

# The Abortion Debate:

## A Comparison between Ancient Rome/Greece and Modern America



Picture source: (Harmon 2019)

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‘Quid enim ille non edidit?’ (Cicero)

PUGNA	ONUS	CLAM	MERITO	SPES LIBERORUM
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Leyla Yasemin Halter

Realgymnasium Rämibühl, Zürich

Supervisor: Islème Sassi

20/12/2019

Word Count: 12'599

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Personal motivation

When I finish high school, I want to study medicine and become a surgeon. I am looking forward to diving into the path of science soon but would regret not having engaged myself as well in language and literature, as I very much enjoyed the Latin classes. This is the reason why I decided to combine Latin and medicine in my paper to explore the historical but also socio-cultural side of a medical topic and its developments in the Ancient times. My aim is to write on an issue, which currently is significant and of great importance but also has been in Ancient Rome/Greece. This requires the analysis of ancient literature – a task which I am probably never going to do again in this depth.

In the past year when browsing online media and reading various newspapers I came across many articles on the abortion debate, be it the ongoing debate in America or the “Marches for Life” that have been taking place in many cities across Europe. It seems undeniable that abortion is a key and constant topic debated in politics as well as in public. Movements started to form, defending the opinion of different interest groups that argue with contrasting opinions and different areas of concerns. Society is split into two sides, which do not seem to be able to speak with and understand each other. Their arguments are based on different beliefs, so it is no surprise that they have not been able to settle on one opinion. The abortion debate is an emotional one, in which people are always going to put their hearts and souls into, because admitting that the own opinion is wrong would be like acting against their own faith and moral understanding.

What I would like to investigate is how this debate has changed over time. To be more precise, how was this debated in Ancient Rome/Greece? Abortions have been performed for centuries, but what did the public and politicians think about it back then? Seeing that the moral compass has changed over time, how much did the pro- and anti-abortion argumentation exactly change? To investigate these questions further, I set up the following research question:

***What similarities do pro- and anti-abortion arguments in Ancient Rome/Greece have with the pro- and anti-arguments of the current abortion debate in modern America?***

## 1.2 Approach

I will answer the research question in this paper by first analyzing the arguments used in Ancient Rome/Greece and modern America separately, then comparing them, and lastly drawing a conclusion at the end of the paper.

For the analysis of arguments used in Ancient Rome/Greece, I used literary works, as those are the only written sources that have been kept over time. When looking at this time period, there was no actual public debate going on, which could be considered an abortion debate in the narrower sense, as it is going on today. Nevertheless, the topic has been subject in several literary works, such as collections of poems or political speeches. The mentioned arguments are therefore taken as stances for the different sides that prevailed at that time and represent the pro- and anti-arguments of the abortion debate.

In my paper I included a broad range of Latin/Greek literary sources to have sufficient information at hand to be able to draw the correct conclusions. As pro- and anti-arguments on abortion were never the main topic of a work, my analysis includes a number of literary works that show a sound variety of the most important arguments of different poets and writers, however being by no means exhaustive. The approach for the analysis for modern America was a bit different. Currently only very few well-known people express their opinion using poetry or political writing. It would have been wrong for me to single out certain spokespersons to cite their arguments, as nowadays the movements and discussions are significantly influenced by digital media. This means that people from all over the country can meet in Internet forums and discuss their opinions. Due to this, a lot of different arguments form, but they are also represented by the entire community, which created and shaped them. In modern America there are two main and distinct movements which now dominate the abortion debate and which arguments I have used in this paper. For this reason, my paper has an emphasis on the analysis and evaluation of the arguments of the Latin/Greek literary works and is more detailed than the evaluation of the arguments of modern America.

The full version of the Latin/Greek literary works, from which sections/lines are cited throughout the paper, are shown in the Appendix (see page 42ff).

The sources are taken from critical editions of these literary works, as these provide the most authentic form of the original text (The Free Dictionary by Farlex n.d.). A critical edition shows

the different influences and changes that were made in the original text over time (for example when an *ex* was abbreviated into an *e*) and includes those in form of a commentary. This method is usually applied when there are several different forms of the same text and one cannot determine which one is the closest to the original, so the critical edition offers a version that from the publishers' view is thought to be the most authentic (Wikipedia 2019).

For the abortion debate in America, I mostly based my argumentation on books that have been written in the 2000s, as they retain their topicality today, but I also used various Internet sources.

## 2 Ancient Rome/Greece

### 2.1 Socio-cultural and medical background

Before starting the analysis of the abortion debate in Ancient Rome/Greece, the socio-cultural factors that influence the understanding of the literary works have to be investigated. These are crucial, as knowledge provided in the chosen passages is dependent on the social situation, the medical understanding and the moral principles of that time. They will be taken in account during the analysis and also put into perspective. Therefore, the following subchapters will give a better understanding of the social status of women at that time, the social and legal status of a fetus and the general knowledge of gynecology in Ancient Rome/Greece. Some of these factors will be able to be reestablished in the literary sources used for the analysis in the chapters *Anti-abortion* and *Pro-abortion*.

#### 2.1.1 The social status of women

Women were considered inferior to men. In domestic life, their everyday duties and responsibilities and even in areas such as fertilization, course of pregnancy and birth, men were considered more important. They were the center of each decision that was made for women and their bodies and they were the center of fetal development, meaning the evolution of life (Miles 2004).

These statements are supported by the theory of Pythagoras, a Greek scholar that lived around 530 BC, that hereditary information, meaning the instructions needed for a baby to grow inside women's bodies, were only carried in the male semen (Mukherjee 2016). The sperm in the body of men collected instructions by travelling through the body and absorbing the vapors from all the individual parts, retaining the "manual" to fetal development. The focus is put heavily on men, as women are only viewed necessary for the insemination (intercourse) and the provision of the nourishment that the semen needs to grow out of. This theory is called spermism, as it is centered around the fact that men provide all genetic information for the physical and mental abilities needed for a child, whereas the mother only gives the nutriment. This theory is also shown in the work *Eumenides* written by Aeschylus, the first of Athens's dramatists, who lived from 525 to 456 BC. The work talks about the trial of Orestes who has killed his mother and now has to defend himself in front of the jury of citizens that was summoned by the goddess Athena. The god Apollo is his defender and the Furies are the accusers (Podlecki & Taplin 2019). In course of the argumentation of the defense speech, Apollo mentions the argument that

a mother is not seen as a parent but only as a nurse, i.e. as the nourishment provider for the embryo. The father is defined as the only parent necessary for the upbringing of a child. As an example, he takes Pallas Athena who was not nursed by a mother and still developed into a strong goddess (Smyth, cited in Theoi Greek Mythology 2017). The only parent she had was the father of all gods, Zeus.

This theory and argumentation mirror the social status of women, showing their unimportance in social hierarchy with the example of their inferior role in the evolution of children. Women appear to only be the vessel and seem to have no influence on whatsoever is happening in and with their bodies. Physicians in Ancient Rome/Greece were only men. Midwives and nurses were female, as the happening of childbirth was considered a women's thing (Totelin 2019). However, all texts that were written about female anatomy and gynecology were written by men only.

In Ancient Greece, women had a guardian, which could be their father, their husband or in case of a female slaves, their owner (Miles 2004). This guardian that had to be male held the financial responsibility, guarded the sexual chastity and decided on medical treatments of a woman. He was the only one who could decide whether a baby should be kept or die. Thus, even during pregnancy, which per definition should be a matter focused on the affected women, men held a superior position, as they were able to decide upon the fate of the unborn child. Once the decision was taken to give birth, mainly midwives and nurses took over, as mentioned before, and were responsible for bringing the child safely into the world.

In Ancient Rome, women were part of the household (*domina*), however without significant decision-making rights as their father or husband (the *pater familias*) always was their guardian (Hinze 2015). Women were legally put inferior to men. They had a stronger status in domestic life than they had in their public representation. At home, women were responsible for the upbringing of their children and had the chance to politically influence their husbands without having actual power. In public however, women had to represent traditional values. These were sowing clothes, such as the bearing of many, strong children that can carry the family name and legacy. The little freedoms, such as running a small business, were also heavily dependent on the wealth of the family, in which women were married into (PBS n.d.). As in Ancient Greece, childbirth was also the women's domain, accompanied only by female midwives and nurses and female relatives that assisted the birth (Totelin 2019).



### 2.1.2 The social status of a fetus

In Ancient Rome/Greece, a fetus was not considered a person, even more not a living thing at all. The fetus was part of a woman's body over which she however was not allowed to have any influence on. The status of a fetus was not defined by its own or its mother's rights, but by the rights that a father or a state possessed over the fetus. These rights being a father's right to an heir and a state's right to a future citizen (Büchler & Frei 2011) (Mulder 2015). The viability of the fetus was not considered during the argumentation of the debate, however focused on the advantages or disadvantages a birth would bring to external factors (a father or a state).

### 2.1.3 Gynecology

A passage from the book *De naturalibus facultatis* written by Galen (see Figure 1) is used to demonstrate the general knowledge at that time about pregnancy, abortion and the processes of childbirth. It was known that the child develops in the uterus, however the specific structures and mechanisms of childbearing and childbirth were not known. Based on the knowledge at that time, a miscarriage was induced by annoyance (underlined word in Figure 1) that was the result of excessive stretching of the uterus or of irritation that was caused by the quality of the fluids contained in the uterus. A miscarriage can be induced with violence, however also naturally, such as delivery.

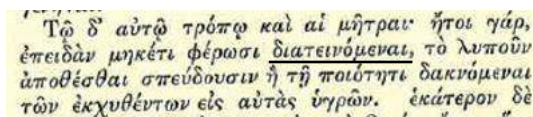


Figure 1: Galen, cited in Brock n.d., p.284

Therefore, a miscarriage ( ἀμβλυσκουσι see Figure 2) compared to abortion was portrayed as a natural process that the body of a woman sometimes induced on its own. The unnatural induction of this process was brought by abortifacient drugs (underlined word in Figure 2). These destroyed the embryo or ruptured some of its membranes.

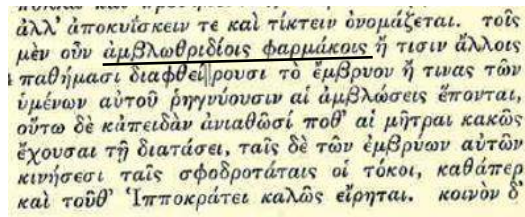


Figure 2: Galen, cited in Brock n.d., p.284

There were different types of abortions. An abortion could be induced with pessaries, herbal substances taken in orally or vaginally or mechanically (Hermann n.d.).

## 2.2 Anti-Abortion

The following subchapters provide literary sources from different authors that contain information on circumstances, opinions and arguments on the abortion debate in Ancient Rome/Greece. This chapter focuses on arguments against abortion. Each literary source was analyzed, and the arguments taken from this evaluation were used as a cross reference with the stances on pro-abortion and the discussion in modern America at the end of the paper.

### 2.2.1 The Hippocratic Oath (Miles 2004)

The Hippocratic Oath is a document which is estimated to be written in 400 BCE and it is the first text found on medical ethics in the Western world. The original language it is written in is Greek, but for this paper the Latin translation was used. The assumption that the author of this document is Hippocrates, is not likely to be true. To this day the author is unknown, and no other text of such kind was found. The oath talks about the guidelines and codes of conduct a doctor in Ancient Greece should have to follow if he wants to be successful. It still to a certain degree influences the thinking and actioning of doctors today. The oath cannot be utilized entirely by the present-day society, but some parts are accepted, as they speak of contemporary issues such as euthanasia (assisted suicide). This is because the text is embossed by the medical knowledge and social norm of that time.

The oath clearly states that a doctor should not perform abortions on women. It puts abortion on par with murder and suicide. This is implied by the word usage “similiter” that connects the first sentence with the second sentence:

‘Neque vero ullius preces apud me adeo validae erunt, ut cuipiam venenum sim propinaturus neque etiam ad hanc rem consilium dabo. **Similiter** autem neque mulieri talum vulvae subditicium ad corrumpendum conceptum vel fetum dabo.’

(The Hippocratic oath, cited in Cornarius 2018)

It begs the question of whether this refusal of performing abortions is built on ethical concerns for the murder of a fetus or possible health concerns and death of the mother that would emerge due to the lack of safe “treatment options”.

‘...talum vulvae **subditicium ad corrumpendum conceptum** vel fetum **dabo.**’

(The Hippocratic oath, cited in Cornarius 2018)

This citation shows that a physician will not give a destructive pessary to a woman. A vaginal pessary is considered a destructive pessary and consisted of a wool tampon that got soaked in substances, such as boiled honey or rose oil. These are substances with either healing qualities, that are used to heal infections in the uterus, or in contrary contain components that lead to an intended abortion. The pessary is inserted manually in the vagina. This method was not entirely safe, as the insertion of a pessary could lead to a damaging of the vaginal walls and result in infections. These infections often lead to death, as they were hard to heal. Physicians noticed these risks for female health and became more averse to this abortive method. The other argument why doctors would not perform an abortion could be their ethical judgement, as they did not want to be responsible for the death of a woman (Miles 2004). But physicians did not always think of the wellbeing of women (more in chapter *Septimius Severus and Antonius Caracallas*).

### Anti-Abortion argument No 1

Abortion is murder of a fetus and possible murder of a woman. Women have to face great health risk, when aborting.

### 2.2.2 Ovid

Ovid was a Roman poet that lived from 47 BC to 17/18 AC. His original texts are composed in Latin and some of his greatest works are the *Metamorphoses* and the *Amores* (Sucharski 2015). Parts of the *Fasti* and *Amores* are analyzed in this subchapter.

### 2.2.2.1 *Fasti 1 617-636*

The *Fasti* are originally a collection of twelve books, of which only six are preserved. Each book represents one month of the year, where the festive days (Roman festivals), Graeco-Roman myths and legends and the origin and religious importance of these festivities per month are described. The books are written in the structure of a poem and the available six books teach about the first six months of the Roman year. It has become a great source for the understanding of rites and religious activities in Ancient Rome (Sucharski 2015). The following passage is from the first book, lines 617 – 636 (Ovid, cited in Alton et al. 2005, p.20&21). This passage talks about the rites on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January.

In this passage Ovid describes his take on the revolt of women against *Lex Oppia*. *Lex Oppia*, which was introduced in 215 BCE in Rome, restricted the property and monetary ownership of women, their liberty to dress in color and their freedom to drive in a vehicle pulled by horses. The key source on this revolt is conveyed by *Livius*, (*ab urbe condite XXXIV, 1-3*) who is another Roman writer (Universität Heidelberg n.d.). Ovid tells that as a result of *Lex Oppia* women refused to bear children, as in their eyes men were responsible for this law being put in action (only men were allowed to take part in politics).

‘...mox honor eripitur, matronaque destinât omnis ingratos **nulla prole novare viros, neve daret partus, ...**’ (lines 621-623)

The usage of the word “*ingratos*“, which translates to ungrateful, is the adjective to “*viros*” which in combination means unthankful men and could get interpreted as social criticism. Ovid thinks that men take for granted that women do whatever they tell them or demand of them. This passage also shows the social status of women and their lesser importance in society.

‘..., **ictu temeraria caeco** visceribus crescens **excutiebat** onus, ...’ (lines 623-624)

The act of abortion is described as a secret thrust that was made by a rash decision. By saying that the decision of women getting an abortion is rash and not entirely thought through, Ovid states that he does not think that abortion is the correct solution. However, he uses the word “*onus*”, which translates to burden, for the baby, showing that he yet sees the injustice that women faced at that time. Not every child was wanted and would be born into a good environment. The usage of the word “*caeco*”, which means hidden, could also imply the lack

of public or legal acceptance of an abortion at that time. Women either had to hide it from their husbands or from the public, to stay out of shame that was associated with this practice.

‘... , corripuisse patres **ausas** immitia **nuptas**, ...’ (line 625)

His criticism on abortion is also seen with the depiction of women. He deems them cruel “ausas”, when aborting a baby and thus reveals that this act is morally unacceptable for him. The rest of the poem (lines 627-636) shows the rites and temple duties that were established as a result of the revolt that took place on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. The poem states that the temples shall not be entered when wearing a leather belt or other things that are associated with death, which could also include women who have had an abortion, as they would harm the purity of these.

‘... **scortea** non il li fas est inferre sacello, ne violent **puros exanimata focos.**’  
(lines 629-630).

Thus, in Ovid’s view, the practices of abortion are not accepted by religion. By formulating it as such: “If thou have any love of ancient rites, ...” Ovid tells the reader that anyone who would support abortion would speak against the sacred rites. As tradition and religion were very highly valued in Roman times, it made it very hard for the reader to support a pro-abortion view without feeling ashamed, as the reader would then neglect his/her own culture and religion.

### Anti-Abortion argument No 2

Abortion is an act against the principles of religion. It is a non-justifiable decision made in rashness.

#### **2.2.2.2 Amores 2. 13**

Amores are love poems and were originally published in five books around 15 BC (Sucharski 2015). The books that were retained over time are the three books of the second edition (which was published around the turn of the eras). The following poems used for the analysis are from the second book (Ovid, cited in De Verger 2006, p.75-76).

This poem tells the story of a pregnant woman Corinna, the lover of the lyrical identity, who has aborted a child, or as said in the text, has relieved herself from that burden, and as a result is suffering great health complications.

‘Dum **labefactat onus** grauidi **temeraria** uentris, in dubio uitae lassa Corinna iacet.’

(lines 1-2)

As in the *Fasti* 617-636, Ovid uses the word “temeraria” to describe the circumstances in which the abortion took place. This again means reckless or worrisome, thus putting abortion in a negative light.

‘...ilia quidem **clam** me tantum molita **pericli** ira digna mea, sed cadit ira metu.’ (lines 3-4)

He names abortion “pericli”, which means something dangerous. This on one hand shows the aversion of Ovid to that practice but on the other hand it also shows the lack of safe medical knowledge that was provided at that time. Abortive methods were still underdeveloped and not sanitary, resulting in health complications, as described in this case for Corinna. The word usage of “clam”, which means secretly but also can be translated to “without me knowing”, shows the social position of women (this is also shown in the *Fasti* 617-636) and the intolerant view of society on abortion. The text (lines 5-22) continues with the lyrical identity praying, offering frankincense and duties to the goddess of birth Ilithyia, so that Corinna gets better.

‘... ipse ego tura **dabo fumosis Candidus aris**, ipse feram ante tuos **munera uota pedes**; ...’

(lines 23-24)

Ovid changes in the subsequent lines the narrative in addressing and talking to Corinna as “tu” (line 26) and “tibi” (line 28), instead of the goddess, as he was doing before. The last sentence stands out, as it is written in a different tone than the rest of the poem. It expresses a warning to or an order for Corinna.

‘... hac tibi sit **pugna** dimieuisse satis.’ (line 28)

Ovid uses the word “pugna”, which functions as a metaphor for Corinna’s abortion. The metaphor shows the moral fight and disunity on abortion, the health of a woman that is put in jeopardy and the fight that she has to overcome to survive the complications. It also describes

the method with which Corinna has performed the abortion. Ovid in this text is talking about the mechanically induced abortion. This abortion is performed by using tools and other objects that were inserted into a woman and ended a pregnancy (Hermann n.d.). In the last sentence he warns Corinna that she should never do such thing again and hopefully has learned from her mistakes. Therefore, this could be understood as a warning for the reader itself that abortions are very dangerous and should not be performed using those brutal methods.

### Anti-Abortion argument No 3

Abortion is a dangerous procedure, the decision lacks morality and is a great risk for the health of women.

#### **2.2.2.3 Amores 2.14**

The poem 2.14 is the consecutive poem to *Amores 2.13* and has a thematic accordance. It explores the last sentence of 2.13 further and gives an implementation on the war metaphor used on line 28, 2.13. Whereas the first poem shows the emotional and shocked response of the lyrical identity, the second poem serves as an explanatory function. The lyrical identity wants to teach Corinna a lesson and criticize her doings, by writing in an indignant tone.

The text analysed (Ovid, cited in De Verger 2006, p.77-79) begins with a cynically formulated question that the lyrical identity asks itself. If women are not obliged to join the military and swing swords in battle, then why do they in absence of Mars, meaning in absence of war, decide to turn the weapons against themselves?

‘Quid iuuat immunes belli cessare puellas nec fera peltatas agmina uelle sequi, si sine Marte  
**suis patiuntur uulnera** telis et **caecas armant** in **sua fata manus?**’ (lines 1-4)

The symbolism of turning the weapons against their own bodies stands for self-induced mechanical abortion (like Corinna had used). He again uses the word “caecas” which means blindly, and he utilizes “fata” which is translated to deterioration. This puts abortion in a negative light, as it, like in the poems before, judges the sincerity of the decision and denigrates the outcome. The lyrical identity even goes as far, as stating that woman in general who have performed abortion, would deserve to die in war, meaning to die during abortion or of consequences thereof.

‘... quae prima instituit teneros **conuellere fetus**, militia fuerat **digna perire sua.**’ (lines 5-6)

He does not only fear for the health consequences but also the consequences for humanity. If everyone were to abort their children, there would not be anyone left to carry on traditions and family names. He addresses abortion as “vitio”, representing it as a violation against humanity.

‘...si mos antiquis **placuisset matribus** idem, **gens hominum** hoc **uitio deperitura** fuit, quique iterum iaceret, generis primordia nostri, **in uacuo** lapides **orbe**, ...’ (lines 9-12)

From lines 12-20 he brings several famous examples of heroes or important historical figures. If mothers of those figures had aborted the fetus, these important people would not have been born (people such as Venus who was pregnant with Aeneas or Ilia with the twins). He even addresses “tu”, meaning Corinna, and asks her how she would feel if she had not been able to live a life, giving the expression a bitter and provocative notion.

‘...**tu quoque**, cum posses nasci formosa, perisses, temptasset, quod tu, **si tua mater opus**; ...’ (lines 19-12)

Another argument that Ovid brings in this text is that it is better to let nature take its way than interfere in the process.

‘... sponte fluant matura sua, sine crescere nata...’ (line 25)

He thinks that abortion is an unnatural thing, as even animals would never harm their own offspring, so why do girls harm their babies and put their own health in jeopardy? This text does not only offer arguments on why Ovid thinks abortion should not be performed, but also shows the opinion of the society at that time. This is shown in the word “merito” on line 40. It translates to “she deserved it”, meaning a woman deserves to die after performing an abortion on herself. The text also offers a solution to this issue. He thinks that the act of abortion should be punished. The first violation, i.e. the first abortion of a woman could be forgiven, however the second one shall have consequences.

‘... di faciles, peccasse semel concedite tuto! et satis est: **poenam culpa secunda ferat.**’  
(line 43-44)



### Anti-Abortion argument No 4

Abortion takes away the opportunity of the human race to live to its full potential and it kills possible great leaders. It comes with many health risks, is a morbid procedure and society does not accept it.

### **2.2.3 Cicero**

Marcus Tullius Cicero was a politician, scholar and writer who lived from 106 to 43 BCE. He was one of the greatest Roman orators and his literary works include writings of philosophy, rhetoric, politics and letters (Balsdon & Ferguson 2019).

#### **2.2.3.1 *Pro Aulus Cluentius***

This passage is from Cicero's defense speech for Aulus Cluentius Habitus, who was prosecuted for the murder of Statius Albius Oppianicus (Barr n.d.) (Cicero, cited in Clark n.d., p.106).

This text clearly states that Cicero speaks against abortion. The destruction of a father's honor, of a family name's continuance, of a family property's heir and the loss of a possible member of Roman community are all arguments he uses against abortion.

‘...; nec iniuria quae **spem parentis, memoriam nominis, subsidium generis, heredem familiae, designatum rei publicae civem sustulisset.**’ (lines 12-14)

Cicero uses the word “iniuria”, which is translated to injustice, to describe his feeling on the prosecution of a woman in Milet, who has had a self-induced abortion. The injustice should not be understood as an injustice for this women, but the crime she has committed should be considered as unjust. She was processed with the death penalty and the punishment was not chosen without good reason, meaning Cicero supports this sentence.

### Anti-abortion argument No 5

Abortion destroys the honour of the father, puts the family name in jeopardy and kills a potentially valuable Roman citizen.

## 2.2.4 Seneca

Seneca was a Roman philosopher and writer who lived by the stoic principles from 1-65 AD (Kinderzeitmaschine n.d.).

### 2.2.4.1 *Ad Helviam matrem de consolatione*

This text was written around 40-45 AD and is a consolation for his mother, who has been banned to Corse.

This passage (Seneca, cited in Rosenbach 1993, p.342) starts with an enumeration of compliments. It talks about the temptations of life that his mother has not fallen into and therefore has stayed a pure woman. Examples for the mentioned misguidances are wealth that negatively influences an individual's character, putting money over personal values and generally letting one's judgement being devoured by bad people and bad decisions.

‘...; non gemmae te, non margaritae flexerunt; non tibi diuitiae uelut maximum generis humani bonum refulserunt; non te, bene in antiqua et seuera institutam domo, periculosa etiam probis peiorum detorsit imitatio; ...’

The misguidance that he mentions is that his mother never put her beauty over her fertility. She never tried to hide or terminate a pregnancy to maintain her beauty.

‘...; numquam te fecunditatis tuae, quasi exprobraret aetatem, puduit; numquam more aliarum, quibus omnis commendation ex forma petitur, tumescentum uterum abscondisti quasi **indecens onus**, nec intra uiscera tua conceptas **spes liberorum** elisisti; ...’

By using the words “spes liberorum”, which is translated to “the hope for children”, Seneca expounds that abortion is not an option for him. He dislikes all women who try to hide and get rid of the wonder of life by thinking that it is a “indecens onus”, indecorous burden. Therefore, Seneca criticizes all women who had an abortion with the intention of maintaining youthful beauty.

### Anti-abortion argument No 6

No woman should choose beauty of her body and youth over a child.

### 2.2.5 Septimius Severus and Antonius Caracallas

Septimius Severus and Antonius Caracallas were emperors of Ancient Rome and introduced two laws concerning abortion, which were the first ever recorded laws for the practices and consequences of abortion (Poulakou-Rebelakou, Lascaratos & Marketos 1996, p.21). There is not much information retained on these two laws. The only source that mentions them is *The Digest of Justinian*.

#### 2.2.5.1 Law : 47.11.4

The law states that married women who had an abortion were sent to exile, as they unpurified the legacy of a father and took away the possibility of an heir. This law clearly states that abortion should be punished and shows that it is not accepted by society.

‘..., a praeside in **temporale exilium** dandam: indignum enim uideri potest **impune eam maritum liberis fraudasse.**’ (Marcianus, cited in Mommsen 1963, p.784)

The way that the law is formulated also speaks against women in general. It seems to be only women who perform abortions on themselves without the help of others: “..., quae data opera abegit, ...”, which puts all societal pressure and judgement on them. They are portrayed as predators, whereas men are described as victims. The blame was solely put on women, showing their status on society, being a vulnerable and easy target.

#### Anti-Abortion argument No 7

Abortion damages the legacy of a father and steals a possible heir.

#### 2.2.5.2 Law: 48.8.8

This law says the same as law 47.11.4. However, the act of abortion is much more violently described. This leaves a negative impression and shows on one hand the danger of performing such an abortion but on the other hand also the lack of social acceptance of this practice. Abortion is described as that the woman employs a force upon her abdomen. This produces an aggressive and self-mutilating picture of the practice which leads to a negative impression on the reader.

‘Si mulierem **uisceribus suis uim intulisse**, quo **partum abigeret**, ...’ (Ulpianus, cited in Mommsen 1963, p.784)

Again, the blame is focused on women and only they should be punished with exile.

‘...; eam **in exilium praeses prouinciae exiget.**’ (Ulpianus, cited in Mommsen 1963, p.784)

Both laws show the judicial approach in criminalizing and prohibiting the practice of abortion. They also mirror women’s place in society and emphasize on the danger of abortion practices.

### Anti-Abortion argument No 8

Abortions are very dangerous and lead to the health of women being put in jeopardy.

## 2.3 Pro-Abortion

The following subchapters provide the literary sources and analyses thereof that speak for abortion in Ancient Rome/Greece.

### 2.3.1 Cicero

#### 2.3.1.1 *De legibus* 3.8.19

This work, which is composed of three books, was written in 52 BCE and depicts a conversation between Marcus Tullius Cicero, Quintus and Atticus Cicero. They talk about the treaties of laws, similar in style to the book *De re publica* written by Plato (Nickel 2013). The following passage is taken from the third book.

This passage talks about abortion by referring to deformed or illegitimate children. Having a sick or illegitimate child in Ancient Rome was seen as a weakness or disgrace to family and stained the honor of a father. This is shown in the ironic comment, which can be translated as: “What didn’t it generate/spawn”

‘Quid enim **ille** non edidit?’ (Cicero, cited in De Plinval 1959, p. 91)

The “ille” could represent a handicapped or also illegitimate child and thus the passage could be read as if the author was saying, what problems do not come with such a child? This puts these handicapped or “bastard” children in a negative light, which is also backed by the

consequences that are described further on. A deformed, an “impio”, meaning wicked child, takes away the honour of a father and as said in the text: “it puts the lowermost man equal to the uppermost man” (Nemeth, cited in Google books n.d., p.139.140).

‘Qui primum, ut **impio dignum fuit, patribus omnem honorem eripuit, omnia infima summis** paria fecit, ...’ (Cicero, cited in De Plinval 1959, p. 91)

Figuratively “impio” could also be viewed as an “illegitimate” or “unwanted” child, as it was not possible to know if a child was handicapped while it was in utero. Handicapped children were abandoned or killed after birth. So, it is more likely to be meant that “bastard” children should be aborted. As a result, Cicero would imply in his text that abortion should be allowed, in this special case, as Roman society and values are founded on honor and respect. Aborting illegitimate children and abandoning and killing deformed children was socially accepted and also under the provisions of the Twelve Tables (written Roman rights). However, the opinion that is portrayed in this passage, is an exception. Abortion in general, meaning in other situations, was not accepted by Cicero and he thought that this practice should get punished. This statement is supported by his previous text *Pro Aulus Cluentius*.

#### Pro-Abortion argument No 1

The abortion of a handicapped or illegitimate child saves the honor of the family and the father.

### 2.3.2 Juvenal

Decimus Junius Juvenalis was born in 55/60 BCE and died in 126/127 BCE. He was one of the most popular satirists in Ancient Rome. His most famous works are the 16 satires found in five books, which talk about the ambiguous moral understanding in Rome and injustices of mankind (Hight 2019). The following passage is taken from the second Satire (Juvenal, cited in Lorenz 2017, p.124).

#### 2.3.2.1 *Saturae 2.29-35*

This passage has to be considered in its historical context. Domitian, a Roman emperor has had an incestuous relationship with his niece Julia that has left her pregnant. He forced her to have an abortion, which led to chunks exiting her body that had similarities with the appearance of her uncle, as written in the text (Felbermayer 2013).

‘...et **patruo similes** effunderet **offas**. ...’ (line 33)

This story is based on actual rumors that Juvenal heard and incorporated in his poem. It is written in an ironic tone, as Juvenal makes fun of Domitian himself and by means of this example of the hypocrisy embedded in human nature. Domitian introduced a strict set of laws concerning adultery, whereas he was acting against the law, making him look like an unlawful and hypocritical figure.

Juvenal describes the practices of abortion very brutally. Using words such as “effunderet”, which is translated as pour out or discharge, to describe the fetus leaving the woman’s body, makes it look very brutal. The fetus is also described as “offas”, which means chunks. This could on one hand be interpreted that Juvenal does not believe in abortion being a morally correct practice, but on the other hand he could have also used the word “offras” to enhance the shocking effect to the reader, to express the bad things that Domitian has done in the most extravagant way possible. He also uses the word “fecundam”, which means fertile, to describe the womb, putting it in a positive light.

This poem is controversial and can be interpreted in two ways. It shows that Juvenal does not encourage the practices of abortion, because of his word usage, but it also shows the commonness of abortion itself in Roman society, by writing so casually and critically about it. Therefore, even though abortion was something that Roman people officially did not accept, it still seems to have been performed often.

It seems to be that abortion is not right, when women use it for their purposes (with reference to the arguments in the *Anti-Abortion* chapter), i.e. when they want to abort for reasons such as rape, cheating or beauty concerns. However, when men commit adultery, abortion suddenly becomes a very handy tool. This shows the ambiguity of abortion in Ancient Rome. Although Juvenal criticizes abortion in his text, it also becomes clear that the practice became morally acceptable, when men decided that they had made a mistake and therefore forced a woman to have an abortion and to get rid of the “problem”. Abortion seems to be acceptable on a personal level, for the individual man, but was not to be generally applied to society. This is another example of hypocrisy shown by Juvenal and should make the reader think about his own moral compass. Juvenal himself does not speak out for abortion, however he portrays the commonness of it.

### Pro-Abortion argument No 2

Men can push through abortion to protect themselves and their families from shame, which would have been brought upon them because of their misconduct and inappropriate behavior.

#### 2.3.3 Plato

As the passages from Plato, the Republic book 5; 459 a-e and 461 a, b, and Aristotle, *Politeia* 1335b, provide the same pro-abortion argument and are based on the identical ideas and principle, they can be analyzed together.

Plato was born in 428 BCE, died in 349 BCE and was a Greek philosopher. He was a student of Socrates and the teacher of Aristotle (Meinwald 2019). One of his most famous works is *De res publica* also called *Politeia*, consisting of ten books, which talk about a perfect state. The analyzed passages are taken from the fifth book. This book depicts a conversation between Glaucon, Socrates, Adeimantus, Polemarchus and Thrasymachus. The four speakers focus in on Socrates and bring him to describe the system of a perfect state, regarding property, women, children and other aspects. The following passages focus on childbearing (Course Hero n.d.).

##### 2.3.3.1 459 a-e

Although this passage does not give an actual pro-abortion argument, it is important to lay out the relevant principles and ideas on which the subsequent written arguments are based on (Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.187-188).

The topic of abortion is introduced by talking about the breeding of animals. They state that some animals are better than others and that they are born that way. Only the strongest males and females are chosen to breed further, so that the offspring inherits the strongest features.

Πρώτον μὲν αὐτῶν τούτων, καλύτερ ὄντων γενναίων, ἄρ' οὐκ εἰσὶ τινες καὶ γίγνονται ἄριστοι;

Figure 3: Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.187 459a lines 6-7

The weaker animals are thus not used for the continuation and optimization of the race. By outlining this method of breeding, the principle is also put on the human race.

ἀκρων εἶναι τῶν ἀρχόντων, εἶπερ καὶ περὶ τὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων  
 c γένος ὡσαύτως ἔχει.  
 Ἄλλὰ μὲν δὴ ἔχει, ἔφη· ἀλλὰ τί δὴ;

Figure 4: Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.188 459 b/c lines 11-13

This is one of the fundamental and central principles of eugenics. Eugenics is a set of beliefs and practices where the human species is trying to be improved by mating people with specific hereditary features and traits (Genetics Generation n.d.). In this case, these traits would be strength and age.

Δεῖ μὲν, εἶπον, ἐκ τῶν ἀμολογημένων τοὺς ἀρίστους ταῖς  
 ἀρίσταις συγγίγνεσθαι ὡς πλειστάκις, τοὺς δὲ φαυλοτάτους  
 10 ταῖς φαυλοτάταις τοῦναντίον· καὶ τῶν μὲν τὰ ἔκγονα τρέφειν,  
 e τῶν δὲ μὴ, εἰ μέλλει τὸ ποιμνιον ὅτι ἀκρότατον εἶναι· καὶ  
 ταῦτα πάντα γιγνόμενα λανθάνειν πλὴν αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀρχον-  
 τας, εἰ αὐτὴ ἀγέλη τῶν φυλάκων ὅτι μάλιστα ἀσασίαςτος  
 ἔσται.

Figure 5: Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.188 lines 459 d lines 8-9, 459e lines 1-4

The passage in Figure 5 states that the best men and women need to mate as much as possible, whereas the worse men and women should mate the least. This has to be done, so that the population can be optimized and maintain its high quality (underlined words in Figure 5).

It also suggests that only children, who are of higher value, would be worth getting an education and the other ones would not be worth it. With this Plato could mean children of lower value should be aborted, abandoned or killed after birth. However, these associations are not mentioned directly in the text.

### 2.3.3.2 461 a,b

The passage 461 a, b serves the purpose of elaborating on the principles of eugenics mentioned in passage 459 a-e (Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.190-191). It provides further detail, under which conditions a person is meant to be in his prime of life and when it is appropriate for people to produce children.

461 Ἀμφοτέρων γοῦν, ἔφη, αὕτη ἀκμὴ σώματός τε καὶ  
 φρονήσεως.

Figure 6: Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.90 461a lines 1-2



Children that were born under unholy circumstances, i.e. children that were conceived without the support of offerings and prayers, should be frowned upon and not get the chance to be properly incorporated in Greek society. Plato himself does not state clearly that abortion should be used to prevent the “unholy” births from happening. However, he indicates indirectly that those children should either never see the light of day or should be hidden after birth.

### Pro-Abortion argument No 3

Abortion can be used to assist the selective breeding of humans, so that a more efficient society can emerge.

### 2.3.4 Aristotle

Aristotle was a Greek philosopher who lived from 384-322 BCE. His works encompass certain topics such as natural sciences, rhetoric and philosophy (Kenny & Amadio 2019). One of his greatest works is the *Politeia* which criticizes different forms of politics and states, talks about the composition of a perfect state and explains some of the political structures found in the Ancient Greece that he was living in. Aristotle was a student of Plato and therefore has taken over many of his opinions. This has also been the case, when discussing the most ideal way to control the population of a state. The passage chosen for this analysis enhances the statements made in the works of Plato (Sparknotes n.d.).

#### 2.3.4.1 *Politeia 1335b 19-40*

This passage is taken from the seventh book, which overall talks about the proposition of a perfect state and is focused on the aspect of childbearing and fertility as a mean to control the development of a state (Aristotle, cited in Ross n.d., p.247).

Aristotle agrees with Plato that there should be a restriction of age (underlined word in Figure 7), when the population is allowed to produce children.

διωρισμένον τῇ αἰσθήσει καὶ τῷ ζῆν ἔσται. ἐπεὶ δ' ἡ μὲν ἀρχὴ τῆς ἡλικίας ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ διώρισταί, πότε ἀρχεσθαι χρὴ τῆς συζεύξεως, καὶ πόσον χρόνον λειτουργεῖν ἀρ-

Figure 7: Aristotle, cited in Ross n.d., p.247 lines 26-28

This again shows the continuing of eugenic thinking. Aristotle states that children, who were born with parents that were either too young or too old (which at that time were people over 50), will have deficits concerning their intelligence and physical strength (black underline in Figure 8). They would have a disadvantage with respect to children that were born to parents who were in their prime of life (the time with the highest mental efficiency – red underline in Figure 8).

μόττει πρὸς τεκνοποιῖαν ὠρίσθω. τὰ γὰρ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἔκγονα, καθάπερ τὰ τῶν νεωτέρων, ἀτελῆ γίνονται καὶ τοῖς σώμασι καὶ ταῖς διανοίαις, τὰ δὲ τῶν γεγηρακότων ἀσθενῆ· διὸ κατὰ τὴν τῆς διανοίας ἀκμὴν. αὕτη δ' ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις ἤνπερ τῶν ποιητῶν τινες εἰρήκασιν οἱ μετροῦντες ταῖς ἑβδομάσι τὴν ἡλικίαν, περὶ τὸν χρόνον τὸν τῶν πενήκοντα ἐτῶν. ὥστε τέτταρα ἢ πέντε ἔτεσιν ὑπερβάλλοντα

Figure 8: Aristotle, cited in Ross n.d., p.247 lines 29-34

These regulations of birth-rates would help the state to control population growth and development of Greek society.

As in Roman culture (shown in chapter *Anti- Abortion* sub-chapter *Cicero; De legibus 3.8.19*) handicapped or illegitimate children were also seen as weaknesses in Ancient Greece. This is shown by the proposal of Aristotle that there should be a law, which states that newborns with disabilities should not be raised, figuratively stating that they should be killed or abandoned. He justifies this statement by stating that these births are superfluous, as the population growth needs to be minimized and these children are a burden. He proposes that all children that either were not born within the correct age-limit of the parents or with a potential disability, should be aborted (red underline in Figure 9) or not survive after birth.

ὥσπερ τὰ φυόμενα τῆς γῆς. περὶ δὲ ἀποθέσεως καὶ τροφῆς τῶν γιγνομένων ἔστω νόμος μηδὲν πεπηρωμένον τρέφειν, διὰ δὲ πλῆθος τέκνων ἢ τάξις τῶν ἐθῶν κελεύει μηθὲν ἀποτίθεσθαι τῶν γιγνομένων· ὀρισθῆναι δὲ δεῖ τῆς τεκνοποιίας τὸ πλῆθος, εἰ δὲ τισι γίγνηται παρὰ ταῦτα συνδυασθέντων, πρὶν αἰσθῆσαι ἐγγενέσθαι καὶ ζωὴν ἐμποιεῖσθαι δεῖ τὴν ἀμβλώσασιν τὸ γὰρ ὄσιον καὶ τὸ μὴ

Figure 9: Aristotle, cited in Ross n.d., p.247 lines 24-31

In this text, for the first time the viability of a fetus is mentioned (black underline in Figure 9). Abortion should not take place, if a fetus has a perception of life. Like that, the fetus itself is more important and not the influence on which this abortion would have on others. This argument is not included in the analysis.

Pro-Abortion argument No 4

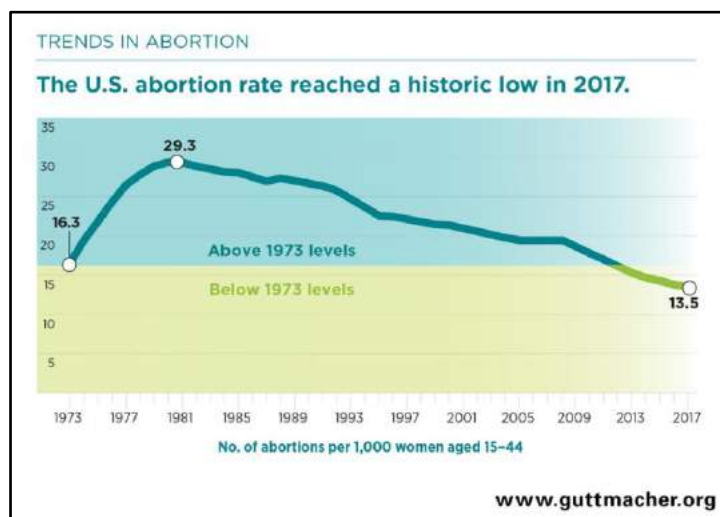
Abortion should be legal to control population growth and reduce children with disabilities, physical weaknesses or which are illegitimate. These actions support the growth of an optimized population.

### 3 Modern America

For this paper and its analytical purpose modern America is defined as the timespan between the first constitutionalizing of abortion in 1973 and 2019.

Abortion in modern America is defined as an induced termination (purposeful interruption) of pregnancy, which in result does not bring a live birth (Medline Plus n.d.). It is considered a medical procedure, therefore usually performed surgically (such as emptying the uterus using suction) but it can also be induced medically, meaning by using drugs such as the abortive drug mifepristone (a pill that can be taken without the patient needing to get an in-clinic procedure) (Cunningham et al. 2014).

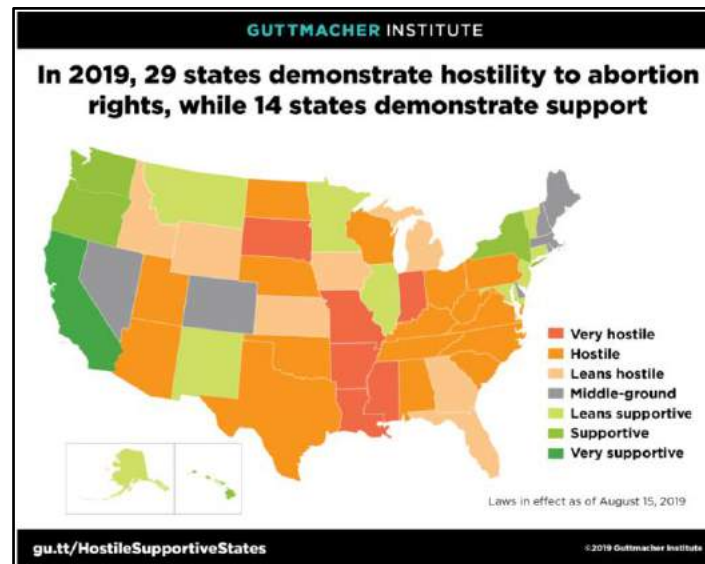
The discussion about legalizing abortion has been raging on for a long time, starting with the first legal acceptance of abortion rights due to the Supreme court case *Roe vs. Wade* in 1973 (more to this in chapter *The social and legal acceptance of abortion; Roe vs. Wade*). When looking at Graph 1, the year 1973 where the abortion law was first introduced, the abortion rate was 16.3 abortions per 1000 women aged between 15-44. This rate spiked in the 80s to 29.3 and started a declining trend ever since. In 2017 it reached a new historic low of 13.5. The graph clearly outlines that abortion rates today are even lower than the rates before it was legalized.



Graph 1: shows the trend in abortions per 1000 women aged 15-44 over time, from 1973-2017 (Guttmacher Institute 2019)

Since the introduction of the law based on the *Roe vs. Wade* case on Federal level, the individual states have become more averse to this law. In 2019, 29 states are considered “hostile” to

abortion, 14 are “supportive” and seven states are “middle-ground”, meaning indecisive (Guttmacher Institute 2019).



Graph 2: shows the distribution of the acceptance/supportiveness (reaching from very hostile to very supportive) of all the 50 states for abortion (Guttmacher Institute 2019)

Abortion is not only a topic and discussion theme about women or the fetus itself, but it also is about rights, religion, morality, sexuality, gender, women’s emancipation and politics. These factors have influenced and shaped the development, argumentation and public representation of the pro-choice (pro-abortion) and the pro-life (anti-abortion) movement. They will be shown in the discussion in the chapters *Anti-Abortion* and *Pro-Abortion*.

### 3.1 Socio-cultural and medical background

Before starting an analysis of the two movements, some general socio-cultural and medical information is provided in this chapter, so that the situation and the argumentation can be put in context. These insights also show the different circumstances, i.e. different knowledge levels and social statuses’, under which the actual abortion debate takes place.

#### 3.1.1 The social status of a woman

Women’s rights in modern America have developed and changed over time. A key milestone in this respect was the introduction of the Equal Rights Amendment in 1923, which states that all men and women shall have same rights. Before that time women were not entitled many rights, they could not own a property or open a bank account. Later on, several Acts such as the

Equal Pay Act in 1963 (promising equal pay for everyone, regardless of race, religion, sex, etc. of the worker) were introduced, to close the inequality gap for women (Milligan 2017). This gap has been closing itself more and more in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, heavily steered by the women's emancipation movements that have formed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and developed over the subsequent decades. In 2019 a woman living in America is set equal to a man when it comes to constitutional rights, voting etc., although there are still some inconsistencies in areas such as the wage equality, political and management representation. These aspects of the women's rights debate are not critical for the analysis of the argumentation of the abortion debate but are important to be able to put these argumentations into context. The development to gender equality is also mentioned in the chapter *The social and legal acceptance of abortion*.

### 3.1.2 The social status of a fetus

Due to the many women's rights movements that emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, topics such as contraceptives, abortion and the female body during pregnancy and childbirth were put in the spotlight of various political discussion. These developments encouraged scientists and researchers the study of the relatively unexplored medical field of fetal anatomy and pregnancy. Therefore, a lot of new technologies such as IVF (in-vitro fertilization), the Pill or the ultrasound were invented, leading to a fast attainment of knowledge on female and fetal anatomy (Al-Gailani & Davis 2014). Even though it is known today how the fetus develops during pregnancy, the social status of a fetus cannot be determined easily. The discussion of fetal civil and legal rights only emerged as a result of the Supreme court trial *Roe vs. Wade* (read more in chapter *The social and legal acceptance of abortion*, subchapter *Roe vs. Wade*). However, this question cannot be answered using the legal rights that are written down in the US Constitution. The question on the social status of a fetus is answered differently by both parties of the abortion debate.

When asking an activist of the pro-life movement about the social status of a fetus, this person would answer that the fetus is a human being at any point in time during pregnancy and thus should be protected by the Constitution. A key argument of the pro-life movement is that human life begins at conception. This once again leads to the unanswerable question: "When does life begin?", which was also mentioned by Aristotle (see page 25).

However, when asking an activist of the pro-choice movements the same question, the person would state that a fetus is part of a woman's body and therefore the woman can decide upon

the fetus. In their chain of reasoning, life begins at the moment of birth, or with the development of the brain and neural system which is in the second and third trimester of pregnancy (Harmon 2019).

These different opinions result in big dispute, as both parties argue from a very different point of view.

### **3.1.3 The social and legal acceptance of abortion (McBride and Parry 2016) (Rohlinger 2015)**

Nowadays, abortion is legally - depending on the state - and partially also socially accepted. Partially, as the newly stirred debates show that not the entire American society has accepted abortion rights. This acceptance is highly dependent on each individual person, depending on their different upbringings, experiences and belief systems that may or may not support abortion. The development of the policies that were crucial for the legal acceptance of abortion are key building blocks in the argumentation chain of the pro-life movement and hence outlined in the following chapters.

#### **3.1.3.1 *Roe vs. Wade***

In 1969, Norma McCorvey, a twenty-one-year-old carnival baker became pregnant with her third child. She was poor and sought an abortion. However, as she was unable to find a clinic that would perform the practice and the only place she found was in an abandoned building where the environment and instruments were in an insufficient hygienic situation (a “back-alley abortion”). McCorvey decided to go to court, to defend her legal right to have an abortion. In 1970 two attorneys brought her case against the Texas court, where the defendant was called Henry Wade. McCorvey changed her real name to a pseudonym and called herself Jane Roe. Thus, the famous court case *Roe vs. Wade* began. This legal issue was not solved in the Texas court but climbed its way up to the Supreme Court in 1970, where the trial and oral arguments went on for two years. In 1973 the court decided to rule for McCorvey.

To solve the conflict of interest, the pregnancy was legally sequenced into trimesters, opposing to the quick/non quick idea prevalent in the 1800 (a fetus is quick, when the pregnant woman can feel its movements in the womb). In the first trimester, simple procedures for abortion could be used. In the second trimester serious abortive procedures could be performed in the hospital, but in the third trimester procedures would be life-threatening for the mother, thus be restricted.

Also, the fetus was regarded as viable. In this case viability of a fetus is defined as the ability of a fetus to live outside the womb (defined by the case *Doe vs. Bolton*). Due to this categorization, the law according to *Roe* says that in the first trimester the state cannot interfere in the decision of a woman or doctor to perform an abortion, in the second trimester the state can control the medical conditions of the abortion being performed but it cannot prohibit it and in the third trimester the state has the rights to prohibit the abortion when the health of the mother is in jeopardy. For the first time in American history the right to an abortion was constitutionalized.

This breakthrough did not only have a huge impact on women's rights, but it also triggered the medical science and technology development in several areas. Prenatal genetic testing started getting applied in several hospitals and clinics all over America, allowing scientists and doctors to predict certain illnesses in utero. Nearly one hundred chromosomal disorders and metabolic diseases, such as Klinefelter syndrome and Turner syndrome, were now detectable in utero. Not only did the development of medicine change due to the legalization of abortion, but also significantly influenced the pro-life and pro-choice movements (read more in the chapters *Anti-Abortion (pro-life)* and *Pro-Abortion (pro-choice)*).

### **3.1.3.2 Today**

Even though abortion has been legalized for over 50 years, there is still a debate going on if this decision has been the right one and if those laws need to be revised. There have been attempts in 2019, such as in Alabama, to overturn *Roe vs. Wade* and ban abortion completely with the one exception where the health of the mother would be at risk. The bill that was signed by the governor of Alabama does not exempt rape or incest victims. This is why the democrats in Alabama tried to re-introduce an amendment but failed. The bill forbids the performance of abortions. Doctors performing the procedure would be punished and could face up to 99 years of jail time, if the Supreme court allows this law to stand. The women getting an abortion would however not be punished (The Guardian 2019).

Ohio is another state which is trying to undermine the right of abortion with its "heartbeat bill". This bill prohibits abortions being performed after the sixth week of pregnancy. It is based on the premise that fetal life begins after six weeks of pregnancy. At this time during pregnancy a small bundle of cells sending out electrical impulses form. They are the first cells that later are going to be part of the heart. The "heartbeat bill" label these electrical impulses as first signs of



a fetal heartbeat. However, doctors say that for these cells to be called a heart and therefore classify as a heartbeat, they would require further development, a neurological system (which has not been formed yet) and other things (Harmon 2019).

These laws have not gone into effect yet, but they deem the purpose to provoke the Supreme court and stir controversies and doubt regarding abortion.

## **3.2 Anti-Abortion (pro-life)**

Before the Roe vs. Wade trial there was no need for people to publicly speak out their opinion, form groups and coordinate themselves nationwide. But due to the constitutionalizing of abortion, this changed on the pro- as well as the anti-abortion side. Society was split into two camps, deeply polarized, resulting in striking controversy. People started to form organizations enabling them to reinforce their opinion in the public more effectively, influencing and driving politics to further discuss this matter (Holland n.d.).

### **3.2.1 The movement**

The anti-abortion movement also called the pro-life movement criticizes the practices of abortion, particularly the legality and morality of the practice itself. It started to grow and actively form right after the Roe vs. Wade trial.

As a result of prejudice and overgeneralization, there is a traditional and rather negative portrait of the anti-abortion movement. This traditional portrait assumes that the movement is mainly led by men and heavily influenced by religion and religious institutions. Supporters of this movement have a very special religiously influenced language and a very aggressive way of approaching different opinions (violence in demonstrations). Bills and laws are used to criminalize and ban abortion. Finally, the movement's stance is viewed to be clearly anti-women and fetal-centric (Saurette & Gordon 2015). These are all aspects which influenced and guided the abortion debate in modern America. Thus, the arguments elaborated in the next subchapter will be compared and contrasted with these pre-assumptions of the pro-life movement.

### 3.2.2 The arguments (Saurette & Gordon 2015).

#### Anti-Abortion argument No 1

A fetus is a human being that should be protected by the Constitution.

This anti-abortion argument is the main argument of the pro-life movement. The emphasis is put on the humanity of the fetus. At first women were put into a selfish and immoral light, leading to an anti-woman and life-centric argumentation. This of course had negative impact on the public image of the movement, forcing it to get away from the anti-women claims and rather start to focus on a fetal-centric “positive” campaigning. The mainstream movement started to protect the fetus by initiating actions to set up bills and laws. From 1973 up to today, the movement has focused on introducing several new legislations and laws, such as the Hyde bill, to either prohibit, limit or ban abortion in several states, thereby confirming the traditional portrait of the pro-life movement, using bills and legislations to reinforce their opinion.

As the abortion rates were steadily rising, and the movement could not see any impact in their work, they started to take an increasingly radical turn in the 1970/1980s. Ultra-aggressive anti-abortion organizations such as Operation Rescue emerged, however again lost their influence in the 1990s. Their activities basically confirm the traditional portrait of the religious and quite aggressive approach of pro-life organizations. The mainstream movement, which can be seen today, has distanced itself from these radical values. It however still is channeled by a rather religious, fetal-centric and anti-women course. They approached abortion clinics directly and tried put pressure on involved medical staff as well as tried to change the opinions of women by telling them they would “kill their baby” and “commit a crime” leading to the next key abortion argument:

#### Anti-Abortion argument No 2

Performing an abortion is murder and a criminal act.

Through this, the movement adapted the emotional and religious language used to persuade the public. That representation is also often used in movies or TV series to show the controversy (for example in the Netflix show Sex Education released in 2018).

The religious language emerged as the movement was affected by the upcoming of Christian rights as a politically important movement in the 1970s and 1980s. Due to prior political developments in the 1940s, the conservative Protestants gained influence on the agenda of the Republican Party in the late 1960s. Protestants and the evangelicals, in alliances with the Republican party led to a united front and opposition being formed that argued against feminism, abortion, pornography and homosexual rights. These topics were first on the official agenda of the party during the presidency of Ronald Reagan. Religious groups started to justify policies for the prohibition of abortion using religious appeals or direct links to scripture (i.e. the bible). They argued that god has a plan for everyone and if anyone were to interrupt the structure of this plan, that person would be disrespecting and interfering in god's will.

#### Anti- Abortion argument No 3

Performing an abortion is interfering in the work of god, who has created the miracle, meaning the child.

The movement focuses on the positive aspects of their argumentation, meaning the creation of new life and its protection. In general, ethical and moral judgements are used, to justify the reasoning, if a woman has had an abortion and had mixed feelings afterwards, this would mean that the abortion itself must have been unethical (Erdreich 2013).

#### Anti-Abortion argument No 4

The decision that leads to an abortion being performed cannot be done without bad feelings or guilt and therefore is not the right decision to be made.

In conclusion, the analysis of the anti-abortion argumentation confirms quite clearly the traditional portrait of the pro-life movement and argumentation. It confirms the important religious aspect in the language of the movement, the aggressive approach, the fetal-centric view and anti-women argumentation. The only prejudice that does not align with the current appearance is that the movement is only led by men. This may have been the case in the beginning, clearly due to the overall lack of women's rights at that time, but the contemporary movement is also led by women.

### 3.3 Pro-Abortion (pro-choice)

#### 3.3.1 The movement

The pro-abortion movement, also called the pro-choice movement, is a key part of the abortion debate in America and fights for the right of women to choose a legal abortion, meaning to have the right to terminate a pregnancy. It has profited a lot from the women's emancipation movement, as the movement advances a view in which women should be put in the center of focus, when talking about abortion. The movement fights to increase accessibility to abortion clinics, contraceptives, etc. It also defends the legality and morality of abortion and educates the public about abortion procedures (NARAL Pro-Choice America n.d.).

As abortion is a controversial topic and the pro-choice movement defends an opinion, which is officially less favored in America, it is very hard to bring up abortion as a topic in the media or on TV. Only a few TV series such as *Grey's Anatomy* or *Degrassi: The Next Generation* have featured abortion as a right choice for women. In contrast, in quite several movies such as *Knocked Up* or *Sex and the City*, abortion is not depicted as a viable option. Even though pregnancies happened in unfortunate events and were unwanted, keeping the baby was always shown as the direct right choice, without abortion even being put up as a possible option. As America has become more hostile to abortion, major networks do not want to air episodes that talk about abortion as a viable option. It leads to bad press, outrage in the pro-life community and loss of viewers. However, the representation in mass media is very important today. It has a lot of influential power and should take on more discussions about abortion, which would help the movement (Erdreich 2013).

#### 3.3.2 The arguments (Erdreich 2013) (BBC 2014) (NARAL Pro-Choice America n.d.)

The argumentation of the movement puts the focus on the procedure itself and related medical facts rather than appealing to the potential emotional elements of the discussion.

##### Pro-Abortion argument No 1

Abortion is a safe procedure and causes no further health implications, when performed correctly.

The reason, why emotions are included rarely by this movement, is that it does not want to tell women how they should feel. Every abortion is different and can result in an ambivalence of

feelings (such as guilt). This ambivalence is hard to justify from a pro-choice view, as the only validation for those would mean that abortion is bad. The answer of the pro-choice movement to this argument is that abortion is hard for every woman without however saying that it is wrong for the affected woman.

The movement provides more factual information on the procedure and also fights for more education work about the practices in medical schools throughout America. There were universities where up to 2004 and 2005 abortion was taught to be illegal and immoral. Thus, the movement's key anchor points are education, outreach and conversation to spread its opinion.

The argumentation is patient centered. The movement fights for the opening of free clinics, where a safe environment is created. This also helps to put abortion in an everyday normal light. Banning abortion will only lead to an increase of illegal "back alley" abortions. Women, who made up their mind, will not suddenly want to keep their baby; they will just find another way to abort it.

#### Pro-Abortion argument No 2

The legalization of abortion will lead to the procedure being safer and more controlled, resulting in less "back alley abortions".

Another emphasis is on the fact that a woman should have the choice to decide what is happening to and in her body, if she is ready for motherhood.

#### Pro-Abortion argument No 3

A woman can decide over her own body.

This argumentation is shown by the biggest pro-choice advocates such as the National Abortion Federation (NAF), Planned Parenthood, NARAL Pro-Choice America which in their campaigns and public appearances show the commonness and safety of abortion but avoid talking about the emotions. The pro-choice movement has heavily benefited from the women's emancipation movement and upcoming of feminism. It can base its argumentation on the aim to achieve full equality of men and women, which would include the right to make a decision about the own body.

Pro-Abortion argument No 4

Women and men are set equal, so denying the basic right to make a decision for the wellbeing of her family and herself, leads to inequality.

## 4 Comparison of Ancient Rome/Greece with modern America

Before starting the comparison between the pro- and anti-abortion arguments in Ancient Rome/Greece and the arguments found in the abortion debate in modern America, a small summary is provided to recall the arguments found during the analysis.

### 4.1 Anti-Abortion arguments

No	Ancient Rome/Greece	Modern America
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Murder</b> of fetus and women</li> <li>• <b>Health risks</b> for women</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fetus = human being</li> <li>• Should be protected by the Constitution</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Against the principles of religion</li> <li>• Non-justifiable / rash decision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Murder</b> of fetus</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient <b>knowledge</b></li> <li>• <b>Dangerous procedure</b></li> <li>• <b>Lack of morality</b> of decision</li> <li>• Health risks for woman</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interference</b> in god's work</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highest <b>potential of human race</b> cannot be achieved</li> <li>• Possible great personalities are killed</li> <li>• Health risks for women</li> <li>• <b>Morbidity</b> of procedure</li> <li>• Social unacceptance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bad feelings and guilt for decision</li> <li>• Decision = <b>wrong</b></li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Destruction</b> of father's honour</li> <li>• <b>Endangering</b> the family name</li> <li>• Valuable <b>Roman citizen is killed</b></li> </ul>	
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Beauty and youth of body = less important</b></li> </ul>	
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage of father's legacy</li> <li>• Stealing of heir</li> </ul>	
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dangerous</li> <li>• Health risks for women</li> </ul>	

## 4.2 Pro-Abortion arguments

No	Ancient Rome/Greece	Modern America
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When child <b>handicapped/illegitimate</b> then <b>salvation of family's honor and father</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safe</li> <li><b>No health implications</b> (when done correctly)</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Protection</b> from shame</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Legalization</b> = safer and more controlled (less "back-alley" abortions)</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selective breeding</li> <li>More efficient and <b>optimized</b> society</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Decision</b> over her own body</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population growth control</li> <li><b>Optimized population</b> (sorting out the weak and unwanted)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women and men = equal</li> <li><b>Women not</b> being able to <b>make decision</b> for their wellbeing of family and herself = <b>inequality</b></li> </ul>

## 4.3 Comparison

### 4.3.1 Anti-Abortion arguments

After having analyzed the arguments, it becomes clear that there are similarities between Ancient Rome/Greece and modern America.

The argumentation in Ancient Rome/Greece and modern America both have been influenced by religion. In the antiquity it was said that abortion is against the principles of religion, as childbearing was seen as a fundamental rational on which the society was built on. They do not include their gods directly, which is done in the argumentation of modern America, where it is stated that aborting would be interfering in god's plan. This is more focused on what power god has over humans, whereas the antiquity focuses on the core values which are portrayed by their religion and society.

Abortion is murder. This argument has not changed over time. The only thing that has changed is the reasoning behind it. In the antiquity, murder was meant in a quite literal sense, without giving any legal rights or moral significance to the fetus. The murder also referred to the woman, as due to a lack of sanitation many women died of health complications after abortions.



This is rarely spoken about today. The argumentation in the modernity only refers to the fetus, as it is set equal to a living human being and therefore should be given constitutional rights. The argument is the same, the justification although is different. This is thanks to new medical understandings of the anatomy and livelihood of the fetus during pregnancy and the shift of the ethical and moral principles of humans.

The circumstances, under which the decision to abort is made, are criticized in the antiquity as well as in the modernity and the argumentation is exactly the same. The decision is supposedly made in rashness and cannot be supported by moral standards. If women had feelings of guilt after the procedure, it must have meant that it had been wrong. Looking at the antiquity, this argument can be justified easily. All the literary sources used in this paper were written by men. It is comprehensible that they cannot understand the weight of the decision of women to have an abortion instead of giving birth, as they never were put in a similar situation and had to make such a decision themselves. The answer to the decision might seem simple for them but is life-changing for women. This argument has a lot of emotional roots, which is why it is still used today. The pro-abortion movement cannot and will not argue against this statement, as it agrees with the fact that there can be feelings of guilt after the procedure. These feelings however are normal, and many women experience them. There are many articles where women tell their own abortion stories, which show that every abortion is different and never easy. The inability of the pro-choice movement to counter this argument encourages the pro-life movement to utilize it even more often.

In the antiquity, the previous argument is based on the inability to understand the decision and thus labelling it as “rash” and “flimsy”. The modernity generated this argument as a result of the increasing presence of ethical discussions in the media and in the public. Nowadays ethical discussions and theories are widely discussed by everyone, which significantly impacts the behavior of people. They try to act morally pure and ethically correct. This widespread conversation about ethical theories was not present in the antiquity, where of course ethical virtues were discussed and represented by philosophers, such as Stoicism or Epicureanism, but they were never accepted by the entire population. This is the reason why the antiquity uses no ethical reasoning to reinforce the argumentation. In contrary, the modernity bases almost the entire argumentation on ethical principles and the generation of guilt, if one was not living by those moral understandings.

The residual arguments from the antiquity have no similarities with the modernity. This comes about because the argumentation is based on virtues and values which were regarded highly in Roman and Greek society but have changed over time. The destruction of a father's honor and family name, maintenance of eternal youth, the murder of a possibly great leader or Roman citizen and the loss of the full potential of humanity are all arguments that focus on societal, state- and men-centric factors that do not affect pregnancy directly. However, as women in antiquity had little say in their own decisions concerning their pregnancy, this argumentation is not deceptive. It would be absurd to use these today, because society believes that women are equal to men and the focus of the debate is shifted to the fetus (pro-life movement), without considering external factors.

#### **4.3.2 Pro-Abortion arguments**

There are no similarities of the pro-abortion arguments from the Ancient Rome/Greece and modern America. This arises because of the different foundations out of which the arguments emerged. The antiquity argued with what benefits abortion would have on population growth, the optimization of the population (eugenics) and the abortion of handicapped/illegitimate children (avoiding social problems). These arguments are again focused on societal and state-centric factors and do not in any way consider the fetus or woman. This however is done in the argumentation nowadays. As influenced by the women's emancipation movement, the abortion debate has become women- and fetal-centric. This corresponds with the present-day values of women's right and female individuality.

## 5 Conclusion

After completing the comparison, I have come to the conclusion that there are similarities between Ancient Rome/Greece and modern America in the anti-abortion argumentation. I identified these, even though they are based on completely different principles, those being men-centric in Ancient Rome/Greece and fetal-centric in modern America. The arguments that I have identified show religious influence, the understanding and definition of murder and the limitation of the plausibility of the decision. These three arguments are less influenced by the social situation of a certain time, which has been the reason why the other argumentations have few parallels. Religion has always portrayed a pro-life view and intentionally planned murder was never a morally justifiable action. Therefore, the persistence of these arguments can be explained by stating that they portray core values of certain groups of people. In addition, the status of women in religion often goes back to solely giving birth to children, preferably boys, by nurturing them and ensuring the succession of the family name. The questioning of the sincerity of the decision to abort can however be made from the social and political context of a certain time, as it solely focuses on the credibility and emotional situation of women.

I however identified no similarities between the pro-abortion arguments of Ancient Rome/Greece and modern America. The argumentations are based on completely different principles, where the antiquity argued society- and men-centric and the modernity women-centric. Similar to the anti-abortion arguments, the pro-abortion arguments of the antiquity and modernity are focused on different aspects of the debate, nevertheless they show no similarities. This is because all the arguments found for pro-abortion are based on the social situation of gender groups at a certain time. Men-centric and society-centric argumentation is a result of the inequality between men and women, i.e. the low social status of the woman in antiquity. The women-centric argumentation emerged because social beliefs changed and the equality between men and women was established.

In comparison, the arguments in the antiquity seem more diverse than those of today.

It was very interesting to see that such a current topic has also been a topic more than 2000 years ago and for that time, as it seems, intensely discussed. Of course, it would have been interesting to hear the opinion of a woman on abortion in Ancient Rome/Greece, but no literary

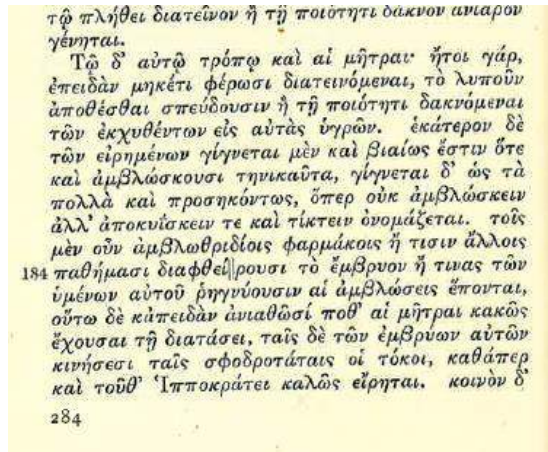
works have been preserved. This could probably have changed the dynamic of my argumentation and conclusion.

The analysis of the Latin/Greek literary works was very challenging, as some sources are written in a very sophisticated manner and as I cannot read any Greek. However, this investigation has taught me a lot about the history of the abortion debate and has reinforced my opinion, in being a pro-choice supporter. It was shocking to see that some of the currently used anti-abortion arguments are 2000 years old. For me, this testifies as a backwardness of the movement, but I have to accept that there are always going to be people, who believe in completely different values.

I am never going to lose interest in this discussion and will actively try to advocate my opinion further.

## 6 Appendix

### 6.1 Galen (Galen, cited in Brock n.d., p.284)



### 6.2 The Hippocratic Oath

‘Neque vero ullius preces apud me adeo validae erunt, ut cuipiam venenum sim propinaturus neque etiam ad hanc rem consilium dabo. Similiter autem neque mulieri talum vulvae subditicium ad corrumpendum conceptum vel fetum dabo’.(The Hippocratic oath, cited in Cornarius 2018)

‘And I will not give a drug that is deadly to anyone if asked (for it), nor will I suggest the way to such a counsel. And likewise, I will not give a woman a destructive pessary.’ (The Oath cited in Miles 2004, p.xiv)

### 6.3 Fasti 1 617-636 (Ovid, cited in Alton et al. 2005, p.20&21)

Respiciet Titan actas ubi tertius Idus,  
 fient Parrhasiae sacra relata deae.  
 nam prius Ausonias matres carpenta vehebant  
 (haec quoque ab Euandri dicta parente reor) ; **620**  
 mox honor eripitur, matronaque destinât omnis  
 ingratos nulla prole novare viros,  
 neve daret partus, ictu temeraria caeco  
 visceribus crescens excutiebat onus,  
 corripuisse patres ausas immitia nuptas, **625**  
 ius tarnen exemptum restituisse ferunt,  
 binaque nunc pariter Tegeaeae sacra parenti  
 pro pueris fieri virginibusque iubent.  
 scortea non il li fas est inferre sacello,  
 ne violent puros exanimata focos. **630**  
 siquis amas veteres ritus, adsiste precanti;  
 nomina percipies non tibi nota prius.  
 Porrimum placatur Postvertaque, sive sorores,  
 sive fugae comités, Maenali diva, tuae ;  
 altera quod porro fuerat cecinisse putatur, **635**  
 altera ventui um postmodo quicquid erat.

#### 6.4 Amores 2. 13 (Ovid, cited in De Verger 2006, p.75-76)

Dum labefactat onus grauidi temeraria uentris,  
 in dubio uitae lassa Corinna iacet.  
 ilia quidem clam me tantum molita pericli  
 ira digna mea, sed cadit ira metu.

5 sed tamen aut ex me conceperat aut ego credo:

est mihi pro facto saepe quod esse potest.

'Isi, Paraetonium genialiaque arua Canopi  
 quae colis et Memphin palmiferamque Pharon,  
 quaque celer Nilus lato delapsus in alueo  
 10 per septem portus in maris exit aquas,  
 per tua sinistra precor, per Anubidis ora uerendi

- sic tua sacra pius semper Osiris amet  
 pigraque labatur circa donaria serpens  
 et comes in pompa corniger Apis eat -,

15 hue adhibe uultus et in una parce duobus:

nam uitam dominae tu dabis, illa mihi,  
 saepe tibi sedit certis operata diebus,  
 quis tangit laurus Candida turba tuas.

tuque, laborantes utero miserata puellas

20 quarum tarda latens corpora tendit onus,

lenis ades preeibusque meis faue, Ilithyia!

digna est quam iubeas muneris esse tui.

ipse ego tura dabo fumosis Candidus aris,

ipse feram ante tuos munera uota pedes;

25 adiciam titulum SERVATA NASO CORINNA:

tu modo fac titulo muneribusque locum.'

si tamen in tanto fas est monuisse timore,

hac tibi sit pugna dimieuisse satis.

## 6.5 Amores 2.14 (Ovid, cited in De Verger 2006, p.77-79)

Quid iuuat immunes belli cessare puellas  
 nec fera peltatas agmina uelle sequi,  
 si sine Marte suis patiuntur uulnera telis  
 et caecas armant in sua fata manus?  
**5** quae prima instituit teneros conuellere fetus,  
 militia fuerat digna perire sua.  
 scilicet, ut careat rugarum crimine uenter,  
 sternetur pugnae tristis harena tuae?  
 si mos antiquis placuisset matribus idem,  
**10** gens hominum hoc uitio deperitura fuit,  
 quique iterum iaceret, generis primordia nostri,  
 in uacuo lapides orbe, parandus erat,  
 quis Priami fregisset opes, si numen aquarum  
 iusta recusasset pondera ferre Thetis?  
**15** Ilia si tumido geminos in uentre necasset,  
 casurus dominae conditor Urbis erat;  
 si Venus Aenean grauida temerasset in aluo,  
 Caesaribus tellus orba futura fuit.  
 tu quoque, cum posses nasci formosa, perisses,  
**20** temptasset, quod tu, si tua mater opus;  
 ipse ego, cum fuerim melius periturus amando,  
 uidissem nullos matre necante dies.  
 quid plenam fraudas uitem crescentibus uuis  
 pomaque crudeli uellis acerba manu?  
**25** sponte fluant matura sua, sine crescere nata:  
 est pretium paruae non leue uita morae.  
 uestra quid effoditis subiectis uiscera telis  
 et nondum natis dira uenena datis?  
 Colchida respersam puerorum sanguine culpant  
**30** aque sua caesum matre queruntur Ityn;  
 utraque saeua parens, sed tristibus utraque causis  
 iactura socii sanguinis ulta uirum.



dicite, quis Tereus, quis uos irritet Iason  
 figere sollicita corpora uestra manu?  
**35** hoc neque in Armeniis tigres fecere latebris,  
 perdere nec fetus ausa leaena suos.  
 at tenerae faciunt, sed non impune, puellae:  
 saepe, suos utero quae necat, ipsa perit;  
 ipsa perit ferturque rogo resoluta capillos,  
**40** et clamant 'merito' qui modo cumque uident.  
 ista sed aetherias uanescent dicta per auras,  
 et sint ominibus pondera nulla meis.  
 di faciles, peccasse semel concedite tuto!  
 et satis est: poenam culpa secunda ferat.

## 6.6 Pro Aulus Cluentius (Cicero, cited in Clark n.d., p.106)

**32** Tegere potuissent. Memoria teneo Milesiam quondam mulierem, cum essem in Asia, quod ab heredibus secundis 10 accepta pecunia partum sibi ipsa medicamentis abegisset, rei capitalis esse damnatam ; nec iniuria quae spem parentis, memoriam nominis, subsidium generis, heredem familiae, designatum rei publicae civem sustulisset. Quanto est Oppianicus in eadem iniuria maiore supplicio dignus! si qui- 15 dem illa, cum suo corpori vim attulisset, se ipsa cruciavit, hic autem idem illud effecit per alieni corporis mortem atque cruciatum. Ceteri non videntur in singulis hominibus multa parricidia suscipere posse, Oppianicus inventus est **33** qui in uno corpore pluris necaret. Itaque cum hanc eius 20

**6.7 Ad Helviam matrem de consolatione (Seneca, cited in Rosenbach 1993, p.342)**

3 Non te maximum saeculi malum, impudicitia, in numerum plurium adduxit; non gemmae te, non margaritae flexerunt; non tibi diuitiae uelut maximum generis humani bonum refulserunt; non te, bene in antiqua et seuera institutam domo, periculosa etiam probis peiorum detorsit imitatio; numquam te fecunditatis tuae, quasi exprobraret aetatem, puduit; numquam more aliarum, quibus omnis commendatio ex forma petitur, tumescentem uterum abscondisti quasi indecens onus, nec intra uiscera tua conceptas spes liberorum elisisti ; 4 non faciem

**6.8 Law: 47.11.4 (Marcianus, cited in Mommsen 1963, p.784)**

4 MARCIANUS libro primo regularum. Diuus Seuerus et Antonius rescripserunt eam, quae data opera abegit, a praeside in temporale exilium dandam : indignum enim uideri potest impune eam maritum liberis fraudasse. 19

**6.9 Law: 48.8.8 (Ulpianus, cited in Mommsen 1963, p.784)**

8 ULPIANUS libro trigensimo tertio ad edictum. Si mulierem uisceribus suis uim intulisse, S\* quo partum abigeret, constiterit, eam in exilium praeses prouinciae exiget. 34

### 6.10 De legibus 3.8.19 (Cicero, cited in De Plinval 1959, p. 91)

19. MARCVS. - At uero, Tite, si parebunt his legibus, nihil erit iis Vrbe, nihil domo sua dulcius, nec laboriosius molestiusque prouincia.

Sed sequitur lex, quae sancit eam tribunorum Plebis potestatem, quae est in re publica nostra. De qua disseri nihil necesse est.

QUINTVS. – At mehercule ego, frater, quaero, de ista potestate quid sentias. Nam mihi quidem pestifera uidetur, quippe quae in seditione et ad seditionem nata sit. Cuius primum ortum, si recordari uolumus, inter arma ciuium et occupatis et obsessis Urbis locis procreatum uidemus. Deinde, quom esset cito necatus tamquam ex XII tabulis insignis ad deformitatem puer, breui tempore nescio quo pacto recreatus multoque taetrius et foedior renatus est.

IX. Quid enim ille non edidit? Qui primum, ut impio dignum fuit, patribus omnem honorem eripuit, omnia infima summis paria fecit, turbauit, miscuit. Cum adflixisset principum grauitatem, numquam tamen conqueuit.

### 6.11 Saturae 2.29-35 (Juvenal, cited in Lorenz 2017)

qualis erat nuper tragico pollutus adulter  
 30 concubitu, qui tunc leges revocabat amaras  
 omnibus atque ipsis Veneri Martique timendas,  
 cum tot abortivis fecundam Iulia vulvam  
 solverei et patruo similes effunderet offas.  
 nonne igitur iure ac merito vitia ultima fictos  
 35 contemnunt Scauros et castigata remordent?

## 6.12 459 a-e (Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.187-188)

Πῶς οὖν δὴ ὠφελιμώτατοι ἔσονται; τόδε μοι λέγε, ὦ 459  
 Γλαῦκων ὀρῶ γάρ σου ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ καὶ κύνας θηρευτικούς  
 καὶ τῶν γενναίων ὀρνίθων μάλα συχνούς· ἄρα οὖν, ὦ πρὸς  
 Διός, προσέσχηκός τι τοῖς τούτων γάμοις τε καὶ παιδοποιίᾳ;  
 Τὸ ποῖον; ἔφη. 5  
 Πρῶτον μὲν αὐτῶν τούτων, καίπερ ὄντων γενναίων, ἄρ'  
 οὐκ εἰσὶ τινες καὶ γίνονται ἀριστοί;  
 Εἰσίν.  
 Πότερον οὖν ἐξ ἀπάντων ὁμοίως γεννᾶς; ἢ προθυμῇ ὅτι  
 μάλιστα ἐκ τῶν ἀρίστων; 10  
 Ἐκ τῶν ἀρίστων.  
 Τί δ'; ἐκ τῶν νεωτάτων ἢ ἐκ τῶν γεραιτάτων ἢ ἐξ b  
 ἀκμαζόντων ὅτι μάλιστα;  
 Ἐξ ἀκμαζόντων.  
 Καὶ ἂν μὴ οὕτω γεννᾶται, πολὺ σοι ἤγη χείρον ἔσεσθαι τό  
 τε τῶν ὀρνίθων καὶ τὸ τῶν κυνῶν γένος; 5  
 Ἐγὼ γ', ἔφη.

dg μέγιστοι DF Avertroes: γυμνοῦσθαι A 459a4 τι om. F

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Τί δὲ ἵππων οἶε, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζώων; ἢ ἄλλη  
 πη ἔχειν;  
 Ἄτοπον μὲν τῶν, ἦ δ' ὅς, εἶη.  
 10 Βαβαῖ, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, ὦ φίλε ἑταῖρε, ὡς ἄρα σφόδρα ἡμῖν δεῖ  
 ἄκρων εἶναι τῶν ἀρχόντων, εἴπερ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων  
 c γένος ὡσαύτως ἔχει.  
 Ἄλλὰ μὲν δὴ ἔχει, ἔφη· ἀλλὰ τί δὴ;  
 Ὅτι ἀνάγκη αὐτοῖς, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, φαρμάκοις πολλοῖς  
 χρῆσθαι. ἰατρὸν δὲ που μὴ δεομένους μὲν σώμασι φαρμάκων,  
 5 ἀλλὰ διαίτῃ ἐθελόντων ὑπακούειν, καὶ φαυλότερον ἐξαρκεῖν  
 ἡγνούμεθα εἶναι· ὅταν δὲ δὴ καὶ φαρμακεύειν δέη, ἴσμεν ὅτι  
 ἀνδρειότερου δεῖ τοῦ ἰατροῦ.  
 Ἀληθῆ; ἀλλὰ πρὸς τί λέγεις;  
 Πρὸς τόδε, ἦν δ' ἐγώ· συχνῶ τῷ ψεύδει καὶ τῇ ἀπάτῃ  
 d κινδυνεύει ἡμῖν δεήσειν χρῆσθαι τοῖς ἀρχοντας ἐπ' ὠφελίᾳ  
 τῶν ἀρχομένων. ἔφαμεν δὲ που ἐν φαρμάκῳ εἶδει πάντα τὰ  
 τοιαῦτα χρήσιμα εἶναι.  
 Καὶ ὀρθῶς γε, ἔφη.  
 5 Ἐν τοῖς γάμοις τοῖνυν καὶ παιδοποιίαις ἔοικεν τὸ ὀρθὸν  
 τοῦτο γίνεσθαι οὐκ ἐλάχιστον.  
 Πῶς δὴ;  
 Δεῖ μὲν, εἶπον, ἐκ τῶν ὠμολογημένων τοὺς ἀρίστους ταῖς  
 ἀρίσταῖς συγγίνεσθαι ὡς πλειστάκις, τοὺς δὲ φαυλοτάτους  
 10 ταῖς φαυλοτάταις τοῦναντίον· καὶ τῶν μὲν τὰ ἔκγονα τρέφειν,  
 e τῶν δὲ μή, εἰ μέλλει τὸ ποίμνιον ὅτι ἀκρότατον εἶναι· καὶ  
 ταῦτα πάντα γιγνόμενα λαμβάνειν πληρῶν αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀρχον-  
 τας, εἰ αὖ ἢ ἀγέλη τῶν φυλάκων ὅτι μάλιστα ἀστασίαστος  
 ἔσται.  
 5 Ὅρθότατα, ἔφη.  
 Οὐκοῦν δὴ ἑορταί τινες νομοθετητέαι, ἐν αἷς συνάξομεν τὰς  
 τε νύμφας καὶ τοὺς νυμφίους, καὶ θυσίαι, καὶ ὕμνοι ποιητέοι

## 6.13 461 a, b (Plato, cited in Slings 2003, p.190-191)

461 Ἀμφοτέρων γούν, ἔφη, αὕτη ἀκμὴ σώματός τε καὶ  
 φρονήσεως.  
 Οὐκοῦν ἕαντε πρεσβύτερος τούτων ἕαντε νεώτερος τῶν εἰς  
 τὸ κοινὸν γεννήσεων ἄμνηται, οὔτε ὄσιον οὔτε δίκαιον φήσο-  
 5 μεν τὸ ἀμάρτημα, ὡς παῖδα φυτύνοντος τῇ πόλει, ὅς, ἂν λάθῃ,  
 γεννήσεται οὐχ ὑπὸ θυσίων οὐδ' ὑπὸ εὐχῶν φύς, ἄς ἐφ'  
 ἐκάστοις τοῖς γάμοις εὐζονται καὶ ἱέρεια καὶ ἱερῆς καὶ  
 σύμπασα ἢ πόλις ἐξ ἀγαθῶν ἀμείνους καὶ ἐξ ὠφελίμων  
 ὠφελιμωτέρους αἰετὸς ἐκγόνους γίνεσθαι, ἀλλ' ὑπὸ σκότου  
 b μετὰ δεινῆς ἀκρατείας γεγονώς.  
 Ὅρθῶς, ἔφη.  
 Ὅ αὐτὸς δὲ γ', εἶπον, νόμος, ἕάν τις τῶν ἔτι γεννώντων μὴ  
 συνέρξαντος ἀρχοντος ἀπτηται τῶν ἐν ἡλικίᾳ γυναικῶν

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461 b

νόθον γὰρ καὶ ἀνέγγνον καὶ ἀνιερὸν θήσομεν αὐτὸν παῖδα τῇ 5  
 πόλει καθιστάναι.  
 Ὅρθότατα, ἔφη.  
 Ὅταν δὲ δὴ, οἶμαι, αἶ τε γυναῖκες καὶ οἱ ἄνδρες τοῦ γεννᾶν  
 ἐκβῶσι τὴν ἡλικίαν, ἀφήσομέν που ἐλευθέρους αὐτοὺς συγ-  
 γίνεσθαι ὧ ἂν ἐθέλωσι, πληρῶν θυγατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ καὶ ταῖς τῶν 10

## 6.14 Politeia 1335b 19-40 (Aristotle, cited in Ross n.d., p.247)

## ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΩΝ Η

1335<sup>b</sup>

νοϊαν τούναντίον τῶν σωμάτων βραθυμότερως ἀρμόττει δι-  
 άγειν· ἀπολαύοντα γάρ φαίνεται τὰ γεννώμενα τῆς ἐχούσης  
 ὡσπερ τὰ φύομενα τῆς γῆς. περὶ δὲ ἀποθέσεως καὶ  
 τροφῆς τῶν γιγνομένων ἔστω νόμος μηδὲν πεπηρωμένον 20  
 τρέφειν, διὰ δὲ πλῆθος τέκνων ἢ τάξις τῶν ἐθῶν  
 κελεύει μηθὲν ἀποτίθεσθαι τῶν γιγνομένων· ὀρισθῆναι δὲ  
 δεῖ τῆς τεκνοποιίας τὸ πλῆθος, εἰ δὲ τισὶ γίγνηται παρά  
 ταῦτα συνδυασθέντων, πρὶν αἰσθῆσαι ἐγγενέσθαι καὶ ζωὴν  
 ἐμποιεῖσθαι δεῖ τὴν ἀμβλωσαι· τὸ γὰρ ὅσιον καὶ τὸ μὴ 25  
 διωρισμένον τῇ αἰσθήσει καὶ τῷ ζῆν ἔσται. ἐπεὶ δ' ἡ μὲν  
 ἀρχὴ τῆς ἡλικίας ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ διώρισται, πότε ἀρχε-  
 σθαι χρὴ τῆς συζεύξεως, καὶ πόσον χρόνον λειτουργεῖν ἀρ-  
 μόττει πρὸς τεκνοποιίαν ὀρίσθαι. τὰ γὰρ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων  
 ἔκγονα, καθάπερ τὰ τῶν νεωτέρων, ἀτελῆ γίνονται καὶ τοῖς 30  
 σώμασι καὶ ταῖς διανοαῖσι, τὰ δὲ τῶν γεγηρακότων ἀσθενῆ·  
 διὸ κατὰ τὴν τῆς διανοίας ἀκμὴν. αὕτη δ' ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς  
 πλείστοις ἤνπερ τῶν ποιητῶν τινες εἰρήκασιν οἱ μετροῦντες  
 ταῖς ἑβδομάσι τὴν ἡλικίαν, περὶ τὸν χρόνον τὸν τῶν πεν-  
 τήκοντα ἐτῶν. ὥστε τέτταρσιν ἢ πέντε ἔτεσιν ὑπερβάλλοντα 35  
 τὴν ἡλικίαν ταύτην ἀφείσθαι δεῖ τῆς εἰς τὸ φανερόν γεν-  
 νήσεως· τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν ὑγείας χάριν ἢ τινος ἄλλης τοιαύ-  
 τῆς αἰτίας φαίνεσθαι δεῖ ποιουμένους τὴν ὁμιλίαν. περὶ δὲ  
 τῆς πρὸς ἄλλην ἢ πρὸς ἄλλον, ἔστω μὲν ἀπλῶς μὴ καλὸν  
 ἀπτόμενον φαίνεσθαι μηδαμῆ μηδαμῶς, ὅταν <ἀνὴρ> ἢ καὶ 40

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