The Wedding Within the War by Michael Rossman

(Doubleday Anchor Books; 397 pp.;$2.95)

Carol Turner

For one who grew up in those times, reading a journal about the student movement of the sixties is a bittersweet experience. It reawakens memories of old friends and the experiences and feelings that we shared: the hope, the sense of community, the reality of the confrontations. It revives nostalgia for the days when the cause was just and the tactics symbolic; it arouses feelings of embarrassment for the arrogance of our youth and the simplicity of our solutions.

At the same time, a history of the student movement seems painfully irrelevant to these times. Those experiences cannot be recaptured; one fears the movement of our youth may have little relevance to present social change. Michael Rossman's book captures the development and the evolution of the movement but stops short of evaluating the student movement as a continuing force for social change.

Rossman argues that the essence of the student movement was a progression to consciousness shared by those who participated in the public events and demonstrations which came to stereotype the movement. The first element in the progression was from an intellectual to an emotional involvement in social change. Most public events and demonstrations educated intellectual, middle-class kids to the reality of police violence: We saw helpless people clubbed; we had friends who were arrested; we watched the police line up and move in with tear gas and motorcycles, and we were afraid. With our fear came feelings of impotence and anger. Anger with "Amerika" transformed us from violent to peaceful dissenters. We felt comfort and security and power from the others in the group, from the singing, from the marching. Instant encounters with others highlighted the real loneliness we felt most other times and places. Since the society treated dissenters as a group, the group became a movement; as the movement absorbed the anger and the projections of the Establishment, it developed its own culture and its own norms. Rossman describes it: "we found flowering in ourselves the presence whose absence we were at heart protesting." We had shared powerfully affective learning experiences which left us changed.

In a related progression to consciousness, we turned from issues to ourselves—ourselves as a movement and ourselves as alternatives to American culture. Rossman views the free speech movement at Berkeley as the turning point in this process. For the first time "we acted collectively on a condition of our own immediate life, as a class with a responsibility to ourselves for the future." We began to work on alternatives: free schools, communes, health foods, arts and crafts, new drugs. We met in conferences and along the road, to communicate what we were doing and to share the enthusiasm and the arrogance of our discoveries. We began to criticize ourselves. For example, Rossman argues that the Yippie demonstration at Chicago did not responsibly prepare kids for the violence and the destruction which were to be expected. In another article he notes that free universities were using encounter group techniques as a substitute for conflict which must be encountered before love and learning can take place.

As we changed and experimented with new alternatives, the fundamental power of the society remained in control, affecting our lives. Rossman argues that the major thread in the progression to consciousness is the relationship of the movement to authority. The fundamental purpose of authority is to control. The individuals who act as authorities may be good people, or ordinary people, or vindictive people, but each is able to affect and influence the authority system only insofar as he succeeds in controlling you and me. In the large demonstrations the control was exercised through deceit and manipulation, through clubbing and killing, at Jackson and Kent State and at the People's Park. In ordinary, everyday ways, through pettiness and legal repression, authority destroys the alternatives and undermines the solidarity of the group. The demise of Haight-Ashbury and the conspiracy trials are examples. Violence which erupted on the campuses is part of the violence of the streets, which in turn is part of the violence of war and racism in this society. The student movement slipped off the liberal mask of white America and exposed the control function of all authority. For Rossman, out of this realization comes the need to protect yourself and your loved ones from a repressive society. The idealism of civil disobedience requiring jail as the price of resistance becomes dysfunctional; it is dangerous and deadly to cooperate with the control systems of America. It is necessary to build and maintain a supportive subsystem to survive and grow. We invent new rituals and we reject the State. We must survive before we can change America.

Michael Rossman succeeds in communicating both the flavor and the meanings of the student movement by sharing his own experiences and early writings about his own experiences. His method of presentation is in itself expressive of the student movement and the way participants in the movement conceptualize what was going on. (Whether or not the reader agrees that participants ought to feel as Michael Rossman does, it is more important to understand what students did feel in the movement.) Few readers will be moved by the entire collection of articles within Rossman's book, but more will be

interested in the later articles; "Letters From a County Jail" and "The Night We Named Our Child We Had Fish for Dinner" stand out.

What Rossman does less effectively is to demonstrate why this is an important book to write in these times. The story teases us with old memories, but now that the liberal solutions have been unmasked, what next? Rossman says that he aspires to be an active agent for social change. *The Wedding Within the War* speaks to our need to survive rather than our power to change. Like all things under heaven, the student movement had a time to be born and a time to die. For those who participated and grew up in the movement, the seventies are a time for founding families and finding work. We take from the sixties a network of old friends and a shared language about the need for social change. We know what we want, but in many ways we have lost faith in the tactics of the student movement and need something to replace them.

Rossman calls himself a prophet: In 1960 he wrote that the New Left was coming and in 1964 that "they" would be killing kids on campuses all over America in subsequent years. But where is the prophecy for the seventies in *The Wedding Within the War?* For Rossman it is a time for writing books. What is needed is a new prophecy and a new hope.

STUDENT RATES

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History, Man, and Reason: A Study in Nineteeth-Century Thought by Maurice Mandelbaum

(Johns Hopkins Press; 553 pp.; $15.00)

Mark O. Morris

In books with titles like *History, Man, and Reason* we expect sweeping ideologies or prophecies, statements to ease the uncertainty of our times. Professor Mandelbaum chose, however, a more modest and careful circumference and limits himself to a period of about 150 years, of which the nineteenth century is the core. The focus is a history of ideas in philosophy and related developments in science and the social sciences.

The thesis is that the nineteenth century had a considerable degree of philosophic unity, expressed in the form of a dialogue developed around specific themes. Three themes are of particular importance: a new belief in the progressive nature of history; the discovery of the degree to which human nature is changeable and malleable; and a growing doubt about the purity and efficacy of human intellect. The main participants in this dialogue can be loosely grouped in the schools Mandelbaum sees as dominant in the nineteenth century—metaphysical idealism and positivism.

The first theme was that history is the scene of progressive human development. Unlike the Enlightenment hopes for progress, in which reason was brought *to* history, nineteenth-century thinkers tended to believe that reason was immanent *in* history. Mandelbaum defines the new view as "historicism," or the theory that history displays a progressive and directional pattern, developing from lower to higher forms of civilization. What particular meaning was found in history varied, as is evident by the diversity of thinkers who shared some manner of belief in development: Hegel, Marx, Comte, and, in some respects, J. S. Mill, to name a few. Romantics and idealists tended to see in history the movement of "Spirit," however defined; positivists saw the empirical laws of social and economic evolution.

It was a period of encompassing systems, reflecting a naive and even arrogant faith in civilization on the march. But it should be noted (and here we go beyond Mandelbaum's description) that these were new kinds of systems. Whereas the Enlightenment drew on transcendent standards of reason and justice in order to apply them to the criticism and reconstruction of human affairs, in the nineteenth century both the transcendence and the human agency were discounted. Reason and progress, considered immanent in human affairs and the workings of history, tended to nourish the sense that little could or needed to be done. Underlying the apparent optimism of historicism was a sense of diminished political potency, even a kind of political and philosophical despair which shows up more clearly in the religious thinkers of the period—who were all too aware of the loss of critical transcendence—and the proto-existentialist figures, such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, who perceived the undercurrents of historicist optimism.

The second theme was the discovery that human nature—or at least the variety of human conditions and potentials—was much more open and malleable than had been thought before. Professor Mandelbaum's grasp of this topic is impressive, producing the most acute and subtle section of his book. There was an astonishing variety of doctrines focusing on man's malleability set forth by Helvetius, Condillac, Comte, Spencer,