

# **Analysis of the scientific production on SRT within the Romanian academic field**

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**Why a doctoral thesis focused on analyzing the scientific production within a specific national academic context?**

# Argument

- **Generally**, because there are certain moments when one feels the need to stop for reviewing and reflecting upon the previous theoretical and empirical production within a specific scientific area, in order to understand its current situation and possibly to have a glance on its future.

# Argument

- Referring specifically to the Romanian scientific production on the SRT, my need for this kind of reflection started from a strong feeling of ambiguity derived from witnessing the changes in the Romanian institutional and scientific context.
- This feeling also derives from contrasting my two perspectives:
  - a. the former one (from outside)
  - b. the present one (from inside)

- a.** as an undergraduate and master student I “grew up” knowing that our Social Psychology Laboratory was an active group of social psychologists, with a group identity and a powerful, strongly motivated leader. Most of its members were intensively working within the SRT perspective, the group from Iasi being well-known in Romania and abroad.
- b.** now I am a member of this academic community but I can't grasp the essence of this group or its former identity. If I look at the last publications, research projects, interests, formal or informal scientific meetings, I have a feeling of group dissolution and identity loss.

**The main categories of the scientific production that we are taking into consideration are:**

- 1. Romanian publications on SRT (journal articles and books/chapters)**
- 2. Foreign publications disseminated in Romania (translated books/chapters, texts published in Romanian journals)**
- 3. Romanian doctoral thesis conducted within the SRT framework**

# Analysis dimensions

- I. **a specific content analysis** using the “Grid for Meta-Analysis of the SR literature” (de Rosa, 1994). The sections taken into account will be:
  - (2) Type of paper,
  - (5) Thematic analysis,
  - (6) Methodological profile,
  - (9) Instruments for data collection,
  - (10) Chanel used and sources of information,
  - (11) Techniques for analysis of the data.

# Analysis dimensions

**II. a more general interpretative analysis** (based on the content analysis), in order to see:

1. the frequency of publications over the years (as a sign of the interest elicited by the SRT framework);
2. if there are specific thematic interests in the Romanian research;
3. if there is a preferential approach or endorsement of SRT;
4. the degree of reflexive or critical approach of SRT from a theoretical perspective;
5. the degree of creativity or vitality in the empirical research from a methodological perspective.



**A general overview of the Romanian  
scientific production on or related to SRT**

- Very recently (April 2011), in Napoli, it took place an anniversary scientific event celebrating 50 years from the first publication of S. Moscovici's book (1961) marking the appearance of the SRT.
- One of the invited speakers was the Romanian professor A. Neculau. The essence of his presentation was to emphasize the impact of the SRT on the Romanian social psychology field and to present the activity and the scientific production of the social psychology laboratory in Iasi.

- prof. Neculau entitled his presentation “**A late affiliation: the group from Iasi**”.
- Although the very detailed content analysis has not yet been realized, I propose a slightly different title which summarizes my hypotheses and my perspective:

**“A late, intensive, but endangered affiliation:  
the group from Iasi”**

## ***Why late affiliation?***

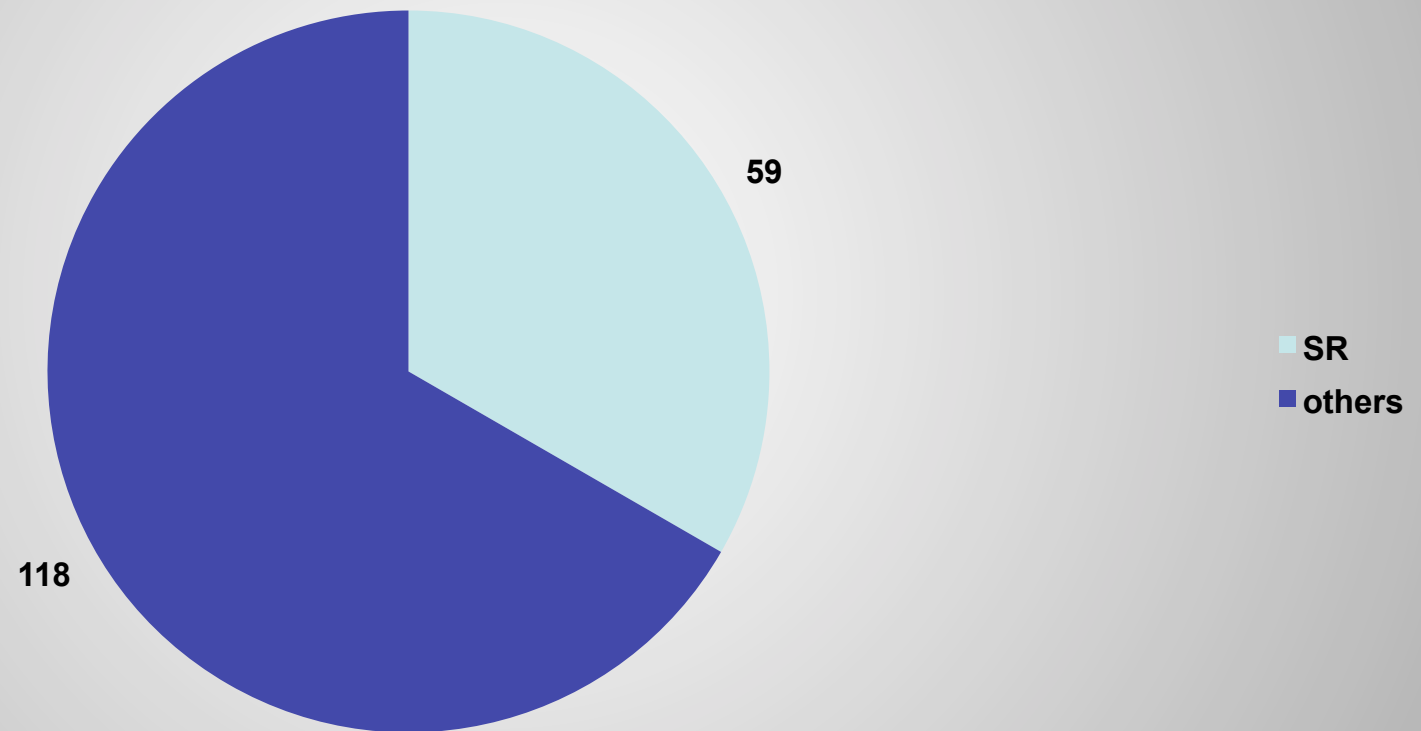
- It was a 30-year delayed meeting of the Romanian social psychologists with the SRT
- The scientific opening was produced in 1991 when prof. Neculau first met with S. Moscovici
- The first article presenting the SR was published by Neculau in 1992
- in 1995 the first anthology was published, comprising translated classical texts on SRT (signed by Moscovici, Doise, Jodelet, Abric, de Rosa, Flament, Moliner, Deconchy)

## ***Why intensive affiliation?***

- After the foundation of the new Faculty of Psychology (1997), the Social Psychology Laboratory led by A. Neculau become one of the most active scientific group in the field
- it was founded the “Collegium. Psychology” collection at the Polirom Publishing House; around 115 titles have been published, most of them related to social psychology
- In 1998 was founded the only Romanian journal dedicated to social psychology – *Psihologia Sociala* – with a continuous biannual appearance since then. Almost all the Romanian and foreign articles on SRT are to be found in this journal

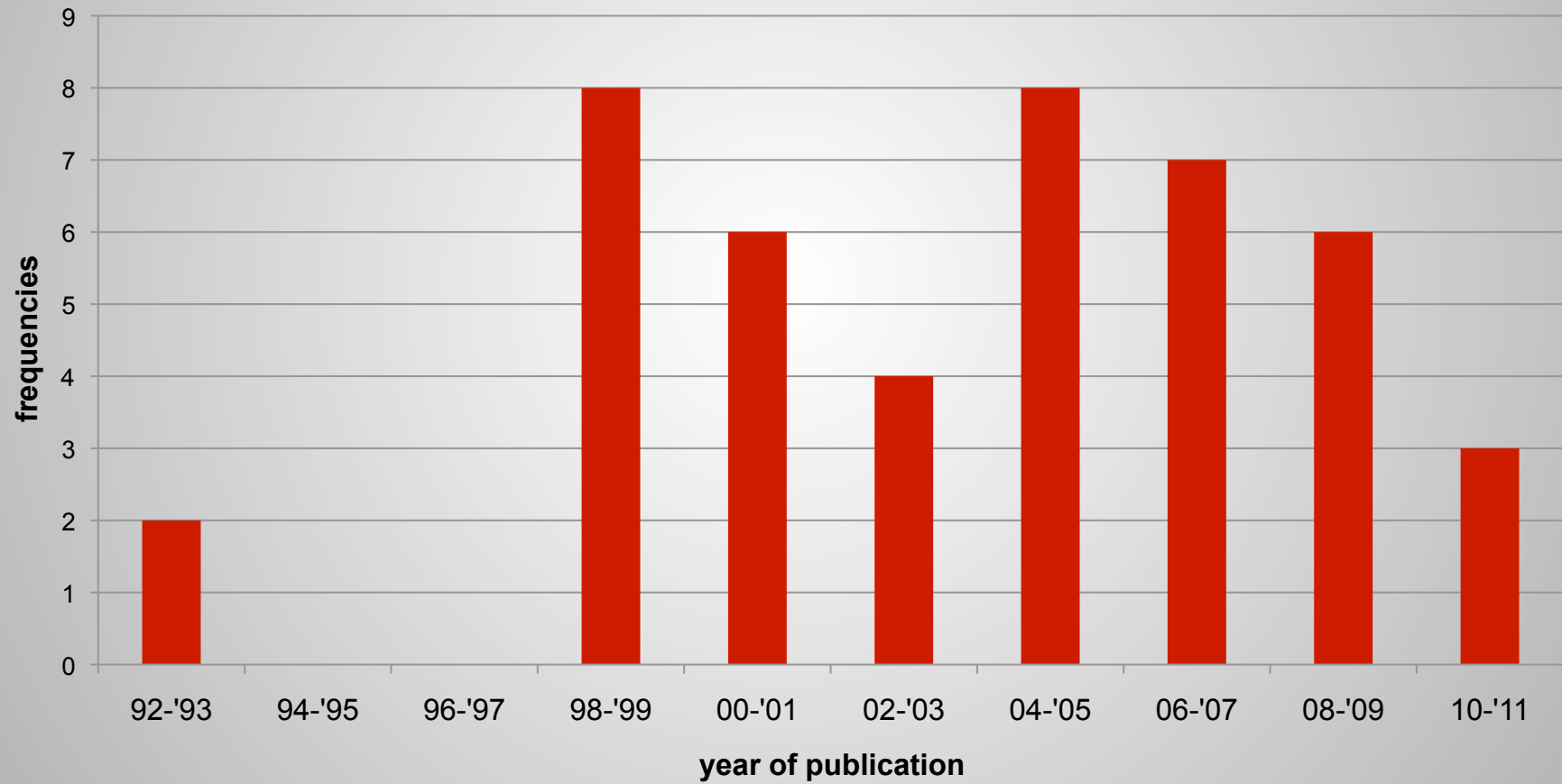
# Why *intensive affiliation*?

Graph 1: number of articles on SR in *Psihologia Sociala*



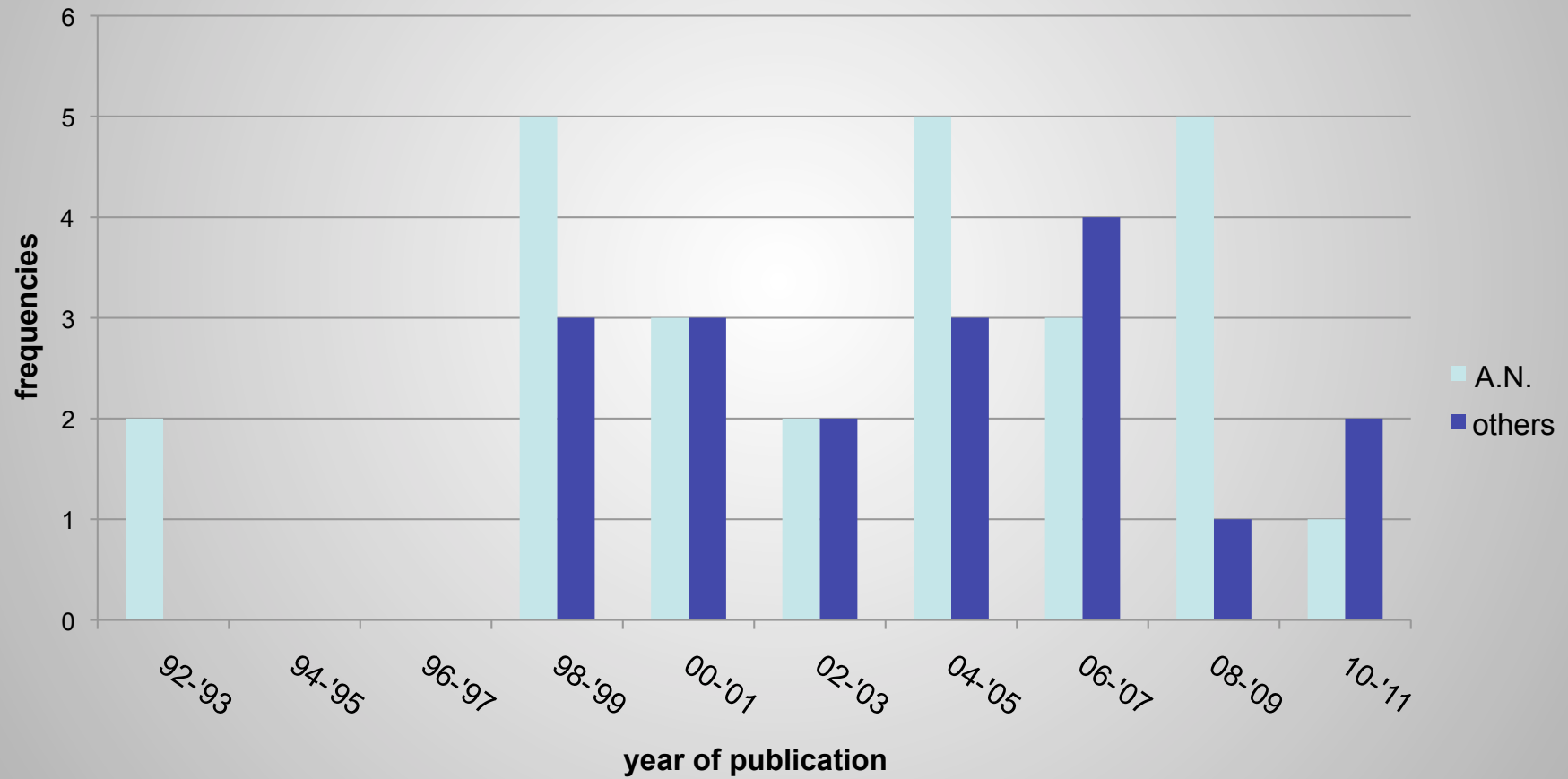
# Why *intensive affiliation*?

Graph 2: publications on SRT by Romanian authors



# Why *intensive affiliation*?

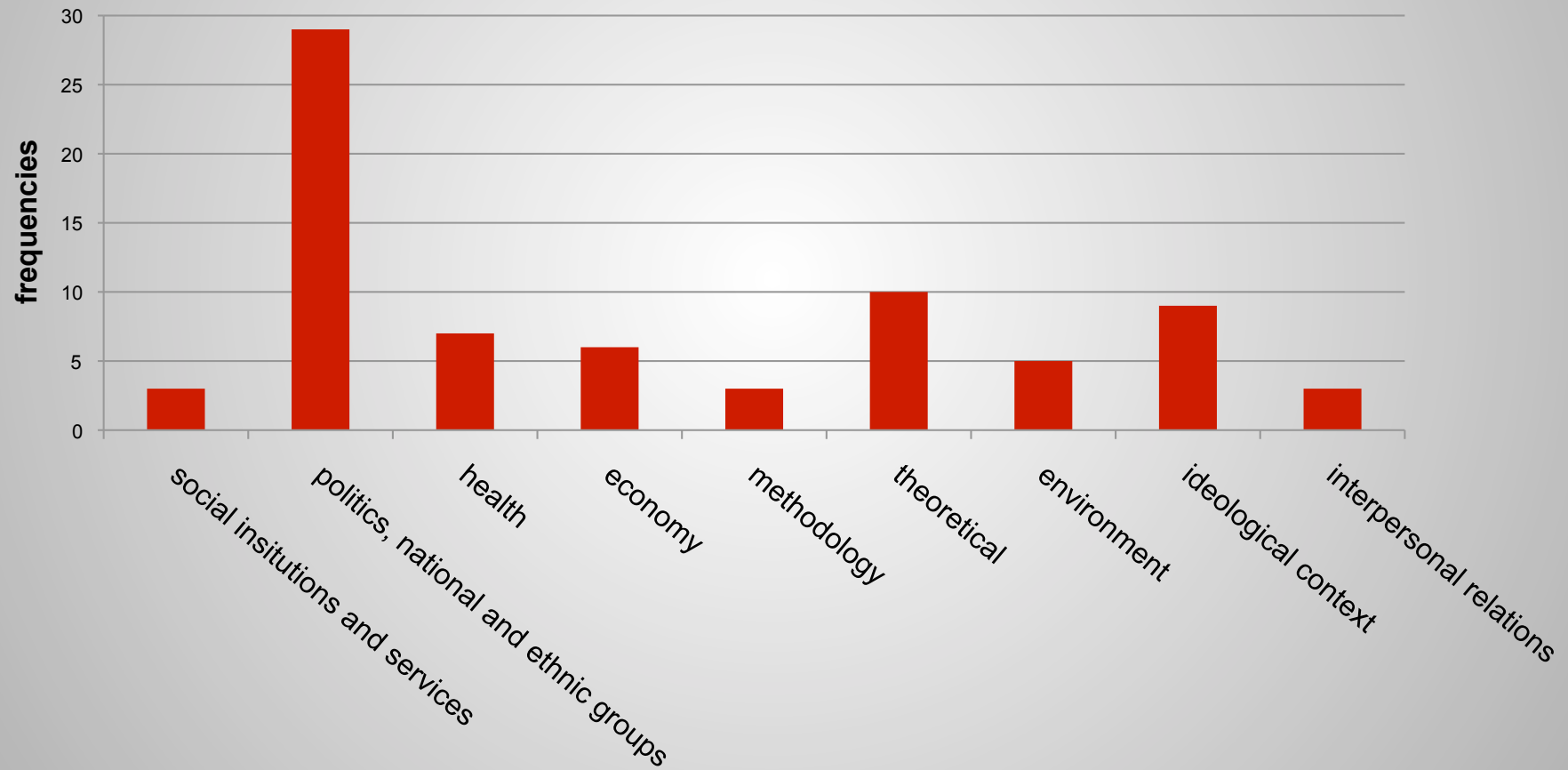
Graph 3: Romanian publications on SRT by authors





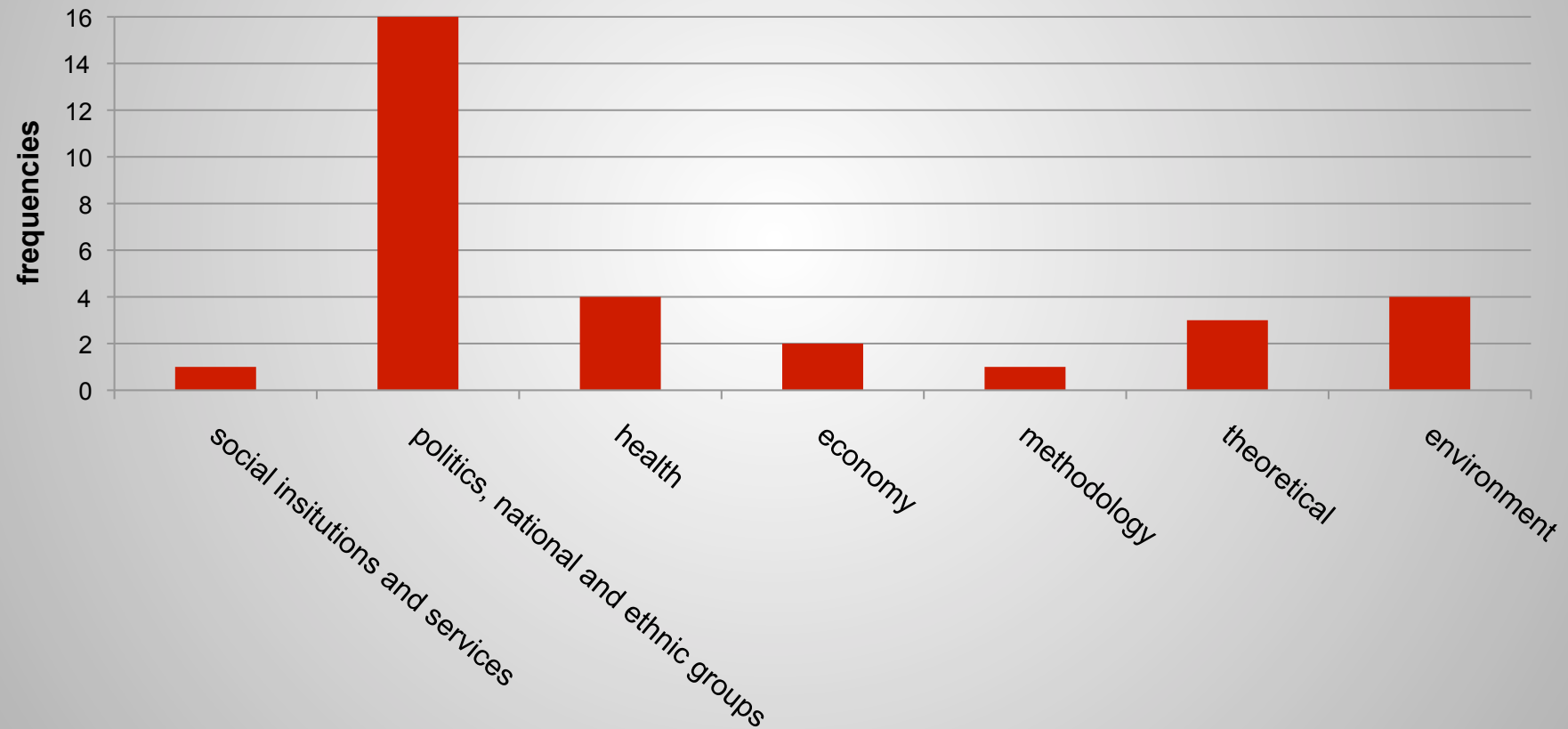
# Why *intensive affiliation*?

Graph 5: thematic distribution of Romanian articles



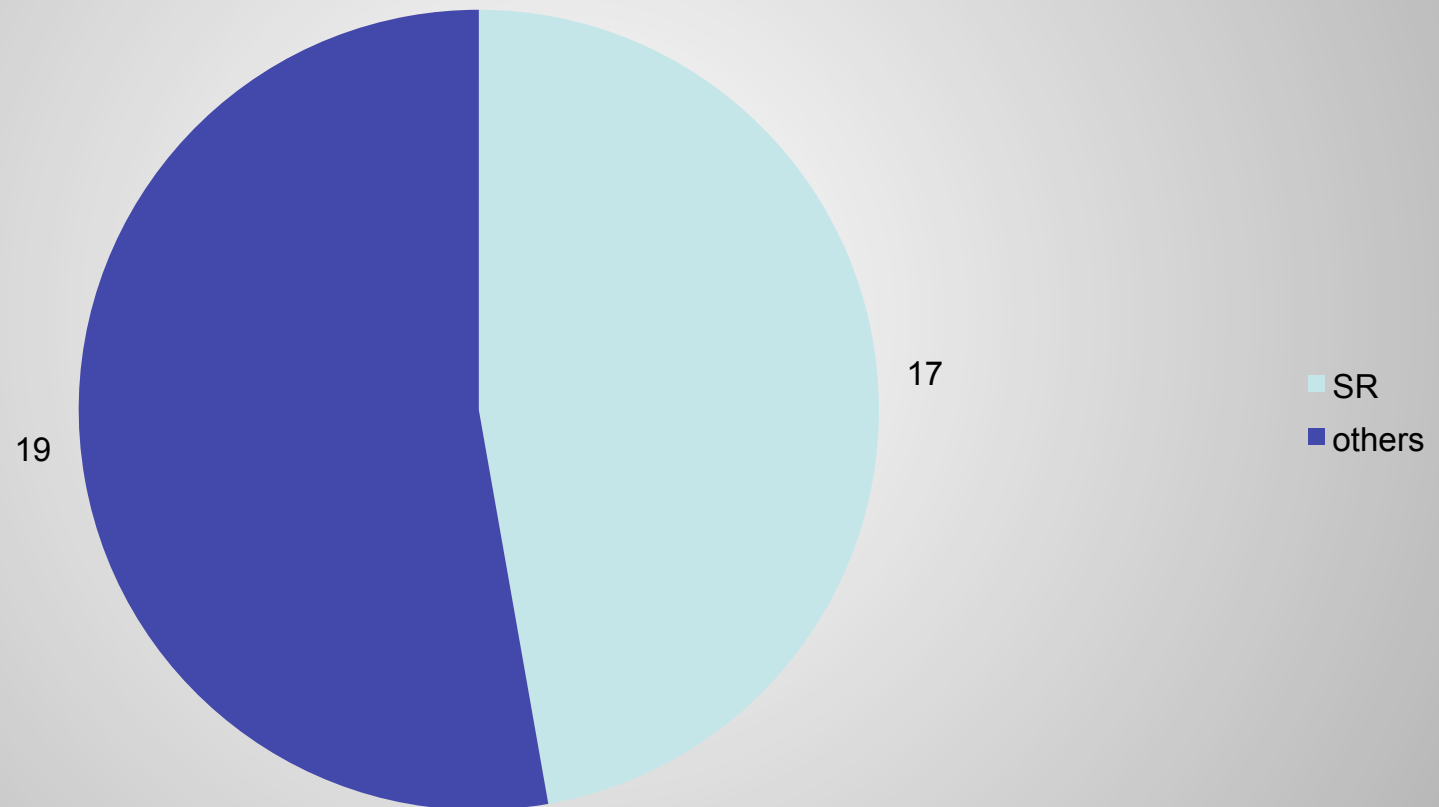
# Why *intensive affiliation*?

Graph 6: thematic distribution of the foreign authors' articles in *Psihologia Sociala*



# Why *intensive affiliation*?

Graph 4: Thematic distribution of doctoral thesis



## Why *intensive affiliation*?

- in Iasi there is (**or better said was?**) the only social psychology doctoral school in Romania under the scientific supervision of prof. A. Neculau.
- I've intentionally used the past tense because since prof. Neculau retired there is no Romanian doctoral student working on SRT and none of the present doctoral scientific supervisors is directly interested in this field

## ***Why endangered/fading affiliation?***

- This section of my paper will be related especially to the second level of analysis (the interpretative one), based on both the results of the detailed content analysis and on the facts or institutional data to be presented regarding the Romanian past and present academic context.

## ***Why endangered/fading affiliation?***

- Regardless of the analyzed dimension of the scientific activity and production of the Romanian social psychologists related to SRT, one will inevitably see the strong link with prof. Neculau.
- Not only because of his institutional power (as head of the Psychology Department and of the Social Psychology Laboratory), but because almost every scientific initiative regarding SRT research came from and was supervised by him.

*Psihologia Sociala* (chief editor)

Volumes on SRT (written or coordinated)

Foreign papers on SRT published or translated at his initiative

“Psychology” collection of Polirom Publishing House

A.N.

Invited speaker within SRT scientific events

National or international research grants related to SRT

International recognition within the SRT community

Teaching the Social Psychology course (half of the semester used to be dedicated to SRT)

Doctoral students in social psychology

Constant contact with prestigious figures within SRT field

## ***Why endangered/fading affiliation?***

- If we look closely to the figure above we see that “the SRT Romanian group” is strongly linked to its leader. One might even say that the very essence and identity of this scientific group lies within one symbolic figure.
- But the present Romanian academic and scientific context is quite different from that depicted above. Here are some elements:



## ***Why endangered/fading affiliation?***

- A.N. is associated professor. He is still very active in his scientific writing, but losing most of his institutional power;
- In time, many of the former members of this group went on different areas of interest within social psychology or other fields. There are only 2-3 persons still working on SR, but not as their main interest;
- A.N. is no longer teaching the social psychology course, and very little space is allocated to the SRT, influencing students' information or perception on this theory

## ***Why endangered/fading affiliation?***

- The doctoral supervisors are no longer experts or primarily interested in social psychology or SRT
- In the last couple of years there was no national research grant focused on SRT
- The new canonical institutional criteria for validating our scientific work is impregnated with the American mainstream standards, influencing our scientific orientations or priorities

## ***Why endangered/fading affiliation?***

The young generations of undergraduates or master students are educated in the same spirit:

- a more experimental and cognitive approach,

- a great emphasis on statistics and controlled research,

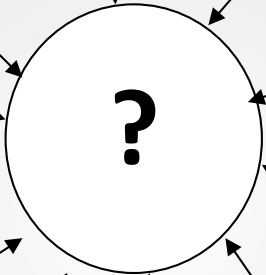
- lesser and lesser accent on exploring a psychological phenomenon from different broader angles, on epistemic curiosity, on methodological creativity etc.

*Psihologia Sociala* (chief editor)

Volumes on SRT (written or coordinated) ?

Foreign papers on SRT published or translated at his initiative

“Psychology” collection of Polirom Publishing House ?



Invited speaker within SRT scientific events ?

National or international research grants related to SRT  
**NO**

International recognition within the SRT community ?

Teaching the Social Psychology course (half of the semester used to be dedicated to SRT)  
**NO**

Doctoral students in social psychology  
**NO**

Constant contact with prestigious figures within SRT field ?

# Final open question

In the view of the new modified figure above:

*If we “challenge its central core” and if we remove or question some of the key elements, due to the current contextual transformations, what will remain of the Romanian scientific production on/affiliation to the SRT?*