

1 **Imhotep** (fl c. 2600 BC). Egyptian high priest and
 2 architect. Imhotep, who probably served as high priest of Heliopolis under the
 3 kings Djoser (reg 2630*2611 BC) to Huni (2599*2575 BC),
 4 was traditionally the architect of two step-pyramid complexes at
 5 SAQQARA. His name was found inscribed on the base of a statue
 6 of King Djoser found in the precincts of the Step Pyramid. By the Late Period
 7 (c. 700 BC) Imhotep had been deified and there are numerous
 8 bronze statuettes (see EGYPT, ANCIENT, #902xiii, 16, fig.
 9 004), dating from the Late and Greco-Roman periods, showing him seated and
 10 reading from a papyrus roll. He was worshipped at the temple of Karnak
 11 (Thebes) and an unfinished chapel at Philae was dedicated to his cult. He was
 12 traditionally also the builder of the temple at Edfu, and harpists sang about
 13 his wisdom, while scribes made a libation to him before they wrote.

14 The historian Manetho identified him, in the Aegyptiaca
 15 (c. 300 BC), as the physician Asklepios, and, more importantly,
 16 described him as the inventor of building with ashlar. However, the fact that
 17 two large open funerary courts at Saqqara, pre-dating the step-pyramid
 18 complexes by some years, are enclosed by great stone walls may cast doubt upon
 19 this claim. Gunn's suggestion, that there were two Imhoteps, father and son,
 20 the former the inventor of building in stone and the latter the architect of
 21 the step pyramids, finds little support in the tradition recorded some two
 22 thousand years later that Imhotep's father was a certain Kanefer of
 23 Krokodilopolis (Arab. Gebelein).

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32 NABIL SWELIM
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