

THE MUNICIPALITY IN THE FACE OF REGIONAL PLANNING: INTER-AMERICAN IDEAS IN THE 1950s

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Abstract

*This article examines the debate that took place in São Paulo during the 1st Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies, held in 1958, under the coordination of Antônio Delorenzo Neto. The main thrust of the analysis is focused on the discussion amongst the participants regarding the concepts of planning and planification in the session “The municipality in the face of regional planning”, after the presentation of the conference *La organización del plan regulador de la ciudad de Buenos Aires y el planeamiento del gran Buenos Aires*. Similarly, the article also discusses, albeit indirectly and in more general terms, the trajectory, during the 1950s and 1960s, of Antônio Delorenzo Neto, creator of the abovementioned seminar, which occurred at the Instituto de Estudos Municipais da Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política in São Paulo. It was during this period that his original professional career in the field of law approached the field of planning in order to consider municipal development both in Brazil and across Latin America.*

Keywords

Municipalist Thought; Regional Planning; Municipal Planning.

O MUNICÍPIO EM FACE DO PLANEJAMENTO REGIONAL: IDEIAS INTERAMERICANAS NA DÉCADA DE 1950

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Resumo

*Este artigo aborda o debate que ocorreu em São Paulo durante o I Seminário Interamericano de Estudos Municipais, realizado em 1958, sob a coordenação de Antônio Delorenzo Neto. O eixo central da análise compõe-se das discussões sobre os conceitos de planejamento e planificação entre os participantes da sessão “O município em face do planejamento regional” após a apresentação da conferência *La organización del plan regulador de la ciudad de Buenos Aires y el planeamiento del gran Buenos Aires*. Da mesma forma, o artigo problematiza, ainda que indiretamente e em termos mais gerais, a trajetória, nas décadas de 1950 e 1960, de Antônio Delorenzo Neto, idealizador do referido seminário, que ocorreu no Instituto de Estudos Municipais da Escola Livre de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo. Foi nesse período que sua trajetória profissional original no campo do direito se aproximou do campo do planejamento, e com ele se articulou, para pensar o desenvolvimento municipal no Brasil e na América Latina.*

Palavras-chave

Pensamento Municipalista; Planejamento Regional; Planejamento Municipal.

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Introduction

This work is part of a broader investigation and is interested in the problematization of the discipline and professional field of urbanism and urban-regional planning within the context of Brazilian municipalist thought between the 1940s and 1970s. This time frame is initially defined in the 1940s since this was the moment when what I term the institutionalization of this thought was first set in motion, structured on the following tripod: the creation of the Brazilian Association of Municipalities (ABM) in 1946; the National Congresses of Brazilian Municipalities (CNMB) held since 1950; and the creation of the Brazilian Institute of Municipal Administration (IBAM) in 1952. Delimiting the final period in the 1970s, especially with the creation of the National Commission for Urban Policy (CNPUR) in 1974, is associated with the institutionalization process of urbanism and urban-regional planning in the federal government, inasmuch as “a municipal issue is the object-purpose of all national development policies, since such policies should not exist without macroeconomic conceptions being related to the field of urban planning” (FARIA, 2019b, p. 40)².

This municipalist discussion is not, however, something that may be confined to the twentieth century. In the Brazilian case, according to Marcus Melo (1993),

1. This article is part of a set of publications funded by a CNPq Research Productivity Fellowship.

2. This and all non-English citations hereafter have been translated by the author.

it was during the Empire that the municipalist banner was first raised, structured on the conceptual assumption of municipal autonomy as the axis for the political beliefs of liberal thinkers. This argument is undeniably linked to an interest in understanding the very formation of the Brazilian State, developed by Melo from the perspective of political science. His studies, published in the 1990s, are a mandatory reference for discussion on urban issues in relation to municipalism (MELO, 1993), especially when studying the institutionalization process of urbanism in municipal administrations from the 1930s, in the context of the so-called Vargas Era³. If compared to the moment when Marcus Melo published his works, it is possible to affirm that interest regarding the subject in the field of the history of urbanism and urban planning is more recent, but has expanded and deepened with studies on the institutionalization of urbanism in municipal administrations and on municipalist institutions, in particular IBAM, whose role has been central in training professionals, amongst other topics (FELDMAN, 2008; 2011; 2012; FARIA, 2007; 2006; 2009; 2011a; 2011b; 2019a; 2019b; GONÇALVES, 2015, FREITAS, 2019; 2012).

By considering ideas on the autonomy of local authorities, as proposed by Melo, it is possible to incorporate the colonial period into the approach and, thus, a further set of important references. Within this context, evidently marked by certain characteristics inherent to the historical moment of domination by the Portuguese crown, autonomy has been a recurrent theme and object of numerous historical interpretations (BICALHO; AMARAL, 2005; SOUZA; BICALHO; FURTADO, 2009; BICALHO, 2003) that have analyzed the forms of government and their institutions between 1500 and 1822. Hence, the discussion regarding this municipalist banner of autonomy may be conducted bearing in mind the administration of the colonial company in organizing local management systems. When problematizing the debate on autonomy within a long-time perspective, between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries, it may be stated that municipalist thought in Brazil, in this sense, is a programmatic construction originating in colonial administrative relations forged to manage the interests of the Portuguese crown over (and in) the colonial territory.

On the other hand, it would also be a structural mistake to imagine that the assumption of autonomy has remained static throughout these five centuries, mainly because the historical particularities have not remained the same and the local management system has experienced continuous movement and (re)structuring, despite being slower at some points and quicker at others. In addition, and at the same time, throughout this long duration there have been political and ad-

3. Getúlio Dornelles Vargas was a Brazilian lawyer and politician, who served as president during two periods between 1930 and 1945.

ministrative arrangements that explicate the colonial, imperial and republican contexts. Within this process, the nineteenth century was the central temporal arc that deconstructed the colonial enterprise, with independence and the beginning of the continuous (and conflictual) construction of the Brazilian nation-state between political monarchist-unitarian and federalist projects. During this period and from then on, municipalist programmatic thinking enunciated a set of (re)actions in defense of autonomy, most notably because other actions were produced in the opposite direction to this defense.

In this regard, it is important to highlight the opposition to autonomy during the period between the two reigns and even in the decentralizing interregnum of the Regency, especially through the Law of October 1, 1828. This may be observed, for example, in Article 24 of Title II on Municipal Functions, which transformed the City Halls into purely administrative corporations, without exercising any contentious jurisdiction (LAXE, 1885, p. 72). For Miriam Dolhnikoff (2005, p. 86), “the City Halls of 1828 had extremely limited attributions. They were able to administer the city or town, rendering accounts to the Provincial Council. They were unable to freely decide on either collecting taxes or imposing them. They therefore became mere administrative agents”.

Shortly after the aforementioned law, less centralizing winds blew across Brazil, initially during the Regency Period, between 1831 and 1840, characterized by its decentralizing aspect resulting from the liberal reforms of the 1830s. The Additional Act of 1834 was important in this, especially because it defined that the “authority of the central government and provincial governments was constitutionally divided” (DOLHNIKOFF, 2005, p. 17). However, it is necessary to bear in mind that the regency decentralization was constituted as being autonomous from the provinces (or, perhaps, less restrictively submissive to them), and not from the municipalities. This situation may also illustrate, in the construction of the nation-State, the political game/confrontation between the national elites, part of them in defense of the federation - and, in this case, led, amongst others, by liberals such as Diogo Antônio Feijó -, and the other in defense of centralization, although a construction not entirely guided by unrestricted autonomy nor by any level of autonomy. With regard to this liberal political project, Dolhnikoff (2005, p. 85) observed that “its conception of federalism included some municipal autonomy within the greater scope of provincial autonomy [...] the liberals nurtured deep distrust through the City Halls, since any autonomy had to occur within [...] the national unity”.

The importance of this political debate, involving legal-administrative-economic dimensions in constructing the nation-state with regard to the central, provincial and municipal powers, as well as autonomy and decentralization, amongst

other topics, received valuable attention from intellectuals as of the second half of the nineteenth century. However, it was chiefly in the early decades of the twentieth century that the discussion turned to the specific theme of the municipality in Brazil (BASTOS, 1870; MAIA, 1883; MEDEIROS, 1948; CARVALHO, 1937; NOVELLI JÚNIOR, 1948). Understood herein as intellectual (re)actions, these ideas also involved the construction of knowledge regarding the Brazilian municipal reality based on studies and institutions within the field of statistics, from the General Directorate of Statistics (1871), which was later renamed the National Department of statistics, and the National Institute of Statistics (1934) and then, finally, The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), which was the intellectual and political nucleus of Brazilian municipalism in the 1940s and the intellectual center for the ideas that founded the conception of the Brazilian Association of Municipalities.

For all these reasons, when considering the municipalist banner in the context of the Empire, as proposed by Marcus Melo, I signpost an interpretative path that stretches through Independence and the construction of the nation-state from 1822. This period was characterized by several editions of the constitution, from the first, in 1824; through legal-administrative provisions, such as the Law of October 1, 1828; through changes in the power relations between the federated entities with the 1891 Constitution; through administrative restructuring after 1930, especially with the creation of IBGE and the Administrative Department of Public Services (Dasp), until culminating in the approval of one of the most famous municipalist constitutions, that of 1946, when the institutional tripod formed by ABM, CNMB and IBAM began to structure.

This institutional tripod, therefore, has driven and legitimized the aspect that is at the core of municipalist thought and that has guided the creation of these institutions: the defense of municipal autonomy, which, in programmatic and symbolic terms, constitutes the pillar of municipalist thought. Thus, autonomy is central to understanding the process of institutionalizing municipalist thought in Brazil resulting from the creation of ABM and IBAM. At the same time, it is also a central theme in order to investigate the ideas that were formulated within these institutions in relation to urbanism and urban-regional planning so as to contemplate municipal development. In the case of this article, it is interesting to analyze one specific debate on the interface of regional planning with a view to reflecting on the development proposed by the Instituto de Estudos Municipais da Escola de Sociologia e Política de São Paulo [the São Paulo Institute of Municipal Studies of the School of Sociology and Politics] in the 1950s. This occurred when the 1st Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies was held in 1958. At that time, the Institute's director was Antônio Delorenzo Neto, a law graduate, who, after spending a term

as mayor of the municipality of Guaranésia during the first half of the 1950s, directed his professional career towards the field of urban-regional planning. He went on to become active in the municipalist debate, particularly as an ABM representative at several events across the American continent and in Europe (FARIA, 2015; 2016; 2017)⁴, but especially in the Inter-American Organization of Intermunicipal Cooperation (OICI) created in Cuba in 1938 (FARIA, 2018). The most relevant of his studies were related to defending administrative decentralization and, chiefly, the regional issue, supported by the idea of legally creating a region for planning purposes, seen as an entity with constitutional rights and an intermediary territorial base between the nation and comuna⁵.

Based on an approach substantiated by the analysis of primary documentary sources, the central axis of the study is to interpret the discussions on planning and planification that took place throughout the session “The municipality in the face of regional planning”. This interpretation also sets out to delineate, albeit indirectly and in general terms, the trajectory, during the 1950s and 1960s, of Antônio Delorenzo Neto, who devised the seminar. It was during this period that his professional trajectory became linked to the field of urban-regional planning in order to reflect on municipal development in Brazil, Latin America and Iberian America.

The text presented herein is organized into three parts, which are at the same time autonomous and yet linked by the discussions that took place at the Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies. The first part focuses on the work of Antônio Delorenzo Neto at the São Paulo Institute of Municipal Studies of the School of Sociology and Politics, about which it has been possible to study until the present day due to access to documentary sources. This same aspect also determined a certain limitation in relation to analyzing this institute. No documents have thus far been found that would make it possible to investigate both its creation and the choice of this field of action in relation to municipal studies. These lacunae, which include information regarding most of the professionals who participated in the Seminar in 1958, have therefore imposed the need to consider the institute in more general terms, as part of a context in which the discussions took place on the interfaces between municipalities and regional planning. The second part addresses some of the main ideas of Antônio Delorenzo Neto in relation to municipal planning supported by the important issues of municipalist thought, such as autonomy, decentralization and regional planning. The third part analyzes the debate on re-

4. In these other publications, I approached the European context more closely, with particular interest in the discussion in Spain.

5. Reference to the word “comuna” in this case is related to the local dimension, the municipality.

gional planning that took place during the session “The municipality in the face of regional planning”, a theme closely related to the ideas and professional activities of Delorenzo Neto during the final years of the 1950s. Analysis of the discussions that took place in the Seminar is important, chiefly because it helps to clarify a set of ideas on planning and planification within the Latin American context, which at that time were on the agenda of professionals and institutions.

1. Antônio Delorenzo Neto, director of the São Paulo Institute of Municipal Studies

“The municipality in the face of regional planning” was Theme III of the 4th Session at the 1st Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies, held at the São Paulo School of Sociology and Politics in 1958, between November 5 and 7. Two other themes were developed at the Seminar: “Municipal law and Social Sciences (formulation – systematization, interrelations)” and “The problem of indigenous communities and the necessary measures for their conservation, improvement or incorporation into municipal life”, presented, respectively, by Salvador Dana Montaña (professor of Municipal Law at the Universidade Nacional do Litoral, Santa Fé, Argentina) and Alfonso Trujillo Ferrari (professor at the São Paulo School of Sociology and Politics).

The Seminar was organized at a time when the School of Sociology and the Institute of Municipal Studies were both undergoing significant functional and physical restructuring. Created on October 6, 1949 as a School Department, in 1950, a first course on Municipal Public Finance was offered, followed by two others, Municipal Administration and Municipal Statistics. Between 1951 and 1954, according to the *Relatório Anual de Atividades* [Annual Activities Report] published in the School’s newsletter, the Department of Municipal Studies was reduced due to the lack of physical space. Work was effectively resumed at the new headquarters as of 1955, at the same time that new teachers were invited to give lectures and run courses on municipal administration, finance and accounting. Amongst them was Antônio Delorenzo Neto, who was responsible for the course entitled The Municipality and its Legal System. It was within this context of changes that Delorenzo took over the direction of what became known as the Institute of Municipal Studies, after the administrative reforms at the School of Sociology and Politics had been carried out in 1958, the same year as the Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies.

Although he fulfilled an important internal role, Delorenzo Neto’s work as director of the Institute was not only limited to recommencing his activities after the administrative restructuring and the Seminar had been held. The subsequent activities in which he engaged were of great relevance, especially in relation to

his links with Latin America and Europe (FARIA, 2016b)⁶. This work was also particularly outstanding since it brought together the School and the Institute for the post-1946 Brazilian, and Iberian American, municipal debate for discussion on urban-regional planning and municipal administration.

Amongst these interlocutions, constructed through participating in technical meetings and congresses, it is possible to mention those that were held with the OICI (FARIA, 2018)⁷; as a member of the ABM Fiscal Council, created on March 15, 1946; by contributing to the *Revista de Direito Municipal - Doctrine, Administration, Urbanism, Jurisprudence and Legislation*, created in Bahia in 1946 by Yves de Oliveira; by participating in the 1st and 2nd Iberian American Congresses of Municipalities created by the Instituto de Estudios de Administración Local, held, respectively, in Madrid (1955) and Lisbon (1959), which opened an important interlocution with Spain. Over subsequent years, the congresses were hosted in Brasília (1966), Barcelona (1967) and Santiago de Chile (1969).

Another important interlocution, still in the early 1950s, and essential for his later work, was his involvement as one of the team coordinators in the Society of Graphic and Mechanographic Analysis Applied to Social Complexes (SAGMACS) in São Paulo (CESTARO, 2019). Additionally, Antônio Delorenzo Neto was also a representative of ABM and the Association of Municipalities of Bahia (AMB) in activities of the International Session on Regional Administration, promoted by the Sociological Center for Economics and Humanism. His nomination was put forward in two letters⁸ (Figure 1) sent to J. L. Lebret, both dated September 1952, respectively, by Yves de Oliveira, from AMB, and Rafael Xavier, president of ABM.

His connections with the Economy and Humanism Movement, and, therefore, with Lebret himself, may have justified and reinforced the work of Antônio Delorenzo Neto at SAGMACS. This proximity enabled other joint activities carried out at the São Paulo School of Sociology and Politics, in a course also organized by the Institute of Municipal Studies in 1959. On that occasion, Father Lebret participated in the inaugural class given by professor Mário Wagner Vieira da Cunha, on the

6. His approximation to Europe occurred notably through links with the Instituto de Estudios de Administración Local (IEAL), created in Spain in 1940. This institute was responsible for approaching the Latin American municipalists, when proposing the Ibero-American Congreso de Municipios, which was held in Madrid, in 1955. Hence, this was responsible for bringing the Spanish urban debate back into the international debate.

7. The OICI was created in Cuba in 1938 as a result of the first Congreso Pan-americano de Municipios. Its origin is linked to the Inter-American Conferences, which began in 1889. In 1928, during the VI Conference in Cuba, a resolution was approved to hold this first congress of municipalities.

8. A copy of the letters was kindly provided by Maria Cristina da Silva Leme. They were obtained as a result of research she conducted in France on Lebret, Economics and Humanism and SAGMACS.

course The Economic Organization of Brazilian Municipalities, which was attended by Delorenzo himself and several representatives from the Municipal Executive and Legislative Branches of São Paulo and other municipalities.

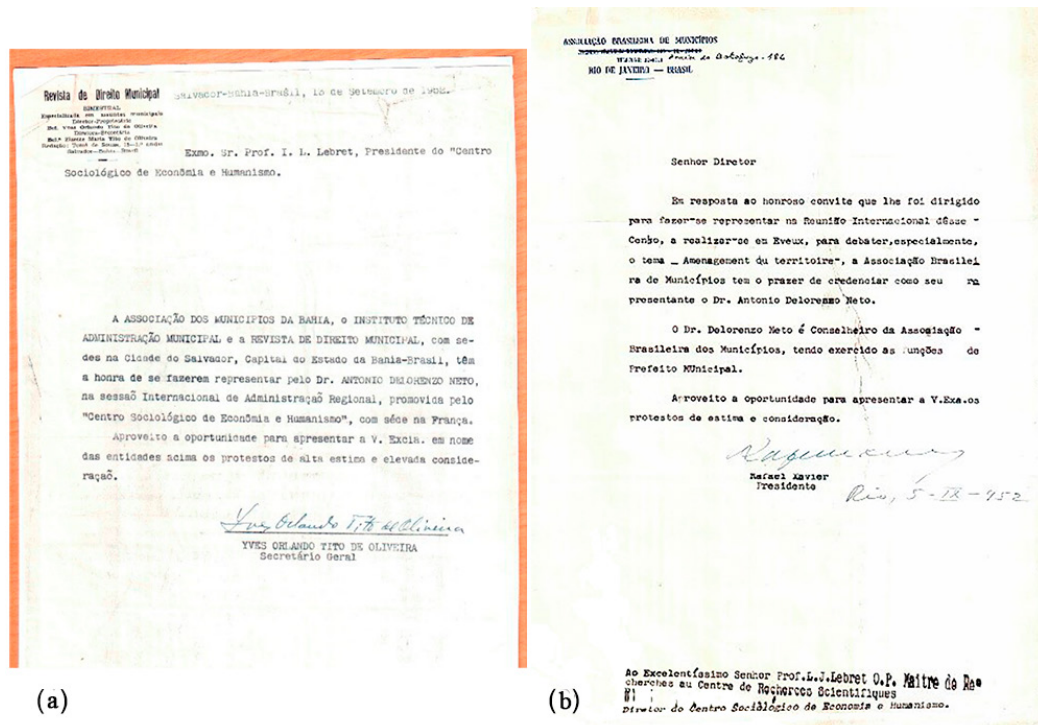


Figure 1. Letters from Yves de Oliveira (a) and Rafael Xavier (b).

What is of particular note here, is not only the presence of Lebrét at official activities of the Institute of Municipal Studies (Figure 2), but, primarily, the set of themes that structured the abovementioned course, which explains how some of the themes addressed in the work at SAGMACS, in the Economics and Humanism itself, came to be on the agenda of both the discussions coordinated by Delorenzo Neto at the Institute and the entire Brazilian and inter-American municipalist debate regarding the development of the municipalities. Discussions on this were not only held at the 1st Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies, but also before, in the session “Operation Municipality, Regional Projections - political, administrative, economic, financial, technical and cultural aspects”, included in the IV National Congress of Brazilian Municipalities organized by ABM in Rio de Janeiro in 1947 and, later, at the VII OICI Congress, also in Rio de Janeiro, in the second half of 1958.



Figure 2. The inaugural class of the course *The Economic Organization of Brazilian Municipalities* Seated, from left to right, the first is Lebret, the third is Delorenzo Neto.

Source: Newsletter of the São Paulo Foundation School of Sociology and Politics. *Relatório Anual de Atividades*, ano II, p. 50, 1959.

The course in question was organized into three structural thematic parts: Part I - The location of economic activities and municipal economic organization; Part II - Economic regionalism and the economic organization of municipalities; Part III - Theories of national economic development and municipal organization. Amongst these, the second was directly related to discussions on the agenda in the most diverse institutional contexts regarding municipalism and planning for the economic and social development of municipalities. Such themes were part of the agenda of Economics and Humanism and of Lebret himself, as these were part of the inaugural class - perhaps even throughout the entire course.

From the description of the program, it may be observed that the agenda included, for example, the development of studies on economics and regional planning in developed and underdeveloped countries, as well as the study of economics and regional planning in Brazil. Hence, although there was no innovation with respect to the content of the discussions and propositions of the Institute of Municipal Studies, the course reinforced them, due to considerable national interest, as well as the Latin American scope with regard to planning in general and regional planning as an instrument of municipal development.

2. Antônio Delorenzo Neto, municipalist thinker

In the words of Professor Delorenzo Neto (1971), organizer of the 1st Seminar, the event was conceived as a “[...] preparatory university meeting for the

VII Inter-American Congress of Municipalities, held in Rio de Janeiro, in the second half of November 1958”, with OICI being responsible for the organization. Delorenzo Neto’s most effective work at the OICI congresses began in 1956, as a delegate of the Brazilian Government at the previous congress, in Panama, when he presented his thesis on municipal planning. He also participated in the XI Congress, as president of the Brazilian delegation, in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1966. This event presents a particularly relevant aspect, since access to the documentation has indicated that, parallel to the Congress, the V Inter-American Seminar of Municipal Studies was also held, which indicates the continuity of the seminar created by Antônio Delorenzo Neto within the São Paulo Institute of Municipal Studies of the School of Sociology and Politics, in 1958⁹.

As a general objective, the 1st Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies aimed to “[...] bring together university professors and local government leaders, in order to conduct a closer examination of the difficult problems indicated in the respective themes of the debate” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958, p. 2). This approximation constitutes Delorenzo Neto’s own professional trajectory from the 1940s, when, from 1946 to 1951, he occupied the position of mayor in Guaranésia, in Minas Gerais, as well as his role as legal consultant of more than fifty Brazilian municipalities, as director of the Institute of Municipal Studies and, from 1955, as president of SAGMACS, with his prominent performance particularly in the Department of Socioeconomic Research.

Although not necessarily contemporary activities, his work in municipal administration, in research and in teaching constitutes a unique, significant structure of professional action by Delorenzo Neto, especially due to the quantity and relevance of the studies and proposals he developed on topics such as municipalities, municipalism, regional planning and municipal administration. Amongst his various academic works, one of the best known and complete is the trilogy *Estudos municipais* [Municipal Studies], published between 1968 and 1971. The three volumes presented the same time frame: 1948-1968, which also covered the most substantive period of Brazilian municipalism from an institutional viewpoint, precisely that whose origin was in the 1946 Constitution, passing through the creation of ABM, that same year, and IBAM, in 1952, and within the scope of the II National Congress of Brazilian Municipalities.

9. This documentation is part of the *Revista Ciências Econômicas e Sociais*, v. 6, n. 2, jul. 1971, published by the Faculty of Economic and Administrative Sciences of Osasco, São Paulo. Another part of the *Anais* was not published, but it consists of a compilation made by Delorenzo Neto himself, typewritten, where the debates that took place between the conference lecturers and invited speakers may also be found.

The theme of each volume in this trilogy is, respectively, the “Interpretation of municipal development” (1968), “The municipality in the face of regional planning - municipal reorganization” (1969) and “The international perspective on municipalism” (1971). In the first volume, Delorenzo Neto developed a study on a number of municipalities, including where he had once been the mayor. In this study, in which the assumptions of decentralization and centralization are considered generically – related terms with regard to the forms of the State’s territorial organization –, his analysis focused on the need to consider the positive right of the municipality (in addition to its legal characterization) within the scope of the federal states, which is the case of Brazil, to what he called the “fundamental notion of decentralization”, classified as *perfect* or *imperfect*.

While considering these two categories as qualitative aspects of decentralization in his analysis, Delorenzo Neto directed his interest to the one designated as *perfect*, since it is the one in which local rules are established in a definitive, independent manner:

[...] definitive: i.e., without central norms being able to revoke them or replace them [...] independent: i.e., without central norms having the quality to modify their content. Decentralization is, on the contrary, imperfect, when the first or second of these elements is absent. An example of imperfect decentralization: the central law sets the principles of regulation, of which the local law will only have to establish the particularities (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 2-3).

His interest is unsurprising, since, for a professional strongly involved with municipalist assumptions and with the necessary path towards municipal development, through planification and administrative rationalization, this perfect decentralization was ideal. Hence, the decentralization of administration completed the development process, due to the fact that it contained municipal autonomy in relation to the formulation of local norms, especially when they are not replaceable and have not become devoid of their contents by the central norms. This would demarcate or reveal whether, in addition, the creation of such norms could come about through a single body, according to Delorenzo Neto himself, such as “the centralizing character of a State” (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 2).

At this point, it would opportune to consider not only a distinction, but a criticism put forward by the author of the *Municipal Studies* trilogy concerning what municipal autonomy would be at the political level and what autonomy would be at the administrative level. The criticism was aimed at what was in fact institutionalized and legitimized by the aforementioned 1946 municipalist Constitution in relation to this distinction between political and administrative, revealing, on

the part of the author, a certain discernment regarding the most immediate commonplace analysis on the effective assumption of the autonomy and decentralization of the Constitutional Charter amongst Brazilian municipalists. According to Delorenzo Neto, the Brazilian Federal Constitution enshrined municipal autonomy in the political sphere, without, however, corresponding to the administrative sphere, decentralization. Municipal authority is minimal because our organic laws, when organizing municipalities, deprive them of autonomy, consequently hampering the progress and expansion of municipal legislation (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 3).

Delorenzo Neto's considerations were specifically directed towards Item II of Article 28 in the 1946 Constitution, whereby the text presupposes that autonomy is ensured "by the administration itself, with regard to its particular interest, and, especially: a) the decreeing and collection of its authorized taxes and the application of its income; and b) the organization of local public services". In the sequence, he presents these questions: "What is the reasoning behind Item II, in Article 28? Which items represent the particular interests of the municipality?" (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 4). The answer spells out a clear, historical divergence in Brazilian federalism, ever since its origins, in the nineteenth century – considering here the legal assumptions of the Constitutional Charter of 1824 –, of autonomy between states and municipalities¹⁰:

Well, discriminating it was the responsibility of the Organic Laws, in harmony with the conditions established in the state constitutions. Under these conditions, the enumeration of the cases of the municipality's private authority varied according to the states, contrary to many municipal organic laws, the precepts of the Federal Constitution, in clear contradiction to the provision of Article 28 (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 4).

The author recognized that an exception was given by the state of Rio Grande do Sul, whose constitution provided for extended attributions to the municipalities - an example of this was in its Article 154, when considering amongst these attributions that of "voting for and reforming its organic laws". Even so, he was categorical when considering the incipient character of municipal legislation developed with difficulties due to the *imperfect* decentralized logic, which in the classical structure of the federal state had the dimension of an outdated framework. Criticism was constructed and grounded through comparison with the Italian Constitution, for

10. Either the provinces and the city halls before the advent of the republic, mainly by the 1828 Law, which subtracted important authorities from the localities, thereby restricting them to their purely administrative aspects.

conceiving the “[...] structural ordering of the State based on local autonomy. The comuna is the primary unit, and the region is the intermediate zone – it is indispensable between the nation and the *comunas*” (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 4). His defense in relation to effective administrative decentralization in Brazil is based on the need to recognize the “region” as an object of constitutional law and territorial base, in order to configure the notion called *direct decentralization*. This is opposite, therefore, to what is presented in the 1946 Constitution, according to Delorenzo Neto, as *indirect decentralization*, “[...] through the use of certain provisions, such as that encountered in Article 74, of the São Paulo Constitution: the municipalities of the same region may be grouped together for the installation, administration and exploration of common services” (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 4).

In the Italian case, according to the analytical sequence developed by Delorenzo Neto, an initial fundamental characteristic consists of the Republic’s organization being divided into regions, provinces and municipalities, in which the regions “are made up of autonomous entities with their own functions and powers” (DELORENZO NETO, 1968 , p. 5). With regard to the authoritative norms of the region, “as long as these norms do not contrast with the national interest and that of other regions”, legislative norms on urban planning may be instituted; railways and highways of regional interest; in addition to navigation and ports; road, aqueducts and public works of regional interest (DELORENZO NETO, 1968, p. 5). This is a conception of State organization which, as the author emphasizes, would be extremely advantageous for great economic and administrative development, for example, in the case of the state of São Paulo.

It is important to note that Delorenzo Neto’s ideas on the development of the nation, with regard to the implications for regional and municipal development, are not closed or limited to the legal problem of the State’s administrative organization, especially in relation to his defense of decentralization, conceived as a reference for constructing municipal autonomy. He himself recognized that it is essential to promote municipal development through planning, mainly because of the need to revise the management methods of the municipalities, in his opinion poor and backward, so that there is an effective use of the existing resources.

This defense for planification was presented in 1954, at the 5th Inter-American Congress of Municipalities, in the city of San Juan, in Puerto Rico. Delorenzo Neto used his own experience in municipal management, the actions of which were published by the IBGE Graphic Service in 1951 in the book *A planificação municipal de Guaranésia* [The municipal planification of Guaranésia] - Decree No. 50, of October 6, 1950. This publication lists the gains for municipal development that the 1946 Constitution promoted, by expanding the sources of revenue in rela-

tion to those in force in Brazil, considering them to be essential amongst the municipalist demands, explaining, however, that municipal development should not be limited to the financial problem. The text categorically affirmed the need to analyze the application of these resources, in order to avoid a certain budgetary disorder of local finances by studying the various basic problems, and defining that “planning is the practical means that best serves the municipalist spirit” (DELORENZO NETO, 1951, p. 9).

This conception of planning, as a practical and necessary means, was not, however, exclusive to Delorenzo Neto’s thinking on development, since it had already been stated in the *Carta de Princípios, Direitos e Reivindicações Municipais* [Charter of Municipal Principles, Rights and Demands] of the First National Congress of Brazilian Municipalities, held in Petrópolis in the year before the publication of the book on Guaranesia, i.e., 1950. According to the text of the *Petrópolis Charter* (reproduced in part by Delorenzo in the book), in topic XV

[...] the lack of well-designed planning reduces the economic capacity of the municipalities and compromises the success of measures aimed at ensuring social stability for the municipalities, at the same time that it considerably aggravates[,] the precarious situation in which the majority of Brazilian settlements, villages, towns, and municipalities are to be found [...] Planning constitutes an element of modernization and improvement of local administration [...] Thus, all Municipalities should conduct a rigorous survey, as a basic preliminary step towards formulating a plan for solving the local problems (ABM, 1953, p. 45).

The modernization and rationalization of municipal management were not peculiar to the political inflection that the redemocratization of 1946 represented, especially with regard to associating this change with the creation of ABM that same year. Contributing to this were the most incisive criticisms of Brazilian municipalists regarding the loss of municipal autonomy throughout the Vargas Government, especially in the Estado Novo, characterized by strong administrative centralization. Both modernization and rationalization were prior to the 1946 municipal redemocratization and were linked to the construction of the so-called “state techno-structure” (IANNI, 1976), as part of the post-1930 actions of the Vargas Government, albeit with the support of institutions belonging to the structures of authoritarian and centralized control, as in the case of Dasp, created in 1938.

Thus, alongside the criticism made by the municipalists, there were also considerations presented by those who were linked to the administrative institutions of the Vargas Government. Therefore, and only to amplify the (contradictory and

complex) interpretations on the administrative centralization and control over the autonomy of the municipalities between 1930 and 1945, it is possible to bring to the debate the “defense” (ideologically compromised?) of the actions of that government with respect to these points, in which it is clear that it was not the denial of municipalism and municipal autonomy, but the explanation of the “errors” that consubstantiated them. Thus, interpretations are avoided of particular historicities, which are commonly generalized between post-revolution centralization from 1930 to 1945 and post-redemocratization decentralization from 1946 to 1964. Cândido Duarte, graduated in law and social sciences, who in 1942 headed the Administration and Statistics Division of the Department of Municipalities in the State of Rio de Janeiro, presented his position on this issue in the book *A organização municipal no Governo Getúlio Vargas* [Municipal organization in the Getúlio Vargas Government], published in the same year of 1942, by the Department of Press and Propaganda (DIP):

The need for administrative decentralization and local zeal was often confused with political prerogatives and independence [...] This autonomy, which so ardently wished for protection from the legal tyranny of the Member State or the Union, did not, however, become susceptible to the command of party leaders, regional tyrannies or electoral campaigners in the area. By not distinguishing between what was the administration of local interest and the general rules of procedure, everything seemed to be unreasonable interference in particular interests. The right to legislate or deliberate on local requirements or needs was also confused with the freedom to regulate matters of general competence [...] In fact, if there is a point on which it may be said that the *Estado Novo* had already managed to ban entirely the political romanticism that rocked the nation [...] it is that which appreciates the issue of municipal organization [...] To pluck the municipality from the indolence caused by politics, to attract it towards an intensely productive activity [...] this is what the government of President Getúlio Vargas has achieved (DUARTE, 1942, p. 14-17).

In his books, Delorenzo Neto does not enter this confrontation directly, although his defense of the need for decentralization and autonomy is explicit. This position did not preclude his adherence to the modernizing principles of management, without this representing any political or ideological commitment to the authoritarian assumptions of the *Estado Novo*, even for stating that, “from 1946, with the foundation of the Brazilian Association of Municipalities, there was an accentuated movement in Brazil for the recovery of the municipality, initiated years before by Rafael Xavier” (DELORENZO NETO, 1951, p. 9). This argument made clear

his objection to the misdirection of municipal development by the (possible) overlap (control?) of national and local deliberations, which, in Cândido Duarte's argument, was demonstrated by the non-distinction – of municipalities and its rulers – between local and national interests, markedly associated with what he called the “political romanticism of the nation” (DUARTE, 1942).

Thus, and considering the periods when the books were published, it is possible to confront the ideas of both professionals on the organization of the Brazilian State. To a certain extent, they foreshadowed the ongoing pressing debates regarding the (possible and/or necessary) restructuring of the federative pact in Brazil, so that national, state and municipal public policies did not fragment and prevent the rigid, non-cooperative autonomy of each federated entity after the 1988 Constitution.

3. The municipality in the face of regional planning

Delorenzo Neto's arguments for planning, as presented in the *Petrópolis Charter*, did not signify, however, that other dimensions of municipal development should not be considered, especially in aspects related to the modernizing principles of management, based on scientific methods of rationality for the performance of administrators in solving municipal economic problems. At this point in particular, especially with regard to the concern of regional and local plans, these dimensions are fundamental, especially in federated countries such as Brazil, since the realization of only national plans could constrain local actions due to the specificities of an administrative, social or territorial nature. Thus, “in relation to the problems of Brazilian cities, any planification must, to a large extent, take care of urbanism issues. Solving or foreseeing them is essential for the destiny of our urban groups and for the life of the country” (DELORENZO NETO, 1951, p. 10).

The defense of urbanism issues is presented by Delorenzo Neto through comparisons with international experiences, most notably in the aspects of urban legislation that regulate the mandatory master plans. In the UK, cities with more than 25,000 inhabitants are required to draw up master plans; in Argentina, by Law nº 2.439 of 1935, from the Province of Santa Fé, this is also mandatory for communities with a population of between 500 and 3 thousand; in France, the Urbanism Law of June 15, 1943 created the Circumscriptions of Urbanism directed by the inspector general of Urbanism, responsible for “directing and coordinating urbanist measures in order to formulate the master plan” (DELORENZO NETO, 1951, p 11).

All of these experiences, in addition to the discussions on national planning and regional planning, were somehow at the center of the debates amongst professionals who participated in the 1st Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies,

especialmente en la Sesión III del Tema, “La municipalidad frente al planeamiento regional”. El tema se discutió basándose en la conferencia *La organización del plan regulador de la ciudad de Buenos Aires y el planeamiento del gran Buenos Aires*, dada por Carlos Mouchet (profesor de Derecho Público en la Universidad de Buenos Aires) y Eduardo Sarraih (profesor de Urbanismo en la misma institución). El vínculo entre un jurista y un urbanista en el estudio sobre el capital argentino reforzó la importancia del debate sobre planes urbanos y regionales en conjunto con estudios sobre descentralización administrativa y autonomía municipal, dos temas centrales de la corriente municipalista no solo interamericana sino también europea ibérica (FARIA, 2015; 2016a; 2016b).

Este vínculo, o la intención de establecerlo, también involucró los nombres de los ponentes originalmente invitados a la Sesión III del Tema, que tuvo lugar el 6 de noviembre de 1958, liderada por Carlos Morán, Secretario General en ese momento, de la OICI. Entre los ponentes brasileños, Luís de Anhaia Melo y Antônio Bezerra Baltar fueron prominentes como planificadores urbanos y Orlando de Carvalho, quien era director del Departamento de Asistencia Municipal. Profesionales de otros países incluyeron Adriano Ramoy (Cuba), Salvador Montaña (Argentina), así como abogados y profesores, quienes trabajaban en el campo del gobierno municipal y el derecho municipal, respectivamente. Por lo tanto, hubo un enfoque claro para el desarrollo municipal que no se restringió al campo disciplinario urbanístico, sino que ya estaba vinculado con el derecho urbano y administrativo, y con el planeamiento en su sentido más amplio.

El aspecto más interesante y oportuno en esta expansión del conocimiento centrado en los problemas de ciudades, municipios y regiones fue la integración de un cierto movimiento transicional y de cambio que ocurrió con el apoyo del urbanismo en sus sentidos proyectivo y técnico-artístico. Esto fue lo que Arturo Almandoz Marte observó en su “conversación” con Alejandra Monti (MARTE; MONTI, 2019). En el caso de América Latina, esto había ocurrido en el contexto de discusiones sobre industrialización, urbanización, modernización y desarrollo en la primera mitad del siglo XX, aunque particularmente en el posguerra, y con la importante presencia intelectual de la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL). Según Almandoz, el urbanista que trabajó hasta mediados del siglo XX fue “en la mayoría de los casos un diseñador proveniente de la arquitectura o la ingeniería” (MARTE; MONTI, 2009, p. 20), mientras que los profesionales relevantes en el campo del planeamiento lo hicieron acercándose a las ciencias sociales. Esto no fue solo una transición desde el conocimiento urbanístico hacia el planeamiento, llevada a cabo en general por arquitectos e ingenieros, sino también, principalmente, a través del involucramiento e interés de otros campos profesionales. En el caso de las discusiones municipalistas, hubo una fuerte presencia de abogados, como Antônio Delorenzo Neto, Salvador Montaña y Carlos Mouchet.

One of the results of extending the professional fields was associated with the questions posed with regard to the significance of planning and/or planification, as well as to the possible definitions, and institutionalization¹¹. The speakers, in turn, questioned the concept of planning presented at the conference applied to the city of Buenos Aires, mainly because of the possible use of the terms **planning** and **planification** as synonyms. This similarity was most pointedly questioned by the Argentine Salvador Montaña, for whom the “[...] term, planning or planification, was misused by all previous congresses that dealt with municipal affairs”. In the sequence, Salvador Montaña stated that he had “had the opportunity to study a little [...] so that I found that the terms planning and planification are used interchangeably, except that they correspond to completely different spheres” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958).

His argument was structured in these terms: planning corresponds to the determinations of the means and to the ends of the production and distribution of wealth, which is why it is related to the economy, and to the State; the municipality has nothing to do with actions in the field of governmental economic planning. In relation to planification, Montaña stated that “[...] it refers to a completely different order of things because it is closely linked to the political, legal and social interests of the community. All cities have to structure their plans according to the elements inherent to the municipality” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958). According to the transcription of his words in the seminar document, “[...] we may have an economic plan and a planification that may be local, regional or national. Both one and the other must be integrated” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958). Salvador Montaña referred to the VII Inter-American Congress of Municipalities (which would take place in Rio de Janeiro a few days after the Seminar held in São Paulo) to discuss the delimitation of planning and regional planification, even though he recognized that both items needed to act and in an integrated manner.

His argument was formed with the intention of indicating that the biggest problem was not in the plans, either economic or urban-regional, and much less in the technical, since, in his opinion, the urban planners of the Americas had been

11. Some terms, such as *planeamento* or *planeação* have remained in Portuguese in order to preserve the conceptual discussion undertaken by the professionals at the Seminar in 1958, as well as the form in which they appear in the original research document. A discussion on the meanings of the terms in each disciplinary field (legal, urban, amongst others) indicated exactly how each field of knowledge understood the scale, the particularities and notions of planning, urban planning, regional planning, national planning, urbanism. The translation into Portuguese in the document clearly sought to preserve the terms closest to the Spanish language used in the Seminar by the professionals of Hispanic origin, including “*planeamiento*”, “*planificación*”, “*urbanismo*”, “*planeamiento regional*”. The words *planeação* and *planeamento* have no corresponding translation into English, hence the option to leave the term in Portuguese. These words appear in the primary documentation used in the research.

trained to formulate plans for municipalities of different sizes, as well as for states and regions. The big problem, for Montaña, was legal, as demonstrated by this question: “What is the point of having a great plan if we do not have the legal means to carry them out?” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958).

Throughout the course of the debates, Professor Carlos Mouchet presented what could have been a propositional response regarding the differences that could possibly delineate the terms **planning** and **planification**. For Mouchet, the matter basically rested on a question of terminology, since “there is planification, planning and *planeação*. The term *planeação* is used to signify municipal or regional planning. Planification covers the national scope, such as, for example, economic, transportation, public services planification” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958).

Up to this point, the arguments presented were authored by professionals from the legal field. To qualify this discussion, it is important to look at the Seminar document for the position of urban planners, especially that of Eduardo Sarraih, who discoursed on the Buenos Aires plan. For Sarraih, “the term planification, we urban planners understand that it must be applied when dealing with technical matters and when referring to physical planning. *Planeamento*, therefore, must be used when referring to the physical ordering of expanding the State or the municipality. In the action of *planeamento*, specific work, such as administrative planning, etc., is planification” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958).

At this point in the discussions, an intervention arose from a speaker whose name was not on the list of those originally invited: Carlos Lodi, most likely replacing Luís de Anhaia Melo, not listed in any of the debates in the Theme III Session. In the part of the document indicated as a transcript of Lodi’s observations, it is stated that a plan such as that in Buenos Aires, presented by Mouchet and Sarraih, was urban, not regional; a city plan, indicating road systems that demarcate their limits. For Lodi, the plan that was presented was more representative of:

[...] technical planning, but there should also be state or federal planification, in order to solve general problems. What is missing is the interplay between these planning scales. Planning regarding systems for movement, or general transport etc. should come before, not dictating the city plan, but establishing general rules around which the city plan could be developed (DELORENZO NETO, 1958).

Lodi broadened his arguments by demonstrating the need to establish “different degrees of planning”, starting from the urban and concluding with the national, but always giving priority to the most extensive planning. According to his argument, the city plan is not justified if a superior planning, political and economic

dimension is not under development, preceding technical planning. For Lodi, “[...] it would be necessary, in the first instance, to establish this differentiation between what is the material, physical, planning of a city, and what comes to be in the general, physical, political, economic and social sense” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958).

In the sequence of the debates between the speakers and the participants, the arguments were concentrated in an attempt to characterize, or conceptualize, the general notion of planning and the idea to be formed regarding regional planning and its relationship with municipal development. To a certain extent, what is perceived is an agreement on the relationship of regional planning with the national scale as part of a country’s national development guidelines, without disregarding, however, the necessary link between the national scale and what was termed the physical planning of the city.

In relation to the aspects of the relationship that could exist between national and municipal planning, Carlos Morán presented a question regarding the water issue, which he considered to be a regional issue. In these cases, as it is not a topic restricted to a single municipality, physical planning should respect the region as something superior. One path to a possible solution to these problems, according to Salvador Montaña, would be the construction of governmental agreements: “The planning of locality, regions and national territories must establish and affirm a coordinated relationship between the governments and the national authority, through agreements and national covenants” (DELORENZO NETO, 1958). This orientation is not very different from those that are still on the agenda of debates in Brazil, for example, on metropolitan regions, which have done very little with regard to intermunicipal and regional cooperation through institutional management and administrative coordination mechanisms.

Final considerations

Because this topic regarding government agreements was present on the debate agenda at the Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies, with a discussion on cooperation between governments and between municipalities in the same region, to close this analysis, we may not disregard the observations of Antônio Delorenzo Neto, who had been working exactly towards that direction, according to whom,

[...] the municipality must participate in regional planning, either through agreements and covenants with the authorities of national governments, member states and between interested municipalities. When dealing with regional planning, we must understand regional in terms of international [from the series of arguments, it is likely

that the shorthand transcription was wrong: the term would probably be “intercity”, not “international”]. The appropriate administrative legal body would be the grouping or union of municipalities, a society with its own legal personality [was he foreseeing, already in the 1950s, the debate and the construction of metropolitan regions in Brazil?], whose objective is to solve problems of the respective local area. Regional or intermunicipal administrative action must always be preceded by an exhaustive analysis of the area considered, in order to establish the limits of attraction and the competence of the respective “grouping”. Financial problems: regional planification must pay attention to problems of authority, arising from different types of State, preferentially setting general or programmatic norms by national governments (DELORENZO NETO, 1958).

Although Delorenzo Neto made no distinction between planning and planification in this passage, which constituted one of the axes of the discussions held, the defense of regional planning with the participation of municipalities is evident. Based on the series of arguments presented at the Seminar and on the ideas of Antônio Delorenzo Neto, it may be observed how each of these arguments reveals conceptions on works in the field of planning, both in the municipal sphere (understood by the participants as the physical-urbanistic) as well as in the regional-intermunicipal and national: they are complex actions, mainly because they demand governmental articulations - in the Brazilian case, between the three entities of the federation.

Likewise, these themes have been on the agenda of professionals and institutions since the first half of the twentieth century, especially from the 1950s, a moment that Sarah Feldman rightly characterized as a belief in regional planning due to the existence of a “[...] conviction that public control is possible, the conviction that big cities may be renewed, reorganized, redistributed, and that making territorial organization efficient is a way to overcome regional inequalities” (FELDMAN, 2009, p. 2). Such themes should continue to be explored today, in view of the evident need to think of urban planning as a process of intermunicipal linkage, no longer limited spatially and legally by the headquarters of the municipalities, the cities - a path, therefore, for the construction of administrative systems for regional management, both in metropolitan areas and in regions made up of intermediary and small municipalities.

The interest of Antônio Delorenzo Neto, graduated in law, in the field of planning, according to documentation on his professional life, occurred in the context of his term as mayor of Guaranésia. In relation to his academic work, his approximation to the School of Sociology and Politics was fundamental, as a guest professor, in work aimed at defending the disciplinary approach – one of the outs-

tanding aspects that the Inter-American Seminar on Municipal Studies intended to establish when creating a dialogue between lawyers and urban planners – and studies on municipal development, including his role as director of the Institute of Municipal Studies and as president of SAGMACS, in the Department of Socioeconomic Research. The 1st Inter-American Municipal Studies Seminar in 1958, subsequently incorporated by the OICI as part of the activities of the Inter-American Municipal Congresses, was largely due to the professional path traced by Antônio Delorenzo Neto, by linking two important areas for municipal development: law and planning, which reinforces the idea that law, thought of as urban legislation, designs the city (FARIA, 2016).

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