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Modes of Resistance to Injustice Radically Reframe Human Existence:

Levinas and Diversity of Tactics in Social Justice Mobilization

Emmanuel Levinas observed that it is within the essential nature of the nation-state to produce injustices through the imposition of universal norms that will inevitably intrude into the personal lives of individuals living within the state. I will consider this through work by Flemish scholar, Roger Burggraeve. The titles of Burggreaeve’s major works on Levinas’ political thought *From Self Development to Solidarity* (1981) and *The Wisdom of Love in the Service of Love* (2003) foreshadow well their bearing on these matters. While falling short of an explicit anti-statist position some pronouncements on the *transcendence of the state* and the necessity of the *permanent revolution* of social justice movements resonate with political philosophical principle I call *anarcho-existentialism*. When left to itself, the state, regardless of its origins, inexorably advances towards totalitarianism. I will discuss these assertions in light of three modes of resistance deployed by radical environmentalist, indigenous, and anti-poverty activists during the 2010 Anti-Olympics Convergence in Vancouver, Canada. Three actions in particular (a mass march, a tent-city squat, and a Black Bloc mobilization) can be shown to have radically reframed human existence across social levels of scale from the individual to the city and finally the world-historical. This is compared to Mohandas K. Gandhi’s *Satyagraha*, or *Soul Power,* system of nonviolent civil disobedience that he deployed against British colonial rule in India. I will discuss whether the diversity of tactics now commonly deployed in the streets of the United States can be justified from an ethical position inspired by Levinas.