# Περὶ Ὕψους 3.3–4 and Aristotle's Theory of the Mean

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IN A RECENT STUDY of "tradition and originality" in the anonymous treatise *On the Sublime*, W. Bühler[1] has demonstrated in a manner far more conclusive and thorough than heretofore the full measure of "Longinus'"[2] debt to the rhetorical and literary-critical tradition. Absent, however, in Bühler's monograph, although this is admittedly a selective commentary, and in the scholarly literature in general, is a satisfactory account of Longinus' relation to Aristotle and to the Peripatetics. One factor which has probably tended to divert attention from this question is the overwhelmingly Platonic character of the treatise, however we may disentangle the line of inspiration which ran from Plato to Longinus.[3] Nevertheless, the influence of Aristotle, and Theophrastus too, on later literary theory appears to have been immense, a fact which is becoming increasingly more evident with the advance of scholarly work in this field.[4] The *a priori* likelihood, therefore, of some debt to Peripatetic stylistic theory is considerable and invites a more detailed investigation.

Scholars have, it is true, occasionally noted Peripatetic elements in the treatise, although, for the most part, either in an unsystematic manner[5] or merely in passing,[6] without any attempt to assess their

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[1] Winfried Bühler, *Beiträge zur Erklärung der Schrift vom Erhabenen* (Göttingen 1964).

[2] The use of the name "Longinus," hereafter without quotation marks, is meant to imply nothing concerning either the identity or the date of this figure. The only consideration has been convenience.

[3] Posidonius or Theodorus of Gadara, or both together, are the two vehicles of influence which have been chiefly suggested. Mutschmann (see below, p. 198 and n.7) was the champion of the latter. His position, however, and that of those who follow him (*e.g.* Rostagni) has been seriously weakened by Grube's attack (*AJP* 80 [1959] 337–365). The case for Posidonius seems strong; see Aulitzky, "Longinus," *RE* 13 (1927) 1420.63–1422.49 and Reinhardt, "Poseidonios," *ibid.* 22.1 (1953) 772.26–34.

[4] For Dionysius of Halicarnassus, see S. F. Bonner, "Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the Peripatetic Mean of Style," *CP* (1938) 257–266; for Horace, see C. O. Brink, *Horace and the Art of Poetry* (Cambridge 1963); for Demetrius, see G. M. A. Grube, "An Ancient Literary Critic," *The Phoenix Supplementary Volumes* 4 (Toronto 1961) 32–38.

[5] *E.g.*, K. Swoboda, "O spise *Περὶ Ὕψους*," *Listy filologicke* 52 (1925) 83–85.

[6] *E.g.*, F. Solmsen, "The Aristotelian Tradition in Ancient Rhetoric," *AJP* 62 (1941) 184. Here the question of Peripatetic influence on Longinus is noted, but only briefly. More

significance in a more than casual way. In this particular matter, however, such treatments are especially unsatisfactory, since they imply an estimation of Longinus which contradicts what is most characteristic of this author. For scholarly investigation has shown that however certainly we may be able to derive any particular feature in the treatise from some predecessor, the clear fact is that Longinus cannot on the whole be charged with merely assembling bits and pieces of older systems. The key elements in his treatise, drawn though they may have been from diverse sources, were welded by this extraordinary critic into a cohesive and original system of aesthetics. In view, therefore, of both these considerations, it seems a distinct lack that there has been so little attempt to make more sense of these observed cases of Peripatetic influence, *i.e.*, to interpret them in the light of the general intentions of the treatise.

# I

In one of the most influential studies of Longinus published in this century, the *Tendenz, Quellen und Aufbau der Schrift vom Erhabenen,*[7] Hermann Mutschmann, although concerned chiefly with elaborating his theory of a Theodorean Longinus, paused for several pages (91–94) to examine elements in the *Περὶ "Υψους* which appeared to him clearly Peripatetic in character. Mutschmann maintained that when Longinus at 3.4 (ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν οἰδοῦν κτλ.) gave a name to the vices which were akin to the 'sublime,' *viz.*, 'tumidity' (τὸ οἰδοῦν) and 'puerility' (τὸ μειρακιῶδες), he constructed his analysis on the foundation of the Aristotelian theory of the mean. For Longinus, so Mutschmann argued, 'tumidity' was an excess in the Aristotelian sense, 'puerility' a deficiency; the third vice, παρένθυρσον, was something of an intruder, and Mutschmann pointed to several indications which bear out this assertion.

Before considering Mutschmann's evidence—and he is surely right, although, as I shall argue, in only a qualified sense—I should like to examine the passage which slightly precedes the one upon which

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recently, D. A. Russell (*"Longinus" On the Sublime* [Oxford 1964]) notes *ad* 3.4 ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν οἰδοῦν . . . ἀγεννέστατον: "The transition . . . is managed by means of a scheme based on the Peripatetic doctrine of the mean." He does not comment, however, on what he considers the significance of this fact to be. Hanns Stefan Schultz (*Der Aufbau der Schrift Περὶ "Υψους* [Diss. Berlin 1936] 42–46) does however essay an interpretation of elements which derive, he argues, from Theophrastus' *Περὶ Λέξεως*.

[7] (Berlin 1913).

Mutschmann based his argument and which he did not consider. Longinus is analyzing the process by which the author who aims at 'sublimity' falls instead into the vice of 'tumidity':[8]

ὅλως δ' ἔοικεν εἶναι τὸ οἰδεῖν ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα δυσφυλακ-
τότατον. φύσει γὰρ ἅπαντες οἱ μεγέθους ἐφιέμενοι, φεύγον-
τες ἀσθενείας καὶ ξηρότητος κατάγνωσιν, οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως ἐπὶ
τοῦθ' ὑποφέρονται, πειθόμενοι τῷ 'μεγάλων ἀπολισθαίνειν
ὅμως εὐγενὲς ἁμάρτημα'. κακοὶ δὲ ὄγκοι καὶ ἐπὶ σωμάτων
καὶ λόγων οἱ χαῦνοι καὶ ἀναλήθεις καὶ μήποτε περιστάντες
ἡμᾶς εἰς τοὐναντίον· οὐδὲν γάρ, φασί, ξηρότερον ὑδρωπικοῦ.

The concepts employed in this analysis of stylistic aberration, and the terms used to express them, strongly suggest that Mutschmann's assertion of Aristotelian influence merits attention; for here, too, traces of Peripatetic doctrine are surely to be detected. Let us examine the process, as described by Longinus, by which the author (I shall point out below the significance of the italicized terms) who *aims* at 'grandeur of style,' in an effort to *escape from* the charge of 'dryness' and 'insipidity,' lapses instead into 'tumidity'—a danger difficult to *guard against*—and even, at times, into its *opposite*, 'dryness,' the very extreme he sought in the first place to avoid. Now except for the notion, for which I can find no Aristotelian parallel, that overshooting the mark occasionally brings us back to the very fault from which we sought to escape (καὶ μήποτε περιστάντες ἡμᾶς εἰς τοὐναντίον 3.4), the dependence of this passage on the concepts elaborated by Aristotle in his discussion in Books 2 and 4 of the *Ethics* appears for the following reasons highly likely.

First, in the passage quoted, virtue (now a virtue of *style*) appears to be viewed as a mean which lies between two vicious extremes, into either of which an author may easily lapse. That the notion of the mean and its two extremes is present in Longinus' discussion of 'tumidity' is suggested, first of all, by the statement further on in this passage [3.4] that "tumidity desires to surpass the sublime." Now, inasmuch as the ὕψη of 3.4 is merely synonymous[9] with μέγεθος of 3.3, it seems clear that in the passage under discussion also the vice of

'tumidity' should be viewed as an *excess,* in very much the sense that Aristotle understood this term; *i.e.* as an attempt gone awry, which *overdoes* 'sublimity.' As in the *Ethics,* it is an imprudent overuse of an otherwise commendable quality which engenders vice, this quality being, in the present case, a style rendered impressive by the use of metaphor. In the same way, it is clear that ἀσθένεια and ξηρότης, which our hypothetical author endeavors to flee, are deficiencies in the exact Aristotelian sense, since they are at the same time qualities which by their nature are opposite to another extreme quality, *i.e.* 'tumidity,' (τοὐναντίον 3.4) and which ought also to be shunned (φεύγοντες 3.3) by anyone who aims at 'sublimity'; for ἀσθένεια and ξηρότης, to judge from their meaning, are deficient in precisely those characteristics of style which Longinus designates as 'sublime': they are bloodless and feeble. We would thus have the following scheme:

ὑπερβολή — τὸ οἰδοῦν

μεσότης — μέγεθος

ἔλλειψις — ἀσθένεια/ξηρότης

The interpretation implied by this scheme seems the only valid one which can be extracted from the passage. 'Aridity' is clearly antithetical to 'sublimity'; it is otherwise difficult to see why we should have to flee it [3.5]. In any case, common sense tells us that this is true. We are told, furthermore, that in aiming for 'sublimity' we sometimes end up with 'tumidity,' which is described as the opposite of 'aridity.' 'Tumidity,' moreover, is seen in some way to be an endeavor to exceed the 'sublime' [3.4]. In 3.3–4, therefore, Longinus is telling us three things: first, that 'aridity' and 'tumidity' are opposites to each other; second, that 'sublimity' lies somewhere in the middle between these two extremes; third, that of the two extremes, it is 'aridity' from which those who aim at 'sublimity' endeavor to flee. The similarity to the terms of the Aristotelian discussion of the mean is striking.

The terminology, too, is precisely reminiscent of the *Ethics.* The author in Longinus *flees* (φεύγοντες 3.3) from 'aridity,' which is described as the *opposite* (τοὐναντίον 3.4) to 'tumidity.' So, in the second book of the *Ethics,*[10] πᾶς ἐπιστήμων τὴν ὑπερβολὴν μὲν καὶ τὴν ἔλλειψιν φεύγει [2.1106b5–6] and, αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἄκραι καὶ τῇ μέσῃ καὶ ἀλλήλαις ἐναντίαι εἰσίν [2.1108b13–14]. The ἐφιέμενοι of 3.3 may also be compared

with *Ethics* 1.1094a1–2, πᾶσα τέχνη . . . ἀγαθοῦ τινος ἐφίεσθαι δοκεῖ; although it should be noted that the customary Aristotelian term in this connection is στοχάζεσθαι (cf. *ibid.* 2.1109a30 τὸν στοχαζόμενον τοῦ μέσου). Again, in discussing the various rules for striking the mean, Aristotle notes that in matters of pleasure we ought especially to be on our guard (μάλιστα φυλακτέον *Ethics* 2.1109b7); Longinus likewise, although perhaps for different reasons,[11] remarks [3.3] that 'tumidity' is ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα δυσφυλακτότατον.

Mutschmann's assertion of Aristotelian influence on Longinus' discussion is therefore well founded, although it has to be modified in two important ways. First, the specific terms of Mutschmann's analysis are not valid; this is, I hope, already apparent from my own discussion (and see below, p. 205). Second, Mutschmann's remarks suggest that he was unaware of Hendrickson's[12] thesis that Aristotle employed the doctrine of the mean, which he had already elaborated in the *Ethics*, as the central concept in his discussion of stylistic virtue in *Rhetoric* 3, chapters 2 and 12. For Aristotle, and Hendrickson is surely right despite the demurrers of several scholars, σαφήνεια was a stylistic virtue (and Aristotle's only one) which was defined not absolutely, but only relatively to the necessity of avoiding, on the one hand, utter baldness of manner (*i.e.* ταπεινὴν [εἶναι] *Rhet.* 3.1404b3) and, on the other, a style rendered unintelligible by an excess of metaphor and gloss (*i.e.* ὑπὲρ τὸ ἀξίωμα *Rhet.* 3.1404b3–4). Accordingly, Mutschmann's contention that Longinus derived the terms of his discussion of 'sublimity' and its vicious extremes *directly* from Aristotle's treatment in the *Ethics* is not necessarily correct. The fact is that Aristotle, as was demonstrated by Hendrickson, had himself already made this adaptation in the *Rhetoric*. And in this step he was to be followed

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[11] In Aristotle the matter is clear. The extreme which is pleasurable is the more difficult to guard against, because the pleasant is something to which we are naturally attracted. In Longinus there is some uncertainty about why 'tumidity' is especially difficult to escape from. To judge from the sentence which follows, it appears that when we aim for 'sublimity,' we lay ourselves open to a dangerous natural (φύσει) tendency to lapse into 'tumidity.' But there are no clear indications as to why this is *naturally* so. The probable explanation is that for Longinus 'tumidity' is, first of all, the extreme more akin to the 'sublime,' and therefore at times separated from this quality by only the finest line. And given Longinus' views of the natural affinity of the soul for the 'sublime,' it is not difficult to understand why most blunders should occur in the extreme which is closer by nature to 'sublimity.'

[12] "The Peripatetic Mean of Style and the Three Characters," *AJP* 25 (1904) 125–136. Hendrickson's view has not gone uncontested. For another analysis, see Solmsen (above, n.6) 43.

frequently in later antiquity,[13] a consideration which may help to mitigate the seeming improbability of the notion that Longinus was in this particular discussion closely indebted to Aristotle. For stated as it was by Mutschmann, the idea seemed all too unlikely. Why, after all, would Longinus, whose outlook is so thoroughly Platonic, turn to the bald details of the Aristotelian system of ethics for his terms and concepts? The question however, natural though it seems, ignores the two factors just considered: Aristotle's own use of the doctrine of the mean in his stylistic writings, and the continued presence of this concept in the rhetorical writers of later antiquity.

To return to our analysis. Having considered τὸ οἰδοῦν, we may examine the vicious extreme which Longinus tells us [3.4] is directly opposed to sublimity, viz., 'puerility' (τὸ μειρακιῶδες) or 'frigidity' (ψυχρότης). (The large question which the "or" of the preceding sentence begs I shall consider presently.) Now the terms in which Longinus describes the dangers which lead to this aberration exhibit important similarities to the previous discussion of 'tumidity.' As there, the author who strives for (ὀρεγόμενοι, cf. ἐφιέμενοι 3.3) a certain stylistic quality—here the 'pleasant' (τὸ ἡδύ)—lapses (ὀλισθαίνουσι, cf. ὑποφέρονται 3.3) instead into the related vice, 'puerility.' The chief difference here is that, whereas in the passage on 'tumidity,' Longinus presented the full scheme of the mean and its two extremes, in the present passage he treats the matter only in terms of a given virtue of style, here the 'pleasant,' and a single related vice; in other words, in terms of the doctrine of ἁμαρτήματα παρακείμενα or vicina vitia, which is familiar from Demetrius, Auctor ad Herennium and Horace. This curtailment, however, should probably not be viewed as a deviation from the Peripatetic character of the discussion, since the doctrine of vicina vitia was itself almost certainly nothing but a simplified derivative of the theory of the mean as it was applied to style.[14]

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[13] As, for example, by Dionysius of Halicarnassus; cf. Bonner (above, n.4). The "real" Longinus, in the third century, himself shows clear traces of the Peripatetic doctrine of the mean in his τέχνη ῥητορική (Rhet.Gr. ed. Walz, IX. 559 τὸ δ᾽ ἔργον . . . τοῦ μέτρου λαμβάνῃ 560). Moreover, it is likely that the wide-spread doctrine of ἁμαρτήματα παρακείμενα was itself merely a simplified derivative of this doctrine; cf. below, n.14.

[14] This appears as likely a solution as any. It is as if, for example, Aristotle's discussion of μεγαλοπρέπεια in Book 4 of the Ethics had been simplified by some successor. Instead of a scheme with one vice and two extremes, we should have the one virtue (i.e., μεγαλοπρέπεια and only the one of the two vices which was the more akin (i.e., the vice of being βάναυσος). The notion moreover that the doctrine of related vices is derived from the doctrine of the mean gains some support from the fact that the doctrine of related vices occurs in its most

Let us consider now the meaning of the terms μειρακιῶδες and ψυχρότης. No small confusion has resulted from Philippson's analysis of the categories of stylistic vices which are found in Περὶ Ὕψους 3.3–4.[15] If Philippson is correct, an important consequence is that we should be compelled to view μειρακιῶδες and ψυχρότης as two entirely distinct vices. Yet, as Mutschmann has shown, this is unlikely. For this scholar argued[16] that in the discussion of τὸ ψυχρόν[17] which occupies chapter 4, this stylistic quality is characterized by two terms which are, for different reasons, closely connected with the supposedly distinct μειρακιῶδες: the one (τὸ παιδαριωδέστατον 4.2), because it is synonymous; the other (μικροψυχίαν 4.7), because it had earlier [3.4] been listed by Longinus as an attribute of τὸ μειρακιῶδες. Consequently—and Mutschmann's point is well taken—if in an account of τὸ ψυχρόν these terms can be employed with perfect appropriateness, it would seem wrong to attempt rigidly to distinguish this latter term and τὸ μειρακιῶδες.

Moreover, and this Mutschmann did not note, the two terms were used by the rhetoricians apparently as synonyms. Dionysius, for example, in a discussion of a strained use of stylistic figures, speaks of τὰ μειρακιώδη πάρισα καὶ τὰ ψυχρὰ ἀντίθετα, [De Dem. 20 (U-R p. 171)]; surely, there exists no strict distinction between πάρισα and ἀντίθετα which would require terms of clearly separate significance. In just the same way, Quintilian [4.1.77] condemns frigida et puerilis . . . affectatio. As to affectatio, moreover, there is evidence that we should consider as related in meaning to ψυχρότης and τὸ μειρακιῶδες the term κακόζηλον [3.4]; at 8.3.56 Quintilian notes: κακόζηλον, id est mala affectatio. This is, in any case, a conclusion to which we should have been led on other grounds, since κακόζηλος was Demetrius' designation [ch. 186] for the aberration of the stylistic 'character' (viz., χαρακτὴρ γλαφυρός) which is the most closely akin to, if not identical

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developed form in Demetrius, who without question represents a rhetorical tradition which is overwhelmingly Peripatetic in character.

[15] "Zu Περὶ Ὕψους," RhM 74 (1925) 267–279. Philippson's thesis is further supported by Grube, AJP 78 (1957) 362–364. Munno essays a refutation (Mondo Classico 2 [1932] 309–312).

[16] Op.cit. (above, n.7) 88–91.

[17] It should be noted that in Aristotle's Rhetoric the term τὸ ψυχρόν has a quite different sense, and is in fact very close to what Longinus means by 'tumidity.' In Rhet. 3.1405b34–1406b19, the term designates, among other things, a tasteless use of metaphor. Theophrastus (cf. Demetrius ch. 114) appears to have used the term in a sense closer to that of Longinus.

with, Longinus' ἡδύ.[18] And it is, we should remember, above all in the pursuit of τὸ ἡδύ that we lapse into ψυχρότης.

Furthermore, if τὸ μειρακιῶδες is not identical with τὸ ψυχρόν. where in the treatise was this important topic discussed? For it is important, as is shown by the statement τὸ δὲ μειρακιῶδες ἄντικρυς ὑπεναντίον τοῖς μεγέθεσι 3.4. The problem of the *lacunae* has no relevance here, for τὸ μειρακιῶδες is a topic pertinent to Longinus' discussion of vices in chapters 3–5 and it is difficult to imagine its having been introduced elsewhere. The portion of the treatise which preceded was devoted to a characterization of 'tumidity,' and this subject is clearly dismissed as Longinus moves on to 'puerility.' There is no indication that the matter has already been discussed, since Longinus, apart from showing us how this aberration arises, is also at pains to give us a definition of 'puerility.' This is surely his intention in 3.4 (τί ποτ' οὖν κτλ.), and it would be a serious error here to separate ψυχρότης and τὸ μειρακιῶδες, since 'puerility' appears to be Longinus' term for the whole childish process whereby an author, in an overly clever and academic spirit, aims at a novel effect but only manages to err disastrously. Clearly, ψυχρότης denotes the end result of the process for the whole of which Longinus employs the term μειρακιῶδες, and it is difficult to see how we can legitimately separate these two terms.

It would therefore seem mistaken, in the light of this evidence, to construct, as Philippson did, a dubious theory of two γένη, each consisting in turn of three εἴδη. θατέρου of 4.1 is clearly appropriate and cannot be used as evidence for two γένη, since παρένθυρσον is intrusive and considered only briefly. And not, of course, because it was unimportant, but because, connected with the topic of πάθος, it was *too* important to deserve less than special treatment. It is also difficult to see how, if τὸ ψυχρόν were a second and distinct γένος, Longinus could say [3.5] τούτῳ παράκειται τρίτον τι κακίας εἶδος. τούτῳ surely refers to the τοῦτο τὸ γένος of the preceding sentence, and whereas I have argued that τοῦτο τὸ γένος assumes both τὸ ψυχρόν and τὸ μειρακιῶδες, Philippson contended that it designated τὸ ψυχρόν only. If, then, τὸ ψυχρόν is a different γένος, in what sense can παρένθυρσον, an εἶδος according to Philippson of the first, unnamed γένος, be said to be 'allied' (παράκειται) to 'frigidity'? Finally, the distinction between

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[18] Demetrius ch. 128; this fact is noted by Russell (*op. cit.*, above, n.7) *ad* 3.4 τὸ ῥωπικὸν καὶ κακόζηλον.

γένος and εἶδος, upon which Philippson builds, is perhaps too uncertain to allow us to form a theory on its basis,[19] a theory which, in any event, is most improbable in view of the evidence we have been considering.

To summarize. It appears certain that in 3.3–4 Longinus is employing techniques of literary analysis, and categories to which these give rise, which were derived from Peripatetic speculation on style, or, more precisely, from chapters 2 and 12 of Book 3 of the *Rhetoric*, and from later developments in the Peripatetic tradition, such as is evidenced in Demetrius and Horace. There is moreover evidence, afforded by the diction of the passage, which suggests—and this point will be taken up shortly—that Mutschmann was correct when he argued that Longinus knew the doctrine of the mean in its original setting, *i.e.*, Books 2 and 4 of the *Ethics*.

Be that as it may, the specific terms of Mutschmann's analysis cannot be accepted as valid. For, as we saw, the vices whose genesis Longinus considers fall into two distinct groups: the one consisting of τὸ οἰδοῦν and its opposite ἀσθένεια or ξηρότης, both of which are akin to 'sublimity' (μέγεθος 3.3 or τὰ ὕψη 3.4); the other, *viz.*, τὸ μειρακιῶδες or ψυχρότης, aberrant products of a search for 'pleasantness' (τὸ ἡδύ 3.4). Consequently, Mutschmann's assertion that Longinus conceived of his virtue of sublimity as a mean which is flanked on the one side by τὸ οἰδοῦν as an excess, and, on the other, by τὸ μειρακιῶδες as a deficiency, cannot be strictly correct.

Yet Mutschmann's evidence, even though it was adduced in support of an analysis which was in itself inaccurate, should not for that reason be ignored. For his analysis was inaccurate only in its *precise terms*; the general conclusions which it suggested, *i.e.*, Longinus' familiarity with Peripatetic theory, was, as I hope I have shown, entirely justified. Mutschmann's evidence, moreover, was important not only because it pointed quite strongly to a Peripatetic context, but also because it suggested that the *semblance* of the mean was being

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[19] These terms are in one instance used interchangeably in Aristotle; see Bonitz, *Index Arist.* 151b47–49. It is also not unlikely that Longinus used γένος in the sense of εἶδος under the influence of the Latin, as *genus* was a possible rendering of the Greek εἶδος when this meant "kind"; *cf.* Cicero *Tim.* 21 *tertium materiae genus* with Plato *Tim.* 35a3–4 τρίτον . . . οὐσίας εἶδος. For possible influence of Latin usage on Longinus, see W. Rhys Roberts, *Longinus on the Sublime*[2] (Cambridge 1907) 188; H. J. Edmiston, "An Unnoticed Latinism in Longinus," *CR* (1900) 224; and J. C. Kamerbeek, "'Ἐπικείμενα (Περὶ Ὕψους xxxiv.2)", *Mnemosyne* 12 (1959) 128. My own guess is that Longinus wished to avoid using the term εἶδος twice in such close succession.

evoked in the discussion of 'sublimity' and its attendant vices at 3.4 (ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν οἰδοῦν κτλ.), even though there can be no question here of a derivation of the mean along strict Aristotelian lines, as was argued by Mutschmann.

Now the suggestion that the semblance of the mean was being evoked at 3.4 must, of course, presuppose that the discussion of 'sublimity' and its attendant vices has *intentionally* been cast by Longinus into a form analyzable from two standpoints, the one of which rests on the distinction between the 'pleasant' and the 'sublime' examined above, the other of which is reflected in Mutschmann's mean and is of a *composite* and *artificial* nature, since its extremes would be derived from two distinct categories, *viz.*, the 'pleasant' and the 'sublime.' A discussion of this composite mean, and a consideration of the motives which led Longinus to employ it, will occupy the second section of this paper. Let us for the present examine some further items of evidence, some observed by Mutschmann, some not, which lend support to his thesis that Longinus knew the *Ethics* at first hand.

With reference to the statement in chapter 5 (ἀφ' ὧν γὰρ ἡμῖν τἀγαθά κτλ.), where Longinus advances the notion that both virtue and vice, success and failure, derive from the same source, Mutschmann compared *Ethics* 2.1103b6–8: ἔτι ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν καὶ γίνεται πᾶσα ἀρετὴ καὶ φθείρεται, ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τέχνη. Mutschmann quite properly argued that it was not likely that the similarity of concept could be fortuitous. Again, in the passage which was his chief item of evidence (ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν οἰδοῦν κτλ. 3.4), Mutschmann argued that τὸ μειρακιῶδες was in the strict Aristotelian sense the extremity the more opposed to the mean (ἄντικρυς ὑπεναντίον 3.4). The notion of the one extreme being the more opposed to the mean is, of course, an important feature of Aristotle's discussion of Book 2 of the *Ethics*; cf. 2.1108b35 to 1109a2: πρὸς δὲ τὸ μέσον ἀντίκειται μᾶλλον ἐφ' ὧν μὲν ἡ ἔλλειψις ἐφ' ὧν δὲ ἡ ὑπερβολή. παρένθυρσον, as I have noted above, Mutschmann considers an intruder in the scheme.

There are further items of evidence, not noted by Mutschmann, which lend support to his contention of Aristotelian influence. In the summing up [5], which follows the section on the vices akin to 'sublimity', Longinus says:

> διόπερ ἀναγκαῖον ἤδη διαπορεῖν καὶ ὑποτίθεσθαι, δι' ὅτου
> τρόπου τὰς ἀνακεκραμένας κακίας τοῖς ὑψηλοῖς ἐκφεύγειν
> δυνάμεθα.

This parallels, surely, the statement earlier in the same chapter examined by Mutschmann (*i.e.*, ἀφ' ὧν γὰρ κτλ.), and is noteworthy because of its Peripatetic phraseology.[20]

Moreover, the assumption of Peripatetic context would make it clear, for example, why the one fault (τὸ οἰδοῦν) arises from a desire to "outdo the sublime." For why is Gorgias censured for 'tumidity' of style, when he calls vultures "living tombs" (ἔμψυχοι τάφοι 3.2)? Metaphor is, after all, a feature of the 'sublime' manner which Longinus seeks to define. Ought it not to follow that a richly metaphorical style deserves all the more to be called 'sublime'? The answer is, of course, No, and Longinus gives a clear answer in terms of the concept of propriety. If, Longinus says, excessive and tactless use of metaphor is ill-suited to poetry, which by nature admits more στόμφος (3.1), it can scarcely be appropriate (ἁρμόσειεν 3.1) to prose. The concept of propriety as a criterion by which a given quality, essentially neutral, acquires its value, and a sense for the appropriate moment which is allied to this concept, are in this context clearly reminiscent of Aristotle's discussions in the *Ethics* and *Rhetoric*.[21] For when our sense of propriety fails, those very qualities which would constitute virtue become the ingredients of vice (*cf. Ethics* 2.1109a20ff).

Finally, in the passage [15.3] where Euripides, a poet very little inclined by nature to 'sublimity,' is praised for boldly essaying the grand manner, we are reminded of Aristotle's discussion of the second rule for hitting the mean [*Ethics* 2.1109b1–5]: σκοπεῖν δὲ δεῖ πρὸς ἃ καὶ αὐτοὶ εὐκατάφοροί ἐσμεν. ἄλλοι γὰρ πρὸς ἄλλα πεφύκαμεν . . . εἰς τοὐναντίον (*i.e.* to the one to which we are prone) δ' ἑαυτοὺς ἀφέλκειν δεῖ. In the same way, Euripides ἥκιστά γέ τοι μεγαλοφυὴς ὢν ὅμως τὴν αὐτὸς αὐτοῦ φύσιν (*cf.* πεφύκαμεν) ἐν πολλοῖς γενέσθαι τραγικὴν προσηνάγκασεν (*cf.* ἐφέλκειν) [15.3]. In both cases, success is achieved by bending one's nature in the direction to which it is the less inclined.

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[20] With ἀνακεκραμένας *cf. Poetics* 22.1458a31, δεῖ κεκρᾶσθαί πως. The significance of (ἐκ) φεύγειν as a technical term has already been noted (above, p. 200).

[21] *E.g., Rhet.* 3.1404b3–4 μήτε ταπεινὴν μήτε ὑπὲρ τὸ ἀξίωμα, ἀλλὰ πρέπουσαν. Also *cf. ibid.* 1408b13 ἁρμόττει with ἁρμόσειεν 3.1. For 'sense for the appropriate moment,' *cf.* 2.2 τὸν ἐφ' ἑκάστου καιρὸν with *Rhet.* 3.1408b1–2 τὸ δὲ εὐκαίρως ἢ μὴ εὐκαίρως χρῆσθαι κοινὸν ἁπάντων τῶν εἰδῶν ἐστιν. In this context, Longinus' use of the word ἀκρότης [1.3] to characterize 'sublimity' is perhaps noteworthy. Aristotle observes (*Ethics* 2.1107a6–8) that although κατὰ μὲν τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι λέγοντα virtue is a mean, it is κατὰ . . . τὸ ἄριστον καὶ τὸ εὖ an ἀκρότης; *cf.*, however, D. H. *Dem.* ch. 2 [U-R p. 130] for the use of this term where there is no question of a Peripatetic context.

## II

If the preceding analysis is correct, there are two problems which require attention. First, what is the significance of the two categories, ὕψος and τὸ ἡδύ, which emerged as a result of our own analysis? The second problem, which concerns Mutschmann's apparent mean ("apparent" because constructed out of elements belonging to two separate categories), I should like to defer for the moment.

At the very outset it should be made clear that the appearance in chapter 3 of ὕψος and τὸ ἡδύ as two distinct, yet allied stylistic categories is not fortuitous. Several parallels, in fact, occur within the Περὶ Ὕψους, as well as in the work of the ancient literary critics, particularly Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Let us consider the following passages from the Περὶ Ὕψους; it should be noted that the μεγαληγορία of 39.1 (if Toll's conjecture is correct) and τὸ θαυμάσιον of 1.4 are merely synonyms of ὕψος or ὑψηλόν, as is χάρις (1.4) of τὸ ἡδύ:

> ὅθεν ἐπίφορον εἰς συνταγμάτων κατόρθωσιν τά τε κάλλη
> τῆς ἑρμηνείας καὶ **τὰ ὕψη** καὶ πρὸς τούτοις **αἱ ἡδοναί**, [5.1]
>
> θαῦμα μ᾽ ἔχει, . . . πῶς κατὰ τὸν ἡμέτερον αἰῶνα **πιθα-**
> **ναὶ** μὲν ἐπ᾽ ἄκρον καὶ πολιτικαί, δριμεῖαί τε καὶ ἐντρεχεῖς,
> καὶ **μάλιστα πρὸς ἡδονὰς** λόγων **εὔφοροι**, ὑψηλαὶ δὲ λίαν
> καὶ ὑπερμεγέθεις, πλὴν εἰ μή τι σπάνιον, οὐκέτι γεννῶνται
> φύσεις. [44.1]
>
> **πάθος** δὲ **ὕψους** μετέχει τοσοῦτον, ὁπόσον **ἦθος ἡδονῆς**.
> [29.2]
>
> . . . οὐ μόνον ἐστὶ **πειθοῦς** καὶ **ἡδονῆς** ἡ ἁρμονία φυσι-
> κὸν ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλὰ καὶ **μεγαληγορίας** καὶ **πάθους**
> θαυμαστόν τι ὄργανον· [39.1]
>
> πάντῃ δέ γε σὺν **ἐκπλήξει** τοῦ **πιθανοῦ** καὶ **τοῦ πρὸς**
> **χάριν** ἀεὶ κρατεῖ **τὸ θαυμάσιον**, . . . [1.4]

It is soon apparent, moreover, that with this pair of stylistic qualities, i.e., with ὕψος and τὸ ἡδύ, there are associated additional elements. From the passages above we see that this contrasting pair is in itself incomplete; the full scheme is ὕψος – πάθος – ἔκπληξις, as opposed to ἡδύ – ἦθος – πειθώ. Indeed, the former part of this scheme appears explicitly in Longinus' description of Demosthenes' lightning-like eloquence [12.5]:

> καιρὸς δὲ τοῦ Δημοσθενικοῦ μὲν ὕψους καὶ ὑπερτεταμένου
> ἔν τε ταῖς δεινώσεσι καὶ τοῖς σφοδροῖς πάθεσι, καὶ ἔνθα δεῖ
> τὸν ἀκροατὴν τὸ σύνολον ἐκπλῆξαι.

It can be shown, moreover, that Longinus is employing a complex familiar in ancient literary criticism. The triad ὕψος – πάθος – ἔκπληξις is, in fact, already present in Aristotle, at least by implication;[22] while the entire scheme of two contrasting triads is employed by Dionysius in the *De Lysia* 13 [U-R p. 23]:

> οὐδ᾽, ὥσπερ ἐν τοῖς ἤθεσίν ἐστι πιθανή, οὕτως ἐν τοῖς
> πάθεσιν ἰσχυρὰ οὐδ᾽ ὡς ἡδῦναι καὶ πεῖσαι καὶ χαριεντίσασθαι
> δύναται, οὕτω βιάσασθαί τε καὶ προσαναγκάσαι.

Dionysius' ἰσχυρά alludes to his stylistic category, ἰσχύς or δεινότης; this is close to Longinus' ὕψος, when ὕψος contains an element of strong passion (*cf.* below, n.28). As to βιάσασθαι, Περὶ ῞Υψους 1.4 makes it clear that βία (*cf.* βίαν ἄμαχον) is a constituent element of ἔκπληξις.

It is clear from this evidence that the contrast between the 'pleasant' and the 'magnificent' in style, which had been previously unnoticed in 3.3–4, was a familiar one, and one which ultimately, I suggest, derives from Theophrastus.[23]

But to return to Mutschmann. That ὕψος should in his analysis be flanked by two aberrant stylistic qualities, the one of which (τὸ οἰδοῦν) is allied to μέγεθος, the other (τὸ μειρακιῶδες) to τὸ ἡδύ, now seems *in itself* less curious. Moreover, since ὕψος *(-η)* and μέγεθος *(-η)* are for Longinus synonymous, it is not strange that he should bring τὸ οἰδοῦν, which is an aberrant product of a search for μέγεθος, into relation with τὰ ὕψη as one of its vicious extremes. But why τὸ μειρακιῶδες *(and τὸ ψυχρόν)*? For the discussion of τὸ ψυχρόν which follows [4] seems to be only in terms of τὸ ἡδύ,[24] and while it is a concept associated with

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[22] See *Rhet.* 3.1408b11–12, τὰ δὲ ὀνόματα . . . τὰ ξένα (for these as elements of the 'sublime' style, *cf.* Περὶ ῞Υψους 30) μάλιστα ἁρμόττει λέγοντι παθητικῶς, and *ibid.* 1408a23–25 συνομοιοπαθεῖ ὁ ἀκούων ἀεὶ τῷ παθητικῶς λέγοντι . . . διὸ πολλοὶ καταπλήττουσι τοὺς ἀκροατὰς θορυβοῦντες.

[23] It was argued by Stroux (*De Theophrasti Virtutibus Dicendi* [Leipzig 1911] ch. 2) that Theophrastus in his Περὶ Λέξεως subdivided his fourth virtue of style, *viz.*, κατασκευή or κόσμος, into ἡδύ and μεγαλοπρεπές. The first three Theophrastean virtues, according to Stroux, were σαφήνεια, ἑλληνισμός, and πρέπον. What stylistic qualities were indicated by μεγαλοπρεπές it is not easy to reconstruct with precision. By a process of elimination, however, *i.e.*, by eliminating the first three virtues and ἡδύ, it appears that μεγαλοπρεπές designated qualities very much like those for which Longinus employed the term ὑψηλόν. And we should also remember that μεγαλοπρεπές is itself a synonym for ὑψηλόν; *cf.* 12.3 and 30.1; also D. H. *De Lysia* ch. 13 [U-R p. 23] ὑψηλὴ δὲ καὶ μεγαλοπρεπής . . . For a recent discussion of Theophrastus' Περὶ Λέξεως see G. Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton 1963) 273–284 and the scholarly literature cited there.

[24] The chief cause of ψυχρότης according to Longinus is a search for new and clever ideas, and his examples show that 'frigidity' occurs chiefly when an attempt at *wit* misfires.

ὕψος, it is also, as the evidence cited above demonstrates, quite distinct. The conclusion suggests itself that Longinus, employing terminology which reflected two well recognized areas of style, sought to imply a stylistic category which was constituted of both, and that in order to do so he had recourse to the form of the Aristotelian mean. Why this should be so we shall now consider.

## III

An answer to the problems raised by the preceding analysis immediately suggests itself if we recall the character of the treatise. It is a polemic aimed at discrediting Caecilius' adverse criticism of Plato's style, and at pointing out the absurdity of Caecilius' omission of πάθος in his discussion of 'sublimity'.

Caecilius, as Longinus tells us [32.8], considered Lysias an author without fault, and for that reason superior to Plato, who was, as Caecilius maintains, guilty of numerous stylistic lapses. Longinus replies that even if Caecilius' charges were true, which they are not, Plato would be superior to Lysias merely on the grounds that he possessed ὕψος, a virtue which redeems all stylistic faults [36.2; cf. 1.3].

This entire discussion [32.8–36] presupposes the elaborate system of stylistic virtues which had been worked out by the time of the Augustan period, although there are hints of it already in Cicero. It is also familiar from the critical works of Caecilius' contemporary and friend, Dionysius.[25] We are not, to be sure, equally well-informed about Caecilius' system of virtues and vices, if indeed there was any. It is clear, however, that Caecilius considered ὕψος a virtue (as did Dionysius). This we can infer from Longinus' observation [1] that Caecilius failed to show the reader the means to acquire ὕψος; rather, Caecilius merely illustrated what it was by means of numerous examples. Needless to say, Longinus' charge would be senseless if Caecilius had condemned ὕψος as an undesirable quality of style. For Caecilius, ὕψος was therefore a virtue of style, although in no way an indispensable one, since Lysias, his exemplar of perfection, was without it. That Caecilius explicitly maintained that Lysias lacked ὕψος is not known, since the fragments of Caecilius' two studies of Lysias have nothing to say on this particular matter. Dionysius, however, denied this range of style to Lysias, and common sense requires that if ὕψος,

[25] See S. F. Bonner, *The Literary Treatises of Dionysius of Halicarnassus* (Cambridge 1939) 18–24.

μεγαλοπρέπεια, etc. had any stable meaning, they could not have been used by Caecilius to characterize Lysias' style. This was ἡδύ, not ὑψηλόν or μεγαλοπρεπές; it possessed χάρις, not ὕψος.

Lysias' charm and grace are the burden of Dionysius' praise (*De Lysia* 10 [U-R p. 18])—a view which Longinus, too, shared, as is clear from a remark in his characterization of Hyperides [34.2]: "He possesses all of Lysias' virtues and his graces (χάριτας)." In other words, Lysias, an author rich in 'charm' and 'grace,' but devoid of 'splendor' and 'sublimity,' is accorded by Caecilius a place in the critic's hierarchy superior to that of Plato. The reason that Longinus found this contention insupportable will be obvious to every reader of the treatise.

What I do suggest, however, is that Longinus' dissatisfaction, and the polemical interchange which it engendered, found expression also in the precise details of rhetorical theory reflected in the passages which we considered earlier. Furthermore, Longinus appears in chapter 3 to be drawing upon a tradition, which can be traced back at least as far as Cicero, according to which distinction in style—anything, that is, which remains after the bare requirements of communication have been discharged—was divided into the pleasant and the magnificent.[26] Although some occasions might demand more of the one than of the other, both were, and should be, constant features of a style which pretended to more than mere clarity and correctness: the best orator would have both at his command.

Now the passages quoted above show that Longinus viewed the matter in somewhat this light: καὶ τὰ ὕψη καὶ πρὸς τούτοις αἱ ἡδοναί [5.1], and οὐ μόνον ἐστὶ . . . ἡδονῆς ἡ ἁρμονία φυσικὸν ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλὰ καὶ μεγαληγορίας . . . ὄργανον [39.1]. Moreover, despite his views on the importance of sublimity, the admiration of Longinus for a charming and graceful style, as is shown by his characterization of Hyperides, is quite sincere [34.2], as is his recognition of the real way Demosthenes blunders when he attempts to be jocular and pleasant: "he does not excite laughter but rather becomes the subject of it" (οὐ γέλωτα κινεῖ μᾶλλον ἢ καταγελᾶται 34.3). Both qualities, therefore, should ideally be present in style; it is an acknowledged defect of Demosthenes that he lacks a graceful wit. However,—and here Longinus parts company with Caecilius—if one were compelled to choose *one* of the two, and to

[26] See *Orator* 79 and Kroll *ad loc.*; *cf.* also *Part.Orat.* 6.19–22. See also above n.23, where Stroux's conclusions suggest that very much the same idea was already present in Theophrastus' Περὶ Λέξεως.

say that *this* is the expendable quality, even without *this* an author can be supreme, then one must surely eliminate 'charm,' not 'sublimity.' This is one obvious source of Longinus' displeasure with Caecilius for his elevation of Lysias to the level of perfection and his consequent preference of the orator to Plato. Lysias, according to Caecilius, excelled Plato; and yet Lysias did not possess ὕψος, whereas Plato did. This surely was not a critical position which Longinus could calmly and decently endure. It should be noted, moreover, that this same outlook characterizes the σύγκρισις of Hyperides and Demosthenes [34].

It is, I submit, precisely into the framework of this literary debate that the section ought to be placed, to the Peripatetic character of which Mutschmann was the first to call attention. Its purpose was to enunciate the two terms of the debate, *i.e.*, the 'pleasant' and the 'sublime,' and at the same time to suggest, with the help of what I have called an "apparent" mean, the traditional notion that distinction in style was a composite of these two qualities, even though for Longinus the presence of 'sublimity' always redeemed any lapse or omission in the domain of the 'pleasant.' My own conjecture is that the authority of Theophrastus is consciously being invoked in this particular matter. This cannot of course be proven. Cicero, however, provides an interesting parallel.[27]

To come now to the second point in Longinus' critique of Caecilius' treatise, *i.e.*, Caecilius' omission of πάθος in his discussion of sublimity. There can have been two reasons for this, Longinus argues, and both are wrong. The second explanation put forward is that Caecilius thought that πάθος had no part at all in the virtue of sublimity (incidentally, if he did, he would only be sharing Dionysius' opinion).[28] This, I suspect, was the interpretation to which Longinus inclined; at any rate, he devoted much more space to this alternative. Now we have already seen that for Longinus πάθος and ὕψος are complemen-

[27] See *Orator* 79, where Cicero uses the authority of Theophrastus to support his contention that the Atticists' conception of style was inadequate.

[28] For Dionysius, πάθος was not an ingredient of ὕψος; *cf.*, for example, *De Isoc.* ch. 3 [U-R p. 59], where the ὕψος of Isocrates, who is an exemplar of this virtue, is praised, and the absence of τὸ παθητικόν noted (*ibid.* ch. 2 [U-R p. 57]). Rather, it was associated with what Dionysius called ἰσχύς or δεινότης; *cf. De Thucyd.* ch. 53 [U-R p. 412] τὴν ἐξεγείρουσαν τὰ πάθη δεινότητα. The ὕψος of Longinus appears to be a composite of both categories of Dionysius; in 8.2 it corresponds to the ὕψος of Dionysius, in 8.4 to his ἰσχύς. As Longinus states in his discussion in ch. 8, there are some kinds of ὕψος which have πάθος, and some which do not. See L. Voit, Δεινότης, *ein antiker Stilbegriff* (Leipzig 1934) 47–53.

tary concepts, and that the two imply the further notion of ἔκπληξις. Longinus allows, to be sure, that there are examples of the sublime which have absolutely no trace of passion. Yet he does insist [8.3] that nothing contributes so effectively to 'sublimity' as noble and exalted passion. There are several reasons, but the fundamental one surely is that πάθος is one part of us in which the divine manifests itself. From this fact derives the poignancy of the last chapter, where Longinus points out that it is not political oppression which has caused the dearth of great literature, but the corruption of our passions by a prosperous material environment. For in a world where our passions, sullied and cut off from their divine source of nourishment, have replaced what is truly god-like with the spurious divinity of wealth, there is no possibility of a renascence of literary greatness.

It is in this light that we should reconsider the beginning of chapter 44, where the contrast between the 'pleasant' and the 'sublime' is most clearly expressed. In the context of the analysis of the causes of cultural decline which immediately follows, Longinus' polemic against Caecilius concerning the relative merits of 'charm' and 'sublimity' assumes a quite different, a more urgent and profound character. For to exalt, as Caecilius had done, the 'pleasant' over the 'sublime,' and to maintain further that *pathos* had nothing to do with this latter quality, was not merely a matter for a fellow critic's censure; it was also to acquiesce in and encourage the root evil of the time. Caecilius, by saying that 'sublimity,' with its all but invariable component of transcendent passion, was not necessary for literary greatness, surely seemed to Longinus to be denying the potential function of literature to cleanse men of their avarice and self-gratification.

In conclusion, it need scarcely be emphasized that Longinus was no ordinary rhetorician. The way in which he adapted to his own extraordinary requirements the often arid and doctrinaire details of rhetorical and stylistic theory shows this quite clearly. Yet we must remember that Longinus was, first of all, a rhetorician, and if this had not been the case, if he had not had at his ready disposal the elements of a long and fully elaborated tradition, his conception of the 'sublime' would not have been clad in precisely the garb in which it was, nor without the Peripatetics would his polemic with Caecilius have assumed the particular form that it did.

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