

“Penetrating the *Novum Rostrum*: First Century CE Latin Oratory”

First Century CE Latin oratory is remarkable for its drastic contrasts with the Late Republican model. As imperial rule gripped Rome and its provinces, the profession was pressed to evolve so that it could continue to have a role in the remains of the *respublica*. A pair of main texts from later in the century demonstrates these changes and how it affected the newest generations of orators. Tacitus’s *Dialogus de Oratoribus* highlights the political and social circumstances which surround this time while taking subtle jabs at contemporary circumstances. Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* shows the proper aural and visual techniques required to be perceived as a powerful and capable voice.

These works together provide an outline of how successful oratory was performed. A quality speaker displays proper balance between captivating an audience and reducing himself into the realm of the theatrical through excess. In addition, he is an authoritative figure as he presents himself in control of his words and actions. Meanwhile, he must also carefully choose his remarks so as to not disrupt the power structure to such a degree that the Emperor, or his associates, perceives a potential threat to his hegemony. In following these outlines, an orator is able to permeate the minds of his audience, whether a mass in the forum or an intimate conversation with colleagues and friends, and represent himself as influential despite the omnipotent forces which guide the burgeoning Empire. This combination of physical technique and sensitive diction permits the profession of oratory to continue as despite the realities of tyranny.