Taras Kuzio

THE RUSYN QUESTION IN UKRAINE:
SORTING OUT FACT FROM FICTION

The Rusyn minority lives in four countries--Poland, Slovakia, former Yugoslavia, and Ukraine. Rusyns are either considered to be a fourth eastern Slavic people or a branch of the Ukrainian nation. This article deals only with the Rusyn question in the Trans-Carpathian region of Ukraine. Since the disintegration of the USSR and the creation of an independent Ukraine in 1991-1992, Rusyn groups have appeared in Trans-Carpathia. To what degree this Rusyn reorientation has widespread public support is a major focus of this article.

Western Studies of Trans-Carpathia and Rusyns The few studies that have been published of Rusyns in Ukraine are by émigré groups, which are either biased from a pro-Ukrainian or a pro-Rusyn point of view. The single largely objective Ukrainian study which is devoid of emotion in either a pro-Ukrainian or pro-Rusyn connotation was made possible only by a grant from a German foundation.[1] Reports in the Western media merely scratch the surface and tend to be biased towards the Rusyn viewpoint. Commentaries in the central Ukrainian media, on the other hand, go in the other direction, and are usually written by nationalists masquerading as scholars.[2] Think tanks, such as the European Centre for Minority Issues, have also dealt with the issue, but these have been within the overall context of Ukraine's policies towards its national minorities.[3] Surprisingly, not a single Western academic study has been undertaken of Trans-Carpathia using survey results or opinion polls.[4] Within political science in North America the use of such quantitative data is central to the study of attitudes, feelings, orientations, and views. Surveys and polls on Ukrainian issues have been used extensively in all areas of contemporary Ukrainian studies, especially on issues of national identity.[5] These surveys and their follow-up academic studies have ignored Rusyns. The well-known Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS) has undertaken two surveys which included Trans-Carpathia and also many polls on interethnic relations in Ukraine. But not a single one of these surveys has collected data on Rusyns.[6] A survey conducted by the KIIS in October 2004 inquired "What is your nationality?" The survey found that 79.7 percent declared themselves to be "Ukrainian," a figure higher than the 77.8 recorded in the 2001 Ukrainian census. The survey also records a smaller number of Russians (16.4 percent) than found in the Ukrainian census (17.3). All other nationalities recorded in the census are below 0.2 percent. The KIIS survey did not record a single respondent who claimed Rusyn nationality.

This lack of survey data has been coupled by academic neglect of the Rusyn phenomenon. There have been few Western academic studies of Trans-Carpathia and Rusyns in Ukraine. The only two academic studies of Trans-Carpathia are a historical study of Trans-Carpathia [7] and one article dealing with the Rusyn revival itself.[8] Another difficulty is that the few attempts at academic studies tend to be biased by either a pro-Rusyn or a pro-Ukrainian perspective. Robert Magocsi, the most prolific scholar on Rusyns, writes on the issue from an academic and a populist medium

perspectives.[9] This means, one critic argues, that Magocsi and other pro-Rusyn authors do "not make their case persuasively" because of their use of "an uneven analysis of sources."[10] Magocsi's studies of Rusyns "somehow always seems to favor signs of the Rusyns' concern about their distinctiveness."[11] In other words, how sources are selected can lead either to an exaggerated view of the popularity of the revival of Rusyn identity or a minimizing of their significance by those with a pro-Ukrainian viewpoint on the issue.

A further difficulty is the common assumption that all eastern Slavs living in Trans-Carpathia are in fact Rusyns who are being forcibly designated as "Ukrainians."[12] Without any scholarly evidence to support her assertion, J. Batt, for example, claims that most of the population in Trans-Carpathia "think of themselves as Rusyn."[13] Based solely on interviews with local Rusyn activists, she claims that Rusyns "are probably the largest group in the region."[14] Interviews with activists on one side of the Rusyn questions are no substitute for the near-complete lack of sociological data on national identity and affiliation in Trans-Carpathia. Gwendolyn Sasse also claims that the region is "extremely multi-ethnic" in a manner similar to the Donbas and the Crimea.[15] In the 1989 Soviet census 78.4 percent of the inhabitants claimed Ukrainian ethnicity, close to the average throughout Ukraine. This percentage has grown by the 2001 Ukrainian census. P. Jordan and M. Klemencic describe the Rusyns as "an East-Slavonic people," some of whom claim to be a "nation distinct from the Ukrainians." Rusyns have a "very distinct Ukrainian dialect," which again, some Rusyns regard as "an individual language."[16] J. Batt places regional and separatist threats in the Donbas and Crimea respectively on a par with alleged threats from "radical Rusyn nationalists" in Trans-Carpathia.[17] One common mistake is to claim that the December referendum in Trans-Carpathia, held on the same day as the referendum on Ukrainian independence, gave 78 percent in favour of "autonomous status for the region."[18]

The referendum, permitted to take place by the then President Leonid Krawchuk, favoured "self governing status"--not autonomy.[19] The central authorities have always denied granting autonomous status to any region, except Crimea, which was upgraded from an oblast to an autonomous republic in January 1991. This was a status it had enjoyed from 1922 to 1945. The Crimea was made the exception because it is the only Ukrainian region with a non-Ukrainian ethnic majority, namely, 65 percent Russian in the 1989 Soviet and 58 in the 2001 Ukrainian censuses.

Although some radical Rusyn nationalists did exist in the Trans-Carparthian region in the first half of the 1990s, they were marginal. This is especially striking in comparison to the Crimea, where separatists came to power in the January-March 2004 Crimean presidential and Crimean Supreme Soviet elections.

To place Rusyn and Crimean threats to Ukraine's territorial integrity within one category is to exaggerate the Rusyn question in Ukraine. The Crimean separatist challenge was a serious threat that was resolved peacefully. It could have easily ended in violence, as in Moldova's Trans-Dniestr region, Georgia's Abkhazia, or Russia's Chechnya. In Trans-Carpathia there was never any likelihood that a separatist programme would gain the backing of the majority of the region's population.

One survey by Jordan and Klemencic inquired: "To what country should Transcarpathia belong?" Over 60 percent of those who considered themselves to be Ukrainian or Rusyn-Ukrainian viewed the region as an integral part of Ukraine. Only ten percent of Ukrainians and seven percent of Rusyn-Ukrainians preferred an independent Trans-Carpathia.[20] Even among Rusyns the survey found that they were divided. Forty percent of the small number who considered themselves to be a separate Rusyn people supported independent statehood. Nearly the same number, 37 percent, favoured maintaining Trans-Carpathia as part of Ukraine.[21] Separatism is not alive and well in Trans-Carpathia.

Studies of regionalism have been extensive, but these have over-focussed on the polar opposites of Lviv in Galicia, and Donetsk in the Donbas, with Kyiv as the midpoint. Crimea also has been studied extensively because of its separatist challenge to the Ukrainian state and its vantage point as the only region with an ethnic Russian majority. These studies have usually ignored Trans-Carpathia, as well as other regionally important centres, such as Dnipropetrovsk and Odesa.

The single Western academic study of politics in the region considers the dominant role of the local "party of power," the pro-presidential Social Democratic United Party (SDPUo),[22] and its attempts at maintaining its dominant position in Trans-Carpathia. Rusyns are mentioned only in passing in a footnote. More recent non-academic studies have dwelt on conflicts between the SDPUo and the reformist Our Ukraine bloc.[23] While pro-(SDPUo) and anti-presidential (Our Ukraine) groups under Leonid Kuchma ignore Rusyns in Trans-Carpathia, the main defenders of Rusyn rights are the less popular Communists,[24] who support the ethno-cultural rights of Rusyns. At the same time, like pro-presidential centrists and national democrats, the Communists *also* regard Rusyns as a regional branch of Ukrainians. This should not come as a surprise, because the Communists hailed the "unification" of Trans-Carpathia, as well as other regions of western Ukraine, with Soviet Ukraine in World War II as a major Soviet achievement. One reason given for the right of the USSR to annex these regions, including Trans-Carpathia, was that they included large Ukrainian ethnic majorities.

The publication of the *Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture* was a contribution to the academic study of Rusyns.[25] The 520-page *Encyclopedia* is an invaluable source for those interested in Rusyn issues in the Carpathian region. The *Encyclopedia* includes 1,070 alphabetically arranged entries with 1,400 cross references in alphabetical arrangement with the main entries. The *Encyclopedia* is a survey of Rusyn culture and history with 90 percent of the entries written by Bohdan Horbal, Magocsi, and Ivan Pop.

The *Encyclopedia* has three problems. First, the tones in the entries written by Magocsi and those by Pop differ.[26] Between 1963 and 1992, Pop was a historian at the Moscow Institute of Slavic and Balkan Studies of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. His comments about Rusyns with a pro-Ukrainian "national orientation" are derogatory and reminiscent of Soviet propaganda against Ukrainian "bourgeois nationalists."[27] Second, the *Encyclopedia* uses the term "Rusyn" to cover peoples who have been defined in the past as Rusyns, Ruthenians, Carpatho-Ukrainians, Carpatho-Russians, and Lemkos. This makes it confusing to define who "Rusyns" really are. Ivan Lysiak-Rudnytsky,[28] the noted Canadian historian, commented in a review of Magocsi's [29] first major study of identity in the Carpathians, that making "Rusyns" synonymous with "Ruthenians" is historically problematical. "Ruthenians," "Rutheni," and "die Ruthenen" in English, Latin, and German, respectively, was the commonly used English-language term for eastern Slavs living in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, and then later for Ukrainians living in the Austrian empire in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. Third, like many Western commentators and scholars, the *Encyclopedia* implictly assumes that the eastern Slavic population of the Carpathian region is entirely Rusyn. The large number of maps in the *Encyclopedia* defines the eastern Slavic population of the Carpathian region, *i.e.*,Trans-Carpathian Ukraine, south-eastern Poland, and north-eastern Slovakia, in such a manner. Rudnytsky criticized this tendency in his review of Magocsi's 1978 study. His view leads to the "false impression" that the "Slavic population of the Subcarpathian land is ethnically distinct from the rest of the Ukrainian people."[30]

Yet, such claims are impossible to prove without survey data, opinion polls, or census results. Without these, an accurate national, *i.e.*, Ukrainian, Rusyn, or Ukrainian-Rusyn, affiliation to the eastern Slavic population of Trans-Carpathia cannot be ascribed. The data available from official and unofficial census surveys conducted in 2001 show that only a small minority of the Trans-

Carpathian eastern Slavic population defines itself as "Rusyns." A map on page 186 of the *Encyclopedia*, for example, entitled "Carpathian Rus', 2000," it includes only Carpatho-Rusyn settlement for 1920. Eight decades have spanned the period between 1920 and 2000, during which changes in national identity and ethnic affiliation may have occurred one or more times. After all, "Rusyns" became "Ukrainians" over a far shorter period of time in the nineteenth century when Austria ruled Galicia.

After 1945, Soviet nation-building policies in Trans-Carpathia redefined eastern Slavs from "Rusyns" into "Ukrainians." Since the disintegration of the USSR in 1991, some of these Trans-Carpathian "Ukrainians" have redefined themselves as "Rusyns." But the limited available data point to only a small proportion of eastern Slavs in Trans-Carpathia redefining themselves as Rusyns. Dominique Arel believes it unlikely that there will be an increase in the number of Rusyns after decades of nation-building in Trans-Carpathia.[31]

Magocsi's earlier study concluded that the Ukrainian orientation "proved to be enduring" in Trans-Carpathia, "because of the specific culture of the region and the demands of political reality."[32] The limited data suggest that this conclusion remains true, despite the change in political realities brought about by the disintegration of the USSR. A further reality might reinforce Magocsi's earlier conclusion. The enlargement of the EU in 2004 to include Poland and Slovakia, two other countries with eastern Slavic populations divided in their national identities, not unlike Ukrainians and Rusyns, will reinforce the separation of Trans-Carpathian Ukraine's population from "Europe," *i.e.,* the EU.[33]

Professors and Politics Robert Magocsi concluded in his first major study that the Ukrainian orientation, implemented by the USSR after 1945, was dominant.[34] In other words, Magocsi believes that the Ukrainophile orientation had become victorious over the Rusyn orientation, in the same manner as what had taken place in Galicia in the 1880s. Magocsi was therefore surprised to see the revival of the pre-1939 Rusyn orientation after Communism collapsed in Central Europe and in the USSR between 1989 and 1991. Since the late 1980s, Magocsi has become the main Western scholar to take an interest in the Rusyn question. The irony is that Magocsi's academic position at the University of Toronto is that of the Chair of Ukrainian Studies. This, in itself, adds to the confusion as to whether Rusyns are a Ukrainian sub-group. Magocsi is highly productive within the academic and media-populistic fields. Many of his books and articles have dealt with the Rusyn question. But he has also produced many excellent history, theoretical, and geographical-atlas books and articles. Magocsi's *History of Ukraine*, published jointly by the Universities of Toronto and Washington Presses, is a solid contribution to historiography.[35] It differs from other recent Western histories of Ukraine that are histories of ethnic Ukrainians.[36]

Magocsi and Orest Subtelny, both based at different universities in Toronto, are the two main history authors of Ukraine published since the collapse of the USSR. The Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, the preeminent Ukrainian scholarly institute in the USA, has failed to produce a history of Ukraine. Subtelny's history has been reprinted in one million Ukrainian- and Russian-language copies, giving it a broad range of influence within Ukraine itself. In contrast to Subtelny's history, Magocsi's volume follows in the traditional Western framework of basing a history of a country on all of the events that have taken place within the territorial boundaries of a nation-state. Magocsi's history therefore deals with Ukrainians and other ethnic groups that have ever lived within Ukraine. This inclusive approach to Ukrainian history flows from Magocsi's multiculturalism.

Magocsi's involvement in the Rusyn movement has been subjected to criticism not only by the Canadian-Ukrainian diaspora but also by other scholars. It is indeed difficult to see where to draw

the line between impartial scholarship and direct and high level involvement in politics and nation-building.[37] Mykhailo Hrushevsky, the doyen of Ukrainian historical scholarship, did combine history writing and politics, but this was over a century ago in a different era, when Ukraine was not an independent state. Magocsi has therefore been accused of instigating the Rusyn revival. He categorically denies this and claims that he has followed, but not initiated, developments among Rusyns.[38] Magocsi helped to found the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Centre in 1978 and was its president for many years. He has also regularly attended World Congresses of Rusyns.

Magocsi's writings and involvement have given Rusyns a strong sense of self-confidence. This is because "Most of them credit Professor Magocsi with giving them the self-confidence to act by providing the necessary historical framework of their people."[39] He has assisted Rusyns by providing them with a history book that was initially used by the Slovak Ministry of Education but then was withdrawn from circulation. Magocsi has been proactive in giving Rusyns wider access to the outside world and promoting a language congress to promote what they speak as a language, rather than as a Ukrainian dialect.[40] This is an important distinction because a "dialect" can easily become a language after a nationality obtains an independent state. The "Little Russian" dialect in the Tsarist empire was a language in Austrian-ruled western Ukraine. This dialect/language became the Ukrainian state language in 1989 that was then codified in the 1996 Ukrainian constitution. The Rusyn dialect was codified as a language in the Vojvodina region of Serbia in 1923 and in Slovakia in 1995. In Ukraine, the Rusyn speech is still understood to be a dialect of the Ukrainian language following the official view that Rusyns are a sub-group of Ukrainians. Obviously, the two issues of recognition of Rusyns as a fourth eastern Slavic ethnic people and recognition of Rusyn as a fourth eastern Slavic language are interlinked. In Slovakia and Serbia the Rusyns have been recognized as a separate people apart from Ukrainians. In Ukraine they have not.

Divided Identities in Europe Divided loyalties are not uncommon in Europe. This is especially the case with the revival of minorities in the last two decades. Magocsi is the editor of a recent volume on multiculturalism and Canada's ethnic groups. He was appointed director of the Multicultural Society of Ontario in 1990, taking a five-year leave of absence from academia.[41] He has had a long-term interest in minorities throughout Europe, a field that he teaches at the University of Toronto. Magocsi supports a future Europe that emphasizes regions over nations and countries.[42] A major handicap is that if "Europe" is associated with the "EU," which is normally the case even if this arrangement is geographically incorrect, Ukraine currently lies outside "Europe" as understood by the EU.[43]

The Rusyn revival is not a unique phenomenon in Europe, Magocsi believes, because it follows a general trend in the 1990s that coincided with the collapse of communism in central and eastern Europe and the decentralization of traditional nation-states. National minorities, such as Bretons and Corsicans in France, and regional groups, such as the Rusyns of Slovakia, have used this newly available political space to revive identities that were previously hidden from view by homogenizing nation-states.[44] The revival of a Rusyn orientation is therefore, in Magocsi's view, a normal part of the revival of minorities throughout Europe.

Including new ethnic groups in censuses is inevitably a controversial step. Evidence from US and Canadian censuses shows that their very inclusion can *potentially* lead to the growth of the ethnic group's national identity.[45] This revival does not necessarily lead to separatism, because regions, Magocsi believes, can coexist within looser nation-states which are themselves members of the EU. But this is not always the case, because national minority conflicts can become violent. Witness the three-decade conflict in Northern Ireland by Catholics in favour of Irish unification, and demands for independence for the Basque region of Spain and the Corsican region of France. Alternatively, the

Catalan region of Spain has promoted its autonomy peacefully, as have those who favour independence from the UK for Scotland and Wales.

In Moldova, national identity is divided in three ways depending upon one's political views. Centre-right and nationalist Moldovans tend to support the view that they are Romanians. The right course of action is therefore to unite Moldova and Romania. The political centre agrees that Moldovans are Romanians but supports the view that Moldova should be an independent country in a 'One People, Two Countries' formula. The left follows Soviet nationality policy in arguing that Moldovans are a completely separate people from Romanians. Similar divided loyalties existed in Macedonia until Yugoslav Communist nationality policies built a Macedonian identity after 1945. Most Bulgarians and Serbs still define Macedonians as either "western Bulgarians" or as "southern Serbs," respectively.

The most acute divisions are to be found in Montenegro, the only non-Serb republic of former Yugoslavia which did not declare independence. Montenegro's relations with Serbia remain complex. All Serbs regard Montenegrins as "Serbs." In Montenegro and Macedonia the nation-building policies that were implemented in the Communist era (1945-1991) helped to cement a sense of their separate identity to Serbs. In the post-Communist era this has led to an independent Macedonian state, but only demands for greater sovereignty for Montenegro.

In the case of Macedonia, independent statehood has been buttressed by ethnocultural factors. In the case of Montenegro these sentiments are largely absent, or are highly contested within the Montenegrin population. A desire for greater sovereignty for Montenegro is therefore more closely linked to political and economic factors than to ethnic ones. The driving force within the ruling Montenegrin élites is the desire to control their own affairs by distancing themselves until 2000 from a Serbia ruled by Slobodan Miloševiæ A second resultant factor in obtaining greater sovereignty for Montenegro was the profits that would accrue to the ruling élites from governing their own country, including proceeds from corruption and organized crime. Montenegro's relations with Serbia remain complex. Within Montenegro itself, attitudes towards whether Montenegrins are a regional branch of the "Serbs" or a separate ethnic group are divided. Half of the population sees itself as "Serbs" and the remainder as a separate people.[46] This division over national identity is compounded by regional divisions between a pro-Serb north and a pro-independence Montenegrin south. Hence, why Montenegro alone of the former Yugoslav republics has not clamoured for outright independence from Serbia is a puzzle. The last parliamentary elections held in Montenegro in October 2002 revealed a stark divide between pro-independence and pro-Serbian sections of the population.

Table 1. Parliamentary Elections in Montenegro: 2002

PARTY/BLOC	% VOTES	SEATS
DPS-SDP "For European Montenegro" Coalition	47.9	39
SNP-SNS-NS "Coalition for Change"	38.4	3
Liberal Alliance	5.7	4
Patriotic Coalition	2.81	0
Albanian Coalition	2.4	2
Bosnian Coalition	1.3	0
Others	1.1	0
Total	100.91	75

Source: *Nations in Transit: 2003,* p.657.

Note: DPS-SDP (Democratic Party of Socialists-Social Democratic Party);

SNP-SNS-NS (Socialist Peoples Party-Serbian Peoples Party-Peoples Party);

Patriotic Coalition (Serbian Radical Party and offshoot of Socialist Peoples Party).

Ethno-cultural divisions in Montenegro can be seen in Table 2 when the election results are broken down according to attitudes towards identity:

Table 3. Pro and Anti-Independence Parties and Blocs: Montenegro

PARTY/BLOC	% VOTES	SEATS
Pro-Independence: DPS-SDP "For European Montenegro" Coalition Liberal Alliance Bosnian and Albanian Minority Coalitions	57.3	45
Anti-Independence: SNP-SNS-NS "Coalition for Change" Patriotic Coalition	41.2	30
Total	98.5	75

Note: The "For European Montenegro" Coalition favours an evolutionary move towards independence whereas the Liberal Alliance favours a radical break with Serbia.

The 2003 Montenegrin census raised a further controversy over issues of identity and language. Unlike Croatian and Bosnian, Montenegrin is not recognized as a separate language from Serbian. In the 1991 census, 62 percent of Montenegrins declared themselves to be Montenegrin and 9 percent to be Serbian. The Montenegrin authorities would most likely repudiate a census result in which Montenegrins did not exceed 50 percent of the population.[47]

Competing National Orientations in Western Ukraine   During the immediate pre-Soviet era three orientations competed throughout the western Ukrainian regions of formerly Austrian-ruled Galicia and Bukovina, Hungarian-ruled Trans-Carpathia, and Russian-ruled Volhynia.[48] Russian nationalists equated eastern Slavs with "Russians," whereby they regarded Ukrainians and Belarusians as regional branches of "Little" and "White" Russians. In other words, Ukrainians and Belarusians were akin to the Bavarian position in Germany. Rusyns were also regarded as "Russians." This orientation disappeared in western Ukraine by World War I.

A second orientation was Rusyn, which defined itself as a fourth eastern Slavic group. In western Ukraine such an orientation existed only in Galicia and Trans-Carpathia. In Galicia, ruled by the more liberal Austrian portion of the Austro-Hungarian empire, it lost out to a Ukrainophile orientation by the 1880s. In Trans-Carpathia, which suffered from more repressive Hungarian nationality policies, a Rusyn orientation continued to compete with a Ukrainophile orientation during the interwar period.

In Trans-Carpathia, the competition between Ukrainian and Rusyn orientations came out into the open only in the interwar period in the more liberal environment found within Czechoslovakia. This issue could not be discussed in the former nationalizing Hungarian portion of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Czechoslovak censuses defined "Ruski" as collectively those with Great Russian, Ukrainian, or Carpatho-Rusyn identities.

The Ukrainophile orientation believed, and still believes, that Lemkos, Boikos, and Hutsuls in Galicia and Trans-Carpahia were, and remain, regional branches of Ukrainians. Although these three groups were usually collectively defined as "Rusyns" until the twentieth century, Lemkos and

Boikos also called themselves "Rusnaks." Hutsuls, who inhabit the Carpathian mountains between Ukraine and Romania, always called themselves "Hutsuls."

Rusnaks and Hutsuls in Galicia adopted a Ukrainophile orientation by the late nineteenth century. This was not the case in Trans-Carpathia, where competition between Ukrainophile and Rusyn orientations continued until World War II. Consequently, by the 1880s, the Ukrainian orientation was the dominant identity in the majority of Western Ukraine. This tendency was reinforced during Soviet rule (1945-1991), when the Soviet regime promoted a Ukrainian orientation and Rusyns living in Trans-Carpathia were collectively defined as "Ukrainians." In the Soviet era, Boykos, Lemkos, Hutsuls, Rusyns, Ruski, Cossacks, Pinchuks, Polishchuks, and Lytvyns were classified as Ukrainian sub-groups. The idiom spoken by these groups was therefore classed as "Ukrainian" dialects.

Studies of Soviet nationality policies in Ukraine tend to ignore this aspect and focus instead exclusively upon Russification and denationalization of Ukrainians in eastern and southern Ukraine. Western academic studies of Soviet nationality policies in Trans-Carpathia do not exist.[49] In reality, Soviet nationality policies were contradictory. Denationalization of Ukrainians through Russification in eastern Ukraine was accompanied by Ukrainian nation-building policies in Trans-Carpathia, Galicia, Volhynia, and Bukovina, the four regions annexed by the USSR during World War II.[50] In western Ukraine, the Polish and Jewish urban inhabitants were either ethnically cleansed or murdered during World War II. These western Ukrainian urban centres, which grew in the post-Soviet era alongside industrialization, were filled by nationally conscious Ukrainians. Russification policies were not applied by the Soviet regime to western Ukraine, unlike to western Belarus and eastern Ukraine.[51] Independent Ukraine inherited Ukrainian ethnic majorities in all of its urban centres outside the Crimea. But only in western and central Ukraine are these urban centres also dominated by the Ukrainian language and culture.

Census Data The December 2001 Ukrainian census did not fully clarify the Rusyn question. Arel blames three main factors for this omission.[52] First, Soviet nationality policies had been deeply internalized by the Ukrainian élites and citizens. Second, "the overarching political context [in Ukraine] is one of nation-building." The recognition of a Rusyn identity would be an obstacle in building a Ukrainian identity. Third, Ukraine's first census as an independent state legitimizes itself as being different from Russia. Ukrainian élites wish to prove the existence of a strong revival of Ukrainian national consciousness.[53] The census results showed a decline of three million Russians in comparison to the 1989 Soviet census. This reidentification of Russians into Ukrainians shows the degree to which changes in identities among peoples who are closely related is possible. Such conclusions equally apply to the reidentification process from Rusyns into Ukrainians and back.

On the eve of the 2001 Ukrainian census, Ukrainian academics refused to acknowledge that Rusyns are a nationality distinct from Ukrainians. Arel believes that this reluctance is proof of "hard primordialism" within the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences. Ukrainian officials agreed to a compromise whereby Rusyns would be included within the census as a branch of Ukrainians alongside of Hutsuls, Bojks, Lemkos, and others.[54] This proposal enjoyed cross-party support from the Communists through the pro-presidential centre to the National Democratic right. Magocsi concedes that Rusyns are not a "nationality" as yet. Nevertheless, he believes that they could be evolving in this direction.[55] The official census result found only 10,200 Rusyns, 672 Lemkos, and 131 Boykos.[56] The 10,200 Rusyns are somewhat close to the 6,004 and 22-28,000 Rusyns found in two parallel censuses conducted by Rusyn organizations.[57]

These two parallel unofficial censuses also showed small numbers of Rusyns in Trans-Carpathia. The Sejm (Diet) of Trans-Carpathian Rusyns found only 6,004 eastern Slavs in Trans-Carpathia who declared themselves to be Rusyns out of a total population of 1,258,300, 80.5 percent of whom

declared themselves to be Ukrainian. From the nature of the two organizations conducting these two parallel censuses one might have expected them to find larger numbers of Rusyns. Instead, they found only between 0.67 and 3.11 percent of eastern Slavs in Trans-Carpathia who defined themselves as Rusyns. This is a far cry from the exaggerated claims that all, or most, eastern Slavs in Trans-Carpathia are Rusyns.

One problem for official and parallel census-takers is that some people on the ground do not see the need to make hard decisions as to whether they are Rusyns, Ukrainians, or both. Most people in Trans-Carpathia, after all, were free in the census to declare themselves as being *both* Ukrainian citizens and Rusyns. Another way to define their identity could be for the inhabitants of Trans-Carpathia to declare themselves to be Ukrainian by ethnicity *and* by citizenship. At the same time, they could still adhere to a Rusyn regional identity. These official and parallel census results reflect the degree to which identity on the ground in ethnically mixed areas such as Trans-Carpathia is still in flux. The identities are influenced by the nationality policies of empires and states that rule over these regions. Different options are available to the local citizens who could identify themselves in a civic sense according to their citizenship. This, though, would be confusing, because in the West "citizenship" and "nationality" are often conflated erroneously. Or, they could define themselves by ethnicity *i.e.,* Ukrainian, Rusyn, or Ukrainian-Rusyn. But ethnic identity is no longer recorded in official documents, such as internal or external passports, unlike in the Soviet era when this was a requirement. Only birth certificates and censuses record ethnic identity. With little data available from Ukraine's first post-Soviet census, birth certificates in Trans-Carpathia could be a good source of data on national identity affiliation.

Regional Identity and Religion in Trans-Carpathia In eastern Ukraine the policies of indigenization (Ukrainianization) that accompanied industrialization and urbanization in the 1920s terminated by the early 1930s with the onset of Stalinism. Modernization, *i.e.*, the change of society from largely rural to urban that was traditionally accompanied by nation-building, *i.e.*, evolution from local to national identities, ceased in eastern Ukraine. Eastern Ukraine has therefore a territorial attachment to the border of Soviet Ukraine, which now belongs to independent Ukraine. At the same time, Russification in the Soviet era meant that little Ukrainian ethnocultural identity existed in the urban centres of eastern and southern Ukraine. In western Ukraine, modernization, urbanization and industrialization was accompanied by Ukrainianization after World War II. Western Ukrainians moved into towns that had been largely Polish and Jewish before 1939. In the Trans-Carpathian region the Soviet authorities supported a Ukrainian orientation over a Rusyn to legitimize its claim that the annexation of the region, as in Galicia, Volyn, and Bukovina, constituted a "reunification" of Ukrainians.

This Soviet nationality policy was due to two factors. First, Soviet leaders had to justify their annexation of Trans-Carpathia, northern Bukovina, and Galicia/Volhynia from Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Poland, respectively, in ethnic terms. This the Soviet Union proclaimed as the liberation and unification of ethnic Ukrainians with the Ukrainian SSR. Second, the Communist Party was not popular in western Ukraine and therefore support for the Ukrainian orientation was a way of attracting nationally conscious Ukrainians to the Communist Party. Similar policies had been adopted also in eastern Ukraine in the 1920s, when Ukrainianization policies brought Ukrainian national Communists into the ranks of the Bolsheviks.

Soviet rulers found a strongly entrenched Ukrainian identity in Bukovina, Galicia, and Volhynia. In Trans-Carpathia, identity remained contested. To what degree Soviet nationality policies contributed to the success of transforming Rusyns into Ukrainians in Trans-Carpathia has still to be studied academically. In other words, Soviet policies may have completed in Trans-Carpathia

after 1945 what Austrian policies successfully permitted and supported in Galicia and Bukovina prior to the end of World War I.

Most Western scholars simplistically depict western Ukraine as "Catholic" and contrast it to the "Orthodox East." In reality, only three Galician out of the seven West Ukrainian *oblasts* that were annexed by the USSR in 1939 are Catholic. The remaining four *oblasts* in Western Ukraine have Orthodox majorities, with competing Ukrainian Autocephalous and Russian Churches. The deep roots of the Orthodox Church in Trans-Carpathia acted as a barrier against Magyarization during the half-century preceding 1914 when the region came under the Hungarian portion of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Converting to the Greek Catholic Church meant Slovakization or Magyarization. The more liberal Austrian-ruled regions of the Austro-Hungarian empire (Galicia and Bukovina) had fewer pressures for assimilation. There, the Greek Catholic Church acted as a conduit for the evolution from a Rusnak-Rusyn to a Ukrainophile orientation, which became dominant by the 1880s. Although Trans-Carpathia was traditionally Catholic, the largest number of parishes today are of Russian Orthodox persuasion. It is difficult to say with any certainty if this reflects a historical legacy of Russophilia in the region. The religious affiliation in Trans-Carpathia has also been inadequately researched.

In the three *oblasts* of Galicia (Lviv, Ternopil, and Ivano-Frankivsk), two *oblasts* of Volhynia (Rivne and Volyn) and one *oblast* of Northern Bukovina (Chernivtsi), the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC) and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarch (UOC-KP), predominate among Orthodox believers. In contrast, in Trans-Carpathia the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) is the largest religious denomination of the Russian Orthodox Church. Of 550 Orthodox parishes in Trans-Carpathia, 542 are under the jurisdiction of the UOC.[58] The UOC is the largest Church in Ukraine according to numbers of parishes, but is not monolithic in its politics and national identity throughout Ukraine. Trans-Carpathia's UOC parishes have a more Ukrainian or Rusyn orientation, in contrast to the Ukrainophobe views prevalent within the UOC in eastern and southern Ukraine and Crimea. Trans-Carpathia's regional distinctiveness persists within the local Ukrainian Catholic Church, which refuses to be included under the jurisdiction of the Lviv eparchy that dominates Galicia. The Trans-Carpathian Ukrainian Catholic Church comes directly under the jurisdiction of the Vatican.

Politics and Identity in Trans-Carpathia Trans-Carpathia's dominant Russian Orthodox Church and regional distinctiveness has not influenced its politics. Ideologically and culturally, the region is not oriented towards Russia, unlike the Donbas and Crimea. Magocsi believes that one reason for this is the negative memory that the local population harbours about the Soviet annexation of the region in 1944-1945.[59] In the survey undertaken by Jordan and Klemencic, Trans-Carpathians hold the least positive feelings for Hungarians and Russians. Hungarians are disliked because of their long imperial and authoritarian rule over the region. Negative attitudes towards Russians resemble those found throughout western Ukraine.[60] Another factor for these dislikes could be geography and the impact it has on local political culture. The Trans-Carpathian region is geographically situated in central Europe and borders many countries that will be joining NATO and the EU between 2004 and 2007. Tens of thousands of Trans-Carpathians work in the West and in central Europe, which exposes them to Western influences. In Trans-Carpathia a pro-Western orientation is therefore dominant. This was evident in the June-July 1994 presidential elections, when the region voted for the incumbent "nationalist" candidate, Leonid Kravchuk, rather than for his main opponent, the Russophile Leonid Kuchma. In the second round of the November 1999 presidential elections the region also backed the incumbent and by then less Russophile Kuchma in preference to the hard-line Communist leader, Petro Symonenko.

Table 2. Presidential Elections in Trans-Carpathia: 1999 (%)

Candidates	Round 1 (31 October)	Round 2 (14 November)
Leonid Kuchma	54.73	84.53
Petro Symonenko (Communist Party leader)	3.35	9.66

Source: *Central Election Commission* (www.cvk.ukrpack.net)

In the March 1998 parliamentary elections in Trans-Carpathia, six political parties passed the four percent threshold in the election, according to proportional party lists. Of these, three were pro-presidential (SDPUo and People's Democratic Party [NDP], and the Green Party), whereas two were national democratic (Rukh and Reforms and Order) parties and the Communist Party. In the March 2002 parliamentary elections in Trans-Carpathia two national democratic blocs (Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine and Yulia Tymoshenko) obtained a combined 40.89 percent of the vote. These were followed by the pro-presidential For a United Ukraine bloc and the SDPUo, while the Communist Party trailed. In the 2003-2004 mayoral elections in the Trans-Carpathian town of Mukachevo, Rusyn organizations allied with the national democratic Our Ukraine. The April 2004 mayoral repeat elections in the town led to violence and massive election fraud. The Trans-Carpathian Rusyn parliament blamed the SDPUo-controlled oblast (state) administration authorities for this fraud.[61] The alliance demonstrates the degree to which Ukrainophone national democrats and Rusyn activists cooperated against political parties allied with the then President Leonid Kuchma.[62] Rusyn political parties have failed to mobilize the population in any parliamentary election. Ostensibly they could have met this challenge by demanding that Rusyns be defined as a separate ethnic people, and therefore given them autonomy or independence.

Table 4. Parliamentary Elections in Trans-Carpathia: 1998 and 2002 (%)

Election	Political Party or Bloc Over the 4% Threshold	Election	Political Party or Bloc Over the 4% Threshold
March 1998	Social Democratic United Party (31.17)	March 2002	Our Ukraine (36.50)
	Rukh (7.19)		Social Democratic United Party (13.94)
	Communist Party (6.64)		For a United Ukraine bloc (9.96)
	People's Democratic Party (6.27)		Communist Party (5.96)
	Green Party (5.4)		Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (4.39)
	Reforms and Order Party		

Note: The For a United Ukraine bloc, Social Democratic, People's Democratic and Green Parties are centrist, pro-presidential groups. Rukh and Reforms and Order Parties and the Our Ukraine bloc (which both parties joined in 2002) are national democratic.

Source: *Central Election Commission* (www.cvk.ukrpack.net)

Conclusion The Rusyn question is difficult to understand because Rusnaks-Rusyns in the majority of the territories where they lived (Galicia and Bukovina) evolved into Ukrainians by the 1880s under relatively liberal Austrian rule. Rusyns-Rusnaks who lived in the Hungarian portion of the Austro-Hungarian empire were subjected to assimilation and therefore could not undergo this transformation into Ukrainians. The conversion of Rusyns into Ukrainians occurred only later in Trans-Carpathian Ukraine by the Soviet authorities after 1945, when they annexed the area. Since 1989, a Rusyn revival has taken place throughout the Carpathian region, but the strongest of these movements has been in Slovakia[63] and less so in Poland and Ukraine. Yugoslavia continues to maintain two different orientations, as there was in the Communist era--Rusyn in Serbia's Vojvodina and Ukrainian in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In contrast, in Ukraine and Poland, the Ukrainian orientation remains dominant.

The Rusyn question has been demonized by its Ukrainian opponents because of the insecurity many of them feel about their own nationality, language, and culture, despite living in an independent state. As nation-building is still an on-going process in Ukraine, and Ukrainophones still feel threatened by the domination of the Russian language and the large numbers of Russian speakers, the Rusyn question is usually condemned as a political movement instigated by hostile neighbouring countries or foreign scholars. At the same time, the strength of the Rusyn movement has been exaggerated by Western scholars and proponents of a separate Rusyn identity inside Ukraine. The available limited official and parallel census data show that the Rusyn revival in Trans-Carpathia is limited in scope.

Soviet nationality policies after 1945 may have successfully transformed Rusyns into Ukrainians in the same manner as Austrian policies did in the nineteenth century. This does not rule out the possibility that some have reidentified themselves as Rusyns since 1991. But until surveys are undertaken and the next census takes place in 2011 it is imappropriate to make all-embracing assumptions about the national identities of eastern Slavs living in Trans-Carpathia.

George Washington University

[1] See Oleksandr Mayboroda, *Politychne Rusynstvo: Zakar patska versiya peryferiynoho natsionalizmu* (Political Rusynism: Subcarpathian Version of Peripheral Nationalism) (Kyiv: Kyiv Mohyla Academy, 1999).

[2] Vsevolod Naulko, "Rusyny--Khto Vony? (Rusyns--Who Are They?)," *Narodna Armiya*, 20 April 1999.

[3] Minorities in Transcarpathia (Flensburg: European Centre for Minority Issues, 1998).

[4] See the extensive bibliography of secondary sources on contemporary Ukraine at http://www.taraskuzio.net/ukrainian/bibliography.html.

[5] See Stephen Shulman, "National Integration and Foreign Policy in Multiethnic States," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 4, No. 4 (Winter, 1998), 110-132, and "Asymmetrical International Integration and Ukrainian National Disunity," *Political Geography*, 18, No. 8 (November, 1999), 913-939.

[6] Valeriy Khmelko, Communication, 27 October 2003.

[7] Istvan Madi, "Carpatho-Ukraine," Tuomas Forsberg, ed., *Contested Territory: Border Disputes at the Edge of the Former Soviet Empire* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1995), pp. 128-142.

[8] Raymond A. Smith, "Indigenous and Diaspora Elites and the Return of Carpatho-Ruthenian Nationalism, 1989-1992," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 21 (Spring-Summer, 1997), 141-160.

[9] Robert P. Magocsi, *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End* (New York: East European Monographs, 1999), 3 vols.

[10] Hugo Lane, "Review Article: Rusyns and Ukrainians Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow: The Limitations of National History," *Nationalities Papers*, 29 (December, 2001), 694.

[11] *Ibid*.

[12] Mayboroda, *Politychne Rusynstvo*.

[13] Judy Batt, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place--Multi-Ethnic Regions on the EU's New Eastern Frontier," *East European Politics and Societies*, 15 (August, 2001), 506.

[14] *Ibid*., 510.

[15] Gwendolyn Sasse, "The 'New Ukraine': A State of Regions," James Hughes and G. Sasse, eds., *Ethnicity and Territory in the Former Soviet Union: Regions in Conflict* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), p. 83.

[16] Peter Jordan and Mladen Klemencic, "Transcarpathia--Bridgehead or Periphery," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 44 (2003), 501.

[17] Batt, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place," 506.

[18] Jordan and Klemencic, "Transcarpathia," 501.

[19] Sasse also confuses the December 1991 Trans-Carpathian referendum for a "self-governing administrative territory" with the status of autonomy which Crimea successfully obtained in January of that year. Sasse, "The 'New Ukraine'," 83.

[20] Jordan and Klemencic, "Transcarpathia," 503.

[21] *Ibid*.

[22] See Kimitaka Matsuzato, "Elites and the Party System of Zakarpattya Oblast," *Europe-Asia Studies*, 54 (December, 2002), 1267-1299.

[23] Taras Kuzio, "Conflict Grows Between Our Ukraine and Social Democrats," *RFERL Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine Report*, 11 November 2003, and "Divisions within Social Democrats Continue to Cause Conflict," *RFERL Poland, Belarus and Ukraine Report*, 13 January 2004.

[24] Ivan Myhovych, "Cherez istorychni zavaly: Slovo za rusyniv (Through Historical Hindrances: A Word for Rusyns)," *Holos Ukrayiny*, 2 December 1998.

[25] R.P. Magocsi and Ivan Pop, eds., *Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2002).

[26] Oksana Zakydalsky, *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 23 February 2003.

[27] Magocsi and Pop, *Encyclopedia*, p. 55.

[28] Ivan L. Rudnytsky, *Essays in Modern Ukrainian History* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1987), p. 357.

[29] R.P. Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978).

[30] Rudnytsky, *Essays*, p. 357.

[31] Dominique Arel, "The Census as a Plebiscite: Interpreting 'Nationality' and 'Language' in the 2001 Ukrainian Census," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 18, No. 3 (May-June, 2002), 213-249 [231].

[32] Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*, p. 275.

[33] See T. Kuzio, *EU and Ukraine: A Turning Point in 2004?: Occasional Paper 47* (Paris: Institute for Security Studies-EU, 2003).

[34] Magocsi, *The Shaping of a National Identity*.

[35] R.P. Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

[36] Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*. 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

[37] Lane, "Review Article," 659.

[38] Martin Fedor Ziac, "Professors and Politics: The Role of Paul Robert Magocsi in the Modern Carpatho-Rusyn Revival," *East European Quarterly*, 35 (2001), 224 and 229.

[39] *Ibid*., 214.

[40] See R.P. Magocsi, ed., *A New Slavic Language is Born* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

[41] R.P. Magocsi, ed., *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

[42] See R.P. Magocsi, *The End of the Nation-State? The Revolutions of 1989 and the New Europe* (Kingston: Kashtan Press, 1994).

[43] See T. Kuzio, "Who Is in Charge of Ukraine?," *RFERL Newsline*, 18 November 2003.

[44] See Rogers Brubaker, "National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External Homelands in the New Europe," *Daedalus*, 124 (1995), 107-132, and in response, T. Kuzio, "Nationalising States or Nation Building? A Critical Survey of the Theoretical Literature and Empirical Evidence," *Nations and Nationalism*, 7 (April, 2001), 135-154, and "The Myth of the Civic State: a Critical Survey of Hans Kohn's Framework for Understanding Nationalism," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25 (January, 2002), 20-39.

[45] Greta Uehling, "The First Independent Ukrainian Census in Crimea: Myths, Miscoding, and Missed Opportunities," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27, No. 1 (January, 2004), 151.

[46] Adrian Karatnycky, Alexander Motyl, and Amanda Schnetzer, eds., *Nations in Transit 2003. Democratization in East Central Europe and Eurasia* (New York: Freedom House, and Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003), p. 652.

[47] Julia Geshakova, "Montenegro: Census Stirs Political Passions," *RFRL Weekday Magazine*, 19 November 2003.

[48] Magocsi, *A History of Ukraine*, and Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History*.

[49] Typical studies of Soviet nationality policies in Ukraine include Ronald G. Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993) and Walker Connor, "Soviet Policies Toward the Non-Russian Peoples in Theoretic and Historic Perspective: What Gorbachev Intended," Alexander J. Motyl, ed., *The Post-Soviet Nations: Perspectives on the Demise of the USSR* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), pp. 30-49.

[50] T. Kuzio, "Ukraine: Coming to Terms with the Soviet Legacy," *The Journal of Communist Studies & Transition Politics*, 14 (1998), 1-27.

[51] See Roman Szporluk, "West Ukraine and West Belorussia: Historical Tradition, Social Communication, and Linguistic Assimilation," *Soviet Studies*, 31 (1979), 76-98.

[52] Arel, "The Census as a Plebiscite."

[53] On the census results, see T. Kuzio, "Census: Ukraine, More Ukrainian," *Jamestown Foundation, Russia and Eurasia Review*, 4 February 2003.

[54] O. Mayboroda, "Ethnopolitychna Svera v Ukrayini (The Ethnopolitical Sphere in Ukraine)," Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Kennan Institute, *Politychni ta ekonomichni peretvorennia v Rosii I Ukrayini* (Political and Economic Transformations in Russia and Ukraine) (Moscow: Try kvadrata, 2003), p. 312.

[55] Lane, "Review Article," 695.

[56] "V Ukrayini znykly 3,000,000 rosian a zalyshylysia 22 'lytvyny' (In Ukraine Three Million Russians Have Disappeared and 22 'Lithuanians' Have Remained)," *Ukrayinska Pravda* (www.pravda.com.ua), 6 February 2003.

[57] Interviews with R.P. Magocsi, University of Toronto, 18 December 2001, 27 February 2002, and 5 September 2003.

[58] See Alexei D. Krindatch, "Religion in Postsoviet Ukraine as a Factor in Regional, Ethno-Cultural and Political Diversity," *Religion, State and Society*, 31 (2003), 37-73.

[59] See note 57.

[60] Jordan and Klemencic, "Transcarpathia," p. 503.

[61] Leaflet dated 15 May 2004 in Ukrainian giving the resolution of the Trans-Carpathian Rusyn parliament and local Society of Trans-Carpathian Rusyns. I thank Professor Magocsi for a copy of the leaflet.

[62] See T. Kuzio, "Dirty Election Tactics in Ukraine," *Jamestown Foundation Eurasian Daily Monitor*, 1, No. 4 (6 May 2004).

[63] See R.P. Magocsi, *The Rusyns of Slovakia* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1993).