R. B. Egan's article, 'Lexical Evidence on Two Pauline Passages', has pointed to many of the shortcomings in the traditional metaphorical interpretation of \( \text{θριαμβεύειν} \) in 2 Cor. 2:14 and Col. 2:15. He argues that the meaning of \( \text{θριαμβεύειν} \) should be "to publicize, display, divulge, noise abroad", and he rejects any connection with the Roman triumph. I wish to get the procession on the march again though for different reasons than those traditionally advanced, while at the same time looking briefly at the problems associated with interpreting ancient metaphors. I suggest that \( \text{θριαμβεύειν} \) in 2 Cor. 2:14 is a metaphor of shame which reflects one nuance of the triumphal motif "led captive in triumph" and is an instance of Paul's typical depiction of himself as a figure of shame.

I

Egan contends on chronological and lexical grounds that \( \text{θριαμβεύειν} \) with the sense of "to noise abroad, display, etc." predates Paul's writings by almost 70 years and is used quite independently of the Roman triumph. He draws attention to two second century AD uses which function in a similar way and indicates that the majority of the early translators and commentators adopt this rendering. By contrast, he says that he was unable to locate any instance of a metaphorical triumph and doubts whether such "a unique metaphorical abstraction derived from a Roman institution" would have been comprehended by the Corinthians.

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2 Ibid., 38.
3 Ibid., 38.
On contextual grounds, he suggests that \( \theta\varphi\iota\alpha\mu\beta\varepsilon\u03b1\varepsilon\nu \) as “display, manifest, make known” not only introduces Paul’s apology (2:14-7:4) but is consistent with one of its most important themes, “the openness and visibility of the apostle”. By comparison, he finds many shortcomings with the various triumph interpretations. He rejects two of the common versions, “makes us triumph” and “leads us in triumph as a general leads his victorious army”, because they are unattested in Greek literature. The third and fourth renderings, “triumphs over us” and “leads us in triumph as defeated enemies”, are common notions in Greek literature but are inappropriate for a number of reasons: a. both would indicate that God defeated Paul as though he were an enemy; b. a “continually ongoing triumphal procession” (suggested by the present participle with the adverb \( \pi\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\sigma\) is difficult to conceptualize; c. both uses have a “strictly literal, technical, military character” until much later; d. both appear to be inconsistent with the \( \delta\sigma\mu\eta\) metaphor which follows in v. 14.

II

Egan has done us a service in demonstrating the 14 B.C. usage of \( \theta\varphi\iota\alpha\mu\beta\varepsilon\u03b1\varepsilon\nu \) as “display” and pointing to many of the anomalies and weaknesses in the traditional triumph interpretations. His strongest argument appears to be the apparent lack of attestation for the triumph metaphor in Greek literature until well after Paul’s time. In my limited inquiry, I have not located \( \theta\varphi\iota\alpha\mu\beta\varepsilon\u03b1\varepsilon\nu \) as a metaphor in the literature of Paul’s near Greek contemporaries. There is substantial evidence of its referring to the actual celebration of the triumph and to being led in triumph. Here \( \theta\varphi\iota\alpha\mu\beta\varepsilon\u03b1\varepsilon\nu \) (and the noun \( \theta\varphi\iota\alpha\mu\beta\omicron\) is equivalent in meaning to the Latin term \( \text{triumphare} \) (noun, \textit{triumphus}). I am not prepared though, to concede that the two second-century examples Egan cites are so devoid of connections with the triumph as he suggests. In the first examples of a

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4 Ibid., 50-52.
5 Ibid., 37-39.
6 E.g., “to celebrate a triumph”, \( \theta\varphi\iota\alpha\mu\beta\varepsilon\u03b1\varepsilon\nu \): Plutarch, \textit{Lives} “Romulus” 25.5; “Crassus” 7.1, 11.8; “Pompey” 14.3, 45.1.5. \textit{Triumphare} Cicero, \textit{Muc.} 11; \textit{de Fin.} 2.20.65. “To lead in triumph”, \( \theta\varphi\iota\alpha\mu\beta\varepsilon\u03b1\varepsilon\nu \): Plutarch, \textit{Lives} “Thes. & Rom.” 4.2; “Ages. & Pomp.” 3.2; “Coriolanus” 35.3; Strabo, 7.1.4. Cf. Cicero, \textit{Fam.} 5.11.2: \textit{duces eum captum triumpho}; Pliny, \textit{NH} 7.43.135: \textit{bis in triumpho ductum}.
7 “Two Pauline Passages” 42-43.