Outline of lecture for Unit II:
Ancient Egyptian Writing

I. Linguistic background
      A. Meaning of "hieroglyph(ic)"
      B. Egyptian language: one of six branches of Afro-Asiatic (or "Hamito-Semitic") family.

II. The origins of Egyptian hieroglyphic writing
      A. Forerunners of hieroglyphic writing
            1. Labels and tags from Abydos tomb U-j
            2. The palette of Narmer
      B. Comparison of early stages of Sumerian cuneiform and Egyptian hieroglyphic scripts.
            1. Which writing is older, Sumerian or Egyptian?; did one derive from the other?
            2. No definite answer to these questions (yet).

III. The graphic system of hieroglyphic Egyptian
      A. Logo-syllabic like other early systems, but with unusual features, especially with regard to treatment of vowels, which are not represented at all.
      B. Types of graphs
            1. Logograms
            2. Phonograms (consonant-syllabic type, with vowel unspecified)
                  a. Uniliteral/uniconsonantal (type C^x) (26 characters); derivation by **acrophonic principle**, e.g. $n < nt$ 'water'
                  b. Biliteral/biconsonantal (C^xC^x) (ca. 80)
                  c. Triliteral/triconsonantal ($C^xC^xC^x$) (ca. 70)
            3. Classifiers or semantic determinatives (ca. 150); see HANDOUT III.2
      C. Functions and combinations of basic sign types
            1. Multiple functions of many graphs: e.g. *pr* 'house' as logograph, biliteral phonogram, and semantic determinative.
            2. Phonetic complements
                  a. Partial phonetic complementation (e.g., *ḥḏ-ḏ*)
                  b. Full phonetic complementation (e.g., *ḥḏ-ḥ-ḏ*); principle of **redundancy**
            3. Homophonic and semantic extension, e.g. *ḥḏ* 'mace' = *ḥḏ* '(be) bright' > *ḥḏ* 'silver', etc.; see HANDOUTS III.3, 4
      D. Analysis of an example of a hieroglyphic text (HANDOUT III.5 < Hooker p. 107).

IV. Hieratic and demotic Egyptian
      A. Hieratic: simplified form, or rather "style" of writing, with **cursivization** and **abstraction** of hieroglyphic graphs.
      B. Demotic: further simplified and cursivized later script; development of **ligatures**.

V. Scripts developed from or influenced by Egyptian writing
      A. Coptic (Egyptian Christian) alphabet: Based on Greek alphabet, but with 6 supplementary characters borrowed from demotic Egyptian.
      B. Meroitic script (Sudan): indirect adaptation from Egyptian, with fundamental typological shift and unusual features.
      C. Luvian ("Hittite") hieroglyphic script (Asia Minor)
      D. Proto-Sinatic/proto-Canaanite consonant syllabary; ancestor of the European alphabet

Generic determinatives in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing

(from A. Gardner, *Egyptian Grammar*, p.33)

T night, darkness.

★ star.

fire, heat, cook.

air, wind, sail.

▭ stone.

copper, bronze.

• • • sand, minerals, pellets.

water, liquid, actions connected with water.

(less often ▭) sheet of water.

irrigated land.

land (later often replaces ⊥).

road, travel, position.

desert, foreign country.

foreign (country or person).

town, village, Egypt.

house, building.

door, open.

box, coffin.

shrine, palanquin, mat.

boat, ship, navigation.

sacred bark.

clothe, linen.

bind, document.

rope, actions with cord or rope.

knife, cut.

hoe, cultivate, hack up.

× break, divide, cross.

▽ cup.

vessel, anoint.

(less accurately ○) pot, vessel, beverages.

bread, cake.

or loaf, cake, offering.

festival.

(also vertically ‖, older form ═) book, writing, abstract.

royal name, king.[1]

one; the object depicted (§ 25).

| | | (also |, ||, • • •) several, plural.

substitute for signs difficult to draw (mostly hieratic).

[1] The hieroglyphs spelling the royal name are written inside this; see below, p. 74.

· EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS OF THE GRAPH 'MACE'

Entry in A. Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar*, sign-list, p. 510, no. T-3
(semantic category: warfare, hunting, butchery:

$$\mathrm{mace\ with\ pear\text{-}shaped}$$
$$\mathrm{head^1\ (vertical)}$$

Ideo. in 〔〕[2] var. 〔〕[3] *ḥḏ* 'mace'.   Hence phon. *ḥḏ*, exx.
〔〕 var. 〔〕[4] *ḥḏi* 'damage'; 〔〕 *ḥḏ* 'be bright', 'white'.

ḥḏ: logogram: "mace"
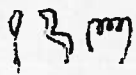
ḥḏ-ḏ: logogram with partial phonetic complementation

ḥḏ-ḥ-ḏ: logogram with full phonetic complementation
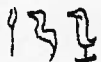
ḥḏ-ḏ: by homophonic extension, logogram: "bright," written
with partial phonetic complement and determinative ⊙ "sun,
light"

ḥḏ-ḏ: by semantic association, "silver," with partial phonetic
complement and determinative ⌒⌒⌒ "precious metal"
(pictogram of necklace)

ḥḏ-ḏ-t: with feminine suffix -*t*, "white cloth," with partial
phonetic complement and determinative ⌢ "cloth"

ḥḏ-d-i: by homophonic extension, "damage," with partial
phonetic complement and determinative   "little, bad"
(small, weak bird)

ḥḏ-d-i: "damage," with partial phonetic complement and
determinative X "break"

## Examples of logographic and determinative graphs
## in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing

(from A. Gardner, *Egyptian Grammar*, pp. 477, 457)

Sect. L. Invertebrata and Lesser Animals

L 1   dung-beetle (*Scara- baeus sacer*) Ideo. in ▦[1] var. Pyr. ▦[2] *ḫprr* 'dung-beetle'. Hence phon. *ḫpr* in ▦ var. Pyr. ▦[3] *ḫpr* 'become' and derivatives.

[1] *Eb.* 88, 13.   [2] *Pyr.* 697.   [3] *Pyr.* 212.

Sect. D. Parts of the Human Body

56 leg Ideo. or det. in ▭ var. *rd* 'foot'. Det. leg, foot, exx. ▦[1] *mnt* 'thigh'; ▦ *pd* 'knee'; ▦ *wrrt* 'leg', 'shank'. From *pd*, phon. *pds*[2] in ▦ varr. ▦, ▦, ▦ *pds* 'box'. From *wrrt*, phon. or phon. det. *wrr* in ▦ abbrev. ▦ *wrrt* 'district' and its derivative title ▦ *wrrtw* 'district official'; also in ▦ *wrr* 'flee'. From ▦[3] *sbḳ* 'leg', phon. det. or phon. *sbḳ* in ▦ var. ▦[4] *sbḳ* 'excellent', 'successful'. For some reason unknown, phon. *gḥ* or *gḥs*[5] in ▦[6] var. ▦[a] *gḥs* 'gazelle'. The group ▦ is used to determine various verbs expressing movement, exx. ▦ *tht* 'transgress'; ▦[7] *hnd* 'tread'.
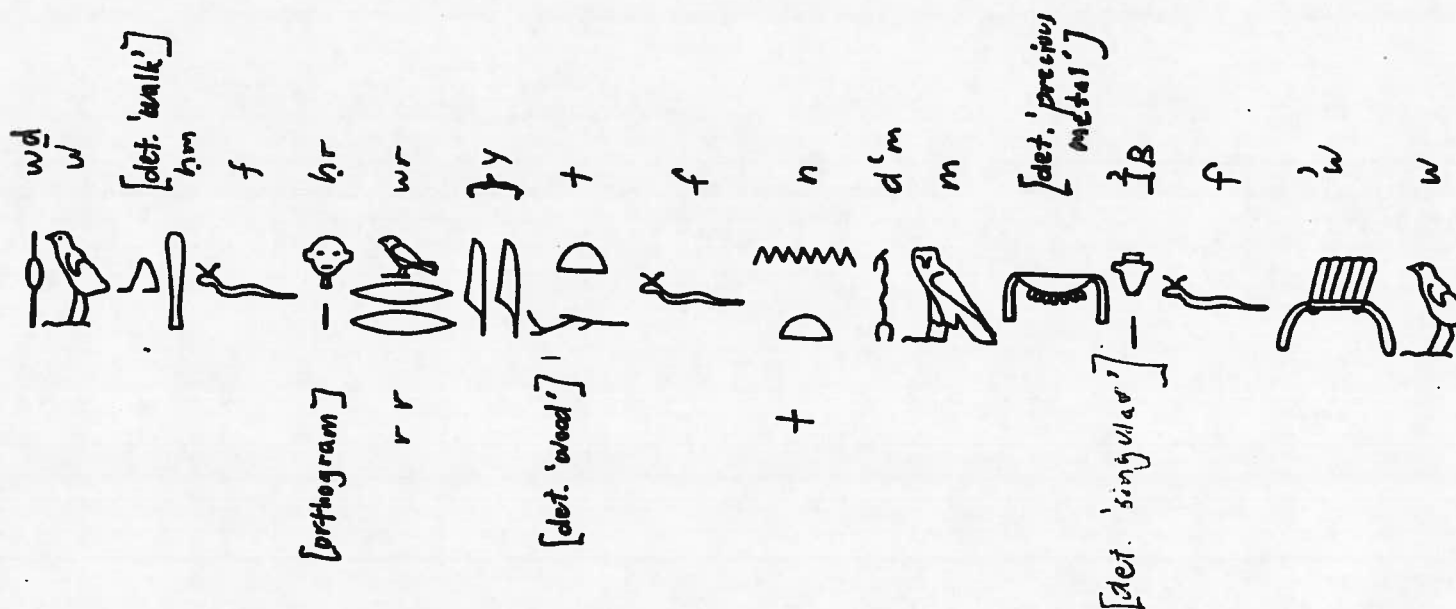
[1] In Pyr. (ex. *Pyr.* 262) with a very different determinative.   [2] *Sphinx* 13, 89.
[3] *Wb.* iv. 93, ex. *Pyr.* 1314 (*sbḳ*).   [4] *Urk.* iv. 84, 17.   [5] *Sphinx* 13, 89.
[6] *Urk.* iv. 741, 12.   [a] *Eb.* 98, 7, see *Khui* l, 144   [7] Not related to *hnd*
'part of foreleg', *Pyr.* 1547; for this word see *Bull.* 30, 866.

Sample text in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing

(from J. Hooker, *Reading the Past*, p. 107)

<u>Full transcription</u> (Phonetic complements in *italics*; logograms in CAPITALS; determinatives in SMALL CAPITALS):

wḏw WALK ḥm.f ḥr wrryt.f WOOD nt d'mm PRECIOUS METAL YB.f SINGULAR 'ww ABSTRACT

<u>Normalized transcription:</u>

| wḏ	ḥm.f	ḥr	wrryt.f	nt	d'm	yb.f	'w
departed	his majesty	upon	chariot-his	of	electrum	heart-his	joyful

<u>Translation:</u>

"His majesty departed on his chariot of electrum, his heart joyful."

**Sample text in Egyptian hieroglyphic writing,
with explanations from Alan Gardiner, *Egyptian Grammar***

A. *ḥm*, "majesty": From "Sign-list" (logographs), p. 520, no. U-36
(agriculture, crafts, and professions):

36   club used by fullers in washing[1]   Ideo. in [hieroglyphs][3] var. [hieroglyphs][3] *ḥmww* 'fuller (?)'. Hence (?) phon. *ḥm*,[4] in [hieroglyphs] *ḥm* 'slave' and the related words; also in [hieroglyphs], isolated late var. [hieroglyphs],[5] *ḥm* 'Majesty' (p. 74).

B. *ḥr*, "upon":

    1. From sign-list," p. 450, no. D-2 (parts of the human body):

2   face   Ideo. in [hieroglyph] *ḥr*[1] 'face' and derivatives. Hence phon. *ḥr*, exx. [hieroglyphs] *ḥr* 'prepare'; [hieroglyphs] *dḥr* 'bitter', 'sour'.

    2. From list of "Simple prepositions," p. 127:

    § 165. [hieroglyph] *ḥr*, more rarely [hieroglyph] alone,[10] with suffixes [hieroglyph] *ḥr* or occasionally [hieroglyph],[11] signified originally 'upon'.

C. *ib*, "heart": sign-list, p. 465, no. F-34 (parts of mammals):

34   heart   Ideo. in [hieroglyph] var. Pyr. [hieroglyphs][1] *ib* 'heart'. Det. in [hieroglyphs] *ḥзty* 'heart'.
    [1] *Pyr.* 311.

D. *wrrt*, "chariot": English-Egyptian vocabulary, p. 608:

chariot [hieroglyphs]