

Urban Gardening – use and symbolic-communicative functions of urban food production

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Abstract

Urban Gardening has become a major trend in the metropolises of Europe and Northern America. In different cities of the world citizens unite to grow vegetables and fruits in the public spaces of the city. Müller (2011) considers this return of the gardens into the city a new form of urbanism.

Although the phenomenon of urban gardening can be observed in a global context, its forms are multiple, comprising the formation of collective gardens, guerrilla gardening, urban agriculture, subsistence production, roof top gardens, etc. These different practices of urban gardening determine a city's very own urbanism. Moreover, practices and their meanings appear to differ according to the socio-economic and political context they are based in. According to Lefebvre every society has its own space. Space is socially produced and thus relations of production are manifested in space (Lefebvre 1991). This might help to explain the different manifestations and connotations of urban gardening both in the Global South and North.

The proposed research examines the multiple forms of urban gardening adopting a cross-cultural approach. The analysis includes field research in Southeast Asia, particularly in Vietnam and Indonesia and in German cities taking into account the use and communicative functions of urban gardening as well as the interrelationship between private and public and the development of common property resources (Ostrom 1990).