

Review of: "Collective Guilt and the Search for Meaning in Post-Communist Albania: An Existential Perspective"

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While a valuable concept to explore the consequences of retrospection, the current rendition of the study fails to actually offer meaningful insight into what collective guilt looks like (or reads) in this specific set of cases. More actual content is needed from the sources themselves rather than repeating narratives about the utility of this prism to understanding present-day (as much as past) Albanian society. It may also be of greater utility to the reader if a larger reference base is used to help those who know a thing or two about the "regime" to navigate the agenda of the authors. Since the transition itself cultivated multiple retrospective narratives of the Hoxha era, with different constituencies emerging who remained powerful, fell into destitution, recalibrated into opposition, entrepreneur, migrant etc. the insistence that we are dealing with a graspable theme of guilt for the past must correspond with deeper references to the collective victimization narratives many developed in parallel. How these contrasting approaches intersect also may require contextualizing the conditions in which guilt/shame rather than anger, fear, or that victimization is iterated deserves some consideration. More, the phenomenon, while the reader is told has broad comparative possibilities, is nevertheless operating without actual examples of comparison/contrast. Clearly this is a project in gestation and the authors have articulated well what WILL become a useful enterprise but we the reader will need more of the testimonials and contextualization/qualifications/elaborations from the authors before this project is done.