“Designer huts” in allotment gardens – A new phenomenon – A case of Warsaw, Poland

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Background and Aims

- Allotment garden – (not) a socialistic relic
- Changing environment
- Changing buildings

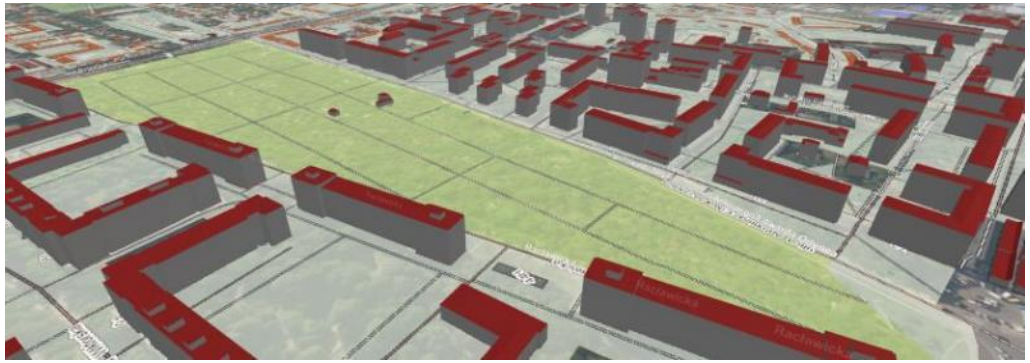
Explore the buildings in allotment gardens…

Identify patterns in designs and explore them

Explore the new phenomenon of *“designer buildings”*

Warsaw’s allotment gardens

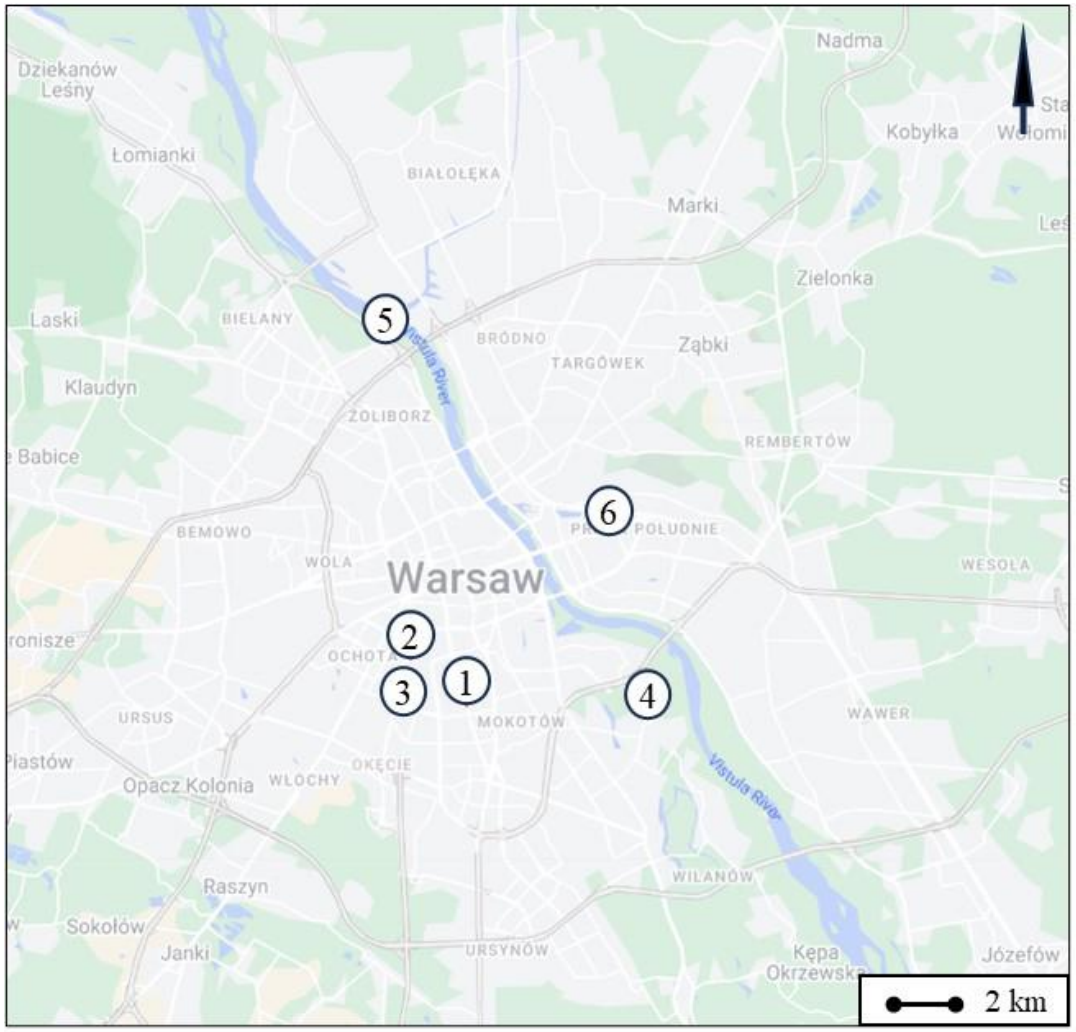
- 190 family gardens
- 30,000 allotment gardens
- 1,200ha (2.3% of Warsaw’s area, 7% of green space)



mapa.um.warszawa.pl
https://warszawa.wyborcza.pl/warszawa/7,34862,15801157,tysiac-hektarow-ogrodow-dzialkowych-do-zwrotu-sa-roszczenia.html

Methodology

No	Area (ha)	AGs
1	9.8000	275
2	17.5400	520
3	2.8000	74
4	11.6800	227
5	15.9500	461
6	21.0000	400



Private spaces but public green infrastructure

- Act on family allotment gardens (AFAG, 2013)
- Green areas - public infrastructure
- Allotment garden:
  - Max 500m^2
  - Gardening and/or recreation
  - No accommodation
- Family garden:
  - Allotment gardens
  - Common infrastructure

Year	Max. built-up area	Max. height	Terrace / pergola
1965	12m^2	n/a	n/a
1977	20m^2	3m	n/a
1982	20m^2 in cities 35m^2 outside cities	4m	6m^2 in cities 9m^2 outside cities
1987	20m^2 in cities 35m^2 outside cities	4m – flat roof 5m – pitched roof	n/a
2014	35m^2	4m – flat roof 5m – pitched roof	12m^2

Social and other changes – people and uses

Retirees and elderly

Intensive gardening

Biodiversity - beauty

Biodiversity - subsistence

Young adults and parents

Relaxing “gardening”

Mono-culture

“Wild” nature

Building design – typology framework

Criterion	Description
Function	Major functionality of the building (purpose and use)
Rules	Typical dimensions of the building, floor area, height, verandas and other elements
Aesthetics	Design style and typical design features
Technology	Dominant building materials and building structure, solutions used in the construction
Nature	Level of interaction with nature, connectedness or separation from the green area
Community	Actual users and role of the building in community building

Source: Authors based on Thompson (2000) and Tudor (2014)

Thompson, I.H. (2002) Ecology, community and delight: a trivalent approach to landscape education. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, *60*(2), 81–93. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0169-2046(02)00061-0
Tudor, Ch. (2014) *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*, Natural England. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/691184/landscape-character-assessment.pdf

Evolution of Design

Functionalism
1950 - early 70s

“Vernacular pseudo-classicism”
1980s

Recreational functionalism
since 1970s

“Single-family” houses
since 1990s

“New single-family” houses
since late 2013

Ascetic neo-modernism
current

Return to original design concepts
current

“Designer buildings” – interview topics

Phenomenological research: Ball *et al.* (2023), Booth *et al.* (2023), Horry *et al.* (2023)

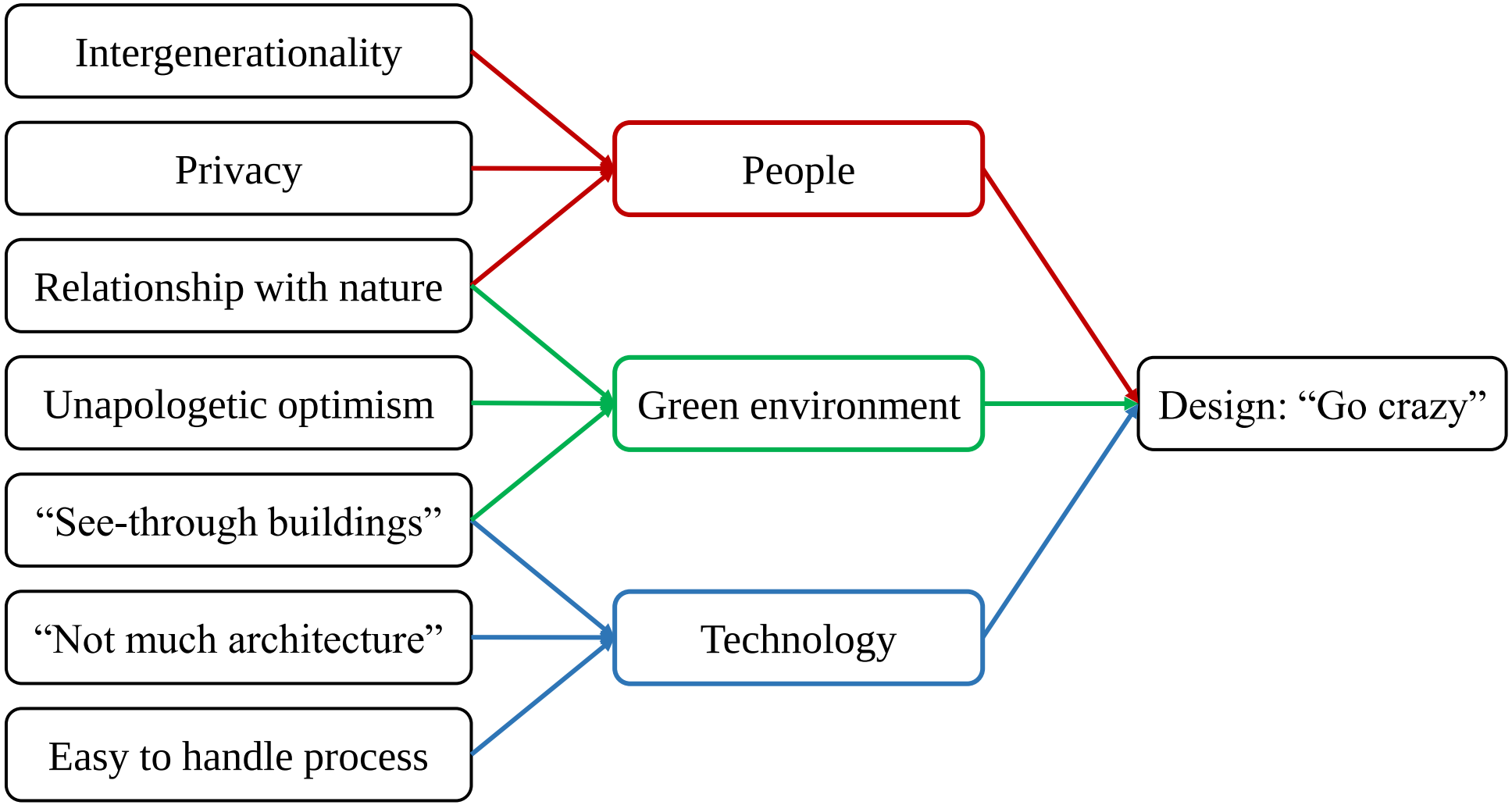
- Initial thoughts and feelings about designing the building
- Architectural context that influenced the design
- Perception of privacy
- Design process and intricacies of the development process
- Meeting requirements of the users
- Comparing design to other architectural projects
- Perceptions of the changing function of family gardens
- Perspectives on the long-term future of allotment gardens
- Overall impressions and advice to other architects and designers

Participants and their buildings

Id	Gender	Age
P1	Male	40-50
P2	Female	30-40
P3	Male	40-50
P4	Female	50-60

Id	Location	Floor area
B1	FG2	35m^2
B2	FG2	35m^2
B3	FG5	10m^2
B4	FG3	25m^2

Observations



Conclusions

- “Designer buildings” …

  … more than just buildings

- Buildings - well-thought through designs, more than the building, catalysts for higher value aesthetics in high value-green space
- Architects - aesthetics, technology, integration with nature, users
- Community - privacy & openness, myriad of users

Photos: Authors and courtesy of Elżbieta Gozdowska, Rajarshi Roy, research participants and their photographers