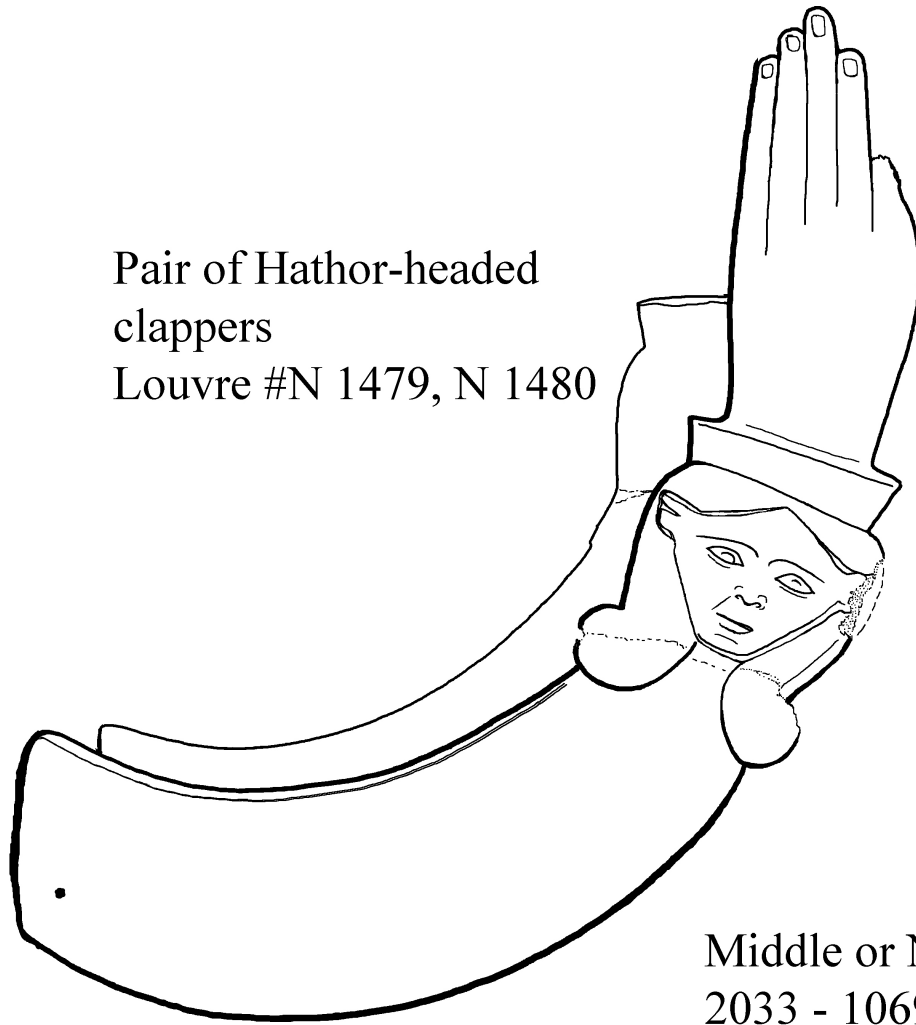


Pair of Hathor-headed
clappers
Louvre #N 1479, N 1480



Middle or New Kingdom?
2033 - 1069 BCE

These two clappers are curved, due to the shape of the hippopotamus ivory with which they were carved. Each end was originally decorated with the head of the goddess Hathor and a slender hand, although the one clapper has since lost its hand. In antiquity they would have been held together by a cord inserted through a tiny hole each has at the end. They would have been used as a percussion instrument by clapping them together. Clappers like these "seem to be the first musical instruments to have been depicted on vases, as early in the predynastic period. Clappers with hands appeared in the Middle Kingdom, yet it seems that the most beautiful of these objects can be dated to the New Kingdom, particularly those representing a head of Hathor. Music and dance played an important role in ancient Egypt..." (*From the museum website*)

Bleeker quotes an excerpt from a "song sung by the seven Hathors to the great goddess Hathor":

"We laud thee with delightful songs,
For thou art the mistress of jubilation,
The mistress of music, the queen of harp-playing,
The lady of the dance,
The mistress of the chorus-dance, the queen of wreath-weaving."⁷

from **Hathor and Thoth: Two Key Figures of the Ancient Egyptian Religion**,
by Claas Jouco Bleeker, (*Page 53*)