


E-LEARNING IN EGYPTOLOGY: COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND BRAZIL


Egiptologia Digital: Esforços Colaborativos entre Portugal e Brasil

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ABSTRACT

This article presents the development of an e-learning teaching project focused on Ancient Egyptian language, initially launched as an academic experiment among Portuguese and Brazilian universities. Since 2020, the initiative has expanded into a robust network, culminating in the creation of a digital, open-access anthology of sources. The rise of Digital Humanities has introduced new research possibilities by offering specialized digital tools and methodologies that integrate into Humanities studies. This became particularly crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, when universities were compelled to shift classes and meetings to online platforms due to physical restrictions. This transition fostered greater international collaboration and networking. The project key achievement was the production of recorded lectures on Middle Egyptian, delivered in Portuguese and made freely accessible across various platforms. It represents a groundbreaking effort in the digitization of Egyptology resources for Portuguese-speaking students, significantly improving access to academic materials in the field.

KEYWORDS: Egyptology, E-learning, Middle-Egyptian, YouTube, Open Access.

RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta o desenvolvimento de um projeto de ensino em formato *e-learning* voltado para a língua egípcia antiga, inicialmente lançado como uma experiência acadêmica entre universidades de Portugal e do Brasil. Desde 2020, a iniciativa se expandiu para uma rede robusta, culminando na criação de uma antologia digital e de acesso aberto de fontes. O crescimento das Humanidades Digitais introduziu novas possibilidades de pesquisa ao disponibilizar ferramentas e metodologias digitais especializadas que se integram aos estudos em Humanidades. Esse movimento tornou-se particularmente crucial durante a pandemia da COVID-19, em 2020, quando universidades foram obrigadas a transferir aulas e reuniões para plataformas virtuais devido às restrições físicas. Essa transição favoreceu maior colaboração e articulação internacional. O principal resultado do projeto foi a produção de aulas gravadas sobre o egípcio médio, ministradas em português e disponibilizadas gratuitamente em diversas plataformas. Trata-se de um esforço pioneiro na digitalização de recursos em Egíptologia voltados a estudantes lusófonos, ampliando significativamente o acesso a materiais acadêmicos na área.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Egíptologia, E-learning, Egípcio Clássico, YouTube, Open Access.



The field of Digital Humanities (DH) is widely recognised as interdisciplinary and collaborative and has expanded its scope of application within many subjects. Despite these developments, there is often little reflection on how digital tools impact research methods and methodologies. Crucially, many discussions overlook the differences between disciplines within DH, such as History, Literature, or Art History. This lack of differentiation limits our understanding of how and why scholars use digital tools and how “the digital” shapes research and teaching/learning practice.

Although one can study research methods in the Humanities without referencing technology, it is impossible to engage with DH without critically considering “the digital”. Doing so raises important questions about collaboration, specifically, who humanists work with and why. Today, interdisciplinarity must extend beyond the Humanities to include fields with entirely different perspectives and skills.

Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe’s ‘Understanding by Design’ presents “backward design”, a course planning method that begins with clearly defined learning goals and works backwards to align assessments and activities. This approach addresses three fundamental questions: What are the learning objectives? How will understanding be demonstrated? What experiences will lead to these outcomes? Although originally designed for DH courses, it serves as an effective pedagogical tool for e-learning projects by preventing content-driven planning that often leads to fragmented learning experiences.

This article explores an innovative pedagogical initiative in the field of Egyptology, which originated as a collaborative experiment between academic institutions in Portugal and Brazil. Conceived as a response to the shifting demands of higher education, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project has since developed into an international digital network. The integration of DH methodologies, ranging from online dissemination to the use of specialised linguistic tools, has played a pivotal role in shaping both the structure and outreach of the project. Amid widespread institutional shifts to remote learning, the initiative capitalised on digital platforms to enhance cross-border academic exchange. Notably, the project produced a comprehensive series of video lectures on Middle Egyptian grammar, offered in Portuguese and freely distributed through multiple digital channels. By addressing a significant gap in instructional resources, this project contributes meaningfully to the democratisation of Egyptological knowledge,

particularly ancient Egyptian language, and the broader advancement of digital pedagogy in the Humanities.

It is important to recognise both the opportunities and the limitations of online education in expanding access to higher learning. For students facing barriers to campus-based study, online programs offer a flexible and accessible pathway to academic achievement. As a result, institutions around the world are increasingly investing in remote education, including within the Humanities. However, concerns persist regarding the quality of teaching and the overall student experience in virtual settings. Critical questions remain: Can online education truly match the quality of face-to-face teaching? And how can students develop academically and professionally in the absence of in-person interaction?

Research on online learning is mixed: while outcomes often match or exceed those of traditional classrooms, student satisfaction can be lower, and perceived quality may vary. Professional identity development, which relies on community interaction, also poses challenges in online settings. Educators in DH must acknowledge the lasting role of online education and refine pedagogies that support both deep learning and professional growth in digital spaces.

BOLOGNA'S C(O)URSE

Since 1999, Portugal has undertaken significant reforms in its national university curriculum to align with the Bologna Declaration. This initiative sought to align curricula across European higher education institutions, thereby facilitating student mobility and the mutual recognition of degrees and diplomas. Under the revised framework, undergraduate programs in the Humanities typically span three years and comprise 180 ECTS credits. A key consequence of this restructuring, however, is the removal of research training from the undergraduate curriculum, which is now primarily reserved for the master's level. Consequently, master's programs have been extended to two years, encompassing 120 ECTS credits. This shift has led to a situation in which many master's students embark on research projects without prior training in research methodologies. Frequently, they lack experience in academic publishing and conference participation, resulting in a substantial gap in essential research competencies at the early stages of their academic development.



Portugal does not currently offer dedicated university programs in Egyptology. Nevertheless, courses on Ancient Egyptian history and culture are integrated into the curricula of History departments at institutions such as the Universidade de Lisboa and the Universidade Nova de Lisboa. Although a standalone undergraduate degree in Egyptology is unavailable, students can pursue this field through specialized tracks within master's programs in History. Opportunities for doctoral research in Egyptology are also available, often undertaken in collaboration with international institutions. A comparable academic landscape exists for Brazilian students, as noted by Thais Rocha (2017; 2019).

Securing scientific funding for Egyptological research remains a significant challenge in both Portugal and Brazil. In Portugal, the principal funding body is the Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT), which distributes financial support derived from the national government and the European Union. Funding for disciplines such as History and Archaeology is disbursed through competitive annual calls evaluated by thematic panels, covering master's, doctoral, and postdoctoral scholarships, as well as broader research initiatives. In Brazil, federal agencies such as CNPq and CAPES, in conjunction with various state-level institutions, are responsible for supporting academic research and postgraduate training.

However, given the marginal position of Egyptology within the broader academic frameworks of both countries, postgraduate students pursuing this field often encounter difficulties in securing funding. Research proposals in Egyptology may be perceived as less impactful compared to other disciplines, further complicating the acquisition of competitive grants. This reflects the relatively limited institutional support and recognition Egyptology receives within the research landscapes of both Portugal and Brazil.¹ As a consequence, Egyptology continues to occupy a peripheral position within Portuguese academia, hindered by a lack of institutional infrastructure and strategic investment. This marginalisation has contributed to the discipline's limited visibility and impact, resulting in minimal incentives for universities to allocate resources toward its advancement. The absence of sustained support reinforces a cyclical pattern of underfunding and underrepresentation, compelling aspiring Egyptologists to pursue specialised training and research opportunities abroad.

¹ See for example Bakos, 2004, Rocha, 2014, 2017, 2019. For discussions about the field of ancient history in Brazil see Carvalho and Funari, 2007, Francisco, 2017, Silva, 2010, Silva, 2011, Santos, 2014, 2019. Unfortunately, there is no similar study focusing the Portuguese case in detail.

The teaching of Egyptology in Portugal faces considerable obstacles, chief among them the absence of a dedicated library equipped to meet the specific needs of researchers in the field. As a result, scholars frequently rely on international travel to access essential academic resources. While intra-European Union mobility offers some relief from these limitations, the situation is markedly more restrictive for scholars based in Brazil, where geographic distance significantly hinders access to research materials and opportunities (see Rocha, 2017, for a comprehensive overview).

Access to primary sources remains a critical barrier for students in both Brazil and Portugal. While museums do house Egyptian collections² that allow students some interaction with ancient Egyptian artefacts, the absence of training in classical Egyptian language forces them to rely heavily on translations, often in foreign languages. This dependence has led to a systematic reproduction of ideas, concepts, and terminologies without sufficient critical engagement or original analysis by students. Mastering these sources in their original form is essential for conducting meaningful scientific research. Thus, to establish Egyptology as a legitimate field within the Portuguese-speaking world, the development of fundamental educational tools has become urgent.

This landscape began to change with the publication of the first Middle Egyptian grammar in Portuguese (Pereira, 2014; 2016). This work has provided Portuguese-speaking students, particularly those at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa, with essential resources for studying the subject in their native language. This grammar has enabled a new generation of Portuguese students to read and engage in discussions about Middle Egyptian in their master's theses and doctoral dissertations. The Universidade Nova de Lisboa has already established itself as a leading institution for Egyptology in Portugal, having conducted a decade of archaeological fieldwork in Egypt under the guidance of (now retired) Professor Maria Helena Trindade Lopes from 2000 to 2010 (Lopes, 2010). Building on this foundation, the Universidade Nova de Lisboa once again took the initiative by offering a comprehensive course in ancient Egyptian grammar, covering both Hieroglyphic and Hieratic writing for master's and doctoral students in 2016 and 2017.

² The principal Egyptian collection in Brazil suffered significant damage during the 2018 fire. Since then, archaeologists have been working to recover artifacts from beneath the debris. For preliminary findings, see von Seehausen et al. (2024). For information on other Egyptian collections in Brazil, refer to Brancaglione (2004).

E-LEARNING AND ISSUES WITH DIGITAL TEACHING

The increasing presence of digital technologies in academia has given rise to diverse fields that incorporate a variety of tools in distinct ways. The digital evolution has promoted the development of new approaches and methodologies that have been applied to education. Within the large umbrella of DH, e-learning has emerged as a useful tool to support and enhance the process of teaching and learning. E-learning primarily refers to the use of electronic media and information technologies to facilitate education and training (Croxton, 2021; Schuster & Dunn, 2021). It focuses on the design, delivery, and assessment of educational content to enhance learning experiences, often emphasizing accessibility, interactivity, and extensibility across diverse learner populations. With the advancement of artificial intelligence, e-learning has emerged as a significant alternative to the traditional classroom setting—an evolution that has also sparked concerns among educators and professionals across disciplines (Croxton, 2021; Schuster & Dunn, 2021).

The development of the internet has profoundly transformed the ways in which knowledge is produced and disseminated. As Serge Noiret (2015) argues, the affordances of Web 3.0 have further enhanced interactive and participatory research practices. Concepts such as crowdsourcing, the growing relevance of Big Data, the convergence with Information Science, the automation of narrative construction through artificial intelligence, and the application of 3D technologies are increasingly central to discussions within the DH (Noiret, 2015; Nicodemo & Cardoso, 2019). These shifts challenge researchers not only to update their methodological toolkits but also to critically reflect on how digital environments transform historical inquiry itself.

Traditional forms of knowledge production have been transformed along with changes in who consumes that knowledge. As the audience has diversified, new patterns of information consumption have emerged, opening up broader opportunities for interaction and engagement (Noiret, 2015). In response to these changes, scholars in the Humanities have begun employing digital tools to increase the volume of data available for research and to improve the efficiency of analysis and visualisation processes. Rather than relying solely on statistical methods or model-building, researchers in the DH advocate for the integration of qualitative approaches enriched by technological innovation. Fields such as Ancient History and Archaeology have been particularly responsive to these developments, gaining new insights and through the application of digital methodologies. Yet, their effective use still requires strong theoretical frameworks,



clear research questions, and rigorous analysis. While new technologies offer exciting possibilities, they remain tools, not substitutes for critical thinking or scholarly depth (Croxtton 2021).

In a newspaper article,³ Marcelo Rede questioned the effectiveness of artificial intelligence (AI) in translating cuneiform texts. He highlighted a project at the University of Munich that is developing a comprehensive database of transcriptions and translations of cuneiform fragments, with the aim of reconstructing lost portions of Mesopotamian works such as the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. Similarly, researchers at Ben-Gurion University are employing AI trained on phrases from the Hebrew Bible to interpret highly fragmented Hebrew and Aramaic inscriptions. Although technological capabilities are advancing rapidly, the limitations and potential of AI require careful, critical assessment. Rather than concentrating solely on how far AI can go, it is more meaningful to consider how it supports broader intellectual and scholarly pursuits. Decipherment is not simply a technical task; it is situated within a complex historical and academic context, where human interpretation and critical judgment remain essential.

In the case of e-learning, these developments also raise pressing concerns about access to and the dissemination of knowledge in the digital age (Alves, 2016; Moerbeck & Rocha, 2022). Key factors, such as language barriers, computer access, internet connectivity, reliable electricity, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities, must be taken into account to ensure equitable participation.

The ideal of democratizing knowledge, often promoted in political and corporate discourse as a universal solution, frequently falls short in contexts marked by deep social and infrastructural inequalities. This tension was evident in an online course on the ancient Egyptian language offered in Brazil.

The hybrid e-learning model combined asynchronous and synchronous components. Pre-recorded theoretical lectures were permanently accessible in a digital repository, enabling students to review materials at their own pace. Synchronous sessions focused on homework review and deepening theoretical understanding through discussion and feedback. This structure supported a dynamic learning process tailored to individual progress. While the asynchronous content remained fixed, the live sessions introduced adaptability, making each course iteration unique and shaped by participant contributions.

³ 'IA começa a decifrar textos antigos. É uma boa notícia?', Folha de São Paulo, 18.set.2024. (<https://folha.com/i27nkpbx>)

Aligned with Jean Piaget's (1977) constructivist theory, this model treats learning as an active, experiential process. Rather than simply transferring static knowledge, it fosters continuous engagement, reflection, and adaptation—positioning the project as a constructivist educational experience.

MODULE 1: EXPERIMENTAL USAGE OF DIGITAL TOOLS FOR EGYPTOLOGY IN BRAZIL

The unprecedented availability of a Middle Egyptian grammar in Portuguese soon gained international attention and was adopted as part of the curriculum at Brazilian universities. In 2020, the authors, together with the Ancient History Working Group (GTHA) of the National Association of University History Professors (ANPUH) proposed a teaching initiative to be hosted by the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC). The project aimed to offer an introductory Middle Egyptian course from August to November 2020.

The course aimed to give students of ancient Egyptian history access to Middle Egyptian language while promoting collaboration with established scholars from Brazilian universities to support joint research initiatives. This initiative marked the first official online course in the ancient Egyptian language offered in Brazil. Conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, it brought together students and professors from various departments across Brazil and Argentina. Given its experimental nature and the anticipated enrolment of students with no prior experience in the subject, the first module was intentionally designed to focus exclusively on non-verbal sentence structures.

Teaching under lockdown posed significant challenges for both instructors and students. However, the remote format enabled participation from across Brazil and neighboring Argentina, an opportunity unlikely in a traditional in-person setting. Despite this benefit, creating an optimal learning environment remained difficult due to technological and contextual constraints. Time zone differences, power outages, and unreliable internet, often worsened by storms, frequently disrupted the continuity and quality of instruction.

The course was hosted on the intranet platform of the Federal University of Santa Catarina (UFSC) and organized around two main components. The first provided a comprehensive theoretical foundation, featuring thematic video lectures, handouts, exercises, and examples drawn from Pereira's Middle Egyptian Grammar. The author's direct involvement ensured pedagogical consistency and addressed potential copyright



issues associated with digital content. All materials were pre-recorded and uploaded to UFSC's secure, password-protected platform, accessible only to enrolled students.

The second component of the course consisted of interactive online sessions designed to complement the asynchronous learning materials. Before each live session, students were expected to review the pre-recorded video lectures to ensure a foundational understanding of the content. During these scheduled meetings, participants engaged in collective discussions, analysed the text provided, and worked through supplementary exercises and examples. As a final activity, students were required to prepare and present their translations of selected texts, which served as a prerequisite for receiving a course completion certificate.

Following the conclusion of the module, the theoretical video lectures, featuring condensed content from Pereira's Middle Egyptian Grammar, were made publicly available via YouTube. This initiative aimed to establish an open-access educational resource specifically tailored to Portuguese-speaking students interested in Egyptology, particularly those requiring knowledge of the ancient Egyptian language for academic research purposes. By expanding access to specialised instructional materials, the project sought to reduce barriers to entry and support the development of Egyptological studies within the Lusophone academic community.⁴

The use of digital platforms played a key role in overcoming regional barriers, allowing classes to be delivered from Portugal to participants in Brazil and Argentina. While the online environment significantly expanded the reach of the course, facilitating access for students across a wide geographical area, the quality of interaction between instructors and students was often contingent, affected by unstable electricity and internet access, challenges often caused by environmental conditions and infrastructure limitations.

As the main output of this initiative, the completion of the first module was followed by a short report that reflected on the course in relation to the challenges posed by the use of digital technologies in education. The report also offered recommendations for expanding the project and guiding similar initiatives in the future (Pereira & Rocha, 2021). Targeted at researchers at various stages of their academic careers, as well as educators in the field of Egyptology, the course was designed to strengthen collaborative networks among specialists. By promoting the exchange of knowledge and pedagogical resources,

⁴ Module 1 playlist : bit.ly/3jphAfo



the initiative sought to cultivate lasting collaborative relationships among participants. Furthermore, it aimed to expand educational access for individuals in regions with limited availability of qualified instructors, academic literature, and scholarly networks—thereby contributing to a more inclusive and interconnected academic community.

During the week, students were also encouraged to use various smartphone applications designed to aid in memorising Egyptian hieroglyphs and building vocabulary. Traditionally, before the advent of the internet, vocabulary acquisition often relied on physical flashcards. Today, a range of digital tools has replaced or supplemented these methods, offering interactive and accessible alternatives. Scholars have increasingly recognized the value of such technologies and are encouraged to integrate them into their teaching practices to enhance language learning outcomes.

The development of the internet has significantly reshaped how knowledge is produced and shared. Traditional formats, such as printed books and academic institutions, have been transformed alongside shifts in the audience engaging with scholarly content. This new audience has introduced different consumption habits, broadening opportunities for interaction and participation (Noiret, 2015).

In the first module of the course, digital tools—including video lectures, a secure intranet repository, language learning apps, and virtual meeting platforms—were essential in enabling the large-scale teaching of ancient Egyptian languages in Brazil. These technologies also helped strengthen connections among researchers. However, despite their usefulness, such tools cannot replace the fundamental practices required for mastering the language. Core tasks like memorising vocabulary, recognising nominal forms, and analysing texts still require consistent effort and structured learning. Digital resources thus functioned as valuable complementary materials, allowing a structure for future teaching initiatives in similar contexts.

Module 2: Developing digital tools for a Portuguese-Speaking Egyptology

Following the success of the initial experimental module, the GTHA/ANPUH launched a second module on Classical Egyptian Grammar, running from March to July 2021. This advanced course aimed to explore the complexities of the Middle Egyptian verbal system. Participation was limited to students who had completed the first module.



Like the first module, this phase included pre-recorded video lectures supplemented by weekly online sessions for discussion and deeper analysis. After the course, the theoretical materials, particularly the video summaries of Pereira's grammar, were made publicly available on YouTube. For certification, students were required to translate excerpts from an authentic Egyptian text, *The Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor* (Papyrus Hermitage 1115).

The second module culminated in the open-access publication of a fully annotated translation of *The Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor* (Papyrus Hermitage 1115) by Pereira and Rocha (2023). Designed to support both historical and philological study, the work includes an introduction with a historical overview of the Middle Kingdom and relevant bibliographical references. Each line of the text is accompanied by detailed linguistic analysis, and an appendix features a Middle Egyptian–Portuguese glossary to help vocabulary development.

In 2023, the Centre for the Humanities (CHAM/FCSH – Universidade Nova de Lisboa) partnered with the open-access repository Zenodo to host all video lectures from both modules. Each lecture was assigned a Digital Object Identifier (DOI), ensuring discoverability and citation. Integration with GitHub further supported data preservation and open access.⁵ As a result, the video classes are now citable like traditional scientific publications and are freely available for download, providing open-access learning in Middle Egyptian for Portuguese-speaking individuals.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS: CONSOLIDATING COLLABORATIONS

The project's primary outcome was the creation of a comprehensive dataset comprising lessons from an entire Middle Egyptian grammar, all available in Portuguese. This digital resource complements the study of Middle Egyptian for Portuguese-speaking learners. The lessons are freely accessible on YouTube and downloadable via the open-access academic repository Zenodo.

Access to Zenodo was made possible through CHAM-FCSH, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, which acted as the institutional curator for the dataset and formally recognized it as an educational project output. Hosted by OpenAIRE and CERN, Zenodo ensures long-term preservation and free access in accordance with the European Union's open-access policy.

⁵ Zenodo is CERN Data Centre-backed research data repository. It aims to facilitate storage and sharing of research outputs: <https://zenodo.org>



The project's dataset was created to provide essential learning resources for Portuguese-speaking Egyptologists. University departments in Brazil and Portugal can integrate the materials hosted on Zenodo as supplementary references in their curricula. The recorded asynchronous lessons offer flexible support, enabling each department to independently adapt and align their syllabi with the freely available content, thus fostering greater curricular autonomy and resource accessibility.

The collaboration with GTHA/ANPUH marked a significant step in providing Portuguese-speaking students with open-access resources for learning the Egyptian language. Through two structured video modules—available on YouTube and individually downloadable via Zenodo, the project offered a comprehensive introduction to Middle Egyptian grammar, followed by advanced study. Students engaged with the material using Pereira's grammar textbook (in print and digital formats) alongside online instruction from the author. The modules were further enriched by historical and philological analyses, including key examples from ancient Egyptian literature. This integrated approach equipped students to deepen their proficiency through the study of annotated bilingual papyrus translations, fostering an immersive and academically rigorous learning experience.

In 2023, the *Laboratório do Antigo Oriente Próximo (LAOP)* at the Universidade de São Paulo (USP/Brazil) launched a collaboration to offer instruction in ancient Middle Egyptian to both undergraduate and graduate students, following the model of a previous course. These workshops, titled *Seminários de Leitura de Textos Egípcios*, were designed to train students in reading ancient Egyptian texts and to help them gradually become independent in reading and interpreting their sources.

The program featured online interactive sessions over three months, offering additional guidance and support. Following an initial phase dedicated to grammar review, the course transitioned to reading short funerary inscriptions, primarily composed of formulaic expressions. Students also studied excerpts from the ancient Egyptian literary text *Sinuhe* (Ashmolean Ostrakon 1945.40). Through close analysis of these texts, participants enhanced their understanding of Middle Egyptian while engaging directly with primary sources.

The workshops concluded with a lecture by Richard Parkinson (University of Oxford), a specialist on *Sinuhe*, who participated in an online session during, followed by a Q&A. Additionally, the authors prepared a translation and commentary of *Sinuhe* (Papyrus Berlin 3022), which will be published with open access. This translation features an



introductory section that provides historical context and a comprehensive overview of the text's themes. As a result, it serves as a valuable resource for introducing students to the complexities of Middle Kingdom Egypt and its broader interactions with the Levant during the Bronze Age.

Later in 2023, LAOP initiated a collaboration with the University of Paris Nanterre following the III International Colloquium on Ancient Egypt and the Near East, with the aim of training students in the palaeography of the Persian Period. The research group *Mudraya* leads this initiative through the project *Paléographie de l'Égyptien hiéroglyphique d'époque perse*, directed by Thais Rocha (UFMG) and Matheus Treuk (UERJ), with consultancy provided by Damien Agut-Labordère (CNRS). The group focuses on the study and interpretation of inscriptions from the Persian Period, an area that, despite its significance, has received comparatively little scholarly attention within the broader field of Egyptology.⁶ The workshops focus on both the palaeographic analysis of hieroglyphic inscriptions from the Persian Period and the material context and supports in which these texts were produced. By combining palaeographic study with discussions on materiality, the workshops aim to provide students and researchers with a holistic understanding of epigraphic practices during this understudied period of Egyptian history.

The broader goal of the project is to shed light on the continuity and transformation of Egyptian writing culture and society under Achaemenid rule, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of Egypt in the late first millennium BCE. The findings, including annotated transcriptions, palaeographic notes, and contextual analyses, are intended for publication on the website of the Achaemenet Project, coordinated by Damien Agut-Labordère, to ensure open access and scholarly dissemination.

Since 2025, the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) established two research groups⁷ to expand the scope of e-learning initiatives focused on ancient Egypt. By bringing together students from both São Paulo and Minas Gerais, LAOP/UFMG has promoted online language training and research-oriented meetings. In 2025, students began a course in Late Egyptian course taught by Dr. Christina Geisen of the British Museum.

Currently, LAOP/UFMG is working to establish new partnerships aimed at expanding its international network of collaborators, particularly with institutions in France,

⁶ See also within LAOP the research group *Parsa*, dedicated to Achaemenid studies and directed by Matheus Treuk (<https://laop.fflch.usp.br/parsa-grupo-de-estudos-aquemenidas>).

⁷ Núcleo de Egiptologia Brasileira (NEB) and Laboratório do Antigo Oriente Próximo (LAOP/UFMG).



Poland, and the United Kingdom. These collaborations seek to develop new courses covering a range of stages and textual corpora of the ancient Egyptian language, including Demotic and Hieratic. The overarching goal is to improve access to digital resources for Portuguese-speaking students interested in Egyptology, enabling them to consult primary sources and pursue independent research.

Although most of these international collaborations are conducted in English, there is a clear awareness of the limitations faced by many undergraduate students who lack proficiency in English or French. To help bridge this gap and support the acquisition of modern language skills, we offer Middle Egyptian workshops and research meetings in Portuguese. This approach ensures that, by the time students reach the graduate level, they are better prepared to engage with international academic standards and operate on an equal footing with their peers.

It is important to acknowledge that, while digital tools offer significant advantages, they are not a panacea for the challenges facing Egyptology in Portugal and Brazil. These tools provide efficient access to resources and enable valuable connections with international specialists, but they also introduce new complications. Digital media, for instance, can encourage a focus on short-term solutions at the expense of long-term educational investment. Although they facilitate the dissemination of information and global networking, they may inadvertently diminish the perceived need for sustained, in-depth training and institutional support. Furthermore, an overreliance on digital platforms can obscure the logistical challenges inherent in traditional academic exchanges, such as transportation, visas, funding, and accommodations, that remain critical for building robust international collaborations.

While DH offer promising avenues for the production and dissemination of educational resources, it is essential to approach them with measured expectations. These tools provide valuable support for Portuguese-speaking academia and complement other ongoing initiatives in the field of Egyptology. However, despite the growing potential for research and training in ancient Egyptian history and archaeology, substantial investment is still required—and meaningful results may only emerge over time. Relying solely on voluntary initiatives, such as the one outlined in this paper, is not sustainable. Although collaboration is undoubtedly beneficial, further institutional commitment is essential to firmly establish Egyptology as a recognized academic discipline in both Portugal and Brazil.

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