

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

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The article pretends to explain the feelings of Albanians about the communist past, whether they feel responsible for what happened to them or not, and if they have resentments about their role to the collective suffering, if any. However, the article does not bring the reader to this end: it is unclear in the article whether the interviewed people feel any responsibility for what happened during dictatorship or not. What is clear is the sense of powerlessness, because the regime did not allow any opposing views or agency. Given to the past reality, and their role in it, the participants do not feel responsible for the harm that regime caused to people because such a thing was out of their reach. As the definition on the collective guilt refers, guiltiness implies an act of harm caused to someone by a person or the group (the person belongs to) to another group. It is not clear in the article; do the participant belong to a group that caused harm to another one? If yes, who are the victims? What are the participants guilty for, in a repressive regime? Why and for what reason should they be responsible of? What is the harm they caused to others in communism? How did they harm the others? How do they feel guilty for the harm that regime caused to them and others? To convince the reader on the veracity of their complicity of "doing harm" to others, accounts from participants are needed, but we do not see any. I do not see neither what the participants tell, nor what participants were asked about, to come to conclusion that in present time they are suffering collective shame/responsibility/guiltiness on the supposed "harm" they did to others in the past. I do not see the participants in the article, I see only presumed results/conclusions from the authors. The article should consult more literature on transitional justice in former communist regimes, including Albania (<https://www.osce.org/presence-in-albania/445090>). Attitudes of Albanians versus communist past should be weighed against large surveys on Albanians perceptions of the past as well, as there is a rising nostalgia for security and material equality under communism, regardless material dearth of that time (<https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/d/1/286821.pdf>). Even if the findings were accurate, they cannot be generalized for Albania as 20 people do not represent the whole population. I would recommend the authors to continue research for transitional justice in Albania, as the studies in this area are very needed.