Archetype of Alleys in the Cities - A Retrospective Approach

Rafal Blazy

1Cracow University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture, Institute of City and Regional Planning A-5, ul. Warszawska 24, 31-155 Cracow, Poland

r_j_blazy@wp.pl

Abstract. Alleys are very important elements in the city. Their role is not only architectural, but also cultural and social. When we design characteristic points on a city map, they are very often significant spaces in the wider area, as well as a place that is generally known, recognizable and allowing to determine a location or a reference point. According to the contemporary urban definitions, the alleys are walking, cycling or driving routes. The alley also includes the waterway route, planted on both sides with trees or shrubs with a specific composition that is keeping the rhythm of planting and landscaping connections. In the article, the author included historical and cultural changes that take place in contemporary times. The alleys create permanent - stable forms in the landscape. On the other hand, due to the excessive car traffic and related environmental pollution, the alleys lose their recreational significance. The role of the alleys in the city is changing. Usually, it was a system which was always associated with fashion and prestige. The author in conclusion showed that the main values of the alleys should be cultivated; nowadays, their most important feature from the archetypical point of view should be the recreation and economic opportunities. The article shows that today's alleys should have less transport importance. This is because the car traffic is no longer synonymous with the progress of civilization and technical achievements.

1. Introduction

Alleys are very important elements not only architectural, but also cultural and social. When designating characteristic points on a city map, they are very often a significant space in the wider area, as well as a place that is generally known, recognizable and allowing to determine a location or a reference point. According to contemporary urban definitions, the alley is a walking, cycling or driving route. The alley also includes the waterway route, planted on both sides with trees or shrubs with a specific composition that is keeping the rhythm of planting and landscaping connections. Alley usually is a representative element of the city, characterized by special natural, cultural, aesthetic and economic values. "Allée" (meaning "the road", later translated into "alley") comes from the French "aller". Dezallier d'Argenville, an excellent French theoretician of the gardens in the eighteenth century, meant quite generally alley as a path in the garden or park with accompanying vegetation [1], [2], [3].

The alleys create permanent - stable forms in the landscape. One of the oldest is the Chestnut Alley in Croft Castle, from the beginning of the 17th century in Poland, it is Lime Tree Alley in Margonin which is 250 years old. These alleys from the first half of the last century can still experience another hundred years. Unfortunately, nowadays they are cut under the pretext of increasing the number of car accidents. On the other hand, due to excessive car traffic and related environmental pollution, the alley loses its recreational significance. The role of the alley in the city is changing. Usually, it was a system always associated with fashion and prestige, which is more or less the functional archetype of the alley. Moreover, its most important feature from the archetypical point of view should be recreation and economic opportunities. The article shows that today's alleys should have less transport importance. This is because car traffic is no longer synonymous with the progress of civilization and technical achievements.
2. Alleys and their importance in the city.
"The alley is a walking path, bicycle path or roadway, as well as a waterway route, planted on both sides with trees or shrubs with a specific composition that is keeping the rhythm of planting and landscape connections." The alleys vary depending on the place of occurrence, horizontal and vertical projection, type of road surface, tree species used and purpose to be used. In terms of nature, we distinguish single-species or multi-species alleys, as well as one-, two- or multi-row alleys. In the Polish open landscape, a single-row alley (one row from each side) is most common, established in one-century and from one-species, it is usually the main tree alley (the most popular species in Poland are: lindens, oaks, poplars and clones).

Alleys are also present in gardens as independent elements. They often perform a function of an access road to the spatial dominants of important places, for example: commute and access roads to the palaces. Within the cities and towns, there are alleys that accompanying streets, appearing in public premises of greenery such as folk parks, promenades, sports grounds, cemeteries and necropolises.

Aesthetically, we distinguish open and closed alleys. The open alley (allée découverte) has a wide gap between rows of trees, and the visibility of the "sky range" in selected places is provided by see-through of the crowns. Examples of this type of implementation are representative alleys in baroque gardens. Closed alley (allée couverte), this is an assumption in which the tree crowns touch each other creating the form of a "shadow roof". Often, tree crowns are formed in this system by cutting and care. Their groundsides are often closed by bushes or hedges.

Alleys significantly reduce noise (up to 50%) and act as pollution filters. They can neutralize up to 70% of air pollution. It is important that the trees produce oxygen, as well as volatile substances, which are bactericidal and stimulate the process of breathing and circulation, even regulate the functioning of the human nervous system.1

Tree shelters are long-lived assumptions. Arrangements from the first half of the last century may at least last another hundred years. Unfortunately, many such assumptions are cut under the pretext of increasing the number of car accidents. Many of them are also mutilated - what is justified as the fallen branches may pose a threat to traffic. Due to the dynamic progress of civilization, the pressure of this type of activities is increasing. It is becoming easier and faster to change the landscape around us, which sometimes was cultivated for decades. Sustainable, stable forms, landscape architecture and cultural heritage are the subjects to deconstruction [3],[4],[5].

3. Case study
3.1 Chapultepec Avenida, Mexico City, Mexico
A good example of a classic alley is Chapultepec Avenida, it is one of the main roads in Mexico City. It serves as the main circular transport route in both directions to connect the central part of the city from the areas near Bosque de Chapultepec, Tacubaya and Polanco. It flows into the western part of Pedro Antonio Santos Avenida, connecting the areas of Tacubaya and the financial district of Santa Fe, while from the east it stretches towards the historic center of Mexico City on Arcos de Belén Alley. Part of the alley was led along the trail of the former aqueduct Chapultepec. Currently, it is one of the most important and famous roads in Mexico City. Moving along Avenida Chapultepec in the direction of Oriente-Poniente, we can meet many attractions such as Conjunto Mascota - one of the first residential buildings built in the city, nineteenth-century residences, Glorieta de los Insurgentes and Insurgentes metro station.

---
1 Trees also contribute to the increase of ionic potential and the creation of a favorable balance of negative and positive ions in the air.
In August 2015, the Mexican government announced plans to build the "Culture Corridor" of Chapultepec, it was planned to introduce minibuses next to the Chapultepec and Glorieta de Insurgentes metro (Metro Insurgentes). The original project included the construction of a second floor for pedestrians, including a shopping center, shops, restaurants and services, as well as cultural spaces. The goal was to connect Colonia Roma with the Rosa area. The project aroused controversy between citizens and social organizations. Going through the revitalization process, the space should have received a new form. The traffic was captured in two lanes in each direction; the rest was intended for pedestrians, cyclists, rollers, etc. In addition, the space gained a friendly character by introducing a large amount of greenery and elements of small architecture having both a recreational and leisure function. Along the alley, there are many service places such as cafes, restaurants and shops to meet the needs of people spending time there. An additional advantage were places where street fountains have been set up, allowing the passers-by to cool down on warm days. A large amount of low greenery and rows of trees not only improved the visual aspects, but also gave a lot of shade what in Mexico is a significant advantage, taking into account the climate. The area was very well connected by public transport, easy access to the metro station and buses increased the attractiveness of this place for tourists and residents. Moreover, it reduces the number of people interested in reaching the park area using their own car, which reduces traffic in a given area, and as a result, gives fewer amounts of produced fumes and greater safety. Despite that, the project was not realized strictly according to the first conception. Alley has become a very important and representative element of the Federal District, combining communication and recreational functions.2

A very important element of the Chapultepec Alley is Glorieta de Insurgentes, a large roundabout created at the intersection of Avenida Chapultepec and Avenida de los Insurgentes. The Oaxaca Alley and the streets of Jalapa and Genoa are open nearby. It consists of a perimeter street and a round pedestrian square in the center, which is surrounded by shops located under it. Additionally, a metro station is also localized underground. Glorieta de Insurgentes was thoroughly rebuilt in 2012 thanks to the installation of advertising nodes and the organization of distributed advertising. It aims to imitate public spaces of a similar nature, such as Times Square, Shibuya or Piccadilly Circus.

3.2 Jerozolimskie Alleys, Warsaw, Poland
Jerozolimskie Alleys are one of the largest and most important alleys of Warsaw. This is the street running through Śródmieście, Ochota, Włochy, Wola and Ursus, starting from Wisłostrada (Poniatowski Bridge) and going to the city limits at the intersection with street Bodzicha and

2 The castle and garden complex Chapultepec is closely connected with the alley. Chapultepec, commonly referred to as "Bosque de Chapultepec" (Las Chapultepec) in Mexico, is the second largest urban park in Latin America, after Santiago Metropolitan Park in Chile, with a total area of just over 686 hectares (1,700 acres). Classified as one of the largest and most visited city parks, together with Bois de Boulogne in Paris, Imperial Gardens in Tokyo and Central Park in New York. The name "Chapultepec" means "on the grasshopper hill" in Nahuatl and refers to a large rock formation, which is the center of the first part of the park. One of the main functions of the park is the ecological space in Greater Mexico. It is considered as the first and most important "lung" in Mexico City, with trees that supplement oxygen to the Valley of Mexico. The area of the park was inhabited and considered as a landmark since pre-Columbian times, when it became a retreat for the Aztec rulers. In the colonial period, the Chapultepec castle was built here, which eventually became the official residence of the Mexican chiefs of state. It remained the residence until 1940, when it was moved to another part of the park called Los Pinos. Bosque de Chapultepec is divided into three parts, the first one is the oldest and the most visited. This section contains most of the park's attractions, including the castle, the Chapultepec Zoo, the Anthropology Museum and the Rufino Tamayo Museum. It receives about 15 million visitors per year. The area of the park complex itself has been thoroughly cleaned up and renovated. The huge Chapultepec Park in Mexico has become more connected to the city, more accessible to residents and more environmentally friendly. In 2013, the City created a major revitalization plan for the second part of Chapultepec, which dealt with four priorities: improvement of mobility options, better water and infrastructure maintenance, the organization of stores and sellers to optimize the use of public space and revitalize green areas.
Sosnkowski, their length is almost 12 kilometers. In various periods of their existence, alleys were called: Jerozolimska Road, Jerozolimska Street, Jerozolimska Alley, Bahnhofstraße (Station Street), sometimes also 3rd May Alley, Reichstraße (Reich), Ostlandstraße (Eastern Territories) and Sikorski Alley.

The history of Jerozolimskie Alleys dates back to 1702, the first significant object erected along the street was built in 1844-1845 and designed by Henryk Marco. It was the Warsaw - Vienna Train Station, located at the crossroads with Marshal Street. From that moment, the northern frontage of Jerozolimskie Alleys is connected with running a railway route there. The construction of the railway station gave impetus to the development of the southern Śródmieście and the road itself, which at that time received the name Jerozolimska Street. The first tenement houses in this place began to appear in the 1850s. In next years, the street's status increased, thanks to which at the end of the 19th century its entire name was changed to the Jerozolimskie Alleys. Even in the interwar period, it was planned to continue the street extension to the west of Zawisza Square, towards the West Railway Station, however, this road has never gone beyond the sphere of plans. During the Second World War, the Germans changed the name of Alley to Bahnhofstrasse (Station Street), then to Reichstrasse (Reichstrasse) and Ostlandstrasse (Eastern Territories), the idea of a street extension to the west also returned, but only the Jerozolimskie Rogatki was dismantled.3

As a result of war activities, the building near the street was largely destroyed, more than 30 tenement houses were found in the ruin, furthermore, the strategic objects for the city - Poniatowski Bridge and Main Station were blown up by the Nazis. After the war, it was decided not to rebuild the damaged buildings4. Many of the buildings in different parts between Emilii Plater and Marszałkowska Street survived the war. In the years 1947-1949, the east part of Nowy Świat was called Aleja Sikorskiego Alley (compare: Sikorskiego Alley), but in 1949 the original name Jerozolimskie Alleys was restored for the whole street. It was also proposed to extend the tramline to the West Station, but this idea also never went beyond the sphere of plans. In the 1960s Jerozolimskie Alleys was significantly rebuilt and expanded5. Additionally, in 1969-1970, the reconstruction of the intersection with Marszałkowska Steet, where a roundabout with underground passages was created, took place - officially opened on December 30, 1970. At the same time, preparations were made to build the extension of Jerozolimskie Alleys in the westerly direction, which began with giving it (in 1969) the name "Jerozolimskie Alleys ", although it was proposed, among others, the name of "Heroes of Warsaw". A part from Zawisza Square to the city limits was created in the 70s of the twentieth century6. In 1975, a new railway dominant of Alley - Central Station was opened.

Since then Jerozolimskie Alleys did not have any major urban changes until the beginning of the 21st century, when the reconstruction of Jerozolimskie Alleys was started on the section from the Siberian Exiles roundabout to Lopuszańska Street in order to adapt it to the conditions of the planned bypass. In 2002, the viaduct over the railway line of Radom was rebuilt in Szczęśliwice, then on November 2, 2006, the flyovers over Mszczonowska Street, and on January 2, 2008, another viaduct over Popular Street together with D. Dudajew roundabout was opened. In the future, it is planned to narrow the Alley roadway in the city center in favor of pedestrian walkways.

3 During the Warsaw Uprising Alleys were in the hands of the Germans, and communication between the northern and southern downtown was possible only thanks to the small tunnel connecting the tenement No. 17 and No. 22.
4 Exceptions were houses no. 30, no. 32 and no. 34.
5 In 1961 the reconstruction of the Nowy Świat - Marszałkowska section took place and in 1965 the Chałubińskiego - Raszyńska section was completed.
6 First, the western part from the street was built from the Wery Kostrzewy Street, opened in November 1971, and the rest was ready in July 1973. However, the previously planned tunnel under Zawisza Square, so the traffic from west to east would be directed through Niemcwieczna Street, did not arise.
4. Conclusions

The presented examples clearly show that the alleys are very important elements not only architecturally, but also culturally, socially and related to the communication. They are characteristic points on the map of significant cities, and additionally, they are very often a showcase of a given area as well as a place that is generally known, recognizable and allowing to determine a location or a reference point. Their values should be cultivated, it is important to constantly maintain their good condition or to ensure its improvement - an example is the Chapultepec Alley in Mexico, where thanks to the implemented project, assuming its revitalization, new features such as recreation were achieved. In many examples, it is clearly visible that the well-maintained alleys are very often the meeting places. They also add economic possibilities to the area, as in the case of the 5th alley in New York, which is a very recognizable and iconic place in the city. Alleys are places in big cities where many state and cultural celebrations take place. Various events and competitions are also organized there. It is an important element to bring together the residents, but also constitutes a significant communication route. In Polish reality, the rebuilding process is usually focused on the same minor aspects of the alley. The most important move is to give it back to the pedestrian. The second aim is to fulfill it with greenery because it is their archetypic and basic form of existence [1], [2], [3].

References

[1] R. Blazy, “Aktywność społeczna jako najważniejsza treść rewitalizacji miasta, artykuł” [in:] Projektowanie rewitalizacji miast, Czasopismo Techniczne, z. 3-A, Publishing House of the Cracow University of Technology, Cracow, pp.173-180, 2012.

[2] R. Blazy, Wartości humanistyczne jako kod genetyczny miasta, (text in Polish with abstracts in English and French), MONOGRAPH No. 497, Series Architecture, Publishing House of the Cracow University of Technology, Cracow, 2015.

[3] W. Czarnecki, Planowanie miast i osiedli. Volume I, PWN, Warsaw 1960.

[4] A. Zakrzewska-Półtorak, “Znaczenie bliskości dla występowania efektu synergii w powiązaniach funkcjonalnych jednostek przestrzennych”, (in:) Przestrzeń w nowych realiach gospodarczych, ed. Korenik S., Hajduga P., Rogowska M., Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, Research Papers of Wrocław University Of Economics No. 408, Przestrzeń w nowych realiach gospodarczych ISSN 1899-3192, 2015.

[5] Z.K. Zuziak, Strategie rewitalizacji przestrzeni śródmiejskiej, Monograph; 236, Publishing House of the Cracow University of Technology, Cracow, 1998.