

reduce rural poverty, a prerequisite to better education. Many rural areas' backward education is largely due to a lack of basic infrastructure such as convenient transportation. The Chinese government might be right to invest billions in roads, because it is an effective way of eliminating rural poverty. To deal with its human capital crisis, China may still need to prioritize some short-term measures, such as physical infrastructure construction, to eradicate rural poverty.

Despite its rapid economic growth, China faces one of its biggest challenges—the urban–rural human capital divide that threatens its economic health. The Chinese government must reduce this educational inequality as soon as possible. To close this divide, the Chinese should prioritize eliminating rural poverty. I believe that the Chinese government can shift some of its unsustainable practices to a healthy economic model. The world and the West should be optimistic about China's rapid economic growth and stability. Not only is a healthy Chinese economy beneficial for the global economy, but a stronger China would not threaten the current global liberal order. We should expect China to follow this order, contribute to global growth, and support a better global system.

Turkey and China: Political, Strategic, and Economic Aspects of the Relationship. By SELÇUK ÇOLAKOĞLU. London: World Scientific Publishing Europe Ltd., 2021. 222 pp. \$78.00 (paper).

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doi:10.1017/jea.2021.11

Over the last decade, China's increasing westward interest in Asia, and the establishment of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has drawn considerable attention. While Chinese development ambitions in the region are a relatively recent development, Chinese political engagement with western Asia is anything but new. Selçuk Çolakoglu's book, *Turkey and China: Political, Strategic, and Economic Aspects of the Relationship*, offers a detailed look into the historical development of the Sino-Turkish relationship. Having pursued a hybrid East–West foreign policy since 2014, Çolakoglu places Turkey at critical point with potential for a strategic Eastward reorientation. In this context, he argues that the domestic politics of Turkey, particularly as related to the issue of East Turkestan (Xinjiang), have prevented Turkey from developing a concrete China strategy.

The book begins with a historical review of the bilateral relationship. Relations first emerged in the 1970s in the context of Turkey's rift with NATO and its Western allies. The following period was a "flourishing partnership," marked by Turkey's opening up to East Asia, high-level political engagement, and an increase in economic and cultural exchange between the two countries. Notably, the Uyghur ethnic minority was considered a "bridge of friendship," with China encouraging direct economic and cultural ties between Xinjiang and Turkey. Positive relations halted in 1992 with Turkey's shift toward an "Uyghur First Policy." The dissolution of the USSR and Turkish support of independent Turkic Muslim nations in the Balkans made China suspicious of Turkey's Pan-Turkic ambitions. These suspicions were heightened by the rise of Uyghur leader Isa Yusuf Alptekin and his development of an influential Uyghur lobby in Turkey, and by increasing Turkish public sympathy toward the Uyghur cause. Heightened support continued until 1995, when the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought to reconnect with China.

From 1997 to 2009, Turkey adopted a "Beijing First Policy" and restricted Uyghur activities in Turkey. High-level exchanges and strategic meetings produced several trade and energy agreements. Positive relations and increasing economic exchange were temporarily slowed, however,

by Turkey's criticism of China for the 2009 Urumqi riots. In the next decade, China and Turkey developed common strategies on several regional and global crises, and high-level diplomacy continued. China became a major FDI source for Turkey, and economic partnerships emerged in energy, infrastructure, and telecommunications sectors. Even in this period of revival, the Uyghur issue remained relevant, with the Turkish ministry of foreign affairs publicly denouncing the treatment of Uyghurs in China as late as 2019.

Çolakoglu illuminates the deeply intertwined nature of Turkey's foreign policy approach to China and the issue of the Uyghur minority, questioning whether any approach toward the Uyghurs can satisfy both parties. Turkey's desire for Uyghurs to maintain their Turkic roots, culture, language, and religion seems to be at odds with China's assertive assimilation policies. The Uyghur question is thus a persistent barrier to diplomatic harmony between China and Turkey. If these differences are in-fact irreconcilable, the development of a strong and diversified Sino-Turkish partnership will prove to be quite difficult.

In the second part of the book, Çolakoglu focuses his discussion on various development initiatives in central Asia and the broader Eurasian contexts. Here, he presents the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) as one of many regional development initiatives, including the Russian Eurasian Economic Union, the American New Silk Road Initiative, the European Union's Silk Wing Initiative, the Indian Connect Central Asia plan, and the Turkish Middle Corridor. In light of increased Chinese investment in Turkey under the umbrella of BRI, Çolakoglu contemplates potential compatibility between the BRI and Turkey's Middle Corridor. Turkish consideration of the threat of increasing Chinese hegemonic power, potential debt traps, underdeveloped institutional design and binding norms within the BRI, and domestic pushback against Chinese involvement are identified by Çolakoglu as barriers to the expansion of BRI related projects in Turkey.

Within the broader study of Chinese political economy, this book offers a novel and nuanced depiction of development in central and west Asia. Chinese strategic ambitions in the region exist alongside (or in conjunction with) the interests of other major powers. In employing this approach, Çolakoglu uncovers the ways in which the BRI is inevitably intertwined with other initiatives seeking to capitalize on the untapped potential of central Asia and highlights the complexity of potential paths for future development available to countries in the region. Despite strategic differences and varied implementation, this book illustrates potential dimensions of compatibility and cooperation between different initiatives and the state powers behind them—avoiding reductionist assumptions of China–West polarity often present in debates about the BRI.

Çolakoglu presents a highly detailed historical narrative and a wealth of valuable information on the relationship between two very different emerging powers. Meticulous tracing of the partnership's evolution offers a rare look into the finer points of Chinese engagement with a country that holds strategic geopolitical value. Conversely, the challenges faced by Turkey in continuing its partnership with a China that grew rapidly in power, offers many teaching points on middle-power engagement with China. The focus on one specific relationship and its historical roots is refreshing and valuable within a broader body of literature on Chinese foreign policy that too often falls victim to exceedingly broad generalizations and ahistorical claims.

Writing on China's rise and role in the global order, Yves Tiberghien (2020) emphasizes the importance of historical contextualization of Chinese decision-making. Çolakoglu's book responds well to this call by considering how historic vulnerabilities and domestic factors shape both Turkish and Chinese approaches toward their partnership. The multi-dimensional nature of the Uyghur issue carries serious implications for any study of Chinese ambitions, even beyond Turkey. The strong ethnic and cultural linkages flagged by the author continue to connect west Asia to the Middle East, through central Asia, and as far as Xinjiang, with many countries on the BRI path home to predominantly Turkic populations. Where culture and history coincide directly with issues of political economy, Chinese success in central and west Asia depends on delicately balancing ethno-cultural ties with economic and political interests.