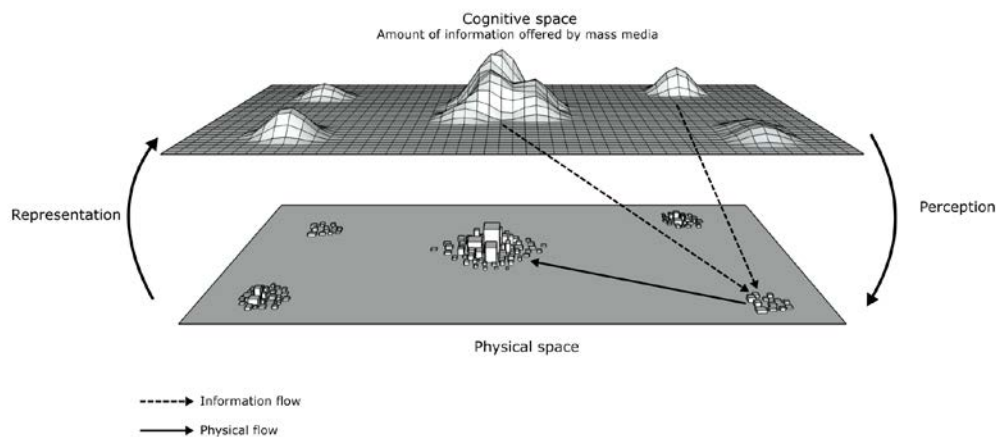# Information circulation, representation of cities and urbanisation process

**Keywords:** system of cities, urban networks, information circulation, representation, urban theory
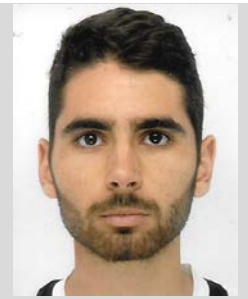
**OTB Department / Urban and regional studies**

**Area of Research:  Urban studies**



Cognitive space
Amount of information offered by mass media

Representation

Perception

Physical space

- - - - - ▶ Information flow
———▶ Physical flow

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PhD started in: 2016

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*Main Question: How cities are represented by the mass-media? To what extend these representations have an impact on urbanization process?*

*Deliverables: PhD dissertation composed of research papers.*

**Research Summary:** Cities are crossroads of multiple social, economic and infrastructure networks. They overcome local deficiencies in knowledge or goods production by engaging in exchanges over middle and long distance with other cities. These connections make cities interdependent in such a way that important changes in one city will have repercussions in other ones in the system. Among these flows, the circulation of information is central because cities are the result of an accumulation of decisions of people and firms, deciding to locate or to interact with a place rather than another. But before trading with a distant company or moving to another city, urban agents need to be informed about the economic risks and opportunities within the system of cities. The aim of this PhD research is to analyse the circulation of information between cities over the long term and evaluate its impact on the development of cities. In order to achieve this objective, it is necessary to develop a new method to evaluate the circulation of information between cities. This method will be based on the analysis of mass media over time. Knowing what is written about a city in the press or on internet allow us to grasp the major themes of the urban life offered to a given population. This research analyses two massive text corpora: an historical database gathering the Dutch newspapers and an internet archive gathering websites mentioning Dutch city names. To evaluate the impact of narratives on places, the media flows will be compared with 'real world' interactions taking place between cities.

**Research Methodology:** This research is carried with quantitative methods. The first step of this research is to create a database on information circulation between cities. This work is carried out with text mining techniques applied to the text corpora. The selection of relevant news items is operated with named entities recognition and their classification with topic modelling. Once the data will be created, the comparison with other flows will be handled under the framework of multiplex networks.

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