

MUTUAL AID: KROPOTKIN

A respected naturalist and geographer, as well as a popular theorist of *(communitarian anarchism (or libertarian communism))* Kropotkin (1902) held that in the animal kingdom mutual aid was just as common and important as competition. He first heard this hypothesis from the zoologist ^{.....} and he confirmed it by observing uncounted cases of mutual support among Siberian and Manchurian mammals and birds striving to survive in a harsh environment, where competition cannot lead to progressive evolution. Mutual aid is not a result of love, ^{or sympathy} for it often occurs among unknowns: it results from an instinct of sociability and solidarity. The basis of human society is not love or even sympathy but human solidarity. Darwin (1871) had already remarked that man is naturally social: that sociality

is neither of divine origin nor is it the result of coercion. Kropotkin generalized this observation to a number of animal species above the social insects, emphasizing that there have been animal societies long before the earliest human societies emerged, and that the savages and barbarians described by travellers and anthropologists do not behave in the manner imagined by Hobbes. He also wondered how there could still be distinguished thinkers, such as ^{T.H.}Huxley and Spencer, who--in the face of so many counterexamples--could hold that the normal state of primitive man was "the Hobbesian war of each against all" (1902, 1924).