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Focus on ERC 2018

We Should Not Stand Aside / Saving a Dying Language

Two ERC grant winners, Magdalena Winiarska and Michał Németh, each discuss their work, hopes, and challenges. **10, 16**



Research in Progress Archaeology

Metamorphosis Hidden in the Sand

Dr. Artur Obluski from the University of Warsaw talks about political, social, and religious changes in medieval Sudan. **30**

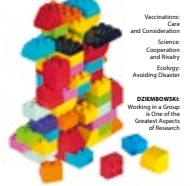


Briefly Speaking

Curiosity Must Come First A laureate of this year's FNP Prize talks about RNA-degrading enzymes, yeast's role in research helpful to people, and two types of scientists. **40**

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JAKUB OSTAŁOWSKI (2), MATEUSZ REKLAJTIS (1)

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FROM THE EDITORS

THE TIES THAT BIND

A community is a capricious thing, by nature hard to handle. Just like the individual people that make it up. Big communities form as if without effort – almost automatically including everyone who share a common nationality, faith, or language. Some people do not attach much importance to this, others make it a basic element of their identity. And that can be dangerous. Placing one's own group above others has, historically, been the cause of quite a few bloody conflicts.

Small communities, on the other hand, take hard work to maintain. Painstaking efforts to preserve a language, for instance, because its demise means the death of a culture, or to integrate into a larger society peacefully, so as to live without harm to anyone. But also never allowing oneself to be intimidated, never consenting that belonging to a minority entails having fewer rights.

For any community, be it large or small, to be something worth being a part of, one main thing is required: respect. Respect both those who are not included, and for those who are. Because no group or society is monolithic, all of them sometimes include people who have somewhat different views, slightly different objectives, somewhat different motivations. This is true among scientists: as Prof. Andrzej Dziembowski notes, there are some who are pleased just to discover new knowledge, while others are motivated by a desire to outpace others. If both the former and the latter behave ethically, and rival rather than fight one another, they will change the world. And thanks to them, it may become easier to handle, and just a bit less capricious.



"Black Tulips," 1991, Edward Dwurnik (1943–2018)

Dwurnik studied at the Painting Department of the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts, graduating from the workshop of Prof. Eugeniusz Eibisch in 1970 r. In 1966 he created his most numerous cycle, "Hitchhiking Journeys." In the 1990s he continued this with further cycles, "Blue Cities," "Diagonals," "Blues," and "Counting-Rhymes." He took part in Documenta 7 in Kassel in 1982, Nouvelle Biennale de Paris in 1985 and in the 28th Art Biennial in Sao Paulo in 1987.