and becoming "modern," Hong Kong's Chinese society retains many old and conservative features that are only now coming under major attack. Lineage domination of villages and areas is fading with the growth of population and its vastly increased physical mobility, to say nothing of changes in social mobility. The lineages themselves, partly as a consequence of their loosened hold on geographical power centres, but also because of more profound shifts in economy, political organization and education, are showing functional decline. In Taiwan a similar decline has been observed and is sometimes attributed to the effects of land reform. Obviously it is just at such junctures that comparison is most needed and likely to be most rewarding to our comprehension of causes and conditions of change.

For those who would like a deeper appreciation of the Chinese in Hong Kong than is at present available in scattered articles, or can be derived from the ritual tourist trip to Kam Tin, Mr. Baker's book is highly recommended, particularly if read in conjunction with Jack Potter's *Capitalism and the Chinese Peasant* (1968). In the final analysis, however, the great merit of this book and its enduring value will lie in its painstaking gathering and excellent presentation of a great deal of factual material of particular concern to those deeply involved in the study of Chinese society.

MORTON H. FRIED.

Revolutionary Immortality: Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Cultural Revolution. By ROBERT J. LIFTON. [New York: Random House, 1968. 178 pp. $1.95.]

Revolutionary Immortality is an exciting book, humanistic, systematically organized, and deeply incisive. The book illuminates brilliantly the character of Mao (and through Mao the character of all great world historical figures), some sources, significances and limitations of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and more universal psycho-historical issues.

In his preface, Professor Lifton makes clear what he does and does not claim for the book. Recognizing that "large historical events cannot be attributed to a single cause, nor grasped by a single explanation . . . ," Lifton sees his book as "an interpretative essay whose central theme—that of revolutionary immortality—serves to organize a large number of divergent events and attitudes." He quite properly claims that this highly inclusive theme (it does not preclude many alternative explanations of the Cultural Revolution) enables him to explore in a new way the connexions between individual and collective patterns

and the "excruciatingly complex encounter between man and technology." In nine chapters—with such titles as "The Death of the Leader," "The Death of the Revolution," "The Quest for Rebirth," "Purity and Power," and "Technology and Psychism"—Professor Lifton relentlessly argues and develops this provocative theme.

Lifton does not here attempt a full-scale psycho-biography of Mao. He stresses shared experiences and justifiably rejects the "solipsistic tendency all too common in . . . [his] profession . . . of viewing large historical events as nothing but manifestations of someone's individual psychopathology." Nor does Professor Lifton here attempt to deal comprehensively with the multicausal nature of the Cultural Revolution. Rather, *Revolutionary Immortality* is an exploratory, frankly speculative effort to relate in a selected context the metaphysical, historical, cultural and psychological components of "man's continuing need for 'an assurance of eternal survival for his self'." Some behaviourists may charge that Lifton's data base is thin and that his theory is capable neither of being confirmed nor disconfirmed. In their concern that all works of social science be "empirically verifiable" they may miss entirely the rewards of reading Lifton.

The context of the book is the Chinese Cultural Revolution, but the larger perspective is that of "man's struggles for various forms of renewal and transcendence"; forms which Lifton analyses in terms of "modes of symbolic immortality" which "deal with both death symbolism and human continuity." The sense of immortality, derived from such symbolic modes as biological immortality (the awareness of ancestors and of offspring) and revolutionary immortality, is the individual's and the group's "connection with man's general past and future." It is one element of personal and historical continuity in the dialectic between change and continuity that is the stuff of history.

Brilliance (Lifton's), like charisma (Mao's), is a rare gift, but one that should be accepted—to do it justice—not without some resistance. Instead of further summarizing Professor Lifton's book, let me offer a different interpretation of the Cultural Revolution (one not necessarily incompatible with Lifton's; see for example his footnote on p. 138) and register several related reservations to his argument.

In the first place, while the fear of individual and group death may be one ultimate motivating factor in the Cultural Revolution, it can be argued that the desire for a more meaningful life today—a desire not exhausted by the sense of transcending death—is at least equally important. Such an alternative inclusive interpretation seems consonant with the increasingly world-wide awareness—particularly among the young—that our institutions serve more to obstruct than to facilitate the

realization of the very ideals with which we have all been socialized. All over the world, and particularly in China, systems of authority and allied bureaucratic structures are under attack. While one may point out that the attack in China was initiated from above and in this sense is distinguishable from analogous events in France, Mexico or the United States, the fact remains that the attack in China also has had a life of its own: it has gained believers, developed with some spontaneity, been exceedingly difficult to control, and sought to realize (too often through methods difficult for our middle class minds to accept) a vision of a more humane existence.

Within Mao's own framework, it is arguable (though to my knowledge thus far unargued) that Mao was correct in provoking the Cultural Revolution. Assume that Mao's primary goal has been to set in motion the forces required to create on earth an approximation of the ideal society. It seems quite clear that whatever the improbability of that ideal society being created by means of the Cultural Revolution, it was even less likely to be created through the continuation of trends in Chinese society existing before Mao began his "counter-attack" in the mid-1960s: trends like increasing industrialization, specialization, and bureaucratization. Mao was tragically right when he perceived that the organizations and institutions of China in the early 1960s were not suitable means to realize the vision of Chinese society to which he has dedicated his adult life.

Accepting, then, that Mao and his followers are, in a meaningful sense, acting for the purposes and from the motivations they ascribe to themselves, one comes to a radically different appreciation than that suggested by Professor Lifton of a pivotal institution in China: Mao's cult of personality. Lifton's discussion of the cult of personality emphasizes the needs of Mao and his followers for a deification of the leader to ensure their individual and collective symbolic survival (transcendence), in order to deny that Mao and the revolution are losing their magical power. To my mind, this comes too close—much as Professor Lifton tries to avoid such pitfalls—to ascribing large historical events to individual psychopathology. The cult of personality should not be taken as a sophisticated manifestation of Mao's vanity. Quite the contrary seems to be true: the cult of personality consistently has been used instrumentally to achieve ends more significant than the enhancement of Mao's self-image.

In the 1950s the cult of personality was used in China as an effective organizational mechanism, for what Weber calls "routinizing charisma"; the cult functioned primarily as a mode of legitimizing roles and institutions through their association with a beloved and respected

person (thus, Chinese children's songs praise *Chairman* Mao). After the failures of the Great Leap and the resulting cynicism, the collective leadership who took operational control of China as Mao withdrew simultaneously sniped at Mao and continued to tolerate a reduced cult of personality. More recently, the cult of personality has been used by Mao in an opposite manner, as an anti-organizational weapon in the attack phase of Mao's ambivalent relationship to organizations. As Mao took to the attack, he used his only non-organizational source of authority repersonalizing the cult of personality as charisma in a broad based attack on most of China's bureaucratic organizations. The more he attacked all other sources of authority, the more deeply he had to rely upon his remaining source. In this perspective the Cultural Revolution can be understood in part as a battle waged between different types of authority—a battle, again in Weberian terms, between charismatic authority, on the one side, and legal-rational (bureaucratic) and traditional authority on the other. And from this viewpoint the Cultural Revolution may well be the most effective manner to propel China towards goals which admittedly may be unachievable.

Reference to the attempt to achieve what may be unachievable brings me to a different criticism of Lifton's book. Greatness, to my mind, lies precisely in attempting the seemingly impossible. Mao undoubtedly is one of the great men of the twentieth century. It is characteristic of great men that they walk the narrow line between historic achievement and psychosis. When a great man is successful, he imposes his subjective vision of the world upon external phenomena at a time when that imposition is capable of moulding events. But when a great man is unsuccessful, he is retrospectively said to be guilty of what Lifton calls "psychism": the attempt, doomed to fail, "to achieve control over one's external environment through internal or psychological manipulations, through behaviour determined by intra-psychic needs no longer in touch with the actualities of the world one seeks to influence." Herein lies the internal contradiction of greatness. *Hubris,* perhaps, is a quality of all great men. But that quality may be obscured in all such men who succeed (in the face of seeming impossibility) and then die, either before they become lesser men by defecting from their characteristic greatness or before they end in tragedy. Mao has remained true to his character, thereby reaffirming his greatness. And, if one dares predict, he will fail tragically in his effort to remake man and society in the face of human nature and antagonistic social forces associated both with traditional China and with the modernization process.

A more explicit theory of great men in Lifton's book would have

helped to frame some of these issues, which in the absence of such a theory tend to be dealt with unsystematically. Professor Lifton brings out the positive contributions of what I would call Mao's early psychism, but, by defining psychism exclusively in terms of failure, he obscures the fine line dividing a great man's successes from his failures. After failure is established it is easy to say the great man was out of touch with reality.

Finally, if Mao is guilty of psychism in Lifton's sense, I would argue that Lifton, despite his unusually high sensitivity, is at times perhaps guilty of the opposite, "technologism" (my coinage). In his chapter on technology and psychism there appears to be an implicit assumption that, in the final analysis, technological forces are generally what determine human history. Even Mao's early successes—which, Lifton writes, "almost take the fallacy out of the psychistic fallacy"—are explained away as "a kind of 'technological judo', a means of putting to effective use one's opponent's technological strength."

There is something very American about this assumption, as American as the technologism of the Vietnam War (which Professor Lifton opposes), in which America has attempted to "build someone else's nation" through the manifold application of techniques. If technology does reign, it has limits—limits not fully knowable in advance. And in Mao's failure to achieve revolutionary immortality at the expense of technology, we all die a little.

RICHARD M. PFEFFER.

The Chinese Communist Movement: A Report of the United States War Department, July, 1945. Edited by LYMAN P. VAN SLYKE. [Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1968. 267 pp. Paperback $2·95.]

SOME secondary sources are unusually important for research into the history of Chinese communism both because of the paucity of key primary materials and because of the polemical nature of those primary sources which do exist. *The Chinese Communist Movement* is such an indispensable secondary source. Prepared by the Military Intelligence Division of the U.S. War Department in late 1944 and early 1945 as a compendium of existing information based on "over 2,500 reports, pamphlets and books," this document was declassified in 1949 by Secretary of State Dean Acheson in the process of his defence of the controversial China White Paper. It was published in 1952 as Appendix II of Part 7 A of the Senate Hearings on the Institute of Pacific Relations, but remained as inaccessible as one would guess from the four line title in governmentese of that long out of print document.