

## LETTERS

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From the *Slavic Review* Editorial Board:

*Slavic Review* publishes signed letters to the editor by individuals with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be restricted to one paragraph of no more than 250 words; comment on an article or forum should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. When we receive many letters on a topic, some letters will be published on the *Slavic Review* Web site with opportunities for further discussion. Letters may be submitted by e-mail, but a signed copy on official letter-head or with a complete return address must follow. The editor reserves the right to refuse to print, or to publish with cuts, letters that contain personal abuse or otherwise fail to meet the standards of debate expected in a scholarly journal.

To the Editor:

Ivo Banac's review of my book *Elusive Compromise: A History of Interwar Yugoslavia* (vol. 68, no. 4) is dismissive to the point of being self-discrediting. Banac is too erudite and intelligent to reject as incompetent an author who disagrees with him, yet he has made a habit of doing so. Has he done it in this case because I argue that Yugoslavia was not doomed to failure from the start, as he claimed in his 1984 work *The National Question in Yugoslavia?* (an emotional interpretation of Yugoslavia's formative period, 1918–21, based largely on pamphlets and newspapers—so much for “underresearched books,” “primary sources of secondary importance,” and misleading titles). Does he object to my challenging the “incompatible national ideologies” argument he appears to favor? It is not clear, because his review does not say much about the book, though possibly it says something about the reviewer. Banac has refrained from academic book publication for a lengthy period, presumably in order to pursue a political career in Croatia. He thus follows a well-established regional tradition of historians-turned-politicians, but would it be too much to expect at least an academic book review?

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Professor Banac chooses not to respond.