Neo-stud

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The idea

• T-zero moment: 1990 – re-institutionalization
• Early nineties: weak control of the state in the universities, very limited autonomy of the universities, comprehensive collective action from the student organizations – extended space for none-state initiative
• Some of the organizations of the early ’90 still exist, but most of them in a different form – what determined the changes?
The dominant organizational forms (Minkoff, 1994)

- The bottom-up student union – transformed into organization
- The top-down student representative in faculty councils and university senates
- The branch of an international organization

- Descriptors: what they do? Who are the leaders? (Altbach) How? For whom?
- Where did these forms come from?
Conceptualizing student organization as clubs

- Self-governing bodies (students)
- Producing collective action: advocacy, protests, services (Altbach, political opportunities structure literature)
- In competition for ?scarce? resources: students’ attention & participation, resources, media coverage, powerful actors attention, positions
- As clubs, not necessarily as one club
Research design options

• No national federation in the early nineties – focus on the university level
• Co-existence of the three organizational forms – focus on the structure of the organizational field
• The capacity to produce different forms of collective action: focus on (1) how collective action is produced and (2) who are the entrepreneurs and which are their incentives
• Define student organizations as self-governments whose aim is to produce collective action: neo-institutional rational choice
The empirical side

• Analyze the t-zero moment: founding members and founding ideas
• Changes in students organizations' bylaws
• Changes in the provision of collective action
• Entrepreneurs’ (leaders’) contribution to change
• The power map – who controls access to resources

• How? Desk research, media analysis, semi-structured interviews
The CEE relevance

- The structure of political opportunities – similar (V-countries) yet different (Romania – Bulgaria)
- The Europeanization through the Bologna Process
- The common organizational forms (from the Komsomol, through BEST, ELSA etc. to ESIB/ESU)
- The different formal rules
The literature perspective (CEE)

• Dissident movements (historical perspective Vos in Ruegg, 2011)
• National level student organizations or movements (Altbach, Klemenčič)
• Civil society (repertoires of contention, political opportunities structure)
• Labour unions
From corporatism to diversity: a neo-institutionalist study of representative student organizations in post-communist Romania

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• neostud.net
Thank you for your attention!