in contemporary Romania through an overview of the contexts in which representations of “the mythical Jew” have surfaced. (Mythical since the actual Jewish population has dropped below 0.1%!) Sadly, many of the stereotypes and conspiracy theories in circulation—for instance, Jews blamed *both* for implementing communism and demolishing it in favor of an exploitative capitalist system—are echoed in other national contexts across the region.

Dedicated to issues of gender and sexuality, Part 3 is no less replete with intriguing data for comparison with other postcommunist societies. Burdened with a history that produced “minimalist citizens,” Romania typifies the region where, to various degrees, gender and sexual politics is being frowned upon and cannot thrive without Western funding and transnational NGOs. Chapter 6 (“The Postcommunist Feminine Mystique: Women as Subjects, Women and Politics”) embraces a large array of themes. The reader gets a glimpse into women’s post-1989 employment patterns; rising, yet still meager rates of political participation; into competing cultures of femininity, as well as issues of abuse and reproductive health (or, rather, reproductive morbidity). Roman also addresses the plight of the local feminist movement seeking its own distinctive voice and agenda. Finally, in Chapter 7 (“Between Ars Erotica and Scientia Sexualis: Queer Subjectivity and the Discourse of Sex”) she interprets the problematic of gay experience, rights, and activism within the larger context of Romania’s repressive sexual culture.

In sum, this is a thoughtful book offering insight into a society whose popular culture so far has received scarce scholarly attention. The well-selected collection of photos of cityscape and printed media enhances the information value of the book. It should be a useful addition to reading lists for graduate courses in European and Eurasian studies, gender theory, and cultural studies. But the book is not without flaws. Roman covers an exceedingly large terrain in an impressionistic and anecdotal manner. Several of her claims beg for elaboration or explanation. Highlighting a narrower segment of everyday life via case studies would have produced thicker descriptions (in the Geertzian sense) and richer, more compelling theoretical arguments. Another point of difficulty with the book is its jargony and, at times, quite sloppy language. *Fragmented Identities* would have merited a more competent and dedicated copyeditor.

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The Temptations of Tyranny in Central Asia, David Lewis (London: Hurst, 2008), viii+243 pp.

Of the several surveys of politics and society in Central Asia to have appeared in recent years, David Lewis’s timely and immensely readable study is distinctive

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both in foregrounding events since 2001 and in locating the "temptations of tyranny" in Central Asia firmly within the context of the global "war on terror." Moving between political journalism and scholarly analysis, the book provides a detailed, informed and judicious account of particular issues and events, including the Andijan massacre and its aftermath, Kyrgyzstan's "tulip revolution" of March 2005, the decimation of Turkmenistan's educational infrastructure, and the criminalization of the Tajik state. As such it provides a much needed synthetic narrative of a complex and critical moment in recent Central Asian history.

But it is also more than a straight narrative history: the account provides the basis for a searing critique of Western "engagement" in the region since 2001 and what Lewis refers to as the "geopoliticising of democratic values" (p. 233). For Lewis, the temptations of the title refer not only to those of Central Asian presidents, for whom the war on terror has provided the opportunity to curtail political, social and religious freedoms, but those of Western governments too. "Blinkered by the prism of the 'war on terror', and an ill-informed obsession with radical Islam," Lewis argues, "distracted by the allure of democracy on the cheap and the idea of revolution," the West has continually failed to understand the concerns and needs of ordinary Central Asians, instead capitulating "to the narrow visions of their self-appointed leaders" (p. 236). This is demonstrated most clearly in his analysis of US relations with Uzbekistan between 2001 and 2005, in which a new-found alliance, born of the "war on terror," clouded sustained analysis of the real economic devastation facing the country; fostered excessive US dependence upon dubious Uzbek intelligence; led to exaggerated perceptions of terrorist threat, and provided President Karimov with the legitimation he needed to launch a crackdown on internal opposition.

Lewis is equally critical of the raft of Western-sponsored democratization programmes launched in Kyrgyzstan, which "attacked the symptoms" of democratic deficit, rather than addressing "the systemic weaknesses that made political leaders unwilling to reform" (p. 122). As such, when Kyrgyzstan's democratic experiment led to the first comparatively peaceful change of power in the region, it came to be seen by its neighbours less as a model of political possibility than an instance of colossal state failure and further demonstration of the claim that Central Asia was "not ready" for democratic politics. Lewis's account of the build-up to the Kyrgyz revolution is a model of integrative analysis, and deserves to be widely read by scholars interested in post-Soviet political transformation, as well as those involved in "democracy assistance." There have been several accounts of the March 2005 events, ranging in tone from triumphalist to damning, and mostly focused on the immediate build-up to the "spring of discontent" in early 2005. Lewis's analysis is unusual in recognizing the systemic weaknesses that led to President Akaev's downfall, tracing his analysis to the botched response to the 2002 protests in Aksy, which mobilized north–south antagonisms and destroyed any residual faith in the police as guardians of the peace. Crucially, moreover, Lewis highlights the growing role of political-economic-criminal elites which, in many rural areas, came to be the most familiar face of the state and able

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to mobilize populations to devastating effect when their political ambitions were threatened. This attention to the multiple sources of disaffection with the Akaev regime allows Lewis to dismantle the thesis that the Kyrgyz revolution was simply a "western import"; and to show that the vocal, articulate and media-savvy youth of protest groups such as Kelkel, which have garnered considerable attention in Western analyses, were ultimately epiphenomenal to the political change that occurred.

Lewis was director of the International Crisis Group (ICG) in Central Asian between 2001 and 2005. The book bears the hallmark of the best of ICG reporting: lucid in its prose, informed by intense, long-term research in the region, and with sufficient first-person sketches to lighten the narrative and remind the reader that the author is no armchair observer of events. His depictions of the surreal entertainment offered to mark the fifth anniversary of Tajikistan's peace process or the US Air Force planes "lined up like grey, bloated slugs" along the tarmac of Bishkek's international airport are as evocative as they are economical, and always used to support an important analytical point (in this case, the performativity of "stateness" in Tajikistan, and the intense popular ambivalence in Kyrgyzstan to being host simultaneously to Russian and US forces).

The vast majority of Lewis's references are to his own interviews and observations, and to newspaper and policy reports. This gives the book a timely character, as well as making it very accessible. In his preface, Lewis explicitly positions the book as "not a purely academic study," and if its readable character makes it cross the desk of those not usually taken to digesting scholarly monographs on Central Asia, this is no bad thing. My regret is that whilst it is not *just* an academic study it is, nonetheless, also pitched at a scholarly audience and published by a scholarly press. The argument it advances ought to inform academic debate within area studies and international relations. Certainly, the empirical material it presents has the potential to dismiss many received wisdoms about the region. Lewis's excellent analysis of the Kyrgyz revolution, for instance, can correct much that has been written about "modular revolutions" in the post-Soviet space; and his account of the failure of US foreign policy in the region should inform comparative analyses of the fall-out from the "war on terror." This potential is limited by the fact that the volume converses little with existing academic debates about Central Asia; and does not systematize the footnote references into a bibliography.

It also, curiously, devotes little attention to Kazakhstan. In the introduction, Lewis justifies his decision not to include a separate chapter, arguing that historical and contemporary differences place Kazakhstan apart, "closer perhaps to Russia than to the southern arc of Central Asian republics" (p. 7). Certainly, Kazakhstan's oil wealth does place the urban population "apart" from the rest of the region, at least economically. But in other respects Kazakhstan is also archetypically a Central Asian state: subject to a similar history of colonial conquest; drawing upon similar cultural traditions; facing similar dilemmas surrounding appropriate articulations of ethnic identity within an expressly "civic" state; and justifying presidential politics through

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similar appeals to security and stability. Perhaps most importantly, Kazakhstan is also crucial for understanding the dynamics of regional cooperation; and its economic fate will be profoundly consequential to the rest of the region.

These limitations aside, this is an important contribution to the small, if growing, collection of regional studies, written by one of the most informed, acerbic and articulate commentators on contemporary Central Asia. It deserves to be widely incorporated within undergraduate courses on the region, and should be of interest to scholars and policy makers interested in understanding the West's patent failure to understand the "temptations of tyranny" in Central Asia after 11 September 2001.

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The Unwelcome Neighbour: Turkey's Kurdish Policy, Asa Lundgren (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), viii, 159 pp.

Asa Lundgren's book analyzes Turkish foreign policy towards the "state-like Kurdish entity" (p. 1) in northern Iraq as a function of Turkey's nation-building ideology, from a critical point of view informed by constructivist theories of international relations (IR). Chapter 2 ("Nation-Building and Foreign Policy") brings together constructivist IR theories about the functions of foreign policy in nation-building processes together with a critical approach to the distinction made between civic and ethnic nationalism. Lundgren notes that even the "civic" nationalism of the French and American type cannot be free of particularistic components since the civic "culture" in which citizens partake is heavily influenced by the linguistic and cultural features of the dominant ethnic group. Moreover, Lundgren's warning that "[a]ssociational sentiments and loyalty have to be based on something more substantial than legal citizenship or living on the same territory" (p. 7) is a useful corrective to the belief held by some theorists that political communities can be sustained solely on the basis of formal-legal criteria and rights.

Turkey's approach to ethnic diversity is identified as assimilation and civic nationalism, aimed at rendering ethnicity irrelevant in the public sphere and politics. Based on a "melting pot" model, this aspect of the Turkish nation-building project determines the orientation of foreign policy regarding questions of ethnicity and sovereignty. This prevented Turkey, for example, from pressuring its neighbors, including the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Greece, Iran, and Iraq, for the protection of Turkish and Turkic-speaking minorities' rights. Even after the breakup of the Soviet Union, Turkey established relationships only with internationally recognized states in Central Asia and the Caucasus, not supporting other Turkic groups' aspirations for independence.

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