

Summaries of the Reviews of the Editions and Translations of Pseudo-Longinus' *On the Sublime* Published in the *Gelehrte Journale* Between 1710 and 1783

Lorenzo Leonardo Pizzichemi

Abstract: This essay aims to offer new and systematic information for those—particularly historians of knowledge and classicists—who are interested in 18th century German reception of Pseudo-Longinus' *On the Sublime* (Περὶ ὑψους), “the golden book” of the German *Aufklärung*. By systematically reporting, for the first time, the content of 30 German book reviews of overall 11 editions and translations of *On the Sublime* that appeared in 14 *Gelehrte Journale* between 1710 and 1783, this essay seeks to address still neglected sources that are crucial to understanding the concrete reception of the treatise in 18th century German-speaking territories.

Keywords: Pseudo-Longinus, *On the Sublime*, Translation Reviews, *Gelehrte Journale*, German Enlightenment Journal Reviews, *Aufklärung*, History of Knowledge.

...wer die art der gelehrten kennt/
welche viele bu^cher haben/
und zugleich in allerhand disziplinen ge^ebet sind.
Sie fallē wie die Bienen/
von einer Blume auff die andere;
von einem buch auff das andere:
und nehmen sich also keine zeit
eine grosse und weitla^uftige Schriff
zu verfertigen.
(Anonymous reviewer 1711).¹

1. Introduction

Several reasons—regardless of the research results already achieved by scholars—lead us to argue that the book reviews [*Rezensionen*] published in the

¹ “...whoever knows the nature of those scholars who own many books and are at the same time practiced in all sorts of disciplines knows that they flit like bees from one flower to the next, from one book to another, and thus they do not take the time to compose a great and

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German Enlightenment journals [*Gelehrte Journale*] can be considered relevant sources for uncovering new and innovative research perspectives on the German Enlightenment and 18th century German thought. Two reasons, in particular, seem to me decisive in this regard: (a) the relevance of the press in the 18th century and (b) the fundamentally commercial nature of book reviews.

(a) Whereas today the press is a relic, relegated to the margins of the social production of truth, starting from the 18th century the journals held a *monopoly over truth*—a monopoly that would persist in Western societies well into the 20th century. From the 18th century onward, truth, systems of certainty, and the construction of values began to transcend the ‘inner forum’ of individual conscience and materialise in the printing press: the ‘inner voice’—along with the “clear and distinct ideas”—gave way to ‘public opinion.’ The epochal significance of this transition remains largely understudied—especially in German-speaking regions, whose intellectual legacy would profoundly influence the course of global thought over the ensuing centuries. It is a matter of fact that the authors who gave modern philosophy its vocabulary (e.g., Kant) feared book reviews. In a way that might seem odd to us today, defences against reviewers’ attacks appear in the most sensitive passages of their works. A single review could destroy an entire career—and, most importantly, determine for readers what was worth buying and what could be discarded.

(b) The book reviews published in the *Gelehrte Journale*, or at least the majority of them, were written with commercial intentions.² The purpose of a review was, quite clearly, to answer the question: “Should this book be purchased?” At a time when the bourgeoisie was shedding the workshop’s apron and discovering leisure, reviews played a strategic role: they pointed to what ought to be possessed. Even in their leisure time, which they devoted to “shaping themselves as they are,”³ the bourgeois remained “busy” and “at work.” Therefore, reviews—by offering a brief synopsis of the book’s content—*took the place of the book itself*.

With the significant rise in book publication during the 18th century, came an exponential increase in journals and reviews. In this context, reviews of philosophical texts are paradigmatic. In fact, the number of theoretically significant or ‘original’ reviews of philosophy books represents a negligible fraction of the corpus of published reviews of philosophical works. Even if there are notable differences among journals and between disciplines—e.g., reviewing a text written in an ancient language generally required a higher level of expertise —, the aver-

extensive treatise”. For the source of this quotation, see *infra* par. 2.1.2. I would like to thank the Biblioteca of the Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici (Rome), and in particular Dr. Lisa Antonello, as well as the Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig for their essential support in locating and digitizing the sources. I also wish to thank Prof. Laura Anna Macor for her guidance during my research.

² In his *Parerga und Paralipomena* (Schopenhauer 1851/1988, par. 281, vol. II, pp. 451–54), Arthur Schopenhauer vehemently deprecated the commercial aims of review journals, their shady connections with publishing houses, and the widespread practice of anonymity in writing book reviews.

³ This is a quotation from Johann Wolfgang v. Goethe, *Wilhelm Meister*, Book V, Chapter III.

age quality of reviewers was not outstanding. The systematic use of plagiarism is clear evidence of this. Precisely because of its commercial—and at times even self-promotional—nature, and its lack of theoretical rigor—when there is little to say, pages are filled with clichés designed to win the reader's assent—plagiarism tends to select and amplify certain clichés over others, thereby shaping a commonly shared body of knowledge.

As such, reviews become a key source for historians of knowledge. In the reviews published in the *Gelehrte Journale*, the body of knowledge of the German *Aufklärung* takes form, and the concrete mode of social production of truth becomes visible through the analysis of the structure, articulation, development, and dissemination of specific categories or 'ideas' via journals. For instance, a particular German translation that was praised as excellent in one decade may be dismissed as poor in the next. What changed? The collective mentality, the reader expectations, the "Mode".⁴

In this essay, I am going to systematically report and analyse, for the first time, the content of 30 German book reviews of a total of 11 editions and translations of Pseudo-Longinus' *On the Sublime* that appeared in 14 *Gelehrte Journale*⁵ between 1710 and 1783. I am convinced that reviews can yield new insights for scholars only when examined systematically. From the perspective of the history of knowledge, quantity is a kind of quality. In addition to the intrinsic beauty and astonishing modernity of the work—which cannot fail to captivate any scholar, then as now—my decision to focus on the reception of *On the Sublime* in German Enlightenment journal reviews is also motivated by the fact that, starting from the 17th century, this treatise enjoyed an enormous success in the European culture,⁶ especially in German-speaking territories. In fact, the success of this treatise is exclusively a modern phenomenon, and this represents a fascinating aspect to explore from the standpoint of the history of knowledge. Ignored—as far as we know—in antiquity, this treatise enjoyed undeniable popularity in German-speaking territories during the 18th century, partially shaping its philosophical destiny. Authors such as Winckelmann, Mendelssohn, and Lessing—to name just a few—cited and philosophically engaged with the treatise. To borrow an expression from 18th century journal reviews of the treatise, *On the Sublime* was certainly the "golden book" of the German *Aufklärung*.

⁴ I employ here the German term "Mode," leaving it untranslated, in the weighty—and meaningful for historians of knowledge—sense suggested by Gadamer (1960/2010, 42–3): as the concrete, collective and historically laden realization of taste. "Mode" also pertains the field of knowledge (Gadamer 1986/1993, 51).

⁵ I.e., *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* [+ Anhang], *Ausführlicher Bericht von allerhand neuen Büchern u. andern Dingen*, *Neue Bibliothek oder Nachricht* etc., *Neue(r) Zeitungen v. gelehrten Sachen* [+ Beytrag], *Niedersächsische Neue Zeitungen v. gelehrten Sachen*, *Niedersächsische Nachrichten v. gelehrten neuen Sachen*, *Hallische Gelehrte Zeitungen*, *Philologische Bibliothek*, *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste*, *Wöchentliche Nachrichten von gelehrten Sachen*, *Göttingische Zeitungen v. gelehrten Sachen*, *Göttingische Anzeige von gelehrten Sachen*, *Gothaische gelehrte Zeitungen*, *Deutsche Acta Eruditorum*.

⁶ On the translations of the treatise up to 1600, see Weinberg 1950.

Although there are still several studies on the reception of *On the Sublime* in 18th century European and German culture (e.g., see Fritz 2011), in this essay I will attempt to trace its German reception through sources that have so far been overlooked, yet essential for understanding its concrete dissemination: i.e., the reviews of its editions and translations published in the *Gelehrte Journale*.

2. Summaries of the Reviews of the Editions and Translations of Pseudo-Longinus' *On the Sublime*

In order to present these so far overlooked research materials to scholars in a way that allows for uses different from the one pursued here—and thereby enable these sources to be examined in light of other research questions—I have adopted in this essay the scholastic method of “summaries” (Lat. *summaria*, Germ. *Summarien*), which enjoyed great success in early modern Germany (e.g., Luther 1533). The “summary” is a method of exposition aimed at identifying the “purpose” [*scopus*], content [*argumentum*], and “usage” [*usus*] of a text. This mode of presenting the sources will also allow me to draw conclusions that can be verified by scholars who prefer different methodological approaches. I have organized the reviews by dividing them into several classes according to a twofold criterion: (a) I have grouped into the same class all reviews referring to the same edition or translation of *On the Sublime*, even if they appeared in different journals, and (b) I have arranged them in chronological order. Consequently, reviews that appeared in the same journal but concern different editions or translations have been placed in separate sections. Each section, centred on a specific edition or translation of *On the Sublime*, opens with a very short introductory paragraph about the edition, followed by the corresponding summaries of the reviews. To each edition/translation and each review I have assigned a label, placed in square brackets and indicated respectively with the letters “T” (for Text) and “R” (for Review), followed by a number. This system should make it easier to reference and discuss the results of my research in the last section of this essay and in further works. Several reviews address issues of translation theory, specifically discussing translation choices. Although these are quite interesting, space limitations have made it impossible to reproduce these discussions in full. Nevertheless, in the summaries I have indicated which reviews contain such translation-related remarks. Conversely, in the hope of assisting scholars working on the modern textual tradition of *On the Sublime*, I have systematically highlighted cases in which reviewers criticize or discuss the readings chosen by the editor, occasionally offering their own commentary or alternative reading. To avoid burdening the reading experience for those uninterested in such issues, however, I have placed a list of these cases in the following table (see Table 1).⁷

⁷ In quoting passages from *On the Sublime* in the following pages—whether from reviews or editions—I have added the corresponding paragraph and page numbers from Halliwell’s edition in square brackets for the reader’s convenience, even when the wording may differ.

Table 1 – Cases in which Reviewers criticize and discuss editors' readings or translations.

Edition/ Translation	Review	Text Passage in the Edition/ Translation	Emendation/ Criticism of the Reviewer	Motivation/ Reviewer's Comment	Remarks
T1	R2	περι ὑψους [Title] (Lat. <i>De sublimitate</i>)	περι ὑψους λόγον (Lat. <i>De sublimi sermone</i>)	The use of ὑψος "absolute" is unlikely	Reporting of a Schurtzfleisch's consideration
T1	R2	Καικήλιος [passim]	Καικελιος	More common writing style	Reporting of a Schurtzfleisch's consideration (also according to both the MS in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana and Manuzio's edition) ⁸
T1	R2	Ποστούμει Τερεντιανὲ φίλτατε [par. 1.1, Halliwell 2022, 2].	Ποστοῦμε Φλ. Τερεντιανὲ	"Postumus" as a proper name instead of "Postumius" (a <i>gens</i> name) likely allows for the identification of the addressee of the treatise as "Terentianus Posthumus Flavius"	Reporting of a Schurtzfleisch's consideration. This passage is still controversial ⁹
T1	R2	ἐπι πάσης τεχνολογίας [par. 1.1, Halliwell 2022, 2]	"Pro quacunque artis liberalis tractatione" (Schurtzfleisch) / "In omni artis alicujus tractatione" (Hudson)	Hudson and Schurtzfleisch both agree on the interpretation of the passage	—
T1	R2	δυνάμει δὲ κυριωτέρου [par. 1.1, Halliwell 2022, 2]	"at natura certe prius" (Hudson)	"at valore certe prius" (Schurtzfleisch) / "potentia prius esse, natura posterius" (Reviewer)	—

⁸ The MS Parisinus gr. 2036 reads Καικίλιος; Russell and Halliwell read Καικίλιος.

⁹ The MS Parisinus gr. 2036 reads Ποστούμει Φλωρεντιανὲ Τερεντιανὲ φίλτατε; Russell reads Ποστούμει Τερεντιανὲ φίλτατε; Halliwell reads Ποστούμει Φλώρε Τερεντιανὲ φίλτατε.

Edition/ Translation	Review	Text Passage in the Edition/ Translation	Emendation/ Criticism of the Reviewer	Motivation/ Reviewer's Comment	Remarks
T1	R2	ἀνδράσι πολιτικοῖς [par. 1.2, Halliwell 2022, 2]	“viris civilibus & in foro judici- isque versanti- bus” (Hudson)	Hudson and Schurtzfleisch both agree on the interpre- tation of the passage	—
T1	R2	διὰ τὸ μετὰ βίας ἕκαστα [...] οἶον καίων τε [...] καὶ διαρπάζων [par. 12.4, Halliwell 2022, 24]	καίων and διαρπάζων are here wrong forms. The correct forms are: καίειν and διαρπάζειν	Hudson, fol- lowing Tollius, makes a gram- matical mistake by using a parti- ciple instead of an infinitive ¹⁰	—
T9	R21	εἰς ῥοπικόν [par. 3.4, Halliwell 2022, 6]	[εἰς ῥωπικόν]	The MSS read- ing ῥοπικόν is clearly incorrect	The reading ῥωπικόν is only indirectly sug- gested by the reviewer
T9	R21	ἀνάθημα [par. 7.2, Halliwell 2022, 10].	ἀνάστημα	—	—
T9	R21	Morus' edi- tion reads: ἀναπτυττόμενα δὲ ἄλλως εὐρίσκοιτο χαῦνα [par. 7.1, Halliwell 2022, 10]. In his glosses, how- ever, Morus conjectures the reading μάλλον instead of ἄλλως	ἀναπτυττόμενα δὲ ἄλλως εὐρίσκοιτο χαῦνα	The read- ing ἄλλως is preferable, the suggested con- jecture in the glosses is wrong	—
T9	R21	Morus' edition reads: λόγων [par. 7.4, Hal- liwell 2022, 10]. In his glosses, however, Morus shows to prefer τρόπων	λόγων	The reading λόγων makes no problem	—

¹⁰ Russell and Halliwell read διὰ τὸ μετὰ βίας ἕκαστα, ἔτι δὲ τάχους, ῥώμης, δεινότητος, οἶον καίειν τε ἅμα καὶ διαρπάζειν.

Edition/ Translation	Review	Text Passage in the Edition/ Translation	Emendation/ Criticism of the Reviewer	Motivation/ Reviewer's Comment	Remarks
T9	R22, R23	ἡγεμόνας καὶ τοὺς ἐν ὑπεροχαῖς [par. 17.1, Halliwell 2022, 34]	ἡγεμόνας ἐν ὑπεροχαῖς	καὶ τοὺς is unnecessary	—
T9	R22, R23	σκηπτῶ τινι παρεῖς πάζοιτ' ἄν ἢ κεραυνῶ [par. 12.4, Hal- liwell 2022, 24] – instead of κεραυνῶ Morus postulates in his glosses ἢ καὶ ῥοδίῳ	κεραυνῶ can remain	κεραυνῶ is the explication of σκηπτός	—

2.1 Reviews to: [T1 =] ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΛΟΓΓΙΝΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΥΨΟΥΣ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ/*De sublimitate libellus*, ed. and trans. by John Hudson, Oxford: Sheldon 1710, London 1730³. Languages: Ancient Greek, Latin

Bilingual edition edited by the English Hellenist John Hudson (1662–1719). The first edition appeared in 1710. Following a Latin-language preface, the volume includes ancient testimonies [*judicia et testimonia*] on Longinus. The Latin translation is printed under the Greek text. A critical apparatus is provided at the bottom of the page. Reviewers showed appreciation for this edition. A reviewer's suggestion—the desire to read Shurtzfleisch's considerations incorporated into Hudson's glosses [*Anmerkungen*]¹¹—appears to have been realized in the third edition (1730).

2.1.1 [R1 =] In: *Ausführlicher Bericht von allerhand neuen Büchern und andern Dingen so zur heutigen Historie der Gelehrsamkeit gehörig*, vol. I, Issue 12, pp. 1105–6. Year: 1710. Reviewer: anonymous¹¹

The reviewer could only have become aware of the identity of the editor and translator after composing this review, as the editor is referred to as “anonymous” [*der ungenannte Verfertiger*] in the very first line. Footnote “(a),” however, specifies that the editor was John Hudson. This review provides some information about Longinus' life and work, drawn from the editor's preface. In doing so, the

¹¹ In the citations of the reviews, the term *Band* is rendered as “Volume,” *Theil* as “Part,” *Anhang* as “Appendix” and *Lieferung* as “Issue.”

reviewer effectively translates into German and disseminates information that was originally written in Latin by the editor. It is emphasized that the editor lists all existing editions of the treatise but has produced his edition solely to summarize Tollius' extensive work in a concise form, making it easier for young readers to purchase and read more quickly. Since the "glosses" [*Anmerkungen*] essentially derive from Tollius and others, the reviewer chooses not to comment on them. This review does not evaluate the quality of the Latin translation or the readings in the Greek text. The last lines of the review appear typographically in the form of a colophon.

2.1.2 [R2 =] In: *Neue Bibliothek Oder Nachricht und Urtheile von neuen Büchern und allerhand zur Gelehrsamkeit dienenden Sachen*, [no vol. indication in the frontispiece], Issue 14, pp. 349–65. Year: 1711. Reviewer: anonymous

The review opens in a rhetorical manner. Thinking is an art, just as speaking is. While many people can think well on their own, they speak poorly, as they fail to express clearly to others what they have in mind. Melancholic peoples [*Völker*], precisely because they do not have a tendency to use many words, have never developed the art of eloquence. As scholars argued, the principles of eloquence were transmitted to us directly from the Greeks through the mediation of the Romans. Therefore, these principles are to be sought not so much among the Romans as among the Greeks. Many renowned Greek rhetoricians exist, such as Aristotle, Demetrius of Phalerum, and others. Nevertheless, Longinus' text contains the very essence of eloquence—one might even say that the "quintessence" of eloquence is entirely concealed within his brief treatise. Indeed, authors like Aristotle and Hermogenes of Tarsus also made subtle observations in their works on rhetoric, but their style is so dry and arid that one would never guess they were rhetoricians. By contrast, Longinus intertwines his doctrine with eloquence itself, often explaining a rhetorical figure by employing the very figure he is describing. It is therefore unsurprising that Isaac Casaubon referred to Longinus' little treatise as a "golden" book. Even though it is a short and incomplete work, "it carries the weight of a great folio volume." The reviewer notes Hudson's intention to produce an edition well suited for young students. He devotes considerable attention to Longinus' life and identity (pp. 351–54), demonstrating erudition while reporting and commenting on Hudson's views on these topics. Then, the reviewer mentions the first three editions of the treatise (Robortello, Manuzio, Porto), which include only the Greek text without a Latin translation, and provides an overview of all existing translations. He also references several manuscripts that served as the basis for various editions or translations of the treatise, once again displaying scholarly depth. The reviewer reports that Hudson produced his translation with the aid of Boileau's French translation, although Hudson acknowledges that Boileau did not adhere too closely to the wording of the original text. The reviewer considers the "most perfect" edition of the treatise to be that of Tollius (1694), despite two drawbacks: it is too expensive for young students, and, like Boileau, Tollius did not follow the original

text word for word. Hudson's edition seeks to remedy these issues by presenting a Latin translation in which "superfluous words" have been removed. Regarding the textual apparatus (glosses, registers etc.), the reviewer states that he would have liked to see the glosses of the late Conrad Samuel Schurtzfleisch incorporated into Hudson's *Anmerkungen*, as Schurtzfleisch had the opportunity during his travels in Italy to consult a manuscript from the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan, which provided information missing from both Tollius' glosses and those of other scholars. At this point, the reviewer compares some of Hudson's readings with those of Schurtzfleisch (pp. 358–64), most of which concern only the first chapter of the treatise. He leans toward Schurtzfleisch's solutions but does not hesitate to propose new insights that differ from both editors.¹² Within this framework, while commenting on a lacuna at the beginning of the third chapter, the reviewer reports the opinion of Richard Simon in his *Lettres choisies*, according to which all the manuscripts of Longinus' treatise depend on a Paris codex or its copies. The reviewer also argues that Tollius probably overlooked the Milanese manuscript because he was aware that the best available manuscript is the Parisian one. Then, the reviewer examines Longinus' famous biblical quotation (Gen. 1, 3–4) and reports various scholarly opinions on the matter. Schurtzfleisch argued that Longinus did not read this passage in either Hebrew or Greek translation but rather quoted it second-hand from Caecilius of Calacte. If Longinus had understood Hebrew—Schurtzfleisch argued—his astonishment would have been even greater. The reviewer, however, notes that Longinus had an almost perfect command of Syriac language. Furthermore, he is persuaded that the key question is not whether these words contain "sublimity," but whether this sublimity should be attributed to Moses' eloquence.¹³ He argues that this "sublimity" is to be sought not so much in Moses' intellect and intention as in the "peculiar nature" [*eigenschafft sic.*] of the Hebrew language itself. While Moses generally employs a very simple style in his historical narrative, the Latin word "fiat" (Gr. γενέσθω [Longinus] or γενηθήτω [Septuaginta]) makes God's eternal and infinite omnipotence comprehensible in His actions, which would otherwise be understandable for Hebrew speakers. Before concluding, the reviewer makes a curious statement: if Schurtzfleisch had wished, he could have explained and improved many Greek and Latin writers in the most learned manner. The nature of scholars well versed in every discipline, however, is akin to that of bees, as they move from book to book just as bees move from flower to flower, without having the time to complete a great and extensive work. Finally, the reviewer states that he knows of no other ancient author who has received such unanimous praise as Longinus. From a linguistic perspective, this review is particularly interesting, as the reviewer frequently employs Latinisms and expressions borrowed from French or Latin (e.g., "etliche alte *Scribenten*," "auf ein

¹² A list of discussions concerning textual passages is presented in Table 1.

¹³ Moses was traditionally considered the author of the Pentateuch.

atqui und ergo,” “Französichen *traduction*” etc.). Additionally, the text contains several linguistic inconsistencies characteristic of early 18th century German.

2.1.3 [R3 =] In: *Niedersächsische neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, [no vol. indication], pp. 581–82. Year: 1730. Reviewer: anonymous

This review is a brief report on Hudson’s third edition. It informs that the first and second editions of Hudson’s Longinus were published, respectively, in 1710 and 1718. In all editions, the name of the editor does not appear. This edition is expanded, as it also includes a Latin translation of Longinus’ fragment *De metris* and incorporates the comments of the late Conrad Samuel Schurtzfleisch into its “glosses.” This edition has already been praised as the most convenient and useful of all. While Tollius’ edition is also useful, it is too expensive for young readers, and the glosses are too extensive. Finally, the reviewer notes that Hudson produced his edition by summarizing the comments from previous existent editions and commentaries, some of which were very costly to purchase, and cutting away the superfluous, thus making Longinus’ treatise easier to acquire and read more quickly.

2.2 Reviews to: [T2 =] *Verhandeling over de verheventheit en deftigheid des Styls, zoo omtrent vaerzen als maetelooze Reden*, trans. by Pieter Le Clercq, Amsterdam: Compagny 1719. Languages: Dutch

This book is a Dutch translation of the treatise *On the Sublime*. Neither the Greek nor the Latin text is included. The Dutch translation was made by Pieter Le Clercq (1692–1759). Le Clercq’s knowledge of Greek, as he himself admitted, was limited. Therefore, he most likely translated the treatise from Boileau’s French version, with the help of some Latin translations. Nevertheless, he believed it was essential to provide the Dutch public with a version of Longinus. The first Dutch translation of the treatise made directly from the Greek appeared a century later, in 1811, with Matthijs Siegenbeek. Interestingly, Le Clercq had a specific modern conception of translation. On these topics, see Schoneveld (1992).

2.2.1 [R4 =] In: *Neue Bibliothek Oder Nachricht und Urtheile von neuen Büchern und allerhand zur Gelehrsamkeit dienenden Sachen*, [no vol. indication in the frontispiece], Issue 86, pp. 515–16. Year: 1719. Reviewer: anonymous.

This is a very short report [*Nachricht*] in a *Sammelresenzion*, i.e. a review that includes reviews of multiple books published in the same place, of a Dutch translation of Longinus’ treatise. The reviewer begins by stating that Longinus’ treatise has been appreciated by scholars of every era. The bitterness that affected Homer, Virgil, Horace, and others has not touched Longinus. As Casaubon said, it is a “golden book.” Since Dutch poets may find this treatise useful, they now have access to a Dutch translation. This translation is recommended to all lovers of an excellent and graceful way of writing.

2.3 Reviews to: [T3_a =] ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΛΟΓΓΙΝΟΥ ΠΕΡΙ ΥΨΟΥΣ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ/*De sublimi dicendi genere*, ed. and trans. by Hudson/Gori/Boileau, Verona: Tumerman 1733; [T3_b =] ΠΕΡΙ ΥΨΟΥΣ ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ/ *De sublimi libellus graece conscriptus, Latino, Italico & Gallico sermone redditus, cum annotationibus*, trans. by Tollius/Gori/Boileau, Verona: Tumerman 1740². Languages: Ancient Greek, Latin, Italian, French

Two editions of the same book—a multilingual edition of *On the Sublime* published by Tumerman in Verona. Alongside the Greek text, there are translations in Latin, Italian, and French, arranged on facing pages. In the first edition, published in 1733, the Greek and Latin texts follow John Hudson's edition; the French translation is the renowned version by Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux (1636–1711), and the Italian translation is by Anton Francesco Gori (1691–1757). According to [R7], in the 1740 edition the Latin version is that of Jacob Tollius (1633–1696). The Italian translation by Gori is printed—prepared under the supervision of Anton Maria Salvini—in order to replace the lost version by Giovanni da Falgano, which the publisher had committed to publish. [R5] appears to contain some errors, reporting that Giovanni da Falgano's translation was “attached,” and confusing Niccolò Pinelli with Gori. These errors are likely due to the fact that the Introduction, which contains this information, is written in Italian.

2.3.1 [R5 =] In: *Niedersächsische neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, [no vol. indication], pp. 527–28. Year: 1733. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a very short report. The reviewer provides information about the text and the quality of the book. The Greek text, along with the Latin, French, and Italian translations, is printed on facing pages in four columns. The Greek edition of the treatise and its Latin translation are those of Hudson. Therefore, the reviewer refers to the review of Hudson's first edition, which appeared in this journal (See [R2]). For the Italian [*Toscanische*] translation, Pinelli's version was used.¹⁴ The reviewer states that this learned Florentine became widely renowned through various historical contributions, and his translation has been recognized by all scholars as an excellent rendering of the Greek text. Additionally, an unpublished Italian translation by Giovanni da Falgano [John. Falgani], which was famous around 1570, has been included [*beygefügt*], and Antonio Magliabechi counted him among the best translators. The French translation is that of Boileau, published in 1729 in The Hague. The print and the quality of the paper are spotless.

2.3.2 [R6 =] In: *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1734*, vol. XX, Issue 35, pp. 308–9. Year: 1734. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a short report in a *Sammelrezension*. The Latin translation is that of the Oxford edition of 1710, here corrected and improved on the basis of the Greek

¹⁴ If I have understood correctly, “Pinelli” is probably a mistake by the reviewer for “Gori”. In fact, Niccolò Pinelli produced an Italian translation of the treatise, published in Padua in 1630, and in 1723, Gori consulted it—though only for a few days. Cf. also [R11].

text. The Italian translation is by Gori, who had already completed it in 1720 under the supervision of Abbot Salvini. The French translation is that of Boileau. The four texts are presented side by side. The notes are those of Boileau, Boivin, Dacier, Tollius, and other authors. This edition includes all the variant readings [*variantes lectiones*] compared with other printed editions published so far, as well as with a specific manuscript “aus der Bibliothek des Bischoffs Joh. Mori” (p. 308). These variant readings were added in an appendix because they did not arrive in time during the printing process. An indexed description of the book’s parts (dedications, registers etc.) follows.

2.3.3 [R7 =] In: *Wöchentliche Nachrichten von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1740*, vol. I, Issue 1, p. 192. Year: 1740. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a brief report. The public is now offered a quadrilingual edition in a single volume. It is described as a “complete masterpiece.” The Greek text comes from the best manuscripts, the Latin version is by Tollius, the French by Boileau, and the Italian by the editor. Information is provided regarding the book’s price. Those interested may contact “Herr Rickershausen,” from whom they can receive, free of charge, two catalogues listing the available books, most of which are in German or French, alongside some in Romance languages or Italian.

2.4 Reviews to: [T4 =] *De sublimitate*, ed. and trans. by Zacharias Pearce, Amsterdam: Wetstein 1733; (with the *Commentari Fr. Porti* as Appendix), London: Tonson & Watts 1744³. Languages: Ancient Greek, Latin

Greek text and Latin translation of the treatise edited by Zacharias Pearce (1690–1744). The three editions were published in London in 1724, 1732, and 1744 respectively. In 1733, a Dutch publishing house issued a reprint of the second edition.

2.4.1 [R8 =] In: *Niedersächsische neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, [no vol. indication], pp. 683–84. Year: 1733. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a short report in a *Sammelrezension*. The reviewer begins with some information about the book. It is an Amsterdam reprint of a book previously published in London. It contains the Greek text, along with Pearce’s Latin translation and glosses. Pearce’s first edition appeared in 1724. The print quality of this edition is no less than that of the original English edition. Moreover, this edition is enhanced, as it is published together with Franciscus Portus’s commentary. The Dutch publishers, given the success of the London edition, had begun the printing process when, during production, Pearce announced a revised second edition. As a result, the publishers had to place the improvements concerning the already printed pages in an appendix. Thus, this Amsterdam edition remains just as good as the London one. Indeed, considering the addition of the glosses by Franciscus Portus—which are edited here for the first time by the Amsterdam gymnasial professor Isaac Verburg (1680–1745) and had remained hidden until then—it is even better. The re-

viewer does not dwell on the quality of Pearce's work regarding Longinus' treatise, as it has already been acknowledged by all the most renowned journals.

2.4.2 [R9 =] In: *Nöthiger Beytrag zu den Neuen Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, Part 3, pp. 472–73. Year: 1738. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a German report on a review originally published in French in the *Bibliothèque raisonnée*. Pearce had published the first edition of his Longinus nine years ago. Since it was too expensive, Dutch publishers decided to reprint it, encouraged in their decision by the discovery of a previously unpublished commentary on the treatise. The author of this commentary, Franciscus Portus, had died about 150 years earlier, and his work was included as an appendix. While the Dutch publishers were nearly finished with the printing process, news reached them that Pearce had, in the meantime, published a revised edition. Therefore, they awaited the English edition and gathered everything the editor had added or improved in it, then they printed these additions separately. Before Pearce, Tollius had devoted significant efforts to Longinus. Pearce, above all, sought more information about the Paris manuscript of the treatise, which had been produced over 600 years earlier. Boivin, through correspondence, provided him with the most precise description, and a Greek scholar residing in Paris compared it [*conferirte es*] with a printed edition. In particular, these efforts revealed that much is missing from Longinus and that one is often mistaken in believing that a gap can be filled with just a few lines. From this, it becomes clear that Tollius' conjectures are entirely erroneous. Pearce describes the manuscript. His glosses fall into two categories: purely critical-textual [*critisch*] or explanatory. The former are placed at the bottom of the book, while the latter appear beneath the text—an arrangement that provides the reader with considerable convenience. From the selection of glosses, one can appreciate Pearce's refined taste. Moreover, they are highly useful, leaving nothing more to be desired. To compile them, he made use of the best tools available to him. Regarding the translation: his Latin is good, yet it does not obscure the clarity and meaning of the original text. The fragments of Longinus were taken from Hudson. Finally, the German reviewer notes that the French reviewer provides some "samples" [*Proben*] of both types of Pearce's notes but does not reproduce them.

2.4.3 [R10 =] In: *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, vol. XXX, Issue 75, pp. 665–66. Year: 1744. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a report in a *Sammelrezension*. From the third edition of this work, it is clear that it has been well received by the educated public. The first edition appeared in 1724, the second in 1732. Now, a third edition has been released, which surpasses both in many aspects. In his Preface, the author reviews previous editions of the treatise—not only his own—and evaluates them. He also explains why he undertook a new edition and details the sources he used. He acknowledges that he retains the text of Manutius' edition but under the con-

dition that he has never disregarded the best readings of Robortello's edition and the manuscripts. He has not included all the notes that have been written on Longinus' text but has made a selection, with most of them being his own. In his glosses, Pearce demonstrates both erudition and refined taste. Pearce found it necessary to prepare a new Latin translation of Longinus. He argues that, although Tollius' version is among the finest, it is not sufficiently faithful, as it does not closely follow the original [*nicht allzu treulich dem Texte folge*]. Pearce uses the Paris manuscript, the best available, with Bovin having sent him its variant readings. Pearce also questions whether the readings noted in the margins of the manuscript used by Tollius, attributed to Voss,¹⁵ are actual textual variants from other manuscripts, as Tollius believed, or merely Voss' conjectures. Pearce has not found these variants in any manuscript. The final index is positively assessed. Finally, the reviewer reports also the death of Alexander Pope.¹⁶

2.5 Reviews to: [T5 =] *Trattato sul sublime*, ed. by Anton Francesco Gori, Firenze: Albizzini 1737. Languages: Italian

This is an Italian translation of *On the Sublime*, published by the Italian publisher Albizzini in Florence. The translation by Gori was prepared under the supervision of Anton Maria Salvini. In the Introduction, on pages XXII–XXIII, there is an ekphrasis of the edition's frontispiece (see Figure 1), which is also referenced in [R 11].

2.5.1 [R11 =] In: *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1738*, vol. XXIV, Issue 14, pp. 115–16. Year: 1738. Reviewer: anonymous

This review occurs in a *Sammelrezension*. Praise for Gori. The reviewer offers interesting evaluations of the translation: "As far as possible, he has translated the thoughts and expressions [of Longinus] not with servile [*knechtischen*] fidelity, but with noble fidelity" (p. 115). "The method of translation that merely aims to capture the author's thought while expanding his expressions with as many words as one finds convenient has never appealed to him" (pp. 115–16). Gori was not the first to

¹⁵ Probably Gerhard Johannes Voss (1577–1649). It is a well-established fact that *On the Sublime* had been read and appreciated, from an early stage, within Dutch learned society.

¹⁶ It is a meaningful coincidence that the reviewer reports on the death of Pope, who was famous, among other things, for a sort of parody of the treatise *On the Sublime*, published in 1727 under the title *Peri Bâthous, or The Art of Sinking in Poetry*. The title *Peri Bâthous* echoes the word βάθος (gen. of βάθος, "depth", "low") that appeared in the treatise *On the Sublime* (par. 2.1, Halliwell 2022, 2), and which, contrary to the manuscript reading, is now preferably rendered as πάθος. From Falgano's translation ("affetto"), however, it is evident that he too had corrected the possibly erroneous manuscripts reading. There is an interesting occurrence of the term "bathos" in Kant's *Prolegomena*, where, in response to a reviewer, he writes (Prol., AA IV, 373): "Hohe Thürme und die ihnen ähnliche metaphysisch große Männer, um welche beide gemeinlich viel Wind ist, sind nicht für mich. Mein Platz ist das fruchtbare *Bathos* der Erfahrung usw" (High towers and similarly lofty metaphysical men, around which there is usually a lot of wind, are not for me. My place is the fertile *bâthos* of experience etc.).

undertake an Italian translation of the treatise. There was a translation by Giovanni da Falgano, once kept in the Magliabecchi Library but now lost. Reporting implicitly a Gori's conjecture, however, the reviewer supposes that the text commonly referred to in these cases is actually none other than the Rhetoric of Demetrius of Phalerum, translated by Falgano and effectively preserved in the Library. As a result, Niccolò Pinelli was the first to produce an Italian translation of the treatise, published in Padua in 1630. This book is extraordinarily rare, and in 1723 Gori was granted permission to consult it, but only for a few days. Gori himself published his Italian version in 1733, but this new edition has been improved in several places, and some errors have been corrected. Finally, the reviewer comments on the frontispiece (see Figure 1), which is taken from an ancient gem of which Gori possesses an imprint. It depicts the following scene: Icarus, with his left wing already attached, impatiently waits as his father Daedalus finishes crafting the right wing. Above, there is Mercury's caduceus, and below, the inscription: $\chi\alpha\lambda\epsilon\pi\acute{\alpha}\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\ \kappa\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}$, i.e. "beautiful things are difficult".¹⁷

TRATTATO
DEL SUBLIME
DI
DIONISIO LONGINO
TRADOTTO DAL GRECO IN TOSCANO
DA
ANTON FRANCESCO GORI
LETTOR PUBBLICO DI STORIE
NELLO STUDIO FIORENTINO.



IN FIRENZE . MDCCXXXVII.
NELLA STAMPERIA DI GAETANO ALBIZZINI.
Con licenza de' Superiori.

Figure 1 – The frontispiece of *Trattato del sublime di Dionisio Longino tradotto dal greco in toscano da Anton Francesco Gori*. Firenze: Albizzini 1737.

¹⁷ Quotation from Plato (*Resp.*, 435 c, 497 d; *Crat.* 384 b; *Hipp. ma.* 304 e) attributed from Plutarch to Solon.

2.6 Reviews to: [T6 =] *Von Erhabenen*, ed. and trans. by Karl Heinrich v. Heinecken, Dresden: Hekel 1737, 1742² (with a new Introduction). Languages: Ancient Greek, German

German translation of *On the Sublime* with the Greek text, translator's glosses [*Anmerkungen*], and a concluding essay by Karl Heinrich von Heinecken (1707–1791). The Greek text is based on Pearce's edition. The second edition of the work (1742) was published with a new anonymous Introduction. There is also a 1784 reprint from Basel of Heinecken's translation of the treatise, issued without the Greek text and without any Introduction.

2.6.1 [R12 =] In: *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1737*, vol. XXIII, Issue 41, pp. 359–60. Year: 1737. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a report in a *Sammelrezension*. The translator renders into German one of the most difficult Greek texts to translate. Regarding the source language, he has followed the text word for word. Where euphony had to take precedence, however, he made use of the freedom granted to a translator and, at the same time, demonstrated how skilful our mother tongue is in conveying the emphasis of Greek rhetoric. He has also taken into account all other translations in different languages, meticulously noting and correcting their errors. In the glosses, he has explained what is most important. Everything contributed by other scholars to improve the Greek text has been gathered and carefully examined. The Greek text is that published in Pearce's edition. Nevertheless, Heinecke has spared no effort in refining his text to some degree by comparing all available editions. Heinecke's essay on the life of Longinus surpasses all others in completeness. His glosses sufficiently clarify the obscure passages. The record of previous translations is both comprehensive and appropriate. In examining what Longinus understands by the sublime, Heinecke has repeated all the statements provided by him and illustrated them with German examples, thereby revealing his ability to render judgments on eloquence and poetry in accordance with reason and good taste. The work is dedicated to Count Sulkowski, and the printing is clean.

2.6.2 [R13 =] In: *Deutsche Acta Eruditorum*, [no vol. indication], Issue 218, pp. 139–45. Year: 1737. Reviewer: anonymous

The reviewer begins by stating that Longinus's treatise has always been held in high regard, and that rhetorical principles are not unusual nor exclusive to a single language. Consequently, this translation is also useful to Germans. Until now, we have not had a translation of Longinus into our language. Gratitude is due to Heinecken for making the text accessible even to those among us who do not master the Greek language—and even more gratitude is due because of the translation's quality. It is so well executed that it brings honor both to the translator and to our homeland. The contents of the book are as follows: an introduction including the life of Longinus, the Greek text alongside the German

translation, and a treatise by the editor aimed at understanding what Longinus meant by the word “sublime.” The reviewer intends to report on each section of the book. After recounting Longinus’s life based on Heinecken’s introductory essay, the reviewer focuses on the German translation:

The editor has carefully observed both of the most important duties of a translator, and he has earnestly endeavoured to faithfully express the meaning of his original. Yet, he has made every effort to ensure that there could be no objection to the purity and beauty of the language into which he has translated Longinus (p. 141).

Moreover, the editor has supplemented his translation with numerous scholarly glosses—some clarify the meaning of the text, others justify his translation, still others point out errors in other translations, defend Longinus against unfair criticisms, or bring in various elegant reflections, especially from history and rhetoric. As a sample of the translator’s glosses, the reviewer presents an example taken from the commentary on section IX of the text, which discusses the concept of the sublime and offers a quotation from the first book of Genesis—whose sublimity has been hotly contested. Heinecken cites the opinion of Pierre-Daniel Huet (1630–1721), who claimed that the passage has nothing inherently sublime about it, and that the prophet did not intend to express himself sublimely—thus, in Huet’s view, Longinus’s statement is pointless. The Port-Royal Society, however, in the preface to its translation of the first five books of Genesis, not only cited this very passage from Longinus, but also Boileau’s reflections on it, fully agreeing with Boileau’s judgment. Thus, in a new edition of Longinus, Boileau quoted that preface and expressed astonishment at the opinion of a learned man like Huet. A short history of this controversy follows, and it is noted that M.[agister] Christoph Wolle (1700–1761) held a disputation in Leipzig on this passage, citing the positions of Boileau, Tollius, Huet, Le Clerc, and others. The final section of the book is a treatise on what the sublime was for Longinus. He wrote this part to clarify Longinus’s “sublime”—but above all, for the pleasure of German readers. Heinecken has repeated all of Longinus’s statements on the sublime and illustrated them with German examples. In general, the word “sublime” [*Erhaben*] designates the highest perfection of a thing. The sublime in poetic and rhetorical art, however, is a thought that has been brought to its perfection through what is rich in meaning and spirit [*Geist*], and whose production depends partly on the natural capacity of the intellect, partly on passion, partly on fine representation, partly on word choice, and partly on artful synthesis. Many people have a mistaken idea of the sublime because they fail to note the great difference between sublimity in thought and elevated style. The editor concludes his essay by stating that Longinus, in his treatise, spoke only of sublimity in thought. This must be clearly kept in mind when reading Longinus—for to believe he was offering stylistic advice would be entirely misleading. In general, Heinecken’s conclusive essay is well written and contains many correct and profound insights. Nevertheless, since the editor has made strong use of the “*illustrans ad opposito*” (explaining by the

opposite) strategy, and since most of the quoted passages are taken from still-living authors, the reviewer ironically doubts that these authors will feel particularly grateful to Heinecken.

2.6.3 [R14 =] In: *Wöchentliche Nachrichten von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1742*, vol. III, Issue 48, p. 290. Year: 1742. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a brief report on the second edition of the work (1742), published with a new anonymous introduction. This report was received by the journal without any information regarding the author or place. The journal opts to publish the following report. Nonetheless, a response to it will probably follow. This work is not new, as this translation had already been published several years ago. Nevertheless, it was not particularly well known. The translator was Heinecken. This work had bad luck, the reviewer does not know whether the fault lies with Longinus or with Heinecken himself. There have been several attempts to reprint it, but without success. This is in fact the fourth edition, and it stands out because of an anonymous Introduction. The fact that it is anonymous aligns with its intent, as it is verbose and contains “slander” [*Lästerungen*] against Prof. Gottsched and the poets of Leipzig, as well as being very long-winded. Prof. Gottsched is not attacked on the merits, but with malice. Also the editors of this journal were insulted. One cannot write an objection to this introduction, because the purpose of an objection is to point out an opponent’s error. In this case, however, it is unnecessary, because we place our trust in the impartial and reasonable reader. A brief discussion follows about who the author of the anonymous introduction might be—whether it is Heinecken himself or someone else. Since the work is now on the market, the translator is wished well. Certainly, it would have been better if the translator had stuck to his task without venturing into the fine arts.

2.6.4 [R15 =] In: *Göttingische Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, [no vol. indication], pp. 807–8. Year: 1742. Reviewer: anonymous

Review of the second edition of the work (1742). The book had already been published, but it is now reissued with a new title page and a new anonymous Introduction. The author of the new Introduction expresses dissatisfaction with Gottsched and others. Every reader is curious to see what their response will be. Regarding the work itself, there is a new account of the life of Longinus, carefully prepared, which attempts to shed light on what has come down to us from those very obscure times. Evaluation of the translation: “The translation has been rendered in clear German [*in reines Teutsch eingekleidet*] and conveys well the sense of the Greek text, which is printed according to Pearce’s edition” (p. 807). In the glosses, attention has been paid not only to the beauty of the German style but also to the clarification of the text. The appendix on the concept of the sublime in Longinus is worth reading, and this edition, due to its many merits over all the others, deserves the attention of lovers of eloquence.

2.7 Reviews to: [T7 =] *On the Sublime*, ed. and trans. by William Smith, London: Watts, 1739. Language: English

This book contains an English translation of *On the Sublime* by William Smith (1711–1787), including the translator's glosses. Reviewers put in emphasis that this is the fourth English translation of the treatise, but the first to be made directly from the original Greek.

2.7.1 [R16 =] In: *Göttingische Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, [no vol. indication], pp. 479–80. Year: 1739. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a report in a *Sammelrezension*. The reviewer opens the review with the following statement: “The translator was moved by the intrinsic—and universally recognized by scholars—beauty of Longinus to translate him into English” (p. 479). His translation had already been undertaken when he became aware of the work of others. During his work, three English translations came to his eyes. The first was that of Welstedt (1724). Smith notes that this is a translation from the French into poor English, in which all the beauties of the French are lost, while all its errors, including misprints, are carefully preserved. The second is that of John Hall (1654), and the third is an anonymous one published in Oxford in 1698, which also includes the French. Smith judges these translations to be such that he does not regret having prepared one of his own. His translation had been ready for nine years, but he had it read by friends and reviewed it several times in light of the Greek text. The reviewer states: “He paid particular attention to drafting it in such a way that it did not seem like a translation, without thereby weakening the spirit and force of Longinus” (p. 480). Through his edition of the text and his notes, Pearce not only shed light for him in many passages, but also improved certain translations here and there. Smith, however, had already completed the majority of his glosses when he read Pearce's Latin. Moreover, he found in English writers many passages where he could illustrate Longinus's judgments [*Critiken*]. One can only rejoice if he refined the taste of his readers and enabled them to distinguish truly meaningful words from hollow sounds, false brilliance from true magnificence, and the sublime from bombast [*Bombast*] and pomposity [*Schwulst*]. The critical apparatus is very well prepared. It would only have been better if the notes were printed below the text rather than at the end.

2.7.2 [R 17 =] In: *Wöchentliche Nachrichten von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1740*, vol. I, Issue 24, p. 152. Year: 1740. Reviewer: anonymous

This is a few-lines report. There were already three English translations of Longinus's treatise. The work under review, however, is the first English translation made directly from the original Greek. Some of the glosses were suggested to the author by Pearce, who was working on the second edition of his own edition of Longinus.

2.7.3 [R 18 =] In: *Nöthiger Beytrag zu den Neuen Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen*, Part 6, pp. 222–23. Year: 1740. Reviewer: anonymous

Brief German report of an English review published in the English journal *History of the Works of the Learned*. Three English translations of Longinus' treatise have already been published, but Smith's is the most beautiful of all. He has proven to be well-suited to undertake this translation. His thoughts and expressions are so elevated that they can serve as examples for Longinus' rules on elevated style. The apparatus is better than that of Boileau. Smith's glosses on Longinus, partly his own and partly by Pearce, can be found at the end of the translation.

2.8 Reviews to: [T8 =] *De sublimitate*, text and glosses by Zacharias Pearce, trans. by Samuel Friedrich Nathanael Morus, Leipzig: Weimann und Reich 1769. Languages: Ancient Greek, Latin

This is an edition of the Pseudo-Longinus text edited by Pearce, but with a new Latin translation by Friedrich Nathanael Morus (1736–1792). The Greek text and annotations are by Pearce, while the new Latin translation is by Morus. The Greek and Latin texts are printed on facing pages.

2.8.1 [R 19 =] In: *Hallische Gelehrte Zeitungen*, vol. IV, Issue 91, pp. 723–25. Year: 1769. Reviewer: anonymous

The reviewer welcomes this publication with pleasure, noting polemically that

in our times—both with regard to Greek literature and our own literature—it is more fashionable to publish only some fleeting remarks and sell them whenever the opportunity arises (or even when it doesn't), rather than truly study these works at their sources (pp. 723–24).

The edition is valuable, and we must thank Morus, who possesses a command of the language, has taste, and does not lack critical accuracy. In a word: he has been formed according to the best model. The Preface explores themes such as why Longinus enjoys prestige among both those who merely offer reflections on the sublime etc. and those who investigate their causes, as he unites both approaches in his treatise. The Greek text follows Pearce's 1732 edition, as he collated the Parisian manuscript with greater accuracy than his predecessors. Morus included the variants in the footnotes and provided a new Latin translation. Through this translation, Morus "aims to make the text understandable to those who know nothing of Greek" (p. 724).

It is a praiseworthy intention, which proves useful to someone who does not have the opportunity to learn Greek and who, through this translation—besides that of Heinecke—can come to know what Longinus is saying! Only, there is the fear that many, for this reason, might neglect the study of the Greek text. I have

always liked Geßner's method¹⁸ of omitting the Latin translation. Nonetheless, it must be noted that with the present translation from time to time it seems that something from the Greek text has been sacrificed for the sake of a beautifully dressed Latin version.

The critical apparatus is useful. Superfluous elements have been cut, as well as audacious emendations. The reviewer concludes:

We place this Longinus even in the hands of the young lover of Greek, because—partly through the explanatory notes, partly through the linguistic analogies between Greek and Latin—he can read this short, yet fundamental, text almost on his own (p. 725).

2.8.2 [R 20 =] In: *Philologische Bibliothek*, vol. 1, Issue 1, pp. 15–28. Year: 1770. Reviewer: "M." [= C. Meiners?]

This edition is a "gift" to lovers of ancient literature of such importance that the reviewer deems it appropriate to discuss it with the readers of the journal. Already from its Preface, it is clear that Morus is able to read the ancient authors with taste and to think with the genius of the moderns. Included here—along with references to the pages of the Preface in which they appear—are some of Morus's reflections from the Preface, both aesthetic and historical in nature. E.g., the deep investigations into the nature of the beautiful and the good were not, unlike for the moderns, in fashion among the ancients; Longinus speaks far more to the moderns than to the ancients, even though he focuses on what seem to us to be trivialities; he writes in a sublime language, rich in imagery, bordering on bombast—something for which he was reproached by later ancient critics—due to his heightened sensitivity; Longinus enjoyed an inordinate esteem, almost bordering on superstition; he held an incomplete and incorrect concept of the sublime, placing many "sources" where there is in fact only one, and lingering excessively on "rhetorical trivialities." The reviewer admits that he would not have wanted to see these critical reflections merely presented, but rather overcome by Morus in his edition, since the reviewer trusts no one but Morus to do so. Let this serve as a suggestion to Morus for his future work, as it seems he wishes to devote himself to Greek aesthetics, and in his notes, he has acted not only as a philologist but also as a philosopher (p. 17). It would be an exaggeration to deem the rhetorical works of antiquity superfluous simply because they "think in too national a way" (p. 18), and because they derive their ideal of the beautiful and the sublime in both poetic art and oratory solely and exclusively from the great minds [*Geister*] of their own nation. Such criticism would be valid only if there were nothing to be gained from them. But there is much of value to be drawn from Longinus and from other Greeks of refined taste. Even those insights that

¹⁸ In this case, the reviewer is referring to the Conrad Geßner (1516–1565), a noted humanist, polyglot and botanist.

refer solely to the Greek sense of beauty deserve our attention, to the extent that in order to judge them, we must think and feel in their way. The task of the critic is to show what is national and to determine that those aspects from which we rightly distance ourselves stem from a difference between our genius and that of the Greeks. For this reason, what seemed essential to the ancients appears insignificant to us: it is a matter of national character. We do not read Demosthenes with the same enthusiasm as the ancients, nor we are convinced by rhetorical rules that are suited to the genius of the ancients. The reviewer does not know whether Morus chose not to develop these topics out of a concern for being verbose; what is certain is that the readers would not have found it unpleasant. As for the commentary, Morus has reported the notes of other commentators, trimming the superfluous, and his editorial decisions, judged on a case-by-case basis, are not to be criticized. The commentary addresses two kinds of readers: language experts and beginners. It would have been better to include the names of the authors next to their commentary notes, “and the reasons are too obvious to require explanation” (p. 20). The reviewer appreciated the explanations of difficult passages. The reviewer values that Morus has provided a glossary in which technical terms from ancient rhetoric are translated into German. As for Morus’s Latin translation, it is judged as “excellent—neither too free nor too literal” [*vortrefflich, weder zu weitläufig noch zu slavisch*] (p. 21). The reviewer believes Morus when he says the translation costed him great effort. He would likely have gained even more favour among those he wishes to impress, if he had provided such a beautiful translation in German. No list will follow of places where Morus failed to grasp the sense of the text, in order not to cast a shadow on the merits of the translation. A list follows, however, of instances where the translator offered a correct translation but gave an inaccurate explanation in the notes. Both Morus and Pearce find Longinus unintelligible when he uses expressions common in philosophical schools to refer to ordinary things. Actually, an additional list follows of passages where both Pearce’s and Morus’s translations are incorrect (pp. 23–27). The reviewer has compared Morus’s version with Pearce’s. Pearce draws more frequently on passages from Quintilian in his explanations. The reviewer hopes Morus will continue his work. The review is signed with “M.” However, the author can probably be identified as Christoph Meiners (1747–1810), who was a student in Göttingen at the time.¹⁹

2.8.3 [R 21 =] In: *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste*, vol. X, pp. 303–10. Year: 1770. Reviewer: anonymous

The reviewer begins this review by stating that Longinus’ translation has appeared at just the right time, as today’s young writers are preoccupied with judg-

¹⁹ The collaborators of the *Philologische Bibliothek* were professors, teachers, and students of the University of Göttingen, as well as members of the *Philologisches Seminar*. They were recommended by Christian Gottlob Heyne (see Habel 2007, 417).

ing or critiquing the works of Spirit and Genius, laying down laws for Beauty, and self-satisfied teaching the reasons for both. The ancient authors might serve to guide them back onto the right path. The reviewer expresses appreciation for both the Preface and the Introduction written by Morus. In the Preface—a fine part of this edition—Morus demonstrates sharp insight. In the Introduction, he argues that Longinus possesses a distinct merit in comparison with modern aestheticians, insofar as he shows how one may arrive at the “Great” and the “Sublime,” while also explaining and evaluating the models and examples with such sensitivity that the reader experiences the very same feelings as Longinus himself. “A general merit of the ancient method,” the reviewer notes, “is that it tends more toward practical application, even if it may be flawed in other respects” (p. 304). The method of the ancients is this: some collect all the beautiful passages from various writers, extract general principles from them, and young students must imitate these. Other ancient authors, however, focus more on the emotional impact on the reader or listener; they examine the differences in these effects and identify their causes in arrangement, structure, and so on. Longinus belongs to this latter group. Longinus’ merit lies in having understood that the only true effect of the sublime is “astonishment” [*Erstaunen*], even if he failed to grasp precisely how this effect is produced. Longinus dwells more on the sublime in expression than on the sublime in thought. Modern aestheticians are concerned with the causes that make beauty and the sublime produce such effects. Perhaps these inquiries belong more to the realm of psychology than to the fine arts. There is a lament that the work of Longinus has come down to us in a fragmentary state. The review references the Paris manuscript—the oldest—and notes that all other manuscripts are merely copies of it and have little independent value. This observation, the reviewer suggests, ought to have made Morus somewhat bolder in proposing emendations (p. 306), and some examples follow. Pearce’s editorial improvements are given in the footnotes. The explanatory glosses of Greek terms are positively evaluated. The text is also useful for younger scholars, particularly in demonstrating how an author can be explained by means of his own words. There follows a discussion of some terminological explanations. Regarding the Latin translation, Morus is to be commended for the modesty with which he presents his work, given the inherent difficulty of translating Longinus. Yet the reviewer is confident that no one will read this translation without finding it beautiful. Despite the challenges, the Latin captures the style of Longinus. While some of Longinus’ character may be lost, the reader gains in aesthetic enjoyment. Finally, the reviewer also extends praise to the publisher for undertaking such a worthy project.

2.8.4 [R 22 =] In: *Wöchentliche Nachrichten von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1770*, vol. XXXI, Issue 14, pp. 107–9. Year: 1770. Reviewer: anonymous

Morus is known for his work on Greek literature. His edition will be instructive and very useful, especially in light of the current zeal with which contemporary scholars engage with the concept of beauty and its determinations. The

reading of Morus's edition will be appreciated both by connoisseurs of the Greek language and by those in need of a translation. Morus offers improvements to Pearce's edition based on manuscripts or through his own conjectures, which he places in the footnotes. The translator deemed it necessary to produce a new translation, as those currently available are partly inaccurate and flawed, and partly verbose. He does not expect, however, universal approval in this regard and notes that, despite all efforts, he has not succeeded in faithfully rendering the metaphors employed by Longinus. A detailed discussion of certain Latin translations follows, in which the reviewer suggests improvements. The reviewer appreciates the explanatory glosses, though he points out a few cases where he disagrees. The concluding remarks focus on Morus's Preface and Introduction. The reviewer displays clear expertise in the field.

2.8.5 [R 23 =] In: *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1770*, vol. LVI, Issue 14, pp. 108–12. Year: 1770. Reviewer: anonymous

This review appears in a *Sammelrezension*. Morus is well known for his efforts in the field of Greek literature. His edition will be instructive and very useful, especially in light of the current zeal with which contemporary scholars engage with the concept of beauty and its determinations. The Greek text chosen for the edition is that of Pearce; textual critics will find in the footnotes the changes proposed by Morus, either based on manuscript evidence or on his own conjectures. There is an evaluative comment on Morus's explanatory glosses. The notes were selected from other authors, and Morus added some of his own. He considered it overly verbose to list all the parallel passages in ancient authors where the words under discussion are used with the same meaning as in Longinus. Nevertheless, he made considerable efforts to provide helpful insights into the metaphors employed by Longinus. The translator deemed it necessary to produce a new translation, as those currently available are partly inaccurate and flawed, and partly verbose. At p. 110 the reviewer begins to offer judgments on the translated renderings and textual readings, and the examples and opinions are nearly identical to those found in another review. In fact, several propositions in this review recur *verbatim* in [R 22]; see p. 109, lines 5–7; p. 110, lines 3–13; pp. 110–112, *passim*. Nevertheless, this review displays stylistic originality, which makes it unlikely that the two reviews share the same author.

2.8.6 [R 24 =] In: *Göttingische Anzeige von gelehrten Sachen*, [no vol. indication], Issue 1, pp. 388–90. Year: 1770. Reviewer: anonymous

This review appears in a *Sammelrezension*. Much has been said about Longinus, but in this edition Morus says no more than what is necessary for our understanding of Longinus' treatise—and he also says something that previous scholars had neither mentioned nor noticed. It is an excellent text for young readers, particularly in the field of aesthetics. The translation possesses its own Latin elegance, which can be admired in only few other translations.

A preface is included, in which, with great intelligence, the true value of recent aesthetic inquiries into what pleases—and their relation to Longinus's method, and more generally to that of the ancients—is clearly established (p. 390).

The quality of the printing is praised. This is not a technical review; there are no references to the Greek text.

2.8.7 [R 25 =] In: *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, vol. XV, Issue 1, pp. 315–16. Year: 1771. Reviewer: "I." [= C.G. Heyne]

At the opening of this review, the reviewer offers some interesting cultural reflections. This edition of one of the finest critics of antiquity does honor to our Germany in the eyes of all foreigners. The editor and publisher have done everything to endow it with the value it deserves. If German booksellers were to procure for themselves the great classical Greek authors—not with an overflow of annotations, but as correct as possible, simple, and in a middle ground between the tasteless Dutch luxury and the cheap German printings—then it might indeed be possible, given the gradually reviving interest in Greek literature, to stand firm against the influx of frivolous *belles lettres* and journalistic pedantry. For, once someone has shaped their taste according to the ancient Greeks, he can no longer be tempted either to waste an entire life—of which our homeland and fellow citizens have such a strong claim to the greater part—nor to submit to the debasing cabal of the journalists. This is followed by a brief description of Morus's edition: the published text is that of Pearce, suggested improvements to the text are placed in the footnotes etc. Judgment on the translation: "The Latin translation is more elegant and beautiful in Latin than it is faithful in character to Longinus; but precisely for that reason, it will openly please less" (p. 316). Though brief and not focused on technical matters, the review is remarkably brilliant and written in a refined style.

2.8.8 [R 26 =] In: *Hallische gelehrte Zeitungen*, vol. IX, Issue 13, pp. 97–9. Year: 1774. Reviewer: anonymous

This review appears in a *Sammelrezension*. The edition is of considerable value and was published several years ago. At the beginning, there is a dissertation by Morus in which he demonstrates both taste and philosophical insight. He argues that the term $\psi\upsilon\chi\omicron\varsigma$ does not carry the same meaning across the various chapters of Longinus's work, and that it does not always correspond to what we now call "the sublime." According to Morus, the term $\psi\upsilon\chi\omicron\varsigma$ has the following meanings: (1) The grand or elevated that astonishes [*Erstaunen*]; (2) The grand through which we ourselves are drawn into a feeling of our own greatness—this pertains to critical judgment ("and this is the twofold kind of the sublime, as we use the word", pp. 97–98); (3) It refers to the vehemence and fire of thought; (4) It refers to the powers of thought insofar as they set in motion; (5) It refers to the refinement through which certain objects are made beautiful by the intellect.

Morus applies this conceptual analysis to the five characteristics Longinus proposes for the sublime expression. The reviewer acknowledges that, in order to establish a true understanding of Longinus's treatise, more is to be gained from this brief dissertation—which is also praised for Morus's literary style—than from the treatises of theorists or from other editors of ancient works. Rarely are such profound linguistic knowledge and philosophical depth found together (p. 98). The notes are highly useful and well worth reading.

2.9 Reviews to: [T9 =] ΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥ ΛΟΓΓΙΝΟΥ ΤΑ ΣΩΖΟΜΕΝΑ. *Dionysii Longinii quae supersunt*, ed. by Jonathan Toup, with the emendations of David Ruhnken, Typographia Clarendoniana: London, 1778. Languages: Greek, Latin

This is a collection of all the “fragments” (“quae supersunt”, τὰ σωζόμενα) attributed to Pseudo-Longinus. The introductory dissertation and the commentaries are in Latin. The Latin translation appears below the Greek text. A fourth edition was published in 1806.

2.9.1 [R 27 =] In: *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1779*, vol. LXV, Issue 1, pp. 129–32. Year: 1779. Reviewer: anonymous

The review opens with a brief description of the book. The edition begins with a disputed dissertation [*Disputation*] by Ruhnken titled *De vita et scriptis Longini*. This is followed by the text of the treatise *On the Sublime*, as well as the other fragments, with Pearce's Latin translation printed beneath the Greek. Starting from p. 133, Ruhnken's glosses are included, while Toup's begin on p. 153. The reviewer reports some emendations suggested by Toup in the notes, followed by a brief discussion. Toup often draws apt comparisons between the style of Longinus and that of Plutarch; at times, however, he is too hasty in asserting that a particular word must be used in the text merely because it appears in another passage of Plutarch, of another author, or even of Longinus himself. For example, in a passage from section XXIX [par. 29.1] of the text, Toup prefers the word ἐπίκαιρον (opportune) to the one transmitted ἐπικηρον (risky), simply because it occurs in a similar expression in another passage of Longinus. But that is not the issue. The question is whether it should appear in this particular passage. The Greek text contains few conjectures, though numerous improvements are suggested in the glosses. The critical apparatus is excellent and is based on the editions of Robortello and Manutius, three Paris manuscripts (that of Pearce, that of Voss, and one shared with Toup by Larcher), and a codex that Toup was able to consult personally in Cambridge. The reviewer reports on Toup's attempts to fill in gaps in the text. There are mentions of supposed relations between Manutius and Porto, and some notes on Ruhnken's glosses. It is useful for the reader to compare the notes of Toup and Ruhnken, even when they disagree, and there is no regret in seeing some things explained twice in this edition. This edition certainly confirms, supplements, and corrects previous editions, though it does not render them superfluous. Perhaps it is unnecessary

to recall Morus's *Animadversiones ad Longinum* (1773), where here and there one reads with pleasure some explanations of terms or expressions—explanations that Toup's edition rightly identifies as incorrect or to which he assigns the same meaning already given by Morus. The anonymous reviewer demonstrates expertise in the subject, particularly in linguistic matter, through his criticism. The reviewer, however, does not propose any improvements or new conjectures regarding the editors' readings.

2.9.2 [R 27* =]: *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen*, vol. ?, pp. 362–63. Year: 1780? Reviewer: C.G. Heyne?

This review appears to be unavailable. Although it can be retrieved from the GJZ18 project database, it does not appear in the journal's records for the years 1778–1782, which I have consulted.

2.10 Reviews to: [T10 =] *Vom Erhabenen*, trans. by Johann Georg Schlosser, Weidmann und Reich: Leipzig 1781. Language: German

German translation of *On the Sublime*. Following the translator's preface, there is a brief account of the life of Pseudo-Longinus, followed by an analysis of his work. After the translation, the volume includes an essay on the sublime by Schlosser. For further information on this book and its reception in German culture—excluding journal reviews—see Zanicchi 2015.

2.10.1 [R 28 =] In: *Gothaische gelehrte Zeitungen*, vol. XVI, Issue 90, pp. 737–39. Year: 1781. Reviewer: anonymous

We already possess a German translation of this author by Heinecke [sic], which, however, in our century—one that places great value on the beauty of sound—has found few readers due to its flatness. Mr. S. has therefore attempted to provide literature enthusiasts with a new translation which, as he flatters himself, would surpass Heinecke's (p. 737).

It follows a brief commentary on the glosses: in the notes, Longinus's examples are expanded upon with others, mostly taken from English writers; the correctness of Longinus's observations is examined; the misapplication of his rules and observations to misleading examples is demonstrated; and his reflections are traced back to psychological motives. In the concluding section of the book, there is an essay on the sublime by Schlosser, in which he “discusses the concept of the sublime and shows how it is possible for the sublime to arise in us through words and the representation of ideas” (p. 737). Had he made use of David Runken's [sic] treatise *De vita et scriptis Longini*, published in Toup's edition, Schlosser could have enriched the brief section he dedicated to the life of Longinus with more interesting information. The reviewer would also have liked Schlosser to use the editions of Morus and Toup, described as “two of the

greatest critics of our time” (p. 738). The translation reads, aside from a few awkward word connections and expressions, in a light and pleasant manner. “We doubt, however, whether it may not itself lose something when compared to the original, as we have occasionally lamented the translator’s lack of fidelity” (p. 738). In this regard, a discussion follows of several renderings from the Greek, including terminological ones—the Greek text or word is provided, along with Schlosser’s translation and the reviewer’s commentary. Notably: there is a literal rendering of the word *προπεπωκότες* [par. 32.2], literally “drank away,” as *zugesunken*, which does not sound natural to the German ear; the translator should have used a different metaphor. The reviewer raises these critical points so that the public may form its own opinion. Translating Longinus is no easy task—as the reviewer notes “from personal experience” (p. 739). Schlosser also sketched out a plan for a theory of the sublime that is so beautiful the reviewer regrets it remained only a plan.

2.10.2 [R 29 =] In: *Neue Zeitungen von gelehrten Sachen auf das Jahr 1781*, vol. LXVII, Issue 71, pp. 573–76. Year: 1781. Reviewer: anonymous

This report appears in a *Sammelrezension*. The review opens with a series of critical remarks. It begins with a quotation from Schlosser’s Preface, in which he claims to have conferred greater prestige on Longinus than Heinecke did. According to the reviewer, Schlosser would have done well to make better use of Morus’s work. It seems that Schlosser is unfamiliar with Toup’s recent edition. Schlosser states that he aims to write more for lovers of literature than for scholars (“what a contradiction!,” p. 574). The reviewer, however, notes that only scholars can make use of this translation and of his essay on the sublime. In fact, the treatise by Longinus discusses rhetorical categories such as metonymies, asyndeta etc., which are not accessible to non-specialists. Moreover, Schlosser’s own essay on the sublime employs philosophical and psychological concepts. This is a valuable part of the book, and the translation is also good (“pleasant to read and useful”). Before printing, however, the translation should have been cleaned of unusual, foreign, or peculiar constructions and words. Nevertheless, pompous expressions, flatness, and errors are evident. Examples follow. The reviewer would have wished, as in the “much-maligned” edition by Heinecke, that the Greek text had been printed alongside the translation, so that one could consult the original when the latter proved unclear. Continuing with examples, the reviewer states the following: in some cases, certain words have been left untranslated; and there are passages that have been mistranslated. Despite this, this “German Longinus” is a “valuable publication” (p. 575), and the author deserves thanks.

2.10.3 [R 30 =] In: *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, Supplement [*Anhang*] to voll. XXXVII-LII, Part 2, pp. 1250–52. Year: 1783. Reviewer: “Ik.” [= F. Gedike]

Since Heinecken’s translation is awkward and, for the most part, incorrect, there was a desire for a better translation of this treatise, which, although frag-

mentary, remains a precious remnant of ancient aesthetics. This translation not only surpasses those of its predecessors in every respect, but is indisputably one of the few translations of Greek authors that is readable in our language, and it may rightly be placed alongside Boileau's esteemed French translation. The expression is pure, fluent, full of vigor and dignity. Nevertheless, it is at times too free, and occasionally it seems as if we are reading Schlosser more than Longinus. Anyone familiar with the original Greek also knows the difficulties a translator must contend with, and it is often nearly impossible to extract a coherent meaning from passages where the text is corrupted. Yet, where the translation occasionally lacks a precise understanding of the Greek language and its nuances, this shortcoming is rightly compensated for by Schlosser's sensitivity and insight, especially where he penetrates the thought of Longinus. Often, in passages where critics—with all their emendations and interpretations—have failed to extract any acceptable meaning from the text, Schlosser intuitively grasps Longinus's intent. The reviewer states that in many passages of the text we must ask ourselves: Longinus must have meant this, even if the text as it stands seems to say something else or nothing at all. The passages from poetic works cited in the treatise are excellently translated. The translation is based primarily on Morus's edition. The reviewer would have liked Schlosser to have also consulted Toup's more recent version. Fortunately, the translator does not belong to that group of translators who, out of blind enthusiasm for their author, see in him nothing but beauty and revere every word as if it were an oracular pronouncement. The notes are well judged. The reviewer recommends Schlosser's essay on the sublime to all theorists and scholars of aesthetics, as a rich collection of psychological and aesthetic observations and reflections, which—although not always expressed with sufficient precision—nonetheless reveal sound taste and clear judgment. The style in which the essay is written is warm and lively, though at times a bit too assertive and dismissive. The review is signed with the initials "Ik." The reviewer is identified as Friedrich Gedicke (1754–1803).

3. Some Valuable Facts and Recurring Themes in the 18th Century Reviews of Pseudo-Longinus' *On the Sublime*

In this concluding section, I aim to briefly highlight some recurring themes or valuable facts found in 18th century German journal reviews of the treatise *On the Sublime* which emerged during my analysis of the sources and which I consider relevant from the point of view of the history of knowledge.

1) I would like to begin by highlighting a point that may seem insignificant at first glance but is, upon closer inspection, far from trivial from the perspective of the history of knowledge: the recurring emphasis on commercial aspects (target audience, book price, print quality etc.) in the reviews of various editions and translations of the treatise *On the Sublime*.²⁰ In many of these reviews, *On*

²⁰ Cfr. [R1], [R2], [R3], [R5], [R7], [R8], [R9], [R12], [R19], [R20], [R21] and [R24].

the Sublime is targeted toward a young readership; the low cost of the editions is praised, and the editors' glosses positively evaluated precisely because they include only what is essential for understanding the text, avoiding the superfluous and selectively incorporating the most useful notes from more expensive editions. Reviews—both in the 18th century and today—create a market; they shape and influence public opinion about a product. It is also through these features, repeatedly emphasized in the reviews of *On the Sublime*, that the treatise was able concretely to become a “golden book” for the younger generation of the German *Aufklärung*, starting in the early decades of the 18th century.

2) Reviews of *On the Sublime* sometimes appear to have had an influence on the publishing world. For example, a suggestion made by a reviewer ([R2]) when reviewing the second edition of Hudson's edition of the treatise ([T1])—namely, the wish to see the notes from the later Schurtzfleisch incorporated into the editor's glosses— was realised in the third edition. It is also a well-known phenomenon, observable in these cases as well, that reviews engage in dialogue with other reviews through cross-references (e.g., [R5] refers back to [R2]), polemics, and even plagiarism. In the latter case, for instance, [R23] is noteworthy for having plagiarized very technical linguistic critiques from [R22] (see Table 1). This evidence shows that the reviews of *On the Sublime*—as well as reviews more generally—were not ineffective or isolated acts of criticism.

3) The aspect that most captured my attention was the recurring presence of linguistic issues in the reviews of *On the Sublime*, particularly those concerning translation. First and foremost, it is important to highlight the multilingual context in which these reviews are situated—a context shared by reviews published in the *Gelehrte Journale* more broadly.²¹ Latin, Italian, French, Dutch, and German translations of the treatise are reviewed. In two instances ([R9] and [R18]), the contents of reviews originally written in other languages are conveyed in translation when discussing editions or translations of the treatise. References to Greek are not uncommon, and the adequacy of Latin renderings is frequently assessed. In these instances, the reviewers appear to be highly proficient in the relevant languages. Moreover, the reviewers acknowledge that the treatise is particularly difficult to translate. In one case, a reviewer even notes this from personal experience [R28]. Within this framework, the relationship between various languages and cultures and the notion of (German) national identity comes to the fore (see [R12], [R20]). These issues also resonate with themes deeply rooted in German intellectual culture since the time of Luther—for example, in [R19], where the Lutheran principle is clearly evident: that the aim of translation is to make a text accessible to those who do not know the original language. Even the evaluative register and criteria used to assess translations find their foundation in Luther's

²¹ For discussions of multilingualism in journal reviews and Luther's *Sendbrief* as the reviewers' “gold standard” for evaluating translations, see Pizzichemi 2026. On translating as an intrinsic part of scholarly work, to which a particular economy was attached, in mid-eighteenth century, see Gantet 2025.

approach.²² Notably, in [R19], there is a strikingly modern awareness that translations may lead to a loss of the knowledge of the original language. Finally, Latin is often regarded as a useful intermediary for accessing Greek, and the taste in translations—as reflected in the changing assessments of Heinecken's translation of the treatise over the decades—appears to evolve over time.

4) Longinus—whose identity is never questioned in the 18th century—receives unanimous appreciation from both editors and reviewers. The reviewers also acknowledge the modernity of the treatise (e.g., see [R21] and [R22]). As 'knowledge actors,' the reviewers play a key role in disseminating ideas about the sublime that will become part of the shared intellectual heritage and serve as a foundation for later work by prominent authors.

5) What proved most striking in my research was not what I found, but what was missing from the sources I examined—an *absence* I had not expected. In fact, in the final surviving section of the treatise (par. 44.1–12; Halliwell 2022, 68–73), Pseudo-Longinus imagines a dialogue with a “philosopher,” to whom the most politically suspicious and dangerous views are attributed. In this part of the treatise, the decline in the literary quality of the time is discussed, and the “philosopher” identifies its cause in the loss of freedom: it is democracy, he argues, that truly nurtures the sublime. Democracy, by granting liberty, allowed the flourishing and expression of the talents of great minds, whereas the condition of servitude imposed by an authoritarian regime becomes a prison for the mind. To this argument, Pseudo-Longinus replies that the decline lamented by the “philosopher” is, in reality, the result of a general moral deterioration of the society, and that authority plays a beneficial role in restraining the negative passions that have led to this decline. He writes:

But perhaps for people such as we are it is *better* to be ruled than to be free: if our greedy instincts were entirely let loose, as if released from prison, against those around us, they would deluge the world with evil (par. 44.10; Halliwell 2022, 73).

Now, this is the ‘epochal’ theme of the German *Aufklärung*: what relationship should exist between individual freedom and political authority in order to foster the flourishing of both individual and societal qualities? It is a problem, for instance, to which Kant would later respond by proposing the distinction between the “public” (free) and “private” (authority-bound) use of reason. I asked myself how it is possible that such an epoch-defining issue, also present in the treatise, is *not* even briefly addressed in the reviews I analysed, despite the fact that they span the period from 1710 to 1783. This is particularly striking given that the audience of the *Gelehrte Journale* was a bourgeois, and that the theme of the literary decline of the time is indeed discussed in several of these reviews (e.g., [R19], [R21]), with the reading and the study of *On the Sublime* even being proposed as a remedy for it. At present, I am not able to provide a definitive and convincing answer to account for the aforementioned absence. It seems to me, at

²² Cfr. [R10], [R11], [R15], [R16], [R20], [R21], [R25], [R28], [R29] and [R30].

least, that no single explanation is entirely satisfactory. One possible hypothesis is that the reviewers were concerned solely with matters of erudition—though this does not appear to be the case. Another possibility is that, out of respect for Longinus, they chose not to highlight an opinion from which they felt ideologically distant. Or, perhaps more plausibly, this theme was deliberately avoided in the reviews for political reasons—either to sidestep censorship or to avoid engaging in politically sensitive debates.

What is certain, however, is that even today, this “golden book”—which in the 20th century saw more editions and translations than ever before—continues to favour the genre of the review as a battleground for critical debate.²³

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²³ E.g. see the critical review of Halliwell’s edition of *On the Sublime*—and particularly its Italian translation—by Lombardo 2022.

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