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Perspectives on Portugal's National Past and Present

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Erasmus Mundus Master in the Psychology of Global Mobility, Inclusion and Diversity in Society.

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Supervisor: PhD Jenny Roth, Associate Professor, University of Limerick

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CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS
E HUMANAS

Department of Psychology

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Resumo

Este projeto investiga se a nostalgia coletiva nacional está associada de forma positiva ao narcisismo coletivo nacional e se essa relação é moderada por ameaças relacionadas com a identidade. Foi realizado um inquérito transversal online junto de 160 adultos portugueses, que avaliou a nostalgia nacional, o narcisismo, a ameaça de categorização errada, a privação relativa do grupo, a descontinuidade coletiva e outras variáveis exploratórias relacionadas com ameaças. Análises suplementares examinaram a relação entre o declínio nacional percebido e a nostalgia nacional, e análises fatoriais confirmatórias avaliaram a dimensionalidade da escala de narcisismo coletivo.

Os resultados foram consistentes com a hipótese 1 — a nostalgia nacional estava associada positivamente ao narcisismo nacional. No entanto, a ameaça de categorização errada, a privação relativa do grupo e a descontinuidade coletiva não moderaram esta relação, embora várias delas tenham emergido como preditores independentes significativos do narcisismo nacional. Análises suplementares indicaram que a nostalgia nacional estava mais fortemente associada a avaliações positivas do passado de Portugal do que a avaliações negativas do seu presente. As análises fatoriais confirmatórias forneceram um apoio preliminar a uma estrutura de dois fatores que distingue as dimensões grandiosa e vulnerável do narcisismo coletivo, embora os fatores estivessem altamente correlacionados.

Estas conclusões destacam a importância potencial das representações históricas coletivas na compreensão das formas defensivas de identidade nacional e contribuem para a investigação emergente sobre a estrutura e os antecedentes do narcisismo coletivo.

Abstract

This project investigates whether national collective nostalgia is positively associated with national collective narcissism and whether this relationship is moderated by identity-related threats. A cross-sectional online survey was completed by 160 Portuguese adults assessing national nostalgia, narcissism, miscategorisation threat, group relative deprivation, collective discontinuity, and additional exploratory threat variables. Supplementary analyses examined the relationship between perceived national decline and national nostalgia, and confirmatory factor analyses evaluated the dimensionality of the collective narcissism scale.

The results were consistent with hypothesis 1 - national nostalgia was positively associated with national narcissism. However, miscategorisation threat, group relative deprivation, and collective discontinuity did not moderate this relationship, although several were significant independent predictors of national narcissism. Supplementary analyses indicated that national nostalgia was more strongly associated with positive evaluations of Portugal's past than with negative evaluations of its present. Confirmatory factor analyses provided preliminary support for a two-factor structure distinguishing grandiose and vulnerable dimensions of collective narcissism, although the factors were highly correlated.

These findings highlight the potential importance of collective historical representations in understanding defensive forms of national identity and contribute to emerging research on the structure and antecedents of collective narcissism.

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Introduction

"Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined." (Anderson, 1983). Rather than merely the strength of group identification, increasing psychological literature has revealed it is also the content and ways these identities are collectively represented, which can predict different intergroup outcomes (Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). For instance, studies have demonstrated that more essentialist representations of the ingroup predict greater prejudice over and above the strength of group identification (Meeus et al., 2010; Pehrson et al., 2009). Likewise, distinguishing between different modes of group identification has shown that ingroup glorification, rather than ingroup attachment, predicts reduced group-based guilt for ingroup moral violations (Roccas et al., 2006) and lower demands for justice following ingroup-perpetrated violence (Leidner et al., 2010). Understanding how individuals come to adopt and become attached to particular representations of their ingroup may therefore be central to understanding some of the most consequential forms of group behaviour in contemporary society.

Within social psychology, social identity - the part of the self that derives value and emotional significance from membership in the collective (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979) - provides one foundation for this understanding. To the degree to which we rely on group membership for positive self-regard, we are motivated to perceive our groups favourably through positive comparison and feelings of group distinctiveness (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). As with individual identities, collective identities may also motivate people to seek verification of their shared representations of the ingroup (Chen et al., 2004; Gómez et al., 2013).

Collective identity can be threatened, resulting in defensive processes aimed at maintaining positive image of the ingroup (Branscombe et al., 1999; Ellemers et al., 2002). One manifestation of these defensive processes is collective narcissism, characterised by an exaggerated, idealised representation of the ingroup alongside a belief that others fail to sufficiently recognise its exceptional value (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Golec de Zavala & Lantos, 2020). Collective narcissism is linked to a host of detrimental intergroup outcomes, including increased prejudice (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009) and hostile behaviour towards

outgroups (Golec de Zavala, 2025), authoritarian and populist political attitudes (Golec de Zavala et al., 2025; Lantos & Forgas, 2021), and lower ingroup satisfaction and solidarity (Federico et al., 2021; Golec de Zavala, 2019). Although research on the antecedents of collective narcissism has expanded in recent years, the literature remains more developed with respect to its consequences (Golec de Zavala, 2024; Tondang et al., 2025). Individual antecedent research focusses on frustrated personal needs and individual narcissism, while at the intergroup level threats to identity and status have been the focus (Golec de Zavala & Lantos, 2020; Guerra et al., 2022; Tondang et al., 2025). Recent work has argued that comparatively little attention has been paid to how collective narcissism emerges through broader societal processes such as historical narratives, political rhetoric, and social change (Tondang et al., 2025).

Collective nostalgia represents one construct that speaks directly to each of these dimensions. Having been cited as an outcome of perceived societal change through collective continuity (Smeekes et al., 2022), it captures an affective response to a groups historical representation (Wildschut et al., 2014), and has increasingly been examined within the context of populist political rhetoric (Couperus et al., 2023; Wohl & Stefaniak, 2020). Where collective narcissism represents a present-focused defensiveness around an idealised group image (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009), collective nostalgia may represent a historical and emotional foundation from which that image is drawn. Despite their conceptual proximity, both involving idealised representations of the collective, their relationship remains relatively unexplored. The present study examines this relationship within the Portuguese national context, where an institutionally embedded and emotionally charged imperial past (Peralta, 2025) provides a theoretically motivated setting for examining both constructs.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

1.1 Collective Narcissism

Collective narcissism is an exaggerated belief in the ingroup's greatness, accompanied by the perception that outgroup members fail to sufficiently recognise it (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Marchlewska et al., 2020). The group's idealised image of superiority can be expressed along any dimension, be it competence, morality or ethnicity, and is used to justify an outsized deservingness claim of privilege (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). This form of group identification is fragile, recognition-dependent, and plagued by an underlying insecurity regarding its own greatness (Cichocka, 2016; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). Early evidence suggested that collective narcissists' highly positive explicit evaluations of their ingroup were not accompanied by correspondingly positive implicit evaluations, a pattern initially interpreted as reflecting an insecurely maintained positive ingroup image (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). Consistent with this, collective narcissists display heightened sensitivity to perceived disrespect and both symbolic and realistic threats to the ingroup's image, responding defensively to criticism and challenges to the group's status (Golec de Zavala et al., 2013; Guerra et al., 2022). These patterns suggest a construct organised around two related discrepancies: one between how the ingroup deserves to be seen versus how it actually is seen, and another between the grandiose image projected outwardly versus a privately held sense of insecurity about group identity. This raises the broader question of what contributes to the projection of such a grandiose ingroup image.

Evidence suggests a multitude of frustrated individual-factors can lead to collective narcissism. Primarily, an undermined or threatened sense of self-worth can motivate narcissistic investment in group identity (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019; Marchlewska et al., 2020). A recent systematic review similarly reported positive associations between collective narcissism and both grandiose and vulnerable individual narcissism, alongside Dark Triad traits more broadly (Tondang et al., 2025). Furthermore, diminished personal control has been shown to predict narcissistic ingroup positivity, potentially by motivating construction of a powerful ingroup identity to compensate for feelings of reduced personal agency (Cichocka et

al., 2018; Marchlewska et al., 2020). This interpretation is further supported by evidence that non-self-determined motivations, whereby identification with the ingroup is driven by external validation, identity-contingent self-worth, prestige, and favourable social comparisons, rather than autonomous commitment to the group (Eker, 2021). Such findings help explain why individuals may become psychologically invested in an idealised representation of the ingroup, through which frustrated psychological needs can be compensated. In turn, because this investment is directed towards the collective self, it can become inherently dependent upon the group's social standing and recognition by others.

The intergroup foundations of collective narcissism are rooted in perceived threat, insecurity and concerns surrounding the ingroup's status, value, distinctiveness, and external recognition (Cichocka, 2016; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009, Guerra et al., 2022). Foundational work by Golec de Zavala and colleagues (2016) characterised collective narcissism by a heightened sensitivity to criticism and perceived disrespect directed towards the ingroup. Accordingly, ambiguous outgroup behaviour is readily interpreted as intentionally hostile (Golec de Zavala, 2019, 2024; Golec de Zavala & Lantos, 2020), alongside broader tendencies towards exaggerated perceptions of intergroup threat and siege mentality beliefs (Golec de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012). Supporting this account, both realistic and symbolic threats positively predicted national collective narcissism across four European countries (Guerra et al., 2022). Distinctiveness threat, reflecting threats to the ingroup's perceived uniqueness rather than its resources or values, likewise predicted higher collective narcissism in cross-national analyses (Guerra et al., 2022). More recently, categorisation threat, being mistaken for a historically rivalrous outgroup, was found to increase collective narcissism experimentally, with this effect replicated across multiple studies and supported by internal meta-analytic evidence (Guerra et al., 2025). Group relative deprivation has also been associated with elevated collective narcissism across both majority and minority groups in multiple national contexts (Bagci et al., 2023; Marchlewska et al., 2017). Across these diverse forms of intergroup threat, the common feature is a perceived challenge to the ingroup's idealised standing. Consequently, defending and restoring that image becomes central to collective narcissism.

The defensive and recognition-dependent processes underlying collective narcissism motivate efforts to defend, restore, and secure validation for the ingroup's idealised image. Collective narcissism predicts prejudice particularly towards outgroups perceived as threatening the ingroup (Golec de Zavala & Cichocka, 2012), and has been associated with intergroup aggressiveness and support for military hostility more strongly than several related

constructs, including social dominance orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, and blind patriotism (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). Further intergroup outcomes include support for populist political movements, including Brexit and Donald Trump (Marchlewska et al., 2017), alongside exclusionary nationalism, anti-immigrant attitudes, reduced solidarity toward disadvantaged outgroups, political polarisation, and support for political violence (Capelos et al., 2025; Cichocka et al., 2022; de Zavala, 2023, 2024; Górska et al., 2019). Together, these findings suggest that collective narcissism functions as a motivational orientation towards defending and validating an idealised ingroup image, driving defensive attitudes and behaviours aimed at protecting the group's status, distinctiveness, and external recognition.

1.2 Unresolved Questions in Collective Narcissism

The above findings have substantially clarified what collective narcissism is and how it differs from related forms of ingroup identification. Established construct distinctions include: blind patriotism, characterised by uncritical loyalty to the nation; nationalism, reflecting beliefs in national superiority and dominance; right-wing authoritarianism, involving preference for social conformity, obedience to authority, and punitive responses towards norm violators; and ingroup satisfaction, a secure and non-defensive form of positive ingroup evaluation (Golec de Zavala, 2024; Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). Additionally, research consistently demonstrates that it is specifically the insecure and narcissistic form of ingroup identification, rather than secure ingroup satisfaction, which predicts detrimental intergroup outcomes (Cichocka, 2016; Górska et al., 2023).

However, compared to individual narcissism, relatively less attention has been devoted to potential variation within collective narcissism itself. While primarily conceptualised as a unitary construct, collective narcissism has also been described as an ambivalent form of group esteem (Golec de Zavala, 2018; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009), combining an idealised, exaggerated ingroup image with the belief that this exceptional image is insufficiently recognised by others. This raises the possibility that these defining characteristics differ in their relative psychological salience and organisation.

Several observations suggest greater variation in the psychological expression of collective narcissism. The construct has been demonstrated across diverse collective identities, including both majority and minority groups occupying different social positions (Bagci et al., 2023; Golec de Zavala et al., 2019; Marinthe et al., 2025), while its association with grandiose

individual narcissism also varies across national contexts (Golec de Zavala et al., 2019). Although indirect, these findings provide some justification for exploring construct multidimensionality. Additionally, recent work has proposed communal and agentic forms of collective narcissism, illustrating an established precedent for further potential differentiation within the construct (Żemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2021; Zhai et al., 2025). The present study builds upon this precedent and explores a further potential distinction, drawing conceptually from the grandiose-vulnerable differentiation established within individual narcissism (Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Jauk et al., 2022; Miller et al., 2011).

The proposed distinction of collective grandiose narcissism, and collective vulnerable narcissism, concerns the relative psychological salience of the two defining characteristics inherent to collective narcissism: affirming an idealised ingroup representation, and sensitivity to failures of external recognition. A grandiose organisation may emphasise projecting and affirming ingroup superiority, whereas a vulnerable organisation may emphasise grievance and restoring the ingroup's deserved recognition. If such distinctions exist, understanding the processes through which individuals become invested in these differing organisations becomes theoretically relevant, providing further rationale for examining the role of collective nostalgia.

1.3 Collective Nostalgia

Collective nostalgia can be conceptualised as an individual's emotional response to their group's past, characterised as an ambivalent "bittersweet" longing for this former image, experienced as shared amongst group members (Wildschut et al., 2014). While personal nostalgia increases feelings of social connectedness through a sense of belongingness and acceptance (Sedikides et al., 2016), collective nostalgia extends this function, linking to ingroup connectedness, continuity, and re-engagement with meaningful social bonds (Sedikides & Wildschut, 2019; Wildschut et al., 2006). Under conditions of threat, collective nostalgia can function defensively as identity-regulating (Wohl et al., 2023). Threats to the groups continuity or stability are linked to increasing collective nostalgia, which stabilises identity through an increased emphasis on group shared-values and traditions (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015; Wohl et al., 2023). Smeekes et al., (2022) found that collective discontinuity - a rupture of perceived group-continuity - predicted collective nostalgia and was associated with subsequent increases to ingroup-protective and outgroup-rejecting collective action

intentions in longitudinal studies. Similarly, collective angst - anxiety about the groups future - predicted collective nostalgia, and was theorised to function as a coping mechanism during periods of uncertainty (Smeekes et al., 2018; Wohl et al., 2020).

Collective nostalgia is also inherently motivational, driving ingroup-oriented behaviour and collective action independently of threat (Wildschut et al., 2014; Wohl & Stefaniak, 2020). Experimental studies priming collective nostalgia increased positive ingroup evaluations, intentions to approach other ingroup members, and behavioural intentions to support the ingroup following outgroup transgressions in manipulations with no threat induction (Wildschut et al., 2014). The content of collective nostalgia, shaped partly by the nature of the threat eliciting it, has consequences for the kinds of intergroup outcomes it produces (Versteegen, 2024). Drawing on foundational distinctions between restorative and reflective nostalgia (Boym, 2001), contemporary research has differentiated collective nostalgia into content types such as homogeneity-focussed and openness-focussed nostalgia (Stefaniak et al., 2021). These differentiations can lead to different intergroup outcomes, with homogeneity-focussed nostalgia linked to increases in exclusionary intergroup attitudes, anti-immigrant sentiment, populist political support and ingroup-favouring collective action (Behler et al., 2021; Cheung et al., 2017; Lammers & Baldwin, 2020; Smeekes et al., 2021). In contrast, nostalgia for a more open society was associated with warmer attitudes towards outgroups, lower prejudice, and less anti-immigrant sentiment (Stefaniak et al., 2021; Wohl et al., 2020). Both kinds of motivational outcomes suggest the past image at the centre of collective nostalgia is positively remembered and selectively constructed (Dresler-Hawke, 2005; Hilton & Liu, 2008; Wohl et al., 2023), providing a representation of the ingroup which is held against the present and may intensify investment in protecting that image.

Concurrently, there remains conceptual tension within the collective nostalgia literature. For example, there are discrepancies between whether or not collective nostalgia intrinsically includes perceptions of the ingroups decline over time (Cheung et al., 2017; Elçi, 2022; Elgenius & Rydgren, 2022; Wildschut et al., 2014). Wildschut et al. (2014) conceptualised collective nostalgia as a decline-neutral orientation towards the group's past, where threat shapes and amplifies the content of nostalgia without decline being necessary for nostalgia itself. Alternatively, several contemporary approaches frame collective nostalgia as involving perceptions that the past was better for the ingroup, often linking nostalgia to decline, loss, restoration-oriented motivations, or wanting to return to that period (Cheung et al., 2017; Elçi, 2022; Elgenius & Rydgren, 2022; Obradović & Baron, 2025). This distinction has

implications for whether collective nostalgia is considered primarily threat-reactive, or as already containing threat-based appraisals of collective continuity. Regardless of whether a decline is perceived as intrinsic to collective nostalgia, both framings suggest that longing for an idealised collective past may increase investment in protecting that idealised image in the present. This raises the question of whether collective nostalgia functions as a motivational antecedent to more defensive forms of ingroup identification, such as collective narcissism.

1.4 Conceptual Overlaps and Distinctions

Despite developing as largely separate research literatures, collective nostalgia and collective narcissism share a common underlying architecture (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Wildschut et al., 2014): both centre on idealised representations of the collective, although these representations differ in their temporal focus and motivational significance. In collective nostalgia, these representations concern an idealised collective past, although contemporary approaches increasingly conceptualise nostalgia as emerging from perceived discrepancies between that past and a diminished or discontinuous present (Smeekes et al., 2022; Wohl et al., 2020). In collective narcissism, by contrast, the discrepancy is relational: an idealised image of the ingroup is contrasted with the recognition it receives from others, which is perceived as insufficient (Golec de Zavala, 2011; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). Although these constructs differ in their temporal focus and proposed motivational processes, both involve emotional investment in idealised representations of the collective.

This structural parallel points toward a more specific theoretical possibility - that collective nostalgia may provide collective narcissism with the historical and narrative depth it otherwise lacks. Collective narcissism is typically examined as a present-focused sensitivity - a preoccupation with whether the ingroup's current image is sufficiently recognised and respected (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). What it does not account for is how groups arrive at, and become emotionally invested in, their idealised self-image in the first place. Collective nostalgia may be one answer to that question. By emotionally anchoring the ingroup's greatness in a shared, idealised past (Wildschut et al., 2014), nostalgia may provide a pathway towards narcissistic investment in the group's image a temporal foundation and a sense of historical legitimacy. The ingroup is not merely great; it was great, and the present represents a failure to live up to, or be recognised for, that historical identity.

Beyond this parallel, both constructs share motivational and action-oriented properties that further suggest their interconnection (Wildschut et al., 2014; Wohl & Stefaniak, 2020). Collective nostalgia motivates ingroup-protective tendencies and collective action aimed at safeguarding valued aspects of collective continuity (Smeekes et al., 2022; Wildschut et al., 2014), while collective narcissism drives defensive and retaliatory motivations aimed at protecting the ingroup's image and distinctiveness from perceived criticism or disrespect (Golec de Zavala et al., 2013, 2016). Additionally, both have been linked to hostility towards threatening outgroups, anti-immigrant attitudes, and support for restoration-oriented political movements under particular conditions (Cheung et al., 2017; Guerra, et al., 2022; 2025; Marchlewska et al., 2017; Smeekes et al., 2018). Despite these conceptual similarities, there has been little direct empirical examination of the relationship between collective nostalgia and collective narcissism. Capelos et al. (2025) reported a small positive association between nostalgia and collective narcissism within a broader grievance-politics framework, though nostalgia was not operationalised using a dedicated collective nostalgia measure, limiting the interpretability of this finding.

1.3.1 Shared Threat Dynamics

Both collective nostalgia and collective narcissism have independently been characterised as threat-reactive constructs (Bagci et al., 2023; Guerra et al., 2022; Smeekes et al., 2022; Wohl et al., 2020). Collective nostalgia has been conceptualised as an emotional response to perceived disruption of collective continuity, traditions, or identity (Smeekes et al., 2018, 2022; Wohl et al., 2020), while collective narcissism has been associated with heightened sensitivity to symbolic and realistic threats against the ingroup's image, status, distinctiveness, and miscategorisation (Bagci et al., 2023; Guerra et al., 2022; Guerra et al., 2025). Furthermore, both appear sensitive to perceived tensions surrounding the ingroup's continuity, distinctiveness, or standing, and may together reflect a broader pattern of identity defence under threat (Golec de Zavala, 2024; Golec de Zavala & Lantos, 2020; Smeekes et al., 2022; Wohl et al., 2020). These conceptual overlaps inform the selection of the following moderators, in that they may each represent conditions under which the discrepancy between idealised and present ingroup identity becomes most psychologically salient, and under which collective nostalgia and collective narcissism become most strongly interconnected.

Each moderator examined in the present study capture distinct but related forms of identity-relevant threat that may intensify the nostalgia-narcissism relationship. Miscategorisation threat refers to the perception that the ingroup is being mistaken by others for a historically rivalrous outgroup, thereby undermining its sense of uniqueness and distinctiveness (Branscombe et al., 1999; Guerra et al., 2022, 2025). Rooted in Branscombe et al.'s (1999) taxonomy of social identity threats, which distinguishes categorisation, distinctiveness, value, and acceptance threats, miscategorisation threat represents an operationalised synthesis of the categorisation and distinctiveness threat types, capturing the experience of having one's preferred group identity externally disregarded (Guerra et al., 2025). Experimental evidence across multiple national contexts demonstrates that miscategorisation threat is a robust positive predictor of collective narcissism, (Guerra et al., 2025). It was therefore included as a potential moderator of the national nostalgia-national narcissism relationship on the basis that identity threat may broadly activate defensive ingroup processes. If national identity feels externally undermined, individuals may be more inclined both to idealise a past in which that identity was more secure and to insist upon its present exceptionality.

Group relative deprivation (GRD) refers to the perception that the ingroup receives fewer resources or less recognition than it deserves relative to relevant comparison groups (Grant & Brown, 1995; Marchlewska et al., 2018). Cross-sectional and experimental evidence links it to collective narcissism: Marchlewska et al. (2017) found that perceived long-term ingroup disadvantage experimentally increased collective narcissism, and that collective narcissism in turn mediated the relationship between perceived disadvantage and support for populism. There is also preliminary evidence linking GRD with collective nostalgia. However, the nostalgia measures employed within this literature appear to incorporate intrinsic appraisals of decline, making it difficult to disentangle nostalgia from deprivation-adjacent appraisals.

Within this literature, Rogenhofer et al. (2022) found a significant main effect of group relative deprivation on collective nostalgia, and Grosche and Rothmund (2025) subsequently argued that injustice appraisals associated with deprivation evoke nostalgic responding, informing their development of the Nostalgic Deprivation Scale (Grosche & Rothmund, 2025). Taken together, these findings suggest the possibility that perceptions of collective disadvantage may reinforce both nostalgic investment in a more favourable national past and narcissistic demands for restored recognition and status. Group relative deprivation was therefore examined as a moderator of the relationship between national nostalgia and national narcissism. Additionally, given these conceptual overlaps, the present study operationalised

collective nostalgia using items referring to nostalgic engagement with valued aspects of the collective past, while assessing perceived decline and related constructs separately. This allowed these conceptually overlapping processes to be examined independently.

Collective discontinuity concerns perceived ruptures in continuity between the group's past and present identity (Smeekes et al., 2022;Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2014a, 2014b). Cross-sectional evidence has established a positive association between collective discontinuity and collective nostalgia, with Smeekes and Verkuyten (2015) finding that feelings of displacement and discontinuity were significant positive predictors of national nostalgia among native Dutch majority members. More recently, Smeekes et al. (2022) provided longitudinal evidence in a three-wave cross-lagged panel study that collective discontinuity predicted collective nostalgia over time, with the reverse path being non-significant. Collective discontinuity was therefore included as a potential moderator of the national nostalgia-national narcissism relationship on the basis that, when there is a perceived gap between an idealised past and a diminished present, the motivational salience of both nostalgic idealisation and narcissistic exceptionality claims may be heightened.

1.5 Portuguese Context

Portugal presents a theoretically relevant context because national identity continues to be shaped by representations of its imperial past (Peralta, 2025; Sadowski et al., 2024). Imperial nationalism has long constituted a central component of Portuguese national identity, with narratives surrounding the "Age of Discoveries" becoming particularly amplified under the Estado Novo regime through romanticised and selective representations of Portuguese colonialism (Peralta, 2017, 2025; Sadowski et al., 2024). Consequently, the temporal distance and politicisation by the Estado Novo has led to high emotional attachment, questionable historical accuracy, and ongoing contestation of this past, and thus of Portuguese contemporary identity (Peralta, 2025). This is particularly evident in Lusotropicalism ideology (Castelo, 2013), a social representation of Portuguese colonialism as uniquely benevolent and culturally integrative, contributing to narratives of Portuguese exceptionalism and moral superiority (Valentim & Heleno, 2018).

Proponents of this idealised, sometimes exaggerated, vision of Portugal's imperial past may represent an interesting sample for examining the potential role of nostalgia and narcissism at the group level. Threats to this idealised past, including proponents of critical reflection and

suggestions of colonial reparations (Peralta, 2025), may be increasingly perceived as threats to the constitutive balance on which their identity rests. Those challenging this vision may be conceptualised as a threat to the national group's continuity. Critics comparing Portuguese colonial atrocities to those of other European colonial powers, such as Spain or the UK, may prompt feelings of miscategorisation, as Portuguese collective memory has long emphasised the exceptional benevolence and moral distinctiveness of Portuguese colonialism through narratives of Lusotropicalism (Castelo, 1999; Castelo, 2013; Peralta, 2025; Valentim & Heleno, 2018). Similarly, where this idealised vision forms a meaningful basis of national identity, challenges to it may prompt feelings of relative deprivation through perceptions that Portugal receives less recognition or status than it deserves. Furthermore, nostalgia for this past may represent a meaningful justification for why some could feel Portugal deserves a privileged position today. The moral benevolence attributed to Portuguese colonialism, particularly as represented in Lusotropicalism ideology (Castelo, 2013), could provide a basis for perceptions of Portuguese national distinctiveness and, potentially, exceptionalism.

The experience of saudade, widely regarded as a culturally distinctive feature of Portuguese identity (Barreneche, 2023; Silva, 2012), further exemplifies the relevance of examining group-based nostalgia in Portugal. Historically associated with remembrance, longing, grief, and hope, saudade links idealised representations of the past with present emotional experience (Leal, 2000). Leal (2000) further argues that saudade has served as a "positive driving force behind" major Portuguese historical narratives, including the “Discoveries”, the founding of Portugal, and Sebastianismo - the belief in a future national restoration associated with King Sebastião. Although conceptually distinct from nostalgia due to its greater emotional ambivalence, melancholic orientation, and broader temporal focus (Neto & Mullet, 2014), saudade nevertheless reflects the cultural salience of emotionally meaningful engagement with collectively constructed representations of the Portuguese past.

1.6 The Present Study

In attempts to address these gaps, the present study aims to examine whether Portuguese individuals who experience national nostalgia are more likely to exhibit dimensions of national narcissism, and investigate whether this association is moderated by perceived threats.

Based on the literature review, we formulated the following hypotheses:

H1: National nostalgia is positively associated with national narcissism.

H2: The positive relationship between national nostalgia and national narcissism is stronger the more individuals experience miscategorisation threat.

H3: The positive relationship between national nostalgia and national narcissism is stronger the more individuals experience group relative deprivation.

H4: The positive relationship between national nostalgia and national narcissism is stronger the more individuals experience collective discontinuity.

Additionally, the study aims to examine whether perceived national decline predicts national nostalgia in Portugal:

H5: Individuals who evaluate Portugal's past more positively and its present more negatively report higher levels of national nostalgia.

Finally, we explored whether national narcissism exhibited a multidimensional structure, and the role of additional threat moderators: categorisation, moral, competence and general threat, and temporal injustice.

CHAPTER 2

Methodology

2.1 Design and Participants

The study used a cross-sectional design. All participants completed the same online questionnaire assessing the constructs of interest.

A power analysis conducted in G*Power (Faul et al., 2007) for a linear multiple regression (fixed model, R^2 increase) with an alpha level of .05, power of .80 and a small to medium effect size ($f^2 = .07$) indicated a required sample of n = 160. To account for anticipated exclusions, 200 complete responses were sought. Participants were required to be over the age of 18 and identify as Portuguese. Participants were excluded if they did not meet these criteria, did not fully complete the survey, or failed the attention check. Outliers were assessed using influence diagnostics (e.g., Cook's distance) and excluded only where additional indicators suggested invalid responding.

A total of 222 responses were collected. Following data screening, 62 responses were excluded. Exclusions consisted of incomplete survey responses (n = 53), participants who did not identify as Portuguese (n = 8), and one participant who failed the attention check item (n = 1). The final sample comprised 160 Portuguese participants. Participants had a mean age of 31.2 years (SD = 10.9, range = 56). Participants indicated their age, gender identity, national identity, and level of education, presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of participants (n=160)

Characteristic	***n* (%)**
Gender	—
Female	72 (45.0)
Male	88 (55.0)
Other	0 (0.0)
Education Level	—
None	0 (0.0)
Elementary School	2 (1.2)
High School	38 (23.8)
Bachelor's Degree	64 (40.0)
Master's Degree / Doctorate	51 (31.9)
Other	5 (3.1)

Note. N = 160. Age ranged from 18 to 74 years (M = 31.8, SD = 10.9). One respondent who selected "Other" identified as male in an accompanying open-text response; this case was recoded as male for analysis.

2.2 Procedures and Measures

All study materials were approved by the ethics committee of the University of Limerick (18/06/2025) and preregistered on AsPredicted (19/02/2026). Materials were translated from English to Portuguese using the AI tools and reviewed by Rita Guerra (supervisor), a native speaker of Portuguese. The study's duration was approximately 13 minutes and was conducted on Qualtrics (Provo, UT). Participants were primarily recruited via QR code distributed throughout public spaces in Lisbon, social media channels (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp) and supplemented by recruitment on Prolific (Prolific, 2014) (n = 115). Non-prolific participants were incentivised by a raffle for one 50€ amazon voucher, and Prolific users were paid approximately 10€ for participation. Participants began by providing

informed consent, which included contact information of the researchers, duration of the study, and information on the anonymous, confidential and voluntary nature of participation, followed by completing demographic questions. Participants then completed items in the following sequence: national nostalgia and threat items presented in a randomised order, perceived decline scale items, and finally national narcissism. Within each scale, items were presented in a randomised order, with the exception of demographic questions.

All primary measures were specified with reference to the Portuguese national ingroup. All response options ranged from 1 to 7, with higher values reflecting higher levels of all variables. Where composites are referred to, scale scores were computed by averaging item responses, including reverse scored items where appropriate. The full survey is presented in Appendix A.

National nostalgia was assessed using five items retrieved from an adapted version of the 4-item Collective Nostalgia Scale (Smeekes et al., 2014; Smeekes, 2015), (e.g., items: "How often do you miss the values of the Portuguese people in the past?") The items demonstrated excellent internal reliability (α = .90). On all nostalgia items participants rated their frequency of experiencing nostalgia on a 7-point Likert scale (*1 = Very rarely to 7 = Very often*);

National narcissism was assessed using the 9-item Collective Narcissism Scale (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009) (e.g., "The Portuguese deserve special treatment.") and six additional exploratory items developed for this study (e.g., "I often fantasise about us, the Portuguese, having great success and power.". The additional exploratory items were adapted to the group level from the individual narcissism scale FFNI (Miller et al., 2013). All items were further specified towards the Portuguese national ingroup. The composite of these 15 items demonstrated excellent internal reliability (α =.88). Responses were recorded on a 7-point Likert scale (*1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree*).

Miscategorisation threat was assessed using one item from Guerra et al. (2025) ("I get annoyed when other people don't recognise the important differences between Portuguese people and people from other countries"). Response options ranged on a 7-point Likert scale (*1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree*).

Group relative deprivation was assessed three items from Lindstrom et al. (2025) (e.g., "Portuguese people are unfairly disadvantaged in society because other groups are advantaged"). The items demonstrated excellent internal reliability (α = .89). Participants rated their agreement on a 7-point Likert scale (*1 = Strongly disagree = 7 Strongly agree*).

Collective discontinuity was assessed using one item from Smeekes et al. (2022) ("Portuguese identity is no longer what it used to be in the past"). Participants rated their agreement on a 7-point Likert Scale (*1 = Strongly disagree = 7 Strongly agree*).

Temporal injustice was assessed using three items from the temporal injustice dimension of the nostalgia deprivation scale (Grosche & Rothmund, 2025), (e.g., "Compared to the past, the Portuguese are now treated with less respect than they deserve"). Participants rated their agreement on a 7-point Likert Scale (*1 = Strongly disagree = 7 Strongly agree*). The composite of these three items demonstrated excellent internal reliability ($\alpha = .81$).

Social identity threat was assessed using five adapted items from the Social Identity Threat scale (Branscombe et al., 1999; Ma et al., 2024), which included items assessing categorization, distinctiveness, competence, moral and general threat, (e.g., "I often feel that I am judged negatively for being Portuguese." Each item was analysed as an individual exploratory moderator rather than combined into a composite scale. Participants rated their agreement on a 7-point Likert Scale (*1 = Strongly disagree = 7 Strongly agree*).

Perceived decline of Portugal's past versus its present was assessed with two items developed for this study. These items asked participants to rate their perception of Portugal's past and present (e.g., "How negative or positive do you perceive this past historical period?") on a slider scale from ranging from 0-100 with options in increments of 10. A perceived decline score was subsequently calculated by subtracting evaluations of the present from evaluations of the past, with higher scores indicating a more positive evaluation of Portugal's past relative to its present.

CHAPTER 3

Results

3.1 Preliminary Analyses

Prior to hypothesis testing, data screening, descriptive statistics, and reliability analyses were conducted. The final analytic sample comprised N = 160 Portuguese nationals, and missing data was handled with pairwise deletion. All primary and moderation analyses used the full sample of N = 160. Regression diagnostics were conducted prior to each inferential model: homoscedasticity and linearity were assessed via visual inspection of residual-versus-fitted and scale-location plots, and influential cases were identified using Cook's distance (threshold: 4/n). No influential outliers were detected across any model.

Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations for all study variables are presented in Table 2. Scale means ranged from 3.29 to 4.42 and standard deviations from 1.03 to 1.83, indicating adequate variability across variables. Skewness and kurtosis values were all within acceptable limits (|skew| < 0.5, |kurtosis| < 1.0), supporting use of parametric analyses. Full descriptives and correlations of primary variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptives and Correlations of main variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	α	1	2	3	4
1. National Nostalgia	3.53	1.55	.88	—	—	—	—
2. National Narcissism	3.56	1.03	.90	.66***	—	—	—
3. Miscategorisation Threat	3.90	1.83	—	.44***	.62***	—	—
4. Group Relative Deprivation	3.29	1.61	.89	.57***	.63***	.40***	—
5. Collective Discontinuity	4.42	1.63	—	.40***	.37***	.42***	.37***

Note. N = 160. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Correlations are zero-order Pearson r. Dashes in the Alpha column indicate that reliability estimates are not applicable to single-item measures (Miscategorisation Threat, Collective Discontinuity). All correlations were statistically significant at $p < .001$.

Zero-order correlations revealed strong positive associations among the major study variables. Of particular note, national nostalgia and national narcissism were strongly correlated. Several potential moderator variables - including group relative deprivation and miscategorisation threat - were also moderately to strongly correlated with both nostalgia and narcissism (*rs* = .37–.65), indicating that these constructs share substantial variance.

3.2 Hypothesis 1: National Nostalgia and National Narcissism

Hypothesis 1 predicted a positive association between national nostalgia and national narcissism. To test this, we conducted a simple linear regression with national nostalgia as the predictor and national narcissism as the outcome. The unstandardised regression coefficients are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

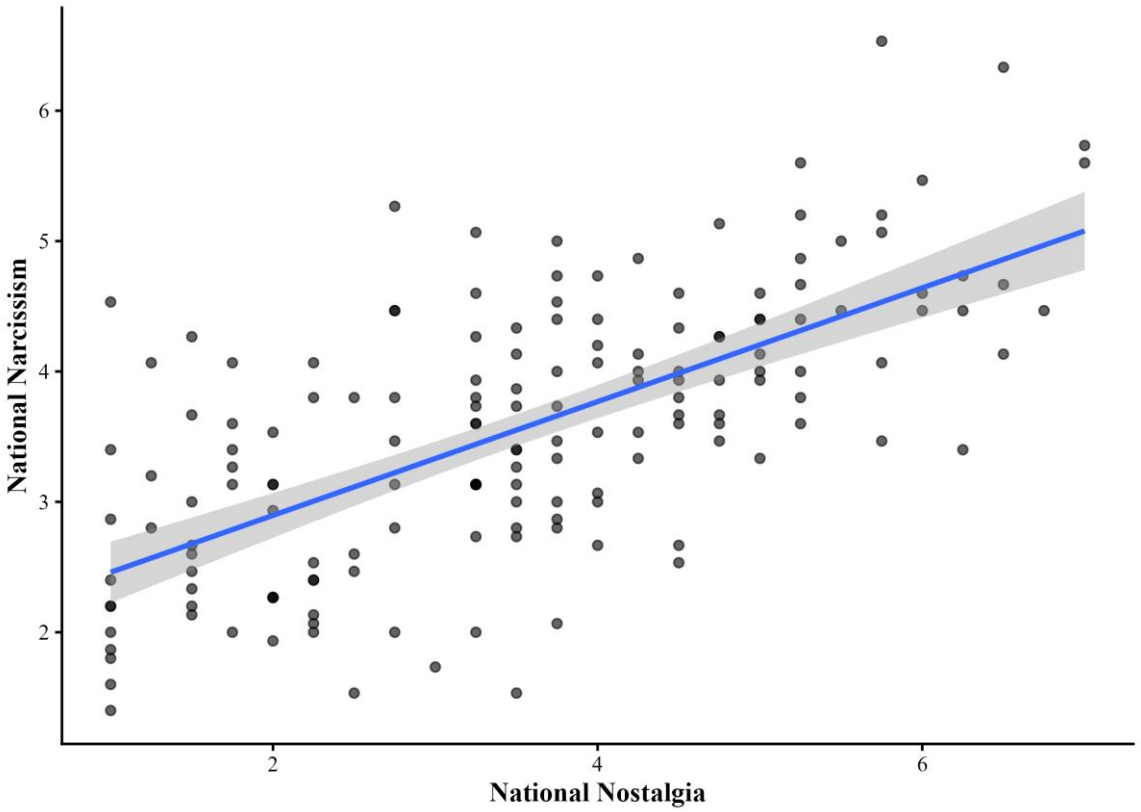
Simple Linear Regression of National Narcissism on National Nostalgia (N = 160)

Predictor	***B***	***SE***	***t***	***p***
Intercept	2.02***	0.15	13.14	< .001
National Nostalgia	0.44***	0.04	10.92	< .001

The simple linear regression confirmed that national nostalgia was a significant predictor of national narcissism. The model accounted for 43% of the variance in national narcissism, R^2 = .43, adjusted R^2 = .43, $F(1, 158) = 119.30$, $p < .001$. The regression scatterplot is presented in Figure 1. As predicted, (H1) higher national nostalgia was associated with substantially higher national narcissism, and the effect was large by conventional standards.

Figure 1

Scatterplot of the Relationship Between National Nostalgia and National Narcissism



Note. Each point represents one participant (N = 160). The blue line represents the ordinary least squares regression line and the shaded band represents the 95% confidence interval. Both variables were measured on a 1–7 scale.

3.3 Hypotheses 2-4: Moderation of the National Nostalgia-National Narcissism Relationship

Hypotheses 2-4 predicted that the relationship between national nostalgia and national narcissism would be moderated by miscategorisation threat (H2), group relative deprivation (H3), and collective discontinuity (H4), respectively. To test these hypotheses, three separate moderation analyses were conducted using PROCESS Model 1, with national nostalgia as the predictor, national narcissism as the outcome, and each proposed moderator examined in a separate model. The interaction between national nostalgia and each moderator was the focal test of moderation. Full model results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Moderation Model Results for H2-H4

Model	Predictor	*B*	*SE*	*t*	*p*	LLCI	ULCI	ΔR^2
Model 1: Miscategorisation Threat								
	National Nostalgia	0.318***	0.040	8.042	< .001	0.240	0.396	
	Miscategorisation Threat	0.229***	0.033	6.910	< .001	0.164	0.295	
	National Nostalgia × Miscategorisation Threat	-0.005	0.019	-0.243	.808	-0.042	0.033	0.0002
Model 2: Group Relative Deprivation								
	National Nostalgia	0.293***	0.045	6.567	< .001	0.205	0.381	
	Group Relative Deprivation	0.248***	0.043	5.789	< .001	0.164	0.333	
	National Nostalgia × Group Relative Deprivation	-0.014	0.023	-0.628	.531	-0.059	0.031	0.0012
Model 3: Collective Discontinuity								
	National Nostalgia	0.391***	0.045	8.740	< .001	0.303	0.480	
	Collective Discontinuity	0.088*	0.041	2.118	.036	0.006	0.170	
	National Nostalgia × Collective Discontinuity	0.022	0.025	0.851	.396	-0.029	0.072	0.0026

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Note. N = 160. Coefficients are unstandardised (*B*). *SE* = standard error; LLCI and ULCI represent the lower and upper limits of the 95% confidence interval, respectively. ΔR^2 represents the variance uniquely explained by the interaction term.

3.3.1 Hypothesis 2: Miscategorisation Threat

The interaction between national nostalgia and miscategorisation threat was non-significant, indicating that, contrary to the hypothesized (H2), miscategorisation threat did not moderate the nostalgia–narcissism relationship in either direction. Although the interaction was non-significant, both national nostalgia and miscategorisation threat independently predicted national narcissism. The full model explained 56.5% of the variance in national narcissism, $R^2 = .565$, adjusted $R^2 = .556$, $F(3, 156) = 67.43$, $p < .001$.

3.3.2 Hypothesis 3: Group Relative Deprivation

The interaction between national nostalgia and group relative deprivation was non-significant, indicating that contrary to the hypothesized (H3) group relative deprivation did not moderate the nostalgia–narcissism relationship in either direction. National nostalgia and group relative deprivation, each independently and positively predicted national narcissism. The model explained 53.1% of the variance in national narcissism, $R^2 = .53$, adjusted $R^2 = .52$, $F(3, 156) = 58.89$, $p < .001$.

3.3.3 Hypothesis 4: Collective Discontinuity

The interaction between national nostalgia and collective discontinuity was non-significant, indicating contrary to the hypothesized (H4) that collective discontinuity did not moderate the nostalgia-narcissism relationship in either direction. National nostalgia independently predicted national narcissism. Collective discontinuity also emerged as a significant independent predictor, suggesting that a perceived sense of temporal rupture in national identity was associated with higher collective narcissism. The model explained 44.7% of the variance in national narcissism, $R^2 = .45$, adjusted $R^2 = .434$, $F(3, 156) = 42.05$, $p < .001$.

3.4 Confirmatory Factor Analyses of the Collective Narcissism Scale

To examine the factor structure of the collective narcissism scale, a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) were conducted in R using the lavaan package with maximum likelihood estimation. Three models were tested sequentially: a baseline one-factor model; a theoretically derived two-factor model distinguishing collective grandiose narcissism (CGN)

and collective vulnerable narcissism (CVN); and a refined two-factor model with Item 10 removed on the basis of consistent evidence of poor psychometric performance across reliability analyses, item-total correlations, and factor loadings. CFA fit was evaluated using CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR, with CFI and TLI ≥ .90 and RMSEA < .08 considered indicative of acceptable fit. Table 5 displays the CFA fit indices.

Table 5

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit Indices for the Collective Narcissism Scale

Model	χ^2	*df*	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
One-Factor Model	192.51	90	.897	.880	.084	.063
Two-Factor Model	175.53	89	.913	.898	.078	.060
Two-Factor Model (Item 10 Removed)	151.61	76	.923	.908	.079	.058

Note. CFI = Comparative Fit Index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis Index; RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation; SRMR = Standardised Root Mean Square Residual. The two-factor model distinguishes national grandiose narcissism (Items 2, 6, 13, 14, and 15) from national vulnerable narcissism (Items 1, 3-5 and 7-12). The refined two-factor model excludes Item 10.

3.4.1 One-Factor Model

The one-factor model, specifying a single collective narcissism latent factor underlying all 15 items, demonstrated marginal fit: CFI = .897, TLI = .880, RMSEA = .084, SRMR = .063. CFI and TLI values fell slightly below the .90 threshold, and the RMSEA exceeded the preferred upper bound of .08, suggesting that a strictly unidimensional structure was not fully adequate for these data. Examination of standardised factor loadings revealed considerable heterogeneity: while most items loaded in the range λ = .43–.79, Item 10 showed a substantially weaker loading (λ = .175), indicating that it contributed minimally to the latent factor.

3.4.2 Two-Factor Model

The theoretically motivated two-factor model assigned Items 2, 6, 13, 14, and 15 to a CGN factor (reflecting superiority and entitlement) and Items 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 to a

CVN factor (reflecting recognition sensitivity and resentment). This model demonstrated improved fit relative to the one-factor model: CFI = .91, TLI = .898, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .06. A chi-square difference test confirmed that the two-factor model fit the data significantly better than the one-factor model, $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 16.99$, $p < .001$. Item 10 continued to show a weak standardised loading in the two-factor model ($\lambda = .186$), indicating that the psychometric weakness of this item was not resolved by dimensional differentiation.

The two latent factors were very highly correlated, $r = .89$, indicating that while CGN and CVN may represent distinguishable dimensions with different item compositions, they nevertheless share substantial variance. This degree of overlap is consistent with a structure in which a common narcissistic core underlies both dimensions alongside differentiated motivational emphases, rather than two fully independent constructs.

3.4.3 Refined Two-Factor Model

Given convergent evidence across reliability analyses, item-total correlations, and factor loadings, Item 10 was removed and the two-factor model was re-estimated. This refined model demonstrated the best fit of the models examined: CFI = .92, TLI = .91, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .06. Both CFI and TLI exceeded the .90 threshold, and SRMR improved further. The factor correlation remained high ($r = .89$). It should be noted that the chi-square comparison between this model and the full 15-item two-factor model is not strictly equivalent to the nested comparison between the one- and two-factor models, as the models differ in their observed variable sets; this comparison should therefore be interpreted descriptively rather than inferentially. Standardised factor loadings for the refined model are presented in Table 6.

Taken together, the CFA results provide preliminary evidence that collective narcissism may possess distinguishable grandiose and vulnerable dimensions, though these dimensions remain strongly interrelated. The theoretical and psychometric implications of this structure are considered in the Discussion.

Table 6

Standardised Factor Loadings from the Refined Two-Factor CFA Model of Collective Narcissism (Item 10 Removed)

Factor	Item	Item Wording	Standardized Loading
CGN	Item 2	Portuguese people deserves special treatment	.735
	Item 6	If the Portuguese had a major say in the world, the world would be a much better place	.744
	Item 13	Portuguese people are exceptional in the ways that truly matter	.544
	Item 14	I often fantasise about us Portuguese having great success and power	.635
	Item 15	Leadership comes naturally to the Portuguese	.666
CVN	Item 1	I wish other nationalities would more quickly recognize the authority of the Portuguese	.788
	Item 3	I will never be satisfied until Portuguese people get the recognition they deserve	.773
	Item 4	I insist upon the Portuguese getting the respect that is due to them	.755
	Item 5	It really makes me angry when others criticize the Portuguese	.718
	Item 7	I do not get upset when people do not notice the achievements of the Portuguese	.446
	Item 8	Not many people seem to fully understand the importance of the Portuguese	.747
	Item 9	The true worth of the Portuguese is often misunderstood	.658
	Item 11	Criticism of Portuguese people makes me worry that Portugal is not living up to who it should be	.477
	Item 12	I'm slow to trust those who are not Portuguese	.619

Note. CGN = collective grandiose narcissism; CVN = collective vulnerable narcissism. Loadings are standardised estimates from the refined two-factor model estimated in lavaan using maximum likelihood. Items 10-15 were developed for this study based on FFNI individual narcissism scale (Miller et al., 2013). Item 10 was

excluded on the basis of poor psychometric performance across reliability, item-total correlation, and factor loading analyses.

3.4 Supplementary & Exploratory Analyses

3.4.1 Hypothesis 5: Perceived National Decline and National Nostalgia

A supplementary preregistered analysis examined whether evaluations of Portugal's past and present independently predicted national nostalgia. Five cases were excluded due to missing data on the perceived decline items, yielding an analytic sample of N = 155 for this analysis. A multiple regression with past evaluation and present evaluation entered simultaneously indicated that past evaluation significantly predicted national nostalgia. Present evaluation did not independently predict national nostalgia after controlling for past evaluations. The model explained 21.8% of the variance in national nostalgia, $R^2 = .218$, adjusted $R^2 = .21$, $F(2, 152) = 21.18$, $p < .001$. These results indicate that nostalgia was more strongly associated with idealisation of the national past than with dissatisfaction with the present as an independent predictor; although present evaluation was directionally consistent with expectations, it did not account for unique variance once past evaluation was controlled. Regression results are presented in Table 7.

As an exploratory follow-up, a past-present discrepancy score was computed by subtracting present evaluation from past evaluation, operationalising the subjectively perceived gap between an idealised national past and a less favourable national present. A simple regression indicated that greater perceived discrepancy significantly predicted higher national nostalgia, $B = 0.02$, $SE = 0.003$, $t(153) = 6.05$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .19$, $F(1, 153) = 36.59$, $p < .001$.

Table 7

Multiple Regression of Past and Present National Evaluation on National Nostalgia (N = 155)

Predictor	***B***	***SE***	***t***	***p***
Intercept	2.697***	0.388	6.95	< .001
Past Evaluation	0.024***	0.004	6.29	< .001
Present Evaluation	-0.009	0.006	-1.57	.119

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. Outcome variable is national nostalgia. N = 155 (five cases excluded due to missing data on perceived decline items). *B* = unstandardised regression coefficient; *SE* = standard error.

3.4.2 Exploratory Moderation Analyses

Given the absence of significant moderation in the preregistered analyses (Section 3.3), six additional exploratory moderation analyses were conducted to assess whether the null pattern extended across a broader range of threat and deprivation-related variables: temporal injustice and five social identity threat items (categorisation, distinctiveness, competence, moral, and general threat). All analyses followed the same moderation analysis procedure using PROCESS Model 1 as the preregistered moderation models. As all six models followed the same analytic structure as those reported in Section 3.3, the interaction terms are the primary focus of the results presented below. Full model coefficients are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Exploratory Moderation Analyses: Regression Coefficients for National Nostalgia, Moderator Main Effects, and Interaction Terms Predicting National Narcissism

Predictor	*B*	*SE*	*t*	*p*
Temporal Injustice				
National Nostalgia	0.29***	0.05	5.96	< .001
Temporal Injustice	0.23***	0.05	4.80	< .001
National Nostalgia × Temporal Injustice	0.02	0.02	0.82	.415
Categorization Threat				
National Nostalgia	0.40***	0.04	9.75	< .001
Categorization Threat	0.13**	0.05	2.77	.006
National Nostalgia × Categorization Threat	0.01	0.03	0.43	.670
Distinctiveness Threat				
National Nostalgia	0.42***	0.04	10.23	< .001
Distinctiveness Threat	0.09*	0.04	2.11	.037
National Nostalgia × Distinctiveness Threat	0.02	0.03	0.79	.431
Competence Threat				
National Nostalgia	0.44***	0.04	10.98	< .001
Competence Threat	0.01	0.04	0.21	.838
National Nostalgia × Competence Threat	-0.03	0.02	-1.29	.200
Moral Threat				
National Nostalgia	0.43***	0.04	10.67	< .001
Moral Threat	0.09	0.05	1.88	.063
National Nostalgia × Moral Threat	0.00	0.03	0.12	.908

Predictor	*B*	*SE*	*t*	*p*
General Threat				
National Nostalgia	0.34***	0.04	8.42	< .001
General Threat	0.23***	0.04	5.26	< .001
National Nostalgia × General Threat	-0.03	0.02	-1.32	.189

Note. Outcome variable is national narcissism. Coefficients are unstandardised (*B*). *SE* = standard error. Interaction terms represent the product of national nostalgia and the respective moderator. N = 160. $p < .05$*, $p < .01$**, $p < .001$***.

No interaction term reached statistical significance across any of the six models. National nostalgia remained a significant positive predictor of national narcissism in all six models (all *p*s < .001), consistent with the preregistered moderation analyses. Several moderators also emerged as significant independent predictors of national narcissism, including temporal injustice, categorisation threat, distinctiveness threat, and general threat. However, none of the interaction terms was statistically significant. This pattern was consistent across both the preregistered and exploratory moderation analyses, with no evidence that any of the nine moderators examined significantly altered the relationship between national nostalgia and national narcissism. Given the exploratory nature of these analyses and the increased risk of Type I error associated with multiple comparisons, these findings should be interpreted with caution.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

4.1 Overview & Hypothesis 1

The present study examined the relationship between national nostalgia and national narcissism in Portugal. Results supported Hypothesis 1: national nostalgia was strongly and positively associated with national narcissism and significantly predicted it in linear regression, indicating that individuals who more frequently experienced nostalgia towards the Portuguese national ingroup were also more likely to endorse a defensive and recognition-dependent form of national identification. Although the cross-sectional design cannot establish causal direction, the findings nevertheless demonstrate a strong association between these constructs within the present sample. These findings extend the limited existing evidence from Capelos et al. (2025) linking collective nostalgia and collective narcissism by providing a more direct examination of this relationship using a dedicated measure of collective nostalgia.

The strength of the association between collective nostalgia and collective narcissism implies the possibility of shared underlying psychological features, making them more likely to co-occur. Most notably, both constructs centre upon idealised representations of the ingroup, though differing in temporal orientation and motivational significance. These representations share two important characteristics: both feature emotional investment (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Wildschut et al., 2014), and both emphasise idealised characteristics that define the ingroup (Cichocka, 2016; Golec de Zavala et al., 2009; Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015). As such, each highlight comparisons and discrepancies between these idealised representations and alternative representations perceived as comparatively discontinuous or deficient. In collective nostalgia this discrepancy concerns the relationship between an idealised collective past and the present, whereas collective narcissism primarily concerns discrepancies between the present group's perceived exceptionalism and the recognition it receives from others.

This conceptual account framed through idealised ingroup representations enables the speculation towards the potential role of collective nostalgia within this relationship. One

possible role being that collective nostalgia provides one psychologically meaningful source of the symbolic content underlying collective narcissism. For example, individuals who are collectively narcissistic regarding their Portuguese identity, by definition, believe that the Portuguese nation is exceptional (Golec de Zavala et al., 2009). However, from a collective narcissism perspective alone, the symbolic basis upon which this exceptionalism is constructed remains unclear. Within the Portuguese context, nostalgic representations of the nation's imperial history, global influence, or moral exceptionalism, may provide one such source of symbolic content (Peralta, 2025; Sadowski, 2024). However, if Portugal is nostalgically represented as historically exceptional, contemporary Portugal becomes more likely to be evaluated against that idealised standard, aligning with research on group-based nostalgia predicting radical far-right support due to perceptions of decline (Versteegen, 2024). Any perceived failure to receive comparable contemporary recognition may therefore become psychologically meaningful. From this perspective, nostalgic representations may intensify the discrepancy between how the nation is remembered and how it is perceived in the present, and contribute to increased likelihood of a narcissistic form of group identification.

4.2 Moderation Findings

The absence of significant moderation effects may itself further support the collective nostalgia-collective narcissism relationship, suggesting that it operates as a relatively independent pathway that does not require additional identity threat activation to emerge. This interpretation is also consistent with the significant main effects observed for all three preregistered moderators. Rather than altering the strength of the nostalgia-narcissism relationship, miscategorisation threat, group relative deprivation, and collective discontinuity may instead represent independent predictors of national narcissism. While miscategorisation threat and group relative deprivation have previously been established as predictors of collective narcissism (Guerra et al., 2025; Marchlewska et al., 2017), collective discontinuity has not, to the authors' knowledge, been examined as an independent experimental predictor. The significant correlation and main effect observed for collective discontinuity therefore suggest that perceived ruptures in collective continuity may represent an additional independent contributor to national narcissism that warrants further investigation.

An alternative interpretation concerns the conceptual overlap between the moderators and the primary constructs. The significant correlations observed between all primary variables

may indicate that the moderators shared insufficient independent variance with collective nostalgia and collective narcissism to produce interaction effects. For example, individuals high in national nostalgia may already perceive discontinuity between an idealised national past and the present, as the previous established association between collective discontinuity (Smeekes et al., 2022), and this study's supplementary perceived decline findings, also suggest. Similarly, individuals high in collective narcissism may already be comparatively sensitive to relative deprivation and miscategorisation threat, consistent with previous findings that both independently predict collective narcissism (Guerra et al., 2025; Marchlewska et al., 2017). From this perspective, the moderators may capture psychological features that are already partially embedded within the primary constructs, reducing their capacity to function as independent moderators. This possibility is particularly relevant for collective discontinuity and perceived decline, raising questions concerning the conceptual content of collective nostalgia, further considered in the following section.

4.3 Psychological Content of Collective Nostalgia

A broader question explored by the present findings concerns what collective nostalgia actually captures psychologically. Supplementary analyses (H5) examined whether perceived national decline predicted national nostalgia: positive evaluations of Portugal's past significantly predicted national nostalgia, whereas evaluations of its present did not. An additional exploratory past-present evaluation score, operationalised as the difference between evaluations of Portugal's past and present, also significantly predicted national nostalgia.

Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was only partially supported. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that, consistent with previous literature, positive evaluation of the nostalgised period represents a meaningful component of collective nostalgia (Wildschut et al., 2014; Wohl et al., 2023). More broadly, they contribute to the ongoing conceptual debate surrounding whether collective nostalgia intrinsically incorporates appraisals of collective decline (Cheung et al., 2017; Elçi, 2022; Rogenhofer, et al., 2022; Wildschut et al., 2014). The present findings provide preliminary support for the view that negative evaluations of the present are not a necessary feature of collective nostalgia, in alignment with its foundational conceptualisation (Wildschut et al., 2014). Rather, what appears more central is an idealised evaluation of the collective past, while evaluations of the present appear comparatively less important. Although the significant past-present evaluation score suggests that perceived differences

between the past and present may also contribute to nostalgic engagement, this relationship appears to be driven primarily by favourable evaluations of the nostalgised period rather than dissatisfaction with the present. This interpretation is also consistent with the personal nostalgia literature upon which the collective construct was originally developed: personal nostalgia reflects sentimental longing for one's past without requiring the belief that life was objectively better, and is often accompanied by awareness that the nostalgised past is idealised, romanticised, and valued primarily for its symbolic rather than restorative significance (Wildschut et al., 2006).

The present study's national nostalgia findings are additionally informative in this regard due to its operationalisation using an adapted version of the four-item Collective Nostalgia Scale (Smeekes et al., 2015), which focusses on the frequency of nostalgic engagement with valued aspects of the collective past rather than incorporating explicit appraisals that the past was objectively superior. By assessing perceived decline separately, the present study was able to examine these components independently, providing preliminary evidence that idealisation of the collective past may represent a more central feature of collective nostalgia than negative evaluations of the present.

These questions regarding the psychological content of collective nostalgia can also be considered alongside the findings for collective discontinuity and temporal injustice. Although both variables were originally examined as moderators of the relationship between collective nostalgia and collective narcissism, rather than as direct predictors of collective nostalgia itself, they nevertheless provide useful conceptual context. Collective discontinuity was moderately and positively associated with national nostalgia, consistent with previous work identifying perceived disruptions in collective continuity as an antecedent of nostalgic engagement (Smeekes et al., 2022, 2023). Likewise, temporal injustice - a dimension of the Nostalgic Deprivation Scale (Grosche & Rothmund, 2025) that captures perceptions that the ingroup is treated less fairly or respectfully than in the past - was strongly associated with national nostalgia. However, neither variable moderated the relationship between collective nostalgia and collective narcissism. Although these findings should be interpreted cautiously given that these analyses addressed a different research question, they are consistent with the possibility that perceptions of decline, discontinuity, and temporal injustice may represent conditions under which collective nostalgia becomes more likely, rather than intrinsic components of the construct itself or factors that fundamentally alter its relationship with collective narcissism.

4.4 Collective Narcissism Factor Analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis of the 9-item collective narcissism scale together with the six items developed for this study was conducted to evaluate the proposed distinction between collective grandiose narcissism (CGN) and collective vulnerable narcissism (CVN). These dimensions were specified prior to analysis. The proposed two-factor model demonstrated a modest improvement in fit over the one-factor model, although the two latent factors remained highly correlated.

These findings suggest that variation within collective narcissism may reflect differences in the relative psychological emphasis placed upon its defining characteristics. Critically, the very high inter-factor correlation indicates that these proposed emphases are unlikely to constitute independent forms of collective narcissism. Instead, they appear to remain embedded within a common psychological architecture, differing primarily in the relative organisation of shared narcissistic processes. CGN may place greater emphasis on affirming and projecting an idealised ingroup representation, whereas CVN may place greater emphasis on perceived failures of that representation to receive corresponding external recognition. Consistent with conceptualisations of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism at the individual level, these proposed distinctions may therefore concern differences in the psychological organisation of a shared narcissistic core, rather than fundamentally different forms of collective narcissism (Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Miller et al., 2011).

Viewed alongside the representational architecture proposed earlier in this discussion, the high inter-factor correlation may reflect the fact that both proposed organisations remain grounded in the same idealised ingroup representation and underlying insecure collective identity. The distinction may therefore concern where psychological emphasis is placed within this shared architecture. In CVN, greater emphasis may be directed towards the discrepancy between the idealised ingroup representation and its perceived recognition by others, increasing the motivational importance of external validation. In CGN, psychological emphasis may remain centred on constructing, affirming, and projecting the idealised representation itself.

4.5 Limitations & Future Directions

The present study contains several important limitations. First, the cross-sectional design prevents conclusions regarding causality or temporal ordering. Although the theoretical framework developed throughout this thesis proposes that collective nostalgia may contribute to collective narcissism by strengthening attachment to an idealised ingroup representation, the reverse relationship remains equally plausible. Collective narcissism may similarly encourage more favourable reconstructions of the collective past, or both constructs may develop through reciprocal reinforcement or shared antecedents. Consequently, these findings should be interpreted as evidence of association rather than causal influence.

Second, the study was conducted exclusively within the Portuguese national context. Portugal provided a theoretically appropriate setting given the continuing significance of its idealised imperial collective representations. However, the content and political relevance of collective nostalgia differ significantly across societies (Stefaniak et al., 2021; Wohl et al., 2020) meaning the observed relationships may not generalise to national contexts characterised by different historical experiences or identity narratives.

Several measurement considerations should also be acknowledged. Although the principal scales demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties, multiple moderators were assessed using single-item measures, limiting measurement precision. In addition, the perceived decline items and the exploratory collective narcissism items were developed specifically for this study. While the confirmatory factor analyses on collective narcissism produced encouraging preliminary findings regarding potential multidimensionality, further validation is required before stronger conclusions regarding these measures, and the proposed dimensional structure can be drawn.

Finally, the null moderation findings should be interpreted cautiously. Interaction effects typically require larger samples than comparable main effects to detect reliably. Although the study was adequately powered for the preregistered analyses, smaller moderation effects may have remained undetected. Replication using larger samples would therefore provide a more rigorous test of whether identity threats influence the relationship between collective nostalgia and collective narcissism.

4.6 Conclusions

The present study examined whether national collective nostalgia was associated with national collective narcissism and whether this relationship was moderated by identity-relevant threats. Consistent with the primary hypothesis, national nostalgia positively predicted national narcissism. None of the preregistered or exploratory moderators significantly altered this relationship, although several independently predicted national narcissism. Supplementary analyses also suggested that national nostalgia was more strongly associated with positive evaluations of Portugal's past than negative evaluations of its present, while the confirmatory factor analyses provided preliminary evidence supporting a multidimensional structure of collective narcissism.

Overall, these findings suggest that emotionally meaningful engagement with an idealised collective past may represent an important component in understanding defensive forms of national identity. They additionally indicate these emotional experiences to historical representations deserve greater consideration within research on the antecedents of collective narcissism. Although further longitudinal, cross-cultural, and psychometric research is required, the present study provides initial evidence that collective nostalgia may represent one pathway through which idealised representations of the collective contribute to grandiose yet insecure forms of national identity and their associated defensive responses.

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Appendix A

Demographics

Age Qual é a sua idade?

_____

Gender Indique o seu género:

- ○ Mulher (1)
- ○ Homem (2)
- ○ Identifico o meu género como (especifique): (3) _____

Self-ID as Port Considera-se português/a?

- ○ Não (1)
- ○ Sim (2)

Education Qual é o nível máximo de escolaridade que concluiu?

- ○ Nenhum (1)
- ○ Ensino básico (2)
- ○ Ensino secundário (3)
- ○ Licenciatura (4)
- ○ Mestrado/Doutoramento (5)
- ○ Outro (6) _____

National Nostalgia

CNost Exp Neste estudo, “nostalgia” é definida como “saudades do passado”, ou como sentir-se sentimental devido a uma memória apreciada e terna do passado.



SH Pro

	Muito raramente 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Muito frequentemente 7 (7)
De modo geral, com que frequência experiencia nostalgia? (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○



CNost Scale

	Muito raramente 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Muito frequentemente 7 (7)
Com que frequência tem saudades dos valores das pessoas portuguesas no passado? (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Com que frequência tem saudades da forma como as pessoas portuguesas eram no passdo? (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Com que frequência tem saudades do Portugal do passado? (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Com que frequência tem saudades quando ouve músicas portuguesas do passado? (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: CNost

Moderators

Mod Intro Indique quanto concorda ou discorda com cada uma das afirmações. Use a seguinte escala 1 (Discordo totalmente) a 7 (Concordo totalmente):

Miscateg

	Discordo fortemente 1 (1)	Discordo 2 (2)	Discordo parcialmente 3 (3)	Não concordo nem discordo 4 (4)	Concordo parcialmente 5 (5)	Concordo 6 (6)	Concordo fortemente 7 (7)
Fico chateado/a quando os outros não reconhecem as diferenças importantes entre portugueses e pessoas de outras países. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○



GRD

	Discordo fortemente 1 (1)	Discordo 2 (2)	Discordo parcialmente 3 (3)	Não concordo nem discordo 4 (4)	Concordo parcialmente 5 (5)	Concordo 6 (6)	Concordo fortemente 7 (7)
Os portugueses estão injustamente em desvantagem na sociedade porque outros grupos estão em vantagem. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sinto-me zangado/a porque os portugueses são discriminados. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sinto-me frustrado/a quando penso em como os portugueses estão em desvantagem na sociedade em comparação com outros grupos. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Collect Disc

	Discordo fortemente 1 (1)	Discordo 2 (2)	Discordo parcialmente 3 (3)	Não concordo nem discordo 4 (4)	Concordo parcialmente 5 (5)	Concordo 6 (6)	Concordo fortemente 7 (7)
A identidade portuguesa já não é o que era no passado (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Attention Check Esta é uma verificação de atenção. Selecione «Concordo totalmente» abaixo.

- ○ Discordo totalmente (1)
- ○ Discordo (2)
- ○ Não concordo nem discordo (3)
- ○ Concordo (4)
- ○ Concordo totalmente (5)

Nost Dep

	Discordo fortemente 1 (1)	Discordo 2 (2)	Discordo parcialmente 3 (3)	Não concordo nem discordo 4 (4)	Concordo parcialmente 5 (5)	Concordo 6 (6)	Concordo fortemente 7 (7)
Em comparação com o passado, os portugueses recebem hoje menos respeito do que merecem. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Em comparação com o passado, os portugueses são hoje em dia sistematicamente prejudicados pela política. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
É injusto que os portugueses tenham perdido riqueza em comparação com períodos anteriores. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

SIT

	Discordo fortemente 1 (1)	Discordo 2 (2)	Discordo parcialmente 3 (3)	Não concordo nem discordo 4 (4)	Concordo parcialmente 5 (5)	Concordo 6 (6)	Concordo fortemente 7 (7)
Sinto frequentemente que sou julgado/a negativamente por ser português/a. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Sinto frequentemente que os portugueses não são vistos como únicos. (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Os portugueses são frequentemente vistos como incompetentes. (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Os portugueses são frequentemente vistos como imorais. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A minha identidade como português/a está frequentemente ameaçada. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Moderators

Start of Block: Qual

Qual 1 Quando pensou no passado de Portugal nas perguntas anteriores, a que período histórico se referiu principalmente?

- ○ Ditadura do Estado Novo (1933–1974) (1)
- ○ A Revolução dos Cravos (1974) e a transição democrática (2)
- ○ Integração na UE e desenvolvimento económico (1986–2000) (3)
- ○ História recente (2000–presente) (4)
- ○ Uma combinação de vários períodos (5) _____
- ○ Não estava a pensar em nenhum período específico (6)
- ○ Outro (especifique): (7) _____

PD1 Quão negativo ou positivo considera este período histórico?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

(1) 

PD2 De que forma vê Portugal atualmente?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

(1) 

*

Qual 2 Descreva brevemente que aspetos do passado de Portugal lhe trazem mais saudades (Pode descrever eventos, valores, tradições, pessoas ou práticas culturais)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*

Qual 3 Por que acha que esses aspetos do passado são importantes para si?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*

Qual 4 Na sua opinião, como é que estes aspetos do passado se relacionam com a forma como vê a sua identidade portuguesa hoje em dia?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

CNarc 7-Likert

	Discordo fortemente 1 (1)	Discordo 2 (2)	Discordo parcialmente 3 (3)	Não concordo nem discordo 4 (4)	Concordo parcialmente 5 (5)	Concordo 6 (6)	Concordo fortemente 7 (7)
Gostaria que outras nacionalidades reconhecessem mais rapidamente a autoridade dos portugueses. (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Os portugueses merecem um tratamento especial. (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Nunca estarei satisfeito/a até que os portugueses recebam o reconhecimento que merecem. (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Insisto em que os portugueses tenham o respeito que lhes é devido. (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Fico realmente zangado/a quando os outros criticam os portugueses. (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Se os portugueses tivessem “uma voz importante” no mundo, o mundo seria um lugar muito melhor. (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Não fico chateado/a quando as pessoas não reconhecem as conquistas dos portugueses. (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Poucas pessoas parecem compreender plenamente a importância dos portugueses. (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
O verdadeiro valor dos portugueses é muitas vezes mal interpretado. (11)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Gostaria de não me importar com o que os outros pensam dos portugueses. (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

As críticas aos portugueses fazem-me recear que Portugal não esteja à altura do que deveria ser. (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Tenho dificuldade em confiar em quem não é português. (14)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Os portugueses são excecionais nas coisas que realmente importam. (15)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Costumo fantasiar sobre nós, portugueses, termos grande sucesso e poder. (16)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A liderança é algo natural para os portugueses. (17)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○