



In remembrance of prof. Bruno Angelillo

I am very glad to speak about Professor Bruno Angelillo in this occasion (National Conference of Public Health, Naples 2009).

Probably Giancarlo De Riu would have done this better of me, but he passed away over two years ago and now I want to associate him in memory with Prof. Angelillo, perhaps for the first time in our academic history.

Accepting this task, I realised how emotionally deep and delicate it was, especially considering the professor as the Founder of the Neapolitan School of Hygiene.

I hope you will forgive me if in this memory I have necessarily include some personal elements:

I will start therefore with a declaration of a heavy conflict of interest!

I met professor Angelillo in Cremona, our hometown, before my graduation in Parma. The following March I went for a interview at the Institute of Hygiene of Sassari and in April I moved on a permanent basis to that city!

I left behind my student status as a little bit “dispersive”, finding in Bruno Angelillo and Giancarlo De Riu a reference and a guide capable of providing a new order in my life.

Why this decision 45 years ago? (At that time “to end up in Sardinia” sounded like a punishment!)

- The field had aroused my interest (Hygiene, “the good consciousness of medicine”)
- I was involved in the mission “to develop the field and to improve the quality of services”, and, in a way, this was an attractive challenge... then, we will have to “return to the continent”...Where? ... and finally to Naples!

There were also the immediate aspects of membership:

- I was aroused to have a operative task (research, didactics) in a University Institute;
- I felt a sense of security in the success of the academic career... and this is no small thing, either!

So, my task here initiates on a note of mainly personal debt and gratitude to the Professor.

We are in Naples, 10 years after Prof. Angelillo’s disappearance; here present are, maybe, all of his Pupils and I think I can make mention, without fear of someone contradicting me, that I recognise some of the characteristics of the Professor’s personality:

- The extraordinary ability of evaluating individuals (characteristics; thoughts; hidden thoughts; ambitions and weakness);
- The strategic clearness in planning (to look beyond, to analyzes the situation from a historical perspective, to not forget details);
- The personal involvement, the perseverance, the resoluteness, the activism;
- The sense of direction for the goal (he hit the mark, straight until destination, without any distraction);

Then there are others aspects related to typology of interpersonal relationships.

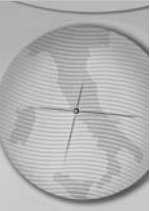
I have to say: it wasn’t ever easy to work with the Professor!

- And not only for his conversation with colleagues, which could have seemed very abrupt

(he didn’t drift in chat and he wasn’t intimate very easily)

What kind of leader was Prof Angelillo? I am not yet able enough to say, in the wetland of the definitions of Management in the literature.

Certainly he exerted a heavily directive leadership on occasion of our group development (in Sassari and Naples) or in particularly critical moments like the splitting of the Faculty or when, during staff renovation, starting all over again,



depriving himself with generosity of his grey-headed colleagues.

But it was a type of leadership closer to Change. Many people will remember the meeting with the ever more numerous heads of Departments, with their detailed reporting on local conditions and policies: his ability to listen and his precious advice...

For some aspects we can consider him a "charismatic leader" and he had the characteristics and natural history of relative organisations, and did not hold out when the main binding agent ran out.

As a matter of fact, for all of us, in front of important decisions, of difficulties or problems... it was enough to ask "*What would the Professor have done in this situation?*" "*How would he have behaved?*"

However I persuade myself that the best definition of him is Master, the same that we all used spontaneously for him. A Master and, then, a School!

There is therefore another aspect in the figure of Prof. Angelillo, less personal and private, that I want to mention in this occasion, in front of this numerous audience. This aspect is his "sense of Institutions", the "ethic of responsibilities" to understand a concept of responsibilities towards an institution, their aim, facilities and users, in a really in aristocratic way! And for being a credit to such responsibility, he put the common good before personal advantage, the main interests despite of personal interests. Today this is a rare value but, fortunately, it is still present among hygienists, and probably lives on in the concept of Public Health, a concept that we know, expand and profess.

Prof. Angelillo had always shown interest for:

- University/Faculty: he never had particular charge but he always carried out positive roles, with a moral suasion act recognised by Colleagues, Directors and Chancellors.
- General Hospital: where he passed on wisdom, but also with due firmness, about the historical dualism between Health Management and Clinicians, which has protected the health and safety of workers demonstrating a rightful autonomy for higher political and administrative bodies.
- Society of Hygiene: where he continued and revived those lines of transparency in relationships with major sponsors that still bring honour to our company, and where, in particularly favourable relations with one of the sponsors, he promoted these conferences specifically targeted to prevention services, with a day dedicated to operator training and another to continuous quality improvement of the health organization.

Finally, in our School, the "sense of the institutions" has felt, in a particularly qualifying way, his responsibility for the valorisation of its Associates.

I feel a duty to bear witness to the criteria that have been put together around our school by Prof. Angelillo:

- Certainly a paternalistic approach, but necessarily pragmatic in the identification of Staff and in the request, as well as in the ability and motivation, and even a human spirit, and a willingness to transfer and consider conditions of economic sustainability;

And with great regret of the Professor for some very good drop ...

- Attention and rigor in vocational and cultural training and, in line with time and resources, opening even wider to external collaborations and experience from abroad.
- Careful review of scientific and human maturity, especially in cases where seats were new or difficult.
- Constant refinement of the code of practice for access to university concourses (the Professor, already five years before his death, had made us discuss the minimum precursor criteria of the good work recently conducted by Augusto Panà, as required by the CUN).
- High-profile policies in public competition dynamics. In harmony with the community of Hygienists, Prof. Angelillo, and then those of us who participated in comparative examinations, have always taken virtuous and transparent positions even in the most sensitive cases.



I can say that objectivity has always been maintained in our industry to a dignified height!

It is with this history at our backs that, in these times of repeated and indiscriminate attacks against the University, when the public opinion is led to believe that University is made of dishonest individuals, when the concepts of School and Teacher are perceived as negative or ridiculed and despised, or when we feel the presence of outside malicious accusations that we - along with all the Italian schools of hygiene - refuse to feel involved in the ongoing denigration.

If at this time Prof. Angelillo were here, he would probably expresses his satisfaction:

- for the large number of hygienists who acknowledge its teachings and in its design;
- for the increasing quality of hygienists in the generations that have gradually succeeded;
- for the recognition that hygienists, in universities and in hospitals, are working together to improve Universities and Health Care with the most conscious and rational reformers in good faith.

Let me conclude these memories with some considerations that express my satisfaction.

The older students of Professor Angelillo, present among us in our seats, acclimatized and developed in accordance with his fundamental values. Our leadership styles differed not only for obvious reasons of personality but also for the need and the opportunities we had to test conditions, reports and different problems, often in times of radical change and away from his protection.

This type of path has meant that the relationship with the Master has evolved, maturing and consolidating over time, during the period when he was alive and now even after his passing away. We met individually and voluntarily to follow his "footprints" and looked at him as a "guide" in the process of continuous improvement of our mission and we tried ourselves, in turn, to indicate this to our fellow workers.

Our School has remained vital, collaborative and compact even after the painful loss of its charismatic leader:

- because it has confirmed the common interest. To diversify locations has been recognized as a visionary project and how important the sacrifice and commitment of its pioneers has been in this achievement;
- because we have used the legacy of the precious wisdom that he has left us;
- because mainly benefits have occurred as a result of his masterful intervention.

The memory of the hardships and sacrifices will eventually dissolve while good examples, whilst the admiration, and identification are deposited in the unconscious ready to resurface as needed: this is true education and these are true, recognized Masters.

Scholars of Developmental Psychology (especially Erikson, a student of Freud, who described the 8 stages of Psychosocial Theory of Human Development) have a term for this positive treatment of adult personality that our Master has certainly delivered.

This is "Generativity" (the opposite of stagnation, of limited or of personal impoverishment!).

Generativity is a feature that exceeds the scope of procreation and the desire to create, nurture and care for one's children (this is paternity!), but extends beyond and is the voltage required to maximize the potential of future generations on their own. In essence, generativity coincides with the intergenerational transmission of rules, traditions and values.

I think our school is a good example of this process!

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