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***Zadruga* from the Past – an Imaginary Pattern for Scientific Examination and a Model for Construction of Political and Social Organization in Bulgaria**

(Abstract)

The notion “zadruga” was introduced in the scientific research literature, as well as in the social and political discourse of the then young Balkan countries in the XIX century to mark the multitude of historical forms under which the “complex family organization” was known among the South-Slavic people in the region. Following broad discussion in the fields of historic demography and anthropology in the past three decades concerning this “Balkan Family Pattern” this paper aims to contribute and continue their findings. Therefore, it concentrates on the usage of the term “zadruga” and its meanings in the context of the nation- and institutional building in the newly-forming Bulgarian state at the end of the XIX and the beginning of the XX centuries, as well as in the cooperative movement in the agrarian sector of the interwar period. It also analyses the attempts of the new communist leaders to use the traditions of the pre-modern society in terms of communal living in *zadruga* through the imposition cooperative system and the nationalization of the arable land in the first years under the totalitarian system following the Second World War.

Keywords: Zadruga, Complex Family Organization, Balkan Family Pattern, Cooperative Movement, Uses of the Past

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