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Studies on Contemporary History: the Bulgarian Case

(Abstract)

The text problematizes the interpretations of contemporary history in the context of the world historiography as well as Bulgarian historiography. Special attention is paid to the conception of contemporary history during socialist times in Bulgaria. Back then contemporary history was associated with the Bulgarian Communist Party coming in power and ruling. Most historians examined the early period of socialist époque during 1944–1948 and until 1958 as to avoid the obligatory glorification of the BCP and its government. Those who studied the period after 1958 were the party historians in the university ideological departments and in the Institute of BCP history. After the collapse of state socialism contemporary history included the whole socialist period. It was examined by state institutions and NGO on the rich archives base and from the point of view of liberal democracy. Now historians tend to avoid studying the transition period 1989–2007 because of the lacking temporary distance and accessible archives. It became the object of political science, sociology, economy and anthropology. A huge amount of such literature was accumulated from 1989 until 2017 and was classified in Catalog of the Literature of the Bulgarian Transition (1989–2007) that can be found in the site of the Institute for Historical Studies. The text analyses 1281 pieces of work of this Catalog thus arguing that history of the transition obtains a solid base to become already the object of the historical science.

Keywords: *contemporary history, Bulgarian historiography, transition period.*