

WHAT IS YOUR REAL NATURE: THE HEDGEHOG OR THE FOX

Greek poet Archilochus says: „The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing“. The words may have a sense of universal difference between scholars, scientists and in general between human beings. And as you may presume the hedgehog always defeats fox. This simplified classification into only two big categories enable us to divide intellectual and artistic personality in: these with centripetal and those with centrifugal ideas.

Isaiah Berlin further expands this idea to divide writers and thinkers into two categories: hedgehogs, who view the world through the lens of a single defining idea (examples given include Plato, Dante, Pascal, Hegel, Dostoyevsky, Nietzsche, Proust...), and foxes, who are seeking a wide variety of experiences and for whom the world cannot be simplified to a single idea. Examples given include Herodotus, Aristotle, Erasmus, Shakespeare, Molière, Goethe, Pushkin, Balzac...

Sir Harold Himsworth was a distinguished clinical scientist at a time when modern clinical science was at an important stage of development. He made remarkable contributions to the clinical investigation and etiology of diabetes mellitus and of liver necrosis. When asked for reviewing the manuscript sent to the *Lancet* in 1943 about the discovery that alloxan could produce diabetes in animals, he considered as his duty to check the experiment. It didn't work, so he rejected the paper. When the authors protested, he realized that he had accidentally inactivated the alloxan by boiling, and the paper was finally accepted. I wanted to bring to your attention this anecdote about Himsworth which classes him as a hedgehog.

It is difficult to expect such degree of intellectual curiosity and devotion in our reviewers. I don't intend to force you to be so judgmental and to classify our authors in the categories mentioned above. Weather you estimate yourself as the hedgehog or the fox, enjoy reading new issue of *Facta*

Inspired by:

1. Gale EAM. Commentary: The Hedgehog and the fox: Sir Harold Himsworth (1905-93). *Int J Epidemiol* 2013; 42: 1602–1607.
2. Isaiah Berlin. *The Hedgehog and the fox*. Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1953.



Editor-in-Chief

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Lj. Šaranac".

Ljiljana Šaranac