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Caught in the Web
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Caught in the Web

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In a few decades the whole world has been covered in several new webs. Internet, mobile phone network & co... How fast this web expands, how ever more densely interwoven it gets... hardly anyone would have predicted. Optical fibre cables that like veins are extended under cities, signals that buzz with always higher frequencies through the air, antennas, modems, mobiles, wireless, home monitoring, the internet of things, smart city...

Today there is exponentially more talk about social networks, network integration, networking, the web, etc.... These concept enter into the vocabulary of businesses, of politics, of interest groups and circles of friends... really everywhere is this language. It is a total transformation of theories about organisation while, which shouldn't be surprising, at the same time the whole of society is restructured on new bases.

But what is the purpose of a web? Undoubtedly, a spider weaves its web to catch insects which it can then devour alive. A fisher brings a net to catch fish. So, to what end is this brave new worldwide web, that is build by several businesses and state institutions and is continually expanded? Well, those who weave and finance this web have their eye on one thing: *capital*.

Everything that is caught in this web becomes information in the form of zeros and ones, potentially usable information which means more capital for those *up-to-date*.

This web has been woven during several decades, and lots see still more development potential. What if we expand ever more the web over the urban architecture? Weave it into homes? Or even into humans? That would yield even more information. Detailed information, information that can reflect all of reality, meaning: still more capital. Capital in the form of security, of control, of speed, of forecasting and predictability...

With the present restructuring, that is developed to save capitalism, also the relations of domination change. This has been coming for a long time. Certain now outmoded things that caused lots of disgruntlement, are more and more relinquished – of course this can change again in the future. At least the direct and openly authoritarian behaviours in the family, the school, the workplace etc. can be increasingly toned down as the direct and unmediated human relations dwindle more and more anyhow. In their place comes the logic of networks, transparent networks that at best create a productive knot in the huge web. Domination is more impersonal and it is unclear to whose algorithm we're dancing, how it is programmed, who controls the program... As flies we're stuck in a spider's web, but it seems that we've lost the instinct to try to wriggle out and attempt to fly away. Often we don't even know what it means – *to fly*.

As anarchists, I think, we shouldn't just adopt the language about networks etc. A web is something with which one is caught, in which one becomes tangled up and from which one barely emerges again. Rather should we base our struggle in an open organisation – that can be freely engaged in and that can always be dissolved by the participants when it makes sense – and on direct and unmediated relations – beyond social norms and hierarchies, beyond algorithms and programs.

And while it seems that people fall as flies in the web, lured with flickering images, convenience and gadgets to the point of nausea, should we better think about how we cut through the knots and sever the wires till the whole web tears up!