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,

Hegel, Marx, Mill, Fichte, Green, and Darwin. Whether malleability was seen as socially conditioned (by whichever of a number of social forces) or self-moved, there was a distinctive loosening of the theoretical boundaries around human natures. Because doctrines of malleability were often tied to doctrines of historicism, malleability supplied for some thinkers an additional ground for optimism.

These developments also produced certain ambiguities. For one thing, the credos of natural law and of the Enlightenment had supported an egalitarianism based on man's innate ethical and rational powers, but this was now challenged by the doctrine of malleability, particularly when placed in an evolutionary context. (Often with brutal consequences: viz., egalitarian America's arrogant decimation of the "savage" Indians because they could be considered scarcely human.) Moreover, malleability *per se* is an empty concept; it suggests potentials for almost anything. The faculty of reason, central to older theories of human nature, lost its centrality to a variety of other possibilities. Many of these possibilities were pointed out by the thinkers who formed the third stream of nineteenth-century thought, namely, those who doubted the purity and efficacy of rationality.

What Mandelbaum calls the "rebellion against reason" might be seen as a counter-worldview to the various worldviews of the nineteenth century. In thinkers such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche this was the case. But the rebellion was also central to romantic idealism. Further, Mandelbaum describes in discriminating detail how the challenge to intellect entered also into the mainstream of positivist thought. The positivism of Helmholtz and Mach, for example, moved from asserting that whatever else might be "there," all we can know of the world is what we observe, to arguing that what we observe is itself fundamentally conditioned and limited by our organs of observation.

Mandelbaum believes the twentieth century has outgrown both historicism and simplistic views of human malleability, and he deplores the "rebellion against reason" that still "permeates our lives" to an "alarming extent." But beyond that, Mandelbaum is a subtle and conscientious scholar who is commendably wary of reading present concerns into past history. His critical discussions are very valuable, but insofar as Mandelbaum contends that we have, or should have, outgrown the nineteenth century, some questions are in order.

In discussing historicism Mandelbaum demonstrates that, both logically and empirically, it is impossible to reduce history to a unilinear development based on a single moving principle. History, he argues, is considerably more complex than that. Even if progress could be adequately defined, let alone identified with the course of history, history appears inevitable only in retrospect. In history as it is lived, choice and chance play major roles. This is not to say that Mandelbaum thinks history is simply random. There are functional relationships and regularities operative, which enable us to comprehend why something did or did not happen in many cases. But there is also large room for human agency and choice. This is a modest and reasonable appraisal that is true so far as it goes. However, it glosses over difficulties with which the historicists attempted to deal and which, I think, our century has not outgrown.

Few would doubt that history is complex, but historicists nonetheless tried to penetrate that complexity in search of what was essential or at least important. This is, of course, a major concern of any science. Indeed, the location of significance is a task which contemporary social science has yet to master. While Mandelbaum is aware of this, he argues that we have at least severed the problem of significance from notions of progress. It is true that social scientists at long last seem wary of arrogant or smug uses of categories like "primitive," "modernization," etc. But in ridding ourselves of such arrogant illusions, we have not entirely shaken off past modes of thought.

In their search for the essential nature of history, nineteenth-century historicists were looking for more than a principle of explanation. They also sought, in history, a structure of values—of shared values—to replace the transhistorical values of natural law and religious thought. In the twentieth century there remains a strong belief in progress, but that belief has been transposed to the economic and technological spheres. It is not simply that we still believe in progress; by focusing on technology we have retained an essential assumption, if I may speak so loosely, of the nineteenth-century spirit. What progressed, according to central figures like Marx, Comte and Darwin, was man's emergence from, and power over, nature. The nineteenth century saw this as the growth of the human spirit, and that is what gave progress its particular value. We still believe in technological progress, although we are more reluctant to invest it with value and hope or consolation. As thinkers as diverse as Ellul and Galbraith have pointed out, progress in the guise of technology seems increasingly autonomous from human agency, even human comprehension.

Early signs of concern about alienation from the world emerge in "the rebellion against reason," although the revolt was not directed immediately against technology but against certain modes of thought. Mandelbaum wants to defend conceptual, analytical thinking against those who charge that concepts distort and dessicate nature and alienate men from it. He does demonstrate that concepts are both necessary and useful in human thought, and his argument to this point is so sensible that only the most resolute of mystics would protest. But he does not really speak to the concerns of the "rebels" about what the nature of reality is and what that implies about how men proceed.

For Nietzsche, for example, reality has no *given* structure; no conceptual system can capture it. On this crucial question there is, of

course, room for infinite debate, yet precisely here Mandelbaum offers only a rather weak assertion of faith: Since science has advanced and since we have survived, our concepts must reflect some reality. But Nietzsche's point is that no conceptual system can capture all of reality's possibilities, all of the freedom reality allows. Nietzsche attacked not concepts *per se,* but the misuse of concepts—the arrogant attempt to freeze reality and ourselves within our systems. Unless we are aware of the limits of our concepts, we will destroy the multifacetedness, the plasticity of human and natural realities.

Within this lofty metaphysic is a practical concern: that language too is a technology, one which can be used to construct a common reality, whether in a scientific discipline or in a political community. Language also, as Thomas Kuhn has pointed out, can foreclose further advances by limiting the imaginations of its makers. We should therefore maintain an ironic sensitivity to what our words conceal. This is a problem which the nineteenth-century "rebels," who shared the expansionist energies of their time but feared its encompassing systems, revealed for us. It is a legacy which Professor Mandelbaum seems too eager to discard.

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Briefly Noted

Beyond the Stable State by Donald A. Schon

(Random House; 255 pp.; $7.95)

England's 1970 Reith Lectures delivered by a visiting professor at M.I.T. and president of the Organization for Social and Technical Innovation. The "state" in the title refers not only to the government but to virtually all contemporary institutions (university, church, business, labor, etc.) now being forced out of their fixed identities and procedures. The task is to overcome the "dynamic conservatism" of institutional fears and to recast structure, theory and technology into "learning systems." The book belongs to the "future shock" genre, although with a larger than usual dash of optimism. Most of the argument is common currency in futurist literature, but along the way Schon offers useful insights into the reasons behind the failures of several innovative governmental programs, especially in the area of housing. The many systems charts and innovative terminology, however, become more fascinatingly complex and precise in proportion to the triviality of the subjects they are intended to illuminate.

The Draft and the Rest of Your Life by Richard L. Killmer & Charles P. Lutz

(Augsburg; 104 pp.; $1.95 [paper])

A modest book, to be sure, but perhaps for that reason a real contribution in a field glutted with prejudice and misinformation. The authors offer a fair survey of the history, rationale and practice of Selective Service, together with a well-balanced challenge to young men and their families to form an ethically considered response to the draft system. Written from a specifically Christian view, the book recommends itself for use in draft counseling as well as in general discussion of the moral responsibilities of citizenship.

The Decline of the Wasp by Peter Schrag

(Simon & Schuster; 255 pp.; $6.95)

A hurried and sometimes breathless survey of what almost everyone has said or written about what is wrong with American liberalism. The WASP's, argues *Saturday Review* editor Schrag, divided the world into cannibals and missionaries, and now the cannibals are making a comeback. Between the complex barbarity of the one and the unvarnished barbarity of the other, Schrag refuses to make a choice. He prefers to hope that all of us outsiders—for somehow we have all become outsiders in this America repressive of all and responsive to none—will form new coalitions to create highly decentralized and therefore humanized communities that will provide "the privileges of being intrinsic, the integrity of place, the ability to love and to create in the present . . . and the ability to live where one feels most at home." Much of the writing is better than this note may suggest or than the author's argument may warrant.

The Struggle Is the Message by Irving Louis Horowitz

(Glendessary Press; 185 pp.; $5.95)

A few years later Mr. Horowitz brings together a number of pieces that might otherwise be lost to even the conscientious collector of his awesome productivity. These items which he produced as a consultant to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence were omitted from the Commission's published findings, *The Politics of Protest,* and their publication now vindicates the Commission's editorial judgment. There is, however, one interesting essay comparing the radical impulses of America's sixties with the *fin de siècle* period in France, with particular attention to the thought of Georges Sorel. The essay previously appeared in the journal *New Politics* but warrants the new exposure it receives here.