

Persona Versus Personality

This paper investigates how extensive research of a particular ancient author over the course of an academic career shapes the researcher's ability to become "one" with the studied author. Is it feasible that extensive research, often a devotion to one author's works throughout an academic career, can manifest itself in the modern classicist's ability to react to situations in the guise of the Latin author himself? Can a modern classicist separate his/her own personality from that of the studied author? Does one actually begin "to think" like the Roman author might have thought, an urging often voiced by Latin teachers from the earliest years of the language's study? These are the questions this paper poses.

The process to gain insight into these questions consists of several steps. First, leading scholars associated with research in the works of major Latin authors (Catullus, Cicero, Ovid, etc.) will take an unlicensed version of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Test as themselves. Each will take a second administration of the test with responses recorded as he/she thinks the studied author would respond. At least one beginning classicist will be tested to compare his test results with those of a senior classicist, both of whom are scholars of the same author. Another comparison will be made using responses of two senior classicists who also have both studied the same author over their academic careers.

This paper has its roots in two diverse areas familiar with this presenter. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Test forms a cornerstone for a three-week leadership seminar for members of an honorary society that this presenter attended on the campus of the University of Texas, Austin. The presenter has used the unlicensed version of this test

often in the past as a means to determine personality traits useful in working with members of this organization and other educators. The second instance that piqued this presenter's interest and led to the topic of this paper deals with Goldstein's use (2014) of the Myers-Briggs when she records Plato's fascination with and "responses" to this test, spawning the idea to expand this idea and apply it to other classical authors, using modern classicists to generate the data. Through a comparison of the data generated by this exercise, this paper will address the influence of extended scholarly study on the persona versus personality question.

Bibliography

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Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Personality Test Info (www.cpp.com)

Personality test based on C. Jung and I. Briggs Myers type theory

(www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-bin/jtypes2.asp)