

be confined within national borders. Yet minorities in Israel, Lebanon, Ethiopia, and the Soviet Union are demanding self-determination. The two trends, nationalism and internationalism, run counter to each other and can produce situations fraught with risk. Although Schaeffer does not offer an answer, he asks an important question: Should national or ethnic self-determination, once championed so ardently by Woodrow Wilson, be a governing principle of world politics?

Arts & Letters

MOZART IN VIENNA, 1781-1791. By Volkmar Braunbehrens. Weidenfeld. 481 pp. \$25.95

MOZART: The Golden Years. By H. C. Robbins Landon. Schirmer. 272 pp. \$29.95

"Looking at Mozart's daily life serves only to emphasize how little we really know about him," says musical historian Braunbehrens, who succeeds nonetheless in revealing "what was happening outside Mozart's house while he was composing inside." Braunbehrens' investigations lead him to dispute the popular notion that "Viennese society and, above all, Joseph II [the Habsburg emperor] were to blame for Mozart's lack of recognition, slow demise, and interment in a pauper's grave." Indeed, a different portrait emerges. It depicts a willful young man rebelling against the restrictions put upon his music by his employer, Archbishop Colloredo, and boldly setting out in 1781 to seek artistic freedom and renown in imperial Vienna. Despite financial difficulties during his decade in Vienna, Mozart composed a body of music—including six operas, some 20 symphonies, a host of works for piano, strings, clarinet, flute, horn, oboe, and voice, as well as the great Requiem mass he was working on when he died—that would stand as a remarkable catalogue for any composer, but particularly for one who lived only to the age of 35.

Mozart had been to Vienna before. His father, Leopold, had nurtured his musical talent from childhood and taken him, the child prodigy, to perform before princes, kings, and popes throughout Europe. But earning a living as a free-lance musician was another matter. Jo-

seph II's stinginess was proverbial. While encouraging Mozart with praise, he was reluctant to guarantee him a permanent salary. So Mozart gave lessons, sold copies of his music, and performed concerts to support himself, his wife Constanze, and their children, all the while maneuvering



for imperial appointments that never came. A war with Turkey in 1788 emptied Vienna of the aristocrats who supported him, forcing Mozart to borrow heavily from friends. Still, Braunbehrens shows that his prospects were improving in 1791, the year he died of a recurrence of rheumatic fever; indeed, in that year he made more money (almost 4,000 florins) than he had in any previous year.

Readers will find fewer details of Mozart's life in musicologist Robbins Landon's study of the same period. But while Braunbehrens shuns discussion of Mozart's music ("Music must be heard," he says), Robbins Landon lavishes attention upon the origins and legacies of Mozart's works. We learn, for example, that the Stein pianos used by Mozart were well suited to the "delicate and rather staccato technique" he favored—as opposed to later pianos whose sustaining qualities allowed for the "beautiful and silvery effect" associated with Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata." Robbins Landon shows how Mozart revolutionized orchestration with unusual pairings of instruments, and how he broke with established forms of concerti and quartets to create a sound never before heard—so unique that a quartet dedicated to his friend Joseph Haydn in 1785 was dubbed the "Dissonance" quartet. The weakness of *The Golden Years* is its attempt to psychoanalyze a man known to us only through his letters. (The author, for example, diagnoses Mozart as a manic-depressive in order to account for the large number of works he composed in a minor key.) What stands out in both volumes, however, is the fact that Mozart—despite human failings and personal misfortune—achieved what most others can only marvel at. We are still marveling 200 years later.