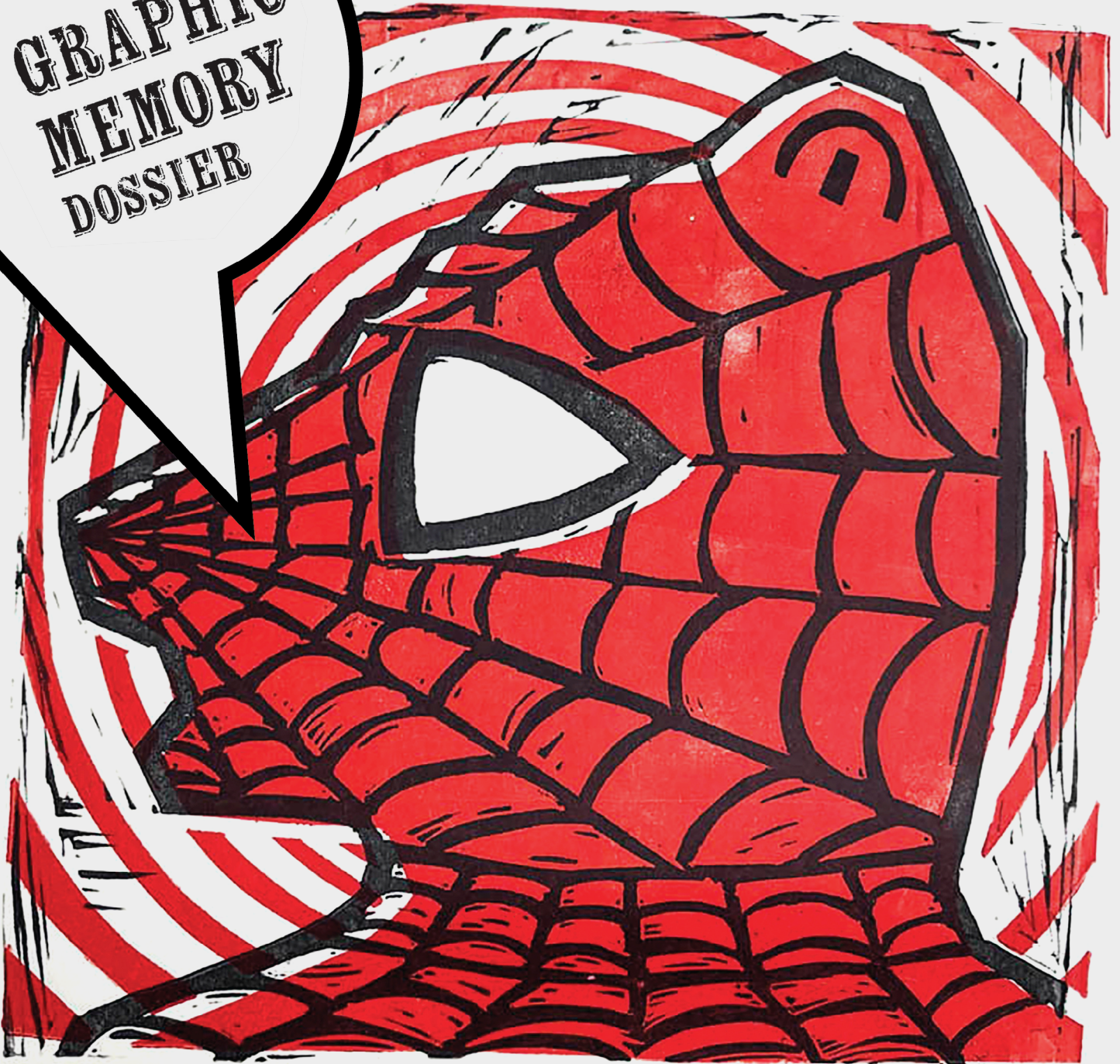


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Traces, returns, and reverberations: *Diálogos com a Economia Criativa Journal*, “Graphic Memory” Dossier

Rastros, retornos e reverberações: Revista Diálogo com a Economia Criativa, Dossiê “Memória Gráfica”

Mirella De Menezes Migliari^I , Helena de Barros^{II} , Letícia Pedruzzi Fonseca^{III} 

This issue of *Diálogo com a Economia Criativa* focuses on graphic memory as a field of thought and research situated within visual culture and print media. The dossier brings together studies that investigate images, gestures, and graphic traces as embodied forms of thinking. Graphics are examined as a language shaped by context, affection, and temporality, operating through their sensitive presence and evocative capacity.

Material culture provides the means and modes through which marks are inscribed over time. Papers, pigments, fabrics, and various supports, whether ephemeral or enduring, preserve intentions, ideas, and repertoires. Each visible form carries within it the invisible — rhythms, intensities, and narratives. Through careful examination, the researcher uncovers what has been imprinted — a form of knowledge that emerges through detail and extends into discourse. Artifacts function as graphic instances that establish connections between time, the body, language, and socialization. In each article, the graphic is activated as a device for listening.

The texts adopt diverse approaches: ethnographic, historiographic, anthropological, formal, and affective. Their authors engage with the materials with both rigor and flexibility, refining their gaze to attend to what endures, emerges subtly, and resonates. Reading becomes a gesture of cohabitation: one lives with images until they begin to speak. In this shared presence, a silent exchange unfolds between the time of the artifact and that of the observer.

Thus, the dossier outlines a landscape of studies that recognizes the graphic as an active force. The images and practices examined do not conclude upon being evoked; rather, they remain in motion, persisting in the reader’s interpretation, memory, and embodied experience. It is this uncertain permanence that imparts vitality to the field: memories that continue to act when provoked, contextualized, and comprehended.

The field of graphic memory is expanding. The ten articles presented here form a diverse panorama of contemporary research on the subject, offering a comprehensive

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overview of recent developments, trends, and findings. While earlier studies concentrated primarily on Brazilian ephemera, they now point toward broader, international perspectives.

Initially the table of contents highlights the diversity reflected in the collection of articles. Topics addressed include education and professional practice in the graphic sector, followed by discussions on ephemera such as posters and magazines. The dossier also explores less commonly examined subjects within material culture, including the visual legacy of a beach and urban facades, the tradition of a popular festival, and even a distinctive regional fabric. In this way, the scope of research possibilities is broadened. This expansion also extends geographically, as the field of graphic memory — known in Brazil as *Memória Gráfica Brasileira* (MGB) — has begun to transcend national boundaries, with related studies emerging in other contexts, such as South Africa.

The article “The training of masters of the Sergipe press in the context of technical education in the early 20th century” investigates the training of typographers through an analysis of 14 issues of *Sergipe Artífice*, a magazine produced in the graphic arts workshop of the state’s School of Apprentice Craftsmen (*Escola de Aprendizizes Artífices*) between 1934 and 1945. The study aimed to examine the historical and graphic characteristics involved in the magazine production, identifying the individuals and their practices through the analysis of historical documents. It also highlights that typographic training served as an opportunity for the Black population of Aracaju in the post-abolition period, contributing to broader processes of social inclusion.

The article “The myth of an urban Narcissus: reflections on Hudinilson Jr. (1957–2013) and graphic memory in Brazil” explores the professional trajectory of the artist in a solo context. It offers a reflection on his works, which engage with displacement, recording techniques, and image reproduction practices, shedding light on the creative and conceptual processes involved in the conception, development, and production of generative matrices. The article examines both the technical and conceptual dimensions of these processes, emphasizing their role in understanding and articulating the artist’s path.

The following four articles focus on ephemera. “Handmade *lambe-lambe* posters in the graphic memory of Rio de Janeiro: A case study on the production of Fernando Baranda” presents the graphic work of this lyricist, poster artist, and screen printer, who has produced his renowned large-format street posters in Rio de Janeiro since the 1990s. The study situates his work at the intersection of graphic memory and print culture, understood, respectively, as an emerging field of research and a collection of practices and knowledge. The research draws on a collection of hundreds of poster images produced between 2008 and 2012.

From posters, the focus shifts to magazines. The article “Narratives of modernity: Editorial design and visual culture in *Revista Senhor* (1959–1964)” investigates the magazine both as an artifact of graphic memory and as a cultural mediator in a time Brazil was undergoing tensions between modernity and patriarchy.

Although recognized for its graphic and editorial sophistication, the magazine has yet to be thoroughly analyzed within the field of design as a social phenomenon, particularly in terms of gender representation and the visual and editorial choices that reflect the sociopolitical context of the period.

“The case of Issue 1 of *Revista Ritmo* (1935): Contributions to Graphic Memory and Brazilian Culture” offers a graphic analysis of this journal’s inaugural — and, to current knowledge, only — issue, which exhibits a strong modernist character. The focus is on highlighting this issue’s specific contributions to advancing the cultural identity project of *Antropofagia* (anthropophagy).

The final ephemera examined is a newspaper in the article “What the covers say: graphic analysis of issues of *Jornal Alternativo de Fato* (1976–1978).” This study sought to clarify how graphic-editorial design conveyed sociopolitically engaged messages through technical and aesthetic elements on the newspaper’s covers during Brazilian civil-military dictatorship. Positioned within the field of graphic memory, the research recognizes graphic artifacts as crucial materials for constructing a history of design. The methodology involves a critical graphic analysis of visual layout, addressing both the arrangement of elements and their historical context.

The following article, while also addressing ephemera, offers a distinct territorial perspective. “Graphic memory and the visual legacy of COVID-19 in Jeffreys Bay, South Africa” analyzed ephemeral visual artifacts produced during the COVID-19 pandemic in a coastal town in South Africa known for its surf tourism and visual culture. Viewing transient printed materials as cultural and historical markers, this research positions visual artifacts as essential tools for documenting socioeconomic disruptions and community responses during times of crisis.

The city of Belo Horizonte serves as the territorial focus of the article “Signs for Romeo de Paoli’s hotel projects.” Taking the 13 hotel projects approved by the city government in the 1930s for the downtown area, six were designed by Romeo de Paoli’s office. This article examined a brief period in his career, focusing on three buildings — *Imperial Palace* (1934), *Piraquara* (1935), and *Cláudio Manoel* (1939) — that still retain their original signage. Often overlooked even by heritage protection agencies, these graphic artifacts constitute an integral part of Belo Horizonte’s typographic landscape.

Finally, two articles explore traditions and their material and graphic expressions. *La Ursas*, or Carnival Bears (*Ursos do Carnaval*), is a traditional game in the Northeast of Brazil, introduced by European immigrants. This practice forms part of Pernambuco’s Carnival, where it is common to see children and adolescents dressed as bears, particularly in peripheral neighborhoods, during the days leading up to the festivities. Parades and contests are held in various towns across the state, with prizes awarded for the best costume. Amid ongoing social changes, recognizing and preserving this tradition is essential to sustaining Pernambuco’s cultural identity. The article “*La Ursas* and its memories: Cultural manifestation and affectivity in Pernambuco” sought to examine how the affective memories associated with *La Ursas* festivities, when applied through design, represent and preserve this cultural expression.

The final article, “A body for memory: The construction of calico fabrics in visual culture (Rio de Janeiro, 1808–1850 c.)”, begins with the context of the expansion (both in quality and variety) of a textile product within international markets. The study critically examines the mechanisms that enabled the “differentiation” of fabrics through iconographic resources. Its methodology draws on an 1804 calico fabrication report, as well as engravings by Henry Chamberlain and Joaquim Guillobel.

This dossier explores graphic memory and reaffirms its essential role in shaping the cultural identity of various peoples, regions, and historical periods. Far from serving merely as a repository of visual traces, graphic memory emerges as a dynamic field in which graphic and ephemeral artifacts function as “sites of memory”, bridging past and present. The studies presented here underscore how material culture documents social, political, and economic practices over time, contributing to a deeper understanding of the visual narratives that inform diverse identities and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, the analysis of graphic manifestations underscores the significance of visual artifacts as expressions of regional culture, reinforcing the plurality and richness of visual memory. By bringing these productions to light, this dossier reaffirms graphic memory as a field of thought situated within visual culture and print materiality, one that contributes to the preservation and appreciation of cultural heritage and memory relics. More than static records, the artifacts examined here function as agents of transformation, enabling new interpretations and fostering dialogue on the trajectory of visual communication.

This dossier positions itself within a field of tension between the visible and the latent, the trace and time, matter and affection. Each article presents silent ideas that continue to resonate. Graphic memory emerges as a form of attention and care. Each author restores what it offers: permanence, presence, return, and meaning. In reactivating these memories, the researcher becomes part of the flow, integrated into the network of echoes that research evokes. The past, when attentively engaged, enters dialogue and asserts its presence in creative and meaningful ways.

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La Ursa Aranha Makes the Cover

La Ursa Aranha Ganha Capa

Mirella De Menezes Migliariⁱ , Helena de Barrosⁱⁱ , Letícia Pedruzzi Fonsecaⁱⁱⁱ 

The Graphic Memory Dossier comprises ten richly illustrated articles, an essential feature, given that printed images are intrinsic to the subject matter and tell us stories. More specifically, printed images, or representations of printed materials — in a broad sense — constitute the central object of study in this field, where graphic design intersects with memory and material culture. At the same time, the diverse themes depicted in the images presented across the ten articles suggest multiple potential directions for the development of a cover for this collection.

Ephemera are a recurring topic in graphic memory studies and have become a tradition within the field, encompassing various categories. These are printed materials characterized by their transitory nature and limited lifespan. In this dossier, ephemera appear in the images accompanying articles that specifically address posters, magazines, and newspapers, consistently providing compelling opportunities for illustrating aspects of graphic memory. Cover design, however, demands an image that is striking, appealing, and thought-provoking. To achieve impact, the image must be simple and high in contrast. To be visually engaging, it should resonate with the viewer by drawing upon familiar visual references. To stimulate curiosity, it must invite inquiry into the topic. Ideally, the chosen image should allow for an engaging interpretation and offer multiple layers of potential narrative.

The image selected to illustrate the cover is the woodcut *La Ursa Aranha*, from the *Artes do Imaginário Brasileiro* collection by Pernambuco-based graphic artist Lourenço Gouveia. This work exhibits the ideal characteristics for a cover illustration. It presents a simple composition, consisting of only two elements: figure and background, and employs a contrasting color triad of red, black, and white. The image draws upon the repertoire of global popular culture through its reference to the character Spider-Man, while simultaneously generating curiosity by merging this reference with the Northeastern Brazilian folk tradition — *La Ursa* —, adapting the figure to reflect the contours of such animal. Furthermore, the piece conveys the crafty and regional visual language of woodcut printmaking, contributing to its authenticity. Gouveia describes this visual repertoire as “popular geek art” — which, in his words, seeks “to direct these perspectives from pop culture, from geek culture, to something popular, something regional, something that is

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present in our day and in other moments as well. Trying to bring what we watch and read to the street as a form of inspiration so that new things can also happen and represent this universe, this multicultural place in which we live.”

This image succeeds in mobilizing several attributes, or layers of meaning, relevant to the field of graphic memory. Although contemporary, it reflects the tradition of graphic production processes. It integrates both universal and regional visual languages. Moreover, it forms part of the body of work of a Brazilian artist from the Northeast, whose production has the potential to constitute a significant collection within the domain of graphic memory.

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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

Germana Gonçalves de Araujo^I , Fabricia Guimarães Sobral Cabral^{II} ,
Aglaine dos Santos Mendonça^{III} 

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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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).

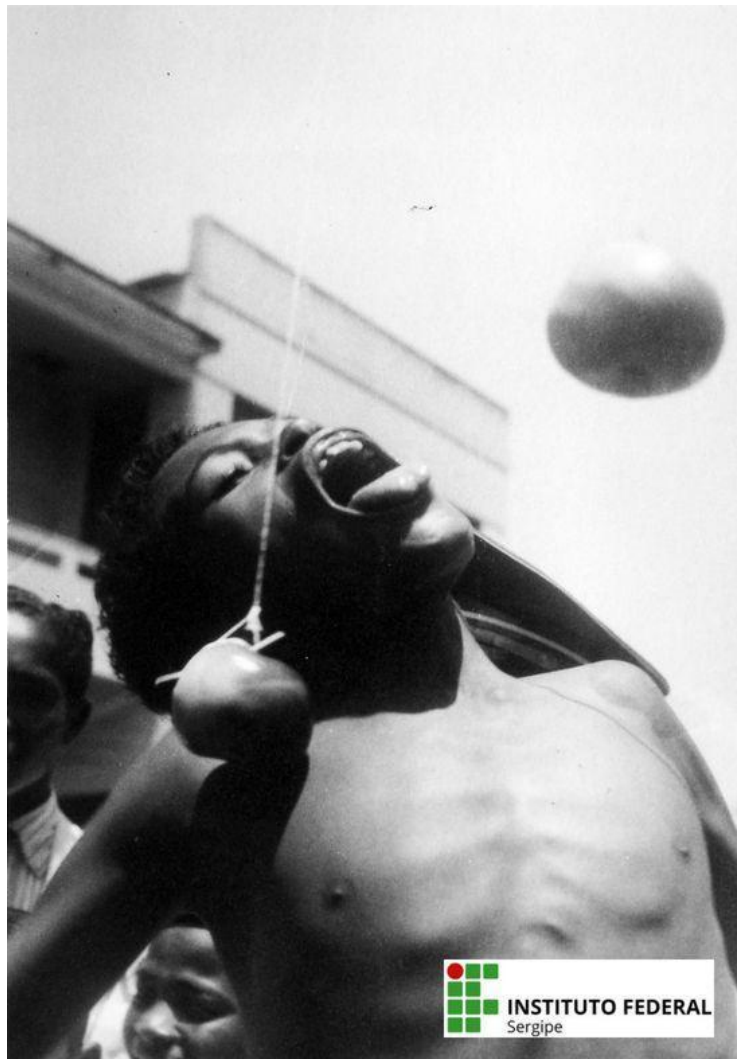
The areas farthest from the city center were inhabited by the less affluent population, including a significant portion of the Black community. At the end of the 19th century, this group experienced a historical turning point that transformed social relations and revealed new projects within Brazil's 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.

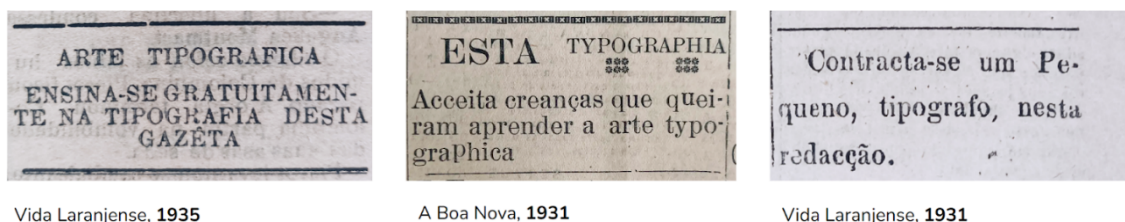


Figure 2. Newspaper advertisements calling young people to work in printing houses.

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 Morais, 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
Oswaldo 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

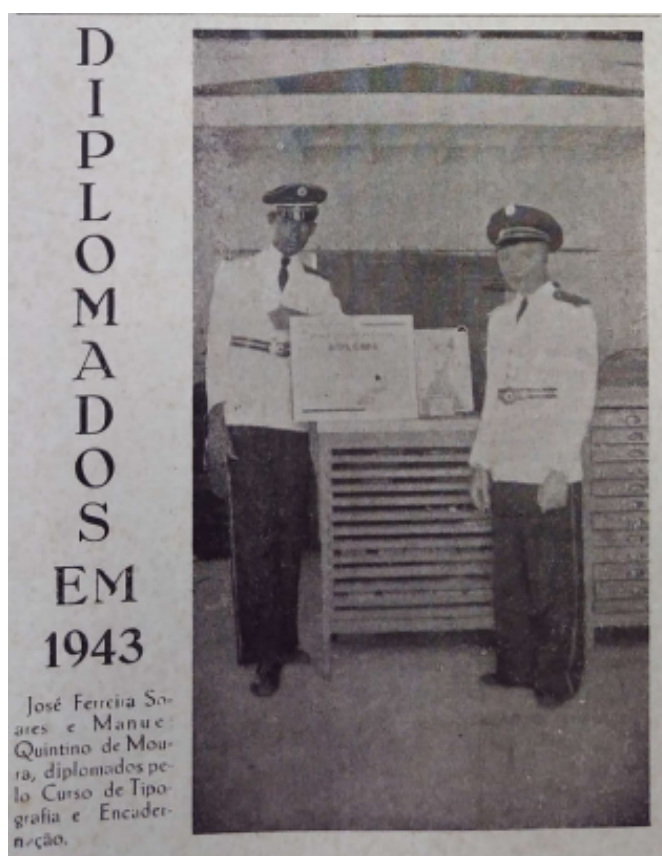
Source: Sergipe Artífice (1934–1945).

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



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.

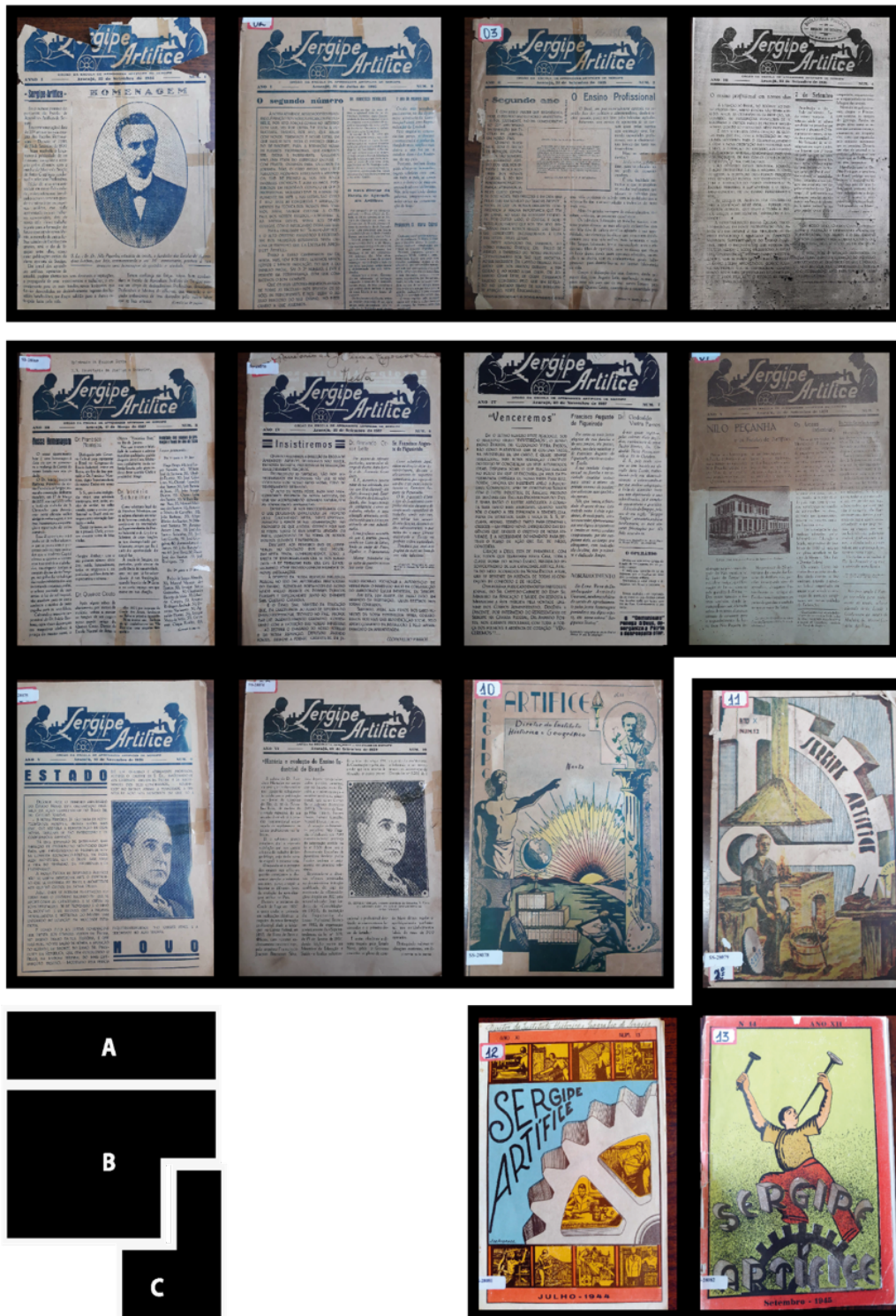
The collaborative work of teachers and students in producing graphic materials remained continuous between 1934 and 1945, with the exception of the years 1941 and 1942, during which no editions were printed.

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.

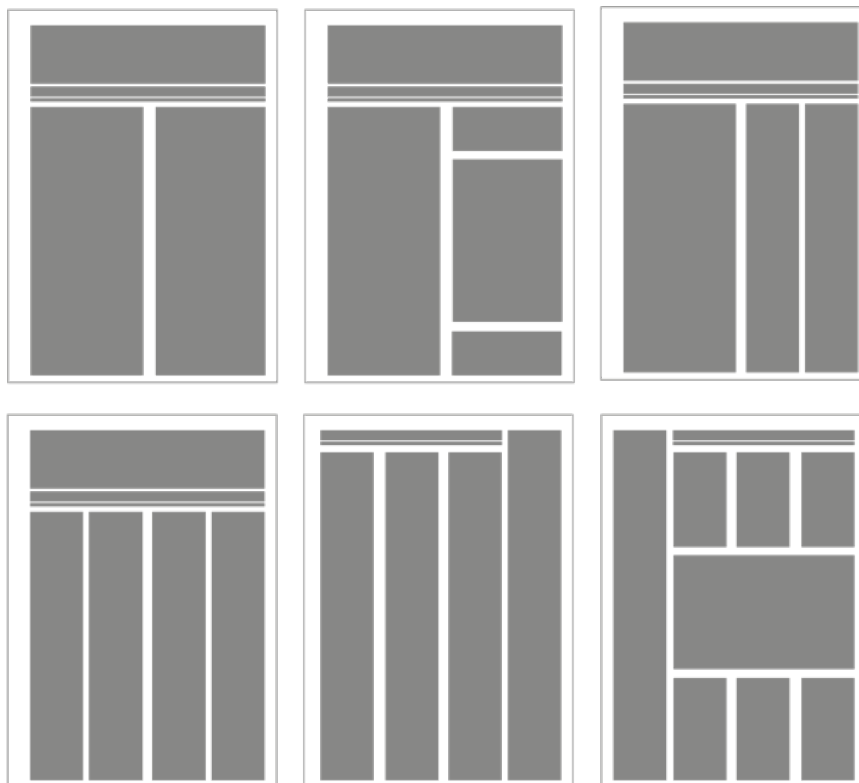


Figure 7. Layout of the pages of *Sergipe Artífice* (n. 1 to n. 10).

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

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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 using 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).

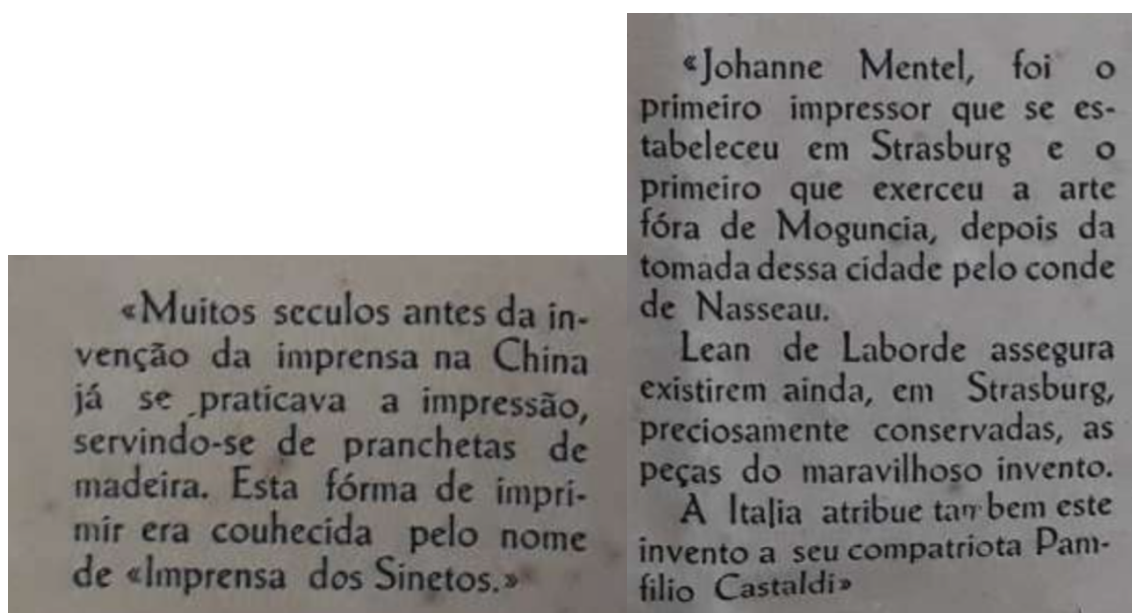
Finally, it is important to highlight that, since the earliest issues of the magazine, there have been sections (Figures 9 and 10) dedicated to curiosities, technological advancements, and significant historical events related to what the authors referred to as “typographic art” or the “art of printing.” 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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Myth of an urban narcissus: reflections on Hudinilson Jr. (1957–2013) and graphic memory in Brazil

Mito de um narciso urbano: reflexões sobre Hudinilson Jr. (1957–2013) e a memória gráfica no Brasil

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ABSTRACT

This article proposes a reflection on the works of artist Hudinilson Jr. (1957–2013) related to printed technical images. Our objective is to examine some of his works that engage with displacement, recording methods and image reproduction practices, highlighting the creative and conceptual process linked to the conception, idealization and production of generating matrices. Hudinilson Jr. built an extensive career with interests spanning the fields of research, archiving, and teaching. Guided by the concept of artmedia, by desire, and by the public and authorial nature provided by São Paulo art circuit, his research themes frequently highlighted the forms and visualities of the nude male body. In this context, the present study approaches, from a perspective grounded in the history and critique of art and design, works and processes related to woodcut, mail art and xerography, produced between the 1970s and 1980s. We analyze the technical and conceptual aspects of these procedures, emphasizing how they contribute to understanding and describing the artist's trajectory. Finally, this research reaffirms the importance of unveiling new narratives about Brazilian artists and the potential of their approaches, highlighting their contributions to shaping design, contemporary art, and the country's graphic memory.

Keywords: Hudinilson Jr. Reference notebooks. Xerography. Technical image. Brazilian graphic memory.

RESUMO

Este artigo propõe uma reflexão sobre os trabalhos do artista Hudinilson Jr. (1957–2013) relacionados às imagens técnicas impressas. Nosso objetivo é pensar algumas de suas obras que dialogam com o deslocamento, os métodos de gravação e as práticas de reprodução de imagens, destacando os processos criativos e conceituais vinculados à concepção, idealização e produção de matrizes geradoras. Hudinilson Jr. construiu uma carreira extensa, com interesses que abrangeram os campos da pesquisa, do arquivo e da docência. Orientado pelo conceito artemídia, pelo desejo e pelo caráter público e autoral proporcionado pelo circuito artístico em São Paulo, seus temas de investigação frequentemente destacaram as formas e visualidades do corpo masculino nu. Nesse contexto, o presente estudo aborda, com base em uma perspectiva fundamentada na história e na crítica de arte e design, obras e processos relacionados à xilogravura, à arte postal e xerografia, produzidos entre as décadas de 1970 e 1980. Analisamos aspectos técnicos e conceituais desses procedimentos, enfatizando como eles contribuem para a compreensão e descrição da trajetória do artista. Por fim, esta pesquisa reafirma a importância de revelar novas narrativas sobre artistas brasileiros e as potencialidades de suas abordagens, destacando suas contribuições para imaginar o design, a arte contemporânea e a memória gráfica do país.

Palavras-chave: Hudinilson Jr. Cadernos de referências. Xerografia. Imagem técnica. Memória gráfica brasileira.

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INTRODUCTION

Storytelling, whether about a person or an artifact, serves as a means of encountering, observing, perceiving, selecting, collecting, and disseminating perspectives on a set of events and practices. With this framework in mind, the present article examines the work of artist Hudinilson Jr. (1957–2013) and offers a reflection on a selected body of his work.

It is possible to conceive of Hudinilson Jr. as a narrator of his time, as highlighting fragments of his trajectory evokes, through his visual collections, memories, and testimonies, not only his own artistic operations but also the cultural spaces, curators, and critics active during his lifetime. A multifaceted artist proficient in various techniques and methods, Hudinilson Jr. left a legacy that bridges distinct moments and practices. Accordingly, this study focuses on the processes of reproducibility of technical images present in his work, analyzing how gestures of appropriation and displacement, as well as recording and reproduction, are expressed in his woodcuts, mail art, and xerographic practices.

Throughout the text, particular attention is given to Hudinilson Jr.'s interest in images, with emphasis on the works featured in the exhibition *Do Detalhe ao Exercício (From Detail to Exercise – 1981)*. The exhibition was structured around two main sections: *Detalhe do detalhe (Detail of Detail)* and *Exercício de Me Ver (Exercise of Seeing Myself)*¹. In both segments, assemblages of copied printed images are presented, produced through direct interaction (performance) between the artist and the photocopying machine.

In essence, performance functions as a unifying thread between the two sections, as Hudinilson Jr. employs his own body as a matrix and, mediated by the photocopier, generates bodily impressions that result from this interaction. These works present compositions that emphasize the artist's pores, curves, and body hair, revealing a simultaneous desire both to see himself and to become an image. Consequently, on the photocopied pages, the contours of the body extend beyond the boundaries of the artistic field. At this juncture, when aligned with graphic design, such images not only underscore the increasing use of the photocopier but also provoke critical discussions about regimes of technical reproducibility and their significance within that historical context. Moreover, by foregrounding the male body on these blank sheets, the works invite reflection on modes of representation in circulation — bodies that are desired, consumed, and reproduced.

However, the significance of Hudinilson Jr.'s work extends beyond these aspects. His practice prompts critical inquiry into the use of technological devices, the recurrence of specific layouts and visual structures, and the impact of these formal strategies on the construction of visual narratives. Accordingly, before proceeding to the analysis of his works, it is essential to outline the premises that inform this article, including the acknowledgment of the breadth and complexity of his artistic production.

1 We chose not to assign dates to the two series, as they were not dated by the artist. These are also visual investigations that were resumed and continued over the years, possibly both before and after the exhibition.

Over the course of nearly five decades, Hudinilson Jr. developed numerous series that predominantly explore self-image and xerography. This text focused specifically on the early stages of his career, a period during which certain visual and thematic strategies began to take shape. It is important to note that each of the artist's series is organized in a distinct manner, featuring unique compositions that often function as reproductions of his own body. The patterns analyzed here reveal identifiable recurrences within his work, without claiming to account for the entirety of his artistic practices.

Drawing on this excerpt and employing both discursive and semiotic perspectives, Hudinilson Jr.'s trajectory is approached as a site of research and an experimental graphic archive, in which the technical and aesthetic dimensions of images are inextricably linked. This approach is grounded in references from cultural studies, which regard the consumption of images as a cultural system composed of meanings, messages, and codes that can be identified, interpreted, and communicated. Within this framework, it becomes possible to underscore the artist's incorporation and critical engagement with graphic processes in his practice, culminating in a sensitive and multidisciplinary poetics.

The materials consulted for this study were drawn from key publications documenting the artist's life and work, including *Posição Amorosa (Love Position)* by Ricardo Resende (2016) and the exhibition catalog *Hudinilson Jr.: explícito (Hudinilson Jr.: Explicit)*, organized by *Pinacoteca de São Paulo (PINA)* and curated by Ana Maria Maia (2020). Additionally, the temporal and geographic scope of the research was limited to works developed or completed during the 1970s and 1980s, within the city of São Paulo, where the artist lived and produced.

By foregrounding the work of Hudinilson Jr., this study aimed to contribute to the strengthening of narratives that emphasize the production of Brazilian visual artists, particularly those whose trajectories challenge normative interpretations of art and design history and criticism. By expanding the boundaries between these fields, the research sought to deepen the understanding of graphic memory in Brazil, providing a foundation for the study of technical images and reproductive processes as both expressive and political tools. Within this context, emphasis is placed on how artistic practices generate meanings, articulate desires, and shape patterns of symbolic consumption mediated by reproductive technologies and popular media.

BRAZILIAN GRAPHIC MEMORY AND HUDINILSON JR.: DIALOGUES BETWEEN ART AND DESIGN AND SOME CONTRIBUTIONS TO A GROWING FIELD OF STUDIES

Researchers Marcos da Costa Braga and Priscila Lena Farias (2018) explain that the term graphic memory is particularly associated with debates developed in Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking countries in Latin America. This research perspective emphasizes the recovery and revaluation of visual artifacts, with particular

focus on rapidly circulating printed materials situated within contexts of local meaning and identity. According to Braga and Farias (2018), within this emerging 21st-century trend², such artifacts play a vital role in everyday life, serving as mediators of individual and collective experiences in urban environments and functioning as repositories of shared knowledge. The authors further note that the study of graphic memory contributes to the construction of plural narratives in both design and art practices linked to Latin America. Additionally, the concept of print culture offers a broader and more suitable framework for the analysis of printed materials, as it encompasses not only the variety of print forms but also their techniques, reproductive processes, modes of publication, circulation, and reception, thereby expanding the scope of inquiry.

In Brazil, researcher and designer Letícia Pedrizzi Fonseca (2021) observes that the concept of Brazilian graphic memory was introduced into academic discourse in 2005, initially in connection with a seminar focused on design research. The author emphasizes that the field remains under development, highlighting its multidisciplinary character and its growing relevance within design studies. In this context, Fonseca (2021, p. 11) notes that understanding this concept requires consideration of “the conceptual basis of much of the research on Brazilian Graphic Memory, which focuses on artifacts considered places of memory, since they are memorial traces of a practice and production in design.” According to Fonseca, such artifacts constitute elements of material culture that embody social and political practices rooted in specific historical contexts. From this perspective, the study of Brazilian graphic memory plays a vital role in valuing, questioning, and disseminating Brazilian cultural heritage, incorporating key components in the construction of collective identities.

Building on these discussions, the focus now turns to Hudinilson Jr.’s work in the field of image reproduction. The artist engaged extensively with reproductive techniques, demonstrating a sustained interest in technical images. Presenting a segment of his trajectory and creative processes enables an understanding of how graphic practice, in dialogue with art, challenges the consumption and circulation of images, particularly those concerning representations of the male body. In this regard, the analysis of Hudinilson Jr.’s work offers an opportunity to situate him within the São Paulo art scene, especially during the 1970s and 1980s, highlighting his engagement with images and the cultural circuit of that period. Moreover, examining his practices and interpreting his body of work contributes to a broader and more collective understanding of the artistic processes and visual production dynamics that shaped his generation.

Hudinilson Urbano Junior was a visual artist, born on October 17, 1957, in São Paulo, Brazil, to Maria Aparecida Urbano and Hudinilson Urbano. Curator and art critic Ana Maria Maia (2020) notes that Hudinilson Jr. consistently

² Braga and Farias (2018) note that studies on memory began to be recognized as a specific field of research in the early 1990s, with investigations focused on graphic memory gaining greater prominence only from 2008 onward.

expressed a fascination with his own image and with the possibility of projecting that representation into the world. According to Maia, through his exploration of visuality, the artist operated as a designer, researcher, archivist, and educator, consistently driven by a pursuit of the public and authorial dimensions of art in São Paulo.

It is evident, therefore, that the authors' perspectives converge in the work of Hudinilson Jr., whose artistic practice not only engages in the appropriation, reproduction, and reconfiguration of images and graphic artifacts, but also in their production. His personal archive, comprising graphic publications, everyday clippings, photocopies, and various printed materials, emerges as a space where art and design intersect, and in which the body and urban experience permeate, support, and confer meaning upon the image.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: WOOD PRINTING, MAIL ART AND THE BODY AS A RESEARCH TOPIC

In a candid statement delivered at the *IV Seminar on Art, Culture, and Photography*³, Hudinilson Jr. (*apud* Geartfoto, 2009) remarked that while his enthusiasm for art had always been present, it was the field of images that most strongly captured his attention. He recounted that his initial contact with art occurred during early adolescence, as a result of evading Sunday mass, a family obligation imposed by his parents. This strategy emerged after reading his father's newspapers and discovering that the Lasar Segall Museum, located near his home in the Vila Mariana neighborhood, held weekly screenings of art and culture films every Sunday, coinciding with the time of the religious service. Motivated by curiosity and desire, and using the event as a convenient pretext, he succeeded in obtaining a pass that justified his absence from mass.

Hudinilson Jr. (*apud* Geartfoto, 2009) explains that his experience at the Lasar Segall Museum soon extended beyond Sundays and evolved into a daily practice. He notes that he attended and received training in the museum's free engraving studio, where he explored the possibilities of wood engraving. This period marked the beginning of his engagement with printed images and with models for serial production and reproduction.

Woodcut, the technique through which Hudinilson Jr. first engaged directly with printed images, is a relief printing method typically carried out in three stages. First, the image is created by carving into a wooden block (matrix). Next, pigment is applied to the raised, uncarved surfaces of the matrix. Finally, the image is transferred by pressing the inked matrix onto the chosen support⁴.

3 Much of this article is based on the records of Hudinilson Jr.'s testimony at the 4th Seminar on Art, Culture, and Photography (Geartfoto, 2009), organized by Prof. Dr. Domingos Tadeu Chiarelli at the School of Communications and Arts of Universidade de São Paulo (ECA-USP), supported by the Art & Photography Study Group (Geartfoto).

4 Woodcut printing is a process rich in nuances and experimentation possibilities. Here, we briefly explain the concept in order to provide context and aid in the general understanding of the text, but it is important to recognize that the technique is far more complex than this description suggests.

In Brazil, woodcut printing was introduced in the first half of the 19th century to meet the growing demand for illustrations in books, advertisements, and other printed materials. According to researcher Antonio Costella (2003), the technique gained popularity among artists, likely due to its low cost and ease of execution, and is now recognized as part of the country's cultural heritage. Researcher and professor Rafael Cardoso (2005) further notes that advancements in this and other techniques involving image transfer through matrices and presses had a direct impact on the production costs of printed materials from the 1840s onward. As a result, there was a significant increase in the volume of materials in circulation, accompanied by a rise in the number of readers.

In the field of illustration, Cardoso (2005) observes that advances in serial reproduction techniques also transformed the ways in which printed materials were consumed, introducing images into everyday life through large-scale production and reproduction. He emphasizes that, alongside the expansion of this type of content, there were notable improvements in the quality and finish of these artifacts, thereby broadening the possibilities for both visual perception and creative production. Cardoso (2005) argues that the development and industrialization of such techniques marked the emergence of the graphic industry during this period. He further notes that technological advances in the industrial production of printed materials gave rise, at that historical moment, to a new visual culture centered on illustrated print media.

An analysis of Hudinilson Jr.'s early woodcuts reveals compositions characterized by well-defined, economical lines and minimal detail. Employing high-contrast black-and-white imagery, the artist produced works, generally untitled and averaging thirty by thirty centimeters, that focused on figures and bodily details. The stylistic approach adhered to traditional parameters of the woodcut technique, without significant formal innovations. Nevertheless, Hudinilson Jr. demonstrated a clear command of the medium, consciously incorporating its visual language as a means of developing a distinct visual poetics. The uniqueness of these works lies primarily in their content, which conveys sensuality and provocation, expressed at times through the depiction of the phallus (Figure 1), and at others through suggestive curves and bodily gestures.

Critic and curator Ricardo Resende⁵ (2016) notes that woodcuts marked the beginning of Hudinilson Jr.'s artistic trajectory, during which he became acquainted with forms, colors, and the sequential processes of engraving, printing, and reproduction. Resende highlights recurring motifs in the artist's work, such as the hat, the glass bottle, and the vase, visible in pieces like *Untitled* (1978) (Figure 2). According to Resende (2016), the presence of the hat may be interpreted as an allusion to the artist himself, as this object would later become a recognizable element of Hudinilson Jr.'s personal image.

5 Resende (1962–) has directed important institutions such as Centro Cultural São Paulo. His research explores Brazilian contemporary art and the work of local artists. A close friend of Hudinilson Jr., he was entrusted with writing the book on the artist's biography and career.



Source: Resende (2016, p. 82).
Figure 1. *Untitled*, 1979. Woodcut on paper. Dimensions: 30x22,5 cm.



Source: Resende (2016, p. 77).
Figure 2. *Untitled*, 1978. Woodcut on paper. Dimensions: 30x30 cm.

In terms of content, many of Hudinilson Jr.'s woodcuts depict faceless figures, delineated by incisive lines that emphasize muscular forms. According to Resende (2016, p. 69), these images, characterized by their simplicity and sketch-like quality, function "as masculine signs. Graphic indices that correspond to homosexual masculinity." He identifies these works as the starting point of the artist's exploration of homoeroticism and pornography, themes that would persist throughout his career.

Nearly one hundred and fifty years after the introduction of woodcut printing in Brazil, Hudinilson Jr. revisited this classic technique to engage with and update fundamental debates. Although these works mark the beginning of his career, they underscore the artist's ongoing dialogue between the body and the technical reproducibility of images, demonstrating how visual artists can incorporate and blend technological advances as a critical strategy.

Learning to print also sparked Hudinilson Jr.'s interest in other graphic techniques based on the logic of matrix and reproduction. Within this context, he began experimenting with stamps, both industrial and handmade, that he created himself, engraving invented expressions, his name, or other recurring symbols onto them. The stamp's structure (engraving, inking, and printing) streamlined the reproduction process and was consequently incorporated into his visual language. This procedure was often combined with collages and photocopies, resulting in hybrid compositions characterized by their own unique visual rhythm and qualities (Resende, 2016).

Hudinilson Jr.'s interest in accessible and reproducible media led him to engage with mail art, a practice he became involved in during the 1970s⁶. Mail art utilized printed materials distributed through the postal system as a medium for artistic works with critical and political messages, serving as an alternative to official art circuits⁷. As Paulo Bruscky⁸ (1976), an artist from Pernambuco, emphasized this form of expression was primarily associated with protest and social denunciation. Bruscky (1976) further noted that mail art integrated various media and practices, such as postcards, envelopes, stamps, telegrams, postmarks, collages, and photocopies, facilitating more accessible exchanges both nationally and internationally.

It is worth noting that the first postcard circulated in Brazil in 1880, created to address the demand for lower costs and simplification of traditional letters. To this day, standard postcards maintain a blank space on the back reserved for the sender's and recipient's addresses, postage stamps, postmarks, and optionally, a message, scribble, or dedication. The front side is typically reserved for an image,

6 The first exhibition he participated in was *Arte Correo* (1976), in Mexico City. Other notable events include *Imagens Impressas* (1978), the *Mostra Internacional de Arte Postal* (1981), and the *Mail Art Section* of the 16th São Paulo Biennial (1981).

7 The Brazilian urban mail art circuit was significant, as noted by Resende (2016), with particular emphasis on the use of photomechanical and manual techniques such as xerography and offset printing. Among the artists mentioned by the author are Anna Bella Geiger, Cildo Meireles, Regina Silveira, and Rogério Nazari.

8 Paulo Roberto Barbosa Brusky (1949–) is a Brazilian multimedia artist and poet. He has participated in numerous national and international exhibitions, such as the São Paulo Biennial, and his artistic career is notably marked by works associated with mail art and conceptual art.

illustration, or photograph. A distinctive characteristic of postcards is that all this information remains visible throughout their handling and transportation (Biblioteca Nacional, 2021).

In Hudinilson Jr.'s work, postcards transcended the conventional format (10x15 cm) and were often composed of magazine clippings, stamps, self-portraits, and references to the myth of Narcissus. Photocopies frequently appeared, particularly photographic reproductions of the artist's own face. Additionally, drawings, images of Greek statues, narcissus flowers, and representations of male bodies were commonly incorporated.

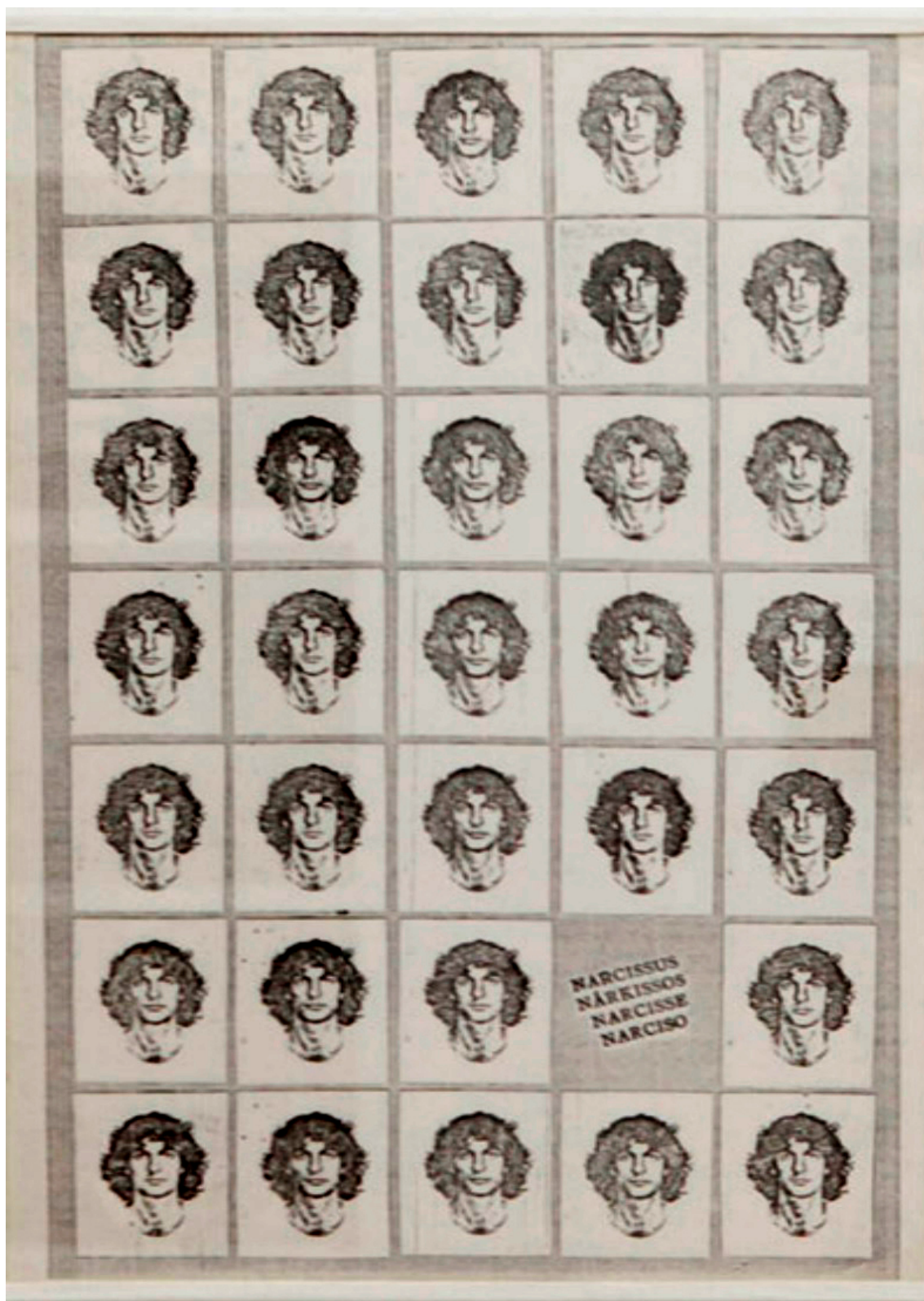
In the work *Narcissus Nárkissos Narcisse Narciso* (Figure 3), this approach is intensified through the juxtaposition of multiple photocopied images of the artist's face, which cover nearly the entire sheet of paper. A blank space reveals a stamp featuring variations of the name *Narcisse*, emphasizing the interplay between identity, repetition, and technique. The high-contrast images, reminiscent of woodcut effects, accentuate facial features through visual patterns and graphic blurs that oscillate between figuration and abstraction.

As noted by Resende (2016) and Maia (2020), the myth exerts a significant influence on Hudinilson Jr.'s work, recurring frequently and serving as a symbolic foundation for his investigations, particularly in relation to self-representation. According to these authors, the myth tells the story of a young man who, after a long and exhausting walk, encounters a lake and leans over its surface. Upon seeing his own reflection, he becomes enamored with the unattainable image and, unable to touch it, remains in contemplation until his exhausted body fades away, transforming into the flower that now bears his name.

Thus, it is evident that the visual choices in Hudinilson Jr.'s compositions do not negate the traditional postcard structure but rather create a productive tension with it. The artist transforms this functional medium, originally intended for the exchange of brief messages, into a critical platform for artistic circulation. The repeated presence of his body, combined with the use of stamps, challenges the boundaries of institutionalized art by relocating the work into everyday spaces where it can be encountered by diverse audiences beyond the museum, including mail carriers, doormen, and postal workers.

As Resende (2016, p. 71) observes, for artists like Hudinilson Jr., the creation of postal art "was configured as a message sent in the form of a postcard." The significance of this practice and medium lies in the act of sending, the potential to be perceived as a communicative product, its interactive or collective nature, and the circulation of ideas beyond the mediation of museums. In this sense, the progression between techniques such as woodcuts, stamps, and postcards does not represent a rupture but rather an organic extension of Hudinilson Jr.'s artistic practice.

By mastering the fundamentals of relief printing, Hudinilson Jr. expanded both his technical and conceptual repertoire, applying similar principles to new media while exploring diverse expressive possibilities. What began as a graphic exercise in the studio gradually evolved into a methodology for visual research: the acts of



Source: Maia (2020, p. 63).

Figure 3. *Narcissus Nárkissos Narcisse Narciso*, 1980s. Mail art. Xerography and stamp on paper. Dimensions: 33x21.5 cm. Collection of Galeria Sultana, Paris.

printing, stamping, cutting, and pasting became modes of investigation. Each technique imparted new insights to the artist, who, in this progression, infused his work with personal individuality. Consequently, within this integrated blend of technique,

artistic intent, and daily practice, the artist's material and technical choices reveal flexibility, adapting to the focus of his study and investigation: the body.

In this regard, in his text *Sex Gay Super*, Hudinilson Jr. (undated) offers a poetic explanation of part of his creative process:

SEX GAY SUPER
WITH THE RETINA, THROUGH PASSION FOR THE BODY
REMOVE/ISOLATE
MICRO DETAILS OF THE NAUGHTINESS/
BODY/IMAGE
BEAUTIFUL BODIES IN DIRTY SCENES⁹

Hudinilson Jr. describes the body and its magnetic appeal. Among the opening terms in his text, retina stands out, a word that denotes both the biological organ in the human eye and a technological concept related to graphic processes of image production and reproduction. Biologically, the retina functions by converting light into signals that the brain interprets as images. In the context of design and visual production, retina has come to signify resolution and the perception of image quality. Through this dual meaning, Hudinilson Jr. underscores his attraction to the body, affirming that visualities serve as modes of assimilation, interpretation, and knowledge. He explains that his artistic inquiry manifests in the gestures of cutting out, removing, and isolating representations, whether found in circulation or created by himself. Finally, he highlights his practice of displacement: his deliberate act of deviation removes, or as he puts it, *exposes* the beautiful body from a context deemed polluted.

Therefore, analyzing Hudinilson Jr.'s production enables a reflection on his desires and visual investigations surrounding masculinity, but above all, it sheds light on how such representations function within the collective field of images, expanding the possibilities for interpreting and challenging the regimes of visibility that shape our ways of seeing and consuming representations of the body.

XEROGRAPHY AND REPRODUCTIBILITY

To understand Hudinilson Jr.'s poetics and production, as well as his relationship with Brazilian graphic memory, we chose to emphasize his engagement with and study of photocopying machines during the 1970s and 1980s.

It is worth mentioning that the photocopying machine was invented by Chester Carlson (1906–1968) in 1938. Initially, the process involved recording and reproducing images through a special powder applied on a sheet of paper, supported by a laminated glass base with ink drawings and a zinc plate. However, the popularization of this technology only became possible due to investments by The Haloid Photographic Company (United States, 1906)¹⁰, under the leadership of Joseph

9 The text was transcribed with all words in uppercase letters, exactly as they appear in the book *Posição Amorosa* by Ricardo Resende (2016, p. 121).

10 A empresa de Nova York foi fundada em 1906 e produzia, principalmente, papel fotográfico. Neste sentido, percebemos um interesse inicial pelo campo das imagens, conectado ao envolvimento com a fotografia.

Wilson. In 1949, the company launched the first industrial Xerox Copier. The machine became synonymous with photocopying and paper reproduction, solidifying the term “xerox” in many countries, including Brazil¹¹.

According to researcher Amir Brito Cadôr (2024), from the 1970s onwards, artistic production in Brazil became increasingly associated with photocopiers, giving rise to what became known as xerox art, xerogravure, or xerography¹². Unlike other graphic processes, the photocopier operates through a simplified mechanism and allows for the manual creation of matrices, offering a more dynamic and accessible approach. Another distinguishing feature was the speed of production and the low cost of copies. From that decade forward, photocopy machines played a fundamental role not only in art production but also in the printing of alternative publications, facilitating the wide circulation of materials — often experimental in nature — on both national and international scales. Beyond artworks, photocopiers were also utilized in producing exhibition publicity materials and in recording content.

Cadôr (2024) highlights that, during the 1980s alone, approximately fifty editions of artists’ books were produced using xerography as the primary or exclusive technique. Photocopying represented not only an economical alternative but also an invitation to experiment with emerging media. Artists such as Hudinilson Jr., Alex Vallauri (1949–1987), and Paulo Bruscky (1949-) were pioneers in this field and became key references for this artistic language.

Regarding his approach to xerography, Hudinilson Jr. (1981 *apud* Hudinilson Jr., 2016, p. 198) reports that:

Xerography, or the technique of reproducing images through dry printing by a chemical-physical process, has existed in Brazil for 20 years, since the first multinational companies, such as *Xerox do Brasil S.A.*, were established here and introduced the first machines to the market. It was in the 1970s that the equipment became popular and artists gained access to the new technology — which brought new parameters for creating and reproducing images with quick results. The low-cost xerographic image was immediate and enabled artists to expand the concepts of graphic art.

In Brazil, this technique, used within the realm of the arts, especially visual arts, only emerged in the early 1970s (although, without the same impact, there are reports of similar and earlier manifestations in other countries, mainly the United States—where xerography was invented—and some European countries), always through concerned and active artists interested in contemporary technical possibilities and, as a rule, detached from the myth of the artwork, the elitist practice of this art, and the concept of a unique piece.

Hudinilson Jr. emphasizes that his connection with the photocopier was rooted in the device’s capacity to provoke reflections through seriality and technical mediation. Xerox art became the primary medium through which he achieved greater

11 The *Haloid Company*, an investor in imaging technology, founded the *Xerox Palo Alto Research Center* (PARC) in 1970, which became a landmark in technological advancements. The center drove inventions such as personal computers and graphical user interfaces for image creation.

12 Cadôr (2024) explains that the term xerography refers to the technical printing process, while the product generated through this procedure is called a xerographic copy.

visibility among media outlets and museum institutions interested in exploring new artistic languages and contemporary expressions¹³.

According to Maia (2020), Hudinilson Jr. had his first contact with the photocopier while studying at Zoom School in the late 1970s. The author highlights the innovative use of the artist's own body as a printing matrix, skillfully balancing the act between the printed result and performative gesture. Hudinilson Jr. was able to explore this technique thanks to the availability of a photocopier at PINA, initially acquired for producing teaching materials and other reproductions. In this context, he worked as coordinator of a Xerographic Center, positioning himself as both a technical and artistic apprentice/researcher within Brazil's emerging photocopy art scene (Figure 4)¹⁴.



Source: Maia (2020, p. 7).

Figure 4. Xerography course taught by Hudinilson Jr. at the Pinacoteca of São Paulo (1980s).

13 About xerography, Cadôr (2024, p. 14) notes that "critical recognition came years later, at the 20th São Paulo Biennial (1989), with a section called *Electrografias* showcasing works by Artur Matuck, Bernardo Krasnianski, Mario Ishikawa, Paulo Bruscky, Roberto Kepler, and Vera Chaves Barcellos."

14 Resende (2016) reports that in 1980, the Pinacoteca de São Paulo installed a XeroX machine to boost artists' studies in this medium. In 1981, the Activity Bulletin was created, a monthly publication aimed at disseminating activities related to the space.

Resende (2016) reports that, over the eight years he worked at PINA, Hudinilson Jr. led several workshops, including those focused on xerography. In addition to his pedagogical role, he organized various exhibitions¹⁵ and taught courses on graffiti and xerox art at both the São Paulo Museum of Art Assis Chateaubriand (*Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand* – MASP) and the Museum of Contemporary Art of Universidade de São Paulo (*Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo* – MAC-USP). According to Resende (2016), Hudinilson Jr. developed a strong connection with PINA, which inspired him to expand his activities beyond the institution, throughout the interior of São Paulo and to other cities across Brazil, actively promoting xerographic language as both an educational and theoretical field of exploration.

Cadôr (2024) adds that Hudinilson Jr., in collaboration with Mario Ramiro and Rafael França (1957–1991), transformed a room at Universidade de São Paulo (USP) into a true laboratory for graphic experimentation. In this space, the artists explored the capabilities of a Dutch OCÈ photocopier, which featured a flash and was capable of capturing three-dimensional images with varying degrees of depth. The advanced technology of the device enabled the production of visual sequences that revealed subtle nuances of the body and movement, effectively linking the artists' performative gestures with the materiality of the printed image.

Regarding the art scene in São Paulo during the 1980s, researcher Arlindo Machado¹⁶ (2010) contributed to the debate by introducing the concept of *media art*, referring to artistic expressions that appropriated various technological resources. According to Machado, artists involved in *media art* were committed to alternative and qualitative propositions that questioned conventional fields of knowledge and modes of consumption. Hudinilson Jr. exemplifies this group by using his own body as a matrix and employing technological mediation as a critical and investigative tool.

Thus, it is pertinent to examine the xerographic production of Hudinilson Jr., an artist who demonstrated profound mastery of both the technique and the operation of the photocopier — a device employed not merely as a means of reproduction, but as a tool for poetic and political provocation. His practice, like that of other artists associated with xerox art, transcended technical limitations by incorporating interference, layering, and experimentation with various supports. Furthermore, his works were not restricted to the walls of museums; on the contrary, they circulated through the Post Office, took shape in books and other printed materials¹⁷.

15 Among the exhibitions curated by Hudinilson Jr. featuring the works of his students, Resende (2016) highlights *Xerox Gráfica* in 1980 at the *Zoom School*, and *Xerografia Arte e Uso* in 1984 at the Pinacoteca de São Paulo.

16 Arlindo Ribeiro Machado Neto (1949–2020) was a researcher and professor focused on studies in semiotics, cinema, radio, and television. He is a key reference in the field of technical images or images produced through technological mediation.

17 Many of Hudinilson Jr.'s performances with the photocopier produced ephemeral outcomes, scattered on the floor and handed to the audience. The copies — fragments of the artist's own body — extended the artistic gesture as they were gathered, expanding the action across time and space.

DO DETALHE AO EXERCÍCIO

*Do Detalhe ao Exercício*¹⁸ was an exhibition held by Hudinilson Jr. in 1981. We highlight it here due to its significance in the artist's career, despite the limited documentation available. As one of his first solo shows, it brought together key works that marked distinct moments in his artistic trajectory. Through research in materials archived by the artist himself, now part of the Visual Arts Library at the Documentation and Memory Center of PINA (*Centro de Documentação e Memória da PINA – CEDOC of PINA*)¹⁹, we were able to construct an overview that partially reconstructs the exhibition. This effort underscores the importance of preserving collections assembled by individuals and/or institutions as vital sources for art historical research.

According to a 1981 report published in *Folha da Tarde Ilustrada*, the exhibition took place from May 5 to 31 at PINA and featured 16 works, including seven artist books and nine panels. The curatorial proposal aimed to present a synthesis of Hudinilson Jr.'s production over the previous two years, with a particular focus on serial reproduction techniques executed in black and white. The article highlights that the works stemming from the artist's interaction with the photocopier were organized into two thematic axes. The first, titled *Exercício de Me Ver* (Figure 5), consisted of a study centered on a repeated print run of a specific body part, with the artist sharing his analytical processes and the overlapping compositions generated from these fragments. The second axis, *Detalhe do detalhe* (Figure 6), functioned as an extension of the first, delving deeper into body fragmentation through strategies of juxtaposition.

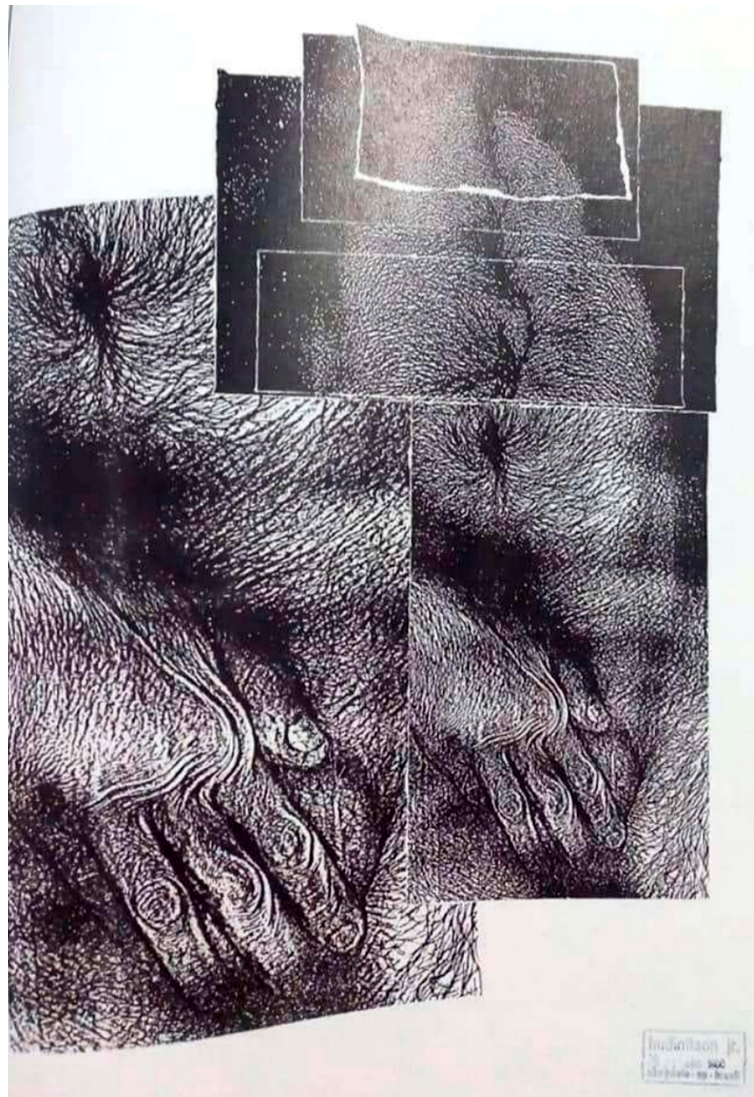
In another publication from the same month and year, the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*²⁰ (1981) reported that the artist's interests in the exhibition were directed toward exploring the potential of the body, both in the reproducibility of its fragments and in the possibility of materializing his reflections in an imagetic form. In Hudinilson Jr.'s own words, as cited in the article, the human body functioned as the matrix from which a special working relationship emerged, one grounded in the physical contact between conceptual intention and mechanical process.

Always attentive to the potential of serial reproduction, an examination of the records from the two sections that comprised the exhibition *Do Detalhe ao Exercício* reveals both similarities and differences across Hudinilson Jr.'s works. On one hand, there are recurring elements that clearly reflect his ongoing research with the xerographic machine; on the other, the artist employed diverse strategies for visual composition and the presentation of the pieces.

18 In the document *Pinacoteca de São Paulo: 110 Years* (2015), published by the Documentation and Memory Center of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, all exhibitions held at the venue are listed. However, despite including the exhibition title in question, Hudinilson Jr.'s name does not appear in the corresponding entry.

19 The Documentation and Memory Center of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, active since 2005, preserves archival collections and private holdings related to visual arts in Brazil. Access requires prior scheduling via email and an in-person visit to the location at Praça da Luz, São Paulo.

20 This material was consulted in person at the Archive of the Documentation and Memory Center of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo (2022).



Source: Resende (2016, p. 255).

Figure 5. Exercise of seeing myself (1980s). Xerography on paper. Dimensions: 40x35cm.

In both cases, it is evident that Hudinilson Jr. (1986 *apud* Hudinilson Jr., 2016, p. 194), much like Narcisse, used the translucent glass surface of the photocopy machine as a kind of watery mirror to contemplate his own reflection. This interaction between artist and device resulted in images, fragments, and serial reproductions of his own body. Maia (2020, p. 17) notes that the artist “submitted his face, back, and limbs to the photocopying field. He shrank to fit within the frame, twisted himself to reveal particular angles, and repeated movements to evoke a speculative and procedural impulse.” In the visual records of these works (Figure 7), Hudinilson Jr. can be seen leaning over the machine’s glass, merging with and responding to the apparatus in various physical and compositional ways.

Through a sensitive, physical, and methodical engagement, Hudinilson Jr. turns his gaze inward, exploring angles and perspectives that select, crop, magnify, and emphasize specific details, transforming his own body into the matrix for generating a multitude of images. Maia (2020, p. 17) notes that these copies serve “to refute ideas of originality and uniqueness and to defend, in their place, works and identities



Source: Maia (2020, p. 36).

Figure 6. Untitled, (1980s). From the series *Detalhe do Detalhe*.

that are mirrored, multiplied, refracted, and contaminated by their surroundings.” By deliberately adopting a technical process that produces no singular original but only copies, the artist questions traditional notions of authenticity in art and proposes alternative ways of understanding both artistic production and identity construction. As Maia further highlights, Hudinilson Jr.’s work underscores the extent to which image creation is mediated by machines and, by extension, by technology.

Regarding Hudinilson Jr.’s xerographic production, researcher Marcos Rizolli (1993, pp. 208–209) observes:

The artist’s body is the referent — offered up for the machine’s reading — and becomes part of the equipment’s mechanism, revealing, in the act of copying, a sensual intimacy between referent and sign. A peculiar indexicality — an authentic art, free from mediations. The machine poetically captures the very agent of the action, the artist.

After undergoing a process of image capture, using his own body as the matrix and converting it into a series of printed reproductions, Hudinilson Jr.’s work advances



Source: Resende (2016, p. 273).

Figure 7. Performance documentation - *Exercício de me ver II Narcisse* (1982). Photographic print. Dimensions: 61x37 cm.

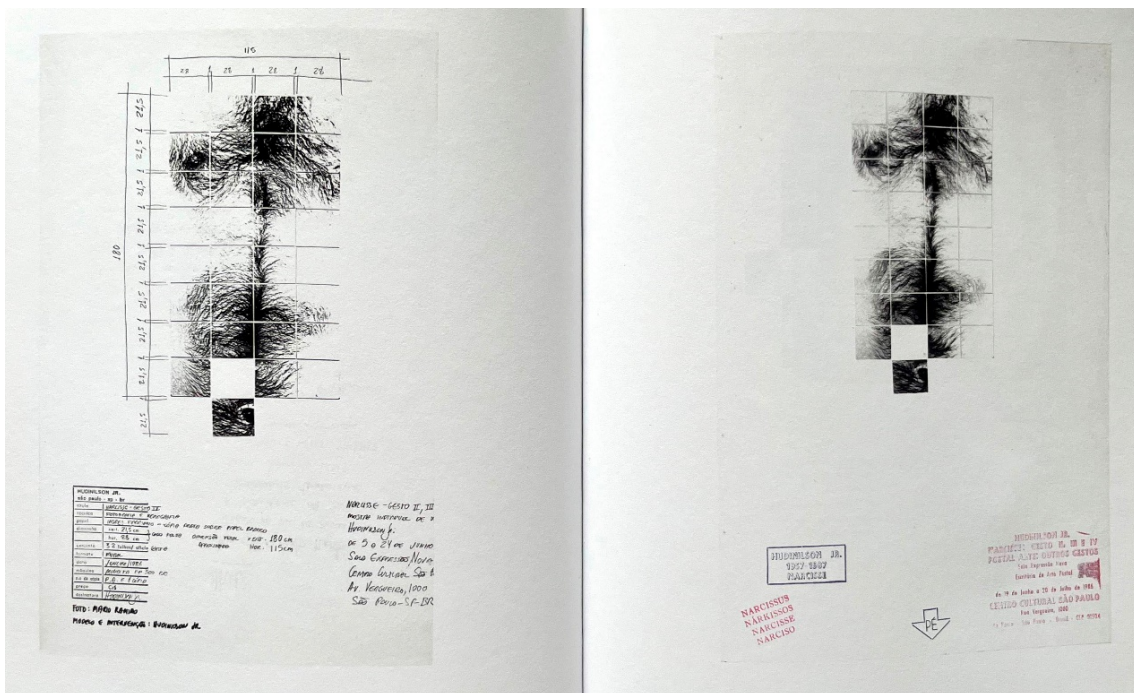
to the challenge of composition. Through juxtaposition, superimposition, cutting, pasting, and the reorganization of selected fragments, the artist constructs image diagrams that engage in visual dialogue with one another. Reflecting on this process and practice, Hudinilson Urbano Jr. (1985, p. 247) states: “I separated a square centimeter from each one, and below, in another sequence, there is a detail of the square centimeter enlarged ten times of the entire series. It is something hyper-abstract.”

Finally, the last stage concerns the modes of presentation selected by Hudinilson Jr. for his xerographic compositions. These works are typically arranged in one of three formats: grouped within envelopes (intended for mailing), compiled into notebooks or artist’s books, or framed and exhibited as murals or wall panels.

Although no additional images directly depicting the series exhibited and analyzed in this article were found, we have included documentation of *Exercício de me ver* (1980) (Figure 8), where the artist packages his compositions in an envelope, as well as a wall mounting scheme for the work *Narcisse – Act III* (1986) (Figure 9). These examples aim to facilitate the visualization of the envelope and panel presentation formats discussed above.



Source: Resende (2016, p. 252 and 253).
 Figure 8. *Exercício de me ver* (1980s). Xerography on paper. Dimensions: 12x20 cm each.
 Polyptych of 15 pieces.



Source: Resende (2016, p. 236 and 237).
 Figure 9. *Narcisse – Act III*. Assembly scheme. Xerographic panel on paper. Dimensions: 180x115 cm.

The artist's gesture of capturing, displacing, and recomposing transforms his body into a detail that becomes a fragment, a point of view, an image, and ultimately a detail of the detail of the gaze. The multiple impressions of parts of his body, produced on A4 sheets, resemble grids that, when assembled, offer a new way of seeing and imagining the body itself.

Through this collection of images and reports, it becomes clear that Hudinilson Jr. situates his work within a graphic context deeply connected to the

logic of technical reproducibility. His approach reveals a dual role, positioning him as both a visual and graphic artist, evident in how he conceives, organizes, and prints his compositions.

As shown in the montage scheme presented, the images do not arise merely from spontaneous performance gestures but result from a rigorous process of selection and structuring. The formal work materializes only after careful fragment selection and the establishment of a visual organization that engages with how the image is perceived. Thus, although some compositions may be interpreted as abstract, it is important to emphasize that their construction relies on precise technical procedures that acknowledge both the machine's capabilities and the reception of the printed image.

In the series *Detalhe do Detalhe*, copies originate from the same matrix and angle but exhibit variations in printing, particularly in size and image saturation. Although the scissors always select the same content, each copy bears unique characteristics (due to the photocopier's technical operation, which introduces subtle differences in contrast and light). Hudinilson Jr. utilizes the entire white sheet, arranging the fragments side by side to create a visual collage that invites viewers to engage with the images from multiple technical and perceptual perspectives.

Similar to *Detalhe do Detalhe*, the series *Exercício de Me Ver* (1981–1986) also reflects the artist's sustained interest in self-portraiture as an ongoing investigation²¹. However, unlike the former series, this body of work features copies marked by cutouts, either manual or with scissors, and enlargements that emphasize specific image areas. The compositions are created through overlapping elements that extend beyond the sheet margins, drawing attention to tonal variations and shifts in perspective caused by gestures of enlargement and cutting, as well as by different ways of viewing the same print fragment.

In both series, Hudinilson Jr. invites reflection on the multiplicity of the body's shapes and textures. At the same time, his approach of bringing the images closer together problematizes reproducibility, questioning whether all copies, despite being produced under the same technical conditions and derived from the same matrix, can truly be considered identical.

Through the records of the works presented in *Do Detalhe ao Exercício*, we observe that Hudinilson Jr. deliberately employs repetition as a key compositional strategy. The layouts appear designed specifically to emphasize this element, drawing attention to the singularities within each copy through direct visual comparison. In this way, the body represented in the exhibition exists in multiple versions, reflected, transformed, and reconstituted according to their placement on the blank sheets. Lacking any immunity from external influence, the artist's repetitions and compositions remain vulnerable to error and shaped by the surrounding visual

21 Maia (2020) clarifies that the series *Exercício de me ver* unfolded into different compositions that arise from the direct contact between the artist and the photocopier. She highlights works such as *Espelha-me* (1980s) and the performances *Xerox Action* and *Narcisse* (1982).

culture. Yet, this raises important questions: why choose the body as a matrix, given its intrinsic individuality? And why reproduce it through a fragmented composition of cutouts?

In *O corpo colado*, Hudinilson Jr. (undated)²², says the following:

The particular differences of each medium; the texture and unique layout of the xerographic medium, the contrast to photographic images, and now the body, not necessarily mine, but exhausting the subject (body/matter/meaning) through extrapolation. The photograph of any body, manipulated within a new composition/idea/collage.

The human body, male/female, composed/pasted into this space and present in everyday life; the always tangible atmosphere (libidinous) of the erotic, the sensual contact of the nude body with any other unusual material/trash, or another body, or itself, a mirror/Narcissus, without identity yet recognizable within the shared universe of perceptions/assumptions/loving stance. The playful interplay of creation and consequent interpretation.

For Hudinilson Jr., the body acts as both a driving force and a point of departure for exploring subjectivity. The images produced through his interaction with the photocopier express not only the desire to see himself but also blur the line between being preserved and actively preserving. By assembling montages of fragments and creating new visual configurations, Hudinilson Jr. transforms individuality into a form of poetry. The once intimate body becomes a shared collective experience. Thus, beyond reinventing the body, the series challenges the traditional function of the photocopier, which emerges as an ally to his artistic gesture. In other words, the artist subverts the device's conventional purpose, reconfiguring it as a medium for artistic expression.

Hudinilson Jr. (1986 *apud* Hudinilson Jr., 2016, p. 193) warns in his agenda that:

I am no longer interested (or perhaps, truthfully, I never was) in xerography as a 'democratizing' vehicle for the work of art. I concern myself only with the medium and, with it, the myths: the medium and the subject matter. Technique as its own language, suited to my concerns within the field of imagery. In the revelation of time and graphic form. The result of ten years of coexistence/complicity. Trial and error. Refinement. The speed is contemporary. The contact is intimate. The immediate mirror of Narcissus.

Thus, what is considered here are the qualities of Hudinilson Jr. as a media artist, deeply engaged in exploring both his own body and the emerging media of his time, while challenging the visual outcomes of these interactions. In the field of image and memory studies, anthropologist and researcher Etienne Samain (2012, p. 23) observes that "every image is a memory of memories, a large garden of declaredly living archives." From this perspective, the images serve as documents that record Hudinilson Jr.'s mistakes, successes, and creative processes, with the photocopies functioning as archives of these experimental attempts. In other words, the

²² The typewritten text, signed by the artist, is held at the Documentation and Memory Center of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo and was consulted in person.

artist's work reveals a continuous drive and curiosity for experimentation and the exploration of diverse practices.

Another recurring aspect of Hudinilson Jr.'s work involves the development of a printing matrix. Whether working with wood for woodcuts, rubber for stamps, graphite masks, or the xerographic body, a common thread among these materials is the artist's dedication and ongoing search for a medium capable of effectively imprinting or reproducing his concerns, objectives, and desires.

Thus, multifaceted and unconstrained by limiting classifications, Hudinilson Jr.'s trajectory stands as an invitation to recognize both the qualities and the vast field of possibilities inherent in methods of image recording and reproduction. Although his career is marked by a significant diversity of artistic languages, it is possible to observe that this network of intersections converges into a cohesive and conceptually coherent path, that evolves and strengthens over time and across different mediums.

Thus, multifaceted and unbound by limiting classifications, Hudinilson Jr.'s trajectory serves as an invitation to recognize both the qualities and the broad field of possibilities inherent in methods of image recording and reproduction. Despite the significant diversity of artistic languages present throughout his career, it is possible to discern that this network of intersections converges into a cohesive and conceptually consistent path, which connects and strengthens over time and across different mediums.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Hudinilson Jr. and his body of work are framed and discussed in this article as part of the construction of graphic memory and culture that, although rooted in individual experience, enables the mobilization of collective reflections on artistic processes, technical reproducibility, and visual representation. As Braga and Farias (2018, p. 16) suggest, research on "graphic memory often focuses on artifacts produced beyond the lifetime of potential witnesses, requiring procedures that make it possible to obtain stories from things." In this context, engaging with Hudinilson Jr.'s collection demands a form of sensitive listening to the impressions he left behind, which function as components of a possible narrative about the body, technique, and desire.

This study highlighted Hudinilson Jr.'s strategies for engaging with techniques of image reproduction and displacement, framing them as elements of an aesthetic and investigative repertoire that propelled his experimentation. The repeated use of matrices, copies, repetition, and montage is evident in several of the works analyzed and contributes to an expanded understanding of the modes of technical image production in Brazil during the 1970s and 1980s.

In this context, it is argued that although Hudinilson Jr. did not produce works that fit directly within the field of design — understood here as a communication practice guided by specific design methodologies —, his work maintains a dialogue with concepts such as seriality, assembly, and image appropriation. This dialogue

does not manifest through the development of graphic products for marketing purposes, but rather through a conceptual engagement with methods of image reproduction, particularly xerography, which the artist employed as an expressive tool.

The photocopier, more than a technical instrument, becomes an extension of the body in Hudinilson Jr.'s practice, serving both poetic and political investigation. As Cadôr (2024) observes, artists who employed photocopy art as a discursive strategy during the 1970s and 1980s represented a break from traditional editorial models. They established an independent, self-published approach that, in fact, continues to resonate in contemporary publications, even though these are now mediated by a wide array of different technological resources.

Although certain gaps remain in this research, they may be viewed as opportunities for future studies. It is important to reaffirm, however, that the work of Hudinilson Jr., along with that of other Brazilian artists who explored printmaking and technical images, reveals the richness of possibilities and the critical engagement these media provoke. Far from being closed or finalized practices, printmaking, montage, and xerography continue to represent open fields of experimentation. Ongoing research seeks to accompany and reflect the plurality of their contemporary developments.

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Handmade *lambe-lambe* posters in the graphic memory of Rio de Janeiro: a case study on the production of Fernando Baranda

Cartazes de lambe-lambe artesanais na memória gráfica do Rio de Janeiro: um estudo de caso sobre a produção de Fernando Baranda

Pedro Sánchezⁱ , Alberto Pereiraⁱⁱ 

ABSTRACT

This article presents a case study on the graphic production of Fernando Baranda, a letterer, posterist and silk screen printer who, since the 1990s, has worked in the city of Rio de Janeiro producing and publishing *lambe-lambe* (paste-up) posters. The present work is located at the intersection between graphic memory and printing culture, understood, respectively, as a growing field of study and a set of practices and knowledge. The research is based on a collection of hundreds of images of posters, between 2008 and 2012, as well as interviews with the agent studied, carried out independently, in June 2010 and October 2024. In this sense, the article seeks to highlight the aesthetic values of the objects analyzed, the procedural characteristics, graphic solutions and the formal-informal adaptations in the face of sociopolitical and economic impacts and raise a discussion about the use(s) of the street as a visual apparatus.

Keywords: Wheatpaste posters. Print culture. Urban intervention. Silkscreen.

RESUMO

Este artigo apresenta um estudo de caso sobre a produção gráfica de Fernando Baranda, letrista, cartazista e serígrafo que, desde a década de 1990, atua na cidade do Rio de Janeiro (RJ) produzindo e veiculando cartazes de lambe-lambe. O presente trabalho situa-se na intersecção entre a memória gráfica e a cultura da impressão, compreendidas, respectivamente, como um campo de estudo em ascensão e um conjunto de práticas e saberes. A pesquisa baseia-se em um acervo de centenas de imagens de cartazes de 2008 a 2012, além de entrevistas com o agente estudado, realizadas de forma independente, em junho de 2010 e outubro de 2024. O artigo buscou destacar os valores estéticos dos objetos analisados, as características processuais, as soluções gráficas e as adaptações formais e informais diante dos impactos sociopolíticos e econômicos e levantar uma discussão sobre o(s) uso(s) da rua como aparato visual.

Palavras-chave: *Cartazes de lambe-lambe. Cultura da impressão. Intervenção urbana. Serigrafia.*

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This article presents a case study on the graphic work of Fernando Baranda, a lettering artist, poster designer, and screen printer active since the 1990s in Rio de Janeiro (RJ). Baranda specializes in creating and displaying *lambe-lambe* (paste-up) posters. The term *lambe-lambe* refers to a technique of affixing printed images with industrial or homemade glue (wheatpaste), typically applied in public spaces. This technique varies in method, size, and format: it may be handcrafted, produced at commercial print shops, or created by hand through writing or painting. *Lambe-lambe* posters can be black and white or colored, and take rectangular, square, or irregular shapes, adapting to the illustration or message conveyed. This traditional technique is employed for both advertising and artistic purposes (Navarro, 2016).

This study is part of the Visual Tactics Research Group, established in 2024, of which the authors are members. It arises from the convergence of investigations previously conducted by them: the doctoral dissertation *Street Graphics: Strategies and Tactics in the Visual Street Culture of Rio de Janeiro (Gráfica de rua: estratégias e táticas na cultura visual de rua do Rio de Janeiro)*, by Pedro Sánchez Cardoso, completed in 2012 within the Graduate Program in Design at Pontifícia Universidade Católica of Rio de Janeiro; and the short documentary *Filme em Cartaz*, produced and directed by Alberto Pereira and Debora Herszenhut. The latter was supported by the Paulo Gustavo Culture Grant No. 05/2023, which funds audiovisual projects in the state of Rio de Janeiro.

The text is positioned at the intersection of graphic memory and print culture, understood respectively as a thriving field of study and a collection of practices and knowledge (Leschko *et al.*, 2014; Fonseca, 2021). This study aimed to highlight the aesthetic values of the analyzed objects, along with the procedural characteristics and graphic and design solutions inherent to the specific materiality of their technique and primary medium. Additionally, an effort is made to establish a connection with visual culture, focusing more specifically on what is referred to as street visual culture.

The aforementioned research group sought to investigate, introduce into the academic environment, and foster discussion around a range of cultural practices and objects that often extend beyond the formal configurations of established works and devices.

The visual manifestations discussed are, for the most part, primarily situated in the street, which functions as their privileged site of occurrence and interaction. The street is understood as a visual apparatus, that is, a device that shapes the experience of a visual event and its observer (Mirzoeff, 2000). As Mirzoeff explains, "When I engage with an apparatus, a medium or a visual technology, I undergo a visual experience. By visual experience, I mean the interaction of the visual sign, the technology that enables and sustains that sign, and the observer" (Mirzoeff, 2000, p. 20).

Michel de Certeau (2003), in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, presents an understanding of culture as an arena where social conflicts are continuously negotiated. He emphasizes a distinction between two types of operations — "tactics" and

“strategies.” The difference between these lies in the distribution of power. Tactics are the maneuvers carried out by agents who find in the deviations made in use — during the processes of reception and appropriation — their opportunity for action.

I call a “strategy” the calculation of power relationships that becomes possible when a subject of will can be isolated from an “environment.” It postulates a place that can be circumscribed as one’s own and, therefore, capable of serving as the basis for managing relations with a distinct externality. [...] I call, on the contrary, a “tactic” a calculation that cannot rely on a place of its own, nor, therefore, on a boundary that distinguishes the other as a visible totality. A tactic has only the space of the other as its place. [...] It lacks a base from which to capitalize on its gains, prepare expansions, and ensure independence from circumstances. [...] What it gains, it cannot keep. It must constantly play with events to turn them into opportunities. The weak must ceaselessly take advantage of forces that are alien to it (Certeau, 2003, p. 46-47).

In this context, the appropriation of the street as a visual apparatus is understood as a “tactical operation” (Certeau, 2003), involving the conquest of an alternative “means of publicity.” Through this medium, various agents are able to represent themselves both visually and discursively (Cardoso, 2012), engaging in a process of constructing counter-legitimacies (Bourdieu, 2009).

Thus, the street is understood not merely as a physical space or structural element of the urban fabric, but as a site for the construction of meanings, a place where alternative means of circulating images, objects, and cultural practices are sought. It constitutes an “autonomous cultural field” — a symbolic space in which meanings are contested and representations asserted (Bourdieu, 2009). This is the perspective from which the case under study is approached. Let us now return to it.

Fernando Baranda has worked as a poster artist for over five decades. A self-taught professional, he began as a teenager, hand-painting lettered posters for sound system crews in his neighborhood. Over time, he adopted screen printing as an efficient method of graphic reproduction and wheatpasting (*lambe-lambe*) as a powerful means of information dissemination. Since the 1990s, Baranda has provided services involving the creation, production, printing, and posting of informational posters throughout the city of Rio de Janeiro. Although he continues to use wheat-pasting, he began digitally printing his posters just over five years ago. This study focuses on the period preceding that transition. The material analyzed consists of *lambe-lambe* posters produced via screen printing, which were distributed throughout the streets of Rio de Janeiro — from the west zone to the south zone, including the north zone and city center. For nearly two decades, these posters formed part of the city’s “graphic landscape,” operating as a parallel system to the formal visual communication typical of this urban visual environment (Till; Segre, 2011).

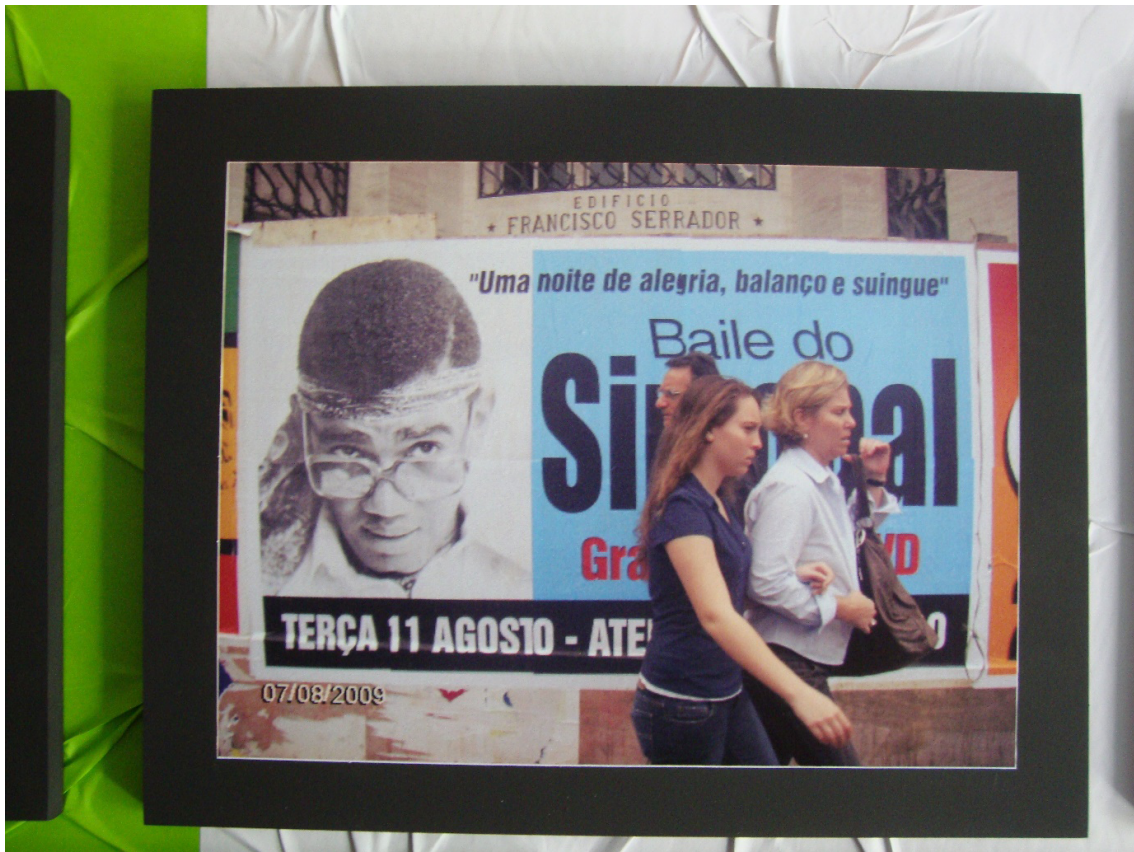
The set of graphic elements in a city encompasses segments related to signage (of streets and public spaces, traffic, warnings/danger, services, construction, identification of buildings, places of interest, etc.); urban

furniture and equipment; official advertising and that of public and private companies with local, regional, or international reach; interventions such as graffiti, tagging, mural paintings, or exhibitions; informal advertisements executed by sign painters or small-scale advertisers, among others. The information is supported by fixed or moving bases and can be permanent or ephemeral, integrating into the body of the city and creating a vast communicational texture, which we seek to better understand (Till; Segre, 2011).

Many individuals who lived in or visited Rio de Janeiro during that period, particularly those with an emotional connection to the field of visual design, to which most readers likely belong, can probably recall a mental image of those graphic objects. These posters, approximately human-sized, primarily promoted cultural events such as concerts, CD and DVD releases, festivals, or art exhibitions. They featured large typography in flat, vibrant colors, sometimes combined with photographic images, and employed a stylistic device in which the name of the neighborhood hosting the event replaced the name of the commercial venue. What is perhaps less widely known is that these posters were all produced by the same company, operating from the backyard of a house in the *Engenho de Dentro* neighborhood, located in the northern zone of the city. They were printed manually using the traditional technique of screen printing. The use of metonymy in identifying the event location was a deliberate strategy, intended to divert attention from potential legal infractions associated with their public distribution.

Hollis (2000) defines the poster as the simplest of graphic vehicles, merely a “loose sheet, without folds and printed on one side.” As a graphic design object, the poster falls within the category of presentation and promotion, where image and text must be economical and anchored to a single, easily remembered meaning. In the expanding cities of the 19th century, posters served as expressions of economic, social, and cultural life, competing in public space to attract consumers to products and audiences to entertainment. Hollis (2000) also notes that, across several centuries, three basic functions of graphic arts can be observed, functions that have changed as little as the Roman alphabet itself. The first is identification: stating what something is or where it originates. The second is to inform and instruct, indicating relationships between elements. The third is to present and promote, aiming to capture attention. Additionally, Moles (2004) characterizes the poster as the image of a visual game, one that engages the viewer through its power of seduction.

Baranda’s posters were composed of ten individual sheets, each measuring 96 × 66 cm, arranged in two rows of five. Each sheet was printed separately, with a few centimeters of margin reserved for overlapping during assembly. When assembled, the full composition measured 1.90 meters in height by 3.20 meters in width, a format well suited to the street environment in which the posters were displayed — the street —, ensuring clear legibility for both passing motorists and pedestrians (Figure 1). According to the artist, this format was adopted in 2005:



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 1. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on the street.

Before, I used to make smaller posters — one sheet, two sheets. But over time, I concluded that making one poster with ten sheets was much more interesting than making ten posters of just one sheet each. The poster is the height of walls, of fences. And also the size of the people passing by. Most fences are at most 2 meters tall. Nobody makes a 4-meter fence, so there's no point in wanting to make a poster 2.5 meters tall because you won't find a place to paste it. These things you learn through practice, really (Baranda, 2010).

Each sheet was printed using silkscreens etched in the workshop itself, through a process that combined image vectorization software and a film-cutting printer — considered cutting-edge technology at the time — with a highly rudimentary application of screen printing techniques.

Ferreira (1994) characterizes screen printing as a “stencil engraving” process, in which the image is printed through a raised form of a film held in place by a mesh stretched over a frame. Unlike more modern techniques such as lithography, whose history is well documented, screen printing has been practiced for millennia, with origins that have been lost over time (Eichemberg, 1976). As such, this study does not aim to trace its historical development or provide a detailed procedural account. What is essential to emphasize is that, due to its high versatility, screen printing remains widely practiced today. In a polarized world, its application spans opposing ends of the technological spectrum (Santos, 2006). As geographer Milton Santos

(2006, p. 25) observes: “When a new family of techniques emerges, the others do not disappear. They continue to exist. But the new set of instruments starts to be used by the new hegemonic actors, while the non-hegemonic ones continue using the less current and less powerful.”

Today, screen printing is widely employed both by large industries — serving sectors such as fashion, electronics, automotive, and packaging — and by micro-entrepreneurs and creative producers who often rely on low-cost, and frequently improvised, technical solutions (Cardoso, 2008).

The technological arc involved in Baranda’s system, combining both high- and low-tech procedures, was physically embodied in the layout of his workshop. Beginning in the main office, where the graphic pieces were designed, vectorized, and the layers separated, and where the films used for screen exposure were cut and assembled, the workflow extended to the back of the house. This rear area served as the space for preparing and engraving the silkscreens. It was equipped with a handcrafted light table, consisting of a wooden box fitted with ultraviolet lamps, a glass plate, and a pressure system improvised from plywood sheets and bricks (Figures 2, 3, and 4).



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 2. Screen exposure process in Baranda’s workshop.

If the poster featured only one color, the process required the engraving of ten silkscreens. However, for a poster produced by Baranda that included up to five color layers, as many as 50 screens could be necessary. Figures 5 and 6 depict the poster created for the Cat Power concert in Barra da Tijuca, Rio de Janeiro. This particular poster used three colors — black, yellow, and pink — and required a total of 30 screens: ten for pink, ten for yellow, and ten for black, which was printed as the final layer, overlaying the others. This poster exemplifies the type of composition Baranda considers ideal, primarily typographic in nature.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 3. Screen printing process in Baranda's workshop.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 4. Continuation of the screen printing process in Baranda's workshop.

Most of the artwork I do myself, but a lot of help comes from my son. He's studying Communication in college, so when it's necessary to find a photo of the artist on the internet, for example, he handles that because he's more familiar with that kind of image editing. When I create the art, what I aim for is to simplify the information. Some clients want to pay very little but want a ton of things on the poster. If it were up to me, I'd work with just two colors. Street lambe-lambe posters shouldn't be cluttered with lots of stuff; that ends up hurting readability. You have to be straightforward: lambe-lambe is information (Baranda, 2010).



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 5. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street 1.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 6. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street 2.

In the early 2000s, shortly before the time frame covered by this study, Baranda began incorporating photographic images into his posters. For these cases, a color separation system was employed, in which the photograph was interpreted into the four colors of the CMYK model — cyan, magenta, yellow, and black. The photoliths required for this process were printed externally, and the corresponding screens were then prepared based on these prints. Figures 7 and 8, from the *Revelação* poster series, illustrate the use of CMYK color separation combined with Baranda's characteristic flat printed areas. In other instances, Baranda made use of halftone films, also printed externally and reserved for various purposes, to simulate gradient effects. This approach can be seen in the poster created for the band Jota Quest (Figure 9).



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 7. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street 3.

By combining three techniques — flat printed areas, color separation (polychromy), and halftone films — a range of graphic solutions was developed to meet the varied demands of Baranda's clientele. In the poster created for the band *Ponto de Equilíbrio* (Figures 10 and 11), which uses only two colors, black and green, the black fills the entire background, while the image of the lion is constructed through the vectorization of black and green layers, contrasted with the white of the paper. This approach eliminated the need for a photolith. In contrast, the poster for the event *FUNK-SE* relies exclusively on a photographic image engraved from a photolith, printed in two layers, with the textual information rendered as a cutout (Figure 12).



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 8. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street (detail).



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 9. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street 4.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 10. Baranda's lambe-lambe pasted on street 5.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 11. Baranda's lambe-lambe pasted on street (detail) 2.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 12. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street 6.

I've been working with screen printing for thirty years. It's not just about knowing how to do it and that's it. There are a lot of problems you run into while doing the job. For example, imagine a poster with all those colors the client asks for. If you do it properly, with a photographed screen for each color, you'll end up spending more on materials than what you charged the client. Most of the time, I cut the second color entirely by hand, because otherwise, if I make a film for each color, it gets way too expensive. Sometimes I work with overlapping colors: one color combined with another creates a third. So instead of having three print runs on the sheet, you work with just two (Baranda, 2010).

The screens were never preserved. Once prepared and used for printing, they were set aside for reuse. A water compressor gun was employed to wash off the deposited emulsion, effectively cleaning the screen and rendering it ready for subsequent use. In contrast, the outsourced photoliths were archived and could be reused if the advertiser chose to reprint the same image at a later date.

An interesting example of creative reuse of materials is the posters for the *Tempo Festival*, a contemporary theater event presented by Oi, a telecommunications company. The graphic materials — invitations, folders, catalogs — created for the festival's visual identity used cutouts as a design feature, allowing the reading of graphic noise — images and texts — behind the main typography, which was designed to favor the cutout effect. To reproduce this effect, Baranda repurposed used photoliths, arranging them randomly as a lower layer in three color versions — cyan, magenta, and yellow —, overlaid by solid black in two bold lines: *TEMPO / FESTIVAL* (Figures 13, 14, and 15).



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 13. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street (detail) 3.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 14. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street (detail) 4.



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 15. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* pasted on street 7.

There are a lot of solutions we come up with on the spot, handmade solutions. You don't learn this in courses; you get to know it over time. Over all these years, I've been understanding and cutting costs to get the best yield. Here, we use a specific technology for what we do. In serigraphy, you can use imported nylon, solvent-based ink, etc. But here we use domestic nylon and water-based ink, so it's cheaper and less toxic (Baranda, 2010).

The solutions developed throughout Baranda's production process — from graphic design and screen preparation to printing and, ultimately, the act of pasting the posters — position him as a true “craftsman,” in the sense articulated by Sennett (2009). Observing his work in the workshop and listening to his accounts, one encounters a form of technical knowledge that has been developed, refined, and embodied through practice, shaped by setbacks, unforeseen challenges, and material and economic constraints.

Combining technologies that have been separated for millennia and outsourcing part of the production, Baranda established a circular production system, ideal for the type of use he intended. At the time the first interview was conducted, about ten employees worked directly with him, handling screen preparation, engraving, and printing. The printing took place at the back of the workshop in a covered porch where two huge paper dryers had been installed. The printed copies were hung in pairs, folded over a 1.5-meter-wide wooden rod, which was then placed into the dryers, which could hold around 180 prints in total (Figure 4).

In the case of multicolored posters, the prints would return to the printing table for the application of subsequent color layers. Once this stage was completed, the posters were assembled through a type of sheet imposition — arranged in the order in which they would be pasted, from left to right, beginning with the bottom row and progressing to the top. They were then folded, ready to be taken out into the streets.

I like this outcome, people getting there... you know? Enjoying seeing it. There was an event at Fundação Progresso where they did a poll at the entrance to find out how people got to the event, since it was a group from Bahia not well known. So they asked, did you come through the newspaper, the radio, or the lambe-lambe poster? And I didn't go ask—they told me themselves that the lambe-lambe poster won by a landslide: "We came here because of a lambe-lambe poster on the street." That's cool, that adds up, you know? (Baranda, 2024).

As in all other stages of the process, Baranda relied on assistants at this point, but he supervised and often personally handled the operation.

Various types of glue can be used for applying *lambe-lambe* posters — ranging from those made with pH-neutral materials that preserve the paper's chemical composition, such as carboxymethylcellulose (CMC), an additive derived from cellulose, water-soluble, used for various purposes including pharmaceutical and food industries as well as book and artwork conservation — to adhesives based on vinyl glue, and even very low-cost homemade glues like the well-known "wheatpaste" (*grude*), made from wheat flour and caustic soda. The latter was the one Baranda used. The pasting was (and still is) done exclusively at dawn.

The posters stay on the street for about 10 to 15 days. The locations are chosen based on where the event will take place. If it's in the South Zone, we try to paste them nearby. The price is based on the number of posters produced, usually between 50 and 100. The minimum number I usually make is 50. Sometimes a desperate client comes by, and I end up making only 30. But that's not good business for me because I start from a high cost. I've made 100, even 200 posters for some clients... but those clients paste the posters even in Campo Grande.

When the quantity is larger, we can even replace the posters since they get torn up now and then, so we do a kind of maintenance. The average price is about R\$ 2,000 for 50 posters, including the pasting on the street. But if there is color printing involved, that price doubles because of the cost of the photolith and printing.

I have an employee who goes out photographing all the posters so I can send the photos to the client. Besides providing the route where the posters are pasted, we send these photos to highlight the service. The photos are also a way to supervise my employees' work (Baranda, 2010).

An essential component of the service provided, the pasting of posters involved the appropriation of urban space as a medium for advertising. A form of mapping was conducted, organizing pasting locations by zones and neighborhoods. Upon completion of the service, a list of these locations was delivered to the client. This strategic territorial occupation was a key factor in attracting clients such as major

record labels, cultural producers, and concert venues in the city. It also afforded Baranda a significant degree of productive and financial independence. However, as this operation was carried out informally and operated on the margins of legality — barely legal¹ — it simultaneously positioned him in a marginal context.

In 2009, the newly inaugurated mayor of Rio de Janeiro, Eduardo Paes, created the Municipal Secretariat of Public Order, through which he launched the Operation Shock of Order. According to the official website of the Rio city hall:

Urban disorder is the main catalyst for the feeling of public insecurity and creates the conditions conducive to the commission of crimes in general. As one thing leads to another, these situations drive people and good principles away from the streets, contributing to the degeneration and abandonment of these public spaces and the reduction of economic activities.

With the goal of putting an end to urban disorder, combating petty crimes in the main corridors, and decisively contributing to the improvement of quality of life in our city, Operation Shock of Order was created.

These are operations carried out by the newly created Secretariat of Public Order, which in its first year of existence has been able to restore order to the city (Rio de Janeiro, 2009).

As part of a program to tighten control over the use of public space, Operation Shock of Order was an administrative and discursive strategy aimed at curbing a range of practices that came to be seen as urban disorder. These included activities that used public space as a visual platform, such as street posters, *lambe-lambe*, banners, signs, and flyers, which started to be classified as illegal advertising. This represented a decisive blow to the production system of our subject.

Dude, they've been tearing down the posters nonstop, especially in the South Zone. The city hall, Operation Shock of Order, and [Companhia Municipal de Limpeza Urbana] Comlurb... they're ripping them down, painting over the posters... Even the clients have started complaining: "We put up the poster one night, and the next day it's already been taken down. How is that possible?" We go back and put them up again, but it's no use.

I don't see any chance of this becoming fully legal. There's a law for lambe-lambe posters, created by Cesar Maia in 1995. But it's unworkable. It allows street posters for cultural purposes to be pasted on construction site fences, only if the site owner gives you written permission. For example, in Barra [da Tijuca], there was that Riviera condo, which was our biggest spot for posters there. That place belonged to Sérgio Naya. How are you supposed to approach Sérgio Naya and ask, "Can I put up posters on your fence?" How would you even get in touch with that guy? And how much do you think he'd charge per poster pasted there? (Baranda, 2010).

According to Baranda, the crackdown on his posters, primarily concentrated in the South Zone, occurred through their removal — either by tearing or scraping them off — or by defacing the information they conveyed. Both types of action

1 Barely Legal Barely Legal was the name of the third major exhibition by the British anonymous artist known as Banksy, held in a warehouse in Los Angeles, United States, on the weekend of September 16, 2006 (Banksy Explained, 2006).



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 16. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* crossed out by employees of the Municipal Urban Cleaning Company 1.



Source: Cardoso (2012).
Figure 17. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* crossed out by employees of the Municipal Urban Cleaning Company 2.



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 18. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* crossed out by employees of the Municipal Urban Cleaning Company (detail).



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 19. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* crossed out by employees of the Municipal Urban Cleaning Company 3.



Source: Cardoso (2012).

Figure 20. Baranda's *lambe-lambe* crossed out by employees of the Municipal Urban Cleaning Company 4.

were carried out by employees of Comlurb, the municipal cleaning company of Rio de Janeiro City Hall (Figures 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20).

From that point onward, a struggle of forces unfolded. Posters that were pasted were torn down or defaced, only to be quickly replaced, then destroyed again (*rateados*)². Much of the archive documents this ongoing tug-of-war. Although exploring this conflict in greater depth exceeds the physical scope of this article, it is important to emphasize that this was a visually manifested dispute. Beneath the discourse of public order lay an underlying desire to manipulate, monopolize, and control urban space as an advertising medium. In other words, the stance of the new municipal administration implicitly recognized the political power of the street as a visual apparatus — a site where representations are constructed, affirmed, and contested.

The 14-year interval between the two interviews with Baranda reveals significant changes not only in the services he provided but also within the city's cultural event production chain. Regarding the company's operations, the most notable and symbolic shift was the sharp decline in the original production of screen-printed poster designs, which began in the 2000s and gradually diminished over the years. This trend, combined with new regulations, increasing pressures on the activity, and evolving market demands, rendered the traditional process financially unsustainable and impractical in terms of production speed. From 2018 onward, digital

² Originating from the *pixação* culture, "*rateio*" is the practice of crossing out the tag (mark, *pixo*) of an "opponent," thereby marking that territory (see Cardoso, 2012).

printing using plotters, also common in billboard poster production, became the predominant graphic solution.

Regarding the switch to digital, it was probably about six or seven years ago, because screen printing required a lot of manpower, I needed 10 to 12 people to produce the specific quantities I had at the time. A lot of labor, a lot of hassle; labor is a complicated thing, you know? And then I made the comparison, also because digital printing sparked a lot of interest among clients in backgrounds with landscapes... In short, the art designs became more specific (Baranda, 2024).

The second change lies in this new printing method and technology, which consequently demands investments, infrastructure, new work processes, machinery, training, agility, and a different relationship with the production and display time of the posters.

These changes led Baranda to adapt his activities, gradually modifying his services, which previously covered much of the production chain, including design, graphic production, mapping, distribution, and documentation, but now focus on a partnership model with print shops for poster production. Nowadays, the mapping and pasting operations are carried out by Baranda and a team of just two employees.

The workshop from 14 years ago has since been transformed into a leisure space, now featuring a bar, a dartboard, theatrical props, a small card table, and a large pool table covered in earth-toned mixed wool felt, where the team typically organizes the sequence of posters. In a smaller adjoining area that still retains some characteristics of the original workshop, one finds a sink, various work tools, a large cutting table, and, on the back wall, a work board referred to by Baranda as the “grid.” This board serves as a planning tool for mapping and arranging the pieces to be pasted for upcoming clients.

The client sends the artwork, we prepare a grid, right? And that's what's going to be pasted on the wall. Once that grid is done, we move on to the next one. Everything is bound together so when we get there, all we have to do is paste. [...] One thing that surprises people is that there are only three of us and... it's a quick game, like Ayrton Senna (Baranda, 2024).

The third change relates to the reconfiguration of the music industry in recent years and the nuanced impact this has had on Baranda's work. Over the past 14 years, the market has undergone substantial transformations in the consumption, commercialization, and distribution of musical works, leading to a commercial shift — whereas the majority of revenue once came from record sales, it now primarily stems from concerts, live performances, and festivals.

If in 2010, Herschmann (2010) pointed to about fifty independent festivals taking place nationwide, organized by artist collectives, associations, small record labels, and/or producers, from 2012 onward there was a boom of large national festivals, as well as international festivals of epic proportions in their Brazilian versions. These were no longer promoted by small producers but were consolidated by

a global shows and festivals industry, dominated by a few production companies that control a large part of the market and manage the national operation of these festivals, with annual revenues exceeding R\$700 million (Rosa, 2024).

A brief mapping of just Rio and São Paulo shows the first initiatives of *Queremos!* (2010), the return of Rock in Rio after a 10-year hiatus (2011), the arrival of Lollapalooza (2012), Coala Festival (2014), Tomorrowland Brazil (2015), the first editions of Rock the Mountain and *Festival Queremos!* (2018), as well as *Coquetel Molotov*, originally from Recife (PE), holding its first edition in São Paulo in 2018. Post-pandemic, in 2022, there were editions of the MITA Festival and *Primavera Sound* taking place in both São Paulo and Rio, in addition to the first edition of Arena Jockey (2023) in Rio de Janeiro. During the pre-production and filming scheduling process, Baranda worked on *lambe-lambes* at Marina da Glória (*Festival Clássicos do Brasil*), and later we followed his paste-up activities for Arena Jockey 2024.

"Here we're already starting the refilling process, Rock The Mountain is happening in Itaipava and Ludmilla's Numanice tour in São Paulo. [...] Not to mention that we're there putting up posters and soon Djavan will be playing there. It's cool, it's something that's contagious" (Baranda, 2024).

In addition to these socioeconomic factors and the structural conditions of the cultural industry, the persecution Baranda faced ultimately led him to abandon the silkscreen production system we've analyzed here, opting instead for digital printing methods. This shift came as his operating territory was increasingly restricted and his market opportunities were, in a sense, undermined. A victory for the monotonous, monochromatic, and one-track-minded urban sanitizers. A loss for us, lovers of graphic arts. Life goes on for our craftsman.

Despite the marginalization they were subjected to, these *lambe-lambe* posters printed in screen printing had a massive presence in the city. Oscillating between formality and informality, repressed by the municipal administration, contracted by the largest cultural producers in the country, easily identified by their format and graphic solutions used, these prints left a mark on Rio de Janeiro's graphic memory.

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Narratives of modernity: editorial design and visual culture in *Senhor* magazine (1959–1964)

Narrativas da modernidade: design editorial e cultura visual na revista Senhor (1959–1964)

Gabriela De Laurentis¹ , Plínio Balbino¹ 

ABSTRACT

This article investigates *Senhor* magazine (1959–1964) as an artifact of graphic memory and its role as a cultural mediator in a Brazil marked by the tensions between modernities and patriarchy. Although recognized for its graphic and editorial sophistication, the magazine still requires analysis that places it within the field of design as a social phenomenon, especially in relation to gender representations and the visual and editorial choices that reflect the sociopolitical context of the time. Using a systemic approach, it primarily analyzes the covers of the first sixteen issues of the magazine, published between March 1959 and June 1960, as well as other graphic design elements, through a semiotic analysis articulated with specialized literature and contextual references of the period. The results point to the magazine's role in consolidating an elitist and masculine imagery of Brazilian modernity, combining local and international influences. The research contributes to the studies on editorial design and visual culture by highlighting the magazine as an expression of the sociocultural dynamics and power structures in 20th-century Brazil. Furthermore, it emphasizes the role of illustrated magazines as mediators of cultural values and agents in the construction of graphic memory.

Keywords: Graphic Memory. Editorial design. Gender. Cultural identity. Illustrated magazines.

RESUMO

Este artigo investigou a revista Senhor (1959–1964) como artefato de memória gráfica e sua atuação como mediadora cultural em um Brasil marcado pelas tensões entre modernidades e patriarcado. Embora reconhecida por sua sofisticação gráfica e editorial, a revista ainda requer análises que a situem no campo do design como fenômeno social, especialmente em relação às representações de gênero e às escolhas visuais e editoriais que refletem o contexto sociopolítico da época. Partindo de uma abordagem sistêmica, foram analisadas prioritariamente as capas das 16 primeiras edições da revista, publicadas entre março de 1959 e junho de 1960, assim como outros elementos do projeto gráfico, por meio de uma análise semiótica articulada à literatura especializada e às referências contextuais do período. Os resultados apontaram para a atuação da revista na consolidação de um imaginário elitizado e masculino da modernidade brasileira, combinando influências locais e internacionais. A pesquisa contribuiu para os estudos sobre design editorial e cultura visual ao destacar a revista como expressão das dinâmicas socioculturais e das estruturas de poder no Brasil do século XX. Além disso, enfatizou o papel das revistas ilustradas como mediadoras de valores culturais e agentes na construção da memória gráfica.

Palavras-chave: Memória gráfica. Design editorial. Gênero. Identidade cultural. Revistas ilustradas.

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INTRODUCTION

Graphic memory plays a central role in studies of material culture and graphic design, connecting the history of visual artifacts to the construction of cultural identities. In this context, graphic artifacts significantly contribute to the formation of visual narratives and the preservation of symbols that reflect the social and cultural dynamics of a society (Farias; Braga, 2018). These elements, often considered ephemeral, accumulate historical and cultural meanings that strengthen the collective perception of cultural unity and uniqueness (Assmann, 2011).

In turn, studies of material culture demonstrate how consumer objects carry and transform cultural meanings over time, as material goods go beyond their practical use, acting as mediators of values, social practices, and identities (Miller, 2002; McCracken, 2007). This approach broadens the understanding of graphic design, which ceases to be seen merely as an aesthetic activity and becomes established as an interdisciplinary field capable of analyzing cultural and social dynamics, especially in contexts of modernization and consumption.

In 20th-century Brazil, illustrated magazines played an important role as artifacts of graphic memory, contributing to the circulation of ideas and the consolidation of new fields such as design. These publications were not merely editorial products, but tools for building collective memory, integrating visual and discursive references during a period of profound transformations in the country, such as accelerated urbanization, industrialization, cultural modernization, the emergence of new social identities, as well as intense debates and changes in the political landscape marked by periods of democracy and authoritarianism (Martins, 1995).

As artifacts that are part of what we can call cultural heritage, magazines serve as possible sources for understanding the socio-cultural relationships that supported them. In addition to their ability to “represent the dynamics of history” (Martins, 2009, p. 281), by gathering and interconnecting texts, images, and narratives that document currents of thought and values shaping Brazilian society, magazines allow for the analysis of graphic and social transformations of the period. In other words, they reflect “their potential to represent specific audiences, worldviews, and particular values within the broad social segmentation of the country” (Martins, 2009, p. 296).

Senhor magazine¹, published between 1959 and 1964, exemplifies the role of illustrated magazines as mediators of graphic and cultural memory in Brazil. It transcended its function as an editorial product and became a significant cultural document of its time. Created as a small-scale venture, the publication summarized the transformations experienced by Brazilian editorial design in the 1960s, articulating modernity and culture through a sophisticated and innovative graphic language rooted in the predominance of illustration as a central element of visual communication (Melo, 2006).

1 *Senhor* is the title of the magazine and a Portuguese noun meaning “lord,” “master,” or “gentleman.” It also functions as a formal address for men (abbreviated as “Sr.,” similar to “Mr.” or “Sir” in English). The term carries connotations of authority, masculinity, and social distinction, which the magazine’s title intentionally evokes - a nuance that has no direct equivalent in English

The state of the art regarding cultural illustrated magazines in Brazil and Latin America has been consolidating, highlighting their role in culture and graphic design. The book *A Revista no Brasil*² (2000) provides a historical overview of these publications in the 20th century, while Niemeyer (2002), in his doctoral thesis, analyzes the graphic design of *Senhor* as a bridge between international modernism and Brazilian culture. On the other hand, Bustamante (2007), guided by Niemeyer in her dissertation, investigates, through semiotics, the use of colors in *Senhor*, exploring how its graphic elements reflected Brazil's cultural transformations and the balance between national identity and global modernity.

Building on this overview, this article discussed how *Senhor* magazine contributed to the construction of visual and discursive narratives that reflected and shaped certain cultural dynamics in Brazil between 1959 and 1964. Additionally, it explored how its graphic and editorial language interacted with the sociopolitical context of the time. Despite its renowned editorial and graphic sophistication, the magazine still lacks more in-depth analyses of its role as a cultural mediator, capable of understanding design as a social process that promotes other modernities within the Brazilian context of the 1960s.

The hypothesis is that the narratives of modernity promoted by *Senhor* magazine dialogued with patriarchal values still present in Brazilian society. The coexistence of aesthetic innovation and the maintenance of traditional hierarchies suggests a tension inherent to modernity in the country: while projecting a modern and cosmopolitan image, the magazine also highlighted the social and cultural limits of its time. By analyzing its visual and discursive choices, the study aimed to reflect on the reaffirmation of gender patterns even within proposals considered progressive or avant-garde.

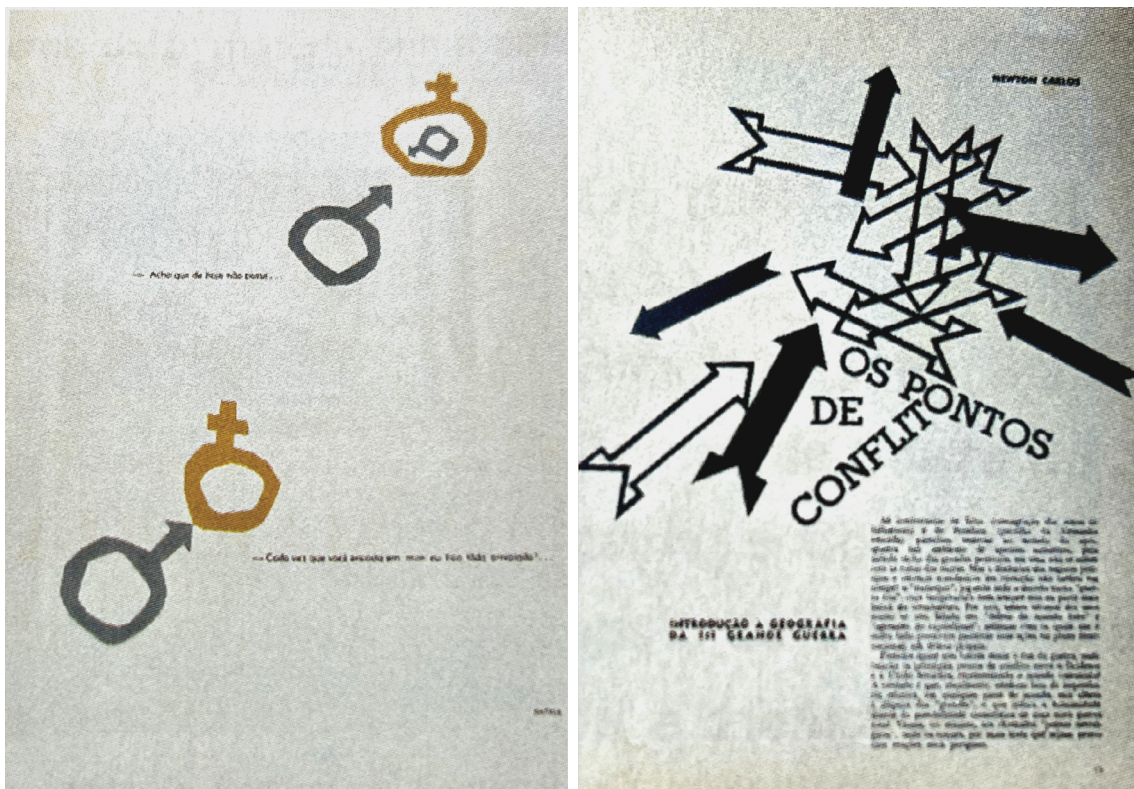
The main objective of this work was to investigate how *Senhor* magazine functioned as an artifact of graphic memory and its contribution to cultural and visual discourses in Brazil during the 1960s. To achieve this, a semiotic analysis was conducted on the covers of the first 16 editions (1959 and 1960), mapping themes, images, and editorials anchored in academic studies and publications about the magazine, along with a contextual consideration to situate the analyzed materials in relation to graphic memory, editorial design, and the sociocultural environment of the period.

The article was organized as follows: first, it investigated the trajectory of the graphic and editorial design of *Senhor* magazine, analyzing its visual and narrative choices within the context of graphic memory and visual culture. Next, it examined how the magazine's graphic language interacted with the Brazilian sociopolitical landscape between 1959 and 1964, reflecting cultural transformations and debates surrounding modernity in the country. Finally, it discussed the magazine's role in articulating alternative modernity possibilities, highlighting its function as a cultural mediator and its contradictions in reaffirming elitist class and gender structures.

2 It is the book's original title in Portuguese, which means *The Magazine in Brazil*.

SENHOR MAGAZINE: AN ARTIFACT OF GRAPHIC MEMORY

Founded in the city of Rio de Janeiro, the magazine distinguished itself through its focus on culture and the prominent presence of illustration in its visual language (Melo, 2006). Its editorial approach aimed for a high standard both in content and graphic presentation, targeting an educated and economically privileged audience (Niemeyer, 2002). Every element of the magazine was considered part of the construction of a unique aesthetic experience, as shown in Figure 1. This distinctive character allowed the magazine to be perceived as a showcase of quality in editorial standards, prioritizing prestige over immediate profit (Basso, 2005).



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 53).

Figure 1. Examples of using typography as illustration in *Senhor* magazine: n. 6, p. 19 (1959) and n. 7, p. 13 (1959).

The magazine's audience was predominantly composed of men from the economic and intellectual elite, many of whom were clients of Editora Delta, already engaged with elite cultural products such as the *Delta Larousse*³ Encyclopedia, works by modern and classical authors, bossa nova records, and imported jazz, among others. This repertoire reinforced an image of sophistication and erudition aligned with the ideal of modernity cultivated through the pages of *Senhor* magazine. Its profile consisted of liberal professionals and entrepreneurs seeking social status through culture. The subscription price of the magazine further reinforced this positioning, being significantly higher than that of popular publications like *Manchete* and *O*

3 Encyclopedia of reference in Brazil, published by Editora Delta in partnership with the French publisher Larousse

Cruzeiro, thus establishing itself as a symbol of social and intellectual distinction (Niemeyer, 2002; Basso, 2005; Melo, 2006).

The magazine's editorial content covered culture, politics, economics, and entertainment, with an emphasis on cultural journalism. Reflecting Brazil's modernization in the 1960s and the societal transformations of the time, *Senhor's* thematic diversity made it one of the main reflections of that period. The predominance of literary and critical texts underscores the magazine's importance as a space for intellectual development and cultural dissemination (Basso, 2005; Melo, 2006).

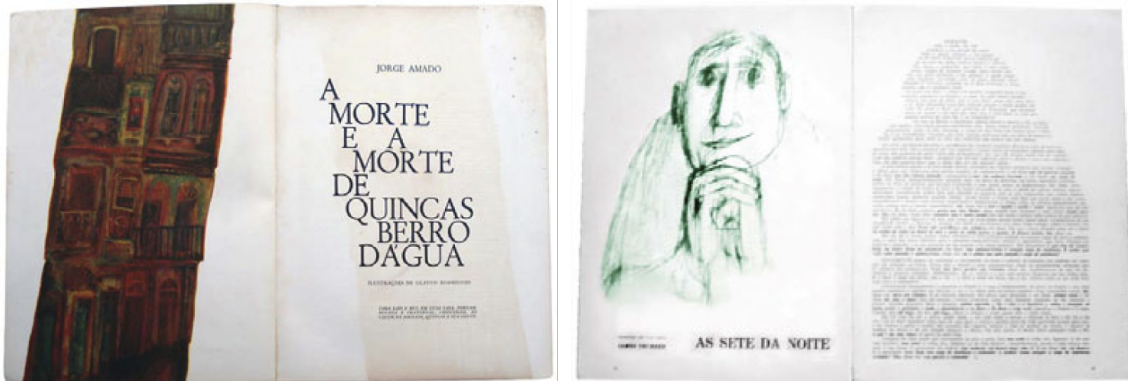
Visually, the magazine combined elements such as fine arts, cartoons, photography, and typography, resulting in a distinctive layout (Melo, 2006) (Figure 2). Its graphic design influenced generations of designers and established an aesthetic standard that resonated in subsequent publications.



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 52, 84 e 86).

Figure 2. Examples of experimental layout using typographic techniques in *Senhor* magazine: n. 6, p. 66 (1959); n. 13, p. 98 (1960); and n. 14, p. 26 (1960).

The editorial and visual style of *Senhor*, characterized by cosmopolitanism and the pursuit of a unique identity, reflects a transitional period in Brazilian design and graphic communication. This influence occurred within a context of intense transformations in the Brazilian press, especially in the 1950s, when a wave of modernization swept through the economy, culture, and media. *Senhor* emerged in this fertile environment, integrating a movement that reinterpreted international models — particularly those from French and British schools — combining them with local ideas. This process resulted in a distinctive style and paved the way for bolder editorial projects, including that of the magazine itself (Basso, 2005). Its layout broke away from traditional models, adopting a free and experimental approach (Figure 3). From the early editions, the absence of a rigid grid revealed a thoughtful planning of content and form, aiming for a striking and cohesive visual experience (Bustamante, 2007).



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 84 e 85).

Figure 3. Examples of graphic blotches in *Senhor* magazine: n. 4, p. 50–51 (1959) and n. 3, p. 38–39 (1959).

Senhor magazine can be understood as an artifact of graphic memory, based on the thinking of Farias and Braga (2018), who define this field as a means of rescuing and reevaluating visual artifacts, especially ephemeral printed materials, with the aim of recovering or establishing a sense of local identity. In this way, *Senhor*, as an editorial product of its time, functions as a testament to the national graphic production and contributes to understanding the communication and aesthetic dynamics of the period, articulating a unique and provocative reading of the national reality in dialogue with the consumption patterns of the era.

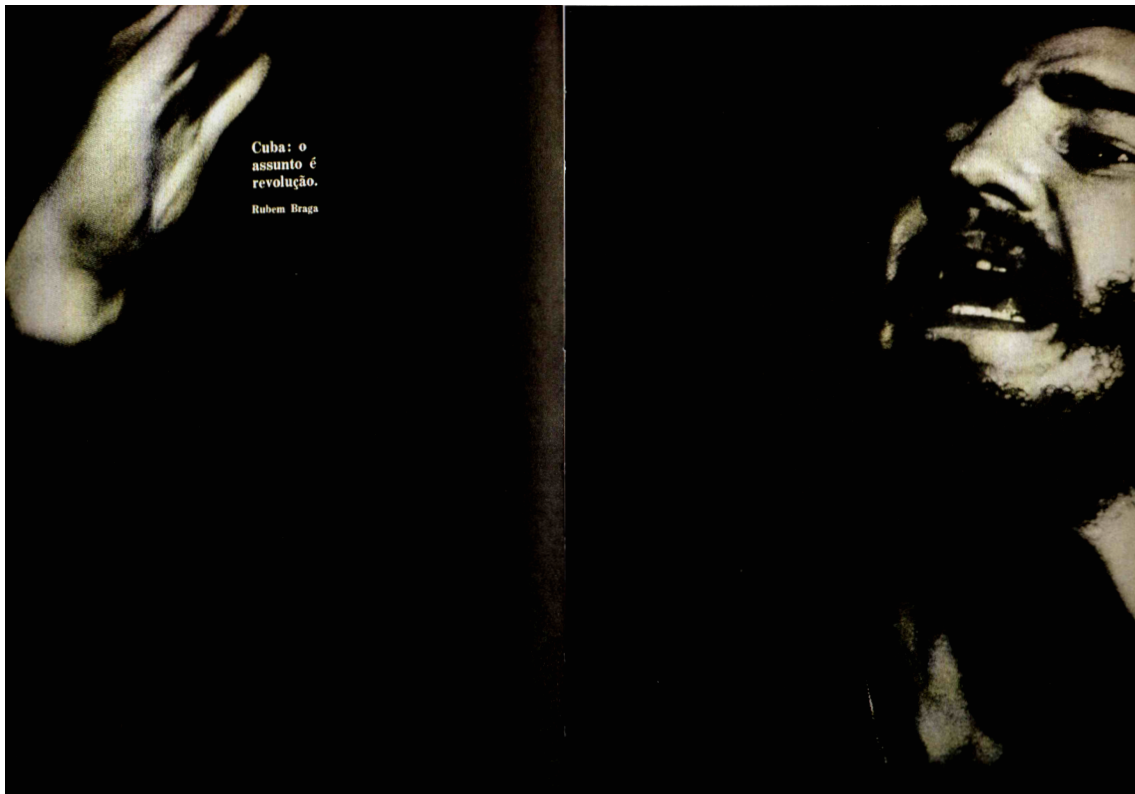
IMPRESSIONS OF A BRAZIL IN TRANSFORMATION (1959–1964)

The period of publication of the magazine (1959–1964) coincided with profound changes in Brazilian society. Politically, the country was experiencing the final years of the democratic experiment before the 1964 military coup. The developmentalist era, driven by the governments of Juscelino Kubitschek and João Goulart, was characterized by industrialization, rapid urbanization, and the strengthening of an emerging middle class, which was also becoming a consumer audience for culture.

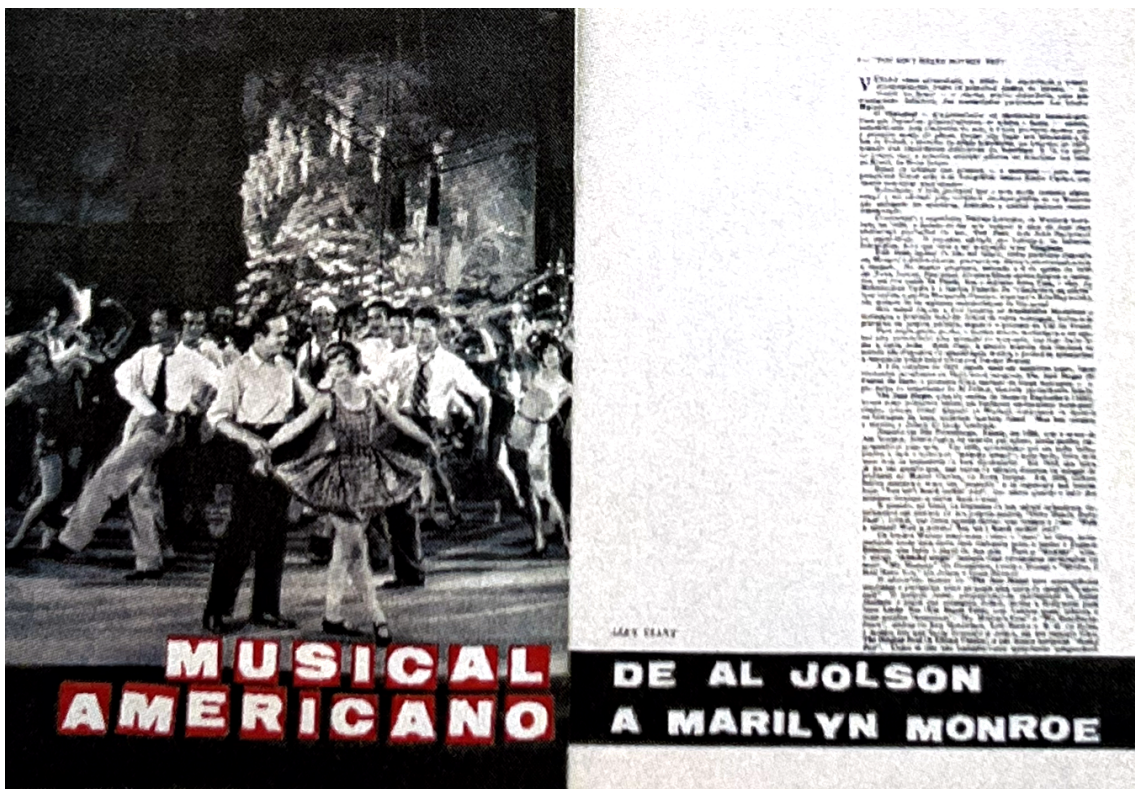
In addition to following the cultural changes, the magazine contributed to the construction of visual and textual discourses that reflected the ongoing transformations in Brazil. It established itself as a space that not only mirrored but also articulated the cultural shifts of the 1960s through active editorial curation, with examples such as visual essays that engaged with *Cinema Novo*⁴—like black-and-white photographs of transitioning cities—and in dossiers that combined stories by Lygia Fagundes Telles and art critiques, fostering the crossing of different languages (Figure 4).

In the field of design as a political argument, the magazine used graphic collages that subverted visual hierarchies, blending popular culture with luxury advertisements, breaking with narrative linearity. Sections such as “Panorama Internacional” contrasted themes like Broadway and Brazilian concrete art, highlighting dilemmas between cosmopolitanism and national identity (Figure 5).

⁴ *Cinema Novo* was a Brazilian film movement from the 1960s, marked by strong political and auteur-driven characteristics.



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 79).
Figure 4. Use of black and white photography in a feature about an expedition to Cuba in *Senhor* magazine, n. 16, p. 18–19 (1960).



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 52).
Figure 5. Report on Broadway shows in *Senhor* magazine, n. 11, p. 34–35 (1959).

Despite its brief trajectory, *Senhor* magazine remains a reference for understanding the intersections of design, culture, and politics in Brazilian history, albeit with limited and segmented reach. Embedded in the modernization promoted by President JK⁵ — whose slogan “50 years in 5” symbolized progress through industrialization and urbanization — the publication expressed the contrasts of a country in transition. As Jacques Lambert highlighted in an article within the magazine itself, Brazil had a modern and industrialized pole in the South and Southeast, coexisting with regions that were broadly marginalized. In this context, *Senhor* became both a document of this moment and a space for reaffirming the values of the urban elite benefiting from these transformations. Its visual and editorial choices also reflected social, racial, and gender hierarchies, which are discussed in more detail in the following sections of this work.

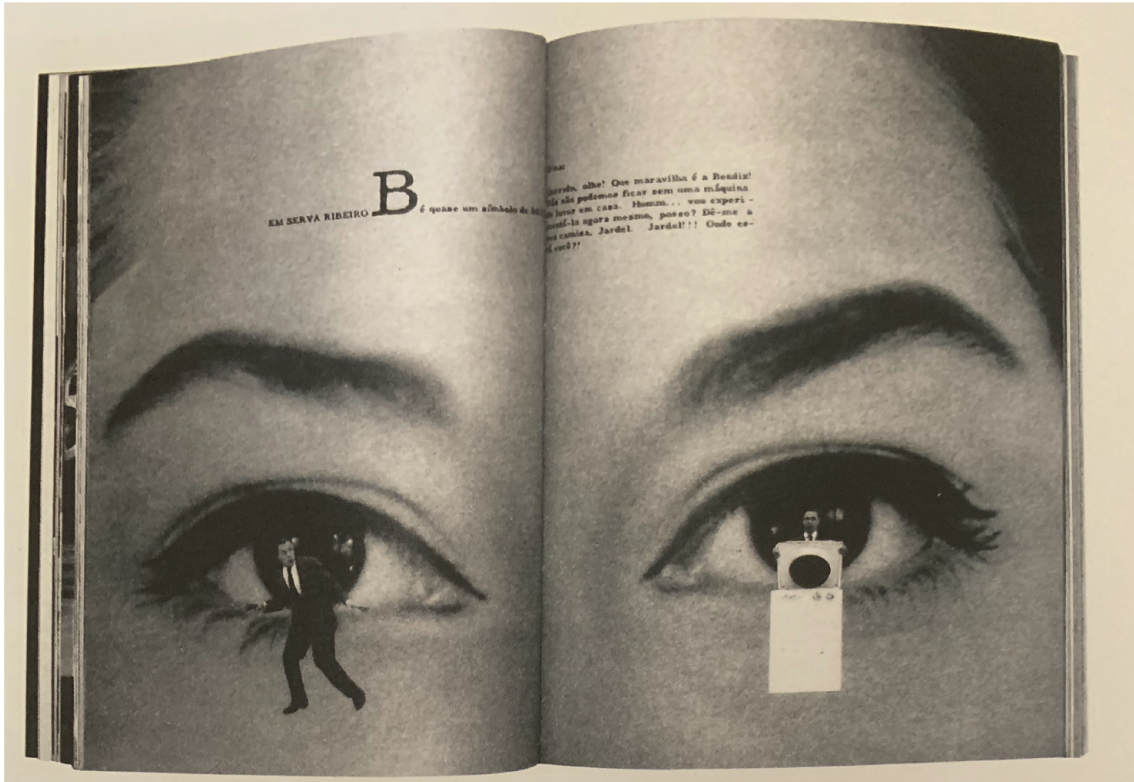
The visualities in *Senhor* magazine, under the artistic direction of Carlos Scliar (Instituto Cultural Casa Museu Carlos Scliar, 2025), reflected both the modernizing ideals and the oppressive structures of that national project. Designed and led by men, it operated with an editorial perspective marked by erasures. Aesthetic experimentation was prominent on the covers, which favored paintings over photographs, giving the publication an artistic and exclusive character, aligned with the pursuit of symbolic distinction and cultural identity (Niemeyer, 2002; Basso, 2005; Melo, 2006).

The graphic singularity of *Senhor* in depicting aspects of the daily life of Brazilian elites helped to crystallize a predominantly male, white, and class-based imagery. This construction resulted from a dialogue with international references, particularly magazines such as *The New Yorker* and *Esquire*, which influenced its aesthetics and narrative (Basso, 2005). The combination of foreign influences with elements of Brazilian identity produced an editorial aligned with the discourse of modernization, while simultaneously legitimizing it visually and culturally.

Advertising was one of the strategic elements in the dissemination of the modernizing ideal. The economic growth and urbanization of the 1950s stimulated a new consumption dynamic, accompanied by the strengthening of advertising agencies and propaganda as a means to reach this emerging market (Basso, 2005). Within this context, *Senhor* magazine organized its advertisements in an integrated manner with its graphic design, reserving the first and last pages for advertising, which contributed to the visual cohesion and sophistication of the publication (Figures 6 and 7).

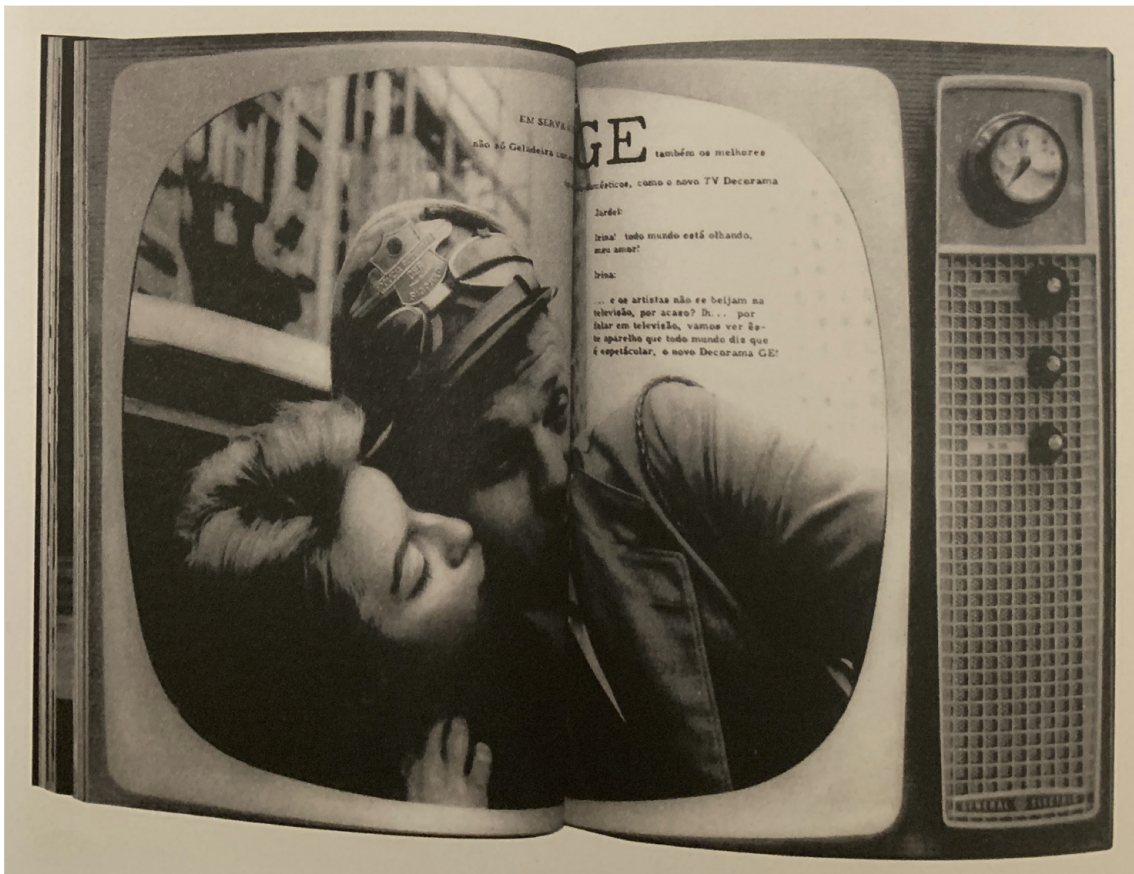
Many of these advertisements were produced by the magazine’s own art team, surpassing the standards of traditional advertising and reinforcing the ideal of refinement (Melo, 2006). Products such as *GE* televisions and *Bendix* washing machines, which had just arrived in Brazil in the 1960s, were among the items advertised, symbolizing technological progress and the promise of domestic comfort and efficiency offered by industrial advancement (Figures 6 and 7).

5 “JK” refers to Juscelino Kubitschek, president of Brazil (1956–1961).



Source: Melo (2006, p. 143).

Figure 6. Advertising of home appliances in *Senhor* magazine: *Bendix* washing machines.



Source: Melo (2006, p. 143).

Figure 7. Advertising of home appliances in *Senhor* magazine: *GE* televisions.

Based on these considerations, the design of *Senhor* can be understood as part of a social process, as it not only reflected the modernizing discourses of the time but also accompanied and reinforced them. By presenting aesthetics, consolidating values, and expanding narratives that helped shape a particular vision of modernity in Brazil, the magazine exemplifies the idea that “design has always had the fundamental function of an agent of change that interprets all kinds of transformations — social, political, economic, [...] cultural [...] etc.” (Rawsthorn, 2024, p. 13). Therefore, the publication highlights design as an interdisciplinary field embedded within a broader cultural ecosystem, in constant dialogue with external social dynamics.

“A MAGAZINE FOR THE GENTLEMAN”: ANALYSIS OF DISCURSIVE AND VISUAL NARRATIVES

Throughout its first phase, recognized as the publication’s golden age from March 1959 to January 1961, *Senhor* magazine established itself as a cultural and avant-garde reference, with narratives that emphasized cultural, political, and economic themes, permeated by a humor characteristic of the period. Under the direction of Nahum Sirotsky and with Carlos Scliar as art director, it assembled a team of renowned journalists, visual artists, illustrators, and writers, giving the publication a unique and distinctive identity in the Brazilian editorial scene of the time (Niemeyer, 2002; Basso, 2005).

The graphic team assisting Carlos Scliar with the magazine’s layout also included “the Gaucho Glauco Rodrigues⁶ and Jaguar⁷, from Rio de Janeiro, then a humorist illustrator for the magazine *O Cruzeiro*” (Melo, 2006, p. 107). Although briefly, Bea Feitler⁸ also contributed to the graphic team in 1960 as an art assistant, already demonstrating her potential as a designer. Together, they helped establish the magazine as a space for visual experimentation and discursive articulation. Joining this team were Caio Mourão — an art assistant who joined almost simultaneously with Feitler — and the advertising professional Michel Burton, who took over from Glauco Rodrigues as art director after issue no. 25 (corresponding to the magazine’s second anniversary).

The editorial project proposal allowed *Senhor* not only to explore diverse content but also to establish a platform for intellectual debates, prioritizing the quality of the writing and the historical relevance of literature. The magazine’s editorial line was based on the belief that the dissemination of culture is a fundamental value. To achieve this, the publication’s management invested in hiring esteemed

6 Glauco Rodrigues (1929–2004) was a Brazilian visual artist, illustrator, and graphic designer. Associated with the modernist movement, his work traversed expressionism, surrealism, and pop art, exploring themes of Brazilian culture with irony and social critique.

7 Jaguar (Sérgio de Magalhães Gomes Jaguaribe, 1932–2021) was a Brazilian cartoonist, illustrator, and graphic designer, known for his irreverent humor and his work in the alternative press.

8 Bea Feitler (1938–1982) was a Brazilian graphic designer who revolutionized editorial design with her innovative work. At *Senhor*, she contributed to the magazine’s visual modernization, foreshadowing the bold approach that would define her international career in publications such as *Harper’s Bazaar* and *Rolling Stone*.

collaborators, acquiring articles, essays, critical reviews, reports, and especially unpublished literary texts. The compensation offered by the magazine was higher than the market average, which facilitated the attraction of renowned writers and emerging talents. This model resulted in the constant publication of unpublished literary works, ensuring authors maintained their copyright rights. In this way, *Senhor* managed to assemble a large team, promoting the coexistence of already established authors and new talents who, years later, would become prominent figures in national and international literature (Basso, 2005; Melo, 2006).

The magazine prioritized journalistic articles and essays, focusing on cultural and political analyses. Among its contributors were educators Anísio Teixeira and Darcy Ribeiro, who discussed education as an essential factor in shaping national identity. In the political and philosophical fields, notable figures included diplomat, lexicographer, and philologist Antônio Houaiss, who reflected on nationalism and the Brazilian *intelligentsia*, and French sociologist and economist Jacques Lambert, with his dualistic thesis on Brazil's rich and poor sectors. Economist Celso Furtado contributed studies on economic development, while Jean-Paul Sartre analyzed bourgeois theater (Basso, 2005).

The multifaceted nature of *Senhor* was also evident in its travel chronicles, which featured contributions from Fernando Sabino, Otto Maria Carpeaux, and Vinícius de Moraes. In art criticism, the magazine had a prominent presence of Alex Viány, who focused on topics related to cinema. Sports journalism was represented by Armando Nogueira. In the field of reporting and articles on politics and economics, Newton Carlos stood out (Basso, 2005). The magazine's thematic diversity emphasized its goal of offering comprehensive and elitist content, guided by the criterion of textual excellence.

Senhor also engaged in promoting literary texts by renowned foreign authors, publishing works by figures such as Ernest Hemingway, Leo Tolstoy, William Faulkner, Mark Twain, T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Dorothy Parker, Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, D. H. Lawrence, and Bertolt Brecht (Niemeyer, 2002; Basso, 2005). This literary curatorship positioned the magazine as a space for cultural exchange, reinforcing its role as a mediator of this flow, and also providing the Brazilian public with access to texts from different literary traditions, regarded as high quality.

In addition to foreign literature, *Senhor* magazine emphasized domestic literary production, publishing previously unpublished works by renowned authors such as Nelson Rodrigues (*Boca de Ouro*, 1960), Graciliano Ramos (*Pequena História da República*, 1960), and Jorge Amado (*A Morte e a Morte de Quincas Berro D'Água*, 1959). This reinforced its focus on Brazilian literature and contributed to strengthening its cultural identity and consolidating its influence within the intellectual circles of the time.

In the realm of cinema and theater, *Senhor* also distinguished itself by showcasing modern movements that aimed to intellectualize and autonomize the film production, elevating it to the status of art. Regarding theater, the magazine followed and acclaimed the renewal movements of Brazilian theater, which proposed

to bring the country's reality to the stage and contribute to the construction of a national identity (Basso, 2005).

In the first 16 issues of *Senhor* magazine, published in 1959 and 1960, a graphic and conceptual pattern that reflects the construction of masculinity and gender relations within the context of that period can be observed. According to Bustamante (2007), during this time, the covers were illustrated by members of the magazine's art department or by recognized artists—only one edition featured a cover that was exclusively typographic. Male presence on these covers was consistently manifested, either as the protagonist or in a position of superiority or dominance over female figures.

ILLUSTRATED PATRIARCHY: 16 COVERS OF *SENHOR* MAGAZINE (1959 AND 1960)

This section analyzed gender representation on the covers of the first 16 issues of *Senhor* magazine (1959 and 1960). The visuals projected a modern ideal of masculinity while reaffirming gender hierarchies. We propose to reflect on how these images contributed to a patriarchal imaginary aligned with the values of the elite of that time. This approach emerged organically during the research, stemming from the recurring male centrality on the covers and the absence or subordination of female figures.

The following reflections are based on the covers of the first 16 issues of *Senhor* magazine (Figure 8). Inspired by semiotic analyses and the observations of Lucy Niemeyer (2002), from the first issue of *Senhor*, published in March 1959, in her doctoral thesis, we will now provide a synthesis that will pave the way for new questions and future discussions.

The first cover, by Carlos Scliar, establishes an iconic scene of Rio de Janeiro by evoking the landscape of Copacabana (Figure 9). The black and white background reproduces the infinite succession of ocean waves, creating a rhythmic movement that repeats in the depicted female figure. Niemeyer (2002) describes this figure as a woman with voluptuous shapes, loose black hair, walking briskly along the beach, attracting the gaze of a man sitting on a bench near the sand. This man, positioned below the magazine's title, establishes a direct relationship with the idea of a "Gentleman" observer.

The visual interaction between the two characters reinforces a male gaze that appropriates femininity within a play of desire and contemplation. Furthermore, the man's gaze not only focuses on the woman but also extends to the reader, transforming him into a voracious observer who follows the sway of the walker. The scene encapsulates one of the main dynamics present in the magazine's covers: the valorization of the male gaze as the dominant agent and the objectification of the female body.

In the second cover (Figure 9), by Glauco Rodrigues, this hierarchical relationship between genders is intensified by the portrayal of an expansive male figure in a vivid red, suggesting imposition and dominance over a withdrawn female figure, represented in yellow, implying vulnerability and covered with letters. The female character appears to be in her workplace, against an orange background that



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).

Figure 8. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: 16 editions dated from March 1959 to June 1960, issues 1 to 16, presented from left to right, from top to bottom.

conveys tension. She is possibly a secretary typing on a machine, while the man, with his hands on her shoulder and close to her chest, displays a gesture of possession and authority. The scene alludes to the social structure, where men held a dominant role, and even when women were in professional environments, they were perceived as subordinate.



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).

Figure 9. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 1 and 2, authored by Carlos Scliar and Glauco Rodrigues, respectively (1959).

The third cover, by Glauco Rodrigues, reinforces this perspective by depicting a couple at a table, where only the man's face is fully visible, while the woman's is partially outside the magazine's frame (Figure 10). Both are dressed elegantly, with the man wearing a suit and bow tie, and the woman in a plunging dress. The posture of the characters suggests an interaction in which the man, with his hands on his chin and leaning forward, demonstrates overt interest. In contrast, the woman keeps her gaze downward, in a stance of modesty and introspection, explicitly illustrating the prevailing gender hierarchy in society, which reinforces stereotypes of discreet femininity.

The fourth cover, by Glauco Rodrigues, presents a variation in the representation of women by depicting several women on top of a car (Figure 10). However, these figures are drawn in a less figurative manner, in poses that emphasize their bodies, wearing dresses that highlight their curves. The chaotic arrangement of the female figures on the cover, combined with the lack of individuality among them, reinforces the perception of women as objects of collective desire, fragmented and accessory to the male universe. The car, traditionally associated with masculinity and status, can be interpreted, alongside the female figures, as representing the men's possible "consumption" interests.

On the fifth cover, also by Glauco Rodrigues, male presence is implied through the suggestion of an environment of seduction and conquest (Figure 11). The composition features a glass with a little drink, a pipe, two women's shoes seemingly left haphazardly, and a bottle of alcohol against an intense reddish-brown background.



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).
Figure 10. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 3 and 4, authored by Glauco Rodrigues (1959).



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).
Figure 11. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 5 and 6, authored by Glauco Rodrigues (1959).

The absence of human figures does not prevent the construction of a visual narrative that suggests the presence of a man, possibly a "gentleman" who attended a meeting, and the atmosphere evokes a seductive imaginary. The reddish-brown hue reinforces this sensual and nocturnal motif, evoking an aesthetic associated with the bohemian and hedonistic male universe.

The sixth cover, by Glauco Rodrigues, employs a mythological figure to represent the male ideal of power and elegance: a centaur, whose human part is dressed in an extremely sophisticated manner, wearing a suit, tie, vest, and top hat (Figure 11). The choice of this hybrid figure of man and horse reinforces the duality of civilization and instinct, rationality and brute strength. The impeccable attire suggests a man belonging to the elite, while the equine part alludes to a wild and virile side. This visual composition directly dialogues with the construction of masculinity during the period, where the ideal man was simultaneously cultured and dominant, rational and vigorous, aristocratic and imposing.

The seventh cover, considered the most significant by Carlos Scliar in terms of design (Figure 12), features two faces: a male one on the left and a female one on the right (Melo, 2006). The painting created specifically for the cover stands out for its intentional use of empty spaces. The male figure occupies a larger area and looks down from above with an expression of superiority. In contrast, the woman, with red lipstick and a slightly downward gaze, appears in a reduced scale. The difference in framing and the direction of their gazes establish a visual hierarchy, in which the man dominates the symbolic and discursive field, while the female figure is positioned in a secondary role, reinforcing gender patterns that characterized the magazine's editorial language.

The eighth issue features an abstract approach in shades of blue, without an obvious visual narrative or a clearly identifiable central figure (Figure 12). In this cover, Glauco Rodrigues explores informal abstract expressionism, a stylistic choice



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).

Figure 12. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 7 and 8, authored by Carlos Scliar and Glauco Rodrigues, respectively (1959).

that differs from the previous covers, which often depicted the male figure explicitly (Melo, 2006). However, the magazine's editorial identity maintains an aesthetic coherence that resonates with the male target audience of the time. The absence of a human figure does not necessarily imply visual neutrality, but rather can open space for more subjective interpretations.

The ninth cover features a close-up of the face from Vincent van Gogh's painting *The Schoolboy* (Figure 13). The choice of a classical painting to adorn the magazine's cover can be interpreted as an effort to reaffirm intellectual and cultural identity, aligning with the image of the ideal *Senhor* reader: a sophisticated, cultured man who appreciates the arts. The depiction of a young student at the center of the composition may also reference the valorization of erudition and continuous learning, aspects often associated with an intellectualized form of masculinity.



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).

Figure 13. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 9 and 10, including a detail from Van Gogh's work and authored by Jaguar, respectively (1959).

The tenth cover (Figure 13), created by Jaguar for the December 1959 edition, is considered one of the most emblematic of *Senhor* magazine (Sarmiento, 2000 *apud* Basso, 2005). His contributions were crucial in shaping a visual identity that combined sophistication and irony in the representation of the modern man. In this cover, Jaguar depicts the magazine's ideal male figure: a middle-aged man, careful and sensitive, aligned with the profile of an intellectualized reader. The image balances pride and delicacy, symbolized by the upright posture of the man and the flower he holds: it is a portrait of both the magazine and its reader — or at least, of how both wished to be seen (Melo, 2006).

The eleventh edition, by Glauco Rodrigues, features on its cover the sun with a masculine face set against a dark blue background (Figure 14). The solar iconography, traditionally associated with power, reinforces the symbolism of masculinity as the central and guiding force. While sunlight is often linked to reason and clarity, the presence of a masculine face can be interpreted as the personification of the man as a guide — someone who illuminates and determines the directions of knowledge and culture. This reading resonates with the readership, which, in a way, sees itself as the protagonist of modernity, a central value of the magazine.

The twelfth cover, by Glauco Rodrigues, from February 1960, features a man dressed as a *Pierrot*, with a conical hat tilted on his head (Figure 14). He appears leaning back, almost fallen, conveying an impression of intoxication, with lost eyes and a slight smile. His colorful attire references the carnival universe, suggesting a male figure that distances itself from the rigidity traditionally associated with serious and austere masculinity. However, this representation may be linked to a bohemian dimension, often romanticized within the masculine context of the period.



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).

Figure 14. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 11 and 12, both authored by Glauco Rodrigues (1960).

The thirteenth cover, also created by Glauco Rodrigues, is “exclusively typographic”, explicitly indicating that “SR.” is an abbreviation for “*Senhor*” (which many people did not notice). Since then, the covers have been identified with the full name of the magazine (Figure 15). This choice can be understood as a graphic experiment but also as a reflection of the magazine’s visual identity, which was not limited to the figurative representation of masculinity but also explored its presence through design and language.

The fourteenth cover, from April 1960, by Glauco Rodrigues, features a man wearing a shirt, shorts, sunglasses, and a pipe, walking toward a sign pointing to Brasília⁹ (Figure 15). The composition suggests a traveler, a modern explorer heading to the newly inaugurated capital on April 21, 1960. The choice of Brasília as the destination reinforces the connection between the male figure and the ideals of progress and modernity, recurring themes in the narrative constructed by the magazine, and aligns with the events of the period.



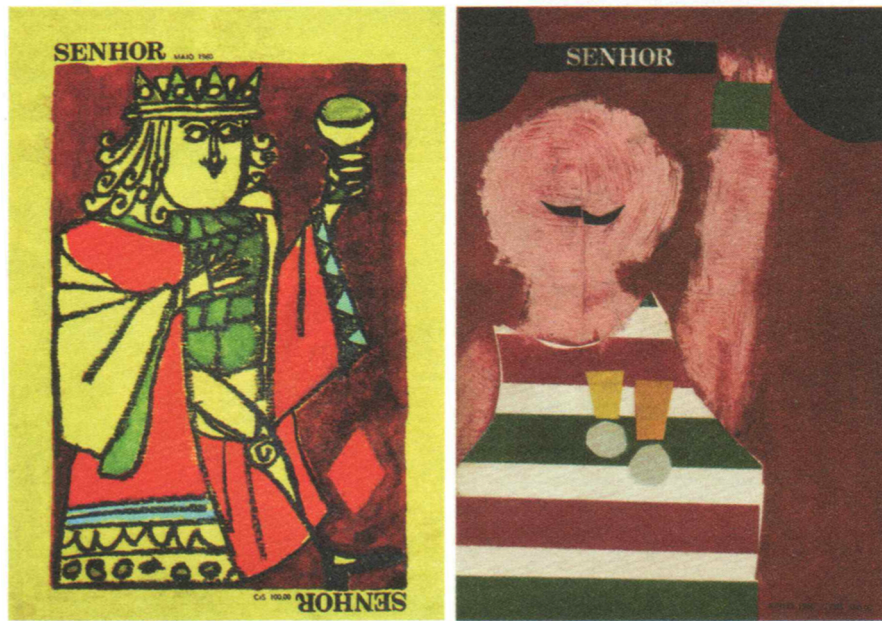
Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).

Figure 15. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 13 and 14, both authored by Glauco Rodrigues (1960).

The fifteenth cover, by Glauco Rodrigues, presents a reinterpretation of the King card from a deck, a symbol of power and strategy (Figure 16). This representation associates masculinity with leadership and decision-making. The use of the King icon, adapted to the magazine’s graphic context, emphasizes *Senhor’s* dialog with the idea of a reader who sees himself as the protagonist — the most important card in the deck of his social, professional, and intellectual life.

The sixteenth cover, by Bea Feitler, dated June 1960, features a weightlifter lifting a barbell with one hand and displaying two medals on his chest (Figure 16). This is the first of only three *Senhor* covers created by a woman, Bea Feitler. The image evokes physical strength and athletic performance, elements traditionally valued in the construction of masculinity. The figure of the medal-winning athlete symbolizes the valorization of male performance, whether intellectual or physical, which also expresses a “mix of exhibitionism and charm” (Melo, 2006, p. 116).

9 Brasília is a planned city, inaugurated in 1960 as the new capital of Brazil.



Source: Bustamante (2007, p. 51).

Figure 16. Covers of *Senhor* magazine: issues 15 and 16, authored by Glauco Rodrigues and Bea Feitler, respectively (1960).

These covers reinforce the visual and conceptual coherence of *Senhor* magazine, which, throughout its editions, built a multifaceted masculine imaginary, always centered on the figure of the man as a reference of power, culture, and sophistication. The various graphic and narrative approaches used on the covers demonstrate how the publication articulated visual elements to engage with its target audience, establishing itself as a space for affirming masculinity within the Brazilian editorial context of the period.

Despite its appeal to modernity, both in content and design, *Senhor* magazine reinforced patriarchal values rooted in the Brazilian society. This was expressed through the themes selected, the tone of the texts, and, most notably, the covers, which encapsulated a discourse aligned with the interests of the male elite. Directed, edited, and primarily illustrated by men, the publication not only reflected but also normalized a worldview centered on the male figure as the holder of symbolic, cultural, and material power.

The notion of masculinity promoted by *Senhor* adhered to a hegemonic model, in which the white, educated, and economically privileged man was presented as the universal reference of the human experience. According to Kimmel (1998 cited in Voks; Silva, 2022), societies construct normative ideals of masculinity that become cultural standards. In *Senhor*, this ideal appears in the protagonists of the texts and in the iconography of the covers, which delineated a canon of the modern man. Despite addressing modern and progressive ideas, the magazine maintained rigid class and gender boundaries, limiting who could be represented and to whom it was addressed. Thus, it reaffirmed an exclusionary imaginary, aimed at the intellectual and male elite of the period.

The analyzed covers continue to symbolically reproduce patriarchy, even when they appear to be distanced from the more obvious stereotypes of masculinity. The recurring presence of male figures portrayed as references of authority, intellect, or sophistication illustrates how the publication constructed an imaginary of masculinity aimed exclusively at a bourgeois male audience. This phenomenon is directly related to the power dynamics that shaped Brazilian society.

As Oliveira (2004 cited in Voks; Silva, 2022) argues, middle-class men, by seeing themselves as universal human beings, naturalize their privileges and fail to recognize how gender, race, and class affect their own experiences and those of those who are systematically excluded. *Senhor*, operating within this logic, reflected a discourse that legitimized this universalizing perspective and reinforced it through its editorial identity.

Based on the analysis by Voks and Silva (2022) of *Cláudia* magazine, which illustrates how, decades later, another publication still reinforced the maintenance of the patriarchal system, similarly, *Senhor*, decades earlier, reflected this same logic of subalternization. In this logic, men were represented as possessors of bodies, territories, and resources, while patriarchy operated as a system that ensured this ownership, functioning both as a social norm and as a mechanism for reproducing this hierarchical structure (Voks; Silva, 2022).

This principle manifested in *Senhor* not only through the systematic erasure of women and other social groups on its pages but also in the reaffirmation of men as the almost exclusive possessors of culture and knowledge. This narrative, constructed in the silence of the cover images of these 16 editions, reinforced a notion of man defined by the possession of knowledge and cultural capital, establishing invisible barriers that restrict access to these spaces for those who do not share the same social profile.

SENHOR MAGAZINE: BETWEEN MODERNITIES AND CULTURAL TENSIONS

Modernism, as a global movement, is often associated with technological progress and the idea of a “better life through technology” (Tunstall, 2023, p. 50, our translation). However, this narrative conceals the harms caused by mass-produced technologies, which perpetuate inequalities and exploitation, especially in colonial and post-colonial contexts. In Brazil, this hegemonic modernism took on specific contours, particularly from the 1930s onward, when the state began adopting modernist aesthetics as part of a national-developmental project (Niemeyer, 2002).

However, modernity in Brazil was not limited to the reproduction of European models. Alongside expressions of functionalist values, there was a movement to recover and update elements of Brazilian culture, aiming to reconcile tradition and innovation. This process was driven by contact between artists and intellectuals with European avant-garde movements, resulting in a diversified aesthetic production that encompassed visual arts, literature, music, and graphic design (Niemeyer, 2002).

As central platforms for the circulation of ideas and cultures, magazines are cultural products and agents that shape values and world narratives. Through them, discourses have been constructed, either to resist Eurocentric universalism and propose situated and plural interpretations of design practices, or simply to serve as another reinforcement of colonialities, with local touches.

Senhor magazine emerged in this context as a space for experimentation and innovation, challenging the boundaries between high culture and popular culture. It was a cultural magazine rooted in a modern behavioral stance, reflecting the social and cultural transformations of the period (Melo, 2006). Therefore, it played a mediating role for local and global references, articulating cultural debates, particularly in the field of literature, and political discussions focused on Brazil's progressivism in the context of global transformations.

In addition to producing vibrant expressions of artistic modernism, the magazines of this period impacted attitudes and behaviors beyond the elites (Cardoso, 2022). This impact, during the 1950s and 1960s, when Brazil underwent an accelerated process of industrialization and urbanization, deeply reflected in the country's visual and material culture. Within these movements, avant-garde projects aimed at approaching popular culture developed, supported by symbols of nationalism. *Senhor* magazine positioned itself as a space for experimentation and critique, even if subtly, of this movement (Basso, 2005).

The heterogeneity of *Senhor's* graphic design expressed the tensions between tradition and modernity on both local and global levels, embodying a Brazil in transformation. Although linked to modernism, the magazine was not confined to reproducing foreign models, reflecting a multifaceted and uneven modernity. For some, it pointed toward socialism; for others, it aligned with the interests of elites and the developmentalist national agenda.

While promoting progress and consumption, it also deepened inequalities. On one side, an elite with access to cultural goods and planned neighborhoods; on the other, a marginalized population excluded from the benefits of this development (Niemeyer, 2002; Basso, 2005).

The modernism promoted by *Senhor* prioritized experimentation, rejecting the mass model of central countries that, although promising universal progress, perpetuated inequalities. The concept of alternative modernity emerged as a response to these tensions, proposing flexible ways of relating to the world. *Senhor's* graphic design reflected this vibrant thinking, oscillating between the boundaries of modernism and sometimes challenging it. By integrating local and global elements, the magazine not only engaged with the society's ethos but also contributed to the construction of a pluralistic modernity.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the analysis of the graphic, textual, and editorial elements of *Senhor* magazine, in articulation with its sociopolitical and cultural context, its role as an artifact of graphic memory and cultural mediator was understood. As the results

indicate, although innovative in editorial design and visual language, the magazine constructed a discursive space aimed at an intellectual and elitist audience, promoting a specific vision of Brazilian modernity. *Senhor* articulated a sophisticated imaginary of masculinity and culture, aligned with foreign references, but also reinforced class and gender hierarchies. Despite representing the cultural and political transformations of the period, its discourse was confined to a normative ideal, excluding other experiences and reinforcing structural inequalities.

As a graphic memory artifact, *Senhor* magazine is a document that subtly captures values and oppressions that have historically persisted within the Brazilian social fabric. In the realm of representations, images are not merely neutral illustrations of reality; they participate in the construction of the collective imaginary. In the context of *Senhor*, this logic manifests in the systematic absence of any representation that diverges from ideals of white, elite, and culturally privileged masculinity. Throughout its editions, the publication did not leave room for the plurality of masculine experiences and lives in Brazil, confining itself to a normative ideal of man that reinforced gender, race, and class inequalities. The thematic selectivity of *Senhor* — focused on literature, visual arts, sophisticated behavior, and intellectual debates — dialogued with a literate and elitist audience who saw themselves as protagonists of modernity.

More than a mean of entertainment or reflection, the magazine functioned as an instrument of social distinction. The language, references, and construction of an ideal reader highlight this aim: to establish a discursive space that reaffirmed masculinity as an exclusive domain, ensuring the reproduction of the patriarchal model. *Senhor* thus becomes a testament to how visual and discursive representations uphold (and continue to uphold) exclusionary and hierarchical social structures.

By analyzing the magazine from a critical perspective, we find that, despite its modern and innovative proposal, *Senhor* did not break away from patriarchal values. By reaffirming the white, literate, elite man as the centerpiece of representations, it reinforced hierarchies that marginalized other groups from cultural visibility. Its legacy, therefore, goes beyond its graphic and historical impact, as it reveals how visual culture functions as a device of power: shaping perceptions, consolidating privileges, and perpetuating structural inequalities. The magazine exemplifies how aesthetically progressive projects can, simultaneously, uphold exclusionary structures under an appearance of modernity and sophistication.

This work contributes to studies of graphic memory, editorial design, and visual culture in Brazil by exploring the extensive material available to understand the aesthetic and intellectual dynamics of the period. By proposing new readings on the relationship between graphic design and sociopolitical processes, it highlights how the visual choices of *Senhor* magazine reflected class and gender hierarchies, as well as the intentions of its creators. Thus, the study enriches the field of design history by incorporating an approach that extends beyond aesthetics, considering the cultural and political meanings embedded in the editorial practices of the 1960s.

Despite its contributions, the study faced limitations that impacted the results. The selected time frame (1959–1964) allowed focus on the initial phase of the magazine (1959 and 1960), but prevented analysis of subsequent developments. Choosing the first 16 editions was also challenging due to limited access and the lack of digitization. Another limitation was the scarcity of recent studies on *Senhor*, as the available literature predominantly dates from the 2000s and has restricted access. Additionally, the inability to consult all editions compromised the comprehensiveness of the analysis.

For future studies, it is recommended to deepen the research in various directions. One possibility is a comparative analysis of *Senhor* with other contemporaneous magazines, especially Latin American ones, to investigate how different publications articulated discourses on modernity and cultural identity. The scope can also be expanded to include issues of race, gender, and class, analyzing how these aspects were addressed or silenced visually and textually. As a further step, a systematic analysis of *Senhor's* level of innovation is proposed, considering its impact on Brazilian editorial culture and its dialogue with international magazines from the same period.

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Contributions to graphic memory and Brazilian culture: the case of the Cover of *Ritmo* magazine Issue 1 (1935) in the context of Anthropophagy

Contribuições para a memória gráfica e cultura brasileira: o caso da Capa do Número 1 da revista Ritmo (1935) no contexto da Antropofagia

Leonardo Coelho Siqueira¹ , Marcos da Costa Braga¹ 

RESUMO

This article presents a graphic analysis of the cover of *Ritmo* magazine, issue number 1, published in 1935. To the best of current knowledge, this was the only issue ever circulated — and it bears a strong modernist character. However, we are concerned with demonstrating in this study how this specific cover reflects the graphic conveyance of elements praised by the cultural identity project of Anthropophagy, which was taking place at the time, as well as contributing to the study of graphic memory and design as part of national culture, rather than merely its graphic representative. It is important to highlight that the Oswaldian Anthropophagy is understood as a process of ingestion, carried out through cultural filters, resulting in a new product with local characteristics, derived from the assimilation of a foreign or imposed idea. From a methodological standpoint, the graphic analysis is structured around the compositional elements of the image, the typographic configurations within it, as well as the conceptual, contextual, and linguistic interactions with the illustrations on the analyzed cover. In addition, other theoretical references support the analysis in terms of culture, graphic memory, and graphic design. In this sense, it could be observed that the issue reflected elements of Brazilian identity as debated within Oswaldian Anthropophagy, through the representation and assimilation of ideological identity signs in the constructed image. Furthermore, it was also possible to draw parallels with other cultural manifestations, indicating relationships with other national periodicals and social circuits, evidencing the consolidation of signs of *brasilidade* (“Brazilianess”) emphasized in the Anthropophagic framework.

Keywords: *Ritmo* magazine. History of Brazilian graphic design. Brazilian graphic memory. Anthropophagy. Brazilian cultural identity.

ABSTRACT

O presente artigo apresenta uma análise gráfica da capa do número 1 da revista Ritmo, publicada em 1935. Até onde se sabe, esta edição foi a única que chegou a circular — tendo forte caráter modernista. Contudo, estamos preocupados em demonstrar neste estudo como esta capa em específico reflete a veiculação gráfica de elementos enaltecidos pelo projeto de identidade cultural da Antropofagia, que ocorria na época, assim como contribuir para os estudos de memória gráfica e do design como parte da cultura nacional, não apenas um representante gráfico da mesma. É importante pontuar que a Antropofagia oswaldiana é compreendida como um processo de deglutição, operada por meio de filtros, gerando um novo produto com características locais, derivado da assimilação de uma ideia estrangeira ou imposta. Em termos metodológicos, a análise gráfica é estruturada seguindo os elementos compositivos da imagem, as configurações tipográficas na mesma, bem como as interações conceituais, contextuais e linguísticas para com as ilus-

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trações na capa analisada. Além disso, outros referenciais teóricos sustentam a análise nos termos da cultura, da memória gráfica e do design gráfico. Nesse sentido, pôde-se medir que o número espelhou elementos de identidade brasileira debatidos pela Antropofagia oswaldiana — na representação e assimilação de signos de identidade da ideologia na imagem construída. Além disso, também foi possível traçar paralelo com outras manifestações culturais, indicando relações com outros periódicos nacionais e circuitos sociais, evidenciando consolidações de signos de brasilidade destacados na Antropofagia.

Palavras-chave: Revista Ritmo. História do design gráfico brasileiro. Memória gráfica brasileira. Antropofagia. Identidade cultural brasileira.

INTRODUCTION

Ritmo magazine can be understood as a cultural magazine that stands out for its modernist character in its time. Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011) highlight this affiliation, as well as the syntax of *Art Deco*, evidenced in the cover of the issue in question. Issue 1, investigated by the authors, was not located in the visited collections and, therefore, we contacted, via digital means, the researcher Homem de Melo, who informed us it was an issue of difficult access, likely to be a single edition. Being rare and with enormous potential to represent elements of Brazilian culture at the time it circulated, it was one of the publications considered in a master's thesis already defended (Siqueira, 2023), and for these same reasons it is the object of study of the present article.

According to the thought of Farias and Braga (2018), it is understood that the ephemeral documents were responsible for inaugurating discussions on graphic memory in Latin America. Therefore, the cover of *Ritmo* magazine is configured as a relevant object to be resumed and documented, as its memory has been undergoing the process of erasure. This statement is based on the fact that, up to date, the only known record of the journal is found in the work *Linha do tempo do design gráfico no Brasil* [Timeline of graphic design in Brazil], by Chico Homem de Melo and Elaine Ramos (2011). In this sense, we seek to document the memory of this cover, articulating it with a discussion pertinent to the Brazilian culture.

Understanding the importance of the cover in question for graphic memory, we present this article, in which we sought to analyze the cover of issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine, proposing a reflection on the possible contributions of Brazilian graphic design to the construction of an idea of *brasilidade* (Brazilianness) — based on the identity project proposed and disseminated by the Oswaldian Anthropophagy. To this end, our starting point is exploratory qualitative research with a strong character of historical study, through a case study, with a perspective on the microhistory approach. However, it is worth highlighting that we do not intend to discuss the anthropophagic idea proposed by Oswald de Andrade, but rather to demonstrate possible mirroring of elements of cultural identity of Anthropophagy in the studied cover.

Taking this into consideration, and bearing in mind the specific object of this article, the microhistory approach was adopted. The approach favors the observation of specific aspects of an object of historical study, that is, it reduces the scale of observation by the perspective of a historian to perceive aspects of an object that would go unnoticed in macro approaches, but without losing relations with its immediate surroundings, with broader social and cultural conjunctures of the society in which it is inserted. For this reason, microhistory helps us understand conceptual, contextual, and linguistic relationships between Anthropophagy and the image created on the cover of issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine.

The methods of microhistory make intensive use of primary sources, employing artifices of historical narrative, in order to perceive, at the same time, particularities of the object of study and “a broader social issue or a significant historical or cultural problem” (Barros, 2007, p. 175, free translation). Here, we are limited to what the source allows us, as we could not find the original copy of the journal — which impacts, for example, the impossibility of analyzing its core, but does not diminish the representative and discursive potential of the cover as to graphic memory. This corroborates the reflection by Braga and Ferreira (2023, p. 127), according to whom the microhistory approach helps in the observation of Brazilian design that “in many cases and in several areas arises and develops in specific socioeconomic and cultural contexts and conjunctures and in various temporalities” (free translation).

Conversely, we believe that microhistory is an important tool to explore gaps in graphic memory that still persist in the historiography of design, being the term *Memória Gráfica Brasileira (MGB)* [Brazilian Graphical Memory (BGM)] consolidated by highlighting “cultural artifacts and material traces of history” (Cardoso, 2018, p. 10, free translation). However, it should be noted that this term carries with it a longer development of knowledge in the field of design, supported by studies on material culture in the field of design as of mid-20th century until today (Fonseca, 2021). This reflection makes us ponder that the Brazilian graphic design not only represents elements of culture, but is part of its construction.

It is noteworthy that resuming and interpreting history are necessary actions to understand social history, thus enabling the identification of life experiences, culture, cultivated symbols, social imaginary, beliefs and values which form a collective memory, according to Halbwachs (1990 *apud* Fonseca, 2021). This symbolic set corroborates the Brazilian culture thought of Ortiz (2012), enabling an important parallel between graphic memory and Brazilian national memory. Farias and Braga (2018) reflect that the studies on graphic memory

not only contribute to insert graphic artifacts in the sphere of material culture and in the collective memory of a people — and, therefore, among the elements that express a sense of local identity —, but also contribute to the debate on the postulates of the professional identity of the local graphic designer (Farias; Braga, 2018, p. 21, free translation).

Conversely, Ortiz (2012) understands national memory as a set of abstract national elements that represent an identity that may or may not belong to a collective

memory. We can assume, therefore, that graphic memory is also an instrument that can help to understand a social configuration — which is directly related to the idea of a national memory and a Brazilian identity.

Regarding the 1930s, decade in which the cover we intend to analyze was created, there is a cultural and economic effervescence throughout the country, especially due to the modernization and urbanization since the end of the 19th century (Ferreira; Delgado, 2018). This scenario is added to a process of searching for an idea of nation, of Brazilianness, consisting of several cultural movements. In Siqueira (2023), we can notice that there were several projects of national cultural identity, proposed by many intellectuals from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century. These projects are political and, according to Bresciani (1998), they were forged by the interests of intellectuals of the time, who sought the fortification of a specific idea of homeland and Brazilianness — today often understood as stereotyped. However, in this study, we do not seek to bring to debate the stereotyping issue behind national identity projects, but rather to understand whether the Brazilian graphic design contributed or not to the formation of this symbolic universe. That is, if there was a function of symbolic intellectual mediator in this process. For Ortiz (2012, p. 139), intellectuals take on the role of symbolic mediators because “they are actually historical agents who operate a symbolic transformation of reality, synthesizing it as unique and understandable” (free translation). Hence, the designer could be understood as a symbolic intellectual mediator of the Brazilian identity, precisely by operating an idea and designing information in a way that is understandable by the mediator’s interpretation of a reality.

But what Brazilian identity project are we talking about? The project conceived by the Brazilian writer Oswald de Andrade, in 1928, called *Antropofagia* [Anthropophagy] — inspired by the work of great international recognition *Abaporu*, by Tarsila do Amaral (Oswald’s wife at the time). Anthropophagy advocated a resumption of national native culture, seeking a reconnection with the roots originating in the country, without ignoring the historical processes already taking place in the national territory. Reflecting on the text by Candido and Silvestre (2016), we can understand that Anthropophagy operates with ingestion, a process that mixes national culture with an imposed culture and produces a result through the filter of the operator (which could be understood as a symbolic intellectual mediator). Anthropophagy, then, aims to be timeless, philosophical, and focused on the construction of a national memory that favors the national signs — which are already part of a process of interculturality (Candido; Silvestre, 2016). But is this argument enough to observe this cultural identity project of Anthropophagy? Not only for this reason, but Anthropophagy gains international prominence and manages to establish a look at the Brazilian artistic and literary production that, according to some authors, was delegated to a mere copy of Portuguese aesthetics (Zanini, 1983; Fabris, 1994; Candido; Silvestre, 2016). In the field of Arts, not so far from graphic design, considering the 1920s and 1930s, when the professional field of graphic

design was not yet delimited as such and somehow belonged to the idea of graphic arts in Brazil, Anthropophagy behaved in an avant-garde logic (Fabris, 1994). So why not ponder about its emergence in graphic design?

Concluding the incitements of this article, it is worth mentioning the thought of Velloso (2018), who points out intellectual mediators of Brazilian identity on behalf of designers (such as Kalixto, J. Carlos and Raul Pederneiras) — who, from the author's histographic perspective, would become crucial figures to understand the languages and representations of the period. The understanding that Brazilian design has its manifestations linked to the context in which it is inserted leads to the reflection that Anthropophagy can be a point in history that influenced the evolution of the field of design in the country. Décio Pignatari (1964, p. 79) mentions the importance of the Modern Art Week and its consequent artistic and cultural movements for the "visual revolution" of the time; according to him, the visual world has undergone important changes, both for the design field and for the Brazilian identity. Previously, Pignatari (1964, p. 20) pondered that the designer's thinking must be "critical, anthropophagic, for the sake of the depth of their performance" (free translation). The author also pinpoints Anthropophagy as a direction to think of design as moving away from the copy, being Oswald de Andrade's thought internationalized, but still committed to national "values." From the author's perspective, Anthropophagy can be understood as "the cultural anthropology best suited to Brazilian civilization" (Pignatari, 1964, p. 20, free translation).

Conversely, it is worth underlining a historical and philosophical difference between the Modern Art Week and Anthropophagy. The Modern Art Week, although being an important historical landmark for the first phase of Brazilian Modernism, consolidates a cultural process that had been happening since the end of the 19th century (Fabris, 1994; Ferreira; Delgado, 2018; Siqueira, 2023). In addition, the Modern Art Week of 1922 presents itself as a specific and particular historical moment, which had great importance for the consolidation of movements, manifests, and ideologies that followed it — such as *Pau Brasil*, *Verde Amarelo* and *Antropofagia*. Anthropophagy, in turn, is an ideology (Candido; Silvestre, 2016; Nunes, 1970) that is timeless and specifically seeks to resume the Brazilian native culture. It should be noted that Anthropophagy had a group of intellectuals distinct from the Modern Art Week, even led by important names that organized the Week — such as Oswald de Andrade, Tarsila do Amaral, and Menotti Del Picchia.

In this line of reasoning, assuming that the Brazilian graphic design assimilated and mirrored, to some extent, elements of cultural identity of Anthropophagy, in this research we seek to answer the following question: What can be measured about a possible assimilation of the cultural identity elements of the Oswaldian Anthropophagy through a graphical analysis of issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine (1935)? The objective is to identify a possible representation of the idea of anthropophagic Brazilianness that circulated at the time by the Brazilian graphic design — more specifically on the cover of issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine. It is also noteworthy that we do not intend to prove links between illustrators, literary and editorial professionals of

the magazine and Anthropophagy; here, we seek to understand if anthropophagic ideas are reflected in the cover of the analyzed magazine and to what extent this occurs (without the need for affiliation between the parties and Anthropophagy).

METHODS

For the graphical analysis of this article, authors who follow the semiotic thought of Charles Morris (1976) (semiotic classification in three dimensions: syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic) were considered. The syntactic dimension is of the formal nature of signs and their relations; the semantic, the formation of meanings derived from signs and their interactions; and the pragmatic, the impacts of these meanings on observers, agents, and other users involved in the communication system in question.

First, reading the elements of the composition is indicated. André Villas-Boas (2009) states that the elements for graphical analysis can be divided into two groups: technical-formal and aesthetic-formal. The first is the design principles (unity, harmony, synthesis, balance, movement, and hierarchy) and the composition devices (graphic mass, structure, center alignment, and axis). The second group is formed by textual (text), non-textual (pictorial), and mixed (graphs, tables, infographics, etc.) components. Having established the recognition of the elements according to Villas-Boas (2009), the authors propose to draw parallels with the Anthropophagy elements identified in the *Revista de Antropofagia* [Anthropophagy Magazine]. Siqueira (2023) considered four categories of analysis that would represent the elements of cultural identity disseminated by Anthropophagy:

1. Race and ethnicity;
2. Tropicality, fauna and flora;
3. Festivities and local customs;
4. Regionalisms, national legends and folklore.

These categories arise from a long process of indexing 5,705 terms that could be represented in Anthropophagy. The most relevant terms were filtered by recurrence and contextual and linguistic conceptual attributes and grouped into the aforementioned four categories (the complete survey, as well as its step-by-step, can be found in Siqueira, 2023).

Considering the graphic elements identified by Villas-Boas (2009), we sought to understand if there is a representation of aspects that constitute the idea of cultural identity of the Anthropophagy used in typography, that is, meanings that could have been assimilated by typography in the composition that could be related to the circulation of ideas of Brazilianness proposed by the Oswaldian ideology. Priscila Farias (2016) therefore proposes to look at typography based on five categories: letter, word, text, page, and volume (see Figure 1). These factors help to understand typography as a representation of a context/meaning beyond its form, design. For the typographic classification in the graphical analysis, the model of Maximilien Vox (Silva; Farias, 2005; Figure 2) was considered.

	LETTER	WORD	TEXT	PAGE	VOLUME
SYNTACTIC DIMENSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · production mode · size · proportions · structure (box) · form · color 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · direction · alignment · continuity / segmentation · variation (form or structure) · space between letters · associated elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · column wide · space between words · alignment · interlineation · tonality of the text spot · column format · space between paragraphs · indentations · marking of lines, paragraphs, or text block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · grid · space between columns · space between text blocks · alignment of the text blocks · hierarchy · relation text blocks x images · demarcator elements of text blocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · material aspects · dynamic aspects · number of pages · height of the book spine · recording or reproduction system · bookbinding · relation between parts of the volume
SEMANTIC DIMENSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · relation with the alphabet · phonetic value · speed · rhythm · expressivity · assertiveness · producer status · history of form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · relation with the verbal language · sound value · speed · rhythm · expressivity · assertiveness · producer status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · relation letter/ content · sound value · speed · rhythm · expressivity · assertiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · relation letter/ image · sound value · speed · rhythm · expressivity · relative importance of the different parts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · relation letter/ format · values attributed to the materials · level of ephemerality or permanence · posture required from the reader
PRAGMATIC DIMENSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · visibility · legibility · expressivity · glyph area · effects generated by the meaning of the letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · visibility · legibility · expressivity · word area · readability · effects generated by the meaning of the word 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · visibility · legibility · expressivity · text area · readability · performance · effects generated by the meaning of the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · visual impact · text MANCHA · readability · performance · type of support · paper use · type of paper · effects generated by the meaning of the page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · visual impact · text volume · type of support · paper use · type of paper · finishing · obsolescence · effects generated by the meaning of the volume

Source: adapted from Farias (2016, p.49).

Figure 1. Systematization of the Farias' analysis model.

By observing the analysis model of Farias (2016) and the study object of this article (cover of issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine), it is noted that the *volume* category has no point in being analyzed, as a cover without its core could only be evaluated to the *page* category. It is also worth noting that there are aspects mentioned by the author that will not make sense for this specific analysis, as well as others that cannot be evaluated (such as several aspects of the pragmatic dimension, due to the lack of records and living agents).



Source: adapted from Silva and Farias (2005, p. 70).
 Figure 2. Maximilien Vox's model classifications.

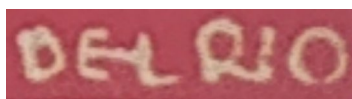
Subsequently, the authors aim to observe the composition following the pictorial graphic language of Evelyn Goldsmith (1980). The author, like Farias (2016), corroborates Morris, dividing her analysis proposal into the semiotic dimensions of syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics. However, Goldsmith (1980) categorizes it into visual factors: unity, location, emphasis, and text parallels. These factors enable the understanding of the composition of the image, obtained from the interaction between illustration and text, seeking to understand the representation of a context through dialogue between shapes and meanings. In Figure 3, the synthesis of the pictorial graphic language of Goldsmith (1980) is presented. It should be noted that the *text parallels* factor will not be evaluated according to Goldsmith (1980), because we understand that the method of Farias (2016) already accounts for the relations between text and illustrations in the image.

Factor	Syntactic Level	Semantic Level	Pragmatic Level
Unity	The recognition of an image is determined by the pictorial marks themselves, that is, by the chosen treatment of the image.	The recognition of an image is determined by the clarity of its main characteristics.	Cultural context is essential for the recognition of an image.
Location	At the syntactic level, the observer perceives the location of the object regardless of object recognition.	Understanding of size, position, and depth can be determined by object recognition.	Understanding of cultural context can determine the comprehension of size, position, and depth of an object.
Emphasis	Emphasis through factors such as shape, color, size, etc.	Emphasis through universally attractive elements, such as eyes, gaze direction, humans, etc.	Emphasis that depends on cultural habits, such as reading direction, meaning of certain colors, etc.

Source: adapted from Moreira, Fonseca and Gonçalves (2019, p. 2178).
 Figure 3. Systematization of Goldsmith's thought.

DEVELOPMENT AND RESULTS

Considering the proposed analysis method, we should contextualize the publication before starting the analysis. Once again, the journal is unknown and its only record is found in the work of Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011). On the one hand, we can infer that the magazine was published in São Paulo, because it is an information printed on the cover image of issue 1 of the magazine. Another information that can be verified is that the illustration on the cover is signed by Del Rio (Figure 4). However, we did not find new sources to allow us establishing social circuits in which Del Rio was inserted — the same applies to the publication itself. On the other hand, there are records of other journals that bear the same name, which can cause false approximations between them.



Source: adapted from Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011, p. 193).
Figure 4. Del Rio's signature present in issue 1 of the *Ritmo* magazine.

On the cover of the first and only issue found in the *Ritmo* magazine (Figure 5), Del Rio demonstrates mature style with strong influence of elements typical of graphic *Art Deco*, as well as of European modernism, on the composition (Homem de Melo; Ramos, 2011). The image created for the cover of *Ritmo* resembles these styles, in which it is complemented by nuances and gradients, as well developed in



Source: Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011, p. 193).
Figure 5. Issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine, 1935.

the posters of Adolphe Mouron Cassandre (Figure 6), an important Franco-Ukrainian designer, author of hundreds of posters, and a great exponent of this graphic style.



Source: available from: <https://www.graphaine.com/>. Access on: Feb. 23, 2025.
Figure 6. Example of Adolphe Mouron Cassandre's Deco aesthetics.

Convergences can be seen in the use of visual language in the compositions of Figures 5 and 6. The cover of issue 1 of *Ritmo* has the elements of the Deco syntax, but still with elements that refer to the Brazilian culture. This is an indication to investigate a possible influence of Anthropophagy on this manifestation — regardless of a clear relationship between the illustrator (Del Rio) and the ideology (Anthropophagy). To better interpret this manifestation, we developed Figure 7, which presents the technical and aesthetic-formal configuration of the composition.

With the analysis of Figure 7, we can perceive some formal issues of the composition of the aforementioned cover. Based on Villas-Boas (2009), we notice:

- Technical-formal elements
 - Design principles: The composition presents a symmetrical graphic mass between its elements, conferring an immediate harmony upon the visual



Source: adapted from Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011, p. 193).

Figure 7. Technical and aesthetic-formal configuration of the *Ritmo* magazine.

ensemble. The components are organized in a fixed grid, which indicates a possible intention of identity construction for the magazine — an aspect that could configure a graphic unit if it were replicated in subsequent editions. The choice for a palette restricted to two hues (red and black), combined with the presence of the illustration, results in a visual synthesis that highlights the banana tree centered on the composition. In addition, the hierarchy and balance between the elements demonstrate formal harmony, evidencing an effective integration between illustration and typography, with the visual weights evenly distributed and reinforcing the symmetry of the image;

- Composition devices: The modular grid suggests a fixed structure of page organization, in which elements are precisely arranged. The graphic mass is widely distributed, occupying almost the entire surface of the cover and creating, by contrast, a frame in the white areas of the paper. Its configuration refers to a quadrangular geometric shape, which

establishes a parallel with the orthogonal grids of European modernism — a characteristic that can be interpreted as an anthropophagic assimilation in the graphic making itself. The optical and geometric centers of the composition reinforce points of visual attention, highlighting both elements of the illustration and the number “1,” which indicates the release of the journal. This emphasis is further intensified by the reading curve suggested by the layout of the elements: the visual route begins with the “Ritmo” lettering (logo), followed by the illustration of the banana trees, going to the number “1,” and culminating in the information on date and location at the bottom of the cover — “São Paulo – novembro de 35” [São Paulo – November 1935]. It should be noted, however, that design decisions cannot be fully evaluated in this analysis; nevertheless, the composition indicates an intention, whether rationalized or intuitive, to hierarchize certain elements at the expense of others.

- Aesthetic-formal elements
 - Textual components: It is possible to identify three textual elements in the composition: “Ritmo,” the name of the magazine — possibly a lettering that can be interpreted as the logo of the journal; “1,” which indicates the edition’s issue — in this case, the first; and “São Paulo – novembro de 35,” which informs the place of publication (circulation/edition) and the date (month and year) of the print circulation;
 - Non-textual components: On the cover page of the magazine, it is possible to identify only one non-textual component: the illustration. We observe the representation of banana trees, composed of two main visual elements — the leaves and the bunches. The illustration uses a different color from the textual elements (red for banana trees and black for texts, as can be seen), which creates a chromatic contrast that reinforces the separation and highlight between image and typography;
 - Mixed components: We identified no components that merge textual and non-textual elements in the composition.

Thinking specifically of the textual elements identified in the composition of the image represented on the cover, starting from the categories expressed in the semiotic analysis model for typography by Farias (2016), based on the typographic classification proposed by Maximilien Vox (as adapted by Silva; Farias, 2005), we can observe:

- Syntactic Dimension
 - Letter: Although the absence of the original makes it difficult to understand the mode of production of the letters used on the cover of the magazine, we notice some noise and ink stains (Figure 8), which refer to manual processes. This would rule out, for example, the use of offset printing and increase the chances that movable-type printing was used.



Source: adapted from Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011, p. 193).

Figure 8. Details of the printing type on the cover.

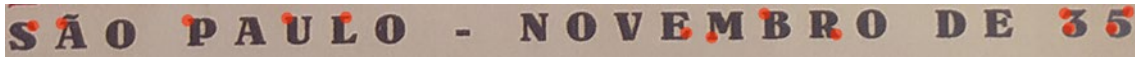
In "Ritmo," the spacing between "M" and "O," which coincides with the width of the illustration, suggests that there was a change in the spacing between the letters after the word was composed. The size of the letters (apparently above 72 points) is compatible with the hypothesis of the use of wood-made movable types, and the typesetter might have sawn the type to adjust the spacing. Another possibility would be the use of a matrix of a design of letters with spacing problems, or a single piece carved in wood and sawn to adjust the width. Finally, "São Paulo - novembro de 1935" (estimating the size at low points), seems to have been composed of metal-made movable types. When analyzing the size of the letters in the composition, we notice that there is a difference between the textual elements of "Ritmo" and "1" and those of "São Paulo - novembro de 35." In addition to the size differences, there is also a variation of style, which determines the shape of the letters. However, there is similarity in the structure of the letters, all presented in uppercase letters. In "Ritmo" and "1," we observe the appropriation of the *Art Deco* styles, with linear typography, without serif, and geometric shapes (Figure 9). The letters have angular and pointed terminals. In turn, in "São Paulo - novembro de 35," a didone typography is used, not supported. This is demonstrated by the letter "O," corresponding to the 12 and 6 o'clock



Source: adapted from Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011, p. 193).

Figure 9. Details of the typography used in "Ritmo" and "1."

positions, with serif, and by the refinement in the numbers “3” and “5” (Figure 10). The humanistic characteristic in the typography used counterbalances the seriousness and reliability in the design of the letters. However, when we observe the composition of the image as a whole, this difference is still subtle enough not to interfere with the geometric shapes of the linear typography used in “Ritmo.” Textual elements are presented in black color, possibly faded by the action of time;



Source: adapted from Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011, p. 193).

Figure 10. Details of the typography used in “São Paulo – novembro de 35.”

- Word: The words in the composition are represented according to the Western reading, from left to right and from top to bottom. The alignment of the textual elements is centered on the page. There are no variations of shape or structure in words with the same style. The spacing between letters seems to be regular in “São Paulo – novembro de 35,” whereas in “Ritmo,” we can notice differences between the letters that make up the word;
- Text: The composition presents textual elements arranged along the single visible column, centered on the page. There are no blocks of text with more than one line, which makes it impossible to analyze the lead. Moreover, no indent, pilcrow, or organization in text blocks are observed;
- Page: The grid of the page is quite fixed, as we have already seen in the other parameters, dividing it into three blocks of text, according to the graphic mass represented in Figure 7. This grid also organizes the textual elements “Ritmo,” “1,” and “São Paulo - novembro de 35,” creating uniform spaces between them. It can be seen that the style used in textual elements is the same as used in the illustration at the center of the page. When observing the page in its entirety, a black square stands out, which demarcates the textual element “1.”
- Semantic Dimension
 - Letter: In “Ritmo,” we observe that the letter “T” presents a different configuration from the usual one, with a shorter bar, which confers more rhythm upon the word. The typographic choice seems to be assertive for the context in which it is employed, especially due to the expressiveness provided by the size of the letters in “Ritmo” and “1,” which occupy the largest graphic mass of textual elements;
 - Word: We perceive that the letter “O” in “Ritmo” forms four equal quadrants, creating a perfect circumference, which establishes harmony with the counters present in the top of the letter “R.” The letters “I” and “T” contrast with the letters “R” and “M” due to the strokes and

- counters that make up the word, which highlights the rhythm of the word "Ritmo" [which means "rhythm" in English], reflecting the meaning of the term (signifier);
- Text: The typography used is aligned with the content, reflecting the logic of the musical rhythm and the context of the *Art Deco* style. Textual elements are in harmony with each other;
- Page: We observe the visual importance of the elements "Ritmo" and "1," which highlight the name of the magazine and its emergence, conferring visual emphasis on the elements of the image.
- Pragmatic Dimension
 - Letter: In "Ritmo" and "1," we can perceive a greater graphic mass, resulting in greater visibility in the composition. This is not the case with "São Paulo - novembro de 35," because, proportionally, the text block is much smaller, having little visibility when compared to the rest of the composition. We identified no legibility and readability issues. The *Deco* style used in the typography, reinforced by the visual language of illustration, refers to European modernism, which adds contextual information about the typography;
 - Word: Aspects of the letter are repeated in words;
 - Text: The textual element "1," highlighted in the geometric center of the page, stresses the semantics of being the first issue of the magazine, emphasizing this information and privileging it in relation to others. The graphic delimitation contributes to the construction of this idea;
 - Page: The page, in its entirety, shows a clear influence of European modernism on Del Rio's choices. We can observe a visual impact on the contrast between the colors of the typography and the illustration, which have different weights. However, the black typography occupies the foreground, which reinforces the modernist ideal present in the shapes of the letters.

Considering the typography analysis on the cover of *Ritmo* magazine, we will analyze the image considering the pictorial graphic language of Goldsmith (1980).

- Syntactic Dimension
 - Unity: We notice pictorial marks of the *Deco* style in the image created, both in the illustration and in textual elements. This confers a graphic unit on the composition, highlighting the choice of visual language in the image;
 - Location: The graphic mass is clearly divided into two elements: illustration and text. The illustration, positioned at the center of the page, contrasts with the textual elements, which occupy less space, but still stand out in relation to the text blocks;
 - Emphasis: The size of the letters, along with the black color applied to them, somewhat emphasizes their presence on the cover. However, the

use of red highlights the element illustrated at the center of the composition. The optical and geometric centers highlight both an illustrated banana bunch and the textual element "1," both centered on the image.

- Semantic Dimension
 - Unity: The graphic unit proposed in the image (considering its possible replicability) is systematic and fixed, reinforced by the modular idea in which the elements are distributed and interact with each other;
 - Location: The scale, proportion, and position of the elements of the page indicate that the image seeks to highlight the components that identify the magazine, the illustrated elements, and also the *Art Deco* style used in all elements of the page (except the textual element "São Paulo - novembro de 35");
 - Emphasis: The visual course of the image, as well as the sense of reading, highlights the "Ritmo" and "1" letterings, as well as the illustration of the banana trees on the analyzed cover.
- Pragmatic Dimension
 - Unity: To understand the intentions behind the cover image of issue 1 of the *Ritmo* magazine, it is essential to recognize the *Deco* aesthetics. Del Rio imports the gradients, the typographic style, the high contrasts, and the grid modularity of the construction of modern European styles. It is worth resuming that *Art Deco* is a style linked to modernity in the early 20th century (especially in the 1920s and 1930s; Baines; Haslam, 2005). The context in which the magazine is positioned in the editorial field marks the peak of the international *Deco* aesthetic (Meggs; Purvis, 2009) and the effervescence of the nationalist agendas in Brazil (Fabris, 1994; Ferreira; Delgado, 2018);
 - Location: The location of the elements of the page seems to benefit the characteristics of the *Deco* style in the image. The dynamics between the textual and pictorial elements privilege the qualities of the *Deco* style, but does not leave aside the representative Brazilian element: the banana trees. This is because there is a very clear delimitation of the spaces that the elements occupy on the page, once again reinforced by a grid with strong European modernism influences;
 - Emphasis: The emphasis on the constructed image is divided between the textual element "1" and the illustration on the page. The textual element "1," located at the center of the page, with its pointed terminals, is undoubtedly the first to be observed. Nonetheless, when reading the image of the analyzed cover again, the element that stands out is the illustration. This is represented in red, contrasting with the page voids (paper) and the typography's black. This contrast helps to highlight the banana trees represented, especially because they are in a hue distinct from black and white (positive-negative/light-dark logic). In addition, the use of color is an assimilation of European modernist

aesthetics, which often uses primary colors in contrast to black and white in graphic manifestations.

However, the choice of the representation of banana trees on the cover evidences an intention to highlight an element so dear to Brazilianness (Homem de Melo; Ramos, 2011; Siqueira, 2023) and demonstrates, in a discursive way, a possible relationship between its editorial and the nationalist guidelines that circulated in Brazil since the end of the 19th century — encompassing the landmarks of the Modern Art Week, the *Pau Brasil* movement, and Anthropophagy. Conversely, although the banana tree became a symbol of Brazilianness in the period, as you can see in Siqueira (2023), the fruit is not originally Brazilian, it is native to Australia and India, and was brought by the Portuguese when invading the Brazilian territory. This process alone already imposes an anthropophagic layer to the sign of banana trees — which stands out among the others when speaking of the cultural identity at the time.

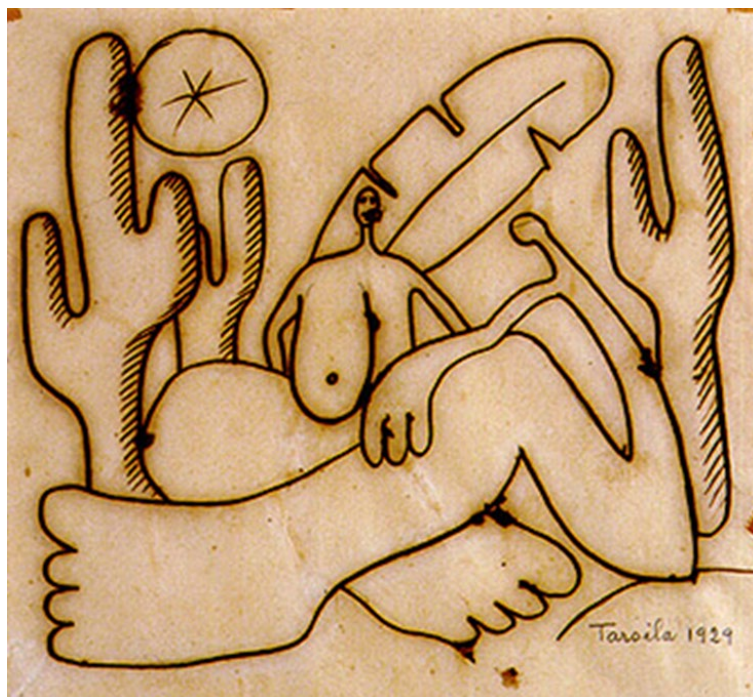
The fusion of the elements of *Art Deco* with the motif of banana trees — the notorious influence of modernism on the composition of the cover image of the magazine — leads to the approximation of anthropophagic discussions. The anthropophagic process can be identified by the assimilation of elements of styles external to our culture (international) and to ingestion, added to the elements of Brazilianness, represented here by the banana tree. The banana tree was identified in the discourse of the *Revista de Antropofagia* as an element representative of the idea of Brazilian cultural identity that had been sought after at the time. Homem de Melo and Ramos (2011, p. 193) state that “the theme of banana trees, so dear to Brazilianness, appears filtered by the characteristic geometrization of the *Deco* syntax” (free translation). The authors’ statement enables a direct association with anthropophagic thought and demonstrates that the thought of the fusion between elements of Brazilianness with motifs of other international styles already circulated among theorists of the field, although it was not mentioned as a specific manifestation. Nevertheless, it was usually associated with a maturation process of national graphic design, which we understand here as a manifestation, somewhat associated with the ideas of anthropophagy, which may have influenced both the design thinking and the aesthetics of the compositions.

In line with the aforementioned considerations, we have the work of Tarsila do Amaral, a great exponent of Visual Anthropophagy (Fabris, 1994) — which influenced Oswald de Andrade’s *Manifesto Antropófago* [Anthropophagus Manifesto]. Tarsila, in *Antropofagia*, 1929, unites the paintings *A Negra* and *Abaporu* in one composition to symbolize the ideas discussed by the group of anthropophagus intellectuals (Figure 11). It is worth noting the sign of the banana tree already represented by the artist in the center of the piece and close to the central figures (*A Negra* and *Abaporu*), highlighted by contrast and illumination in relation to the other elements that would be representing Mandacaru plants (which occupy the background). In this sense, we can point out that Tarsila privileges this sign in relation to others, reinforcing the idea that the banana tree was an important sign



Source: available from: www.encyclopedia.itaucultural.org.br. Access on: Feb. 24, 2025.
Figure 11. *Antropofagia*, 1929. Tarsila do Amaral.

for anthropophagic discourse and, consequently, the idea of Brazilianness that the group of intellectuals affiliated to Anthropophagy have been defending and circulating. Sketches by Tarsila do Amaral also reinforce the idea that the sign of the banana tree was thought to occupy the place it occupies on the canvas (Figure 12), in which the artist, from the first sketches, already evidences her intention to highlight and privilege signs in relation to others.



Source: available from: www.encyclopedia.itaucultural.org.br. Access on: Feb. 24, 2025.
Figure 12. Sketch of *Antropofagia*, 1929. Tarsila do Amaral.

However, this sign of Brazilianness (banana tree) was not restricted to the Arts; it also advanced through graphic design and was in force in Anthropophagy discourses. In Figure 13, we present other examples of covers of magazines published in São Paulo that adopted this sign in their issues. First, issue 20 of the *Arlequim* magazine, an important journal openly modernist. Subsequently, issue 379 of *A Cigarra*, which stood out for the influence on the São Paulo territory — having its national and international projection consolidated (Cruz, 1997).

We observe an intention in the images. In *Alerquim* (issue 20), the purpose is to privilege the sign of banana trees in the composition, a sign of prominence in the



Source: (a) Biblioteca Brasileira Guita e José Mindlin; (b) Biblioteca Nacional.

Figure 13. Examples of the use of banana trees in other São Paulo journals: (a) Cover of *Arlequim*, issue 20, 1928, Jean Gabriel Villin; (b) Cover of *A Cigarra*, issue 379, 1930, unidentified author.

work, being explored as an aesthetic and symbolic element, as occurs in the cover of *Ritmo*. In turn, in *A Cigarra* (issue 379), there is the use of the same visual resource that Tarsila uses in her work to highlight the illustrated banana tree, which stands out together with the central figure of the composition. This fact already shows that, not for nothing, this sign was represented on the cover of *Ritmo* magazine, also highlighted by color (red) to emphasize the verbal elements (typographical) arranged in the image. The visual resource used in issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine also indicates a circulation of the banana tree sign between artists and illustrators of the

time. This fact supports the reflection that there was, to some extent, an absorption of the identity signs idealized by Anthropophagy in graphic design.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Studying a research object without being able to confer depth upon documentary research and its historical background is undoubtedly a challenge. However, we understand that to bring to light manifestations of graphic design and contribute to the construction of Brazilian graphic memory, it is necessary to revisit sources as far as possible, even those unknown by historiography — even more so when we observe the latent difficulty in establishing collections concerning the field of design and its memory. Investigations in the field of graphic design focused on culture are still scarce when we think of a continental country such as Brazil, but we believe that studies like ours can contribute to the construction of a national, collective, and graphic memory of our country.

Issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine, object of our study, in turn, poses these challenges, but we deemed it very important to understand aspects of graphic language that may have contributed to the establishment of the idea of national culture disseminated by the Oswaldian Anthropophagy and known internationally even today. Indeed, we are considering a specific number that has its particularities, but in Siqueira (2023) we can observe that it is not an isolated fact when it comes to the territory of São Paulo. We observed that signs explored in Anthropophagy also circulated in graphic design, such as the banana tree chosen by Tarsila do Amaral to compose the work that brings with it the name of the Oswaldian ideology. This same sign reverberated by the modernist magazine *Arlequim* with prominence and explored between visual grids and the traditional geometrization of the journal. It was also evidenced in the cover of the magazine *A Cigarra*, as previously shown — having privileged location in relation to the other elements. And, more than five years after these manifestations, the *Ritmo* magazine used, in its release, the sign of banana trees without hesitation — demonstrating its strength in the Brazilian culture of the time.

This corroborates the circulation of ideas of Anthropophagy and assimilation/absorption of its discourses in the social circuits that interfered with the graphic design of the time. But beyond the state of São Paulo, the question remains about graphic manifestations of culture that may have circulated throughout the country. Did the Anthropophagy not influence new cultural movements? And more, did it not support the initiatives already circulating in Brazil? We assume that the response is positive, but we should investigate these manifestations to understand the dynamics in the field and their possible contribution to strengthening an idea of Brazilianness.

Here, we observed that *Ritmo* magazine exhibits the representation of the signs of national identity explored by Anthropophagy within a logic of the Deco synthesis, European heritage that spread throughout Brazil, also as a symbol of modernity. In addition, issue 1 of *Ritmo* magazine also consolidates the banana tree as an element of the Brazilian flora as a symbol of identity, being an example that can represent the graphic manifestation of anthropophagic thought in an iconic way.

Therefore, in this study, we sought to contribute to the perspective of the field of design aimed at Brazil, as there was an erasure of our manifestations prior to the emergence of concrete art in the country. Thus, it is necessary to fill and document these gaps in Brazilian design historiography. Following the starting points of Cardoso (2005), it is sought to understand these manifestations in national territory and to record, in some way, that which was disregarded by the great European and North American narratives, as observed in Meggs and Purvis (2009). In this sense, elucidating narratives with approaches such as microhistory can be a way to strengthen the Brazilian graphic memory and, thus, contribute to continuous counter-hegemonic narratives of erasure and silencing of cultures from the global South.

Finally, we highlight the first issue of the *Ritmo* magazine, an important object of study to understand the circuits of anthropophagic ideas as well as graphic manifestations of culture at the time. It should also be noted that the aforementioned issue demonstrates a manifestation of graphic design as a symbolic intellectual mediator that reinforces information and interpretations about a reality. Therefore, the case studied here is another indication of the importance of observing, reflecting on, and questioning the role of design and designers in the formation of discourses within society.

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What the covers say: a graphic analysis of copies of the alternative newspaper *De Fato* (1976–1978)

O que dizem as capas: análise gráfica de exemplares do jornal alternativo De Fato (1976–1978)

André Matias Carneiro¹ 

ABSTRACT

This article aims to elucidate how the graphic-editorial design of the covers of the alternative newspaper *De Fato* (1976–1978) in Minas Gerais communicated socio-politically engaged messages during Brazil's civil-military dictatorship through technical and aesthetic elements. Thus, the study falls within the field of graphic memory, which identifies graphic artefacts as important materials in the construction of a history of design. The methodology adopted follows the assumptions of André Villas-Boas, who advocates the critical practice of graphic analysis of visual programming projects, considering both the organization of elements in the *layout* and the historical context. In the search for more in-depth knowledge, procedures from Gui Bonsiepe's visual-verbal rhetoric were also used, applying concepts drawn from semantics to design. The results show that the design of the covers functioned as a visual translation of discourses permeated by social demands, driven by compositional strategies that demarcate the place of design in narrative disputes.

Keywords: Graphic analysis. Alternative press. Graphic memory. Visual-verbal rhetoric. *De Fato* newspaper.

RESUMO

Este artigo objetiva elucidar como o design gráfico-editorial das capas do jornal alternativo mineiro De Fato (1976–1978) comunicou mensagens de cunho sociopoliticamente engajado durante a ditadura civil-militar no Brasil por meio de elementos técnicos e estéticos. Dessa forma, o estudo se insere no campo da memória gráfica, que identifica os artefatos gráficos como importantes materiais na construção de uma história do design. A metodologia adotada segue os pressupostos de André Villas-Boas, que defende a prática crítica da análise gráfica de projetos de programação visual, considerando tanto a organização dos elementos no layout quanto a sua contextualização histórica. Na busca por conhecimentos mais aprofundados, também foram utilizados procedimentos da retórica visual-verbal de Gui Bonsiepe, aplicando os conceitos extraídos da semântica ao design. Os resultados mostram que o design das capas funcionou como tradução visual de discursos permeados por reivindicações sociais, impulsionados por estratégias compositivas que demarcam o lugar do design em disputas narrativas.

Palavras-chave: Análise gráfica. Imprensa alternativa. Memória gráfica. Retórica visual-verbal. *Jornal De Fato*.

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INTRODUCTION

This work is part of a doctoral research project that examines the visual characteristics of the Brazilian alternative press, considering this movement as a form of cultural resistance to the civil-military dictatorship that governed the country from 1964 to 1985. Within this framework, the study focused on the graphic and editorial design of two newspapers: one from Bahia and *De Fato*, published in Minas Gerais, the latter being the subject of the present analysis. By treating graphic artifacts as documentary sources subject to investigation through specialized methodologies, the research is positioned within the field of design history, specifically in the area of graphic memory studies.

The sociopolitical context in which the artifact was produced is reflected “in Brazilian design, both in a positive sense, linked to the stimulating atmosphere of the time, and in a negative sense, related to the suppression of freedom of expression” (Melo, 2008, p. 36). In this regard, graphic memory serves as a tool for analyzing communicational and pictorial artifacts from the past, with the objective of understanding the particularities of specific socio-historical contexts (Farias, 2017; Verissimo; Campello, 2019). It is noted that “valuing research that focuses on the most varied artifacts that make up material culture, produced at different times and in different places, is essential for the construction of Brazilian identity” (Fonseca, 2021, p. 13). Newspapers are included in this category and are regarded as sites of memory — artifacts of material culture that reflect the social, political, economic, and technological practices of their respective historical periods (Fonseca, 2021).

A graphic analysis of two *De Fato* covers was conducted based on the principles proposed by Villas-Boas (2009), who advocates for a critical examination of visual programming projects by evaluating the solutions adopted for organizing visual elements—namely, layout—alongside relevant historical variables. From a complementary perspective, considering the multiplicity of meanings involved in the production and reception of journalistic content, it becomes clear that the discursive content of newspapers is neither neutral nor impartial (Tavares; Vaz, 2008). To deepen the understanding of the messages conveyed by the covers, concepts from visual-verbal rhetoric were incorporated, defined as “a set of empirical persuasive techniques used to influence the emotions and feelings of the message recipients” (Bonsiepe, 2011, p. 115).

Rhetoric, by operating within the structural logic of the graphic piece itself, engages with its semantic field and fosters a reflective approach guided by the manifestation of language. This perspective creates an opening “for the study of characteristics that allow us to recognize, in a graphic composition, the creative, persuasive, and argumentative potential of Graphic Design: its Rhetoric” (Almeida Junior; Nojima, 2010, p. 16).

Additionally, the decision to investigate the front pages is justified by their capacity to provide immediate identification of the publication. Once analyzed, these elements allow for discussions that extend beyond design, encompassing cultural, economic, and, in particular, social issues.

BRAZILIAN AND MINAS GERAIS ALTERNATIVE PRESS

The alternative press, also referred to as the “political,” “*nanica*” (tiny), “independent,” or “underground” press, is understood as a resistance movement that emerged during the Brazilian civil-military dictatorship (1964–1985). It was primarily driven by professionals “organized in cooperatives, with lean structures and operating outside the industrial model” (Carvalho, 2013, p. 35). Influenced by the American counterculture and new journalism, this segment addressed social and behavioral issues from a fresh perspective, receptive to the transformations occurring globally (Barros, 2005).

Alternative periodicals positioned themselves in opposition to the mainstream press’s alignment with the dictatorship, indicating that the political conditions of the time played a crucial role in fostering their emergence (José, 2015). Notably, the consolidation of this segment occurred during the regime’s most repressive phase, after the failure of armed resistance became apparent. Consequently, these publications served as a legal platform for political resistance, where numerous journalists, intellectuals, and former militants sought not only to express dissent but also to create an alternative professional space outside the commercial press (Abreu, 2002).

During the years of the dictatorship, “around 150 periodicals were born and died, all sharing a common trait: an uncompromising opposition to the military regime,” as noted by Bernardo Kucinski (2018, p. 11) in *Journalists and Revolutionaries: In the Times of the Alternative Press (Jornalistas e revolucionários: nos tempos da imprensa alternativa)*, one of the most influential works on the press during this period. Regarding the sociopolitical and economic context, it is important to emphasize that, while civil liberties were severely restricted, the “modernizations brought about by economic growth intensified the striking contradictions between the practices of an industrialized and urban society and a politically closed regime” (Vilela *et al.*, 1996, p. 31). The print newspaper, as a media category, was affected by this economic modernization, experiencing significant changes in production processes, including technical innovations in journalism, improvements in printing facilities, and the introduction of offset printing. Within this context, the *nanicos* (underground newspapers), “with access to offset printing, freely created new column and headline formats, which stood out due to their innovative nature and increased their appeal among intellectuals and artists” (Teixeira, 2024, p. 263).

Multifaceted in nature, the alternative press included both national and regional publications, exhibiting considerable diversity by addressing topics ranging from cultural issues to gender, including homosexuality and women’s rights, and, above all, establishing itself as a form of journalism actively resisting the dictatorship (José, 2015). Beyond their oppositional stance, these newspapers shared common structural features, such as the tabloid format and a pronounced emphasis on graphic design in their editions (Magalhães; Musse, 2016). Their print runs were irregular: some were sold at newsstands, while others circulated within party circles, clandestine leftist movements, academic centers, and the student movement.

Regarding the persecution of these small outlets, Magalhães and Musse (2016, p. 4) highlight that the alternative press endured severe military repression, “especially the more popular and irreverent ones, which were even seen as enemies by the censoring (surveillance) bodies, receiving a harsher degree of censorship.” Although tolerated, these newspapers remained under strict surveillance and faced not only rigorous censorship but also attacks from far-right groups (Capelato, 1994). As a result, few critically oriented newspapers maintained long-lasting trajectories.

According to Kucinski (2018), approximately 25 newspapers intrinsically opposed to the political model of the time had lifespans of up to five years. Despite the considerable variety of editorial approaches, aesthetic solutions, and thematic, regional, and ideological diversity, none survived the authoritarian regime with their original characteristics intact. Nevertheless, the alternative press served as a space for political and ideological reorganization “within the specific conditions of authoritarianism. Therefore, [...] it acquires an importance that goes beyond its appearance as a collection of newspapers or as an ideological-cultural creation” (Kucinski, 2018, p. 15).

With a territorial focus on this approach, Kucinski’s work (2018) was again adopted as the primary source to identify titles circulated in the state of Minas Gerais during the dictatorship period. The initial survey was based on a listing presented in the book, where publications are organized chronologically by their year of inception. The list includes seven organizational factors, as outlined at the top of Chart 1: year of emergence; title; city of foundation; paper format; publication frequency; editor; and categories describing the journalistic language and other characteristics. These categories vary according to the following codes: (P) predominantly political newspapers; (R) reportage; (H) humor; (C) cultural; (F) feminist; (A) anarchist; (G) gay; (E) ecological; (n) national; (r) regional; and (e) ephemeral, indicating publications lasting less than one year; otherwise, the total number of years in circulation is provided.

In addition to the publications listed by Kucinski (2018), other periodicals produced in the state were included based on parallel investigations, such as the magazine *Circus* (1973), referenced in a document by the Truth Commission of Minas Gerais (*Comissão da Verdade em Minas Gerais – COVEMG*, 2017), and the newspaper *Sete* (1970) from Juiz de Fora, examined in a study by Magalhães and Musse (2016). Ultimately, the list presented in Chart 1 was compiled, with the acknowledgment that some fields related to the characteristics of the periodicals remain incomplete due to the lack of more precise information.

For this article, the selection of one newspaper was based on the following criteria:

- availability of visual material;
- availability of access to physical or digital archives suitable for review.

Through searches in libraries, public newspaper archives, digital collections, and academic databases, a group of periodicals was identified, including *Binômio*,

Chart 1. Survey of alternative printed materials from Minas Gerais.

Year	Title	City	Format	Freq.	Editor	Classif.
1952	Binômio	Belo Horizonte	Tabloid		Euro Luiz Arantes	P r 12
1958	Binômio	Juiz de Fora	Tabloid		Fernando Zerlottini	P r 6
1968	Piquete	Belo Horizonte				
1970	Sete	Juiz de Fora	Tabloid	Weekly	Ivanir Yazbeck	
1973	Vapor	Belo Horizonte	Tabloid	Monthly	Aloísio Moraes	P r e
1973	Circus	Belo Horizonte	Magazine	Monthly	Aloísio Moraes	R r e
1974	Mantiqueira	Poços de Caldas	Standard	Weekly	Luís Nassif	R r e
1976	De Fato	Belo Horizonte	Tabloid	Biweekly	Aloísio Moraes	P n 3
1976	Expansão	Uberaba		Biweekly	Pedro C. de Oliveira	R r e
1976	Jornal dos Bairros	Belo Horizonte	Tabloid	Biweekly	Edson Fernandes	R r 4
1976	Paca Tatu, Cotia Não	São Gotardo	Magazine	Irregular	Júlio Prado	C r e
1977	Dois Pontos	Poços de Caldas		Weekly	Luís Nassif	R r e
1977	Mutirão	Patos de Minas		Monthly	Roberto Melo Maia	R e
1977	O Vagão	Belo Horizonte	Mini tabloid	Monthly	Coletivo	C r e
1978	Geraes	Vale do Jequitinhonha	Tabloid	Monthly	Aurélio Silby	R r e
1979	Uai	Poços de Caldas	Tabloid	Monthly	Coletivo	P r e
1979	Cometa	Belo Horizonte	Tabloid	Monthly	Aloísio Moraes	P r 30

Source: adapted from Magalhães and Musse (2016) and Kucinski (2018).

Sete, *Circus*, and *De Fato*. Subsequently, in pursuit of additional information — particularly regarding visual characteristics — complete, high-resolution digital editions of *De Fato* were located and made available for consultation on the website of the Central and Historical Archive of Universidade Federal de Viçosa (UFV). Given the accessible graphic material, which demonstrated significant relevance in terms of design elements, *De Fato* was selected as the object of study.

DE FATO (1976–1978)

The newspaper *De Fato* was founded in January 1976 in the city of Belo Horizonte, conceived by journalist Aloísio Moraes, who also served as the editor of the publication. Over its two years and nine months of existence, a total of 27 issues were published, all in tabloid format. The newspaper was produced by the

editor-in-chief with the support of the editorial staff, fourteen regular contributors, and additional collaborators who worked on specific issues (Leão, 2015). Across its monthly editions, “more than 100 people were involved: [...] some stayed from the beginning to the end, but most had a brief presence” (Carrato, 2022, p. 103).

The publication emerged at a unique moment during the civil-military dictatorship, when “civil society in Minas Gerais and Brazil was already showing the first signs of wanting the return of democracy, civil rights, and amnesty for political prisoners, exiles, and those banned by the regime” (Carrato, 2022, p. 100). In this context, the catalyst for the creation of *De Fato* was the murder of the journalism director at São Paulo’s TV Cultura, Wladimir Herzog, at the DOI-CODI¹ headquarters in October 1975 (Carrato, 2022). According to Kucinski (2018, p. 100), Herzog’s death triggered internal crises in several newsrooms, leading to the emergence of alternative newspapers founded by respected journalists in capitals outside the Rio de Janeiro–São Paulo axis. *De Fato* was born out of a rebellion by journalists at *Jornal de Minas*, which occurred after its editor, Afonso Paulino, publicly supported the repression in various editorials (Kucinski, 2018; Morais, 2018).

It was in this context that Aloísio Morais, then a correspondent for *O Globo*, alongside journalists from *Jornal de Minas* and students of communication and psychology, conceived a new alternative newspaper founded on the principle of “journalistic autonomy.” Launched without formal management or working capital, *De Fato* was initially produced in Morais’s home. Revenue from the sale of each edition, approximately seven thousand copies, financed the production of the next. Distribution was typically carried out by the newspaper’s own team, who sold copies individually at bars, and outside cinemas and theaters (Kucinski, 2018; Carrato, 2022).

The structure of *De Fato* as a communication vehicle included an editorial, a letters section featuring readers’ correspondence (ranging from commentary on topics covered in previous editions to socially engaged denunciations), news articles, reports, opinion pieces, a humor section (titled “*Humordaz*”), small advertisements from local businesses, numerous images, and short stories. Each edition averaged approximately 20 pages, increasing to 24 pages from the 17th edition onward, with even higher page counts in the final issues (Leão; Torre, 2016).

Regarding its journalistic identity, the publication was “committed to protecting the exercise of citizens’ rights against a dictatorship that restricted freedom” (Leão, 2015, p. 65). Although it was part of the cultural and political resistance to the dictatorship, the newspaper was not subject to direct censorship by the Censorship Division of the Ministry of Justice — which did not prevent constant threats made by repression agents against its journalists.

In an effort to raise awareness among its readers, *De Fato* addressed topics largely ignored by conservative society, establishing itself as a prominent platform

1 Information Operations Detachment (*Destacamento de Operações de Informações – DOI*) – Internal Defense Operations Center (*Centro de Operações de Defesa Interna – CODI*), agencies responsible for carrying out repression.

for the communication of ideological proposals through the production and social engagement of the young journalists involved in the project (Lemos; Duarte, 2021). In its early issues, the newspaper covered themes such as feminism, homosexuality, and popular culture, alongside discussions on cinema, theater, and literature (Lemos; Duarte, 2021; Carrato, 2022).

Nonetheless, the newspaper's primary focus was on local issues, particularly the hardships faced by the most vulnerable segments of the population. According to Lemos and Duarte (2021, p. 194), the journalism practiced by this alternative newspaper from Minas Gerais constituted "an intervention, in the sense of telling, showing, analyzing, and denouncing social and political life localized in the urban environment of the 1970s, in the capital of the state of Minas Gerais." As noted by Leão and Torre (2016), the tabloid published articles that addressed internal social tensions, aiming to expose the lack of infrastructure in various neighborhoods, along with issues related to public transportation, housing, and expropriation.

Ultimately, the newspaper's run came to an end in October 1978, not as a direct result of repression, but due to related factors, including the invasion of its newsroom by vandals and a shift in pursuit of more effective means of opposing authoritarianism through journalism (Morais, 2018; Carrato, 2022). Nevertheless, given *De Fato's* stance as a combative communication outlet against the dictatorship, it may be inferred that the visual and editorial elements of its covers serve as indicators of its "role in resisting censorship and the silencing imposed by the dominant mainstream press" (Leão, 2015, p. 66).

COVER DESIGN IN PRINT NEWSPAPERS AND VISUAL-VERBAL RHETORIC

According to Caldwell and Zappaterra (2014), editorial design fulfills multiple functions, including conveying expression and personality to the content, attracting and retaining readers, and organizing elements in a clear and coherent manner. These functions, as the authors emphasize, must operate simultaneously and continuously to produce outcomes that are enjoyable, useful, or informative — often combining all three. In this context, the importance of "engaging readers through visual presentation in order to foster interest in reading" is underscored (Damasceno, 2013, p. 8).

With regard to editorial design in the context of journalism, Gruszynski and Damasceno (2014) note that graphic forms emerge from the interaction between these fields, serving as the visual expression of journalistic content. Accordingly, various terms are employed to describe the set of elements and processes that create identity and confer visual form to journalistic discourse — newspaper design, press design, visual journalism, journalistic design, and news design are among the most commonly ones in specialized literature are (Gruszynski, 2012; Travassos, 2012; Damasceno, 2013; Caldwell; Zappaterra, 2014; Moraes, 2015).

An examination of the visual characteristics of printed newspapers reveals that design is intrinsically linked to the publication's editorial project and, ultimately,

constitutes a specific form of visual identity design (Moraes, 2015). Editorial design determines how and where each topic will be presented, that is, graphic design, in this context, defines the format, layout area (including margins), column structure and spacing, typography, color palette, and iconographic elements that collectively articulate the publication's conceptual identity (Gruszynski, 2012).

In this context, the front page plays a central role in consolidating a newspaper's identity, serving as a reflection of its journalistic stance. It is the space where visual and editorial elements are synthesized and most readily absorbed by readers. Between 1950 and 1990 — the period during which *De Fato* was published — marketing and advertising concepts promoted heightened graphic-visual awareness. This shift, driven by economic-industrial logic, led newspaper owners to regard the publication as a product and the front page as its packaging (Travassos, 2012). As the primary visual interface with the reader, the front page is designed to attract attention and realize the newspaper's communicative potential (Ferreira Junior, 2003; Damasceno, 2013).

At the intersection of design and journalism, there are distinct approaches to front pages, but generally, they can be classified into three categories: figurative, abstract, and text-focused (Caldwell; Zappaterra, 2014). However, it is important to highlight that among the "range of differentiations that a newspaper layout must promote, there is one that perhaps can be [...] the most evident to the reader: the difference between the appearance of the front pages and the appearance of the inside pages" (Damasceno, 2013, p. 30).

When designing a newspaper cover, professionals must attend not only to its communicative and informative functions but also to the demands of synthesis and persuasion. These characteristics align the cover with the field of rhetoric, as Bonsiepe (2010) asserts that "information without rhetoric is an illusion." According to the author, the act of designing an object for communication inherently involves rhetorical mechanisms. In his view, "'pure' information exists only in sterile abstraction. As soon as one begins to give it a concrete form, rhetoric begins its process of infiltration" (Bonsiepe, 2010, p. 180).

Recognized as the classical art of persuasion, the "objective of rhetoric is, fundamentally, to shape opinions, determine the attitude of other people, or influence their actions" (Bonsiepe, 2010, p. 177). Thus, this work proposes the use of rhetoric as an analytical-descriptive tool, favoring the refinement of analyses regarding the relationships between the verbal and non-verbal content of the studied graphic compositions, and their consequences on the reading public. For this purpose, visual-verbal rhetoric is the most suitable tool for the proposed objectives.

Over time, classical rhetoric, verbal and strictly related to language, gave way to visual rhetoric because it could no longer "describe and analyze phenomena in which verbal and visual signs, that is, word and image, are associated" (Bonsiepe, 2010, p. 178). Posters, advertisements, films, newspapers, magazines, and commercials are just some examples of artifacts that evoke image-word combinations, in which the signs are independent but interact closely. Therefore, it is understood

that, just like such combinations, there are different relationships of signs and figures of visual-verbal rhetoric in these artifacts (Bonsiepe, 2010).

In visual-verbal rhetoric, therefore, rhetorical figures are combinations of two types of signs (linguistic and visual), “whose communicative effectiveness depends on the tension between their semantic characteristics. The signs cease to simply add up and begin to operate, more precisely, in cumulative reciprocal relationships” (Bonsiepe, 2010, p. 181).

GRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE COVERS OF *DE FATO* NEWSPAPER

The selection of covers for analysis was based on the availability of digitized editions of *De Fato* within the digital archive of the Central and Historical Archive of UFV, specifically issues 9, 17, 20, 21, and 22 of the newspaper. Figure 1 displays these covers in chronological order. Among the five examples, the covers of issues 20 and 21 stood out due to their graphic and visual characteristics. The primary selection criteria included the prominent use of color as background within the compositions and the unconventional arrangement (both verbal and visual) in the graphic design, features that distinguish these covers and attract attention. Furthermore, the selected covers addressed key themes aligned with *De Fato*'s journalistic stance, particularly concerning the social issues of the period, and were published during the newspaper's most politically engaged phase (Carrato, 2022).



Source: Central and Historical Archive of Universidade Federal de Viçosa (UFV).

Figure 1. Covers of issues 9, 17, 20, 21, and 22 of the newspaper *De Fato*, respectively.

It is noteworthy that the professionals responsible for the layout and assembly of *De Fato* issue 20 were Edson Ricardo Teixeira de Melo and Dione Maria Dutra, whereas issue 21 was solely laid out by Edson, as indicated in the mastheads (De Fato, 1977). Additionally, the graphic analysis method employed followed the approach proposed by Villas-Boas (2009) in the article “*About critic design strategies and teaching practice.*”

From another perspective, in agreement with Tavares and Vaz (2008), who define the newspaper as a communication medium characterized by communicative strategies manifested through the coexistence of text and image, the discussion proceeds based on the visual-verbal rhetorical patterns proposed by Bonsiepe (2010; 2011). Communicative intentions are primarily revealed “through rhetorical patterns described as ‘the art of saying something in a new way’ and ‘the semantic transformation of words and the effort to give greater persuasive power and vitality to discourse’” (Bonsiepe, 2011, p. 117).

The method proposed by Villas-Boas (2009) considers graphic analysis as a critical-analytical practice involving technical-formal and aesthetic-formal elements, as shown in Chart 2. The technical-formal elements (or technical elements) are those that the average observer does not see (or tends to ignore), whereas the aesthetic-formal elements (or aesthetic elements) refer to what the observer actually sees in the layout (images, lettering, colors, etc.). In other words, the technical elements concern the overall organization of the aesthetic elements on the surface of the design, but not the aesthetic elements themselves (Villas-Boas, 2009).

Chart 2. Summary of aesthetic and technical elements.

Layout	Technical elements	Composition devices	Graphic Mass Structure Centering Axis
		Design Principles	Unity Harmony Synthesis Balance Movement Hierarchy
	Aesthetic elements	Textual components	Kicker Headline Subheadline Subheading Body text Drop cap Caption Pull quote Recurring unit (etc.)
			Non-textual components
		Mixed components	Graphic Logotype Illustrated table Infographic (etc.)

Source: adapted from Villas-Boas (2009).

The analysis begins with the identification of the design area and its dimensions. *De Fato* adopted the tabloid format, with each front page, inner page, and back cover measuring approximately 27 cm in width by 32 cm in height (Moraes, 2015). Based on this information, the subsequent step involves the identification and description of the technical elements that structure the layout — beginning with issue number 20 (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Cover and layout of issue 20 of *De Fato*, Dec. 1977.

The technical elements are categorized into two groups: compositional devices and design principles. Compositional devices are instrumental design techniques employed to position aesthetic-formal elements on the layout's surface (Villas-Boas, 2009). The most fundamental of these is the graphic frame, which establishes margins and defines notions of bleed. In the cover under analysis, the aesthetic elements that mark the vertices of the graphic frame are the newspaper's logo and the textual component positioned at the bottom of the layout (Figure 3). According to Moraes (2015), the graphic frame of the tabloid format typically measures 24.7 cm in width by 30 cm in height.

The layout structure serves as a device that organizes the positioning and dimensions of aesthetic-formal elements on the design surface by dividing the graphic frame into preferably homogeneous modules (Villas-Boas, 2009). These modules are derived using a structural diagram composed of horizontal and vertical lines. In the composition under analysis, the spacing between the vertical lines was determined by the width of the header — positioned below the logo —, while the horizontal lines were guided by the height of the newspaper's title, which served as the basis for defining the module dimensions.

Centering is a compositional strategy that aligns the layout according to two reference points: the Euclidean geometric center and the optical center. Its application enhances the organization of the layout and increases the visual prominence of specific aesthetic-formal elements. On the cover of issue number 20 of *De Fato*, the tracing of these centers reveals a strong alignment with the photograph, which is positioned for strategic visual impact (Villas-Boas, 2009). Notably, the optical center is located almost precisely at the eye of the photographed subject, Charlie Chaplin (1889–1977).

Design principles, in contrast to compositional devices, do not constitute specific arrangements or prescriptions; rather, they are historically determined references (Villas-Boas, 2009). In the composition under analysis, the most prominent

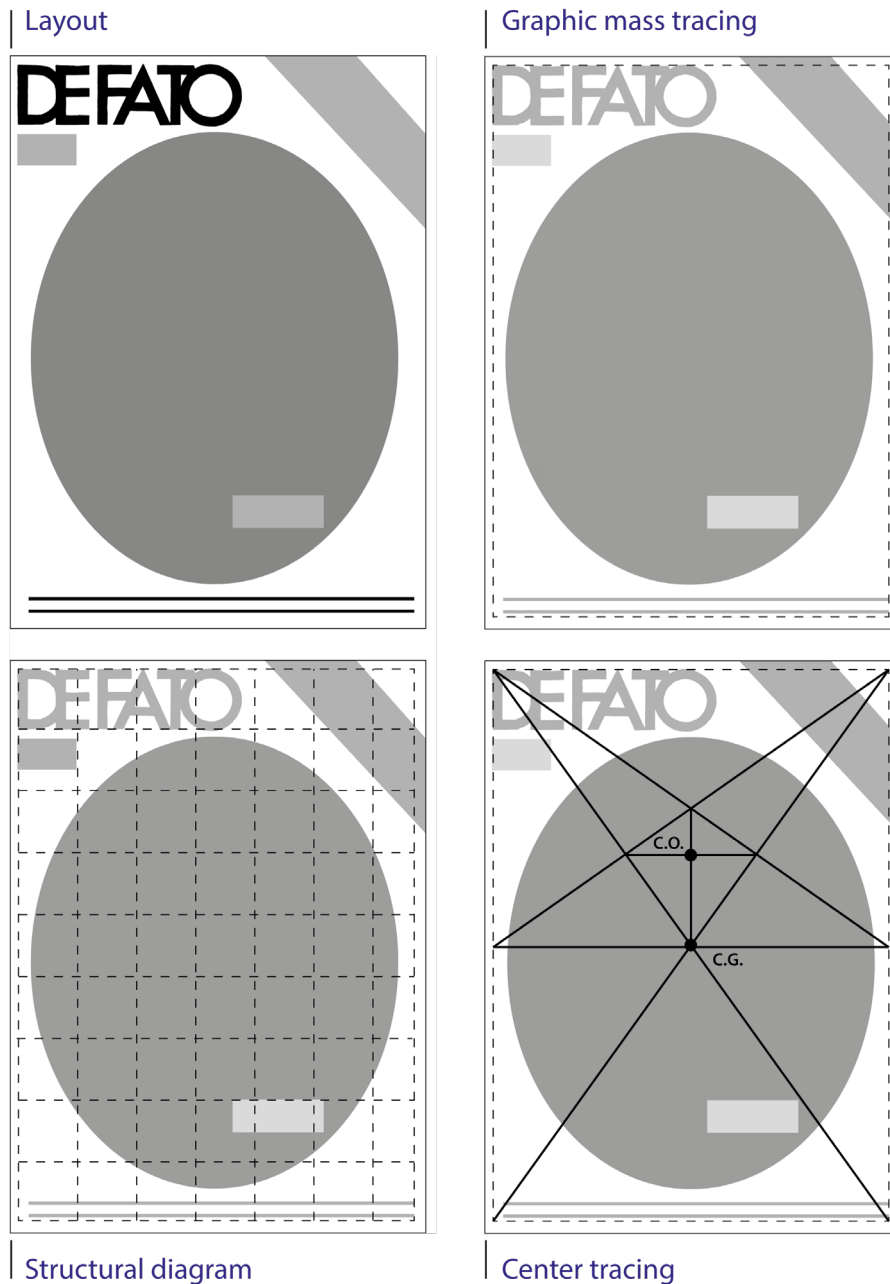


Figure 3. Layout and specifications of the compositional devices.

principles are synthesis and hierarchy. With a limited number of verbal and visual elements, the cover effectively synthesizes key information to facilitate communication. Complexity is achieved through the combination of simple components, with synthesis functioning as a design principle capable of organizing a “richness of meaning and form into a total structure that clearly defines the place and function of each detail within the whole” (Arnheim, 2011, p. 52).

Visual hierarchy is established through the positioning and scale of aesthetic elements on the cover, structured to guide the viewer’s reading in accordance with the relative importance assigned to each element (Villas-Boas, 2009). The photograph receives the greatest prominence, as it occupies a substantial portion of the composition and is centrally positioned. This prominence

enhances the significance of the message associated with the image, creating a visual dividing point that influences the viewer's mode of navigation/reading (Lupton; Phillips, 2008).

Consequently, it is noted that the examination of the design principles brings the analysis closer to the aesthetic elements present in the composition, and thus, the recognition and discussion of these elements, indicated in Figure 4, follows.



Figure 4. Identification of the aesthetic elements.

With regard to the textual components, a prominent diagonal (black graphic) in the upper right corner features the headline: “BRAZILIAN POLITICS IN 1978: WHAT WILL IT BE, WHAT WILL IT BE?” (*A POLÍTICA BRASILEIRA EM 1978: O QUE SERÁ, QUE SERÁ?*), referencing the song *O Que Será* by Chico Buarque, released in 1976. Within the context of authoritarianism, the newspaper evokes uncertainty about the future, a sentiment visually reinforced by the expression of doubt and apprehension in the photograph, particularly through Charlie Chaplin’s anxious gesture of “biting his nails.” This demonstrates the use of the rhetorical pattern of visual/verbal analogy, in which “a verbal comparison is transferred to the visual field through equivalent semantic signs” (Bonsiepe, 2011, p. 118), or when “a verbally expressed referent is confronted with a similar referent expressed visually” (Bonsiepe, 2010, p. 181).

Another verbal-textual element appears at the bottom of the layout, where the following headline is displayed: "SPECIAL, 20 PAGES: THE WORKERS IN EIGHTY YEARS OF BEAGÁ'S HISTORY" (*ESPECIAL, 20 PÁGINAS: OS TRABALHADORES EM OITENTA ANOS DA HISTÓRIA DE BEAGÁ*). It is noteworthy that, beginning with issue number 20, *De Fato* began to engage more intensively with the labor movement, establishing it as a central theme through the publication of interviews and articles addressing the political struggle of the working class (Leão; Torre, 2016).

On the other hand, the main headline of the issue is not explicitly represented in the graphic composition of the cover. Instead, the design professionals employed semantic strategies such as the rhetorical pattern of visual/verbal associative transfer. This meaning becomes evident upon recognizing that Charles Chaplin was (and remains) widely known for portraying the hardships faced by workers in his films. Chaplin, also known as Carlitos, "made 61 silent films and about ten sound films, most of them critically addressing the social problems of his time" (De Fato, 1977, p. 3).

Thus, by establishing connections between the verbal text and the photograph, it can be inferred that the image of the artist functions as a signifier for labor-related themes, encapsulated in the verbal expression "workers in eighty years of history." Associative transfer occurs when "the meaning of a verbal signifier is visualized, allowing another element to associate with this meaning. Through syntactic juxtaposition, a semantic transfer (a semantic borrowing) is sought" (Bonsiepe, 2011, p. 118). In this context, the workers' struggle against authoritarianism is thematically associated with Charles Chaplin, a figure widely recognized for his connection to labor issues. This results in a transfer (borrowing) of meaning, whereby a potential reader, upon viewing the cover, is likely to associate Chaplin's image with the newspaper's journalistic stance and infer that the issue addresses workers' concerns.

Finally, there is a textual component with compromised legibility due to its juxtaposition with the photograph, which reads: "CARLITOS, OFF THE STAGE OF LIFE" (*CARLITOS, FORA DO PALCO DA VIDA*). Metaphorical in nature, the phrase refers to the death of the renowned British filmmaker, which occurred on December 25, 1977, two days prior to the newspaper's publication. In this context, the photograph "is not just an image of the news. It is also the news" (Tavares; Vaz, 2008, p. 131). Accordingly, in the text/image relationship, the presence of two rhetorical patterns can be observed: visual/verbal parallelism and metaphorical inversion (or re-metaphor).

Visual/verbal parallelism occurs when "the verbal and visual signifiers refer to the same meaning" (Bonsiepe, 2011, p. 118). In the case under analysis, the verbal signifier "Carlitos" directly references the visual referent, the portrait of Charles Chaplin. The remainder of the textual component, "off the stage of life," introduces a metaphorical inversion, as Chaplin's image is used to announce his death, metaphorically conveyed through the phrase. This results in a reversal of meanings between the verbal and visual elements. In the metaphorical inversion pattern, tension is established between primary and secondary (transferred) meanings, whereby the visual signifiers either illustrate or invert the primary meaning (Bonsiepe, 2011).

Complementarily, and with the aim of deepening the analysis, the discussion returns to the use of specific aesthetic elements. Regarding the striking presence of the photograph, Barthes (2012) emphasizes that such an image possesses the power to confront the observer directly, an effect notably achieved in this composition through technical elements such as centering. Despite the image's nostalgic tone, it is observed that the photograph, although not necessarily evoking the past, serves as evidence that what is depicted did, in fact, exist, thereby reinforcing the undeniable significance of Carlitos (Barthes, 2012). Sontag (2004) further supports this perspective, arguing that photography confers upon the event or the photographed subject a form of immortality (and significance) that they might not otherwise attain.

Given the prominent use of color on the cover, it is understood that this element has the capacity to elicit emotional, sentimental, and affective responses, as well as to convey associated meanings. In particular, green evokes restorative thoughts and is commonly linked to notions of growth, hope, health, and safety (Dondis, 1997; Arnheim, 2011; Lupton; Phillips, 2018). By correlating the elements (verbal and non-verbal) with the use of green, it can be inferred that *De Fato*, despite operating under the constraints of censorship and the harsh conditions faced by workers, sought to reinforce a sense of hope among those striving for a better future, much like Charlie Chaplin did through his artistic work.

From this point onward, the analysis turns to the identification and description of the technical elements that structure the layout of the cover of *De Fato* issue 21, as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Cover and layout of issue 21 of the newspaper *De Fato*, Jan. 1978.

On this cover, beginning with the compositional devices, the aesthetic elements that define the vertices of the print area include the newspaper's logo, the illustration on the left, and the verbal component positioned at the bottom of the composition (Figure 6). Regarding the layout structure, as in issue 20, the spacing between the vertical lines was determined by the width of the header — located

beneath the logo — while the horizontal divisions were based on the height of the newspaper's title, which served as the guiding element for defining the modules. This approach “embeds the notion of a grid, present in graphic designs of newspapers, books, magazines, and other paginated prints” (Villas-Boas, 2009, p. 13).

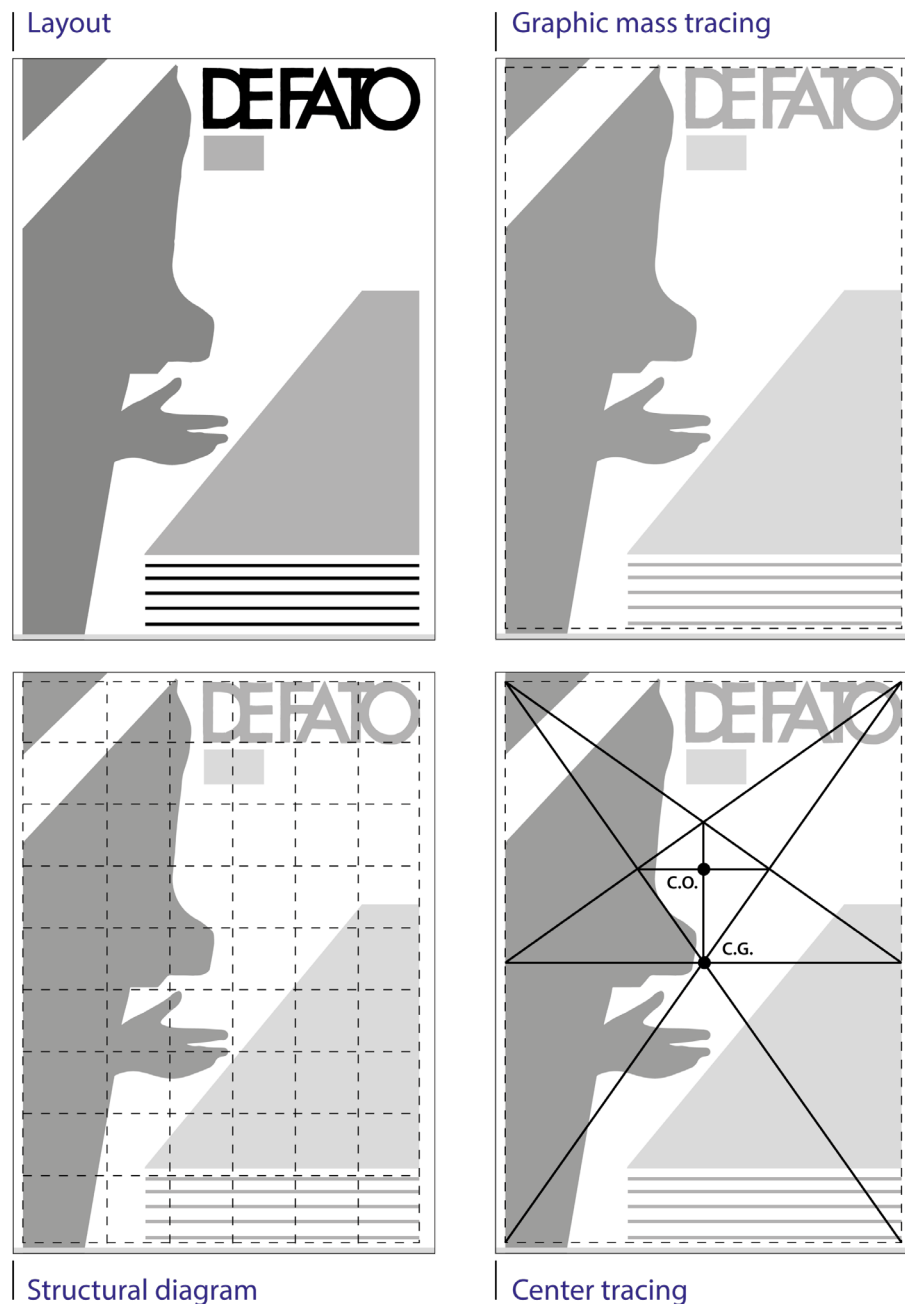


Figure 6. Layout and specifications of the compositional devices.

With respect to centering, the establishment of the referential centers — the Euclidean geometric center and the optical center — reveals a perceptible sense of depth within the composition. On the cover of issue 21 of *De Fato*, the tracing of these centers indicates a clear relationship between the verbal and non-verbal elements, which nearly overlap, suggesting a deliberate complementarity between them.

Regarding the design principles outlined by Villas-Boas (2009), which are regarded as broadly accepted intentions, the most prominent in this composition is movement. Although the image is static, the cover conveys a sense of movement through two factors: the previously noted impression of depth, created by the shape and arrangement of elements, and the allusion to a plea (an action in motion), represented by the hands of the prisoners in the illustration. As Dondis (1997, p. 80) observes, the suggestion of movement in “static visual manifestations is more difficult to achieve without simultaneously distorting reality, but it is implicit in everything we see, and derives from our full experience of movement in life.”

Complementarily, Arnheim (2011, p. 365) notes that “movement is the visual attraction that most intensely captures attention.” According to the author, in a static image, the most effective way to convey movement is through “the selection of a moment that represents a unique structural instance, as if taken from a film representing the sequence in the temporal dimension” (Arnheim, 2011, p. 415). In the composition under analysis, among various possibilities, the designer chose to depict the movement of hands engaged in an act of dissent and supplication, thereby creating a sense of tension that conveys the “agony of the political prisoners.”

Furthermore, the analysis continues with the identification and discussion of the aesthetic elements present on the cover, as indicated in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Identification of the aesthetic elements.

Regarding the textual components, the most significant for understanding the meanings conveyed on the cover is the prominent headline: "THE AGONY OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS" (*A AGONIA DOS PRESOS POLÍTICOS*). Once again, *De Fato* reaffirms its firm journalistic stance in opposition to the civil-military dictatorship by publishing 22 testimonies from individuals convicted under the National Security Law, distributed across nine pages.

Regarding the text-image relationship, Tavares and Vaz (2008, p. 134) observe that when engaging in a quick reading of a newspaper, "the reader [...] will certainly have their attention drawn [...] by its headlines and images. Hence the importance of the relationship between them. There is a complementarity of information, a dialogue between both." In the graphic design under analysis, this complementarity is achieved through the use of two rhetorical patterns: synecdoche and visual/verbal parallelism.

Visual/verbal synecdoche occurs when a part stands in for the whole. In the case under analysis, the verbal referent "political prisoners" is not represented through literal depictions of incarcerated individuals, but rather through the image of hands behind bars (Bonsiepe, 2010; 2011). Parallelism is evident when "visual and verbal signs represent the same referent" (Bonsiepe, 2010, p. 183). Accordingly, the illustration (visual signifier) clearly conveys the agony experienced by prisoners (meaning), aligning with the verbal signifiers presented in the headline (Bonsiepe, 2011).

To enhance the analysis, it is essential to revisit the discussion of key aesthetic elements, particularly the illustration and the use of color. Regarding the illustration, its primary function is understood to be referential. Its main objective is "to convey visual information to a specific audience, information that generally means the expansion of a verbal message" (Dondis, 1997, p. 205). As demonstrated throughout the analysis, the cover presents a clear correlation between the illustration and the verbal message. Oliveira (2008) is agreed with in understanding illustration as a communicational phenomenon, endowed with informational and persuasive functions to make objects perceptible, but without giving them finished forms, representing them with a kind of membrane of illusion that evokes reflective thinking in observers.

Finally, the color red stands out as a highly significant element in the analyzed composition. Red is a color loaded with ambivalent connotations — it may be associated with anger, but also with passion; it appears on flags waved to provoke bulls, yet also features prominently in the banners of communist parties (Dondis, 1997). In the case studied, the vibrant and provocative red paves the way for various associations, such as the relation to the bloodshed of tortured individuals, to the banners of leftist parties, to anger, danger, and other heated sensations. In any case, it should be kept in mind that color "is the most emotional of the specific elements of the visual process, it has great strength and can be used very effectively to express and intensify visual information" (Dondis, 1997, p. 69).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This article discussed the relationship between graphic memory artifacts — in this case, alternative newspapers — and editorial graphic design. Amid the restrictions imposed during the dictatorship, the new technical resources of the time allowed greater space for creative experimentation, successfully utilized by the alternative press. The graphic analysis of the covers of the newspaper *De Fato* confirmed that the prominent use of photographs and other types of images, as well as colors, made its presentation more dynamic and engaging, inviting the reader to read and reflect. Furthermore, it was evident that the journalistic identity of the outlet — prominent in its verbal content — was intrinsically related to its visual aspects.

In light of the results, the analytical method employed, grounded in the propositions of André Villas-Boas and complemented by Gui Bonsiepe's principles of visual-verbal rhetoric, proved effective in elucidating the meanings generated by the image compositions on the covers. This understanding reinforces the role of design in the construction of narratives, particularly those of a socially engaged nature. It demonstrates that the professionals involved intentionally apply compositional and persuasive strategies to fulfill the communicational/informative functions of the editorial project.

From another perspective, the knowledge acquired opens new avenues for understanding the visual foundations of the Brazilian alternative press and the strategic use of visual language in conveying anti-authoritarian messages. This involves not only analyzing the solutions adopted in the organization of aesthetic elements within the layout but also interpreting their meanings in light of the historical context.

Considering the studies on Brazilian Graphic Memory, their significance is recognized as an integral part of policies aimed at valuing and disseminating the national cultural heritage. By analyzing the covers of an alternative newspaper produced during the civil-military dictatorship, this article highlights that such graphic artifacts formed part of discourses infused with social demands and were linked to segments of the population opposing the regime. Although the analysis focused on only two covers due to the article's textual constraints, it is concluded that comparative studies of similar and contrasting cases offer promising avenues for future research.

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Graphic memory and the visual legacy of COVID-19 in Jeffreys Bay, South Africa

Memória gráfica e o legado visual da COVID-19 em Jeffreys Bay, África do Sul

Yolandi Burger^I , Everardt André Burger^{II} 

ABSTRACT

This research explores the concept of graphic memory by analyzing ephemeral visual artifacts produced during the COVID-19 pandemic in Jeffreys Bay, a coastal town in South Africa renowned for its surf tourism and visual culture. Grounded in graphic memory theory, which highlights the significance of transient printed materials as cultural and historical markers, this research positions visual artifacts as critical tools in capturing socio-economic disruptions and community responses during times of crisis. Employing Zeisel's Design by Enquiry methodology, pandemic-related visual traces such as signage, sanitation stations, and floor markers were systematically documented within key tourist areas, capturing shifts in public behavior, economic impacts, and evolving local identities. The findings illustrate how temporary visual interventions simultaneously communicated public health measures, exposed tensions between governmental mandates and local economic survival, and underscored community resilience. The eroded condition of certain graphic traces, alongside the deliberate integration of public health messages with local branding, revealed dynamic processes of compliance, adaptation, and resistance. Ultimately, this research highlights graphic memory's role in preserving local identity narratives and informing future strategies in crisis management, urban resilience, and cultural heritage preservation, thereby contributing significantly to the broader discourse on visual culture, design history, and socio-economic recovery.

Keywords: COVID-19. Jeffreys Bay. Visual culture. Pandemic signage. Physical traces.

RESUMO

Esta investigação explora o conceito de memória gráfica por meio da análise de artefactos visuais efêmeros produzidos durante a pandemia de COVID-19 em Jeffreys Bay, cidade costeira na África do Sul conhecida pelo seu turismo de surf e cultura visual distinta. Fundamentada na teoria da memória gráfica, que destaca a importância dos materiais impressos transitórios como marcadores culturais e históricos, esta investigação posiciona os artefactos visuais como ferramentas críticas na captura de perturbações socioeconômicas e respostas comunitárias em tempos de crise. Empregando a metodologia Design by Enquiry de Zeisel, vestígios visuais relacionados à pandemia, como sinalização, estações de saneamento e marcadores de piso foram sistematicamente documentados nas principais áreas turísticas, capturando mudanças no comportamento público, impactos econômicos e evolução das identidades locais. As descobertas ilustram como as intervenções visuais temporárias comunicaram simultaneamente medidas de saúde pública, expuseram tensões entre os mandatos governamentais e a sobrevivência econômica local e sublinharam a resiliência da comunidade. A condição desgastada de certos traços gráficos, associada à integração deliberada de mensagens de saúde pública com marcas locais, revelou processos dinâmicos de conformidade, adaptação e resistência. Em última análise, esta investigação destaca o papel da memória gráfica na preservação de narrativas de identidade local e na informação de estratégias futuras na gestão de crises, resiliência urbana e preservação do patrimônio cultural, contribuindo assim significativamente para o discurso mais amplo sobre cultura visual, história do design e recuperação socioeconômica.

Palavras-chave: COVID 19; Baía de Jeffreys. Cultura visual. Sinalização pandêmica. Traços físicos.

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INTRODUCTION

Graphic memory serves as a critical tool for bridging historical gaps by examining ephemeral materials, languages, and graphic processes embedded in daily life. These transient printed materials reflect the prevailing material culture and contribute to shaping local identities through design (Farias, 2014; 2019). The study of graphic memory extends beyond conventional design history, offering an alternative lens to explore visual narratives, particularly in non-hegemonic contexts where dominant historical narratives often overshadow local expressions (Farias, 2019). By intersecting print, visual, and material culture studies (Farias, 2019), graphic memory research highlights the materiality of graphic artifacts as spatially situated phenomena that encode cultural, social, and economic histories.

A key focus of graphic memory research is printed ephemera, or transient, everyday documents that often escape formal archiving yet serve as crucial markers of cultural memory. These materials, encompassing railway prints (Zapata, 2024) and the historical evolution of “printed ephemera” (Russell, 2014), function as mnemonic carriers that preserve cultural diversity and counteract the erasures imposed by time (Mussell, 2012). The interdisciplinary nature of graphic memory studies enables visualization techniques, such as historical geographical information systems (GIS), to analyze spatially embedded artifacts (Farias, 2019) while addressing broader cultural and ethical concerns surrounding identity formation (Lezama Galindo, 2020). Brand archives, for instance, play a vital role in resisting the homogenizing effects of globalization, safeguarding local specificity in visual identity (Carvalho de Almeida, 2012). Additionally, critical examinations of print culture challenge dominant narratives in graphic design history, offering insights into issues of class, race, and gender representation (Raizman, 2020).

This study situates graphic memory within Jeffreys Bay, South Africa, where visual artifacts produced during the COVID-19 pandemic reveal complex intersections between public health communication, cultural identity, and economic disruption. As an ephemeral material not necessarily intended for long-term preservation, COVID-19 signage provides a unique lens through which to analyze shifting identity narratives in a post-pandemic landscape. By engaging with broader discussions on visual culture and material memory, this research investigates how the pandemic era’s visual artifacts contribute to shaping public identity, resilience, and local design heritage in the town of Jeffreys Bay in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa.

THE HISTORICAL ROOTS OF JEFFREYS BAY

Located in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa, the small coastal town of Jeffreys Bay has a rich history and a global reputation as a premier surfing destination. The origins of Jeffreys Bay can be traced back to the early 19th century, when European farmers and traders first settled the area. The town is named after Captain Jeffrey, a trader who established a port in the area to facilitate the export of agricultural products. Initially, Jeffreys Bay was a quiet fishing village, with its economy centered around the abundant marine resources of the Indian Ocean (Hift, 2022).

Over time, its natural beauty, with pristine beaches and rolling dunes, began to attract tourists. The 1960s marked a turning point, as surfers discovered the world class waves at Supertubes, now regarded as one of the best right-hand point breaks globally (Hift, 2022). This propelled Jeffreys Bay into international prominence within the surfing community, leading to steady economic growth driven by surf tourism (Hift, 2022). The town hosts the annual World Surf League event called the Corona Cero Open J-Bay, attracting elite surfers and global spectators (World Surf League, 2025). Despite its development, Jeffreys Bay retains much of its small town charm, with a laid-back atmosphere, vibrant craft markets, and a conservation and marine preservation focus. In addition to its surf culture, Jeffreys Bay holds cultural and historical significance as part of the broader Eastern Cape, known for its rich Xhosa heritage and historical events during South Africa's colonial and apartheid eras (Hift, 2022).

VISUAL CULTURE OF THE TOWN

Jeffreys Bay, globally recognized as a premier surfing destination, has developed a visual identity shaped by its strong surfing culture, natural coastal environment, and local community engagement. The town's aesthetic landscape is deeply influenced by surfing-related iconography, marine themes, tourism, and environmental consciousness, which contribute to a unique sense of place. The town's public signage, shopfronts, and street art prominently feature surfboards, waves, and ocean imagery (see Figures 1–4). Tourism-driven visual communication is evident in the town's visual identity, which showcases pristine beaches and surfing culture. The town's strong environmental consciousness is reflected in visual campaigns advocating marine conservation and sustainability. Local artisans and crafters emphasize marine-inspired aesthetics, selling handmade items such as driftwood sculptures, shell jewelry, and ocean themed textiles in Jeffreys Bay's informal markets. The color palette of the urban landscape frequently mirrors beach tones, with soft blues, sandy beiges, and whites dominating storefronts and public spaces, evoking a sense of coastal tranquility. The dominance of surf-related businesses aligns with broader trends in surf tourism economies, where place branding becomes essential to the visitor experience (Ponting; O'Brien, 2015). This visual contrast between corporate surf branding and informal sign making illustrates the diverse economic landscape of the town, where global surf culture coexists with local entrepreneurial traditions.



Figure 1. Public signage of Jeffreys Bay, South Africa.



Figure 2. Examples of shopfronts in Jeffreys Bay, South Africa.



Figure 3. Street art in Jeffreys Bay, South Africa.



Figure 4. Environmental conscious campaigns in Jeffreys Bay, South Africa.

THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted the global tourism industry, affecting economic stability, social interactions, and environmental conditions. Lockdowns and mobility restrictions led to sharp declines in international travel, causing significant losses in revenue, employment, and business sustainability within the tourism sector (Dossan, 2021; Liang *et al.*, 2021; Wallace *et al.*, 2023). The crisis mainly affected small businesses, vacation rentals, and cultural attractions, where tourist preference shifts altered urban dynamics (Liang *et al.*, 2021; Zaar, 2022). In addition to economic consequences, the pandemic also had environmental implications, with improved air quality observed in major tourist destinations due to reduced human activity (Silva; Branco; Sousa, 2021).

Beyond economic and environmental factors, the pandemic exposed vulnerabilities in urban planning and tourism dependent economies. The emergence of “ghost cities” highlighted the drastic transformations in urban landscapes as once thriving tourist hubs became deserted due to prolonged restrictions (Korstanje;

George, 2023). While international tourism suffered significant setbacks, some positive trends emerged, including the growth of domestic tourism, increased reliance on digital solutions for travel experiences, and a renewed interest in local attractions (Wallace *et al.*, 2023). However, despite these adaptive responses, small cities and rural destinations, particularly those reliant on informal economies, experienced severe food insecurity and financial strain, exacerbating inequalities among low income populations (Ruszczuk *et al.*, 2021).

Like many other nations, South Africa experienced severe economic and social disruptions due to the pandemic. Following the country's first confirmed case on 5 March 2020, the government implemented one of the strictest lockdowns globally (Steytler; De Visser, 2021). Measures included travel bans, school closures, and restrictions on business operations, which were strictly enforced by police and military personnel (Mattes; Glenn, 2021). While initially accepted, these measures faced increasing criticism due to inconsistencies in policy, concerns over human rights violations, and allegations of corruption in government relief efforts (Mattes; Glenn, 2021). The tourism industry was one of the hardest hit sectors in South Africa, with severe implications for employment and local economies. Lockdowns and travel restrictions led to financial distress for tourism businesses, particularly micro, small, and medium enterprises (SMMEs), many of which faced bankruptcy or closure (Gumede, 2022; Rogerson; Rogerson, 2022). Sectors such as aviation, maritime tourism, special events, accommodation, and cultural attractions were among the most affected (Dube, 2021). Coastal towns that relied on tourism revenues, such as those along the Western Cape and Eastern Cape, experienced significant economic downturns, with many businesses unable to recover from prolonged restrictions (Rogerson, 2021). By January 2022, South Africa had recorded over 3.5 million confirmed COVID-19 cases and nearly 100 thousand deaths, further straining the healthcare system and economic recovery efforts (Loo *et al.*, 2022).

One of the most contentious policies impacting the tourism industry was the closure of beaches during the peak holiday season of December 2020 (see Figure 5). This decision, implemented to curb the spread of the Beta variant (second wave), had significant economic consequences for coastal communities that depended on seasonal tourism. The closure sparked legal challenges and public protests as businesses struggled to sustain operations without government relief support. This highlighted the disconnect between national level decision making and local economic realities in tourism-dependent towns (Rogerson, 2021). Figure 5 illustrates the South African government's festive season restrictions during the second wave of COVID-19, as communicated by the Kouga Municipality (2020b), which governs Jeffreys Bay. These restrictions, which included beach closures, were part of broader public health measures to curb infections, particularly in coastal towns reliant on tourism. Such policies had significant socio-economic consequences, disproportionately affecting small businesses, informal traders, and tourism-dependent communities (Rogerson, 2021). As seen in Figure 5, beach closures were also not applied consistently to all the beaches in South Africa. Beaches in the Eastern Cape province

(where Jeffreys Bay is located) and the Garden Route District were closed for the majority of the peak holiday season, whereas other beaches remained open or only closed for a few days. While the “Stay Safe, Protect South Africa” campaign for the festive season’s restrictions was widely used across many coastal regions in South Africa, its presence on social media pages for Jeffreys Bay heightened the visual and economic disruption experienced by locals and holiday-goers during the pandemic. Although not unique in form, such signage gained symbolic weight in this context by interrupting established local practices and visual rhythms associated with surf culture and seasonal tourism.

Festive season restrictions to contain the second wave

South Africa has entered a second wave of infections. To contain the resurgence of the virus, the following **extra measures will be in place** from **15 December 2020**:

BEACHES AND PARKS

- All beaches in the **Eastern Cape** and the **Garden Route District** are closed from **16 December 2020 to 3 January 2021**
- All beaches in **KwaZulu-Natal** are closed on **16, 25, 26 and 31 December 2020** as well as **1, 2 and 3 January 2021**
- All other beaches in the **Western Cape** and **Northern Cape** remain open

Additional restrictions apply during the festive season | South Africa remains at Level 1

WHATSAPP SUPPORT
0600 123 456
EMERGENCY NUMBER
0800 029 999
sacoronavirus.co.za

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

2030 NDP

Source: Kouga Municipality (2020b).

Figure 5. Stay Safe Protect South Africa campaign: Festive season restriction to contain the second wave.

The pandemic significantly disrupted surf tourism, local businesses, and small-scale fisheries that form the backbone of the economic structure of Jeffrey Bay, leading to widespread financial losses, unemployment, and business closures (Martín-González; Swart; Luque-Gil, 2021; Rogerson, 2021). The closure of beaches during lockdowns was particularly devastating, as Jeffreys Bay relies heavily on beach-based tourism, including surf competitions, holiday rentals, and local hospitality businesses (Schotte; Zizzamia, 2021). The tourism downturn exacerbated existing socio-economic challenges, exposing the vulnerability of Jeffreys Bay’s economy to external shocks. Small business owners faced cancellations, income losses, and prolonged periods of inactivity, with many unable to sustain operations beyond the lockdown period (Vermeulen-Miltz *et al.*, 2022). The crisis also deepened economic inequalities as informal sector workers, including small scale fishers and vendors, struggled with food insecurity and financial support (Okafor-Yarwood *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the tensions between public health mandates and local economic sustainability. While restrictions were justified based on rising infections, their enforcement disproportionately affected small coastal towns where tourism is the primary economic driver (Rogerson;

Rogerson, 2022). Many local businesses questioned the effectiveness of blanket restrictions, advocating instead for targeted risk mitigation strategies that would allow economic activity to continue while maintaining public safety (Mach, 2021). Moving forward, discussions around tourism recovery in Jeffreys Bay emphasize resilience, sustainability, and community-led development. Scholars argue that future tourism strategies should integrate risk management, diversification of economic activities, and increased local involvement in decision making (Daniels; Tichaawa, 2021). Sustainable tourism initiatives, such as eco-tourism and digital tourism, offer potential pathways for recovery while reducing the town's reliance on seasonal visitors (Mach, 2021). Additionally, policy reforms in the small scale fishing sector could enhance social protection and ensure economic stability for vulnerable communities (Okafor-Yarwood *et al.*, 2020). While this research does not focus on economic inequalities, the broader economic tensions provide relevant context for understanding the precariousness of informal economies in coastal towns like Jeffreys Bay, where visual signage during the pandemic often intersected with economically sensitive spaces such as beachfront markets and informal trading zones.

The enforcement of beach closures during South Africa's second wave of COVID-19 was met with resistance from coastal municipalities and tourism-dependent communities. The Kouga Municipality, which oversees Jeffreys Bay, publicly expressed shock and disappointment over the government's decision to close beaches during the festive season, a period crucial for local economic activity (Kouga Municipality, 2020a). Figure 6 offers a visual of the deserted Dolphin Beach, which is the town's main beach during the December festive period. Official municipal statements, such as the one shared on Facebook on December 15, 2020, reflect the tensions between public health mandates and economic survival in small tourism driven towns. These digital communications also serve as visual and textual artifacts documenting local frustrations, shaping how the pandemic is remembered in Jeffreys Bay's tourism history.



Source: Kouga Municipality (2020a).

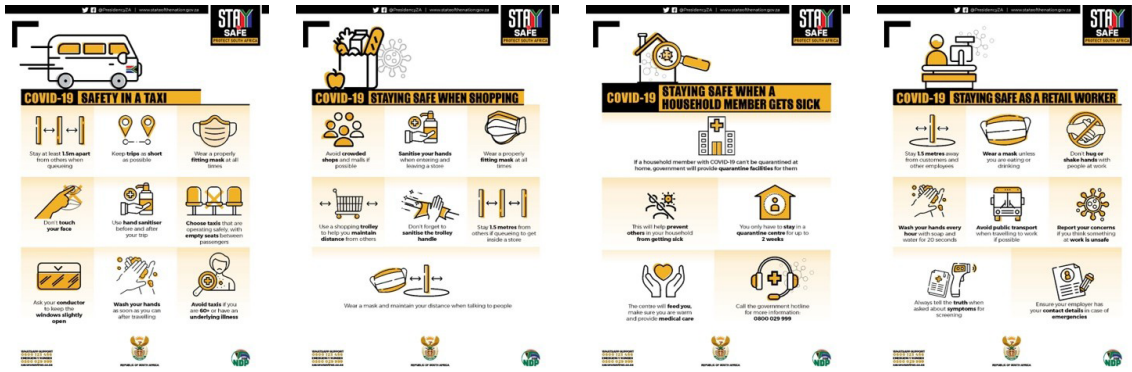
Figure 6. Photo of empty Dolphin Beach (main beach): The municipality was shocked and disappointed by the decision to close beaches.

From a graphic memory perspective, such public statements often shared through municipal websites, social media, and printed notices become part of a broader visual narrative of crisis communication. The backlash against beach closures underscores how official COVID-19 signage and government-issued restrictions became more than just public health tools they were also catalysts for socio-political debate.

VISUAL CULTURE OF THE PANDEMIC

In urban areas, COVID-19 related signage and advertisements transformed cityscapes, vividly reflecting government responses and public health concerns (Speake; Pentaraki, 2023). South Africa, in particular, experienced extensive digital health communication campaigns that introduced and normalized new terminologies like “social distancing” and prioritized accurate, timely dissemination of information to mitigate the virus’s spread (Farao, 2020). The visual culture of the pandemic emerged through official public health messaging, typography, street art, digital communication, government branding, and modifications to physical environments.

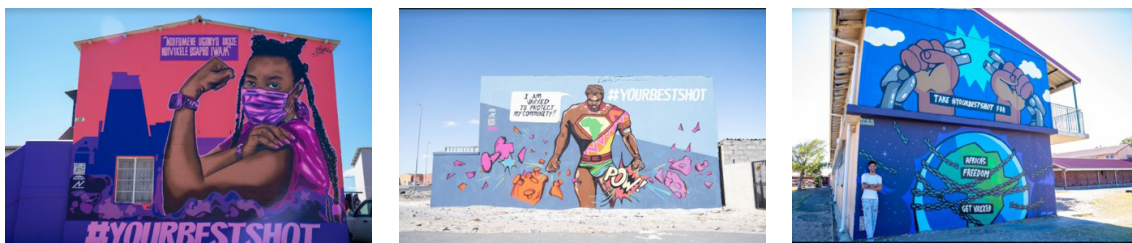
Bold, high contrast signage featuring urgent instructions such as “Stay Safe,” “Sanitize Your Hands,” and “Wear a Mask” became ubiquitous, often enhanced by universally recognizable visual symbols such as masks, sanitizer bottles, and social distancing markers that transcended linguistic barriers (see Figure 7 for examples of the visual symbols commonly used in South Africa). These symbols have largely been incorporated into online iconography libraries and, at one point, even became generic signage available for purchase in stores much like standard toilet signs. Typography played a crucial role in these efforts, employing clear, authoritative sans-serif fonts (see Figures 7, 8, 9 and 10) often in several languages to facilitate inclusive communication across South Africa’s diverse communities. Digital platforms amplified the visual impact through vibrant, easy to understand infographics promoting public health practices and memes that provided humor and social commentary (for example the Hay’khona Corona! campaign in Figure 7), helping citizens cope emotionally and socially during the crisis. Street art also significantly contributed to the visual landscape, documented comprehensively by initiatives like the COVID-19 Street Art Database, which is a crowdsourced collection of over 500 entries from across the world. These artworks tackled fears, connected isolated individuals, offered alternative narratives, and extended the reach of essential health and safety messages, demonstrating street art’s power as a communal engagement tool during the pandemic (Lawrence; Shirey, 2023). Figure 8 shows #YOURBESTSHOT which was the first iteration of a COVID-19 vaccination awareness campaign in South Africa using carefully selected street artists to create accessible, impactful, and positive vaccination narratives through street art (BIZ-ART, 2020). Official government branding, notably the “Stay Safe, Protect South Africa” campaign, reinforced visual consistency, embedding public health guidelines into everyday visual encounters. Initially, it was called the “Stay Home, Save South Africa” campaign, but following the easing of lockdown restrictions, the campaign evolved into the “Stay Safe, Protect South Africa” initiative and thereafter a vaccination campaign (see Figure 9).



Source: Republic of South Africa (2020b).
Figure 7. Common pandemic visual symbols used in South African campaigns.



Source: Jive Media Africa (2020).
Figure 8. Multilingual South African Hay'khona Corona! Campaign.



Source: BIZ-ART (2020).
Figure 9. Examples of #YOURBESTSHOT Covid-19 vaccination awareness campaign in South Africa.



Source: Republic of South Africa (2020a).
Figure 10. "Stay Home, Save South Africa" initiative.

Physical spaces were also profoundly altered, incorporating practical visual markers such as floor stickers delineating social distancing requirements, plexiglass barriers for safety, and widespread use of branded disposable masks and personal

protective equipment. These visual elements facilitated adherence to health guidelines and became integral aspects of individual and collective identity. Additionally, temporary COVID-19 testing and vaccination stations emerged visually within public spaces, further reinforcing the visibility and importance of public health measures.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

As March 2025 marks five years since the initial COVID-19 lockdown, South Africans continue to encounter graphic devices in the urban environment that trigger memories of the pandemic. These visual remnants include faded social distancing floor decals, weathered public health posters, and signage instructing mask-wearing that each serves as a fragmented yet persistent record of a collective experience. Carmona (2021) argues that time is a crucial factor in urban design, embedding interventions within locally specific historical processes of place. During the pandemic, the urban environment became a medium for temporary interventions to guide human behavior, such as floor markers indicating safe distances, posters reinforcing hygiene protocols and health stations to check your body temperature and mandatory sanitizing. These interventions dictated public actions while coexisting with the natural time cycles of cities, such as day and night transitions, seasonal shifts, and changing weather patterns (Carmona, 2021), despite the lockdown creating a perceived stasis in social life. As restrictions eased, human interaction with public spaces resumed, accelerating the erosion of pandemic related visual cues. Some physical traces disappeared over time; for example, floor signage gradually wore away from pedestrian traffic, and printed messages faded under exposure to the elements. However, remnants persist, whether in ghost signage on floors and walls, the lingering presence of sanitization stations, or even the collective memory evoked by once familiar symbols of crisis. These traces highlight the layered nature of urban environments, where graphic memory acts as both a reminder of past disruptions and a marker of resilience in the evolving cityscape.

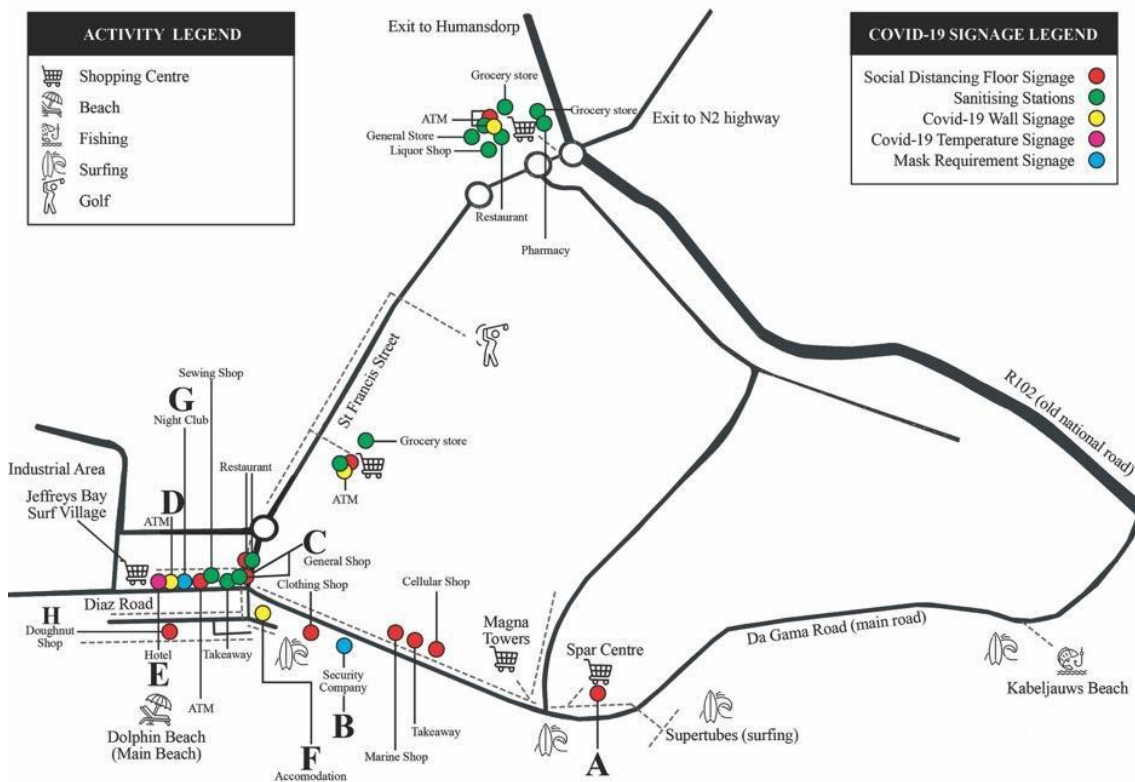
This exploratory research adopts John Zeisel's Design by Enquiry approach to document pandemic-related physical traces in the urban environment of Jeffreys Bay during December 2024. Physical traces were observed exclusively in the main tourist areas of the town, including the central town area of Jeffreys Bay, Dolphin Beach (the main beach), the five most prominent shopping centers in the town and places that offer activities for tourists such as golf, fishing and surfing. Zeisel (2006) describes this method as systematic and consciously curious, enabling researchers to analyze physical surroundings for visible remnants of past activities. The method possesses several key qualities that make it effective for exploring this phenomenon. Firstly, its imageability allows for observing physical traces that create vivid impressions and are highly illustrative. Secondly, it is unobtrusive, meaning that observations do not influence the behaviors that initially produced the traces. Thirdly, the method is durable, as many traces persist over time, permitting multiple site visits for further documentation and analysis. Finally, physical trace observation is cost effective and efficient, enabling researchers to investigate various hypotheses

quickly (Zeisel, 2006). Field observations focus on documenting COVID-19 signage in public spaces, focusing on spatial distribution and contextual relevance. According to this method, recording devices included photography to obtain high-resolution images, annotated diagrams to map forgotten signage to identify the locations and persistence of pandemic related signs and observational notes to capture the spatial distribution, condition, and contextual relevance of these signs.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The pandemic related physical traces observed in Jeffreys Bay were systematically documented using an annotated diagram of the town (see Figure 11) and classified according to Zeisel's (2006) four categories: by-products of use, adaptations for use, displays of self, and public messages. Human interaction with the built environment leaves behind various physical and symbolic traces. These by-products of use are typically classified into three categories: erosions, such as trampled grass or worn paths that indicate repeated activity; leftovers, including tangible remnants like cigarette butts; and missing traces, which suggest absences in behavior, such as unfurnished balconies that remain unused. In contrast, some elements are intentionally introduced to shape or facilitate use. These adaptations for use include props like bike racks, separations such as sidewalk barriers preventing vehicle intrusion, and connections like ramps that enhance accessibility. People also communicate their presence and identity through displays of self, which may take the form of personalization (e.g., family photos on a refrigerator), identification (e.g., numbered addresses), or expressions of group membership (e.g., sports team memorabilia). Additionally, the urban landscape is saturated with public messages, ranging from official signage such as street signs, to unofficial notices like lost dog posters, and unsanctioned expressions considered illegitimate, such as graffiti. The diagram employs colored markers to indicate locations where COVID-19 signage was observed. At the same time, the letters A to H correspond to places where photographic evidence was gathered in public spaces (illustrated in Figure 11). Photographic documentation was limited as certain traces were located inside private or semi-public spaces, such as shops or shopping centers, where photography was prohibited as per the ethical considerations of this research.

The findings of this study underscore the significant role that graphic memory plays in capturing and interpreting cultural, economic, and social responses to crises within localized contexts. Through the systematic documentation of pandemic-related visual artifacts in Jeffreys Bay, using Zeisel's (2006) physical trace observation method, graphic interventions' ephemeral yet impactful nature during the COVID-19 pandemic became clear. Jeffreys Bay's identity, deeply intertwined with surf tourism and its coastal aesthetics, underwent pronounced disruptions during the pandemic. The documented visual traces range from heavily eroded floor markers to enduring branded sanitation stations, highlighting how these graphic interventions were more than mere tools for public health communication; they became markers of societal resilience, adaptation, and the socio-political tensions between government mandates and local economic realities.



Source: adapted from the Jeffreys Bay Tourism Map, originally designed by Dare to Image Studios. Figure 11. Annotated diagram of the research area in Jeffreys Bay.

The category by-products of use illustrated how physical interactions with pandemic signage reflected changing community responses. The worn social distancing markers found predominantly in high traffic areas such as shopping malls act as an erosion that vividly portray how initial compliance gradually gave way to pandemic fatigue or disregard (see Figure 12A). Remaining pandemic signage as documented in this research are examples of leftovers from the pandemic which might have been forgotten about or purposively not removed (see Figures 11 and 12). Conversely, the absence of signs in prominent tourist spots like Jeffreys Bay Surfing Village and the local golf course might point to community-driven choices about memory and identity, possibly signaling a collective desire to distance themselves from the disruptive events and return swiftly to pre-pandemic normalcy or even non-adherence in the first instance.

In the category adaptations for use, temporary public health interventions evolved into lasting commercial identity markers. Initially, props like improvised sanitation stations (see Figure 12C) have either become forgotten props hidden away in a corner or transitioned into permanent and branded fixtures at retail stores and restaurants within shopping centres which reflects a long-term shift in consumer safety expectations. This evolution indicates an enduring transformation in public spaces and underscores how businesses have capitalized on crisis-driven necessities to reinforce brand identities and consumer trust, blending health compliance seamlessly into marketing and branding strategies. Figure 13 shows a Sani-touch hand and trolley wipe station, now commonly found outside stores (Sani-Touch, 2021). These stations can be branded to align

with the store's identity. Unfortunately, no separating or connecting physical traces were observed within the study area. An example of a pandemic-related separation was the protective screens installed at cashier counters in Spar stores for example (Nair, 2020). A gazebo outside a local pharmacy chain functioning as a walk-in and drive-through COVID-19 testing facility (Kew, 2020) is an example of a connection (see Figure 13).



Figure 12. Photographic evidence of physical traces of COVID-19 signage.



Figure 13. Examples of common adaptations for use in South Africa during the COVID-19 pandemic which was also used in Jeffreys Bay, namely props, separations and connections.

Displays of self, documented primarily through personalized pandemic-related signage by local businesses, highlighted a critical intersection between public health communication and local commercial identity. Businesses integrated their unique visual identities within crisis messaging with common pandemic visual symbols, subtly merging compliance with marketing (for example, the social distance signage of the ATM in Figure 9D that adheres to the branding of the specific South African bank). This personalization also contributed to brand identification in some instances, ensuring visibility and narratives amid economic hardship. Although no physical traces of pandemic-related group membership were observed in the study area, social media commentary and lived experience in South Africa suggest the presence of two forms of affiliation. On one side, compliant individuals aligned with official health campaigns, as evidenced by behaviors such as mask-wearing, queuing at vaccination centres, and the use of signage promoting social distancing. In contrast, dissenting groups such as anti-vaccination advocates expressed their resistance through protests and visible acts of non-compliance, including the refusal to wear masks in public spaces.

Public messages dominated the graphic landscape during the pandemic in South Africa. The prevalence of unofficial signage in Jeffreys Bay points to a community-driven response, emphasizing the need for practical, immediate action in localized contexts rather than relying solely on centralized governmental directives. Over time, many of these unofficial signs degraded into ghostly visual echoes, reflecting their temporary functional role and the enduring residues left by the pandemic. Many of these messages took the form of self-made notices often placed in street-facing windows near entrances (see Figure 12E as an example) or displayed outdoors where exposure to the elements limited their longevity. Official signs maintained clarity and longevity, representing institutional consistency in contrast with the transitory nature of informal communications and illegitimate messages that were not observed. Official signs included generic bold, high contrast signage featuring urgent instructions with universally recognizable visual symbols (see Figure 12).

These findings enrich graphic memory scholarship by illuminating how temporary visual interventions during crises encapsulate broader socio-political dynamics, community identity, resilience, and adaptation. Although many of the graphic interventions, such as generic signage, were implemented nationally and not exclusive to Jeffreys Bay, their local resonance must be considered within the town's long-standing surf identity. The juxtaposition of these restrictive signs against an otherwise vibrant, surf-oriented landscape created a dissonance that underscored the community's economic vulnerability and the temporary rupture in its visual identity. Therefore, Jeffreys Bay's visual artifacts from the COVID-19 pandemic embody the memory of a historical moment and reflect deeper narratives around local economic struggles, identity negotiations, and collective resilience. The documented tensions between public health messaging and local economic realities suggest the need for further investigation into how visual communication reflects localized responses to top-down policy implementation. While this study does not prescribe policy solutions, it points to the potential of graphic memory as a tool for revealing overlooked socio-economic dimensions during crises.

CONCLUSION

As Jeffreys Bay moves toward economic and cultural recovery, residual visual artifacts from the COVID-19 pandemic serve as valuable insights into how design, tourism, and crisis response intersect to express local identity. These visual traces represent resilience and economic hardship, reflecting the town's complex, layered visual culture. The persistence of COVID-19 signage highlights the critical role graphic memory plays in documenting, critiquing, and reflecting upon community experiences during disruptions, particularly public health crises. Such artifacts preserve historical narratives and inform future community-driven development strategies by balancing historical preservation with urban renewal. By examining graphic memory in Jeffreys Bay, this research contributes to broader discussions on visual culture's role in shaping collective memory, ultimately highlighting how visual legacies from the COVID-19 pandemic can contribute to understanding community experiences and responses, with the aspiration that such insights may inform more inclusive, resilient, and culturally grounded approaches to future disruptions.

Future research could expand on comparative studies of similar coastal towns or tourism-dependent regions affected by global crises, deepening our understanding of diverse community responses through visual culture. Insights from such studies would inform future policy decisions and intervention strategies, emphasizing sustainability, economic resilience, and culturally nuanced community engagement.

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Signs from Romeo de Paoli's hotel projects

Letreiros dos projetos de Romeo de Paoli para hotéis

Rafael Maia¹ 

ABSTRACT

Romeo de Paoli was born into a family of Italian builders in the recently inaugurated city of Belo Horizonte. He graduated in Engineering and also worked professionally as an architect, builder, visual artist and entrepreneur. He was one of the most important figures in the city's civil construction industry in the first half of the 20th century. Among the thirteen projects approved by the city hall in the 1930s for hotel use in the central area, six were designed by his office. This article explores a brief moment in his career, a gap between the approval of three of these buildings, which still retain their original signs: Imperial Palace (1934), Piraquara (1935), and Cláudio Manoel (1939). Often ignored even by heritage protection agencies, these graphic artifacts are part of Belo Horizonte's typographic landscape. Recording and collecting data such as the building's identity (image, name, address, original use, current use, location, architect's name and date of construction), data on the nominative architectural typography, with photos, specifications on the typeface, composition and materials used, are premises of the investigation and tools for cataloging the Belo Horizonte's graphic memory.

Keywords: Architecture. Design. Memory. Heritage. Typography.

RESUMO

Romeo de Paoli nasceu em uma família de construtores italianos na recém-inaugurada Belo Horizonte (MG). Formou-se em Engenharia e atuou profissionalmente como arquiteto, construtor, artista plástico e empresário. Foi um dos mais relevantes nomes da construção civil da cidade na primeira metade do século XX. Entre os 13 projetos aprovados pela prefeitura na década de 1930 para uso hoteleiro na área central, seis são de autoria de seu escritório. Este artigo aborda um breve momento de sua trajetória, hiato entre a aprovação de três desses edifícios que mantêm íntegros seus letreiros originais: Imperial Palace (1934), Piraquara (1935) e Cláudio Manoel (1939). Frequentemente ignorados até mesmo pelos órgãos de proteção ao patrimônio, esses artefatos gráficos integram a paisagem tipográfica belo-horizontina. Registrar e coletar dados como identidade do edifício (imagem, nome, endereço, uso original, uso atual, localização, nome do arquiteto e data de construção), dados sobre a tipografia arquitetônica nominativa, com foto, especificações sobre o tipo de letra, composição e materiais utilizados são premissas da investigação e ferramentas para catalogação da memória gráfica de Belo Horizonte.

Palavras-chave: Arquitetura. Design. Memória. Patrimônio. Tipografia.

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INTRODUCTION

When walking through cities, attention is often confined to what lies within the immediate field of vision. A utilitarian gaze frequently overlooks a range of stimuli present in the urban landscape, including signs that display the baptismal names of buildings and the distinctive architectural typography used in their inscriptions. This article focuses specifically on three such permanent inscriptions that identify a trio of hotels designed by Romeo de Paoli, all of which still retain their original signage: the Imperial Palace (1934), Piraquara (1935), and Cláudio Manoel (1939) buildings. These signs represent fragments of an often invisible yet recently documented heritage, each revealing its own narrative.

This study originates from the author's master's research titled *Horizonte tipográfico: um inventário de tipografias arquitetônicas nominativas em Belo Horizonte do período entre 1932 e 1942*, defended in December 2024. By identifying and organizing graphic artifacts that had not yet been cataloged, the investigation contributed to the preservation of memory, identity, and heritage in the capital of Minas Gerais, while also exploring the relationship between architecture and type design. The theoretical and methodological framework draws on prior research conducted on collections from São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, under the supervision of Priscila Farias of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism and Design at Universidade de São Paulo. The study adopted methods and procedures developed by *Projeto Paisagens Tipográficas* (Typographic Landscapes Project)¹ to address the subject.

If culture is understood as a way of life, then visual culture shapes both the world and the way it is perceived (Freedman, 2002). This field of study is not structured around the names of artifacts, facts, and/or subjects, but rather around their cultural meanings. It is closely tied to the mediation of representations, values, and identities (Sardelich, 2006). The visual culture of a society is thus composed of its pictorial and graphic creations, visual grammars, and modes of communication, as well as the social, cultural, and symbolic relationships that emerge in the production and dissemination of visual artifacts (Campos, 2012).

Frequently regarded as primary sources of research, graphic artifacts are cultural products that serve as mediators of socially shared practices and values. They embody, through their materiality, the customs, values, and technologies associated with the specific time and place in which they are produced and utilized (Santos, 2005, pp. 13-15). According to Braga and Farias (2018), graphic artifacts are defined as any objects created (written, engraved, or inscribed) by humans to fulfill functions related to visual communication (whether two- or

¹ Developed by members of the Typography and Graphic Language Research Group, accredited by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (*Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico* – CNPq) at Centro Universitário Senac, in partnership with the Architectural Typography Research Group, accredited by CNPq at Universidade Estadual de Campinas, with support from the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (*Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior* – CAPES), CNPq, and the São Paulo Research Foundation (*Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo* – FAPESP).

three-dimensional) and considered in terms of their aesthetic, cognitive, and semi-otic aspects as potential conveyors of information. As sources for examining societal dynamics, graphic artifacts contribute to visual culture and to the construction of collective identities through communicative experiences. Integrated into the urban fabric, they function as part of the informational structure of cities, guiding flows and signaling specific areas.

This article did not seek to provide an in-depth analysis of the typefaces included in the inventory. The field research and digital data cataloging were conducted using the card system developed by *Projeto Paisagens Tipográficas*. Each card used in cataloging a typeface contains seven items that describe its formal characteristics. Analysis of these elements enables the classification of typefaces, particularly for generating statistical data and facilitating potential comparative studies with other initiatives in the field, such as the completed theses by Salomon (2011) on Rio de Janeiro and D'Elboux (2013) on São Paulo. Similar to the present study, those works examined features such as typeface style (serif, sans serif, display, script), orthographic usage (uppercase, lowercase, title case, small caps), weight (light, medium, bold, black), slant (upright, italic), alignment (left, right, justified, centered), material (metal, wood, stone, paint), and relief (high, low, flat).

Often overlooked by passersby, nominative inscriptions form part of Belo Horizonte's material heritage. Many of these inscriptions are damaged or obscured by architectural modifications, traffic signage, advertising structures, electric fences, insufficient maintenance, or poorly executed renovation projects. Documenting and collecting data on these inscriptions, including information about the building's identity (name, address, original and current use, location references, architect's name, and date of approval by the city government), as well as details of its nominative architectural typography with specifications on the typeface, composition, and materials used, serves as a vital tool for cataloging the graphic memory of Belo Horizonte.

THE DE PAOLI

Positioned between the entrance and the screen, Cine Glória showcased the bold engineering feat of being supported by the first 15-meter free-span reinforced concrete beam constructed in Belo Horizonte (MG) in 1926. The residents of Belo Horizonte expressed skepticism. The prevailing sentiment was one of doubt regarding the structural integrity of what was, at the time, the largest, most American, and most extravagant of the city's cinemas (Andrade, 2017). In response to public concern and to demonstrate the project's safety, architect Ângelo Marcelo de Paoli removed the shoring and sat atop the beam himself (Filgueiras, 2016).

Of Italian origin, Ângelo Marcelo de Paoli was born in Polesella, Italy, in 1882 and immigrated to Brazil with his parents at the age of nine. After a brief return to his homeland, he settled in Belo Horizonte, which was still under construction at the time. The abolition of slavery in 1888 and, subsequently, the Proclamation of

the Republic in 1889 formed the historical backdrop for the founding of the new capital of Minas Gerais in 1897.

In Belo Horizonte, Ângelo worked as a bricklayer's assistant, bricklayer, craftsman, and eventually as a builder. On construction sites largely staffed by Black laborers, opportunities for professional advancement were typically reserved for those of European origin. As a craftsman, he contributed to several notable projects, including the buildings of the Finance Department, the former Law School, and the Palácio da Liberdade, where he was responsible for the plasterwork. He constructed numerous mansions along Avenida João Pinheiro; the residences of Estevão Pinto and Benjamim Guimarães; the Pathé Cinema; the *Banco Hipotecário e Agrícola do Estado de Minas Gerais*, located on *Praça Sete*; and Cine Glória on Avenida Afonso Pena, the site where he famously demonstrated his engineering expertise shortly before his untimely death at the age of 45. Ângelo also built a house on Rua Bonfim with his father and brother, where he lived with his wife, Elvira Canfora (Rome, 1889–?), and their eight children: Carmelita, Anita, Julieta, Rodolfo, Roberto, Raul, Remo, and Romeo de Paoli, their eldest son, born in Belo Horizonte in 1908 (Filgueiras, 2016).

While still a teenager, Romeo de Paoli began his career as an apprentice architect in the office of Antônio da Costa Christino². Between 1928 and 1934, he served as a first-class construction inspector for the city of Belo Horizonte. During this period, he earned a degree from the School of Engineering at Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG) in 1932, the same year he established his own office. He was a pioneer in the exploration of limestone quarries in Pedro Leopoldo and Lagoa Santa, municipalities within the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte. In 1939, he founded Louza Remy, an artificial marble manufacturing company. As an entrepreneur, he also owned a construction materials business, *Construções e Indústrias Reunidas Romeo de Paoli LTDA*, which was founded around 1940 and remained in operation until 1945, when he relocated to Rio de Janeiro. He passed away there in 1994 (Filgueiras, 2016).

Romeo de Paoli was one of the leading figures in the architectural landscape of Belo Horizonte. In addition to the Imperial Palace, Piraquara, and Cláudio Manoel buildings, discussed in this article, his office was responsible for a number of significant projects, including *Colégio Santo Agostinho*³ (1935); *Edifício Greco*⁴ (1936); *Colégio Imaculada Conceição*⁵ (1936); the design and construction of the swimming pool, changing rooms, and playground at *Minas Tênis Clube*⁶ (1937); *Hotel Madrid*⁷

2 Portuguese architect and builder born in 1869, he was a renowned designer of buildings in Belo Horizonte, working primarily during the 1910s and 20s. He kept his architecture office active until 1931, one year before his passing on August 15, 1932.

3 Located at Avenida Amazonas, 1803.

4 Located at Rua Rio de Janeiro, 348.

5 Located at Rua da Bahia, 1534.

6 With Alfredo Carneiro Santiago.

7 Located at Rua dos Guaranis, 12.

(1937); as well as the Mauro Queiroz⁸ (1936), *Tupinambás*⁹ (1940), *Império*¹⁰ (1940), Elmar (1947), and Uberaba¹¹ (1950) buildings; and *Banco Financial da Produção*¹² (1944) (Filgueiras, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

The material corpus of this research falls within the field of memory studies. It is a historical investigation (both documentary and iconographic in nature), employing a qualitative approach with an exploratory character. The theoretical framework is grounded in bibliographic research focused on the fields of graphic design and architecture. The literature review enabled the identification of the architectural styles of the buildings, the clarification of concepts related to typography, and the contextualization of the historical period in which the hotels and their signage were introduced in the city. The scope of the study was limited to buildings authored by Romeo de Paoli, all originally designed to function as inns. Field research was conducted in the hypercenter of Belo Horizonte and considered only those typographic examples that were in place at the time of each building's inauguration.

In graphic memory studies, the object can be approached similarly to how it is treated in the fields of archaeology and anthropology, that is, any artifact from the past is analyzed as a human-made object that offers insights into the material and cultural (both technical and symbolic) aspects of the time and society to which it belonged. In this context, the graphic artifact serves as both a source and a subject of study within the scope of graphic memory (Braga; Farias, 2018).

An ideal methodological procedure for the investigation of typographic landscapes is understood to require not only careful protocols for data collection and systematization but also coherent methods of analysis and interpretation. The resulting data must enable the identification of cultural specificities and allow for the comparison of cases across different locations and historical periods (Gouveia *et al.*, 2007).

Since 2003, *Projeto Paisagens Tipográficas* has been investigating typographic elements present in urban environments. For the study of the city of São Paulo (SP), a card-based system was developed to support field surveys and the digital cataloging of data. The involvement of researchers from various disciplines (including architecture, design, history, geology, and photography) contributed to shaping a comprehensive data collection framework. This system was later adapted and applied in the study *Tipografia arquitetônica carioca* by Carlos Alexandre Salomon (2011), which, like the present research, focused exclusively on nominative typography.

8 Located at Rua Acre, 107. Headquarters of the Chauffeurs Center of Belo Horizonte. Designed by Ângelo Murgel.

9 Located at Rua Tupinambás, 671.

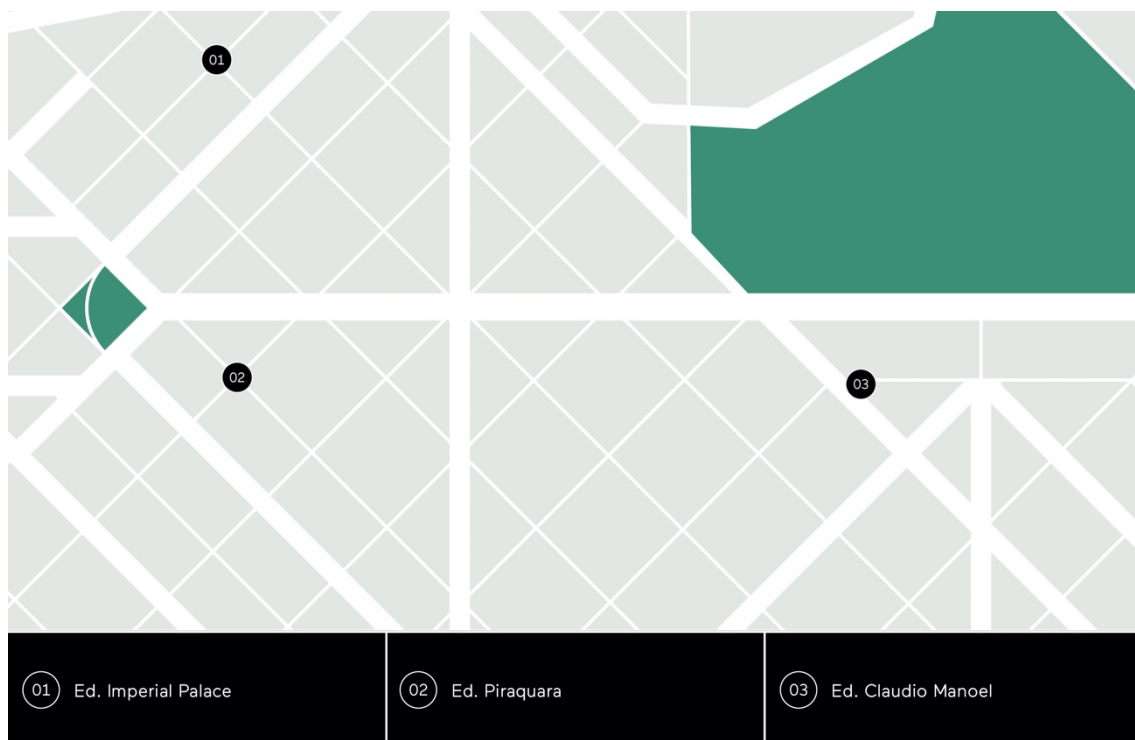
10 Located at Rua Tupinambás, 379. With Carneiro Rezende & Cia.

11 Located at Avenida Augusto de Lima, 279.

12 Located at Avenida Afonso Pena, 571. Currently *Hotel Financial*.

In both cases, data are organized using two cataloging cards: Card A for the building and Card B for the sign.

In this adaptation, the first four fields are shared by both forms (A and B). Data collection was guided by a route mapped according to the locations of nominative architectural typographies (Figure 1). This configuration is recorded in Field 1, which refers to the order number. The sequence reflects the itinerary followed by the researcher/author and serves merely as a suggested path for navigating and locating the examples under study. Field 2 records the date of the fieldwork. Field 3 documents the building's address, and Field 4 identifies the individual responsible for data collection.



Source: Author's archive (2024).

Figure 1. Location of the inventoried typefaces.

In Form A, Field 5 refers to the architectural style of the building. The date of project approval is recorded in Field 6. Information regarding authorship is provided in Field 7. Field 8 classifies the current condition of the building. Fields 9 and 10 document the original and current uses of the property, respectively. Field 11 contains a map indicating the location of the object of study within the urban area, while Field 12 is designated for a digital image of the property. Finally, Field 13 is reserved for additional observations by the individual responsible for the survey.

Form B contains specific data related to the nominative architectural typography. Field 5 records the authorship of the typographic element. Field 6 provides information on the condition of the sign, while Field 7 indicates its visual placement. Fields 8, 9, and 10 classify the typography according to family, orthographic use, weight, slant, alignment, material, and relief. Fields 11 and 12 include visual documentation: a general view showing the typography's position and proportion in

relation to the building, and a detailed image of the typographic element. Field 13 is reserved for additional observations. *Edifício Cláudio Manoel* (Carlos Manoel Building) features two distinct typographies: one for the word *Edifício* and another for the name of the poet and *inconfidente*¹³. In this case, two separate forms were created (B1 and B2), one for each occurrence.

One of the main modifications introduced to the card system proposed by *Projeto Paisagens Tipográficas* in this study was the inclusion of an item specifically addressing the condition of the sign. Previous studies assessed only the condition of the building; however, during the course of this research, particular issues were identified that adversely affect the condition of the nominative architectural typography, even in cases where the building itself remains well preserved. In the present sample, two-thirds of the signs were found to be in poor condition, primarily due to compromised legibility caused by electric fences, pipes, concertinas, inadequate maintenance, and advertising installations.

Data collection was conducted in two stages. The first stage took place in the field, guided by the card system, during which photographs of the buildings were also captured. The second stage involved supplementing the data through consultation of official records at the Public Archives of the City of Belo Horizonte, the Urban Information and Registration Department, and the Abílio Barreto Historical Museum. Figures 2, 3, and 4 present Forms A and B for the three inventoried buildings, completed with information gathered from both stages of the research process.

HORIZONTE TIPOGRÁFICO IMPERIAL PALACE FICHA A

01 Número de ordem 1 02 Data Coleta 14/11/22

03 Endereço Rua Guslicurus, 446, Centro

04 Responsável pela coleta Rafael Maia

05 Estilo Arquitetônico do Imóvel Art Déco

06 Data do projeto 1934

07 Autoria do projeto Romeo de Paoli

08 Estado do imóvel RUIZ

09 Uso original do imóvel Hotel

10 Uso atual do imóvel S/U

11 Localização do imóvel no meio urbano

12 Imagem do imóvel

13 Observações Na primeira visita, realizada em 05/03/23, havia uma placa sobreposta ao letreiro original, que veio a ser revelado somente em ocasião da segunda visita, em 14/11/23.

HORIZONTE TIPOGRÁFICO IMPERIAL PALACE FICHA B

01 Número de ordem 1 02 Data Coleta 14/11/22

03 Endereço Rua Guslicurus, 446, Centro

04 Responsável pela coleta Rafael Maia 05 Autoria da tipografia Não encontrada 06 Estado do imóvel RUIZ

07 Localização visual da tipografia nominativa

08 Classificação Tipográfica

Família serifada sem serifa display cursiva Outra, Qual?

Uso ortográfico caixa alta caixa baixa CA e CB versalete Outro, Qual?

Peso light medium bold black Outro, Qual?

Inclinação normal itálica Outra, Qual?

Alinhamento esquerda direita justificado centralizado Outro, Qual?

09 Material metal madeira pedra pintura outro:

10 Relevô alto baixo plano

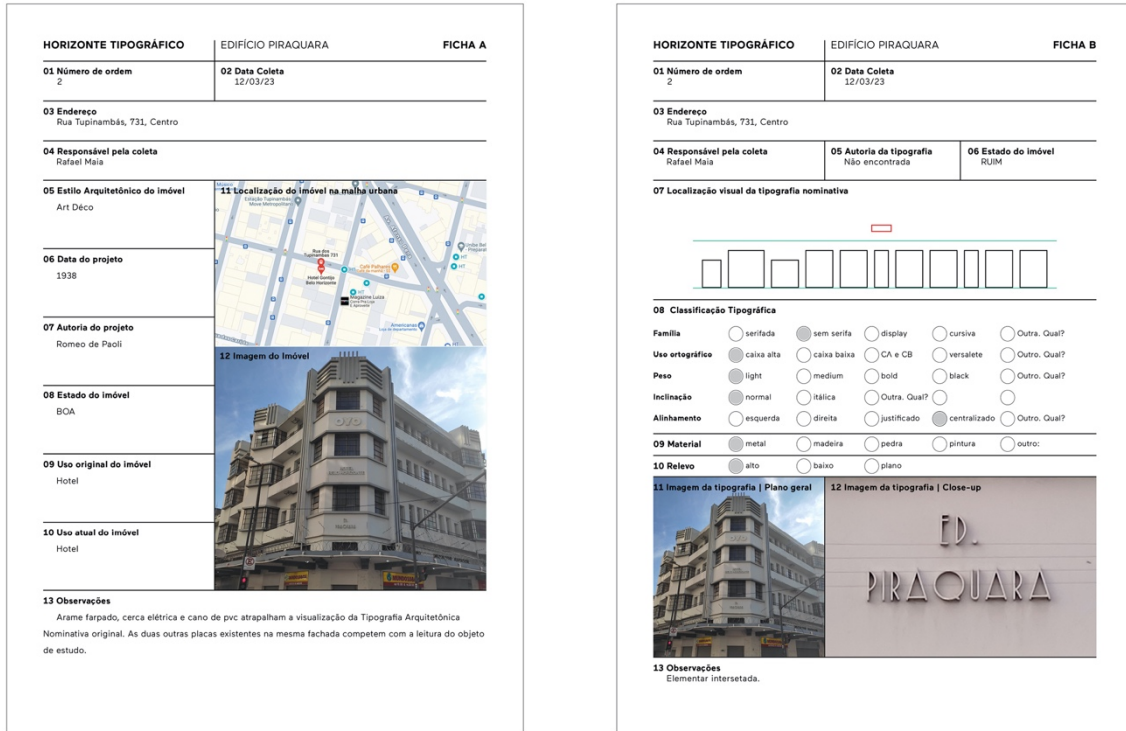
11 Imagem da tipografia | Plano geral 12 Imagem da tipografia | Close-up

13 Observações Moderna elementar: curvada monoespçada (exceto "Y").

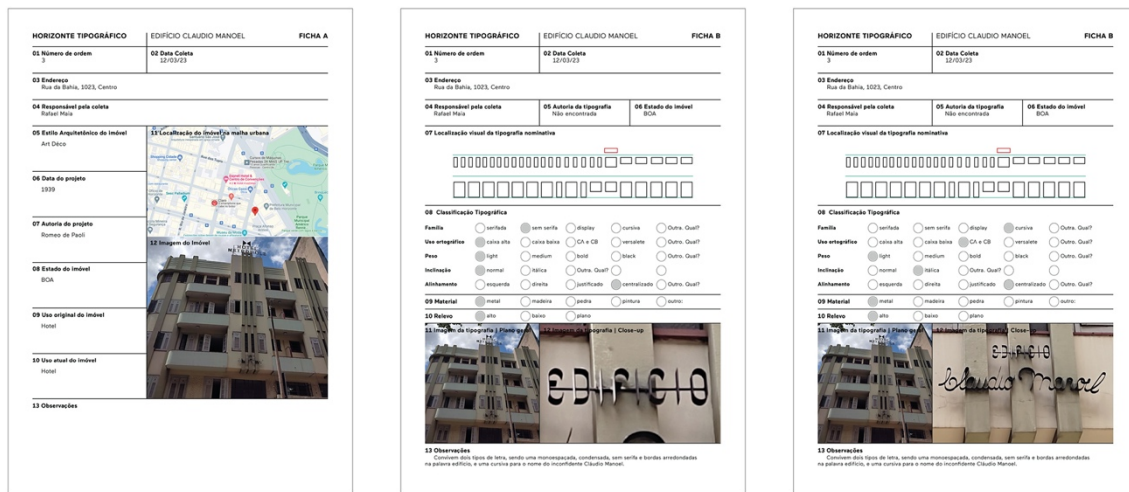
Source: Author's archive (2024).

Figure 2. Cards A and B used in the survey of *Edifício Imperial Palace*.

13 *Inconfidente* refers to someone associated with the *Inconfidência Mineira*, a historic Brazilian independence movement, so it's often kept as a proper noun or translated as "*Inconfidente*" to retain the historical context.



Source: Author's archive (2024).
 Figure 3. Cards A and B used in the survey of *Edifício Piraquara*.



Source: Author's archive (2024).
 Figure 4. Cards A and B used in the survey of *Edifício Cláudio Manoel*.

As part of the research project *Horizonte Tipográfico: um inventário de tipografias arquitetônicas nominativas em Belo Horizonte do período entre 1932 e 1942*, the streets of the city center were surveyed over the course of a week to catalog typographies relevant to the study, along with the *façades* of the buildings in which they appeared. The focus was on the city's earliest vertical constructions in the Art Deco and proto-modern styles. An initial set of approximately 60 examples was narrowed down to 24 inventoried signs following the cross-referencing of collected information. For the purposes of this article, the analysis is limited to the previously cataloged data concerning the three buildings highlighted herein: Imperial Palace, Piraquara, and Cláudio Manoel.

A visit to the Municipal Public Archives was conducted with a focus on the three buildings examined in this study. The process demands great care to avoid damaging the archival materials, which include official seals approving the construction and the signatures of the builder, property owner, and the architect and/or engineer. In this research, project authorship is attributed to the technical manager who signed the plans. The date associated with each building corresponds to the date of project approval, as indicated in the documentation. Of the items inventoried in this study, only the original plan for the Imperial Palace Building is preserved in the Public Archives collection. The original plans for the remaining buildings were lost; however, copies were located in the Urban Information and Registration Department, which operates exclusively through the online service portal of the Belo Horizonte City Hall.

Subsequently, a visit was made to the library of the Abílio Barreto Historical Museum, an institution dedicated since 1943 to the history, research, production, and dissemination of knowledge about Belo Horizonte. The museum houses the Romeo de Paoli Collection, which comprises 131 printed photographic positives of his architectural works. The high-quality, well-composed images reflect the architect's commitment to documenting his projects and confirm that the signs on the buildings examined in this study were installed at the time of their inauguration.

Research conducted at the Library of the School of Architecture at UFMG led to the discovery of Carlos Roberto Noronha's master's dissertation, defended at the institution in 1999. Entitled *Área Central de Belo Horizonte: arqueologia do edifício vertical e espaço urbano construído*, the dissertation investigates the emergence and dissemination of verticalization in downtown Belo Horizonte, aiming to make the spatial conformation and the vertical city produced therein more legible (Noronha, 1999). The term *archaeology* refers to the detailed documentary analysis of the evolution of buildings in Belo Horizonte, structured across eight periods, one of which encompasses the timeframe addressed in this study. Noronha's work served as a reference for the description of the buildings examined here and provided a range of historical data instrumental in framing the notion of modernity in the city under investigation.

Although this study is limited by criteria related to the location of buildings, time frame, authorship, and function, the same methodology may be applied in future research to other groups of examples, with the aim of expanding the cataloged typographic landscape.

AN INVENTORY OF NOMINATIVE ARCHITECTURAL TYPOGRAPHIES

Research on graphic memory and visual culture shares a common interest in understanding the visual propositions and forms of a society, as well as how these elements are reflected within them. The researcher plays an active role in selecting, interpreting, and recontextualizing a set of graphic artifacts. The formation of such a collection has the potential to evoke the collective memory of a people in the present and, through a narrative of the past, contribute to the construction of their identity. Visual communication elements associated with the graphic universe, such as illustrations, photographs, and typographic components, are regarded as legitimate

subjects of research related to graphic memory. The collection and organization of these elements are essential for the development of databases that support the majority of studies in this field (Braga; Farias, 2018). The aim of this article is to establish a collection of graphic artifacts found in the typographic landscape of Belo Horizonte.

The surplus generated by favorable export prices led to a wave of prosperity in Brazil at the end of World War I (1914–1918). This economic upswing helped solidify Belo Horizonte's role as an administrative center and significantly transformed its economic foundation. As the city expanded and established itself as a hub for industry, commerce, and services, the demand for hotel accommodations increased accordingly. A proliferation of guest houses emerged to meet the growing needs of visitors drawn by the city's administrative functions as the state capital. Of the 13 vertical buildings intended for hotel use that were approved by the Belo Horizonte city government within the boundaries of the hypercenter during the 1930s, six were designed by the office of Romeo de Paoli¹⁴.

The three buildings designed in this section follow the Art Deco style, with signage integrated into the architecture through cultural matrices reflected in both the lettering and the linguistic elements employed in the construction. The Piraquara, Imperial Palace, and Cláudio Manoel buildings exhibit modern characteristics consistent with the architectural style in which they are embedded, and their typographic treatments are unprecedented, which contributes to their exceptional value as heritage assets. All signs are executed in display and light typefaces, applied in metal relief (high relief) and positioned centrally. Among them, only the Imperial Palace building features typography placed at the entrance. In contrast, the signage for Cláudio Manoel and Piraquara is located on the sides, aligned with the height of the first balcony, and does not serve to indicate the building entrances.

Verticalization was almost synonymous with the modernity embodied by Art Deco. In typography, this is reflected in a tendency toward fonts with condensed proportions, a characteristic evident in all examples presented here. In architecture, the formal composition is further emphasized by *façade* elements that project longitudinally, enhancing the building's scale by extending beyond its structural boundaries (D'Elboux, 2013).

Edifício Imperial Palace (Hotel Imperial)

Two years after graduating from the UFMG School of Engineering in 1932, de Paoli received approval to construct the Imperial Palace Building (Figure 5), intended to house a hotel of the same name at Rua dos Guaicurus, number 446. This project represents the first of three by the architect analyzed in this study. The exterior's decorative richness is characterized by vertical lines and a rationalist approach devoid of ornamentation, defining the building as belonging to the geometric style. Regarding typography, this approach manifests as a geometrization of letterforms (Baines; Haslam, 2005, p. 82), a quality shared by all three signs documented.

¹⁴ *Edifício Imperial Palace, Edifício Piraquara, Hotel Majestic (1936), Hotel Madrid (1937), Edifício Império (1938), and Hotel Metrópole (1939).*



Source: Museu Histórico Abílio Barreto (2024).
Figure 5. *Edifício Imperial Palace*.

With its axis of symmetry arranged to emphasize the corner, *Edifício Imperial Palace* exhibits a classical architectural composition, characterized by a symmetrical structural organization. Notable architectural elements include Cremona-style window locks and tripartite Venetian windows (Noronha, 1999). The first floor consists of retail spaces and the hotel entrance, while the hotel itself occupied the second through fourth floors. Above the metal doorway, the words *Imperial Palace* are displayed in capital letters. The monospaced geometric typography (Figure 6) closely resembles the type used for the word *edifício* on *Edifício Cláudio Manoel*, which will be discussed subsequently.

During the initial field visit conducted in March 2023, it was observed that the *Hotel Imperial* sign was superimposed over the original signage (Figure 7). Consequently, a second visit took place in November 2023, at which time the obstructing structure had been removed, revealing the object of study amid pipes, wires, and considerable neglect.

Edifício Piraquara (Hotel Gontijo)

In 1935, de Paoli's project for the *Edifício Piraquara* (Figure 8) was approved; the building continues to house *Hotel Gontijo* today. The four-story structure features a chamfered corner defined by vertical frieze markings (Noronha, 1999). Above the marquee, display typography is applied in a light, uppercase font, notable for the letter Q rendered as a complete circle and the letter A's eye nearly



Source: Author's archive (2023).
Figure 6. Signage of *Edifício Imperial Palace*.



Source: Author's archive (2023).
Figure 7. Hotel Imperial sign overlaid on the original signage on the *façade of Edifício Imperial Palace*.



Source: Museu Histórico Abílio Barreto (2024).
Figure 8. *Edifício Piraquara (Hotel Gontijo)*.

forming a triangle due to the low position of its crossbar (Figure 9). Characteristic of Art Deco typography, this geometric formalism often reduces letters to their basic shapes (D'Elboux, 2013).

Beyond the chamfer, the sequential volumes form projections that alternate between balconies and solid masses, one of which culminates in a triangular shape featuring large glass bascules. The bold manipulation of proportions is also evident in the signage, where condensed and expanded letters alternate. As a modifier of modernity, the style incorporates influences from geometric decoration and Cubism, as well as Art Nouveau (Jubert, 2006, p. 220), which commonly applied horizontal bars at the terminals of the letter's mid-height strokes (Consuegra, 2004, p. 271), exemplified by the letter A on the sign. According to the typographic classification system proposed by Catherine Dixon in 1995 (based on the British Standards BS2961), letters with these features are described as curvilinear, characterized by the presence of combined curves and highly stylized lines (Silva; Farias, 2005, p. 67-81; Baines; Dixon, 2008, p. 184).

During the visit, the presence of concertina wire, electric fences, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes, and two additional signs (advertising devices) on the same *façade* was noted, all of which obstruct the visibility of the subtle nominative architectural typography.



Source: Author's archive (2023).

Figure 9. Signage of *Edifício Piraquara (Hotel Gontijo)*.

Edifício Cláudio Manoel (Hotel Metrópole)

The project for *Hotel Metrópole* in *Edifício Cláudio Manoel* (Figure 10) was initially commissioned from the Italian architect Raffaello Berti¹⁵, who had settled in the city in 1929 at the invitation of his colleague Luiz Signorelli¹⁶. This project marked Berti's first approved vertical design following the regularization of his professional status as a foreign architect. However, the design was completely reformulated, including its volumetric aspects, by the office of Romeo de Paoli, who obtained approval from the city hall in 1939.

A distinctive example of Art Deco architecture in Belo Horizonte, the building features volumes that extend beyond the alignment, introducing dynamic movement to the *façade*. The projecting elements are adorned with vertical friezes, including the curved corner (Noronha, 1999). Two types of lettering coexist on the same sign (Figure 11): a monospaced, uppercase, condensed, sans-serif style with rounded edges for the word "*edifício*," and a cursive style in upper and lowercase used for the name of the poet Cláudio Manoel. This cursive lettering represents an exception among the other modern uppercase letterforms, which led to the creation of two separate B cards for this example (B1 and B2) (Figure 4).

15 Raffaello Berti (Pisa, 1900 – Belo Horizonte, 1972) graduated as an architect in 1921, the same year he arrived in Brazil. In Minas Gerais, he was responsible for hundreds of projects. In 1930, he helped found the School of Architecture at UFMG, where he taught until 1967.

16 Luiz Signorelli (Cristina, 1896 – Belo Horizonte, 1964) began his architectural career in Belo Horizonte in 1925. Of Italian descent, he designed, among others, *Clube Belo Horizonte* (1928), *Automóvel Clube* (1929), *Hotel Sul-Americano* (1928), and the Public Security Secretariat (1930).



Source: Museu Histórico Abílio Barreto (2024).
Figure 10. *Edifício Cláudio Manoel (Hotel Metrópole)*.



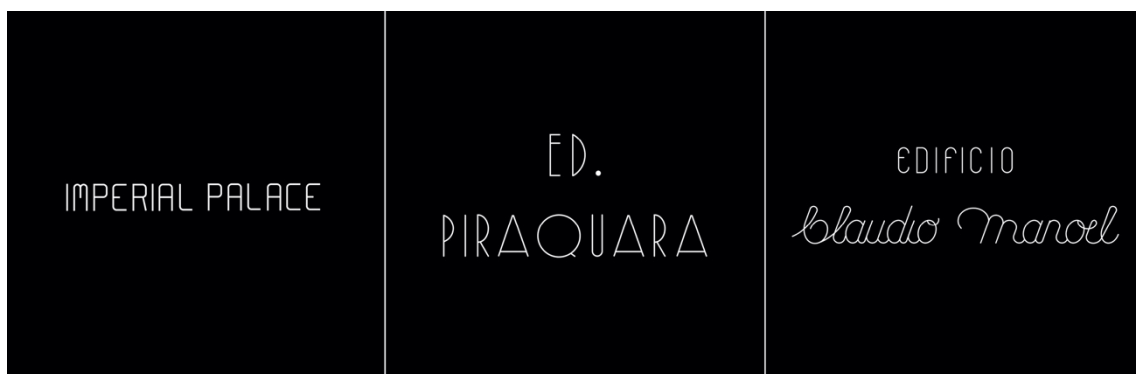
Source: Author's archive (2023)
Figure 11. Signage of *Edifício Cláudio Manoel (Hotel Metrópole)*.

CONCLUSION

Research conducted in the hypercenter reveals a set of artifacts largely unfamiliar to the city's inhabitants. Once brought to light, these items constitute a collection of primary graphic materials that may serve as future references and as a repertoire for new projects and visual languages. This initial comparison between the hotel buildings designed by de Paoli and the typographic elements applied to their *façades* contributes to the historiography of the graphic field in Belo Horizonte and opens new avenues for research by broadening the understanding of the city's visual and material culture.

Romeo de Paoli distinguishes himself from his contemporaries by the volume of buildings he documented through photography and the consistent quality of these records, each bearing one of his many distinctive signatures. Intent on affirming his authorship, he signed some of his works with small metal plaques, such as the one affixed to the concrete *façade* of *Edifício Imperial Palace*. He also employed various forms of identification — stamps, handwritten marks, and advertising devices — at construction sites, presenting himself as designer, builder, architect, and structural calculator.

Many Art Deco fonts and alphabets were originally developed for use in magazine titles or posters. Their qualities suited for prominent display may explain their frequent application in architectural typography (D'Elboux, 2013), which, as demonstrated by the three examples discussed, contributed to giving buildings a modern and sophisticated appearance. The high-resolution photographic surveys conducted by the author served as the basis for creating vector drawings of the signs (Figure 12). Given the ease with which these architectural elements can be replaced, vectorization serves as a valuable tool for the preservation of heritage assets in restoration processes and in the reconstruction of damaged elements, as it enables the reproduction of the original design (Gouveia *et al.*, 2007).



Source: Author's archive (2024).

Figure 12. Vector drawings of the inventoried typefaces.

Although all three buildings are designated as historical heritage sites, public archives overlook the presence of their inscriptions. Research conducted in these repositories revealed no records of drawings or other data, such as location, measurements, or typographic style specifications, related to the signage examined in the

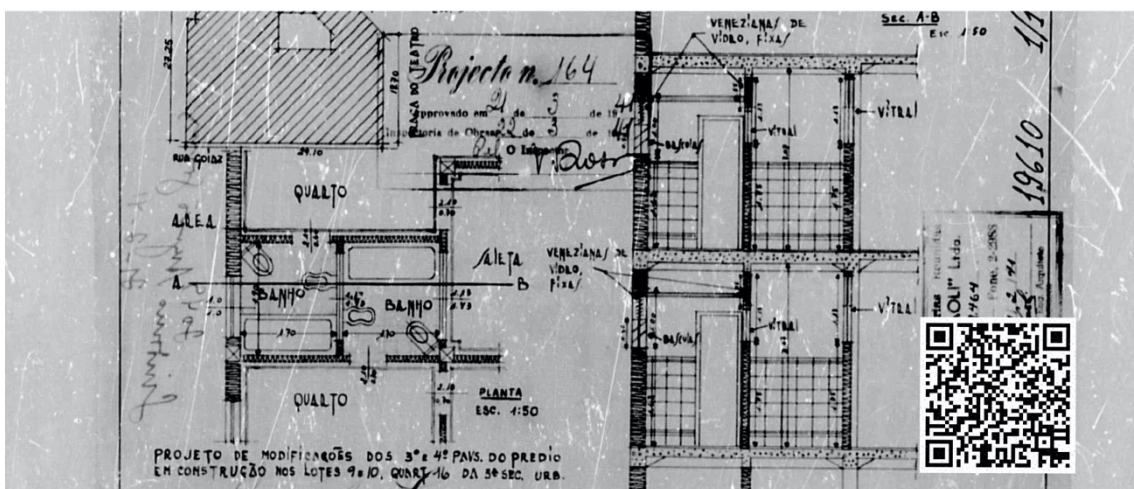
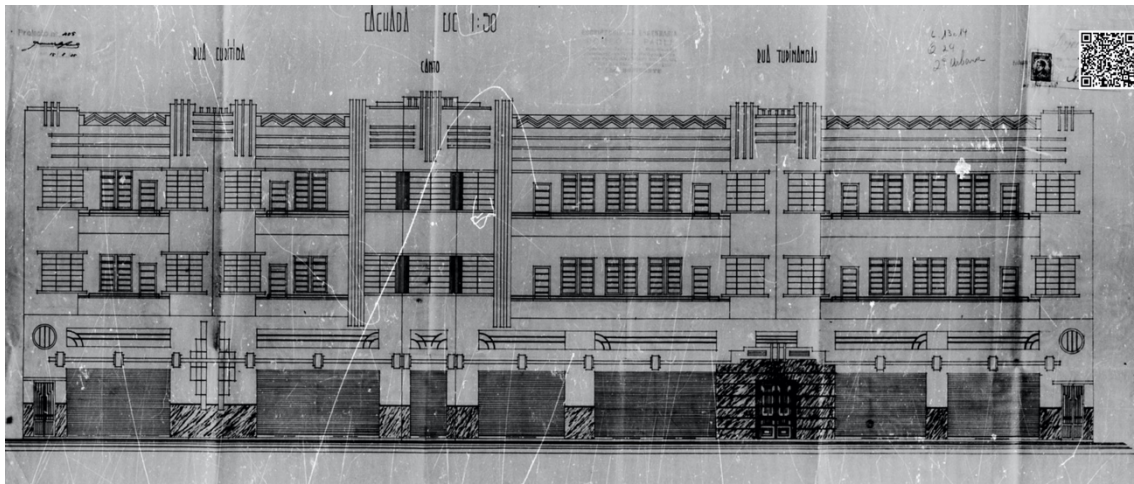
architectural plans. The authorship of these artifacts remains unknown. Consequently, the investigation focused on methods of visual language analysis and the techniques employed in the creation of the inscriptions.

Research sources on the topic are scarce, superficial, and lack systematic organization. The library of the UFMG School of Architecture, named in honor of architect Raffaello Berti, maintains a physical newspaper archive stored in a single drawer, in which no information related to Romeo de Paoli's projects was found. Ninety-four years after the establishment of the first autonomous architecture training center in Brazil, the institution has yet to compile a collection of materials documenting the key professionals and buildings from the city's modern period. Furthermore, no academic studies on Romeo de Paoli were identified in research repositories, indicating a broader lack of interest in investigating the city's spatial development and the principal figures involved in its formation.

The Belo Horizonte City Hall does not maintain a unified platform for accessing building documentation. Searches within the Belo Horizonte City Public Archives are conducted exclusively through the cadastral index, with no available filters for architect, building, architectural style, or geographic location. During the days spent handling archived plans, the storage and access conditions were found to be alarming, posing a clear risk of loss, an outcome that is not uncommon, as the survey revealed that two-thirds of the physical plans consulted had disappeared. At the Urban Information and Cadastral Directorate, copies are provided free of charge; however, the quality is notably poor, with building details and critical information — such as dates and signatures — often rendered illegible. In some instances, a QR code has been conspicuously inserted over project details or typographic records, obstructing their visualization (Figure 13).

There appears to be no established objective to promote access through the dissemination of public collections. The requirement to pay for the digitization of plans of iconic buildings reveals a disregard for public property and a lack of strategic planning aimed at ensuring accessibility. The methodological process of this research prompted a critical reflection on archival practices and raised interest in contemporary models for the dissemination of collections. Although archival science is a scientific discipline, it inherently supports public access by facilitating the communication of the informational content of documents. From this perspective, the dissemination of collections pragmatically reinforces the constitutional right to access information—and, by extension, to culture and memory (Lopes, 2018, p. 8).

The absence of information on the inventoried items highlights a significant gap in the methodologies employed by heritage preservation agencies. In cases involving inscriptions on buildings of historical significance, where architectural typography constitutes an integral component of a valued legacy, its documentation is both essential and urgent. This issue aligns with the concerns raised by Moema Oliveira (2021) regarding the reasons why Brazilian design from this period remains marginalized. As a result, designers often fail to recognize it as part of the country's design history, and it continues to be undervalued by the very institutions and researchers dedicated to heritage preservation.



Source: Diretoria de Cadastro e Informação Urbanística (2024).

Figure 13. Examples of plans signed by Romeo de Paoli, provided by the Directorate of Urban Registration and Information..

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La Ursa and its memories: cultural manifestation and affection in Pernambuco

La Ursa e suas memórias: manifestação cultural e afetividade em Pernambuco

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ABSTRACT

Carnival is a major festivity that takes place in February in Brazil, bringing together various cultural expressions. La Ursa, or Carnival Bears, is a traditional game in the Northeast, brought by European immigrants. Its main character is the bear, accompanied by a hunter, also called a gringo or tamer. This tradition is part of Pernambuco's Carnival, and it is common to see children and teenagers dressed up, especially in peripheral neighborhoods, in the days leading up to the festivities. They go door to door asking for money and singing: "La Ursa wants money, those who don't give are *pirangueiros*" — *Pirangueiro*, a term from Pernambuco's vocabulary, meaning "a frugal or stingy person, among other things." Beyond the games, parades and contests take place in several cities in Pernambuco, rewarding the best Carnival Bear costume. In the face of social changes, recognizing this tradition is essential, as it keeps Pernambuco's cultural identity alive. Preserving these manifestations allows new generations to understand their value, strengthening their sense of belonging. This article aims to identify how the emotional memories of La Ursa festivities and their applications in design highlight this cultural expression in Pernambuco.

Keywords: La Ursa. Pernambuco. Affective memory. Design. Cultural identity.

RESUMO

O Carnaval é uma grande festividade que acontece em fevereiro, no Brasil, reunindo diversas manifestações culturais. A La Ursa, ou Ursos do Carnaval, é uma brincadeira tradicional do Nordeste, trazida por imigrantes europeus. Seu personagem principal é o urso, acompanhado por um caçador, também chamado de gringo ou domador. Essa tradição faz parte do Carnaval pernambucano, e é comum ver crianças e adolescentes fantasiados, especialmente em bairros periféricos, nos dias que antecedem a folia. Eles vão de porta em porta pedindo dinheiro e cantando: "A La Ursa quer dinheiro, quem não dá é pirangueiro". Pirangueiro: vocábulo pernambuquês que significa "pessoa econômica, mão de vaca etc.". Além das brincadeiras, desfiles e concursos acontecem em várias cidades de Pernambuco, premiando a melhor fantasia do Urso de Carnaval. Diante das mudanças sociais, reconhecer essa tradição é essencial, pois ela mantém viva a identidade cultural pernambucana. A preservação dessas manifestações permite que novas gerações compreendam seu valor, fortalecendo o sentimento de pertencimento. Este artigo busca identificar como as memórias afetivas das festividades da La Ursa e suas aplicações no design evidenciam essa manifestação cultural em Pernambuco.

Palavras-chave: La Ursa. Pernambuco. Memória afetiva. Design. Identidade cultural.

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INTRODUCTION

Carnival is a major festivity characterized by abundance and universality (Araújo, 2003, p. 37). The author notes that this tradition dates back to ancient agrarian celebrations held in Egypt and the Near East, approximately 4,000 years before Christ (Araújo, 2003). These festivities, marked by rituals, dances, and costumes, honored fertility gods and expressed gratitude for life and requests for blessings for the future.

Carnival celebrations, beyond the festivities, served as an opportunity for total disorderly conduct. Amid the chaos and playfulness, criticisms were aimed at those in power and societal issues, exposing hypocrisies and inequalities.

In Brazil, until the mid-19th century, *entrudo* was the carnival practice that most closely resembled medieval festivities. Originating in the Iberian Peninsula and inspired by Greco-Roman Bacchic and Saturnalian ceremonies, *entrudo* developed during the early formalization of Christian Carnival, after 590 AD. "Its roots deepened in Portugal, lasting for about 10 to 12 centuries, with its peak between the 12th and 13th centuries" (Alencastro, 1997).

Currently, Carnival in Brazil is considered a major tourist attraction and one of the most representative celebrations of Brazilian identity. Since traditions are present in most states, each with its own particularities, analyzing the festival in Brazil reveals that it is most emphasized in the Southeast and Northeast regions of the country. Carnival is one of the main events that attract tourists to Brazil, consolidating its cultural and economic significance.

The festivities gained even more importance because they are public and free, as revelers dress up and occupy the city streets to celebrate. The streets were the main stage for the revelry, a festival that embodies simplicity and inclusiveness for all social classes:

In the history of Carnival, the street has always been an important stage for festivities; *entrudo*, *zé-pereira*, carnival clubs or societies, *cordões*, *ranches*, blocks, the parade, and samba schools have always used the streets as their stage. Those who did not participate would go to the streets to watch (Arantes, 2013, p. 10).

As mentioned earlier, the Southeast and Northeast are the regions with the strongest prominence of Carnival in Brazil, especially in Pernambuco, where emphasis is placed on street Carnival, with marches, electric trios, orchestras, and more. Besides the celebration itself, other festivities are present during the period leading up to or during the carnival, such as La Ursa, Frevo, and Maracatu.

La Ursa, or the Carnival Bear, is a tradition that most people outside the Northeast are unlikely to know. In this activity, children, teenagers, and even adults go out into the streets dancing and singing marchinhas, wearing handmade costumes, usually made from recyclable materials, crafted by a relative or even by the revelers themselves.

The origin of the La Ursa tradition has several versions, but it is speculated that this cultural manifestation was brought by European circus immigrants, specifically

Italians, who came to Recife between the late 19th century and the 1920s (Fundação Joaquim Nabuco, 2017). Since then, this festivity, considered a Cultural Manifestation from Pernambuco, has been prominent over the years.

As an entertainment, this folk play can be seen as a way to promote temporary inclusion among different social classes in the appreciation and dissemination of Carnival customs and traditions of the local culture. The visibility of “La Ursa” can be explained both through the creation of meaning in its performances and choreographies, as well as in the construction of the aesthetic and musical artifacts that make up the festivities (Aranha, 2015, p. 122).

With the effort to recover and establish a sense of local identity, especially of the Carnival Bear, it is described as an objectified cultural memory, a tangible carrier of “mnemonic energy”, a Greek technique that uses simplification and association to help memorize more complex things, capable of storing knowledge through which a group would attain “a consciousness of its unity and singularity” (Assmann, 1995, p. 129–130). In other words, the importance of memory for the formation of subjectivity within the collective consciousness is linked to cultural identity and is present in many forms, in addition to playing a significant role in the sense of belonging and the construction of societal identities.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective

The present study aims to identify how the affective memories of the festivities and traditions of La Ursa, as well as their applications in design, highlight the presence of this cultural manifestation in the state of Pernambuco.

Specific Objectives

- To recover the history of this festival;
- To discuss affective memory and its relations with festivities in the state;
- To list examples of design that demonstrate the presence of this memory in Pernambuco.

JUSTIFICATION

The relevance of this work lies in the need to document and preserve a significant part of Pernambuco’s culture, which is at risk of being lost or altered over time. In a context of social changes, it is essential to recognize the value of La Ursa as a cultural manifestation, highlighting the importance of protecting and valuing these expressions. This not only contributes to the current state of research but also promotes the conservation of this rich cultural heritage for future analysis and appreciation.

Furthermore, in the social sphere, the tradition brought by La Ursa strengthens the community’s sense of identity and belonging, while also preserving and

transmitting cultural traditions to future generations. It also enriches the region's cultural landscape, providing a deeper understanding of the traditions associated with these festivities.

In light of this, it is evident that the absence of reflection on the festivities of La Ursa as part of Pernambuco's cultural expression could result in significant losses, both in terms of cultural identity and the socioeconomic impact on the communities involved in these celebrations, since these elements (the Bears themselves) have also come to be present in crafts and popular art.

An example of La Ursa's contribution to the community is its ability to encourage social integration in peripheral neighborhoods. Children and teenagers, by dressing up and going out into the streets singing marches and asking for contributions, are not only experiencing a cultural tradition but also able to establish community bonds, which can strengthen the sense of collective belonging. In the same vein, many of the costumes and accessories are handmade by family members, which can stimulate creativity and promote recycling of materials, valuing local craftsmanship, while also keeping the region's cultural identity alive.

Overall, this work not only documented the presence of La Ursa memories in Pernambuco but also clarified its ongoing impact on the state's cultural and social landscape. By exploring the connection between La Ursa traditions and contemporary design projects such as prints, masks, illustrations, souvenirs, clothing, and more, this research highlighted the significance of these festivities for Pernambuco's cultural identity.

In addition to preserving the memory of La Ursa, this study demonstrated how its vibrant colors, playful shapes, and symbolism have been revitalized by designers in contemporary creations. This presence can be observed in various artifacts, where these reinterpretations not only keep the tradition alive but also enable it to dialogue with new languages and audiences.

This study not only contributed to the appreciation of Pernambuco's cultural manifestation but also inspires new creative approaches that can revitalize traditional elements for contemporary use, thereby enriching the region's cultural landscape and strengthening its unique identity.

METHODOLOGY

The research conducted in this study is classified as theoretical in nature, as it seeks to understand and interpret concepts, theories, and phenomena related to the La Ursa festivities in Pernambuco. Regarding its objective, the research is exploratory, involving a dynamic relationship between the real world and the subject, that is, an inseparable connection between the objective world and the subject's subjectivity. It cannot be translated into numbers, as it aims to investigate and explore the affective memories associated with La Ursa and its presence in the state, without the intention of establishing definitive conclusions or generalizations (Gil, 2002).

In the course of this work, a review of relevant information and documents about La Ursa was also conducted through the website of Fundação Joaquim Nabuco (FUNDAJ), a renowned institution in the field of culture and heritage, with particular focus on the Northeast region of Brazil. Consulting this source proved to be extremely important for enriching the research, providing data and materials that significantly contributed to the understanding of Carnival traditions, especially those related to La Ursa, within the Pernambuco context.

In terms of addressing the problem, the research adopted a qualitative perspective, which focused on a deep understanding and interpretation of the collected data through document analysis (Silva; Menezes, 2000, p. 20). This approach enabled a detailed investigation of participants' experiences and perceptions regarding the La Ursa festivities, emphasizing subjective and qualitative aspects to capture the richness and complexity of the cultural memories involved.

Methodological procedures

This research, of a theoretical nature, may have applied applications based on its findings. It is classified as qualitative, as it sought results without the intention of statistical analysis. The methodological procedures adopted in this study followed a deductive approach, starting from general principles to arrive at specific conclusions about the presence of La Ursa's memory in Pernambuco. In this sense, a case study will be conducted based on the methodology (Silva; Menezes, 2000), with the festivities of La Ursa as the specific object of investigation. The central themes of the research focused on understanding the affective memories associated with La Ursa, exploring its origins, evolution, and cultural meanings within the Pernambuco context (Gil, 2002, p. 57).

The spatial delimitation of the research was restricted to the state of Pernambuco, Brazil, where the La Ursa festivities are a deeply rooted tradition in the local culture. Regarding the temporal delimitation, the study focused on the contemporary period, considering current practices and perceptions related to La Ursa. There was no specific population restriction for this research, as its focus was on the cultural festivities themselves, without limitations concerning participants.

The technical procedures included a bibliographic survey, through which theoretical information and examples of the presence of this manifestation in contemporary times were collected to support the theoretical analysis. Due to the physical distance between the cities in the state where this manifestation is present, data collection was conducted through secondary photographic records produced and published by newspapers and social media, capturing locations within the state where these manifestations are found, as well as through online data gathering with visual records of these manifestations. A visual reference to the popular culture of La Ursa was accepted as an inclusion criterion, while the exclusion criterion was the fact that the manifestation was not from the state of Pernambuco. Consequently, case studies were conducted to examine specific examples that demonstrate the presence of La Ursa memories in Pernambuco (Gil, 2002, p. 55).

CARNIVAL BEAR

The performance is characterized by a main figure, which is a single bear, and another participant, the tamer, who can be called the Commander or Italian. Additionally, in other versions of the festivities, a third figure appears, the Hunter (Figure 1), who uses a shotgun and “shoots” whenever the bear attempts to escape.



Source: Alexandre Berzin (1945).
Figure 1. The bear and the hunter.

In organized festivities, there may be a flag bearer, holding a banner or poster displaying the group’s name and the founding date. There might also be someone responsible for collecting donations from the crowd that witnesses the event, a role that can also be performed by the Tamer, in addition to the management team and a balancer or juggler to make the bear dance.

However, the central figures are always the bear and the tamer. The bear’s costume is the most elaborate, often a worn-out jumpsuit filled with plush, burlap, or other plant-based materials that are abundant in each region, such as agave or caroá. In its hands, the bear wears gloves with large claws at the fingertips, usually made of wire, and on its head, the most important and characteristic element: a mask made of papier-mâché, painted in various colors, including black, white, blue, red, and yellow.

The tamer’s costume is simpler and also varies from region to region, but generally, it consists of a hat or bag used to collect money, along with a more elegant

outfit that was originally a suit. The tamer always wears a false mustache, either blonde or black, as well as a whip to discipline the bear.

Katarina Real, an important researcher who, during her stay in Brazil, conducted folkloric studies on Carnival and other cultural manifestations of Recife, states that in the first appearance of the Cabeça Lesa Bear in 1965, the costume was extremely rich and detailed:

In one of the "luxurious" Bears", the *Cabeça Lesa*, which appeared for the first time in the 1965 Carnival, the tamer wore a richly embroidered jacket and a tricorne, a style of hat that was popular from the 16th to the 18th century, with tall plumage, resembling a prince at a Frevo club (Real, 1967, p. 123).

Additionally, there is a peculiar orchestra, similar to a *charanga*, a band typically composed of wind instruments, accordion, triangle, bass drum, reco-reco, tambourine, and tambourins in the more basic groups. In simpler performances, it is common to hear the song "La Ursa wants money, those who don't give are *pirangueiros*," which originated as a way to warn revelers about the tradition of gifting La Ursa.

The term "*pirangueiro*," used for those who refuse to give money, carries a playful and pejorative tone, suggesting that the person is stingy or greedy. However, in more sophisticated orchestras, it was also possible to find instruments such as *cavaquinho*, guitars, snare drum, tambourine, and even clarinet and trombone. The author Katarina Real discusses her research on the rhythms present in La Ursa manifestations and the association of Italians with the accordion, an instrument developed in Austria but refined to its current model in Italy:

Any of these instruments may be missing, but not the accordion, according to my research among half a dozen of these groups. This is logical, considering the association between Italians and the accordion. The rhythm is always very fast and lively, typically xote, xaxado, baião, and even polka (Real, 1967, p. 124).

HISTORICAL RECOVERY

As mentioned earlier, there are many stories and tales about the origin of La Ursa. One of the versions is by Katarina Real, who states that the closest ancestor of the Pernambuco Bear comes from the Middle Ages. According to Real, at that time, bears were always present at fairs and festivals in European villages and towns, serving as entertainment provided by minstrels and jongleurs, synonymous terms used to refer to people considered artists, originally in medieval Europe (Figure 2). These performers were responsible for street spectacles that used animals as attractions, including bears, horses, monkeys, camels, and even lions.

Another version about the origin, which is of little credibility but still exists and is mentioned by Real, is the story about the son of Brazil's second president, Floriano Peixoto, who had the same name as his father and was a Greco-Roman wrestler. This story began after rumors that he had fought with the so-called bear.



Source: Reynold (1931, p. 166).

Figure 2. Illustration of a performative bear in the Middle Ages.

However, some versions suggest that La Ursa may have its origins among the European Gypsies, who traveled through cities with chained animals, dancing in exchange for coins, similar to the version presented by Ovídio da Cunha (FUNDAJ, 2023).

It is worth mentioning that Ovídio da Cunha (1948), in "*Ursos e maracatus*", published in *Contraponto* magazine, discussed La Ursa as an inheritance from Europe, possibly also brought by Italians, within an Afro-Indigenous Carnival.

Probably during the colonial period, the sugar mills had as artisans Italians, who were always skilled in copper metallurgy. From this small population of artisans, the "bears" would have emerged, societies affiliated with the "Carnival Federation", which appear leading a chained bear by the snout, guided by men with long mustaches. In these bears, there is always a group of young women with tambourines, with string instruments always predominating (Cunha, 1948).

Katarina Real recounts that, in the past, the bears were identified as associations by the Pernambuco Carnival Federation (FCPE) and also by public security agencies, making it difficult to distinguish which groups were genuine (Real, 1967, p. 128). However, in 1965, the FCPE established special categories of Bears: *Aliado*, founded in 1959 (Figure 3); *Branco Folião*, founded in 1960; *Cabeça Lesa*, founded in 1965 (Figure 4); *Come Rama*, founded in 1964; and *Mimoso da Mustardinha*, founded in 1965, among others.



Source: FUNDAJ (1961).
Figure 3. *Urso Aliado* in front of its headquarters.



Source: FUNDAJ (1965).
Figure 4. *Urso Cabeça Lesa* leaving its headquarters, in the Prazeres neighborhood.

MEMORY, AFFECTIVITY AND CULTURE

Graphic and affective memory

Memory, a central theme in understanding individual and collective identity, is multifaceted and complex. Several authors have dedicated themselves to uncovering its mechanisms and nuances, among them Maurice Halbwachs (1990), who proposed a categorization that has become a fundamental reference for the study of memory: individual memory, social memory, and collective memory.

Individual memory resides in each person's experiences and life events, shaped by their personal interactions, interpersonal relationships, and sociocultural context. These memories, unique and non-transferable, form each individual's life story, influencing their perception of the world and their actions (Halbwachs, 1990). For example, the memory of a reveler dressed as La Ursa during Carnival, along with their sensations, emotions, and experiences during the celebration, constitutes their individual memory of La Ursa.

Social memory, in turn, arises from the intersection of individual memory and collective memory. It is shaped through the negotiation of meanings and communication among members of a group, influencing individuals' perceptions of the past and present. Through processes of symbolic mediation, social memory is constantly reinterpreted and re-signified, shaping collective identity and social cohesion (Halbwachs, 1990). The social memory of La Ursa can be built based on the interaction of individual memories of revelers, stories told about the tradition, representations in the media and popular culture, among other elements.

According to the author, collective memory represents the set of shared memories among a group or community, rooted in their history and identity. This memory is constructed and transmitted through traditions, rituals, narratives, and symbols, strengthening the sense of belonging and social cohesion. For example, La Ursa, as a symbolic figure of Pernambuco's Carnival, embodies the collective memory of this tradition, bringing together the community's shared memories of the festival, its characters, and its meanings.

The graphic representations of La Ursa, such as costumes, artworks, and others, serve as artifacts of memory. Through forms, colors, and textures, these objects are capable of evoking feelings, stories, and experiences, weaving the past into the present (Damazio, 2006). Each image is able to carry the experiences and perspectives of its creator, contributing to the construction of collective memory and strengthening the bond between different generations of the carnival community.

Affective memory, a concept extensively discussed by authors like Candau (2016), refers to memories strongly marked by emotions and sensations. It is directly related to how sensory experiences, such as sounds, smells, images, and movements, can connect to personal experiences, giving them a lasting and symbolic meaning. In the context of Carnival, affective memory can serve as a powerful link between the individual and the tradition, for example, when hearing the drums or seeing a

La Ursa costume, many revelers are emotionally transported to past experiences, reinforcing their cultural belonging. By keeping alive the emotions linked to these experiences, this sensitive dimension of memory fosters both the preservation of traditions and their renewal in the collective imagination.

Material culture

Material culture, composed of objects, goods, and tangible artifacts, transcends mere utility and stands as a powerful vantage point for understanding the functioning and transformations of societies over time (Meneses, 1994). Each artifact, from rudimentary tools to elaborate works of art, carries within it a fragment of history, whispering secrets about beliefs, values, social practices, and challenges faced by civilizations in different eras.

Therefore, material culture is established as a crucial tool for understanding societies, complementing other sources of historical knowledge and revealing the transformations that civilizations have undergone over time.

Affective memory

In the context of La Ursa traditions, it is possible to relate the visual and symbolic elements of this manifestation to what Norman (2008) defines as the reflective level of design. This level is directly connected to subjectivity and affective memory, being influenced by cultural and emotional aspects. The costumes, masks, and representations of La Ursa, when experienced over the years by different people, carry unique and personal meanings, evoking memories of past experiences such as processions, sounds, smells, and social interactions. These objects thus become artifacts of memory, because, as Norman (2008, p. 66) states, "what truly matters is the story of the interaction". In other words, the value of these elements lies both in how they were used and in how they left marks on the experiences and emotions of those who participated in the tradition.

LA URSA IN PERNAMBUCO

Over the decades, La Ursa has become not only a symbol of Carnival festivities but also an intrinsic part of the cultural identity of various cities in Pernambuco. From lively celebrations to its presence in architectural elements, designs, crafts, and local artistic productions, La Ursa continues to leave its mark on multiple facets of everyday life in Pernambuco.

Through a mapping conducted on websites such as G1 and Folha de Pernambuco, it was possible to uncover the prominent presence of La Ursa in cities like Recife, Olinda, Caruaru, Arcoverde, São Caetano, São Lourenço da Mata, Ribeirão, and Limoeiro. In these locations, it manifests in various aspects, from streets alive with the sounds and colors of Carnival to sculptures and bars that pay tribute to it.

This analysis (Figure 5) reveals La Ursa not only as a folkloric tradition but also as a cultural manifestation in constant transformation, adapting to new social and cultural realities and contributing to the construction of Pernambuco's identity.



Figure 5. Map of the cities that show the presence of La Ursa.

Recife

Recife, the capital of Pernambuco, is one of the cradles of La Ursa, with various representations spread throughout the city today. One example is La Ursa (Figure 6), a bar, café, and restaurant located in one of the city's oldest buildings, which, as the name suggests, carries a sense of cultural identity through the presence of elements of this Carnival symbol in the state.

Furthermore, the festivities of the traditional figure of Pernambuco's Carnival are undergoing modernization to meet the needs of contemporary times. An example is the lyrical block "O Bonde" (Figure 7), which, in addition to performing its classic role of soliciting contributions from participants and spectators, now also accepts payments via credit card, debit card, and Pix. This reflects the evolution of society and the need to keep up with new trends.

Olinda

In the Guadalupe neighborhood of Olinda, the tradition of making La Ursa masks remains alive through Julião (Figure 8), who learned the craft at age 12 from his father. This tradition was started by his grandfather. While the bear mask is the most famous within the Julião family, a wide variety of models are available. Using papier-mâché and arrowroot gum, the masks and "big heads" as Julião calls them, are meticulously handcrafted and painted with oil paint.

Caruaru

In "Little Princess of Agreste", it is the skilled artisan Shivo Araújo who keeps the tradition of La Ursa alive in Pernambuco through his sculptures. With mastery,



Source: La Ursa Recife (@laursarecife) (2023).
 Figura 6. La Ursa Bar.

he transforms important historical figures from Brazil into representations of La Ursa (Figure 9). For Shivo, these folkloric figures are not just Carnival symbols, but also represent a period of challenges and joys in his life.

São Caetano

For five decades, São Caetano has been the stage for the tradition of La Ursa, a practice deeply rooted in the local culture (Figure 10). Initially organized by traditional families, these folkloric characters appeared in small groups, singing and dancing to the sound of objects that produce various noises (G1, 2018). As mentioned earlier, La Ursa



Source: Folha de Pernambuco (2024).
Figure 7. Lyric Block "O Bonde" in the street.



Source: Rafael Furtado (2020).
Figure 8. Julião and his masks.



Source: Nascimento e Vaz (2022).
Figure 9. La Ursa Ariano Suassuna.

began soliciting monetary donations, which became a distinctive feature, symbolized by the popular song “La Ursa wants money, those who don’t give are *pirangueiros*”. From this tradition, the La Ursa contest in the municipality was created, aiming to further strengthen the carnival culture and preserve this rich cultural heritage.

São Lourenço da Mata

In the Recife Metropolitan Region, the city of São Lourenço da Mata highlights the festivities of La Ursa. About 20 groups, including bulls, bears, and associations, parade through the city. The main attraction is the White Bear of Cangaçá (Figure 11), declared a local cultural heritage. With 41 years of existence, the White Bear of Cangaçá is a two-time champion of La Ursa in Pernambuco.

Arcoverde

The vibrant figure of La Ursa (Figure 12) also makes its presence felt in Arcoverde, in the backcountry of Pernambuco, Araripe. This cultural manifestation, rich in symbolism and affectivity, finds a fertile space to flourish in this municipality, perpetuating traditions and creating affective memories that intertwine with the local identity.



Source: G1 (2018).
Figure 10. La Ursa contest.



Source: Folha de S.Paulo (2024).
Figure 11. Presentations of *Marrom Teimoso* and *Branco de Cangaçá* Bears.

In 2012, the Project for the Maintenance of the Peleja Bear (Figure 13) was established by the Boi Maracatu Cultural Association, aiming to preserve the tradition of the Peleja Bear in Arcoverde. The project offers workshops and training courses in various fields, such as dance, music, theater, and mask and costume making, for young members of the community.



Source: Hugo Muniz (@hugomunizzz) (2022).
Figure 12. *Pé de Lã* Bear.

The initiative aims to strengthen the local popular culture, generate income and opportunities for young people, and preserve the identity of the *Peleja* Bear, a prominent figure in Arcoverde's Carnival. *La Ursa* remains alive through the community's struggle and hard work, which is dedicated to keeping the flame of this important cultural manifestation burning brightly.

This project is an example of the strength of tradition and the importance of popular culture for the Arcoverde community. Through the preservation and promotion of the *Peleja* Bear, the project contributes to the construction of local identity and the social development of the community.

Ribeirão

In the Mata Sul region of Pernambuco, the Carnival festivities take on a grandiose touch with the presence of the Giant *La Ursa* of Ribeirão (Figure 14). Standing at 3.5 meters tall, the imposing figure dominates the streets, enchanting revelers



Source: Cityhall of Arcoverde (2021).

Figure 13. Project for the Maintenance of the Peleja Bear.

of all ages. Created in 2016 by artisan Jorge, La Ursa is a result of a talent inherited from his mother, continuing a family tradition that brings joy to the community.

More than just a Carnival character, the Giant Bear has become a symbol of the local culture. Each year, the income collected from donations by revelers is reinvested in creating new costumes, ensuring that the Bear continues to evolve and surprise everyone.

Limoeiro

Limoeiro's Carnival in Pernambuco is a traditional celebration held every year in February. One of the highlights of this festivity is La Ursa, whose costumes are made from burlap, plush, velvet, and other materials, decorated with ribbons, flowers, and hats. Each bear has its own story and tradition, and revelers sing and dance to Carnival music as they pass by.



Source: G1 (2023).

Figure 14. Giant La Ursa.

In 2024, the bears *Peludinho* (Figure 15), *da Última Hora*, *Esperança*, *Drácula*, *Pé de Lã*, and *Atrás de Casa* parade in Limoeiro. Each of them performed a different show, with music, choreographies, and costumes that delighted the audience. Limoeiro's Carnival is a celebration for the whole family, and the bears are one of the most popular attractions that ensure the joy of revelers.



Source: E-news WEBTV (2024).

Figure 15. *Peludinho* Bear.

LA URSA IN DESIGN, ARTS AND HANDICRAFT

The graphic representations of La Ursa, such as costumes, masks, illustrations, and other visual creations, are able to transcend their aesthetic function and play a fundamental role in the construction and re-signification of collective memory.

In the social context in which they are embedded, these visual expressions become symbols that reinforce community bonds, revive affections, and preserve traditions. The handcrafted production of these artifacts, often done within families or groups, encourages intergenerational interaction and strengthens the sense of belonging to the local community.

As Damazio (2006) observes, objects can function as “artifacts of memory”, awakening feelings, memories, and experiences. Thus, when shared on social networks, craft fairs, and during Carnival, these representations update and expand the social memory of La Ursa, allowing individual memories of revelers to become part of a collective narrative. In this context, design not only materializes these affections but also becomes a tool for cultural preservation, connecting the past, present, and future.

The presence of La Ursa in graphic artifacts has the potential to become a fundamental tool for preserving memory, transmitting values, and building the cultural identity of the state. By incorporating images and symbols of La Ursa into everyday items and art, the tradition is constantly remembered and celebrated. Additionally, interactivity and engagement are promoted through these products, which enable people to interact tangibly with the culture, whether by wearing a shirt, drinking from a printed cup, or decorating their homes with themed items, as listed in Chart 1.

Chart 1. List of artifacts found.

Graphic	Product/Fashion
Flag	American-style glass
Woodcut <i>La Ursa Aranha</i>	Bottom
Digital collage	Cachepot
Tattoo	Refrigerator magnet
Album <i>Carnaval no Inferno</i> , from the Eddie band	Pillow
	T-shirt
	Shirt and pants

Considering the representations of La Ursa as cultural heritage also involves understanding these elements within the framework of material culture. As Prown (1982) points out, artifacts carry not only the creativity of their makers but also the values, ideas, and beliefs of a society at a given time. In the case of La Ursa, masks, costumes, accessories, and even graphic representations function as symbolic records that go beyond aesthetics: they carry memories, stories, and shared feelings. These objects withstand the passage of time and help tell not only the history of the tradition itself but also the way it is experienced, perceived, and transmitted by different generations.

Graphic

In the book *Dez ensaios sobre memória gráfica*, Priscila Farias and Marcos da Costa Braga (2018) discuss the idea that graphic design plays a fundamental role as

a support for cultural memory by enabling the permanence and circulation of visual signs loaded with social, historical, and emotional meanings. In the case of the La Ursa tradition, these graphic manifestations materialize in posters, prints, illustrations, and various visual records, functioning as artifacts of memory capable of bringing to the present a sense of belonging and local identity. These representations not only visually document the manifestation but also contribute to its re-signification over time, connecting generations and strengthening the collective imaginary that encompasses Pernambuco's popular culture.

For the listing of these graphic artifacts (Figure 16), a search was conducted on websites and Instagram pages, identifying various examples that highlight the presence and importance of La Ursa in Pernambuco.



Source: adapted from the websites Apple Music (2024), Editora Bagaço (2024), Imaginário Brasileiro (2024b), Instagram @juba.ttt (2024), Instagram @projetociberdelia (2024) and lorguti (2024).

Figure 16. Assembly of graphic artifacts.

Through this research, it was possible to find artifacts that incorporate the image of La Ursa both physically and digitally, including flags with various prints, woodcuts, and album cover illustrations, such as "*Carnaval no Inferno*" by the Eddie Band, as well as children's books like "*La Ursa Cara Feia*" published by Bagaço Publishing.

There are also digital collages, which carry not only the image of La Ursa but also a strong sense of Pernambuco's identity. Additionally, it was possible to find the work of professional tattoo artists who have immortalized the image of La Ursa on their clients'skin.

Product/fashion

For the listing of these artifacts applied to products (Figure 17), a search was conducted on websites, Instagram pages, in-person visits, and craft fairs.



Source: adapted from the websites Golpe Store (2024), Imaginário Brasileiro (2024a), Instagram @ wunderbarbrasil (2024), Loja Henrique Brandão (2024), Na Laje (2024) and Oh! Laria (2024).
Figure 17. Assembly of product/fashion artifacts.

Graphic and product/fashion artifacts serve as educational tools that can spark curiosity and interest among people who may not be very familiar with La Ursa. Cultural continuity can also be ensured by integrating the tradition into new contexts, such as digital media and fashion. Younger generations can find relevance and connect with the tradition in ways that are familiar to them.

Finally, these items reinforce the cultural identity and local pride, fostering a sense of belonging and the historical continuity of the state. In this way, artifacts not only help preserve the memory of La Ursa but also ensure that this rich cultural tradition continues to be passed down from generation to generation, remaining alive and relevant in contemporary society.

CONCLUSIONS

This article investigated the origins and artifacts associated with the La Ursa festivities in Pernambuco, revealing the rich culture, beliefs, and values that define this tradition. Through a preliminary study, the research highlighted how La Ursa shapes both individual and collective identity, strengthening social bonds and transmitting values from generation to generation.

La Ursa presents itself as a stage where memories intertwine, creating an invaluable cultural legacy and offering a potential opportunity for investigation through affective memory. Through mapping the cities, it was possible to identify the mechanisms by which this tradition shapes identities and strengthens the sense of belonging and social cohesion. The festivity ensures the perpetuation of values,

beliefs, and customs, preserving collective memory and building a society that is more conscious of its rich identity.

The festivities of La Ursa expand the cultural horizon of the region, offering a window for a deep understanding of the traditions associated with these celebrations. This cultural immersion enriches the local landscape and strengthens cultural diversity. Cultural identity, a fundamental pillar of the community, is emphasized through these celebrations, which also have socioeconomic impacts by generating income and promoting local craftsmanship and popular art.

However, it was challenging to find authors who addressed the origin of La Ursa in detail, highlighting the need for further studies and research on this unique tradition.

This work serves as a preliminary document recording the presence of La Ursa in Pernambuco. The research highlighted the integration of the tradition's memories into design projects such as prints, masks, illustrations, souvenirs, and other expressions of contemporary Pernambuco design. Its aim was to strengthen and unify cultural identity, preserve traditions, and pass them on to future generations. Moving forward, the study intends to further develop its approach to affective memory through interviews with artisans and revelers, participant observation during the festivities, graphic analysis of artifacts identified as contributions to Pernambuco's graphic memory, and an in-depth exploration of their social contexts of use.

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A body for memory: the construction of chintz in visual culture (Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850 c.)

Um corpo para a memória: a construção das chitas na cultura visual (Rio de Janeiro, 1808–1850 c.)

Rosângela Leite¹ 

ABSTRACT

During the first half of the 19th century, in Rio de Janeiro, calico fabrics, which had long been known to residents of other parts of Brazil, became popular among different social groups. The growing success of these prints informed a constant requalification of textiles. As these classifications became more frequent, painters, engravers and publishers strove to reproduce these fabrics through images. The transfer of the Royal Family to Brazil and the opening of ports to friendly nations caused conflicts, interests and experiences surrounding textiles and the circulation of printed matter to gain new momentum. Starting from the context of the expansion (of qualities and varieties) of the same product in international markets, this article problematizes the mechanisms that ensured the “differentiation” between fabrics through iconographic resources. Our investigative path examines a calico manufacturing manual (1804) alongside engravings by Henry de Chamberlain and Joaquim Guillobel. The argument here is that the archetypes constructed around black bodies were fundamental to inform elements present in the images — and, paradoxically, also to represent what could not be visualized, such as the warp and weft of fabrics. Finally, I highlight the permanence and power of these iconographic constructions over time.

Keywords: Iconographic memory. Fabric. Rio de Janeiro. 19th century.

RESUMO

Durante a primeira metade do século XIX, no Rio de Janeiro, os tecidos estampados, que já eram antigos conhecidos dos residentes das partes do Brasil, caíram no gosto de diferentes grupos sociais. Esse sucesso crescente informava uma constante requalificação dos têxteis. Ao passo que essas classificações se tornavam mais frequentes, pintores, gravadores e editores esforçavam-se para reproduzir, por meio de imagens, os padrões têxteis. A transferência da Família Real para o Brasil e a abertura dos portos às nações amigas fizeram com que conflitos, interesses e experiências em torno dos têxteis e da circulação dos impressos ganhassem nova velocidade. Partindo do contexto de ampliação (das qualidades e das variedades) de um produto nos mercados internacionais, este artigo problematiza os mecanismos que garantiram as “diferenciações” entre os tecidos, por meio de recursos iconográficos. Nosso caminho investigativo examina um manual de fabricação de chitas (1804), ao lado de gravuras de Henry de Chamberlain e Joaquim Guillobel. O argumento aqui defendido é que os arquétipos construídos em torno dos corpos negros foram fundamentais para corroborar os elementos presentes nas imagens e, paradoxalmente, representar o que não podia ser visualizado, como a urdidura e a trama. Por fim, destaco a permanência e o poder dessas construções iconográficas ao longo do século XIX.

Palavras-chave: Memória iconográfica. Tecidos. Rio de Janeiro. século XIX.

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INTRODUCTION: IMAGE AND MEMORY

What is the relationship between memory and image? This broad question has been explored by phenomenology of memory, which emphasizes the connection between remembrance and erasure. Paul Ricoeur (2007), drawing on the writings of Henri Bergson, defined the transition from pure remembrance to “image memory” as a moment of crystallization (Ricoeur, 2007, pp. 66-67). But it is not enough to recognize that memories crystallize into images; it is necessary to examine how they repeat and, through these repetitions, foster desires or longings with other images, or become credible testimonies.

Alongside pure remembrance, Bergson recognized that our perception of others is shaped through the play of the “remembering-image” (Dosse, 2000, p. 279). The revitalized past, through the image-material, is therefore a muddy terrain where both the traces for constructing historical knowledge and deliberate silences, as well as the matrices for the extermination of individuals considered different, are found.

Materialized images in colors, drawings, and fabrics present themselves as inescapable artifacts of material culture and form social memories that evoke spaces, times, and people. Social memory is rooted in specific communities and particular periods, marking gatherings, convivialities, and sometimes conflicts, reordering, and violences.

Based on the context of the Portuguese Royal Court’s arrival in Brazil and the opening of the ports to friendly nations, this article analyzes how textiles were classified at the port of Rio de Janeiro at the beginning of the 19th century. As these classifications¹ became more frequent, painters, engravers, and publishers endeavored to reproduce textile patterns through images. International conflicts, which resulted in the Napoleonic Wars, changed interests and experiences related to textiles and also modified editorial circuits. Faced with this multitude of transformations and interests, this article examines the mechanisms that ensured the “differentiations” between textiles through iconographic resources². To address this question, we will examine a 1804 chintz manufacturing manual alongside engravings by Henry de Chamberlain and Joaquim Guillobel. The argument here is that the archetypes built around Black bodies were crucial in corroborating the elements present in the images and, paradoxically, in representing what could not be visualized, such as the warp and the weft.

1 Most of the products arrived in pipes, barrels, lots, casks, bales, and boxes. These large volumes bore the label of the company, merchant, or firm, or simply the initials SAR (His Royal Highness). Upon disembarkation, the products could follow three paths: re-exportation for coasting trade and the Rio de la Plata; distribution within different parts of Brazil via mule transportation; or sale through auctions in Rio de Janeiro. In many cases, large lots were subdivided, renamed, and advertised in local newspapers. The term “classification system” encompasses this entire process of constructing the taxonomy for products within global commercial circuits.

2 Iconographic resources used to represent a fabric are different from the prints on the fabric; the latter have been referred to as surface design. Surface design is recognized within the framework of visual culture and, more recently, understood as “visual texts” (Lemire, 2018; Skeeahan, 2020).

By visual culture, we understand “a set of devices, institutions, technologies, figurations, materialities, powers, desires, languages, and processes of shared collective meanings” (Schiavinatto; Costa, 2016, p. 6). Based on this broad framework, it becomes important to isolate some “social markers and their operated deviations” (Certeau, 1994). This broad starting point distances us from explanations that analyze goods as manipulated solely as signs. It is true that laws and the purposes of states operated in accordance with the cognitive processes of individuals. Appropriations of behaviors and representations occurred within specific historical conditions, and studying these relationships, together with competing economic practices, helps us understand how certain political cultures took root and became resistant.

INTERESTS TO DISCIPLINE

Charles Ribeyrolles (1941, p. 19), who was in Rio de Janeiro in 1858, declared that Brazil was a country with so many issues to debate and so many “interests to discipline,” where everything was still to be done.

Since the beginning of the 18th century, manuals aimed to “discipline interests” and educate tastes (Neira, 2014, p. 200). Maxine Berg suggested that the changes in the aspirations of the middle classes in the 18th century were driven by international trade. There was a fascination with oriental designs arriving through maritime expansion. On the other hand, French influence persisted, dominating bourgeois taste. These ideas were well received in London, whose urban growth had been nurtured by the initial signs of the Industrial Revolution. Fashion, represented by printed cotton fabrics and Chinese decoration, created demand for the cotton industry (Berg, 1995, p. 29). Thus, new markets for these items emerged, stimulated by industrial progress, changes in domestic spaces, and the newly opened trade borders, as was the case with the Port of Rio de Janeiro since 1808.

Domestic economy or consumers of new markets, the fact is that exchanges of information during long-distance travel constructed values, social systems, technologies, and artistic sensibilities. Conversely, it is important to highlight the role of the circulation of people, artifacts, and printed materials, creating a fertile ground for what some historians have called intertwined cultural flows (entangled history).

Since 1808, Rio de Janeiro has been characterized as an “intertwined space” (Bhabha, 1998). It was a space that housed many people (coerced, chained, or free) amidst the migration of the Portuguese Royal Family. The move of the Braganza Court aimed to establish a seat for the European monarchy in the American soil, in response to the continental blockade occurring in Europe. This initiative did not happen without conflicts, and as the Court projected its power into the world, it also had to negotiate through divergent projects concerning Brazil itself.

The displacements of objects and the marking of differences occurred alongside the transitions of the colonial system, Portugal’s position in the European concert, and the insurgent parts of Brazil. From a commercial perspective, Rio de Janeiro functioned as an important site for classifying and qualifying goods, because it was a city that was growing and hosting the Court, in addition to serving as a “transfer

hub” for supplying the “*sertões*” and “all the numerous small ports along the Brazilian coast” and in South America (Spix; Martius, 1938, p. 71). The reinterpretations of material culture artifacts and the construction of images (through manuals, watercolors, and drawings) took place within the context of these transformations.

Recovering, even briefly, the fabric related to the classification of textiles helps us understand how memory played a role in the weaving of a visual culture in Brazil at the beginning of the 19th century³.

The overarching question guiding my research is: how, since the transfer of the Portuguese Court to Brazil, have the systems for classifying objects in the Rio de Janeiro commercial market been refined? Within the scope of this dossier on visual memory, I would like to specifically address the uses (and abuses) surrounding the iconographic memory of chintz⁴.

In 1804, Antonio Veloso Xavier translated, by order of the Portuguese Court, the book “*Arte de fazer chita*” by Lormois. Originally, written in French in 1780. The treatise described how to prepare dyes, produce the design, and apply the material onto the fabric. During this period, the plates for application were made of blocks of wood, iron, or copper.

In addition to explaining the methods for producing dyes and their application, the manual, translated by Veloso Xavier, also provided instructions on creating designs that would appeal to the “general taste”:

One can use all [...] such as natural flowers, flowers, and fruits of India, and from fantasy [...] some landscapes are also introduced, as well as animals, mainly butterflies, insects, and birds: but it has been experimented that the designs which most resemble nature are more sought after; when the natural flowers, which have been introduced, are well drawn and well painted, and when the fabric and handling match the correction of the design, they sell very well. An artist should therefore focus on making natural drawings, and should not place on the same branch flowers of many species; likewise, he should avoid using many colors on the same flower; I mean, for example, that in a branch, it should only have red, in a jasmine, blue; in a jonquil, orange; in violas, purple, etc. There are also certain flowers, which are susceptible to many colors, such as anemones, multi-hued tulips, and perfumed roses (Lormois, 1804, p. 5-6).

Both the reference to distant countries and the emphasis on the outline of the flora deserve highlighting.

And going far beyond describing nature through textile liturgy, the dissemination of the manual — in its translation into Portuguese — also allowed for the revelation of techniques for the restoration of artifacts:

3 The most recent work discussing this intersection between text, textiles, and graphic design is that of Danielle Skeehan (2020), but this debate is not new. Gilda de Mello e Souza, in 1953, defended a thesis in which she sought to understand fashion in 19th-century Brazil both as a marker of social distinction and as a material support for class, gender, and race struggles. This interpretation — predating the works of Pierre Bourdieu — was based on the studies of Florestan Fernandes, Roger Bastide, and Gilberto Freyre.

4 This choice overlooks a valuable debate about national interests, the textile industry, and the relationship between slavery and the textile factory. For this discussion, see the recent works of Dourado (2023) and Santos (2023).

They are also very suitable for renewing the colors of old tapestry, or those with a high gloss, or silks, wool, or cotton, making them look like new, by passing the same color with a brush on areas where the color has faded. You will be pleased to see that these colors will be more beautiful and will fade less than the original ones used in the making of the tapestries (Lormois, 1804, p. 7).

The entire focus is on the themes of the design and the application techniques. At no point is the weaving process evaluated. And, although it is known that chintz printing mainly took place on cotton fabric, muslin, silks, wool, and tapestries could also be printed, as highlighted by Lormois (1804).

William Reddy (1987), who studied textiles in the context of the French Revolution, reported a methodological problem that his own research encountered. By using a commercial catalog as a source, Reddy (1987) found that his documentary corpus exhibited a stable situation that hindered access to human relationships and the terms of agreements and conflicts that shaped their forms. Reddy's (1987) warning is unequivocal: if we want to understand the agreements that gave rise to a dimension of the object under certain conditions, we must rely on documentary sources of various kinds. The image is the result of these agreements and conflicts, not the starting point.

Paying attention to Reddy's (1987) warnings, we will start from the description of chintz fabrics reported at the end of the 18th century and proceed towards the pictorial understandings in Rio de Janeiro, already at the beginning of the following century.

As we traverse this path, we can find the earliest evidence of the connection between the creation of drawings and watercolors, the dissemination of printed materials, and the circulation of artifacts of material culture.

Let's look at the case of Guillobel and Chamberlain:

The significance of Joaquim Cândido Guillobel's work for Brazilian visual memory at the beginning of the 19th century remains relatively underexplored. The Portuguese military officer was responsible for producing isolated drawings. His goal was to create sketches that would serve as the basis for representing the "characters" of that Brazil (*Olhar Viajante in Casa Fiat de Cultura*, 2008, p. 56).

In Figure 1, the Black person is a theatrical figure. An archetype featuring a pipe, a staff, and an unsteady gait, with a basket on the back and striped clothing and plain dyed fabric. This representation created a character that was quite popular:

The watercolor on paper is attributed to Henry de Chamberlain. It is likely that Guillobel sold his drawings to Chamberlain⁵, who composed the scene of "Largo da Glória" and handed it over to engraver Thomas Alken. Once the engraving was

5 Joaquim Cândido Guillobel was a Portuguese painter and military officer, while Henry de Chamberlain was an English painter and military officer. Both collaborated in Rio de Janeiro at the beginning of the 19th century. Portugal and Great Britain, during the João VI period, usually studied from the perspective of the imposition of English consumption patterns or Portuguese "disadvantages," but they can also be analyzed through the perspective that recognizes the practices of trade, the diffusion of arts, and printed materials within intertwined circuits. It is important to emphasize that copying of drawings, in that context, was not an obstacle.



Source: Guillobel (1819–1822).

Figure 1. Brazilian asking for money for the church festival and enslaved Brazilian.

completed, the plates were edited by one of the most renowned London publishers of the mid-19th century, Thomas McLean. Based on McLean's edition, the catalogs acquired printed materiality and circulation speed. The collective work involving a draftsman, watercolorist, engraver, and publisher was completed. At the end of this process, about a dozen more traders, booksellers, and auctioneers could be involved.

The original drawings, the creation of watercolors, the work of engravers, and the actions of publishers created circuits for the prints and for the textiles depicted through these prints (Leite, 2023, p. 403). And thus, the archetypal Black figure with a staff and pipe traveled the world.

This network of collaboration between artists and merchants built a "credible testimony," a "factor of security for the entire set of social relations," fostering the trust necessary for transforming testimony into an institution (Ricoeur, 2007, p. 174). It is under this perspective that we should revisit the character created to represent the Black person.

In Figure 1, the garments of the lower part of the Black figure with a pipe were painted dark blue. In Figure 2, Chamberlain lightened the same piece and reduced the contrast of the shirt. All the enslaved women are depicted with a slight drape of the fabric around their shoulders. These signs of sensuality contrast with the white man, who is overly dressed for the scorching temperature of Rio de Janeiro. The only figure not carrying weight on his head is the white man; he is also the only character whose clothing features red tones. These images were also given the title (at the time) of "Brazilian types".

Beverly Lemire (2018) recognized that intercultural exchange through artifacts was successful in Early Modern Europe as it evoked the imagination, beliefs, and



Source: Chamberlain (2025).
Figure 2. *Largo da Glória*.

values transmitted over time. Botanical knowledge was thus intertwined with perspectives on the world that embraced new designs, colors, and textures. This movement led to a revision of material culture within the global system, enabling men and women to acquire cosmopolitan sensitivities through a long process of adoption, adaptation, and modification of content that was already familiar to them (Lemire, 2018, p. 11).

From another perspective, it is important to understand the force of violence that shaped "*Largo da Glória*" by Chamberlain. The characters were already sketched out and received more or fewer colors depending on their (arbitrary) placements within the city's spaces.

The difference is striking when Chamberlain depicts his Black characters in moments of conviviality:

In Chamberlain's Figure 3, the women's breasts burst out of their dresses, the stripes appear clearly, and the work is accompanied by the sound of a *berimbau* played in the background.

It is worth emphasizing once again — following the testimonies of Lormois (1804) — that printed fabrics were highly valued in the global market, and the use of colors did not represent an attribute of any people or exclusivity of a particular geographic region.

However, the main reference for the painter in Figure 3 is *Guinea cloth*, that is, striped fabrics with bold tones, invented by English manufacturers for trade in



Source: Chamberlain (2025).
Figure 3. A market stall.

Africa and later characterized as having an “African taste”⁶. According to Danielle Skeeahan (2020), when Manchester manufacturers began producing *Guinea cloth*, they were compelled to study and imitate African patterns, prints, and aesthetics, as well as incorporate printed Indian cottons that sold well in the prosperous West African market. The striped and checkered patterns that characterized these types of fabrics would become one of the main prints or styles that English cloth producers in Guinea attempted to imitate. *Guinea cloth* has the ability to illustrate how Europe visually plundered Africa. Embedded within the fabric itself is a history of economic relationships, aesthetic practices, and unequal distributions of power that characterized the slave routes across the Atlantic (Skeeahan, 2020, p. 74).

At this point in our analysis, we need to highlight the difference between printed fabrics in general, chintz, and *Guinea cloth*. In eighteenth-century England, chintz was the name given to fabrics featuring traditional Indian colors: red, pink, brown, blue, and yellow. In France and Portugal, as indicated by Lormois’s document, besides the primary colors, chintz was also considered a form of high-quality painting, employing sophisticated techniques of the time.

Calico was a designation for fabrics that were generally painted. Cotton, with different weaves, could be painted using mechanical or manual techniques, but

⁶ The use of striped fabrics to identify enslaved people is not unique to Chamberlain’s work. Jean Baptiste Debret (1981) employed the same techniques in plates such as “Transport of Carriages at the Port of Rio de Janeiro” (Debret, 1981, p. 287). What this article aims to demonstrate is precisely this circulation and collaboration between the artists.

muslin, linen, and fustian were also subjected to the same process (Sykas, 2007). The term “chintz” as a designation for a fabric⁷, pattern, and weave would be a contentious concept throughout the 19th century.

Still following Skeehan (2020), it is important to highlight that textiles themselves were highly circulated material texts that infiltrated various cultural circuits. In this way, these fabrics created memories that guided artworks and enhanced the growing publishing market.

The collection of drawings and watercolors forms a grammar for the eye, portraying enslaved people alternately as staggering, sensual, or drum players. The clothing framed this image, defining colors for the Black individuals, without small flowers or heavy garments such as velvet and wool.

When we compare these images with the shipments of chintz that arrived at the port of Rio de Janeiro (still in the early 19th century), we find evidence indicating the prestige of fabrics from France, the USA, and England. Meanwhile, the iconography of these same textiles begins to differentiate small flowers for ladies and large stripes and bands of fabric for the clothing of those depicted as enslaved.

Over the years, this distinction became more pronounced. But if the composition could only be verified by touch and drape, how did iconography develop a code to translate the thickness and fiber composition?

The recovery of Chamberlain and Guillobel’s works, along with the trajectory of these prints, allows us to infer that the marker indicating the “quality” of the fabric was located in the depicted bodies, not in the textile itself.

The further we progressed through the 19th century, without the presence of Chamberlain or Guillobel, the more the iconographic memory evoked a specific body to describe an ordinary product:

Figure 4 is a temporary print from the second half of the 19th century, and as such, it has a broader circulation potential than the engravings and manuals from the early 1800s⁸.

In this new context, “chintz” became a specific type of fabric and no longer referred to the 18th-century chintz with its floral motifs. In the lists of almanacs, the descriptions of fabrics became more important than the drawings, and so “linen pillowcases, chintz bedspreads, white cotton socks” appeared (Almanak Administrativo, Mercantil e Industrial do Rio de Janeiro, 1858, p. 215).

The writings below Figure 4 emphasize that the “colors” were “fixed”, although the contrast highlights the difference between black (skin) and white

7 From a technical perspective, the variation in cotton is characterized by the fiber (length and quality), and the fabric by the fiber content, warp, and weft.

8 We will not delve into the debate over the consumption and dissemination of these ephemeral prints. For now, if we assume that the socio-economic figure of the consumer was shaped through a long process of bargaining, usurpations, and agreements, and that what we commonly recognize as the “public space” at the end of the 19th century was the result of these struggles, on one hand, and state decisions and global circuits of trade, industry, iconographic production, printing, and distribution, on the other, then it becomes increasingly important to study consumption based on the mediations between body, culture, and economic circuits, from a historical perspective.



Source: Heinwmann, Rainho e Cardoso (2009, p. 114).
Figure 4. Creole chintz.

(fabric). All the violent attributes, elaborated by painters, draftsmen, engravers, and publishers during the earlier period, were consolidated by the second half of the 19th century, without the need for explanation or retouching. The “interests to discipline”, as indicated by Ribeyrolles (1941), were embedded through crystallized memories, whose repeated sharing fostered a sense of commonality (Ricoeur, 2007, p. 175)

In the second half of the 19th century, it was no longer necessary to alter the colors of clothing, create stripes to define *Guinea cloth*, or draw a *berimbau* to evoke someone’s African origin. Skin color remained prominent. All other attributes were constructed through a long process of erasures and violence⁹.

CONCLUSION: BODY AND MEMORY

Within a broad perspective of visual culture, I have sought to demonstrate throughout this text how fabrics were classified in the city of Rio de Janeiro between 1808 and 1850 (c.), starting from the analysis that examined engravings, paintings,

⁹ “Curiously, the field of research on the histories of clothing in Brazil has been slow to undertake the collective effort to reveal the plurality of its attire” (Andrade *et al.*, 2024, p. 2).

and drawings by two artists and compared these images with a treatise titled "*Arte de fazer chita*", translated into Portuguese in 1804.

It is true that what I refer to as a "new system of classification" of goods encompasses transformations in the body of laws, state regulations, and the cognitive processes of individuals that are much more complex and interconnected than those presented in this text. Within the scope of this dossier on visual memory, I have aimed to select and describe how the construction of a memory specifically regarding chintz took place.

The documentary collection is not exhaustive. Neither do the sources used include less explored works. It was precisely this ordinary character of the images that led me to conduct initial examinations regarding the persistence of a visual memory. By analyzing the work of these artists, I was able to verify the interconnection between drawing, painting, publication, and distribution, which reflects the dynamism of editorial circuits on a global scale, as well as the repetition of iconographic patterns that depicted the people in Rio de Janeiro.

Henry de Chamberlain and Joaquim Cândido Guillobel developed efficient codes for their representations of textiles. Over time, these codes evolved into mnemonic understandings of the fabrics. In South America, the editorial circuit, the production of watercolors, and the textile trade cannot be understood as isolated businesses.

The way textiles were represented allowed for a classification system that translated designs and colors, penetrating the complex terrain of qualifying the weaves and threads. It was an intermediation between material culture artifacts and images that reflected a long and violent process of enslaving people from Africa. It was a system of description of Black bodies.

The materiality of the artifact was revealed through pictorial apprehension. But how was it possible to describe texture, weave, and volume of textiles through images? The draftsmen, painters, engravers, publishers, and merchants worked collaboratively, not only to spread the fabrics but also to ensure that the characters, imagined and constructed solely through the gaze of white men, traveled across different engravings and catalogs. As we progress into the 19th century, print runs and editions became more numerous and circulated increasingly widely. Thus, a body was created based on reiterated visual memories, reproduced and sold within global circuits. A body was fashioned for the graphic memory.

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