

THE OSTRACISM OF THE ELDER ALKIBIADES

(PLATE 1)

I. THE OSTRAKA

NINE ostraka have been discovered bearing the name Alkibiades. Eight of the potsherds come from the Agora Excavations, the ninth from the North Slope of the Acropolis. Since we know from ancient authors that an elder Alkibiades was actually ostracized and that a younger, the famous statesman and general, was a "candidate" in the year when Hyperbolos was banished,¹ the first thing to be decided in the case of each ostrakon is which of the two persons is meant. Name, patronymic and demotic are the same for both men, so other criteria must be sought. The shapes of the letters, particularly *lambda* and *sigma*, and the use of E or H in the last syllable offer the readiest means of distinction, and when the Attic forms are used the ostrakon may with some confidence be assigned to the elder Alkibiades, whereas when Ionic forms appear it is more likely that the younger Alkibiades is meant. The circumstances of finding and the type of pottery used for the ostrakon may sometimes offer additional criteria. Using these data six of the ostraka have been assigned to the elder Alkibiades and three to the younger.

1-6 OSTRAKA OF ALKIBIADES THE ELDER

1. Inv. No. P 18537. Diam. of foot, est. 0.065 m. Max. dim. 0.049 m. Plate 1 and Fig. 1.

Found in a deposit of the second quarter of

the fifth century B. C. containing pottery which runs down to, but hardly beyond, the middle of the century. From the same deposit come three ostraka of Kimon and one of Themistokles.



Fig. 1. Nos. 1 and 2. Profiles of kylix feet used as ostraka of Alkibiades the Elder.

¹ 417 B. C. is the date usually given for this ostracism: see J. Carcopino, *L'ostracisme athénien*², 1935, pp. 191 ff., and W. Peek, *Kerameikos*, III, *Inscripten, Ostraka, Fluchttafeln*, pp. 101 ff. 415 B. C. has recently been proposed by A. E. Raubitschek, *T.A.P.A.*, LXXIX, 1948, pp. 191-210; see also A. G. Woodhead, *Hesperia*, XVIII, 1949, pp. 78-83.

Hesperia, XXI, 1

This deposit was in the southern part of the large poros building in the valley between the Areopagus and the Hill of the Nymphs.²

The ostrakon is a fragment from the foot of a black-glazed kylix of a type which flourished in the second quarter of the fifth century B. C. and which is not found earlier.³ The outer face of the foot is slightly set back near the top, the upper half being reserved, the lower half glazed. The resting surface is reserved. The under side is glazed as far up as preserved. There is no line or off-set on the upper side, which is entirely glazed. For the profile see Fig. 1.

Incised on the upper surface:

[A]λκιβ[ιάδες]|[K]λινίο.

Note the Ionic *lambdas*, on which see below. On the use of *iota* for *epsilon iota* in the first syllable of the patronymic, see Miss Milne's recent discussion of the inscriptions on the Taleides amphora; *Bull. Met. Mus.*, V, 1946-7, pp. 226-7.

2. Inv. No. A-O 194. Diam. of foot 0.06 m.
Plate 1 and Fig. 1.

Found in a mixed fill on the North Slope of the Acropolis in excavations under the supervision of Oscar Broneer.

Fragment of a kylix foot of the same type as the last, hence not earlier than the second quarter of the fifth century B. C. The thoroughly archaic letter forms, even including punctuation, would be quite out of place in 415 B. C. and in fact at any time much after the middle of the century. We may therefore date the ostrakon on internal evidence alone somewhere in the years 475-440 B. C.

Published by Carl Roebuck, *Hesperia*, IX,

1940, pp. 247-8, No. 296, fig. 51. A profile is given here, Fig. 1.

3. Inv. No. P 6794. Max. dim. 0.06 m.;
diam. est. 0.09 m. Plate 1.

Found in a deposit of the Hellenistic period on Kolonos Agoraios, some fifty meters south of the Temple of Hephaistos.

Fragment of the knob from the lid of a large vase, probably a lekane. The upper surface is glazed except for the deep central depression and the rim. The outer face has a band of glaze at the top and is reserved and reddened below. The profile and fabric would suit a date in the first half of the fifth century B. C. The inscription is incised through the glaze on the upper surface: [A]λκιβ[ιάδες] K[λινίο] | Σκαμβ[ο] <ν> ι <δ> ε[s].

The restoration of the demotic in the second line is not certain, but seems probable. This line may have been written by a different hand, for the style shows less assurance and two of the letters, if we have interpreted them correctly, are badly misshapen; but the effect might also be due to crowding on the shorter inner curve.

4. Inv. No. P 7134. Max. dim. 0.036 m.
Plate 1.

Found between the Metroon and the Temple of Apollo Patroos in a thin layer of the first half of the fifth century B. C. which also contained a few later fragments of Hellenistic times.

Fragment from the wall of a closed pot with glaze wash outside and dull black glaze inside. Incised outside: [A]λκιβ[ιάδες]|[K]λινί[ο].

5. Inv. No. P 20562. Max. dim. 0.084 m.
Plate 1.

Found in a deposit of the fourth century B. C.

² On this building see *Hesperia*, XX, 1951, pp. 168 ff., especially pp. 178-9. One of the Kimon ostraka is published, *Hesperia*, XVII, 1948, p. 194, pl. 69, 5.

³ H. Bloesch, *Formen attischer Schalen*, pp. 139-141, pl. 38; "Wiener Schalen": *Hesperia*, V, 1936, pp. 336-339, fig. 4, P 5116 and P 5126; it is definitely not like the early form of this foot as illustrated by the Agora white-ground cup, *ibid.* fig. 5, and *Hesperia*, II, 1933, p. 229, fig. 6, datable to around or soon after 480 B. C.

near the northern end of the Stoa of Attalos.

Fragment from the wall of a large amphora with thin brown wash on the outside, unglazed inside. Incised outside: 'Αλ[κι]βιά[δες] | Κλι[ο].

6. Inv. No. P 10720. Max. dim. 0.066 m.
Plate 1.

Found near the Tholos, in a deposit containing much fifth century B. C. pottery but also

some fragments as late as the second century B. C.

Fragment from the wall of a large, unglazed amphora. Incised outside: [*Αλκι]βιάδες | [Κλ]ιό.

Published *Hesperia*, VII, 1938, pp. 361-2 and fig. 50 on p. 359; cf. also *A. J. A.*, XLII, 1938, p. 13 and p. 15, fig. 20; and *B. C. H.*, LXI, 1937, p. 448, fig. 11.

7-9 OSTRAKA OF ALKIBIADES THE YOUNGER

7. Inv. No. P 7310. Max. dim. 0.075 m.
Fig. 2.

Found in a well of the Roman period on Kolonos Agoraios some eighty meters south of the Temple of Hephaistos.



Fig. 2. No. 7. Ostrakon of Alkibiades the Younger

Fragment from the wall of a large, coarse, unglazed amphora of dark buff, very micaceous clay; non-Attic. Incised outside: [*Α]λκιβιάδης | [Κλι]νίο.

Mentioned *Hesperia*, X, 1941, p. 2.

8. Inv. No. P 4506. Max. dim. 0.038 m.
Plate 1.

Found in a disturbed deposit near the Tholos. Fragment from the wall of a skyphos, the glaze fired red inside and out. Incised inside: [*Αλκιβιάδης | Κλι]νίο | [Σκαμβο]νίδης.

9. Inv. No. P 19077. Max. dim. 0.048 m.
Plate 1.

Found in the excavation dump in earth probably brought from the valley between the Areopagus and the Hill of the Nymphs.

Rim fragment from a red-figured bell krater; below the rim outside a reserved band. Good glaze, chipped. Incised inside, below a reserved line: <[*Α]λκιβ[ιάδ]ην ἐ' [*Σκαμβονιδών].

The vase from which this ostrakon came may be dated on grounds of shape and style in the twenties of the fifth century B. C. as Miss Talcott and Mr. Corbett assure me.

II. THE DATE OF THE OSTRACISM OF THE ELDER ALKIBIADES

There can be no doubt about the fact that an elder Alkibiades, the grandfather of the famous statesman and general, was ostracized. It is so stated by two ancient authors,⁴ and there are now six ostraka which support the tradition. The exact date,

⁴ Lysias XIV, 39; [Andoc.] IV, 34. He was ostracized once only, not twice, see J. Carcopino, *L'ostracisme athénien*², 1935, pp. 112-114; J. Hatzfeld, *Alcibiade*, 1940, pp. 14-15 and 20-22; Raubitschek, *T. A. P. A.*, LXXIX, 1948, p. 203.

however, is not known, although the consensus of modern opinion places it in 485 B. C., a year in which we know that someone was ostracized but do not know his name, Aristotle referring to him merely as the third friend of the tyrants.⁵ There is now some archaeological evidence bearing on the question which makes it necessary to reconsider this verdict.

A great deal of fill dating from the time of the Persian sack of Athens in 480 B. C. and the years immediately preceding it has been dug in the course of the Agora excavations, and ostraka of all the persons definitely known to have been banished in the eighties have been found in contemporary deposits;⁶ no ostrakon with the name Alkibiades has yet been found in such a deposit. On the other hand, one ostrakon, No. 1 above, comes from a deposit of the second quarter of the fifth century B. C., and the sherd is a fragment of a kylix that can be dated to this same quarter century and not earlier.⁷ The *lambdas* on this ostrakon are of Ionic form, not Attic, and if we did not have the evidence of the circumstances of finding which gives us a lower limit of about 450 B. C., we should have been tempted to assign this ostrakon to the younger Alkibiades assuming that an old sherd had been used, as frequently happens. Ionic forms are not out of place in the second quarter of the fifth century, however, and other ostraka and graffiti show us that they begin to appear with some frequency at this time; on ostraka of Kimon, 461 B. C., for example, both the Attic and the Ionic *lambda* occur.⁸ We may therefore date this ostrakon with complete assurance in the second quarter of the fifth century B. C. As it seems fair to assume that it was used on the occasion of his own ostracism and not on some other occasion when his name may have been up (for example at the ostracism of Kimon), it follows that his ostracism is to be dated in the second quarter of the century.

In order to test this conclusion and if possible to pin the event down more precisely within this quarter century, it will be necessary to see what we know about the career of this elder Alkibiades.

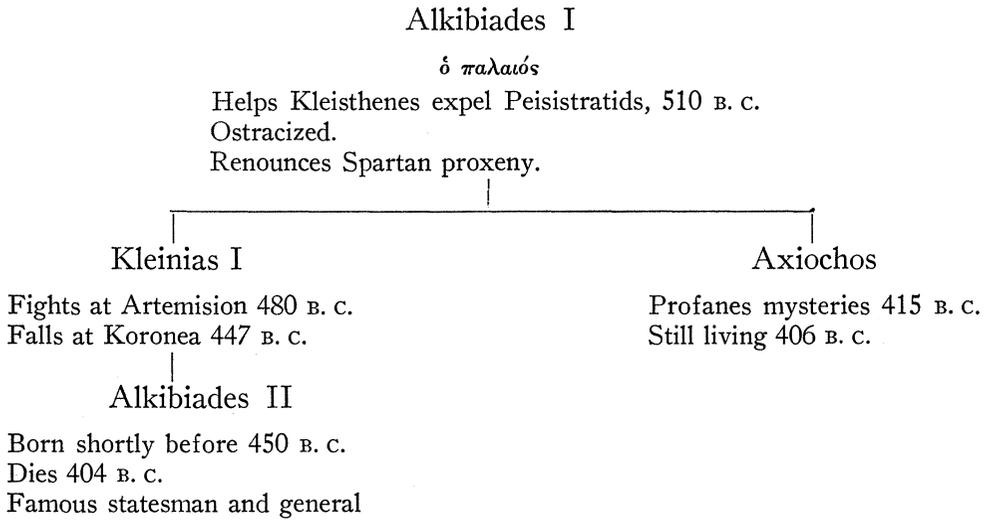
The ostraka give us for the first time the name of his father, Kleinias, and this important new fact forces us to revise somewhat the current views on the genealogy of the Alkibiades family. At the beginning of the present century three generations were recognized in the period that immediately concerns us, and the stemma drawn up by J. Kirchner in *Prosopographia Attica*, I, p. 42, illustrates the view then current. In its essentials it is this:

⁵ Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.*, 22, 6. For the date, see Carcopino, *op. cit.*, pp. 145-148, and Hatzfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-15.

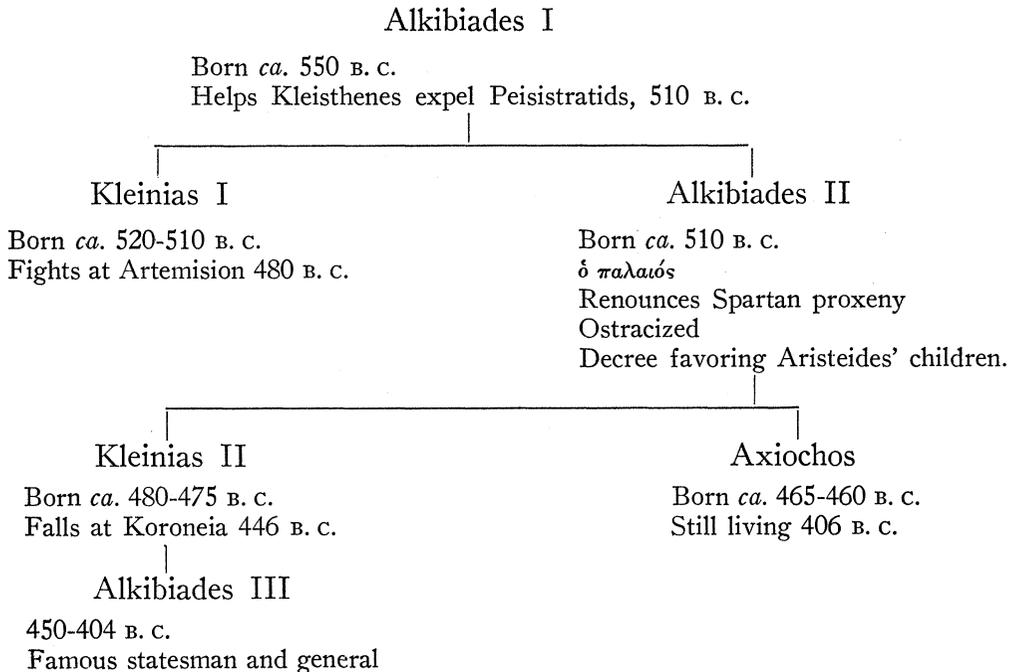
⁶ For Hipparchos, Megakles and Aristeides, see especially *Hesperia*, XV, 1946, pp. 266 and 271-275; for Xanthippos, cf. *Hesperia*, Supplement VIII, pp. 394-5 (other examples to be published shortly).

⁷ Remember that the ostrakon No. 2 above is from a similar kylix.

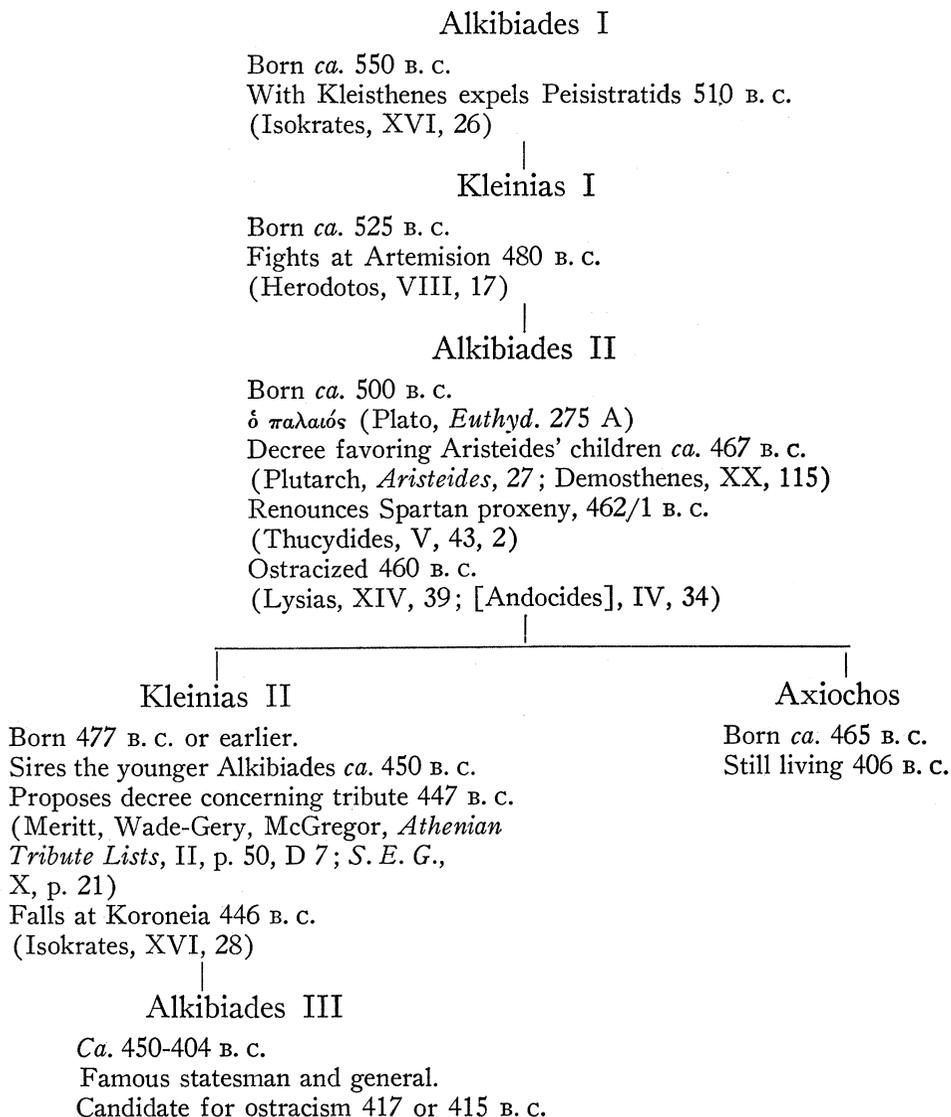
⁸ Attic *lambda*: W. Peek, *Kerameikos* III, *Inschriften, Ostraka, Fluchtafeln*, pp. 51-62. Ionic *lambda*: *Hesperia*, VII, 1938, pp. 241-2; XVII, 1948, p. 194.



This scheme is open to a number of serious objections which were at once pointed out by Dittenberger in an article in *Hermes*, XXXVII, 1902, pp. 1-13. He proposed a different stemma, inserting an extra generation, and this was adopted by Kirchner in the addenda to the *Prosopographia Attica*, II, p. 442, and has since been generally accepted, most recently by J. Hatzfeld, *Alcibiade*, 1940, pp. 10-18. In its essentials it is this:



This plausible scheme must now in its turn be revised, for the ostraka show us that the Alkibiades who was ostracized was the son of Kleinias and not the son of another Alkibiades as in Dittenberger's stemma. One's first thought is to return to Kirchner's original scheme merely adding another Kleinias at the head of the stemma; but this scheme has extremely long generations and involves us in several chronological absurdities. We may therefore add still another generation and establish the following succession:



The dates of birth are for the most part hypothetical and have been included merely to show that the stemma is not only chronologically possible but represents an

easy and natural sequence. The twenty five year interval for each generation is somewhat less than the thirty three usually allowed by prosopographers, but thirty three is itself only a rule of thumb and applicable to any or all offspring; and since we are probably dealing here almost exclusively with eldest sons, we need not hesitate to adopt the lower figure.⁹

The date 460 B. C. suggested for the ostracism is arrived at in the following way. The decree providing benefits for Aristeides' children, which was introduced by Alkibiades, may be dated most reasonably about 467 B. C., right after the death of Aristeides.¹⁰ The renunciation of the Spartan proxeny is doubtless connected with the affair of Ithome and the resulting wave of anti-Spartan feeling and may therefore be dated in 462-1 B. C.¹¹ These two facts show us that Alkibiades the elder was in Athens during most of the four sixties. If his ostracism is to be placed before this time, we must go back at least to the early seventies if not to the eighties, for the normal term of exile was ten years, and we have seen that this is not admissible on

⁹ This stemma does not agree with the statement found in Isokrates, XVI, 26, according to which the Alkibiades who worked with Kleisthenes was the great-grandfather of the famous Alkibiades; it makes him the great-great-grandfather. Possibly Isokrates was using the term *πρόπαππος* loosely in the sense of ancestor, preferring it to the more exact but awkward designation *τέταρτος γονεύς*; or perhaps the tradition was already, in his day, a little vague owing to the fact that the names Alkibiades and Kleinias were repeated over and over in alternate generations. In any event, the point that is being made in this passage is that the Alkibiades who aided Kleisthenes, and also Kleisthenes himself, are direct ancestors; the exact generation does not matter.

Nor does the stemma agree with the statement in Plutarch, *Alkibiades*, I, 1, that the father of the famous Alkibiades fought at Artemision (480 B. C.), equipping a trireme at his own expense, and fell at Koroneia (446 B. C.). This statement will not bear scrutiny, however, for if it is true, Kleinias will have been a young man, perhaps in his twenties, at the time of Artemision and in his fifties when he fell at Koroneia, having only recently begotten the famous Alkibiades and his younger brother. Dittenberger (*op. cit.*, p. 9) saw the difficulty and assumed that two persons, one a generation older than the other, were involved. In our stemma these two persons are two generations apart, but their ages prove to be eminently suitable to the roles that we find them playing. The equipping, manning, and commanding of a trireme presupposes a mature man, wealthy in his own right and probably the head of his family; and at the age of about 45 our Kleinias I was probably all those things. The begetting of two sons, and falling in action in a land battle suggests a younger man; our Kleinias II will have been twenty-five to thirty years of age; he must have reached 30 by 447 B. C. for we find him proposing a decree in that year. We may safely assume then that Plutarch knew from various sources that the father of the famous Alkibiades, Kleinias, son of an earlier Alkibiades, had fallen at Koroneia; he read in his Herodotos that Kleinias, son of Alkibiades, had distinguished himself at Artemision in a trireme which he had equipped and manned at his own expense; and he simply identified the two men, not pausing to consider the chronological difficulty.

The love name Alkibiades which appears on a kylix by the Briseis Painter in Ruvo is thought by Beazley to be modern though perhaps over ancient traces: *Attic Red-figure Vase-Painters*, 1942, p. 267, No. 14 and p. 913. If the inscription could be accepted it might well refer to our Alkibiades II, for the vase is to be dated around or soon after 480 B. C.

¹⁰ Hatzfeld, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

¹¹ Hatzfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

archaeological grounds; furthermore, if our calculations are correct, he would have been a very young man at this time. We are forced then to seek a later date. Kimon was ostracized in all probability in 461 B. C.,¹² which excludes that year, but in the following year, in the spring of 460 B. C. we may with considerable assurance place the ostracism of Alkibiades the Elder, attributing it to the continuing wave of anti-Spartan feeling; his renunciation of the Spartan proxeny was not enough, or had come too late in the day to save him.

III. THE VICTIM OF 485 B. C.

If the above argument is correct, we are again left with a blank for the year 485 B. C. when, as Aristotle tells us, the third friend of the tyrants was banished.¹³ Two possibilities suggest themselves for filling this gap. Archaeological evidence indicates that Boutalion of Marathon and Hippokrates, son of Anaxileos, were both "candidates" for ostracism in the middle eighties.¹⁴ Boutalion may perhaps be ruled out, for since he is generally identified by his demotic rather than by his patronymic, we may guess that he was a *novus homo*.¹⁵ Hippokrates, son of Anaxileos, however, has a name which suggests that he was an aristocrat and perhaps an Alkmeonid, and it may well be that he was the victim in 485 B. C. and followed his kinsman Megakles into exile.

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¹² Carcopino, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-168; Peek, *op. cit.*, p. 62; A. W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, I, pp. 395, 411-12.

¹³ *Ath. Pol.* 22, 6.

¹⁴ *Hesperia*, XV, 1946, p. 272, Nos. 5 and 6.

¹⁵ It has often been observed that the members of the great aristocratic families were generally identified by their patronymics rather than by their demotics; see Koerte, *Ath. Mitt.*, XLVII, 1922, pp. 6 f.; Peek, *op. cit.*, p. 76. This is in general borne out by the ostraka from the Agora. It is perhaps possible, but I think unlikely, that Boutalion was a local worthy who had sided with Hippias at the time of the Persian landing at Marathon and so was known as a friend of the tyrants.



No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4



No. 5



No. 6

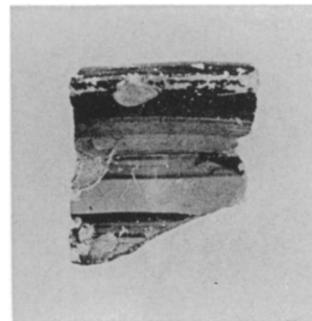
Nos. 1-6 Ostraka of Alkibiades the Elder



No. 8



No. 9 inside



No. 9 outside

Nos. 8-9 Ostraka of Alkibiades the Younger