

**LIZICA MIHUȚ: TWO BOOKS IN A HEART OR ABOUT THE
LIVED (AND WORKED) HISTORY OF “AUREL VLAICU”
UNIVERSITY ARAD**

Anton ILICA¹¹⁹
“Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad

Abstract: *The 40 anniversary of higher education at “Aurel Vlaicu” University Arad is highlighted by Lizica Mihuț’s publication of two volumes: “A lived history: 40 years of higher education in Arad” (in collaboration with Andrei Ando) (Palimpsest, București, 2012) and “Aurel Vlaicu University 2011 – 2012” – volume XIII (Arad, 2012). My mission, as book reviewer, is to motivate the reader in taking up the reading of these books.*

Keywords: *higher education; mission; publication*

I lean upon the fact that Lizica Mihuț’ has a publicist’s yearnings and a certain gift that has left its mark on the structure and style of the texts lukewarm in these two books. Another reason is given by the event itself: 40 years are not much for an institution but are fundamental for building its authority. Arad required a strong, stable and secure academic pile that would last over the years.

On page 4, L. Mihuț states “*I have gathered a significant number of comments and pieces of information to rebuild, at an anniversary moment, the lived history*” of “Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad (UAV). The volume “**A lived history...**” is an analytical study on the development of “Aurel Vlaicu” University, continuing the activity of *The Institute for sub-engineers*, dating in Arad from December 10th, 1972. From 1972 until nowadays, The Institute for Sub-engineers Arad as technical institution of higher education, baptized by the Polytechnic Institute “Traian Vuia” Timisoara, has developed an academic profile, functioning structures, so that since 1990, anmely after 18 years, the Government released the document regarding the founding of the

¹¹⁹ Prof. univ. dr., e-mail: anton.ilica@yahoo.com.

Institute of Higher Education of Arad. Professor Lizica Mihuț's study, from the opening of the book, is based on data regarding the founding procedures, including those regarding the change of name from the Institute of Higher Education to "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad by the Ministry's Order from March 22nd, 1991.

As far as the structure is concerned, the over 900 pages long volume, begins with "The Rectors' Gallery" and continues with "Dialogued confessions, Daily Notes, Contemporary Testimonies" and ends with "Attitudes and Opinions".

Lizica Mihuț has written (and said) several times about the desire of Arad's intellectuals to assign the city of Arad, the status of university city. It has been an old wish of the intellectuals, ever since 1812, for over 200 years, when the Preparandia of Arad (Pedagogic High school) and the Clerical Institute had elements of superior education. Nowadays, both have higher education representations, in two faculties of "Aurel Vlaicu" University. The volume offers young researchers a vast documentary material in order to build a monographic image as bases for the future activity of the State University of Arad. To Andrei Ando's question (in an interview) on "***How will the future of UAV look like?***", Lizica Mihuț, showing a real responsibility, answers "*I am seriously thinking about the future. It will certainly increase in quality. I wish for UAV to have a future.*" (p. 894)

Lizica Mihuț brings a scientific argumentation regarding the name given to the university. Aurel Vlaicu is the spiritual protector of the university, a symbol of aspiration towards the peaks of science and culture. It is a necessary volume – study that will hallmark the future of the University, representing a first testimony about the 40 year history of "Aurel Vlaicu" University.

The second volume X-rays the last year of "Aurel Vlaicu" University's activity and its urge to define an institutional personality. It is published as a "valuable moment in a year's activity" but also with the hope that we, the people will have a historical responsibility: "*each one's duty of honour is towards the citizens of Arad that have desired an university ever since 1855, but, mostly it is a duty towards ourselves. Only through thorough scientific contributions, powerful research centres, studies and books published at important publishing houses and in important journals, will "Aurel Vlaicu" University have a present and a future*". (p. 170). As we have been accustomed since the

year 2000, the idea of visibility is represented in volumes, as a testimony of UAV's activity, as it is revealed by the press from inland and abroad.

The author of the above statements, Lizica Mihuț, is as well gifted with this historical responsibility. She owns representativeness in her concern and struggle for a real visibility of the university's deeds and accomplishments. She proves that her activity is based on authentic values and aims at maintaining a high institutional quality.

Starting with 2000, when she became rector, until today, Lizica Mihuț elaborates a dynamic chronicle, in yearly volumes with the title "*Aurel Vlaicu*" *University*", counting 18 volumes so far.

All in all, the volumes "Aurel Vlaicu" University (from 2000 until 2012) contain over 8000 pages, similar to a *Larousse* or *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. A whole library shelf.

Rigorously structured, the 16 chapters describe the university's activity as presented in the press or in official documents: the academic year opening ceremony with all its press echoes, the presentation of the university's structures (faculties, departments, directorates), the scientific research and international relations, venue, the university's guests and Romanians we are proud of, publishing (including iconographic material). They confer the reader a complex picture of "Aurel Vlaicu" University's activity, an intellectual institution, involved in the training process of Arad's community.

What is so special about the last volume is that it stresses and promotes the idea of continuity in changes. The Senate's elections, the changes in management structures are presented with the clear intention of keeping the institution in a legal and stable framework. I also notice that this volume stresses the virtues of scientific research in promoting the authority and image of "Aurel Vlaicu" University.

Another of the author's attitudes deserves our appreciation: Lizica Mihuț's faith in the future of "Aurel Vlaicu" University: "*We know that it is difficult. We know that the standards are high. We know that the competition is not loyal. But we also know that **together** we will overcome the obstacles, we know that values will last in spite of the "waves", hardships, irrespective which they are.*" (p. 37).

These two volumes offer the readers a coherent text, revealing a fact that an authentic intellectual is familiar with: the value of a

justifying document. Moreover, Lizica Mișuț writes about the future, about the paradigm of building the personality of a higher education institution, about making tradition as lived history, by the contemporary generation.

The two books that Lizica Mișuț has published (one in co-authoring with Andrei Ando) are the most precious gift a member of the academic staff can offer to an institution in celebration. This institution has gradually developed from its first rector until nowadays. As President of the UAV and former rector, Lizica Mișuț makes a historical confession but also reveals the beautiful and dignifying present, as well as a trustful vision in a successful development of the “Aurel Vlaicu” University, an institution she has dedicated her life to. The author has the strong belief that **TOGETHER** (the institution’s slogan) through all the accomplishments that will come, the university will ensure an organizational culture and Lizica Mișuț will keep on being the image and visibility promoter of the State University that she provided with the most beautiful characteristics of its evolutional and quality development.