

The Realistic Vision of Professor Ion Nicolae Angelescu about the Part Played by Culture in the Creation of a Modern and Complex Economic Civilisation

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ABSTRACT

As a result of the 1918 Great Union and the formation of Modern Romania, Professor and economist Ion Nicolae Angelescu approached and studied mostly the relationship between economy and culture, namely, civilization. Among the great professors who carried out their activity before the foundation of the Faculty of Commerce, in 1951, we have the great honor to "make room" at "Personalalia" column, for Ion N. Angelescu. Economist, distinguished scholar and neo-liberal politician. He was an associate professor and afterwards a professor at the History of Commerce Department in the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Sciences. He was a university Professor at the History of Commerce Department and rector of the Academy of High Commercial and Industrial Studies; he had high official positions (member of parliament, chief of the Ministry staff, under-secretary of state, minister), one of the founding president of Romanian Economists' Association, as a professor, rector and economic thinker. Ion N. Angelescu had an outstanding professional experience for an economist from the beginning of 20th century, generally, and for an economist with a modest provenance and limited material possibilities, particularly: Ion N. Angelescu had a Bachelor of Law and a Bachelor of Literature and Philosophy, at the University of Bucharest; a doctor degree in economics at the University of Munich, with Lujo Brentano as a guiding scientific professor, dean of the new historic German school.

He stressed the importance of the organization of an advanced economic educational network aimed at connecting the theoretical approach to every day practice.

Ion Nicolae Angelescu's approach to the role played by culture in the development of socio-economic life as well as to their interdependence brought new ideas and theses to the field of economic culture.

Introduction

The encyclopedic personality of the neoliberal Ion Nicolae Angelescu, is important because he managed, during his short life (1884-1930) to highlight the importance of the inter-wars period throughout his entire theoretical and practical activity.

Among his professional achievements which show the connection between culture and economy mention should be made that he was founder professor of A.I.S.C.I. (currently A.S.E. -the Academy of Economic Sciences)

He was its rector from 1918 to 1926 and then the founder and manager of the Statitic and Economic Annals from 1926 to 1930. He was a co-worker to various Rumanian and foreign journals.

The proper interpretation of the actual economic situation of a country is done with the support of a vast general culture offering the researcher a vast field of study in order to be able to approach present and long term socio-economic issues.

I.N. Angelescu was an active, creative spirit constantly preoccupied to emphasize the indissoluble connection which should exist between cultural development and the economic life of a people, as Maria and Dumitru Mureşan state, that he looks upon economic life „ in its entire complexity and makes it out under numerous aspects”¹.

I.N. Angelescu's approach is that: “the special culture and the genius of a people is a factor for the greatness and spreading of which, people use up a lot of energy and consciousness”².

In another context, I.N. Angelescu states that: “in the course of history no culture was created without thorough economic organisation and a prosperous material life.

When during very civilised stages, the justifying of rivalries and attacks are achieved through tendencies and spreading of culture and the battle is fought on economic field. „After a battle, one acquires goods and favorable economic situations and on the other hands, the enemy's economic defeat is surely followed by the cultural defeat”³.

I.N. Angelescu states that „the past life of the world offers us convincing evidence that everywhere the gathered wealth leads to the creation of a culture, of a political force and of the superior output of feeling and thinking”⁴ and his speeches on the history of trade confirms the fact that in this subject „one has the most appropriate occasion to emphasize the close connection between the economic and the cultural development of a people”⁵, as it offers to each society member the possibility to understand his or her place and use in society and to channel his or her activity in the sense required by society”⁶.

According to I.N. Angelescu's approach, the economic culture which is in the benefit of people having a functionally active part, with a multitude of aspects enabling mostly the revelation, „comprehension and application of economic laws which are scientifically researched and which should be obeyed”⁷. He mentions that laws must be obeyed to the letter without being disobeyed, to make possible the elaboration of a correct economic policy. When speaking about the duties of politicians in the field of economic culture, I.N. Angelescu thinks that:

„The results of scientific research on economic issues must be learnt by politicians just as they learn writing and reading, the basics of law and of natural science”⁸ regardless of the political party to which they belong.

Taking into account that the degree of perception of the purpose of scientific research of the economic field varies from politician to politician, “only a powerful economic culture could determine all of them, in view of logics and honesty, to accept the principles and conclusions of economic science and to act accordingly”⁹.

As the consequent application of the efficient economic policy is concerned, I. N. Angelescu stated that „all is as to a consequent caution of economic policy. I.N. Angelescu stated that „ all the decisive elements of economic life, – as only thus – economic policy is closer to positive science”¹⁰.

¹ Maria and D. Mureşan, *Culture and Economic Life in Professor I.N. Angelescu's Works introduced at the Professors' Session, May 1997*, The Romanian-American University, Bucharest, 378.

² I.N. Angelescu, *The Economic and Political Power*, p. 9.

³ Ibidem, p. 10.

⁴ Idem, *The History of Trade*, Bucharest 1915, p. 54-55.

⁵ Idem, *The History of Universal Trade in relation to Economic History and the History of People's Culture*, p. 28.

⁶ Maria and D. Mureşan, op. cit., p. 379.

⁷ I.N. Angelescu, *The Economic History and other Economic Studies*, I, p. 20.

⁸ Idem, *The History of Trade* p. 236.

⁹ Maria and D. Mureşan, op. cit., p. 381.

¹⁰ I.N. Angelescu, *The Knowledge and Leadership of the Economic Market*, 1914, p. 5.

I.N. Angelescu also stated that economic culture plays an important part in solving economic, social, political and moral crises which emerge in society, while initial reforms act as „lever or support in order to achieve the legislative frame of order in society”¹¹.

One cannot establish „ social order by means of isolated means or laws. This system is not achieved by simple-minded impressions and mostly by means of passionate drives of hate”¹². I.N. Angelescu underlines that “reforms and laws must be initiated and applied by paying”¹³ much attention to the benefit of everybody, allowing an appropriate orientation of such complex economic issues in order to avoid „man’s falling a victim to existential fight, as well as for man to shape a proper behaviour „the result of our victory regarding the requests leading to a better material status, to a moral uplifting, cultural development conditioned by the economic development”¹⁴.

I.N. Angelescu ascertains that in his effort of having a better life „man prepares his economic and cultural aim, on the other hand, man can bring about economic ruin and cultural burrial”¹⁵.

Finally, the allotment of riches,„ has a crucial influence on the economic, cultural and political development of the people”¹⁶.

„Economic culture with the meaning offered to material life is the result of the spreading of wealth in the town bourgeoisie, as well as of passing land ownership in the hands of the true farmers, either before or after appropriating land to the peasants

People’s natural desire to progress leads to competition.

The competition between the active people leads to technical progress and thus the gathering of wealth by means of **mora** and intellectual progress”¹⁷.

The importance of economic scientific culture is emphasised by I.N. Angelescu when he discusses about the foreign capital participation to the economic activities, such as machines and tools, while „the most qualified work to the most upskilled work will be Romanian”¹⁸.

I.N. Angelescu point of view on education related to forming an economic culture was that „ by means of education man is able to live material and moral life more fully ”¹⁹.

As to population and its professional education, I.N. Angelescu stated that,„ It is our generation's duty to try hard to implement at home the most advanced civilisation ”²⁰

Regarding the state role, he states that: „The first duty is the formation of population to emphasize national riches. Up to now, we had almost nothing. The Former Kingdom does not offer us the required elements, while they are theoretical limitations and are not in accordance with our real needs”.

Important production and industrial branches with great commercial perspectives imposed by our relationship with other countries do not have the appropriate educational level. work These branches are dominated by routine and tradition, while technical discoveries are used to convert us into mere blind tools aiming at a purpose which is not ours”²¹

¹¹ Maria și D. Mureșan, op. cit., p. 382.

¹² I.N. Angelescu, *Guide lines in economic and Financial Policy of Romania*, p. 5.

¹³ Ibidem, p 5.

¹⁴ Idem, *The History of Universal Trade in relation to Economic History and the History of People's Culture*, p. 11.

¹⁵ Idem, *The economic and the Political Power* p. 10.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 38.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 31-32.

¹⁸ Idem, *The Economic Policy of Great Romanian*. 37-38.

¹⁹ Idem, *Social insurance in Modern States*, p. 158.

²⁰ Idem, *The Political economic of Great Romania*, p. 18.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 20.

Regarding the competition between states, I.N. Angelescu states that „in case our national production is not able to sustain competition and we will have to resort to protectionist systems which make consumers' living more difficult, the cause of all that is the lack of an appropriate professional preparation. There must be unity and coordination of forces in our national economy due to a lack of a systematic economic education”²².

Thus „on a professional level, all citizens should have appropriate educational training during their life time; to attain Progress in a certain branch is useful to the national work force”²³.

The state has a leading role, while all people also play an active part, as education „is an issue which concerns the entire population of the country.”²⁴, being a stringent urgency for the young generation.

That is why an immense effort must be made to offer the necessary preparation to young people. “One should devise a ample plan of national education from the very beginning”²⁵

He stated that „ Building all level schools endowed with teachers should be the main preoccupation of a government”²⁶, as well as „the organisation of higher economic education which should be competitive with the European economic higher education. and prepare experts with both ample professional knowledge and culture, by organising university education at the level of the European education.

I.N. Angelescu stated that „workers need higher professional qualification with good and profound cultural background so as to ensure the economic progress of the nation”²⁷.

„Special culture, thorough knowledge in any research field are aimed at spreading to wider circles”²⁸, by the people who „having at their disposal exact methods of research, personally contribute to progress. They have to cope with everyday life issues”²⁹. They have to be very well prepared from the scientific point of view, in order to efficiently solve the economic issues.

The extension of the economic culture both horizontally and vertically, determines the economic behaviour of all society members, becoming a basic component of the economic modern civilisation, requiring complex theoretical and practical preparation which „is able to be put to good use and enrich the requirements of science. This reaffirms that peoples' energy” may be used only with the most advanced technique”³⁰.

CONCLUSIONS

Ion Nicolae Angelescu will be remembered as a prestigious representative of the Rumanian economy and education which he served with abnegation all his life.

The research of various aspects of the role played by the economic culture in determining the economic life, leads to I.N. Angelescu's opportunity to formulate objective considerations regarding the role of the state and of the educational system in the professional and cultural formation of the entire population.

I.N. Angelescu ideas on the role played by culture in the socio-economic life make up a complex and realistic conception with everlasting ideas which can also be a source of

²² Ibidem.

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 21.

²⁵ Idem, Guide in the *Political and Financial Economy of Great Romania*

²⁶ Ibidem.

²⁷ Idem, *The History of universal Trade into Economic History and with the History of People's*, p. 5.

²⁸ Idem, *The History of Trade*, p. 231.

²⁹ Ibidem.

³⁰ Idem, *The Economic Policy of Great Romania* p. 7.

inspiration and meditation about the contemporary situation of our society, in order to shape Romanian economy according to the requirements of the modern market economy.”³¹. His approach emphasizes the connection between economic theory and practice, leading to pertinent conclusions.

Mention must be made that I.N. Angelescu's interest in economic culture results from his intense preoccupation in this field. His approach was internally and internationally affirmed and dwells on an ample process from a scientific point of view as phenomena which amplify during the interwar period.

Nowadays I.N. Angelescu's approach is: “One lives in a period of time in which the usual schemes are not valid any more, people look for a more complex image about themselves. This image must be in accordance with their image in real life ³². The author agrees with Ion Nicolae Angelescu who considered that culture played a decisive part in the making of a modern economic civilisation, able to a rational putting to good use of material and human potency towards successful progress.

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³¹ Maria and D. Mureşan, op. cit., p. 388.

³² Zamfirescu D., History and Culture, Eminescu Publishing House, 1975, p. 8.