



# *New Buildings, Exciting Opportunities*

By Pietro Copiz

**E**ducation in the Euro-Africa Division has seen major changes over the past decade. In 1980 the division lost most of its schools outside Europe. New territorial adjustments occurred in 1985. This transferred Marusevec Seminary, Yugoslavia, to the Trans-European Division. Some schools experienced a slow but steady growth in total enrollment for 1985-1990. For Sagunto College, Spain, however, the increase was extraordinary—from 183 students in 1980-1981 to 672 in 1989-1990. During this school year, for the first time, Marienhoehe Seminary, in the Federal Republic of Germany, reached an enrollment of 600 students.

However, the total percentage of

students from Adventist families decreased by more than 3 percent during the quinquennium. In most countries the losses occurred in elementary and secondary schools. For some school boards this trend may require a readjustment of goals and objectives from those typical for a church school to those that usually characterize a missionary school.

The closing, for financial reasons, of a school in Naples, Italy, was balanced by the opening of two schools in Portugal (Santarém and Setúbal). In addition, three "free time occupation centers" were opened in Portugal, and two more should be organized in the near future. These centers (not included in the statistics), which generally tend to become regular church schools, have done a remarkable work among non-Adventist children. Many of them are enrolled in the local Pathfinder clubs and some attend Sabbath school services. Thus prejudices against the church are being broken down.

The number of preschoolers enrolled in Adventist-operated institutions has almost doubled during the quinquennium. In Spain some kindergartens have experimented with admitting two- to three-year olds, but it is too early to know if the practice will continue.

### ***Religious Instruction Courses***

The important increase, however, took place in the number of children enrolled in religious instruction courses, from about 8,000 in 1985 to more than 20,000 in 1989. This program, initially offered mainly in German-speaking countries but now systematically organized in most Euro-Africa Division unions, progressed very rapidly in Angola and Mozambique. During the school year the church offers weekly Bible courses to Adventist children who do not attend denominational schools.

Certainly such instruction cannot match the benefits of full Seventh-day Adventist education, but it does keep children close to the church. In many places it provides the only way these children can receive formal religious instruction.

The number of textbooks used for religious instruction continues to grow. In Spain textbooks have been prepared for eight different levels. Other countries more commonly have such textbooks for two to five levels. Of special interest is a recently published church and denominational history textbook for German-speaking countries. This attractive and richly illustrated volume is the product of long years of dedicated teamwork by many teachers and others.

### ***New Buildings***

Among the most visible additions to campus skylines are new buildings—some partly financed by 13th Sabbath Offering overflows. A spectacular change took place in Beira, Mozambique, where more than 10 prefabricated buildings—ranging from classrooms to cafeteria, workshop, dormitories, and houses for personnel—were erected in just a few months, after many years of negotiations in a country facing

serious problems and shortages. As is often the case when major improvements take place, adequate maintenance now presents a serious challenge. Another project that seemed almost impossible to attain is the nearly completed multipurpose building at Friedensau Seminary, in the German Democratic Republic.

A modern building was also added to the library at Salève Adventist Institute, Collonges, France. It provides classrooms for ministerial and foreign language students, teachers' offices, and an auditorium with audio-visual and multiple translation equipment. This complex is also frequently used as a convention center. A fine apartment building, mostly for ministerial students, was inaugurated at Marienhoehe Seminary. At Sagunto College a much-needed cafeteria and two three-classroom elementary school units, harmoniously integrated in the natural Mediterranean vegetation, highlight the most recent additions to the physical plant of this relatively new institution. At Bogenhofen Seminary, Austria, the girls moved from the romantic but inadequate rooms in the attic of the old castle to a new dormitory, where each modern and efficient room has its own toilet and shower.

Other improvements ranged widely

in scope and cost: central heating at Sagunto College; paving of campus roads and sidewalks on many campuses; extensive remodeling and repair of older buildings; new lighting and telephone systems in a number of schools; modern equipment added or renewed; new playgrounds; and many items essential to the smooth operation of a school or illustrating other important values, such as the giant cage for exotic birds at Sagunto College.

### ***New Programs***

Some new programs provided extra dimensions in the curriculum, like the practical theology courses—with added faculty—at Collonges and Marienhoehe. A vocational school for foreign-language secretaries was established at Marienhoehe, where, at the secondary school level, consecutive instruction is now offered for grades 5 to 13.

At Bogenhofen, the first graduates of the full secondary school passed the Matura (university entrance examination). A regular four-week student exchange between this school and two academies in North America has been organized, with positive results.

Ministerial students from Collonges are now employed as chaplains dur-



*français, anglais.*

ing the summer at the large university hospital of Lausanne, Switzerland. At Collonges evening language courses for adults have had good success, and intensive language training for missionaries has played a key role in providing qualified personnel for French-speaking fields. As might be expected, computer science courses have become common at all levels of instruction in the division, and computer technology is widely used in all school activities, from administration and correspondence to research and library cataloguing.

### ***Faculty Upgrading***

To ensure faculty upgrading in Adventist institutions for the secondary school teachers who received their degrees in public universities, the division administration continues a consistent and vigorous sponsorship program for advanced studies. In addition to teachers' conventions, which provide a more limited upgrading, seminars directed by staff members from the Geoscience Research Institute have been scheduled every second year in our major institutions. Under the umbrella of the Faculté Adventiste de Théologie (Collonges), continuing education has been offered every summer to workers in Angola, Mozambique, and Tahiti through regular extension courses.

Division archives have been successfully established at Marienhöhe—for German-speaking and Eastern European countries. Some books, based on research associated with this center, have already been published. Similar archives are being organized at Collonges for Latin

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countries and for material related to the history of missions in French-speaking countries of Africa.

Many college teachers are currently doing research. Some are active in the Euro-Africa Division Biblical Research Committee. The resulting publications include a number of books and many articles. A book on the Seventh-day Adventist Church, written by Richard Lehmann, dean of the Faculté Adventiste de Théologie, was the first to be published in a Catholic collection scheduled to cover all Christian, Jewish, and Muslim denominations. The Italian Junior College began regular publication of a scholarly theological and historical journal appropriately named *Adventus*. By the time this report is printed, the first issue of *Spes Christiana*, a theological journal prepared at Marienhoehe, should have been published. In addition, many schools produce their own school paper. In some cases, the circulation may be quite impressive (10,000 at Marienhoehe and 3,500 at Collonges).

#### ***Affiliation and Accreditation Continued***

Accreditation by the SDA Board of Regents was renewed for a full term to the institutions that had previously received it. The Faculté Adventiste de Théologie affiliation with the Univer-



sity of Strasbourg. Through this agreement a certain number of ministerial students who qualify can obtain government-approved degrees ("Licence" and "Maîtrise" in theology) by following the regular program at Collonges. Marienhoehe has been actively seeking government recognition for its theological seminary. Because of its special relationship with Goethe-Institut, Bogenhofen Seminary has been authorized not only to choose its own schedule for the final examinations, but also to deliver the basic and intermediate level certificates of German, which are recognized worldwide.

The Euro-Africa and Trans-European divisions cooperate actively in higher education through a joint European Educational Consultative Committee, which meets once a year to coordinate projects, programs, and activities. For example, many authors are contributing to a book on denominational history in Europe to be published during the next quinquennium. Modern language and biology/geology teachers' associations will be organized at the European level. European theology teachers meet every second year on different campuses.

### ***Service and Outreach Activities***

The religious freedom enjoyed in some parts of Europe allows conscientious objectors, instead of serving in the military, to work in the schools of at least three Euro-Africa Division countries. During the quinquennium, for example, 20 conscientious objectors served at Collonges. Other countries, including some in Eastern Europe, may soon offer civil service as an alternative to military service. In addition, scores of young people provided essential help to many schools through voluntary service. Some later became regular workers on at least three continents.

Spiritual outreach programs played an increasingly important role in the life of teachers and students during this quinquennium. Significantly, the 1987 division-wide education convention theme was "The Missionary Call of Our Schools." About 450 students were baptized during the quinquennium. Most Adventist schools participated in HARVEST 90 evangelistic campaigns, some of which were held on campus (at Marienhoehe, this has become a regular feature in the school's calendar). Traditional activities (Ingathering, Great Missionary Week, Week of Prayer) continued to highlight their respective seasons; but

new methods appealed to many young people.

At Collonges, Radio Salève uses students' talents to broadcast in four languages. As a result of helping local authorities with the annual fair, the school is now allowed to set up its own booth. The self-supporting Alliance Choir has become a powerful soul-winning instrument both on campus and in many French towns. Similar choirs are being established throughout the whole country.

At Marienhoeh, especially through the richly diversified adult education courses, hundreds of non-Adventists are regularly drawn to the campus. Many of them later accept the invitation to attend seminars, Bible study groups, and evangelistic efforts for young people by young people. Because of its encouraging impact, this program will become an integral part of the annual schedule.

At Friedensau the inhabitants of the neighboring villages were invited last year to an afternoon open house,

for which a variety of programs had been planned to meet different interests. To the great surprise of the organizers, and in spite of the uncertain weather, about 2,000 non-Adventist visitors showed up.

But the typical influence of our schools is like a slow-ripening fruit. The example of a non-Adventist student illustrates this point. Although intelligent, he suffered from continuous trembling, which made it difficult for him to attend a regular school. He was accepted at Bogenhofen, where he felt very much at home. A devout Catholic, he was moved by the truths he discovered in the Bible class. After years of study, he was baptized and will probably begin the ministerial program when he finishes high school.

#### ***Anniversary Celebrations***

Quite a number of schools celebrated anniversaries during the quinquennium: Friedensau, 90th (1989); Italian Junior College, 50th

(1990) and 40th (1987) on the Villa Aurora campus; Zurich, 30th (1990); Lisbon, 25th (1989); Sagunto, 25th (1990). In 1987 a large crowd gathered at Collonges to honor the 100th birthday of Alfred Vaucher, a distinguished professor who taught the Bible classes when that school first opened in 1921.

#### ***Planning for the Future***

Plans for the immediate future include apartments for married students at Collonges; apartments for personnel at Marienhoeh; a classroom building at Villa Aurora; a multipurpose farm building at Oliveira do Douro, Portugal; an urgently needed new school building in Lisbon, and other classroom buildings in Portugal, where many students are not presently accepted for lack of room. In Angola, where the political situation caused the transfer of Bongo Seminary to Huambo, a whole new campus will have to be created. There are good prospects for opening

church schools in Southern Germany. A geoscience center at Colonges and an archeological center at Marienhoehe are in the advanced planning stages.

In addition to normal challenges, new situations demand new solutions. In Spain recent government policies have adversely affected the financial operation of private schools. This means potentially severe enrollment losses in the union, which currently enrolls almost 30 percent of the total number of Euro-Africa Division students and pupils. Churches and parents will have to rally to the support of their children's education.

Creeping worldliness and secularization could undermine the Christian effectiveness of many schools if this danger is not recognized and faced with spiritual vigor and educational insight.

On the other hand, the rapid changes in Eastern Europe call for wise immediate reactions and bold long-range planning, even if the present resources are limited. In Romania the trickle of ministerial students allowed by the government could double overnight.

In Czechoslovakia, where ministerial training was reduced to correspondence courses and monthly meet-

ings, a new seminary has been authorized, and the division faces the happy problem of looking for a suitable building and establishing a new curriculum. Pastors are now invited to teach the Bible in public schools. As for Friedensau, it could regain the prominent role it used to play in ministerial training for Central Europe. And, if the new freedoms reach an extent that nobody could even dare to dream of a few months ago, it could well be that education and church schools may represent the secret weapon of the church as it faces the challenging opportunities ahead. □