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Book Review — Digitized Version

[Rezension] Dieter Nohlen (Hrsg.): Pipers Wörterbuch zur Politik, Bd. 5: Internationale Beziehungen : Theorien - Organisationen - Konflikte. München: Piper Verlag, 1984

Modern law and society: a review of German language research contributions on law, political science, and sociology / German studies, section II

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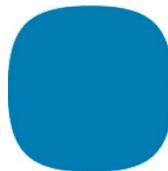
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NOHLEN, DIETER (Ed.)

Piper's Dictionary of Politics. Volume 5: International Relations. Theories – Organizations – Conflicts

[“Pipers Wörterbuch zur Politik, Band 5: Internationale Beziehungen. Theorien – Organisationen – Konflikte. Herausgegeben von Andreas Boeckh”]

Munich: Piper Verlag, 1984; 583 pp.

This dictionary of international relations constitutes Volume 5 of the Piper Verlag's intended “survey of politics at the end of the 20th century”. Each volume is, however, self-contained and thus individually usable. Those already published are Volume 2: “Western Industrial Societies” and Volume 3: “The European Community”. Also due to appear in the near future are Volume 1: “Political Science”, Volume 4: “Socialist Systems”, and Volume 6: “The Third World”.

Although it does seem that recently a general trend toward dictionaries, handbooks and yearbooks has come to prevail in the area of political literature, the Piper project, due to its broad conceptualization and extraordinary scope, is unique. The volume on “International Relations” includes 196 contributions written with the collaboration of 81 authors. This work therefore contains almost three times as many contributions as the previous standard dictionary of international politics edited by Wighard Woyke. It is impressive not only in terms of quantity but also of quality. Almost all the articles furnish the most up-to-date information and for the most part are judiciously organized. All the key words represent original contributions, and are supplemented by highly relevant bibliographies and a very comprehensible system of cross-referencing. Another positive aspect that needs to be mentioned is that it devotes at least as much attention, not just *per postulat* but *de facto* as well, to the North-South dimension of international politics as to the traditionally more strongly emphasized East-West dimension.

What strikes one about the conception of the book is, *inter alia*, its strong “policy analysis” orientation which entirely corresponds to recent developments in West German political science. The consequence is a plethora of articles, relating on the one hand to various problems of international politics such as policies on trade, raw materials, culture, nuclear energy and currency, and on the other hand to sectoral international organizations and conferences which represent forums for these and other problems of politics. In addition, the central problems and conflict areas of international relations in the postwar period, such as “German-German Relations”, “The Cuba Crisis”, “The Palestine Conflict”, etc. are rightly incorporated into this conception. Only the area of international relations theory has been somewhat neglected. Thus,

for instance, although there are four key words relating to the problems of international raw materials policy from various points of view ("Integrated Programme for Raw Materials", "Raw Materials Treaties", "Raw Materials Producers' Cartels", and "Securing Raw Materials") there is no article on "Dependency Theory". Apart from these deficiencies in the area of "theory", one might ask whether an entry each for the respective foreign policies of those states that are uncontestedly of great significance to the Federal Republic of Germany, e.g. the USA, USSR, France and naturally the FRG itself, would not have been a useful addition.

For all that, however, it must be said by way of conclusion that this Piper dictionary of international relations is a most successful work. As a reference work, it presents a reliable survey; it is eminently suited as a starting point for the further study of given topics; and its up-to-date references give it a certain bibliographical character as well. On account of its many possible applications, this book can be recommended to a correspondingly broad readership.

Michael Zürn, Tübingen