

The Garden – a Place of Biocultural Diversity

Petar Petrov, Valentina Ganeva-Raycheva, Dessislava Dimitrova,

Teodora Ivanova, Yulia Boseva, Yana Yancheva

(Summary)

The first part of the article presents the theoretical and methodological basis of the study of interconnections and interactions between the social and plant world in gardens, with an emphasis on the concept of biocultural diversity. Experience from collaborative field studies of ethnologists and botanists has been shared. The second part presents observations and reflections on the garden as a multilayered topos: an economic but also an aestheticized place; a place of conservation of genetic resources and knowledge, but also of experiments and innovation; a place where the diversity and composition reflect social relations, hierarchies and conflicts, social mobility and migration, memory of important events and loved ones, cultural orientations and values. The analysis shows that the garden is characterized by constant doing and incompleteness, that it is a place where people bring together different spaces and times and that each garden has its own biography which reflects the life trajectories of its owners.

Keywords: gardening; home gardens; biocultural heritage; human – plant interactions; biography of garden; ethnobotany; interdisciplinarity

For contacts:

Petar Petrov

Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies

with Ethnographic Museum – BAS

Bl. 6 Acad. Georgi Bonchev Str.

1113 Sofia, BULGARIA

petar.petrov@iefem.bas.bg