‘Happy Anniversary? *States and Social Revolutions* Revisited’

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Happy anniversary?

1979 was a big year for revolutions. In January, Shah Reza Pahlavi fled Iran following 16 months of protests against his regime. On 1st February, Ayatollah Khomeini, a central figure in the opposition to the Shah, returned to the country, where an estimated three million Iranians took to Tehran’s streets to welcome him. Some 40 years later, Iran remains a country largely defined by its revolution. In July, Nicaraguan President Anastasio Samoza resigned after a bloody, multi-year struggle with the FSLN (better known as the Sandinistas). Like Iran, contemporary Nicaragua is a country that has been shaped in large measure by the 1979 revolution. Towards the end of the year, the Soviet 40th Army intervened in Afghanistan’s ‘Saur Revolution’, assassinating the President, Hafizullah Amin, and installing a more complaint figure: Babrak Karmal. The subsequent decade-long conflict became a Sorcerer’s brew of Cold War politics, helping to radicalise a generation of Salafists and setting in motion dynamics that remain central to contemporary world politics.

These events tell us much about the closeness of the relationship between revolution, war, intervention and terrorism, as well as the long-term impact of revolutions on both domestic societies and world politics. But 1979 was not just a momentous year for the practice of revolution, it was also a year that saw the publication of a landmark text on the subject: Theda Skocpol’s, *States and Social Revolutions*. Skocpol’s book offered a full-spectrum account of revolution, from issues of theory to granular accounts of three major revolutions: France, Russia and China. Over subsequent years, Skocpol’s ‘structural’ account, focused dually on international dynamics and state-society relations, became the baseline for the study of revolutions. So how should we assess *States and Social Revolutions* 40 years on? Does its scholarly impact compare with the substantive impact of the Iranian, Nicaraguan and Afghani revolutions? This review essay first examines the content of Skocpol’s book before assessing its impact on three issues: theory, structural approaches to revolution, and the international. A final section argues that, rich as it is,

the time has come to move beyond *States and Social Revolutions*. Just as revolutions in the contemporary world have largely departed from the model associated with Iran, Nicaragua and Afghanistan, so studies of revolution should no longer be confined within the agenda established by Skocpol's book.

***States and Social Revolutions* revisited**

States and Social Revolutions was highly anticipated. During the 1970s, Theda Skocpol, a student of the renowned Harvard Russianist, Barrington Moore, had built up a high-quality, high-profile resumé of publications on revolutions. Skocpol's book, based on her PhD research, did not disappoint, receiving several awards and going on to be translated into a number of languages. Although Skocpol has subsequently published more on American domestic politics than revolutions, *States and Social Revolutions* remains the pre-eminent text in the field.

States and Social Revolutions argues that revolutions do not arise, nor are they observable, through the interests, motives or actions of individuals, groups, classes or organizations. Rather, they are multi-faceted processes made up of contradictory aims, unintended consequences and disparate interests. As such, the student of revolution must rise above issues of intentionality and look for the patterned relationships (i.e. social structures) that explain revolutionary dynamics. For Skocpol, two social structures lie behind revolutions: international relations, and the potentially autonomous state, both of which are embedded within 'world time', by which Skocpol means the overarching context within which inter-state competition and capitalist development takes place.[1] For Skocpol, the uneven spread of capitalism, alongside the development of the states-system, disadvantages some states relative to others. Military backwardness and economic dependency undermine the legitimacy of the state, which is politically autonomous from other sources of authority because of its dual functions: maintaining domestic order and competing with other states abroad. Defeat in war or the threat of imminent invasion by more advanced states, alongside pressures on domestic class structures, result in administrative and military crises, opening up the way for revolts from below to succeed.

[1] Theda Skocpol, *States and social revolutions: a comparative analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 23.

For Skocpol, therefore, the two causes of social revolution are: first, state breakdown as a result of military challenge (especially defeat in war) and administrative weakness; and second, a conducive agrarian class structure that allows the peasantry to mobilise beyond the reaches of the state. Thus, 'social revolutions in France, Russia, and China emerged from specifically political crises centred in the structures and situations of the old-regime states'.[2] In all three cases, the outcome of revolution was the emergence of rational, mass, bureaucratic nation-states. For Skocpol, revolutions should be seen as political processes that start with state crisis and end with the consolidation of new state bureaucracies.

Although, as noted above, Skocpol's trajectory since the publication of *States and Social Revolutions* has increasingly focused on American domestic politics, she has defended and refined her approach to revolutions on a number of occasions, including applications of her theory to both the 1979 revolution in Iran and uprisings in the 'Third World'.[3] However, these amendments have retained the three core commitments – to theory, a structural approach, and the international – that lie at the heart of her schema.

Theory

Skocpol defines social revolutions as 'rapid, basic transformations of a society's state and class structures … accompanied and in part carried through by class-based revolts from below'.[4] Skocpol's definition has been just as influential as her wider contribution. But it is not without problems. If revolutions must be 'rapid', it is difficult to see how China's three-decade long struggle conforms. If revolutions must transform 'state structures', then France does not qualify – republicanism was a short-lived experiment eclipsed first by Napoleonic empire and then by the restoration of the monarchy. If revolutions must both be 'class-based revolts from below' and transform 'class structures', then few if any revolutions meet this standard. Revolutions are cross-class coalitions that are bound up in complex dynamics of continuity and change.

[2] Skocpol, *States and social revolutions*, p. 46.
[3] Theda Skocpol, *Social revolutions in the modern world* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
[4] Skocpol, *States and social revolutions*, p. 4.

Skocpol's advocacy of a particular phenomenon of 'social revolutions' helped to funnel the study of revolution towards a handful of 'great' revolutions: England, France, Mexico, Russia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua, and Iran. Not only does this limit enquiry to a small number of cases, it also uproots the study of revolutions from a wider universe of revolutionary events, experiences and movements that do not conform to her definition. There are many more unsuccessful than successful revolutions and a large number of revolutionary situations that do not lead to revolutionary outcomes. Although *States and Social Revolutions* made some attempt to compare successful and unsuccessful cases, the instances of unsuccessful revolution chosen by Skocpol were too unlike the former to be causally significant.[5] Furthermore, her definition requires an assessment of levels of transformation that is both inexact and can only be made well after the fact. Just how much transformation is enough? And *when* should these judgements be made: 5 years after a revolution, 10 years, 30 years, 100 years?

The point is not that Skocpol's definition is *particularly* difficult to square with diverse revolutionary experiences. All theories are tools of simplification – their value arises not from their capacity to explain everything, but from their capacity to generate useful insights into particular domains of social life. Rather, the point is that any definition rooted in an attempt to ascribe revolutions with a set of essential characteristics both occludes the empirical subject matter it claims to explain and fails to capture the sense in which revolutions are *dynamic* processes. Revolutions have been conducted by nationalists in Algeria and Angola, slaves in Haiti, constitutionalists in America and France, communists in Russia, China, Nicaragua, and Afghanistan, radical military groups in Libya and Ethiopia, peasants in Mexico, Cuba, and Vietnam, a curious coalition of leftists, students, merchants, and clergy in Iran, and an even curiouser mix of Islamists, youth, labour organizations, and 'ultra' football fans in Egypt. They are not static objects of analysis, but processes that change in form across time and place. Requiring, like Skocpol, that revolutions fulfil a set of inalienable characteristics distorts understanding of how they change according to different contexts and how they are undertaken by a diverse set of actors.

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[5] Charles Ragin, *Fuzzy set social science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 210, ff. 6. Thanks to Colin Beck for alerting me to this reference.

Revolutions, therefore, are adaptive, evolving practices. In Ancient Greece, revolution was linked to the movement contained within Aristotle's trinity of democracy, oligarchy and tyranny. In the Middle Ages, the concept was used to denote something circular, the turning of wheels rather than fundamental rupture, as in the elliptical movement of planets surveyed by Copernicus in his *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* ('On the Revolution of Celestial Spheres'). During the early modern period, the term began to be associated with sudden, dramatic political changes. By the early part of the 19th century, the constitutional revolutions of America and France had become seen as archetypal – the latter in particular crystalized the notion of revolution as a deliberate act, signified by the emergence of a distinct category of *révolutionnaire* (revolutionary). From this point on, revolution was a future-oriented act – an ongoing project of potentially unlimited duration. During the 20th century, revolutions became primarily associated with violent ruptures from one type of social order (capitalist and/or colonial) to another (socialist and/or post-colonial). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, revolution took another turn, whether conjoined with reform programmes to generate a new category of 'refolution',[6] or reconnected with older notions of return, as captured in Jürgen Habermas's notion of 'rectifying revolutions'.[7]

Indeed, the events of 1989 and after are often considered to mark a breakthrough to a new form of 'unarmed', 'colour', 'self-limiting', 'democratic', 'negotiated', or 'electoral' revolution. This mode of revolution provides a range of amendments to existing understandings of revolution, including organisational form (from hierarchical vanguard parties and guerrilla movements to horizontalist people power campaigns) and tactics (from violent insurgencies to non-violent campaigns). The post-1989 mode of revolution is best represented by the formation of mass participatory coalitions that are largely committed to non-violence and usually decentralised, with power changing hands not through revolutionary violence, but via elite negotiations. These movements are animated less by the 'social question' (mass poverty and inequality) than the uprisings Skocpol saw as exemplifying social revolutions. Nor do they seek to seize the state in

[6] Timothy Garton Ash, *The uses of adversity: essays on the fate of central Europe* (London: Penguin, 1989).
[7] Jürgen Habermas, 'What does socialism mean today? The rectifying revolution and the needs for new thinking on the left', *New Left Review* 183, 1990, pp. 3-21.

order to instigate programmes of systemic transformation. To the contrary, they are deliberately self-limiting in that protest mobilises around narrower goals: the removal of an autocrat, an end to corruption, constitutional reforms, and so on. The contemporary world is witnessing a considerable amendment to the practice of revolution. It is one that Skocpol cannot help us with, in part because the experience of revolutions has moved on, in part because, through definitional fiat, she restricts the universe of revolutionary experiences to a small number of historical cases.

This is not just a theoretical issue. Indeed, the theory and practice of revolution is tightly meshed. Uprisings since the end of the Cold War in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine, Lebanon, Moldova and elsewhere have resembled the experience of Central and Eastern European states in 1989, sometimes closely, at other times at more of a remove. The attempted revolutions that took place in many parts of the Middle East and North Africa in 2010-11 also shared a family resemblance with the new model of revolutions, including horizontally organized movements promoting primarily non-violent protest, a formal ethos of democratization, and a focus on political and symbolic concerns rather than economic transformation. The embracing of horizontal forms of participation and deliberation, including the occupation of squares and the establishing of public assemblies and protest camps, has been the hallmark of contemporary movements from Occupy Wall Street to Rojava. Perhaps the principal weakness of *States and social revolution* is that it singularised the character of revolution rather than seeing it as a process that adapts to many times and many places. The concept of revolution has not just been forged *in* history, it has been remade and contested *through* history. The threads of revolution run from England, America, France and Haiti to Mexico, Russia, China, Cuba, Vietnam, Iran, Nicaragua, Eastern and Central Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and up to the present day. Revolution as concept and practice has been remade in these events. Revolution is forged and reforged in history.

Revolution, therefore, is not a single thing. This may seem like an obvious claim. Yet, since the publication of *States and social revolutions*, much of the social science of revolution has proceeded by identifying revolutions as a particular class of phenomenon, breaking them down into their constituent parts (a range of core attributes, necessary and sufficient conditions, etc), and measuring the fit between these components and cases

that conform to – or challenge – these attributes. Forty years on, it is time to try a different approach. One option is to start from particular revolutionary episodes, ordering these episodes into clusters of social action that, in turn, yield causal configurations that reoccur across time and place.[8] The goal is to demonstrate that, alongside the singularity of each revolutionary experience can be found recurrent causal patterns. The difference between this approach and the one offered by Skocpol is akin to taking a photograph or shooting a film. Skocpol chooses the former, holding certain conditions constant by taking a snapshot of a particular moment in time, then applying this snapshot to other instances of the phenomena. The latter, in contrast, sees social reality as a moving spectacle that requires analytics to be adjusted to changing conditions. This, in turn, allows the analyst to better see and assess variation in revolutionary practices across time and place. In this way, revolutionary theory becomes just as adaptable as revolutionaries themselves.

Structuralism

Skocpol was the leading figure in what became known as the 'third wave' of revolutionary studies. Third wave theorists saw revolutions as determined by the emergence of particular macro-alignments: responses by the bourgeoisie and the peasantry to the commercialization of agriculture;[9] demographic changes that destabilized social orders by placing pressures on state coffers, thereby weakening the legitimacy of governments and generating new forms of intra-elite competition;[10] and state crisis emanating from international conflict and elite fracture.[11] Third generation theorists, including Skocpol, tended to incorporate international factors – uneven capitalist development, military conflict, and patterns of migration – into their accounts. Overall, the right combination of international and domestic factors served as the proximate causes of revolution. Given the correct conjuncture of forces, revolutions had to occur. As Skocpol famously put it: 'revolutions are not made, they come'.[12]

[8] George Lawson, *Anatomies of revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
[9] Barrington Moore Jr., *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy* (London: Penguin, 1966).
[10] Jack Goldstone, *Revolution and rebellion in the early modern world* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
[11] Skocpol, *States and social revolutions.*
[12] Skocpol, *States and social revolutions*, p. 17.

Over the past forty years, two main critiques have been raised against structural approaches. First, when it comes to their historical analysis, structural theories tend to become markedly less structural. Despite her claims to be generating a 'resolutely non-voluntarist' approach, 'voluntarist' factors were central to all three of the cases examined by Skocpol: China was a two-stage revolution separated by thirty years of agitation by the Chinese Communist Party; the Russian revolution was, to some extent, made by the Bolsheviks who had a highly developed strategy of revolution; and ideology was a central factor in uniting revolutionaries in all three cases. Since the publication of *States and Social Revolutions*, much analysis of revolution has focused on how ideology and political culture shape revolutionary events, in part stemming from the desire to explain multi-class revolutions in Iran, Nicaragua and Afghanistan mobilized, at least in part, by religious sentiment. When it came to explaining actual instances of revolution, ideology, political culture, values and beliefs 'slipped in through the back door' of structural approaches.[13] Despite their common *theoretical* starting point in macro-analysis, therefore, most structural approaches recognize the importance of meso- and micro-level dynamics to explanations of *particular* revolutionary episodes.

A second set of difficulties arises from the lack of fit between theoretical and empirical registers. Although Skocpol argued that her theory was limited to the three cases surveyed in *States and Social Revolutions*, much of her later work made clear that she intended at least three dimensions of her analysis to have wider purchase: the role of international factors in providing the permissive context for revolution; the centrality of state instability to revolution; and the superiority of structural approaches. However, few actual cases of revolution meet these provisos. The Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions that appeared more or less in parallel with the publication of *States and Social Revolutions* ran counter to her three conditions. In both cases, an urban-based revolution took place within a modern country without a substantive international crisis. What is more, in both Iran and Nicaragua, revolutions were carried through, at least in part, by the middle classes, in the case of the former under the banner of a 7th-century religious doctrine. Not only did Skocpol's work run into difficulties when confronted with contemporaneous revolutionary uprisings, her framework struggled to explain past events, for example,

[13] John Foran, *Taking power: on the origins of third world revolutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 12.

why there was no successful revolution in Germany in 1919 or 1923 given the favourable structural conditions for it.

The difficulty with Skocpol's structural approach, therefore, like that of 'third generation' approaches more generally, is that advocates find it difficult to explain how revolutions are made in unpromising circumstances and why revolutions do not occur when the right structural conditions are in place. Making this point need not entail an acceptance of outright voluntarism – revolutions do not happen just because people will them to take place: they are closely bound up with state-society relations, particularly control of the means of coercion, and international dynamics that lie largely outside the reach of participants. There is no such thing as non-structured action. Rather, what is needed is an account that moves beyond binaries of structure and agency – in other words, a 'relational' approach that conceptualizes social action as taking place within broader patterns.[14] This is a mode of enquiry that tacks between historical and theoretical registers, being sensitive both to the singular character of revolutionary events and the possibility of generating insights across a range of revolutionary episodes. Revolutions may be diverse, but from this diversity can be discerned comparable causal patterns: the centrality of client-patron relations to how revolutions begin, the use of slogans, music and images to how they play out, and the close relationship between revolution, war and intervention to their outcomes. Revolutions do not have uniform structures, but they do have shared forms.

Revolutions and the international

Perhaps the main strength of Skocpol's study lies in its emphasis of the international features of revolutionary change – 'social revolutions cannot be explained without systematic reference to *inter*national structures and world historical development' (emphasis in original).[15] This strength, however, is tempered by two issues: first, Skocpol's tendency to align 'international' with 'structural'; and second, her tendency to reduce the international to military competition.

[14] Lawson, *Anatomies of revolution.*
[15] Skocpol, *States and social revolutions*, p. 14.

First, for Skocpol, international factors are limited to the onset of revolutionary crises, serving as relatively inert background conditions, such as the 'world time' of revolutionary epochs. This is a peculiar category. Skocpol's cases range from late 18th century France to mid-20th century China. It is stretching credulity to see 'world time' as consistent throughout this period, a period that saw dramatic changes to almost every sphere of international relations, from the emergence of modern capitalism, to new technologies, ideologies, weapons of war, forms of transportation and infrastructure. The world of 1949 looked quite unlike that of 1789. Second, while Skocpol is explicit in stating that the 'international system' or 'context' (terms she uses interchangeably) impacts revolutions, her overarching argument is that revolutions are primarily caused by state breakdown, which is, in turn, most often brought about by defeat in war. Factors such as fiscal crisis and the spread of ideas play little part in her analysis. As a result, she neglects the ways in which a cornucopia of international processes, from forms of organisation to shared slogans and tactics affect how revolutions begin, endure and end. Neither Iran, Nicaragua or Afghanistan, nor more recent uprisings in 1989 or 2011, had anything to do with defeat in war, and little to do with inter-state competition more generally. This is not to say that they had no international causes. Quite the contrary, it is to emphasize that the international components of revolution go well beyond issues of permissive context and military competition.

How might an approach that seeks to more thoroughly integrate the international into the study of revolutions proceed? Such an 'inter-social' approach would examine the relationship between 'external' and 'internal' dynamics wherever these are found: in ideas that cross borders, amongst networks of revolutionary actors, in asymmetrical market interactions, and more.[16] Its primary concern would by on how differentially located, but interactively engaged, social sites affected the development of revolutions without containing a prior presumption of what these social sites are.

[16] The term inter-social is preferred to alternatives such as inter-societal, international and inter-state in that it does not presume that the objects of analysis are societies, nations or states respectively. Skocpol preferred the term 'inter-societal'. See: Theda Skocpol, 'A critical review of Barrington Moore's "Social origins of dictatorship and development"', *Politics and Sociology* 4: 1, 1973, pp. 1-34.

An inter-social approach to revolutions begins from a simple premise: events that take place in one location are both affected by and affect events elsewhere. To take one of Skocpol's' cases, the onset of the French Revolution cannot be understood without attention to the expansionist policies of the French state during the 17th and 18th centuries – between 1650 and 1780, France was at war in two out of every three years. This bellicosity, a product of pressures caused by developments in rival states as well as domestic factors, brought increased demands for taxation that, over time, both engendered factionalism in the *ancién regime* and led to chronic state debt. World trade too played its part in destabilising the French state, fostering an underground economy, particularly in tobacco and calico, which heightened dynamics of rebellion and repression. The interactive dimensions of international relations also affected events during the revolutionary period. For example, in 1792, as the Jacobins were losing influence to the Girondins, leading Girondins pressed the state into international conflict. As France's foreign campaigns went increasingly badly, the Committee of Public Safety, a leading site of Jacobin authority, blamed the Girondins for betraying the revolution and committed France to a process of domestic radicalization: the Terror. In this way, domestic political friction induced international conflict that, in turn, opened up space for heightened domestic polarization. The Jacobins identified the Girondins as unrevolutionary traitors, while identifying themselves as the guardians of the revolution, a process that prompted a wave of popular militancy, most notably the *levée en masse*.

In addition to the dynamic role played by inter-social relations in both fostering the revolutionary situation and revolutionary trajectories in France, inter-social relations also played a fundamental role in the outcomes of the revolution. First, the revolutionary regime annexed Rhineland and Belgium, and helped to ferment republican revolution in several neighbouring countries, including Holland, Switzerland and Italy. Second, the revolution prompted unrest throughout Europe, including Ireland, where a rebellion against English rule led to a violent conflict and, in 1800, the Acts of Union between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Third, the threat from France was met by extensive counter-revolution in neighbouring states. In England, for example, *habeas corpus* was suspended in 1794, while legislation ranging from the Seditious Meetings Act to the Combination Acts was introduced in order to contain the spread of republicanism. Although the French did not generate an international revolutionary party, many states

acted as if they had done just this, instituting domestic crackdowns in order to guard against the claim made by Jacques-Pierre Brissot that: 'we [the French revolutionary regime] cannot be at peace until all Europe is in flames'.[17]

An inter-social approach builds from this understanding of the generative role of transboundary entanglements. Empirically, an inter-social approach charts the ways in which relations between people, networks and states drive revolutionary dynamics. Highlighting these empirical connections realizes the *descriptive* advantages of an inter-social approach. To date, the development of such a descriptive inter-social approach has been most evident in transnational, global and economic history.[18] However, the richness of this scholarship has not been matched by work that adequately explores the *analytical* advantages of an inter-social approach. Analytically, an inter-social approach is concerned with the ways in which the logics of differentially located, but interactively engaged, social sites affect the causal pathways of revolutions. Such interrelations take many forms: the withdrawal of support from a more powerful state, the pressures that emerge from the fusion of 'advanced' technologies in 'backward' sectors of the economy, the transmission of revolutionary ideas, the desire to emulate both revolution and counter-revolution, and so on. In both descriptive and analytical forms, inter-social interactions are less the product of revolutions than their drivers.

Inter-social relations form an interactive crucible for each and every case of revolution, yet these dynamics have not, as yet, been effectively theorized in the study of revolutions. It is the task of an inter-social approach to identify these dynamics and demonstrate their generative role in the formation of revolutionary processes. Revolutions are amalgams of transnational and local fields of action. While Skocpol helped to open up this line of enquiry, contemporary students of revolution should be aware of the *multiple* international entanglements that lie behind revolutionary processes. Revolutions are inter-social all the way down.

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[17] R.R. Palmer, 'The world revolution of the west', *Political Science Quarterly* 69: 1, 1954, pp. 1-14 at p. 11.

[18] See, for example: David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyan eds., *The age of revolution in global context* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010).

Beyond *States and Social Revolutions*

Like 1979, 2019 is proving to be a bumper year for revolution. Uprisings in Sudan, Algeria, Venezuela, Hong Kong and elsewhere speak to the continuing hold – and adaptation – of revolutionary practices. Militant Islamism represents a challenge to international order that has its roots in a miscellany of revolutionary heritages. Around the world, authoritarians are deploying nationalism both as an assertion of state power and as a defensive shield against globalisation, Westernisation and neoliberalism. Even as this move seeks to legitimise state power, it also serves to rouse revolutionary sentiments. The increasingly personalistic tendencies of many states, from Russia to China, and from Turkey to Saudi Arabia, speaks to a vulnerability that could, in time, yield revolutionary pressures. Around the world, a range of radical movements contest ongoing injustices: inequality, racism, sexism, austerity, climate justice, and more. Many of these mobilisations have produced mass movements that directly challenge the authority of state managers, corporate elites and other power brokers. As one astute observer puts it, 'revolution has a future, even if many theoretical definitions of revolution do not'.[19]

Some 40 years ago, Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions* reinvigorated the study of revolutions. Yet today, revolutionary theory is more hampered than helped by the debt it owes to this landmark text. The research agenda Skocpol generated has been highly productive, but its agenda has run its course. It cannot, by virtue of its core theoretical commitments, respond effectively to the diverse experiences of revolutions across time and place. Its structural approach fails to sufficiently accommodate issues from culture to religion. And its understanding of the international as predominantly a realm of inter-state competition fails to see the ways in which revolutions are inter-social all the way down. If most studies of revolution since 1979 can be framed as a discussion between Skocpol and her critics, such a framing will no longer suffice. There has been a stall in theories of revolution even as empirical studies of revolutionary episodes are thriving. It is time for revolutionary theory to catch up. What is needed is a new Skocpol for a new age of revolutions.

[19] Jeffery Paige, 'Finding the revolutionary in the revolution: social science concepts and the future of revolution', in John Foran, ed., *The future of revolution* (London: Zed, 2003), pp. 19-29, at p. 19.