

ical theory guiding the research, as there is in Steven J. Hood's *The Kuomintang and the Democratization of Taiwan* (Boulder: Westview, 1997). Lastly, many references to historical data come from secondary instead of primary sources. This may result in the contamination of primary data by these authors. For instance, Taiwanese historians have debated the accuracy and bias of data selection in George Kerr's books because of his alleged CIA role, which Roy cites extensively.

Author's Response: **Hitting the Intended Target**

DENNY ROY

The set of foregoing reviews can be summarized as follows: first, most of the reviewers found the book a useful contribution to the literature on Taiwan's politics and history. They identified balance, readability, and thoughtful analysis as the book's strengths. Second, all of the reviewers, including those who were the most complimentary about the book, pointed to deficiencies or alternative approaches. Finally, two of the reviewers seemed to feel that the book's flaws were so severe as to render it on balance a failure. I will comment on each of these main summary points in turn.

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The genesis of this book project was my observation that while there was a large amount of comment and research on Taiwan's political development, much of the literature was ideologically polarized. I also found that coverage of key events in any given study tended to be spotty—many researchers wrote on parts of Taiwan's story, but very few even attempted to pull all of the parts into a single analysis. I therefore concluded that there was room in the field for a concise survey of Taiwan's history that presented viewpoints from different sides of the ideological divide, covered both domestic politics and pertinent international events and pressures, and presented the package in lively, accessible prose. I am gratified that many reviews of the book suggest I hit the target it was aiming for.

As is true of any book, even a successful one, I could have done more or done it differently. Kuo Chengtian (郭承天) is certainly correct that I could have written at greater length on the important issues of the role of local political factions in Taiwan, factions within the DPP, the political activities of business conglomerates, and the impact of KMT state corporatism. Indeed, each of these topics merits its own book. Murray Rubinstein rightly points out that my understanding of what constitutes "political history" is a narrower interpretation than his. In fact I do not disagree with his argument that literature, religion, and intellectual movements bear on a society's political development. Nevertheless, I chose not to give these elements the extended coverage they get in Rubinstein's book, opting instead for a more strictly traditional approach to historical analysis. In so doing I sacrifice breadth for focus. As a result, my book and Rubinstein's take distinctly different cuts at a similar topic—and I sincerely hope students of Taiwan will continue to read both.

I am disappointed that J. Bruce Jacobs and Linda Gail Arrigo, both extremely knowledgeable on the subject, took the position that the book's flaws are its defining feature and negate its possible strengths. The book was a compilation and synthesis of the work of many other authors, combined with some of my own judgment and analysis. In the process, I evidently passed on some inaccuracies. The question for potential readers is whether these relatively minor problems destroy the book's ability to provide readers with the big picture of Taiwan's story. I submit that the

work remains, as Peter R. Moody writes, "comprehensive, lucid, and balanced." I do not believe most readers would share Jacobs' opinion that the book is "poorly organized." As for his comment that "the romanization is frequently terrible," I refer to the book's preface, in which I explain that I generally use *Pinyin* for names associated with mainland China and Wade-Giles for names associated with Taiwan, while in the case of the latter I make exceptions to accommodate non-conforming spellings based on historical familiarity or the preferences of the individuals themselves.

Linda Gail Arrigo, who comments on a limited (albeit important) period of the history covered in my book, commands respect as a participant in events I merely observed or wrote about. Frequently, however, participation in political events militates against cool, dispassionate analysis; judgments become colored by personal grudges. This is a particularly common feature among the writings of human rights activists. Thus, Arrigo finds that I am insufficiently critical of Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國) for her taste. She also finds, to my surprise, that I "miss the significance of Taiwan's mass movement against martial law." I simply cannot believe the typical reader could finish my book without an appreciation of pressure from society for political liberalization as perhaps the most important theme of Taiwan's history. Nor do I gloss over Chiang's role in upholding an authoritarian political system in postwar Taiwan. It is remarkable that Taiwan underwent such a thorough degree of political liberalization in the 1980s without additional massive bloodshed. As the book clearly argues, this was not because the top leadership of the KMT suddenly accepted liberal values, but rather because they saw no viable alternative in the face of mounting demands from the mass public.

These reviews remind me that the topic of Taiwan's political history is complex and inspires great interest and passion. I am grateful for the insights of the reviewers, from which I learned much. I look forward to more scholarship on Taiwan, the history of which both carries so many lessons for the world as well as portends of future developments that could affect the well-being of the entire Asia-Pacific region. In the meantime, I hope and believe my book offers a valuable introduction to the subject.