

ARCHAEOLOGY

Double Double-Cross

This modernly flavored bit of political connivance took place some 2500 years ago in Greece. The word "ostracism" comes from the peculiar ballots used.

► HERE is the story of a political double double-cross, that happened in a certain town. After you have read it, you may figure out whether it might possibly have been your town.

Three men were contending for recognition as top boss. Let us identify them, for the moment, by nicknames. First there was "Bolo," considered pretty much a left-winger; a man of working-class origin, strong for the labor vote. Opposing him was "Al," an ambitious, up-and-coming young fellow, but rated as reasonably safe by the solid-businessman element. Between them was a veteran officer, "Nicky," expected to catch a considerable ex-GI vote.

An election was coming up, in which all three would figure. The deal was that the one who came out at the bottom of the heap would have to leave town and stay away for ten years.

Al first turned his guns on Nicky. That looked like a signal for Nicky and Bolo to gang up against him. Realizing this in time, and not relishing the idea

of having to spend his best ten years out of politics, Al switched, supported Nicky whom he had at first attacked, and so sent Bolo into exile.

All this happened in Athens. Not Athens, Ga., or Athens, Ohio, but Athens, Greece. And for all the modern flavor of the skullduggery it happened nearly 2500 years ago, in 417 B.C., when Hyperbolos the demagog got the short end of an ostracism election in which the other "candidates" were Nikias, a popular general, and Alcibiades, about the smoothest politician that Greece ever produced.

The story is told in the journal, *Archaeology* (Summer, 1948), by Antony E. Raubitschek, along with some interesting tales of other ostracisms conducted in ancient Athens.

That interesting political device, by which the citizens could pick out one of their number and exile him for ten years, seems to have been the one real chance that they have ever had to indulge the very human impulse to "vote

against" someone, without having to vote in favor of someone else whom they didn't like, either. You simply put on your ballot the name against which you had the biggest gripe, and if enough of your neighbors did the same thing, out he went.

The ten-year sentence of exile was softened by the possibility of a recall by vote of the Athenian Assembly, or town council. And whether he served out his full ten years or was recalled sooner, the loser retained his citizenship and title to his property. Some of Athens' most noted leaders suffered ostracism, and were subsequently recalled to lead the state anew.

Ostracism gets its name from the peculiar ballots used. Voters scratched the names of the "candidate" on bits of broken pottery, which were known as "ostraka." Originally, ostraka were oyster-shells, and the name apparently was transferred to the pottery scraps because of a general resemblance in size and texture.

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MEDICINE

Hibernation of Germs Affects Malaria Relapses

► HIBERNATION plays a part in the time interval between relapses of malaria, Drs. G. Robert Coatney and W. Clark Cooper of the National Institute of Health told the Congress on Tropical Medicine and Malaria meeting in Washington.

The hibernating is done by the malaria germs, or parasites as doctors call them. This hibernation seems to be the reason why there is a long, over-winter period between a first attack of malaria and the first relapse in patients who get malaria in the United States. It may also be the reason for the spring wave of malaria in other temperate-zone regions.

Malaria germs from the tropics, however, such as attacked our fighting forces in the South Pacific, do not seem to hibernate. Relapses come in close succession, as many a veteran knows.

Drs. Coatney and Cooper had a unique chance to compare malaria parasites in the course of the war search for a quinine substitute for malaria treatment. Human volunteers were used in one stage of the studies. By 1944 the doctors had germs of vivax malaria from the blood of a soldier recently returned from New Guinea. They belonged to the Chesson strain of malaria germs. The doctors were able to infect some human volunteers with these germs and infect other



AN OSTRAKON—Sometimes called a potsherd ballot, it was used in the voting that sent into exile one of Athens' foremost citizens. It bears his name, in crudely scratched characters: Aristeides, son of Lysimachos. This could be the very ballot which one grouchy Greek cast because, he said, he was "tired of hearing Aristeides called 'the Just'."