

**THE SYSTEM, THE DEMOCRACY, THE STATE:
THREE RELATED NOTIONS IN EXPRESSING DISCONTENT**

Valentina Gueorgieva

Abstract

The text is based on an anthropological research of the protest movements in Bulgaria in the period 2009-2013 and suggests an analysis of in-depth interviews with activists and participants in these movements. The data is interpreted in the light of the anthropology of democracy which studies the understandings of democracy of the ordinary people and the various forms of participation in the democratic process, as well as the possibilities of expanding the democracy from below. By using the three notions in the title the respondents describe their discontent and draw the contour of the desired change. The analysis shows that even when they talk about the same thing (e.g. democracy), the protestants do not agree with each other. The many-voiced expression of discontent supports the hypothesis that the protest movements form heterogeneous multitudes but fail to settle their differences and to work out a common vision about “democratism“.