



---

## TRIUMPH AND POETIC GLORY IN OVID

**Paola Gagliardi**

Università degli Studi della Basilicata

[paolagagliardi@hotmail.com](mailto:paolagagliardi@hotmail.com)

**ABSTRACT:** My paper focusses on the treatment of the triumph as a metaphor for poetic glory in Ovid. In the Augustan poetry the triumph theme is treated predominantly from a political perspective, but images and situations of the ceremony are also used from a literary point of view. Ovid in particular gives this topic original and ambiguous features.

**KEY-WORDS:** triumph; poetic glory; Ovidian elegy; *amor*. 1, 2.

As recent scholarship has showed, the ceremony of the triumph was not only the celebration of a military victory, but an event open to multiple readings and interpretations<sup>1</sup>. Especially important was the visual aspect of the triumph, and the chance it gave to focus on the prisoners or even on the viewers (Beard (2007) 110-111 and 135-137). This abundance of perspectives and possible representations inevitably made the triumph an interesting matter for the Augustan poets, and for Ovid in particular, who, among the Augustans, develops this topic most often and most

---

<sup>1</sup> Among the main works on this topic see Beard (2004); Beard (2007); Pandey (2011). On the visual aspects of the triumphal ceremony see Östernberg (2009) (but the changes made by Augustus are insufficiently emphasized), while Lange – Vervaeke (2014) deals with the Republican triumph, and Goldbeck – Wienand (2017) with the imperial age.

variously. Given the public and official nature of the ceremony and its propagandistic importance, fully understood by Augustus, the treatment of this theme involves the risk to create a delicate relationship with crucial aspects of the current ideology. While Augustus ‘rereads’ Republican institutions and customs, giving the triumph substantial restrictions, and wholly focusses it on the dynasty in power<sup>2</sup>, the poets explore its different facets, taking it as a discrimen between public and private life (Beard (2007) 296).

In each reworking of the triumph theme, the Augustan poets, of necessity, confront the current ideology and show their attitude toward it, their involvement in or detachment from official propaganda and public life. So, for the poets, the triumph can be deployed as a symbol of Augustus’ glory and a synthesis of the values he represents, as, for example, in Virgil’s description of Octavian’s triumph in 29 at *Aen.* 8.714-728<sup>3</sup>, but it can also be a moment in which, alongside due celebration of public aspects, the triumph encroaches upon the private arena, as in Horace’s attempt to combine both aspects, both crucial to his poetry, in book IV of *Odes* (Barchiesi (1981) 158, and Nicastrì (1984) 109-110). But –predictably– the most original and provocative readings of the triumph come from love elegists, who paradoxically include it in the essentially private universe of their poetry<sup>4</sup>. But the treatment of the triumph in Augustan poetry takes also another and more original approach to the subject: the features of the triumph may be used as a metaphor for poetic glory, and the description of the ceremony can afford the opportunity for the poet to celebrate himself and his own art.

So for the Augustan poets triumph it is not only an imaginary or real celebration of victories; authors also appropriate it to enhance their own works, as a metaphor for the greatest poetic glory. In this way, while Octavian is transforming the institution of

---

<sup>2</sup> Beard (2007) 70 and 296-297. Torelli (1982) 121-128 and 132, distinguishes the Republican triumph, that describes the true deeds and victories of the general, and the imperial one, in which symbols and allegories prevail, to exalt the figure of the emperor. On the remarkable changes made by Augustus about the triumph see Krasser – Pausch – Petrovic (2008).

<sup>3</sup> On this Virgilian triumph see Mc Kay (1998); Pandey (2011) 128-132: according this scholar, Virgil, who writes from an official perspective, tends to monumentalize the triumph, without paying attention to different and marginal points of view. But the interpretation of this Virgilian triumph can be more nuanced and ambiguous: think of the ‘Harvard school’ and their Oxford counterparts – Parry, Johnson, Thomas. In fact, the images on the shield can be deceptive: see for example *non enarrabile textum* (‘an indescribable texture’, v. 625) and (*sc. Aeneas*) *rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet* (‘he delights in the images, ignoring the future events’, v. 730) (perhaps, he rejoices *because* he does not understand the contents – why else the juxtaposition?).

<sup>4</sup> Propertius, in particular, makes the triumph a privileged theme in Latin love elegy: cfr. Galinsky (1969) 91.

the triumph, the poets often reflect and use it as an image of their art. So Virgil describes himself leading Hesiod's Muses down in triumph from Helicon to Latium in the preface of the third book of the *Georgics*, and Horace uses the language and the features of the triumph to enhance his lyric works in the σφραγίς of *carm.* 3, 30<sup>5</sup>.

But, as usual, the elegists are those who exploit this association in the most original and brilliant way. Their attention to the triumph and their original approach to it may derive from the importance of this theme in the poetry of Gallus, the *inventor* of Latin love elegy. The discovery of the Qasr Ibrim papyrus, in fact, has revealed at vv. 2-5 the presence of the triumph theme in Gallan poetry<sup>6</sup>, although the text is very complex in many respects, the reconstruction of its precise meaning is difficult, and its historical references and dating are a subject of debate. Furthermore it is not clear whether at v. 5 the poet refers the final moment of a triumph, when spoils were placed in a temples, or a later time, when he will read a description of the triumph in written works (debate and bibliography in Gagliardi (2014), 31-52).

Anyway, these verses are interesting in many respects: first, Gallus presents himself as far detached from the expedition that Caesar is about to conduct, a pose which anticipates the 'elegiac' vision of triumph, even if Gallus does not yet display the provocative attitude that Propertius will (e. g. in 3, 4). But more interesting for our topic is the Gallan treatment of the triumph not as an event which has happened, but rather as a predicted one, fusing a point of view which relates to that of a *propemptikòn*: this perspective is destined to resonate powerfully among the Augustan poets, who will appropriate it not only in the descriptions of actual triumphs, but also in the metaphorical uses of the theme. So, for example, Virg. *geo.* 3, 10-31 uses the language and imagery of the triumph to announce a new epic poem, while also using the same perspective of a triumph which has not yet occurred but is rather predicted. It is, however, Propertius who employs the triumph as a metaphor of his poetry in the most original way.

In 3. 1. 9-12 he gives the metaphor of the triumph a provocative and irreverent tone, combining the solemnity of the most official of public ceremonies with the private

<sup>5</sup> In the ode many features allude to the triumphal ceremony: see Ziogas (2015) 116-117; Beard (2007) 50.

<sup>6</sup> Fata mihi Caesar tum erunt mea dulcia quom tu / maxima Romanae pars eri<s> historiae / postque tuum reditum multorum templa deorum / fixa legam spolieis deivitoria tueis ("My fate, Caesar, will be sweet for me when you become the greatest part of Roman history, and, after your return, I survey the temples of many gods richer for being fixed with your spoils", PQI 1, 2-5).

sphere of his erotic elegy, when he represents himself on a triumphal chariot next to his Muse and to Cupids<sup>7</sup>, followed by a crowd of other poets (*et a me / nata coronatis Musa triumphat equis, / et mecum in curru parvi vectantur Amores / scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas*, “and the Muse born from me goes in triumph with flower-hung horses, and young Loves ride with me in the chariot, and a crowd of writers hangs there at my wheels”). The elegy, highly programmatic in a Callimachean sense, is a *recusatio* of war and epic, and so, unexpectedly, triumph is associated with a poetry of peace (Galinsky (1969) 89). Perhaps, by comparing his poetry and his fame to the triumph, Propertius wants to show how seriously he considers his own work (Galinsky (1969) 91), but it is undeniable that the association of the noblest Roman ceremony to scandalous love elegy, at the same time as repudiating war and military glory, sounds at least controversial and disrespectful to tradition and the official ideology. Parodic echoes of the impressive *incipit* of Virgil’s *Georgics* confirm the mocking tone of the elegy<sup>8</sup>. In this noteworthy poem it should be particularly noted that Propertius too describes a triumph which is only imagined: of course, this may have been prompted by Virg. *geo.* 3, 10-31, but the possibility of a reminiscence of Gallus PQ11 2-5 cannot be excluded.

Ovid fully understands the provocative impact, but also the potentialities of the Propertian scene and confronts it in a programmatic text, *amor.* 1, 2<sup>9</sup>, but –in line with his attitude– he expands the image of Propertius and makes it the theme of the whole poem (Galinsky (1969) 94). The result is a brilliant poem, which anticipates many of Ovid’s innovations in the treatment of the triumph theme: the poet follows Prop. 3, 1 in debasing the solemnity of the triumph ceremony by treating it as an erotic theme, but innovates vis-à-vis Propertius by turning Propertius’ viewpoint on its head: where Propertius described himself as *triumphator*, accompanied by *parvi...Amores* in a triumphal chariot (Prop. 3, 1, 11-12), in Ovid the triumph of *Amor* is over the poet, who takes the role of one of the captured prisoners paraded in the triumphal

<sup>7</sup> Propertius is the first poet who links the theme of triumph to Latin love elegy: cf. Athanassaki (1992) 125 (but of course a precedent can be Gallus, who in fr. 2, 2-5 might have continued linking the two themes, or, indeed, Gallus may have treated the triumph theme elsewhere: out of all the elegists, he is the one who had an illustrious military career and may, indeed, have actually participated in a triumph, although obviously not as *triumphator*).

<sup>8</sup> For this reading of Prop. 3, 1 see Miller (1995) 290. See also Thomas (1983) 101-103.

<sup>9</sup> Due to the programmatic nature of this poem, on which see Reitzenstein (1935), some scholars hypothesized that it could be the opening elegy in the first edition of the *Amores*: so Cameron (1968) 320 ss.; McKeown (1989) 33, who however does not share this opinion. On the relationship between *amor.* 1, 2 and Prop. 3, 1, see Galinsky (1969) 91.

ceremony. In his subsequent works, Ovid will continue to develop this striking tendency to explore the triumph from all the possible points of view. While Ovid too describes a triumph which is predicted, he distorts further Propertius' already distorted treatment of the original model in Gallus. Finally, already in *amor.* 1, 2, there can be clearly seen hints of a polemical attitude to official ideology such as frequently elsewhere Ovid raises difficult questions about his position vis-à-vis the Augustan regime. *Amor.* 1, 2 appears perhaps even more irreverent than Prop. 3, 1, which the poet develops to its extreme: the triumph is now that of Love and the poet becomes a victim of the god (En ego, confiteor, nova sum tua praeda, Cupido; / porrigimus victas ad tua iura manus, "I admit, Cupid, I'm your latest prize, and I extend my conquered hands towards your justice", vv. 19-20). In this way, Ovid no longer advances the image of his own poetic glory, but rather his subjection to his genre. The celebration of the individual poet yields to that of the genre itself, with the comparison to Propertius revealing distinct features of originality (Athanasaki (1992)). While Propertius celebrates himself and his all-encompassing love story, in the typical spirit of elegy, Ovid celebrates 'love' in the abstract, freed from the constraint of subjection to one woman: this is a main novelty of his elegy, which ceases to appear as the narrative of a love story, but only as love poetry, that is, as a series of variations on erotic themes, without exclusivity<sup>10</sup>: in fact in *amor.* 1, 2 Ovid is still not yet in love and, paradoxically, he becomes a prisoner of love before he meets the woman of which he will be the victim (Athanasaki (1992) 127). Perhaps also his immediate capitulation to the invincible god, in contrast to the struggles and resistances with which usually the Latin elegists face him, alludes to this feature of Ovidian elegy (Miller (1995) 291), while his inclusion in the ranks of the prisoners trailing Love's triumph (an echo of the poets behind the chariot of Propertius<sup>11</sup>) is not

<sup>10</sup> According to Labate (1979) 29-31, this Ovidian operation aims to remove from Latin elegy its provocative character towards the regime: in fact, eliminating the exclusivity of the love relationship with one woman, he removes the totalizing nature that made elegiac love a real way of life as opposed to the traditional views. In this way, instead, he gives the experience of love a tolerable level of normalcy even in the official ideology. More broadly, the very choice of a libertine and gallant life would aim to resolve the elegiac contradictions and to reconcile that vision with the current morality (66); more generally on this point, Labate (1984) 94.

<sup>11</sup> McKeown (1989) 51, on v. 36, affirms that Ovid is ideally including himself in the *scriptorum turba* of Prop 3, 1, 12. The imitation of the Propertian text is almost *ad verbum* in this passage: see Prop. 3, 1, 12 (*scriptorumque meas turba secuta rotas* 'a crowd of writers follows at my wheels') and *amor.* 1, 2, 36 (*adsidue partes turba secuta tuas* 'a continual crowd follows at your side'): when Ovid wants to stress the differences from a model, he recalls it with great precision, see Morgan (1977) 107-109.

any indication of a less controversial attitude than that of his predecessor, nor is it a subtle criticism aimed at the excessive confidence of Propertius (Cameron (1968) 326); it simply points out the new arrangement given by Ovid to erotic elegy<sup>12</sup>. In this way the topic of triumph unexpectedly becomes an occasion for a learned literary dialogue on erotic poetry and a means to affirm the novelty of Ovidian elegy.

But this elegy's provocativeness is directed not only to literary models. As he frequently will do, Ovid touches also upon official aspects of Augustan propaganda, diminishing the value of the triumph by attributing it to the most frivolous of gods, in connection with the irreverent sphere of love<sup>13</sup>; yet further, aspects and symbols of the ritual are trivialized, since they are attributed to Amor, they lose all their solemnity<sup>14</sup>. Thus Venus' myrtle replaces the laurel of the triumphator's crown<sup>15</sup> and the chariot's white horses become doves of the goddess of love; *Amor* is adorned with jewelry, totally inappropriate for a victorious commander (McKeown (1989) 54, on vv. 41 and 42), and the ranks of *comites*<sup>16</sup> comprise negative personifications such as *Error*, *Furor* and *Blanditiae*, while positive figures such as *Mens Bona* and *Pudor* are among the prisoners (*Mens Bona ducetur manibus post terga retortis, / et Pudor*, "You'll lead Conscience, hands twisted behind her back, and Shame", vv. 31-32), and the fact that it is two deities portrayed as prisoners<sup>17</sup> (*Mens Bona* was a deity particularly worshipped<sup>18</sup>), is really shocking<sup>19</sup>. On his way, the god makes the bystanders fall in love, in a scene that seems to recall that of *Ars* 1, 216-228<sup>20</sup>, and his procession is

<sup>12</sup> Du Quesnay (1973) 8, denies each critical attitude towards Propertius in the *Amores* and sees instead in the work the intention to show a more detached and playful side of love.

<sup>13</sup> McKeown (1989) 58, on vv. 51-52; Beard (2007) 52 and 113; Harvey (1983) 89.

<sup>14</sup> See Athanassaki (1992) 140; Miller (1995) 294; Davis (2006) 74-77, reads the assimilation of the elegiac life and love to the military sphere as a refusal of the current ideology.

<sup>15</sup> Actually the myrtle was used in the ceremony of *ovatio*, which was a minor triumph, but in this passage it should of course be related to Venus; Ovid may have at most exploited the coincidence. According to McKeown (1989) 45, on vv. 23-24, the detail of the myrtle could instead be referred to the *ovatio*: in this way the poet would to show Love's triumph as a triumph in a minor key, since Ovid has already surrendered.

<sup>16</sup> On this word, typical of the triumphal language, see McKeown (1989) 5, *ad loc.*

<sup>17</sup> Although *Pudor* was not a real god and he seems a personification made by the Augustan poets: see McKeown (1989) 49, *ad loc.*

<sup>18</sup> On the cult of *Mens Bona* see Latte (1960) 239-240.

<sup>19</sup> On the strong provocative nature of this passage see Miller (1995) 289 and 292-392; Goh (2015) 172-173. Du Quesnay (1973) 41, sees instead absence of polemical and hostile attitudes towards the regime in the *Amores*.

<sup>20</sup> This passage of *Ars amatoria* is perhaps the most irreverent treatment of the triumph in Ovid: the glorious ceremony is in fact reduced to a good time to put in practice the teachings of the *praeceptor amoris*. The debasement of the ceremony is complete, its really important feature is just the crowd that it attracts, in which the seducer can find his prey. But the interpretations of these verses are different:

assimilated to that of Bacchus on his path from India to the West<sup>21</sup>. Some details touch very closely the figure of the *princeps* and his ideology: in the whole scene have been seen references to the paintings in *Forum Augusti*, where there were a picture of Alexander leading a triumphal procession<sup>22</sup> and a representation, here reversed, of the chained *Furor*, which already inspired the Virgilian scene at *Aen.* 1, 291-296<sup>23</sup>. Moreover, the reference to the *felicia Caesaris arma* (v. 51)<sup>24</sup> creates an embarrassing relationship with the defeated *arma* of Ufens in the *Aeneid*<sup>25</sup>. The final couplet appears remarkably provocative: *adspice cognati felicia Caesaris arma: / qua vicit, victos protegit ille manu* (“Look at Caesar’s similar fortunes of war: what he conquers, he protects with his power”). In emphasizing the kinship between *Amor* and Augustus, Ovid not only connects the *princeps* to the frivolous god<sup>26</sup>, but also jokes about his celebrated *clementia*, invoked in the superficial context of love<sup>27</sup>, and perhaps –as has been suggested (Harvey 1983: *passim*) – alludes to the restriction of the triumph to members of Augustus’ family (Harvey (1983); Miller (1995) 293). There is in fact enough to make this one of the most irreverent of Ovid’s poems concerning the triumph<sup>28</sup>, although its goals are not hostile to the regime and aimed at

---

some scholars believe that the attitude shown by Ovid in his didactic poem is not hostile to the Augustan regime, see Labate (1987) 96.

<sup>21</sup> The role of Bacchus in the poem is interpreted in many different ways: for example Labate (1984) 69, sees in him the figure of a civilizing god, like *Amor* and Augustus, while for Athanassaki (1992) 134, in Dionysus can be an allusion to the tragedy, that, like love elegy, is able to win over the audience. On the relationship between Bacchus and the triumph, cf. McKeown (1989) 32 and 57.

<sup>22</sup> Miller (1995) 293; McKeown (1989) 48-49, on vv. 31-36.

<sup>23</sup> Miller (1995) 292-293; McKeown (1989) 48-49, on vv. 31-36.

<sup>24</sup> McKeown (1989) 59, connects the phrase *felicia arma* to the Augustan propaganda, that aimed to present the *princeps* as a victorious general.

<sup>25</sup> Ufens is brutally killed by Aeneas in a crucial moment of the poem, when anger for the violation of the truce raises a real *furor* in the hero, who forgets his *pietas* and makes a fierce slaughter. Moreover, we should not forget that the children of Ufens will be sacrificed by Aeneas for Pallas in another moment of the hero’s inhuman fury, after the death of the young prince, at *Aen.* 10, 518: the hint at such inglorious conduct of the hero to whom Augustus resembles so much is another risky operation of Ovid, especially considering that the *princeps* had acted in a similar way when he slaughtered hundreds of citizens after the capture of Perugia, an episode which perhaps inspired the massacre carried out by Aeneas and the human sacrifices he offers when Pallas dies ....

<sup>26</sup> This connection is reinforced by the figure of Venus, mother of *Amor*, but also of Aeneas, and therefore ancestor of the *gens Iulia*: see Labate (1984) 81. On the relationship between *Amor* and Augustus, see also Galinsky (1969) 92.

<sup>27</sup> Labate (1984) 67-69, and Miller (1995) 294, express two opposite ideas on the allusion to *clementia* in this passage. For Athanassaki (1992) 140, reference to *clementia* implies a tacit hint to the violence that unavoidably precedes each triumph.

<sup>28</sup> See Miller (1995) 294; Athanassaki (1992) 140; Harvey (1983) 90.

undermining it, but rather to lighten a weighty theme and to reaffirm Ovid's choice of life and poetry, detached from public concerns and *gravitas*<sup>29</sup>.

By contrast, this poem has been also read as an attempt to shorten the distance between elegiac point of view and Roman tradition, to show the possibility of reconciling the choice of love with collective values<sup>30</sup>. It is as always difficult to define unambiguously the intention of a brilliant and versatile poet like Ovid, but certainly this joke on the triumph gives him the opportunity to assert many ideas, both in comparison with other poets, with whom he establishes a learned dialogue, and with the current ideology he plays down without intending to contest its validity.

But the representation of the triumph in *amor.* 1, 2 is perhaps useful to Ovid for another reason: he, in fact, explores a particular feature of the ceremony, in assuming the point of view of the prisoners. This is a way to reverse the official viewpoint of the ritual and to investigate all the possibilities of describing it, in the constant search for variety and mutability that characterizes all of Ovid's work. Furthermore, this is also a means to show the painful side of the ceremony, using a perspective which is also frequent in subsequent descriptions of the event, to reveal its ambiguity and multiplicity of meanings.

Ovid continues to explore in the *Amores* the possibilities offered by the theme of the triumph, using in other circumstances the image or the metaphor of it to emphasize the otherness of the elegiac life with respect to current social norms. The approach in his amatory elegy remains powerfully provocative: in *amor.* 1, 7, 35-38, for example, there is a brief allusion to the ceremony when, after beating the woman he loves, the protagonist regrets and feels ashamed for his easy victory, and ironically compares himself to a *triumphator*<sup>31</sup>: can we see in such a polemical mention of a victory which is too easy an allusion to the actual reality of real triumphs?

But the poem which, in addition to 1, 2, debases the event to an extreme point is undoubtedly 2, 12: here the victory in which the poet plays a triumphator is the

---

<sup>29</sup> See Galinsky (1969) 94; according to McKeown (1989) 33 and 58, the aim of Ovid in the parody of the triumph in *amor.* 1, 2 is only to amuse, without polemic intent against the regime.

<sup>30</sup> Labate (1979) 66-67: according to Labate (1984) 67, the poem aims at the creation of a parallelism between elegiac life and traditional Roman rules.

<sup>31</sup> I nunc, magnificos victor molire triumphos, / cinge comam lauro vota que reddere Iovi, / quaeque tuos currus comitantum turba sequetur, / clamet 'io! forti victa puella viro est!' ("Go, now, conqueror, devise a great triumph, crown your hair with laurel, and give thanks to Jupiter, all the surging crowd, following your chariot, calling 'Good! The great man who conquered a girl!'").



entrance into the house of his beloved girl<sup>32</sup>. For this success Ovid describes himself as a military victor, opposing the *militia amoris* to the *militia* of war: the attribution of the highest Roman honour to so trivial an occasion is deeply irreverent (Pianezzola (1999) 83), but even more so is the way in which Ovid describes his victory as superior to a normal triumph, because it is a victory without blood spilt. The affirmation in vv. 5-6 (*haec est praecipuo victoria digna triumpho / in qua, quaecumque est, sanguine praeda caret*, ‘this is a victory worth of a great triumph, in which, whatever else it is, the gain is bloodless’) squarely challenges the traditional Roman military ideology and mentality, to which the elegist opposes his pacifist views, in the wake of Prop. 3, 5, 1 (*Pacis Amor deus est*, ‘Love is a peaceful god’), or Prop. 2, 14, 23 (*haec –sc. the conquest of the beloved– mihi devictis potior victoria Parthis*, ‘this victory is more important than defeated Parthians to me’). With this poem, Ovid proves again his skill in dealing with the triumph, but also demonstrates the ambivalence of the event. He highlights that the roles of the victors and victims are interchangeable (Beard (2007) 136-137), as often he will suggest in his exile poetry (see *Tr.* 4, 2, *Pont.* 2, 1 and 3, 4). So the victims seem to take on a role reversal, stealing the spotlight from the *triumphator* (Beard (2007) 135-136), and he explores another possible perspective of the event, the official point of view of the victor, after having played the role of a prisoner in *amor.* 1, 2 and before he identifies himself with the crowd’s perspective at *Ars* 1, 213-228 and *Tr.* 4, 2, 19<sup>33</sup>.

The triumphal scene, the emphasis on the victor, with the detail of the laurel crown, and the erotic ambit to which the triumph is connected are deliberate allusions to *amor.* 1, 2: but now the poet, who there followed the god’s chariot as a prisoner, assumes the role of the god, suggesting an assimilation with him that acquires its most poetic important meaning. If in fact the triumph of Love was a metaphor and symbol of successful erotic elegy *tout court* (the figure of the god indicates and ensures the greatest generality of discourse), now that glory belongs exclusively to Ovidian elegy, and thus the triumph again becomes an image and symbol of literary success, even, shockingly, in relation to erotic poetry. Here then appears the remarkable mention, as

<sup>32</sup> *Ite triumphales circum mea tempora laurus! / vicimus: in nostro est, ecce, Corinna sinu, / quam vir, quam custos, quam ianua firma, tot hostes, / servabant, nequa posset ab arte capi!* (“Go, wreath my brows with triumphal laurel! I have won: behold, Corinna, in my arms, whom husband, watchman, firm doors, all those enemies guarded: she couldn’t be kept prisoner by their art!”).

<sup>33</sup> On the choice of Ovid to explore the triumph from all viewpoints see Beard (2007) 142, and Schäfer-Schmitt (2008).

in *amor.* 1, 2, of the *Georgics*, alluding to *geo.* 3, 219-223 in a couplet describing the struggle of two bulls for the *iuvenc*a (vv. 25-26<sup>34</sup>): the reference, as in *amor.* 1, 2, 13-16, is again to book III of the *Georgics* (vv. 212-241), which contains also the scene of the poetic triumph. So a series of similarities connects the two elegies, united by the purpose of enhancing Ovid's erotic poetry, inserted into a chain of precedents, but at the same time differentiated from them by its own originality. The two poems, however, have something to say also with respect to traditional Roman ideology, using the illustrious and solemn institution of the triumph, the most official and symbolic event, to affirm, by overturning it, the otherness of an irreverent and detached choice of lifestyle.

To conclude, Ovid exploits with great depth and variety the image of the triumph as a metaphor for literary glory, following the other Augustan poets, and developing with his brilliant wit their suggestions. His own contribution is not only the exploitation of all the possible ways and perspectives from which to treat the topic, but also the skill to adapt it to different circumstances and purposes, and he succeeds in including the exaltation of poetry in more or less irreverent celebrations of the triumphal ceremony. Even when the image of the triumph is used to glorify his own poetry, in fact, Ovid can insert hints of criticism and derision of the *mos maiorum* and official ideology, as in *amor.* 1, 2 and 2, 12. Similarly the triumph inspires his extraordinary ability to see and represent reality in its different perspectives, and so, analyzing it in all sides, the poet assumes from time to time each point of view, revealing the ideological complexity and the eminently visual nature of this ceremony. But he also exploits its ambivalence and the element of illusion in a solemn public event which can turn it into a parody of itself, a metaphor for the scandalous elegiac life and poetry, but also a powerful image of poetic glory.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Athanassaki, L. 1992. "The Triumph of Love and Elegy in Ovid's Amores 1, 2," in MD 28: 125-141.

---

<sup>34</sup> Vidi ego pro nivea pugnantes coniuge tauros; / spectatrix animos ipsa iuvenca dabat ("I have seen bulls fighting over a snow-white heifer: / watching, she herself aroused their passion").

- 
- Barchiesi, A. 1981. "Notizie sul 'nuovo Gallo'", in *AeR* 26: 153-166.
- Beard, M. 2004. "Writing Ritual: The Triumph of Ovid"; in A. Barchiesi, J. Rüpke, S. Stephens (eds.) *Ritual in Ink. A Conference on Religion and Literary Production in Ancient Rome*, held at Stanford University in February 2002, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 2004, 115-126.
- Beard, M. 2007. *The Roman Triumph*. Cambridge, MA – London.
- Cameron, A. 1968. "The First Edition of Ovid's Amores", in *CQ* 18: 320-333.
- Davis, P. J. 2006. *Ovid & Augustus. A political reading of Ovid's erotic poems*. London.
- Du Quesnay, I. M. Le M. 1973. "The Amores"; in J. W. Binns, (ed.) *Ovid*, London: Routledge 1973, 1-48.
- Gagliardi, P. 2014. "Il poeta, Cesare, il trionfo: una rilettura dei vv. 2-5 del papiro di Gallo", in *PapLup* 23: 31-52.
- Galinsky, K. 1969. "The Triumph Theme in the Augustan Elegy", in *WS* 3: 75-107.
- Goh, I. 2015. "The End of the Beginning: Virgil's Aeneid in Ovid. Amores 1, 2", in *G&R* 62: 167-176.
- Goldbeck, F. – Wienand J. (edd.) 2017. *Der römische Triumph in Prinzipat und Spätantike*. Berlin – Boston.
- Harvey, F. D. 1983. "Cognati Caesaris: Ovid Amores 1, 2, 51/52", in *WS* 17: 89-90.
- Krasser, H. – Pausch, D. – Petrovic I. (edd.) 2008. *Triplici invecus triumpho. Der römische Triumph in augusteischer Zeit*. Stuttgart.
- Labate, M. 1979. "Poetica ovidiana dell'elegia: la retorica della città", in *MD* 3: 9-67.
- Labate, M. 1984. *L'arte di farsi amare. Modelli culturali e progetto didascalico nell'elegia ovidiana*. Pisa.

Labate, M. 1987. "Elegia triste ed elegia lieta. Un caso di riconversione letteraria", in MD 19: 91-129.

Lange, C. – Vervaeke, F. (edd.) 2014. *The Roman Republican Triumph: Beyond the Spectacle*. Roma.

Latte, K. 1960. *Römische Religionsgeschichte*. Munich.

Mc Kay, A. G. 1998. "Non enarrabile textum? The Shield of Aeneas and the Triple Triumph of 29 B.C."; in H. P. Stahl. (ed.) *Vergil's Aeneid*, London: Duckworth in association with The Classical Press of Wales 1998, 199-218.

McKeown, J. C. 1989. *Ovid, Amores. Text, Prolegomena and Commentary in four volumes. Volume II, A Commentary on Book One*. Leeds.

Miller, J. F. 1995. "Reading Cupid's Triumph", in CJ 90: 287-294.

Morgan, K. 1977. *Ovid's Art of Imitation: Propertius in the Amores*. Leiden.

Nicastri, L. 1984. *Cornelio Gallo e l'elegia ellenistico-romana*. Napoli.

Östernberg, I. 2009. *Staging the World: Spoils, Captives and Representation in the Roman Triumphal Procession*. Oxford.

Pandey, N. B. 2011. *Empire of the Imagination: the Power of Public Fictions in Ovid's 'Reader Response' to Augustan Rome*. Diss. Berkeley.

Pianezzola, E. 1999. *Ovidio. Modelli retorici e forma narrativa*. Bologna.

Reitzenstein, E. 1935. "Das neue Kunstwollen in den Amores Ovids", in RhM 84: 62-88.

Schäfer-Schmitt, J. 2008. "Candida victima im tristen Tomis. Zur Funktionalisierung des Triumphmotivs in Ovids Epistulae ex Ponto 2, 1"; in H. Krasser, D. Pausch, I. Petrovic (eds.) *Triplici invecus triumpho. Der römische Triumph in augusteischer Zeit*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008, 285-304.

Thomas, R. F. 1983. "Callimachus, the Victoria Berenices, and Roman Poetry", in CQ 33: 92-113.

Torelli, M. 1982. *Typology and Structure of Roman Historical Reliefs*. Ann Arbor.

Ziogas, I. 2015. “The Poet as Prince: Author and Authority Under Augustus”; in H. Baltussen, P. J. Davis (eds.) *The Art of Veiled Speech: Self-Censorship from Aristophanes to Hobbes*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 2015