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Sentiments of solidarity: Varying conceptions of nationhood in Turkey

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Abstract

Studies on nationalism have recently transitioned from macro-level analyses of large structural factors to micro-level examinations, emphasizing nationalism as a set of cultural and political beliefs held by individuals. Such works that use opinion measures to explore heterogeneity in national self-understandings show that nationalist beliefs distribute among the public in particular and non-random ways, though the extent to which these heterogeneities induce variation in behavioural outcomes remains relatively unexplored. In this article, we argue that varying conceptions of nationhood inform ethnonational boundary-making strategies and social action. Using latent class analyses and a resource allocation task in original representative survey data (N = 1,460), we ask whether varying cultural positions on nationhood covaries with preferential behaviour. We found that nationalist cultural models provide heterogeneous cultural templates and lead to preferential treatment of ethnonational ingroups.

KEYWORDS
culture, latent class analysis, nationalism, Turkey

1 | INTRODUCTION

Long before Benedict Anderson (1991) famously defined nations as imagined communities brought into existence through the subjective values and orientations of individuals, Max Weber offered a distinctively constructivist approach to studying ethnic groups and nations, which treated them as subjective communities based on the

shared feelings of their respective members (Weber, 1978). "If the concept of 'nation' can in any way be defined unambiguously," Weber wrote, "it certainly cannot be stated in terms of empirical qualities common to those who count as members of the nation, [...] the concept undoubtedly means, above all, that it is proper to expect from certain groups a specific *sentiment of solidarity* in the face of other groups" (Weber, 1978:922, emphasis added).

An important implication of Weber's perspective is the need to approach nationalism *from the bottom-up*, that is, treating nationalism and self-understandings about the nation as a set of beliefs and preferences in the minds of concrete individuals (Kunovich, 2009). In addition to being a powerful public ideology strategically used by various kinds of political elites, nationalism is also a set of positions held by individuals that helps them answer fundamental questions relating to identity (who am I?), belonging (who are we?), boundaries (how are we different from others?), and purpose (what good are we for?). Nationalism, or "popular nationalism," is thus organized as a set of "ideas, sentiments, and representations by which [citizens] understand the [nation] and their relationship to it" (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016:949).

Following this insight, studies that have taken popular nationalism seriously have suggested that self-understandings about the nation distribute among the population in particular and non-random ways, generating what we call *cultural models*, that is, shared cognitive schemas through which individuals understand and interpret the nation. People often cluster around distinct cultural models, meaning that nationalism figures in a variety of ways in the population. This is not, of course, exclusive to nationalism; cultural beliefs generally bundle in different regions of the belief space, and individuals cluster around these regions (Martin, 2000).

One question we might ask about this clustering is whether it has concrete implications for people's decision-making. We know that popular nationalism covaries with political preferences and policy positions (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016), but we do not know the degree to which nationalist positions are relevant for understanding how individuals police their nation's boundaries and protect its resources. Approaching nationalism as a cultural model should mean that nationalist cultural models induce varying classification schemes about the world (this is, after all, what cultural schemas are all about), and these, in turn, should lead to varying behavioural outcomes depending on one's cultural model about ingroups and outgroups. More precisely, we argue that one's self-understandings about the nation should inform their ethnonational boundary-making strategies and decision-making.

In this article, we follow Bonikowski and DiMaggio's (2016) empirical strategy to explore national self-understandings in the context of Turkish nationalism, a case that figures prominently in studies of nationalism, to uncover distinct types of national cultural models that exist in Turkey and ask how these different types might induce behavioural consequences by influencing people's construction, evaluation, and treatment of outgroups. In order to fulfil these goals, we analyse original and nationally representative survey data ($N = 1,460$) that tap into the nationalist beliefs of survey participants. Using latent class analyses and a resource allocation task, we cluster people into four nationalist classes and analyse how these class positions relates to people's decision-making in allocating material resources between ingroups and outgroups. We find that nationalist cultural models have strong behavioural consequences.

The rest of the article is organized as follows. First, we review the literature on nationalism, reiterating the recent convergence among scholars that nationalism should be inductively understood from below and that there are substantively different understandings of the nation among the public. We hypothesize that these differences should induce varying preferences with regard to the national outgroups. Second, we present our data and analytic strategy. Using latent class analysis, we show that there are four distinct types of Turkish nationalism, which strongly relate to people's resource allocation decisions between ingroups and outgroups. In the final part, we discuss the implications of our article and conclude.

2 | BACKGROUND

Most research on nationalism adopted a macro-structural perspective at the expense of an inductivist approach honing in on the actual beliefs that exist in the minds of concrete individuals (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016).[i] A general glance at this broad literature reveals that the overwhelming majority of studies on the phenomenon falls under one (or more) of the following categories: (a) explaining the historical emergence of nationalist ideologies and nation-states so as to demonstrate their modern and socially constructed nature (Anderson, 1991; Brubaker, 1994; Gellner, 1983; Hechter, 2000; Wimmer, 2008); (b) showing how state institutions, such as schools, armies or statistical agencies *construct* the nation (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012; Kertzel & Arel, 2002; Tilly, 1994); (c) deconstructing national narratives to highlight their historicity or fundamental inconsistencies and ambiguities (Alonso, 1994; Bhabha, 1990; Wodak et al., 1999); (d) making sense of the different forms nationalism takes in different contexts, for example, ethnic and civic nationalisms (Ariely, 2013; Brubaker, 1992); and finally, (e) accounting for ethno-nationalist conflicts (Hechter, 2000; Horowitz, 1985; Snyder, 2000; Wimmer, 2008).

As an empirical case, Turkey has frequently fared in the literature because of a variety of reasons: the violent process of unmixing of peoples since the Ottoman Empire collapsed (Barkey, 1997; Bayar, 2014; Naimark, 2002; Ulker, 2015; Zurcher, 1998), the all-too-visible contradiction between the civic foundations of official Turkish nationalism and the primordialist and ethnic practices on the part of state institutions (Akman, 2004; Aslan, 2007; Bayar, 2011; Canefe, 2002; Goalwin, 2017; Keyman & Kancı, 2011; Yıldız, 2001), and finally, because of the prolonged armed conflict between the Kurdish guerilla and the state that claimed the lives of more than 30 thousand citizens (Belge, 2011; Sarıgil & Fazlıoğlu, 2013; Yeğen, 2007). This literature on Turkish nationalism also almost exclusively employs a macro-structural historical perspective that deals with the historical origins of nationalist beliefs and institutions, and the socially constructed nature of nationalist identities. Most empirical research on Turkish nationalism thus attempts to (a) demonstrate how state institutions and policies have actively constructed the nation (Akman, 2004; Aktar, 2000; Aslan, 2007; Bayar, 2011; Türköz, 2017), (b) uncover the conflicts and contradictions that have emerged in this process of construction (Belge, 2011; Kuyucu, 2005; Yeğen, 2007; Yıldız, 2001), and (c) deconstruct nationalist narratives to pinpoint their inconsistencies, forced silences, ambiguities or errors (Altınay, 2004; Canefe, 2002; Keyman & Kancı, 2011).

2.1 | Studying nationalism from bottom-up

Notwithstanding the theoretical and empirical contributions of such studies, their macro-level theoretical and methodological preferences have prevented more detailed understandings of how individuals orient themselves toward nationalist beliefs, and whether and how these beliefs motivate them to act in particular ways. The comparatively smaller number of works that analyse nationalism from bottom-up have clearly demonstrated that nationalism, even within a single socio-cultural context, is never a monolithic set of beliefs. Depending on situational or personality-level factors, individuals hold different beliefs about insiders and outsiders of a nation, criteria of membership to this imagined community, their place within it, and their level of identification with the collectivity (Kunovich, 2009; Sagiv et al., 2012).

In this framework, political psychologists differentiate between *patriotism* and *nationalism* (Blank & Schmidt, 2003; Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989), or *blind* and *constructive* forms of patriotism (Schatz et al., 1999), where the former refers to more inclusive and *civic* forms of nationalist beliefs, in the sociologists' parlance, and the latter pointing toward exclusive and *ethnic* types. The particular style of attachment a person cultivates with the national group depends both on individual-level factors, such as one's overall value orientations (Roccas et al., 2008, 2010) or thinking styles (Rosenberg & Beattie, 2018) and contextual factors, such as the existence of real and perceived threats or the real and perceived status of the ingroup (Blank & Schmidt, 2003; Schnabel & Hjerm, 2014; Verkuyten, 2005). At a more fundamental level, these studies on ingroup identification and outgroup vilification

provide insights into why certain people identify with the nation, while others maintain a more critical stance toward such identifications (Doosje et al., 2002; Haidt, 2012; Mummendey et al., 2001).

Among sociologists and political scientists, studies on cultural conceptions of nationhood have been less prevalent. The central objective of the comparatively few such studies is to understand the variations among and across populations and classify types of nationalisms based on their inclusivity and exclusivity. Using population survey data that tap into respondents' beliefs, these scholars test whether existing ethnic and civic (or patriotic and nationalist) distinctions that prevail in the literature are analytically useful and empirically generalizable to the larger populations (Davidov, 2010; Jones & Smith, 2001; Kosterman & Feshbach, 1989; Larsen, 2017; Reeskens & Hooghe, 2010). The major findings from these studies demonstrate how the dichotomous ethnic/civic classification is inadequate to capture the actual diversity of nationalism types. Most survey respondents fall somewhere in between these ideal stances (Kunovich, 2009), and the meanings attributed to these distinctions are substantially different cross-culturally (Reeskens & Hooghe, 2010). It is, of course, no surprise that culture is messy.

2.2 | Nationalist beliefs and cultural models

One prominent strategy to attack this problem emerged from Bonikowski and DiMaggio's (2016) seminal work, which proposes the use of inductive clustering techniques for survey data. In this view, rather than starting with such pre-existing blueprints, we would approach nationalism as a set of varying "schemata [... that organizes] the domain of nationality" (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016:951). What this means is that nationalist positions can be derived directly from individual beliefs and preferences rather than collapsing the data into analytically limiting typologies. This strategy would allow us to detect what D'Andrade and Strauss (1992) *cultural models*, that is, shared cognitive schemas through which individuals understand the world, whatever these "schemas" are.[ii] Hence, we have the chance to explore how conceptions of nationhood are bundled in different regions over the belief space.

Such an approach provides at least three advantages. First, instead of assuming that individuals share the same schemata for the nation, it relaxes this assumption and allows people to combine various (and perhaps conflicting) beliefs together. This increases the range of possible positions individuals take in the belief space. Second, the approach makes it possible to use various dimensions of nationalism together, so much so that the analyst has the chance to see how particular groups combine these dimensions together. Third, the proposed nationalist typology provides sound bases for theorizing the socially shared cultures of nationhood, without committing scholars to demographic sorting or network autocorrelation that generates cultural groups through selection and influence (DellaPosta et al., 2015).

3 | THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Studies using the person-centric approaches to identifying cultural models have shown that nationalist positions strongly predict people's policy preferences and social beliefs (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016), affect one's voting choice (Bonikowski et al., 2021) and have roots in particular historical processes (Soehl & Karim, 2021). Yet, the literature currently lacks a clear conceptualization of whether and how varying conceptions of nationhood are particularly relevant for understanding action when people are exposed to ethnonational cues. As Brubaker et al. (2004) put it, nations are not "entities in the world" but "perspectives on the world" (41), shaping how one interprets social interactions and acts on this basis. In this sense, nationalist cultural models provide the shared principles of "vision and division" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:12), treating each new person and event not as an independent unit, but as an "instance of an already familiar category or schema" (Brubaker et al., 2004:41).

One consequence of this framework is that those with varying cultural models should differ with respect to their treatments of ingroups and outgroups. A large body of literature in political psychology has demonstrated that

individuals differ significantly in their propensity to favour those they perceive as belonging to an ingroup over socially distant others (Brewer, 1999; Chen & Li, 2009; Haidt, 2012; Mullen et al., 1992). These differences in individuals' in-groupism have serious behavioural consequences in interpersonal relations (Luttmer, 2001). Given these robust empirical findings, we should expect a person's national and ethnic identification to have direct effects on how they would behave toward others within or outside their perceived group. In other words, we argue that the varying conceptions of nationhood should covary with differing levels of in-groupism across actors depending on the level of perceived social distance.

To orient the argument, think of two actors: A and B. There are various strategies of boundary-making A can use with regards to B: she can (a) reproduce the existing boundaries and perpetuate the learned classifications; (b) expand the boundaries of the existing categories to make B part of the group; (c) contract the boundaries of the existing categories to push B outside the group; or (d) blur the boundaries such that existing categories would not adequately define A or B—we can think of several other strategies as well (see Wimmer, 2008). The question is to ask why A would choose one strategy over another strategy. This question is vital as the meaning of reproducing existing boundaries changes drastically *if actors cast their nets differentially in the first place*. What this means is that actors might use different strategies simply because their cultural priors on what it means to belong to *the nation* are different from one another.

3.1 | The varieties of preferential treatment

We propose that one empirical strategy to explore whether one's national self-understandings and boundary-making strategies are strongly coupled is to analyse their covariance in the context of preferential treatment. If national self-understandings have indeed relevance for organizing how "the nation" is constructed with "default assumptions" (DiMaggio, 1997:269), we should observe people policing the boundaries of their larger group depending on their cultural model. This, in turn, is "likely to have implications for the frequency and quality of social interaction across group boundaries" (Bonikowski, 2016:438) and the degree to which these boundaries are enforced in real-world settings, such as hoarding of opportunities (Valentino & Vaisey, 2022). In this sense, these instances of preferential treatment are theoretically important: if cultural models are relevant above situational or structural factors, we should see a strong coupling between one's national model and boundary-making strategies, given that they supposedly tap into the same construct, that is, "cultural" positions and "behavioural" outcomes depend on one's national model.

Let us formalize this coupling. Suppose an actor is endowed with a limited resource budget *x*, and she is asked to allocate it between socially close ingroups and socially distant outgroups. We can define one's overall resource allocation decision by specifying the extent to which the individual allocates these resources *preferentially*, that is, giving more to the members of the ingroup compared with that of outgroup. This is simply the ratio between one's ingroup share α and the outgroup share (x−α). We argue that this preferential treatment depends on an θ that regulates the level of boundary-drawing an individual engages in (see Enke et al., 2023 for the formalization of this approach in the context of universalism). We argue that the theoretical parameter θ varies with respect to one's position on nationhood, or nationalist cultural model. Using a treatment heterogeneity perspective, we can say that cultural models motivate one to decide on the degree to which θ should be steep or not.

If these expectations are true, cultural models should have strong ties to decision-making. Generalizing from the resource allocation model, we might expect that individuals with varying cultural models should vary on hoarding the opportunities for their ethnic or national ingroups compared with the outgroups, the composition of their friendship networks, and decisions about granting access to groups, organizations, and resources. We believe that these behavioural outcomes depend on decision-making moments where cultural models are activated. This article is a first step to capture these moments as the backbone of social action.

3.2 | Theoretical and empirical implications

We propose a stylized model, hypothesizing that one's latent cultural model on nationhood shapes one's classification, evaluation, and treatment of outgroups. We define a "cultural model" as one's shared set of beliefs that regulates the group's evaluative judgements on cultural understandings. We argue that how an actor classifies and evaluates an outgroup chiefly depends on the extent to which cultural models provide the default understandings of the nation.

We expect an actor's cultural model to have strong coupling with their preferential treatment toward actors within and outside their perceived in-group, where preferential treatment is defined as the unequal allocation of one's fixed amount of resource weight between ingroups and outgroups. We have asserted that nationalism comes in several types, with substantive differences with respect to how one views the nation and its boundaries. If this is indeed the case, it would mean that people with varying sets of beliefs should have differential trajectories of evaluation. Thus, we hypothesize that varying conceptions of nationhood should affect individuals' classification and evaluation of national outgroups, which leads to differential social treatment.

In order to evaluate this hypothesis, we conduct an idealized resource allocation task that directs individuals to allocate a fixed amount of money between two socially salient groups by varying the ingroup category across all cases. If our hypothesis is true, we should find that national cultural models are effective in preferential treatment once there are ethnonational cues, compared with ingroup priming instances where there are no ethnonational cues.

4 | DATA AND METHODS

We use original survey data for this investigation.[iii] In June 2022, we hired an online polling agency to conduct a survey of 1,500 respondents, representative of the Turkish population. Using stratified quota sampling in an existing panel, we first selected 26 geographic units according to the Turkish Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics classification of the region (NUTS-2) representing 81 cities in Turkey. We then used quotas for sex, age, and socioeconomic status (SES) to select respondents from the panel. The participants self-completed the survey, and those failing the attention checks randomly distributed throughout the study were excluded from the final analyses. In the end, we have an analytical sample of 1,460 respondents.[iv] The excluded sample has slightly more male and older respondents, though they do not differ from the main sample in terms of one's religious affiliation, self-reported ethnicity, or party affiliation.

After completing the conventional questions on demographics, respondents began by reading a short passage stating that the interview will be completely anonymous, and they should answer the questions in ways that feel right to them. Since certain items might invoke desirability bias, we stressed the anonymity of the survey participation multiple times during the session. We also showed the opinion items across distinct parts of the questionnaire to mitigate respondent fatigue and randomized the ordering of both opinion items and allocation tasks.

4.1 | Measuring cultural models on nationhood

In order to tap various dimensions of Turkish nationalism, we used 13 survey items, summarized in Table 1.[v] The items tap into five distinct dimensions of an individual's nationalist beliefs, four of which were detailed before in Bonikowski and DiMaggio's (2016) work: *national identification*, or the extent to which respondents feel identified with the nation; *national pride* in being part of the nation; *criteria of membership*, which regulates the meanings of being "a true Turk," (d) *national hubris*, and (e) *national culture*, or beliefs that emphasize the nation's cultural traditions and identity over other dimensions of national identification.

TABLE 1 Nationalist belief items.

Item name	The statement
National identification	
natident1	I define myself, first and foremost, as part of the Turkish nation.
natident2	If I could be a citizen of another country, I would easily give up my citizenship.
National pride	
natpride1	Being part of the Turkish nation makes me proud.
natpride2	Turkey's achievements in international competitions make me proud.
Criteria of legitimate membership	
natmembr1	Speaking Turkish is an indispensable condition of being Turkish.
natmembr2	I define myself first as a "Turk," and then as a citizen of the republic of Turkey.
natmembr3	I doubt the Turkishness of a non-Muslim.
National hubris	
nathubrs1	I consider my own nation superior to all other nations.
nathubrs2	The contribution of the Turkish nation to world civilization is higher than the others.
nathubrs3	If I do business with a person or a group, I will prefer Turks over others.
nathubrs4	Discussing controversial events from my country's past (e.g., the Armenians or Kurds) bothers me.
National culture	
natcultr1	It is not race or religion that makes us who we are, but Turkish national culture.
natcultr2	Every Turkish citizen has to respect the historical heritage of the country.

Note: The statements are coded such that higher values indicate nationalist positions.

In selecting these dimensions, we closely followed the conceptual framework presented in Bonikowski and DiMaggio (2016, particularly see pages 955–56), although we deviated from the original plan in two respects. First, we added a new dimension, "national culture," to tap into the construction of the "Turkish" identity in the Turkish constitution which supposedly excludes racial or ethnic definitions in favour of a civic identity and a shared historical culture. Second, we wrote new items, such as the difference between a "Turk" and a "citizen", in order to capture respondents' propensity to identify the nation on ethnic or civic terms, and added questions about controversial events from country's past to include contextual questions to our measures. Our original expectation in this design was to revise the previous work's excessive reliance on the National Identity Supplement, which was featured in General Social Survey and International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), though Supplemental Materials A show that our estimates with the new instrument substantially replicates the Turkish component of the ISSP and previous work.

Of course, there is an inherent trade-off in the use of these indicators. On the one hand, the meaning of being a "Turk" is heterogeneous, unsettled, and contended: respondents can associate ethnicity, religion, or history in different ways, substantially modulating what it means to be a Turk for an ethnically Turkish, Sunni, and a male respondent compared with, for example, an ethnically Kurd, Alevi, and a female respondent. In this sense, these propositional questions lack interpretive heterogeneity. That said, *the entire purpose* of using inductive methods is to find out this heterogeneity without *training* our respondents in any fashion. Considering that survey responses contain strong measurement error, we urge that these results derive from the assumptions that, (a) respondents' cultural models are fairly stable, and (b) the interpretive heterogeneity is adequately captured.

We used Latent Class Analysis (LCA) to cluster our participants. LCA uses patterns of survey responses to partition people to clusters with the aim of providing homogeneous response probabilities (Collins & Lanza, 2010;

Goodman, 1974). More formally, the LCA model uses the cross-tabulation of item $j = \{1, ..., J\}$ and response categories $r_j = \{1, ..., R_j\}$ to compile the response patterns $y = \{r_1, ..., r_2\}$. The basic model can be represented as follows:

$$P(Y_i = y \mid L = c) = \sum_{l=1}^{n_c} \gamma_l \prod_{j=1}^{J} \prod_{r_j=1}^{R_j} \rho_{j r_j \mid c}^{I(y_j = r_j)}$$

The model estimates a series of latent classes with the aim of eliminating the dependencies between the observed variables, conditional on a unit's class membership L (Goodman, 1974). In the end, each person has an array of probabilities specifying their probabilities of belonging to L_i.

To decide on the number of latent classes, we first estimated successive LCA models by increasing the number of classes in each step. Since indicators were prepared as Likert scale response options (ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree), we treated these measures as ordinal for the analyses. Figure 1 plots Bayesian Information Criteria (BIC) from these estimations, documenting that the BIC elbows at the model with N = 4. Of course, none of these LCA solutions was able to fully explain the covariation among indicators, meaning that the local independence assumption was not satisfied. Thus, we allowed some indicator pairs to have local dependencies after inspecting their bivariate residuals.[vi] As can be seen from Figure 1, this model performs fairly well compared with highly complex and noisy solutions down the lane. In the end, we settled on our four-class solution by favouring parsimony against over-fitting (Raftery, 1995).[vii]

There are at least two substantive implications of this choice. First, settling on this solution necessarily means that we prefer adequate representation over low-prevalence groups. As we will show below, some groups with high visibility (e.g., secular nationalists with strong anti-religiosity or highly religious individuals with low nationalism) are absent in the following schema, although we note that it is hard to reliably explore these positions in a small sample without risking a strong reliance on noisy estimates. Given that our aim is to show the covariance between cultural positions and preferential treatment, this is less important for our purposes.
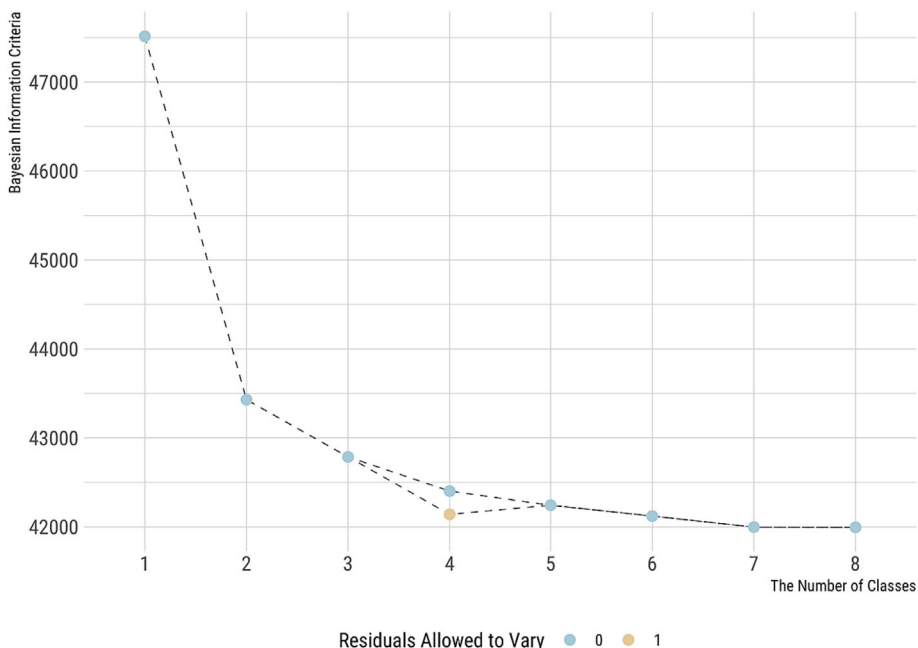

FIGURE 1 Bayesian information criteria from latent class models.

More importantly, we emphasize that the LCA solution is intended to show a set of *heuristic positions*, not *real groups* in the wild, meaning that there are no "classes" of people out there. In one sense, this rather mundane point warns against the problem of misplaced concreteness highly visible in cultural sociology. In fact, LCA is *destined* to provide certain group solutions, even when these solutions are relatively meaningless. Hence, we use this strategy to organize our respondent's propositional attitudes and do not make strong and untenable claims about social groups.

4.2 | Measuring the treatment of outgroups

In order to tap into behavioural outcomes, we instructed our participants to allocate a fixed amount of money between two representative individuals, a strategy developed and validated by Cappelen et al. (2022). In a series of vignette tasks, we presented our respondents with 100 Turkish Lira (TL), and specified that these hypothetical individuals have similar levels of income to control for perceptions of income disparities, and neither would know about their real identity. After reading the description, participants used a slider to change the amounts presented under two person icons labelled according to the characteristics we defined for each pair. We hid the initial 50TL-50TL allocation in the screen to avoid respondent priming. Thus, respondents actively moved their cursors to settle on their allocations before moving to the next allocation screen.

We followed four different scenarios. In all settings, we designated the outgroup person as "a random stranger from anywhere in the world." This is effectively an anonymous person serving as control for manipulations. We presented four ingroup individuals: (a) *ethnic fellow condition*, "a random person with the same ethnicity as you," (b) *national fellow condition*, "a random person from Turkey," (c) *family condition*, "someone from your family," and (d) *friend condition*, "one of your friends." With the final two tasks, we intended to measure the baseline ingroup preferences. We document the distribution of full allocation decisions across these four conditions in Figure 2, emphasizing that friends and families conditions created more ingroup allocations compared with the ethnic fellow and national fellow conditions.[viii]

4.3 | Analytic strategy and model adjustments

In all models, we estimated three-step LCA regression models for distal outcomes with a correction for misspecification. In contrast to the conventional practice of assigning participants to the class with the highest probability of class membership, and using these class vectors as predictors, the three-step framework corrects for the downward classification bias resulting from uncertainties in class membership (Vermunt, 2010). We used Bolck, Croon and Hagenaars (BCH) corrections for outcomes implemented in Latent GOLD 6.0 software[ix] and 95% intervals to talk about precision in estimates, though we note that class sizes are different.

5 | RESULTS

5.1 | Cultural models on nationhood

We found four cultural models characterizing Turkish nationalism, largely replicating the response structures found in previous work (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016; Soehl & Karim, 2021). Table 2 shows a summary of these cultural models along with their prevalence in our sample. The class-specific item response probabilities are presented in Figure 3.
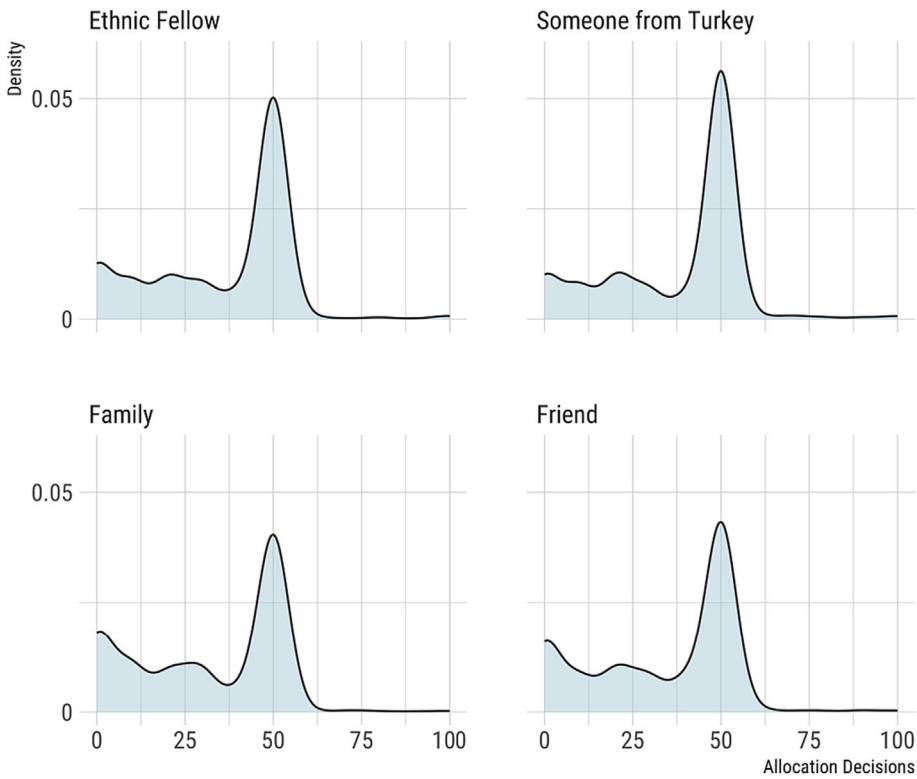
FIGURE 2 The distribution of allocation decisions across four conditions. *Note*: the figure shows the distribution of lira allocations for the stranger across four conditions. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

TABLE 2 Profile of cultural models.

	Cultural models			
	Ardent	**Restrictive**	**Disengaged**	**Moderate**
The prevalence of classes	19%	40%	9%	32%
Nationalist dimensions				
National Identification	High	High	Low	Moderate
National Pride	High	High	Low	High
Criteria of membership	High	High	Low	Moderate to high
National Hubris	High	Low to moderate	Low	Low to moderate
Importance of culture	High	High	Low	High

Note: Adapted from Soehl and Karim (2021).

There are several important patterns to highlight. First, similar to earlier studies, the Ardent and the Disengaged groups represent two ideal poles in opinion scales, one is high and the other is low nearly in all nationalism dimensions. Together, these positions capture close to 30% of the respondents in our sample. Note that while the Ardent class scores unanimously high in nearly all questions, those that were classified as the Disengaged gave less constrained responses to items, rather than showing full disagreement, suggesting that the latter features a combination of (a) those who are critical of nationalistic positions and (b) those who have relatively more apathy. The Restrictive
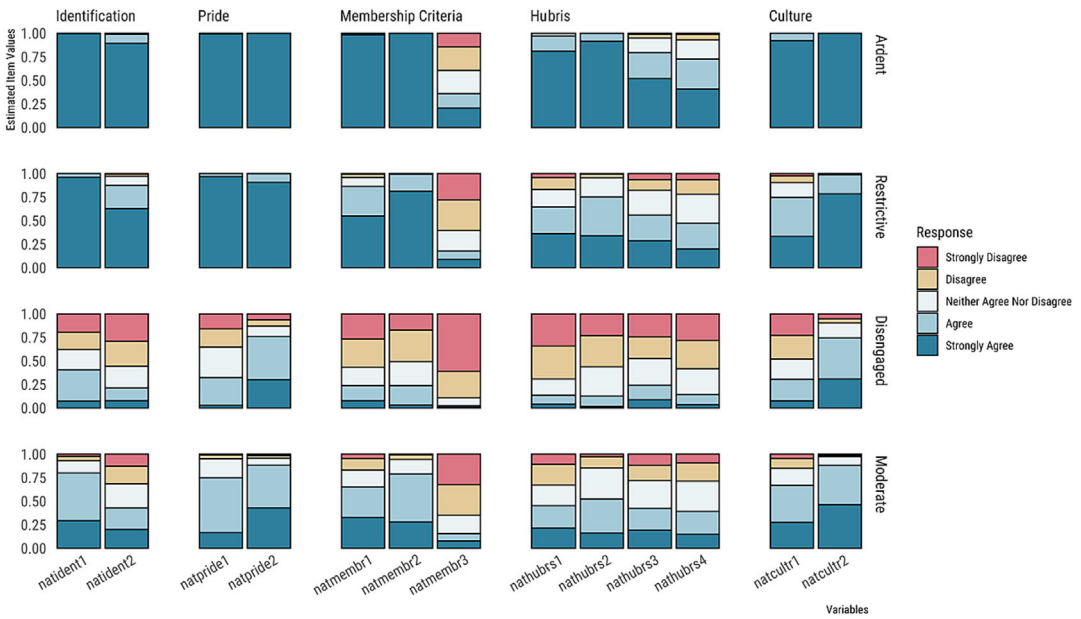
FIGURE 3 The item-response probabilities of cultural models. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary. com]

group, with 40% of the sample, shows a different pattern: while they score high in nearly all dimensions, their national hubris is rather low. Finally, the Moderate class involves respondents with particularly low national hubris and relatively less stringent membership criteria, though they still scored high in national identification, national pride, and national culture.[x]

The observation that the Ardent and the Restrictive class make up nearly 60% of our sample largely confirms the findings of many past research regarding the prevalence of strong and ethnically motivated nationalistic views and the existence of entrenched chauvinistic nationalist sentiments among the Turkish population. This can also be evidenced in multiple domains such as the electoral success of nationalist parties since the 1950s, popular discourses circulating in the public regarding Turkishness and its supposed others or the salience of xenophobic and racist messages against Kurds and other minorities.

We argued above that these configurations might be seen as cultural models, suggesting that an LCA pattern is one approximation to the common cultural schemas within the population. One particularly interesting implication of this proposition is presented in Tables 3 and 4, where we show the demographic sorting across the latent classes. Notably, classes substantively differ according to one's self-reported ethnic group and religious affiliations, though the lion share seems to lie in partisan affiliation, where the governing *Cumhur Alliance*, with its strong autocratic and nationalist bent, dominates the Ardent and Restrictive classes, while the liberal, socialist, and Kurdish opposition mainly sorted into the Disengaged class.[xi]

In essence, these patterns suggest that nationalist cultural models are strongly tied to social divisions, allowing us to understand the social infrastructure behind these positions. First, note that there is strong demographic sorting: while self-identified ethnic Turks distribute across the Ardent, the Restrictive, and to a lesser extent, the Moderate, the ethnic minorities take the central share for the Disengaged. Similar patterns are observed for religion: while the dominant religion, Sunni Islam, is sorted into the chauvinistic positions, the minority groups (Alevis and non-affiliated) are either Moderate or Disengaged. Second, national positions strongly correlate with party affiliation, showing how the recent convergence of different political positions in three main alliances (i.e., *Cumhur Alliance*, *Millet Alliance*, and *Labor and Freedom Alliance*) in Turkish politics strongly divide along sociodemographic and cultural lines. That said,

TABLE 3 Attribute differences across latent classes.

Attributes	Ardent	Restrictive	Disengaged	Moderate
Gender				
Female	48.1%	51.6%	47.6%	51.3%
Male	51.9%	48.4%	52.4%	48.7%
Age	42.7	41.1	42.3	43.2
Ethnic identification				
Turk	95.4%	91.9%	54.0%	79.7%
Kurd	2.8%	3.6%	34.1%	13.8%
Other	1.8%	4.5%	11.9%	6.6%
Education level	4.6	4.7	5.0	4.9
Religious identification				
Muslim	94.3%	92.1%	66.7%	80.7%
Alevi	5.7%	7.4%	17.5%	15.0%
Non-affiliated or other	0%	0.5%	15.9%	4.2%
Religiosity	5.3	5.1	3.9	4.6
Party affiliation				
Cumhur Alliance	48.4%	37.5%	9.5%	17.2%
Millet Alliance	25.8%	30.2%	39.7%	39.2%
Labor & Freedom Alliance	0.7%	0.7%	40.5%	11.2%
Other political parties	5.7%	3.6%	3.2%	8.3%
No political affiliation	19.4%	28.0%	7.1%	24.2%
Ideology	4.7	4.5	3.0	3.9

Note: Values denoting proportions of respondents are represented as percentages and values that refer to group means are represented as scores.

the existence of high heterogeneity, even in the case of strong sorting mechanisms like partisanship and ethnicity, implies that a bottom-up approach is still necessary.

5.2 | Resource allocation tasks

If our hypotheses are correct and cultural models *orient* people to preferential treatment, we should observe differences across resource allocations. This was a relatively weak hypothesis, but now that we know our cultural models and the extent to which classes should rely on boundary-making, we can expect strong ingroup preferences by the Ardent class, more equal allocations for the Disengaged class, and in-between positions for the Restrictive and Moderate classes.

Figure 4 presents the results of these analyses. The bottom two panels (family and friends) show that, as expected, there are no substantive differences, suggesting that latent class positions have no relation with allocation decisions for the closest ingroup ties. However, when we ask our respondents to allocate resources between an ethnic fellow and a random stranger, we see precise estimates that show that the Ardent class is more likely to favour ingroup members. In contrast, the Disengaged respondents are more likely to disregard this information once asked to decide on the allocations (change from the former to the latter decreases ingroup allocations by 0.53 standard deviations, on average). The results are less pronounced for other classes (0.21 standard deviations for the

TABLE 4 Class distribution within groups.

| Attributes	Ardent	Restrictive	Disengaged	Moderate
Gender				
Female	18.5%	40.6%	8.1%	32.8%
Male	20.3%	38.7%	9.1%	31.8%
Ethnic identification				
Turk	21.7%	42.7%	5.5%	30.2%
Kurd	5.8%	15.3%	31.4%	47.4%
Other	6.5%	33.8%	19.5%	40.3%
Religious identification				
Muslim	21.1%	42.1%	6.6%	30.1%
Alevi	10.5%	28.3%	14.5%	46.7%
Non-affiliated or other	0%	7%	46.5%	46.5%
Party affiliation				
Cumhur Alliance	30.6%	48.5%	2.7%	18.1%
Millet Alliance	15.1%	36.2%	10.4%	38.3%
Labor & Freedom Alliance	1.8%	3.6%	46.4%	48.2%
Other political parties	20%	26.2%	5%	48.8%
No political affiliation	16.2%	47.6%	2.6%	33.5%
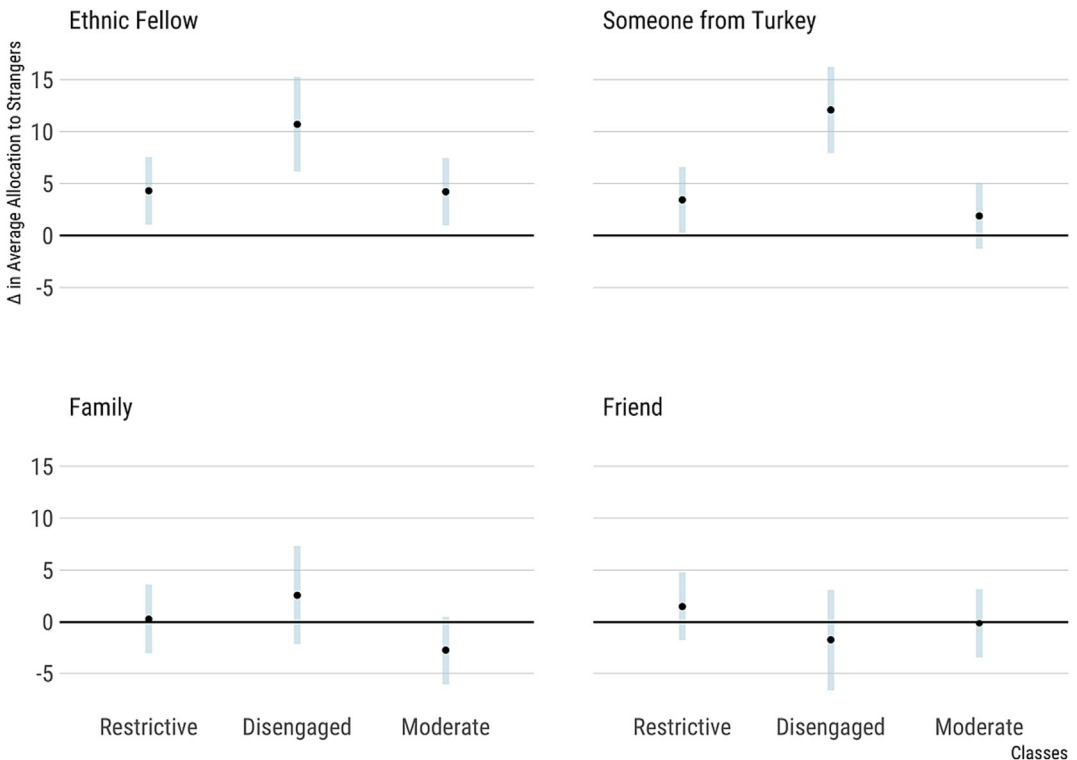
FIGURE 4 Coefficient plot for allocation decisions. *Note*: the plots show the coefficients from linear regression models with distal outcomes. The ardent class serves as reference in all estimations. Point estimations with 95% credible intervals.

Restrictive and 0.21 standard deviations for the Moderates), but substantively still there, suggesting that these participants are less likely to cast their nets around ethnicity when the cues point toward ethnic groups to which they perceive belonging.

When we turn to the allocation decisions between random stranger from Turkey and random stranger from anywhere in the world, we see an interesting flip: the Disengaged class has still the same precise estimates (0.62 standard deviations less ingroup allocations, on average), but the Moderate class becomes indistinguishable from the Ardent class. This is particularly relevant to understanding how classification schemas work in this exercise: when we cast our net more broadly (changing our cues from ethnicity to Turkey), there emerges an alignment between the Ardent and Moderate classes in their in-group preferences.[xii]

5.3 | Exploratory analyses

While the allocation tasks provide clear evidence that there is a strong coupling between cultural positions and preferential treatment, the real-world implications of this relation are not particularly obvious. As part of our study, we also collected relationship measures from our respondents regarding several social groups, asking whether individuals have ties to people from particular social groups that they "discuss important matters with." These groups include those who identify as (a) Alevis, (b) LGBTQ, (c) Syrian or African refugees, and (d) Atheists, Deists, or Agnostics. If cultural models have real-world relevance, it is possible that one's network sorting reflects this. In Figure 5, we present the percent of respondents with outgroup ties across each latent class.

The results are mixed, but they reflect clear patterns across classes. The distribution of Alevi ties (among those who are not self-identified as Alevi) are rather indistinguishable. That said, there are clear differences among latent classes regarding their ties to LGBTQs, Refugees and Religious Nones. Those classified as Ardent or Restrictive are
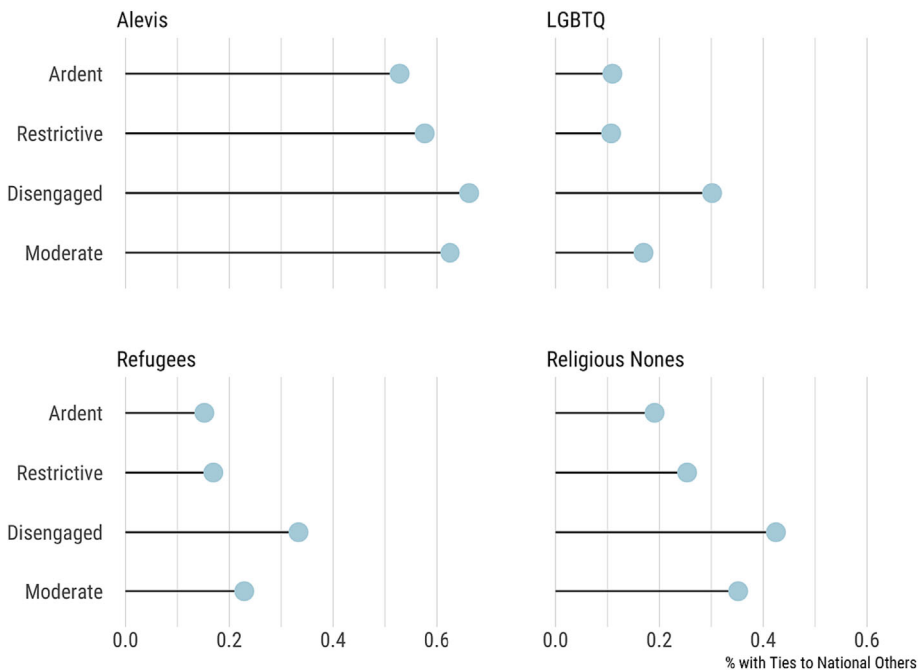
FIGURE 5 Network ties to national outgroups. *Note*: the plots show the percent of those who have ties to national outgroups across each class. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

least likely to have ties to national outgroups, while those classified as Disengaged have the most ties. As expected, those classified as Moderate are in-between. Of course, social sorting has important backdoor paths, and we do not claim that there is a causal channel from national self-understandings to social ties. That said, the covariance between these two is suggestive of the same patterns we observed in the allocation tasks.

6 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this article, we used original survey data to explore the varieties of Turkish nationalism and analysed how cultural models can relate to behavioural outcomes. We asked respondents to allocate resources between two hypothetical individuals and manipulated the identities of the ingroup members. The decisions showed that cultural models lead to differential treatment between one's designated ingroups and outgroups. With this design, we could be able to detect the effects of competing conceptions of nationhood on preferential treatment.

6.1 | Questions for cultural sociology

One qualification of our findings is that we did not assess *actual social behaviours*: the allocation task was meant to explore preferential treatment at its representative moments, though the extent to which these results translate to behavioural outcomes is not clear. Moving forward, further research should ask whether and how varying cultural models influence differential social action. The findings of this paper suggest that differences should occur in a variety of real settings such as hoarding of public or social opportunities (e.g., access to public goods, status allocation, or discrimination) or the composition of one's social network ties.

This opens up another question, particularly related to cultural sociology broadly construed: whether personal differences observed with propositional statements provide clues for situational action. Even though some researchers are sceptical about the connections between dispositional attitudes and situational behaviour (Jerolmack & Khan, 2014), the psychological literature converges on the idea that situations are often effective in short term moments while dispositions are effective in understanding the *typical* ways of acting (Fleeson, 2004). Our findings suggest that cultural models are activated when actors are cued with ethnic or national information. Hence, these dispositions might be effective so long as the situation itself is defined along ethnic or national terms. In this sense, our finding speaks to the broader discussions in cultural sociology about the relevance and causal importance of cultural dispositions.

One particular advantage of using LCA is that it does not assume cultural coherence. After all, LCA is basically a dimensionality reduction tool, and classes are just heuristic devices to organize sets of beliefs in an efficient fashion. This implies that the categorical differences across response patterns might be more important than the linear effects of additive scales, which might have implications for how cultural models affect behavioural outcomes. Further research can explore how social action depends on people's patterned positions in the overall belief space, and adjudicate whether these effects occur because of categorical differences.

One highly important question that our study, by nature, cannot answer is whether cultural models and their relation to behavioural outcomes are stable over time. Studies show that cultural beliefs tend not to be malleable, but the disproportionate salience of political issues might affect the trajectory of one's personal beliefs (Kiley & Vaisey, 2020; Lersch, 2023). Assessing the effect of changing issue salience on cultural beliefs requires the existence of longitudinal data, which, unfortunately, is not available in the Turkish context. Hence, we do not know the extent to which changes in the Turkish political landscape influence behavioural dynamics.

6.2 | Questions for nationalism studies

As far as we know, this is the first study, after the ISSP's 2013 National Identity module, that uses representative data to present a wide selection of opinion measures for national self-understandings in Turkey. This is striking considering the enormous political changes that the country has gone through since 2015, the year when then-governing AKP lost its absolute majority in the elections, which, in turn, instigated a period of intense turmoil with several terror attacks killing more than 200 people and the resurgence of armed conflict between the Turkish armed forces and the Kurdish guerillas after the failed peace process. Following this, the country experienced an attempted coup d'état against the AKP, which was followed by drastic authoritarian measures and a referendum in 2017 that changed the governing system from a parliamentarian to a (highly authoritarian) presidential system. Since the referendum, President Erdoğan has flexed his muscles and has been governing the country with an iron-hand. The president's ruling "Cumhur Alliance," an electoral coalition formed between the AKP and two ultra-nationalist parties, has also intensified their nationalist rhetoric, targeting minorities, *foreign forces*, and the opponents of the government. Our study was implemented within this politically charged context, exactly one year before the crucial 2023 elections where Erdoğan was re-elected as President for a third term.

Given this context, our results showing a strong coupling between preferential treatment and national self-understandings might predicate on the fact that nationalist rhetoric was highly salient in the period of this survey. Hence, future research should extend this study to other contexts, and ask whether people's stated opinions in survey contexts and their behavioural outcomes *do* couple in low-chauvinistic environments. This speaks to general debates about whether the use of one's propositional attitudes presented in surveys are relevant for understanding social action.

More broadly, this study calls for a deeper engagement with culture and cognition in studies of nations and nationalisms. We began this article with Weber's (1978) characterization of nations as subjectively formed communities brought into existence through a "specific *sentiment of solidarity* in the face of other groups" (922). Following Weber, we argued that a proper social scientific analysis of nations and nationalisms must start from the judgements of concrete citizens who are members of this solidarity group. One implication of this approach is to take cultural positions seriously: social processes indeed provoke certain responses from people, but these responses go through a process of perception, classification, and understanding. We believe nationalism studies would be strongly enriched by accounting these cultural processes.

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ENDNOTES

[i] We will use *belief* as a catch-all term for one's evaluative judgements on propositional attitudes. It is possible to invoke a family of concepts such as values, attitudes, opinions, orientations, interests, or worldviews, though for the purposes of this article, we hold no position about the relevant distinctions (or lack thereof) among these concepts.

[ii] We use the term "cultural models" to invoke shared patterns of thinking and interpreting the world. The same issues that haunt Footnote 1 apply here as well. One can call these patterns "belief systems," "cognitive cultures," "schemas," or perhaps "public frames." Depending on the level of consideration (Lizardo, 2017), each makes sense. The principal takeaway is the idea that cultural beliefs tend to cluster. We thus urge against misplaced concreteness.

[iii] Scientific Research Projects at Boğaziçi University funded the entire project while the preparation of the survey instrument and the relevant sampling procedures were executed by the authors. The Institutional Review Board for Research

with Human Subjects at Boğaziçi University approved the study. The data as well as R and Latent GOLD code replicating the results are available at github.com/tkeskinturk/nationLCA.

[iv] While deciding on appropriate quotas, we cross-tabulated all 26 NUTS-2 regions with age, sex, and socioeconomic status, a summed scale of education and occupation, and determined the quotas within each subregion. Hence, all the basic demographics represent the population statistics shared by the Turkish Statistical Institute. There are no reliable estimates for other measures, but all estimates for the ethnic identities, education, and religion approximate to the ones listed by KONDA, a credible public opinion company in Turkey. See interaktif.konda.com.tr for details.

[v] The survey items in previous works usually came from the International Social Survey Program and General Social Survey's National Identity Supplement (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016; Soehl & Karim, 2021). See Figure A1 and Figure A2 in the Supplemental Materials for a comparison of this instrument with our measures.

[vi] The indicator pairs are *natcultr2* and *natpride2*, *nathubrs1* and *nathubrs2*, *natmembr1* and *natmembr2*, *natcultr1* and *natident2*, *natident1* and *natmembr3*, and *nathubrs1* and *natmembr3*. In all pairs, we restricted the covariation to allow for the model to have higher accuracy compared to the case where there is no restriction.

[vii] See Table B1 for the full set of fit statistics.

[viii] The mean allocation (out of 100 in all cases) is 68.9 for family, 66.7 for friends, 64.3 for ethnic fellow, and 62.1 for someone from Turkey. Thus, respondents generally preferred higher allocations to ingroup members.

[ix] Since the models achieved high entropy ($\varepsilon > 0.80$), we replicated these results using models with predicted class memberships and adjustments for sex, age, education, ethnicity, religion, religiosity, partisan affiliation and ideology. Table C1 provide the estimates for both bivariate distal outcomes and OLS analyses.

[x] We preserved the latent class labels used in previous work (Bonikowski & DiMaggio, 2016) with the exception of our "Moderate" class, which is seemingly close to "Creedal," though the implications of the latter (e.g., universalism and rule of law) are not particularly pronounced in the Turkish context. These patterns are replicated in our alternative analyses in Supplemental Materials A, where we talk about the ISSP data and its implications.

[xi] Formal election alliances formed between political parties became legalized in Turkey after the country's transition into a presidential system in 2017, in the aftermath of a failed coup attempt against the then-governing AKP government. In the new system, the presidential candidate must win more than 50% of casted votes in order to be elected. Given the divided nature of Turkish politics, no candidate of any party, including AKP's Erdoğan, could secure such high percentage of votes, thus making "election alliances" a necessity. Following the acceptance of the new constitution in 2017, Erdogan's AKP formed a formal coalition with the ultra-nationalist MHP and named it as the *Cumhur* Alliance, which translates as "alliance of the public." The two main parties of the opposition, secular nationalist CHP and secular far-right IYIP, formed the *Millet* Alliance (alliance of the nation) in response. During the critical 2023 elections, fringe parties from various positions joined the two alliances and Erdoğan's Cumhur Alliance won with a small difference. The socialist parties, led by the Kurdish HDP, also formed an alliance named *Emek ve Özgürlük* Alliance (Labor and Freedom Alliance).

[xii] Studies in cultural evolution suggest that kinship networks might be effective in explaining social interactions (see Enke, 2019), particularly the extent to which group boundaries are effective in perpetuating divisions. In Table D1, we tried to tap this dimension using region fixed effects. Similar results apply.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information can be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of this article.