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Visualizing the Networks of Thoughts

The latest developments in ICT just furthered the ongoing process of the last hundred years getting our culture more and more centered around visuality. With the emerging use of mobile communication devices visualization tools became as widespread as the ones for alphabetical information exchange. These changes in our instruments necessarily have effect on our ways of thinking as well. The methods of visualizing human thoughts from mind maps and concept maps to diagrams and flowcharts do not simply help us in fulfilling our cognitive projects but also transform the way we see things on the abstract level.

In *The Structure of Scientific Inference* (1974) Mary Hesse introduced her network theory of knowledge, which finds its predecessors already in Duhem, Hempel and Quine. The basic idea is about an infinite web of thoughts linked by inferences without touching the grounds of solid reality. In my presentation I shall examine to what extent this epistemological theory and the practice of information visualization can be informed by each other.

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