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Appropriating Peri hypsous : interpretations and creative adaptations of Longinus' Treatise On the Sublime in Early Modern Dutch Scholarship
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INTRODUCTION¹

Character magnificus varias, cum apud Latinos, tum Graecos, appellationes sortitus est. (...) Denique Dionysio Longino, Rhetori κριτικωτάτω, qui sub Aureliano Caesare de hoc caractere ablectum et plane aureolum reliquit libellum, appellatur ὕψος (G.J. Vossius).²

Il faut donc sçavoir que par Sublime, Longin n'entend pas ce que les Orateurs appellent le Stile Sublime: mais cet extraordinaire, et ce merveilleux qui frappe dans le discours, et qui fait qu'un Ouvrage enleve, ravit, transporte (N. Boileau-Despréaux).³

I. Topic and aims

The reception of Longinus' treatise *Peri hypsous* (*On the Sublime*) is characterized by paradox and ambivalence. The lacunary treatise itself poses interpretative challenges and ambiguities, and its argument has been interpreted in a multitude

¹ The research leading to the results presented in this dissertation has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) / ERC grant agreement n° 312306. This research is part of the project *Elevated Minds: The Sublime in the Public Arts in 17th-century Paris and Amsterdam* (2013-2018) led by S.P.M. Bussels.

² G.J. Vossius, *Commentariorum rhetoricorum sive oratoriarum institutionum libri sex* (Leiden: J. Maire, 1630), II, 432-433: "The grand style is called by many names, in Latin as well as Greek. (...) By Dionysius Longinus, a most critical rhetorician, who in the time of Caesar Aurelian wrote an excellent and truly golden booklet on this particular style, it is called 'sublimity'." Throughout this book I cite early modern sources in their original format and spelling, unless a modern edition has been used, in which case this had been indicated.

³ N. Boileau-Despréaux, *Oeuvres Diverses du Sieur D. Avec le Traité du Sublime ou du merveilleux dans le discours* (Paris: De la Coste, 1674), 'Traité du Sublime', iiiiv: "One must therefore understand that by 'sublime' Longinus did not mean that which the orators call the 'sublime style', but the extraordinary and marvellous which is striking in writing, and which makes that a text lifts up, ravishes, transports."

of ways ever since its rediscovery in Renaissance Italy. Modern scholars moreover hold rather divergent views on how, when, and why certain interpretations of Longinus' treatise came into being or disappeared over the course of its history.

Peri hypsous, written by an anonymous author in the first or third century AD, was practically unknown until a tenth-century copy of the treatise emerged in Italy around 1450.⁴ In the following century a dozen copies of the treatise were made in Italy.⁵ After the publication of the first printed editions by Francesco Robortello (Basel, 1554) and Paolo Manuzio (Venice, 1555) the treatise received increasing interest, first from Italian scholars, but – as a result of its wider dissemination – also from French, Dutch, English, Spanish and German scholars.⁶ In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century Longinus' treatise played a role in various scholarly contexts and was adduced for a multitude of reasons. Some scholars used *Peri hypsous* for the citations of classical authors that were preserved in the treatise, such as an otherwise lost poem of Sappho and fragments of Greek tragedies. *Peri hypsous* was also frequently mentioned in general works on rhetoric, and its arguments played a role in discussions on literary style and taste. Longinus' reference to Genesis (*Peri hypsous* 9.9) moreover sparked the interest of several biblical scholars. As the seventeenth century progressed, scholars continued to make new editions and (vernacular) translations of *Peri hypsous*, resulting in an ever-increasing readership of the treatise. This development culminated with the publication of a French translation of *Peri hypsous* by the French critic Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux in 1674, which had a great bearing on the treatise's influence and interpretation.

By analysing discussions of and references to *Peri hypsous* in seventeenth-century Dutch scholarship, the present study seeks to elucidate crucial aspects and factors of the early modern reception of *Peri hypsous*, such as the dissemination of the text and its contents, as well as the motives behind certain interpretations and applications of the work. Focusing on one particular text, area and period, this investigation functions as a case study within the field of classical reception

⁴ C.M. Mazzucchi, 'La tradizione manoscritta del Περί Ὑψους', *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica* 32 (1989), 205-226: 205-210. See also C.M. Mazzucchi, *Dionisio Longino. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commentario a cura di Carlo Maria Mazzucchi* (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2010), xxxix-xliv.

⁵ Mazzucchi (1989), 205-226 (210-223).

⁶ An overview of such references can be found in Appendix 1.

studies and the history of scholarship. It moreover adds to existing scholarship on the reception of Longinus by investigating an area and period that have not been discussed fully in studies of this topic. The rise of popularity of Longinus' treatise in early modern Europe is often connected to the French translation of Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux. Recent scholarship however has shown that *Peri hypsous* has received significant attention well before Boileau's translation.⁷ Such studies however hardly discuss the Dutch involvement in the reception of Longinus treatise in the seventeenth century.⁸ The present book will add to existing scholarship in three ways: 1) It will focus on the hitherto undisclosed reception of *Peri hypsous* in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century. 2) By discussing material that has not been studied comprehensively in this context, the present book also serves to test claims and observations that have already been made for the early modern reception of Longinus in other countries. 3) Given the international nature of scholarly activity and intellectual networks in the early modern era this study moreover highlights trends in the early modern reception of *Peri hypsous* that transcend one particular geographical area. In this introduction I shall briefly discuss the contents of *Peri hypsous*, provide a critical overview of existing scholarship, discuss my sources and methodology, and highlight relevant aspects of the historical context.

II. Longinus, *Peri hypsous*

The ancient treatise *Peri hypsous* (*On the Sublime*) aims to describe the effects of 'the sublime' (ὑψος) in literature, and to demonstrate how it can be attained. The treatise was probably written in the first or third century AD, although the exact

⁷ For instance in M. Fumaroli, 'Rhétorique d'école et rhétorique adulte: remarques sur la perception européenne du traité *Du Sublime* au XVIe et au XVIIe siècle', *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* 86 (1986), 33-51; E. Gilby, *Sublime Worlds. Early Modern French Literature* (London: Legenda, 2006); C.A. van Eck, M. Delbeke, S.P.M. Bussels, and J. Pieters (eds.), *Translations of the Sublime. The Early Modern Reception and Dissemination of Longinus' Peri Hypsous in Rhetoric, the Visual Arts, Architecture and the Theatre* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

⁸ The study of C. Madelein, *Juigchen in den adel der menschlijke natuur. Het verhevene in de Nederlanden (1770-1830)* (Gent: Academia Press, 2010) is concerned with the Low Countries, but focuses on a later period.

date of creation, as well as the identity of the author are uncertain.⁹ The oldest extant copy of *Peri hypsous* (MS Parisinus Graecus 2036, tenth century), presents divergent speculations about the authorship of *Peri hypsous*.¹⁰ The table of contents on fol. 1^v attributes the work to 'Dionysius or Longinus', whereas the heading of the work on fol. 178^v ascribes it to 'Dionysius Longinus'. On the basis of this ambiguous attribution, the author of the treatise was called 'Longinus' or 'Dionysius Longinus' throughout the early modern period, and was often identified with the third-century rhetorician and philosopher Cassius Longinus (213-273 AD). In the nineteenth century this identification has been rejected.¹¹ The anonymous author is nowadays conventionally called Longinus or Pseudo-Longinus, and the treatise is usually situated in the intellectual context of the Augustan period or the first century AD.¹² Throughout my dissertation I will refer to the author of the treatise as Longinus.

According to Longinus, ὑψος (sublimity) is a quality of language that incites wonder and amazement (ἐκπληξίς) in readers or listeners. Longinus' prime examples of sublimity are Homer, Plato and Demosthenes, and in general *Peri hypsous* takes its illustrations from the classical Greek canon, with the notable exceptions of Genesis and Cicero.¹³ The treatise is addressed to a Postumius

⁹ See D.A. Russell (ed.), *'Longinus' On the Sublime. Edited with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), xxii-xxx, M. Heath, 'Longinus On Sublimity', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 45 (1999), 43-74, and Mazzucchi (2010), xxix on the authorship of *Peri hypsous*.

¹⁰ Russell (1964), xxii-xxiii.

¹¹ Russell (1964), xxiii; Heath (1999).

¹² Russell (1964), xxv; C.C. de Jonge, 'Dionysius and Longinus on the Sublime. Rhetoric and Religious Language', *American Journal of Philology* 133 (2012), 271-300.

¹³ On the structure and contents of *Peri hypsous* see Russell (1964), x-xxii and xxx-xlii, D.A. Russell, 'Longinus Revisited', *Mnemosyne* 34 (1981), 72-86, D.A. Russell, 'Introduction', in: S. Halliwell, W.H. Fyfe, D.A. Russell and D.C. Innes (eds.), *Aristotle, Poetics. Longinus, On the Sublime. Demetrius, On Style* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999), 145-158: 148-154, D.C. Innes, 'Longinus: Structure and Unity', in: J. Abbenes, S. Slings, and I. Sluiter (eds.), *Greek Literary Theory after Aristotle* (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1995a), 111-124, R. Hunter, *Critical Moments in Classical Literature: Studies in the Ancient View of Literature and Its Uses* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 128-168, Mazzucchi (2010), xi-xviii, S. Halliwell, *Between Ecstasy and Truth: Interpretations of Greek Poetics from Homer to Longinus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 327-367, and J.I. Porter, *The Sublime in Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

Terentianus, probably a Roman citizen of high rank.¹⁴ Chapters 1-2 introduce the topic and position the treatise as a critical response to Caecilius of Caleacte, who had also written on the sublime.¹⁵ In chapters 3-5 Longinus discusses the stylistic vices that result from false attempts at creating sublimity. Chapters 6-7 further define ὑψος as a universal phenomenon that impresses audiences from all times and backgrounds. The greater part of the treatise is dedicated to a discussion of the five sources that may lead to sublimity, which are introduced in chapter 8. For Longinus these sources are ‘greatness of thought’, ‘emotion’, ‘figures of speech’, ‘diction’, and ‘word arrangement’.¹⁶ Chapters 9-15 are dedicated to ‘greatness of thought’, and discuss the divine aspects of elevated subject matter (chapter 9), the selection of the most powerful elements in a narrative (chapter 10), amplification (chapters 11-13.1), the attainment of greatness through imitation and emulation of the great classics (chapters 13.2-14), and φαντασία, which is the vivid imagination and representation of the events described (chapter 15). In chapters 16-29 Longinus discusses various figures of speech. Chapters 30-38 present a discussion of elevated diction, which is interrupted by a lengthy digression, in which Longinus expresses his preference for writers whose greatness causes them to make mistakes, over flawless mediocrity (chapters 33-36). The fifth source of sublimity, word arrangement, is discussed in chapters 39-42. After an addendum on diction (chapter 43), the final chapter of the treatise laments the loss of true sublimity in the author’s time (chapter 44).¹⁷

¹⁴ See W. Allen, ‘The Terentianus of the Περὶ ὕψους’, *The American Journal of Philology* 62.1 (1941), 51-64.

¹⁵ See D.C. Innes, ‘Longinus and Caecilius: Models of the Sublime’, *Mnemosyne* 55 (2002), 259-284 on the sublime according to Caecilius and Longinus.

¹⁶ In the treatise (as it is preserved) there appears to be no separate discussion of the source of ‘emotion’. See Russell (1981), 72-86 Innes (1995a), and D.C. Innes, ‘Longinus, Sublimity and the Low Emotions’, in D.C. Innes, H. Hine and C. Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric. Classical essays for Donald Russell on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995b), 323-333 on emotion in *Peri hypsous*.

¹⁷ Throughout this book Greek citations from *Peri hypsous* are taken from D.A. Russell (ed.), ‘Longinus’ *On the Sublime. Edited with Introduction and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964). Translations of Longinus’ text are adapted from W.H. Fyfe and D.A. Russell in: S. Halliwell, W.H. Fyfe, D.A. Russell, and D.C. Innes (eds.), *Aristotle, Poetics. Longinus, On the Sublime. Demetrius, On Style* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999).

III. Studies and controversies

Uncovering the fortunes of Peri hypsous in early modern Europe

The early modern reception of Longinus became a research topic in its own right in the early twentieth century. Studies like those of F.M. Kilburn (1912), A. Rosenberg (1917), A.F.B. Clark (1925), T.R. Henn (1934), and E. Nitchie (1934 and 1935) were among the first to investigate the fortunes and influence of *Peri hypsous* in early modern criticism.¹⁸ These studies focused on late seventeenth-century (English) critics, and mainly looked at the influence of Longinus through Boileau's French translation of the treatise. Samuel Monk's influential study *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-century England* (1935) likewise starts from late seventeenth-century debates and takes Boileau's translation as a starting point for his discussion of the influence of *Peri hypsous*.¹⁹

These first studies of the early modern reception of Longinus tended to downplay the importance of Longinus' treatise before 1674, a tendency that prevailed throughout the twentieth century.²⁰ This may have resulted from an initial lack of knowledge about the history of the treatise before Boileau's translation. Bernard Weinberg started to fill this gap with studies on the early editions and translations of Longinus' treatise (1950, 1962, 1971), and his discussion of Longinus in his massive two-volume work on Renaissance literary

¹⁸ F.M. Kilburn, *The Influence of Longinus in the Seventeenth Century* (Diss. University of Illinois, 1912), A. Rosenberg, *Longinus in England bis zum ende des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Diss. Berlin, 1917), A.F.B. Clark, *Boileau and the French Classical Critics in England 1660-1830* (Paris: Champion, 1925), T.R. Henn, *Longinus and English Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1934), E. Nitchie, 'Longinus and Later Literary Criticism' *The Classical Weekly* 27.16 (1934), 121-126 and 'Longinus and the Theory of Poetic Imitation in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century England', *Studies in Philology* 32.4 (1935), 580-597.

¹⁹ S.H. Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in XVIII-Century England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1935).

²⁰ This tendency is for instance visible in R. Macksey's qualification of Longinus' treatise as a 'slow starter' in 'Longinus Reconsidered', *MLN* 108 (1993), 913-934: 926, and the remarks of J. Logan in his article 'Longinus and the Sublime', in: G.P. Norton (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism. Vol. 3. The Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 529-539: 530: "(...) until Boileau's translation was published, Longinus remained virtually unknown to all but a handful of scholars and writers, most of whom were interested in the treatise chiefly for its great philological treasure, the ode by Sappho that is preserved in it and in it alone."

criticism (1961).²¹ In addition, Demetrio St Marin's 1967 bibliography of *Peri hypsous* provided an extensive overview of all early modern versions of *Peri hypsous*, including the manuscripts, editions, and translations, as well as commentaries and secondary literature on Longinus' treatise.²²

Boileau's translation nonetheless long remained the primary point of interest in studies on the reception of Longinus. Brody (1958) is among the first to provide an overview of pre-1674 references to *Peri hypsous*, but as Brody's study is primarily concerned with Boileau's reading of Longinus' treatise, the main purpose of his overview of references to *Peri hypsous* is to demonstrate that the earlier reception of Longinus' treatise was of little importance.²³ In more recent studies too Boileau's translation is taken as a convenient starting point for the discussion of the sublime and/or the reception of Longinus in early modernity, as for instance in Doran (2015).²⁴ As a result of this tendency there is ample literature discussing the concept of the sublime and the reception of Longinus in the second half of the seventeenth century, especially in French criticism, such as the studies of Litman (1971), Wood (1972), Saint-Girons (1993), Hache (2000), Kerslake (2000), and Cronk (2002), while

²¹ B. Weinberg, 'Translations and commentaries of Longinus' *On the sublime* to 1600, a Bibliography', *Modern Philology* 47 (1950) 145-151; idem, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 Vols. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961); idem, 'Une traduction Française du *Sublime* de Longin vers 1645', *Modern Philology* 59 (1962), 159-201; idem, 'ps. Longinus, Dionysius Cassius', in P.O. Kristeller, F.E. Kranz (eds.), *Catalogus Translationum et Commentariorum: Mediaeval and renaissance Latin Translations and Commentaries* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1971), 193-198.

²² D. St. Marin, *Bibliography of the Essay on the Sublime* (ΠΕΡΙ ΨΠΣΟΥΣ) (Bari, 1967). Later studies of this kind are G. Costa, 'The Latin Translations of Longinus's *Peri hupsous* in Renaissance Italy', in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bononiensis. Proceedings of the Fourth international Congress of Neo-Latin studies* (Binghampton, 1985), 225-38; Mazzucchi (1989); and E. Gilby, *Pseudo-Longin. De la sublimité du discours. Traduction inédite du XVII^e siècle introduite, éditée & annotée* (Paris: Chambéry, 2007).

²³ J. Brody, *Boileau and Longinus* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1958), 9: "Isaac Casaubon, one of the few Renaissance scholars to know the Robortello edition, suggests that Longinus' early fortunes were indeed meager"; p. 10: "The circumstances surrounding the publication of Tollius' edition provide still another index of the relatively small popularity of Longinus' treatise as late as the final quarter of the seventeenth century"; p. 12: "With the publication of the Boileau translation in 1674 the dotted Longinian trace on the map of European letters swelled out into a broad, continuous line whose subsequent course and contours have been charted by several students of eighteenth-century criticism."

²⁴ R. Doran, *The Theory of the Sublime from Longinus to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), contrary to what its title suggests, does not discuss ideas about sublimity prior to Boileau.

large-scale studies that focus on the reception of Longinus and the concept of the sublime before 1674 have long been lacking.²⁵

An increasing amount of scholarship however has turned towards the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century reception of *Peri hypsous*. In 1986 Marc Fumaroli broke a lance for the pre-1674 reception of Longinus' treatise in his article 'Rhétorique d'école et rhétorique adulte', by drawing attention to Longinian ideas in French and Italian criticism.²⁶ Around the same time Dorothy Coleman discussed echoes of Longinus in Montaigne's *Essais*, and Gustavo Costa published two articles on the sixteenth-century reception of Longinus in Italy.²⁷ English influences of Longinus' treatise have been discussed by Nativel (1994), Norbrook (1999), Van Eck (2010), and Cheney (2018).²⁸ In recent years several monographs on the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century reception of Longinus' treatise appeared. Emma Gilby (2006) discusses the works of Corneille and Pascal against the background of the influence of *Peri hypsous* in mid-seventeenth-century France.²⁹ Dietmar Till (2006) traces the history of the sublime in early modern

²⁵ T. Litman, *Le sublime en France (1660–1714)* (Paris: A.G. Nizet, 1971); T.E.B. Wood, *The Word 'Sublime' and Its Context: 1650-1700* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972); B. Saint-Girons, *Fiat Lux. une philosophie du sublime* (Paris: Quai Voltaire, 1993); S. Hache, *La langue du ciel. Le sublime en France au XVII^e siècle* (Paris: Champion, 2000), L. Kerslake, *Essays on the Sublime. Analyses of French Writings on the Sublime from Boileau to La Harpe* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2000), N. Cronk, *The Classical Sublime: French Neoclassicism and the Language of Literature* (Charlottesville VA: Rookwood Press, 2002).

²⁶ Fumaroli (1986). Earlier studies that focus on the reception of *Peri hypsous* before Boileau are W. Ringler, 'An Early Reference to Longinus', *Modern Language Notes* 53 (1938), 23-24, and T.J.B. Spencer, 'Longinus in English Criticism: Influences before Milton', *The Review of English Studies (New Series)* 80 (1957), 137-143.

²⁷ D.G. Coleman, 'Montaigne and Longinus', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 47 (1985), 405-413; G. Costa 'Paolo Manuzio e lo Pseudo-Longino', *Giornale storico della letteratura italiana* 161 (1984), 60-77; Costa (1985).

²⁸ C. Nativel, 'Le Traité "Du sublime" et la pensée esthétique anglaise de Junius à Reynolds', in R. Schnur (ed.), *Acta conventus neo-latini hafniensis. Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Neo-Latin studies* (Binghamton: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1994), 721-30; D. Norbrook, *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); C.A. van Eck, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); P. Cheney, *English Authorship and the Early Modern Sublime. Fictions of Transport in Spenser, Marlowe, Johnson, and Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

²⁹ E. Gilby, *Sublime Worlds. Early Modern French Literature* (London: Legenda, 2006).

German scholarship while discussing many aspects of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century reception of Longinus in an international perspective.³⁰ Klaus Ley (2013) provides a broad overview of the reception of Longinus' treatise in Europe, from the appearance of the treatise in the circle of cardinal Bessarion up until Boileau and beyond.³¹ Several recent edited volumes, such as Costelloe (2012), Van Eck *et al.* (2012), and special issues of *Journal for Historians of Netherlandish Art* and *Lias: Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources* in turn explore the multifaceted reception of Longinus' treatise in various domains of early modern culture; from rhetorical theory to the visual arts, theatre, music and architecture.³² The early modern Dutch involvement with Longinus' treatise however has yet received relatively little attention in these studies.³³

One could say that modern scholarship on the reception of Longinus pivots around Boileau's 1674 French translation of the treatise, which has long been deemed the starting point of the reception of *Peri hypsous*, but which is nowadays seen as the culmination of two centuries of reception and interpretation of

³⁰ D. Till, *Das doppelte Erhabene. Eine Argumentationsfigur von der Antike bis zum Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2006).

³¹ K. Ley, *Longin - von Bessarion zu Boileau. Wirkungsmomente der "Schrift über das Erhabene" in der frühen Neuzeit* (Berlin: Weidler Buchverlag 2013).

³² T. Costelloe (ed.), *The Sublime. From Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); C.A. van Eck, M. Delbeke, S.P.M. Bussels, and J. 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* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); S.P.M. Bussels and B. van Oostveldt (eds.), *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 8.2 (Special Issue) (2016); S.P.M. Bussels, B. van Oostveldt and W.L. Jansen (eds.), *Lias. Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources* 43.2 (Special issue: *The Sublime in Early Modern Theories of Art and Literature*) (2016). Besides studies that discuss direct or indirect influence of *Peri hypsous*, there are also those that take Longinus' theory as a key to understanding early modern art: C. Nau, *Le Temps du sublime. Longin et le Paysage Poussinien* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2005); M. Delbeke, 'A Matter of Material and Scale. The Sublime, Pandemonium and the Baldacchino', *Lias. Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources* 43.2 (2016), 281-296; F. Sierhuis, 'Therapeutic tragedy: compassion, remorse, and reconciliation in the Joseph plays of Joost van den Vondel (1635-1640)', *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire* 17 (2010), 27-51.

³³ Exceptions are C. Nativel, 'Lectures du *Traité du sublime* par Franciscus Junius F.F.', *Lias. Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources* 43.2 (2016), 263-279 and S.P.M. Bussels, 'Theories of the sublime in the Dutch Golden Age. Franciscus Junius, Joost van den Vondel and Petrus Wittewrongel', *History of European Ideas* 42 (2016), 882-892.

Longinus' treatise.³⁴ That Longinus' treatise did receive significant attention before 1674 is hardly contested in recent literature. Instead, controversy has now shifted to questions about the nature of the Longinian sublime and the accuracy of the early modern interpretations of *Peri hypsous*. The following sections will be dedicated to this debate, as it entails serious methodological implications for the study of the early modern reception of Longinus' treatise.

Boileau's double sublime

The origins of this debate are usually traced back to the remarks that Boileau made on *Peri hypsous* in the preface to his *Traité du sublime* (1674) and the elaboration of his opinion in his *Réflexions critiques sur quelques passages du rheteur Longin* (1694-1713). In the preface to his translation Boileau stated that Longinus is not just a rhetorician and that 'the sublime' (*le sublime*) is not the same as the 'elevated' or 'grand style' (*le stile sublime*) in rhetorical theory.³⁵

Il faut donc sçavoir que par Sublime, Longin n'entend pas ce que les Orateurs appellent le Stile Sublime: mais cet extraordinaire, et ce merveilleux qui frappe dans le discours, et qui fait qu'un Ouvrage enleve, ravit, transporte. Le Stile Sublime veut toujours de grands môts: mais le Sublime se peut trouver dans une seule pensée, dans une seule figure, dans un seul tour de paroles. Une chose peut-estre dans le Stile Sublime et n'estre pourtant pas Sublime; c'est à dire, n'avoir rien d'extraordinaire ni de surprenant. Par exemple. Le souverain Arbitre de la Nature d'une seule parole forma la lumiere. Voilà qui est dans le Stile Sublime: cela n'est pas néanmoins Sublime: parce qu'il n'y a rien là de fort merveilleux, et qu'un autre ne pût aisément trouver. Mais. Dieu dit: Que la lumière se fasse, et la lumière se fit. Ce tour extraordinaire d'expression qui marque si bien

³⁴ See for instance K. Axelsson, *The Sublime. Precursors and British Eighteenth-Century Conceptions* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), 30-36, and Doran (2015), 97-99 for the idea of a turning point brought about by Boileau.

³⁵ Although the full title of Boileau's *Réflexions* implies that Boileau took Longinus to be a *rhetor*, his *Préface* states the opposite: "Pa là on peut voir que Longin n'estoit pas seulement un habile Rheteur, comme Quintilien et comme Hermogene; mais un Philosophe capable d'estre mis en parallele avec les Socrates et les Catons" (Boileau, 1674, 'Traité du Sublime', iii).

l'obéissance de la Créature aux ordres du Créateur est véritablement Sublime et a quelque chose de divin.³⁶

One must therefore understand that by 'sublime' Longinus did not mean that which the orators call the 'sublime style', but the extraordinary and marvellous which is striking in writing, and which makes that a text lifts up, ravishes, transports. The sublime style always demands grand words: but the sublime can be found in a single thought, in a single figure of speech, in a single phrase. Something can be set in the sublime style, while not being at all sublime itself; that is to say, having nothing extraordinary or amazing. For example: 'The sovereign ruler of Nature has created light from a single word.' This is set in the sublime style, yet it is not sublime, because there is nothing miraculous in it, and nothing that someone else couldn't have thought of. But. 'God said: "Let there be light, and there was light."' That extraordinary way of expressing, which describes so well how the Creation obeys the rules of the Creator is truly sublime and has something divine.

Boileau argued that sublimity can be produced without using lofty expressions, and illustrated this by adducing a passage from Genesis 1 (quoted by Longinus in *Peri hypsous* 9.9) as an example of elevated subject matter expressed in simple words.³⁷ Boileau elaborated on this point in his *Réflexion X* (1713) and argued that it is *simplicity itself* that makes for the sublimity of this particular passage.³⁸

³⁶ Boileau (1674), 'Traité du Sublime', iiiiv.

³⁷ Elsewhere in his *Préface*, Boileau speaks of critics who do not understand that sublimity may well be found in a simple passage, which does not please the eye, but rather touches the soul: "Ils chercheront souvent le Sublime dans le Sublime, et peut-estre se mocqueront-ils des exclamations que Longin fait quelquefois sur des passages, qui, bien que tres sublimes, ne laissent pas d'estre simples et naturels, et qui faisoient plustost l'ame qu'ils n'éclatent aux yeux" (Boileau, 1674, 'Traité du Sublime', iiiiv).

³⁸ N. Boileau-Despréaux, 'Réflexion X', in: N. Boileau-Despréaux, *Oeuvres de Nicolas Boileau Despréaux. Nouvelle Edition, revuë & de beaucoup augmentée. 2 Vols.* (Paris: E. Billiot, 1713), 279-280: "Longin n'entend pas ce que nous appelons le stile sublime; mais cet extraordinaire et ce merveilleux qui se trouve souvent dans les paroles les plus simples, et dont la simplicité même fait quelquefois la sublimité." See Porter (2016), 47-49 for a discussion of the misconstruction of 'simplicity' as an element of the Longinian sublime (since Boileau). The early modern debate about Longinus' *Fiat Lux* will be discussed in Chapter Three.

According to Boileau's *Préface* and *Réflexion X* the Longinian sublime is the creation of a gifted mind rather than a skilled rhetorician, and it should be valued according to its effect ("it ravishes, transports," etc.) rather than its adherence to stylistic precepts (as expressed in the rule that "the grand style always uses grand words").

Modern scholars often contrast Boileau's interpretation with the categorisation of *Peri hypsous* as a treatise on the 'grand style' (*genus sublime* or *grande*), which can be found in a number of early modern rhetorical works, as well as in the Latin title given to the treatise by its first editors: *liber de sublimi genere dicendi* ('book on the elevated style of writing').³⁹ The non-rhetorical and the rhetorical interpretation of Longinus' treatise are often seen as mutually exclusive.⁴⁰ It has been argued that the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century association of *Peri hypsous* with the *genera dicendi* actually inhibited the non-rhetorical interpretation of the treatise.⁴¹ Boileau in turn is credited as one of the first critics who freed *Peri hypsous* from its rhetorical confines, and read the treatise 'as it was meant'.⁴²

³⁹ Antonius Lullus for instance mentions Longinus as an authority on *sublimitas* in his discussion of the various 'types of style' (*ideae*), while Pedro Juan Nuñez adduces Longinus in the sections 'on greatness in discourse' and 'on splendor' (*de orationis magnitudine* and *de splendore*): A. Lullus, *De oratione libri septem, quibus non modo Hermogenes ipse totus, verumetiam quicquid fere a reliquis Graecis ac Latinis de Arte dicendi traditum est, suis locis aptissime explicatur* (Basel: J. Oporinus, 1558), 448-453; P.J. Nuñez, *Institutionum rhetoriarum libri quinque* (Barcelona: S. à Cormellas, 1593), 304. Gerardus Joannes Vossius refers to Longinus in his chapters on the 'grand style' (*grandis character*): Vossius (1630), II, 446. The title page of the edition of Franciscus Portus (Geneva: J. Crispinus, 1569), in which Longinus' text is combined with rhetorical works of Aphthonius of Antioch and Hermogenes of Tarsus, presents these three ancient authors as 'excellent teachers in the art of rhetoric' (*praestantissimi artis rhetoricae magistri*). See also D. Till, 'Der "rhetorisierte" Longin. Medienstrategien zur "Klassierung" eines Autors', in: K.A.E. Enenkel and W. Neuber (eds.), *Cognition and the Book: Typologies of Formal Organisation of Knowledge in the Printed Book of the Early Modern Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 257-284, and Till (2006), 21-41.

⁴⁰ See Porter (2016), 10 on the idea of a 'non-rhetorical' approach to *Peri hypsous* in modern scholarship.

⁴¹ Dietmar Till and Bernhard Huss argue that the rhetorical framing of Longinus' treatise in the sixteenth century had a stifling effect on its interpretation: Till (2005), 274-275; Till (2006), 23-25; B. Huss, 'Anmerkungen zur Rezeption von Longins 'Erhabenem' im Cinquecento', *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 62 (2011), 165-187.

⁴² Brody (1958), 88: "It took the kind of critical insight of which Boileau boasted to see that *Peri hypsous* was less a manual of rhetoric than an essay in esthetics."

Boileau's categorical division between 'the sublime' and 'the sublime style' and his focus on simplicity (or rejection of stylistic embellishment) strongly resonate in modern scholarship on Longinus and often take a central place in discussions of the nature of Longinus' theory of the sublime. Donald Russell for instance explicitly sets Longinus' idea of ὑψος apart from discussions of sublimity or the 'grand style' as they appear in other ancient works on rhetoric and literary criticism, stating that "Boileau was right" in categorising ὑψος as an effect of discourse, rather than a type of style.⁴³ A similar opinion is voiced by Dietmar Till, who stated that "[Boileau] was among the first to recognize that Longinus's category of ὑψος was not identical to the grand style of the three *genera dicendi* [...]"⁴⁴ Likewise, Emma Gilby's definition of the Longinian sublime is a direct echo of the definition found in Boileau's *Préface*: "In no sense is the Longinian sublime to be confused with a discussion of the 'sublime style' in the tradition of a rhetoric of stylistic gradation: a style characterized by complex figurative language".⁴⁵ In applying Boileau's distinction to *Peri hupsous*, modern scholars tend to downplay the stylistic aspects of Longinus' theory of sublimity and to set the treatise apart from its ancient rhetorical and literary critical background.

⁴³ Russell (1964), xxxvii. Porter (2016), 9n.22 gives an overview of scholars who adopted Russell's definition.

⁴⁴ D. Till, 'The Sublime and the Bible: Longinus, Protestant Dogmatics, and the "Sublime Style"', in: C.A. van Eck, M. Delbeke, S.P.M. Bussels, and J. 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* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 55-64: 55.

⁴⁵ Gilby (2006), 1. Similar statements are found in Doran (2015), 6n.20 (Boileau "is [...] the first interpreter to truly understand Longinus's theory of sublimity"); Logan (1999), 530; Till (2006), 21-41, and H. Gründler, 'Orrore, terrore, timore. Vasari und das Erhabene', in: C.A. van Eck, M. Delbeke, S.P.M. Bussels, and J. 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* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 83-116: 89. The idea that simplicity is an (essential) element of Longinus' theory is for instance found in: Brody (1958), 91: "Simplicity is not merely a characteristic of the Sublime: it is its essence", Saint-Girons (1993), 232: "La révolution longinienne consistera (...) dans la suppression de l'opposition traditionnelle entre simple et sublime, ou, plus exactement, dans la réhabilitation de la simplicité, non pas à côté du sublime, mais en son cœur même" and Gilby (2006), 1-2: "Indeed, sublime experience can be - although is by no means always - triggered by the simplest discourse, as with the Fiat Lux. Simple, everyday language can produce the revelatory, transformative experiences with which Longinus is concerned."

Methodological implications

The assumption that Boileau's interpretation is 'the right one' is however quite problematic. Lawrence Kerslake and Francis Goyet have pointed out that Boileau's definition of the sublime differs substantially from the definition(s) that *Peri hypsous* offers.⁴⁶ Longinus' treatise itself does not explicitly separate sublime effect from sublime style; neither does it deny the importance of style for the creation of the sublime, or include simplicity as a source of sublimity.⁴⁷ Longinus' concept of ὑψος embraces both subject matter and style.⁴⁸ In *The Sublime in Antiquity*, James Porter has recently argued that Boileau's reading has had a distorting effect on later interpretations of the original Greek treatise.⁴⁹ According to Porter, Longinus is inherently part of the ancient rhetorical tradition, and is not, as modern scholarship has often characterized him, "the first Romantic critic".⁵⁰ Building on Porter's argument I suggest that Boileau's redefinition of the Longinian sublime not only had a great bearing on later interpretations of *Peri hypsous*, but also on modern evaluations of the early modern responses to the treatise.

Two methodological issues are of importance here. Firstly, in keeping with Boileau's dichotomy between the sublime and the sublime style, early modern responses to Longinus' treatise are often either categorised as misguided attempts to incorporate the treatise into rhetorical theory, or as interpretations that 'do justice' to the Longinian sublime as a phenomenon that defies the rules of rhetoric.⁵¹ These categorisations are however only necessary if one adheres to a

⁴⁶ F. Goyet, 'Le pseudo-sublime de Longin', *Études littéraires* 24 (1992), 105-120; Kerslake (2000), 26-63.

⁴⁷ The importance of stylistic aspects speaks from Longinus' extensive discussion of dignified figures of speech, diction and word arrangement (*Peri hypsous* 16-43). The tension between art and nature in *Peri hypsous* and the implications of this tension for early modern interpretations of Longinus' treatise will be discussed extensively in Chapter Two.

⁴⁸ See Porter (2016), 7-17.

⁴⁹ Porter (2016), 36-51.

⁵⁰ R.A. Scott-James, *The Making of Literature* (New York: Holt, 1929), 80. See Porter (2016), 9-10 for a discussion of this tendency.

⁵¹ See for instance Fumaroli (1986); K. Ley, 'Das Erhabene als Element frühmoderner Bewusstseinsbildung. Zu den Anfängen der neuzeitlichen Longin-Rezeption in der Rhetorik und Poetik des Cinquecento.' In: H. Plett (ed.), *Renaissance-Poetik / Renaissance poetics* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1994), 241-259; Till (2006), 21-41; Huss (2011); Gründler (2012), 89. Porter (2016), 9-10 also calls this the 'post-rhetorical' interpretation of *Peri hypsous*.

strict division between a ‘non-rhetorical sublime’ and a ‘sublime style in rhetoric’. This paradigm may be sensible for discussions of the sublime from the eighteenth century onwards, but it is anachronistic in the case of (the early modern responses to) *Peri hypsous*.⁵² Early modern critics before Boileau hardly (if ever) comment on a distinction between the sublime as an effect and the sublime as a type of style when discussing Longinus’ treatise.⁵³ Distinguishing strictly between discussions of ‘the sublime’ and ‘the sublime style’ in early modern literary criticism is moreover inherently difficult because of the mutual affinity of these concepts and their common vocabulary. Both ‘the sublime’ and ‘the sublime style’ can appear in or as a characteristic of discourse, both aim at impressing readers or listeners, and both are described with metaphors of greatness and height.⁵⁴ When analysing early modern responses to Longinus’ treatise we therefore cannot simply rely on the interpretative paradigm that Boileau’s binary opposition provides. Secondly, the presumed unicity of *Peri hypsous* within the context of ancient and early modern literary theories often too easily leads to the identification of ideas similar to

⁵² As for instance for Edmund Burke’s *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1759). See R. Gasché, ‘... And the Beautiful? Revisiting Edmund Burke’s “Double Aesthetics”’, in: T. Costelloe (ed.), *The Sublime. From Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 24-36.

⁵³ Porter (2016), 17: “Longinus’ earliest readers saw no reason to distinguish sublimity from grandeur.” Boileau is the critic most famous for this interpretation. Boileau is preceded by Tanneguy Le Fèvre’s remarks in his edition of 1663; T. Le Fèvre, *Dionysii Longini philosophi et rhetoris Περί ὕψους libellus* (Saumur: J. Lenerius, 1663). I know of no other early modern critic (before Boileau) who explicitly distinguishes between the (Longinian) sublime and the sublime style. See Cronk (2002), 96-97, Till (2006), 27 and 129-132. On Le Fèvre, see also section 1.3.3.

⁵⁴ C. Kallendorf, C. Zelle, C. Pries, ‘Erhabene, das’ in: G. Ueding (ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik, Band 2* (Tübingen: De Gruyter, 1994), 1357-1361. Porter (2016), 15-17 argues that a distinction between the sublime and the sublime style (or between sublimity and grandeur) can hardly be deduced from differences in terminology, as neither can be connected to one specific word from the wide spectrum of terms that are used in this context. Likewise, Cronk nuances the idea (as proposed by Monk, 1935) that the word *sublime* was first used as a rhetorical term, and shifted to the realm of aesthetics after Boileau. Instead, Cronk shows that seventeenth-century French critics used a variety of terms to denote the sublime style (other than *sublime*), and that the word *sublime* appeared in various contexts and was not strictly used as a rhetorical term in the early seventeenth century (Cronk, 2002, 82-90).

Longinus' as direct echoes of *Peri hypsous*.⁵⁵ Longinus' treatise however belongs to a wider ancient tradition that commented on sublimity, and the diverging responses to *Peri hypsous* in early modernity moreover indicate that Longinus' theory of sublimity was by no means interpreted straightforwardly or unanimously by its early modern readers.⁵⁶ As such, it is difficult if not impossible to ascertain direct influence of *Peri hypsous* if neither the treatise nor the author are mentioned by name.

In order to avoid these pitfalls and to do justice to the fluidity of responses to Longinus' treatise in early modern criticism, I have chosen to focus on explicit references to *Peri hypsous*. These references are in turn discussed against the background of the text of *Peri hypsous* itself (as printed in early modern editions and translations), and the works in which they appear. I have tried to refrain from making *a priori* assumptions about the nature of the Longinian sublime or about the way early modern scholars interpreted *Peri hypsous* (either rhetorical or non-rhetorical). Instead I have aimed to reconstruct how early modern scholars used elements from Longinus' treatise and for what purpose. After all, Boileau too had

⁵⁵ An often-used method is to identify elements resembling Longinus' theory in the works of a particular author on the basis of his proximity to copies of *Peri hypsous* and hence his possible knowledge of the treatise. Examples of this approach are Coleman (1985), on the influence of Longinus on Montaigne's *Essais*, and Steppich (2006), on echoes of Longinus in the work of the Swiss scholar Vadian: C.J. Steppich, 'Inspiration through *imitatio/mimesis* in *On the sublime* of 'Longinus' and in Joachim Vadian's *De poetica et carminis ratione* (Vienna, 1518)', *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 55 (2006), 37-69. In the case of Montaigne a different approach is chosen for instance by D.L. Sedley in 'Sublimity and Skepticism in Montaigne', *Modern Language Association* 113 (1995), 1079-1092 and in *Sublimity and skepticism in Montaigne and Milton* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005) 9-10. Instead of tracing certain ideas in the *Essais* back to Montaigne's (possible yet uncertain) acquaintance with *Peri hypsous*, the author attributes reminiscences of Longinus' treatise to Montaigne's interest in cognate Neo-platonic ideas that were current in the sixteenth century. As Sedley argues, Montaigne's interest in the sublime may not be a result of the increasing popularity of *Peri hypsous*, but may well be a symptom of the current trends that also contributed to the rediscovery and dissemination of Longinus' treatise. See also Porter (2016), 37-43 on 'Longino-centric' tendencies in modern scholarship on the sublime.

⁵⁶ Porter (2016), 18-34 (and *passim*) discusses several traditions and manifestations of the sublime, before and after Longinus, which can be found not only in rhetoric and literary criticism, but for instance also in poetry and philosophy. Ideas of sublimity existed already before *Peri hypsous* was written, as well as during the period in which the treatise suffered complete oblivion. See Porter (2016), 18-25: 'The sublime without Longinus', as well as Innes (2002) on the sublime in Caecilius of Caleacte, and De Jonge (2012) on the sublime in Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

particular motives for defining the Longinian sublime in the way he did. Boileau published his translation in a period in which literary critics debated the question whether art can adequately be described by rules, and how classical literature should be valued.⁵⁷ Boileau's separation of the 'sublime' from the 'sublime style', and his suppression of the rhetorical aspects of the Longinian sublime in the preface to his translation, served the purpose of presenting Longinus' treatise as a text that could provide an answer to these questions.⁵⁸

In my case studies (which will be introduced in the next section) I have tried to reconstruct and shed light on the motives of several Dutch scholars whose interests in Longinus' treatise appear to have been motivated by the scholarly debates of their time. Each of these case studies shows that *Peri hypsous* was not simply 'read' or 'studied' in early modernity, but that it was at the same time appropriated, adapted and/or transformed. One might argue whether there is such a thing as 'pure' reception, in which a text is read or interpreted in its 'true' or 'original' sense.⁵⁹ In the case of *Peri hypsous* it is evident, as will appear from the case studies, that the interest of its early modern readers was not primarily to do justice to the actual meaning of the treatise, but rather to select particular elements and aspects of the treatise and to adapt them creatively to the purpose they had in mind. In analysing these processes I have thus sought to explain why particular interpretations of Longinus' treatise gained momentum over the course of the seventeenth century.

IV. Scope of this study

The present book explores the reception of *Peri hypsous* by studying various ways in which the treatise was studied, interpreted and appropriated in the Dutch Republic. I have investigated the dissemination of copies of *Peri hypsous* in the

⁵⁷ Extensive discussions of the seventeenth-century critical debates in which *Peri hypsous* was appropriated will be given in Chapters Two, Three and Five.

⁵⁸ E. Borgerhoff, *The Freedom of French Classicism* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950), 200-212; See Cronk (2002), 1 and 146-152, as well as Gilby (2006), 132-142 on the role of *Peri hypsous* and the sublime in the *Querelle du Fiat Lux*. See also Porter (2016), 46-47.

⁵⁹ See for instance the discussion of Charles Martindale in 'Reception', in: Hornblower, S., Spawforth, A., and Eidinow, E. (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Dutch book trade, analysed (explicit) references to the treatise in the works of Dutch scholars, and examined Dutch contributions to the textual criticism of Longinus' treatise. My study will cover the whole seventeenth century, from the earliest appearance of copies of and references to Longinus' treatise in Dutch scholarly circles around 1600, up until the publication of Jacobus Tollius' edition of Longinus' treatise (Utrecht, 1694).⁶⁰ In the next sections I will discuss the scope of my investigation, by elucidating my focus on a particular scholarly network as well as my choice of source material.

Intellectual context

My investigation of the active reception and dissemination of *Peri hypsous* has yielded a corpus of primary sources that mainly consists of (Neo-Latin) scholarship, literary criticism, and classical philology, and which mainly focuses on the Northern Netherlands. *Peri hypsous* is hardly if ever mentioned in works that are not of a scholarly or theoretical nature. References to the treatise in the vernacular are moreover quite rare compared to its reception in early modern Neo-Latin writings.⁶¹ The almost exclusive appearance of *Peri hypsous* in the context of Neo-Latin scholarship is probably due to the specialist and somewhat arcane nature of *Peri hypsous* and the topics it addresses.⁶²

The early modern reception of Longinus' treatise in the Low Countries is moreover divided along a geographical border: it appears that the reception of Longinus' treatise was largely limited to the Northern provinces, while hardly any

⁶⁰ J. Tollius, *Dionysii Longini De sublimitate commentarius, ceteraque, quæ reperiri potuere Jacobus Tollius e quinque codicibus mss. emendavit; novamque versionem suam Latinam, & Gallicam Boilavii, cum ejusdem, ac Dacierii, suisque notis Gallicis addidit* (Utrecht: F. Halma, 1694).

⁶¹ Exceptions being the English and Dutch translations of Franciscus Junius' *De pictura veterum* (1638 and 1641), the quarrel between Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac and Jean Goulu in the 1620s. On this debate, see E. Gilby, 'Where to draw the line? Longinus, Goulu and Balzac's *Lettres*', *Lias Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources* 43.2, 2016, 225-240). References to Longinus' discussion of the *Fiat Lux* moreover also appear in English sermons in the 1640s. See M. Lazarus, 'Sublimity by fiat: New Light on the English Longinus', in: G. Alexander et al. (ed.), *The Places of Early Modern Criticism* (2019, forthcoming).

⁶² Fumaroli (1986) and Till (2006), 22-24 observe that the reception of *Peri hypsous* took place mainly among the intellectual elite, and did not play a role in educational contexts.

traces of the reception of *Peri hypsous* are found in the Southern provinces.⁶³ Compared to the Southern provinces, it seems the North had a better momentum for the dissemination and reception of *Peri hypsous*. The separation of the Northern and Southern Netherlands and the turbulent reconquering of the South by the Spanish in the 1570's and 1580's caused many scholars to seek a safe haven in the Northern provinces.⁶⁴ When the first printed editions of Longinus' treatise became available and started to circulate in Europe (in the second half of the sixteenth century), the Southern intellectual centres were declining, while the newly founded University of Leiden experienced an influx of scholars from all over Europe, who brought with them a wealth of scholarly knowledge and books.⁶⁵ Leiden University, as well as the numerous other academic institutions that were founded in the Northern Netherlands from 1575 onwards, provided fertile ground for the development of classical philology, biblical scholarship, rhetoric and literary criticism.⁶⁶ In this context Longinus' treatise, which offered a thought-provoking evaluation of ancient literature, contained a wealth of unique textual

⁶³ Exceptions to this geographical division are the textual studies of the brothers Willem (1542-1575) and Dirk Canter (1545-1616) (see also Chapter One), and a few books containing references to Longinus that were printed in Antwerp in the second half of the sixteenth century, such as the edition of Scaliger's *Castigationes in Catullum* (which casually mentions *Peri hypsous*), printed by the Antwerp printer Aegidius Radaeus (Gillis van den Rade, c. 1555-1615). When the Spanish forces captured Antwerp in 1585, Radaeus fled and moved his printing house to Franeker. J.G.C.A. Briels, *Zuidnederlandse boekdrukkers en boekverkopers in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden omstreeks 1570-1630* (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1974), 393-399.

⁶⁴ J. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness and Fall, 1477-1806* (Oxford History of Early Modern Europe) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 219. J. IJsewijn, 'Humanism in the low countries' in: G. Tournoy (ed.), *Humanism in the Low Countries, by Jozef IJsewijn. A collection of Studies selected and edited by Gilbert Tournoy* (Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia XL) (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015), 391-453: 394-395.

⁶⁵ A large number of professors appointed at Leiden University in the first decades of its existence were not born in the Northern Netherlands. See J. Waszink, 'Classical Philology', in: Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer and G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes (eds.), *Leiden University in the Seventeenth Century. An Exchange of Learning* (Leiden: Universitaire Pers Leiden, 1975), 161-175, and Israel (1995), 569-575.

⁶⁶ IJsewijn (2015), 391-397; Israel (1995), 575-577. See also R. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship. From 1300-1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 124-129 on classical scholarship in Holland in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, and H.-J. van Dam, 'Humanist Centres – Leiden and Philology', in: P. Ford, J. Bloemendal and C. Fantazzi, *Brill's Encyclopedia of the Neo-Latin World* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 988-990.

fragments, and presented a controversial reference to Scripture, was sure to attract scholars' attention.

As my study will show, the reception of Longinus in the Northern Netherlands took place in a close-knit network of scholars who belonged (over a longer span of time) to the same intellectual circle, which was formed by family ties, friendships, and shared academic affiliations, particularly (but not exclusively) around Leiden University. This circle included Daniel Heinsius (Gent, 1580 – Leiden, 1655), Hugo Grotius (Delft, 1583 – Rostock, 1645), Gerardus Joannes Vossius (Schönau, 1577 – Amsterdam, 1649), Franciscus Junius F.F. (Heidelberg, 1591 – Windsor, 1677), Isaac Vossius (Leiden, 1618 – Londen, 1689), and Jacobus Tollius (Rhenen, 1633 – Utrecht, 1696).⁶⁷

Sources

My analysis is based on three types of sources: 1) manuscripts and editions of Longinus' treatise, and their dissemination as attested in Dutch book sales catalogues; 2) references to Longinus' treatise in the writings of Dutch scholars; 3) annotations and textual criticism of Longinus' text by Dutch scholars.

Manuscripts, editions and book sales catalogues. A study of the early modern reception of Longinus' treatise benefits from an investigation of the form in which the treatise became known to its readers. The famous rediscovery of a Byzantine manuscript (Parisinus Graecus 2036) containing *Peri hypsous* by Basilios Bessarion in the mid-15th century marks the beginning of the early modern dissemination of Longinus' treatise.⁶⁸ While the manuscripts of *Peri hypsous* never seem to have reached the Dutch Republic, their existence and availability in European libraries is nonetheless of importance for the reception of Longinus in the Dutch Republic.

⁶⁷ Pfeiffer (1976), 128 observes how classical scholarship in the Dutch Republic was often passed on from one generation to another. D. van Miert visualises the Dutch scholarly network as an 'intellectual family tree' in his article 'The French Connection: From Casaubon and Scaliger, via Saumaise, to Isaac Vossius', in: E. Jorink and D. van Miert (eds.), *Isaac Vossius (1618-1689). Between Science and Scholarship* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 15-42 (17-18). C.S.M. Rademaker's biography of Gerardus Joannes Vossius presents family trees that illuminate the relationship between the Vossius and Junius families. See C.S.M. Rademaker, *Life and Work of Gerardus Joannes Vossius (1577-1649)* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1981), 440-442, 445.

⁶⁸ Mazzucchi (1989), 205-211; Mazzucchi (2010), xxxix-xl.

Firstly, a study of the dissemination of the manuscripts in Europe (mainly in Italy) until 1600 provides us with the ‘prehistory’ of the dissemination of *Peri hypsous* in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century. Secondly, these manuscripts formed the basis for the editions of Longinus’ treatise that did become available in the Dutch Republic. Thirdly, the manuscripts of *Peri hypsous* play an important role in the textual criticism of Isaac Vossius and Jacobus Tollius in the second half of the seventeenth century. The manuscripts of *Peri hypsous* will be discussed in Chapters One and Five.

The early modern editions of Longinus’ treatise differ in scope and contents. Some only presented the Greek text, such as the early editions of Robortello (1554) and Manuzio (1555). Others contained notes, commentaries, or (multiple) translations, in Latin or the vernacular, such as the editions of Gabriele de Petra (1612) and Gerard Langbaine (1636). Just like Boileau’s preface had a bearing on later interpretations of Longinus’ treatise, so too did earlier editions sometimes influence readers of the treatise, through the various paratextual materials they contained, as well as editorial choices that engendered different interpretations of the Greek text.⁶⁹

The Dutch book trade had brought editions of Longinus’ treatise to the Northern Netherlands around 1600 at the latest. Dutch printed book sales catalogues provide a record of book sales and private collections from 1599 onwards, and give insight in the availability and circulation of editions of Longinus’ treatise in the Northern Netherlands. In 1601 Lowijs (I) Elzevier auctioned the vast library of the wealthy merchant Daniel van der Meulen (1554-1600). The auction catalogue, printed by Christophorus Raphelengius, lists almost 1200 books, among which the following entry appears: “Aphtonius & Dionysius Longinus Gr. Gen. 69”. This entry indicates an edition of Greek texts by a certain ‘Aphtonius’ and a ‘Dionysius Longinus’, which was published in Geneva in 1569.⁷⁰ This must have been the edition prepared by Franciscus Portus, which contains works by Aphthonius of Antioch and Hermogenes of Tarsus, as well as the text of

⁶⁹ An example of this is Heinsius’ interpretation of *Peri hypsous*, which makes more sense when one takes into account certain textual variants in the early editions of Longinus’ text (see Chapter Two).

⁷⁰ F. Portus, *Aphthonius, Hermogenes & Dionysius Longinus, praestantissimi artis Rhetorices magistri* (Geneva, 1569).

Peri hypsous.⁷¹ The auction catalogue of Van der Meulen's collection is the oldest printed Dutch book sales catalogue that mentions Longinus' treatise. Assuming that this copy entered Van der Meulen's library prior to his death on July 25, 1600, we are provided with a *terminus ante quem* for the arrival of the first physical copy of *Peri hypsous* in the Northern Netherlands. From the record of Dutch book sales catalogues we can thus deduce which scholars owned a copy of *Peri hypsous*, and which editions of the treatise were available to them.

References. The dissemination of the contents of *Peri hypsous* (as opposed to the dissemination of physical copies) is witnessed by references to the treatise and the incorporation or appropriation of its ideas in the writings of early modern scholars. These references vary from an incidental remark on *Peri hypsous* or (Cassius) Longinus, to citations or paraphrases of passages from the treatise, as well as more extensive discussions of the treatise's contents. The earliest references to Longinus' treatise in printed books appear in the mid-sixteenth century, around the time when the first editions of Longinus' treatise were published. Explicit (or identifiable) references to and comments on *Peri hypsous* are our best evidence for exploring the early modern reception of Longinus' treatise, as they allow us to make a detailed analysis of the way in which early modern readers used (parts of) Longinus' treatise, and what meaning or value they attributed to it.⁷² Early modern authors may also have used their knowledge of the treatise without *explicitly* mentioning it. For methodological reasons (as explained in section III of this introduction) I have chosen not to speculate about possible influences of *Peri hypsous* in cases where it is unnecessary to assume an author's indebtedness to Longinus.⁷³ The explicit or identifiable references to Longinus' treatise in the writings of Dutch scholars are rich enough; their analysis may provide a solid contribution to our knowledge about the way in which early modern scholars read

⁷¹ The name of the first author is more commonly spelled 'Aphthonius' than 'Aphtonius'.

⁷² See Appendix 1 for an overview of the references to *Peri hypsous* before 1600. An example of implicit but identifiable references to *Peri hypsous* is Daniel Heinsius' use of passages from the treatise in his *Prolegomena* on Hesiod; see Chapter Two.

⁷³ An exception is Daniel Heinsius' paraphrase of passages from Longinus' treatise in his *Prolegomena* on Hesiod (1603). The name of Longinus is never mentioned, but Heinsius' indebtedness to *Peri hypsous* is almost indisputable, as has been observed by other scholars, and as my analysis in Chapter two will again demonstrate.

and used Longinus' treatise. The largest part of this study is dedicated to the analysis of several significant cases of reception of *Peri hypsous* in early modern Dutch scholarship. These include Daniel Heinsius' elaborate utilisation of arguments from Longinus' treatise in his *Prolegomena* on Hesiod's poetry (1603), the discussion of Longinus' reference to Genesis by Gerardus Joannes Vossius, Hugo Grotius and Daniel Heinsius, Franciscus Junius' adaptation of passages from Longinus' treatise in his *De pictura veterum* (1637), and Tollius' reflections on Longinus' treatise in his *Animadversionum criticarum ad Longinum gustus* (1677).⁷⁴

Scholarship and textual criticism. The early modern reception of *Peri hypsous* in the Dutch Republic culminates with the 1694 edition of the text made by Jacobus Tollius. In making his edition Tollius was heavily indebted to Isaac Vossius, whose studies of the manuscripts of *Peri hypsous* provided the basis for the new critical Greek text. Isaac Vossius' manuscript studies are preserved in two annotated copies of Longinus' treatise.⁷⁵ The contact between Tollius and Vossius is moreover documented in several letters they exchanged between 1666 and 1677.⁷⁶ A study of these materials gives insight in an episode in the history of the textual criticism of *Peri hypsous*.

⁷⁴ D. Heinsius, 'In Hesiodum Prolegomena', in: *Hesiodi Ascraei opera quae extant, cum Graecis scholiis Procli, Moschopuli, Tzetzae, in Ἑρῶα καὶ Ἡμέροα: Io. Diaconi & incerti in reliqua* (Leiden: ex officina Plantiniana Raphelengii, 1603); G.J. Vossius, *Oratoriarum Institutionum libri sex* (first ed. Leiden: A. Cloucq, 1606); H. Grotius, *Meletius sive de iis quae inter christianos conveniunt epistola* (ca. 1611), published by G. H. M. Posthumus Meyjes (ed.), *Hugo Grotius, Meletius sive De iis quae inter Christianos conveniunt epistola* (Leiden: Brill, 1988); D. Heinsius, *Aristarchus sacer, sive ad Nonni in Johannem metaphrasin exercitationes* (Leiden: B. and A. Elsevier, 1627); F. Junius, *De pictura veterum* (Amsterdam: J. Blaeu, 1637), *On the Painting of the Ancients* (London: R. Hodgkinsonne, 1638), *De Schilder-konst der Oude* (Middelburg: Z. Roman, 1641); J. Tollius, 'Animadversionum criticarum ad Longinum gustus', published in J. Tollius, *M. Tullii Ciceronis Oratio pro A. Licinio Archia. Jacobus Tollius emendavit, notulisque, & expositione rhetorica illustravit* (Leiden: D. Gaesbeeck, 1677) and J. Tollius, *Dionysii Longini De sublimitate commentarius, ceteraque, quae reperiri potuere Jacobus Tollius e quinque codicibus mss. emendavit; novamque versionem suam Latinam, & Gallicam Boilavii, cum ejusdem, ac Dacierii, suisque notis Gallicis addidit* (Utrecht: F. Halma, 1694).

⁷⁵ G. De Petra, *Dionysii Longini de grandi sive sublimi genere orationis* (Geneva: J. Tornaesius, 1612), Leiden, UB: 756 F 10; T. Le Fèvre, *Dionysii Longini philosophi et rhetoris Peri hypsous libellus* (Saumur: J. Lenerius, 1663), Leiden, UB: 755 F 8. Another edition of Longinus' treatise in the Leiden University Library contains annotations of Gerardus Joannes Vossius: F. Portus, *Aphthonius, Hermogenes & Dionysius Longinus, praestantissimi artis Rhetorices magistri* (Geneva, 1569), Leiden, UB: 756 F 11.

⁷⁶ An overview of these letters can be found in Appendix 4.

V. Outline

My dissertation aims to investigate the role of Longinus' treatise *Peri hypsous* in early modern Dutch intellectual history. By examining the arrival and circulation of editions of *Peri hypsous* in the Northern Netherlands in the first half of the seventeenth century and working out several case studies which together span the first decades of the seventeenth century up until the publication of Tollius' edition in 1694, I hope to present a comprehensive image of the various ways in which Longinus' treatise was read in the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century.

Chapter One provides a prehistory of the seventeenth-century reception of Longinus' treatise, and reveals the network in which the Dutch reception of Longinus' treatise took shape. By discussing the creation and circulation of the manuscripts and early editions of Longinus' treatise, as well as the earliest references to the treatise, this chapter offers insights on how and when *Peri hypsous* became known in Europe and the Dutch Republic. A study of Dutch Book Sales Catalogues moreover provides a unique perspective on the circulation of physical copies of the treatise in the Dutch Republic. While the circulation of copies of *Peri hypsous* increased, references to Longinus' treatise also appeared in Dutch scholarship. Three case-studies (**Chapters Two to Four**) provide an in-depth analysis of the ways in which the treatise was read and used by Dutch scholars from the early seventeenth century onwards. Chapters Two and Three constitute a pair, as they both demonstrate how Dutch scholars derived an idea of 'sublime simplicity' from Longinus' treatise in the context of the scholarly debates of their time. **Chapter Two** investigates how Heinsius uses Longinus' digression on Rules and Genius (*Peri hypsous* 33-36) to make a case for the appreciation of the simplicity of Hesiod's works (in his *Prolegomena on Hesiod*, 1603). **Chapter Three** analyses how Dutch scholars used Longinus' reference to Genesis (*Peri hypsous* 9.9) in discussions about (the sublime simplicity of) the Bible, in relation to the seventeenth-century debates of this topic. **Chapter Four** focuses on Franciscus Junius' work *De pictura veterum* (1637), which not only applies Longinus' theory to the visual arts, but also provides material for a study into the vernacular terminology of the sublime, as Junius translated his work into English (1638) and Dutch (1641). In **Chapter Five**, I will give an account of the scholarly efforts made by Isaac Vossius and Jacobus Tollius in preparation of Tollius' 1694 edition of *Peri*

hypsous: the first edition of the treatise to be published on Dutch soil, and a pinnacle of scholarship on Longinus' treatise. In this final chapter I will look at the handwritten annotations to *Peri hypsous* that are preserved in Isaac Vossius' Library, analyse the contents of Tollius' edition and relate Vossius' and Tollius' efforts to the wider European context. My **conclusion** will bring together the Dutch contributions to the early modern interpretation of Longinus' treatise *Peri hypsous*.

