

ЕКОНОМІЧНІ НАУКИ

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THE DESTRUCTION OF TALENTS AND SOCIAL SECURITY

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Assuming O. Spengler's remark, criticizing the enlightenment theory of linear, cumulative progress encompassing the whole of humanity and all manifestations of human activity, to be justified, an attempt should be made to search for ways to ensure the optimization of the path of development. Investigating the authors of the future progress of Europe's regions unification appears especially relevant. It requires incessant research in order to identify the determinants of progress, which are considered to include processes, structure, as well as human beings themselves, especially the one considered to be a talent

Keywords: *competency, talent, components of talent, talent management, the destruction of talents, social security*

Припускаючи, що зауваження О. Шпенглера, що критикує просвітницьку теорію лінійного сукупного прогресу, що охоплює все людство і всі прояви людської діяльності, є виправданим, слід спробувати шукати шляхи для забезпечення оптимізації шляху розвитку. Дослідження авторами майбутнього розвитку європейських об'єднаних регіонів виглядає особливо актуальним. Це вимагає безперервного дослідження з метою виявлення факторів, що визначають прогрес, які включають в себе процеси, структуру, а також самих людей, особливо тих, які вважаються талантами

Ключові слова: *компетентність, талант, компоненти таланту, управління талантами, знищення талантів, соціальне забезпечення*

1. Introduction

The theories of progress include one which identifies social progress with the concept of a citizen, understood not as a legal term or a denotation of social position, but as a concept describing a collection of properties and virtues. Its author and propagators believed it to include “education and merit”, “effort”, and “talent” [1] Currently, in this era of information-based economy, determining the relationship between development and talent is of particular importance. In this article, the author attempts to present the range of such a relationship after delineating again the semantic field of the concept of talent and recounting the approaches to progress.

2. Literature review. Semantic history of the concept of talent

Even a cursory historical analysis of the concept of *talent* indicates that its meaning varied in particular epochs. Therefore, in order to increase the usefulness of talent management studies, it is sound to trace the semantic field of the concept of talent in consecutive time periods and mutually assign a varying meaning to time. Using semasiological (pertaining to the meaning and changes in the meaning of words) and onomasiological (pertaining to the classification of concepts or designata in accordance with names) aspects, will result in the establishment of the relationship between the “word” and “thing” and the thematisation of the functions of this concept, which will enable us to

limit the use of the so-called “word play” in the study of *talent management*, thus strengthening the exclusive use of *concrete nouns and adjectives* in ultimate explanations and the *elimination of apparent names* in this subdiscipline of human resource management [2]. Concurrently, this will facilitate the implementation of knowledge contained within *one language, not many* into an organization [3].

The term *talent* used in contemporary Polish comes from the Greek name for a basic unit of weight [4] as well as volume and balance – *τάλαντον* [5]. The use of the term was widespread, particularly among the inhabitants of those Greek *pólis* which played the key role in trade (Some sources indicate that the talent as a unit of weight/currency was already known in Assyria and Babylonia (Babylonian talent was worth 3600 shekels) as well as Palestine (worth 3000 shekels) [6]. The relative independence and autonomy of the archaic and classical city-states of Greece contributed to the development of variety in terms of the amount of weight expressed by this unit [7].

In the period between the 5th and 6th centuries, the Attic (Herodian) talent [9] and the Egeian talent [10] were the most popular ones. Each of them was worth 60 minas or 100 drachmas (Table 1).

The talent as a unit of weight was also present outside the region of classical city-states of the Peloponnesian Peninsula and Lydia; e.g., it was also used by ancient Semitic peoples and their neighbours (Table 2).

Table 1

Weight of selected Greek talents

Talent type	Talent weight	Name of equivalent unit	Weight of equivalent unit
Attic talent	26.2 kg	Mina	approx. 624 g
Egeian talent	37.1 kg	Mina	approx. 436 g

Source: the author's own work based on: [8]

Table 2

Ancient Semitic units of weight

Name of the unit	Biblical source	Equivalent	Mass in grams
Beka	“(…) a beka a head (a beka is half a shekel, according to the standard used in the sanctuary) for everyone who went through the registration process (…)” Exodus 38:26.		5.71g
Shekel	“(…) the iron point of his spear weighed 600 shekels (…)” 1 Samuel 17:7.	2 bekas	11.42g
Mina	“And he made 300 shields of beaten gold; three minas of gold went into each shield (…)” 1 Kings 10:17.	50 shekels	571.20g
Talent	“At great effort I have provided for the Temple of the LORD 100,000 gold talents [and] 1,000,000 silver talents (…)” 1 Chronicles 22:14.	60 minas	34,300.00g

Source: the author's own work based on: Exodus, 1 Samuel, 1 Kings, 1 Chronicles

The popularization of money as an equivalent for other goods fulfilling the ever-developing human needs [11] contributed to the broadening of the semantic field of the term τάλαντον. Toward the end

of the golden era of ancient Greek nationality, the talent also became a name for the currency unit of the highest denomination in the Euboean and Egeian monetary systems [12] (Table 3).

Table 3

Selected ancient monetary units

Name of the unit	Biblical source	Equivalent
Denarius	“After agreeing to pay the workers one denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.” Matthew 20:2.	1 day's pay for a worker
Silver shekel	“(…) So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for 50 silver shekels,” 2 Samuel 24:24.	4 denarii
Gold shekel	“So David paid Ornan 600 shekels weight worth in gold for the site.” 1 Chronicles 21:25.	15 silver shekels
Gold mina	“(…) The mina is to be comprised of three coins weighing 20, 25, and fifteen shekels, respectively.” Ezekiel 45:12.	60 gold shekels
Gold talent	“(…) [the king of Egypt] imposed a fine on the land of 100 talents of silver and one talent of gold.” 2 Chronicles 36:3.	60 gold minas

Source: the author's own work based on Book of Ezekiel, Gospel of Matthew, 1 Samuel, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles

Along with the growth of Greek colonialism, the talent as a unit of precious metal weight appeared in the Corinthian colonies on Sicily. This is why the Latin term *talentum* (From the root 'tollo', *tolero*) [13], as the Greek τάλαντον, expresses a defined weight as well as volume and worth of a precious metal [14]. Unlike Hellas, in the ancient Orbis Romanum, the talent was worth not 60, but 120 smaller units called litras or 1440 ounces [15].

With the end of the classical era and the onset of the middle ages, the conceptual category of *talent*, though used sporadically as the monetary equivalent of 240 denarii [16], began to be identified with the object presented in the Gospel of Matthew (A parable telling of the multiplication of entrusted coins can also be found in the Gospel of Luke; however, the author uses a different

currency unit, i. e., the mina [17]. Most often, however, the understanding of the Evangelical depiction was at odds with the words and expressions used by the author of this text [18]. Talent began to be understood as a trait – a synonym of aptitude (“Similarly, it is like a man going on a trip, who called his servants and turned his money over to them. To one man he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, based on their ability. Then he went on his trip. (...) Then you should've invested my money with the bankers. When I returned, I would've received my money back with interest.” (...) [19]. Many years of tradition and the associated word formation mechanisms have contributed to the fact that this “modification” of the primary meaning of the word talent, i.e. a term for balance or the highest denomination of precious metal, is accepted as the basic meaning.

Talent became further established as the synonym of a gift, brilliancy, genius, Divine Spark, nerve, aptitude, knack [20] with the development of studies concerning aptitude (especially musical aptitude), at first conducted only by the Viennese surgeon T. Billroth and later also by the so-called experimental psychologists, including H. Holmholz, W. Wundt, and C. Stumpf. The peak of the “modification” of the primary meaning of the term “talent” took place when the semantic field of the category of *citizen* [21] was being changed and the ideas related to the legal protection of the highest levels of artistic aptitude (Article 73 section 2 of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of Poland reads: “*This right [to benefit from cultural achievements – author’s note] shall be ensured, on an increasing scale, by developing and making available to the working people of town and country libraries, books, press, radio, cinemas, theatres, museums and exhibitions, community centres, clubs, and recreation rooms; by the extensive promotion of the cultural creative activity of the people and by the stimulation of creative talents*” [22] were being realised; it also resulted from the popularization of the modern meaning among the authors of literature and studies in the humanities, predominantly pedagogy (Okoń W., among others, considers talent to be:

1) an exceptional aptitude for a particular field of creative activity: science, literature, visual arts, music, or other;

2) outstanding motor skills which can be used, e.g., in certain sports competitions, acrobatics, dance, typewriting, etc) [23], didactics, and psychology.

Especially the latter disciplines have focused on determining the so-called *model of talent* (e.g. pedagogical) – (Baley S., among others, considers *pedagogical talent* to be “a trait that is not widespread, but rather exceptional, which appears in large doses only in certain persons endowed by nature (...) with a pedagogical attitude” [24], aspects of talent heritability understood as a set of outstanding and rare personality traits [25], as well as the classification of abilities [26] and their changes during the education process [27] (Table 4).

The results of pedagogical and psychological studies, enriched with the remarks of literary authors, may present a picture of complete understanding of the concept contained within the word talent; they may indicate talent’s association with exceptionality and frequent lack of social acceptance for the person who embodies it or stress that it should be *developed in the tranquillity of private life*.

The term *talent* remains similarly ambiguous in current science. It is employed in technology as well as many other areas of empirical sciences (For the purposes of modern technology, the term *talent* was borrowed in order to describe overhead wiring powered by electricity or combustion. Bombardier, a Canadian company, has manufactured overhead wiring called TALENT since 1994. The name comes from the German name *TALbot LEichter Nahverkehrs Triebwagen*) Among the areas of science using this concept are management studies. However, this field also features numerous explanations of talent (Some of them are not definitions in the logical

sense, but rather verbal explanations).

Table 4

Concepts of talent by selected literary authors

Name of the author	The substance of the talent definition
Alphonse Allais	Great talent is only great impatience.
Henri Frédéric Amiel	Doing easily what others find difficult is talent.
George Byron	Talent may sometimes be forgiven, but genius can hope for no mercy.
Anton Chekhov	Dissatisfaction with oneself is the foundation of every talent.
Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach	It is unfortunate that a good talent and a good man seldom come together.
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe	Talent develops in the tranquillity of privacy, character - in the full current of public life.
Plautus	The greatest talents often lie buried out of sight.
Juliusz Słowacki	Talents are lanterns in the hands of madmen, the light guiding them straight to the river to drown.
Władysław Syrokomla	We were not blessed with the gift of song. We mark the traces of our homes with stones.
Henryk Sienkiewicz	“There was only one thing he was hungry for, that is the playing of music. He heard it everywhere”
Eliza Orzeszkowa	Out of talent comes inspiration.
Bolesław Prus	“From sunrise to sunset, he whittled sticks and tied them together in a cross (...) By the age of ten he’d gone through four penknives, but he had carved wonderful things with them. He made windmills, fences, ladders (...) It made people think, and they would tell his mother that he’d be either a master craftsman or a complete wastrel.”

Source: the author’s own work based on: [28–30]

3. The contemporary semantic field of the term “talent”

The verbal descriptions of what talent is used by the authors of management studies can be categorized into several groups (The assumed division was adopted from the classification of cultural definitions proposed by L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, as quoted in Olszewska-Dyoniziak B.2001) [31], which will facilitate the optimization of activities related to talent management [32] by bringing talent management closer to competency management and knowledge management (Bringing these areas closer together is not an expression of a stiffening of knowledge, but is rather an example of knowledge unification postulated by J. Szacki, among others). Approximation will be achieved as a result of, among other factors, a renewed distinction between *vulgar tongue* and *grammar* – i. e., *language produced*

with art [33], honouring the principle of reinterpreting sets of empirical data and associating them with the new paradigm instead of the old. This will contribute to the realization of originality and the creation of a new school, competitive to the previous methods of activity [34] both as a result of the recollection (recordati) [35]

of scientific language concepts and separating it again from colloquial speech, as well as basing it on the principle that those matters which promote the end we have in view must one and all be scrutinized by a movement of thought which is continuous and nowhere interrupted [36].

Table 5

Selected definitions of talent

Author	The substance of the definition	Definition group
Dawid J. W.	Talent is strengthened aptitude	Descriptive definitions define the substance of the phenomenon in a synthetic fashion
The Conference Board	A talent is any person who can influence the present and future achievements of its organization in a significant manner. Therefore, the results and the capability for professional growth of each employee are considered	
Sosińska N.	Every Employee	
Tannenbaum A. J.	Talent is constituted by: general skills, i. e., outstanding intellectual potential, and specialized skills, i. e., abilities pertaining to specific areas of functioning, as well as a factor that is not related to thinking, i.e. motivation for achievement, emotional maturity, and mental toughness.	Descriptive-numerical definitions are limited to enumerating the components of talent and underscoring the most important component.
Kotarbiński T.	Craft mastery consists of knowledge about the material and the principles that govern it, knowledge about the methods of action and the equipment, knowledge of the co-workers and their social association, as well as awareness of the planned undertaking.	
Renzulli J. S.	Talent is constituted by three components, i. e.: outstanding skills, creativity, and work engagement.	
Listwan T, Chępa S.	The most important trait of talented persons is the so-called personal intelligence.	
Juchnowicz M	Outstanding potential of a person, comprised of intellectual capability, abilities, as well as resourcefulness and strong motivation for achievement. Work engagement is also an indispensable attribute of talent.	
Borczyk A.	Persons characterized by four fundamental traits: openness to other people (the ability to find one's wits in any environment); openness to results (the development of a team achieving good results); openness to change; open-mindedness (the will to share one's experience and knowledge with others).	
Guryn H.	Talent means strongly developed competencies combined with the ability to learn easily.	Psychological definitions focus on the processes of talent development
Maliszewska E.	Talent as an expression of outstanding aptitude does not guarantee success. It must be developed constantly.	

Source: the author's own work based on: [37–40]

Most definitions of talent used in the scientific discourse concerning human resources management underline that its occurrence is associated with the saturation of abilities, knowledge, and positive attitudes, expressed by developed internal motivation (Table 5). In combination with the historical meaning of the word talent, this enables one to define talent as the highest, balanced value of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes to work and learning (Fig. 1), or the highest level of competence components.

Taking into account the association between the concept of talent and the term competency, "talent management" can be understood as managing the highest and balanced level of attitudes, abilities, and knowledge. It is also sound to presume that managing talents consists

in taking action to optimize the trajectory of talent growth in order to realize the goals of a company.

As in the case of competency management, achieving the best results of an action is ensured by taking the action in accordance with the organizational cycle and the concept of the company as a system open to action associated with talents entering the organization, going through transition, and leaving the organization [43] (Fig. 2). However, the difficulties of this process are exacerbated by several factors. Among them, there is the need to continually eradicate the belief in harmfulness of evaluation and rank assignment in order to strengthen the position of all those who manage to achieve the maximal level of specialization by optimizing the components of competence. Moreover,

another postulated factor is the obligation to prevent *the spoiling of talents* (This follows from the foundations of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as well as from the social teachings of the Church: “ (...) By means of society, each man is established as an 'heir' and receives certain 'talents' that enrich his identity and whose fruits he must develop” [44].

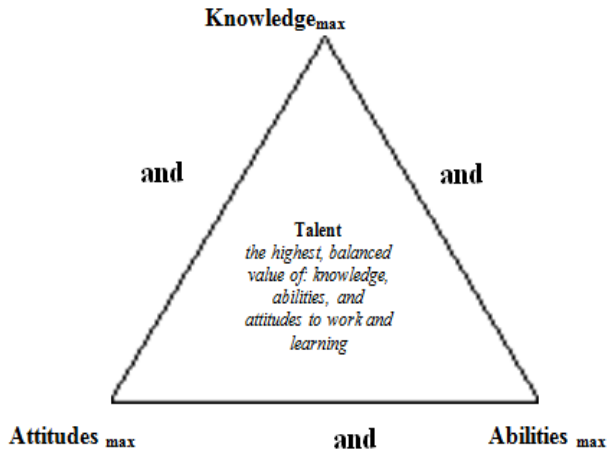


Fig. 1. The substance of talent [41]

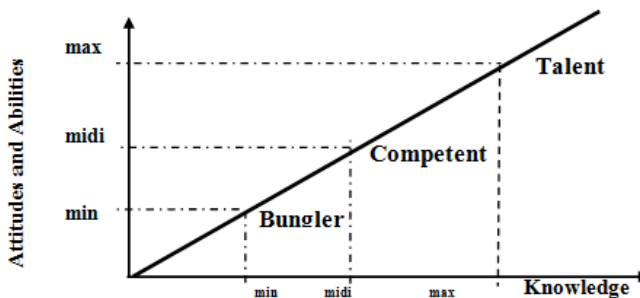


Fig. 2. Talent and level of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes [42]

As with regard to the term *talent* itself, the primary guarantee of the quality of such action is repeated reading of works pertaining to the individual competence components, particularly those which present the substance of knowledge and attitudes.

4. Sources of the destruction of talents in modern organizations

The current situation in the area of talent management is closely associated with a number of past actions, especially with the change in the semantic field of the concept of *talent* and the marginalization of the earlier understanding of this term. The sources of the current “fashion” for introducing experimental action regarding the so-called growth and quasi-management of talents (One such experiment pertaining to growth and quasi-management of talents is the theory of N. Sosińska, postulating that talent management is a synonym of personnel management) [45], should also be sought in other factors. Among them, there is the rejection of the perennial belief that talents are primarily encountered in highly developed societies and are not observed in the

postfeudal, pauperized states of East-Central Europe (“(...) — *Quel beau pays que l'Italie On est heureux de chercher l'—bas des talents et de les protéger. (...)*” [46] Another source is the abandonment of the conviction that *there is no specialty that cannot be taught* [47] and the rejection of previous education concepts critical of individualized learning systems (During the dominance of command economy, Louis A. Fliegler, proponent of selecting gifted students and grouping them into separate classes was under constant criticism in the Soviet bloc) [48]. The primary concept was the idea that the education process should be “polytechnicised”. It assumed that “(...) improvements achieved by a specialist due to performing only one function come at the cost of deteriorating resourcefulness (...)” [49]. As a result of applying the polytechnicisation theory to education, previous organizations most often strived to optimize the results of their activity by achieving a multiplied average form, while their human resources policies preferred personnel with average and not balanced (not harmonized) – (Referring directly to the concept of harmony is, in the opinion of the author, another expression of the return to the roots, being reminiscent of the Platonic idea of “*harmonizing the three internal factors like three strings in consonance with each other*”) [50] levels of employee competency components. Moreover, they did not conduct competency evaluation ((...) *the modern trend of competence development* [behavioural – author’s note] began around the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. One of its pioneers was D. MacClelland (...) *The core document, finished in 1980, initiated the creation of the New Education Initiative association, which later transformed into the National Council for Vocational Qualifications. The said Council sanctioned the creation of a vocational qualifications system around the year 1986 (...)* [51], delineate career paths, or plan for succession. Currently, we may observe a gradual intensification of evaluation, understood as measurement and assignment of appropriate hierarchical ranks to the obtained results. This conduct is not new, but rather constitutes an expression of returning to the roots by rereading outstanding works from previous epochs (The main postulate of Lyotard, an early theorist of postmodernity) [52]. Plato wrote that “(...) *we must believe that all the arts alike exist and that the greater and the less are measured in relation not only to one another but also to the establishment of the standard of the mean* [53]”. With detriment to the optimization of talent management, this Platonic vision continues to await its complete realization. As a result, another Plato’s quote rings true, underlining that although “(...) *all things which come within the province of art do certainly in some sense partake of measure (...)*”. “[people] *are not accustomed to distinguish classes according to real forms, jumble together two widely different things, relation to one another, and to a standard, under the idea that they are the same (...)*” [54]. In terms of managing human resources in an organization, the truth of this statement is most often observed in the employed methods and techniques (“*In the literature of the subject, the terms method and technique of evaluation are used as synonyms*”) [55] of evaluating employees as well as in the methods in which their feedback is utilized (Table 6, Fig. 3).

Table 6

Selected approaches to employee evaluation

Author(s)	Employee evaluation approach
E. McKenna and N. Beech	Evaluation focused on work assessment and evaluation focused on growth.
A. Pocztowski	Employee evaluation may be classified in accordance with its goal. There are two types of goals for employee evaluation: organizational and psychosocial.
E. Smyk	Bipolarity of evaluation systems. One of the poles concentrates views concerning the association of the evaluation system with the salary. The other is home to the attitudes resulting from striving for perfection and coordinating the principles of managing human resources.
M. Sloman	The results of employee evaluation are externalized in the form of judgment and training.

The author's own work based on: [56–59].

The most popular techniques prefer the most representative values, instead of the highest ones (Defined on the basis of the theory described in Chapter 1.2), and do not employ detailed analysis of the balance between the components of talent.

Employee evaluation that is burdened with pathology influences competence assessment, delineating career paths, and planning succession in a negative manner.

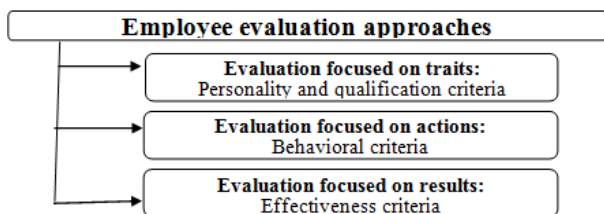


Fig. 3. Classification of employee evaluation. Source: the author's own work

Errors in evaluation result in the violation of the centuries-old rule stating that “He who is capable of the best qualification for ruling can best qualify others. In every action the chief intent of the agent, whether it acts by necessity of nature or by choice, is to unfold its own likeness” [60]. This results in limitations in the realization of a company's function, thus increasing the risks to social security by stabilizing growth at a meagre level.

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ПЕРЕДУМОВИ СОЦІАЛІЗАЦІЇ ФІНАНСІВ ТА ПРИНЦИПИ ФОРМУВАННЯ МОДЕЛІ ФІНАНСОВИХ ВІДНОСИН В УМОВАХ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ

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Досліджено аспекти соціалізації економіки і фінансів під впливом парадигми сталого розвитку. На підставі теоретичного аналізу виявлено домінуючі чинники постіндустріальної трансформації фінансових відносин, зокрема соціалізація, демократизація, колаборація та конвергенція. Запропоновані принципи побудови оновленої моделі фінансових відносин в умовах сталого розвитку

Ключові слова: сталий розвиток, соціалізація фінансових відносин, демократизація, колаборація, конвергенція, соціальні фінанси

The article investigates the aspects of socialization of economics and finance in course of the emergence of the sustainable development paradigm. The theoretical analysis which was conducted in the article has identified the dominant factors for post-industrial transformation of financial relations, such as socialization, democratization, collaboration and convergence. Besides, the author derives several principles for the construction of the revised model for financial relations in the context of sustainable development

Keywords: sustainable development, socialization of financial relations, democratization, collaboration, convergence, social finance

1. Вступ

Поглиблення суперечностей ринкової економіки, наростання глибоких екологічних проблем планети, посилення соціальної нерівності у суспільстві,

триваюча економічна рецесія призводять до розуміння широким загалом людства нездатності традиційної економічної політики розв'язати ці проблеми. Все наполегливіше висловлюються думки про необхідність