

### *Intus et in cute: Persius' Satires and Schizo-Stoicism*

In his third satire, Persius' satiric persona wakes up after a night of drinking to both a headache, which makes him say "I'm splitting open" (3.9, *findor*), and the haranguing of his advisor, who justifies his criticisms by evoking the student's body, "I have come to know you in and on your skin" (3.30, *ego te intus et in cute noui*). As Gowers (1994) and Reckford (2009) point out, the use of *findor* suggests not just the splitting headache, but also the splitting of the poet's persona, such that the voice of the advisor is the voice of the student persona addressing themselves. This reflexive splitting follows Bellandi (1996) and Hooley (1997) as they demonstrate how Persius' obscure style and stylistic solipsism arises from a surface of scathing critique with a depth of highly styled Horatian poetry within. As such, Persius poetry embodies the figure of *intus et in cute*, but the body imagined is one that is fragmenting, given the splitting of personalities. This fragmentation follows Deleuze's (1990) analysis of schizophrenic patients to explore the nature of meaning: for the schizophrenic (at least conceived philosophically), the body is conceived between two poles of nonsense, the fragmentary body and the surface-level "body-without-organs". In his work, Deleuze also draws on ancient Stoicism, which structures Persius' moral vision, describing their greatest insights as the work of "an extraordinary art of surfaces" (133).

I argue that the "schizoid" quality of Persius texts arises from his Stoicism as demonstrated in his presentation of the body. On the one hand, and consistent with Deleuze's description, Bramble (1974) discusses how Persius frequently uses the metaphor of skin to refer to surface appearance as contrasted with what is *intus*, but as Reckford and Henderson (1991) point out, what is inside the skin is hollow, given the analogy of humans with pots (3.21-2, *sonat*

*vitium percussa, maligne/responde viridi non cocta fidelia limo*), and the collections opening lament over the emptiness of human things affairs (1.1, *O curas hominum! o quantum est in rebus inane!*). The construction of the body of the agent and the body of the work itself reflects the first schizophrenic tendency toward the body-without-organs. On the other hand, it also looks into the depths of the body in terms of schizophrenic fragmentation. Gowers, (1994 & 2005), Bartsch (2015), and Freudenburg (2018) show how the visceral bodily metaphors and descriptions in the collection work as part of the stylistic *iunctura acris* of the collection, as Persius updates the satires of Horace on the secondary level to fit the age of Nero; for example, in *Satire 5*, Persius's persona offers himself up to his mentor Cornutus' evaluation by giving his intestines for examination (5.22, *damus praecordia*; 5.29, *arcana fibra*) and asks for jaws rather than speech to praise him (5.26, *hic ego centenas ausim deponere fauces*).

However, these entrails are also inside of the hollow body, as the pot analogy from *Satire 3* returns (5.24-5, *pulsa, dinoscere cautus/quid solidum crepet et pictae tectoria linguae*). The split levels of the text and the split levels of the personae reflect the schizophrenic-like split in the conception of the fragmenting of the body into organs at the same time as it is imagined in terms of its (ceramic) surface. Building on these and other examples across the *Satires* where Persius draws on anatomical fragmentation opposed to the focus on surface, I demonstrate how Persius' poetry literally embodies Stoic psychology. Just as the satirist describes the fragmentation of bodies for moral evaluation, the text itself reflects the psychological disintegration of a Stoic who still has much progress to make.

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