

# 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:

<b>Personal information</b>	
Name	Fiona Thompson
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<b>Studio</b>	
Name / Theme	Transitional Territories   North Sea – Landscapes of Coexistence
Teachers / tutors	Nicola Marzot, Stefano Milani
Argumentation of choice of the studio	<p>Transitional Territories addresses the context of the North Sea and its surrounding coastal states, discussing the impacts of climate change and global influences. The studio brief challenges the impact climate change will have on the political, economic, ecological and spatial structures on these countries, today and in the future. The sea level is projected to rise 5m+, ice caps increasingly start to melt accelerated by human activity we are presented with questions for our environment; what impact will this have to coastal countries and how will it affect them? Being one of the most extracted, exploited and over utilised spaces, the consequences of such activities is cause for alarm as its impacts are becoming ever more present on today's society.</p> <p>The studio has given me the opportunity to work in an interdisciplinary studio. Having previously worked in multiple departments in an architecture practice (before starting my MSc), I have enjoyed embracing this part of the studio's ethos. The initial group work at the beginning of semester brought us together as we collectively researched the territorial scale. This highlighted different perspectives, training and knowledge when tackling the urban projections, scenarios and limits. The teachings and outcomes of the research in the studio have presented freedom in our choice of topic, and fascination to pursue. We are not limited by a location in one city, but our research takes us to the site.</p> <p>Coming from a North Sea country, I think it is important to test, analyse and comprehend these impacts. The brief teaches us that executive decisions made amongst a country's leader or representative can have a ripple effect on our environment, ecology and economic stability. All these unintended consequences can become detrimental to the survival of life (human/nonhuman) in the</p>

	North Sea. We need to become better informed of the environment in which we live, this will enable us to understand the impact our decisions have on the built environment. In the hope, we (architects) can subsequently design site specific architecture which is responsive to the context it is in.
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<b>Graduation project</b>	
Title of the graduation project	<i>Grey Lines in the Sand</i> The Nomos of the North Sea; a parliamentary state of exception.

<b>Goal</b>	
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Location:	Dogger Bank, North Sea
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The posed problem,	<p>The North Sea has evolved into a global space of extreme dense activity, detrimental for a coastal nation's stability. However, we are now putting our national identity before the needs of nature, all in pursuit of the desires of man.</p> <p>The project analyses the North Sea commons and its potential longevity for future generations to benefit from. Now one of the most extracted, exploited and utilised resources in the world, globalism ideals have led to nationalism practices; we are on a path towards the tragedy of the North Sea commons.</p> <p>1. Borders</p> <p>The project addresses the impact different types of borders have had on the North Sea. It showcases the tensions and conflicts that blur the line between inclusion and exclusion of life. Different ones have been established, evolved and erased throughout time. Borders can overlap, connect or disconnect us from one another. In the North Sea, multiple countries adhere to different rules, for their countrymen as well as regulations enforced by the European and International law. The North Sea commons resembles a complex web of permission, profit and passage for all who want to enter and enjoy the spoils of the many resources available within the common space. Though we must remember the nonhuman life in and around the North Sea. They are unaware of man's "invisible" borders, yet, most likely to be the ones who get are tangled up in these border webs.</p> <p>2. Jurisdiction, Sovereignty and the "Constitution"</p> <p>The North Sea is surrounded by seven democratic decision makers. Each have a projected 200km Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) border from their baseline, dissecting the North Sea into seven zones. Each zone enables the coastal nation to have control on all the economic resources within it, but jurisdiction allows everyone to still enter this zone for their personal gain – deemed by the state controlling the zone. Only in the territorial water (12 nautical miles from the baseline), can a coastal nation exercise its exclusive sovereign rights to an activity e.g. fishing. Finally, Bruno Latour refers to the</p>
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	<p>"Constitution", a place for human and nonhumans, for their properties and their relations, their abilities and their groupings. A way to bring nature (science representing things) and culture (politics representing subjects) into the same conversation. Two types of representatives faithfully defining the law outside the national limit (EU), to separately resolve disputes, which have now become too complex to do under the current arrangement.</p> <p>3. Commons</p> <p>The North Sea commons is composed of four layers.</p> <p>Layer 1; above the North Sea (air space – wind turbines, oil platforms).</p> <p>Layer 2; on top of the North Sea water (the realm of travel, trade and sea power).</p> <p>Layer 3; in the North Sea (creatures in the sea: flora, fauna and man's machines).</p> <p>Layer 4; on the North Sea seabed (a réseau of data cables, pipelines and extraction equipment).</p> <p>It is important to define the layers in the North Sea, to understand the infrastructure, lifeforms and interaction in this layered system. It introduces the idea that the North Sea is a contested space which is being exploited by man's desire, in more than one way. All to progress and embrace globalisation and the growth of a country's GDP - a measure of stability, strength and prosperity at the expense of the territory.</p> <p>4. Cosmopolitanism commons</p> <p>Is defined as the space between nation states who widen their borders to protect their sovereignty. The world is seen on two scales; the individual and the global. In theory we seek the idea that individuals hold equal rights and a general value as humans (including moral universalism). But many see it difficult to relate equally to individuals everywhere. The worldview finds inter-cultural openness and inclusiveness difficult to fully practice. Especially because the ideals of man can distort their moral compass when interacting with the commons. Subsequently, this can lead to the tragedy of the commons.</p>
<p>research questions and</p>	<p>Research Question:</p> <p>Can we introduce a state of exception at the heart of the North Sea, a grey area to prevent the tragedy of the North Sea commons, and to guard the morals of man and future flows of operation?</p> <p>Sub-research questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How to reclaim land in the North Sea whilst minimising the impact on the existing ecology? (Territory scale)</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. How will the spatial order and orientation of this new commons subvert and convert the grey zone out of the national sovereignty and into a space of neutrality? (Urban scale)</li> <li>3. How does one experience a space of neutrality? (Architecture scale)</li> </ol>
<p>design assignment in which this result.</p>	<p>The proposed design assignment seeks to create a space of neutrality at the heart of the North Sea, at the main intersection of EEZ borders. It is based on the concept, to quote David Held; "<i>increased globalisation doesn't necessarily create an increased openness in the political environment</i>". The unintended consequences of these activities are on our environment.</p> <p><u>Masterplan</u>  The project will be located at the heart of the North Sea, on an area of land that once connected continental Europe with the United Kingdom, called <i>Doggerland</i> (land bridge). Around 6000BC a tsunami submerged the majority of this former landmass, leaving an island called <i>Dogger Bank</i>. As water levels rose in this period the remaining low-lying land slowly disappeared, before this too disappeared. The highest point of this bank is where the project will be located at -10m below sea level. The challenge will be to reclaim a small piece of land that was once lost and to prevent the same fate from happening again, as well as to ensure minimal disruption on the local ecology (this space is a known fishing ground for the North Sea fishermen). The site location presents a poetic space of recapturing the essence of a land that was once connected the two land masses - especially today where there are political tensions. Physically it is the highest submerged point of the North Sea, making it possible to build an island at such a distance from a landmass.</p> <p><u>Architecture Intervention</u>  This is a symbolic project which seeks to establish a neutral ground, not held by any political boundary. The new island will be located on <i>Dogger Bank</i>, it will encompass the idea of a grey area, a state of exception. It will become a new common which gathers knowledge in an institute and resolves disputes in an informal parliament. The institute will address six claims presently on the North Sea; protein, ecology, energy, extractivism, logistics and migration. Presently, a large proportion of surveys are conducted by the oil platform companies. Once the oil is no longer profitable or possible to extract, these surveys will no longer take place. A gap in the market will arise.</p> <p>This knowledge from these surveys will then be passed to the decision makers gathered in the informal government. This will be a space for discussing and resolving internal disputes regarding the North Sea. It will be separate from the daily operations of Brussels and The Hague, yet still under the jurisdiction of the European Union and United Nations.</p>

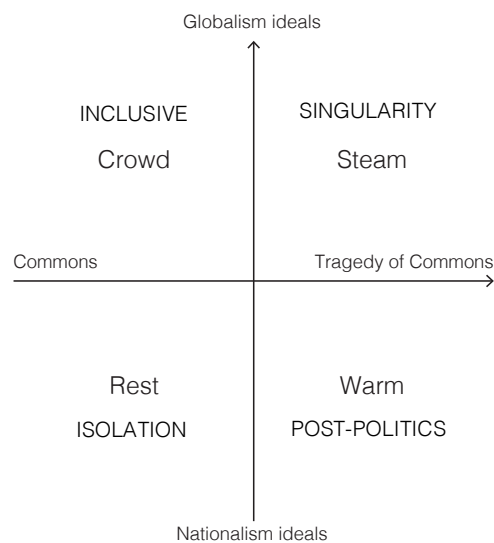
The project aspires to investigate how to cultivate a space of exception - a space of neutrality – within the North Sea. Changing what is perceived or understood in the human consciousness and denounce man’s political agendas once entered the space, to only consider the good of the North Sea commons as a result. Though, also taking into consideration the current demands of globalisation ideals (or nationalism ideals) placed on the North Sea.

## Process

### Method description

The graduation project follows an exploratory research framework intertwined with a constructivist and pragmatist paradigms. The project is approached on three scales; territorial (macro), architecture (meso) and tectonic (micro). On the territorial scale the data was collected using GIS and government websites, this was done in interdisciplinary groups. This data was mapped to show the current and projected outcomes. It gave us a small introduction into different aspects of the environment. – politics, economics, ecological and spatial relationship.

From this research my project started to develop initial fascinations and a problem statement which was then analysed; border as method, North Sea commons, cosmopolitan commons and jurisdiction and sovereignty. This was tested in a scenario-planning application axis diagram (below), it was important to test multiple extreme realities and interpret how different actors will experience the environment, taking into consideration the group work outcomes.



The exercise led me to investigating the three key theorists regarding spatial order and orientation (Schmitt), rethinking the status-quo (Latour) and the changing relationship of sovereign power (Agamben). The sources are key to understanding the relationships of man’s power in relation to the environment. This literature review becomes a key aspect to the construction of the graduation project’s narrative and the foundations to the design proposal.

The research question was a result from the territorial analysis and literature review, it takes into consideration the social and historical context of the North Sea through developing the *research by design*. Socially, it registers, what are the commons? What is a state of exception? And what are global glows of operation in the North Sea? Historically, it recognises what are the different types of borders

from 1150 (when the North Sea was last seen to be “free”) to borderlines that have been established today? How land appropriation and orientation has changed? And what can we learn from the past to prevent it from occurring again?

The studio symposium in December cemented the research through depicting the project in three different types of medias. A 400-word letter expressing our concern and design proposal, three images to visualise the project at three scales and finally, a gypsum model to contextualize it. Each was a different step to express and interpret the research in preparation for the next stage, the design.

The graduation project is a reflection on the research outcomes tested and evaluated, a method to test the potential future North Sea.

## **Literature and general practical preference**

### Key Theorists:

Carl Schmitt

Bruno Latour

Giorgio Agamben

### Case Studies

*State of Exception*

Svalbard Treaty 1920 | Svalbard

Malta Migrant Stand-off (January 2019)

### Islands

Wadden Sea

Proposed Energy Island on Dogger Bank

Making of Palm islands | Dubai

### Parliament

Parliament of Things | Bruno Latour

National Assembly of Bangladesh | Louis Kahn

House of Commons, UK Parliament | Charles Barry and Augustus Pugin

La Maddalena 2009 G8 Summit | Stefano Boeri Architetti

North Sea Embassy

### Literature

ADAMS, R. E. (2017). *Mare Magnum: Urbanisation of Land and Sea*. Ph.D., Iowa State University.

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AUGÉ, M. (1995). *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*, London - New York, Verso.

GAFFNEY, V. F., S. AND SMITH, D. (2009). *Europe's Lost World: The Rediscovery of Doggerland*, London, Council for British Archaeology

JANSSENS, C. G. N. (2014). The Future Commons 2070: the ethical problem of the territorialization of the North Sea. *50th ISOCARP Congress*. Poland: ISOCARP.

MEZZADRA, S. and NEILSON, B. (2013). *Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor*, North Carolina, Duke University Press Books.

NEGARESTARI, R. (2014). Frontiers of Manipulation. *Speculation on Anonymous Materials Symposium*. Germany.

RAWORTH, K. (2018). A healthy economy should be designed to thrive, not grow. Youtube.

SCHMITT, C. (2006). *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of Jus Publicum Europaeum*, New York, Telos Press Publishing.

LATOUR, B. (1991). *We Have Never Been Modern*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

Latour, B. (2004). "From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik." <http://www.brunolatur.fr/sites/default/files/downloads/96-MTP-DING.pdf>

## Reflection

### Relevance

Today, as media engulfs our daily lives with up to date accounts of current state of affairs, it is hard to shy away from contested topics such as Brexit, Trump's administration, economy, migration, climate. It gives the impression that each topic is a separate case and not a series of interconnected events. We try to congregate into one room to discuss the aforementioned topics, but this typically results in complex, expensive and time-consuming meetings with little to show of it. We need to reconnect the conversation and resolve disputes in a more effective and clear manner.

The project attempts to reflect on man's moral compass on its environment, to reconnect nature and culture. The North Sea and its coastal nations become an interesting "precedent" site for this conversation. It encapsulates high levels of tensions, activity and climate change in this dense urban space and becomes a catalyst for the shift in conversation of change, for the common good rather than the individual.

The North Sea is a water body which has become a major source of wealth, prosperity and income, on both the large and small scale. Over exploited, extracted and utilised, as its rewards diminish our interaction with it will soon change. Therefore, a space for conversation and for data gathering on this environment needs to (re)arise. The creation of a new common, a space of exception that all coastal nations regard.

From an architectural perspective, it is a way to bring nature (science representing things) and culture (politics representing subjects) into the same conversation. Designing in collaboration with these representatives and the physical and ecological conditions of the North Sea will result in a programme and site-specific design for the good of the North Sea commons. The design will become the vessel for the future transitional North Sea territory.



## Time Planning

### P1 (week 1-11)

- territorial research (North Sea) (*Site analysis*)
- topical research/ project level (border as method, North Sea commons, grey area - state of the exception) (*situational research*)
- concept formulation (grey area, a state of exception) (*thematic research*)
- draft research

### P2 (week 12-17)

- Graduation plan
- urban research (Dogger Bank, North Sea) (*urban draft*)
- site analysis (Dogger (New) Bank, North Sea – making of the island)
- master plan (massing, spatial orientation on site, characteristic, appearance)
- programme (an island for medium term residents; informal parliament and institute for data gathering on the North Sea) (*programme requirement*)
- draft design (plans, elevations) 1:1000

### P3 (week 18-25)

- draft reflection
- plans, elevations, cross-section, 1:500 / 1:200
- building fragments (parts of the building), plan and cross-section (appropriate scale)
- façade fragment with horizontal and vertical cross-section (appropriate scale)
- details draft

### P4 (week 25-...)

- theoretical and thematical framework of research and design
- final reflection on relevance (territorial, architectonic, social, etc.)
- master plan 1:5000 / 1:1000
- site plan 1:500
- ground level plan 1:500
- plans, elevations, cross-sections 1:200 / 1:100
- building fragments, plan and cross-section 1:50
- façade fragment with horizontal and vertical cross-section (appropriate scale)
- details

### P5 (week ...)

Same as for P4

- impressions  
models