

In doing so, she offers us an analytically neat way to bring together long-standing arguments about strong and weak states, as well as societal pressures, in the making of foreign policy.

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## **The Economy-Security Nexus in Northeast Asia**

T.J. Pempel, ed.  
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The Northeast Asian region has attracted at least two types of international relations analyses. A first type focuses primarily on military and hard security and investigates changes in states' power and the politics of coercion, balance of power, and alliances. A second type is interested in cross-border economic activities, regional interdependence, and institutionalization and then examines the states' policies of development, trade, money, and technology, as well as the politics of institutional building and reform. T.J. Pempel's edited volume synthesizes the two approaches by viewing the mutually shaping interactions between economics and security as a major feature of regional politics. The book is a fruit of collaborative efforts by American, Japanese, South Korean, and Chinese scholars who provide in-depth analyses of recent developments in the region.

The edited volume begins with the introductory chapter (Pempel), which sets forth the common research questions of 'how well or how poorly states interact with each other in geopolitics and how this is (or is not) affected by their economic relations' (p. 17). This economy–security nexus contains the basis of state power and provides strategic opportunities

and constraints for states' behavior. Analytically, it constitutes an organizing concept for the following chapters that investigate the outstanding regional issues – the China–Taiwan conflict over the sovereignty question, North Korea's nuclear weapons program and elusive behavior, technological development and arms buildups in the region, complex interdependence in trade and money, and the institutionalization of intraregional and interregional economic and security affairs.

Chapter 2 (Scott L. Kastner) argues that the cross-strait trade agreements short of sovereignty claims have been a positive step toward the amelioration of the Taiwan–China tensions. Chapter 3 (Hiroko Imamura) shows that South Korea's approach of mixing coercive diplomacy with economic aid has generated only limited effects on the behavior of the North's increasingly militaristic dictatorial regime whose survival depends on external economic assistance. Chapter 4 (Tai Ming Cheung) uncovers that states in the region, except for North Korea, have pursued economic growth through technological development, dubbed as techno-nationalism, creating both cooperative and competitive effects on interstate relations. Likewise, chapter 5 (Jong Kun Choi) and chapter 6 (Mie Oba) argue that economic interdependence has deepened despite regional rivalries and historical animosities, while states use economic leverages to reduce tensions and exploit their own strategic advantages. Chapter 7 (Min Gyo Koo) analyzes the South Korean efforts at promoting free trade and other economic agreements as a notable example of the dual-purpose strategy. Chapter 8 (Pempel) and chapter 9 (Keisuke Iida) demonstrate that regional and interregional institutions on trade, money, and denuclearization as well as trilateral summits have positive effects in promoting interstate cooperation and can possibly generate spillover effects in reducing tensions in the hard security realm. Chapter 10 (Pempel) concludes the volume by summarizing key findings and suggesting future prospects for the region.

While agreeing on the importance of the economy–security nexus in the issues, the contributors develop slightly different perspectives on the likelihood of regional cooperation, the severities of conflicts, the region's future prospects, and policy recommendations. The differences may be derived not only from the complicated and ambiguous nature of regional relations *per se*, but also from the differences in what they analyzed and how they analyzed them. Yet, several contributors embrace the liberal–institutional perspective to evaluate the apparent stability of the region, defined as the absence of war, in effect making it an overriding theme of the book. Even

these contributors never fail to include the reservation that the stability is susceptible to disruptions from nationalistic domestic politics and the basic dictums of international politics: increasing prosperity can hardly eliminate the underlying political conflicts; the institutionalization of economic relations cannot rescind states' sovereign authority and the coercive use of power; wealth and technology can be used for arms buildup and accelerate power transition that will upset the regional order. This nuanced perspective is summarized in Pempel's conclusion as follows: 'Economics has by no means displaced security worries across Northeast Asia, but classical security dilemmas and a hard security focus have surrendered some of its sharpness in the face of an enhanced economic focus and greater cross-border economic and financial conditions' (p. 197).

The latter half of the conclusion seems provisional and is called into question in the wake of precarious events like the nuclear blackmail by North Korea and the intensified island disputes in the East China Sea that ensued in early 2013 when the edited volume was published. These events favor a pessimistic prognosis toward regional peace and stability, lending support to the realist explanation that attributes the regional stability to US military supremacy and shrewd alliance management, ascribing instability to the weakening thereof. Institutionalized economic interdependence is arguably one of several conditions for international stability and peace. If other important conditions were to become less viable, the observed stability would crumble.

T.J. Pempel's volume undoubtedly helps improve our understanding of regional politics by illuminating the complexity of the economy–security nexus in the particular spaces and times. Nonetheless, the chapters' findings remain highly contextual and need to be recalibrated systematically within a sharper conceptual framework. Such an analytical endeavor will clarify the economy–security nexus even further and contribute to international relations theorizing.

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