https://doi.org/10.7592/YBBS7.05

Plants and migration

Mariyanka Borisova Zhekova

PhD, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

e-mail: marizhekova@gmail.com

Abstract: The article focuses on the ethnobotany, analysing the migration of plants that accompany Bulgarians to new destinations. The functions and meanings of these plants are outlined. Plants 'in migration' in this way are considered in the light of the relationship between culture and place. Some plants perceived as traditionally Bulgarian are rediscovered and transferred to the receiving country and are present in the stories, cultural practices, and everyday lives of migrants. These plants can be examined through the lens of sensory anthropology, as bearers of knowledge and emotion through perception in the form of vision, smell, touch, taste. Plants can be seen as a synecdoche of the homeland. According to the interviews, Bulgarians abroad perceive some plants as emblematic of Bulgaria. Plants transported abroad are recognised by migrants as Bulgarian cultural heritage, through which cultural values and symbols are maintained. Bulgarians take abroad plants that give them aesthetic pleasure and remind them of Bulgaria, of home, of family, of childhood. An emotional connection with the homeland is also provided by the plants, the cultivation of which in the new place is an experiment with no guarantee of success. 'Bulgarian' plants taken and grown abroad (flowers, fruits, vegetables, spices, herbs) offer a wealth of sensory perception and have an aroma and/or taste often defined by respondents as the "aroma and taste of Bulgaria". Plants in migration develop versatile functionality, facilitate adaptation, and concentrate narratives.

Keywords: ethnobotany, cultural heritage, migration, place, plant, sensory anthropology.

Large-scale migration is one of the clearest manifestations of globalisation, along with the movements of capital, goods, symbols and services. The powerful migration processes of recent decades have been the subject of multiple studies with different emphases: political, sociocultural, demographic, economic (see e.g. Bansak, Simpson and Zavodny 2015; Brettel and Hollifield 2000; Castles et al. 2014; Elliot and Urry 2010; Smith and Favell 2006; Zimmermann 2005). The 'migration' of plants also is the object of a number of studies (see e.g. Bhamra et al. 2017; Kujawska *et al.* 2017; Bhamra *et a*l. 2014; Ceuterick *et al.* 2008; Pieroni and Vandebroek 2007; Pieroni and Quave 2005). Plant migration is the subject of research by botanists, climatologists, hydrologists and ecologists and takes in factors such as climatic changes and human activity. The present research combines the approaches of ethnobotany and cultural anthropology. The emphasis is on a specific type of cross-border movement, i.e. the 'migration' of plants as a result of human migration. The purpose of the research is to outline the functional and emotional relationships of Bulgarian emigrants who travel abroad with plant species. The methods of observation and semi-structured interview are applied. In the cases considered, the functions and meanings of these plants are analysed. Plants 'in migration' are considered in the light of the relationship between culture and place. Some plants, perceived as traditionally Bulgarian, are rediscovered and transferred to the receiving country and are present in the stories, cultural practices, and everyday lives of the migrants. This study also looks at plants that migrants take with them from the receiving country back to their homeland.

Plants have social lives (Petrov *et al.* 2021b: 5) and are a presence in migrants' lives. They support and shape social relations, symbols and practices (Petrov et al. 2018: 317). In turn, migrants affect the biological lives of plants, growing them in a new, different environment. Biodiversity is maintained through various measures, among which are rules for the transfer of plants across borders. Plants for personal use can be transported within the European Union provided they are "free from pests and diseases"[1]. In order to prevent plant invasion and disturbances of the biological balance the importation of plants to a number of countries outside Europe is prohibited or restricted. For these reasons, the transcontinental transfer of plant specimens by Bulgarian migrants is a more complicated process.

As for bilateral plant–migrant relations, they are revealed in the garden as "a space formed in co-authorship between the gardener and the plants" (Petrov

et al. 2021b: 5). Canadian anthropologist Natasha Myers, in her research, pays special attention to the ability of plants to involve other creatures in their care and their propagation (Myers 2017, 2019). Plants can be seen as symbolic capital. On the one hand, the migrant takes care of the plants, on the other hand, the plants provide the migrant with a sight, smell and taste of his or her homeland.

Plants can be seen as a synecdoche of the homeland. Bulgarians abroad perceive some plants as emblematic of Bulgaria. Migrants satisfy their homesickness in various ways, one of which is cultivation or use of fresh or dried "native" plants. The function of plants in this case is not so much utilitarian as sentimental. Plants transported abroad are recognised by migrants as Bulgarian cultural heritage, through which cultural values and symbols are maintained. Plants as cultural heritage are an important element of knowledge of and ideas about the homeland; they are part of its co-experience (See Bokova 2021: 385). The plants taken abroad by Bulgarian migrants can be examined through the lens of sensory anthropology (See e.g. Pinc 2010; Dassié, Gélard et al. 2020) as bearers of knowledge and emotion through perception, i.e. vision, smell, touch.

The research was carried out within the framework of the Ethnicity, Religiosity and National Identity in Bulgaria and Lithuania (Traditional Elements and New Transformations) project[2]. For the purposes of the study, 38 interviews were conducted with Bulgarians living in Europe (Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Iceland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Cyprus, Georgia, Hungary, Romania), North America (the USA, Canada), Africa (Morocco), the Middle East (Bahrain), and Oceania (New Zealand). The interlocutors are friends and acquaintances of the author living outside Bulgaria. They were asked whether they felt the need to take, or had taken, plants (fresh or dried) from Bulgaria to the respective receiving country. Interlocutors knew that the author would not cite their names in the research. The interviews were conducted face-to-face or via social media (e-mail, Facebook, Messenger) in May, July and September 2022. The interviews[3] were conducted with 31 women and seven men between the ages of 30 and 70 who have lived for more than five years in their respective new countries. All interlocutors are first-generation emigrants. Most respondents have higher education and work in different fields. Some of the interlocutors are migrants, others are abroad on business, and a few have already returned to Bulgaria permanently. I also consulted ethnobotanists for the purpose of the research.

The plants mentioned by the respondents are well known in Bulgaria and are identified by their popular names. Fifty-four species of plants (fresh or dried) transported abroad were given, of which 15 were flowers, 13 spices, 11 herbs, 8 vegetables, 3 fruits and 3 trees and/or shrubs. The flowers, (seeds of) vegetables, fruits and herbs, saplings and shrubs were intended to be grown in the receiving country. The rest, i.e. the spices, herbs, vegetables and dried fruit, were intended for consumption.

The interviews outlined the following picture: plants taken abroad by Bulgarian emigrants have several functions.

Aesthetic function

A number of the flowers and bushes that accompany Bulgarians in migration have an aesthetic function[4]. Such plants are bigroot geranium, horsehoe geranium, snowdrop, rose geranium, lily of the valley, rose, begonia, petunia, fritillary, violet, tulip, lilac, *Tagetes patula*, etc. The flowers decorate the yards and homes of the respondents in the receiving country and have an aroma and beauty associated with Bulgaria, creating emotional connections with the birthplace (see Petrov et al. 2018: 328). The informants rarely mention flowers such as the lily of the valley, petunia, fritillary, begonia. More popular among the Bulgarians abroad are bigroot geranium, horsehoe geranium, rose geranium.

Bigroot, or Bulgarian, geranium (*Geranium macrorrhizum*)[5] is a particularly popular flower among Bulgarian migrants with seventeen respondents indicating that they grow bigroot geranium in their new country. Aromatic plant as a symbol of health, well-being and longevity in Bulgarian traditional culture was used in a number of ritual practices from the family and calendar rite cycle, such as weddings, births, caroling, New Year, Saint George's day, etc. (Stoynev 1994: 145; Marinov 1994: 105–106). Today, the ritual use of bigroot geranium has been reduced, although its symbolic value has been preserved and Bulgarian migrants revere the plant, associating it with the homeland. Here are a few examples:

A respondent in Hungary says: "Here the local Bulgarians consider bigroot geranium a Bulgarian plant".

An interlocutor in Paris (France) says that after each trip to Bulgaria, she returns with a bunch of bigroot geranium.

A female respondent in Chicago (USA) tells of buying a new home in another neighborhood, where she was surprised to find bigroot geranium planted in the garden. This Bulgarian geranium, grown by previous American owners of the house, pleased the new owner and reminded her of her homeland.

The distribution of the cold-resistant and evergreen bigroot geranium in the temperate zone (in a number of receiving countries respectively) does not debunk its perception by migrants as a Bulgarian flower. Bigroot geranium, grown in the homes of Bulgarian migrants, regardless of whether it was brought from Bulgaria or originated in the host country, carries an emotional connection with the birthplace and native culture through its aroma and appearance.

Another flower, often taken abroad by Bulgarians, is horsehoe geranium (or zonal pelargonium *Pelargonium Zonale*, L'Hér ex Aiton)[6]. Five of the respondents indicated that they took it to the host country and grew it there. Zonal pelargonium is among the flowers present in the garden and on the maiden's posy in traditional Bulgarian culture, although it originates from South Africa. Even today this flower decorates Bulgarian garden and balconies. Bulgarian migrants grow horsehoe geranium in their homes in receiving countries and see its bright colours as a reminder of home.

An interlocutor in Morocco says that she took zonal pelargonium with her because in Bulgaria there are zonal pelargonium blossoms that she has not seen anywhere. This emotional connection (as with bigroot geranium) is not disturbed by the frequent use of horsehoe garanium in exterior landscaping throughout Europe.

Four of the respondents have transported and grown rose geranium (or sweet scented geranium *Pelargonium graveolens*, L'Hér)[7] abroad. This aromatic plant is used as a flower, spice and herb. Rose geranium has been widely adopted in Bulgarian cultute, although it too originates from South Africa.

The flowers mentioned so far are popular in Bulgarian traditional culture. They have symbolic resources and with their appearance and/or aroma reproduce the comfort of the homeland. In this way, the plants help immigrants adapt more smoothly to the receiving society.

Sometimes respondents take flowers with them that are not strongly perceived as Bulgarian, as they are reminiscent of the respondents' own homes. An interlocutor in Baltimore (USA) says:

> *I used to carry a branch of Christmas cactus (Schlumbergera) from our home in the town of Dupnitsa, as a symbolic resettlement of the family spirit, because at home it always bloomed around Christmas. I transported it as pure contraband (a sprig of Christmas cactus was wrapped in wet napkins, no soil, in a jar stuffed in a plastic bag, in a large travel bag full of clothes). It was very difficult for it to take and I waited many years for it to bloom, but it did, and I was very happy.*

This flower reminds the interlocutor of her childhood, home and family, all of which she missed in the USA and with which she symbolically connects in this way. The feelings with which the respondent associates this plant are so strong that she took the risk of bringing the flower to her new home, despite the prohibitions.

Utilitarian function

Another function of the plants taken abroad by Bulgarians is utilitarian: for consumption and medicine, for example vegetables, fruits, spices and herbs.

Food can act as a cultural marker of identity (Ludwinsky et al. 2021). Eating as a social activity links people to their cultural heritage through affective memory of dishes and specific ingredients (ibid.). At the end of the 20th century, when a large wave of Bulgarian emigration began, there were no Bulgarian shops abroad as there were not enough Bulgarian emigrants (See Karamihova, 2004: 39–41) and nostalgia was felt particularly acutely. Then many Bulgarian migrants in the USA planted various 'native' plants in order to recreate a Bulgarian environment in their new habitat, i.e. vines, fruit trees, vegetables.

A Bulgarian man in Chicago says:

> *When I was first abroad, in 1998, I remember very well the nostalgia of the Bulgarian community here for the nettle, basil, savoury and other Bulgarian spices the aroma and taste of which we lacked. Like many others, I have received letters with tomato seeds stuck to the sheets. I did not*

> *have a place to plant them in the apartment and gave them to friends to plant in their garden. There was no harvest, but it was enough for a photo with Bulgarian tomatoes. At this time, US customs strictly monitored the import of such products. Some of the Bulgarians "entered" the computers as trespassers.*

The ban on the import of uncertified seeds and vegetables in countries outside Europe has caused migrants to use various tricks to get plants across the US border, although over time this issue has been resolved: "The owner of Malincho, a Bulgarian food shop,[8] took out a permit to import Bulgarian spices and sacks of basil, fenugreek (*Trigonella*), savoury, cumin and everything else necessary for Bulgarians' tastes come to Chicago". The resourceful merchant found a legal way to satisfy the needs of large Bulgarian communities in North America for Bulgarian-flavoured food (including plant based food).

A Bulgarian woman in New Zealand says: "I had asked my mother to send me certified seeds with English translation on the package. I wanted Bulgarian pink tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, okra, and I especially hoped there would be summer savoury. Unfortunately, I could not grow many of them because the climate is different".

Under the influence of the Ottoman empire in Bulgaria, a significant number of oriental spices were adopted into Bulgarian traditional cuisine and are now perceived as Bulgarian (See Dechev 2010). Especially popular among Bulgarians abroad is summer savoury (*Satureja hortensis*)[9], which, according to the interlocutors, is difficult to grow even in countries with a climate similar to Bulgaria. Twenty of the respondents indicate that they take summer savoury, as a spice that is dried and ground, to the receiving country.

A Bulgarian woman in Lyon (France) says:

> *When we [my family] go home to Bulgaria, I stock up on dried summer savoury. We like a lot of summer savoury, I put it in dishes with pork or chicken, but also in various salads, and in France I couldn't find a spice that can replace it. For example, I successfully replaced spearmint (Mentha spicata) with peppermint (Mentha piperita). It happened that I brought dry spearmint from Bulgaria, because it grows in the village, in my father's garden, but in practice it is not something that I miss.*

This woman tells how, on one of her trips back to Bulgaria, she forgot to get summer savoury, but found it in an airport shop before the flight to France at a very high price. As she says: "To sell summer savoury at the airportit means that we are not the only ones who lack this spice and are ready to buy it at an ungodly price before boarding the plane".

Summer savoury became the favourite spice of an interethnic family in Romania, where the husband is Bulgarian. He says: "We certainly use summer savoury [from Bulgaria] most often and in huge quantities, because you cannot find it in Romania. The children learned to cover bread and butter, omelettes, and salad with summer savoury".

A female respondent in Hungary talks about the book *With the Aroma of Summer Savoury and Spearmint: Culinary Recipes of Bulgarians from Hungary* (2009), a bilingual Bulgarian–Hungarian edition from the Bulgarian Republican Self-Government in Hungary. The idea for the book was born from an annual culinary exhibition by the Bulgarian community in Budapest. The publication includes recipes for dishes perceived as traditional Bulgarian (See Dechev 2010), with a separate section dedicated to spices. The title of the book unambiguously indicates that the aroma of summer savoury and spearmint are hallmarks of Bulgarian cuisine and confirms the status of the two as the most popular and sought-after by Bulgarians in Hungary.

Eight of the respondents indicate that spearmint, popular in Bulgarian cooking, is a herb that they take to the host country. From the quote above, it is clear that spearmint has a replacement, although the respondent takes spearmint from Bulgaria because her father grows it. The attitude towards this plant is more emotional than utilitarian, symbolising a connection with the family.

An interlocutor in London (UK) says that she grows parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) in the garden yard of her Syrian neighbour. Immigrants giving parts of their gardens to other immigrants in order to grow 'native' plants is indicative of the importance of these plants, as well as of migrant networks, in successfully adapting to the receiving country.

Interlocutors also take herbs in dried form to their new destinations to make tea. Here, herbs are arranged in descending order of popularity according to the number of mentions by the interlocutors: thyme (6), linden flower (5), basil (4), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) (2), mursala tea (*Sideritis scardica*, mountain tea) (2), chamomile (1), oregano (1), fig leaves (1), rosehip (1), mint (1), and others (all with 1 mention). This group of plants also contains an emotional

charge in addition to their healing properties. Some of the plants with practical applications that Bulgarian migrants take abroad can be used both as herbs and spices: thyme, basil, mint, oregano.

Ritual function

Some plant species play a ritual role in Bulgarian culture, embodying relevant symbolism. Migrants take and grow some plants abroad to use them in traditional ritual practices. Geranium (*Geranium macrorrhizum*) as a symbol of health is present at every Bulgarian holiday and is also sued in the rituals (Photo 1).

Photo 1. A bunch of bigroot/Bulgarian geranium for sprinkling with holy water in the Bulgarian Orthodox St. Archangel Michael and St. Archangel Gabriel, and St. Venerable Paisius of Hilendar church, St Lazar's day, The Hague (Netherlands), 08/04/2017. Photo by Mariyanka Borisova. National Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (NCICH) archive at IEFSEM - BAS. FtAIF 1609, Nr 37.

Willow (*Salix*) is used on Palm Sunday, when branches of a consecrated willow tree are taken from the church. A respondent in the USA shared a photo on his Facebook account with the following caption: "The willow for the Bulgarian Orthodox St John of Rila church in Chicago is ensured. The branches from the two willow trees in the garden will enter the Bulgarian church this year again, and stay on the altar overnight" (Photo 2). The collected willow branches ensure observance of the orthodox ritual on Palm Sunday. In this case, the ritual plants grow in the host country and their procurement does not involve cross-border transport.

Photo 2. The willow for the Bulgarian Orthodox St John of Rila church in Chicago is ensured. The branches from the two willow trees in the garden will enter the Bulgarian church this year again, and stay on the altar overnight, 13/04/2014. From the Facebook account of a Bulgarian in the USA. He gave his consent for the publication of the photo.

Cornel (*Cornus mas*)[10] is a symbol of health in Bulgarian traditional culture (Georgieva 1993: 47; Marinov 1994: 93–94). The ritual role of this plant is associated with toughness and strength, with the specificity of blooming earliest in the year and bearing fruit latest. Cornel twigs are used for the New Year's ritual survachki and for luck during New Year's baking[11]. 'Survachka' is

a decorated cornel twig, with which, according to Bulgarian custom, people 'survakat' each other after New Year's Eve, on January 1st, lightly hitting their backs with wishes for health, happiness, and well-being. On the other hand, a cornel bud, a vine bud, a coin, and a bean are among the lucky charms for New Year's baking, according to Bulgarian tradition. A cornel bud means health throughout the New Year.

Bulgarian cultural heritage (customs, language, music, dances, history, festivity, etc.) is a way for migrants to preserve their cultural identity. This is why they strictly follow traditions, customs, and holidays. Every year, children in Bulgarian schools abroad prepare survachki with flexible cornel branches. The cornel can be found in the gardens of Bulgarian immigrants in Spain, the USA, Canada. In the countries where cornel does not grow, branches from other trees or bushes are used, for example olive.

The reverse route of the plants – from abroad to Bulgaria – also deserves attention. An interviewed woman, who grows flowers professionally in Denmark, related how, when she returns to Bulgaria, she often takes her mother fresh flowers that she had grown herself, as well as tulip bulbs. However, when she noticed that large chain stores deliver the same rare flowers to Bulgaria, she stopped this complicated transfer of flowers by plane. Another interlocutor says that she takes seeds of a variety of tomatoes that she particularly likes from Cyprus to Bulgaria. For illustration, she sends a photo of the desired tomatoes. A respondent in Germany says that her acquaintance asked her to supply him with tomato seeds from Germany, as he was not satisfied with the taste of tomatoes grown in Bulgaria. Bulgarian women living in Greece and Spain often take flowers to plant in their Bulgarian gardens. This type of plant migration has aesthetic and utilitarian motives, although the subject of the route plants take from abroad to Bulgaria deserves a separate study.

Conclusions

Bulgarians take plants abroad that remind them of Bulgaria, of home, of family. My interlocutors emphasize that the walnuts they take are from "mother's garden", that father grows delicious spinach, and that zonal pelargonium and rose geranium are from "grandma's garden". Through these plants Bulgarian migrants symbolically connect with their families and with their places of birth.

An emotional connection with the homeland is also provided by the plants, the cultivation of which in the new place is an experiment with no guarantee of success: tomatoes and especially peppers don't withstand a cold climate; vines wither; snowdrops bloom too early, unlike in Bulgaria; and squirrels and birds eat the fruits of the cornel, etc.

The plants taken abroad, perceived by respondents as Bulgarian, also remind them of childhood. A female interlocutor in Jena (Germany) says: "I always try to get [dried] linden [blossom] in Germany. This is the taste of childhood." A respondent living in Sibiu (Romania), says: "Specific aromas remind me of Bulgaria and childhood. In this regard, I remember that I once asked my grandmother to send us honey garlic (*Allium siculum* subs. dioscoridis (Sm.) K. Richt.)[11] especially. In her native village [Shanovo, Stara Zagora district] [the honey garlic] is a traditional spice, rubbed with salt [and dried]". Abroad, even local spices such as the honey garlic, popular in south eastern Bulgaria, are associated with the motherland. The plants carried by migrants abroad, along with their aesthetic, utilitarian, and ritual functions, satisfy nostalgia, carry emotional memory, maintain a connection with the carefree time and place of childhood and/or youth.

The topic of plants that Bulgarian migrants take abroad is pleasant for interlocutors, they willingly talk about it and share stories about their own and their friends' experiences of bringing, growing and using fresh and dried plants and seeds abroad.

Bulgarians who live abroad have a sharp awareness of Bulgarian aromas. Therefore, they define the aromas of, for example Spanish thyme and oregano, or geranium from the Isle of Man, etc., as different. These plants are probably different spices of the same genus, hence the different aromas. A respondent living in Baltimore (USA), says: "Here you don't find Bulgarian flavoured savoury or the wonderful fragrant dried peppers for Christmas dishes." On the one hand, the taste and aroma of edible plants in the USA are different, on the other hand, nostalgia adds the romantic colours of memory and exacerbates the difference.

Conversations with the interlocutors outlined preferred plants for Bulgarians abroad. These are bigroot geranium as a flower and a symbol, and summer savoury as a herb and prerequisite for food to have a 'Bulgarian' taste.

The similarities between Bulgarian, Balkan and Slavic cuisines allow Bulgarians abroad to find the spices they need in Bulgarian, Turkish, Greek or Russian

migrant shops in the host country. Bulgarian online stores also allow shopping for spices without the respondents having to bring them from the homeland.

There are no plant import–export prohibitions in the European Union, although there are such prohibitions for other continents in order to protect the local flora from invasive species and plant infections.

The younger generation, distinguished by mobility, is more flexible in adapting to new places. A young respondent in Denmark says: "I don't miss anything, because I eat everything, I like to combine cuisines and cultures. A tomato is Bulgarian when it is grown in Bulgaria. The seed is important for the appearance, the taste comes from the climate". When a person emigrates at a more mature age, it is difficult to adapt to the new conditions in the host country and nostalgia is more of a factor; the person feels a tangible need for native plants. Therefore this age cohort tries, although not always successfully, to plant tomatoes, vines, eggplants, okra, zucchini, summer savoury, etc., from Bulgarian seeds.

In addition to the time and the youth–maturity correlation, space has a bearing on the migration of plants. When the country of migration is distant, the desire to grow and consume native plants is stronger. Therefore, it is not surprising that a respondent cultivates tomatoes in her apartment on the thirty seventh floor in Toronto (Canada). The reasons are emotional.

The type and quantity of plants transported abroad depends on various factors: the age of the migrant, the frequency of visits to Bulgaria, family status, whether his/her marriage is interethnic, etc. It is important to note that the interviews conducted for this research were with first-generation migrants. The situation with second-generation immigrants is different. Their relationships with plants are a topic for further research.

'Bulgarian' plants taken and grown abroad (flowers, fruits, vegetables, spices, herbs) offer a wealth of sensory perceptions and have an aroma and/or taste often defined by the respondents as the "aroma and taste of Bulgaria". Plants 'in migration' develop versatile functionality, stimulate easier adaptation and concentrate narratives and social contacts.

The symbolic and social meanings of the plants that the Bulgarian emigrants take to their receiving countries are revealed through the migrant narratives about the transfer and cultivation, and about the connection with the home, the family, the homeland (See Petrov, Raycheva 2021a: 233). Narratives and associations have a sensory basis: plants can be seen, tasted, touched, smelled.

Migrants' shared stories delineate the biological and cultural identity of plants (ibid.: 9). The intimate migrant–plant relationship extends beyond the decorative and food role of the plants (Petrov 2021: 13).

Through transferred plants, Bulgarian migrants create and maintain feelings based on a nostalgic reaction, something that the American anthropologist Virginia Nazarea (2005) calls an out-of-place sense of place.

Acknowledgements

I sincerely thank all respondents and ethnobotanists for their responsiveness and cooperation. I also thank two anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments.

Notes

[1] https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/travel/carry/meat-dairy-animal/index_bg.htm (7/01(2023).

[2] A joint project by the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences) and the Lithuanian Institute of History, 2022-2024.

[3] All interviews are in the author's personal archive.

[4] For the aesthetic pleasure of plants see Petrov et al. 2018: 324.

[5] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geranium_macrorrhizum (18/08/2023).

[6] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelargonium_zonale (20/08/2023).

[7] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pelargonium_graveolens (20/08/2023).

[8] See: https://malincho.com/departments/spices/imported-from-bulgaria.html (08/01/2023). For more about the Malincho shop see in Matanova & Penchev 2021: 97.

[9] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summer_savory (25/08/2023).

[10] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornus_mas (25/08/2023.

[11] See: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allium_siculum (25/08/2023).

References

Bansak, Cynthia & Simpson, Nikole B. & Zavodny, Madeline 2015. *The Economics of Immigration*. London and New York: Routledge.

Bhamra, Sukvinder K. & Adrian Slater & Caroline Howard & Mark Johnson & Michael Heinrich 2017. The use of traditional herbal medicines amongst South Asian diasporic communities in the UK. In: *Phytotherapy Research*, 31 (11): 1786–1794.

Bhamra, Sukvinder K. & Michael Heinrich & Caroline Howard & Mark Johnson & Adrian Slater 2014. DNA authentication of Tulsi; the cultural and medicinal value of Ocimum species among diasporic South Asian communities in the UK. In: *Planta Medica*, 80 (16), P2B13.

Bokova, Irena 2021. Kulturni nasledstva i setivna antropologia – belezhki ot terena. – *Balgarski folklor*, 4, 383–396. [Cultural Heritages and Sensory Anthropology – Fieldwork Notes. *Bulgarian Folklore*, 4: 383–396].

Brettel, Caroline B. & Hollifield, James F. (eds.) 2000. *Migration Theory. Talking Across Disciplines*. London and New York: Routledge.

Castles, Stephen & de Haas, Hein & Miller, Mark J. 2014. *The Age of Migration. International Population Movements in the Modern World*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ceuterick, Melissa & Ina Vandebroek & Bren Torry & Andrea Pieroni 2008. Cross-cultural adaptation in urban ethnobotany: the Colombian folk pharmacopoeia in London. *Journal of ethnopharmacology,* 120 (3): 342–359.

Dassié, Véronique, Marie-Luce Gélard, David Howes. 2020. Présentation. Habiter le monde : matérialités, art et sensorialités. In: *Anthropologie et Sociétés*, 44 (1): 13–23. DOI: https://doi.org/10.7202/1072766ar

Dechev, Stefan 2010. Intimizirane na "izobretenoto": Natsionalna darzhava, natsionalna identichnost i simvoli na vsekidnevieto (XIX–XXI vek). [Intimating the "Invented": National State, National Identity, and Symbols of everyday life (XIX–XXI s.)]. In: Dechev, Stefan (eds.). *V tarsene na balgarskoto – mrezhi na natsionalnata intimnost (XIX–XXI v.)*. [In search of the Bulgarian – Networks of National Intimacy (XIX–XXI s.)]. Sofia: Institut za izsledvane na izkustvata, pp. 5–126.

Elliot, Anthony & Urry, John 2010. *Mobile Lives*. New York: Routledge.

Ganeva-Raycheva, Valentina & Ivanova, Teodora & Bosseva, Yulia & Dimitrova, Dessislava 2021. Singing the Nature – Ethnobotanical Knowledge in Bulgarian Folk Songs. In: *Botanical Sciences*, 99, 2, Sociedad Botánica de México, pp, 321–342. DOI: https://doi.org/10.17129/botsci.2672. Available at
https://botanicalsciences.com.mx/index.php/botanicalSciences/article/view/2672/4320

Georgieva, Ivanichka 1993. *Balgarska narodna mitologiya*. [*Bulgarian Folk Mythology*]. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo. (Vtoro preraboteno i dopalneno izdanie. Parvo izdanie – 1983). [(Second revised and enlarged edition. First edition – 1983)].

Karamihova, Margarita 2004. *Amerikanski mechti: Patevoditel sred parva generatsiya imigranti*. [American Dream: *A Gide Among the First Generation of Immigrants*]. Sofia: Krotal.

Kujawska, Monika & Piotr Klepacki & Łukasz Łuczaj 2017. Fischer's Plants in folk beliefs and customs: a previously unknown contribution to the ethnobotany of the Polish-Lithuanian-Belarusian borderland. In: *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine*, 13:–15.

Ludwinsky, Rafaela H. & Amanda E. Cavalhieri & Monika Kujawska & Nivaldo Peroni & Natalia Hanazaki 2021. "If there's no dill, the taste isn't right!" A comparison of food plant knowledge between Polish and German descendants in the context of an imagined culinary community in Brazil. In: *Journal of Ethnic Foods*, 8 (1): 1–9.

Marinov, Dimitar 1994 [1914]. *Narodna vyara i religiozni narodni obichai*. [*Folk Faith and Religious Folk Customs*]. Sofia: Izdatelstvo na BAN.

Matanova, Tanya & Vladimir Penchev 2021. Identifikatsionni parametri na biznesna-chinanieto (Balgarskite magazini i restoranti v SASHT i Kanada v minaloto i sega. [Identification Parameters of the Business Start-up (Bulgarian Shops and Catering Establishments in the US and Canada in the Past and Nowadays]. In: Voskresenski, Valentin & Hristova, Mina & Matanova Tanya (eds.). *Balgarski obshtnosti v chuzhbina. Aspekti na kulturata, identichnostta I migratsiyata.* [Bulgarian Communities Abroad. Aspects of Culture, Identity, and Migration]. Sofia: Prof. Marin Drinov Publishing House of Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, pp. 85–102.

Myers, Natasha 2017. From the Anthropocene to the Planthropocene: Designing Gardens for lant/People Involution. In: *History and Anthropology*, 28 (3): 297–301.

Myers, Natasha 2019. From Edenic Apocalypse to Gardens against Eden: Plants and People in and after the Anthropocene. In: *Infrastructure, Environment, and Life in the Anthropocene*. Kregg Hetherington (ed.). Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 115–148.

Nazarea, Virginia 2005. *Heirloom Seeds and Their Keepers. Marginality and Memory in the Conservation of Biological Diversity*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Petrov, Petar 2021. Ovoshki i hora. Za otglezgdaneto na otnoshenia. [Fruit Trees and People. About Nurturing Relationships]. In: Petrov, Petar & Ganeva-Raycheva (eds.). *Rasteniya i hora. Priblizhenie kam biokulturnite vrazki.* [*Plant and People. An approach to biocultural connections*]. Sofia: Erove, pp. 12–74. Available at http://iefem.bas.bg/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/rastenia-i-hora.pdf

Petrov, Petar & Valentina Ganeva-Raycheva 2021a. Rasteniya – vrazki – pamet. Za drugata rastitelna simvolika. [Plants – connections – memory. About the Other Plant Symbolism]. In: Petrov, Petar, Valentina Ganeva-Raycheva *(eds.). Rasteniya I hora. Priblizheniya kam biokulturnite vrazki.* [Plant and People. An Approach to Biocultural Connections]. Sofia: Erove, pp. 219–241. Available at http://iefem.bas.bg/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/rastenia-i-hora.pdf

Petrov, Petar & Ganeva-Raycheva (eds.) 2021b. *Rasteniya i hora. Priblizhenie kam biokulturnite vrazki.* [Plant and People. An Approach to Biocultural Connections]. Sofia: Erove. Available at http://iefem.bas.bg/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/rastenia-i-hora.pdf

Petrov, Petar & Valentina Ganeva-Raycheva & Dessislava Dimitrova & Teodora Ivanova & Yulia Boseva & Yana Yancheva 2018. Gradinata – myasto na biokulturno raznoobrazie. [The Garden - Place of Biocultural Diversity]. In: *Balgarski folklor*, 3: 315–342.

Pierony, Andrea & Cassandra L. Quave 2005. Traditional pharmacopoeias and medicines among Albanians and Italians in Southern Italy: A comparison. In: J*ournal of Ethnopharmacology,* 101 (1–3): 258–270.

Pieroni, Andrea & Ina Vandebroek (Eds.) 2007. *Traveling cultures and plants: the ethnobiology and ethnopharmacy of migrations,* 7. Berghahn books.

Pink, Sarah 2010. *The future of Sensory Anthropology/the Anthropology of the Senses*. Response to Sarah Pink by David Howes. In: *Social Anthropology*, 3: 331–340. Available at https://monoskop.org/images/5/54/Pink_Sarah_2010_The_Future_of_Sensory_Anthropology_The_Anthropology_of_the_Senses.pdf

Smith Michael Peter & Favell, Adrian (eds.) 2006. *The Human Face of Global Mobility. International Highly Skills Migration in Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific*. Volume 8. New Brunswick (USA) and London (UK): Transaction Publishers.

Stoynev, Anani 1994. *Balgarska mitologia. Entsiklopedichen rechnik*. [Bulgarian Mythology. Encyclopedic Dictionary]. Sofia: 7M+Logis.

Tyutyunkova, Monika (ed.) 2009. *S dah na chubritsa i dzhodzhen. Retsepti na balgarite ot Ungaria*. [*With the Aroma of Savory and Mint. Culinary Recipes of the Bulgarians from Hungary*]. Budapeshta: Izdanie na balgarskoto republikansko samoupravlenie. [Budapest: Bilingual Bulgarian-Hungarian Edition of the Bulgarian Republican Self-Government in Hungary]. Available at https://hirmagazin.sulinet.hu/oroksegtar/data/magyarorszagi_nemzetisegek/bolgarok/az_en_bolgar_szakacskonyvem/az_en_bolgar_szakacskonyvem.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1zwHYZD_kPGTrghiyQufE--ZxcCRKw3_f3ypuMleT2RatWtYVPvvBItL0

Zimmermann, Klaus F. (ed.) 2005. *European Migration: What Do We Know?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mariyanka Borisova Zhekova, PhD, is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Studies with Ethnographic Museum, Bulgarian Acad-emy of Sciences, Bulgaria. Her main fields of research are calendar masquerade games, new migration, cultural heritage, traditional and official festivities, oral and written narratives, and local history. She participates in many projects, is the author of numerous articles, and is the coauthor of several collective monographs.

marizhekova@gmail.com