

# Transylvanian Saxons: A journey through the centuries

Johann Lauer

Embark on a fascinating journey through the past, present and future of the Transylvanian Saxons.

## 1. Past: origins and development of the community, tragic causes of emigration

The journey through time begins with an explanation of the identity-forming institutions that transformed the small community into a solid castle. This enabled them to survive in Transylvania from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The tragic reasons for the emigration are then described.

- 1.1 The settlement in Transylvania constitutes a component of the broader medieval settlement of Eastern Europe
- 1.2 Fortified churches for protection against Mongols and Ottomans
- 1.3 Identity-forming institutions
- 1.4 Nationalism and chauvinism: tragic causes of emigration

## 2. Present: from the seven chairs to the seven countries, from the old to the new settlement areas

Migration from the old to the new settlement areas forced the dissolution of the *stable castle*, the community is now structured as an *open club*: Anyone who is interested in the Transylvanian-Saxon cultural heritage or is a member of one of the many associations is included.

- 2.1 From a stable castle to an open club
- 2.2 Logos and coats of arms of the Transylvanian Saxons
- 2.3 From a shared geographic space in Transylvania to the new bond, to a shared communication space on the Internet

## 3. Future: cultural heritage, associations and digital innovations for tackling the future

The Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage is today the *strong bond of sympathy* that holds the community together and shapes its identity. Associations, the Internet and generative artificial intelligence are the most powerful tools of the future.

- 3.1 Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage as a bond of sympathy
- 3.2 Organizational structure of the community today
- 3.3 Internet and generative artificial intelligence as a digital communication space for the Transylvanian Saxons



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Generative Artificial Intelligence and Transylvanian-Saxon Cultural Heritage. Opportunities and threats for appropriation, preservation and further development.

Quelle: [siebenbuergensachsen.de/generative-ai-saxon.pdf](http://siebenbuergensachsen.de/generative-ai-saxon.pdf).

# 1. Past: origins and development of the community, tragic causes of emigration

The following is a brief description of the characteristics of the Transylvanian Saxon community and its institutions. In a first step, I will explain which institutions have shaped the Transylvanian Saxon community over the centuries. In a second step, I will show how the transformation from a fortified castle to an open club took place. A more comprehensive historical overview with references to further literature is presented in the following article: Transylvanian Saxons - yesterday, today, tomorrow. From a fortified castle to an open club ([Siebenbürger Sachsen - gestern, heute, morgen. Von einer festen Burg zu einem offenen Club](#)).

## 1.1 The settlement in Transylvania constitutes a component of the broader medieval settlement of Eastern Europe

As part of the movement of eastern settlement in Europe, settlers from Western Europe, especially from the Rhine-Moselle region, migrated to Transylvania from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards and settled on the so-called royal land of the Hungarian kings. There they founded the community of Transylvanian Saxons. This community can be seen as a fortified castle that surrounded all members and was of existential importance for the individual.

The basis of the community was the Golden Charter of 1224, also called Andreamum because it was issued by the Hungarian King Andrew II. The Andreamum enabled the settlers to establish an autonomous settlement area in the royal domain. They were granted the right to self-determination and were encouraged to be united as a community (*unus sit populus*).

## 1.2 Fortified churches for protection against Mongols and Ottomans

The Transylvanian Saxon *fortified churches* ensured physical survival for centuries. As early as the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the churches were surrounded by fortifications, which were further developed into defensive structures from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards due to the great Mongol storms (1241, 1242, 1285 and 1299). In the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the fortified churches were expanded into comprehensive defensive structures, and the



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peak of fortified church construction came in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. These were now primarily intended to protect against the Ottoman attacks to which the country was exposed from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Even today, around 190 fortified churches still characterize the Transylvanian landscape.

### 1.3 Identity-forming institutions

Over time, in addition to the physical defensive walls, other *spiritual* walls were established that strengthened cohesion and guaranteed the survival and preservation of the cultural independence of the Transylvanian Saxons in Transylvania until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These included the Saxon National University, the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Romania, the German language and a strong neighborhood and association system.

The threat from the Ottomans and the threat to legal autonomy from the Hungarian nobility and sometimes also from the central power prompted the urban bourgeoisie to politically unite the German settler communities in Transylvania. In 1486, the *Saxon National University* (*universitas saxonum*, i.e. the totality of all Saxons) was founded, based on the *Andreanum*. For centuries, this had a similar significance for individuals as today's citizenship. It functioned as a common judicial, administrative and political authority that carried out sovereign tasks. In 1876, the Saxon National University lost its sovereign rights and with it the Transylvanian Saxons lost their political and legal autonomy after more than seven centuries. Until its final dissolution in 1937, the Saxon National University functioned as a foundation and managed the assets accumulated over the centuries.

In addition, there was the *religious bond*. On the initiative of Johannes Honterus, councilor of Kronstadt/Brasov, and Peter Haller, mayor of Hermannstadt/Sibiu, a Church Order for all Germans in Transylvania ("*Kirchenordnung aller Deutschen in Sybembürgern*") was printed. In 1550, the Saxon National University introduced this church order in all German towns and communities in Transylvania. This created a "spiritual university" (Konrad Gündisch): the "*ecclesia Dei nationis Saxonicae*". This applied to all Transylvanian Saxons, not only to those living on royal soil.



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During the Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Transylvanian Saxons converted to Protestantism. They became members of the Evangelical Church A.B. (Augsburg Confession or *Confessio Augustana, CA*). The Evangelical Church in Transylvania is still based on this confession. The vast majority of the population of Transylvania belonged to other Christian denominations. The exception was the Jews, who had another religion.

The Transylvanian Saxons were also linguistically distinct from all the other inhabitants of the country. In private life, the Transylvanian Saxon dialect was spoken, which is similar to the relict dialects of Luxembourg and the Moselle, while in church, school and administration modern German had been the predominant language since the Reformation. In 1722, compulsory education was introduced for boys and girls, who had to read, write and learn the catechism in standard German. This made the Transylvanian Saxons one of the first in Europe to have compulsory education.

Brotherhoods, sisterhoods and neighborhoods, which were generally compulsory for the whole community from a certain age, were a special feature of Transylvanian Saxon villages. Membership was granted after confirmation. They were similar in structure, organization and function to the journeymen's and guild brotherhoods in the Saxon markets and towns.

In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, special-purpose associations were set up, which people joined voluntarily. Associations were formed in the fields of culture, business, science, protection and assistance, leisure, socializing, youth and the elderly. The principles of autonomy, self-government, self-help and mutual aid, which had been practiced for centuries not only in the Saxon National University but also in the Church and in the primary groups (brotherhoods, sisterhoods and neighborhoods), could be taken to a new level with the new institutions.

These spiritual and physical walls figuratively formed the Transylvanian Saxon fortified castle in which the Transylvanian Saxon community lived and developed from the 12<sup>th</sup> century until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As with other national and religious minorities, a strong sense of community developed, characterized by tolerance towards other



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nations and religions: a “defensive tolerance” (Hans Bergel) that is exemplary even by today’s standards.

The aforementioned Transylvanian Saxon institutions and organizations were of existential importance and guaranteed that every citizen was part of the Transylvanian Saxon community from the cradle to the grave, secured and integrated by a comprehensive network of social relations. Life outside the community was virtually impossible for the vast majority. The following lines from the poem “Stay faithful” (*Bleibe treu*) by Michael Albert (1836-1893), poet, teacher and writer, describe the situation in the 19<sup>th</sup> century quite realistically:

“However necessity may press and compel,  
Herein lies the strength to resist;  
Step out of the sacred ring,  
And you shall fade without honor”.

*Wie die Not auch dräng´ und zwingt,  
Hier ist Kraft, sie zu bestehn;  
Trittst du aus dem heil´gen Ringe,  
Wirst du ehrlos untergeh´n.*

These institutions, briefly presented here, formed the defensive walls that held the community together and guaranteed the cultural and political autonomy of the German settlers in Transylvania, the Transylvanian Saxons, for centuries. In this way, a rich cultural heritage was created over the centuries, even as the community found itself within the borders of different states:

1. from the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century to 1541, in the medieval Kingdom of Hungary;
2. from 1541 to 1699, in the autonomous Principality of Transylvania under the sovereignty of the Sultan and thus part of the Ottoman sphere of influence;
3. from 1699 to 1867, in the Habsburg Monarchy and thus in Austria;
4. 1848-1849, in revolutionary Hungary, from 1867 to 1918 in Transleithania, the Hungarian part of the Habsburg Dual Monarchy;



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5. in Romania since 1918;

6. since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many Transylvanian Saxons emigrated to America (USA and Canada). Since the Second World War, more and more Transylvanian Saxons have moved to the Federal Republic of Germany, acquiring German citizenship and becoming Germans in the national sense;

7. today, the vast majority have German citizenship, less than 10 per cent have Romanian citizenship and a small proportion have Austrian, Swiss, US or Canadian citizenship. There are Transylvanian Saxon associations in these countries. A few have other nationalities, and some hold several citizenships.

The physical existence of the Transylvanian Saxon community was repeatedly threatened by Mongol and Ottoman raids over the centuries. As described above, these threats were met with improved defenses. Unlike Western Europe, where the Thirty Years' War raged (1618-1648), there were no religious wars in Transylvania. As early as 1557, on the initiative of the Saxon National University, the Transylvanian Diet in Thorenburg declared its commitment to religious tolerance, which lasted for centuries. However, the decline of the Ottoman Empire did not eliminate the dangers to the community; the Transylvanian Saxons subsequently had to deal with other existential threats. These began at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and led to major upheavals in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries due to national conflicts.

#### **1.4 Chauvinism and nationalism: tragic causes of emigration**

The “invention of the nation” (Benedict Anderson) and the emergence of nation-states, as well as the accompanying “social mobilization” (Karl W. Deutsch), brought forth both positive and negative developments. On the one hand, hitherto unknown forms of solidarity within the nation were established; on the other hand, brutality and hatred towards other nationalities emerged. The positive results include the overcoming of the agrarian society and the establishment of the industrial world, which made possible the following significant advances: the emergence of national cultures and cultural diversity, the establishment of representative democracy, the rule of law, the creation of prosperity and social security systems that virtually presuppose national solidarity.



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*National movements* have been calling for the creation of nation-states since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Along with religion and race, nationality is another instrument used to exploit differences between people and to legitimize power and domination. The creation of nationally homogeneous states in multi-ethnic areas inevitably led to conflicts and cultural clashes. The conflation of national and territorial issues has led to negative developments, particularly in the brutality of armed conflicts. National chauvinism is a historical phenomenon that reached its most terrible excesses in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These include, in particular, “demographic warfare” (Dan Diner) or ethnic cleansing in the form of *genocide* and *expulsion*. The *de facto* expatriation and expulsion of the German population from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe can be seen as a result of the national chauvinism of the 19<sup>th</sup> and especially the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The process took place in several stages. In the following, this development is illustrated by the example of the Transylvanian Saxons.

The *first phase* is characterized by a variety of nationally induced disadvantages. The starting point was the Josephine reform movement at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The announcement that German would be used as the official language instead of Latin led to resistance, especially among the Magyars. The Age of Nationalism thus spread through the Habsburg Monarchy as an unintended consequence. The Josephine Reforms, implemented by Emperor Joseph II (1765-1790) in the spirit of enlightened absolutism, triggered a discussion among the Transylvanian Saxons about a *Finis Saxoniae*. The danger of dissolution of the community was discussed, as the rights of the Transylvanian Saxons were severely curtailed by the Rescriptum of concivility (Konzivilitätsreskript, 1781) and the abolition of the veto right (*Kuriatvotum*, 1792). According to the Rescriptum of concivility, members of other nations could also acquire land in the royal domain; since the 12<sup>th</sup> century, this right had generally been reserved exclusively to Transylvanian Saxons. In the princely era, the veto right meant that each estate nation from Transylvania – the Hungarian nobility, the Szeklers and the Transylvanian Saxons – had one vote in the Transylvanian Diet, without which no law could be passed. As a result of the new per capita voting system, the Saxons were now hopelessly in the minority (about 10 per cent). Joseph II reversed most of his



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reforms on his deathbed, but his successor Leopold II restored the Saxon National University, which existed until 1876, when the centuries-old autonomy of the Transylvanian Saxons was abolished.

In the period that followed, the Transylvanian Saxons were confronted with cultural struggles in the form of attempts at Magyarization and, from 1918, at Romanianization. These were mainly averted by the fact that the German schools of the Transylvanian Saxons were run as denominational schools under the auspices of the Evangelical Church A.B. until after the Second World War.

In the *second phase*, the Third Reich concluded a large number of bilateral treaties with eastern and south-eastern European states, which resulted in the resettlement ("*Heim-ins-Reich-Aktion*") of Germans from the Baltic States, the Soviet Union, Romania, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria and, in some cases, from the Italian South Tyrol to Germany. The Transylvanian Saxons were not affected by these resettlement campaigns. On the basis of treaties signed in 1943 between the Third Reich and Hungary and Romania, German men fit for military service were conscripted into the German military, the Wehrmacht and, above all, into the Waffen-SS. These treaties show how far the de facto naturalization of Germans in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe had already progressed. The German Reich naturally saw itself as responsible for millions of Germans of other citizenship. Although the Transylvanian Saxons had considered themselves German for centuries, Transylvania had never belonged to Germany, and the Transylvanian Saxons were at the time partly Romanian and partly Hungarian citizens. To this day, these events have hindered the peaceful and normal coexistence of Germans with other peoples in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe.

The *third phase* of de facto resettlement and expulsion began with the Second World War and led to flight, deportation, expropriation, expulsion and forced resettlement. The Transylvanian Saxons in the main settlement areas of south Transylvania (Altland and Burzenland) were not affected by flight and expulsion, as Romania was the only Eastern European country not to carry out German expulsions. Only from Northern Transylvania (Nösnerland), which belonged to Hungary from 1940 to 1944, did the



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Transylvanian Saxons flee westwards in several treks. Those who remained in Romania were deported to labor camps in the Soviet Union. The German settler groups in East-Central Europe were punished for the war damage and crimes committed by Hitler's Germany (and subject to a kind of national "kin liability") even though, living as they did outside the German Reich, they could not have been involved in the establishment of the Nazi regime. On 6 January 1945, 30,336 Transylvanian Saxons (15% of the population) were deported to the Soviet Union, all men between the ages of 17 and 45 who were not already prisoners of war, and women between the ages of 18 and 35. The last of them returned from deportation in 1949, while 3,076 people (12%) died in the Soviet Union (Georg Weber et al.).

The *fourth phase* of this development began in 1949 and lasted until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nationalism, which communism promoted despite its claims to the contrary, celebrated its resurrection in new clothing. This period is characterized by a variety of disadvantages for those left behind and led to the resettlement of people from the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The year 1949 is considered to mark the end of the actual flight and expulsion caused by the war. After the end of the Second World War, it was mainly former soldiers and refugees from northern Transylvania who came to Germany, as well as exhausted deportees who were released in the Soviet occupation zone. In the 1950s, around 350 German people left Romania each year; the number increased in the 1960s and rose again after the agreement between Helmut Schmidt and Nicolae Ceausescu in 1978. In 1990 there were 111,150, in 1991 32,178, in 1992 16,146, and thereafter about 6,000 per year, of which about 50 per cent were Transylvanian Saxons (Ernst Wagner).

## **2. Present: from the seven chairs to the seven countries, from the old to the new settlement areas**

### **2.1 From a stable castle to an open club**

The above-mentioned Transylvanian Saxon structures really experienced a radical change after the Second World War. The most significant consequence was the *dissolution* of the Transylvanian Saxons' *shared geographic space*. Less than 10



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percent still lived in Transylvania at the turn of the millennium. The religious bond has also lost its formative significance. The religious ties to the Evangelical Church A.B. that undoubtedly existed before the Second World War are now only present in a minority of individuals.

The migration movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century also resulted in a shift in the significance of language as a unifying force within the community. The number of speakers of the dialect is declining, and even the ability to understand the dialect has been lost in some cases. The Transylvanian Saxons, a group that has resided in the USA and Canada since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, utilize English as their primary language and possess only a rudimentary comprehension of German and a negligible understanding of the Transylvanian Saxon dialect. In German schools in Romania, over 90 percent of the pupils are of a different nationality, typically Romanian. It is notable that a considerable number of these pupils evince a keen interest in the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage and are willing to learn and develop it further. In order to provide those who are enthusiastic about and would like to participate in the appropriation, preservation and further development of the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage with the opportunity to gain further insight, this article was published not only in German, but also in English and Romanian.

The Transylvanian Saxon neighborhood and association system has been partially saved, rebuilt or newly established not only in Romania, but above all in Germany, as well as in the USA, Canada, Austria and Switzerland. The majority of Transylvanian Saxon towns have a hometown community (HOG, *Heimatortsgemeinschaft*), which serves to maintain connections between former residents worldwide. Additionally, these communities play a pivotal role in preserving fortified churches in Transylvania. A considerable number of the associations that were established during the nineteenth century continue to operate with great efficacy in the present day. The Transylvanian Saxon *cultural heritage* represents the sole remaining *point of connection* and shared identity among Transylvanian Saxons across the globe, and it is this heritage that the existing associations are committed to preserving and promoting. Since the conclusion



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of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Transylvanian Saxon community has ceased to function as a *fortified castle* and has instead become an *open club*, welcoming individuals with an interest in the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage. The absence of a shared settlement area has resulted in the Transylvanian Saxon community being held together by *common interests*, thereby rendering it more comparable to an *open club*. Membership is open to all those with an interest in the Transylvanian Saxon heritage or who are members of one of the numerous associations.

## 2.2 Logos and coats of arms of the Transylvanian Saxons

The coat of arms of the Transylvanian Saxons shows seven castles, which, according to legend, are meant to remind us on the one hand of the name “*Siebenbürgen*”, which means “seven castles” and is the German name for Transylvania, and on the other hand of the seven seats. However, there were not just seven castles in Transylvania, but over 200. About 190 fortified churches or their remains can still be seen today. The original structure of administration included *eight seats*, namely the main seat in Hermannstadt (Sibiu) and the seven secondary seats (Schäßburg/Sighișoara, Mühlbach/Sebeș, Großschenk/Cincu, Reussmarkt/Miercurea Sibiului, Reps/Rupea, Leschkirch/Nocrich, Broos/Orăștie). All eight seats also functioned as administrative units of the Saxon National University. The path of the vast majority of Transylvanian Saxons led from their settlement area in Transylvania out into the wide world. Today, Transylvanian Saxons live in various countries such as Germany, Romania, Austria, Switzerland, the USA and Canada. Small numbers also live in many other countries. It can therefore be stated that the seven castles in the logos and coats of arms still have their justification. The six castles, each representing one of the above-mentioned countries, and the seventh castle, which symbolizes the rest of the world, form an ensemble which, as a whole, reflects the present settlement area of the Transylvanian Saxons.

Robert Linz (1957 to 2014) designed at my request a series of logos for Transylvanian Saxon clubs, which can be used by all groups or associations. Further examples of his work, along with information and literature about logos and coats of arms, can be found



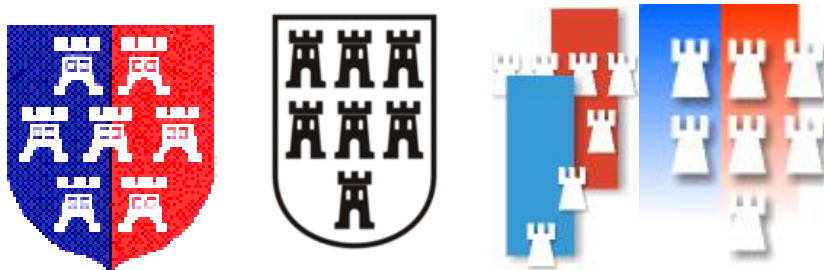
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in my article: Logos and coats of arms. Further development of the Transylvanian Saxon corporate design ([Logos und Wappen. Weiterentwicklung des siebenbürgisch-sächsischen Corporate Designs](#)).



With regard to the *communication design* (corporate design) of the Transylvanian Saxon institutions, two elements should be taken into account. The first is the colors of the Transylvanian Saxon flag: *blue* and *red*. The second element, for the reasons mentioned above, is the seven castles. My recommendation is therefore as follows: every informal club or association that feels committed to the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage should use a logo that contains these two basic elements. Logos are modern optical signals that provide orientation in the flood of information. The logo has (partially) taken over the functions of the coat of arms and serves as a recognition symbol and orientation aid: quickly recognizable, clearly identifiable. In contrast to the coat of arms, which was initially an individual symbol, the logo is usually not an individual or concrete recognition symbol, but an *abstract symbol*. Certainly, some coats of arms have also evolved from an individual to an abstract symbol, such as the Transylvanian Saxon coats of arms, which in their black and white versions cannot be clearly associated with any Transylvanian Saxon institution.

### **2.3 From a shared geographic space in Transylvania to the new bond, to a shared communication space on the Internet**

The Transylvanian Saxons finally lost their shared settlement area, one of several walls that were lost over the course of history, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The commonalities caused



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by geography are now a thing of the past since the resettlement during the communist era and the mass exodus. However, there are still common interests for the Transylvanian Saxons scattered around the world.

The Transylvanian Saxons are now dispersed throughout the globe, with the majority residing in Germany and the majority of Transylvanian Saxon institutions located there as well. Additionally, there are numerous active institutions in Transylvania/Romania, Austria, Switzerland, the USA and Canada. Consequently, the Transylvanian Saxons have a future not only in Transylvania, but in all countries where there are Transylvanian Saxon institutions and individuals interested in maintaining *and* developing the often-cited “invisible baggage”, the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage.

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the overwhelming majority of Transylvanian Saxons were convinced that they were witnessing the end of more than 850 years of the Transylvanian Saxon community’s history, culture, and identity. Some believed that the future of the Transylvanian Saxons would be best served by remaining in Transylvania. Given the relatively low number of returnees, this option was inherently unsustainable.

Following the dissolution of the shared living space in Transylvania, the Transylvanian Saxons established a common communication space on the Internet, thereby forging a new bond. The advent of the Internet at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the emergence of new avenues for communication and publication. Following 1995, these opportunities were initially utilized by individuals, before being subsequently embraced by Transylvanian Saxon associations.

The advent of the Internet at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has enabled the creation of communication and publication spaces that are independent of both space and time. It is not feasible for digital communication spaces on the Internet to entirely supplant genuine conversations in physical locations and at specific times. However, they are an effective means of maintaining contact with one another. The same can be said of digital publication options; they cannot replace analogue ones, but rather serve to



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complement them. Nevertheless, the Internet was particularly suited to the needs of the Transylvanian Saxon community, which had lost its common living space in Transylvania during this period. The Internet can serve as a second pillar, alongside the associations, to ensure the preservation of the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage.

The internet infrastructure of the Transylvanian Saxons and the challenges of generative artificial intelligence are discussed in detail in another article.:

[Generative Artificial Intelligence and Transylvanian Saxon Cultural Heritage. Opportunities and threats for its appropriation, preservation and further development](#) (HTML version), [PDF format for printing](#).



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Generative Artificial Intelligence and Transylvanian-Saxon Cultural Heritage.

Opportunities and threats for appropriation, preservation and further development.

**Quelle:** [siebenbuergensachsen.de/generative-ai-saxon.pdf](http://siebenbuergensachsen.de/generative-ai-saxon.pdf).

### 3. Future: cultural heritage, associations and digital innovations for tackling the future

#### 3.1 Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage as a bond of sympathy

In my opinion, since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage has become almost the only remaining *bond of sympathy* that holds the Transylvanian Saxon community together and shapes the Transylvanian Saxon identity.

#### 3.2 Organizational structure of the community today

Today, the Transylvanian Saxon community is organized through a large number of associations. In addition to local communities (*Heimatortsgemeinschaften*) and specialized associations, the Evangelical Church of A.B. in Romania plays a special role in preserving the Transylvanian Saxon cultural heritage. Here you can find a list of [organizations and institutions](#).

#### 3.3 Internet and generative artificial intelligence as a digital communication space for the Transylvanian Saxons

The advent of generative artificial intelligence will serve to enhance the Internet's capacity as a digital communication space, facilitating the appropriation, preservation and further development of the Transylvanian-Saxon cultural heritage. This will be the case in the future as well. Because in the future the following will still be true:

*“What you have inherited from your fathers,  
Appropriate it in order to possess it” (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe/Faust).*

*„Was du ererbt von deinen Vätern hast,  
Erwirb es, um es zu besitzen“ (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe/Faust).*

A comprehensive examination of this subject matter can be found in my article: [Generative Artificial Intelligence and Transylvanian Saxon Cultural Heritage. Opportunities and threats for its appropriation, preservation and further development](#) (HTML version), [PDF format for printing](#).



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## 4. Further articles by the author

Self-citations have been avoided, so verbatim copies of other articles I have written are not marked. The most important of my own publications on this subject are listed below.

- **2024:** [Generative Artificial Intelligence and Transylvanian Saxon Cultural Heritage. Opportunities and threats for its appropriation, preservation and further development](#) (HTML version), [PDF format for printing](#).
- **2024:** [Philosophy of generative artificial intelligence \(AI\). Theoretical limitations and possibilities, practical benefits and threats of large language models](#) (HTML version), [PDF format for printing](#).
- **2003:** [Siebenbürger Sachsen - gestern, heute, morgen. Von einer festen Burg zu einem offenen Club](#) (Transylvanian Saxons - yesterday, today, tomorrow. From a fortified castle to an open club): [siebenbuergersachsen.de/geschichte/index.htm](http://siebenbuergersachsen.de/geschichte/index.htm).
- **1999:** [Gemeinsame Kommunikationsräume im Internet](#) (Shared communication spaces on the Internet): [siebenbuergersachsen.de/portal/daten/dokumente/50-jahre-ig-baden-wuerttemberg/perspek/23.htm](http://siebenbuergersachsen.de/portal/daten/dokumente/50-jahre-ig-baden-wuerttemberg/perspek/23.htm)
- All my articles on [Transylvanian Saxon](#) topics, most unfortunately only in German, are linked on my Transylvanian Saxon website: [siebenbuergersachsen.de](http://siebenbuergersachsen.de).
- On this page you will find my other [publications](#) ([lauer.biz/publications.htm](http://lauer.biz/publications.htm)).



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**Quelle:** [siebenbuergersachsen.de/generative-ai-saxon.pdf](http://siebenbuergersachsen.de/generative-ai-saxon.pdf).



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- The responsibility for any remaining errors is my own.
- A printable PDF file (17 A4 pages) can be downloaded here: [siebenbuergersachsen.de/saxon.pdf](https://siebenbuergersachsen.de/saxon.pdf).

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