
Screening Interpreting on the Social Construction of the Turkish in Economic Crisis 2025

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Abstract

The study is based on a paradoxical phenomenon: during a severe inflation crisis in 2025, with the annual rate reaching 35.41%, Turkish society appears to respond relatively calmly, showing no massive social turmoil or widespread protests. The economic pressure is significant, with the prices of necessities, housing, and utilities increasing sharply, eroding real purchasing power, and exacerbating inequality. This paradox raises the question of how Turkish society constructs its social reality under such economic stress. This study aims to understand this phenomenon through the lens of Peter L. Berger theory of social construction. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the research collects data through literature studies, media discourse analysis, policy document reviews, and in-depth interviews with workers, students, and community members in Turkey. The findings reveal that the Turkish government deliberately shapes social reality by restricting demonstrations, controlling narratives through mainstream media, and reinforcing nationalism as a unifying ideology. Through the stages of externalization, objectification, and internalization, the state produces an illusion of social stability which, in practice, masks forms of socio-political repression. Moreover, the rational-instrumental actions, such as adaptation to new prices and wage adjustments, and affective actions, such as pride in national identity, further contribute to society's seemingly passive response. Overall, the study shows that the Turkish case is not merely about economic resilience but about how power constructs, directs, and sustains a dominant social reality during times of crisis.

Keywords: Turkish Inflation; Turkish Government; Social Construction; Economic Crisis; Social Reality

Introduction

Inflation is a condition in which the overall price of goods and services increases continuously over time. This increase reflects a decrease in people's purchasing power, in line with the depreciation of the domestic currency's value against the goods and services available in the market (Hafidz Meiditambua Saefulloh, Rizah Fahlevi, and Alfa Centauri 2023). As a country with a republican presidential system of government and a population exceeding 84 million, Turkey currently faces complex economic challenges, particularly in the face of high inflation fluctuations. In response to the economic crisis, President Erdoğan has frequently labelled interest rates as “evil” and promoted polarizing policies, arguing that lowering interest rates will reduce inflation (Esfahani and Masoudnia 2025). At the same time, Turkey is experiencing a deepening centralization of political power under President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, accompanied by restrictions on press freedom, judicial independence, and opposition activities. These socio-political dynamics are inseparable from the economic crisis, as the state simultaneously constructs narratives of national unity and resilience to suppress dissenting voices.

Inflation has a direct impact on the decline in people's purchasing power and has the potential to cause social instability, especially in low-income groups (Hafidz Meiditambua Saefulloh et al. 2023). Rizani et al. (2023) demonstrate that high inflation prompts significant changes in consumption patterns, with people focusing their spending on basic needs. In the long run, this condition can weaken purchasing power and reduce social welfare (Rizani et al. 2023). Rahmatullah (2025) emphasized that food inflation, in particular, can widen inequality and increase the risk of social instability, especially in areas with high dependence on external supplies (Rahmatullah 2025). Meanwhile, the findings of Azis et al. (2023) in a bibliometric study confirm that global inflation is often associated with problems of poverty and social instability, making it a serious cross-border problem (Azis, Rozalinda, and Wira 2023). Agustina et al. (2024) note that although inflation can be controlled, if it exceeds the threshold, it will have a broad impact on the social, economic, and even political sectors (Agustina et al. 2024). Thus, inflation is not only an economic problem, but it can also trigger specific social constructions related to the meaning of stability or unrest, depending on how the state and society respond to it.

In Turkey, inflation is not a new phenomenon; however, since 2021, this crisis has shown increasingly complex symptoms. The World Bank noted that the inflation rate increased from 14.826% in 2020 to 28.701% in 2021 (Mustikawati 2023). As of March 2025, the annual inflation

rate will still be at 38.10%—a figure that is nominally lower than in previous months, but still a significant strain on the public consumption sector. The increase in the price of necessities, such as food and non-alcoholic beverages, which reached 37.12%, as well as the soaring housing and energy sectors, show that people's daily lives are still overshadowed by the crisis (Tradingeconomics 2025a).

In addition to Turkey, the economic crisis poses a significant challenge for numerous countries worldwide, particularly following the global crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. This phenomenon not only suppresses the real economic sector but also affects social and political stability (Alfiyati, Laila, and Amalia 2024). Several countries, including Argentina, Sri Lanka, and Lebanon, have experienced significant social unrest as the economic crisis has taken a severe toll (Bachtiar 2023). This shows that when people's purchasing power is drastically weakened and basic necessities become difficult to reach, the social response that emerges is generally in the form of demonstrations, riots, or even political regime changes (Tupper and Karacaoğlu 2025). However, this reality is not entirely accurate in Turkey, which instead shows a relatively calm social phenomenon amid a surge in high inflation.

For example, Argentina's economic crisis was characterized by high inflation rates and the depreciation of the peso, which led to a wave of massive protests and labor strikes. Public dissatisfaction with the government became the primary catalyst for the emergence of political tensions, even leading to the resignation of several political leaders (Setiawan and Kartiasih 2021). In Sri Lanka, the crisis of shortages of staples, fuel, and rising prices of necessities sparked massive protests that led to the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in 2022 (Sari and Tholhah 2025). Lebanon, meanwhile, is experiencing the collapse of its banking system, which has led to profound public distrust of the state, reflected in social chaos and the erosion of public service structures. This situation erodes people's deep trust in the state because the state fails to fulfill its basic function of protecting and serving the people. Amid this chaos, the World Food Programme (WFP) is present as an actor and instrument of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) that help fill the void in the role of the state by distributing food aid, supporting vulnerable groups, and contributing to Lebanon's social stability in the period 2018–2023 (Sabrina 2025).

In Ukraine, the crisis was triggered by political turmoil following the cancellation of the signing of the Association Agreement with the European Union, which sparked a wave of massive protests and shook the country's stability. The situation was further exacerbated by the overthrow of President Viktor Yanukovich, which stoked tensions with Russia and led to the annexation of Crimea, adding to economic pressure through armed conflict and political uncertainty. In addition,

economic sanctions from Russia and the prolonged conflict's impact have led to a decline in investment, disrupted trade, and a sharp depreciation in the value of the Ukrainian currency (Massaguni, Badu, and Sallatu 2022).

This condition suggests that, in many cases, economic crises tend to create harsh social responses and demand structural changes. However, not all countries show the same pattern. Some countries have managed to maintain social stability despite facing severe economic pressure (Setiawan and Kartiasih 2021). This opens up space to examine more deeply how the state manages public perception and shapes certain social realities in the context of a crisis.

The state has a very strategic instrument to shape social construction in critical situations. Through media control, the use of national symbols, the framing of public narratives, and selective law enforcement, the state can direct public perceptions of the crisis as part of a collective struggle, not as a state failure. In China, for example, the government actively orchestrated the narrative during the pandemic and economic slowdown by emphasizing social solidarity, nationalism, and the importance of stability. Government media serve as a tool to build a calming discourse, even when economic pressure is immense (Romdani 2021).

In Russia, a similar strategy is being employed in response to international sanctions and an economic recession. The government uses external threats as a central narrative to unite the people, while suppressing criticism through repression and information control (Sujibto and Diah 2022). According to Berger and Luckmann, social reality is not something that is formed naturally, but the result of a continuous process of human interaction (Light, Berger, and Luckmann 1967). This reality is constructed through three main stages, includes externalization, objectification, and internalization.

Therefore, Berger and Luckmann's approach to social construction theory becomes relevant for understanding how social realities in crisis conditions can be shaped, disseminated, and internalized by society. The process of externalization by the state through policies, speeches, media, and symbols will be the basis for the objectification of reality. When society no longer questions the narrative and begins to accept it as a collective truth, then the internalization stage has been reached. This does not mean that the crisis has been resolved, but that the perception of the crisis has been successfully controlled. However, the theory of Berger and Luckmann lacks a critical dimension, as it tends to overlook the role of power and the actors who monopolize it in shaping, manipulating, and enforcing social reality (Hourani 2021).

With the oppressive economic situation in Turkey, the social conditions of the Turkish people show a calmness that is not proportional to the burden of economic pressure. Public reactions to high

inflation tend to be passive, without the emergence of major riots, mass protests, or widespread social unrest. This phenomenon indicates the existence of social conditions that appear to be stable, but contain a complex layer of socio-political construction. This stability does not arise solely as a result of public acceptance of economic conditions, but as a form of social reality that is systematically formed. That condition cannot be separated from the operation of hegemonic processes in society. As Gramsci explains, hegemony is maintained not only through coercion but also through the internalization of ideological values. Similarly, Althusser's concept of ideological and repressive state apparatuses provides useful insight into how schools, media, religion, and even law enforcement play a role in shaping obedience and limiting criticism. Thus, the social calm observed in Turkey is not a natural acceptance, but the outcome of state-managed hegemonic construction. This demonstrates that stability in times of crisis is less the result of economic resilience than of successful hegemonic narratives that transform repression into perceived normality and even national pride.

Berger and Luckmann's theory of social construction posits that social stability is not a natural condition, but rather a product of a process of externalization, objectification, and internalization. Various studies support this view, such as Intan et. al. (2024), which shows how the value of harmony in the Siwaluh Jabu traditional house is formed from the practice of cooperation (Intan, Wibowo, and Riza 2024), Fredriko (2024), who highlights the role of Toba Batak women in patriarchal structures (Fredriko 2024). This view is enriched by Delia, Kelly, and Craig's thinking, which emphasizes the subjectivity of reality, the role of communication, and the construction of reality through interaction (Sulaiman 2016).

Berger and Luckmann's social construction theory focuses on studying the relationship between human thought and the social context in which it emerges and develops (Oruh and Agustang 2024). This theory has been widely applied to read social meaning in the context of religion, spiritual behavior, and digital politics (Nurkhalis 2018; Romdani 2021). However, the study of social construction in the context of international socio-political crises is still limited. Therefore, this study fills this gap by using Berger and Luckmann's framework to explain how social stability in Turkey in 2025 is constructed through symbols of nationalism, narrative control, and restrictions on public space. In this way, the paper not only applies Berger and Luckmann's theory but also demonstrates its relevance for understanding contemporary authoritarian politics. This provides a concrete case that makes the abstract concept of social construction more visible and empirically grounded.

So it is important to know how society builds understanding and responds to crises through social construction theory. Social construction theory explains that reality is not formed naturally, but rather the result of social interactions, language, and mutual agreement. According to Berger and

Luckmann, reality is formed through the process of externalization, objectification, and internalization (Romdani 2021). This theory highlights how inflation not only impacts the economy but also becomes an arena for the construction of social meaning and a tool for the state to control public space (Muslim and Wilis Werdiningsih 2023).

Integrating Berger's framework with Gramsci and Althusser allows this study to highlight how 'constructed reality' in Turkey is not value-neutral, but deeply political. The state actively produces meaning, objectifies it through institutions, and ensures its internalization through ideological narratives of nationalism, religion, and security. This theoretical triangulation enriches the sociological explanation of why Turkish society, despite economic hardship, remains relatively calm compared to other countries facing similar crises. Therefore, this study aims to analyze how the high inflation crisis in Turkey in 2025 affects people's social behavior and government policies in maintaining social stability. This research also aims to understand how socio-political constructions are formed through the mastery of public space, the use of nationalist symbols, and the application of rational and affective actions by various social factors, based on the perspective of social construction theory. Beyond the Turkish case, these findings are expected to provide broader insights into how states construct stability in times of crisis, offering lessons that may resonate with other national contexts experiencing similar challenges, such as Indonesia.

Methods

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, which, according to Sugiyono, aims to gain a deep understanding of social phenomena in their natural context (Sugiyono 2022). In this research, a descriptive qualitative approach is used to explore how Turkish society constructs and interprets the social meaning of the ongoing inflation crisis through everyday experiences, narratives, and actions. Data were collected through a combination of literature reviews, media discourse analysis, policy document studies, and semi-structured interviews with workers, local communities, and students in Turkey. These methods were chosen to capture diverse perspectives and provide a deeper understanding of how the economic crisis is experienced and narrated by different social groups.

The data analysis follows the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing as proposed by Miles and Huberman. Furthermore, the interpretation process is informed by Peter L. Berger's Social Construction of Reality Theory, which encompasses the stages of objectification,

internalization, and externalization. Objectification refers to how the economic crisis is perceived as a tangible social fact; internalization examines how this crisis shapes the community's sense of nationalism; and externalization explores how these meanings are expressed through actions, discourses, and government policies. Together, this approach helps explain how Turkish society constructs and negotiates social reality during a severe economic downturn (Light et al. 1967; Sulaiman 2016).

Results

Turkey is currently facing a significant inflation crisis, with the annual inflation rate reaching 35.41% in May 2025, down from 37.86% in the previous month. This inflation indicates a significant increase in the prices of goods and services, particularly in the housing and utilities sector, which rose by 67.43%, and in food and non-alcoholic beverages, which increased by 32.87%. This price increase reduces people's purchasing power and creates economic uncertainty that can hinder investment and exacerbate social inequality.

Although Turkey is currently experiencing a severe inflation crisis, social realities indicate that society remains relatively calm, with no significant turmoil, such as mass protests or riots. Data shows that the income or assets of some residents increased during this period. However, the increase does not come from an increase in purchasing power, but from an increase in the nominal value of assets such as property or stocks due to inflation (Amani 2024).

In addition, according to the Trading Economics (2025), the actual employment rate increased to 49.2% in March 2025 – the highest figure in the last three months – and the expenditure allocated to workers rose from 742.10 to 913.30 points in the Same Month. This increase indicates a rise in formal economic activity and people's nominal income, despite inflationary pressures. However, this illusion of stability does not fully reflect the reality experienced by the lower class, which is increasingly depressed by soaring prices of necessities, especially in the housing and food sectors (Tradingeconomics 2025b). The absence of a massive social reaction is not proof that society accepts this condition with resignation, but rather is the result of a strong socio-political construction. The government imposed a ban on demonstrations, controlled narratives in the media, and restricted critical public information, creating the perception that the situation in the country was "fine". However, as Informant, Mayang, an Indonesian student in Turkey who also works in the informal sector notes, the nominal increase in income is offset by proportional price hikes from

traders. This shows that the narrative of wage policy as state protection conceals structural inequalities. Here, Berger's internalization process meets Gramsci's notion of common sense: people accept the official discourse as truth, even though their lived reality tells a different story." This is not only in line with Berger and Luckmann's concept of constructed reality, but also with Althusser's idea of a repressive state apparatus, in which the police, judiciary, and security forces are mobilized to maintain order by silencing dissent, which is also reinforced by the testimony of informants from a Turkish student in Istanbul and an informal sector worker in Istanbul, showing how oppression is experienced by both middle-class students and low-income working class people, which shows the extent of coercion in everyday life.

The Turkish government has actively banned demonstrations, especially in strategic areas such as Istanbul and Ankara, in response to political events such as the detention of Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu. This ban is accompanied by restrictions on social media and news censorship, which creates a sterile public space for opposition discourse. As a result, despite the real economic pressures, the forms of social expression of society are constructed and directed by the state (MetroTV 2025). This aligns with the theory of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, which posits that social reality is not something objective and fixed, but instead is formed through social interaction and mutual agreement within society (Asmanidar 2021). In other words, the Turkish government deliberately controls and shapes "social reality" by regulating public spaces and permitting discourse, so that the dominant narrative that emerges is one of stability and order, despite the oppressive economic pressures. From the results of an interview conducted with one of the Turkish students who did not want to be named, it was found that the Turkish people are aware of the high risk of demonstrations, especially in a sensitive political and economic context:

Legally, demonstrations are not prohibited, but in reality, they are constrained. If the topic is sensitive—such as criticism of the government or support for the opposition —demonstrations are often denied. Even if the demonstration continues, it is usually immediately forcibly disbanded. Although it is said to be free, the reality is that it is complicated for people to speak out. (Informant_01)

Based on information obtained from an informal sector worker in Istanbul, it was stated that demonstrations are not only legally prohibited but also have the potential to endanger personal safety, as protesters can be subject to arrest or violence from the authorities. This phenomenon shows that social tranquillity in Turkey is not the result of stable economic conditions or a

prosperous society, but rather a form of repression that silences expressions of discontent. In contrast, information obtained from Ali Kokmars, a worker in Ankara, said that.

“There are no demonstrations in Turkey because everyone lives comfortably, and our country helps those who are in difficulty.”
(Informant 2)

This statement describes the side of society that has been formed by the government's official narrative, that tranquility is the result of the state's success in meeting the needs of the people. This reflects the internalization of state ideology, where repression is no longer perceived as such, but is instead considered a form of stability and a measure of government success. In other words, political control over public space has shaped a social construct that creates the illusion of stability, but behind it lies significant pressure and unfreedom. This is in line with research conducted by Mukhtar & Jatmiko (2024), which states that the concepts of power and knowledge emphasize that power not only regulates physical behavior, but also controls knowledge and discourse that shape people's perception of reality (Mukhtar and Jatmiko 2024). With the ban on demonstrations and media censorship by the Turkish government, the Turkish government has dominated the public discourse space, so that social expression and criticism that could threaten the legitimacy of the state can be suppressed and reframed according to the interests of power.

Nationalism as a Symbol of Turkey's Social Resilience

Amid economic pressure due to high inflation, Turkey not only relies on economic policies or bans on demonstrations to maintain social stability, but also uses nationalism as a cultural and ideological instrument. Strategic sectors, including housing, utilities, and non-alcoholic food and beverages, recorded sharp price spikes. Despite the heavy economic pressure, Turkish people have shown a relatively calm response and have not engaged in massive protests. This condition poses an interesting social problem, a severe economic crisis does not necessarily give rise to social turmoil in society.

From the perspective of the social construction theories of Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, the state's response to this crisis can be understood as part of the process of externalization, that is, the creation of social meaning by dominant actors. The Turkish government is actively shaping the narrative that the situation remains under control and stable, through the mainstream media, official state channels, as well as restrictions on protest activities in public spaces. This statement is supported by the opinion Binici et al. (2025) which states that the Turkish media

landscape consists of various outlets with different political orientations, especially regarding their attitudes towards the government. The policy of banning demonstrations in major cities such as Istanbul and Ankara, accompanied by the arrest of opposition figures, is a concrete form of this meaning-creation strategy.

The process of externalization is evident in the steps taken by the Turkish government, which actively creates and disseminates a narrative of pan-Turkism. Through institutions such as OTS, TIKA, and Diyanet, the government instills the values of brotherhood, language, and culture as a symbol of the nation's collective identity (Krzyzanowska 2024). Turkey's global ambitions, such as its efforts to join BRICS and its vision of becoming a world logistics power by 2053, continue to be campaigned through state speeches and national media. All of these efforts represent a tangible manifestation of how the government seeks to project a new social meaning for the community, fostering national solidarity and pride (Waldman 2024). These findings also resonate with Gramsci's theory of hegemony, which emphasizes how states manufacture consent through ideology. The statement of Informant Ali Kokmars, a factory worker in Ankara, reflects this hegemonic process, where silence and obedience are not perceived as repression, but as proof of state success. In this sense, nationalism functions as an ideological apparatus that transforms political control into cultural acceptance."

This finding is in line with Romdani's (2021) research which shows that in the context of regional head elections during the pandemic, the government and the media create the meaning of "security" and "compliance" through various digital communication channels, which are then accepted by the public as a form of shared truth (Romdani 2021). Muslim and Werdiningsih (2023) also affirm that social and religious institutions can play a crucial role in the externalization of certain symbols and narratives, collectively forming group identities (Muslim and Wilis Werdiningsih 2023). Research by Romdani (2021) and Muslim and Werdiningsih (2023) supports the notion that dominant states and institutions can shape public perceptions of social reality through effective communication strategies, narrative control, and symbolism.

Symbolism is also evident in the raising of the Turkish flag, which is one of the country's national symbols with significant historical and cultural value. Based on the results of interviews with resource persons who have a background in history education and an interest in state symbolism, it was revealed that the Turkish flag is not only a formal representation of the state, but also a symbol of struggle, identity, and spirituality that has been inherited since the time of the Ottoman Empire (Fibri 2023).

This social meaning, formed repeatedly, then enters the stage of objectification. The public receives one-way information without alternative critical discourse, so that the narrative of order and stability becomes a collectively accepted reality. The current order also arises because Turkish people have great faith in their government, as seen in an interview with Ali Kokmars, a worker in Turkey:

“At the moment, inflation is declining, and President Erdogan is doing his job well; we also believe in our country and always support it.”
(Informant 2)

This suggests that the narrative constructed by the Turkish government has been successful in creating order in Turkish society, as evidenced by the absence of mass protests and the increasing number of formal data on employment or labor expenditure, which reinforces the perception that life is returning to normal. According to data from Trading Economics (2025), by 2025, the gross minimum wage in Turkey is set at 26,005.50 lira per month in the second quarter and remained stable until the fourth quarter of 2025. This figure is the highest in the history of the minimum wage in Turkey, which previously averaged only 2,535.19 lira per month since 1990. This policy is implemented to reflect the state's commitment to workers and as a form of intervention to maintain people's purchasing power amid inflation. More than a third of Turkey's workforce (approximately 10 million people) receives this minimum wage, which the government claims is designed to approach or meet the Decent Living Needs (KHL) of urban communities. The government promotes this policy as tangible proof that the state is there to protect the people in times of crisis (Tradingeconomics 2025c). This is in line with what an informant, Mayang, who is a Turkish student from Indonesia, said:

"Inflation here is unlikely, because the government provides a salary increase that can be 2-3x compared to before. Like my lecturer, it can be 70-100 million, the calculation of the price in rupiah, which is for employees or permanent staff. If the waitress is in the range of 12-15 million." (Informant 3)

This policy, which is constantly repeated in official statements and media reports, shapes the public perception that the state has fulfilled its responsibilities. Overall, these findings demonstrate that the absence of mass unrest in Turkey cannot be interpreted as social stability in the economic sense. Rather, it is a hegemonically constructed reality, sustained by the combination of Althusserian

repressive apparatus (restrictions, arrests, censorship) and ideological apparatus (nationalism, wage narratives, symbols). When read through Berger and Luckmann's three stages externalization, objectification, and internalization it becomes clear that Turkey's apparent tranquility is itself a social product of power relations. This high minimum wage is part of the social reality that is considered "normal" and "sufficient", thus reinforcing the illusion that people's economic conditions are maintained despite high inflation. From the traders' side, it is stated that they have increased the capital price by 3 times as well. As stated by Mayang, who also does freelance work amid her busy life:

"People who sell also increase the price 3 times the basic price. As I have a freelance job in business selling Indonesian food or whatever the children request, I now follow the market price. For example, if I am now selling donuts, the price of flour and other ingredients is 50,000, I sell 150,000." (Informant 3)

This statement suggests that the increase in revenue provided by the state is not proportional to the surge in the price of goods, mainly due to mark-up practices by traders who follow the logic of the free market. This is reinforced by the view of Ali Kokmars, a Turkish citizen who stated:

"There are many opportunists in the country, and there is also a free market, so that is why the price hike is happening." (Informant 2)

The public accepts this fact as an objective reality that is not in question, even though real purchasing power is still eroded due to price spikes. These facts demonstrate that the social reality the public accepts as objective is, in fact, shaped through subtly manipulated structures of discourse and symbolic systems. Salary increases that appear to be "satisfactory" mask the fact that people's real purchasing power is declining, creating an inequality between narratives and everyday life experiences. Shahadha's (2020) research notes that symbols such as the flag and statue of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk are constantly visible elements in public and private spaces, thus reinforcing the perception that nationalism is an integral part of the everyday identity of Turkish society (Al-Saleh 2020).

Syahadha (2020) also notes that the motto "Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene" (How happy a man who calls himself a Turk) has become a popular phrase that represents the spirit of nationalism and national identity (Syhadha 2020). It is not only a slogan but also a reminder of the collective identity that has been institutionalized since the early years of the Turkish Republic. This shows that the

expression of nationalism in Turkey is not only manifested through the act of raising the flag, but is also strengthened rhetorically and symbolically through the use of national slogans (Al-Saleh 2020). Furthermore, this process continues to the internalization stage, where the socially oriented meanings that have been objectified are absorbed by the individual and become part of their self-consciousness. The people did not show resistance, not because they agreed with the existing conditions, but because the state's narrative had been embedded in their understanding as something right and unquestionable. Fear of legal repression and the loss of safe spaces to voice unrest also reinforce this passive acceptance. Nationalism became an institutionalized personal belief, even during periods of high economic pressure. This phenomenon is reinforced by state narratives such as "a strong Turkey, a united Turkey", which frames the crisis as a test of the nation's resilience, not as a structural failure of the country's economy (Gülseven 2021).

This is also in line with the concrete information recorded in the OSW Commentary (2024), which states that the internalization process is supported by the government's official pan-Turkism narrative, emphasizing Turkey's position as the natural leader of the Turkish World. OSW data show that the government, through OTS, TIKa, and Diyanet, promotes fraternal values, language, and culture, and funds Turkey's state-building projects, thereby instilling pride in the collective identity (Krzyzanowska 2024). This narrative is also reinforced by the government's global ambitions, such as its efforts to join BRICS and its vision of becoming a world logistics power by 2053, which continues to be campaigned through state speeches and national media, instilling the idea that the people should be proud to be part of their nation's global struggle (Waldman 2024).

In Gülseven's (2020) research, it was explained that the Turkish government often uses crises as a moment to strengthen national identity and the legitimacy of power through a narrative of protection and independence. By putting forward the concept of "national struggle against global threats", the government emphasizes the importance of people's unity. It portrays itself as the savior of the nation, capable of protecting citizens from external dangers. This narrative is reinforced by symbolic actions such as the repatriation of citizens, the construction of large hospitals, and the delivery of medical aid to other countries, which aim to arouse national pride and collective trust. In this context, nationalism is employed as a tool to address ontological insecurity while bolstering the government's position as the primary actor in maintaining the state's sustainability and honor (Gülseven 2021).

Through stages of externalization, objectification, and internalization, Berger and Luckmann's theories of social construction provide an understanding that society's response to the inflation crisis is not just a form of economic adaptation, but part of the formation of a politically

controlled social reality. This aligns with social construction theory, which explains how social reality is shaped and directed through symbols, narratives, and collective practices developed by social actors and state institutions. According to Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, social reality is not something objective and fixed, but rather it is formed through social interaction and mutual agreement within society (Asmanidar 2021). The government deliberately controls and shapes social reality by regulating public spaces and permitting discourse, ensuring that the dominant narrative that emerges is one of stability and order, despite economic pressures.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that Turkey's ongoing inflation crisis does not automatically trigger massive social unrest, as the government successfully constructs and maintains a narrative of stability and nationalism. Through the stages of externalization, objectification, and internalization, the state controls discourse, symbols, and public spaces to shape social reality in accordance with its interests. This is realized through policies that restrict demonstrations, media censorship, and the continuous reinforcement of nationalist sentiments, which together create the illusion of socio-economic stability. Although purchasing power continues to decline in real terms, the population's perception is shaped to accept this condition as usual and even as proof of the government's success. In this way, nationalism becomes not only a cultural identity but also a political instrument that strengthens the legitimacy of power, demonstrating that the inflation crisis is not merely an economic phenomenon but also a socially constructed reality embedded in Turkey's political landscape. These findings also confirm Gramsci's idea of hegemony and Althusser's notion of repressive and ideological apparatuses, showing how coercion and ideology work together to manufacture consent. Thus, the Turkish case illustrates that social calm during crisis is less about genuine stability and more about the successful construction of controlled reality.

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