Migrant organisations supply more than mere support for individual immigrants. They enable those who so wish to preserve something of the life, language and culture of the home country. The three groups of migrant organisations studied here—Polish, Dutch and Maltese—differ widely in their aims and success.

The Polish migrant organisations in Melbourne are mainly intent on preserving Polishness, not only among those who migrated here from Poland but also in the younger generations who were small children when their parents came to Australia or who were born here. The Dutch have little wish to retain association with the Netherlands. Most speak English and membership of their organisations includes many Australians and other nationalities. The most disorganised are the Maltese. They have a multiplicity of migrant bodies, most of them competing with each other, and little corporate feeling.

Mrs Unikoski, herself a migrant from Belgium, had long been conscious of the relation between organised groupings and the individual stranded in alienness, of the inability of some adults to alter inbred behaviour patterns and of a covert hostility of some Australians to ethnic organisations. Before writing this book she talked with many hundreds of migrants from the three groups studied and was allowed to attend meetings of the officials who run the migrant organisations. The result is a book which shows her understanding of the problems encountered both by adults who find themselves in a strange country where customs are different and by children and adolescents who are torn between two cultures.
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Immigrants in Australia 8
A Series sponsored by
The Academy of the Social
Sciences in Australia
To Jackie
Note on the Series

The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia is the national body representing the social sciences. One of its objectives is the sponsorship of major research projects in areas of national importance. Two previous projects, sponsored under its earlier name of the Social Science Research Council of Australia, were *The Role of Women in Public and Professional Life* and *Aborigines in Australian Society*. It was hardly surprising that in 1966 the Council, as it then was, decided to sponsor another project designed to examine the contribution of overseas immigrants in Australia’s economic, social, and cultural life, for new settlers had not only supplied slightly more than half the nation’s growth from 7,579,000 in 1947 to 11,550,000 in 1966, but had brought into our society a great diversity of national groups from the United Kingdom and many parts of Europe.

The major difference between the flow after World War II and all previous immigration was the high proportion of non-British, first from northern and western Europe, primed by the influx of some 200,000 refugees in the immediate postwar years, and thereafter from southern Europe, particularly from Italy and Greece. The mosaic of postwar immigration is seen in the following estimate by Dr C. A. Price of the ethnic origin of persons who came to this country between July 1947 and June 1970 with the intention of settling here.\(^1\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>British Isles</th>
<th>1,086,500</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>121,800</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>337,700</td>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>68,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>Other East Europe</td>
<td>220,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>140,600</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>334,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>136,800</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,646,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the immediate postwar years, marked by high levels of

economic activity associated with rebuilding the nation's capital stock and reopening the channels of overseas trade, immigrants were absorbed into the economy almost without notice and with few structural changes. These were also years when, because of the very low fertility in Australia in the great pre-war depression of the thirties, there was a marked lag in the natural increase of the non-immigrant workforce: immigrants were welcomed if only because they filled that gap. They manned great national projects like the Snowy Mountains Scheme; they provided a great part of the labour force for new mineral enterprises; they helped to build houses, offices, and industrial buildings; they made the nation's steel; and they became the workhorses of the burgeoning motor industry. But, above all, they settled in the major cities, often forming substantial ethnic groups, restructuring national customs in their adopted environment, keeping alive their native languages, yet rubbing shoulders with Australians, being influenced by Australian culture — often through the participation of their children in Australian schools — and at the same time influencing by their presence and activity a remarkably homogeneous and at times slightly suspicious Australian society.

By the sixties few Australians could be unaware of the impact of the immigrants, whose flow continues to the present. As their numbers have grown, as the ethnic origins of the new settlers have become even more diversified, as the size of some of the ethnic communities in major cities has increased, as some schools have emerged in which the majority of children are immigrants brought up in a non-British tongue, and as job competition has grown keener as the swelling Australian cohorts of the postwar 'baby boom' have reached maturity and seek employment in the nation's workforce, the presence of the immigrant has been increasingly apparent. Some call for a reduction of the inflow; many seek to know what the impact has been on the nation's culture, economy and society; none can ignore the immigrants' presence.

So the Academy sponsored a project to try to find at least some of the answers to the questions being asked, both by encouraging and helping workers already known to be engaged in immigrant research, and by organising new studies to fill some of the major gaps. In September 1967 two Honorary Directors were appointed: Dr C. A. Price, Professorial Fellow in the Department of Demography at the Australian National University, to lead studies in the
cultural, political, and social fields; and Professor R. T. Appleyard, Department of Economics, University of Western Australia, to lead work in economic and industrial studies. An Organising Committee with a wide geographical and disciplinary representation was also appointed and set about costing the enterprise, which proved to be beyond the financial capability of the Academy. It is with gratitude that the Academy acknowledges generous financial support from government, business, and foundation sources. The Academy also records its appreciation of the co-operation of the Department of Demography of the Australian National University, both for its contribution in research and for its assistance in many organisational aspects of the project.

Throughout the project every attempt has been made to keep the research workers in communication with the main objectives of the project and with one another. To this end a major seminar was held in Canberra in May 1970.

The project does not, and indeed could not aim to produce a single definitive volume, but rather to sponsor books and journal articles within areas felt to be significant with regard to the processes of settling the interaction of Australian and immigrant and the impact of immigrants upon the nation. Major areas in which studies are being sponsored are:

The economic role of immigrants in specific industries.
Patterns of immigrant consumption and expenditure.
Mobility and career patterns of immigrants.
Displaced persons and other refugees.
Professional and highly skilled immigrants.
Immigrant communities and problems of integration.
Studies of selected ethnic groups.
Immigrant concentrations in metropolitan areas.

In addition to articles in learned journals, it is expected that at least a dozen books will flow from the study. The sponsorship of new research ceased at approximately January 1971; the task now is to bring to publication work begun by that date. So far seven books have been published and one is in preparation, and the flow is expected to continue.

The Academy hopes that the project will assist in an understanding of a great national enterprise and the growing complexity of a nation in which almost a quarter of the population is of postwar immigrant stock; for, whatever the future of immigration, there can be no doubt that the introduction of the 2,646,000 new settlers from
Note on the Series

1947 to 1970, of whom about 85 per cent have remained in Australia, has changed the character as well as the economic structure and the size of this young nation.

W. D. Borrie
Chairman, Organising Committee

Canberra
December 1971
Acknowledgments

The field work for this study and the early stages of writing were financed by a grant from the Myer Foundation, Melbourne. The Department of Political Science, University of Melbourne, gave financial assistance which enabled me to carry on at a later time. I would like to record my appreciation to both these institutions.

I owe more than I can easily express to Dr Charles Price, Department of Demography, Australian National University. He has advised and supported me throughout the project, patiently reading and correcting the successive drafts. I cannot pay too much tribute to his great knowledge of the migrant situation and his fine scholarship, which have taught me a great deal, as have the rigorous standards he set for both content and literary form. Most of all, I want to thank him for the kindly way in which his skillful and sensitive editing have transformed my manuscript into a book.

The other major influence of this study has been that of Professor Alan Davies, Department of Political Science, University of Melbourne. With great imagination he guided my work in its formative stages and solved certain problems of presentation. He regenerated excitement in the book at a time when I had grown very stale. Through his conversations and his own writings he has influenced my thinking in many ways. Most especially he sharpened my awareness and increased my perception of the human element. He encouraged me to navigate, with caution but with courage, through the undercurrents of human behaviour which shape the dynamic character of communal affairs.

I would also like to thank Professor J. Zubrzycki, Department of Sociology, Australian National University, for reading the Polish section and offering advice and helpful comment.

It is a pleasure to be able to acknowledge my appreciation to Miss Meriel Wilmot, Executive Secretary of the Myer Foundation, for all her support. With efficiency and thoroughness she investigated the background to my proposals and, having committed herself, actively championed my cause. Throughout the project she has shown professional and personal interest well beyond that which might be expected in her official capacity.

I am also glad to express the pleasure that the acquaintance of Neil Whitlock, Department of Political Science, University of Melbourne, has afforded me. Her warmhearted interest and the many delightful conversations we shared have often eased a difficult or despondent moment.
Acknowledgments

This book would not have been possible without the co-operation of a very large number of people in the three communities. I wish to record my deep gratitude to all those individuals and communal leaders who were so generous with their time, who welcomed me into their homes and clubs, allowed me to benefit from their knowledge and understanding, and gave me the privilege of sharing some of their personal experiences with me. They are too numerous to be thanked individually and some have preferred to remain anonymous. I would however like to name three, with their permission.

Mr Tom Ostrowski spared no time or effort in helping me. He read the manuscript of the Polish section with meticulous care and contributed valuable criticisms and suggestions, as well as correcting factual and linguistic lapses. Mr Hugh Azzopardi, whose knowledge of, and concern for, the Maltese community were apparent in each conversation, read and commented on the Maltese section. Mr Tom Westerveld was very helpful in the various discussions we had about the Dutch community.

I also want to express my thanks to Margaret Godlewski and Stan Krajewski, Carmen Carabott, Peter van Beek, for translating into English from their respective languages the various documents and other material which I needed for my study.

All the above people have contributed a great deal to the improvement of the book. I alone am responsible for any shortcomings or misinterpretations therein.

Finally, I gladly acknowledge my obligations in the family realm. I have drawn inspiration and insight from Hillel and Paula, my parents, who have had the courage to start life over and over and over again. Throughout the years my sister Helen has persevered in her firm belief in my chosen course. It has been a pleasure to discuss certain aspects of my study with Isi and Ari and they have helped me in various practical ways. Most of all, though, their sense of perspective has been refreshing and stabilising. They never had the slightest doubt that this task, like others in daily life, would also be completed.

It is impossible for me to acknowledge all that I owe to my husband, an immense indebtedness which extends beyond measurement.
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Introduction

The original purpose of this project was to make a survey of ethnic organisations in Victoria. It became very quickly obvious that the magnitude of such a task put it beyond the scope of an individual. In fact, the Department of Immigration used its Australia-wide resources to carry out a field survey of ethnic institutions between 1970 and 1972. Almost 2000 organisations were shown to exist at that time.¹

At the same time, it did not require much imagination to realise that a mere compendium of factual details, besides making tedious reading, was not a very fruitful or illuminating approach. However exhaustive such a catalogue might be, it could only provide an outline of formal ethnic organisations. It could not convey the substance of the communal structure in which these are incorporated. It could not provide a balanced perspective of the community itself. Nor could it answer the fundamental questions about ethnic organisations: what are they and what do they do? Thus, it was quite evident that the field of inquiry would have to be narrowed down and the whole undertaking made at a deeper level.

The most profitable way of narrowing the field seemed to be to concentrate on three widely contrasting national groups. After a process of selection and elimination, I settled on the Polish, Dutch and Maltese communities. These offered an interesting variety of geographical origin, reasons for emigration, patterns of immigration to Australia. They also offered useful constants of religion, comparable group size and post-war influx.

¹Australia and Immigration, Department of Immigration, Canberra, January 1974.
More importantly, I could view all three with the same objectivity. Being Belgian-born and French-speaking, I had no personal links with any of them, no contacts within the national groups, no knowledge of their languages. The only preconceived notions I had were the vague, generally prevalent ones about the Poles being very nationalistic and about the Dutch assimilating easily. Of the Maltese I knew nothing at all.

Having thus set the project more concretely, I proceeded on the field work. I gained a great deal of information and background knowledge from written sources within the communities: ethnic newspapers, constitutions, bulletins, reports and other organisational material. Much of this had to be translated for me, as it was in the original language. In order to get the 'feel' of the communities, I attended some of the social activities, unofficially as often as possible. I also had the opportunity of attending a few committee meetings, a courtesy extended to me when some of the proceedings were conducted in English.

While this provided a tremendous amount of valuable material, the laborious method of personal interviewing was the most rewarding. This was mostly conducted with organisational officials, sometimes with rank and file members, more rarely with settlers of the group who were not ethnically bound. I saw some of these people individually, some within their family group, others within committee or organisational settings. Many of these people were visited within their own homes, some on club premises, a few came to my home.

The form of the interview was unstructured. I always tried to elicit some basic information about the organisation and then we just talked about and around organisations, individuals and community. After a couple of clumsy attempts I gave up the tape recorder. Apart from facts and figures I made very few written notes, not to inhibit the mood and flow of conversation. Hearing what people said and how they said it was extraordinarily helpful. It brought to life all the information gained from documents, it reinforced or corrected all that could be inferred from direct observation. Gestures and expressions sometimes conveyed more than the speaker had intended about motives and feelings; they often provided the clue that a lot more probing was necessary to get beneath the surface of information offered.

Inevitably, even the most tentative initial contacts raised a host of related and highly pertinent questions:
How do such organisations come into being?
What is their life span?
Why does organised communal life vary so much from group to group, given the same environment and seemingly similar circumstances?
What are the personal implications of such organisations, that is how do they affect the life of immigrants, their adjustment? How do leaders emerge to form and maintain them?
Are there any common factors in the various organisational developments?

Most of these questions appeared contingent upon two basic issues: the nature and the role of ethnic organisations. By focusing on these two issues, it might also be possible to bring some light on the related matters raised above.

Furthermore, those considerations revealed the need for a deeper and broader basis to the inquiry. I had to move outside the strict boundaries of the organisational realm and explore the historical setting and psychological assumptions underlying organisational patterns. Such a broadening process tends to acquire its own momentum and I had great difficulty in not getting swamped by the rich human material, in not allowing the excursions in related areas to grow into projects of their own. By drastic cutting, I tried therefore to keep only the background material necessary to an understanding of the distinct patterns of development exhibited by these three national groups.

I cannot claim to have answered all the above questions, but if I have conveyed some insight into the processes of ethnic organisations and some understanding of the people involved with them, then I have attained some measure of achievement of my original objective.

Primarily, then, this book is concerned with the ethnic organisations evolved in post-war Melbourne by the Polish, Dutch and Maltese communities. Although these groups were not studied in this order, I set them out thus for one major reason. Since the purpose of the study was to present a descriptive analysis of communal organisations, it seemed logical to place the three communities in descending order of organisational development. Starting with the solidly-based, well-defined Polish communal structure gave a useful frame of reference for the less-developed systems of the other two national groups.
In order to arrive at some understanding of the basic issues — the nature and role of ethnic organisations — three guidelines suggested themselves:

(i) setting the communal background to each group
(ii) a description of the organisations, that is their nature
(iii) an analysis of them, that is their role.

To avoid superimposing a rigid, artificial treatment, I have dealt with each group in a different way, the character of communal life itself dictating the approach in each case. Thus, the Polish material lent itself quite readily to a systematic procedure of description followed by analysis. The Maltese demanded an approach based on the theme of organisational disarray, their most conspicuous communal feature. The Dutch confronted me with the hardest problem of presentation, which I finally resolved by placing their communal situation in the context of assimilation, a combination which proved to be appropriate, if incongruous at first sight.

The communal background is fairly straightforward factual material, dealing mostly with the demographic and socio-economic setting of the three groups. Where necessary some historical background has been included.

The description of the organisations has been done as comprehensively as possible, since it is the core of the study. I have tried to show the communal structure not as a static entity but as a dynamic process, set against the specific aspects of organisations: their formation, development, mode of operation, administration, membership, and so on.

The analysis of ethnic organisations was a much more complex undertaking. Such an analysis had to establish the place of organisations in communal life, it had to identify the multiplicity of functions assumed by the organisations, it had to evaluate the fulfilment of such functions. This could best be done through an examination of the goals and expectations set by the founders of the organisations, which were often on two interrelated planes:

the ostensible goals, clearly spelled out in the constitutions, and which I have termed specific. These are defined and circumscribed objectives such as welfare, culture, sport.

the deeper aspirations, not always clearly stated, and not even clearly
understood in the case of the less ethnically conscious. These I have termed the ethnic objectives. They are of a general, idealistic nature and tend towards uniting the group internally, acting as its representative externally, and sometimes perpetuating ethnic consciousness.

While my primary objective was to study the social phenomenon of ethnic organisations, these are quite inseparable from the people who fashioned them, themselves moulded by their character and by individual and collective experiences. I have therefore endeavoured to weave 'the human dimension' throughout the body of the book, to explore possible interactions between historical circumstances, personality facets, and communal situations. This may shed some light on some of the associated questions inherent in the concept of ethnic organisations enumerated earlier. It may illuminate some of the problems and difficulties faced by many new settlers. It may also evoke, however dimly, the collective subconsciousness that determines the communal course steered by each particular ethnic group.

Finally, the concluding section offers the opportunity to stand a little away from the welter of details and try to abstract certain general principles of ethnic organisations. By contrasting such very distinct communal structures, it is likely that the common grounds and similarities that do emerge are valid guidelines to the patterns of the organisational development in other communities.

These patterns are discernible in many dimensions. The past has influenced the development of present organisations, the present situation will influence the future of these and other organisations. The actual impact of ethnic organisations moves in concentric circles of effect, radiating outwards first through the membership, then to settlers who are not ethnically bound, and finally to Australian society as a whole.

These influences emerge as beneficial. Implicit in such a statement is the principle of diversity, as formulated by the biologist and humanist Julian Huxley: 'I believe in diversity... Diversity is not only the salt of life but the basis of collective achievement. And the complement of diversity is tolerance and understanding.'

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Part One

The Polish Community
Communal Background

Post-war Migration Pattern. In the case of the Poles, one significant fact bears testimony to the personal dramas and upheavals inherent in the tragic forced movements wrought on an unprecedented scale by World War II. This fact lies in the diverse geographical sources from which Polish-born migrants made their way to Australia in the post-war period. The years 1947-51 saw the arrival of about 70,000 Poles, of whom, quite remarkably, less than 10,000 came directly from Poland. The rest came from the widespread parts of the world where the war had cast them up.

From England and Scotland came the earliest arrivals, nearly 1500 Polish troops who had fought under allied command, had been demobilised in 1945 and were later assisted in resettlement overseas by the British Government. The others were Displaced Persons, most of whom came from Germany, where they had been prisoners of war and internees of labour or concentration camps, and had refused repatriation despite the early, more or less gentle, persuasions of the U.N.R.R.A. The other D.P.s came from various free or allied occupied territories in Europe, where they had fled as post-war political refugees. Still others came from India, the Middle East, China and East African countries, which had harboured Polish civilian refugees, formerly deported to Russia and released in 1941. This, then, motley and war-scarred, was the first wave of Polish post-war immigration — 70,000 Polish nationals, of whom 51,000 were born in Poland, the 20,000 difference being mostly children born in D.P. camps and elsewhere to Polish parents. To these can be added about 1600 Polish-born arrivals
who were registered as stateless. Altogether then, the years 1947-51 saw the influx of about 72,000 Polish migrants.

The drying-up of D.P. sources and the restrictive emigration policy of the Polish Government reduced Polish migration to a mere trickle between 1952 and 1957 (e.g. 1953-4 — 124 Polish arrivals, 26 ex Poland). This was followed, after the Poznan riots of 1956, by a more liberal attitude to emigration, based on a family reunification plan. This, the second wave of Polish migration, brought new arrivals to Australia at the rate of 1000-1800 yearly.

Since 1965, however, the numbers have again fallen to about 500 per year, in keeping with the present emigration policy in Poland.

Religious composition. The 1971 census shows the number of Polish-born residents of the Melbourne metropolitan area as 20,745, a figure which represents 88 per cent of the Poles in Victoria and nearly 38 per cent of Australia's Polish-born population. Of these, 9619 profess to be Catholics and form the largest homogeneous religious bloc. To these could be added about 2500 children born to Polish parents either in D.P. camps or in Australia. The second largest group is made up of Polish-born Jews, whose 6789 members lead a completely separate communal life. The total number is made up by about 500 Orthodox Poles, 250 Seventh Day Adventists (a small but active closeknit group), various other Protestant adherents (including 200 Lutherans), and 2637 Poles who either claimed no religion or did not answer the religion question on the census paper.

The communal life of Polish Jews is integrated in the general Jewish community, which has been analysed by Medding and Taft. The smaller groups do not take part in the general community, nor, with the exception of the Seventh Day Adventists, do they seem to have formed their own organisations but rather have merged in the general background, both in religious practice and social participation. All further descriptions and observations therefore, unless expressly stated, will apply only to the Polish Catholic community in Melbourne.

Socio-Economic Structure. According to communal leaders, the large

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wave of Polish post-war immigrants consists of 90 per cent 'simple people', the 'peasants', the rest being the 'intelligentsia', that is educated people. Although this may seem a gross simplification, Zubrzycki in his analysis of the 1954 census indicates a high proportion of unskilled or semi-skilled Polish settlers, with 46 per cent of the male work-force engaged in heavy industry.\(^2\)

The 1971 Census shows the following major areas of occupation for the Polish-born settlers in Melbourne:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, technical and related workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(esp. draftsmen)</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative, executive and managerial</td>
<td>1617</td>
<td>353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales workers</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communication</td>
<td>435</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesmen, production-process workers</td>
<td>4914</td>
<td>1686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and labourers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service workers</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total work-force</td>
<td>9661</td>
<td>4758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14,419</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Taking the numbers employed in electricity, gas, construction, transport, industry and small shop-keeping, we obtain a figure of 63 per cent of the work-force employed in areas where the amount of training and/or education is not extensive. This is not a very accurate figure, because this analysis is not restricted to Polish Catholics but includes Polish Jews as well. Also, the educational attainment of some of those employed in those particular areas is quite high (that is the déclassé members of the Polish community). The above estimate is therefore no more than an indication that there is a fairly large number of the so-called 'simple people'.

That this should be so is in no way remarkable, when one remembers the chequered life of the average adult Polish migrant, plucked from a rural or semi-rural background, pitched at best into the army, into forced labour otherwise, shunted back and forth across Europe during and after the war.

The 'intelligentsia' is composed of the more educated people, including pre-war secondary and tertiary students, higher-ranking ex-officers, graduates and professionals. It is very interesting that this distinction between 'peasants' and 'intellectuals' is reflected in several spheres, for instance organisational affiliation, degree of affluence (with the less educated being the more comfortable and the intellectuals suffering more straitened resources as well as reduced status). Most clearly it is seen in area and standard of residence. This is by no means a rigid or deliberate cleavage and there is, of course, much overlapping of circumstances, but the trend is clear enough to warrant comment.

There is a large number of working-class Poles living in the western suburbs, such as Footscray, Sunshine, St Albans, Ardeer. (These suburbs also have other national concentrations, Ukrainian, Yugoslav, Maltese, etc.) This residential concentration is probably linked to the cheapness of land available around the migrant hostels in the early 1950s and to proximity to place of employment. As the general movement from central areas to the outer suburbs continues, one finds the numbers of Polish-born residents decreasing in the inner suburbs (the city proper, Brunswick, Richmond, Fitzroy) and increasing in the newly-established outer western suburbs, such as Niddrie, Deer Park, Avondale Heights.

From personal observation, the houses themselves are often of high standard, usually owned or being paid off, well-furnished, with the latest electrical appliances: 'All of us never dreamed to live like this -- with a machine to beat the eggs, and our own cinema in the lounge-room!'

The 'intelligentsia' on the whole prefer the south-eastern suburbs, Hawthorn, St Kilda, Elsternwick, Elwood. The reasons given for this preference vary, the most common being that some of these areas have a cosmopolitan atmosphere, are more attractive than the industrial western suburbs, more accessible by public transport and offer more choice of rented accommodation. The latter two reasons tend to emphasise the lower material standard reached by the educated older migrants, who often do not own a car and whose house or flat, bought or rented, is frequently shabby and neglected on the outside, though spotless on the inside.

Perhaps describing their houses as having 'only a packing-case for a chair, but a good painting on the wall' is an exaggeration; but certainly
the indifferent quality of the furniture is often compensated by the high standard of ornaments and representations of Polish folk-art, the absence of a TV set by the presence of a musical instrument or a fine radiogram. One is struck again and again by the overwhelming presence of books everywhere, frequently in several languages, and of magazines, overflowing from their shelves, mostly in Polish and originating from France, England and America.

An obviously embittered former undergraduate, now a clerk, gave this view on ways in which the two 'classes' reacted to transplantation:

When we came here, we were fools. We thought we were coming to a civilised country, but those peasants, they had the right idea for this country! They wanted a piece of land and as soon as they scraped £5 together — quick, deposit on a block, and then they slaved on two jobs and lived in a shack for years and years and built their house themselves. But us? Ah, no! We had enough of manual work, and even if we wanted to build, did we know how? No, no, at the week-end, we wanted to be our real selves, civilised, cultured, we wanted to live in suitable apartments close to the city. We felt it was more important to spend time and money on keeping our heritage and our links with our brothers, here and abroad. But the peasants, they were right, and so, they are rich and we are not.

At organisational level, the difference between the peasant and the educated classes is seen in the various affiliations. Polish communal life in the western suburbs is centred around the local Polish Associations and sports clubs, while, predictably, the cultural groups claim most of their members from the educated Poles residing generally in the south-eastern suburbs. The powerful ex-servicemen’s organisations, although they have eligible members all over Melbourne, seem to draw the executive and many of their actual members again from the south-eastern suburbs, possibly because those people in the western suburbs who are organisation-minded are either daunted by distance or are committed to the local association.

This divergence does not appear among the younger people, and despite some reported snobbery, language classes, choir and dancing groups are attended by the offspring of all sections of the community.

Second Wave. There are several differences between the so-called first (1949-51) and second (1957-60s) waves of Polish migration. The most
striking characteristic of the latter group is no doubt the fact that almost all the settlers came from Poland itself, as compared with only 18 per cent in the first influx (i.e. 9007 ex Poland out of 50,021 Polish arrivals — 1968 Consolidated Statistics).

Another interesting factor is the preponderance, small but constant, of female over male immigrants. These are, reportedly, educated women, in their late 20s or early 30s, 'who came here looking for husbands'. This slight imbalance reflects the more severe one in Poland (in common with many European countries), a situation arising in large part from the heavier male losses sustained in war and accentuated by the predominantly male emigration of the earlier years. Though interesting, the surplus of female migrants is too insignificant to rectify the still pronounced masculinity rate among the Poles.

Economically speaking, there is a more even distribution of skilled and unskilled workers, possibly due to more stable post-war conditions and more widespread education.

Since the second-wave settlers usually came to families and an established residential pattern, the concentrations remain the same, that is in the outer western and south-eastern suburbs, plus a new Polish nucleus around Oakleigh, composed of the Seventh Day Adventists.

At the organisational level, one finds that the later arrivals are proportionately less represented. In fact they usually join only after several years and do not seem to be on the executive of the more important organisations.

Seventh Day Adventists. Although this is such a small group (250 adults plus about 70 children), it merits description by virtue of its cohesion and segregation from the general Polish community.

The members migrated in the early 1960s, mostly as family units, and congregate around the suburbs of Oakleigh and Clayton, where a modern community hall and a primary school have recently been built and where they own land for the erection of their church.

As with the other members of the second migration wave, there is a fairly balanced occupational distribution, and what seems to be a more even degree of affluence, regardless of social levels, than in the first wave. Both the private and the outstanding communal material standing are attributed to the closely-knit character of the congregation, whose members help one another and contribute in terms of money and labour to their community.
This is a fairly autonomous ethnic unit of the wider Australian Seventh Day Adventist movement and, directed by its Polish pastor, assumes not only religious but also welfare and social functions. Thus, accommodation, jobs, language classes are arranged, communal outings, sports, choir, orchestra are organised, and all this, in addition to the religious bonds, services, Bible classes, festivals, ensures a self-contained society.

The Polish Seventh Day Adventists are quite separated from the other Poles and there is a certain antipathy between the two groups, the main subject of discord being the official contact maintained by the former (alone out of the whole Polish community) with the Polish Consul, who is in turn fiercely repudiated by the bulk of the Polish community, since he represents a hated, and to them, illegal regime.

Communal Influences
The reasons for any migrant community developing along certain lines are always varied and intricate. They must be accounted for by past history; the repercussion of world events; national as well as personal characteristics; changes in political, social, religious and economic factors; the attitudes of the host-society, itself affected by all these factors; the interplay of circumstances sometimes too tenuous to be traced or too involuted to be untangled.

In his authoritative work on the Poles in Great Britain, Zubrzycki describes the development of the Polish communities abroad as being marked by three distinct features: the ‘accommodation’ pattern of an emigration of the masses in search of economic opportunities; the refusal to assimilate by a smaller, more select movement, intent upon maintaining the political purpose of its emigration; the Polish character of the ecclesiastical structure in the migrant communities, which strongly reinforced their ethnic cohesion as well as their ties with Poland.

Having in mind the particular patterns of emigration of the Polish community and the turbulent background of Polish history, it is not surprising to find in Melbourne a community which is complex both in its composition and in its inter-relations. It is also a community conscious of its ethnic identity but uncertain of its orientation; an active

community and therefore one fraught with tensions, frictions and divisions.

In addition to the traditional features, the Melbourne Polish community (possibly a prototype of other urban Polish communities in Australia) exhibits some particular characteristics.

Firstly, whereas the post-war migrations to other centres usually took place to countries where there were already established Polish communities, the large first wave of post-war Polish migrants was thrown completely on its own resources, one result being the early formation of a large number of ethnic organisations.

Secondly, and very importantly, this migration could be seen, superficially, as having a purely political character, inasmuch as its members were fleeing from one totalitarian regime, after suffering at the hands of another one. However, the majority of these people were not the intellectuals and patriots of the traditionally 'elite' political emigrations, but belonged rather to the classes which had, in the past, made up the massive economic movements. So that we find here the interesting situation of a potentially economic migration overlaid with political forms and values, and the obvious possibility of a conflict of interests.

Thirdly, circumstances during and after the war have wrought more subtle changes in the religious character of the Polish community than at any other times in the history of Polish emigration.

Below is a discussion of the various factors which have shaped Polish communal life in Melbourne and which seem to be encompassed by two broad issues, the religious and the political.

**Religious Aspects.** Historically, Poland has always been a bulwark of Catholicism in Europe, and national traditions have been inseparable from the Church. Throughout the long and varied emigration saga of the Polish people, the emigrants' spiritual welfare abroad has been the concern of Polish priests and it is so in Australia. The Polish character of this pastoral care is reinforced by the fact that the Polish priests, though under the jurisdiction of the Australian Catholic Church, maintain direct links with the so-called 'Emigrants' Bishop', a member of the Polish Episcopate who resides permanently in Rome and has overall responsibility for the spiritual care of Polish migrants throughout the world.
In Melbourne, there are seven Polish priests in the metropolitan area, attached to various presbyteries. Only one of them resides in the western suburbs, where the need might be considered greatest. Polish mass is usually conducted following the English service, a rather unsatisfactory arrangement for many congregants, since long travelling time and 'Mass in the middle of day eats up all Sunday', and this is probably one reason why attendance is indifferent.

There is a convent in Essendon, staffed by the Sisters of the Resurrection, American nuns of Polish origin, who run an orphanage and a primary school for Catholic children of various national origins.

In the late 1960s, plans were laid down for the erection of the first Polish church in Melbourne to be built next to the convent. In some ways, the conflicting feelings regarding this building typify (or perhaps stem directly from) the generally ambivalent religious attitudes of the Polish community.

For some of the advocates, the church is necessary as a rallying point, as it has been throughout history. Others see it as a matter of status — a community worthy of the name must have its institutions, religious and secular, visibly established and suitably housed. For others it is a matter of national prestige, and even interstate rivalry: 'If the Ukrainians can have their own church, so can we.' 'Sydney has a Polish church, why not Melbourne?'

For others still, the reason is emotional and represents an exiled community's need for a tangible expression of its national faith, encompassing all the feelings evoked by worshipping in Polish in a Polish church, the nostalgia as well as the strength of the ties binding the migrant to what he has left behind.

Much of the opposition to the church is based on practical grounds. There might have been a case for building a Polish church in the earlier years, say the critics, but twenty years later it is quite unnecessary since the majority of Poles, and certainly their children, have become used to local worship. Or, it is pointed out, the location is not central enough (Essendon), therefore distance and transport difficulties will limit attendance, as they have affected the Sydney church and the local Polish services. Or, again, after the novelty has worn off, the new church will be too large for the small regular congregations and too small for the large crowds that will attend on religious or national holidays. Sometimes the detractors are more cynical and the Polish clergy is accused of self-aggrandisement in wanting its own church, or of
distorting the purpose of religion, which is 'to bring God to the people, not the people to the church'.

The most significant objection, however, especially in view of later discussion on Polish identification, is that since ethnic cohesion is at stake, money raised for the church would be far more profitably used in the improvement of existing Polish centres and especially facilities for the youth.

The former attitudes won the day, and the Polish church was formally opened and consecrated in 1973 by the Archbishop of Cracow during his visit to Melbourne for the Eucharistic Congress.

The ambivalent attitudes towards religion itself are not so clearly defined, nor so sharply divided as the issue of the church building.

Here, the fundamental principle, religious acceptance, is generally recognised. The ambivalence is rather manifested in relation to religious practices and to the clergy, and it must be seen in the context of the evolution of a mostly rural and largely ignorant people into a community whose norms are gradually approximating those of the urban, industrialised sophisticated society in which it has settled.

Thus one finds the Poles intensely religious but not necessarily pious. They readily admit that they are frequently less observant in religious practices than Australian Catholics. They may work a second shift on Sunday, or build their houses, but will adhere to certain religious rites, for example those connected with births, marriages, and deaths. They may not go to confession regularly, but will not forgo the religious ceremonies of the great festivals or the national days.

The same attitude is seen at communal level. For instance, the 1966 festivities commemorating the Polish Christian Millenium were organised mostly on secular lines, exhibitions of Polish folk-art, philately, floats in the Moomba parades, concerts. Yet none of these aroused the tremendous enthusiasm received by a copy of the famous painting Our Lady of Czestochowa, patron saint of Poland, on its peregrination through Australia.

The changed attitudes towards the clergy are even more striking. With the exception of the old people, and to a lesser extent the middle-aged women, the traditional closeness and devotion to the priest, and the reliance on him, have been changed and broadened, once again by historical experiences and developing circumstances. He is no longer the powerful figure he was in the Polish village, nor the only educated person to whom all turned in the earlier American migration, nor yet
the guide to religious, social and nationalistic standards, the 'Father-image', as he was to the bewildered Polish refugees in post-war Britain.

He is not needed in these capacities by the more educated people and even the 'peasants', the edges of rusticity rubbed off by the army, the camp, or a sojourn in a foreign country, will no longer run to the priest, but will rely more and more on their children for interpreting and the simpler dealings with officialdom, and increasingly on the appropriate machinery for their legal, welfare and other problems. Their current views will be moulded more and more by television, newspapers, discussions with friends and neighbours, rather than by pulpit pronouncements or advice from the priest whom they see but seldom.

The very image of the priest has changed for many people, sometimes entailing a complete reversion of feeling:

Then we travelled to other countries, and our eyes were opened when we saw other priests. And we remembered back in our villages, the priest, like a lord, with his church and his plot of land, he curved his finger and the peasants who lived so miserably, had to work for him and leave their own harvest, which they needed more for their miserable children than the priest for his paunch. No, we don't forget these things, never. We respect the priest, yes, he is learned, a man of religion, but the old feeling, that is all gone.

Sometimes the change arose from painful disillusionment:

You see, back in the village, people thought the priests knew everything and could do everything. But in the concentration camps we turned to them — Father, help us! — but could they help us? No, they could not! And they suffered like us, and you know what? We saw that all we believed, for all our life, all that was nothing, and they were men, just like us. You know what I mean? Just men like us.

By and large, that is how the priest is now seen — as a man. He is still respected by virtue of his learning, his training, his vows, his position, his personal endeavours for the community, as the case may be; he is still held in affection for having shared the various wartime and later tribulations of his flock, or by remembrance of his pre-war role; his name will still be authoritative enough to open many individual doors. But he is no longer the almost charismatic personality, imbued with universal knowledge and endowed with the aura of the hallowed powers he represents.
Thus, the Polish Catholic Church in Australia is not the force it was either in Poland, in pre-war overseas communities, or in post-war Britain where it was a powerful factor of social cohesion and ethnic segregation. Various factors beside the diminished standing of the priests contribute to this state of affairs, for instance the necessarily more diffuse allegiance engendered by an international church, especially in a sprawling city like Melbourne, where local worship is so much more convenient; or the fact that the church, unlike its post-war British counterpart, has not formed any social organisations.

This is not to say that the Polish church has no place in the Melbourne Polish community. On the contrary. Its power has weakened, its role has been circumscribed to more specific functions, but its influence should not be underestimated. It is still very closely bound up with the community, especially influential through its individual pastoral ministrations, and also through the part it plays in the communal life. The clergy has its representative on the Federation; it inspects the language classes, though does not teach or prepare the syllabus; it is in charge of Polish archives in Melbourne; a priest chaired the committee for the Millenium celebrations; no event of any importance in the community, be it sports festival or the opening of a new hall, would begin without a mass or a priestly blessing. Furthermore, their religion, whether strictly observed or not, is to the Poles a mark of the solidarity of their nation, in their homeland and abroad.

Thus, albeit more indirectly than in pre-war Poland or earlier migrant communities, the Polish church in Australia continues its traditional support of Polish national consciousness.

**Political Character.** One must be impressed by the unvarying course the political character of Polish emigration has pursued. From 1772, through almost two centuries of wars and upheavals, until present times, this has been a course single-mindedly aimed at the restoration of freedom and independence in Poland:

> We are fully aware that our words are reaching men and women who have suffered heavily and are terribly exhausted... Our future path is a hard one, but, at journey's end, we shall see the Poland for which we are still
striving, a Poland free and independent, a Poland of liberty and justice, a Poland in which love of God and man shall prevail.4

This staunchly-maintained goal and the concomitant severance from the official Polish Government have two tremendous implications for any community which, like the Melbourne one, is loyal to the London-based Government-in-Exile.

Firstly, by cutting itself off from the recognised Polish Government, the Melbourne Polish community has no official status, no diplomatic or consular representative, therefore no official channels of communication with Poland and its people, and must rely entirely on itself in all internal matters and all dealings with Australian agencies.

Secondly, by committing the political refugees 'to be the spokesmen of those who must remain mute' and 'to hold in safekeeping the ideals of the violated nation', they are pledged not only to resist assimilation and maintain their national and cultural heritage in order to ensure ethnic continuity, but also to fight communism wherever possible.

The challenges and tasks present in both those situations were tackled by the setting-up of a strong network of communal institutions. Since these are reinforced by the support of the church and of the local Polish press, and since they provide the vehicle for the secular manifestations (language, history, traditions, social contacts) wherein Polish identification is largely vested, one must conclude that these organisations lie at the core of communal co-ordination.

Historical Note on the Polish Government-in-Exile (P.G.E.) It is necessary to include some jottings on this body, which is still accepted by many of the Poles abroad as heir to the pre-war authorities and therefore as the legal Polish government.5 In many ways it represents the embodiment of what is sometimes called the Polish complex: an obsession about autonomy and independence arising in large part from


5 Churchill, W., The Second World War, Vol. VI, Triumph and Tragedy. 'I said that I shared the President's [Roosevelt] dislike of the word emigre. It was a term... properly applied only to those who had been driven out of their own country by their own people. But the Poles abroad had been driven out of their country by the Germans, and I suggested that the words 'Poles abroad' should be substituted for emigrés. Stalin assented.'
Poland's vulnerable geographical position and the resultant assaults and partitions by its powerful Eastern and Western neighbours, in turn inducing feelings of intense patriotism in the Polish nation and fostering courageous rebellions through the ages.

After the fall of Warsaw in September 1939, the Polish Government withdrew successively to Rumania, France and finally to Great Britain in June 1940. It was officially recognised by the Allies and other nations including the U.S.A. and continued to operate throughout the war.

In August 1944, Warsaw revolted against the Germans but was forced to capitulate on 2 October, when nine-tenths of the city were destroyed, according to Hitler's order to 'raze Warsaw to the ground', and 200,000 inhabitants lost their lives. The tragedy of the Warsaw uprising was complicated by political rivalries and dissensions. The underground resistance movement consisted of the Home Army (Armia Krajowa), the right-wing branch directed from London, and the People's Army (Armia Ludowa), the left-wing branch, in contact with the Soviet Union.

Accusations of malicious incitement, double-crossing, lack of cooperation, treachery, atrocities, still occupy the minds and pens of many Poles today. It is outside the scope of this note to go beyond mention of these charges hurled by both sides. In this particular context, it is sufficient to indicate the existence of a strong left-wing faction, out of which rose in January 1945 the Polish Committee of National Liberation, operating as a provisional government in Lublin. This was recognised by the Soviet Government but rejected as a communist puppet by the Western powers and the P.G.E.

In February 1945, the Three Big Powers met at Yalta, in the Crimea, to consider, inter alia, the question of Poland. Some of the measures foreshadowed in Teheran (1942) were adopted: Eastern Poland was to be annexed by the U.S.S.R. to the Curzon Line; territorial compensation given to Poland by extension of her frontier westward to the Oder-Neisse Line; the provisional Lublin Government was pledged to hold 'free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot' (Yalta Protocol, article VII).

In August 1945, the Potsdam Conference ratified the Yalta decisions, including transfer of territories (Oder-Neisse Line officially recognised by East Germany in June 1949) and resettlement of displaced populations. The pledged general elections did not take place until 1947 and under such repressive measures that the Western powers...
charged a violation of the Yalta provisions and protested at the accelerating transformation of Poland into a communist-dominated Russian satellite.

We cannot get involved here with the progress of Polish politics, nor with the assessments of the above international decisions. This is not the place to discuss whether what took place was 'Appeasement or Realism', 'a Munich called Yalta', naive idealism on the part of the Allies; or, whether, as the apologists claim, hindsight is more discerning than foresight, and compromises were justified by the threat of Japan and the need to safeguard the communications and rear-lines of the Soviet armies.6

What does concern us here are the implications of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam for the Poles abroad in general and for the P.G.E. in particular. They saw these agreements in wider terms than territorial and population issues. For them, Yalta marked the suppression of personal and national freedom in Poland, a renegation of the democratic principles for which the Allies (including the Polish people) had so strenuously fought, a solution of expedience to the vexing problem of the rival Polish governments7. Above all, it was taken as a denial of Poland's essential rights as a nation, stated by Churchill himself:

I wanted the Poles to be able to live freely and live their own lives in their own way . . . Honour was the sole reason why we had drawn the sword to help Poland against Hitler's brutal onslaught and we could never accept any settlement which did not leave her free, independent and sovereign. Poland must be mistress in her own house and captain of her own soul.8

Not only were ideals and principles a casualty of Yalta, but the Poles abroad had also become victims of circumstances, for they could never

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return to a Poland under communist rule. The arrests, deportations, purges and show trials taking place there indicated to them that:

although one tyrannical regime had been overthrown, another — as oppressive and as formidable, — had taken its place; and that the Western democracies, for all their sacrifices had succeeded in rolling back the tide of totalitarianism only from the Rhine to the Elbe.\(^9\)

For this reason, many Polish citizens still in Western Europe as displaced persons or in the armed forces refused to be repatriated.

For the P.G.E., the consequences were no less final. In July 1945, the Western powers withdrew recognition from them in favour of the Soviet-sponsored Government of National Unity. In the eyes of the self-exiled Poles, this repudiation ‘could not deprive the Polish Government in London of the character of a genuine representative and advocate of the interests and rights of Poles in the free world.’\(^10\)

The P.G.E. reorganised itself in London with a President and a Council of Ministers, in order to deal with the new situation. This included practical matters such as the handing over in trust to the Foreign Office of the Polish embassy and other property.

Over the years, the P.G.E.’s effectiveness has continued to decrease. It is reduced to the bitter role of playing politics \textit{in vacuo}. Rent by sterile disputes over would-be foreign policy and would-be domestic issues, torn by in-fighting and bickering, it exhibits the painful symptoms of a political party too long in opposition, its members venting the frustrations of their powerlessness against each other. A major upheaval took place in 1954, when a coalition of political parties abroad refused to recognise the President’s power. The resultant split brought two competing authorities, that of the President and that of the Council of Three. The latter commanded the allegiance of most Poles abroad, headed as it was by the famous names of war-time leaders. This was the situation until May 1972, when the election of the latest president heralded a reconciliation.

Notwithstanding its problems and its impotence, the P.G.E. had steadfastly maintained its stand of 1945, protesting its right as the sole constitutional representative of the Republic of Poland. To the Poles abroad, it still is ‘the outward manifestation of the political purpose of

this self-imposed exile". It represents the former Republic of Poland (Rzeczypospolita Polska) as against the current communist-dominated People’s Poland (Polska Ludowa). It launched in 1972 a world-wide appeal for funds for ‘a national treasury (Skarb Narodowy)) to fight for the restoration of a free, independent, legal Republic of Poland’.

The P.G.E. has restored the constitution of 3 May 1791 (the original liberal constitution modelled on the French) as the rightful one, overriding the present constitution drafted in 1952. Though the majority of Poles abroad are getting slowly detached from the subtleties and intensities of play-politics in London, all celebrate 3 May as the Polish national day.

This latter point perhaps epitomises the position of the P.G.E. Banished to the realm of the would-be, split, powerless, flying a ragged flag to a dwindling remnant of older, wearier, obsessed exiles, the P.G.E. has remained the symbol of their unswerving commitment: ‘Notwithstanding the recognition by other powers of its present subjection, the Polish Nation will never give up its right to independent existence and will never cease to struggle for it.’

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13 Raczynski, In Allied London, p. 366. (Note presented to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by the Polish Ambassador, E. Raczynski, on 7 July 1945).
Looking down the long list of Polish organisations in Melbourne, one cannot but recall Jean-Jacques Rousseau's recommendations to the Poles on the value of national institutions in preserving national identity.\(^1\) Since his treatise was written before the advent of large-scale emigrations in the modern sense, one might be forgiven for stretching his concept of national identity to include that nationalist urge to achieve ethnic cohesion and continuity seen in many migrant communities. Speculation upon any possible effect his views may have had upon the development of this and other Polish expatriate communities is, obviously, outside the scope of this study.\(^2\) But it seems pertinent to refer from time to time to those aspects of his writings which, while particularly designed for the subjugated Poles in 1772, could very well describe certain features exhibited by the Polish community in Melbourne in 1972.

\(^1\) Watkins, F. E. (ed.), *Political Writings of J. J. Rousseau*, Nelson, London, 1953, p. xxxvi. 'Considerations sur le Gouvernement de la Pologne' is a practical application by Rousseau of the political theories he evolved in his 'Contrat Social'. These were the circumstances. In 1768, Polish landowners formed the Confederation of the Bar to resist absorption into Russia. 'Recognising that extensive reforms would be needed if Poland was to survive as a modern state, this assembly included among its acts a resolution that foreign political theorists be asked to lend their advice. Count Wielhorski, one of the members, was commissioned to approach Rousseau on the matter'.

Rousseau completed the work in 1772, on the eve of the third successive partition of Poland.

\(^2\) It should be mentioned that the influence of French philosophers on the reforms effected by the Polish Diet at that time is acknowledged in general terms. It is perhaps permissible to be more specific and trace Rousseau's direct contributions in such matters as the formation in Poland, in 1773, of the world's first Ministry of Education (*Encyclopaedia International*, p. 467) or the adoption of his suggestion to include wheat sheaves on the
Rousseau maintains that preservation of the ethnic soul is the essence of national survival: 'If you see to it that no Pole can ever become a Russian, I guarantee that Russia will not subjugate Poland.' He then elaborates:

It is national institutions which shape the genius, the character, the tastes and the manners of a people; which give it an individuality of its own; which inspire it with that ardent love of country, based on ineradicable habits, which made its members, while living among other peoples, die of boredom, though surrounded by delights denied them in their own land.3

It is indeed this emphasis on ethnic content which is such a prominent feature of the Polish organisations in Melbourne, and their multiplicity, their variety, the important place ascribed to education and sport, all seem to echo Rousseau's ardent belief in the diffusion of the national ethos through all forms of social and public institutions.

Other salient features of the Polish communal organisations are their early formation; the wide network of organisational bonds; the political character of some associations; the multiple functions of others; the fragmentation into quite small groups; their formal character and especially their ability to survive despite their small size. One also gets a strong impression of communal motivation radiating, as it were, in several directions — backwards, forwards, outwards and inwards.

The latter impression is perhaps most illustrative of the structure of Polish communal life. For example the important ex-servicemen's constitutional emblem. However, it would be absurd to attribute the ethnic spirit of the Polish migrant communities to Rousseau's influence. This spirit has been evident in the Polish people throughout their turbulent history and it is doubtful if more than a handful of the Poles in this and other migrant communities have even heard of this particular writing. More significantly, many other national groups have established strong ethnic institutions to achieve cohesion and continuity, without Rousseau's guidance.

The greatness of this particular aspect of Rousseau's 'Considerations' resides, therefore, not in the creation of a program for the maintenance of national integrity, but in the perception of the universal means whereby all passionate peoples, subjugated or exiled, seek to retain their national ethos, and that is by channelling the national impulse into their communal institutions wherever located, through religious and secular customs, habits and folklore.

3 Rousseau, op. cit., p. 168. I am indebted to Mr T. Ostrowski for pointing out that the word 'boredom' is a poor translation of the French ennui. Rousseau certainly did not mean that the transplanted citizen would suffer from 'boredom' but rather from depression, mental weariness, home-sickness.
associations are quite definitely orientated backwards, both in terms of underlying political character and social interest. Though the emphasis may vary, often according to personalities involved, from the fiercest nationalism to a program dedicated to adjustment of the members without any stated political interest, these associations are branches of, or affiliated with, the various associations formed in England after the war, are closely in touch with them, have modelled their constitutions on theirs, are still governed by their directives, and many of the social activities revolve around reminiscences and revival of comradeship experienced in fighting years.

The youth organisations, inasmuch as they aim at ethnic continuity in the new land, can be said to be motivated forward, and language classes, dancing groups and choirs perpetuate the national heritage, not in preparation for a return to Poland, but in order to give the child his due cultural background in the Australian environment.

The outward movement is seen in the local Polish Associations, where emphasis lies on the exercise of charitable, social and cultural functions to promote the integration of the adult settlers. The inward-turned organisations are the several cultural groups which provide a cultural refuge where the older, highly-educated déclassés can pursue appropriate interests, compensating them for their present low social and occupational status.

Obviously, these directions are neither absolute, nor mutually exclusive, and there is much overlapping of functions and purpose. Who would split hairs by trying to classify the vital sports organisations, catering to both younger and older generations, as only outward or only forward moving? And when integration in the new environment takes place as a group phenomenon, the ethnic cohesion that accounts for it can only exist among people who have common pre-formed norms. And again, where a forward-looking program to preserve ethnic continuity is desired, it must be an extension of earlier traditions.

And so the various goals — ethnic cohesion, maintenance of the national heritage, integration in the new environment — are pursued, singly or severally, by the organisations in their own individual way. Whether they achieve their purpose is another matter and will be discussed in the following sections. To the outsider, the Polish community projects the positive image of a vital, well-defined structure — active organisations linked together and operating under the aegis of a co-ordinating roof-body, reinforced by the encouragement and co-
operation of Polish press and clergy, and consolidated, individually and collectively, by interlocking connections with similar Polish communities interstate and overseas.

It is now time to deal with these organisations in depth. This is quite a formidable task when one considers their number and variety, complicated by the diverging tendencies that govern them. However, they fall quite readily into five distinct categories: the general organisations; the ex-servicemen’s groups; the sports bodies; the adult cultural groups; and the youth organisations. Moreover, these categories correspond roughly to the motivating forces mentioned earlier which propel some of the organisations backwards towards the past, some forward towards the future, others diffusing outward or, on the contrary, convoluting inward.

It is proposed to describe the organisations within each of those categories as a collective unit, and to complement description with an analysis of that particular unit, the importance of the organisations within it, the role they play in the community, the success attained in fulfilling their purpose.

Such an approach (indeed, perhaps any attempt to break down complex entities for examination) runs the risk of over-simplification. It is possible, by dividing the organisations as proposed, to present only a collection of neat separate units instead of the truer picture of bodies functioning together, albeit differently and not always concertedly. It is also possible, by over-application to laborious details, to obscure or miss altogether those elusive connective threads which lace a mere collection of facts about organisations into a coherent account of the organisational structure of a community.

To overcome this problem, two guidelines suggest themselves. Firstly, it is important to stress the state of relatedness evident in Polish communal life. There are bonds between the organisations as well as between the different groups of organisations. There are contacts with other Polish communities interstate and overseas. There are connections with Polish press and clergy. In another dimension, there are powerful links with the past, both immediate and historical, and with past experiences, both general and intensely personal. Therefore, although describing the organisations category by category, it is important constantly to bear in mind the wider relationships and the historic links and experiences.

Secondly, it seems necessary to steer away from an unduly rigid
procedure. Uniformity of treatment may well distort the overall picture, by giving equal weight to all groups, for instance, or by omitting or manoeuvring some things in order to make them conform to the proposed pattern. Therefore, the categories (and the organisations within them) will be treated in a similar though not necessarily identical manner. In other words, while keeping to the general plan of describing and analysing the organisations in manageable units, the details will be handled in the way most likely to bring out the particular essence of each category. One category, for instance, may be best described by concentrating on one typical organisation within it. The complexities of another category may be best conveyed by contrasting two organisations with it. With a third category it may be preferable to combine all the organisations to avoid tedious repetition.

Similarly with analysis. While it is intended in all cases to discuss the role of the organisations and to evaluate their achievements, emphasis will be placed on whatever aspects seem essentially characteristic of the particular category. This may be an appraisal of its success and the factors behind it, or a search for the reasons causing its failure, or again a retrospective glance at the historical background which has shaped its present form.

By proceeding in this fashion it may be possible to present not merely the separate elements of Polish communal life in Melbourne, but also some of the design and texture that their interweaving produces.
General Organisations

Description
The general organisations can be described as multi-functional. Their activities include social gatherings, dances, film-nights. They fulfil certain charitable functions such as visiting hospitals, arranging funerals, raising funds for needy families. They also provide premises and support for language classes, dancing groups and scouting activities. They may vary in age, membership and efficiency, but with the major exception of the Polish Association of Melbourne they serve the working-class Poles, are conducted by them, and are located in the western suburbs of Melbourne.

The best way to illustrate the development and operation of these organisations is to give a detailed account of the Polish Association of Melbourne, a description warranted by its importance as the nucleus of the present Polish communal structure and by its historical value as the earliest post-war Polish organisation in Melbourne.¹

The Polish Association of Melbourne (Stowarzyszenie Polskie w Melbourne), hereafter the P.A.M., was formed in May 1949, out of informal beginnings at the Migrant Hostel in Fishermen’s Bend (an industrial western suburb of Melbourne). The original purpose of the Association was to help newcomers with everyday problems — housing,

¹ The information for this account comes from numerous personal interviews and from articles, summarised and translated for me, which appeared in the commemorative issue of Polish Voice (Glos Polski, 18 April 1970).

The first Polish organisations in Victoria were the Polish Society (1831), a branch of the Polish Socialist Party (1913-19) and the Polish Club (1925-45) (L. Paszkowski, 'First Steps', article in ibid.)
employment, translation, taxation, and so on. This was mostly organised by the newcomers themselves, helped by some concerned pre-war settlers. Later on the scope widened to cover some relief work and later still social activities.

The first two years of its history were tempestuous, and the newly-formed association was buffeted by political storms and torn by power struggles. In order to understand these conflicts, which threatened the early existence of the P.A.M., it is necessary to be aware of certain background matters. Among the Polish settlers at that time there was a general feeling of instability, arising mainly out of the hope that the cold war would soon end, that the old regime would be restored in Poland, and that they would go back home. Thus, while some sort of organisation was wanted, plans for permanency were not considered necessary. Furthermore, there was a certain disparity in the needs and attitudes of the Polish migrants.

The pre-war arrivals were naturally more settled and more Australianised in their ways. Their political attitudes were ambivalent, some being quite a-political, others divided between alignment with pre-war socialist views in Poland and sympathy with the sufferings of their compatriots, if not always with their political leanings.

The post-war Poles themselves were of two main types. The ex-servicemen, mainly young and single, were fierce in their rejection of the new Polish regime, and determined to uphold the principles for which they had fought until the hoped-for restoration of democracy in Poland. The D.P.s, often older, with families, were more dispirited, more anxious to settle down.

Further ambiguity was added by the perplexing position of the former honorary consul for Poland (an Australian) and of the accredited representative sent out by the Polish Government-in-Exile in 1940, both of whom carried on unofficially after 1945 (when the Western Powers withdrew official recognition from the P.G.E.).

In such an uncertain and oversensitive climate, it is not surprising to find dissension breaking out among the original seventy members of the association, barely six months after its formation. Conflicting political outlooks, personal antipathies, private ambitions and resentments, all came to a head at the first general elections in November 1949. Disapproval of the incoming president's plan of action, plus the discovery that more ballot cards had been submitted than there were members, completely disrupted the stormy meeting. The outcome was a
sharp split into two different bodies, along political lines. The larger group, led by the representative of the P.G.E., was considered right-wing and consisted mainly of newcomers. The other smaller group, considered left-wing, held a proportion of both older and newer settlers. Although there was an undeniable political cleavage, differences were more exacerbated by personal frictions, and by the emotional black-or-white character of political attitudes at that period, than by rigorous doctrinaire adherence. By and large it was thought a bad thing for the community and for its image outside, to be thus divided.

Various attempts were made to heal the breach between the two groups, a notable one by the Federal Council of Polish Associations in Sydney, where denunciation of the post-war regime in Poland was even fiercer than in Melbourne. Those peacemaking efforts only aggravated the situation and it was not until July 1951, after strenuous individual efforts, that the two factions were united.

This dispute had two important implications. Firstly, there was the resignation and subsequent loss to the organisations of valuable members who had been alienated by the bitterness engendered during the two years of strife. A more decisive and far-reaching outcome was the settling of the Polish organisations (through the P.A.M. at first and later through the Polish Federation which it helped to form) into a strongly anti-communist mould, passionately devoted to the ideal of democratic restoration in Poland. This pattern, in an attenuated form, is still in evidence more than twenty years later.

Notwithstanding its early difficulties, the P.A.M. prospered. It formed a youth group and a sports club. It established a monthly paper which ran intermittently during 1950 and 1953, then disappeared owing to financial difficulties. All through the 1950s, a vigorous interest in communal life was evidenced by the emergence of various clubs within the P.A.M. (Polonia Soccer Club, ex-servicemen's clubs, etc.), by participation in religious affairs of ethnic interest, and by the acquisition of communal property.


3 For instance, formation of a Sodality for men and women (Dom Sodalicji Marianskiej), whose voluntary task is to assist the Polish clergy in various duties — church collections, preparation of church (flowers, altar cloths, etc.), organisation of Polish mass, etc. The Sodality is still functioning today. Another instance is the continuing interest and
This was perhaps the most notable achievement of that time. In 1952, the idea of a communal centre was mooted and a fund opened for that purpose. The local Poles scraped together £100 from their meagre earnings. This was duly banked under the name of the Kosciuszko Building Co-operative Society, formed within the P.A.M. for the purpose of purchasing a suitable house. After three years of painstaking perseverance, the society bought a property in Parkville (an inner suburb of Melbourne) and opened the first Polish centre in Melbourne, which became the headquarters of the P.A.M. The site was later profitably sold to a chain of motels and the society was able to purchase and refit a valuable property in the heart of the city, which is today the headquarters for the P.A.M. and the Polish Federation, and houses various communal activities. This is variously known as Polish House (Dom Polski) or Kosciuszko House (Dom i.m. T. Kosciuszki).

Gradually, the P.A.M. found its administrative machinery inadequate for the sprouting of subsidiary bodies and resultant responsibilities. It therefore sponsored the formation of the Federation of Polish Organizations in Victoria (Federacja Polskich Organizacji w Wiktoria) which came into being in 1962, to co-ordinate the activities of the wide range of organisations in existence. Thus, the character of the P.A.M. changed from that of a central communal body to that of an individual organisation. Since 1962, its role has been restricted to general activities and interests. The P.A.M. organises various social functions, dances, picnics, films, in order to raise funds for its charitable work, which is now mostly concerned with inmates of psychiatric hospitals. It holds itself responsible for maintaining financial support for the Convent of the Resurrection (SS Zmartwychwstani) formed in 1953 and staffed by American nuns of Polish origin, initially for Polish orphans. Although its activities have now extended to cater for general studies at primary level, it is still predominantly Polish in character and part of Polish communal life, especially with the erection of the Polish church nearby. Its present parish priest is a young Jesuit arrived recently from Poland but ordained in Melbourne in 1972.

4 It is interesting to compare this development with that of the Maltese Community Council, which moved in the opposite direction and superimposed the character of a roof-body over that of a particular organisation.

5 There were 328 Polish patients with psychiatric disorders under departmental care in May 1970 (not including Polish Jews). This represents 3.66 per cent of the estimated 8921 Polish refugees born 1910-29 and who arrived in Australia between 1945 and 1954. In numbers, this is the largest single ethnic group under departmental care (e.g. Russians, 154, Balts, 152, Hungarians, 90); in percentage it comes second to the Hungarian group (4.3 per cent). Schizophrenia and alcoholism are the two most prevalent disorders. (Figures from Dr J. Krupinski's paper delivered at the Social Service Research Council conference, 1970.)
cultural and educational activities (for example it provides a lending library of over 3000 volumes at Polish House); for supplying amenities for the Polana camping site and facilities for language classes at Polish House. It dispenses information in its monthly duplicated newsheet, maintains contact with Australian organisations (responses to various appeals, Spastic Children, Anti-Cancer Campaign, Good Neighbour Council etc.) as well as Polish ones. Its concern for ethnic continuity is seen not only in its co-operation with other Polish groups and sponsorship of youth activities, but also in frequent public discussions on the future of the community.

The foregoing activities are in accordance with the objectives stated in its constitution, registered in 1966:

B.3.
The Association is a non-political body open for membership to Poles and persons of Polish descent. The objects for which the Association is established are:

(a) To carry on relief activities for members and all other persons in need of help.
(b) To preserve and propagate the Polish traditions and culture.
(c) To assist in the bringing up and the education of children and young people according to Polish traditions.
(d) To promote friendly Polish-Australian relations.

To administer their affairs the members of the P.A.M. hold yearly elections. The president only is elected on a personal basis, the other positions (vice-president, secretary, treasurer, 15 committee members) are later allocated by the committee which has been collectively elected. In addition, three trustees, whose sole responsibility is to safeguard the Association’s funds and property, are voted into position until ‘death, resignation or removal of office’.

One other matter demands mention. Notwithstanding its claim of being a non-political body, the P.A.M. places the following constitutional membership bar:

C.6.
Persons believing in the doctrines of communism or acting in the spirit of

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6 This clause could be reaction from earlier mishaps, fraudulent mishandling, or absconding with funds, either here or in Tasmania. This was only hinted by various people, never officially confirmed. A tendency to gloss over, or deny, rifts and difficulties was frequently encountered. It matters to all to present a good image of the community. Delicate probing was often necessary to get below the shining surface.
such doctrines are not eligible for admission to membership of the association.

This clause has been steadfastly observed through changing circumstances. In the late 1950s, it was mostly invoked to exclude prospective members (few enough in numbers) who had arrived in the second wave of migration and whose political credentials could not always be vouchsafed. ("We are not like those who see a communist bogey in the valise of every new arrival, but still, you must be careful. And you can always smell them out somehow.") In the middle 1960s it was used to chastise those initiators of travel to Poland who, not content with breaking the tacit prohibition, could also find things to praise there on their return. In the 1970s, the enforcement of that clause has not been relaxed, despite the detente evident regarding visits to Poland and acceptance of later arrivals. This can sometimes lead to anomalous situations, like the one encountered in one of the suburban organisations, where the membership application of a tireless communal worker is rejected year after year, on the grounds of pre-migration communist sympathies, while his services are eagerly accepted and his wife holds an official position in the same organisation.

The Other General Organisations. The P.A.M. differs in several respects from the suburban organisations in the same category. For a start, it is centrally located, while the others are mainly situated in the areas of Polish residential concentration in the western suburbs. (One must not omit to mention two early Polish organisations in the eastern suburbs — Ringwood and Dandenong — which merged into the Polish Association of Eastern Suburbs in 1973 with headquarters in the Polish Centre in Dandenong.) This means that its membership, consisting of older and often original participants living in the inner or south-eastern suburbs, has remained static for many years. On the other hand, the steady trend of population movement from inner to outer urban areas has led to the vigorous growth of the western suburban organisations, where local interest is, of course, intensified by competition with other Polish suburban organisations and by rivalry for the greater number of positions available.

Then, the occupational and educational backgrounds are different. The P.A.M. draws its support from a somewhat higher level, which includes teachers, draftsmen, public servants, as well as lower-status
occupations. The membership and leadership of the western suburban organisations are wholly recruited from peasant stock, who work as unskilled or semi-skilled tradesmen or lower-grade clerks. One also sees here many mixed Polish and German/Russian/Ukrainian marriages.

While these differences are not so very important from the viewpoint of social distinctions, they bestow upon the P.A.M. a certain status acknowledged by the others. This is reinforced by its somewhat more intellectual pursuits, its historical place as organisational nucleus and most of all by its communal outlook. Here lies the most significant distinction. The suburban organisations, with their more parochial and superficial interests, are considered to be often 'acting like children, always bickering and splitting and joining together again'. The P.A.M. takes upon itself responsibility for communal efforts (for example forming the Federation, purchasing the Polana camp site) and is therefore more respected and more influential both within and without its particular category.

On other scores, the various general organisations offer similar activities as the P.A.M. though on a more limited and often informal scale. They have more or less official connections with the Federation and other Polish organisations, either directly or through a sports club or language school formed and supported by them.

Of the suburban organisations, the most important one is the Polish Association of Kingsville (Stowarzyszenie Polakow w Kingsville), started in 1957 because of increasing demand for a local organisation from the increasingly large Polish community in the western suburbs. It deserves singling out because it is an interesting example of the development of an organisation based upon the needs of an ethnic group, yet integrating into the general local environment.

The number of original members has increased from 34 to 200 financial members. Wider support is evident in the participation by many of the 1000 people on the mailing list who attend functions, send their children to language and dancing classes and 'contribute if pressed'. This solid backing by a large number of local Polish residents who enjoy the services of the organisation but do not commit themselves to membership was given more concrete form when the need for premises became urgent in the early 1960s. Voluntary collectors went on a door-knock appeal for several weeks, the local Polish paper advertised the appeal free of charge, collections were taken up at church. The response was such that the cash on hand exceeded the cost of the chosen
property purchased in 1962 in Footscray. The old weatherboard house was subsequently pulled down to erect a 'fitting Polish House' (Dom Millennium). The ambitious double-storied brick structure is not yet completed: 'Our members have done much of the work and they're pretty tired of it. The second stage will take quite a while to finish.' Nevertheless, it is used as a communal centre in a very real sense. The premises are used for dancing and language classes and scouting activities for the young, as well as for committee meetings and administrative tasks. Fortnightly dances are held there and the large main hall, with the Australian flag and the Polish Eagle prominently displayed, is popular with Polish residents for weddings, twenty-first birthdays and other celebrations. Further blending into the suburban community is achieved by local contacts outside the Polish circle. The hall is hired for various functions by local bodies and leased by the local Institute of Technology for night classes.

Analysis of General Organisations

Fulfilment of Specific Aims. It is now necessary to try to establish the degree of success obtained by the general organisations in carrying out their four specific objectives of welfare, preservation of Polish traditions and culture, Polish education for the young, and promotion of friendly Polish-Australian relations.

Within the modest ambit of their welfare aims, the general organisations have carried out their tasks steadfastly. Naturally, the larger organisations have more opportunity to exercise charitable functions than the smaller ones which operate on a much smaller scale and within the local scene.

It is interesting to note the progressive change in the direction of welfare in this ethnic group, governed by its fairly static migration pattern. The day-to-day difficulties of the earlier years (employment, housing, etc.) gave way to concern for needy families and orphans. Later it became necessary to deal more and more with cases of hardship and personal conflict due to increased stresses and, quite often, to the breakdown of traditional family patterns. At present the greatest

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7 Cp. ten years earlier, when Polish settlers were equally responsive to the appeal for the first communal centre, but the total raised was £100. Making allowance for the small migratory increase during the decade, this seems an interesting illustration of the increasing degree of affluence in the Polish community keeping pace with that of the general community.
Concern is with older people — the plight of old single people, suffering from alcoholism, psychiatric disturbances or just sheer desperate loneliness (‘sometimes I scream inside myself, I am so alone’). The establishment of a Polish-sponsored ‘Pensioners’ Home’ is also well in progress.

Relief work is financed by various fund-raising efforts. As we have seen, these enable the general organisations to maintain communal centres, to support various institutions, to provide food parcels and remittances for the needy, to arrange visits and gifts to hospitalised Poles and funerals for the destitute.

Despite these results, many officials have reservations about the success of welfare objectives. They feel that more could have been achieved and, more importantly, that the community in general could have been more involved. They complain that philanthropic participation is not widespread, nor are individual contributions very high (‘we Poles are more generous with our blood than with our purse’). This feeling is strengthened, if not caused, by comparison with other groups. They point to the Polish Seventh Day Adventists, for instance, with their reputation for self-help, or to the Jewish group, whose communal charity and organisation are enviously acknowledged: ‘Why should Polish Jews join our organisations, when they’ve got everything they want among themselves, only a hundred times better.’

It is arguable whether such self-depreciation is entirely justified. Comparisons are inevitably made upwards, that is towards an ideal goal from which one must always fall short, or towards communities with greater achievements. It would be just as valid to make comparisons downwards, that is towards less achieving communities (as will be seen to be the case with the other two ethnic groups studied). Viewed intrinsically, it would seem that the Polish general organisations have attained a respectable measure of success in accomplishing their welfare goals.

The preservation and propagation of Polish culture and traditions operate at various levels. One fundamental aspect of Polish tradition is its religious character, and this is entwined in the activities of all the general organisations — involvement of Polish clergy, mass officiated in Polish before major events, financial support and general interest for religious occasions and institutions.

Another basic element determining the achievement of ethnic
preservation is the willingness of organisations to support communal efforts towards this objective. The co-operation of the general bodies in supra-organisational endeavours has resulted in the success of such undertakings as national and commemorative ceremonies, or the Millenium celebrations, the Czestochowa peregrination, the Copernicus festivities, receptions for visiting Polish cultural groups.8

The level of achievement in purely cultural matters is considerably lower, a not very surprising state of affairs in a group largely made up of settlers with little formal education. Film nights are popular, while within the general organisations the small nucleus of those aspiring to culture of a higher order must rely on the P.A.M. for lectures and discussions.

At the most superficial plane of maintaining Polish identity are the social and sporting activities of the various general organisations, where concept of Polish values is restricted to its simplest expression, that is contact with people of Polish origin with whom one can speak Polish.

Overall, it would seem that, notwithstanding various concepts of the ways in which to go about it, preservation of Polish values is seen as being satisfactory for the present generation. However, it is felt to be less so for the second generation, in whom Polish consciousness has been induced perhaps, but not heightened to a positive active degree. This is very closely linked with the matter of Polish education for the young.

In Polish education of youth we touch the prime concern of all general organisations (and the third objective of the P.A.M.'s constitution). This encompasses not only the transmission of Polish language and customs but the unstated hope of producing leaders for the Polish community in the next generation. Top priority is therefore given to the development of Polish motivation among the young.

8 1966 marked the one thousandth anniversary of Christianity in Poland, which was celebrated by Poles all over the world. 1973 marked the 500th anniversary of Nicolas Copernicus. In Melbourne, these commemorations were marked by various events — exhibitions, concerts, floats, as well as by religious celebrations.

'A copy of the famous painting of "Our Lady of Czestochowa" revered by Polish people throughout the world, which was blessed by Pope John, has been on a Peregrination throughout Australia and New Zealand in the past few years [1963-1966] . . . and has aroused tremendous zeal and enthusiasm among the 100,000 Polish Catholics at all points visited.' B. Doyle, 'Our Lady of Czestochowa, Queen of Poland', Catholic Leader Press, Brisbane, 1965.

The most famous visiting artists have been the Mazowsze Dance Ensemble, 1969 and the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra, 1970.
The general organisations provide premises and support for language classes, folk-dancing and scouting. They supply amenities for summer camps and subsidise youth activities. Even the building of the Kingsville Polish House, for instance, is planned with an eye on the future: 'We've got to believe the kids'll come good — otherwise we wouldn't build such a house, would we, just for tired middle-aged codgers like us.'

Yet, despite the hope and the constant pre-occupation, this is the area of biggest disappointment. The results of efforts in youth work must be seen in both extensive and intensive contexts. Extensively, a certain degree of achievement is acknowledged. It is claimed that one or other of the several youth branches has touched, however briefly, most Polish children.

Intensively, however, the general feeling is that there are no leaders emerging among the youth (with the possible exception of the scouts, discussed later). Whether this situation is due to some failing of the adult organisations, to lack of interest in the home, to educative or assimilatory pressures, to combinations of these factors, grave doubts are expressed regarding the continuity of the Polish community in the hands of the Australian-born generation.

The bitterest discouragement is undoubtedly the lack of interest displayed by on-coming graduates of Polish origin, some of whom have had some financial support from the Polish organisations.9

The promotion of friendly Polish Australian relations operates at communal level and is not aimed at individual integration (as is the stated aim of some of the Dutch and Maltese organisations). This could not be otherwise in an autonomous group, such as this one, which has succeeded in creating a viable communal structure in very difficult circumstances.

The pursuit of this objective therefore is mainly centred on relations with official Australian bodies. As we have seen, through its organisations (the P.A.M. at first, the Federation later) the community is represented on the Good Neighbour Council, the Council of Social Services, the Citizenship Conventions. The general organisations send donations to the Lord Mayor's Appeal, the Anti-Cancer Campaign, etc.

9 Medding, Assimilation to Group Survival, p. 173. This corroborates this author's findings among the Jewish community that high education is inversely related to ethnic identification.
They sponsor Polish dance groups' appearances at the Moomba and Maryborough festivals and other general festivities. They have introduced (in conjunction with the Hungarian societies) a national folk-dancing festival to celebrate Australia Day. Immigration Department English classes are advertised in the P.A.M.'s circulars as are other official items of possible interest, and the Australian flag is always prominently displayed beside the Polish Eagle at all official premises and functions.

Moves to promote friendly relations between Polish and Australian authorities have resulted in the participation by the general organisations in the activities of the host society, while seeking to retain their identity. It can be claimed, therefore, once the terms of integration as a group have been accepted, that this particular constitutional objective has been fulfilled.

**Fulfilment of Ethnic Aims.** As a category, the general organisations probably occupy the most important place in Polish communal life, an estimate which revolves around several factors.

We have seen that the P.A.M. was the first post-war organisation to be formed and it was therefore the nucleus for the vigorous organisational structure that grew around it. It promoted the growth of various other communal bodies, including the Federation, and by its example encouraged the suburban organisations to diversify their program and in their turn form sports and youth groups.

Of at least equal importance is the psychological significance of its early formation. It is no coincidence that this first organisation should have come into being in 1949 in a migrant hostel. The D.P.s who, to their credit, started it, were well aware of the problems associated with temporary communal living, the frictions, the relative aimlessness, the opportunities for potential delinquency. By providing services and activities for young and old, they acted as an agent against demoralisation and despair, as well as being a cohesive factor.

The present importance of the general organisations resides in the fact that they are the only ‘mass’ organisations in the Polish community. This is both from the point of view of size and because their membership is drawn from the peasant class. These are the people who form 90 per cent of the Polish settlers, have little or no education, have usually worked hard and managed to establish themselves. Their narrow interests, with an undertone of simple Polonism, are usually adequately
served by the local general organisations, which are in that sense the real Polish centres.

These organisations were earlier described as outward-looking. This particular orientation is manifested in the way they have gone about, steadily and undramatically, in fulfilling their self-assigned role in the adjustment of the ordinary settler. By providing a social milieu loosely based on Polish values and by helping members in the everyday problems encountered in settlement, they have used at grassroots level the essential two-pronged approach of successful integrating instrumentalities.

Looking towards continuity, the general organisations also have the greatest potential for survival. They can pass on a ready-made framework for the next generation, in the hope that it will use it and mould it to its particular needs. Furthermore, because they are general organisations they can offer more variety in the scope of their activities, shifting the emphasis as needed, from welfare to sport, for instance, or from organising dances for the older group to offering educational activities for the younger one.

Connected with the latter point, we see the general organisations displaying a certain flexibility which is not evident in some of the other, more ossified, organisations, and which may well be their greatest strength. This characteristic could result from a leadership largely made up of an in-between generation of D.P.s, not young and not old, not yet set in their ways when they arrived in Australia and therefore more adaptable though fully aware of their Polishness. Or it could be that families, unlike single individuals, are more dynamic units whose multiple changing concerns are reflected in their organisations. Whatever the causes, the general organisations, with the P.A.M. as their doyen, show a readiness to adjust to different circumstances. This is seen for instance in their perception of progressive stages in communal development and adaptation to them; or in the continually changing direction of welfare.

The process of changing attitudes percolating from individuals through organisations and thereby shaping the official communal outlook is very clearly seen in the sphere of contacts with Poland, touched upon earlier. The early tentative contacts with communist Poland, usually in the form of parcels or remittances to relatives, have become more varied and numerous, at individual and organisational level. It would have been unthinkable in the 1950s or 1960s for the
general organisations to give receptions for visiting Polish artists. In the same way travel to Poland was regarded as suspect, but in the 1970s it is accepted as a fact of life by individuals and officials of the general organisations. More than that — it has actually become a status symbol. This interesting situation has been brought about by a combination of factors: the natural desire to visit the homeland by settlers who have had twenty or more years to establish themselves; long-service leave accruing to many of these migrants; cheaper air-fares; the eager reception encountered in Poland.

Such mellowing has inevitably made its mark in the communal sphere. While there still is undivided loyalty to the London-based authorities and unanimous rejection of the present communist regime, necessary compromises with Polish officialdom (travel documents, 'import' of soccer players and other commodities, etc.) highlight the shift in emphasis in the conduct of communal affairs.

In the Federation, also, where more moderate officials are gradually replacing the 'paper tigers', the burning involvement with anti-communist issues is slowly giving way to concern with the realities of accommodation for the Polish ethnic group, a policy steadfastly pursued by the general organisations from the beginning.

In recapitulation, we see the general organisations playing a leading role in the Polish community in the past and present. Notwithstanding officials' earnest misgivings in estimating achievements, these have been by no means negligible. In trying to fulfil the specific objectives for which they were created, the general organisations have also gone a long way towards accomplishing the underlying ethnic goals of all communal organisations, in particular cohesion and continuity.

From the preceding analysis, their past achievements can be summed up as formative, generative and cohesive. They initiated a communal machinery to cater for a group of refugees, often disorientated and dispirited. They provided welfare, social and educational facilities at a time of crucial psychological need.

In the present, their importance lies still in their cohesive nature. They consolidate the communal structure they initiated by co-operation with other bodies, by adjustment to changing needs and by their influence on the roof-body. Their strength also lies in the fact that they are the only 'mass' organisations and offer their truly integrative services
to the larger proportion of those Poles who are interested in Polish organisations.

The place of the general organisations in the future is less distinct. Were it only to depend on the concern and efforts of present committees, the continued existence of these organisations would be assured. However, more is involved than the good-will of the founders and present members. The new generation differs considerably in background, education, interests and outlook. Circumstances in the present are also vastly different from those in the immediate post-war era. In the context of communal life, there is very little common ground between the politically-motivated alien refugees arriving from war-torn Europe twenty-five years ago, and the present young Australians of Polish origin, who are more secure, more affluent, more self-seeking perhaps, and certainly more in tune with the general society in the midst of which they live.

What little common ground that does exist hinges on religion, family ties and the spark of Polonism kindled at language or dancing classes. It is improbable that religion will aid ethnic continuity — adherence to a universal church like the Catholic one is not, of itself, conducive to this.\(^{10}\) It remains to be seen whether family ties and Polish traditions on the one hand, and on the other far-sighted communal leaders implementing revised goals, will together prove strong enough to

\(^{10}\) Many communal leaders look upon the whole question of advanced education with increasing perplexity. It had always been their concern to increase the small proportion of tertiary students in the Polish community, not only for reasons of personal betterment but because a large number of professionals reflects on the whole group and raises its status (lists of graduates and articles on particularly meritorious students are printed in the paper). It is, however, being gradually recognised that realisation of this aim may well work at cross purposes with the hope of thus ensuring Polish leadership in the next generation. Does one then encourage the young to go on studying, usually at the expense of their interest in communal affairs? Or does one involve them in Polish activities to the possible detriment of their advancement? The former line of action usually prevails, since parents naturally place children's progress before communal interest.

There is, however, a more contentious view held by a minority that it is wrong to push the youngsters: 'You can't jump from a peasant to a professor in one generation'. Such a course of action is seen as bringing about frictions and pressures and family breakdowns. Unwise parents pushing their children through higher education often find themselves faced with one of two predictable results. Either the children succeed and become ashamed of their parents 'because you must never make the chair higher than the table'. Or else the children, with no tradition of learning, reach their limit very soon and fail. The parents cannot understand this failure and have nothing to show for all their dreams, hard work and sacrifices. The youngsters become merely unskilled young adults, frustrated and restless. Either way they are a loss to their families and to the community.
accomplish the transition between the two generations and maintain a viable Polish communal machinery.

It is likely that these general organisations, in modified and attenuated form, will survive to cater for the social needs of a group of Australians whose congeniality is the result of Polish antecedents and shared interests aroused by early contacts with Polish youth activities.

It is unlikely that these particular social organisations will survive as specifically Polish organisations, in the sense of being orientated towards preserving Polish cohesion and continuity. Unless there is a renewal of migration to bolster up and revitalise the ethnic feeling, the next generation will have neither the knowledge nor the expertise for the pursuit of ethnic goals. Nor, more essentially, will it have the necessary impetus to do so, the vital leaven introduced into the Polish community by many of the fiercely nationalistic post-war immigrants.
Description
These organisations probably form the most vigorous and diffuse sector of Polish communal life, by virtue of their numerous clubs, the number and extensive age-range of their members, and the support of the whole community reinforcing the involvement of the participants.

Polish sport in Victoria dates from 1949, with the encouragement of sporting activities at the Maribyrnong migrant hostel. 'We know from the D.P. camps how important it is to keep morale. Sport helped us then and it helped here too.' As with other ethnic groups, soccer takes pride of place, both as participant and spectator activities.

Soccer. The Polonia Maribyrnong Soccer Club (Klub Sportowy Polonia-Maribyrnong) was formed in 1950 and has remained the major Polish sports club. It claims that its successes since inception are responsible for the proliferation of Polish sports clubs and for arousing the interest of second generation Polish children in participating in Polish soccer.

In the ensuing years the ever-shifting pattern present in all communal organisations has been evident here too, some clubs continuing in existence, some disappearing, others disbanding and sometimes reforming or amalgamating, as demand arose.

At present, there are four formal soccer clubs in the Melbourne metropolitan area, Polonia being the major representative one. These four clubs field six senior teams and twelve junior teams.
Formed | Teams
---|---
1950 | 2 seniors  
 | 2 under 14s  
 | 2 under 16s  
 | 1 under 20s  
 | 1 'old boys'
1956 | 2 seniors  
 | (as ‘Olympic’)  
 | 2 juniors
formed in the 1960s; amalgamated in 1972 | 2 seniors  
 | 2 juniors
1966 | 3 juniors

Several interesting points emerge from the tabulation. Firstly, the steady formation of new soccer clubs over the years from early beginnings to present day indicates continued interest in Polish-bound sport by both older and younger generations.

Secondly, these clubs are centred in western suburbs, which house the heaviest concentration of Polish settlers. This fact corresponds to the distribution of the general associations, the only other mass organisations in the Polish community. This would seem to bear out the claim that the peasants lead the most vigorous communal life.

Lastly comes a marginal point, perhaps, but revealing of general Australian attitudes. It will be noticed that several of the clubs have dropped Polish identification from their name. This is the result of pressure from local councils, which sometimes impose this condition for usage of sports grounds, and of greater pressure from the Victorian Soccer Federation, in its efforts to eliminate national rivalries and to promote an Australian image of soccer.¹

¹ The matter of name change is a heated issue debated quite fiercely at meetings and in the press, at both national and ethnic levels. The stand of the ethnic groups, in general, is opposed to that of the Victorian Soccer Federation. They claim that devotees of the game...
While the soccer clubs range in structure from formal bodies with written constitutions to clubs or teams which are merely offshoots of general organisations, all sports clubs, including those other than soccer, are contained within an elaborate network of connections. These provide the sports clubs with links outside as well as inside the community. The larger soccer clubs are affiliated with the Victorian Soccer Federation and/or League and with its interstate and national counterparts. Some also have connections with the Warsaw based Polish Olympic Committee.²

Most of the clubs, either directly or through a parent body, belong to the Polish Federation of Victoria, and through it to interstate Polish bodies. A Council of Polish Sports Clubs in Australia was formed in 1966, on the occasion of the Polish Millenium. This body joins together a host of Polish sports clubs throughout the country, arranges interstate fixtures, sponsors a yearly 'Millenium' Cup and co-ordinates the organisation of a yearly Victorian sports festival.

Financially, the clubs levy yearly subscriptions (varying from $5 to $10). These are supplemented in the usual way by gate proceeds and by social activities—dances, picnics, film-nights. These are less successful and arouse less enthusiasm than the sporting fixtures, one reluctant member going as far as remarking that they were an imposition on the goodwill of those members who did turn up.

Membership numbers vary considerably, from Polonia with its 400 financial members to the smaller clubs without financial membership. Figures fluctuate and the performance of the teams is of course a strong influential factor in drawing membership. Other means are devised to continue to identify teams ethnically, regardless of suburban cloak, and that change of name will not result in less intense national rivalries and fewer disturbances. These goals can only be achieved by enforcement of restrictive and punitive measures (like the drastic action taken by the V.S.F. when it banned for life the Croatian club for a particularly violent demonstration by its supporters in 1972). Furthermore, they argue that change of name is not justifiable either in moral terms, since origin, formation and support of the respective clubs are based on ethnic feeling; or in terms of future success, since anonymity will inevitably breed apathy among supporters.

The essential point about this debate is the ethnic importance still attached to the clubs a quarter of a century after their formation, and which equals at least the importance attached to sporting achievement.

² The committee arranges to send players from Poland for funds raised in Australia and deposited in overseas banks. This arrangement is satisfactory to both sides and there is ‘no clash with ideologies’, as this committee was supposedly established about 50 years ago. Once again, this practice reflects the more relaxed attitude at organisational level towards contact with Poland.
attract people, such as concessions to games and socials. Personal drive is also an important way of recruitment, as explained by one official:

We're trying hard to build up our membership. This year, our treasurer's a terrific bloke. He's got a good pub personality, and he's got a nose for the places where Poles hang out. So he reminds them they haven't paid yet, and he makes new members there also. You know, after a couple of drinks, it's easier to talk people into things.

The two types of membership must be differentiated, that is, the supporting members and the participating members. The supporting members consist mostly of older Poles, most of whom were in the first wave of Polish post-war settlers, a fact which again emphasises the non-participation in communal life of later arrivals. They are usually males (though social functions cater for both sexes) and seem to fall into two age-groups: the fathers and coaches of junior team members, approximately 36-45 years old, and the original founders, present organisers and uninvolved supporters, in the older bracket, 46-65 years.

The playing membership of the several junior teams is almost entirely of Polish origin, as are the reserves and the second, third and fourth division teams. This seems to be an important indication of the continuing active interest of the Australian-born generation in ethnically-bound sport.

The composition of the State League Team, Polonia, is more diverse and merits closer description, as it mirrors various stages in the development of Polish communal life. In the early 1950s, footballers were largely Polish settlers from D.P. camps or returned ex-servicemen. In 1959, Polonia received a powerful boost from the arrival of several athletes (arranged with the officials of the Polish Olympic team during the 1956 Games held in Melbourne). This boost was maintained over the succeeding years by the ‘acquisition’ of about twenty players recruited from Poland through the Olympic Committee mentioned above. Those years were very successful in sporting achievements.

1960 World Cup
1961 World Cup and Dockerty Cup
1963 Ampol Cup
1964 Ampol Cup

However, financial and personal adjustments were less satisfactory.
Accommodation and jobs had to be found for the new recruits, in addition to initial outlay of 'gifts' to the Polish Olympic Fund. At least half of them returned after their two to three year contract, usually because their families could not be brought out. There were frictions ('the players are different these days, they're better educated people'), differences of opinion, disappointments ('some of them expect too much'). This method of recruitment gradually tapered off, especially as the younger players grew up and joined the senior side, helping to substantiate Polonia's boast that they were the team with the highest ethnic content: 'not like Juventus, all Scotchmen, or Hakoah, not one Jewish player'.

Other Sports. Apart from soccer, the only other formal sports group is the small Lechia Sports Club, which has survived since 1952 as a volley-ball club, the second most popular sport among Poles. At present it has twenty playing members aged between 18 and 40, only half of whom are Polish. They play A Grade fixtures within the Victorian Volley Ball Association and give exhibition games for hospitals, jails, country carnivals, as well as at Polish affairs.

The small Tatry Ski Club is an informal friendship group of about twenty-five families who have built a chalet at Mt Buller, with facilities for their members.

Athletics, swimming, tennis, table-tennis, are activities encouraged at youth and scout camps and given display at the annual youth festival. However, these do not command the following and interest exhibited in soccer and there are no facilities or arrangements provided for them at communal level.

Annual Sports Festival. This yearly event, described as the 'Festival of Youth — Beauty — Strength', is undoubtedly the highlight on the Polish community calendar. Since 1963, the various sports clubs, under the auspices of the Polish Federation of Victoria, have arranged this festival where the athletic talents of Polish youngsters are displayed to the rest of the community. Held every February in the outer western suburb of Werribee, the sports festival attracts up to 5000 spectators, who come from suburban and country areas to support the 200-odd participants aged from 10-30.

5 'Swieto Modosci Piekna, Sily' Special issue commemorating 5th anniversary of sports festival in Victoria, February 1969.
The event draws involvement not only from sportsmen, parents and supporters but from all sections of the community. Mass, officiated in the open in Polish, precedes the parade, gymnastic displays and competitive events. Communal leaders address the assembled people. Local Polish business firms donate trophies and prizes and arrange for printing of programs, catering, photos and filming. A special post-office is manned by the Polish scouts and issues commemorative stamps. Altogether the sports festival exudes a carnival atmosphere, with the crowd-pleasing ceremonies, the dazzling Polish colours of white and red worn by the athletes, the Polish language ringing out under the brilliant sky of an Australian summer.

Analysis

The annual Polish sports festival at Werribee is so illustrative of the way sport can operate as a cohesive force within a community that it seems worthwhile to dwell on it, when evaluating the success of Polish sports clubs in fulfilling their specific and their ethnic objectives.

Here, sport is seen very clearly as a means to an end, a vehicle for ethnic cohesion. While the specific purpose of the festival is to provide a display case for the prowess of young Polish athletes, all its preparations and pageantry serve the cause of its idealistic objective: to maintain and intensify Polish awareness.

That sport can be used for such ends was a proposition wholeheartedly advanced by Rousseau:

How then is it possible to move the hearts of men, and to make them love the fatherland and its laws? Dare I say it? Through children's games; through institutions which seem idle and frivolous to superficial men, but which form cherished habits and invincible attachments.

Though its ethnic value is probably not as great or long-lasting as envisaged by the philosopher, nor is it knowingly based on his precepts, this yearly festival is an exemplar of the role sport can play in enlarging ethnic feeling.

The affair is made a total communal effort by drawing on the group's available resources and by enrolling the participation of all its institutions. All the chores and practical details involved in running

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4 Rousseau, Government of Poland, p. 162.
such a show are put in Polish hands: sound system, photography, catering, printing, transport are arranged by Polish professionals or individuals; Polish firms and organisations contribute the various trophies; the coaches, referees and adjudicators are Polish. The occasion is publicised by the Polish press; given prominence at language classes, youth camps, scouting activities; it is dignified by open air mass celebrated in Polish. The co-operation of over 100 officials from various organisations and central bodies consolidates the consciousness-raising effect obtained by encompassing preparations within the Polish circle. This is further heightened by guests of honour who explicitly make the festival a focal point for the primary ethnic target; the value of preserving Polish traditions. This is expressed in articles such as 'The Meaning of Sport and Physical Culture as a Means of Perpetuating the Polish Identity Abroad', and professed in public addresses:

In this manner [i.e. bringing the young into Polish organisations through sporting activities] we build a bridge to carry across our cultural traditions and which will enable the younger generation to guard against being absorbed by the alien seas which surround us on all sides.

Thus we see a common purpose linking all those involved and culminating in an occasion which draws spectators and gives children an opportunity to shine in the communal context. Again Rousseau considered both these achievements highly desirable. He felt that 'children's games ought always to be public', for their purpose was not merely to develop physical skills but to accustom them to living under the public eye and that all care should be taken 'to make the games attractive to the public, by presenting them with some ceremony and with an eye to spectacular effect. Then we may assume that all worthy people and all good patriots will consider it a duty and a pleasure to attend'.

Just as the festival, by combining all sections of the community, mirrors its various facets, so too do its generating forces reflect the several directions evident in the life of the community and discussed on numerous previous occasions.

The inward tendency, for instance, seen in the deliberate effort to

5 5th sports festival issue, p. 3.
6 Ibid., p. 2.
7 Rousseau, Government of Poland, p. 179.
contain sport within the group (for example recruiting coaches and referees from within the community) is balanced by the outward direction (integration) underlying the stated belief that the young Polish sportsman 'will also become a fit participant in the life of the Australian community'. While no occasion is overlooked to relate the past to the present, by historical or admonitory reference, this backward emphasis is extended forwards to a future where sport is seen as providing an opportunity to develop ethnic continuity. The perpetuating quality of sport is illustrated by the many junior players continuing into senior Polish teams. It is hopefully predicted in statements about youngsters who are 'brought up through sport in a common ideology' and will thus 'ensure strong permanent ethnic organisations'.

It is of course important not to lose sight of the fact that this festival is but a single event in the communal calendar and that its glamour does not accompany every sporting fixture. But precisely because the festival is a highlight does it follow that the forces which make it such a success operate continually, bringing about this peak from a base of repetitive sportive and social contacts designed to bring the children into the community and to bind them together in an atmosphere of Polish knowledge and self-awareness.

What of the success of Polish clubs in the specifically sporting sense? Soccer clubs seem to be active, even thriving. In this national group with its static migration pattern, enough consistent interest in the sport has been generated to maintain its star team in the State League for over twenty years and to accept changes of policy regarding origin of players in order to improve standards. Similarly, enthusiasm of players and supporters are evidenced by the existence of four senior teams in various divisions and the gradual formation over the years of twelve junior teams, attracting second-generation Polish boys between the ages of 10-18. Such development indicates fulfilment of the aims of the founders who, in the words of one official, 'wanted to do something for the large number of Polish boys growing up and not being able to take part in any organised sport. The fathers, of course, wished that their boys played soccer, the type of football they grew up with.'

However, communal interest seems limited to soccer. No progress is visible in other types of sport. After a gradual decline, the volley-ball

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8 5th sports festival issue, p. 2.
9 Ibid.
club has been static for several years and comprises players of various nationalities ('Yes, that's true, but as long as I'm president, it stays a Polish club!'). Tatry Ski Club has remained, as it set out to be, a friendship group engaged in a somewhat elite sport.

Athletics, swimming, tennis, seem to lack the appeal of soccer and the support it commands. Any clubs formed to cater for other sports have usually had only a brief span of life, a failure which is frequently deplored. Appeals are often made to the community to respond with more enthusiasm to the need for facilities and professional services in order to offer a wide-ranging choice of individual sports within a Polish framework.

This state of affairs is rather surprising when one recalls the success of the Polish sports festival. Here, individual sports are impressively displayed and are a source of pride and pleasure to the community, in a specific as well as ethnic sense. Yet, throughout the year they are not played in organised manner within the Polish circle, nor competitively as an ethnic unit outside it.

Paradoxical as it may sound therefore, one must conclude that the ethnic achievements of Polish sport are greater than its specific success. Polish sport has undeniably managed to maintain and develop ethnically-bound soccer, but that has been its limit. With the notable exception of the yearly sports festival, it has not provided incentive, support, or facilities for other kinds of sports; it has not fielded outstanding teams; it has not produced Polish athletes of excellence; it has not provided for regular athletic activities within or without the group.

Its achievement lies rather in its power to touch the lives of more Polish settlers than any other category of adult communal organisations. It presents sport in a context of historical connotations and communal co-operation, thereby binding the present settlers and ensuring a nucleus of continuity through the children affected by this spirit. It is as if the centrepiece, that is sport itself, is overshadowed by the frame which contains and outshines it.
Description

The series of struggles for Monte Cassino will pass into war history as a battle ranking with the battles of the Somme, Verdun and Alamein . . . The honour of completing the capture of Monte Cassino was to fall to the men of the Second Polish Corps.²

The name of Monte Cassino has assumed for Poles the legendary aura evoked for Australians by the name of Gallipoli. It is synonymous with

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These writers have covered in detail the history of the Polish Ex-Servicemen’s Association in Great Britain. Briefly, the strength of the Polish forces under British command in December 1945 was 249,000, of whom 180,000 chose not to be repatriated upon demobilisation. In addition to various Anglo-Polish societies already in existence, the Polish Ex-Servicemen’s Association was formed in 1945 to facilitate the adjustment of the former servicemen to civilian life. The Association undertook various responsibilities for the men and their 33,000 dependants, such as consular and legal services, welfare and social functions, care of burial grounds and so on. By 1953, the Ex-Servicemen’s Association had become the major Polish organisation in Great Britain, numbering over 27,000 members. With the emigration and re-settlement of some of its members to various overseas countries, the Association became a world-wide body with branches in the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, Brazil, among others.

An 'Outline of Polish Ex-Servicemen’s Association' was included in the commemorative program of the 50th anniversary of the Republic of Poland, Melbourne, November 1968. This varied from the above account in emotional tone and in the figures given. For instance, the strength of the Polish forces under British command is given as half a million. It also refers to 'millions of expatriate civilians who, following the example of the soldiers refused to return to their occupied country'.

military valour and glory and has become the focal point for World War II commemorative services in all exiled Polish communities. Its mystique is bound up with the Christian ideals symbolised by the monastery on the Cassino hill and, more importantly, with Polish hopes of returning to a free independent Poland. For Monte Cassino is seen not only as a military victory over the German enemy, not only as a triumph for men who had just suffered the rigors of Russian prisons and forced labour camps, but as a success that 'would bring fame once more to Polish Arms and still further increase the spirit of the Polish Nation in its belief in the final victory of Justice and Honour'.

It will be remembered that, to many of the Poles in the ex-servicemen's groups, liberation of Poland from communist rule is an ideal that is very much alive, however unattainable it may seem. 'We number thousands of ex-soldiers whose aim is to fight for a free and democratic Poland and to maintain a loyalty to our adopted countries.' This goal is seen as a logical continuation of historical aspirations for Polish national independence. The P.G.E. in 1972 links the hopes of the Republic it wants to restore with Kosciuszko's insurgence in 1794. Present endeavours to this end are but a prolongation of the struggle started by men of the Polish army in September 1939 and continued for six years alongside the Allied forces. This ideal, symbolised by Monte Cassino, is the major force motivating the men who formed the first wave of post-war Polish migration to Australia.

This influx consisted of over one thousand former members of the Polish armed forces under British command who, after demobilisation in Great Britain, were recruited to work on the Hydro-electric scheme in

5 Ibid., pp. 1-10. Majdalany, F., Cassino — Portrait of a Battle, Longmans Green & Co., London, 1957. The Allied offensive in southern Italy was held up in 1943 by a German defensive line finally broken by the capture of Monte Cassino, a strategic mountainous stronghold. This seemingly impregnable objective necessitated three successive attacks. The first attempt was by the American and French forces (Jan./Feb. 1944), followed by New Zealand and Indian Divisions (Feb./March 1944), and finally the Second Polish Corps in two phases, 12 and 18 May 1944. The fierceness of this last attack can be gauged from the high casualty figures (Poles — 860 killed, 2822 wounded; Germans — 900 killed, unknown number buried after first phase, 130 prisoners). The reason given for the desperate German resistance was the rumour current among them that Poles did not take prisoners. The area on Monastery Hill where this battle took place measures about one square mile.

4 'Outline of Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association'.


Tasmania in 1947. After serving out their two years' contract, these men dispersed throughout Australia and in due course formed branches of the Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association based in London.

The four ex-servicemen's groups in Melbourne are differentiated by the historical background governing their individual formation. From this springs a distinct pride in their particular war-time experiences which sometimes amounts to a sense of elitism.

The Association of Polish Ex-Servicemen/Branch No. 3 (Stowarzyszenie Polskich Kombatantow Kolo Nr. 3) was formed in 1952 as a general Polish ex-servicemen's association though aimed in particular at grouping members of the Second Polish Corps and zealously guards the memory of the Italian campaign.

The small Carpathian Club (Klub Karpatczyków w Melbourne) separated from the above in the mid-1950s to maintain the even closer fellowship of shared exertions at the battle of Tobruk.

The Victorian Branch of the Polish Air Force Association (London) (Stowarzyszenie Lotników Polskich w Melbourne) was formed in 1954. Their particular point of pride is the distinguished participation taken by Polish fighter squadrons in the R.A.F. during the Battle of Britain: 'We were among those Churchillian few who changed the course of the war, saving Great Britain in 1940 and assisting the Allies to achieve the final triumph.'

Finally, the Home Army (Samodzielny Oddział Kola Armii Krajowej w Wiktorii/ A.K.), formed in the middle 1950s by former members of the Underground resistance movement, who bear the scars of years of German occupation and of the tragic Warsaw uprising.

Their historical background is the only significant difference between the four associations. In all other important aspects these groups are very similar. Their membership is fairly small (25-40), predominantly male, slowly declining after a lengthy static period. Members are mostly in their middle fifties and upwards and arrived in the early years of Polish migration to Australia (1947-52).

The groups are linked through complex ramifications to state, interstate and overseas Polish organisation networks. They are all individually affiliated with the Federation of Polish Organisations in Victoria, which belongs to the Federal Council of Polish Organisations.

in Australia. A loosely-constituted Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association binds some groups together and is a member of the Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association in Australia, which is in turn affiliated to the Polish Ex-Servicemen's Headquarters in London. The strongest bond is that joining each separate group to its particular parent body in London and to other particular branches in Australia and throughout the world. This takes the form of shared constitutions and a proliferation of contacts through individual journeys, personal and official correspondence, bulletins and magazines.

Relations with similar Australian bodies are very limited. Individual members belong to the Returned Servicemen's League. Common wartime experiences have led to the existence of informal contacts between the Carpathian Club and the 'Rats of Tobruk', a mateship sometimes resented by other Polish groups as being unnecessarily exclusive. The only formal connection is the affiliation of the P.A.F.A. with the Victorian branch of the R.A.A.F. Association. This is usually envied as it enables this particular group to achieve financial solvency by holding socials on licensed premises.

The four ex-servicemen's groups are multi-functional and do for their members what the general organisations do for the general community. Broadly speaking their objectives cover social, welfare and perpetuative functions, all expressly stated in the constitutions adopted from the parent body.

Social gatherings are intended to foster good fellowship and the continuation of wartime comradeship. This is accomplished mainly by monthly reunions, often in private houses: '20 minutes for business, correspondence — and then hard drinking — no women — and we remember. . .' These bodies often function as friendship groups, with informally-arranged picnics, outings, joint holidays, Christmas parties for children. The four groups combine forces for the more formal occasions such as the twice-yearly balls which attract over 1000 guests.

The range of welfare activities is quite extensive. In the earlier days, new arrivals were assisted with housing and employment. The associations acted as channels for advocacy on war pensions and gave guidance and advice on day-to-day concerns. Financial assistance was provided when possible. Nowadays, the ex-servicemen use funds mostly to help with hospitalisation and funeral costs of destitute members, to provide services for their children, sometimes even to arrange a wedding reception for such orphans. Donations are made to local institutions
and relief in the form of parcels and money goes to invalid or needy ex-servicemen here and abroad.\(^8\)

The low membership fees ($2-$3 yearly) barely cover administrative costs and funds are raised by communal balls, appeals where individual contributions are listed in the paper, private donations, raffles and so on.

So far then, on the basis of social and welfare functions, we mainly see similarities between the ex-servicemen’s groups and the general organisations. The notion of ethnic continuity, however, is conceived and conducted along radically different lines. The general organisations are aiming ‘outwards’, at integrating the Polish settlers into Australian society on a permanent basis. They see maintenance of ethnic identity as centred around provisions for a social milieu with a Polish flavour for their members. Concepts of continuity pivot around Polish language, sport, and other activities, as means of keeping Polish traditions alive in the next generation.

The ex-servicemen, on the other hand, see themselves as political émigrés, here on a temporary basis — ‘We are only here until we return or until we die’. More passionately than any other section of the Polish community they still feel deeply engaged in ‘Poland’s struggle for freedom, personal liberty and justice’.\(^9\) Their whole outlook is therefore bound up with this self-assumed responsibility and they envisage the perpetuative function along a spectrum of retrospective militarism. This ranges from maintenance of a particular service spirit: ‘The object of the P.A.F.A. is to . . . perpetuate the comradeship which commenced during service in the Polish Air Force’,\(^10\) through the ‘upkeep of Polish illustrious military traditions’, to reiteration of the ‘dream of achievement. . . to free the beloved dominated homeland’.\(^11\)

Wings (Skrzydla), the periodical of the P.A.F.A. published since 1945,

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\(^8\) Naturally these contributions vary yearly and according to degree of affluence of particular association, e.g. Home Army raised $8000 in seventeen years for relief, excluding monthly parcels worth $3.00 to prisoners recently freed from Siberia (Polish Weekly, 2 August 1969).


\(^9\) ‘Outline of Polish Ex-Servicemen's Association’.

\(^10\) P.A.F.A. Constitution — Rule 3 (i).

proclaims monthly on its front cover: ‘Our Aim: Return to a Free Poland’ (*Nasza Cel: Powrót do Wolnej Polski*).

Inherent in their vision is the continually expressed hatred of communism. The Polish Ex-Servicemen’s Association has undertaken to spread the ‘truth as regards present-day conditions in Poland falsified by the renegade Polish regime and the Kremlin’.  

How are these difficult tasks to be carried out? Obviously, there are no very effective weapons that can be used in Australia to dislocate a regime situated 18,000 kilometres away, which has existed for over a quarter of a century and which is moreover supported by a world power. There are no bombings of Polish official representatives, no training of guerillas to be sent back to Poland. Whatever political intrigues and machinations the ex-servicemen may have engaged upon, these have not proved successful in altering the status quo.

And yet, Polish ex-servicemen do carry on the struggle as individuals and through their associations. They keep what are to them burning issues alive among Polish settlers and present them to the general public whenever possible. As individuals, they have used their influence on the Federation and in the local Polish press to organise or sponsor marches (for example 1966 march for 10th anniversary of Poznan riots; 1972 motorcade in conjunction with other ethnic groups to protest Soviet occupation of ‘satellite’ countries). They join committees (for example Association for Freedom of European Nations, formed by various ethnic groups in Melbourne following the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia). They organise protests and petitions (for example against resumption of diplomatic ties between Australia and Poland in 1972). They were vocal in their support of the D.L.P. in general and its anti-communist stand in particular, they supported the Vietnam war and any other anti-communist action. For years they suspected most later arrivals from Poland as agents provocateurs and mistrusted visits to Poland as subversive experiences.

The ex-servicemen’s associations consolidate these individual stands and keep wartime experiences fresh in the minds of their members through reminiscences at their meetings, special anniversaries, wreath-laying ceremonies. Their magazines bring news of other branches all over the world, warn of communist dangers (for example exposé of plot

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12 ‘Outline of Polish Ex-Servicemen’s Association’.
13 E.g. bombings of Yugoslav premises and allegations of Ustasha training camp based in Australia (Australian press, June-September 1971).
by Polish communist regime to persuade émigrés to return by psychological inducements and apparent failure of this scheme). Mostly they churn up memories. The past is an obsession. Articles, poems, photos, illustrations, letters, obituaries, all combine to give a sense of actuality to historical events, and in particular to World War II and their participation in it.

Outside their immediate circle, the ex-servicemen's associations carry out their conception of ethnic continuity by keeping the Polish flame burning in the general community and in particular among the youth. They sponsor and/or organise commemorative services for the general community, or co-operate with other organisations for this purpose. These are not restricted to military anniversaries such as the Monte Cassino celebrations but embrace events of much wider significance in Polish history (for example Millenium celebration of 1966; 1969 Pilsudski anniversary). These formal celebrations (Akademie) all aim at showing Polish greatness, at re-affirming pre-war values and their own commitment to the restoration of these ideals in a political framework.

Many of the ex-servicemen's efforts are channelled to the young. They give financial and personal support to communal events involving young people (such as the annual sports festival, or the dancing group's visit to Canberra to entertain hospitalised servicemen). They emphasise the heroism of the Polish fighting tradition. Polish scouts are standard-bearers for their regimental colours at religious and commemorative services. By fiery exhortations and impassioned pleas, they try to quicken the young Poles' pride in their past, to prepare them as future guardians of Polish freedom:

We are a chivalrous people. A passion for magnanimity runs through our blood. Just as our forefathers were renowned for their splendid horsemanship and skilful handling of sword and lance, so, in our days, do we endeavour to pay tribute to this tradition... to demonstrate our skill in different but disciplined sports... to display the same ambition to be victorious and the same magnanimity towards our defeated opponent.

Analysis
This category holds a very special place in the life of the community.

15 Address by the President of Ex-Servicemen's Association at fifth Sports Jubilee, February 1969.
The ex-servicemen's associations are a very small section of the community, numerically and comparatively. They were not the first to be formed, nor are they likely to last beyond the lifespan of their members. Yet they have played a singularly powerful and formative role among Polish organisations, acting as ferment during their development and virtually controlling communal affairs for a period lasting almost a quarter of a century. The obvious question poses itself — how was this possible? The answer is rather complex.

It is unnecessary to belabour the extent of success reached by these associations in fulfilling their social and welfare objectives. These have been shown as carried out satisfactorily within the limited sphere of service to members.

What does require close analysis is the tremendous impact made on Polish communal life by the ex-servicemen's notion of the perpetuative function of their associations. Because it is by impressing upon the Polish community their particular formula for ethnic continuity that the ex-servicemen have influenced the political direction of organisational life and stayed at its helm for well on twenty years.

Basically, this vision is oriented towards the past. Its tenets are adherence to pre-war principles, perpetuation of wartime glories, staunch anti-communism, all culminating in the ideal of restoration of independence in Poland and their own return there. How did the ex-servicemen manage to impose these seemingly unrealistic objectives upon the organised community?

In trying to analyse what is, at one level, an exercise in power politics, one encounters at a more fundamental level a veritable enmeshing of social and psychological factors. One sees how a certain vision was woven into the communal structure by personalities dedicated to its implementation, thereby dominating and directing the community for a long period of time. While seeking to elucidate this complicated pattern of personal, historical and communal interaction, one catches a glimpse of adjustment difficulties experienced by individuals who are unable to restructure their identity in a new environment except by keeping within a focus of actuality the past wherein they had their proper allotted place.

Looking at the immediate post-war scene, and the appearance in Melbourne of ex-servicemen just released from their Tasmanian contract, it is not difficult to visualise the effect of the new arrivals upon
the Polish community, just emerging and hesitantly feeling its way. The contrasts were strong.

On the one hand were the ex-servicemen, mostly younger men, without personal responsibilities; on the other hand, families anxious to settle down. On the one hand, soldiers still glowing with recent, often glorious war experiences and fired with dedication to continue the struggle that would restore democracy to the homeland. The D.P.s, on the other hand, burdened with experiences often more appalling than those suffered on active service, were more passive, more intent on their quest for permanency. Moreover, the new arrivals, especially those who took an active interest in communal matters, were often better educated than the majority of D.P.s, peasants straight out of labour and D.P. camps. Thus, it is not surprising that the ex-servicemen should try to assume control, especially in the face of the unwillingness or inability of the few intellectuals to do so.

The ex-servicemen also brought a certain personal vigour which enabled them to devote more time and energy to communal affairs than family-bound settlers, mostly concerned with achieving economic stability. As new organisations proliferated, this meant greater participation and multiple membership on the part of the ex-servicemen. They were represented in all facets of communal life, quite out of proportion to their numbers, and were thus able to command support in decision-making roof-bodies from the many organisations where individual ex-servicemen were active participants.

This penetration in no way depreciated the efforts of the P.A.M. On the contrary. Because it took place within the existing structure, it brought reinforcement to the current attempts to establish communal cohesion. This was a second vital element accounting for the ex-servicemen's growing control of communal affairs. They introduced no new ideas into the community. Rather they intensified the attitudes already there.

Just as there was a communal framework in existence and they sought to consolidate it, so they heightened the quality of the anti-communist feeling generally present. By their intransigent rejection of official contacts with present-day Poland, they stiffened the political character of the organisations. By their unwavering support of the P.G.E., they increased the sense of communal isolation and the attachment to a powerless authority run by military leaders growing old and embittered in exile.
Again and again they reiterated the principles for which they had fought, the sacrifices made ‘in the hope that they would build a new world free from fear, oppression and persecution’.\textsuperscript{16} They extended the past struggle to encompass their view of the Polish cause. In these ways they focused the settlers’ emotional attachment on to the homeland; they moulded vague aspirations of return into acceptance that all were political exiles and that their role was to try to restore democracy to an independent Poland.

Perhaps these views were all the more readily accepted because those who propounded them still carried about them the glamour of heroism; they personified place names resonant with glory and synonymous with patriotism and idealism. Or perhaps, in some obscure fashion, belief in keeping the flame of patriotism burning and in working towards liberation of the homeland vindicated to some extent the upheavals and sufferings undergone through the war years. Or, even quite prosaically, it may have eased the conscience to know that, while one went about rebuilding one’s life, there were others who gave themselves up with passionate constancy to the cause that had involved them all.

Whatever the possible explanations, the ex-servicemen’s program must have been, at the time, something to hang on to, a common concern that was a rallying point for the many who were disorientated.

This consciousness-raising quality exercised by their associations and the personal factors described just before it were not the only sources from which the ex-servicemen derived their strength. In at least equal part, this was the result of an accumulated tangle of connections which, for want of a more eloquent word, has been described earlier as the backward motivation of the ex-servicemen’s groups.

The most readily apparent of these backward links is the network of interstate and overseas organisations formed for Polish servicemen during World War II and the period immediately following it. This bestows on these small groups the solid backing and the prestige of world-wide organisations, together with the benefits of a unified program and expertise in organisational life.

Another source of influence, also relating to the past, is inherent in the above but more subtle and more pervasive. The pride in origin and background which is the major differentiating factor between the four ex-servicemen’s groups diffuses itself in a particularly effective way

\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Contact}, p. 41.
through the community. It is as if that historical background becomes embodied in the ex-servicemen. For despite in-service jealousies and rival claims to the most arduous war experiences, their basic unity is unruffled. They are all enveloped with a mystique that has grown out of timeless traditions of Polish military valour, out of reverence surrounding the battles of Warsaw, of Britain, of the Middle East, of Monte Cassino, out of an ardent belief in the Polish spirit displayed in 1939, ‘when the idealistic character of the war was not yet lost, when every soldier believed that he was fighting against tyranny and the freedom of all men and nations, for large and small countries and for all their citizens’.17

This quasi-legendary reputation earns them the respect (not always untinged by envy or resentment) of those who did not participate militarily in the conflicts. We have seen how it glamorises the former soldiers. It also serves to re-emphasise in their own eyes and in those of the community the ex-servicemen’s commitment, previously mentioned: ‘The Association has its branches in all the countries of the free world. . . We number thousands of ex-soldiers whose aim is to fight for a free and democratic Poland and to maintain a loyalty to our adopted countries.’18

This self-imposed obligation gives them a clear-cut singleminded sense of purpose which has enabled them to set themselves up as watchdogs for the community in exile.19 By their example and their activities, they give validity to their obdurate convictions and aspirations which are rooted in the past. They do not merely appear as advocates of idealistic wartime principles, as standards against which to be measured, or even as symbols of a long-lasting fidelity — in total effect, they form a vital perpetual link with history and the homeland, a living backward strand.

The preceding analysis has shown how personal factors, singleminded purpose, the ability to heighten existing consciousness, the backing of well-organised world-wide networks, all combined to put the ex-servicemen at the helm of the Polish community in Melbourne in the immediate post-war period, a position they maintained for well nigh twenty years.

17 Contact, p. 39.
18 'Outline of Polish Ex-Servicemen’s Association.'
19 One is reminded of Alf Potter’s ‘The R.S.L.’s the only bastards who care — I’ll march’ in Alan Seymour’s The One Day of the Year.
However, the course of time has wrought many changes which, imperceptibly at first, but quite clearly now, have shifted the pattern of organisational relationships within this ethnic group. It might be best explained as a growing divergence (between the majority of Polish settlers and the hard-core ex-servicemen) of the overall attitudes of life, leading in turn to diverging perceptions of the means to achieve the common goal of ethnic continuity.

Those settlers, whom we saw earlier accepting the vision of the ex-servicemen and their formula for its implementation while seeking to establish themselves in the new country, have now fallen quite frankly into the conforming pattern of all economic migrations. The common goals of the common man, his down-to-earth expectations, have asserted themselves over ideals whose likelihood of realisation is receding even further. Everyday concerns, the onset of middle age, Australian-born children, material stability, have made the compromises of adjustment easier. The original D.P.s, the 'in-between' generation, the Australian-born generation, the later arrivals from Poland, all are primarily concerned with their advancement in Australia. Polonism, where it exists, is more a matter of maintaining Polish values, traditional and cultural, in an Australian environment, as opposed to seemingly futile militant involvement with a powerless authority in exile. Polonism is therefore being slowly divested of the political and retrospective elements which were hitherto believed to be integral parts of it.

Comparing the two major trends in the present Polish community is, in effect, presenting a case of the dream that faded versus the impossible ideal tenaciously pursued. For the ex-servicemen show quite a different reaction to the passage of time from the comfortable compromises made by most settlers.

They see the situation essentially in terms of betrayal. The big powers at Yalta and Potsdam bargained away what they had fought, and died, to hold. Time and circumstances wrought more insidious betrayals: within the community, concessions to suit convenience; in the international world, compromises bordering on the dangerously naive or on perfidy (such as the change in public opinion and military commitment regarding the war in Vietnam, or resumption of diplomatic ties with communist countries). Perhaps the unfairlest betrayal of all is the one that has brought about a bewildering reversal in economic status. The growing affluence of peasants, who had strenuously pursued
material improvement, is in strong contrast to the precarious material stability of many ex-servicemen who had devoted themselves to selfless endeavours.

Each new betrayal seems to have turned them more resolutely towards the past. It has made them cling all the more to an unattainable goal, it has stiffened their allegiance to a pledge whose rejection would mean a mockery of all they had ever believed in. More devastatingly, it would mean a betrayal of themselves.

One may be disposed to shrug off their stand by saying that if you look backward, of course you can’t move forward. But that is altogether too glib and too patronising an assessment to make. For is will-power really the determining factor? Can conscious volition be disentangled and singled out as the motivating force in this particular complex pattern where individual character, social and political circumstances, history, personal experiences, are so tightly and inexorably knotted? How does behaviour shape itself for these men? Does the glow of past glories and future hopes radiate so strongly within them that it leaves the present in unimportant dimness? Or are the difficulties of the many adjustments so insuperable for some that they are driven to re-living or re-creating a past where active participation assured the purpose and self-respect they cannot find today? Or is it that external circumstances and personality, ingrained habits, fear of change, language barrier, age, loneliness, decreased status, the bleak emptiness of the future — all these separate components spiral around them, coiling them helix-wise onto the axis of the exalted past, the past which, however well-remembered or emotionally distorted, becomes the important reality?

These questions can only remain speculations on obscure, multifaceted motivations, but it is certain that such desperate retrospection has tremendous psychological and social repercussions. For most Poles in the 1970s, carrying on the struggle is no longer the assured hope of participation in the eventual triumph of dreams of Polish independence, but has become rather a matter of passing on a spark of the Polish spirit. While many of the Polish settlers who served in the armed forces have managed to reconcile themselves to the status quo, the men at the hard core of the ex-servicemen’s associations are still so intensely beset with the past that it has become an obsession, one that can have a severe corrosive effect on individuals.

We have seen how prolific contacts and continually retrospective writings make the past an actuality, how loyalty to the few remaining
military leaders in London is synonymous with loyalty to pre-war Poland and the Polish spirit. In a personal way, the obsession with the past finds expression in quirks and oddities which illustrate a growing divorce from reality.

While hoarding of war mementoes and souvenirs is not restricted to Polish ex-servicemen, there is something curiously unreal about the enthusiasm with which his recent citation is displayed by a freshly-promoted colonel, a meaningless appointment in a phantom army by a moribund authority.

Again, it may be a harmless if morbid idiosyncrasy to look upon heart disease as a cunning enemy to be tracked down, symptom by symptom, because it has been lying in wait for the 'desert rats' since Tobruk and will finally vanquish them all. But there is an undeniable undertone of deluded fantasy in the episode alleged to have taken place at a recent banquet when a (perhaps inebriated) guest made an emotional appeal to a visiting general: 'Lead us back, and we will follow! Command and we will fight!', a call rousingly taken up by many of those present.

The advertisement inserted by a Polish ex-serviceman in the bereavement columns, mourning the destruction of a quarantined pet monkey twenty-five years earlier, has a strong sentimental appeal:

In Memory of Barbara (Rhesus)  
Pet of m/s Warszawa  
Veteran of Tobruk siege and Italian campaign  
Exterminated September 23rd, 1947

But the attitude behind this gesture and the other fixations described above are indicative of minds hopelessly fastened on the irretrievable past.

Sometimes the gap between reality and the past becomes harder to bridge and the disorders are more virulent, more self-destructive and can manifest themselves in venomous writings, alcoholism, and mental illnesses.

In the communal context, such backward-orientated inflexibility breeds ossification of organisations and, as we have seen, a growing alienation from general communal attitudes. On the ex-servicemen's part, the feeling that people no longer care very much about what

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20 Melbourne Herald, 30 September 1972.
happened increases their sense of embittered isolation. It throws them back all the more inevitably towards their clubs and their unchanging activities — the endless reminiscences, the drinking, the narrow single-minded views, the exalted rhetoric. There is a kind of helpless perversity in keeping their associations functioning along defiantly rigid lines, because not a few of these ex-servicemen catch glimpses, hastily obscured, of the present futility of their program, of deluded ramblings or suspected senility in their leaders. The only way not to stumble and collapse over such uncertainties is to play-act the right pattern their lives should have followed, to hang on to that part of one's life filled in retrospect with patriotic ideals and heroic endeavours. Re-living this past with like-minded companions and trying to perpetuate it in the future puts some purpose in life, even if it means by-passing the present.

On its part, the general community views the ex-servicemen's associations differently from in former days. The intelligentsia had always looked down upon them and had vehemently rejected their political involvement, their militarism, their right-wing unprogressive tendencies. They now feel somewhat vindicated by the strengthening feeling among the average Polish settlers that the ex-servicemen's associations are passé, that they have nothing more to contribute ('organisations in the 70s are different than in the 50s'). Some see them merely as excuses for drinking bouts, and their members as 'paper tigers'.

The cruelest rejection is undoubtedly that inflicted by the young. However great the ex-servicemen's personal need for the past as a crutch, in another fundamental sense its pursuit has been their means of enshrining the Polish spirit in the younger generation. That their sincere endeavours have not succeeded very well is seen in many young people's frank dissociation from that particular brand of Polonism. The ex-servicemen of Polish origin who served in Vietnam will not join the clubs, not only because they have little in common with their members, but because they are just not interested. Many adolescents complain, sometimes bitterly, of fathers who only live in the past. Not a few relegate that past to a limbo of irrelevance: 'Of course Monte Cassino was heroic. So what? It's all history!'

It is now necessary, in summing up, to put the ex-servicemen's associations into perspective in the present communal set-up. We have seen how they made a tremendous impact on the early communal machinery, buttressing its development, imposing their own political
direction on it and dominating its management. Time and circumstances have brought a slow but definite shift in outlooks and organisational relationships which has greatly diminished the influence of these associations. But it would be wrong to assume that they are totally ineffective. Ex-servicemen are still involved in every communal activity, are still vocal within the Federation, have not relinquished their exhortative role with the young. It is rather that they have remained static in the self-made capsule of the past, which is their own reality, while the majority of other Polish settlers has moved onward, along parallel lines with the general community.

The ex-servicemen's influence has waxed and waned, the flamboyancy is fading, the drum-beating and flag-waving are getting fainter; but all this does not detract from their fundamental contribution to Polish life in Melbourne. For whatever the relation of their beliefs to reality, however debatable their attitudes and methods, they took upon themselves the task of stimulating the ethnic awareness of the Polish community, that essential ingredient for cohesiveness in a minority group. Even if they are nearing the end of their usefulness, they did succeed in this consciousness-raising role which, traditionally, has been assumed by émigré intellectuals; and in this particular migration the émigré intellectuals failed to do so.
In a complex, advanced society like Australia's it is evident that a certain amount of education is essential for communal leaders to carry out their tasks effectively. The Polish settlers who manage the community's affairs seem to have a middle-level background of education, namely some secondary or tertiary studies interrupted by the war and never resumed. There are a few graduates, mostly in the applied sciences, who have managed to find employment in their field, albeit at a lower level. They do not form a distinguishable group of their own but fit into the various organisations which they run and they have been described there.

In this section, we are dealing with the intelligentsia proper, the small, highly-educated élite whose professional status and cultural pursuits separated them from, and placed them above, the bulk of pre-war Polish society. One must further differentiate between two types of Polish intellectuals in Melbourne: those who have managed to gain, or regain, professional qualifications, and those who have not.

The former are usually younger people who served in the armed forces and through favourable combinations of circumstances, health, resilience, youth and will-power, managed to take advantage of the various rehabilitation schemes offered to them in the U.K. With a few individual exceptions these are mostly too taken up with their professional advancement and interests to take an active part in communal affairs, and they fall, therefore, outside our area of interest.

The other intellectuals, the truly déclassé, often older D.P.s, who were too old, too tired, too ill or too broken to start again on the professional road, form the membership of the adult cultural clubs under review.
These clubs do not lend themselves very readily to an overall description. Whereas the general organisations and the ex-servicemen's associations hold similar goals and expectations within their respective categories, the cultural groups have specifically individual interests which require less collective treatment. It seems worthwhile to review them in some detail by virtue of their intrinsic interest, and because they are a unique category among the three national communities studied here. Furthermore, they are of great personal interest. Not only do they represent a vanishing section of the community, and are therefore worthy of historical record, but in human terms too they merit attention because, once again, they give us an insight into difficulties of adjustment which are additional to the usual difficulties experienced by most new settlers.

The best way to convey the inward-turned quality of their milieu is perhaps to describe two contrasting clubs, the one characteristic of inward tendencies, the other featuring a more outward attitude and therefore unique within this category. These trends are most clearly manifested in the membership, activities and affiliations of the Polish Cultural and Artistic Circle (Polskie Kolo Kulturalno-artystyczne w Melbourne) and the Polish Philatelic Society (Polskie Stowarzyszenie Filatelistyczne).

The Polish Cultural and Artistic Circle reached a peak of thirty-five members soon after its formation in 1954. It declined slightly and slowly and for several years has maintained its membership at twenty-five, most of these being foundation members. They form a homogeneous group of middle-aged professionals: doctors, teachers, ethnologists, dentists, former high-level public servants, most of whom have been unable to continue professional practice in Australia. They consider themselves an élite group, not in any social sense, but by reason of the high intellectual and cultural level of the members. The Circle does not seek to recruit new people, because this is seen as a futile task in the present Polish community, and it is not prepared to lower the high standard of its program.

On the other hand, the Polish Philatelic Society has increased its membership from the original 27 in 1959, its foundation year, to over 100 at present (throughout Australia, 60 in Melbourne). These are also educated people, though at a somewhat lower level, and number various occupations, including teachers, public servants, office workers.
Ages range from 18 to 65 and over, but the majority are between 35 and 50 years old.

The Polish Philatelic Society's sanguine expectations for survival and their drive to increase membership differ sharply from the Circle's acceptance that it will decline with the passing of the years and of its members. There is no defeatism in this attitude, sadness certainly but this demise is seen as a natural sequence of events and, in the meantime, devoted work goes into keeping the Circle in operation. In the same way, their lack of desire to attract new blood cannot be called apathy, since this course is entirely deliberate. It seems rather that they have developed their club as a refuge and want to maintain it as such. They derive satisfaction from its rarefied intellectual atmosphere, they are at ease with each other, people of similar backgrounds growing older in similar circumstances. This status quo and their inner stability would be disrupted by new and unfamiliar additions.

The activities of the two groups provide another illustration of the static character of one and the more dynamic drive of the other. The Circle's program consists of lectures, musical evenings, discussions, theatrical presentations, all conducted in Polish. This is not only because many of the members experience some difficulty with English at the high intellectual level prevalent at the meetings, but also because, on the rare occasions when the proceedings have not been in Polish, there has been an element of stiffness, an ill-at-ease feeling. Again, one senses an implied warmth and intimacy when the Circle meets en famille, a feeling of belonging, which is an essential element of the Circle's appeal to its members.

The Circle sends a monthly newsletter to its members and maintains a circulating library, independent of the official one at Polish House. This much-appreciated service represents the Circle's heaviest expenditure, as well as a storage problem awkwardly resolved by dividing up the books and making various members responsible for bringing the crates of books to the rented Y.W.C.A. rooms where meetings are held.

To frame a suitable program is the Circle's most serious problem. Its scope is severely limited because it can only draw speakers from within the suitable section of the Polish community, whose numbers are dwindling. Thus the Circle has to fall back on its inner resources, but prides itself on the fact that in the last fifteen years it has held eleven
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annual meetings, despite difficulties. Again, one sees here an unwillingness to go outside the group. The emotional stability of the members is more important than the possible stimulation introduced by an outsider.

In contrast, a vigorous outward thrust underlies the activities of the Polish Philatelic Society. They seem to succeed in a felicitous blending of Polish-orientated philatelic interests with wider Australian and international contacts. Their aim to strengthen ties between Polish philatelists in Australia is not to the exclusion of offering expert advice outside the society, especially on Polish philatelic and numismatic matters. The Polish Philatelic Society also adopted as one of its objectives the spreading of Polish history and culture. To this end their illustrated monthly bulletin, dealing mostly with 'Polonica' themes, is written in English, even if some of the material has to be translated from Polish. This bulletin is widely circulated in philatelic circles and has won various awards at international exhibitions. Among its other activities, the society arranges talks and displays at its monthly meetings, organises philatelic auctions and conducts a yearly exhibition entitled Polphil, when it issues thematic souvenir stamps.1

A third area of contrast between the Circle and the Philatelic Society (emphasising their different directions) concerns contacts within and without the community. Once again, the Circle does not look beyond itself. Unlike most other Polish organisations it has no official interstate

1 The Polonica themes include such exhibits as Polish stamps, postmarks and postal stationery from 1860 to the present; special London issues by the Polish Government-in-Exile; covers and stamps of the 2nd Polish Corps in the Middle East; samples of the Polish Boy Scouts' underground postal service.

Articles appear from time to time on people and topics of joint Polish-Australian interest: Kosciuszko, Strzelecki, the projected 'Independent Polish Settlement in Oceania' by Polish insurgents of 1863; the unsuccessful 1935 flight from Warsaw to Melbourne planned to carry a bottle of water from the Vistula River for presentation to Poles in Australia and to carry back soil from Mt Kosciusko in Australia to the Kosciuszko memorial in Poland.

Among others, the Society's Bulletins won prizes at the 1961 'Intermess II' in Poland; at the 1963 'Mipex' in Australia; at the 1968 'Praga' in Czechoslovakia; at the 1971 Budapest Exhibition. It is interesting to note once again the early cultural contacts with Poland.

Some of the Polphil's outstanding souvenir stamps include the facsimile of Poland's No. 1, commemorating the centenary of Poland's first postage stamp (1960); a Kosciuszko stamp issued for the 5th anniversary of the Polish Philatelic Society (1964); a medieval scene featuring Miecisko I, first Christian king of Poland, to celebrate the Millenium of Polish Christendom (1966). The Society's postal mark is a kangaroo surrounded by the stars of the Southern Cross, and its name in Polish and English.
or overseas connections and is thus comparatively isolated. Its links with other sections of the Polish community are limited to combining forces to present theatrical revues. It has steadfastly refused to affiliate with the Polish Federation on the grounds that the latter is politically orientated, influenced by the clergy and covertly anti-semitic. Since its basic principle is to run a cultural group regardless of race, religion or politics, the Circle feels unable to accept overtures made by the Federation.

The Polish Philatelic Society, on the contrary, is thoroughly involved in various spheres, both officially and through those members active in other sectors of Polish life. It has branches in most states, is connected though not affiliated with the Polish Federation and uses the premises of the Polish House. It is affiliated with the Victorian and Australian Philatelic Associations and is a corresponding member of various Australian and overseas philatelic bodies. It prides itself on the active participation of its members at international exhibitions, thus advancing the cause of Australian philately. It claims, for instance, that the stamp collections sent by four of its members to the 1964 Paris exhibition were the only displays representing Australia and that the credit for the Australian flag flying outside the Grand Palais in Paris was therefore entirely due to the efforts of the Polish Philatelic Society.²

The foregoing account contrasting one static and one active cultural group would be misleading if a point briefly stated earlier were not emphasised here. For the purposes of providing a detailed description and a basis for contrast, the active and the static groups were each given equal weight. The actual situation is that the Polish Philatelic Society is the exception within this category. The other cultural groups, with individual differences, resemble the Cultural Circle in all significant aspects. Their membership is static or dwindling. Their contribution as organisations to the life of the community is minimal, though there is some individual participation. Their members hold themselves separate, detached, and seldom live in the western suburbs. Their interest is centred inwardly, on themselves, on their Polishness, and pivots on their pre-war cultural or professional standing.

The Polish Technical and Professional Association provides an excellent illustration of the great importance of this latter point. The club was formed in 1951, to provide social contact for people whose

education and background set them apart from other Polish migrants, and whose life experiences gave them little in common with their Australian counterparts. Professional qualifications equivalent to the Polish degree of engineer are required for membership, as one of the aims is to preserve and hand down the traditions and attitudes of Polish professionals, in this case, engineers, architects, agronomists and so on.

Membership has been static at around fifty for several years after declining from a peak of eighty and consists of earlier arrivals, mostly now in their middle fifties. This club is the only 'cultural' group affiliated with the Federation but it does not play a dissident part on it, usually aligning itself with the ex-servicemen, as many club members served in the armed forces.

Activities are irregular — informal get-togethers, an occasional lecture, slides, an infrequent bulletin. The important social event is a yearly ball in June, to celebrate St John's Eve, the traditional European mid-summer festival. This draws about 300 people, 'all by invitation, of course, and very formal, because we are an exclusive club'. The proceeds of this ball make up the Strzelecki Fund (Stypendium im. Pawła Strzeleckiego), a scholarship fund to encourage tertiary study among young Poles. It is awarded annually on the basis of general academic achievements, both the H.S.C. and Polish classes, plus an essay, usually autobiographical, written in Polish.3

In its own view, the Polish Technical and Professional Association considers this to be its only contribution to the Polish community. Otherwise, it greatly disparages itself, its activities, its purpose, even its existence. But on the point of professional standing, it holds itself proud and superior, equally aloof from the Polish peasants and from Australian professionals.

This latter distinction is explained by the alleged difference of attitude towards professionals in the two societies. In pre-war Poland, the professional classes were greatly respected, not merely because of the generally low level of education but because of the way professionals looked upon themselves. They entered their chosen career because they believed in it, in their capability to exercise it, in the responsibilities inherent in it. A profession was a personal service whose fulfilment carried its own reward and status. Professionalism in Australia, on the

3 The value and distribution of scholarship funds vary according to proceeds and need of those eligible. In 1972, for instance, $200 was awarded to one winner and prizes of $20 to four other contestants.
other hand, was often debased, viewed in terms of income and social standing, or even just as a job, not a way of life that imposes standards and duties. And 'the result is that you get tragedies like the West Gate Bridge collapse, or you get medical clinics where you never see the same doctor twice, you are just an index card and not a human being'.

Obviously, this is not the place to debate the validity of these views, but there is no doubt that they are sincerely held. Perhaps they are too staunchly held, too volubly expressed. The professional pride that sometimes comes across as arrogance may very well stem from two causes: a genuine respect for the professional ethics these Polish settlers knew; and a subconscious need to shore up their self-esteem by magnifying the relative quality of these ethics. Thus, by claiming (and feeling) superiority to their Australian counterparts in the one field that really matters — that of professional standards — they not only differentiate themselves from the mass of Polish peasantry, they also ease a little the painful reality of professional and social déclassément.

The theatrical groups have waxed and waned since their formation fifteen to twenty years ago. They were very popular in the earlier years but declined sharply in the late 1950s with the advent of television. Yet they have survived into the 1970s, staging performances occasionally and lending their services to commemorative and other communal events.

In view of the decrease of public interest and the minute membership of individual companies (10-15 members), one wonders at the existence of four theatrical groups in the community (Ogniwo Theatre Group; Polish Folklore Theatre; Polish Theatrical Association; Theatrical Branch of the Cultural and Artistic Circle). Personal frictions and ambitions are only a small part of the explanation, for rifts have occurred and been healed, but the four groups have continued to operate individually though with co-operation.

The underlying reason seems to be the sharply divided opinion regarding the role of ethnic theatre. According to one view, this should be education. The theatre presents the only opportunity for the second generation Poles and for the peasants to hear the language 'live' and correctly spoken. Formal drama therefore, classical or modern, is indicated because it is suitable, educational or informative.

Another group considers entertainment to be the objective of ethnic theatre. The presentations usually fall into two types. The revues are a mixture of Polish folk-songs, recitations of poetry, jokes, sketches of a
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humorous or satirical nature, farcical situations. The full-length comedies are light pieces, almost vaudevillean. The 'naughty' character of these is deplored by the exponents of the more serious role of theatre:

It is funny, yes but for sophisticated audiences, who can appreciate the wit, but not, good heavens, for those poor simple peasants who can only see — when they understand! — immorality paraded on stage by better class people. If you feel any responsibility towards them, you must exercise care in the choice of your presentations.

The third conception of ethnic theatre centres on its function of preserving Polish culture and bringing it to the masses. Classical theatre is aimed at the more educated sections of the community, folklore theatre at the peasants and the children, in order to show them their rich cultural past and instil pride in their traditions. The Polish Folklore Theatre Group, for instance, formed in 1950, flourished for about fifteen years, presenting the dances, legends, superstitions, poetry, customs that make up Polish folklore. The success it achieved is attributed to its authenticity of material and to the participation by whole families 'just as the folk did in their villages'.

The highlight of the Folklore Theatre's existence was the presentation of a village wedding — from the first meeting of boy and girl, through courtship, until the marriage day. The performance weaves the courtship and all the village life and characters into a superb whole, glowing with the richness of genuine hand-woven costumes and vibrant with music and dancing. The show had a long run for both Polish and Australian audiences and was filmed 'because this is a historical document of the Polish community and must be kept for posterity, a continuation of folklore transplanted from Poland to Australia'.

The group started to decline in the 1960s as fewer and fewer families became involved with it and its 1966 performances for the Millenium celebrations (which included a colourful float in the Moomba procession) virtually marked its last major appearance.

A similar fate befell the Polish Historical Society, the Chopin Musical Society, the Syrena Choir. Since their heyday of the late 1950s and early 1960s, they are dormant until there is a particular need for their specific activities or until the enthusiasm of a particular individual gives them fresh impetus for a short period. Otherwise, they have all but run out the cycle of their existence.
Analysis

Fulfilment of Specific Aims. Do the cultural organisations fulfil the purpose for which they were set up? By and large, one would say yes, keeping in mind their very limited goals. Whether they fulfil the purpose which the general community ascribes to them is an entirely different matter and will be discussed later.

It is easy to assess the achievement of the specific-based Polish Philatelic Society. Since success here is measured by philatelic participation, it seems that the society's claim that it is one of the leading philatelic associations in Australia bears some justification. The society has brought expertise and certain specialisations to Australian philately, thereby helping to raise its standard. Its members take part in local and international exhibitions and have won many prizes. The society helps to prepare other clubs' collections for displays and competitions. It produces a sophisticated philatelic magazine which has won international awards. We have seen that it claims credit for inclusion of the Australian flag at the 1964 Paris exhibition. Within the Polish circle it participates, with philatelic and numismatic displays, in all communal celebrations, such as the 1966 Millenium or the 1973 Copernicus centenary.

However, the Polish Philatelic Society is the exception in the category of cultural organisations and it is very difficult to speak of specific results for the others. Their effect is rather one of atmosphere, of moods. One senses sadness and a certain gallantry in the low-key attempt to recreate in miniature the broken rhythm of a former life, in clinging to the nostalgic memory of European culture. For their members, the small number of intellectuals and professionals bereft of status and acceptable milieu, the cultural groups offer companionship of peers and congenial leisure-time pursuits. However sterile these may seem to the outsider, they go a little way to alleviate the present conditions of life for these déclassé settlers. The monthly meetings are a purposeful activity, engaging those responsible for their arrangements into dedicated activity and providing all members with a highlight, something to look forward to 'on those long Sunday afternoons, so quiet, so terrible, when you yearn to go somewhere but you stay home with the longing and the melancholy because there is nowhere to go'.

Ethnic Achievements and Communal Participation. It seems reasonable to expect the more educated members of a migrant group to
act as communal leaders, in particular when the group is largely made up of peasant stock. One has only to see the important role of the priest, often the only educated person in earlier migrations, to appreciate the practical benefits of such leadership: helping newcomers to deal with paper work and officialdom in the new environment; possessing the know-how, the cultural resources and the authority to arrange social activities and so on.

The practical side of the educated migrants' participation in their community's activities has often been induced or reinforced by ideological motives. Since intellectuals were often exiled for political or patriotic opposition to existing regimes, it was only natural that they should continue such ideological activity in exile, being again in the forefront of their communities abroad. This has been most evident in the European upheavals of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which sent, for instance, Russian, Polish, Hungarian émigrés to England, France, or America.4

Yet this does not seem to have been the case with the intelligentsia under review, even though Polish post-war migration to Melbourne exhibits some traits of both ideological and economic motivations.

By their own admission and by communal consensus, the intelligentsia play no active role in the corporate life of the Polish migrants. They have not taken the lead in organising the community. They stand aloof from its formal institutions and from their fellow settlers. They are not involved with youth activities, the prime concern of all other organisations. They are not affiliated with the Federation of Polish Societies and exercise no influence on the direction of communal affairs.

There is some marginal involvement through theatrical presentations or philatelic displays, for instance, which while not aimed at the average Polish settlers are certainly open to them. There are also certain intellectuals who have channelled their frustrated professionalism into at-

4 This does not necessarily mean that involvement by intellectuals continues to function satisfactorily. Lengyel, for instance, describes the intellectuals ousted by the peasants in the Hungarian-American organisations. Medding accounts for the growing non-involvement by intellectuals in the Melbourne Jewish community, in part, by the lack of common ground.

In a reverse situation, Price suggests that the refusal by the educated middle classes of Malta to emigrate was a contributory factor to the failure of Maltese communities abroad in the many nineteenth century schemes (Malta and the Maltese, Georgian House, Melbourne, 1954).
tempts at injecting some artistic leaven into communal events. But these are individual efforts and they do not obscure the overall failure of the intelligentsia, as a group, to fulfil the communal expectations for leadership.

In trying to find out why this expected leadership did not occur, it is inevitable to draw comparisons between those expected to lead and those who did lead the early community, since there are several parallels. Like the ex-servicemen, the intellectuals are mostly older settlers who arrived here with the first wave of post-war migration. They tend to reside in the more cosmopolitan suburbs of St Kilda, Prahran, Elwood, that are outside the concentration of Polish residence. Both are minority groups in the communal mass. Both have formed fairly exclusive clubs ossifying around their particular needs. They are avowedly one-generation organisations. There is an air of finality about them both.

Yet, as groups, they took diametrically opposed courses of action — the ex-servicemen involving themselves to the full and shaping the development of the communal machinery; the intelligentsia withdrawing into their own little circles and detaching themselves from the mainstream of organised Polish affairs.

Some features of their failure are readily discernible and exemplify once again the degree to which historical, social, communal and psychological factors are enmeshed.

Primarily, of course, the intellectuals were square pegs in communal circles: a-political in a group whose initial motivation was political; less materialistically-inclined than many of their fellow settlers who developed the characteristics of economic migration; a professional, highly educated if déclassé minority in a community of largely peasant stock.

From the earliest days, many of the intelligentsia completely rejected politics, or rather placed cultural pursuits well above politics. They established cultural contacts with Poles all over the world, regardless of political or religious affiliations, and they welcomed later arrivals from Poland within their clubs. Keeping in mind the intensity of political feeling in the Polish community, especially in the early post-war years, it is obvious that such a course of action aroused indignation, suspicion, and even ostracism.

Their divergent view on the comparative importance of political matters was compounded by many other deeply-felt differences. Many
of these intellectuals opposed a cosmopolitan liberal Weltanschauung, rooted in their Polish cultural background, to the right-wing retrospective views prevalent in the early years of the community. They set their attachment to general Polish achievements against the emphasis on glorious Polish military traditions. Their manifestly tolerant outlook on religion ran counter to the simple faith, devoutly practised, of the majority of settlers. Their claim to be the only Polish clubs with Jewish members (few enough in numbers) was in marked contrast to the prevailing attitude of more-or-less covert anti-semitism. Generally speaking, they were an intellectual island in the peasant mass and felt little in common with the bulk of the community, in background, current interests and aspirations.

It follows that there could be no fusion between these intelligentsia and the average settlers with whom they were so much out of step, unlike that achieved by the ex-servicemen who intensified existing attitudes and loyalties and consolidated the organisational framework.

In addition to the above considerations, there was an element of realism in the intellectuals' disassociation from the political course generally taken. They held the expressed conviction that the clocks of history could not be turned back, that to raise the hopes of restoration to pre-war Poland was misleading, a betrayal by the military of the simple people who put their faith in them.

But why, if they felt this way, did this intelligentsia not try to steer the community in a different direction?

It is always a complex task to determine the reasons for the collective course pursued by any group. It is a particularly difficult task here for there is no substance to what we are seeking. It is not a matter of trying to trace the design, however intricate, of an established situation, but of making speculations, of evoking possible individual motivations, of finding elusive connections which resulted in a non-occurrence, namely the intelligentsia's absence of involvement.

For an élite to guide its community, from which it differs on many grounds, it must be able to offer a powerful inspiring vision that transcends those differences, a common effective goal towards which all can work. This the intelligentsia were unable to do. Not only were they at odds with the community on general considerations, but what they did have to offer was all out of joint for the situation: wrong in character, in timing, in psychological terms.

The intelligentsia's commitment to culture was at once too narrow
and too diffuse, too rigid as well as too realistic. Their attachment to art divorced from politics was too narrow a view of life at a time when the disorientated settlers needed broad developing guidelines which took into account their political isolation and instability. At the same time, the intelligentsia's concept of culture, though focused on things Polish, had too broad a cosmopolitan base, it lacked the ardent nationalistic stance required if it was to act as a cohesive agent. It was also much too highbrow for the peasant majority, separated by a wide gulf of educational background and experiences. The intellectuals' refusal to compromise on cultural standards nullified their efforts since their contributions were badly understood and could therefore be neither shared nor used for ethnic transmission.

What we saw earlier as a realistic element in the intelligentsia's attitude (namely accepting the political and international status quo and building a cultural bridge above, or regardless of, politics) ran counter to the community's loyalties. It also appeared as resignation, even hopelessness, too devastating a counsel to follow so soon after the years of fighting and suffering.5

How could all these aspects of the intelligentsia's cultural commitment compete with the ex-servicemen's rousing patriotic vision? How could a vague abstract ideal of aesthetic values with recusant undertones compete with the glowing dream of a future that would perpetuate past glories, easily understood by the average settlers and in tune with their current feelings?

The word 'compete' offers a clue to another conceivable reason for the intelligentsia's detachment from communal life. Coupled with the intelligentsia's circumstantial inability to appeal to the mass of Polish settlers, there also appears an unwillingness to fight for control of communal affairs, a reluctance to descend into the market-place, as it were, and throw out a challenge there. This is perhaps best evidenced in their refusal to join the existing roof-body. They could have done so and, by taking advantage of leadership expectations resting with them, try to exercise their influence institutionally.

However, they did not. Granting the truth of their given reason (ir-

5 Ironically, this attitude is the prevalent one in current times. Not only are Polish artistes welcomed enthusiastically, but personal and communal contacts with Poland are acceptable. One even hears the view, heretical once, and still expressed reluctantly in some quarters, that admittedly some progress and improvements have taken place in communist Poland.
reconcilable ideological differences), one senses deeper reasons submerged beneath the rational explanation. The unstated leadership contest suggested above draws us further still into the shadowy realm of personal motivations.

The rejection of politics was undoubtedly genuine: 'I ran away from Europe because of politics. For what? To get mixed up in politics here? All that I want is to forget. It's not enough, what we suffered? I want peace and quiet and lead my life, not carry flags and make plots and hatreds.' But there was also an underlying reluctance to get embroiled in personal politics. The intellectuals professed a strong antipathy for the ex-servicemen as well as for their policies. They may also have been somewhat overwhelmed by the latter's vigour, their strength of purpose, their domineering hold on communal affairs.

One senses their distaste of having to fight for control, of perhaps demeaning themselves. It is as if, inwardly aware of their claim to a front seat and unwilling to take on a back seat, they disdained to jostle for leadership and preferred to withdraw, inviolate.

Their reluctance to vie for leadership may also have been partly founded on a fear of failure. The streak of realism in them would have refused self-delusion, would have perceived the different images projected — on the one hand, older quieter intellectuals who had mostly shared the same experiences as the D.P.s; on the other hand, the more charismatic ex-servicemen invested with the glamorous background of heroic soldiering.

This mention of charisma raises abstract questions on the nature of the nexus between leadership and personality. Is it justified to equate leadership with intelligentsia? Or, on the contrary, does intellectual only rhyme with ineffectual, as the poet suggests?6 Are intellectuals constitutionally unable to assume leadership, or do they become devitalised by academic considerations until the 'pale cast of thought' inhibits action? Is there any correlation at all? Does that elusive dimension of personality that compels other people to follow only befall the rare individual capriciously, regardless of his intellectual and other attributes? This is of course not the place to discuss such speculations,

6 'We always run away, from town to town,
we — intellectuals:
small and shivering, a tribe without a tribe,
a class of ineffectuals.'
except perhaps to suggest that, in this particular context, it seems to have been misplaced to put leadership expectations on intellectuals simply and solely because they were intellectuals.

There remains one other important psychological aspect that is relevant to the failure of the intelligentsia to fulfil the leadership role expected of them. This can only be described as a kind of life fatigue. Originating in their experiences, this complex, diffuse force is like an undercurrent that emerges now and then in explicit utterances revolving around weariness: 'We are a very tired people'; 'Of course I'd like to help but I'm not up to travelling so far'; 'How could I start studying again, I'm too old, too tired — and what for anyway?'

It is true that most of their compatriots underwent similar hardships, but it is possible that the intelligentsia's resilience has been more crushed because, in some ways, they were more vulnerable than the majority of settlers.

It is a tenable hypothesis that the harsh daily struggle for life experienced by the peasants in pre-war Poland toughened them in a way that comfortable middle-class living could not do for the intelligentsia. Obviously, too, improved living prospects are easier to get used to than the reverse. Despite undoubted difficulties of adjustment, many of the Polish settlers find themselves better off than they had ever imagined. But for the intelligentsia, the process has been in a downward direction. Their pre-war life had a well-established foundation of social status, professional attainment, financial security. War and migration dislocated this desirable pattern in an irretrievable manner.

A resigned weariness echoes through their conversation and attitudes in a variety of subtle ways which underscore the disjointed character of their reconstructed life. It is evident when they talk of the wearing effect of a disliked, sometimes menial, job; when they compare what is with what might have been; when they refer with respect to those who did regain professional status. This compounds their feelings of social diminution, the loss of their rightful place in society, the inappropriateness of toiling at blue collar level while they have the educational background of professionals. They feel an erosion of personal significance in an environment which discredits their professional achievements and thereby devalues them as human beings in their own eyes. Most of all, perhaps, one perceives the overwhelming sense of their vie manquée, the bitter regret at being too old, too tired, too ailing to start an arduous course of study while supporting oneself and family.
It is as if the years of war and struggling, which knocked away the certainties of a lifetime, left them as exhausted by the present as by the ordeals of the past and brought them to the point of resignation, to the acceptance that here was an end to striving. That is how this impression of life fatigue communicates itself most forcefully — in terms of the tremendous battering that life has inflicted upon these people. There is a sense of that maiming force in adverse circumstances which often goes unrecognised or underestimated. For who really knows how spirit and determination can be broken by imprisonment, torture, forced labour, wanderings, exile? Who really understands how people react to the kind of humiliations imposed by a host society which sets musicians on a road gang, and doctors to cleaning lavatories? How can one measure the cumulative level of exhaustion built up by past ordeals, daily grind, bruised self-esteem, deep aching regret for wasted lives, estrangement and alienation?

Indeed, what is surprising is not that so few intellectuals should have regained professional qualifications but rather that, alienated, burdened by past ordeals, bereft of status, purpose and a fitting occupation, so many should have the fortitude to go on living their blighted lives with a measure of equanimity.

Relating this syndrome of fatigue to the communal context, it can be seen underlying and intensifying the various other factors which set the intelligentsia at odds with the rest of their group — their non-political views, their realism, personality traits, different backgrounds and aspirations. All these working together motivated them into a course away from communal affairs. To lead a movement running counter to the mainstream requires not only an inspiring vision and a forceful personality but also a great deal of stamina. The intelligentsia were too weary physically and psychologically, they lacked the vital spirit to alter the communal course of action which in their view was mistaken.

Seen in this light, it is not so surprising that the intellectuals should have formed a sheltering no man’s land around themselves where their own values and self-importance are recognised. Their withdrawal becomes a mechanism of self-protection and is obviously one of their ways to overcome the disjointing watershed of their existence. Unable to reconstruct their lives according to the desired pattern, too realistic to clutch at illusions, unable and unwilling for the many reasons offered earlier to get closely involved with their mismatched compatriots, they have exercised an almost tactical retreat to preserve their few remaining
assets, in particular their rich cultural background which assumes the value of a prized possession.

Paradoxically, this turning inwards, which appears as a failure in the communal context, takes on an air of gallantry on the personal plane. The individual expression of this withdrawal seems to be less bitter in general, less venomous towards others, less poisonous for self, than the effect of their obsession upon many ex-servicemen. Overall, there seems to be less inner conflict and personal disintegration perhaps because the intellectuals have greater inner resources. There is nothing jaunty about this reliance on themselves: it is partly having learned how to endure, but it is also a subdued, steadfast affirmation of unfading values that transcend their weariness, their resignation, the feeling of finality in their clubs, their avowedness that there could not be any continuity through them. It is obvious that they are sustained by their absorption in the world of literature, discussions, music, all suffused with old-world Polish courtliness: 'This [the club] is more than a place to go, it means friends to me, it is my language, my culture, my level, my people, it gives me strength'.

It is rather difficult to make a neat summing-up of the place occupied in the Polish community by the intelligentsia. This is partly because their role has been largely negative. It is also because, in trying to fathom out the reasons motivating this collective behaviour, our sense of perspective has become clouded by these very considerations. In fact, the whole issue now assumes a curiously fluid aspect, the various facets of the intelligentsia's behaviour changing in character according to shifting viewpoints.

What appears as a legitimate expectation of leadership from the communal viewpoint could well be described as unreasonable and misplaced if one takes as point of departure the attributes of leadership in a general abstract sense. What seems, at first glance, a dereliction of duty becomes from another angle a realistic appraisal of the situation, a foreshadowing of the future communal course. What is, on the face of things, a deliberate aloofness may very well be a subconscious perception of personal inadequacies. With some psychological insight the intelligentsia's withdrawal becomes a defence mechanism, a

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7 This is a personal, impressionistic opinion, which cannot be substantiated statistically, because there is no breakdown into educational and occupational background of the mental health figures quoted earlier. This impression is, however, reinforced by the striking absence of any mention of this particular problem in conversations with this group, whereas it is expressed as a grave concern by all other sections of the community.
measure of self-protection. The withholding of themselves, the hoarding of possible contributions, which are so much resented by the community, become efforts by people crippled with weariness not to dissipate the inner resources which sustain them. The outward expressions of arrogance and snobbery may well be in substance a barricade of allegedly superior professional ethics to compensate for shattered expectations and bewildering loss of status and of fitting occupation.

Nevertheless, in the final analysis, the original assessment still stands: whether unwilling or unable, the intellectuals did not fulfil the leadership expectations which the community, rightly or wrongly, placed upon them.

Like the ex-servicemen caught in the snares of their retrospective errand to redeem the Polish inheritance, the intellectuals are caught in their own sterile bubble of culture. This exists in its own isolation, empty of purpose, for there is no commitment of the cultural inheritance beyond self. To those sheltering within its frail walls it offers a faint evocation of what once was; it provides a pale replica of Polish Gemütlichkeit, which bears an indeterminate relation to the present reality and is further tempered by the desolate awareness of diminishing membership ranks.

Neither group has been able to resist the pull of its particular attachment to the past, whereas the current of communal development has moved on vigorously, outgrowing the ex-servicemen and by-passing the intellectuals. The immediate future of Polish communal life seems to be in the hands of the flexible, broadly-based general organisations and of the dynamic sports groups. The more distant future lies with the ethnically hesitant second generation.
In his advice to the Poles in 1772, Rousseau places great importance on the effect of children's education upon their love of country: 'It is education that must give souls a national formation, and direct their opinions and tastes in such a way that they will be patriotic by inclination, by passion, by necessity'.

Among Melbourne Poles in the 1970s, it is also this concept which greatly engages communal endeavours. We have seen the emphasis laid on youth work by the general, ex-servicemen's and sporting associations. They all lead, encourage, support any activity which will instil some Polish spirit into their youngsters. From the description of the youth festival it is evident that no effort is spared to inject ethnic content into sport, and we will see that all youth activities are designed with the same primary object — to strike and nurture a spark of Polonism in the second generation.

These activities, considered of paramount importance by the whole community, are formally divided into language schools, scouting troops, dancing groups, summer camps. There are also less stable youth organisations, usually for older adolescents or for students. Each of these sections will now be described and evaluated in turn. Such detailed treatment seems justified not merely by virtue of its intrinsic interest and its importance to the Polish community as a means of ensuring continuity, but also because this is the only national group out of the three studied here which has formed such institutions for its young.

Rousseau, Government of Poland, p. 176.
Language Classes

Description. Polish language classes were inaugurated in 1949 in the migrant hostels. At present there are twelve junior language schools in the Melbourne metropolitan area, of which nine are located in the western suburbs. The classes are usually held on Saturday mornings in the local Catholic school or church hall and are attended by about 600 pupils aged between 6 and 14. These schools cater for the most representative cross-section of the Polish community.

The children attending them are usually Australian-born, mostly of the younger post-war settlers, of both peasant and more educated backgrounds, and whose parents are not necessarily otherwise involved in communal life. The language schools are also the only communal institution where later arrivals are equally, or at least proportionately, represented. These are often Polish-born children who use the language more at home and who are considered an asset in the classroom because their Polish is more fluent and still unadulterated by anglicisms.

The aim of the language schools is to provide a basic six year course in Polish language and culture, starting from the age of six or seven. Obviously, achievement of this aim varies greatly from school to school, depending on demand and facilities. The syllabus for these primary classes consists of elementary language learning, reading, writing and grammar. Two hours of this are followed by one hour of Polish folk-dancing, alternating with one hour of scouting.

In 1966, a senior school, the gymnasium, was initiated, to provide an advanced four year course, upon completion of which a 'matriculation' certificate is issued. The present 70-odd secondary students, mostly in their later teens, attend classes on Sunday mornings at Kosciuszko House. Standards here are fairly high. History and geography are taught as formal subjects. While there is still some language study in the form of advanced grammar and syntax, emphasis is placed on literature and study of texts. ‘Well, we do regional and economic features of Poland, then Reymont, Sienkiewicz, Mickiewicz, — you know, ‘Pan Tadeusz’ and all that. Then we do the Jagellonians and all that jazz! . . .’

A course of studies somewhat more reverently outlined by Rousseau two hundred years ago:

At twenty, a Pole ought not to be a man of any other sort; he ought to be a

2 It is interesting to record the opposition in earlier days of local authorities to hiring out premises for the teaching of ‘foreign’ ethnic languages.
Pole. I wish that, when he learns to read, he should read about his own land; that at the age of ten he should be familiar with all its products, at twelve with all its provinces, highways and towns; that at fifteen he should know its whole history, at sixteen all its laws, that in all Poland there should be no great action or famous man of which his heart and memory are not full, and of which he cannot give an account at a moment's notice.³

Since February 1973, the Polish language has been introduced within the Victorian State Education system, with an initial enrolment of ninety-two. This is carried out within the framework of the Saturday School of Modern Languages, where various national languages are taught up to Higher School Certificate, if the ethnic groups concerned show evidence of sufficient demand and the ability to provide trained teachers who are fluent speakers of the language. Nineteen seventy-five marked the first year of the inclusion of Polish in the H.S.C. examinations.⁴

On the administrative side, the language schools conform to the predictably thorough pattern of Polish associations, the local network being connected with interstate and overseas bodies. The Melbourne (and country) language schools are joined in a Victorian Federation of Polish Schools, which is a member of the Australian Federation of Polish Schools, which is in turn affiliated to a London-based roof-body, the Central Administrative Headquarters for Polish Schools Abroad (Zarzad Główny Polskiej Macierzy Szkolnej Zagranica). The latter designs the course of study from which the local curricula are adapted.

Between them the various administrative, bodies arrange for coordinating and standard-setting committees, periodic inspections, and lately, an interstate exchange scheme, whereby groups of children are hosted by parents of Polish school children of other states during school holidays.

The Victorian Federation of Polish Schools has its own representative on the committee of the Federation of Polish Organizations which makes a yearly grant towards overcoming the schools' chronic financial shortage. The remainder of the $8,9000 needed annually to run the

³ Rousseau, Government of Poland, p. 176.
⁴ There are now 20 languages accepted for the Victorian H.S.C. Of the three communities studied here, only the Polish one has striven for its language to be included. There are no language classes in the Dutch and Maltese communities, although Dutch has long been included in the H.S.C. as it is one of the subjects for Germanic Studies at the University.
schools comes from functions organised by school committees and occasional appeals within the community which supplement the minimal fees paid by the parents.

Text-books for the language schools have always presented difficulties. At the secondary level, a certain amount of Polish literature is available from the Kosciuszko House library, while geography and history teachers often make up their own notes for distribution among students. At the junior level, the problem is different.

In the early days, organisers were flooded with material from a Polish Government agency responsible for the teaching of Polish abroad. This had been rejected because of its high propaganda content: 'It was always — Russia is our friend, Russia helps us, Russia gives us. All lies! And nothing about God or religion.' American publications were given a trial period but were not found particularly suitable. The text-books in use at present are those issued by the Polish Federation in Great Britain.

It is very interesting (and indicative of changing attitudes in the community) to contrast the two prevalent opinions of teachers regarding printed material. All teachers use the prescribed text-books from England. The majority consider them 'reasonably good', although expensive and not as satisfactory as a local series would be.

Other teachers, fewer in number and usually younger in years (both later arrivals and young Poles who have graduated from the local schools), are more detached and objective in their views. Their main criticism of the London-issued primers is that they change very little in contents, method and presentation, whereas the Polish-issued primers are constantly being improved. While they agree that the latter are often grossly biased, they feel that the former also present a distorted, or at least a one-sided image: 'It's heroic, downtrodden Poland, again and again and again. Well, I mean, I know it's true, but it gets a bit top-heavy. And you can't help wondering — have we really always been only right? always only good?'

In actual practice, the situation is fairly flexible. Young Polish-Australian children continue reading the adventures of Ala and Ola and their dog As, who make their way through the Polish seasons in the traditional way, celebrating the feast-day of St Nicholas, painting eggs at Easter, joining in the midsummer festival of St John during the European harvest time. Individual teachers supplement the primers with additional teaching aids and posters obtained from travel agencies
and often with books and magazines from Poland, brought by later arrivals or by settlers returning from visits to Poland. This material is considered of high quality, especially the illustrated folk and fairy tales.

The most difficult problem faced by the language schools is the lack of teachers in general, and the lack of trained teachers in particular. These, it is felt, would not merely improve standards but also attract new pupils. ‘But where do you find such people? You must be an idealist to come in at the week-end, to teach without pay kids who are often unwilling to learn. But we have all become Australianised, materialistic, we like now to take things easy!’

There is a rapid changeover of teachers in the junior classes. Some of these are recruited from former pupils, some from later arrivals, usually better-educated women who migrated as single persons. At the secondary level, the position is more stable and classes are often taken by Polish graduates who are unable to pursue their profession here.

This is an area where non-involvement by the intelligentsia is seen as another instance of their failure to take their rightful place as leaders in communal life. This was underscored in 1972 during negotiations with the Education Department regarding inclusion of Polish in the Higher School Certificate. These revealed a far larger number than expected of Polish settlers who were qualified and willing to teach the language under the departmental scheme. This caused much acrimony in the communal circle as it was felt that such services were offered for the attendant remuneration and not for the community’s needs.

Analysis. In trying to determine the effectiveness of the language-learning program, one is faced with a much more complex task than that of establishing the number of pupils attending classes and their standard of proficiency. Indeed, estimating these attainments only serves to trigger off a whole set of more basic questions inherent in the whole language issue. Why do parents send their children to learn Polish? Is learning the language an end in itself? Why do parents and communal bodies view language learning as crucial? Why are language classes the only place where children of earlier and later migrations are equally represented? More importantly perhaps, how do the children themselves react to the demands made upon them?

Obviously, some of the motivations discussed hereafter underlie not only the language classes but also their related activities, such as scouting and dancing groups. These are dealt with separately for descriptive purposes, but the language question is too closely knit into them to analyse them separately in psychological terms.
It seems essential to try to fathom out the motivations behind the language-learning program. This issue is an important one in more ways even than in terms of the above questions. It involves not only parents and children as such, that is to say first- and second-generation migrants, but also the interaction between these generations and therefore highlights a factor of family life which does not exist in Australian families. It is an aspect of communal life proper to many ethnic groups, yet not to the other two groups studied here. Analysing it at depth now may shed some light on why the pursuit of the homeland language is a dynamic force in some national groups and not in others. It may reveal some of the psychological drives motivating linguistic behaviour which is often misunderstood or condemned by many Australians, who view it as a wilful refusal to adjust to the new country.

The answers to the questions enumerated at the beginning of this analysis often coincide and are in any case interlocked. Linking each explanation to its particular question would therefore give us only thin separate threads of an answer, not the feel of the whole complex issue of ethnic language preservation. One can perhaps get closer to the heart of the matter by sub-dividing its nature into essentials. Indeed, notwithstanding the emotional eddies which never allow lines to run quite straight, the language situation revolves on two axes. Along one axis we see the parent, as initiator, and the child, as recipient, of something of value that must be transmitted — in this case the language. At one end of the other axis are the personal aspects of the linguistic issue, a private, often emotional, affair which touches every migrant family. At the fourth end lies the communal aspect, where all the individual motivations coalesce into the corporate institution of language schools.

The reasons advanced to justify the parents' desire for their children to learn the language of their forefathers are manifold. Knowing Polish enables communication between parent and child. It will enable the children to communicate when they visit Poland. A knowledge of the homeland language will enable the growing generation to maintain a Polish identity. A second language is always useful, why not learn your own. A second language improves scholastic performance by making your 'brain more flexible'. Learning the homeland language gives the child a cultural background he would otherwise lack. A study of
Poland, its language, culture and traditions, engenders in the child pride and love for the country of origin of his parents.

Three most common and basic factors emerge from this medley of practical and idealistic reasons. The drive for the maintenance of the homeland language resolves itself around its usefulness for educational purposes, its value in heightening ethnic feeling, its role as a channel of communication.

We must now examine these three sets of reasons for learning Polish in relation to the parents, that is their own parental and personal needs in relation to the children for whom the language program is designed and in relation to the language schools which are the corporate embodiment of language.

**Parental Attitudes.** Since language learning as a purely educative process is a vast topic which deserves and receives a great deal of attention from both linguists and educationists, it is perhaps sufficient here to limit ourselves to the educational advantages of bilingualism as perceived by the Polish parents under discussion. In common with most Europeans they hold the view that *un homme qui connaît deux langues en vaut deux*, that in order to be truly educated and cultured, knowledge of another language is essential. What easier way to acquire such culture than by learning the language practised at home? If, in addition, that language can gain a credit for the Higher School Certificate then it is eminently desirable from a practical point of view. Added weight is given to this view by the increasing acceptance (even by the notoriously monolingual English-speaking nations) of the advantages of knowing a language beside one's own, whether in the context of ever-growing travel, international involvement, expanding business contacts, scientific interchanges, and even communication with, and understanding of, non-English residents in their country.

The claim that learning a second language improves scholastic performance is a rather dubious one. There seems to be no evidence to show that it will, per se, develop mental alertness or promote good study habits any more successfully than any other cumulative subject. (Nor is there, on the other hand, any substantiation for the exactly opposite view held by many Dutch and Maltese parents, that it is harmful to the child's educational advancement to burden him with a largely useless subject like the homeland language.) As far as one can tell, there is no
authoritative study on this particular point, showing for instance the number of second-generation migrants going on to tertiary study in relation to their knowledge of ethnic language and its effect on their academic career. There may very well be no such effect and each line of study proceeds independently. On the other hand, learning aptitude itself may be the nexus and not the result, that is, if the child does well at school it does not mean that this proficiency is due to learning Polish but rather that he will cope well with the demands of school and ethnic language because he is academically inclined or perhaps because more particularly he has an aptitude for languages.

The ethnic motivation for transmitting the homeland language is, in actual fact, a many-stranded one. The political character of the post-war Polish migration will be remembered. We have seen that many Poles consider the present communist-dominated Polish government as illegal and themselves as custodians of the Polish spirit abroad until the restoration of the pre-war constitutional authorities. In such circumstances, language preservation plays a vital role in the self-assumed duty of heightening Polish consciousness and of preparing the young Poles abroad for a return to the homeland.6

Less political, but nonetheless just as intense, is a feeling for Poland's long and chequered history, where the language itself, more than once suppressed, was a nationalistic symbol. Language and history thus interwoven are a source of love and pride in a past that deserves to be transmitted.

This historical continuity is itself obscurely bound up with personal continuity, a fusion of personal and historical extensions. The parental instinct to live on in one's children and to hand on one's values to them is duplicated, more faintly perhaps, in the need to continue beyond oneself in one's people. It is an unwillingness to end with self the individual and collective chain started a long time ago by others in other places.

There is also the frequent conviction that educational standards and cultural achievements were higher in Poland than in Australia. Appreciation of these can only be fostered through the language. Among the simpler people this appears as a stubborn undefined attachment to Polish ways and customs, which were better and must

therefore be kept, the use of Polish at home being again the tangible means of so doing.

Other parents see it as essential, psychologically, to establish a Polish identity for their children. It is to them rational, and a parental duty, to foster in their children pride in their Polish antecedents since they cannot give them Australian traditions and background. They see a national background as a touchstone for a child's stability. Without awareness and pride the child feels lost, bereft of solid foundations, inferior to the Australian child who can claim his environment as his heritage in a way the migrant child cannot. 'And how can you give Polish traditions if not in Polish?'

The homeland language plays an important part in the furtherance of communal aims, too. This institutional cadre through which Polonism is to be continued is envisaged in terms of its office-bearers speaking Polish. Strong ethnic organisations and ethnic continuity hinge on the preservation of the Polish language which will endow future communal bodies with a sense of Polishness.

One encounters one or more of these attitudes in all types of homes, in people of various background and at various stages of settlement. Naturally, one reason is more important than another, according to the individual. The fiercely nationalistic political motive, for instance, is most evident in early post-war arrivals. The educational angle has perhaps more weight among later settlers. But in every case, the language is seen as the means to maintain some form of Polishness. It is the primary instrument to fulfil the subtly-blended political, historical, cultural or emotional ethnic aspirations.

The preceding educational and ethnic reasons for language preservation are put forward honestly by the parents and the validity of most of them is undeniable. But they only complement, or extend, the basic elemental purpose of language learning, which is communication. Here we come closest to the well-spring of the parental drive, a not-altogether definable complex need to use the language as a bond between parent and child, as an often desirable, sometimes desperately necessary element in the family relationship.

We enter here a zone whose subtilised countenance is not easy to delineate. Language is acknowledged as one of the forces binding any social grouping: 'one of the deepest impulses toward community solidarity derives from the element of mutual intelligibility obtainable
through a common language'. It is, all the more so, a vital link between parent and child. It is also, very much indeed, a strand knitted into the individual structure of personality. For when we try to penetrate one aspect motivating language preservation, we corkscrew our way into another, for there is no bedrock of personality. There is only layer upon layer of incalculable depth where the underlying forces of instinct, heredity, impulses, longings and fears work through the cross-currents of circumstances, historical consciousness, personal and collective experiences, and so emerge into behaviour, the outward and visible sign of the rich tangled mass of the individual's inner being. And only through individuals can we trace the convolutions of language as an active principle in the parent's relationship to the child.

Language is a 'behavioural aspect of the human being' and as such serves to express the things that lie at the bottom of the parent's heart. Tenderness comes more naturally in one's native tongue, made more precious perhaps by using terms of endearment remembered from one's own childhood. Private jokes and rituals have more meaning, more encompassing warmth, if the whole family can follow a switch of language that accentuates intimacy. Frustrations, too, and the irritations of daily living can be better vented in the earthy vocabulary of the mother tongue; for some inexplicable reason, vulgarities and abuse seem to be the words most easily acquired and retained by the child!

Concern for the child's school work is displayed by many parents. Whether it is dictated by genuine interest, desire for the child's advancement or by a vicarious striving towards unrealised ambitions, this interest again necessitates some knowledge of Polish in the child to bridge the deficiencies in the parent's English.

However imperfect the child's knowledge of Polish may be, it can compensate for the parent's ignorance or poor command of English, and it means that parent and child can talk to each other, about everyday life, about school, about friends. This is a personal aspect which intersects the area of social behaviour, for this kind of basic communication not only enhances and strengthens family life but works towards adjustment and integration of the migrant family. It helps the child to understand the parent's background and to appreciate some of

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8 Sapir, quoted by Spencer, in ibid.
his difficulties, while the parent is more receptive to new ways and habits brought home by the child.

Of more urgent import in daily living is the sometimes desperate need of distressed, homebound mothers or grandparents, cut off from other contact, to have the comfort of speaking in their native tongue to their children.

Embedded in the parent's consciousness is his instinct to have a part in the child's future, inherent in parental love and feeling, since the child is an extension of oneself. This sense of forward continuity is balanced by the parent's longing to share his past (a longing not necessarily reciprocated by the child through the medium of the homeland language).

All these scattered impulses crystallise around the homeland language as a means of communication. Linguistically speaking, the child is to meet the parent half-way, so that they may journey on together. This is probably the unspoken central motivation beneath the drive for language preservation in migrant families — the parent's primitive, visceral urge to remain part of the child's life, to have his place in it, not to lose the child altogether to the alien surroundings, not to stand, mute and forsaken, outside the child's present and future.

There are vaguer, yet no less compelling motivations: the emotional attachment to the mother tongue, an inextricable element of the individual's progression through life; the uneasiness at being a stranger, more poignantly felt when allied to dispossession of a beloved country; fears of the future; feelings of alienation, of rejection. In all these emotions the homeland language can be a fastness, it can bring heartsease. It can also be a weapon against real or imagined discrimination, in the classic defensive reaction — if I'm treated like a foreigner, I will stay one, act like one, speak like one and impose my language on my children.

Bound up with all this and deeper still in the fibre of the parent is another obscure strand of motivation relating to the psychological notion of self-concept. It is inevitable that the child should outstrip the parent acculturally in the new environment. The Polish language is at least one area where the parent is superior, or more importantly, where his superiority is perceived by the child. It is important for the parent's self-esteem that it should be so, especially if he is not very successful economically. His linguistic superiority can contribute to the maintenance of his traditional role as head of the family. This is
possibly bound up with the previously seen rationale for providing the child with an ethnic identity. In his desire to provide foundations and stability for the child, the parent intuitively works to achieve self-equilibrium by establishing a framework of values wherein his own appropriate dominant place is perceived, or reaffirmed, and family balance is thereby maintained.

This feeling lurking inarticulately in the parent's subconsciousness is revealed in conversations where knowledge of Polish by the child is constantly linked with respect for parents, discipline and harmony in the home. It finds overt expression in such statements:

"If your children speak Polish, you can explain and discuss things and there is no shame for parents if they make mistakes in English or ask for children's help in English spelling. Because the children understand why this is so and they know that in Polish their parents still know much, much more than them."

From the above analysis we gain some insight into the complex parental drive for the preservation of the homeland language, some understanding of the inter-relatedness of the given and revealed reasons for transmitting it. We see, for instance, how the instinct for self-perpetuation blurs into the desire for historical continuity; how the homeland language can operate as a two-way social factor for integration; how psychological and ethnic motives can fuse, through the medium of language, to promote stability for both parent and child. We can understand how the retention of the homeland language is not a panacea for adjustment difficulties, nor is it a deliberate stumbling-block set up by recalcitrant 'New Australians'. It is rather a complex protective mechanism which can ease some of the tensions besetting new settlers.

Before going on to analyse the children's response to the study of Polish, with its educational, ethnic and emotional connotations discussed in the parental attitude, it is opportune to stress that this study was limited to parents and children involved in communal affairs, some closely, some marginally. The foregoing interpretations only apply therefore to ethnically bound families and would possibly vary from a study of non-involved families.

Similarly, the responses from which the following analysis was drawn all came from children who once again had some contact with the
Children's Attitudes. How then do Polish-Australian children react to having to learn Polish? Is the language acting successfully as a vehicle for promoting in them educational progress and ethnic feelings? Is it proving to be a channel of communication with their parents?

Starting with their general response to attendance at language classes, they regard it, not unnaturally, as an imposition, as would all children made to learn an extra subject, even devoid of emotional implications. It is a nuisance having to go and do more school work on a Saturday morning, when there seem to be a hundred better things to do. They comply with their parents' wishes although irregular attendance and a significant drop-out rate indicate wavering support. On the other hand, once the initial effort of coming to class has been made, the children, by and large, are quite happy to be there. 'You're expected to say it's a drag, everyone says it and you do too, even if you don't awfully mind coming.' The enjoyment seems to be derived not from study of the language itself, but from meeting friends, engaging in various activities within an atmosphere of Polishness, as if Polonism were given another dimension, wider than that existing at home. Once they are involved with Polish activities the children feel a certain smugness, a pleasant sense of doing something special. With characteristic inconsistency the hundred better things they had to do on Saturday mornings become, for that brief period at least, 'only mucking around'.

An interesting phenomenon is the attitude encountered at the secondary level. After persevering through the earlier years of study, mainly concerned with the technical aspect of the language, sometimes made dull by uninteresting books or uninspired teachers, the students find the syllabus at the gymnasium interesting and worthwhile. They learn 'high-school things' in Polish, the language is broadened out from childish stories and pedestrian usage in the home to a vaster concept of historical and cultural relevance. This arouses not only interest and awareness but also feelings of affection and pride. The more thoughtful ones see the intrinsic value of learning another language and feel
emotional enrichment by the fact that they have their roots in it. The more sensitive ones realise the importance language preservation has for the older generation and pursue it all the more willingly, filial duty strengthened by awakened understanding and sympathy and aroused ethnic interest.

The pleasure we saw the younger children experiencing in the Polish atmosphere of the school and its related activities is intensified at this level. There is the distinct consciousness of 'belonging', the pleasant secure feeling of being part of a group. The younger children feel that (on Saturdays at least), 'It's nice to be just with your Polish friends'. This develops into a feeling of ease at being with other young Poles when 'you can discuss Polish things that wouldn't interest Australian friends'.

That this increased involvement is not an automatic occurrence is of course evident in the significant decrease in numbers from junior to senior classes. That it does take place at all is remarkable in view of the powerful pressures against it: demands of advanced studies, inconvenience, apathy, social commitments, peasant background, the assimilatory forces of school, sport, television.

Several factors could account for this heightening of ethnic interest and emotional identification. Perhaps the youngsters concerned are the more mature of their contemporaries; perhaps they are the more academically inclined. Some of them perceive the intrinsic value of biculturalism, expressed quite charmingly by a Polish lad thus:

I feel richer for knowing the two. Really, it's a bit like having a house in town and a place in the bush. It means you're better off and you get more out of life. When you rough it out in the shack, you miss the comforts of home. When you're back in town you miss the bush, the air, the holiday feeling. That way, you see more, and you appreciate more, of each thing you have.

Certainly the home environment plays an important part, favourable attitudes and traditions of learning being reflected in the child.

Another very important factor is responsible for the young people's interest in the advanced language classes and the related activities. The more or less intense crisis of identity common to all adolescents, the what-am-I, where-do-I-come-from, where-am-I-going phase, is inevitably bound up, for second-generation migrants, with the
consciousness that their background is different from that of their Australian counterparts. This can lead, in conjunction with the adolescent's necessity to rebel, to a rejection of homeland values and a conscious Australianisation of attitudes. It can also lead in the opposite direction, to a new or increased interest in their antecedents, as in these youngsters. Thus, this new ethnic awareness is added to the adolescent need to be 'in a peer group where they can share youth consciousness', the emotional and social strains and experiences of this transitory period of life. Polish-bound activities allow them to share common background and interest in Polish traditions and culture with their peers, an extra dimension added to the bonds of youth and specific interests not present in other youth groups which act as outlet for leisure-time activities (such as Y.M.C.A. or local sports club).

Participation in ethnically-bound affairs may not last far beyond this self-questioning stage, it may not necessarily bear the expected fruit of future commitment. But it does serve as an extension of the family within the Polish circle; it eases transition into adulthood; it widens social and cultural horizons; it may deepen not only ethnic but social consciousness; it may form the basis for future adult friendships; it often provides choosing grounds for life partners.

Educationally speaking, apart from the obvious advantage of counting as a subject for the Higher School Certificate, the children find only marginal benefit from the study of the Polish language. Occasionally a point of grammar in another foreign language taught at school, such as French or German, is made clear by reference to Polish. Otherwise, they see no transfer into other subjects, they do not feel that it contributes to the development of scholastic ability.

In discussing the role of language in the promotion of ethnic feelings it is impossible to disassociate the impact of the language from its related activities, that is the study of Polish literature, history and geography, and participation in other Polish-bound groups. There is no doubt that this global emphasis induces in the second generation an awareness of Polish background, a pride in Polish culture, sometimes a love of things Polish. On the other hand, neither the urgent militant nationalism fostered in some quarters, nor the ardent ethnic continuity desired in others, seems to have come to fruition in these Australian-born youngsters.

This failure is seen conclusively in two indicative areas — return to Poland and further language transmission. All youngsters interviewed wanted to visit Poland, but not always more than other European countries. None wanted to return permanently there, even under a changed regime. The children born here considered themselves Australian, those lately arrived from Poland considered the loss of its higher educational and cultural standards more than compensated by the freedom and material advantages offered by Australia.

Regarding teaching of Polish to their own children, the prevalent feeling was that they could envisage doing so, providing their spouses were also thus inclined and providing that there were Polish language schools still in existence. The underlying relevance of this attitude seems to be two-fold. Firstly, these children are matter-of-fact about marrying non-Poles or Poles not ethnically bound. Secondly, on the question of language transmission, they see themselves in a passive role. In other words, they may, or they may not, send their children to language classes, but they do not visualise themselves organising or running the sort of educational program which exists at present.

We now come to the area of communication, which we established as the parents' strongest motive for preserving the homeland language. We saw this drive compounded of several closely-knit ingredients, the Polish tongue being an element in the parent/child relationship in daily life, in prosaic intercourse, as well as in more deeply felt needs, such as affection, personal image, appropriate place in the child's life, self-continuity. The role of the language as communication channel also diffuses into that of agent working towards family integration and ethnic continuity.

How does this many-stranded role assigned by the parents to the language affect the recipients, the children?

The most obvious general attitude underlying the children's response in this area is that the language is not, for them, the emotionally charged issue it is for their parents. It is not, for them, an integral part of their inner being as it is of their parents'. Some of them grow to love the language, but it is not from within, they relate to it as an outside point of reference. Their attenuated blander ethnic attachment sees it

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10 The one apparent exception was a 17 year old girl who declared she did not want to visit Poland. When pressed more closely she admitted with comical dismay that she was afraid of getting emotionally entangled with Polish boys: 'And how do I know if they really love me or if they just want to use me as an entry permit to Australia?'
only as one focus of Polish identification, reinforcing the appeal of other Polish activities certainly, but not inseparable from them.

This is clearly manifested in their dealings with peers. The children enjoy the Polish-centred activities but even while engaged upon them the Australian-born children do not, as a rule, speak Polish with their likewise Polish-descended friends. Where they are expected to express themselves in Polish, the children make the effort to do so. The point is that it is an effort and that the result is often a hybrid tongue that dismays teacher and parent. Seen in another light this situation is the manifestation of a sort of integral biculturalism, innate and unself-conscious, arising from natural contact with both Polish and Australian environments.

This well-adjusted biculturalism seems typified in a little scene recently witnessed, where a Polish-Australian lad speaking in the broadest 'strine', was complimenting his partner on her pleasing appearance, while both were waiting in their brilliant folk-costumes to go on stage to perform a Polish national dance in celebration of Australia Day.

This delightful episode reveals that both cultures can be entwined in an intrinsic and enriching manner. This can only be achieved by a natural exposure to both environments with due respect accorded to both cultures. For the second-generation migrant to achieve painless transition to adult stability he must have the kind of emotional security that can be gained from standing confidently astride his two worlds, not falling in between them.

Moving on to more specific reactions, the majority of the children interviewed found it useful to know Polish, especially when dealing with older people, being involved in Polish religious or national celebrations, or getting the most out of Polish-bound activities. However, a great many found its usefulness outweighed by the effort and difficulties inherent in the attainment of linguistic proficiency. They 'got by' with what they picked up at home and at the elementary classes. If only the Polish language could be acquired 'in one go, like an injection', they would be very pleased to be thus injected.

The extent of spoken bilingualism varies considerably from home to home. For instance the more recent arrivals may speak only Polish with their offspring, with an occasional word in English thrown in by the latter. Earlier settlers may speak only or mostly Polish to their children, who respond only or mostly in English. Or again, parents and children may speak in varying mixtures of both languages. These are usually
unpremeditated arrangements gradually evolved over the years of adjustment.

There are other, unhappier situations where the parent or the child cannot, or will not, make any compromise and the result is friction, hostility or, possibly worse, silence, withdrawal, alienation.

It is relevant here to dwell a little on the friction provoking aspect present in language preservation. Although we have seen that the children do not feel or think so deeply about the homeland language as their parents do, there is no doubt that this issue can, and does, generate tension between the two generations. This does not always take the generally accepted stereotyped view of the parent grimly pressing the unwelcome subject and the consequent resentment in the child.

Interestingly enough, the conflict can arise because the child was not made to learn Polish. He may get involved in Polish activities in his later teens, or consciousness of his Polish antecedents may be magnified during his questioning adolescent phase. It is not uncommon then that he reproach his parents for failing to make the effort of sending him to Polish school, for not showing enough concern for his heritage. He feels he has been cheated of something that is rightfully his, that there is something missing in his background, like a suddenly felt gap in a wall against which one is leaning to survey the way ahead.

The more usual pattern of friction on the language issue is a complex reciprocal warping of the communication lines in the family — the child clashing with the parent, imposition on the one hand, revolt on the other; each further response provoking another deepening hostile reaction. The parent is bitter at the rejection and withdraws behind a barrier of speaking only Polish; the child refuses involvement with Polish activities; the parent occasionally abuses or berates the child in front of others, 'washes his hands' of him. The classic deterioration progress occurs: disassociation from each other's interests, endeavours and expectations; breakdown of parent/child relationship; alienation with much bitterness and suffering on either side.

Yet, one cannot help wondering whether this kind of conflict really hinges only on the issue of the homeland language. It seems rather that the language factor does not so much create antagonism as reflect it, that it is but a symptom of the feelings between parent and child. After all, human relationships are not so single-stranded and it seems more probable that attitude towards the language is dependent on the whole of the family climate. And, where this is hostile, then parental authority
on the one side, and juvenile rebellion on the other, will include the homeland language among the reasons for discord, or will seize upon it as a focus for a greater number of not always palpable grievances or inadequacies.

Also relevant to the relationship between parent and child on the language issue is the reported element of shame experienced by children whose parents speak the homeland language in public.\(^{11}\) This was not encountered in this selective sample of Polish children. Sometimes they felt embarrassment, in case the use of Polish was misinterpreted by Australians as discourtesy or 'talking behind their backs'. Sometimes there was a certain smugness that they themselves were able to say things that others would not understand. There was even a typically adolescent mixture of the naive and the defiant at being conspicuous by speaking Polish. Generally it was accepted as natural that Polish be spoken by their parents at home and outside it.

This attitude, contrary to the usually reported one, could be due to the fact that Australian society, conditioned by twenty-five years of steady migration, is more receptive than in earlier years to hearing foreign languages in the street. Or it could be that most of these children live in areas of higher migrant density where various languages are spoken and accepted matter-of-factly. It could also be that these particular children have a more positive attitude towards their parents' language and therefore are not ashamed of its public display.

This matter of positive attitude seems to be the key to the whole question of parent/child conflict on the issue of ethnic language. The direction and intensity of the juvenile attitude depends on the context in which the child perceives the homeland language. This context is usually a concentric pattern enfolding the family unit, the community, and society at large.

If the child sees Polish as his parents' means of communication, different certainly but equivalent in value to English; if he realises that it is difficult for them to learn English and impossible to shed Polish; then he will accept the homeland language as a natural, integral part of his family life and of his own development. Conversely, if he only sees Polish as the external sign of his parents' foreign-ness, both parents and language will appear out of place in the Australian environment,

\(^{11}\) Johnston, op. cit., pp. 55 and 256. Among other psychological difficulties experienced by the bilingual child, this author names shame of the ethnic language and antagonism to it.
inferior, to be ashamed of. This negative view is bound up with the point made above that the language factor is but one element in the family relationship. Whatever activates the conflict — be it personal factors, clashes on language and other issues, frustrations — there is a wholesale, undifferentiated rejection of parents, language, background, values.

The communal context can sometimes alter this latter negative view, but generally it reinforces the attitude established at home. This is where ethnic schools and other Polish-oriented activities succeed in presenting the homeland language in a favourable positive light. Here the child perceives that the language has wider relevance than hitherto suspected. It is not merely the medium through which often uneducated parents express the trivia of daily life or crudely vent their exasperations. The language acquires wider implications for the youngsters in the language schools and in the communal circle. They perceive that it is spoken outside the home by their peers as well as by other adults. It is an added source of enjoyment to their leisure-time activities. It is given value and respect by its historical and cultural connotations.

The third of these concentric circles defining the child's view of his parents' language is the attitude of society at large. The language gains in stature by being seen as something of value outside the communal sphere — the daily newspaper's review of a Polish film for instance, the publicity accorded to visiting Polish artists, the acceptance of the language into the Higher School Certificate. Such formal approval confers legitimacy upon an element of migrant life hitherto greatly depreciated. This increased standing in turn rebounds favourably on the parent/child relationship and on the credit of the communal institutions which brought about this validity.

Yet another area of language learning where there is a close link between the attitudes of parent and child is that of attendance at ethnic schools, mentioned in general terms earlier in this discussion. It is readily apparent that here the child's reaction is primarily dependent on the perceived parental attitudes. If the parents deem it their duty to preserve the homeland language and diffuse this through their actions, the children will accept this and attend classes, even if they grumble. If the parents impose their choice without clarifying their purpose or giving it credibility in daily life, then the children may still attend but
may also rebel against either school or parent or both. If the parents are hesitant upon the value of language preservation, if they waver in their intentions or even in their practical arrangements, the children are quick to seize upon this to their advantage and they will use cunning tactics to breach their parents' irresolution.

Naturally, other influences come into play in this situation: opinions and actions of friends, transport difficulties, availability of language classes, social or scholastic pressures. Basically, however, where parents feel secure in their right to insist upon language preservation and stand firm upon regular attendance, children will comply more or less willingly. Where parents vacillate or appear insincere, children will find ways to avoid attendance or drop out altogether. The parents then feel resignation, disappointment or bitterness.

Curiously in some cases, the result is a rejection in their turn by the parents of the value of language preservation. It is hard to say why this occurs. Perhaps they are the kind of individuals who are easily swayed and in this instance abandon their set of values to switch over to their children's. Perhaps their initial commitment was too weak to withstand the difficulties of carrying it through and, by rationalising their rejection, they excuse in their own eyes the line of least resistance they have followed.

To sum up the above it is useful to return to our earlier illustration of the homeland language issue and examine the axis linking parent to child. The parents' end appears as a heavy, emotionally-vibrant cluster of inseparable ingredients. For them the language issue is compounded of deeply-felt personal needs, involving both themselves and their children, and of collective and historical motivations in both past and future dimensions. All these work together to create a drive to use the homeland language as a means of achieving educational aspiration for their children, and, above all, communication with them. Beyond the personal, the language is seen as an instrument to arouse ethnic awareness and lead on to continuity.

All these expectations, transmitted along the axis of language, reach the children in an attenuated form. They have not faded completely but have tapered down to arrive at the receiving end in a paler guise, far less substantial, far less significant. For the parents, language preservation, with all its motivating forces, is at the core of their being. For the children, it is only a strand of their life, at best an enrichment, at worst a focus for hostility and rejection.
It is an inevitable transmutation. The thickly braided drive to transmit the language is refracted, as it were, into slender single threads of ethnicity by the prismatic effect of another environment, other times, other circumstances. Furthermore, it is over-loaded with demands, and these multi-dimensional needs cannot be requited by one single factor. Proficiency in Polish can enrich culturally but cannot develop, per se, academic performance. The homeland language eases communication but it cannot determine, per se, a satisfactory relationship between parent and child; it cannot allay misgivings and fears, reaffirm self-esteem or restore harmony, it cannot secure the parent a place in his child's future. Knowing Polish and speaking it, however clumsily, gives the youngsters a feeling of ease and affinity with other Polish-born young Australians, but it does not induce them to preserve the language for their children. Their parents' language contributes to the development of ethnic awareness in the second generation, it heightens the pleasure of participating in ethnically bound affairs but it does not, per se, ensure ethnic continuity.

This is a situation where external pressures (such as vigorous renewal of immigration from Poland, or hostile attitudes in Australia) could stimulate a revival of ardent organised ethnicism. It is not a climate where Polonism can flourish from within, to kindle a Polish flame in a third generation.

Communal Aspects. We now arrive at the last sector of the language issue: the communal institutions which embody the relevant personal aspirations of the Polish settlers. Are they successful in fulfilling the goals of the parents who created them? In this section we will try to gauge the achievements of the language schools in terms of specific results, both quantitative and qualitative.

Absolute numbers are impossible to establish. The approximate figure of 600 is given as the annual attendance over the last few years. This is probably the optimum enrolment figure, that is, not taking into account irregular attendances and those pupils who drop out during the year.

On the other hand, the very significant cumulative aspect of attendance must not be ignored. Over the 20-odd years of their existence, the language schools have ministered to a succession of pupils whose total numbers are obviously far larger than the annual enrolment. Over this period an estimated 3500 to 4000 youngsters of
Polish descent have pursued Polish language studies for an individually varying number of years. Of these youngsters about 250 have successfully completed a 10 year course of study, the first graduating in 1970.

These figures seem to represent a respectable measure of success in a community whose numbers have increased but slowly. Taking the Polish Federation's own figures of some 1120 children of Polish extraction at present residing in Victoria,\textsuperscript{12} the yearly enrolment of 600 at ethnic classes, that is just over 50 per cent of estimated school-age children, represents a very fair achievement of parental expectations.

Yet communal leaders are rather disheartened by the general attitudes and feel that they have failed in their purpose. They claim that the community is apathetic; that parents cannot be bothered driving their children to classes or do not want to disrupt week-end activities; that living in a free comfortable society breeds materialistic aspirations; that even the early idealists have grown weary, or been overtaken by the urge to have better furniture or a grander car. The teachers also feel that they are labouring against heavy odds: reluctant children; parents who act as if 'they do you a favour'; irregular attendance; peasant background and no learning traditions; lack of discipline; modern educational trend to 'amuse' children.

It is generally acknowledged that neither the quality of the teaching nor the standard reached by the pupils is very high; that the children commit 'atrocities' to the language and that their Polish is riddled with anglicisms; that they read very little Polish; that they speak it very little, either at home or with peers and that their knowledge is therefore only passive.

How does this subjective pessimism square with the concrete results we have observed earlier — the moderately successful statistics, the sustained interest, the growth of schools, their excellent organisation, and so on?

Looking at the situation dispassionately, it seems that such dismally coloured self-evaluation greatly underrates present achievements. On the other hand, the sometimes carping complaints about attitudes, standards, materialism, all cloak a current of real fear about the decline and eventual demise of the language schools. This presentiment of failure regarding the future is probably justified.

This apparently contradictory assessment requires elaboration. Why should something that is successful today fail tomorrow? The answer depends on what criteria are adopted. Does one interpret the situation in terms of actual achievements, of what has in effect been done; or does one measure the situation in how far it falls short from the ideal goal?

If the former, then the language program up to date has a long list of accomplishments to its credit. The classes have functioned efficiently for about twenty-five years and in that time they have expanded and consolidated their own and allied youth activities. They have touched, with greater or smaller impact, the lives of thousands of children of Polish descent. They have enlarged for some of them the Polish language beyond daily usage into a perception of history and literature, a limited imperfect knowledge undoubtedly but better than nothing, and better than what could have been provided by largely uneducated parents. They have imparted one strand of ethnicism which has been reinforced by complementary activities and has, in turn, endowed these with emotional richness. In the quarter-century of their existence the language schools have undergone recessions and revivals, such as the unexpected growth of interest which promoted the formation of the secondary course in 1966. It is very likely that the inclusion of Polish as a subject for the H.S.C. will again prove a boost to enrolment and attendance. This will also undoubtedly raise the frequently deplored quality and standard of the language as taught at the language schools.

More importantly, the classes have presented the language in a positive context, not as an outward sign of alien-ness to be ashamed of but as something of value, part of a heritage worthy of pride and preservation. In so doing, they have promoted the psychological stability obtained by an unself-conscious self-respecting biculturalism. The schools' involvement in communal events where Polish is used (such as the sports festival, religious and national celebrations) further widens and enhances the validity of the language program. This increased status is confirmed in the eyes of the children by the acceptance of ethnic languages by Australian society. Inclusion of Polish in the H.S.C., description in the news media of such events as mass celebrated in Polish during the Eucharistic Congress, or the opening of the Polish Marian Chapel (February 1973), all help to confer legitimacy in the wider world on an aspect of their background hitherto confined to the communal sphere.
These specific results are accompanied by less tangible but no less important benefits. While purists condemn the quality of teaching and standards in the language classes, most parents are satisfied with some form of communication: 'Even if we only talk about the Flintstones, as long as we talk to each other'. Beyond language itself, the schools offer facilities and encouragement for scouting and dancing groups, camps and interstate exchanges. In so doing, they not only increase ethnic awareness, they also give the children a sense of belonging, they add an ethnic bond to the solidarity experienced by adolescents engaged in leisure-time activities within their peer group. This in turn works in favour of the emotional stability that a soundly structured biculturalism can offer.

What of the further striving towards the ideal of language and ethnic continuity beyond the present school generation?

It is in the nature of things that it will end in failure, and this through the interaction of two major forces, one external, the other internal. The former consists, of course, of the strong assimilatory tendencies of modern environment. Educative processes, the drive of competitive materialism, mobility, mass media, unrestricted contacts in school, work, neighbourhood, all combine to produce a levelling climate, an urge towards conformity. These pressures operate within a generally tolerant host society, whose responses to manifestations of ethnicism range from indifference to resentment, but have not been hostile enough to provoke intense reaction.

Yet, these assimilatory pressures, powerful though they may be, could have been withstood a little longer, were it not for the eroding effect of an inner decline, taking place at the same time. It is this organic weakening of the ethnic fibre that concerns us here, since we are trying to look at ethnic life from within. It seems appropriate to enlarge on the probable internal breakdown of linguistic and general Polonism, since ethnic continuity is carried on through the children, and since the language is the sinews of ethnic transmission.

Yet, it is the language that fails first. It does so precisely because it is the vehicle of communication and therefore particularly vulnerable to the effects of environment. The slang, the anglicisms, the adulterations that infiltrate the children's spoken Polish are inevitable. The home and ethnically bound activities can offer but meagre, token steadfastness against the all-pervasive influence of the English word, spoken, read and written at school, work, play, in the shops, on television. The
demands of daily life erode even the adults' knowledge of their mother tongue — 'I wouldn't have a clue how to say sewerage or municipal rates in Polish'. The settlers of twenty years' standing have lost touch with the changes and developments of Polish, since language is a living thing. Their Polish has become inadequate to cover the trappings of comfort and the other realities of their current life, the 'mixmaster', the 'wall-to-wall carpets', the 'stereogram', 'long-service leave', 'income-tax deductions'.

Thus the language tapers down, in vocabulary range and in usage, even for the adults. It is no longer used for practical purposes by the young people moving into adulthood. It has ceased to be a cohesive system of communication and has become a collection of words used by them for Sunday best, as it were, for special purposes, family visits, communal celebrations. Like all tools handled but rarely it grows stiff and rusty, its use becomes unfamiliar.

So too with dancing, folklore and other activities, for failure of language heralds failure of other forms of ethnic expression. They may last a little longer than the language because they are pleasurable and require no great effort. The youngsters can learn Polish folk-dances or prepare Christmas ornaments in the Polish tradition while chatting in English. But here too, passive knowledge, lack of expertise, absence of emotional intensity, make of their heritage a debilitated, featureless Polonism, altogether too frail and insubstantial a structure to permit of transmission.

This is an inevitable progression. Up to now, the various aspects of Polonism with which the second generation can identify themselves have been infused into them by their parents and by communal institutions created by that generation. These people and the motivations that led them to create these institutions are living links with the past, primary sources of Polonism.

But right from the first Australian-born generation onwards, Polonism becomes second-hand, an acquired background, something altogether different from a living tradition bred in the bone, part and parcel of one's being. That is the essential organic cause of the inevitable ethnic decline. From the first Australian-born generation, Polonism is cut off from its roots, and any rootless plant, no matter how carefully and fervently tended, must eventually wither and die.

Each natural progression of life takes Polonism away from its origins. Each time Polonism is handed down it is changed and diminished. The
Polish-born parents, steeped in Polonism, have endeavoured to transmit this ethos, though they themselves realise the inroads made by twenty-five years of living abroad.

The next generation is balanced with more or less equipoise over the Polish and Australian cultures. But the Polonism of these young people is contrived, a purpose superimposed on their life, not an integral part of their being. It is valid and valuable without a doubt. It can be culturally enriching. It has undeniable emotional and psychological advantages. But it is different, narrower and shallower. Their sense of ethnicism derives from outward forms, not from feeding at the source. Its common denominator is not direct Polish experiences but once removed modes of ethnic expression — linguistic, cultural, historical, religious — pressed upon them. It is a semblance of Polish traditions fabricated for them by their parents in the Australian environment. It is probable that these contrived forms will eventually be reduced to a single focus of social identification. They will feel at ease with one another because they share a similar background of Polish extraction and Polish-centred activities in their youth. Their Polonism is not merely different from their parents', it is also passive. They are at the receiving end of ethnic transmission and it is doubtful if they will have the know-how, the emotional need, the vital elan to transmit either the essence of Polish tradition, or its forms, in turn to their own children.

However, this third generation will not need the buttressing so essential to the generation in transition. Twice-removed from Polish sources it will have sprung its own roots in Australia. The ardent Polonism of its grandparents, the attenuated Polish-Australian blend of its parents, will be resolved for them into a surname, a few remembered words of Polish, perhaps a vague stirring of interest at things Polish, an impalpable feeling, altogether a gossamer thing.

**Polish Scouting Movement**

**Description.** The Australian Polish Scouting Movement was formed at the Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel in 1950. Melbourne has now eight troops numbering about 140 boys and girls in the 11-15 age range and there are about 50 cubs in two packs. As with most Polish organisations administration is formal and there are wide ramifications. The troops are numbered in order of formation for the whole of Australia and Melbourne has the earliest (the 1st, formed in 1950) and the most recent (the 16th, formed in 1968). There are sixteen troops of Scouts in
Australia and thirteen troops of Guides. These are grouped into five 'districts' — Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth. The state districts are governed by the Australian Federation of Polish Scouts whose headquarters alternate biennially between Melbourne and Sydney. The Federation of Polish Scouts is affiliated with the Federation of Polish Societies and with the Polish Scouting-Movement-in-Exile, whose headquarters are in London. The Polish scouts are in contact with the Victorian Scouting Movement and attend some of their functions as guests. There is no affiliation because the latter does not accept ethnic units.

The Polish Scouting-Movement-in-Exile, together with its disseminated branches, share the pre-war Polish Scouting constitution, whose aims are in accordance with those of the world-wide organisation: development of character through activities, and preparation to serve their country as useful citizens. Polish scouts all over the world wear the same uniform of khaki shirts and shorts with berets for boys, grey dresses and hats for girls, plus coloured scarf and lanyards.

In Melbourne, the Polish Scouts' communication needs are served by the Polish Weekly which carries a monthly page of scouting activities. Since 1969, a half-yearly magazine Be Prepared (Czuwaj) has been published for Australia-wide distribution and there is a duplicated, irregular newsletter for the cubs.

The scouts meet fortnightly, alternating with folk-dancing groups, usually after language classes and at the same centres, Polish Houses, Catholic schools, church halls. Their activities include the usual scouting games, tests, parades, etc. There are a few traditional Polish activities such as making toys and decorations for Christmas, gathering 'pussy-willow' in August and storing it in a dark place until Easter when it is blessed on Palm Sunday. The language spoken is Polish, interspersed with English on the part of the children.

The most important purpose behind the Polish scouts' program is the transmission of the Polish spirit and traditions, particularly their manifestations in the pre-war Polish Scouting movement, for in the present Polish scouts is vested the communal hope for future leadership. Emphasis is laid therefore on the religious significance of the scouts' oath to serve God and Country (the word 'God' having been dropped by the present movement in Poland). Much attention is paid to the heroic role played by Polish scouts during the war when they distinguished
themselves in the armed services and in the underground, particularly during the Warsaw uprising, where they were organised into three 'battalions' and ran such essential services as the post-office.

The overall endeavour is to make the children realise that their role is to replace the dead heroes of the Polish Scouting Movement, that they must lead a life that makes the latter's sacrifices worthwhile, and that Polish continuity and future leadership depend on them.

Analysis. As with other institutions designed for the young, an assessment of the Polish Scouting Movement must be made from two angles — the aspirations of parents and founders and the reactions of the youngsters themselves. Much has been written in the section dealing with the language schools that is, of course, also applicable to the Polish Scouting Movement. To avoid repetition, discussion will be limited to the major differentiating aspect of this institution, namely the expectations for future communal leadership lavished on the Polish Scouting Movement.

It was no arbitrary choice that designated the Polish scouts for this role, but a natural extension of the Polish Scouting Movement's long tradition of service and heroism. It was this spirit of patriotism that the founders sought to foster, in 1950, when they felt it necessary to initiate organised activities in a place like the migrant hostel where working parents and idle children — unsettled, uprooted, alien and in exile — faced the dangers of demoralisation and potential delinquency.

Nor was it unnatural that the ex-servicemen should play a leading role in the development of the movement in Melbourne. As we have seen, they were deeply involved in the organisational life of the community. Many were themselves former scouts. Moreover the movement had assumed a para-military character during the war years. Thus the ex-servicemen, who considered themselves the conscience of the community, viewed the scouts as fitting repositories of the Polish inheritance, worthy heirs who would guard it when they themselves had passed on.

Firmly entrenched in the past, the ex-servicemen used the same method to imbue the Polish scouts with their particular vision of continuity, coiled around military valour and past glories. They wrote commemorative articles for them, they made the scouts their standard bearers for communal occasions, they sponsored a delegation of Polish scouts to represent Australia at the twenty-fifth commemorative services...
Institutions for the Young

at Monte Cassino. The ex-servicemen also handed over to the local Polish scouts and guides the restored grave of a nineteenth century Polish patriot, to be maintained by them as a national shrine for the Polish Community in Melbourne.15

However, it would be wrong to assume that the ex-servicemen were the sole moving force behind the Polish Scouting Movement. Though they looked upon these youngsters as their special responsibility and groomed them for leadership through knowledge and emotional involvement, all the communal institutions shared in the task of weaving into the movement the various elements of Polishness such as religion, language, history, traditions. Even in practical matters, such as replacing clothes and equipment destroyed in a fire, the community and the ethnic newspaper responded in unison.

The total effect of communal endeavours seems to have been the provision, by the general community, of a broad basis of Polishness for the future leaders; and the firing, by the ex-servicemen, of the youngsters' spirit into a flame that was intended to burn, fiercely Polish, into the subsequent generation.

The passing years helped to set more firmly those two motives which, while close enough in the beginning, began to diverge in time. Just as in the general community there occurred a widening separation between the retrospective obsessions of the ex-servicemen and the aspirations of the majority of Polish settlers to establish themselves in Australia while retaining a Polish identity, so there grew a corresponding gap within the senior leadership of the Polish Scout Movement.

The move to wean the Movement away from its traditional militaristic inclination and base its objectives in the reality of current circumstances is clearly illustrated in the initial issue of its magazine, Be Prepared.

Set on one page is an impassioned affirmation of the actuality of the struggle to restore independence to Poland and the Polish scouts' important role in this goal: 'If the Scouts take over the tradition of the Combatants, Poland will not be lost.'14

Yet, on another page, the scouts' role is presented in a different light.

15 Captain Rakowski, a participant of the 1830 uprising in Poland, arrived in Australia during the second uprising of 1862 to act here as an emissary of the Polish Revolutionary Government. He died in Melbourne and was buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery in Carlton.

The first part of the Polish Scouts' Oath, dealing with service to God and Poland, is annotated thus: 'To serve Poland you don't have to fight your enemy with a weapon — Scout or Guide can also serve Poland through knowledge of Poland, her history and literature, and by spreading this information to Australian friends.'

This dual pull — the clinging to the past and the necessity to look to the future — is evidenced further in the different attitudes underlying, on the one hand, the numerous pictures and articles dealing with Polish valour at Monte Cassino and the Battle of Britain, the pages devoted to the courage and gallantry of young scouts during the Warsaw uprising; and on the other hand, the different drift, but no less stirring tone, of the editorial.

The latter takes the older generation to task for allowing the youth question to remain marginal while they stay involved in politics and 'are always ready for war'. It claims that, as a result, the youth is alienated and not prepared to take over responsibility from the political émigrés, 'although it is time to change the guard after 24 years of migration'. The editorial concludes that the one 'ray of hope is the Polish Scouts Movement, the only youth group with traditions and a program of leadership for the coming generation'.

Despite such positive statements and notwithstanding their hopes and dedication, the adult leaders view the future of the Movement with misgivings. The crucial problem is the lack of young leaders. The older people recognise the limitations of adult leadership, but find it increasingly hard to recruit young Australian-born Poles to take over this time-consuming role from them, largely because there are so many other demands made on them at this age — studies, sport, romantic attachments, and so on.

Equally vital to the survival of the Movement is a new direction, a fundamental change of policy. This is envisaged not as a reversal of past principles but as an extension of them, a future built on past traditions. However, while it has been relatively simple to use the past as a firm basis for the movement up to date, a conception of future goals for the 1970s and beyond has not yet eventuated.

Nothing illustrates this failure more clearly than the sense of futility exuding from the international conference of the Polish Scouting-

15 Ibid.
16 Ibid.
Movement-in-Exile, held in London in 1970. The only decisions taken dealt with relatively minor matters: a clause allowing girls to act as standard bearers; a relaxation of rules against smoking for senior scouts; a ban on the use of drugs. On major matters, however, the results of the conference were inconclusive. Yet all those present knew that the survival of the Movement depended on basic changes in its whole philosophy. It seems that the leaders were still too closely bound with the life and moods of yesterday to be able to formulate a re-orientation that would appeal to present second-generation young Poles, let alone future offspring.

What about these young Australians of Polish descent? How do they view the Polish Scouting Movement? How willing is their participation? There is no doubt that all the youngsters interviewed thought highly of the Movement and enjoyed its camps and general activities. Further questioning evinced the response that the Polish Movement gave them several valuable things that the Australian Movement could not give. Because it was smaller, it allowed more individual attention and interest in personal development. It also allowed more contact between boys and girls in joint camps and gave opportunities to form relations with interstate counterparts and links with overseas branches.

One sees here an interesting shift of emphasis: the children perceive the social aspects of the Movement as the primary source of satisfaction, more important to them that the ethnic objectives of the founders.

At the same time it would be misleading to ignore the fact that ethnicity is woven through their attachment to the Polish Scouting Movement. They derive a sense of belonging through contacts with peers of the same background and through participation in a small group which extends and enriches the Polishness of their home. In addition, through the emphasis placed on the traditions and historical background of their movement, they develop an awareness of Polish cultural and patriotic traditions, as well as of the communal expectations resting upon them.

Yet here, once again, there is an evident shift of emphasis, perhaps more accurately an attenuation of the original purpose. For the founders of the Polish Scouting Movement in Melbourne twenty-five years ago, the duties of the local Polish scouts were to carry on the traditions of the pre-war Polish Scouting Movement, since this could not be done in Poland; to maintain the Polish spirit in exile until such time as freedom returned to Poland.
The youngsters today accept in principle the role in which they were cast, that of replacing the dead heroes of the Polish Scouting Movement. This means, in idealistic terms, to carry on the struggle for Polish independence, and, in specific terms, to train as future communal leaders. They get more or less emotionally involved at Polish ceremonies. They are more or less articulate regarding their aims and probably quite sincere, even when giving the impression of parroting their elders' utterances.

But in practice the children have failed to respond adequately to the vehement retrospective patriotism devised for them. In practice, their ideals are subordinated to the exigent realities of current life in Australia. London politics are remote, dismissed as futile, unreal, 'living in the past as my father does'. Even the shrine handed into their care in the middle 1960s is neglected and forgotten in the middle 1970s. It is doubtful if many of them are even aware of its existence.

The Polish Scouting Movement is undoubtedly for them a focus of Polish identification, but primarily in terms of leisure-time activities, of enjoyment in the company of peers. They fully expect to abandon it eventually if it clashes with more demanding pursuits or when they have outgrown it. They usually regret this but accept it as part of unavoidable development.

To recapitulate this assessment, it would seem that the founders of the Polish Scouting Movement in Melbourne have succeeded in establishing an institution for the young which has functioned for a quarter of a century. During this period they have provided opportunities for Polish-centred activities for young Poles in earlier years and for the present Australian-born generation. By the emphasis laid on the traditions of the Polish Scouting Movement and its religious, historical and military links, they have created another layer of Polishness for the youngsters and induced in them an awareness of their special role.

Their intense earnestness of purpose has not succeeded beyond this cognitive stage. They have only evoked a pale replica of the response they were seeking to arouse. They have not transmitted their particular brand of patriotism, touched with old sorrows and fierce aspirations, to the Melbourne Polish Scouts. Nor have they fired the latter with the determination to fulfil the expectations of continuity and leadership lavished upon them.

The Movement itself seems to have passed its numerical peak. Despite
occasional fluctuations and renewals of interest it is doubtful if it will survive beyond the lifetime of the present Polish-born leadership. It is significant that this 'old brigade' is still guiding the movement in the 1970s.

As for the youngsters themselves, they regard the movement with affection. They enjoy its activities and envisage continued attendance — as long as this does not interfere with other demands. The Polish Scouting Movement is for them another element in the amalgam of Polishness that gives them an enriching and stabilising background. Their respectful awareness of Polish scouting traditions makes a comforting glow but does not ignite a fire to project Polonism into the next generation.

Some of these boys and girls will probably emerge as leaders of a future Polish group, but this will not be a direct consequence of their membership of the Polish Scouting Movement alone. It will be rather the result of personality and circumstances working together with the various accretions of Polonism, which undoubtedly include the scouts. More importantly, these youngsters will be leaders of a different kind of Polish community — smaller, bicultural, ethnically anaemic. They will know, and possibly love, their Polish antecedents, but there will be no trumpet call in their souls, the past will not exert a compelling pull at their heartstrings.

Polish National Dance Group
Description. Whereas the Polish scouts are looked upon as the élite of the youth organisations in the sense that they are groomed to form the nucleus of Polish continuity, Polonez is regarded as the showpiece of the community. It is the official Polish National Dance Group, representative of the community and not to be confused with the suburban dancing classes held after language lessons. This group is composed of about forty senior members (16-23 years old), most of them Australian-born and several of them at secondary or tertiary institutions. About sixty junior 'reserves' constitute a pool for future performers.

Started in the 1950s under the name Zacheta, this group went through several cycles until 1965, when it was formally reconstituted as a non-profit making, self-supporting, youth organisation whose objective is to promote and perform Polish folk-dances. It then adopted its present name. Under an executive committee of six, headed by a
president, Polonez has become stabilised and has improved the quality and number of performances. It boasts the services of a choreographer and a music director who runs the group's orchestra, instrumented and styled as a Polish village band.

The troupe's repertoire consists of traditional national dances, such as the internationally-known polonaise and mazurka, as well as regional folk-dances from Kurpie or Rzeszow, for instance. The colourful costumes, some of which are genuine homespun garments imported from Poland, represent the traditional finery still worn at village festivities.

Polonez appears at most communal functions and presents an annual full-scale theatrical performance of songs and dances which has been favourably reviewed in both Polish and Australian press. Outside the Polish circle, the company participates in various events such as international concerts during the Melbourne Moomba Festival and Australia Day celebrations and the Golden Wattle Festival of Maryborough. It has performed in Canberra, at the Morshead Home for Veterans, and in front of government and diplomatic audiences.

Analysis. It is relatively easy to account for the success of Polonez as a communal dancing group. For one thing the material itself — the songs, costumes, music and dances of Polish country life — is immensely appealing to both participants and audience. For another thing, ethnic groups are particularly tolerant of home-grown entertainment, all the more so if their offspring are performing, or if their own nostalgia is awakened. But it would be doing Polonez an injustice to classify it as merely a mediocre, amateurish ensemble, nor would it explain its continuing appeal and the reputation it enjoys outside the Polish circle. These are built on very high artistic standards and clearly stated principles, implemented by a sound and efficient organisation.

It was possible to build up high standards because of this ethnic group's particular composition. The very small number of Polish intellectuals active in the communal sphere had enough knowledge between them to devise a folklore program to appeal to the majority of settlers of peasant origin, who formed receptive audiences and were eager to enlist their children's participation. Right from its earliest days,

17 Martin, J., Community and Identity: refugee groups in Adelaide, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1972, p.39 also comments on the professional talents available in the Polish community of Adelaide.
Polonez commanded the expertise and devoted services of experts in ethnology, choreography, music, all the more willing to offer their know-how for being unable to practise their skills professionally. Thus a wide repertoire could be conceived and carried out at a high artistic level, while authentic costumes could be designed and even imported by various individuals unhampered by the political taboos prevalent in the early days of the community.

Interestingly, this issue of authenticity proved to be the most disruptive element in the early years of Polonez, creating major resentments and conflicts among those concerned, leading to upheavals, disbandment and formal reconstitution. It is worthwhile to elaborate a little on this matter, because it was this conflict which led to the drafting of firm principles and efficient organisation which guide the present successful group. Furthermore, this issue illustrates once again an important aspect of adjustment encountered in other areas of Polish communal life — the difficulties experienced by some settlers in making the necessary compromises and concessions to changed circumstances.

In all communal conflicts personality clashes play a part, but these can often be overcome if there is agreement on basic principles. Here, however, the major divisive factor was a matter of principle — namely, the interpretation of the concept of authenticity. Some contended that the causes of culture and continuity were best served by compromises on both costume and performance; that flexibility was essential because of the various limiting conditions of presenting folk-culture on a stage in another land; that it was justified to stretch authenticity a little if, by so doing, one achieved greater financial success as well as reaching and involving a wider number of children and adults. Others maintained the necessity of adhering in the most minute detail to the original dances and costumes, for adulterated culture and background were false and therefore worthless; they argued that even minor deviations from true folk-culture debased its quality and its very nature, rendering it thereby unworthy, and eventually incapable, of transmission. Even things like the seemingly trivial matter of shortening the skirts worn by the girls aroused heated debate, one side seeing this as a reasonable adaptation to current trends, the other side as pandering to the unaware youngsters with a deliberate act of vandalism.

As with the ex-servicemen and their rigid concept of nationalism gradually alienating them from the general community, so too with
those unable to compromise on cultural matters. What was to them a passionate attachment to the cause of truth and continuity through their unyielding stand on genuine folklore appeared to most others as a capricious or tyrannical imposition, an impracticable and futile course to pursue.

On the personal plane, this obsession with authenticity led the adamant few to extravagant lengths. Some ruined themselves by importing at their own cost expensive books, rare home-spun materials, costly footwear ('ah, those beautiful red boots, handmade by craftsmen!'). Others accepted suspicion and ostracism following contact with ethnologists in Poland to ensure accurate reproduction of village life. Most felt that changes and compromises were an assault on their own artistic or professional integrity. All experienced bitterness when the more realistic and pragmatic faction inevitably won the upper hand.

On its part, the community lost several talented cultural exponents it could ill afford to spare when those intractable individuals withdrew from active participation.

The re-constituted Polonez framed its new objectives and course of action in 1965. It mapped out a carefully calculated two-pronged approach. Firstly, the emphasis was laid not so much on authenticity and accuracy of detail as on the direct impact of the production composed of vivid hues, unsophisticated tunes and rustic dancing steps, and on conveying the true spirit of the joy of living which penetrates the simple forms of folk entertainment.\(^{18}\)

To carry this out, selection and adaptation of the vast material was necessary, as was rationalisation of costumes, which were narrowed down to those of three representative regions.

Secondly, the organising committee set out to make Polonez a prestige dancing group by separating it from the suburban dancing classes, by enrolling only the older children and by imposing strenuous practice sessions.

This combination of a restricted but clear-cut objective (that is, presenting Polish folk dances as theatrical entertainment) with the principle of a small, select troupe, guided by energetic hard-working

\(^{18}\) Polonez 1969, Souvenir Program.
officials, brought about the desired effect of creating a dancing group with high artistic and performing standards and pleasing, if somewhat synthetic, ethnographic content. This had become a dancing company which the Polish community could proudly display, at its own functions and before non-Polish audiences, with gratifying reception.

Achievement has a self-reinforcing aspect — success breeds success — and the theatrical fortunes of Polonez have various side effects which, in turn, consolidate its stature and augur well for its short-term continuity.

In specific terms, limiting the age and number of performers has had the result (unintentional perhaps but not unforeseen) of making it a very desirable goal for the younger children. Most of those interested in dancing dream of being part of Polonez and wearing its exquisite folk costumes and 'real red boots'. The interest in the suburban dancing classes revives the sometimes flagging interest in the preceding language classes. This provides indirect reinforcement for the communal schools and thus enlarges the potential reservoir for future Polonez ensembles.

In the ethnic sense, Polonez provides yet another opportunity where the Polish youngsters come into contact with the language, history, and customs of their forefathers. However minimal and superficial this contact may be, it is yet another accretion of Polonism. The historical background of the folklore is emphasised:

During the tragic period of partition of Poland, the 'Dabrowski Mazurka' accompanied the Polish foreign legion in exile. After the restitution of the Polish Republic in 1918, this song was honored by its selection as the national anthem.19

Further annotations reiterate traditions of patriotism and valour in carefully unpolitical terms:

The words [of the former national anthem] 'Poland has not been lost as long as we live' are dear to Polish hearts, especially when the mother country is overpowered by the enemy. . . [Polish folk dancing] expresses well the national character of a Slav country whose folk, sedate and sentimental at heart, will not hesitate to rally and defy threatening dangers if need arises.20

Still in the ethnic context, the success of Polonez enhances the image

19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
of Polish culture in the eyes of the children and increases respect for it. Unlike their parents who, a generation ago, were ruffled or even crushed by the patronising interest displayed towards 'the charming dances of our new Australians', these Polish-born Australian youngsters feel self-importance in the pleasing reception of their performances and come to view folk-dancing as a genuine art form with the added merit that it is part of their patrimony.

Most of all, perhaps, Polonez serves the ethnic ends of the community by providing — with its music, colourful finery, heady public applause — a magic circle where boy can meet girl in a Polish atmosphere.

**Polana Camp Site**

This 4 hectare site of timbered bushland in Healesville (64 km north-east of Melbourne) was originally bought by three Polish individuals. The Polish Association of Melbourne purchased the property from them in 1963, when its financial situation was more stable, and has administered it as a camp site for Polish children since then.\(^{21}\)

A Polana committee consisting of ten adult members deals with all matters concerning the use of the property. The summer camps are subsidised by the Polish Association, additional finance comes from an annual festival and lottery held on the site in March and a fund-raising ball held in September. Since 1972, the site is hired for most of the year to Australian schools and scouts. This helps to meet the high cost of maintenance for the property, which is fully used by the Polish community only during the summer months.

There are two different camps, the first one for the 8-14 years group lasts a fortnight, and the teenagers' camp lasts about 10 days. The 150 to 180 children who come annually are looked after by over 30 adult volunteers who act as supervisors, leaders, kitchen and maintenance staff.

The youngsters come from all suburbs and all backgrounds. They are mostly Australian-born, mostly from parents who arrived in the first migration wave. There are a few more recent arrivals, usually girls who find it difficult to mix with the Australian-born children and tend to keep to themselves.

Interestingly enough, a great proportion of campers consists of children who are not involved in other Polish youth activities but whose

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\(^{21}\) *Polish Voice*, June 1970.
parents make use of this communal institution. Those children who do belong to language schools or Polish scouts usually run their own holiday activities or take part in interstate exchange schemes and only join Polana when these have ended.

The Polana program consists of ordinary camping activities—gymnastics, hiking, swimming, soccer, volleyball and other sports, camp fires and so on. Emphasis is laid on Polish content at the social activities. Each tent is then responsible in turn for the evening’s entertainment (films, sketches, songs) which must be presented in the Polish language. Despite the intent, ‘what really turns out is 60 per cent Polish and 40 per cent English — and even that 60 per cent is not always recognisable’

In actual fact, it is this very mixture of Polish and Australian features which makes the most striking impression upon the casual visitor. At the Polana campsites, everything reflects a casual, unself-conscious blend of biculturalism: the Polish and Australian flags flying side by side; the huts of Australian timber with Polish names or designations; the Jadwigas and Halinas and Bronislawas sunbathing in bikinis as brief as those worn by their Australian counterparts; the beech and poplar saplings, giving a flavour of the Polish countryside among the towering gums of the encroaching bush.

Polana seems to hold a special place in the heart of the community. Enlarged photos of the camp site decorate the Polish House premises. Visiting celebrities are taken out to Healesville and these occasions take on the character of some communal fête-champêtre — ‘When the Warsaw Philharmonic was here — the A.B.C. came too — we had over 1500 guests and we ran out of food’. Such visits are commemorated by tree-planting ceremonies. Polana has an oak tree planted by a Polish ex-general, a pine tree planted by the Mazowsze ensemble, a maple tree planted by the Polish cardinal who attended the Melbourne Eucharistic Congress.

Besides being a communal showpiece, the campsite draws many youngsters from outside the communal circle. While the claim that ‘every Polish child in Victoria comes into contact with Polish atmosphere at Polana’ is perhaps exaggerated, it does seem that most Polish children in Victoria have attended it, or know someone who has attended it. Summer camp is often these children’s only contact with

Polish youth activities and Polana thus becomes a focal point of ethnicity, diffusing Polonism to a wider number of children than is reached by the other formal youth institutions.

Again, the assertion that 'communal work is never popular but work for Polana is' glosses over the reality.\textsuperscript{23} It is often the same adults who take on another turn of duty and a good deal of contacting and nagging is necessary to induce reluctant 'volunteers' to devote some of their holiday time to Polana. Nevertheless, it is true that the successful continuation of summer camps for the last sixteen years is the result of total communal involvement. The Polish clergy participates in the organisation and supervision of the camp; the Polish press gives generous coverage to it; Polish Association officials and others offer their services in addition to formal subsidies; Polish business houses donate huts and other facilities; teachers from the language schools lead the various activities; kitchen and other maintenance staff are drawn from dedicated community members.

Thus, like the annual sports festival albeit on a smaller scale, Polana is based on an interweaving of all sectors of the community, institutions and individuals, all aimed at providing leisure time activity for the children in a Polish atmosphere.

**Other Youth Organisations**

Language schools, scouts, Polonez and Polana are not only the major institutions for the young but also the most stable. Youth organisations which cater for the 18 and over age-group tend to mushroom and disintegrate, as young people join, wax enthusiastic, then lose interest, or marry and get settled. 'Interest flares up in May and dies in September.' Then the next batch of adolescents feel the need for a formal group and a new cycle is begun.

Apart from the soccer clubs included in the sports section, the only two groups that need be mentioned are the Polish Youth Group (Związek Milodziezy Polskiej) and the Polish Students' Club (Klub Polskich Studentów Uniwersytetu w Melbourne).

The former is the longest-lived of the two. Founded in 1952 it has gone through several cycles providing a loose program of social, cultural and sporting activities. At present, it has about 200 members on its mailing list but attendance fluctuates between 50 and 80. This youth

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
Institutions for the Young

group is affiliated with the Federation as a non-paying member and has always been associated with the senior Polish associations, whose premises it uses for meetings.

Presenting an interesting variation of character is the Polish Students' Club, formed at Melbourne University in 1962. It aims at maintaining Polish culture, providing opportunities for social gathering for students of Polish descent and offering help for Polish students who experience difficulties adjusting to university life. Of these objectives, only the social one has been carried out with any degree of success, although periodically there are renewals of interest towards the ethnic objectives.

The club differs from other Polish youth organisations in two essentials: its composition and also its detachment from the community. Of the sixty members some were born here, some came as children, some are recent arrivals; about a third of the membership consists of Australian students and other non-Poles. This poses the dual problem of devising a satisfactory unifying program and of maintaining the Polish character of the club versus becoming an international students' club. The answer to the latter question will undoubtedly hinge on the future course the society will chart vis-à-vis the Polish community, for maintenance of Polish identity is dependent upon involvement with the Polish circle.

Up to the present, the Polish Student's Club is still uncommitted. Whereas all other youth organisations are, in effect, institutions for the young formed, supported and guided by adult individuals and organisations, the Polish Students' Club is quite independent, concerned that ties with communal agencies would bring loss of autonomy as well as political and other involvements.

Polish officials, on their part, have a rather ambivalent attitude towards the society. They regard it as something of an enfant terrible, to be treated cautiously. They are prepared to make allowances for the necessary rebellion of adolescence and for the blunders resulting from youthful strivings for independence. Nevertheless, they were outraged by the club's screening of films borrowed from the Polish Consulate, films borrowed in 'good faith' and which turned out to be 'propaganda and distortions of history'. Yet, on the whole, the Polish Federation, with its dedication to communal unity and continuity, would like to draw the club within its orbit, and advances are made regularly to woo the students into the communal fold.

The club plays hard to get but will probably affiliate sooner or later,
for its independence brings along too many problems. It suffers from perpetual lack of funds; more basically, it suffers from chronic instability. Not unnaturally, it projects the same character as the young people it represents. They are immature, if engaging; eager, frank, with half-formed and inherited ideas and prejudices; full of ingenuous vanity and naive delight at arousing storms in the communal teacup and tantalising their elders. So too with their club, which presents a picture of altogether confused aspirations, crises of conscience and of identity, ignorance of their own culture and background. These are problems which they have not managed to resolve, despite ten years' shaky existence.

To conclude the discussion on these senior youth organisations, there seem to be two further things to say, one regarding their indifferent level of achievement and the other their future prospects.

Several reasons suggest themselves to account for the vastly different rates of success between these senior youth organisations and the institutions for the younger children discussed earlier. In general, 18 and over is a difficult age group to cater for: young people become more resentful of authority, more jealous of their individuality and independence, more self-assertive and, certainly, in our times of sophisticated entertainment, more blasé about organised leisure activities. Studies, work, the need to get established, make heavy demands upon them. Also, they are at an age where outings à deux are infinitely more appealing than group entertainment. In the particular case of the Polish organisations, the more institutionalised activities of scouting, dancing, language classes are more successful because they are run by adults on specific lines for a limited number of childhood years, whereas the older groups suffer from the disorder and vacillations of inexperience and the difficulty of exercising control or authority over one's peers. Again, the organisations for the younger children are clearly aimed at definite perpetuative and cohesive objectives, whereas the senior groups' vague purpose boils down, in effect, to the provision of entertainment.

On the second matter of continuity, the Polish Youth Organization will probably continue its periodic cycles of renewal and completion as long as there are young people of Polish-born parents, that is a generation with a direct personal link to the homeland and its spirit. Beyond that, prospects are doubtful.

As for the Polish Students' Club, it must very shortly decide on which
direction to take: it will either become an international club and *ipso facto* cease to be a Polish group, or it will come closer to the rest of the Polish community. If it chooses the latter course, one would hazard the forecast that it will be greatly strengthened, in the short term, by the sense of purpose, the support and the resources of communal bodies. In the long term, it has been the experience of other ethnic groups that graduates have the least identification with their group and the least adult communal involvement. There is no evidence to assume that the case will be different in this ethnic group.

24 Medding, op. cit., p. 173. The Dutch settlers in the present study also complained of lack of involvement by professionals and intellectuals.
Part Two
The Dutch Community
Preliminary Considerations
The Dutch communal scene presents a marked contrast to that of the Poles, studied in the preceding section. Even a brief survey of Dutch organisations in Melbourne shows a limited communal structure and indications of weak group identity and cohesion. There was, for instance, very little organisational life until the 1960s, despite the substantial migration of the late 1940s and early 1950s. The number of organisations is comparatively small for a community of this size — about a dozen formal groups for a group of around 23,000 immigrants. The proportion of migrants who are members of these organisations is also very small, 1 per cent being a generous estimate.

Most striking perhaps is the fact that the organisations seem largely confined to the social function of providing companionship and entertainment within a Dutch atmosphere. Though some of the organisations include a charitable objective in their aims, this usually operates within their very restricted spheres. There is no official welfare society, no central communal agency where a Dutch migrant with problems can turn, no Dutch community centre. One finds very little evidence within the Dutch community of any pride in native culture or of desire to carry on native traditions. There is virtually no organised cultural life within the community, no language classes, no youth organisations.

These observations confirm the widely-held notion that the Dutch 'assimilate easily'. On the above evidence, 99 per cent of Dutch migrants have no interest in maintaining their heritage or handing down
traditions to their children, they take little or no part in Dutch community life and seemingly merge into the Australian environment.

It is important to try to find out *why* the Dutch have developed this particular communal pattern, especially when, on the face of it, they share certain common characteristics with the Polish national group: a tradition of emigration; a massive post-war influx into Australia over relatively few years; a comparable number of Catholics. There are even certain historical similarities, for while the Dutch nation has not suffered Poland’s tragic fate, it has nevertheless undergone wars of politics and religion; subjugation and rule by Spain and France; rebellion and restoration; union with Belgium and dissolution; uneasy neutrality in the first world war and invasion by the Germans in the second.

Why then should these two national groups, transplanted to the same receiving society at the same time, evolve such divergent communal structures?

In order to answer this question, it will be necessary to approach the problem from several angles. We must look at factual information and also consider psychological motivations and social circumstances. Observable manifestations in Australia must be related to pre-migratory situations and experiences, including those relevant historical factors which have shaped the essential Dutch character and thus contributed to the particular course of the transplanted group.

**Communal Background**

There is an old acquaintance between Australia and the Netherlands. The first authenticated European landfall was made by a Dutchman in 1606. The first white settlers were probably two Dutch mutineers exiled on the mainland in 1629. Nearly two-thirds of the coastline were examined and charted by Abel Tasman and other Dutch explorers during the seventeenth century. Nova Hollandia was the name first given to Terra Australis, the great southern continent so earnestly sought since Marco Polo’s days.¹

But that early acquaintance showed no sign of development over the


Willem Jansz in the yacht *Duyfken* landed on the western side of what is now Cape York peninsula in 1606. Dirk Hartog in 1616, Houtman in 1619, Jan Cartenz in 1623, Vlamingh in 1696, and others, examined nearly all the western coast of Australia. Abel
three subsequent centuries. On the contrary, it grew stunted and gradually withered away. Some of the nomenclature remained. Arnhem Land, Cape Leeuwin, Duyfken Point, Nuyts Archipelago, Dirk Hartogs Island, all are names which remind us of early Dutch exploration. But New Holland was limited to the western half of the continent in 1788 (when Phillip founded New South Wales in the eastern half) and it was formally taken over by the British Government in 1829. Van Diemens Land was renamed Tasmania in 1853 (still a Dutch reminder).

The fact was that the Dutch found no interest in the continent they had accidentally discovered. The land was reported barren and uninviting, the few natives encountered had no marketable goods, the coast grew nothing that was valuable. Australia was unworthy to be a European trading post and too close to Djakarta to be a port of call for the last leg of the voyage from Capetown. The Dutch therefore ‘concluded that Australia was valueless’.\(^2\)

It was not until the early post World War II period that Dutchmen rediscovered Australia — not as explorers or traders but as settlers, drawn by the economic promise of that land their forbears had rejected.

**Dutch-born residents of Australia — Censuses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>594</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>1391</td>
<td>1274</td>
<td>2174</td>
<td>52,035</td>
<td>102,083</td>
<td>99,549</td>
<td>99,295</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Arrivals.** The tremendous influx of Dutch nationals between 1947 and 1961 was facilitated by agreements between the Commonwealth and Dutch governments. Post-war economic conditions in the Netherlands, as well as fears of a new conflict activated by political tensions in Europe and the outbreak of the Korean war, played a large motivating part in the arrival of the Dutch settlers, 62 per cent of whom came on various assisted programs in large waves throughout the 1950s.

Janszen Tasman took possession of what is now Tasmania in 1642 and named it Van Diemen’s Land, after the governor-general of the East Indies. The best-known wreck was that of the *Batavia* on the Abrolhos Islands in 1629. Part of the crew mutinied and murdered some of the passengers and crew. The mutineers were hanged except two who were marooned on the mainland.

\(^2\) Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance*, p. 6.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Published</th>
<th>Price's estimates</th>
<th>From Indonesia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(long term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and permanent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>4008</td>
<td>3571</td>
<td>762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>16,863</td>
<td>16,526</td>
<td>1597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>10,128</td>
<td>9925</td>
<td>879</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13,996</td>
<td>13,716</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>9822</td>
<td>9626</td>
<td>273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>11,579</td>
<td>11,347</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>14,126</td>
<td>13,843</td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>9557</td>
<td>9366</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>6876</td>
<td>6378</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>8445</td>
<td>8276</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>9657</td>
<td>9328</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>6656</td>
<td>6299</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>3062</td>
<td>2860</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>1742</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>2473</td>
<td>2298</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>2275</td>
<td>2106</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>2293</td>
<td>2146</td>
<td>241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>2449</td>
<td>2262</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>3068</td>
<td>2870</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>2997</td>
<td>2752</td>
<td>486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>2358</td>
<td>2159</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1698</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>655</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1237</td>
<td>1175</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures are used with the kind permission of Dr C. A. Price, Consultant to the Committee on Social Patterns of the Immigration Advisory Council. His estimates are derived from Long Term and Permanent arrivals 1947-58 and for settler arrivals 1959-74. The switch from nationality to birthplace in 1959 enables comparison with the censuses and helps to keep track of Dutch persons who have become Australian citizens.
**Departures.** The 1960s saw a stabilised situation in Europe, improved economic conditions and good social services in the Netherlands. Australia in the early 1960s was undergoing a recession which greatly affected the building trade, where many Dutch settlers were employed. These were some of the reasons which prompted the departure from Australia of Dutch settlers who returned home at a high rate from the early 1960s onwards.

The Committee investigating the departure of all settlers from Australia established the Dutch loss rate at 40 per cent for the arrivals of the previous ten years. Compared to the total settler loss rate of 21.9 per cent, this made the Dutch loss rate second to that of the American and Canadian group, and equal to that of the Germans. Because earlier arrivals departed less frequently the total loss was smaller, about 25 per cent. Price estimates that the total number of Dutch settlers for the period 1947-74 was 144,470 and the loss deficit 36,650.

This pattern of a relatively low intake and a relatively high rate of loss has continued well into the 1970s, resulting in very small settler gain from the Netherlands.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Settlements Born in the Netherlands</th>
<th>Arrivals</th>
<th>Loss Deficit</th>
<th>Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>2159</td>
<td>2522</td>
<td>-363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>2652</td>
<td>-1082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>1410</td>
<td>-416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>1175</td>
<td>3115</td>
<td>-1940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(By courtesy of Dr C. A. Price)

**Naturalisation.** Another interesting aspect of Dutch migration is the low to medium naturalisation rate of these settlers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace: Netherlands</th>
<th>Nationality: Dutch (Inc. some born in Indonesia)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>52,035</td>
<td>53,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>102,083</td>
<td>75,817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>99,549</td>
<td>47,955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>99,295</td>
<td>33,183</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\[4\] Ibid., p. 34.
The 1971 figures rank the Dutch half-way on a scale showing proportions for groups with the same nationality and birthplace:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace and Nationality</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baltic States</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.S.R. and Ukraine</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumania</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>33.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>49.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugoslavia</td>
<td>54.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>59.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>63.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>64.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(By courtesy of Dr C. A. Price)

Residential Distribution in Melbourne. In 1971, nearly 34,000 Dutch settlers were living in Melbourne, the largest concentration of any Australian state. Of these, over 23,000 lived in the Melbourne area (a smaller proportion of urban dwellers than the other two groups studied here).

The Dutch preference for semi-rural environment is further revealed in their residential distribution. As can be seen from the figures below, they have chosen to settle in the south-eastern and outer-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. There is thus a 'Dutch belt' from Box Hill, past Dandenong, to the picturesque areas of Ferntree Gully, Sherbrooke and Berwick, which have a frankly rural character.
Outsiders outside these suburbs, there are minor concentrations in the northern suburb of Broadmeadows (648) and the outer-western suburbs of Keilor and Sunshine (690 and 585).

**Occupational Distribution.** Contrary to the 'widely-held image of Holland as a land of polders and windmills', the Dutch come from a highly urbanised country, which is primarily industrial (37 per cent) and secondly commercial (24 per cent).

The Dutch settlers reflect this emphasis, nearly half of their total work-force in Melbourne (15,000) being skilled craftsmen and tradesmen, as can be seen in this table showing the major areas of Dutch employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carpenters, electricians, metal workers, etc.</td>
<td>6324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical workers</td>
<td>1862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers, nurses, technicians, draftsmen, etc.</td>
<td>1360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers, administration, etc.</td>
<td>1210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaners, other service workers</td>
<td>1173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeepers, other sales workers, etc.</td>
<td>1110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1971 Census — Melbourne Statistical Division)

**Religious Distribution.** The Dutch settlers do not form a homogeneous

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group, as can be seen in the following information drawn from the 1971 Census for the Melbourne Statistical Division:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>10,328</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>2171</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Protestants</td>
<td>1447</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants Undefined*</td>
<td>1199</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Christian</td>
<td>1211</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other faiths</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion &amp; Indefinite</td>
<td>5592</td>
<td>23.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply</td>
<td>1572</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,604</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These are probably adherents of the Reformed Church of Australia and will be described on pp. 189-93.

**Analytical Framework**

The above quantitative material sets the background adequately but provides no explanation for the pattern of loose and limited organisational structure exhibited by this community.

We have repeatedly seen in the Polish situation that the communal course is shaped by many elements such as motives for migration; conditions and attitudes in both home and receiving countries; social and psychological factors, themselves formed or influenced by historical and present-day circumstances. In view of the complexity of these determinants and their interaction, it is essential to find a coherent framework within which we can study these components of communal life. As the Dutch are very different from the Poles a different method is indicated.

Their organisations are few in number, they are usually restricted to social functions and the activities are similar and repetitive, involving only a fractional proportion of the group. They seem to lack the richness of meaning and the emotional intensity that transcend outward form. They appear therefore singularly unfit to provide us with an insight into the essential Dutch character, the collective spirit that has determined the particular configuration of their communal life. The answer seems rather to lie outside the organisational sphere, for if the
majority of Dutch settlers are not ethnically bound, then that seems to be a more profitable area to investigate in order to understand the Dutch character and the reasons for their particular communal patterns.

Thus we will be using a converse approach to that used in the Polish situation. There, the organisations institutionalised the settlers' feelings. Analysing them gave us an insight into the psychological motivations of that ethnic group. Here, we will start with the personality of the settlers and try to see how this has shaped the Dutch organisational structure. We will seek 'the latent and residual qualities of the people — their temperamental, psychological, emotional and philosophical nature, which gives rise to the visible institutions'.

The pursuit of the essential character of the Dutch leads us inescapably to the generally accepted notion that the Dutch migrants assimilate very readily, or at least more readily than most other national groups. The term assimilation is used advisedly, in full awareness of its controversial value. Its application to the Dutch is not an arbitrary choice but one based on various grounds.

This is not the place to develop a critique of assimilation theories, but it is necessary to discuss the use of the word assimilation in this context. Australian society has long favoured assimilation as a desirable adjustment process for its migrants, while many of the latter have vigorously rejected the notion, with its implied obliteration of their own cultural traits. Although many Australians still think of assimilation as the ideal goal, greater flexibility has developed in official and informed circles, due in part to the impact of continued migration itself. Also worldwide studies of the various aspects of this process of adjustment have resulted in greater understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity. Nowadays, the word assimilation tends to be somewhat discredited and has been replaced by the more acceptable term integration. In Australia, the Assimilation Division of the Immigration Department was changed to the Integration Division in 1966 and while many migrants are somewhat sceptical regarding the change of intention, most welcome the change of name at least.

It is therefore all the more significant that, by and large, Dutch

settlers still accept both the word and the principle. That is the major justification for using the term 'assimilation' here. The Dutch settlers see their migration in the context of assimilation, of 'conformity in all social and cultural areas', of merging into Australian society to the point of invisibility. This attitude will be elaborated later; it is sufficient here to see assimilation as a key element of the Dutch situation — in their view of themselves, in their personal utterances, in their behaviour. Other indices also suggest assimilatory trends among the Dutch — the comparatively high rate of intermarriage, the comparatively low rate of ethnic readership.

This view of Dutch migration in terms of assimilation is also consistent with the findings of other researchers both in Australia and abroad.

While providing a useful frame of reference, assimilation does not give the whole answer. There are for instance various paradoxical features of Dutch migrant life in Melbourne: they have a high rate of residential concentration in the outer-eastern suburbs; they have one of the highest rates of return; they have only a moderate rate of naturalisation. Such speculations take us outside the framework of assimilation and recall the question raised earlier, regarding the diverging development of two ethnic groups, apparently sharing certain common characteristics.

There is yet another question. Even if one accepts that assimilation accounts for the loose fabric of Dutch communal life, it does not explain why the Dutch do assimilate so readily. After all, it is reasonable to assume that, whatever their background and expectations, whatever their plans for permanency, whether they want to retain their identity or not, most migrants are willing (for their own ease of living) to adjust in varying degrees to the new environment. But human conduct is not a rational process of volition and however much the new settler may want painless adjustment, he cannot always attain it. Yet, by and large, the Dutch seem to achieve relatively easy adaptation. What is there, then, in the Dutch character or the Dutch experience that enables them to

9 Ibid., p. 97.
10 Thomson, Dutch Immigrants, p. 166. Hempel, J., Dutch Migrants in Queensland, Australian National University, Canberra, 1960, p. 3. (roneoed)
merge into Australian society; to adopt new behaviour patterns; to resist the pull of the homeland and the influence of the past; to overcome the emotional uncertainties which can prove so difficult and even so traumatic to many other migrants?

It is clear from the above, that, in order to understand Dutch communal development, we will have to use a three-dimensional approach. Having reached the tentative conclusion that assimilation is the keynote of the Dutch situation, it will be necessary first of all to resolve within this framework the various contradictions enumerated earlier. Secondly, we must seek an insight into the Dutch collective spirit, to try to understand what makes the Dutch settlers apparently so assimilable. Finally, throughout this process we must relate any conclusions reached to our primary objective: an understanding of the particular development of the 'visible institutions' shaped by the Dutch settlers in Melbourne.
Historical Paradoxes
Even a cursory review of the Netherlands' history reveals a dualism which exhibits some contradictory aspects. On the lighter side, it is seen in the country's two names, Holland and the Netherlands (plus the adjective Dutch for good measure); in its two capitals, The Hague and Amsterdam; in its national currency, either gulden or florins. It might even be said that the country 'lives on two elements, land and sea'.¹ Dialects are still used side by side with standard Netherlandish and 'unemotional nationalism coexists with intense provincial feeling'.²

However, nothing illustrates dualism more comprehensively than the religious situation in the Netherlands.

Religion and Materialism. The 1973 *Encyclopaedia Britannica* gives the following religious distribution in the Netherlands: 44.5 per cent Protestants, 38 per cent Roman Catholics, 17 per cent no religion. Contrary to what might be expected, religion has seldom been a divisive factor in the history of the nation. Both Catholics and Reformers alike objected to the excesses of the Spanish Inquisition. They rose together against Spanish rule and have lived peaceably side by side since Dutch independence in 1648.³ That is not to say that there are no distinctions along lines of religion, the most obvious two being residential concentrations and spheres of influence: the northern provinces are predominantly Protestant, the southern provinces mostly Catholic.

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³ Ibid., p. 15.
Wealth and social power are concentrated among the former, while the latter exercise a strong influence in politics and business, and constitute the Catholic People's Party, still the strongest political party in the Netherlands.\(^4\)

Still on the subject of religion, it is claimed that the growth of Protestantism, with its mixture of practical and religious attitudes, 'has created a dualism which can be traced through the entire period of Dutch history to the present day'.\(^5\) Both the private and the public sectors of Holland's unparalleled economic expansion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were characterised by that 'amazingly good... conscience in the acquisition of money, so long as it took place legally' which Weber saw as the root of the bourgeois economic ethic of the time.\(^6\)

The themes of religious duality and materialism form an interesting basis of comparison in this study of the Dutch settlers in Melbourne. It should be noted, first of all, that religious fervour is not evident in either the Protestant or Catholic sectors (but it is very strong among the Dutch Reformed). Worship is usually carried out at the nearest local church, while attendance at the monthly services run in Dutch by both Protestant and Catholic clergy is not marked by any great numbers. Spurred on by the example of other communities, an appeal was first made in 1970 for funds to build a Dutch Catholic Church. This met with no response at all. The call was renewed in 1973: 'Come on, Dutch Catholics, show yourselves, what other people can do, we can do better!'\(^7\) It is doubtful if this will be any more successful, despite the scathing comparison drawn in that article between the willingness of Dutch Catholics to contribute to a club house and their reluctance to work towards a church building.

Secondly, the Netherlands' religious distribution is not exactly reproduced in Melbourne. The Catholic group is the largest (43.8 per cent), the Protestant group is considerably smaller (20.4 per cent) and there is a higher proportion of settlers who answered negatively (30.3 per cent).

Probably some of those who stated no religion were Protestants. It has been said that those who took the same stand in the Dutch census did

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\(^5\) Ibid., p. 177.


\(^7\) *Dutch Societies' Courier*, November 1973, p. 9.
not show a lack of religious interest but on the contrary, a great deal of seriousness on the matter. Many Dutch-born persons questioned on this matter here, however, felt that this trend was rather indicative of Dutch individuality and independence.

Whatever the explanation for the latter point, numbers alone in Melbourne would account for the majority of organisational membership being found among Catholics. There may be other factors responsible for this, or at least reinforcing reasons for the much greater communal involvement by Catholics. This could be a low-key re-channelling of the latter's interest in public affairs (seen in the political life of the Netherlands). It could be linked with a difference in attitudes (often pointed out during the Melbourne interviews) that is, traditional Catholic group participation as against the greater emphasis on individual social activities by Protestants. This seems borne out by the fact that there are few organisations founded or dominated by Protestants, although there are Protestants in most of the organisations. Participation on the basis of province of origin is a reinforcing if not a primary reason for joining organisations like the Limburger Kangaroos.

Going on to materialism, we see throughout the modern history of the Netherlands a close relationship between religious principles on the one hand and conscientious labour and material success on the other. This duality was so pronounced that Renier was able to state: 'the warp of Dutch life was economic and its woof religious'.

We have seen a comparative decline in the religious intensity of the Dutch settlers. They are still inclined to be materialistic, but whether they are markedly more so than any other people in this particular age and country is rather doubtful. They came to Australia to better themselves economically, which is the major motivation of most free migrations. They were not singled out for the materialistic trait in an earlier Melbourne study.

By the same token, and without getting drawn into a debate on the Protestant ethic, it seems that too much can be made about the relation between Calvinism and materialism, if for no other reason than one obvious fact: most Netherlanders, notwithstanding religious affiliation, exhibit the same attitudes towards economic endeavours and the

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9 Renier, *The Dutch Nation*, p. 94.
10 Jupp, J., *Arrivals and Departures*, Cheshire Landsdowne, Melbourne, 1966, p. 133. This author found the Italians the most materialistic of the migrants interviewed.
importance of material success. This appears to be the case now, and it appears to have been so throughout history:

The vast masses of Catholics who . . . took an active part in Holland's . . . economic life, were as careful managers of their property as the Calvinists. And the liberal and sceptical regents husbanded their wealth . . . like the artisans of the ultra-calvinist lower middle-class.\(^{11}\)

In the context of this study, the characteristics that do seem particular to the Dutch and which have emerged from their history are those of industry and thrift. The prosperity of the nation and of its citizens is attributed to hard work and careful husbandry of land, resources and capital, for 'nothing came easily to the Dutch'.\(^{12}\)

Industry and thrift are traits unreservedly acknowledged by the Dutch. Historically, 'labour to them was not a curse'\(^{13}\) and in the Australian environment they pursue their material goals steadfastly and assiduously, allowing themselves the right to criticise the Australian work ethic. Industry and thrift account in part for their general comfortable situation as individuals. (Assisted passage can also be a boost to the new settler's economic adjustment.)

Moreover, thrift itself reappears in the communal situation. Turned into pettiness, or parsimony, it is held as one of the reasons for the low circulation of their ethnic newspaper: 'We have a lot of meelezers, people who read someone else's paper. It is never thrown away, just passed from one to the other, so that several families make do with the one copy.' Combined with caution, thrift becomes one reason for the attitude towards joining organisations: 'You must see if it will be worth it. What are you going to get in return for your membership fee?'

**Lack of Ethnic Persistence.** It is not possible to account very satisfactorily for the divergence in communal development pointed out earlier between the Dutch and the Polish. Part of the answer is undoubtedly that the resemblances which prompted the comparisons are superficial.

The similarity between the migration patterns is only outward. It is true that both groups migrated in large numbers in the early post-war

\(^{11}\) Renier, *The Dutch Nation*, p. 93.

\(^{12}\) Ibid., p. 92.

\(^{13}\) Landheer, op. cit., p. 41.
years. The Poles, however, consisted largely of D.P.s and political exiles, many of whom were single men, disorientated and demoralised. In those early years, their dominant thought was return to a free and democratic Poland. The Dutch settlers, on the other hand, though containing many single men, had also many family groups in search of greater opportunity for themselves and their children. These contrasting circumstances are partly responsible for the divergence in communal development.

And yet, reverse motivations for these two groups have still resulted in diverging outcomes. The earlier Polish mass migrations to France and the U.S.A., for instance, were largely prompted by economic motives, but the Polish migrants still maintained strong Polish identification and formed a network of ethnic institutions.

The Dutch, however, even when animated by strong sentiment, merged rapidly into the host society. The great 1847 migration to the U.S.A. was ‘based primarily on religious motive and only secondarily on economic and other material factors’. Those Dutch Reformants clung to the church as a focal point for their activities. Religion, however, was the binding factor, not Dutch identification, for they quickly forgot their mother tongue, parted with traditional ideas and customs and rapidly adopted the mode of life of their new country.

Again, the historical experiences of these two nations, both of which have undergone turbulent periods, vary not only in intensity but in character. Poland fought to remain herself through the various subjugations and dismemberments aimed at making her a geographical and political nullity. In contrast, throughout her tribulations — wars, subjections, territorial gains and losses — Holland remained an autonomous viable entity. The Netherlands remained the Netherlands, the Dutch continued to speak Dutch, the country's institutions continued to function.

Foreseeably, Poland's history bred an intense nationalism in its oppressed people whether at home or in exile. Less predictably, the spirit that had enabled the Dutch to go on stubbornly being themselves under various foreign dominations took the path of internationalism.

Internationalism. By virtue of its geographical position at the

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15 Ibid., p. 636.
confluence of three major rivers, Holland has always been a natural base for maritime and commercial enterprises. This has enabled her tremendous economic expansion and has also given rise to certain characteristics which still mark the Dutch people today. Rubbing shoulders throughout the centuries with men from different creeds and customs imbued the Dutch with a collective open-mindedness which finds expression in an all-pervasive tolerance, as well as in a notable international outlook.

The tradition of tolerance is probably best seen in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This period of intransigent religious attitudes were marked in Holland by an early humanistic and rationalistic development which produced humanists and philosophers like Erasmus, Groot and Spinoza. It also produced a ruler like the Prince of Orange, who could state in 1564: 'Although attached to the Roman Catholic faith, I cannot possibly approve that princes should wish to rule the consciences of their subjects and deprive them of their liberty of faith and worship of God.' To implement these noble sentiments, he gave religious and civil liberties to all denominations, offered asylum to persecuted Jews from Spain and Portugal, to Separatists from the Church of England and to Huguenots from France.

Tolerance was displayed not only in religious matters but was diffused in all attitudes. The Dutch showed a receptiveness to other people's ideas, customs, laws, practices; an acceptance of the value of other people's ways; even a willingness to adopt these ways 'when convinced that such ideas are better'. Thus their tolerance became closely bound up with international consciousness, intensified by their world-wide trade and commerce, the possession of overseas territories and the early travelling tradition of the leisureed classes.

Dutch internationalism is epitomised nowhere better than in the Dutch national anthem, which is 'almost a profession of cosmopolitan faith'. It proclaims that Wilhelminus von Nassouwen, the great leader, a 'scion of Dutch and ancient line', was born in German Nassau, was Prince of Orange in France, honoured the King of Spain, yet remained 'true unto death to the fatherland'.

The Dutch international outlook is allied to a form of subdued nationalism. Their patriotism is strongly aroused in defensive situations,
when their land is invaded or their freedom is threatened. Otherwise, they take their nationality as a matter of course, singularly free of emotional connotations: 'A man in his senses does not become excited because he is Smith, or Gerritsen, or a Dutchman'.

These ingredients of Dutch national psychology, their international outlook and low-key nationalism, their familiarity and acceptance of other people’s ways, allow the Dutch to be at ease in a plurality of worlds. It is no accident that the first recorded individual who declared himself a citizen of the world was a Dutchman at the French court, who stated in 1656 ‘the world is my country’.

In the context of this study, these same factors greatly facilitate the loosening of ties to their heritage, which is an essential feature of the Dutch settlers’ adjustment in Australia.

Local Paradoxes
The relevance of the foregoing discussion to the development of local Dutch organisations is not immediately apparent. Here are no clear-cut correlations, only occasional echoes, fragmentary reflections. Yet, these do have a bearing for they bring into relief certain historical aspects which have had a marked influence in moulding the Dutch character. Such persistent features as independence, tolerance, cosmopolitanism, thrift, assert themselves so repeatedly that they may be taken as essential components of the Dutch character. Taken as such, they help to resolve certain paradoxes of the local Dutch situation and further our understanding of the communal development of these settlers.

The main contradictions observed within the framework of assimilation were: a certain degree of residential concentration; a fairly high rate of return; a medium rate of naturalisation.

Residential Concentration. The Dutch may concentrate in the south-eastern suburbs of Melbourne, but this is mainly due to the comparative cheapness of land in what was an underdeveloped rural setting at time of arrival. These suburbs thus offered new settlers the opportunity to build their own homes and not live in flats or congested city areas, an important consideration for the Dutch who value family life and set great store by privacy. An added attraction was the hilly, wooded

19 Ibid., p. 82.
20 Landheer, The Netherlands, p. 48.
topography of the area, which made a pleasant contrast to the overall flatness of their home country. Thus, this residential concentration is due to environmental causes and definitely not to a feeling of unity. In fact, the Dutch settlers are quite often unaware of each other’s proximity and not infrequently displeased about it.

**High Rate of Return.** The Committee investigating the departure of all settlers from Australia listed various reasons for departure other than dissatisfaction with Australia. These included homesickness, attitude of community, communication, medical problems, migrant education, reduction in status, employment, accommodation, social services.22

This particular study of the Dutch community revealed four major reasons for this group’s high rate of return. Firstly, economic conditions in the Netherlands have some influence in regulating both the arrival and departure of these settlers.

Secondly is the fact that the Dutch migrants have a country to which they may freely return, a solution for homesickness or dissatisfaction not available to certain other migrant groups. It is interesting to note that, according to communal leaders, there is a flow-back of ‘second-time’ migrants, variously estimated as 30 per cent to 50 per cent. The inquiry, however, estimates this figure to be much lower — 24.5 per cent of settlers who had departed within two years of arrival had returned to Australia. Detailed working on the Australian migration statistics of movements to and from the Netherlands suggest that only about 20 per cent of Dutch settler-arrivals 1961-74 are second-timers.

Another reason given for returning home was the attraction of higher pension and better social services available in the Netherlands. Although this country was not singled out, the Inquiry into the Departures of Settlers notes that countries of northern Europe provide much higher levels of social security than Australia. It is also interesting to note, still in this context, that a special inquiry into the problems of aged migrants has been ordered by the Minister of Immigration.23

There are also, apparently, a number of migrants whose intention to settle was indefinite. A sense of adventure and the attraction of an assisted passage prompted their decision to come to Australia, and the same lack of commitment prompted the return of some of them. This is

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22 *Inquiry,* op. cit., p. 6.
borne out by a Dutch Government study by Hofstede, which revealed that 'returnees had typically a trial and error attitude towards their emigration'.

**Low Rate of Naturalisation.** We now come to the matter of naturalisation, a sensitive point with some Australians who feel that more Dutch should be naturalised by now. Although the formality of naturalisation is not necessarily indicative of assimilation, the reasons behind Dutch refusal to become naturalised are interesting. First is a reluctance to renounce the Queen of Holland for the Queen of England, a reluctance reflecting the personal affection with which the Dutch regard their Queen; and an inability to accept the sovereignty in Australia of a monarch residing in England.

Second, is the Dutch characteristic of independence and individualism. Again and again, one comes across these comments: 'Dutch nationality is as good as Australian nationality'; 'I am what I am — a piece of paper won't change me'; 'I feel just as Dutch or just as Australian without a certificate'.

Third, the unwillingness to commit oneself seen in naturalisation is compounded of native caution and self-interest. The Dutch are often 'fence-sitters', neither spontaneous nor impulsive; but will calculate a move carefully before committing themselves. Whether it be naturalisation, or a suggestion to form or join an organisation, the idea will need to mature slowly before being acted upon. A well-known saying is 'to wait and see which way the cat jumps' (*de kat uit de boom kijken*). One may be satisfied, but one prefers to leave the door open — just in case.

Caution is reinforced by common-sense self-interest. It is felt that little is gained by changing nationalities as long as Holland offers better social security and welfare than Australia.

These character traits go a certain way towards explaining why the Dutch seem to feel less need for ethnic organisations, but they do not explain what makes them fit easily into Australian society. If one is independent, individualistic, absorbed in economic pursuits, one has little time or inclination for organised social intercourse. However, one can still feel alien, isolated, ill-at-ease, unable or unwilling to adopt new

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ways. These are not problems which greatly afflict the Dutch, who fit into Australian society with a minimum of difficulties.

It is this assimilability which is such a striking feature of the Dutch as a group. It is that which distinguishes them from many other national groups and which is a major determining factor of the communal course they pursue.
Assimilation has been defined as being 'a process whereby migrants discarded the cultural traits of their land of origin and acquired the culture of their new country'.\textsuperscript{1} The latter aspect has received the greater amount of attention, yet it seems that discarding former traits is also very significant. Indeed, each stage of the quasi-linear progression evolved by some writers,\textsuperscript{2} that is acculturation-identification-assimilation, is made up of two complementary facets:

- acquisition of new behaviour patterns
- disassociation from old ones.

This is an almost rudimentary mechanism of attachment and detachment. The closer the new settler moves to the new society, the further he moves away from the old one. Yet, disassociation from former norms may sometimes be just as difficult as the acquisition of new ways, and sometimes even more painful. The bonds that tie a man to his place of birth are innumerable and powerful. They comprise such specific issues as house, work, climate; the more emotional ones of relationships with family and friends; the diffuse area of language, with its manifold connotations; the intangible feelings of stability and continuity in familiar surroundings; the undefinable nostalgia-filled memories of the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of the homeland.

It is convenient to discuss the Dutch situation in these terms because

\textsuperscript{1} *Dictionary of Social Science*, Unesco, 1964, p. 98.
\textsuperscript{2} Notably, various psychological studies carried out by R. Taft and A. Richardson at the University of Western Australia.
this is where they differ most from many other national groups. As individuals, they exhibit a similar variety of personality traits, occupational and social adjustment, satisfaction and grievances. Collectively, however, they display a greater readiness and ability to adopt Australian ways and a marked degree of ease in severing bonds with the past, the latter all the more striking for being such a painful and sometimes impossible process for many other groups of settlers.

The ability of Dutch migrants to adjust to the Australian environment has been documented by various writers whose findings coincide or are consistent with those made in this study. This facet will therefore not be as greatly elaborated as the Dutch migrants' detachment from their background, which has not received as much attention as it deserves.

Adoption of New Ways. Apart from a general proficiency in English, the major factors that facilitate the assimilation process for the Dutch are related to the 'perceived similarity of norms' between the two societies. The Dutch background is very similar to the Australian one — democratic, advanced, urbanised, industrialised. They have a nuclear family pattern which places much value on family life but accepts independence, freedom of movement and of migration on the part of its members. With the exception of the Dutch Reformed, there is no ethnic church to bind them together and Dutch settlers worship at the local Catholic and Protestant churches as a matter of course.

One central feature that must be elaborated is the settlers' own view of themselves. This was established as a key element in the Dutch situation and one of the reasons for using assimilation as a framework for this particular study.

Quite categorically, the Dutch see migration in terms of assimilation — 'If you've chosen this country, you must live by its rules'. In a complementary manner, they see themselves as assimilable material. They migrated as a matter of choice, not driven by poverty or ideological conflict, and they strive to justify their decision. They want to fit in, to become Australianised, that is what they came here for. In a subtle way this colours their attitude towards others.

They see themselves as being different (if not superior) from others.

3 Jupp, J., Arrivals and Departures; Taft, R., From Stranger to Citizen; Zubrzycki, J., Settlers of the Latrobe Valley.
4 Taft, op. cit., p. 56.
They accentuate distinctions. Their view of other national groups is that these others 'stick together', 'they're not educated', 'they don’t want to learn English', 'they don’t want to assimilate'.

Vis-à-vis Australians, these avowed differences and Dutch readiness to adopt Australian ways determine their social expectations — they expect to be accepted, to be welcomed into Australian homes. Where this does not happen they are greatly disappointed. They cannot accept that in Australia 'the point at which friendships cut off is often the front doorstep'. They feel doubly hurt. It is a personal rejection of themselves. It also means that in Australian eyes they are 'lumped together' with those other migrants from whom they try to separate themselves.

By and large, however, the Dutch mix freely with Australians and their level of social participation in Australian affairs is comparatively high. Certainly among the three groups studied here, the Dutch showed the greatest involvement in local activities, school committees, Red Cross, business associations and so on. This would appear to be a reason for less ethnic affiliation. But it is very difficult to determine whether their participation in Dutch affairs is limited because their energies, time, and interests are absorbed in the Australian environment, or whether they channel their energies into Australian outlets because they prefer to detach themselves from their national group, as we will see on pp. 165-7.

The Dutch settlers' readiness to identify themselves with Australia is clearly seen in their attitude towards ethnic continuity. If the desire for ethnic continuity is demonstrated by efforts to imbue the second generation with homeland traditions, then the lack of such efforts is indicative of the desire to assimilate.

This is quite clearly the case with most of the Dutch settlers interviewed, who saw no value in ethnic transmission for their children: 'This is where they're going to live and that's how they must be — 100 per cent Australian.' Some of them go further and express pleasure at any assertion of Australian feeling in their children: 'They love football — but they can't bear to look at a soccer match — we've just got to turn the TV off.'

For the children to be considered Australians is highly desirable. The best compliment one family received was given at their first parents-

5 Jupp, op. cit., p.105.
6 Ibid.; Zubrzycki, Settlers of the Latrobe Valley.
teachers meeting, when the headmaster expressed surprise at their Dutch origin, as he had always thought of the children as ‘Aussies through and through’.

In fact, the whole Dutch psychological orientation tends outside the ethnic sphere, and we now come to this essential feature of the Dutch migrants’ assimilability — their desire and ability to detach themselves from their background, which is manifested in three major areas: language; homeland; compatriots.

Disassociation from Language. The paramount importance of learning the language of the new country is accepted by all immigrants. They also realise that in due course the new linguistic skill will be detrimental, in varying degrees, to the use of their native tongue.

The Dutch display an unusually early abandonment and corruption of their native language. This is repeatedly acknowledged in statements like these: ‘At home, we speak mostly English’. ‘Even after only five years here we spoke a rotten Dutch’. It is implicit in this delightful vignette:

It is a pleasure to see a meeting conducted by this man. He has his watch in front of him and we stick to the times! At 11 we close. Not like before, half the night and not decided anything. And what beautiful Dutch he speaks! Like the old Queen Wilhelmina who spoke the best Dutch in Holland. And when we mix in English words, or we make mistakes, he is like a teacher and says — I beg your pardon — so we must correct ourselves.

The majority of Dutch settlers feel no attachment to their language on their own account: ‘Most of us seem to “forget” Dutch’ — or on their children’s account: ‘I wouldn’t send them if there was a Dutch school down the street’.

This particular linguistic behaviour is a persistent trait among Dutch emigrants. The decline in the use of the Dutch language was a feature of the 1847 migration to the U.S.A., where complaints were voiced as early as 1886 about the Dutch parvenus ‘who speak as if they no longer understand Dutch and regard it as a kind of disgrace to speak it . . . but begin as soon as possible . . . to speak a disgusting Dutch-English patter.’

7 Lucas, Netherlanders in America, p. 594.
A pragmatic basis for their attitude is revealed in the almost universal attitudes towards teaching Dutch to their children: 'What's the use of it here?' 'There's no point to it', 'What for, anyway'.

In marked contrast to the Polish view, the Dutch settlers express the opinion that it is unfair to burden the child with the homeland language when he usually learns a foreign language at school anyway, that it would be too confusing and detrimental scholastically.

There are none of the emotional connotations so abundantly displayed in the Polish situation. The homeland language is not needed as a channel of communication since most Dutch parents know English well enough to use it for that purpose. The Dutch language cannot be used to heighten ethnic consciousness since there is very little feeling for historical and cultural traditions.

It is worth noting, on this latter aspect, that most of the settlers interviewed felt that there was nothing specifically Dutch that they wanted to preserve or hand down. The Dutch heritage was rather seen in terms of personal attributes: thrift, industry, broad-mindedness, a closely-knit family life, and also, very often, the ability to enjoy life: 'Not like so many Australians who sit, all the men on one side and the women on the other. We Dutch, we dance and we sing and we are noisy, but we have a good time. And when we drink, it's all together.'

There may also be a feeling of inferiority in the Dutch linguistic behaviour, perhaps obscurely related to the Netherlands' overshadowed cultural development, influenced as it was by that of its powerful neighbours, France and Germany. Landheer makes a similar observation:

particularly have the Dutch middle classes been likely to show a sense of inferiority when travelling in other countries; this, in turn, has often prompted them to copy ... the behaviour of their larger neighbours.8

Where this is not so, where there is a sense of pride in culture (as with the Limburgers), there is a desire to transmit cultural traditions in however modified a manner. Here one finds both adults and Australian-born children more familiar with, and more fond of, language and folk customs.

In addition, a sense of realism is undoubtedly at work here: the

8 Landheer, The Netherlands, p. 186.
accepted notion that if you move to a new country, you adopt its ways, with the implied corollary that you detach yourself from former ways. And yet, this is not a rational process — one does not go about consciously divesting oneself of past attachments. What then enables the Dutch to put their sense of realism into practice? Possibly conditioned by their historically-determined international outlook and the resultant willingness to adopt other people’s ways, the Dutch face up to the fact that ‘only the Dutch speak Dutch, so it’s up to us to learn other languages’. Characteristically, this view of the situation is implemented, in modern Holland, by making foreign languages compulsory in all schools, a measure all the more effective in a country where illiteracy is virtually unknown.

This realistic, practical attitude is seen, once again, in an earlier migration. While the Netherlanders who migrated to America 150 years ago had no knowledge of English, there was no hesitation about the necessity of acquiring it. It was taken for granted that ‘English would have to be used in business and other social relationships’.9 Even the great debate about the interdependence of the Dutch language and the continuity of religious teaching in the Reformed Church was resolved by abandoning Dutch in favour of English, which was usually the only language spoken by the children of the immigrant settlers.10

Certainly the most curious illustration of the Dutch readiness to abandon the native language in order to adopt a mode of communication suited to time and place is the one reported in 1875, when ‘some Hollanders in Fillmore County U.S.A. who lived among Scandinavians, were acquiring a knowledge of Norwegian, and their children were beginning to speak that language’.11

Disassociation from Homeland. In a people whose international outlook and sense of realism are central features of the national character, it is not surprising that these should be guiding forces in the process of detachment from the homeland.

The Dutch are accustomed to looking outwards, most of them seem to have contacts abroad — ‘Everybody has an uncle or an auntie somewhere’. Travelling to other countries is an accepted thing, and

10 Ibid., p. 598.
11 Ibid., p. 589.
migration is often motivated by a sense of adventure. The accompanying feelings of expectation towards the new land work towards neutralising the attachments to the old one. They 'put the home country behind' once they leave it. They see themselves as fitting in 'like chameleons' in the new place.

They are realistic about immigrant behaviour. 'There are no two ways about it — if you stay you've got to fit in' — and they cease very early to identify with Holland. A very interesting process appears to take place in their disassociation from the homeland. The present reality becomes the decisive factor and imperceptibly colours the memory of the past (a reverse direction to that observed in many Poles, whose past experiences influence their present behaviour).

That is not to say that they reject Holland, or that everything about Australia is good — they can suffer from nostalgia on the one hand, and they are quite vocal about Australia's shortcomings on the other. It is rather that the present reality becomes the basis of comparison. The various aspects of their old life acquire a shift of significance in the light of Australian circumstances. Where certain features were worse in Holland than in Australia, it is easy to become detached. Where features were better in Holland, they are still viewed in terms of the present reality, and a pragmatic evaluation is adopted, as will be seen from the following examples.

In Holland, the Dutch accept the bureaucratic impositions on daily life and comply with them matter-of-factly. Having become used to the relatively less restrictive red tape in Australia, they look back on the petty tyranny of administrative controls and see it looming large as one of the worst features of Holland: 'You need papers and diplomas for everything, so many papers, you can't move anywhere without papers'. In retrospect, that particular aspect of life (which was formerly accepted with resignation) becomes something that they 'are well rid of', something they 'had to escape from'.

A similar shift of perspective is seen in relation to Australian spaciousness, a feature which did not decide their coming here but which is stressed as the most favourable Australian feature. The appreciation of wider spaces grows into a strong attachment which

12 Jupp, *Arrivals and Departures*, p. 184. Adventure as main reason for emigrating to Australia: Dutch 16 per cent, compared to Greeks 5 per cent, British and Italian 3 per cent.

13 Ibid., p. 185.
overcomes the Dutch passion for environmental orderliness, the occasional nostalgia for the neat houses and gardens. In retrospect, Holland’s landscape is seen as restrictive, ‘choking, like a tight collar around your neck’.14

Where aspects of life were comparatively better in Holland than in Australia, the reaction is practical. It is not one of futile regret or of trying to recreate past patterns. This is clearly seen in respect of Australian education, which most settlers find inferior in quality and standards to that obtainable in Holland. By an interesting process of rationalisation, many of the people interviewed arrived at the conclusion that while this was a pity, it did not matter much, because education was not very important here. The new country offered plenty of opportunities and they felt that ‘you get on better in Australia with less education, than in Holland with more’.

The same realism is evinced in respect of social services. Once again, these are universally acknowledged as being of much higher standard in Holland. The sensible thing to do therefore is to go on living and working in Australia as long as prospects are favourable, and hope for an improvement in welfare services. If this does not occur, one leaves the door open for return to Holland, and social benefits there, by not becoming naturalised.

Disassociation from Compatriots. We have noted earlier that Dutch settlers are often surprised and even displeased to find how close they live to one another. It is hard to know why they dislike contact with their fellow countrymen. They are perhaps, as they claim, an outgoing people, at ease with other nationalities — ‘Even on board ship, we Dutchies mixed straightaway with everyone else — the English, the Germans’.

They deliberately look to Australians for friendship, as part of their adjustment process: ‘If we decided to settle, we want to make a complete go of it’. But, in fact, that is only one aspect of the matter, concerned with entry into the new society. This is complemented by a conscious effort to disassociate themselves from their fellow Dutchmen. The study by Hofstede already quoted remarked: ‘In general, Dutch immigrants are unfavourable to other Dutch immigrants.’15

14 Ibid., p. 132. Jupp also observed this displacement of motive.
15 Quoted by Taft, Migration and Assimilation in the Netherlands, p. 10.
The explicitness and even intensity of this rejection can be quite baffling. They admit unequivocally that they are not drawn to one another, that they prefer not to mix together: 'We're all too much alike, we're all a little bit stuffy-shirt. And then we're too stubborn. Dutchmen can argue themselves black and blue in the face — but you won't change and he won't change'.

Their well-known love of privacy sometimes polarises into a rejection of Dutch neighbours and an acceptance of Australians, through perceived visiting habits: 'Dutch neighbours will pop in every five mintues, be inquisitive about everything, criticise, be jealous. But Australians will come in for a cup of tea when you invite them, make no personal comment — and I like it that way'.

One also finds an echo of the inferiority feeling (mentioned in connection with the Dutch language) in the undefinable atmosphere of wariness among Dutch nationals, in the constant depreciation of themselves expressed again and again in such statements: 'We Dutchies are funny fellows'. 'We don't like each other'. 'You can always tell a Dutchman by his stubborness and his loud m outh.'

Sometimes, this syndrome of disassociation among the transplanted Dutch nationals is explained as being a consequence of the social rigidity allegedly existing in Holland: 'Over there there's a lot of class consciousness — you don't mix with people below you, or with people above you'. The subsequent reactions in Australia work in various ways. There is appreciation of a more egalitarian society: 'I have a friend, an Australian, an army captain. In Holland, a man with such a rank would look down on me, he wouldn't be my friend. Anybody with a bit of a uniform is stiff and distant. But here, it doesn't make any difference.' There can be reluctance to cling to compatriots who might evoke the social divisions back home. There is snobbery based on material improvement: 'He's got rich, so he keeps to himself.' There can be downright rejection: 'When they've worked themselves up a bit, some get arrogant, they think they're just IT, they'll even pretend they're not Dutch.' Lucas also recorded this particular trait in the Dutch settlements in Michigan in the 1880s. The tendency of some 'Hollanders to play the Yankee' was deplored, as was 'the desire of some Dutch immigrants not to be known as Hollanders'.

Personal disassociation is extended to the collectivity, as clearly

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illustrated by one particular interviewee who, in the course of conversation, mentioned that he had seen pictures of large Dutch families in distress whose plight had been relieved by appeals run through Australian newspapers. He did not identify with these people. He was not aware that ethnic relief agencies existed. He doubted if he would contribute to a Dutch charitable organisation, because he felt no ties to any Dutch community, no loyalty to any group, only to friends, who might happen to be Dutch, though probably not.

Undoubtedly, this was the most extreme position encountered. But altogether one gets a strong impression among Dutch settlers of dislike and rejection of things Dutch. There is an absence of the fellow feelings which often bind together a transplanted group, an absence of solidarity, of belonging to a community. It is all the more striking because it happens within the context of a neighbourhood with a marked concentration of Dutch people.

The same lack of sense of a collectivity has been aptly described by Zubrzycki in his Latrobe Valley study: 'The Dutch population in Moe is simply a collection of individuals of common ethnic origin who happen to live within the boundaries of a local government unit.'

In the context of this study, the most relevant consequence of the Dutch disassociation syndrome is its inhibiting effect on the formation of a strong ethnic structure.

General Considerations
We have now gone as far as seems relevant into the Dutch background for us to consider the organisational situation with fresh insights. We have arrived here by the back door, as it were, seeking firstly to identify traits of the Dutch character which would explain the particular development of their communal life. In analysing their assimilability, which is the most readily apparent cause of their loose ethnic structure, we have tried to resolve certain paradoxes which, in turn, have led to some historically determined and persistent attributes of Dutch psychology: pragmatism; industry; international outlook; and so on.

There is another personal feature on which the Dutch place tremendous emphasis. This is the characteristic of independence, of initiative, seen for instance in the determination to 'make good' and to do so by one's own efforts, to have the satisfaction of knowing that whatever one has, one owes to oneself only. Coupled with this attitude is a certain hardening against the person who does not succeed, an unwillingness to help, because 'nobody helped me, why should I help him?'; 'If I managed, why couldn't he?'

It is easy to extend this self-made, independent attitude to the collective realm and see it as one of the reasons for the lack of communal welfare facilities. There are other reasons, of course. The Dutchman who is imbued with these attitudes but, for whatever reasons, does not 'make it', is too proud to seek assistance and his need therefore is not seen by the community.

One also comes across expressed distrust of potential hangers-on:
The way I see it, if you set up a society to help such people — who is to say who is really in need, and how much he is in need, and how much the members must give to help? Then what? You have people who work hard, and also must support those who bludge? No, each one makes his way and each one is happy.

Another facet of this spirit of independence is the genuine appreciation of personal freedom, in contrast to the petty tyrannies alleged of Dutch laws and regulations. This sometimes makes Dutch people wary of associating together, especially at organisational level, as it might be reminiscent of restraints experienced at home: 'If I left Holland, I don't want to saddle myself with Holland here'. Also, because everyone 'is equal here', they do not tolerate easily being directed by other Dutch people, for fear this may induce a return of social stratification.

Furthermore, the Dutchman does not have the 'club mentality'. He asserts his individualism by finding his enjoyment personally, not within an organised framework: 'I am happy in my own home, with my own friends. I don't want, and I don't need, my social life arranged for me.'

This individual outlook, based on desire for privacy and home-centred activities, accords very well with the social conditions prevalent in the outer suburbs where many of the Dutch settlers live. This in turn reinforces their individual pursuit of leisure since the whole pattern of outer suburban life does little 'to encourage tightly-knit community life'.

Finally, one meets again the caution evinced regarding naturalisation. Here, in the organisational context, it often manifests itself thus: 'Yes I've settled here, yes, I'm satisfied. Yes, I think a Dutch organisation is a good thing — but I'll wait a bit and see how it turns out before joining.' The what's-in-it-for-me guideline and the ubiquitous caution are held responsible for the slow development of communal life.

All these personal characteristics underscore the absence of strong ethnic consciousness among the Dutch settlers. If we consider the elements that make up ethnic feeling, they could be roughly grouped into religious, national or cultural categories. Singly or in combination these act as cohesive agents and stimulate the formation of formal or informal associations that bind the transplanted settlers. These elements are undeniably present in the Dutch situation, but they are of a subdued, almost marginal, nature.

1 Jupp, J., *Arrivals and Departures*, p. 75.
In religious matters, the Dutch migrants have not felt the need to build their own national churches. A fractional number of them attend the monthly services conducted by Dutch chaplains of both Catholic and Protestant denominations but, as a rule, Dutch settlers worship at their local churches without experiencing a sense of loss. Regarding national consciousness, this is generally low-keyed, even in Holland, as long as freedom is not threatened, and the Dutch abroad feel no need to assert their Dutchness. Culturally, there is little in their traditions that the Dutch wish to maintain or hand down. Thus, the usual ethnic drives are largely ineffective in the Dutch context.

Another reason for the emergence of ethnic organisations is the feeling of comfort derived by settlers from contact with their compatriots amidst alien surroundings. Once again, this does not generally apply to the Dutch. They experience relatively little alienation thanks to various factors already discussed, such as congruence of norms between Dutch and Australian societies, linguistic ability, even a suitable pattern of life in suburbia.

Personal characteristics, therefore, weak ethnic motives, facility of adjustment in new surroundings, all combine to provide seemingly overwhelming odds against the formation of communal life. Yet, certain Dutch organisations do exist, do operate within their limited sphere and indeed have developed beyond the expectations of many communal workers.

Dutch Organisations in Melbourne
St Gregorius Dutch Male Choir (1952)
Soccer Club Ringwood City-Wilhelmina (1953)
Providence Children's Home (1957; Karneval Club Limburger Kangaroos (1957)
Netherlands Society Abel Tasman (1958)
Social Club De Meijongens (1959)
Dutch Social Club Nieuw Holland (1964)
Holland-Australian Club Northern Suburbs (1967)
Catholic Dutch Migrant Association of Victoria (1970)
Holland-Australia Retirement Foundation (1972)
Melbourne Tukkers (1972)

The above societies are the constituent members of the Association of Netherlands Organizations in Victoria, formed in 1965. The Klaverjas
Federation is a specific roof-body formed in 1963 to co-ordinate the activities of the various card clubs run by the above societies. The only formal society outside the Association is the Erasmus Foundation — Netherlands Australian Cultural Society formed in 1965.

Development of the Organisations
The post-war period saw a rapid influx of considerable numbers of Dutch settlers into Australia, of which Victoria received a substantial proportion as these census figures show:

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This was not accompanied by the proliferation of communal organisations seen in various other ethnic groups. On the contrary, the formation of Dutch organisations was a slow, somewhat casual process, often depending on incidental causes or individual stimulus.

In 1950, for instance, the Dutch Migrants Hostel (now closed), was founded by a Dutch priest greatly concerned for the social and moral welfare of the many young single Dutchmen arriving in the early years. Throughout the twenty years of its existence, until its founder's death, the Dutch Migrants Hostel depended entirely on his dedicated hard work for the position it held as the focal point for Dutch Catholics.

The Wilhelmina Soccer Club was formed in 1953 by a Dutch businessman, reportedly in response to the challenge of another ethnic soccer club. Since then, and despite the general appeal of such a club, Wilhelmina has been run by the same individual. ('He is the club. He controls it, subsidises it, makes all the decisions. He's like a kid with an electric train set, and just like that he'll probably wreck it, too'.)

It was not until 1957 that what might be termed a genuine ethnic club was formed by a handful of Limburgers filled with nostalgia for the traditional festivities of this southern province of the Netherlands. Even

2 From 6 January, the Epiphany, there is a period of festivities culminating in the Karneval, which takes place during the last three days preceding Lent. It is a tradition going back to medieval times although its origins are believed to be much older and based on the Bacchanalia and Saturnalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Its present form in Holland probably goes back to the sixteenth century when the country was under Spanish rule. A Council of Eleven with a Vorst (President) rules during the three days of Karneval. A Prince Karneval is also elected every year throughout the towns and cities of Limburg and Brabant. He is given the key to the city on the Sunday when a gay
so, it straggled on informally and with little success until 1959, when it began to gather momentum and eventually grew into the most successful of Dutch clubs in Melbourne.

The same year, 1957, also marked the formation of Providence House. Again this was instituted by the Dutch priest mentioned above and fell within the social welfare sphere of the Catholic archdiocese of Melbourne. Supported by the efforts of a nucleus of Dutch families, Providence House catered for Dutch and Australian children from broken homes. This was the first communal recognition by Dutch settlers of possible needs and hardships within their group. Notwithstanding its partial Dutch character, it has remained the only official welfare institution within the Dutch community.

Slowly, other organisations emerged, mostly unaware of each other, some gradually established themselves and are still in existence, others less successful disappeared. Thus communal development took shape haphazardly and hesitatingly until the mid-1960s when it was stimulated by a number of factors.

Of major importance was the growth of organised charter and group flights at a reduced rate. For the purpose of pooling membership in order to be eligible for the reduced air-fares to Holland, a Federation was formed by Wilhelmina, Nieuw Holland and the Limburger Kangaroos. This was unofficially backed by some privately-owned Dutch travel agencies. Here seemed an opportunity to promote membership of Dutch clubs, and eligibility for travel was made conditional upon a six-months' period of membership to a recognised Dutch club and a small registration fee. Opinions vary as to the success of this manoeuvre. Some officials maintain that people just sent their money in and did not attend in person. Others feel that membership growth was due not only to the travel scheme but also to greater interest in club activities. Whatever the cause, membership did increase.

More importantly from the angle of communal involvement, Dutch procession of floats and fancy-dressed people entertain large crowds. On Monday all day there is a masquerade and a competition of 'Barrel-speakers' — another custom reputed to go back 1000 years — where speakers vie with each other to make fun in the most outrageous manner of all forms of authority. On Tuesday the children parade in the streets in fancy-dress.

The number eleven has great significance, being the Fool's number, and is used as much as possible. Gradually, in the nineteenth century, Karneval societies came into being and the oldest one recently celebrated its seventh cycle (77 years). The above traditions are celebrated in the northern parts of Belgium and some of the Rhineland towns of Germany as well as in the southern provinces of Holland.
settlers became aware of the existence of Dutch organisations, and the Dutch clubs themselves became aware of the existence of other such clubs. This led in turn to the formation in 1965 of the Association of Netherlands Organizations in Victoria, which gradually took most of the societies under its umbrella.

The functions of this body are to co-ordinate the activities of the Dutch organisations in Victoria, which send two representatives to the Association's monthly meetings. It also organises the Queen Juliana Ball in April and the Dutch Community Ball in December, where a Dutch 'Queen' is selected to represent the community in the Miss Victoria Quest. The association administers the money raised, usually along these lines: contributions to the Spastics Society and the Providence Children's Homes; subsidies to a monthly magazine published in South Australia (Nederlands Maandblad), to the Choral Society and to the St Niklaas Fund (the traditional Santa Claus ceremony held in December at the Springvale Town Hall). Significantly, there is no formal provision for any type of welfare or relief work. Except for Providence, this is done on an individual basis or through the church.

Soon after its formation the association took over the group air travel scheme and the Federation formed for that purpose was disbanded. The reduced fare benefits were passed on to all members of the association. With the cheaper rates available on an individual basis in the 1970s, this function of the association has become redundant. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the air travel scheme was the major single factor that contributed to the development and unification of the Dutch organisations in Melbourne.

Other forces obviously come into play. A specific example of an outside influence is the fluctuation in interest and membership created by the granting of a liquor licence to a club at a time of early closing in Victoria, and the effect of later closing introduced a few years later.

Another instance of an organisation created through a specific need (and initiated by an individual) is the formation in 1972 of the Holland-Australia Retirement Foundation (H.A.R.F.). The idea of housing elderly Dutch settlers together in retirement flats came about in an interesting way.

For about twenty years, a small 'bush library' has been operating sending out on request parcels of about twenty books each on a six-months loan. After a brisk beginning in the middle 1950s, interest in the
bush library gradually dwindled until it was almost forgotten by the community. Then interest revived dramatically in the early 1970s. Inquiries by the librarian revealed that these requests all came from elderly Dutch settlers 'older and less involved in everyday affairs, usually retired, who begin to feel again the need for Dutch things and company'.

This acknowledged need led to the formation of H.A.R.F. H.A.R.F. is formally registered with the Hospitals and Charities Commission, and fund-raising activities are proceeding.

The resurgence of interest in the bush library illustrates a general force which produces later interest in ethnic organisations. This is the time lag enabling settlers to achieve a certain economic stability. This is the period when many migrants have more leisure time on their hands and look for entertainment within a homeland atmosphere. Dutch settlers also followed this pattern, albeit in an attenuated form, and the Dutch clubs grew and consolidated themselves in response to increased demand from the late 1960s onwards.

This psychological awareness, the feeling 'I'm still a Dutchman after all', was reflected, or perhaps stimulated, by the more favourable climate towards ethnic organisations in the Australian community. General acceptance, plus the success of some clubs, the Limburger Kangaroos in particular, overcame the cautious Dutch attitude towards joining organised Dutch activities. The knowledge of such activities and of the existence of Dutch clubs was greatly increased by the appearance in 1970 of the Dutch Societies Courier, a monthly publication disseminating news of communal life.

Thus, a whole lattice of self-reinforcing causes has brought the Dutch societies in the mid-1970s to a period of success, of increased membership and activity, of hope for further development.

Character of the Organisations
The interesting thing about the present buoyant state of the Dutch societies is that it goes hand in hand with a lack of ethnic orientation. This is probably the most conspicuous characteristic of the Dutch societies. They are pleasant, transient attempts at providing a few hours' entertainment in a congenial atmosphere. Their Dutch character comes principally from the fact that the majority of their numbers originate from the Netherlands. It is not intensified by any desire to maintain or transmit Dutch values, by any strong identifications with
Holland, nor by any sense of common destiny with their compatriots in Australia. There is little Dutch content in their activities, the English language is used freely, sometimes exclusively. Australian patronage and participation are eagerly sought, and all the clubs have a varying degree of Australian membership, sometimes up to 40-50 per cent.

In fact, that is exactly how the Dutch themselves view their organisations: 'Not so much Dutch as social, in a general sense, started by people of Dutch origin'. They sometimes express surprise at the degree of success they have achieved, which itself indicates a very low degree of ethnic expectation. Disassociating ethnicity from their clubs even further, they stoutly and unanimously maintain that Dutch organisations are different from those in other ethnic groups. In their view, the latter 'isolate the migrants', 'keep them tight in little groups', whereas the Dutch organisations are seen as drawing Australians into their activities by catering for general interest.

This weak ethnic orientation seems part of an overall lack of intensity about the Dutch communal scene. They suffer the same problems as other national groups. All the difficulties, frustrations and irritations facing organisers everywhere are present here too, but in a milder form. There are communal wrangles, personal rivalries, fears of losing autonomy, but these do not have the violent emotional overtone seen with the Maltese, for instance, and which has fractured that community. Nor is there any of that burning sense of commitment which has enabled the Polish organisations to combine, despite dissensions, into a purposeful, well-integrated communal machine. The Dutch societies co-operate because they see the practical advantages of unity, not out of any deep-seated sense of belonging together.

Generally speaking then, it could be said that the Dutch settlers have set about their communal affairs in their realistic, pragmatic, orderly manner. They have established themselves individually first, then cautiously looked towards the communal realm. Later than other national groups therefore, they have rectified the haphazard growth of societies, overcome the inevitable disagreements and have established a loose but fairly efficient communal system to cater for that small minority among them who find enjoyment in organised activities in the company of other Dutch people.

Their societies embody in the corporate sphere the personal traits we observed earlier. The weak ethnic orientation reflects the international outlook of the individuals. The lack of intensity is probably allied to
their assimilability: Dutch settlers can be detached about their organisations because they are not dependent on them for their psychological well-being. The Dutch individualistic tendencies are repeated in the independent lines pursued by most societies, which prefer to do things in their own way and by themselves. Even the contradictory element of the Dutch character can be traced here, where we see their insistence on independent communal development coupled with their strong resentment at the absence of consular interest.

These and other character traits will reappear when we look in greater detail at the organisations themselves, which have been grouped under the broad but useful headings of social, welfare, cultural and regional organisations.

Social Organisations

The Holland-Australia Committee is typical of many Dutch social clubs. Formed in October 1967, this group started its program with a St Nicolas children's party at the Broadmeadows Town Hall the following December. Two hundred children were invited including some from the nearby St Joseph's Babies Homes, the Migrants' Hostel, etc. With the co-operation of the mayor, the local press and shopkeepers, this was a most successful affair with over 1000 people attending, clearly showing to the organisers that there was a demand for a Dutch group in the northern suburbs. A typical comment also illustrates the lack of ethnic awareness: 'We had no idea there were so many Dutch migrants living here!' The Holland-Australia Committee was formally organised, with President and vice-president, secretary and associate secretary, treasurer and assistant treasurer, plus six committee members. These are elected on a three year rotating basis. From the original 6 families the membership has grown to about 150 families, mostly older residents. The formal balls attract up to 250 people, of whom perhaps 50 are not Dutch. These include the patron of the club, the mayor of Broadmeadows, and friends of the younger people.

This Australian attendance and other factors such as advertising of functions in the local press, stipulating quest entrants must be naturalised citizens and so on, all help in fulfilling the first object of the constitution: 'Integration between the Dutch and Australian community'. Other aims are to keep ties with Holland (showing Dutch films, printing news items from Holland in the newsheet); to organise
social activities (quarterly dances, annual ball, fancy-dress ball, picnics, car rallies); to hold a yearly St Nicolas festival. The Holland-Australia Committee is affiliated with the Association of Netherlands Societies, but prefers not to hold combined functions, for fear of losing its own special, intimate atmosphere.

This self-sufficiency and independence are typical of the other Dutch social clubs which follow a similar pattern of objectives, administration, activities. The smaller clubs usually meet in hired local halls. Abel Tasman and Wilhelmina Soccer Club have premises on long-term leases, as well as liquor licences, both factors which tend to provide a solid basis for membership. The age-range of members is usually from 35 years upwards, though the larger functions attract a number of younger people. In addition to their social activities, the clubs usually provide one or more forms of subsidiary entertainment: billiards, darts, bridge, draughts, ladies' soccer, etc. All clubs run a Klaverjas section. This Dutch card game (named after the suit of clubs) is probably the most popular of Dutch entertainments. There are sixteen Klaverjas groups, twelve of which are metropolitan and usually belong to a larger organisation. The latest, formed in 1974, is unusual, because it consists only of Dutch pensioners.

These Klaverjas groups, whose aggregate membership runs to about 600 people, formed a Klaverjas Federation in the mid 1960s, to co-ordinate the playing which is done on an elimination basis, with weekly and monthly 'drives' culminating in a yearly Klaverjas Tournament held in November. This is a highlight on the Dutch social calendar and attracts up to 800 people, some of whom travel down from the country. Card-playing starts around 3 p.m. and goes on until 8 p.m., then dancing starts. In Dutch tradition there is no formal supper, but buffet tables are ready throughout the evening, laden with salt herrings, smoked eel, meat balls, meat croquettes, salads, cheese, cakes. There are raffles, lotteries, a Miss Klaverjas competition, the band is Dutch, and everyone has a good time.

Although the atmosphere is good and the tournament always a success, the problems that plague all social organisers also appear here:

People are unco-operative. They're asked to give the numbers in advance and they don't. Or if they do, they say 60 and 100 turn up, and then there isn't enough food and they complain how badly it's organised.

They always complain — about the tables being too close, about not sitting
with their friends. Or then one club boycotts the other and your seating is completely mucked up. That's the Dutch all over!

Very little distinguishes one social club from another. It is perhaps interesting to mention the formation of the Nieuw Holland Dutch Social Club in 1964, as a 'declaration of independence'. It was formerly a branch of Wijkomen, a world-wide society based in Holland with the specific objective of helping migrants in need to return to Holland in case of emergency. The Melbourne branch felt this to be too one-sided a program, as emergencies, genuine or otherwise, arise frequently, but people do not join until they feel they qualify for the benefit. Furthermore, funds raised locally were sent to Holland to be administered there and this was far from satisfactory. Wijkomen in Australia was disbanded and the new club formed on a social and charitable basis. The latter function is carried on locally — food or money to needy families, donations made to Providence House, the Spastics Society, and so on.

The late formation of some other clubs, for instance the Melbourne Tukkers, a social club formed in 1973 for migrants from the province of Groningen, illustrates the cautious attitude of Dutch settlers towards their own organisations: 'It takes us such a long time to get anything started!' This delay is sometimes self-defeating, as the need for which the organisation is finally set up has greatly diminished by that time, a situation which will be clearly seen in the case of some of the welfare organisations.

Welfare Organisations
Although the Dutch Migrants' Hostel was closed down in 1970, it is fitting that it should open this description of Dutch welfare bodies, because it was the recognised nucleus of Dutch communal life. The hostel was founded in 1950 by a Dutch priest concerned for the welfare of young single Dutchmen 'drifting around and usually ending up in St Kilda or Fitzroy with bad company'.

The nature of the hostel was that of a transition centre. At the peak of Dutch migration, residents stayed about 3-4 months; in later years it was possible for them to stay much longer. Its purpose was social and spiritual, definitely not philanthropic: 'Hard-working young men usually land on their feet with money, but can you imagine how lonely young boys can feel, all alone in a foreign country?' It is estimated that
at least 2000 young men between the ages of 18 and 30 passed through the reception centre.

But the hostel's influence was much greater than that. For many years it was the only place where Dutch people could come, discuss their problems, find Dutch company. Its founder was not only known to most Dutch settlers but respected and looked upon as guide, initiator and 'cement' of the Dutch Catholic community. These feelings seem justified by his achievements and activities. He founded the hostel and Providence House for needy children. He initiated social activities, was responsible for pastoral care of Dutch settlers throughout Victoria and edited a monthly magazine.

The hostel declined in importance with the scattering of the Dutch settlers throughout the metropolitan area, the decline in immigration, the gradual formation of formal Dutch organisations. There were only a handful of young men in residence when the founder died in 1970 and the hostel was closed down as a reception centre.

Later that year, the Catholic Dutch Migrants Association was formed to replace the hostel, albeit with a change of purpose: the organisation was formed as a committee to help families in need. Thus, after twenty years of migration, there came formal communal recognition that not all Dutch migrants had settled successfully, that sickness could prove a disaster in Australia, that large families with small children were particularly vulnerable, that there was need to assist some people with advice and material help.

A very interesting situation developed. We noted earlier certain aspects which operated against the formation of organised welfare: Dutch industriousness; a certain hardening against those who had not succeeded; a rapid merging into the Australian background; pride and therefore reluctance to ask for help.

The character of the Dutchman is usually marked by determination... the result can then be that people cannot ask for help, they simply will not ask for help, they keep pushing until it is too late. The C.D.M.A. had to look for people who needed help.3

We now see the unusual position of a welfare body searching for recipients, largely because the need had greatly diminished after twenty

years of successful settlement. The needy settlers had either overcome a difficult period or had returned to the Netherlands.

Nevertheless, the committee of fifteen, supported by Dutch organisations and Dutch individuals, are working in close contact with such Australian bodies as the Society of St Vincent de Paul, in order to help new settlers with problems. These are not necessarily Dutch people but also migrants from other countries. Here we meet again a facet of the Dutch character, their international outlook, which enables them to get involved outside their own group.

This outward orientation is also seen in the two specific welfare projects conducted by the Dutch community: Providence House and H.A.R.F. (Holland-Australia Retirement Fund). Though formed only recently, H.A.R.F. is assuming greater importance in this well-established community. The interesting thing is the concern expressed for old people in need generally, not merely for Dutch pensioners.

Providence House offers proof of the sincerity of this expressed concern. Started in the early 1950s to look after Dutch children from broken homes, it has never been ethnically bound but has accepted children from Australian and other backgrounds. The Providence House scheme at Bacchus Marsh (52 km from Melbourne) has grown into a complex of five family homes, each housing ten children with their foster parents. These children are orphans, wards of the state, etc., and only four of them are Dutch.

Since Providence House falls within the Catholic welfare scope, it is true, of course, that a closed ethnic scheme would not be acceptable. But this disregards altogether other factors. Providence House, while founded by a Dutch priest for Dutch children, accepted others right from its inception. During its twenty years of existence, Providence House has been supported wholeheartedly by Dutch organisations notwithstanding the ever-decreasing number of Dutch children in residence. As recently as 1974, the Dutch community donated an Olympic-size swimming pool to the children of the homes, in memory of the founder, Father Maas.

Cultural Organisations

Saint Gregorius Choir. A somewhat ambivalent review of a concert given by the Dutch Choral Society appeared in the Dutch Courier of November 1973. Starting with high praise for the choir, the audience, the hall, even the acoustics, the tone of the review abruptly changes into
one of condemnation for the lack of Dutch content. 'After all, this is a Dutch choir!' The correspondent goes on to express the opinion that on this and other occasions the choir seems ashamed to acknowledge its Dutch origin through its music. It concludes with the hope that a selection of Dutch songs would be included in future performances, because 'greater Dutch self-respect' would increase the esteem in which the choir is held by both Australian and Dutch audiences.

This letter reflects fairly accurately the character of the Saint Gregorius Choir. This is probably the earliest Dutch organisation, formed in 1952 and still active in 1974, despite rifts, splits, changes of name, disbandment and re-formation. Originating in the Dutch Migrants' Hostel, the choir's objective was to carry on the Dutch tradition of singing for church services. Known as the Dutch Male Choir, it drew most of its membership from the young men residing at the hostel and remained at a steady figure of about thirty through the early fifties.

As the young men left the hostel, married and began devoting themselves to getting established in Australia, interest dwindled. A major split occurred in the late fifties and the choir went through a moribund phase.4

A gradual renewal of interest took place in the late 1960s, attributed largely to the same factor which promoted the development and consolidation of the other Dutch clubs. Having successfully settled down, the Dutch migrants found time for entertainment and some of them looked back to Dutch traditions.

In 1969, the choir re-formed with about twenty-five members and adopted the name of Saint Gregorius Dutch Male Choir. In the mid-1970s, it has about forty members (all of them Dutch), and sings during church services for Dutch and Australian Catholic mass. It sings at charity concerts, was active during the Eucharistic Congress and is in demand for various occasions, such as carol singing, weddings, etc. The repertoire is mainly spiritual, light popular and folk, and the choir sings in several languages.

The Erasmus Foundation. There is also some ambivalence in the character of this organisation, which is unique within the Dutch community and keeps itself quite apart from Dutch affairs.

4 Some members of the breakaway section joined the choir of the Knox Shire.
Formed in 1965, 'to explain to the Australians what makes the Dutch tick, and vice-versa', the Foundation caters mainly to professionals and upper-rank businessmen with a 60-40 Dutch Australian ratio and an age range of mid-thirties upwards. It has had a fairly static financial membership of about 100 families since its inception, while attendance fluctuates between 70 and 120 at the monthly meetings.

The stated objective of the Foundation is 'to forge the cultural links between the Netherlands and Australia'.

This is defined in its constitution:

(a) to familiarise Australians and Netherlanders with the historical, technical, musical, and literary culture of the Netherlands and Australia.

(b) To promote understanding and friendship between Australians and Netherlanders.

To carry this out the foundation undertakes a series of nine or ten yearly lectures, at which well-known speakers address the members on topics based alternately on Dutch and Australian subjects, for example 'Flemish Art'; 'Flora and Fauna in Australia'; 'Delta Plan, Holland's Safety Valve'; 'Theatre in Australia'.

Thus, quite clearly, the foundation is not an ethnic organisation in the narrower sense of preserving culture within the national group. It is in intent a Dutch-Australian cultural organisation, directed towards the spreading of both cultures. In practice, however, there is a shift in character from Dutch to Australian.

In order to recruit new and younger members, and also to overcome the difficulty of obtaining speakers of the required calibre on Dutch topics, the foundation loosened the strict Dutch/Australian sequence as early as 1968 (three years after its formation) and introduced more controversial topics in its program: 'Suburbia, Youth and Drugs'; 'Modern Music has no Meaning'; 'Communism and Atheism'.

In the 1970s, the foundation takes pride in the wide spectrum of interest of its members, and seeks to provide them with a suitable program. The theme for the 1971-2 period, for instance, was:

the impact of the twentieth century and the Western World on our culture.

The influences and social pressures arising from modern music, literature and the arts will be examined and discussed by well-qualified speakers.\textsuperscript{6}

While there are still Dutch topics on the program, there is no doubt that the decreasing ethnic content is indicative of the direction taken by the foundation. A minority of the members express some uneasiness at the speed with which the Australianisation process is moving. Most of the Dutch members, however, foresee with equanimity the time when the foundation will become an Australian cultural society — 'You have to be realistic and accept these things; you live here, you become Australianised and so do your organisations. If not, they disappear altogether'.

It is difficult to evaluate the success of the foundation, mainly because it is not a clear-cut matter of linking activities to stated objectives. There are other aspects, such as the unofficial hopes of the founders and the undercurrents of community expectations.

To deal with these points in order, there is little doubt of the foundation's success as a cultural association. Over its years of existence, and notwithstanding the present greater emphasis on general topics, the foundation has presented a stimulating Dutch-Australian cultural program of a high level. The list of people delivering lectures is impressive and has included professors, a judge, a federal minister, other professionals and dignitaries. The status of these speakers, no less than the content of the lectures, is a great source of gratification to the members.

The hoped-for dramatic increase in membership did not come about with the more controversial program. However, the respectable number of members has not dwindled and the small turn-over indicates that interest is being maintained.

The foundation has links with various cultural organisations, such as the Art Gallery Society in Melbourne, and the Prins Bernard Fund in Holland. The latter, a society whose purpose is to advance the culture of Holland, allocated the sum of $1250 to the Erasmus Foundation for the year 1971.

It is arguable whether the second objective of the foundation, the promotion of understanding and friendship between Australians and Netherlanders, has been fulfilled. It is neither denying nor belittling the

\textsuperscript{6}Ibid., p. 2.
contributions to cultural understanding made by the foundation over the years to wonder if these exchanges are not taking place in the sphere of the already converted. That is to say, one wonders if the cause of understanding and friendship, the verbally expressed purpose of 'showing what makes the Dutchman tick', are really served by an intellectual (and sometimes esoteric) program of lectures to a small select audience, which presumably already has an insight into the cultures of both societies.

Altogether, the Erasmus Foundation projects the image of an efficient, somewhat elitist, cultural organisation of Dutch-Australian interest. It is unlikely that this particular image had been planned, but it is now accepted and it is quite pleasing to the members.

In the Dutch community at large, however, the reflection of this image is distorted. Here, the Erasmus Foundation is seen as snobbish, aloof, having failed in its responsibilities.

It is only fair to say that the Foundation has never represented itself as a Dutch communal organisation. It has never committed itself to doing anything for, or with, the Dutch migrants in Melbourne. On the other hand, it is fully aware of the expectations of the Dutch community, from the various approaches made by the latter and by the contacts existing at personal level. Nor does it seem unreasonable for the Dutch community to look to a society like the Erasmus Foundation for guidance, co-operation, and even leadership.\(^7\)

With the notable exception of one individual, this has not been forthcoming. The Foundation has pursued its separate course and refused to affiliate with the Dutch roof-body despite the offers of the latter. It feels that it has little in common with the bulk of Dutch migrants, either in interests or aspirations, and that no useful purpose could be served by closer ties. It considers, on the contrary, that this might even constitute a clash of interest with its own goals and activities.

Not surprisingly, a great deal of resentment against the Foundation has built up over the years. 'They're just great snobs', 'They're not for ordinary people like most of us' are comments which illustrate the general feeling. More specifically, the Foundation is blamed for not taking any interest in the Dutch community, for failing to help existing clubs by hiring their premises, for instance, for not affiliating with the Associated Dutch Societies.

\(^7\) Cp. the expectations of its intelligentsia by the Polish community.
These things are deeply felt. It is not only that the Foundation holds itself aloof, but that it could have advanced the Dutch communal cause with its status and expertise. It is felt that the Foundation could have brought about unity earlier, instituted a more effective and diverse communal structure, it could have raised 'the tone of us clod-hoppers'.

Thus, rightly or wrongly, Dutch communal workers look upon the Foundation as having defaulted from its rightful place in the community. The benefit they derived from their experiences with the one individual from the Foundation (who headed their roof-body for several years) has left them with a strong sense of loss at this refusal by professional and qualified Dutch people to become involved in the organised affairs of the Dutch community.

Regional Organisations
The Limburger Kangaroos and the Meijongens. These organisations deserve particular attention. They are intrinsically interesting. They are the only Dutch organisations who seek to maintain traditions. They occupy an important place in the community.

The Dutch settlers from Limburg 'are conspicuous for the tendency to find their friends amongst the immigrants from the same province of origin'.

There are many differences between the Limburgers and other Dutch settlers from Limburg 'are conspicuous for the tendency to find their friends amongst the immigrants from the same province of origin'.

There are many differences between the Limburgers and other Netherlands, differences arising from the separate development of this south-easternmost province which did not become fully integrated with the Netherlands until 1867. Historically and culturally, Limburg has many ties with Belgium and Germany. Its most famous tradition, which it shares with the northern parts of Belgium and some of the Rhineland towns of Germany, is the Karneval, the pre-Lent festivities starting on the Epiphany, 6 January.

The distinctiveness of the Limburgers also arises from their Catholic affiliation; from their particular dialect which is 'on the frontier between Germanic and Romance speech'; from their character, which is reputed to be merry, boisterous and outgoing, as against the more dour and reserved nature of the northerners.

We have mentioned the regional attachment which is an interesting feature of the Dutch national feeling. Nowhere is this more evident than in the case of the Limburgers. There is a well-known anecdote about a

9 Ibid., p. 292, n. 18.
Dutch soldier in the second world war who was ordered to surrender. To which he replied: ‘A Limburger does not surrender’ (i.e. Limburger, not a Netherlander). The Melbourne Limburgers, too, preserve their distinctiveness: ‘Among the Dutch migrants, there are Hollanders, and there are Limburgers’.

These various differences which set the Limburgers apart from the other Dutch settlers form bonds between them which are extended from the personal to the collective sphere. The Limburgers are undoubtedly the most closely-knit of all Dutch migrants (with the exception of the Dutch Reformed group), and their clubs are the most active and flourishing.

Their beginnings were small. In 1957 ‘5 Limburgers . . . came together in a cellar and decided that we should have Karneval here in our new homeland’.10

In 1959, the Kangaroos formed an offshoot, the *Meijongens* (May-boys), in order to bring together young bachelors from Limburg who were interested in keeping alive the traditional festivities of the May Queen. The clubs prospered, despite the wrangles and personal strife evident in every community.

By the end of 1959, the young club had already withstood many storms, but more was to come. The big crisis came during the middle of 1959 when the club existed [sic] of a few members because many had left or were made to leave . . . it was not long before the L.K. flourished again and had become the biggest Dutch club in Australia and their activities had extended to four balls per year.11

These balls are designed to keep alive the festive traditions which go back to the period following the 80 years’ war (1648). Although greatly modified in the Australian setting, as many of the customs as possible are preserved. Eleven Councillors are elected. A Prince Karneval, a Miss Karneval, and a Guard of Honour are chosen. All the above must be Limburgers or of Limburger origin. These ‘rulers’ and ‘princes’ are officially crowned at the balls and every year has thus seen the reign of a Vorst Joep 1st or Vorst Leo 1st, or Prinz Henk 1st or Prinz Eddy 1st. All the officials wear white tie and tails, plus the traditional medieval

11 Ibid., 1967, p. 5.
headgear, chains of office, ceremonial medals and badges exchanged with other Karneval clubs here and in Holland.12

The entertainment also is traditional. Dances around the maypole are carried out by dansmarietjes around a pole erected in the ballroom. There are 'barrel speeches, where a speaker sings, recites, talks in a humorous way, tortures all forms of authority, especially wives, military and bureaucracy'.13

The traditional and the Australian mingle at these affairs. The Vorst in full medieval regalia holds a toy kangaroo as symbol of the club. The Karneval Prinz in festive garb is surrounded by his maids of honour in modern marching girls' outfit, the latter being billed either as 'dansmarietjes' or as 'go-go girls'. There is no denying the good humour and the boisterousness of the proceedings, 'with the roof lifting 5 feet to let out the fun and laughing'.14

Throughout the year there are other activities — social evenings, car rallies, film nights. December 5 marks the traditional arrival of Saint Nicolas and his assistants, the Black Peters.

On the administrative side, the membership fee is $10 per family. There are about 50 member families, but the balls attract 1200-1400 guests. These are sometimes held in conjunction with one or another of the Karneval clubs, Dutch or German. The guests include up to 25 per cent of Australian spouses or friends.

The Limburger Kangaroos have expanded considerably since the opening of their club house in November 1972, a considerable event in communal affairs, since this was, and still is, the only Dutch communal property. The club house is situated in the 'Dutch belt', the outer eastern suburb of Keysborough. It has a liquor licence and a snack bar, facilities for tennis, billiards, barbecues and so on.

Although its ethnic character makes the Limburger Kangaroos unique within the community, its importance to organised Dutch life lies not so much in any emotional appeal this may give it, but is due to two other factors. Everybody knows about 'those mad Limburgers'. There is a little jealousy perhaps at their success. There is also a sort of half-amused resentment that according to the club's constitution all key

12 In Melbourne there are a few other Dutch Karneval clubs, The Jokers, The Wombats, etc., which are usually very small and affiliated with one or other of the larger Dutch organisations. There is also a Karneval Society of Victoria, with which the German and Dutch Karneval clubs are affiliated.
13 Souvenir program of the Limburger Kangaroos, 1967, p. 11.
14 Ibid., 1968, p. 2.
positions must be occupied by native Limburgers. 'You've got to become a naturalised Limburger to join them!' But it is recognised that they are the most dynamic club, the only one with its own premises, thus making it a focal point within the Dutch communal sphere and attracting many non-members.

Secondly, in addition to their own activities, the Kangaroos have always been involved in various aspects of communal life and have set out on a deliberate promotion of contacts within the community. They have sponsored or promoted various moves, such as the formation of a co-ordinating body, group travel schemes, and so on. They feel it is their duty to 'show our faces at whatever is going on', ostensibly to find suitable candidates for the May Queen and her attendants, but more importantly 'to show that we care'. The Limburger Kangaroos also provide entertainment at other Dutch social occasions: 'We're all Dutch, you understand, but we Limburgers are the fun-makers'.

There are thus good reasons to support the general consensus that the Limburger Kangaroos are a cohesive force within the Dutch community.

To end this account of the Limburger Kangaroos, it is interesting to note that this Dutch organisation, whose aim is to maintain some of the homeland traditions, nevertheless accepts the inevitable Australianisation of the club.

In 1968, the club boasted that:

The remarkable fact is that the Club has been able to find a successor every year and the tradition that the Prince has to be a bachelor and of Limburger origin has never been broken . . . The tradition that the Councillors have to be Limburgers is still kept.15

In the mid-1970s, regret is expressed that in order to carry on the traditions for the next generation, the constitution will eventually have to be changed to allow Netherlanders from other provinces to hold positions 'but that will be only if we're desperate — up to here!'

Beyond that, it is realised that the majority of the members are aged 40 or more and that migration from Holland has been almost at a standstill for the last ten years. It is also recognised that the young people who attend the club for tennis and dancing do so with an increasing number of Australian spouses and friends.

Being Dutch, the attitude to the future is realistic: 'It's a terrific club house, it'll always make a good social centre'.

15Ibid., p. 3.
Although this religious group lies outside the sphere of organised Dutch life, its inclusion in this study is warranted by the fact that it forms a little Dutch community of its own.

The Reformed Church of Australia is the Australian branch of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (Gereformeerde Kerk). This religious movement was founded in 1834, when a group of orthodox Calvinists, the Separatists, broke away from the established Netherlands Reformed Church (Hervormde Kerk), in protest against the growing liberalism of the latter. This conservative evangelical church is the second largest Protestant group in the Netherlands, and it was estimated that it numbered 800,000 adherents in Holland in the mid-1960s.\(^1\)

It is impossible to determine statistically the number of adherents to the Reformed Church, as they are classified together with 'other Protestants' on the census. However, the following information is available on the various Victorian congregations:\(^2\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Membership Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne (1950)</td>
<td>120 communicants and baptised members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Hill (1957)</td>
<td>423 members plus own church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside metropolitan area</td>
<td>249 members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^2\) From 1969 *Year Book of Reformed Churches of Australia and New Zealand*, and personal interviews.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Membership Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mt Evelyn</td>
<td>303 members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moe</td>
<td>138 members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Gippsland</td>
<td>180 members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandenong</td>
<td>833 plus own church and day school since 1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geelong</td>
<td>334 plus theological college since 1955.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is estimated that there were 3087 congregants in Australia in 1955. With continued migration and natural increase numbers grew to 8058 in 1969. Members are scattered throughout Australia, with the earliest congregation in Tasmania. ‘Kingston — now that’s a town with a Dutch stamp on it. A few of our people came and started as hop-pickers. Then they sponsored friends and relatives, and they’re a real active community, with their own school and everything.’

The Box Hill congregation is made up of Dutch migrants mostly from the northern provinces of Holland, a few families from Ceylon and a few from Indonesia. A handful of Australians also attend, usually drawn in by Dutch spouses. All age groups are represented and it is claimed that half the membership is aged under 35.

The group gives the impression of a very tightly-knit community, leading its life within the religious circle which fulfils all its spiritual and social needs. The members are paying off their church hall, where three services are held every Sunday — in Dutch at 9 a.m. and in English at 10.30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Two weekly Bible classes are held, one in English and one in Dutch. Bible Study is one of the most important activities of the Reformed Church ‘and daily readings after meals is important but it is not enough’. There are two Ladies’ Guilds, again one English-speaking and one Dutch-speaking. These also hold Bible Study and discussion meetings, as well as ‘all the things ladies do on guilds’ — afternoon teas, sewing talks, an annual fête etc. There is a choir, composed of both adult and young members, who sing in English at church services and other gatherings.

The congregation is very proud of its active youth group, the Cadets for boys of 8-15, and the Calvinettes for girls of the same age. These have Bible Study suitable for their age-group and in addition several activities of the Boy Scout type. The older Youth Group (15-20) again have Bible Study, also hikes, fortnightly social evenings and they bring out their own magazine. They have bi-annual camps, often interstate, with other Reformed groups.
All social activities take place within the congregation. There is a minimum amount of formal visiting since friends and acquaintances see each other every Sunday.

Once a year the choir holds a social evening with songs and party games. Once or twice a year there is a great 'Field Day' with races, competitions, food etc. and even the people who work on Saturdays try to take this Saturday off and spend it with their families. There are also the official visits (religious counselling) which are not really social but 'mean you see one another'.

The Reformed Church of Australia and New Zealand is in touch with sister churches all over the world — Holland, U.S.A., South Africa, Indonesia, and so on. It sponsors a 'Back to God Hour' on the radio every Sunday night in five states, and has issued a monthly journal *Trowel and Sword* since 1954. This is written in English with a small section in Dutch and deals mainly with religious topics of basic principles (for example Creation or Evolution) or of topical interest (Civil Rights in Northern Ireland). Some of these articles are reprinted from American Reformed Church magazines in U.S.A. Each congregation also has a fortnightly roneoed newsletter regarding church activities, excerpts of an evangelical nature, etc.

Financially each congregation is self-supporting. The members pay monthly dues which cover the minister's stipend, the mortgage on the church and its maintenance. There are collections throughout the year (as approved by the yearly synod) to support the Theological College, the Mutual Assistance Fund (for both individuals and churches in need), the youth organisations, the broadcasts, and foreign missions. These are 'prescribed offerings'. There are also 'recommended offerings' for the World Relief Organisation, Bible Society, etc.

Administratively each congregation has a Clerk (Secretary), a Treasurer, a Deacon (charitable work), Migrant Sponsoring Committee (purely honorary position as no migrants have been sponsored since the early 1960s) and a Board of Management consisting of representatives of the various groups within the congregation as well as representatives for the Australia-wide undertakings (schools, broadcasts etc.) These are elected annually by ballot, as are the three Elders who visit regularly the homes of the members to discuss any problems that

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5 I could not establish any amounts. However, Zubrzycki, *Settlers of the Latrobe Valley*, p. 174 mentions personal contributions as being 10 per cent of income.
arise and to maintain religious principles and practice at a satisfactory level.

Looking ahead to the future of the Reformed Church in Australia, its members see the work being carried on by second and third generations — 'look at America, after more than 100 years'. One would tend to agree with this view. There are some signs of disaffection, such as reduced attendance at Bible Study, some latent resentment of the rigorous discipline imposed by the church, a number of congregants leaving the church, usually through marriage.

Overall, however, many factors indicate the probability of continuity. Church services are always well-attended and there is no mistaking the religious fervour of both adults and youngsters. Subscriptions and contributions are regular and the scope of church activities is maintained and even widened. The intensity of life within the orbit of the church — religious, spiritual and social — seems to give the group a great deal of self-sufficiency. They have no contact with the rest of the Dutch community and, apart from work, very little contact with Australians. The reality of their own world is supported by strong links with interstate and overseas congregations, by the visits of pastors and theologians from Holland and America. The care and encouragement given to the development of the children within the religious circle makes continuity a strong probability.

While it is certain that the work of the Reformed Church of Australia will be carried on into the next generation at least, it is very debatable if the group will remain Dutch in character: 'Sure we are Dutch. But our children are born here. They are Australians of the Reformed faith.'

Admittedly, there is more Dutch used by members of the Reformed Church both at home and in religious services than is used by other Dutch settlers. It is also true that the Reformed Church adherents do not mix outside their religious circle. But it must be remembered, as Zubrzycki has pointed out in his Latrobe Valley study, that 'the Reformed Church is an exclusively Dutch institution, and therefore in-group participation for these people means participating exclusively with their compatriots'. Practising their religion is the objective of these people. Remaining Dutch is not. As one Reformed Church Minister commented: 'We do not want to be a Dutch church, we want to be an Australian church.' They point out that, from the time of their arrival,
they were known as the Reformed Church of Australia, not the Dutch Reformed Church (which is the official name of their Church in South Africa).

This emphasis on local development — using English in worship, establishing a local college for the training of ministers, growing away from ethnic origins — indicates that the Reformed Church of Australia is following the pattern of its American counterpart. Over there, declining interest in things Dutch has not hampered the growth of the two major religious groups with Dutch origins. In 1968, the Reformed Church of America reported nearly 400,000 members and the Christian Reformed Church about 278,000 members. Whether the Reformed Church of Australia will also last 150 years or more is a matter of conjecture. Its development here will undoubtedly be on a much more modest scale, since numbers are small and immigration from Holland virtually at a standstill. On the other hand, this may obviate the many schisms which have rent the Reformed Churches in America and in Holland.

Taking all the above into account, it is clear that religion binds the Reformed Church group together, not ethnicity. It is likely therefore that this religious movement will survive into the next and possibly subsequent generations, a church of Dutch origin but with an increasingly Australian character.

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Part Three

The Maltese Community
Historical Trends of Maltese Migration

Emigration from Malta has long been one of the means of easing the economic and social pressures wrought by an abundant birthrate upon the slender resources of the small barren island.

Although the issue of over-population was not yet a major one, it engaged the attention of the Knights as early as 1653, and even of the French during their brief occupancy of the island in 1798-1800. By the nineteenth century proper, the density was about 900 inhabitants per square mile and the spiralling rate of population growth that was to boost this figure to the present 2700 persons per square mile had become alarming enough to warrant government action. Indeed, it had turned into the basic social problem facing Malta, suffering as she was from a succession of adverse circumstances — the loss of revenues from the Knights; the decline in agriculture and trade following drought; cholera epidemics and protracted quarantines.\(^1\)

Since cholera was hardly an ideal solution to the problem, for 'plague only ploughs a track which, like that of the sea, is speedily filled up again',\(^2\) and since attempts at artificial controls such as raising the marriage age were unsuccessful, the authorities, despite much opposition, at last turned to planned emigration in the early 1820s.

The saga of nineteenth century emigration from Malta is colourful and fascinating, comprising individual undertakings and organised movements; success and failure; temporary and permanent settle-

\(^1\) Price, *Malta and the Maltese*.

ments; economic and military schemes; emigration gains offset by repatriation and voluntary return. Yet all these variations exhibit two main constant features. One is the fact that most emigration schemes failed, largely because of what the Maltese call *pika* — personality clashes and domestic political fighting in the transplanted communities.

The other characteristic is the fact that the flow of the emigration movement (almost entirely unorganised and unofficial) was overwhelmingly directed towards the shores of the Mediterranean, particularly North Africa and the Levant. The affinity of language and customs found in the Arab countries, their closeness to Malta, important not only for the comparatively short outward journey, but for the frequent returns necessitated by nostalgia or failure, all these made migration to the Mediterranean littoral less fearful and less irrevocable than setting out for the unknown and far-flung outposts of the Empire. These circumstances also partly compensated the ardently Catholic Maltese for living among the infidels and for the fact that their social lot was often worse, and their economic conditions were not always much better than those they had left behind.

The first Australian proposals to Malta by the Queensland Government in 1861-2 had come to nothing, and despite occasional private settlements, notably in Queensland in the 1880s, the Maltese did not display much interest in this remote country until the 1920s. The movement was slow, hampered by various factors. There were lengthy repercussions of the unhappy 1917 episode when the then Prime Minister, W. M. Hughes, refused a shipload of Maltese permission to land, so as not to prejudice the conscription issue with fears of 'cheap labour' replacing men on active service; there was no transport available for repatriation and the Maltese were shuttled between Australia and New Caledonia, then detained on a hulk in Sydney harbour, before being allowed to land under conditions of guaranteed employment. The existing migration laws also restricted Maltese entry into Australia. For by this time, in a situation analogous to that in the U.S.A., Australia regulated its intake of certain ethnic groups upon the numbers already settled here. Thus, the failure by the Maltese to establish any sizeable communities before World War I greatly limited

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the number of their compatriots allowed to enter the country in the period between the two world wars.

It was not until 1947, when individual sponsorship and various schemes of assisted migration by both Australian and Maltese governments came into being, that a noteworthy Maltese group was established in Australia.

This has grown from 3238 in 1947 to 53,681 in 1971⁴ and an estimated 57,200 in 1974.⁵ These numbers represent one-sixth of Malta's population.⁶ Australia continues to be the main recipient of Maltese emigrants and accommodates the largest Maltese community outside Malta.⁷ Price⁸ gives the following estimates of Maltese emigration for the period 1947-74:

to Australia 74,400

to other countries 25,000

Of the 55,000 or so Maltese-born settlers in Australia, 45 per cent live in the state of Victoria. The 25,000 Maltese living in the Melbourne metropolitan area represent 95.5 per cent of Victoria's total.⁹ With 94.2 per cent of their group professing the Catholic faith, the Maltese show a very high level of religious homogeneity. Their occupational composition reveals 86.4 per cent engaged in semi-skilled and unskilled work.

⁴ Consolidated Statistics, Department of Immigration, Canberra, various years.
⁶ Report on the working of the Department of Labour and Emigration for the year 1961, Department of Information, Malta (1963). This report, referring to a population total of 330,000 (2700 per sq mile) spoke of an optimum population of 250,000 to be reached by a policy of organised emigration. By 1970 the population was down a little — about 320,000. For a review of policies and achievements here, see Charles Price's 'Migration as a means of achieving population targets' in CICRED, Seminar on Demographic Research in relation to Population Growth Targets, St Augustine, W. Indies, 1973, Paris, 1973.
⁷ Malta — Report for the year 1968 (1970) 'For several years, Australia has not only been the country which receives the highest number of Maltese migrants, but has in fact accounted for over half of the whole emigration movement.'
⁸ Private communication.
⁹ Zubrzycki, J., Immigrants in Australia — Demographic Survey based upon the 1954 census, Melbourne University Press (for Australian National University) Melbourne, 1960, p. 72. This author found the Maltese to have the highest rate of urban concentration for any southern European group.
Total Maltese work force in Melbourne 14,836
Process workers, machinists, packers, mechanics, carpenters, toolmakers 8051
Cleaners, caretakers, road transport 1785
Labourers 1542
Clerical 1452
(1971 Census M.S.D.)

Maltese Community in Melbourne
The Maltese use the word *pika* to denote feelings of hostility, of rivalry, and if there can be said to exist any single predominant feature in Maltese communal life, it is this *pika* which emerges. It presents itself in several ways: as an impression of discord at both personal and organisational levels; as a pervasive disunity which has prevented the development, after twenty years, of a co-ordinating representative authority; as an atmosphere of rivalry which has fostered the formation of overlapping, duplicate societies, competing for the patronage of the same minority of Maltese settlers. The word 'minority' is emphasised, for this active communal rivalry must be set in perspective against the apathy, even the occasionally antagonistic lack of interest, of the amorphous, socially inert Maltese masses (that is socially inert in ethnic terms).

The influx of settlers, which has increased the Maltese-born population of Melbourne eighteen-fold in twenty years, has not resulted in a concomitant expansion of communal life and interest, and the power struggles, the clashes of personalities and viewpoints, are enacted within a narrow orbit of communal participation. This is based on an estimate of a combined financial membership of 500-700, plus another 1000-1200 people marginally and superficially involved in the limited and repetitive activities offered by the dozen or so existing societies: altogether, up to perhaps 2000 people, out of a community of 24,627.10

This community, though comparatively homogeneous in both religious and socio-economic spheres, exhibits divisions more subtle, and at the same time more disruptive of communal cohesion, than is evident in other more heterogeneous groups. Or perhaps it is that minor differences do assume greater importance in a homogeneous society,

10 At least 30,000 if Australian-born Maltese are included.
whereas they are over-shadowed, and sometimes overcome, in more complex groups.

One important mark of differentiation is seen in the residential pattern of the Maltese. Although they are spread throughout the whole metropolitan area, there are some solid concentrations, one being in the older northern suburbs (Brunswick, Preston, Glenroy). The heaviest concentration, however, is in the industrialised western and outer western suburbs (St Albans, Sunshine, Altona). It follows that communal activities are centred around these two areas, hereafter called the northern and western concentrations.

1971 Census M.S.D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altona</td>
<td>1799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadmeadows (Glenroy)</td>
<td>2844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunswick</td>
<td>820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coburg</td>
<td>852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footscray</td>
<td>611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keilor (St Albans)</td>
<td>3153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melbourne (North)</td>
<td>1469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preston</td>
<td>966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine</td>
<td>5445</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By and large, it is accepted among the Maltese that 'blue collar workers' live in the western suburbs and the 'white collar workers' in the northern suburbs. This division is strongly felt and (accepting this oversimplified assumption for a moment) explains in part the resentment met on either side, the acrimonious complaints of residents in the western suburbs that the others are snobbish, consider themselves 'high class', 'won't talk to you unless you wear a bow tie' and are not interested in the welfare of the large community on the other side of Melbourne. In the northern suburbs, one frequently comes across the view-point that only 'truckies and wharfies' live in the western suburbs; that they are only interested in their own personal economic advancement ('how to put a bob in their pocket') that they are the rowdy, showy low class.

However, this notion of blue collar workers versus white collar workers must be qualified. While it may be true that there is a preponderance of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the western suburbs, and of clerks, craftsmen and a handful of professionals and semi-professionals in the northern suburbs, there is enough occu-
pational variety, including a scattering of businessmen, large and small, in all suburbs, to make this particular division far from absolute.

And yet, there are distinctions, but they are rather elusive and hard to pin down. Why, for instance, should a clerk who happens to live in Coburg, consider himself a cut above a salesman living in Sunshine, or a shipwright of Glenroy be declared more knowledgeable than a truck-driver of Altona, or a caterer in Merlystone be thought 'better class' than a travel agent in St Albans?

Now these niceties are obviously not a matter of occupational level, nor of living standard, and it is difficult to see how social status would explain them, so what does account for such refinements?

The answer seems to lie in subtle cultural differences. It could be, in part, a carry-over of the town/country divisions observed by Boissevain.\(^{11}\) For even if the social distance between townsman and countryman has lessened in Malta (where many of the villagers now work in towns) nevertheless villagers return to their homes at night. There, village-centred activities, frequent neighbourhood contacts, the spoken language itself — slower, heavier more Semitic — are in contrast with the more private and often more sophisticated atmosphere of the larger towns, where the Maltese language is freely interspersed with either English or Italian words. It is evident that in Australia, these distinctions are even more attenuated. Yet, they are unmistakably there, like a faint rustic twang that cannot be mistaken.

Education could also be a distinguishing influence, as is seen by pursuing further the illustration given above. The clerk who matriculated writes articles in the ethnic paper; the salesman who 'couldn't wait to get out of school' does not bother to read it. The shipwright, whose chief personal pride is his copper-plate handwriting, comments that 'whatever he is [the clerk] he knows how to use words'; the semi-literate truckdriver would not buy the ethnic paper even if he knew it existed.

But the distinction seems to be less formal education as such and more an undefinable personal broadening-out, a widening of horizons, due to greater contact with outside influences, rubbing shoulders with people of various kinds, acquiring more know-how through active involvement in Malta with scouting, or Christian Youth movements, political clubs and similar activities.

This more experienced, more outward looking attitude, could go

some way in explaining why most of the communal activity originates with residents of the northern suburbs, who consider themselves more advanced and more community minded than the socially inert Maltese of the western suburbs, hampered perhaps, despite greater numbers, by more large families, more illiteracy, more religious rigidity and more dependence on the local priest.

Another difference, perhaps relevant to the issue of an active versus an inert community, is in aspirations for the children. On the one hand, there is the limited outlook, evidenced for instance in the father being satisfied with his 15 year old daughter getting 'good' employment in a carton factory. Or in the case of one Maltese congratulating another on his large family, because the children would soon all go to work 'and then you've got it made, Joey!' On the other hand, less frequent is the view of parents who want their children 'to go as far as their brain and my purse go', or the despairing cry of the heart from one Maltese trying unsuccessfully to persuade a friend to allow a son to continue his studies: 'they just won't rise off their bellies!'

Of course, it would be quite absurd to ascribe any given attitude, whether in respect of the last point or the preceding one, exclusively to the residents of either the northern or the western suburbs. It so happens that the examples given above were encountered in the particular areas mentioned, but the overall number of interviews was certainly too small to form any significant pattern. However, it is to be expected that, in a group with a high proportion of unskilled workers, the areas of higher ethnic concentrations, such as the western suburbs, will have higher numbers of blue collar workers. Similarly, the accepted theory of the self-perpetuating cycle of poverty and ignorance is more likely to be seen at work among the large, less affluent families and would account for the more limited educational outlook being met more frequently in the western suburbs.

To the above differences — area of residence, broadening experiences, social inertia, educational level and aspirations, these corresponding very roughly to a division between residents of the northern and the western suburbs — can be added two distinctions of origin. First is that between migrants from the island of Malta proper (hereafter called Maltese) and those from Gozo, the other inhabited island of the Maltese archipelago (hereafter called Gozitans). Greater is the difference between the indigenous Maltese (settlers from the Maltese islands) and the Levantine Maltese: that is first generation Maltese who had to leave
Egypt, Lebanon, Lybia, Tripoli, Tunisia or Algeria, after lengthy periods of residence, or second and even third generation descendants of earlier Maltese settlers in those countries of Africa and Asia Minor. The Levantine Maltese, together with the indigenous Maltese, and persons born in Australia of Maltese parentage, make up the Maltese people discussed in this work.

Gozitans represent about 15 per cent of the Maltese settlers\(^\text{12}\) and are said to live mostly in the western suburbs. The view that they have settled close to one another seems acceptable, if one remembers that Maltese migration is largely chain migration and that the Gozitans have a relatively strong group feeling engendered by proximity, kin relationships, similarity of occupation and living standards on the tiny island from which they come. Thus, every Gozitan here more or less knows everyone else, including antecedents and failings. Whether this necessarily brings a feeling of communal unity in the transplanted group is another matter, but, informally at least, Gozitans prefer to mix with their own.

They have a great sense of pride in their island. They point out, for instance, that it is so picturesque that the Maltese come to Gozo as tourists, or that Gozo is so unspoilt that there are no buses running on it. This strong awareness of district of origin and their informal cohesion set them slightly apart from other Maltese.

The other main point of contrast is an intensification of the town/country and other cultural differences outlined above. This is probably due to the fact that the Gozitans come from a more rural background, have less contact with outside influences and a higher rate of illiteracy. On the whole, they appear to be more inarticulate, more church-bound, more limited in outlook, more indifferent to life in Australia, and to have less ease with the English language. Whether or not, as they claim ‘they are to the Maltese proper what the Scottish are to the English, providing most of the energy and much of the intelligence of Maltese activities at home and overseas’,\(^\text{15}\) they certainly consider themselves more shrewd and more cunning, as well as ‘truer people back home’ than the ‘mainlanders’ whom they somewhat disdain for aping the English in both language and manners, while they themselves retain their dialect and customs, with their perceptible Arabic strains.

\(^{15}\) Price, *Malta and the Maltese*, p.v.
As we will see later, this division is carried over at organisational level, where interested Gozitans belong to only one western suburban society and that society the one setting itself up as a rival representative body to the long-established Maltese Community Council, thus dividing the fragmented organisational structure even further. However, the social and cultural differences between Maltese and Gozitans are minimal and rather in the nature of rivalry between children of the same family. One Maltese might say that ‘Charlie is a terrific organiser, even if he comes from Gozo’, and a Gozitan might admire some Maltese’s stubborness by saying that ‘his head is hard like a Gozo rock’. Like Mediterraneans, and like children of the same family, their heated disputes can flare into quite bitter conflict, but they all consider themselves to be Maltese.

On the other hand, the differences between the Maltese from the Maltese islands and from the Levant are much more pronounced, and the resentments aroused are those of two almost alien groups.

It must be realised that the latter, of whom the majority come from Egypt, have a widely different background from indigenous Maltese. Firstly they did not migrate voluntarily, in search of economic opportunities, but were forced out from North Africa and the Levant by circumstances. Political conflicts and nationalistic aspirations in those countries resulted in confiscation of foreign-owned property and expulsion of residents of foreign nationality (for example from Egypt in 1956, following the seizure and nationalisation of the Suez Canal; from Tunisia in 1964, upon legislation expropriating landowners of foreign origin). Unable to return to Malta, many of the Maltese were repatriated to England, since they were British subjects, and awaited migration opportunities there.

Secondly, these Maltese are usually the offspring of earlier migrants and, as such, are in some ways one generation more advanced than many present Maltese migrants in Melbourne — their outlook is not so parochial, they are less intensely religious, they are more urbanised, more cosmopolitan, have smaller families and higher education.

Thirdly, it is necessary to appreciate just how vastly different from simple, semi-rural, religious, insular Malta was the environment from which the North Africans came — a sophisticated, cultured, polyglot, multi-racial society, where the numerous foreign colonies were the élite and had more contact with each other than with the often menial Arab host-society and where, moreover, each ethnic group firmly maintained
its distinctiveness by running its own administrative affairs, day schools and community centres.

Furthermore, transplantation to Australia for indigenous Maltese has generally meant one step up the ladder of economic progress, but for the Levantine Maltese at least one step down. Also lowered occupational status has often limited social contacts to people less educated than themselves. The women have found it even harder to make the transition from the leisurely, luxurious colonial life to the more egalitarian Australian society where wives not only do all the chores formerly performed by Arab servants, but quite often must go to work as well.

It is evident that, apart from origin and sometimes language, the Levantine Maltese have little in common with the majority of Maltese settlers — neither background, outlook, nor living and educational standards. They do not share even the same nostalgia, for if the latter sometimes long for the harsh but colourful and boisterous life of the Mediterranean island, the memories of the former are of the easy, languorous, exotic Levantine customs. ('You see, I was always a Maltese, never an Egyptian — but Egypt was my home'.)

But it is the third distinctive feature mentioned above, that of established ethnic minorities, which is the most significant in the context of this description of Maltese communal life in Melbourne. It means that because of their experiences in a pluralistic society, the Levantine Maltese had the necessary cohesion, the self-reliance, the communal know-how (which the Maltese majority lacked) to organise themselves, to establish a formal association soon after their arrival (Melita Club), to pool their resources in order to purchase the only premises owned by any Maltese organisation in Melbourne.

It was inevitable that frictions and resentments should arise from the gulf that separates the large indigenous Maltese community and the small Levantine group, estimated to be about 5 per cent of total numbers.14

The major point of dissension is that many Maltese simply do not consider the Levantine settlers as Maltese at all. Being unaware of the structure of society in the Levantine countries, they, who assimilate so

14 Price's estimates, based on unpublished statistics cross-classifying birthplace x nationality, suggest that Egyptian-born Maltese in Australia were about 1100 in 1971, say 1500 for Levantine Maltese all told. This is about 5-6 per cent of the nearly 26,000 Melbourne settlers who were born in Malta and in the Levant of Maltese parents.
readily, cannot understand that others could have retained for two or three generations an identity which they acknowledge as their own but in which they evince no particular pride. It is further incomprehensible to them that people who vary from them in so many ways could, or should, claim kinship — 'It's not for me to say, but you tell me — if you're Egyptian, can you be Maltese?'

This attitude is reinforced by the Maltese government who, striving hard to establish a vigorous emigration policy, do not recognise second-generation settlers as Maltese nationals, for fear of upsetting their precarious population balance. This political expediency greatly wounds the Levantines, who complain that, at the time of the Suez crisis for instance, they were neither here nor there, unacceptable to Malta and treated by Britain as second-class citizens, especially regarding assisted passages.

The Levantines greatly resent their rejection by the indigenous Maltese. They have always considered themselves as Maltese, albeit resident abroad; they have maintained their ethnic identity alongside the other minorities, which had looked upon them as Maltese. Moreover, they contend they have greater knowledge of Malta and her history than any natives of the island, and this point resolves itself once more into one of the dividing facts discussed earlier, the cultural and educational gap.

It was quite predictable that many of the Maltese should regard the Levantines as 'high and mighty' and 'snobs' (an accusation equally applied to the residents of the northern suburbs) while the more sophisticated Levantines look upon some of their compatriots as narrow-minded peasants.

At the communal level, the indigenous Maltese resent and obstruct the efforts of the Levantines towards a unified roof-body for fear of being taken over by these more competent and better organised people, especially when they are not even sure if they are Maltese at all! They are also understandably envious of the well-established organisation and club house of the Egyptian Maltese, while the latter are contemptuous of a community that cannot get together and dip in its pocket, whereas 'we, in Egypt, had such a centre that when the Arabs took over they used it as municipal chambers'. Nevertheless, they claim that their organisation is open to everybody, to which the indigenous Maltese promptly reply that they are made to feel outsiders since, on their club
premises, their polyglot compatriots pointedly speak only French, Italian or Arabic.

Once again, emphasis must be placed on the fact that, intensive as these rifts and conflicts may be, they are narrowly confined to the very small number of people actively involved in communal affairs. The overwhelming majority of Maltese settlers are wholly engrossed in a fierce struggle to improve their prospects ('It's maybe a good country, but it's a hard country'). Their interests are bound by family, work, church and the garden hedge, usually in that order. Many are not aware that Maltese organisations and Maltese newspapers do exist, nor that there are Maltese from other parts of the world, and when they do know of them they could not care less.

Set in its proper perspective, then, one can see that the normal tensions and undercurrents arising from the composition of any transplanted community are in part responsible for the disunity so evident in the Maltese group, whether they be the minimal but magnified differences among the Maltese proper, the subtle frictions between the Maltese and the Gozitans, or the more profound cleavage between the indigenous Maltese and those from the Levant.

However, other communities have managed to overcome far greater divisive influences, conflicts and adverse circumstances to form an effective communal machinery. One must therefore look to other factors which keep this ethnic group in a state of irritated effervescence.

**Organisational Structure**

In the microcosm of communal politics as at the national level, the struggle for power and problems of leadership create friction and personal rivalries. The in-fighting of the Maltese resembles the in-fighting of any governing body whose members know each other too well and where arguments *ad hominem* are permitted to take precedence over rational discussions. It is not surprising, therefore, to find splinter groups being formed by status-seeking individuals; affiliated organisations breaking away on the grounds of disagreement or supposed discrimination; constructive suggestions being rejected because of personal antipathy; discussion of politics being turned into heated abusive debates.

Such wranglings occur in every community. But whereas many other equally long-established national groups have managed to subordinate internal differences to community interest, the Maltese seem plagued by
two burdens which generate the existing fragmentation of organised life. These readily apparent characteristics are, on the one part, their own suspicious nature, and on the other, the absence of a unifying vision regarding the concept of communal life in an ethnic minority.

The deep-seated Maltese mistrust colours every aspect of communal life and is responsible for the disruptive rivalries among associations. To the uninvolved, organisation officials obviously are in it for what they can get out of it, otherwise, why would they bother? Within the small circle of communal workers, each distrusts the motives of the other, each organisation is suspicious of the activities of the others, and no one is above 'putting sticks in the wheels' of everyone else. And if the resultant succession of upheavals, rifts and dissensions keeps threatening the communal structure, it somehow also seems to kindle anew the impassioned interest of the committed.

This character trait, attributed to Arab inheritance\(^{15}\) and freely acknowledged ('who tells you different doesn't know the Maltese'), this distrust at both personal and organisational levels, is probably the main stumbling block on which all endeavours to create an effective communal machinery have repeatedly foundered.

The other characteristic — a lack of unifying vision — boils down to a conflict between peasant-like simplicity and social sophistication, a tug-of-war which entails diverging visions of communal life. On the one hand, there is the casual concept, an extension of village life, with its informality and personal politics, embodied in the rather rudimentary organisations catering for the simpler people in the western suburbs. On the other hand, the more educated and 'broadened-out' Maltese, as well as the Levantines, envisage a more formalised communal structure, whose principles they have applied, along a continuum of efficacy, to their own organisations mostly located in the northern suburbs.

This divergence of attitudes lies behind the present battle for supremacy between the Maltese Community Council (M.C.C.) and the Maltese Independent Community Council (M.I.C.C.). The former carries the weight of stability and official consular recognition. It is the

\(^{15}\) "The Arabs as a people feel themselves to be alone in the world; individually, they feel themselves to be alone in their own society. Beneath the graceful ritual . . . of hospitality is the sense of mistrust. Every man . . . lives by himself and for himself, trusting no other. Every man must plot to save himself and deception is a rule of self-defence against the malice of one's brothers.' Burdett, W., *Encounter with the Middle East*, Deutsch, London, 1970, p. 13.
oldest established organisation and has ten formally affiliated bodies. It is anxious to take its place as the properly constituted and representative authority equivalent to that of other ethnic groups, and emphasises formality and democratic principles to the point of trying to impose them on those who are perhaps not yet ready for this type of communal life.

Challenging the Maltese Community Council is the recently formed Maltese Independent Community Council, itself informal, without a constitution, connecting a fluctuating number of other informal groups. Despite this apparent insubstantiality, the M.I.C.C. is not to be dismissed out of hand. Its recent formation is but the latest of several rebirths, it is powerfully backed by several large businessmen, and served by a fortnightly paper. It is primarily a village-type operation, dependent upon the patronage of influential people, where the rendering of accounts is done on an individual basis by officials who are not averse to placing expediency above democracy. Just because of these features, it has its chance of success, as it is in tune with the Maltese masses.

On the fringes of these two co-ordinating bodies are two or three independent organisations, uncommitted at the moment but in sympathy with the M.I.C.C. since they also cater for the same simpler people in the western suburbs.

A detailed look at the history of the Maltese Community Council is worthwhile at this stage since, in its inadequacies, failures and continuing struggles, it reflects quite closely the difficulties facing any Maltese organisation, as well as the changes slowly taking place in the climate of Maltese communal life, with its growing awareness of the functions of ethnic organisations.
The 'Old' Council

Unlike the Polish and Dutch organisations, which assumed a formal character at the time of their formation (the former, for instance, modelling themselves on established organisations overseas and the latter catering for a more sophisticated type of settler) the development of the Maltese Community Council followed two main lines guiding early ethnic organisations, both here and abroad. Like them, the M.C.C. emerged from an informal group, and like them, the original impetus was a religious one.1

In this specific instance, the Maltese Social Society, as it was then named, was formed in 1932, to draw the Maltese settlers into participation in the first Eucharistic Congress held in Australia. It was then decided to widen the activities of the society to include charitable and social functions for the small Maltese community in Melbourne.

Throughout the pre-war period, the society retained its informal character, meeting in private houses, having no explicit program or defined membership, holding its social activities as the need arose — to remember religious feast days, to welcome visiting Maltese dignitaries, to raise funds for needy families. This money was then distributed, in the same way as hospital and jail visits were made, without formal

1 To name but a few: Zubrzycki, Settlers of the Latrobe Valley, (Greeks around cafes and Orthodox Church; Northern Europeans around Lutheran Church). Medding, Assimilation to Group Survival, (Jews around the synagogues in the 1920s). Galitzi, C. A., A Study of Assimilation among the Roumanians in the United States, Columbia University Press, New York, 1929. (Formal organisations sprang from informal groups meeting in coffee shops and boarding houses, or from informal church activities centred around the priest).
accounting, so that both social and welfare activities came to be identified with individuals rather than with the society.

To the early settlers, looking back, this period is naturally tinged with nostalgia. Photographs of the time usually show the priest at the place of honour at the table, surrounded by younger smiling men. These dinners, and other more informal meetings, provided contact between countrymen, outlets for their longing for family and way of life back on their sunny Mediterranean island, opportunities to discuss hardships of adjustment. Most of all, the society offered the kind of comradeship that alleviated loneliness.

Times were hard but we cared about each other. Those who found work on the wharf gave the others a couple of bob. I'd rather spend mine on a new tie than food, then I'd press my only pair of pants under the mattress, so I could walk down Bourke St with my mates.

Inevitably, the achievements of the time loom larger in retrospect: 'We did so much more than now'. Perhaps more significant is the nostalgic statement, 'we all knew each other then'. This seems indicative of a very important aspect of Maltese communal life: the ease of coping with communal social needs when the group was small, compared with the inability to rise above the transplanted village relationships into the complexities of a large ethnic community, itself set within a larger, more advanced society than the one they had left behind. This point will be developed when we come to analyse the reasons for the inefficacy of the Maltese communal organisations.

One other important feature of the Maltese Society, also to be discussed later, was its overemphasis on 'respectability'. This, like the inability to transcend village-type rivalries, is a thread which runs right through the history of the society and of its successor, the Maltese Community Council. It accounts in part for the failure of these bodies to be truly representative of the Maltese community for, in the concern to counteract the bad reputation earned by some undesirable elements, the Maltese Community Council has maladroitly alienated the larger mass of the simpler working-class people living in the western suburbs and has acquired among them a reputation for aloofness and indifference.

World War II intensified interest, and the Maltese Society, which had largely been dormant in the preceding years, provided the nucleus for
more social and fund raising activities, in aid of the 'Meat for Maltese Children' Fund and other schemes, demonstrating solidarity and sympathy for family and friends on the beleagured island.

The first issue of *Malta News* appeared in 1944, a two-sheet fortnightly bulletin containing news from Malta and items of local interest to the Maltese community in Melbourne. Although sponsored by the society, it was the effort of four or five hard working individuals who privately edited, printed and mailed the *Malta News* to all the known Maltese settlers in Melbourne. Despite a small circulation, ranging between 100-170 copies per issue, and an almost continuous financial deficit, the *Malta News* survived until 1954, and bears the distinction of being the first attempt at a Maltese communal newspaper in Australia.

Over the post-war years, marked by an unprecedented rate of Maltese immigration, various Maltese organisations were formed, some duplicating the social and welfare activities of the Maltese Society, others fulfilling a more specific function. Of the latter, the George Cross Soccer Club was the first, being formed in 1948, initially as an adjunct of the Maltese Society and under direct Maltese religious patronage.²

In an effort to draw together the various societies and co-ordinate their activities, the Maltese Social Society officially became the Maltese Community Council of Victoria with seventeen constituent bodies. The date was September 1958, a date set to coincide with the Maltese National Day.

The first constitution of the Maltese Community Council, a typewritten set of rules, seems a brave attempt at formalising the communal machinery of a mainly unsophisticated group. One cannot help wondering if that constitution appeared perhaps more imposing than meaningful to the owners of the laboriously-formed signatures witnessing its final draft.

The aims of the council were numerous, but almost abruptly stated in sketchy, single word fashion:

² Earlier that year, the Society of St Paul, a Maltese missionary order concerned with the spiritual welfare of emigrants, opened a mission house in Parkville, an inner suburb of Melbourne. The Maltese Fathers, anxious to channel the exuberance of the predominantly male settlers, and probably influenced by the example of the various other ethnic soccer clubs coming into existence at that period, encouraged the formation of the Maltese Soccer Club. George Cross used a bungalow on the premises of the Mission House as its headquarters until 1975, when Courage Brewery offered new premises in exchange for its name being combined with that of the club.
Article 2: The objects of the Association are and shall be:
   a) Integration  
   b) Social Functions  
   c) Educational  
   d) Reception and Hospitality  
   e) Public Relations  
   f) National Festivities  
   g) Extension Work  
   h) Conferences  
   i) Sporting activities and promotion  
   j) Advisory  
   k) Welfare.

   This grand but vague, all-inclusive wording contrasts with the lengthy, minute description of the duties of each of the members of the executive from the President downwards suggesting that this constitution may have been inspired by a similar document from some other society.3

   It is more surprising to note that the objective of co-ordinating the various Maltese organisations, ostensibly the reason for forming the council, is relegated to the last place in the paragraph outlining the powers of the council:

   Article 6:
   The Council shall, in addition to its other powers, have the following powers and duties — i) to co-ordinate the activities of all Branches and affiliated Bodies.

   This inversion of priorities seems to emphasise a certain flaw in the whole conception of the Maltese Community Council. By superimposing this body upon the Maltese Social Society, there arose a confusion of roles between the duties and functions of a social organisation and those of a federation of societies, a confusion responsible, even today, for the inept situation of a would-be roof-body competing with its affiliated societies and duplicating their activities.

   Though its name had changed, the Maltese Community Council, in most respects, did not differ greatly from its precursor, the Maltese Social Society. It met with the same apathy on the part of the general

3 It is symptomatic of the climate of communal rivalry existing among the Maltese that half-a-dozen of the present organisations claim to have originated the constitution, upon which the various other societies have supposedly based their own.
community. Though it generated much heated feeling among the narrow ranks of the committed, the burden of administration still rested on the shoulders of not merely four or five individuals, but the same four or five individuals. Its policies, like its undeniably devoted and hard-working president, clung to the pre-war attitudes of rapid assimilation and good, if superficial and unrewarding, contacts with Australian agencies. Although it occasionally cast an envious glance at the achievements of the Italian community, the M.C.C. itself could not, in its turn, rise above personal frictions and parochial differences to meet the challenges presented to its communal machinery by any large ethnic group in an increasingly pluralistic society.

Thus the M.C.C. shuffled on, still casual, still informal, without change in policies, without the know-how or the effective leadership to deal with the chicanery and scandals within its own ranks and without giving adequate attention to the working-class masses outside its orbit. Its welfare work was still done on an individual, irregular basis, with little information or public accounting. Its round of social activities was repeated monotonously year after year, a ball in April for the George Cross celebrations, one in September for the Maltese National Day, a dinner or cocktail party for visiting Maltese dignitaries. If numbers had grown from 200, at the reception in 1953 for the Archbishop of Malta, Sir Michael Gonzi, to 600 at the reception for the Prime Minister, Dr Borg-Olivier in 1966, nothing else had changed, not even the anxious emphasis on proper standards of dress and behaviour.

But if things remained largely unchanged within the Maltese Community Council, there were stirrings outside it. Certain elements in the community — more vocal settlers, younger, better educated arrivals, some second-generation settlers whose interest had been revived, the Levantine Maltese — all these people felt and expressed growing dissatisfaction with the communal set-up. New situations also, such as the more favourable government interest in ethnic organisations, the example of other ethnic communities, the success of a Maltese club like the Melita (due, it was felt, to the know-how and cohesion of its North African members), the crying need for control and co-ordination of various clubs mushrooming into existence, all these factors induced a growing awareness of the necessity for one strong central communal authority. The restlessness of the small but vitally interested active section of the community was fostered by occasional editorials in both the Maltese Herald and the Voice of Malta critical of the inaction and
ineffectiveness of communal authorities in dealing with the disorders and scandals caused by self-interest.

By 1967, the process of communal fermentation had intensified to the point of forcing a fully-attended general meeting and formal elections, for the first time in almost a decade.

This meeting and the events leading up to it held all the drama of large-scale political activity, with lobbying and manipulations on both sides, cloak-and-dagger meetings in parked cars, allegedly underhand dealings, surprise candidates, calculated moves to embarrass the existing committee and provide opportunities for disparaging personal remarks.\(^4\)

The result was a narrowly-gained change in leadership with some Levantine Maltese and a few up-to-then uncommitted professionals elected to the committee.

Thus, for the second time in twenty years, the inarticulate needs of this growing group had outstripped the inadequacies of its organisation structure, and those community-conscious Maltese found themselves groping once more for an effective central representative authority.

The 'New' Council

The changes in the leadership of the M.C.C. signified the end of the old settlers' control. This was not accomplished without a great deal of lingering bitterness on both sides.

Furthermore, the old executive challenged the ability of the new to improve on its past record, whereas the latter accused the outgoing officials of autocratic inefficiency and inability to adapt to changing circumstances. However, all acknowledged as sincere and justified the *cri-de-coeur* of the outgoing president, claiming continuity as his greatest achievement:

> Of course, *I* was the Council, *I* was the only one, because it needs a battleship to move the Maltese! Somebody had to run the show. Oh, they'll come if you run things for them, but nobody turns up at meetings or when there's work to be done. But one thing I did, *I* always carried on at least for the name to be existent. Even if not much was done, the name of the Maltese Community Council was always on the Good Neighbour Council list, and *I*

\(^4\) 'So I ask for the treasurer's report, as we had arranged. He takes the balance sheet, turns it like this and like that a few times, pretends it isn't clear and passes it to somebody else. So I call out — if you can't read your own writing, you're a born donkey!'
The Maltese Community Council was always available. All those years, I kept the name in people's minds. Now we'll see what they can do!

If the new Maltese Community Council called itself 'reconstituted' in 1967, in the early 1970s it seemed to be so mostly in hopeful vision and outward form, rather than in actual fact. True, the leadership had changed from little-educated working-class pre-war settlers from Malta, to a committee whose members include professionals, white collar workers, Maltese of Levantine origin and those Maltese described earlier, not formally educated, but astute and more outward-looking through broadening experiences. True, the vision of communal life had been enlarged from assimilatory goals to the ideal of a well-organised ethnic group, holding its own among other national groups. True, there was more emphasis on democracy within the council and its constituent bodies; greater regularity of meetings and formality of procedure.5

Basically, however, nothing had altered. Not out in the community where, despite solid numerical increase, there has not been enough change in either socio-economic composition or aspirations to overcome the general apathy; and not within the council itself, whose mostly hopeful, dedicated members cannot break the pattern of pervasive mistrust and organised rivalry that bogged down the old council and keeps this one in a constant state of creakiness.

The matter of the constitution itself is a good case in point. To preserve continuity the original constitution was taken over en bloc. It was not until three years later, in November 1970, that a move was made to incorporate the council formally as a cultural and welfare organisation, and to prepare articles and a memorandum of association to effect this corporation. Officially, the move was aimed at limiting the council's liability and obtaining tax concessions for donations made to the council. It would also qualify the council for receiving a subsidy from the Immigration Department towards obtaining the services of its own social workers.

Unofficially, there were two other motives for the proposed incorporation, equally valid in view of the ever-present mistrust and rivalry. First

5 Though even this riles several members of the committee who feel this enforced formality to be faintly ridiculous among familiars. More used to devious, peasant craftiness they also find open, above-board tactics a sign of weakness and 'foreign-ness' in their new president. 'He's an Egyptian — he takes us too much at face value'; 'He doesn't appreciate how a Maltese mind works.'
it was felt, and stated, that since incorporation required auditing by the Registrar of Companies, this would allay suspicion regarding funds held by the council. Secondly, by taking legal steps to reserve the name Maltese Community Council, pending preparation of a memorandum of association, the manoeuvre would block the reported efforts of the Maltese Independent Community Council to register as the official body of the Maltese Community.6

The objectives outlined in the constitution have remained the same, but a genuine effort has been made to inject more meaning into the vague terminology of the original document. For instance, strong emphasis is laid on attempts to co-ordinate the activities of the various organisations within the council. A sustained series of appeals has been directed at associations to avoid date clashing, to submit their social calendars to the council, not to compete with the council in the matter of communal balls and other official functions. The obstructive response from some quarters was clearly illustrated at the July 1970 committee meeting, which unanimously passed a motion to leave the month of September free of social commitments to ensure the success of the M.C.C. communal ball. This did not prevent at least two of the constituent bodies from holding an Independence Day ball in direct opposition to the M.C.C.7

The new council has also tried to put the welfare objective on a wider more rational basis, by renting a room in Collins Street where voluntary workers could direct to the proper channels any Maltese seeking guidance or assistance. This was a short-lived attempt and survived only a few months, perhaps because it was not publicised enough, but mostly, it seems, because that is not the way the working-class Maltese goes about seeking help. He prefers to go to the priest, or to rely on the patronage of a prominent member of the community, or to approach

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6 It is interesting to record how painlessly, almost indifferently, the above motion went through. It was thought out and submitted by the President and one vice-president, both in the legal profession. The committee accepted it without debate, on the grounds that legal moves could only be understood by lawyers and the council's own legal people were entirely reliable. The unmistakable impression gained was that it did not matter very much anyway.

7 One of the committee members responsible was gleeful about his club stealing a march on the council. 'Why should we be suckers and lose money, when I know quite well that nobody else will take any notice. Did you see how clever I was? When they were discussing the hall, I said — no comment! — and now we've hired the biggest place for the Saturday before them!'
someone who knows someone who might be working in the Housing Commission or a similar agency.

The effort to carry out constitutional objectives is perhaps seen most particularly in the enthusiastic commitment of the New Council to establish a Community Centre, an undertaking which will be fully discussed on pp. 223-8.

The above illustrations show the attempts of the new M.C.C. to tackle what it considers the most urgent of its communal tasks. Other objectives of the constitution, dealing with educational, cultural and public relations goals, have remained in the realm of aspirations, occasionally aired at meetings or through the printed word:

to encourage, develop and promote Maltese talent, whether in the field of arts and crafts or in the field of music or otherwise. Possibly to hold a limited number of social functions in order to introduce members of the Maltese community to Victorian and Australian dignitaries with the aim of fostering them into a closer relationship with the Maltese community and getting them better acquainted with its needs.

Generally to uphold the dignity and cultural as well as historical background of our Island. That Island to which we are so proud to belong.8

To carry out its functions, the council enlarged its executive committee to include a president, two vice-presidents, secretary, treasurer, social secretary, and public relations officer. These office bearers are elected by the committee which in addition consists of delegates from affiliated organisations, plus ten interested persons. All positions are held for two years and are strictly on an honorary basis (so much so, that in order to avoid suspicion, administrative costs are sometimes paid out of the committee’s pockets).9

If the annual general meeting and the monthly committee meetings are strictly observed, the threat of expulsion from the M.C.C. for continued absence of representatives is not enforced, allowing such associations as the Malta Catholic Guild and the Maltese Ex-Service-men’s Association to be listed as constituents, though to all intents and purposes they have ceased to function.

Perhaps the most interesting area of comparison between the ‘old’

8 Items (c), (h) and (i) on Malta House Project newsletter, outlining constitutional aims served by a community centre.
9 'You spend $2 but you know finance is low, so you claim only $1 — but everyone is sure you only spent 50 cents.'
and the ‘new’ councils is in the field of constituent bodies. Contrary to what might be expected from a national group whose numbers have grown steadily, the list of seventeen associations has dwindled to ten, in fact only eight when one dismisses the almost defunct ones mentioned above.

**Affiliated Bodies of the M.C.C.**

1958
- Austral-Malta Association
- Maltese Settlers Association
- Malta Migrant Catholic Guild
- Melita Social Club
- Welfare Club
- George Cross Soccer Club
- St Fidelis Soccer Club
- Melita Soccer Club
- Maltese Ex-Servicemen
- 1st Malta Boy-Scouts Group
- Ta’ Pinu Committee
- Star of the Sea Dramatic Company
- Malta Dramatic Company
- Malta Monthly Publication

1967
- George Cross Soccer Club
- Malta Migrant Catholic Guild
- Maltese-Australian Social Club
- Maltese Ex-Servicemen
- Maltese Welfare Association
- Welfare Social Club
- Melita Social Club
- Phoenicians’ Association
- Salesian Old Boys Association
- Society of Christian Doctrine
- Auxiliary

1976
- Maltese Community Council
- as above 1967

**Maltese Independent Community Council.**
- Maltese Unity Club
- Order of St John
- Crusaders Dramatic Society

**Unaffiliated organisations**
- Western Suburbs Association
- Star of the Sea Dramatic Company

Two main factors seem to have brought about this quite dramatic decrease. Firstly, as occurs in every ethnic group, there is the natural demise of associations which have fulfilled their purpose and, secondly, there is the inability of the M.C.C. to attract the few new organisations which hover uncertainly on the periphery of Maltese communal life.

The former fate seems to have overtaken the two smaller soccer clubs,
The Maltese Community Council

...the Malta Dramatic Company, the Boy Scouts Group, the Ta'Pinu Committee and the Malta Monthly Publication. After a decline of several years, the Austral-Malta Association has reappeared as the Maltese-Australian Social Club. The Ex-Servicemen's Association is moribund, its only activity a wreath-laying ceremony at the Melbourne Shrine on George Cross Day, attended each April by ever fewer members. The Malta Migrant Catholic Guild supported publication of the *Voice of Malta* until 1970, when financial losses and other pressures caused it to fold up. In some obscure fashion, the guild still has connections with travel agents and arranges charter flights to Malta, although its social activities are non-existent.

The above, then, is the normal ever-shifting pattern of institutional growth, decline and change, found in migrant communities. The other factor responsible for the shrinking list of organisations within the council, namely its failure to attract new member associations, is at once more complex and more particular to the Maltese community.

In order to become a constituent of the M.C.C. an organisation must submit its constitution and membership list to the council; it must fulfil a welfare or charitable function in addition to its social character; it must pay an affiliation fee of $25 (changed to $10 in 1973).

Comparatively modest as these requirements may be, because of the particular climate within the Maltese community — its suspicion, mistrust, rivalry, class-consciousness — these conditions have proved to be seemingly insuperable obstacles to grouping all existing organisations under the one roof-body.

The clauses relating to submission of constitution and membership list seem justifiable when one recalls the frequent exploitation of organisations for personal gain. This was the reason given when the M.C.C. rejected the application of the Maltese Unity Club, for instance, a club allegedly created as a front for several Maltese business interests and whose membership list reputedly is the mailing list of the *Times of Malta*, a fortnightly paper subsidised by the same interests.10

10 Opinions are divided on this rejection. While it is agreed that the backing interests may be unscrupulous, there is the feeling that the situation was handled without finesse; that democratisation could have been instituted gradually, because these people were very anxious to join the Council, which they regard as socially superior. 'They have money. Now they want to buy a good name. For that, they will do what you tell them. But you can't always stick by your little black book and always wear white gloves. You must bend a little, give a little, and you could get out a lot.' Be that as it may, the Maltese Unity Council has now become the nucleus for the Maltese Independent Community Council.
Other societies have either left the council (Star of the Sea) or, despite approaches made, refused to join (Western Suburbs), on various grounds connected with the conditions for admission. The former, for instance, has no constitution. Neither of the just-named societies sees the need for, or the purpose of, a $25 affiliation fee. Other objections include the expressed fear that membership lists might be pirated by other organisations or by the council itself; that access to members' constitutions might make the council too powerful or too interfering; that the smaller associations might be 'taken over' (an over-riding concern). There is also the widely-held belief that the organisations, especially those in the western suburbs, would not gain anything at all from joining the council and might even stand to lose.

These undercurrents go a long way towards explaining why there are so few organisations on the present M.C.C. There is another, most important reason, not always expressly stated but always quite evident. It is a distinctive feeling of class divisions (surprising to an outsider who might consider the Maltese a fairly homogeneous group), an awareness of a social gulf which finds expression in resentment that 'on the other side' the Maltese in the northern suburbs are not interested in the Maltese of the western suburbs; that they do not condescend to attend functions when invited; that they are 'too stiff', 'they call us rowdies when we are enjoying ourselves'; that the M.C.C. itself is too formal, 'too high-class for us'.

This impression is supported by a closer look at the present list of constituent bodies of the council. There is not one organisation based in the western suburbs, although these hold the larger concentration of Maltese settlers. Apart from George Cross Soccer Club, there is not one organisation which represents the blue collar class. Apart from George Cross, again, which is a sporting body, there is not one organisation of specific character; they are all social and welfare organisations with overlapping interests, activities and areas of membership, all competing with each other and with the council.

In these deficiencies lies the real failure of the M.C.C., for no communal body can act effectively on the shaky foundation of selective representation, as is the present case with the M.C.C.

It is worthwhile illustrating Maltese awareness of those deficiencies by quoting from an editorial of the *Maltese Herald* of June 1974, which dealt with the forlorn hope of establishing a national roof-body. How indeed, says the writer, could this come about when the general meeting
The Maltese Community Council could not take place because (not for the first time) attendance was too small.

'What concerns us more is that the Council is inefficient and has seriously failed as a forum of ideas for the Maltese community.' The editorial then berates all the organisations for being concerned only with the entertainment of their members and not with the interests of Maltese migrants. The needs of the Maltese people are ignored, it goes on to say. There was no Maltese voice raised when the Immigration Department was reorganised, when the Task Forces were set up, when other matters arose which affect migrants in the continuous struggle to improve themselves. 'And in future also, our interests will be forgotten, through the fault of those who call themselves leaders and cannot be found when they are needed.'

The Maltese Herald claims that in its fourteen years of existence it has always supported the various organisations and campaigned for unity within the community and for the formation of a national body. 'We still believe in this. The Maltese community still needs a Council. But it should have a vaster and more varied membership, because at present they think that with a handful of people they represent us all.'

Malta House
The above conflicts and discontiguous lines of action reflect very closely the social tensions described earlier, the carry-over of town/country and Malta/Gozo/Levant differences, the frictions between residents of northern and western suburbs, emphasis on the minimal differences of social status, varying levels of sophistication, resentment of the Levantine Maltese in communal position. Nowhere are these focused more sharply than in the divergence of outlooks regarding the creation of a communal centre. Here, as in the failure of the M.C.C. as a representative body, can be seen most clearly the negative outcome of constant rivalry and pervasive mistrust, the two most prevalent characteristics of the Maltese community.

In a history clouded by conflicting reports, the by now familiar combination of lack of unity, personal machinations and overwhelming (if at times justifiable) mistrust, emerges clearly as the undermining influence of the various abortive attempts made over the last twenty years to establish a community centre for the Maltese. From the welter of confusing and reciprocally accusing accounts, the past role played by
the Maltese Community Council assumes a rather vague, irresolute and negative character, while the few definite practical proposals to bring this contentious communal goal to fruition appear to have been made by individuals, more or less well-intentioned, but certainly untram­
melled by democratic scruples.

The various proposals have followed an almost identical pattern of conception and failure. The first attempt was a speculative move by a Maltese builder, aimed at selling a completed centre to the community. In a private capacity, he obtained the approval of the Maltese Fathers to erect a hall on the land of the Mission House in Parkville, had plans drawn up by an architect and was successfully negotiating with the Maltese Government for a $1000 donation. Several circumstances contributed to the failure of this particular enterprise: the incumbent of the Mission House died and plans had to be shelved until the arrival of his successor; in the meantime the Headquarters of the Order in Malta withdrew permission to use church lands for secular purposes; in Melbourne the M.C.C., outraged that an individual was soliciting funds for communal purposes, despatched a cable to Malta, explaining the situation and blocking the expected donation.

A few years later, another proposition was put forward by the same builder and other businessmen, offering to convert a three storey building into club rooms for the community, on the condition that the ground-floor shops and proposed licensed premises above would remain the property of the backers. However, the principle that a communal project should not be undertaken on an individual profit-making basis caused the council to reject the proposition, while its sponsors claimed that their offer was refused through jealousy and spite, because the centre would be located in Sunshine, a western suburb, and would therefore be patronised by working-class people.

Yet another scheme, aimed at running Malta House as a business project and registering as a company with issued shares and limited liability, came to nothing. The business interests behind this suggestion were prepared to put up a $10,000 interest-free loan and make a sizeable donation, but once again suspect motives, petty politics and personal disagreements frustrated any further development.

With the advent of the new council came the first organised attempt to create a centre as a community project. As mentioned in the previous

11 It is interesting to note that such was the basis for the establishment of Polish House, legally the Kosciusko Co-operative Building Company.
section, the new M.C.C. committed itself wholeheartedly to the establish­ment of Malta House. Vigorous action was undertaken by the execu­tive. Badges and car-stickers promoting Malta House were printed and distributed; the affiliated bodies were asked to make a $500 loan towards the project; correspondence seeking financial support was sent to the Prime Minister and the Archbishop of Malta, to the Maltese representatives in Victoria and Canberra, to Maltese newspapers and individuals; the revenue from the two yearly balls was re-allocated to this fund, instead of to the Spastic Children's Appeal, as in former years; emotional appeals in the Malta House Newsletter attempted to rouse the lethargic community:

Let us help ourselves — it is a worthy cause. Let us build this monument in honour of our Island and as a heritage to our children and our children's children. We are a proud and honourable people. We have a great heritage. Let us forge ahead and do something really worthwhile. Our Motto is 'MALTA HOUSE'.

At first, enthusiasm ran high and the gratifying total of $6000 was reached in pledges, loans and donations. On the strength of this, moves were initiated to purchase a suitable property, once again in Parkville. But this first positive step seemed to puncture the fragile bubble of concerted effort, as if the transition from dream to practicality had triggered a release of all the doubts and disagreements which had been relegated to the background while the likelihood of achievement was negligible.

Even erstwhile supporters began to have misgivings about the project. It was not merely displeasure at the so-called high-handed attitude of the executive in opening negotiations ('They've got ideas — great ideas — but you can't say out of the blue — here's a building, let's buy it'). It was the sudden revelation, by that tentative initial step, of the number of perplexing issues that the inexperienced leaders of the community had not considered in depth when the project was in the realm of vision.

The financial situation had to be faced realistically. In actual cash, of the $6000 so optimistically counted, only $1000 properly belonged to the council. The rest was either pledged or loaned, and where was the money to come from, for interest charges, repayment and maintenance? The lack of response from official contacts and from the affiliated organisations themselves was disheartening. Communal apathy raised a
blank wall, 'What will we get out of it?' 'We came here to make money, not to give it away'.

The choice of location was another controversial matter. Several areas had been suggested, Parkville, South Melbourne, St Kilda, all considered suitably central, being on the fringe of the city. The obvious question was, of course, central for whom? Because, significantly, in this project sponsored by the council, not one of the western suburbs rated a mention as possible location, despite housing the highest concentration of suburban Maltese. Wilful or not, this omission reinforced the character of selective representation on the council.

These points raised more basic issues. Sceptics questioned the principle of making the tremendous effort required to raise the target sum of $50,000 to build premises for a community that was mainly indifferent to any form of communal life. Even granting the need for a communal centre, was it advisable to expend such a large sum on one supposedly central property, which would at best only serve a minority of the community? A more acceptable alternative might well be, given the geographical disposition of Melbourne, for some societies to amalgamate, in order to jointly rent, and perhaps later purchase, strategically placed premises, to cater for as wide and varied a section of the community as possible.

This particular suggestion struck at the root of the most serious problem facing the communal structure — the continuing disunity of the organisations, even on a project such as Malta House, to which all subscribed in principle. Out of the council's affiliated associations, only four made any financial contribution, others were re-considering their earlier commitment, one or two were seeking their own premises in direct competition with their roof-body. Outside the council, the Maltese Independent Community Council was considering building its club rooms ('only we'll have to call ours Malta Centre, if they're calling theirs Malta House'). In view of this persistent and disruptive rivalry, some of the previous supporters now wondered uncertainly if the Malta House project was not a case of putting the cart before the horse:

I'm not sure any more — I think perhaps now we are going the wrong way around. First, we must unite, not only in the council, but the others outside also. We must see the light, that nobody is trying to do the others out of something, then when there's friendship, and a feeling of sincerity, when we see each other working together for a common cause, then we can build Malta House.
Underlying these paralysing indecisions is another more fundamental source of division. The same absence of unifying vision regarding communal life is also evident in the various concepts of a communal centre. Some see it as a symbol of unity, a focal point for the whole community, perhaps even the only way of rallying the various antagonistic factions. Others see it as a tangible means of projecting a favourable image of the Maltese community to the Australian public and officialdom, a more genuine and effective representation than the detached one provided by the Maltese Commissioner's office. Malta House is also variously seen in the role of a welfare centre, to welcome new arrivals and assist settlers in their adjustment problems; as a cultural centre, housing a library, a theatre, language classes; as a trade centre (reinforcing or usurping the duties of the Commissioner's office) displaying Maltese products, arts and crafts, an outlet for disseminating information about the Maltese in the form of exhibitions or films; as a social centre for small communal affairs; simply as a place in which to relax, bring the family, enjoy the company of other Maltese.

It follows that, at the practical level, opinions are just as much divided. Predictably, the Levantine Maltese envisage Malta House as a replica of their former community centre, with administrative offices, committee rooms, facilities for social and cultural activities. A more modest centre is preferred by other council officials who feel that such plans are too grandiose, too costly, impractical and quite out of tune with the average Maltese settler. As the Levantine Maltese vision is shaped by experiences as a community in the Arab countries, so is the view of the simpler Maltese limited to an imitation of their clubs back on the island, and they do not see beyond a place providing facilities for billiards, table-tennis and licensed premises for social functions. Yet another plan, claiming the merit of being more viable financially, seeks to enlist the aid of the Maltese ecclesiastical and consular authorities by either building on the former's premises or having the latter move from its distinguished but remote South Yarra address to a more accessible location and using it as a nucleus for a community centre.

Inevitably, the various concepts and practical notions are mutually suspect. While the more advanced and sophisticated Maltese reject the

12 That all these concepts need not be mutually exclusive is seen in some of the highly organised communities, such as the Italians, the Jews, the Poles.
13 The Commissioner's office has now moved to premises in the city, but is still detached from communal affairs.
idea of reducing a community centre to the proportions of a village club and even fear that it may turn into a disreputable gambling den, those few communal workers representing the working class are convinced that Malta House, along the lines suggested by the council, would merely be a 'Casino Maltese', an exclusive club for a small elite, where the ordinary settler would not even be admitted.

There is no absence of suspicions on pecuniary grounds. On the council, the belief is firmly held that a club would turn out to be another profitable business venture on the part of those who suggest it. In the western suburbs, it is equally firmly believed that the projected Malta House is a front to benefit those officials who, it is rumoured, hope to rent part of it as professional suites. ('What I want to know is — who's going to check that they're really paying rent?')

Thus, after twenty years of hopes, plans and strivings, the issue of a community centre is still unresolved. The essential Maltese characteristics have thwarted any positive achievement, and the mid-1970s find the situation deadlocked. The council's project is bogged down by apathy and opposition from the outside, while its own affiliated associations have eroded the initial enthusiastic commitments by inconstancies and underhand dealings. The Independent Council watches warily to see what happens, off-handedly ready to open a billiard room, as a beginning, above a shop owned by one of their backers. Other organisations are renting halls on a more or less regular basis, or are considering more permanent arrangements, while Melita, in 1976 was the only association with its own premises, as it was in 1954.

In 1977 the Maltese Community Council reached an agreement with the Pauline Fathers, who allowed their premises in the inner suburb of Parkville to be used as a community centre. Some social functions began to be held there and facilities were made available for counselling.

The aim of the Maltese Community Council is to build a multi-storeyed centre providing one floor for the Fathers to live in and the remaining space to be used for social, cultural and counselling activities. Ownership agreements have yet to be specified but the member organisations have committed themselves to the development of this centre. On the financial side, the Victorian government has made a $5,000 grant towards running costs. The major fund-raising activity is expected to be Bingo, legalised in Victoria in August 1977 after a ban of 23 years.
The difficulties faced by the Maltese Community Council are, of course, the difficulties experienced by the organisations themselves. Thus, general apathy, mistrust, rivalries, diverse and confused concepts of communal life, all combine to make the organisations no more effective than the council itself as a cohesive force within the Maltese community.

Nevertheless, the existing societies do operate, they do shape communal life whatever its inadequacies, they do serve the welfare, social and cultural interests of the Maltese settlers. Moreover, they relate more closely to the rank-and-file members than does the council, since they have direct dealings with them. It follows that the closer attuned to the ethos of the Maltese migrants they are, the more satisfactorily do these organisations fulfil their role, as will be seen in the case of the Star of the Sea Dramatic Company, for instance.

The purpose of this section, therefore, is to give a detailed factual account of the various Maltese ethnic associations. Since most of these are multi-purpose and share the same objectives, while frequently overlapping in membership and activities, it is felt that enumeration of particulars would prove merely repetitive and tedious. In order to avoid this, description will be carried out laterally, along the lines of formation, structure and administration, membership, activities, stratification. It is hoped that this approach will present a picture in depth of organised communal life among the Maltese.

Despite its possible interest, an historical account covering the rise and demise of past Maltese associations has proved an impossible task. The informal and ephemeral character of some societies (Scouts’ Groups, Southern Cross Club, Cosmopolitan Club), the failings and
distortions of human memory, the death or departure of some of the principals; all these have made the confused data obtained rather doubtful in value. Accordingly, and since the Maltese Community Council has already provided a record of the development of at least one Maltese association, the following account will be limited to the organisations in existence at the time of writing.

Formation
The interaction of religious and secular influences often found in the communal life of migrant groups is particularly evident in the case of the Maltese, who are reputed to be among the most fervent and devout Catholics in the world, and in whose homeland church and state are closely interwoven in daily life.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find that nearly half the existing societies owe their beginnings to clerical influences, stemming from either the universal Catholic Church, or a specifically Maltese religious order, or from the local parish priest.

The Maltese Society, later to become the Maltese Community Council, falls in the first category. It came into being in 1932, to allow Maltese participation in the first Eucharistic Congress held in Australia. Similarly, the Salesian Old Boys Association (Maltese Branch) was formed in 1968 in answer to a request for a Maltese branch in Melbourne from the Salesian order, a world-wide Catholic movement seeking to bring together former students at Salesian colleges, in order to cater for their spiritual and temporal needs.

In the second group, we find the George Cross Soccer Club, the first post-war Maltese society, organised in 1948, under the patronage of the Society of St Paul, a Maltese missionary order concerned with the spiritual welfare of emigrants. Another example of Maltese religious impetus is the Auxiliary Committee of the Society of Christian Doctrine set up in 1960, principally to raise funds for the Victorian Branch of this lay apostolic group, known in Malta as MUSEUM.

Two of the other societies were initiated by a local parish priest. In 1954, the Australian incumbent of the Church of the Star of the Sea in North Melbourne, at the time a suburb of high Maltese density, urged the formation of the Star of the Sea Dramatic Company, to entertain, keep together and benefit the Maltese migrants. In 1958, the Maltese Migrants Catholic Guild was established by a Maltese parish priest as a
welfare organisation and to sponsor a Maltese newspaper, the *Voice of Malta*.

The other societies arose spontaneously out of the needs of the settlers through individual efforts. The earliest was the Melita Social Club, founded in 1954 to bring together the Maltese from Egypt. In 1956, a Maltese major canvassed all known Maltese ex-servicemen and started the Maltese Ex-servicemen's Association. The Maltese Welfare Association was created in 1962 for social and welfare purposes, as was the Maltese-Australian Social Club, revived in 1964 from the defunct Austral-Malta Society. The Phoenicians' Association (1967) resulted from dissatisfaction with other clubs, while the Melfare (1968) a splinter group of the previous society broke off, ostensibly out of disenchantment with its progress (others claim it was formed out of pique by a member who failed to be elected). In 1968, the Western Suburbs Association was reconstituted from the remains of an earlier organisation, to cater for the social and welfare needs of the mass of residents in the western suburbs. The Maltese Independent Community Council was formed in 1970, in direct opposition to the established council, which had rejected its application for affiliation. The Independent Council appears to be less a roof-body than an up-grading of the Maltese Unity Club, the only active organisation out of the several that the Independent Council claims to co-ordinate (for example St Bernadette's Dramatic Company, the Maltese Crusaders' Association). Several businessmen behind the Independent Council subsidise and run the *Times of Malta*, a rival Melbourne Maltese newspaper.

**Structure and Administration**

The structure of the Maltese ethnic clubs runs the full gamut, from informal to formal. There are a couple of small clubs, casual meeting places in privately owned shops, with facilities for cards and billiards; there are loosely formed bodies which can draw large attendances, like the Star of the Sea and the Maltese Unity Club (Independent Council); in contrast one finds small, formally constituted but informally conducted 'friendship groups', like the Salesians and the more cliquish

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1 From the Biblical name for Malta.
2 'Doubly symbolic: the first settlers of Malta and the first settlers of our tribe in Melbourne.'
3 *Melbourne Welfare.*
Melfare; and finally the larger, more formal associations, which try to carry out the management of their affairs along regular orthodox lines.

**Constitution.** Where there is a written constitution, it often reflects the degree of sophistication of the particular organisation and its members, not only in contents but even in presentation. Thus, some constitutions appear piecemeal at the back of a roneoed club bulletin, others are carbon copies of typed documents, and others still are printed and bound in booklet form.

On the whole, the objectives of the organisations are those stated by the council and include social, cultural and sporting advancement for their members, along with integration and welfare. Whereas these aims were stated almost abruptly in the council's set of rules ('Social Functions' 'Public Relations'), the terminology of the subsequent constitutions is progressively enlarged, producing definitions which are often more explicit, not always more meaningful, and are sometimes couched in quite formidable officialese.

For example, the condition relating to charitable purposes, the basic criterion for admission to the council, is greatly expanded from the baldly-stated objective 'Welfare' in the Maltese Community Council's constitution. It becomes 'Promotion of Social Work and to maintain funds as necessary' (Guild) and 'To support any approved charitable institution or any venture which may be deemed by the Committee of the Association to be within the province of the Association's activities. To foster and develop the welfare of its members' (Phoenicians).

Similarly, the general social and cultural aims ('Social Functions' 'Educational' in the council's constitution) become: 'To initiate and conduct activities to promote the social, intellectual and sportive advancement of its members' (Melita).

'Integration' in the council's set of rules is variously interpreted as

- To create and foster a spirit of co-operation and understanding between the Maltese and the Australian people (Maltese-Australian Social Club).

- To look after the interests of the community and foster their duty to God and country as good citizens (Melita).

- To help in the assimilation of Maltese in Australia without losing their originality (Western Suburbs Association).
Although occasional repetitions can be picked up in the various constitutions, it seems far fetched to see in these echoes substantiation of the accusations and counter-accusations of stealing and copying made by many of the associations. Undoubtedly some were inspired by others, but it seems reasonable to expect that associations of a multi-purpose general nature will have similar objectives and express them in similar vein, especially in a community where the reservoir of communal leadership is small and where some of the officials do find themselves improving or re-writing for their new club a set of rules which they had helped to draft for a previous one.

Study of the various constitutions yields insight into Maltese community life of far greater interest than the quibbling over authorship. It provides clues which reinforce the assessment given by leaders of those particular characteristics that seem to hamper the satisfactory development of the Maltese organisational structure: the lack of know-how for instance, the rivalry, the mistrust.

The contrast between the tersely worded objectives in the constitution of the council and the lengthy cataloguing of the duties of all committee members has already been pointed out. It seems to support the often voiced complaint regarding ignorance of formal procedures. ('They were amazed when they saw how a meeting should be conducted'. 'He is a good man, well-meaning, but somebody should buy him a book on how to chair a meeting'.)

This is further corroborated by the minutely detailed standing orders and official duties seen in all constitutions. These include, in addition to what might usually be expected, details that more sophisticated groups might well take for granted, such as the direction that notice of meeting sent to members must include time, date and place of meeting; or that the secretary must enter the minutes in a book entitled minute-book; or this even more explicit instruction on elementary procedure, 'Any member desiring to speak shall raise his hand and address the chairman' (Western Suburbs Association).

In a similar way, one gains the impression that the originators of some of the constitutions sought to allay any possible suspicion of monetary gain through club connections. Emphasis is laid on the honorary nature of the official positions. The Western Suburbs Association directs the procedure for 'assisting financially in desperate situations, but not giving money to the persons concerned'.

The constitutions also reflect the concern over disunity among the
Maltese in general, among the organisations, and even within the ranks of individual organisations. The Melita Club seeks 'To obtain official recognition and maintain good relations with other allied organisations, so that good relations may be encouraged and maintained among members'. Several go further to protect their associations from being undermined by dissension. While the Melfare, for instance, is content to empower its committee to enforce rules, arbitrate over disputes, expel or suspend any member whose conduct is judged 'injurious to the character or interests of the Club or any of its members', the Western Suburbs Association provides for a formal tribunal to be set up, consisting of '3 members of the legal profession', so that members could be brought before the Tribunal if they
(a) break the rules and the Constitution
(b) Conspiracy towards the Centre which can harm the Centre.
(c) A Member of the Executive Committee will be elected member of any other organisation of which the Centre is not affiliated with the same aims and objectives.

Although the organisations are usually not powerful enough to enforce these rules (despite the occasional occurrence of situations qualifying under those terms), the relevant fact remains that their founders felt that the possible threat of damaging machinations by their own members was strong enough to warrant incorporation of such disciplinary clauses in their constitutions.

Affiliations. We have seen how the majority of formally constituted associations are affiliated with the Maltese Community Council. The relationship is a viable one, even though disagreements and discord among the organisations are largely responsible for limited achievement. Despite all its shortcomings the council, with its affiliated bodies, forms the core of the Maltese organisational structure.

The Maltese Independent Community Council, on the other hand, is a more insubstantial body, with tenuous ramifications. It is not formally constituted, it does not have an elected executive, it claims to coordinate various organisations which (apart from the Maltese Unity Club) repudiate any official connections. In actuality it is quite influential, but rather through the various individuals who sponsor it,
support it, or use it as a front, than as an association in the more conventional sense.

The few other organisations in existence stand quite separate. It is no accident that these are located in the western suburbs, where the majority of Maltese live.

Like all organisations, the Maltese societies are jealous of their autonomy. In addition, they have not yet overcome suspicion and distrust of each other to weld themselves into an effective communal machinery. This applies even more to the few organisations in the western suburbs, led in the main by simple, working-class people, with little education and limited horizons. Although they see the benefits of a cohesive ethnic group they lack group consciousness and the spirit of cooperation to progress towards such cohesion. Although they desire unity, they cannot achieve it, because they see communal life mostly in terms of village or parish rivalries. Although they appreciate the need for collective efforts, they cannot discipline themselves to the formal demands of corporate life because they are more at ease with the flexible, often highly personal, communal procedures of their semi-rural background.

On the more specific level, therefore, they view with suspicion formal links between organisations; they confuse affiliation with merging and loss of identity; they fear take-over by the more sophisticated organisations. Even the administrative process of formal affiliation is resented, to the extent that the mere affiliation fee is regarded as exploitation (‘Why do they want us to pay a fine to affiliate?’).

Only the Salesians Association and the Melita Club have any outside connections. The former shares the constitution and the religious aspirations of this world-wide Catholic movement. Socially, the bond is very loose and consists of the Maltese branch’s participation in a yearly religious event.

The Melita Club is affiliated with the London-based Association of the Maltese Communities of Egypt. This involvement is more meaningful as contact is maintained with Maltese/Egyptian communities throughout the world and regular bulletins convey items of personal, social, cultural and political interests. Another link exists through Melita’s position as the local branch of the London Association’s Department of Claims against the Egyptian Government, regarding sequestration of personal and communal property.
Finance. Like other voluntary organisations, most of the Maltese societies rely partly on membership fees in order to run on a businesslike basis. These subscriptions are usually modest, and entitle members to the usual benefits, such as reductions on entrance at various functions, admittance of family at balls, dances and other social functions; raffles, gate proceeds at soccer matches for the George Cross Soccer Club; sales of newspapers for the Guild and the M.I.C.C.; direct donations to specific projects like Malta House or the Imnarja celebration; sale of car stickers and badges; in the case of the Melita Club, an additional source of income is the hiring of its premises.

Premises. The problem of finding satisfactory meeting places is always one that exercises the ingenuity of communal organisers, especially if the ethnic group does not own a communal centre. For the small regular meetings, the Maltese societies find that a church hall is usually the logical and appropriate choice. For functions planned to attract large crowds, the large traditional Melbourne halls are hired, the Royale Ballroom, Earls Court, Leggets, the San Remo Ballroom.

Some of the organisations, disenchanted with the short-term prospects of Malta House, are investigating the hiring or the purchase of individual premises in order 'to have a proper club for those impossible Sunday afternoons', with billiards, table-tennis, drinks, a place of meeting for the whole family.

These facilities are already offered by Melita, whose premises are open four nights a week and all day Saturday. The club first rented this hall from the A.L.P.'s Coburg branch at the beginning of the rift with the D.L.P. It decided to purchase it in 1956, when the Suez crisis drew the Middle Eastern community together, and the house was used as a central point to obtain news of relatives; to make contact with the Swiss Legation and the International Red Cross; to keep records, to obtain information on the whereabouts of dispersed communities. Because of its dilapidated condition the house was offered at an acceptable price and strong membership and attendance, together with efficient administration, enabled its gradual renovation.

Executive Positions. The constitutional terms of tenure for executive positions are fairly uniform throughout the formal organisations. At the annual general meetings, the presidents are usually elected to their office for a period of two years, while vice-president, treasurer, secretary,
their assistants, various other committee members, usually hold their position for one year.

In practice, there is little turn-over in official positions, presidents and others being re-elected and holding office year after year. Moreover, the same names seem to crop up again and again, in one position or another, in one organisation or another. These facts again bear out the established notion of a small circle of active communal workers.

**Leadership.** Since an organisation is shaped and driven by its leaders, this seems an appropriate place to dwell a little on the people who set the level of communal life and their social relationship with rank and file members.

Like their members, the officials are post-war settlers, who over the years have gradually taken over control from the pre-war migrants. They come from various walks of life but, with the council as the one important exception, the organisations possess a fairly high degree of internal homogeneity. Thus, at the head of clubs with a working-class membership, there are, for instance, a factory hand, a wharf labourer, a shop-keeper. Additional lustre is given by the fact that one is a J.P., another is backed by wealthy businessmen, but, in their rural origin, background, education, outlook and aspirations, members and leaders are kindred and there is mutual understanding.

Similarly, in the organisations of the so-called higher classes, blue and white collar workers, factory supervisors, small business people, have elected a clerk, a tradesman, a caterer, to official positions. The affinity here lies in a somewhat higher level of education, greater general awareness and interest, possibly an urban background and greater familiarity with organised life, such as political parties, or Boy Scouts, or Young Catholic Workers.

In the Melita Club, harmony results from sharing a Levantine origin, a more cosmopolitan outlook, similar educational and social background, even if occupational and economic levels have often dropped in Australia.

A certain discrepancy between members and leaders becomes apparent in the Phoenicians, the other 'high-class' association, which claims a broad cross-section in its membership, while its founders and present leaders come from the small, better-educated section of the Maltese community and include teachers, lawyers and so on.
The greatest disparity in composition occurs in the Community Council, the above-named exception to internal homogeneity of the Maltese organisations. Professionals and Levantines predominate on the executive committee of the council, while the community it seeks to represent consists principally of largely ignorant, working-class people of peasant origins. The resultant divergences in outlook and attitude, the inability to identify with each other, inevitably lead to resentment and misunderstandings on both parts.

The practice of democracy in communal affairs makes an interesting illustration of this. In the more casual clubs of the western suburbs, appointments are often self-made, or sponsored by interested individuals, and become a permanency. This, it is claimed, is the only way clubs can exist in that area, because formal proceedings are unsuitable for the type of Maltese residing there, who are, in any case, far too apathetic socially to interest themselves in the management of any communal organisation.

The whole framework of Maltese communal life in the western suburbs is attacked by the council, which emphasises the basic principle of democratic elections and accuses the unelected leaders of maintaining the status quo in order to exploit their positions for personal gain.

Back comes the argument that democracy just would not work among people who are ignorant, unaware, uninterested, and used to some form of paternalistic system. Furthermore, detractors of the council, who often resent the later involvement of the present leaders (‘they come to the ready’) point out that the professionals only pay lip-service to democratic principles anyway, and helped to pull each other into office whenever vacancies occurred.

Obviously, claims and counter-claims contain elements of truth as well as exaggerations. What all the allegations do highlight in this particular context is the inability of the educated leaders to accept and cope with the difficulties involved in moulding a simple, parochial people into the formalised set-up of an ethnic unit in an alien urban society. Their inflexibility, their sincere but righteous clinging to ideals removed from the reality of the peasant outlook, are the essential causes for their failure to find common ground with the Maltese masses in the western suburbs.

The whole matter of Maltese professional involvement is worthy of examination. It contrasts with the situation in the Dutch and Polish
communities, where the most common complaint is that intellectuals are too pre-occupied with their own advancement to participate in communal affairs. The reasons given by the Maltese professionals for their commitment include the need for more orderliness in communal life, which they feel they can bring about; a sense of duty and responsibility; the practical help they can give by virtue of their profession; a sense of belonging, even a re-discovered sense of identity by some second-generation Maltese.

The reaction of other communal workers to involvement by the professionals is no less interesting. It has undergone several changes. At first, they were welcomed with respect, it was felt that educated people would add prestige to the community and would be able to retrieve the communal situation made chaotic by rivalries. Most of the communal workers were dazzled by the impressive formality of the procedures and by the status of the new recruits, who were seldom contradicted.

Gradually, disillusionment set in. The slow progress did not meet up with high expectations, no positive achievements could be claimed, there was still disunity and the communal affairs did not seem much further forward. There were accusations of snobbery, self-aggrandisement, inability to understand general mentality, professional gain. More active hostility was manifested in underhand dealings, such as agreeing with motions passed at meetings and acting in a deliberately opposite manner (as was seen in connection with Malta House, or with the social calendar for communal functions): 'It's the knife-in-the-back method — they got so used to being yes-men, they still say nothing different at meetings, but behind his back they're bankrupting the man.'

One can only conjecture further developments, whether the intellectuals will eventually be ousted from leadership or whether their involvement will decrease through dissatisfaction and incompatibility with relatively uneducated co-workers. On the other hand, it is also possible that they will continue stalwartly and achieve a degree of unity and effectiveness. For it must be stressed that, while they enjoy their top-dog status in the restricted sphere of communal affairs, they are undeniably dedicated, they have a degree of genuine concern, and a strong conviction of their responsibility (perhaps because there are so

4 Galitzi, Roumanians in the U.S., and Lengyel, Americans from Hungary observed similar situations in the early Rumanian and Hungarian communities.
few of them). Furthermore, by virtue of their training and position outside the community, they are more likely to succeed in welding the Maltese together, and in representing them to the outside on a par with the other ethnic groups.

Membership Numbers. It is impossible to give an accurate figure of financial membership, let alone of those casually interested. One organisation may be active but informal and have no financial members, while another, though practically inoperative, counts its members in hundreds and even thousands, through subscription or mere purchase of a sectional newspaper. Some officials were suspicious and refused to disclose their numbers while others gave obviously inflated, or quite contradictory figures. For these reasons, numerical assessment of communal participation among Maltese is necessarily impressionistic. That is not to say that the suggested figures were reached haphazardly. They are based on the somewhat unscientific methods of comparing figures given by different officials; evaluating numbers given in conjunction with the personality of the people who did give them; estimating attendance from private observation at functions and comparing this to ethnic newspaper reports. The estimates are complicated by various other factors. One must, for instance, take into consideration the matter of multiple membership, which seems very prevalent among the Maltese; if a Maltese is interested in some form of communal life, he will more than likely belong to more than one organisation, or attend the functions of various organisations. This is suggested by the frequently heard complaint that one always sees the same faces, by the fact that the same names crop up in community affairs.

There are other difficulties, such as discriminating numerically between actual financial members and those whose only connection is their name left over on a membership list from previous years; between active communal participants and those whose attendance varies from irregular to infrequent. Again, whereas one can reasonably discount the 'several thousands' of members claimed by the associations subsidising the two local newspapers, it is a more delicate task to estimate the numbers involved in family memberships. Thus, the numerical situation is nebulous, but two facts emerge clearly. One is that overall membership is a very small fraction of the Maltese population, and the
other is that organisations of the western suburbs are smaller in number and membership than those based in the northern suburbs.

**Composition.** The Maltese organisations share a similarity of distribution regarding the age/sex/period of residence/national origin of their members.

The Maltese like to have their entertainment on a family basis, and the societies aim at activities that will appeal to all age groups. At formal balls, care is taken to provide cacophonous bands to please the young as well as more traditional music. Buses are hired to accommodate families on club outings. Melita has table-tennis and billiards competitions for various age levels. This concern accounts for so many clubs having family subscriptions and is echoed in the often-voiced opinion that any projected Malta House should simply be a place to take the whole family.

While the whole family often attends the various functions offered by the societies, active communal participation seems mainly to devolve upon people in their 40s and over, though a few are in their late 30s. This is commonly accounted for by the older age group having established some form of economic stability, being less family-bound since their children are older, being 'wiser in people's ways' than younger people.

It is not uncommon to see father/son/son-in-law, or brother/sister or uncle/nephew on the same committee, adding more support to the notions of restricted communal circle.

It is often assumed that Mediterranean groups have exclusively male clubs, but this is not the case with the Maltese. Although in Malta male and female social activities are usually enjoyed separately, the nature of the organisation in the Australian environment is different and there is mingling of the sexes throughout the associations.

Certainly the George Cross Soccer Club and the Ex-Servicemen's Association (in its active period), are primarily male organisations, but by reason of common interest and not by convention. Again, committee workers are predominantly male, not by exclusion of women, but simply because the latter are more housebound in duties and interest.

The connection between length of residence and communal participation is characterised by two trends. Firstly, there is practically no present involvement by pre-war settlers. These, a small group, numerically swamped by later arrivals, have gradually faded out of the
organisational sphere, through age, loss of interest and divergence of outlook, especially after the formation of the new council. Secondly, there is an inverted ratio between involvement and length of residence, with the post-war arrivals becoming interested in community affairs only after a sizeable period of residence. We find for instance that not one of the present communal leaders has lived in Australia for less than ten years. This increase of involvement dependent upon length of residence is in accordance with findings in other communities and supports the suggestions made that various adjustments must be accomplished before social participation can take place, notably a certain economic stability, the realisation of being an ethnic minority, an awareness of organised activities beyond the church circle.

Another fairly uniform element in the composition of the Maltese societies is the national origin of their members. In principle, membership is open to all and this is stated with various degrees of explicitness in the constitutions. The Maltese Guild declares that

Membership shall be open to all people of Maltese origin and persons interested in helping the Maltese community who agree to abide by the rules of the Guild (Rule 2)

In more detailed terms, the Maltese-Australian Social Club enumerates those who are eligible:

b. Australians residing in Victoria.
c. Wives of Maltese husbands and vice-versa, irrespective of their nationality (Rule 4)

In actual fact, there are few members of other nationalities. In its early days, Melita attracted some French, Italians, Lebanese, because of North African affinity, but these gradually drifted away. The large communal functions, especially the George Cross and Council annual balls, always draw a significant number of Australians. It seems reasonable to assume that these are partners of the Maltese nationals and not outsiders eager to join the Maltese organisations.

At committee level, most societies have a constitutional limit to the

Medding, *Assimilation to Group Survival*, p. 178, suggests this possibility to account for low professional involvement in the Jewish community.
number of non-Maltese allowed in official positions (e.g. Melita 30 per cent, George Cross 25 per cent). Such clauses are inserted to safeguard the Maltese character of the societies and no difficulty is experienced in maintaining them.

Social Distinctions. While the membership of the Maltese organisations displays a fairly uniform distribution of age, sex, length of residence and national origin, this is not so in regard to social status (posizzjoni), and one encounters throughout the community awareness and acceptance of social distinctions. This notion of comparative social elevations emerges clearly in Maltese self-assessment and is supported by personal observation.

To summarise briefly what was discussed at length in earlier sections, social differentiation among the Maltese is not readily apparent to the outsider, who sees the group as fairly homogeneous in socio-economic terms.

They themselves, however, classify as 'lower class' the large numbers of working-class Maltese living in the western suburbs, whether they be manual, skilled and unskilled workers, lower-grade clerical and sales employees, a few shop-keepers and even fewer large business owners. These people usually have a low level of education, a high degree of religious observance, come from a Maltese rural background and include Gozitans, who often act as a driving force among them.

The so-called 'higher class' Maltese live in the northern suburbs where they are engaged in marginally higher occupations, tradesmen, higher grade white collar workers, a few self-employed and a sprinkling of professionals. These are usually more educated, with a broader, more liberal outlook and they tend to originate from Malta or from North Africa.

Obviously a large community like the Maltese is too complex to be absolutely and rigidly divided as the above generalisation implies. Nevertheless, such simplification reflects existing patterns and explains the order in which the Maltese rank their organisations. For if the Maltese respond at individual level to the notion of comparative social layers, it follows that their organisations will reproduce such stratification in their relationship to each other. How the organisations view themselves and how they are viewed by others are the determining factors that establish their inferior or superior place within the Maltese Gesellschaft-like society.
Stratification of Organisations
The closest counterpart in Australia to the working man’s club in Malta is probably the Maltese Club in North Melbourne, a privately-owned coffee-shop patronised only by men and occasionally raided by police for gambling. It is of a type familiar to all early migrant communities, and its usefulness as an informal meeting place has greatly dwindled through the usual pattern of settlers moving from inner to outer suburbs and also through the formation of formal groups. There is a similar club in Springvale, while the original Maltese Club in Lonsdale Street is now closed.

The concern for respectability causes all organisations to look down upon the Maltese Club. It is feared that the poor reputation it has acquired through police raids for gambling and other offences gives the whole community a bad name.

Within the organisational sphere, the M.I.C.C., the Maltese Unity Club, the Crusaders, occupy the lowest level. Because these associations are informal and identified with the individuals who control them, their ranking is based not only on the social status of their participants, but also on the character of their leaders. These are alleged to be unscrupulous, peasant-shrewd and to support the clubs only in order to exploit the mostly poor and uneducated Maltese who attend their functions. The following deprecatory remarks are commonly heard:

It’s just a front for their real estate affairs. They call the new arrivals ‘goats’ and pack them together in houses and everybody calls them the ‘bungalow Maltese’.

He organises a ball and then later, he shows me his new car that he got out of it. And he’s proud of it, that he’s so clever.

These allegations are naturally refuted by those so accused. They disclaim any direct profit through their connection with the associations, only the indirect advantage of getting their names more widely-known. They point out that, furthermore, the type of people with whom they deal have no interest in communal life and come to their affairs precisely because they are arranged for them, because they are run in the traditional Maltese village pattern of informality and patronage. Were it not for them, they claim, there would not be any Maltese communal life in the western suburbs, since the ‘high class’ council is not interested in them, does not care about their ‘side of the tracks’.
In this particular context of social stratification, the relevant point of their defensive argument seems to be their unconscious acceptance of differential ranking, of 'high class' others and of themselves on a lower level.

The Star of the Sea Dramatic Company and the Western Suburbs Association hold the same view of themselves, as inferior in relation to the council and the northern suburbs associations which keep aloof from them. These two groups, however, are regarded in a more favourable light than those previously mentioned. Although they cater for the same type of simple, working-class Maltese, they are considered more respectable in their management of functions, the motives of their leaders are accepted as sincere and genuine.

It will be noticed that these organisations at the lower end of the Maltese status scale are all located in the western suburbs of Melbourne and are not affiliated with the Maltese Community Council.

The George Cross Soccer Club occupies the next rank and is in a unique position among the Maltese societies. It seems to bridge the gap between western and northern suburban dwellers, since its membership is drawn from both. It is called a blue collar organisation, since its members are mostly working-class people, but it has been on the council since its inception, and is accepted as the sporting body representing the whole Maltese community.

Within the council itself, the stratification continues. The Maltese Welfare Association, the Maltese-Australian Club, the Salesians Old Boys and the Auxiliary Committee, all share an intermediate social rank. These organisations and the people who compose them make up a most interesting section of the community. As mentioned several times earlier, it is difficult to say precisely what differentiates this stratum from the previous one. The criteria are not to be found along the lines of income, occupation or formal education, since these outward standards are at a fairly uniform level throughout both strata. The differences are more vague, more intangible, focused upon a somewhat wider outlook on life, or perhaps more exactly upon an awareness of village ways being inadequate in a more open, more sophisticated, more complex environment. Associated with this recognition is an obscure apprehension of themselves having to shake off rusticity, as it were, to effect changes in their social patterns enabling them to move towards adjustment in the new society.

This dual perception — of a different milieu and of their role in
adapting their organisations to fit into it — engenders a certain feeling of superiority over the organisations in the western suburbs, considered more backward in their outlook, more unscrupulous in their methods.

In an inarticulate fashion they consider themselves, if not better, at least more advanced than their village-minded compatriots, more prepared to extend life beyond mere money-making and church-going, vitally important as these are. They perceive that the socialisation requirements of an ethnic minority in an urban industrial environment vary from those of a semi-rural church-bound people in its own homeland. They have moved away from the club, as an extension of the individual, towards more or less efficient corporate bodies, with rules and formalities. They see the need for organisational unity, but have not yet managed to rise above distrust, squabbling and parish-pump politics to achieve a well-functioning roof-body. Like the majority of Maltese individuals and organisations, they have a low degree of group consciousness and communal feeling, yet they have a desire for something frequently referred to as 'having face', an unidentified ambiguous concept seemingly akin to esteem and honour, not only for the individual but for the whole group.

All these undercurrents are struggling indistinctly below the surface but find expression in their attempts to formalise their societies, in trying 'to do things as they are done here, but doing them for the Maltese'; in all their endeavours to 'keep a good tone'; in their concern for respectability, which causes them to disassociate themselves from the 'rowdies' and to emphasise correct formal wear at functions for instance, and to exclude those 'wearing leather jackets.'

It is inevitable that only these outward manifestations and not their obscure motivations should be seen by the lower communal layer, since the differences between lower and intermediate are so minimal. The former see the latter only in terms of people of similar status, who are trying to upgrade themselves, and they greatly resent the sometimes crude attempts by the 'jumped-up low class' to 'keep themselves to themselves', and thereby virtually exclude them from the social life in the northern suburbs.

The inarticulate aspirations of the organisations in the intermediate layer are shared by the Phoenicians' Association, one of the organisations occupying the upper stratum of the Maltese organisational structure. Whereas the former are entangled in a confusion of new and obscure perceptions, the Phoenicians' Association
have a more intensive awareness of their situation as an ethnic group, a clearer understanding of communal needs and of their own role in achieving goals which are more defined, albeit unfulfilled.

The vague notion of 'having face' previously encountered, is clarified as being a matter of self-respect. There must be standards of behaviour: 'They [in the western suburbs] will have anybody, as long as it's crowded, but we care, we only admit good elements' and the constitution of the Phoenicians' Association makes members responsible for the behaviour of their guests (Art.15). By extension they seek as members of their association people of good character: 'Good character in the Maltese sense — who can behave well, who can hold himself in public, who could be sent as representative to Canberra or to Port Melbourne, and would do the community credit, if he is a cleaner or a doctor.'

Their striving towards an ideal of self-respect may be a reaction against the rough, illiterate peasant they feel is the accepted impression of the Maltese immigrant. By raising the tone of their association initially, and of the community later, they hope to project a more favourable image to society at large and thereby achieve recognition and esteem for their national group.

All this is closely bound up with the complex implications of shaping a group into a community. We have seen how the lower stratum associations operate independently, in a transplanted village system, flexible, personal, informal. The intermediate layer is confusedly groping its way away from parochialism towards more formal, more democratic, more efficient organisations. The Phoenicians' Association and the other organisations in the upper stratum are one step further on this gradual process towards formal socialisation in the more sophisticated environment.

They accept unreservedly the concept of a corporate body as opposed to identification of a club with an individual. They see the advantages of co-ordination and have the ability to engage in collective efforts. Their aim is for the Maltese to obtain their place on a par with other ethnic groups. They have an earnest sense of responsibility towards the community. Above all, they are acutely aware of the crucial need for unity, which they perceive as the primary essential goal.

They see themselves as a moving force in the process of bringing about unity and of shaping the associations into a well-organised and efficient communal instrument. They claim to have played an
important part in the re-constitution of the council and in the democratisation of its working procedures. Despite frustrations they advocate amalgamation of overlapping societies as the only way to achieve unity ('The situation in Glenroy is just plain ridiculous').

The more advanced ideas of the Phoenicians' Association must be accounted for in great part by the fact that, on the whole, their membership includes the more educated of the Maltese settlers. This would also be a prominent factor in determining their 'high-class' status within the organisational stratification. Both the lower and intermediate strata rank the Phoenicians' Association as above themselves and point to the exclusiveness of their membership. This is strongly denied by the Phoenicians, who claim that though the association was started by a few select people of similar interests, their policy of 'opening doors wider' has resulted in a membership covering a good cross-section of the community, including professionals and manual workers.

Yet class awareness is very much a matter of course, as evidenced in this delightfully revealing vignette, purporting to illustrate the absence of social distinctions:

We used to be exclusive, but no more. We now have all levels and we all sit in the same room. Of course, everyone sits at his table with his own friends. The President comes down and he moves about. The dockyard worker stands up and says 'How do you do, Mr X' and he is answered 'Hullo, Tony'. They both feel good. The President because he is respected and looked up to, the wharfie because he mixes in the company of better class and educated people who will greet him.

On a level with the Phoenicians' Association but not fitting into the former structure so neatly are the Melfare and the Melita. The former, splintered from the Phoenicians' Association, is primarily a friendship

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7 This is the account of the failure of one such attempt. 'We made an approach and got a sympathetic hearing, but the committee had to be advised and a general vote taken. Silence for weeks. We made inquiries — yes, still favourable. Silence again. We wrote a letter, they said they never got it. We wrote another one and personally dropped it in his letter box, then another one we sent registered. They still claimed they never received anything. So — finished.'

The officials of the other organisations were very evasive when questioned about this issue, but despite lack of confirmation, it is symptomatic of the chicanery frequently found in the conduct of Maltese communal affairs.
group made up almost entirely of professionals who have nothing in common with the intermediate layer associations and are outside the orbit, and even the knowledge, of the western suburban organisations. It is an exclusive, segregated coterie, small in number and negligible in communal influence.

Also slightly apart but of much greater communal impact is the Melita Club. Although no longer rejected as it was a few years ago, it is still regarded as ‘foreign’, especially by the lower stratum organisations who have virtually no contact with it. It is still considered ‘different’, not merely because of its Levantine background, but because of its egalitarianism and cosmopolitanism. Moreover, its efficiency and stability make it outstanding, even unique, among the Maltese organisations and its achievements (often viewed with suspicion or envy) are acknowledged by all. Melita is influential in the organisational sphere by the example of its success as well as by its commitment to communal unity, backed by the sincere efforts of its officials on the council, who have their own transplanted vision of an effective Maltese community.

Sitting uneasily at the top of the organisational structure is the Maltese Community Council. Its position and uneven relations with the other societies will be only briefly recapitulated here, since these have been described in detail in a previous section. The council is acknowledged as being the top body of the Maltese community, by virtue of its recognition by Maltese and Australian agencies, by the prestige conferred on it through the professional status of its executive, by the formality of its procedures.

Its most significant weakness is undoubtedly its unrepresentative nature. This failing is aggravated by the fact that its formation, development and activities have tended to blur its image, so that it is often seen as another organisation rather than a roof-body. Such a situation greatly reduces its effectiveness in co-ordinating its affiliated members, in embarking on comprehensive communal projects, or even in enforcing routine decisions.

Within the organisational sphere, the council enjoys relations on an equal footing with the Phoenicians, the Melita and the Melfare, and its executive is largely drawn from the former two societies. Of the intermediate layer organisations (whose representatives form the rest of the council’s committee), some strive to act upon a level of equality; most look upon the council as socially superior both at individual and at corporate level. They are either dazzled, sycophantic, or ill-at-ease, and
their occasional disagreements, or resentment at suspected high-handed manner are expressed in underhand dealings rather than open discussion.

The council has no effective communication with the associations outside its orbit. Enough has been said about their reciprocal attitudes (on the one part, the claims of undemocratic structure, of individual exploitation, of peasant outlook and poor standards of behaviour and so on; on the other part, counter-claim of ineffectuality, lack of interest in the Maltese majority, self-aggrandisement, snobbery), to indicate the likely direction of their social relations.

We have seen that the organisations in the western suburbs have a sense of their own inferior ranking compared to those in the northern suburbs. This is carried to an even more intense degree in relation to the council: ‘As individuals, at least, we can get into some of their clubs [i.e. intermediate-layer organisations], but those high-class rich people will never let our clubs into the council’.

Their grievances and resentments are always keenly felt more in terms of social disparagement than within the context of failure of communal co-operation. That is to say, disagreement and divergences are accepted as the normal fabric of communal life, opposition and exclusion can be fought with cunning countermoves, the intense rivalries even generate a certain amount of pleasurable excitement as well as angry passion. All these turbulent interchanges take place in the realm of politics, a separate plane, as it were. But it is the social slight that really hurts, whether the cut is at the purely personal level:

We grew up together in North Melbourne and now he doesn’t even say hullo when we meet at a function, just because he’s on the council and we’re on the other side.

or whether it involves the standing of the organisation:

The council never bothers to attend our balls [western suburbs] and when our officials go to their balls, they snub them. They made a photo for the paper, everybody’s name was in it with the organisation they represent, everybody, except us and our association’s name.

In order to keep the Maltese communal picture in perspective it seems essential in view of the foregoing detailed section describing notions of
comparative social elevations, to stress again the very limited sphere of organisational life in numerical terms. The deeply committed workers at the core of communal activity are naturally fewer in numbers than the figure of 500 to 700 regular participants suggested earlier. A further diffusion of involvement occurs among the additional 1200 or so on the fringes of communal life and interest seems to fade away altogether among the remaining majority. Thus, although no statistical evidence can be offered, these figures, drawn from given numbers and private observation, support the persisting impression of intense involvement by a very fractional minority, a mere kernel surrounded by an amorphous, passive majority.

Activities of the Organisations

The major criterion for affiliation to the council is that the associations have a charitable objective. In fact all organisations raise funds, usually through social activities, and these are allocated to charitable projects both inside and outside the community.

The main outside recipient is the Spastic Society of Victoria, which conducts a Miss Australia Quest, with the participation of various ethnic groups, including the Maltese. Other appeals also benefit, but on a much smaller scale.8

Each organisation is responsible for the disposition of its funds and, inside the community, these are usually distributed according to an established pattern. Some organisations make themselves responsible for institutions while others give to their parish priest, or directly to distressed individuals as the emergency arises.9

The various non-financial communal tasks — hospital and jail visits, court work, legal and medical assistance or advice, reference to Housing Commission, Social Services, and other appropriate agencies, are not

8 Predictably, officials are very reluctant to give definite figures. Many just clam up when the word finance is mentioned, and some refuse outright. The figures below were obtained from old club bulletins and newspapers and though outdated and incomplete give some idea of the size of contributions.

Maltese Australian Society — 1968
Spastic Society $275
Meat for Malta $20
Biafra Relief $6

9 This is usually a donation in kind rather than in cash — basic essentials supplied to a large family for the first two weeks after father's death — 'They sent us the bill. My God! I never thought anybody could drink so much milk and eat so much bread!'
carried out at communal level but on an unco-ordinated, mostly individual basis. That is to say, needy Maltese, as well as the parish priests and the social workers who come across Maltese in need, will turn to prominent Maltese for help rather than to the associations (‘Being a Maltese J.P. means being a target’). These patrons, not all of whom are involved in communal life, will either refer these people to the associations or will take it upon themselves (sometimes from altruistic, sometimes self-advancing motives), to approach various authorities, such as the local council, the Immigration Department, or political figures.

The nature and range of entertainment provided by the organisations is fairly limited. All associations conduct annual formal balls, which can be very elaborate affairs, with two bands, floor-shows, raffles of various prizes, including occasionally a trip to Malta. At these functions, dress is formal, Maltese and Australian flags are displayed, club emblems and ribbons are pinned on lapels to enhance the festive atmosphere. Throughout the year, there are informal dinner dances, cabarets, social evenings, as well as picnics and other club outings, fancy-dress and Christmas parties. The council holds frequent receptions and cocktail parties, the Melita Club an occasional thé dansant, a nostalgic echo of similar occasions in Egypt.

On the sporting side, activities are mostly of the spectator variety and consist of attendance at George Cross soccer matches. Some players in this State League team are brought over from Malta, but a junior team has recently been formed for local youngsters of Maltese parentage. Melita, because of its own premises is able to offer facilities for billiards and table-tennis, and these teams compete in local and regional fixtures.

The cultural life of the community would be more aptly termed folk-cultural and, like sport, is mostly of the consumer variety. The core of the cultural effort consists of regular theatrical performances by the small but steadfast Star of the Sea Dramatic Company, which has put

10 These social evenings are usually a euphemism for tombola, the Maltese equivalent of bingo. There is passionate resentment that this form of entertainment, beloved by the Maltese on the island, should be illegal in Victoria, forcing it to be played ‘in the small backroom, mostly men, a few beers, a couple of games’, instead of being an outing for the family.

11 The only exception is the very rare occurrence of a soirée musicale, presented by the Auxiliary of Christian Doctrine, where the classical program is performed by Maltese musicians.
on three or four yearly shows since 1954. These usually consist of a revue, or some one-act plays, presenting dramatic or farcical situations close to the Maltese heart, centred as they are on religious or family themes and acted in the Maltese language.

The other theatrical companies are less reliable and their activity fluctuates according to the stability of their unofficial committees, so that intervals of one or more years can occur between performances.

Another genuinely Maltese event is the Imnarja festival, which has become an annual highlight in the western suburbs. On the island, this feast of SS Peter and Paul, held in June, is celebrated in the inimitable Maltese tradition, flamboyantly intertwining religious and secular themes. There are all-night celebrations, followed by religious processes, bare-back races, agricultural displays and sideshows. Of necessity adapted to Australian conditions, the Imnarja festival is held in a hired hall and presents to a large audience a wide variety of attractions, contests, stage-shows, side-shows, prizes, sketches etc.

The frequency of organisational activities varies considerably. Despite the council's attempts at co-ordination, there is fierce competition over the celebration of the Maltese National Day: 'The usual September balls are already in a mess, as at least three societies are holding their function on the same day'. There is such a spate of communal balls over this period, known as the 'silly season', that balls sometimes spill over into August to forestall functions of rival associations. New Year's Eve and George Cross Day in April are also occasions for formal social activities, though not on the same competitive scale as the National Day Balls.

Throughout the year, the large organisations aim at regular once-a-month activities. The smaller organisations hold theirs at more infrequent intervals: 'there are so many other functions, we try to slip ours in between'. The informal clubs and the friendship groups operate irregularly and seemingly on impulse: 'Someone may decide to organise an impromptu party and the members all turn up'. 'Somebody thinks that next weekend is a good day for a picnic so he gets on the telephone and rings a dozen people, and that can make 100 or more of us to go out together.'

It is interesting to note that the Maltese associations use their ethnic

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12 Boissevain, Saints and Fireworks, p. 56.
13 Maltese Herald, 12 August 1970.
press considerably less than do other national groups in advertising their activities. This so-called under-exposure is attributed to two main factors: the familiar theme of distrust, and the conviction that notification through newspapers will not reach enough people.

In the first case, it is feared that open advertising might bring about contrary results: the ‘wrong elements’ (that is not respectable) might be attracted; other clubs might copy activities; or they might sabotage the success of activities by either arranging something on the same date, or influencing people not to go. In the second case, it is felt that advertising, either in the Maltese or local suburban press, does not achieve its aim: ‘It’s useless. They don’t read. If they read, they usually miss it. Usually they leave it on the top of the fridge and forget about it.’

Apart from the limited announcements in the Maltese Herald and the very restricted advertising in the Voice of Malta and Times of Malta (restricted to organisations they sponsor), the associations find the more direct and personal forms of notification to be the most satisfactory; for example in areas of high Maltese concentration, announcements from the pulpit after services; handbills posted in shop-windows or hand-delivered to Maltese residents; in the large organisations announcements in club bulletins or direct information through the mail; personal canvassing and, of course, contact through the most useful tool in modern communication — the telephone.
Assessment

In order to complete this account of the Maltese organisations, there now remains the difficult task of assessing their measure of success in fulfilling the functions for which they were created. This requires two preliminary steps. Firstly, to clarify what these functions are. Secondly, to decide which criteria to adopt for an assessment of the particular measure of success attained.

The functions outlined in the introduction were seen as being 'protective' (such as helping to cushion the settlers in their adjustment to the new society) or 'defensive' (such as maintaining homeland values against the influence of the new society). To achieve this, ethnic organisations operate on two interrelated planes, the general and the specific.

On the general idealistic plane, the organisations seek to unite the ethnic group internally and to act as its representative externally. On the specific pragmatic plane, the organisations are concerned with more defined and circumscribed objectives, such as welfare, culture, sport. These, while sufficient in themselves, will also serve towards fulfilment of the ideal of unity.

In order therefore to see how successful the Maltese organisations are, we must evaluate how much unity, representation and specific objectives they have achieved for their community.

To enable presentation of a balanced perspective on the communal situation, two criteria will be used for such evaluation:

- assessing achievements in terms of goals pursued
- assessing achievements of the organisations in relation to each other.

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General Aims

It is evident from discussion in preceding sections that the Maltese associations are a long way from realising the general or idealistic objectives of ethnic associations — internal cohesion and external representation. They have not succeeded in binding the Maltese together as a group, not only because of the very fractional participation by settlers in communal affairs, but more importantly because they do not provide a focus of identification for the majority of Maltese migrants who are largely unaware of them and of their activities. On the representative issue, the associations have again reached only a very limited degree of success, mainly because they have been unable to overcome their rivalries and form an effective roof-body. Such a body ‘If it is adequately to represent the community must also be representative of it’. It must democratically represent all sections and all interests of the group. The Maltese Community Council’s claim to this position is not justified, since it does not meet those essential requirements.

This absence of a single body to speak and act on behalf of the Maltese migrants means diffuse authority inside the community and disorderly relations outside it. There is, for instance, the inability to muster sufficient pressure to control the exploitation by unscrupulous individuals of organisations as fronts for personal enterprises such as travel or estate agents. There has not been fundamental unity to prevent the setting-up of a rival would-be roof-body. Only in such a disunited, disorganised community could the ‘Mintoff scandal’ have taken place, when the then Leader of the Opposition in Malta was invited to Melbourne in 1968, ostensibly under the auspices of the Maltese community, but in reality, as he found out to his dismay, by individuals who made a profitable deal out of sponsoring his visit.

Outside the community, the situation is prevalent (almost as much now as it was formerly when the group was very small) of cases of hardship being presented to various instrumentalities (local councils, Department of Social Services, Housing Commission) by individual persons or organisations purporting to represent the community. Contact is made with the Minister of Immigration;3 appeals are launched for charities, both communal and general, more often than

\[2\text{ Medding,} \textit{Assimilation to Group Survival} \text{ p. 30.}\]

\[3\text{ ‘He answered me!’ was the triumphant justification. The official letter of reply, framed and prominently displayed, was obviously the ultimate comment on the matter.}\]
not on privately-initiated bases (for example an individual appearing on TV in the name of the Maltese community and calling on Maltese settlers to contribute to the Spastic Children’s Appeal).

Thus, in terms of goal achievement, the Maltese organisations have reached only a low level of effectiveness. In terms of comparative achievement, the Maltese Community Council, with its affiliated bodies, seems to have a slight edge over the Independent Council and the other unaffiliated organisations. However unrepresentative and ineffectual, the council is at least a nucleus for internal cohesion and external representation, by virtue of three major factors — it is democratically constituted; its aims of communal unity are genuine, however clumsily pursued; it is acknowledged as the official Maltese body by the Maltese Commissioner and Australian agencies, such as the Department of Social Services and the Good Neighbour Council.

Specific Aims
It is doubtful if the authors of the various constitutions fully realised the onerous implications of the numerous objectives they set out for themselves in so ambitious and detailed a manner. A dispassionate scrutiny reveals many of these goals to be, by and large, inappropriate and unrealistic for the Maltese community. The objectives aspire too high, they are too sophisticated for the type of settler concerned, and therefore at odds with real needs. Their scope is frequently too wide or too fragmented to be covered by any single small, often unstable organisation. Most importantly the leaders and communal workers of the calibre necessary to bring these idealistic aims to fruition are not available in the Maltese community.

To assess rigidly actual performance in terms of the goals as they are stated would be to report the organisations as having failed. A more equitable guideline is the spirit and not the letter of the constitutions. For the sanguine expectations, often couched in vague high-flown language, neither hide nor invalidate the vision which motivated them, namely, that the organisations serve the community in some particular concrete ways, which would also promote and reinforce the ideal of ethnic cohesion.

These specific objectives fall in four broad categories: welfare, social, cultural and sportive purposes. These can act as standards by which to measure the success of the organisations.
Welfare Activities. The overwhelming impression of relief work in the Maltese community is of its chaotic highly personal nature, which has resulted in low welfare achievements. This is particularly striking in a large ethnic group of over twenty years’ standing, where the combination of large families, unskilled labour and low incomes exposes the settlers to distress in case of illness, unemployment or accidents. Their vulnerability is compounded by the standard of social services in the general community, and by the pressures of adjustment to a more advanced urban society which bring about an increase in broken marriages, rebellious adolescents, mental illness and criminal activities.

Various factors in the communal situation are responsible for the non-existence of a systematic approach to these tasks. The associations themselves bear a large part of the burden for this failure. Obviously, streamlining of welfare services depends on the co-operation of organisations and the co-ordination of their activities. In principle, they agree that ‘there is no better substitute than unity’; in practice the contrary is evident.

As we have seen, there is no fully representative body, no unifying roof-structure, and divergent views on the administration and distribution of welfare further undermine the chances to establish a rational, unified communal instrument for relief work. Some associations see the answer in Malta House, as it would provide a centre for inquiries, for the administration of welfare, and it would qualify the community for a subsidy towards a social worker. Other organisations, on the other hand, perhaps justifiably, fear loss of autonomy under such a central administration, or resent the prospect of accounting for, or handing over, the money they themselves have raised.

The distribution of funds also raises disagreements. There is the viewpoint that charity begins at home and that the slender resources of funds greatly needed in the local community should not be diverted on ‘outside’ contributions, such as the Spastics Society or charities back in Malta. There are queries as to whether donations made to local parishes should not be more directly made to needy Maltese families, and so on.

Another aspect of the failure of the organisations is that their activities, and in particular their welfare work, are not sufficiently publicised to make them a focal point inside the community. Thus, many Maltese settlers do not know of the organisations or do not consider approaching them with their problems.

Besides the failings of the associations, other major factors account
for the disordered state of welfare services. There is no formal liaison work between the Maltese priests, the Commissioner's office, the Maltese press and the associations. All contacts and references are on a casual and personal basis so that the associations lack the support and reinforcement that formal ties with these agencies could provide.

Another reason could well be the general negative attitudes towards welfare as a communal responsibility. There is the widespread reliance on individual good-will, or patronage, which caused one official to complain: 'With so many of us, it's too many problems for one person to cope.' There is the unwillingness to assume collective responsibility for needy compatriots: 'We made a go of it — let them work hard too, or let the Government help them.' 'You send someone to them and you never hear what happens. So how can you send someone else? There just isn't any flowback, everybody's in the dark.'

Finally the so-called Maltese character may be a contributory factor, the distrust officials sometimes express of the motives of those seeking aid, the attitude towards money: 'Maltese are takers, not givers'; 'Impossible to get a cent out of them unless you give them something in return'.

Social Activities. Of the various purposes for which the associations were formed, the emphasis lies ostensibly on welfare work. In actual practice, this aspect is subordinated to the social character of organisational activities. That is to say while the object is to raise money and later to distribute it, the administration of welfare is conducted on rather casual, indeterminate lines while the planning and management of social activities engage the interest and endeavours of club officials to a considerable degree of intensity.

Notwithstanding the repetitive nature of social events, their limited scope and the heated rivalries they engender, this seems to be one area where the organisations achieve a good measure of success. Undoubtedly, there are frictions and frustrations. Unforeseeable difficulties and personal disagreements arise in the most carefully planned affairs. Seating arrangements can never please everybody. Chartered buses can get snowbound — 'you should have heard the moaning and groaning, as if I had made the weather'. On the whole, the associations succeed in providing opportunities for enjoyment within the Maltese community.

4 These views are not limited to Maltese but were also encountered among the Dutch.
This is evidenced over the whole spectrum of Maltese associations, despite different motives for gratification and different standards of behaviour. The members of the more informal clubs find pleasure in a crowded ball 'without a head-table', frankly noisy and exuberant: 'We're a rowdy lot. We shout to each other across the tables. We really enjoy ourselves'.

They find the more formal balls of the upper level organisations too subdued for their taste: 'They sit like stiff shirts, and only talk to their neighbours.' The latter participants, however, derive great satisfaction from the more decorous atmosphere. In addition, formality of clothes and proceedings gratifies their sense of self-respect, especially if their occupational and residential contacts have been reduced to an inferior level.

Sporting Activities. The George Cross Soccer Club is probably the most successful of all Maltese organisations in that it comes the closest to fulfilling its objective of promoting the sporting interest of the Maltese community and in the fact that it is the only ethnic club known throughout the Maltese community.

The reasons for this success are not hard to find. Football is a favourite sport in Malta where it is widely followed, and it is a natural progression to focus this interest on a Maltese football club in a sport-minded country like Australia. Thus, the George Cross Soccer Club becomes a symbol of national identification for the Maltese, as are the other ethnic soccer groups for their followers.

The double involvement of sporting interest and ethnic identification has always aroused much emotion among the supporters: 'You can't imagine how it was. If the team lost, it was like a defeat in war. It's better now, they realise it's just a game.' Even so, enough passionate partisanship persists to create occasional disturbances at sporting fixtures which result in fines for the club.5

Furthermore, continuity is rare enough in Maltese affairs to make this a source of pride for the settlers. Throughout its twenty-one years of active existence, and despite varying attendances,6 the fortunes of the George Cross Soccer Club have been followed by all sections of the

5 Maltese Herald, 12 August 1970.
6 E.g. estimated total of 25,000 spectators for a top match between George Cross and Juventus, 6000 for a less glamorous fixture.
community, an interest reinforced by regular reports in the local Maltese press.

In analysing the success of the George Cross Soccer Club (in fact of any sports club) it seems important to take into account a general consideration. This is, that the specific objectives of a sports club are comparatively more attainable than those of welfare or cultural organisations. Sport provides lively short-term gratifications, whereas the demands of relief work are continuous and unexciting; it provides effortless regular and competitive entertainment in a way cultural offerings cannot equal. The supporters of sport come predisposed in its favour, while interest and generosity must first be stimulated by the general organisations before potential participants will attend cultural events or dip into their pockets to help others.

These advantages, while not negating the achievements of the George Cross Soccer Club, do facilitate the achievement of its objectives, notably its promotion of sport and its place as focus of identification for the Maltese community.

Cultural Activities. The discrepancy between the declared cultural goals of the organisations and the actual cultural life of the Maltese community leads one to wonder how much real meaning lay behind the drafting of sonorous cultural objectives and how much was merely fanciful verbal elaboration. These doubts arise less from non-fulfilment than from the fact that the frequently pretentious phraseology is greatly at variance with the personality and background of the authors and even more so with the cultural needs of the Maltese settlers.

There is neither creative contribution by the Maltese to the general Australian cultural life, nor even participation in it,7 despite aspirations 'To foster culture both Australian and Maltese amongst members of the Maltese community. To promote art and for exchange of Art and Culture between Malta and Australia' (Constitution of Western Suburbs Association).

Similarly, within the community itself, the multi-purpose organisations have fallen very short of the educational and cultural goals outlined in their constitutions. The M.C.C. wanted 'to support or publish a newspaper or other similar medium'.

7 Compare Italian art shows, German and Dutch floats in Moomba parade, Polish philatelic exhibitions, etc.
The Phoenicians' Association set out 'to promote educational and cultural activities by way of films, lectures, seminars or otherwise'.

It is rather doubtful if the establishment of Malta House would result in the anticipated cultural and educational flowering envisaged in the Malta House Newsletter: 'Generally to uphold the dignity and cultural as well as historical background of our Island. That Island of which we are so proud.'

The fault undoubtedly lies in the unsuitability of the cultural objectives. Here again the formal organisations have failed to appreciate the general mentality of their community and have aimed at an inappropriate and unrealistic program, completely at odds with the cultural standards of the majority of Maltese settlers.

The situation has resulted in an almost complete lack of cultural life in the northern suburbs, and a comparatively active folk-culture program in the western suburbs, frankly low-brow perhaps but sturdily maintained over the years. This is focused on the theatrical representations of the Star of the Sea Dramatic Company and on the Imnarja festival run by the Maltese Independent Community Council. Here, where entertainment close to the ethos of the Maltese community has been offered, success is apparent in large attendances and audience identification:

On Easter Sunday the audience was about double that of Friday's. A Drama in one act 'The Forgiveness' (Il-Mahfra) broke many a heart and a few tears too, the apparition of the Crucifix brought out the climax and the ending of the play with incessant applause.8

Rejection of these plays for not being 'art' or 'culture', criticism of their simplicity or standard of performance, all tend to ignore the obvious fact that this is what the Maltese migrant wants. Religious and family themes, the use of the Maltese language, a story that they can understand and feel ('And at the end, when the voice of God spoke, in the hush you could hear voices asking — is it real?') Melodrama, farce or nostalgic reminders, all this is the enchanting involvement their ethnic theatre weaves around them and this is what they always enjoy: 'and to dry the tears off after the drama . . . a farce . . . providing the

8 Visit of the Victorian Star of the Sea Dramatic Company to Adelaide, reported in the South Australian Maltese Newsletter, April 1970.
rest of the evening with delightful continuous laughter . . . The au-
dience remained in their seats until well past midnight'.

The same formula is responsible for the success of the yearly Imnarja
festival, organised by the Maltese Independent Community Council
since its inception in 1970 and by the same people but as individuals
before then. Its appeal is based on the attempt to recreate a traditional
Maltese celebration. The flamboyancy is of necessity greatly reduced:
'How can you have the same feelings here? You cannot imagine the
excitement, the noise, the colours, the weather, especially the weather.
Here, in the hall, it loses the flavour' but the range of entertainment,
activities and prizes, draws large appreciative crowds. These consist of
the average 'peasant-type' Maltese settlers, many of whom find here
their only contact with organised communal life.

In the communal context, the Imnarja festival achieves a great deal
more than its obvious entertainment value. The Maltese Independent
Community Council manages, at least for this particular event, to win
the participation and co-operation of the various Maltese societies in the
western suburbs, and to co-ordinate the activities of the several theatri-
cal groups as well as a large number of privately-arranged entertain-
ment acts. It provides opportunities for local Maltese dancers, actors,
musical groups to be revealed to the Maltese community, and the
audiences are warmly receptive of 'homegrown' talent, regardless of
amateurishness. By enrolling the support and sponsorship of Australian
firms, the Maltese Independent Community Council also establishes
relations within the local suburban community.

Viewing the above discussion in terms of goal and comparative
achievements, it is clear that the western suburban organisations have
taken the lead over the more formal associations in providing a cultural
program for the community. Undeniably, the word cultural is used here
in the restricted sense of folk-culture, but it is precisely because this
form of culture is in harmony with the Maltese settlers that it is
successful.

Democratic Aims
It is appropriate to end this account of the effectiveness of Maltese
organisations with a discussion on the matter of democratic principles in
community affairs. This is a vital issue for the Maltese leaders. It is a

9Ibid.
deeply divisive factor among the organisations, both in theory, where there is a divergence of viewpoints on the concept of democratic organisations, and in practice, where varied organisational structures exist, and where the reason given by the M.C.C. for its refusal to admit as members some of the associations is that their character is undemocratic.\(^{10}\)

Two distinct lines of discussion emerge in this context:

(i) the achievement of democratic principles in the management of organisational affairs

(ii) do democratically-run organisations achieve more than those otherwise conducted?

It is a point of pride with the council and its affiliated bodies that they manage their affairs along democratic lines. They point, for instance, to their constitution, open elections, formal procedures, regular meetings, balance sheets, to the fact that responsibility for carrying out duties is divided among the executive, who are in turn accountable for the way in which this is done.

On the other hand, allegations are made (inside and outside the organisations concerned) that these officials observe democratic principles only when it suits them, for instance that professionals were co-opted without elections, that the council tried to impose its Malta House ideas on the community, that free and open argument is minimal ('If you disagree with him, he says — righto, I'm putting you down in my little black book').

These accusations are possibly justified. After all, in an imperfect world, the democratic process, be it in the small or large context, may be less open to abuse than other systems but is still not invulnerable. What matters, in this context of assessing the achievement of democratic principles in organisational management, is that the council is concerned with the democratisation of itself and of its affiliated bodies.

For their part, the M.I.C.C. and other unaffiliated organisations have no constitution, no elections, no written records, no public

\(^{10}\) While the validity and sincerity of this given reason may be conceded, the matter is far more complex and numerous other factors must be taken into account. Considerations of social status come into it, personality clashes, the fear of loss of identity, of having to account for what is done and how it is done. There is also the strong factor of personal ambition, what Lengyel calls the 'title malady' (Americans from Hungary, p. 164).
accounting, no formal connection with each other, no committees. They are virtually one- or two-man organisations, dependent on these individuals' interest and hard work for successful functioning.

We have seen that the explanation given for this state of affairs is that the clubs in the western suburbs are undemocratic by default. That is to say, there is not enough interest in the community for them to operate in any other way, that it is only possible to run organisations for the Maltese settlers by traditional and individual control. There certainly is some truth in this assertion. Ethnic social inertia is an undeniable fact in the Maltese communal situation, but it cannot alone account for the undemocratic structure of these organisations. (All voluntary organisations, not merely ethnic ones, labour against general apathy.) If the Maltese community displays apathy to a particularly high degree, it still has managed to produce some democratic organisations.

A more important factor is the basic psychology of their leaders who, like the majority of the simpler Maltese settlers whom they represent, are themselves not oriented towards democratic practice.

This is evident in their actions and in their conversations. One cannot altogether dismiss the frequent accusations that several of them deliberately foster this type of loose set-up because it is advantageous to them. It is claimed that they exploit the Maltese settlers by using the clubs as fronts for various enterprises, such as newspaper, travel or housing agencies, a situation repugnant to the more advanced community leaders — 'The democratic way cannot accept the individual fattening on the mob despite the success of social activities'.

This negative attitude towards democracy is not limited to those individuals who might conceivably benefit financially from their position as communal leaders. It seems an innate characteristic of most of those leaders, be they businessmen or blue collar workers, who share the same background of rural origin, little education and 'unworldliness' in the sense of no broadening contact with influences outside the restricted social set-up in their village.

These particular leaders display a certain contempt for communal democracy, as that evinced by the newspaper owner who, according to several reports, refuses to publish, or even destroys, club notices of 'rival' organisations. Even if they accept the theory of democracy, they grasp only the cumbersomeness of its processes:

We think a lot about making a constitution, but it's very difficult. There's
just me and Joe working on it. I say — this lunch time, and he says — no, can’t be bothered today. He says — tonight, and I say — no, I’m too tired. It’s very difficult. First, you must write it down, and that’s not so simple as you think. Then, you must present it to the delegates. There’s sure to be objections. Then, they must present it to their members. Some more changes. Again submit to the other organisations for voting — there’s just no end to it!

They compare the disadvantages of public accounting to the expediency of individual decisions:

The bank made a donation — $25, in 20c pieces, to be distributed to the kids at the Imnarja festival. But there’s this family in trouble, see, so one or two of us, we decide to give them the $25. It helps them a bit — and who is to know? The kids? The bank? They don’t care. You don’t need to hold a meeting for that!

Complementary to their partial understanding of democracy, limited mainly to its practical disadvantages, they envisage, perhaps with nostalgia, the continuance of benevolent authoritarianism:

We Maltese are not like other people. What we need is a strong hand, even a dictator if you like, as long as he’s not working for his own glory. A committee, that’s people all pulling in different directions. A strong man, he can do things.

They see the short-term gains of the system of patronage:

I just can’t understand the council! Why do they refuse his offer! He wants to give them a centre, won’t cost them a cent. Well, I say, you don’t look a gift horse in his mouth. And what he does with the rest of the building, well, that’s his business, isn’t it?

It is clear from the above that the simpler, more unsophisticated leaders in the western suburbs (who are sometimes shrewder than their counterparts in the northern suburbs, and frequently just as hard-working and well-meaning) rate the traditional form of individually-run clubs well above the clumsier formal machinery of the democratic organisations.

Thus it would seem that in terms of communal democracy, the
organisations on the council, despite problems and failings, have travelled further along the road to this particular objective than the informal clubs.

In trying to relate effectiveness to democratic principles, it is not possible to give a conclusive answer. There are no categorical areas of success or failure exclusively related to either the 'democratic' or the 'traditional' organisations. We find that both the formal and informal types achieve a similarly high degree of success with identical social activities. On the other hand, a similarly low level of achievement in welfare work results from different methods of tackling problems. A large, formally-run 'democratic' club like the George Cross Soccer Club achieves continuity and serves as a focus of identification for the community. At the same time, a small, quasi-oligarchic group like the Star of the Sea Dramatic Company is equally flourishing as a communal institution.

Clubs appear, disappear and emerge again, a phenomenon operating independently of the outward forms, democratic or otherwise.
Part Four

Conclusions
Conclusions

The Polish, Dutch and Maltese groups display widely different examples of communal structures. They illustrate the many characteristics of ethnic organisations and the diversity of functions these fulfil. Since our purpose was to abstract certain principles governing ethnic organisations, it is now time to seek those through the specific communities we have studied.

This is an exciting and challenging task. The rich and complex material we have uncovered affords a selection of viewpoints, each one providing a different perception of ethnic organisations. Seen individually, the organisations present interesting variations of specific problems of function, program, membership and so on. Seen as a whole, they indicate the common need of human beings to form social groups. If we take them within their national context we are aware only of disparities. If we look across national boundaries and along lines of particular interest we see much in common — the soccer clubs, for instance, show similar development; the social clubs all experience similar problems. Universal human nature is revealed equally in all three communities: on the one hand, the ability to transcend personal circumstances and work for the collectivity; on the other hand, the conflicts and tensions arising from self-seeking individuals intent upon power-play, and ‘the ability of man to dissolve himself into wrangling committees’.¹

The problem then is of selecting the most advantageous viewpoint. If we contemplate the organisations from a middle distance — not too

close to be overwhelmed by the mass of detailed information we have accumulated, not too far for them to be blurred into a nebulous mass of 'migrant clubs' — certain definite patterns appear before our eyes. Beneath all the variables of their differences, the organisations exhibit certain constant features of nature and role which, since they are common to all three national groups, are essential characteristics of ethnic organisations. There are also concentric circles of influence radiating from the organisations through the confines of actual membership to other settlers within the national group and to general society beyond that. We will now look more closely at these general characteristics of ethnic organisations, their role, and their influence.
Universality

First and foremost, the universality of ethnic organisations must be stressed. All ethnic groups develop their own organisations, regardless of their differences: diverse religions; multivariable circumstances; urban or rural origin; educational or occupational background; political or economic motives. These organisations will be more or less effective, more or less formal, more or less multifunctional, but they will exist. The establishment of ethnic organisations is an axiomatic premise, fundamental to any discussion about such organisations. Warner and Srole talk of the various ethnic communities in America developing 'a semi-autonomous social system which is remarkably similar in the various groups despite diverse background and development'.

There is more substance than stating the obvious in stressing the above premise. It is not uncommon to hear doubts expressed about the wisdom of such organisations, especially if they come into adverse prominence. Is it a good or a bad thing to have migrant communities? Should or should not migrants stay in their own circle? The fact is that this is not a matter of choice. Ethnic organisations are a natural, spontaneous social phenomenon. They arise in all national groups to provide 'something of an extended family or tribe' for the new settlers in the strange environment.

Glazer and Moynihan go on to say that 'there is satisfaction in being

with those who are like oneself. The desire to be with people of a similar background is seen in such transient circumstances as the Australians on working holidays in London, who used to congregate in Earls Court, and among the young British professionals in Sydney known as the ‘Paddington Poms’. If this is so with people who speak the same language and share so many other aspects of culture and behaviour, how much more so with migrants in a completely different environment. As Price says:

Assimilation is at least a 3-generation process. The first generation need and must create ethnic groups in which they can preserve the old world cultures that alone they understand and feel secure in.

Multiplicity
Another characteristic of ethnic organisations is the multiplicity of outward forms they assume. Ideally, this is ‘a genuine effort at the reconstruction of social, cultural, and spiritual life of the community planted in foreign surroundings’. In practice, it is neither so clear-cut, nor so successful. Many of the activities merge into each other. There is a great deal of competition and much divisive duplication. Furthermore, the form of the organising body is often adapted to the new environment and therefore differs from the traditional structure existing in the migrant’s homeland. Thus the new experiences are ‘recreating the ethnic group’ until the latter becomes a ‘new social form’.

Each national group forms social and welfare organisations. In addition, the national groups overall produce formal and informal bodies covering a whole range of interests and functions — sporting, cultural, religious, educational, ex-service, regional, and so on. Naturally, the variety and efficiency of these vary from group to group, but one sees here, in however rudimentary a form, an attempt at catering for as many needs as possible within the ethnic circle.

The more needs that are perceived and catered for within the ethnic circle, the greater will be the variety of organisations within the

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3 Ibid., p. 19.
particular group, and the greater will be the readiness to accept change and adaptation to permit fulfilment. This latter dynamic aspect of ethnic organisations is discussed in the following pages.

**Dynamism**

The ethnic organisations, like the people and groups they represent, are dynamic entities. They are formed, succeed or fail, disappear or are re-formed, change in character and function, according to the needs of the people for whom and by whom they were devised. It could even be said that the ability of an organisation to respond to changing circumstances is a condition of its survival.

In the communities we have studied, we see this principle exemplified in numerous ways. The Polish dance group Polonez has been re-formed four or five times, modifying its program, adapting itself to the limitations of presenting folk-culture on a theatrical basis. The result has been a certain watering-down of authenticity but a tremendous and continuing success. The ex-servicemen's organisations, on the other hand, have retained a rigid unyielding program, and have gradually shrunk in size and importance. The adult cultural groups have not cared to widen the scope of their activities and are declining with the passing of years and dwindling membership. Both acknowledge and accept their self-imposed limits which mark them as one-generation organisations.

The Dutch organisations, slow in development and low in ethnic awareness, show individually the adaptive processes necessary for survival. The Abel Tasman Club, whose popularity in earlier years rested on its possession of a liquor licence, had to expand its activities when restricted drinking hours were liberalised. It introduced bridge, billiards, a Queen competition, etc. in order to keep its membership. The Limburgers, whose cultural activities appealed mainly to the settlers from that particular province, eventually built a club house and proceeded to change from a folk-cultural to a general social club, so that it now has a vastly increased list of members who originate from all parts of the Netherlands. The Erasmus Foundation chose more general topics of discussion to extend its appeal, albeit to the general Australian community.

It is the occasions on which the Maltese Community Council tries to reorientate itself which evoke the greatest interest in the community.
When it seeks to reconstitute itself along more democratic lines; when it proceeds to transform itself into a roof-body, when it sets out on a Malta House campaign; those are the times when the conflicting passions of communally aware Maltese are aroused. But when the council goes on an unvarying round of cocktail parties, or continues its unending wrangles within its constituent bodies, that is when communal participation is at its lowest ebb. The Maltese Independent Community Council, like a capricious phoenix, effects its rebirths at intermittent periods, now for the visit of a Maltese dignitary, now for the Imnarja festival. These forays into the realm of communal activities are frequently successful because they supply what is needed at a particular moment.

This last illustration steers us in the direction of an important observation on the dynamism of ethnic organisations. The driving force of these organisations is ethnic consciousness, not any specifically stated goal. Thus, casual meetings between friends can become a formally constituted association. The direction of charitable goals can change. A cultural group can become a social club. A cafe for card players can change into a billiard club; a travel bureau or an estate agency can become the nucleus for a social club. All these metamorphoses can take place without a radical change of character or membership because their raison d'etre is ethnic and the outward manifestation is secondary. Unlike say a bowling club, which would collapse were bowling to be removed, ethnic organisations can survive while undergoing numerous changes, in response to the ethnic needs of their people. That is to say, as long as the membership feels the need for companionship or recreational pursuits within the ethnic group, as long as the membership wants to maintain or perpetuate ethnic identity, so long will the organisations continue to exist, evolving in response to the ethnic needs of the settlers.

It is clear from these shifting patterns that the needs of settlers change and that therefore their organisations change. Some flourish early in fulfilment of immediate and pressing needs, others develop late in response to different needs. There often comes a time when the ethnic organisations have nothing more to offer a settler. He may now have many common bonds with the host society, or he may have become socially self-sufficient within the network of family, kinfolk and friendships.

All this serves to emphasise the fact that while active organisations are
dynamic and adaptable, they are also often transient and finite, a theme which will be developed in chapter 21.

Secularism
Unlike many earlier migrations to the U.S.A. (and especially the Polish and the Dutch), these three post-war ethnic communities in Melbourne display a strongly secular character. That is not to say that these settlers no longer consider religion important, or have severed their ties with ethnic clergy. On the contrary, the latter is represented on the administrative bodies of all three communities; important occasions are enhanced by religious ceremonies. It is rather that, though still linked to the community, the church has ceased to be the natural communal centre, the transmitter of culture. It no longer plays its former initiating and controlling role but rather complements the secular bodies. Several reasons can be advanced for this different development.

In the earlier American migrations, the massive influx of peasant settlers made the priest’s mission crucially important. He was often the only point of reference in the new great bewildering environment, the spiritual guide, the dispenser of charity, the social leader who tried to maintain cultural values through Sunday school, fraternal societies, ladies’ guilds, and other church-centred activities. He was often the only literate person in the group and was therefore the go-between in many American-ethnic contacts.7

In post-war Australian migration, however, the circumstances are different, both in the immigrant and host societies. The Poles, because of their particular background, represent a broad spectrum of society, not merely the illiterate peasant section. Moreover, they learned to rely on themselves during, and immediately after, the war and continued to do so in the Australian context. The Dutch come from an advanced, sophisticated country and found, by and large, few adjustment difficulties, all factors inducing less reliance on the ethnic clergy. Even the Maltese, who perhaps have most in common with the peasant-type immigration and who are perhaps the most clerically-orientated in their home country, have not become very dependent on their priests in Australia. It has been suggested that the particular reason here is that the Maltese clergy itself has not been sufficiently prepared for the

culture and mentality of the new environment and is unable to cope with the different needs of its flock. It has found itself restricted therefore largely to spiritual guidance.

Be that as it may, in all three communities various local factors have contributed to the narrowing of the priest's traditional and multiple role. For one thing, the residential pattern of Melbourne, with its early movement from inner to outer suburban areas, has meant no individual ethnic segregation. Thus, while there are concentrations of migrants in certain suburbs, all nationalities live there side by side. Also, the universality of the Catholic Church lessens the necessity to attend ethnic services. These two circumstances have fostered the development of multi-ethnic congregations. This has also been encouraged by the opposition of the church hierarchy to the existence of autonomous ethnic Catholic units.

In the social context, greater awareness and contacts through technical developments have diminished reliance on the ethnic church as the sole meeting place. Despite distance migrants can communicate easily by telephone, or visit by car. The media of radio, television, ethnic films and theatre can entertain outside the orbit of the church, thus fragmenting its social significance.

Finally, despite obvious inadequacies and frequent cases of hardship, there is at least a minimum of social services provided by the state and this again places less dependence on the ethnic priest.

To conclude, it must be repeated that there are strong links between ethnic organisations and ethnic clergy, of a ceremonial, personal and functional nature. However, the leading, initiating and controlling role, formerly played by the ethnic church in many early migrant communities, has passed into the hands of the secular organisations.

Organisational Membership and Individual Adjustment
The perceived relationship between organisational membership and individual adjustment varies according to the viewer. As we will discuss later, Australian society generally regards ethnic organisations with disapproval if not with suspicion.

Among migrants themselves, a minority of Poles view their organisations as purposefully against assimilation. We have seen that some of the older and more fiercely nationalistic Poles cling to the hope of returning to a Poland restored to pre-war circumstances. They see their task therefore as maintaining an intense Polish spirit. To them, their
organisations are deliberate barricades set against the invading tide of assimilation. (The reality of this view has been exhaustively discussed in its relevant place.)

There is another small proportion of people in the various migrant groups who also see ethnic organisations as retarding assimilation. Very interestingly, however, these people see other national groups displaying this obstructive nature, never their own community. Thus, some Poles express the view that Jewish organisations segregate their members from Australian society. Some Maltese feel that Italians associate only with their own countrymen and thereby cut themselves off from Australians. Some Dutch settlers find that all Southern European migrants are slow in assimilating, because they all ‘stick together’.

By and large, however, the overwhelming majority of migrants interviewed hold the opposite view: that there is little relation between membership of ethnic organisations and individual assimilation or integration or whatever term is preferred for the process of adjustment. Such adjustment, they maintain, is something that happens outside the organisations, that is, migrants do, or do not, fit into Australian society regardless of membership of ethnic organisations. This view is perhaps all the more valid because the three groups arrive at the same conclusion from different points of departure.

The Dutch look upon themselves as assimilable. They are equally at ease in Dutch company and in Australian company. Indeed, we have seen that they frequently do not join Dutch clubs until after they have adjusted individually into Australian society. They find ethnic membership quite irrelevant to their concept of assimilation, which, to them, is something to do with language, housing, work, getting on with your Australian neighbours. They join Dutch clubs because these happen to be there at the right time. They could equally belong to the Chamber of Commerce or the local tennis club, and frequently do so. They could just as well not join any association at all and be sociable on a friendly individual basis with people of any background at all. The ethnic organisations are just incidental to their socialising process.

The Maltese have a similar outlook with stronger ethnic attachment. They find that their organisations have no limiting effect on their Australian contacts. They feel Maltese and proud of it whether they are members of ethnic organisations or not. Their Maltese feeling is much more focused on their religion, their kinfolk, and their ties with family ‘on the island’ than on Maltese clubs here ‘which aren’t very good’.
The Polish attitude is more complex. They reject the word 'assimilation' and their concept of integration embraces the maintenance of ethnic identity. Their organisations institutionalise this self-awareness and the desire for Polish continuity. This they do not see as retarding adjustment but merely as embodying the wishes and needs of Polish individuals. If there were no such organisations, these Polish individuals would still have the same strivings. According to their age, character, and other circumstances these people would, or would not, fit into Australian society, independently of the existence of their ethnic organisations.

Historical Continuity
While the communal structures of the three national groups have evolved along separate lines, it is also true that the distinct development of each is not an isolated phenomenon but conforms to the broad historical pattern of that particular national group.

Thus, in the history of the migrations to various places at various times, the Poles have formed tightly-knit communities; the Dutch have tended to assimilate very rapidly as individuals; squabbles have dissolved Maltese communal structures into ineffectuality. Here in Australia also, these three groups have so developed in an identical host society. Why is this so?

It is very difficult to avoid the notion of national character in trying to explain the historical continuity of each particular communal development. One can reject stereotypes of national character, but it is also absurd not to see 'basic differences between a Dane and a Papuan'.

One can, like Montesquieu, attribute the formation of 'a general spirit of nations' to unique combinations of 'climate, religion, laws, maxims of government, precedents, morals and customs'. Or one can, like Rousseau, emphasise that education 'must give souls a national formation, and direct their opinions and tastes in such a way that they will be patriotic by inclination, by passion, by necessity'.

However, one must acknowledge that differences in national character do exist. Fascinating though it may be, the search for national

10 Rousseau, Government of Poland, p. 176.
character and the elements that determine it are outside our scope. But if differences in national character do exist, one must also accept that these will exert great influence on the communal course pursued abroad by emigrating citizens. The communal situations we have studied then are the distillation of certain fundamental qualities of national character deeply embedded in history.

As each national group pursues its destiny outside the land of its birth, there will occur, in the course of time, random differences due to interaction with particular circumstances in particular places. Climate, housing, licensing laws, talents of settlers, all will affect in certain details the outward manifestations of communal life. But the basic communal pattern remains unchanged.

Nineteenth and twentieth century records show a pattern of ethnic consciousness and communal unity for the Poles in America, France, England, Brazil and elsewhere. They show the assimilatory trends of the Dutch in America and in New Zealand. They show the limited disorderly communal development of the Maltese in their Mediterranean and American migrations. Each particular pattern of communal development now appears along similar lines in Australia in the 1970s.
Fundamentally, ethnic organisations operate on two interrelated planes, the immediately obvious one, which we have termed the specific, and the general underlying one, which we have called the ethnic.

On the specific plane, the associations are concerned with defined and circumscribed objectives, such as welfare, culture, sport, which usually devolve upon the individual organisations. While these ends are sufficient in themselves, they also serve towards fulfilment of deeper, vaguer, more idealistic aspirations, related to ethnic consciousness.

On this ethnic plane, the associations seek to bind the group internally, to act as its representative externally, and to perpetuate ethnic consciousness in the following generation. Fulfilment of these goals is incumbent upon the whole communal machinery, that is the network of organisations reinforced by other communal influences, such as the ethnic press and clergy.

Ethnic and specific aspects are therefore the closely interwoven idealistic and pragmatic manifestations of the essential role of ethnic organisations. In substance, these manifestations may be summarised in two categories: the protective and the cohesive.

The Protective Role
The protective role is manifested, with obvious variations, in the three ethnic groups we have studied. Greater or lesser emphasis is given to one or other of the functions discussed below; a greater or lesser degree of success attends endeavours to fulfil specific objectives. But, fundamentally, the ethnic organisations are the spontaneous expression
of individual needs through a corporate body, and these needs will dictate the particular form of protection.

At its most widespread and practical level, the protective role will assume charitable functions. These can cover a wide range of activities: care of the sick and elderly; hampers of food to needy families; relief in time of unemployment or sickness; catering for the many contingencies that can arise in a country where social services are not very satisfactory. The last fact emphasises the protective role that can be played by ethnic organisations, since migrants, coping with language barriers, new working conditions, and so on are more affected by inadequate social security. That certain national groups are particularly vulnerable is also obvious when one considers how much the combination of large families, unskilled labour and low income exposes the settlers to distress in cases of illness, unemployment or accident.

At another level, the new settler may need protection in the form of cushioning against what is widely termed the 'cultural shock' of the new environment. This is the social function of ethnic organisations. They can help provide the companionship of others in the same circumstances who speak the same language. By maintaining some of the old ways and gradually acquiring some traits of the new culture, the organisations can ease the settlers' adjustment into the new society, whether the transition be the more common rural-to-urban type, or the no less difficult one from higher to lower professional and social status.

Within society generally, the organisations can act as a balance to personal demoralisation and as a controlling force against anti-social behaviour. Organisations, says Park, 'beginning in the family and the community, are the means by which men regulate their lives'.

Writing about the Italians and Greeks in Melbourne, Petrolias concludes that ethnic organisations act as 'counterbalance to the disorganising influence of new surroundings'.

He also reports that there is less crime in these communities and less serious crime, through 'the control exercised by means of organisations, churches and family'.

Zubrzycki states that the Polish communities of Great Britain

1 Park, op. cit., p. 287.
3 Ibid., p. 170.
provide: 'the sense of security without which an individual cannot become fully integrated with his group'.

The same opinion is held by Wilson, who finds it significant that: 'of 26 suicides reported in 1951 to the Federation of Poles in Great Britain 22 occurred among Poles who lived or were employed in conditions of cultural isolation'.

Thus it seems that in the migrant situation (characterised by all the problems of transition, different language, standards and customs, disturbed social and family patterns), the organisations can supplement, or provide, the necessary backing and stability.

The Cohesive Role
To say that the ethnic organisations play a cohesive role does not imply that they draw all the members of the group together. This, as we have seen, they do not do. They act as cohesive agents in the sense of Weber's concept of communalisation which 'occurs if, and insofar as, the orientation of social behaviour ... is based on a sense of solidarity: the result of emotional or traditional attachments of the participants'.

The key word in our context is orientation, for Weber saw action as a necessary element of communalisation. The mere sharing of common qualities, situations or modes of behaviour is not enough to induce communalisation: 'It is only when this feeling leads to mutual orientation of [people's] behaviour toward each other that communal relationship arises among them.'

In our ethnic groups we see communalisation occurring because the organisations not only embody in corporate form the personal needs and aspirations of the settlers but also seek to fulfil them. That is to say, these organisations institutionalise the conditions and needs that arise from the settlers' 'collective feeling of distinctiveness'.

What are some of these needs and why can they be met only by ethnic organisations?

We have discussed at length the practical and tangible needs of new settlers. In an ideal situation, these specific problems could be met by the state, by professional agencies, by friendly neighbours. In the actual

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4 Zubrzycki, Poles in Great Britain, p. 189.
5 Wilson, F. M., They Came as Strangers, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1959, p. 245.
7 Ibid., p. 94.
situation, the ethnic organisations seek to supplement the help in fact offered by these bodies.

There are, however, other needs, less tangible and fulfilable, that people and agencies outside the group cannot meet, however well-meaning they may be. These are the individual needs of identification and of solidarity and the collective needs of perpetuation and of representation.

**Identification.** There are two psychological necessities bound up here for the new settler: a sense of identity, of knowing who he is and what he is; also a sense of 'belonging', of being able to identify himself with a group. For it is undeniable that many migrants are disturbed over their own sense of identity by the circumstances of migration. They feel different from those around themselves and are perceived to be so. At the same time they become detached from their original orientation, slow, partial, unconscious and involuntary though the process may be. This creates a vacuum; they are no longer one thing, nor yet the other. Yet it is a basic human necessity to know what one is. To quote Fromm: 'The need to feel a sense of identity stems from the very condition of human existence and it is the source of the most intense strivings'.

It is perhaps not so much who he is as what he is that disturbs the new settler, because he now has to adjust himself to new values in relation to which he may feel inferior, ineffective, inarticulate.

The ethnic organisations can provide the opportunity for such individuals to find themselves. They bring together people with similar uncertainties. In the troubling transitional period the organisations provide an environment where the new settler has status, where he represents something, where he can make himself understood, where the ways and customs with which he is familiar are accepted and respected. The organisations help, to quote Martin, in preserving 'continuity between past and present, and so safeguard the individual's sense of personal location in time'.

Similarly, the ethnic organisations provide a focal point of identification to meet the individual's need to belong, thereby institutionalising 'some form of relatedness [which] is the condition for any kind of sane living'.

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10 Martin, *Community and Identity*, p. 133.
11 Fromm, *The Sane Society*, p. 36.
Solidarity. In his famous passage, Horace Kallen talks about men changing 'their clothes, their politics, their wives, their religions, their philosophies . . . [but] they cannot change their grandfathers'. He goes on to say: 'The self-hood which is inalienable in them . . . is ancestrally determined'.

This ineradicable factor forms the basis of the migrants' feeling of collective distinctiveness. At the same time, it provides them with commonality, a basis for solidarity with others like them.

The new settler can identify himself with his community because he shares with his ethnic group certain dispositions which establish that sense of solidarity. Members of the group have a common origin, a common language, common values, possibly a distinct religion, often similar experiences. They also share emotionally binding, if less definable attributes:

a fund of data acquired by being raised in a country, knowledge less learned than absorbed through the pores . . . a mixture of proverbs . . . trademarks . . . sermons and travelogues, prohibitions and platitudes, menus and metro tickets, the inbred notion of a certain way in which things are done and said.

As long as these common values are strong enough for the new settlers to continue recognising themselves as an entity, these people will continue to feel a greater sense of well-being, of familiarity, in the company of their peers.

This communality of interests and feelings gives a firm broad base of solidarity to the ethnic organisations. Here is an extension of the family, a larger circle wherein all share a similar background, can participate in activities which create or reinforce group consciousness. Here is a means of reducing individual isolation by relating the individual to a community, to a whole range of other people whose adaptation follows a comparable course.

At a more advanced degree of communalisation, the ethnic organisations embody the sense of responsibility for members of the group which sometimes accompanies solidarity. Here common ties

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and background form the basis for common endeavours, and the organisations attempt to meet the needs of the new settlers beyond human sociability. They work towards relieving hardship, towards offering leisure-time pursuits, towards planning for ethnic perpetuation.

Perpetuation. In the Polish section we examined closely the drives governing transmission of ethnic consciousness. We saw the complex diffuse relations between self-perpetuation and ethnic continuity; the fusion of psychological and ethnic motives that promote stability for first- and second-generation migrants through the maintenance of traditional values.

In these individual and collective needs the ethnic organisations again act to fulfil the aspirations of the group. They can present language, culture, history, customs, in a larger, more positive context, one that increases the status of such values and intensifies the pride of the settlers and awakens the interest of the second generation. They can help ‘to keep alive long and profound traditions' for settlers who feel that their past deserves to be maintained and transmitted.

Additionally, in the case of dispossessed minorities, the organisations assume the duty of perpetuating the political aspirations of those who believe in a return to their restored homeland.

Representation. Yet another institutional way in which the ethnic organisations exercise their cohesive role is by representing the group to society at large. This is carried out with varying degrees of effectiveness, because the success of the communal structure as representative outside the group is largely determined by the degree of unity achieved inside it. Our three communities display various degrees of co-ordination, co-operation, unity on communal projects, consensus on major as well as routine decisions. They do not always reach the ideal of ‘a carefully co-ordinated and disciplined political structure which enables it to speak with one voice, in the name of all its members'.

Nevertheless, it is the communal structure that acts for the group. In an increasingly complex and bureaucratic society, contacts between ethnic groups and formal bodies such as government, local and other

15 Sklare, M., quoted by Martin, op. cit., p. 6.
agencies are more and more carried out at the organisational level and less and less through independent individuals. A striking illustration of this trend is the formation in 1974, after settlement of over 100 years, of a roof-body to represent the Chinese community in Australia. This was a direct result of a situation which arose when the Federal Government did not know where to send letters when they wanted data on Chinese settlers for ethnic population surveys.\textsuperscript{17}

This area of relations between ethnic groups and formal bodies is a very large one and will be explored more closely later.

To conclude this discussion on the cohesive role of the ethnic organisations, it must be stressed that for the individual, membership of the organisations is only one focus of identification among others such as kinship, religion, language, a sense of peoplehood through shared past and experiences. For the group, however, it is the ethnic organisations (reinforced by clergy and press) which make up a community — a \textit{Gemeinschaft} — out of an assortment of people who share certain attributes.

In other words, an individual can feel Polish, Dutch, Maltese, and can proclaim himself to be so, without belonging to an ethnic organisation.

\textit{But there can be no Polish, Dutch or Maltese community without the existence of their respective communal organisations.}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Australian, 8 July 1974.}
\end{flushright}
We know that communal participation is limited in numerical terms. In the more active Polish group, multiple membership and irregular attendances are variously estimated at 2000 to 2500, that is about 15 per cent of Polish settlers. This figure decreases dramatically in the Maltese and Dutch communities where involvement is down to about 2 per cent and 1 per cent of the respective groups. These figures are only estimates, because accurate numbers are extremely difficult to establish. Not only does membership fluctuate constantly, but all sorts of variable factors come into consideration, such as different criteria for determining membership, out-of-date lists, multiple membership and so on. However, the above figures do give an idea of people involved and quite a reliable indication of the relative communal participation within the three groups.

Is it correct then, in the face of such negative evidence, to say that the organisations are at the core of communal life? That view can be maintained, because in actual fact the ethnic organisations assume a nucleus-like character. While they directly involve only a minority of migrants, their services and functions diffuse into the ranks of non-members and beyond that, outside the ethnic group, thus making concentric rings of influence emanating from the central communal structure.

Within the Membership
It is unnecessary to belabour the significance of the organisations for their members. These range in all three national groups from the practical to the psychological and it is sufficient to recall but a few of
these benefits, which were discussed at length in the body of the study. In varying degrees of competence the organisations offer material help, counselling, referral to agencies. They provide a sort of anchor in the new environment, opportunities to come into contact with people of the same background who speak the same language, who share the same problems. They provide 'a kind of decompression chamber in which the newcomers [can] at their own pace, make a reasonable adjustment'.

Among some migrants the benefits are perceived as being mostly materialistic: 'Sometimes you make contact with somebody who can give advice about a job or about a block of land, and it all helps to make things easier than if you had not met him.'

In some cases, the clubs fulfil a dormant need: 'After 20 years of not being in it, you suddenly feel you'd like to be jolly with your own people again.'

In other circumstances, the organisations act as a crutch, a deep psychological necessity that can obviate decreased social status, disturbed family pattern, terrible loneliness.

For the Australian-born generation, some of the Dutch and Maltese family-orientated activities can offer pleasant social intercourse within the traditional atmosphere of their parents' background. For the Polish children, as we have discussed at length, the primary concern of organisations is transmission of Polishness and they seek to provide for their young not only a setting for language and customs, but also training for future leadership, and firm foundations for a sense of identity.

**Within the Ethnic Group**

What relevance do the ethnic organisations have for non-members? They play a vital part in building up ethnic consciousness. By institutionalising individual needs they contribute a great deal to the cohesion and sense of identification of the whole group.

More tangibly, the value of a communal structure extends far beyond direct participation. It lies in the development of facilities which benefit all settlers within the group, irrespective of membership.

In terms of functions, the activities of organisations diffuse outside the circle of those actively involved. For instance, the recipients of charity in all three groups are seldom the actual members of the welfare

body. They are more likely to be those whom the necessities of life have prevented from activities outside the daily struggle. In another instance chartered flight discounts were extended to the general Dutch community, when efforts to boost club membership by restricting this benefit did not prove successful. Efforts by the organisational bodies and the ethnic press to point out and reduce possible exploitation by their more unscrupulous fellow-countrymen also have the effect of benefiting all settlers within the group.

In terms of numbers as well as functions, the organisations influence the lives of vastly more people than those indicated on membership lists. The Maltese Imnarja festival, organised by a dozen individuals, linked by a very loose informal body, attracts up to 2500 Maltese settlers who enjoy the opportunity to participate in this national festival and identify thereby with their culture, at least on this yearly occasion. The Polish Sports Festival has annual attendances of 5000 or more spectators, many of whom have no formal affiliation with the sports groups. All three national groups have communal balls and commemorations which are attended by more than the combined membership of their clubs.

Still speaking in numerical terms, the cumulative aspect cannot be ignored. For instance, the Dutch Migrants' Hostel housed no more than twenty young Dutchmen at any one time, but over the years of its existence cared for over 2000 of them. The Polish language classes have a combined yearly enrolment of about 600 young people, but since their inception have seen about 5000 pupils pass through their doors.

All these figures show that the lives of many people, vastly in excess of current membership figures, are touched by ethnic organisations.

Further diffusion occurs outside the local scene. There are interstate and international contacts between organisations, especially among the Poles. We see examples in all three communities of funds being directed to the home country: the Poles for the relief of ex-prisoners in strained circumstances; the Dutch and their earlier bonds with the Wijkommen Society; the Maltese with contributions for various charitable purposes on the island.

Thus, in practical terms (numbers, charitable, social and cultural functions) and in the idealistic functions (ethnic consciousness, cohesion, identification), the organisations play an important role within the national group by influencing a large proportion of the non-affiliated settlers.
Beyond the Ethnic Circle
The influence of ethnic organisations beyond the ethnic circle is the most intricate to trace, because these organisations form an important point of contact between migrants and such a variety of areas in society at large. We will look at these areas in turn and examine the place of ethnic organisations

- within the private sector
- in government circles
- with voluntary agencies
- within the political sphere
- with other ethnic groups

Within the Private Sector. Evaluation of the attitudes of Australian individuals towards ethnic organisations cannot be treated adequately here. This would require a large-scale study based on an altogether different perspective from the one used here. However, one cannot ignore altogether the impressions formed from numerous personal contacts, reinforced as they are by the comments of other writers.

Australian attitudes towards migrants as individuals and towards migrant organisations are quite distinct. By and large, Australians have viewed the adjustment of their migrants with a casual, laissez-faire attitude, implying less an unconscious acceptance of pluralistic principles than a careless tolerance. Writing in 1966 Jupp expressed the feeling that ‘perhaps the greatest problem is not prejudice but simply indifference’.²

Speaking in 1973, the president of the Y.W.C.A. told an Eucharistic Congress Seminar: ‘Australians today are not opposed to migrants, they just don’t care about them’.

The Australian attitude to migrant organisations, however, has usually been one of more or less covert antagonism. The views expressed can show a complete lack of understanding: ‘If they must join a group, why not an Australian group’. Or they can reveal a certain amount of jealous resentment: ‘Why raise money just for their people? Why not for Australian charity, then we’d all be better off’. Quite often, the justified indignation at the outrages perpetrated by some extreme nationalist organisations tars all migrant organisations with the same brush: ‘They should all be banned!’

² Jupp, Arrivals and Departures, p. 120.
There is the overriding belief that migrant organisations tend to isolate the migrants from the Australian mainstream and thus retard their assimilation, a view which accords with the earlier American experience: 'Following the instinctive prejudice against strangeness, many Americans distrust immigrant organisations, as such, and consider them obstacles to assimilation.'

Overall, the existence of ethnic organisations is deplored, and 'it is still expected . . . that they will not push their demands as an "organised minority"'.

It is all the more interesting to record these private views because they strongly contrast (or have not yet caught up) with the development of informed and official thinking regarding migrant organisations. Here we will see government and voluntary agencies moving from mere tolerance towards a more co-operative relationship with ethnic organisations.

In Government Circles. Writing in 1954, Borrie commented that assimilation is a slow process seldom completed in the first generation and that 'This has been wisely recognised in official circles and no attempt made to discourage celebration of national festivals and formation of ethnic societies'.

Since then, official policy under both major political parties has moved from the above non-committal position to the active encouragement of ethnic communal institutions. 'They have the true power of communication' said Mr Snedden, when announcing the Immigration Department's new scheme of subsidising migrant organisations to employ trained social workers.

This marked not only a positive approach to the problems of new settlers but a reversed policy towards migrant organisations, a recognition that ethnic societies could be of benefit in such areas.

Opening a block of flats for elderly Jewish people in 1973, Mr Hayden's theme was the effectiveness of ethnic support for new settlers, the element 'of constant personal involvement — the security that is intangible but real and that comes from genuine communication and

5 Park, Old World Traits, p. 287.
4 Jupp, Arrivals and Departures, p. 122.
6 Address given to the National Immigration Committee of the Y.W.C.A., 3 May 1968.
understanding between people with common values, common ideas, common interests and a common culture'.

An interesting example of the way government thinking had come to accept the advantages of an effective ethnic structure is seen in a statement by Dr Forbes. He was commenting on the special difficulties experienced by Turkish migrants: 'There is a gap in the community services affecting these people. There isn't an established Turkish community to assist in their reception.'

There has also come recognition that the role of ethnic organisations is more embracing that the immediately visible field of charity and welfare. 'Settlers need their own groups as buffers' commented Mr Lynch.

In 1970, the Immigration Department initiated a nation-wide study of ethnic organisations on the grounds that these groups play a vital role in the adjustment of new settlers. This also marked an official admission of the pluralistic possibilities in Australian society: 'The maintenance of national origin traditions is quite compatible with being Australian'.

Mr Grassby's forecast of 'a brighter future for migrants' introduced a quickening of government initiative in the year 1973: the formation of a Committee on Community Relations to probe discrimination against migrants; a study of the role which ethnically-based welfare agencies currently play and that which they could effectively play given more government support; the setting-up of various task forces to inquire into areas affecting migrants; the establishment of a 24-hour interpreter telephone service.

Criticism was voiced by various migrant leaders who complained that there was no migrant representation on these various projects. The department countered that there were migrants on all projects and that the chairman of the steering committee on the welfare inquiry was a migrant. Overall, it seems that while migrant representation is small, especially on the decision-making bodies, there is a genuine attempt to secure the co-operation of ethnic bodies which, it is felt, have more know-how than government agencies and are closer to new settlers.

Official government recognition of the positive aspects of cultural diversity was expressed in the Interim Report of the Committee on

7 Melbourne Sun, 21 May 1973.
8 Melbourne Age, 26 June 1971.
9 Melbourne Age, 6 October 1969.
10 Melbourne Age, 6 October 1970.
Community Relations of the Immigration Advisory Council, tabled in the House of Representatives in October 1974. This report 'supported the development of strong and viable ethnic community organisations as a basic means whereby immigrants might become more adequately and easily integrated into Australian society'.

Early 1975 marked the beginnings of Access Radio and ethnic programs, a prospect which received the wholehearted support of all migrant groups. The press advertisements were interestingly worded, stressing the contribution of ethnic radio 'to the total life of the city' as well as the help this could give 'to make living in Australia easier for your fellow-countryman'.

Of particular interest in the area of relations between government and ethnic agencies (and again in strong contrast to the individual Australian view), is the differentiation made between potentially dangerous organisations and the majority of ethnic bodies:

Our society must, and does, distinguish between the unhealthy development of groups which try to segregate people from the community as a whole and which could conceivably lead to division, suspicion and reaction — and the kind of ethnic organisations which provide support and strength to those in need.

We see even more active official support, verging on the actual protection of legitimate ethnic organisations, in the situation involving alleged illegal gambling clubs in New South Wales. While planning investigation of these allegations, the minister for justice expressed his concern 'that any police action should not impede the operations of migrant cultural associations in New South Wales'.

Organisations and Voluntary Agencies. While government is tacitly and actively recognising the importance of ethnic organisations as channels of communication in dealing with migrants, there is also an increasing diversity of contacts between those organisations and various formal Australian bodies. Such interaction can be described as being of a contributory and of a representative nature.

Contributory Contacts. The so-called contributory contacts between

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11 Melbourne Herald, 12 May 1975.
ethnic and Australian bodies consist largely of financial and cultural participation. Most ethnic communities contribute as ethnic groups (as distinct from individual donations) to various charitable appeals such as the Freedom from Hunger Campaign, National Heart Foundation, Spastics Society and the Darwin Relief Appeal. Contributions vary from year to year and from community to community but most are substantial and in some cases amount to quite considerable proportions.

'In 10 years $250,000 has gone to hospitals and major appeals from the pockets of Melbourne's estimated 300,000 Italian-born'.

There are also innumerable gifts prompted by specific needs and occasions, such as the donation of a kidney machine to the Royal Melbourne Hospital by the Maltese community, of a lung machine to a life-saving club by the Greek community, a swimming-pool for wards of the state by the Dutch community.

In the cultural field, ethnic communities participate in the Melbourne Moomba and other arts festivals, in philatelic exhibitions and so on. There are gifts to art galleries and the famous statue, Imagio, donated to the city of Melbourne by the Italian community.

We have detailed earlier the efforts made by the Polish community to have the Polish language recognised as a Higher School Certificate subject. This is paralleled in various other national groups, who must produce to the Education Department evidence of the viability of the new subject and then submit a suitable curriculum. This sort of contact has resulted in the acceptance of the twenty modern languages available in the 1976 Victorian secondary education examinations.

A more spectacular contribution in the educational field has been the raising of $70,000 by the Greek community to establish a chair of modern Greek at Melbourne University. The Greek government made a gift of $45,000 in 1973, to bring this goal nearer.

While many of these contacts are superficial they represent, by their very existence at the organisational level, the acceptance by Australian bodies of the legitimacy of ethnic organisations. They also imply an admission, if not a recognition, of the aspirations of migrants to retain their heritage as well as their ethnic identity as a group.

This independent recognition of pluralistic principles reflects the development of government thinking on ethnic communities. It is also

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becoming more apparent in the area of representative contacts between ethnic and Australian agencies.

**Representative Contacts.** At the representative level, relations between ethnic and Australian bodies have moved from a passive to a more active phase.

In the 1960s, and even more so earlier, ethnic representation was poor and felt by migrants to be of a nominal and sometimes patronising nature.

In the 1970s, these token contacts have developed into more genuine representation: ethnic groups represent and speak for their communities; they advise Australian bodies on matters relating to migrants; they act concertedly. For instance, ethnic welfare agencies are affiliated with the Council of Social Services. Their views are sought and their formal submissions to various inquiries on social welfare are taken into account. Over the years migrant representatives have contributed to the yearly Citizenship Conventions, at first seen as little more than 'window dressing'. Here various policies have taken root, such as government subsidies for trained social workers, or intensive courses in English for professionally trained migrants. Ethnic organisations co-operate with voluntary agencies such as the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Catholic Family Welfare, Australian Council of Churches.

These new relations are the results of two important new trends in the orientation of the voluntary and semi-official agencies. Firstly, the emphasis on assimilation, formerly underlying such institutions as the Good Neighbour Council, has veered towards promoting 'the integration of migrants by co-ordinating the work of voluntary and welfare organisations'.

Secondly, the whole complex area of ethnic identity is no longer the inward-directed cry-in-the-wilderness of isolated ethnic communities. It is being increasingly recognised as a legitimate need and an important issue by Australian agencies directed by Australians.

The Director of the Ecumenical Migration Centre sees the need

To provide a broad based community education program. This to include information on migration and integration, as well as the more complex task

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15 Objective of the Good Neighbour Council, Directory of Social Service Agencies of N.S.W., 1971, p. 532.
of helping migrant children and the Australian community to see value in being Greek or Yugoslav or Turkish.

To provide a community development program based on the ethnic group. The migrant minority needs to develop its cohesion: it needs to have both the opportunity and the facilities for the retention of its language and culture, and it needs the resources to provide support for its members.\(^{16}\)

It is easy to be cynical about either the implementation or the success of such programs, but changes in community attitudes and social programs need time and resources to be effected. One might perhaps say that a beginning has been made in the orientation towards integration based on established ethnic structures.

This re-orientation is explicitly stated in various official statements. At the eighteenth Australian Citizenship Convention, for instance, Mr Lynch stated: ‘There can be little doubt that there is a wider role to be played by national groups in the integration of migrants.’

In an address delivered to the twenty-fifth annual meeting of the Victorian Council of Social Services, the spokesman for the Department of Immigration acknowledged that

National and ethnic groups also have a part to play in the welfare of migrants . . . Often they provide a supportive group for the newcomer fulfilling an educative function and helping him to find his feet in a society which may be radically different from that to which he has been accustomed . . . [The Department] hopes . . . to develop closer liaison and co-operation [with ethnic organisations] in the interests of the welfare and integration of immigrants.\(^{17}\)

Ethnic participation seems therefore to be the new line in migrant advancement programs, a course advocated by Jupp several years earlier:

What their leaders are most likely to appreciate is an invitation to take part as advisors to the Immigration Department on a national basis. Like most other people, migrants think they know what is best for them and do not appreciate being told by outsiders that they need help.\(^{18}\)

It would be naive to suggest that relations are at their most active and

\(^{16}\) Rev. A. Matheson, Melbourne Herald, 11 April 1972.

\(^{17}\) Australian, 12 August 1971.

\(^{18}\) Jupp, Arrivals and Departures, p. 151.
effectual level, or that they are entirely responsible for initiative and action in recent migration advancement programs. But there is no doubt that ethnic-Australian interaction is playing an important role in this area.

In the Political Sphere
In general, participation by migrants in their new country's politics is very low, both in Australia and elsewhere. There are many reasons for this, some obvious, others less so. Immediate preoccupations with settlement, ethnic fragmentation, language difficulties, lack of leadership, of political knowledge, of organisation; all these combine to keep the migrant on the periphery of the political arena. There is sometimes an outright rejection of politics by those whom 'politics has already failed' either economically or by putting them to flight. There are also the psychological effects of migration, what Davies calls: 'the discontinuity, dissonance, and sudden shifts within the individual political outlook'.

The particular Australian political climate reveals additional reasons for lack of interest: the general Australian political apathy; the uninspiring if honest politics where no major differences are discerned between two leading parties; the bewildering system of preferential voting; the intricate nature of federal and state governments.

The resulting political uninvolvment by migrants moved Jupp to comment in 1966: 'For all the apparent influence of Australia's . . . migrants, they might just as well not exist.'

Davies gives some startling figures highlighting the political 'quietness' of the migrant sector and he notes the corresponding 'quietness' of politicians, their failure to make political mileage out of migrant issues. As late as the political campaign of 1969, the Australian newspaper ran an article by political scientists on the subject, sub-headed 'Political parties do not seem to worry about attracting ethnic votes'.

In the mid-1970s there has been a fractional advancement. Continued migration, increased publicity of migrants and their needs, progressive policies in the field of 'after-sales service to migrants', all have contributed to an increased awareness of migrants' voting potential and in a migrant policy being featured in the election platform of the major political parties. Correspondingly, migrants

20 Jupp, Arrivals and Departures, p. 122.
21 Davies, op. cit., pp. 78-81.
themselves are slowly becoming more visible and more vocal in their participation in the politics of trade unions and the three tiers of political activity.

Actual representation, however, is still very low. In 1971, non-British post-war migrant involvement in Victoria was as follows:

4 local councillors out of 90, in certain suburbs with migrant population ranging up to 60 per cent of migrant ratepayers.

*Victorian State Executives*

0 migrant out of 57 members — Liberal
1 out of 35 — DLP
3 out of 33 — ALP

*Federal Parliament*

no migrant parliamentarians

What is the role of ethnic organisations in all this? They seem to have marginal influence in guiding voting behaviour. The official ethnic attitudes seem to be of political neutrality. There are few open commitments by official bodies, few ethnic endorsement of candidates, no ethnic voting blocs. While it is generally surmised that '70-80% of Italian and Greek migrants vote labor', June Hearn's survey revealed that all the political spectrum was covered by migrants. If the Southern Europeans favoured the Labor Party, the Dutch inclined toward the Liberals and the East Europeans toward the D.L.P.

The ethnic press sometimes seeks to direct opinion in its editorials but during election campaigns it displays paid advertisements for all political parties. Politicians of every hue are sought by communal organisations as patrons, speakers and guests of honour. It would seem therefore that participation in politics takes place on an individual and not on a national group basis.

However, if there are no Tammany Halls, if the significance of ethnic organisations in directing voting behaviour is minimal, they nevertheless play an important role in the political sphere as pressure groups. Here they are more outspoken and more effective, vocally promoting migrant interests.

The anti-communist issues are usually the most dramatic and the most publicised, as can be seen from two typical examples. In 1969, the

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24 Hearn, J. M., Migrant Political Attitudes, M.A. Thesis, Melbourne University, 1971
Assembly for Freedom of European Nations, claiming to represent 100,000 people, expressed its concern over the government's foreign policy of rapprochement with the U.S.S.R. It stressed their own bitter experience 'that any belief in coexistence with Communism is a dangerous dream and contrary to life — cultural, political, military and otherwise'. The political implications were clearly stated to the government-in-office: 'We feel it is our duty to express our firm stand on these matters and assure you and others of our support of a political party which will clearly define its foreign policy in this respect and fulfil its election promises.'

A more explosive issue was the Australian Government's 1974 recognition of the incorporation of the three Baltic States into the Soviet Union. The domestic impact of this step was very clearly one of ethnic pressure aimed at changing government policy. The debate over the decision itself, its purpose, validity and morality, is not our concern here. What is relevant in this context is the interaction between ethnic communities and government.

Not unnaturally, the organisations of the three Baltic communities in Australia reacted emotionally to what they saw as a broken promise and a betrayal of the rights of oppressed minorities. Individually and concertedly, the Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian organisations called for an explanation, sent a delegation to the Federal Government, made representations to numerous parliamentarians on both sides of the House, organised rallies, protest meetings, torchlight processions. Their compatriots overseas joined their protests and the Prime Minister was the object of hostile demonstrations when he subsequently visited Canada and the U.S.A. Within the Australian Parliament members of the Opposition tabled a motion deploring 'the complete disregard for the freedom, justice and right to self-determination of the people of the States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia' and requested a revocation.

26 Prior to the May 1974 election the Baltic communities concerned canvassed the Prime Minister who replied in a guarded letter that 'the policy of the present Australian government is that while not formally recognising the incorporation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia into the Soviet Union it must be cognisant of the de facto situation and deal with the Government which has effective control of the territory in question'. This was taken as an inference that there would be no policy change. Yet in July the news leaked out of the Australian Government's de jure recognition of Soviet control of the Baltic states (Australian, 14 July 1974).
27 Australian, 14 July 1974.
Political pressure continued by the well-organised Baltic minority, estimated at between 25,000 and 40,000, and they won a pledge from the Leader of the Opposition delivered at a Baltic protest rally: 'We oppose the recognition, we reject it and when we come back to government we will review it'.

Not all political lobbying is so dramatic or so intensive. Over the years, ethnic organisations have made representation to the government and/or political parties on a variety of specific issues. Campaigns for better social services recognising the special disadvantages of migrants have had the support of all ethnic groups. Many of these have pressed for a national inquiry and presented submissions to the Commission set up to probe into poverty in Australia (1972). The Federation of Netherlands Societies carried on a somewhat testy correspondence with the then Prime Minister on the issue of social security (1971). Portability of old-age pensions was a well-received decision resulting from lengthy lobbying. All ethnic organisations expressed surprise and concern at the dissolution of the Immigration Department (July 1974) and the re-channelling of its services through the Labour, Education and Social Security Departments. The Australian Assistance Plan announced at the same time also raised many expressed doubts on the future viability of ethnic welfare services. (These often cut across the geographical boundaries of the regional councils set up as a base for government funding.)

Ethnic pressure in the political sphere embraces many other perennial causes. Humanitarian decisions have resulted from appeals to government. The Czech refugees in 1968, the Chileans in 1972, the Cypriots in 1974, were granted right of entry upon applications by families and organisations acting in co-operation with the Australian Council of Churches, the Catholic Church, etc.

The New Citizens' Council of Australia has for many years canvassed the Minister for Civil Aviation for permission to operate cheap air transport for migrants to visit their homeland. The fight for recognition of overseas trade and professional qualifications continues. Lobbying for improvement of facilities for teaching English to migrants obtained some results, though it was felt that funds were not administered with great benefit. There is increasing pressure by ethnic groups and other

agencies for government to encourage migrant children to learn their own language.

The Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre makes an unequivocal stand on the need for political action at organisational level:

The organisation of an effective state election campaign would be an appropriate means to raise the question of migrant rights at a significant level.

We believe that if migrants are to achieve equality then they will have to act politically... If specifically migrant concerns are to be taken up then it will be necessary for the migrant communities to prosecute their own case. To do this organisationally it may be appropriate to draft a list of demands which migrants could reasonably expect from a Victorian government.31

With Other Ethnic Groups
Surprise is often expressed at the absence of supra-ethnic organisations which would be representative of all migrant groups and speak with one voice for all migrants. Yet, most migrants themselves perceive the folly of creating any form of exclusive migrant bloc that might divide Australian society. 'A migrant political party would be suicidal' was the general reaction to the New Australian Party proposed by some frustrated settlers.32

Quite apart from the dangers inherent in such an ethnic bloc, it is quite unrealistic to expect the formation of such an alliance. The differences that exist among the new settlers are as great as those that exist between the new settlers and Australians, and sometimes even greater. The migrants are differentiated by religion, education, occupation, sometimes social class. Moreover, the needs of long-established settlers are very different from those of new arrivals.

It would therefore be quite impossible for one, or even several, supra-ethnic organisations to be truly and efficaciously representative, let alone operate smoothly. There are, however, certain areas where supra-ethnic co-operation does exist.

We have seen the ethnic organisations of various backgrounds exercising political pressure in order to obtain decisions or influence policies on specific migrant concerns, such as welfare, trade qualifications, language classes, and so on. Some of this lobbying is on an

32 Melbourne Age, 29 April 1971.
individual national basis. Some of it is a concerted effort by several ethnic groups, the anti-communist issues being the most obvious example.

Joining of forces across national boundaries does also happen on occasions other than those of exclusive migrant concerns and we will look at three such examples.

**Australia Day Celebrations.** Since January 1970, various national groups have joined forces to celebrate Australia Day in a manner which seems to them worthy of the occasion. In conjunction with the Australia Day Council whose chairman raises the Australian flag, various European groups perform national songs and dances. The groups represented include performers from Estonia, Greece, Lithuania, Croatia, Rumania, Austria, Poland, Finland, Hungary, Macedonia.

The organisers point out that everywhere else Australia Day is a drab unmemorable ceremony, whereas they inject colour and enjoyment into it, thereby enriching Australian culture and instilling civic and national pride in all those present. They even hope eventually to attract Australian participants.

**The Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre.** In 1973, the Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre began an interesting experiment, focused on the right of ethnic minorities. Based in an inner Melbourne suburb with a large migrant population, the Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre proposed the formation of a committee for 'the purposes of initiating and organising action on migrant rights and areas of discrimination'.

It was envisaged that such a committee would bring the issues into a political framework by using them during a forthcoming state election.

The relevance of all this here is that the Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre saw ethnic participation as a basic principle. It offered its resources (premises, a social worker, a researcher, a typist), but it did not see itself as pursuing the outlined strategy. For this to be effective the

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33 The following two examples of supra-ethnic interaction concern Australian individuals and organisations as well as migrant ones, but are included here because, basically, they arise from ethnic foundations.

The Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre is an Australian organisation 'basically concerned to be a resource, research and social action oriented one concerned mainly with various social problems of living in cities. It has previously been concerned with the sociological effects of freeways and construction; urban renewal and high rise living' (private communication, 14 March 1973).
Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre felt it was essential for the various migrant communities to work together on the proposed committee.

To achieve those ends it organised a series of lectures ('Migrants and the Law', 'Citizenship and Political Involvement of Migrants', 'Migrants and Trade Unions' etc.) given by migrants involved in their particular communities. It commissioned a series of background papers to be written on relevant topics with the intention of having them published.

It is difficult to assess the success of such an enterprise soon after its foundation. At the discussion evenings, there certainly was some inter-ethnic wrangling, some very narrowly-conceived viewpoints, a great deal of touchiness. On the other hand, a committee was formed, made up of representatives of the larger ethnic groups in the area — Greek, Italian, Yugoslav and Turkish. There were some recommendations made to local council and state government. Some areas for future investigation were identified.

The overall impression was that a start had been made but that it was a rocky road to one of the Fitzroy Ecumenical Centre's goals: to 'demonstrate the ability of migrant groups to work together on projects of common interest'.

Soccer. Undoubtedly the area where supra-ethnic interaction has proved most spectacular — in terms of success and of controversy — is that of sport and more particularly of soccer. The saga of soccer in Australia, however, is far more than an illustration of supra-ethnic interaction. Outside the sphere of economic development, it is probably the largest single contribution by migrants to Australian life. It is also an instrument of identification, that is to say that through the development of soccer in Australia the ethnic identification associated with national club soccer is being transmuted into identification with Australia — clumsy, imperfect and incomplete though the process may be at this stage.

These claims — supra-ethnic interaction, contribution to the host society, transference of identification — cannot be justified without reference to the circumstances of soccer's development.

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34 The information for this account of soccer comes from various sources. Primarily interviews with soccer officials and supporters among the three ethnic groups studied. Secondly, newspaper articles too numerous to list, except two very informative ones written by Kenneth Joachim in the Melbourne Herald, on 27 May 1972 and 5 May 1973, from which most of the quotes were taken.
While the sport has been played in Australia in a desultory fashion since the 1830s (among the British soldiers), the post-war era saw a dramatic boom in soccer. The migrants arriving in the great influx of the 1950s all formed their national soccer clubs, usually bearing some name identifying their country of origin (for example Hellas, Juventus, George Cross, Polonia, Wilhelmina, etc.) Whether formed to ward off demoralisation or homesickness, in emulation of others, or as a rallying point for the group, the clubs thrived and aroused in their supporters strong emotions based as much on nationalistic feelings as on sport.

The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a consolidation of the sport in Victoria. Players were 'imported' to boost the chances of local teams. Clubs expanded. Good soccer games attracted crowds of up to 20,000. The old Soccer Football Association which did not admit migrant teams into official competition was gradually superseded and the present Victorian Soccer Federation was formed in 1962.

However, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, ethnic soccer clubs in Victoria suffered a prolonged decline, which was in fact a painful period of evolution. The years of settlement had moved many supporters to outer suburbs. Defections to Australian Rules Football had also depleted members' ranks. But, ironically, it was mostly ethnicity, the source of soccer's post-war revival and success, which was cramping the further development of the game in Victoria.

The most visible, and the most publicised, adverse aspect was the frequent brawling resulting from political feuds. This over-ardent nationalism earned the game the title of 'foreign legion soccer'. While this 'patriotism pressure-cooking around the grounds' was gradually becoming rarer, incidents did recur periodically and caused much dismay and public disfavour for the game. As late as April 1972, one of the fixtures (Footscray-J.U.S.T. versus Croatia) had to be played behind locked gates at an undisclosed venue, in order to avoid expected violent 'audience participation'.

There was also a certain amount of strife and jealousy among club officials, which again fell along lines of national division, because the richer clubs were recruiting 'stars' from overseas, while the others had to make do with local talent.

But the ethnic soccer clubs were beset by more fundamental difficulties than those. The fact was that, despite its temporary decline in Victoria, and notwithstanding antagonistic attitudes in that state, soccer had in some measure 'arrived' in Australia. It had become big
business. Interest in the game had grown beyond the European initiators to the so-far uninvolved British migrants. It had also begun to be played in schools. This meant a radical change in Victorian soccer, a re-orientation which required the sport to shed its foreign image and turn itself into a national game.

The Australianisation of soccer became a course of deliberate policies, focused around the related, often emotive, matters of club names and management.

In an effort to remove frictions based on former allegiances and to build up local interest and following, the Victorian Soccer Federation (as in the Adelaide situation) ‘adopted a policy of encouraging ethnic, and other non-regional clubs, to become district clubs’. Little by little, and with considerable heart-ache in some cases, many of the ethnic clubs changed their original name or combined it with a regional name. Thus, Wilhelmina became Wilhelmina-Ringwood, then plain Ringwood City; J.U.S.T. became Footscray-J.U.S.T.; Hakoah became Hakoah-St Kilda, and so on.

A tougher problem, not yet resolved, is that of management. Basically, this is a conflict of outlooks. Some stalwart officials who have nursed the game from its beginnings are reluctant to let it go into the broader arena. They still see support as being ethnically based and needing only imported stars to boost attendance back to previous figures. At the personal level, struggles for status and power are also at play in hanging on to official positions. There is also the fact that many officials have put time and money, often their own, during the long lean years of promoting the game, and they feel they know how to manage it and are entitled to continue doing so.

The opposing view, held by Australian, British as well as some ethnic officials, is that soccer is a world-wide game. They say that only a broad approach will permit Australia to enter it, not the narrowly ethnic, amateurish, highly personal form of management which does not see beyond next week’s game.

While these two conflicting views continue to struggle, other less obtrusive factors are making steady inroads into the ethnic context of soccer. Over the years most of the State League teams have steadily diluted their ethnic content with players from various countries and

35 Martin, Community and Identity, p. 77.
with Australians. The ranks of the supporters are expanding to take in Australian wives and Australian in-laws of foreign-born players.

More positive factors are also pushing the game into an Australian framework. Firstly, the $10,000 a year appointment in 1969 of a Director of National Coaching gave a tremendous boost to the game. He formed a national squad, a national team, and set up coaching schemes at all levels of the game.

Secondly, the entry of Australia into international soccer has brought to the local game some of the prestige and money generally associated with it overseas. Since affiliating with the Federation of International Football Associations (F.I.F.A.) in 1968, an Australian team has made good-will tours of Europe, Asia and the Pacific. It almost qualified for the World Cup in 1970 and did so in 1974. International teams from England, Israel, Brazil, Uruguay, etc. have drawn large crowds at Australian venues. In financial terms, single games with visitors have netted the Federation $8000 to $10,000; good-will tours have brought up to $40,000; qualifying for the World Cup has brought $100,000; all money to be used on the further development and growth of soccer in Australia.

Lastly, there is the growing popularity of the sport in schools. This is possibly the most fruitful course of action in the Australianisation process. Soccer is being promoted in a big way in Victorian schools, by means of finance, coaching and so on. The Federation sees this as the answer to expensive imported players, a practice which might prolong the national and political tensions. Promotion of junior soccer is aimed at providing a steady flow of skilled recruits so that the next generation clubs will be Australian in character.

The position of soccer in the mid-1970s, therefore, is still fluid but very promising. There are 20,000 registered players in Australia and also plans for a national league, for amateur teams to future Olympic Games, for further international and World Cup participation.

While the game is undoubtedly still associated with its ethnic beginnings, Australian interest and participation are growing. Victoria has not yet emulated New South Wales in its recognition that Australian Rules football and soccer can co-exist, but it is slowly making room for the 'foreign' round-ball game. The national squad, with the unlikely name of the Socceroos, boasts exotic names like Utjesenovic, Abonyi, Buljevic, Myskohus, Schaeffer. There are also players from England and Scotland. Almost half the squad is Australian: Williams, Fraser,
Warren, Tolson, etc. (It is noteworthy that the development of soccer has not prevented migrant participation in local Australian Rules football, as evidenced by such favourites as Jesaulenko, Gabelich, Kekovich, Ditterich.) With the growing emphasis on district soccer clubs co-operation with many local councils has increased. With the advent of J.U.S.T. becoming Footscray-J.U.S.T. for instance, this club now has ovals in Footscray, plus a loan of $100,000 from the council to improve facilities.

These details show the increasingly Australian content of soccer. It is fitting here to mention that the development of soccer in Victoria has been made against the tide of Australian feelings.

Many things rankle with soccer fans and officials: the fact that soccer has long been disdained as a foreigners' game and not seen as an international sport; the difficulties in earlier days of hiring grounds; the lack of recognition by the government of the sport's growth in Australia and its importance in the world (in contrast to the help given by a few Australian industries). They also feel that far too much adverse publicity is given to the now rarer crowd incidents (especially when turbulent crowd behaviour is also seen at football matches or politically activated demonstrations such as the turmoil over the Springboks' visit to Australia). While acknowledging the inevitable evolution of the sport from its ethnic group beginnings to a broader Australian base, many Europeans feel bitter about the apathy of the thousands of British migrants in Victoria who did nothing to help soccer in its difficult days but let the other migrants carry the entire burden and now 'are ready for the take-over'.

The most acute resentment, however, is aimed at the lack of coverage given to the sport by radio and especially television. For nearly twenty years, and especially in Victoria, it was as if soccer, with an estimated Australian following of three million fans, did not exist. In the mid-1970s, there is more media awareness, but matches are still shown on film when the results are already known. The following article by an Australian sports writer expresses much of the frustration experienced by soccer fans:

Soccer fans in Australia — and there must be at least 3 million of them — have been given a big runaround by the Australian Broadcasting Commission.
At midnight on Saturday our time, the biggest Cup final in English football will burst into life when Arsenal meet Liverpool at Wembley Stadium. Every Englishman, Scotsman, Welshman and Irishman in Australia, not to mention the Italians, Greeks, Maltese, Dutchmen, Hungarians, and Yugoslavs would give their eyeteeth to be able to share in the excitement of such a soccer classic.

The match will be telecast live to a world audience of more than 400 million. But not to Australia, despite the fact that it could be shown via satellite for only a fraction of the money that soccer fans here pay for their TV licences. Instead of enjoying the drama of the game as it happens, Australians will have to wait until Monday night to see the match on film when they will already know the outcome.

Apart from the soccer fanatics, the soccer match of the year would have had great appeal to all Australians interested in major sport.

Soccer fans have certainly been left for dead — but that’s hardly news. They were neglected last year when the magnificent World Cup series could have been screened live.

You can hardly blame our migrant population for whingeing about being treated as also-rans when they settle in this country.36

With some of its history behind us, can we now justify the claims made earlier for the impact of soccer on Australian society?

There is certainly no doubt about supra-ethnic interaction, involving Australian, British and European participation. At the most elementary level, the various national groups have had a continuous period of working together in order to run the game, arrange fixtures, eventually form the state and national federations. With the growing emphasis on district soccer clubs co-operation with many local councils has increased. Though some of the matches have been focal points for politically-based demonstrations, there are supra-ethnic arrangements aimed at controlling crowd hostility. Many clubs assign their own marshals around the grounds to help keep order among the spectators. To set an example of friendliness, the presidents of two feuding clubs have taken the field arm-in-arm before commencement of their sides’ match.

There is no doubt in the migrants’ view of the contribution they have made to Australia through the game of soccer. They feel they have revived an ailing localised game into a vital national sport. They have

introduced Australia to a 'great game, brimful of science, thrillful of skills'. They have created an Australian branch of what is probably the world's most popular spectator game. They have put Australia on the international soccer scene, thereby gaining the sort of publicity, prestige and lucrative results that local football could never achieve. They are preparing the grounds for future young Australians to have the opportunity of playing international soccer and have an earning potential of $30,000 to $40,000 a year like some of the overseas stars, instead of getting their heads knocked off for $60 a match in Australian rules football'. That these contributions have been made by migrants is a fact recognised by most people who have any knowledge of the sport. In the words of an Australian official: 'soccer's gains have been achieved only by the tremendous efforts and sacrifices by people from the various migrant communities'.

Running parallel to the Australianisation of soccer, and largely produced by it, is the process of identification with Australia through soccer. This does not mean that all soccer fans are going to stop identifying themselves with their ethnic clubs. It does mean that there is an overlapping of ethnic and Australian soccer interests. Alongside ethnic identification, supporters are slowly, subtly, unevenly, seeing soccer in the Australian context, orientating themselves to its development as a national game, supporting the national teams as an Australian team, identifying themselves as Australians with an Australian team in the international sphere.

This process starts, naturally enough, with the team, the so-called 'United Nations Squad', by welding together players born in Australia, England, Scotland, Hungary, Germany, Yugoslavia, Russia. The first step was a formal one, the naturalisation of all those who were not yet Australian (a regulation of F.I.F.A.). Naturalisation is not an index of identification, but when the Socceroos play overseas, they play as Australians on foreign soil, 'and the result is magical. They see the crowds howling for the defeat of the Australians. Instantly you've got a team of Australians!'

The process is less dramatic with the fans. The purpose of changing ethnic club names to district names was firstly to stop perpetuating traditional loves and hatreds, and secondly to encourage local following, especially through the promotion of junior soccer. When soccer will thrive on the rivalries of districts, when spectators and players will identify themselves with their local area club regardless of
where they were born, then 'the fatherland for soccer in Melbourne . . . will be Australia'.

That is still a distant goal whose attainment will suffer many setbacks. But time and perseverance will gradually bring about this transformation, already begun in the mid 1970s. During the preliminary qualifying rounds for the World Cup in 1974, there were many negative attitudes towards the success of the Socceroos, many sarcastic remarks about their ability to defeat only weaker Asian teams, but this did not obscure the fact that soccer fans of all national backgrounds saw the Socceroos as their team, and Australia as the country they were supporting.

So far in this study we have analysed the contemporary scene. We have also sought to increase our knowledge and understanding by establishing relationships between present and historical facts. It would be an incomplete task and a lack of commitment not to go further. This is not venturing upon the risky business of forecasting. It is the search for a tentative line of continuity between past and present patterns and their likely future development.

This search leads to two conclusions. Firstly, it is self-evident that the continued existence of ethnic organisations is usually bound up with continued immigration. Secondly, on all rational grounds and on all past evidence, it is probable that existing secular ethnic organisations are destined to disappear. Others will take their place, to cater for different needs in the established groups, while new settlers will form their own communal machinery within their national group.

Immigration Policies
It has been estimated that by mid-1975 some 3.3 million migrants had arrived in Australia since the end of the war. Additionally, 1.4 million children born since the war have at least one post-war settler parent. This means that about 30 per cent of the present population (3 out of 10) is either a post-war settler or the child of one.\(^1\)

The Australian post-war immigration program which brought them here can almost be summed up by a few over-used catchphrases which characterise its successive phases.

'Populate or Perish' was the doctrine of the late 1940s and of the

\(^1\) Latest estimates, by courtesy of Dr C. A. Price.
1950s. The gigantic post-war immigration program was designed to supply labour for reconstruction and growth, and to provide defence capability against any possible future aggression.

Immigration agreements were signed with Britain in 1947, Malta in 1949, the Netherlands and Italy in 1951, West Germany in 1952. In addition, there were various refugee schemes. The Australian Government also made arrangements with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration and the governments of Austria, Belgium, Greece and Spain.²

In the 1960s, increased European prosperity diminished the appeal of Australia for Northern Europeans and official attention extended towards other Mediterranean countries. Agreements were signed with Turkey in 1968 and with Yugoslavia in 1970. The quest for new sources of immigrants was officially described as 'increasing market penetration to reach the highest possible number of prospective migrants in source countries'.³ In popular terms, it was called 'scraping the bottom of the barrel'. Fears were expressed that migrants from the new areas could create tensions: the Turks, because of transition difficulties from their remote villages; the Yugoslavs, because old animosities could be fanned into terrorism.

July 1970 marked a turning point in Australian immigration policies. The Federal Government announced its decision to re-examine Australia's immigration program with a view to cutting down intake. This represented official recognition of current problems and their relation to immigration: a slow-down in the economy, some unemployment, inflation, pressures on public services, especially schools and housing.

Two new clichés came into being: 'The Numbers Game' and the 'Quality of Life' issue. The former catchphrase deplored the emphasis on mere numerical increase, the so-called 'batting average'.

The attitude which 'regarded annual statistics as a source of comfort . . . and each boatload as a boost to economic growth' disregarded the many problems inherent in massive immigration.⁴ Those who decried the 'Numbers Game' also expressed justified concern at the heavy wastage, in economic and human terms, of immigrants who returned to their homelands.

³ Mr Lynch, Melbourne Age, 17 December 1969.
⁴ Melbourne Age, 27 July 1970.
The ‘Quality of Life’ slogan will probably be the doctrine of the 1970s decade, just as ‘Populate or Perish’ was the earlier article of faith. This is a two-fold issue. The dominant one is the effect on Australia of social and environmental problems, intensified by migration which puts added pressure on already strained housing and public services, and adds to the frustrations of daily living: inadequate highways and public transport, overcrowded schools, rising land and building costs. This is the ‘Quality of Life’ issue in its broader, general terms.

A secondary aspect of the issue is the need to improve the lot of disadvantaged sections of society, pensioners, Aborigines, migrants. The areas where new settlers experience problems are being defined: recognition of overseas qualifications; English classes; discrimination within the law, in employment, and in general opportunities. The problems of migrant children are increasingly brought to the fore: inadequate schools, high drop-out rate of migrant children. Lack of specialist teachers, the need for bilingual teaching, the large number of ‘latch-key’ children.

Pre-settlement period is also being investigated, especially the glowing recruitment tactics which could be misleading. There is an increased emphasis on tailoring the migrant intake to Australia’s requirements: ‘It is . . . unfair to bring migrants here and have them placed on social service benefits’.5

Thus, existing conditions and a new realism have dictated a reduction in immigration figures, as can be seen below:6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Actual Intake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969-70</td>
<td>175,000</td>
<td>185,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-71</td>
<td>170,000</td>
<td>170,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-72</td>
<td>140,000</td>
<td>132,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>107,401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>112,712</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Future Courses**

What are the implications for ethnic organisations of the course of immigration policies outlined above? Logically, one can expect:

- the continuity of ethnic organisations in national groups with continuing immigration, e.g. Italian and Greek.

5 Melbourne Herald editorial, 27 December 1972.
6 Consolidated Statistics, Department of Immigration, Canberra, 1970-1975; Australia and Immigration. A review of migration to Australia, Department of Immigration, Canberra, 1974.
the possibly protracted decline and eventual demise of organisations in groups with static immigration, e.g. East European.

the development of organisations in those groups which are only now beginning to settle in Australia, e.g. Turks, Spaniards, South Americans.

This is of course only the broadest of classification, and each category displays internal variations.

Continued immigration may place, for instance, such welfare burdens on a particular group’s organisations that the communal machinery will not develop much beyond the charitable function. This would mean in turn that more settled members of the group, or the young, would either form organisations that serve their particular less urgent needs, or find outlet for their ethnicity in friendship or kinship situations. Either way, this would mean increased differentiation within the group, a growing gulf between older and newer settlers.

Some of the static groups may, for one reason or another, become rejuvenated with a new flow of migrants. Vigorous new organisations would then be formed, or grafted on the ailing old ones. These would serve the newcomers and could reawaken the ethnic consciousness of the Australian-born generation. (The post-war Jewish community is a dramatic instance of such a situation.) With the new impetus, organised communal life could persist into the fourth or fifth generation and thus perpetuate itself beyond the expected time-span.

The new national groups may find the present pluralistically-inclined climate more propitious to the development of their own organisations which may then develop within a very short time. Or, on the contrary, like the Turks, the process may be very arduous because there is no established Moslem community. In this case, alien-ness, scarcity of interpreters and distressing lack of communication greatly hamper communal development.

Some writers have argued that there are certain factors which can prolong the survival of even small communities for much longer than expected. Price, for instance, points out that geographic isolation is keeping a robust Barossa German community already into the fifth or sixth generation. He also feels that religion is most important, particularly with the more distinctive sects. However, the situation of isolation in the former case does not apply to the urban communities

7 Medding, Assimilation to Group Survival.
described here. The latter case is undeniable and it is certain that the Dutch Re-reformed group will survive for a long time, but bound by ties of religion, not ethnicity.

Likewise, writers such as Marcus Hansen with his 'law of the third generation', John Appel and Charles Price instance the fact that there is sometimes in third or even later generations a swing back to the culture and folklore of the first. One wonders, however, how great a part continued or renewed immigration has played in stimulating such a revival of interest.

In my own opinion, despite these variations, we can expect groups which display a static migration pattern to fade away gradually, though certainly at a varying rate.

On the one hand, there are the assimilatory pressures of a modern, free society: open education, mobility, mass media, contacts in school, work, neighbourhood, the drive of competitive materialism, the uniformity imposed by technology. On the other hand, there is the organic weakening of ethnic consciousness in the Australian-born children, an inevitable process for a generation whose contacts with their traditional sources are secondhand. This erosion of the linguistic, cultural, historical, religious modes of ethnic expression modifies and reduces their ethnicity. It cannot compete with the many powerful attachments to what is their country of birth. It becomes passive, lacking in knowledge and emotional vitality, unable to be transmitted meaningfully to the following generation.

Thus, from the second generation onwards, trends in the host society, organic decline of ethnic awareness, plus the important factor of intermarriage, all lead inevitably to the demise of ethnicity in the static group.

Looking at our three groups in particular, the creaky communal machinery of the Maltese is constantly threatening to break down. There is no reason to suppose that it will improve. On the contrary, as the older settlers who had interest and purpose lose heart, and the new settlers, smaller in number, find no stable communal machinery, the traditional pattern of Maltese settlement abroad will run its course, this group being 'almost certainly destined for loss of identity and ultimate absorption'.

The Dutch communal structure shows an interesting type of development. Slow and unpromising at the beginning, growing awareness and commitment have enabled it to develop in a certain way and its peak is only now being reached, some twenty years after peak immigration. Within the next fifteen to twenty years it will probably begin to decline again with the passing of the first-generation settlers and it is most unlikely that even the Limburgers will be carried on by the Australian-born generation, unless it be reinforced by a new wave of migration.

It would seem that the high point of Polish communal development was reached in the 1950s and mid-1960s. Since then, there has been a consolidation of the existing organisations, together with a search for a new orientation that would maintain the Polish spirit in the Australian-born youngsters. Despite all the strivings for heroic and political objectives, the communal course is inexorably turned towards the practice of accommodation: concern with the realities of life in Australia and the maintenance of a spark of Polonism in the Australian context. The coming fifteen years or so will probably see a drastic pruning of the number and variety of organisations. Second-generation Poles will still have some organisational life but it will be in a modified and attenuated form, catering to Australians of Polish antecedents and with shared experiences of Polish youth activities. It may be handed down in an even more diminished form to a third generation, but it will not be aimed forward at further transmission of Polonism.

Of the three groups studied, the Polish community will certainly be the longest-lived — into the third generation at least, longer if immigration is renewed.

This is because the ethnicism of this group is the most intense and the most differentiated. Common antecedents are reinforced by religious and social customs, by language, folk-dancing, scouting, historical celebrations and commemorations, by identification with the homeland through travel and personal contacts. Each manifestation of ethnicism is another link between the individual and his group. Although the bonds will gradually weaken and disappear, the more bonds there are, the stronger will the group feeling be and the longer will it endure.

The above indicates the probable future trend. It is impossible to make more accurate predictions about the actual time of decline of particular ethnic communities. Warner and Srole classified time taken for assimilation by ethnic groups into the following:
The Future of the Organisations

— very short: within 1 generation
— short: more than one generation but less than six
— moderate: more than 6
— slow: a very long time in the future which is not yet discernible
— very slow: group will not be totally assimilated until present social order changes gradually or by revolution.9

One cannot be any more precise than this very broad estimate. Human affairs are never so neat. They are also much too complex and too dependent on the interaction of any number of contingencies, foreseeable and otherwise. Outside pressures may reactivate interest in dormant ethnic organisations, as may renewed immigration. Favourable government actions and the example of other ethnic groups may prolong the span of existing organisations. Overlapping generations may provide overseas-born leadership for Australian-born ethnic membership beyond the expected time span. Some organisations might linger on for a very long time, but with a mere flavour of their ethnic origin, such as soccer teams with a combined ethnic-district name. One can also visualise the Erasmus Foundation, for instance, continuing its cultural activities in a completely Australian context, with only its name giving a hint of Dutch origins.

The only certainty is that, unless immigration of particular groups is renewed on a considerable scale, the existing ethnic organisations of those groups will disappear in the long term. This view is based on all the preceding reasons and it accords with the conclusions reached by sociologists writing about the similar American experience. Warner and Srole conclude the above-quoted timetable of group assimilation by stating that ‘the future of American ethnic groups seems to be limited; it is likely that they will be quickly absorbed’.

Gordon comments on the institutions in third- and fourth-generation migrant groups which ‘in relation to the total number of ethnic descendants become increasingly thinly-manned’ as a substantial proportion of those descendants of earlier non-English migrations are absorbed into the mainstream of American life.10

Eisenstadt also discusses the natural decline of ethnic organisations:

By their very nature all these various associations are to some extent transitory, i.e. they lose much of their attraction with the passing of time

and with the continuous absorption of new elements of American culture by the younger generations of immigrants. Gradually, the various immigrant associations become more and more interwoven into general associations in which the emphasis on groups of origin is much smaller.\textsuperscript{11}

Lengyel briefly sums up the future of ethnic organisations 'In the long run, it is the fate of all diasporas to be dispersed. It is the fate of these organisations to try, and to fail. Before they fail, they often help accomplish an aim'.\textsuperscript{12}

Even Glazer and Moynihan, who argue so eloquently that 'the melting pot did not happen', point out the recurring phenomenon of individual groups disappearing. They cite the Germans as an example of immigrants who 'as a group are vanished'. They could also have spoken of the Dutch, who formed a large proportion of the earlier arrivals but have not survived as an organised ethnic group.\textsuperscript{13}

Even were one to desire within a nation the permanent ethnic pluralism advocated by some early American writers, it would be impossible to achieve. Horace Kallen envisaged 'a federal republic, its substance a democracy of nationalities'.\textsuperscript{14} However, the reality has shown the impossibility of continued separate development in modern open society. Even Kallen, the most ardent supporter of ethnic perpetuation, foreshadowed 'the role of industrial technology and mass communications techniques in producing tendencies toward cultural uniformity which militate against ethnic cultural variability'.\textsuperscript{15}

After making out a strong case for American acceptance of ethnic communities, Park sums up:

It is impossible for the immigrants we receive to remain permanently in separate groups. Through point after point of contact, as they find situations in America intelligible to them in the light of old knowledge and experience, they identify themselves with us. We can delay or hasten this development. We cannot stop it. . .\textsuperscript{16}

It is persecution and discrimination which tend to perpetuate

\textsuperscript{13}Glazer and Moynihan, \textit{Beyond the Melting Pot}, p. 311.
\textsuperscript{14}Kallen, quoted by Gordon, p. 80.
\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 148.
\textsuperscript{16}Park, \textit{Old World Traits}, p. 308.
separate development. Rejection by the host society often has the consequence of strengthening cohesion within the minority group. In free societies, great effort is required to maintain ethnic qualities and characteristics, an effort eventually destined to fail. Talking about efforts to maintain Welsh and Gaelic cultures, Abraham says: 'The secret of maintaining, much less encouraging, greater differentiation in society side by side with observing the uniformity required for social life, has yet to be discovered.'

One might perhaps add that it is likely that existing ethnic communities will disappear at a faster rate in Australia than in America. There are several plausible reasons for this suggestion.

Firstly, the high British content of immigration into Australia (over a third of the total intake) means that nearly half of the new settlers became almost invisible in the new society, where they were absorbed on an individual basis, having formed no visible organised community.

Secondly, the rest of the immigrants have been almost entirely of European origin and have arrived during a twenty-five year period of relative prosperity and economic growth. Discrimination and ethnic tensions along racial and economic lines often generate group cohesion within the discriminated group. These have been largely absent from the Australian scene.

It is also important to remember that the settler movement in Australia has been largely directed towards the cities. This has meant very few pockets of ethnic isolation which could perpetuate themselves in the countryside. Taft notes that 'ethnic origin makes some contribution to the formal associational structure in the cities but practically none in country districts'.

There is also in the Australian environment a certain quality that generates conformity. Talking of preserving cultural diversity, the then Minister for Immigration, Mr Grassby, said: 'The Australian way of life is so strong that it kills.'

It is hard to say precisely what there is in the Australian way of life that runs counter to ethnic involvement and perpetuation. The difficult circumstances of some migrants (working in two jobs, travelling long distances) certainly preclude many outside activities. At the same time,

17 Abraham, Sociology, p. 105.
many of the lotus-land aspects of the Australian life-style rub off on migrants: leisure time spent at the beach or in the bush; indifference to events disrupting the easy-going, pleasantly mediocre, materialistically-based, tenor of life. Even Australian drinking habits induce a male camaraderie that saps the inclination to seek other avenues of entertainment. In addition, there is the paradox of migrants in the inner suburban areas where ethnicity is strongest (neighbours, corner shops, clubs, cafes) aspiring to a house in the outer suburbs, where the home-centred life style (tending the garden, painting the house, washing the car, watching television) will inevitably draw them further away from communal involvement.

Lastly, and this is where the Australian experience possibly differs most from the American one, is in the matter of numbers. The sheer size of massive, repeated waves of immigration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has had tremendous implications for the development of ethnicity in America. The first decade of the twentieth century, for instance, saw nearly 9 million “greenhorns” flood into the U.S.20 Such enormous numbers in such a short time meant the appalling living and working conditions of the tenements and the sweatshops. It also meant intense self-awareness and self-reliance in most ethnic groups. This manifested itself in the social and political structures of the immigrant minorities. The two centuries of America’s immigration program have given a long line of continuity to the ethnic organisations of that country. These acquired interior stability and exterior legitimacy from the fact that this facet of ethnicity was repeated in so many of the minority groups. Furthermore these two hundred years have made the institution of organised ethnic life ‘self-perpetuating, created by ethnic interests and serving them’.21

This pattern of ethnicity, which Glazer and Moynihan describe as being deeply imbedded in the life of New York, is a much shallower one in Australia. The numbers are not large enough to have the impact of the American influx. The particular circumstances of immigration into Australia are not conducive to establishing traditions of ethnicity: high Anglo-Saxon component; a somewhat hedonistic, insular, home-centred lifestyle; economic, social and residential conditions which have prevented the formation of ghettos, and therefore the fostering of intense ethnic consciousness and self-perpetuating structures.

21 Glazer and Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot, p. 301.
The thirty years of Australia's post-war immigration have also coincided with a period of history where the trends towards conformity are greatest — more general education, for one thing; greater technology; more frequent travel; the emergence of a universal youth culture; the broadening and levelling influences of the mass media.

Australia's pattern of ethnicity therefore has brought a certain amount of cultural diversity into Australian society but has not radically changed it. Ethnic institutions will probably continue along the lines so far developed; organisations being formed in varying strength and character for first and sometimes second generations, then gradually dwindling or disappearing unless maintained or rejuvenated by new and considerable immigration.

Is there any value then in ethnic organisations beyond the limited period of service to their group?

First of all, this intrinsic value cannot be dismissed lightly, just because it is transient. Anything that helps to 'have life more abundantly'\(^2\) is of value, and the organisations are of enormous value because they serve the very real needs of human beings. It is of no mean importance for an institution to contribute, for whatever length of time, in however limited a manner, to the happiness, welfare, and dignity of thousands of individuals. At the same time, the organisations provide what Alvin Toffler calls 'zones of stability', 'certain enduring relationships', 'patterns of relative constancy' in situations of great change.\(^3\) This is a direct service to the migrants, but also of considerable benefit to the receiving society, which is faced with less bewildered, needy, alienated new settlers than would otherwise be the case.

Beyond the first generation, the ethnic organisations can offer to the Australian-born generation of migrant children a positive view of their own background. These children are overwhelmingly Australian, but they will be better Australians and better people for having a stable base of personality. Knowledge of their heritage and respect for it not only enrich them but can ward off the ethnic self-hatred which is so destructive psychologically. The current demands made by Australian teachers and social workers for migrant languages and cultures to be taught in predominantly migrant areas indicate recognition, after

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twenty-five years of neglect and rejection, of the usefulness to Australian society of reassuring these children of the value of their ancestral culture.

There is another long-term aspect to be considered. The point was made earlier that ethnic organisations are finite institutions, destined to disappear when they have outlived their usefulness. However, ethnicity will not disappear. That is to say, assimilation may eventually overtake individuals, organisations and finally ethnic groups, until they are no longer distinguishable from the host society. But the ethnic spirit — the feeling of distinctiveness stabilised and enriched by knowledge and pride — the ethnic spirit is an ever-present factor in the migratory situation. Therefore, as long as new settlers arrive, there will be among them enough ethnic consciousness to stimulate the formation of new ethnic organisations. The newcomers may benefit from the experiences of the earlier migrant waves and model their communal structures on the previous ones, or even 'inherit' some of their buildings, as has already happened. They will certainly benefit from the greater understanding and receptiveness of Australian officialdom and other related agencies, a more open and co-operative attitude wrought by the efforts of the current ethnic organisations.

The above then are some of the functions of ethnic organisations diffusing beneficially into Australian society. One must also make brief mention of the considerable impact of migrants (tangential in this context but too important to omit altogether) — the corporate structures being inseparable from the individuals. The migrants' considerable and immediately visible contributions to economic growth need hardly be emphasised. Their contributions to the improvement and variety of sport, music, art, entertainment, food, clothes, cannot be overestimated. All these enrich our society and add colour and variety to our lifestyle. But there is another effect of immigration, less tangible, less definable, but no less important. This could be described as the process of broadening the Australian ethos, of diffusing into the Australian soul a perception and appreciation of the cultural diversity existing in the world. Immigration is not a catalyst that has radically changed Australian society but it has been a contributing agent to the modification of an isolated and insular society into one that is more aware of itself and of others; more purposefully conscious of the world and of Australia's place in it; more open to ideas, more receptive to
different currents of thoughts; more understanding and more tolerant. Immigration has helped Australia to become 'a much better and more exciting and mature place in which to raise . . . children'.

Finally, the continued existence of ethnic organisations fulfils one other major function. The attitude of a society towards its minority groups is an accurate barometer of democracy within that society. The free pursuit of ethnic aspirations is an acknowledgment of individual freedom, that basic principle of modern democracy. It recognises the right of individuals and groups to shape their personal and collective life, as long as this does not interfere with the life of others. It confers legitimacy and value to each man's background and heritage. It gives each man the right to preserve and perpetuate his traditions for as long as he wants to do so. It offers him the opportunity to consort with his fellow countrymen and enjoy the comfort derived from mutuality and familiarity. It acknowledges the validity of a diversity of languages and cultures and lifestyles. It accepts

that life as a whole is more important than any single part or product of life; and that since life, however complex, is essentially one, it is false to give absolute predominance to any system of ideas or conduct, to any one aspect of life.

The free flowering of ethnic communities is neither the creation nor the salvation of democracy, but it is a true indicator of democratic practice within a society.

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24 Appleyard, R. T., 'Immigration and National Development' in Roberts, Australia's Immigration Policy, p. 27.
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