

# For a Cautious Use of Big Data and Computation

J. Raimbault<sup>1,2</sup>

[juste.raimbault@parisgeo.cnrs.fr](mailto:juste.raimbault@parisgeo.cnrs.fr)

<sup>1</sup>UMR CNRS 8504 Géographie-cités

<sup>2</sup>UMR-T IFSTTAR 9403 LVMT

RGS-AC 2016

*Session Geocomputation : The Next 20 years*

31st September 2016

# Computational power : exponential capabilities

## *Moore's law in Geocomputation ?*

- [Gleyze, 2005] : urban network analyses, concludes that “limited by computation”  
→ 10 years later : [Lagesse, 2015] !
- First Simpop models [Sanders et al., 1997] “calibrated” by hand  
→ today Simpoplocal [Schmitt et al., 2014] and Marius [Cottineau et al., 2015] calibrated on grid, billions of simulations !
- Space syntax : from the theoretical origins [Hillier and Hanson, 1989] to large-scale applications [Hillier, 2016]

# New and Big Data

*Larger dataset can be processed, new type of data available :*

- Mobility studied through various type of data : new data from transportation systems [O'brien et al., 2014], from Social Networks [Frank et al., 2014], other types such as mobile phone data [De Nadai et al., 2016]
- Opening of “classic” dataset should allow ever more meta-analyses
- New ways to do research, more interactive, crowd-sourced science and data ? [Cottineau, 2016] ; [Chasset et al., 2016]

# But to what purpose ?

[Barthelemy et al., 2013] : new data and methods, but reinvent the wheel !



OPEN

SUBJECT AREAS:

PHYSICS

STATISTICAL PHYSICS,  
THERMODYNAMICS AND

## Self-organization versus top-down planning in the evolution of a city

Marc Barthelemy<sup>1,2</sup>, Patricia Bordin<sup>3,4</sup>, Henri Berestycki<sup>2</sup> & Maurizio Gribaudi<sup>5</sup>

# But to what purpose?

Exaggerating agent-based modeling? Up to simulating the world at scale 1 :1!

## 120 Million Agents Self-Organize into 6 Million Firms: A Model of the U.S. Private Sector

Robert L. Axtell  
George Mason University  
4400 University Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22030 USA  
+1 (703) 556-0333  
[rax222@gmu.edu](mailto:rax222@gmu.edu)

### ABSTRACT

An agent model is described at full-scale with the U.S. private sector, consisting of some 120 million agents. Using data on the population of U.S. firms the model is calibrated to closely reproduce firm sizes, ages, growth rates, job tenure and labor flows, along with several other empirically-important facts. It consists of a coalition formation model in which the Nash equilibria are dynamically unstable for sufficiently large coalitions. When agents are free to join coalitions where they are

the economy is in general equilibrium then there is no way to realize micro-dynamics except by the imposition of external shocks. Can microeconomic models *endogenously* produce the kinds of dynamics observed empirically when the incentives agents have to change jobs are fully represented?

Here I describe a microeconomic model capable of producing, *without* exogenous shocks, firm and labor dynamics of the size and type the U.S. economy experiences. While conventional explanations for these large labor flows exist [e.g.,

## But to what purpose ?

*Other worrying examples :*

- [Cura, 2014] : waste computational ressources to simulate mean and variance of Gibrat model (= recheck the Central Limit Theorem !), which is fully solved otherwise [Gabaix, 1999]
- Recently seen on Geotamtam : rush on new data (Pokemon Go) before thinking !
- [Louail et al., 2016] draw social equity policy recommandations by acting on mobility, from credit card transaction data but totally disconnected from Urban Form.

# Theories and Computation

**Claim :** The computational shift [Arthur, 2015] and simulation practices will be central in geography [Banos, 2013], but may also be dangerous :

- Data deluge may impose research subjects and elude theory
- Computation may elude model construction and solving

→ *Make a stronger link between computational practices, computer science, mathematics, statistics and theoretical geography*

→ *Theoretical and Quantitative Geography in the center of this dynamic, as it was its initial purpose that seems forgotten in some cases*

## Case study : Context and Rationale

**Study of interactions between network and territories :**

→ *searching for stylized facts, what can be learnt from static correlations between urban form and road network ?*

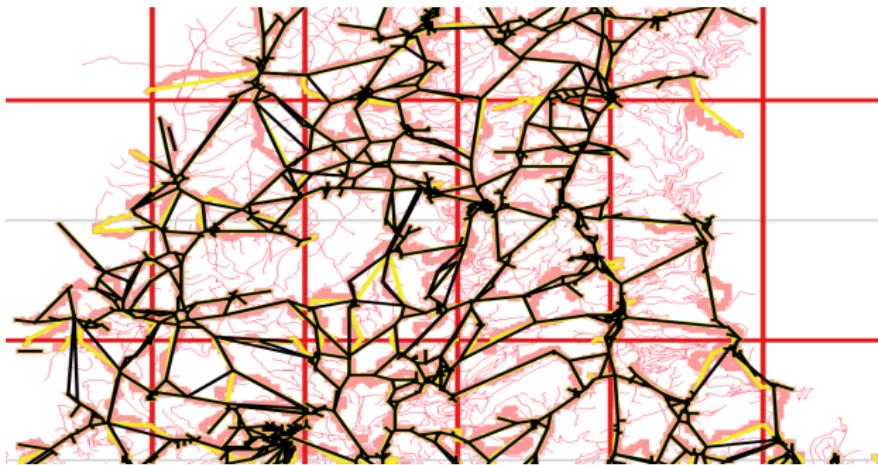
**Theoretical Background :** *A Theory of co-evolutive networked human territories* proposed in [Raimbault, 2016], that in particular postulates an important role of networks in the morphogenesis of complex adaptive urban systems that are human territories

→ *investigation of stationarity and ergodicity properties of relation between road network and population distribution ; implies spatiality of correlations and link static-dynamic*

## Dataset construction

Computation of topological road network for all Europe, at 100m granularity scale (to be used consistently with population grid [EUROSTAT, 2014])

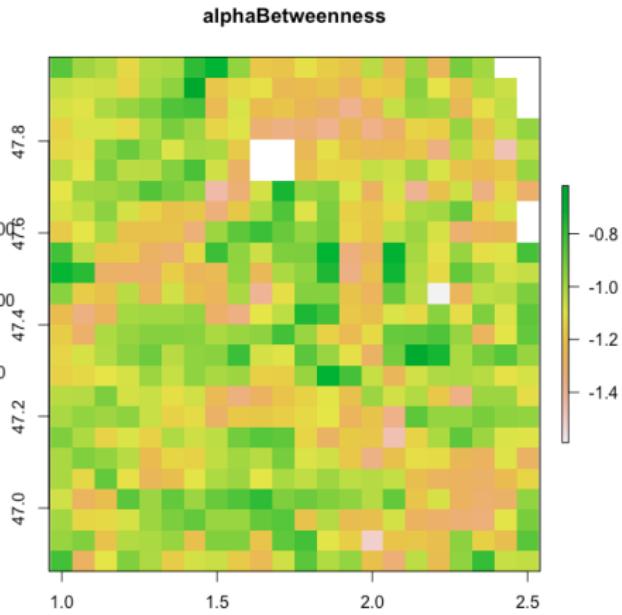
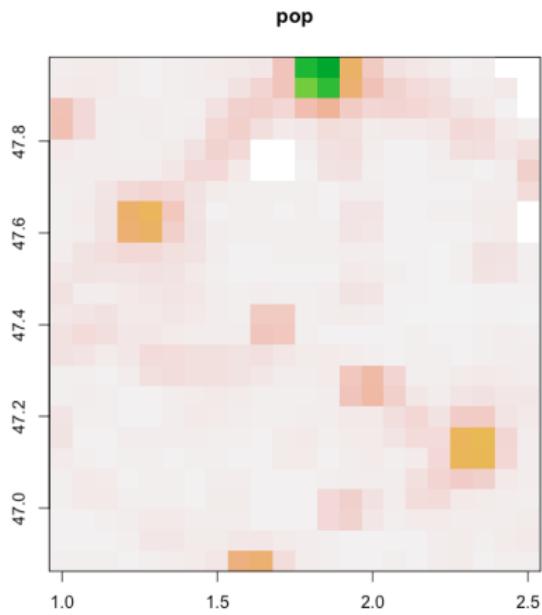
→ Import of OSM into pgsql, simplification at 100m granularity, topological simplification with split/merge algorithm



$\simeq 44 \cdot 10^6$  links in initial OSM db,  
 $\simeq 61 \cdot 10^6$  in first simplified layer,  
 $\simeq 21 \cdot 10^6$  in final database

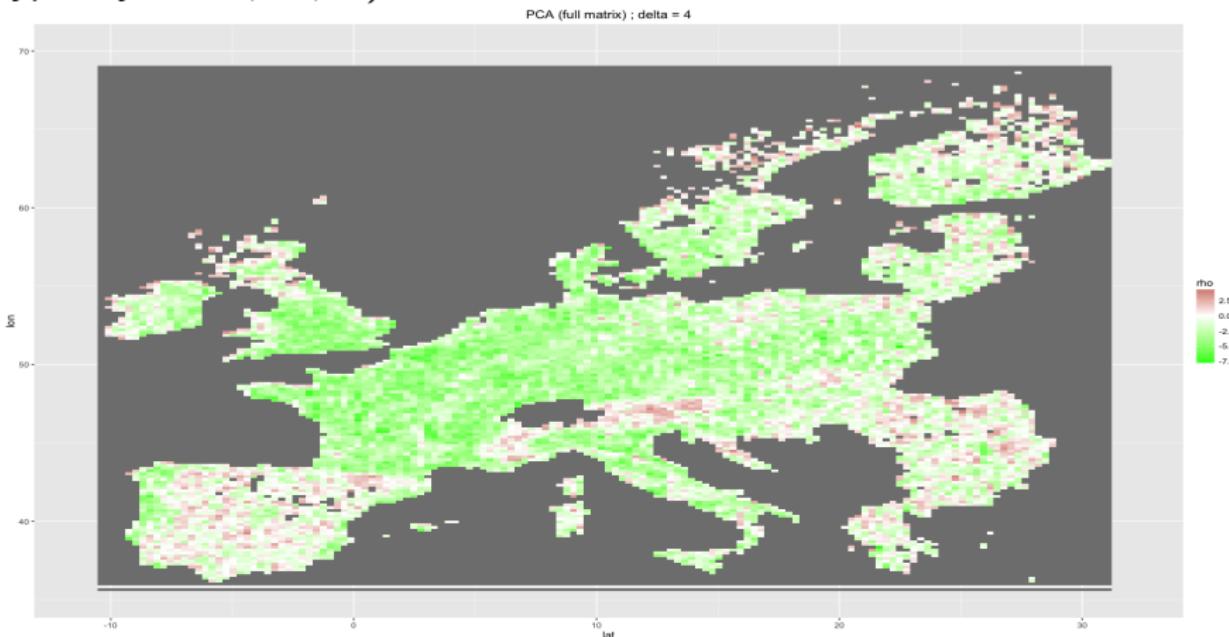
# Results : Computation of Indicators

*Computation of urban form indicators [Le Néchet, 2015] and network indicators on  $l_0 = 10\text{km}$  side square*



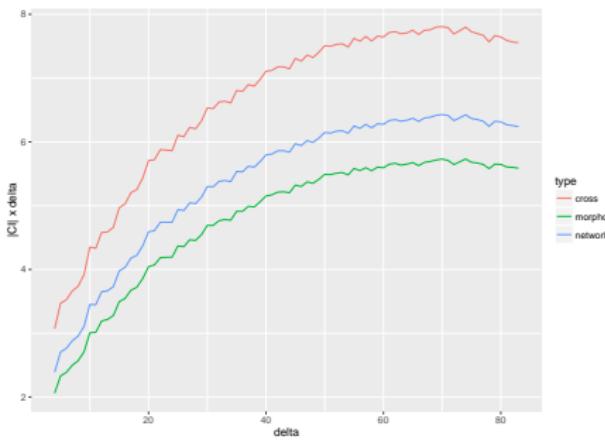
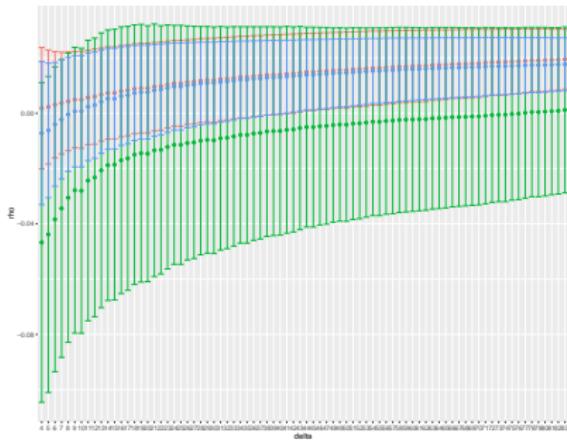
## Results : Spatial Correlations

*Computation of spatial correlation on square areas of width  $\delta \cdot l_0$  (with typically  $\delta = 4, \dots, 16$ )*



→ local spatial stationarity of processes

## Results : Multi-scale Processes



→ Significant variation of mean correlation with  $\delta$  (Left) and of normalized confidence interval (Right) given by  $|\rho_+ - \rho_-| \cdot \delta$ , as bounds theoretically vary as  $\sqrt{N} \sim \sqrt{\delta^2}$  : implies multi-scalarity

# Empirical Findings (Formalization)

$Y_i[\vec{x}, t]$  spatio-temporal stochastic process, verifies empirically :

- ① Local spatial autocorrelation is present and bounded by  $I_p$  (in other words the processes are continuous in space) : at any  $\vec{x}$  and  $t$ ,  
$$\left| \rho_{\|\Delta\vec{x}\| < I_p} [Y_i(\vec{x} + \Delta\vec{x}, t), Y_i(\vec{x}, t)] \right| > 0.$$
- ② Processes are locally parametrized :  $Y_i = Y_i[\alpha_i]$ , where  $\alpha_i(\vec{x})$  varies with  $I_\alpha$ , with  $I_\alpha \gg I_p$  and weakly locally stationary in space.
- ③ Processes are multi-scalar : since  $\rho(\delta = \infty) > \rho(\delta = 0)$ , a necessary non-linear correction on processes spatial averages in correlation computation is present.

# Analytical Deductions

## Case study : implications

→ Still points to explore :

- variable correlations areas (size and shape in space)
- same work on cities population/train network data, which are also dynamical databases : extrapolation of ergodicity parameters ?
- correlations of returns : link between  $\rho[\Delta_t Y]$  and  $\rho[\Delta_x Y]$  (more difficult : if pure local ergodicity,  $\exists$  a permutation making the correspondance)
- Link between  $\Delta_\delta \rho(\delta)$  and process derivatives ?

→ We show the regional nature of network-territories interactions, in particular the non-ergodicity of urban systems on these components

→ No direct results on time dynamics, but indirect : spatio-temporal processes do not have same speed and react/diffuse differently

# Discussion

## 1. *Is a theory-free quantitative geography possible ?*

→ close to the trap of black-box data-mining analysis ; still poor explanatory power, can exhibit relations but not reconstruct processes

## 2. *Is a pure computational quantitative geography possible ?*

→ even gaining 3 orders of magnitudes in computational power does not solve the dimensionality curse

**In our case study :** Without theory, would not know which objects, measures and properties to look at (e.g. multi-scale and dynamical nature of processes) ; without analytics : no conclusion from empirical analysis.

# Conclusion

- Nothing is really new, and more than ever we need simple but powerful theories à-la-Occam
- Need for a wise integration of new techniques/rediscovering into existing body of knowledge : multi-modeling and model families (see Rey et al. presentation) as one way to do that ?
- Need for more interdisciplinarity than ever ?

# Reserve

## Reserve Slides

# Network Simplification Algorithm

- ① Filter OSM links (highway tag) and insert into pgsql with osmosis [team, 2016]
- ② First simplification : two cells of base raster (population density) are linked if and only if they are linked by OSM link (associated type/speed)
- ③ Topological simplification :
  - split the space into a partition, simplify within each box
  - construct independent merging subsets of the partition, merge sequentially for each subset.



# Indicators

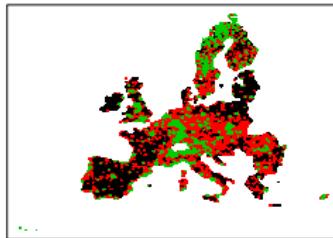
**Morphological Indicators :** Density, Spatial Autocorrelation, Entropy, Mean Distance, Hierarchy

**Network Indicators :** betweenness (mean/hierarchy), closeness (mean/hierarchy), mean link length, network performance, mean path length, diameter, components, clustering coefficient, density

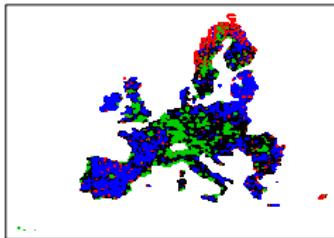
**Correlation Measures :** Pearson test ; correlation matrices then aggregated (mean, mean absolute, first principal component - % variance with  $\delta =$ )

# Morphology Classification

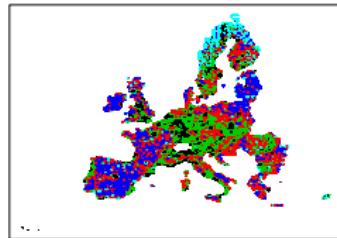
ku2 ; withinProp:0.379727175801079



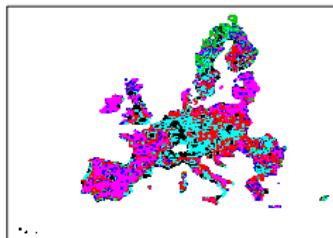
ku4 ; withinProp:0.30493425637215



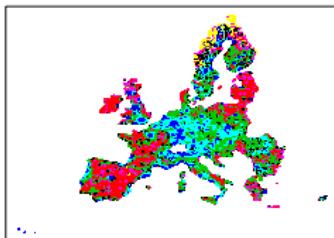
ku5 ; withinProp:0.258568287232286



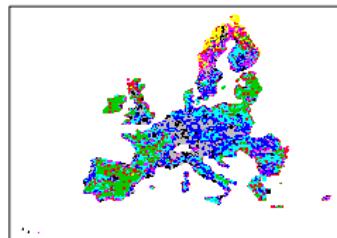
ku6 ; withinProp:0.224823913069682



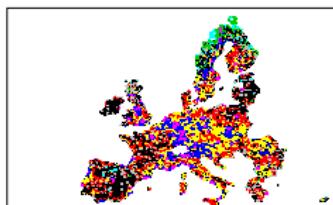
ku7 ; withinProp:0.201595958597077



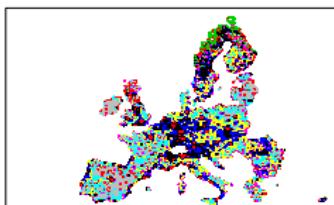
ku8 ; withinProp:0.173856720275466



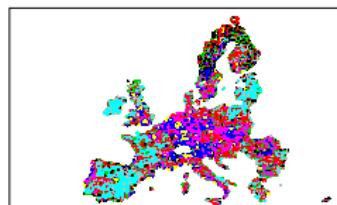
ku9 ; withinProp:0.167033521857729



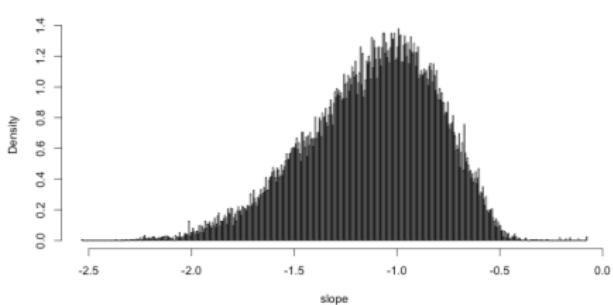
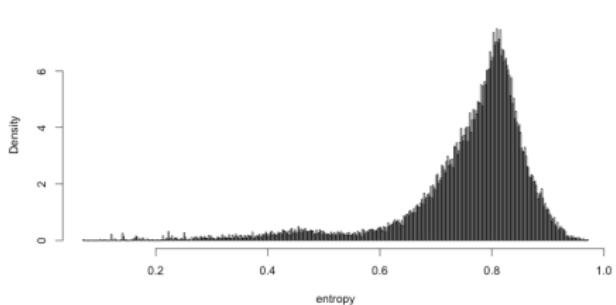
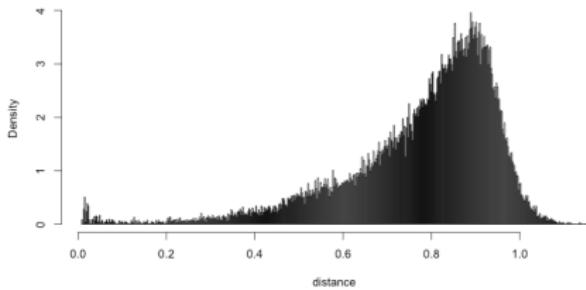
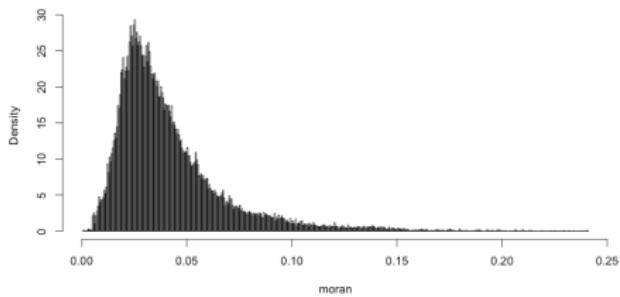
ku10 ; withinProp:0.156221620124614



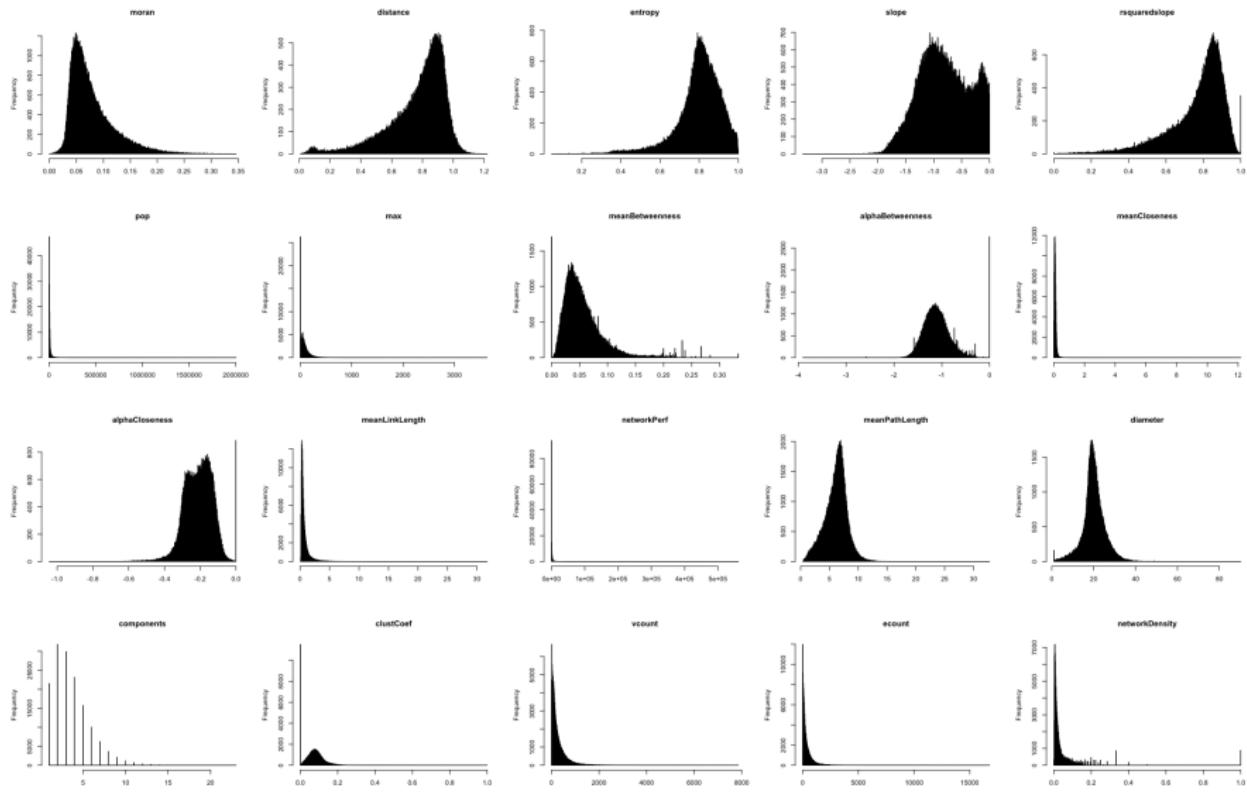
ku11 ; withinProp:0.148766338602203



# Morphology Distribution



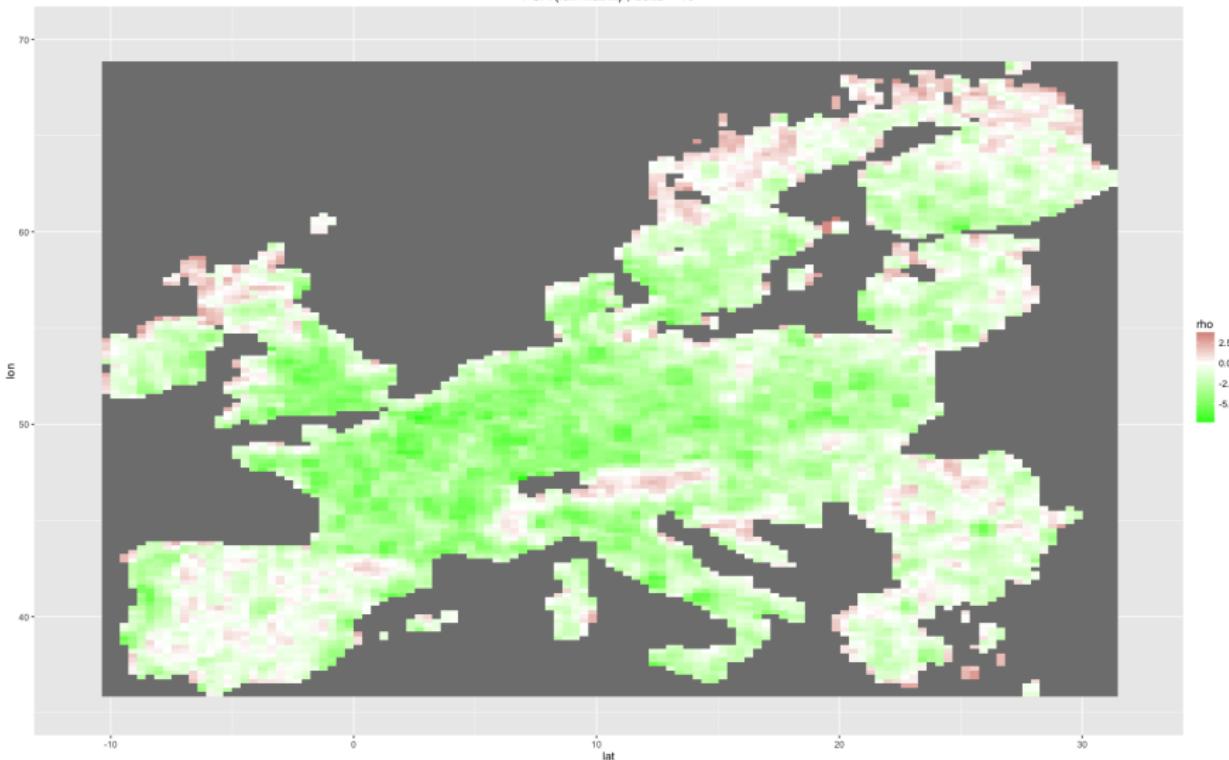
# Network Distribution



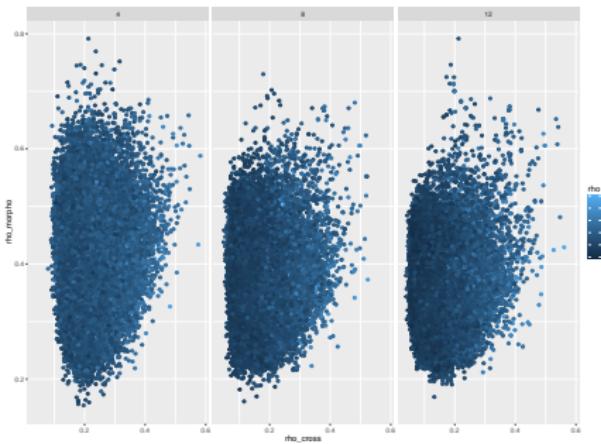
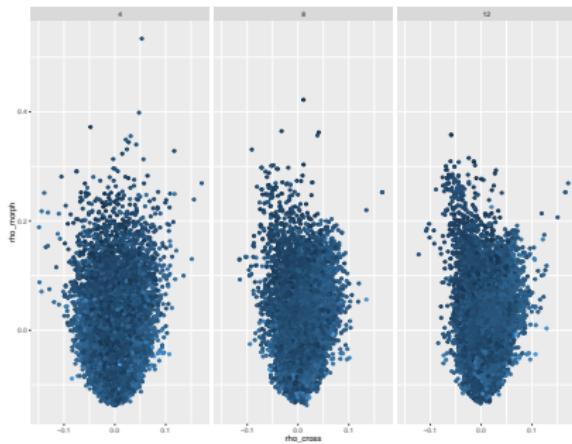
# Correlations

$$\delta = 10$$

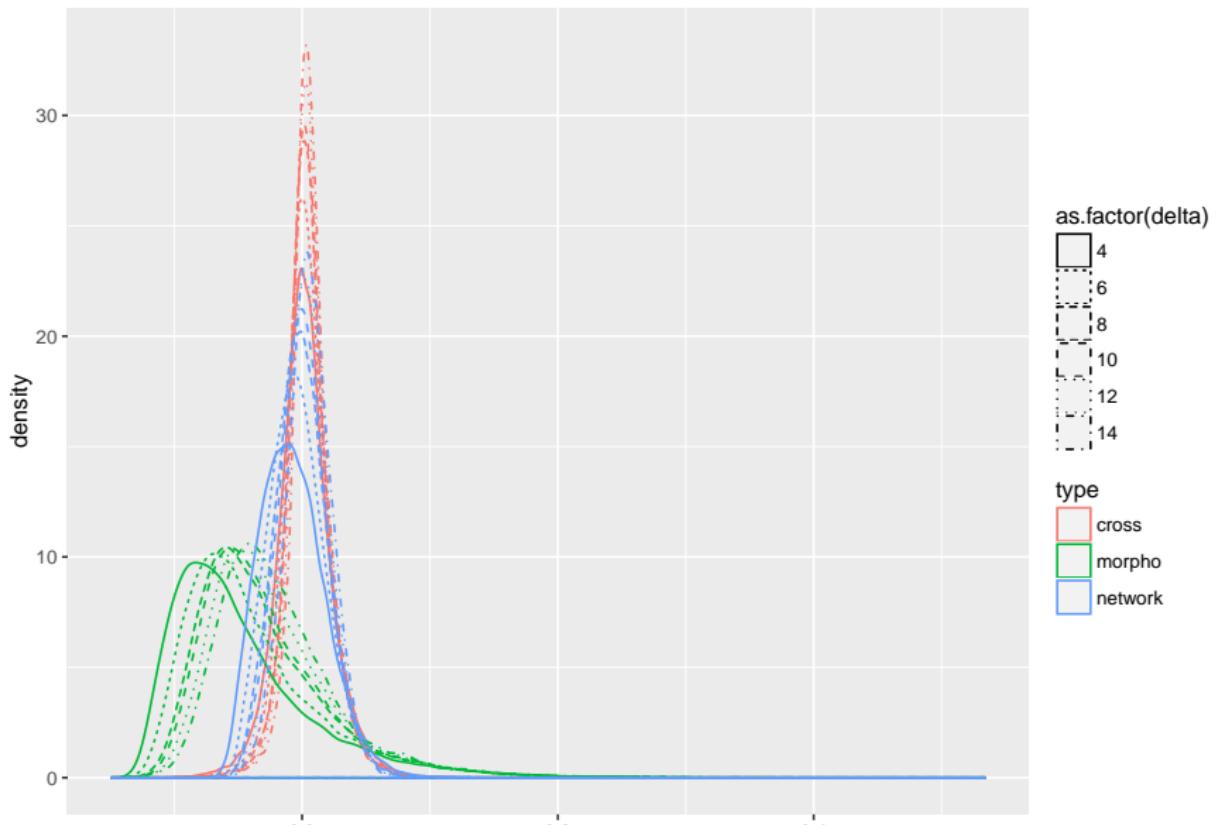
PCA (full matrix) ; delta = 10



# Correlations



# Correlation distributions



# Theory : Pillars

- ① *Networked Human Territories* → Raffestin approach to territory combined with Dupuy theory of networks.
- ② *Evolutive Urban Theory* → City Systems as complex Adaptive systems, applied to human settlements in general and thus territorial systems.
- ③ *Urban Morphogenesis* → Morphogenesis as autonomous rules to explain growth of urban form. Used as the provider of modular decompositions.
- ④ *Boundaries and Co-evolution* → Co-evolution as the existence of *niche*, consequence of boundary patterns.

# Theory : Specification

- Previous def. of territorial systems
- Modular decomposition and stationarity : existence of scales
- Feedback loops between and inside scales yield weak emergence, thus complexity
- Morphogenesis gives modular decomposition and co-evolution
- **Main assumption.** Necessity of Networks : networks are necessary component of co-evolutive niches.

## References I

-  Arthur, W. B. (2015).  
Complexity and the shift in modern science.  
Conference on Complex Systems, Tempe, Arizona.
-  Banos, A. (2013).  
Pour des pratiques de modélisation et de simulation libérées en géographies et shs.  
*HDR. Université Paris*, 1.
-  Barthelemy, M., Bordin, P., Berestycki, H., and Gribaudi, M. (2013).  
Self-organization versus top-down planning in the evolution of a city.  
*Scientific reports*, 3.
-  Chasset, P.-O., Commenges, H., Cottineau, C., and Raimbault, J. (2016).  
cybergeo20 v1.0.

## References II

-  Cottineau, C. (2016).  
MetaZipf. (Re)producing knowledge about city size distributions.  
*ArXiv e-prints*.
-  Cottineau, C., Reuillon, R., Chapron, P., Rey-Coyrehourcq, S., and Pumain, D. (2015).  
A modular modelling framework for hypotheses testing in the simulation of urbanisation.  
*Systems*, 3(4) :348–377.
-  Cura, R. (2014).  
Gibrat population growth simulator.

## References III

-  De Nadai, M., Staiano, J., Larcher, R., Sebe, N., Quercia, D., and Lepri, B. (2016).  
The death and life of great Italian cities : A mobile phone data perspective.  
In *Proceedings of the 25th International Conference on World Wide Web*, pages 413–423. International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee.
-  EUROSTAT (2014).  
Eurostat geographical data.
-  Frank, M. R., Williams, J. R., Mitchell, L., Bagrow, J. P., Dodds, P. S., and Danforth, C. M. (2014).  
Constructing a taxonomy of fine-grained human movement and activity motifs through social media.  
*arXiv preprint arXiv:1410.1393*.

## References IV

-  Gabaix, X. (1999).  
Zipf's law for cities : an explanation.  
*Quarterly journal of Economics*, pages 739–767.
-  Gleyze, J.-F. (2005).  
*La vulnérabilité structurelle des réseaux de transport dans un contexte de risques*.  
PhD thesis, Université Paris-Diderot-Paris VII.
-  Hillier, B. (2016).  
The fourth sustainability, creativity : Statistical associations and credible mechanisms.  
In *Complexity, Cognition, Urban Planning and Design*, pages 75–92.  
Springer.

## References V

-  Hillier, B. and Hanson, J. (1989).  
*The social logic of space.*  
Cambridge university press.
-  Lagesse, C. (2015).  
Read Cities through their Lines. Methodology to characterize spatial graphs.  
*ArXiv e-prints.*
-  Le Néchet, F. (2015).  
De la forme urbaine à la structure métropolitaine : une typologie de la configuration interne des densités pour les principales métropoles européennes de l'audit urbain.  
*Cybergeo : European Journal of Geography.*

## References VI

-  Louail, T., Lenormand, M., Arias, J. M., and Ramasco, J. J. (2016).  
Crowdsourcing the robin hood effect in cities.  
*arXiv preprint arXiv :1604.08394.*
-  O'brien, O., Cheshire, J., and Batty, M. (2014).  
Mining bicycle sharing data for generating insights into sustainable  
transport systems.  
*Journal of Transport Geography*, 34 :262–273.
-  Raimbault, J. (2016).  
*Towards Models Coupling Urban Growth and Transportation Network  
Growth. First year preliminary memoire. DOI :*  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.60538>.  
PhD thesis, Université Paris-Diderot - Paris VII.

## References VII

-  Sanders, L., Pumain, D., Mathian, H., Guérin-Pace, F., and Bura, S. (1997).  
Simpop : a multiagent system for the study of urbanism.  
*Environment and Planning B*, 24 :287–306.
-  Schmitt, C., Rey-Coyrehourcq, S., Reuillon, R., and Pumain, D. (2014).  
Half a billion simulations : Evolutionary algorithms and distributed computing for calibrating the simpoplocal geographical model.
-  team, O. (2016).  
Osmosis.  
<http://wiki.openstreetmap.org/wiki/Osmosis>.