

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	Peter Laurence Gill
Student number	5249961

Studio		
Name / Theme	Borders & Territories Graduation Studio / Transient Liquidities along the New Silk Road	
Main mentor	Oscar R.G. Rommens	Architecture and the Built Environment, Theory & Territories
Second mentor	Ir. Pierre H. M. Jennen	Structural Engineering
Third mentor	Dr. Nishat N. Awan	Architecture and the Built Environment
Argumentation of choice of the studio	To develop a new conceptual and practical understanding of the spatial conditions created surrounding urban borders.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	Where the Wall Lies: Urban barriers and edge conditions <i>An investigation into edges and boundaries as spatial modifiers</i>
Goal	
Location:	Thessaloniki, Greece
The posed problem,	Thessaloniki no longer exists as a walled city in the same sense that it did in the 18th century and has since grown far beyond its historic boundary. Despite the fact that for large portions of its length, the wall no longer exists above ground, its legacy still plays a large role in the spatial, cultural, and architectural division of the city. As both the concept of the historic wall, which is treated as a monument and is to be untouched, and the ruin of the wall, which stands as an obstacle to the development of the city, exist in parallel a conflict exists between the official and cultural image of the wall as an urban artefact. Due to the

	<p>dichotomous urban relationship the historic wall has with the built environment, it has left a void in the city fabric where it is not reaching its full potential as an instrument that could activate the spatial integration of the past and the present. Through its unpacking, the walls role as a controlling artefact can shed light on the power dynamics and politics of the city. This will not only reveal the significance of this cultural artefact as a boundary element but also elaborate the spectrum of spatial territory this artefact occupies within the city.</p>
research questions and	<p>To advance my research I have set a series of research questions, each of which aim to unravel the emerging spatial relations presented by the wall. Each of which would result in a series of textual and visual representation elaborating the tensions of the wall as a point of intersectionality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -How can the static monument of the historic wall be distinguished from the phenomena of its spatial autonomy as an urban artefact? -To what extent does the spatial autonomy of the historic city wall of Thessaloniki result in different spatial conditions? -What socio-political factors have contributed to the dynamic spatial conditions surrounding the wall and how has this changed over time? -In what domains does the historic wall still exert influence?
design assignment in which these result.	
<p>The project aims to act as an intermediary between the historical preservationist movement and the vernacular modes of spatial inhabitation seen in the areas around Thessaloniki's historic city wall.</p> <p>By proposing the re-inhabitation of the areas surrounding the wall, the project works to re-enable and re-empower the wall as more than just a static urban artifact. The project explores the relationships between public space, spatial inhabitation, and heritage to create an urban catalyst of the social, similar to the agora of the past. The shared living, education, and community focus of the program is aimed at diversifying the conception of historical spaces such as the city wall into places not</p>	

only of reflection and reverence but into structures which breed engagement and growth as well.

Together these factors work to provide insights into how the conditions surrounding urban artifacts such as Thessaloniki's historic wall can be manipulated to create socially productive spaces which engage in the continued spatial history of the city. The previously diminishing role of the wall as a spatially separating object which has been disestablished through the demolition of the historic housing will be re-established through the built intervention to re-align connections between internal and external communities.

Process

Method description

Four themes have been defined in order to provide structure to this investigation and to support findings. Firstly, by exploring the cultural attitudes to the wall as an urban artifact the concepts of Intra Muros/ Extra Muros will be used to define the historical and contemporary approaches to the wall. This found understanding will then be used to investigate the autonomy of the wall as a monument as defined in the second theme. The reasons behind this will be justified through the heritage and preservation lens of the third theme. Together these investigations will then be projected against the current state of the wall in the fourth theme to create a vertical history represented through the physical condition and materiality of the wall itself. This should all together provide significant information to justify the existing state of the wall and inform decisions surrounding its future as an element of the city's urban fabric.

These themes provide the main structure of the city and site investigations. Starting on the city scale, these themes capture a particular aspect of Thessaloniki's historic wall. With each iteration of the investigation, these will be reintroduced and evaluated against one another to provide visually tangible insights about the spatial impact of the wall.

Literature and general practical preference

- Boer, I. E. (2006). *Uncertain Territories: Boundaries in Cultural Analysis*. Brill/Rodopi.
- Cheah, P., & Robbins, B. (1998). *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation* (Cultural Politics) (First edition). Univ Of Minnesota Press.
- Hauge A. (2007) "Identity and Place: A Critical Comparison of Three Identity Theories¹," *Architectural Science Review*, 50(1), pp. 44–51. doi: 10.3763/asre.2007.5007.
- Houtum, H. V., & Kramsch, O. (2004). *B/ordering Space* (Border Regions Series). Routledge.
- Kostof, S. (2015). *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* by Spiro Kostof(2015–08-04). Oxford University Press.
- Newman, D. (2006). *The Lines that Continue to Separate Us: Borders in a Borderless World*. *Progress in Human Geography* 30(2).
- Newman, O. (1966). *Creating defensible space*. Diane Publishing.
- Polo, M., & Latham, R. (1958). *The Travels of Marco Polo* (Reissue ed.). Penguin Classics.
- Rumford, C. (2008). *Introduction: Citizens and borderwork in Europe*. *Space and Polity*.
- Sennett, R. (1998). *The spaces of democracy*. [Ann Arbor]: University of Michigan, College of Architecture + Urban Planning.
- Schimanski, J., & Wolfe, S. F. (2018). *Border Aesthetics: Concepts and Intersections* (Time and the World: Interdisciplinary Studies in Cultural Transformations, 3) (1st ed.). Berghahn Books.
- Wilson, T. M., & Donnan, H. (2012). *A Companion to Border Studies* (1st ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

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)?

As an architect, it is important to have a wide understanding of the diverse spatial conditions of the built environment. During my studies at TU Delft I have tried to explore as many definitions of "Architecture" as I could to find both my place within the field and to understand the positions of others. The views explored on the built environment in the Borders and Territories studio have been the most confrontational to me so far as they deal with both the physical and the meta-physical. My graduation project aims to capture these nuanced relationships which I have been made more conscious of through the studio in order to gain a greater understanding of what it means to inhabit space.

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

My work explores the social consequences of heritage preservation actions and the supporting of vernacular building methods as a valuable resource both in terms of maintaining a co-linear narrative for the city and supporting historical communities. It therefore provides a counter narrative to the purist preservationist approach to heritage which has become more prevalent over the last 30 years.

Given this approach, much of the smaller independent narratives of social history will be lost which I am deliberately choosing to honour and preserve. These micro-narratives provide uniquely valuable insights into daily life and as such as crucial to the improvement of urban, domestic, and socially conscious design.