Interdisciplinary Applications of Shame/Violence Theory

Breaking the Cycle

Edited by
Roman Gerodimos

Interdisciplinary Applications of Shame/Violence Theory

"We live in a truly ugly world. Thankfully, Professor Roman Gerodimos has assembled the most remarkable team of brilliant intellectuals who have provided us with unparalleled insights into the origins of lethal, global violence. This groundbreaking book must absolutely be read by every single world leader... and by every single citizen as well."

—Professor Brett Kahr, *Chair of the Scholars Committee of the British Psychoanalytic Council, and Honorary Director of Research at Freud Museum London, UK*

"Extraordinary. While we are all focused on the visible crises of war, hate crimes and a pandemic, Roman Gerodimos alerts us to what we aren't recognizing: that so much violence, so many deaths, and so often our traumas are triggered by shame — by individuals and groups not wanting to appear vulnerable. Every thought-provoking section of the book has actionable intelligence. Activists and scholars across fields will find this inspiring. And those making public health or public policy decisions as well as those standing on the frontlines of criminal justice or social justice will find it a wise and ultimately hopeful guide to a better future."

—Susan Moeller, *Professor of Media & International Affairs, University of Maryland, College Park, USA*

"This remarkable book draws together a wide range of contributions by those interested in the understanding of the relationship between shame and violence. The foundational thinker in this field is James Gilligan. He has stimulated many others in this collection to apply his insights to other contexts. The collection is wonderfully consistent, insightful, and a vital addition to our understanding of violence."

—Charles B. Strozier, *historian and psychoanalyst, USA*

"Using shame as a focal point to explore phenomena as diverse as family dynamics, local turf wars, and terrorism, Roman Gerodimos and the highly diverse group of practitioners and scholars he has assembled cover a dazzling amount of conceptual and disciplinary space to offer a volume chock-full with ideas and insights about the causes and dynamics of violence."

—Stathis N. Kalyvas, *Gladstone Professor of Government, University of Oxford, UK*

"This pathbreaking interdisciplinary contribution to the human sciences could not be more timely or more needed as we face the continuing threat of forms of political violence both at home and internationally. Its argument is framed by the work of James Gilligan, unique among psychiatrists in extending psychoanalysis, in contrast to Freud and others, to the *empirical* study of violent American prisoners, listening to them and developing a cultural psychology of largely male violence arising from the humiliation of patriarchal manhood that not only diagnosed the roots of their violence but led to new forms of therapy that, in contrast to American prisons, demonstrably lowered violence both in the prisons and rates of recidivism thereafter at a much lower cost to taxpayers than American prisons. Dr. Gilligan frames the argument of this book in a brilliant opening chapter that shows how his psychology of personal violence extends to political violence, both diagnosing the problem (from Hitler to Osama Bin Laden to Putin) and suggesting how to understand and prevent such violence. His theory of violence, arising from the culture of patriarchy long unquestioned, is complemented by another revelatory chapter in which Carol Gilligan, the developmental psychologist, in conversation with Roman Gerodimos, shows how the problem of violence, including violence against women, arises from the culture of patriarchy, and how radical listening, already powerfully used by James Gilligan in his therapy of prisoners, is the key to breaking the hold of the gender binary of patriarchy, freeing resisting voices of both men and women. The following essays in this volume fruitfully explore the implications of this approach in a remarkable range of contexts, both diagnostic and therapeutic, including exploring shame and the self; humility as a value in resistance; the role of the diagnosis and therapy of shame in children; intervention projects; violence in football fans, left-wing terrorism; Greek city planning; political violence between Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey; Brexit; the Genderqueer community; shame in black women, dwarfs, and others; and how to break the cycle of shame and violence in all these contexts."

—David A. J. Richards, *Edwin D. Webb Professor of Law, New York University, USA*

Roman Gerodimos
Editor

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This book is dedicated to the child in each and every one of us,
especially those who were not able to contain their shame,
in the hope that, one day, they, and those they have affected, can heal.

Acknowledgments

Bournemouth University. A big thank you to George Vossinakis and Dionysia Dimopoulou for their help with the transcription of the original Berlin sessions.

I would like to give my sincere thanks to Ambra Finotello, Anne-Kathrin Birchley-Brun, Balaji Varadharaju and Ananda Kumar Mariappan at Palgrave Macmillan, for their editorial support and patience throughout this project. I am most grateful to my friends and family, especially my partner Anthony, for feeding my enthusiasm for this project, and tolerating the rollercoaster of emotions and unavailability that came with it.

In the two years of the book's writing and production, we have experienced Britain's exit from the European Union, a global pandemic, and the biggest war and humanitarian crisis in Europe since World War II. I am profoundly grateful to all the contributors for their resilience, continued engagement and reliability under the most adverse circumstances. While a book cannot change the world, everything that has been happening recently has made us feel that its themes and mission are as relevant and pressing as ever.

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Jonathan Asser is a psychodynamic counsellor and screenwriter. Asser originated violent prisoner therapy Shame/Violence Intervention (SVI), which won the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy Innovation Award in 2008. He also wrote the critically acclaimed prison movie *Starred Up*, for which he won Best British Newcomer at the BFI London Film Festival in 2013 and became a BAFTA Breakthrough Brit in 2014.

Louise Braddock is an independent scholar and associate member of the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Oxford. She trained as a psychiatrist and later as a philosopher, gaining her Ph.D. from the University of Reading. Between 2006 and 2017, she was a Bye-Fellow at Girton College at the University of Cambridge where she taught philosophy and lectured on the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of psychoanalysis. From 2011 to 2020, she was the Director of Research for the Independent Social Research Foundation (ISRF).

Roman Gerodimos is Professor of Global Current Affairs at Bournemouth University and a senior faculty member at the Salzburg Academy on Media & Global Change. He is the co-editor of *The Media, Political Participation and Empowerment* (2013) and *The Politics of Extreme Austerity: Greece in the Eurozone Crisis* (2015), and author of *Dispatches from the 21st Century* (2020). He has led research projects funded by NATO, the UK Department for International Development,

the Independent Social Research Foundation, the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Greek think-tank Dianeosis. He has also written, directed and produced four short films and a feature length documentary (*Deterrence*). He is the winner of the Political Studies Association's Arthur McDougall Prize for his research on youth civic engagement, and founder and convenor (2004–2017) of the Greek Politics Specialist Group of the PSA.

Carol Gilligan is University Professor and Professor of Humanities and Applied Psychology at New York University. She is the author, co-author and editor of numerous highly influential books, including *In A Different Voice* (1982), *Mapping the Moral Domain* (1988), *Making Connections* (1990), *Women, Girls, and Psychotherapy: Reframing Resistance* (1991), *Meeting at the Crossroads: Women's Psychology and Girls' Development* (1992), *Between Voice and Silence: Women and Girls, Race and Relationships* (1995), *The Birth of Pleasure* (2002), *The Deepening Darkness: Patriarchy, Resistance, and Democracy's Future* (2008), *Joining the Resistance* (2011) and *Why Does Patriarchy Persist?* (2018). She has received a Senior Research Scholar Award from the Spencer Foundation, a Grawemeyer Award for her contributions to education, a Heinz Award for her contributions to understanding the human condition, and was named by Time Magazine in 1996 as one of the 25 most influential Americans.

James Gilligan, M.D. is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Adjunct Professor of Law, New York University. Gilligan is a psychiatrist who has devoted his career at the Harvard Medical School, the Institute of Criminology at Cambridge University, and currently New York University, to studying the causes and prevention of violence, both on an individual level (in prisons), and on a collective and political scale, through working with major political leaders including President Clinton, Tony Blair (as Shadow Home Secretary), Kofi Annan (Secretary General of the United Nations) and institutions, including the World Court, the World Health Organization and the World Economic Forum.

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Risk Policies. Regressions of Social Modernization in Greece 1947–2000 (2013), *Adventures of the Middle Class. Sociological Records in Late Political Changeover Greece* (2021). He has edited the collective volume *Greece in the 80's. Social, Political and Cultural Dictionary* (2010) (co-edited with Vassilis Vamvakas) and the collective volume *Political and Cultural Aspects of Greek Exoticism* (2020) (co-edited with Dimitris P. Sotiropoulos).

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Barry Richards is Emeritus Professor of Political Psychology at Bournemouth University. He is the author of *Emotional Governance* (2007), *What Holds Us Together* (2018), *The Psychology of Politics* (2019) and other works developing a psychosocial approach to understanding public emotion. He trained and worked as a clinical psychologist in the NHS before taking a Ph.D. in sociology. At the University of East London, he led the establishment of psychosocial studies as an interdisciplinary teaching programme and research paradigm. At Bournemouth since 2001, he has written extensively on the emotional and unconscious dimensions of politics, and introduced an M.A. in Political Psychology. He was a founding co-editor of the journal *Media, War and Conflict*, and of the independent journal *Free Associations*.

Charlie Rigby is the founder and CEO of The Violence Intervention Project. Charlie has worked with young people since 1996 in a variety of social settings including: activity camps, youth centres, social services

and youth justice. In 2015, he obtained a diploma from the Tavistock and Portman Clinic in Psychodynamic Approaches when Working with Young People. Working as a specialist youth and community worker for seven years (2010–2017) for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, Charlie developed his practice and strong relationships with the local community. He founded the Violence Intervention Project in April 2017 with the aim to develop therapeutic relationship with vulnerable young people, outside of conventional clinical settings. The charity currently works with young people involved in serious youth violence, delivering practical and emotional outreach support, helping them gain resilience and move forward positively with their lives.

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Introduction: Interdisciplinary Applications of Shame/Violence Theory

Roman Gerodimos

Shame, which is the reluctance to be who we're not even sure we are, could end up being the deepest thing about us, deeper even than who we are, as though beyond identity were buried reefs and sunken cities teeming with creatures we couldn't begin to name because they came long before us.

—André Aciman (2011), *Alibis: Essays on Elsewhere*, New York: Picador, p. 24.

1 Shame/Violence Theory as a Passkey

It does not happen very often in the life of an academic to have an experience of genuine epiphany—a moment when someone's work or ideas provide you, not just with temporary inspiration or insights, but with a passkey: a tool that you can use, in your work and daily life, to strive for positive change in the world, starting (of course) with yourself. You are

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lucky if that happens once or twice in your career; you are blessed if it happens twice in the same project.

This was my experience when, in the Spring of 2014, as I was scrambling to put together a workshop on political violence, I came across Jonathan Asser's article in *The Observer*. Asser had just written the screenplay for *Starred Up*, an award-winning film based on his experience working with violent gang members at HMP Wandsworth. Asser's unique approach, known as SVI (Shame/Violence Intervention), demonstrated in the most tangible way the role of shame as a core driver of aggression, and the power of shame awareness in preventing and diffusing it. For 12 years, Asser was able to carry on running group sessions with some of Britain's most violent offenders without a single incidence of violence, and with his participants becoming the best ambassadors for the value of this approach.

As soon as I read the article, I cold-emailed Jonathan asking him to deliver the keynote at our workshop a few weeks later, which he kindly agreed to do. During that workshop—in which some of this volume's contributors were present—we started to explore the fascinating implications and applications of his approach, as well as important questions about the role of the individual (self, trauma, therapy) versus that of social forces, which became a running thread of our work and remains an important and open question to this day.

Following our June 2014 workshop, life intervened, as it tends to do, and I was not able to follow up this work—until November 2017, when I finally got the chance to read James Gilligan's work, which had inspired and informed Asser. Reading Gilligan's (2003) article on shame, guilt and violence was one of the most powerful and enlightening experiences. Gilligan's work draws a straight line from the Bible through the Trojan War and onto twentieth-century dictators, showing how shame always lies behind violence. His theory, based on decades of clinical work in prisons and mental hospitals, incorporates the concepts of guilt, self-harm, indignation and pride and is a step-by-step explanation of the conditions that breed humiliation and shame, how these are experienced and metabolised by individuals, what the manifestations of the resulting violence are and how violence is likely to lead to further humiliation and shame, thus creating a self-reinforcing vicious circle.

Shame/violence theory provided me with a passkey that unlocked my own experiences of anger and understanding of aggression across contexts

and levels of analysis. As I was reading Gilligan's paper, I could immediately decode and explain patterns of familial, social and political violence and aggression in the Greek civic culture, within which I had grown up. A subsequent testing of Gilligan's shame/violence theory to the case of Greece through the prism of cultural anthropology (e.g. accounts of honour crimes) and political history (from the collective trauma of the Civil War to the recent experience of the economic crisis), showed that an application of this clinical model at the macro-social level was not just a legitimate endeavour, but a fruitful and highly promising one (Gerodimos, 2018): if shame theory can be used at the clinical level to heal, prevent and rehabilitate, then we should also be able to use it at the collective level to achieve the same goals.

Shame is not a new phenomenon; it has always been here. Shame is the original sin. It's the violence and aggression we all carry within us, inherited from our ancestors, who inherited it from their own ancestors. It's a key mechanism of regulating behaviour and maintaining social organisation. It's embedded in the way we perceive ourselves, our sense of belonging, and our roles within any community. It's woven into the way we educate, discipline and socialise our children; in the way we treat suspects of crime (and occasionally victims, too), and punish and rehabilitate offenders; in the way populist leaders frame elites and experts, and in which totalitarian regimes persecute minorities; and even in the way the labels of majority and minority are constructed, adopted and weaponised.

While none of these phenomena is new, it is worrying that the residue of shame is particularly visible at this moment in time, in the current political culture of Western liberal democracies and global geopolitics. Shame has become a powerful socio-political currency: in the rhetoric of populist politicians, in the toxic discourse on social media, and in the way demographic, identity and ideological groups perceive of those who are different from them, shame is the go-to tool to try gain an advantage over a perceived adversary or competitor.

In his work, Gilligan shows how, across centuries, philosophers and thinkers—from Aristotle to Freud to Bernard Williams to contemporary practitioners—have identified shame as a key driving force of all types of anger and violence. Yet, paradoxically, shame has continued to be something of a common secret among psychologists and sociologists; the "unspoken emotion" (Bath, 2019) hiding in plain sight, despite or, perhaps, *because* of its ubiquity. In addition to Gilligan's work (e.g. 1997, 2003, 2017), Nathanson (1994) offered an influential conceptualisation

of the concept—a "compass of shame" focusing on four possible manifestations: withdrawal, attack self, avoidance, attack others. Akhtar (2015) pulled together rich insights on the developmental and clinical aspects of shame. Brene Brown (e.g. 2012) has been instrumental in exploring and engaging a broader audience with the concept of shame.

However, with the notable exceptions of the work of Vamik Volkan (e.g. 2004, 2009) and Thomas Scheff (e.g. Scheff & Ratzinger, 1991; Scheff, 1997, 2011) who have led the groundbreaking work of using shame in the context of socio-political violence, international relations and peacebuilding (see also Lacey, 2011), the overall body of work on the social and political applications and implications of shame/humiliation and shame awareness is surprisingly limited given the ubiquity of the concepts and the scale of the stakes involved within and across societies. Also, there is marked lack of a direct dialogue between levels of analysis and disciplines.

Furthermore, even highly successful interventions in the community—including some of the initiatives designed by James Gilligan and Jonathan Asser, whose efficacy was proven through evaluation studies and compelling quantitative and qualitative evidence—continue to face insurmountable institutional and cultural obstacles to being continued or scaled up across other communities.

Thus, it was precisely that proven applicability and efficacy of shame theory and practice, combined with the exciting yet frustrating sense of its unrealised potential, and the sense of urgency and global need for this kind of work, that motivated me to organise a residential workshop on shame/violence, funded by the Independent Social Research Foundation (ISRF). The workshop took place in August 2019 in Berlin—a city that has successfully addressed historic challenges of violence, shame, guilt and community division to seek education and reconciliation.

The Berlin workshop brought together some of the leading experts on shame/violence—including Gilligan and Asser—along with an interdisciplinary group of established and emerging academics, researchers and practitioners. Over six intense days at the welcoming and historically important space of Harnack Haus, our group engaged in a series of highly stimulating conversations that further persuaded us about the value and potential of this undertaking. Over the following months, our group expanded and the conversations continued. This book is the product and culmination of these explorations, which we hope will continue to expand in scope and scale.

2   Aims of the Book

This book takes James Gilligan's model as a starting point for an application of shame theory across cultures, disciplines and levels of analysis. We critically engage with the concept of shame, exploring its existential origins, the emotional, linguistic, cognitive and cultural manifestations and symptoms, and its relationship with other emotions. We choose to conceptualise and operationalise shame and aggression in the broadest way that encompasses not just manifested violence, but the *seeds* of violence: anger, resentment, self-hatred, trauma, victimisation and victimhood.

We address the following specific questions:

- What is the role of shame as a driver of aggression and violence, from the micro level of the individual to the macro level of societies and states?
- What are the existential, psychological and sociological drivers of shame?
- How important is gender in the shame/violence dynamic?
- How does the shame/violence dynamic manifest itself in politics, terrorism, culture and urban space?
- What are the challenges facing practitioners working with children, high-risk youth and violent offenders?
- What is Shame/Violence Intervention (SVI), and what are some of the strategies for empowering traumatised individuals and communities to opt for alternatives to violence?
- How can shame/violence theory help us understand, empathise with and bring together communities at the fault lines of current sociopolitical phenomena and "culture wars", such as Brexit, trans rights, racial equality and "cancel culture"?
- How can we use interdisciplinary applications of shame/violence theory in practice to break the vicious cycle of violence?

The book aims to contribute to the literature by facilitating a dialogue and an innovative application of the concept of shame that crosses boundaries of all sorts:

- **Blending theory and practice**: Our work is driven by the conviction that a better understanding of the root causes of violence opens the way for more effective prevention and rehabilitation; and that the current challenges facing us globally and across local and national communities make the application and grounding of theory an urgent task. Practice is not something that can be retrospectively added on to theory. It is not an afterthought. In fact, it is the combination of *inductive* and *deductive* reasoning—identifying patterns in the isolation of clinical work and then testing the applicability of the model across contexts—that has made Gilligan's shame/violence theory so powerful. In this book, shame is conceptualised and operationalised through a variety of theoretical, methodological and practical lenses.
- **Facilitating an interdisciplinary dialogue**: This volume brings together perspectives from psychiatry, clinical psychology, psychoanalysis, psychosocial studies, sociology, philosophy, political science, gender studies, communication and cultural studies, scriptwriting and filmmaking, urban studies and architecture. It has been our goal to produce *an interdisciplinary vocabulary* on shame and violence, based on the belief that complex psychosocial phenomena that manifest themselves across all areas of human activity and life, ought to be addressed in an imaginative and holistic way.
- **From micro to macro:** At its core, our approach involves taking a psychological concept—an emotion—that has traditionally been examined at the micro level of the individual self, interrogating its origins and interaction with other emotions, mapping its causal relationship with aggression, and then extrapolating: asking whether those causal relationships and interactions between emotions also apply to other levels of analysis, such as organisations, communities, nations and the world at large. This is the essence of the psychosocial approach, which draws from clinical practice to inform academic work.
- **Highlighting the role of gender:** Our book brings together James Gilligan's shame/violence work with Carol Gilligan's groundbreaking work on gender, voice and listening, which demonstrates that gender is indispensable to shame dynamics; or as Gilligan herself notes, "if shame is the mechanism, gender is the lever".

- **Understanding the present:** We engage with current phenomena, such as the role of shame in the populist rhetoric and politics; the Brexit referendum; the trans community's campaign for self-declaration; public space as an arena of political competition for memory, visibility and recognition; and the debates on victimhood as an identity, the emerging prerequisite of "lived experience" and our approach to historical and cultural context.
- **Seeking solutions for the future:** We also identify, collate, prototype and offer recommendations and solutions that are as practical and applicable as possible.
- **Crossing geographical boundaries:** Contributors share their theoretical insights, clinical or outreach work and field research from across several countries with an emphasis on the US and the UK. The third part of the book focuses on Greece as a case study of shame in the civic culture, while some chapters include comparative analyses from countries such as Cyprus, Turkey, the Netherlands and the UK.
- Finally, this book **blends formats** including essays, reflective accounts, edited conversations and data-driven research studies, so as to best capture and communicate the essence of each chapter's contribution, and make it accessible to a diverse audience of researchers, practitioners, scholars, students and the general public. Contributors apply shame/violence theory employing a range of quantitative and qualitative methods—surveys, psychosocial analytic groups, interviews, clinical case files, case studies, textual analyses.

3   BOOK STRUCTURE AND OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

The book is divided into four parts: theory; practice; politics and culture; identity, community and current affairs. This division is somewhat schematic, as chapters from across the book touch upon all of these themes, but it is intended as a roadmap for the reader to navigate the contents, and as a logical scaffolding taking us from shame and violence at the micro level of the individual to the macro level of societies and communities.

Part I features diverse and interdisciplinary perspectives on the existential, psychological, psychosocial and sociological drivers, manifestations and effects of shame and violence, as well as the emotions, strategies and

policies that may counter these, by providing individuals and societies with viable alternatives.

Based on many decades of observation, clinical work, education and rehabilitative programming with thousands of the most violent men in society, James Gilligan provides us with a framework that acts as a point of reference for the rest of the contributions and with a comprehensive rationale of why we need to study shame and violence. He notes that in all his years of work, he has yet to come across one offender whose violence was not precipitated by feelings of shame and humiliation, and whose violence was not his attempt to undo or prevent being overwhelmed by those feelings, which were so severe that they threatened to subject him to what he calls "the death of the self". James Gilligan takes a step-by-step approach, starting with the role of shame and guilt in individual-level violence, and then examining the ethics and politics of shame and guilt, broadening the lens so as to look at the role of shame in authoritarianism, revolutions and wars throughout history. Inequality emerges as a fundamental driver of shame and guilt (and therefore violence) and transcending these emotions requires access to non-violent sources of self-esteem, self-respect and dignity.

In our conversation, Carol Gilligan reflects on the role of gender in the shame/violence cycle and explains the value of radical listening in helping to identify shame as embedded in language. We start by revisiting Gilligan's paradigm-shifting work, *In a Different Voice* (1982) and considering whether a similar ground-breaking approach might be needed today, especially in the context of continuing racial injustice and oppression. Gilligan argues that "if shaming is the mechanism, gender is the lever, in setting up a structure of inequality, of domination and subordination". Gilligan reflects on the links between patriarchy and the culture of aggression, between shamed masculinity and violence, and how the gender binary, as well as framing female desire and sexuality as shameful, perpetuates these structures of oppression. We then turn to Gilligan's work on radical listening and how that can be a valuable tool in helping us identify shame in language. This is done by listening for different layers of voices—things and subjects that are omitted or avoided, as much as those that are articulated—and how even those voices may be gendered. In the concluding section, Gilligan reflects on the radical potential of interdisciplinary research, on the associative logic of art and creativity and on how questions of method are ultimately political.

Shame theory has established the social and moral dimensions of this emotion, not just in the functional sense of regulating individuals' behaviours, but also in terms of the social angst that the shamed individual experiences: shame is often defined or understood as the immediate threat of being marginalised or excluded from society or a community because one has transgressed. In her chapter on shame and the self, Louise Braddock goes further and examines shame as a pre-moral emotion. Braddock argues that we ought to focus on "the mind's capacity for misrepresentation in the service of psychic defence": when the mind's capacity to think is threatened, then it employs shame as a defence mechanism that misrepresents that threat as a dependence on a shaming other. Through this lens, shame can be understood as a defence mechanism against profound, existential anxiety, by positioning the self in a self-violent relation of extreme dependency on the figure (internal or external) of another. Therefore, as Braddock notes, the internal connection to violence already exists within the structure of shame itself, well before it may or may not manifest itself in actual physical or verbal violence.

In the final chapter of this part, Barry Richards proposes humility as an antidote to humiliation and shame. Examining its religious, psychological and sociological meanings and applications, he observes that the sociocultural environment has recently been far from favourable to humility, favouring narcissism over humbleness. And yet, as Richards shows, humility constitutes a valuable form of emotional capital that can displace or detoxify the experiences of humiliation and shame both at the individual and at the collective level. He concludes that if a democracy is to function well and contain violence, humility must be in abundant supply in the emotional public sphere.

Part II of the book moves from theory to practice and features three contributions from practitioners who have been at the front line of dealing with the causes and effects of shame and violence, and working actively to contain and heal. Each of these chapters focuses on a high-risk group: traumatised children, violent prisoners, high-risk youth involved in inner-city gangs. These three vignettes may look different to each other in terms of their format: a scholarly reflection; a quasi-cinematic memoir; and a conversation. Yet, all three identify similar vicious cycles of shame/violence starting in childhood and in familial and school settings. Crucially, all three reflect on institutional and structural barriers and challenges facing shame/violence-related interventions and on the

counter-productive role of punitive approaches, which only serve to perpetuate the cycle.

In her chapter, Ioanna Tsimopoulou provides a theoretically informed overview of approaches to shame, and observes a deep misunderstanding of the real needs and vulnerability of children with feelings of chronic shame. She argues that we have to look beyond the behavioural manifestations of shame, and make a genuine effort to understand what underlies their behaviour. Tsimopoulou takes a relational perspective on the development of chronic shame, examining how it can emerge and be maintained in the context of children's interpersonal relationships. Her analysis sheds light on the inner experiences and mental processes of children who struggle with overwhelming feelings of chronic shame, and who might have also been exposed to developmental trauma. Tsimopoulou concludes her account with a reflection and recommendations on breaking the cycle, based on observations from clinical practice.

Jonathan Asser reflects on the extraordinary story and the roots, mechanics and legacy of Shame/Violence Intervention (SVI)—the ground-breaking programme he developed while working with violent prisoners at HM Prison Wandsworth in the UK. Inspired by James Gilligan's work, Asser developed SVI as a way of providing both prisoners and himself with a sense of belonging and healthy pride in the face of shame. By creating a potent, authentic and visible way to maintain status without violence among the main players (or what he calls "a high-status alternative to violence"), including gang leaders, SVI enjoyed high levels of voluntary and committed engagement from those prisoners who would normally be hardest to reach and present the biggest risk to others. Asser's approach is not only shame-informed, but also *power*-informed, thus giving us a manual of avoiding and averting violence without unilaterally creating power vacuums, which can be more destabilising than conventional deterrence. The institutional response to Asser's initiative reveals a lot about institutional shame and the difficulty of implementing innovative programmes within a calcified, under-resourced and risk-averse prison system.

In our conversation, Charlie Rigby—whose work was influenced both by Gilligan's theory on shame/violence and by Asser's SVI—reflects on the creation, mission, operations and impact of The Violence Intervention Project (VIP)—a non-profit organisation that works with young people involved in gangs and serious violence in London. We explore different techniques of approaching and working with clients, the actual day-to-day

work of shame and violence intervention, as well as some of the logistical, sociocultural, emotional and ethical challenges facing both young people and the team. As with Asser's SVI, one of the VIP's unique features—and reasons for its success—is that it approaches young people flexibly, without judgement, and without an agenda. Thus, it avoids the shame that is inherent in top-down institutional youth work. As has been noted repeatedly in the literature, one of the biggest challenges of raising shame awareness among those who need it the most—i.e. traumatised individuals who shame others and themselves—is that "shame is shameful"; even uttering the word shame can be shaming in itself.

If the first half of the book focuses mainly on shame and violence at the micro level of the individual, the second half examines shame and violence at the collective level of communities and societies. Part III focuses on shame and violence in different aspects of the public sphere and the political culture, using Greece as a case study. Greece is a society that has historically experienced more than its fair share of political violence and aggression, manifested across a range of contexts and levels of analysis (familial, educational, institutional, urban, political).

While acknowledging the unique traits of each culture, and offering adequate context to inform the analysis, we do not adopt a view of Greece as an "exotic exception" (the ubiquity and flaws of that approach are well documented in Panagiotopoulos & Sotiropoulos, 2019). Instead, we build on the existing body of literature that has identified Greece as fertile ground for an in-depth examination of the affective dimension of the political (Demertzis, 2013; Gerodimos, 2015, 2018; Karyotis & Gerodimos, 2015; Nesbitt-Larking et al., 2014). We use Greece as a case study that can provide us with insights about broader socio-political phenomena that are topical and pertinent not just across Western liberal democracies in Europe and the United States, but in other parts of the world, too, such as Latin America and the Middle East.

These phenomena include, for example, the success of populist parties and a rhetoric of grievance and self-victimhood, in turn driving radicalisation and extremism; verbal or physical aggression in domestic, digital, urban and political contexts; bouts of far-right ethnonationalism and far-left terrorism; community strife due to increased and mismanaged flows of refugees and migrants; football hooliganism and regional antagonisms between the centre and the periphery; gender-related shame within a traditionally patriarchal, "macho" society.

Part III features a range of interdisciplinary perspectives on the socio-cultural and political manifestations of shame and violence. Contributors draw on sociology, cultural studies, political science, history, architecture and urban studies to examine the dynamic of shame and violence in the mosaic of contemporary Greece. These analyses do not only provide us with a glimpse into shards of the public sphere. Each of the four chapters engages in an experimental application of shame/violence theory, thus offering a methodological framework for the scaling up of shame awareness across disciplines and spaces.

In her chapter, Rosa Vasilaki explores the phenomenon of football fandom and hooliganism's violent manifestations through the lens of pride and shame, focusing on the case of PAOK FC—a popular football fan club situated in Northern Greece. She looks at how the human geography of PAOK fans maps onto the turbulent history and collective memory of Thessaloniki. By employing three lenses, which correspond to different kinds of fans' grievances (the historical, the socio-political and the gender-based), Vasilaki dissects the sense of humiliation experienced by those who feel that the core of their collective identity is being seen as inferior and subject to contempt, as well as their attempt to restore pride by resorting to violence.

Turning our attention to political violence, Andriani Retzepi, Angelos Nastoulis and Panayis Panagiotopoulos apply James Gilligan's shame/guilt model to far-left terrorism in Greece, focusing on the case of the 17 November Group (17N), the assassination of journalist and Member of Parliament Pavlos Bakoyiannis and the subsequent shaming and abuse directed at the victim's family. Retzepi et al. demonstrate how the far left (including the son of the murderer) reversed shame/guilt ethics and the roles of the perpetrator and the victim, framing Bakoyiannis and his family (including his son who is now the mayor of Athens) as part of a corrupt elite so as to justify their actions and maintain a spiral of shame and blame directed at the family. Crucially, society's tolerance of 17N's actions and its ambiguous stance towards the family in the aftermath of the attack, acted as a key enabler of this role reversal and left a stigma of shame not on the perpetrators, but on the victims.

The Bakoyiannis assassination—like many other acts of far-left terrorism—took place in downtown Athens. The city has long been a theatre of political violence: assassinations, riots and violent clashes with police, bank robberies funding terrorism, anarchist squats and raids, and hate crimes by neo-Nazi groups such as Golden Dawn are only some

of the phenomena observed during the last few decades and especially since the events of December 2008 following the shooting of a 16-year-old student by a police guard. The month-long riots—themselves a straightforward manifestation of the shame/violence vicious cycle—not only allowed deeper links to be forged between terrorist groups, anarchist groups and organised crime, but also changed the relations of power in public space: entire streets, especially in the neighbourhood of Exarcheia, became de facto off-limits for the police and the authorities. The decade-long debt crisis, which broke out in 2009, led to extreme austerity, mass unemployment and civil strife, with extremist groups and populist political parties gaining power—all of which unfolded in public space. The urban landscape of Athens became a canvas upon which groups, gangs and individuals exercised their voice or vented their frustration.

Starting from this premise, i.e. that public space carries not only the traces of pride and triumph, but also of shame, humiliation and violence, Christos-Georgios Kritikos and Kostas Tsiambaos use the metaphor of the city as a body and look more closely into the deeper meanings and drivers of urbicide and vandalism in central Athens. Kritikos and Tsiambaos apply Gilligan's model of shame/violence to the case of unauthorised interventions—what they call "programmatic marking"—showing how each of the cases under consideration can credibly be interpreted as a response to being shamed, as an act of counter-shaming, and as an attempt to facilitate a public dialogue about the contested uses of space and urban coexistence.

On the related theme of how public space, art and culture carry memories, perpetuate traumas and are weaponised politically and geopolitically, Vicky Karaiskou examines the affective cultural landscapes of Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, identifying shame/violence dynamics in recent events that grabbed international headlines, such as the 2015–2016 performances of Greek tragedies in the Turkish-occupied northern part of Cyprus, and the change of the status of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul in 2020. Karaiskou demonstrates how myths and monuments can be exploited to restore pride or redress feelings of inferiority and shame, and how constant mutual demonisation of the Other's intentions and actions lead sorrowful emotions, victimhood and trauma to become learned and integral parts of a community's collective identity.

Part IV continues the application of shame/violence theory to the macro-social level, focusing on the relationship between shame, identity

and community. The chapters in this part of the book focus on controversies, communities and issues that have been at the forefront of so-called "culture wars" in the West. These accounts provide us with a manual for crossing social, political and cultural fault lines, listening to shamed and marginalised Others, and facilitating empathy and healing.

Candida Yates and Iain MacRury explore data emerging from a series of reflective psychosocial group-based explorations of emotional experiences of Leavers and Remainers that were held following the 2016 Brexit referendum in the UK. Yates' and MacRury's participants could not even tolerate meeting the other side face-to-face, and their reflections highlight powerful psychosocial dynamics related to a lack of emotional containment, including prevalent expressions of shame. Yates and MacRury's work also demonstrates the value and potency of the psychosocial analytic group method in exploring and understanding the root causes of shame/violence in socially and politically charged contexts. The challenge of listening to the other side, understanding the root causes of their grievances—the shame that manifests itself as intolerance or aggression—is key to building bridges across political divides.

In their chapter, Vasiliki Tsagkroni presents the design and findings of the first-ever survey to operationalise and explore the impact of gender-binary discourse, shame and violence in the genderqueer community across three countries (the Netherlands, Greece and the UK). Tsagkroni adopts and combines elements from the literature on shame, self-esteem, self-concept and gender to create a research design that examines the impact of self-expression on personal and professional relationships and feelings of shame and self-esteem. The findings of the survey confirm the potency of gender self-expression in diminishing feelings of shame. Interestingly, the extent to which self-expression further removes barriers in one's personal and professional relationships varies depending on the social acceptance of trans equality, reminding us of the importance of structural equality and cultural acceptance in creating a supportive environment.

In the penultimate chapter of the book, Maya Parchment and I reflect on the many layers of shame (and equal layers of *resistance* to shame) that we encountered while researching and scripting Black women, dwarfs and other misfits of the Old West, for the short film *A Probable Outcome*. A primary layer is the shame experienced by marginalised or oppressed minorities who were paraded and objectified as "freaks" in nineteenth-century circuses and sideshows—and the counter-narrative offered by

a more nuanced historical research producing ample evidence of pride, success and visibility. A secondary layer is the shame that we, as contemporary members of these communities, experienced while researching their history—while acknowledging our role as potential perpetrators of the shaming that is embedded in any process of handling sensitive research data or scripting the lives of Others. A tertiary layer of shame is the one currently levelled against those who engage in creative work about, or representation of, people who are different from them, without direct lived experience. We engage with questions of historical accuracy and cultural context, creative freedom and lived experience, political correctness, sensitivity, representation and language—including the use of terms such as "dwarfs"—which have dominated public debate during the last few years, often fuelling a cancel culture and toxic wars on social media. We attempt to chart a path of respectful, rigorous and free artistic creation, arguing that raising the questions and trying to engage with them honestly may be more important than the answer one provides.

In the concluding chapter, I revisit and reflect on the key themes discussed in the book, pulling together the main findings, arguments and lessons from each of the chapters and of the book as a whole, so as to create an interdisciplinary vocabulary on shame and violence, identify solutions and recommendations across spaces and levels of analysis and articulate a research agenda that can help further scale up and apply this work.

While human beings are awfully good at masking the true origins of their traumas and grievances, at the heart of this cycle invariably lies real or perceived *inequality*: the individual or community experiencing shame interprets the triggering act as an attack or existential threat or risk of social marginalisation. Ultimately, though, the underlying force is the perception (justified or otherwise) that the self is vulnerable and that the other is, or claims to be, more powerful. While we may not be able to control the actions and words of others, we can control our own actions and words. And while we may not be able to eliminate triggers of division or feelings of shame, becoming aware of this dynamic—and of the patterns that drive our own actions—is key to changing our individual and collective behaviour. Identifying strategies of responding to shame and inequality that incorporate a sense of healthy pride and self-respect will provide alternatives to violence and aggression, creating a virtuous cycle of healing and coexistence.

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