

ENGLISH AUTHORSHIP AND THE EARLY MODERN SUBLIME

Patrick Cheney's new book places the sublime at the heart of poems and plays in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England. Specifically, Cheney argues for the importance of an 'early modern sublime' to the advent of modern authorship in Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Jonson. Chapters feature a model of creative excellence and social liberty that helps explain the greatness of the English Renaissance. Cheney's argument revises the received wisdom, which locates the sublime in the eighteenth-century philosophical 'subject'. The book demonstrates that canonical works such as *The Faerie Queene* and *King Lear* reinvent sublimity as a new standard of authorship. This standard emerges not only in rational, patriotic paradigms of classical and Christian goodness but also in the eternizing greatness of the author's work: free, heightened, ecstatic. Playing a centralizing role in the advent of modern authorship, the early modern sublime becomes a catalyst in the formation of an English canon.

PATRICK CHENEY is Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Pennsylvania State University. He is the author of seven monographs and the editor of eleven collections, as well as the editor of poems by Spenser, Marlowe, and Shakespeare. A recipient of the Faculty Scholar Medal from Pennsylvania State University and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Montana, Cheney has been a Visiting Research Fellow at Merton College, Oxford, and a Visiting Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford. Currently, he is the general editor of the fourteen-volume *Oxford History of Poetry in English*.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-62791-8 — English Authorship and the Early Modern Sublime
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Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson

PATRICK CHENEY

Pennsylvania State University



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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

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education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107627918
DOI: 10.1017/9781107279100

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First published 2018
First paperback edition 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-107-04962-8 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-107-62791-8 Paperback

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Cambridge University Press
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For Jan

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to colleagues and friends who have helped with the writing of this book: Judith H. Anderson, Catherine Bates, Martin Butler, Dympna Callaghan, Henry Day, Lukas Erne, Elizabeth Fowler, Andrew Hadfield, Philip Hardie, Adam Hooks, David Hopkins, Wolfram Keller, William J. Kennedy, Laura Knoppers, Charles Martindale, Jean-Christophe Mayer, Sam McMillan, David Lee Miller, Michael O'Neill, James I. Porter, Yulia Ryzhik, Maggie Rouse, Michael Schoenfeldt, Charlotte Scott, Tiffany Stern, Paul Stevens, Bart van Es, and John Watkins. Kenneth Borris, Andrew Escobedo, Heather James, and Leah Whittington kindly allowed me to cite work in progress, while Leah helped secure Wieix's 'Grammatica' for an illustration, and Lydia Hamlett directed me to Orazio Gentileschi's 'An Allegory of Peace and the Arts' for the cover image.

To complete the book, I have depended on the stellar work of my research assistants, Katharine Cleland, Paul Zajac, Kelly Lehtonen, Ted Chelis, Jayme Peacock, Danielle Ryle, Mckenzie Eggers, and Brice Peterson, as well as my undergraduate interns, Stéfan Orzech and Nicholas Babich. At the end, Brice did a heroic job of working with Nicholas to check quotations and citations, including tying together many loose threads. I have also benefited from conversations with Kelly, who has just completed her PhD dissertation on the 'heroic sublime' in Tasso, Spenser, and Milton.

Additionally, I would like to thank the Warden and Fellows of Merton College, Oxford, for a visiting fellowship during September 2015, as well as my longtime friend at Merton, Richard A. McCabe. I would also like to thank the Warden and Fellows of All Souls College, Oxford, for a visiting research fellowship during Michaelmas 2015, as well as longtime friend Colin Burrow. While at All Souls, I benefited especially from the collegiality of Simon Hornblower, Dean of Visiting Fellows, Neil Kenny, and George Woudhuysen, as well as the Fellows Secretary, Rachel Stephenson, and the Chair of the Visiting Fellows Colloquium, Joseph Ziegler, who kindly invited me to present my work before the College. Finally, I would

like to thank the American Philosophical Society for awarding me a Franklin Research Grant for 2016.

Thanks, as well, to colleagues and friends who invited me to present parts of the book in progress: Henry Day and Philip Hardie, at the Conference on the Sublime and Classical Culture, Trinity College, Cambridge, 7 March 2008; Lukas Erne and Guillemette Bolens, at the Medieval and Early Modern Authorship Biennial Conference of the Swiss Association of Medieval and Early Modern English Studies, University of Geneva, 1 July 2010; Casey Charles, Chair of the Department of English, and Chris Comer, Dean of Arts and Sciences, at the University of Montana, 23–25 September 2010; Kenneth Gross, chair of the joint panel of the International Spenser Society and the Marlowe Society of America at the MLA in Los Angeles, 1 January 2011; Tim Arner and the English Department at Grinnell College, during my appointment as the Connolly Lecturer, 14–15 October 2011; Jeanne Brink, organizer of a special tribute to Thomas P. Roche III at the Renaissance Society of America, New York, 28 March 2014; and Lukas Erne, at the Department of English, University of Geneva, 20 May 2014.

At Penn State, I would like to thank my two department heads, Mark Morrisson of English and Robert R. Edwards of Comparative Literature, as well as Dean Susan Welch of the College of Liberal Arts, for strong research support, as well as a sabbatical leave during Fall 2015. Two organizations at Penn State invited me to present my research to faculty and students: the English Department Sociability Initiative, chaired by Robert Caserio and Janet Lyon; and the Early Modern Studies Colloquium, chaired by Brad Bouley. Also at Penn State, I would like to thank Bob Edwards, Garrett Sullivan, and David Loewenstein for their friendship and conversation extended over many years.

Parts of the Introduction and Chapter 1 derive from the pilot essay for this book, “‘The forms of things unknown’: English Authorship and the Early Modern Sublime”, published in *Medieval and Early Modern Authorship*, edited by Guillemette Bolens and Lukas Erne (Tubingen, Germany: Narr Verlag, 2011) 137–60. A few paragraphs of Chapter 1 come from *Marlowe’s Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). The section in Chapter 3 on Arthur’s Dream of Gloriana derives from ‘Petrarch’ in *Edmund Spenser in Context*, edited by Andrew Escobedo (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016) 235–45. The section in Chapter 4 on Marlowe’s *Edward II* derives from ‘*Edward II*: Marlowe, Tragedy, and the Sublime’, published in *The Cambridge Companion to English Renaissance Tragedy*, edited by Emma

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Smith and Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 174–87. I am grateful to the editors and publishers for the opportunity to include this material here. I would add that elsewhere I discuss sublime authorship in two additional English Renaissance figures (both mentioned in the Works Cited): Donne (*‘Artes Poeticae’*) and Marston.

At Cambridge University Press, I am especially grateful to Sarah Stanton, longtime commissioning editor and friend, who has expertly overseen the publication of five books of mine. I will miss Sarah, who retired just as the present book was moving into production. She has been such a mighty influence on my career that I cannot adequately express my gratitude to her: it’s been fun, Sarah, and I shall miss you. Also at the Press, I would like to thank the new commissioning editor, Emily Hockley, and Tim Mason, editorial assistant, for their help in ushering the book into production. Kristy Barker has done a magnificent job of copyediting the script, while Divyabharathi Elavazhagan has courteously overseen the production process, and Robert Swanson has professionally produced the Index. Finally, Catherine Bates has read the script for the Press, and offered a profound meditation on the Renaissance sublime that should be available in print!

Outside the academy, David and Theresa Ganow have been exceptional friends, loyal for many years, dating back to the days of youth soccer for our sons, and including (more recently) trips to England. My mother-in-law, Shirley Freeman, continues to share my zest for all things Shakespearean. My sister, Anne, has been a constant source of conversation about *life*, and I’m lucky to have such sturdy brothers as Jack and Damien.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the love and support of my inner family: my wife, Jan, and our children, Hannah, Kelton, Evan, and Kate, along with Kate’s husband, Aron, and their new baby, our granddaughter, Lola Jane.

I dedicate this book to Jan, who, with her sublime skill in design, has lovingly kept our home *glowing* and me *dressed*: inside and out.

Note on Texts and References

Quotations from Spenser's poetry come from *The Faerie Queene*, ed. A.C. Hamilton (Harlow: Pearson Education-Longman, 2001) and *Spenser's Shorter Poetry*, ed. Richard A. McCabe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1999).

Quotations from Marlowe's plays come from *Christopher Marlowe: The Complete Plays*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett, Everyman Library (London: Dent; Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 1999), while quotations from Marlowe's poems come from *The Collected Poems of Christopher Marlowe*, ed. Patrick Cheney and Brian J. Striar (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Quotations from Shakespeare's poems and plays come from *The Norton Shakespeare*, ed. Stephen Greenblatt, et al., 3rd ed. (New York: Norton, 2016). For *King Lear*, quotations come from the Norton 'Combined Text', which uses the folio edition as the base text, then interpolates lines from the quarto edition. In one instance, I cite the quarto itself.

Quotations from Jonson come from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, ed. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson, 7 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Quotations from other Renaissance dramatists come from *English Renaissance Drama: A Norton Anthology*, ed. David Bevington (New York: Norton, 2002).

Quotations from Donne come from *John Donne: Collected Poetry*, ed. Ilona Bell (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2012), while quotations from Milton come from *John Milton: Complete Poems and Major Prose*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (Indianapolis: Odyssey, 1957).

Quotations from Longinus come from *On Sublimity, Classical Literary Criticism*, ed. D.A. Russell and Michael Winterbottom, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972) 143–87.

Unless otherwise noted, quotations and translations from other classical authors come from the Loeb Classical Library. As the Works Cited list at the end reveals, major exceptions include Plato's dialogues, which come from the edition of Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns; Aristotle's

Note on Texts and References

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works, from the edition of Richard McKeon; and the Bible, from the facsimile of the Geneva edition of 1560 published by the University of Wisconsin Press. (Works merely cited in passing but not quoted in the text do not appear in the Works Cited list.)

Throughout, I modernize the archaic i–j and u–v of Renaissance texts, as well as other obsolete typographical conventions such as the italicizing of names and places.

For formatting, I rely primarily on the ‘works cited’ format from the *MLA Style Manual*; this format depends on a system of abbreviation in the text and the notes, and thus it includes full citations only in the list of Works Cited. In particular, I use the following citation format to refer to a given primary work’s book number, section or chapter number, and page number, such as Longinus’ *On Sublimity*: 1.4: 144 (or sometimes minus the section or chapter number: 10: 105). For secondary works of more than one volume, I use the following format to refer to volume and page number: 2: 205. Secondarily, I accommodate Cambridge University Press’s in-house style guide by using single quotation marks, as well as other formatting conventions, such as for printing dates and page numbers and for spelling.

Abbreviations

<i>CEWBJ</i>	<i>Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson</i>
<i>c</i>	<i>circa</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
esp.	especially
<i>FQ</i>	<i>The Faerie Queene</i>
MS	manuscript
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
rpt.	reprint
qtd.	quoted
pub.	published
s.d.	stage direction
St.	Saint

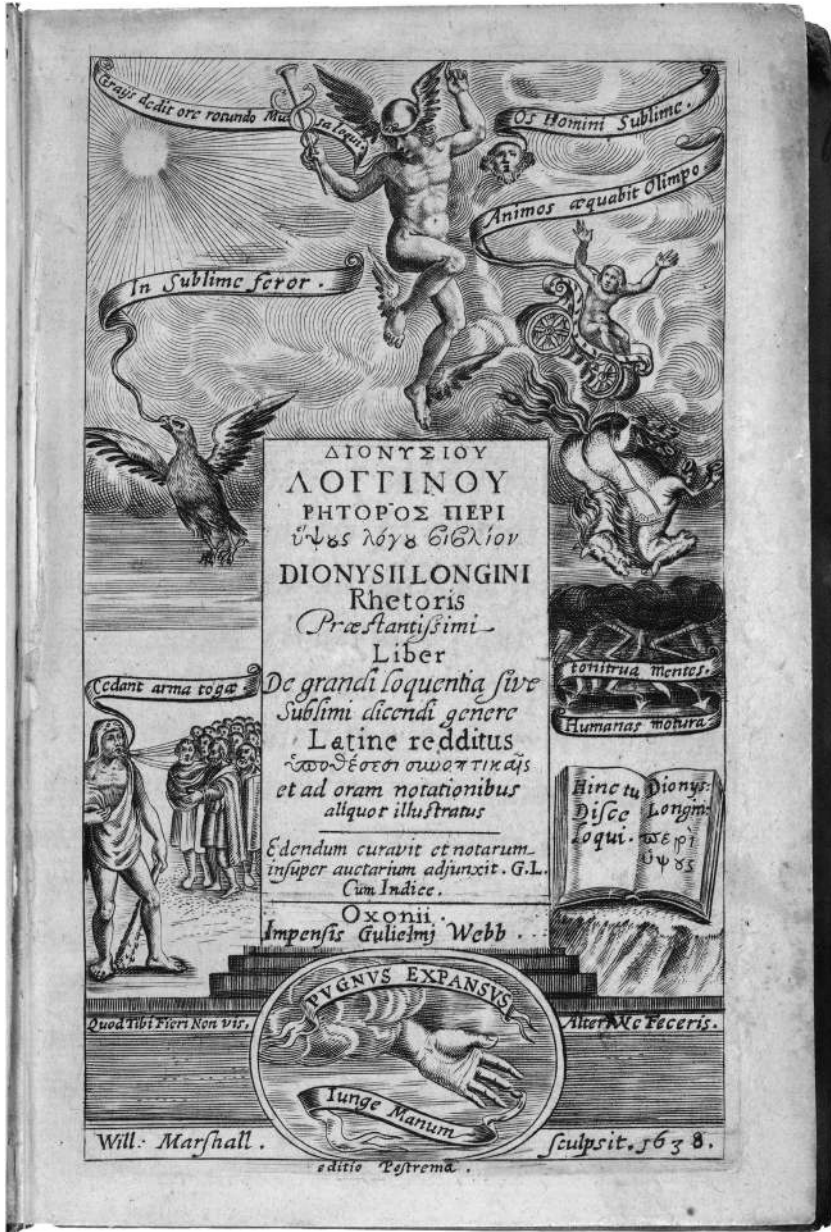


Figure 1. William Marshall, title page to Gerard Langbaine's edition of Longinus: *Dionysiou Longinou rhetoros Peri hypsous* (Oxford, 1636). With permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC.



Figure 2. Antonie Wierix II, 'Grammatica'. Antwerp, 1592.
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