



ARTICLE

Belarmino de Mattos:
the Didot of the maranhense press in the empire
Belarmino de Mattos: o Didot da imprensa maranhense no Império

César Augusto de Castro¹  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7650-895X>

Amaury Araújo Santos²  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5589-0846>

¹ Universidade Federal do Maranhão, São Luís, MA, Brasil. / e-mail: ccampin.ufma@gmail.com

² Universidade Federal do Maranhão, São Luís, MA, Brasil. / e-mail: amaurydavilla@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the personal and professional trajectory of Belarmino de Mattos, a typographer who worked in the Province of Maranhão in the eighteenth century and in view of the quality of his prints - books, newspapers, leaflets, etc. - received the code name Didot Maranhense. This study is characterized as documentary-historical, supported by the foundations of the New Cultural History. Mattos, besides performing the art activities of Gutenberg defended his professional category when founding the Maranhense Typographic Association, in 1853. It is considered that this research brings important and fertile contributions to the History of the Press, Book and Reading in Brazil.

KEYWORDS

History of the press. Typography. Maranhão – Empire. Belarmino de Mattos.

RESUMO

Este artigo discorre sobre a trajetória pessoal e profissional de Belarmino de Mattos, tipógrafo que atuou na Província do Maranhão no oitocentos e face a qualidade dos seus impressos - livros, jornais, folhetos, etc - recebeu o codinome de Didot maranhense. Caracteriza-se este estudo como histórico-documental, tendo como suporte os fundamentos da Nova História Cultural. Mattos, além de exercer as atividades da arte de Gutenberg defendeu a sua categoria profissional ao fundar a Associação Tipográfica Maranhense, em 1853. Considera-se que esta pesquisa traz importantes e férteis contribuições para a História da Imprensa, do Livro e da Leitura no Brasil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

História da imprensa. Tipografia. Maranhão – Império. Belarmino de Mattos.



JITA: HE. Print materials.

1 INTRODUCTION

Looking for clues, traces and signs (GINZBURG, 2002) to weave a historical discourse is not an easy task, especially the more we go back in time, for two reasons: the first because of the need to locate sources, which are not always available or when they exist, are dispersed in different *places of memory*¹ (NORA, 1993), such as archives, libraries, museums or even in private collections, among others. The second, which does not require the understanding of the terms, expressions and forms of textual construction of the past. These are challenges to be faced by historians who, when entering these places, also need to understand the rules and organizational structures given by information professionals (librarians, archivists, for example) when arranging bibliographic and archival sources in a labyrinthine perspective (BARATIN; JACOB, 2006).

In this text, we seek to understand the history of the Maranhão press in the 1800s, notably on the action of typographers, that is, the subjects who made ideas and knowledge materialize and circulate, whether in the form of books, newspapers, magazines in the streets and slopes of São Luís do Maranhão and other locations in the Province and in the different regions of Brazil, which contributed to the constitution of the epithet of this city as Brazilian Athens, like Antônio de Frias, Sátiro de Brito, Ignacio José Ferreira, Belarmino de Mattos, among others. For Marques (1970, p. 340), “[...] in the middle of the 19th century, the production of books, as an incidental manifestation of Maranhão's prosperity, had reached a high standard of technical and aesthetic excellence and sufficient volume to draw attention for provincial editions”. Only with the expansion of the typographic houses did the books begin to be published in the Province, with emphasis on Frias and Belarmino de Mattos, the greatest printers in Maranhão in the 1800s (HALLEWELL, 2012). These printers contributed to the circulation in newspapers of advertisements for the purchase and sale of books from Portugal, England and, mainly, France, which dealt with philosophy, law, languages, among other subjects, such as this advertisement that circulated in the newspaper *Publisher Maranhense*, on November 26, 1834:

João Antônio da Costa Rodrigues, Rua da Estrela n. 38, the following works can be sold for comfortable prices: Dictionary of Literature by Lahaupé - 14 volumes
Dictionary of Industry - 6 volumes
Dictionary of Arts and Crafts - 3 volumes
Dictionary of Chemistry - 3 volumes
Law Lessons - 2 volumes
History of English Philosophism - 2 volumes
Critical History of Philosophy - 3 volumes
Philosophy of Nature - 10 volumes
Teatro de Corneille - 10 volumes
The Great Geographic Dictionary - 10 volumes (PUBLICADOR, 1834,p.3).

Among the various Maranhão typographers from the 1800s, we were particularly interested in Belarmino de Mattos, as he was considered the *Maranhense Didot*², whose hands

¹ *Place of memory* is a historical concept highlighted by the work *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, published since 1984 under the coordination of Pierre Nora, formed by seven volumes, the first being *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, the next three *La République* and later more three volumes entitled *Les France*. These works became a reference for the study of cultural history in France. The places of memory, for Nora, are places in all senses of the term, ranging from the material and concrete object to the most abstract, symbolic and functional, simultaneously and in different degrees, these aspects must always coexist. (NORA, 1991).

² Didot is the name of a family of famous French printers, punches and publishers. Through its achievements and advances in printing, publishing and typography, the family lent its name to the typographic measures developed by François-Ambroise Didot and the Didot font developed by Firmin Didot, recognized as the best printers of that time (ROCHA, 2013).

came out in print that deserved national and international recognition and for his involvement in the defense of his professional category, when creating in 1857, the Associação Tipográfica Maranhense (typographic association from Maranhão), with the objective of defending the printers who suffered, censorship and persecution of the “moneyed” and political society of the time.

Antônio Lopes, in the *History of the Press in Maranhão*, states that:

With Belarmino de Mattos, a simple worker who immortalized himself for his love of work, progressive spirit, artistic taste and probity, typographic art reached a level of perfection in Maranhão that was superior to what it had achieved elsewhere in Brazil. Orders for Pará, Ceará, Pernambuco and Bahia flowed into his typography [...]. Without this worker-editor, the intellectual movement that won the title of Brazilian Athens in Maranhão in the 19th century would not be possible (LOPES, 1959, p. 17).

About Belarmino de Mattos, the most elongated work on his personal and professional trajectory is found in the work *Pantheon Maranhense: biographical essays of the illustrious dead Maranhenses*, by Antônio Henriques Leal, published by the National Press of Lisbon, in four volumes in 1873.

Pantheon Maranhense is an instrument to understand where social subjects, members of Athenas, spoke, although they are not the ones who speak, but the author, who speaks for them. Although it does not portray the entire elite, in fact, that was never his intention, the inclusion criteria in the work - consequently, the exclusion criteria - do not take into account only the intellectual capacity of the biographers, profiling literary, journalists, lawyers, orators, among others, but also of politicians, reinforcing the element of social distinction by condition of notoriety as quality of belonging to an elite (BORRALHO, 2010, p. 36, our highlight).

This quote by Borralho (2010) allows us to make some comments regarding Belarmino de Mattos. First, that he does not fall into any of these categories expressed by the author, “[...] the literary, journalists, lawyers, orators” (BORRALHO, 2010, p. 36), despite having some writings published in the press, we cannot restrict him to the exercise of one of these professions, therefore, we fit him in the category “among others”. Second, despite not being part of a “political and economic elite” in the 1800s, he belonged to a group of men who contributed to forming a thought about Athenas from his activities as a typographer. Third, by analyzing the articles published in the newspapers *A Imprensa* and *O Publador Maranhense*, we can say that the presence of Belarmino in Henriques Leal's work was due to the relationships of friendship, better said by his networks of sociability both in the professional sphere and in the recurrence of their political-partisan conceptions insofar as both were active in the liberal party, defending the autonomy of the Maranhão province and the valorization of deputies in the National Assembly, they also assume the movement in favor of the typography class, from the Associação Tipográfica Maranhense.

It was in Belarmino de Mattos that Divina Providencia embodied the idea of the creation of the Associação Typografica Maranhense, and he, purified in the belief of being useful and with an open heart to the emery of work, later entrusted this secret of his conscience and generous protection, to his friend, the illustrious Dr. Antonio Henriques Leal, and entrusted him with the preparation of the Statutes, according to the bases he had presented to him” (TYPOGRÁFICA MAGAZINE, n. 5, p. 1, 26 jul. 1908, grifo nosso).

Regarding the sources of this study, one of the relevant documents was the *Revista Tipográfica Maranhense* published by the Organ of the Graphic Classes of Maranhão, printed

in the workshops of the *Diário do Maranhão*. It started circulating in October 1907, every two months, and probably stopped circulating in February 1914. Among its several editions, we highlight the number 40, of 1907, dedicated exclusively to Belarmino de Mattos.

2 BELARMINO DE MATTOS: FROM BIRTH TO THIS ENCOUNTER WITH TYPOGRAPHY

Belarmino de Mattos was born in the village of Axixá, which belonged to the village of Icatu, one of the oldest regions of Maranhão³, founded in the 17th century under the name “Arraial de Santa Maria de Guaxenduba”, it becomes an important economic and political center of the Munim River region.

In the early hours of May 24, 1830, Belarmino de Mattos is born, from the womb of Dona Silvina Rosa Ferreira, the historian Henriques Leal does not name his father, from which it is possible to infer that he was the son of a single mother. This meant, for her, to live stigmatized, probably poor and, because of the necessity of survival, the children should learn a mechanical job that would guarantee a profession in the future.

At the age of six, Belarmino's mother leaves her hometown for the provincial capital, fleeing from Balaiada⁴ and also in order to provide access to education and a more comfortable life for her offspring. When he arrived in the provincial capital, the mutual⁵ method was the one stimulated by the government for teaching the first letters, taught in 44 rooms, with a greater incidence in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Conceição.

At the age of seven, Belarmino joined the public primary school in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Conceição, then governed by Mr. Alexandre José Rodrigues, who, despite being quite old, has not yet said goodbye to the role of educator. (LEAL, 1957, p. 230).

³ The village of Icatu was initially called Arrayal de Santa Maria de Guaxenduba, a name given by its founder Jerônimo d'Albuquerque Maranhão. It acquired a city category in 1824. According to Varnhagen, the toponym “Icatu” or “Hycatu” means “Good Bridges”. Ayres Casal translates it as “Good waters” (MARQUES, 1970).

⁴ Balaiada, also called the War of Bem-te-vis, was the longest popular movement that took place in Maranhão from 1838 to 1841, which claimed better living conditions for the poor population and counted on the participation of cowboys, slaves and other groups without material and economic assets (SERRA, 2008).

⁵ The Lancaster Method, also known as “Mutual Teaching” or “Monitorial”, aimed to teach a larger number of students, using little resources, in a short time and with quality. It was created by Joseph Lancaster, an English quaker, influenced by the work of Anglican pastor Andrew Bell. However, Lancaster supported his method in the oral teaching of repetition and memorization, as he believed that this dynamic inhibited laziness, idleness, and increased the desire for stillness. In this methodology, students were not expected to have originality or intellectual clarity in pedagogical activity, but mental and physical disciplinarianism. Faced with the problem of lack of teachers, and the need to teach the masses, the solution came with the monitor element. These were more advanced students who received, separately, guidance from a single teacher and then passed on to the others, the youngest, in numbers of ten, the grades. In the process, a single teacher was able to teach, at the same time, to a huge group of students. Because it is a teaching for a number of students, with objectives aimed at training and social control, the classes were organized in order to follow a methodological and spatial order. They were taught in a rectangular environment, without any kind of division, where the students were lined up, seated one behind the other and the teacher's desk was at a higher point from where they could see the whole environment. No student could reach him, only the monitors, to receive information and pass it on to others. For the whole process to work, the stimulation procedure was superior to that of punishment, instituting a new way of thinking about school discipline. (BASTOS; FARIA FILHO, 1999)

Professor Alexandre José's school operated at his residence where he taught reading, writing and the four mathematical operations to boys so that they could exercise some professional activity or, to those of greater means, enter the Liceu Maranhense, an institution created by the Law n. 77, of July 24, 1838. In addition to these private lessons, Alexandre worked at the Colégio de Nossa Senhora da Conceição, by Antônio Joaquim Gomes Braga, where Belarmino studied.

With three years of steady application, Belarmino had been qualified to pass a primary education exam, limited, as it was, to a few subjects, and in which he was fully approved. Knowing how to read and write at the age of ten, he took care of his mother in applying it to a mechanical art, and for that he put him in 1840 as an apprentice in the Typographia da Temperança, which Manoel Pereira Ramos owned (REVISTA TYPOGRAPHICA, n.8, p.6, 17 set.1914).

Faced with the movement of the press in Maranhão, there was a strong inclination of parents to allocate their children to learn the craft of printing. Unlike other boys who learned to read through newspapers, Belarmino de Mattos, when entering this environment, already dominated the fundamentals taught in primary education. In this regard, Frias describes that in Maranhão typography “Intellectual education begins, with few exceptions, by coming to learn to read in typography. [...] [sometimes] not for the purpose of learning an art that you want to be official, but to start making money right away”(FRIAS, 1866, p. 22). This was certainly one of the reasons why D. Silvina put him as an apprentice in the workshop of Tipografia da Temperança, owned by Manuel Pereira Ramos.

Tipografia da Temperança was part of a group of projects for publishing texts in Maranhão in the 1800s. The first was the Tipografia Nacional Maranhense founded in 1821, by Governor Bernardo da Silveira and with Antônio Marques da Costa Soares as director who, through Ordinance No. 405, of November 13 of this year, appoints a commission for its administration, being José Leandro da Silva, Lázaro Antônio da Silva Guimarães, president and treasurer, respectively, and that all expenses were borne by the Treasury coffers.

Due to the scarcity of qualified labor to start the project, the following were hired from Portugal: Francisco José Nunes Cascaes (composer); Francisco Antônio da Silva (printer); Antônio Pedro Nolasco (printer) and Antônio da Silva Neves (guard and workshop servant), who, according to Marques (1878, p. 220), form the framework of the first workers of progress and the light of civilization. In this respect, says Castellanos (2017, p.72-77)

In Maranhão, the press emerges from the movement called the Liberal and Constitutionalist Revolution of Porto (or just the Porto Revolution), in 1820 - amid several political demands. This movement originated in the city of the same name and spread throughout Portugal until reaching Lisbon, winning in this trajectory the support of the bourgeoisie, the clergy, the nobility and the army as a reaction to the decree of Opening Ports to Friendly Nations (1808). Decree in which the dominant commercial monopoly was transferred for almost three centuries to other countries, especially England, displacing a significant part of the metropolis' economic resources and banning during this long period both the edition and the production of Brazilian printed matter (books, newspapers, pamphlets), such as their circulation and consumption, whenever they were not licensed by the Desembargo do Paço.

This typography, from November 1821 to July 1823,

[...] primarily published *O Conciliador*, after that period also printed official documents and other leaflets of ephemeral life such as *Palmatoria Semanal* and the first books printed in Maranhão. *Treaty of Morality for the Human Gender*, taken

from philosophy and founded on nature by Mr. De Salis. Way to cure blood diarrhea for use by farmers and more people who live far from the city and Memória, about the need for the opening of the hole (LOPES, 1958, p. 22, highlighted by the author).

Until 1830, this was the only printing house in São Luís, when Clementino José Lisboa founded the Typography Constitutional, “Date that marks the growth in the number of printers. This growth was such that, in ten years, this industry has expanded too much and fierce competition has led to a decline in artisanal standards” (HALLEWELL, 2012, p. 187) which according to Lopes (1959, p. 22).

From 1830 onwards S. Luís counted, many other printers and some stood out for improvements that they introduced in the graphic arts in Maranhão: the Typography Monarchical Constitutional, by Francisco de Salles Nunes Cascaes, who, in 1840 or 1843, having gone to Europe, brought French printers and other novelties from there; Tipografia Maranhense [...] Tipografia Teixeira [Tipografia d’O Progresso], among others.

Belarmino de Mattos, already with some experience in the art of printing acquired as an apprentice in Temperança, is hired by Satyro de Faria, who had a strong influence in the press, for the publication of newspapers such as Malagueta Maranhense, where Belarmino de Mattos worked as a typographer, receiving 200 réis a day, becoming the provider of his family. With that amount, which contributed nothing to his maintenance, even though he was a dedicated employee, he ended up saying goodbye, going to work in the workshops of Francisco Salles Nunes Cascaes, who was also having financial problems, being obliged to pay “the holidays of employees with vouchers who did not find a course in the market” (FRIAS, 1866, p. 231).

According to Frias in Memórias da Tipografia Maranhense (1866), the difficulties faced by Maranhão typographers were due to the following factors:

- a) amount paid to prints when compared to other artistic activities;
- b) obsolete equipment;
- c) manpower poorly trained to work in the press, being necessary to resort to slave labor and young apprentices;
- d) discontinuity of publications, especially newspapers, which constituted the greatest demand of the workshops;
- e) government privilege in the services of some printers.

The period in which Belarmino was “wandering” through the printers corresponds to the first phase of the press, that of retreat: from 1821 to 1841, as Frias calls it (1866). The second being stationary; from 1841 to 1848; and, the third from 1849 to 1866, in advance. Thus:

The somewhat slow ways in typography ways due to other causes, which have the principle of the lack of justice of those who can and should help the industry, while those who are guilty have resources and protection at their disposal, who touched the scandal, who never took a step, never made a sacrifice for that which enriched them and was trampled on by them. In all countries, the most ways in the typographical ways are administrative ways, and in Maranhão, a few years ago, it can be said that they were the only ones that mattered. If these ways were divided one by each establishment, it is obvious that the desire to serve well to be preferred way least contemplated in turn would bring about the improvement of work and the development of art. These ways were monopolized by anyone who despised art, who ways supplied, sought with the administration to become their owner, making them believe that only he could do it (FRIAS, 1866, p. 23).

“*O Progresso*” was the first newspaper to circulate daily in São Luís, therefore requiring a commitment from editors and printers to keep daily production on four pages that contained the most varied information, both from the Maranhão Province, as well as from other places in Brazil or abroad. From 1849 onwards, Antônio José da Cruz took over as owner and the periodicity, which used to be daily circulation, starts to be three times a week, written by Carlos Fernando Ribeiro and José Joaquim Ferreira Vale.

In strong opposition to the president of the province, Antônio Candido da Cruz Machado⁶, out of revenge he orders “to arrest all the workers so that they enter the military service. [...]” (JORGE, 2008, p. 203) and break into the building where this newspaper's workshop operated. According to Jorge (2008), Belarmino leads the movement along with the other workers, denouncing such arbitrariness.

However, Belarmino's financial gains did not favor his livelihood and that of his family, which required several hours of extra work to increase income. At night, he printed prayers, saints and other lesser services “which increased his salary with sales” (LEAL, 1874, p. 232) and, when he returned home, he continued with his printing tasks until dawn, since

There was no print paper in the market in the *Progresso* format, so it was necessary to amend the sheets. Belarmino, as a gift to his former master and now a boss, took on this painstaking task and bent until late at night on the table, he would not seek rest without having stuck at least a ream of paper (LEAL, 1874, p. 232-233).

According to Leal, this night activity was not recognized by Antônio José da Cruz, who, even though he knew of his difficulties and his commitment to the workshop of *O Progresso*, did not facilitate the costs of printing the spare parts that Belarmino took for himself, as a means of support, on the contrary, it charged him the same values applied to any other individuals who wished to use the press in this newspaper.

It seems that Cruz was a particularly stingy boss and the pay levels were so much lower than the rising cost of living that the young Belarmino, then aged 19, was forced to work regularly three to four extra hours a day to ensure adequate subsistence (HALLEWEEL, 2012, p. 195).

However, the recognition of Belarmino de Mattos' quality as an editor and printer went beyond the borders of São Luís, having been invited to work in Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco. However, he rejects the proposals on the grounds that he had a personal commitment to the owner of *O Progresso* and his family.

2.1 O defensor da classe tipográfica maranhenses

In 1854, Antônio José da Cruz, already old and tired of chores with typography, gave in to pressure from the government and handed over the direction of *O Progresso* to Carlos F. Ribeiro, taking all the employees with him. Belarmino de Mattos was not yet 24 years old when he took charge of the direction of this enterprise, “ordering the most modern equipment and presses from Belgium, France and the United States” (HALLEWELL, 2012, p. 195). This periodical being the center of disputes between conservatives and liberals in the 1856 elections, where “the popular masses were agitated with the promise of respecting the freedom of the

⁶ Antonio Candido da Cruz Machado (Minas Gerais, 1820-1905). Visconde de Serro Velho. Lawyer, he was a professor in the provinces of Goiás, Bahia and Maranhão (1855-1857) (MARQUES, 1970).

ballot box” (LEAL, 1874, p. 235), that is, the opposition to the government had awakened after a long lethargy in which it had been lying since 1849.

The strategy of the members of the conservative party led by the president of the province, Antônio Candido da Cruz Machado, to cool the spirits before the 1856 elections, which represented the possibility for the liberals to reach power, starts to persecute newspapers and printers, for being the press the main stage of this debate in denouncing arbitrariness, that is, the editors of *O Conciliação* and those of *Diário do Maranhão* and *O Progresso* before the election postponed what the role of the press should be, not omitting the capacity of this vehicle to fulfill its real role, which, according to them, was to inform, as can be seen in this true manifest:

The elections for general deputies are approaching and there is a complete mutation in the newspapers about the men who must represent us in parliament. It would be good if journalism, whose purpose is to clarify the public about its interests, tried to nominate the candidates so that they would be appreciated in advance by those who have to pay their votes, and not be presented in the election, as it has happened until today. It is time for the population of this province to recognize and convince themselves that their representatives must be appreciated for their civil merits and virtues, in order to defend public rights and interests; and that it is necessary, once and for all, to give these men without capacity that they will only find for themselves or for relatives-scholarships-commendations-baronies-income-ping-jobs and dispatches for party intrigues etc & etc; it is finally necessary that the reign of the womb fall and rise to the throne in its place that of the intelligence and merit. We, unfortunately, do not have a large number of people able to represent us well, we must take advantage of the few that we have choosing the following citizens, in our opinion the best, and who seem to gather sufficient sums of capacity, as long as they do not present us with others who do exceed them: The Messrs. Francisco José Furtado. Fábio Alexandrino de Carvalho Reis. Francisco de Mello Coutinho de Vilhena. João Francisco Lisboa. Cândido Mendes de Almeida João Nunes de Campos (*DIÁRIO DO MARANHÃO*, 6 fev 1856. p.3).

Opposing journalism exposed the government's arbitrary acts and improper interventions, making public the illegal acts it had used to ensure that its conservative candidates won the elections. In a possible conceit of vanity, the president of the Province of Maranhão, Antônio Candido da Cruz Machado, edits a decree through which he orders the police authorities to prevent the entry of voters who denounced the election as false and to arrest them, instituting lawsuits against them.

On the afternoon of January 10, 1857, Mr. J.M.C. Frias, where *O Conciliação* was printed, as well as the workers of the Typography of Mr. Carlos Fernando Ribeiro, where *O Progresso* was published, were surprised by the police action that had the objective of arresting them at the door of the respective workshops. Taken by the surprise of the action, they took flight, however, two were captured: the printers Falcão and Luís Carlos Barbosa, taken to prison and forced to “settle down” (serve the army). Such an action directly violated the rights of freedom of thought explicit in the National Constitution. Opposition printers closed their doors, printers hid themselves from justice. There was a dread installed in the society of Maranhão. The newspaper editors then issued a simple protest printed on the small press of Mr. Carlos Fernando Ribeiro, who had the idea of transferring him to a house opposite, where he lived. The feeling of indignation in the majority of the population found an echo in what came next.

The protest of the opposing writers from Maranhão had a strong repercussion and denunciation with the Fluminense and Pernambucana Imperial Tipografica Associations.

The defense of the maranhenses by fellow professionals from Rio de Janeiro, next to the Monarch, was decisive for many of those who were in prisons in the barracks or at home to return to their activities (see chart below). In recognition of the support of the printers of these provinces, the following articles were published in the newspaper A Imprensa (1857):

And with a heart overflowing with joy, which we address to you, brethren, for the noble profession we have followed, to thank you from the heart of the soul for the generous and spontaneous part you have taken in our sufferings. The holy ark of liberty, which is partly entrusted to us, because we are one of the instruments that it uses to expand from all angles to the earth, was for the arrogance and the crime that was violated here with the arrest and prison of some of our brothers, and you lords, there you took the cause as yours without delay and took it before the throne of our beloved Monarch so that he, who is just and upright wise, and does not leave a wound without the balm of his justice, a tear running in his presence that does not rinse it, hear the groans of the oppressed printers and repair the injustice that they did against the printers in Maranhão, and punish the criminal [in this case the president of the province Antonio da Cruz Machado]. We the oppressed, we the homographs typographers of Progresso, Estandarte and Diário do Maranhão, and with us from the typographers of the Publisher Maranhense, Temperança and the Observer, we extend this thanks to the Imperial Associação Tipográfica Fluminense, and to all the typographers of Rio de Janeiro, who were so interested in the fate of the persecuted, and with all the veins of our hearts, and full of acknowledgments, we assure them that their noble conduct and the valuable effort that this illustrious Association has shown us that have suffered so much from arbitrary power. Believe, gentlemen, in the sincerity of our protests of gratitude.

We are

Your work brothers

São Luís, March 4th, 1857 (A IMPRENSA, 4 mar.1957, p.4).

In the same edition, the typographers persecuted in Maranhão would like to thank the support from Associação Tipográfica Pernambucana

We read with pleasure, and full of acknowledgment, the statement that you had inserted in N. 1302 of Liberal Pernambucano.

You, who are our brothers through work, you who know how we taste the country of fatigue, the sorrows that accompany the outcasts of this century, you have felt our sorrows, you have suffered like us, through the powerful voice of the press, feed us and all of us doubly, with the nourishment of the body and intelligence, and your voices, when perhaps they were not heard by anyone else, would be. As they were, for us originated by the arrogance of a Regulation, for us the hosts, for all our brothers, the composers and printers of the other printers of Maranhão, and we will reverberate them in a thousand blessing and we will record it forever in our memory . Your behavior is beautiful and noble, like that of our brothers from Rio de Janeiro and of you brilliant children from that land of Liberdade, nor did you bow your neck to the throbbing of tyranny it was not to be expected otherwise. From the bottom of my soul, we thank you for being the brilliant composers and printers of Pernambuco, the active part that you have taken in favor of the persecuted Maranhão typographers.

Believe that we will never forget the help that you have given us on this court and that it will serve as an incentive for us to never slip from the noble path trodden until today.

Maranhão, March 2nd, 1857. (A IMPRENSA, 4 mar.1957, p.4)

In Chart 1 below, we explain typographic institutions and printers involved in the process.

Chart 1 – Typographers involved in the process

TYPOGRAPHY	TYPOGRAPHER
PROGRESSO	Belarmino de Mattos Manoel Teixeira de Souza Joaquim Mauricio Serra Raimundo Felício Correia
ESTANDARTE	João Mathias Alves Serrão Odorico Francisco de Paula Colás
DIÁRIO DO MARANHÃO	Joaquim Luiz Carlos Barbosa João Raimundo Pereira Joaquim Avelino Ferreira de Carvalho Luiz Raimundo de Azevedo Raimundo Caetano da Silva Bernardino de Sena Castro
TEMPERANÇA	Lino Carlos de Oliveira Guimarães
PUBLICADOR MARANHENSE	Antônio Justino de Mesquita João Francisco Bezerra de Menezes Joaquim Canuto Lapa João Thomaz de Mello José Theodoro da Silva Raimundo José de Seixas Corrêa
MARANHENSE	Joaquim Antônio Pires Satyro Antônio de Farias Jacintho Antônio da Silva

Source: A Imprensa (1857) - Digital Collection of the Benedito Leite Public Library, adapted by the authors.

In the face of these denunciations, D. Pedro II requests an investigation of the facts and, in order to respond to the clamor of public opinion, he dismisses the provincial president in respect of the postponed law. Only 42 days passed between the aforementioned act of the president and his resignation and expulsion from Maranhão under boos and mockery by a large part of the population.

Passing this episode, Belarmino and his fellow professionals returned to work, but remained fearful of the animosities that hung in the air. This climate of uncertainty and insecurity led O Progresso workers to collect equipment and presses so they could continue publishing the newspaper.

However, even with the bluster, the liberals suffered yet another defeat: the Baron of São Bento was elected Deputy; Carlos Ribeiro abandoned the political struggle in Maranhão and went to Amazonas to be secretary to the president of the province, his fellow countryman and correlator, João Pedro Dias Vieira; and, Ferreira Vale entered the diplomatic career (BORRALHO, 2010, p. 157).

These questions were decisive for Belarmino de Mattos to found, on May 11, 1857, the Associação Tipográfica Maranhense with the support of the president of the province, Manuel Gomes da Silva Belford, the Baron of Coroatá, and several journalists, typographers and intellectuals under the blessings of the diocesan bishop.

Under the blessings of the Catholic Church, represented by Bishop D. Manoel Joaquim da Silveira, the Statute of the Maritime Typographic Association is approved. The statutes, after being drafted by the members of the board, were handed over to the bishop by the Commission chosen for this purpose. Among the effective partners were: Manoel Teixeira de Sousa, Ayres Firmino Cesar Gomes and João Thomaz de Melo. In the speech delivering the document, Manoel de Sousa says:

Your Excellency and Reverend Mr. - As an organ of the Typographica Maranhense Association, installed in this capital, we have the honor of kissing the ring of Your Excellency, while receiving the blessing of the illustrious and distinguished pastor of this diocese, when presenting Your Excellency and Most reverend the statutes, as the same Association is governed.

It is on this solemn occasion, and for us of indivisible pleasure, that we have the honor to announce to Your Reverend Excellence that our Association, committed to the public duties it has to fulfill, has not hesitated to launch its nascent hope for a better future for the High Person Your Excellency, that you should deign to accept the place of your Protector and support it with your recognized illustration and very religious piety.

The Associação Typographica Maranhense, which only aims at the material and moral improvement of this sublime art and the Maranhenses who profess it, dares to expect from Your Excellency's innate goodness that it is welcomed by the paternal heart of Your Most Reverend Excellency, in which never a single impurity has entered, that was not one of the many virtues that make the flower of glory that adorns the head of the Prince of Maranhense Church.

Through the committee organ, which is before Your Most Reverend Excellency, the Associação Typographica Maranhense renders your Excellency its purest and most sincere thanks, and prostrated receives with the humility of the Christian the blessing of its holy and venerated pastor.

Maranhão, September 13th, 1857.(A IMPRENSA, 1857, p.4)

For its financial maintenance, the Association uses lotteries, whose tickets could be purchased at printers, pharmacies and other locations in São Luís and other locations in the Province under the control of treasurer João Marcelino Romeu, the way the Association paid for its activities, including payment for the property located at Travessa do Teatro, n. 10, in the parish of Vitória, in São Luís, with a portrait of Gutemberg in the entrance hall.

But what is the goal of this Society? The journal *O Paiz*, of 1863, informs that:

In this city, printers form a society for such philanthropic purposes that saying them is the greatest compliment that can be given to these children of work. They came together as brothers, took part of their savings, part of that bread earned with so much sweat. *If one falls ill, society runs to his aid, does not leave him to wane, and if he dies he buries him with decency.* This is what the Typographic Society is. (O PAIZ, 1863, p. 3, our highlight).

We understand that this attribution occurred after the consolidation of the Association, since the primary reason that motivated its creation was the persecution of the printers and, therefore, the freedom of the press and the need to guarantee their office.

To this end, the association was made up of a group of men-typographers, journalists and other professionals related to the press, who assumed different functions within the association divided between the effective and honorary members who held monthly meetings to debate issues related to the profession and the organization and administration of the Association.

The board was elected for a one-year term. It consisted of a president, vice-president, first and second secretaries who should take care of the organization of the house, keep the register of members up to date, write and issue documents and call the board of directors to the general meetings and conduct them, as well as keep in touch with similar associations. The treasurer was responsible for keeping the finances in order, presenting the annual balance sheet and promoting lotteries for fundraising. The fiscal council, being that this activity in the course of time happens to be called "investigation council", whose purpose was to receive and supervise the conditions of work in the workshops and to appoint new members. The Board, after being elected, should be appointed by the President of the Province.

The honorary members were chosen from people who directly contributed to the Association's aggrandizement and were of a permanent character, such as Henriques Leal and Belarmino de Mattos, who, after assuming the first presidency, took over this role, as did Antônio de Frias.

During the 19th century, several printers took over the direction of the Association, of which we present some examples

Chart 2 – Association members in the 19th Century

YEAR	TYPOGRAPHER
1864	José Maria Correia de Frias - President João Francisco Bezerra de Meneses - Vice- President Antonio da Rocha Borba - 1. Secretary José Theodoro da Silva e Souza - Treasurer Fiscal Council: Inácio José Ferreira; Antonio Justino de Mesquita Manoel Francisco Pires.
1864-1865	Antonio Henriques Leal - President (reelected) Antonio da Rocha Borba - Vice President João Francisco Bezerra de Meneses - 1 Secretary Mauricio Jose Colles - 2 secretaries José Theodoro da Silva e Souza - Treasurer Union Committee: Antonio Ramundo Barbosa Luiz Raimundo de Azevedo Joaquim Canuto Lapa
1874-1875	Antonio da Rocha Borba - President Joaquim de Farias Guimaraes - Vice President João José F. de Menzes - 1 secretary Antonio Francisco de Barros Luna - 2 secretaries Antonio Justino de Mesquita - treasurer
1879	João Francisco Bezerra de Meneses - Presidente Antonio Francisco de Barros Luna - Vice Presidente Joaquim Antonio Luz da Paz - 1 secretary Joao Hilario Caldas - 2 secretaries Joaquim de Farias Guimaraes - treasurer Union Committee Cristino Vicente de Castro José Joaqui, Pinheiro Lima Antonio Florindo de Sousa Castro Protector - Henriques Leal Honor President -Themistocles da Silva Maciel Aranha

Source: Chart elaborated by the authors

Each year, the Association held a commemorative party in reference to the date of its foundation. The event was attended by all members and family members, civil and ecclesiastical authorities. On the occasion, various activities were held, such as conferences, exhibitions of printed materials, in order to show society the advances in printing art and the incorporation of new members who should take the “style oath”. On that occasion, poetry was also recited by members, always dealing with the profession of typographer.

Typographica Association. On the 8th of this year, the solemn session of the Associação Typographica Maranhense took place at the home of Mr. José Maria Correia de Frias. The public is already aware of the celebration program and, therefore, we only need to add that this program was very, very exceeded. In the

presence of the Honorable Mr. President of the Province and a brilliant competition of people of different degrees and artists from different professions, the solemn session was opened, with the presence of almost all workers from Maranhão.

Honorary members Dr. Jorge Junior José de Conselho Estrella and Jorge Sobrinho will deliver similar speeches, followed by Mr. Lieutenant-Colonel Fernandes Luiz Ferreira, editor of the artist, Mr. Mesquita, typography artist and committee rapporteurs. of the Societies Atheneu Maranhense, Luso-Brazilian and that of the Gabinete Portuguez de Leitura.

Mr. Dr Antonio Henriques Leal, worthy honorary president of the Typographica Association after giving an allocation, invited the new administrative board to take office. After taking office, Mr. Correia de Frias, effective President of the Association, invited the bystanders to a glass of water, after having distributed a beautiful poetry by Mr. Rocha Borba, magnificently printed at that time.

The table was served with splendor and profession. The following gifts were made, among others:

- the memory of Guttemberg; typographic art; to the Honorable Most Reverend Mr. Archbishop of Bahia, protector of the Typographic Association of Maranhão and to the Honorable Mr. President of the Province by Mr. Correia de Frias.

- the press, serious and moralized in the province, represented there by Messrs. Gentil Braga, Joaquim Serra, Canon Santos Themistocles Aranha and Lieutenant Colonel Ferreira, to the Dean of the Maranhão press, the illustrious Mr. Sotero dos Reis, who was absent, by Mr. Dr. Antonio Henriques Leal.

- to the honorary president of Associação Typographica, to Mr. Belarmino de Mattos, Frias, Bezerra, to the owners of the typographies, J. J. Ferreira mentioned, by Mr. Gentil Braga.

- to the Honorable Mr. President of the Province, by Mr. Themistocles Aranha.

- To Messrs. Former newspaper editors, who were present. Drs. Rego, Roxo, Leal and Jorge Junior, the glories of Maranhão, Mr. Gonçalves Dias, Odorico Mendes, Gomes de Sousa and João Lisboa, by Mr. Serra.

Finally the Honorable Mr. President of the Province offered a toast to the people of Maranhão and the prosperity of the Typographica Association, concluding the remarks made at His Majesty the Emperor's first table by Your Excellency. (A COALIZAÇÃO, 11 set. de 1862, ano I, n. 63, p. 1).

This association entered the Republic with the same purposes of its creation by Belarmino de Mattos. It publishes Revista Typográfica which started to circulate on October 31, 1907, with bimonthly periodicity and probably circulated until 1914, with the objective of publicizing the activities of the graphic class of Maranhão.

The magazine presented, on the first page, the file with the name of the main editor, Artur Lima Brandão, assisted by José Simeão de Assis and having the Editor's Secretary, André Avelino Espírito Santo Ferreira and all employees, partners and directors and editors. Its impression was made in the workshops of the official press of the State.

Observing the details of the magazine's logo in the figure below, we note the effigies of three important personalities in the creation of movable typography. They are inserted inside the letter R, side by side. The first is by Guttemberg, inventor of the movable type press. The second by Johann Fust or Faust, who sponsored Guttemberg's research, being his patron, and the third is by Peter Schöffer or Petrus Schoeffer who served as a printer, studied in Paris and worked as a manuscript copyist, before he was Guttemberg's apprentice.

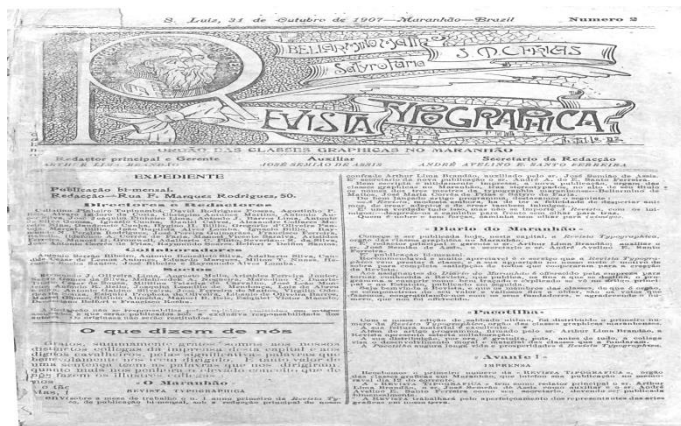
Another equally important detail is the magazine's homage by incorporating, in its brand, a pennant with the names of the most celebrated typographers of 19th century Maranhão: Belarmino de Mattos, Antônio de Frias and Satyro Faria. We note that Belarmino's name comes first, an indication that, for the typography class, he would be the most renowned of them.

This magazine circulated in several parts of Maranhão and Brazil, since we found articles thanking the journal for receiving the numbers in other units of the federation, notably

by Maranhão people who were in these locations, like Artur Azevedo, who, upon receiving a number of the magazine, declared:

I received from the capital of my state the second issue of the periodical Typographica Magazine, which is said to be an organ of the graphics class and of which Mr. Artur Lima Brandão is director. The happy times when my Maranhão was nicknamed Brazilian Athens. Some people also called it Brazilian Leipzig, because it was the capital of the kingdom of Saxony, the city in the world where the typographic art had the most progress. (TYPOGRAPHICA MAGAZINE, n.8, p.6, 17 set.1914).

Figure 1 – *Typographica Magazine* cover detail (1907)



Source: Digital Archive of the Public Library Benedito Leite

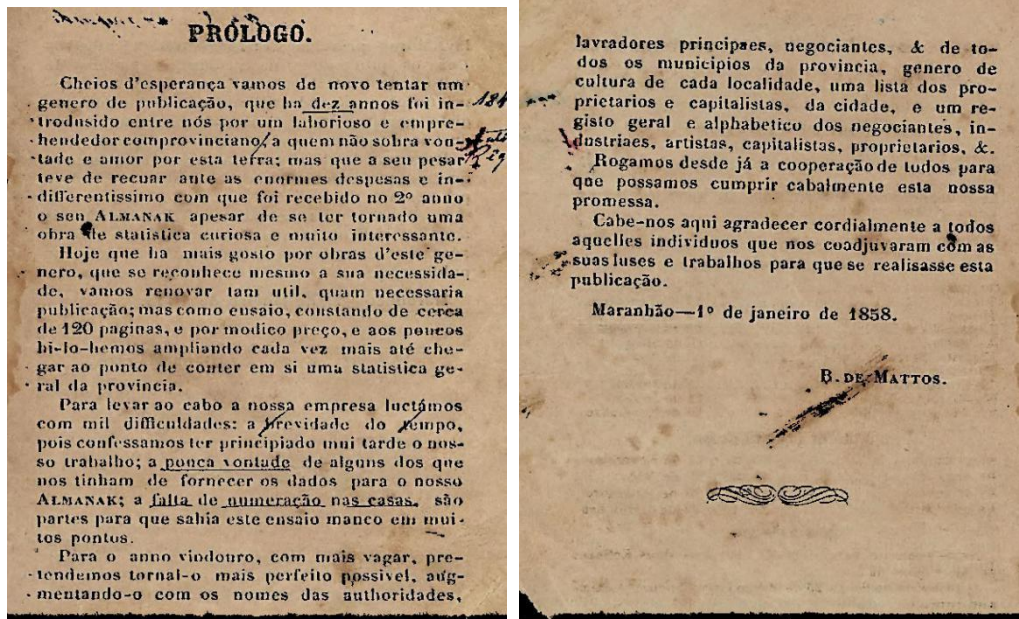
3 O IMPRESSOR/EDITOR BELARMINO DE MATTOS

As reported in *Revista Typographica* (1913), from the press of Didot Maranhense, a set of printed works emerged that deserved national recognition,

[...] its elegance and artistic execution, so high in the volumes so reasonable in prices that Maranhão is distinguished as part of Brazil where the most advanced typographic art was found, the products of its workshops being placed among the first, both in quality and in cheapness and I accept your commercials with advantageous salaries for Ceará and Pará (TYPOGRAPHICA MAGAZINE, n. 7, p. 2, 1913).

The *Almanac Administrativo Mercantil e Industrial* organized by Belarmino de Mattos, with the contribution of several characters, with emphasis on Antônio Henriques Leal, “These materials are a precious source to anyone who wants to know the Maranhão of then” (TYPOGRAPHICA MAGAZINE, n. 7, p. 2, 1913). See Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 – Prologue detail in *Almanaque do Maranhão* (1858)



Source: Public Library Benedito Leite digital archive.

In this list of almanacs, Belarmino published other series in 12 volumes, in the years 1858 to 1869, and the 1860, 1862 and 1864 editions are the most sought after, due to the content expressed in them, which resulted in a number of issues quite high as we can see in Chart 3.

Chart 3 - Works printed by mino de Mattos⁷

TITLE	AUTHOR	YEAR
Postillas Gramaticais	Sotero dos Reis	1867
Poesias	Antônio Francisco de Sá	
Comédias	Luiz Miguel Quadros	1866
O Sogro da Rapaziada	Joaquim Serra (Obras traduzidas por esse autor)	
Os estudantes da Bahia		
Um coração de mulher		
O salto de Leucade		
O mundo marcha	E. Pletrom (tradutor)	
Estatística da Província do Ceará	Sotero dos Reis	
Obras póstumas	Antônio Gonçalves Dias	-
“Impressos” de Andrade	Coleção de Poesia de Trajano Galvão de Carvalho / Antônio Marques Rodrigues e Gentil Homem de Almeida Braga	-
Parnaso Maranhense		
Três Liras		
Eloá (tradução)	Flávio Reimer	-
Canções da vida	Francisco I. Ewerton	-
Versos	Celso Magalhães	-
Motins Políticos da Província do Pará	Domingos Antonio Raiol	-
História da Independência da Província do Maranhão	Luiz Antonio Vieira da Silva	-
Curso elementar de Matemática	João Antônio Coqueiro	-

⁷ For the works that we were unable to obtain the probable date of printing, we chose to include only their name and author.

Impressões e gemidos	José Coriolano de Sousa	-
Confidências (poesias)	F. C. de Figueiredo	-
Curso elementar de mathematicas	João Coqueiro	-
Os miseráveis	Victor Hugo	-
O homem que ri		-

Source: Adapted by the author (*LEAL, H. Pantheon Maranhense, 1874, tomo 2, p. 246-247*).

From its press, editions of *O Progresso* (1806), the first daily newspaper that circulated in Maranhão and whose editors were Fábio Alexandrino de Carvalho Reis, Alexandre Teófilo de Carvalho Leal, Antônio Rego, among other figures of literature and politics of Maranhão in the 1800s. In addition to this newspaper, Belarmino also publishes *O Paiz*, considered one of the most widely circulated and important newspapers in the Northeast of Brazil, equaling the *Diário de Pernambuco*.

In addition to such newspapers and many others of smaller format and circulation, Belarmino de Mattos also printed in the provinces of Pará, Ceará, Piauí and Pernambuco, as well as literary school books and translations, which shows the quality and quantity of materials that passed by his skilled printer hands. This resulted, therefore, in the expansion of the installation space of his workshop to more adequate proportions.

In 1863, he already owned a workshop of such proportions that the building on Rua Santa'Anna was narrow to contain the typography of dr. Carlos F. ribeiro, which was meant to conserve and guard it, and his abundance of presses, machines, and boxes of typos of diverse points and characters.

It was believed that the workers' personnel corresponded to such a vast material, far superior to that of all the others. Therefore, he had to move his establishment to Rua da Paz (today Colonel Collares Moreira), coming to occupy the entire flow of houses in front of the current Library, under numbers 9, 11 and 13, but which at that time formed only one building.

It was here that he who writes these lines was fortunate to meet him; it was there that his last and most exquisite editions came out; it was also here that, on February 26, 1870, death came surprisingly in the midst of work (*TYPOGRAPHICA MAGAZINE, n.7, 1913,p.3*).

CONSIDERAÇÕES PONTUAIS

As can be seen, Belarmino de Mattos, as a printer, played a very representative role in circulating newspapers and books that crossed the borders of the Maranhão Province.

As such, Belarmino de Mattos was an important mediator of written culture as, from his press, important newspapers were published that circulated throughout the province and the books of the most eminent intellectuals of the period, contributing to the epithet of São Luís as the Brazilian Athens, not only as a typographer, but as an editor, master of his trade, leader of his class' political cause and a respectable representative of his art.

Finally, we believe that this work will contribute to the history of the Maranhão press in the 1800s, notably on the figure of Belarmino de Mattos, as with the exception of the text by Antônio Henriques Leal, the other works refer to him in a fragmented and gaping way.

However, we understand that a deeper incursion into these records is necessary, a reflection on the signs that have not yet been perceived and the expansion of this study as well as a description of the trajectory of other Maranhão typographers who worked in the 1800s.

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Article submitted to the similarity system



Submitted: 30/01/2020 – Accepted: 04/04/2020 – Published: 19/04/2020
