

Foaia Românească

7 Decades In-Between Documenting Social Reality and Culinary Journalism

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THE PURPOSE of the current article is to present a critical analysis of the subject, via a case study which highlights how the topic of food is reflected in a specific periodical, not widely known, but defining for the Romanian minority in Hungary. The publication in question is *Foaia românească* (The Romanian Sheet), the main organ of the Romanians in Hungary, published in Gyula since 1951. Employing a chronological approach, the main types of food-focused articles are reviewed, which leads to an understanding of how society perceives the importance of food and the way in which the press contributes, to a high degree, to the formation of public opinion about food. Prioritizing the importance of identifying the perspectives from which the topic of food is approached, a diachronic approach is adopted to reveal the major social, political and economic issues that characterize the contexts of the community to which the periodical is addressed. It will become clear how the perspective from which the topic of food is approached, as well as its construction as a topic of research and reflection for the Romanian community in question, are influenced by broader contexts. I thus deliberately disregard specific contexts related to the evolution of the magazine or the existence of potential causal relationships between the authors of the articles and their messages, as all these aspects are less visible and matter less to the general public who reads the magazine and whose opinion is formed by it. A synchronous analysis of the discourse about food at a specific moment in the period of the existence of the magazine, taking into account and comparing all references to food, would be a valid and relevant research exercise, but not one that will be offered here. The current chapter instead takes a rather descriptive approach to review the major steps in establishing food as a reflexive theme for a community, identifying a potential corpus of documents which can be used for a deeper analysis.

As a working method, the current paper completes observations made on the occasion of several scientific conferences¹ where I presented various topics based on my research of the primary sources in the archive at the offices of *Foaia românească* in 2019. During that research visit I documented all the references to food in the issues of the

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magazine and its supplements over the course of the seven decades of its existence. For the current article, only content published in *Foaia românească* itself has been considered, and the material from its supplements has not been taken into consideration for the sake of space. The entire archive of the magazine has been available online since July 2021 and has been consulted during the drafting stage of the current study.²

Recognized as the main publication of the Romanians in Hungary, *Foaia românească* published its only issue of its first year of existence on Thursday, 1 June 1950. The name at that time was *Libertatea noastră* (Our Freedom). It was published monthly from 15 January 1951 until 23 December 1955, for a total of 91 issues. From 1 November 1957 to 27 September 1991, the magazine's name was *Foaia noastră* (Our Sheet). At first it appeared bimonthly, and in 1978 it started to be published weekly. From 4 October 1991 to 24 December 1997 it appeared under the name *Noi* (We) with the variants *Noi, românii din Ungaria* (We, the Romanians in Hungary) and *Noi, săptămânal al românilor din Ungaria* (We, a Weekly of the Romanians in Hungary). With the issue of 9 January 1998 the magazine received its current name, *Foaia românească*.

Two main types of references to food can be distinguished within the magazine during the first years of its existence. First of all, there is an abundance of articles designed to promote collectivization, dealing with issues related to the state-led collecting of the products harvested by the peasants, now transformed into agricultural workers. Their aim is to convince the general public of the vital importance of accumulating large supplies of grain to be managed by cooperatives in order to provide a strong insurance against hunger. This is also the focus of the only article within the first issue of the magazine, which does not have the founding of the magazine and its implications for different areas of activity as its main subject. Published on the first page, the article has a suggestive title, "Let's harvest and collect in time and well, to ensure success!"³ and a propagandistic purpose. It aims to ensure an efficient collection of the harvest by the state, equaling food with social welfare: "Today the members of the mass organizations and all the working people face a great task: to ensure through joint efforts the food for the working people, raising their levels of wellbeing!"⁴ During the first five years of the existence of *Libertatea noastră* this topic returns regularly, vital as it is for the construction of socialism. It seems that the increase in food production by identifying new agricultural technologies, from developing better seeds to paying attention to sowing and harvesting, are as important as managing and preserving all these supplies. The argument is made that the evolution of society in Hungary depends to a decisive extent on the amount of staple foods that can be produced more easily via agricultural cooperatives than individually. Therefore, the public should be educated in such a manner as to prevent resistance to collectivization. Several titles are relevant: "Abundant Harvests in Agricultural Production Cooperatives in Our Country,"⁵ "Why Was it Necessary to Regulate Supplies?"⁶ "The Population of Micherchi Understood the Word of Time: The Sowing of Spring Barley Has Begun."⁷ "Collection is a Patriotic Duty,"⁸ "Harvesting in Time—the Struggle for Peace."⁹ "The Harvest of Peace"¹⁰ etc. Beyond the similarity in formulation, all these articles illustrate the idea of food in relation with cereal crops, implicitly recognizing humanity's historical dependence on cereals and vice versa.¹¹ Thus, for example, the press aims to raise awareness of the values of traditional communities by using bread, one of the most important food

items, as a symbol. Bread gradually replaces St. Stephen as the primary national symbol for Hungary. After the Second World War, when the communist regime abolished St. Stephen's Day, Hungary started to celebrate Constitution Day on 20 August. A relation is created between this national celebration and bread, due to its date close to the end of the wheat harvest. Here is an example of how the association between the two events has been constructed: "The rich harvest from the first year of the Five-Year Plan was gathered all over the country. This rich harvest is a well-deserved reward for the year-long efforts of all working people, especially the working people in the villages."¹² Similar images of well-being are regularly presented during this period mainly by associating the idea of well-being with the impressive amounts of food grown as a result of new agricultural policies and techniques. The press was obliged to draw attention to agricultural successes, especially in the summer and autumn months.

Gastronomic topics more in line with the current understanding of the concept start to appear from Thursday, 15 May 1952, when *Libertatea noastră* introduces a new column, entitled "Women's Corner."¹³ It was featured irregularly until the end of the 1980s, either under this name or an alternative, "Practical Homemaker." In October 1952, when "Women's Corner" was published for the second time, a brief explanation of the newly introduced column was given:

*Our goal with this column is to give practical advice to our readers on issues that arise in their households and to publish new methods, through which they can achieve greater results, thus increasing their family income. At the same time, we ask our readers to write to us as often as possible, asking for our advice, and we in turn will answer the questions in our column.*¹⁴

The main area in which the column tries to provide efficient solutions is precisely the management of one's kitchen, regarding daily cuisine, recognized as the domain of women (in contrast with *haute cuisine*, an exclusively male occupation).¹⁵ Opening with a paragraph on pig farming, this column contains a more applied section entitled "Homemakers' Problem," which explains the necessity of the column "Women's Corner": "The eternal problem of homemakers is what to cook. To make things easier for them, we publish some simple dishes that can be prepared very quickly, are tasty and... cheap!"¹⁶ The dishes proposed on this occasion are potatoes with cream, meatballs with potatoes (which can be served as a main course accompanied by a salad), Russian soup, a winter salad and a "nice cake," containing jam and walnuts. After this initial demonstration, "Women's Corner" appeared regularly for the next three decades, playing an important educational role. It provided specific suggestions indispensable for a good homemaker, focusing especially on maintaining a proper household hygiene: clothes maintenance, house cleaning, childcare, food preparation, etc. Thus, for instance, the column provides not only a recipe for the increasingly promoted jam, but also trains the readers regarding the storage conditions and cleanliness of the vessels to ensure that the jam would keep over winter:

First of all, we take everything out of the pantry. We dust the walls and clean them of insects that may have accumulated during the winter. In a day or two we whitewash the pantry,

*clean the window, the door and the shelves with hot water. A wooden or stone floor is also washed with hot water; in the case of an earthen floor, it is first washed with hot water, and then with a mixture of water and clay. After cleaning, we carry all the shelves back inside, put clean paper on them, and the pantry is ready to store the new jars.*¹⁷

However, before all this advice, the anonymous author reminds the reader of the importance of preserving a satisfactory quantity of vegetables and fruits for the winter at a time when they are still to be found in abundance, in the spirit of a socialist ethics of saving: “Step by step, the pantry empties. The canned food for the winter has been used, to make room for the new supplies.”¹⁸ In the instructions for the preparation of the jam, however, an imperative language, specific to culinary recipes is used:

*Pour 1 dl of water over the prepared fruits and boil it until it crystallizes again, but be careful not to burn it. When the sugar is at this stage, add 1 kg of strawberries, cleaned, washed and sprinkled with 1 dl rum and boil them until, trying a drop on a plate, you see that the drop no longer flows. Then the jam is ready.*¹⁹

At a time when, unlike in North America, most European households did not have refrigerators at all or only some extremely impractical ones,²⁰ recommendations regarding the correct storage of food are very important. Under these conditions, the correct cleaning of jars, “washed with hot water and wiped well with a clean cloth”²¹ becomes as important as using the right proportion of ingredients or following the precise technological process for obtaining the product. These instructions ensure that the population has access to a variety of food throughout the year, including the winter.

At the same time, the magazine does not miss any opportunity to disseminate information about the emergence of revolutionary culinary tools to aid local production. In December 1959 *Foaia noastră* announces that the Aluminum Factory has introduced a new model of cooking pot for sale, called “kukta,” in which “the two-year-old bean boils in 20–25 minutes.”²² The information is accompanied by a photo taken in the factory laboratories, where two technicians are testing this vessel. The first semi-prepared products are also obtained locally: “At the poultry processing company in Békéscsaba, 5–6 thousand packages of 400–500 grams are made daily, containing processed poultry for culinary use.”²³ The emergence of this revolutionary product indirectly highlights the benefits of the increasing visibility of the food industry, coming to the aid of workers: “Poultry thus prepared can be boiled immediately, thus greatly facilitating the work of homemakers working in parallel in the second shift.”²⁴

Beyond all this complementary information, “Women’s Corner” is an important source for culinary recipes. *Libertatea noastră* published its first culinary recipe in May 1952—a lamb *drob în foaie*,²⁵ prepared from lamb entrails which, once cooked and mixed with herbs, are placed as a filling in between two layers of dough, which can be baked either in the oven or in a pan. The recipe for this main course is accompanied by the recipe for an unnamed, simple and filling cake which can be kept for a long time. Following this innovative issue in the field of culinary journalism practiced by *Libertatea noastră*, both “Women’s Corner” column and the similar ones continued to provide regularly

recipes throughout the following decades. Unlike the recipes in the 1950s, the ones published at the end of the 1980s are adapted to the readers' socio-economic contexts, thus making their actual preparation more realistic. In the issues of the periodical from 1955 an attempt at the popularization of a Soviet-inspired cuisine can be recognized. The recipes presented are meant to introduce certain culinary practices and ingredients or to change attitudes in a certain direction. A good example is the recipe for rabbit with sauce, cooked with many vegetables. The insistence on the importance of vegetables and the demotion of meat from the main ingredient to a simple component of a larger whole is noteworthy. However, the dessert proposals are more representative as illustrations of specific trends of the time. The walnut cake recipe instructs the baker to place the walnut filling in between ready-made wafer sheets (bought in the shops); a recipe for "egg pancakes" is distinguished by the use of soda, which is required to ensure a "fairly soft dough for pancakes"; "Tree trunk cake" has a cream that can be obtained using either butter or margarine (a recent product). The decoration of this cake is extremely important and consists of lines drawn in the cream which are supposed to imitate the bark of a real tree trunk, made using a heated fork. In a context where Christmas is censured, the "winter tree" features instead, and edible decorations are proposed in the form of biscuits in various shapes, such as mushrooms and domino pieces. The issues of 1958 introduce a general change of tone and of themes, visible in the change of the name of the magazine and its reorganization. These changes also affect the field of culinary recipes. Thus, they are distinguished by a strange innovative character resulting from the atypical use of some ingredients or the substitution of the original ingredients of certain recipes with accessible local substitutes. These new culinary practices are hidden under the refined names given to some of the dishes: cauliflower soufflé, chestnut compote, potato pudding, coffee liqueur, and noodle mousse. A good example is the apple katayif, based on the famous Arabian dessert compared with which, except for the noodles, all the other main ingredients have been replaced by something else: apples are used instead of walnuts and a syrup obtained from sugar, water and vanilla powder is proposed to replace the original honey.

After 1960, the food references published over the next three decades in *Foaia noastră* can be divided into three categories of complementary information. These three categories sometimes appear together within the periodical, at other times they occur separately. The first, and most prominent, of these is the famous "practical advice," targeting the needs of households in communist societies and dealing with topics of interest to the general public, such as preserving and bottling food for winter or preparing and keeping fresh food in summer, in the absence of a refrigerator; the reuse of food resources to avoid waste; resorting to different "tricks" in the kitchen to obtain, for example, a tasty dish (steak, thawing meat, mashed potatoes); ideas for the presentation of food; instruction in table manners (how the steak should be served at the table, how the table is placed); "skewer" preparation; the way of organizing the kitchen as a space that is both hygienic and functional, and cleaning tips.

Secondly, the 1970s highlight two themes inspired by a paradoxical reality: an abundance of products of vegetable and animal origin, and the development of a (pseudo-) scientific approach to food which aimed to limit and reduce its consumption, especially

of meat. In a chronological approach, attention is first given to the importance of animal husbandry and of animal products—milk, eggs and meat. These were mandatorily produced in large quantities and in accordance with the quality standards agreed by the competent institutions in the vicinity of the Romanian villages in Hungary. This becomes an important topic in 1962 when “Women’s Corner” publishes information about milk, which is seen as food rather than as a drink:

Milk is relatively easy to digest, provided that, especially in the case of adults, it is not drunk like water; but consumed together with food such as bread or other flour-based products . . . If we compare the nutritional value of a liter of milk with that of other foods, counting it in calories, we can see that it is equal to: 750 grams of veal, 600 grams of beef, 400 grams of pork, 9 eggs, 2.300 kilograms of cabbage or 1.300 kilograms of apples. It is rich in vitamins B1, B2, C, A and D, as well as many mineral salts.²⁶

As if the public were completely ignorant, the same article also provides a recipe for preparing yoghurt. Beyond the processing of milk in a home kitchen, special attention is paid to industrialized processing, especially following the construction of the milk powder factory in Gyula, which, after the modernization of 1970

will process 125–130 thousand liters of milk daily, which will be three times more than the current production. In addition to milk powder, cheese and cream will be prepared in Gyula; from here the bottles of milk will be transported to nearby towns and villages.²⁷

The Gyula factory is the place where, because of these rewarding investments, the milk from the nearby households of localities such as Bătania (Battonya) and Micherechi (Méhkerék) will be processed. Furthermore, eggs are mainly presented as food that can be consumed boiled or fried, used as an ingredient in cakes or pies, or turned into egg liqueur. Attention has also been given to the symbolic usage of eggs as they are decorated for Easter. The possibility of having eggs hatch to raise chickens for meat is also discussed. Unlike milk and eggs, the idea of eating meat is not formulated explicitly, but suggested by titles that draw attention to the abundance of meat products: “Farm for Growing Pheasants in Gyula”²⁸; “A Pheasant Farm”²⁹ (which will raise over a million pheasants, turkeys and geese); “Three Thousand Chickens per Hour”³⁰; “A Visit to the Meat Plant in Gyula”³¹; “Shepherding is a Profitable Sector of the ‘Spic de Grâu’ Cooperative”³²; “Come on, for Pheasants!”³³; “Lambs for Export”³⁴; “Sixty Thousand Pheasant Chicks,”³⁵ “Thousands of Rabbits from Békéscsaba in the Refrigerator”³⁶ etc.

AFTER READING these articles it is obvious, in spite of the apparent abundance, that the consumer is not to be found in the vicinity of the reader, since these huge quantities of meat are exported to various countries, such as the Soviet Union, Austria, Switzerland, and West Germany. Meat consumption associated with local traditions, practiced on small scale in the household, is rarely mentioned—but still present in the magazine. For example, the slaughter of pigs and giving pork meat or dishes as alms are recorded as “traditional aspects of village life and a wonderful opportunity for

family and friends to gather and consume—of course in addition to a glass of wine—the wonderful dishes prepared with great skill by the woman of the house.³⁷ Pigeons are also frequently mentioned, as the domestic pigeon is considered “a means of supplying the family.”³⁸

Sugar is an aliment which was introduced into wider use during the soviet era and came to be regarded as a symbol of well-being. The column “Agricultural Corner”³⁹ in one of the first issues of the magazine describes sugar as indispensable for the proper functioning of the human body. It is obtained from sugar cane, a plant that can only be grown in geographical areas controlled by capitalists. The alternative would be to cultivate another plant from which the much-appreciated sweetener can be obtained, namely sugar beet. The communist countries of Eastern Europe do not have the geographical advantage of Cuba, which in the early years of the Cold War transformed sugar into one of the major currencies of exchange with the rest of the world.⁴⁰ In spite of the geographical disadvantages, the increase in crop areas dedicated to sugar beet was an important component of Soviet agricultural propaganda. For the Eastern bloc, the cultivation of sugar beet became a true symbol of independence from the rest of the world. By gradually enhancing its image as an indispensable ingredient, sugar became an instrument of propaganda. The Sarkad sugar factory was well represented in the periodical, featured in different ways. One of the occasions on which attention was drawn to this factory was through the eyes of an eight-year-old pupil. He understood the necessary steps for obtaining sugar and, after a visit, he dreamed to work in such a factory when older. Sugar and sugar beet are reoccurring topics in the magazine, always surprising in terms of quantity:

*This year the holdings of cooperatives gave a total of over 100 thousand wagons of agricultural products. Sugar beet recorded an average production of 220 mázsa [approx. 100 kg] per jugerum [about ¼ hectare], but there are farms, near the Main East Canal, where the production exceeds even 300 mázsa per jugerum.*⁴¹

In fact, almost any food of vegetable origin grown during the period under investigation is harvested in unlikely quantities. Strawberries exported to Sweden had been grown from Swedish seeds and were cultivated on Hungarian soil where they registered a huge production; the tomato campaign in Békéscsaba involved the daily processing of 100 wagons of canned tomatoes, i.e. 3,000 wagons of tomatoes per season; collective labor in 1976 led to a record production of 750 wagons of vegetables; and a total of 1,100 wagons of onions were exported to Sweden, England, Switzerland, West-Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands in 1969. Therefore, the magazine underlines the “Great Parade of Agricultural Food Products” as an effect of Soviet policies that have generated an increase in food consumption per capita. This is proudly highlighted:

*In our country the consumption of meat per capita before the war was 33 kg, and today it has reached 58 kg, the consumption of eggs has increased from 5 kg to 12 kg, the consumption of sugar has increased 3 times and is consumed with 50% more vegetables, and 72% more fruit than before the war.*⁴²

Not only the quantities in which food is produced are surprising, but also some of their qualities. Thus, at the pig farm in Otlaca-Pustă (Pusztáotlaka) “Keszthely varieties are raised, which are 1–2–3 vertebrae longer than the usual ones.”⁷⁴³ The giant goose egg of 380 g, 13 cm long and 8 cm in diameter was laid by “one of the Rhine geese from the farm of the Kossuth agricultural production cooperative in Jászberény”⁷⁴⁴; at Gyula a bread of “excellent quality”⁷⁴⁵ is obtained; and botanists have discovered that “lemon can be grown even in colder climates. As a result of these experiments, Soviet lemons also appeared on world markets.”⁷⁴⁶ In this context, all food obtained industrially is of admirable quality and in considerable quantities, thanks to the quality of the raw materials and of the production processes. The Póstelek cannery produces “hundreds of containers with jars of *zakuski*”⁷⁴⁷ to be exported to the Soviet Union, and at the Békéscsaba cannery, “entering its yard, the visitor notices huge containers lining up in perfect order. In them are pickles—as I found out later—some specifically Russian pickles, called *zakuski*.”⁷⁴⁸ The way of preparing these pickles is accurately described, making the readers familiar with the industrial kitchen, which they can replicate at home, by adapting the quantities.

As a result of such articles, the overall picture that the magazine provides is that of food abundance. The direct beneficiaries or consumers of this wealth are not easily traceable, as it seems that all this food is intended for export. The same can be said about crockery, as the magazine highlights in the early 1980s: “More and more cookware for export.”⁷⁴⁹ The food-producing community is satisfied with the public recognition of the exceptional quality of the food it produces. The readers are educated about an important issue related to food: healthy eating. Thus, the entire culinary discourse of the 1970s and 1980s is built around this new reality, characterized by several main directions within a food education focusing on the need for balanced meals, with cautiously chosen dishes and carefully proportioned quantities, relying on several obvious pillars: the nutritional and healing properties of certain foods, diets, and proper nutrition for the young generation. Adopting a (pseudo-) scientific tone for diets and food recommendations, at the beginning of 1975 the consumption of meat is encouraged due to its nutritional properties. This is accompanied by different suggestions for preparing it, in brine, as steak, etc. However, specific advice is given regarding quantities, limiting meat consumption. It is strongly stated that “healthy people with moderate activity are recommended a ration of 100 to 150 grams per day. A larger amount is only desirable for those who engage in intense physical activity.”⁷⁵⁰ A month later, the readers are trained in the importance of consuming fats, sweets and flour in the cold season, when they are extremely necessary for the proper functioning of the body. An article published in May of the same year provides a useful clarification on “Food and the Need for Its Consumption,”⁷⁵¹ identifying the main types of nutrients (proteins, sugars, fats, mineral salts, and oils) and explaining the contexts in which they become essential. Particular attention is paid to the nutrition of the younger generation, which must be carefully chosen primarily in terms of quantity to contribute to the harmonious growth and development of children, starting with breastfeeding. A common practice is the publication of recipes for snacks designed for children and adolescents, including suggestions for the school lunch box, all accompanied by scientific explanations in terms of caloric requirements. Here is an example of a menu suggestion for a 10-year-old child, also published in 1975:

*Breakfast: a glass of sweetened milk, a boiled egg, bread with butter; lunch: tomato salad (a tomato), grilled steak (125 grams), garnished pumpkin (250 grams) with cheese, apple pie or apple cake; 5 o'clock: fresh fruit juice: apples, oranges, grapefruit, biscuits. Dinner: fried liver (100 grams); 3 medium potatoes baked in the oven and served with lettuce, fresh green parsley and 20 grams of raw butter; a sweetened yogurt, one fruit. A 10-year-old normal-weight child needs 2,000 to 2,500 calories a day.*⁵²

Beyond educating mothers about what and how much children should eat, the magazine addresses the youngsters directly on the youth page, which contains guidelines on attitude and hygiene during meals, including the correct use of plates and cutlery. Regarding diets, the guidelines are directly related to the strong emphasis placed on eating foods rich in vitamins, which is obsessively repeated in the issues of the magazine throughout this period. Starting with the second half of the 1970s and until the end of the 1980s, the magazine regularly published recipes for dishes with recommended foods of vegetable origin, intensely promoted for the vitamins and minerals necessary for the body and which may prevent obesity. Vegetables and fruits such as carrots, grapefruit, quince, leeks, lettuce, spinach, radishes, leeks, cabbage, beans, celery and beets become the focus of the culinary columns such as “Women’s Corner,” “Practical Homemaker” and more recently “Let’s Cook Together.” All these foods can be consumed as such or cooked in dishes less familiar to the public in the region. At the same time, herbs and spices such as mint, marjoram, cinnamon, cloves, bay leaves, thyme, parsley, dill, pepper, larch, garlic, and cumin, vegetables such as onion and garlic, and dried fruit such as raisins are subject to equally sharp descriptions that reduce them to their simple nutritional properties, as a laboratory analysis in which molecules count exclusively as micronutrients. The flavor, exactly the characteristic that contributed to their spread all over the world, is completely ignored. This communicates the message that food is not a joy for the taste buds, but rather a physiological necessity. For example, cinnamon is simply described as “used in various cakes, especially in those with apples, and in rice pudding. It increases gastric secretion, raises body temperature, facilitates digestion.”⁵³ As a result, the recipes published during this time (especially between 1984 and 1987) use the kind of ingredients which create the image of a community which, for a decade and a half, is on a diet: cold vegetable soup, tomatoes à la Russe, dietetic çullama (thick pancake), lettuce, omelet just from the egg white, Transylvanian spinach, sorrel soup, stuffed eggs, spinach eggs, apple charlotte, beet salad, celery salad, salad of baked peppers, baked potatoes, tomato dishes, parsley salad, goulash salad, boiled eggs with tomatoes, marinated eggplant, potato donuts with ham, French fries, eggplant mousse, Romanian moussaka, *salată de vinete* (eggplant spread/dip), cauliflower salad, sorrel with egg, spinach dish with poultry, meatballs with cream, and potatoes stuffed with meat. In exceptional situations, more familiar dishes are allowed, but just the modest ones, such as “fried potatoes, *sabagulele*, polenta, *lângălău*, *moșocoarna*, *pogace* with *mujdei*, *cocoșei*” recommended for fasting days; poultry liver in aspic, salad and mushroom sauce for holidays, and desserts such as walnut croissants, butter cream, mocha cream, nut cream, caramelized sugar cream, pie, fruit cake and walnut cake. Drinks also find their place in the magazine during this period, but only extremely rare and exclusively non-alcoholic ones: lemonade,

soda water, mineral waters and coffee are mentioned. Some attention is also given to infusions from medicinal herbs.

After 1990, the discourse about food gradually changes as the magazine takes on a new identity, reflecting the changes in the socio-economic-political context. While the magazine and the community which it addresses are in an obvious search of a new identity, reorienting towards values perceived as belonging to western cultures, the issues of 1991, 1992 and 1993 of the magazine seem to repeat the type of culinary information published until 1989. The magazine, with a new name: *Noi, românii din Ungaria* continues to offer its readers practical advice needed in everyday life and on cooking, including recommendations for storing food, but this time in the freezer, or guidance on preparing and serving festive meals, e.g. for the winter holidays. Other practical topics include how to determine the weight of some ingredients frequently used in the kitchen (butter, margarine, honey, sugar, flour, oil, etc.) using a table spoon or teaspoon, instead of a scale. The change in name and appearance of the magazine, now printed in color, are accompanied by other innovative practices. For the present discussion, the most interesting of them is the appearance of advertisements for restaurants or for ingredients. An example is the first issue with the new name, of 4 October 1991, which contains an advertisement for the Százéves confectionery in Gyula, presented with the heading “A One Hundred Years-Old Sweetshop.”⁵⁴ Measured by the standards of today it hardly deserves the term “advertisement”; it can be evaluated as a rather clumsy first attempt at adapting to the market economy. The most obvious changes in the approach to food can be seen in the culinary recipes starting early in the 1990s. The new columns such as “From the Cookbook,” “Weekly Recipe” and “Culinary Recipe” introduce both recipes completely unknown to the community and rather common recipes, but prepared with at least one unusual main ingredient.

These unknown or reinterpreted dishes provide a fresh breath both to the magazine and to the kitchen in which the recipes are to be prepared, transforming the homemaker into a cosmopolitan person. Examples are revealing: canned meat appetizer; surprise chop with sauce; pizza (in a recipe presented in great detail); baked pork steak; special eggs (similar to stuffed eggs, with some small adjustments in the preparation process); baked duck; Greek pilaf; chicken with lemon; risotto; spring cocktail (based on ice cream, strawberries and cream); kebab (described in detail, with attention to the description of how to fry the meat and cut it from the thorn as it fries); baclava; potatoes stuffed with cheese; Danube fish; yoghurt pie (prepared using ready-made pastry sheets), oven-cooked pheasant (presented as a game specialty); raisin pallets; cauliflower with mushrooms; Greek potato soup etc. A common characteristic of all these recipes is the precision in the instructions about the quantities of the ingredients. The preparation process is described in detail. Additional descriptions of the ingredients to be used are provided, which thus creates a demand, promoting the increasingly widespread use of some of these ingredients. In 1991, the recipe for American peppers stuffed “with three kinds of quality cheese” comes with an explanation considered necessary “for example, cow’s cheese, Emmentaler, and pressed cheese.”⁵⁵

Gradually, the interest in this eccentric-globalist cuisine fades away, so that the issues of 1995 reflect a new search for identity in the presentation of gastronomic topics.

Therefore, as the community is encouraged to assert its ethnic identity in the spirit of European Union policies that were later summarized with the motto *united in diversity*, the discourse on food also changes. Thus, several recipes for dishes reflecting regional specialties or local cooking techniques start to be published. Examples include: cabbage pie similar in terms of ingredients and cooking techniques to the local *mîțșe* pie and tomato sauce prepared with cream to be served with fresh bread as a main course. This small and almost unseen revolution of regional dishes is accompanied by a more visible component: writing about public events that are either organized around food or involve a shared meal. Examples of the first category include the kind of events which had occasionally been organized already before 1990, such as “Romanian Ball with Snacks” in Chitighaz (Kétegyháza), organized in early February 1994. Around this event a large article was written,⁵⁶ predicting that eventually these kinds of “days” and “festivals” would be perceived not as an event, but as a mode of communication and a subject of press attention. An article published in the autumn of the following year, dedicated to the Romanian gastronomic days in Békéscsaba, can be identified as a pioneering moment⁵⁷ in the changing discourse dedicated to food. It demonstrates how food becomes an important identity-shaping element. Organized at the Garzon Restaurant in Békéscsaba, the event features three elements: Romanian culinary specialties, Romanian folk music and the works of amateur painters from Micherechi. Among the dishes which the magazine presents to its readers on this occasion are: *salată de vinete* (mashed eggplant with mayonnaise), *sarmale* with smoked ribs, *mîțșei* with potatoes, polenta with sheep cheese and Brașov snack, all cooked by chef Marian Burtoi from Brașov. It is for the first time that the magazine writes about the common consumption of courses such as *sarmale*, polenta and *mîțșei* by people attending a public event and connected mainly by a shared general Romanian identity.

Before a sharp and sudden increase in the attention given to festivals and traditional dishes, another period of popularization of international cuisines can be seen within the magazine. This time, unlike during the first period with a focus on global cuisine (the first half of the 1990s), the recipes include information about the specific national cuisines to which the dishes belong. This orientation is visible since 1998, when the magazine changed its name again into *Foaia românească: Săptămânal al românilor din Ungaria* and introduced columns such as “Recipes from International Cuisines” and “Gastronomy.” These recipes catch the attention of the reader not only by the variety of dishes, but also by the frequent use of names in the original language: chicken *Marengo*, Cossack meatballs, *Minestrone alla Milanese* and *Pollo fritto alla Fiorentina* (Italy); *Ugnspankaka* and *Dansk appelpage* (Sweden and Denmark), Fried chicken and *Sugo* (Italy); delicious pears and apple cake (France); stuffed bagel and leek with cheese (Germany); Sophia Loren’s Soup; Sausages in French dough; winter fruit cream, winter cruson; poultry salad (United States of America); cabbage soup (French) etc. The recipes for these dishes always contain explanations, translating unknown terms to acquaint the reader with other cultural codes. Explanations are presented at the appropriate places, when the use of terms such as *al dente*, *American food*, *fast food*, *antipasti*, *basmati*, *brandy*, *gnocchi*, *gorgonzola*, *hot dog*, *mascarpone* and *Worcester sauce*⁵⁸ may hinder the proper understanding of the message. Dilemmas involved in culinary terminology are explicitly addressed in

an article from 1998⁵⁹ aiming to present the cuisine as an important component of a culture. A shared specific culinary terminology may become defining not only for nations, but also for smaller communities. Equating the use of a language and the assumption of a specific cultural identity, the article urged the use of a specific language pertaining to regional cuisine. The wish was expressed for this specific regional culinary language to become the symbol of a double identity: not only would it differentiate the Romanian minority from other minorities in Hungary, but it would also distinguish the Romanians in Hungary from other Romanians. This exhortation is a good example of how the media shape human behavior. Several years later more and more articles were published on culinary topics that used a terminology designed to emphasize local cultural identity. At first this terminology was expressed a bit forcefully, as a conscious decision, but later it became more natural.

THE CREATION of a set of “traditional” values (the “return” to an imaginary past) based on a local gastronomic identity is attained with difficulty. It is the result of a process consisting of several isolated actions, meant to highlight the real or imaginary attachment of individuals to a certain way of life. *Foaia românească* has contributed to the (re)creation of an idyllic pastoral image triggering the reader’s nostalgia, by publishing extensive articles drawing attention to the importance of agricultural activities that, carried out in a traditional way, bring family members together and make everyone equally responsible for obtaining their own food. Returning to such a past is recognized as compensation after the communist years that introduced the mechanization of agriculture. It represents a turn towards the family, to smaller scale agriculture and the cultivation of values compatible with a peaceful rhythm of life. The extensive description of activities carried out around 2000 in the Romanian villages in Hungary which described important moments in the life of the village connected with food, had an important contribution to developing the conviction of the qualitative superiority of the local food obtained through traditional techniques over mass-produced and imported ware. After a decade full of information about the variety within global, international cuisine, the excitement for local festivals and traditional recipes is perfectly justified, since it meets the basic need for local affirmation. Whether they refer to *Ignat*, the slaughter of pigs and almsgiving of pork dishes, raising animals or birds, obtaining dairy products, preserving food for winter, harvesting or bread baking, all these articles are written in a similar way. Thus, they include long descriptive paragraphs, accompanied by archive photos that capture the traditional tools needed to prepare the foods under discussion (sieve, milk jug, etc.). This way the nostalgia of the people is fostered, along with a possible desire to reconstruct such practices. Mihai Otlăcan, the host of one of the traditional harvest festivals, remarks: “Today we felt like a big family from the past. We all worked together: grandfather, father, son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren. Even for this, it was worth doing the harvest in a traditional manner!”⁶⁰ This opens the way for initiating and organizing the countless festivals focusing on gastronomy or organized around a certain type of food in the promotion of which the media play an important role. *Foaia românească* marks the moments of setting up several such festivals, the evolution of which can be traced in the magazine’s archive. Here is, for example, the

first presentation of the Gyula cooking festival in August 2002: “The festival took place for the first time last autumn and it intends to become traditional.”⁶¹ The current edition expected several teams of amateur chefs, from the community and from Romania, to compete in preparing dishes for the public attending the event.

But there is another festival with a constant presence in *Foaia românească* involving active citizen participation and providing an excellent case study for the way in which food becomes a symbol: the Cucumber Festival in Micherechi. Established in 2003, the Cucumber Festival provides a celebration for the inhabitants of Micherechi, understood as an opportunity for family reunions, for games and competitions and for local pride. The first edition of this festival attracted wide media coverage, including by *Foaia românească* which advertised its numerous activities (concerts, agronomic lectures, marketing of specific local dishes and competitions). At the same time, the first issue of the magazine published immediately after this edition of the festival dedicates the last page to a photo gallery that captures a series of relevant snapshots.⁶² The success of the first edition of this festival determines the constant appearance of references about it in the following years. Thus, for the 17 editions of the festival held so far, *Foaia românească* records this event in over 30 issues that dedicate space to the programs and the dates of the festival, as well as to extensive chronicles, photo galleries or cover pages meant to emphasize the importance that the event has for the community. In addition to the extremely visible and well-known Cucumber Festival, the magazine also records the organization of other similar recent festivals, which seem to follow one another with an unnatural frequency in the second half of the first decade of the third millennium. A general picture is created of a real competition between local communities aiming to organize the most “authentic”/“traditional”/“relevant” festival. Contenders include: the Gastronomic Festival of the Romanians in Hungary held in Chitighaz starting with 2005, described as “the authentic one, not made up with a dozen powders and perfumes,”⁶³ the Sausage Festival in Békéscsaba; the Ball of Grapes in Chitighaz; *Gurmania*; *Pogăcițe* Festival in Chitighaz; Palincă Festival in Gyula; Medgyesegyháza Watermelon Festival; Greaves Festival in Otlaca-Pustă; Romanian Gastronomy Festival in Budapest and the Sausage and Ham Festival in Gyula. All these festivals are accompanied by a series of other public celebrations with an intrinsic gastronomic component, often mentioned as an indispensable feature. Thus, in 2005, describing the manifestations occasioned by the Days of Gyula, celebrated on 10 April, *Foaia românească* writes that “dishes offered to the public were spring soup, *sarmale* filled with meat and vegan ones with corn flour, liver meatballs, baked goose, Romanian salad and many more.”⁶⁴

Occasionally, the idea of consuming traditional food in the context of such public rituals is expressed already in the title of the articles, even if the information on this topic does not occupy a very prominent place within the text, such as “Tributes, Contests, Folklore and Romanian Dishes for the Romanians from Gyula,”⁶⁵ “Barbecue Party—Friday, 8 August 2008, from 15.00, in the Courtyard of the Cultural Union,”⁶⁶ “A Traditional *diznotor* with a Romanian Party”⁶⁷ etc. It is obvious, therefore, that a relatively small community, such as that of the Romanians in Hungary, practices a somewhat unsustainable form of expressing and promoting local gastronomy by organizing too many festivals, which are thus doomed not to last. Their fate was determined by the

competitive form in which they were organized, since they were all planned to take place in a relatively short calendar period (usually in the summer), and they address a limited audience consisting of members of their own community plus some of the inhabitants of the cross-border region.

The increase in festivals around food, considered to be defining for local communities, leads to the gradual collapse of the glory of these events and the search for new ways to assert the culinary identity of the community that has become aware of the importance of addressing this issue. *Foaia românească* reflects this decline, as one of the covers in the summer of 2009 contains the title “Summer Festivals in Chitighaz and Micherechi.”⁶⁸ This title suddenly combines two festivals (of greaves and of cucumbers) which had been until then presented separately and almost in a rival relationship. The inarticulate plural is also used on other occasions, thus suggesting awareness of the need to frame all these events in broader categories, such as seasonal festivals, an approach that decreases the exceptionality of each particular event. Before the inevitable decline, there was a moment of festival glory which can be compared with the record productions of the 1970s. For the first time since the era of production by the wagon-load, the community and its magazine seem to lose track of quantities one more time, as the impressive quantities of raw food with an unknown destination appear to have metamorphosed, three decades later, into impressive quantities of cooked dishes, publicly displayed by community members who prepared them with great effort. This again confirms the idea of the compensation for the mechanization of food production in the communist period.

*At the end of last week, the city's celebration took place in Medgyesegyháza. During the City Days, the Romanians from Medgyes and the Mihai Purdi Cultural Association from Otlaca-Pustă, with support obtained through a competition from the Békés County Council, cooked for the public present at the event almost a thousand Romanian sarmale and Romanian soup in some huge cauldrons.*⁶⁹

In parallel with this penchant for festivals, *Foaia românească* presents several people from the community who stand out for their special know-how in preparing specific dishes. A prominent example is Maria Pilan Kalcsó, the organizer of *Gurmania*. She produced a brochure in which she collected the recipes of some traditional dishes considered to be representative for the Romanian minority in Hungary. Some of these recipes are also shared with the magazine's readers: rabbit from Aletea, pigeon soup, *sarmale* from Florica Istin, baked goose, *mother's arm*, *long tongue*, *poverty*, *knots*, *nățișe*, cabbage pie and *sweet Vlach pie* from Mrs. Ciumpila.⁷⁰ The process of preparing all these dishes, with names designed to create the image of traditional food, is presented in the usual way (according to *Foaia românească*'s standard for presenting recipes): the ingredients are presented in precise quantities, followed by brief descriptions of the steps to prepare the product. Without providing more examples, the frequent appearance of the name of Maria Pilan Kalcsó around 2010 underlines her star status in the field of the Romanian cuisine from Hungary in the first two decades of the 21st century, thanks to both her cooking talent and her passion for collecting and publishing information. The need to document material related to traditional food becomes one of the themes that

Foaia românească understands and promotes. As a result, the magazine systematically communicates any initiative related to collecting relevant information in the field of local cuisine. Examples include cross-border collaborative projects conducting research in the field of intangible cultural heritage with gastronomic outcomes (local ingredients or local recipes), the cooking shows on Duna TV in Micherechi, periodic calls inviting readers to send “grandmother’s recipes” for publication in the journal of the national minorities in Hungary, and the complete publication of Radu Anton Roman’s book *Romanian Food, Wines and Customs*. In addition, a reflective article entitled “The Cuisine and Traditional Food of the Romanians in Chitighaz”⁷¹ was published in 2010. Focusing on the importance of bread and the traditional way of preparing it, the article provides an opportunity to review some of the dishes assumed as traditional and defining for the Romanian communities: greaves, *leveșe*, soup, *scoacă*, *păsulă groasă*, stuffed cabbage, *taște cu prai*, etc. Ana Otlăcan and Floarea Santău, both from Chitighaz, are two other elderly women acknowledged by *Foaia românească* as possessing culinary know-how specific for the community they represent. Thus, the first is recognized for her ability to prepare the well-known *scoacă* of Chitighaz,⁷² while the second provides valuable information on the preservation of cabbage for winter.⁷³

During the last decades, in parallel with the rise of reflexive articles addressing the topic of traditional food, the number of culinary recipes in the pages of the magazine has been declining. *Foaia românească* thus goes beyond simply presenting certain dishes. With its awareness of the relation between food and identity, the magazine shows increasing interest in food studies. As a result, in the publication of culinary recipes, the new approach focuses on highlighting the dish in question as a defining cultural element. Thus, in parallel with the identification of a number of dishes as defining for the community, the center of interest migrates from informing on how to cook to advice on how to obtain the best version of the dish, which is often neither noble nor spectacular. Examples of titles include “The Simplest and Tastiest Recipe for Baked Peppers for the Winter,”⁷⁴ “How to Prepare the Best Zakuski”⁷⁵ and “How to Prepare the Best *Cafea la Ibric* [Balkan coffee/Turkish coffee].”⁷⁶ The recipes present, in addition to the indications and quantities necessary for the preparation, information about the importance of using the best ingredients (e.g. how to choose the most suitable peppers for baking) or key moments in the preparation process, on which the success depends (e.g. how long the vegetable stew should boil to result in jars of *zacusca* which keep over winter). These “secrets,” told by “the grandmother” or other female characters recognized for their talent in the kitchen, have a therapeutic function, since they restore a generation gap. As an effect of lifestyle changes, today’s young homemakers no longer benefit from a period of apprenticeship in the kitchen of their own mothers, mothers-in-law or grandmothers in order to learn kitchen secrets, so they must retrieve this information from reading numerous newspapers, brochures, cookbooks, culinary blogs, watching TV shows or listening to the radio. The need to recover this information in writing most likely represents a reaction to the period of disinterest in traditional culinary techniques at least for the last 50 years, due both to the political context of state communism, and, later, to the extremely aggressive globalist trend from the early 1990s. The last issue of *Foaia românească* analyzed in the context of the research for this article, of 21–28 December

2018, provides a perfect example of the reflective approach to food. Under the promising title “What Romanians Currently Eat on New Year’s Eve,”⁷⁷ readers do not find the kind of precise information they might expect or hope for, but only three suggestions for dishes considered suitable to be prepared in the domestic kitchen for guests: assorted appetizers, fish balls, and beef salad. A comparison is to be made by the reader since the article is accompanied by the image of a restaurant menu from New Year’s Eve of 1969 with dishes such as: carp caviar, olives, cheese paté, cooked turkey with stewed cabbage, pork chop, French fries, gherkins, *telemea* (similar to feta cheese), chocolate cake and chocolate parfait. The latest issue of the magazine, indicating an awareness of the importance of food in defining communities, closes the presentation of examples which illustrate the evolution of the discourse on food in the most important publication of the Romanians in Hungary.

IN SUMMARY, in the presentation of the main types of information about food that this magazine offers its readers in the more than 70 years of existence addressed in this article, the following main elements and phases can be recognized. At first the focus was on the struggle for food reflected in the concern for increasing production and collection. The magazine disseminated important information related to the hygiene of food preparation and storage, provided recipes and practical culinary tips designed to ensure survival in an era of scarcity, and popularized the latest discoveries in the food industry. After the end of state communism, the search for a new identity is reflected in the alternation between a focus on the dissemination of symbolic dishes of globalism and the efforts to raise awareness of the existence of national specialties in an international cuisine. The beginning of the 21st century witnessed a boom of competing culinary festivals meant to (re)discover and to (re)create “authentic,” “traditional” food, cumulating in the recent concern with the history of their own diet. Taking into consideration all the examples described in this article, its conclusion is that, within the past half of a century food becomes one of the themes of journalistic reflection and one of the important elements in creating a community’s identity. This process involved several easily traceable steps following a careful examination which reveals an approach to food with multiple perspectives, influenced by historical contexts. Therefore, even though the press in Hungary was under a much more permissive censorship than that of other countries in the Eastern bloc, it still had to submit to the interests of the Communist Party. This is visible in the first years of the magazine’s existence in the large number of articles focusing on the collection by the state of the products harvested by farmers, and on the need to increase the quantities of cereals grown. Although this topic has not been addressed in great detail within this article, the competition between large state farms and small scale family farms (small holders) also contributed to the need to increase the quantities of food produced. Beyond the ruling political regime, however, the growth of the global population, especially in the second half of the twentieth century, led to the need to identify innovative solutions for obtaining food, sometimes radical ones, documented in the press of the time. Regardless of the regime or political orientation, the common goal of governments seems to be “against hunger, at all costs.”⁷⁸ This results in recommendations such as those concerning genetically modified seeds and

fertilizers (currently known to poison both soil and water), making the general public increasingly aware of the need to raise the quantity of food. The identification of new, synthetic products and industrial processes avoiding waste of any kind, became a new reality. The press had the duty to promote these among the general public, and to promote their acceptance. Therefore, a common practice would be to prove their utility and benefits by encouraging acceptance of new culinary recipes suggesting the use of such ingredients. Ready-made pastry sheets, margarine, milk powder and soda are just a few examples. The obsession for large quantities of crude foods exported both to the Soviet Union and to capitalist countries, signaled with great pathos in extensive articles, is an important aspect of the food discourse. It is echoed in the recommendations made in culinary columns (i.e. "Women's Corner") based on a (pseudo-) scientific approach to nutrition aimed at limiting food consumption. Paradoxically, as the quantity of raw food increases, the consumption of the average person decreases, under the influence of these recommendations for a healthy diet, in an attempt to mask the collapse of the communist system. This collapse was primarily due to the impossibility of feeding the people, despite the propaganda discourse in the media in all communist countries, both those with a stricter and those with a more relaxed form of communism: "The Soviets sacrificed millions of small farms and farmers to the dream of a collectivized industrial agriculture that never managed to do what a food system has to do: feed the nation."⁷⁹ In fact, a pleasant culinary experience involves not only the pleasure of eating, but also the pleasure of cooking, the existence of which the Soviet authorities feel the need to emphasize, especially as an effect of the "kitchen debate"⁸⁰ between Khrushchev and Nixon. Hence the advertisements for the *kukta* pot and other locally produced crockery, intended both for the local market and for export. In addition to following the official discourse on food, *Foaia românească* occasionally signals the existence of a parallel food system, practiced in the small household and noticed only in its association with certain moments in the traditional calendar (e.g. Easter eggs, the slaughter of pigs and the giving of pork as alms, and spring balls with "snacks"). Since these small articles are not published around the time of the holidays to which they are connected, but with differences of up to two months, their function is not to provide instructions for preparing or reviewing certain traditional dishes, but rather to confirm the continuity of some traditional culinary practices to the community. However, revenge is taken after 1990 when, gradually, the interest in "traditional," national or ethnic food gives way to an awareness of their own local culinary specificity (with a closer affinity to Hungarian than to Romanian cuisine), explored via several forms of manifestation, as illustrated in the second part of the current article. My research has thus confirmed that after 1990, the interest in food as reflected in *Foaia românească* evolved from "intensive westernization to acceptance of nostalgia,"⁸¹ as the former socialist countries enter a global economic circuit in which they try to gradually shape their identity. Therefore, the early 1990s are dedicated to the knowledge of other cultures, i.e. an intense media coverage of global dishes and the use of ingredients or cooking processes specific to recognized national cuisines. Subsequently, the direction changes from an external to an internal orientation. The new direction has two components, which complement each other as they focus on so-called "traditional" food: festivals with important citizen participation and written recipes for

dishes assumed to be specific for the community. In both cases, specific people emerge as representatives of the community and are recognized by the community as people with particular expertise in local food, knowing *how* to cook, *what* to cook, *when* to cook etc. Last but not least, as shown above, the most recent period can be characterized by an orientation towards the identification and consumption of several dishes that are more than traditional. Namely, the best versions of known local dishes, as prepared only by one's mother or grandmother. All these examples represent relevant case studies for the evolution of food and its reflection in a magazine which represents a minority. It has been demonstrated how, regardless of the era and the specific ways in which it has been treated, food becomes an important factor in strengthening a community, ensuring the connection between generations.⁸²



Notes

1. Diana Mihuș, “De la ‘Libertatea noastră’ la ‘Foaia românească’: 7 decenii de referințe despre hrană în principala publicație a românilor din Ungaria,” 15th edition of Annual Conference of Romanian Association of Ethnological Sciences, Sibiu, 6–8 november 2019; ead., “Discurs alimentar, identitate etnică și realitate socială: Comentarii pe marginea rețetelor din ‘Foaia românească,’” 9th edition of International Conference Communication and Culture in European România, online, 11–12 June 2021; ead., “‘Foaia românească’: Documentarea realității sociale versus jurnalismul culinar,” 5th edition of the International Conference “Zilele Sextil Pușcariu,” online, 9–10 September 2021.
2. The digital archive of *Foaia românească* is available at <https://adt.arcnum.com/ro/collection/FoaiaRomaneasca/>.
3. “Să strângem la timp și bine recolta, să asigurăm reușita colectărilor!,” *Libertatea noastră* 1, 1 (1 June 1950): 1.
4. Ibid.
5. “Recolte îmbelșugate în cooperativele agricole de producție din țara noastră,” *Libertatea noastră* 1, 1 (15 January 1951): 7.
6. Ibid.
7. “Populația din Micherechi a înțeles cuvântul vremii: a început însămânțarea orzului de primăvară,” *Libertatea noastră* 1, 4 (4 April 1951): 4.
8. “Colectarea este o îndatorire patriotică,” *Libertatea noastră* 1, 6 (1 June 1951): 1.
9. “Strângerea recoltei la timp—lupta pentru Pace,” *Libertatea noastră* 1, 6 (1 June 1951): 7.
10. “Secerișul de pace,” *Libertatea noastră* 1, 7 (1 July 1951): 1.
11. Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 27.
12. “Sărbătoarea constituției și pâinii noi,” *Libertatea noastră* 1, 8 (5 August 1951): 1.
13. “Colțul femeii,” *Libertatea noastră* 2, 10 (15 May 1952): 4.
14. “Colțul femeii,” *Libertatea noastră* 2, 19 (1 October 1952): 5.
15. Paul Freedman, *Food: The History of Taste* (Berkeley–Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 231.
16. Ibid.

17. "Colțul femeii," *Libertatea noastră* 5, 13 (23 June 1955): 5.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Bee Wilson, *Consider the Fork: A History of How We Cook and Eat* (New York: Basic Books, 2012), 262.
21. "Colțul femeii," *Foaia noastră* 4, 19 (1 October 1960): 7.
22. "Colțul femeii," *Foaia noastră* 3, 23 (1 December 1959): 5.
23. "Colțul femeii," *Foaia noastră* 5, 4 (15 February 1961): 7.
24. Ibid.
25. "Colțul femeii," *Libertatea noastră* 2, 10 (15 May 1952): 4.
26. "Colțul femeii," *Foaia noastră* 6, 15 (1 August 1962): 7.
27. "Modernizarea fabricii de praf de lapte din Giula," *Foaia noastră* 14, 20 (15 October 1970): 8.
28. "Fermă pentru creșterea fazanilor la Gyula," *Foaia noastră* 8, 15 (1 August 1964): 3.
29. "O crescătorie de fazani," *Foaia noastră* 11, 10 (15 May 1967): 3.
30. "Trei mii de pui pe oră," *Foaia noastră* XI, 23 (1 December 1967): 8.
31. "Vizită la Combinatul de carne din Giula," *Foaia noastră* 30, 8 (24 February 1980): 8.
32. "Oieritul e un sector rentabil al cooperativei Spic de grâu," *Foaia noastră* 30, 18 (4 May 1980): 1.
33. "Hai, la fazani!," *Foaia noastră* 32, 53 (31 December 1982): 3.
34. "Miei pentru export," *Foaia noastră* 37, 16 (17 April 1987): 3.
35. "60 mii pui de fazani," *Foaia noastră* 12, 10 (15 May 1968): 3.
36. "Mii de iepuri în frigoriferul de la Békéscsaba," *Foaia noastră* 7, 8 (15 April 1963): 3.
37. "La pomana porcului," *Foaia noastră* 12, 4 (15 February 1968): 7.
38. "Porumbelul de casă: un mijloc de aprovizionare familială," *Foaia noastră* 26, 9 (1 May 1976): 7.
39. "Zahărul," *Libertatea noastră* 2, 3 (4 February 1952): 2.
40. Elisabeth Abbott, *Sugar: A Bittersweet History* (London–New York: Duckworth Overlook, 2009), 375.
41. "Peste 100 de mii de vagoane de produse recoltate," *Foaia noastră* 13, 21 (1 November 1969): 3.
42. "Marea paradă a produselor agricole alimentare," *Foaia noastră*, 14, 18 (15 September 1970): 1.
43. "Recolte peste plan la Otlaca-Pustă," *Foaia noastră* 13, 22 (15 November 1969): 8.
44. *Foaia noastră* 12, 8 (15 April 1968): 8.
45. "Pâine de calitate excelentă la fabrica de pâine din Giula," *Foaia noastră* 21, 7 (1 April 1971): 8.
46. "Detronarea lămâii," *Foaia noastră* 12, 4 (15 February 1968): 8.
47. This is the Romanian *zacusca*, a vegetable spread, usually made with baked eggplant. "Sute de cisterne cu zacuscă în fabrica de conserve de la Póstelek," *Foaia noastră* 25, 17 (1 September 1975): 3.
48. "La o unitate a fabricii de conserve din Békéscsaba," *Foaia noastră* 21, 8 (15 April 1971): 3.
49. "Tot mai multe vase de bucătărie pentru export," *Foaia noastră* 30, 8 (24 February 1980): 7.
50. "Colțul femeii," *Foaia noastră* 25, 2 (15 January 1975): 8.
51. "Colțul femeii," *Foaia noastră* 25, 10 (15 May 1975): 8.
52. "Colțul femeii," *Foaia noastră* 25, 1 (1 January 1975): 8.

53. "Condimentele, pentru și contra," *Foaia noastră* 33, 10 (11 March 1983): 7.
54. "Cofetăria de o sută de ani," *Noi, românii din Ungaria* 1, 1 (4 October 1991): 16.
55. "Ardei americani," *Noi, românii din Ungaria* 1, 5 (1 November 1991): 16.
56. "Bal românesc cu merinde," *Noi, românii din Ungaria* 5, 6 (10 November 1995): 8.
57. "Zilele gastronomice românești," *Noi: Săptămânal al românilor din Ungaria* 5, 45 (10 November 1995): 8.
58. "Dicționar de bucătărie modernă," *Foaia românească: Săptămânal al românilor din Ungaria*, new ser., 51, 20 (18 May 2001): 10.
59. "Câte limbi, atâția oameni," *Foaia românească: Săptămânal al românilor din Ungaria* 1, 34 (21 August 1998): 1–3.
60. "Un seceriș ca pe vremuri," *Foaia românească: Săptămânal al românilor din Ungaria* 51, 30 (3 August 2001): 16.
61. "A doua ediție a festivalului de gătit la Giula," *Foaia românească: Săptămânal al românilor din Ungaria* 52, 35 (30 August 2002): 2.
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Abstract

Foaia Românească: 7 Decades In-Between Documenting Social Reality and Culinary Journalism

The current article analyzes food references published by *Foaia românească*. This periodical was first printed in Gyula in 1951 and it is defining for the Romanian minority in Hungary since it provides political, economic, social or cultural information relevant for the community. The article focuses on columns and articles dedicated to food and provides a diachronic investigation on food as a distinct topic for the periodical. It results in a complex image in which the very idea of food ranges from trying to prepare “exotic” recipes in the '50s, to the extremely austere approach of the '80s and up to the well-known current appetite for contemporary gastronomic festivals or preference for “traditional” recipes and food.

Keywords

food, *Foaia românească*, Romanian community, gastronomic identity, communism