INTRODUCTION: FRAMES OF UNDERSTANDING

In recent years two developments in text theory have opened up the possibility of bridging the gap between synchronic semantics and what is usually called ‘Traditionsgeschichte’.

The so-called ‘script’ or ‘frame’ theory developed in artificial intelligence (cf Abelson 1973; Minsky 1980) influenced linguistic models developed to describe discourse processing (cf the reader by Metzing 1980). It has become clear that the expressions forming the explicit textbase are interpreted against the background of ‘frames’ or ‘scripts’. These frames or scripts are stored in the long-term memory (LTM) and are activated during the process of reading by the expressions in the text for use in the short term memory (STM. Cf Bower & Cirilo 1985; Kintsch 1985; Van Dijk 1987, Hobi 1988). This model enables us to explain important aspects of the functioning of the lexicon (Petöfi 1985:100), as well as how actual semantic discourse analysis works (Bower & Cirilo 1985; Van Dijk 1985, 1987). For exegesis this is important. The way in which we frame the numerous details historical research has accumulated, influences us when we read early Christian documents. How predominant such frames can be, is illustrated by the change in the way in which scholars have tended to interpret soteriological texts since Colpe (1961) demolished the gnostic saviour myth or since Neusner (1971) and Saladarini (1988) refuted the identification of pre-70 Pharisaism with later rabbinic Judaism.

In analysing natural language texts it has become clear that we have to consider that a process is going on in the mind of the reader. Semantic theories have to be sensitive to the cognitive psychological dimension of the process of discourse understanding (cf Bower & Cirilo 1985; Horowitz & Samuels 1987; Ungern-Sternberg & Reinau 1988). How does the information the reader has in mind influence his/her understanding of the words he/she reads in the text? The pictures of antiquity which we exegetes have framed in our minds, steer our process of text interpretation. Text interpretation is a process through which the exegete reads the text in the light of what he or she has in mind. With this I do not wish to deny that the explicit textbase could control this process. I still think it is possible to speak about the ‘Textgemäßheit’ (Breytenbach 1984:110-129) of an interpretation.

In this essay, however, I would like to set aside the theory of text processing and explain what I mean by ‘terminology as a window on tradition.’ Theoretically I mean that the words, the expressions, forming the explicit textbase are the windows through which we have to look in order to recognise parts of those frames which suit the text. However, when we look further and discover the whole ‘frame’, when we have an equivalent of the
frame which the writer had in mind in our own mind, only then we can hope to interpret the text adequately. But how are we to discover the frame when only part of it is expressed in the text? Frames are not explicated in the text itself. They are presupposed. They were part of the common knowledge of ancient society. We too store our knowledge about events such as ‘going shopping’ or ‘using a library’, about places such as ‘airports’ and ‘lecture rooms’, as structured ‘frames’ or ‘scripts’ in our LTM. What we have in mind influences our process of understanding when reading about these events or situations. Writers normally presuppose this type of knowledge. It forms part of the implicit text.

Modern text theory has thus underlined the role that common knowledge, structured in frames, plays in the process of interpretation. When reading texts which originated within first century Hellenistic Judaism, the exegete must be familiar with the frames that were presupposed by the writer. If we really want to read our texts synchronically, we must take up the task of historical research in order to find the right frame. Keeping James Barr’s (196) legitimate critique in mind, we have to continue the work started in Kittel’s ‘Theologisches Wörterbuch’. We might prefer not to call our encyclopaedia a ‘lexicon’, but we still have to structure the work in such a way that the users have access to the frames by means of the words used to refer to them.

Traditionally this research was done in the ‘history of traditions’ or ‘history of religions’ schools. My aim is to illustrate that even from the perspective of modern theories which explain how text processing functions, this work still has to be done in order to understand the text synchronically. Text-immanent semantic approaches which interpret the text only in terms of the discourse world reconstructed on basis of the explicit textbase, may be a starting point. They are however inadequate. They are not synchronous but achronic.

2 PAUL AND THE ΘΡΙΑΜΒΟΣ (2 Corinthians 2:14-16a)

2.1 The problem

In this text Paul might have used the Roman triumph as foil for his description of his apostolic mission. The text is, however, far from clear. Recently the interpretation of 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 has become a matter of dispute. Since the earlier discussion is well documented (Hafemann 1986:18-20), it suffices to concentrate on the major alternatives among the exegetes.

There are three problems. In the first instance it has been questioned whether the Roman pompa triumphalis really forms the background of 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a. I hope to present sufficient evidence that Paul indeed presupposed the Roman triumphal procession as ‘frame’ in 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a (contra Field 1899; Egan 1977; Dautzenberg 1981). In this sense his use of ἐρημιμβεύειν in our passage fits in well with his use of καταλλάσσειν κτλ. The terminology of ‘reconciliation’ stems from a diplomatic background and belongs to the same frame as that of the πρέβευσιν/προσβευτῆς which Paul uses in his description of his apostolic task (2 Cor 5:11-6:2. Cf Breytenbach 1989:64-66). The images Paul uses in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6 have a very similar background (Malherbe 1983).

The second question concerns the meaning of ἐρημιμβεύειν + τιν. Since
Chrysostom questioned the aptness of the interpretation that Paul was led in triumph like a prisoner of war in the procession (104.52.797), various attempts have been made to understand θεραμβευόνται in 2 Corinthians 2:14 in a causative sense: 'to cause to triumph' (KJV). There is no lexical evidence for this usage (Meyer 1862:50; Findley 1879; Williamson 1968:320-321; Bauer 1988:739). This, however, does not mean that the meaning of θεραμβευόνται ἡμᾶς in 2 Corinthians 2:14 is beyond dispute. Two proposals have been forwarded since I attended to the matter (cf Breytenbach 1986). Following Williamson (1968:319), Hafemann (1986:33) denies that θεραμβευόνται ἡμᾶς can mean anything but ‘(God) who leads us in triumph’. Both authors argue that the transitive form of the verb has the sense of 'to lead in triumph' and that Paul referred to himself by making use of the image of the enslaved prisoner of war being led in triumph by the victorious general. Marshall (1983), on the other hand, tries to show that 'to be led in triumph' is a metaphor of social shame. In my discussion of the linguistic evidence I shall concentrate on the solution offered by Williamson and Hafemann, since there is almost no linguistic evidence that θεραμβευόνται was used as a metaphor of social shame as early as the first century CE.

Both solutions, however, fail to interpret verses 14b-16a within the frame of the Roman triumph. This brings us to the third problem. According to 2 Corinthians 2:14, the apostle is part of the triumph. According to verses 14b-16a, he spreads the Θεος ἀνακοίνωσεν. He is the εὐνοοῦσα λαμπρά ὑπεράνωσεν, ἐν τῷ τιμωρίαν. The question is whether it is possible to interpret verse 14 through 16a within the one frame of the triumphus. Windsich, following Hehnri (1900:104-108), did this in his commentary (1924:97), but he found little support. Most exegetes tend to explain that Paul conflated two different images (e.g. Bultmann 1976:67-80; Furnish 1984:187-188) or that he integrated the image of the θεραμβευόνται into his understanding of the apostolic mission as a sacrificial offering (Hafemann 1986:43-54).

In order to discuss these problems, we must investigate the use of the word in the early years of the principate.

2.2 The use of the word θεραμβευόνται in the corpus helenisticum
The word is a Latinism. It translates the Latin triumphare and is used very much in the same manner. The Greek word refers to the Roman institution (Mason 1974:sv). The explanation which Hesychius gives for θεραμβευόνται deserves attention: θεραμβευόνται πομπή, ἑπίδειξις νίκης...
With the cordial help of Tyndale House at Cambridge a search regarding
the use of the Greek lexeme θραμβεύειν in the corpus hellenisticum was
done. The following conclusions may be drawn:

2.2.1 The Intransitive usage
All but one of the expressions in which θραμβεύειν is used, refer to
the actual Roman triumph. The terminology is used figuratively only once (cf
infra). In the majority of instances an active form of the verb is used in-
transitively in the augmented tenses, therefore without any direct object
(e.g. Appian: Sic 6.7.3, Iber 90.8, 156.1, 179.6, 243.2, 463.4, Illyr 33.6,
Mith 482.1; Cassius Dio: 60.30.2.3 [Xiphilinus, 11th century C.E.]; Diodorus
Siculus: 16.90.2.7, 31.8.10.4; Plutarch, Vitae: Rom 16.8.4, Cam 7.1.5, Aem
36.2.2, Pomp 14.6.5, 45.2.1, Ant 84.7.4). It is clear that the word has
the sense of 'to celebrate a prior victory by means of a triumph'. It is
very important that the pompa is the triumphant celebration of a victory.
The word θραμβεύειν does not denote the victory, but the celebration of an
already accomplished victory.

Although normally the subject of the action is the victorious commander
of the army, it may also be indicated that the soldiers joined in the cele-
brations. The commander triumphs with his soldiers: θραμβεύειν μετά τινα
(Appian: Bell Civ 2.13.93.13). Appian even uses the active form of the verb
to indicate that the soldiers triumphed. In Bell Civ 2.13.93.18 the subject
of the verb θραμβεύοσουσι is the soldiers. It is therefore wrong to insist
(contra Marshall 1983:33) that the subject of the verb is always the com-
mander.

Most authors use a prepositional construction to express the nature of
the celebration. 'To celebrate the triumph over somebody' is expressed by
θραμβεύειν ἀπό τινος (e.g. Appian, Celt 1.1.4; Diodorus 39.4.2.5; Plutarch:
Vitae, Rom 25.6.1, Publ 9.9.1, Marius 44.8.2) or κατά τινος (e.g. Appian,
Bell Civ 1.9.80.22; Eutropius 2.19.9, 4.19.2, 4.25.2, 5.9.7, 9.13.16). When
the reason for the general's triumph is stated, the construction
θραμβεύειν ἐπί τινα is used (e.g. Appian, Bell Civ 1.11.101.20, 4.5.31.2;
Plutarch: Vitae, Sulla 3.3.7, Gracchus 38.8.5; Eutropius 2.2.6, 4.4.21,
4.22.10, 8.10.10, 8.13.5).

3 For the critical editions of the texts referred to or quoted, cf Berkow-
itz & Squillier (1986).
4 In most instances when a participle is formed, the verb is also used in-
transitively (e.g. Herodian 1.6.6.3, 8.7.8.6; Plutarch, 'Vitae': 'Cam'
1.1.4, 'Aem' 5.8.2, 35.3.1, 'Marius' 44.8.2, 'LUC' 36.4.8, 'Pomp' 14.2.2,
'Cato Minor' 29.5.2; Plutarch: 'Moralia', 282F.5).
5 Cf Livius 7.13.10: 'tecum triumphantes urbein Inire.'
6 The participle ὁ θραμβεύωνσας (e.g. Epictet 3.24.85.6; Plutarch:
'Vitae', 'Cato Maior' 11.4.6, 'LUC' 36.4.8, 'Pomp' 14.2.2) often refers to
the person who triumphs, the 'triumphator'. Although the noun ὁ θράμβος
(Mason 1974:247) is used to refer to the triumphal procession, some authors
use the infinitive + τό to perform this function: (e.g. Plutarch: 'Vitae',
'Aem' 36.2.1, 'Cato Minor' 29.5.2).
The construction ἑπλατουμένη τῶν ἑρώων (Appian, Lib 642.4, Bell. Civ 2.15.101.3; Plutarch: Vitae, Fabius Maximus 23.2.1; Eutropius 1.20.22) is a figura etymologia. The substance that is entailed in the verb is made an explicit object (cf Kühner & Gerth 1898:303). The added substantive need not be derived from the same root. The later Koine tends to be more explicit; the historian Eutropius thus uses the form ἑρωμεμένη τῆς νίκης (1.11.13, 3.23.8).

In the Moralia (201E.5) Plutarch uses the verb in a very similar construction. He writes 'After he (Scipio) celebrated his second triumph': ἑπεὶ...ἠρωμεμένας τὸ δεύτερον. In this case the form of the verb clearly cannot mean 'to lead somebody as a captive in triumph'. As can be illustrated from Eutropius, the form ἑρωμεμένη + τινά does not have the lexical sense of 'to be led in triumph': ἐντηθέντων δε αὐτῶν πανοραματι, οἱ ἑρωματὶ τῆς νίκης ἠρωμεμέναι (1.11.13; cf 3.5.9, 3.23.8). A section in Plutarch's Moralia (318B.7) presents yet another piece of evidence to refute the widely accepted thesis that ἑρωμεμένη + τινά must mean 'to lead in triumph' (as prisoner of war): καὶ Παύλος Αἰμήλιος ἀπὸ Περσέως καὶ Μακεδὼνος, ἀντρωτον στρατὸν ἐγὼν καὶ νίκην ἄδακρου ἑρωμεμένων μεγαλύνει τὴν Τύχην. Clearly, the accusative here cannot refer to a prisoner of war led in triumph. This alleged 'meaning' of ἑρωμεμένη + τινά seems to be more a matter of 'reference' than of 'sense'. What we have to do is to explain the exact function of the accusative, since it has the function of explaining the verb (cf Kühner & Gerth 1898:315-318).

2.2.2 The transitive usage

Important for the understanding of 2 Corinthians 2:14a are those occurrences where ἑρωμεμένη is used with an accusative object. The rarity of the passive and the use of the prepositional constructions with ἄπο and κατὰ explicating the meaning of the verb, underline the fact that ἑρωμεμένη did not frequently take a direct object. The word was rather used intransitively. The construction in 2 Corinthians 2:14 must be viewed against those rare cases where the verb was used in connection with an accusative. When we examine all known cases, it is clear that it can be maintained that 'when followed by a direct personal object, ἑρωμεμένη means "to lead as a conquered enemy in a victory parade"' (Williamson 1968:319). We must keep in mind that we are dealing with an intransitive verb which might be used transitively.

It could however be argued that when the accusative refers to a 'person, it is imperative to translate it as 'lead in triumph'. Bearing in mind that we have to explain the function of an accusative in combination with a verb which, in the majority of the instances, is used intransitively, we look at some examples.

Is it imperative that the grammatical sense must be 'to lead somebody in triumph'? I doubt it. One should, in the light of the intransitive use, ra-
ther ask whether the sense of some of the expressions should not rather be described as 'to celebrate (by means of a triumph) a victory over'. Plutarch (Vitae, Aratus 54.8.) gives an example: τοῦτον (sc Περσάς) Αιμίλιος ἐθριάμβεσεν (cf also Diodorus Siculus 31.26.4.2). He says about Romulus that he celebrated a triumph over kings and commanders: καὶ βασιλεῖς ἐθριάμβεσε καὶ ἡγεμόνας (Vitae, Theseus et Romulus 4.4.3). Lucullus ordered that the Roman senator Varius should be killed, for it did not seem fit to celebrate a triumph over a Roman. Alexander was guarded until the procession: οὐ γὰρ ἔδοξε Ρωμαίον ἄνδρα Βουλευτῆν θριαμβεύειν. Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ ἐς τὴν πομην ἐφυλάσσετο Appian, Mith 338.). It is correct to say that some of the kings and commanders were led in triumph. Since θριαμβεύειν has the sense 'to celebrate a prior victory by means of a triumph', the transitive use still entails this sense. The accusative merely states who is the object of the victory, therefore it cannot be one of the victor's own soldiers or fellow generals. Thus the expression with τινὰ can only denote the leading of a besieged in triumph.

The whole issue hinges on the question concerning the function of the accusative. Hafemann (1986:33) states that 'the use of θριαμβεύειν with prepositional phrases to indicate its object or with a direct object alone, always refers to the one having been conquered and subsequently led in the procession, and never to the one having conquered, or to those who shared in his victory (e.g his army, fellow officers, etc)' (Hafemann 1986:33). Important is that this is a matter of reference and reference, as we all know, has to do with language use and should not be confused with lexical sense. In 2 Corinthians 2:14a we want to find out in which way Paul refers to himself (ημᾶς). Herodian (1.6.6.3) found it necessary to mention that the prisoners of war were led in triumph, because the leading of the prisoners of war itself is not entailed in the sense of θριαμβεύειν: καλὸν δὲ σοι χειρασμαίνει σάντας αὐτοὺς καὶ τὴν ὑπὸ τὴν ἄρκτον ὁκεαυὸς τὴν ἀρχὴν ὄριον ἐπιπεπελθεῖν οἴκας ὀρισαντίστε θριαμβεύοντι τε καὶ δεσμοῖς ἁπάγοντι καὶ αἰχμαλώτους βασιλείς τε καὶ σατράπας βαρβάρους. In other texts the fact that the people involved are displayed as prisoners of war, is inferred from the reference of the expression and not on the basis of its lexical sense.

Only one relevant instance is known where the form θριαμβεύειν + τινὰ is used in an expression that undoubtedly refers to captives being led in triumph. In this case the translation 'to lead in a triumph' seems more appropriate than 'to celebrate (by means of a triumph) a victory over'. Strabo 12.3.35.6 refers to the occasion after the battle at Actium when Caesar Augustus displayed Adiactorix, with wife and children in his triumphal procession by using the expression Καίσαρ Ἰοῖος τὸν Ἀδιατόριγα μετὰ παιῶν καὶ γυναικὸς Geog 12.3.35.6). Here it is clear that Adiactorix and his family were present when the victory was celebrated and that they were displayed in the procession.  

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8 Translation LCL: On the other hand, if you subdue them all and extend the northern empire to the ocean, it will be wonderful for you to return in triumph, leading home barbarian kings and governors in chains.

9 In his reception of Cassius Dio's 'Roman History' (51.11.3) Ioannes X1-
2.2.3 The passive

In four instances we find a passive form of the verb 'passionis. In three of these cases the translation 'to be led in the procession' seems to be more appropriate than 'to be triumphed over'.

Appian writes in his *Mithridatic Wars* (494.3) that Tigranes was displayed in the triumph and killed: ἐφαρμβεύθη καὶ ἀνηρέθη. From the context it is clear that he was displayed in the procession as an enslaved prisoner of war. In this case the focus is more on the captive being displayed than on the triumphant general.

Strabo uses the word twice in this way. The Galatian Adiutorix (cf supra) was displayed in triumph after the victory at Actium and killed together with his son: θραμβεύθης δὲ μετὰ τὴν ἐν' Ἀκτίω νύκτη ἐσφάγεν μετ' υίον (Geog 12.3.6.12) The younger Germanicus celebrated 'a most brilliant triumph' on the 26th of May 17 A.D in which 'the bodies' of the most famous men and women of the Cherusci were presented: καὶ παρέσχον (σε οἶκο Χρυσόμοιο) τῷ ναυτηρῳ Γερμανικῷ λαμπρότατον θραμβόν. ἐν ὧν ἐφαρμβεύθη τῶν ἐπιφανεστάτων ἀνδρῶν σώματα καὶ γυναικῶν,...(Strabo Geog 7.1.4.20). In this instance the verb is used very similarly to *πομπεύεσθαι* (cf *Strabo, Geog 7.1.4*). It means 'to be led in triumph'. The role in which the person is led in triumph we learn not only by looking at the reference of the expression and its wider context, but also because the verb denotes the celebration of a prior victory.

The striking soliloquy by Plutarch's Cleopatra while holding the urn containing Anthony's ashes in her hands (Plutarch, *vita Antonil 84*) gives proof that ἐφαρμβεύθης is not used to refer to prisoners of war only, but more generally to the besieged. At the same time, however, it excludes the possibility that the one which is the object of the triumph, can be a general or soldier of the *triumphator*. The captured Cleopatra is bound for Rome to be part of Augustus' triumph. For the last time she pours libations at Anthony's grave: 'Dear Anthony, I buried you but lately with hands still free; now, however, I pour libations for you, being a prisoner of war, and so carefully guarded that I cannot with blows or tears disfigure this body of mine, which is a slave's body, and closely watched to be part of the triumph over you (καὶ τηρούμενον ἐπὶ τοὺς κατὰ σου θραμβούς — 84.4. Do not expect other honours or libations; these (σε the libations at his grave) are the last Cleopatra can bring to you.' Cleopatra then prays by the power of the Roman gods that Anthony will not abandon her as long as she lives and that he will not permit himself to be triumphed over (that a triumph over him be celebrated) in her person (μηδὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ περιήξις...)

*Cassius* (78.101) formulates: καὶ ὁ μὲν Καῖσαρ ἐπιθυμῶν αὐτήν εἰς τὴν Ἐφικήν ἀγαλείν, ἵνα ἐφαρμβεύῃς αὐτῇ ἐκ τῆς Ῥωμαίας τὴν περίπτωσιν εἰς τὸν Κλεοπάτραν. This work, however, dates from the 11th century CE. Cassius himself wrote:...καὶ ἐν ἐπιμελείᾳ αὐτῆς (σε Κλεοπάτραν) ἐποιεῖτο (σε Καῖσαρ), διὸς οἱ τὰ ἐπινίκια ἐπιλαμβάνη. Cassius dio rather used τὰ ἐπινίκια (51.21.4) or νικητήρια (51.21.6). *Namij's Index* does not note one instance where Cassius himself used ἐφαρμβεύειν καὶ. One should therefore refrain from using this material to clarify the use of ἐφαρμβεύειν in Paul's time.
2.2.4 The figurative usage

Paul used the verb in a figurative way. Is this a Pauline peculiarity? As I mentioned earlier, there is one other case where the ἐπανίδευεν terminology is used figuratively. Up till now various exegetes have disputed this possibility (e.g. Egan 1977:38). From the metaphorical use in Latin Marshall inferred that it could well have been possible in Greek too, but he was unable to find an example (1983:303, 305-306, 311). Epictet (3.24.85.4-6) reminds his readers not to allow emotions free reign: ‘if you kiss your child, your brother, your friend, never allow your fancy free reign, nor your exuberant spirits to go as far as they like, but hold them back, stop them, just like those who stand behind those celebrating a triumph, and keep reminding them that they are mortal (οἶον οί τοῖς θραμβεύουσιν ἐφεστώτες διπλάθεν καὶ υπομιμήσκοντες, ὥσι ἀνερῶποι εἰσιν). In such fashion do you too remind yourself that the object of your love is mortal.’

The passage from Epictet illustrates that the triumph was in fact used as similitude. If Paul used the ἐπανίδευεν terminology figuratively, he is in line with the use in Hellenistic popular philosophy. There is therefore no reason to deny the possibility of a figurative use of the image of the Roman triumph in 2 Corinthians 2:14 as Egan did (1977:38). Apart from this passage from Epictet, where the Greek word is attested, there are various cases in contemporary Latin texts where the triumphare terminology is used metaphorically (Marshall 1983:304-306).

2.2.5 Conclusion

There are very few instances where θραμβεύειν is used transitively. Normally the lexeme is used intransitively and means ‘to celebrate (by means of a triumph) a prior victory’. It denotes the celebration of a military victory through a special Roman institution, the pompa triumphalis.

In order to express that the triumph resulted from a military victory over a political opponent, ἐπί and κατά are used.

When the active form of the verb is used transitively, it still has the sense of ‘to celebrate (by means of a triumph) a prior victory over some-
body' (Plutarch: Vitae, Aratus 54.8.2, Theseus et Romulus 4.4.3; Appian, Mith 388;6; Diodorus Siculus 31.26.4.2). In some of these instances, does the immediate context make it clear that somebody to whom the expression refers, is led in the triumph as a besieged prisoner of war. In such cases (e.g. Strabo 12.2.35.6) one could translate it as 'to lead in triumph'.

In most cases were the passive is used, the same frame is presupposed and an apt translation would be 'to be displayed (as a prisoner of war) in a triumph'. Plutarch (vita Antonii 84.7.4) however illustrates that once again this is a matter of context and not of the passive construction itself. The construction itself denotes the fact that the triumph concerns the logical subject of the passive. He is one of those whose being conquered is the reason for the triumph.

In one instance (Epictet 3.24.85.) the word is used in a similitude. Paul’s use, to which we now turn, and Colossians 2:15 reflect metaphorical usage.

2.2.6 2 Corinthians 2:14a
Paul uses ἐπάθετεν with an accusative. In the light of our survey, 2 Corinthians 2:14a can be interpreted in two possible ways. Either we presuppose the common sense of ‘to celebrate (by means of a triumph) a victory over’ or we presuppose that Paul is depicted as partaking in the procession and translate it as ‘who leads us in triumph’. In the first instance God celebrates his prior victory over Paul by celebrating a triumph. In the latter case the context must determine in which way Paul is thought to be part of the procession, since the grammatical sense of the expression ἐπάθετο ἡμᾶς does not determine in which manner Paul is thought to be part of God’s triumphal procession. It is clear that the function can only be in the role of one of those being conquered. The meaning of the verb excludes the possibility that the person displayed in triumph is part of the victor’s army or household. We therefore have to know who is taking part in the triumph and we have to look carefully at the context of 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a.

2.3 The Roman triumph
In order to reconstruct the frame Paul presupposes in 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a, the literary and archiological sources which provide information on the Roman triumph must be scrutinised.

2.3.1 The literary evidence
There are various descriptions of the Roman triumph in the works of Greek historiographers. From these descriptions it becomes evident that many more than just the prisoners of war took part in the pompa triumphalis (e.g. Josephus, War 7.132-157. Cf Ehlers 1939:502-510).

Although it is beyond dispute that captives were led in triumph (cf supra), it is well known that this image does not explain verses 14b-16a. It is also not so easy to understand how Paul could have pictured himself in verse 14a in the role of God’s captive led unto death (contra Hafemann 1986). We therefore have to examine the literary material in order to establish who else joined in the procession. We refrain from presenting all the details and confine ourselves to those aspects which may have bearing on the interpretation of 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a.
Cassius Dio’s description — which we know through Ioannes Zonaras’s (12th century C.E.) quotations from Cassius’ sixth book (cf Zonaras 7:21) — mentions that the triumphant general’s relatives took part in the procession:

And he would not be alone in the chariot, but if he had children or relatives, he would make the girls and the infant male children get up beside him in it and place the older ones upon the horses — outriggers as well as the yoke-pair; if there were many of them, they would accompany the procession on chargers, riding along beside the victor. None of the rest rode, but all went on foot wearing laurel wreaths.

Plutarch describes how, during Camillus’ triumph, the citizens he liberated by breaking the siege of Rome, accompanied his chariot (Cam 30.2). From his description of the triumph of Titus Flamininus (Flam 13.9) we learn that the men whom he set free followed the triumphant Titus:

For these men shaved their heads and wore felt caps, as it is customary for slaves to do when they are set free, and in this habit followed the triumphal car of Titus.1

Appian: Although Paul might have pictured himself as one of the children of the triumphator, or as one of the liberated slaves, the role that would explain 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a best is found in Appian’s Punic wars. In his description of the Roman triumph, Appian (Lib 292 [8.66]) mentions a number of incense bearers (θυματηρίων πλήθος) that walked right in front of the general in his chariot:

All who were in the procession wore crowns. Trumpeters led the advance and wagons laden with spoils. Towers were borne along representing the captured cities, and pictures showing the exploits of the war; then gold and silver coin and bullion, and whatever else they had captured of that kind: then came the crowns that had been given to the general as a reward for his bravery by cities, by allies, or by the army itself. White oxen came next, and after them elephants and the captive Carthaginian and Numidian chiefs. Lictors clad in purple tunics preceded the general; also a chorus of harpists and pipers, in imitation of an Etruscan procession, wearing belts and golden crowns, and they marched in regular order, keeping step with song and dance. They are called Lydian because, as I think, the Etruscans were a Lydian colony. One of these, in the middle of the procession, wearing a purple cloak reaching to the feet and golden bracelets and necklace, caused laughter by making various gesticulations, as though he were dancing in triumph over the enemy.

11 Translation LCL. Cf also Livius 45.40.4-8; Valerius Maximus 5.7.1, 5.10.2; Tacitus, ‘An’ 2.41.3

12 Translation LCL. That senators, generals, soldiers and freed prisoners of war joined the procession, should be beyond dispute — cf Livius 7.13.10; Plutarch, ‘Moralia’ 196E, and Eichers (1939:509-510).
Next came a number of incense-bearers, and after them the general himself on a chariot.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus (AntRom 7.72.13) confirms this point:

After these bands of dancers came a throng of lyre-players and many flute-players, and after them the persons who carried the censers in which perfumes and frankincense were burned along the whole route of the procession.

We now turn to representations of the triumph in Roman art in order to examine the role of the incense bearers in more detail. It is worth mentioning that, according to a passage in Ovid's Fasti (3.731), cinnamon and incense were offered as culmination of the triumph.

2.3.2 The pompa triumphalis in Roman art

There are various monuments from Roman antiquity which allow us to fill in the frame associated with ὄριομβος and ὄριαμβεσίν (cf Ryberg 1955). In this way the picture we have in our minds becomes more detailed and allows us to read texts on the triumph in the light of this frame.

In order to obtain an overall impression, it is fitting to start with the arch which the Roman senate erected 114 CE in Benevent in honour of Trajan (cf Hassel 1966). This architectonic masterpiece is well preserved, as one can see from the pictures published by Hassel (1966:Tafeln 2 & 3). Of particular interest in connection with the triumph is a frieze which encircles the monument (cf Hassel 1966:48-49). Rich in detail, this frieze captures the triumph Trajan celebrated after his victory over the Dacians in 107 CE. 'The relief illustrates numerous items recorded by literary descriptions of the triumph and also adds a few details not mentioned in ancient literature' (Ryberg 1955:150). The pompa was led by trumpeters and closed by the triumphator himself, drawn in a chariot, 'accompanied by his lictors with laureate fasces and by officers and soldiers who had participated in the victory' (Ryberg 1955:151). When one looks in more detail at this group closing the procession (Ryberg 1955: fig 82e [plate LV]) it is evident that the triumphant victor was accompanied by a pair of lictors close behind the chariot and two more in front of the horses. 'The procession is completed by a token number of the officers and soldiers of the army on foot and on horseback' (Ryberg 1955:153).

This has important implications for the discussion of 2 Corinthians 2:14. Since ὄριαμβεσίν + τινά can denote 'to lead as one being conqueror in triumph', there are reasons why Paul could not have referred to his being part of God's triumphal procession in the sense that he belonged to the...
group at the end. From 2 Corinthians 5:20 we know that Paul understood his apostleship as being Christ's ambassador (προσβεβυκτόν - cf Breytenbach 1989:64-66, 78-80). From Cicero (Pls 60) we know that legati joined the procession. What remains problematic is that, by accepting this interpretation, we are obliged to understand 2 Corinthians 2:14b-16a within another frame. Even more problematic is that we have to abandon the basic meaning of θυμαμένον as 'to celebrate a victory over the besieged enemies'.

From Ovid, Appian and Dionysius we have learnt that the bearing of incense played an important role during the procession. The arch of Titus on the forum Romanum in Rome and the arch of Trajan in Benevent shed more light on this issue. The most puzzling figures in the frieze on Titus' arch are a number of camilli who walk ahead or along the victim groups. On the left arm they carry small embossed shields, in the right hand some sacrificial instruments (Ryberg 1955:148, his fig 80b [Plate LIII]). In the frieze on the arch in Benevent (Ryberg 1955:148, fig 82a+c [Plate LIV]) similar figures are to be seen. They are also on the pylons, 'where they are placed heraldically, along with another pair of camilli, at each side of a tall lighted thymiaterion. There they carry in the right hand either a pitcher or a torch (or staff) and they are clearly distinguished as camilli by their girlishly dressed hair' (Ryberg 1955:148). Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his History (7.72) and Appian in his Punic Wars (cf supra) mention that the dancers and musicians were followed in the procession by attendants carrying incense burners (Θυματήριον). It is possible that they are depicted as small, because they were iuvenes, members of the royal family. Is it possible that Paul depicted himself as one of the children of the royal family who bore the incense during the procession? This would explain 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a within one coherent frame. Nevertheless the meaning of θυμαμένον does not allow such an interpretation. The iuvenes were not part of the besieged.

Apart from the mentioned material a fragment of a procession in the museum of Naples (Ryberg 1955:149, fig 81c [Plate LIII]) shows a pair of tunic- ca attendants carrying θυματήρια. Almost all reliefs reflecting the sacrificial ceremony which presented the climax of the procession, depict camilli carrying incense boxes. This is the case on the arch of Trajan (Ryberg 1955:156, fig 84 [Plate LVI]) and on one of the panels reflecting the triumph of Marcus Aurelius over the Germans and Sarmatians in 176 C.E. (Ryberg 1955:157, fig 86 [Plate LVI]). There can be little doubt that the triumphal procession spread the odour of cinnamon and incense from the porta triumphalis to the temple of Jupiter. This opens up another possibility.

2.4 An alternative interpretation of 2 Corinthians 2:14-16a
Drawing on the passive use of the verb we could presuppose the sense of 'to display in triumph' and translate '(God) who displays us (Paul) in triumph'. It is then possible to imagine that Paul perceived himself as being conquered and part of God's triumphal procession.

There might be another possibility (cf Breytenbach [1991]). This comes to the fore when one keeps in mind the use of the word θριμαμένον and the nature of the θρίμαμος. The word θριμαμένον, as we have demonstrated, has another more frequent use. It may have the sense of 'to celebrate (by means of a triumph) a prior victory over somebody'. In this case it denotes that the victor celebrates an accomplished victory over X, Y or Z by means of a
triumphal procession. If this is the meaning of the expression in 2 Corinthians 2:14a, then Paul is saying that God is celebrating his victory over him, Paul, always. The frequency expressed by the πάντοτε in verse 14a is resumed by the expression ἐν παντὶ τόμῳ in verse 14a.

It is clear that in the case of the θρίαμβος the whole procession spread the smell of burning incense and cinnamon along the route. If one looks carefully at verses 14b-16a, it is clear that it is not only Paul, but Paul's missionary activity which is compared with the δόμη or the εὐεργεία. The triumphal procession is a metaphor for Paul's apostolic activity. The focus thus is not on Paul as participant in the triumphal procession, but on the fact that Paul the apostle spreads the knowledge of Christ whilst God is celebrating his preceding victory over Paul. Paul's apostleship is therefore like the pompa triumphalis — it spreads an odor. The proclamation of the gospel through Paul is like the θρίαμβος. God celebrates his prior victory over his enemy, over the persecutor of his church.

It is common knowledge that Paul's apostleship rooted in God's victory over him near Damascus (Gl 1:14-17). Paul often uses his own conversion as an example of God's grace. Paul's apostleship thus constantly reminds us of God's saving power. Wherever Paul preaches the gospel, the smell of cinnamon and incense is spread. Through Paul's proclamation of Christ, God, the victorious general, always celebrates his victory over Paul. He conquered Paul and now Paul spreads his fame.

This interpretation seems to suit the way in which Paul understood his apostleship. Moreover, it has a solid lexical basis. θριαμβεύειν + τινά normally means to celebrate (by means of a triumph) a victory over someone. This interpretation also leads to the reader being able to understand verses 14a-16a within one coherent frame.

3 COLOSSIANS 2:15

The terminology used suggest that the frame of the θρίαμβος forms the backdrop. The verb ἀπεκδίδεσθαι + τινά means 'to disarm somebody' (cf Bauer 1989:166) and both 'magistrates' and 'powers' reflect terminology associated with rulers (cf Mason 1974:sv). God made a public example of them by celebrating, through Christ, his victory over them.

4 CONCLUSION

The letters of Paul are full of enigmatic passages. Some of the riddles can be solved if we understand the patterns of thought, the frames which are presupposed in the text. Since Heinrici's plea (1900) to study the Pauline letters as part of the Hellenistic world, many great scholars have joined the task of reconstructing the frames Paul might have had in mind when writing. The superb contributions of Abraham J Malherbe (1989) are a splendid example of just how fruitful these endeavours are.

The frame though would not have been so clear had I not used θριαμβεύειν and θρίαμβος as windows to look into the 'thesaurus linguae Graecae'. From there the path naturally led to Rome and Benevent. I am sure that a glance at the way in which 'triumphare' is used, will enrich our picture and frame it more precisely. Unfortunately the indexing of the 'thesaurus linguae latinae' has not reached 't' as yet.
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