

THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SLOVAKS ON THE TERRITORY OF MODERN-DAY ROMANIA IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES

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Abstract: *In the presented study, we aimed to awaken and deepen knowledge about the history of the Slovak minority in modern-day Romania. We focused on the settlement of the Slovaks on the territory of modern-day Romania in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the literature dealing with this topic, we often find only partial information on this issue. Authors usually focus on Slovak settlement in one or two Romanian regions or areas. Therefore, in our study, we tried to point out all the significant regions throughout modern-day Romania where Slovaks migrated in the observed periods. We examine the migration of Slovaks to the regions of Arad–Banat, Bihor–Sălaj, Satu Mare, Maramureș, as well as to Bukovina. In addition, we also present the reasons for migration and the individual waves in which Slovaks moved to Romanian regions.*

Keywords: Romania, migration, migration waves, Slovak minority, counties.

Emigration of Slovaks is not just a marginal episode in Slovak history, but an inseparable event with both external and internal significance. Not only for those who left, but also for those who remained in the old homeland, emigration is an inherent part of Slovak history. Slovaks were one of the many nations living in multicultural Hungary and later in Austria-Hungary, and for a long time, they fought for their rights and freedoms.

The primary impulse for developing this study was my strong personal interest and a certain awareness of the Slovak minority in Romania, which I gained through the stories of my great-grandfather. He was one of the 20,000 Slovaks who decided to leave Romania as part of the post-World War II re-emigration. My initial motivation was not only to become more familiar with my family history, but also to map and clarify the migration of Slovaks to modern-day Romania.

The aim of this contribution is not to cover all the research conducted regarding the Slovak minority in Romania. We focused only on selected research activities, mainly identifying locations where Slovaks migrated to or established after their arrival in the areas of Arad–Banat, Bihor–Sălaj, Satu Mare, and Maramureș, as well as in Bukovina. We will also present the waves of Slovak migration to Romania and explain the circumstances that forced Slovaks to emigrate from their homeland. In the

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following lines, we will not only address Slovak villages with ethnically homogeneous populations, but also those where the Slovak minority settled during subsequent domestic migration waves. From a temporal perspective, we focused on the period of the largest influx of Slovaks to the territory of *modern-day Romania*, specifically the 18th and 19th centuries, with some overlap into the 20th century.

Slovak Migration Waves to the Territory of Romania and the Causes of Emigration

Modern-day Romania was, in the past, a second homeland for many Slovaks. The reasons and causes for which Slovaks left their homeland and emigrated to a foreign country are varied. The triggers for the start of Slovak emigration can be found in the period of the consolidation of Habsburg power, the harsh re-Catholicization, and the estates revolts in Hungary. This serious decision, which most viewed as temporary, was mainly driven by social poverty, poor economic conditions, a lack of work and money, but also by political and religious persecution. Slovaks settled in Romania as part of the so-called *settlement of the Lower Land* during the 18th and 19th centuries.

The term *Lower Land* is derived from the Hungarian term *Alföld* and usually refers to geographically defined parts of Hungary that were settled by Slovaks¹. The Lower Land (Slovak: *Dolná zem*) is a specific historical, geographical, political-economic, and socio-cultural area within the Pannonian Basin (sometimes also referred to as the „Pannonian Depression” or „Carpathian Basin”). This basin includes, in addition to Hungary, regions in western Romania such as Banat and Crişana, and is bordered by the Carpathians, the Alps, and the Dinaric Alps. Its generally accepted boundary is not precisely defined, as interpretations still differ today². This term is understood and used differently by Slovaks in Slovakia, differently by Slovaks from the Lower Land, and further differentiations exist within their communities. The ethnic boundary defines this area as a space settled primarily by Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians, Serbs, Romanians, Croats, and Rusyns during the 17th to 19th centuries. Three types of settlement can be distinguished:

- a) Unorganized and spontaneous migration of individual settlers – namely refugees and their families, serfs who fled from their landlord;
- b) Direct, already organized migration of settlers or settlement from northern Hungary;

¹ Ianko Gubani, *Slovenská menšina v Rumunsku – historický kontext migrácie a štatistický aspekt identity a materinského jazyka za obdobie 2002–2011* [The Slovak Minority in Romania – The Historical Context of Migration and the Statistical Aspect of Identity and Mother Tongue for the Period 2002–2011], „Geographical Information”, 20, nr. 2, 2016, p. 420.

² Ladislav Lenovský, *Asimilácia a hranica* [Assimilation and the Border], „Dynamika akulturácie na etnickej hranici”, Nitra, Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa, 2011, p. 15–23.

c) Migration of settlers from resettled areas to other parts of the Austrian Empire – or further south, to Bačka, Banat, and Syrmia³.

As a result of Slovak migration, numerous Slovak villages or compact areas were established on the territory of present-day Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia. The migration of Slovaks to the Lower Land was part of the larger settlement process in Hungary after the expulsion of the Turks from its territory. It coincided with large-scale settlement actions or colonizations organized by the Habsburg court and Hungarian landowners, who sought to repopulate Hungary with immigrants from beyond its borders, such as German settlers (*impopulatio*), as well as to relocate the local population from more densely populated northern regions to the southern areas that had been abandoned and depopulated due to the Turkish occupation (*migratio colonorum*). The migration of Slovaks belongs to the second group of relocated population, as they mostly moved and settled within the Monarchy. It was a long-term process that affected large geographic areas with different economic and political developments. It also took quite a long time for immigrant groups or individual families to find their permanent or long-term homes. The original Slovak immigrants and their descendants sometimes moved through multiple villages and regions, and even countries. For example, Slovaks from Banat later settled in Bulgaria⁴.

In the early stages of settling new territories, the first settlers took advantage of the abundant land and acquired property. However, they constantly had to be on guard against various dangers posed by the unfamiliar environment⁵. It is therefore not surprising that Slovaks in their new homes preserved their traditional way of life and customs inherited from their ancestors for a long time. They maintained their native language, traditions, culture, religious practices, and more. Slovak emigrants felt a strong need to form communities. Gradually, they founded various associations, started publishing periodicals, and printed books, calendars, and similar materials. In fact, Slovaks managed to create more favorable conditions for the development of Slovak cultural life in their new environment than those existing in their homeland at that time. Their social and economic status also improved significantly in the new homeland.

The Slovaks who moved to the lowlands, including Romania, fully utilized their right to religious freedom and the right to establish Slovak church schools from the

³ Michal Franko, *The Migration of the Slovak Population to Békés County – the Problems of the First Immigrants*, „Migrations in the Slavic Cultural Space from the Middle Ages to the Present Day” Łódź, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Series Ceranea, vol. 10, 2022, p. 115.

⁴ On this issue, see Jozef Hrozič, *Slováci v Bulharsku* [Slovaks in Bulgaria], Martin, Matica slovenská, 1985, 167 p., or Marek Jakoubek, Vladimír Penčev, *Češi a Slováci v Bulharsku. Příspěvky ke studiu české, slovenské a československé krajanské přítomnosti v bulharských zemích* [Czechs and Slovaks in Bulgaria. Contributions to the Study of Czech, Slovak, and Czechoslovak Expatriate Presence in the Bulgarian Lands], Brno, Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2022, 216 p.

⁵ Ján Sirácky, *Slováci vo svete 1*. [Slovaks Around the World 1], Martin, Matica slovenská, 1980, p. 7–9.

very beginning. After building their homes, they would immediately construct a church, a parish house, and a school⁶.

Different regions of modern-day Romania were settled by Slovaks during various periods and waves of migration. The defeat of the Ottoman Turks and the treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, as well as the defeat of the last estate uprising (1711) marked a turning point in the economic and social development not only in Hungary but also in Central Europe as a whole. Large migratory movements, especially from the north to the south, significantly influenced the ethnic composition of the population in the former Kingdom of Hungary. Hungarian nobility also supported the migration of Slovaks to economically exploit extensive plains and forested areas.

The Slovak community on the territory of modern-day Romania was primarily concentrated in the western part of the country, mainly in the current counties of Sălaj (*județul Sălaj*), Bihor (*județul Bihor*), Arad (*județul Arad*), and Timiș (*județul Timiș*), and to a lesser extent in Satu Mare (*județul Satu Mare*) and Caraș-Severin (*județul Caraș-Severin*). Those Slovaks who settled in the Arad and Timiș regions typically arrived during the secondary or sometimes even tertiary phase of colonization of the lowlands in the first half of the 19th century. For example, Slovaks who settled in today's counties of Sălaj and Bihor reached the areas of the Plopiș Mountains (Romanian: *Munții Plopiș*, *Munții Rez*) at the end of the 18th or the beginning of the 19th century, coming directly from Upper Hungary⁷.

The beginnings of significant Slovak migration to Romania can be traced back to the mid-18th century, mainly in the first half of the 19th century. Slovak colonists interacted with the Romanian population in several regions, including Transylvania⁸ (Romanian: *Transilvania*, *Ardeal*), the Banat⁹, and the Arad and Békés-Csanád regions. Close contact occurred particularly in villages such as Nădlac (Romanian: *Nădlac*), where Slovaks and Romanians lived as neighbors and influenced each other in various aspects of daily life¹⁰. Pastor Ľudovít Haan, who served in Békéscsaba¹¹

⁶ Juraj Porubský, *Formovanie národného povedomia Slovákov v 19. a začiatkom 20. storočia v Nădlaku* [The Formation of National Consciousness of Slovaks in Nădlac in the 19th and Early 20th Century], „Slováci v zahraničí”, vol. 22, 2005, p. 72.

⁷ Miriama Bošelová, *Slovak minority in Romania – ethnocultural contexts. Individual and Society*, vol. 18, nr. 2, 2015, p. 49. See also Ján Sirácky, *Slováci vo svete 1*, p. 84-88.

⁸ Transylvania is a historical region in Romania. It encompasses the territory between the Carpathian arc in central Romania and the Carpathian Mountain range of the Apuseni Mountains.

⁹ Banat is a historical territory bordered in the north, west and south by the rivers Mureș, Tisa, Danube (*Dunăre*) and in the east by the Southern Carpathian Mountains.

¹⁰ Miroslav Kmeť, *Z kultúrnych dejín rumunsko-slovenských vzťahov v 19. a 20. storočí* [From the Cultural History of Romanian-Slovak Relations in the 19th and 20th Centuries], „ACTA HISTORICA NEOSOLIENSIA”, vol. 19, nr. 2, 2016, p. 78–79.

¹¹ *Békéscsaba* (Romanian: *Bichișciaba*, Hungarian: *Békéscsaba*) is a county town in southeastern Hungary. It lies 20 kilometers north of the border with Romania. The city is an important center of the Slovak minority in Hungary.

and previously in Nădlac, recorded that many orphaned Romanian children (due to the famine years of 1816–1817) were adopted by Slovak families living in Békéscsaba¹².

Today, the result of these migration waves is evident in four Slovak regions in Romania located in the western (Arad-Banat region), northwestern (Bihor-Sălaj region, Satu Mare, and Maramureş region), and northeastern (Bukovina region) parts of the country. These areas were originally part of the Kingdom of Hungary and became part of Romania only after 1918¹³.

Slovak Settlement in the Arad-Banat region

The Arad-Banat region spans over the territory of today's Timiș county (Romanian: *județul Timiș*, Hungarian: *Temes megye*) in southwestern Romania. The Arad county (Romanian: *județul Arad*, Hungarian: *Arad megye*) directly borders Csanád and Békés counties in Hungary. The settlement of the Arad–Banat region by Slovaks began in the 18th century and represents a significant historical process that had a profound impact on the demographic and cultural development of the region. During the reign of Empress Maria Theresa and Emperor Joseph II, this area was strategically settled, with Slovak colonists establishing themselves mainly in villages and towns where they engaged in agriculture and craftsmanship.

The settlement of modern-day Romanian territory by Slovaks began in 1747. At that time, the first group of Slovaks from Békéscsaba (Romanian: *Bichișciaba*) and Sarvaš founded the oldest Slovak village, Mokrá (Romanian: *Mocrea*, Hungarian: *Apatelek*). The Slovaks settled on the estates of count Ján Péterffy. Each settler was given a plot of land that he had to clear and prepare, and the colonists were exempt from taxes for three years. This village was settled by Slovaks from the Gemer¹⁴ and Hont¹⁵ regions.

In 1803, a large group of Slovaks arrived in Nădlac, primarily from Slovenský Komlőš (Romanian: *Tot Comlăuș*), but also from Békéscsaba and Sarvaš. By 1806, Nădlac had 3,335 Slovak inhabitants, and their numbers continued to grow. The Royal Chamber approved the relocation of a part of the population from Slovenský Komlőš to Nădlac, based on a Chamber decision dated August 28, 1800. In the fall of 1802, about 200 families arrived in Nădlac from Sarvaš, Békéscsaba, and Slovenský Komlőš. They took care of the allocated fields but returned to their old settlements for

¹² Ludovít Haan, *Pametnosti békeš-čabianske* [Historical Memorabilia from Békéscsaba], Pešť, 1866, p. 17.

¹³ Ianko Gubani, *Slovenská menšina v Rumunsku*, p. 421.

¹⁴ Gemer is a Slovak region. Its territory is almost identical to the territory of the former Gemersko-Malohontská County. Gemer borders the national parks Slovenský raj and Muránska planina. It currently belongs to the Brezno District.

¹⁵ The Hont region is located in the south of central Slovakia. It is one of the oldest Slovak regions and its territory is identical to the territory of the Slovak part of the former Hont County, whose last seat was Šahy.

the winter. Only in the spring of 1803 did they return and begin building their first houses¹⁶. Later, in 1805, 700 Slovaks from the abandoned village of Slovenská Stámora joined Nădlac. In 1813, Slovaks from Orava¹⁷, Ponitrie¹⁸, as well as from Bačka and Vojvodina, joined the Nădlac community. Nădlac was gradually populated by Slovaks from various historical regions of central Slovakia, including Novohrad¹⁹, Hont²⁰, Zvolen²¹, Liptov²², and Gemer²³.

Nădlac grew rapidly as it was also settled by Slovaks from earlier phases of colonization in the surrounding areas – from Vojvodina, from the Romanian part of the Banat, and directly from Slovakia. Over time, Nădlac became the settlement with the largest Slovak minority²⁴.

Due to high birth rates and a lack of arable land, many Nădlac inhabitants began to leave their area from the 1820s to the 1840s, founding new Slovak villages in the lowlands. They settled, for example, in Pitvaroš²⁵ and even in more distant parts of Europe and America²⁶. During the interwar period, Nădlac began to play the role of a spiritual and national center for the Slovak minority in Romania. Up to this day, Nădlac remains a cultural, educational, and national revival center for the entire Arad-Banat region.

The Slovaks also settled in the territory of the historic Timișoara Banat (Romanian: *Banatul Timișoarei*, *Banatul timișan*). The historical Timișoara Banat, after World War I, was divided by state borders. Its western part became part of Vojvodina, the larger eastern portion was assigned to Romania, and a small northwestern section lies in present-day Hungary. The terrain is flat or slightly hilly,

¹⁶ Samu Borovszky, *Csanád vármegye története 1715-ig.*, Budapest, 1897, p. 427.

¹⁷ Orava is located in the northwestern part of Slovakia in the Žilina Region.

¹⁸ Ponitrie is a Slovak region located in the basin of the Nitra River and its tributaries. In addition to the Danubian Lowland, it also includes the Upper Nitra Basin.

¹⁹ The Novohrad County is now the territory of a former Hungarian county divided between Slovakia and Hungary. The area of the historical Novohrad currently occupies the central southern part of the Central Slovakia region. It consists of the eastern part of the Veľký Krtíš district, the southwestern part of the Zvolen district, and almost the entire Lučenec district.

²⁰ The Hont County was located in the southern part of central Slovakia.

²¹ The Zvolen County was a historical territory in central Slovakia, named after the Zvolen Castle. The core of the territory lies in the Zvolen Basin.

²² The Liptov County covered an area roughly corresponding to the present-day districts of Ružomberok and Liptovský Mikuláš, with a small part extending into the district of Poprad. It was located primarily in the northern part of central Slovakia.

²³ Pavel Rozkoš, *Svadba Slovákov v Nădlaku* [The Wedding of Slovaks in Nădlac], „Slováci v zahraničí 1”, 1971, p. 155.

²⁴ Jaroslav Čukan et al., *Mapovanie a hodnotenie kultúrneho potenciálu Slovákov v Rumunsku* [Mapping and Assessment of the Cultural Potential of Slovaks in Romania], „Kontexty” 2, 2017, p. 8–9.

²⁵ Pitvaros is a village in Hungary, located in Csongrád County, Makó District, near the Romanian border.

²⁶ Pavol Hlásnik, Bianca Pasková, *Historicko-demografická charakteristika skúmaných lokalít* [Historical and Demographic Characteristics of the Studied Localities], „Atlas ľudovej kultúry Slovákov v Rumunsku”, Nădlak, Vydavateľstvo Ivana Krasku, 1998, p. 88–118.

with low elevation, offering favorable conditions for agriculture and for the cultivation of heat-loving crops. After the end of Ottoman rule, this border territory was settled by Slovaks, Czechs, and Germans, who, together with Serbs, Romanians, Hungarians, and Jews, created a multiethnic and multicultural environment.

At the beginning of the 19th century, specifically in 1819–1820, Slovaks from Békéscsaba, as well as from Orava and Nitra²⁷, settled in Semlak (Romanian: *Semlac*). A second group of Slovaks arrived in 1852, consisting mainly of members of the imperial army from eastern Slovakia. These soldiers dispersed across the lowlands after the suppression of the 1849 uprising. In the 1870s, around 300 Slovaks of Greek Catholic faith also settled in Semlak, but they quickly assimilated with the local Romanians. In other settlements in this region, the number of Slovaks was relatively small (as in Semlak), such as in Pecica (Romanian: *Pecica*), Arad, Șeitin (Romanian: *Șeitin*), Pâncota (Romanian: *Pâncota*), and in similar places²⁸.

Between 1825 and 1827, groups of Slovaks settled in Vucova (Romanian: *Vucova*). The first settlers included 25 Slovak families from Veľký Krtíš²⁹ in the Novohrad region as part of state-sponsored colonization. Each family received 32 yokes of land, a plot for a house, and even one yoke of vineyard land. Later, Slovaks began purchasing land there. By 1827, they had built a school and hired a teacher. In 1828, Slovaks from Novohrad, Trenčín³⁰, and Nitra, and later (1847–1848) from Békéscsaba, settled in Brestovec (Romanian: *Brestovat*). In this village, Slovaks lived alongside Romanians, Czechs, Germans, and Hungarians³¹. At the beginning of the 19th century, Slovaks also settled in Tejč (Romanian: *Tes*), Skajuš (Romanian: *Scăiuș*), and Berzovia (Romanian: *Berzovia*)³². In 1853, Slovaks from the Šariš region³³ settled in Veľký Pereg (Romanian: *Peregul Mare*). However, they received relatively little land in Peregul, and the settlers primarily worked as agricultural laborers or helpers. Alongside Slovaks and Romanians, Czechs also lived in this area. In 1883, a group of Slovaks from Békéscsaba and several Catholic families from Orava (from Suchá Hora) and from the Nitra region settled in Tipar (Romanian: *Tipar*). In addition to Slovaks, Romanians, Hungarians, and Germans also lived in Tipar³⁴.

²⁷ Nitra is a city located in the Nitra Region, approximately 90 km east of Slovakia's capital, Bratislava. The city lies in the Danubian Hills, on the Nitra River, near the southern edge of the Tribeč Mountains.

²⁸ Ján Sirácky, *Slováci vo svete 1*, p. 85.

²⁹ Veľký Krtíš is a town located in the Banská Bystrica Region, in southern Slovakia.

³⁰ Trenčín is one of the three oldest cities in Slovakia and the largest city in the Trenčín Region, serving as its administrative center. It is located in the northwestern part of Slovakia.

³¹ Ján Sirácky, *Slováci vo svete 1*, p. 86.

³² Jaroslav Čukan et al., *Mapovanie a hodnotenie kultúrneho*, p. 9–10. See also Miriama Bošelová, *Slovak minority in Romania – ethnocultural contexts*, p. 49.

³³ The Šariš region is located in eastern Slovakia, with the city of Prešov as its center.

³⁴ Ondrej Štefanko, *Slovenské osídlenie v Rumunsku* [Slovak Settlement in Romania], „Atlas ľudovej kultúry Slovákov v Rumunsku”, Nadlak, Ivan Krasko, 1998, p. 15–21. See also Ianko Gubani, *Slovenská menšina v Rumunsku*, p. 422.

A notable example of the diverse origins of Slovak settlers is one of the southernmost Slovak communities in Romania – Butín (Romanian: *Butin*) in the Timiș county (Romanian: *județul Timiș*). At the time, Butín belonged to the Royal Chamber. In 1810, 417 Slovaks lived there, and by 1820, they had established a confessional school³⁵. The original locations from which Slovaks migrated to Butín include Valaská Dubová, Orava, and the Nitra region – specifically Brezová pod Bradlom, Myjava, and Vrbové³⁶.

Throughout the 19th century and the early 20th century, Slovak migrants continued to arrive in Butín from Malý Kereš³⁷, Slovenský Komlôš, and Békéscsaba in present-day Hungary, from Aradáč, Padina, Kovačica, Hajdušica, Jánošík, Vojlovica, and Pančevo in Serbian Banat, from Báčsky Petrovec and Silbaš in Bačka, as well as from Nădlac, Vucova, Semlak, Moravia, and Clopodia (Romanian: *Clopodia*) in Romania. After the dissolution of Austria-Hungary, several Slovaks from Brezová pod Bradlom in the Trenčín county, Slovakia, moved to Butín in the 1940s³⁸.

The main reasons for the Slovak migration to these territories

The primary reasons for migration to these territories included economic motives, such as the lack of labor in the sparsely populated plains of Arad and Banat. Noble landowners sought to populate these areas with new settlers who owned basic agricultural tools, horse-drawn or ox-drawn wagons. Such settlers had the means to cultivate and improve the land effectively³⁹.

The immigrants themselves were drawn to these regions due to the fertile fields and excellent agricultural conditions offered by the sparsely populated plains. Local landowners provided various incentives, such as temporary exemptions from labor obligations for the landowners, materials for building churches and schools, and rights to operate dry and water mills, among other benefits⁴⁰.

³⁵ For the history of Butín, see the publication: Jaroslav Čukan, *Butín. Kultúrne tradície Slovákov v rumunskom Banáte* [Butin: Cultural Traditions of Slovaks in the Romanian Banat], Nitra, Filozofická fakulta UKF v Nitre, 2008, 250 p.

³⁶ Brezová pod Bradlom, Myjava, and Vrbové are towns located in present-day western Slovakia. Jaroslav Čukan et al., *Mapovanie a hodnotenie kultúrneho*, p. 9–10. or Sirácky, Ján, *Slováci vo svete 1*, p. 85.

³⁷ Malý Kereš, also known as Kiškereš (Hungarian: *Kiskőrös*), is a town in Hungary, located in Bács-Kiskun County within the Kiskőrös District.

³⁸ Jaroslav Čukan et al., *Mapovanie a hodnotenie kultúrneho*, p. 10.

³⁹ Ján Gomboš, *Korene stykov nadlackých a komlôšských Slovákov* [The Roots of Contacts Between Slovaks from Nădlac and Komlôš], in vol. *200 rokov života Slovákov v Nadlaku*, Nadlak, Ivan Krasko, 2003, p. 5–8. See also J. Kukučka, *Nadlacká kolonizácia vo svetle nových historických zdrojov* [The Nădlac Colonization in the Light of New Historical Sources], in vol. *200 rokov života Slovákov v Nadlaku*, Nadlak, Ivan Krasko, 2003, p. 8–12.

⁴⁰ Petr Kokaisl et al., *Po stopách Slovákov ve východní Evropě: Polsko, Ukrajina, Maďarsko, Rumunsko, Srbsko, Chorvatsko a Černá Hora* [In the Footsteps of Slovaks in Eastern Europe: Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro], Praha, Nostalgie, 2014, p. 161.

Another significant reason for settling in the new territories was the overpopulation of their original villages and the lack of arable land, which was the primary source of livelihood⁴¹.

Due to its geographic location and agricultural character, the Arad-Banat region experienced another wave of Slovak migration in the 1960s. This time, it was internal migration from the Bihor-Sălaj region. The new immigrants moved to areas with established Slovak minorities, such as Nădlac, Butin, and Vucova. During this migration wave, Slovaks also settled down in villages like Fântânele, Mănăștur, Topolovățul Mare, and Iosifalău, where there had previously been no Slovak communities⁴². It was during this period that the Slovak population in cities like Arad, Timișoara (Romanian: *Timișoara*), and Reșița (Romanian: *Reșița*) also increased⁴³.

The primary occupation of Slovaks in the Arad-Banat region was agriculture, as the soil in this area consists of fertile chernozems. In addition to cultivating wheat, tobacco, and paprika, residents also engaged in cattle farming⁴⁴.

A distinctive characteristic of Slovaks migrating to the Arad County and to Banat was their tendency to settle in locations already inhabited by other nationalities rather than establishing entirely new settlements. This significantly influenced the natural process of acculturation, which involved not only blending cultural elements but also creating unique manifestations, particularly in material culture. For example, Nădlac was primarily inhabited by Romanians, Serbs, and Hungarians, meaning Slovaks did not arrive in an empty or deserted area⁴⁵.

Migration of Slovaks to the Bihor-Sălaj region

The migration of Slovaks to the Bihor-Sălaj region (Romanian: *județul Bihor, județul Sălaj*) began in the second half of the 18th century and reached its peak in the first half of the 19th century. Similar to the Arad-Banat region, this migration occurred in several waves. The primary goal of the Hungarian nobility was the effective economic exploitation of the forested areas of the Plopiș Mountains (Romanian: *Munții Plopiș, Munții Rez*). Consequently, the new settlers primarily worked in forestry as lumberjacks and also in glassworks, where they utilized the harvested timber⁴⁶.

⁴¹ Ján Gomboš, *Korene stykov nadlacksých a komlôšských Slovákov*, p. 7.

⁴² Eva Michalčáková, *Sťahovanie Slovákov do Sedmohradska a spôsob ich života* [The Migration of Slovaks to Transylvania and Their Way of Life], in vol. *Slováci v zahraničí 6: Zborník Oddelenia pre zahraničných Slovákov MS*, Martin, Matica slovenská, 1980, p. 159–178.

⁴³ Petr Kokaisl et al., *Po stopách Slováků ve východní Evropě*, p. 161.

⁴⁴ Ondrej Štefanko, *Slovenské osídlenie v Rumunsku*, p. 17.

⁴⁵ For the material culture of Slovak immigrants, see the publication: *Identita, história a kultúra. Dejiny Slovákov na Dolnej zemi* [Identity, History, and Culture: The History of Slovaks in the Lower Land], Anna Kováčová (eds.), Budapešť – Békešská Čaba, 2011, 174 p.

⁴⁶ Juraj Cigán, Peter Chrastina, *Pôvod bihorských Slovákov z hľadiska kritickej analýzy diela Grigoreho Benedeka (jazykový a historický kontext)* [The Origin of Bihor Slovaks from the Perspective of a Critical Analysis of Grigore Benedek's Work (Linguistic and Historical Context)], „Český lid – Etnologický časopis“, 2013, vol. 100, nr. 2, p. 173–182, or Ianko Gubani, *Slovenská menšina v Rumunsku*, p. 423.

Between 1785 and 1790, at the invitation of count Barányi, the first 50 Slovak families arrived in the forests around Borumlacu (Romanian: *Borumlaca*), Varzaľ (Romanian: *Vărzari*), and today's Bodonoș (Romanian: *Budoii*). These groups consisted of Slovaks from Kysuce⁴⁷, Gemer, and Zemplín⁴⁸. They were promised favorable conditions and received cleared land in return for their labor. The majority of Slovaks settled in Bodonoș, located at the northwestern foothills of the Bihor Mountains. This settlement became the largest Slovak village in the Transylvanian Ore Mountains (Romanian: *Munții Metaliferi*) of the Western Carpathians (*Munții Apuseni*)⁴⁹. The land in the area is relatively fertile, and the village territory contained rich deposits of brown coal. In 1880, the village had 210 inhabitants, and by 1910, the population had grown to 334⁵⁰.

In 1811, Slovaks from Zemplín founded the settlement of Salajka, which later became part of today's Gemelčička (Romanian: *Făget, Valea Ungurului*). Gemelčička itself was established around 1800. By 1830, the village was home to 360 Slovaks living in 70 houses. Over the next 60 years, the population grew significantly, reaching 1,412 inhabitants and 223 houses. The settlers mainly came from Orava, Kysuce, and the Slovak-Moravian border regions. Additional groups arrived from the Slovak Ore Mountains, specifically from the villages of Látky, Lom nad Rimavicou, and Málinec. The residents lived a typical dispersed settlement lifestyle. Each household had a fruit orchard and agricultural land that they cultivated. Houses were spaced an average of 50 to 200 meters apart. Over time, Gemelčička became the largest Slovak dispersed settlement in the Transylvanian Ore Mountains (Romanian: *Munții Metaliferi*). In 1898, groups of Slovaks from the settlements of Židáreň (Romanian: *Valea Târnei*) and Borumlacu relocated to a valley in an area covered by oak forests, where they established the settlement of Čerpotok (Romanian: *Valea Cerului*)⁵¹. This territory had previously been uninhabited, as it was primarily used as pastureland. The organization of this settlement more closely resembled a lowland village than a dispersed settlement. During World War II, the village was occupied by Hungary. After the war, coal mining began in the area, followed later by oil extraction⁵².

⁴⁷ Kysuce is a region in northwestern Slovakia that encompasses the districts of Čadca and Kysucké Nové Mesto.

⁴⁸ Ianko Gubani, *Slovenská menšina v Rumunsku*, p. 423. Bodonoș is located at the foothills of the northwestern Transylvanian Ore Mountains. Eva Michalčáková, *Stáhovanie Slovákov do Sedmohradska*, p. 160.

⁴⁹ See Radek Ocelák, *Počátky osídlení II: Bodonoš, Boromlak, Varzaľ* [The Beginnings of Settlement II: Bodonoș, Boromlacu, Varzari] http://ocelak.cz/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/pocaty_osidleni_II_bodonos_boromlak_varzal.pdf

⁵⁰ Ľudovít Hamáš, *Z dejín Slovákov v Rumunskej socialistickej republike. Slovenské obce v Sedmohradsku* [From the History of Slovaks in the Socialist Republic of Romania: Slovak Villages in Transylvania], in vol. *Slováci v zahraničí 2*, 1974, p. 115.

⁵¹ Miriama Bošelová, *Slovak minority in Romania – ethnocultural contexts*, p. 50, or Ján Sirácky, *Slováci vo svete 1*, p. 89.

⁵² Miriama Bošelová, *Slovak minority in Romania – ethnocultural contexts*, p. 50.

Between 1811 and 1817, count Bánffy invited Slovaks to settle down in the region's forests. These settlers were primarily lumberjacks and metallurgists from the eastern and central regions of Slovakia. They settled down in the hills west of Gemelčička, establishing the settlements of Židáreň (Romanian: *Valea Târnei*) and Nová Huta (Romanian: *Șinteu*). Židáreň is located along the road from Aleșd to Șimleul Silvaniei (Slovak: *Šumľov*) and was founded by Slovaks from the Zemplín region. By 1830, Slovaks had already established a school there⁵³. Count Bánffy completed the settlement of his estates by 1820.

Around 1830, count Batthyányi also began the settlement of his estates⁵⁴. At that time, Slovaks from Orava, Zemplín, and Zvolen counties founded the villages of Stará Huta (Romanian: *Huta Voivozi*) and Sočet (Romanian: *Socet*)⁵⁵. The name of the village Stará Huta originates from the glassworks that settlers built there for glass production. The surrounding area was rich in dense forests, and wood from these forests was used as fuel for the glassworks' furnaces. Unlike the settlement of other fertile areas of the Lowlands, this settlement was characterized by a prevalence of craftsmanship and work in the glassworks. Besides producing firewood from beech forests, the Slovak population made a living by collecting quartz (locally known as „žabice”), which is still found in the local Bystrá stream⁵⁶.

In 1820, Slovaks from the areas around Gemer and Detva founded the village of Bogdana Huta (Romanian: *Bogdana*). The surnames of the first settlers included Bigas, Ďuriš, and Kortiš. The Slovaks in this village were known for their exemplary coexistence with the local Romanian population, with intermarriages between Slovak and Romanian families being common. They spoke a dialect similar to that of other Slovaks in the Transylvanian Ore Mountains, with some expressions from Eastern Slovakia, as several Slovak families from Eastern Slovakia settled there in the 19th century. Additionally, they were fluent in Romanian and Hungarian⁵⁷.

In 1831, Slovak families from Zemplín founded the settlement of Bikáč (Romanian: *Bicaciu*), a mixed community near Oradea Mare. Groups of Slovaks moved there from other Romanian villages at the end of the 19th century. Most of the original inhabitants came from the Zemplín, Šariš, and Abov regions. In 1840, Slovaks established the village of Boiana Huta (Romanian: *Boianu Mare*), where they worked as farmers and, during the winter, as lumberjacks. In the 20th century, some

⁵³ Ľudovít Hamáš, *Z dejín Slovákov v Rumunskej socialistickej republike*, p. 126.

⁵⁴ On this topic, see: Radek Ocelák, *Kolonizace úspěšná i neúspěšná: historický místopis slovenského osídlování Sedmihradská* [Successful and Unsuccessful Colonization: A Historical Topography of Slovak Settlement in Transylvania], http://www.ocelak.cz/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/pocatky_osidleni.pdf

⁵⁵ Radek, Ocelák, *Počátky slovenského osídlení v bihorskó-salajské oblasti Rumunska: osídlení vrchu (Stará Huta, Gemelčička, Nová Huta, Židáreň, Sočet)* [The Beginnings of Slovak Settlement in the Bihor-Sălaj Region of Romania: Highland Settlements (Stará Huta, Gemelčička, Nová Huta, Židáreň, Sočet)] http://www.ocelak.cz/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/pocatky_osidleni.pdf

⁵⁶ Miriama Bošelová, *Slovak minority in Romania – ethnocultural contexts*, p. 50.

⁵⁷ Ľudovít Hamáš, *Z dejín Slovákov v Rumunskej socialistickej republike*, p. 116.

Slovaks moved from this village to Jeseník and Český Krumlov in the Czech Republic. A group of Slovaks also settled in the neighboring village of Patal⁵⁸. For work and in order to improve their living conditions, Slovaks from the Zvolen county moved to Fegernik (Romanian: *Fegernic*). Later, in 1848, Slovaks from Šariš founded the village of Bystrá, also known as Čierna hora (Romanian: *Pădurea Neagră*)⁵⁹.

This marked the end of the initial colonization and the beginning of the so-called internal colonization, during which Slovaks moved to other settlements situated in the same area belonging to modern-day Romania⁶⁰.

Internal migration waves

The history of Slovak villages in the Bihor–Sălaj region recorded two internal migration waves. These were caused by a high birth rate, leading to overpopulation in the established villages, as well as by the poor soil quality and limited job opportunities. The first wave of internal migration lasted until 1918, with the Slovak minority settling in locations such as: Šarany (Romanian: *Serani*), Nový Šastelek (Romanian: *Sacalasău Nou*), Bojovské (Romanian: *Marca Huta*), Groš (Romanian: *Groși*), Lunkšora (Romanian: *Luncșoara*), Lugoš (Romanian: *Lugașul de Sus*), Siplak (Romanian: *Suplacu de Barcău*), Zavaň (Romanian: *Zăuan-Băi*), Plopiš (Romanian: *Plopiș*), Jaz (Romanian: *Iaz*), Tusa (Romanian: *Tusa*), Ciganești (Romanian: *Țigănești de Criș*), Čerpotok (Romanian: *Valea Cerului*), and the settlement of Tria near Derna (Romanian: *Derna*), among others located near existing Slovak villages⁶¹. Interestingly, in many cases, people from Slovakia's mountainous counties reached Bihor indirectly. During the first phase of migration, a part of the population moved from Upper Orava to locations in western or northwestern Gemer and Novohrad, and only then to Bihor⁶².

In the 1960s, as a result of industrialization and limited job opportunities, another migration wave of Slovaks occurred. This time, they moved not only to industrial centers such as Oradea (Slovak: *Oradeja/Varad*), Alešd (Slovak: *Ilešd/Alešd*), Bicaciu (Slovak: *Bikáč*), Derna (Slovak: *Derna*), Voivozi (Slovak: *Vojvoz*), and Marghita (Slovak: *Margeta/Margita*) but also to agricultural villages like Aștileu (Slovak: *Aštil'ov*), Varasău (Slovak: *Harasov*), Loranta (Slovak: *Loranta*), Urvind (Slovak: *Urvind*), Mădăras (Slovak: *Madaras*), Foglaș (Slovak: *Foglaš*), Valea Cerului, Vâlcele, Tileagd (Slovak: *Telegda*) in Bihor, as well as to the previously mentioned settlements in the Arad-Banat region⁶³.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 114–119.

⁵⁹ Ondrej Štefanko, *Slovenské osídlenie v Rumunsku*, p. 18.

⁶⁰ Ján Sirácky, *Slováci vo svete 1*, p. 88–89.

⁶¹ Ianko Gubani, *Slovenská menšina v Rumunsku*, p. 423–424.

⁶² Juraj Cigán, Peter Chrastina, *Pôvod bihorských Slovákov z hľadiska kritickej*, p. 423.

⁶³ Ondrej Štefanko, *Slovenské osídlenie v Rumunsku*, p. 20.

Cultural diversity and linguistic evolution

The diversity of regions from which Slovaks arrived in the Bihor-Sălaj region and the subsequent internal migration waves fostered the creation of a Slovak community characterized by mixed dialects and unique expressions of folk culture. These emerged as a combination of various ethnocultural elements into a single identity. The mountainous areas, often difficult to access, especially on isolated homesteads and hills, preserved unique local cultures, maintaining their language, traditions, religious customs, and dialects⁶⁴.

For example, in Nová Huta, the residents are referred to as „Huťania”, a term used by the inhabitants of this village in the Bihor County to distinguish themselves from the surrounding world. Alongside Slovaks, who formed the majority in Nová Huta, there were also Romanians, Hungarians, and Roma people. The Huťania differentiated themselves from the Romanian ethnicity primarily through designations and names. They sometimes referred to Romanians as „Padurjan” (male) or „Padurjanka” (female). Slovaks living in present-day Romania, including those from the Bihor region, were given the name „Tăuți” by Romanians, derived from the Hungarian term for Slovaks – „Tóti”. Given the village’s location, the Huťania are also called „horniaci” or „vrchári” (highlanders), while the inhabitants of lower-lying Slovak villages (like Bodonoș, Varzal’, and Boruml’ak) are referred to as „dolniaci” (lowlanders)⁶⁵.

In most Slovak settlements of these mountainous regions, the harsh living conditions did not allow the development of the population’s educational level. Although confessional schools were established in the 19th century, as I indicated for some locations, prevailing trends of the time, the lack of adequate church authorities, and insufficient financial resources hindered the development of national consciousness in these schools. As a result of these adverse circumstances, especially up until 1918, there was a high level of illiteracy and an absence of organized cultural activities.

For the Slovak minority in modern-day Romania, its language has been and remains the most significant manifestation of the normative function that culture provides⁶⁶. For the Slovaks, speaking Slovak is natural, and the language ensures the internal cohesion of the community, acting as a unifying and collective factor even today. After World War II, most Slovaks from the Bihor region returned to Czechoslovakia as part of re-emigration efforts.

Slovak settlements in the Satu Mare and Maramureș counties

The Satu Mare County (Hungarian: **Szatmár vármegye**, Latin: **Comitatus Szathmariensis**, German: **Sathmarer Komitat**) was historically a county of Hungary (before 1918), and today part of its territory lies in northwestern Romania, with a

⁶⁴ Petr Kokaisl et al., *Po stopách Slováků ve východní Evropě*, p. 164.

⁶⁵ Miriama Bošelová, *Slovak minority in Romania – ethnocultural contexts*, p. 53.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 50.

smaller portion in eastern Hungary. The Maramureş County (Hungarian: **Máramaros vármegye**, Romanian: **comitatul Maramureş**, German: **Maramuresch Komitat**) was similarly a Hungarian county (before 1918), now located in northwestern Romania and western Ukraine (Zakarpattia Oblast).

The Satu Mare – Maramureş region was settled by Slovaks from the Zemplín, Šariš, and Už⁶⁷ counties who arrived in 1787 at the invitation of Hungarian nobles Vécsey and Perényi. Slovaks established themselves in villages like Livada, Vagas (Romanian: **Văgaş**), and Porumbéşti⁶⁸. In 1847, Slovaks from Zemplín, Šariš, and Abov moved to the settlement of Huta Certeza (Romanian: **Huta Certeze**) to work in glass and iron foundries. Most Slovaks there made a living primarily from agriculture and lived at a very low cultural level. They spoke the Zemplín dialect and were isolated from other Slovaks. Near Huta Certeza, there is a small settlement called Bujar Haz, home for several Slovak families⁶⁹.

From the late 18th century to the first half of the 19th century, skilled miners from Spiš migrated to the mining settlements in the region (e.g., Baia Mare, Baia Sprie, Ocna Şugatag, Băiuţ, Căvnic, Borşa, Coştiui, Vişeu de Sus). In 1889, Slovaks from Jánovce in Spiš settled in the village of Boineşti, which still bears the Slovak name „Ľudovítovo údolie” (Ľudovít’s Valley), derived from the name of the founder of the local iron foundry. In the 19th century, both counties had a significant Slovak population. For the spiritual needs of these settlers, a separate parish was established in Huta Certeza in 1863, which included Slovak villages in the Oaş region. Religious instruction and part of the services were conducted in Slovak. However, due to the absence of Slovak schools and to strong Magyarization pressures, this population was gradually assimilated over time.

Similar to the Bihor and Sălaj regions, efforts to preserve the Slovak dialect and ethnic consciousness began in the 1930s with the introduction of Slovak-language education⁷⁰. However, attempts of national awakening through the establishment of Slovak schools in Huta Certeza and Boineşti gradually failed. Education in these schools lasted only briefly, and after 1945, most Slovaks in these counties were either Magyarized or Romanianized⁷¹.

Slovaks in Bukovina

Bukovina (Romanian: **Bucovina**, Ukrainian: **Буковина [Bukovyna]**, German: **Buchenland** or **Bukowina**, Polish: **Bukowina**, Hungarian: **Bukovina**) was a historical region and part of the Habsburg Monarchy between 1775 and 1918. Today,

⁶⁷ Už County was a territory in the southeastern part of Slovakia and the western part of Ukraine.

⁶⁸ Petr Kokaisl et al., *Po stopách Slováku ve východní Evropě*, p. 166.

⁶⁹ Ľudovít Hamáš, *Z dejín Slovákov v Rumunskej socialistickej republike*, p. 120.

⁷⁰ Jaroslav Čukan et al., *Mapovanie a hodnotenie kultúrneho*, p. 16–17.

⁷¹ Petr Kokaisl et al., *Po stopách Slováku ve východní Evropě*, p. 167.

it is divided between Romania and Ukraine. The Slovak community in Bukovina represents an interesting „branch” in the history of Slovak communities in Romania, as it remained isolated from them throughout its existence and did not share the same post-reemigration fate. The mountainous environment of Bukovina was colonized at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries by **Gorals**⁷² and other Slovak settlers from the regions of **Kysuce** and **Orava**⁷³. The Gorals came from Slovak villages such as Skalité, Čierne, Svrčinovec, Horelica, Turzovka, Makov, Podvysoká, Oščadnica, Závodie, Staškov, Vysoká nad Kysucou, Olešná, Raková, and Čadca. These Gorals also settled in Bukovina's Stará Huta, where they worked in a glasswork factory⁷⁴. Employment opportunities were also available at the salt mine in Kačica (Romanian: **Cacica**). In all these areas, Slovaks found sustenance through work in forestry. In 1793, an entrepreneur named Kiegshaber built a glass factory near the Siret River for producing window glass. The factory owner lacked sufficient workers for the glassworks and timber harvesting from Bukovina's forests. Consequently, in 1799, he sent envoys to Upper Hungary, recruiting 100 people who arrived in Bukovina in 1803 to work. They established a new settlement they named **Krasna**, likely to remind them of Krásno nad Kysucou, where some had originated⁷⁵. Over time, more settlers arrived from places like Oščadnica, Skalité, Ústie nad Oravou, and other parts of Slovakia.

The Slovak population grew rapidly, and by the mid-19th century, there were 25 locations in Bukovina with Slovak inhabitants. In these settlements, Slovaks spoke the **Kysuce dialect**⁷⁶. Most incoming Slovak residents took over abandoned feudal estates, which their previous owners had vacated for various reasons, and assumed the obligations associated with managing these lands. A larger group of 14 families from Trenčín County arrived before 1814, likely due either to the flooding of the Kysuca River in 1813 or to the famine that devastated five Upper Hungarian counties between 1811 and 1817⁷⁷.

By taking over abandoned estates, Slovaks did not form a cohesive community. The first request for land in order to establish an independent settlement was

⁷² The Gorals are an ethnographic group living in the Czech-Polish-Slovak border region, approximately between Jablunkov in the Czech Republic (inclusive) and northern Spiš in Slovakia (inclusive), as well as in small enclaves in Poland, Slovakia, and on the Romanian-Ukrainian border.

⁷³ See Dagmar Mária Anoca, *Slovenská literatúra v Rumunsku. Druhé doplnené vydanie* [Slovak Literature in Romania. Second Revised and Expanded Edition], Arad, Ivan Krasko, 2010, p. 11.

⁷⁴ Michal Kurpaš, *Výskum Slovákov v severnom Rumunsku – prieskum terénu* [Research on Slovaks in Northern Romania – Field Survey], in „Kontexty kultúry a turizmu”, 2, 2015, p. 41.

⁷⁵ Krásno nad Kysucou (*Krasno*) is one of the youngest towns in the territory of Slovakia. The town is located in the Čadca District in the Žilina Region.

⁷⁶ Jozef Jurašek, *Potomkovia Kysučanov v rumunskej Bukovine* [Descendants of People from Kysuce in Romanian Bukovina], <https://www.czsk.net/svet/clanky/svet/kysucebukovina.html>

⁷⁷ Lukáš Michalčák, *Kolonizácia Slovákov v Rumunsku* [Colonization of Slovaks in Romania], in vol. *Slováci v Rumunsku. Zborník materiálov z vedeckej konferencie 7.6.1995 Bratislava*, Bratislava, 1996, p. 22.

submitted by Slovaks living in the villages of Krasna (Romanian: **Crasna**) and Tereblecea (Romanian: **Tereblecea**) in 1821. However, this request was rejected by imperial decree, following advice from the district inspectorate, due to an insufficient amount of available arable land⁷⁸. Faced with extremely harsh conditions, the population relocated several times. Between 1834 and 1842, Slovaks settled in southern Bukovina in areas such as **Nový Solonec** (Romanian: **Solonețu Nou**), **Pleša (Romanian: Pleș)**, and **Poiana Micului** (Slovak: **Polana Malého**), where they lived alongside Romanian, Polish, and German inhabitants⁷⁹.

The situation changed in the 1830s with colonization efforts on state-owned lands. The economic office in Solca permitted the settlement of 30 Slovak families from the village of Adâncata in the fall of 1834. They were settled on clear-cut areas along the valley near the military road between the villages of Solca and Gura Humorului. The settlers were tasked with clearing forested land, maintaining and cleaning the military road, and building homes in such a way as to guard the largest possible portion of the road. In November 1834, the first Slovak-founded settlement in Bukovina, **Solonețu Nou**, was established⁸⁰. Under similar conditions, 16 Slovak families from the village of Clocucica settled in the summer of 1835 on the southern slope of Pleș Hill (Romanian: *Dealul Pleș*). This new settlement was named **Pleș** (or **Pleša** in Slovak).

The last and largest Slovak settlement was established in the spring of 1841 in the valley of the Humora River. Here, the state economic office in Solca permitted the settlement of 38 Slovak families from Tereblecea, 40 families from Crasna, and approximately 40 German families from Bohemia who had recently relocated to Bukovina. This mixed community, where Slovaks occupied the lower end and Germans the upper end, was named **Poiana Micului**. Slovaks adapted the name to **Pojana Mikuli** in their language. This village later became the cultural center of life for these three Slovak settlements⁸¹.

Conclusions

Beginning with the 18th century, Slovaks migrated to the territory of present-day Romania in several waves and directions. They founded new villages or settled in older ones alongside Romanian inhabitants. Slovak communities living in modern-day

⁷⁸ Tereza Richtáriková, *Konštrukcia slovenskej identity v komunite reemigrantov z Bukoviny do ČSR* [The Construction of Slovak Identity in the Community of Reemigrants from Bukovina to Czechoslovakia], „*Studia historica Brunensia*”, vol. 69, nr. 1, 2022, p. 60–61.

⁷⁹ Jaroslav Čukan et al., *Mapovanie a hodnotenie kultúrneho*, p. 17.

⁸⁰ Simeon Reli, *Z minulosti čechoslovácku usedlých na panstvích rumunského pravoslavného církevního sboru v Bukovině* [From the Past of Czechoslovaks Settled on the Estates of the Romanian Orthodox Church Parish in Bukovina], „*Bratislava 7*”, 1934, p. 223.

⁸¹ Raimund Friedrich Kaendl, *Das Ansiedlungswesen in der Bukowina seit der Besitzergreifung durch Österreich mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der Ansiedlung der Deutschen*, Wien, 1902, p. 304; Tereza Richtáriková, *Konštrukcia slovenskej identity*, p. 61.

Romania contributed to the development of local culture, economy, and education, enriching the lives of native residents with their traditions and customs. Slovaks migrated primarily in search of better living conditions, which they often found in their new homeland.

Slovaks living abroad maintained and continued the local, or more precisely regional, culture of their original homeland. At the same time, they developed new cultural elements in a rather specific way. Often, they began their „new life” in areas with different natural and geographical conditions, within a distinct socio-cultural environment, surrounded by people of different nations, ethnicities, and religions.

The way of life of Slovaks in Romania has been and remains a continuously evolving socio-cultural system that responds dynamically and naturally to the surrounding environment and to the circumstances brought by different historical periods. After World War II, some Slovak villages in Romania disappeared as residents emigrated to Czechoslovakia. However, many returned for various reasons and resettled in different parts of Romania.

Despite various historical and political challenges, Slovak communities in modern-day Romania still play a significant role in the country's multicultural environment and contribute to its ethnic diversity. Today, the Slovak diaspora in Romania is an important and inseparable part of Slovak cultural history.

Although the Slovak minority in Romania is small and geographically dispersed, it has managed to maintain its national identity and has resisted assimilation for more than two centuries. However, it is a fact that the number of Slovaks in Romania is declining. This is a general and understandable phenomenon, influenced by changes in lifestyle, low birth rates, natural assimilation, and contemporary population movements, such as migration for economic opportunities.