

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), 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	Hiu Yeung LEE
Student number	5264936

Studio		
Name / Theme	Borders & Territories / Transient Liquidities Along the New Silk Road	
Main mentor	Stefano Milani	Education Coordinator Discipline Borders & Territories
	Filip Geerts	Borders & Territories
Second mentor	Mauro Parravicini	Building Technology
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The Borders & Territories studio can provide me with the opportunities and freedom in exploring experimental architectural topics which might be constrained in some of the typical studios. Meanwhile, the theory and research-based design approach could help me to ground and justify radical ideas in the theoretical framework and the physical reality.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Rumination of Ruination A Search for the Meanings of Decay in the Post-industrial Trieste
Goal	
Location:	Trieste, Italy
The posed problem,	The city of Trieste has been filled with ageing urban fabrics and abandoned industrial buildings due to obsolescence. Witnessing the decay of the city excusably provoked the pessimism of the locals as it made them conscious of the fact that their life and pride are degrading. The negative labels associated with decay inevitably seized the general definition and cognition. However, deterioration can only be understood as one of the superficial readings of the phenomenon of decay. As depicted in many arts and literature, decay does have its only poetics, aesthetics and intrinsic values that embellish and complement the urban environment and memories. Meanwhile, the degeneration of architecture with symbolic values, be it an intentional or inadvertent incident, would

	implicate significant political messages and ideas to the society. In the case of Trieste, the meanings of this natural (and occasionally artificial) process are still to be explored and discussed.
research questions and	Is there a possibility that decay could be considered a constructive phenomenon that can sublime as a form of regeneration for the ageing city?
design assignment in which these result.	The design would be an experiment that attempts to embrace the material processes, aesthetics and the spatial and programmatic potentials informed by the phenomenon of decay. It searches for alternative answers to the preestablished architectural typologies, meanings and purposes.

Process

Method description

The research uses the cartographic approach as the fundamental instrument to understand the typological conditions and the morphological pattern in the historical urban fabric of Trieste. By **mapping** out various yet correlated topics in the field of interests, together with the collective mapping excises, a wider picture of the understanding of the entire site context of Trieste can be constructed while narrowing down the personal fascinations to building up an assumption for further studies.

Followed by a **site visit**, the second-hand data and information gathered so far and the hypothesis stemmed from the primary comprehension of the site can be verified. A first personal experience in the site on its impression, ambience and living in the city, as well as first-hand documented materials of the interested abandoned ruins and urban conditions can be collected.

Constructing on the basis of cartography and materials taken from the site visit, a more detailed and insightful idea on the topic could be elaborated in the way of **further mapping and data analysis**. It includes the categorisation of on-site images about the abandonment and ruination of buildings in the city so as to generalise and visualise the situation of decay in Trieste. Another action is to create a mapping regarding abandoned buildings as a way to reveal its significance in presenting or obscuring the urban functionality. These elaborated ideas would then become the ingredients for design.

In parallel, a conceptualised idea of decay is to be developed by establishing a theoretical framework through **writing** to dissect the component of the phenomenon, such as the material processes, aesthetics and implications, which also contribute as influential ingredients. In the search for a position for the research, dialectics could be set up to juxtapose related voices in preservation, anti-restoration and ruin meanings. With the developed standpoint, all the materials collected and

mappings created could be further examined, which in the end become the principle of how to combine the prepared constituents into a design solution.

Entering the design stage, the making of **conceptual physical models** helps to crystallise the information, data and results collected from the research stage. The models could give a tangible representation to the abstract and theoretical design ideas that emerge as the concluding understanding of the site, programme and spatial possibilities from the research materials. Model techniques involved can also inform new design ideas and spatial qualities in the process of making.

In the design process, references towards **deconstructivist** architecture, including the work of Daniel Libeskind, Lebbeus Woods and Zaha Hadid, would be made due to the nature of the graduation topic as a critical view toward the current preset attitude and approaches toward decaying buildings. Techniques and underlying principles are learnt, elaborated and extended to give an answer to the specific site of Trieste.

Literature and general practical preference

Abramson, Daniel M.. *Obsolescence: An Architectural History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Augé, Marc. *Le Temps en Ruines (Time in Ruins)*. Paris: Galilée, 2003.

Clutter, McLain. "Notes on Ruin Porn." In *The Avery Review* 18, October 2016. <http://averyreview.com/issues/18/notes-on-ruin-porn>.

Dorigo, Fabio. "I novanta 'buchi neri' di Trieste che attendono la rigenerazione (The ninety 'black holes' of Trieste awaiting regeneration)." *Il Piccolo*. February 18, 2020. <https://ilpiccolo.gelocal.it/trieste/cronaca/2020/02/18/news/un-area-che-supera-gli-850-mila-metri-quadrati-superiore-persino-ai-60-ettari-dell-antico-scalo-i-novanta-buchi-neri-di-trieste-1.38483590> (accessed October 10, 2021).

Huysen, Andreas. "Nostalgia for Ruins." *Grey Room* 23 (Spring 2006): 6-21.

Morris, William. "Manifesto of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings". In *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*, edited by Nicholas S. Price, M. K. Talley Jr. and Alessandra M. Vaccaro, 319-321. Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1996.

Pétursdóttir, Þóra, and Bjørnar Olsen. "Modern Ruins: Remembrance, Resistance, and Ruin Value". In *Encyclopaedia of Global Archaeology, 4983-4994*. Edited by Claire Smith. Switzerland: Springer, 2014.

Simmel, Georg. "The Ruin". In *Georg Simmel 1858-1918: A Collection of Essays with Translations and Bibliography*, translated by David Kettler, 259-266. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1959.

Solnit, Rebecca. "The Ruins of Memory." In *Ruins: Documents of Contemporary Art*, edited by Brian Dillon, 150-152. MA: MIT Press, 2011.

Speer, Albert. *Inside the Third Reich*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970.

Stokes, Adrian. "The Pleasures of Limestone." In *Ruins: Documents*, 24-26.

Viollet-le-Duc, Eugène Emmanuel. "Restoration". In *Historical and Philosophical Issues*, 314-318.

Woods, Lebbus. *Anarchitecture: Architecture is a Political Act*. NY: St Martin's Press, 1992.

Woods, Lebbus. *The Storm and the Fall*. NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004.

Woods, Lebbus. "Walls of Change." WordPress. Last modified May 28, 2010.

<https://lebbeuswoods.wordpress.com/2010/05/28/walls-of-change/>.

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)?

I would view my graduation project as a reflection of the knowledge I have acquired so far throughout my master programme. My MSc1 and MSc2 design course in my first-year study under the track of Architecture fall rather into a practical aspect on understanding how architecture work technically, socially and aesthetically, and what kinds of possibilities we could develop from the technological solutions to answer the global or regional issues and crises in our time. The freedom I have in the graduation studio allows me to take a step back from what I have already learnt, what I and the field are taken for granted by questioning and challenging the present attitude toward the missed, ignored or overlooked parts in the architectural field and our built environment. The topic of decay has always been treated as an antagonistic problem to be solved for the sake of architectural monumentality, heritage preservation and building maintenance. However, my graduation project can enable me to see it as an opportunity for the extension of our existing knowledge on the phenomenon itself and even the potentials it possesses to alter our built environment rather than considering it as a problem to be eradicated. It is a critical review of the architectural understanding and position I have developed in my master programme by pushing the boundary of my knowledge of the field.

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

Entering the post-industrial era in the 21st century, the port-industry-oriented Trieste began to face the radical transformation of the global economy and trading system. The swift changes in the building requirements eventually led to the rapid obsolescence of buildings, renouncing a large number of outdated structures into the already saturated pool of ruin landscape in Trieste. Similar situations happened around the globe when industrial countries in the developed world had met the crossroads in economic development where their production industries began to dwindle. The changes in production mode had urged those cities to keep updating their hardware frequently, while putting an end to the prospering manufacturing sector, leaving a lot of retired buildings and infrastructures among the urban fabric in vacancy and a slow process of decay. To release the lands with strategic values for economic growth or social development under capitalistic urbanism, demolition and rebuilding, renovations, preservations and regenerations are considered the major approaches to handle abandoned buildings and ruins in the contemporary time. The option of including and embracing decay in the plan seems to be out of the picture. While the mainstream strategies of restoration and reuse have already stirred up a

few controversies that the preservative actions are actually depriving the heritage of its original values, it becomes critical to reflect on the current standpoint on the presentation of old buildings in the new age and rethink our relationship with decay as a way to help us proceed to the future. The research and design result may open up discussion in an alternative way the architectural field deals with modern historical buildings.