

John Feffer on:

- *Warpaths*, Robert Schaeffer. Hill and Wang, New York, 1990. Hardcover, 306 pages.

Margaret Chapman on:

- *Sexual Anarchy: Gender and Culture in the Fin de Siecle*, Elaine Showalter. Viking, New York, \$19.95, 242 pages, illustrated.

Sarah Schulman on:

- *Letters From a War Zone: Writings 1976-1989*, Andrea Dworkin. Dutton, New York, \$18.95, 337 pages.
- *Men & Intimacy: Personal Accounts Exploring the Dilemmas of Modern Male Sexuality*, Edited by Franklin Abbot. Crossing Press, Freedom, CA., \$12.95, 247 pages.

Kevin Coogan on:

- *Bitter Harvest: Gordon Kahl And The Posse Comitatus; Murder In The Heartland*, James Corcoran. Viking Penguin Press, New York, 1990. 274 pages. \$18.95.

Michael Bronski on:

- *Medium Cool: The Movies of the 1960s*, by Ethan Mordden. Knopf, New York, \$24.95, 301 pages, illustrated.



NATIONALISM AND self-determination are often represented as the moral antipodes of international relations. At one end are the nationalists: inflamers of ugly prejudices, ad-

vocates of imaginary ethnic homogeneity. From neo-Nazis and rampaging skinheads to clerical apparatchiks and just plain redneck patriots, nationalists appear under various banners, wrap themselves in assorted flags and use the rallying cry of "nation" to mask their own xenophobic and self-serving agenda. Self-determination, meanwhile, has a noble ring: the politically downtrodden struggling for basic democratic rights through unavoidable military force (El Salvador's FMLN-FDR), deli-

cate political negotiations (Poland's Solidarity) or sheer moral authority (India's anti-colonial movement). Instead of working on behalf of any given interest group, such movements target social injustice and shape their struggles according to enlightened political principles.

However neatly reassuring such categories might be, nationalism and self-determination are seldom so easily separated from one another. Movements for self-determination, for instance, often appeal to the aspirations of a mythic national community and then, upon gaining power, exercise state authority in service of only a particular segment of the "nation." Is Sajudis working for Lithuanian self-determination or simply trying to re-create a Lithuanian nation at the expense of Russian and Polish minorities? Is the Croatian move away from Serbian domination within Yugoslavia a manifestation of rabid nationalism or a legitimate demand for self-determination? Are Palestinian calls for a separate state based entirely on principle or do they also involve some notion of a Palestinian nation?

In *Warpaths*, a study of partition, Robert Schaeffer attempts to go beyond this problematic dichotomy between "good" self-determination and "bad" nationalism. By examining a specific question of political history—divided states in the 20th century—Schaeffer raises some intriguing questions about independence movements, the nations they collectively imagine, and the states they hope to form.

The book's first task, an analysis of the conditions producing divided states, is quite straightforward. Schaeffer, for instance, demonstrates how the British divided their former colonies (Ireland, Palestine, India) as they gradually lost international influence in the period between the two world wars. Partition here represented a policy of convenience that could replace the direct administration associated with imperialism. Later in Vietnam, Korea, and Germany, partition expressed the superpower dualism of the Cold War. The

first partitions came along ethnic and religious lines; the second set along ideological ones.

When evaluating partition, however, *Warpaths* becomes more controversial. No one could possibly deny the horrors that dividing states has caused: the mass population transfers between India and Pakistan, the hitherto concrete reality of the Berlin Wall, the ongoing bloodshed in Ireland. Were Schaeffer simply to blame such failures on the specter of nationalism, *Warpaths* would probably excite little interest. Rather, Schaeffer argues that the recipe for disaster came from two unlikely partners—Lenin and Wilson—and the rogue ingredient was none other than sainted self-determination.

According to both Wilsonian and Leninist internationalism—one Communist, the other liberal—self-determination was a stick with which the emerging U.S. and Soviet superpowers could thrash the declining colonial empires, notably Britain and France. By supporting independence movements in India, Ireland, and Indochina, both nascent hegemonies could hasten the exit of rivals from the world stage; by advocating a world system of "self-determined" nations led by either the Comintern or the League of Nations, both the U.S. and USSR could simultaneously appeal to egalitarian values and establish their respective countries as first among equals.

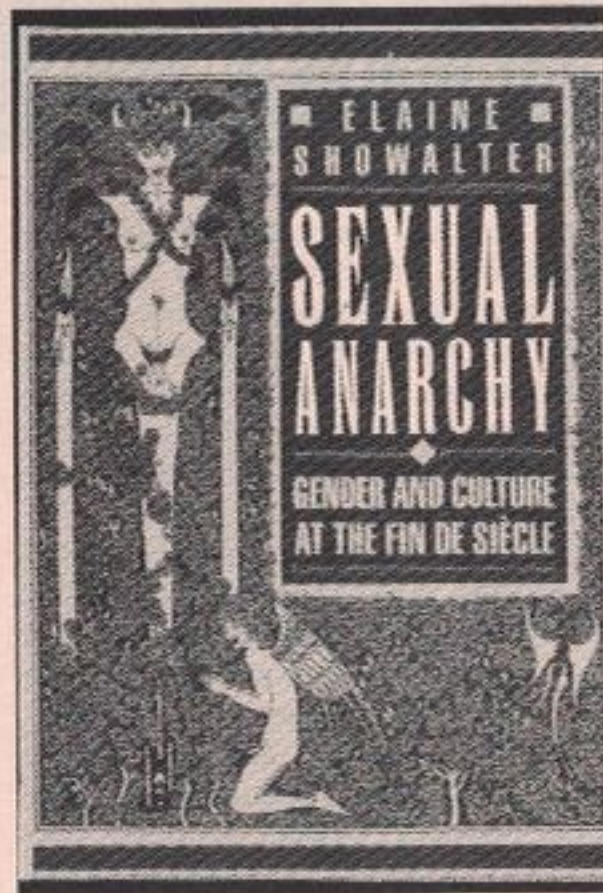
When World War II sealed the fates of both the 19th century empires and their 20th century German and Japanese would-be successors to the world throne, the U.S. and USSR could finally occupy the positions for which Wilson and Lenin had laid the groundwork.

Self-determination, meanwhile, became less of an anti-colonial ploy than a tactical move in the Cold War game. Here again, however, both superpowers conceived of the struggles for national independence instrumentally. The Soviets, for instance, supported Vietnamese self-determination only when it served specific foreign policy purposes (unwilling to disrupt the delicate post-war balance of power, the USSR refused in

1945 to recognize Ho Chi Minh's government). The U.S., meanwhile, squelched Guatemalan self-determination in 1954 because U.S. business interests proved more important. Cold War pressures transformed the latent instrumentalism of Lenin's and Wilson's internationalism into the most vulgar superpower manipulation.

Partition served well its colonial and then superpower patrons. Such ethnic or ideological divisions could satisfy demands for self-determination, facilitate colonial withdrawal, or strengthen a mutually beneficial balance of power. Best of all, the "enlightened" partitioners could blame any resulting turmoil on unruly nationalists. Yet, however geopolitically convenient, partition only accentuated the problems it was intended to solve. Where divisions were intended to decrease ethnic rivalry, such rivalry only increased (e.g., between India and Pakistan); where division was intended to avoid superpower military confrontation, the conflict was merely shifted to other levels (e.g., a tripwire confrontation along the DMZ in Korea). Furthermore, negotiated divisions often have encouraged secessionist movements, setting into motion what might be called Zeno's paradox of partition: the splitting of a nation in half and then half again and again as each ethnic group demands its own unblemished and therefore unobtainable autonomy. India produces Pakistan which produces Bangladesh and further subdivisions in Kashmir and Punjab provinces loom in the future; Yugoslavia threatens to unravel into six or even more separate countries; the USSR may soon splinter into dozens of hostile factions.

As history then, *Warpaths* chronicles the all too common story of failed diplomacy. Were partition simply diplomacy's Maginot Line, we could sit back and laugh at the follies of hapless leaders past. Yet, secession and partition remain popular solutions from Quebec to Lithuania to the West Bank and Gaza. And here Schaeffer states his provocative conclusion: demands for self-determination must be tempered in order to prevent the greater evil of partition. In his final chapter, Schaeffer looks for alternatives to partition in the work of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King, Lincoln for upholding majority rule while guaranteeing by



constitution, King for struggling for minority rights within an integrationist framework.

Yet, for all the persuasiveness of Schaeffer's historical description, his prescriptions fail to convince, despite the combined authority of Lincoln and King. First of all, partition is not the only diplomatic solution that has visibly failed in the 20th century. Its counterpart, forced integration, has also led to tremendous loss of life, for example when Ethiopia federated Eritrea in 1951 and then annexed it in 1962. Eritrean independence was simply postponed and a bloody civil war ensued. A similar arrangement could conceivably have caused more bloodshed than partition had produced in India, Cyprus, or Ireland. Perhaps more important: although self-determination has been manipulated in various Machiavellian ways by both greater and lesser powers, it remains a principled defense against the arrogance of the state.

Without pressures from below generated by movements for self-determination, the state tends to construct in the name of "national interest" both an intolerant and provocative foreign policy and a domestic program of compulsory assimilation.

If neither forced integration nor partition, what is the diplomatic alternative to both the overarching state and a chaos of ethnic rivalries? Can the principles of self-determination be preserved in a way that also tempers the

excesses of nationalism? Though Schaeffer doesn't provide these answers, many of his points are nonetheless well-taken. Nationalism is still a potent force in international relations and self-determination has its limits. Though the Berlin Wall is no more, Lebanon continues to prove an intractable problem: building additional walls, as Schaeffer makes clear, will not solve anything. Z

JOHN FEFFER is author of *Beyond Detente: Soviet Foreign Policy and U.S. Options* (The Noonday Press).

SEXUAL ANARCHY

MARGARET CHAPMAN

THERE ARE nine years left before the year 2,000 but already consumers and producers, marketers and analysts are sharing millennia angst. Fine de Siècle, says Elaine Showalter in *Sexual Anarchy*, is a state of mind. Specifically it means an apocalyptic crisis as gender, racial, and class structures are re-ordered or collapsed. And, as any New York City resident can tell you, collapsed culture does not roll over for a bright new system. Indeed it lies there forcing its citizens to make lives in the rubble.

The many similarities which Showalter highlights between the end of the 19th and 20th centuries are engrossing, though not reassuring. The woman's movement at the turn of the century thought along many of the same lines as the one that followed 70 years later. In one case a 1912 article entitled "The Spinster and Her Enemies" was published in a newspaper called *Freewoman*. Substituting celibacy for the ideological role played ten years ago by lesbianism, the author argued that "an unhusbanded class of women" was necessary for "the task of raising the fair sex out of its subjugation." And the Fin de Siècle backlash to feminism also resembles our current period. Doctors suggested that the feminist woman was dangerous to society because "her obsession with developing her brain starved her uterus." Compare this with the testimony at the 1983 hearings on a Federal Human Life Amendment where a doctor described the fetus as "an