

**Dániel Levente PÁL**

*Visualizations (Maps) & Visions (Metaphors) of the Internet*

What is the Internet? If we type this question (ironically on the Internet) we receive a quasi-infinite number of answers from varying branches of science: studies, theories, hypotheses, metaphors or visualizations, i.e. pictures and maps. Then, if we classify this huge corpus of search results, what we get is a cyclopaedia and not an exact answer.

This is a paradox situation. We do not need to perceive the whole Internet and its shape to analyze or visualize a part of it as a scientist, however the method of our analysis or visualization presupposes the way we see the whole. On the other hand, our illusion or idea about the comprehension of the whole Internet makes it possible to create the techniques and practices which can help us to analyze or visualize a specific detail. (To understand all these we can use a parallel example, which could also present us with valuable experiences: one does not have to come to a conclusion in the theological-philosophical-scientific discussion about the shape of the Earth to draw a city's map, nevertheless, this kind of knowledge may affect the way he starts drawing.)

In this presentation I attempt to make a brief introduction about some of the most important trends and influences (network theory, data visualization, big data analysis, mapping science, etc.) which represent the way we think about the topology and topography of the Internet – either when it comes to the visualization of an abstract problem or to the elaboration of scientific metaphors about a visible phenomenon.

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