

What can we find out about ancient Egypt from what has survived?

Learning Objective:

To understand the importance of artefacts in helping us find out about the past.

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Today we're
going to look at some
objects that the ancient
Egyptians left behind. Have
a look and see if you can
answer the questions
for each one!

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What is it?

What is it used for?

Who used it?



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Canopic Jars

These were used for putting the organs (like the lungs, liver and stomach) when a person was mummified.

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A Harp

This is a musical instrument which would have been played by richer Egyptians or their servants.

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Mace head

This was a type of weapon. It would have been attached to a wooden or metal pole.

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A comb

This comb is made from ivory and would have been used by a rich Egyptian.

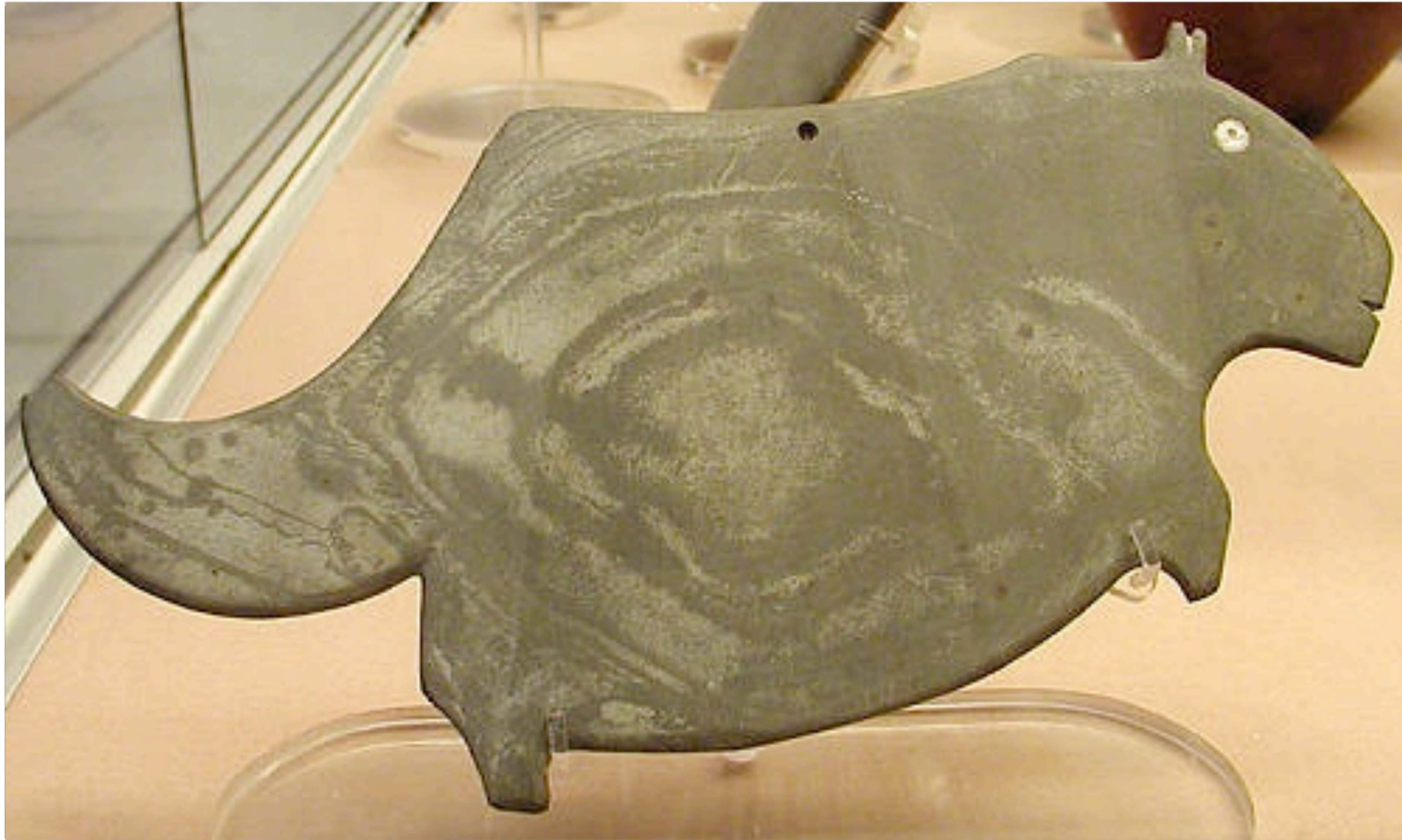
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A make-up palette

This would have been used for mixing the components needed for make-up before applying it to the face. It is shaped like a hippo and would have been used by a wealthy Egyptian woman.

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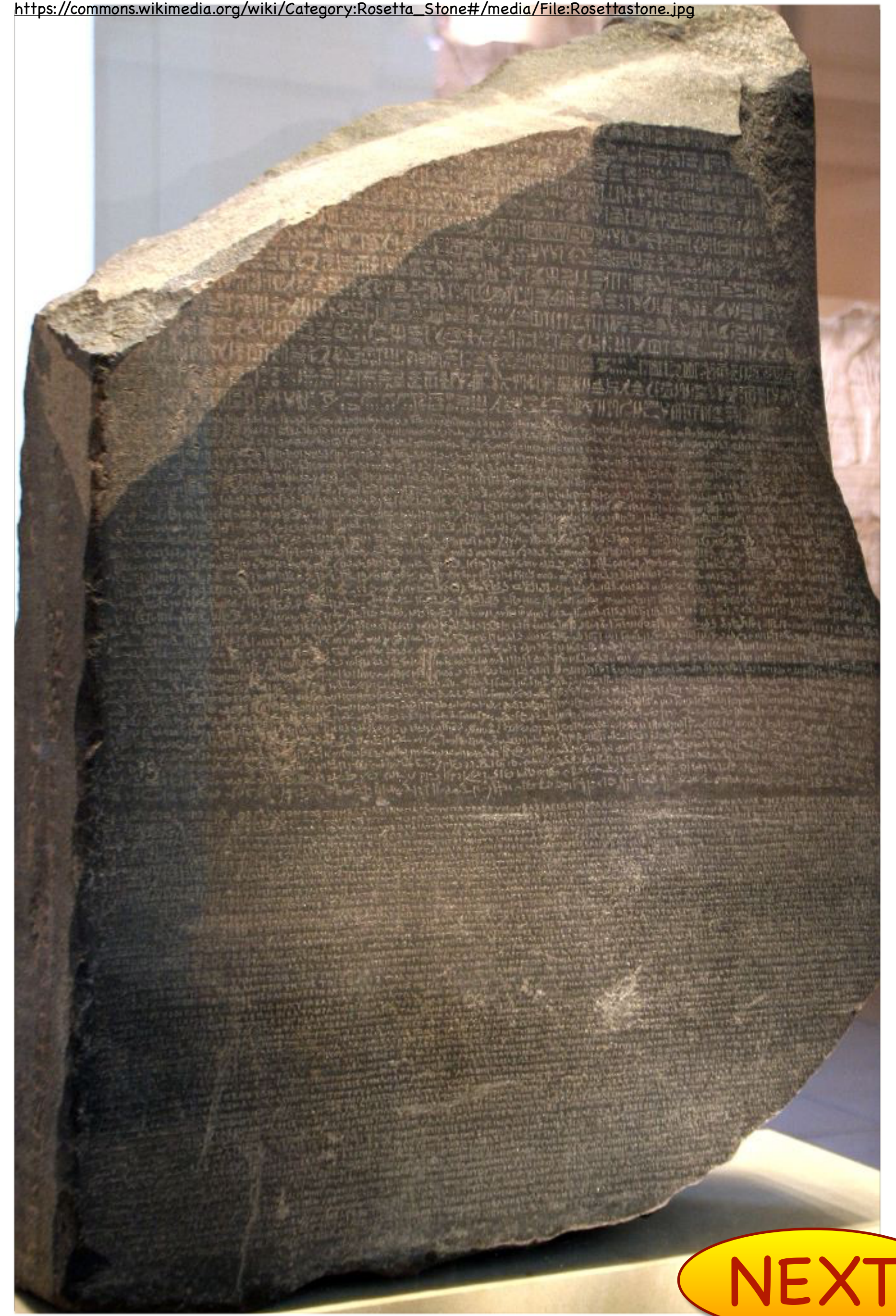
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Objects left behind by previous civilisations are called ARTEFACTS. Artefacts are crucial to our understanding of history because they tell us so much about the people and culture of the past.

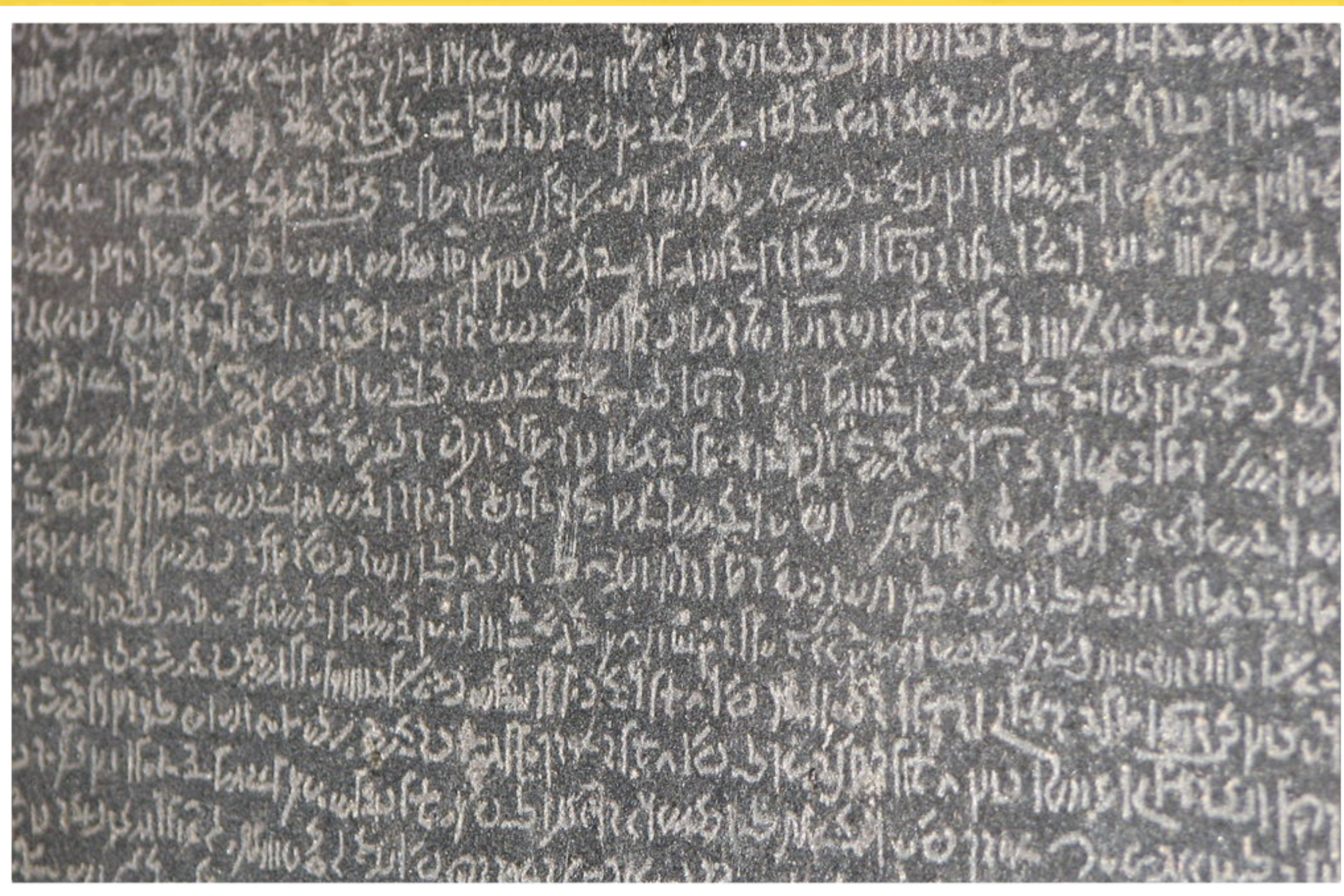


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A great example of this is the Rosetta Stone.



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The Rosetta Stone was found in 1799 by some French soldiers who were rebuilding a fort in Egypt. It is called the Rosetta Stone because it was found in a town called Rosetta.

It was made around the year 200 BC and is unique because it is written in 2 languages (Egyptian and Greek) using three different scripts (hieroglyphics, demotic and Greek).

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Many people had tried to decipher hieroglyphics to see what the ancient Egyptian writing said, but no one had managed to do it. Jean-Francois Champollion however, after many years of study, was able to use the Rosetta Stone and his knowledge of Greek and other ancient languages to finally translate hieroglyphics in 1822.



Thanks to Champollion and the Rosetta Stone, historians are now able to find out even more about the ancient Egyptians by studying and translating the hieroglyphics that cover Egyptian artefacts.

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Here are some examples of hieroglyphics. What do you think they might be saying?



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