

# The right to resist in times of COVID-19: the case of the Belarusian professional football

*O direito de resistência em tempos de COVID-19:  
o caso do futebol profissional bielorrusso*

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## 1. Introduction

*Breaking news! Breaking news! The world has (almost) stopped. From schools to clubs. From buses to airplanes. From offices to gyms. From mosques to parties. No transit of people allowed, except for health reasons or those related to essential services.*

Were it not for the avalanche of news that pours in from all directions regarding the new coronavirus disease (COVID-2019/SARS-CoV-2), an undiscerning observer could read the paragraph above and think it explains an era of a severe armed conflict, for example, the First or the Second World War periods.

But it is not. As pretty much everyone is currently aware, the world is experiencing a new “once-in-100-year type event” (these words were spelled by the Australian Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, at a news conference in mid-March 2020), like the cholera pandemic (1800’s) and the

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Spanish flu (1900's) – without mentioning others, such as the Black Death (1300's).

It shall be said: in those cases, to a greater or lesser degree, *the world has also stopped*, paralysing businesses and/or non-essential activities. The difference, however, from the past to today is that, back then, the globalisation, viz., the process that made the world economy more connected and interdependent, intensifying worldwide social relations through the link of “distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many thousands of miles away and vice versa”<sup>1</sup>, was just a conception for the (future) modern days.

The countries, until the beginning of the twentieth century, were not so integrated in terms of organisations, transportations, connections, communications, policymaking in general, industrial or commodities production and trade: “globalization was not achieved in the pre-modern period, even if there were globalizing processes then. It was placed before the post-modern era. The foundations of worldwide interdependency were established in the era of modernity”<sup>2</sup>.

By the way, it has to be noted: albeit they are commonly seen as synonyms and interchangeable, globalisation shall not be understood (exclusively) as internationalisation, liberalisation, universalisation or even Westernisation. Actually, if it was just those things, there would not be necessary a new word to identify such situation, namely taking into account it is a terminology that has gained prominence across continents<sup>3</sup>.

So, whether *internationalisation* is bound to the increase of transactions and interdependencies of the countries (from messages to pollutants or from investments to merchandise), *liberalisation* refers to an open world, with less borders (no constraints on movements of resources among countries, such as trade barriers, capital controls, visa checks or requirements), *universalisation* means an everywhere or worldwide dispersion of experiences (cultures, politics, legislations, economics, the Gregorian calendar) and objects (vehicles, outfit, toys, beverages, tobacco) and *Westernisation* symbolises a specific part of universalisation, i.e., the expansion of social structures of modernity over humanity (e.g., industrialism, capitalism, ra-

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1 GIDDENS, 1991, p. 71.

2 MARTELL, 2010, p. 66.

3 SCHOLTE, 2005, p. 51.

tionalism, individualism, urbanism) and destruction of local cultures and autonomy, none of them is exactly new or identical to *globalisation* itself, i.e., they already existed before the globalisation period really started or present notorious differences (e.g., globalisation does not presuppose or necessarily opposite to *laissez-faire* economics)<sup>4</sup>.

In fact, the sense in which the term *globalisation* was used above is closer to *spatiality*. The latter is related to the arena of human being actions and experiences and identifies the whole planet as a place for societal relations, through the reductions of borders and barriers to transworld social contacts, in physical, linguistical, psychological, cultural or legal ways, towards *one world*. This is what mainly distinguishes the current moment from its predecessors, i.e., long-distance connectivity has accompanied human history for centuries, but its spread and *supraterritoriality* characteristic are clear distinctive contemporary aspects<sup>5</sup>. After all, should globalisation mean any, but just, those other concepts, like universality or integration, it would have “not been achieved, and may well never be”<sup>6</sup>.

Further, notwithstanding the fact that the science – specifically, the medicine – does not advance in leaps and bounds, on behalf of the appearance of a few geniuses, but much more ordinary, with building knowledge assets over time, since “[o]ne discovery leads to another in slow succession, and new understandings fade into existence”<sup>7</sup>, there were several milestones in the past 100 years, from which medicine changed radically and sometimes rapidly.

So, if last time when *the world stopped* it was, primarily, as a consequence of hundreds or thousands of citizens deaths already happened, this time it is being carried out as a preceding step, i.e., it aims to prevent innumerable deaths across the globe. Although it is true prevention is better than cure, such kind of acting is far more difficult than in the shadow of a disaster or emergency.

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4 SCHOLTE, 2005, pp. 54-59.

5 SCHOLTE, 2005, pp. 60-86.

6 MARTELL, 2010, p. 66.

7 SALEH, 2019.

## 2. No healthy, no party – or, no fans, no football: the shutdown of organised football (COVID-2019), except in Belarus

This is not the appropriate place to be presented and discussed in detail the medical and/or economic topics related to the new coronavirus, particularly because it is a legal paper. Still, even its main aspects (prevention, causes, diagnosis, symptoms, risk factors, treatment, complications) being spread out over the world, certain points are highlightable.

The timeline of the coronavirus outbreak can be summarised as follows: on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, the authorities of China alerted the World Health Organization (WHO) they were facing many pneumonia cases in Wuhan, Hubei province, with an unknown cause. In spite of it being a new virus, at that time it was concentrated in the aforementioned 11-million citizens city, and apart the endless number of accusations of censorship levelled at the Chinese dictatorial regime<sup>8</sup>, perhaps such is the reason why many countries did not pay special attention to it, considering that just within China, because of its local customs and traditions, the disease would be disseminated. Indeed, many politicians, e.g., from the USA, Brazil, Mexico, Iran and Italy<sup>9</sup>, called it a *fantasy* or a *little flu/little cold*, prioritising economic growth over the measures required to curb a rise in infections.

It happens that this virus has an unprecedented speed of transmission – as above stated, also because these are days of globalisation. Until today<sup>10</sup>, there are around 3,000,000 confirmed cases, from China to Chile and the USA to New Zealand, approximately 0.3% of recoveries and more than 295,000 deaths. Actually, one episode that may have been decisive for the accelerated spread of the pandemic in Italy – the epicentre of the disease in Europe – was the match between Atalanta and Valencia, for the UEFA Champions League, realised in Milan, last February, when no one knew that the new coronavirus was already in the country<sup>11</sup>.

The experts have underscored that the best way of preventing the contamination is by limiting the movement, interactions and social contact

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8 REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS, 2020; ALMEIDA, 2020; LEMON, 2020.

9 WARD, 2020.

10 This paper was finalised in the last weekend of April 2020.

11 ROBINSON, 2020.

of the people<sup>12</sup>. As a consequence, the *lockdown* implemented by many politicians worldwide to slow the spread of the disease range from mandatory geographic quarantines to non-mandatory recommendations to stay at home, including the prohibition of agglomerations and the closure of non-essential businesses and borders.

If not everything is roses, for sure it is not just thorns either; rather, many companies introduced home office and encouraged their workers to stay at home, the governments approved financial relieves for their nationals, singers started to perform online, for free, collecting donations to the most needy.

Following such social distancing orders, the international and national football bodies decided, firstly, that the football games should happen in empty stadiums. After many critics – namely, those regarding if it is worth professional sports being realised without spectators, not only from an economic point of view<sup>13</sup>, but also because the fans are the main reason of their existence and because many players started to test positive for coronavirus –, *all* competitions around the world stopped, whether or not prior or subsequent to the implementation of local anti-COVID-19 measures.

In reality, not exactly *all* football tournaments are suspended at this moment: in Belarus, the national league is being regularly played. Unlike everyone or everywhere else<sup>14</sup>, Belarus decided just to play on, bring out

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12 FERGUSON et al. 2020; SHEN; TALEB; BAR-YAM, 2020.

13 There have been considerable questions whether the leading sports can survive without the fans in attendance, since their main sources of revenue are the match-day sales, alongside with the broadcasting rights and sponsorship. It happens that, as well known, times of crisis can create opportunities to reinvent ourselves, meaning that the clubs shall find new ways of monetizing their activities, such as the streaming, new merchandising, advertising and alike strategies, focused on the digital platforms, production of new content, which will also lead the arrival of other players (people) to the market. For sure, those regular revenues (and the incomes of the clubs) were seriously affected by the pandemic, but, if there are no fans to buy tickets or souvenirs, beverages or food at the event, they are, as well, locked down at home, more connected than ever and missing their favourite stars and lovely sports moments. Thus, the supporters might be also more eager to acquire any and all types of products related to the club, and even more susceptible to do so, whatever those articles are, meaning that the marketing departments shall have a special position during the next months in this matter.

14 The national football associations of Burundi (EDWARDS, 2020), Nicaragua (ALEXANDRINO, 2020), Tajikistan (KRASIMIROV, 2020), Taiwan (BLANCHARD et al., 2020) and Turkmenistan (BARKER, 2020) also continued, started a new or restarted the current season of their domestic competitions. The first one, where there are twelve confirmed cases of the SARS-CoV-2 and one person dead, with open stadiums and recommendations to the players do not celebrate goals together and keep their distance from referees; the second (thirteen positive

cheerleaders and put no restrictions on supporters coming to watch it – afterwards, some restrictions were applied, such as only family are allowed to stand together and the body temperature measuring of the fans who enter the stadium.

The reason for that? Basically, the same that led the countries whose politicians, in a first moment, denied the danger of the disease to present more difficulties to face the new coronavirus crisis: according to its President, Aliaksandr Ryhoravič Łukašenka (also spelled Aleksandr Grigor'yevich Lukashenko), the closure of the borders is senseless. In his words, taking a sauna frequently could combat the virus, since the latter could not survive at high temperatures; washing hands with vodka and drinking the rectified spirit poison the virus; and working hard in the countryside would cure everyone<sup>15</sup>.

One of the leaders of the Belarusian opposition, Mikalai Statkevich, accused long-term President Aleksandr Lukashenko of hiding the real number of persons dead due to new coronavirus<sup>16</sup> – *officially*<sup>17</sup>, there are more than ten thousand cases and six dozen of deaths, and the number of recovered patients there is almost half of the world's average (0.16%). A renowned Belarusian journalist, Sviatlana Kalinkina, made an acid criticism after Łukašenka deciding against the enforcement of a strict quarantine, proposed by his Minister of Health: “It suddenly appeared that prohibitions are not our tradition [in Belarus]”<sup>18</sup>.

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tests, three deaths), the third (zero cases reported, albeit there is one recently death attributed to swine flu and four pinned on pneumonia – see: EURASIANET, 2020) and the fourth (more than 420 confirmations and six dead persons) ones, without supporters in the stands; the last one, which has no confirmed cases and the use of the word “coronavirus” in the media and in medical reports has been prohibited, with fans attending the matches. Coincidence or not – aside from Taiwan, where, in spite of it being a far from perfect democracy, such system of governance “stands out against other democracies in East Asia, with its political institutions sound, its legal system functional, its media free and self-confident, and its civil society brisk and buoyant” (SCHUBERT, 2012, p. 66)–, all of them are governed by autocratic leaders, and, just to remember, those are the official numbers, what arouses the suspicion of many critical researchers: (BARCELLOS; MUNIZ, 2020; WILLIAMS, 2019; GAMLEN, 2019, p. 117).

15 DIXON, 2020.

16 PLOTNIKOVA, 2020.

17 The italics in the word *officially* is because, as a matter of fact, Łukašenka does not accept those deaths as purely from the coronavirus. He has recently publicly declared that nobody will die from the virus in Belarus, because they have already found combinations of drugs that can save the people and that “the fatalities were the result of underlying health conditions in the patients, such as heart disease and diabetes” (MAKHOVSKY, 2020).

18 KALINKINA, 2020. Roughly translated.

Still, as the specialised media reported, the locals are not so concerned with the situation, probably having bought into the idea of their national political leader. Conversely, the foreign players think that the games should be suspended<sup>19</sup>. Such suspension would be in line with the recommendation of the WHO's experts and other virology scientists, as explained above, but also with claims of FIFPro, the worldwide representative organisation for professional footballers, whose general secretary asserted: "It is frankly not comprehensible how this could be going on. [...] So everything in common sense tells you that they need to apply the same standards and we will be lobbying to that effect"<sup>20</sup>.

### 3. An overview of Belarus's political context: Lukašenka's era

Prior to entering into the analysis of the topic that concerns this paper, it must be cleared: the following findings, viz., taking recourse to the right of resistance<sup>21</sup> suppose a place under the banner of something else than democracy (or, at least, an act that does not satisfy the democratic requirements) – and, for the lack of a better view, Belarus represents such *something else*. It is not a coincidence that the Belarusian president, who has been running the country for over two and a half decades now, is known as *the last dictator in Europe*<sup>22</sup>.

Despite the Constitution of Belarus stating it "is a unitary, democratic, social state based on the rule of law" (Section 1: Fundamentals of the Constitutional System, Article 1), the reality is somewhat different: its referendum was "outrageously falsified" and carried out through a "constitutional coup' by the head of state", wherefore contemporary Belarus shall be seen

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19 MUNDIM, 2020.

20 REID, 2020.

21 It must be highlighted that, once that is a great ambiguity and a nonconsensual conceptual delimitation of this right, it will be assumed hereinafter a *lato sensu* definition of "right to resist" (or alike), whereby it is seen as a genus and means any "[c]onfrontation (resistance, disobedience) that turns into a limitation of the power of public authority. In this sense, the right of resistance could be conceptualized as the right of the individual, or of organized groups, or of State organs, or of the entire people, to oppose, by any form, even force, an illegitimate power or the arbitrary and violent exercise, not in accordance with the law, of state power" (UGARTEMENDIA ECEIZABARRENA, Juan Ignacio, 1999, p. 214, roughly translated). Nevertheless, for a deeper dive into the differences between the right of resistance and similar figures, e.g.: BUZANELLO, 2001.

22 MCKAY, 2020.

as a country subject to a “law of rule” instead of a “rule of law”<sup>23</sup>. Eight years later, another referendum for the amendment of the Constitution was held, and its results, “perceived by many Belarusians as a crude falsification, provoked spontaneous protests in Minsk”<sup>24</sup>, the capital of the country.

The opposition’s representatives define the current Belarusian regime as *authoritarian* and the national government admits that the concept of *democracy* in Belarus is significantly distinct from the Western one – actually, there does not seem to be any meaningful difference between its promotion of democracy and the geopolitical reorientation of Belarus from the Russian orbit of influence towards the European Union (EU)<sup>25</sup>.

In that sense, some protestors against President Lukashenko created a document entitled *Charter 97*, which is a declaration calling for democracy in Belarus and brought up a pro-human rights and liberties news website. Such document is entitled like that in a direct reference to Czechoslovak human rights declaration *Charter 77*, dated of twenty years before, which was an informal civic initiative criticising the Government for failing to implement human rights provisions arising from, for instance, the 1960 Constitution of Czechoslovakia, the Final Act of the 1975 Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Basket III of the Helsinki Accords) and the 1966 United Nations covenants on political, civil, economic, and cultural rights. At that time, spreading the text of the document was considered a political crime by the communist regime.

Back to Belarus, *Charter 97* echoes the “devotion to the principles of independence, freedom and democracy, respect to the human rights, solidarity with everybody, who stands for elimination of dictatorial regime and restoration of democracy” in that country. Two and a half decades later, the situation has changed very little for people there, being still valid critics such as the one that says that the country’s fundamental law is flouted and their citizens are denied the right to elect representatives to governing structures. In reality, the National Assembly has little real authority or influence, being nearly all governing power concentrated in the hands of the President, and, furthermore, the legislative branch has been dominated by Łukašenka’s supporters in any event since 1996, meaning that his decisions have no substantive opposition.

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23 ROUDA, 2019, p. 261.

24 ROUDA, 2019, p. 262.

25 IOFFE, 2014, pp. 100-101.

The human rights situation in Belarus has already been the focus of attention of the United Nations (UN), which stated its *dramatic deterioration*, evidenced by numerous demonstrations, an unfair decree taxing the unemployed, bureaucratic restrictions, intimidations, arrests, arbitrary detentions, punishment of expressions of dissent, retaliatory procedures, political imprisonments, deprivation of liberty and curtailment of basic freedoms<sup>26</sup>.

Without prejudice to the remarks above, under the guidance of President Lukashenko, Belarus has changed considerably. Its economy has grown in a Chinese/Singaporean model – despite, at the present moment, it being in deep recession<sup>27</sup> –, and such prosperity and move towards European standards (*goodbye, USSR?!*) allows him stay running the country.

That does not mean Lukashenko is exactly trustable when the topic are his political ideals: should now the President go for the development of the private property and cry to heaven the structural reforms promoted in Belarus to facilitate the running of businesses, some years ago he called private businessmen *lousy fleas* and described the local economic system as a *market socialism*<sup>28</sup>.

What could be called as a flexibility, would better fit the noun *populism*, which links Łukašenka more to Latin America politicians than to those from the ex-Soviet nations<sup>29</sup>, where the politics is construed not based on a single person (personalism), but on clans and oligarchies<sup>30</sup>.

Regarding *populism*, even through the lens of Hannah Arendt's lessons, there is no consensus about its origin, one considering it as a consequence of the process of expropriation and production of superfluosity of the liberal democracies<sup>31</sup>, other referring to the key tension between plurality and superfluity, however, mainly, stating that, in spite of populism being possibly a monopolistic and destructive force, the liberal democracy is exactly what allows pluralism create the foundations for the expression of positive freedom. That is why there is still a counterforce to such situa-

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26 UN, 2017, p. 20.

27 EXOTIX, 2019, pp. 121-122.

28 DYNKO, 2010.

29 BURKHARDT, 2016, p. 471.

30 MATUSZAK, 2012, pp. 13-17; MATEJKA, 2012, pp. 35-36.

31 BIRMINGHAM, 2019, p. 192.

tion: the masses acting in concert, towards a shared world that embraces their common interests – which could be named as a *populist pluralism* or, should it seem less contradictory, a *popular pluralism*<sup>32</sup>.

Nonetheless, it shall be asserted: despite populism being an auto-catastrophic political stance that entails all kinds of scepticism, this does not hinder it to come from both left and right political spectrum. Particularly in Belarus, the national populism (or, the *right-wing populism/right-wing nationalism*) has a weak role; the *social populism* (or, *inclusionary populism/left-wing populism*), a merge of both socialism and populism, is what calls the shots: the ideology adopted by Łukašenka combines the left-wing politics and populist rhetoric and themes.

Since 2003, the President proclaims a *state ideology*<sup>33</sup>, which shall not be deemed as a true national Belarusian ideology<sup>34</sup>. Indeed, it essentially aims to consolidate his personal, full control over the state, including the educational system and the media, and to perpetuate himself and ensure his continuity as the maximum leader of the country<sup>35</sup>.

The issue is that, whereas the right-wing populism goes well during times of crisis (e.g., the main mafia state systems, such as Russia and Ukraine), the left-wing one can give poor responses when it is pitted against economic crisis, offering only “disappointment and frustration [...], and [,] if the crisis endures much longer, [...] making the power] soon be called into question”<sup>36</sup>.

This context proves what a prominent Belarusian political analyst noted: Lukashenko is no more than a hostage of the system himself created, and so he will never surrender power voluntarily or without bloodshed<sup>37</sup>. By the way, since Rome, no strongman voluntarily gives up the power, and this is the reason why the relinquishment of power by the first and only Roman emperor to do that, Diocletian, was called by Julius Caesar as an act of political illiteracy: *dictators should not retire*.

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32 MORGAN, 2019, pp. 200-201.

33 WILSON, 2011, p. 203.

34 ŁATYSZONEK, 2006, p. 194.

35 ROUDA, 2019, p. 269.

36 ROUDA, 2019, p. 261.

37 KARBALEVICH, 2010.

Unlike Julius Caesar's words might mean, Diocletian was not a non-educated person. As a matter of fact, it is far probable that he knew that his loyal fellow-countrymen would abandon their loyalty to him as soon as they smelled blood, being really more difficult to choose his own successor on the brink of chaos or even buried for posterity: "it was better to hand over power, to step down, and then pull strings as needed from the wings while he was still alive"<sup>38</sup>.

However, that is not exactly the situation when it comes to Łukašenka: he is described as an incorrigible ignorant in areas of state management, having no particular interest in the study of the ideas, but only in retaining power<sup>39</sup> and his unlimited ambition. For this reason, all life scenarios in Belarus are under the control of the President and subject to his personal interference – typical of autocracies.

It was used the term autocracies, instead of *authoritarianisms* or *totalitarianisms* (the two more common ones when talking about the politics in Belarus), because it is here adopted the understanding, based on the principle of political liberty – "[a] person is politically free if he is subject to his own will and not to a heteronomous or alien will"<sup>40</sup> –, that there are just two pure forms of government, the *democracy* and the *autocracy*, even though neither has properly or entirely taken place over time, but by means of manageable whispers, i.e., mixed or intermediary forms<sup>41</sup>. Norberto Bobbio, in turn, notes that these two ideal types can be also represented as *republic*, from Rousseau's point of view, and *despotism*, in Hegel's sense<sup>42</sup>.

Authoritarianism shall not be seen as a political system or a political expression of power, but just a – sometimes more, sometimes less authoritarian – unilateral way of exercising power. Therefore, authoritarianism may not be confused to or identify with autocracy, much less to democracy; in fact, its opposite is liberalism, and both (authoritarianism and liberalism) are "forms of exercising power that fluctuate at the same time, deter-

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38 STRAUSS, 2019, p. 281.

39 IOFFE, 2014, p. 158.

40 BAUME, 2013, p. 192.

41 KELSEN, 1973, p. 99.

42 BOBBIO, 1989, p. 103.

mining the degree of strength, power and authority of political regimes”<sup>43</sup>.

Besides that, political experts and insiders do not agree what exactly is the Belarusian existing regime<sup>44</sup>, from *sultanism*<sup>45</sup> to *neo-communism*<sup>46</sup> or *superpresidentialism*<sup>47</sup> to *competitive autocracy*<sup>48</sup>. Without limitation to the foregoing, the current political context in Belarus, dissociated from democracy and closer to a non-democratic system, more than being related to the classical categorisation proposed by Linz and Stepan, i.e., authoritarianism, totalitarianism, post-totalitarianism or sultanism<sup>49</sup>, it has already been nominated as an *elected dictatorship*<sup>50</sup>, a *neo-authoritarian regime*<sup>51</sup>, a *non-party system*<sup>52</sup> or, simply, *lukashenkism*<sup>53</sup>.

Even so, Łukašenka remains firmly in power, what may be explained by the fact that he is – allegedly – a political with the gift of intuition, sensitive to public feeling and the social needs – his regime has successfully developed and stabilised Belarus socio-economic relations and strengthened the perception of security among the population<sup>54</sup> –, but also a strategist on the international political arena, suppressing internal opponents of the regime and ending up as the personification of stability and order in Belarus, “a miniature version of the Soviet Union itself”<sup>55</sup>. Accidentally or deliberately, and it appears to be the last one, the security services there still operate under their Soviet-era name, *the KGB*<sup>56</sup>.

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43 BARROSO et al., 1976, pp. 89-90. Roughly translated.

44 BEKUS, 2010, pp. 93-97.

45 EKE; KUZIO, 2000, p. 536.

46 SHUSHKEVICH, 2002.

47 WHITE; KOROSTELEVA, 2005, p. 64.

48 MANAEV, 2014, pp. 56-59.

49 LINZ; STEPAN, 1996, pp. 38-54.

50 KOROSTELEVA; LAWSON; MARSH, 2003, p. 15.

51 USOV, 2008, pp. 110-111.

52 ROUDA, 2019, p. 259.

53 MCMAHON, 1997, pp. 129-137; ZVIGLYANICH, 1999.

54 USOV, 2008, p. 110.

55 MYERS, 2006.

56 BATALDEN; BATALDEN, 1997, pp. 57-58; ORTEGA, 2010.

#### 4. *Hic sunt dracones* – not if fundamental rights are respected; it is time to resist!

Since 2017, the Spanish television heist crime drama series created by Álex Pina, *La Casa de Papel* (in English known as *Money Heist*) is considered a phenomenon. The critical acclaimed it for a sophisticated plot, vibrant interpersonal dramas and outstanding direction. Besides that, the TV show, with its lemma *¡Nosotros somos la resistencia!* (“We are the resistance!”), brought up again a right that, in times of democracy, gets a little bit forgotten: the right to resist.

Forgotten, but not gone; indeed, resistance does not always come to the spotlight. Indeed, this term is frequently used as a phrase, being accompanied by an adjective, adverb or noun, such as *everyday resistance*, *critical resistance*, *off-kilter resistance* or *civil resistance*. Also, in varied fields of research (e.g., social movement, conflict/development, revolutionary, terrorism and subaltern studies) there are “suggestions of other concepts with different but similar connotations as resistance; for example, ‘contention’, ‘protest’, ‘power struggle’, ‘revolution’ and ‘mimicry’”<sup>57</sup>.

While resistance “has been at the heart of all political theories since mankind started to conceptualize the foundations of public power”<sup>58</sup>, it is typically revisited when the relevant situation involves non-democratic regimes or acts. Or rather, as a human right – “natural or invented [by people], they are palpable feature of our moral world”<sup>59</sup> –, the right to resist may be invoked anytime and anywhere domination, power or oppression is present – even under (formal) democratic regimes<sup>60</sup>, such as Belarus. The opposition to unjust laws is the way how the repulsion to a specific legal precept or a set of provisions in disagreement with the moral law is realised, insofar as resistance guarantees the self-defence of the society, the people’s fundamental rights, the control of public acts and maintains the constitutional pact by those in power<sup>61</sup>.

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57 BAAZ; LILJA; VINTHAGEN, 2018, p. 20.

58 TOMUSCHAT, 1984, p. 13.

59 WALZER, 2006, p. 54.

60 Therefore, falls apart the affirmation that is often made “that citizens of a democratic country may never violate democratically derives laws [...], once a good democrat may disagree with the laws of his country but will never carry that disagreement to open disobedience [... and, thus,] never engage in civil disobedience” (KELLNER, 1975, p. 899).

61 CARVALHO, 2008, p. 698.

By the way, the concept of resistance adopted here is the one that separates it from power itself; otherwise, to resist means just a different form of power, since all types of acts in which power is opposed would represent resistance, including the exercise of power against power. Thus, resistance shall be seen as a response to power (an act) from below, viz., from subalterns (the performers) who, on behalf of themselves or in solidarity with any other person that has a subordinated status to the authorities, may challenge, negotiate and/or undermine power<sup>62</sup>. This is the reason why the right to resist protects social facts, such as those organised social movements involved in civil disobedience<sup>63</sup>.

As well all know, the established idea of government evinces that it shall serve the interests of the people, meaning that, if it tends to get lost, governmental orders lack validity and it opens up the possibility of the individual not obeying them, for its injustice or illegitimacy. Without the trust of the citizens, the government turns into an entity that has little or no reason to exist<sup>64</sup>, since, in line with Max Weber's thinking, political legitimacy is "the de facto ability of a political regime to secure acceptance based on *belief* (*Legitimitätsglaube*) as opposed to securing compliance based on *coercion* alone"<sup>65</sup>.

The right of resistance is historically considered a logical consequence of the principle of self-determination<sup>66</sup>, in its internal aspect, which implies the internationally recognised right of the people "to determine their own form of government"<sup>67</sup>, viz., their political status and their economic,

62 BAAZ; LILJA; VINTHAGEN, 2018, pp. 24-26.

63 CARVALHO, 2008, p. 698. Regarding civil disobedience, John Rawls (1999, p. 319) points out it is a public (once it is carried out in an open manner, subject to arrests), nonviolent (there are no direct physical or emotional harms to people or damages to properties), conscientious (it is a sincere and motivated opposition to law and/or government policies, based on moral, ethical or political principles) and political (since its objective is a legal or political change) act contrary to law, which normally aims to change the legislation or public policies. In his view, civil disobedience is a form of protest that, in spite of being illegal, remains "within the limits of fidelity to law" (RAWLS, 1999, p. 326). Such concept, however, is not immune to criticism: "[c]ertainly, that definition, when considering civil disobedience as a nonviolent public act, is situated in a perspective remarkably close to that of the theory of the passive right of resistance. Unfortunately, Rawls expressly states the intention not to consider other cases of disobedience to the law, such as the right to resist" (CARVAJAL ARAVENA, 1992, p. 99, roughly translated).

64 WEBER, 2003, pp. 221-222.

65 LANGVATN, 2016, p. 133, emphasised in the original text.

66 RAZMETAeva, 2014, p. 760.

67 MUSTAFA, 1971, p. 479.

social and cultural development (Article 1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966).

As positivised, this right finds its origin in the Virginia Declaration of Rights (USA) of 1776 (Sections 1 and 3)<sup>68</sup>, the Declaration of Rights of Maryland (USA) of 1776 (number IV)<sup>69</sup>, the United States Declaration of Independence of 1776 (Thomas Jefferson's writings)<sup>70</sup>, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789 (Articles 1 and 2)<sup>71</sup> and the French Declaration of the Rights of the Man and of the Citizen of 1793 (Articles 33 to 35)<sup>72</sup>.

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68 Section 1. That all men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety. / Section 3. That government is, or ought to be, instituted for the common benefit, protection, and security of the people, nation, or community; of all the various modes and forms of government, that is best which is capable of producing the greatest degree of happiness and safety and is most effectually secured against the danger of maladministration. And that, when any government shall be found inadequate or contrary to these purposes, a majority of the community has an indubitable, inalienable, and indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish it, in such manner as shall be judged most conducive to the public weal.

69 IV. That all persons invested with the legislative or executive powers of government are the trustees of the public, and, as such, accountable for their conduct; wherefore, whenever the ends of government are perverted, and public liberty manifestly endangered, and all other means of redress are ineffectual, the people may, and of right ought, to reform the old or establish a new government. The doctrine of non-resistance, against arbitrary power and oppression, is absurd, slavish, and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind.

70 "In Congress, July 4, 1776. The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America [...] We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security".

71 Articles: 1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good. 2. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.

72 Articles: [Omissis] 33. Resistance to oppression is the consequence of the other rights of

It happens that such right may be seen in a different way; actually, the right that is closer to the self-determination is the right to exist, i.e., whenever that existence is threatened by attacks or genocides, comes in the self-determination of the collectivity. Hence, the right of resistance would be “necessarily an outgrowth of the more primary right to exist (since resistance might be an instrumental method of securing existence)”<sup>73</sup>.

Note: although there is an individual self-determination – indeed, that would be the most basic, universal value in a moral universalism context of the modern age<sup>74</sup>, once the states, communities or particular groups have a right to secure their sovereignty or integrity as, *ultima ratio*, an outgrowth of the rights of individuals’, like to life and liberty, which are “entailed by our sense of what it means to be a human being”<sup>75</sup> –, in the sense given above, the principle (self-determination) does not apply to individuals themselves: it is exercisable by whole peoples in cases of remedial secession “or by substantial groups markedly distinguished from the remainder of the community in which they live by virtue of their physical characteristics, habitual language, religious belief or political affiliations”<sup>76</sup>.

Conversely, the right to resist – though legal scholars do not unanimously accept this definition<sup>77</sup> – relies on an individual basis, viz., it is a right that shall be used by any person, not only within a determined group of people, irrespective of his/her status under the legal system of such a country (man/woman, child/adult, citizen/foreigner, etc.), “because the victims from the actions of the public authority may not only be the person having a stable political and legal relationship with a specific state”<sup>78</sup>.

For this reason, *Antigone*, a play written by the ancient Greek tragedian Sophocles, is considered as the first example of the right of resistance; in the tragedy, Antigone decides to disobey Creon’s decree and bury her

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man. 34. There is oppression against the social body when a single one of its members is oppressed: there is oppression against each member when the social body is oppressed. 35. When the government violates the rights of the people, insurrection is for the people and for each portion of the people the most sacred of rights and the most indispensable of duties.

73 OHLIN, 2016, p. 71.

74 BÖHME, 2001, p. 56.

75 WALZER, 2006, p. 54.

76 MUSTAFA, 1971, p. 481.

77 GINSBURG; LANSBERG-RODRÍGUEZ; VERSTEEG, 2013, p. 1192.

78 RAZMETAeva, 2014, p. 768.

brother, Polynices, whose body should be in public shame and not sanctified by holy rites, after leading a civil war in the city of Thebes, fighting for the throne with his other brother, Eteocles: “[t]o obey and to disobey are always disjunctive. If a man can only obey and not disobey, he is a slave; if he can only disobey and not obey, he is a rebel”<sup>79</sup>.

Indeed, the rationale for a defensive force is the fact that anyone placed in a scenario in which he/she is under unjustified or excessive demands has the right to resist, regardless of whether or not that act will secure his/her existence, “because doing so is an expression of the defender’s autonomy as both a moral agent and a legitimate object of moral concern”<sup>80</sup>. That is why it can be treated as “an independent, neo-Kantian right [...], that is not reducible to the right to exist [..., because,] even in such cases annihilation is inevitable and existence cannot be protected, the right of resistance persists”<sup>81</sup>.

Nevertheless, people appear not to instantly and clearly perceive this right itself as a claim-right and, from this vantage point, its (other agent with a) corresponding duty, i.e., “it isn’t immediately obvious who that would be or what the right would require them to do”<sup>82</sup>, though it is presumable that, once resistance is duly realised, the state’s duty is “not to repress those engaged in it. Such repression might conceivably lead to criminal liability, either on the international plane or in local courts after a political transition, on the part of state agents that engage in such repression”<sup>83</sup>.

The right of resistance, additionally, is not a pretext for each and every deviant behaviour; after all, obeying is the common conduct standard and disobeying is the minority practise, including both moral and political grounds<sup>84</sup> – it will not be discussed here why do people obey the rules and laws, if, for instance, as a means of avoiding punishment or because they are intrinsically good, altruistic and cooperative by nature, assuming that individuals “are naturally inclined to behave in socially responsible ways”<sup>85</sup>.

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79 FALCÓN Y TELLA, 2008, p. 67.

80 OHLIN, 2016, p. 90.

81 OHLIN, 2016, p. 71.

82 FINLAY, 2015, p. 34.

83 GINSBURG; LANSBERG-RODRÍGUEZ; VERSTEEG, 2013, p. 1195.

84 MOULIN-DOOS, 2015, pp. 21-22.

85 KREBS, 2011, p. 77.

In reality, the right to resist constitutes an emergency right, to be exercised reasonably and proportionately, in extremely exceptional situations<sup>86</sup>, “as a last resort”<sup>87</sup>. Otherwise, it loses its character of resistance and transforms into a revolution or rebellion, which is, at some level, its opposite: the aim of the right to revolt or to rebel is a complete displacement of the constitutional order, while the right to resist seeks to protect it or enforce its restoration<sup>88</sup>, challenging, changing or retaining specific conditions referring to social relationships, procedures and/or institutions<sup>89</sup>.

Likewise, resistance ought to be exercised only in particular circumstances because “power needs resistance, and would not be operative without it. Power depends on points of resistance to spread itself more extensively through the social network”<sup>90</sup>. That means that, should resistance not be properly pursued, the authority(ies) against who such kind of attitude, behaviour or action is directed will become even more powerful.

Notwithstanding the legislations that have positivised the resistance as “a right or an obligation [..., i.e.,] whether [it] is an option, the exercise of which depends on the citizens’ willingness and preferences, or a duty, wherein the people are required to act under certain conditions”<sup>91</sup>, if for no other reason, the above is enough to assert a degree of contradiction inherent in those legislative actions, since a juridical system may not introduce loopholes in itself: “the law cannot justify the violation of the law”<sup>92</sup>, irrespective of whether “this violation aims at preventing the violation of another law”<sup>93</sup>.

In more specific words, there is no rationality in promulgating norms expecting their fulfilment and, as well, admitting their breaking under exactly those norms; it would mean, at one and the same time, both com-

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86 KAUFMANN, 1985-1986.

87 WALZER, 2006, p. 330.

88 GINSBURG; LANSBERG-RODRÍGUEZ; VERSTEEG, 2013, p. 1193.

89 ROUTLEDGE, 1997, p. 69.

90 HOY, 1999, p. 19-20.

91 GINSBURG; LANSBERG-RODRÍGUEZ; VERSTEEG, 2013, p. 1227. For an extensive list of legislations that constitutionally deal with the right to resist, see: GINSBURG; LANSBERG-RODRÍGUEZ; VERSTEEG, 2013, pp. 1226-1228 and pp. 1242-1259.

92 COHEN, 1971, p. 94.

93 ARENDT, 1972, p. 99.

elling and not compelling<sup>94</sup>. In short, it is illogical a citizen be authorised by a higher order norm, e.g., the Constitution, to disobey lower-ranking norms; in such situation, the legality of the latter norms would be jeopardised, viz., limited or denied – and that is why the right to disobey shall be directed to the excesses of authority<sup>95</sup>.

### 5. So, in times of COVID-19, Belarus's footballers could (or should... must?) force a shutdown?

In the context previously outlined, President Lukashenko and his “unpredictable behavior” under an “unlawful state”<sup>96</sup> seem able to decide alone<sup>97</sup> if the professional football in Belarus will continue to be played, including how it will take place, viz., with or without spectators, with or without celebration of goals scored on the pitch, etc. Facing calls from the WHO to introduce stricter anti-epidemic measures, the country's Minister of Health, Vladimir Karanik, said he is not entitled to decide whether stopping or not public events, like mass gatherings and sports events. In Łukašenka's mind is apparently drawing some economy worries related to a lockdown – which seems to keep the leader of the nation awake at night more than the disease itself<sup>98</sup> and is already making him lose stalwart allies<sup>99</sup>.

And those concerns are related to the reduction of Russian energy subsidies since the conversations between both countries about a deeper integration got ground to a standstill – actually, Belarus is both “isolated and at the mercy of Russia, on whose energy it is heavily dependent”<sup>100</sup>. Now, the economic damages of an outbreak could deepen turmoil: “the populist regimes are more vulnerable to economic difficulties than clan-based regimes”<sup>101</sup>.

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94 SÁEZ CABRERA, 2000, p. 325.

95 ÁLVAREZ, 1990-1991, pp. 49-50.

96 ROUDA, 2019, p. 263.

97 Alone shall not be read exactly as a figure of speech: “Lukashenka's circle of friends is small and shrinking. As it becomes increasingly clear that the current course does not save Belarus' problems, Lukashenka's appeal is waning, even among his supporters” (RUDLING, 2008, p. 71).

98 PATIN, 2020.

99 JEJELEVICIUS, 2020.

100 RUDLING, 2008, p. 71.

101 MATSUZATO, 2004, p. 256.

Seen from a different perspective, democracy is, as a rule, the regime par excellence that does not continue to reproduce itself within the “confining conditions”<sup>102</sup> under which it has arisen, but may, eventually, move beyond it, since “unlike authoritarian regimes, democracies have the capacity to modify their rules and institutions consensually in response to changing circumstances”<sup>103</sup>. Furthermore, 2020 is the year when new elections shall be held in Belarus, and Lukashenko has already announced he will run for a sixth term in office<sup>104</sup>.

That is why precautions against the new coronavirus in Belarus are being taken slowly – or, to put it another way, strict measures are not being really carried out. Not even the fans vow to stop going to the stadiums and their call on the national association to be courageous and shut down the Belarusian football championships were able to change the scenario<sup>105</sup>.

The issue is: in times of pandemic, particularly, with the majority of the countries implementing the shutdown, closing their boundaries, limiting non-essential activities, all the other 54 members of UEFA suspending their championships, makes sense Belarus’s isolated decision to keep playing?

While not absolutely deconstructing Weber’s idea outlined above, based on the de facto acceptance of political authority, it is important to emphasise that Rawls went above and beyond, bringing new elements to the debate<sup>106</sup>. Firstly, he underscores that the legitimacy of democratic decisions and laws is not a matter of whether they are just or not, but a consequence of their legitimate enactment, viz., in conformity with “an accepted legitimate democratic procedure. It is of great importance that the constitution specifying the procedure be sufficiently just, even though not perfectly just, as no human institution can be that”<sup>107</sup>.

Thus, the American philosopher points out that legitimacy has an essential connection to justice, albeit the former being weaker than the latter, what explains its softer constraints on what is doable and leaves a room

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102 KIRCHHEIMER, 1965.

103 SCHMITTER; KARL, 1991, p. 87.

104 FEDOSENKO, 2019.

105 KARMANAU, 2020.

106 RAWLS, 2005, pp. 427-429.

107 RAWLS, 2005, p. 428.

for manoeuvre in comparison with justice (i.e., which justice might not permit). In other words, until it becomes illegitimate for being unjust, the power and its outcomes will remain tolerated and legitimate(d)<sup>108</sup>.

Rawls's vision is important for the query that entitles this final chapter, since, as explained above, the right of resistance is an exercisable right by individuals, groups or communities whenever "the state – or incumbent regime – fails in its principal duty [...], which is] to pursue the best possible fulfilment of human rights and a failure to do so merits to a greater or lesser degree the charge of oppression"<sup>109</sup>.

By the way, that is, in essence, the reason why reference is made here to the *right of resistance* instead of, for instance, *civil disobedience*. In reality, though "[n]o general accepted definition of 'civil disobedience' has been found"<sup>110</sup> until now, it is known the distinguishment made by the German Constitutional Court, to which the right to resist is associated with the resistance to an *obviously unlawful regime* and *civil disobedience* regards a *presumed unconstitutional law*<sup>111</sup> – and, a priori (or rather, when considered separately), the resistance movement by footballers for an outbreak during the pandemic would be just a punctual resistance (i.e., a resistance against a *presumed unconstitutional law/political police*).

Nevertheless, once the entire political system in Belarus is warped, such kind of act would constitute a true – and justified – opposition to the government itself. Indeed, even differentiating those rights, the German Court considered that the second one (*civil disobedience*) does not benefit from the legal characteristic of the other (*right to resist*)<sup>112</sup>, meaning that it could not consensually and calmly embrace the existence "of such a right to resist a presumed unconstitutional law, i.e., on *civil disobedience*"<sup>113</sup>.

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108 RAWLS, 2005, p. 428.

109 FINLAY, 2015, pp. 35-36.

110 KELLNER, 1975, p. 899.

111 MOULIN-DOOS, 2015, p. 50.

112 GERMANY, 1956.

113 MOULIN-DOOS, 2015, p. 51, emphasised in the original text. Actually, the Lockean or liberal right to resist is based on the fact that every individual holds natural rights, inter alia, the right to oppose the political authority if the latter does not respect the rights of the former, insofar as the legitimacy of the authority is given by the people and can be retracted at all times if the government does not protect those natural rights (LOCKE, 2004, p. 89). In that sense, such right was developed taking into consideration "solely the context of a tyrannical regime" (MOULIN-DOOS, 2015, p. 50), so "[t]he doctrine of the liberal right of resistance has no the-

In other words, and considering that, in general, the right to resist has a strong and accurate doctrinal basis (i.e., the natural law and the theory of justice – hence the various levels of resistance, from passive to active resistance and other phenomena related to it<sup>114</sup>, and its ethical foundations, which make always legitimate the invocation and exercise of such right), so that civil disobedience corresponds to “political manifestations or behaviours that have derived from the right of resistance due to, among other historical causes, the inexorable process of secularization of modern society”, in the case of Belarusian football, from a micro perspective, resistance could be an act of civil disobedience.

However, in the macro, it would mean (a grain of sand in) opposition to the entire (unlawful) regime – and it could trigger mass demonstrations in that direction –, given that Lukašenka, in a not exactly democratic (that is, an autocratic) way, personifies himself through it, dominating almost everything, defining each step of the main areas and issues, making all important decisions, whatever they may be and even though if there are people more suitable for that, such as those nominated by him – and this is exactly the situation that emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Back to the matter at hand, in actual fact, resistance is more than just a Shakespearean-like phrase (*to resist, or not to resist, that is the question*); it is a real, natural *duty* (or, in this sense absolutely interchangeable, an *obligation*)<sup>115</sup>, which pertains to *everyone*, albeit in different ways over time. If resistance is necessary as a response to any severe injustices (the structural ones or those arising from the legal system or produced by the agents of the state), then it has to be exercised, regardless of it being prescribed by previous law, as a *duty*, a political *obligation* it is<sup>116</sup>.

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oretical relationship with a theological-moral foundation, not to mention a biblical foundation, a substantial aspect in the theory of the classical liberal right of resistance” (CARVAJAL ARAVENA, 1992, p. 98, roughly translated).

114 FALCÓN Y TELLA, 2004, pp. 69-139.

115 Although the philosophers do not often agree whether duty and obligation (but also wrong and ought) shall be distinguished or not (BRANDT, 1964, p. 374), when they are used within the perspective of the natural morality, and not under the institutional morality, viz., when the moral reason for acting is independent of the person's actions in the past, his/her certain voluntary acts (ex.: promises, consents, agreements, acceptances, orders), both terms are definitely interchangeable – for instance, linguistics shall not consider inappropriate the use of duty or obligation in a situation such as the help of starving people whenever a natural morality is involved, i.e., whenever it underlies in the notion of requirement (BERAN, 2020, pp. 19-22; VERWEIJ, 2000, p. 103).

116 DELMAS, 2018, pp. 5-20.

Hence, it could be asserted that there is a moral right to public disobedience, which is in line with the disjunctive duty for citizens to obey the law or engage in public disobedience<sup>117</sup>: it is both “a right and a general duty of the citizens. This is nothing less than a great political responsibility in ‘abnormal’ conditions. It is not a special or exclusive duty of Christians”<sup>118</sup>. By the way, also “in the medieval perception, [it] was not merely a right but a duty”<sup>119</sup>.

Therefore, even if Łukašenka’s power is considered (formally) legitimate, back to Rawls’s arguments, it is undoubted that the decision outcomes do not need to be fully just, but only not grossly unjust, then “a political authority, say a government, can be politically legitimate, while a particular decision issued by this government is illegitimate”<sup>120</sup>. In other words, although, in that context, the decision of the President of Belarus regarding the non-suspension of the sports activities – mainly the national football tournaments – might be indisputable under a (formal) legitimacy aspect, it may not pass the justice (or, material legitimacy) test: “it is possible to be under political obligation [to obey the state] and yet to be morally justified disobeying the state”<sup>121</sup>.

Having said that, while the technical or scientific recommendations of experts, particularly those from the WHO, are that the appropriate measures to tackle the pandemic are still the quarantine, physical isolation and social distancing, being them considered the most efficient manner to prevent transmission and spread of the new coronavirus – or, to put it another way, as long as these strategies are in evidence, that is, until “the end of the social isolation measures and the return to normality”<sup>122</sup>, even though restrictions may be brought back into force “if or when case numbers rebound”<sup>123</sup> – ,for no other reason they have been adopted by most of the countries around the globe, especially those where the cases are counted in thousands, not in dozens or hundreds – exactly the situation of

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117 LEFKOWITZ, 2007, p. 215.

118 MOLTSMANN; BASTOS, 2014, p. 60. Roughly translated.

119 BIELEFELDT, 2003, p. 1098.

120 LANGVATN, 2016, p. 149.

121 BERAN, 1977, p. 260.

122 CURRIE et al., 2020, p. 85.

123 FERGUSON et al., 2020, p. 2.

Belarus –, it is imperative that the protection of human rights and dignity of the human being guides the state's actions at all levels, including those concerning the sports competitions.

Thus, considering their *duty* of disobeying such immoral decision of the President – “[o]ne has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that ‘an unjust law is no law at all’”<sup>124</sup> – and the fact that sport is a site where people are able to more easily engage others (and themselves) in activism, protests, demonstrations, resistance and persistence behaviours – viz., players, coaches and other participants of this sector of activity, particularly when they are “celebrities”, may use their prominent positions to influence the community towards societal changes or against injustices existing within the society, while the effectiveness of their voice is directly linked to their own credibility and the involvement of their audience<sup>125</sup> –, the footballers in Belarus not only may, but must stop playing. With or without the agreement of the national authorities and/or of the local football association. With no hesitations or awkward silences. Immediately<sup>126</sup>.

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124 KING JR., 1963, p. 3.

125 CUNNINGHAM *et al.*, 2021; AGYEMANG; SINGER; WEEMS, 2020.

126 Even though “other's resistance, material contexts, social relations, and so on also encourage and facilitate resistance” (BAAZ *et al.*, 2018, p. 33), it shall be highlighted that the oppressed is the only one who can authoritatively decide the moment when she or he is ready to any kind of movement or changing act. That is why, despite being a duty, “it is still a RIGHT that she [or he] has; it's something which (in the normal case) she [or he] holds against others. And [...] the duty aspect of the right is not just a matter of submitting to a set of rules. Often what it involves is continual and active exercise of intelligence and choice; and these are her [or his] choices to make, her [or his] intelligence to exercise. She [or he] is privileged in this regard. [...] I actually think lots of rights are like this, especially political rights (and I am going to say more about that in a moment). They have this dual character of right and responsibility, involving: (1) the designation of an important task, (2) the privileging of someone as the person to perform the task, making the decisions which the task requires, (3) doing so in view of the particular interest that that person has in the matter, and (4) the protection of their decision-making pursuant to this responsibility against interference by others and even by the state (except in extreme cases). This seems to me to be a distinctive form of right and one worth studying in some detail. I shall call rights of this kind ‘responsibility-rights,’ and I shall call the formal analysis I have just sketched the ‘responsibility-form’ of rights. I don't think it applies to all rights. But it can be useful in the analysis of a great many of them” (WALDRON, 2010, pp. 5-6, emphasised in the original text). Quite similarly, Blunt (2017, p. 880) underscores that “the liberty-right and claim-right elements of resistance [...] can] often run together, but this is not necessary in every instance of resistance. There is no duty to comply with radically unjust laws or norms. The fugitive slave breaks the law, but it is a law she is not bound to follow. However, this does not mean that she is compelled to pursue institutional reform”.

After all, at the end of the day, these “are just words. But it would be worth recalling the obvious fact that words change human beings, and, the latter, change the world”<sup>127</sup>. Nevertheless, in a nutshell, stay home, stay healthy and stay safe are – still and until further notice – the catchphrases here.

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