Read in 3 Minutes. Take Notes

The *Venus de Milo* is one of the most famous examples of ancient Greek art. The statue depicts Aphrodite, Greek goddess of love and beauty and enjoys nearly universal recognition. Its origins remain controversial—many historians argue that the *Venus de Milo is* a copy of an earlier work.

These historians believe the sculpture is a copy primarily because of its resemblance to older classical works. Upon its discovery in 1820, the *Venus de Milo* was first credited to Greek artist Praxiteles because it strongly resembles the classical style of this earlier artist, who lived during the fourth century BC. When Alexandros of Antioch was correctly credited with creating the *Venus de Milo* between 100 and 190 BC, art historians pointed out that he may

have taken the idea from classical artists. The idea that the *Venus de Milo* could be a re-creation is further

supported by its resemblance to the *Aphrodite of Capua* in Naples. Both statues represent the goddess Aphrodite (called Venus by Romans) in a twisting posture, with her robe falling from her hips. The *Aphrodite of Capua is* a Roman work and is itself a replica of an earlier Greek sculpture.

Finally, historians point to the artist's cultural context as an indication that the *Venus de Milo* was most likely copied from another statue. Alexandros of Antioch lived during the Hellenistic period, a period of decline for Greek art after the more productive classical era. Many other works from the Hellenistic period were copied from classical art Historians believe that the popularity of re-creations during the Hellenistic period makes it likely that the *Venus de Milo* was also a replica.

Source: Collins