



# States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China

By Theda Skocpol

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State structures, international forces, and class relations: Theda Skocpol shows how all three combine to explain the origins and accomplishments of social-revolutionary transformations. From France in the 1790s to Vietnam in the 1970s, social revolutions have been rare but undeniably of enormous importance in modern world history. *States and Social Revolutions* provides a new frame of reference for analyzing the causes, the conflicts, and the outcomes of such revolutions. And it develops in depth a rigorous, comparative historical analysis of three major cases: the French Revolution of 1787 through the early 1800s, the Russian Revolution of 1917 through the 1930s, and the Chinese Revolution of 1911 through the 1960s. Believing that existing theories of revolution, both Marxist and non-Marxist, are inadequate to explain the actual historical patterns of revolutions, the author urges us to adopt fresh perspectives. Above all, she maintains that states conceived as administrative and coercive organizations potentially autonomous from class controls and interests must be made central to explanations of revolutions.

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#### Review

'With lucidity and care, Skocpol has laid out a challenging comparison of three great revolutions ... Here is a book worth studying, refuting, testing, elaborating, and emulating.' Charles Tilly

'I am convinced that States and Social Revolutions will be considered a landmark in the study of the sources of revolution.' Lewis A. Coser, The New York Times Book Review

#### About the Author

Theda Skocpol is Victor S. Thomas Professor of Government and Sociology at Harvard University. Her previous works include the prize-winning "States and Social Revolutions".

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