

# Turkey and the Global Political Economy

*Geographies, Regions and Actors  
in a Changing World Order*

Edited by  
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## A closer look at China-Turkey relations in a changing global order

Kerem Gökten and Çağatay Edgücan Şahin

### Introduction

During the Cold War, the engagement between China and Turkey was very limited because of these countries' differing ideological camps. However, this started to change gradually from the mid-1990s, especially in economic and military dimensions. China's strategy of integration into the world economy made the country a remarkable global economic power (as seen in terms of macroeconomic indicators) in the 2000s, which also made the country increasingly more assertive and more visible in terms of diplomatic efforts. In this sense, Turkey is in a position to be of interest to China, both with its geographical location in the Mediterranean basin and its geopolitical position in the Middle East. Especially, the mega-scaled infrastructure projects that Turkey has undertaken in recent years and the considerable (but currently underutilized) commercial opportunities they offer to contractors are of interest to China.

In the last decade, Turkey has seemingly distanced itself from the Western world, a process which was marked by unprecedented authoritarianism and foreign adventurism. In this context, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) government has been increasing its engagement with rising powers such as Russia and China, against the background of crisis-ridden US-led Western hegemony. Indeed, contacts between Turkey and China at the level of heads of state increased after 2015, when this desire became apparent. China's 'infrastructural developmentalism' policy, which entails creating new valuation areas for its surplus capital, exemplifies an economic win-win situation. This Chinese policy, which is characterized by 'no strings attached' logic (i.e. lack of