Cinesias really was very thin and very tall. Strattis wrote a play about him, calling him 'Phthian Achilles' since he often used the vocative form

Phthian

in his poetry. So Strattis in mockery of his physical appearance addressed him as 'Phthian Achilles'.

The consumptive appearance of Cinesias, poet of Dithyrambs, is mentioned also by other authors, who called him 'thin' or compared him rather rigorously with a skeleton.[5] As is well known, this was only one of several possibilities in giving a caricature of notorious Cinesias.[6] It is true that it is possible to discuss the real meaning of Strattis' joke on Cinesias, but the main point here is that 'Phthian' could be understood in antiquity as 'mockery of his physical appearance'.[7] Even if this was part of a comedy, I would think that when Cinesias could be a 'Phthian Achilles', this is another reason to see Phthia as a region 'of consumption'.[8]

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[5] For Cinesias cf. A. W. Pickard-Cambridge, *Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy* (Oxford–New York, 1927), 59–61. Strattis' jokes on that man: Meriani (n. 4), 21–45; Pickard-Cambridge, 60–1. Thinness: Cf. Meriani (n. 4), 23.33–34.39. Skeleton: Galen, *Hippocr. aphor.* 18.1.149 (Campbell [n. 4], 55, no. 8); scholiast on Ar. *Ran.* 152–3 (Campbell [n. 4], 45, no. 3). For images of poets and philosophers as skeletons in another context cf. K. M. D. Dunbabin, 'Sic erimus cuncti ... the skeleton in Graeco-Roman art', *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 101 (1986), 185–255; K. Schefold, *Die Bildnisse der antiken Dichter, Redner und Denker* (Basel, 1997²), 300–2, figs. 175–8. One should remember that such attention to physical appearance has parallels in art; cf. N. Himmelmann, *Realistische Themen in der griechischen Kunst der archaischen und klassischen Zeit*, Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts 28, suppl. vol. (Berlin–New York, 1994), 19.

[6] Cf. Kassel and Austin (n. 4), at 633, fr. 17; B. Zimmermann, *Dithyrambos. Geschichte einer Gattung*, Hypomnemata 98 (Göttingen, 1992), 119–21.

[7] Cf. Meriani (n. 4), 33–4, with a discussion of proposals.

[8] The question, whether Phthia is a landscape or a city, was treated also in antiquity. Cf. Bernert (n. 1), 949–51; E. Visser, *Homers Katalog der Schiffe* (Stuttgart–Leipzig, 1997), 654–7. For 'phthisis' in medicine cf. K.-H. Leven, *Antike Medizin. Ein Lexikon* (Munich, 2005), 701–2 (M. Stamatu).

EURIPIDES, *ALCESTIS* 320–2: AN OLD CONJECTURE REVIVED

δεῖ γὰρ θανεῖν με· καὶ τόδ' οὐκ ἐς αὔριον
οὐδ' ἐς τρίτην μοι †μηνὸς† ἔρχεται κακόν.
ἀλλ' αὐτίκ' ἐν τοῖς οὐκέτ' οὖσι λέξομαι.

So James Diggle's Oxford Classical Text of 1984. The large majority of scholars since Musgrave's edition of 1778 have suspected or condemned *μηνός*, particularly after Nauck's laconic *vitiosum* in his third edition of 1870; and L. P. E. Parker will do so in her forthcoming edition with commentary of *Alcestis* (Oxford, 2007), from which she kindly showed me her note: see below, at the end. All rightly disregard the scholia's facile explanation '*this* month'; any idea of 'month' is contextually unapt. L. Weber,

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Alkestis (Leipzig–Berlin, 1930) attempted the fullest defence; it was crushed by A. M. Dale, *Alcestis* (Oxford, 1954).

Wecklein's *Appendices* of 1899 (his revision of R. Prinz's first edition of *Alcestis*, 1878) and 1902 (appended to his *Rhesus*) listed conjectures; the two most canvassed by editors have been Herwerden's τρίτον … φέγγος and Mekler's I think misguided deletion of the entire line. *Lustrum* 47 (2005), 76 reports the three most recent conjectures: σοι μητρὸς (D. J. Jakob, *Mnemosyne* 43 [1990], 432–4), τρίτον … γλῆνος (W. Lapini, *BollClass* 18 [1997], 73–87), and μεῖναν (E. Livrea, *SIFC* 16 [1998], 149–50). The first two of these give inappropriate and distracting sense; and like Herwerden's suggestion, they require incidental alterations, unwelcome methodologically. Livrea's participle μεῖναν looks good in sense (although the aorist is surely impossible), and goes some way to explaining μηνός as a transcriptional error (but a very early one, since it was read by the scholia), from similarity of spelling, rather than as an unintelligent, invasive, and displacing gloss. Indeed a participle with similar merits had already occurred to me before I found it in Wecklein's first *Appendix* as Kvíčala's conjecture long ago: μέλλον.

I have been not been able to locate and read Kvíčala's argument, but μέλλον is apt in both idiom and sense: 'For I must die; and this evil comes with no delay for me until tomorrow, nor to the day after, but I shall at once be counted among those who are no longer living.' For the verb μέλλω used of abstractions in Euripides cf. *Ion* 1002 μέλλον γάρ τι προσφέρεις ἔπος ('hesitant word'), with μέλλον read by Wilamowitz and Kovacs, probably correctly (but it is obelized by Diggle and Lee); and for the verb's impersonal use cf. *Or.* 426 τὸ μέλλον δ' ἴσον ἀπραξίαι λέγω, both '(mere) intention' and 'delay, hesitation', cf. 420 with Willink's note; *Bacch.* 197 μακρὸν τὸ μέλλειν; *Phoen.* 1279 οὐ μελλητέον. With μέλλον in *Alc.* 321 the idiomatic pairing of ἐς αὔριον and ἐς τρίτην is simple and forceful; others before me have compared Anaxandrides F 4.3–4 *PCG* νῦν μὲν … / εἰς αὔριον δὲ … εἶτ' εἰς τρίτην. Furthermore, the participle gives fuller sense to the prepositions than if they depend solely upon ἔρχεται, and creates a good contrast with following αὐτίκα.

I was encouraged to find from Dr Parker's note that P. T. Eden also had once thought of the verb μέλλω as appropriate here, similarly without awareness of Kvíčala, but in the form μελλῆσον, suggested without argument in his 'Some skewered gobbets in Euripides', in E. M. Craik (ed.), *'Owls to Athens'. Essays Presented to Sir Kenneth Dover* (Oxford 1990), 25–9, at 26. I think the future tense unnecessary, despite its matching that of λέξομαι; and the conjecture, like those of Herwerden, Jakob and Lapini, involves further alteration.[1]

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[1] I thank Dr Parker and Prof Diggle for reading this note in draft, and for encouraging its submission to the journal. The latter observed that *Hipp.* 1382 (μένει Wilamowitz and most subsequent editors: see Barrett; μέλλει MSS) and Porson's conjecture at Soph. *OC* 547 (if correct: ἄνους for ἄλλους) illustrate the possible confusion between -λλ- and -ν-. The MSS reading in the *Hippolytus* passage in fact affords seductive additional support for restoring μέλλον … κακόν in *Alcestis*: ἐξορίζεται / κακὸν οὐδὲ μέλλει.

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