

States as Instruments of Anarchism

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How can societies maximize equal liberty in the context of the modern sovereign state? While liberal democracy is widely recognized as the type of political regime most conducive to this goal, it fails to offer a vision of life beyond state power and lacks sufficient safeguards against socioeconomic inequality. Meanwhile, the traditional anarchist tendency to downplay differences across political regime types has coincided with a commitment to the prefigurative strategic principle that state power cannot be used as a means to the anarchist end. In turn, it will be argued that strict adherence to prefiguration weakens the impact of anarchism, for instance by increasing the risk of bad anarchy. Gradualist anarchism provides a corrective to these issues, but encounters the challenge of bad government traditionally emphasized by anarchists. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: http://www.transformativestudies.org ©2018 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

KEYWORDS: Anarchism, Prefiguration, Gradualism, Social Revolution, Liberal Democracy, Political Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Since the era of classical anarchism began in the mid-19th century, adherence to *prefigurative principle* – the idea that a free and equal society cannot be advanced with the use of state power – became a

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