significant changes in general attitudes to disease in Greek society at large—a claim which is thought-provoking to the specialist reader, though perhaps somewhat demanding for the non-expert. (It would have deserved mention, in this chapter, that the relevance of the medical discourse to philosophies like Stoicism and Epicureanism was enhanced by their materialist concepts of the soul, making it even easier to 'construe' evil as disease and philosophy as cure). Those familiar with L.'s earlier work will recognize many characteristic ideas and tendencies (e.g. his preference of the concept of 'analogy' over 'metaphor', which he regards as an unhelpful tool), but will also perceive interesting new developments in his thinking on a number of issues, particularly the bold—though admittedly somewhat speculative and sketchy—connections he makes between past and present, history of ideas and sociology of science. A minor disadvantage that will disturb some Hippocrates experts is his use, in the section of texts, of W. H. S. Jones's notoriously unsatisfactory Loeb-edition, even for treatises where other critical editions are available. That these things matter becomes clear in text 3.13 (from the Hippocratic *Prognosticon*), where L. follows Jones in omitting the statement that the doctor should examine 'whether there is something divine in diseases': these words are preserved in the manuscripts but were suppressed by Jones on the ground that they did not accord with the allegedly rational spirit of Hippocratic medicine—a relic of that old positivistic approach to Greek medicine which L.'s work at large, and this study in particular, has been encouraging us so strongly to abandon.

University of Newcastle upon Tyne PHILIP VAN DER EIJK
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ATTITUDES TO ABORTION

K. KAPPARIS: *Abortion in the Ancient World*. Pp. viii + 264. London: Duckworth, 2002. Cased, £40. ISBN: 0-7156-3080-6.

Konstantinos Kapparis surveys abortion in the world of Greece and Rome over the course of the thousand years from 500 B.C. to A.D. 500, and, while he admits at the outset that his primary interest is with Classical Athens, he does not ignore the wealth of information from other times and places within the Mediterranean context (p. vii). K.'s fulsome collection of testimonia and many of his judicious interpretations are a welcome expansion and elaboration of Enzo Nardi's *Procurato aborto nel mondo greco-romano* of 1971, for issues involving abortion continue to swirl around us in the early twenty-first century. Particularly important is K.'s recontextualization of the Hippocratic *Oath* as a statement against all abortive practices that by no means represents a minority view of the Pythagorean sect, as Ludwig Edelstein once proposed, but rather a more mainstream sentiment that frowned upon interference in a pregnancy that had proceeded beyond the initial mixing of parents' liquid seed into a 'flow-out' (*ekrhysis*).[1] Once the fetus was formed

[1]L. Edelstein, *The Hippocratic Oath*, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, Suppl. 1 (Baltimore, 1943), reprinted in O. Temkin, C. L. Temkin (edd.), *Ancient Medicine* (Baltimore and London, 1967), pp. 3–63. Edelstein's interpretation of the *Oath* was cited among 'ancient attitudes' in *Roe v. Wade*, 410 US 113, 93 S. Ct 705, decided by the United States Supreme Court in January 1973.

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abortive procedures were thought to endanger the woman's future fertility, as well as her life.[2] The two Hippocratic physicians who describe the appearance of an aborted fetus both assert that what they were inspecting was but six or seven days old, despite the fact that a week-old embryo is not visible to the naked eye; and the gravid women involved were slaves employed as prostitutes, for whom pregnancy would lessen their value.[3] The gynecological treatises of the *Hippocratic Corpus* are pronatalist and consider abortion more dangerous than giving birth. In his Appendix 2 (pp. 214–18), K. translates and discusses a second-first century B.C. inscription from Philadelphia in Lydia which forbade men or women who had knowledge of or employed contraceptives and abortifacients from entering the private shrine, arguing that the decree was written under the influence of the *Oath*; this remains for me no more than a possibility. What K. does make clear is that knowledge of the *Oath* reached doctors at Rome by the middle of the first century A.D. (Scribonius Largus) and, although Soranus counseled abortion for a woman if continuation of a pregnancy endangered her life, he would not do so if the woman's motive were preservation of youthful beauty or concealment of an adulterous affair. Our earliest copy of the *Oath*, made in the third century A.D. and unearthed in the Egyptian town of Oxyrhynchus (*POxy.* XXXI 2547), likewise suggests that knowledge of the *Oath* became widespread during the Roman period. Still, despite K.'s claim that an ancient physician pledged the *Oath* 'at the beginning of his career' (pp. 74–75), we know very little about who swore it or when in a career it was sworn during the first millennium and a half of its existence.[4]

K.'s material is arranged in seven chapters plus two appendices. As background, he begins with consideration of contraceptive and abortive procedures ('Methods of Abortion: Science and Superstition'), some of which were surely effective. This is followed by a survey of ancient views on when the fetus was considered a human being *in spe*, if not *in re* ('When does human life begin?'), with K. arguing that the 'gradualist' view was more widely held than either the notion that this moment occurred at conception or only at birth. A number of ancient medical texts consider the fetus rambunctious enough to initiate its own birthing by breaking out of the fetal membranes that surround it, and an even larger number of amulets and charms (*ôkytokia*), in use by women in labor for some two millennia from the time of the *Hippocratic Corpus* until the Renaissance, address the fetus with imperatives and second-person commands, urging it to come out from the womb.[5] These *ôkytokia*, employed by pagans and later by Christians, suggest that the fetus was also deemed sentient, as well as rambunctious, able to respond to summons to enter this world. The gradualist view was no doubt far more widely held than K. suggests. His first appendix (pp. 201–13) contains a translation of the pseudo-Galenic 'Whether what is

[2]Hippocrates, *Diseases of Women* I 25, 8.68.14–17 Littré, and I 72, 8.152.15–21 Littré.

[3]Hippocrates, *Nature of the Child* 13.2–4, 7.490.9–492.5 Littré, and *Fleshes* 19.1, 8.610.2–16 Littré.

[4]See C. R. Galvâo-Sobrinho, 'Hippocratic Ideals, Medical Ethics, and the Practice of Medicine in the Early Middle Ages: The Legacy of the Hippocratic *Oath*,' *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 51 (1996), 438–55, and Thomas Ruetten, 'Receptions of the Hippocratic *Oath* in the Renaissance: The Prohibition of Abortion as a Case Study in Reception,' *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 51 (1996), 456–83.

[5]Evidence gathered in A. E. Hanson, 'A Long-lived "Quick-birther" (*ôkytokion*)' in V. Dasen (ed.), *Naissance et petite enfance dans l'Antiquité, Actes du colloque de Fribourg, 28 novembre–1er décembre 2001* (Fribourg and Göttingen, 2004), pp. 265–80.

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carried in the womb is a living being (19, 158–181 Kühn)', with discussion and commentary, yet this treatise also ends with an exhortation to the fetus:

> Come out of the recesses (*mychoi*) without fear that you might be deprived of your generation, or lose your family and your fortune. The slander of many, and the wickedness of those who commit crimes against nature will not erase you. You yourselves will become the avengers, like Pericles, Peisistratus, Paris, like Alexander the Macedonian and Hercules. (p. 210)

The next three chapters examine the motives and attitudes of the parties most intimately involved: professional medical personnel (Chapter 3, 'The Doctor's Dilemma'), the *gravida* (Chapter 4, 'The Woman's Point of View'), and the woman's husband (Chapter 5, 'The Man's Point of View'). K. argues convincingly that poverty was the most likely reason that a medical professional would provide abortive advice or supply actual medicaments and procedures, once it was determined that a continued pregnancy did not endanger the woman's life. It seems to me, however, that the next two chapters in particular would have profited from consideration of what has now been established by demographers who study the ancient world and especially the populations of the Roman Empire: average life expectancy at birth was most likely between twenty-two and twenty-five years; the level of infant mortality was high, with perhaps nearly half the babies born dying before their fifth birthday; those who survived to their tenth birthday had an average life expectancy of about forty-six to forty-eight years; and among married couples, an extended period for the mother's nursing her infant had a dampening effects upon her fecundity. What has been called a 'regime of natural fertility' prevailed, whereby married women were likely to give birth throughout their fertile lives in the hope of leaving behind some two adult children to replace their parents.[6] The harshness of these mortality functions, coupled with the dangers inherent in abortive procedures, underscore the fact that abortion would have appealed only to a very few in the ancient world—the prostitute community and those of the demi-monde caught by pregnancy in an adulterous affair. K.'s claim that 'parents in the ancient world were faced with similar dilemmas to modern parents' (p. 161) seems unlikely, for their world is not our world.

K.'s volume closes with a sixth chapter 'Abortion and the Law', pointing to the first governmental prohibition of abortion as the rescript of Septimius Severus and Caracalla in the early third century A.D., and a brief conclusion, 'Attitudes to Abortion: A Historical Perspective'.

Yale University ANN ELLIS HANSON
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[6]See e.g. B. W. Frier, 'Demography', in A. K. Bowman et al. (edd.), *The Cambridge Ancient History, 11. The High Empire, A.D. 70–192*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 787–816, and *idem*, 'Natural Fertility and Family Limitation in Roman Marriage,' *Classical Philology* 89 (1994), 318–33.

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