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The global/local relationship in the Covid-19 pandemic: the role of multilateralism in Human Rights violations

A relação global/local na pandemia da Covid-19: o papel do multilateralismo nas violações aos Direitos Humanos

Janaína Rigo Santin

Universidade de Passo Fundo, Passo Fundo, Brazil

Letícia Virginia Leidens

Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, Brazil

Virginia Zambrano

Università di Salerno, Salerno, Italy

ABSTRACT: This study reflects on the difficulties, within international organizations, in coordinating public health policies and freedom restrictions, both of which adopted in a disorderly manner by countries to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. We problematize, based on multilateralism, the lack of a coordinated intergovernmental structure and the difficulties of international organizations in administrating joint actions, open to local contexts, to face the pandemic. Furthermore, it is strengthened the perception that international politics is divided between disorder and the domination – or hegemony – of certain States and their alliances, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, several forms of fragile and, often transient, cooperation. Thus, the research points out the need for instruments to forward international coordination in facing the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the appreciation of local production chains to reduce their dependence on international markets. Based on such an issue and applying the hypothetical-deductive method, this work discusses the relationships between the global and the local, approached by human rights violations and public health in the pandemic context. In this sense, as a proposition of the present analysis, a dialogical re-approach between countries.

KEYWORDS: Human Rights – Local Power – Globalization – Short Productive Chains – Multilateralism.



RESUMO: Busca-se refletir acerca das dificuldades na coordenação, em âmbito dos organismos internacionais, das políticas públicas sanitárias e de restrições às liberdades, as quais foram adotadas de maneira desordenada pelos países para o enfrentamento da pandemia da Covid-19. Problematisa-se, a partir do multilateralismo, a falta de uma estrutura intergovernamental coordenada e as dificuldades dos organismos internacionais na organização de ações conjuntas e abertas aos contextos locais para o enfrentamento da pandemia. Fortalece-se a percepção de que a política internacional está dividida entre a desordem e o domínio ou hegemonia de determinados Estados e suas alianças de um lado e, por outro lado, várias formas de cooperação frágil e frequentemente transitórias. Dessa forma, a pesquisa aponta a necessidade de captação de ferramentas que caminhem para a coordenação internacional no enfrentamento da pandemia Covid-19, bem como a valorização das cadeias produtivas locais, a fim de reduzir sua dependência dos mercados internacionais. A partir desta problemática, e pelo método hipotético-dedutivo, a pesquisa discute as relações entre o global e o local abordadas a partir das violações de direitos humanos e da saúde pública no contexto pandêmico. Nesse sentido, como proposição da presente análise, sugere-se a reaproximação dialógica entre países.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Direitos Humanos – Poder Local – Globalização – Cadeias Produtivas Curtas – Multilateralismo.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic reshaped political and socioeconomic issues already faced by local and international societies. However, the lens through which these problems are analyzed is widened by the urgency, emergency, and need to bring immediate responses to contain the increasing number of deaths due to the pandemic. Coordinated public measures and actions need to be urgently adopted to face the defining factors of the health/disease process, explicitly intending to control, delimitate procedures and guarantee the maximum protection of individuals in distinct contexts.

The progression of the disease and the various “waves” of contagion, deaths, and severe illness resulting from the pandemic end up revealing the urgency of relationship improvement between

international actors and their instruments, in terms of organization, communication, cooperation, and monitoring of limits, for state actions, in favor of global public health and fundamental rights.

In this sense, themes such as multilateralism and human rights, whose applications are managed by global and local spheres, required formats associated with the pandemic context. This new reality demanded the approximation and strengthening of relationships between international actors, with the exceptionality connotation and the more open bias of public health in a global scope and reach. Thus, it is a multilateralism of emergency towards greater cooperation among all players in the processes of interpretation and application of protocols and measures materialized in public actions coordinated at the international, national, and local levels.

Therefore, this research purposes to re-discuss central issues that congregate these themes from the global to the local, proposing an orientation based on the problems brought by the Covid-19 pandemic to administrative action, with the intent of greater coordination of international actions, and not overlooking the importance of increasing short production chains, as well as the recognition of local identities and spaces. To rebuild the shared public spaces that will trigger a broadly dialogic non-state public sphere, capable of providing greater autonomy for local production chains to face both the problems and the global productive influxes that largely see to the protection of social subjects.

As such, it is necessary to outline a broader approach inserting the relationship of the global (based on international organizations and their multilateral instruments) with the local (enabling countries to deal with problems of the global supply of products based on the recognition of local production chains). Those issues involve the development and/or increment of a new public sphere, named “glocal”, so the problem of recurring human rights violations may include suggestions for a focused format capable of responding, to a certain extent, to urgent questions imposed by the pandemic context.

The hypothetical-deductive approach method will be applied, considering the research deals with a measurable and verifiable reality and, starting from the confrontation of this reality, it will be possible to deduce a hypothesis aimed at (in) validating it through bibliographical review technique. It is imperative that opposing and manichean ideas of policies and “long” and “short”, “internal” and “external” production chains, be overcome. The lack of global coordination when fighting the sanitary and economic crisis and the countries’ difficulties regarding the lack of products in both the food and health sectors highlighted the multidimensional contradictions of the current global model.

2 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The panorama of international relations in post-contemporaneity is characterized by the plurality of international actors, who interact in different places of power and contribute to the strengthening of international cooperation regarding essential and vital decisions for the international society. However, identifying an international cooperative movement seems, at first, a superficial resource when supported on a generic plan based on State socioeconomic motivations. The relationship between States and international organizations occurs, most of the time, through sharing of common problems and goals, with the intent of raising efforts for the needs of the present and the future, even if originated from vastly different contexts or realities (MORGENTHAU, 2003, p. 159). However, notwithstanding that the cooperation basis is focused on the search for convergence of paths, sociopolitical, economic, and cultural structural distinctions characterize the international actors, and reinforce the qualification of alterity and tolerance as prerequisites for the experience of multilateralism, making such relationships extremely complex (SANTOS, 2002, p. 145-189).

Indeed, international organizations seek to highlight a space that is projected as open, multicultural, inclusive, and democratic in the decision-making process, but many contradictions denounce this identification. It is known that the role of multilateralism does not only contribute to the dynamics and movement of international relations in the global scenario, but, above all, it influences and re-dimensions the internal positions of States, institutions, and society. This gives a significant role to multilateralism as a space of power and confrontation of essential issues, which through dialogue and diplomacy contribute to minimizing localized social conflicts.

Thus, in addition to being a symbolic foundation, multilateralism has the capacity for global articulation by introducing and leading, for States, new legal and cultural formats, often through a language that standardizes action frameworks regarding social needs and urgencies. In this sense, one of its best functional aspects is the global normative structure of human rights, which imposes limitations on the state power based on a slate of fundamental rights and guarantees. International commitments are inserted in internal contexts by legislation and by practices in line with the general principles of international law, influencing, albeit slowly, the establishment of internal socio-cultural changes in order to predispose the needs of human beings on the grounds of recognized universal structures (RAMOS, 2019, p. 277). The aspect residing in the normative interpretation and application movement, which includes Hans-Georg Gadamer lesson of “to understand is to apply”, constitutes a hindrance to consecrate the scope of rights for each man and woman, given that the materialization and *praxis* of human rights reveals a complete nonsense of expectation *versus* reality.

There are many issues in this debate. The materialization of rights by States, in most cases, requires the economic willingness to promote them and selecting public policies capable of directing expenditures with the inclusive logic of human rights and democracy (LEIDENS; VIDAL, 2019, p. 94). This means the rights of freedom and

equality go hand in hand with the determination of political choices, which gives legitimacy to the exerting of power. Given the verification of a liberal or progressive tendency in the rulers who act in the political landscape, freedom and equality rights will only be possible when attached to commitments established in international human rights treaties and conventions, including the constitutional frame of special attention to the protection of minorities and socially marginalized groups. From this perspective, the orientation of the global normative structure projected from universalism is questioned with the movement of human rights *praxis*.

This discussion directly influences the realization of rights, characterized as limited and in opposition to the reach for all, constituting an aspect that conditions the contemporary reflection on human rights. It is a scenario that often influences and questions, repeatedly, the role of multilateralism once its instruments reach state realities differently, often coming to describe human rights categories as abstract. The consequence of this perspective can be found on a smaller sphere, highlighted from the internal point of view of the recurring commonplace of human rights “crisis”, the “ineffectiveness” of rights and the “non-achievement” of rights for all men and women, identified by a universal and not factual standpoint which considers the complexity of local specificities.

Indeed, we must consider that the movement of human rights *praxis* internally mobilized by each State faces the diversity of actors (interpreters) and localized political and socioeconomic scenarios, shaped by different perceptions of reality to solve conflicts and specific social and collective constructions, issues that ought to be recognized in the spaces of power.

The separation between power and politics is one of the decisive reasons for the State’s inability to make appropriate choices. According to Étienne Balibar, the irreparable rift between the local and the global has produced a kind of “Stateless statism”, which takes place through “governance”. This produces the

crippling effect of a political system (representative and of the people, and, therefore, democratic) at the local level, reduced to the management of day-to-day administration, unable to assume and solve problems global power (without political representation and, as such, fundamentally undemocratic) imposes with increasing frequency (BAUMAN; BORDONI, 2016, p. 22-23)

The flawed realization of rights, characterized mainly in the Global South as limited and contrary to reach for all men and women, elevates this debate as a priority, urgent, and necessary (PIOVESAN, 2011, p. 220), with the elements which define it as complex and potentialized in the current context.

Thus, the problem appears with an enhanced tone within the coronavirus pandemic (Sars-Cov-2) scenario, which causes the Covid-19 disease, as it opens new ways of thinking about the issues affecting multilateralism, making them potentially more complex. The local outbreak that, later on, hit the world is an international public health emergency characterized by an exceptional, unknown situation that has transformed the everyday routine of people, institutions, and the State. It reestablished, as essential, the dialogue with international organizations, especially in guiding public health actions – so they take place immediately, under the International Health Regulations (IHR) and with WHO and PAHO recommendations for the protection of citizens' fundamental rights and guarantees.

Besides highlighting the human rights debate, the Covid-19 pandemic (re)positions the role of multilateralism and its international instruments, presented as barriers to the arbitration of the exceptionality movement and the necessity clause put in practice by States to respond to demands involving sanitary measures. The concern of international organizations is within the subtle underline of state demonstrations and decision-making supported by law, but which relativize and restrict rights instead of maximizing them. In the words of Philip G. Cerny and Alex Prichard (2017, p. 378), the globalization of economic sectors

ends up favoring transnational connections to the detriment of local and national ones. As such, the complexity of cross-border networks and hierarchies disaggregates local and national connections. As a counterpoint to this phenomenon, we can see the appreciation of local identities and ethnic and religious ties across borders, demonstrating the need for a complex and multidimensional restructuring of the global, the local, and the unequal connections between them. To the authors, the idea of “high” and “low”, “inside” and “outside” politics must be abandoned once and for all, as it involves multidimensional tensions and contradictions described in various ways as “functional differentiation, fragmentation, disparate landscapes, insecurity, and neo-medievalism”. The pandemic has shown the most acute facet of the globalization of people, products, and services: the anarchic essence of global (dis)order from the perspective of competing, complex and plural claims to authority and power. Moreover, the authors problematize the “virtues” of globalization, pointing to the emergence of a more decentralized and pluralistic world order after the pandemic.

Therefore, as a catastrophic phenomenon, the pandemic context is prone to displace strict legal structures of citizens, for instance, the achievement of fundamental rights, engendering immeasurable impacts to those historic achievements. It is a moment that reverberates the serious violations felt daily, but that, above all, can (will) transform reality, advancing or annulling achievements and imposing new confrontations for international organizations and society.

3 MULTILATERALISM AND THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

The human rights foreseen in different documents historically constituted the global normative structure, highlighted from the creation of the UN and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 (primary document of the entire international system of human rights). Still, the UN International Covenant on Civil

and Political Rights of 1966 and the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1976, along others focused on protecting the vulnerable, stand out as a *hard law* resource, delimiting minimum elements for a life with dignity, through the enshrinement of basic, essential and fundamental rights for every man and woman in any context.

It is a long global normative framework supporting a regionalized implementation (sectorialization) of human rights in environments fragmented by regions and territories. The treaties, protocols, and international conventions provide tutelage and protection to the dignity of the human person through an outline of human rights and fundamental guarantees for the individual, including the right to health.

The right to health, as an open concept systematically linked to the rights to life, physical integrity, and physical and mental health, integrates the Brazilian legal system with the ratification and incorporation of international treaties that extend and confirm the material statute of fundamental guarantees and rights provided for the 1988 Federal Constitution. Expressed in art. 5, § 2: “The rights and guarantees expressed in this Constitution do not exclude others deriving from the regime and the principles adopted by it, or from international treaties to which the Federative Republic of Brazil adheres”.

As a result of the international and constitutional commitment, it is up to the Public Branches, chiefly the Executive in all federative spheres, the duty of developing public policies and public services capable of fully guaranteeing the health of citizens, as provided for the article 2 of the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in order to progressively ensure the full exercise of the rights therein recognized.

Obviously, the right to health, from the provisional perspective of the State as a second-dimensional social right, depends (will depend), for its materialization, on the State’s financial dispensation and the governmental conduction of public policies for this purpose,

in order to bring an equal reach throughout the entire Brazilian territory. These, however, are diametrically deficient in Brazil, explaining the high number of demands recognized through the phenomenon of “health judicialization”, which are taken to the Judiciary to promote, protect and restore citizen’s health when this is denied by the public policies enacted by the Executive Power.

In this sense, health in the Covid-19 pandemic must be understood from the perspective of human rights, highlighting its complexity and enhancing it in several liabilities. First, a look at health incorporates multiple fragmentations, not only in the sanitary field but also in a broader perspective. This perspective includes health as a community provision (SACCHERI; MASSULO; MANGONE, 2008, p. 40-49) materialized with the development of the idea of “comprehensive health”, often granted by the enshrinement of other human rights directly linked to a healthy quality of life. Moreover, the WHO concept of health is convergent with this orientation, as its definition is based on social determinants of health. The fight against the pandemic absorbs everything from access to curative health to the contagion obstruction and the control of transmission chains. It also involves diagnostic skills, surveillance, risk communication, instrumentalizing information, and collective health protocols, and psychological and mental treatment and monitoring measures, in a holistic view qualifying the safeguard of the rights to health, life, and physical integrity.

In the Latin American reality, especially Brazilian, to denounce the stretch of realization of rights for all men and women brings into question the marginalization of the right to health’s tutelage in the country. It projects the internal and international normative structure of human rights in an idealized plan that requires social struggle and engagement to bring forth Brazilian citizens’ extreme vulnerability, particularly the recurrence of violations against the vulnerables, which historically endure the absence of rights. On the other hand, regarding state commitments, it is necessary to emphasize the orientation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

stating in its article 12 “c” the State “has the duty to prevent and treat epidemic diseases as well as the fight against these diseases”. The situation imposes, therefore, the urgency of practical public actions capable of uniting all federative entities and state powers to minimize a political-social quotidian of inequalities in attaining the most basic human rights, especially the right to life and health.

This issue echoes the debate around the deficiency of mechanisms for health access and management and the role of institutional actors in improving coordination, cooperation, and global solidarity to stop the virus spread. In this sense, the pandemic moment as a global problem gives prominence to a “new” relationship between States and international organizations, intended at cooperation much more applicable to global recommendations and referrals. Also, to a “new relationship” between the global and the local, as among the measures to fight the pandemic is the limitation for the circulation of goods and people worldwide. This requires state investment in short production chains to overcome the dependence on supplies from other countries, mainly China, and which involves both the pharmaceutical industry and the production of vaccines and hospital items needed to care for severe cases of Covid-19.

The need for greater cooperation between countries and for coordinated measures to face the pandemic can be seen as the number of cases in the world increased, with the development and implementation of different models, by each State, to mitigate and suppress the pandemic.

From the measures gradually implemented by countries related to maintaining the population in confinement, as well as the closure of borders, isolation, and social distancing, combined with the use of sanitary protocols (masks and hand sanitizer), the validity of these measures was set according to their efficiency and effectiveness.

However, even if international cooperation appears in the aforementioned terms with new characteristics, what cannot be ignored is the absence of an integrated response from international organizations to confront the global pandemic, condoned, most of the time, by a

perspective of nationalist order that invokes “classical” state sovereignty to support and justify self-determined interests to the detriment of a common and shared logic. In this way, with a global and invisible threat, for which effective treatments are not yet available, it urges to emphasize that the present moment calls for awareness to the positions adopted individually by the States, with emerging new challenges in thinking about multilateralism given the changes brought by the context pandemic.

This notion inserts the global structure of human rights into the debate, even more dedicated to protect human rights and limit the power of some States – to the detriment of a whole global (dis) harmony. Given the current urgency-characterized scenario, we seek to reflect from premises that give a new dimension to the themes of multilateralism and basic rights of citizens in the relationship between the global and local spheres.

4 GLOBAL THINKING, LOCAL ACTING

The current geopolitics presents complex societies, conditioned by the market economy and circulation of goods and people never seen before, interconnecting the different international organizations in opaque networks. Across modernity, power centers were located in the Nation-state; however, in the 21st century, new power centers started to act alongside the state power, with a supranational character and often more influential than the States themselves (SANTIN, 2017). In this context, we question: how to define the role of national States, especially when confronted with a pandemic of unimaginable proportions, from a legal point of view, which requires worldwide-orchestrated solutions? Furthermore, what is the role of multilateralism when, in the uncertainty of an effective global response to fight the pandemic, it ends up weakening recommendations of international organizations, such as the World Health Organization?

To fight the evil outcomes of the pandemic, implacably affecting all of us, the difficulties of coordinating common and effective strategies worldwide against the uncertainties caused by Covid-19 are revealed, and this involves a joint reflection on these scenarios.

The pandemic evidenced the lack of sanitary preparation, as well as for legal and economic regulatory matters. The legal instruments of regulation are mostly limited to the borders of sovereign states, yet the economy and the production chains of goods and services are globalized and without specific territories. Among so many questions and uncertainties, one has proved to be crucial: how to characterize a macroeconomic policy and the productive chains resulting from it when legislation and politics remain national, while the economy and the circulation of goods and people are global?

Another unveiled problem was the dependency of national markets upon long production chains and imports of food, medicine, vaccines, and hospital products. With the whole world searching for the same supplies to fight the pandemic, such as hand sanitizer, masks, syringes, respirators, compressed air, analgesics, and other drugs needed by patients in intensive care units, it was seen the States' need for their own local supply chains, in order not to rely so much on the external market. This was also seen regarding the supply for mass testing and for laboratories able to support the growing demand, as well as with products for vaccine manufacturing, almost all coming from China.

In this sense, some scholars defend the paradigm of “glocalization”, that is, valuing the local without disregarding the global aspect.

The concept of glocalization, as elaborated by Roland Robertson, but reclaimed and refined by several others (such as Beyer, Roudometof, and Vásquez), highlights this global-local intertwining. Glocalization is not simply about local statements of opposition to, or differentiation from, global processes. Robertson's argument for localism is not a “communitarian” argument for local (self)defense against outside pressures. For him, in contrast to the “nostalgic paradigm” that contrasts

globalization with the once safe and prosperous localities of the “community” and the “nation”, “globalization involved the reconstruction, and in a way, the production, of ‘home,’ community’ and ‘locality’. In this sense, the local [...] can be considered, taking into account some qualifications, an aspect of globalization” (Robertson 1995:30, our translation). The relationship between the two is one of “simultaneity and interpenetration”, he adds (Robertson 1995:30). Thus, denying a mere opposition between global and local, universal and specific, international and national (Robertson 1995:33). Globalization involves the interconnection of localities by means that do not respect national border protocols, diplomacy, or geopolitical loyalties. This does not mean any of these lose their specific jurisdiction and relative control. Rather, through glocal practices, localities establish *ad hoc* forms of interconnection that are not logically required, foreseen, or entirely governed by existing institutional dynamics or even by a previous history of exchanges; thus, they go beyond themselves, as well as opening up to glocalizing influxes (see Vásquez and Marquardt 2003:34–64; Garcia Canclini 2003; Beyer 2007b; Giulianotti and Robertson 2009:45–47; Roudometof 2016). (BURITY, 2018)

Thus, one can see the exhaustion of this global economic model, with long production chains outlined in recent decades as examples to benefit each country’s competitive advantages. The manufacturing of a large part of the products was deterritorialized when the production stages were separated into large transnational chains placed in the countries based on the competitive advantages offered by each one.

However, when the pandemic required limitations on the mobility of people and goods to prevent it from spreading even further, a sizable part of the products that depended on these long chains, under the responsibility of transnational companies and laboratories, was affected. Due to the lack of a component produced in a faraway country, the entire production chain of that product was compromised.

This situation revealed itself even more serious because the first country where Covid-19 spread was China, the nation responsible for

centralizing stages in the pharmaceutical and hospital supply industry production chains worldwide. The goods needed to manufacture vaccines come from China, and China is also the largest supplier of hospital items, such as mechanical respirators and protective masks.

Thus, the whole world began suffering from the lack of medicines, respirators, and hospital supplies to fight Covid-19, as well as with the considerable increase in food cost, a very explicit issue in Brazil, where the products of the basic food basket had big highs. Indeed, globalization has not prepared the world for problems with the circulation of goods and people. Everything was deterritorialized. Nevertheless, when borders were closed and the influx of people and products was contained, it displayed the need for short production chains for both food and hospital and pharmaceutical goods to deal with situations like the one we are living within the Covid-19 pandemic.

The globalization and transnationalization of the economy have weakened the decision-making capacity of States regarding autonomous and independent national projects in a world (dis)order. When a sanitary crisis of such proportions hit the countries, it was noticed an enormous difficulty for national institutions to deal with this problem, not least because the countries did not adopt a homogeneous conduct in dealing with the pandemic. Many, like Brazil, have not homogeneously limited the free movement of people, goods, and products, enabling a massive window of contagion which, at the moment, is out of control.

Thus, it is understood that the Covid-19 pandemic came to question the phenomenon of globalization, multilateralism, the role of international organizations, and the free movement of people and goods, as well as the dependence of countries on external markets. In this sense, the Local Power in Brazil was greatly strengthened.¹

¹ The Local Power, consisting of state governors and mayors, representatives of the Executive Branch in the state and municipal spheres of the country, upon noting the advancing spread of the disease and the central power's inaction, started to adopt

5 SHORT CHAINS OF LOCAL PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

The deterritorialization of the production chain of a large part of the products consumed by the population, ranging from food to manufactured and industrialized products, as well as the pharmaceutical and preventive medicine (vaccines) industries, forces countries and their citizens to become hostages of internal and external interferences, capable of affecting the continuous development of this global production chain. In the words of Morin and Le Moigne, “problems are increasingly interdependent and increasingly global” (2000, p. 136), but regulation and response strategies remain local. The lack of coordination between national States and, in turn, the absence of efficient and effective multilateral organizations for fighting the pandemic ended up generating a worldwide “every man for himself”, where each country adopted the measures it understood as the most adequate for dealing with the health crisis.

In the Brazilian situation, there was no national policy of the Ministry of Health to fight the pandemic. On the contrary, it was seen the denial, by the federal government, of the critical effects of the

restrictive measures within its scope of competence following instructions not from the Brazilian central power, but according to the determinations of the World Health Organization. Concerned with the overall capacity of the Unified Health System (Sistema Único de Saúde, Brazilian public federal health structure) and, consequently, of the funeral system, they began issuing restrictive Executive Decrees in their spheres of performance, determining social distancing and the mandatory use of masks to protect citizens, as well as limiting economic activity and freedom of circulation in their states and municipalities. This crisis between the country’s federative spheres of power reached the highest constitutional court in the country, the Federal Supreme Court, which, in an injunction in ADI nº 6.341/2020, ratified the competence of States, Federal District, Municipalities and the Union, concurrently, to adopt restrictive measures within its scope of action in the fight against Covid-19, according to the service capacity of its local health system, contamination levels and the demand for assistance by its inhabitants. The court Plenary also signaled that governors and mayors have legitimacy to define the so-called essential activities, those that would not be paralyzed during the pandemic (BRAZIL, 2020).

sanitary crisis, which required specific and localized actions from the other federative spheres to deal with. After a year of pandemic, with a second wave with increasing rates of deaths and contamination, it is clear that the choices in Brazil were not adequate.

A study published by IICA (Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture) reveals that, to contain food shortage issues, as well as the necessary supplies for pharmaceutical and hospital industries, both to fight the pandemic and in a post-pandemic scenario, investments in short production chains will be mandatory. Such chains, in addition to guaranteeing, internally, the countries' supply, may heat internal economies and, in consequence, the employability of local populations, seriously hampered by measures to restrict economic activity and the free circulation of people and goods enacted since 2020. (IICA, 2020)

If the world scenario was already one of severe poverty, hunger, misery, and inequality, it was undoubtedly aggravated by the Covid-19 crisis. Diversifying the Brazilian economic matrix will be essential to better confront both this crisis and others that, without a doubt, ought to come. The massification of productive practices focused on *commodities* exportation privileges only the individual profit of producers, which put themselves ahead of the population's interests and environmental preservation.

Nonetheless, despite all these risks, some countries, such as Brazil, maintain this large-scale production setting to carry out significant exports to first-world countries (MIRANDA, 2007) and contaminating their own environment, as this type of production applies monoculture, pesticides, and weedkillers. Likewise, in doing so, they also harm its internal market, which suffers from shortages and dependence on external production chains. Although they have an extensive agricultural production, most of it is kept focused on industrial agriculture and monoculture to meet the foreign market demands. This ultimately forces the countries to import products from the “basic food basket” to their populations, considerably increasing

its cost since they are not included in the inventory of national agribusiness' specialties. (ABRAMOVAY, 1983)

From this perspective of globalization of production chains and international markets, apparently contradictory paradigms coexist in parallel: how to reconcile a favorable trade balance, and the economic growth derived from the export of primary goods, with food and hospital and pharmaceutical products' needs in Brazilian domestic market, dependent on imports, if not of every stage, but at least part of these at the production chain? (CONCEIÇÃO; CONCEIÇÃO, 1990) In this context, a "return to the origins" is a must by promoting agricultural systems and the self-sustainable production of medicines and vaccines (ALTIERI, 2004, p. 65).

An emblematic and noteworthy case is the Cuban one, since, after the Cold War, it began to face an economic embargo imposed by capitalist nations. The ending of the Soviet Union aggravated this problem and, as a solution, Cuba started seeking internal solutions so that its population would not face an even greater crisis. The country had to adapt its production standards, reinvent itself, and apply cultivation techniques and production of medicines, vaccines, and its own hospital supplies, based on local manufacturing and national production chains. This is an example of sustainable production, as Cubans employ natural items developed by their own universities, accomplishing a sizable domestic production. Thus, with production solely adjusted for domestic needs, issues such as hunger were alleviated in the country. (BUENO, 2015)

Moreover, in the health sector, it is crucial to emphasize that Cuba has one of the most proactive primary health care systems globally, prioritizing preventive medical attention (vaccination), sanitary education, and free access to medical care for the entire population. It has also developed new drugs based on traditional medicine; this makes its quality of life indicators comparable to developed countries regarding health metrics. (OSA, 2011)

The next decade reserves even greater challenges to sustainable production and development. One will be to implement practices that

elevate, encourage, and prioritize the production of drugs, vaccines, and hospital supplies, as well as food cultivation based on the adoption of local solutions dedicated to the social problems of each country. For this, it is necessary to have a planning capable of continuously including and valuing short production chains, apt to bring greater autonomy to States and better recognition to Local Power², without disregarding the global, as two sides of the same coin that should not be exclusive, but complementary.³

6 CONCLUSION

We sought to instigate a reflection transverse to the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, based on related themes, multilateralism, human rights, and its application line managed by the global and local spheres to suggest a reassessment of the elements that dialogue in this pandemic context.

As understood by economic, financial, productive, and migratory processes, globalization has declared the interdependence between societies in their multiple components, producing inflows of “supranational interconnection” (GARCÍA CANCLINI, 2008, p. 58). This endless search for comparative advantages inherent to the global capitalist model has allowed other activities in different places to orient activities in one part of the world. This format, however, had made international organizations interdependent as never before, as well as enabled the development of new power instances alien to the interests of national States and their citizens, eager for profitability and power.

Yet, with the crisis arising from the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become evident that the model of global and deterritorialized

² For a more comprehensive study about Local Power: (SANTIN; TEIXEIRA, 2019), (SANTIN; SANTOS, 2018), (SANTIN; TEIXEIRA, 2020).

³ Regarding this, see: (LEIDENS; SANTIN, 2018).

capitalism needs to undergo a complex and multidimensional restructuring between global and local. It is imperative that opposing and Manichean ideas of policies and “long” and “short”, “internal” and “external” production chains, be overcome. All are important, necessary, and complex. The lack of global coordination when fighting the sanitary and economic crisis and the countries’ difficulties regarding the lack of products in both the food and health sectors highlighted the multidimensional contradictions of the current global model.

It is no longer possible to disregard the mandatory recognition of local and national places and of autonomies and short production chains for essential products for local populations, especially food and healthcare. The global connection is important, but local autonomy is essential, mainly in the observance, protection, and promotion of human rights.

This approach might serve as a reflection, highlighting the difficulty axes always associated with public institutions and requiring a new perspective to face the problem. Thus, the portrait of living in pandemic and post-pandemic perspectives are in a continuous process of (de)construction and (mis)understanding, most of all, characterized as an uncertain, changeable, unfinished, and urgent experience. In this sense, as a proposition of the present analysis, a dialogical re-approach between countries is suggested, using the context of multilateralism as a space, for the creation of multicultural focus groups, which give place to diverse voices, including community members, public health experts, and epidemiologists in order to draw localized, coordinated, and thoughtful perspectives on pandemics.

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JANAÍNA RIGO SANTIN

Associate Professor at the Law Faculty of the University of Passo Fundo -UPF and University of Caxias do Sul (UCS) Brazil. PhD in Public Law from the Federal University of Paraná – UFPR (Brazil). Master in Public Law from the Federal University of Santa Catarina - UFSC.

Professional address: Rio Branco n. 138/501, Vila Rodrigues, em Passo Fundo-RS, CEP: 99070-080, Brazil.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6547-2752>

E-MAIL: janainars@upf.br

LETÍCIA VIRGINIA LEIDENS

Adjunct Professor of Private International Law and Human Rights at Federal Fluminense University – UFF, Brazil. PhD in International Law at Gama Filho (Brazil), with a period of research at the Università di Salerno (Italy).

Professional address: Miguel Frias, 9 – Icaraí, Niterói – RJ Cep 24220-900, Brazil.

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3185-6624>

E-MAIL: lleidens@id.uff.br

VIRGINIA ZAMBRANO

Full professor of Comparative Law at the University of Salerno (Italy). Former lecturer of Anglo-American Law and EU Law at the Second University of Naples; former lecturer of Family Law at the School of Specialisation in Civil Law, University of Camerino. Achieved a PhD in Civil Law and a specialisation at the *Faculté Internationale de Droit Comparé*, in Strasbourg. Member of the Italian Association of Comparative Law and collaborates with the Instituto de Desarrollo y Análisis del Derecho De Familia En España (IDADFE).

Professional address: UNISA, Via Giovanni Paolo II, 132, 84084 Fisciano SA, Itália.

ORCID ID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6836-6357>

E-MAIL: vzambrano@unisa.it

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