

CEAM: Breaking paradigms for 25 Years

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THE CENTER of Multidisciplinary Advanced Studies (*Centro de Estudos Avançados Multidisciplinares* - CEAM) was created in 1986 by a group of professors at the request of the then dean of the University of Brasília (UnB), Professor Cristóvam Buarque. Besides Dean Cristóvam Buarque himself (who is also former governor of the Federal District and is currently a Senator for the Democratic Labor Party – Federal District), Professors Nielsen Paula Pires, CEAM's first director, and José Geraldo de Sousa Jr., current Dean of UnB (2009-2013) also participated in the Center's creation process.

The context in which the University of Brasilia (UnB) was created

In a way, CEAM rescued and resumed principles that guided the very foundation of the University of Brasilia. In fact, UnB was created by the then President João Goulart and its first Dean, Professor Darcy Ribeiro (01/05/1962 - 09/19/1962). The cornerstone of the University of Brasília was laid on December 15, 1961, when the University of Brasília Foundation (*Fundação Universidade de Brasília* - FUB), the UnB sponsoring entity, was established by Law No. 3.998.¹ The University of Brasília, whose creation was provided for in Article 3 of the same Law No. 3998 was officially opened on December 15, 1961, simultaneously with CEAM (CEAM/UnB Portal). In an unusual decision for the time, the Dean of the University of Brasilia automatically became the president of the University of Brasilia Foundation, holding both offices, plus the Presidency of the University Council (*Conselho Universitário* - CONSUNI).

The mission statement of UnB (described below) makes clear references to social responsibility, when the topic had neither been included on the country's political agenda nor discussed by Brazilian society.

The Mission of UnB

The mission of the University of Brasilia is to produce, implement, preserve and disseminate ideas and knowledge, as well as to conduct research, propose solutions, and pave ways for society, acting as a dynamic center of regional, national and global progress and development, committed to providing high quality professional education to ethical, socially responsible and visionary citizens.

Some aspects that will accompany the history of the University of Brasilia - many of which are still a topic of discussion in the Center of Multidisciplinary Advanced Studies (Centro de Estudos Avançados Multidisciplinares - CEAM) – are clear in its mission statement:

- i. To produce, implement, preserve and disseminate ideas;
- ii. To propose solutions and pave ways for society;
- iii. To act as a dynamic center of regional, national and global progress;
- iv. Commitment to the education [...] of ethical and socially responsible citizens;
- v. Visionary citizens.

In regard to item i, the mission statement of UnB mentions disseminating ideas and not only knowledge. What is the reason for that? How? As put by Bertrand Russell (1977):

We wish *the area of our knowledge to be as wide as possible*. But this is the business of *science* rather than of philosophy. A man does not necessarily become a better philosopher through knowing more scientific facts; its principles and methods and general conceptions that he should learn from science if philosophy is what interests him. The philosopher's work is, so to speak, at the second remove from crude fact. Science tries to collect facts into bundles by means of scientific laws; these laws, rather than the original facts are the raw material of philosophy. *Philosophy involves a criticism of scientific knowledge, not from a point of view ultimately different from science, but from a point of view less concerned with details and more concerned with the harmony of the whole body of special sciences.* (emphasis added).

Therefore, to Russell knowledge is associated with scientific facts, with findings, and finally with the very creation of epistemology. In this sense, Russell can be considered – together with Plato and Aristotle – one of the forefathers of epistemology. In turn, ideas are associated with action. This fact had already been described by Aristotle centuries ago:

However, on the other hand, there is the concept of praxis, which is action, what is acted upon. But of course, the ultimate form of praxis, for Aristotle, is theory. There is sometimes the intention of opposing theory to practice, but theory is what is most practical [...]: for Aristotle, it is the supreme form of praxis; it is contemplation; it is vision. There is the *bios politikós*, productive life, there is the *bios praktikós*; and then there is the supreme form, the *bios theoretikós*, theoretical life, which is the most practical of all, which consists precisely in vision, contemplation; here we see that visual idea clearly, the idea of Aristotle's *visuality of thought* (Marías, 1999-2000).

Item ii reinforces the previous explanation: the University of Brasilia was created to solve problems. In this sense, it goes beyond knowledge itself to act like one of the actors in the political process, not as a debate forum or arena (*locus*), but as a provider of solutions. Therefore, dialogue should be established directly with society, including social movements, rather than being restricted to researchers or subject matter experts.

Item iii – to act as a dynamic regional, national and global center of progress and development - leads us inevitably to CEPAL's theses prevailing at the time. In this sense, the influence of Celso Furtado's idea in the creation of the University of Brasilia (UnB) is undeniable.

Indeed, Celso Furtado had participated, in Chile, in the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) – a United Nations agency, since its inception. Along with Raúl Prebisch, its director, an economist from Argentina, CEPAL included the issue of regional, national and global development on the agenda of developing countries. Furtado was director of the Development Division of CEPAL for about eight years, between 1949 and 1957.

Upon returning to Brazil in 1950, Celso Furtado chaired the Joint Group CEPAL-BNDES, contributing to the preparation of Juscelino Kubitschek's Target Plan. In 1959, he assisted President Juscelino in the creation of the Superintendence for the Development of the Northeast (*Superintendência de Desenvolvimento do Nordeste* - SUDENE). A few years later, in 1962, he was invited by João Goulart to be Brazil's Minister of Planning and participate in the draft of the Triennial Plan.

All those occasions when Brazil and a Brazilian like Celso Furtado were at the core of the international debate on development influenced the creation of the University of Brasilia as an institution capable of providing an answer to the issue of development and of overcoming underdevelopment.

Item iv is the commitment to the education of ethical and socially responsible citizens. In this sense, the University of Brasília intended not only to qualify people for the labor market, but to make them citizens as well. Paulo Freire's works from the 1950s were certainly in the minds of the forefathers of the University of Brasilia: Darcy Ribeiro and Anísio Teixeira².

In fact, in 1946 Paulo Freire was appointed director of the Department of Education and Culture of the Social Service in Pernambuco, where he educated and taught low income, illiterate people. Years later, in 1961, he was appointed director of the Department of Cultural Extension at the University of Recife. Still in 1961, Paulo Freire expanded his popular literacy experiences by laying the foundation for the forthcoming Paulo Freire Method³. The results of these experiences were so striking that João Goulart, then president, supported the replication of Paulo Freire's experience in the National Literacy Plan. The central idea of the Plan was to train large numbers of educators to eliminate illiteracy in Brazil within the shortest time possible, as provided for in his method. Therefore, the commitment of the University of Brasilia to society was being fulfilled by combating illiteracy.

Thinking ahead of time

Last but not least, the foundation of the University of Brasilia was characterized by its search for new solutions (item v) that require detachment from existing solutions. This means that UnB was not created to replicate conventional solutions, but rather to seek new solutions, even where these implied breaking

the values and taboos of that time. A clear example of this practice of thinking ahead of one's time was the proposal for the admission of students into UnB through the so-called racial quota system, which led to much controversy in Brazil. What matters is that this issue raised the debate about the reduced presence of Afro-Brazilians in the federal higher-level educational system.

The quota system was first discussed at CEAM as a possible alternative to the limited participation of Afro-Brazilians in the federal higher-level educational system.

Before talking about CEAM, it is worth emphasizing the role played by Anísio Teixeira and Darcy Ribeiro.

Anísio Teixeira, a lawyer, stood out for his work in Brazilian education. He held several public offices in the area, such as secretary of education in the state of Bahia and Rio de Janeiro; consultant for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Brazil; and director of the National Institute of Pedagogical Studies (*Instituto Nacional de Estudos Pedagógicos* – INEP), currently the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research. He designed and led the National Campaign for the Advanced Training of University-Level Staff (*Campanha Nacional de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Ensino Superior* - CAPES), today the Coordination for the Advanced Training of University-Level Staff (*Coordenação Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Ensino Superior* – CAPES) and was one of the founders and deans of the University of Brasília.

In all the offices he held, Anísio Teixeira always sought to implement a new form of education influenced by new thoughts and theories that emerged in Europe and the United States in the early twentieth century. He was greatly influenced by the philosopher and educator John Dewey, who studied and expanded the understanding of democratic education and believed that knowledge and its development area was a product of social interaction. For Dewey, an enthusiast of the Progressive Education school of thought, the main purpose of education is to develop the student's critical thinking. Based on this theory, Anísio Teixeira published one of his most important books: *Educação para a democracia* (Education for democracy), in which he clearly stated his opposition to an elitist education and his willingness to fight for the institutionalization of quality education for the entire population.

Throughout his life, the anthropologist Darcy Ribeiro made great contributions in the fields of education, sociology and anthropology. He held several public offices, in which, influenced by the master and friend Anísio Teixeira, he fought for the Brazilian educational reform. He was one of the founders and the first Dean of the University of Brasília; Minister of Education in the Jânio Quadros government; and President João Goulart's Chief of Staff. After the 1964 military coup he was exiled in several Latin American countries, especially Uruguay, where he defended the university reform. He was also vice governor

of Rio de Janeiro from 1983 to 1987, where he designed, planned and directed the implementation of the Integrated Center for Public Education (*Centro Integrado de Ensino Público - CIEP*), a visionary and revolutionary pedagogical project in Brazil, which provided full time assistance to children, including recreational and cultural activities besides formal education, thus materializing the projects conceived decades earlier by Anísio Teixeira; he was elected senator for Rio de Janeiro, and as such he helped to draft the current Educational Law (*Lei de Diretrizes de Base da Educação - LDB*) No. 9394 of December 20, 1996.

With such revolutionary vision of education - the result of deep reflections - Darcy Ribeiro and Anísio Teixeira outlined the features of the forthcoming University of Brasília, which would pursue, in particular, the establishment of a democratic educational system and the rupture with the vices of academism prevailing at that time.

The creation of CEAM and the redemocratization process

The inception of CEAM is included in the process of democratizing Brazil and the University of Brasília, which had been so hardly affected during the military dictatorship. The University endured more than twenty years of military intervention, a period marked by the violent occupation of the university campus and by the persecution of students and faculty, as illustrated by the collective layoff of faculty members in 1965, the surrender of about five hundred students in 1968, and the disappearance of students such as Honestino Guimarães.

In 1984, Professor Cristóvam Buarque became the first dean elected by the university community, with the participation of faculty and students, something hitherto unprecedented in the history of UnB. It represented the university's cry of freedom. A total of 616 professors – 80 percent of the faculty - and 5,450 students – 64 percent of the total of students voted in the election (UnB Portal) . Professor Buarque took office as dean with the firm purpose of implementing the democratization process at the university. One of the first actions of the newly elected dean was to amnesty the professors affected by the collective layoff in 1965, and create the Communication Office of UnB as a cost center, with the aim to ensure publicity and transparency to the actions of the Dean's Office.

The administration of Cristóvam Buarque defined as its primary mission, besides redemocratization, the restoration of the original principles of the University of Brasília outlined by Darcy Ribeiro and Anísio Teixeira in the 1961 master plan creating UnB: “Only a new university, fully planned, structured on a more flexible basis, can offer the possibility for the immediate renewal of our higher education.” Darcy Ribeiro saw UnB as the cradle of the critical awareness Brazil then needed and still needs to produce knowledge in all areas and thus help Brazilians to make the changes society craves. Therefore, the purpose was to free the University from conservativeness, so that it could resume its status as an *avant garde* institution. In this regard, Cristóvam Buarque defined proj-

ects and targets, besides those already mentioned, meant to release the creative ability of students and professors and promote critical thinking. The idea was to break down the hierarchy between areas of knowledge and revitalize teaching, research and extension activities.

CEAM is the materialization of this entire context, as it represents the spirit of renewal and modernization that prevailed among Brazilians at that time. The Center was created to be the vanguard in academia as envisaged by Anísio Teixeira and Darcy Ribeiro and provided for in the original document of the University. One of the goals, perhaps the main one, was to produce knowledge from a new perspective: multidisciplinary. The idea is for professors, undergraduate and graduate students, collaborating or volunteer researchers, and members of the outside community to study, analyze an challenge a given topic, based on different approaches from various sciences and considering the teaching, research and extension tripod, therefore promoting integration and cooperation among the various departments, institutes and schools at the University of Brasilia, as well as with the community at large, thus bringing the University closer to society. Another aspect is freedom in relation to the topics to be studied.

The Center was designed to be a dynamic venue for the unbiased discussion of various topics, leaving aside the strict rules of the traditional university structure. It is made up of centers originated from the discussion of themes ranging from studies on Asia, Caribbean countries and Cuba to the issue of human rights and peace, in addition to social policies, women, public administration, urban planning, international cooperation, childhood and youth, elderly people, Amazon, oral communication and history, and agrarian, racial, and gender studies among others. Thus,

this conception that favors the integration over the fragmentation of the process to produce knowledge on the most diverse topics aims to help the University of Brasília to strengthen its bonds with society and fulfills its social commitment (Vasconcelos, 2008).

Initially modest, with only one room in the building that houses the Dean's Office, CEAM had as its first director Professor Nielsen de Paula Pires, who had large experience, inter alia, as a researcher at the Center for Latin American Studies (*Centro de Estudos Latino-Americanos - CELA*) of School of Social and Political Sciences, National Autonomous University of Mexico. In his personal background, he also borne the marks of the Chilean (Moniz Bandeira, 2008) and Brazilian military dictatorships, which urged him to put his democratic ideals into practice. With this profile, he was tasked with organizing and structuring the newly created Multidisciplinary Center for Advanced Studies at the University of Brasilia, along with other pioneering professors, including Professor José Geraldo (current dean of UnB) and Roberto Ramos de Aguiar (former *pro tempore* dean of UnB). These professors created one of the first

thematic centers of CEAM: the Center of Studies for Peace and Human Rights (*Núcleo de Estudos para a Paz e Direitos Humanos* - NEP). This center represented an innovation in the aim to develop peace and human rights concepts in academia. These professors outlined the beginning of the work and structure of the Center, starting a history of great achievements, but also of great difficulties.

As an *avant-garde*/visionary project that seeks to reformulate the classical structure of academia and because its very existence represents a new way of reflecting on the setting of the University, there was much resistance to maintaining the project. The initial structuring started in the 1980s was followed by several attempts to close down the Center in the 1990s, as a result of harsh criticism of its existence. On occasions, proposals from the center were challenged and rejected by the higher bodies of the University, which considered the center, according to a political vision, something non-academic. However, through actions initiated by professors Aldo Paviani - professor emeritus and an urban planning specialist at UnB; Roberto Aguiar - who years later would be appointed dean *pro tempore* of UnB; Eleutério Neto; and again professor Nielsen, CEAM resisted the attacks and managed to stay open. Multiple centers were created during that period with contemporary themes that foster reflection by our society. All centers, in a way, are considered innovative for their original structural setting. For example: the already mentioned Center of Studies for Peace and Human Rights (NEP); the Center for Studies and Research in Social Policy (*Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisa em Políticas Sociais* - NEPPPOS); the Center for Studies and Research in Women (*Núcleo de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre a Mulher* - NEPeM); the Center for Afro-Brazilian Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos Afro-Brasileiros* - NEAB); the Center for Agrarian Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos Agrários* - NEAGRI); the Center for Urban and Regional Studies (*Núcleo De Estudos Urbanos e Regionais* - NEUR); the Center for Public Health Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos de Saúde Pública* - NESP); the Center for Study and Research in Bioethics (*Núcleo de Estudo e Pesquisa em Bioética* - NEPEB); the Center for European Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos Europeus* - NEE); and Center for Multilateral Organization Studies, International Negotiations, Tourism, Logistics and Technology (*Núcleo de Estudos de Organizações Multilaterais, Negociações Internacionais, Turismo, Logística e Tecnologia* - NEOMNI TEL-TEC). The goal of the Center for Peace and Human Rights Studies (NEP) mentioned earlier is to produce new knowledge about peace and human rights. Its creation

represented the clearest and most pioneering initiative in raising academic human rights awareness at the University of Brasília. The work of NEP is guided by three main lines of study and research: research for peace itself, which was coordinated by Professor Nielsen Paula Pires and focused on undergraduate studies (discipline Research for Peace). The study *O direito achado na rua* (The right found in the street), whose main reference is the distance extension course of the same name, is currently an editorial series (series “*O direito achado na rua*”), with three volumes already published and several new versions: v.1

1987: Introduction to Critical Law; v.2, 1993, *Introdução crítica ao direito do trabalho* (Critical Introduction to the right to work); and v.3, 2003: *Introdução crítica ao direito agrário* (Critical Introduction to the right to land); and *Direitos Humanos e Cidadania* (Human Rights and Citizenship), comprising a set of activities, academic events and interventions emphasizing the institutionalization of the undergraduate course in Human Rights and Citizenship at UnB (Sousa Júnior, 2004, p.10).

In 2010, after nearly 23 years of continuous research, teaching and extension activities at the University of Brasília and a great contribution to the current debate on human rights and citizenship in Brazil, NEP envisioned the possibility of expanding human rights teaching and research by establishing a Graduate Program in Human Rights and Citizenship, which is being proposed from an interdisciplinary perspective, including PhDs professors from different areas of Humanities, with the aim of consolidating a research, teaching and extension area that covers the size and complexity of the issues that challenge Brazil in the areas of human rights, citizenship and democracy⁴.

The Center for Studies and Research in Women (NEPEM), one of the pioneer centers, is dedicated to the study of gender and its social roles, its struggle to achieve women's rights and its ways of combating prejudice and violence against women.

At the core of these intellectual and political fields, NEPEM has developed harsh feminist cultural criticism based on gender, race/ethnicity and class of the andocentric foundations of legal and customary rights, and of the denial of the right to differences, among others. Thus, it has established itself as a research group that subjects innovations to teaching and research experiences, in order to visualize its way towards change: the interdisciplinary practice and the approach found in the reality that characterizes the feminist way of knowing. Throughout its existence, NEPEM has developed numerous research projects, among which the most important are *Relações de Gênero e Raça: Hierarquias, Poderes e Violências* (Gender and Race Relations: Hierarchies, Power and Violence); *Violência e Cidadania no Distrito Federal* (Violence and Citizenship in the Federal District); and *A Resolução Institucional de Conflitos – Acesso aos Direitos Humanos das Mulheres no Brasil* (Institutional Conflict Resolution - Access to the Human Rights of Women in Brazil)⁵.

In 2010 NEPEM proposed to CAPES the creation of masters and doctoral programs in Gender, Feminism and Society. It was the first proposal on this subject in the Central-West region aimed to ensure the systematic coordination among research lines, course contents, research topics and theses and dissertations on gender and feminism.

The Center for Studies and Research in Social Policies (NEPPOS) has a long history of collaboration with Brazilian society:

The drafting of the bill that gave rise to the Organic Law on Social Assistance (*Lei Orgânica da Assistência Social - LOAS*) that regulates Arts. 203 and 204 of the Federal Constitution in force, in partnership with IPEA and various governmental and non-governmental organizations; the drafting of the bill on the creation of the Social Assistance Council of the Federal District, in partnership with the Regional Council of Social Service of the 8th Region.

The Center for Afro-Brazilian Studies (NEAB) is dedicated to the research, proposal and evaluation of governmental projects and programs that address the issue of racial and ethnical relations, such as UnB's affirmative action known as the quotas system for Afro-descendants, with an emphasis on the graduate course Black Cultures in the Atlantic, which seeks to break the barriers of "invisibility" of the history of the African continent and its relations with Brazil.

The Center for Agrarian Studies (NEAGRI) is designed to bring together the academic community, civil society and public and private institutions around problems and issues on the Brazilian agrarian structure, its dynamics and development. Its areas of research and teaching and extension activities encompass topics such as solidarity economy, cooperatives, transgenics, energy matrices and sustainable development experiences of research, teaching, and extension.

The Center for Urban and Regional Studies (NEUR) addresses topics such as urban sprawling, international migration, multiculturalism, and identity. Since its inception in 1986, it has conducted studies and research in the urban and regional areas, for the purpose of informing the formulation of policies and strategies on the topic, proposing alternatives for solving current problems, updating documentation on the topic, and promoting exchange between UnB and academic communities, civil society and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Center for Public Health Studies (NESP) represents a link between the academic world and the emerging demands of the public health sector, as it develops teaching, advisory and research activities, besides promoting the dissemination and exchange of knowledge. Since its foundation in 1986, it has been involved in very significant projects, such as the strengthening of the Unified Health System (*Sistema Único de Saúde* - SUS), research in sexual and reproductive rights, labor relations in health, and medication policy, among others.

The Center for Study and Research in Bioethics (NEPeB) at the University of Brasilia holds a particular position in the context of CEAM, since it was recognized by UNESCO in 2004 as an international reference center in bioethics, and is currently known as the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics. Therefore, since August 2008 the NEPeB/Chair has been the main point of reference and support of the Graduate Program (Masters and PhD) in Bioethics at UNB, approved by CAPES/MEC (Coordination for the Enhancement of Higher Education Personnel/Ministry of Education).

The Center for the Study of Multilateral Organizations, International Negotiations, Tourism, Logistics and Technology (NEOMNI TEL-TEC) aims to bring international negotiations closer to ordinary citizens. It addresses issues such as environmental health, tourism, education, fight against corruption, and international trade, through teaching, research and extension activities, in particular the undergraduate course in Theory and Critical Analysis of Corruption. The Center for European

Studies (NEE) is dedicated to studying the origin and development of the European Union and its relations with Latin America, and includes the Jean Monnet Chair.

The Center experienced a significant academic strengthening in Nielsen de Paula Pires' second term of office, through the publication of its first books: *Revista do Ceam* (CEAM Journal), with two editions, and *Cadernos do Ceam* (CEAM Reviews), the latter a result of the experiences of the different Thematic Centers. A total of 23 books were published during that period, with an emphasis on the first one entitled "*Atividades para a Terceira Idade no Distrito Federal*" (Activities for Senior Citizens in the Federal District), published by the Center for Senior Citizen Studies (*Núcleo de Estudo para a Terceira Idade* - NEPTI), which publishes information on activities of specific interest to the elderly living in the Federal District; *Dimensões da Integração no Mercosul* (Dimensions of Integration in MERCOSUR), published by the Center for MERCOSUR Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos do Mercosul* - NEM), which presents analyzes attesting to the extent of the integration agenda of this bloc of countries in its economic, political and socio-cultural developments, as well as the interest MERCOSUR continues to raise in the academic milieu, despite the clear pitfalls seen in recent years; *Panorama da realidade cubana* (An overview of the Cuban reality), a review produced by the Center for Cuban Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos Cubanos* - NESCUBA), presenting a brief history of the Center, its objectives and significant activities, through articles by its Brazilian and Cuban collaborators stressing relevant aspects of the Cuban reality; *Oriente-Occidente dimensões culturais* (East-West cultural dimensions), a review issued by the Center for Asian Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos Asiáticos* - NEASIA), with articles on current aspects of Asian affairs; "*Tramas, espelhos e poderes na memória*" (Plots, mirrors and powers in memory), which presents the results of research conducted by the Center of Studies in Culture, Orality, Image and Memory (*Núcleo de Estudos em Cultura, Oralidade, Imagem e Memória* - NECOIM), which has also published the books "*Memória e direitos: moradas e abrigos em Brasília*" (Memory and rights: houses and shelters in Brasília) and "*Mulheres presentes na história de Brasília: direito à vida*" (Women in the history of Brasília: the right to life).

CEAM also offers various undergraduate courses such as: Alternative Agricultures, at the Center for the Study of Contemporary Brazil (*Núcleo de Estudos do Brasil Contemporâneo* - NEBC); Buddhism and Multiculturalism, at NEASIA; Human Rights and Citizenship, at NEP. Also noteworthy are the specialization courses: Science and Technology Policies with emphasis on ICT Policy and Technology and Digital Inclusion (NEOMNI); Fourth and Fifth Specialization Courses in Public Policy (Center of Studies and Research in Public Policy, Government and Management (*Núcleo de Pesquisa e Estudos em Políticas Públicas, Governo e Gestão* - NP3)); Black Cultures in the Atlantic: History of African and Afro-Brazilians (NEAB); Seventh Graduate Course in Bioethics (NEPeB); Social Policy and Urban Development (NEPPOS); Specialization Course in Information for Action in Health Surveillance (NESP).

In 2006, Professor Ana Maria Nogales Vasconcelos took office as director of CEAM. Originally from the Department of Statistics and former coordinator of the Center for Urban and Regional Studies (NEUR), she is known for her dynamic profile and modern views. Chosen by her peers to lead the process of upgrading the Center, Ana Maria faced problems related to the non-acceptance of the Center. However, in several meetings she defended the views and interests of CEAM and succeeded in implementing a new administration, with emphasis on strategic planning materialized by the Institutional Development Plan (*Plano de Desenvolvimento Institucional* - PDI). Still during her administration, she sought to give the Center a new face by increasing its visibility on a new web portal; organizing seminars, conferences and meetings; and maintaining the publications. The Center increased its offer of undergraduate courses, with an average of fifteen per semester, as well as of graduate courses such as: Third Specialization Course in Education and Health Promotion (NESPROM); Ninth Graduate Course in Bioethics (NEPeB); Second Specialization Course in Black Cultures in the Atlantic: History of African and Afro-Brazilians (NEAB); History of Ancient Christianity (Center for Studies Religion Studies (*Núcleo de Estudos da Religião* – NER)); Fourth Specialization Course in Education and Health Promotion (NESPROM). Professor Ana Maria sought to promote greater integration among the Thematic Centers, including in her struggle for suitable physical space. During that period, several debates and reflections were held on the identity, mission and direction of the Center for Advanced Multidisciplinary Studies, which led to the review of the Center's bylaws and its consequent institutional strengthening.

In the second term of Ana Maria as head of CEAM (2008-2010), the academic climate became favorable to the Center, owing to a series of events. At that time, Professor Roberto Aguiar, former director of CEAM, who took office as dean of the University, began to support more consistently the Center's projects by strengthening it institutionally and providing it with new physical facilities and skilled staff. He also created the position of vice-director, which was held by the coordinator of NEOMNI, Professor Ricardo Caldas. One of the main goals of Professor Ricardo Caldas was to strengthen CEAM as an academic unit.

In this context, it was possible to rethink the Center's goals and role for the future. Through meetings of the Advisory Council (CEAM's highest ranking body), the Center's vocation for the study of Development became clear. However, there was a gap in the way the topic was being addressed, as well as in its economic, social and cultural implications, particularly on Human Development, in relation not only to income distribution but also to the increasing freedom of individuals to choose the lifestyle they wanted to pursue. This conception naturally includes the empowerment of vulnerable groups at risk in search of personal development, i.e., involving a more equitable distribution of goods and services socially produced, thus promoting reflection on quality of life and rights. In order to solve the dilemmas and challenges associated with

Development, the countries seek, through international cooperation, to design programs that remove the most vulnerable populations from situations of risk, which are often linked to poverty and its consequences, such as economic and social inequality.

With this new vision, a big dream began to be pursued: the possibility for CEAM to propose the creation of multidisciplinary graduate courses in Development and International Cooperation. Thus, with the contribution of several center coordinators, particularly the then vice-Director of CEAM, Ricardo Caldas, (office implemented from the reformulation of CEAM's bylaws) the Center succeeded in proposing to CAPES the creation of a graduate course in Development, Society and International Cooperation, based on two pillars:

- The impacts of domestic public policies on the quality of life of the population; and
- The effects of International Cooperation in Promoting Society and Development.

This graduate course seeks to fill the gap in the graduate program in Development. Thus, the program intends to meet and complement several needs related to Development “as a strategic factor not only in the socio-economic and cultural process of Brazilian society”.⁶

In 2010, Professor Ricardo Caldas took office as the new director of CEAM, with Professor Julie Schmied as vice-director. During that period, CEAM took a great leap towards the future: the approval by CAPES of the proposed creation of a doctoral and masters program in Development, Society and International Cooperation. CEAM began to implement it with the aim of generating excellence in multidisciplinary studies on this topic.

Conclusions and Perspectives

The assessment of CEAM in the course of its 25 years of existence is positive: it was the forum for the discussion of the Educational Grant (*Bolsa-Escola*), based on the Family Grant (*Bolsa Família*), as well as of the program of quotas for Afro-descendants, an issue currently discussed all over Brazil.

CEAM, a multidisciplinary center of the University of Brasília, continues to focus on the future and on the solution to contemporary Brazilian problems such as energy, environment, climate change and the Amazon.

Currently, it discusses issues in areas such as social inclusion, the urban problem, senior citizens and Afro-descendants, as well the issue of development from its many perspectives - economic, cultural, ethnic and social.

As long as the need for a Center where paradigms can be discussed persists, CEAM proposes to be this venue, holding discussions in a serious and academic – but also passionate - way, incorporating new perspectives into the debate.

CEAM therefore resumes the original objectives that led to its creation in the 1980s, which were the same that resulted in the creation of the University of Brasília in the 1960s.

Notes

- 1 FUB was approved by Decree No. 500 only on January 15, 1962. FUB's statute was published in the official gazette the following day, i.e., January 16, 1962.
- 2 The role of the two educators in the creation of the University of Brasília (UnB) will be discussed ahead.
- 3 Paulo Freire and his group have succeeded in teaching 300 sugar cane cutters how to read and right in just a little over a month.
- 4 Proposal for the creation of a graduate program in Human Rights and Citizenship, 2010.
- 5 Proposal for the creation of a graduate program in Gender, Feminism and Society.
- 6 PPG/Capes 2005-2010 (Introduction).

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