

Dwarfs assimilated in ancient Egypt

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Dwarfs in ancient Egypt were assimilated into daily life and their condition was not seen as a physical handicap, says a U.S. scientist.

Dr. Chahira Kozma, of the department of pediatrics at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, examined the remains and artistic evidence of dwarfism in ancient Egypt, including both elite dwarfs who achieved important status, and ordinary dwarfs.

Pictorial sources of dwarfism in tomb and vase paintings, statues and other art forms are numerous and indicate that dwarfs were employed as personal attendants, overseers of linen, animal tenders, jewelers, dancers and entertainers, according to Kozma.

Several dwarfs were members of households of high officials and esteemed enough to receive lavish burial sites in the royal cemetery close to the pyramids.

In addition, there several dwarf gods in ancient Egypt; the best-known ones were involved in magical practices to protect the living and the dead.

The findings are reported in the January issue of the American Journal of Medical Genetics.

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