

## THE METAPHOR OF THE NETWORK AND ITS CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

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**Abstract.** *The network has become a dominant form of contemporary thinking, the constitutive metaphor being reinvented during the explosion of reticular techniques - the Internet and planetary telecommunications networks. It seems to draw the invisible infrastructure of contemporary society. The figure of the network tends to define the ways of thinking, being ubiquitous in all disciplines, from biology to sociology, from law to computer science, etc., because the hidden structure of the complexity of today's society is the network that dominates and shapes it.*

**Keywords:** metaphor, network, Internet, telecommunications, law, society

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The current Romanian language is a faithful mirror of society, constantly searching for itself in terms of lexical identity. The word network comes from Lat. \*rētēlla, diminutive of rētis<sup>1</sup>, having the meaning of "entanglement of thread, string, wire, etc., worked with large meshes; net, fillet"<sup>2</sup>. This definition of the network refers to the technique that highlights it, fabric manufacturing. Since mythology, webbing is observed as a weaving technique. There was a time when the notion predated the term web, the mythological use of the web metaphor representing the links the gods weave between the invisible Cosmos and the visible world, the web being "the invisible link between the visible places of the physical body". The net, having as its etymology the Latin retis, is composed of regularly interwoven threads, being a fabric with wide meshes used to capture certain animals. We must insist on the dimensions of the fabric, which implies the connection, and of the catch, which aims at control.

From the 17th century to the beginning of the 19th century, the notion acquired a figurative, metaphorical meaning, being applied to the analysis of the human body, especially the circulatory system, becoming "the visible place of an

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. it. *rezza*, abruz. *ritedda*, fr. *réseau* (A. Ciorănescu, *Dicționarul etimologic român*, Universidad de la Laguna, Tenerife, 1958-1966).

<sup>2</sup> *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române* (ediția a II-a revăzută și adăugită), Academia Română, Institutul de Lingvistică, Editura Univers Enciclopedic Gold, București, 2009.