

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

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This is an interesting report and analysis of qualitative data collected from a relatively small sample. There are clearly limits to how far the interpretations of the data can be generalised, even within the population of Albania, since it clearly not a population representative sample. It is hard to judge the extent and effect of bias in the selection and self-selection of the respondents. It is also questionable how honest and open the narratives are. They can perhaps most usefully be viewed as indicating how the respondents wished their actions and motivations to be seen (viz, e.g. Goffman's 'Presentation of Self in Everyday Life'). The analytic method did not appear to consider the need for some form of reliability check on the themes that 'emerged'. Indeed, the analysis description is relatively thin and opaque, and the authors do not seem to be aware of the possibility that they imposed their own order on the data, rather than the order being 'in' the data. It is not clear what the authors mean by saying that the themes were 'organized into categories based on their similarities and differences'. There is hardly any detail given of the instructions or guidance to the respondents on what they were being asked to narrate. This is clearly crucial to know if we are to understand this study.