

BREATHING CRIME AND CONTAGION:
CATILINE AS *SCELUS ANHELANS*
(CIC. CAT. 2.1)¹

On 8/9 November 63 BC, Cicero triumphantly addressed a *contio* to announce to the people his discovery of the Catilinarian conspiracy.² Nearly half of the opening sentence of the *Second Catilinarian* oration is devoted to an ascending tetracolon of invective allegations against Catiline's character and plans:

Tandem aliquando, Quirites, L. Catilinam furentem audacia, scelus anhelantem, pestem patriae nefarie molientem, vobis atque huic urbi ferro flammaque minitantem ex urbe vel eiecimus vel emisimus vel ipsum egredientem verbis prosecuti sumus.

Amid the fear-mongering and inevitable catchwords of Roman political invective, the charge of *scelus anhelans* strikes a curiously discordant note. Unlike its neighbours, it is neither readily visualized (how does one breathe crime?) nor immediately menacing (how does breath harm the state?). If we assume that Cicero regarded breathing imagery as appropriate to the circumstances, and that *anhelare* has been transmitted accurately, we should consider how this unusual allegation of treason contributes to his attack on Catiline.³ In this paper I propose that *scelus anhelans* is a medical

1) I am grateful to audiences at Acadia University and the University of Glasgow, Dominic Berry, and the anonymous referees of *Rheinisches Museum*, as well as the editor Peter Schenk, for many helpful suggestions to improve this paper. Errors which remain are my own.

2) The precise date of the speech is obscured by a confusing time reference in the opening of the *First Catilinarian*, which we know was delivered the day before the *Second Catilinarian*. If *quid proxima, quid superiore nocte egeris* (Cat. 1.1) refers to a single night – the night of 6 November (Cic. Sull. 52) when Catiline met with his associates and hatched a plot to assassinate Cicero at daybreak – then the *First Catilinarian* was delivered in response on 7 November and the *Second Catilinarian* on 8 November. However, some commentators read the phrase as referring to two separate nights, in which case the *First Catilinarian* was delivered on 8 November and the *Second Catilinarian* on 9 November. See discussion and n. 43 below on the events the conspiracy.

3) The MSS agree on the reading *scelus anhelantem*, but this does not clarify whether the phrase was in the speech Cicero delivered in 63 or was added during

metaphor which designates Catiline's crime-ridden breath as the impaired breathing that is symptomatic of disease. As such, it provides a provocative analogy for Catiline's threat to the state, explaining the insidious spread of the conspiracy and identifying a remedy without incriminating potentially 'infected' members of audience. The pathological connotations of *anhelare* have not been noticed in relation to this phrase but provide an attractive explanation which is moreover supported by literary and archaeological evidence respectively identifying diseased breath as a source of contagion, and early November (pre-Julian dates) as part of a seasonal upsurge in lethal infectious disease.

Anhelare and the Language of Disease

The frenzy of Cicero's invective against Catiline in the four *Catilinarian* orations makes it easy to dismiss *scelus anhelans* as yet another outrageous rhetorical concoction. Allegations of criminality are a standby in his political invective, and were a standard feature of the genre.⁴ Nevertheless, accusing an opponent of "breathing crime" cannot be attributed solely to convention. The combination of *scelus* and *anhelare* occurs nowhere else in extant Latin literature and Cat. 2.1 is a unique instance of *scelus* as the direct object of any Latin verb of breathing.⁵ That *anhelans* is metaphorical

revisions prior to publication in 60. The debate about the extent of these revisions is summarized by A. R. Dyck (ed.), *Cicero: Catilinarians*, Cambridge 2008, 10–12. Both Cat. 2.1 and the extended medical metaphors at Cat. 1.31 and 2.11 are accepted in this paper as original on the grounds that they show no sign of anachronism regarding Cicero's role or Catiline's threat. Moreover, Cat. 2.1 and 2.11 seem to have been the models for similar, but less urgent medical metaphors about the conspiracy in *Pro Sulla*, which was almost certainly published soon after Sulla's acquittal in the latter half of 62. See Sull. 28 (esp. *nec sanare potui nec tollere* compared to Cat. 2.11 *sanare non potest, sustulerit*) and 76 (echoing the language of Cat. 2.1 with references to *audacia*, *furor*, *scelus*, and *pestis*, and the verbs *erupit* and *eiecta*); the *Catilinarian* passages are discussed below.

4) On allegations of criminality in Roman political invective, see R. G. M. Nisbet (ed.), *Cicero: In L. Calpurnium Pisonem Oratio*, Oxford 1961, 195 ("avarice") and W. Süß, *Ethos: Studien zur älteren griechischen Rhetorik*, Leipzig 1910, 249 (heading no. 4).

5) "Breathing crime" is the translation printed in C. Macdonald, *Cicero: In Catilinam I–IV, Pro Murena, Pro Sulla, Pro Flacco*, Cambridge (MA) 1977, and is typical of the prevailing practice of translating the phrase literally. Cf. C. D. Yonge,

is clear – the passage is cited by both the Oxford Latin Dictionary and Thesaurus Linguae Latinae as an example of the figurative use of *anbelare* (OLD s.v. 4b; TLL s.v. 67,36–37) – but the force of the verb is not, especially given its transitive use. The substitution of other definitions from the OLD illustrates the breadth of possible meaning: does Catiline utter *scelus* breathlessly (s.v. 5), in the sense of orally inciting his supporters to rebellion? Does he thirst for (s.v. 6) *scelus* as a physical need?

The uniqueness of the phrase is further highlighted by the fact that *anbelare* is rare in pre-Augustan Latin. There are fewer than thirty instances of it and derived nouns and adjectives in Republican literature, confined to the works of just eight authors, most of whom are dramatists or poets.⁶ The passages containing verbal forms indicate that *anbelare* was normally used intransitively in Republican Latin. At Hec. 823 Terence has Pamphilus arrive gasping at his courtesan girlfriend's house after an impromptu sexual encounter en route, Catullus 63.31 portrays the newly self-castrated Attis gasping as he leads the Galli through the forest, Lucretius 4.864 depicts animals gasping with exhaustion owing to the physical rigours of their lives, and Cicero, De Or. 3.41 cautions orators against letting their words sound gasped out, equating this distortion with faulty pronunciation.

By contrast, *anbelare* is used transitively in only four passages, including *scelus anbelans* and a self-quotation by Cicero. This leaves the following two comparators:

The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero, London 1856 (“breathing wickedness”); H. Bornecque and E. Bailly (eds), Cicéron. Discours X. Catilinaires, Paris 1926 (“qui respirait le crime”); L. E. Lord, Cicero: In Catilinam I–IV, Pro Murena, Pro Sulla, Pro Flacco, Cambridge (MA) 1964 (“breathing forth crime”); D. H. Berry, Cicero: Political Speeches, Oxford 2006 (“panting with criminality”); J. E. G. Zetzel, Marcus Tullius Cicero: Ten Speeches, Indianapolis 2009 (“panting crime”). More imaginative renderings include A. S. Wilkins (ed.), The Orations of Cicero Against Catilina, London 1894, n. ad loc. (“breathing out, panting with audacious villainy”); M. Grant, Cicero: Selected Political Speeches, London 1973 (“breathing forth blasts of every audacious rascality”); and M. Fuhrmann, Cicero. Die Catilinarischen Reden, Berlin 2011 (“schäumte vor Frevelmut”). Although the critical editions cross-reference Rhet. Her. 4.68 as a similar construction (quoted and discussed below), the novelty of the combination of *scelus* and *anbelare* receives no comment.

6) The authors are: Caecilius Statius, Plautus, Terence, Afranius, Catullus, Lucretius, Cicero, and the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. Cicero and the author of *Rhet. Her.* are the only prose authors in this group.

1) Rhet. Her. 4.68

At iste, spumans ex ore scelus, anhelans ex infimo pectore crudelitatem ...

2) Cic. Nat. D. 2.112 = Cic. Arat. 58–59

'gelidum valido de pectore frigus anhelans corpore semifero magno Capricornus in orbe'

Like *scelus anhelans*, both passages are metaphorical participle constructions. Dyck identifies Rhet. Her. 4.68 as the earliest example of *anhelare* used metaphorically.⁷ The tone and association with crime and cruelty closely match *scelus anhelans*, but the significance of *anhelans crudelitatem* is much clearer thanks to the anticipatory imagery in the preceding clause and the explicit reference to the breast in the metaphor itself: the subject (Tiberius Gracchus' assassin, Scipio Nasica) is so full of evil intent that he exudes cruelty from the depth of his being. Similarly, in the anthropomorphic description of the winter constellation Capricorn from Arat. 58–59, *frigus* is a natural and readily understood product of *anhelans*. The reference to Capricorn's *validum pectus* reinforces both the physicality of his exhalation and the idea that cold is an innate quality of the constellation and season.

No such anatomical frame of reference is provided for *scelus anhelans*. The abstract imagery of the metaphor contrasts with the comparatively precise allegations which make up the rest of the tetracolon and suggest that *anhelans* had an implicit gravity in its own right which the audience could be expected to grasp. Some insight into the connection between breath and political danger is provided by two passages in which Cicero depicts political agitators as “breathing war”. At Q. Fr. 3.4.6, the tribune Q. Mucius Scaevola is described as ἄρη πνέων for his antagonism (presumably expressed in public speeches) towards an upcoming triumph.⁸ The Latin equivalent, *Martem spirare*, is used to depict Cassius' determination to foment opposition to Antony in the aftermath of Cae-

7) Dyck (n. 3 above) n. ad Cat. 2.1. Wilkins (n. 5 above) n. ad Cat. 2.1 also notes the similar construction.

8) *Sed minantur tamen in primisque ἄρη πνέων Q. Scaevola*. Cf. Cic. Att. 4.18.4.

sar's assassination.⁹ In both cases, breathing is a vehicle for broadcasting one's hostile intentions and convictions. This message fits both Catiline's scope for public influence and Cicero's rhetorical objectives in the *Second Catilinarian*.

Why, then, is Catiline denounced as *scelus anhelans* and not *scelus spirans*? A closer examination of the force of *anhelare* in the intransitive, literal constructions from late Republican literature reveals a subtly negative value that is captured well by the English word 'gaspings'. The verb appears to evoke a specific type of disordered breathing which itself carries connotations of danger – it does not simply mean 'breathing hard' as a neutral physical description. In the examples cited above, the gasping of Terence's Pamphilus alarms his girlfriend as a sign of bad news (a premonition which is ultimately accurate), whereas Catullus closely associates Attis' gasping with the madness that inspired him to mutilate himself. Similarly, the gasping of Lucretius' animals highlights their daily struggle for survival, as their bodies are depleted by activity and excretion. On a slightly different note – befitting prose usage – Cicero's criticism of gasping speech bolsters a primary complaint against an overly-breathy style by exaggerating the fault to an absurd degree.¹⁰ In short, *anhelare* in Republican literature is a verb of disadvantage whereby difficult breathing is a visible symbol (or symptom) of a deeper problem. This meaning echoes the negative connotations of the related noun *anhelitus*, which occurs roughly twice as often as *anhelare* in Republican Latin (though only in the writings of Plautus and Cicero). The conditions manifested by it include lovesickness, debauchery (specifically *anhelitus vini*), and over-exertion. It is also applied to inanimate objects such as volcanoes to explain intimidating natural phenomena.¹¹

9) Att. 15.11.1. D. R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), Cicero's Letters to Atticus, Vol. 1, Cambridge 1967, n. ad loc. proposes that Cicero adopted the phrase from a Greek source, e. g. Aesch. Ag. 375, and did not create it himself. Cicero's use of it is nevertheless significant, since *Martem spirare* occurs nowhere else in extant Latin literature.

10) De Or. 3.41: *nolo (sc. verba) inflata et quasi anhelata gravius*. I do not think it unreasonable to read *anhelata gravius* as an allusion to respiratory disease, with the implication that an orator who needed to stop to catch his breath mid-sentence or mid-word would be impossible to understand. The criticism is put in the mouth of Crassus, who is generally considered to represent Cicero's personal views.

11) Lovesickness: Plaut. Merc. 601. Debauchery: Cic. Red. Sen. 16 (Gabinus); Phil. 13.4 (Antony). Over-exertion: Plaut. Asin. 327; Epid. 205; Merc. 114; Cic. Off.

A thematic concentration of medically-resonant vocabulary in the opening sentences of the *Second Catilinarian* suggests that the disadvantage signalled by *anhelans* should be understood in medical terms. This is not to say that catchwords of political invective such as *furens* and *pestis* lose their significance as terms of abuse, but rather that the convergence of disease imagery draws attention to the unifying theme. Within the invective tetracolon, *scelus anhelantem* is preceded by *furentem*, which evokes delirium, and immediately followed by *pestem*, which has a core meaning of plague or epidemic. The proximity of *pestem* to *scelus anhelantem* is provocative, since reading through the (modern) punctuation yields the strikingly medical phrase *anhelantem pestem*. Three of the verbs Cicero uses to describe Catiline's departure also have medical relevance. Thus translated, the Republic is credited with having "excreted" (*eiēcimus*) Catiline and allowed him to "drain out of its body" (*emisimus*). Similarly, Catiline is said to have "burst out" of Rome (*erupit*) – a choice of verb which calls to mind a ruptured, and thus relieved, abscess.¹² This imagery is reinforced in the final sentence of the *exordium*, where Cicero compares the effect of Catiline's departure on the state to vomiting out a pestilence (*tantam pestem evomuerit*, §2). The rhetoric seems calculated to trigger the audience's recognition of Catiline as a sickness which has gripped the state but is being shaken off at last.

Such pathological connotations for *anhelare* are even more conspicuous in the literature of the Imperial period, where nouns derived from *anhelare* are routinely used to denote impaired breathing associated with disease, especially asthma. In Book 4 of his *De Medicina*, Celsus cites *anhelatio* as the symptom which distinguishes asthma from other breathing difficulties (4.8.1). *Anhelator* is Pliny the Elder's normal term for an asthmatic person (e.g. N.H. 21.156; cf. 23.47), and Seneca the Younger, who suffered with asthma himself, describes the laboured breathing of his attacks

1.131. Intimidating natural phenomena: Plaut. Amph. 233 (fog at a battlefield); Cic. Scaur. 29 (volcanic activity at Mt Etna); Div. 1.115; 2.117 (source of oracular inspiration); 2.44 (cause of thunderbolts). The root definition of *anhelitus* in the OLD (s.v. 1) is "shortness of breath, a gasp, gasping, panting;" there is also a sub-category referring to shortness of breath due to illness (s.v. 1b).

12) Cf. e.g. Cato, Agr. 157.3; Celsus 2.7.31,36; 4.11.5. The OLD includes three medical definitions pertaining to the bursting forth of bodily fluids: s.v. 2b), 4b), 7a).

as *anhelitus* (Ep. 54.6). These nouns also appear in discussions of remedies for various conditions, though it is not clear whether they refer to asthma or a non-specific respiratory disorder (e.g. Verg. G. 2.135; Plin. N.H. 20.140; 23.121). The prevalence of *anhelare* in plague narratives of Augustan and post-Augustan literature also indicates a pre-existing amenability to disease imagery. Beginning with Vergil's account of the livestock plague in Book 3 of the *Georgics*, the verb becomes part of the literary trope, subsequently appearing in the plague narratives of Ovid, Seneca, Lucan, and Silius Italicus. This trend is all the more striking because *anhelare* is used only once in each account, but always – with one notable exception – describes the respiratory symptoms of the plague. Vergil describes pigs wracked by a “breath-taking cough” (*tussis anhela*) which accompanies swelling of the throat (G. 3.497), whereas Ovid depicts human victims turning red with fever and “hardly able to draw a gasping breath” (*ductus anhelitus aegre*, Met. 7.555). Seneca has Oedipus lament the lack of relief for “hearts gasping with fiery heat” (*anhela flammis corda*, Oed. 38), and Silius portrays desperately thirsty soldiers exhaling fiery hot breath “through gasping mouths” (*per anhela . . . ora*, Pun. 14.601–602). Lucan's use of *anhelare* deviates from this pattern, and in so doing strengthens the pathological overtones of the verb. Instead of describing the panting of the ill in an intransitive construction, he uses *anhelare* transitively and metaphorically to express the pervasive contagion of the plague:

*Corpora dum soluit tabes et digerit artus,
traxit iners caelum fluvidae contagia pestis
obscuram in nubem. tali spiramine Nesis
emittit Stygium nebulosis aera saxis
antraque letiferi rabiem Typhonis anhelant.*

(B.C. 6.88–92)

These two sentences mark the transition between animal and human infection in this outbreak, and emphasize the role of the environment – specifically air – in spreading contagion. As will be discussed below, this explanation of the cause of the plague is consistent with ancient medical theory regarding the origins of disease. Although Lucan's imagery is not original, his application of *anhelare* to the plague environment instead of its victims is ef-

fective because of the long-standing pathological connotations of the verb.¹³

Applying this frame of reference to Catiline as *scelus anhelans* makes the metaphor considerably more sinister and appropriate to its context. Two interpretations stand out: (1) *anhelans* denotes gasping as a symptom of a sickness caused by *scelus*; and (2) *anhelans* refers to the exhalations by which the contagious Catiline will spread *scelus* (i. e. the conspiracy). These interpretations are not mutually exclusive, of course. Ambiguity would suit Cicero's purpose by obliging his audience to choose the imagery that was most meaningful to them. Whichever interpretation is selected, the fact that Catiline is identified as a sick man furnishes an appealing rhetorical consistency with the extended medical metaphor which occurs later on in the speech:

Quos si meus consulatus, quoniam sanare non potest, sustulerit, non breve nescio quod tempus sed multa saecula propagarit rei publicae. [...] quae sanari poterunt quacumque ratione sanabo; quae reseccanda erunt non patiar ad perniciem civitatis manere. (Cat. 2.11)

Although this passage is widely recognized as a medical metaphor, little has been said about its political implications. This is perhaps because metaphors of disease and healing are often used in Greek and Latin literature to discuss political disorder.¹⁴ Models of disease progression and the traditional authority of physicians provided analogies that appealed to the lived experience of an audience. A certain preoccupation with medical imagery may be detected in Cicero's denunciation of the conspiracy as *morbis* (Cat. 1.31; Sull. 76) and *contagio* (Mur. 78), his labelling of his advice to the six

13) Ov. Met. 7.548–551 employs similar imagery, but is more explicit about the cause and effect relationship between the secretions of dead bodies and the spread of disease: *dilapsa* (sc. *corpora*) *liquescunt / adflatuque nocent et agunt contagia late*. The innocuous noun *adflatus* is made sinister by association with *nocere* and *contagia*. W.S. Anderson (ed.), Ovid's Metamorphoses Books 6–10, Norman (OK) 1972, ad loc. emphasizes Ovid's inversion of disease causation in this passage: "Just as the air originally infected the earth and living bodies, so now the putrefying bodies infect the air!"

14) See E. Fantham, *Comparative Studies in Republican Latin Imagery*, Toronto 1972, 14–21. Among Republican authors, Sallust and Livy use medical imagery to explain episodes of unrest and the decline of the state as a whole. See e.g. Sall. Cat. 10.6; Iug. 32.4; Livy 28.24–32 (with A. Aranita, *The Contagion of Mutiny in Livy 28.24–32*, in: P. Bosman [ed.], *Madness in the Greco-Roman World*, Pretoria 2009, 36–51 on the concept of contagious madness).

groups of conspirators as *medicina* (Cat. 2.17), and his references to his role in healing the state (*sanare*).¹⁵ The noun *salus* also occurs with disproportionate frequency in the *Catilinarian* orations (33 times) and contemporary *Pro Murena* (17 times), although some instances mean ‘safety’ rather than ‘health’. Perhaps inspired by Cicero’s use of medical imagery, Sallust also describes the conspiracy as an infectious *morbis*.¹⁶

The metaphor at Cat. 2.11 is nevertheless unusual because it emphasizes Cicero’s role in the crisis rather than the crisis itself. Catiline takes a back seat to Cicero the physician who will single-handedly cure the Republic with the judicious application of remedy or surgery. Cicero predicts not only a full recovery if his treatment is successful, but even an extended lifespan for his patient. Second, the surgery signified by *resecanda* demands a once-and-for-all solution to the threat posed by Catiline’s followers at Rome. Perpetual banishment would be an obvious and nominally legal option; but in the ellipsis Cicero offers himself as a “commander” (*dux*) to lead the “civil war” (*domesticum bellum*) against Catiline and his associates, thus transferring the contest to the battlefield where outright execution of the conspirators as *hostes* was a viable solution (as ultimately happened on the Nones of December). Finally, the metaphor contextualizes the extent of the threat posed by the conspirators by identifying two distinct levels of infection: the core group of Catiline’s associates are incurable and must be removed, but regular citizens who had the misfortune to become infected will be rehabilitated.

This stark message and sudden persona-shift by Cicero are too abrupt unless a link between Catiline and disease has been made earlier in the speech. It may not be coincidence that Cicero’s *dux* persona develops concurrently. The audience is prepared for this strong statement by assertions – also in § 1 of the speech – that the conflict is not only a *domesticum bellum* but a *bellum iustum*.¹⁷ The thread of the argument is then reinforced by a brief mention

15) See Cat. 2.11,17; 4.2; Sull. 28; cf. Cat. 3.14 and Sull. 76, where the subjects of the verb are the Senate and Republic itself, respectively.

16) Cat. 36.5: *tanta vis morbi atque uti tabes plerosque civium animos invaserat*.

17) It may be a sign of later revisions to the speech that Cicero makes Catiline *unum huius belli domestici ducem* in § 1, but subsequently takes the title for himself in § 11.

of rival armies in § 5. Cicero's physician persona needs an equivalent antecedent to contextualize the harsh policy it advocates. The intervening sections of the speech catalogue the depravity of Catiline (§§ 7–9) and his companions (§ 10; cf. §§ 4–5) in defence of Cicero's pledge to be lenient no longer (§ 6; cf. §§ 3–4). A medical reading of *scelus anhelans* sets up a causal link between Catiline as a sick man in § 1 and the source of the sickness affecting the entire state in § 11. To put it in medical terms, the metaphor *scelus anhelans* allows Cicero to diagnose the Republic's condition at the outset of the speech, and then to prescribe the remedy in § 11.¹⁸ This is consistent with the strategy which Wooten observes in Demosthenes' use of medical imagery: metaphors of disease and healing bring clarity to complex political situations by not only identifying the cause of the problem, but also – crucially – holding out the promise of a cure.¹⁹

A Metaphor Infected by Current Events

Equally compelling historical evidence for reading *scelus anhelans* as a medical metaphor is found in contemporary concepts of disease transmission and archaeological indications that the months of September, October, and November were a hotbed of seasonal infectious disease in Rome when the Catilinarian conspiracy took place. The latter correlation suggests that Cicero's use of medical imagery may have been inspired by actual sickness in Rome at the time, and thus intended to arouse an automatic self-preservation instinct among his audience. In this section I advance the argument that *scelus anhelans* is a medical metaphor that is intimately connected to its seasonal context: a type of expression which I label "rhetoric of season."²⁰ Such a strategy has precedent

18) A strategy noticed by R. W. Cape, Jr., Cicero's Consular Speeches, in: J. M. May (ed.), Brill's Companion to Cicero: Oratory and Rhetoric, Leipzig 2002, 113–158, p. 148: "The conspirators are a disease and Cicero offers his consulship and *oratio* as a *medicina*."

19) C. Wooten, Unnoticed Medical Language in Demosthenes, *Hermes* 107 (1979) 157–160, p. 160.

20) My approach is guided by the established concept of "rhetoric of space" (see esp. E. W. Leach, *The Rhetoric of Space. Literary and Artistic Representations of Landscape in Republican and Augustan Rome*, Princeton 1988). Although the

in Cicero's well-known appeals to his environment in the *First* and *Third Catilinarian* orations, including calling upon Jupiter Stator to expel Catiline and the conspirators from his temple (where the Senate was meeting, Cat. 1.11, 33) and capitalizing on a newly-erected statue of Jupiter to credit the revitalized god with halting the conspiracy (Cat. 3.20–22).²¹ Furthermore, medical metaphors in other Ciceronian speeches and other authors' works dating to this season suggests that infectious disease was at least a subliminal influence on their language, if not a motif to be exploited for persuasive advantage.²² The message of the *Second Catilinarian* is that Catiline and his fellow conspirators are dangerous and will destroy the state unless immediate action is taken. There could be few more efficient ways to convey abstract political danger to a skeptical audience than by pairing it with a concrete and concurrent threat to their own health.

difficulty of assigning precise dates to extant literature complicates the study of relationships between rhetoric and season, the potential rewards are well illustrated by scholarship on Cicero's use of comic techniques in *Pro Caelio*, a speech which was delivered on the first day of the Megalesia, a festival associated with drama. See esp. K. A. Geffcken, *Comedy in the Pro Caelio*, Leiden 1973; M. R. Salzman, Cicero, the Megalenses and the Defense of Caelius, *AJP* 103 (1982) 299–304; and M. Leigh, *The Pro Caelio and Comedy*, *CP* 99 (2004) 300–335.

21) A. Vasaly, *Representations: Images of the World in Ciceronian Oratory*, Berkeley 1993, 59 notes that the location of the Senate meeting where Cicero delivered the *First Catilinarian* was his choice and reveals his strategic preoccupation “not with the reality of security but with the perception of security” (original emphasis).

22) See e.g. Pliny the Younger's *Panegyricus*, which was likely delivered during his brief term as suffect consul from September to October AD 100. Pliny celebrates the fact citizens no longer need to fear the emperor's displeasure like *insanabiles morbi* (27.1), contrasts Trajan's *moderatio* and *sanctitas* with the contamination (*contaminare*) brought by predecessors (63.7), and extols Trajan's private life as free from *omnis contagio vitiorum* (83.2). Compare the metaphorical use of *contagio* and forms of *contaminare* at Cic. Dom. 108 (delivered on 29 Sept. 57) and warning about the *incertosque motus valetudinis* at Cic. Marc. 23 (delivered mid-Sept. 46). Also, if Caesar's commentaries were compiled from his official dispatches, it may be significant that his only use of *contaminatus*, at B.G. 7.43 to describe the disloyal Aedui as *contaminati facinore*, is metaphorical and belongs to an episode that might have been reported at the beginning of the season of sickness (calculated from B.G. 7.35 where the remaining *maiolem aestatis partem* prompts Caesar to build a new bridge across the Elaver rather than wait for lower waters in the autumn). Although *contaminare* normally refers to moral taint, it also signifies the spread of disease (see OLD s.v. 1b).

The key point of correspondence between the imagery of *scelus anhelans* and seasonal disease at Rome is the role which breath and the act of breathing play in ancient conceptions of disease causation and transmission. These conceptions were dominated by the so-called miasma theory, whereby “bad air” released from decaying organic matter permeated the immediate environment and sickened any humans or animals that had the misfortune to breathe it in.²³ The connection between environment and health was deemed sufficiently important to warrant an entire Hippocratic treatise (*On Airs, Waters, and Places*), and is prominent in lay literature as well, including in the late Republic. Varro animates the miasma as *animalia minuta* and *bestiolae* (Rust. 1.12.2, 3), and recalls an episode from his time in Pompey’s army during the civil war, when he saved his ailing comrades by reorienting the doors and windows of their quarters in order to shut out the unhealthy air of the locale (Rust. 1.5.1). Lucretius adds the novel concept of airborne *semina* from which all things – both good and bad – are created (6.662–664, 769–780). According to his model, disease is caused by harmful *semina* which land on and thereby contaminate food and drinking water, or are breathed in directly by unwitting victims.²⁴ Even Cicero credits the fresh breezes which ventilated

23) See esp. Hp. Flat. 6; Gal. 7.289.14–290.2. On breathing as the principle means of contracting disease, see e. g. Hp. Nat. Hom. 9.11–13; Flat. 5. The label “miasma theory” is not ancient, and few Greek authors use the word μίασμα to describe the “bad air” that causes disease; cf. e. g. Diod. Sic. 12.58.3 “vapours” (ἀτμίδης); Gal. 7.291.3–4 “seeds of pestilence” (λοιμοῦ σπέρματα). J. Jouanna, *Air, Miasma and Contagion in the Time of Hippocrates and the Survival of Miasmas in Post-Hippocratic Medicine* (Rufus of Ephesus, Galen, and Palladius), in: P. van der Eijk (ed.), *Greek Medicine from Hippocrates to Galen: Selected Papers*, Leiden 2012, 121–136 provides a comprehensive survey of the medical use of the term μίασμα in ancient literature.

24) Lucr. 6.1125–1130. C. Bailey (ed.), *Titi Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura Libri Sex*, 3 vols, Oxford 1947, 1718 rightly emphasizes that although Lucretius permits infection via food and drink, the source of the contamination is the air; cf. 6.1090–1102 on the two origins of disease-causing *semina*, as airborne contamination which floats down from outside our world (*extrinsecus*), or rises from soil made putrid by excessive rain and sun. V. Nutton, *The Seeds of Disease: An Explanation of Contagion and Infection From the Greeks to the Renaissance*, *Medical History* 27 (1983) 1–34, pp. 10–11 summarizes the debate about Lucretius’ inspiration for his theory of *semina*, and Jouanna (n. 23 above) 133 n. 22 discusses the striking similarity between Lucretius’ *semina* and the “seeds of pestilence” (λοιμοῦ σπέρματα) mentioned by Galen.

the hills of Rome with creating an oasis of health *in regione pestilenti*.²⁵

Nevertheless, the miasma theory was not universally accepted for explaining the spread of certain diseases. The earliest securely dated example is Thucydides' account in Book 2 of his *Histories* of the Athenian plague of 430, which he experienced first hand. The only "bad air" he mentions is the foul breath (πνεῦμα ἄτοπον καὶ δυσῶδες, 2.49.2) that was symptomatic of the plague. In fact, he explicitly states that the disease had no mitigating cause (2.49.2), but spread from the infected to the healthy:

καὶ ὅτι ἕτερος ἀφ' ἑτέρου θεραπείας ἀναπιπλάμενοι ὥσπερ τὰ πρόβατα ἔθνησκον· καὶ τὸν πλείστον φθόρον τοῦτο ἐνεποίει. (2.51.4)

He further records that physicians died in droves because they had the most contact with the infected.²⁶ As Rhodes notes, it is not clear whether Thucydides arrived at these conclusions on his own, or if the idea was current; the salient point is that this concept of contagion is not represented in ancient medical treatises.²⁷

Thucydides' observations about the plague are corroborated by the author of the *Problems* attributed to Aristotle.²⁸ The crux of the issue is stated in Book 7, where the author asks why disease is transmitted from person to person but no-one is made healthy by coming near a healthy person (ἀπὸ δὲ ὑγείας οὐδεὶς ὑγιάζεται, 7.4, 886b). In Book 1, which deals with medical problems, the plague is singled out as the only disease (μόνη τῶν νόσων, 1.7, 859b) that routinely infects by proximity. The author's explanation sounds like an attempt to reconcile observation with miasma theory, but nevertheless advances the debate by identifying infected individuals as catalysts of the disease. The spread of the plague is ascribed

25) Rep. 2.11; cf. Livy 5.54.4 *saluberrimos colles*.

26) Thuc. 2.47.4. J. S. Rusten (ed.), Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War, Book II, Cambridge 1989, n. ad 2.49.2 observes that Thucydides' comparison of the plague victims to sheep is an allusion to the mass mortality which characterized outbreaks of disease among livestock.

27) P. J. Rhodes (ed.), Thucydides: History Book II, Warminster 1988, n. ad 2.51.4. R. Parker, *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion*, Oxford 1983, 219 n. 68 contends that Thucydides' reference to people who were fearful (δεδιότες) of approaching the sick indicates some popular awareness of contagiousness.

28) On the authenticity and date of the treatise, see R. Mayhew (ed.), Aristotle: *Problems Books 1–19*, Cambridge (MA) 2011, xvii–xxi.

to a “fuel” (τὸ ὑπέκκαυμα) which emanates from plague victims and conquers (ἀλίσκονται) bystanders who were already in poor health. A similar rationale is used in Book 7 to account for the transmissibility of tuberculosis.²⁹ However, in place of fuel, the author blames the direct transfer of breath from an infected person to an uninfected one:

ὁ δὲ πλησιάζων τοιοῦτον ἀναπνεῖ. νοσεῖ μὲν οὖν, ὅτι νοσῶδες· ἀπὸ μό-
νου δέ, ὅτι ἐκπνεῖ, νοσεῖ, οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι ἐτέρως. (7.8, 887a)

Again, there is no trace of this concept of contagious infection in the Hippocratic corpus. It does not reappear until the second century AD, in the writings of Aretaeus of Cappadocia. In *De Curatione Diuturnorum Morborum*, he specifically identifies the breath of infected people as the primary means of disease transmission:

δέος δὲ ζυμβιοῦν τε καὶ ζυνδιατᾶσθαι οὐ μείον ἢ λοιμῶ. ἀναπνοῆς
γὰρ ἐς μετάδοσιν ῥηϊδίη βαφή. (2.13.1)

Leven draws attention to the novelty of Aretaeus’ use of μετάδοσις to describe the spread of disease, noting that Hippocratic usage is always literal.³⁰ Nevertheless, the similarity between Aretaeus’ model of infectiousness and the one described in *Problems* suggests that Aretaeus’ innovation is primarily linguistic and reflects a long established (albeit non-Hippocratic) notion of contagion. Indeed, the fact that some of the technical medical language in *Problems 7* is found nowhere else in the Aristotelian corpus hints at the richness of this unrecorded debate.³¹

Against this backdrop, Lucretius’ theory of airborne *semina* and dramatic adaptation of Thucydides’ plague narrative in Book 6

29) [Pr.] 7.8, 887a. The diseases ὀφθαλμία (conjunctivitis?) and ψώρα (scabies?) are also included, along with separate explanations for their spread which reflect Book 7’s theme of sympathy (i. e. like affects like).

30) K.-H. Leven, *Miasma und Metadosis – Antike Vorstellungen von Ansteckung, Medizin, Gesellschaft und Geschichte* 11 (1992) 43–72, pp. 16–17. Aretaeus similarly uses μετάδοσις to describe the transmission of disease at S.D. 2.13.19.

31) See Mayhew (n.28 above) 228–229, and also V. Nutton, *Did the Greeks Have a Word for it? Contagion and Contagion Theory in Classical Antiquity*, in: L. Conrad / D. Wujastyk (eds), *Contagion: Perspectives From Pre-modern Societies*, Aldershot 2000, 137–162 generally on the language of contagion in ancient literature. Parker (n.27 above) 220 observes that “it is worth considering the possibility that the Hippocratic doctors ignored the principle of infectiousness because they saw belief in it as mere superstition.”

of *De Rerum Natura* (the first of many Latin verse adaptations of Thucydides' account) is more consistent with miasma theory than the *μετάδοσις* model described by Aretaeus. Allowing for poetic license, the sections describing the foul-smelling breath of plague sufferers and the person-to-person transmission of the disease are essentially a Latin rendering of Thucydides' words – Lucretius even borrows Thucydides' animal simile to illustrate the number and manner of plague deaths.³² His version is nevertheless valuable because it establishes that he and his late Republican contemporaries were aware of Thucydides' account, if not also acquainted with the reality from experience of epidemic disease at Rome.³³ His account of the symptoms which heralded death (details which are absent from Thucydides' narrative) also reveals knowledge of Hippocratic theories.³⁴ According to him, impaired breathing was a sign of impending death. Moreover, he places this information between his descriptions of the foul breath which characterized the plague and the contagiousness of the disease.³⁵ Thus, even without a precise understanding of contagiousness, Lucretius identifies breathing as both a signifier of serious disease and a contributor to its spread. Applied to Catiline as *scelus anhelans*, this model pro-

32) See 6.1154–1155 (breath), 6.1235–1238: *quippe etenim nullo cessabant tempore apisci / ex aliis aliis avidi contagia morbi, / lanigeras tamquam pecudes et buccera saecula. / idque vel in primis cumulabat funere funus*. One difference between the two narratives is Lucretius' attitude towards the physicians. The susceptibility of Thucydides' physicians (2.47.4) becomes an expression of impotence in Lucretius' version (6.1179): *mussabat tacito medicina timore*. Bailey (n. 24 above) ad loc. sees a hint of irony in the expression, referring to the physicians themselves muttering "hmm" while they assessed their cases.

33) Records for the first century are incomplete, but W. Scheidel, *Disease and Death*, in: P. Erdkamp (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome*, Cambridge 2013, 45–59, p. 51 estimates that "mortality crises" occurred nearly every five years, based on extrapolation from epidemics recorded by Livy for the years 212–174. W. Scheidel, *Germes for Rome*, in: C. Edwards / G. Woolf (eds), *Rome the Cosmopolis*, Cambridge 2003, 158–176 provides a useful summary of the impact of disease in the city of Rome.

34) *Lucr.* 6.1182–1196. Bailey (n. 24 above) ad loc. provides a convenient list of the relevant Hippocratic passages.

35) *Lucr.* 6.1186; cf. *Hp. Prog.* 5.123. Lucretius faithfully reproduces the original twin focus on the symptoms of panting and slow, deep breathing (*creber spiritus aut ingens raroque coortus*). The structure of Lucretius' narrative owes much to his desire to depict the plague as a moral crisis. M. F. Smith, *Lucretius: On the Nature of Things*, Indianapolis 2001, xxxiii notes that the Epicureans often referred to the "unenlightened" as diseased.

vides a framework for explaining his threat to the Republic: in addition to exhibiting the gasping that was characteristic of disease (and subsequently associated with the plague in Imperial literature), he was a source of contagion himself. The resulting impression is menacing in its own right, but is even more pertinent to the circumstances of the *Second Catilinarian* when seasonal disease trends are factored in.

Our main evidence for the seasonality of disease is epigraphic data relating to seasonal mortality. In the mid 1990s, Shaw and Scheidel independently observed that a disproportionate number of the deaths recorded by funerary inscriptions from Imperial Rome belonged to the months of August, September, and October, representing an increase in mortality of approximately 73 % above the annual mean.³⁶ Inscriptions which recorded the ages of the deceased provided circumstantial evidence that the deaths which occurred at this time of year were due to unusually severe disease. Specifically, adult men and women under the age of 50 – traditionally the most resilient segment of the population – were over-represented. As Scheidel summarizes, “pronounced seasonal mortality variation in disease-resistant age groups is indicative of extremely high mortality overall.”³⁷

Although the available data do not permit a reliable reconstruction of seasonal mortality in the Republican period, a fortuitous snapshot is provided by 125 burial urns of Republican vintage that were recovered from a site known as the Vineyard of San Cesario.³⁸ Notwithstanding the small sample size, the San Cesario dataset yields a seasonal mortality trend that is remarkably similar

36) See W. Scheidel, *Libitina's Bitter Gains: Seasonal Mortality and Endemic Disease in the Ancient City of Rome*, *AncSoc* 25 (1994) 151–175, esp. pp. 167–168 Figures 1–3 with summary on pp. 152–153; B. D. Shaw, *Seasons of Death: Aspects of Mortality in Imperial Rome*, *JRS* 86 (1996) 100–138, esp. p. 115 Figure 5 and discussion.

37) Scheidel 2003 (n. 33 above) 161, with the caveat (pace K. Hopkins, *On the Probable Age Structure of the Roman Population*, *Population Studies* 20 [1966] 245–264) that age-at-death data from funerary inscriptions is inherently skewed by selective commemoration practices.

38) See B. D. Shaw, *Seasonal Mortality in Imperial Rome and the Mediterranean: Three Problem Cases*, in: G. R. Storey (ed.), *Urbanism in the Preindustrial World: Cross-cultural Approaches*, Tuscaloosa 2006, 86–109, pp. 93–101, and 107 n. 1 on previous comments on the inscriptions. The site would have been immediately outside the ancient city of Rome, on the Appian Way.

to the Imperial one, but is displaced by one month, making September, October, and November the deadliest months with an increase in mortality of more than 100% above the annual mean.³⁹ Of course, the displacement is due to the discrepancy between solar time and the civic calendar prior to Caesar's calendar reform – an assured *terminus ante quem* for the date of the burials because none of the inscriptions follow the Caesarean and Augustan renamings of July and August, respectively, and there are five references to intercalary months. Shaw tentatively dates these burials to the late 70s and early 60s on the grounds of physical evidence (burial style, family names, orthography) and documented intercalations that took place in 82 and 52.⁴⁰ This means that the extent of the disengagement between the civic and solar calendars will have been essentially the same in 63 as when the San Cesario burials took place, and that the raw dates from that dataset may be applied to 63 with confidence.

As a rule, mortality is proportional to morbidity; so, the deaths which occurred during the typical September–November mortality peak c. 63 would have been accompanied (or more likely slightly preceded) by a proportionally larger disease burden on the population.⁴¹ This model of an annually-recurring period of increased sickness is consistent with Suetonius' anecdotal observation (Aug. 81) that Augustus was routinely unwell at specific times of the year, including just before his birthday (23 Sept.).⁴² The chronology of the Catilinarian conspiracy fits into this schedule remarkably well. It began to pick up speed at the height of the typical

39) Shaw (n. 38 above) 100 Figure 4–3 (top). The intensity of the trend is certainly exaggerated by the sample size, and need not be taken as evidence of extreme seasonal mortality in that population.

40) Shaw (n. 38 above) 101.

41) The change in weather which accompanied all changes of season was long recognized in medical literature as a cause of disease. See e.g. Hp. Aph. 3.1; Hum. 13.26–27.

42) The death of Cicero's father on 23 November 68 may also be significant in this regard. See Att. 1.6.2; *pater nobis decessit a. d. viii Kal. Dec.* D. R. Shackleton Bailey (ed.), Cicero's Letters to Atticus, Vol. 1, Cambridge 1965, n. ad loc. asserts that this letter is the announcement of the death, contra Asc. Tog. 82C that the death occurred in 64 while Cicero was canvassing for the consulship. Cicero's terse, matter-of-fact statement implies that the death was not unexpected, a scenario which is consistent with mortality caused or hastened by serious illness at the deadliest time of year.

deadly season: letters warning of an imminent massacre were circulated in mid-October, the *senatus consultum ultimum* was passed on 21 October, Catiline's lieutenant Manlius began a revolt on 27 October, and the conspirators finalized their plans at a nocturnal meeting on 6–7 November, dispersing from there to attempt to assassinate Cicero at his home. Cicero delivered his *First Catilinarian* to the Senate on either 7 or 8 November, and the *Second Catilinarian* to the people on the following day.⁴³ Both speeches, therefore, belong to the beginning of the ebb of the typical seasonal mortality / morbidity trend, but a time of year when serious disease and death remained much more prevalent than normal. It is tempting to see this as the inspiration for the two recognized medical metaphors in these speeches. The metaphor at Cat. 2.11 has already been discussed; at Cat. 1.31 Cicero warns his senatorial colleagues that unless the conspiracy is rooted out by the elimination of Catiline and all of his fellow conspirators, the Republic will be no more saved than a feverish person can be cured by a drink of cold water.⁴⁴ Similarly, it may not be a coincidence that the consul-elect Murena was apparently unwell at his trial for electoral bribery, which took place in late November. Cicero twice describes him as “consumed by disease” (*cum corporis morbo ... confecti; confectus morbo*, Mur. 86); but the stress of the trial and Cicero's task as advocate to arouse sympathy for his client may account for this apparent illness.

Furthermore, there is evidence that respiratory disease was a major feature of the mortality / morbidity peak – a circumstance which would make Catiline's “gasping” a topical reference as well as a general signifier of illness. Demographic and epidemiological modelling based on pre-modern southern Italy in the 17th to 19th

43) Berry (n. 5 above) 140–150 provides a clear chronology of the conspiracy, and dates the *First Catilinarian* to 7 November. I am inclined to agree (contra Dyck [n. 3 above] Appendix 2) given the magnitude of the attempted crime and the considerable advantage it gave Cicero as ‘proof’ of Catiline's treason.

44) Cat. 1.31: *ut saepe homines aegri morbo gravi cum aestu febrique iactantur, si aquam gelidam biberunt, primo relevari videntur, deinde multo gravius vehementiusque affligantur, sic hic morbus qui est in re publica relevatus istius poena vehementius reliquis vivis ingravescet*. Though a strong metaphor in terms of articulating Cicero's political agenda, the impersonal comparison makes this passage less immediate than its counterpart at Cat. 2.11. However, the tone is consistent with Cicero's deference to the Senate throughout the conspiracy.

centuries AD highlights the seasonality of epidemic illnesses with respiratory symptoms (particularly malaria and tuberculosis) and fatalities from non-epidemic respiratory infections (e. g. bronchitis, pleurisy, asthma), attributing to both a significant share of the peak-period mortality.⁴⁵ Because the seasonal mortality trends in these populations are virtually identical to the trend indicated by the data from Imperial Rome (and the adjusted data from the San Cesario burials), it is safe to assume that patterns of morbidity were unchanged as well. Many of the non-epidemic infections would likely have been complicated by (chronic) malaria, which was endemic in ancient Rome and is now known to co-exist with and exacerbate mortality for many types of infection.⁴⁶ Furthermore, archaeological evidence indicates that chronic respiratory dysfunction from life-long exposure to particulate from indoor cooking fires and oil lamps was also widespread.⁴⁷ This would have reduced the affected population's physical ability to cope with the respiratory illnesses which characterized the seasonal trend, thus further contributing to the mortality rates for those diseases.

Against this backdrop, one might think that wheezing, coughing, and other signs of impaired breathing would have been ubiquitous and thus unremarkable when Cicero delivered the *Second*

45) See Shaw (n. 36 above) 126–128 (data) and 132–133 (conclusions). The respiratory symptoms of malaria would mainly have comprised panting during fevers, but it is not impossible that the complication now described as acute respiratory distress syndrome also occurred in ancient times. See F. Retief / L. Cilliers, *Malaria in Graeco-Roman Times*, *AClass* 47 (2004) 127–137, pp. 128–129 on the symptoms of malarial infection, and R. Sallares, *Malaria and Rome: A History of Malaria in Ancient Italy*, Oxford 2002 generally on malaria in Rome. Pulmonary tuberculosis (i. e. phthisis, consumption) was and is characterized by a wracking productive cough. See M. D. Grmek, *Diseases in the Ancient Greek World*, Baltimore 1989, esp. 183–188 on tuberculosis in classical Greece.

46) Scheidel 2003 (n. 33 above) 167, and 167–169 for an overview of the “synergistic interaction of malaria with other diseases.” A fuller account is provided by Sallares (n. 45 above) 123–140; see also 201–234 on the effects of malaria in the ancient city of Rome. Cic. Att. 10.16.6 and 10.17.2 mention a *novus morbus* that interferes with Atticus' recovery from a malarial fever. Hirtius' slow recovery from an unspecified serious illness in the late summer of 44 matches this pathology: he was still unwell when he set out to war against Antony in January 43 (see Cic. Phil. 1.37; 7.12; 8.5; 10.16; 14.4).

47) E. g. L. Capasso, *Indoor Pollution and Respiratory Diseases in Ancient Rome*, *Lancet* 356 (2000) 1774 finds that 11.6 % of skeletons observed at Herculaneum exhibit a type of rib lesion that is indicative of inflammation of the lungs.

Catilinarian. It must be remembered, however, that impaired breathing was a visible sign of infection. The symptoms of gastrointestinal or febrile illnesses, for example, would be invisible to a casual observer in all but extreme cases (which would presumably confine the afflicted person to their home at any rate). In his discussion of movement in the city of Rome, Jenkyns draws attention to the practical impact of crowded urban streets on personal freedom of movement, concluding that “it would simply not have been possible to stride vigorously through much of the place.”⁴⁸ Slaves scurried from place to place, but the elite were carried in litters or strolled at a dignified pace. The only respectable reason for a man of Catiline’s status to gasp, therefore, was illness. Yet in the context of the *Second Catilinarian* even benign gasping could be rendered as proof of infection with a type of disease that was presently rampant, at a time of year when such illnesses were to be feared.

Imagery of disease and healing would be a powerful and natural frame of reference under these circumstances, quite beyond the rhetorical commonplace of describing political disorder in terms of illness. The crowd which gathered to hear Cicero certainly included people who had been or were currently unwell, or had family and friends who were ailing (or had died). It may even be a measure of the extent to which the non-elite were affected by seasonal disease that the medical imagery in the *Second Catilinarian* so explicitly identifies Catiline as the source of contagion and Cicero as the trustworthy physician. Although the general public was unlikely to forsake Catiline solely on the grounds of his metaphorical illness (even if it was backed up by coincidental physical symptoms), it would be enough for Cicero’s purposes simply to plant a seed of suspicion against him. Ancient lay and medical literature bears poignant witness to the fear of serious disease. Writing to Atticus about the sudden death of his physician (Att. 15.1.1), Cicero asks *quid est quod non pertimescendum sit, cum hominem temperantem, summum medicum, tantus improviso morbus oppresserit?* Two centuries later, Aretaeus (S.D. 2.13.19) sympathized with the fear of infection and painful death that compelled many people to abandon even parents and children in a bid to save themselves.

48) R. Jenkyns, *God, Space, and City in the Roman Imagination*, Oxford 2013, 146.

The ferocious assurance of Cicero's language in the *exordium* of the *Second Catilinarian* obscures the fact that the charge of *scelus anhelans* is the only allegation that cannot readily be reconciled with what was known about the conspiracy at that date. It was not unwarranted to denounce someone who was rumoured to be planning murder and arson in order to overthrow the government – and whose associates had attempted to assassinate Cicero – as *furens audacia*, *pestis patriae*, and *monstrum atque prodigium*, or his activity as *insidiae* and *latrocinium*.⁴⁹ Even the accusations of *hostis* and *bellum* are nominally justified by Catiline's (alleged) affiliation with Manlius' armed insurrection in Etruria.⁵⁰ We should expect that *scelus anhelans* was equally tempered by the reality of the situation, not least because indiscriminate invective at this stage of the conspiracy would only substantiate Catiline's complaints of persecution (Sall. Cat. 31.9; 34.2–35.6). The pathological connotations of *anhelare*, combined with the extended medical metaphor at Cat. 2.11 and the autumn setting of the *Second Catilinarian*, strongly suggest that this exceptional allegation is both a medical metaphor and an example of rhetoric of season manipulating the audience's wariness of actual seasonal disease in their midst. This reading resolves the incongruity of the metaphor by transforming the bizarre image of Catiline breathing crime into an allusive call to arms to defend the health of the Republic.

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49) Cat. 2.1. An allusion to Catiline's dagger twisting in "our sides" (*latera nostra*, § 1) may refer to the assassination attempt or the general program of murder; cf. Catiline's "unbloodied sword" (*non cruentum mucronem*) in § 2. Cicero's declaration in § 1 that public places and private homes were now freed from fear is a reversal of Cat. 1.1, which emphasizes the panic of the populace and Cicero's precautionary measure of posting guards throughout the city.

50) Esp. Cic. Cat. 1.5; 2.14; cf. Sall. Cat. 27.1 where Manlius is one of three named deputies whom Catiline sent out to agitate various parts of Italy immediately following his defeat at the consular elections in 63. It is a matter of conjecture whether Manlius and Catiline were working together prior to Catiline's departure from Rome. Certainly Cicero misrepresents the situation at Cat. 1.3 when he tells Catiline *habemus senatus consultum in te*. The *senatus consultum ultimum* was passed c. 21 Oct. against Manlius' uprising and did not mention Catiline.