In this book, Robert Doran offers the first in-depth treatment of the major theories of the sublime, from the ancient Greek treatise *On the Sublime* (attributed to "Longinus"), and its reception in early modern literary theory, to the philosophical accounts of Burke and Kant. Doran explains how and why the sublime became a key concept of modern thought and shows how the various theories of sublimity are united by a common structure – the paradoxical experience of being at once overwhelmed and exalted – and a common concern: the preservation of a notion of transcendence in the face of the secularization of modern culture. Combining intellectual history with literary theory and philosophical analysis, his book provides a new, searching, and multilayered account of a concept that continues to stimulate thought about our responses to art, nature, and human events.

**Robert Doran** is Associate Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of Rochester. He is the author of *The Ethics of Theory: Philosophy, History, Literature* (forthcoming) and the editor of three books: *Philosophy of History After HaydenWhite* (2011); Hayden White’s *The Fiction of Narrative* (2010); and René Girard’s *Mimesis and Theory* (2008).
THE THEORY OF THE SUBLIME
FROM LONGINUS TO KANT

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Cambridge University Press
For my father:

Francis Yates Doran (1918–2010)
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Key to abbreviations and translations


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