

Mutual Aid: An Alternative to Power

A Study of Two Evident Factors in Society

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1

Introduction

In this thesis, I would like to study two opposing factors that are apparent within our society. The first of these is found throughout Michel Foucault's work, what he calls 'power', and which he repeatedly claims underlies our society. Power can be found throughout the whole social body and is a part of everyday life. No matter what relationships we may find ourselves involved in, power will play an enormous role within these. He begins his genealogy of this important factor in volume one of *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (1976), in which he undertakes a study of sexuality in the Western world. Here, we find Foucault discussing what he calls 'pastoral power', before ending the book discussing 'biopower', which can be seen as the culminating step he reached in his genealogy. In another of his books, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975), Foucault discusses our penal system which he uses to illustrate two other powers, 'sovereign' and 'disciplinary'. These are sandwiched between 'pastoral' and 'biopower'. In the second chapter, I will explain these different notions of power in chronological order.

But, one of the issues I would like to address in this thesis is; can power explain all facets of our society and life? Although agreeing with Foucault, that power does play a huge role in our lives, I would like to claim that we can find something else present that he does not speak of. He did many times mention of a want to try and find an alternative factor to power, of which he is very critical of, although never offering an answer as to what this could be. One

of the main aims of this thesis is to offer this alternative. This other important factor, that can be found throughout our society, is a theory first spoke of by Professor Kessler; what he called 'mutual aid'. When we look around, it is not only power that is present. We can also find support, cooperation, community and togetherness. Characteristics that would not be considered in Foucault's notion of power, but that are still evident. Even if we look to where Foucault specifically illustrated power, it is possible to find mutual aid. For example, he uses the prison system to illustrate power, yet even here, we can see traces of mutual aid; the rehabilitation of criminals, the protection of society, the idea of justice, rights and morality. Similarly, in his study of sexuality, Foucault uses reproduction, and the labour force this creates, to illustrate power. However, mutual aid can also be found here through the successful continuation of the species, family, kinship and love. Petr Kropotkin later developed Kessler's ideas and through a reading of his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902), I will trace this factors genealogy. Kropotkin begins his genealogy in the animal kingdom, before showing how it developed in our earliest human ancestors, into the village and city, right up until when the book was published in 1902. It is this that will be my focus in the third chapter. As Kropotkin begins his genealogy in the animal kingdom, and traces its evolution all the way up to his contemporary society, by bringing in this other factor, we can also plug another gap in Foucault's theory of power. The time preceding the 15th century is something that Foucault does not discuss, and as he tries to offer an historical account, it can be something he could be criticised for.

When I speak of society, I mean a collection of individuals, groups, associations, and the relationships between these. Throughout this thesis, following the lead of Foucault and Kropotkin, I will specifically concentrate on our own society, and by this I mean, what is generally called the 'Western world'. So, whenever I speak of 'our society', 'we', 'us' 'ourselves', etc. I will have in mind the West.

I hope by speaking of both of these factors, instead of merely one of them, we may offer ourselves a better chance of understanding our society and how we may continue its development. I also believe with the combination of the two, we will achieve a much more overall view of society. At the end, we will now be able to view aspects of this society from two different perspectives, instead of simply focusing upon one which is a criticism both writers can be charged with. A criticism of trying to add mutual aid alongside power is that it may seem to undervalue the role that Foucault gives power as a way of understanding

society. If we add mutual aid, why could we not add another factor ad infinitum? I would not necessarily disagree with this criticism and would welcome any more suggestions which would allow us to understand society, and all its workings, better. For this is the main reason why I feel the need to add mutual aid alongside power.

As I argue that both power and mutual aid have always been present and are responsible for our society, its institutions and the relationships we find within these, I also feel the need to illustrate how both are still present today. To complete this I will concentrate on the role of food in our society, how we produce, buy and consume our food. I feel that this would fit into Foucault's method of studying a specific part of society, such as sexuality or our penal system, for like these, food is present in every society and will be the priority for most. I will show the role of power within food by using evidence that was collected in a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, called *Livestock's Long Shadow: Environmental Issues and Options* (2006), alongside other books such as Tristram Stuart's *Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal* (2011). To show the role of mutual aid, I will discuss two groups that I encountered while studying in Amsterdam over the past year; ASEED and Guerilla Kitchen Waste. Abiding by Foucault's method I will have to show both factors in action, their effects and the relationship between the two.

As both of these factors are only found within active relationships, I believe that the two must also find themselves in a relationship with one another. I will argue that it is this relationship between the two which produces the relationships, institutions and their effects, that we face in our society. To see what may occur between the two factors I will make a close reading of Foucault's 1975-1976 lectures at the College De France entitled "*Society Must Be Defended*". In these lectures, Foucault investigates whether war could be the underlying principle of power. I would like to agree with this claim and argue that the war that underlies power, is the war it is engaged in with mutual aid. Although Foucault would later abandoned this model and sought to explain power through 'governmentality', I will agree with Goddard and Allen who argue that if Foucault's work is to have any political influence we must see a return to the power-as-war model. I will look to see how this relationship between the two has played out through our history, which has been the dominating one at different times, and which is the dominant factor in our modern society. By the end, I hope to have shown how, since the 15th century up to modernity, power has been the dominating factor and this has culminated in the problem of Gaia.

Gaia is the personification of the earth, made up of myth and science, confronting our modern societies destruction of it. It is the view that the earth cannot sustain the damage we are putting upon it much longer. I will discuss three writers who have helped to develop ‘Gaia theory’; James Lovelock, Bruno Latour and John Gray. The first of these three is often credited with first proposing the term in the 1960’s, and has continued to explore the approaching Gaia, and all that it entails, in such works as *The Revenge of Gaia* (2006). Latour and Gray are two other writers who explore Gaia theory and I will discuss their respective books *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (2013) and *Straw Dogs: Thoughts on Humans and Other Animals* (2003).

I will argue that Gaia is an effect of power, although not a form of power that Foucault spoke of. Instead, I will attempt to show, how I believe a new form of power is emerging which can be seen as the next step in Foucault's genealogy; natural power. A critical aspect of Foucault’s notion of power is that it is always mutating and transforming to meet the ever-changing needs of society. As of this, I would like to see if a change has occurred since Foucault developed his theory of power. By bringing in mutual aid alongside power, I will also try to offer us hope in answering the problem of Gaia that has been created by the effects of power, something that many Gaia theorists fail to offer.

Finally, I will conclude that it is Gaia, produced by the effects of the dominating factor power, that society must now be defended from. It is only by a reassessment of the two factors, the roles they play in society and the relationship between themselves, that may save this very society.

Power

Power is central to Foucault's work for he believes “power is everywhere” and “it comes from everywhere.”¹ There is no escaping power for it traverses our society, whether this be through individuals, groups, institutions, discourses or the relationship between these, we can't help but find ourselves involved in power relations. This definition of power differs from past theories for it is no longer an entity that is possessed by individuals or groups. Instead, as Foucault states in *Society Must Be Defended*, "power functions."² It is something

¹ Foucault, M, *History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, pg. 121 (1980)

² Foucault, M, *Society Must Be Defended*, pg. 29 (2003)

that circulates, something that passes through individuals, and is exercised through them, only via a relationship with other individuals or groups. Foucault believes that power is nothing more than this relationship and it can only be studied by looking at the terms of this relationship.

We must study those who exercise power and those who it is exercised over, via its mechanisms, relations, apparatus and its effects “that operate at various levels of society, in such very different domains and with so many different extensions.”³ In Foucault’s theory of power, it is not, as is usually considered, found at the top in the hands of the most powerful, but it is instead, spread throughout the entire social body; he states “power comes from below.”⁴ The coordination of these relationships, effects and mechanisms will come together, in varying forms and varying societies, but whatever society we may find ourselves a part of, the coordination of these will come together to create what Foucault calls ‘blocks’. By looking at the institutions and practices where Foucault explicitly studies power, we can find examples of these blocks; medicine, sexuality, madness, punishment, education, politics and military. These are not individual and separate, but they all come together to create the social body which assimilate to create our society.

Foucault also argues that power is crucial to knowledge and affects what we perceive as true. Power creates a right, which then produces truth in those who it is exercised over, who in their turn reproduce this power and truth. There is a boundary that is created by power, and there are those who are kept to this boundary. This can be achieved in many ways, such as the creation of discourses, which Foucault uses to demonstrate the production of truth which is then circulated. Or, through discipline which makes sure that people abide by this truth and in turn reproduce it, which makes it stronger and seem natural. Power and knowledge are inexplicably related to one another. Power constitutes itself through the knowledge that is accepted to be true, they are intertwined, and there is not one without the other. I will demonstrate how Foucault further illustrates this when we look at his study of sexuality. When we think of power, our mind is immediately drawn to Thomas Hobbes, but Foucault takes a different method to Hobbes who, in his book *Leviathan*, tried to make a study of power by looking at its centre. He believed that this was a commonwealth run by power, which helps to keep civil peace safe from man's natural state of perpetual war. Instead,

³ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 13 (2003)

⁴ Ibid, pg. 95 (1980)

Foucault will try “to do precisely the opposite of what Hobbes was trying to do in the *Leviathan*”⁵. He will achieve this by studying power, not at its centre, but, from below. This will involve looking at those who it is exercised over and where we can see its effects in play. He does not ask the question ‘who has power?’, like Hobbes did, but instead, he looks to see where we can see it in action, who it is exercised upon and why it is exerted upon them. For example, he does not study the sovereign, commonwealth, bourgeoisie, church or the state for he does not believe power resides there. It is instead spread throughout the whole social body, and it is this body that creates, reproduces and circulates this power through the relationships within this. There is no entity of power, so, there is no way that these groups could have hold of all the power in society, as it is often believed. What defines power is the relationship itself, and these groups, such as the church, the bourgeois or the state, have merely managed to gain control of more and more of these power relations.

As of this, he looks at specific cases where we can see power being exercised and where we can see its relationship in play. Examples Foucault gives us of these are such institutions as our medical system (*The Birth of the Clinic*), our penal system (*Discipline & Punish*), sexuality (*The History of Sexuality*) and madness (*Madness and Civilization*). He explicitly studies institutions such as these to find out how they create a truth. Anything that strays from this truth will sought to be normalised via disciplines, or discourses, which produce, circulate and reinforce this truth. No matter what society we are part of we will be involved in these power relations which act upon us, ask questions of us and investigate us in search of truth. It is an everyday, social phenomenon. Whether that be in the form of institutions, discourses, law, truth, disciplines or even our freedom which is affected by the power that is exercised over us; we cannot escape power.

Mutual Aid

In 1902 Petr Kropotkin published his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* as a response to the growing belief in Darwinism and the proposed struggle of life. He states his reasoning for the book as follows, "Consequently, when my attention was drawn, later on, to the relations between Darwinism and Sociology, I could agree with none of the works and pamphlets that had been written upon this important subject. They all endeavoured to prove

⁵ Ibid, pg. 28 (2003)

that Man, owing to his higher intelligence and knowledge, may mitigate the harshness of the struggle for life between men but they all recognized at the same time that the struggle for the means of existence, of every animal against all its congeners, and of every man against all other men, was "a law of Nature." This view, however, I could not accept, because I was persuaded that to admit a pitiless inner war for life within each species, and to see in that war a condition of progress, was to admit something which not only had not yet been proved, but also lacked confirmation from direct observation."⁶ Although written as a response to Darwinism, it almost seems as if Kropotkin could be replying to Foucault, who even himself, noticed the similarity between his power relations and Darwin's struggle for life. Towards the end of his *Society Must Be Defended* lectures, Foucault states that a link was quickly "established between 19th century biological theory and the discourse of power; basically evolutionism"⁷.

As of this, I believe, it is possible to link Foucault, Kropotkin and their respective factors. It is difficult to define what 'mutual aid' precisely means, much in the same way it can be a struggle to define power, but Kropotkin attempts to when he states "it is a feeling infinitely wider than love or personal sympathy. An instinct that has been slowly developed among animals and men in the course of an extremely long evolution, and which has taught animals and men alike the force they can borrow from the practice of mutual aid and support"⁸. Co-operation, support, enthusiasm, sacrifice and solidarity are all phrases utilised by Kropotkin throughout his works, so, it is possible to acknowledge these as key characteristics of the mutual aid tendency. Kropotkin believed that too much weight was being given to the struggle of life and power relations, and that these discourses were missing a fundamental part of evolution and society, such as the traits I have just mentioned. I too, agree with Kropotkin on this point and believe it continues to happen, as is evident in Foucault's works. The theory of mutual aid was influenced by Professor Kessler, a Russian zoologist and Dean of the St. Petersburg University. Kropotkin credits Kessler as the first to argue that beside mutual struggle there was mutual aid and it is the latter, that in fact, has played a far more important role for progress. Kessler believed that human parental feeling was the source of this mutual aid principle but, Kropotkin disagrees and begins his study arguing that mutual

⁶ Ibid, Kropotkin pg. 28 (2006)

⁷ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 256 (2003)

⁸ Ibid, Kropotkin pg. 30 (2006)

aid can be found within the animal kingdom. From the animal kingdom, Kropotkin traces the genealogy of mutual aid, shows where it is apparent and why it was vital to our progression. He begins with our earliest human ancestors to the village community, then the medieval city, before ending his genealogy with modern examples of mutual aid between ourselves. I will trace this genealogy in the third chapter of this work.

I feel that these two opposing principles, mutual aid and power, developed by Kropotkin and Foucault respectively, have many similar characteristics that means they can both be regarded as being hugely influential in our society. Foucault tells us that power is nothing but a relationship, while mutual aid must also be part of a relationship for it is not possible to practice by oneself. Neither is an entity or can be held by a person, but both must be put into action by two people or more. Both could also be described as an instinct; for power, our instinct is to fundamentally survive by overpowering dangers and dominating rivals to secure necessities of life. Also, as we shall soon see, without mutual aid, and the support that this offers us, such as parental care, we would not have been able to survive the struggles and powers we face in life.

I believe it is possible to argue that, just as Foucault shows that power is a significant part of the relationships we face in our society, mutual aid is also another considerable factor which helps to shape this society and its institutions. Where Foucault says we can find power in action, I believe it is also possible to see mutual aid present. In schools, there is the aid in the receiving of education, morals, conduct and social skills. In medicine, there is medical aid and care. As I have already mentioned, in our penal system there are rights, the idea of justice, liberty and the rehabilitation of criminals. In reproduction, there is the successful continuation of the species, kinship and love. All of which would not be possible if it was every man against every man. Just as power "traverses the entire social body"⁹, and "comes from everywhere", likewise does mutual aid. Mutual aid is a relationship and like Foucault's definition of power it functions, passes through individuals, and some discourses produce truth about it in its own right. Just as I will show how power still prevails in our society, through a study of food, I will also show how mutual aid is still evident. But first, we shall return to power and look at Foucault's genealogy of this essential factor.

⁹ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 122, (1980)

2

Foucault's Genealogy of Power

Foucault speaks of four different types of power; pastoral, sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. He develops these notions of power throughout his works, but I will specifically concentrate on two of his books; *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* and *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*. In *Discipline and Punish*, we find Foucault discussing sovereign power, but this fails to deal with major changes within society. He therefore explains the emergence of a new type of power, disciplinary power, which can be seen as the most influential power Foucault introduces, and for this reason, I will discuss this notion of power in most detail. In volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*, we find Foucault discussing the powers that both precede and succeed sovereign and disciplinary power; pastoral and biopower. I will interpret these different types of power in chronological order, beginning with pastoral power in the 15th century, then sovereign and disciplinary, before culminating with biopower in the late 20th century. I must first show this trajectory, for it reveals how power has contributed and influenced this society throughout its history. Once this has been achieved, I can then illustrate how it continues to play a role today and if we must add a new notion of power to this genealogy.

Foucault argues that power is always changing and mutating to suit societies needs. This is why I feel confident that a new power may be added to his genealogy. Significant changes, which will be discussed later on, have occurred since Foucault developed biopower. But, before we get to that I will proceed to explain his historical account of power and how it has played such a contributing role in the shaping of our society.

Pastoral Power

The History of Sexuality was a three-volume study of sexuality in our Western society undertaken by Foucault spanning the years 1976-1984. In the first volume of this series: *An Introduction*, Foucault began his historical account in the 15th century, and we learn that the dominant power in society was what he terms 'pastoral power'. This type of power could be found throughout the religious institutions of the time, and its primary concern was reaching salvation in the next life. A technique that this kind of power used to produce truth was the confession, which can be seen as a clear example of a power-relation, this being where we can see the relationship of power in action. In confession, you always confess to authority, in this case, a priest, who extracts truth from the subject to produce knowledge. This knowledge then gives the authority power over the subject which may be exercised over them. The confession is an illustration of how this type of power was based solely upon the individual and their own own salvation as the confession is a power relationship that happens between the priest and the subject. While the discourses are centered on the subjects own relation to God.

Although the institutions where pastoral power could be found have slowly disappeared from our society, Foucault believes its function, not only remains but has in fact multiplied and spread throughout the whole social body, albeit with a few transformations.

Sovereign Power

In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, published one year before the first volume of *the History of Sexuality*, Foucault begins his account in the 18th century where we find that 'sovereign power' is the dominant form of power within society and which could be found throughout the monarchies of the time. When a new power emerges the old one does not wholly disappear, traces of it can still be seen, but it has been infiltrated, mutated and transformed. For example, sovereign power now concerned itself with salvation in this life, which it achieved through the general rise in living standards, wealth and security. But, it still used certain power relations that were evident in pastoral power, such as the confession, which was again used to extract and produce truth but for much different reasons. Where sovereign power can be seen to differ from pastoral is that it created its right through the

creation and use of jurists and the law, instead of the religious discourses that were evident in pastoral power. The jurists and the law that was created, on behalf of the sovereign, declared the truth that was to be accepted. Foucault argues juridical thought and juridical knowledge became established and that this was born from the sovereign. This juridical system had to express the power of the sovereign and show that it was right and legitimate. Foucault argues a technique that managed to do this was through using torture as its primary form of punishment. The confession, a technique of pastoral power, was still used within this new power as it was the best legal proof that jurists could utilise to prove the defendant guilty. Torture was used to try and extract this, and so this technique was expanded from a punishment to also a means of investigation to produce knowledge which could then be used against the criminal. The confession was also expanded so it could be fitted into this new legal system and acquired a legal meaning along with its religious one. Foucault argues that punishment and torture were techniques that sovereign power used to display its strength over the public. This is why the execution and torture had to be shown in public squares, city centres and busy areas. The public were the main characters in this spectacle, and they had to witness the strength of the almighty sovereign. This strength was displayed through the symbol of its sword, which soon came to replace pastoral powers symbol of the cross. Anything that would harm the sovereign and its right to power would feel its wrath, and everybody else would see this wrath. Here we see the first expansion of power, in that it changes from a one-to-one relationship, into a relationship between the subject, society and the sovereign family. The personal confession would no longer suffice and so the confession is also expanded and put on show to the rest of society.

Disciplinary Power

Towards the end of *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault begins to speak of a new notion of power which he calls 'disciplinary power'. Just as sovereign power emerged from pastoral power as the new dominant power within society, now disciplinary power begins to emerge, infiltrate and become the dominant power. This starts to become evident in the 19th century which is when Foucault notes new mechanisms of power appearing. He puts this down to the appearance of the Victorian bourgeoisie and the development of capitalism. This had at its centre, no longer the sovereign and its bloodline, as was the case with sovereign power, but a

labour force that derived from the population with the aim of creating a system of economic and political efficiency. The good of the whole social body soon came to replace the sovereign as its main concern, and as of this, we see a new power emerging, with new mechanisms and techniques, to help deal with these changes. These new mechanisms of power would now have to extend and reach out to all parts of the social body, instead of the sovereigns small centralised circle. As of this, Foucault notes we soon see power come to infiltrate such institutions as education, the penal system and medicine. Before, power would have only been concerned about the sovereigns education, health and security, so would punish only those that threatened this, which was evident through the use of torture as its form of punishment. The result of power extending out to all different parts of society, according to Foucault, was the creation of a “disciplinary society”¹⁰. This had the aim of normalising people of people with the aim of reaching the maximum potential of the economy which replaced the sovereign as the main concern. While sovereign power sought commodities, land and wealth, disciplinary power was more interested in bodies and their utility with the aim of production and profit.

As of this, the old sovereign's right to take someone's life was replaced by a right to control their body and how they utilise it. Foucault states the sovereign's "ancient right to take life or let live was replaced by a power to foster life or disallow it"¹¹. We see power become more rational and gain more control than the past powers, but this came at the cost of greater intervention. Foucault demonstrates this through a study of our penal system in *Discipline and Punish*. The harsh punishments that we saw in sovereign power soon disappeared from public view, and punishment soon became the most mysterious and secretive part of society. The main reason for this change was that torture would no longer suffice for it would harm the population and labour force that this new power rested upon, sought to maintain and improve. Foucault notes a double movement in that although the punishments, and even the crimes, become much more lenient, many new laws are introduced which in turn created the need for a much stronger police force so that they could be enforced. He offers us the statistic that out of the 223 capital crimes that happened at the beginning of the 19th century, 156 of these would not have been classed as illegal less than a century before. There begins a much

¹⁰ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 209 (1995)

¹¹ Ibid, Foucault, pg 138 (1980)

more "closer mapping of the social body"¹², and we see a rearrangement of power in that the power to punish is no longer carried out by the almighty sovereign, but instead, for "the defence of society" which Foucault argues is still a "terrible superpower"¹³. The idea was not to punish less but to punish better and more efficiently. These new laws also show us how techniques of sovereign power, such as jurists and law, continued to be used in this new form of power. Although they underwent a transformation, they continued to play a dominant role in the disciplinary society, were expanded, and have continued to grow and be utilised right up to our modern society. It is a technique that even managed to infiltrate the next dominant power that Foucault marks in his genealogy; biopower.

All of this, greater control, surveillance and knowledge, could be achieved through the prison system which Foucault uses to illustrate the emergence of this new power which gave birth to these great changes within the penal system. The prisons were born at a time when penal reform was a major discussion in politics, sociology and medicine. There was a lot of discourse against the utilisation of the prison system arguing that it was costly, didn't specify crimes, had no public effect, promoted idleness and was an exercise of tyranny. Most importantly, it did not help to rehabilitate the criminal back into society, which was thought to be the original aim of the prison. Instead, Foucault notes, that the prison system can't help but create "delinquency"¹⁴, and that it tried to achieve this for many different reasons.

Delinquency helped the social body towards its goal of creating a system of economic and political efficiency for it made illegalities easy to control, survey and receive knowledge within a small and enclosed group. This keeps it on the outer edges of society away from the higher classes who, if were involved in criminal activity, could harm the political or economic system. The distribution of space, actions and possibilities, the lack of fresh air, an unnatural and dangerous environment, where violence forever lurks, and the monotonous existence, these are all examples that Foucault uses to show how this delinquency is achieved and where we can see power in action. He echoes Faucher who called prisons "barracks of crime"¹⁵ which relates closely to Kropotkin, who wrote many books and essays criticising prisons, constantly referring to them as "universities of crime"¹⁶.

¹² Ibid, Foucault, pg. 77 (1995)

¹³ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 90 (1995)

¹⁴ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 277(1995)

¹⁵ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 265 (1995)

¹⁶ In Kropotkins essay *Prisons: Universities of Crime* (1913), we can find many of the same remarks that we have just seen in Foucault. They both agree the prison is just a small part of the social body

The prison is just an effect of power, a place where we can see it in action, and although Foucault mainly focuses upon our penal system, it is important to note how and why the social body produces these results. The prison is much more deeply rooted in the social body than just dealing with criminals. The social bodies main aim was to create a productive labour force and to do this it needed to gain control of people's bodies and how they utilise it. The prison achieved this thanks to the new mechanisms of power, such as the spatial distribution of bodies, their organisation, their relationship with others and also their surroundings.

Mechanisms that did not feature within sovereign power but now played a crucial role within the new social body and its aims. These were all factors that would influence the productive forces of the body which began to be rationalized in the least costly way possible. This was made possible thanks to a whole system of surveillance, hierarchies, inspections, bookkeeping and reports, which could all be achieved through the prison system, being most evident in Bentham's panopticon.

Foucault argues it was actually in the military where these techniques were first developed. With the introduction of the rifle, the size of an army was no longer the main concern, now soldiers needed to be skilled, so more attention is paid to the individual soldier instead of the mass of men. Bodies were individually trained, distributed and placed which resulted in an 'anatomy-political' conception of the body; something that can be controlled, manipulated and corrected, which was all possible through discipline. According to Foucault, a disciplined body can be achieved through three techniques; normalising judgement, hierarchical observation and the examination. The prison fulfilled all of these whereas torture would not suffice and this is the reason why we see 'the birth of the prison', not, as was supposed, for the rehabilitation of the criminals. We do not only see these techniques in prisons but at around the same time, these techniques slowly start to infiltrate each branch of the social body. They can be seen in the school, army, workshop and hospital. Foucault concludes, as "the gradual extension of the mechanisms of discipline throughout the 17-18th century spread throughout the social body, the formation of what might be called in general the disciplinary society"¹⁷. Here again we have an illustration of how power continues to grow and expand throughout the entire society, this time from a small enclosed sovereign to the whole of society.

as a whole and that it creates delinquency, which is achieved through the techniques Foucault spoke of.

¹⁷ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 209 (1995)

We continue to see power grow, within the social body, in Foucault's next step of his genealogy; biopower.

Biopower

With this new conception of the body, as something that could be controlled and transformed, we see the appearance of a new form of power which Foucault terms 'biopower'. Influenced by disciplinary power, this new notion of power, sought to utilise bodies in the most efficient manner possible for the greater good of the social body. For this to be achieved, there was a need for the control of bodies into a machinery of production and economic processes. Power was sought over man in the biological sense. In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault uses the example of sexuality to express this point. When the sovereign expressed power there was no need for it to concern itself with each individual's sexuality in that society, as all that mattered was its own bloodline. If anything affected the sovereign's bloodline, then it would need to be punished by torture, but if not, then it was of no concern to the sovereign. Sexuality can serve as a good example of this. When sovereign power was the dominant power, we see that it did not concern itself with people's sexuality, which Foucault claims was often public and very open. Now that the whole population is the concern, each individual matters and must contribute towards society. As this society rested upon a labour force, reproduction became something that had to be administered and controlled and this was possible through the biology of its subjects. For maximum efficiency to be achieved in a capitalist society, there must be an ever-expanding labour force so we can see why the heterosexual monogamous couple became the norm. It helped to achieve the most utility and contributed towards expanding the labour force that this system rested upon. Here we can see why Foucault believes we must study power by looking at those who it is exercised over instead of looking at its centre. There is no literal 'Victorian bourgeoisie' that we may attack, and even if there were, they would not care specifically about homosexuals, beastiality or criminals. Instead, its sole concern is producing a political and economic eligible system with the most utility, and anything that may be harmful to this, such as 'other Victorians', with a highly diverse sexuality could deter the growth of the labour force. As of this, they must be controlled, minimised and corrected so that damage limitation and maximum efficiency is achieved. This control and correction, or as Foucault terms it

“normalisation”¹⁸, was achieved through a technique whose roots can be found in sovereign power; judicial law. Anything that strayed from the heterosexual norm, such as homosexuality and bestiality, were now considered illegal and could be punished. Much in the same way as we saw in sovereign power, when anything that harmed the sovereign's power was punished, we now see this technique applied to the social body.

Sexuality also serves as an excellent example of how discourses help to create truth, in this case, the truth of the heterosexual couple. Foucault goes against the dominant idea that sexuality had been repressed and instead argues that talk of sex and sexuality did in fact explode. In the 19th century, he notes that sex became transformed into a science which he terms "*Scientia Sexualis*"¹⁹. The confession, that ever-lingering technique of pastoral power, was transformed once again into a science via psychoanalysis and was used as this sciences main tool for its production of truth. It was no longer just our actions that must be confessed but also our thoughts, desires, illness and troubles. While it was no longer a priest or a jury that we now admitted to but also doctors, parents, educators and even oneself. This power relation of the confession extended throughout society once again and resulted in an explosion of discourse. A discourse that began to be documented, recorded, analysed with help from psychiatry and which gave knowledge, and therefore power, over the subject once again.

These discourses play a major role in the production of truth and therefore knowledge which is a crucial feature of power. As we saw earlier, power creates a right, for example, the right of the heterosexual couple, this right is then turned into truth, which is achieved through such things as discourse, which is evident once again in sexuality through the creation and rise of psychiatry, or through heterosexual couples who reinforce this truth. When this truth is circulated, it then reproduces this power and makes the right seem natural and legitimate. Foucault talks a lot about truth production, which plays a major role in power, and here we can see clearly how it works.

Foucault states that it is in the second half of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century when we see the emergence of "a new technology of power, but this time it is not disciplinary", although it does not exclude this type of power, it still entails and modifies it. However, this new power "is applied not to man-as-body but to man-as-living being; ultimately if you like,

¹⁸ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 38 (2003)

¹⁹ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 53 (1980)

to man-as-species”²⁰. A species that, influenced by disciplinary power, must be kept under surveillance, controlled, trained, and if need be, punished with the aim of normalisation. It will no longer look at men as individuals but as one huge mass so will take into account no longer simply a man's life and death but the population as a whole, its birth and death rates, its fertility and its productivity. It is a power that is not individualising but “massifying”²¹. After the anatomo-political conception of the body we saw with disciplinary power, we now have the emergence of a "biopolitics of the human race"²². This brings together a whole series of economic and political problems to coincide with the biology of the human race as a species instead of individual anatomy. It seeks to control these issues, and can also explain why we saw the explosion of medical discourse alongside the explosion of discourse on sexuality. These two would help administer and control such issues that affect the whole population such as death and birth rates, illness and mortality which in their turn influence economics and politics.

Biopower can be seen to differ from disciplinary power in that while disciplines solely focused on individuals and their single body, biopower takes an overall look and tries to find the equilibrium via forecasts, statistical estimates and overall measures. This is contrary to something like the confession, which is a much more personal, one-to-one procedure. It seeks not to discipline but to normalise. Disciplinary power centred upon the body to produce useful and docile bodies, while biopower is much more focused on life itself rather than the body. It tries to control, predict and influence a vast mass, the population, instead of training, disciplining and correcting individuals. With the emergence of this new power, we can see a further move away from sovereign power which struggled to deal with a society that was undergoing both a demographic explosion and industrialisation. Biopower helps the population to grow, which supplies the base for an efficient economy in production and tax, and provides a surplus population ready to be deployed for the military. Sex guaranteed all of these, so this is why Foucault uses it to show how the population as a whole began to be involved in power relations.

We saw disciplinary power first take hold of power mechanisms through such things as

²⁰ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 242 (2003)

²¹ Ibid, Foucault, pg 243 (2003)

²² Ibid, Foucault, pg. 243 (1980)

schools, hospitals, barracks and workshops before this was slowly infiltrated by biopower which then adjusted these mechanisms to a whole new level - the population.

From Foucault's genealogy, we can see clearly how power has contributed to the shaping of our society throughout its history. It has affected many of the 'blocks' that Foucault spoke of; religion, ethics, law, punishment, education, politics, the economy, productivity, sexuality, military and the relationships we have within these. In the next part, by making a study of Kropotkin and his text *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, I would like to show how alongside power, another important factor also contributed in shaping our society, its history, its institutions, relationships and ourselves.

3

Kropotkin's Genealogy of Mutual Aid

Kropotkin, in his book *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902), undertakes a very similar task to Foucault. He offers us a historical account of an important factor that we can notice throughout our society and its history. Although power is not what Kropotkin studies, instead he focuses on another important factor; mutual aid. Kropotkin traces this factor further back than Foucault, who begins his study of power in the 15th century. Kropotkin begins his study within the animal kingdom, before showing how mutual aid continued to develop in the beginnings of our human society in our distant tribal ancestors. The next steps in his genealogy are village communities, medieval cities and also what would have been modern examples. Before I can show how mutual aid still prevails in today's society, I must first explain how it developed and played a role throughout our history.

Professor Kessler first formulated this theory in essays and lectures called *On the Law of Mutual Aid* in 1880, unfortunately, a year later he died leaving this theory undeveloped. Kessler stated that cooperation was far more important for our evolution and development than the law of mutual struggle, and beside this, there was the “law of mutual aid”. He argued, “the more individuals keep together, the more they mutually support each other, and the more are the chances of the species for surviving, as well as for making further progress in its intellectual development”²³. Kropotkin further developed this idea and traced its roots further back than Kessler, who argued its roots were found in parental feeling, by beginning with a study of this tendency found in the animal kingdom. As I have already noted, a criticism that can be applied to Foucault’s theory is that he only traces power back to the 15th century, offering very little on what happened before this time. Kropotkin can help us fill this

²³ Avrich, P, *Anarchist Portraits*, pg. 57 (1990)

gap. As we will see, it could even be used to support Foucault's seemingly lack of archimedean point, for Kropotkin will suggest that mutual aid was the dominating factor in our society until around the 15th century. Taking this into account we could suggest that Foucault begins his study when he does as this is when power begins to dominate the relationships in society. First, as Kropotkin originally wrote this text as a reply to Darwin, he will have to show how the mutual aid tendency first developed in animals and then our very earliest ancestors.

Animals

From Kropotkin's study of animals, he concluded that the vast majority of animal species live in societies that are based upon mutual aid instead of struggle and power. The association, support and aid that they lend one another is the best tool in the struggle of life, the advancement of knowledge, continuation of the species, rearing of children, enjoyment, safety and provision of food. Kropotkin offers us lots of examples to prove this point such as ants and bees, who through mutual aid have nests that wouldn't be possible if they lived in isolation, as individuals at war against one another. With paved roads, spacious halls, granaries, rational methods of nursing eggs, larvae "and finally their courage, pluck and superior intelligence" which are "the natural outcome of mutual aid which they practice at every stage of their busy and laborious lives"²⁴. By supporting each other, the ants can fend off attacks from crickets, wasps, grasshoppers, spiders, beetles and flies via this mutual support and confidence in one another.

Birds also offer us another great example of mutual aid. The association of male and females bringing up offspring through hunting together while some birds, such as pelicans and kites, also take flight together simply for pleasure. While the eagle is often thought of as the highest bird, even they are forced to leave their prey to bands of kites. The migration of birds every year, thousands living together, sometimes different species, seems a more comfortable life than the lone robbers who prey on the young or the stray.

Next moving onto mammals, here too, we notice the mutual aid tendency. With an overwhelming amount of mammals living in sociable groups such as the antelope, sheep, zebra, rats, foxes, elephants, rhinos, monkeys, seals, and of course ourselves. These animals

²⁴ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 14 (2006)

are found in the oceans, forests, deserts and cities, in all of the continents on earth sometimes numbering up to millions per social group. Compared to the number of carnivores, who also live in social groups, we can see that the natural world is mainly made up of these animals living in mutual aid instead of individuals involved in power relations. Still, the carnivores hunt and feed together, while it is only in the cat tribes that it can be argued that isolation is preferred, but many of these still come together to hunt. No doubt power still plays a major role in their societies, but mutual aid seems to be more influential and apparent for their development, survival and success. The species that live in isolation or small families are relatively few. Kropotkin argues that before humans multiplied on earth "and waged a permanent war against them, or destroyed the sources from which they formerly derived food"²⁵ it could have been possible to see these isolated animals living in societies.

All this leads Kropotkin to the conclusion that those animals "who acquire habits of mutual aid are undoubtedly the fittest and that mutual aid and association is often the rule for an animal, and its species, success. They have more chances to survive, and they attain, in their respective classes, the highest development of intelligence and bodily organisation."

Kropotkin offers much more in depth evidence supporting his case, many realised during his time as a natural scientist researching in Siberia, and he argues that if these are taken into account, "it can safely be said that mutual aid is as much a law of animal life as mutual struggle, but that, as a factor of evolution, it most probably has a far greater importance. Inasmuch as it favours the development of such habits and characters as ensuring the maintenance and further development of the species, together with the greatest amount of welfare and enjoyment of life for the individual, with the least waste of energy"²⁶. Sharing the burden of rearing children, safety in numbers and the provision of food are also all advantages that mutual aid offers. "The war of each against all is not the law of nature. Mutual aid is as much a law of nature as mutual struggle"²⁷.

Savages

Humans, being no different to other animals, should also then have this mutual aid tendency

²⁵ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 52 (2006)

²⁶ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 6 (2006)

²⁷ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 30 (2006)

within. Throughout the next parts of his text, Kropotkin goes on to show how it developed in our human species, beginning with 'savages' in the stone age before tracing it through our evolutionary line in the villages and cities before ending with what would have been modern examples.

Beginning with the first humans, the so-called 'savages', Kropotkin shows how mutual aid first began to embed itself within our human species and societies. He argues as far as we go back we will always find men living in small tribes or clans, never isolated or alone. Just as we saw with other animals, the human, in its earliest stage would benefit hugely from forming together instead of leading an isolated life. Whether this be for safety, food, knowledge, reproduction or enjoyment. We do not need to look at history though, and there were existing 'savages' living that Kropotkin studied. While Hobbes used modern savages as an example of how we are still at war with one another, Kropotkin uses the savages to show how mutual aid would have existed in our earliest ancestors. He focuses on the bushmen in Australia, who had no dwellings and led a very primitive way of life. Following the European settlement the bushmen were slowly exterminated, 500 killed in 1774 and 3000 in 1808. They lived in small tribes, hunted in common, shared the spoils from the hunt and never abandoned the wounded. Kolben, one of the few researchers to spend time amongst them, wrote: "they are certainly the most friendly, the most liberal and the most benevolent people to one another that ever appeared on the earth"²⁸. He offers other first hand accounts of many other tribes which leads him to argue, how could these tribes, often living in the harshest of conditions on earth, sustain their life without mutual aid? If they lived isolated in a war with one another, just like the animals we looked at before, they would not last very long. The stereotypical image of the bloodthirsty savage is a wrong one. Instead, he lived under a wide range of institutions that have helped shape our modern society by planting the seeds for most of the institutions we can still find today, such as community, ethics, food and the rearing of children. There was no authority to command, but still, the savages gathered in communities and did so for thousands of years, and from these, there grew villages.

I believe an easier example of mutual aid in savages, and humans up to the present day, is our need of parental care and support. It is impossible for us to live isolated and undeniable that mutual aid is necessary to our survival. Kropotkin does not speak much about parental care, which I see as a clearer and better founded example of mutual aid within our earliest

²⁸ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 89 (2006)

ancestors, but this may have been because of Kessler's work on the subject. By focusing on the tribes and first hand accounts of the still surviving tribes it could be argued he offers further support and proof of Kessler's original claims.

So just like every other animal "man is no exception in nature. He is also subject to the great principle of mutual aid which grants the best chances of survival to those who best support each other in the struggle for life"²⁹. We shall now move onto the next part of Kropotkin's genealogy which is the move from small tribes into larger communities; the village.

Village

As people began to migrate and races mix, the inevitable wars that this caused increased and as of this so did migration, it became necessary to group with strangers of different descent, and so villages began to pop up all around the world. Kropotkin notes there is not one single race or nation that has not had its period of village communities, calling it a "universal phase of evolution, a natural outcome of clan organisation"³⁰. He sees these being born out of the hard struggle that the savages faced against hostile nature which could be overcome by grouping together and overcoming those who, although may be stronger and more cunning, could not defeat the community of the village. From this development, which expanded the tribe and united strangers, several benefits came along; agriculture was improved, increased and became more efficient, forests were cleared, organization became better, nature was tamed through the building of roads and bridges, knowledge expanded, a common culture was born, with moral conceptions, a say in judicial, economic, educational and military matters, while markets were also fortified for safety. As the numbers of the tribe and clan grew so did the separation between each member in the village, but the most important aspects were still undertaken as a whole. Bridges and canals could not have been built, marshes could not have been drained, roads could not have been paved, and markets could not have been solidified if it was every man against every other man. All of these which played such an important part in creating the society which we now live in, and developing us as a species, are down to mutual aid. These changes which played such a crucial part in the

²⁹ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 115 (2006)

³⁰ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 122 (2006)

development of our society, would not have been possible if individuals, or families, were isolated and only worked for themselves.

Here, unlike Foucault and his reluctance to speak of any other principle that may have helped shape our society, Kropotkin argues that of course "wars were certainly unavoidable; migration means war"³¹, giving him an advantage over the sometimes monistic Foucault.

Kessler was also adamant it was not only mutual aid that was apparent. He states "I do not reject the struggle for existence, but only affirm that the progressive development both of the entire animal kingdom and, especially, of mankind is not facilitated by mutual struggle so much as by mutual aid... The law of mutual aid has played an incomparably greater role in the history of his [sic–humanity's] successes than has the law of the struggle for existence"³².

This is an important point for the cause of writing this thesis. While Foucault only speaks of the power that is evident in our society, it is obvious that it is not only power relations that traverse the social body. Just as Kropotkin, and Kessler, argue, we can find not only power, struggle, domination and all that Foucault speaks of. There is also mutual aid, support, community and all that Kropotkin and Kessler speak of. Although neither Kessler nor Kropotkin go any further than arguing that this 'power' can be found in Darwin's struggle for life. By fitting mutual aid alongside Foucault's theory of power it makes it possible to see both of these factors in action, and their effects, which gives us a much clearer view of the relationships we can find in our society. While as we saw above, Foucault himself admits the link that can be made between his power relations and Darwinism, which makes me confident that these two factors can be compared. By combining power and mutual aid we have much more room to traverse the social body, for instead of simply looking at one factor in our penal system or medicine, we can now view it from a different aspect within that same society. Just as I mentioned before, the prison system does not only create 'delinquency', many prisoners benefit from the system, some truly do become rehabilitated with the aid that can be found within prison walls. Both the works on mutual aid and power, seem too one-sided. Kropotkin and Kessler's discussion on mutual aid is often criticised for being far too ideal. By putting their works into a Foucauldian frame, I believe it can give them a firmer theoretical footing. Whilst from the works on mutual aid, it seems obvious that Foucault's

³¹ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 137 (2006)

³² Todes, D, *Darwin Without Malthus: The Struggle For Existence in Russian Evolutionary Thought*, Pg. 112 (1989)

notion of power can not give us an adequate understanding of all that we find in society. When he starts his study of power in the 15th century, it may be that power has gained control of the institutions and relationships that make up the social body, but how did this social body first develop and progress? How were the institutions and apparatus first created? Foucault gives us no answers to this, and if we reduce ourselves to trying to explain them only through power, it seems a difficult task. Mutual aid can offer us an answer to these problems.

Medieval Cities

Although the evolution into the village created many advantages, Kropotkin notes that several disadvantages also occurred. With the growth of private wealth and the beginning of centralisation, important factors of society, such as the economy, knowledge and morality, begins to get into the hands of the few. These few individuals then start to exercise it for themselves instead of for the interest of all, which was at the heart of the village and tribe organisation. The next part of Kropotkin's genealogy was the move into cities, and this is where there also begins to be formed what Kropotkin, and Foucault, call the 'state'. Whilst in the village land was common, now it began to be privatised. Whilst food was always shared, it soon became a matter of securing food for you and your family, instead of the whole village. People began to drift further and further away, losing their common culture, moral conceptions and their say in judicial, economic, educational and military matters. Kropotkin notes that when we go further into the higher stages of civilisation the bonds that were so important to our evolution, from the tribe to the village, begin to break and more conflicts begin to appear. Although the mutual aid tendency could never be truly lost and began to flourish elsewhere, such as the growth in importance of the family, which was a place where mutual aid was, and is, still evident.

Medieval cities succeeded so well, that once again, just like the villages they changed the face of Europe. No longer were there miserable huts, poorly built churches and only weaving and forging as art. Now we see the emergence of huge cathedrals, craft and art reached new heights, oceans were conquered, science advanced, mechanical invention began; "such were the magic changes accomplished in Europe in less than 400 years"³³. Kropotkin sees the roots

³³ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 209 (2006)

of the medieval city being planted in the 10th century when invasions from Normans, Arabs and Urgins began a movement of fortifying villages with stone walls and a city enclosed within. Within these walls, invasion could be encroached, and a new life of freedom began to develop. What he calls 'guilds' play a vital part in the medieval free city which existed around the 12-16th century. These guilds were inspired by the same mutual aid and support which was at work in the village community. Guilds were brotherhoods made up of members with similar interests. For example, there were guilds of craftsmen, painters, hunters, peasants, teachers, religion, beggars, executioners, women and pretty much everything else and they were "all organised on the same double principle of self-jurisdiction and mutual support"³⁴. These guilds have lived for thousands of years and continue to exist to this very day, and this is because they answer to that deeply rooted need of human nature - mutual aid. Unfortunately, these cities did not last, and in the 14th century, we see the mutual aid that was apparent within them begin to be replaced by relations of power. Kropotkin says that younger crafts proved too strong for traditional methods and that they soon took over the management of the city. Although this opened up a season of new prosperity, only the few who were in control of this power would benefit, and soon "every meadow, every field, every river, and road around the city, and every man upon the land was under some lord"³⁵. By the end of the 15th century, Kropotkin sees mighty states, moulded on the old Roman pattern, coming into existence and with it a sharp division is traced throughout the city which is marked by a growing military institution. He states, in a similarity with Foucault, it is around this time that the cities were "gradually corrupted by ideas of Roman Caesarism and were doomed to become a prey to the growing military states"³⁶.

No longer can every family and person help to make the city prosper via mutual aid and support. Instead all faith, power and authority is placed in the hands of a king or a lord who is "the saviour of society, and that in the name of public salvation he can commit any violence: burn men and women at the stake, make them perish under indescribable tortures, plunge whole provinces into the most abject misery"³⁷. All the social functions become centralised into the state which no longer favours the development of these for all but for individualism. The mutual aid tendency was crushed as much as possible with guilds coming under threat. In

³⁴ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg 174 (2006)

³⁵ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 200 (2006)

³⁶ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 224 (2006)

³⁷ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 221 (2006)

medieval times every man would have belonged to a guild, but these were slowly made illegal by the new power. As of this, individualism slowly begins to take over from brotherly feelings. However, while Foucault was trying to make a genealogy of power, Kropotkin is trying to do one for mutual aid. So, his task now is to show how this principle still lived on even though power was now the dominant force in society.

Ourselves

We can clearly trace Kropotkin's genealogy of mutual aid. Its roots can be found in all animals and the earliest stages of humanity before developing within the village and city. But after the 15th century, we begin to see the centralisation of the state. Self-government, self-jurisdiction, support and aid, all characteristics that played such an important role up until then, slowly began to diminish. Guilds were also destroyed and matters that would have been settled by them, we find in the latter half of the 16th century, are now resolved in courts and parliament through such things such as legislation and law. This can be seen as closely linked to Foucault's theory of power, especially sovereign power. Truth and knowledge are no longer found in the guilds but are replaced by law. Kropotkin states "judicial power thus makes its appearance"³⁸, which turns societies focus away from collectivism and towards individualism. No longer do people get a say in important matters, but those who express power instead settle societies problems, and often in their personal interest. But Kropotkin does not want to focus on this for so much has already been written about it, as is evident in Foucault and Hobbes. Instead, his task was to show how the mutual aid tendency continued to live on.

An example of mutual aid in Kropotkin's time, and still ours today, are "the countless societies, clubs and alliances, for the enjoyment of life, for study and research, for education and so on."³⁹ Every town, village and city has a football, cricket, tennis, singing, acting club, etc. People, from different backgrounds and social standing, come together to create new bonds and satisfy their need for mutual aid. These clubs do not help the economy, but they help develop relations and also to help create what we call society. These associations are

³⁸ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 160 (2006)

³⁹ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 279 (2006)

made up mostly of volunteers doing unpaid work and can therefore offer us evidence of where we can still see mutual aid in action.

He also offers us the family as another modern example of where mutual aid is still present. He takes specific care to mention here, that although the bourgeoisie, the higher classes and those who have managed to gain control of power relations, may not practice mutual aid with the rest of society, even they, express mutual aid between family and friends. This is because "the brain cannot resist the mutual aid feeling, because this feeling has been nurtured by thousands of years of human social life and hundreds of thousands of years of pre-human life in societies"⁴⁰.

In this chapter, Kropotkin goes on to give more examples that could be found throughout society at the time of writing the book. One of these was the many still thriving village communities that rested upon mutual aid. Kropotkin gives us examples from Siberia, wherein the harsh struggles of life, such as weather, the impracticality, poor vegetation and distance from modern cities, without mutual aid life would not be possible. He also talks of syndicates and in the aftermath of a natural disaster where we can find mutual aid throughout Europe. More examples can be found in another of Kropotkin's books *The Conquest of Bread* such as "free agreement"⁴¹, which is the countless transactions that happen in society every day without the need for state intervention. Instead of going through these examples I would like to look at mutual aid between 'ourselves' at the time of writing this. I would also like to see where we can see power apparent in our society today. To do this I have to give an example, where we can see them both in action, being expressed, and the effects of these.

⁴⁰ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 277 (2006)

⁴¹ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 121 (2015)

4

AN ILLUSTRATION OF POWER

From the above, we can see how both power and mutual aid have contributed to, and been, a major influence upon, our society, its creation, history and development. Kropotkin showed how the mutual aid tendency developed throughout the animal kingdom and in our earliest ancestors. He then traced its genealogy throughout our societies history, in the village and the city, before ending with examples of mutual aid apparent in his society. On the other hand, Foucault showed us how power also played its role, at different stages in our societies history, through four different types of power; pastoral, sovereign, disciplinary and biopower. In the next part, I would like to show how both of these continue to play a role today in our modern society. To do this, I will have to give an example as to where we can see their effects and in action, in one of our societies 'blocks' as Foucault termed them. I have chosen our food industry and believe this can be classed as a block for no matter what society we are a part of, food will be a critical issue, if not the biggest.

Power in Food

I believe to show how power exists within our block of food we must abide by a similar method of Foucault. We will remember that Foucault noted that different types of power had different aims, such as sovereign power was focused upon protecting the sovereign and its blood line, while disciplinary power tried to gain control and influence the behaviour of individual bodies. The last power that Foucault spoke of, and which therefore should be the most evident in modernity, was biopower and this had at its centre a concern for society as a

whole with the aim of producing political and economic efficiency. He stated to find power we must “concentrate on the techniques of power and show the economic profit or political utility that can be derived from them, in a certain context and for certain reasons, then we can understand how these mechanisms actually and eventually become part of the whole.”⁴² So, to find power in food we must find techniques that offer society economic profit and political utility, whilst also remembering that because power has gained so much control of the relations evident in society, these techniques will be the norm. We will also remember that anything that would harm this aim would be pushed to the outer edges of society such as ‘other Victorians’ or criminals. Foucault also states we must look at the relationships, effects and mechanisms of our specific block. Our relationship with the food system is that of consumer and customer, while the mechanisms at play would be the production and sales of the food. I believe two parts of our food system that can be used to illustrate these are livestock and waste so I will first look at the relationship and mechanisms within these before discussing their effects.

Waste

To illustrate how waste can be illustrated to express power relations in our society I must show it can be considered to be the norm while also showing how it helps towards the aim of power in producing political and economic efficiency. Tristram Stuart, in his book *Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal*, set out to research the amount of waste our Western society produces, in the hope of trying to understand how it is possible that we can throw away so much food when there are hundreds of millions of malnourished and starving people in the world. We will remember that Foucault sought to question why the prison system failed so badly in its original aim of rehabilitation, before realising that beneath this apparent meaning behind the penal system, was a much more sinister one which sought control of bodies so they would abide by powers central aim of protecting the sovereigns bloodline. By applying Foucault’s theory of power to the role of food in our society we may now answer Stuart’s problem; the role of food is not, as is thought, to feed this society, as will become evident, but it is too comply with power relations in seeking economic and political efficiency. This is why we see so much wasted food within our society. From Stuart’s

⁴² Ibid, Foucault, pg. 32 (2003)

research we can see just how much food is wasted and why we can consider it the norm, and therefore a technique and effect of power relations. Another reason for the writing of his book is that how much we waste is such an under researched field as no government makes it mandatory for waste to be calculated. Stuart collects the little research and surveys that have been done in this field, whilst also offering his own statistics based on his own evidence, research, surveys and interviews, that are far too in depth to go into for this thesis. He concludes that “in total over 30% of the worlds food supplies are actually wasted”⁴³.

Although at first this seems like a hugely exaggerated figure, Stuart, other researchers, governments and producers all believe this figure is actually a huge underestimate and the figure is much closer to 50%. The fact that we waste a third, or a half, of all the food we produce is evidence that what we originally think the aim of our food system, to feed society, is obviously not the case, and as it happens on such a huge scale, it can also be considered the norm.

As I have shown how we can class waste as what is considered to be the norm in our society, and therefore under the influence of power relations, I must now show how it complies with powers main aim of creating political and economic efficiency. The creation of so much waste can be seen to help creating political efficiency for the overabundance and variety of food that is offered to us in the Western world gives us, as consumers, greater satisfaction through our unrivaled choice and relative cheapness, which leads to political satisfaction and stability. Stuart offers us the statistic that on average a UK worker spends 9% of his salary on food whereas a Pakistani worker spends 75%. With the greater choice, cheapness and seemingly infinite abundance, we can see how producing so much food, although leading to great amounts of waste, creates such political stability and satisfaction. Further proof of the political stability of the Western world, which the overabundance of food helps towards, was evident in the 2008 global food crisis, which led to riots throughout the ‘developing’ world, whereas the developed world remained largely unaffected. It is not only the amount of food that is used to create political satisfaction but also the aesthetics of our food. Supermarkets, which is the norm for where we buy our food in the west, are one of the worst culprits for waste, which Stuart offers first hand evidence of through his own empirical research of looking through their bins. When he confronted the major british supermarkets about their waste he was told that it made economic sense for them to waste so much. The supermarkets

⁴³ Stuart, *Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal*, pg. 190, (2009)

felt they always needed to have an abundance of food because if they didn't have a customer's specific product they would go elsewhere and that customers also like to see full shelves. It is also cheaper for the supermarkets to overstock than to understock because on average it is cheaper to sell one and waste three instead of not selling any. With fresh produce, such as sandwiches which are much more likely to be wasted, the profit margin can be a hundred times greater than the production cost. Here we can see an example of Foucault's insistence that power comes from below and we are all involved in its relations. There is not a 'state' that is determining this wasted food, it is ourselves, as customers, in our relationship within our block of food that help to produce and reinforce these power relations. But, we can still see how the state has managed to gain control of these relations through a technique that was evident throughout Foucault's genealogy; judicial law. Another reason that supermarkets waste so much food is because of the strict laws, determined by the EU, that state what can and can't be sold, and also how long it can be available for sale. These laws state that food must be a certain height, width, shape, weight etc. and an example of the waste this creates is that 25-40% of fruit and vegetables being rejected before they even reach the supermarket. The majority of these have nothing nutritional, or taste wise, wrong with them but are rejected on a subjective aesthetic ground⁴⁴. Although it seems the supermarkets would be against wasting so much of their produce and missing out on extra sales, most enforce even stricter laws than the mandatory EU guidelines and Stuart believes this to be the case for they could not make as much profit selling the less aesthetically pleasing produce.

Another EU determined law that creates a lot of waste is the mandatory 'use-by' or 'best before' date which has also spawned the not legal but still widely applied 'sell-by'. These dates were first conceived of by Lord Haskins while he was working at the British supermarket M&S as a way for staff to make sure old stock got sold first. But, it was not long before they were used instead as marketing tool to guarantee freshness and Lord Haskins himself even states to Stuart that these dates are "excessive, over reactive and absurdly unnecessary" and that "the public are very stupid to take these dates so seriously"⁴⁵. His reasoning for this is because supermarkets are so scared that their products could give one of their customers food poisoning, which would result in damage to their image and profit, and therefore it is common practice to think worst case scenario with these dates. Manufacturers

⁴⁴ Ibid, pg. 102 (2009)

⁴⁵ Ibid, pg. 64 (2009)

also fall guilty of excessively short sell by dates to guarantee the best taste, Stuart observed this at a well known pie factory where the sell by date reflected when the pastry would go soft instead of when it was no longer safe to eat. A public survey concluded that 80% of consumers believed that a best before date, which reflects only when a product is past its best quality, meant that the food was unsafe to eat and that they would be liable to food poisoning. Stuart also mentions that ““Principal function of best-before dates on these products, as some in the industry admit, may merely be to increase the profit of supermarket”⁴⁶. This is because it promotes freshness and encourages us to waste food in the hope of us returning to buy more.

Once again here we can clearly see how power influences our block of food through its focus on profit and political satisfaction. What we originally thought was the main aim of our food system, that of feeding society, seems far from what is actually happening. I believe it is important to note how before power came to be the most dominant factor, this original aim of feeding society, influenced by mutual aid was apparent throughout society. We learnt from Kropotkin that food was one of the biggest concerns in the tribe and village and this was the reason why societies formed and humans cooperate together. This move away from feeding society and the creation of waste is a fairly modern occurrence, which I believe can be put down to powers growing influence on our society. Throughout differing societies worldwide, when mutual aid was the dominant factor, we saw the original aim of the food system, to feed people, being expressed. Whether this be in Allah’s ““eat and drink: but waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters”⁴⁷, Jesus’ proclamation; ““when they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted”⁴⁸ or until very recently, when power began to assert itself but when mutual aid was still more apparent, in Locke’s ““if the fruits rotted, or the venison putrefied, before he could spend it, he offended against the common law of nature, and was liable to be punished.”⁴⁹ The wasting of food, a technique of power in its aim of reaching economic and political efficiency, is a modern occurrence that was not evident when mutual aid was the dominant factor.

Before we move onto another part of our food system which I believe can illustrate power, I would like to note a criticism of Stuart’s account of waste by the anthropologist Marvin

⁴⁶ Ibid, pg. 61 (2009)

⁴⁷ The Quran, 7:31

⁴⁸ The Bible, John: 6:12

⁴⁹ Locke, J, *Second Treatise of Government*, pg. 15 (2007)

Harris who argued that surplus food is of evolutionary benefit to our species. He argues that surplus food, and waste is not just a product of power, or capitalism, but has been evident throughout our history and was crucial to the creation of civilization and society as we know it today⁵⁰. An example he gives of this is when 75% of North American large mammals were made extinct in less than a millennia due to over hunting yet only a portion of these showed any signs of butchering. In the short term this hunting produced a population explosion, destruction of ecosystems, and when the mammals were extinct, there was a shift into farming and the birth of civilization. When this shift into farming happened, it was also beneficial to grow surplus food as it helped to maximise reproduction which could then be used to conquer other groups who would conquer your society if you did not continue to expand. Surplus food also guaranteed against natural disasters and safeguarding against a poor harvest. These are all reasonable points made by Harris, but the amount we overproduce today is not necessary, healthy or safe for our long term prospects. A small amount of over production may be necessary, but Stuart calculates that the West currently over produces by 300%⁵¹. Harris defends this amount of overproduction by arguing that it promotes greater efficiency in labour and that it offers us the chance to supply poorer countries with food aid. I find it hard to agree with Harris, believing that it may have been necessary in our past to over produce, when it seemed like there was an infinite abundance of food, but we find ourselves confined to earth with only limited resources. Overproduction in the past has often led to the end of civilization such as the Mayans or Easter Island, and today we have more in common with these now gone civilizations than a need to expand and safeguard against poor harvests. As Stuart states, it was “when resources reached their limits that over-consumption and waste became sinful”⁵².

I believe that waste can be used to illustrate power in action for it is possible to show how similar techniques to those that Foucault speaks of throughout his genealogy are evident within our contemporary food system. Sovereign power can be noted in the use of judicial law which is evident in the EU’s and supermarkets strict guidelines of what can be sold, as well as the excessively health and safety laws which affect the whole production and sale of food. Disciplinary power can be noted in the aim of creating political and economic

⁵⁰ Harris, M, *Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches*, (1975)

⁵¹ *Ibid*, pg. 175 (2009)

⁵² *Ibid*, pg. 181 (2009)

efficiency which I have shown through how much food is wasted which seems to be a product of this aim. In the overabundance of our food we see production being maximized, while through such techniques as sell-by dates we can see a desire for more quantity to be sold, thus maximizing the economic potential. Sell-by dates can also be used to illustrate biopower in that they are argued to be there to protect the health of the population. Power is also evident in the move away from what was the original aim of the role of food in our society, to feed everybody, to the much more individualism that power creates. While it also abides by Foucault's definition of power that it comes from below and is something that we all find ourselves involved in. This is because, as Stuart notes, "we all have the power to relieve it"⁵³, it is partly down to us, as consumers, that demand this overabundance of food and by continuing to buy and waste on the scale that we are we reinforce these power relations.

Another part of our food system that I believe can be used to illustrate power in action is through livestock.

Livestock

I believe the use of livestock within our food system can be used to illustrate power for, like waste, it can be considered to be a norm within our society and therefore an expression of power. Throughout the west people typically consume animal products, in the UK the average from the many surveys and research done reveal that 1% of the population are vegan, while in the US it is less than 0.5%⁵⁴. Although it could be questioned whether our relationship with animals could be bought under Foucault's notion of power I believe it can be for in his *Society Must Be Defended* lectures he states that biopower "is a power that is applied in general ways to the population, life and living beings"⁵⁵. A trait of power was that it always continued to grow, beginning in pastoral power with an individual before expanding to a sovereign family, society and eventually in biopower when it brings together all of life. As of this I believe we can find evidence for past powers within our use of livestock. Just as in our wasted food, judicial law, a trait of sovereign power, is evident in the rules and

⁵³ Ibid, xvi, (2009)

⁵⁴ <https://www.vegsoc.org/info-hub/facts-and-figures/>,
<https://www.vegansociety.com/news/media/statistics>

⁵⁵ Ibid, pg. 273 (2003)

regulations for the production and sale of livestock. While it could also be argued that in some cases we see torture in such production as foie gras or veal. Of course these are no longer used to extract truth or knowledge but they can be seen to help towards the aim of creating political and economic efficiency in the profit and luxury that they create.

Disciplinary power can also be noted within livestock, as said above, the abundance and seemingly infinite amount of meat available helps towards economic and political efficiency, but also in the production we see an expansion of control and knowledge that were also traits of this power. The shift to farming brought with it the ability for our society to control the amount of meat available for no longer did it depend upon a successful hunt, but now through control and knowledge, we could determine how many animals we kept and where to keep them. At the beginning the benefits to this were clear as was evident in the population growth, but this growth has never stopped and in the past century we have seen it explode. Stuart notes that between Brazil exports in meat rose 700% from 1994-2004⁵⁶, this is not a rare occurrence with meat exports still rising at an alarming rate throughout the world and since 1970 the production of meat has multiplied by two and a half times⁵⁷. We return to our reply to Harris in that this waste is sinful because it is not necessary and destructive. All this meat in turn needs to be fed and watered which takes up land, water and food that could be used to feed the malnourished people within the world. In *Waste* we learn that on average it takes 10kg of cereal and between 5,000-10,000 litres of water to produce 1kg of beef⁵⁸. As most of this meat is grown in developing countries, we are essentially removing food from a country where it could be eaten and transporting it across the globe, where as we learnt above, most of it gets thrown into bins. Here is more evidence that the role of food within our society has been influenced by the dominant factor of power with its focus upon creating political and economic efficiency, which is achieved through this abundance and availability of meat, instead of feeding society as was the case when mutual aid was dominant in our past. This is best summed up by Eric Holt-Giminez who calculates that over the world, humans consume 5.2 billion gallons of water and eat 21 billion pounds of food each day. If we compare this to cows consumption, we will be pleasantly surprised with cows drinking 45

⁵⁶ Ibid, pg. 93 (2009)

⁵⁷ Ibid, pg. 140 (2009)

⁵⁸ Ibid (2009)

billion gallons of water and 135 billion pounds of food each day⁵⁹. This creates enough food to feed 10 billion people but as Eric Holt-Gimenez calls the title of his essay *We Already Grow Enough Food for 10 Billion People....and Still Can't End Hunger*. Oppenlander also discusses this seemingly paradoxical relationship in our food system where we give food and water to animals instead of humans in his essay *Freshwater and Loss: Where is it all going?* When he argues that animal agriculture is responsible for 20-33% of all freshwater consumption in the world today.

Here I have hoped to have shown how livestock can be used to illustrate power in action which I believe to have completed by showing how it can be considered the norm, while also showing how traits of power can be noted throughout. Next, I will look at the effects of this power in action which Foucault also suggests is how we can study power.

Effects of Livestock and Waste

Stuart notes many effects that our huge amount of waste creates. Our huge demand of food, most of which is unnecessary takes up land and resources which in turn destroys ecosystems, biodiversity and creates hunger in other societies. In his introduction he states our food system is “upsetting the climate, hydrological cycle and soil to such an extent that the UN now estimates that the world's agricultural land may decline in productivity by up to 25% this century, which could undermine humanity’s future ability to grow enough food at all”⁶⁰, and that, “the bottom line is that the present and growing demand for food is not sustainable, by which I mean that if it continues unabated, the equilibrium in the worlds biosphere could well be irremediably altered to the detriment of many species on Earth, including our own.”⁶¹ A UN report released by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in 2006, entitled *Livestock's Long Shadow: Environmental Issues and Options* also discussed the effects that livestock had upon our environment and had at its centre the "aim to assess the full impact of the livestock sector on environmental problems, along with potential technical and policy approaches to mitigation". The report led to senior U.N officials stating that the meat industry is "one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious

⁵⁹ Holt-Gimenez, *We Already Grow Enough Food for 10 Billion People....and Still Can't End Hunger*, (2012)

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, pg. xv (2009)

⁶¹ *Ibid*, pg. Xix (2009)

environmental problem" and that "urgent action is required to remedy the situation"⁶². I would like to take the chance here to list a few of the facts that this report revealed, alongside other books and essays such as *Livestock and Climate Change*, *Water Resources: Agricultural and Environmental Issues*:

- The greenhouse gases that are produced from animal agriculture are higher than those that are created by all forms of transportation. With animal agriculture responsible for 18% and transportation responsible for 13%⁶³.

- If we take into account all of the by-products alongside the livestock themselves the percentage rises to 51% of all worldwide greenhouse gas emission, a staggering 32,000 million tons of carbon dioxide every year⁶⁴.

- These emissions are only expected to increase and by 2050 emissions created by agriculture, if we carry on the same way, are projected to increase by 80%⁶⁵.

- The water consumed by livestock and agriculture ranges from 34-76 trillion gallons a year. In the US agriculture is responsible for 80-90% of water consumption. With the following, we can see why. To produce one pound of beef 2,500 gallons of water are needed, 477 to produce a pound of eggs, 900 for a pound of cheese and 1000 for a gallon of milk⁶⁶.

- A farm with 2,500 dairy cows produces the same amount of waste as a city with a population of 411,000 people⁶⁷.

- Three-quarters of the world's fisheries are either exploited or depleted⁶⁸.

⁶² Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, *Livestock's Long Shadow: Agricultural and Environmental Issues*, pg. Xx (2006)

⁶³ Ibid, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, (2006)

⁶⁴ Goodland, R & Anhang, J., *"Livestock and Climate Change: What if the key actors in climate change are...cows, pigs and chickens?"*, (2009)

⁶⁵ Tilman, D & Clark, M, *Global diet links environmental sustainability and human health*, (2014)

⁶⁶ Pimentel, D, *Water Resources: Agricultural and Environmental Issues*, 2004

⁶⁷ Stuart, T, *Waste: Uncovering the Global Food Scandal*, (2009)

⁶⁸ Ibid, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, (2006)

- 90-100 million tons of fish are pulled from our oceans each year. 40% of these fish caught are discarded for either being the wrong size or species and 650,000 whales, dolphins and seals killed by fishing vessels yearly. Sharks are the biggest casualty with 40-50 million so far been killed by nets or lines⁶⁹.

- Animal agriculture is responsible for up to 91% of Amazon destruction. Worldwide there are 1-2 acres of rainforest cleared every single second leading to 137 plant, animal and insect species being lost every day⁷⁰.

- 82% of starving children live in countries where food is fed to animals while these animals, in turn, are eaten by people in western countries⁷¹.

In the above, I believe it is possible to see both disciplinary and biopower in action.

Disciplinary power can be seen in our disciplining of both the animals we call livestock and our actions upon the earth. Foucault argues disciplinary power creates “docile bodies”⁷² and I feel this relates very well to our domestication of animals. While controlling these animals, we also concern ourselves with their health, fertility, birth and death rates. These are all key characteristics of biopower. The writings that these points are taken from are mainly all about the subject of the earth's health, so biopower is evident here once again.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization concluded that “animal agriculture is the leading cause of species extinction, ocean dead zones, water pollution and habitat destruction”. It is why we are experiencing the largest mass extinction in 65 million years⁷³. It is clear that this cannot be sustained. The UN, governments around the world and international charities all give clear warning signs that changes must be made. If these changes do not occur, it is thought, we will witness major changes in our environment which will affect ourselves and the society we are a part of.

In the next part I will continue to discuss, what I and others, see as the most prominent effect that this expression of power creates; the awakening of Gaia.

⁶⁹ Ibid, Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, (2006)

⁷⁰ Ibid, Oppenlander, (2013)

⁷¹ Ibid, Oppenlander, (2013)

⁷² Ibid, Foucault, pg. 135 (1996)

⁷³ Eldredge, N, *The Sixth Extinction*, (2001)

5

Gaia: An Effect of Power

From the study of the role that power plays within our food sector above, which utilised the UN report, *Waste* and other works, I believe it is possible to see power in action. We looked at which parts of the food industry are the 'norm', such as waste and livestock, which created productivity, profit and a healthy population. These then help towards what Foucault argued were the main aims of both disciplinary and biopower; political and economic efficiency. Next, I would like to look at the effects of these actions, and I believe an effect of power, illustrated in the above section, has played a major contribution towards the awakening of Gaia.

Gaia

Gaia theory is the personification of earth, made up of myth and science, awakening because of our destruction of it, and the view that it cannot sustain this damage much longer. It argues that our actions on earth are resulting in an ecological crisis which is all the more powerful than ourselves. If we continue as we have been, then we will witness considerable changes to the earth, and its environment, which will ultimately affect ourselves and result in the end of these things as we currently know them. James Lovelock, who is credited with first proposing the term, tells us in his book *The Revenge of Gaia* (2006), that "we have grown in numbers and disturbance to Gaia, to the point where our presence is perceptibly disturbing...Gaia is suffering from *Disseminated Primatemia*. A plague of people"⁷⁴. Evidence for this can be

⁷⁴ Lovelock, J, *Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, pg. 7, (2007)

seen in the rise of the earth's population that has occurred over the past 200 years. In 1812 the world population was 1 billion. A century later this increased to 1.5 billion, but in the next century we see a dramatic increase where the population reached 7 billion. This surge in growth and its effects, such as the need to feed them as we saw above, has played a major contribution in the damage to our environment and natural resources, which will soon result in major changes to our society. Foucault argued that we should study power where we can see its effects and in action. While I believe we saw power in action in our food sector in the above section, we can now see a consequence of this through Gaia. This, we will remember, were the two aspects of power that we should be studying according to Foucault; power in action and the effects of these actions.

Gray & Latour

John Gray and Bruno Latour are two others writers who discuss the approaching Gaia, in their respective books *Straw Dogs: Thoughts on Humans and Other Animals* (2003) and *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (2013). They both argue that we are entering the "Anthropocene"⁷⁵ era of earth's history, the ecological age where human activity is the dominant force on the environment.

Latour tries to undertake an anthropology of the 'moderns', to find out what they truly value and unite the 'moderns', this being Western society, and the 'others' together so that they can face Gaia and hopefully save themselves. Like Lovelock, who analogises our behaviour with a plague, Latour says our activity upon the earth is like that of a volcano and that "the future, it has been shattered to bits"⁷⁶. The task of uniting moderns and others is one that must be undertaken now for Gaia is approaching. He leaves the old philosophical language and tries to create a "metalanguage"⁷⁷ that would do justice to our experience of life. He argues we are involved in certain 'modes of existence' such as religion, politics, technology, habit, morality, organisation and others which make up our world. He concludes that what we truly value is three of these modes, attachment, organisation and morality, with these three modes of existence intertwining to create the economy, which has become the main concern of our

⁷⁵ Latour, B, *Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns*, pg. 9 (2013); Gray, J, *Straw Dogs: Thoughts on Humans and Other Animals*, pg. 23 (2003)

⁷⁶Ibid, Latour, pg. 10 (2013)

⁷⁷Ibid, Latour, pg. 64 (2013)

society. Here, we can spot a similarity with Foucault's disciplinary power which also had as its main focus creating an efficient economic and political system. I feel that this abides well with an argument that reoccurs throughout this essay; the dominance of power in our society, which has been centred on our economy, has, just as Latour argues, led to the awakening of Gaia. Latour, although never mentioning mutual aid as a way to save ourselves, does argue that it is only by uniting the moderns and others together, that we have any chance of reconciling ourselves and Gaia. So although never explicitly mentioning mutual aid, we can spot traces of it within his work.

While Latour believes there is a chance to save ourselves, on the contrary, Gray believes we are helpless and stuck in an endless cycle from which there is no escape except for fluctuations and repetition; he states "history is not progress or decline, but recurring gain and loss"⁷⁸. So although they may both begin with a similar critique of modernity and the moderns, it is soon revealed the results this produces leads them in two very different directions. For Gray, it can be seen to lead to a sceptical approach, even nihilistic at times, while Latour takes a much more positive approach, which he admits in the opening chapter of the book. He wants and believes there is a way out for the moderns, that we can offer them "a dwelling place at long last."⁷⁹ For Gray we are damned from the beginning; "the notion that human action can save themselves or the planet is absurd"⁸⁰. We are such a small part of Gaia that we have no chance of controlling her or our destiny. He says in comparison to Gaia we are but "slime mould"⁸¹ and if we do not sort ourselves out Gaia will rid us to create the balance it depends upon; that of reproduction and behaviour.

To illustrate this point he makes the radical claim that the moderns are no better off now than their hunter-gatherer ancestors. He argues the shift to farming did not come about by choice but instead was forced upon us by either hunting the animals too heavily, climate change or by being conquered by newly set up farming communities. This jump into the Neolithic age brought about "no overall gain in human well-being or freedom.....almost certainly Paleolithic humanity was better off"⁸². The results that farming produced was a much larger population but a much poorer population. He argues that the hunter-gatherers normally

⁷⁸Ibid, Gray, pg. 155 (2003)

⁷⁹Ibid, Latour, pg. 23, 2013)

⁸⁰Ibid, Gray, pg. 17 (2003)

⁸¹Ibid, Gray, pg. 33 (2003)

⁸²Ibid, Gray, pg. 156 (2003)

always had more than they needed, they did not need to work much to accumulate more and that their lifestyle, when compared to the farmers, can, in fact, be viewed as complete freedom. The lack of objects or possessions may be pointed out by the moderns to how poor these people were, but this could also be used to show their freedom. Another criticism that is given to our ancestors is that they led a nomadic lifestyle, but Gray argues, at the rate we are destroying our natural resources to produce cattle, our exhaustion of the soil, which continues to increase at an ever more alarming rate, and as our search for new land to produce our food ever widens, it may be argued that today we are even more nomadic than our distant ancestors were. Still, the moderns might view the hunter-gatherers as poorer, having a lesser amount of freedom and having a worse diet but, as was implied in the preceding section, "more of the world's population is chronically undernourished than it was in the stone age"⁸³. Similarities can be spotted here with Kropotkin and Foucault. Like Kropotkin, Gray takes an optimistic view of our ancestral tribal and village past, when mutual aid was dominant, before being slowly replaced by power which led to a degradation in society's well being. In the destruction of our natural resources, overproduction of cattle, exhaustion of soil and the demand for more land, we can see clear examples of power being expressed, as we saw in *Waste* and the UN report. While similarities to Foucault can be noted in Gray's work in his criticism of the progressive line that society believes it is on, which is evident in Foucault's study of history which I will discuss further on.

Although agreeing with Lovelock and Latour that the growth of human population is indeed a concern, here Gray, as he does so many other times, goes a different way with this information. He suggests that humans are no different from other animals and that the human population growth, or plague, that is currently taking place can also be seen in rabbits, house mice and plague rats and "like them it can only be short-lived". The argument that we are no different from other animals is a recurring theme throughout his book and can be seen as another similarity that he has with Kropotkin. He argues that fertility rates are already falling throughout the world and just like other animals we respond to environmental stress by "tuning down the reproductive urge" and "ceasing to breed"⁸⁴. He uses research undertaken by Morrison which concluded that animals have a hormone-regulated response to environmental stress that switches their metabolism into a more economical mode whenever

⁸³Ibid, Gray, pg. 157 (2003)

⁸⁴Ibid, Gray, pg. 10 (2003)

resources become scarce. This was apparently evident in research undertaken on lowland gorillas. It could also be evident in modern statistics that show production is falling throughout the Western world, along with other factors that could affect our population. Gray offers climate change, new diseases, a downward spiral in birth rate, war or a mix of all these as a possible solution to the demographic explosion. It is almost as if Gray believes that if we do not sort ourselves out, Gaia will do this for us and either set us back into balance or rid us to create the balance once more, for it is a force that is much stronger than us and a battle that we have no chance of winning. Lovelock, like Gray, also takes a sceptical view as he struggles to find a way to save ourselves from the problems created by Gaia; "Despite all our efforts to retreat sustainably, we may be unable to prevent a global decline into a chaotic world ruled by brutal warlords on a devastated Earth".⁸⁵

I would like to take a different route to all three of these writers by suggesting that with the awakening of Gaia we now see a new form of power emerging. I believe it can be classed as a form of power, and fit into Foucault's genealogy, for like his forms of power it is a relationship and Foucault himself noted that power was always changing to suit societies needs. I would also like to differ from Gray, Lovelock, and to an extent Foucault, and their pessimistic outlook. Although agreeing with many of their criticisms, I believe a major problem with the Gaia theorists, and critical theorists in general, is their lack of alternatives and answers. This is another fundamental reason for the writing of this thesis. By bringing in Kropotkin I hope to be able to offer us hope and such an alternative. While these writers can be considered to be too pessimistic, Kropotkin is often criticised for being too optimistic, so by bringing them all together it is an effort to find some middle ground.

⁸⁵ Lovelock, J, *The Revenge of Gaia: Why the Earth is Fighting Back*, pg. 86 (2007)

6

A New Form of Power

The Next Step In Foucault's Genealogy

Foucault noted that we see the emergence of a new form of power when the past power fails to deal with significant changes that affect society, such as industrialisation. New mechanisms of power entered our society to help deal with these changes. Now, with such major changes occurring once again, such as the demographic explosion, changes to the environment, unheralded technological advancement, and ultimately the emergence of Gaia, it is possible to argue that we need a new power to help deal with these changes. To do this, I will first have to show how this new form of power fits into Foucault's definition of the term, and secondly, how it has slowly infiltrated biopower, just as biopower did to disciplinary power. Finally, I will have to show how its roots can be traced back throughout his genealogy in sovereign and pastoral power.

Foucault argued that power is always changing and mutating which he showed through his genealogy of the four notions of power evident in our societies history. In his *Society Must Be Defended* lectures he also spoke of a need for "giving oneself another theory of power, form another grid of historical decipherment, and while looking more closely at a entire historical material, advance little by little toward another conception of power"⁸⁶. One far from the principle and right of sovereignty, pastoral, discipline, or biopower but he does not offer us any other form. Instead, he believes his purpose was simply to research and offer his works as an instrument or tool for further research. We will not find answers, but only "suggestions for

⁸⁶ Ibid, Foucault, pg. Xxi (2003)

research, ideas, schemata, outlines, instruments; do what you like with them”⁸⁷. I would like to take the opportunity to suggest that, alongside the other important factor of mutual aid that we can place beside power, we can now also see another conception of power; natural power.

Natural Power

When trying to understand a new form of power Foucault gives us a few questions of what we should take into consideration such as "what is the exercise of power? What does it consist of? What is its mechanism?"⁸⁸. The answer to the first of these questions is that we are exercising power upon the earth's natural resources, its oceans, forests, soil, atmosphere, environment and even the living beings that we find upon it. To reply to the second enquiry, we can say that it consists in the devastation and destruction of all of these. To the third question, we can say that its mechanism is society. It is society's needs and wants that causes us to exercise this power and gain from its production and results.

I will term this new form of power 'natural power', and now show, how I believe that this form of power will soon become the new dominant power within society. To do this, and fit it into Foucault's genealogy, I must first show how it slowly infiltrated the past powers before overtaking them as the new dominant form that we find present in modernity. I think we can note many similarities between the last dominant power, biopower, and this new emerging natural power. For example, Foucault stated that biopower aimed to utilise bodies, and the collection of bodies as a mass, or species, in the most efficient manner. At the end of *Society Must Be Defended* he states biopower is "a power that is applied in general ways to the population, life and living beings"⁸⁹. Biopower no longer concerned itself with the individual body, just as disciplinary power no longer concerned itself with the sovereign. Likewise, natural power now no longer concerns itself with the population, but instead, its sole focus is upon life, the earth itself as a living being and all the living beings that we may find upon it. This also still shows how it has only started to infiltrate biopower in that a lot of similarities can still be noted between the two, but it has generalised further, which is a common trait of new emerging powers. Although the main focus of biopower was the population, this

⁸⁷ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 2 (2003)

⁸⁸ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 16 (2003)

⁸⁹ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 273 (2003)

population rests upon the earth, which is undergoing notable changes. Without the earth, the population is not possible, so this must now become its primary concern. It is similar to when disciplinary power slowly displaced sovereign power. It was no longer possible to solely focus on the sovereign and its bloodline, a society was emerging that now needed to be at the forefront. Now, concerns about the human population are not the only thing we need to take into account, we must also focus upon what this population rests upon; Gaia.

Gaia theory generalises, even more so than biopower, in that it sees humans as no different from any other animals. Latour, in his book *Modes of Existence*, argues humans, animals, trees, mountains, planets, stone and almost any physical objects or beings, are all "beings of reproduction"⁹⁰. This means that every second all of these having to fight to stay in existence and take the risk of this ending. To illustrate this, he offers us the example of a lion and the same lion one second later. The lion, although we cannot mark any visible change has changed in at least its temporal sense as he is one second older than the lion before ($t > t + 1$)⁹¹, the same applies to stone, trees, animals and ourselves. While the main reason for Gray's book, *Straw Dogs*, is to attack the belief in humanism, which he defines as the belief that humans are different from other animals. So, while biopower generalised by looking at the human species instead of individuals, natural power can be seen to take this a step further by collecting all living beings together. In both cases, it can be seen to be similar to biopower, and all the past powers, in that it is "massifying"⁹². In pastoral power, it was very individual, as we saw with the one-on-one confession. In sovereign power, it is less individual and more about the sovereign family. With disciplinary power, we see the emergence of a mass of bodies in the military and also a society emerges in place of the sovereign. While biopower then enlarged this mass once again by looking at nations and populations. Now, in the same manner, natural power massifies once again in that it goes from the human population to Gaia, which is the earth and life as a whole.

While biopower seeks to utilise bodies in the most efficient manner, it does this by no longer destroying them but by maintaining them. This is where we can spot another similarity with natural power. Our strain upon the earth's body has become so significant that how we can utilise it to its maximum efficiency, but no longer by destroying it, is probably the most

⁹⁰ Ibid, Latour, pg. 215 (2013)

⁹¹ Ibid, Latour, pg. 88 (201)

⁹² Ibid, Foucault, pg. 243 (2003)

widely discussed problem when it comes to the current state of the earth. In recent years we have seen numerous international laws introduced such as 'The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea' and the 'Sustainable Development Law'. While only one year ago 195 countries signed up to the 'Paris Climate Agreement'. All of these laws have the aim of preserving the earth, for example, holding the earth's temperature, reducing waste, overfishing in the ocean and reducing greenhouse gases. They still aim to utilise the earth in the most efficient possible manner, but by now maintaining it instead of destroying it. Here we can also note a similarity with disciplinary power in that the sovereign's right to take life or let live has been replaced by the right to maintain or foster life. We no longer have the choice of the sovereign's past right. Foucault even states himself that biopower includes "relations between the human race, or human beings, and their environment, the milieu in which they live", which includes the direct effects we have on the geographical, climatic or hydrographic environment. Alongside biopowers main concerns, which as we learnt before are the birth rates, mortality rates and biological issues, it will also be concerned about "the effects on the environment"⁹³. All of this makes me confident that natural power could be the next step in Foucault's genealogy because, in accordance with Foucault's theory, the past powers do not disappear, but they have been modified, infiltrated and transformed. Similarities with all the different notions of power, pastoral, sovereign, disciplinary and biopower, can be noted within this new form of power. Sovereign powers main feature of law and jurists still influences this new power as we just saw with the new laws that are being introduced. While disciplinary powers shift from the right to take life to maintain life is also spotted here along with the shift away from harsh punishment towards more observation, knowledge and surveillance, all of which will be required to take control and see our effects upon the earth. Parts of pastoral power may also be found here. With Gaia theory, we can see a clear confession of our wrongdoings and mistakes towards the earth. There are also links between this theory and pastoral powers links towards the mythical and all powerful. Another way in which this new form of power adheres with Foucault's notion is that he argues we must not study it at its centre but instead at its outer edges, where we can see its effects and who it is exercised upon. We have an abundance of facts, research and pictures that can all demonstrate the consequences of our destructive reckoning upon the earth. Just like Foucault, I am not studying who is exercising this power but where we can see it in

⁹³ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 245 (1980)

action, its consequences and effects, such as how our society deals with food. Foucault argues that there is no literal 'bourgeois', 'sovereign' or 'state' that holds and wields this power for it is instead spread throughout the social body. Natural power also adheres to this for there is no literal 'Gaia' . Instead, there are only power relations, such as the locking up of criminals, the suppression of diverse sexuality and the overproduction of our natural resources. I am also in agreement that there is also no 'state' or 'sovereign' that we can say holds these power relations, for as we saw in the section on food, these power relations are spread throughout the entire social body and each one of us partakes in them.

We can also note many more differences between the two which is why I believe we can call this a new, novel form of power, that is the next step in Foucault's genealogy. For example, in Foucault's concept of power and its relations, there is always the possibility, as Sheridan notes in his book *Foucault: The Will To Truth*, "of a reversal of that power"⁹⁴ . Power is a relationship between two or more people, and therefore the relations that they have with one another can always change, develop or even stop. With natural power, this reversal of power is bound to happen at some point, although some may say that it already has occurred, as Lovelock states - "the world is fighting back"⁹⁵ . When the temperature gets too warm, when the atmosphere no longer protects us, when the sea levels have risen too high, when the forests have been cut down, when the oceans have been rid of all life, all of these could be examples of when the power will reverse and we will be in a weaker position than the dominant position that we currently occupy. Gaia will start exercising natural power over us. However, the difference is, bar a radical innovation in technology, that once this reversal has happened, once Gaia starts exercising natural power over us, there is no possibility of the reversal ever happening again and the only next step will be that the relationship stops. I believe there is a need for this introduction of a new power for, just as sovereign power struggled to deal with the demands of new changes in society, I believe biopower now faces a similar crisis. With the awakening of Gaia, it is no longer sufficient to control individual bodies, or populations and nations, there is now a need for power to dominate the earth, all of its living beings, and the effects these have on the earth. It is now about the earth's illness, its

⁹⁴ Sheridan, A, *Michel Foucault: The Will to Truth*, pg. 217 (1991)

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, Lovelock, pg. 69 (2007)

productivity, its fertility and lifespan rather than our species, which of course depends upon this. After the "biopolitics of the human race"⁹⁶, we now need a biopolitics of the earth. Just as Foucault showed with punishment, sexuality, medicine, madness, politics, religion and the military as to where we could see power in action and its effects, I also feel confident that by taking a close look at the way we deal with food in our society, I have demonstrated where we can see this power in action. While via Gaia I have also shown an effect of this power. A criticism that could be aimed at the argument that natural power is exercised between our society and Gaia is that in all of Foucault's power relations it is exercised solely by people or groups. Gaia, being the mythical figure of Earth, could be seen as not fitting into this definition. A reply to this is that Gaia is always understood as the personification of the earth so therefore should be seen as a person, or living being, that we are involved in relations with.

⁹⁶ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 243 (2003)

7

Power-as-War

Before I show how mutual aid is still evident within our society, I wish to follow Foucault's search for what could be the underlying principle of power. I feel the need to discuss this, because it is through this underlying principle that will allow us to see what sort of relationship occurs between the two evident factors of mutual aid and power. In his lectures of the College De France 1975-1976, *Il Faut Défendre La Société*, translated into English as *Society Must Be Defended*, we find Foucault discussing this important point where he is led to the conclusion that war could be the underlying principle of power. Although he would later abandon this power-as-war model, and proceed to develop a power of theory that relied upon governmentality, I would like to agree with Goddard and Allen. In their essay *The Domestication of Foucault* they argue that for Foucault's work to have any political influence, we must see a return to the power-as-war model. They believe that Foucault's 'power-as-governmentality' model "weakens the political aspirations"⁹⁷ that are to be achieved in escaping power relations. They argue that this later model seems unable to answer the question 'why fight?' For if power relations are inescapable they will always be a part of society and life, so what is the point in fighting back and resisting? It almost seems as we return to Hobbes' conclusion that it is what the subjected want and a nature comprised of every man against every man. Although I agree with Foucault that power relations are inescapable, I also agree with his criticism of power as being the fundamental relationship that determines society and our relationships. As I have already stated, one of the main aims of this thesis is to offer an alternative to power relations, something that Foucault failed to do, and therefore I disagree with the power-as-governmentality model which only makes room

⁹⁷ Allen, A & Goddard, R, "The Domestication of Foucault: government, critique, war, pg. 1 (2014)

for power relations. By returning to the power-as-war model Goddard and Allen argue that 'why fight?' changes to 'how fight?' This is because already entailed within power relations is a battle, and war, that the subject is involved in. By being involved in power relations, you are already in battle and the unanswerable 'why fight?' disappears. Now we *must* fight, and by revealing mutual aid as another important relation throughout our society, I hope to offer us a way in which to fight and escape power relations as much as possible.

Although Edwards concentrated on Foucault's study of state racism and his inversion of Clausewitz's principle to show how war could underlie power, I will specifically focus on his study of history. Through history Foucault sought to show how war could underlie the power relations within, and if this was the case for history, he believed it would also be possible to use war as an analysis of power relations in other institutions, effects, discourses and actions of society.

Power as War

"who saw war just beneath the surface of peace; who sought in the noise and confusion of war, in the mud of battles, the principle that allows us to understand order, the state, its institutions, and its history"⁹⁸.

In an interview, shortly before he died, Foucault stated: "if God grant me life, after madness, illness, crime and sexuality, the last thing I would like to study would be the problem of war and the institution of war"⁹⁹. Although Foucault never had the chance to fulfil this task, we can find evidence for his ideas on war from lectures he undertook at the College De France in 1975-1976. In these lectures Foucault states "the preliminary question I would like to look at a bit this year: Can war really provide a valid analysis of power relations?"¹⁰⁰. He thought that antagonism, rivalry, confrontation, discipline and struggles, all types of power relations, could be classed together under the general term 'war'. This could then be used to analyse where we can see power in action within a relationship. He wondered if the institutions that we find in society, such as politics and military, could also be classed under war and when,

⁹⁸ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 47 (2003)

⁹⁹ "What Our Present Is?" an interview with Michel Foucault by André Berten, *Politics of Truth*, pg. 167 (1997)

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 46 (2003)

how and why it was noticed that war could provide the analysis for these. As the date of these lectures are the same years that volume one of the *History of Sexuality* and *Discipline and Punish* were published, I believe it is possible to make the conclusion that Foucault must have been writing these books with the idea that war underlay the forms of power evident in these books. As of this, the power-as-war theory of power can be much more easily applied to the forms of power we have discussed in comparison to the power-as-governmentality model which he developed later on.

Foucault suggested that if we looked beneath all these different forms of power, their relations, effects, mechanisms and apparatus, it was possible to class war as being the underlying principle and as something primary to them. He states, "if we look beneath peace, order, wealth, and authority, beneath the calm order or subordinations, beneath the state and state apparatuses, beneath the laws, and so on, will we hear and discover a sort of primitive and permanent war?". All the confrontations, struggles and inequality that we face within the social body, all of its institutions and their practices that shape our civil order, such as the military, politics, and all the blocks Foucault speaks of in his works, "its basis, its essence, its essential mechanisms is basically an order of battle"¹⁰¹. War precedes the birth of states, peace and laws are born of battles, victories, massacres and the spilt blood of those who would not submit to power. Once the battle is over Foucault does not believe that this puts an end to war for "war continues to rage in all the mechanisms of power"¹⁰². A clear division can be seen within the different institutions that make up the social body. Underneath family, the law, work, health, truth and knowledge we can see conflict and power relations in play; between the teacher and student, doctor and patient, policeman and prisoner, parent and child, employer and employee or politician and proletarian. We can notice conflict in all of these power relations. Underneath the apparent peace within our society, a war is being waged made up of many battles that we can not escape from. Foucault states "a binary structure runs throughout society"¹⁰³, two groups always struggling against one another in battle; ultimately at war.

We can see this in all the different forms of power. In pastoral power there was the division of the believer versus the unbeliever, the saved versus the unsaved. In sovereign power we

¹⁰¹ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 46 (2003)

¹⁰² Ibid, Foucault, pg. 50 (2003)

¹⁰³ Ibid, Foucault pg. 51 (2003)

can see it in the sovereign versus anyone who dared to threaten it such as criminals that would be tortured in public via the law. In disciplinary power it is the subject versus master, Victorians versus ‘other Victorians’, those who help towards the political and economic system against those who damage it’. Foucault argues we can see this in new laws that were introduced at the time, with some exclusively aimed at the working classes and ‘other Victorians’ who damaged the labour force. While in biopower it is the healthy, productive population against unproductive, unhealthy population. In all of these powers, we can find a battle, a war, and it is this that underlies them. We can also see how this power-as-war effects the new natural power, for Gaia is the awakening to our destruction of her. Latour says we are like a “volcano”¹⁰⁴, while Lovelock apologises us with a “plague”¹⁰⁵. We are waging a war upon the earth through our actions which are resulting in the destruction of species, habitats and the environment, damage to the air, the release of lethal gases, the overproduction of natural resources. Gaia theory is the view that it is ourselves versus the earth and it is the earth that is much more powerful than us. Once again we see this binary structure, a conflict between the two sides. In Paul Kieniewicz’s novel *Gaia’s Children*, set in the year 2050 in a dystopian future ruined by climate change, the protagonist Eisa tells us where this war with Gaia leads us; “the human race was waging war on Gaia. By burning the rain forests and pumping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere we were interfering with the Earth’s life processes the way a virus attacks a healthy body. The earth views the race as a disease, a threat to all life. What do you or I do when threatened by a disease? Our immune system kicks in and increase our body temperature to kill off the virus. This is what the Earth is doing, raising its temperature to decrease our numbers so that we won’t have such a deadly effect on her.”¹⁰⁶

Along with power undertaking many changes, Foucault believes we can also note war undergoing many changes and that this occurred with the development and growth of the state. As disciplinary power slowly displaced sovereign power, the practice of war was no longer concentrated in a small enclosed central power, such as the monarchy, who held all the instruments to wage war. Now war affected the whole of society and we begin to see the emergence of the army as a social institution. Of course, there were armies before, but these

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, Latour, pg. 9 (2013)

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, Lovelock, pg. 19 (2006)

¹⁰⁶ Kieniewicz, P, *Gaia’s Children*, pg. 39 (2012)

troops were at the call of the sovereign or in the name of religion. At the end of the middle ages we begin to see armies that are there for the whole of society and alongside education, medical and political institutions we now see society form a military institution. With this, there is also born a discourse on war, and this understood war to be a permanent social relationship along with the other institutional 'blocks', something that was vital and fundamental to any given society. Even when the battle is over and the war is won, even in times of peace and the state has been established, there is always this military institution keeping the apparent order and ready to be deployed in case of any disruption to this peace. As Foucault states "we are therefore at war with one another; a battlefield runs through the whole of society continuously and permanently, and it is this battlefield that puts us all on one side or the other"¹⁰⁷. So our society is made up of two groups in conflict that come together to constitute the social body in apparent peace, but as we have just seen beneath this peace, underlying the whole of the social body, is, in fact, a permanent war.

This theory of power-as-war can be seen as a very similar to Thomas Hobbes even though both thinkers go about reaching this conclusion in a very different manner. Hobbes argued that war goes on at all times and everywhere, it is "the war of every man against every man"¹⁰⁸. To illustrate this, he offers us the examples of locking of doors, the savages still present in rural areas and the relationship between states in Europe as to where and how we can still see this war being played out, even in times of apparent peace. So, even when a society or state has been founded, war is still present everywhere as we can see through these examples. Hobbes differs from Foucault in thinking that this war is one of equality as if there was a great difference between the two in conflict the war would be over quickly. He argues that power, which is found in the sovereign, is always formed from below by the subjects and those in fear.

Foucault argues that, although Hobbes seems to be proclaiming that war is everywhere, he actually "is, in fact, saying quite the opposite. It is saying that war or no war, defeat or no defeat, conquest or covenant, it all comes down to the same thing 'it's what you wanted, it is you, the subjects, who constituted the sovereignty that represents you'."¹⁰⁹. This can be seen

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, Foucault pg. 51 (2003)

¹⁰⁸ Hobbes, T, *Leviathan*, 13.8 (2014)

¹⁰⁹ ibid, Foucault, pg. 96 (2003)

as the crucial difference between Foucault and Hobbes, for Foucault's theory of war, although agreeing that power is formed from those below, it is one of repression, discipline and domination, while Hobbes believes it is the subject's choice and what they want. But, they can both be seen to agree that power, and precisely power-as-war, plays a huge role in the shaping and development of our society.

Jason Edwards discusses Foucault's theory of war in his essay *Foucault and the Continuation of War*. He states, "power relations are war-like in character. They involve struggle and tactics and strategies for domination and subjugation of the enemy. This is not a war of the state on society, or even between states, it is a war that goes on within both the state and society. We're likely to be averse to this kind of understanding of all social relations of power as the continuation of war because of the way in which we usually talk and think about war. For we often think that war should be defined as a means of action and an instrument of conduct (as, in other words, organised violence oriented towards a rational end, involving specially trained and armed forces, involving rules of combat, etc.), rather than as a relationship between contending parties"¹¹⁰. Other writers have also spoken of Foucault's theory of war but the seemingly lack of secondary literature about this subject may be down to Foucault dropping the term war for 'governmentality'. This is something that John Protevi argues for saying that "Foucault conducts a genealogy of the epistemological use of "war"" and that he "uses "war" (or at least "battle") as a model for understanding social relations" before dropping these terms to focus on "governmentality" as the "grid of intelligibility for social relations".¹¹¹ It is not known why Foucault dropped his study of war to focus on governmentality. As we saw with the quote from him at the beginning of this chapter, his next task was to study war which may have culminated in a return to the power-as-war model. Unfortunately, before he could achieve this, he sadly passed away, so the majority of his ideas on war are to be found only in his posthumously published lectures.

Although agreeing with Foucault's notion of power-as-war, it seems, that if we are to argue that war underlies all power relations, there is even more reason to include the other factor of mutual aid. This is because, as I have already stated, it is not only power that is evident throughout society, we can also clearly see co-operation, solidarity and everything Kropotkin argues are characteristics of mutual aid. By arguing that power is simply a form of war,

¹¹⁰ Edwards, J, "Foucault and the Continuation of War", *The Metamorphoses of War*, pg. 32 (2012)

¹¹¹ Protevi, J, "War", *The Cambridge Foucault Lexicon*, pg. 546 (2014)

Foucault seems to make even less room for such characteristics that are evident in our society, but that this power-as-war model would not allow or be able to explain.

History As War

Foucault now tries to show how power-as-war could be used to analyse power relations, apparatus, its effects and mechanisms within a society after the literal fighting is over. He must show how beneath this apparent peace, war still lurks and evades its institutions and body. While discussing biopower in *Society Must Be Defended* Foucault shows how war continues to exist in what he calls "state racism"¹¹². This is the war between those biological subjects that protect the population's health and productivity against those who damage or weaken it. The most obvious example that Foucault uses for this is the Nazi regime, but I believe two modern examples of state racism, with a foundation of war, are evident in our society today; the 'War on Drugs' and 'War on Terror'. Those who take drugs and therefore affect the population's health, or those who try to harm this population. These wars play a huge role in shaping the social body; its institutions, discourses, truth, military, politics, etc. Once again we can see that clear division within society and its binary structure even in times of peace. Another way in which Foucault explains how war can be used to analyse power relations, and probably the most famous, is by inverting Clausewitz's saying; "war is politics by other means"¹¹³. According to Foucault's theory of war, politics should be war by other means. This was not the accepted discourse of Clausewitz that argued war is only ever an arm of politics, and it is only deployed in exceptional circumstances, when politics fails to deal with society. Edwards mainly focuses on this when analysing Foucault's theory of war as being the underlying principle to power, he says that Foucault argues "we should embrace politics as the continuation, rather than the repression, of war."¹¹⁴ So, therefore, inverts Clausewitz's principle. I would like to instead focus on Foucault's study of history, rather than state racism or Clausewitz's principle, to show how war still traverses society even after the literal fighting is over.

¹¹² Ibid, Foucault, pg. 82 (2003)

¹¹³ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 48 (2003)

¹¹⁴ IBid, Edwards, pg. 24 (2012)

Foucault offers us the example of history to show how this war is still being waged even in times of peace. He believes the traditional function of history was to prove the right of power while also intensifying this power. History is written by the winner is a well known saying and here, I believe, we see Foucault expand upon this point. He tells us that history only ever recounted the sovereign and their victories which helped towards establishing a right of power within those sovereigns. "History is an operator of power, an intensifier of power" and "the discourse of power"¹¹⁵. By telling the greatness of the sovereigns past it ensured its greatness and value today and made this power heroic, natural and legitimate.

The analysts in the 16th century is an illustration of how history was an attempt to reinforce power. By writing and recording everything that the sovereign did, giving special attention to wars in which they were victorious, they created discourses which could be then turned into something heroic. These heroic deeds would then be circulated to intensify this power and their right in such forms as the law. This can be used as another example of how right produces knowledge which is then circulated and becomes truth. Kropotkin too notices the role played by the analysts who he says always took a pessimistic view of humankind. He argues they were "always watchful of wars, cruelty and oppression, told of it, and little more besides; mankind lived in a state of perpetual warfare"¹¹⁶ of which they spoke, with the winners of this war being the heroes and therefore holding a legitimate right to power over subjects.

A good example I can think of to illustrate this was when the British monarchy was overthrown in 1649-1660. The parliamentary records for this period, starting from Charles I execution until the restoration of Charles II and the monarchy, were destroyed when the sovereign reclaimed power as this discourse harmed its right to power. It broke the uninterrupted line of legitimacy and created the division that caused this shifting of power from a sovereign family to a commonwealth and then 'Lord Protector'. Discourses, knowledge and truth of this time harmed the sovereign's natural and legitimate right so it was destroyed and history would once again prove the sovereign's right. Foucault argues that the historical consciousness of the sovereigns of the time was that they were all descendants, and natural heirs, to Rome which he states was evident throughout the monarchies of the time such as in England and France.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 68 (2003)

¹¹⁶ Ibid, Kropotkin pg. 77 (2006)

Edwards also touches upon Foucault's vision of history as an example of how war is still apparent within society, even in times of peace, he argues that Foucault shows how "War runs through history, and history is the history of wars and battles, not of peace"¹¹⁷.

Historical discourse helped to produce truth, a truth that reinforced the sovereign's power, much in the same way as we saw with *Scientia Sexualis* and how the discourse on sexuality helped to reinforce the truth of the heterosexual couple which helped to reproduce biopower. From this we can see how what underlies history is war, and with the victors of this war then able to write their history, they gain control of power relations within society in the form of discourse and truth. Next, Foucault shows how even within the historico-political writing of history itself, there is even a war being waged here.

Counterhistory

In the 17th century, Foucault believes we see the emergence of something that he calls a "counterhistory"¹¹⁸. This new form of historical discourse no longer focused solely on the sovereign and their past glories, but instead, it began to take a closer look at the struggles that go on within a nation, society and its laws. Confrontations between races and classes that had been kept hidden from the sovereigns history were revealed in this new history, and it was learnt that the sovereigns history, was not everybody's history and that their victories were another's defeat. It was these defeats, and the history of the defeated, that the old historical discourse intended to keep hidden until this counterhistory emerged. Foucault calls this a counterhistory as it no longer unites the society together, as the old historical discourse did, it breaks the uninterrupted line of the sovereign and is decisive. This new history sought to show that the king's power and his laws were born of injustice and violence; "the role of history will, then, be to show that laws deceive, that kings wear masks, that power creates illusions, and that historians tell lies"¹¹⁹. It will seek a truth that has been concealed by power and even attack power by breaking the unity and creating the binary opposition of them and us. This was contrary to the preceding history which sought to unite society as one family under the legitimate and natural sovereign that descended from Rome.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, Edwards, pg. 27 (2012)

¹¹⁸ Ibid, Foucault, pg.70 (2003)

¹¹⁹ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 72 (2003)

Thanks to this counterhistory the defeated start to appear - the Franks, Gauls and Celts - whose history had been buried and never written before. Two races now begin to exist in history instead of one uninterrupted line. There are the victorious and the defeated with these two only coming together to form a single society through war, invasion and acts of violence with the victors then having the right to write the history of a sole uninterrupted power. This is all Foucault sees history as; a history of power told by power itself. With the new counterhistory that emerges in the 17th century our society began to leave its roman historical consciousness. Now, instead of a history that is based on sovereign and its law, there begins to emerge a society with a historical consciousness based on the problem of its foundation and the idea of revolution with its promises of future emancipation.

It is from this counterhistory, which Foucault credits Boulainvilliers with first contemplating, that first started to analyse society in binary terms and of two groups always in conflict. It is from this counterhistory that allows Foucault to state that what "shapes the state is in fact one of war, of permanent warfare. The state is nothing more than the way that the war between the two groups in question continues to be waged in apparently peaceful forms"¹²⁰. The whole social body and its history is nothing but a permanent war, as can be illustrated through this example of history and the battle it wages against counterhistory. Kropotkin too noticed that the old history was too one-sided in that it only reinforced power and "paid no attention whatever to the life of the masses". He recognised that this was not the truth and instead of being the one uninterrupted line, in fact "several times civilisation came to an end". He follows this by saying "history will have to be rewritten on new lines"¹²¹ and this can be seen as the history that Boulainvilliers created, and Foucault speaks of. For Kropotkin, echoing these two, also speaks of a "Human society [that] is seen to be splitting more and more into two hostile camps, and at the same time to be subdividing into thousands of small groups waging merciless war against each other."¹²²

This new discourse that emerged around the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century is what Foucault calls a "historico-political discourse". This is a discourse that understands war to be a permanent social relationship, the basis of this society and therefore also the basis for all of its institutions and of all the relations of power. It is not only a basis,

¹²⁰ *ibid*, Foucault, pg. 88 (2003)

¹²¹ *Ibid*, Kropotkin, pg. 117 (2006)

¹²² Kropotkin, P, *The Spirit of Revolt*, pg. 34 (1970)

but this war continues to be waged even then the fighting is over. The organisation of juridical codes, states, monarchies and societies which seem to create peace is nothing but a continuation of this war "we have to interpret the war that is going on beneath peace; peace itself is a coded war"¹²³.

By making a study of Boulainvilliers, Foucault shows how this new history emerged. He argues that with Boulainvilliers, and other reactionary nobility of the 18th century, we can see a new subject in history appearing that differs from the sovereign. The nobility were determined to write this new history for they had been dispersed by the sovereign and lost all of their power. The function of this new history was to demonstrate the illegitimacy of the sovereign's right which it had achieved through its history of an uninterrupted genealogy which had its roots in Rome. The new counterhistories subject is a society which Foucault defines as "an association, group or body of individuals governed by a state, a society made up of a certain number of individuals"¹²⁴, and it is this what history will now be about. This new discourse and its effects can be seen to influence the dominant power in society.

Sovereign power failed to deal with this change of focus upon a society instead of a sovereign and therefore disciplinary power, influenced by this new counterhistory, emerged to help deal with these changes. We can now see an apparent change in history in that it has gone from recounting the victories of kings and their battles to talking of the struggles of the defeated. This is also the same time when we see a change in power, with disciplinary power overtaking sovereign power. So this counterhistory can be seen as a technique of power for disciplinary power.

It is from history that we get the idea we are at war and we now wage war through this history. There is an undeniable link between the two. History does not establish right, nature, order or peace it only ever finds war. So it is war that establishes history and right, and therefore it must also establish knowledge which Foucault believes is also nothing more than a weapon that may be used for war. History is a discourse of power that reinforced the sovereign, that the sovereign constituted itself through and made legitimate as it was an uninterrupted force of power and right that could be displayed through this historical discourse which was one of war. It unites society into one long continuity of glory and victory.

¹²³ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 50 (2003)

¹²⁴ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 134 (2003)

Counterhistory is a discourse of power that broke down the sovereign and spoke for a society, reinforcing disciplinary and biopower, but both are born from war. Whether it be the victory or defeat, history, a key aspect of truth, knowledge and power, can be analysed via war. As Foucault argues that power is nothing but a war and a battle I believe that with every form of power there must be an opposing power that is confronting and struggling against that power itself, just as we have seen with history. If there is pastoral power there must be an 'anti-pastoral power' that is waged within the war that underlies that power. There must be an 'anti-sovereign power' that goes against the sovereign power. The same applies to disciplinary and biopower these must be waged within a war and therefore there must also be an 'anti-disciplinary power' and an 'anti-biopower'. It is also possible that the opposition that power ultimately battles against is not another power. Instead, it could be that other key factor within our society; mutual aid.

8

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POWER & MUTUAL AID

If we now look back throughout this essay, through both writers respective genealogies, I believe we are now in a position to view the relationship that has occurred between the two factors, power and mutual aid, over the course of our history. By looking at how we can combine the two over our societies history, I believe we can see the advantage of bringing together the two theories of two different factors. Foucault only begins his discussion in the 15th century which leaves a huge gap in his theory, especially as he wants to offer us a genealogy but fails to offer us any firm foundation. Kropotkin, who begins within the animal kingdom and our earliest ancestors, can fill this gap in Foucault's genealogy, but, like Foucault, it can be criticised for being too far one sided. Although he acknowledges power, he does not offer any in depth explanation of what this involves. By bringing both theories and factors together, I believe we gain a greater view and more in depth knowledge of our society, its history, institutions and relationships.

It can be argued that both factors seem to play the dominant role within our society at different times in the course of our history, but I intend to show how the two are always apparent. Both factors can be found throughout our institutions and the relationships we find ourselves in. As both are also a relationship, and both traverse the social body, it must be the case, that the two find themselves in a relationship with one another. As we just saw, it is war that underlies power, and as of this, I believe, it is possible to argue, that the relationship power finds itself in with mutual aid, is ultimately a war. Kropotkin, throughout *Mutual Aid*, always stresses that in the institutions and relationships in a society where we use to find the tendency, it has slowly been displaced by power. I too agree that this is the case and that we

could argue that we see power waging a war against mutual aid. I would now like to illustrate where we can see this war between the two.

The War of Power and Mutual Aid

Now, if I am to argue that both have always been evident within our history and society, we must trace both factors from the beginning and show how they are evident in each stage of their respective genealogies. Kropotkin showed us how in the animal kingdom mutual aid offered the best chance for the survival and development of our species. It helped towards higher intelligence, language, safety, enjoyment, the best chance of securing food and the successful continuation of the species. However, his view of the animal kingdom is often criticised for being far too idealistic, and modernity has come to accept what he was arguing against; Darwinian natural selection which argues for survival of the fittest. Power is evident here in the danger of predators and the competition for reproduction and food. So, here it is evident that both factors are at play, and by accepting both factors we can an advantage over any monistic theory which would only allow room for one.

In the early stages of human society, the time of our old ancestors, the savages and tribesmen, Kropotkin argues that mutual aid was still the main driving force behind society as it helped with the growth of knowledge, utility, production and health. Power can also be evident here in that it started to disrupt mutual aid with the mystical, for example, witchcraft and religion. This put power into a few certain hands and created wars and invasion. It could be argued that this was the beginning of what Foucault termed pastoral power. At this time mutual aid was still the dominant factor, and he shows this by arguing that religious institutions were born from the mutual aid tendency, but power slowly sabotaged it by bearing it with the character of inspiration from above. This made the acts 'charitable' and implied "a certain superiority of the giver upon the receiver"¹²⁵, which recalls a similarity with Foucault when he discussed how pastoral power was utilised to gain power over the individual. Here once again is an example of both factors in play together, where we can see the relationship that occurs between the two and the battle between them in trying to become the dominant factor. In the village, power was present in the inevitable wars that migration caused, but this grouping together advanced politics, knowledge, art, safety, food provisions, reproduction

¹²⁵ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 283 (2006)

and the rearing of children which shows, that still, mutual aid played a more dominant role. Through the taming of nature to suit our needs we could also see the beginnings of what I have called natural power.

Around the 15th century, with the growth of the city and the formation of the state, we begin to see the mutual aid tendency slowly lose its dominating role as relations of cooperation and support are slowly replaced by individualism. Its role as the dominant factor in our society is displaced by power, which becomes ever more present throughout the social body. Kropotkin says that the younger crafts proved too strong for traditional methods and that they soon took over the management of the city and collected too much power. Although this opened up a season of new prosperity, only the few who were in control of this power would benefit and soon "every meadow, every field, every river, and road around the city, and every man upon the land was under some lord"¹²⁶. By the end of the 15th century, Kropotkin sees mighty states, moulded on the old Roman pattern, coming into existence and with it a sharp division is traced throughout the city which is marked by a growing military institution. The state, with a military institution, is just one example as to how power slowly infiltrated our society and waged a war upon mutual aid. All of that Foucault speaks of, also serves as an illustration for the growth of power. Whether that be the different types of power or specific mechanisms, techniques, discourses or institutions such as discipline, punishment, prison and sexuality. As he too starts his study of power in the 15th century, the two writers can be seen to be in agreement that it is around this time that power begins to play the major role in our society.

From the birth of the city to Kropotkin's day, an example he uses to show how power continued to displace the mutual aid tendency, was in its fight against workers unions, which he argues can be seen as a modern guild. Even though these unions became prohibited in 1799 through severe punishment and fines, Kropotkin believes it is not possible to destroy the mutual aid tendency, and throughout these years we continue to see its expression. In 1825 unions reappear, and after a few months, Robert Owen's Grand National Consolidated Trades Union had half a million members. Prosecution followed this revival again and by 1844 workers belonging to unions were being arrested, and strikes were suppressed. Even though belonging to a union had adverse effects such as prosecution, the sacrifice of money and time, unpaid work and the risk of losing employment still the union returned. At the time of

¹²⁶ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 200 (2006)

Kropotkin writing his book, 1,500,000 workers belonged to trade unions in the UK. Modern studies say there 6,400,000 members of trade unions in the UK now, but we must bear in mind the brutal attacks that they came under from the government in the 80's that took away most of their power. Here is a clear example of the battle that is being played out in our society of power against mutual aid. We can see through the unions, with their aim being the well being of the workers achieved through mutual aid and cooperation, in a struggle and conflict that is being waged on them by power relations whose only concern was productivity and profit. While mutual aid creates and helps these unions to grow, it is not long before power crushes them. The changes that occur, whether it be the growth or decay of these unions, also show how the relationship between power and mutual aid can change. I have already discussed other examples he gives of the mutual aid tendency being present throughout the past centuries when power has played the dominant role such as associations which are found in every town, free agreement, friendship and family.

As I also stated at the very beginning of this thesis, where Foucault speaks of power being evident, whether it be in schools, hospitals, prisons or the military, I believe it also evident that mutual aid is still present within these. In the school there is education, in hospital there is aid for the ill, in prison rehabilitation and the ideas of justice and morality. As Foucault argued, it may be the case that these relationships have been more affected and influenced by power relations, but these relationships solely rely upon power, mutual aid must play some part or else they would not be possible. We can see power evident during this time from all that Foucault speaks of.

A modern example where we can find power waging a war against mutual aid comes from John Knox, a recently appointed special rapporteur for the UN on human rights and environment. He states that "There is an overwhelming incentive to wreck the environment for economic reasons. The people most at risk are people who are already marginalised and excluded from politics and judicial redress, and are dependent on the environment." He made these remarks after conducting research about how indigenous settlements and environmental defenders were being attacked and even killed by farmers in Brazil, Colombia, Honduras, Mexico and many other countries. It is not only farmers but mining, dams, illegal logging and agribusiness that give reason for these murders to be pushed through by "corporations or state

forces"¹²⁷. Here we see indigenous settlements, such as the tribes and villages apparent within Kropotkins genealogy, with mutual aid visible in them, being crushed by the power that is apparent within our society, which has as its goal economic and political efficiency, instead of the support, solidarity and cooperation that mutual aid tries to bring about.

John Knox was part of an EU-funded atlas that identified more than 2000 environmental conflicts, and these are only the reported ones. As these conflicts happen mainly in indigenous lands, it is estimated there could be at least three times as much. This can serve as an example again how power is not at the centre but instead spread throughout the social body, and why we must study power at its outer edges, where we can see it action. That what express natural power, our society, does not care for indigenous settlements, environmental defenders, endangered species or depleting the earth's resources for it does not concern itself with these. It concerns itself with economics, politics, individualism and of course war, but to see these in action we must study their effects. It also serves as an example of how power is ultimately based upon war, and how this war can become literal with bloodshed and violence. So why do we continue to see mutual aid apparent even after all of these centuries of power waging a war against it? We may find the answer to this in a part we are yet to talk of in Foucault's theory of power which I will now discuss. I believe this can also give more evidence of the presence of both, power and mutual aid, and the relationship that occurs between the two. In the final part of this work, I would like to focus on a specific part of Foucault's notion of power; how there is always something resistant to it. Although power may have led us into an oncoming war with Gaia, this resistance may be able to offer us some hope. For as we have seen, and will continue to see in the next section, mutual aid goes some way to fixing the problems that power creates.

Resistance to Power

When Foucault talks of power he argues that there is always something that is resistant to it and put into action. In *The History of Sexuality*, he states power relations "have a directly productive role, wherever they come into play"¹²⁸. While in *Society Must Be Defended*, he further stresses this important aspect by saying "As soon as there is a power relation, there is

¹²⁷Knox, J, 'Enough is enough: Stopping the Attacks Against Environmental Defenders'. (2017)

¹²⁸ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 94 (1980)

a possibility of resistance We can never be ensnared by power; we can always modify its grip in determinate conditions and according to a precise strategy"¹²⁹. So power is not simply repressive or dominative, it also creates.

Kropotkin's discussion on unions can offer us an example of how mutual aid is resistant to power and how power is productive. The unions, which in their modern form can be seen as descending from the guilds that were evident in medieval cities, were born from struggles and techniques of disciplinary power. This power sought to improve productivity and profit which could be achieved through such things as increasing hours, the workload or reducing staff, and these are the reasons why the unions developed. Here it is possible to see mutual aid, in the unions, set into motion through the exercise of power, which sought to improve productivity and profit, and therefore, we have an example of how mutual aid is resistant to power.

By using mutual aid as our precise strategy it is possible to fight against the power relations, and in particular natural power, that has led us into war against Gaia. Mutual aid can be seen as the counterforce to power, it is engaged in the war that underlies power, but this is a never-ending war that has been played throughout our history. As we have seen, through both genealogies, there are times when one is the dominant force within our society, whether that be mutual aid flourishing within the tribe, village or the free city, or power taking over in the 15th century and still being dominant right up to today. Sheridan notes in his book how "power is not simply repressive; it is also productive....power subjects bodies not to render them passive but to render them active"¹³⁰. Edwards too, notices this key aspect of Foucault's power; "Indeed, power could not operate in the absence of resistance. Domination, in that sense, can only ever be a process of active subjection, of the constant repression of resistance. The subject of domination, on this view, is not a passive and defeated figure, but a resisting agent, using any resources available to it—including those provided by the dominator—in order to contest its status in the relationship"¹³¹. I believe it could also be possible to say that when the roles were reversed, when mutual aid was the dominant factor, this did not only reduce the role of power, but like power, it is too productive which can result in resistances. An example of this is when Kropotkin talks about the success of the village in taming nature,

¹²⁹ Ibid, Foucault, pg. 280 (2003)

¹³⁰ Ibid, Sheridan, pg. 217 (1991)

¹³¹ Ibid, Edwards, pg. 33 (2012)

raising children and expansion which led to clashes between towns and migration. While in the creation of the unions, power was also made productive in creating the laws to ban them. Here we see how mutual aid can also be productive, and also how, it is a never ending battle between the two. As I have argued throughout, I believe these two factors have always been evident in our society, and they will always continue to be.

Power is productive. It creates problems, such as the awakening Gaia, but it also produces resistances, such as mutual aid, which I will proceed to give examples of in the next section. So although power may always be trying to gain control of the relations within society, it can never overpower mutual aid completely, there will always be something resistant to it. It is this resistance that offers us hope.

In the next part, I will attempt to show how mutual aid can be used as a resistance to power by returning to my earlier discussion of food in our society. In this earlier section, I tried to show how power was still playing a major role in our society and how its aim of economic and political efficiency continued to be at the forefront of our institutions, discourses and actions. We saw how what is considered the norm in our dealings with food, how we buy, what we buy, how we discard our waste and also the effects of these, could be used to show power in action. With a discussion on Gaia, I also hoped to show an effect of this power, and also how we saw the emergence of a new type of power called natural power.

To show mutual aid, abiding by what we have talked about in the above section, I will have to show how the two groups I will discuss, Guerilla Kitchen Waste and ASEED, are resistant to the effects of power and also how they include all the key characteristics that Kropotkin argued mutual aid includes. I will also hope to show how mutual aid can go some way to solving the problems that are caused by power, and therefore, offer us hope.

9

Mutual Aid as a Resistance to Power

In our block of food, just as I showed how power is still evident in our society, I can also now show how mutual aid is still present, albeit it on a much smaller scale for as we have learnt, it is power that is the dominant factor in modernity. Kropotkin offers us many examples of groups that have at their centre the mutual aid tendency. In *The Conquest of Bread* (1892) Kropotkin gives a detailed account of two of these; the Red Cross and The English Lifeboat Association. The latter is an example Kropotkin returns to time and time again, as he spent many hours volunteering with this group. This association received no aid from the state, but by 1891 they possessed 293 lifeboats. In the same year, it saved 601 shipwrecks and 32, 671 humans. The association is entirely run by volunteers, without any form of hierarchy split into small local groups, who risk their lives to save others. Casualties are not rare and in 1886 three boats perished and with it all the volunteers on board. The group also gives information and local knowledge out to fishermen and sailors, such as barometers and meteorological charts, for free. Aspects that Kropotkin usually gives of these groups is that they have no intervention from the state, and are based on cooperation, enthusiasm, local knowledge, self-sacrifice and solidarity. I will now discuss two groups, that I encountered while studying in Amsterdam over the past year; Guerilla Kitchen Waste and ASEED. I believe that these two can comfortably show how the mutual aid tendency continues to live on in our modern society, and in particular in our dealings with food.

Guerilla Kitchen Waste

"we do believe in community. Helping and supporting each other while we are on Mother Earth, (ab-)using her is something that we do not stand for."¹³²

Guerrilla Kitchen Waste is an organisation that started in 2014 in Amsterdam with the aim of fighting against and trying to reduce food waste. It began with a couple of friends who would 'skip' supermarket bins to provide food for themselves but, it quickly accelerated into a thriving community that receives supplies and donations from many different areas. With an ever-growing volunteer group of around 50 volunteers a week, every Wednesday they cook a three-course meal for people in need and others who are welcome with a donation. The cooperation, togetherness and sense of solidarity, all characteristics of mutual aid, quickly spreads throughout the evening. From my own experience I can say that even if you only go with the plan of enjoying the meal, it is highly likely you will help with the washing up, cleaning and come earlier next week to help prepare. Guerilla Kitchen Waste is just one example of a *volkskeuken* (community kitchen) with nearly one open in every day within Amsterdam such as Voku Chezmolli, Miltvuur Keuken Zuid, De Peper, Zaal 100, Joe's Garage, Het Einde Van de Wereld and Food Not Bombs¹³³. In each of these locations, there is a *volkskeuken* at least once a week. The money that Guerilla Kitchen Waste receive from these donations is all put back into social projects such as We Are Here, Aid Delivery Mission, Made in Limboland and the Guerilla Kitchen Waste Free Supermarket.. The success of Guerrilla Kitchen has been rapid with at least five new volunteers requesting to help out each week.

After raising 20,000 euros, many members set off on a trip to the Greek and Macedonian border where they set up a spin-off of the Guerrilla Kitchen Waste called Bellies Beyond Borders. This has the same idea of feeding those who need it, and it has crucially helped in giving many thousands of refugees a nutritious meal that the state fails to provide. The food van that was used for this journey was renovated with help from the ADM community¹³⁴ who

¹³² Guerilla Kitchen Waste, *What We Do?*,

<https://www.facebook.com/guerillakitchenamsterdam/app/190322544333196/> (2017)

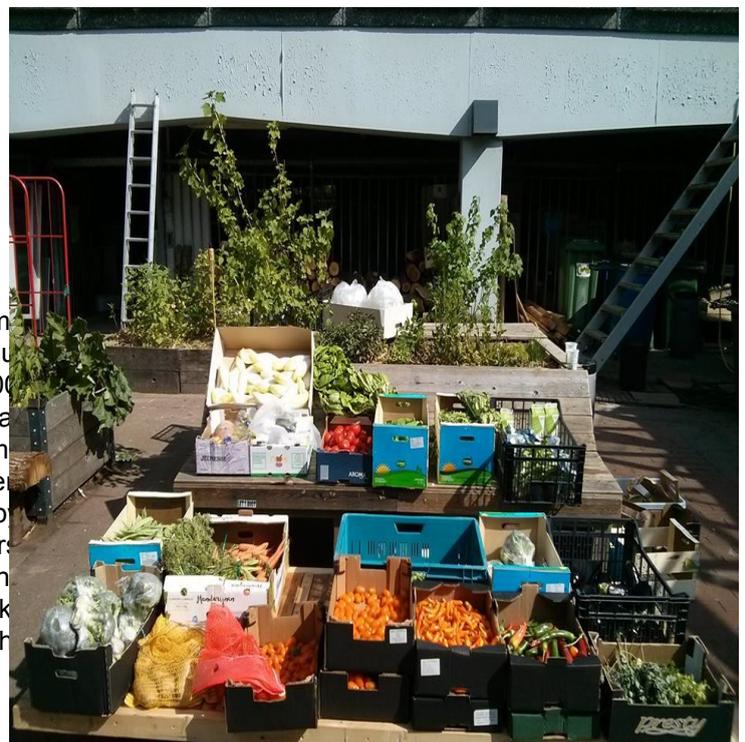
¹³³ There is also a Food Not Bombs presence in Sofia who offer a community kitchen, and other sustainable agricultural events, based on the same principles.

¹³⁴ The ADM is a 'live/work' village on the outskirts of Amsterdam. It can also serve as an example of how mutual aid is still present within our modern society. It is a former shipyard that closed in 1965

could also serve to illustrate where mutual aid is apparent in modernity. With this support, they managed to turn an old Mercedes 508 bus into a food catering truck that travelled through Serbia, Hungary, Macedonia and eventually Greece with more following in any way they could get there. The project was such a success that they eventually received financial support from Medecins Sans Frontieres to continue their work when the original money had run out. They are still there today, continuing to give vital support and aid to those who most need it, but haven't been provided it by the state. The group also offer a free supermarket twice a week where saved wasted food is equally distributed amongst those who most need it and to reduce waste. A picture of this can be found below.

We can spot many characteristics within Guerilla Kitchen Waste that were found in the English Lifeboat Association; the volunteering, no intervention from the state and the local knowledge that is needed to collect the wasted food and then distribute it fairly. We also see many other aspects that make me confident that this group practice mutual aid. The collection of food, the feeding of the hungry and needy, community spirit within the meal being eaten together, the cooperation of preparing, cooking, eating, and cleaning, the equal distribution of goods and the social aspect which brings people together.

We will remember that food played a major role in Kropotkin's mutual aid genealogy. It was always a vital aspect of the tribe and village, when the tendency flourished and played the dominant role in our society. Here we see that it continues to live on in our modern society, and still within our dealings with food, albeit on a much smaller scale.



ASEED (Action for Solidarity Environment Equality and Diversity)

"one of ASEED's most fundamental standpoints is that humans are a part of nature, not apart from it. Modern economic systems, regardless of their political hue, continue to regard nature as a resource to be exploited and recent treaties aimed at slowing down ongoing environmental degradation, climate change and the alarming loss of biodiversity are doomed to failure because short term economic growth is always given precedence over the long term future of the planet"¹³⁵

ASEED is a European organisation formed in 1992, based in Amsterdam, that campaigns against environmental destruction and social injustice by encouraging sustainable alternatives to our current system. They specifically focus on issues related to food, promoting and helping to create sustainable methods. Compared to Guerilla Kitchen Waste, ASEED are much more involved with getting information across and trying to promote the issue, but they still put into practice what they preach. Every year they hold the 'Food Autonomy Festival Amsterdam' at Bajesdorp¹³⁶. They state, "The Food Autonomy Festival (FAF) Amsterdam is about presenting and celebrating alternatives and resistance to the state and corporate-controlled industrial food system". It included talks about "social, political, economical and ecological alternatives to organizing food production and reimagining societies on a co-operative, needs oriented basis, as well as undoing the violence of the industrial food system". It featured speakers from all over the world, including London, Greece, Italy, Netherlands and Mexico who shared their stories and experience of such things as collective farming, land struggles and the possibilities of a self-sufficient lifestyle. This is an example how mutual aid can be found throughout the world, in many different societies. Alongside this, many activities contributed to their ideals such as workshops for composting, mushroom cultivation, urban foraging, seedling and plant exchanges coupled with many stalls offering food on donation throughout the day.

ASEED speak a lot about the 'norm' of our food sector and the destruction that this creates, in a very similar manner to what I presented earlier in this text. An example of this can be

¹³⁵ ASEED, <http://aseed.net/en/aseeds-mission-statement/>. (2017)

¹³⁶ A similar community to that of ADM, which could also serve as another example of mutual aid in our modern society, and fit into the villages we found in Kropotkin's works that have mutual aid at their center <http://bajesdorp.nl/>

found in their reasoning for holding such events as FAF, "The industrial food system is responsible for around half of global greenhouse gas emissions. It destroys biodiversity, drives deforestation, depletes and pollutes water sources, and erodes our soils to dust, making us all more vulnerable to climatic extremes. The industrial food system decimates rural livelihoods, causes the spread of slums, facilitates the ongoing genocide of indigenous peoples, and locks billions into a system where their survival (and liberty) is based on their purchasing power. We need to break free. Autonomy, as we understand it, is the act of individuals determining for themselves the course of their existence in the context of self-organised communities. It is about breaking our dependency on an unjust system and fighting for a better one. We want to see autonomous groups take back the fields, forests, streets, farms and factories. We want to see communities self-organised in a cooperative way in harmony with their neighbours and surrounding ecologies. For this to happen, food is a good place to start. This is why the decentralisation and socialisation of food production is the focus of FAF. Thankfully, there are groups and individuals in Amsterdam and beyond broadly working towards food autonomy in various ways. We want to bring together, celebrate, and learn from these initiatives as part of an important step in collectively reclaiming our autonomy and putting food at the heart of questions over social, economic, political, and climate justice."¹³⁷ They help to spread this information by publishing leaflets, most of which are available for free on their website, and holding events such as the FAF throughout the year all over Europe.

Once again we can spot many similarities with ASEED when we compare them to Kropotkin's example of the English Lifeboat Association and my own example of Guerilla Kitchen Waste. All of these groups are entirely dependent upon volunteers, they have no intervention from the state, and they give out information, services and local knowledge for free. From ASEED's own words we can explicitly see that they practice and aim for mutual aid. Solidarity, community, cooperation, togetherness, all essential characteristics that Kropotkin spoke of, are found throughout their publications and actions. While criticism of the power relations found in our society, such as the focus upon economy and individualism, are also explicitly stated.

Below are pictures from FAF.

¹³⁷ <http://aseed.net/en/food-autonomy-festival/>



These are just two examples, from many that I could have chosen to discuss, from many different countries, and many various parts of our society, that illustrate how the mutual aid tendency continues to live on between ourselves in modernity. From my own examples of Guerrilla Kitchen Waste and ASEED, it is possible to see the resistance that I talked about in the preceding chapter against the power that we saw in action through livestock and waste. Both of these groups can be seen as being produced by the effects of power, we see power

being productive in creating problems which in their turn produce mutual aid that can be used as a resistance. Guerilla Kitchen Waste deals specifically with the waste that is caused by power, that we saw evident in my earlier chapter, while ASEED, try to raise knowledge about the impact of livestock and the damage that this creates upon the Earth. They both also try to offer solutions to solve the problem that is caused by natural power; Gaia. In one of the pictures above from FAF,¹³⁸ we can even see the words 'resistance is ripe' proving that practices we find in mutual aid are widely regarded as resistance to power and how we may solve the problems that power creates.

From these examples we can also see how power has become the dominant factor. Both groups, when compared to the norm in our food sector, are such a small part of it. This can hardly be surprising, after hundreds of years of power continuing to grow and expand throughout the social body. While where we saw power being expressed in food was the norm, mutual aid, still, continues to be apparent. I can echo Kropotkin when he states "the mutual aid tendency in man has so remote an origin, and is so deeply interwoven with all the past evolution of the human race, that it has been maintained by mankind up to the present time, notwithstanding all vicissitudes of history."¹³⁹

¹³⁸ See pg. 28

¹³⁹ Ibid, Kropotkin pg. 223 (2003)

Conclusion

Mutual Aid Between Ourselves and Gaia

Natural power, which we can see expressed in our societies block of food, is one the most destructive causes on our planet. It is one of the reasons why we have witnessed the awakening of Gaia, which now appears to us as a threat to this society and its future. Underlying natural power, and all of Foucault's different notions of power is war, and we can see this war being played out in two ways. On the one hand, we can see the war that is played out between power and mutual aid, with each factor battling against one another to influence our society, its institutions and even our own individual relationships within these. On the other hand, we can see the war that underlies natural power, in the battle against Gaia. But, this is a war that we can never win, as Gaia is all the more powerful than ourselves. It is only a matter of time until the power relations reverse and Gaia starts exercising natural power over us, for as we already learnt from Foucault, power relations always have the possibility of reversing. Although our society may be expressing natural power over Gaia in the form of pollution, species extinction, overuse of natural resources etc. There is always the possibility of our current dominant position changing which, as I have already claimed, may have already begun happening. Evidence for this apparent shift in power could be through some of the facts that have been discussed throughout this thesis; the atmosphere no longer being so protective for us, land becoming infertile, freshwater becoming rarer etc. Natural disasters, in typical Gaia theory, are often used as an example of Gaia expressing power over us in the war that occurs.

The war that power has led us into, against Gaia, now threatens our society in a way that past powers didn't. We have continued to see power grow and spread throughout the whole social body until it has now expanded even further and we now find power relations, not only in our society but between ourselves and Gaia. Power has grown too strong, but, by showing that

alongside power there is also another factor, I hope to have also shown a possible way to reconcile ourselves and Gaia can be achieved by reawakening mutual aid as the dominant factor in our society. Through mutual aid, between ourselves and Gaia, it may be possible to save, develop and progress this society, Gaia and ultimately ourselves. I have attempted to show how such a change is possible, and is happening, but on a very small scale, by looking at the role of food within our society. I hoped to show how it was possible for our relationship and institution within food could be one of mutual aid instead of power, which could help limit and reverse some of the devastating effects of natural power. Of course, this would not be enough but as ASEED state; "food is a good place to start"¹⁴⁰.

The practice of mutual aid between ourselves and Gaia is already present in many areas of society, although not as numerous and evident as power relations. Everything we need to survive - water, food, oxygen - all this is taken from Gaia, and we too go some way to regenerate this. However, our actions mainly involve expressing power over Gaia instead of mutual aid, which instead of reproducing all that we need, destroys it. This is what has led to her awakening. Kropotkin notes in his conclusion of *Mutual Aid*, that the fundamental idea of mutual aid is that it keeps on growing and widens; "from the clan it was extended to the stem, to the federation of stems, to the nation, and finally - in ideal, at least - to the whole of mankind."¹⁴¹ As we have seen, through the examples I have shown in this thesis, the mutual aid tendency continues to live on, and now the time has come for it to grow and widen once more. Just as power has continued to grow, from a relationship between two people, for example, the priest and the subject, to reaching out and infiltrating the whole social body and eventually Gaia, mutual aid must also grow. It must be now found, not only on the outer edges of society, but it must become the dominant force behind society as a whole, as it used to be, with the hope it ever growing until we achieve mutual aid between ourselves and Gaia.

Conclusion

Through a reading of both Foucault and Kropotkin, I have shown how the two factors, power and mutual aid, have helped to create, develop, effect and, ultimately, underlie our society, its institutions and the relationships found within. Through both writers genealogies of their

¹⁴⁰ ASEED, <http://aseed.net/en/food-autonomy-festival/>, (2017)

¹⁴¹ Ibid, Kropotkin, pg. 299 (2006)

respective factor, I have shown, how these two factors have played such an essential role in this societies history and how they have both developed over the ages. While focusing on our block of food I have shown how both continue to play this role today.

Through a reading of Foucault's 1975-1976 lectures at the College De France, I tried to revive his claim that underlying all the different forms of power is war. As of this, I believed it possible to conclude that power found itself involved in a never ending war with mutual aid. These two principles are ultimately relationships and I believe it is possible to argue that they must be in a relationship with each other, and it is this relationship between the two that shapes our society, its institutions, its knowledge and the relationships evident within these. We have seen with Guerilla Kitchen Waste and ASEED, that mutual aid is in a relationship with power by trying to solve the problems that it creates, so both are related to one another. We have also seen this throughout our history in its help to overcome the danger of predators, the taming of nature, the development of arts, knowledge and the successful continuation of the species. We can argue that, although mutual aid managed to resist power, slowly after the 15th century, power gradually took over from mutual aid as the dominant factor in our society and this has continued to be the case up to modernity. This has brought with it the fundamental problem our society now faces; the awakening of Gaia.

To try and deal with this problem we see the emergence of a new type of power; natural power. Although, from the evidence, we have seen from the UN report, and many corresponding texts, no expression of power can help us from the oncoming war with Gaia. As of this, I have concluded that we need to see the reawakening of mutual aid. It is only via expressing mutual aid and making this the dominant factor within our society, as used to be in the tribe, village and medieval city, that we may continue this society and its development. If we continue to see natural power expressed, then I, like the other writers who have discussed the oncoming Gaia, see no hope.

Society Must Be Defended is the title of Foucault's lectures, and here it speaks no clearer to us. It must still be defended from Gaia and power relations. We must seek mutual aid between ourselves and Gaia.

11

Epilogue

But how is this to be achieved? How are we to escape the power relations that are everywhere? How are we to rekindle the mutual aid tendency in our modern society? How are we to solve the problem of Gaia?

Lovelock gives us no answer, only sceptical musings, which find no real hope. Latour argues it is only by uniting our western society with the 'others' that we stand any chance, and therefore, can be seen as hinting at mutual aid. Gray believes it doesn't matter what we think, our destiny is in Gaia's hands. Kropotkin was a revolutionary thinker and sought the emancipation of society, and the overturning of power relations evident within, through revolution which would reignite the mutual aid tendency as the dominant factor behind our society and free us from the adverse effects power. Throughout this thesis, I have intentionally stayed away from the idea of revolution for I believe it would have created more questions than answers. Instead, I have tried to illustrate how Foucauldian power still traverses our society and, through the illustration of natural power, how it has grown again. But I hope to have also shown, how alongside this factor, and the problems it has caused, culminating in Gaia, there is still hope which is to be found in the mutual aid tendency which also continues to live on. Mutual aid resists power and helps to solve the problems it produces. We have seen this in action through the discussion of food in our society and the two groups ASEED and Guerilla Kitchen Waste. This thesis does not have the answers on how to achieve mutual aid between ourselves and Gaia, but hopefully, I have given us more room to manoeuvre and a glimmer of hope. I have shown how an alternative factor has played just an important role as power and how it can be used in the fight against power relations. The answer of how to create mutual aid between ourselves and Gaia is now the next step and a discussion on revolution may be required here.

Foucault also stayed away from a discussion on revolution. As we have learnt, he believed his job was simply to research, but we can still find hints at answers on how to escape power relations. He does express admiration for revolution, in particular, both the Tunisian and Iranian cases, but he was aware of the problems that are created when one brings up the idea.

He is sceptical if they can truly free us from power relations, for this he argues, is impossible. The closest thing we can get to an answer from Foucault, in relation to this thesis, is to be found in his later works. After dropping the power-as-war model, for studying power relations, Foucault developed 'power-as-governmentality'. He argued that the resistance to power-as-governmentality was "the art of not being governed as much"¹⁴². He states that we, as "members of the community of the governed", are "obliged to show mutual solidarity"¹⁴³ with the aim of not being governed as much. If we transfer Foucault's answer of "the art of not being governed as much", into the power-as-war model, it changes to 'the art of not being involved in war as much'. We, as a 'community', must show 'mutual solidarity' and try to escape the battles, and the war, that dominates our society.

But, if we are not to be involved in power relations as much, or the war that these entail, then what are we to be involved in? From this thesis we have learnt, how alongside these power relations we can also find mutual aid and from what Foucault, and Latour hint at, and Kropotkin says, this could be how we fight against power relations. We must seek mutual aid and free ourselves, as much as is possible, from power. Whether this be in our relationships with Gaia, society or between one another.

How this is to be achieved is the next step, but hopefully, I have offered us a possibility and a little bit more hope that others who have discussed this problem have thus far failed to offer.

¹⁴² Foucault, M, 'What is Critique?', pg. 44

¹⁴³ Foucault, M, "Confronting Governments: Human Rights", pg. 474 (2002)

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