STAKING A CLAIM FOR LYRIC ACHIEVEMENT:
HORACE, ODES 3.7-12

Sjarlene Thom
University of Stellenbosch

ABSTRACT

One of the fascinating aspects of ancient Greek and Latin lyric poetry is its multiplicity. Having staked his claim as a Roman Alcaeus in the Roman Odes, Horace goes on to prove his absolute mastery over the multiple possibilities of lyric poetry in general in Odes 3.7-12. In this article I would like to illustrate how Horace, at the beginning of Book 3, prepares renewed proof for a lasting monument of lyric poetry (Odes 3.30.1) – a monument based on his mastery of both metrical variety as well as multifaceted content.

Introduction

I have chosen to focus on this cluster of poems (Odes 3.7-12) at the beginning of Book 3 for a number of reasons. First, this cluster of poems, together with the preceding Roman Odes, forms a showcase of Horace’s lyric achievement at the beginning of Book 3. Second, because of their position in the collection immediately after the Roman Odes, the importance

1 Depending on the organising principle(s) involved, different critics have proposed different structures and combinations of groups, i.a. Santirocco 1986, Dettmer 1983 and Commager 1962. However, whether this group of poems functions as a unit on its own or forms part of a larger group of poems, is not at issue here. This article concentrates on how individual odes in this group respond to specific aspects in individual Roman Odes. A variety of other connections between poems within this group (3.7-12) as well as to other poems in the collection is not only possible, but feasible.
of this cluster is underlined. Third and more specifically, after six consecutive poems in the alcaic metre, the following six poems form a natural cluster also based on the exploitation of metre. Fourth, *Odes* 3.7-12 responds directly to the Roman Odes, not only collectively but also individually, linking closely two rather disparate sections of Book 3. Together they give expression to the multifaceted perspective so characteristic of lyric poetry and offer renewed proof of Horace’s ability as a lyric poet. Finally, this cluster of poems subjects the conventional themes and motifs of elegy and other poetic genres to a multifaceted lyric perspective. In so doing this

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2 *Contra* Syndikus who judges the poems as rather light-weight (1990:98). *Odes* 3.7-12, with their focus on personal relationships, contrast directly with the heavy social commentary implicit in the Roman Odes.

3 This change in metre hints at the variety of individual perspectives that will be reflected in this new cluster. Furthermore, the direct address in *quid fles, Asteriē* indicates a dramatic change after the six Roman Odes in which no addressee is mentioned and where ‘jegliche persönliche Anrede fehlt’ (Syndikus 1990:3). In addition, the unique metre (the ionic *a minore*) of the sixth poem (*Odes* 3.12) in this new group operates as a clear marker ending the unit. In the entire collection only *Odes* 3.12 is written in this metre. Finally, *Odes* 3.13 with its focus on art as the life-blood of individual and society, could be seen as a conclusion after two clusters of six poems each that portray first society and then the individual, respectively.

4 In the Roman Odes an ‘epic’ situation was undermined consistently by an individual, lyric perspective on this situation (Thom 1998:52-66). A sustained focus on the individual perspective in the following cluster of poems restores some balance after the broader socio-political concerns reflected in the Roman Odes. The tone of *Odes* 3.7-12 is more uniform than is normal for other groups of poems in the collections, except of course the Roman Odes to which they respond directly.

5 The Alexandrians, love elegy and Catullus’ hendecasyllables contain examples that come to mind.

6 Cf. Syndikus who explains one of the effects of this cluster of poems as follows: ‘In wenigen Gedichten benützt Horaz so sehr Worte und Motive der Liebeselegie; aber er lässt sich von ihnen nicht forttragen, vielmehr verwendet er diese weichen Stimmungen nur, um sie zu brechen, damit sie sich vor der Klarheit seines Blickes auflösen’ (1990:99). The focus in the rest of the article is on the consequences reflected in the impact made when each poem in the cluster responds so directly to a specific aspect identified in each of the Roman Odes.
cluster exploits these motifs and themes in support of the monument to Horace’s lyric poetry constructed in the odes – the scope of which is presented de novo at the beginning of Book 3.

In this article I would like to illustrate how Odes 3.7-12, as a cluster, embody the multifaceted approach inherent in Horace’s lyric mastery in the same way as the Parade Odes display his metrical attainment,\(^7\) or the Roman Odes his achievement as the Roman alternative to the Greek lyric poet, Alcaeus. More specifically the article proposes that the impact of these poems is enhanced substantially when they are considered as a cluster responding directly to the preceding Roman Odes; that the Odes 3.7-12 cluster, as a conceptualised unit, reflects an alternative perspective on issues or aspects identified in individual Roman Odes.\(^8\) For instance, individual poems in the Odes 3.7-12 cluster pick up on certain issues raised in the Roman Odes in reverse order: Odes 3.7 responds to a specific aspect in Odes 3.6; Odes 3.8 to an aspect in Odes 3.5; Odes 3.9 to Odes 3.4; Odes 3.10 to Odes 3.3; Odes 3.11 to Odes 3.2; and Odes 3.12 to Odes 3.1. The Odes 3.7-12 cluster thus reflects a different outlook on issues that were raised earlier in the Roman Odes, portraying Horace’s mastery of lyric poetry’s multifaceted perspective. This deliberate hysteron proteron arrangement emphasizes the strong link between Odes 3.7-12 and the preceding Roman Odes. It also supports the idea of the latter grouping commenting on the first.

After 336 lines in the alcaic metre in the Roman Odes, the use of the fourth asclepiad in quid fles Asterie ... (‘what are you crying for, Asterie?’ Odes 3.7.1) strikes the ear as something completely new.\(^9\) The following six poems

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\(^7\) The Parade Odes exploit the metrical range established by Horace’s lyric precursors. In this way the poet proves his remarkable poetic ability.

\(^8\) This does not imply that individual poems or the collection as a whole do not reflect the lyric voice or individual perspective so fundamental to all lyric poetry. Instead, I propose that the cluster as a unit, and as a reaction to a different perspective embodied in the preceding Roman Odes, puts forward yet another lyric possibility with renewed vigour.

\(^9\) The alcaic metre, used in every single Roman Ode, gives way to the following metres in this group of poems: Odes 3.7 fourth asclepiad; Odes 3.8 sapphic; Odes 3.9 second asclepiad; Odes 3.10 third asclepiad; Odes 3.11 sapphic; Odes 3.12 ionic a minore. Seager 1993:27-28 points out both the abrupt change in tone and the return to a focus on personal issues in Odes 3.7-12 after the gravitas of the Roman Odes and
(Odes 3.7-12) will not only sound new, they will be quite different in focus. Larger social issues and politics have been laid aside. It is the individual’s reaction to a personal situation that now fascinates the poet.

**Odes 3.7 and 3.6**

In the opening question of Odes 3.7 Asterie, the addressee, is crying for some man (quem, 1). However, the poem gives proof of the unshakeable faithfulness of her beloved, Gyges, by describing the temptations he resists in great detail (ignibus urî, / temptat mille vafer modis, 11-12). The possibility of Gyges causing Asterie’s crying is thus debunked as soon as it is mooted.

By their focus on social conditions. See Cairns 1995:66-99 for a useful discussion of the scholarship concerned with a poem that serves as introduction to the group.

Odes 3.7-12 contain exactly half the number of lines (168) compared to the number dedicated to the preceding Roman Odes (336). This 2:1 line ratio between the Roman Odes and the following six odes could also be seen to imply that two basic units are involved.

This focus heralds a return to lyric poetry’s most fundamental quality – a preoccupation with the personal, ‘with real problems and real situations’ (Porter 1987:172). Cf. also Griffin 1985:159, who earlier underlined this aspect of the real: ‘Earlier literature – Homer, Hellenistic poetry, Latin predecessors – is incomplete without the Roman reality.’ It goes without saying that the lyric reality is a constructed, text-based reality.

Gyges, though absent, is not unfaithful, nor is he in any real physical, financial or even emotional danger. Gyges (confirmed as being constantis ... fidei, 4) does not succumb to temptation. He will return to Asterie at a specific time in the near future – in fact, as soon as possible in spring (primo ... vere, 2). He will have a successful trip behind him (beatum, 3), including the financial success (Thyna merce, 3) that marks him as a sound business man. Not only does he come back safely and prosperously, he even comes back as devoted (constantis ... fidei, 4) to Asterie as ever. Gyges is shown to differ substantially from the stock ‘absent’ elegiac beloved. He is absent only for so long as circumstances outside his control impede his return, he is not poor (on the contrary) and he does not succumb to the wiles of a rival, at least not yet. See Paschalis 2002:75 n. 12 for a discussion of the metaphorical implications of the cold temperatures suffered by Gyges during his lonely nights.

dwelling, in the central section of the poem, in such detail on the serious temptations resisted by Gyges (the ostensible cause of Asterie’s tears) the poet directs attention instead to Gyges’ partner.14 In the actual situation that is the focus of the poem (stanzas 6-8) it is Asterie, not Gyges, who is tempted.15 Her temptation is a real temptation. No go-between is trying to mislead her by constantly putting forward specious arguments (atqui sollicitae ... vafer modis, 9-12). She is sorely tempted by the immediate physical prowess of her neighbour Enipeus (at tibi / ne vicinus Enipeus / plus iusto placeat cave, 22-24).16 Odes 3.7 creates an image of temptation where both partners have not yet succumbed to the lure. Gyges, who is far away, has managed to resist seduction. Asterie, who is in her own surroundings and subjected to immediate physical desire, is so sorely tempted that she cries. She is indeed affected by the moral dilemma in which she finds herself. She would not otherwise have cause to cry.

If we look at Odes 3.7 in terms of its function in the cluster under discussion, it responds directly to the specific social criticism of moral degeneracy reflected in the Roman Odes. As such it functions as a fitting introduction to a group of poems (Odes 3.7-12) that will pick up on the social issues raised in the Roman Odes, but from a different perspective.17 Furthermore, on first hearing quid fles Asterie? after the focused preoccupation with

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14 The two mythical exempla (13-20) here seem to have implications for Gyges, since Bellerophon and Peleus both paid a heavy price for their ostensibly correct moral choices. These exempla include situations where the hero refuses to give in to temptation but, ironically, in the end suffers as if he had. Bellerophon is killed and Peleus just misses being killed, because of morally correct choices. The treacherous (perfida, 13) stepmother’s attempts to seduce Bellerophon fail – but the false charges (falsis criminibus, 14) against him succeed, since they cause retribution to be exacted just as if he had made the wrong moral choice. Davis 1991:48-49 astutely describes using the temptation of heroic figures from mythology to identify an ‘immoral liaison’ as ‘duplicitous appropriation’.

15 Davis 1991:47 points out the obvious analogy between the temptations faced by Gyges and those faced by Asterie.

16 See Nisbet & Rudd 2004:120-21 for aspects of temptation and even of seduction associated with the name Enipeus.

17 Cairns 1995:66-99, amongst others, points out the connection of Odes 3.7 with and response to the Roman Odes.
social and political issues in the Roman Odes, the reader could well imagine Asterie crying ‘for Rome’ in general.\textsuperscript{18} However, it is even more feasible that Asterie’s crying responds specifically to a particular aspect of the previous Roman Ode (\textit{Odes} 3.6). If the \textit{matura virgo} with her unfaithfulness in \textit{Odes} 3.6.21-32 is taken as an example of general female behaviour and the deterioration of social mores, the pressure on Asterie to succumb is high. Gyges’ faithfulness under extreme provocation (at least up till now) also comments directly on the \textit{matura virgo}’s husband’s open acceptance of her unfaithfulness. After all, she acts \textit{non sine conscio ... marito} (29-30).

There may be a conventional elegiac three-some, consisting of a pair of lovers and a tempter/temptress,\textsuperscript{19} involved in this ode, but in terms of its response to the elegiac world,\textsuperscript{20} convention is inverted once Horace shines the light of a lyric perspective on the situation. At the end of the poem the reader has developed some fellow-feeling for Asterie. She is no Penelope to inspire others by a display of her sterling character under difficult circum-stances. Neither is she an elegiac mistress lording it over her excluded and suffering beloved. In the course of the poem, in spite of a situation that evokes a conventional elegiac love-triangle,\textsuperscript{21} Asterie and even Gyges have, somehow, transcended the elegiac convention. Both have stepped out of an ostensible elegiac background into the lyric space depicted by the poem.\textsuperscript{22} From the lyric perspective there is no pat answer to a difficult situation. In the lyric world Asterie has only her tears.\textsuperscript{23} The

\textsuperscript{18} See Collinge 1961:51; Commager 1962:16.
\textsuperscript{19} A lover bewailing his/her unfaithful beloved seems to indicate a typical elegiac love-situation (Syndikus 1990:98). Cf. Griffin on Vergil (1985:159).
\textsuperscript{20} An unfaithful beloved is associated as a matter of course with comedy or elegiac poetry. Barchiesi 2001:141 and Hinds 1998 both refer to these associations and the expectations elicited by a stock or generic situation and how these expectations can be inverted or reinvented. Freudenburg 1993:190 argues that both imagery and diction can be used to suggest that an object represents more than it presents. Gowers points to loaded implications where an object ‘is no longer what it seems’ (1993:220).
\textsuperscript{21} For a detailed reading of \textit{Odes} 3.7 as elegy see Cairns 1995:66-99.
\textsuperscript{22} See Cairns’s discussion (1995:70) of Asterie as failed elegiac heroine.
\textsuperscript{23} Note that no direct answer is given to this question \textit{quid fles, Asterie?} Asterie is clearly crying because the easy way out – blaming an inconstant beloved – is no
so-called practical advice given by the poet for Asterie to remain steadfast (*duram*, 32), to lock her doors (*domum claudi*, 29) and to close her ears to Enipeus’ serenade (*neque in vias / sub cantu querulae despice tibiae*, 29-30), does not help either, since this advice is relevant to a conventional literary motif (the *exclusus amator*), not the situation in which Asterie finds herself. This advice takes neither the impact of physical desire nor the unique circumstances of the individual into consideration. This type of advice has nothing to offer a person facing temptation in the lyric environment.

By analysing the pressure faced in what, initially, could be taken as a stock character’s response to a conventional situation of temptation in *Odes* 3.7, Horace probes the motivation behind an individual example of unfaithful behaviour – behaviour echoing that of the unspecified adulterous, young, married woman (*matura virgo*) in *Odes* 3.6.22-32. Asterie does not have to be married to Gyges to illustrate the mind-set required to contemplate unfaithfulness or the social pressure experienced by the individual to succumb to temptation. Asterie’s social position (or lack thereof) does not affect her effectiveness as an example either. She typifies general human behaviour and how we rationalise our actions. For Horace, the lyric response must take Roman (and human) reality into account. The situation and its consequences – like Asterie’s tears – have become ‘real’ in the sense that she cries for herself and her own individual circumstances and not for conventional reasons or some general social *malaise* as exemplified by the actions of the *matura virgo* and her careless husband in *Odes* 3.6. Elegiac circumstances have indeed been subjected to a multifaceted lyric scrutiny and transformed accordingly.

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24 See Nisbet & Rudd 2004:121 for a discussion of aspects of the paraclausithyron portrayed in the last two stanzas.

25 ‘That a complacent husband condones the unfaithful behaviour of the *matura virgo*, suggests a general disintegration of social values.

26 Gyges’ faithfulness under temptation is enough to show up her very different response to her commitments.

27 See Cairns 1995, who argues for Asterie’s position as a Roman *matrona*. 
Odes 3.8 and 3.5

Odes 3.8 turns its attention to a completely different personal relationship – that between Horace and Maecenas. No fictitious character or relationship is under scrutiny. Real, historic personalities are involved. In fact, the poet takes great delight in conveying the idiosyncrasies of the two protagonists: 28 Horace, the bachelor, seemingly engaged in celebrating a most unsuitable feast 29 and Maecenas dragged to a party, apparently much against his will. The poem opens with an ostensible inversion – a bachelor celebrating a woman’s fertility feast. Horace aims to achieve a subsequent inversion – Maecenas should turn away from political concerns in the public arena to focus on his private responsibilities to his friend. 30 Maecenas is loath to lay aside the burden of political affairs (mitte civilis super Urbe curas, 17), indicating the high level of his sense of responsibility as a citizen. 31 Focusing on this facet of Maecenas’ character, Horace appeals precisely to this aspect of his friend’s personality. Horace points out that it is as much his friend’s responsibility to celebrate his (Horace’s) escape from the falling tree as it is to respond to his (Maecenas’ own) more public responsibilities as a citizen. 32

The poet’s lyric perspective is supported in that the personalities of the protagonists shine through so clearly. Horace manipulates his material so that an appeal to his friend’s sense of responsibility is exploited, ostensibly in order to make him lay down that same sense of responsibility as a citizen, to take up his responsibilities as a friend. And once he has proven his point

28 The basic incongruity of the poem is enhanced by its Sapphic metre, normally associated with love poetry.
32 McNeill 2001:22 makes the important point that ‘in reality a Roman amicitia depended upon a regular trading of beneficia and various expected duties, or officia.’
(and Maecenas has capitulated) the celebrations take off and cares are laid aside (dona praesentia cape laetus horae ac / linque severa, 28). 33 If we look at this poem in terms of its function in the unit, it responds directly and in a startlingly individual manner to Odes 3.5 where Regulus – that epitome of the individual’s responsibility to the state and to himself – is shown as an egregius ... exsul (48), choosing honour rather than expediency and in the process, rejecting concerned friends (maerentes amicos, 47) as well as human relationships. 34 According to the lyric perspective so craftily presented in Odes 3.8, Horace’s appeal is made directly to the quality that Maecenas shares with Regulus – his sense of responsibility. 35 However, in this ode a stand is made for life and friendship, rather than for the inhumanity involved in a choice for torture and death. Maecenas is warned quite explicitly to take care as a private citizen, not to care too much as a citizen of the state (pare privatus nimium cavere, 26). With Regulus as extreme example, in addition to this direct warning about the boundaries imposed upon a privatus ringing in his ears, Maecenas has only one option available – to make the right lyric choice and respond positively to his friend’s invitation.

In a more general sense, the ode also stakes its claim as an ‘invitation’ poem, with Catullus 13 (cenabis bene) amongst others as a challenging precursor. The Catullus poem assumes that Fabullus will accept the invitation. It portrays details concerning the event – details that will make the friend wish for the impossible – to concentrate his whole being into one physical sense (deos rogabis / totum ut te faciant, Fabulle, nasum). Horace is solely intent on persuading the invitee to accept the invitation in the first place, to focus on celebrating reality, the here and now (dona praesentis cape, 27). Most

33 Cf. also Odes 3.29 where Horace, in much greater detail, encourages Maecenas to step away from his burdens and to sort things out with a tranquil spirit (quod adest memento / componere aequus, 32-33).

34 Santirocco 1986:125 suggests that the ‘intrusion of C. 3.8 into an otherwise erotic sequence is not satisfactorily explained.’ If Odes 3.7-12 is taken as a unit reflecting the idiosyncrasy of individual behaviour with a special focus on personal relationships, there is no ‘intrusion’. Neither is there intrusion if Maecenas’ over-developed sense of responsibility in Odes 3.8 is deliberately matched to Regulus’ lone (and self-destructive) example of individual responsibility in Odes 3.5.

35 The impact of the comparison is enhanced by the choice of an historic (and not a fictitious) example of responsibility.
importantly, the ode’s main aim is to reaffirm lyric’s realistic and at the same
time multifaceted perspective on things (\textit{linque severa}, 28). After all, Maecenas
must put aside his own perspective on things and accept his friend’s version
of the situation.

In \textit{Odes} 3.8, in a highly sophisticated manner, one protagonist manoeuvres
another into changing his perspective on things. The male character in \textit{Odes}
3.9 has the same objective, but goes about obtaining his aim in a completely
different way. This male character, assumed to be the poet himself,\textsuperscript{36} is involved in a complex answer-poem (\textit{carmen amoebaeum}) with a previous beloved,
Lydia. In this interchange the lyric perspective focuses on the individuality of
the protagonists and their perspectives, underlining this predominant feature
of \textit{Odes} 3.8.\textsuperscript{37}

\textbf{\textit{Odes} 3.9 and 3.4}

In \textit{Odes} 3.9 it seems as if the male protagonist is the more romantic of the
two. He describes his original situation in terms of the unfamiliar and the
exotic, portraying himself as being in a more prosperous position than the
king of Persia, a far-off country associated with luxury and indulgence. The
poet’s present beloved, Chloe (\textit{me nunc Thressa Chloe regit}, 9), matches this
foreign profile.\textsuperscript{38}

The female protagonist, Lydia, is patently more realistic. Her credentials
can be proven. Her reputation is well-known locally (\textit{multi Lydia nominis}, 7).\textsuperscript{39}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[36] Syndikus 1990:111 suggests that Horace is the man in \textit{Odes} 3.9, as does West
1995:103 amongst a number of others. See also Nisbet & Rudd 2004:133.
\item[37] Cf. the excellent analysis of the poem by Lyne 1980:224, who also points out the
dramatic aspects of the whole dialogue.
\item[38] Chloe comes from Thrace, a place even more exotic than Persia. These extreme
positions are meant to be taken with a pinch of salt, as if the poet is daring Lydia to
match him if she can. West 2002:90 describes ‘this self-mockery as part of his
[Horace’s] poetic persona.’
\item[39] Putnam 1977:140 points out the importance of Lydia comparing herself not to
‘some anonymous exotic king’ but instead to ‘Roman Ilia’ which refers to a shared
Roman heritage.
\end{footnotes}
Her present beloved, Calais (Thurini Calais filius Ornyti, 14), is not only named, but specific details of his family and home district are supplied as well.\textsuperscript{40} The two protagonists are embroiled in a competition to cap each other’s statements. They are evenly matched in ability.\textsuperscript{41} That Lydia is capable of picking up, not only on the poet’s line of thinking, but also on his very words and ideas, points to her sound understanding of her adversary.\textsuperscript{42} That the poet, on the other hand, prefers to move on to a new aspect of the argument, after being capped by Lydia’s response, reflects his experience with his opponent and a subtle understanding of her personality.\textsuperscript{43} By indicating a newly opened door (patet ianua Lydiae, 20), the poet holds out the hope of a happy reversal of the situation for the two. At this stage, Lydia is clearly the winner. She can afford to be realistic in her assessment of the poet’s

\textsuperscript{40} See Nisbet & Rudd 2004:137-38; West 1995:102.

\textsuperscript{41} See Putnam 1977:142-49 and West 1995:102-03 for appreciation of Lydia’s capping the poet-persona in each case. The poet Horace is of course the real winner.

\textsuperscript{42} She also refers to her beloved as \textit{puer} (16) underlining the disparity in age between the poet and her present beloved. According to LS the upper age for a \textit{puer} was technically seventeen, although up to age twenty was possible as well. One could also consider this reference to the extreme youth of her beloved as the gap Lydia offers the poet – making this situation ‘check’ and not a final ‘check mate’.

\textsuperscript{43} In the middle section of the poem, Chloe’s ruling the roost (\textit{me nunc Thressa Chloe regit}, 9) comes as a surprise following the poet’s previous description of his ‘being more prosperous than the king of the Persians’ with Lydia (\textit{Persarum ... rege beatior}, 4). Chloe’s attributes as a girlfriend (\textit{dulcis docta modos et citharae sciens}, 10) are even more surprising. Exotic Chloe keeps the poet enthralled by her ‘learning’ and ‘knowledge’, not by her physical appearance. If Chloe’s intellectual appeal is the source of her attraction for the poet, Lydia’s immediate understanding of the situation marks her as Chloe’s equal. Lydia describes her present situation with Calais in terms of that aspect of a relationship that normally is considered a \textit{sine qua non} – passion, and mutual passion at that (\textit{me torret face mutua}, 13). Not for Lydia, this strategic blunder of not mentioning a partner’s ardent response. See Putnam’s masterly analysis of the poem (1977:137-57). See also West’s succinct summary of the situation (2002:90).
In this way she suggests that the relationship she has in mind will be based on reality and not on idyllic criteria.\textsuperscript{45}

If we look at \textit{Odes} 3.9 in terms of its function in the unit, the impact of the battle of wills between two individuals increases significantly, if it is also read as a crafty lyric take on the epic excesses of the Gigantomachy, used to amplify the argument in \textit{Odes} 3.4. There is a distinct irony at play in associating a battle of wills between two evenly matched individuals to the cosmic chaos associated with the Gigantomachy. Since the characters in \textit{Odes} 3.9 are so perfectly matched, they could well continue their competition without ever reaching a final outcome. It is only because both of them understand this reality, as well as the need for compromise in human relationships, that the situation comes to a satisfactory end. The tempering of power by wisdom, the \textit{crux} in \textit{Odes} 3.4 (65-68), is illustrated on a completely different, thoroughly light-hearted level, when Horace’s \textit{iocosa musa} subjects a battle for power to an ironic lyric scrutiny and sets it out in terms of the lyric environment in \textit{Odes} 3.9.

Furthermore, \textit{Odes} 3.9 identifies the competitive aspect involved in a capping response as the essence of the answer-poem (\textit{carmen amoebaeum}) of bucolic poetry\textsuperscript{46} – and inverts it completely. What starts out as a competition ends, in the lyric environment, when compromise – rivalry’s complete antithesis – steps in and settles the matter in a wise manner.

Lyric realism also takes a cunning shot at the \textit{exclusus amator} motif in \textit{Odes} 3.9. The reference to the open door (\textit{patet ianua Lydiae}, 20)\textsuperscript{47} and Lydia’s compliant acceptance of the poet’s proposition indicate a surprising reversal of the negative outcome normally associated with the closed-door motif so familiar to elegy. In this way \textit{Odes} 3.9 – manipulating the competitive essence of pastoral poetry and inverting the long-suffering perseverance of the

\textsuperscript{44} She bluntly describes the poet as fickle and irascible (\textit{tu levior cortice et improbo / iracundior Hadria}, 22-23).

\textsuperscript{45} In stripping her acceptance of the poet’s suggestion of any romantic overtones, Lydia neatly responds to Horace’s original praise of Chloe as \textit{docta} and \textit{sciens} (10). Lydia has proven her ‘learning’ in the wiles of relationships in addition to her very specific display of personal ‘knowledge’ of the poet.

\textsuperscript{46} Cf. Syndikus 1990:19, who refers to Theocritus and Vergil’s \textit{Eclogues}.

\textsuperscript{47} This is in direct contrast to Lydia’s keeping her door closed to the \textit{exclusus amator} in \textit{Odes} 1.25.
**exclusus amor** – emphasises the different perspective on matters so characteristic of the lyric environment.

**Odes 3.10 and 3.3**

*Odes* 3.10 continues the present cluster’s stand for lyric poetry’s multifaceted point of view. The poet, ostensibly a conventional *exclusus amor*, complains bitterly of his beloved, Lyce, living up to her name ‘she-wolf’, because of her heartless behaviour. The poet uses the mundane comparison of a pulley with a rope around it, as a crane lifting a weight, to describe the proposed relationship between the lover and the beloved. Lyce is the weight and the lover is attempting to move this weight with the normal tool designed for the job. With the transference of the *exclusus amor*’s attempt to persuade his mistress to abandon her exclusivity to the labour sphere of input and result, the situation shifts. A realistic and unemotional criterion of assessment now applies to the state of affairs.

If we look at *Odes* 3.10 in terms of its function in the unit, it responds directly to Roman *Odes* 3.3, in which human and mythological examples of steadfast devotion to a single purpose are extolled. Focused on his quest, the protagonist in *Odes* 3.3 is not deterred by man, god or adverse weather conditions. The would-be lover in *Odes* 3.10, however, is quite different. Adverse weather conditions quickly force him to reconsider his options. He gives up on his proposed aim, after a realistic assessment of his chances of success. His decision is in line with lyric realism and Roman reality, where it

48 Nisbet & Rudd 2004:143.

49 A pulley with a rope around it is used as a crane to lift heavy weights (Nisbet & Rudd 2004:145). Effort is required to lift the weight, but with the right tools the operator can make this crane function properly.

50 Johnson 2003:120 points out that the ‘elegiac lover typically avoids direct criticism of the rejecting beloved.’ He quotes as examples Tib. 2.6.43-54, Cat. 67 and Prop. 1.16.17-32. Williams 1969:78 indicates that Lyce, in opposing Venus, goes too far – with all that it implies for a human being setting up her will against the gods. Lyce does not have Penelope’s moral high ground either.

51 *iustum et tenacem propositi virum / non civium ardor ... / non vultus ... tiranni ... / quatit ... neque Auster / ... nec magna manus Iovis* (1-6).
makes more sense to grasp the gifts of the present hour (\textit{dona praesentis cape}, 3.8.27) and leave serious (long-term) aims behind (\textit{linque severa}, 3.8.28).\textsuperscript{52} Lyric norms and a lyric perspective demand a different type of dedication – dedication to present reality, rather than to self-sacrifice and vague future possibilities.

According to the poet’s realistic assessment of the situation, a real barbarian woman would take pity on her lover’s misery and not reduce him to being an \textit{exclusus amator} figure under such extreme weather conditions.\textsuperscript{53} And, according to the poet, Lyce does not meet the generic requirements for being the \textit{exclusus amator}’s exacting mistress. She surpasses these requirements.\textsuperscript{54} In aiming to exploit a conventional situation to the full, she overplays her hand. With this erring judgement call, something of a real mistress’s dilemma in an irregular situation is exposed.\textsuperscript{55} Lyce, in fact, acts like an ordinary woman in a tricky situation with a would-be lover. Concomitantly, since Lyce does not fulfil the conventional requirements of a mistress, the lover does not have to maintain his ostensible role as \textit{exclusus amator} either. He too can take an inappropriate decision, that is, inappropriate in terms of the \textit{exclusus amator} convention.\textsuperscript{56} His decision will now be based on a personal perspective and an individual reality (\textit{non hoc semper erit liminis aut aequae / caelestis patiens latus}, 3.10.19-20) and not on literary convention. Such realism is the hallmark of lyric poetry. It is also a central

\textsuperscript{52} The lyric \textit{caveat} makes even more sense if the warning in \textit{Odes} 3.3 against a quest undertaken with hubris (\textit{ni nimium pii / rebusque fidentes ...}, 58-59) is taken seriously.

\textsuperscript{53} Syndikus 1995:19 refers to the lover’s complaints being piled up ‘in an exaggerated crescendo’.

\textsuperscript{54} The extremity of her present behaviour would still be inappropriate if Lyce were living at the ends of the earth (\textit{extremum Tanain si biberes}, 3.10.1), if she were married to a savage husband (\textit{saevo nupta viro}, 2) and if she were cruelly exposing the poet to the position of \textit{exclusus amator} (\textit{me tamen asperas / porrectum ante fores}, 2-3) under the foul weather conditions in which he finds himself (\textit{obiere incolis ... Aquilonibus}, 2-4).

\textsuperscript{55} Even Venus is not pleased with her handling of the situation (\textit{ingratam Veneri ... superbiam}, 9), since she does not stay within the parameters of the stock situation in which she supposedly finds herself. Lyce therefore has no excuse for her unfeeling pride, since she is neither stock/elegiac character nor epic heroine.

\textsuperscript{56} This realistic objectivity in the description of Lyce and the poet is noted as being foreign to conventional elegy (Syndikus 1990:118).
component of the renewed affirmation of the multifaceted possibilities associated with lyric poetry, as portrayed by this specific cluster of poems.

**Odes 3.11 and 3.2**

*Odes* 3.11 is directly paired with *Odes* 3.10, since it too embodies the apparently excluded lover’s plea to soften his mistress’s heart. According to this excluded lover, Lyde’s refusing the lyre’s plea (on behalf of the poet) would constitute a crime matching that of the daughters of Danaus, now paying a heavy price for this transgression in the Underworld. In *Hypermestra*, the one exception to the forty-nine

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57 The lover is not described and what he asks is not specified. All this is implied. There is no evidence of Horace as the lover in the poem either (Bradshaw 1978:156). Furthermore, Lyde is only implicitly involved in the poem since Mercury and the tortoise-shell lyre are the direct addressees. Traditionally, Mercury is the trickster god who can persuade people to act against their own inclinations. Cf. Bond 1986:68-86 for the poet’s association with Mercury. However, Mercury enabled Amphion to bend stones to his will in building Thebes ‘with music’ (*Mercuri – nam te docilis magistro / movit Amphion lapides canendo, 1-2*) and the tortoise-shell lyre is the instrument *par excellence* (*nunc et / divitum mensis et amica templis, 5-6*) to help create a more relaxed atmosphere in an audience. According to Nisbet & Rudd 2004:155 the feats of persuasion were attributed to Orpheus with the lyre functioning only as the instrument of persuasion. The persuaded parties include the following: tigers, forests and streams (*tu potes tigres comitesque silvas / duere et rivos celeres morari, 13-14*). Cerberus, gate-keeper of the Underworld, gave way to the lyre’s persuasive power (*cessit immanis tibi blandienti / ianitor aulae, 13-16*). Even Tityos and Ixion, paying in the Underworld for their excessive lust, are given a respite from their troubles (*quin et Ixion Tityosque voltu / risit invito, 21-22*) in response to the lyre’s voice. Right at the beginning of the poem the reader is confronted with examples of the remarkable persuasive successes of Mercury and the tortoise-shell lyre. A young and inexperienced girl would not normally need this level of persuasion. The implication is that Lyde is worth all this focused attention, and that the poet has not been successful until now.

58 The daughters of Danaus were about Lyde’s age when they committed the crimes for which they now pay the price in Hades (*seraque fata / quae manent culpas etiam sub Orco, 28-29*). According to the poet’s spokesperson, the lyre, Lyde has a choice. She is either one of the forty-nine, who could hardly have done anything worse (*impiae –
murderous daughters, Lyde is given an idealised portrait of how she should act.\textsuperscript{60} If Hypermestra is at all a suitable example for Lyde, the point of the comparison is surely that Hypermestra proved her courage and perseverance under extreme conditions. The less taxing conditions under which Lyde must prove the same, should make taking Hypermestra as an example more feasible.\textsuperscript{61} At the end of the poem the lyre has done the poet’s work for him. In the final analysis, the poet’s only request is for Lyde to listen – not to act out the extreme example set before her. This implies she will respond to the situation like an individual,

\textit{nam quid potuere maius?, 30} than kill with such implacable cruelty (\textit{impaiae sponsos potuere duro / perdere ferro, 31-32}) or she could be like Hypermestra (\textit{splendide mendax, 25}), an example to follow that is set out in great detail in the rest of the poem. Typically in precepts used for the edification of young people, both the positive and the negative alternatives are spelled out. In this case, however, the ‘positive’ alternative is presented in great detail and, most persuasively, in the remainder of the poem (33-52).

\textsuperscript{59} The middle stanza of the poem (25-29) contains the crux: a cautionary tale from mythology with a focus on a suitable punishment (\textit{poenas, 26}) for the crime (\textit{scelus, 25}) involved. Cf. the ingenious use of such examples in references to Proetus (3.7.13) and Bellerophon (3.7.15).

\textsuperscript{60} Hypermestra immediately grasps the implications of the threat to her new husband. She takes action (\textit{surge, 37, 38}) to avoid a situation with which she does not concur. If Lyde could be like Hypermestra, she would be unique (\textit{una de multis, 33}). Instead of \textit{impiiae\[e\]} (30) like the many, she would be truly \textit{digna} (24).

\textsuperscript{61} Hypermestra supplies proof of the intended murder of her young husband (\textit{ne longus tibi somnus, unde / non times, detur, 38-39}) understanding immediately that the trusting and unsuspecting attitude of her new husband (who cannot imagine his young wife as a threat) would need this proof of the plot to kill him. She supplies this proof even if it means that she betrays her own family (\textit{socerum et scelestas / falle sorores, 39-40}). She ostensibly characterises herself as having less resolution than her sisters (\textit{ego illis / mollior, 42-43}), but the mental courage required to be the only one to disobey parental authority is not the act of a spineless character. She is determined neither to kill her husband nor to let others kill him on her behalf (\textit{ne te feriam, neque intra / claustra tenebo, 43-44}). The implication is clearly that, if she mercifully allows him to escape (\textit{quod viro clemens misero peperci, 46}), she will bear the full consequences of this action (\textit{me pater saevis oneret catenis, 45}). She knows that this includes banishment (\textit{me vel extremos Numidarum in agros / classe releget, 47-48}) and death (\textit{et nostri memorem sepulcro / scalpex querellam, 51-52}), but she faces up to it.
understanding the implications of the comparison. It also suggests that Lyde would act like an individual, who has the courage to take the mythological (exaggerated) example seriously and interpret its implications realistically; that she is someone who has the imagination to understand the poet’s unique take on the matter. This is in direct contrast to what could be expected from a stock character, who would not have an individual understanding of, or response to, a situation.

If we look at Odes 3.11 in terms of its function in a unit reaffirming the possibilities inherent in an alternative perspective, it responds directly to Roman Ode 3.2, where another adulta virgo (8) has to assess a situation of life and death. Instead of a glorious death for the fatherland (dulce et decorum est pro patria mori, 11), she (like Hypermestra) would prefer to choose life rather than death for her kingly beloved (sponsus ... regius, 10). Both the adulta virgo of Odes 3.2 and Hypermestra in Odes 3.11 are quite aware of the implication of their choices. In essence the choice depends on one’s perspective on virtus. For the soldier the traditional dulce et decorum est pro patria mori represents the essence of his duty to the state. The adulta virgo in Odes 3.2 is forced to concur (suspiret, 8) with this perspective. In Odes 3.11 Hypermestra’s definition of virtus is very different. She sees her duty as a commitment, not to a higher authority, but to another individual (her young husband). She too is prepared to die for her belief, fulfilling her duty in this way. Lyde is not Hypermestra, though. In Odes 3.11 she is only asked to consider these extremes, not to follow them. She is asked, quite clearly, to transfer their implications to the more realistic and light-hearted lyric environment. Virtus is set out with serious consequences in Roman Odes 3.2. Lyric virtus, by implication, needs to be read differently, in the more realistic lyric environment – where the choice is clearly for life and human relationships, rather than for loneliness and death.

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62 There is an implicit compliment to Lyde contained in the comparison. Only one of the fifty daughters did what Lyde is now supposed to take into consideration. Even in myth the odds are against a person displaying this type of courage and individuality.

63 This does not materialise in the rest of Odes 3.2 where the innocent and the guilty both suffer.
In its response to the elegiac *exclusus amator*, *Odes* 3.11 underlines lyric poetry’s inherent versatility and ingenuity. Even if myth transports the specific addressee and the audience in general to a completely different environment, the basic lyric frame of reference remains individualistic and multifaceted. Lyde is confronted by two alternatives. An argument is made for a specific option. The choice remains hers. In *Odes* 3.10, the lyric excluded lover turns away from the excessive behaviour associated with the *exclusus amator* in elegy. He bases his choice on a realistic assessment of a situation. In *Odes* 3.11 the poet expects the ostensible *exclusus amator’s* mistress, Lyde, to respond likewise — as an individual and in a similarly realistic manner. In this way *Odes* 3.11, together with *Odes* 3.10, is a true celebration of the inherent possibilities associated with multiple perspectives so fundamental to the renewed affirmation of the lyric achievement in this cluster.

**Odes 3.12 and 3.1**

With an appreciative portrait of yet another ‘excluded lover’, *Odes* 3.12 brings to a close this cluster of poems focusing on multifaceted perspectives so closely associated with the lyric environment. The unique metre of the Neobule poem (ionic *a minore*) serves to emphasise the underlying implacability of this stock literary situation. However, the poet has taken much trouble, in the preceding poems in this cluster and again in this poem, to illustrate how individual reactions to a stock situation do make a difference.

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64 The next ode in the collection (*Odes* 3.13) focuses on a completely different theme: art as the blood of life. This new marker supports the view that the poems focusing on individual reality (*Odes* 3.7-12) form a distinct group when compared to the Roman Odes (*Odes* 3.1-6) with their focus on a social reality.

65 Unfulfilled love impeding normal activity is a conventional theme in love poetry. Cf. Sappho, Fr. 102 Voigt (Nisbet & Rudd 2004:165).
The opening *miserarum* (1) places the poem squarely in the context of the elegiac lover complaining about an unfaithful or recalcitrant beloved. Neobule, however, is shown to assess her situation in a realistic manner, in spite of this context. Subsequently, she tackles the problem in her own highly individualistic manner. Instead of the expected complaint concerning the iniquities of the unfaithful beloved and the unhappy consequences for the lover, Neobule is shown to list, meticulously, the options open to her under the circumstances. In this way she is characterised as a sensible individual, who does not waste time in self-pity, but who focuses instead on coming to grips with reality.

Being portrayed as this down-to-earth, list-making personality, Neobule’s vulnerability to Cupid is quite striking. Cupid is the prime instigator of her original problem – her fascination with the young man, Hebrus. Cupid also prevents her from coping with this fascination, via her ability to work. He removes both the physical objects (*tibi qualum Cythereae puer ales, tibi telas / … aufert*, 4-5), as well as the mental attitude (*operosaeque Minervae stadium aufert*, 4-6).

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66 Catullus certainly made *miser* a stock adjective for the disillusioned but faithful lover. The plural and more general *miserarum* referring to unspecified females lost in love form a striking contrast to the masculine singular, specifically identified *miser* Catulle of Poem 8.

67 Cf. Nisbet & Rudd 2004:165 on arguments for and against Neobule as speaker in the poem.

68 *Contra* Nisbet & Rudd 2004:165 who describe the circumstances as ‘a stock situation, and individualizing touches are not to be expected.’

69 The feminine *miserarum* already gives a surprisingly realistic turn to the stock situation where the complaining lover more often than not is male.

70 Neobule’s perspective on the situation is that of the *exclusa amatrix*, but without the hope of a lover ever giving in (*amori dare ludum*, 1) to her request. The object of her love is not coy, or even uninterested; he is oblivious. The male *exclusus amator*’s other option to cope with the situation (drowning one’s sorrows in drink, *dulci / mala vino lavere*, 1-2) remains open though. Whatever the case, standing up to officious meddling or even opposing serious constraint (*exanimari metuentis / patrnae verbera linguae*, 2-3) are some of a variety of options open to the realistic lover in spite of this stock situation.
5), needed by her for her work. The strong irritation felt by a practical person, kept from work by a mischievous immortal child, is clear.

Cupid may be the instigator of her dilemma, but the means he uses to create this situation are embodied in the athletic Hebrus. Since he is the immediate cause of Neobule’s problem, it is fitting that his name should occur right in the middle of the poem (Liparaei nitor Hebri, 6). He is after all the crux of the matter. The rest of the poem is devoted to a detailed description of his physical prowess. It is truly ironic that Neobule, whose own ability is artistic (operosaque Minervae studium, 5) and conceptual, should fall for such a physical specimen and indeed one so completely focused on furthering his physical achievements. Hebrus’ complete unsuitability as a match for Neobule, as well as the total inequality in their circumstances, is a good indication of the level of deviousness that can be attributed to Cupid — and which is so realistically portrayed in this lyric take on the conventional situation.

Neobule is shown to acknowledge the incongruity of her infatuation. She is quite aware that her fascination with Hebrus is focused exclusively on his physicality. In dwelling (for half of the poem) on this aspect of his appeal for

71 Her very name links her to her work: Nisbet & Rudd 2004:169 point out that her ‘name suggests that she has “new designs”.’ To lose her ability to work is in effect to lose much of her own identity.
72 Cf Nisbet & Rudd 2004:168, who underline the possible effects of Cupid’s activity on Neobule.
73 At the beginning of the Odes 3.6-12 cluster, Asterie’s lover, Enipeus (3.7.23) was named after a river in Thessaly. Odes 3.12 concludes the cluster with another would-be lover named after a river in Thrace (Hebrus), supplying further support for regarding Odes 3.7-12 as a cluster of like-minded poems. Further implications of river names for would-be or recalcitrant lovers could be that constant change is associated with water.
74 His swimming (unctos Tiberinis umeros lavit in undis, 7), riding (eques ipso melior Belleronbonte, 8) and his exceptional athletic ability in boxing (neque pugno .../ victus, 8-9) and running (neque segni pede victus, 9) would make him a natural huntsman (catus idem per apertum fugientis agitato grege cervos iaculari, 10-11), seeking challenges to hone his skill (celer arto latiantem / fruticeto excipere aprum, 11-12). The double elision in this last line (12) beautifully suggests the risks he takes.
75 The implications of such manly activities are discussed in detail in Leach 1994:338.
her, she seems to admit that the more unsuitable he apparently is, the more she remains in thrall to him.\textsuperscript{76} The poem itself does not offer an escape from the situation. Instead, the relentless metre seems to suggest that the end of the poem inevitably refers back to the initial identification of Neobule as being one of the \textit{miserarum}, with this fundamental difference: there is an attempt to bring the spell by which she is transfixed under control by putting the situation into words.\textsuperscript{77} And on rereading the poem, the ironic distance between her and her situation becomes clear. \textit{Misera} is not the adjective to apply to a human being so gallantly combating the effects of Cupid’s machinations.\textsuperscript{78}

If we look at \textit{Odes} 3.12 in terms of its function in a unit that reaffirms Horace’s lyric achievement, it responds directly to Roman Ode 3.1. There could hardly be two poems that epitomise the difference between the social context of human beings and the fate of the individual more clearly. In a special social setting, the poet-intermediary, the \textit{sacerdos} of \textit{Odes} 3.1, sings songs not heard before (\textit{carmina non prius audita}, 2-3) to an audience of youths and maidens, representing Rome’s future. In \textit{Odes} 3.12, in an ordinary domestic setting, Neobule as well as her fellow sufferers are encouraged by a song directed to the present. The song reflects the sufferers’ own individual situation.

\textit{Odes} 3.1 lists typical Roman occupations – for males. These occupations determine the social standing of individuals, as allotted by even-handed fate (\textit{aequa lege Necessitas / sortitur insignes et imos}, 14-15). In her own environment, Neobule’s very ability to work is taken away not by impersonal fate, but by

\textsuperscript{76} This is typical of the \textit{exclusus amator} situation where the odds against the excluded lover always seem to be remarkably high.

\textsuperscript{77} Oliensis 1998:92 underlines the power implicit in \textit{verbera linguae} in \textit{Odes} 3.12.3.

\textsuperscript{78} The contrast to \textit{miser Catulle} (Cat. 8) could not be greater. The reader believes that Neobule takes charge of her situation since she succeeds in grasping the implications of her circumstances so clearly. She is no victim submitting to a situation over which she apparently has no control (\textit{contra} Porter 1987:177). This is the opposite effect aimed for by the satirist, where self-irony is suspect, because of the constant contradictions in the speaker’s voice (Zetzel 2002:39).
Cupid himself. In *Odes* 3.1 greed feeds the desire for more and the focus on sufficiency is dissipated (*desiderantem quod satis est*, 25). In *Odes* 3.12 on the other hand, Neobule desires only *quod satis est*. All she wants is to escape from being in thrall to Hebrus and to get back to her normal life and ordinary tasks. This final poem in the cluster chooses to focus once again on the most basic tenet of the lyric environment: that given any social context, given even limited or confining circumstances, real or conventional, more than one perspective on a situation is of the essence.

**Conclusion**

After the remarkable preoccupation with social concerns of the Roman Odes, *Odes* 3.7-12 turn to the concerns of the individual. In directly responding to aspects earlier portrayed in the Roman Odes, the poet illustrated one of the most basic characteristics of lyric poetry: lyric's multifaceted perspective on any situation. In addition, a series of highly individual perspectives on typical literary situations is depicted in the course of *Odes* 3.7-12. The individuals concerned may have started out, ostensibly caught in typical or even stock literary situations in these poems, but in their reactions to their respective circumstances, they have stamped their own individuality on each of these situations.

This paper has argued that *Odes* 3.7-12 pick up on specific issues raised in the Roman Odes, offering a different perspective on these issues. In the process the poet created an extraordinary example of what the lyric environment entails and his own complete mastery of the genre. With these odes at the beginning of Book 3 (*Odes* 3.1-12) and the complex interaction linking them together, Horace summarises the basis on which his

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79 The social restrictions that limit Neobule’s choices (and possible ways in which to respond to her dilemma) are even more obvious when compared to the opportunities (to work, etc.) available to males.  
80 *Odes* 3.8 does not portray a literary situation. However, the poem uses the historic friendship between Horace and Maecenas as a point of departure for a unique take on the literary topos of friendship.  
81 The transforming and exploiting of conventions associated with elegy and other genres, *inter alia*, come to mind.
achievement as a lyric poet rests, just as the Parade Odes at the beginning of Book 1 gave evidence of his outstanding metrical ability. With these poems, collectively and individually, Horace offered renewed proof of his lyric achievement and the lasting monument he created (Odes 3.30).

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st@sun.ac.za
Acta Classica is published annually by the Classical Association of South Africa. The journal has been in production since 1958. It is listed on both the ISI and the SAPSE list of approved publications.

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