

Altering writing

**Neutralizing and re-activating the agency
of animate signs in less or non-figurative graphic registers**

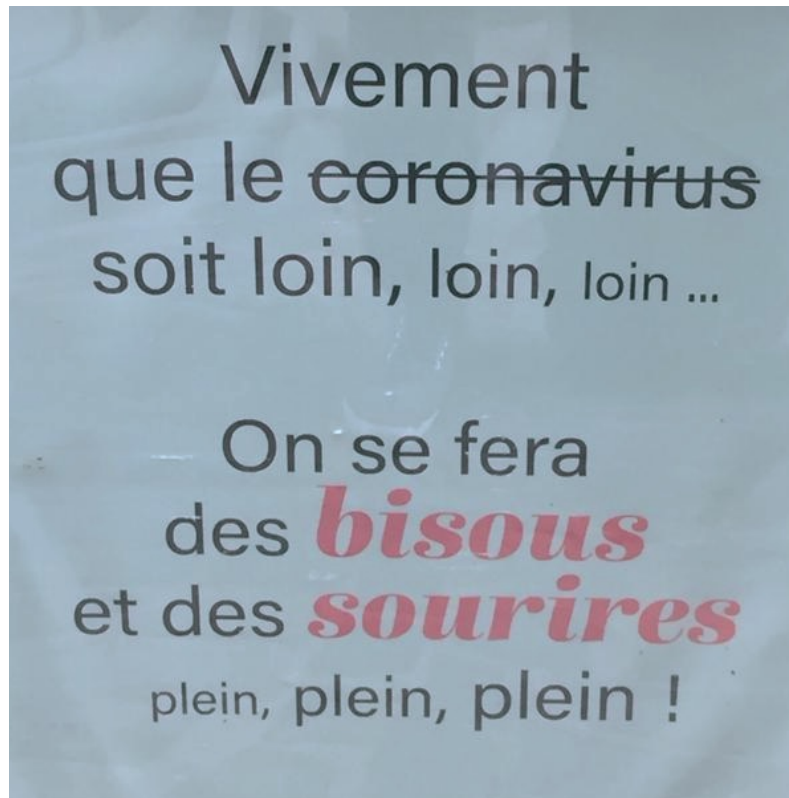
Renaud Pietri & Stéphane Polis



Vivement
que le ~~coronavirus~~
soit loin, loin, loin ...

On se fera
des *bisous*
et des *sourires*
plein, plein, plein !

Liège (2021, May 8)



← Struck-out

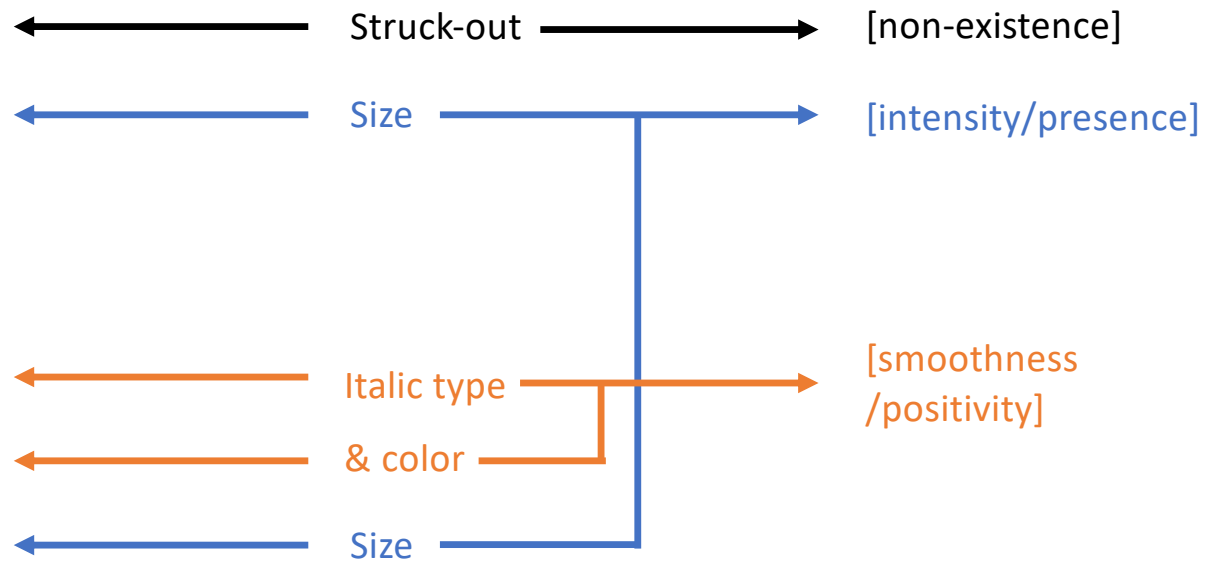
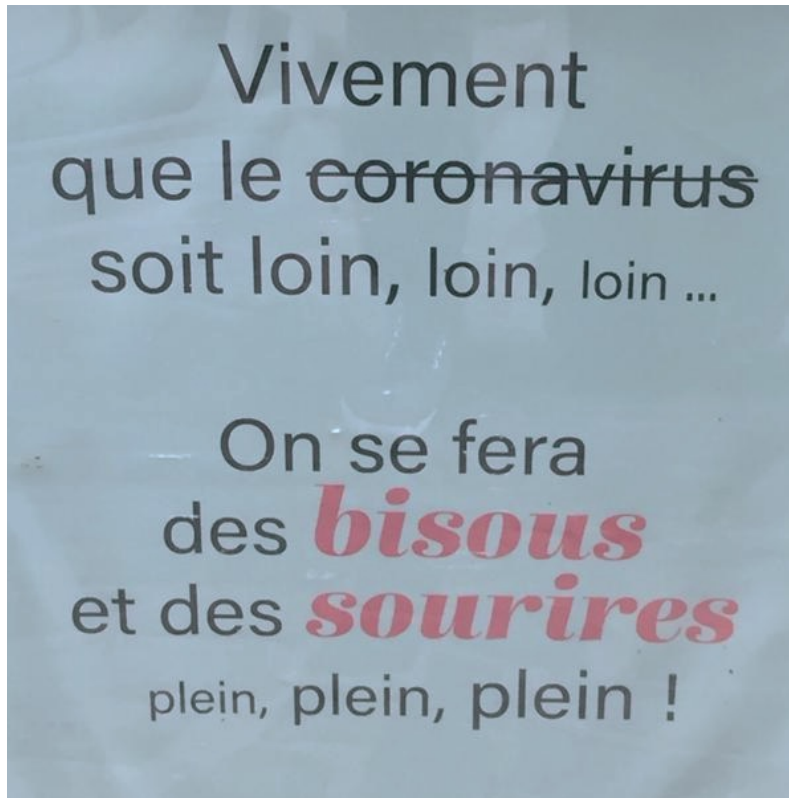
← Size

← Italic type

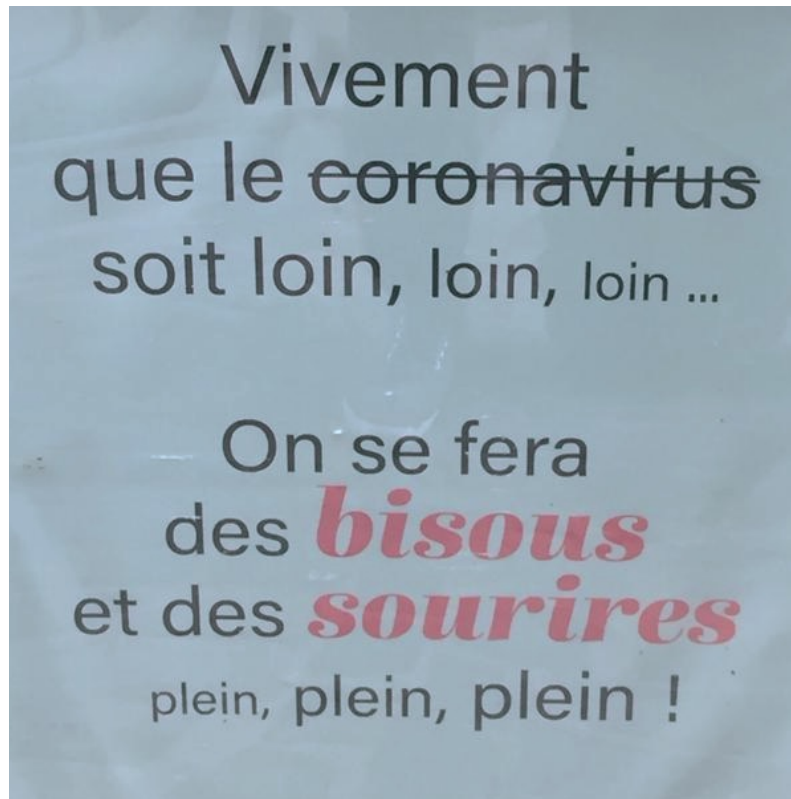
← & color

← Size

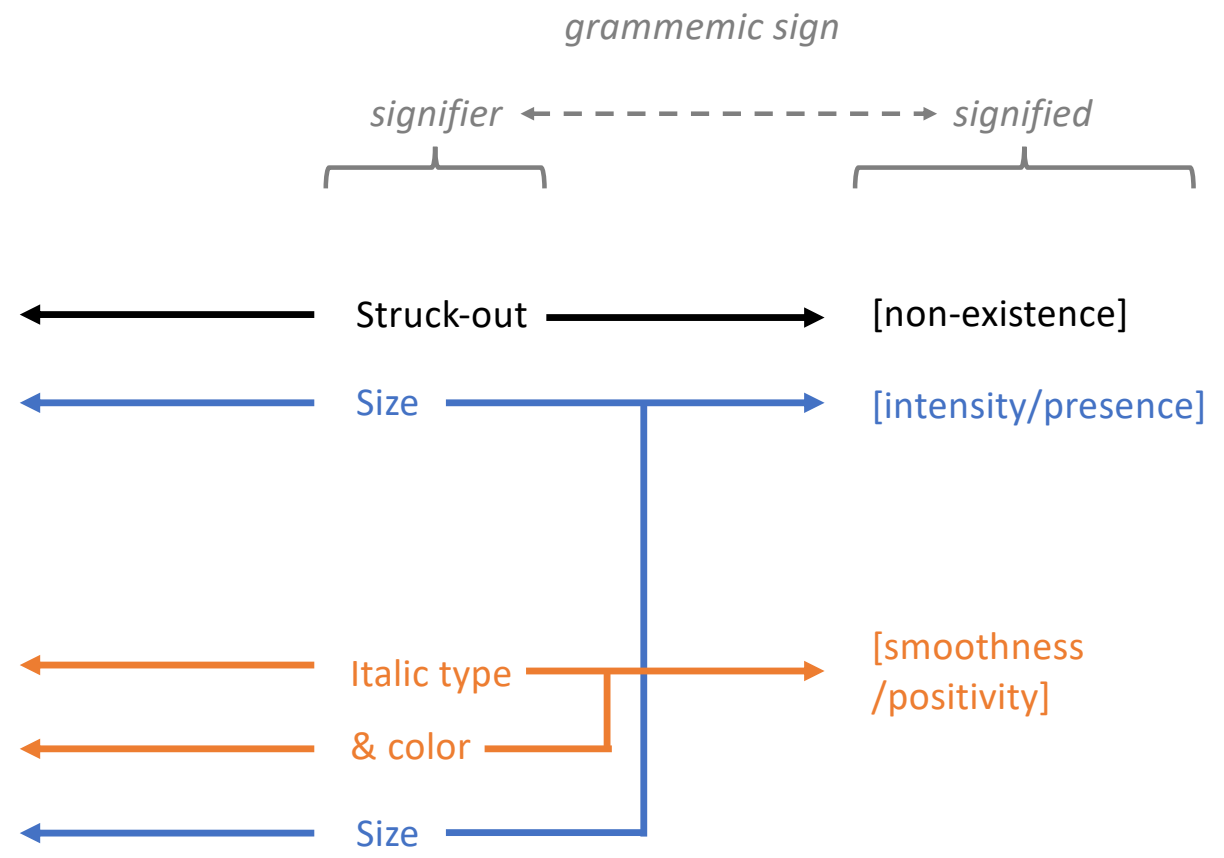
Liège (2021, May 8)



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Liège (2021, May 8)



Outline of the talk

1. Written language taboos in ancient Egypt
2. Altering writing: towards a typology
3. Altering writing in New Kingdom hieratic sources

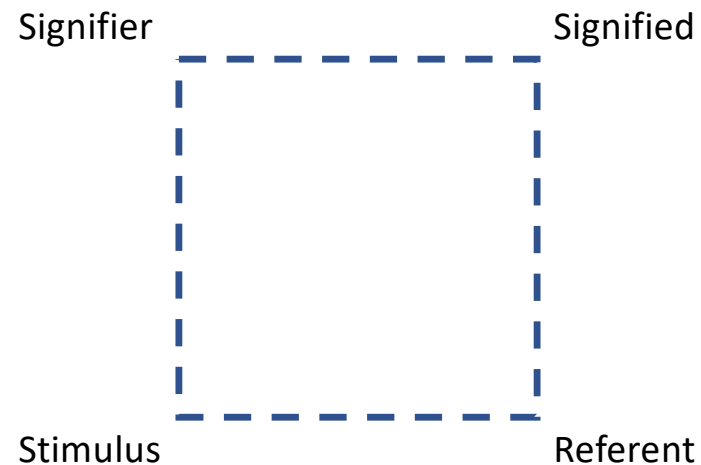
Written language taboos

Written language taboos

- Consubstantiality of language, writing, and reality leads to a series of taboos that concern all the components of the linguistic sign in Egypt

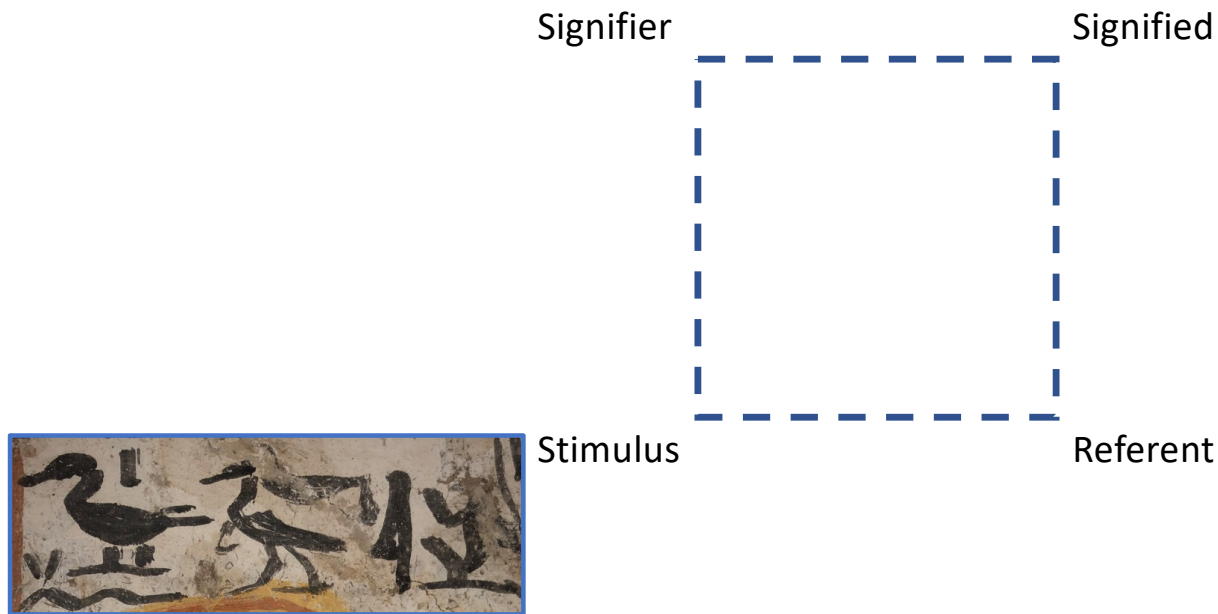
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Signifier

Signified



Stimulus

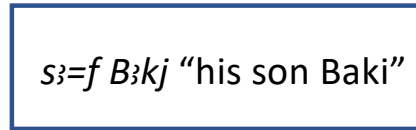
Referent

Written language taboos

- Consubstantiality of language, writing, and reality leads to a series of taboos that concern all the components of the linguistic sign in Egypt



Signifier



Signified

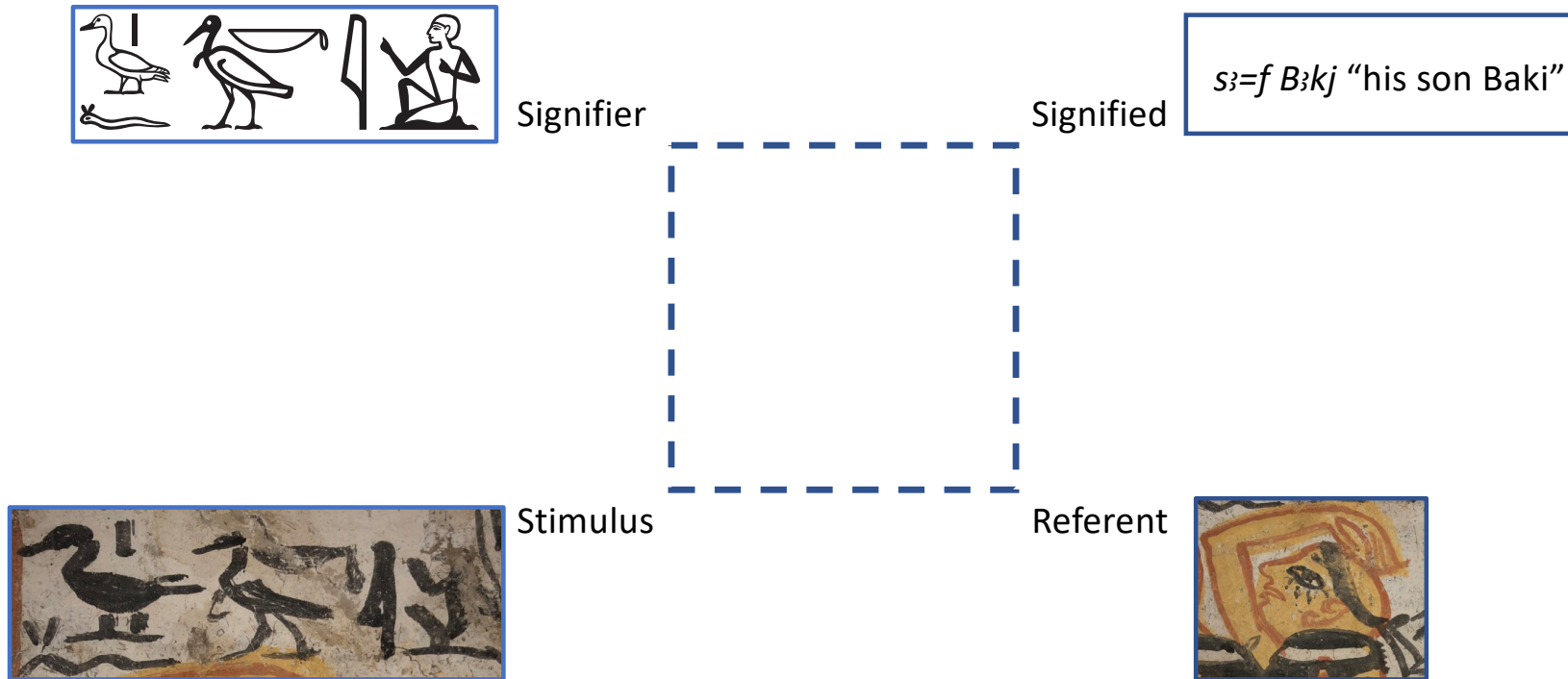


Stimulus

Referent

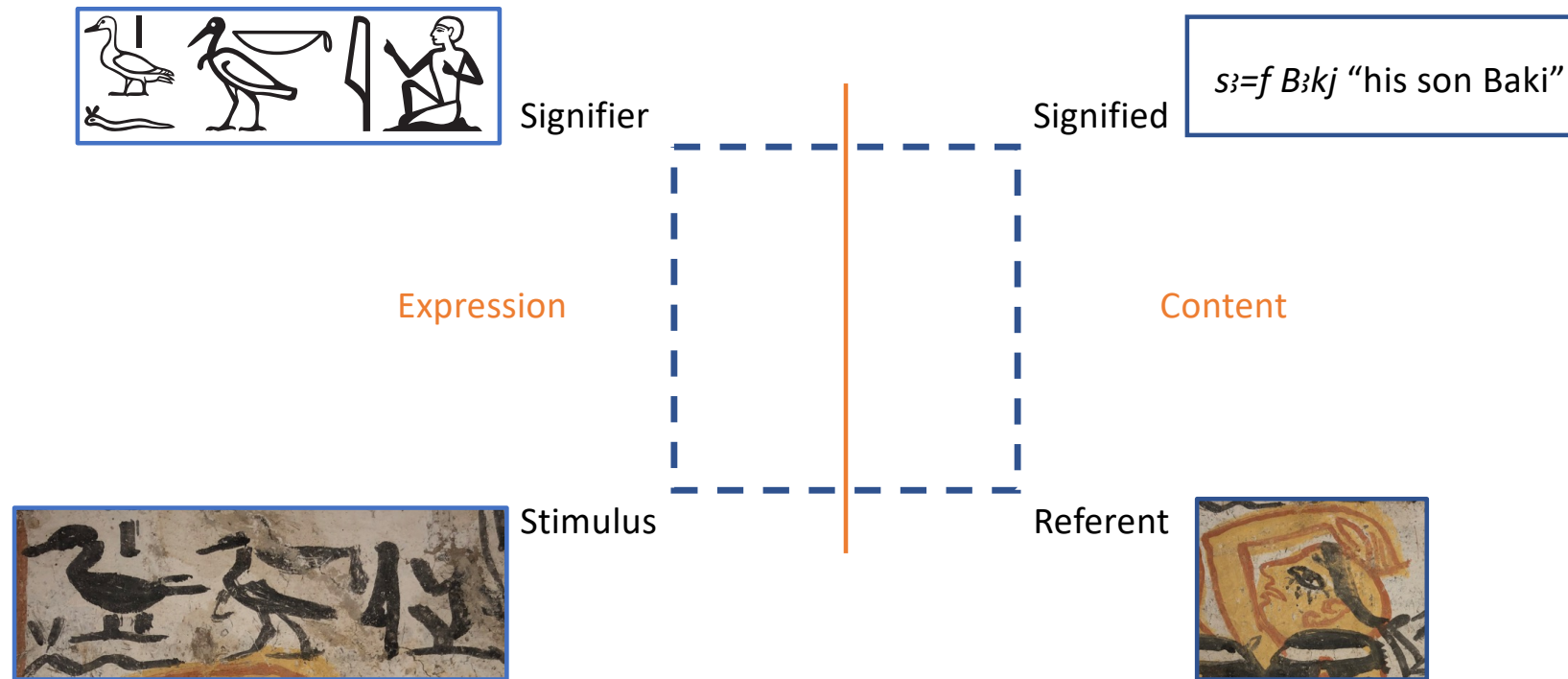
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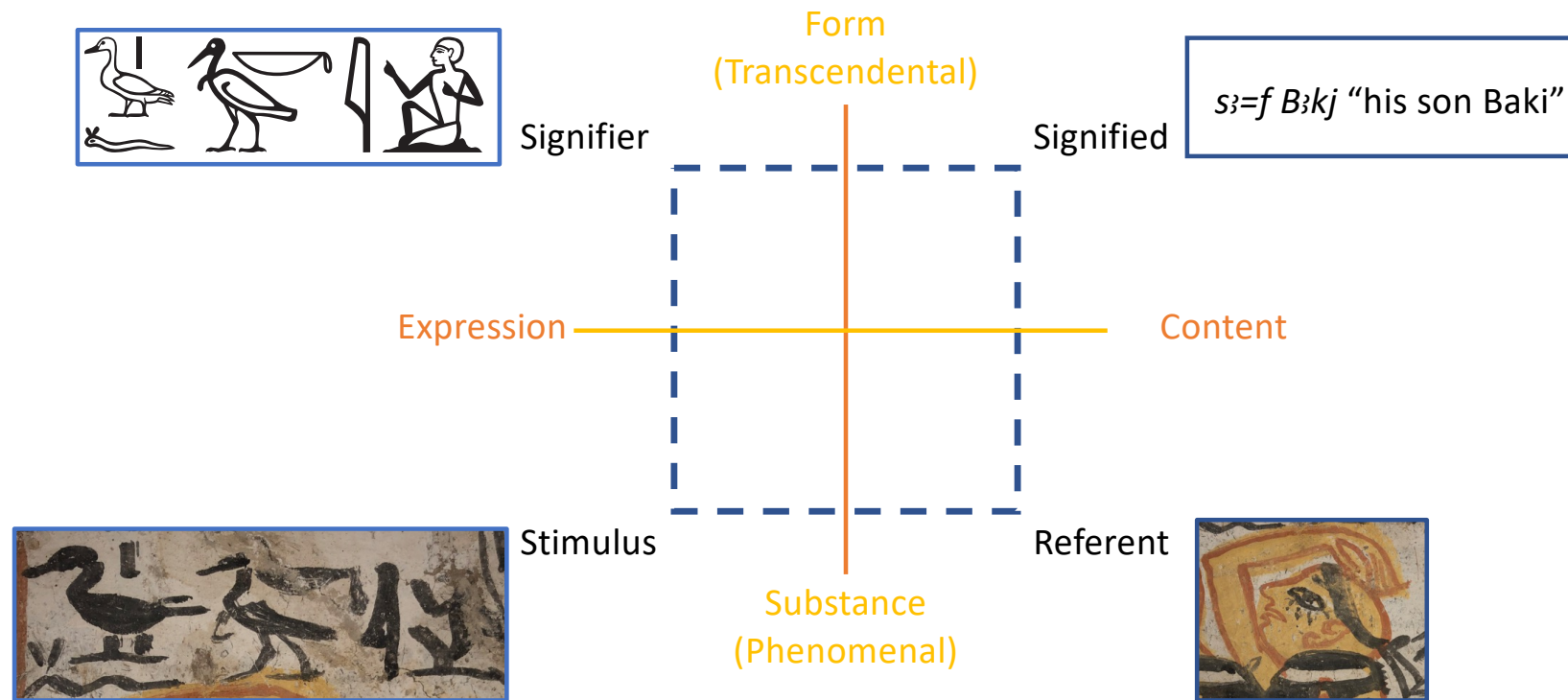
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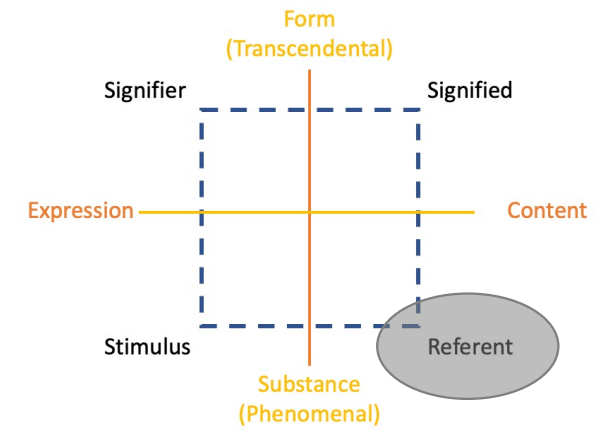
Written language taboos

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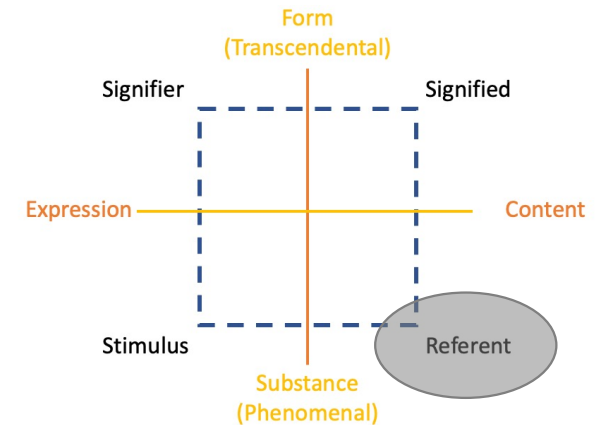
Written language taboos

1. Unspeakable and unwritable referents



Written language taboos

1. Unspeakable and unwritable referents



Qadesh, §193–194 (P. Sallier, 6,8–9 = *KRI* II, 62,10 & 15)

“The major crime that my army and my chariotry have committed **is too serious to be told**”

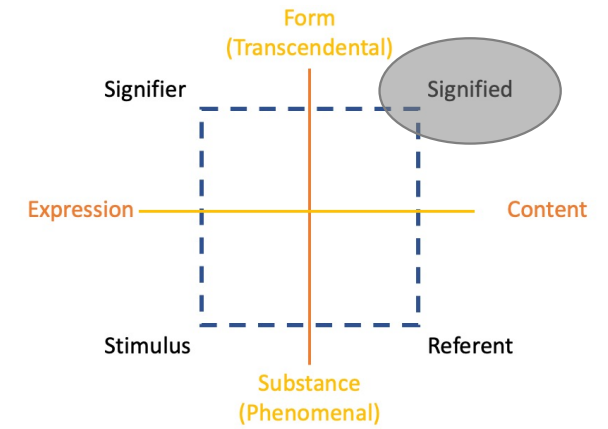


P. Mayer A, v° 12,26–13A,1

“(They [i.e., the thieves] were placed in front of Pharaoh), and **one could not bring us what they have said in written form**”

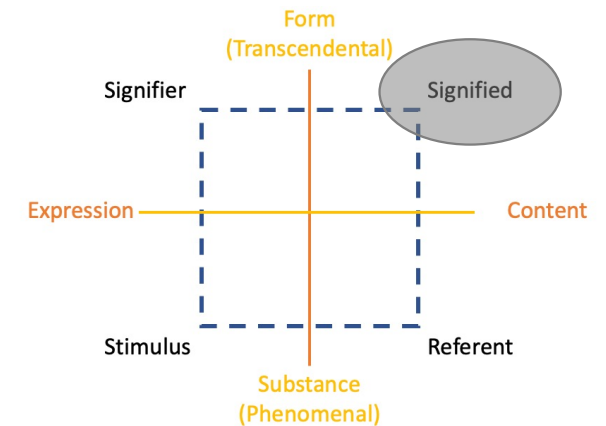
Written language taboos

1. Unspeakable and unwritable referents
2. Upturned signifieds ('antiphrasis')



Written language taboos

1. Unspeakable and unwritable referents
2. Upturned signifieds ('antiphrasis')

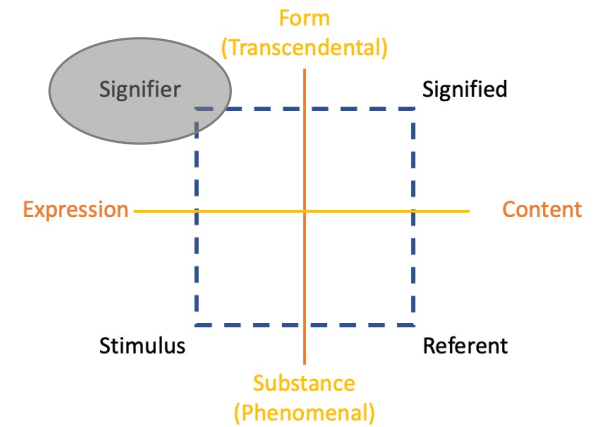


P. Rollin, 2

'They [i.e., the magical writings and figurines] were placed in the hand of Pabakkamen, whom Pra did not allow to be Chamberlain.' (= who was then Chamberlain)

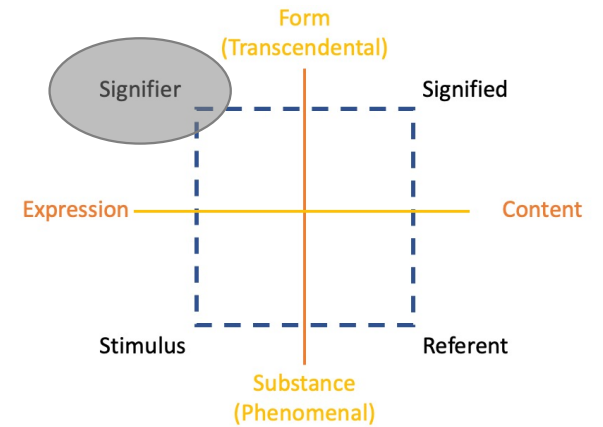
Written language taboos

1. Unspeakable and unwritable referents
2. Upturned signifieds
3. Neutralized signifiers



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1. Unspeakable and unwritable referents
2. Upturned signifieds
3. Neutralized signifiers

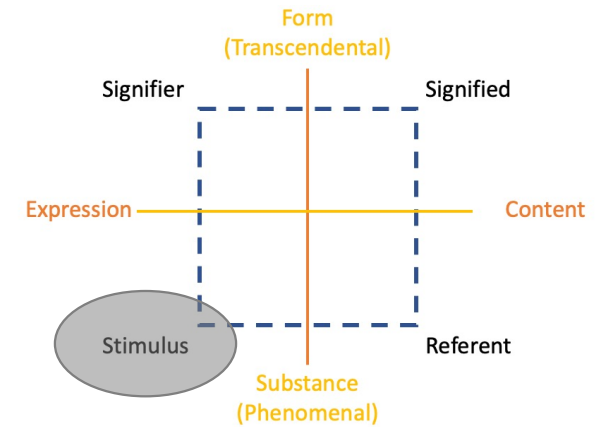


for



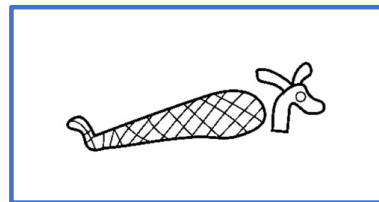
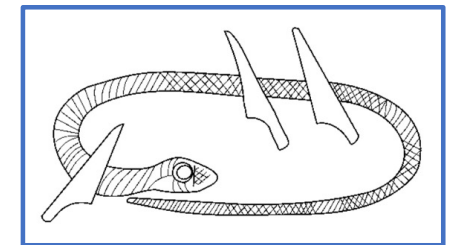
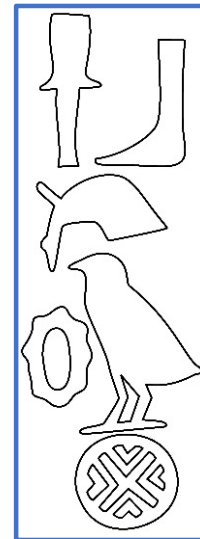
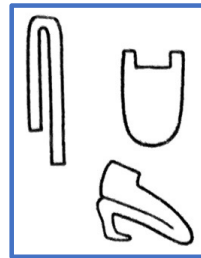
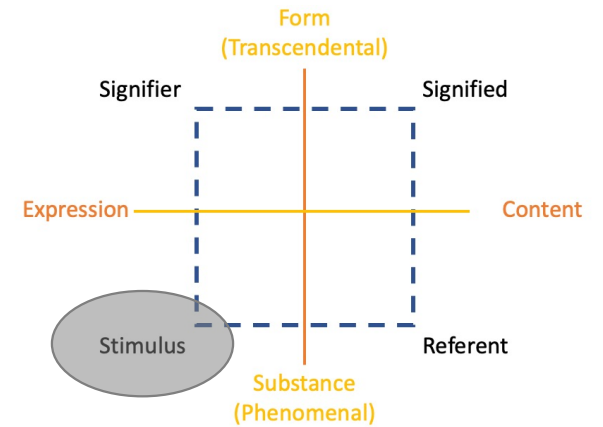
Written language taboos

1. Unspeakable and unwritable referents
2. Upturned signifieds
3. Neutralized signifiers
4. Paralyzed stimulus



Written language taboos

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Altering writing

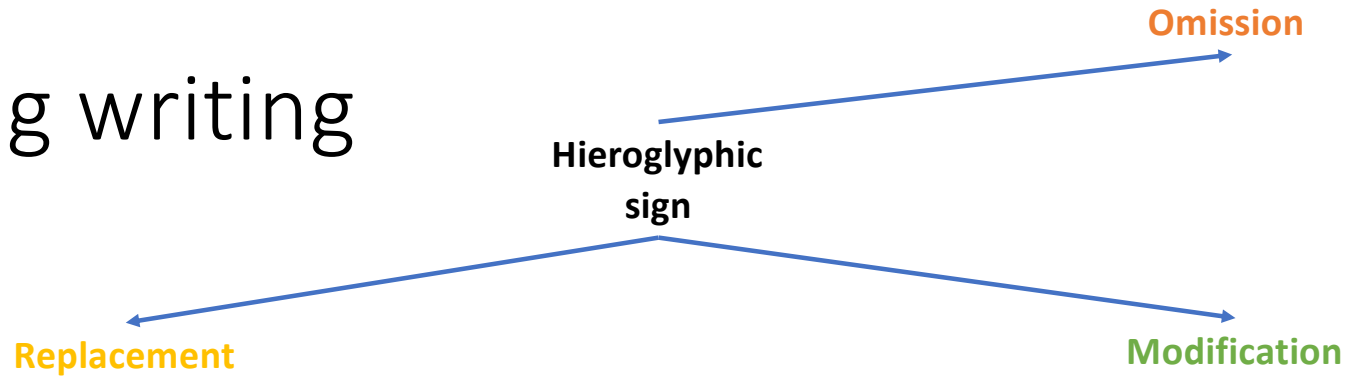
Towards a typology

Altering writing

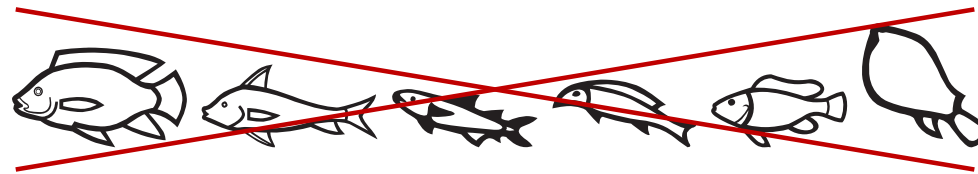
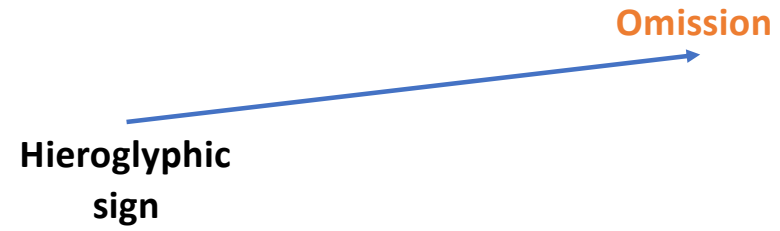
Firth & Gunn (1926: 171–174); Iannarilli (2017, 2018), Lacau (1913, 1926); Lincke (2011: 131-149); Lippert (2012: 251); Mathieu (2022); McDonald (2007); Miniaci (2010); Pierre (1994, 1997); Perdu (2016: 87); Posener (1951); Quack (2008); Ritner (2008); Roth (2017); Schenkel (2011); Thuault (2020); van de Walle (1938); Vernus (2020); Winand & Angenot (2016)

“Les images sont des êtres vivants doués d’un pouvoir magique. Certains signes qui représentent des êtres dangereux ou impurs peuvent donc nuire au mort. Inversement le contact du mort peut profaner les images des dieux. (...) En Égypte l’idée religieuse est partout : il est intéressant de la voir modifier gravement jusqu’à l’orthographe des mots” (Lacau 1913: 64)

Altering writing

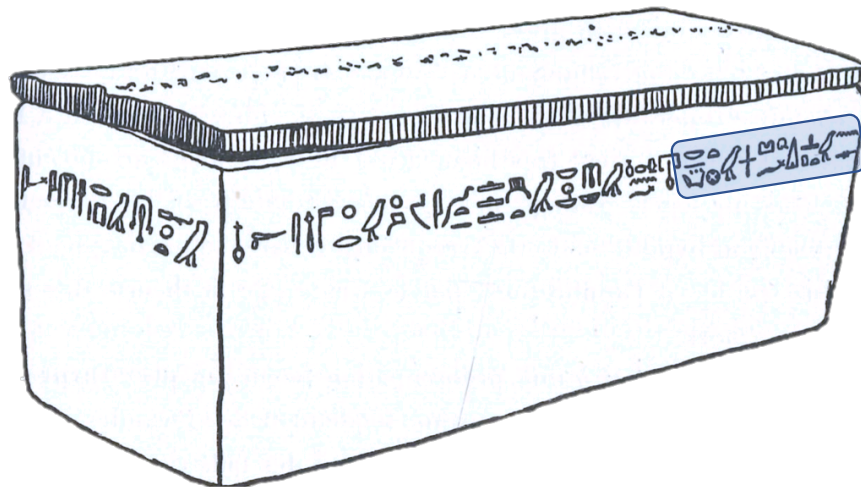
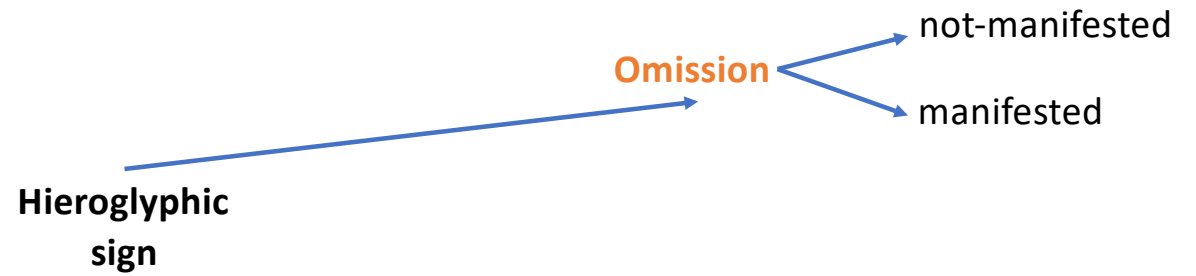


Altering writing



in the *Pyramid Texts*

Altering writing

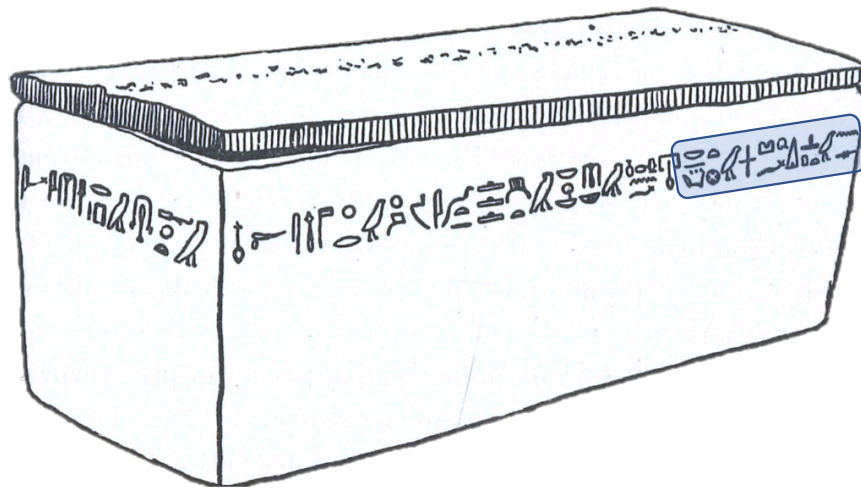
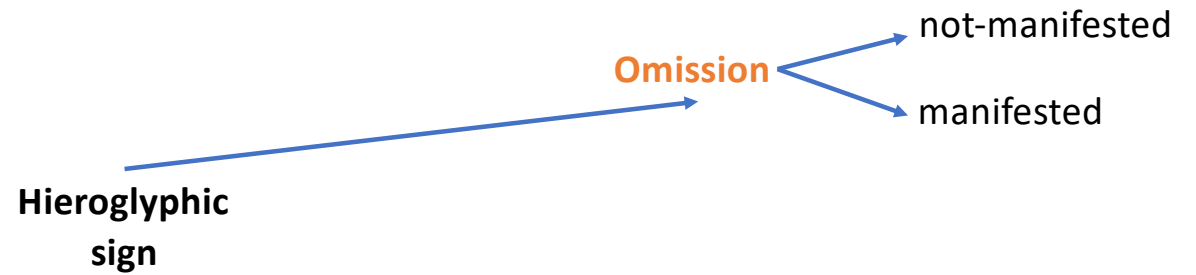


Cairo CG 28121

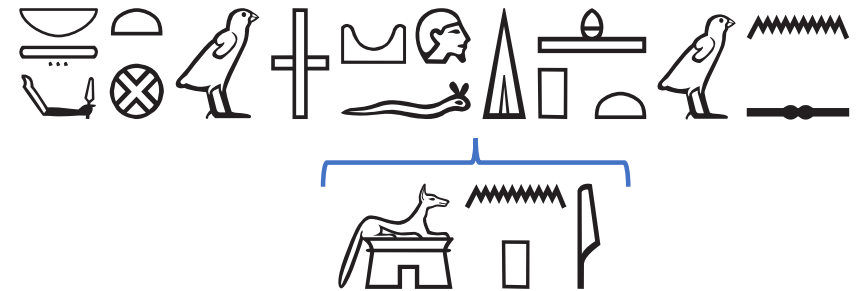


Lacau (1926); Rössler-Köhler (1985);
Hornung (1989, 1994, 1997),
Kockelmann (2008), Arpagaus (2013)

Altering writing

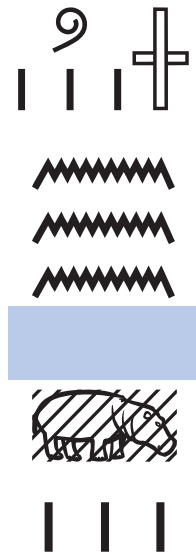


Cairo CG 28121



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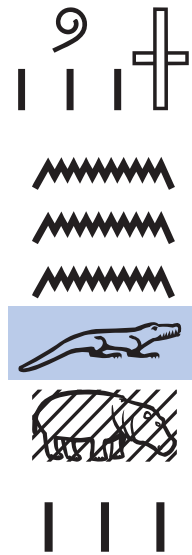
Altering writing



jmy.w-mw 'aquatic animals'



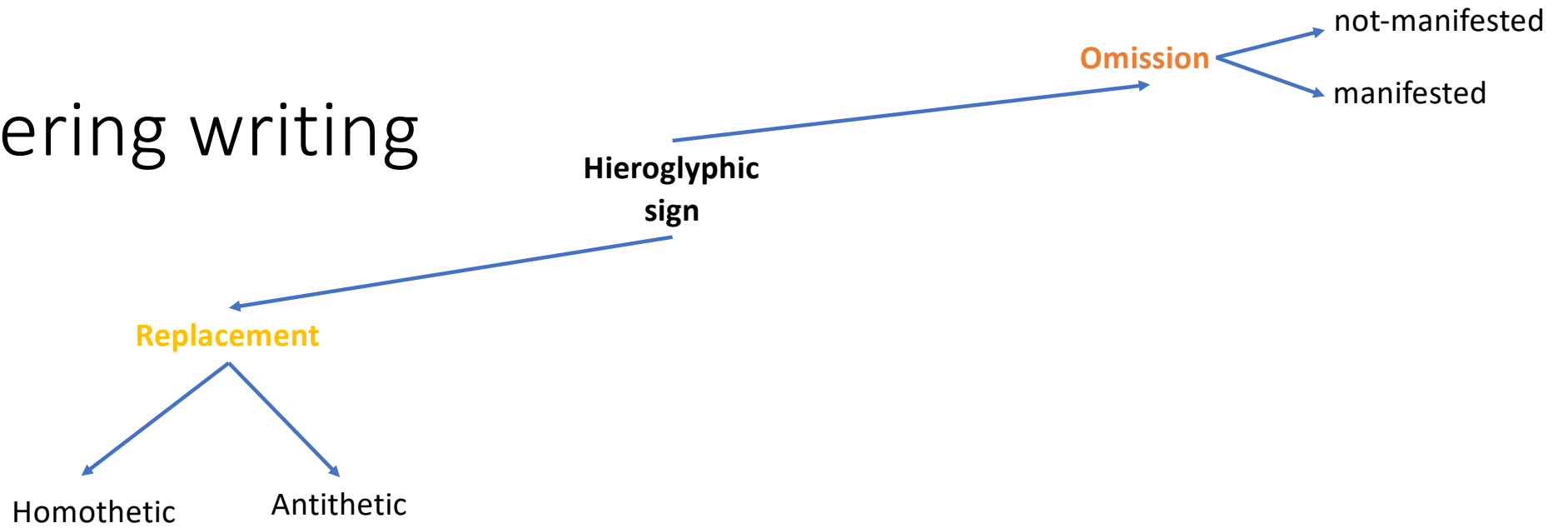
Altering writing



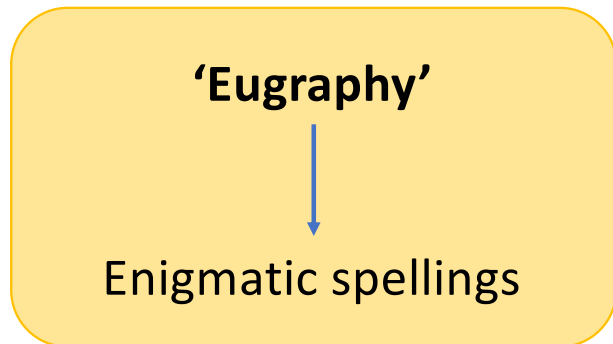
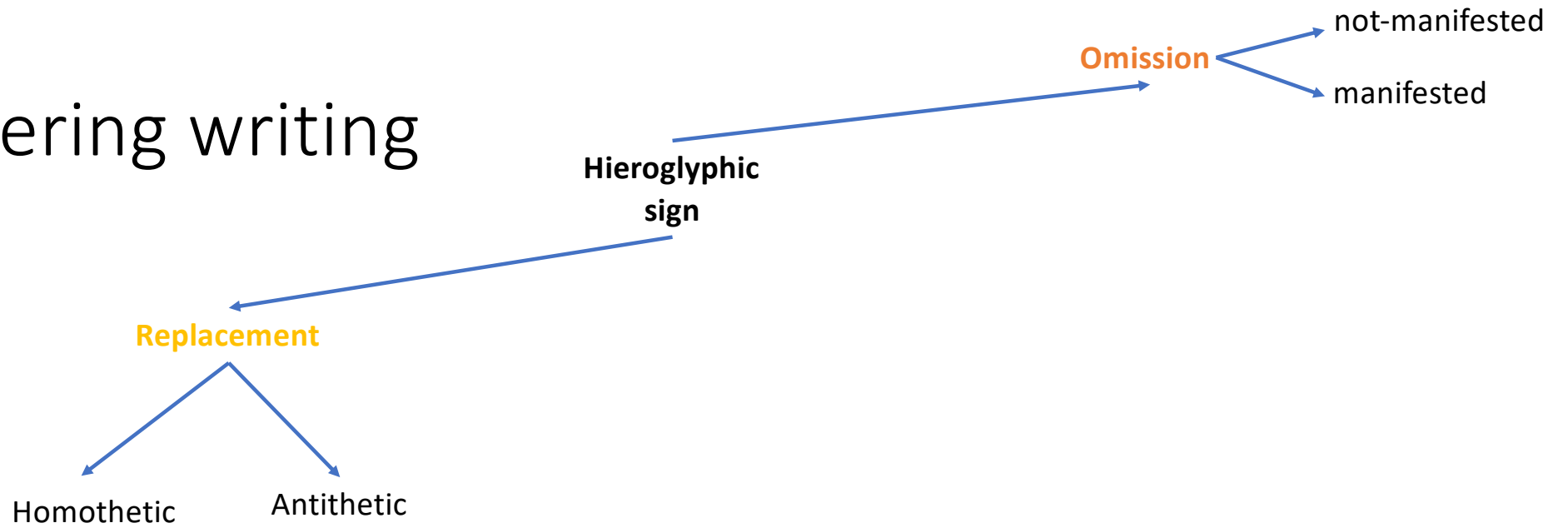
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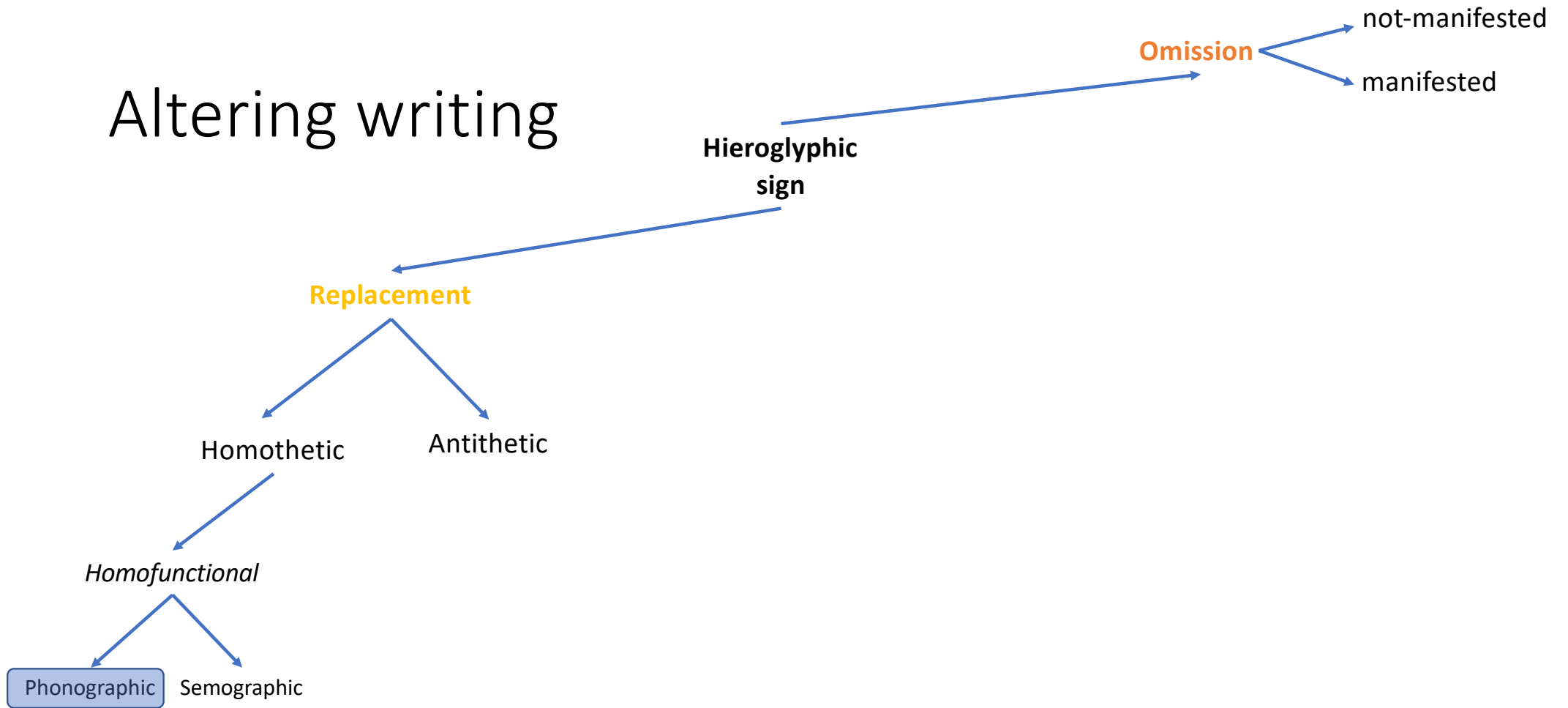
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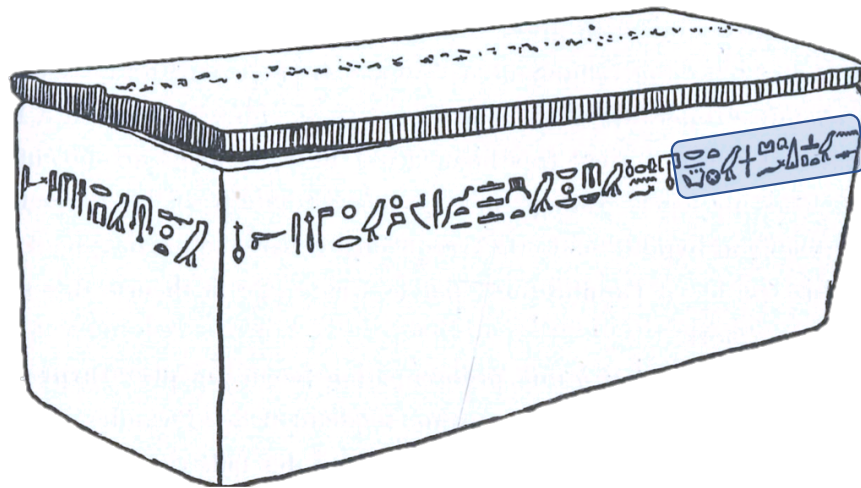
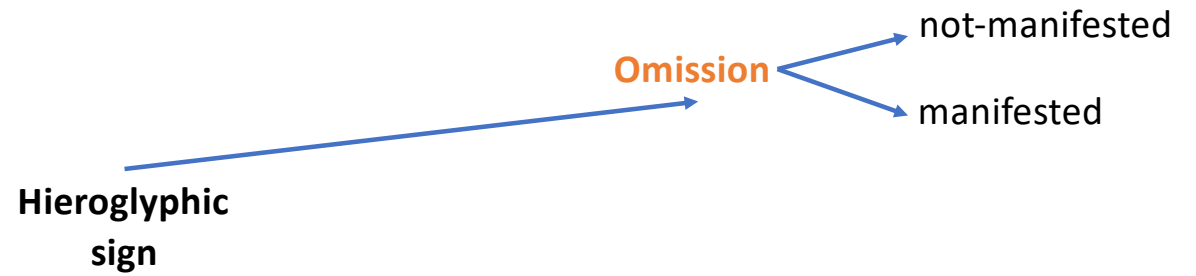
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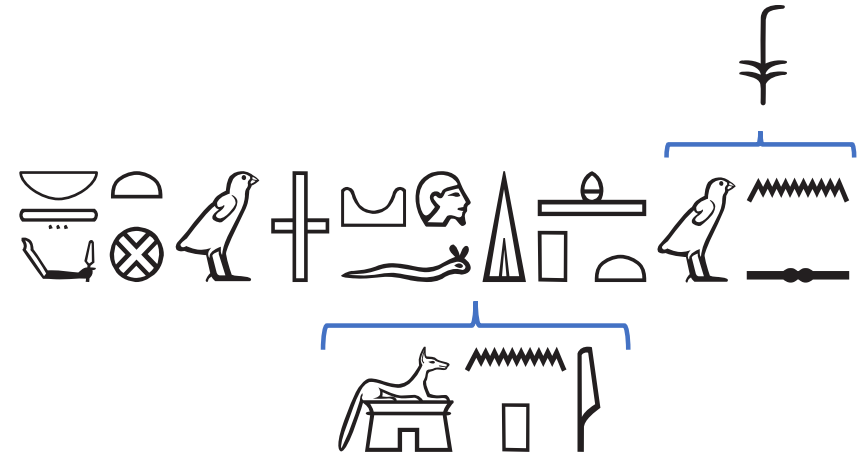
Altering writing



Altering writing

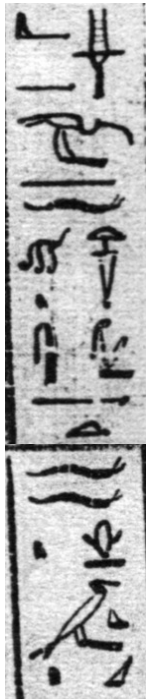


Cairo CG 28121



Lacau (1926); Rössler-Köhler (1985);
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Altering writing

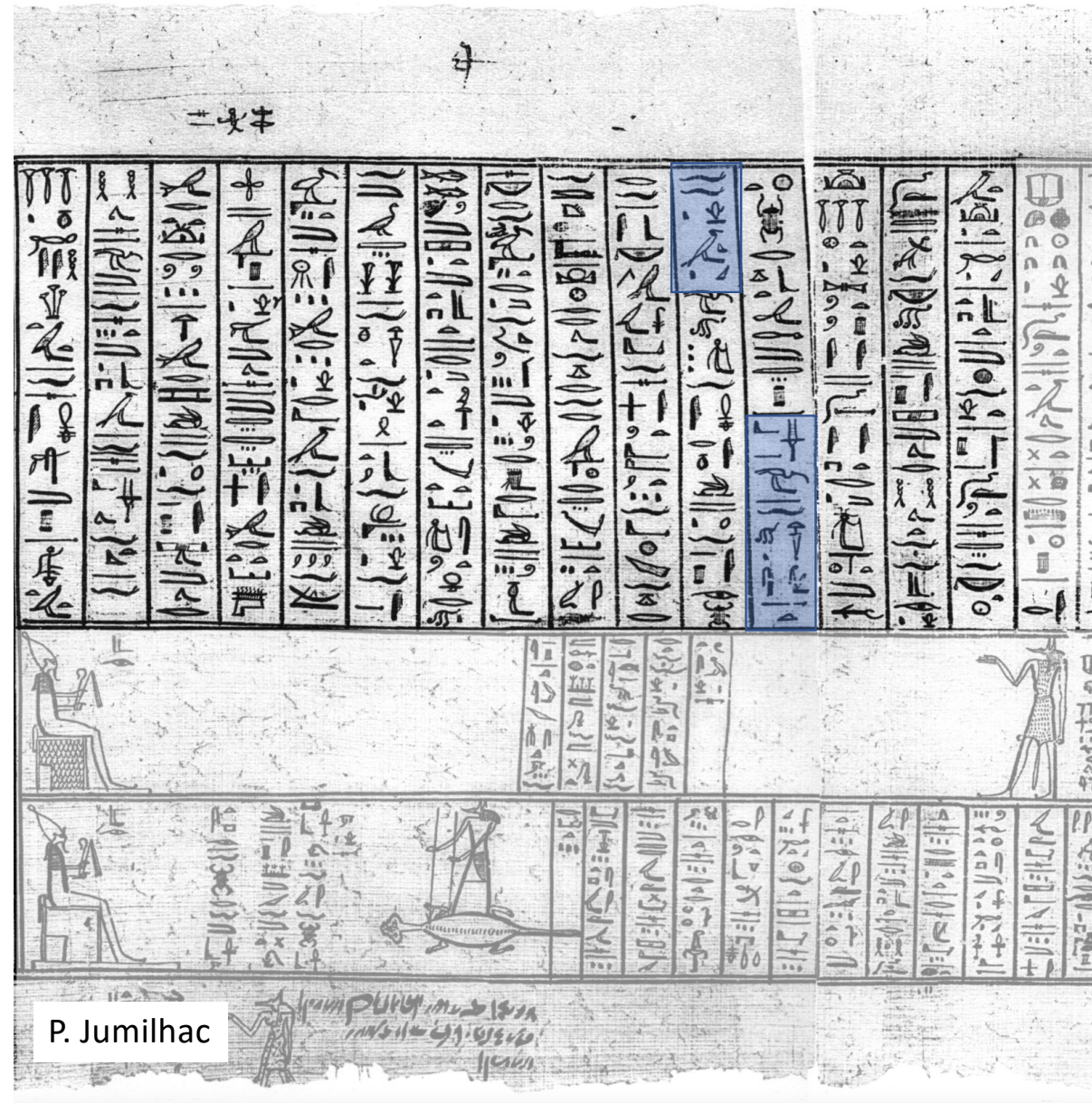


ḥꜥ.n gm.n=f tp šps n (j)t(=f hr k3)

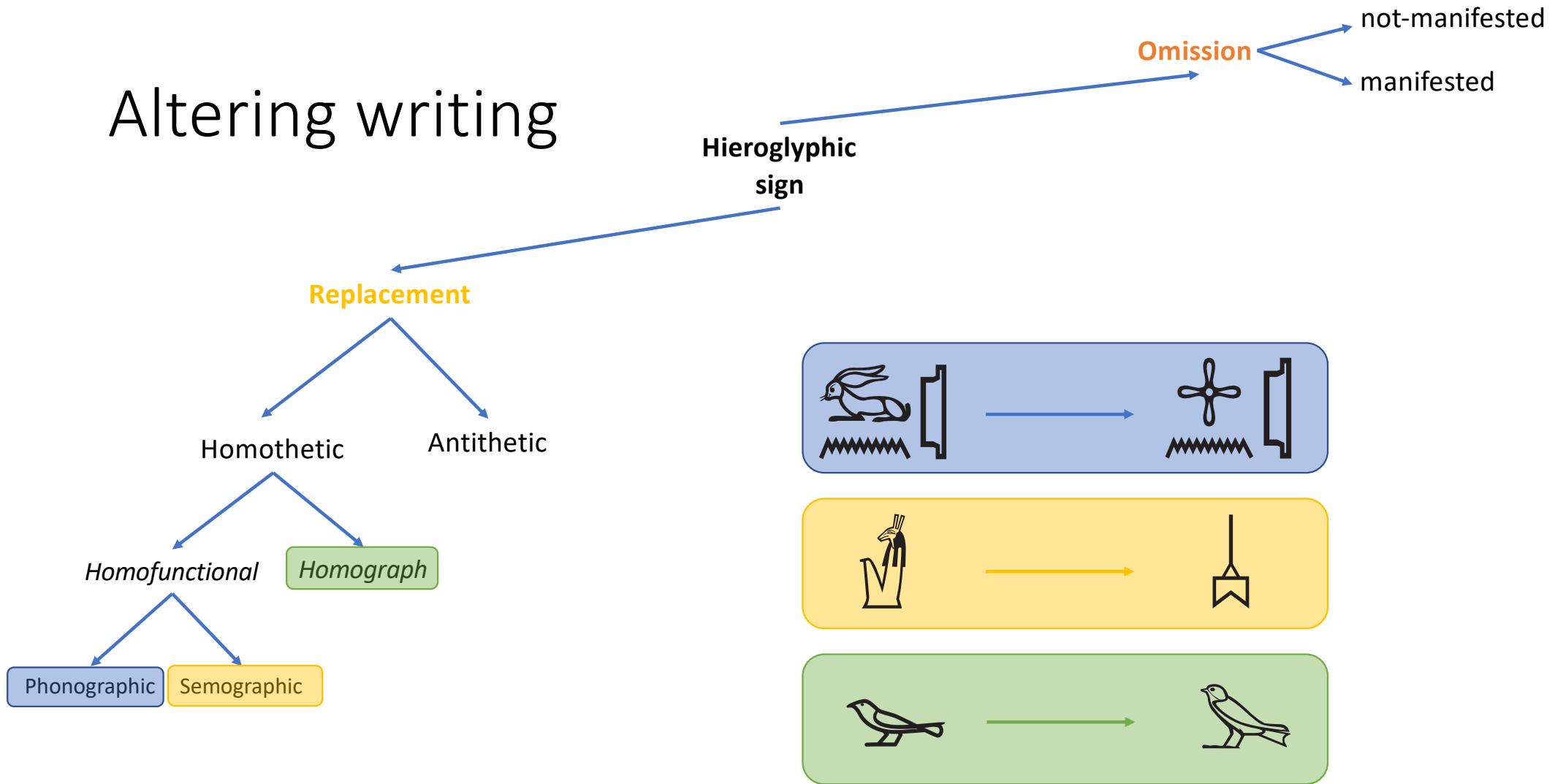
And he found the venerable
head of his father on the hill



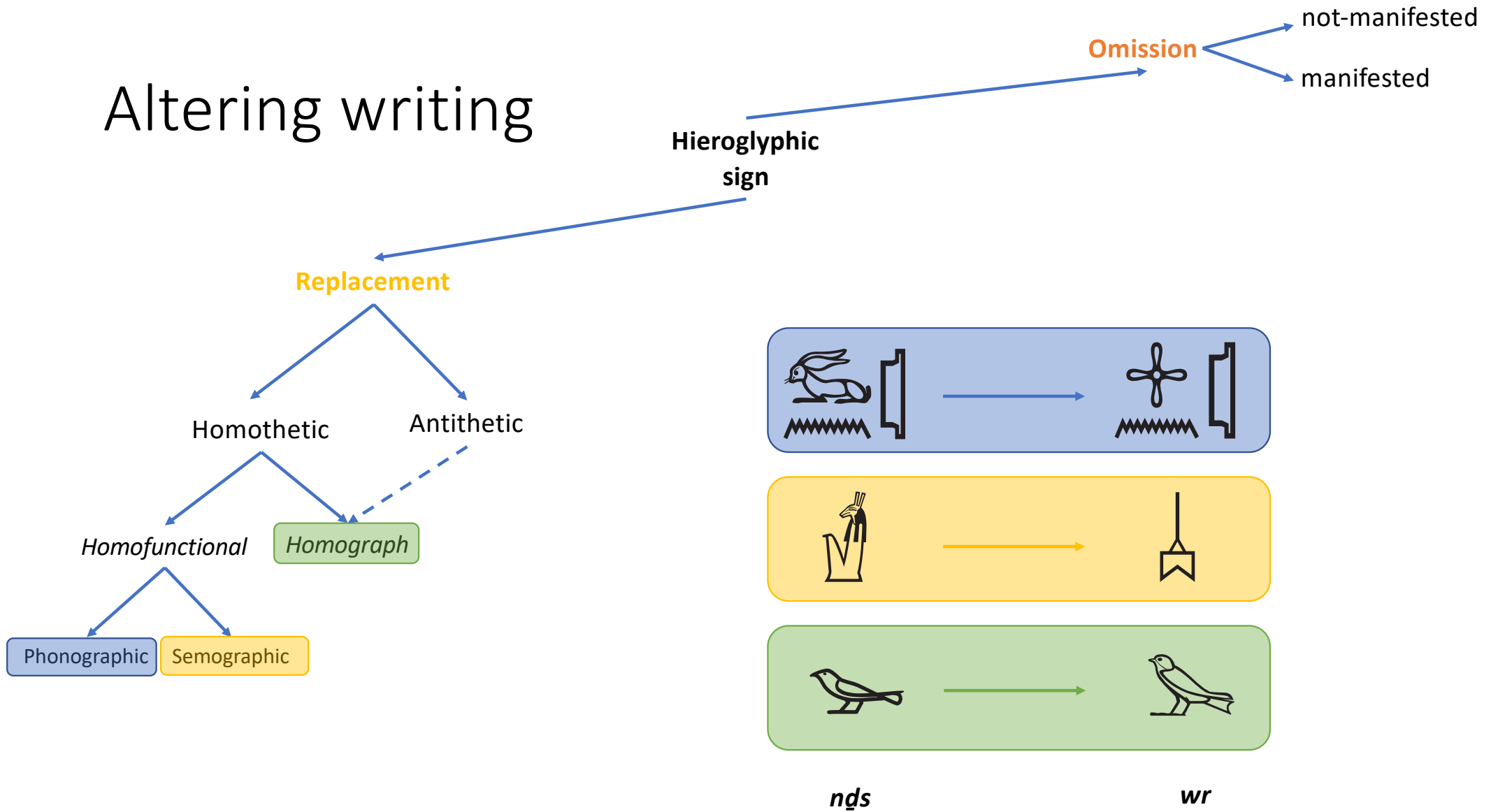
Lippert (2012)



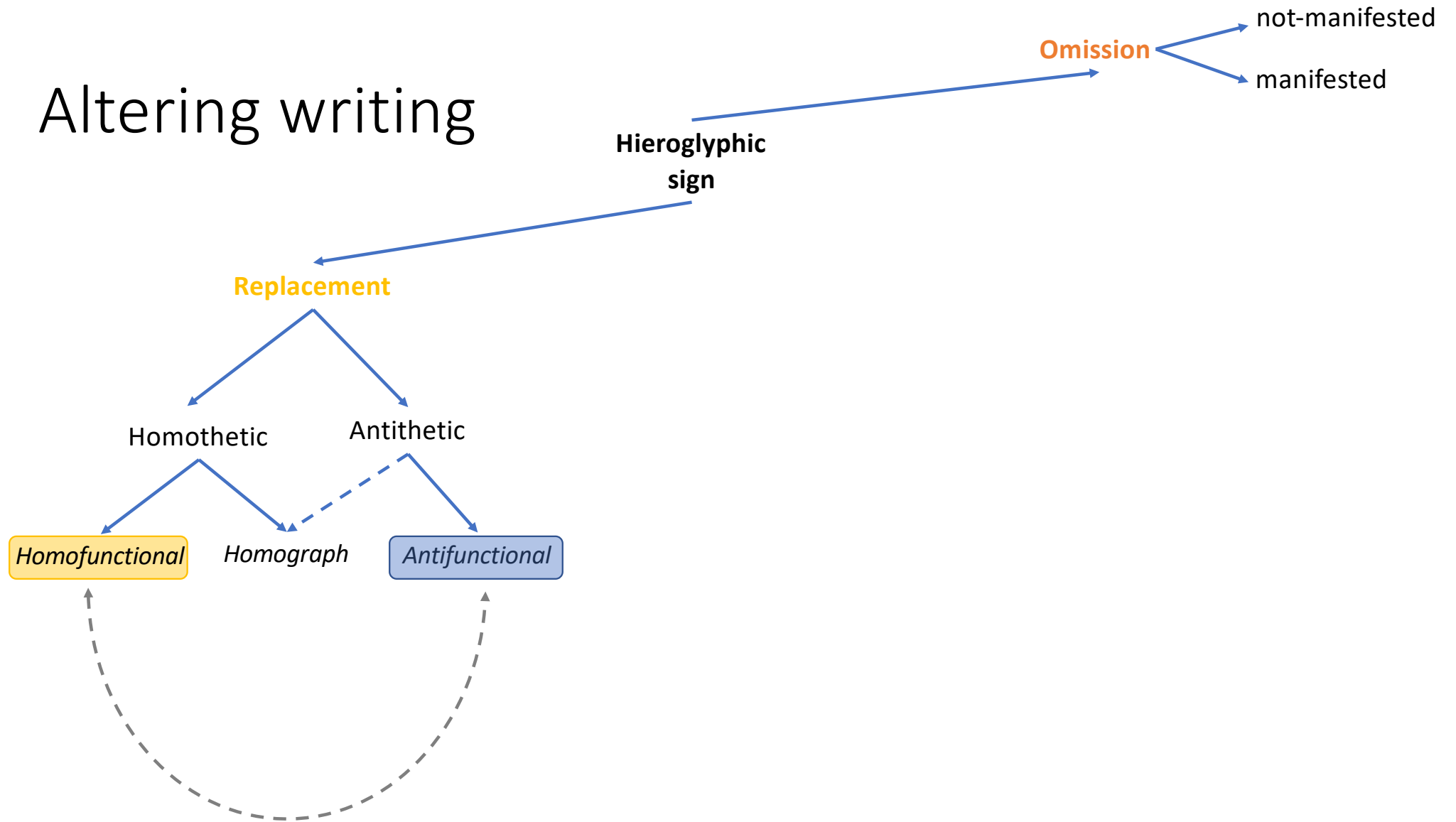
Altering writing



Altering writing



Altering writing



Altering writing

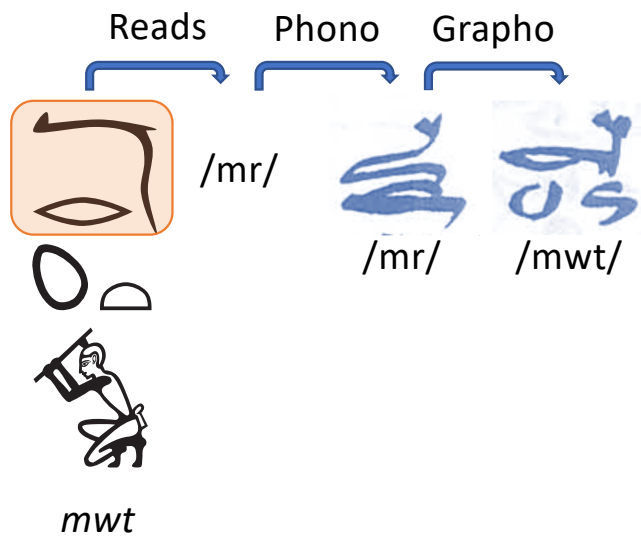
r3 n pr m hrw, tm mwt m whm



Tomb of Inherkhau

Altering writing

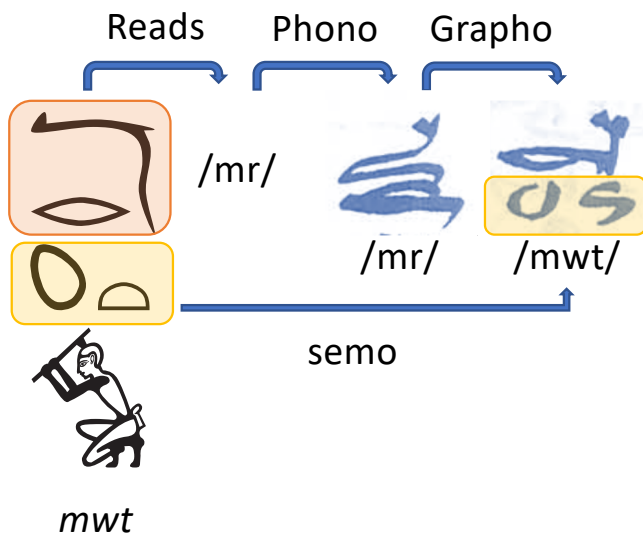
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Tomb of Inherkhau

Altering writing

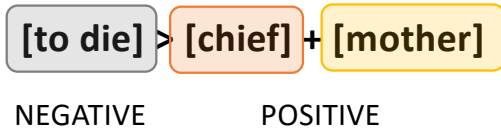
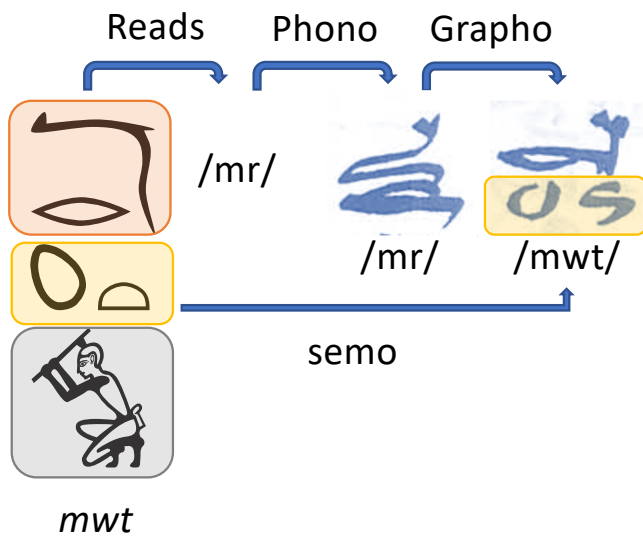
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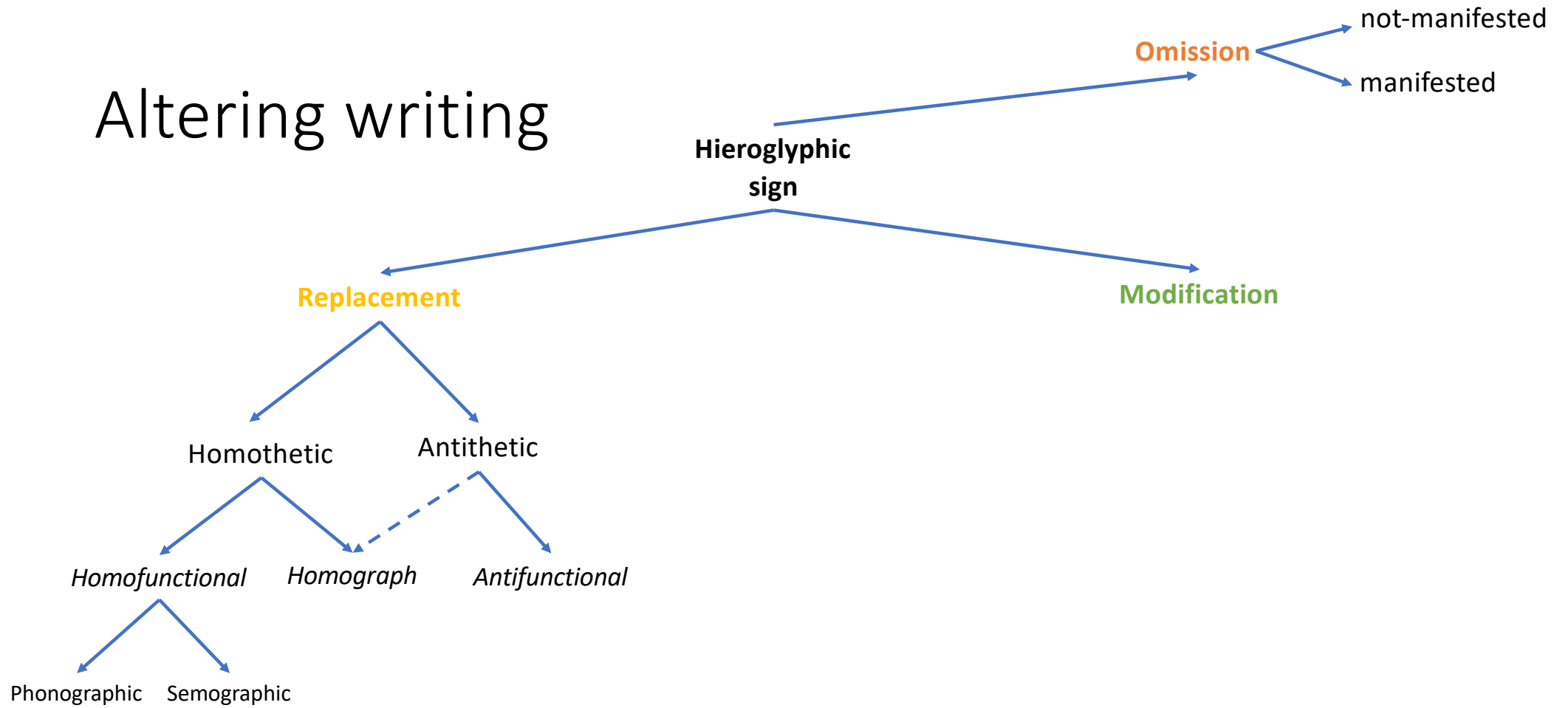
Altering writing

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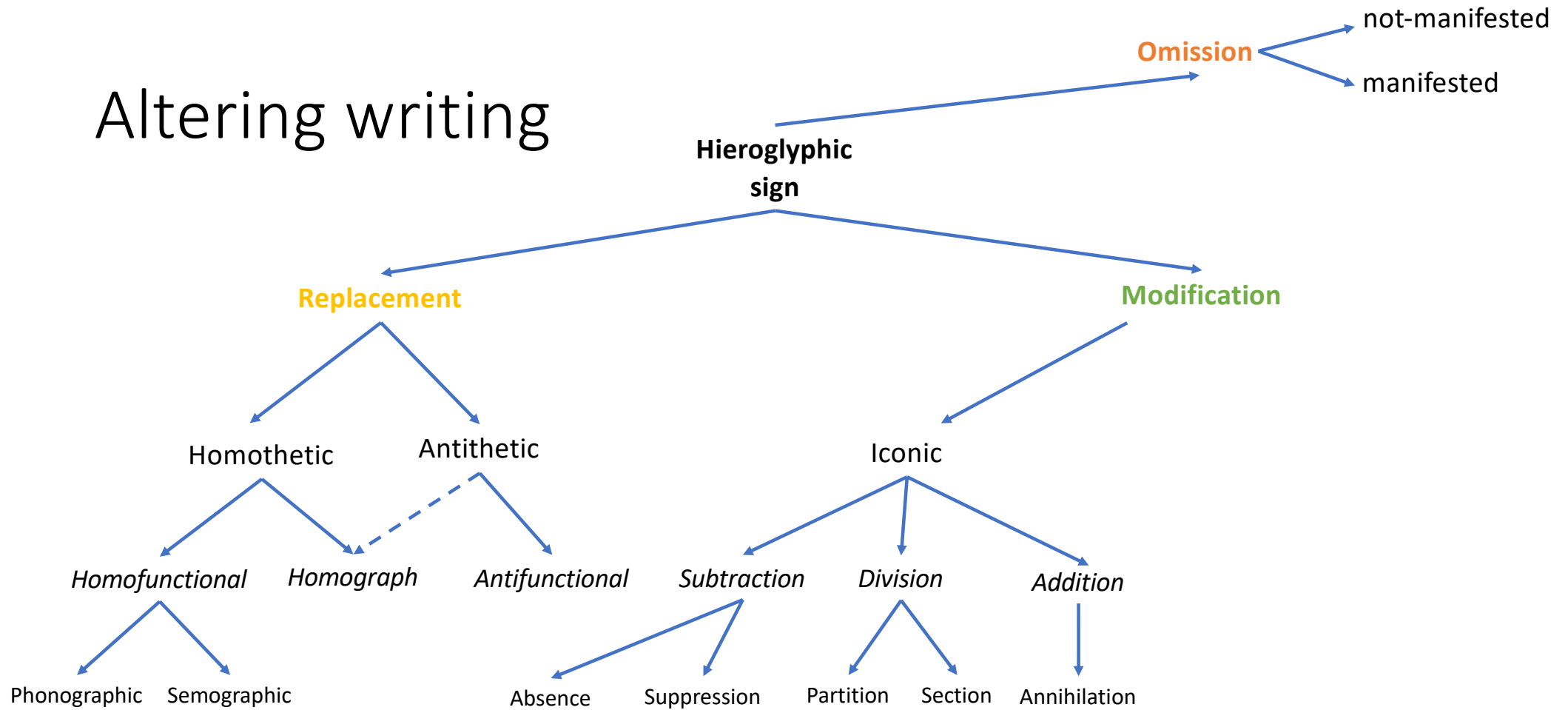


Tomb of Inherkhau

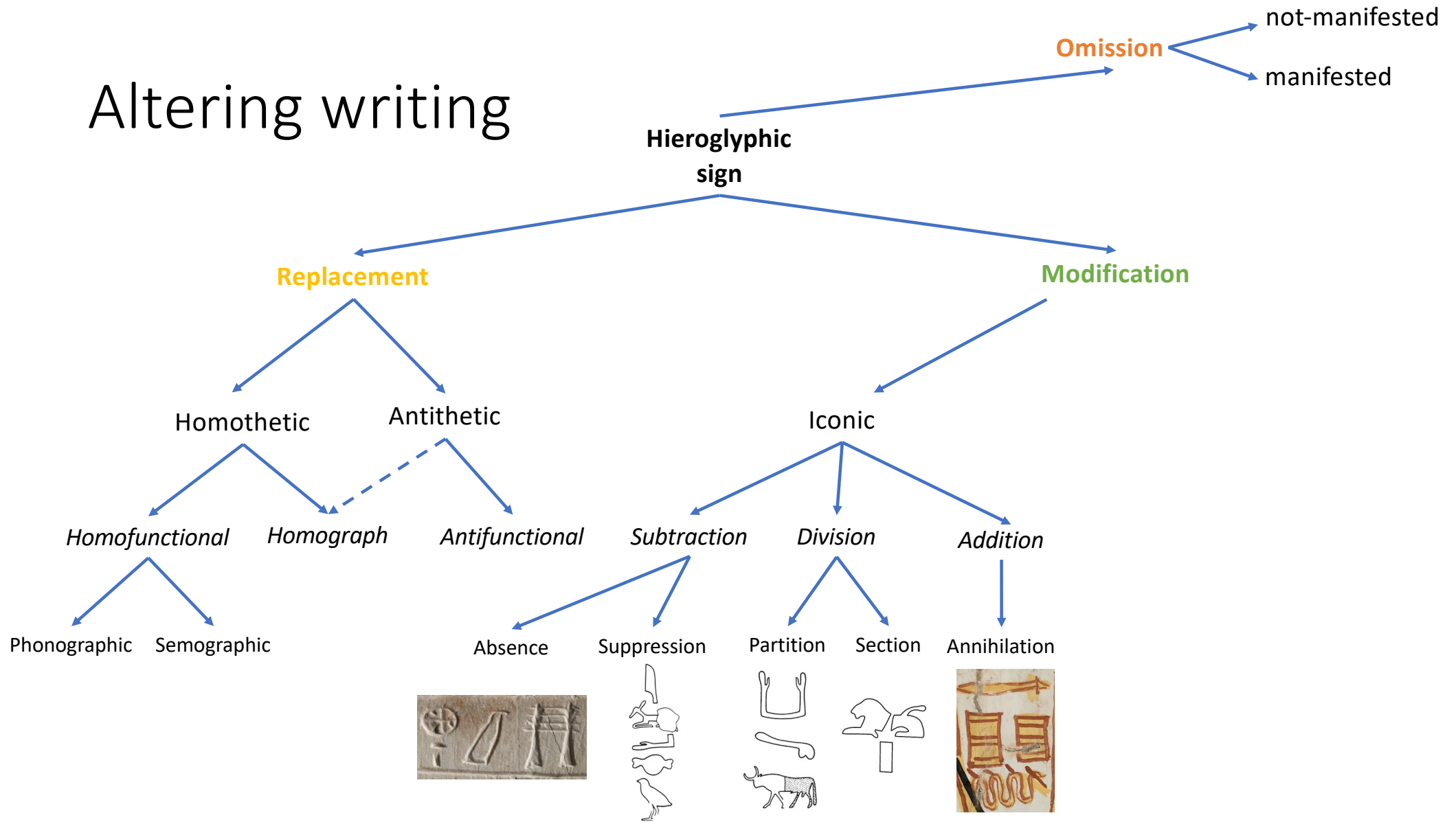
Altering writing



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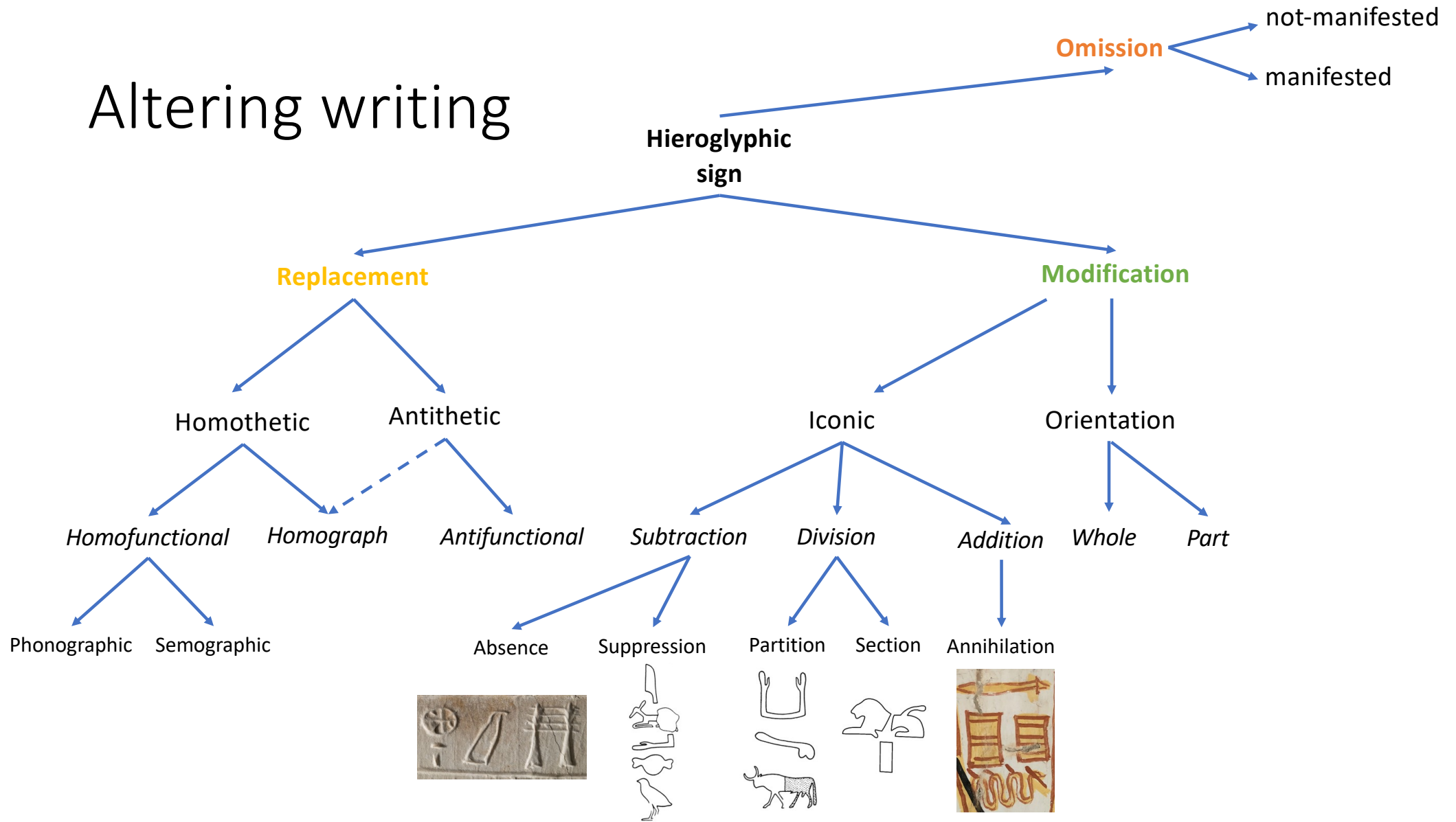


Altering writing



Coffin of Imy, east side (Museo Egizio, inv. no. S. 8918). Photo by Nicola Dell'Aquila and Federico Taverni (Museo Egizio)

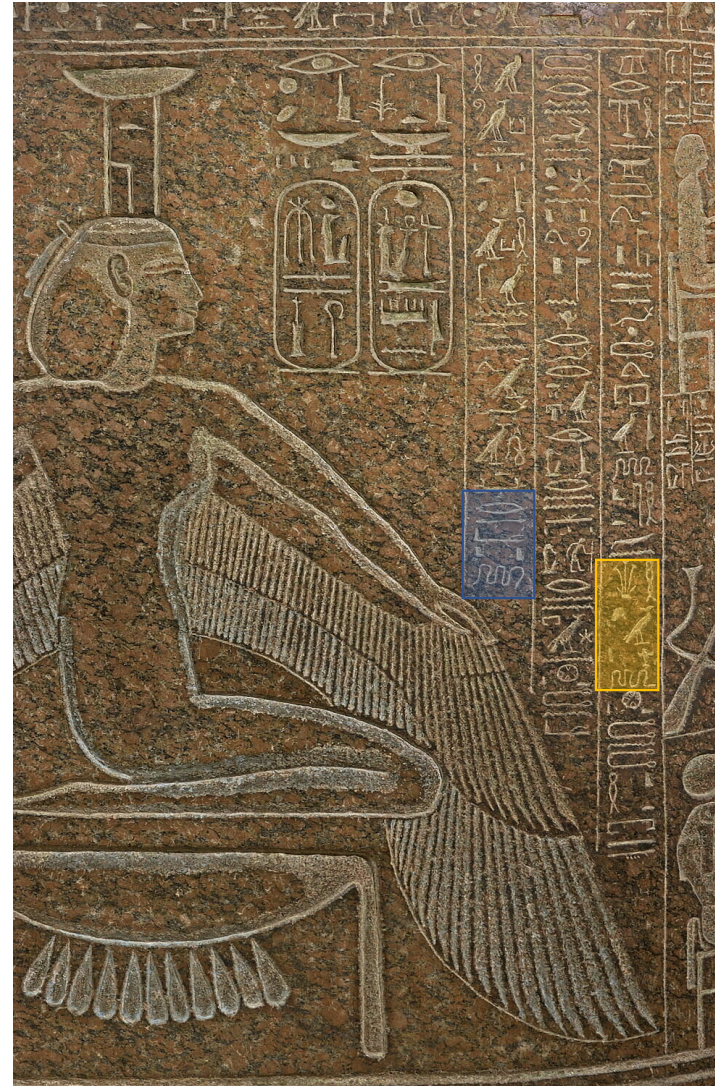
Altering writing



Altering writing



Sarcophagus of Ramesses III
(Louvre; <https://collections.louvre.fr>)



Altering writing



Altering writing



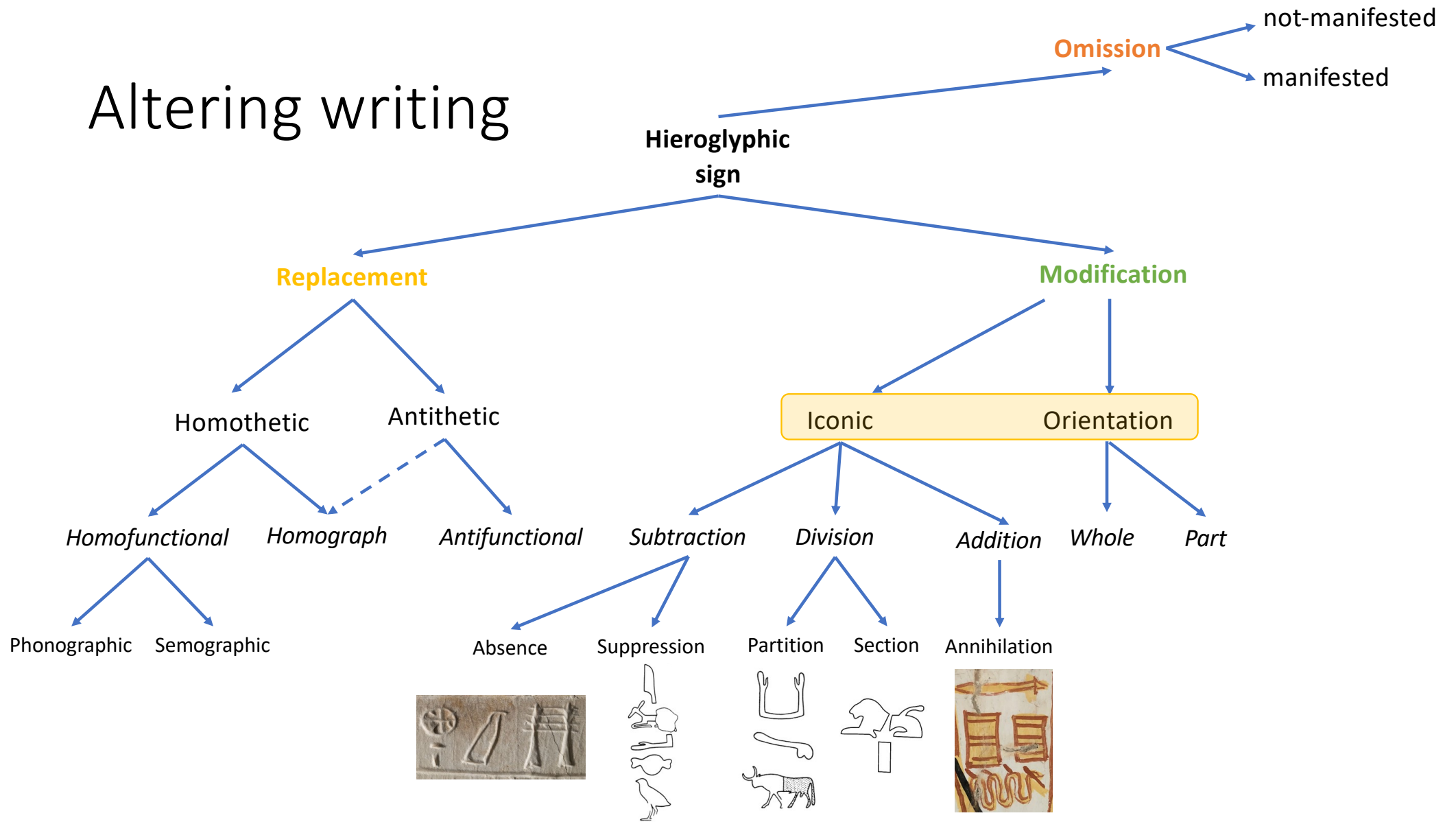
Altering writing



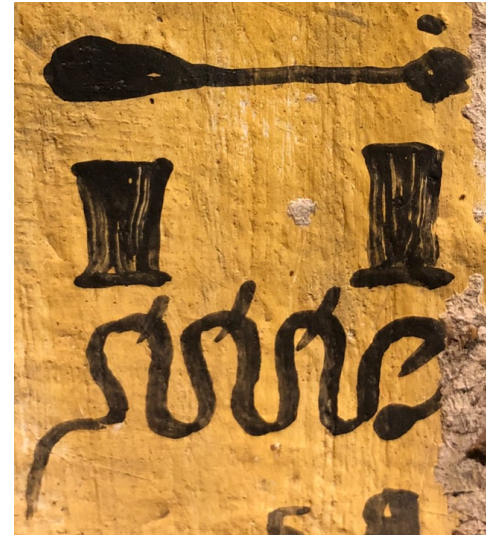
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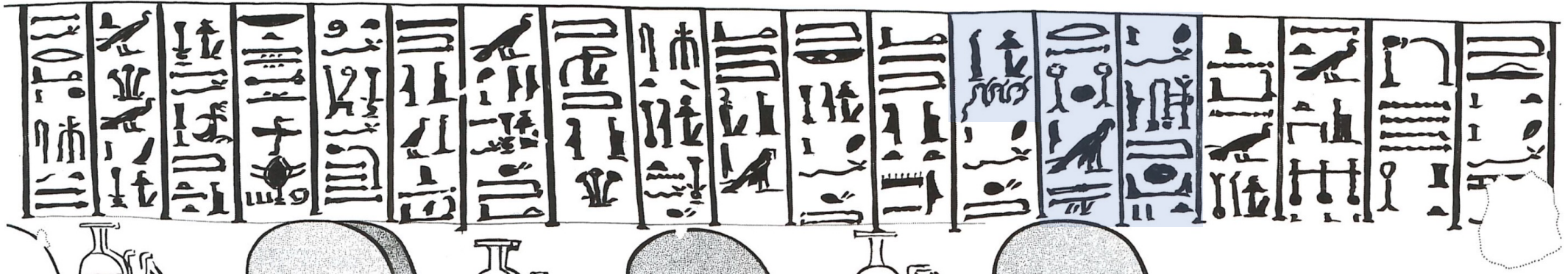


Addition & Rotation



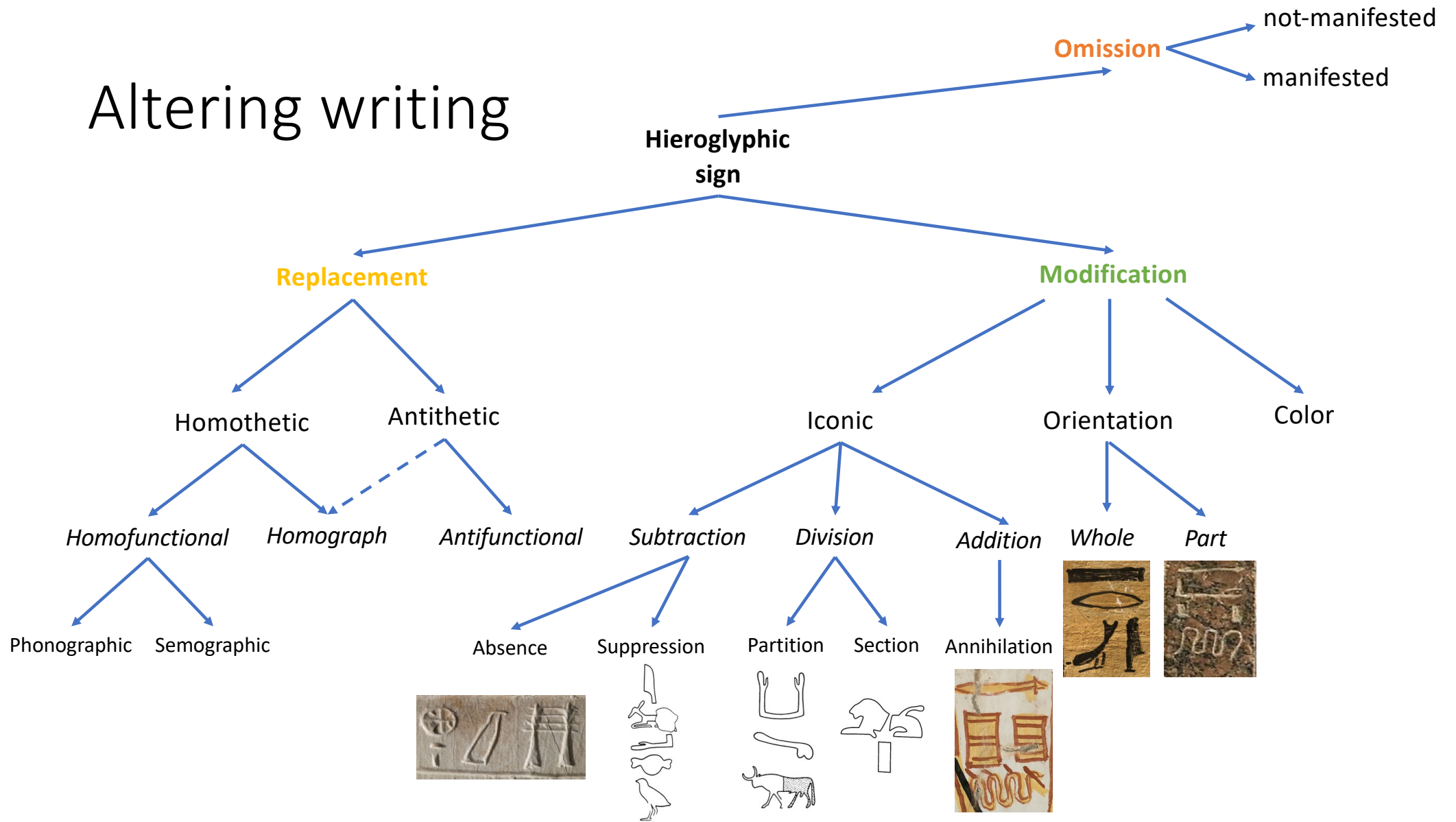
Division

Altering writing



sꜣ=f sš-ḳd m ḫ.t-nḫḫ Ḥr-Mnw mꜣ-ḥrw

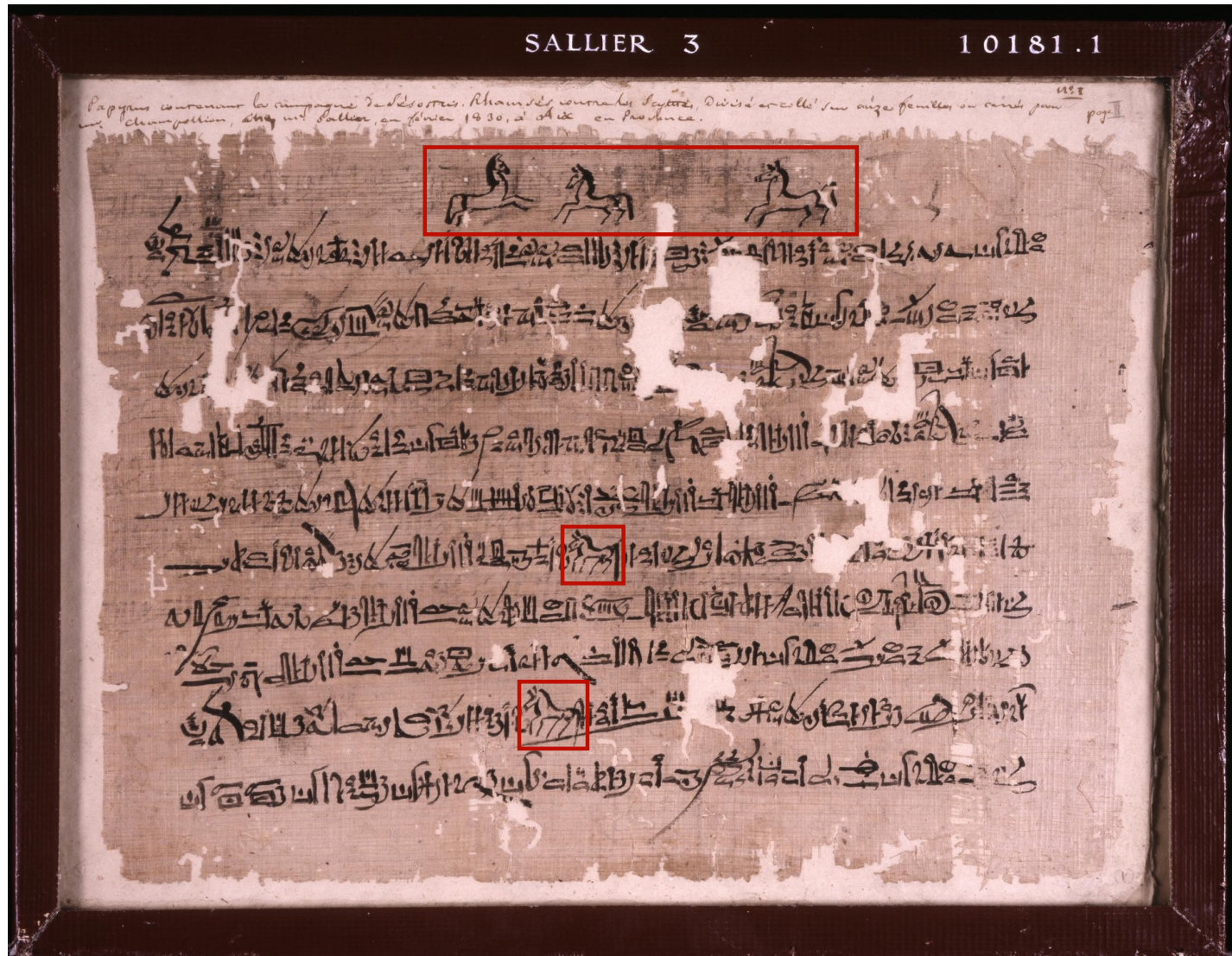
Altering writing



Altering writing in New Kingdom hieratic sources

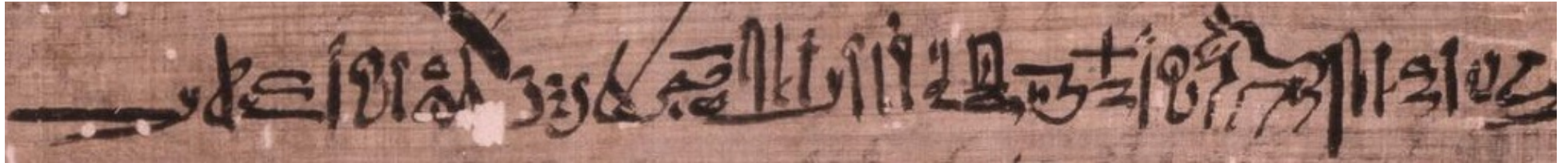
Horses in P. Sallier III

Sallier III – Orientation?



P. Sallier III,1 (= BM EA 10181)

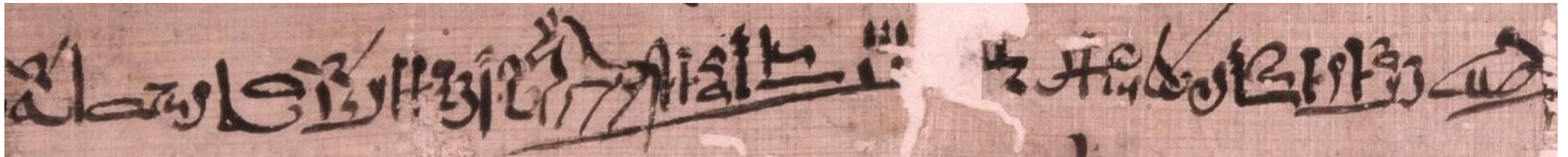




... pꜣ ḥtr ꜣ nty ḥry ḥmꜣf ʿ.w.s. Nḥt.w-m-Wꜣs.t rn.f ...

'The name of the great horse upon which was His Majesty was Nakhtemwaset'

(= King's horses)



... gmꜣf sw jw jnh sw 2500 ʿ-n-ḥtr m tꜣy.f wꜣ.t r bnr ...

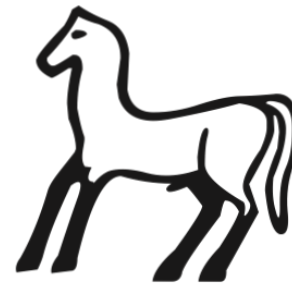
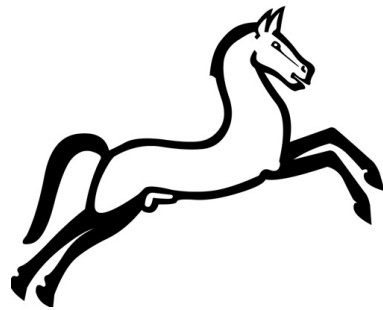
'He (= the King) discovered that 2500 pairs-of-horses were surrounding him on his road backward...'

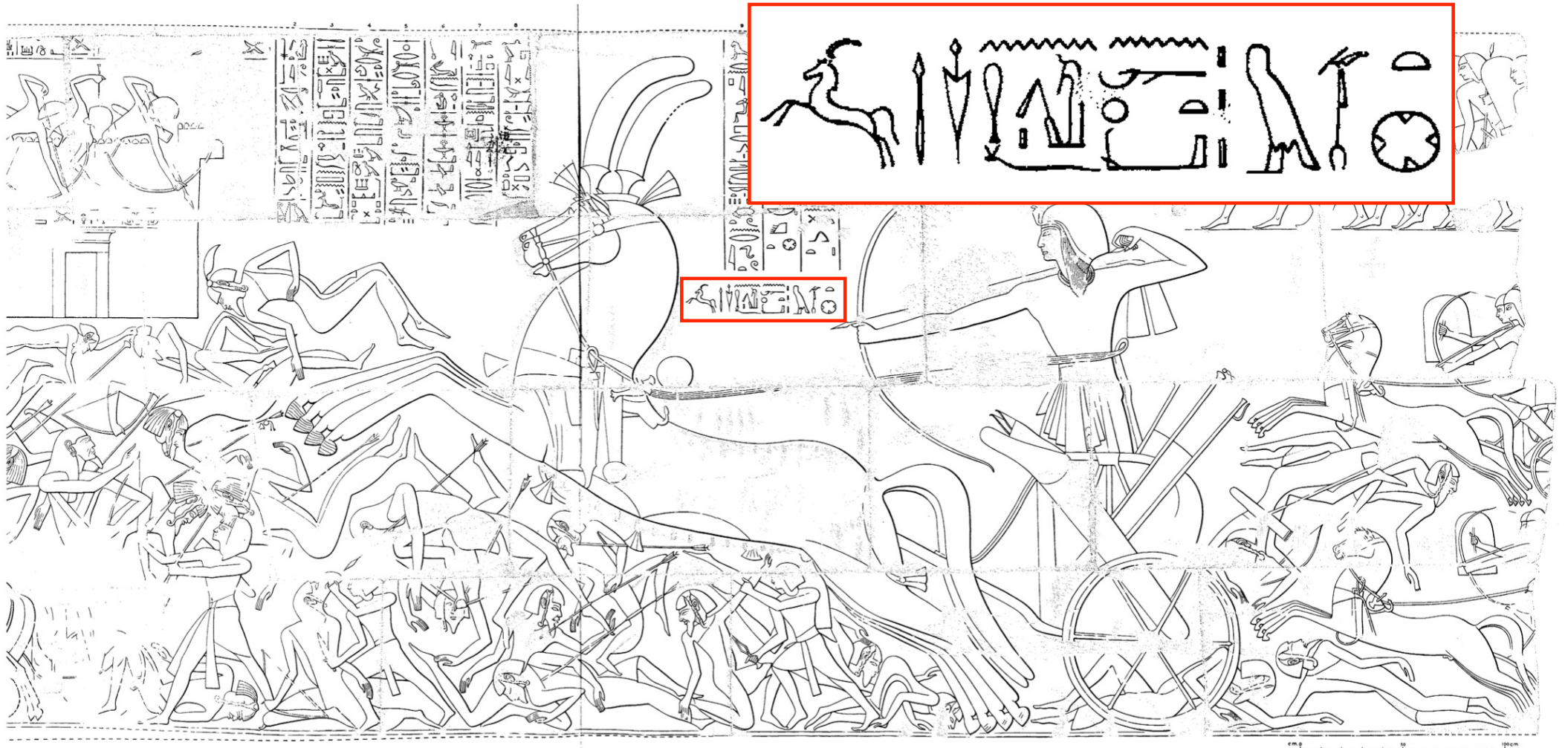
(= Coalition's horses)



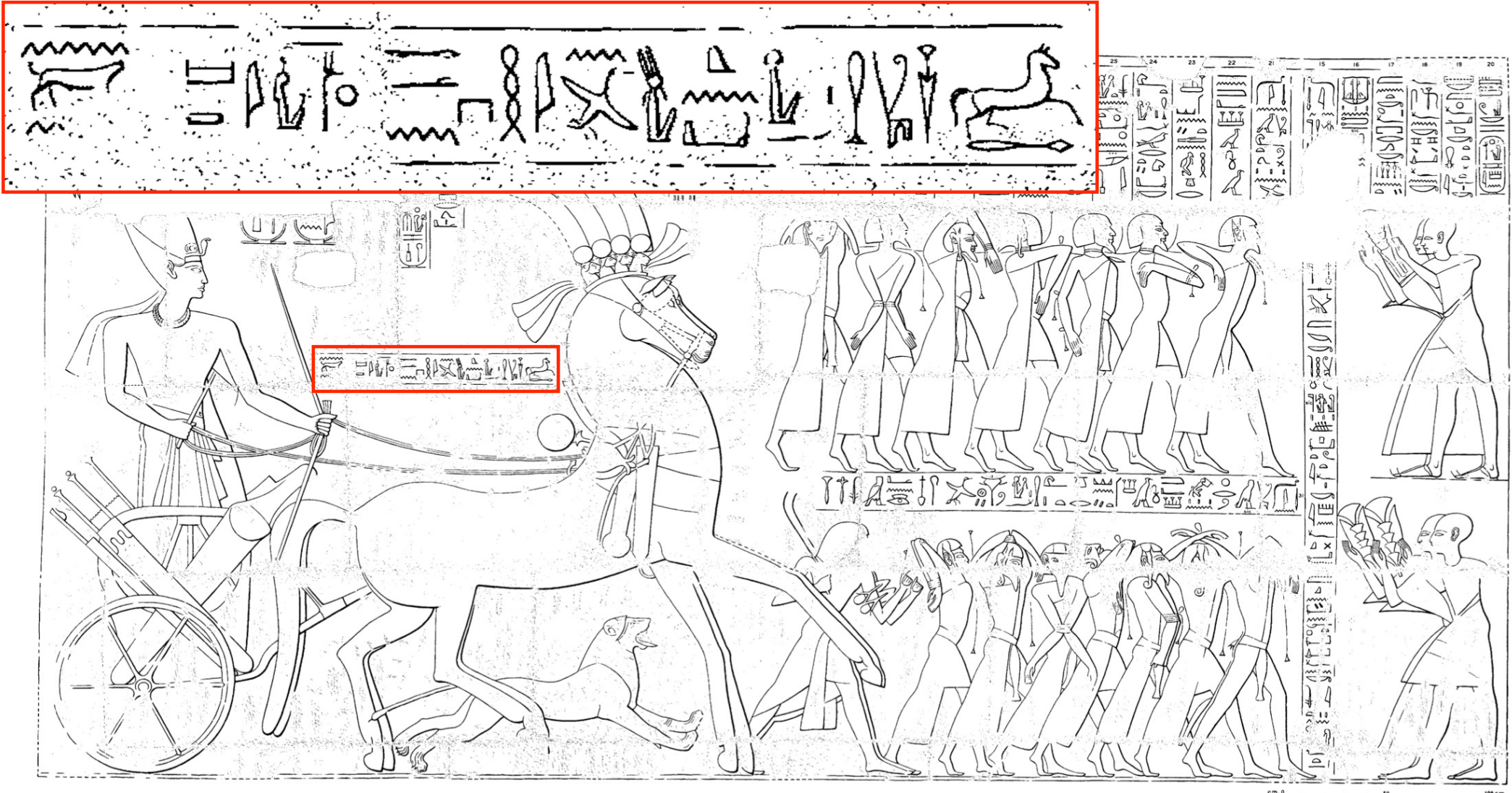
P. Sallier III, 1 upper margin

Horse-sign (Gardiner Sign-List E6) variations?



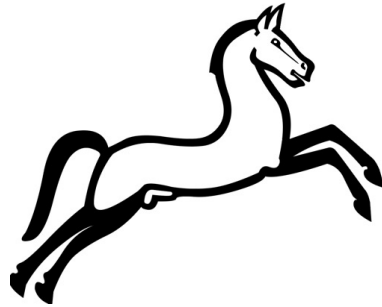


Ramses III pursuing the fleeing Libyans

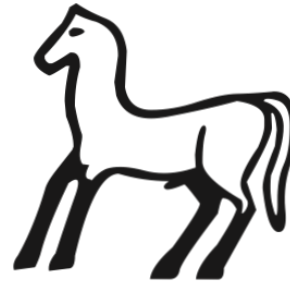


Ramses III returning in triumph from a Libyan campaign

aggressive
(rearing horse)



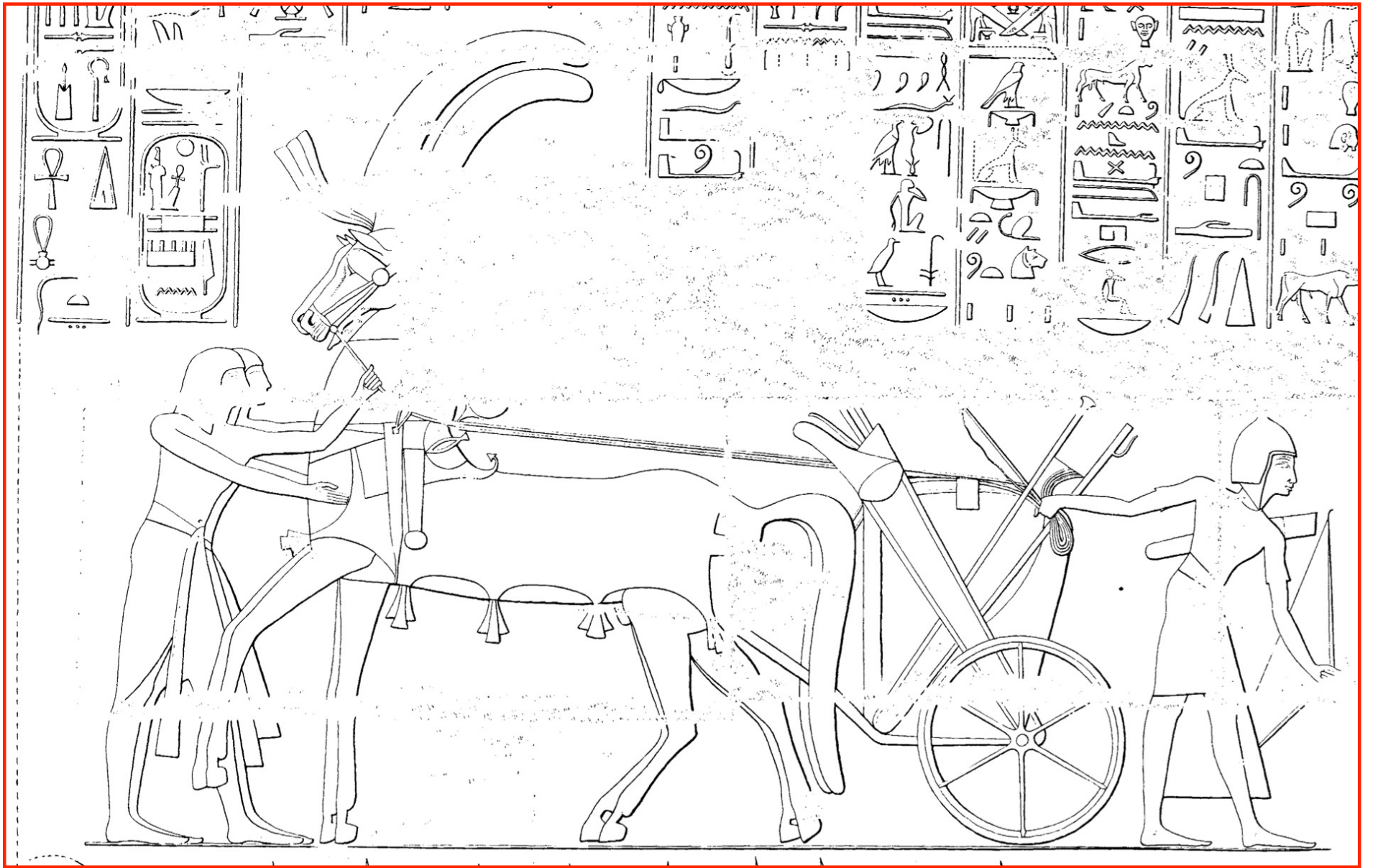
?

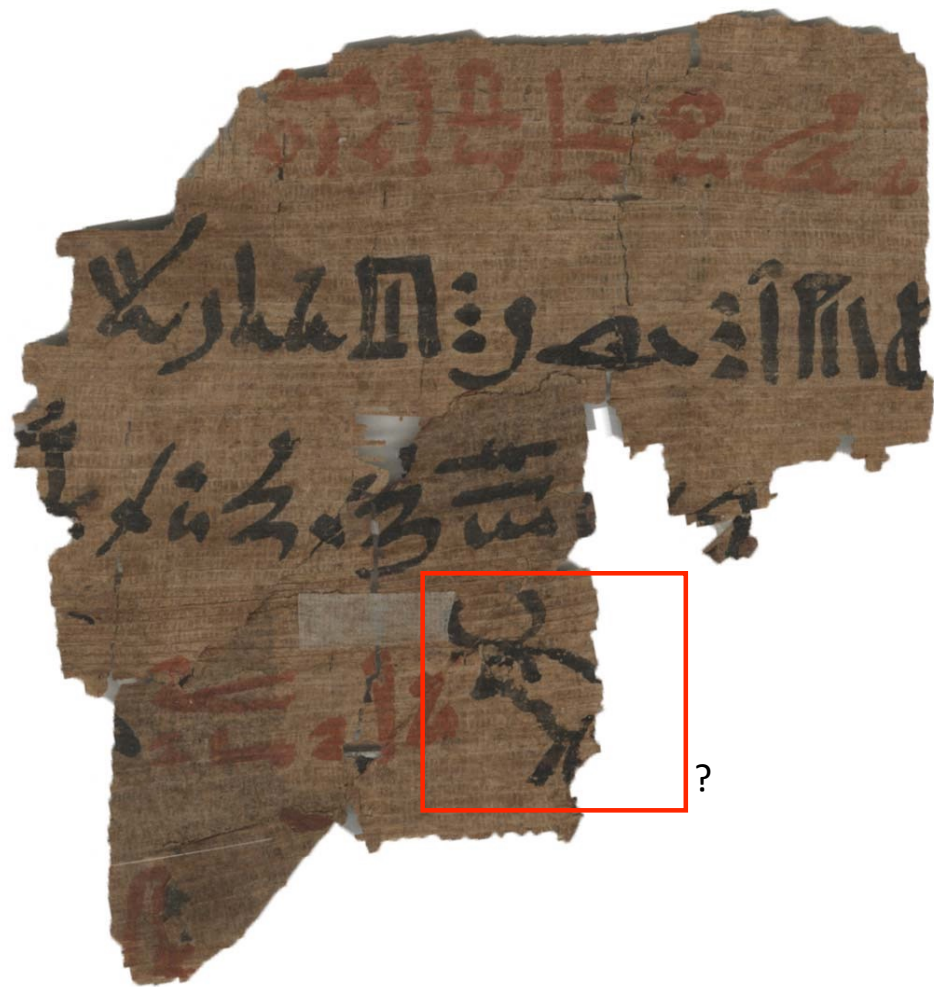


neutralized
(calm horse + reversed)



neutralised/calmed down hieratic version of E6?



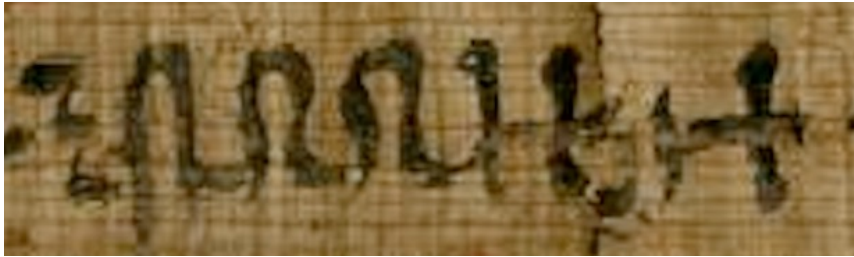


Turin, Museo Egizio, CP 131 (SN)

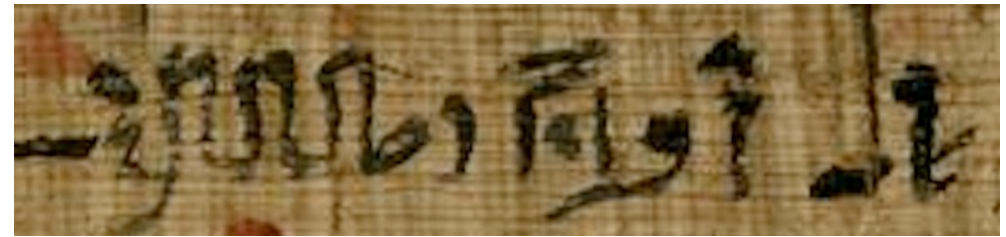
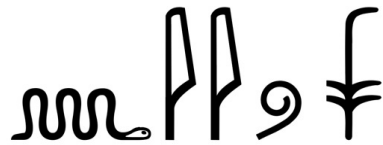
Altering writing in New Kingdom hieratic sources

Snakes and Apophis in New Kingdom Magical Texts

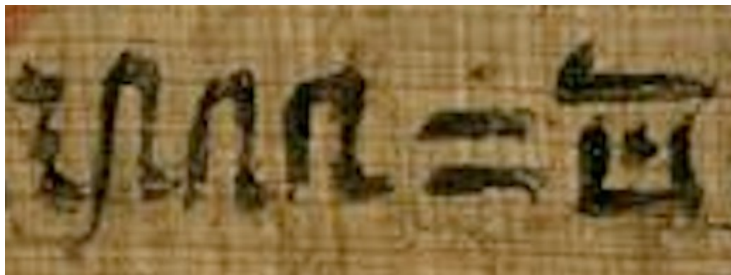
Neutralisation of snakes by amputation



P. BM EA 9997, II, 14
 swy 'swy-reptiles'
 snake without head?

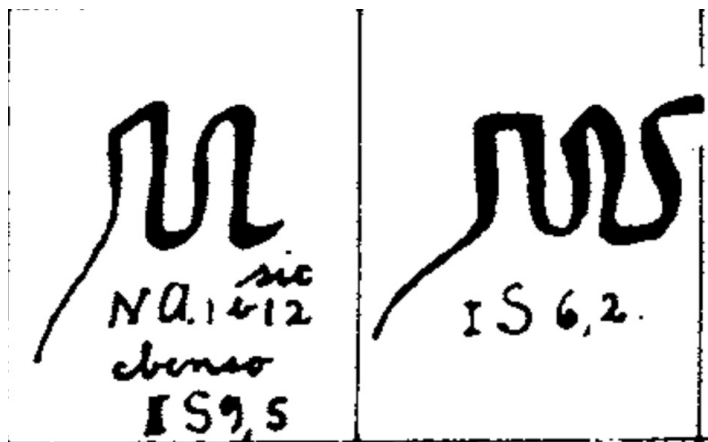


P. BM EA 9997, II, 11
 jn hf3.w
 'by the snakes'

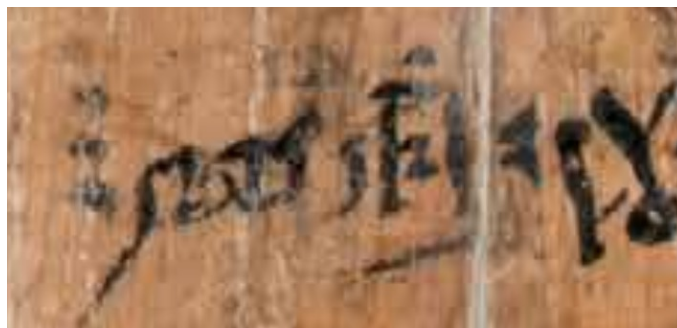


P. BM EA 9997, II, 16
 'pnn(.t)' 'newt (?)'
 snake without head?





After Möller, II, 1



P. Leyden I 345, v°, VIII, 1 (Beck 2018, pl. 55)

... mj hf3.w
 '... like snakes'



P. BM EA 9997, II, 16

hf3.w nb
 'every snake'

snake without head?

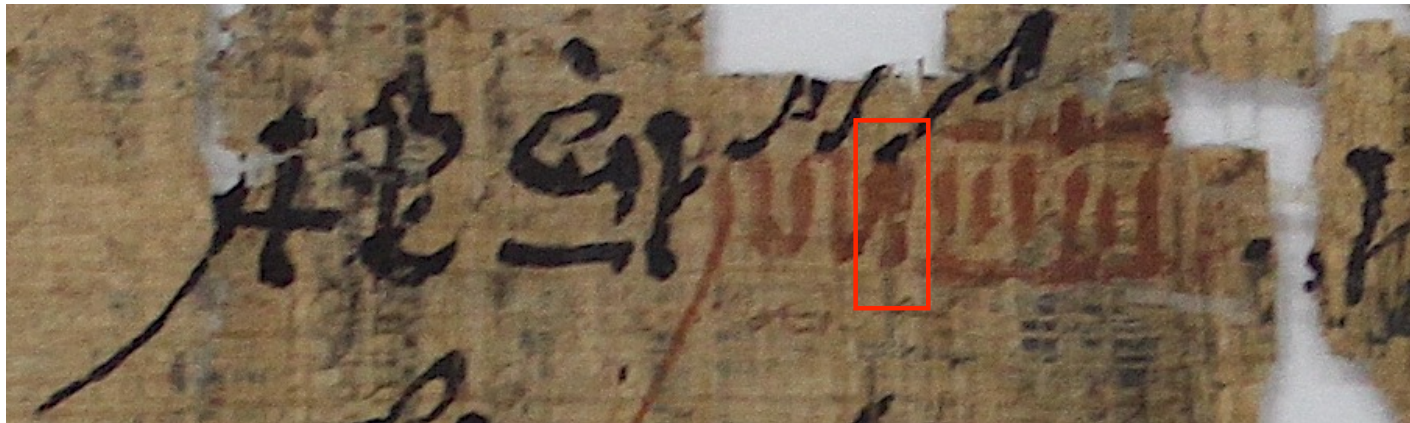


P. Leyden I 345, v°, XI, 1 (Beck 2018, pl. 59)

n3 n(y) hf3.w ...
 'those snakes ...'



Neutralisation of snakes by amputation (+ red ink and black knives)



snake without head
+
red ink
black knives

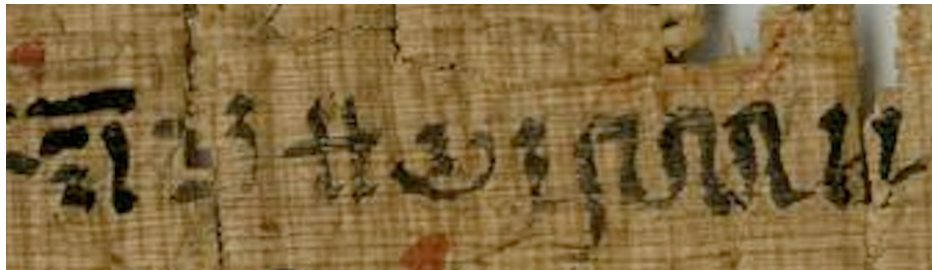
P. DeM 1, 3

Jr ʿpp jmn sw

'As for Apophis who hides himself ...'



Neutralisation of black ink snakes by using red knives

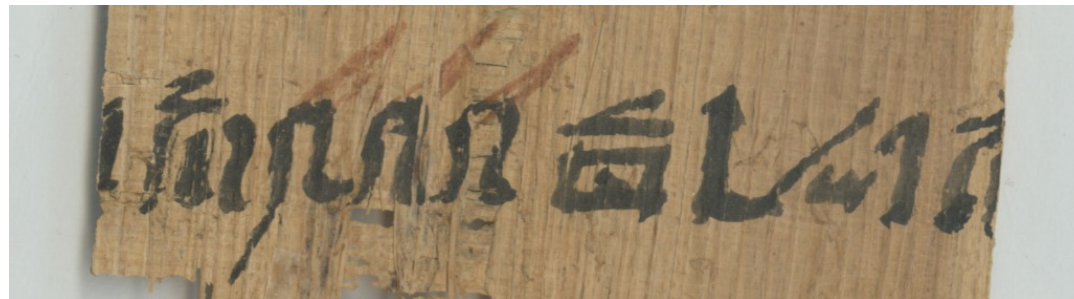
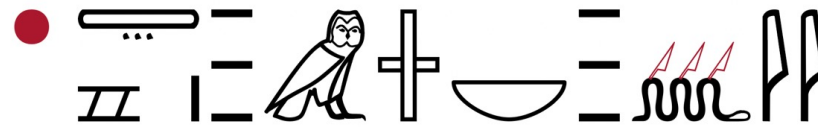


snake without head?
red knives

P. BM EA 9997, II, 9

(f)y nb jmy.w t3

'all the vipers that are on earth'



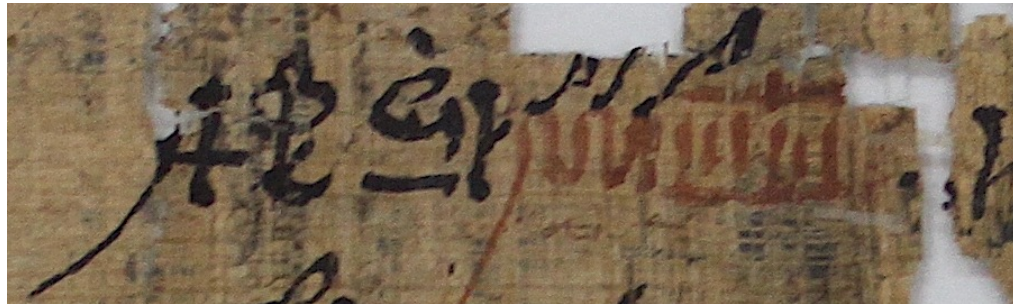
snake without head?
red knives

P. CGT 54016, r°, 2

Ms.w-bdš



Neutralisation of red ink snakes by using black knives

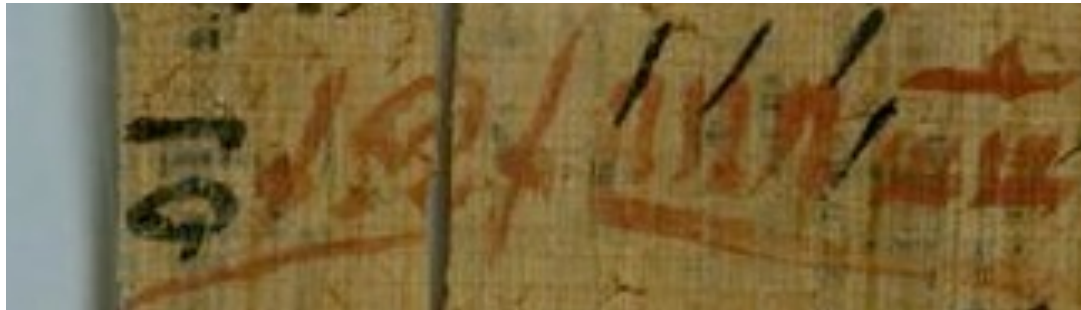


snake without head
red ink
black knives

P. DeM 1, 3

Jr ʿpp jmn sw

‘As for Apophis who hides himself ...’



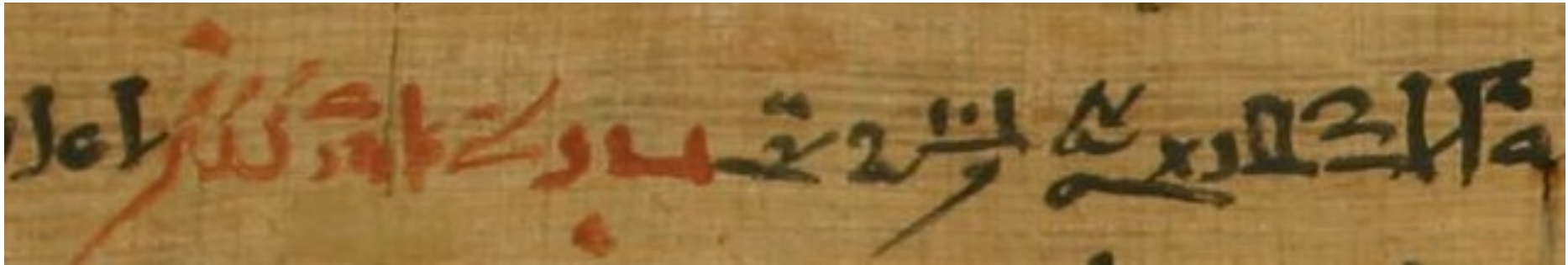
snake without head ?
crossed out pseudo-head
red ink
black knives
+ coiled, elongated and reversed tail ?

P. ChB VIII, v°, 7, 3

ʿpp hfty n(y) R^c

‘... Apophis, the enemy of Re’



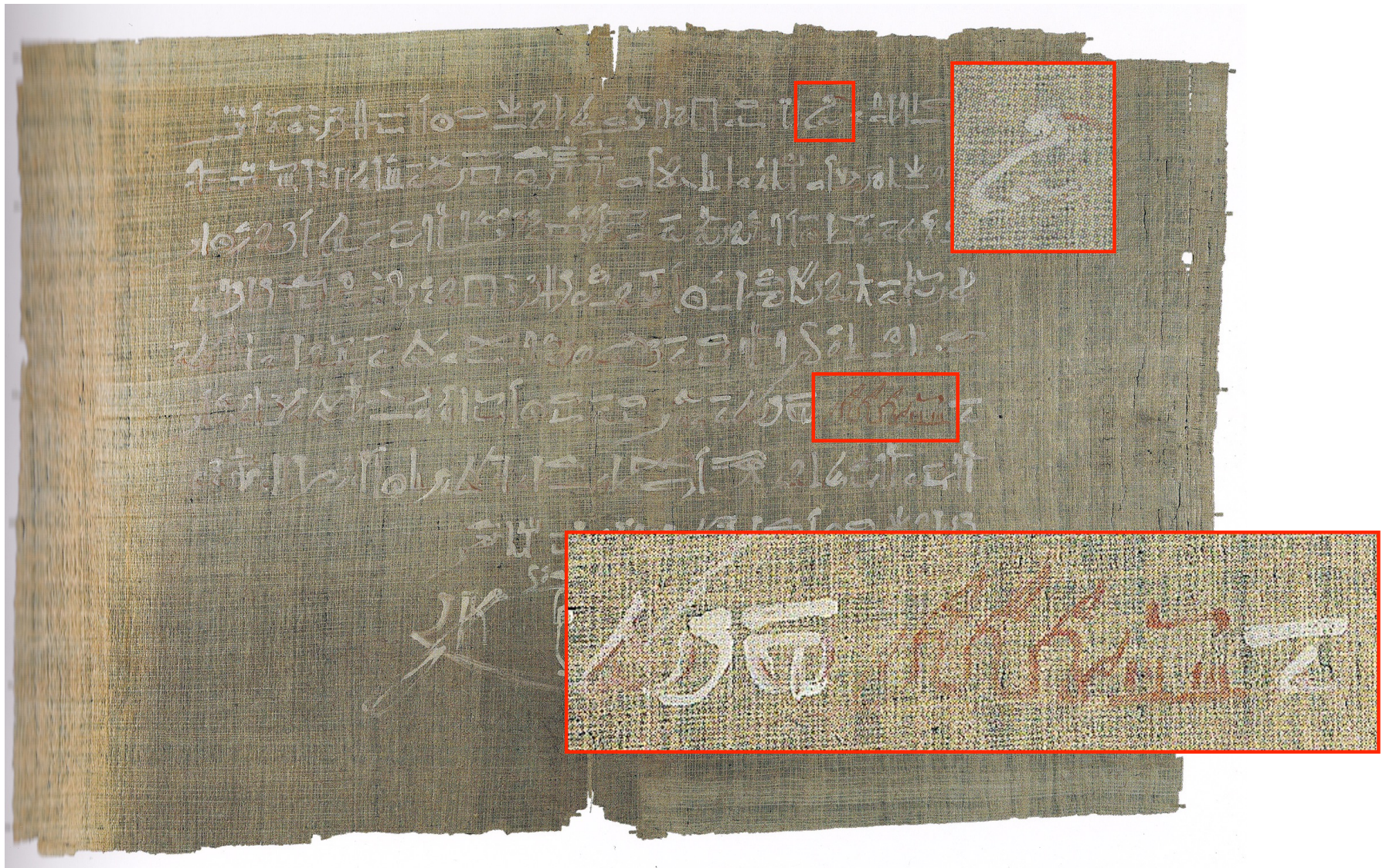


P. BM EA 10042, VI, 2

red
red knives

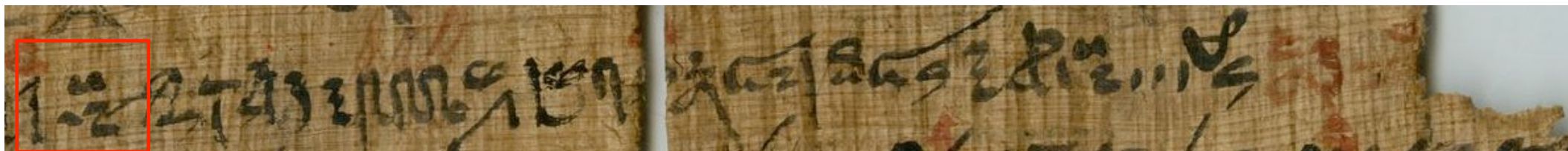
ḏr jnq=k pfꜣ dw-qd

'since you have strangled that one, the 'One-who-is-vile-of-character'



Reading Museum Service, REDMG 1998.29.1 – Book of the Dead, Chapter 100, used as a charm/papyrus-amulet

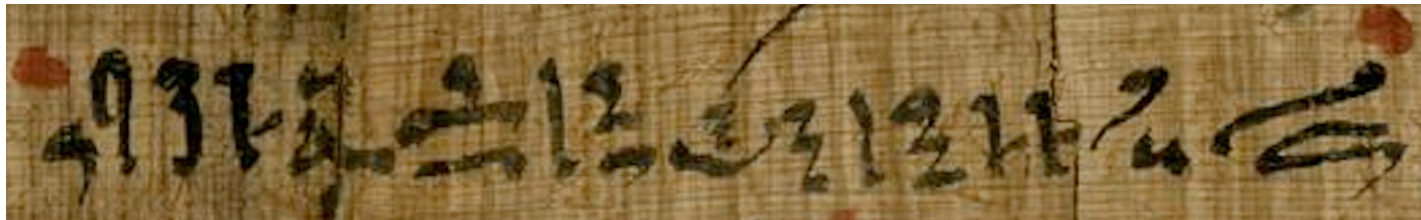
red knives



P. BM EA 9997, VI, 6

Jr tm=k šd mtw.t=k šbh m ḥꜣ.wt n(y) Ḥr ...

'If you don't take away your poison which coiled (like a snake) around/in the body of Horus ...'



P. BM EA 9997, II, 12

ḏdfy nb ḥr tkn jm=s

'all the reptiles were approaching her'

F27/28 instead of the snake classifier?



snake without head ?

crossed out pseudo-head

red ink

black knives

+

Z6 'enemy/death' classifier

P. ChB VIII, v°, 7, 4

ḥpp

'... Apophis'

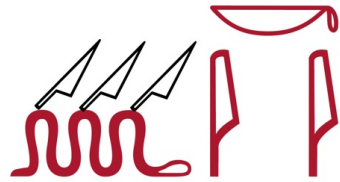




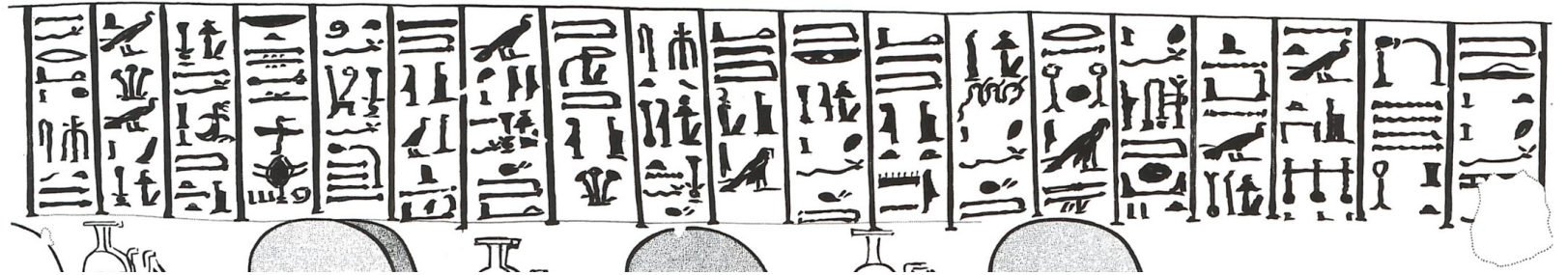
red color
black knives

P. BM EA 9997, III, 11

ky r(3)



Another incantation (to kill snakes)





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