Introduction

This is the first encyclopedia to deal with the historical past and culture of Rusyns in all countries where they live. It is intended to serve as a reference tool for specialists in Carpatho-Rusyn studies and for those in need of introductory information about one of the many peoples who live in central and eastern Europe. But the encyclopedia can also serve as a guide to those interested in acquiring a fuller picture of the history of eastern regions in the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the various states that came to rule the Carpathian region in the twentieth century: Czechoslovakia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and Ukraine.

The Rusyns—also known as Carpatho-Rusyns, Carpatho-Russians, Carpatho-Ukrainians, Lemkos, Rusnaks, Ruthenians, and Uhro-Rusyns—are a Slavic people living in central Europe. Their homeland, Carpathian Rus', is according to present-day boundaries located within the borders of four states: Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, and Romania. Carpathian Rus' forms a contiguous territorial unit whose numerically dominant population has traditionally been of Rusyn nationality. Other names have been used (and will be used in this encyclopedia) to designate Rusyn-inhabited territory in the various parts of Carpathian Rus'; namely, the Lemko Region in Poland, the Prešov Region in Slovakia, Subcarpathian Rus' in Ukraine, and Maramureș in Romania. There are also a few compact Rusyn settlements in present-day northeastern Hungary and in the Vojvodina region of Serbia, and communities of Rusyn immigrants and their descendants are found in the Czech Republic, Canada, and most significantly in the United States.

Rusyns have never had their own state, and some of the governments which have ruled over them have ignored or actively tried to suppress the Rusyn historical past. For instance, in the second half of the twentieth century, Carpathian Rus' was ruled by Communist states (Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia) which banned the name Rusyn and refused to acknowledge that Rusyns comprise a distinct people, or nationality. During that period (1945-1989) state-imposed ideological guidelines in those countries actively discouraged research and tried to eliminate historical memory about much of Rusyn history and culture, where it did not conform to Communist ideology. Part of that ideology was the classification of Rusyns as Ukrainians. A similarly restrictive approach was adopted in scholarly and popular publications that appeared after World War II in countries where Rusyns lived, as well as elsewhere. In that regard, most writers in the West concurred with their counterparts in Communist-ruled Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and the Soviet Union: Rusyns and their cultural heritage were described as Ukrainian, and those individuals, organizations, or publications that did not support the Ukrainian national orientation were, in general, disregarded. This encyclopedia represents in part an attempt to redress the loss of historical memory and knowledge experienced by Rusyns, lacunae that are reflected in most of the literature about the group produced during the last half century.

Because Rusyns are and have been a stateless people—in the sense that they have never had their own nation-state with clearly-delineated political borders—the first problem faced by the editors of this encyclopedia was to define the subject and its parameters. As is evident from the entry, Carpathian Rus', this term appeared in the literature and was used by cultural and political activists from at least the mid-nineteenth century. Eventually, Carpathian Rus' came to mean those lands on both slopes of Carpathian Mountains where an East Slavic population known as Rusyns lived in the majority at the outset of the twentieth century. Since the term Rusyn was at times used by other East Slavs living beyond the Carpathian region, it became necessary to explain why Carpathian Rus' is defined the way it is in the encyclopedia. That explanation, which effectively serves as the conceptual underpinning of the entire encyclopedia, is found in the entry, Ethnography. The reader who wants an introductory overview of the evolution of Carpathian Rus' is directed to the entry on History.

The Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture contains 1,119 alphabetically arranged entries. More than half are biographies of individuals (665), followed by descriptions of religious and secular institutions (136), periodicals (105), definitions of historical terms (67), and political parties (10). Other types of entries deal with geographic regions, historical events, and peoples/nationalities who have interacted with Rusyns throughout their history. Finally, eighteen thematic entries with a more synthetic and interpretive approach address the following subjects: archeological settlements, architecture, art (painting and sculpture), cinema, Communism, ethnography, genealogy, geography and economy, historiography, history, the Internet, language, the language question, literature—early manuscripts, nationalism, printing and publishing, and radio and television. The encyclopedia attempts to provide balanced coverage for all the subdivisions of Carpathian Rus' as well as other countries where Rusyns live. Since in population and territory Subcarpathian Rus' is the largest Rusyn-inhabited territory, the highest percentage of entries concern individuals and events related to that part of Car-
The criteria for inclusion was based on the conceptual premise that this encyclopedia is not about Rusyns per se, but rather about Rusyn history and culture. This distinction was, in particular, crucial in determining the choice of biographical entries. Hence, a person was chosen for inclusion on the basis of what he or she has contributed to Rusyn history and culture. Thus persons of Rusyn background who, although they have had distinguished careers in public service, the natural sciences, or other walks of life, but have not contributed anything to Carpathian Rus’, are not included, while persons of non-Rusyn background who have contributed to Rusyn culture and scholarship, or who played a role in the civic and political life of Rusyn-inhabited lands, are included. That contribution may have been positive or negative. Consequently, individuals who have been critical or even denied the existence of Rusyns as a distinct people are also included because they figure in the historic record of Rusyns and Carpathian Rus’.

Some basic guidelines were followed in determining questions of inclusion and exclusion. For instance, among persons who functioned solely as scholars, their inclusion might require the publication of at least one major monograph on a Rusyn-related topic. With regard to Rusyn newspapers and journals, all those published for ten or more years were included, as were many other periodicals which, although short-lived, were historically significant. In the end, it must be admitted that the definition of “contribution” is to a degree subjective. The editors have nevertheless tried their best to include as many individuals, organizations, publications, and events which figure in the extensive published literature and which seem relevant for a fuller understanding of Rusyns and Carpathian Rus’.

The presentation of biographical data varies, depending on the subject’s place of birth. For those persons born in Carpathian Rus’ or in Rusyn communities elsewhere, data is provided about their educational background and career development. Some of these persons may have made contributions to fields unrelated to Rusyn developments; it is the aspect of their career dealing with Rusyns, however, that is emphasized here. For persons of non-Rusyn background data about their education or activity not related directly to Carpathian Rus’ is generally not provided. A few individuals of Rusyn background who have distinguished careers but who have made no specific contribution to Rusyn history or culture (Mykhail Baludians’kyi, Ihor Hrabar, Andy Warhol immediately come to mind) also have entries, because their persons have subsequently been used by Rusyn activists and coopted into their understanding of Rusyn history and culture. This encyclopedia has no limits on chronology. Included, therefore, are persons, organizations, and events dating from earliest historic times to the present.

Four-fifths of the entries were written in whole or in part by the editors Paul Robert Magocsi (524) and Ivan Pop (401). Most of the entries dealing with the Lemko Region and with Lemko Rusyns in the United States were written by Bogdan Horbal (193). The entries by Ivan Pop and Bogdan Horbal were edited and translated into English by Paul Robert Magocsi. The short unsigned entries defining currency, weights, and measures were written for the most part by Ivan Pop. Other contributors are indicated in the list of authors following this introduction. The thirteen maps were created by Paul Robert Magocsi, who also compiled or determined the final form of the further reading sections. These sections are not meant to include all references to a given subject, but rather to direct a reader to one or more published sources providing greater information than that found in the entry it follows.

The encyclopedia has no index. Instead, there are over 1,500 cross-references interspersed alphabetically among the entries. These include pseudonyms, different spellings of personal names, and foreign-language names of organizations. There are as well internal cross-references indicated by an asterisk, alerting the reader that there is an entry on this person or subject elsewhere in the encyclopedia.

The preparation of the Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture was an exciting and challenging task. The job was infinitely more intellectually rewarding—and easier to complete—thanks to the efficient cooperation of all authors. Several specialists were asked to review parts or all of the manuscript and some helped in supplying difficult-to-obtain factual data. These persons are listed in the advisors section following the introduction. Among the advisors, special thanks are extended to J ubica Babotvá, Catherine Chvany, Richard Custer, and Patricia A. Krafcik, who provided a careful proofread of virtually the entire manuscript. The final preparation of the text is the result of the inputting accuracy and linguistic skills of Natasha Papuga and Nadiya Kushko, and the technical skill and advice of Gabriele Scardellato in laying out the pages. The maps were drawn by Jane Davies at the University of Toronto’s Office of Cartography. Finally, the staff at the University of Toronto Press has once again eased the editors’ concerns by producing an elegant book. To all these individuals as well as to the others listed among the advisors the editors are deeply grateful.

Despite the cumulative wealth of knowledge shared by
all who contributed to the encyclopedia, whatever errors may remain are solely the responsibility of the editors. They are well aware that the decisions regarding overall content or the interpretations found in entries do not represent the last word on the subject. Future editions are likely to include other entries, emendations, and answers to factual data that were impossible to determine at this time. One nevertheless hopes that this work will serve as a useful handbook for all those interested in and in need of information about the rich gamut of Rusyn history and culture.

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