

# SANCTUARY

## KHONSU-HERAKLES



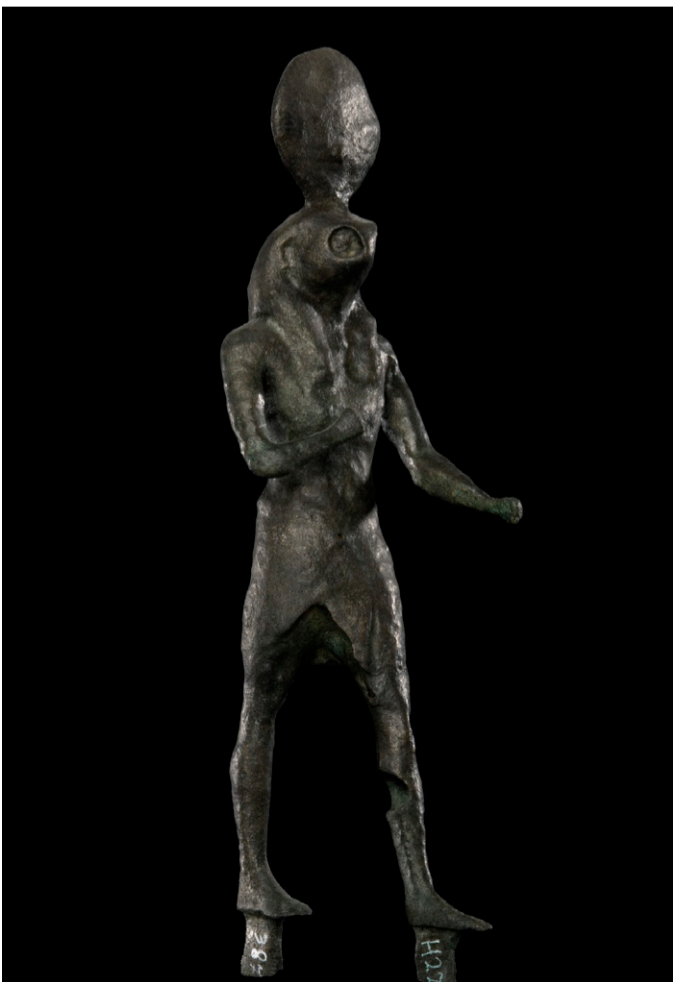
The remains of a sanctuary built with large limestone blocks were found north of the temple of Amun-Gereb on the Central Island of the city of Thonis-Heracleion.

Archaeological excavations have uncovered a **foundation deposit** located in the northeast corner of the monument. It consists of a faience

statue of Khonsu-the-Child accompanied by a wooden naos scaled to its size. Surrounding the divine child were a tablet, an amulet representing Shu, a wadjet-eye, a papyrus-wadj column, a miniature double hes-vase, and several uraei, all of which were made of frit.

## Traces of Khonsu

In the area of the sanctuary a few mementoes of the divine son were found. These include a well-preserved bronze headdress, consisting of a nemes on which rests a hemhem crown, a headpiece that characterizes



the young god. Also, a bronze statuette, 21.5 cm high, of an anthropomorphic falcon-headed Khonsu, was found in the area of the sanctuary.

Bronze cult furniture was also found associated with this temple of Khonsu-Herakles. Many pieces of jewellery, coins, including gold ones, and amulets littered the sanctuary grounds. They testify to the **importance of this place** where the young god was revered as a model of the divine heir and whom the Greeks identified with Herakles.

**Objects:** Limestone blocks, location: Central Island, Thonis-Heracleion, Wood and faïence. XXXth dynasty. Naos in wood, H. 13 cm. Faience amulets: Harpocrates, H. 7.9 cm; papyrus column, H. 13 cm; double hes-vase, H. 7.3 cm; Shu, H. 5.8 cm; wadjet eye, H. 4 cm; uraei, H. 4.2 cm; faïence plaque, L. 8.4 cm; Maritime and National Museums Alexandria (SCA 583, 562, 565, 559, 553, 558, 552, 555, 560).

Hem-Hem crown: Bronze. H. 15 cm. End of Late Period – Early Ptolemaic Period (end of fifth to beginning of fourth century BC). Maritime Museum, Alexandria (SCA 401). Khonsu statuette: Bronze, Late Period, National Museum of Alexandria (SCA 387).

**Sources:** Original description by Franck Goddio in 'Thonis-Heracleion in Context, Part 1.1: The Sacred Topography of Thonis-Heracleion', Oxford Centre for Maritime Archaeology (OCMA), 2015, University of Oxford.

**Photos:** Christoph Gerigk © Franck Goddio/Hilti Foundation