

The training of craft masters of the press in Sergipe in the context of professional education at the beginning of the 20th century

A formação dos mestres de ofício da imprensa sergipana no contexto da educação profissionalizante do início do século XX

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the training of typographers in Sergipe based on the study of 14 issues of the Sergipe Artífice magazine produced in the graphic arts workshop of the Apprentice Craftsman School of the state between 1934 and 1945. The aim is to understand the historical and the graphic production characteristics in the making of the magazine, identifying the subjects and their practices by examining historical documents. We follow the guidelines from the content analysis method according to Bardin (1977), summarized in three phases: pre-analysis; exploration of sources and results; interpretations. As results, the authors discovered a nominal list of 31 apprentice-typographers, who in the training process acquired general and technical knowledge involving typography, printing and bookbinding. The conclusions indicate that modernist conceptions regulated the practices of typography apprentices even before the training of design professionals in Brazil. This study also contributes to the area of History and Graphic Memory by revealing in the social field that training in typography was a possibility for the black population of Aracaju in the context of the post-abolition period.

Keywords: Training of typographers. Sergipe Artífice. Printed materials from the 1930s.

RESUMO

Este artigo investiga a formação de tipógrafos em Sergipe partindo do estudo de 14 edições da revista Sergipe Artífice, produzida na oficina de artes gráficas da Escola de Aprendizes Artífices do estado entre os anos de 1934 e 1945. O objetivo é compreender as características históricas e de produção gráfica presentes na feitura da revista, identificando os sujeitos e suas práticas por meio do exame dos documentos históricos. Seguimos as orientações do método de análise do conteúdo segundo Bardin (1977), resumidas em três fases: pré-análise, exploração das fontes e dos resultados e interpretações. Como resultado, as autoras descobriram uma relação nominal de 31 tipógrafos aprendizes, que, no processo formativo, adquiriam conhecimentos gerais e técnicos envolvendo tipografia, impressão e encadernação. As conclusões indicam que concepções modernistas regulavam as práticas dos aprendizes de tipografia, mesmo antes da formação do profissional de design no Brasil. Este estudo também contribui para a área da História e da memória gráfica ao revelar, no campo social, que a formação em tipografia era uma possibilidade para a população negra de Aracaju no contexto pós-abolição.

Palavras-chave: Formação de tipógrafos. Sergipe Artífice. Impressos da década de 1930.

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Received on: 01/17/2025. Accepted on: 05/06/2025

INTRODUCTION

In the year marking two decades since the republican coup, the Apprentice Craftsmen School (*Escolas de Aprendizizes Artífices* – EAAs) began to emerge in the capitals of Brazil. These institutions resulted from a project implemented by Nilo Procópio Peçanha (1909–1910), the seventh president of the young Brazilian Republic. Following the death of President Afonso Pena (1906–1909), the then vice president assumed the presidency for a brief period and became responsible for issuing Decree No. 7.566 on September 23, 1909, which established the EAAs. Nearly two years after the publication of this decree, on May 1, 1911, the institutional model for training masters in the graphic trade was inaugurated in Aracaju, the capital of the state of Sergipe since 1855¹.

The task proposed here, examining the training of these professionals and characterizing the Craftsmen School in Sergipe at the beginning of the 20th century, as part of a broader national project, is complex due to the inconsistent availability of documentary sources and the pioneering nature of the initiative. Nevertheless, despite the absence of some official records, exploring the relationship between History and graphic design, with a particular focus on the field of graphic memory, and undertaking research — that intersects with previous studies in the field of Education —, proved essential for understanding how typography was established in the state and how local professionals operating the presses were trained during the first half of the last century.

Recognizing the fragmented nature of the available evidence, where some pieces remain scattered and others are entirely missing, this article draws on the 14 issues of the magazine *Sergipe Artífice*, published between 1934 and 1945, as a primary source of study. The magazine was initially produced by the Graphic Arts section of the EAA of Sergipe (EAA-SE) and was subsequently continued and revived by other training units that operated in the same location over time. Accordingly, this study seeks to identify clues both in the textual content and in the graphic elements of the printed material produced within this professional training school, with emphasis on three main aspects:

- who were the historical subjects of this institution who performed or learned the role of typographer;
- what were these apprentices instructed to think about or what were they taught to reproduce as editorial content;
- what observable reflections were there on the role and identity of the typographer.

With these issues in focus, the approach adopted for this study involves both local and national historical analyses, following an inseparable path between design and History. Accordingly, graphic elements are examined in relation to the political,

1 Aracaju emerged as a planned city due to economic needs and political disputes. This occurred during the administration of the provincial president Ignácio Barbosa (1853–1855), through Resolution No. 413, dated March 17, 1855, thus coinciding with the period of the founding of the institution under study.

social, economic, educational, and cultural contexts that shaped the space and time under investigation.

From an operational standpoint, the examination of historical documents followed the principles of content analysis as outlined by Bardin (1977), a method structured into three distinct phases:

- preliminary analysis;
- exploration of the sources and results;
- interpretations.

In applying content analysis, an exploratory framework was developed to organize the information gathered from the issues of *Sergipe Artífice*, focusing on the identification of the following elements:

- issue number/year of the journal;
- names mentioned of students or teachers from the typography course;
- type of content produced by the students (title and authorship, notes, and others);
- Typographic composition, considering the authorship if identified.

Furthermore, to understand the connections between History and design, dialogue was established with historiographical works and studies of graphic memory concerning the educational space and the production of the magazine. Finally, the discourses present in the news content were analyzed to relate historical context to graphic elements.

APPRENTICE CRAFTSMEN SCHOOL IN ARACAJU

At the beginning of the 20th century, EAA was established in Aracaju as part of a national project focused on vocational education. During this period, Brazil was predominantly an agrarian society, governed by political structures typical of the First Republic, including coronelismo and the politics of governors. Within Sergipe's political context, the state president, Rodrigues Dória, had submitted a resignation letter but later resumed his position with the support of federal forces sent by Nilo Peçanha. In the educational domain, the majority of the population remained illiterate, a reality that did not prevent cities, particularly the capitals, from initiating processes of urban modernization. Thus, while the urban landscape was undergoing transformation, Aracaju became the site of the country's last EAA implementation.

After overcoming natural obstacles to implement the urban plan and establishing itself as a political-administrative center in the second half of the 19th century, Aracaju underwent transformations emblematic of modernity in the first quarter of the following century. According to Dantas (2022, p. 48), the city became Sergipe's industrial and commercial hub, hosting the largest number of operating industries in the state. Among these were two major textile factories: Fábrica Sergipe Industrial, which began operations in 1882, and Fábrica Confiança, inaugurated on October 18, 1918. Although these factories were situated outside the original urban plan, they were located in close proximity to the capital's port.

Thus, the new urban dynamics attracted migration from both the wealthier social classes, drawn by the consumption of new lifestyles, and from less privileged groups, who viewed the change of environment as an opportunity for a more dignified and prosperous life through potential employment. The privileged classes settled in the city's central area, whose advantageous location also attracted the establishment of printing houses². For this reason,

With rapid changes in the economic and political sectors in the Capital, Aracaju saw a significant number of printing houses that took over the central area to accommodate a constantly evolving graphic industry. In this context, Rua Aurora, the most privileged location in the Quadrado de Pirro, hosted a total of five printing workshops, in addition to *Imprensa Oficial*, further demonstrating the interest of Sergipanos in printed production. Moreover, setting up printing shops near the port was advantageous since it was the entry point for graphic materials (paper, ink, typefaces, and presses) and brought these printing houses closer to the world of business, news, and goods that also arrived through the port (Grupo de Pesquisa Design, Cultura e Sociedade, 2020).

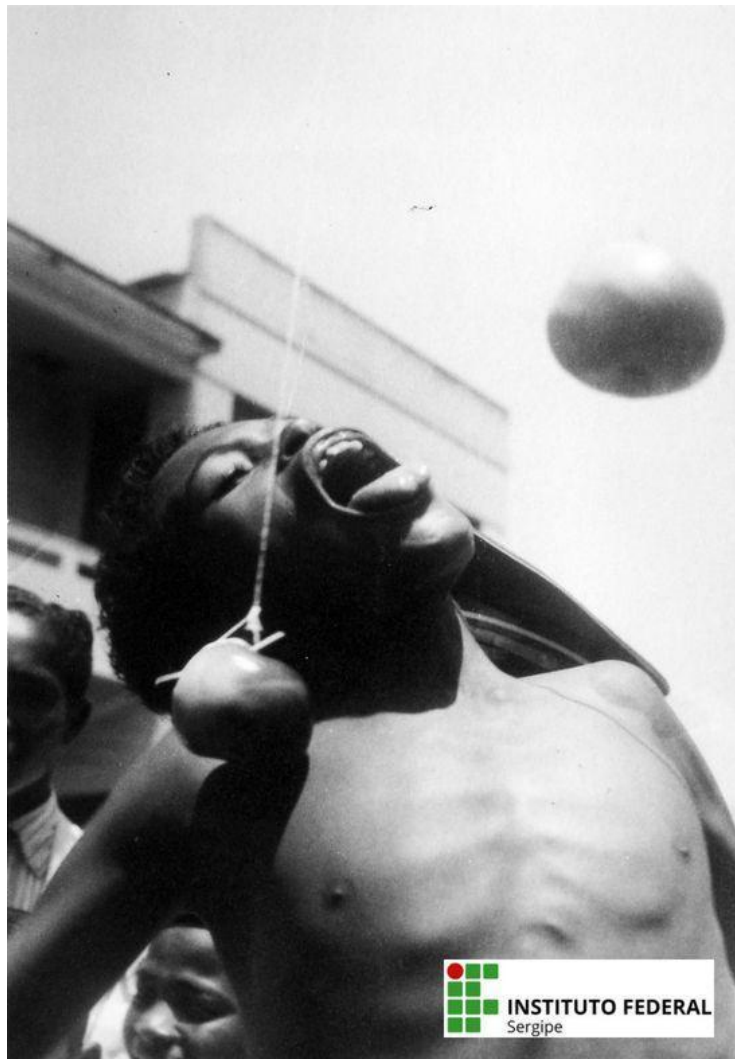
The areas farthest from the city center were inhabited by the less affluent population, including a significant portion of the Black community. At the end of the 19th century, this group experienced a historical turning point that transformed social relations and revealed new projects within Brazil's social structures. The enactment of Law No. 3.353 on May 13, 1888, the *Lei Áurea*, abolished slavery in the country, abruptly ending an elitist agenda that had advocated for a slow and gradual phase-out of slave labor. Consequently, the complexities of the post-abolition period emerged³, with its effects and processes extending into the early republican era, which began the year following the *Lei Áurea*.

According to Souza Neto (2017), Aracaju was a "new" city that represented a pathway to new opportunities for the Black population, regardless of whether individuals had formerly been enslaved. The presence of smaller industries producing consumer goods (food, beverages, cigarettes and cigars, clothing, and footwear), alongside larger enterprises (such as cotton spinning and weaving factories) as well as the expansion of sectors including construction, commerce, public services, domestic and personal services, and transportation, contributed to labor relations increasingly detached from the agrarian context still associated with the legacy of slavery. These developments also shaped new forms of compensation to meet the essential survival needs of the Black population.

2 Academic research on the Graphic Memory of Sergipe, conducted by the Design, Culture, and Society Research Group (Grupo de Pesquisa Design, Cultura e Sociedade, 2020) (dgp.cnpq.br/dgp/espelhogrupo/1142449922073150).

3 See Rios and Mattos (2004), Gomes (2005), Mattos and Rios (2005), Fraga Filho (2006), Abreu, Dantas and Mattos (2012), and Gomes and Domingues (2013): in the post-abolition period, what is at stake are the individual and/or collective actions undertaken not by formerly enslaved people, but by those who built their own history and the national History.

Despite the restrictions imposed by the prevailing code of conduct⁴, which barred certain social groups from occupying elite spaces and prohibited constructions outside a set of established rules, the Black population in the capital after abolition came to represent 62.7% of its inhabitants (Souza Neto, 2017, p. 34). From this period onward, the presence of Black students in vocational schools became evident, as demonstrated by photographs depicting daily school activities (Figure 1).



Source: IFS ([2019]).

Figure 1. Boys apprentices from EAA-SE engaged in playful activity during a festive occasion.

Situated between the central and peripheral areas, the EAA-SE was located at Rua Lagarto, No. 952, on the corner of Rua Maruim, until 1963 (Santos Neto, 2015). The facility's effective establishment was delayed amid political disputes between

4 Complex and comprehensive laws were created to manage the city, assumed by the State, and, according to Santos (2007, p. 102), "were accompanied by a set of legal instruments that ensured its policing and [...] were favorable [...] to the definition of a socially and environmentally segregated and unstructured periphery."

state oligarchies: on one side, the representative of “Olympism,”⁵ Rodrigues Dória; on the other, General Oliveira Valladão, state senator. According to Solange Patrício (2003, p. 68),

Rodrigues Dória knew that the project, escaping his control, would serve the interests of local politicians connected to Senator Oliveira Valladão, who would benefit from federal jobs by appointing their relatives or political allies. Aware of this, he used his position to hinder their privileges, delimiting his sphere of influence and action, weakening them in the eyes of the voters. The School would not submit to the reins of the State Government. [...] The evidence gathered leads us to believe that the main reason for the lack of cooperation with the federal project was the political hostility between Rodrigues Dória and the group supporting the establishment of EAA, especially represented by General Oliveira Valladão.

The rivalries did not impede the execution of the federal project, which was overseen by the Ministry of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce. On the symbolic date of May 1, 1911, the institution was inaugurated under the direction of Augusto César Leite (1910–1916). The first class at the Sergipe school enrolled 120 students. It is noteworthy that vocational schools were part of a project led by the republican elite, aimed at promoting “order and progress” by shaping the popular classes. For this reason,

The field of vocational education was managed by the federal government and aimed at the working classes in order to “civilize” them quickly and thereby integrate them in an orderly and economically viable way into the envisioned republican order. The moral reform of illiterate children and youth from poor classes would only be effective from that perspective if achieved through work, with the public authorities temporarily assuming a paternalistic role to counterbalance, in that historical moment, an extremely exclusionary social order with very low social mobility (Carvalho, 2017, p. 151).

In accordance with the principles of civic-military education, the school’s purpose was to “train workers and foremen” (Santana; Carvalho; Soares, 2013). According to the initial decree establishing the EAAs, students were required to meet specific criteria: to be “unfortunate” — a status to be verified by a certificate or “attestation from reputable persons” (Brasil, 1909) —, to be between 10 and 13 years old, and to be free of infectious diseases or “defects that would make it impossible to learn the trade” (Santana; Carvalho; Soares, 2013, pp. 2–4). The age range for enrollment was expanded under subsequent administrations: during Hermes da Fonseca’s government (1910–1914), it was extended to 12 to 16 years old by Decree No. 9.070 of October 25, 1911, known as the Pedro Toledo Regulation; and under Venceslau Brás’s administration (1914–1918), it was broadened to 10 to 16 years old by Decree-Law No. 13.064 of June 12, 1918, referred to as the Pereira Lima

5 Monsenhor Olímpio Campos was a senator of the Republic, federal and provincial deputy during the Empire, a political leader, and president of the state (1899–1902). He was assassinated in Rio de Janeiro in 1906, when the sons of deputy Fausto Cardoso sought revenge, blaming him for their father’s death during “Revolta de Fausto Cardoso” (1906).

Regulation (the names of the decrees correspond to the Minister of Agriculture, Industry, and Commerce in office during each period).

Regarding the age range of students at the Aracaju school, some information is available in *Sergipe Artífice* no. 11⁶, published two decades after these regulations, in a full-page article titled “*Nosso Ambulatório*” (Our Outpatient Clinic), which reports on the activities of the school’s medical center, directed by A. Vieira Dantas, in 1939. In the paragraph beginning with “The Medical Center was visited during 1939 by 324 students, in accordance with the breakdown in the table below” (*Sergipe Artífice*, 1940, p. 9), data on the students’ ages are provided, adapted here in Chart 1. The frequency of students aged between 10 and 22 years is evident.

Chart 1. Age of students served at the outpatient clinic of the Apprentice Craftsmen School of Sergipe. 1939.

Age of students	Number of visits
10 years	26
11 years	55
12 years	87
13 years	71
14 years	41
15 years	16
16 years	10
17 years	9
18 years	0
19 years	3
20 years	5
21 years	0
22 years	1
Total	324

Source: Adapted from *Sergipe Artífice* (1940, p. 9).

The regulations also established additional rules for the operation of craft schools. Regarding the teaching of crafts, each school was to have up to five workshops focused on manual labor or mechanics. However, this number could be expanded depending on the physical and structural conditions of the facility, with the director responsible for deciding how any expansion would be utilized. Initially, the courses offered included primary education and drawing, alongside training in blacksmithing and mechanics, tailoring, carpentry, shoemaking, and saddlery, which together comprised the full training program. It is important to note that a standardized curriculum was not implemented until the 1920s.

The graphic arts workshop at EAA-SE began in 1926, established “through new legislation that unified the curriculum of EAAs across the national territory, without considering the productive specificities of each state” (Araujo; Cabral, 2024). These curricular changes were implemented through the Consolidation of Devices

6 Before EAA-SE was transformed into the Industrial School of Aracaju, this edition consisted of a denser publication, with 20 pages (the previous ones had four or eight), to report the achievements of the educational space up to the year prior to the publication (1939).

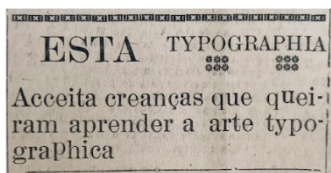
Concerning Apprentice Craftsmen Schools, formalized by Ordinance No. 13, dated November 1926. This regulation reorganized the EAAs by creating a unified curriculum under the Inspection Service of Technical Professional Education and granted legal authorization for the school to produce goods in its workshops upon order.

The trades listed in the regulations were divided into nine sections: woodwork, metalwork, decorative arts, textile arts, leatherwork, shoemaking, clothing manufacturing, commercial activities, and graphic arts. The curriculum for graphic arts was organized as follows: in the third year⁷, typography (manual and mechanical typesetting); in the fourth year, printing, bookbinding, and photography; in the first complementary year, technical photography or lithography; and in the second complementary year, specialization. At EAA-SE, in the year the first edition of *Sergipe Artífice* was published (1934), five sections were offered: woodwork, metalwork, shoemaking, tailoring, and graphic arts.

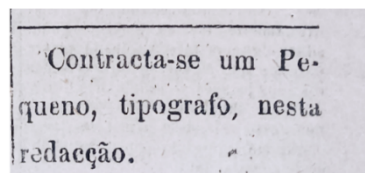
According to information obtained from the collection of Instituto Federal de Sergipe (IFS) library, many young apprentices in graphic arts were often unable to complete the course, as they left to work in printing shops located in the city center as soon as they acquired the necessary skills. Indeed, periodicals from the 1930s archived at the Epifânio Dória State Public Library⁸ include advertisements from printing houses targeting young individuals eager to learn the trade (Figure 2). When this evidence is compared with advertisements from the school itself offering printing services to the general public (Figure 3), it suggests that these apprentices may have dropped out due to the competing demands of schoolwork and paid labor, despite the modest wages earned by novice typographers.



Vida Laranjense, 1935



A Boa Nova, 1931



Vida Laranjense, 1931

Figure 2. Newspaper advertisements calling young people to work in printing houses.

SERGIPE ARTÍFICE: ABOUT THE TRAINING OF PROFESSIONALS IN GRAPHIC ARTS

On September 23, 1934, the first issue of *Sergipe Artífice*, "the organ of the Apprentice Craftsmen School of Sergipe," was published in the capital of Sergipe. The publication date is symbolic, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the establishment of vocational schools. The launch served multiple purposes, including the dissemination of knowledge in technical and industrial fields,

⁷ The first two years were the same for all courses. The first year, covering primary education, was mandatory for students without prior school certification; the second year, focused on drawing and introductory studies, was for everyone, with advancement to later years allowed for students who demonstrated prior knowledge.

⁸ Scientific Initiation Project, PID12406-2023 *Mestres de Ofício de Sergipe*, carried out at the Epifânio Dória State Public Library – PIBIC/UFS 2023–2024.

the promotion of intellectual, political, and vocational education ideals, and the reinforcement of values associated with educational reforms enacted at various historical moments. Additionally, the publication aimed to positively promote the institution.

According to Araujo and Cabral (2024), the editorial team included two prominent instructors: Leyda Régis and Manuel Messias dos Santos, the master of the typography and bookbinding workshop. They collaborated with other instructors, workshop masters, and students. The participation of students at *Sergipe Artífice* consisted of practicing typography, led by master Messias: “the objective of the printed material was for students to have the practice of graphic production revealed” (Araujo; Cabral, 2024, p. 9).

To identify the apprentices involved in the graphic production process, the magazine was examined for mentions of their names. During the analysis and data collection from the issues, student names were recorded when they appeared at the end of news items, typically indicated in parentheses with the attribution “typographic composition,” followed by the year of the course and the student’s name. Unfortunately, not all news items included the apprentice typographer’s name, and in some editions, this practice was discontinued. Additionally, other notes and news items that disclosed the names and enrolled courses of the apprentices were reviewed. This enabled the compilation of the following list of names:



Source: Instituto Federal de Sergipe (IFS, [2019]).

Figure 3. Graphic Arts Workshop of EEA-SE.

The data presented in Chart 2 account for 31 apprentice typographer students. The systematized information also confirms that typography practice was conducted at various stages of the course, with a predominance of third-year students engaged in activities related to magazine production. Moreover, the curricular organization of the course reveals some names of students who reached more advanced stages. While this does not necessarily imply that the others did not complete or progress through later stages, it may indicate a significant dropout rate, a recurring issue across all EAAs. Figures 4 and 5 depict students who remained enrolled and successfully graduated.

Indeed, Solange Patrício (2003), drawing on Fonseca (1961), highlights that dropout rates were particularly high in the third and fourth grades. Using data from Cunha (2000), Patrício calculates the dropout rate in Sergipe and notes fluctuations over time, with periods of both increase and decline. The proportion of dropouts only fell below 26% in 1936 and 1937. While these dropout rates were a source of concern for school administrators and teachers, they may have simultaneously supplied the numerous printing shops in the city center with a steady influx of young labor.

Despite its limitations, the information available in the *Sergipe Artífice* journals, digitized and made accessible through the digital memorial of Instituto Federal de Sergipe (IFS, 2021), highlights a few names of students who reached the more advanced stages of the program. Among them were Félix Milton de Oliveira (Figure 4), who completed the course in 1936; José Ferreira Soares and Manuel Quintino de Moura (Figure 5), graduates of the class of 1943; Pedro Jessé dos Santos, who in 1939 was enrolled in the second complementary year; and Valdemar José Duarte and Manoel Batista de Meneses, who attended the fourth year of adaptation in 1937 and 1938, respectively. It is important to note that although Manuel Quintino de Moura is not cited in any note regarding typographic composition, he was one of the few graduates reported during the magazine's publication period.

To deepen our understanding of the subjects and practices surrounding typography, it is important to emphasize the role of Professor Leyda Régis, who played a pivotal part in encouraging students' textual production across various workshops. The students' writings addressed a range of topics, with some articles signed by the editors themselves. As a result, we adopted a new research strategy: identifying news items authored by apprentice typographers. This involved cross-referencing the data from Chart 2 with identifiable editorial signatures, which led to the identification of the following individuals: Félix Milton de Oliveira, Pedro Jessé dos Santos, Manoel Quintino de Moura, Pedro Rubens dos Santos, Renato Pinheiro de Carvalho, Paulo Dias Moraes, Bertoldo L. Meneses, and Elisiário Vieira de Azevedo. The news articles authored by apprentices, depending on their textual type, were classified as chronicles, opinion pieces, descriptive texts, and educational texts. Their content addressed a wide variety of themes, including the history of typography, civic and commemorative dates, economics, politics, and extracurricular educational activities. This thematic diversity illustrates that typographer training encompassed both the acquisition of general education and the development of practical skills within the graphic arts workshop.

Chart 2. Apprentice typographers cited in alphabetical order.

Name	Course year	Month and year of the publication
Afonso José dos Santos	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1939
Agnaldo Santos	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1937
	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1938
Bertoldo L. Meneses	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1937
Cleantes Cavalcante Brito	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1938
	3 rd year Adaptation	11/1938
	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1939
Elisiário Vieira de Azevedo	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1936
Fausto Santos Silva	1 st year Adaptation	07/1935
Félix Milton de Oliveira	2 nd year Adaptation	09/1934
	1 st year Complementary	09/1935
	Former student	03/1937
Francisco de Borgia Santana	3 ^o year Adaptation	09/ 1940
	Not possible to specify — between 2 nd and 4 th grades	07/1944
Gervasio dos Santos	1 st year Adaptation	07/1935
	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1935
Hunald Teles de Meneses	3 rd year Adaptation	11/1938
João Soares	2 nd year Adaptation	07/1935
Joaquim de Carvalho Campos	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1939
José Ferreira Soares	3 rd year Adaptation	09/ 1940
	Graduated, class of 1943	07/1944
José Bastos Frota	Not listed	09/1945
José Gabriel dos Santos	1 st year Adaptation	07/1935
	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1935
José Valdo de Almeida Farias	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1938
	2 nd year Adaptation	09/1939
José Vieira dos Santos	Not possible to specify — between 2 nd and 4 th grades	07/1944
	Not listed	09/1945
Luiz Farias dos Santos	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1937
Manoel Batista de Meneses	4 th year Adaptation	11/1938
Manuel Quintino de Moura	Graduated, class of 1943	07/1944
Marino Araújo	3 rd year Complementary	10/1937
	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1938
Nilton Paes de Azevedo	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1939
Oscar Dias	3 rd year Adaptation	09/ 1940
Osvaldo Torres	3 rd year Adaptation	09/ 1940
Paulo Dias Moraes	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1938
	3 rd year Adaptation	11/1938
Pedro Jessé dos Santos	1 st year Adaptation	07/1935
	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1935
	1 st year Complementary	11/1938
	2 nd year Complementary	09/1939
Pedro Rubens dos Santos	Not possible to specify — between 2 nd and 4 th grades	07/1944
	Not listed	09/1945
Reinaldo Barroso de Mélo	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1938
	3 rd year Adaptation	11/1938
Renato Pinheiro de Carvalho	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1938
	3 rd year Adaptation	11/1938
Valdemar José Duarte	3 rd year Adaptation	09/1936
	4 th year Adaptation	10/1937
Walter Correia Silva	1 st year Adaptation	09/1936

Source: Sergipe Artífice (1934–1945).

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Source: Sergipe Artífice (1937, p. 3).

Figure 4. Félix Milton de Oliveira graduated from the EAA-SE course in 1936.



Source: Sergipe Artífice (1944, p. 44).

Figure 5. José Ferreira Soares and Manuel Quintino de Moura, graduates of the Escola Industrial de Aracaju in 1943.

In relation to practical knowledge, it is important to revisit the contributions of the other key educator previously mentioned: Master Messias. Beyond his role as an instructor in graphic arts, he actively participated in the production of the *Sergipe Artífice* magazine, for which he also authored texts addressing themes related to typography. As highlighted by Araujo and Cabral (2024, p. 10), he was “a master who also incorporated content on graphic history and, in a reflective manner, articulated the social relevance of the practical activities carried out in the Typography and Bookbinding Workshop.”

In this regard, we highlight that the transmission of the idea of typography as the most distinct of the graphic arts permeated the construction of the typographer’s identity since the beginning of the *Sergipe Artífice* journal, influenced by a functionalist discourse, which foresees the production of a graphic composition of a utilitarian nature to provide an easy and friendly reading: “the typographer should have ‘refined artistic taste’ to be able to make the right choices, considering that each composition has a ‘genre’ that must be announced by the design of the types, fillets and vignettes” (Araujo; Cabral, 2024, p. 17).

Traces of this influence can be observed in the students’ own writings. Following the example of their master, at least two apprentices authored texts on typography and graphic arts at different moments in time. Félix Milton de Oliveira, while in his second year of adaptation, wrote the article “*Minha Arte, Minha Oficina*” (*My Art, My Workshop*), published in the inaugural issue in 1934. Years later, Pedro Jessé dos Santos, during his second complementary year, authored the text “*Principais Artes*” (*Main Arts*), featured in the tenth issue, dated September 23, 1939.

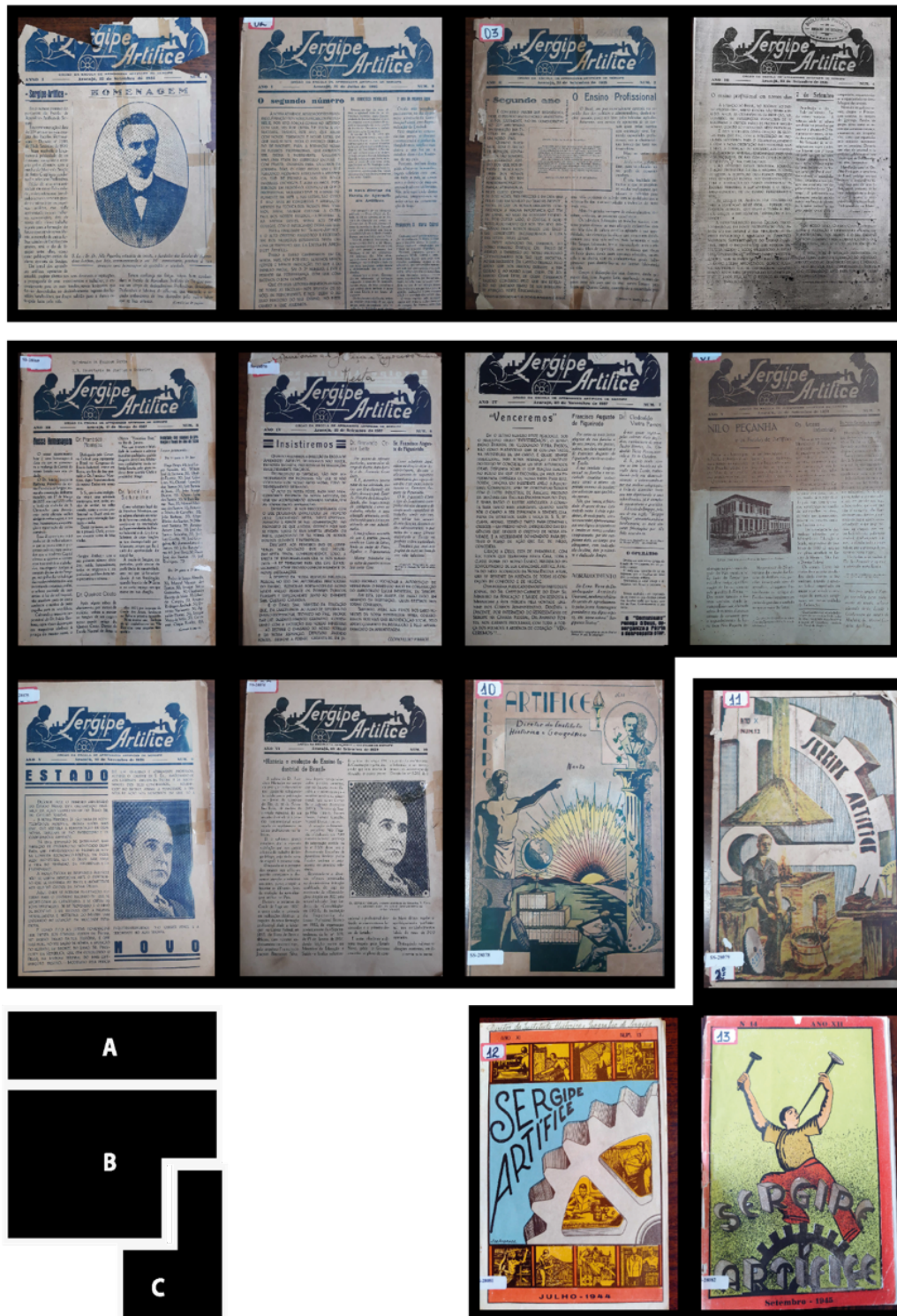
The collaborative work of teachers and students in producing graphic materials remained continuous between 1934 and 1945, with the exception of the years 1941 and 1942, during which no editions were printed.

GRAPHIC AND INFORMATIONAL ASPECTS OF SERGIPE ARTÍFICE

To better understand the graphic aspects employed by these professionals, we analyzed the covers of the 14 editions of *Sergipe Artífice*.

The journal continued to be produced in the Graphic Arts Workshop despite institutional changes, meaning that the periodical was published by the different schools that successively occupied the same facilities: EAA-SE, Liceu Industrial de Aracaju, and Escola Industrial de Aracaju. As shown in Figure 6, EAA-SE, which operated from 1911 to 1937, was responsible for publishing issues 1 (1934), 2 and 3 (1935), and 4 (1936). In 1937, following a change in name and management, the institution became Liceu Industrial de Aracaju, which published issues 5, 6, and 7 (1937); 8 and 9 (1938); and subsequently issues 10 (1939) and 11 (1940). In 1942, after another institutional transformation, Escola Industrial de Aracaju was established, where the final three issues of the magazine were produced: issues 12 (1943), 13 (1944), and 14 (1945).

The training of craft masters of the press in Sergipe in the context of professional education at the beginning of the 20th century



A. Escola Aprendizes Artífices de Sergipe - EAA- SE (1911-1937): 1^a (set. 1934), 2^a (jul. 1935), 3^a (set. 1935), 4^a (set. 1936);
 B. Liceu Industrial de Aracaju (1937-1942): 5^a (mar. 1937), 6^a (set. 1937), 7^a (nov. 1937), 8^a (set. 1938), 9^a (nov. 1938), 10^a (set. 1939), 11^a (set. 1940);
 C. Escola Industrial de Aracaju - EIA (1942-1965): 12^a (set. 1943), 13^a (jul. 1944), 14^a (set. 1945).

Source: Covers: IFS (2021); school dates: Santos Neto (2015)⁹.

Figure 6. Covers of the 14 editions of *Sergipe Artífice*.

⁹ Although Santos Neto (2015) classifies the phases according to the names the school assumed over time, the journal did not change the subtitle "Orgão da Escola de Aprendizes Artífices de Sergipe" until the 12th edition.

Starting with the 11th edition, the magazine's cover adopted a more elaborate visual design, featuring a colored illustration and a hand-drawn title, replacing the earlier header that displayed repeated silhouettes of two apprentices, used consistently through the first ten issues. This visual innovation can be interpreted as a prelude to a new phase for both the institution and the publication. Additionally, a notable shift in content is observed, marked by the expressive use of photographs, engravings, and color printing, elements that signal a technological evolution in graphic production processes.

After a two-year hiatus, issue 12 was published in 1943, featuring a new cover design that introduced the image of a gear, an element that would appear on the final three issues of the magazine. Widely used to symbolize professions associated with mechanized manufacturing processes, the gear conveys the idea of constant, systematic, and orderly movement. This choice aligns with the rationalist educational model aimed at preparing workers as disciplined professionals within the logic of the mass production system.

In terms of layout and pagination, until issue 10, the magazine was produced with four to eight pages and was therefore not bound. Its graphic design resembled that of a newspaper (Figure 7) featuring: a grid of narrow columns and, on some pages, a rectangular grid structure.

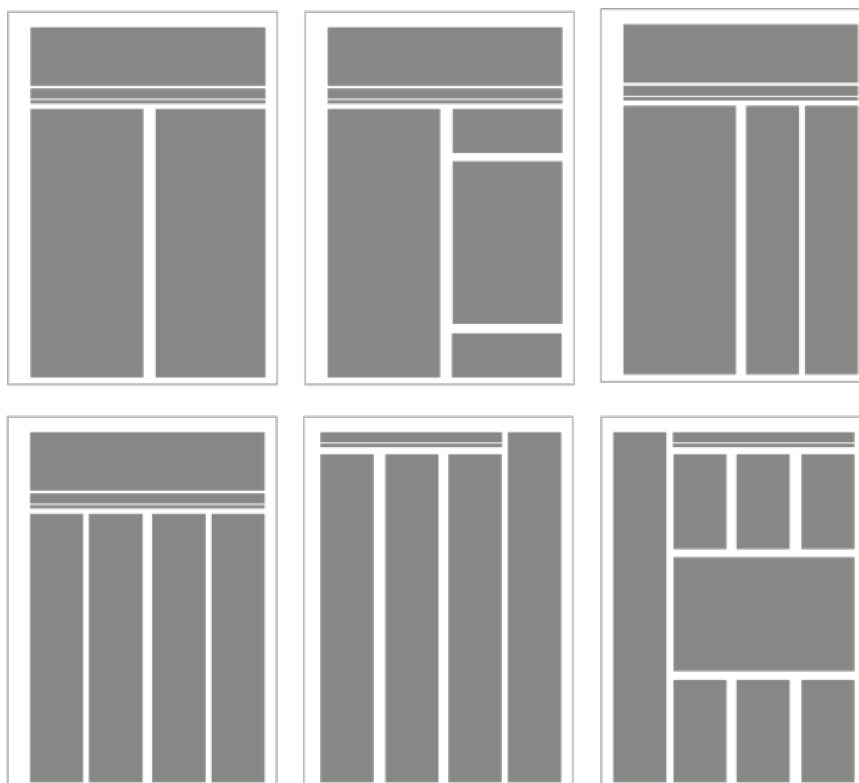


Figure 7. Layout of the pages of *Sergipe Artífice* (n. 1 to n. 10).

It was only in 1940, with issue no. 11, that the journal underwent a significant transformation in its graphic layout: the number of pages increased to at least 20, and the covers became more visually elaborate. The articles written by the apprentices began to include detailed descriptions of the graphic construction process, the

conceptual framework, and the technical stages of production. For instance, in 1944, issue no. 13 (Figure 8), the article titled “A capa do Sergipe Artífice” (*The Cover of the Sergipe Artífice*) discusses the authorship of the illustration, the individuals involved in the typographic composition, and the overall process of graphic production.



Source: IFS (2021).

Figure 8. Cover and double-page spread from *Sergipe Artífice*, n. 13 (1944).

The magazine cover, designed by our Technical Drawing teacher, José de Andrade, brings together in a harmonious composition the essence of the professional crafts encompassed by our school organization.

The typographic portion was carried out by colleagues from the second, third, and fourth grades. The background designs were engraved by fourth-grade students, following this process: preparing the base wood in the desired size and applying the fiber; making a proof of the printing block with ample ink, then immediately transferring it onto the fiber; and engraving the desired background transferring a burin.

Thus, the block printed in blue was engraved with a burin on fiberboard by student Pedro Rubens Santos; the silver color by student José Vieira dos Santos; and the yellow by the author of these lines.

It is also worth mentioning here that, during the printing of this work, we had the effort and goodwill of craftsman Antúvio Fontes and the interest of some colleagues from the aforementioned grades.

Francisco de Borja Santana, 4th grade (Santana, 1944, p. 31).

In the same issue, in the article titled “*Jornais que nos visitam*” (Newspapers That Visit Us), it becomes clear that other technical schools in Brazil were also

producing journals and maintaining correspondence with one another. The text mentions, for example, that they received “as part of a cordial exchange, the official publications from the Technical Schools of Salvador and Vitória, as well as from the Industrial School of Belém,” among others (Sergipe Artífice, 1944, p. 19).

Regarding the content, it is evident how the changes in educational policy implemented during the Vargas government influenced the forms of presentation within the graphic arts, particularly typography. In the first article addressing the subject, typographic art is described as “the one that has distinguished itself most for its beauty and usefulness [...] It is this that has been [...] developing intelligence, sowing ‘books... books by the handful’” (Sergipe Artífice, 1934, p. 4). The text clearly seeks to highlight the need for better equipment in the Graphic Arts Workshop, reinforcing the idea that such improvements were essential for fulfilling the institution’s educational and productive mission, namely, to produce “the art” in question.

In the second article addressing the subject, the discourse adopts a more conciliatory tone, beginning with the assertion: “When dealing with the problem of the arts, we see that they are all of indisputable value, as each one has a precious purpose” (Sergipe Artífice, 1939, p. 6). Within this framework, mechanics and carpentry are recognized as legitimate arts, and the text emphasizes that “Graphic Arts serve as a foundation for those, directly or indirectly, and are the lever for the progress of Education” (Sergipe Artífice, 1939, p. 6). There is an effort to inform how mechanics and graphic arts are inseparable, which is why the progress of both is a driving force for industrial development. In this aspect, one can infer the concern to transmit an image that attests to the importance of graphic arts in promoting industrialization.

Despite their differences, the two articles share two common points: the notion of typography or graphic arts as an art form, and the advocacy for improving the physical-technological infrastructure — in the case of the 1939 text, for both graphic arts and mechanics. This is why the article concludes with: “We eagerly await the construction of the new building for our ‘Industrial Lyceum,’ which should be spacious and precisely efficient to allow for the expansion of both fine arts” (Sergipe Artífice, 1939, p. 6).

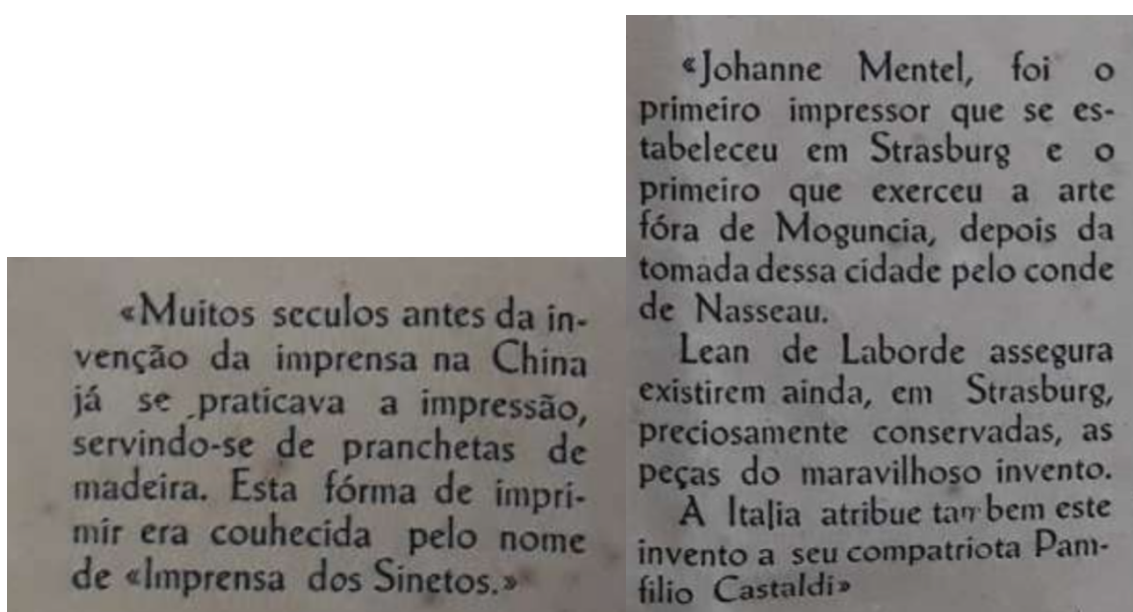
Finally, it is important to highlight that, since the earliest issues of the magazine, there have been sections (Figures 9 and 10) dedicated to curiosities, technological advancements, and significant historical events related to what the authors referred to as “typographic art” or the “art of printing.” These notes covered topics such as the history of book printing, the first printers, the earliest printed works, as well as engravings, illustrations, and other subjects of interest within the field.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Santos Neto (2015, p. 38), the history of the schools for apprentice craftsmen is “marked by the effort for educational and professional development of Brazilians, promoted by the federal government.” However, while the operational goal of the school was to “train workers and foremen” (Santana; Carvalho; Soares, 2013), the content of *Sergipe Artífice* goes beyond this positioning.



Source: Sergipe Artífice (1934, p. 4–5).
Figure 9. Notes in *Sergipe Artífice*, n. 1 (1934).



Source: Sergipe Artífice (1935, p. 2).
Figure 10. Notes in *Sergipe Artífice*, n. 2 (1935).

It presents typography as part of a useful and beautiful art¹⁰, and reveals the instructors' interest in the history of technique and graphic composition, expressed through texts that connect artistic and historical principles with the practical training of the craftsmen.

10 In the *Sergipe Artífice* journal, beauty and utility are linked to style. Thus, a professional in the field must be sensitive to the art of typography and capable of making appropriate choices according to each content and its meaning. "Of all the arts, the one that has stood out the most for its beauty and utility is the typographic art. It is this art that has been [...] developing minds, sowing 'books ... books in abundance,' accessible to all who wish to improve themselves in the school of knowledge. Blessed, therefore, be Gutenberg, the great 'herald of light,' the founder of this gigantic work, which is the art of typography." (Sergipe Artífice, 1934, p. 4).

As observed, professional and technological education in Brazil has undergone multiple transformations throughout the country's political history, shaped by the policies of successive governments and their specific views on the type of technical knowledge deemed essential for integrating professionals into the national industrialization process.

During the First Republic (1889–1930), under the government of Nilo Peçanha, EAAs were established with the objective of teaching specific trades, guided by a welfare-oriented approach. According to the decree that regulated the creation of these schools, their initial target audience was underprivileged children between the ages of 10 and 13. Later, the 1918 decree on the subject extended the maximum age for admission to 16 years old. During this period, the focus became the formation of moral character to guide the less privileged classes, from where the future workers came.

The rise to power of President Getúlio Vargas following the 1930 Revolution marked the end of the First Republic. During Vargas' first administration, which lasted until 1945, several educational initiatives, such as the establishment of the Ministry of Education and Public Health and the recognition of vocational education as a State responsibility, resulted in the transformation of EAAs into industrial high schools. The Capanema Reform, implemented in the 1940s under Minister of Education Gustavo Capanema, further restructured these institutions, converting them into industrial and technical schools. This reform signaled a shift in the approach to vocational education. According to Ramos (2014), the welfare-oriented aspect of these schools was abandoned, and a new focus on workforce training for factory labor, aligned with the industrial development strategy promoted by the Vargas government, was adopted. Within this context, the Organic Law of Industrial Education established age requirements for admission to industrial courses, limiting enrollment to students between 12 and 17 years old.

From this perspective, an investigation into the training of press trade masters in Sergipe, within the context of early 20th-century vocational education, was conducted through the analysis of 14 journals produced during that period. This study identified how shifts in Brazil's educational policies targeting vocational education influenced curricular organization, pedagogical practices, teacher roles, student activities, the training of typographers, and the graphic design characteristics of *Sergipe Artífice*.

Investigating the individuals involved in the technical production of printed materials during the early decades of the 20th century presents significant challenges. However, the analysis of surviving artifacts, such as the journal itself, has provided valuable insights for future research in the fields of history, design, and graphic memory. As a key result, the study highlights the systematization of the names of those who contributed to the publication's production, as well as the notable involvement of a woman in the management of this significant medium of printed communication in Sergipe.

Undoubtedly, numerous questions remain to be addressed by further research, particularly those prompted by the identification of individual names: What became of these apprentices? What professional trajectories did they pursue? Did they remain in the print media industry? While definitive answers to these questions may not be attainable, they establish a foundation for continued investigation. Additional lines of inquiry have also emerged: Was there any dialogue or similarity in the graphic characteristics of comparable magazines? Did exposure to other publications influence changes in the graphic production of *Sergipe Artífice*? Did the significant shift in production beginning in the 1940s reflect a process of national standardization?

It is important to note that the 1943 edition marked a clear rupture with the magazine's prior configuration, a shift that was not coincidental. In the previous year, as part of the Capanema Reform, several organic laws were enacted to regulate vocational education in Brazil, including Decree-Law No. 4.073 of January 30, 1942, which established the Organic Law of Industrial Education (Brasil, 1942). During this period, the Aracaju Industrial School was established, and the former "graphic arts" section was replaced. In its place, vocational training in basic industrial education and mastery-level education was introduced, with instruction in typography and bookbinding offered in both tracks.

Before accessing the journal, newspaper advertisements from the period calling for "children" to work in printing presses appeared merely as a curious historical detail. However, after studying the graphic arts workshops within vocational training units and identifying the ages of these apprentices, such advertisements became more comprehensible. These boys were likely the typesetters responsible for composing texts for printing, as well as the workers tasked with organizing type drawers and cleaning machinery and tools. A detailed analysis of the journal suggests that they also contributed to graphic design work. This indicates that these young individuals played a central role in producing printed materials, yet they remain largely absent from graphic design history. Among the newspapers reviewed during the research, job advertisements targeting children typically listed only the editor's name and, occasionally, the name of the printing house.

The search for individuals who engaged directly in the production of printed communications in Sergipe, beginning with the establishment of the state's first printing press in the province of Estância in the 1830s, has been an ongoing and intensive effort by the Design, Culture, and Society Research Group (Design/UFS/CNPq). Although this investigation presents considerable challenges, the analysis of surviving artifacts, such as the *Sergipe Artífice* magazine, has enabled the identification and understanding of several aspects fundamental to the graphic memory of both the state and, by extension, Brazil.

This article concludes by not only revealing names and practices but also shedding light on the invisible subjects of history, individuals who, through their daily labor in the field of printed communication in Sergipe, enabled the circulation of political, cultural, and economic information throughout the state.

This text was produced as part of the research on the Graphic Memory of Sergipe, initiated in 2017 by the Design, Culture, and Society Research Group (Design UFS/CNPq). Some results have already been compiled and disseminated through articles and books. Given that the universe to be explored and documented remains vast, the effort here is to contribute to the construction of the state's graphic history and to enrich studies on Brazilian graphic memory, making local history part of a possible national memory.

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Conflict of interests: nothing to declare – **Financial support**: none.

Authors' contributions: Araujo, G. G.: project administration, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, writing (original draft), writing, review & editing. Cabral, F. G. S.: formal analysis, investigation, writing (original draft), writing, review & editing. Mendonça, A. S.: data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, writing — original draft.

