

## Graduation Plan

Personal information	
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Studio	
Name / Theme	Architectural Engineering
Teachers	Anne Snijders
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The studio gives the opportunity to develop yourself in your own interest or fascination which leads to the possibility to define your own research and project.
Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	'Ruinophilia: villae Romana'
Goal	
Location:	Parkstad Limburg, the Netherlands
Problem statement	The Via Belgica is a 400 km long Roman road, starting in Boulogne Sur-Mer and ending in Koln. The road is of universal significance for government and military organizations, trade and industry, communication and spread of the Roman culture. In Roman times the Via Belgica functioned as a fundamental development axis for this area. Nowadays, there is a lack in cultural identity in this area. The former meaning and significance is disappeared. Along this road there are studies and analysis to the human activity in the past through excavation of the material culture and environmental data. Several anchors, including ruins of Roman villae, are valuable for possible development.

**Objective**

One of the anchors is the Villa Voerendaal. There are a number of Roman villae founded in the area of the Via Belgica. The villae were one of the most prominent exponents of the Roman culture. The properties consists of the 'pars urbana', the main buildings, and the 'pars rustica', mainly barns. These villae can be used to give new functions and form a museological, educational or cultural/touristical landscape in which the Via Belgica functions as one physical continuous linear infrastructure. The main intention is to research the qualities and identity of the Roman culture and to translate this to the present in a new layer.

**Overall design question**

'How to reinterpret the cultural history of the Via Belgic, with a focus on the ruins of the Roman villae, with the aim to make the area recognisable and valuable back again using the via as a primary connecting axis.'

**Thematic research question**

'How can reuse the ruins of the Roman villae and residues of the Via Belgica contribute to the forming of a new identity in the area.'

**Subquestion**

'What is the relation of the Via Belgica with the Roman villae?'

'In which conditions are the villae, or the ruins of the villae, nowadays and which conservation techniques are used or can be used?'

'What are the factors that make the villae prominent exponents of the Roman culture?' (materials, structures, programs etc.)

'How to reuse ruins, concerning their strength, durability and safety in a new design?'

## Process

### Method description

The methods of research will consist of three components. The first one is literature study. With this study will the use of the existing stock, in this case ruins, in architecture be discovered. Also literature study will provide background information about the philosophy of production of space in an existing environment with a cultural value, and about preserving ruins. The second method is to use case studies. Till now there are several examples of the use of ruins in architecture, with adding new technologies. This study will broaden the objective in using ruins and the current state of combination of the ruins with current technologies. The third one is the study on site. New insights will be developed in site while analysing and observing the left over ruins and segments of the Via Belgica.

### Literature and general practical preference

Dillon, B. (2004). Ruins. Documents of contemporary art. London: Whitechapel Art Gallery.  
Macaulay, R.D. (2011). Pleasure of ruins. USA: Nabu Press  
Appleyard, D., Lynch, K, Myer, J.R. (1958) The view from the road. Cambridge: the MIT press  
Lefebvre, H. (1991) The production of space. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing  
Benjamin, W. (2009) The origin of German Tragic Drama. London: Verso  
Ruskin, J. (2013) The conservation of the cultural heritage.

+ case studies

## Reflection

### Relevance

In this times there is a fascination for appreciation of ruins. Half destroyed buildings and architectural fragments have existed since the beginning of the human culture. Friedrich Schlegel commented on the tempo of transformation of modern ruins: *'Many of the works of the Ancients have become fragments. Many of the Moderns are fragments the moment they come into being.'* Ruins are places which are open for imagination. Decaying structures and abandoned places have been the inspiration for many architects since long ago. Development and transposition of the ancient cultural history can be applied in a larger social and scientific framework.

# Time planning

