

HPAH6010 Ancient Egyptian Funerary Beliefs Scrapbook

By Sofie Margaret Keddie (UWTSD-1600754)

General information

Measurements

Left Clapper:

- Length- 39.5cm
- Width (at Widest)- 5.5cm
- Circumference- 9.6cm

Right Clapper:

- Length– 40cm
- Width (at widest)- 5.5cm
- Circumference– 9.5cm



Object Details

- Location:
Merthyr-Tydfil, Wales
- Museum:
Cyfarthfa Castle
- Object Number:
2018.994
- Material– wood

- Common material for clappers; Wood, Bone, Ivory
- Shape: straight or curved.
- Clappers can vary in both size and design. Although there tends to be some clear trends.

Scholarship Bibliography:

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- Saunders, Tasheka, 'Google Arts Virtual Exhibition: 'An Egyptian Sound'' <https://artsandculture.google.com/usergallery/VQJiYmOiafEhKQ> [Accessed: 3/02/2021]
- Zinn, Katharina, 'Magic, Pharaonic Egypt', *Encyclopaedia of Ancient History*, University of Cambridge. [ZinnMagic.pdf](#)



The pair of wooden clappers are quite well preserved.

The clappers are approximately the same length and width.

Starts off at a narrow point at one end, and gently gets wider towards the hand at the other end.

From the birds-eye view, the fingers appear quite short and undefined (see image on the left). Although the fingers can be seen a lot clearer on the right image.

There are some areas where the wood is darkened, possibly showing some damage to the material.

Some splits in the wood can be seen. On one clapper more than the other.





Colour key:

Purple: design descriptors

Blue: imperfections/
damages.

There is some small cracks along the thumb around the nail design.



Discolouration in the wood, possibly from moisture.

There is also a small almost horizontal crack running part way across the hand

Both clappers have a slightly rounded edge.

- Late Period 'Faience sistrum part', Brooklyn Museum, New York. 05.359. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/17398>
- New Kingdom 'Mirror with handle in the form of a Hathor Emblem', Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 26.7.1450. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/545165>
- Late Period, bronze 'Horns, forming the headdress of a statue of Hathor', Brooklyn Museum, New York. 36.136. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/46091>
- Late period 'inner Cartouche of Gautsesenu', Brooklyn Museum, New York. 34.1223. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3345>
- New Kingdom Bronze 'Hair curler in the form of a woman', Brooklyn Museum, New York. 37.654E. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/4079>
- Middle Kingdom 'Hairdressing Scene', Brooklyn Museum, New York. 51.231. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3568>
- Old Kingdom 'Offering table of Hetjer' (Brooklyn Museum: 37.1491E) <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/4162>
- New Kingdom Bronze 'Hair curler in the form of a woman' (Brooklyn Museum: 37.654E) <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/4079>

Clappers Images:

- Cyfarthfa castle clapper Catalogue photos: Zinn, Katharina (photographer), UWTSd <<https://moodle.uwtsd.ac.uk/mod/folder/view.php?id=314714>> [Accessed:30/01/2021].
- Wood Castanets (clappers), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 89.4.1843. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/502442?searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=ancient+Egyptian+Musical+Instruments&offset=20&rpp=20&pos=36>
- New Kingdom 'Ivory Clapper', Brooklyn Museum, New York. 14.614. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3109>
- New Kingdom, Bone/Pigment Clapper, Brooklyn Museum, New York. 58.28.7a-b. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/74421>
- Middle Kingdom Ivory 'Pair of Clappers', Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 22.1.143a, b. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/546840>
- Middle Kingdom 'Ivory Clapper', Metropolitan Museum of Art. 22.1.142. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/546844>
- Middle Kingdom Clapper, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 09.180.1251. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/546651?searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=ancient+Egyptian+Musical+Instruments&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=20>
- Ivory Pair of Hathor clappers, Louvre, Paris, N 1479, N 1480, <https://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/pair-clappers>

Image Bibliography

- Middle Kingdom Bow Harp, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 19.3.17. <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/544242searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=Ancient+Egyptian&offset=80&rpp=20&pos=83>>
- New Kingdom Sistrum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 68.44. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/553814?searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=Ancient+Egyptian&offset=180&rpp=40&pos=185>
- Dynasty 18 ‘Female Musicians’ (Artist: Charles K. Wilkinson) , Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 30.4.9. <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/557727> >
- New Kingdom Limestone ‘Relief with Female Musicians’, Brooklyn Museum, New York. 68.150.1. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/94144>
- New Kingdom ‘Relief Featuring Blind Harpist’, Rijksmuseum, VanouDHeden, Netherlands, H.III.W. <<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/relief-featuring-blind-harpist-unknown/iQFCSYb6WJm-4Q>>
- Predynastic ‘Large Marl Vase’, British Museum, London. EA36327. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA36327
- Predynastic ‘Painted Shoulder Jar’, British Museum, London. EA35502. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/Y_EA35502
- Middle Kingdom ‘Paddle Doll’, Brooklyn Museum, New York. 37.102E. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3965>
- New Kingdom ‘Necklace with Bes and Hathor Head Pendant’, Brooklyn Museum, New York. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3507>
- New Kingdom limestone tomb relief, ‘Female Attendants clapping Hands’, Cincinnati Art Museum, USA, 1998.54. <<https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/tomb-relief-female-attendants-clapping-hands-unknown/gQFnWr9KMaTHnw>>
- Ptolemaic Basalt ‘King With Sistra (Rattles) Before Hathor’, Brooklyn Museum, New York. 62.46. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3721>
- Middle Kingdom, Limestone ‘Relief of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II and the Goddess Hathor’, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 07.230.2. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/548212>
- Middle Kingdom Stele ‘Princess Nefertiabet before her meal’ , Louvre, Paris
- Middle Kingdom Limestone Stela of Minhotep’, Brooklyn Museum, New York. 62.46. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3721>
- Old Kingdom Alabaster ‘Vase of Pepy I’ Brooklyn Museum, New York. 37.61E. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/3955>
- Old Kingdom, alabaster ‘Sistrum inscribed with the names of King Teti’, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. 26.7.1450. <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/543897>

On this hand there is shallow, unintentional cracks/splits in the wood. Which shows possible damage or wear over time.

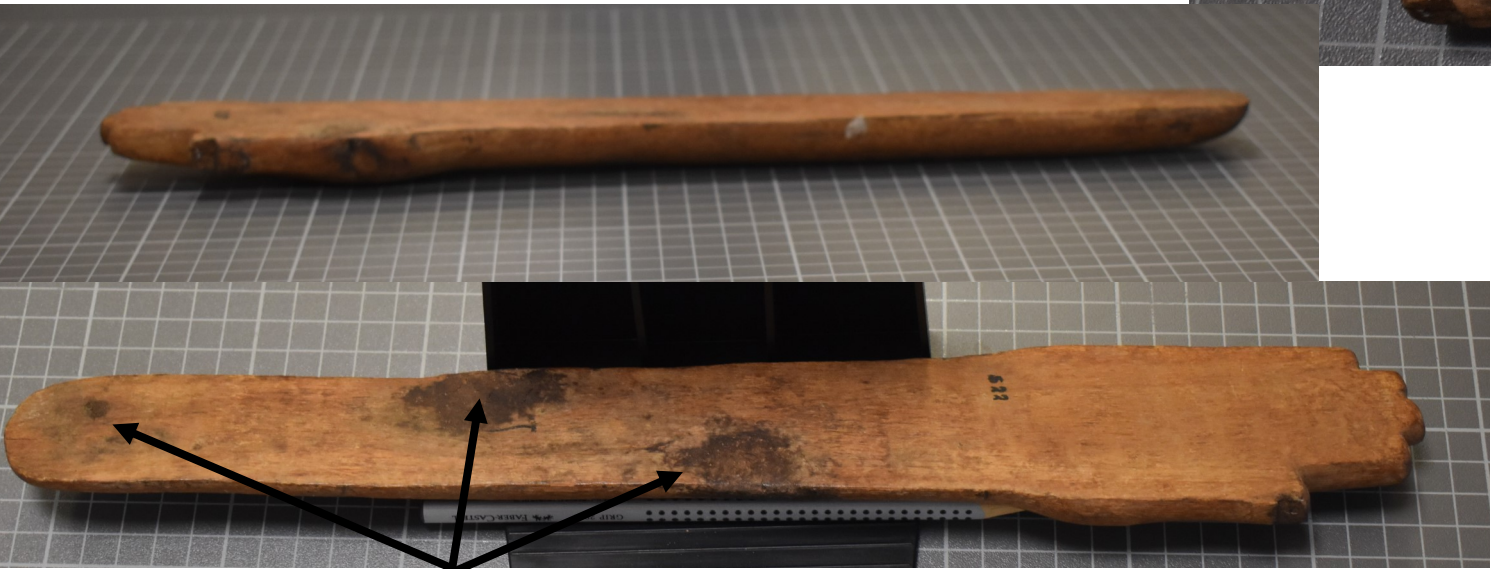


The hands are held with the fingers and thumb pressed together lightly and held out straight. Fingers are facing up and the thumbs are on engraved on the inside of the baton, facing one another. Fingers are defined by a shallow and thin indent in the wood. The fingertips are softly rounded. Fingernails are defined by a deeper rectangular indent which is shown as darker to the rest of the wood.

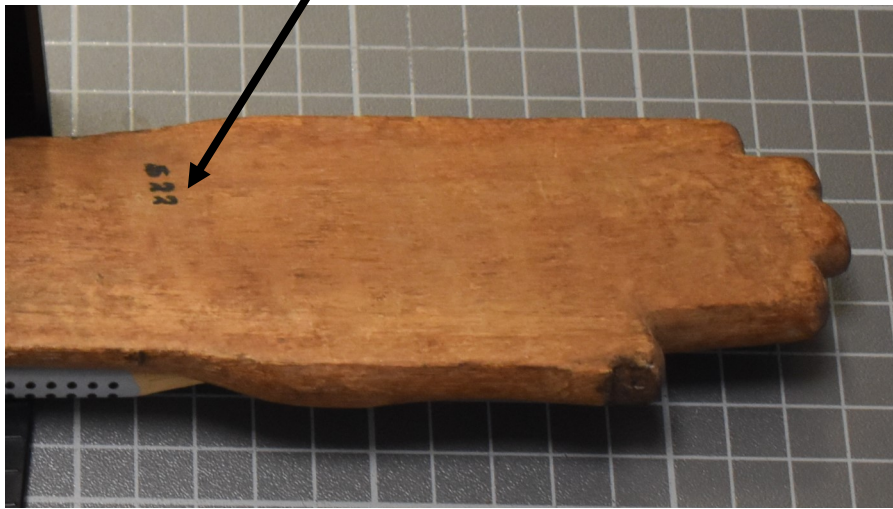
The underside of the object is completely smoothed down. This means that the clappers can be placed down completely flat.



There are small symbols (possibly numbers) on the underside of each clapper. The symbols are in a different position on each clapper.



The dark marks (possibly moisture) goes through to the bottom of the object. There is another small mark further down the object, though it is not as dark.



Modern Comparisons

<https://www.soundtravels.co.uk/p-Claves-973.aspx>



Claves:
These likely make a similar sound to what smaller clappers do.
Like clappers they could work in a similar way even if they were made out of different materials or in different sizes.

Castanets are traditional percussion instruments in many cultures (Spain being the most obvious) and it is one of the most recognised in the western world.
Like some clappers they have holes in the bottom, which many clappers also have.



<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/castanets>

<https://www.frankestein.com/products/granadillo>

Something unexpected:
When I typed into the search engine for ‘modern day clappers’ the first thing that came up was for clap automated lamps and lights.
After a moment I saw the link between that object and ancient Egyptian clappers (if that is possible)
Ancient Egyptian tomb paintings show figures holding their hands up towards the sun, and it is human nature to always seek out light.
It seems that clapping seems to have an association with that quite often. For example;
There is applause when the lights come up in the theatre.
If an unexpected light is seen then a person might automatically reach for it. Sometimes at their own risk.
The clap automated light/lamp I think could encapsulate what the ancient Egyptians were doing when showing hands or clappers reaching up to the sun. clapping encouraged light into situations and the “clapper” (Clap-automated light) does this in a more physical way.

Most of the clappers (other than the wooden ‘castanets’) are not far off the same size.

Which could show that this design was more popular/significant.

The other clappers, even the other ones of the same material, do not seem to have as obvious finger nail markings. This is slightly odd as the natural wrinkles in the hand (such as knuckles) are defined.

One of the main differences seems to be that the Cyfarthfa clappers are lacking almost completely in decorations. Even the simplest design that I have used in comparison at least has a bracelet pattern.

thoughts

it is difficult to deduce whether the Cyfarthfa clappers are of similar design to other wooden clapper at this time, because there are less surviving examples than the ones made of bone or ivory.

There is continuity in designs; concentric circles, bracelets and a depictions of deities such as Hathor.

The design patterns don not seem to have any obvious meaning, but the design was re-used enough, that, there was varying qualities of it.

It does have to be considered, because of the lack of similarities, that it may be a later replica



Instruments

Ancient Egyptians classifications

- Aerophones: ancient equivalent of wind instruments. Trumpets, flutes, oboes, clarinets produced by the Egyptians for military contexts.
- Membranophones– Percussion instrument such as Drums were produced for both military and religious contexts.
- Idiophones– Percussion instruments where the entire body of the instrument vibrates. This category includes; clappers, sistra, rattles cymbals, bells.
- Chordophones– usually string instruments, such as; harps, lutes and lyres.

Definitions from Heigi Kopp-Junk: (the earliest music in ancient Egypt)

Middle Kingdom Bow Harp (MET:19.3.17)



New Kingdom Sistrum (MET:68.44)

Timeline of Ancient Egyptian instruments

5th Millennium BCE:
Rattles appear

4th Millennium BCE,
(after 3100):
Clappers found as
artifacts in tombs.

4th Millennium BCE:
Clappers (depicted on vases)
Flutes appear

3rd millennium BCE:
Harps and drums appear

Predynastic Period

Early dynastic period

The hands is clearly defined.
They are not as 'feminine' as the ivory counterparts.
This may be because the material cannot be shaped in same way as ivory/bone clappers can and be able to last for extended periods.

Wooden Castanets/Clappers (MET museum:89.4.1843

The underside is completely flat, though they are not overly smooth.
This may be that the wood was damaged over time. Or it could have happened during the production process (Less likely).

These clappers are significantly shorter than the other examples I have studied.

- The Cyfarthfa clappers are approximately 40cms long and these pictured here are only around 12cms long.

This and the fact that the MET have classified them as 'castanets' as well as clappers probably means that they were used as a different type of percussion instrument. They were probably played together in one hand. And would have made a higher clapping sound. More like a "clicking sound"



Like the Cyfarthfa clappers; this pair has printed symbols on the underside. Probably put there as a identifier for the museum.

Hathor's image is depicted on the arm of the clapper; her image overtakes the whole wrist. Emphasising her significance.
It is her as a human with cow ears and horns.

One clapper has significant damage at the bottom.
Though the image of Hathor is still recognisable.
This was likely damage that happened over time,



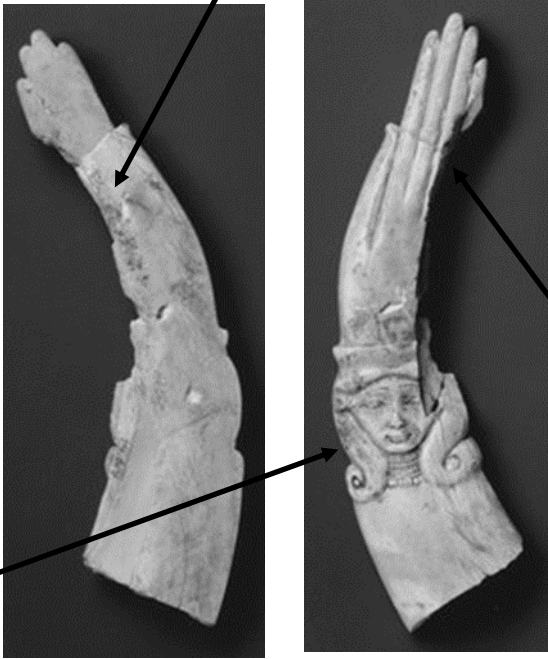
The hand is very delicate and defined. Almost like a dolls hand.
An effort has been made to make it look traditionally 'feminine'

The back is completely flat and smooth, the depiction and shape on the front of the clapper is distorted.

Both are relatively well preserved. But there is bad damage to the hands.
But not bad enough to make them unrecognisable

There is a really small drilled hole in the end (it looks as if it could have been done with a modern power drill).
Could this have been drilled later on? Or could an ancient tool have made it?

Both clappers are curved; as they are both made out of ivory, it may be because it is a hippopotamus tusk, so the artist was following the natural shape.
Both are showing depictions of Hathor. As a woman with cow ears and horns. Her face is embedded into the arm itself.



New Kingdom Ivory Clapper (Brooklyn Museum: 14.614)

The hand is stretched and extended. The fingers are softly defined and there is a slight curve at the tip of the thumb.
An effort has been made to make the hands look 'feminine'. (possible link to fertility aspect?)

Clappers as instruments

Hand clapping was a simple way to keep time, But there were also wood and ivory clappers, usually these were hand-shaped, so as to create a louder sound.

-Angela Murock-Hussein

A match for the Ages (Egyptian musical instruments)



Clapping Hand Icon. Applause Clap. Symbol In Outline Style. Vector Stock Vector - Illustration of applaud, audience: 147712754 (dreamstime.com)

Thoughts:

- Clappers may have been used as a tool to aid players from fatigue and discomfort for long time.
- Clappers would have also carried the music to a larger audience as a human hand does not make as loud a noise as a solid material like wood or ivory.
- Clappers would also have distinguished the performers using them from the audience, who like in modern time, would also join in. depending on the occasion.
- (this is my theoretical thinking. In modern contexts music can be amplified and recorded electronically, In ancient times, they would have used the tools available to them to reach the most people).
- Music and dance in ancient Egypt would have worked together, much like they do today.

"clappers were the first instrument used by musicians in ancient Egypt. They provided cadence and beat"

-Eva Dadrian (Let there be Musical Instruments in Ancient Egypt)

Playing method:

One clapper is held in either hand and hit together to the desired beat.

Given the length of the Cyfarthfa clappers they most likely were played this way.

- As a silly experiment, I measured the length of my forearm and hand:
-



The way the clappers were hit together would have likely have changed according to the occasion;

- Faster beat would likely have encouraged a more energetic atmosphere.
- Slower beats indicates a more sedate mood.

As mention by Eva Dadrian (Let there be Music), instruments could be used to “entertain audiences and provide the solemn character required for religious rituals or military operations”

Alternative method:

Usually smaller versions of the instruments could be held together in one hand and played like ‘bones’ or ‘spoons’.

This would probably make a different type of sound; faster beats , more like a “clacker” than a “clapper”

There is a crack horizontally in the centre. The clapper is in good condition otherwise

Delicately defined hand.

Fingers seem to be longer than they would realistically be.

The thumb had a soft curve outwards (how a natural thumb would)

The fingers and thumbs are subtly defined with a shallower indents compared to the rest of the decorations



Ivory Middle Kingdom Clapper (MET Museum: 09.180.1251)

Both are curved clappers.

Simple horizontal line bracelet decoration. Bracelets appear to be common.

Simple bracelet is the only decoration (not counting the natural hand features)

Observation:

- Both of these clappers were found on their own.
- Neither of them have a drilled hole at one end, The possible meaning of this may mean that;
- Could these clappers be more of a ‘symbol’ to be used in rituals (religious, magic) rather than the sound that the clapper makes?



Ivory Middle Kingdom Clapper (MET Museum: 22.1.142)

Circle pattern, which is quite uneven. Starts off quite spaced out, near the hand and gets closer together suddenly.

Clapper Comparisons

Middle Kingdom ivory 'Pair of Clappers' (MET:22.1.143a, b)



The circles appear to be in a consistent pattern and have been done to a better standard than the New Kingdom pair.

Both pairs of clappers have a similar 'hatched bracelet detail'

This is a detail that is regularly repeated.

There are slightly finer lines to show the defining natural features of a human hand. Like the indents representing the knuckles and finger tips.



New Kingdom bone/pigmen clappers (Brooklyn Museum: 58.28.7a-b)

Observation:

Both pairs of clappers have a hole drilled into the opposite end to the hand.

Possibly for a string of some sort could be looped through to keep them together.

The New Kingdom pair, have fingers that are less neat.

The circles are less defined and the pattern itself does not seem to be as consistent.

The general wear on these clappers appears to be worse than the other pair despite the Ivory pair have been dated earlier

This may be because;

- The material being bone/pigment wears at a faster rate.
- The place that it was buried did not preserve it as well.
- The treatment of archaeologists caused damage

Musicians

"We know about ancient Egyptian music from the instruments uncovered in tombs and from artistic representations of the musicians playing them."

-Angela Murock Hussein

(A match for the ages, Egyptian musical instruments)

"Musicians regularly played in the market place for labourers."

-Joshua J Mark (Music and Dance in ancient Egypt)



'Female Musicians' (MET:30.4.9)

"Scenes found in tombs show musicians and dancers entertaining guests at parties."

-Angela Murock Hussein (A match for the ages, Egyptian musical instruments)

"Banquets were a popular form of relaxation....at such events, music and dancing were common forms of entertainment."

-Douglas J. Brewer and Emily Teeter. (Egypt and the Egyptians: p104)

Thoughts

several examples of scholarship that the majority of dancers were female, although there is also evidence of male performers as well.

This would have also applied to musicians as well as it is more than likely that they would have performed together frequently.

- This could indicate possible differences in gender roles that were followed in this time.

Historians mention that tomb art often depicted the events significant to the deceased individual, or important elements of the funerary ritual.

- Musician depictions gives the impression that music and dance performances were a regular occurrence in the everyday life.
- It could also show that music was also important to the funerary rituals, and the deceased journey to the afterlife.

This emphasis on the size and shape of the hands while clapping.

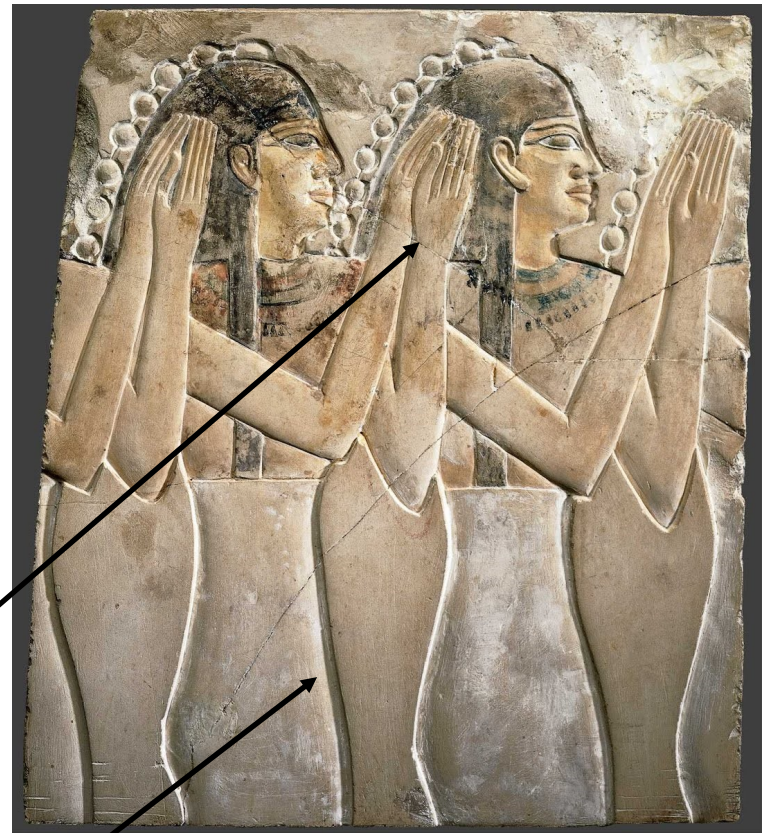
Indicates that the act of clapping was very significant in ritual practices.

It also shows that the human hand had it's own significance as a symbol. (the Ka symbol is that of human hands

The arms and hands are very prominent in the picture;

They are all held in the same position and the hands seem slightly larger than they would be in reality.

Limestone, Middle Kingdom, 'Tomb relief Female attendants clapping hands' (Cincinnati art museum:1998.54)



This relief consists of a line of female singers clapping behind a bigger procession of musicians and performers

Royal Burials and Non Royal Burials

"Private tombs ranged from early oval graves with few offerings to elaborate mastaba tombs similar to those of the early kings."

-- Douglas J. Brewer and Emily Teeter (Egypt and the

Over the course of ancient Egypt, the power shifts from the royal elite to others among the elite.

It was not necessarily a loss of power for the ruler, it most likely had more to do with the society growing and more cultures being integrated in. which means that power would need to be delegated.

The evidence for royal and non-royal elite tombs is much more plentiful than that of the people in the non-elite classes.

The results of this is that it is impossible to get a complete picture of what impact things such as music would have had.

In the case of clappers, this can mean that the examples that can be looked at, are not the full picture. For example;

I have not come across a huge evidence base for clappers made of less expensive material such as wood, mainly because it is not as durable as materials such as Ivory. Because of this, the possibly design and placing in burials can not be fully investigated.

However the pyramid and coffin texts are continuing to show that the funerary rites and practices were more widespread. Despite the formulas themselves mainly mentioned the king.

"Sub-elite tombs consisted of simple shaft-and-chamber burials, with a limited range of grave goods and probably little in the way of superstructures."

-Steven Snape, (Ancient Egyptian Tombs: the Culture of Life and Death, p101)

"Royal tombs ranged from mudbrick mastabas to stone pyramids to rock-cut subterranean tombs."

- Douglas J. Brewer and Emily Teeter (Egypt and the Egyptians: p168)

Links to other places

The fact that there was integration from other cultures around Egypt, like Nubia, opens up the possibilities that the Cyfarthfa clappers could have had influence from not just Egyptian cultures.

As the cult of Hathor shows, this religious practice was incredibly far spread and that Nubian people probably had more influence on the rituals/ practices within the cult than can be proven;

- The main issue is that the Nubian culture did not document things like the Egyptians did. The traditions were passed on by oral tradition.
- This also opens up the possibility that cultures like Nubians have been lost track of over time.

“Traditional forms of ritual music and dance, a central element in the religious practice of Nubians, were incorporated into Egyptian rites performed to the goddess Hathor whose origin in Nubia and journey to Egypt would have been celebrated appropriately with Nubian music and dance.”

-Solange Asby (Dancing for Hathor: Nubian women in Egyptian Cultic Life, p65)

The relief below shows the distinctive figure of a Nubian warrior. This is significant because;

Showing that they took part in things as significant like battle and religious ritual, shows how integrated a culture ancient Egypt gradually became.



New Kingdom Sandston ‘Nubian Comrades’ (Brooklyn Museum:37.413

“Growing political integration of previously separate Nubian groups during the late Old Kingdom.”

-Steven Snape, (Ancient Egyptian Tombs: the Culture of Life and Death, p92)

New Kingdom Limestone relief ‘Relief with female musicians’(Brooklyn Museum:68.150.1)



This scene shows:

A group of musicians are in the squatting position while 1 plays a tambourine and the others clap.

A libation/perfume being poured to the first female musician.

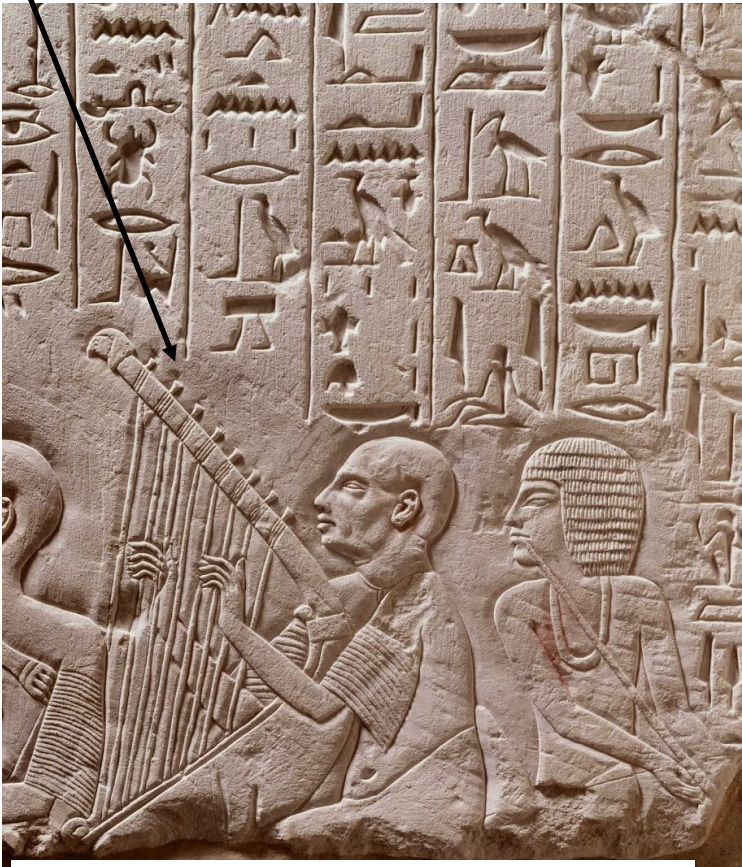
A fragment of a hymn seems to be carved above the scene.

This scene shows:

A blind male harpist performing as part of a troupe of musicians at a banquet for a high priest of Re and his family.

This relief is located in the funerary temple of the priest.

A hymn is written in hieroglyphs above the scene.



New Kingdom, Limestone, ‘Relief featuring Blind ‘Artist’ (Rijksmuseum, VanouDHeden: H.III.W)

Thoughts:

The fact that musicians are often shown with specific hymns in tomb carvings could indicate that songs with a complex musical accompaniment. This could go as far as them having structured performances .

- However, there as ancient Egyptians did not use any formal musical notation, this can not be confirmed or denied.
- The hymns were more than likely passes from person to person.
- If there are some consistent hymn use, then other genres of songs likely also were passed around



On both of the jars; there are similar paintings. Which shows a simple, female looking figure making a specific movement with her arms above her head and 2 more male shaped figures holding stick like batons (clappers).

Other similar styles;
reed/tree pattern close to the female figure.
a stripey rectangular shape also close to the people.
As well as this, the border along the bottom of the design is a collection of short lines.



Predynastic 'painted shoulder jar' (British Museum: EA35502)

Thoughts:

Vases may have been produced multiple times,

They could be made for a particular reason, maybe to be placed as a symbol in a residence or building. Maybe a status or occupation indicator.

The use of clappers and dancers happened as a regular occurrence in the everyday life of the Egyptians. (maybe performances happening at public places, like markets or building sites) depicting specific occasions where there are performances or the performances were the occasion. (dinner parties, theatre performances)

The figures could be showing part of a religious occasion or ritual practice (performances could have been part of funerals and births or they may have been needed to complete a spell or ritual to aid the living or the deceased).

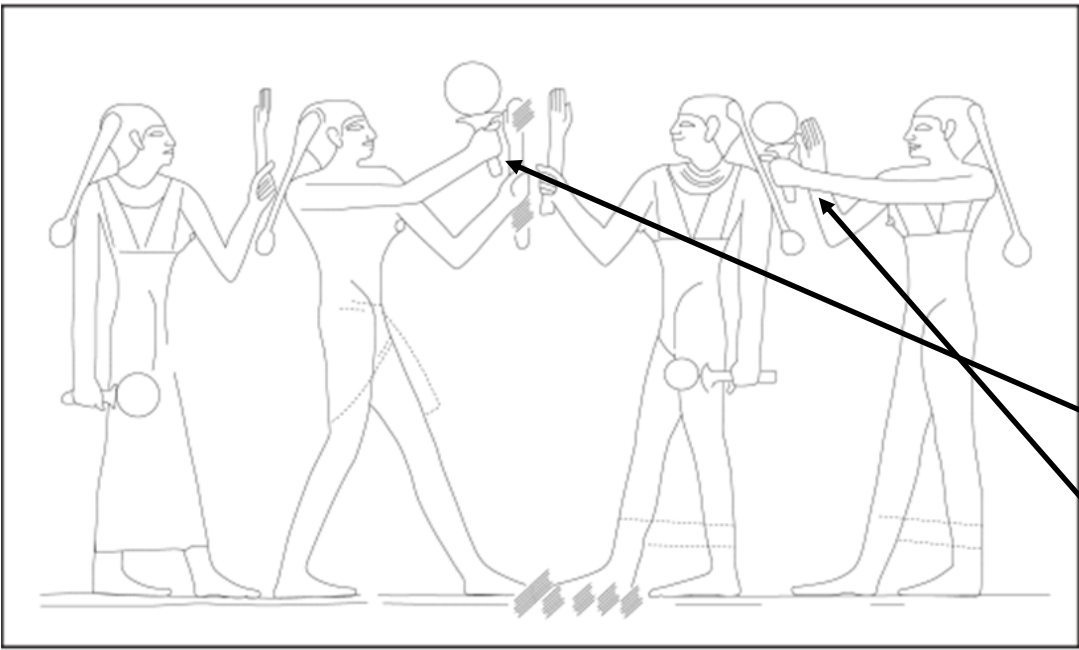


Fig. 8 – Clappers in the female sphere
Mirror dance, Mastaba of Mereruka, chamber A 13, Saqqara (redrawn from SAKKARAH EXPEDITION, *Mereruka*, pl. 164)

Cult of Hathor Mirror Dance:

The tomb painting (Mereuka mastaba at Saqqara) shows:

- All the dancers seem to be women.
- 3 of the dancers have a clapper in one hand and a mirror in the other.
- 1 dancer is holding the clapper up to the mirror so they are touching.
- The dancer that does not have a clapper is holding up their own hand and touching it to the mirror.

(Ellen Morris: *Middle Kingdom Clappers, dancers , birth magic and the reinvention of the ritual*)

Thoughts:

Mirrors are seen as very important for the Egyptians, they used mirrors to emit light into rooms and they were often connected to multiple deities. This means that if clappers are needed in a ritual involving mirrors it will likely have a significant impact.

The diagram shows that clappers are involved in a ritual performance which does not involve so much of the sound that it makes, which means the clapper as a symbol was important.

Possibly because the clapper was needed to emphasise the hand itself.

Other Funerary dances:

It has been theorised that funerary dances formed a few different types:

- The ritual style dance; where the dance actively formed part of the funerary rituals. which is possibly how the mirror dance would be described.
- Grief style dance; where the movement would display the grief for the deceased. (performers would place their hands on their head.
- Entertainment; dance to entertain the deceased's Ka. (This is the dance that was most likely done more times than just the initial funeral. E.g. festivals and celebrations)

Link to fertility and childbirth practices:

“With the head of Hathor; clappers like this were often used during childbirth to ward off evil spirits.”

-Lou Selene-Sayell (Servants of Heket: Midwifery and Birth in Ancient Egypt, p13)

The process of birth and rebirth were viewed almost as one in the same;

- Birth was the entering into life and death was the journey into the afterlife.

“Most effective disguise that four deities could envision for being allowed to aid in the childbirth of future kings was that of a troupe of musicians.”

-Ellen Morris (Middle Kingdom Clappers, Dancers, Birth Magic, and the Reinvention of Ritual, p312)

“As a goddess, Heket was mentioned in the pyramid texts. She was frequently depicted on walls of tombs— especially during the Middle Kingdom, magical objects decorated with her frog-image were found, such as amulets, rods, magic knives, clappers and figurines.”

-Magda van Ryneveld (Frogs in Ancient Egyptian Art, p29)

The fact that musicians and dancers are linked to the events that are seen to be as the most significant to the ancient Egyptians indicates that music was present for everyone at all important stages of life. Being linked to fertility makes it significant in almost all rituals.

Fertility is also linked to all big stages of life for them because, in order for anything in life to continue, everything has to be potent (plants, people, animals etc.)

Ancient funerary practices and view on the afterlife

“Egyptians solution to the frightening prospect of death was to transform the end of life into something understandable-death became a simple transition from the life they knew to eternal existence that was in a realm that was a mirror image of life.”

-Douglas J. Brewer and Emily Teeter (Egypt and the Egyptians: p147)



Parts of a soul:

Ka:

- The life energy of a person, it was seen as a person's double. (it would take the exact form of the individual)
- It had material needs, such as the need for food, drink and clothing.

Ba:

- The part of the soul that can communicate between the land of the living and the after life.
- It is portrayed as a bird with the head of a human.

Akh:

- The part of the soul that represented the most power,
- It was the part of the soul that had safely made it through the journey of rebirth and is able to communicate with the gods.

Mummification:

- This process was seen as essential for the individual to survive in the afterlife.
- The body was seen as the 'anchor' for the Ka and the Ba.
- The body needed to be embalmed; organs removed and placed in canopic jars and the body dried and embalmed.
- A person's body needed to look familiar to the Ka and Ba.

Burial Items

The cartouches of people were made to look just like the individual so that the Ka and Ba could find their way to the body.

It can be assumed that the more wealth a person had, the more elaborate the decoration. Poorer people possibly only had a simple coffin.

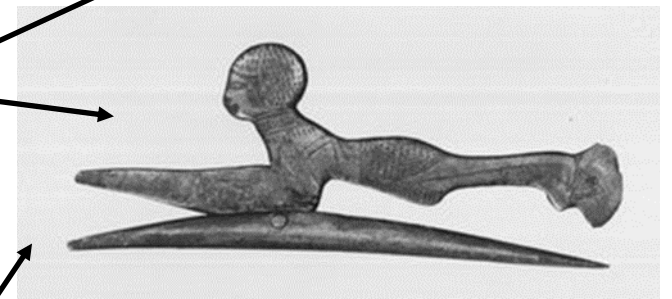
Tomb scenes often reflected the life events of a person.

There is also evidence that the grave goods also reflected the tomb scenes.

The tomb scene shows a hairdresser styling another person's hair.

The bronze hair curler may have been one of the tools used

Middle Kingdom 'Hairdressing Scene' (Brooklyn Museum: 51.231)



New Kingdom Bronze 'Hair curler in the form of a woman' (Brooklyn Museum: 37.654E)

The hair curlers left in a burial may be the ones that were used in life. This means that the deceased could use them as they would have in the afterlife.

Offering tables would have been placed in a place where the living could access it.

This means that they could place offerings for the person's Ka regularly. Such as food and drink.

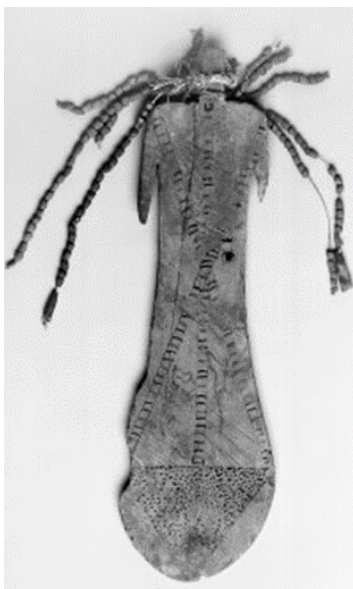
This would have been a significant expense, which means that like most things, the more wealthy would find this easier.



Old Kingdom 'Offering table of Het-her' (Brooklyn Museum: 37.1491E)



Late period 'inner Cartouche of Gautsesenu' (Brooklyn Museum: 34.1223)



Middle Kingdom 'Paddle Doll' (Brooklyn Museum: 37.102E)

Paddle dolls are a symbol of fertility and are often found in burials of females

Some Historians have also associated them with dancers.

- The stringy material at the top is thought to match the hair style that dancers would have worn.

Thoughts:

These items may have been what priestesses of Hathor had, and used in their lives.

- In the case of clappers, this may be somewhat logical. Because, from a modern perspective, if a person owns a musical instrument, they usually would be played.
- However, it does have to be said that instruments can be 'display pieces', in the sense that a very elaborately decorated instrument may not be the easiest to 'play'.

As all these objects all/some have been found in burial sites together potentially shows;

- They were essential parts of the burials for a particular group/individual.

Jewellery could have been shown as a status/occupation symbol.

In religious/cult context; it could represent that a person is a priest/priestess of a cult.

Modern culture example:

- A Christian wearing a crucifix on a necklace.

New Kingdom 'Necklace with Bes and Hathor Head Pendant' (Brooklyn Museum: 48.66.38)



List of Tombs that have some or all of these objects together:

- Mastaba tomb of Mehu (Saqqara)
- Thutmose III Temple of Millions of years tombs.
- Multiple other areas in Saqqara also have evidence of this.
- Evidence is rich in the Memphite region.

Old Kingdom, alabaster 'Sistrum inscribed with the names of King Teti' (Brooklyn Museum: 26.7.1450)

Grave Goods found with Clappers

Late Period, bronze 'Horns, forming the headdress of a statue of Hathor' (Brooklyn Museum: 36.136)



Late Period Faience sistrum part (Brooklyn Museum: 05.359)



These objects have the popularised shape of Hathor (her form of a woman with the ears and horns of a cow).

Depictions of deities on objects was thought to offer protection as well as being a religious symbol.

It could also be a symbol that an individual had show status or profession



New Kingdom 'Mirror with handle in the form of a Hathor Emblem' (MET:26.7.1450)



Members of the cult of Hathor were thought to sometimes wear a headdress that represents the goddess.

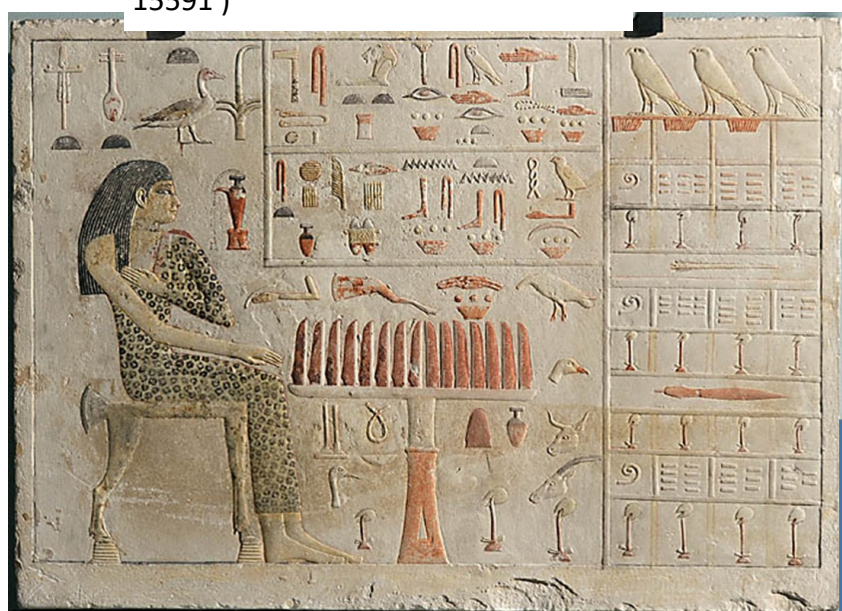
Possibly one similar to ones shown on statues.

Mirrors such as this may have been used in a performance involving clappers. Which shows a direct link between Hathor and the use of clappers.

Sistrums are depicted with Hathor, Inscribed with her name "Hathor, Lady of Dendera" (left) and her image (right) as well as other gods linked with birth/rebirth such as Isis and Osiris

It is thought that musical instruments could be used to alert/awaken the deities.

Middle Kingdom Stele 'Princess Nefertabet before her meal' (Louvre 15591)



Offering formulas

Middle Kingdom Limestone Stela of Minhotep' (Brooklyn Museum: 16.580.212)



This is a stela which shows a fragment of an offering formula (to Hathor specifically; It is described as a 'conventional offering formula' It is dedicated to the pharaoh Minhotep.

Side notes:

Offering formulas often had more or less the same structure.

Some differences were;

- Names the individual
- Non-royals; sometimes mentioned about how something about the tomb was given by the king.
- Kings mention their link to deities. Often being the 'son of-'

Thoughts

This shows that artwork which has offering formulas/spells was quite popular from the middle kingdom onwards. This may be because the changing in political and economic structures affected the way that people carried out funerary rituals. (it is mentioned by multiple historians that local mayors/viziers were going more power in the place of Royalty,

- Meaning that offering physical food was not prioritised over other duties.
- Non-royals having access and could afford more elaborate decorations would have likely been attractive in order to show ones wealth.
- Royals changing their own funerary cult rituals to suit the way the funerals and burial sites changed.

This stele from princess Nefertabet shows:

The deceased seated in front of an offering table with bread.

The hieroglyphs represent offerings of food such as; beef, duck and poultry.

As well as this there are objects such as linen and crockery as well being written as offerings.

Funerary Cults

“If ‘cult’ in general can be defined as an expression of religious ideas and values, then ‘divine cult’ is the idea that every human activity is authorized by a divine order hand aimed at contact with a particular celestial power.”

-Katharina Zinn (Cults: Divine)

“To have children was seen as an essential part of ensuring that your funerary cult would be perpetuated after your death, thus ensuring your comfort in the afterlife.”

-Lou Selene-Sayell (Servants of Heket: midwifery and Birth in Ancient Egypt, p10)

Thoughts:

‘cults’ were not seen in the same way by ancient Egyptians compared to modern ideas.

An important factor was for living family members of the deceased ensuring that the individual had everything that they needed in their afterlife.

- By bringing food, drink and clothing , along with other essentials, for the deceased to use.

Living people would also have been responsible for carrying out the relevant spells/incantations/rituals to help enable the deceased to function in the afterlife or to chase away negative spirits.

Clappers part in this may have been;

- Providing the background beat/music to a spell which provided protection to the individual.
- The actual ‘CLAP’ sound may have been used to scare bad spirits away.

Private cult practice:

Because people would have to rely on family members and future descendants to perform these rituals. It would have been very important for them to ensure this would happen.

From a modern perspective, there are similar worries that people have about being ‘forgotten’ once they die. A similar ‘ritual’ would be taking flowers to someone’s gravesite.

Priestesses of Hathor:

- They were not directly associated with music and dance until the middle Kingdom
- The main cult centres were in the Memphite region as well as having a cult centre in Dendera.
- Provincial centres included; Hagarsa, Hemamiya, sheikh said, Zawer el-Amwat and Deshasheh.
- There were likely small provincial cult priestesses that operated at a significantly simpler level. During the 5th Dynasty, the ruling elite and those in charge did migrate. So this would mean that the cult would have followed.

there was likely some kind of hierarchy:

- Until the Old Kingdom came to an end, a Priestess of Hathor could not hold a rank as high as a phyle, or a shift coordinator.
- Later, they began to hold higher positions and, in some cases, held administrative titles.

Variations of the title (these are some, but not all titles)

- Priestess of Hathor of the Sycamore
- Priestess of Hathor of the Sycamore in all her places
- Priestess of Hathor before the temple of Kharfe
- Priestess of Hathor Mistress of Dendera
- Priestess of Hathor, Mistress of the desert

It is known that after the reign of Mentuhotep, the priestess role gradually began to shift towards direct family members of the kings family.

- Hathor Priestess activities were transferred more to queens and princesses, meaning that the existence of a separate branch from the royals started to wane.

The fact that Mentuhotep married priestesses could have been the beginning in the change in religious practices.

The idea of the centre of religion was the royalty seems to have begun. Like in later eras of history. (like a less sudden version of Henry VIII break from Catholicism.

“Mentuhotep tried to create a new myth of the royal succession , first by calling himself son of Hathor, like Old Kingdom rulers, and then actually marrying priestesses”

-Robyn A. Gillam (Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance, p234)

“Priestesses were employed to maintain this relationship in her own temples, in the royal funerary complexes, and in the mr. t buildings built within the precinct of the palace and often maintained fotr generations.”

- Robyn A. Gillam (Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance, p226)

Cult of Hathor

"Mother and protector of both the creator sun and his earthly representative, the king."

-Robyn A. Gillam (*Priestesses of Hathor: Their Function, Decline and Disappearance*, p211)

The inscription on the vase below says;
"The king of upper and lower Egypt, the son of Hathor, Lady of Dendera, Pepy who liveith forever."

Old Kingdom, Alabaster 'Vase of Pepy I'.
(Brooklyn Museum: 37.61E)



The relief of Mentuhotep II was located in the main mortuary temples main area.

- Showing the significance of the art work.

The figure of Hathor (although damaged) is shown to be as big as the king.

- This means that she was held in very high esteem and was seen as essential in the kings journey.

The fact that a smaller object like a vase is mentioning the kings titles and that he is the 'son of Hathor' means;

- The link to the deity was significant enough that it was seen as necessary for it to be inscribed on as much as possible.

Throughout the Middle Kingdom, multiple kings actively linked their bloodline to Hathor.

The reasoning for this was that associating themselves with a fertility centred goddess would in some way "celebrate his cultic and regenerative potency". (Robyn A. Gillam)

This can be linked to kings across history, because the importance of his birth and ability to produce an heir is essential to the survival of the family line.



Middle Kingdom, Limestone Relief 'Relief of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II and the Goddess Hathor' (MET: 07.230.2)

Ptolemaic Basalt 'King With Sistra (Rattles) Before Hathor' (Brooklyn Museum: 62.46)



This relief shows:

The king depicting himself as the son of the goddess Hathor.

He is holding a sistra (rattle) in each hand. Which is an important part of her particular cult practice.

Funerary Cults

Cult of the King:

Kings were given a divine role while alive because of their direct link to the deities, they were seen almost like the living embodiment of a god or the direct descendant of them.

- Living kings cult– ruler cult
- Deceased king– divine cult

"In all periods, the dead had no overriding significance: the king and the gods, rather than ancestors was crucial."

-John Baines and Peter Lacova (*Burial and the dead in ancient Egyptian Society: Respect, Formalism, neglect*, p27)

Cults of gods

There was the main cult of Osiris, (who was directly linked to the king, as well as other gods that were widely worshipped.

The king was on charge of

"The rise of the Osiris cult led to another important development : the identification of Abydos as the burial place of Osiris, and the subsequent importance of Abydos as a funerary cult center."

-Steven Snape, (*Ancient Egyptian Tombs: the Culture of Life and Death*, p119)