

The Egyptian and the Hellenistic Characteristics of the Asklepieion

By

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The cult of Imhotep was known in Egypt since the Late Period as a god of healing. The Greeks assimilated him with their own Asklepios, and was known by them as "Imutes or Imouthes". He has his temples in Egypt and the Hellenistic world, it was used as a medical therapy, so its temples was built where fresh air abounded on acropolis or on a level space, and the eye was charmed by the variety of the scenery.

Four Asklepeia are known for the cult of Imhotep/ Asklepios in Egypt; at Memphis, Sheikh Hamad (southern Athribis), Deir el-Bahari and at Phila. These temples were used as healing and oracle centres, where the visitors spent their nights, they hope to see the god in their dreams and ask him to solve their problems and good future for them. The stuff of healing dreams reflected familiar ancient healing wisdom, including dietary advice, surgical interventions, and the administration of certain drugs. The god has his special kinds of offerings and was served by his own distinguished priests and festivals.

Great numbers of Asklepeia are scattered in all the spots of the Hellenistic world, which reflect the high rank of god Asklepios and the great numbers of his visitors and their inscriptions upon his temples, thank the god for his treatment and recovery. Natural and physical remedies are attached to the Hellenistic Asklepieion, which give it its special characteristics in its design, kind of offerings, festivals and ceremonies and the gods' epithets.

Key Words: Sickness-Dreams- Interpretations- Remedies- Offerings