

MIGUEL HERNANDO DE LARRAMENDI & AURELIA MAÑÉ, *La política exterior de España hacia el Magreb. Actores e intereses*. (Barcelona: Ariel/Real Instituto Elcano, 2009). Pp. 275. 24 €

*La política exterior española hacia el Magreb. Actores e intereses*, edited by Miguel Hernando de Larramendi and Aurelia Mañé Estrada, is an indispensable reference work not only for those interested in Spain's relations with North Africa, but also for decision-makers and academics who want to grasp the finer points of Spanish foreign policy in general. Presented in classic format, the first part of the book consists of a general framework in which Sánchez provides a thorough theoretical-conceptual analysis of the proliferation of new foreign policy actors and the more formal points of the decision-making process. Parts two and three of the book present a rigorous and exhaustive analysis of the governmental and non-governmental actors who contribute to shaping Spain's foreign policy towards the Maghreb.

Studies of Spanish foreign policy have consistently failed to take stock of the influence of domestic social-political and economic actors, a subject that nonetheless takes pride of place both in academic research on foreign policy analysis (FPA) and in studies of U.S. foreign policy, therefore accounting for a great deal of the foreign policy literature produced to date. The eleven chapters in this excellent book effectively bridge this gap by examining the characteristics of these actors and their interests in a historic context, and notably how they are changing in today's context.

Who really holds the reins in foreign policy decision-making? Although the different case studies in this book do not focus on this core concept of foreign policy studies, they do provide a wealth of information in this respect. Literature on the Spanish political system places control for foreign policy with the prime minister's office, with the ministry of foreign affairs playing second fiddle and parliament lacking any effective control. The chapter by Lemus de la Iglesia and Amirah Fernández confirms that general foreign policy strategy is discussed by the prime minister's office and the foreign affairs ministry, their respective cabinet advisors carrying considerable weight, particularly the prime minister's. The chapter by Hernando de Larramendi, Gonzalez and Azaola shows how the ministry's role shifts depending on who is in power. All the contributors to this work point to the complexity of the decision-making process and the difficulties interest groups face in their struggle to become lobby and pressure groups. The government exercises great autonomy, but in a changing context. The formulation and application of foreign policy is increasingly influenced by the proliferation of new actors and interests, by the progressive Europeanization of foreign policy and the new scenarios resulting from the distribution of competences among regional governments, a subject discussed by Desrues in his chapter on the Andalusian government's capacity to influence central government decisions concerning Morocco.

Although Spanish domestic actors have important interests in the Maghreb -particularly Morocco-, the different interest groups associated with them find it very difficult to form consolidated lobby groups -let alone effective pressure groups- for mediating with legislators, as admirably explained by Durán Parra. The big Spanish companies operating in the communications, airlines, electricity, oil and gas, banking and hotel sectors have the most at stake and therefore the greatest capacity to mobilize and achieve their aims. How they go about this has generated scant attention, fisheries and oil and gas having been analysed more than any other sector in studies of Spanish foreign policy towards the Maghreb. This book is no exception, with the chapter by García

Pérez devoted to the Galician fisheries sector and its impact on relations between Spain and Morocco. From a political decision-making perspective, this work and previous studies fail to provide any evidence of how these companies have influenced the formulation of Spain's foreign policy. This is an important topic and one that should figure more prominently on the academic agenda.

This book offers suggestions for analysing how the growing power of domestic actors influences the various types of political decision-makers and how their influence on the government varies enormously depending on the agenda item in question: fisheries, energy, cultural relations, etc. Political parties are another group of actors who influence the government, but at a different level from interest and pressure groups. Fernández Molina explains why Spanish political parties are more interested in Europe and Latin America than the Maghreb countries. However, parliamentary diplomacy and international party meetings coupled with increasingly professional international relations departments and the growing weight of foundations and institutions have contributed to a proliferation of encounters, a subject covered in Suárez Collado's chapter on the Spanish-Moroccan friendship group. Lopéz García examines whether think tanks and networks of experts can contribute to shaping foreign policy, providing a thoughtful analysis of the Averroes Committee made up of representatives of Spanish and Moroccan civil society, concluding yet again that this interesting institution has exerted zero influence on the foreign policy agenda (p. 196). The brief review of the different domestic actors capable of influencing decision-making processes, projects an image of weakness despite their proliferation in recent years and their important -albeit geographically and thematically disparate- interests. Interest groups find it very difficult to aggregate interests and objectives, and those with more resources at their disposal have hitherto failed to influence decisively the formulation of foreign policy. The same holds true for social movements and promotional groups. This book nonetheless shows that domestic actors are making their voices heard during the consultative phases of foreign policy formulation and its strategic design, and that they therefore have a say in the final decision.

This authoritative work concludes with a number of suggestions for further research in areas that have hitherto generated scant attention: national interests *versus* sector interests, the increasing overlapping of foreign policy agenda items and their Europeanization, and the extent to which the creation of transnational links, networks and platforms -and even transnational actors- is increasing the weight of domestic actors.

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