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Covadonga en la Caldera del Teide. José Miguel Barrios Mufrege.

Flat-section Hairpins during the Egyptian Predynastic Period? A Proposal of Identification and Typology

Candelaria MARTÍN DEL RÍO ÁLVAREZ

This article proposes the identification of a series of items found in Predynastic tombs for which different interpretations had been previously formulated as flat-section hairpins. This characterisation is based on the morphology of the objects, their decoration and the archaeological contexts where they were found. Additionally, a typology for flat-section hairpins is proposed, as well as a comparison between this type of hairpins and the ones of circular section of similar chronology.

¿Agujas de pelo de sección plana en el Predinástico egipcio? Propuesta de identificación y análisis tipológico

Este artículo propone la identificación como agujas de pelo de sección plana de una serie de objetos hallados en tumbas predinásticas para los que se habían formulado interpretaciones diversas. El fundamento de esta caracterización es la morfología de las piezas, su decoración y los contextos arqueológicos en los que fueron halladas. Así mismo se propone una clasificación tipológica y se comparan con agujas de pelo de sección circular de cronología semejante.

Keywords: Flat-section hairpin, Predynastic Period, hair, zoomorphic decoration, typology.

Palabras clave: Agujas de pelo de sección plana, Predinástico, cabello, decoración zoomorfa, organización tipológica.

The most well-known Egyptian Predynastic hairpin is characterised by a circular-section rod with a point at one end and decoration at the other. During the process of searching and studying materials that led to her doctoral thesis, the author of this paper became aware of the existence of objects in museum collections and academic publications with similar characteristics, i.e. pins with a pointed end and topped with figurative decoration, but with flat lanceolate shaped bodies; these pins were found in burials, usually very close to the body of the deceased.

Egyptological literature provides different interpretations on them. Some archaeological reports and museum catalogues classify these objects as spatulas.¹ However, William M. F. Petrie—already in the early twentieth century—as well as Joan C. Payne and Edward Brovarski, already proposed their identification as “flat hairpins” and analyzed them together with other hairpins.²

In order to resolve these two different interpretations, various possibilities regarding its functionality were evaluated. For this purpose, the presence of similar instruments in ethnoar-

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1 Brunton 1937: 88, XLII no. 62; London, British Museum, BM EA 63068; Cambridge, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, n° inv. 1931.945.

2 Brovarski 2005: 223; Payne 2000: 229; Petrie 1920: 30.



Figure 1. Image of a Japanese woman with *kanzashi oiran* in her hairdo.



Figure 2. Reproduction of flat section hairpin (a copy of UC 4524) holding hair during an experimental activity.

archaeological studies was examined and pieces of similar characteristics were studied in diverse cultures.

The literature dedicated to spatulas in prehistoric contexts and its use in different activities (ceramic manufacture, removing of scales, skin treatment, etc.)³ has been reviewed, besides analyzing Egyptian specimens of this type of tool preserved in museums.⁴ A clear difference between these two types of implements is observed. From a morphological point of view, Wenzel and Álvarez⁵ state that prehistoric spatulas were usually made out of sections of conditioned bones; these bones could have

been treated at one end to facilitate the grip—although they were frequently untreated—while the other end was either round or sharp. In many occasions, the concavity of the bone is preserved as part of the inner side, and the exterior one is generally polished, although this polishing barely diminished the original thickness of the material. The nutrient foramen is visible in many examples; occasionally, this foramen was widened to create a suspension hole. Some spatulas have lanceolate shape, well-polished sides and sharp ends.⁶ On the contrary, the Egyptian objects analysed in this paper were polished on both sides and reduced to a

³ See Cabrera 2016: 3-9.

⁴ For instance: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 13.3764 (Middle Kingdom); Manchester, Manchester Museum, 4321 (Middle Kingdom); Cambridge (Massachusetts – USA), Harvard Art Museum, 2012.1.86 (Roman Period); New York, Brooklyn Museum, 25.886.21 (without date).

⁵ Wenzel and Álvarez 2004: 140-148.

⁶ Massoulaud (1949: 37) points out that there are also spatulas shaped like letter openers, whose upper parts had been trimmed leaving a straight surface with no decoration on it.

sheet of bone or ivory around 2 mm thick. As for the decoration, in the spatulas it is frequently incised and limited to the body. However, in these Predynastic objects only one of the tips was prepared to incorporate three-dimensional ornaments and not a single one has incised motifs on the body.

The use of these objects as punches or burins has also been considered, even though the same morphological features listed above make this hypothesis unfeasible. Moreover, flat-section punches usually have eyes,⁷ elements that are absent in the materials studied here.

While the identification of these Egyptian items with spatulas and punches seems unlikely, there exist similarities between them and the hairpins used by communities in Madagascar, China or India, by the Zulu tribe,⁸ as well as with the Japanese *kanzashi oiran* (fig. 1). In all these cases, both the morphology and the decoration patterns are identical to that of the Predynastic objects. Additionally, wooden replicas were created to demonstrate their suitability to elaborate hairstyles with wavy hair. As shown in figure 2, the results were particularly satisfactory: they held the hair and the decoration were visible in the same way as in the traditional circular hairpins.

Furthermore, a morphological comparison between these flat-section objects and the Egyptian Predynastic circular hairpins revealed clear similarities. The following elements are common to both types of pins (fig. 3):

- Head or upper end of the rod. It can be ornamented.
- Rod or body. Flat-section bodies vary in width and have no decoration. However, those rods

⁷ Gutiérrez and Hierro 2010: 270-274; Massoulaud 1949: 547, XLVIII.-9; Vandier 1952: 224-25.

⁸ London, British Museum, Af.+ .8679; 1945.1017.163; As.+ .1077-1079; 1938.0524.586. Cambridge, Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Z 23604 A; among others.

⁹ Martín del Río 2017: 689-696.

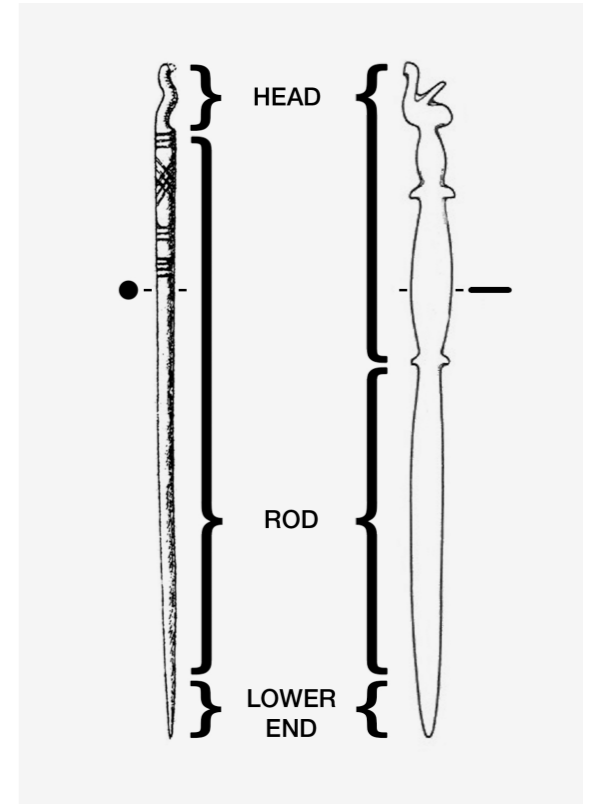


Figure 3. Scheme of the structure of hairpins of circular and flat section.

whose section is circular have standardised diameters between 0.4 and 0.5 cm and can be decorated with geometric designs; this decoration usually takes up the upper third of the body, although some objects can be halfway or completely decorated.⁹

- Lower end, always pointed.

On the basis of the above, the author considers that these Egyptian flat-section objects should be identified as hairpins, and they are referred to as such from now on.

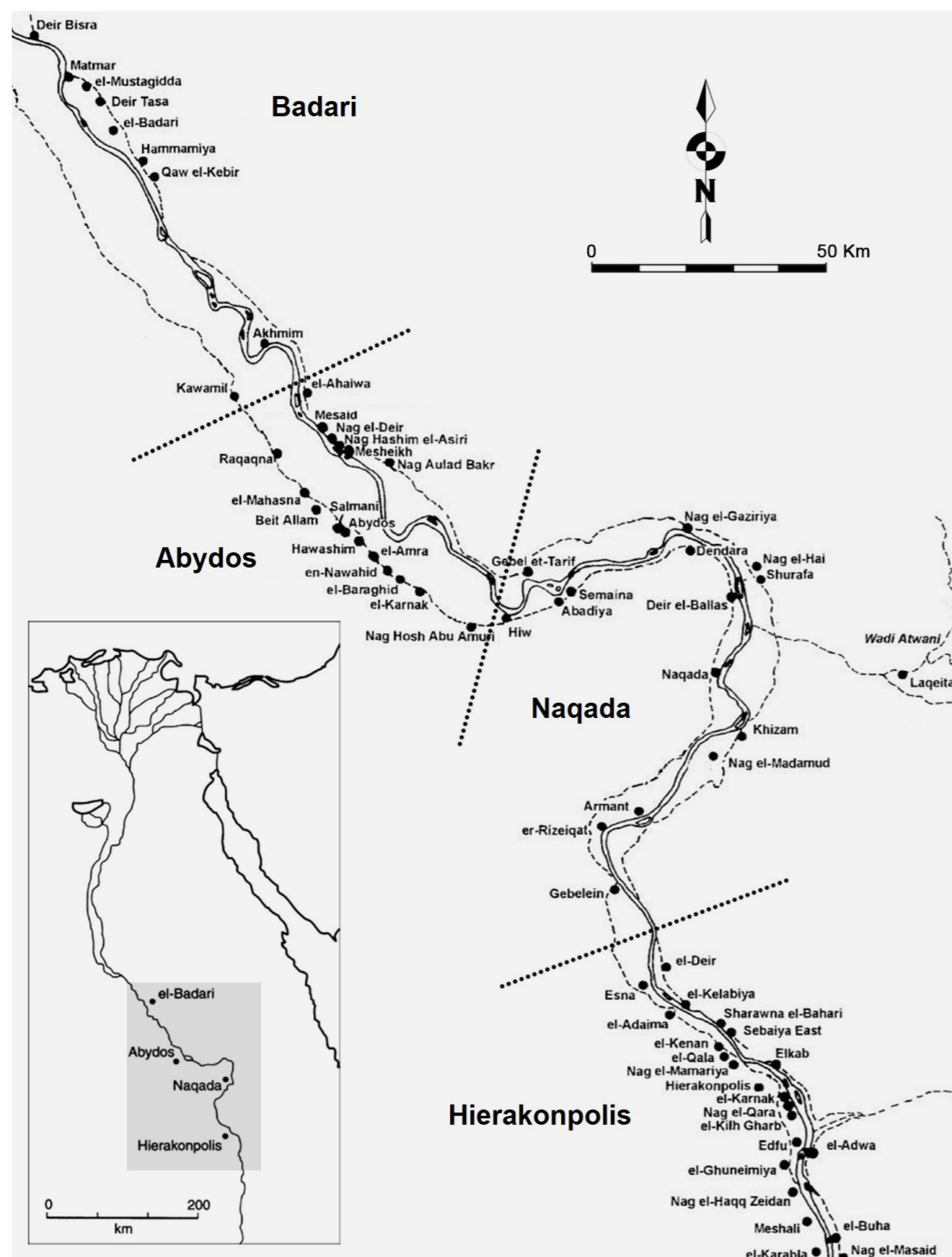


Figure 4. Map with four regions of the Upper and Middle Egypt during the Predynastic Period (After Hendrickx and van den Brink 2002: 367-368).

1. | Egyptian Predynastic and Protodynastic hairpins

A large number of hairpins were manufactured during the Predynastic and Protodynastic Periods. Their designs demanded great dexterity and show a complex symbolic conception. Moreover, the use of valuable raw materials denotes the status of their owners. Many types of hairpins are not attested in later periods.

The author of this article prepared for her doctoral dissertation a catalogue of hair combs and hairpins as the basis for establishing a typology and chronological study of these types of objects.¹⁰ Although it is true that all of them came from funerary contexts, it is also important to bear in mind that, for instance, the study of settlements is quite recent. As a consequence, the absence of these objects in other archaeological contexts must be taken with caution.

This research focused on the four main regions of Upper and Middle Egypt: Hierakonpolis, Naqada, Abydos and Badari (fig. 4). As regards its chronological limits, the necropolises examined were in use from the Badarian Period to Naqada III. Therefore, this vast time span allows one to distinguish trends and changes in the decorative patterns at each Predynastic phase. Furthermore, the presence of royal, elite and non-elite interments¹¹ provides the opportunity to compare combs and hairpins from funerary equipment of individuals with different social status.

¹⁰ Martín del Río 2016.

¹¹ This nomenclature indicates the existence of burials with different degrees of complexity; it is clear that interments with subsidiary tombs relate to individuals with a high status and socio-economic control.

¹² Hairpin MAN77734X (Saint Germain en Laye, Musée d'Archéologie Nationale) is not included in this study because it cannot be certainly dated to the Predynastic Period and is still under study.

2. | Flat-section hairpins

This category encompasses objects with flat lanceolate shaped bodies, which are clearly different from those pins with cylindrical shaped rods.

All documented complete pieces are decorated. The heads show zoomorphic elements. In some cases, it is even possible to distinguish the lower part of these ornaments in incomplete objects, although it is not always enough to allow its identification. The figurative element may be isolated or crowning a series of angular or circular mouldings that, occasionally, exceed ten levels. Geometric or anthropomorphic decoration is not attested.

This category of hairpins was exclusively used during Predynastic times. However, circular-section hairpins are documented beyond the Greco-Roman Period.

There are only twenty-five flat hairpins attested (see Appendix).¹² Considering that more than a hundred circular-rod hairpins have been identified, it seems clear that this type of hairpin was rarely used, a fact that may raise some questions about their nature and features.

As mentioned above, a typology was proposed based on the decoration of these hairpins. In the catalogue of the thesis, a numerical code was assigned to each category; these codes correspond to the ones given in brackets. Accordingly, flat-section hairpins are separated into three different groups: quadrupeds, birds and reptiles (table 1).



Figure 5. (a) flat hairpin with bovine head (AM 1895.958) and two objects of similar decoration: (b) comb (UC 15453) and (c) hairpin of circular section (AM 1895.952).

2. 1. | Quadrupeds (Type I.2.C.1) (see fig. 10)

While several species of quadrupeds were documented on combs and circular-section pins, only a bovine figure has been attested on flat hairpins. Further, there is only one example of this type. This decorative motif is also rare in circular hairpins, and it only appears on combs on rare occasions (fig. 5). In this case, the head of the animal is carved on top of five sections of mouldings.

This type of motif—which also appears in other objects, such as palettes, amulets and tusks—is usually associated with the celestial goddess Bat,¹³ whose horns could also be topped with birds.

¹³ Capel and Markoe 1996: 122; Hart 2000: 56-57; Hendrickx 2002: 292-295; 2005: 14-15.

¹⁴ Palettes, amulets, combs and pottery receptacles with this decorative motif, both incised and carved.

¹⁵ Hendrickx 2014: 137.

Hairpin AM 1895.958 was found in Tomb 1678 of Naqada's main cemetery. Its date is uncertain because it is a unique item and the equipment of this tomb has not been dated either. As a consequence, based on other objects with the same decoration pattern,¹⁴ the chronology proposed is Naqada IA and Naqada IID2.¹⁵ For the same reasons, it is also impossible to establish a geographical projection of this type of flat hairpin. Nor can a gender identification be stated, or a connection between the hairpin and the body of the deceased. However, it is known that this hairpin was found close to the head of an adult individual, which is the most common location of this type of artefact.

2. 2. | Birds (Type I.2.C.2)

There exist three decorative variants of this group: a single bird carved directly on the head of the hairpin; a single bird carved on top of mouldings; and a pair of birds carved on top of the mouldings.

2. 2. 1. | Single bird carved on the head of the hairpin (Type I.2.C.2.a) (see fig. 11)

The absence of intermediate decorative elements between the bird—in a seated or standing position—and the body of the rod is the defining feature of this variant. Despite the schematic designs, the different parts of the animal's body can be easily identified (fig. 6.a).

The rest of funerary goods to which these objects were associated suggests a chronology between Naqada IC and Naqada IIC.



Figure 6. flat hairpin with birds in its three variants (a) single bird (el Mahasna, H29), (b) Single bird carved on top of moulding (AM 1895.950) and (c) A pair of birds carved on top of moulding (UC 4524).

Figure 7. (a) flat hairpin (MFA 11.286a) compared with a serpent and (b) decorated knife (University College London, UC 16294).

Type	Badari	Abydos	Naqada	unknown site
I.2.C.1 <i>Bovidae- bovinæ</i>			1	
I.2.C.2.a Single bird		2	2	
Type I.2.C.2.b Single bird on top of moulding	1		1	1
Type I.2.C.2.d Pair of birds on top of moulding	2		2	
Type I.2.C.2.f Unidentifiable bird				1
Type I.2.C.3.a Serpents		1	3	
Unclassified		2	3	3
Total	3	5	12	5

Table 1. Geographical distribution of flat section hairpins.

With regard to their geographical distribution, these hairpins come from the regions of Abydos and Naqada, mainly from the necropolis of el-Mahasna (burials H29 and H45) and Naqada's main cemetery (tombs N1503 and N1852). Due to the lack of conclusive evi-

dence, it is difficult to establish a relationship between the objects and the bodies of the deceased; it is only possible to state that their owners were adults. Moreover, in H45 the hairpin was found in the south corner of the pit, while in H29, it was close to the feet of the two

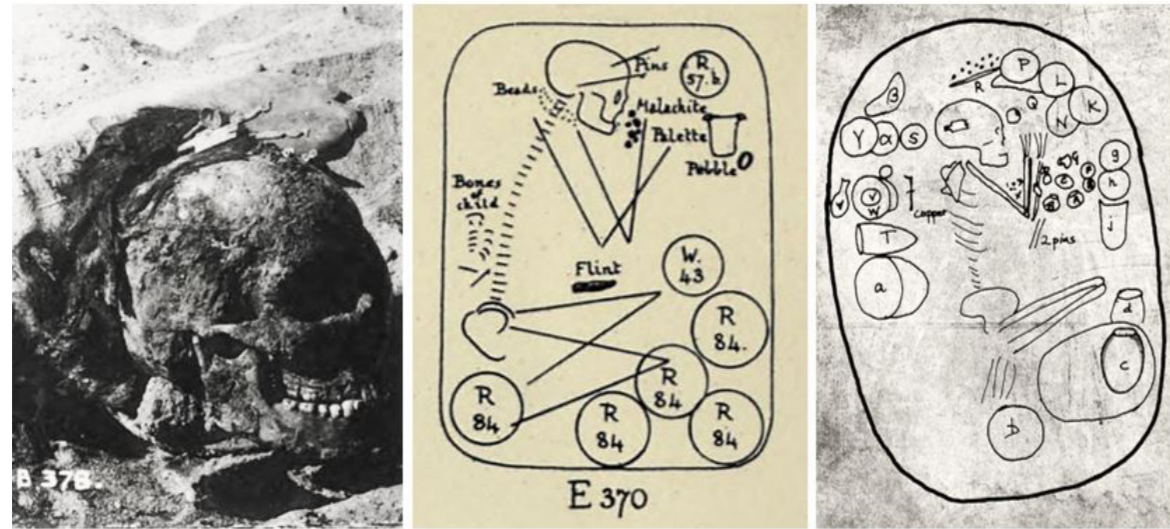


Figure 8. (a) Photograph of the cranium gathered in the tomb Abadiya B378 and two drawings, (b) Abydos E370 and (c) Hierakonpolis HK27-66, containing hairpins and combs.

individuals buried there. In Naqada Tomb N1852, it was deposited on the forearms of the owner, while there are no details about the location of the hairpin in Tomb N1503.¹⁶

2.2.2. | Single bird carved on top of mouldings (Type I.2.C.2.b) (see fig. 12)

This type is characterised by the presence of a series of mouldings just below the ornamental head, acting as a sort of base for it. These elements separate the figurative decoration from the body of the rod.

The only attested item with intact decoration shows a bird in motion, perhaps flying or agitated (fig. 6.b). The way the craftsman represented the bird's attitude is similar to the animals displayed in some combs adorned with single birds.

Concerning their chronology, these items are dated between Naqada IC and Naqada

IIA. They came from the Naqada and Badari regions, from Naqada's main cemetery and the Matmar cemetery respectively. A female adult was buried in Tomb Matmar 2640, so a major interpretation about the relationship between the hairpins and the deceased cannot be stated. Furthermore, it is also difficult to assess their location with respect to the body.

2.2.3. | A pair of birds carved on top of mouldings (Type I.2.C.2.d) (see fig. 13)

The decorative motifs of this type of hairpin consist of a pair of birds that face in opposite directions and that rests on a succession of mouldings (between five and ten pairs), just as in the previous group. Their bodies are structured as a sort of ring, which recalls the horns of a bovid. However, no further similarities can be drawn between this type and type I.2.C.1.b (fig. 6.c).

The geographical distribution of these objects corresponds to the Badari region—the Matmar and Qaw el-Kebir necropolises—and Naqada's main cemetery; two hairpins have been found in each area.

Three out of four tombs are dated back to Naqada IIA, while the pottery found in N162 corresponds to Naqada IID1. Therefore, the chronology of these objects might be Naqada IIA-Naqada IID1.

On two occasions, the age and gender of the owners are documented: they both were female adults. Nevertheless, Qaw el-Kebir (136) is the only example in which there is evidence for the connection between the body of the deceased and the hairpin, which was found next to the deceased's knees.



Figure 9. Cranium from the burial n° 85 of el-Kab, where the displacement of pins can be seen (Courtesy of Belgian Excavations at ElKab).

2.3. | Reptiles (Type I.2.C.3)

2.3.1. | Snakes (Type I.2.C.3.a) (see fig. 15)

This category of hairpins includes those items decorated with a winding figure—similar to a snake slithering—on the head of the rod.

Four objects of this type have been attested; two of them are complete and the animals' heads can be distinguished: in MFA 11.286a, it resembles the angled head of the *Cerastes cerastes*, while in UC 5265, because of the unusual width of the head, the decorative motif looks like a cobra. Likewise, the whole body of the snake is visible on the first example and its tail is modelled (fig. 7). The figures carved on the rest of hairpins show different degrees of fracture. However, the mouldings are still in place—despite being damaged—and are analogous to the ones already described.

The necropolises where these objects were found are located in the regions of Abydos, Me-said (109) and Naqada. Concerning the latter area, the objects came from Naqada's main

cemetery (259 and 1654) and Abadiya's cemetery (B101).

Based on the funerary ensembles of the tombs, the dates proposed are Naqada IC and Naqada IIC/IID2. There is not enough evidence to suggest any gender pattern. However, as regards the age of the owners, two adults were buried in Naqada 1654, whereas a hairpin appeared close to an infant in Abadiya B101. In Naqada 1654, this hairpin was placed on the back of the designated body B, next to two combs.

Conclusions

The study of flat-section hairpins demonstrates their unique nature. In comparison to the circular type, their limited presence on the material record arose many questions. To provide satisfactory answers to these issues, a comparative study between both categories were made, having in mind the following criteria: materials, association with gender and age groups, location within the tomb, geographical distribution, dimensions, connection with

¹⁶ Ayrton and Loat 1911: 11-12, 26-28; Baumgartel 1970: LX; Petrie 1920: 30; University College London 1999: notebook n° 138.

Type	Ivory	Bone	Unidentified
I.2.C.1 <i>Bovidae-bovinae</i>		1	
I.2.C.2.a Single bird	3	1	
Type I.2.C.2.b Single bird on top of moulding	2	1	
Type I.2.C.2.d Pair of birds on top of moulding	1	3	
Type I.2.C.2.f Unidentifiable bird	1		
Type I.2.C.3.a Serpents	1	3	
Unclassified	4	3	1
Total	12	12	1

Table 2. Raw materials used for creating flat section hairpins.

other objects associated with hair care and decoration patterns.

The study of provenance is organised according to four regions: Hierakonpolis, Naqada, Abydos and Badari,¹⁷ since the presence of flat-section hairpins presents some local differences (see table 1):

1. The absence of these types of hairpins in the site of Hierakonpolis is noteworthy. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that the ongoing archaeological works carried out in HK6 and other cemeteries are providing remarkable insights into the development of the site and its regional influence.

2. Half of the findings come from Naqada, while a similar number of objects were found in the others two sites: Badari and Abydos.

3. At Badari there only appeared birds on mouldings, whereas at Abydos there are only single birds without mouldings and serpents.

4. Naqada region is the only one in which the three categories are attested (bovine figures, birds and snakes). The high number of objects found and their variety of decoration seems to indicate that this region could have been a production and distribution centre of flat hairpins.¹⁸

Materials used for their manufacture. Due to the impossibility of studying all the pieces personally, archaeological reports and museum catalogues became an essential source of information. In this regard, the current location of the hairpin from the Hu cemetery (U113) is unknown, and the only available reference for it is the drawings published by Petrie.¹⁹ The rest of items were made out of bone or ivory; no special predilection for any of these two materials seems to be proved (see table 2). It is also important to point out that no wood hairpins—neither flat nor circular—have been documented.

¹⁷ Hendrickx and van den Brink 2002: 367-368.

¹⁸ Martín del Río 2006: 781-788.

¹⁹ Petrie 1901: X-9.

Type	Measurements (cm)
I.2.C.1 <i>Bovidae-bovinae</i>	6.8 (broken)
I.2.C.2.a Single bird	6.2–11.0
Type I.2.C.2.b Single bird on top of moulding	13.8–15.3
Type I.2.C.2.d Pair of birds on top of moulding	10.7–19.3
Type I.2.C.2.f Unidentifiable bird	4.0 (broken) and 10.0
Type I.2.C.3.a Serpents	15.0–15.6

Table 3. Measurements of flat section hairpins.

The dimensions of the hairpins vary depending on their type, although most of them ranged between 10 to 15 cm long. The smaller ones are those decorated with a single bird, between 6 and 11 cm (table 3). However, the hairpins decorated with snakes measure 15 cm, while there is also one example with two birds of 19 cm long. Besides that, there are eight objects quite damaged (fig. 14 and 16a-b); in those cases, the

loss of part of the figurative elements makes it impossible to classify them. Likewise, the only instance with a bovidae figure is incomplete, so we cannot know its precise size.

It is also quite difficult to figure it out if there was some connection between these hairpins and the gender and age of their owners, particularly as there is no reliable information for 70.8% of the corpses. This means that only eight out of twenty-five burials provide data in this regard: seven adults and one infant have flat hairpins among their funerary goods. Consequently, and based on the available evidence, we could suggest that these utensils were usually associated with mature individuals, even though this consideration must be taken cautiously (table 4).

The position of these pins within the tomb should also be taken into account to assess its relation to the deceased's hair. However, this analysis poses two important challenges, mainly due to the limits that early excavations entail. On the one hand, there is no information and graphic records of many of the findings. On the other, the archaeological reports do not

Type	Male	Female	Infant	Unidentified Adult	No information
I.2.C.1 <i>Bovidae-bovinae</i>				1	
I.2.C.2.a Single bird		1			3
Type I.2.C.2.b Single bird on top of moulding		1			2
Type I.2.C.2.d Pair of birds on top of moulding		2			2
Type I.2.C.2.f Unidentifiable bird					1
Type I.2.C.3.a Serpents			1	1	2
Unclassified		1			7
Total		5	1	2	17

Table 4. Age and sex of individuals associated with flat section hairpins.

always provide relevant information that could help us to understand the taphonomic processes that affected the materials, specially the human bodies. These phenomena are essential to determining whether combs and hairpins were usually placed directly on the hair. Pictures and drawings are essential in this regard. A good example of this would be a photograph taken during the excavations in tomb Abadiya B378, which shows a series of hairpins and a comb-pin kept in the deceased's hair; additionally, there are two drawings in the excavation reports of Abydos and Hierakonpolis (Abydos E370 and Hierakonpolis HK27-66) that confirm the existence of hairpins and combs on the skulls (see fig. 8).²⁰

Concerning flat hairpins, it is impossible to determine the precise location of fifteen of the objects under study. Therefore, it is quite difficult to formulate a sound proposal in this regard. Furthermore, it must be taken into account that foreheads, trunks and hands/forearms could be secondary locations for these objects, caused by the decomposition of the hair, the movements of the skull or some external actions (fig. 9). On three occasions these pins were found close to the lower limbs: one on the knees, other under the femur and the third one between the feet of the two individuals buried in a double internment.

The burial ensembles that included these hairpins consist in a wide range of funerary goods, including luxury items such as silver bowls, ivory objects, maceheads, personal or-

naments of gold, coral, tortoise-shell, semiprecious stones, etc., as well as tusks and bone, ivory and gold figurines. Because of the lack of information about six of the twenty-five internments studied, this analysis is based on the study of nineteen items.²¹

Personal ornaments appear on eleven burials, and are usually associated with bird type pins, including all its variants. Likewise, tusks and tags are exclusively associated with hairpins decorated with single birds or snakes. We cannot draw parallels between the hairpin with the bovine representation and the rest of examples because it is a unique piece and the burial where it was found was altered.

Finally, the presence of different kinds of hairpins and combs as part of the same burial assemblage was also examined. There are only two instances where flat and circular hairpins appeared together; both examples come from the cemetery of Mahasna (H29 and H45).²² By contrast, pairs of flat-section hairpins are documented in four tombs: in Naqada 1503, both items have single birds carved on them; in Matmar 2640, decorations with one and two birds are combined; and, in Mahasna H29 and Naqada 162, one object of each type is associated with an unclassified flat-section hairpin.²³ Nevertheless, those items decorated with snake motives never appear with other hairpins, neither flat nor circular ones.

Combs are common companions to hairpins: thirteen of the analysed tombs included combs,²⁴ usually one or two, although this

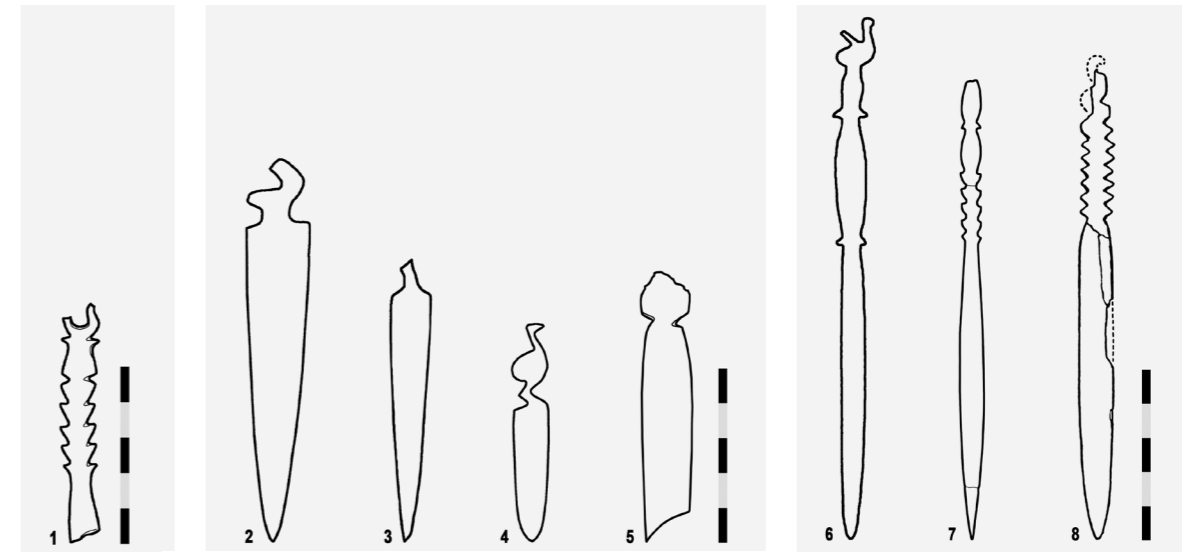


Figure 10. Hairpin type I.2.C.1.b Bovinae.

Figure 11. Type I.2.C.2.a. Single bird carved on the head of the hairpin.

Figure 12. Type I.2.C.2.b. Single bird carved on top.

number could rise to three, five, or even six. Moreover, all variants of combs are documented, except for the comb-hairpin. In terms of decoration, birds prevail, followed by quadrupeds and examples with no decoration. Combs with geometric designs and those with simulated teeth also appear in the same proportion. The ones adorned with snakes were not documented together with flat hairpins with similar animal decoration.

The title of this paper summarises the state of the research about these flat-section objects. The conclusions are opened for discussion, especially for the limited number of items and because some pieces have no information concerning their archaeological context. For that reason, a comprehensive study using the highest number of variables was undertaken, including ethnographic analogies and experimental archaeology. The results seem to support the hypothesis that these unique pieces worked as hairpins at a specific time in the Egyptian Predynastic Period (Naqada I–Naqada II). The symbolism of their decoration is left

for future discussion since it must be taken into account the motifs represented in the hairpins of circular section.

Appendix

Relation of hairpins of flat section

	Type	Site	Date
Type I.2.C.1.b. Bovidae – bovinæ (fig. 10)			
1	AM 1895.958	Naqada (1678)	NIA-IID2(?)
Type I.2.C.2.a. Single bird (fig. 11)			
2	BoM 1909.76:07	el Mahasna (H45)	NIC
3	UC 4181	Naqada (1503)	NIC
4	EMC (–)	el Mahasna (H29)	NIIA
5	UC 5271A	Naqada (1852)	NIIC
Type I.2.C.2.b. Single bird on top of moulding (fig. 12)			
6	AM 1895.950	Naqada (1503)	NIC
7	UC 15188	Unknown	No date
8	MAA 1931.945 A	Matmar (2640)	NIIA

²⁰ Adams 1987: 67-68; Naville 1914: III n° 2; Petrie 1898: 34, VI.

²¹ We should bear in mind that some of the burials might have been altered and that, in some cases, our only available information about their elements consist in brief annotations, sketches and drawings from the excavation reports and diaries, distribution lists, museum records, etc.

²² Ayrton and Loat 1911: 11-12, 26-28.

²³ Brunton 1948: 19, 100; Payne 1987: 183; Petrie 1920: 30.

²⁴ Of the three remaining burial assemblages, two of them are plundered, according to Petrie (Naqada 1768) and Brunton (Matmar 2640); the information about the third one (Mesaid 109) comes from the Museum of Fine Art of Boston, its custodian institution.

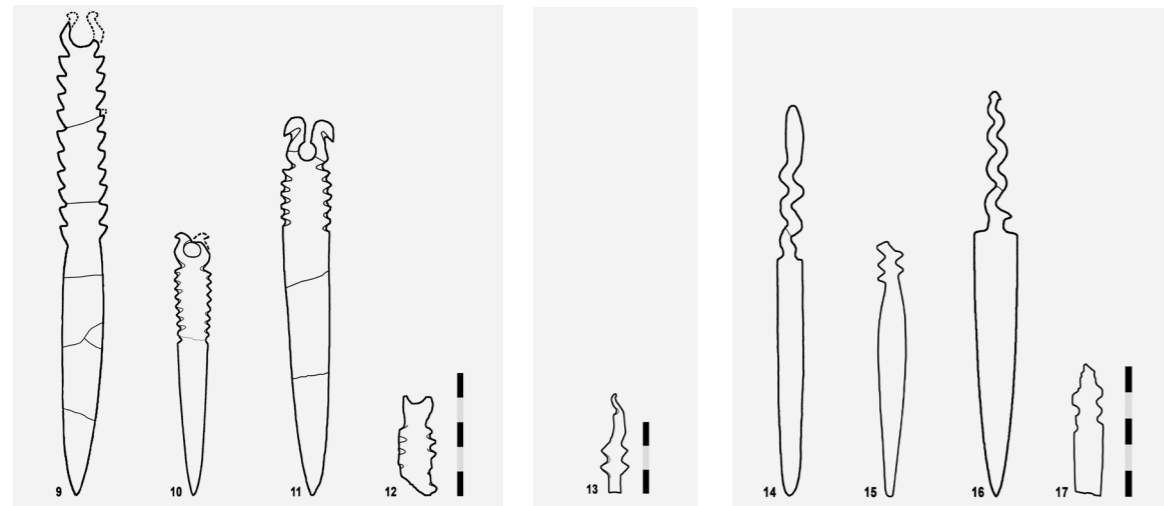


Figure 13. Type I.2.C.2.b. A pair of birds carved on top of moulding.

Figure 14. Type I.2.C.2.f. Bird not classified.

Figure 15. Type I.2.C.3. Reptiles – Snakes.

	Type	Site	Date
Type I.2.C.2.d. Pair of birds on top of moulding (fig. 13)			
9	EMC 54328	Matmar (2640)	NIIA
10	MM 7028	Qaw el-Kebir	NIIA
11	UC 4524	Naqada (293)	NIIA-IIC(?)
12	UC 4548	Naqada (162)	NIID1
Type I.2.C.2.f. Unidentifiable bird (fig. 14)			
13	UC 15187	Unknown	No date
Type I.2.C.3.a. Serpentes (fig. 15)			
14	UC 5265	Naqada (1654)	NIC
15	AME.960	Abadiya B101	NIIA

16	MFA 11.286a	Mesaid (109)	NIIC
17	UC 4399	Naqada (259)	NIIC-IID2
Flat-section hairpins - Unclassified (figs. 16a and 16b)			
18	Unknown	Hu (U113)	NIA-IID2
19	MFA 11.272	Mesaid (30)	NIA-IID2
20	UC 5269	Naqada (1768)	NIC-IIC
21	UC 4550cd	Naqada (162)	NIID1
22	MMA 23.2.25b	Unknown	No date
23	UC 15189	Unknown	No date
24	UC 73085	Unknown	No date
25	PAHMA 6-3212	Nag el-Deir	NIC

IDENTIFICATION	INSTITUTION	LOCATION
AM	Ashmolean Museum	Oxford – England
BoM	Bolton Museum	Bolton – England
EMC	Egyptian Museum Cairo	Cairo – Egypt
MAA	Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology	Cambridge University, Cambridge – England
MFA	Museum of Fine Art	Boston – USA
MM	Manchester Museum	Manchester – England
MMA	The Metropolitan Museum of Art	New York – USA
PAHMA	Phoebe A. Hearst Museum Anthropology	Berkeley University – California - USA
UC	The Petrie Museum	London University College, London – England

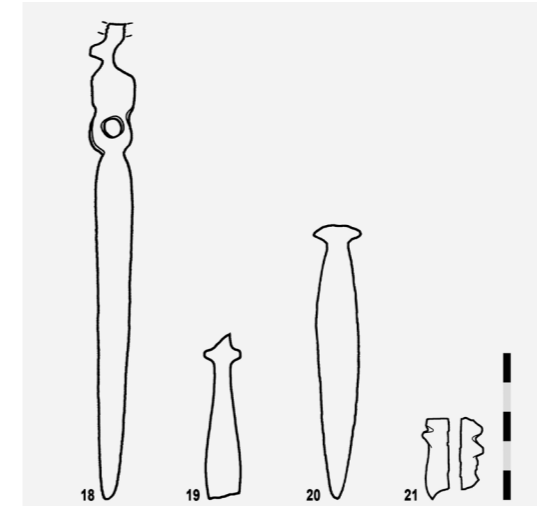


Figure 16a. Flat section hairpins, unclassified.

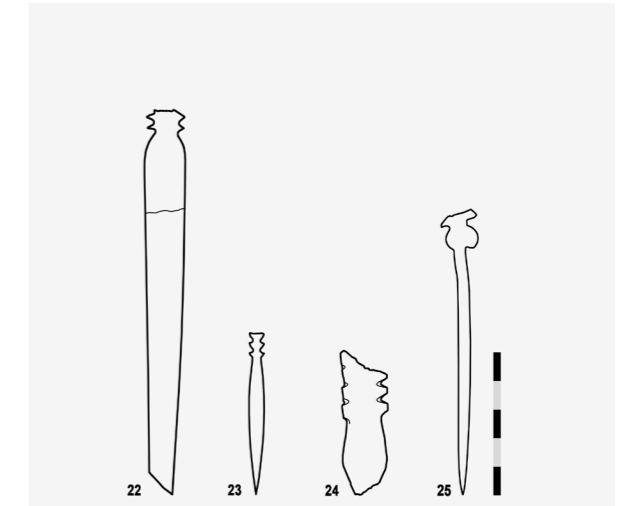


Figure 16b. Flat section hairpins, unclassified.

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Plañidera. Isabel Sánchez Marqués.

Cova fue una mujer de gran valía en lo humano y lo intelectual. Referente femenino en una disciplina novedosa en España, la Egiptología, y por ello, pionera en muchos aspectos. Su magisterio y consejo han dejado huella en nuestras investigaciones. Quienes tuvimos la suerte de conocerla y compartir con ella experiencias humanas y científicas, la mantendremos siempre en nuestro recuerdo.

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Prefacio

A Covadonga le gustaba conducir, le apasionaba estar al volante de su coche. “Pareces una chica del futurismo italiano”, le decía un amigo, aunque su primer automóvil fuera pequeño, blanco con un techo amarillo y a veces le costase llegar a su destino. Estuvimos años riendo cuando nos acordábamos del nombre con que habíamos bautizado aquella máquina. En nuestro recuerdo, ella sigue siendo la joven radiante y activa que conocimos a sus veinte años. Y su personalidad permanece entre nosotros como un perfume indeleble, retomando los versos del poeta alejandrino que tanto le gustaba. Quienes asistieron a sus conferencias conocieron la calidez de su voz; sus clases en la universidad crearon vocaciones; son, sin embargo, los que compartieron con ella su amistad quienes disfrutaron de los rasgos más sobresalientes de su personalidad: la generosidad, la entrega desinteresada a los demás. Cova tenía una capacidad excepcional para la empatía hacia los que se le acercaban. Eso le hizo ganar afectos en todos los ámbitos de su vida y conservarlos, desde los compañeros del colegio de la infancia y la pandilla de la juventud a los colegas de la madurez. Este tributo pretende también transmitir a las generaciones futuras el legado de una persona excepcional y la huella que dejó en su generación.

Un grupo de amigos que vivimos con ella sus labores de docencia, investigación o proyectos arqueológicos, decidimos rendirle un homenaje particular, uno más entre los que se le han dedicado desde el momento en que su *ka* voló al cielo. Este volumen es el resultado de esa voluntad de crear nuestro monumento a su memoria, por tantas experiencias inolvidables compartidas. El homenaje ha querido ser un caleidoscopio de miradas desde las que reflejar la personalidad de Covadonga y hemos preferido romper el formato académico tradicional. Los artículos se entrelazan con fotografías, dibujos, semblanzas o poemas que pretenden dejar constancia de la huella que ella legó a sus autores. Es nuestra ofrenda para que su *ba* siga regresando desde donde esté hasta nosotros, cada vez que la nombremos y en cada ocasión en que su recuerdo tome forma en nuestro corazón.

Foreword

Covadonga enjoyed driving; she loved being behind the wheel of her car. A friend used to tell her “you look like a woman of the Italian Futurism,” although her first car was small and white with a yellow roof, and sometimes had difficulties reaching its destination. We laughed for years remembering the name with which we baptized that machine. In our memories, she is still the radiant and active young woman we met in her twenties, and her personality remains among us as an indelible scent, to draw upon the verse of an Alexandrian poet that she loved so much. Those who attended her lectures knew the warmth of her voice, her classes at the university created vocations, however, it is those who shared her friendship who enjoyed the most outstanding features of her personality: generosity, and selfless dedication to others. Cova had an exceptional capacity for empathy toward those who approached her. This allowed her to win affection in all aspects of her life and to retain it, from the classmates of her early schooldays, to the circles of her youth, to the colleagues of her adult years. This tribute will surely be transmitted to future generations as the legacy of an exceptional individual, and the mark she left on her generation.

As a group of friends who lived with her through teaching, research, or archaeological projects, we have decided to pay her a particular tribute; one more among the many that have been dedicated to her from the moment her ka flew to heaven. This volume is the result of our desire to create for her a monument to so many unforgettable shared experiences. We decided that this tribute should be a kaleidoscope, to reflect Covadonga’s personality, and we have thus preferred to break from the traditional academic format. The articles are intertwined with photographs, drawings, sketches, or poems that are intended to record the traces she left with their authors. It is our offering so that her ba keeps coming back to us from where she now is, every time that her memory takes shape in our hearts.

Carta a una hermana en la luz

Son los hermanos y las hermanas quienes le hablan a su hermana en la luz, como el hijo que le habla a su padre, como la hija que le habla a su madre.

¡O Senet, Senet Meret! Que Osiris-Khentamentiú te otorgue millones de años respirando aliento en tu nariz, dándote pan y cerveza junto a Hathor, Señora de la Tierra de Luz.

Tu condición es como la vida millones de veces, por orden de los dioses que están en el cielo y la tierra. Que Ha, Señor de Occidente, actúe en tu favor de acuerdo a sus deseos, que Anubis, Señor del Buen Entierro actúe para ti como él lo quiera. Que pueda levantar una barrera contra los enemigos, hombres y mujeres malvados que se oponen a tu casa, tus hermanos, tus padres, tu memoria y tus obras.

Fuiste excelente en la tierra, por lo que también serás capaz y eficiente en el Más Allá. Que se te hagan ofrendas, que se realice la fiesta Haker para ti, que hagan la fiesta del Wag, que te den pan y cerveza del altar de Khentamentiú. Que puedas viajar río abajo en la Barca del Ocaso y que navegues río arriba en la Barca de la Mañana. Que estés justificada junto a cada dios. Que te conviertas en alguien elogiado por nuestros espíritus masculinos y femeninos.

¿Has visto estos lamentos ahora que estás allí en el Más Allá?

¡Oh, gran dolor! Útil es una queja para hablar de lo que se hace contra nosotros de una manera tan injusta. Aunque no hay nada que hayamos hecho contra los dioses, y aunque no hemos comido de sus ofrendas, ¡sin embargo nos han privado de ti!

Te han traído aquí a la Ciudad de la Eternidad, sin que albergues ira contra nosotros. Pero si hubiera un reproche en tu corazón, olvídale por el bien de tus hermanas y hermanos. Sé misericordiosa, sé misericordiosa, y así todos los dioses del nomo de This serán misericordiosos contigo.

Mantén alejadas todas las aflicciones dirigidas a nosotros, tus hermanas y hermanos, porque tú sabes que tenemos una gran necesidad de esto. Que vivas para nosotros y así el Grande te elogie. Que la cara del gran dios sea gozosa para ti, y que él te dé pan puro con ambas manos.

Todos los sacrificios funerarios se han realizado para la que está en la luz, a fin de que pueda interceder por nosotros, los sobrevivientes en la tierra que han quedado atrás. Por lo tanto, busca que el que causó aquello de lo que estamos sufriendo ahora te dé una explicación, porque necesitamos entender y queremos también ser justificados delante de los dioses como lo eres ahora, entendiendo todo, justificada y transfigurada.

Son los hermanos y hermanas quienes le hablan a su hermana, para quien la luz ya nunca se oscurecerá.

Letter to an enlightened sister

It is the brothers and sisters who are speaking to their sister like the son who is speaking to his father, like the daughter who is speaking to her mother.

O Senet, Senet Meret! May Osiris-Khentamentiu make millions of years for you by breathing breath into your nose, by giving bread and beer beside Hathor, Lady of the Land-of-Light.

Your condition is like life millions of time, by command of the gods who are in heaven and earth. May Ha, Lord of the West, act on your behalf as he wishes, may Anubis, Lord of the Good Burial act for you as he wishes. May you erect a barrier against male and female enemies, male and female evil ones who oppose your house, your brother, your mother, your memory, your deeds.

You are one who was excellent on earth, therefore you will also be capable in the hereafter. May one make offerings to you, may one make the Haker-feast for you, may one make the Wag-feast for you, may one give you bread and beer from the altar of Khentamentiu. You will travel downstream in the Bark-of-the-Evening and sail upstream in the Bark-of-the-Morning. May you be given justification at the side of every god. Make yourself into someone praised by our male and female ghosts.

Have you seen this lamentation now that you are there in the hereafter?

O, great grief! Useful is a complaint to speaking concerning this which is done against us in such an unjust way, although there is nothing that we have done against the gods, and although we have not eaten of his offerings, nevertheless they have deprived us of you!

You have been brought here to the City of Eternity, without you harbouring anger against us. But if there is a reproach in your heart, forget it for the sake of your sisters and brothers. Be merciful, be merciful, then all the gods of the Thinite nome will be merciful towards you.

Keep away all afflictions directed at us, your sisters and brothers, for you know we have a need for this. May you live for us in order for the Great One to praise you. May the face of the great god be joyous because of you, so that he will give you pure bread with both his hands.

All mortuary sacrifices are made for the enlightened one in order to intercede on behalf of the inhabitants of earth. Therefore seek an explanation from him who caused that of which we are suffering now, for we want to be justified in front of the gods same as you are now.

It is the brothers and sisters who are speaking to their sister, she for whom the light will never darken.