



04-B-19

A PUBLISHING HOUSE SERVING A COUNTRY'S CULTURAL IDENTITY

SHORT HISTORY

In 1972, after 12 years of independence, the Government of Madagascar accelerated the process of breaking with the school organization inherited from colonial days. This was especially noticeable in the Malgachisation of programmes and the use of the national language for lessons. At the same time, great efforts were made to extend schooling to secondary level by the opening of colleges and grammar schools in the principal towns of the country.

To meet this development and these changes new and adapted school books and documents had to be created. The authors were offered an important and exciting task.

Bearing the needs of their pupils in mind, the Brothers of the Christian Schools were the pioneers in this work, thus rendering eminent service to teachers and pupils, and therefore to the whole educational system.

From 1970 onwards a group of Brothers, realising the need for adapting their teaching to the local situation, set to work. The beginnings were modest and the means precarious: installations in a school in Tananarive, the printing of books and magazines by Roneo. Divers contretemps moreover tried the courage and tenacity of the pioneers.

However, the reputation of the first editions quickly spread beyond the bounds of the Brothers' schools and orders flooded in from all over the country. In 1971 a new educational review appeared, "TSIRIM-PAHAZAVANA," thanks to the cooperation between Brothers and laymen. This was the first and only one of its kind to be produced in the country, with one edition for primary schools and another section for secondary level.

DEVELOPMENT

This initial success led to and enabled the buildings to be extended and the FO.FI.PA to be produced. A small building was therefore erected to house the activities and the equipment as well as a small community of Brothers.

From 1975, FO.FI.PA obtained legal status as a publishing house. As such its books are printed in town and they assure the promotion and sales. Only Roneo work is now produced in the house.

Success and good management have gradually made possible the investments needed to avoid calling on the district for help. Assistance from SECOLI and MISEREOR made up what was lacking from local resources.

PRESENT PUBLICATIONS

With reduced man power, 2 Brothers and about 40 employees, FO.FI.PA continues publishing:

- school books for all education levels, primary, secondary and higher,
- pedagogical reviews, primary and secondary,
- reading text books,
- guides for rural development, hygiene, culture, civilization.

In short, all subjects taught are covered by these books, often with a choice between a number of authors. The 1984 catalogue contains over 360 titles for teachers and pupils, without counting a few novels and books of research and analysis not meant so much for school.

Among these publications special mention might be made of publications which are specifically Lasallian as well as district reviews and papers. In particular we should mention:

★ Translation into Malgache of:

- Maillefer's Life of St. John Baptist de La Salle.
- That by the Abbé Courtois.
- Pedagogy by Brother E. Gabriel.
- The Conduct of Schools.
- The Meditations for the Time of the Retreat.
- The Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher.

★ The publication of books written in Malgache:

- Life of St. John Baptist de La Salle by Ratovoarison.
- Life of St. John Baptist de La Salle by Rasamoela.
- Life of Brother Raphael Louis by Brother Louis Robert.
- Life of Brother Raphael Louis in pamphlet form.

★ Life of Brother Raphael Louis in French by Brother Concorde Marie.

To these must be added booklets and pamphlets for the liturgy, for singing, and other texts of the Church in Madagascar.

TEACHERS RETRAINING SESSIONS

From 1970 the initiators of the FO.FI.PA were in demand throught the country for the continuing training of teachers especially in the field of mathematics and the structural approach to the Malgache language.

These requests have persisted and FO.FI.PA continues to offer training opportunities for adults:

- evening classes for candidates for the Baccalaureat,
- pedagogical courses for teachers preparing their professional qualifying exam,
- correspondence courses in pedagogy,
- residential courses in pedagogical leadership in provincial towns and rural agglomerations.

The aim in all these activities is service for all in the good Lasallian tradition.

CONFIRMED SUCCESS

There are now similar organizations in the country offering healthy competition. We think, however, that FO.FI.PA is still very much appreciated for its solid courses, the quality of its publications and its organizational precision.

It is a constant encouragement for the management and all who cooperated in this work.

TO CONCLUDE

We have recently received more encouragement:

★ In 1983 the District Chapter recognized the efforts made by FO.FI.PA and thanked them.

★ More recently, in February 1984, Brother Superior General during his visit to the country said how much he appreciated the work being done and hoped to see the installations increased and transferred to respond better to the demands made on it. He congratulated the personnel for the family spirit and encouraged it to make it even closer.

We think that these wishes could be fulfilled more easily through twinning with a similar organization in another district with an exchange of ideas and techniques and perhaps a kind of sponsorship. Any suggestion on these lines would be very welcome.

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