

Ancient Roman Rhetoric and the Performance of Mark

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In this paper, I would like to ask whether what Quintilian, a contemporary of Mark and an expert in ancient rhetoric, says about performance and delivery, can be useful for performances of the Gospel of Mark today. Most of the present academic based performances of Mark refer to the rhetorical context in which Mark wrote in order to better understand how to perform today. What can they learn from Quintilian? And the second question I put is linked to the first one: what can exegetical methodology learn from performances? There are four parts in my paper: (1) A general introduction. (2) A reading of Quintilians IO 11,3 . (3) A presentation of modern performances. (4) Conclusion.

1. Introduction: general considerations about performance

Much has changed in the exegesis of the Gospel of Mark during the last twenty years. Narratology has made it possible for oral tradition and memory to become more prominent. And in their wake performance of the gospels saw the light of day. As a result, the researchers' attention was directed to how the communication processes work in an oral presentation of a gospel. Attention is paid to completely different things that were undervalued for centuries in the research (emotions, rhetorical strategy). The big difference with purely written study of a text is that the text is *experienced* in a completely different way. The challenge for the exegesis is whether this dimension of the text can be integrated into the classical approaches. My answer is that it can and it should as I will try to explain further on. Suffice it here to say that the impact of orality on an audience is very similar through the ages and cultures, and as Christopher Bryan writes in *A Preface to Mark* (1993): “The abyss that separates Mark from us can [...] be bridged by one means: performance”.

2. Quintilian on performance

But let us start in the first century. Performance is called *actio* in ancient rhetorical handbooks. The *actio* (ὑπόκρισις, also *pronuntiatio*) or delivery is the fifth part of the classical canons of rhetoric: *inventio* (**invention**), *dispositio* (**arrangement**, composition),

elocutio (**style**), *memoria* (**memory**), *actio* (**delivery**). However, not only biblical scholars,¹ but also literary critics in general have noticed the lack of interest in what Quintilian and other orators said about “delivery” (*actio*).² In 2001, Chris Holcomb concludes an article on Quintilian with the following remark: “Strange that historians of rhetoric have not paid more attention to issues of performance. For it is performance, after all, that is the ultimate goal and destination of oratorical training.”³

Quintilian’s commentary on *actio* is found in book 11, section 3.⁴ The two aspects that play a role in performance are the voice (*vox*) and the gestures (*gestus*, including the face). In my analysis of this section 11.3, I would like to make a distinction between two categories. One category concerns the practical suggestions and concrete advices Quintilian gives to his readers-teachers-students. The other one concerns the general characteristics of a good delivery.⁵

(1) Practical suggestions

A long list of tips and tricks, of *dos* and *don’ts* to acquire and to train a good voice precedes instructions on how to use it to conform the language of the speech itself to what is correct, clear, ornate and appropriate. Quintilian mentions the use of pauses, the compatibility of evenness and variety, “the necessity of adapting the voice to suit the nature

¹ Alain Gignac, “‘On en fit la lecture’ (Ac 15,30–32): L’interprétation des lettres du Nouveau Testament en contexte d’oralité,” in *Narrativité, oralité et performance: 7e Colloque international du Réseau de Recherche en Narratologie et Bible (RRENAB), 5 au 7 juin 2014, Université de Montréal*, ed. idem, Terra Nova 4 (Leuven: Peeters, 2018), 71–106. See also Michal Beth Dinkler, “New Testament Rhetorical Narratology: An Invitation toward Integration,” *Biblical Interpretation* 24 (2016): 203–228.

² The same could be said about another aspect of rhetoric, i.e. *memoria*.

³ Chris Holcomb, “‘The Crown of All Our Study’: Improvisation in Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*,” in *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 31/3 (2001): 53–72, here 70. Cf. Lily Tonger-Erk, *Actio: Körper und Geschlecht in der Rhetoriklehre*, Studien zur deutschen Literatur 196 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 45: “Obwohl die Rhetoriken der *actio* so einstimmig einen hohen Stellenwert beimessen, bleibt das Ausmaß der Beschäftigung mit der *actio* doch merkwürdig gering.”

⁴ The general outline of 11.3 is as follows: introduction (1–14a), voice (14b–65a), the gestures and formal things (64b–149a), the difference of speech adapted to each part of it (149b–176), epilogue (177–184). For the English translation online, see http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Quintilian/Institutio_Oratoria/11C*.html#3. For the Latin text, see <http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/quintilian/quintilian.institutio11.shtml#3>.

⁵ This should be seen in the broader framework of Quintilian’s *Institutio* which is also a book on how to be or to become a good man, *vir bonus dicendi peritus* (*Inst.* 12.1.1, quoting Marcus Cato). See Bernd Steinbrink, “Actio,” in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, ed. Gert Ueding et al., 12 vols. (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992–2015), 1:43–52, here 50–51; Lampe, “Psychologische Einsichten,” passim; and many other authors.

of the various subjects on which we are speaking and the moods that they demand”, the breath, the avoidance of singing, and the importance of a correct use of the voice adapted to the emotions. Quintilian mentions (149-176) four general aspects with regard to emotions, starting from the whole of the text to the smaller units. (1) One should find the right tone for the *whole* of the text. (2) Different *parts* of the discourse demand different emotions. (3) Every *sentence* is different and the delivery should be in correspondence with every single emotion in the sentence. (4) In fact, even at the level of a single word one should know which interpretation one wants to deliver.

Quintilian also gives advices about gestures (66–148). The head, as chief member of the body, plays the most important role. The glance expresses feelings like supplication, threats, flattery, sorrow, joy, pride or submission (72). When the eyes move, they become intent, indifferent, proud, fierce, mild, or angry (75). Every detail of the head (except maybe the nose) has a function in the expression of emotions: the eyebrows, the cheeks, the eyelids, and the neck (77–84). The longest part on gesture is dedicated to the hands. The reason is simple: “As for the hands, without which all action would be crippled and enfeebled, it is scarcely possible to describe the variety of their motions, since they are almost as expressive as words” (85). The emotions expressed by the hands – “the universal language” (87) – are countless.⁶

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWmKTFsuHQw&feature=youtu.be>

(2) General ideas

⁶ I found the following ones in *Inst.* 11.3.85–116 (not all of them are emotions): to demand, promise, summon, dismiss, threaten, supplicate, express aversion or fear, question or deny (86); to express joy, sorrow, hesitation, confession, penitence, measure, quantity, number and time (87). Quintilian gives very specific description of the positions of the hand when it comes to express “statements of facts,” reproach, refuting (92), denunciation, indication (94), argumentation (95), modesty (96), markers of different points (99), restraint or timidity (100), interrogation, approval, distinction of different points (101), promise, assent, exhortation, praise (102), surprise, fear, indignation (103), regret, anger (104). Hall (“Oratorical Delivery,” 226) notes “some twenty different gestures involving the hands.” For twenty-four sketches and illustrations about the positions of the hand, see Maier-Eichhorn, *Die Gestikulation in Quintilians Rhetorik*, 137–43. Gignac, “On en fit la lecture,” xx, n. xx, also mentions Gregory S. Aldrete, *Gestures and Acclamations in Ancient Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), and a video (www.uwgb.edu/alldreteg/Greg.Ostia.mov). Concerning the gesticulation there is a debate about the illuminations in the early medieval manuscripts of the work of Terence (Publius Terentius Afer); see Whitney Taylor Shiner, *Proclaiming the Gospel: First-Century Performance of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003), 129–35; Maier-Eichhorn, *Die Gestikulation in Quintilians Rhetorik*, 150–53.

Apart from a detailed description of how to speak and move, we can distill some general ideas, which might be relevant for a performance of the Gospel of Mark. For instance, the use of a simple style of delivery; the triple purpose of a discourse (conciliatory, persuasive and moving), but especially, when reading the *Institutio*, one is struck by the focus on emotions. Voice and gestures have to work together harmoniously in order to “exhibit an emotion that cannot be distinguished from the truth” (62, see 61–65). “If the orator is then able to convey these images effectively to the audience, he will succeed in rousing the same powerful emotions in them too.”⁷

(3) Relevance of Quintilian’s *Actio* for Markan Performance

There are many reasons why we should not refer to Quintilian when performing the Gospel of Mark today. He wrote his *Institutio* for orators and not for storytellers; there are many gestures that are determined by time and region (Mediterranean context) and are therefore foreign to other cultures.⁸ On the other hand, one cannot deny that some basic principles of oral communication transcend the literary genre and are common to the delivery of both rhetorical discourses and stories like a gospel.⁹ One can think of the art of convincing an audience, the attention to the role of emotions, the idea of performing as the ultimate method of communication, the search for a convenient delivery adapted to the kind of text that is performed.

In light of our interpretation of Quintilian’s comments on *actio*, we can retain at least three *essential* things for Markan exegesis in general. First, it is a wake-up call for all exegetes of the gospel, that they should become aware that writing about the text is only half of the job as long as it is not touching the “emotions” of the readers. Delivery is the most efficient way to touch the recipients of the story. And for scholars the best way to

⁷ Hall, “Oratorical Delivery,” 234. See also the beginning of *Institutio* 11 where Quintilian says that voice and gesture appeal to the ear and the eye “the two senses by which all emotion reaches the soul” (11.3.14). Graf, “Gestures and Conventions,” 40: “To understand the system of Roman rhetorical *gestus* and its peculiarities, it is important to have a clear idea of its aim. Quintilian is outspoken about what it is all about; the gestural language together with the rest of the performance is directed towards the emotions, not the reason, of the audience.”

⁸ Graf, “Gestures and Conventions,” 51–52.

⁹ See also above [n. 11 \(Lampe\)](#).

move their audience is to be moved themselves.¹⁰ In other words, what is the relationship of the exegete with the text s/he is studying? Second, it is by speaking the text out loud in front of an audience and in interaction with the audience that we can experience new dimensions of the text. This implies also a preliminary challenge to performers. They should first make a choice about the general goal they want to reach in performing the whole of the gospel. Only thereafter can they see how they should consider every lower level of the text, as Quintilian mentioned: first the whole text, then the larger parts, thereafter the sentence, and finally every word. Third, *actio* is a well-considered aspect of performance. We cannot copy-paste what Quintilian is writing, but we can learn from it that a professional approach of delivery is necessary in order to obtain a good balance between text, voice and gesture. Delivery deserves research.

If we take seriously the contribution of delivery to biblical exegesis, some characteristics of performance could and should be integrated into the broader exegetical perspective. Performance criticism should not be something that is placed in a footnote as a minor issue. One of these characteristics is that each performance is always unique.¹¹ There are no two identical performances, not even by the same person. The circumstances are never identical, the audience changes, etc. And a second one is that the text itself may change with each performance. Some things will be added, others will be omitted or changed, and, maybe more fundamentally, special translations are used.¹² Both characteristics belong to the oral process of performing, and they are sometimes used to disqualify the status of performance for exegesis. In fact, the revival of performances takes us back to the mixed culture of oral and written text, as it was in the first century. It

¹⁰ *Inst.* 6.2.28, 36; see Matthew Leigh, "Quintilian on the Emotions (*Institutio Oratoria* 6 Preface and 1-2)," *JRS* 94 (2004): 122-40. Apart from the *actio* there are many other aspects of the rhetoric that contribute to moving the audience.

¹¹ Bryan, *Preface to Mark*, 169-70. Breytenbach, "Das Evangelium nach Markus," 90-91: "eine *performance* [ist] einmalig. Sie ist in einen bestimmten sozialen Kontext eingebettet. Ein/e bestimmte/r Akteur/in interagiert mit der Zuhörerschaft, die zu dem Zeitpunkt gegenwärtig ist, zuhört und zuschaut, mitfühlt und -riecht. Auch wenn sie sich die Teilnehmer/innen zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt am selben Ort ein weiteres Mal treffen würden, wäre es eine neue *performance* mit einer eigenen Dynamik. Wiederholte Aufnahmen, die Kulturanthropologen von denselben Performern gemacht haben, die die gleichen Texte vor demselben Klan aufführen, zeigen, dass das Gesprochene und die begleitenden Handlungen, auch die der Zuhörer und Zuhörerinnen, sich nur mit erheblichen Variationen wiederholen. Auf der Seite des Performers gibt es nicht nur Variationen in Lautstärke, Ton, Betonung, Gestik und Mimik, sondern auch in Wortwahl und Wendungen."

¹² These "changes" can be compared to what happens in the written transmission of the text.

relativizes the importance attached to a fixed text. Every written commentary on the gospel of Mark is nothing other than a snapshot based on *one* written copy of the non-existing but supposed “original.”¹³ Both aspects of performance – the uniqueness of the text and the changeability of the text – cannot be used as an argument against the integration of performance criticism in the canon of methodologies of gospel criticism. The main difference is that written texts and written commentaries can have an influence for centuries (although they undergo changes!) while oral performances are instantaneous. However, the advantage of an oral performance is that it contains text and interpretation in one movement, while a written source text is “void” of meaning as long as there is no additional interpretation.¹⁴ This observation on the specificity of written text and oral performance is not a judgment on the quality of the medium but on the effect of it. Both have their own value and are not contradictory but complementary. Exegesis is a dialogue between writers, readers, performers and audience. We are evolving towards a continuous exchange between oral and written information and interpretation – not to mention the visual! – and between writers and performers. Although the media and their effects are different, orality and literacy may have more in common than we think. It is the general insight of Quintilian on the role of delivery that indirectly can make a change in the way we describe the function and the method of doing exegesis.

3. The Practice of Performing Mark

(1) In general

When it comes to the *concrete* design of a performance of Mark today, one quickly discovers the limitation of a manual like the *Institutio*. The concrete elaboration depends on the performer himself/herself, just as an individual exegete will use source criticism or other

¹³ On the relationship between written text(s) and oral performance, see (among many other authors) Hartvigsen, *Prepare the Way of the Lord*, 5–9, 8: “The manner in which written texts were composed and read also draws attention to the interface of oral and written media. Interaction between graphic and acoustical signs during the encoding and decoding process tended to reduce considerably the discrepancy between the two media. ... Hence, one might claim that late Western Antiquity was ‘a culture of high residual orality which nevertheless communicated significantly by means of literary creations’” (the citation is from Paul J. Achtemeier, “*Omne verbum sonat*: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity,” *JBL* 109 [1990]: 3–27, 3).

¹⁴ See on this difference Kelly R. Iverson, “A Centurion’s ‘Confession’: A Performance-Critical Analysis of Mark 15:39,” *JBL* 130 (2011): 329–50, 332: “Thus, while writing has distinct advantages, permanence being one of them, a written transcription obscures the full dynamics of a communicative event.”

methods in her or his own way. The delivery Quintilian is talking about is always in interaction with a written text of a speech. This is also true for the performances of Mark by academics we are talking about here. The performer delivers a concrete exegesis of a text. He is an exegete, just like a commentator of the gospel of Mark.

So even with the rules well-described, freedom, responsibility, personality and talent of the performer are determinative for the delivery during the performance. Each performer will act according his/her temperament and according to the circumstances in which the performance takes place. A great effort has been made by several scholars to describe their own performances or how one could/should perform (passages from) Mark. In so doing, they make the inverse movement from oral performance to written explanation about the performance. It is worth the effort to compare some of these comments. On the one hand, this comparison reveals different aspects of delivery and, on the other hand, it helps to see how delivery is a form of exegesis that connects with the tradition of written exegesis.¹⁵ Therefore, in the last part of this contribution, I would like to compare some comments by two authors on the text and the performance of Jesus's death in Mark 15:33–37. Whitney Shiner and Thomas Boomershine

(2) Two Performers Authors on Mark 15:34–37

Whitney Shiner is certainly the author who has the most detailed description that is closest to the theories of delivery in the first century. He concludes his comments on “Delivery and Emotion” in ancient rhetorical literature as follows: “A speaker was not believable if he was not emotional. For the Gospels to be credible, then, the performer would have to present them in an emotional manner. Otherwise, they could be dismissed as quaint stories.”¹⁶ Shiner incorporates Quintilian's idea that the performer himself has to feel the emotions he wants to stimulate within the audience. One of the scenes where “audience inclusion” functions very well is the crucifixion scene. As a performer, one can express the emotions best when it is done in character. That is how Shiner describes the performance:

The cry of dereliction, I enjoy. I have one line to express the suffering of Jesus. I muster up every ounce of pain I have felt in my life and cry in a loud voice, “**Eloi! Eloi!**

¹⁵ It is not my intention here to make a (critical) review of the performances of colleagues. I only want to present some different possibilities to perform Mark and how these creations were justified by the performers themselves.

¹⁶ Shiner, *Proclaiming the Gospel*, 81–83, 83.

Lema sabachthani?" Then I get to repeat in English: **"My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?"** (15:34) It is very cathartic for me, though it may be disconcerting for the audience. The mockery is transformed by doing it in character. My understanding of mockery in character is extremely nasty. I overdo it a little and make the mocking sound like third-graders on the playground, with lots of "Naaah naah na naaah naah!" in my tone of voice. "Hey *Messiah!* King of *Israel!* Come on down from the cross so that we might see and believe!" The childish tone is appropriate since we are supposed to despise those who mock Jesus in his pain.

When I read the mockery silently, I usually think of the cleverness of Mark's irony. When I perform it, I think about how nasty the mockery is. Much of the crucifixion scene consists of mockery. About halfway through, it begins to feel a little strange to perform. This is the foundational narrative of Christianity. It is the climactic scene around which the whole narrative is built. I am standing there, insulting Jesus. The audience is sitting there, listening to me abuse Jesus. What a strange way to celebrate the Son of God! If I wanted to hear someone ridicule Jesus, I could go out on the street and find a Pharisee or some Roman soldiers.

It is this mockery that involves the audience so deeply in the crucifixion. Mark has focused on the one part of the suffering of Jesus that I can experience. If the performer describes the physical agony of crucifixion, it remains something external to me. I sympathize with pain of that sort. If the performance describes the mental anguish of Jesus, it is still external to me. My reaction is still sympathy. If the performer yells insults at Jesus, I experience that directly. That "dinglewort" is insulting *Jesus*. That "dinglewort" is insulting *me*! Mark puts me in the place of Jesus in the one way I can feel directly.¹⁷

The idea behind Shiner's interpretation is that through his authentic performance in which he expresses the emotions of Jesus's pain of the abandonment and of the cruelty of the mockery, he will be able to move the audience. The performance of Mark in the "grand style" of antiquity should make it possible to modern participants to be touched by the story. Why the option for such an "emotional performance"? The answer is very clear and unambiguous. Performing according to Shiner is a testimony of faith and "the performance of the Gospel makes Jesus powerfully present."¹⁸ [This would need a discussion]

Although **Thomas Boomershine** has a completely different way of performing, he shares the same initial idea that "in the moment of performance, the meaning is more directly connected with the emotional impact of the events and characters involved" than

¹⁷ Shiner, *Proclaiming the Gospel*, 182–83 (bold as in the original).

¹⁸ Shiner, *Proclaiming the Gospel*, 192. See the whole conclusion at 191–93.

with ideas or facts.¹⁹ His book on the passion and resurrection story in Mark 14–15 is a critical exegetical commentary and interpretation on the Greek text, and it focuses specifically on the sound of both the Greek text and the English translation in oral performance. Boomersshine’s vision on the message of the gospel is explained in the introduction: “the story of Jesus as the nonviolent Messiah of peace and reconciliation with Israel’s Gentile enemies in the period after the Judean-Roman War.”²⁰ Not as much the gestures but the speed, the emphasis, the voice, the tone, the repetitions, the difference between circumstances and essential sentences are helping the performer in putting the emphasis in specific manner.

In contrast to Shiner, Boomersshine’s performances are closer to the simple style of delivery. The tool that is used to guide the performance is sound mapping.²¹ With regard to Mark 15:33–37,²² this leads to the following printed presentation:²³

- 1.1 (Καὶ γενομένης ὥρας ἑκτῆς σκότος ἐγένετο* ἐφ’ ὅλην τὴν γῆν ἕως ὥρας ἐνάτης.)
- 2.1 (καὶ τῇ* ἐνάτῃ* ὥρᾳ*) ἐβόησεν ὁ* Ἰησοῦς φωνῇ μεγάλῃ,
- 2.2 Ελωι ελωι λεμα σαβαχθανι;
- 2.3 ὁ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον Ὁ θεὸς μου ὁ θεὸς μου, εἰς τί ἐγκατέλιπές με;
- 3.1 καὶ τινες τῶν παρεστηκότων ἀκούσαντες ἔλεγον,
- 3.2 Ἴδε Ἡλὶαν φωνεῖ.
- 4.1 δραμῶν δέ τις [καὶ] γεμίσας σπόγγον ὄξους περιθεὶς καλάμῳ* ἐπότιζεν αὐτόν λέγων,
- 4.2 Ἄφετε* ἴδωμεν εἰ* ἔρχεται* Ἡλίας καθελεῖν αὐτόν.
- 5.1 >ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς ἀφείδ φωνὴν μεγάλην ἐξέπνευσεν.< (rounded with φωνεῖ and φωνῇ μεγάλῃ)

¹⁹ Thomas E. Boomersshine, *The Messiah of Peace: A Performance-Criticism Commentary on Mark’s Passion-Resurrection Narrative*, BPC 12 (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2015), 11. The quotation is found in a section on the difference between “oral-culture” and “literate-culture” audiences (9–13). His commentary on Mark 14–15 maintains “a dialectal relationship between engagement in the experience of the story and critical analysis,” starting with “first engagement with performance and then involvement in critical analysis” (13).

²⁰ Boomersshine, *Messiah of Peace*, 1. “Mark’s gospel announced that the kingdom of God and the deliverance of the human community from the powers of evil will happen by prayer and peaceful engagement with our enemies rather than by violence” (33).

²¹ It is explained from the beginning in Boomersshine, *Messiah of Peace*, p. 1-8. And there is an Appendix 8 with the Greek text of Mark printed *per cola et commata* with marks used to indicate the various features of the episodes in the passion and resurrection narrative (368–86).

²² *Messiah of Peace*, 294–326 (passim in the section on Mark 15:33–47: “The death and burial of Jesus”). For a video of Boomersshine’s performance of the Mark 15:33–37, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnPtuXiYcBw>, from 27’07 to 28’26. There, one can see and hear that a concrete performance has (many) changes to the printed text.

²³ The sound map is found at *Messiah of Peace*, 384. For the explanation of the symbols and the bold print, see 375.

It is difficult to summarize Boomershine's commentary on this passage, which addresses the volume, the speed, the tempo, the rhythm, the way of addressing the audience, the tonal quality, the joke and humor, and the onomatopoeia – in short, all things that have to do with the sound and the voice. Sometimes, Boomershine's analysis is not different from a "normal" narratological commentary:²⁴

Thus, the Aramaic quotation reports Jesus' cry in the context of its original historical occurrence around 30 CE. The Greek translation, in which the storyteller expresses her or his own anguish, sets the cry in the context of the storyteller's relationship with the audience in the present moment of the story at any subsequent time. Both Jesus' sense of abandonment and the storyteller's anguish are thereby made present. The effect of the episode is to establish identification with Jesus as a righteous man praying to God during the most intense suffering. And, as a result of the connection between the quotation of Jesus' words in Aramaic and the storyteller's translation of this most memorable line of the psalm, along with the preceding allusions in 15:24 and 34, the entire crucifixion section is set in the context of Israel's tradition of righteous suffering.

The impression one can have when watching the video and reading the commentary – this is the order Boomershine asks us to follow when reading his book – is that it is difficult to make the bridge from the performance to the general interpretation in the commentary. I am not talking here about the sound aspects, which would probably demand a more detailed, and specific investigation. I am rather thinking of the idea of the "righteous sufferer" and the general interpretation of the Messiah of peace. The question one could ask is, if one were to propose a different dominant theme in the gospel of Mark (e.g. the Messianic secret, the appeal of taking up one's cross, the anti-empire counter-story, etc.), would one perform in a different way than the one Boomershine is presenting to his audience? In what sense is the performance itself a mirror of the interpretation? This question is not a critique of the way the gospel is performed. I only conclude that performance and exegetical interpretation need each other. A performance needs to be enriched by interpretation.

4. Conclusion

In the introduction I asked two questions. Let me conclude by two responses.

²⁴ Boomershine, *Messiah of Peace*, 306.

(1) Can performance criticism learn something from Quintilian's chapter on delivery in the *Institutio oratoria*? Yes, when it comes to the general ideas that performing is an essential aspect in the communication of a text. It becomes more difficult when it comes to the concrete elaboration of gestures and the use of voice because especially gestures take place in concrete cultural environments. Still, there are some characteristics of performing that transcend the concrete situations: emotions²⁵.

(2) In what way is the growing interest in performances of a gospel helpful for exegetical methodology as a whole? I am pleading for a larger exegetical approach than a purely written one. A cross-fertilization between written exegesis and oral exegesis through performance could open up the exegetical work towards new dimensions that are not fully developed yet today: the role of emotions is one of them and the psychological (individual and group) factors that are present when the audience actively participates in a performance is another one. There is no need for a schism between the written text of Mark and the oral performance of it today. Although there are many differences between the written text and the oral performance, there are also many similarities. A written commentary can only become better when someone performs it. An oral performance can only become better when the performer comments on it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Tzq6hDv4pI> 19'43

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnPtuxiYcBw> 27'07 – 29'39

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdZAID8WwIo> 13'10

²⁵ A recent example on a concrete study on emotions is Michael R. Whinton, "Feeling the Silence: A Moment-by-Moment Account of Emotions at the End of Mark (16:1-8)," *CBQ* 78 (2016): 272-89.