

Central Asia between East and West

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Ever since their independence from the USSR in 1991 the former Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan have been trying to find a new framework for their international relations. In this essay the experience and prospects of regional cooperation, special relations with the European Union or southeast Asia (ASEAN), or the Russian Federation are considered at length, along with some other groupings. As an alternative to preferential trade associations, affiliation with the World Trade Organization on a multilateral basis is probable in the years ahead. Meanwhile, the five countries independently pursue what the author has termed "export globalism"—administered trading of their staple raw materials for capital equipment and selected consumer goods.