

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences



## Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners ([Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl](mailto:Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl)), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information	
Name	Younes Chergui
Student number	5670411

Studio		
Name / Theme	City of the Future	
Main mentor	Joran Kuijper	Architecture
Second mentor	Piero Medici	Building Technology
Third mentor	John Hanna	Research (conceptualization)
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The 'City of the Future' graduation studio enables me to experiment and address my personal fascination and frustration - the contestation and separation of border communities along the Algerian-Moroccan border. Its multidisciplinary approach allows me to explore different areas within the built environment, maintaining a holistic perspective that integrates architecture, urban planning, technology, and landscape architecture. Overall, it creates the perfect conditions for pursuing the topic.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Borderless Connections: A Traveling Market as an Agent of Resilience and Change in Borderscapes
Goal	
Location:	Oujda, Morocco.
The posed problem,	<p><i>The general problem is the common perception of borderscapes as closed, marginalized, spaces, resulting in a lack of understanding and investments in borderscapes.</i></p> <p>Problem statement (1)</p> <p>First, the public, not the local (border) communities, tend to understand the borders as a line drawn on the map and as fixed structures controlled by governments, which limit our</p>

	<p>understanding of the dynamics that exist in reality. The authorities have created this political imagination among the public of separation and disconnection.</p> <p>However, the border communities, people who live near the border, perceive the space totally different. They see the border as an opportunity rather than an obstacle. An opportunity of economic growth and exchange through informal trade. According to a Moroccan security expert, borders are never truly closed, some people still try to cross the border secretly to trade, which creates opportunities for those who are willing to take risks.</p> <p>The project seeks to create a different imagination and make the transborder connections clear and something that is known among the people in general and not only by the locals.</p> <p>Problem statement (2)</p> <p>The government, on the other hand, perceives borderscapes as marginalized spaces, resulting in little development directed towards these border communities, which leads them in some cases to seek opportunities elsewhere.<sup>14</sup> In the interaction with the physical world, these places often become isolated.</p> <p>The coastal cities at the west such as Casablanca, Tangier, and Rabat-Salé, make up Morocco's economic centre and were the primary focus of reconstruction during the post-independence period.<sup>15</sup> Between the years 1956 and 2003, the Moroccan government invested a lot in these cities which led to the isolation of the northeastern part of Morocco. Several factors, such as dependence on trade in Algeria and Southern Spain,</p>
--	---

	<p>distance from the major cities, and a poor infrastructural network, contributed to disconnecting the northeastern region from national development efforts until the beginning of the 21st century.</p> <p>According to a Moroccan government agency that gathers statistics, the economic centers were responsible for creating 58% of the country's wealth. Meanwhile, the eastern borderlands, including Oujda, only contributed with 5.1% of the country's wealth. Also, in the eastern borderlands, about 20% of people couldn't find jobs. The future of the northeastern region is still uncertain and is seeking for a strategy to redefine its borderlands.</p>
research questions and	<p>Main question: What design strategies can be employed to redefine Oujda's borderscape as spaces of connection and exchange rather than division and separation to support the needs of the border communities?</p> <p>Sub questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How are border conflicts memorialized by the border communities and how are they discussed/represented in the media?</li> <li>2. How has the historical context of Oujda, shaped the current dynamic nature of its borderscape?</li> <li>3. What kind of everyday practices of the border communities in Oujda, challenge our conventional understanding of borders?</li> <li>4. What if we rethink borders as part of a larger landscape (borderscapes) rather than just a single site (the line itself)?</li> </ol>

	<p>5. What are the different characteristics of Oujda's borderscape within the city fabric?</p> <p>6. What role can transient activities play in shaping Oujda's borderscape?</p>
design assignment in which these result.	This thesis aims to contest the political imagination of the border as a fixed structure by examining the case of Oujda (Morocco), a city near the border with Algeria.

## Process

### Method description

This research is a form of situated knowledge that combines historical and archival research with a set of interviews with multiple locals of Oujda. These interviews are seen to add a personal dimension to the historical information that shaped the current dynamic nature of Oujda's borderscape. The research builds further on the theories of Martina Löw 'Borders that relate', Henri Lefebvre 'The production of Space' and Richard Sennet 'borders and boundaries',

For the benefit of this research, the following analysis are conducted:

1. Historical research - Analysing conflicts, activities, and moments that shaped the current dynamic nature of Oujda's borderscape. Interviews, photography and postcards are used as research tools to draw site-specific stories.
2. Visual sociology - Analysing visual data to explore how borderscapes are represented in the media, and understanding how these representations shape public perceptions of borders.
3. Discourse analysis - studying and interpreting the understanding of borderscapes. This includes critical analysis of the conceived, perceived and lived space of borderscapes through mapping, interviews, and literature and examining the historical significance of objects, and materials in understanding the past.

## Literature and general practical references

'Algerian Routes: Emancipation, Deterritorialisation and Transnationalism through Suitcase Trade: History and Anthropology: Vol 16, No 1'. Accessed 25 January 2024. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02757200500042806>.

Augé, Marc. *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. 2nd English language ed. London ; New York: Verso, 2008.

Boukhars, Anouar. 'Barriers Versus Smugglers: Algeria and Morocco's Battle for Border Security'. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Accessed 5 January 2024. <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/03/19/barriers-versus-smugglers-algeria-and-morocco-s-battle-for-border-security-pub-78618>.

Cruz, Teddy, and Fonna Forman. *Socializing Architecture: Top-down Bottom-Up*. Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2022.

Easterling, Keller. *Extrastatecraft: The Power of Infrastructure Space*. London ; New York: Verso, 2014.

'Engaging Border Communities in Trade and Investment Programming: Why and How | Marketlinks', 5 April 2023. <http://www.marketlinks.org/blogs/engaging-border-communities-trade-and-investment-programming-why-and-how>.

Gallien, Max. 'The London School of Economics and Political Science', n.d.

Gaskell, Ivan. 'HISTORY OF THINGS'. *Debating New Approaches to History*, 2018. [https://www.academia.edu/41578343/History\\_of\\_Things](https://www.academia.edu/41578343/History_of_Things).

Hanlon, Querine, and Matthew M Herbert. 'Border Security Challenges in the Grand Maghreb', n.d.

Herbert, Matt, and Max Gallien. 'Divided They Fall: Frontiers, Borderlands and Stability in North Africa', 2020.

LSE Review of Books. 'Book Review: Theory of the Border by Thomas Nail', 31 January 2017. <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/lsereviewofbooks/2017/01/31/book-review-theory-of-the-border-by-thomas-nail/>.

Pittaluga, Paola. 'Pioneering Urban Practices in Transition Spaces'. *City, Territory and Architecture* 7, no. 1 (12 November 2020): 18. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40410-020-00127-6>.

Schoonderbeek, Marc, and Tom Avermaete, eds. *Border Conditions*. The TU Delft Architecture Series. Amsterdam: Architectura & Natura Press, 2010.

Solberg, Katherine. 'Understanding the Morocco-Algeria Border', n.d.

'The Open City - Essays | Urban Age'. Accessed 7 November 2023.  
<https://urbanage.lsecities.net/essays/the-open-city>.

Tona, Grazia. 'Border Formation: The Becoming Multiple of Space'. *A+BE / Architecture and the Built Environment*, no. 08 (31 May 2023): 1–308.  
<https://doi.org/10.7480/abe.2023.08.7052>.

Zarhloule, Yasmine. 'Defying Peripherality: How Morocco Has Sought to Integrate Its Eastern Borderlands', n.d.

## Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?

City of the Future is a multidisciplinary graduation studio focusing on matters like accessibility and social inclusiveness, which my graduation project addresses. The studio has enabled me to experiment and tackle my personal fascination and frustration - the contestation and separation of border communities along the Algerian-Moroccan border. This topic's multidisciplinary nature requires a studio that explores various areas within the built environment, maintaining a holistic perspective that integrates architecture, urban planning, technology, and landscape architecture.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

Although the project focusses on Oujda as the context, the findings and recommendations from my thesis can be applied to other geographical locations, particularly those with similar border issues or urban challenges.