

# 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		
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Studio		
Name / Theme	Borders & Territories	
Main mentor	Which mentor should be placed here?	Architecture and the Built Environment
Second mentor	Which mentor should be placed here?	Architecture and the Built Environment
Argumentation of choice of the studio	My interest resides in the studio's focus on the notions of land and territory, and how Architecture could be an agent in understanding, dissecting, and intervening on selected sites, making clear the complex socio-political relationships that surround them. The coupling of multiple scales and temporalities, used as a design method, is thus of particular interest and in line with my own interests and fascinations, hence the selection of Borders and Territories as the main conceptual and theoretical framework that surrounds my graduation project.	

  

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Indeterminacy as Method
Goal	
Location:	Canakkale, Istanbul, Turkey
The posed problem,	This research investigation stemmed from a fascination with the forces that shape urban contexts. It takes inspiration from existing theoretical and practical debates on the theme of landscape and territories. It is an investigation into socio-political actors, factors, and forces that constitute the built environment. The particularity of this graduation proposal is the use of an abstract theoretical concept and employing the logic behind its formation in dissecting

the contemporary built environment. Indeed, a certain landscape is not only observed as an amalgamation of objects, but rather as indeterminate forces, events, and systems that are in constant state of transformation. This project is thus an investigation into the specific conditions that give birth to impermanence, more particularly the condition of formation of ephemeral cities emerging along the new silk road.

The establishment of a dichotomy between Landscape and City gives way to a more specific divergence, one that relies on the notion of Time as a main authority in this analogy. Subject to exponential spatiotemporal factors, landscapes, settlements, and the relations that define them are thus understood as ephemeral entities in constant state of transformation. The city then emerges as a juxtaposition of ephemeral and permanent components, subject to inevitable transformations across multiple spatiotemporal scales. Here is where Indeterminacy is introduced as a phenomenon capable of understanding and interpreting the state of permanence of the landscape. Undeniably, a built environment's life cycle is heavily conditioned by ephemerality as a condition and Indeterminacy as shaping phenomenon of these conditions. The establishment of Indeterminacy as Method is then the essence of this graduation proposal. To understand the previously mentioned phenomenon, we shall adopt Rahul Mehrotra and Felipe Vera's understanding of ephemeral landscapes, where they state: "temporary cities are ones that are usually structured around one main purpose" (Mehrotra & Vera, 2018). Here, the site under investigation is introduced: the mining city of Can is the main investigation region, along with the many Infrastructures that connect it to its context. As such, Can shall be

	<p>understood as an amalgamation of systems in explicit tension, subject to constant spatiotemporal uncertainties. This is greatly due to the presence of a surface mine producing 2.5 tons of coal yearly at the edge of the city. Thus, the demonstration of the state of impermanence of the city shall be performed by emphasizing the elements of Indeterminacy that surround it. Consequentially, the research aims to employ Indeterminacy as a lens capable of dissecting and intervening on the Territory, bridging the gap between the inherent spatiotemporal impermanent conditions of a site, and the ability to employ this phenomenon as a shaping agent</p>
research questions and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How could Indeterminacy frame the state of impermanence of the landscape?</li> <li>-How could the Territory be understood as an entity through the lens of Indeterminacy, and eventually use the phenomenon as a tool to shape urban contexts?</li> <li>- How could Indeterminacy frame contemporary theory and method and transcribe the pair into a design method capable of specific agencies?</li> </ul>
design assignment in which these result.	<p>Following the Borders &amp; Territories studio line of inquiry, the projected design outcome shall consider the elements of the site as spatial entities in tension constituting the contemporary Territory. As such, the design assignment is concerned with the establishment of the elements (ecological, architectural, etc.) into a constellation capable of defining a speculative context. Considering an ever-growing schism between humans and nature, there needs to be a clear redefinition of the rights, duties, and expressions of each. As such, it becomes important to associate human act as an act of cultivation rather than mutilation of nature, in order to imagine post-</p>

	<p>anthropocenic landscapes that transcend the human-landscape imagination into a cycle focused on growth and reflection. Nature shall not be observed as the backdrop of human activity, a “pristine background” where an urban-industrialized choreography unravels, but rather a symbiotic entity that responds and develops with its counterparts. As the current site of investigation is a highway encompassing different infrastructural and territorial alterations, these elements shall constitute the essence of the design assignment. Examining extreme zones of manifestation of indeterminacy will be the starting point of this assignment:</p> <p>1- Identifying the spatial and temporal manifestations of Indeterminacy in selected sites across the studied highway</p> <p>2- Demonstrating how this phenomenon shapes the built environment through the uncovering of landscape alterations and socio-political implications</p> <p>3- Establishment of a clear method that places Indeterminacy at its core: each drawing, study or analysis shall seek to draw out elements of indeterminacy surrounding select locations, rendering the phenomenon essential as a method.</p> <p>4- Intervention on site that reconsiders the potential of landscape as industrial space, putting forth ecologies, planning paradigms, and responses to already existing territorial conditions.</p>
<b>Process</b>	
<b>Method description</b>	
<p>The research and design approaches closely mirror the proposed theoretical and conceptual framework proposed by the Borders &amp; Territories graduation studio. The initial research and familiarization with the site stemmed as a group mapping activity, whereas site analysis, familiarization, and eventual visit was established through an in-</p>	

depth dissection of the inherent systems and forces that shape the proposed context. As such, the common mapping activity was concerned with questioning the act of mapping and imagining a novel way of mapping that transcends simple representation, projecting the possibilities of Turkey's Infrastructure future through analysis and research. This embodied the first interface and interaction with the site, setting the ground for future selection and intervention.

The second adopted method relied heavily on drawing as an act of both analysis and interpretation. Indeed, the fascination with the phenomenon of Indeterminacy was the spark for the observation of certain spatiotemporal manifestations in the proposed region, which resulted in the establishment and representation of the different components that shape the landscape as a series of systems and structures, together forming the whole of the 'Impermanent Landscape'. Drawing is then the main medium in identifying, representing, and making clear explicit relationships within each studied context.

The third component in the research plan was the establishment of a conceptual and theoretical background that supports the adopted approach, method, and choice of topic. Here, a theory paper that tackles the use of Indeterminacy as Method was introduced. Selecting and analyzing specific phenomena discussed in contemporary literature, it was possible to find precedents, schools of thought, case studies, and proposed techniques of design and observation that highlight the particularity, complexity, and validity of the research and design approach. By analyzing and observing specific studies and reflections on the studied topic, it was possible to clearly delimit the scope, relevance, and intention of the graduation project.

The fourth research and design technique was proposed within the Borders & Territories studio framework. A two-week workshop was preoccupied with the transition from research to design. As such, three separate physical models tackling Site, Form, and Program were produced in line with the previous research. The Modi Operandi workshop enabled the physical representation of the phenomenon of interest, making clear its implications on the three themes mentioned previously. The physical representation of the studied phenomenon allows the transition of the studied theme from concept to a potential project, enabling discussions about the commencement of the design phase.

The culminating method for the graduation studio will combine the research, theory, and interpretation of Indeterminacy as both a spatial and temporal phenomenon. As such, after the site selection, the form and program shall be determined by specific site properties, with the aim of questioning the relationship between Architecture and the Landscape. The ultimate aim is to demonstrate the Indeterminacy method as particular and specific, proposing a process that relies on its manifestations in order to understand the state of impermanence and ephemerality that surrounds urban contexts.

## **Literature and general practical preference**

In order to frame and support the design process, contemporary debates and theory were utilized as a steppingstone accompanying the research. As discussed in my method previously, the third step of the design method was concerned with identifying and situating the thought process within relevant conceptual frameworks.

As the graduation project suggests an alternate method for understanding and eventually employing a specific phenomenon, the employment of case studies was primordial in order to familiarize oneself with the physical manifestations of Indeterminacy. Diller & Scofidio's "The rotary notary and his hot plate" (1987), as well as Joseph Stieglitz's "Equivalents" (1925) are both employed to showcase Indeterminacy as a design method. The in-depth analysis was able to isolate some elements used for the realization of these projects, and eventually act as an inspiration for the upcoming workshop.

The second effort resided in demonstrating Indeterminacy as a phenomenon, by observing specific transformation related to time and space. It was then important to introduce the themes of Entropy and Obsolescence, both heavily discussed within the architectural avant-garde discourse. The writing of Robert Smithson, most notably "Entropy and the new monuments" (1966) in which Smithson analyzes the phenomenon and explains its employment in his own projects provided a complex framework for understanding Indeterminacy as a temporal entity. Additionally, obsolescent certainty was the theme investigated in-depth from Daniel Abramson's "Obsolescence: An Architectural History" (2017). Here, indeterminacy is showcased as a spatial phenomenon, highlighting the impermanent nature of the built environment as a haphazard amalgamation of site-specific interventions and systems.

It was then important to tie the theory to the project under question. As such, it was important to define the Landscape, as it is the main 'site' and scale of research and design. This is possible by a careful spatialization of the site under study and its interpretation as an abstract landscape, understanding a physical space as the action it exercises (or it suffers) on (from) its surroundings. Cerda Ildefonso (General Theory of Urbanization, 1867) and Pier Aureli (Rome: the center(s) Elsewhere, 2010) helped define the urban context as a symptom of artificiality and capitalism, as forms with adaptable, indeterminable content. Abstraction therefore holds a certain aesthetic, a promise of imagination and malleability.

Similarly, it becomes important to define specific practices pertaining to spatial metamorphosis in the landscape. Landscape phenomena could be regarded as actions that constitute the essence of the Territory: landscapes are defined by the actions and imaginations projected upon them. This specific perception of the environment assumes the use of Indeterminacy as a lens through which these 'actions' are manifested, clearly defining the expression of specific spatial and temporal practices. This reveals uncertainty's ability to dissect complex territorial practices. Thus, it becomes essential to define the many systems, infrastructures, and apparatuses that form the 'totality' of the territorial practices under investigation. Here, the reference to "Transgenic Landscape" as introduced by Alvaro Domingues (2011) is of special relevance. Every single element of this Territory becomes a transient object in space, acting in tension with other objects and systems to define spatial and temporal realities.

As such, the literature review acts as a gap between the initial interest and fascination, and the eventual specific site selection, intervention, and analysis. The phenomenon under investigation becomes an Architectural apparatus, force, and eventual Method.

## References & Bibliography

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## 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)?

The proposed graduation project takes inspiration from the Borders & Territories conceptual, practical, and theoretical frameworks as a base for research and design. The studio topic "Transient Liquidities along the New Silk Road" is heavily in line with the proposed graduation topic, as it investigates conditions of formation of post-industrial landscapes in Turkey, a result of varying demands and rich natural resources along the new silk road. Turkey is then at the forefront of rapid transformations, made possible by its complex infrastructural landscape and abundance of natural resources. However, questionable governance, resource employment, and ecological agendas make the coastal city of Canakkale of particular interest, whereas the whole urban fabric is observed as an ephemeral entity, due to the instances of impermanence and indeterminacy that were fundamental to its conception. The city and its surrounding infrastructural systems and nodes then become a system of independent conditions, forming the ephemeral landscape.

As such, the graduation project builds on the initial promise of the Architecture Master track, by exploring a project from its conceptual phase to an actual physical site intervention. The scale of investigation starts from the observation of the region, then decreases in scale to the actual structure and built edifice on site. It is then a multi-scalar, multifaceted investigation into a specific concept, and eventually formalizing and spatializing it into a critical design project. This graduation project is then heavily concerned with concept, theory, and scientific research, and their essential and fundamental implementation within practical, technical, and concrete urban contexts.

Lastly, the graduation project's main fascination is with the forces that shape urban contexts. It is important then to consider the built environment in its different scales and impacts, using Indeterminacy as a design method. Architecture and spatial planning strategies are thus the focus of research and design, centred around a novel phenomenon, acting as a lens to observe these urban contexts. The master track's diversity and its constitution of multiple design practices and sciences was of help for this graduation project. The multi-disciplinary research environment enabled rich discussions about the topic of interest, allowing the questioning of the state of the built environment, and the systems that form its whole. It is then as an investigation into the many forces that shape our contexts. The main guiding force behind this project is then an independent, critical academic approach to education and Architecture.

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

This graduation project takes inspiration from existing theoretical and practical references dealing with the multiple scales of landscapes and territories. It is an investigation into socio-political actors, factors, and forces that constitute the built environment.

The particularity of this graduation proposal is the use of an abstract theoretical concept and employing the logic behind its formation in dissecting the contemporary built environment. Indeed, a certain landscape is not only observed as an amalgamation of objects, but rather as indeterminate forces, events, and systems that are in constant state of transformation. This project is thus as investigation into the specific conditions that give birth to impermanence, more particularly the condition of formation of ephemeral cities emerging along the new silk road.

The thesis project contributes to the ongoing discussion about cities and urban fabrics, investigating a particular spatiotemporal phenomenon through its different stages and transformations.