

THE PERSONALITY OF AUREL VLAICU  
SEEN BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES

SUMMARY

Well-known and appreciated as a pioneer of world aviation, Aurel Vlaicu set up through his performances as a flyer between 1910 and 1913 a brilliant episode in the history of the Romanian people. He belonged to the oldest, most numerous and, at the same time, most oppressed of all the people of Transylvania. He was a genius in his inventions and as a flyer and he rose to the highest peaks of esteem in the mind of the whole nation who saw in him the living symbol of national revival, of future progress and prosperity.

The present study stresses how, since his first experiments in 1909 and onto the tragic accident of september 1913 which put an end to his life while he attempted to cross the Carpathians from Romania to Transylvania, Vlaicu was accompanied by the enthusiasm and the emotion of the whole Romanian public opinion. The long journey he undertook in 1911 and 1912 in many centers of Transylvania, where in the presence of tens of thousands of people of all ages and social standings he carried out his splendid flight demonstrations, was like a triumphal march that filled with admiration and national pride the hearts of millions of Romanians. His evolutions were as many exciting festivals for the Romanians and they induced at the same time the expression of the sincerest feelings of respect and appreciation in the advanced Hungarian and German public opinion.

Because he contributed to the consolidation of the Romanian people's conscience of their own value, because he inspired confidence in the future of the nation, Aurel Vlaicu's contemporaries considered him as a great and valiant champion of the freedom and happiness of the people. By praising his superior qualities, the present study expresses the high value new Romania sets nowadays on the personality of the important forerunners of our people.

EXPLICATION OF FIGURES

*Fig. 1.* The flyer Aurel Vlaicu in his aircraft „Vlaicu II”.

*Fig. 2.* The flyer Aurel Vlaicu and his friend, the poet Octavian Goga.