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Book Review: Nicolas Badalassi and Sarah B. Snyder (edited by), *The CSCE and the End of the Cold War. Diplomacy, Societies and Human Rights. 1972-1990.* New York, Oxford: Berghahn, 2019.

Paul POPA*

IN THIS 2019 EDITION coordinated by Nicolas Badalassi and Sarah B. Snyder, the authors are presenting aspects on human rights policies evolved through diplomatic techniques in some key events of the Cold War and how these human rights were approached, by communists and by Western Countries. The negotiation of the Final Act from Helsinki once again underlined the major differences in approach, determined by the liberal way in which Western European society evolved, but also by the interests of Eastern European states. A major goal was for human rights to overcome national interests, so that they represent the point of negotiation in every inter-state relation.

In this regard, the role of the CSCE has proved crucial. What was projected as a possible failure turned out into a major project that changed European societies. According to the authors, the success of the CSCE was due to the bilateral and multilateral diplomacy of the Western diplomats, but also the “long term logic” of the CSCE, fully supported by the following meetings in Belgrade, Madrid and Vienna. The architecture created by the CSCE has allowed continuous negotiations in many fields and implementations through different instruments, today the CSCE retaining a major role in cooperation and European security. The volume presents numerous aspects regarding the diplomatic and negotiation instruments between the West and the East, and especially their effects on the post-Cold War European development, which are found today in the form of NGOs manifestations, intellectual elite, media, institutions, etc.

From my point of view, updating some information on events of the way in which human rights have developed is extremely important, considering the

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nationalist and populist movements that are found in Europe nowadays, an anchor in the past of European construction and a continuous reference to the democratization process is vital, precisely to remind us constantly of the efforts that have been made to have the rights and freedoms today. For a better understanding of the events, the volume is divided into three parts: the first part focuses on the experience of the diplomats at the meetings, the strategies, the topics discussed and their consequences; the second section reviews the "transnational movements that defended the human rights" and focuses on the European efforts brought together to seek, establish and implement new human rights visions; and finally, the third part analyses cases of some states on both sides of the Iron Curtain regarding the approach of the policies debated during the meetings and how they subsequently influenced the respective states.

Part I, Diplomats, Diplomacies and the Making of the CSCE, begins with an article by Andrei Zagorski, which presents ***The Human Dimension of the CSCE, 1975–1990***, as a new debate on the agenda of the communists and Western Countries and explains how the two major analysis and debate groups faced numerous mutual reservations, but also how the civil society was majorly involved in making these decisions. From a historical perspective, the author presents the evolution of human rights protection, which led to the creation of international initiatives and mechanisms that developed over time and were specific to Western Countries. Thus, the obligation of respect for human rights and freedoms has been made in the consideration of numerous interests. The follow-up meetings reinforced the need for these meetings to be regular and the development of policies represents a continuous process of their implementation. One condition imposed by the Soviets was *Non-intervention in Internal Affairs*, so *Human Dimension Mechanism* was successful only after 1989 when interaction between the CSCE and NGO's could be strengthened.

The second chapter, *Executors or creative deal-makers? The role of the diplomats in the making of the Helsinki CSCE* (Martin D. Brown and Angela Romano), shows how over six hundred diplomats have done a tremendous job. In the first phase, the chapter sets out the need to create a jargon for diplomats, 'in order to reconcile the goals of some delegations'. This has allowed many rules of negotiation and debate to be changed repeatedly. There has always been a need for consensus, which has led to ad-hoc alliances in informal meetings. Although supposedly non-military meetings, NATO, Warsaw Pact and NNA delegates monopolized the talks, always marginalizing important issues. A special case is that of the UK whose diplomats have proven extremely creative, but also that of France whose diplomats have always created opportunities for negotiation in informal meetings.

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Nicolas Badalassi presents in the third chapter, *From Talleyrand To Sakharov - French Diplomacy in Search of a 'Helsinki Effect'*, the European projection of this conference as one of the biggest contemporary diplomatic events, as well as the political statements according to which the Act from Helsinki represents "an essential human step". The chapter focuses on the social effects that these diplomatic meetings had a vision on human relations, considering the ideas of different delegations. For example, the French were more cunning, always creating the projection of a continuous process, so as to win over the Soviets, who only wanted to draw a few general lines.

'*Human Rights, Peace and Security Has Inseparable*' Max Kampelman and the Helsinki Process' written by Stephan Kieninger presents the role played by US Ambassador Max Kampelman. Following a biographical presentation, the author focuses on presenting his soft power approach by having the capacity "to combine public diplomacy and top-secret backchannel talks with the Soviets". It also played an important role in the next stages both in Belgrade in relation to the communist bloc, but also in Madrid where gun control was analysed especially in relation to NATO.

Part II, The transnational promotion of human rights and the role of dissidence, is structured in five chapters. The first of these, *The committee of concerned scientists and the Helsinki Final Act 'refusenik' scientists, détente and human rights* (Elisabetta Vezzosi) evaluates the role played by scientific internationalism in the consolidation of human rights in the Cold War. This chapter focuses on the role played by scholars and scientists in stressing the need for possible changes in research activity, but also protection against intellectual theft.

Christian P. Peterson, in chapter 6, *Seeing the value of the Helsinki Accords - Human Rights, peace and transnational debates about détente, 1981–1988*, focuses on the public perception of these meetings, but especially the communication between the two blocs on strengthening human rights. The limitations of some negotiations, the implications of Western activists, but especially the activity of support groups are presented. Many of the decisions adopted in the Helsinki Final Act were as a result of the involvement of private citizens to strengthen European democracies.

The importance of the Helsinki process for the opposition in Central and Eastern Europe and the Western peace movements in the 1980s (Jacek Czaputowicz) is a chapter dedicated to the changes produced by the Helsinki Final Act regarding the states of the Eastern Bloc, since by signing it, the European communist states committed themselves to monitoring the

fundamental human rights and freedoms. It is also underlined how the transnational relations were strengthened and the development of the democratic mechanisms of association and union solidarity, which subsequently led to the signing of the Helsinki Memorandum, which aimed to unite the two blocs in public policies through seminars organized in different capitals of Europe.

Chapter 8, *The limits of repression soviet bloc security services vs. transnational Helsinki networks, 1976–1986* (Douglas Selvage) is a chapter dedicated to how the effects of the Helsinki Final Act were felt both in the communist states of Eastern Europe and especially in the Soviet Union. One of the major effects, at least encountered in East Germany, was the desire of citizens to emigrate to West Germany, and in the other states there were many manifestations of awareness that became increasingly difficult over time to be managed by political repression. All of these led to an economic and military weakening of communism, which subsequently manifested itself through the fall of the communist regimes.

Carl J. Bon Tempo *Helsinki at home NGOs, the Helsinki Final Act and politics in the united states, 1975–1985* is dedicated to explaining the effect of Helsinki meetings has had on the policies and agendas of the United States of America. The chapter focuses in particular on how the rights and freedoms as they were developed in the Final Act of Helsinki have influenced the agenda for the rights of African Americans as well as immigrants. Certain groups that supported these rights, in particular the *National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)*, were majorly involved in the entire process of the Helsinki Act. So did immigrant rights organizations, which invoked the Helsinki Act to liberalize US policies.

Part III, The politics of the CSCE in Europe has four chapters describing situations of some European states, and how the Final Act from Helsinki has influenced national policies and the relationship with other states. For example, Maximilian Graf in Chapter 10, *European Détente and the CSCE: Austria and the East-Central European Theater in the 1970s and 1980s*, presents how the Helsinki Final Act did not affect Austro-Hungarian relations because they were already tight, the creation of a tandem of Austria with Poland for cultural heritage, but also the proximity of Czechoslovakia and East Germany. In Chapter 11, Matthias Peter talks about *Saving détente the Federal Republic of Germany and the CSCE in the 1980s*, which opened the vision for East agenda as well as gun control policy of FRG. The volume continues with *Transformation by linkage?* written by Oliver Bange, which has perspectives on East Germany and gun control policy in relations with the Soviet Union. *CSCE Albania, the outsider*

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in European political life (Hamit Kaba) evaluates a special case in the Helsinki Final Act meetings, as Albania is the only state that refused to participate or sign the CSCE, as its leader had a different vision and ideology about European security, considering the two major participants, the USA and the USSR, together with the German states as the main factors of European insecurity. Also, the Albanian leader's closeness to the People's republic of China determined Albania's reservation regarding the CSCE.

The conclusions written by Nicolas Badalassi and Sarah B. Snyder highlight the crucial role of the CSCE in Europe, and why it is important to reassess certain positions and strategies considered by the conference participants. The CSCE has had a major impact in opening discussions between East and West and how human rights and fundamental freedoms have been significantly encouraged and evaluated. I personally appreciate the volume as one of the highest importance, which manages to encompass some of the most significant positions and strategies, compared to the respective political context, which explains very well the evolution and political context of today.