

# Ai-Khanoum

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Ai-Khanoum or Ay Khanum ("Lady Moon" in Uzbek) possibly the historical Alexandria on the Oxus, also possibly later named Eucratidia), was founded in the 4th century B.C.E. following the conquests of Alexander the Great. It was one of the primary cities of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom. The city is located in the Kunduz area in northeastern Afghanistan at the confluence of the Oxus river (today's Amu Darya) and the Kokcha river. Ai-Khanoum was one of the focal points of Hellenism in the East for nearly two centuries until its annihilation by nomadic invaders around 145 B.C.E.

Archaeological excavations of the site were conducted by a French DAFA mission under the direction of Paul Bernard between 1964 and 1978, as well as by Russian scientists. This work had to be abandoned with the onset of the Soviet war in Afghanistan, during which the site was looted and used as a battleground, leaving very little of the original material.

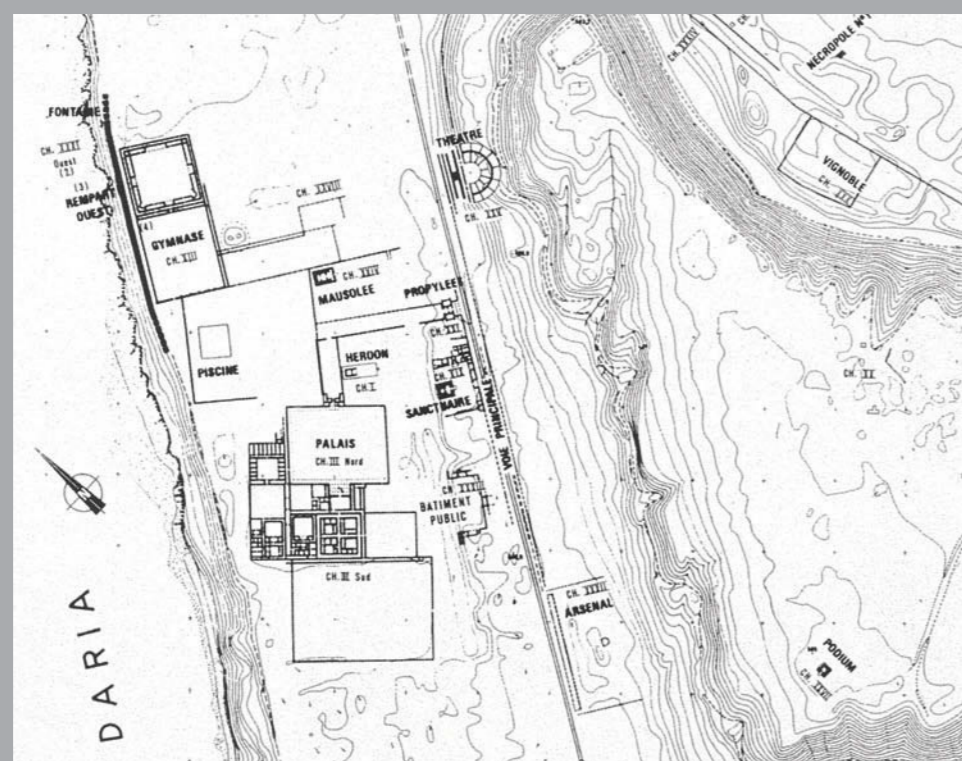
Numerous artifacts and structures were found, pointing to a high Hellenistic culture combined with Eastern influences. It has all the hallmarks of a Hellenistic city, with a Greek theater, gymnasium and some Greek houses with colonnaded courtyards" (Boardman). The various sculptural fragments found display a rather conventional, Classical style, rather impervious to the Hellenizing innovations occurring at the same time in the Mediterranean world.



Ai Khanoum, Cybele, silver plate  
3rd c. B.C.E

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Pictures:  
after Pierre Cambon 2007  
Ai Khanoum, capital: Klimburg-Salter 1971



Ai-Khanoum, map of archaeological site



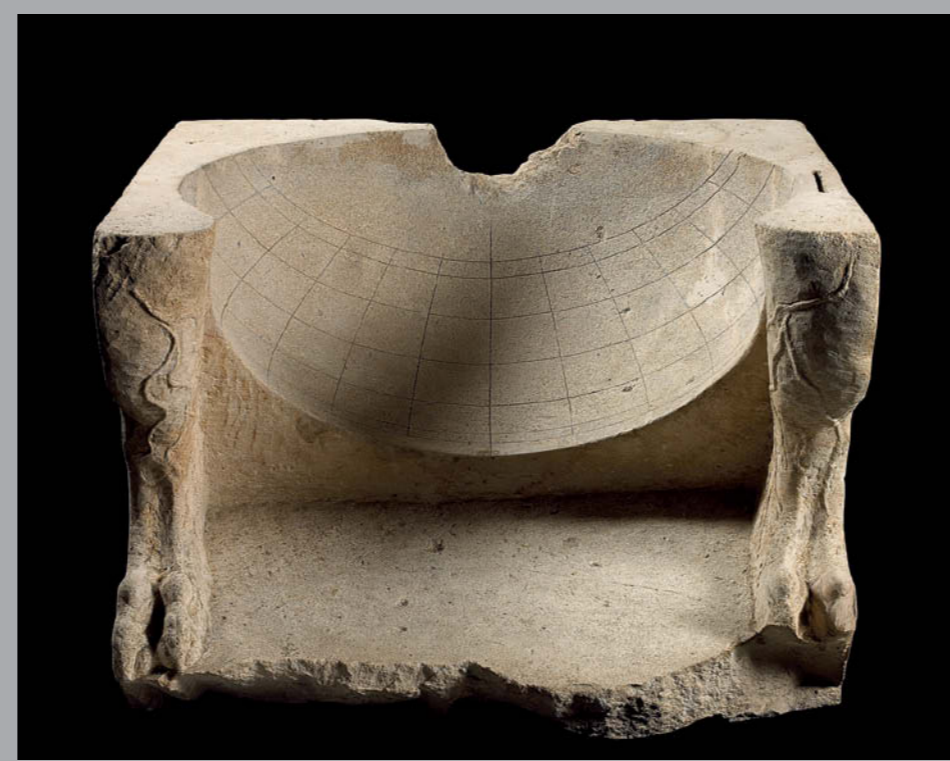
Ai-Khanoum, 3D reconstruction



Ai-Khanoum, 3D reconstruction



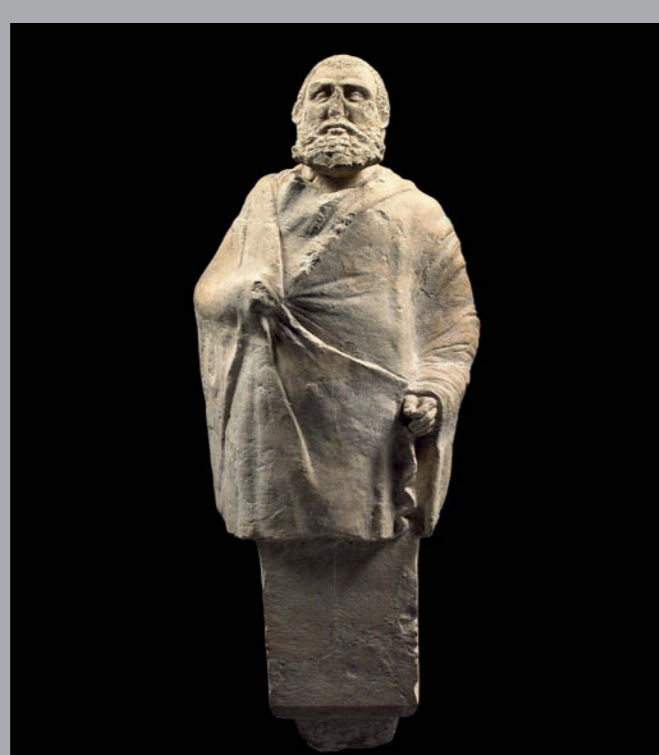
Ai-Khanoum, capital



Ai Khanoum, Hemispherical sundial  
before 145 B.C.E.



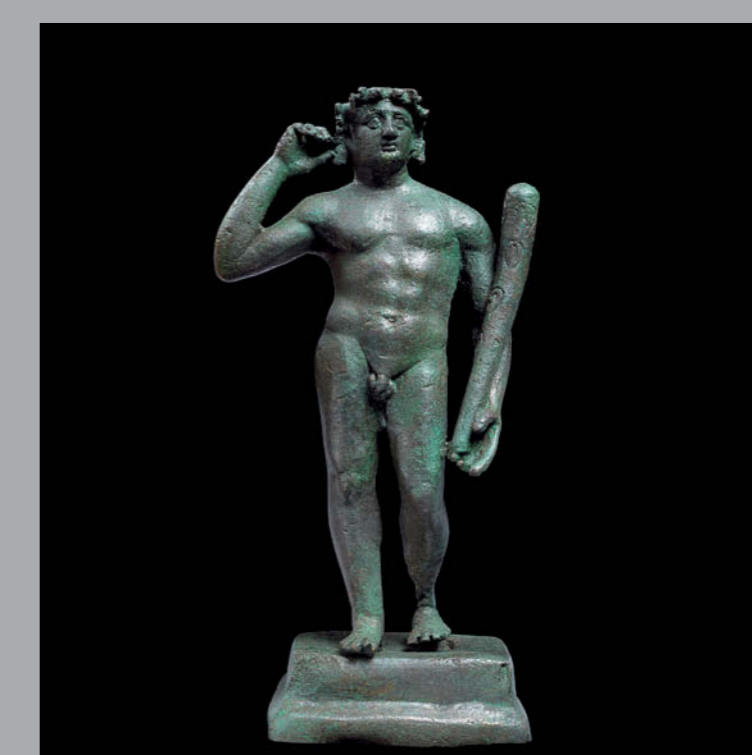
Ai-Khanoum, head, unfired clay, 2nd c. B.C.E.



Ai-Khanoum, Hermaic pillar  
limestone 2nd c. B.C.E.



Ai-Khanoum, water spout, limestone  
2nd c. B.C.E.



Ai-Khanoum, statuette of Herakles  
bronze 150 B.C. E.