

Professor Constantin Ionete: “A Titan of Economic Sciences”

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In the world of economists, Professor Constantin Ionete has been present in different aspects and he has imposed a vigorous, monumental authority and a soul structure of a rare sensibility. Being an exceptional personality, our professor has dedicated himself for over six decades to education, research and production activities. All these years he has worked with interruptions – concomitantly or alternatively – as an academic professor of the Academy of Economic Studies in Bucharest. He was employed as researcher in various economic profile institutes and he held leading positions from head of service to general manager. During 1991-2004 he activated in the Administration Board of B.N.R. (National Bank of Romania). He was part of numerous organisations and institutions with professional, scientific and public character: member of the Romanian Association of the Economists (SOREC), member of the Romanian Association for the Club from Rome, member of the International Council for Science Policy Studies and member of the Romanian Academy.

The education, research and production activities were performed under the sign of the three: courage, creativity and continuity. No doubt, his courage to impose his ideas in a strongly restricted and censured period (1947-1989) brought him respect from colleagues, practitioners and students. In 1972 he published the paper “The behavior of the price formation process”, and one will note opinions on the difficulty of the centralised Romanian economy in the pages of certain prestigious magazines. The book “Prices and tariffs”, published in 1983 and destined to the students for the study of the new aspects from the large sphere of the problematic of prices enters the category of courageous studies. The act of courage is also proven during the time when the ideological constraints had become more and more oppressive and degrading. Unfortunately, the opinions on the necessity of aligning our theoretical preoccupations to the more open orientations from other countries in the area have been considered anti-party and revisionist papers. The lesson was a big price to pay for the professor, because he was expressly forbidden to work for ten years in education, research and central institutions.

Approaching particularly the price mechanism, we will also notice it has been sort of a faith mission, Professor Constantin Ionete will prove a remarkable capacity to identify and decipher problems which imposed the appeal to new concepts. This way, by opening other leads of investigation, he publishes the studies and the books: “The Prices and the Dynamic Equilibrium of the Economy”, “The System Crisis in the Order Economy and Its Explosive Stage”, “Prospective Economic Studies and Analyses”, “Civil Society and Economic Monopoly of the State”, “Nature and Specificity of the Romanian Economic Crisis”, “Strategic Tendencies and Orientation of the Transition Economy in Romania” and “The Converting of the National Currency”. In all the elaborated papers one can sense a creativity doubled by the passion to investigate complex and present problems.

We support continuity through the nature of the scientific research step: he adds ingredients from previous papers to the ingredients of a new paper. The writings achieved during 1990-2000 and after – mostly approaches of problems of the mix of policies regarding the privatization, the monetary market, the taxation, the economic

trend, etc. – are clear radiographies of the economy which no longer finds its equilibrium and necessary force for a lasting development. As disciples of the professor, and there many of us in Craiova, we strongly believe he is the descendent of some famous professors the Romanian education has known: Victor Slăvescu, Ion Răducanu, Virgil Madgearu and so on. Indisputably, Professor Constantin Ionete fully valorised the traditions of the Romanian economic school and that is why he should be rightfully considered the continuer of the advanced traditions, and also the creator of a new work. His analyses meets those of his predecessors so that in the contact points should result not only a connection bridge, but more like a launching platform of new ideas with roots which descend into a past to feed with healthy sap the strong trunk of the contemporary economic high education.

After 1990, Professor Constantin Ionete will participate in the collective of elaboration of the “Draft regarding the performance of the market economy in Romania”. A little later on he will be appointed general manager of the National Institute of Economic Researches. In relation to the activity made here and also in relation to the prestige of the institution we will shortly show the opinions of two distinguished collaborators. Professor Stephane Garelli from the Management and Development Institute from Lausanne mentioned: “We’ve been deeply impressed by the competence and professionalism of your institution and of the people we have been in contact with during the last months. We believe it has been a real privilege to work with you”. Mister Philip Dane, expert with the Plan secretariat from France, appreciated “Contrarily to what is understood by its name, the National Institute of Economic Researches not limited to academic research papers. He strived to achieve prospective studies and analyses, which pursue the very concrete clarification of the Romanian economy problems”.

The unstoppable concern, justified or not, for his own becoming stimulated his feeling of self-improvement and solidified his influencing power. That is why, the attention he gave the day to day behaviour makes us notice both the importance of his big influence on a few generations of researchers, and also the capacity to continuously remodel the complex professional field. As for us, we believe that between the two capacities – the influencing and the remodelling one –are in their turn strongly connected to the features of the scientific research. In short, we would like to specify three features: the interdisciplinarity, the thoroughness and the invigoration by re-evaluation.

The reporting to the papers: „ The Behaviour of the Price Formation Process”, „ Prices and Tariffs”, „ The System Crisis in the Order Economy and Its Explosive Stage” and „ The Converting of the National Currency” allows us to observe an interdisciplinary research step. Such a restructuring of the investigation allows the researcher to contribute with real solutions to the price, economic crisis and currency convertibility management.

We believe that the period 1983 - 2006 can be considered „the top of the iceberg” of the entire research of Professor Constantin Ionete. The richness and variety of the published papers and held conferences during all these years shape more clearly the thoroughness of the scientific research. In order to support the idea of thoroughness of the research, whether we are subjective or not, we will mention two papers: “Nature and Specificity of the Romanian Economic Crisis” and “Strategic Tendencies and Orientation of the Transition Economy in Romania”. There are highest interest debates which must preoccupy both theoreticians and practitioners.

The theoretician and practitioner reputation was consolidated through the phase of the invigoration by re-evaluating each book, study and conference. Regarding the re-evaluation as a systematic exercise, a formative element useful to the progressive

and gradual improvements, the professor draws our attention to the importance of the relation between convergence and divergence, namely between the analytical thinking and the creative thinking. For these reasons, he invites the economists to use the resources they dispose of and intersect the two plans, the two ways of thinking.

Finally, we also believe that the creative activity, even on a more reduced scale, asks for a higher degree of focus and energy. That is why, choosing to live an active life, always pushing the creative frontiers of the professional field involves a self-discipline and intellectual striving level. There are few who choose this path. Among them, no doubt, would be Professor Constantin Ionete at whom we have identified a constant level of self-discipline and intellectual striving in his very long professional life, of more than 60 years.

Our deep consideration for our professor,

Authors