

Vadim Cheshirsky

*The problem
of capacity*

The genius of tomorrow

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Cheshirsky V. J.

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Проблема способностей – это фундаментальная проблема теоретической психологии. Откуда берутся способности, таланты, гениальность? Научная проблема способностей считается в тупике. Автор данного текста предлагает свои решения данной проблемы.

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The problem of capacity The genius of tomorrow

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1. “The first signs of talent”

Numerous attempts to prove that genius and talent have something to do with the shape of the skull and brain size did not somehow receive serious and credible evidence.

There are quite a large spread between brain size and skull shape among the talented people. Usually extreme variants are given.

One of the biggest volumes of brain belongs to Turgenev – 2012.

The smallest amount (one of the smallest) of the brain volume and consequently the skull belongs to Anatol Frans – 1017.

However, such a difference from the average value of brain volume (1450, specify) did not prevent this (and other) very talented people to achieve very bright brilliant results.

In the same way as in other areas of basic science, art (all genres), politics, technology, sports and others – some difference in the volume and size of the brain is neither an obstacle nor an advantage.

Attempts, after the death of prominent people, to preserve their brains, followed by the study of at least some correlation between professional outstanding achievements and at least some features of brain structure have not led to any significant results.

Flashed “sensation” that (supposedly) gene of talent and genius has been opened turned out to be “somewhat exaggerated” and not confirmed. Numerous (I would say endless) attempts to trace and prove how talent and genius are inherited, do not clarify the situation. So whether capacities, talent, genius are inherited or not. If not, then where do all these talents and geniuses come from?

In the scientific and popular science literature devoted to the problem of capacities, the genius of so many well-known names is analyzed in great detail. Two mutually exclusive conclusions are made.

Talents are inherited (in Bach’s family, Mozart and so on). And there is “the famous truth” that nature rests on children of geniuses. At the same time, it is possible to give numerous facts that prove both one tendency and the opposite. In the sum of these two big trends, a large zero is obtained. That is, only the cultural professional background, the tradition of respect for professionalism, some conditions under which a young representative (representative) of a creative family can develop as a creative person is inherited... And may not develop!..

The question of origin of talent remains open.

To the author of these rows, it appears that it is not necessary to waste time proving that talent is inherited. Almost 200 years since the time of Sir Galton there have been attempts to consider how in the families of wealthy well-born aristocrats, many active professionally successful people have been born for several centuries.

These aristocrats again have children and again they are successful. In this basis, the talent is inherited. At the same time, in the same families children are born, which are difficult to suspect of any significant talents. That is to say that talents are not guaranteed to be inherited. (“Nature is resting...”)

And on the other hand, many people, having no support from relatives (and the state), achieved outstanding results in various fields of science, politics, all kinds of arts, sports, technology, etc.

So, talented and capable people can manifest themselves not only due to the fact that they were born and brought up in very comfortable and favorable financial conditions. Talents are just as likely to appear in very underprivileged families living on the verge of poverty. One or both parents die very often in early childhood of the future prominent figure.

He/she can be brought up by very distant relatives and even then not in the most mild conditions. Many examples of these options can be given. The author of these lines deliberately does not want to elaborate on numerous examples of “from what rubbish verses grow...”.

Examples of education and “lack of manners” of the future “winner”, “capitalist competition” (and socialist, too) are in thousands of serious scientific literature and numerous periodical press of various “yellowness” and authenticity.

The author deliberately does not dwell on the various theories of heredity of talents capacities.

Firstly, over the past almost 200 years of studying the inheritance of talents from the time of Galton’s no significant evidence of inheritance of talents was revealed.

Secondly, it seems to the author that the ordinary average person has all the necessary biological formations – “makings”, from which it is possible to “pull out” any capability with the help of appropriate techniques “from nature” in the stage of predisposition.

Since childhood, we used to believe that there are types of jobs, occupations and educational disciplines that require appropriate capacities and those that do not need any special talent.

Traditionally, it is believed that in order to become a politician, musician, actor, artist, scientist, etc., one must necessarily have appropriate inborn aptitude.

However, to be a fitter, plumber, cleaner, driver, loader, janitor, etc. – no “natural” special capacities are required. Here it is enough of some formal non-long training – and the professional is ready.

In order to become an artist, a musician, a poet, an actor, a singer and other representatives of an art – of course, it is necessary to study the profession, but... It is clearly not enough. In addition to professional education, it is necessary to have a certain natural gift. A kind of gift from above, which, regardless of your labor efforts, will necessarily lead you into people. That is, into those people whose portraits are printed in school textbooks, encyclopedias, scientific reference books. Or even are made a monument. In the center of the large square. In the center of the big city.

To let the fog around the talent and capacities, representatives of various kinds of arts, literature, painting, music, in the theatrical and cinematographic environment like very much. The notion of talent, of special capacities is surrounded in this environment by a halo of special occultness and mysticism. Talent is something unknowable, unstudied in principle. It is always a gift from above. Some are rewarded by the heaven, others – not.

2. Someone Is Called a Genius

Talents are “distributed” by the providence (?) ... It’s the Lord God!.. (God has awarded you-me-his-her talent... That is destiny... That is nature... Mother Nature has awarded generously... this person). They called him Genius during his lifetime, he had several sons. But Mother Nature decided to rest on them...

In the theatrical and artistic environment, you can often hear the word “genius”. For every reason and without reason.

In the environment of the exact sciences of mathematics, physics, natural science (geology, biology, medicine, chemistry, etc.) the word “genius” sounds less often. The terms “genius” and “talent” are used somehow more sparingly and strictly.

In order for someone to be called so, one has to open something at least, it is better to have students and preferably – more of them!

And one more thing.

Several decades must pass, so that the person can steadily be called a “genius”.

So, there are also lifetime variants. But less often. If you exclude the elements of sheer toady, you must be a very bright star in your profession and field, so that you can be called a “genius” during your lifetime.

Genius, as a rule, is ahead of his time. Therefore, for the ideas, concepts, plans, solutions, theories that he expressed, to designate (or, on the contrary, refute) his truth or falsity, it is necessary that some time has passed. Some years? A few dozen years? A few hundred years? This is how it will turn out!

Therefore, geniuses during their lifetime are rarely appreciated by contemporaries.

3. Where Do Geniuses Come From?

Anyway, where do geniuses come from? The question is not idle. The question is not only theoretical. It is already recognized at the state level that the development and strength of the state will be determined not by the size of the territory and the population. And not even by natural resources, deposits, fossils.

The strength and development of the country will be determined by the level of education and the intellectual level of the population. The level of creative talent of the people. That is, talents and geniuses for the country are more important (and more necessary) than vast territories and huge reserves of minerals. A good example is Japan. The country is considered to have nothing. Neither territory, nor fossil. The country lives in the “twenty-second century”. The second example here – Germany 30th – early 40s of the 20th century.

Where do geniuses and talents come from? Where is the solution?

On the view of the author of these lines – in the ratio of the demands of evolution (needs for development) of a given society for a given time and the presence in society of a certain number of intellectually trained people who are objectively ready to solve these tasks of the evolution and development of this society.

If there is a society, then it has a zone of proximal development – the tasks of the evolution of a given society. That is, if there is a society, then it, in practice, can always develop. If society is not in a state of “the end of the world”. Even in a degrading, dying society, there are always problems of immediate development.

Which, by the way, are not solved, judging by the decay and decline of this society.

So, on the one hand, there are requests of the society for its further development, i.e. development problems, evolution problems. They are, in principle, objective, they “hang in the air”.

The most prepared members of society to solve these objectively urgent problems are the very talented people who, objectively, pull out this field of science, technology, art, and even the entire country as a whole, to a higher level of development.

Demand breeds supply.

“Demand” here is an objective necessity of the evolution (development) of this field of science-technology-art-country in the creation of the next invention, the next scientific theory, the next masterpieces in the field of all kinds of arts and the urgent socio-political changes.

And the supply “offers” talents for improving, strengthening, increasing, creating a new, invention, etc.

In order to offer any qualitatively new solutions to new and old problems in science-technology-art society, one need to be on the “edge of these problems.” That is, to have all the modern knowledge in “his” areas “with the latest technology”.

This is firstly.

Secondly, to have the talent of creative rethinking of all these modern knowledge. At least in order to “catch” the task (“put the task – solve half of it”). And having set himself the task – to solve it completely and practically.

In order to solve the problem in his native fiels, a talented person needs “so-called capacities”.

Let us take, for example, science, or rather, physics.

Mathematics and physics are the most developed sciences, therefore, rich in examples.

The development of any science (and physics, including) takes place in accordance with the laws of the objective logic of internal development for a given science. There is something that is already known in this science. There is something that is unknown. There is a kind of border between them.

This is the border zone of the nearest development. Therefore, proceeding from the fact that is already known to this science, there are objective laws that should be opened “in the near future”.

These laws objectively “hang in the air”. It happens that 2—3 (maybe more) researchers independently of one another open the same law. Almost simultaneously. But knowing nothing about each other. This confirms the objective nature of the development of science well.

For example, the Biot-Savart-Laplace law. One physical law bears the names of three scientists at once. Not a frequent phenomenon, but indicative.

That is, the laws of science, which should be opened in the near future, is like a ripe fruit, which in the near future should be thwarted. This is the very request of evolution to development. The very “demand” that generates supply. “Demand” for solving the problems of development of this area of science-technology-art-society.

A “supply” comes from those who solve these problems of “evolution”, “hanging” in the air.

In order to successfully solve problems in science, technology, art, politics, literature, journalism, etc., one must have (?) Great natural capacities.

This view is generally accepted in theoretical psychology for over two hundred years, since the days of Sir Galton, the cousin of Charles Darwin.

To successfully solve problems in art, politics, technology, science – it is necessary (?) to have the capacity in these areas of activity. These capacities are given from birth. You either have it or you do not. If you do, then you are happy, merry, you can count on a successful career in this field.

However it is not a fact. In real life, there are many “aggravating” circumstances that hamper the realization of even pronounced “natural” capacities.

And if, immediately and in no time such bright natural gifts are not shown, then a person is declared incapable of this type of activity. He is not strongly encouraged to engage in this field of activity, since the results will be zero, and time will be spent infinitely.

In connection with this “capable-incapable” alternative, a huge number of questions and problems arise. Beginning with professional orientation at school, further increase in professional skills and “ending” with a fundamental scientific problem about the origin of capacities, talent and genius.

4. Two Ways of the Solution of the Problem of Capacities

Numerous theories of the problem of capacities are reduced to the two extreme poles of two opposite approaches to this problem of capacities.

That is, all solutions to this problem are reduced to two extreme, almost opposite scientific concepts (p.0 and p.1).

The space between them is filled with intermediate compromise variants, where both poles are present in the theory, but to different degrees.

The first concept says that all human capacities are given from birth; all capacities are rigidly defined (determined) for the rest of their lives. Capacities do not change either numerically, qualitatively, nor configuration... Virtually by no means, in the course of life. From birth, you already have a ceiling above which you cannot climb, no matter how hard you try. "Above your head you will not jump!" That means that given concept reflects the rigid genetic dependence of all capacities given to a person from birth. Their number, quality, structure and combinations among themselves.

Mom, dad, nature, God gave you at birth – live with it.

This is one extreme point of view.

Another point of view is described by the term "Tabula Rasa" – "Clean slate".

This theory suggests that at birth, all people are equal in their capacities, potential opportunities. Their brains are equally pure, empty, and ready for absorption, assimilation of information, all kinds of knowledge and skills. Under the influence of study, training capacities grow, develop and intensify. This all happens during the course of life, only later. All people are born with a pure unclouded brain, as the basis for the subsequent development of all capacities. Brain is like a clean board on which you can write down any information, create any capacity.

This scientific theory is called "tabula rasa" (clean board, lat.).

These are extreme points. You can designate them as "+" and "-". Or as "0" and "1".

All other theories are some compilations of these two basic ones. Theories that gravitate toward the first extreme "point" are usually called "biologizing". And the theories that gravitate toward the second extreme "point" are "sociologizing" theories of inheritance of capacities.

It is clear that the overwhelming majority of normal healthy people should have a predisposition of their brains to all types of learning initially (genetically, from birth).

And the fact that education can work miracles is not so obvious.

5. “Capable” – “Incapable.”

The very terms “capable” and “incapable” are originated from pedagogical weakness and laziness.

If a school mathematics teacher says to a sixth grader: “You are not capable of mathematics,” then this “takes off” many problems.

Judge for yourself. After such an authoritative diagnosis, from the closest mathematics teacher to the boy, both the mathematics teacher and the boy can sleep peacefully. And this current, and all subsequent mathematics teachers who will train the boy in the future. That is, no matter how much the boy is engaged in mathematics, even if he turns inside out with the best tutors individually, he will never know neither school mathematics nor higher mathematics. The boy (practically, forever) “was given an order for good”:

“You’re incapable of maths! You’re stupid to maths! Do not go to mathematics! Do not do maths ever! Do not waste time for maths! Do not waste your time, or your school (institutional) teachers to teach you maths! Relax!”

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