"Rosetta Stone": One or More? Examples of Multilingualism Texts and the Deciphering of Ancient Scripts*

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Abstract

The decipherment of ancient languages and scripts was a challenging mission for linguists and philologists. There are successful and unsuccessful attempts to decipher ancient and famous languages, of which is the Egyptian hieroglyphs. In 1822, Champollion announced in the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres his innovative methodology to read ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs when he could read the three scripts of the Rosetta Stone: Hieroglyphic, Demotic, and Greek. Champollion's theory is based on finding a multi-script or multi-script text that is used as an aiding tool to read and decipher the required scripts.

Thus, this paper sheds fresh light on the role of multilingualism in decoding ancient scripts. It is worth mentioning that the "Rosetta Stone" became an equivalent term of an assistance tool to crack ancient languages and scripts, giving examples of famous texts such as the Behistun Inscription and the manuscript copy of Landa alphabet.