

BOOK REVIEW

Nicholas Bayne, Stephen Woolcock (editors). 2010, 2nd edition. *The New Economic Diplomacy. Decision-making and Negotiation in International Economic Relations*. Surrey (UK): Ashgate Publishing Limited, ISBN 978-0-7456-7048-3, p. 391

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Continuing the endeavour started by Mike Hodges, Senior Lecturer in the International Relations Department at the London School of Economics, the volume is shaping a theoretical and practical study about how States organise and conduct their international relations at the beginning of the 21st century. While the State is still the main actor on the international stage, the authors highlight the need to take into consideration also the increasingly power of non-state actors in influencing the decision-making process.

Nicholas Bayne and Stephen Woolcock, the editors of this book, are proposing different perspectives to analyze a hot subject in the modern diplomacy. Although the economic co-operation between States is one of the main issues of diplomats' day-to-day work, the globalization, the effects of the recent crisis and the advancements in a more and more technologized world emphasize the need to have deeper examination of multi-level economic diplomacy. In nowadays world, the diplomats have to pay attention not only to traditional trade exchanges, but also to investments, markets, non-state actors, greater transparency, labour migration or environment.

The second edition is organised in two main parts: the first one is composed by a series of academic research made by different authors and focuses on the theoretical framework of Economic Diplomacy, while the second one is a valuable collection of case studies examined by a sequence of practitioners drawn from government, international organizations and the private sector.

The Economic Diplomacy is not just an academic field of research, it is a key activity pursued by State actors. In a classic definition, Economic Diplomacy is

mainly concerned with what governments do. In this view, although it is not restricted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, somehow it is limited to governmental institutions. During the Cold War, the Economic Diplomacy was dominated mainly by trade diplomacy, where officials from different States cooperate within bilateral or multilateral talks in order to stimulate the exchange of goods at global level.

The New Economic Diplomacy is a new paradigm for modern diplomats. In the twenty-first century, the focus moved from nation States to a more balanced power relationship. The approach of Bayne and Woolcock is to enlarge the meaning of the concept by integrating the action of non-State actors. The great variety of the latest and their power of influencing government policies request to analyse not only how governments make use of these organizations but to integrate them into the decision making process. The New Economic Diplomacy is the framework based on three tensions: between Economics and Politics, between domestic and international pressures, and between Government and other forces. In fact, the New Economic Diplomacy is the response to the challenges raised by globalisation, domestic decision-making and increased co-operation between all actors involved. The Economic Diplomacy seems set to continue to grow in importance and has become more complex. The new strategies that involve ministers, non-State actors, a greater transparency and an increased usage of international institutions have all been modified in the recent years. The summit diplomacy is more and more the main instrument for debating key economic issues, but without becoming more effective. The voluntary co-operation between States is observed more frequently than rule making process. The transparency and the involvement of non-State actors give to the whole framework more legitimacy and acceptance by the citizens.

The relevance of the book is enhanced by various theoretical approaches that can be used in the study of Economic Diplomacy, such as systemic theories, domestic theories, models of negotiations and two-level game. In order to illustrate how it can be applied, the theoretical framework refers to concrete cases, such as Doha Developments Agenda negotiations or Cancun WTO Ministerial meeting.

A new concept is introduced by Stephen Woolcock: the multi-level diplomacy. Within domestic decision-making, there is a hierarchy of actors involved (government and non-government, national or local authorities) that interact

among themselves. At the international level, the negotiators may choose among bilateral, regional, plurilateral or multilateral levels and organizations. In order to obtain the maximum benefits, the negotiators conduct multi-level diplomacy by making strategic use of interaction between these levels.

In conclusion, in modern Economic Diplomacy, States are no longer entities that are supposed to act internationally while protecting their domestic interests completely. Although the physical or regulatory borders are still in place, the governments have lost some of their powers. They need to balance between international status and domestic pressure and the mixture obtained should be agreed by all actors involved, public opinion included (Bayne & Woolcock, 2010).

As a final remark, the book is a „must read“ to MA students in Political Science, Diplomacy and Negotiations and International Relations. A good background in International Relations studies is a prerequisite for a better understanding of the book.

Sir Nicholas Bayne is a fellow of International Trade Policy Unit of the London School of Economic and Political Science and a former member of the British Diplomatic Service.

Dr. Stephen Woolcock is a Lecturer in the International Department of the London School of Economic and Visiting fellow at the United Nations University Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies in Brugge.

LIST OF REFERENCES

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