

Caroline van Eck, Stijn Bussels, Maarten Delbeke, and Jürgen Pieters, eds. *Translations of the Sublime: The Early Modern Reception and Dissemination of Longinus' Peri Hupsous in Rhetoric, the Visual Arts, Architecture and the Theatre*.

Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 24. Leiden: Brill, 2012. xix + 272 pp. \$144. ISBN: 978-90-04-22955-6.

This stimulating collection of essays, the result of a research program at the Department of Humanities at Leiden University, uncovers previously unexplored roles that Longinus's *Peri Hupsous* played throughout the early modern period. *Peri Hupsous*, or *On the Sublime*, written by an unidentified first-century Greek rhetorician but conventionally attributed to Longinus, is the foundational text in the discourse of sublimity. As the authors of the present collection demonstrate, it had a vigorous career on the Continent as well as in England, in many cases independently of Nicolas Boileau's seminal 1674 translation.

The first part of the book concerns itself with textual dissemination and translation. Francis Goyet studies a seventeenth-century Latin translation of *Peri Hupsous* along with Boileau's translation, revealing that for Longinus, the term *apostrophiè* does not denote a turning away toward an absent listener. Rather, it refers to a sublime digression that surprises and captivates the audience. Eugenio Refini studies the Longinian notion of *phantasia* with reference to early modern editions and commentaries on *Peri Hupsous*, concluding that *phantasia* denotes both a vivid image and a process whereby the image moves an audience to wonder and astonishment. Dietmar Till elucidates the manner in which the concept of biblical sublimity in Longinus's treatise helped to provide a new Protestant discursive strategy. Paul J. Smith shows how Jean de La Bruyère used criteria from Boileau's translation of Longinus in a famous essay comparing the relative merits of Corneille and Racine. Both playwrights were found to produce sublimity in different ways, however. Over the course of several editions, de La Bruyère expanded his interpretations of the sublime, enriching his comparison but not resolving its ambiguity.

The second part of the collection addresses the translation of Longinian concepts in the visual arts. Hana Gründler detects in Giorgio Vasari's artistic biographies an appreciation for sublime subject matter and effects. For example, he describes the paintings of Raphael as evoking fear and admiration. Vasari was quite likely influenced by the Florentine intellectuals with whom he associated, a circle inspired by Bembo's *Prose* and the 1554 editio princeps of *Peri Hupsous* by Robortello. Maarten Delbeke discusses how biographers of the sculptor Gianlorenzo Bernini, a favorite of Louis XIV, described Bernini as "a genius . . . vast and sublime." Building on Longinus's idea of the sublime genius, René Rapin authored a book on human grandeur and sublimity in which he referred to Louis XIV as "the ultimate compendium of moral greatness" (124). Bernini's bust of the king is an instance in which a sublimely gifted artist captured the sublimity of his subject. Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt show how Longinian

concepts were applied to the analysis of operatic spectacle in France. The *tragedie lyrique* used elaborate stage effects to represent supernatural events. Because Boileau advocated a simple yet sublime style, this form of opera failed to meet his approval. Still, the *tragedie lyrique* caused audiences to marvel, and it thus met a different one of Boileau's criteria of sublimity. In her chapter, Helen Langdon argues that the Italian artist and poet Salvator Rosa's later paintings depict the sublimity of both nature and human genius. Rosa's influences included court circles that knew Longinus's treatise well and Jesuit intellectuals who employed Longinian language and ideas to describe the infinite grandeur of nature.

Lydia Hamlett shows how Longinus influenced English visual artists. For example, the painter and theorist Jonathan Richardson incorporated Longinian ideas into a Protestant visual sublime. Hamlett also studies the frontispieces of translations of *Peri Hupsous*. One of these depicted Longinus as Mercury, the god of eloquence, while another fused his image with that of the ideal Protestant religious figure, St. Paul. Caroline van Eck argues that Anglican church designers searching for an aesthetic free of idolatrous connotations found a solution in the Longinian principle that discordant elements could be brought into a powerful and sublime union. Nicholas Hawksmoor, whose church designs are "stone figurations devoid of iconographical content that border on the abstract" (242), sought to evoke the purity of early Christianity. His influences included the author Leone Allacci, who incorporated long passages from *Peri Hupsous* into his writing and envisioned a return to primitive, sublime speech.

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