The well-known hypothesis that Thucydides based parts of his History, especially in the eighth book, upon information derived, directly or indirectly, from Alcibiades is, in its simplest form, not less than a century old. It is not, as seems now to be very commonly implied, ¹) a product of the last thirty years. In 1880 T. Fellner maintained that in the eighth book, especially VIII 45-6 and 56, Thucydides made extensive use of information obtained from Alcibiades, whom he could have consulted in Thrace, though he had many other oral sources. ²) Not all the conclusions of that paper are convincing, but it is cautious and judicious, making no attempt to carve up the eighth book into sections derived from Alcibiades and sections derived from other informants. In 1891 M. Büdinger attempted to widen the hypothesis by contending that Thucydides received from Alcibiades himself information about all his activities recorded in the History from the first mention of him in V 43. ³)

In recent years the hypothesis has been presented much more fully by P. A. Brunt, who makes his case with clarity and per-


²) Untersuchungen aus der alten Geschichte 2 (Vienna 1880), 67-74.

³) Denkschriften d. oestr. Akademie d. Wissenschaften, Phil.hist. Cl. 39.3 (Vienna 1891), 10-15. A similar view is expressed by T. R. Glover, From Pericles to Philip (London 1919), 69 n. 5, whose fleeting but pithy presentation of the hypothesis suggests that it might occur to any observant reader of the History. I have referred briefly to these largely forgotten works in Individuals in Thucydides (Cambridge 1968), 231 n. 1.
suasiveness but does not claim to have proved it conclusively. 4) A more elaborate and very ambitious treatment of the subject is that of E. Delebecque, who divides the eighth book into 'old narrative', written before a supposed meeting between Thucydides and Alcibiades in Thrace in 406/5, 'new narrative', based upon information received at that meeting but not integrated with the 'old narrative', and finally 'unified narrative', in which material from Alcibiades was combined with material from other sources. 5) This ingenious theory has deservedly attracted much attention, and, though not widely accepted in its entirety, has stimulated interest in the problems involved in trying to discover the sources of the History. 6) K. von Fritz, though expressing admiration for the work of Delebecque, does not accept its conclusions. 7) Recently A. Andrews is unconvinced by the theory as a whole, 8) though in several notes on passages in the eighth book he considers Alcibiades or some close associate to be a possible source. 9)

Unlike Herodotus, Thucydides very seldom chooses to give any indication of the evidence on which his History is based. He refers only to difficulties arising from the unreliability of his informants (I 22,3), tacitly expecting, in his somewhat immodest manner, to be given the credit for having made the best possible use of their reports, combined with his own experiences. Consequently any attempt to identify his sources must inevitably be hazardous and

4) REG 65 (1952) 59-96.
6) Reviews by E. Will, RH 237 (1967), 191, and M. F. McGregor, AJPh 89 (1968), 118-9 (both accept the supposed meeting in Thrace) are more favourable than those by P. Lévéque, AC 35 (1966), 270; D. Asheri, RFIC 45 (1967), 463-7, and myself, CR 17 (1967), 24-6.
7) Loc. cit. (above n. 1). His reasons for rejection will be considered below, p. 5.
8) Loc. cit. His objections to its extreme rigidity and to its contention that Alcibiades provided the basis of the narrative on the opening phase of the oligarchical revolution at Athens, are, in my opinion, fully justified. Andrews mentions that ms. notes left by Gomme suggest scepticism about the general hypothesis. I can confirm that Gomme was sceptical, but, to judge from correspondence with me, this was not because he considered the hypothesis to be incredible but because it could not be proved.