

Comparative Analysis of Political Mobilization of Russian Speakers at the End of the Soviet Era: Case Studies of North East Estonia and Transnistria

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Lane Room, 3rd floor Ellison Hall

Social mobilization of ethnic groups represents an issue of widespread interest for historians and political scientists. The presentation examines the social movements of Russian speakers in Estonia and Moldova, which first arose at the end of 1988. The Estonian and Moldovan cases showed similarities in the initial phases, but dissimilarities later. In the Estonian case, the Russian population negotiated with the Estonian government, while in Moldova a stand-off remains. The main cause for these different outcomes was that the political leaders who led the political mobilizations controlled different types and amounts of "resources." This talk, using the resource mobilization theory, explains why the Russian speakers in Estonia finally chose to seek political dialogue with the Estonian government, unlike those of Moldova where claims for autonomy remain active. The talk should be of interest to those focusing on social mobilization, ethnic conflict, sovereignty, and late and post-Soviet political history and politics.

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