



# THE END OF TRANSITION?

## Analytical and local understandings of »transition« in post socialist space

University of Aarhus (Aarhus)

Date: January 16-17 2009.

Location: University of Aarhus,  
Denmark.

Deadline: October 1, 2008.

Organizers: Maria Louw, Martin  
Demant Frederiksen, Nils Buband,  
Department of Anthropology and  
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Nina Dadalauri, Institute of Political  
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Key note speakers: Valeri Bunce,  
Cornell University; Caroline  
Humphrey, Cambridge University;  
Steven Sampson, Lund University;  
László Bruszt, European University  
Institute.

Submissions: Send your abstract (not  
exceeding 250 words) to  
etnmdf@hum.au.dk.

Following the conference, the  
accepted papers will be considered  
for a publication on the theme.

In the early nineties, the concept of »transition« became a much used framework for describing the phase the former socialist countries had entered: a phase that was supposedly leading the countries from socialism, plan economy and dictatorship to democracy, market economy and globalization.

Over the years, scholars working in the region began to criticise the concept, its neo-evolutionist connotations and lack of analytical value when it came to actual processes of change taking place in the post socialist countries. However, although being abandoned little by little within academia, the concept is still widely used locally, both in political rhetoric and on an everyday level, among »ordinary citizens«.

This conference aims to examine the social lives of the transition concept. We pose the question of whether we should continue to use the term when analysing the social, political and economical processes in the post-socialist world. If so, how should it be defined or measured? How does the analytical concept »transition« as used in the social sciences differ from the way it is used by local actors across the post socialist world?

In short, we call for papers that investigate the concept of »transition« and its social life in academia, among political advisors, as well among the people who are presumably undergoing »transition«.