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Third World Social Revolutions: A Comparative Study.

This study addresses a serious gap in the literature on revolutions by utilizing the prisms of class, gender, and race as interconnected constitutive categories of social structure, partial determinants of political identities, and organizing principles of revolutionary action. The cases studied include Mexico 1910-1920, Cuba 1953-1959, and Nicaragua 1977-79. For each case, a "map" of social structure prior to the revolution is constructed, using census data and primary personal and secondary historical accounts.

Second, the paper uses available accounts to trace the patterns of participation of various actors during the course of the revolutions. This helps bridge the gap in existing accounts between structures of inequality and actions. Questions asked include: What groups actually participated in the revolutions and how did diverse groups come together into the coalitions that were necessary to overthrow dictatorial governments and confront external powers? What differences did mobilization by race, class, and gender make in the outcomes of these revolutions?

Using a Millian comparative logic, the study concludes by asking: What patterns emerge across time and space? Has the participation of women and indigenous groups increased or decreased in the course of the twentieth century? Do particularities of society and history explain the variations, or are there larger, overarching commonalities? If so, are these the product of Third World social structure, systemic forces emanating from the world system, or both?

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