UNASPRESS (The Adventist University Press) is an institution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in the territory of the Central Brazil Union Conference. UNASPRESS is the publisher of the Brazil Adventist University (UNASP), and it is in the building of the Rectory of UNASP, Engenheiro Coelho campus (UNASP-EC) that is on Pastor Walter Boger Municipal Road, kilometer 3.5, Zip Code 13448-970, Lagoa Bonita neighborhood, in the city of Engenheiro Coelho, state of São Paulo, Brazil.

UNASPRESS is responsible for publishing the academic productions of the three UNASP campuses, making the research work of the institution’s professors and students known. In order to serve the academic community, the materials produced by UNASPRESS attend the Seventh-day Adventist Church throughout Brazil and South America. The present catalog features more than forty-five printed books, 7 free half-yearly scientific journals, about twenty e-books, also available for free download on the publisher’s Web site, and a line of musical products distributed under the UNASPRESS Music label.
Developments That Led to the Establishment of the Institution

UNASP’s oldest editorial initiative dates back to the institution’s early years, when it was still called Adventist Seminary. About the early 1920s, the student Rodolpho Belz had the idea of producing O Seminarista (The Seminarian), a newspaper for internal circulation in the school. Then the publication proposal of the journal was presented to director Thomas W. Steen, which with his support started to be distributed monthly. The first editorial board was comprised mostly of students, namely: Rodolpho Belz, Domingos Peixoto da Silva, Adolfo Bergold, Alma Meyer, Folonila Santos, and Luiz Waldvogel, assisted by Professor Flávio Lopes Monteiro. An interesting fact is that some of these students, in subsequent years, made an important contribution to the church in the literary and editorial scopes. Luiz Waldvogel, for example, served as editor of the Brazil Publishing House (CPB).

O Seminarista (The Seminarian) circulated until around 1923. It was succeeded by O Astro Colegial (The Colleagial Star), which circulated until the creation of O Colegial (The Colegial), in the early 1930s. O Colegial (The Colegial) was produced at the Brazil College (IAE) and published under the responsibility of the Grêmio Cultural Estudantino (Cultural Student’s Guild), and its printing was done by the Graphic Arts Department. In 1942 the journal was already gaining visibility; it also served as an “opportunity for those who have a vocation to write both in scientific literature and in pure art, for the first essays.” In the early 1960s, the Graphic Arts Department obtained a good typographic infrastructure having an automatic printer. This department served the school and provided external services. Shortly after, it underwent an expansion, and bookbinding was added to the department, making it necessary to transfer it to the building of the old men’s clothing. In subsequent years the infrastructure underwent upgrades. In 1969 a Heidelberg® printer was imported from Germany, and in 1972 an offset, SOLNA, model 125, capable of printing 8,000 sheets per hour, was imported from Switzerland. In 1973 there were already plans for the construction of an exclusive building for the printing company.

At this time, the Department of Graphic Arts printed the books of the teachers of the institution. These books were usually edited by the authors themselves, as there was no department in the printing company dedicated to this purpose. Some works that were completed after the upgrade of the Department of Graphic Arts are: As Testemunhas de Jeová e a Exegese (Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Exegesis)—1977. Apostila de grego para o curso teológico (Greek Book for the Theological Course)—1980. Análise: textos bíblicos de difícil interpretação (Analysis: Biblical Texts of Difficult Interpretation)—1981, by professor Pedro Apolinário; Arqueologia (Archeology)—1983, by Professor Siegfried Júlio Schwantes, and translated excerpts of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary. With the transfer of the theology program to UNASP-EC, in 1991, the graphic department of UNASP-SP “lost editorial expression and started printing orders from the region, Superbom labels (Brazil Food Factory), until it was completely extinct around 2010.”

Foundation of the Institution

In 1973 Pastor Roger Wilcox, then president of the South American Division (SAD), realized that the church needed to expand its main and oldest server-forming educational center, the Brazil College (IAE), presently UNASP campus São Paulo (UNASP-SP). In such reality, Pastor Nevil Gorski, then director of the institution, was asked to draw up a plan for the expansion of the Adventist higher education in Brazil. In response, a commission was organized, and comprised pastors Nevil Gorski, José Guimarães, Orlando Ritter, and João Bork, with other IAE professors. Under vote no. 73-124, they approved the plan that established a date for the implementation of this project, “designated for 1980.” Despite the fear of some leaders that such a step would lead to the secularization of the institution, higher education “was already seen [...] as being a vital area for the growth and structuring of the entire organizational system of the church.”

In order to make IAE a university, it was found that the institution needed to meet the criteria proposed by the Educational Ministry of Brazil (MEC). Thus, IAE could enhance its position from college to a university center and, subsequently, request the upgrade to university status. A new impulse in the IAE expansion plan occurred when professor Roberto Cézar de Azevedo, at the time leader of the USB educational department, developed the “Education Project.” This was a decennial educational plan (1975-1984) for all educational institutions in the territory covered by the South Brazil Union Conference (USB, presently Central Brazil Union Conference - UCB).

In relation to higher education, Azevedo presented to director Thomas W. Steen, which with his support, started to be distributed monthly. The first editorial board was comprised mostly of students, namely: Rodolpho Belz, Domingos Peixoto da Silva, Adolfo Bergold, Alma Meyer, Folonila Santos, and Luiz Waldvogel, assisted by Professor Flávio Lopes Monteiro. An interesting fact is that some of these students, in subsequent years, made an important contribution to the church in the literary and editorial scopes. Luiz Waldvogel, for example, served as editor of the Brazil Publishing House (CPB).

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The foundation of a university press at IAE is related to the search for the creation of the UAB. From the moment the requirements for raising the institution’s status were examined, it was found that two requirements should be attended to: the opening of new courses and the expansion of scientific research and publication. Regarding this last demand, the IAE, campus São Paulo, since the beginning of the 1980s, had already taken some initiatives in this direction. Professors’ books were printed by the institution’s printing company, along with didactic support handouts. These were sold at the grocery store kept on campus. However, they did not fully attend to the required scientific criteria. In this way, around 1989, the Boletim Informativo de Saúde e Ensino (Health and Education Newsletter—BISE) was launched, aimed at publishing scientific researches of the institution. However, this periodical had a short period of existence.18

On July 6, 1991, eighteen years after the first initiative to create the UAB, Pastor Nevil Gorski returned to the direction of UNASP campus São Paulo. Shortly after, he prepared and submitted another proposal to the SAD educational council. At the time, most church administrators were already convinced that the UAB was needed to train more servants for the church and society. Thus, another committee was assembled and comprised Nevil Gorski, Admir Arrais, José Iran Miguel, Paulo Azevedo, and Irineu Rosales. The new project was designed to create an institution with three campuses, namely: IAE, São Paulo campus—UNASP—SP; IAE, Central campus—UNASP—EC; and IASP—Instituto Adventista São Paulo (São Paulo Adventist Institute—UNASP—HT).19

This project presented by the pastor included the result of a survey that had been carried out using a consultation form. This form had been forwarded to all Adventist high schools in Brazil. Having collected the survey data, the need to expand the offer of courses to serve Adventist and non-Adventist youth was confirmed, as well as to supply the church with trained servants according to Christian principles. Then they prepared a consultation letter and addressed it to the Federal Education Council (CFE), on March 25, 1992. This was the first official request, made by the church, to the government aiming to create the UAB.20

The Brazilian government never responded to the letter. Precisely in the period when the church had sent it, Brazil went through a period of political instability during the government of president Collor de Melo who was deposed. When vice president Itamar Franco assumed the presidency, on December 29, 1992, he elected as the new minister of education and culture Murilo Hingel, who closed the Federal Council of Education (CFE) for a year and a half. As a consequence, the entry of new processes was interrupted, and those that had already been registered were stopped. Despite these obstacles, the church leadership continued its efforts to accelerate the opening process, as it had now more conviction that the UAB needed to be created.21

Another step that took place in the process of scientific production was in 1996, when the book Cristo nas Salas de Aula (Christ in the Classrooms) was published. This book is the result of a national meeting on faith-teaching integration, which took place in 1994, at the IAE, Central campus. The work was organized by Professor Renato Gross and contains the annals of the researches presented at that event. The name Adventist University Press appears on it for the first time.22 Still in 1996, during the government of the President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the then education minister Paulo Renato de Souza established new guidelines that gave great opening to the expansion of higher educational institutions. As soon as they learned of this fact, the administrators of the two campuses, together with the USB education director, Pastor Paulo C. Azevedo, prepared the processes for the opening of 14 new courses for the IAE, Central campus, and seven new courses for the IAE, São Paulo campus, which could be opened in the following years.23

The year 1997 represents another milestone in the succession of events that culminated in the formal establishment of the Adventist University Press. On September 9 the first volume of Revista Escola Adventista (Adventist School Review) was released, under the responsibility of Professors Renato Stencil and Renato Gross. The publication of this semiannual periodical, in a period of scientific content, added to the didactic publications of materials made by the teachers and the book, Cristo nas Salas de Aula (Christ in the Classrooms), and all efforts by church leaders to open new courses, were relevant to level up the IAE status to Centro Universitário Adventista de São Paulo (Adventist University Center of São Paulo). This achievement occurred on the occasion of the visit of the MEC evaluation commission, on September 9, 1999.24

With the IAE raised to the level of an Adventist University Center, it became apparent to the institution’s administrators that it would be necessary to create an editorial department responsible for the production of academic materials. Thus, in the second half of 1999, the Adventist University Press was officially established, at the initiative of Daniel Baía, then academic director of UNASP, Engenheiro Coelho campus. As the first director of the publisher, Professor Renato Stencil was appointed, who was in charge of the works until the end of 2003.25

In November 22—28, 1998, the first Simpósio da Memória Adventista no Brasil (Adventist History Symposium in Brazil) took place at UNASP—EC, organized by the then director of the Brazil National Center of Adventist History (CNMA), Dr. Alberto R. Timm. The result of the works presented at this event culminated in the book Instituto Adventista de Ensino campus II: 15 anos de história (Brazil Adventist University Campus II: 15 Years of History), edited by Timm and published by the University Press in 1999. Two other episodes of this symposium occurred in October 1999 and September 2000, whose works were also organized and published respectively in the books A colportagem adventista no Brasil: uma breve história (Adventist Canvassing in Brazil: a Brief History) and Educação adventista no Brasil: uma história de aventuras e milagres (Adventist Education in Brazil: a History of Adventures and Miracles).26 One last highlight to be mentioned about the publisher’s early years is the launch of the Acta Científica—Ciências Humanas (Human Science—Scientific Journal), at the beginning of the second half of 2001.27
The publisher’s first headquarters was in the building of the Communication Center of UNASP–EC, in a room close to the Accounting and the Faith and Teaching Integration Center. Its initial infrastructure was simple, consisting of a computer used to operate all the tasks performed by the director and the graphic designer. One of the first editorial projects carried out by the publisher was the publication of doctorate theses defended in the department of theology. In addition, the practice of publishing books and researches by campus professors, linked to the educational area, also began. And Revista Escola Adventista (Adventist School Review) became an attribution of the University Press.

Institution History

Three years have passed since its foundation, and at the suggestion of Ruben Holdorf, the name of the publisher was changed, in late 2002, to UNASPRESS. In 2004 UNASP–EC administration noticed that the publisher had a deficit in its finances and, therefore, they were determined to end the publication of books, keeping only the edition of scientific journals. In order to revert this situation, an analysis of all editorial processes was carried out, and an attempt was made to optimize production costs. Until that moment all printing was done by the printing company of the Central Brazil Union, which resulted in a more expensive product. One way to revert the situation was to change the printing site. Another printing company was hired in the city of São Paulo, resulting in cheaper and better-quality products.

Vanderlei Dorneles, then the publisher director, changed the profile of the Revista Escola Adventista (Adventist School Review). As the target audience for this review was the Adventist Schools Network teachers, it was decided that the text should be more comprehensive and informative and less scientific. The result of this change was a considerable increase in printing, which reached 10,000 copies per edition. Around 2005, the publisher had its headquarters moved to a room in the university building. Until then it had a very small staff, formed by the director, who was also the editor, and the graphic designer. Due to an opening on the part of the UNASP–EC board, the number of collaborators could be expanded with the entry of scholarship students, which at the end of Dorneles’ management totaled ten. This institution’s initiative to allow students to enter was worthwhile in the future, for the next two department’s managers were scholarship students at the publisher.


The next director was Renato Groger, who took office at the beginning of 2009 and remained there until around the middle of 2013. At this time he had to leave his position due to the discovery of cancer. After about a year and a half of fighting the disease, he died on September 21, 2014. Books that were produced during that period: Mitos na educação adventista: um estudo interpretativo da educação nos escritos de Ellen G. White (Myths in Adventist Education: an Interpretative Study of Education in the Writings of Ellen G. White–2010), Aprendizagem: múltiplas visões sobre aprender (Learning: Multiple Views on Learning–2011), De aluno a reitor: o legado de Nevil Gorski (From Student to Rector: the Legacy of Nevil Gorski–2011). O princípio cognitivo da Teologia Cristã: um estudo hermenêutico sobre Revelação e Inspiração (The Cognitive Principle of Christian Theology: a Hermeneutical Study on Revelation and Inspiration–2011), and Espírito de Profecia: orientações para a Igreja Remanescente (Spirit of Prophecy: Guidelines for the Remaining Church–2012).

After Groger’s death Pastor Rodrigo Follis was assigned the new director of the department, a position he holds until the present day. Previously he had been an assistant editor since 2011 and, during Groger’s removal, within 2013 and 2014, the interim director. Important changes occurred in the publisher as of 2016, when the administration of UNASP–EC increased investments in the sector to expand its production capacity. That year the headquarters was moved to a larger location in the institution’s multidisciplinary center building; and the number of employees increased, from two to six, besides the scholarship students. The change had positive results, since in 2017 there was a considerable increase in production and sales.

During this period the publisher made changes to the profile of the editorial line. With the intention of increasing the academic and literary production of UNASP–EC, the publisher started to work with the institution’s professors in order to promote the internal creation of works that would serve the church, also meeting the necessary scientific criteria. Some examples of materials produced with this profile are: Sociologia e adventismo: desafios brasileiros para a missão (Sociology and Adventism: Brazilian Challenges for the Mission–2015), Manual do educador: princípios para integrar a fé e o ensino-aprendizagem (Educator’s Manual: Principles for Integrating Faith and Teaching–Learning–2015), Fundamentos jurídicos da liberdade religiosa (Legal Foundations of Religious Freedom–2016), Ellen G. White and her impact today (Ellen G. White and Her Impact Today–2017), Pneumatologia: pessoa e obra do Espírito Santo (Pneumatology: Person and Work of the Holy Spirit–2017), and Teoria do Crime (Crime Theory–2018).

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In November 2018 UNASPRESS underwent its biggest administrative change. From that date on it was no longer linked to UNASP–EC, however, it is linked to the Pró-reitoria de Pesquisa e Desenvolvimento Institucional (Pro-Rectory of Institutional Research and Development–Propedi). This transfer aimed to further direct the publisher’s efforts toward the scope of scientific production. As a department of the rectory, its spectrum of activity has become broader, encompassing the three UNASP campuses. And since the beginning of 2019, it is also attending the demands of distance learning. In this sector the publisher presently manages part of the production of didactic materials and, of the others, scientific journals. In addition, a recent initiative is the creation and promotion of the Researchers Academy, with events to encourage research aimed at training professors and increasing the level of scientific research carried out by the institution.

For 21 years UNASPRESS has played the role of producer and disseminator of Adventist academic knowledge in South America. As a department of UNASP, it has aimed to contribute to the academic growth of the institution so that it is able to more efficiently fulfill its mission. In relation to the public, the works produced by the publisher seek to reach both the lay reader and the academic. Thus, it has provided everyone with books on scientific topics, but in an accessible language. The growth of digital commerce has brought UNASPRESS the challenge of adapting to this new market demand. To deal with such requirements, the publisher has sought greater specialization in this distribution channel and entry into the scope of digital book production. One of the publisher’s goals for the coming years is to establish partnerships with the main e-book distribution platforms in the market.

**Outlook**

Together with Propedi the publisher has sought to intensify and improve the research and academic production processes at UNASP, focusing on raising the institution to university status. While serving the academic community, UNASPRESS also produces materials that serve the Adventist Church throughout Brazil and South America. One of these publications is *Revista Escola Adventista* (Adventist School Review), which is the official journal of teachers in the Adventist teaching network in Brazil and is now in its thirty-fourth edition. In addition to the publication and sale of physical works, e-books are available for free download, and scientific journals can also be accessed for free. The data from the period 2011 to 2018 reveal how the publisher has contributed significantly in its field of work. In those years, 122 books were released; 30,000 printed and distributed units of *Revista Escola Adventista* (Adventist School Review); and 14,400 free e-book downloads were made available on the publisher’s Web site.

UNASPRESS plans, in the near future, to also serve other Adventist higher education institutions located in the territory of SAD. The aim is to enter into partnerships that will further expand the fulfillment of its mission, which is: “to systematize ideas on different fronts for an efficient scientific, artistic, and cultural dissemination, with purpose, which generates academic and social prestige for the institution and makes the world a better place. It is all associated with Adventist philosophy, which tries to transform the world while we wait for Jesus to return.” In the commercial field, UNASPRESS plans to obtain a greater projection in the Brazilian literary market, and, in this way, to become known beyond the Adventist environment.

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1. UNASP [Brazil Adventist University], “UNASPRES,” accessed on June 9, 2020, [https://bit.ly/2Lu84Hr].


12. Superbom is “one of the largest companies in the field of healthy foods aimed at the vegan / vegetarian public in Brazil” and belongs to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Superbom, “A Superbom: Há mais de 90 anos se preocupando com saúde” [The Brazil Food Factory: Over 90

13. Elder Hosokawa (History Undergraduate course coordinator at UNASP), e-mail message to Alysson Huf (UNASPRESS associate editor), February 27, 2019.


17. Ibid., 82-83.


20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Renato Stencel (Ellen G. White Research Center Brazil director), interviewed by Alysson Huf (UNASPRESS associate editor), February 25, 2019; Renato Gross, Cristo nas Salas de Aula [Christ in the Classrooms], Engenheiro Coelho, SP: Adventist University Press, 1996.


29. Ibid.

30. Vanderlei Dorneles (FAT graduate coordinator), interviewed by Alysson Huf (UNASPRESS associate editor), March 4, 2019; Rodrigo Follis (UNASPRESS director), interviewed by the author, December 11, 2019.


32. Rodrigo Follis (UNASPRESS director), interviewed by the author, December 11, 2019.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.

39. More information about UNASPRESS can be consulted on the Web site: https://digital.unaspress.com.br/, or on social networks—Facebook: @Unaspress, Instagram and Twitter: @unaspress and YouTube: UnaspStore EC.