



Etel Soligen, ed., *Geopolitics, Supply Chains, and International Relations in East Asia*

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Global supply chains (GSCs) have emerged as a salient feature of the global economy in the past decades. The rise of trade in intermediate, rather than final goods, along with heightened geopolitical and geo-economic tensions in East Asia, provide excellent opportunities for scholars to assess the implications of this phenomenon for interstate cooperation and conflict in the region. This volume tackles this question, emphasizing the importance of not only geopolitics, but also domestic political, economic, and social factors for shaping the region's GSC relations. The findings highlight the drivers of evolving GSC structures, and the wide range of strategies that firms, industries, and governments have adopted to cope with exogenous shocks such as the United States (U.S.)-China trade war and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Part I of the book focuses on the impact of geopolitics on the dynamic changes in GSCs in East Asia. Contributing authors address how geopolitical tensions in the U.S.-China relationship have accentuated the vulnerability of China-centered GSCs, affected the trade and investment patterns of Japanese firms and the development of the phone/smart phone industry in the region, and created pressures for contractionary or diversionary shifts in GSCs. They additionally document how the Chinese government has increasingly turned towards an inward-oriented strategy by promoting self-reliance in GSCs and how the U.S.-China economic competition has generated spillover effects in other world regions such as Africa through GSCs.

Part II shifts to the domestic drivers of GSC policies. This part of the book examines not only the interests and incentives shaping China's responses to Western-led GSCs, but also corporate responses to the trade war and the rhetorical framing of GSCs in the political debate over the Trans-Pacific Partnership in the United States. The last two chapters in this part analyze how states' relative strategic position within GSCs influence decisions to (de)escalate geopolitical

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conflicts and the implications of GSC expansion for Chinese workers' ability to enhance their structural power and to engage in transnational cooperation.

Contributing authors utilize a variety of methods, including case studies, surveys, and statistical analysis to support their contentions. Collectively, they paint a rich picture of the complex interactions between geopolitical tensions and GSCs, which represent relatively new forms of international economic interdependence whose political and economic implications have so far remained little understood. At a time when East Asia's integration into GSCs made possible by the adoption of outward-oriented strategies is increasingly threatened by the rising popularity of inward-oriented ones, this book provides a timely assessment of the degree to which efforts to decouple the U.S. economy from that of China may be effective in altering existing GSC structures. In highlighting the distributional costs and benefits of GSC restructuring, this book advances our understanding of the impact of geopolitical tensions on transnational economic relations. The findings point to the resilience of GSCs and the potential for increased GSC regionalization.

While the book sets out to explore the reciprocal interactions between geopolitics and international economic relations, how GSC integration may affect the potential for interstate conflict and cooperation has received less attention. Chapter 11 by Phoebe Moon addresses this question, showing that leaders of states that occupy a more critical position in lower value-added segments of GSCs may be more likely to escalate conflicts due to the greater likelihood of GSC replacement. Are there any other features of GSCs that may either enhance or hinder the prospect of interstate cooperation? If conventional trade (i.e., trade in final goods) tends to dampen the potential for conflict, as the "commercial peace" theory would lead us to expect, then can the same be said of intermediate goods trade? The book could have probed these issues in more detail.

Given the book's emphasis on the impact of geopolitics on the GSC landscape, the focus on the domestic drivers of GSCs came as a little bit of a surprise and could have been better integrated into the overall theoretical framework. Both the international and domestic dimensions are obviously important to the formation and spread of GSCs, and the latter could have received more analytical attention.

The book has devoted some attention to how GSC integration may affect domestic socio-economic outcomes such as inequality or labor rights attention. While these issues deserve more systematic analysis, it is understandable that such an endeavor would be beyond the scope of this volume.

These quibbles aside, this book represents a valuable addition to the literature on the relationship between economic interdependence and interstate conflicts as well as to the study of the international relations of East Asia. It is highly recommended for scholars, students, and practitioners interested in better understanding the changing geopolitical and economic landscapes in the region.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest Statement The author declares that she has no conflict of interest.

Dr. Ka Zeng is Professor of Political Science and Director of International and Global Studies at the University of Arkansas. Her research focuses on China's role in the global economy, in particular Chinese trade policy, China's behavior in the World Trade Organization, and China-related trade dispute dynamics. Dr. Zeng is the author or coauthor of *Trade Threats, Trade Wars* (Michigan, 2004), *Greening China* (Michigan, 2011), and *Fragmenting Globalization* (Michigan, 2021).