

Environmental Crimes of Early Romanian Communism: Focus on the *Enemies of Agriculture*

Przestępstwa środowiskowe wczesnego komunizmu w Rumunii: działania wobec tzw. *wrogów rolnictwa*

Alexandru-Ionuț Petrișor*, Elena Tîrzman**

**Doctoral School of Urban Planning, Ion Mincu University of Architecture and Urban Planning, Str. Academiei 18-20, Bucharest, Romania, 010014*

E-mail: alexandru.petrisor@uauim.ro

***Department of Managerial Assistance, Administrative Assistance and Applied Information Technology, Faculty of Letters, University of Bucharest, Str. Edgar Quinet 5-7, Bucharest, Romania, 010017*

E-mail: etirziman@yahoo.com

Abstract

The early beginning of the communist regime in Romania was influenced by transformations of agriculture (including husbandry and fishing), forced to develop intensively (replacing traditional technologies with mechanical ones) and extensively (by taking over natural systems, such as the wetlands). Since the yield did not increase as expected, the conflict with nature was aggravated by finding enemies among the species situated at the top of food chains, blamed for the losses. In order to expedite the outcomes of fighting against these species, media campaigns were developed in parallel with awards given to hunters and people who became part of the war. This paper attempts to correlate the environmental impact of campaigns against certain species with the loss of biodiversity based on statistical data. The analysis indicated that there were direct campaigns to eliminate species conflicting with economy and collateral victims. Each case study illustrates a different point; bustards were eliminated by carelessness (although protected, their status was not enforced); the pelican was eliminated due to insufficient knowledge and contrasting recommendations; and wolf was sentenced to death consciously. The results indicate that although many authors parallel nowadays communist and environmentalist policies, the real communist practices had a strong deleterious environmental impact despite a pro-environmentalist appearance.

Key words: pelican, wolf, bustard, vulture, extinction, degradation, agriculture

Streszczenie

Początkom reżimu komunistycznego w Rumunii towarzyszyły istotne transformacje w rolnictwie (odnoszące się m.in. do hodowli i rybołówstwa), będące zarazem intensywne (mechanizacja w miejsce tradycyjnych metod gospodarowania) i ekstensywne (przekształcanie naturalnych ekosystemów, takich jak mokradła). Ponieważ plony nie wzrosły zgodnie z oczekiwaniami, konflikt z naturą został wzmocniony przez poszukiwanie wrogów wśród gatunków znajdujących się na szczycie łańcucha pokarmowego i obwinianie ich winą za straty. W celu poprawy rezultatów walki z tymi gatunkami, przygotowano kampanie medialne, równolegle wprowadzając nagrody dla myśliwych i innych osób, które stały się częścią wojny. W tym artykule, opierając się na danych statystycznych, podjęto próbę połączenia przyrodniczych skutków wspomnianych kampanii z ich wpływem na zmniejszenie różnorodności. Przeprowadzona analiza wykazała, że wśród przeprowadzonych kampanii medialnych wskazać można na te, które miały na celu wyeliminowanie konkretnych gatunków, nie pasujących do przyjętej ekonomii. Każdy przypadek odzwierciedla inne uwarunkowania; dropie zostały wyeliminowane przez niedbalstwo (chronione tylko formalnie, a nie w rzeczywistości); Pelikan został wyeliminowany z powodu niewystarczającej wiedzy i sprzecznych zaleceń; a wilk został skazany na śmierć świadomie. Należy podkreślić, że choć wielu autorów promuje obecnie politykę komunistyczną i ekologiczną, to rzeczywiste praktyki komunistyczne wywarły szkodliwy wpływ na środowisko, pomimo ich pozornie proekologicznego wyglądu.

Słowa kluczowe: pelikan, wilk, drop, sęp, wyginiecie, degradacja, rolnictwo

1. Introduction

On August 23 1959 the Romanian people celebrated one decade and half since the liberation from the fascist oppression, important milestone in the history of our country. The victory of the armed insurrection and fall of the military fascist dictatorship under the leadership of the Communist Party (...) meant the beginning of the popular revolution when our country conquered for the first time its true national independence and sovereignty and the working people became the master and constructor of its new socialist life. The fifteen years (...) are a brief historical period, when the most daring dreams and most precious aspirations of the working people started being achieved (Cozma, 1959). These words, written into the incomprehensible language of the age, illustrated a sinister truth. At that time, Romania was becoming part of the socialist family – a milestone for social and environmental changes with effects seen until nowadays. The question we are trying to answer in this paper relates to the relationship between the shift of political regimes and these transformations, with a particular focus on the environmental ones.

This article is built on the premise that environmental protection was only part of the communist propaganda, but in fact the attitude towards nature was different when conflicting with economic interest, particularly in fields resulting into direct encounters, such as agriculture (Benedek, 2018). The aim of this paper is to analyze the literature (scientific and popularized) from the very beginning of Romanian communist regime (1950-1960, with few years before and after) in an attempt to demonstrate that, despite the ideological resemblance between communism and environmentalism, the real actions taken during this period had a deleterious effect against the environment with serious consequences lasting until today. This demonstration is based on a hypothesized historical scenario, according to which: (a) the communist regime replaced the traditional means of production with foreign methods of soviet inspiration; (b) the communist regime needed to legitimate itself and also show the value of the *innovations*; (c) due to the unsuitability of communist practices and imported methods, the production did not increase as expected; (d) the *guilt* was found among the human *enemies of the people*, who were exterminated systematically; (e) since the enemy was annihilated, but the production did not increase, *natural enemies were identified*. This is the hypothesized rationale beyond the direct conflicts with species blamed for the low productivity of economy, especially agriculture. (f) Later, although the Soviet regime denounced Stalin's practices during Khrushchev's Thaw (1950-1960), Romanian communists did not change their practices, despite the fact that the country gradually distanced from the Soviet Union (Watts, 2011, 2013); (g) consequently, the campaigns against wild-

life continued even during the 70's. Overall, the underlying hypothesis is that Romania communism was environmentalist in theory and anti-environment in practice.

2. Materials and methods

The study was a documentary research aimed at identifying any official document from the period, including without limiting to: scientific literature (journals and books), popular literature (magazines, almanacs, newspapers) and official documents (legislation), in search for the communist policies with selected environmental impacts, their dissemination and official statistics of the outcomes. The indirect and very well-documented direct impacts, such as the pollution generated by the development of industry or intensive agriculture, significant land use transformations – expansion of agriculture and industry (Filip and Cocean, 2012; Ianoș et al., 2012), over-harvesting of natural resources, construction of dams and irrigation systems, were not the primary focus of this research. The main interest was on direct conflicts between man and animal species, generated by the development of agriculture, leading to the extinction or near extinction of the *enemies of the state*.

Two kinds of sources were used in order to get an overall picture: data on agriculture from specialized journals, magazine and newspapers, and hunting data from magazines, almanacs and newspapers, mostly edited by the National Association of Hunters and Fishermen. In addition to these, books and statistical year books were used if available.

In order to document the results of the campaign directed against the wolf, data were gathered from several sources. The average values were computed eliminating values found in a single source if they differed substantially from those found in the other sources. Of particular interest was a graph found in Georgescu (1970), used to determine the actual values by digitally measuring their corresponding heights.

3. Results and discussion

The study aimed to prove a historical scenario according to which the conflicts with wildlife appeared as means of justifying the failures of communist practices of soviet inspiration. The results of the bibliographical study are organized in two sections. The first one justifies the hypothesized historical scenario and the second takes an in-depth look at the campaigns and their outcomes, detailing two case studies – the wolf and pelican.

3.1. A historical perspective of man-wildlife conflicts during the early communist period

While the new communist *plans* affected the environment by developing a polluting and resource-de-

pleting industry – *socialist industrialization* (Anonymous, 1951), this research focuses on the direct conflicts between humans and wildlife. These conflicts were mostly due to the change of agricultural practices, although the extinction or near-extinction of some species was also caused by industrial pollution or over-harvesting of resources. Early Romanian communism was inspired by the soviet model: *the treasure of revolutionary experience of the communist (bolshevist) party* (Anonymous, 1951). The socialist transformation of agriculture was done through the *program for the creative application of the genial cooperative plan of great Lenin to the concrete conditions of Romania* (Cozma, 1959) started in 1949, involving the extensive development (increasing agricultural areas) and the intensive one (mechanical and chemical agriculture – machinery, irrigation and/or draining, fertilizers and pesticides, in parallel with applying Michurin's practices and introduction of new breeds from Russia) (Anonymous, 1951; Feneșan et al., 1958; Cozma, 1959; Anonymous, 1959; Murgescu, 1960; Central Directorate for Statistics, 1961). An important increase was in the number of machines; the number of tractors increased over 800% by 1959, compared with 1938 (reference year used in the official statistics of that period) (Murgescu, 1960). The extension of agriculture was done through the *collectivization*, consisting of confiscating the private ownership parcels and aggregating them in large lots, suitable for the mechanical agriculture.

These new practices were set in the context of a new goal – *victory in the historical competition between the socialist and capitalist systems* (Cozma, 1959), or *anti-imperialist fight for peace* (Anonymous, 1951). This involved increasing the yield (Anonymous, 1957; Cozma, 1959), in order to legitimate the communist regime and new agricultural practices. Statistics seemed to indicate that the outcomes were as expected, suggesting an increase of the cereal production, number of animals and their yield (Anonymous, 1959; Murgescu, 1960; Central Directorate for Statistics, 1961).

However, if the overall figures, compared with the situation of 1938 or for large periods, appeared to legitimate the new regime, the yearly situation was different. Data from the Central Directorate for Statistics (1961) show the situation of sheep meat, milk and wheat yield. In the early years of the communist regime, the variations (especially losses) could be attributed to natural causes due to the climate variability (draughts, floods etc.) (Teodoreanu, 2017). However, this could not be done always, and was also ideologically against the ideas of Michurin and Lysenko, who considered that in the socialist system man can always defeat nature (Lecourt, 1977).

Moreover, assigning the losses to the *enemies* allowed the communist regime to legitimate its oppressive actions against its opponents. The political ideologists defined different categories: those who

owned land (especially large surfaces) and opposed to the collectivization process the *kulaks*; those who were not giving out the share requested by the government; those who were sabotaging the new economy. Newspapers like *The factory and the field* or *The new agriculture* abounded in titles like *For the liquidation of the consequences of right deviationism in the issue of collection, Thieves must be severely sanctioned, Kulak Marin Istrătescu of Ungureni – Râncaciiov is still trying to exploit the poor peasants, Kulak Florescu took out pieces from the thresher, Punishing some sabotaging kulaks, Kulak Elena Dișescu of Gemenea Commune, allowed to sabotage without consequences, Sabotaging kulaks, Hostile elements removed from the cooperation etc.*; each of them meant an individual or family tragedy, as they were executed, sent to prison or died in the labor camps and their families suffered severe consequences as well.

3.2. Campaigns against the natural enemies

The elimination of human enemies did not result into a spectacular increase of the agricultural production. We hypothesize that the *natural enemies of the people* were identified in an attempt to find an explanation for the failures. An *advertisement* from 1954 magazine *Sportive hunter and fisherman* (Anonymous, 1954a) reads, *A wolf destroys yearly 52 animals weighting 1,000 kg. Through 3,125 wolves destroyed in 1953, 3,000,000 kg of meat were saved for the economy of the country. Through 200,000 stray dogs destroyed in 1953, 18,000,000 kg of food were saved for the economy of the country. 250,000 damaging birds destroyed in 1953 represent an economy of 2,000,000 kg of seeds, eggs and meat. 20,000 cormorants destroyed in 1954 [mean] 6,000,000 kg of fish saved for the economy of the country*; the text identifies the main enemies: wolves, stray dogs, seed-eating birds and cormorants. It is important to note that the stray dogs constituted an issue in areas other than the urban ones, in opposition to the current situation (Ioja et al., 2011).

Although many species suffered due to the communist policies or due to the lack of protective policies, the situation differs from one case to another. In a 2010 interview, Dr. Dumitru Murariu, Director of *Grigore Antipa* National Museum of Natural History, mentions four cases: (a) the wolf, result of a campaign, (b) all scavenging vultures (populations shrunk in sizes, the bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*) extinct), as side victims of the wolf campaign, particularly through poisoning (Bardan, 1951), (c) the pelican, again as a result of a campaign, (d) the bustard (*Otis tarda*), due to the lack of protective actions (Gheorghe, 2010). In the following sections, a special attention will be paid to two well-documented campaigns, against the pelican and the wolf. The bustard situation is controversial. While the official attitude was favorable and its protection recommended, populations were endangered by illegal

collection of eggs, direct elimination by dogs joining the peasants to field works, capturing the hatch (Anonymous, 1952), and especially massive killings during the winters, when their wings were covered by ice and peasants killed them with wood bats (Anonymous, 1952; C. B., 1954; Gheorghe, 2010), such as the 1938 episode described by C. B. (1954). In addition, ice resulted killed them by freezing or due to the natural predators (C. B., 1954).

3.2.1. Pelicans – a controversial campaign

Although the pelican campaign occurred during the communist period (Gheorghe, 2010), its roots are earlier (Botezat and Linția, 1942). In fact, the literature review indicates a gradual change of attitude, from considering it an enemy in the beginning up to considering it at most a menace.

In the early stages, an article by Botezat and Linția (1942) suggests that the pelican has a selective role, but concludes that it is destructive and clearly recommends the destruction of nests and hatch.

On a milder note, Șumuleanu (1958) shows that, even though the results of research are controversial, the pelican *should be protected despite the damages of fishing economy*, keeping the population level at approximately 2,000 as a *treasure of our fauna*. The arguments are that pelicans have sufficient nesting sites and sufficient numbers (*i.e.*, the estimated 1,500 is not realistic and the true population exceeds 10,000). The economic arguments *against* the pelican include the fact that although they select the fish, the pelicans consume only the healthy one; the approximately 5,000 pelicans in the Delta (although, again, the population is really around 10,000) consume not 2, but 4 kg of fish/day (and lethally wound an equal amount) 2,250,000 kg of fish, equivalent to 5,500 cattle. A similar figure (200,000,000 kg of fish/year) is given in other studies (Anonymous, 1949). Rădulescu (1966) cites studies showing that pelicans produce damages to the fishing economy and adds that they can transmit parasite eggs through their dejections. During the early communist regime, pelicans were not the main target, although their status was not certain. While officially protected, the literature of that period includes statements like: pelicans and cormorants produce serious damages and therefore *the fight against these birds damaging fish culture must be systematically organized by hunting associations* (Pojoga, 1959). On the other hand, Cătuneanu (1950b) and Dimitrie (1952a, b, 1957) point out that although destroying the fish, pelicans have a selective role. Although pelicans and cormorants wound and spare fishes and occasionally hunt together (Dimitrie, 1952b), the authors recommend that pelicans should be protected, whilst cormorants should be *killed without any fear that they could disappear* (Dimitrie, 1952a). The same thesis is sustained by other articles (Anonymous, 1949; Dimitrie, 1952b; Cătuneanu, 1950b). The hunting association of the two species is known by biologists; pelicans

form a circle and flap their wings, cormorants dive and catch some of the fish; those who are trying to escape going to the surface of the water are caught by the pelicans (Melian et al., 2005). For this reason, it is likely that the campaign against cormorants had its contribution to the near extinction of pelicans. It is important to mention that the campaign against cormorants was a clear consequence of the communist policies. An advertisement (Anonymous, 1954a) also indicates that *by killing 20,000 cormorants in 1954, 6,000,000 kg of fish were saved for the economy of the country*. Killing of cormorants was a *duty of the hunters, in order to increase the fish production for [feeding the] working class* (Cătuneanu, 1950a); in addition to killing fish, cormorants were also responsible for sickening them (Anonymous, 1948). Despite all these, the near extinction of pelicans is attributed to the antipathy of fisherman, who illegally destroyed the nests and hatch, or is a *collateral consequence* of the campaign against fish-eating birds (Anonymous, 1949).

3.2.2. Wolves – a systematic campaign

The campaign for the extermination of wolves was organized in such a systematic way, that it continued longer. Even after the separation from the Soviet policies, articles advocating the extermination of wolves were still present (Georgescu, 1970). Given the coherent and planned campaign, its presentation is organized in several sections.

Rationale. The wolf campaign was not a Romanian creation. Its roots are in the soviet policies. Ideologically, the campaign is based on the recommendations of soviet biologists Mantefjel and Larin (1951), cited by others (Lazăr, 1953; Galațchi, 1954; General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1954; Gavrițeș, 1957), according to whom *the selection [of game species] must be done by man, not by the wolf* (General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1954), or, more exactly, *in the socialist state, man does not only observe nature, but intervenes, directing laws to the benefit of the people* (Almășan, 1950). Moreover, the proliferation of predators, particularly wolves, was part of the *problematic inheritance of the bourgeois regime* (Lazăr, 1953; General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1954) and resulted into the incapacity of obtaining the maximum hunting yield (General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1954). The ideological fight involved even the reinterpretation of fairy tales, in order to induce in the young generations the hate against wolves (Andronache, 1954). Attempting to offer a *balanced* viewpoint, the author offers a literature review, according to which some authors discuss the selective role of wolves without opposing their extermination, excepting for the *inhuman means* – poison and traps, while others try to charge wolves with all possible crimes, concluding that the growth of their populations must be con-

trolled. However, Almășan (1950) calls for the total eradication, so that the word *wolf* would be present *only in the stories*. Consequently, the literature of that period called the wolf *enemy no. 1 of domestic animals and furry game* (Andronache, 1954), *plague* (Almășan, 1949), *enemy of the hunting economy* (Iacobi, 1956), or *greatest enemy of the game* (Popescu, 1955a). The cruelty of wolf was also described in texts like: *the endless hunger of these cruel predator beasts heavily endangers the cattle in village households, but especially the precious game of our forests* (Iotici, 1949).

Substantiation. The main argument against wolf is an economic one. Wolves were accused of destroying domestic animals and all species of interest for the hunters. Different authors have compiled a *menu* for the wolf, including: stag (*Cervus sp.*), elk (*Cervus elaphus*), deer (*Capreolus sp.*), rabbit (*Lepus sp.*), wild boar (*Sus scrofa*), chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*), capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*), grouse (*Tetrastes bonasia*), partridge (*Perdix sp.*), wild goose and duck, sheep, deer, small and large cattle, horse, chicken, goose (Schnell, 1948; Witting, 1948; Almășan, 1949; Lazăr, 1953; General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1954, 1955; Stanca, 1954; Popescu, 1955a, b; Rudescu, 1955; Iacobi, 1956; Bodea, 1957; C. B., 1958; Georgescu, 1970). Obviously, the list is exaggerated; it is unlikely for wolves to reach the chamois or attack the very large species included in the diet. The figures are even less credible: thousands of cattle and sheep yearly (Lazăr, 1953); millions of kilograms of game meat and domestic animals from people's households (C. B., 1958); 2,700,000 kg of meat consumed by the 4-5,000 wolves (Stanca, 1954) or 4,000,000 kg of meat consumed by 4,000 wolves (Galațchi, 1954); 52 cattle weighting 1,040 kg (Andronache, 1954). The advertisement from 1954 read that by killing 3,125 wolves in 1953, 3,000,000 kg of meat were saved, as a wolf kills yearly 52 animals weighting 1,000 kg (Anonymous, 1954a). In addition to the damages, wolves were also found responsible for the rage (Popescu, 1955a). Another argument, meant for the hunters, is that wolves must be destroyed so that the stags won't be all killed (Schnell, 1948). Nevertheless, in compensation, wolves did not have too much to offer, as even their fur was of little value, especially compared to the fur of the game destroyed by it (Andronache, 1954).

Mobilization. The legal basis of the campaign consists of the Government Decision 108/1953 on the wolf combating campaign (Andronache, 1954), replaced by the decision on the action of destroying wolves from the territory of People's Republic of Romania (Stoica, 1957). The laws mobilized the hunters, including economic stimulants: awards, paid vacation during the 5 mandatory yearly campaigns (Lazăr, 1953). Moreover, the total destruction of wolves was a public, yet honoring duty (Lazăr, 1953), justified by the increasing demand of people

for *more milk, meat, cheese, wool and leather* (Lazăr, 1953). The power of examples was also used; the magazine *Sportive hunter and fisherman* published the account of a Bulgarian old hunter who destroyed 161 in only one year (Anonymous, 1954c).

Weapons. In a similar way to the ideological campaign, weapons were also of soviet inspiration. Brochures were translated from Russian and distributed to the hunters (Savițchi, 1951). The methods included poisoning with letholine and strychnine, catching babies and adults in their burrows, shooting (collective sessions, chasing, using dogs or vultures, sledges or aircrafts), traps, snares and pitfalls (Iotici, 1949; Andronache, 1954; Galațchi, 1954; General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1954, 1955; Anonymous, 1955; Popescu, 1955a; Nicolae, 1956; Bodea, 1957; C. B., 1958). Gavrilet (1957) provides a calendar of the different methods. The calendar indicates that the wolf can be killed without any restriction at any time (Almășan, 1949, 1950; Lazăr, 1953; General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1955). With respect to the usage of methods, 1609 wolves were shot, 343 poisoned, 75 trapped and 477 killed in their burrows in 1954 (C. B., 1958). Similar figures are reported by Popescu (1955a).

Results. Disparate figures were found in the literature; they indicate that 600 baby wolves (Bodea, 1957) and 3,000 adults (Anonymous, 1954a) were killed yearly. Although the figures from different sources vary drastically (after all, they rely on hunting accounts), Fig. 1 shows a graph obtained by averaging the values from different authors for the number of killings (Almășan, 1950; Andronache, 1954; Anonymous, 1954a; Popescu, 1955a; Nicolae, 1956; Gavrilet, 1957; Georgescu, 1970) and Georgescu (1970) for the population size. In the second case, a single source was preferred, as the others referred to a single year and figures differed substantially. The graph shows that the number of killed wolves keeps increasing, most likely because the set of methods used expands beyond traditional hunting campaigns to include the most bestial ones, such as poisoning, killing the wolf offspring in their borrows, or trapping. The increase stopped when almost all existing wolves were killed; from here on, lesser wolves are killed each year, but enough to prevent the restoration of the overall population. Furthermore, despite the variations, the attitude is consistent and all authors agree that too few wolves were killed (General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, 1954; Stanca, 1954; Popescu, 1955a; Popescu, 1959). Georgescu (1970) also discusses the relationship between the decrease of wolf population and the increase of stag population, supporting the statements of Schnell (1948) and explaining it through the theory developed by Lotka and Volterra.

The side victims – scavenging vultures – were mostly killed by poisoned carcasses, due to the re-

commendation to replenish the poison as soon as the poisoning sites were visited (Anonymous, 1954b). *Time span.* As it the cited literature shows, the wolf campaign started almost at the same time with the seizure of power by the communist regime (1948). Its peak was in the 50's, but, as it can be seen in Fig. 1, the campaign was still going on in 1966. Furthermore, the tone of the book of Georgescu (1970) does not show any change, despite the fact that some of Stalin's policies were condemned immediately by Khrushchev and Romania started developing its own communist system after 1965.

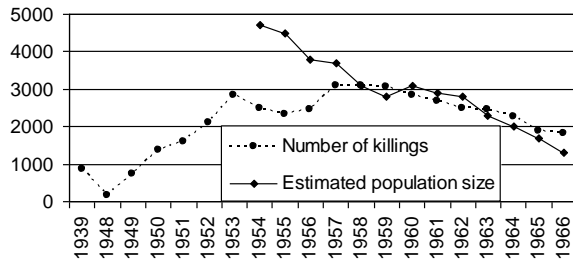


Figure 1. Results of the wolf campaign: killings and estimated population size. Values reflect averages of Almășan, 1950; Andronache, 1954; Anonymous, 1954a; Popescu, 1955a; Nicolae, 1956; Gavrilet, 1957; Georgescu, 1970.

3.3. Discussions

The analysis presented in this article aimed to show that, despite the *care for the environment* stated by the Romanian communist regime, its actions had been directed against the environment. In order to sustain this claim, three cases of species eliminated totally or partially during the early communist period in Romania were presented. Each of them illustrates a different point; bustards were eliminated by the carelessness showing that although protected, the status of the bustard was not enforced; the pelican, also protected, was eliminated due to the lack of sufficient knowledge and contrasting recommendations; and the wolf was sentenced to death consciously. The underlying premise is that the extensive and intensive development of agriculture results into a conflict with the species from natural ecosystems, as a particular side of the conflict between economy and the environment (Marinescu and Co-man, 2010). This relationship was discussed in the literature of the communist period and used as an ideological weapon. Popescu (1955b) argues that *only rudimentary agriculture leads to the destruction of game and rational, scientific agriculture practiced on large surfaces* does not have this effect. Obviously, his comments (not based on facts or a literature review) are meant to support the collectivization process. However, the results presented in this article clearly infirm his theses. The *new* agriculture failed and wild species, such as the wolf (*enemy of husbandry*) and fish eating birds ('enemies of the fisheries') were direct victims. Other species (pelicans too) were eliminated to the lack of protection; apart

from the individual protection status (rarely enforced), only two reserves existed before 1989: Danube Delta and Retezat Massif. Nevertheless, they missed an administrative structure and any plans of management, similar to the findings of other studies (Khabibullov, 1991; Mazursky, 1991; Ostergren and Jacques, 2002). On a different note, these case studies show that giving science a *political sense* is unproductive and the science created to serve political interests is a fake one, losing even its scientific character. The examples consisted of political statements without scientific support and substantiation from facts/data. Moreover, it is hard to distinguish a different tone or approach between scientific and popular literature. All illustrate the *socialist science*, which was meant to substantiate the new policies. Conclusions such that a species can be eliminated without consequences or is detrimental to the ecosystem where it belongs denote the lack of scientific ethics and respect for the environment (Ianoș et al., 2009). However, Romania did not learn from these lessons. In 2015, a senator planned to sign a petition showing that the 10,000 protected bears became a menace and some 4,000 should be killed (Dărămuș, 2015), similar to the wolves killed during the communist period. In the same year the skylark was threatened by excessive hunting, lacking a protection status similar to its status in other European Union countries (Benedetti, 2015), repeating the tragic story of the bustard during the communist eve. With respect to the theoretical framework, the three cases sustain the initial claim. The bustard and pelican were legally protected, but their status did not save the bustard from the hungry peasants and did not stop the occasional campaigns against the pelican. In addition, campaigns against the cormorant affected the pelican, because the relationship of the two species, particularly the joint fishing efforts, was insufficiently known. This is an indication that, despite the claim of *safeguarding the environment*, the Romanian communist regime did not support related research before taking concrete actions. The most obvious example is provided by the campaign against the wolf, which had, in addition to the concrete actions, an ideological side (i.e., the interpretation of the fairy tales, meant to induce in children the hate against wolves). However, it is noteworthy mentioning that different *interpreted* images of the wolf are not necessarily a communist innovation, as exist also in the American literature, without being used as ideological weapons (Jones, 2010, 2011). All the three examples resulted into an attempt to eliminate (deliberately, in the case of the wolf and occasionally the pelican) entire species. There is no doubt that pro-environmentalist policies can have such effects; therefore, the actions of the communist regime were anti-environmentalist. Another question is how much such campaigns had to do with communist ideologies versus local particularities. The wolf campaign took place during the

same period in Russia (Andronache, 1954) and Bulgaria (Anonymous, 1954c), due to the soviet influence. Historical records show that in 1357 severe winters determined the wolves entering the human settlements in Finland; the king issued a decree requiring their extermination on April 16, 1357 (Teodoreanu, 2017). Wolves were also presented as pests during 1700-1850 in the Prussian Brandenburg (Sprenger, 2015). However, in the West such campaigns were only accidental, took place for a very limited amount of time and were not meant for the complete extermination of a species. A campaign similar to the one directed against the wolf in Romania took place in China against the *four pests*, killing 1 billion sparrows brutally, by scaring them away and preventing their landing by keeping clapping until the birds fell down dead, resulting into a loss of crops due to the insects that would have been eaten by them (Hesketh and Zhu, 1997) forcing China to import sparrows from the Soviet Union (Bernstein, 2014), 1.5 billion rats, 100 million kilograms of flies and 11 million kilograms of mosquitoes (Lampton, 1972). However, the Chinese example does not necessarily illustrate a communist anti-environmental policy in its very nature, but rather consequences of the conflict between agriculture and the environment, although the size of effects is certainly possible only in a centralized economy. Similar conflicts existed in Europe; during 1700-1850, Prussian Brandenburg adopted measures for controlling the agricultural (migratory locusts) and silvicultural (pine caterpillars) pests (Sprenger, 2015).

Despite the dual possible interpretation of the Chinese example, the examples from the communist countries point out to the communist ideology of intervening against nature.

As it could be seen, old ethics, present in the literature discussed in the study, rarely questioned the morality of intervening against nature, but discussed issues such as, *should we keep the pelicans or destroy all, how many of them are enough*; in the case of wolf, its elimination is advocated without any ethical questioning. Current ethics considers that man has no right to tackle with the ecosystem laws (Taylor, 1981; Loftin, 1984; Mittelstra, 2003; Horta, 2010; Gache, 2013) and certainly no right to determine the extinction of species (Scott, 1973), obviously, such principles not taken into account by the actions of the communist regime.

There are several possible explanations of the cleavage between the communist pro-environmentalist policies in theory and the practice of drawing entire species near their extinction. On the one hand, the interpretation of the environment during the communist period was based on an anthropocentric perspective (Petrișor, 2016) and subject to political interpretations (Gare, 1993); the environmentalist policies were not conceived in a holistic manner and were approached separately from the hunting or agricultural ones. As a result, those responsible for

managing, at a national level, the fishing, hunting, or agricultural activities considered a campaign against entire species perfectly legitimate, since their policies were not correlated with those from the environmental sector. Second, the communist regime did not include the environment among its highest priority (Earnhart, 1997; Nawrotzki, 2012); in Romania, communists were continuators of the socialists and their primary focus was represented by social issues. As a consequence, anti-environmental actions were permitted if they were serving a purpose considered more important. Third and tightly related, law enforcement was not as strict in the sectors of lesser importance, such as the environmental issues (Khabibullov, 1991), as in the very important ones, particularly those related to the communist ideology (private/state property, private/state economy, control of mass-media etc.). Fourth, communist propaganda had means of diverting people's attention from the real problems by creating fictive issues and enemies (Lasswell, 1951); as it has been stated in the beginning, the wild animals were held responsible for the failure of agricultural policies, following the extermination of political enemies for the same reasons.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Starting from an analysis on the literature comparing communism and environmentalism, which seems to indicate that the two are similar and belong to the *left* side of the political range, this article attempted to analyze the early communist regime literature in Romania, hypothesizing that *new* policies had direct adverse environmental consequences with political roots. The analysis indicated that there were direct campaigns to eliminate species conflicting with some economy branches (e.g., conflict between wolf and husbandry or hunting, between the pelican and cormorant and fishing economy) and collateral victims (poisoned scavenging vultures, elimination of bustards and pelicans due to the non-enforcement of existing protective policies or their lack).

The examples analyzed above show clearly that, far away from being environmentally friendly, the communist regime of Romania had a deleterious effect against species and ecosystems all over its duration; some of the environmental consequences of communist actions are still visible today.

Moreover, the analysis shows the ethical consequences of political ideologies. While modern ethics limit human interventions over nature, particularly at the scale of sentencing a species to death, results can be disastrous when specific political ideologies do not show any respect for the environment. It can only be hoped that the examples remain painful lessons of the past and their repetition – in other places, with other ideologies – is impossible nowadays. In a nutshell, the analysis of the Romanian communist regime shows a huge cleavage between the seemingly

pro-environmentalist policies in *theory* and the anti-environmentalist *practice* of drawing entire species near their extinction.

Acknowledgement

This work was entirely supported by the authors from their personal funds. The authors would like to thank Professor Dan Cogălniceanu at the Ovidius University of Constanța for referring, during the courses taught in the 90's at the University of Bucharest, the literature referring to pelicans and wolves, situated at the core of this article, and Professor Cristian Iojă at the University of Bucharest for his comments that helped refining the message of the article. Also, we thank for the time and efforts saved through the help of Mr. Lucian Popa at the National Library of Romania, Mrs. Mirela Ringheanu at the Library of the National Academy and Mrs Luminița Miron at the Central University Library in accessing promptly the documentary resources.

References

1. ALMĂȘAN A., 1949, Menace of the wolf, in: *Vânătorul*, 1(13), p. 3.
2. ALMĂȘAN A., 1950, The wolf destruction campaign, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 2(3), p. 3.
3. ANDRONACHE I., 1954, *Hunting as an economic, sportive and scientific factor*, General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, Bucharest, Romania.
4. ANONYMOUS, 1948, Kill the water birds, in: *Foaia pescarului*, 2, p. 6.
5. ANONYMOUS, 1949, The pelican, in: *Vânătorul*, 1(11), p. 7-8.
6. ANONYMOUS, 1951, 30 years of glorious fight for freedom, peace and socialism, in: *Probleme agricole*, 3(4-6), p. 1-5.
7. ANONYMOUS, 1952, Bustards and ice, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 4(12), p. 5.
8. ANONYMOUS, 1954a, Agenda of sportive hunter and fisherman, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 6(1).
9. ANONYMOUS, 1954b., Contribution of hunters to increasing the amount of widely consumed products, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 6(11), p. 14-15.
10. ANONYMOUS, 1954c, How I killed 161 wolves, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 6(12), p. 21-22.
11. ANONYMOUS, 1955, Let's intensify the action for combating the predators, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 7(6), p. 2.
12. ANONYMOUS, 1957, 40 years from the Great Socialist Revolution of October, in: *Probleme zootehnice și veterinare*, 11, p. 5-10.
13. ANONYMOUS, 1959, 15 years since the liberation of the country, in: *Probleme agricole*, 11(8), p. 7-13.
14. BARDAN A., 1951, Combating the wolves, in: *Vânătorul*, 3(10), p. 2.
15. BENEDETTI L., 2015, *Romanian hunting law threatens wild birds and violates the Birds Directive*, BirdLife International, Cambridge, UK, <http://www.birdlife.org/europe-and-central-asia/news/romanian-hunting-law-threatens-wild-birds-and-violates-birds-directive> (06.08.2018).
16. BENEDEK K., 2018, Aspects in Romanian Nature Conservation – A Review, in: *Environmental Engineering and Management Journal*, 17(1), p. 95-106.
17. BERNSTEIN T. P., 2014, Mao, Chinese communism, and the USSR, in: *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 16(2), p. 108-127.
18. BODEA M., 1957, Catching baby wolves at their burrow, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 10(4), p. 12-13.
19. BOTEZAT E., LINȚIA D., 1942, The pelican faces the economic exploitation of the Delta, in: *Carpații: Vânătoare. Pescuit. Chinologie*, 10(1), p. 173-177.
20. C. B., 1954, The bustards, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 6(4), p. 4-5.
21. C. B., 1958, Combating wolves at their burrow, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 7(5), p. 9-10.
22. CĂTUNEANU I. I., 1950a, Current aspects of the bird colonies from the Danube Delta, in: *Vânătorul*, 2(8), p. 7.
23. CĂTUNEANU I. I., 1950b, Few data on fish-eating birds, in: *Vânătorul*, 2(7), p. 5-8.
24. CENTRAL DIRECTORATE FOR STATISTICS, 1961, *Development of People's Republic of Romania's Agriculture*, Central Directorate for Statistics, Bucharest, Romania.
25. COZMA I., 1959, The agriculture of People's Republic of Romania on its ascending trend towards socialism, in: *Revista internațională pentru agricultură*, 6, p. 14-25.
26. DĂRĂMUȘ N. R., 2015, Killing the bear with a glance: the gaze of senator Tanczos, in: *Kamikaze*, 6(29), p. 7.
27. DIMITRIE R., 1952a, Fish-eating birds and their combating, in: *Vânătorul*, 4(12), p. 12-13.
28. DIMITRIE R., 1952b, Fish-eating birds from Romania and their combating, in: *Vânătorul*, 4(11), p. 12-13.
29. DIMITRIE R., 1957, The pelican, a species that is getting lost, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 10(4) p. 12-13.
30. EARNHART D., 1997, Enforcement of environmental protection laws under communism and democracy, in: *The Journal of Law and Economics*, 40(2), p. 377-402.

31. FENEȘAN O., FRĂSIE D., LUCA I., ONICĂ P., ROMANOVICI A., VASCAN O., VASILIU C., 1958, *Development of agriculture in People's Republic of Romania*, Editura Agro-Silvică de Stat, Bucharest, Romania.
32. FILIP S., COCEAN P., 2012, Urban industrial brownfields: constraints and opportunities in Romania, in: *Carpathian Journal of Earth and Environmental Sciences*, 7(4), p. 165-174.
33. GACHE C., 2013, Environmental ethic values through ecological education in one Romanian master degree program, in: *Natura Montenegrina*, 12(3-4), p. 1-8.
34. GALAȚCHI N., 1954, Destruction of wolves at their burrow, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 1(13), p. 3.
35. GARE A., 1993, Soviet environmentalism: The path not taken, in: *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 4(4), p. 69-98.
36. GAVRILEȚ I., 1957, Forestry and hunting personnel in the wolf combating action, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 10(1), p. 15.
37. GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF SPORTIVE HUNTERS AND FISHERMEN IN ROMANIA, 1954, *Destroying the wolves in their burrows during the spring and summer*, General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, Bucharest, Romania.
38. GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF SPORTIVE HUNTERS AND FISHERMEN IN ROMANIA, 1955, *Destroy the predators*, General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, Bucharest, Romania.
39. GEORGESCU M., 1970, *The bear and wolf in our Carpathians*, General Association of Sportive Hunters and Fishermen in Romania, Bucharest, Romania.
40. GHEORGHE D., 2010, Wolves and vultures from Romania, executed as 'enemies of the people', in: *România liberă*, 6082, p. 6.
41. HESKETH T., ZHU W. X., 1997, From Mao to market reform, in: *British Medical Journal*, 314(7093), p. 1540-1542.
42. HORTA O., 2010, The ethics of the ecology of fear against the nonspeciesist paradigm: a shift in the aims of intervention in nature, in: *Between the Species*, 13(10), p. 163-187.
43. IACOBI R., 1956, Enemy of the hunting economy, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 9(1), p. 17, 19.
44. IANOȘ I., PEPTENATU D., ZAMFIR D., 2009, Respect for environment and sustainable development, in: *Carpathian Journal of Earth and Environmental Sciences*, 4(1), p. 81-93.
45. IANOȘ I., SÎRODOEV I., PASCARIU G., 2012, Land-use conflicts and environmental policies in two post-socialist urban agglomerations: Bucharest and Chișinău, in: *Carpathian Journal of Earth and Environmental Sciences*, 7(4), p. 125-136.
46. IOJĂ I. C., ROZYLOWICZ L., PĂTROESCU M., NIȚĂ M. R., VÂNĂU G. O., 2011, Dog walkers' vs. other park visitors' perceptions: The importance of planning sustainable urban parks in Bucharest, Romania, in: *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 103(1), p. 74-82.
47. IOTICI N., 1949, Let's prepare for combating the wolves, in: *Vânătorul*, 13(1), p. 7-8.
48. JONES K., 2010, From Big Bad Wolf to Ecological Hero: *Canis Lupus* and the Culture(s) of Nature in the American-Canadian West, in: *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 40(3), p. 338-350.
49. JONES K., 2011, Writing the Wolf: Canine Tales and North American Environmental-Literary Tradition, in: *Environment and History*, 17(2), p. 201-228.
50. KHABIBULLOV M., 1991, Crisis in Environmental Management of the Soviet Union, in: *Environmental Management*, 15(6), p. 749-763.
51. LAMPTON D. M., 1972, Public health and politics in China's past two decades, in: *Health Services Reports*, 87(10), p. 895-904.
52. LASSWELL H. D., 1951, The Strategy of Soviet Propaganda, in: *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, 24(2), p. 66-78.
53. LAZĂR F., 1953, Destruction of wolves, a communitarian action, in: *Vânătorul*, 5(12), p. 3-4.
54. LECOURT D., 1977, *Proletarian science?*, NLB, London, UK.
55. LOFTIN R. W., 1984, The Morality of Hunting, in: *Environmental Ethics*, 6(3), p. 241-250.
56. MANTEJFEL P. A., LARIN S. A., 1951, *Wolves and their combating*, Physical Culture and Sport Press, Bucharest, Romania.
57. MARINESCU B., COMAN C., 2010, The ethics of animals testing, in: *Romanian Journal of Bioethics*, (8)3, p. 197-204.
58. MAZURSKY K. R., 1991, Communism and the Environment, in: *Forum for Applied Research and Public Policy*, 5(4), p. 39-44.
59. MELIAN I., TODERAȘ I., CIOCÎRLAN V., 2005, *Birds – systematic, biology, ecology*, State University of Moldova, Chișinău, Moldova.
60. MITTELSTRA J., 2003, The impact of the new biology on ethics, in: *Romanian Journal of Bioethics*, 1(2), p. 1-8.
61. MURGESCU C. (ed.), 1960, *Problems of developing and consolidating the socialist agriculture*, Academy of People's Republic of Romania Press, Bucharest, Romania.
62. NAWROTZKI R. J., 2012, The politics of environmental concern: A cross-national analysis, in: *Organization & Environment*, 25(3), p. 286-307.
63. NICOLAE S., 1956, Combat the wolves in their burrow, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 9(5), p. 8.
64. OSTERGREN D., JACQUES P., 2002, A Political Economy of Russian Nature Conservation

- Policy: Why Scientists have Taken a Back Seat, in: *Global Environmental Politics*, 2(4), p. 102-124.
65. PEPPER D., 1985, Determinism, idealism and the politics of environmentalism – a view point, in: *International Journal of Environmental Studies*, 26(1-2), p. 11-19.
 66. PETRIȘOR A.-I., 2016, Brief critical analysis of concepts used for assessing the market value to ecosystem goods and services in urban and spatial plans, in: *Journal of Urban and Landscape Planning*, 1-2, p. 98-108.
 67. POJOGA I., 1959, *Fish culture*, State Agriculture and Forestry Press, Bucharest, Romania.
 68. POPESCU A., 1955a, Let's continue the action for combating the wolves in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 9(9), p. 20.
 69. POPESCU A., 1959, Let's destroy the wolves, greatest enemies of the game, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 7(2), p. 8.
 70. POPESCU E., 1955b, On hunting and agriculture, in: *Almanahul vânătorului și pescarului sportiv*, 5, p. 86-88.
 71. RĂDULESCU I., 1966, Pelicans as predators and possible vectors of parasitic diseases to hatchery fishes, in: *Buletinul Institutului de Cercetări Piscicole*, 25(1), p. 75-78.
 72. RUDESCU L., 1955, Game and hunting in the Danube Delta, in: *Almanahul vânătorului și pescarului sportiv*, 5, p. 152-158.
 73. SAVIȚCHI A., 1951, The wolf combating campaign, in: *Vânătorul*, 3(1), p. 8-10.
 74. SCHNELL E., 1948, Decrease of our stag populations, in: *Calendar vânătoresc*, eds. Witting O., Coresi, Romania, p. 26-31.
 75. SCOTT P., 1973, Species Extinction in Birds, in: *Bird Study*, 20, p. 93-102.
 76. SPRENGER J., 2015, An Ocean of Locusts – The Perception and Control of Insect Pests in Prussian Brandenburg (1700-1850), in: *Environment and History*, 21(4), p. 513-536.
 77. STANCA I., 1954, How much does a wolf cost?, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 6(1), p. 19.
 78. STANCA I., 1954, How much does a wolf cost?, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 6(1), p. 19.
 79. STOICA C., 1957, Decision on the action of destroying wolves from the territory of People's Republic of Romania, in: *Vânătorul și pescarul sportiv*, 10(10), p. 18.
 80. ȘUMULEANU B., 1958, Should we protect or destroy the pelican?, in: *Buletinul Institutului de Cercetări Piscicole*, 17(3), p. 55-58.
 81. TAYLOR P. W., 1981, The ethics of respect for nature, in: *Environmental Ethics*, 3(3), p. 197-218.
 82. TEODOREANU E., 2017, *Searching for the lost time. A historical climatology sketch*, Paideia, Bucharest, Romania.
 83. WATTS L. L., 2011, *With Friends Like These. The Soviet Bloc's Clandestine War against Romania*, RAO Press, Bucharest, Romania.
 84. WATTS L. L., 2013, *The First Shall Be Last. Romania and the End of the Cold War*, RAO Press, Bucharest, Romania.
 85. WITTING O. 1948, Conspectus of the hunting economy, in: *Calendar vânătoresc*, ed. Witting O., Coresi, Brașov, Romania, p. 20-25.