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ONE OR TWO STATUETTES OF DIOGENES?

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*L. à P. retour  
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*à l'attention de l'auteur  
reçu par M. A. Richter*





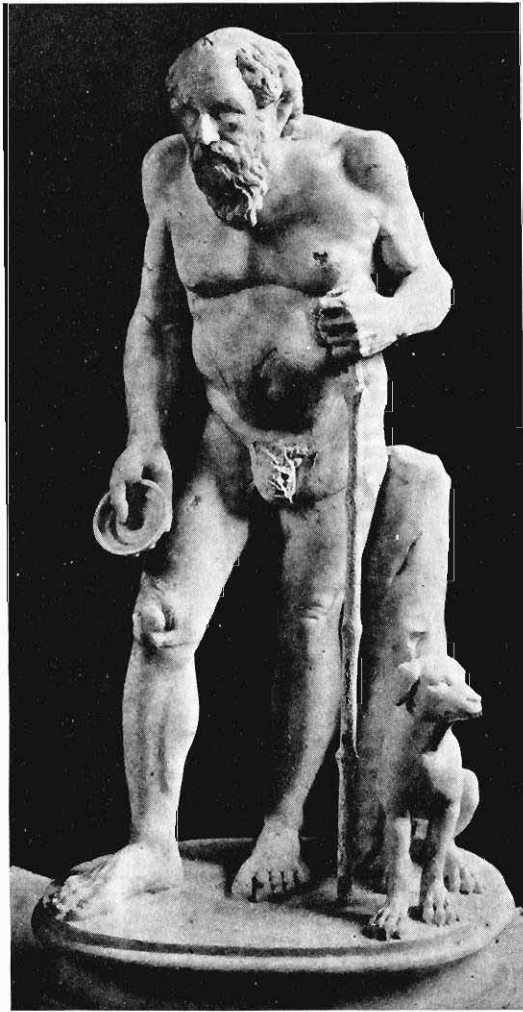
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## ONE OR TWO STATUETTES OF DIOGENES?

By GISELA M. A. RICHTER

The fame of the Cynic philosopher Diogenes (about 414-323 B. C.), the despiser of human comforts, has been perpetuated to our day. The

cally accurate or not. Dissolute in his youth, even exiled from his native Sinope for falsifying the coinage, he was converted to philoso-



FROM ARNDT-BRUNN-BRUCKMANN, "PORTRÄTS," PL. 321

FIG. 1. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES IN THE ALBANI COLLECTION, ROME



FIG. 2. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES IN THE ALBANI COLLECTION, ROME FROM A CAST

two well-known anecdotes concerning him — that he lived in a tub and that he told Alexander the Great to move out of his light — are obviously typical of the man, whether histori-

phy by Antisthenes in Athens. He embraced it at first with vehemence and then with a steady conviction which lasted throughout his long life. He became indeed famous for "his won-

derful gift of persuasion" and for "the magical spell of his discourses." Many wise sayings are attributed to him,<sup>1</sup> all typically Greek in their independence of spirit: "Nothing in life has any chance of succeeding without strenuous

he answered, "The ability to hold converse with myself." His humor was equally incisive. The story runs that seeing a bad archer he sat down beside the target with the words, "In order not to get hit." While in Crete he was



FIG. 3. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
IN THE ALBANI COLLECTION, ROME  
FROM A CAST

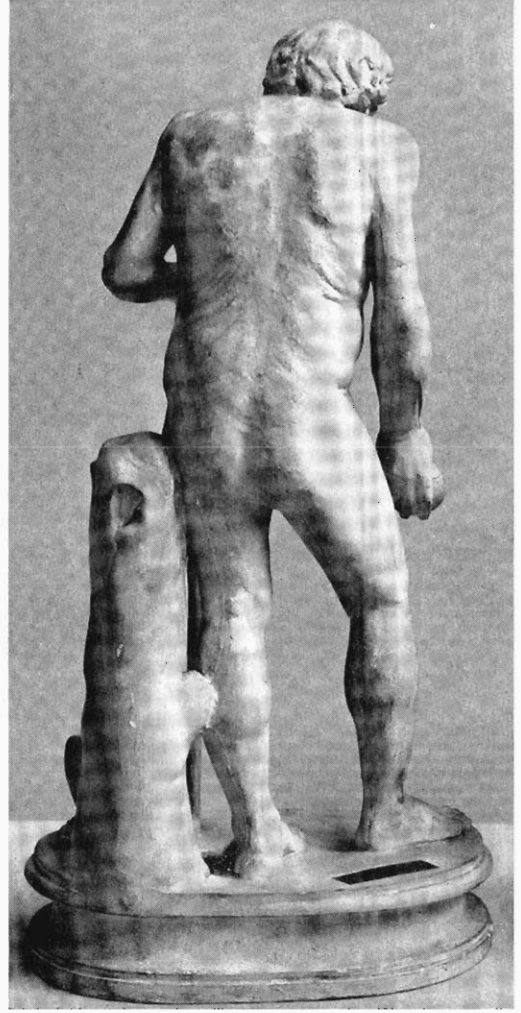


FIG. 4. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
IN THE ALBANI COLLECTION, ROME  
FROM A CAST

practice and this is capable of overcoming anything." "The despising of pleasure is itself most pleasurable." Being asked what was the most beautiful thing in the world, he replied, "Freedom of speech." When questioned what advantage had come to him from philosophy,

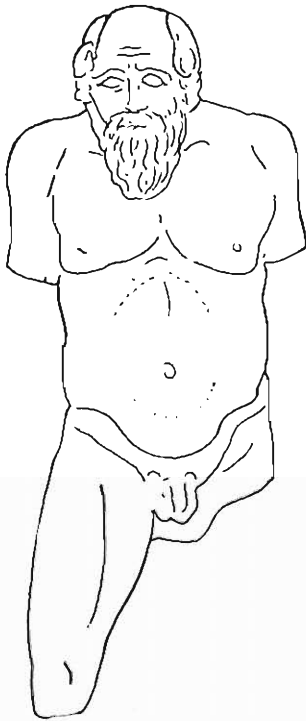
<sup>1</sup> cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, vol. II, "Diogenes," *passim* (translation by R. D. Hicks in the Loeb edition).

captured by brigands and sold as a slave to Xenocrates, who took him to Corinth where he spent the rest of his life. Xenocrates used to say that with Diogenes a good spirit had entered into his house. When Diogenes died, there was set up on his grave a pillar crowned with a dog (the emblem of the Cynics) of Parian marble, and his fellow-citizens honored him with bronze statues inscribed with this epigram:

"Time makes even bronze grow old, but thy glory, Diogenes, all eternity will never destroy, since thou alone didst point out to mortals the lesson of self-sufficingness and the easiest path of life."

Diogenes' poverty, his unkempt appearance, and his provocative ways must have made him a striking figure during his life. Our only

a late Greek work.<sup>2</sup> It was long ago identified as Diogenes on the evidence of the stick and the dog, though, as a matter of fact, both are restorations, the only ancient parts of the figure being the head<sup>3</sup> and the torso, including part of



REDRAWN FROM REINACH, "RÉPERTOIRE,"  
VOL. II, PL. 569, 10

FIG. 5. ANCIENT PARTS OF THE STATUETTE OF  
DIOGENES SHOWN IN FIGURES 1 TO 4

means of visualizing this remarkable personality hinges on a curious circumstance. In the Villa Albani in Rome there is a marble statuette of a stooping old man leaning on a stick, a dog by his side (figs. 1-4) — a Roman copy of



FROM WINCKELMANN, "MONUMENTI ANTICHI INEDITI,"  
VOL. II, PL. 172

FIG. 6. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
FORMERLY IN THE ALBANI COLLECTION

the upper arms and the right leg to below the knee (fig. 5).<sup>4</sup> But the stick is suggested by the

<sup>2</sup> Height with plinth, 1 ft. 9½ in. (54.6 cm.), without plinth, 1 ft. 7¼ in. (49 cm.). Of Carrara marble. Published: Bernoulli, *Griechische Ikonographie*, vol. II, p. 49, pl. VIII, where the older literature is given; Arndt-Brunn-Bruckmann, *Porträts*, pls. 321 f.; Helbig, *Führer*, vol. II, p. 413, no. 1856; Lippold, *Griechische Porträtstatuen*, pp. 84 ff.; Amelung, *A. J. A.*, 1927, pp. 287 ff.; Reinach, *Répertoire*, vol. II, pl. 569, 10. The other extant representations of Diogenes —

on the relief in the Villa Albani, the cippus in the Palazzo Barberini, and the mosaic in Cologne — are not reliable sources for identification. (cf. Amelung, *op. cit.*, pp. 289 ff.; Bernoulli, *op. cit.*, pp. 47 ff.; Arndt-Brunn-Bruckmann, *op. cit.*, text to pls. 321, 322.)

<sup>3</sup> The nose, however, is restored.

<sup>4</sup> Redrawn from the outline drawing in Reinach, *Répertoire*, *loc. cit.*, which reproduces a cast in the École des Beaux-Arts.

bent attitude, and the dog was long ago vouched for by its presence in another copy. This other copy, which supplies the important clue, is the subject of the present article.

The history of this statuette is of extraordi-

the dog only the hind part is ancient ("si è conservata la parte di dietro del cane"), and that the heads of the two statuettes are "completely alike" ("le teste son tutt' e due perfettamente consimili"); but the illustration shows that the

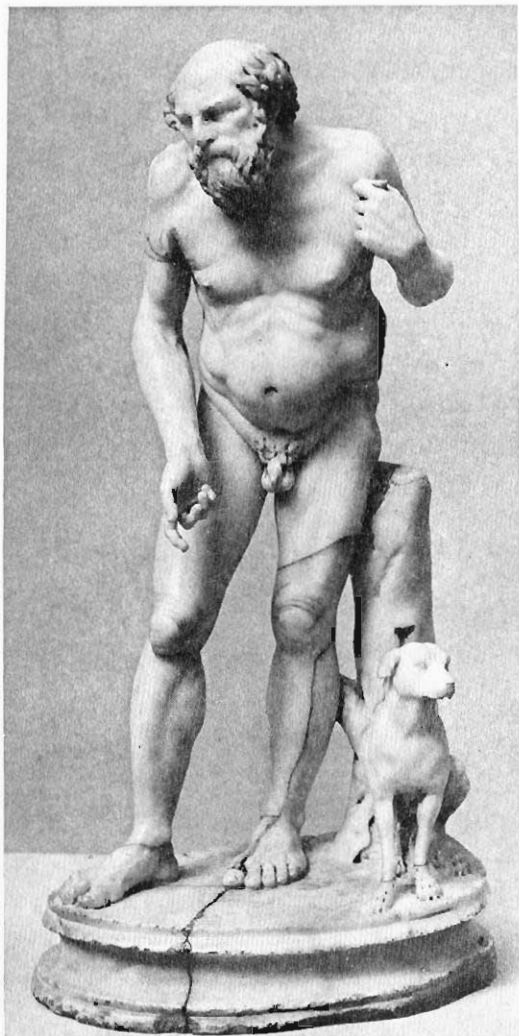


FIG. 7. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

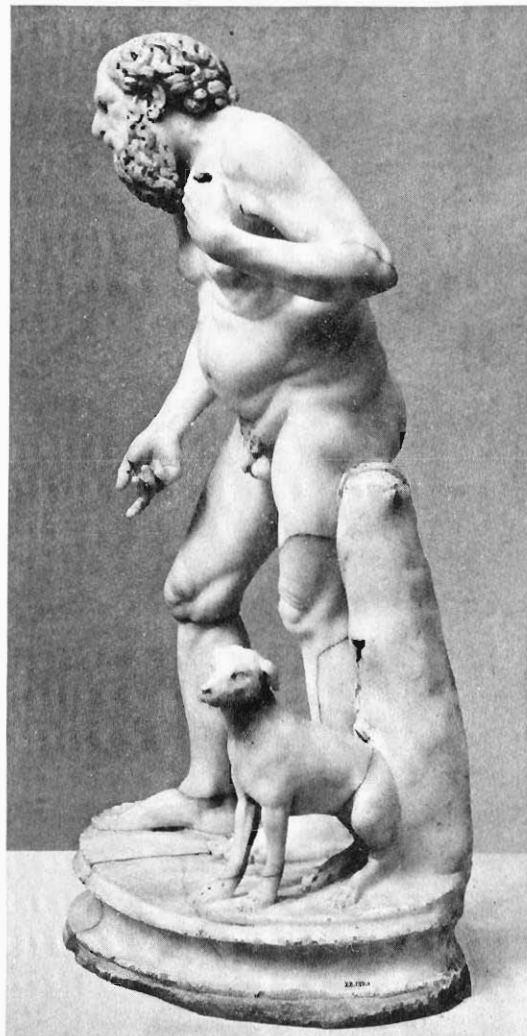


FIG. 8. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

nary interest. As long ago as 1767 it was published by Winckelmann in his *Monumenti antichi inediti*<sup>5</sup> (fig. 6) as then in the possession of Alessandro Albani. It is described as a companion piece to the other marble statuette of Diogenes in the same collection (figs. 1-4). By way of description it is stated merely that of

<sup>5</sup> Vol. II, pl. 172.

two figures differ in the attitudes of the hands (cf. figs. 1 and 6).

Subsequently, the second statuette was removed from the Villa Albani and for a long time its whereabouts was unknown. The approximate date of its removal may be computed from the following entries: In the first edition of the *Indicazione antiquaria per la villa suburbana dell' eccellentissima casa Albani*,

published in 1785, the two statuettes appear as number 593 ("statuetta di Diogene cinico ignudo col cane accanto, e col bastone nella sinistra; ed. dal Winck. M. I. n. 172. sp. p. 228") and number 599 ("statuetta di Diogene, simile alla

Winckelmann's *Monumenti*, dated 1821 and 1830, can hardly be used as evidence one way or the other, for these books are practically mere reprints of the earlier publication. It is also of small account that the statuette is still

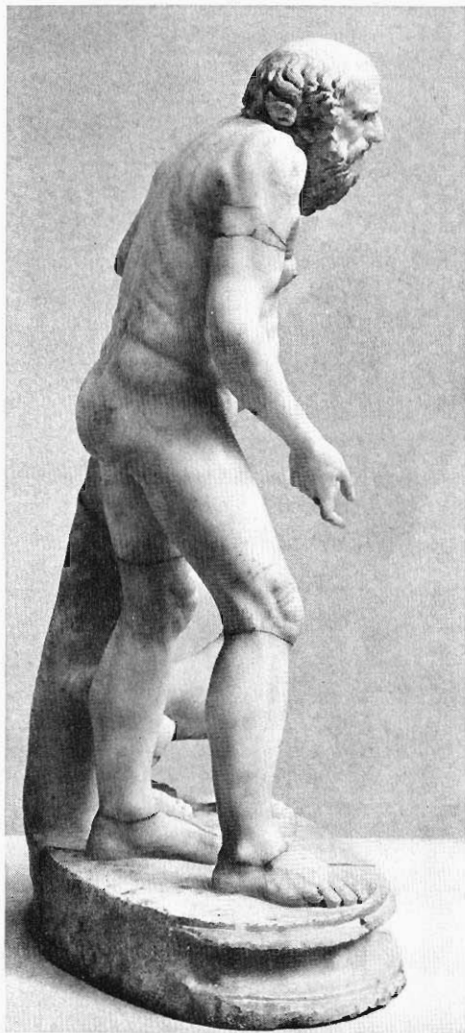


FIG. 9. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM



FIG. 10. STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

precedente"). The second edition, dated 1803, lists only one statuette, as number 564 ("statuetta di Diogene cinico col cane accanto e col bastone nella sinistra; edito dal Winck. M. I. n. 172. spieg. p. 228"). It would seem to follow that the second statuette left the Villa Albani after 1785 and before 1803. The fact that it still appears as part of the Albani Collection in the second and third editions of

mentioned by Visconti in his *Iconographie grecque*,<sup>6</sup> published in 1808 and again in 1824, for he wrongly identifies the figure illustrated by Winckelmann with the one now in the Al-

<sup>6</sup> Vol. I, p. 271: "On peut croire que cette petite statue [that is, the Albani statuette (fig. 1)] et une autre qui lui ressemble parfaitement ne sont que des copies de statues en bronze que les habitants de Sinope avoient élevées en l'honneur de leur compatriote."

bani Collection.<sup>7</sup> In Morcelli, Fea, and Visconti's *Description de la Villa Albani* of 1869 only one statuette of Diogenes is listed, as number 942. Bernoulli in his *Griechische Ikonographie*<sup>8</sup> in 1901 refers to the missing statuette as follows: "Bei einer jetzt verschollenen Replik, die sich ebenfalls in der Villa Albani befand, soll auch der hintere Teil des Hundes noch erhalten gewesen sein." In a footnote he surmises that Winckelmann was mistaken and that this replica is identical with the other extant Albani statuette. "Die Notiz dass zwei ganz ähnliche kleine Diogenes-figuren in der gleichen Sammlung sollen existiert haben und dass beide antik gewesen seien, ist nicht eben Vertrauen erweckend."

But Winckelmann was not mistaken and a second statuette did exist, for in 1906 it was rediscovered in the possession of the Duke Braschi at Tivoli by the well-known archaeologist Friedrich Hauser; whereupon, after some years, it was acquired by this Museum<sup>9</sup> (figs. 7-10). The statuette corresponds perfectly with Winckelmann's illustration and shows the same variations from the Albani figure, in that the right hand has no phiale and the position of the left hand is different. In explaining its change of ownership it is interesting to remember that Pius VI, a member of the Braschi family, was pope from 1775 to 1799 and that Giovanni Francesco, a member of the Albani family, was cardinal during that very time (viz., 1754-1803). An obvious possibility is that the statuette passed from one family to the other when the two were thus intimately connected; and this would agree with the date between 1785 and 1803 suggested above.

So much for the known history. It does not differ greatly from those of many other antiquities which remain quietly hidden for genera-

tions in private hands and then unexpectedly reappear. But a study of the statuette brings us to further disclosures. As we examine the figure more closely we are faced at once with a curious puzzle. It has evidently been pieced together from a number of fragments. In this piecing most of the junctures do not show as irregular lines caused by breaks, but as straight lines, indicating the insertion of new pieces of which the joining surfaces had to be smoothed. Partly on this evidence, Hauser, John Marshall, and others thought that most of the upper portion (i.e., the head, torso, and upper parts of the legs), as well as part of the plinth with the tree trunk and the lower half of the dog, was antique, and that the rest was either restored (i.e., both arms from below the biceps and the upper part of the dog) or "recomposed from fragments belonging to this statuette and to the Albani one" (i.e., a portion of the plinth and the lower part of the legs). The employment of the same Carrara marble and the final high polish applied over the entire surface tended to make the whole appear consistent. According to this estimate, then, the New York statuette is all antique except for the arms and the upper part of the dog, whereas the base and the lower parts of the legs are ancient pieces belonging partly to it, partly to the Albani statuette. The patching would explain the straight joints.

In the opinion of the writer this ingenious theory falls to the ground, first of all for stylistic reasons. The two statuettes, though similar in content and size, are poles apart as works of art. A comparison between the two is indeed a good lesson in the appreciation of the antique. In the New York statuette there is no sense of construction, which is the foundation of all ancient sculpture. The bulges and hollows which are supposed to suggest bones and muscles are the result of a merely superficial treatment; there is no proper understanding of the anatomy of the human body. The shoulder blades, the thorax, the pelvis, all are misshapen. Partic-

<sup>7</sup> cf. note 4, p. 270.

<sup>8</sup> Vol. II, p. 49.

<sup>9</sup> Illustrated and briefly referred to by Amelung, *A. I. A.*, 1927, pp. 287 ff., fig. 4. The height is 1 ft. 9 $\frac{1}{16}$  in. (54.1 cm.).

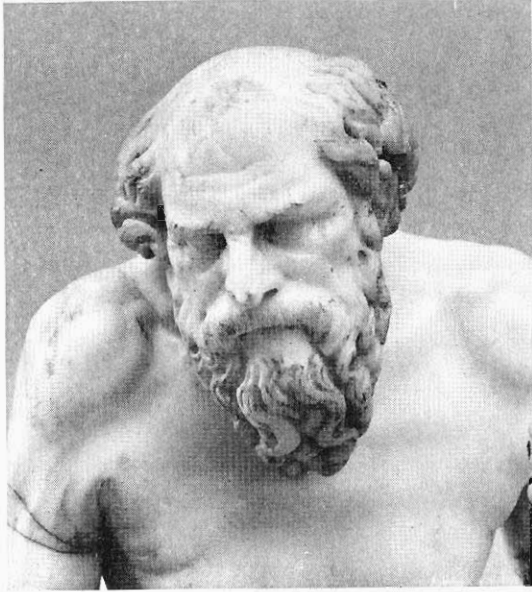


FIG. 11. HEAD OF FIGURE 7

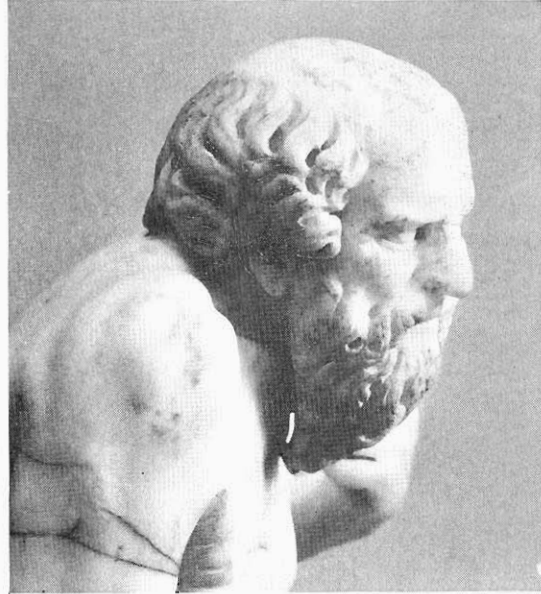
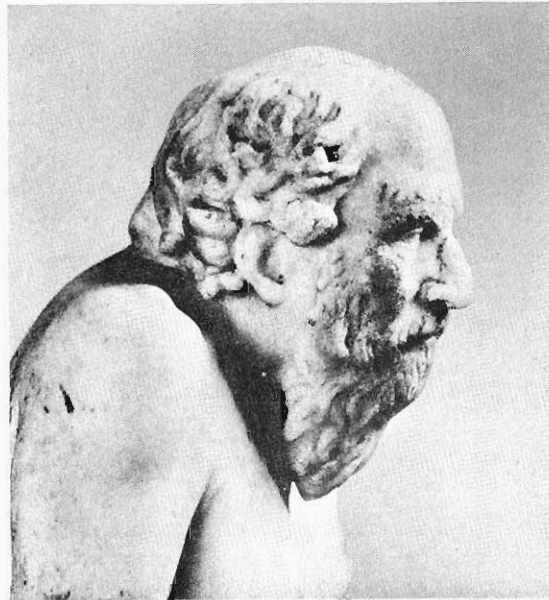


FIG. 12. HEAD OF FIGURE 7



FROM ARNDT-DRUNN-BRÜCKMANN, "PORTRÄTS," PL. 322A

FIG. 13. HEAD OF FIGURE 1



FROM ARNDT-DRUNN-BRÜCKMANN, "PORTRÄTS," PL. 322B

FIG. 14. HEAD OF FIGURE 1

ularly painful is the large bulge on the left side beneath the serratus magnus, corresponding to nothing in nature. A humble stone-cutter of classical times would not have been guilty of such modeling. Furthermore, the head (figs.



FIG. 15. STATUETTE OF A "FISHERMAN"  
IN THE LOUVRE

11 and 12) with its affected little tilt, its petulant expression, and the finicky rendering of the nose,<sup>10</sup> eyes, and ears, is totally un-antique. How different is the Albani statuette! Here the

<sup>10</sup> The shape of the nose is copied from that of the Albani statuette, which is restored — another "give-away."

construction of the figure is beautifully understood throughout, the function of every bone and muscle is well expressed, and the age and flabbiness of the body are shown in a simple, generalized manner. The head (figs. 13 and 14), in spite of its suggestion of suffering and privation, impresses one with the high intellect and nobility characteristic of Greek philosophers. Clearly we have in these two figures en-

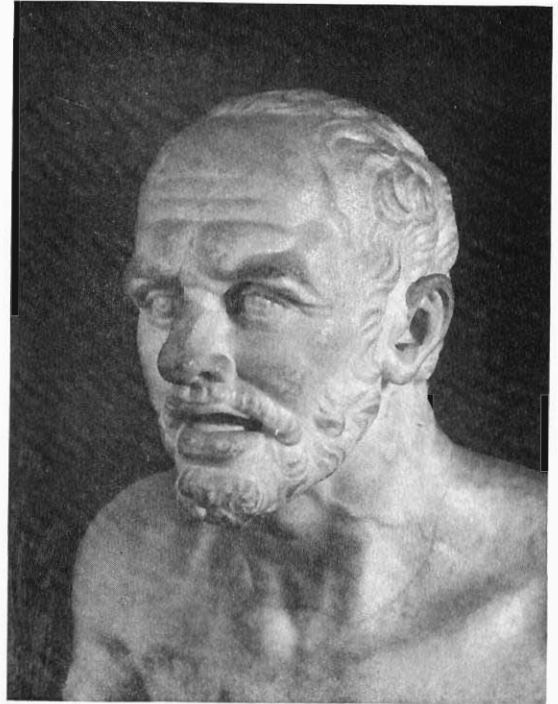


FIG. 16. HEAD OF FIGURE 15

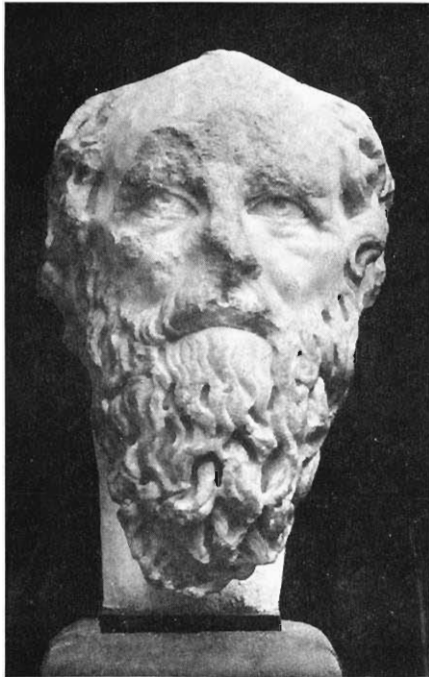
tirely different outlooks belonging to periods far removed in time.

A close examination of the surface of the New York statuette<sup>11</sup> bears out these stylistic conclusions. It brings out the fact that the base (which is in one piece with the feet and a portion of the left leg of the man, the tree trunk, and the hind part and forepaws of the dog) is different in appearance from the rest of the statuette. The surface of the marble in the base and the adjoining portions has a convincing

<sup>11</sup> The examination was made by Dr. Colin G. Fink, head of the Department of Electrochemistry at Columbia University.

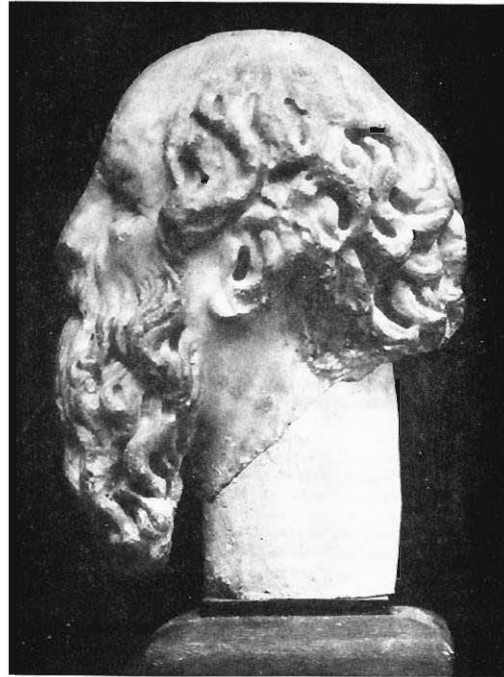
yellowish tint in contrast to the brilliant white of the other parts, and brown discolorations here and there have penetrated into the marble, whereas in the upper portions of the figure (e.g., in the beard) they are merely superficial. And in this respect the condition of the arms and the upper part of the dog—which everyone has recognized as restorations—is identical with that of the head and the torso

joints—which helped to suggest the other theory—we can easily account for them in a different manner. Let us suppose that the statuette now in the Albani Collection was broken some time before 1767 (the date of Winckelmann's publication), only two main portions remaining, the head and the torso, and the base with the tree trunk; and that the owner then ordered the head and torso completed,



FROM ARNDT-BRUCKMANN, "EINZELAUFNÄHMEN," No. 1407

FIG. 17. HEAD OF DIOGENES AT AIX IN PROVENCE



FROM ARNDT-BRUCKMANN, "EINZELAUFNÄHMEN," No. 1408

FIG. 18. HEAD OF DIOGENES AT AIX IN PROVENCE

of the man. An experiment with violet rays brought out the same findings.<sup>13</sup> Exposed to such rays the parts which we consider ancient present a distinctly different appearance from the rest; they are more mottled and this mottling seems ingrained in the marble, not superficial as in the other portions. Thus both the physical and the stylistic examination indicate that the whole upper part of the statuette is of more recent date; only the base and the portions in one piece with it go back to ancient times.

With regard to the evidence of the straight

for it was a time when only whole figures were tolerated. Accordingly, the arms and the lower part were restored, the latter being copied from the existing base (hence the tree trunk, hence the dog). But it seemed a pity to throw the ancient base away and in its present state it was no good to anybody. So the sculptor completed the base as well as the figure, and two statuettes emerged from what formerly was one. In this restoration of the base we may assume that the sculptor first took a block of marble and copied the extant portions of the head and body of the Albani statuette (which, it will be noticed, theory that our statuette is ancient but reworked is not borne out by the measurements.

<sup>13</sup> The experiment was made in this Museum by James J. Rorimer of the Department of Decorative Arts. The

correspond approximately with the head and torso of the New York figure, except that in the latter the left arm and leg are carried down a little farther); and then supplied the missing portions: (1) the parts of the legs between the torso and the ancient base, and (2) the arms, and the upper part of the dog. Since the breaks were not original, the joints had to be smoothed and hence appear as straight lines.



FROM A. J. A., XXXI, 1927, P. 288, FIG. 6

FIG. 19. LOWER PART OF A STATUETTE OF DIOGENES  
IN THE MAGAZZINI OF THE VATICAN

The supposition that the base of our figure belongs to the Albani statuette could probably be verified by a comparison of the two marbles side by side; but with the ocean now separating them that is difficult to accomplish. An examination of the marble of the Albani statuette which I was able to make (in the summer of 1929), though not conclusive, bore out the probability of the theory. The marble resembles that of our base, that is, it is white with

yellowish stains and brownish incrustations; and it has a lustre, though not the high polish of our piece — which was doubtless added to suit the demands of later taste.

It seems surprising, of course, that Winckelmann published as antique a statuette so largely restored, and even more so that it should have passed from the Albani family to the Braschis, perhaps as a gift from a cardinal to a pope. But we must remember that it was a comparatively uncritical time, and one, moreover, when extensive restorations were in vogue. We know of many examples of “antique marbles” in the old Roman collections restored from quite small fragments. In the Vatican, especially in the Sala degli Animali, are several such cases. For instance, in the statue of a hound,<sup>13</sup> only the base with the paws and the tip of the tail is ancient, and in a group of a stag and a dog,<sup>14</sup> the only ancient parts of the dog are the fore legs and the hind paws. Such wholesale restoring was not considered “faking” but the proper thing to do. Fragments as fragments were unacceptable, and restorations, however modern in style, did not offend. In no sense, therefore, was the Diogenes considered a “forgery.” It was a cleverly restored antique and as such was a welcome gift, no doubt, even to a pope.

In this connection it is interesting to compare the statuette of a so-called fisherman in the Louvre<sup>15</sup> (fig. 15), likewise extensively restored (the head, arms, legs, base, support, and pail) in the eighteenth century or earlier.<sup>16</sup> These restorations, especially the head (fig. 16) with its exaggeratedly realistic style, bear a resemblance to those of our statuette. Curiously enough the records show that the Louvre piece also came from the Albani Collection,<sup>17</sup> evidently one of the spoils of Napoleon.

<sup>13</sup> Amelung, *Die Skulpturen des vaticanischen Museums*, vol. II, no. 114, pl. 31.

<sup>14</sup> Amelung, *op. cit.*, no. 107, pl. 39.

<sup>15</sup> *Catalogue sommaire des marbres antiques*, no. 470; Reinach, *Répertoire*, vol. I, p. 165, pl. 325, no. 2246.

<sup>16</sup> “Au plus tard du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle” (E. Michon). It was published in 1806 (with the restorations) in *Monuments antiques du Musée Napoléon*, vol. IV, p. 75, no. 35.

<sup>17</sup> I owe this information to the kindness of E. Michon.

Besides the Albani statuette — now perhaps to be completed with our base — there are two fragments extant of similar small statues of Diogenes, one of a head at Aix in Provence<sup>18</sup> (figs. 17 and 18), the other of the lower portion, including the base, right foot, left leg, tree trunk, and a wallet instead of the dog<sup>19</sup> (fig. 19). The latter was found by Amelung in the Magazzini of the Vatican in 1921 and recognized as a Diogenes by the wallet and the stance of the legs. Amelung suggested that it was the lower portion of the Albani statuette, and made a reconstruction of the two pieces in plaster.<sup>20</sup> If that were the case, however, it would seem odd that the lower portion of the Albani statuette was not restored from the Vatican piece and that it corresponds rather with the fragment in New York in every detail, including the moulding of the plinth. Moreover, a close examination of the Vatican fragment in conjunction with the cast of the antique portion of the Albani statuette shows that the two do not really fit; if placed at the right angle the left leg does not connect, even if we allow

for a missing piece.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the marble of the Vatican fragment is dead white, with no yellowish or brown discolorations, quite unlike that of the Albani statuette. Therefore we cannot accept Amelung's reconstructions.

At all events, whether or not our ancient base belonged to the Albani statuette, it is a precious document in itself. For it clinches the identification of the only real portrait we have of one of the most interesting personalities of ancient times.

<sup>18</sup> Arndt-Amelung-Bruckmann, *Einzelaufnahmen*, nos. 1407 f. (the height is given in the text as 9 cm., but this is the measurement of the head on the photograph; the scale there added shows the height to be really 10.6 cm., which is the same height as that of the head of the Albani example, so that the Aix head may well have been part of a statuette similar to the Albani one). A modern copy of this type is mounted on a statuette of Epikouros in Ince Blundell Hall; cf. Poulsen, *Greek and Roman Portraits in English Country Houses*, p. 43, no. 16, with two illustrations.

<sup>19</sup> Amelung, *A. J. A.*, 1927, p. 288, fig. 6.

<sup>20</sup> Amelung, *op. cit.*, p. 287, fig. 5.

<sup>21</sup> In this investigation I was helped by Dr. Kaschnitz, who agrees with these findings.

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