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IT'S TIME TO BE ASHAMED!
REACTIONS TO THE BREAKING
OF A LONG-LASTING SELF-CENSORSHIP
ON INGROUP WAR CRIMES

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This study explores the reactions of Italian university students to information about colonial crimes perpetrated by the Italian Army during the invasion of Ethiopia (1935-36), events that are still self-censored in intergenerational narratives. Participants reported their emotions about the Italian colonial past and their knowledge of this historical period was examined. Then they read a parrhesic (i.e., straightforward) or, alternatively, an evasive narrative of crimes committed in Ethiopia in 1935-36 and, once again, reported related emotions. A week later, they evaluated the crimes' seriousness, reported for the third time their emotions about Italy's colonial past, and declared their moral shame, social shame, and guilt for colonial crimes. Finally, they expressed their support for reparative actions. As expected, the vast majority of participants knew little about past misdeeds. Participants presented with a parrhesic narrative were more able to acknowledge older generations' responsibilities and to distance themselves morally from them. Moral and social shame, outrage, and a reduced sense of pride, rather than guilt or anger, predicted support for reparations. The limitations of the present study, and future research perspectives, are discussed.

Key words: Italian colonial crimes; Self-censorship; Parrhesia; Moral emotions; Intergroup reconciliation.

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When intergroup violence comes to an end, long and difficult processes start, aimed to cope with past wrongdoings either suffered or perpetrated. Thanks to these complex and fragile social and psychological processes, people belonging to groups of former enemies may, in time, turn the page on past violence and rebuild trust, allowing them to interact peacefully again (Nadler, Malloy, & Fisher, 2008). When these processes are successful, reconciliation happens at both a personal and a societal level. At a personal level, reconciliation is signaled by letting go of the other group's image as the enemy (Kelman, 2008). At a societal

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level, the "ethos of conflict" is gradually abandoned (Bar-Tal, Sharvit, Halperin, & Zafran, 2012): namely, ordinary people no longer see intergroup relations as a zero-sum game, in which the shared normative assumptions to stay loyal to one's group imply a personal commitment to fight against the other group.

The aim of this paper is to explore more in depth one of these social and psychological processes eventually leading to intergroup reconciliation: the cognitive and emotional reactions of descendants of a group, when presented with the knowledge of past wrongdoings perpetrated by their group before their birth — wrongdoings that were until then kept silent and self-censored (Bar-Tal, 2017) in the social discourse about the group's past.

INTERGENERATIONAL NARRATIVES, HISTORICAL CULTURE, AND PAST INTERGROUP VIOLENCE

After massively perpetrated violence, intergroup reconciliation processes can take a long time. When new generations, born after the cessation of intergroup violence, become ready to enter the social and political forum of their community, they ideally should be given an account of past violence. Nevertheless, older generations often self-censor and avoid truth-telling (Bar-Tal, 2017) because they fear the emotional discomfort to young people, and to themselves, when confronted with the awareness of the ingroup's responsibility for violent historical facts. The perceived threat of opening Pandora's box of negative group-based emotions leads to a social silence in which young adults are not allowed to learn about highly consequential historical events.

Yet only by being aware of past intergroup violence may new generations fully understand present intergroup relations, and hope to prevent future violence. The knowledge of one's own "historical pre-existence" (Ortega y Gasset, 1930/1957) lets new generations decide, as adults, the civic actions to adopt for maintaining a peaceful intergroup future. This knowledge, therefore, makes room for both continuities and discontinuities between intergroup actions of older and new generations (Leone, 2017). To deny the young this knowledge is a form of benevolent over-helping (Leone, 2012), an authentic disempowerment of young people, despite the intention to protect them from challenging truths.

In the last fifteen years the approach by Ortega y Gasset (1930/1957) has been conceptualized in depth through the new terms of "historical consciousness" (e.g., Rüsen, 1989; Seixas, 2004, 2017), enabling young people to understand the choice to either continue or reverse the decisions that previous generations took. With historical consciousness, the civic participation of young generations has potential to create both continuity and change in ingroup and intergroup relations. However, in these intergenerational processes not only knowledge received but also knowledge denied plays a crucial role (Leone, 2017; Leone & Sarrica, 2017).

In our study, we have chosen to address the little-explored case of historical responsibility for the Italian war crimes committed in 1935-1936 during the colonial invasion of Ethiopia. A recent review of the politics of history education in nations that were formerly colonial empires makes it apparent that a "selective myopia" has continued "to allow post-colonizing states to disseminate nostalgic and largely uncritical versions of the colonial past" (Mycock, 2017, p. 406). On the topic of Italian colonial violence in Ethiopia, Italian historical culture is more characterized by a social denial (Cohen, 2001) than by "selective myopia." Even in the present day, when well-documented research by Italian scholars has proved these colonial crimes to be true beyond doubt (Labanca, 2004), a societal self-censorship (Bar-Tal, 2017) still refuses to narrate these wrongdoings to young generations.

The voice of historical research, therefore, is silenced in the map of narratives on Italy's colonial past that contributes, together with history education received in school, to build a comprehensive historical

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culture. In contemporary Western societies, historical consciousness (Seixas, 2017) is influenced by many other informal sources beyond formal education, conveying information through old and new popular media — such as family narratives, books, exhibitions, commemorations, organized visits to lieux de mémoire (Nora, 1989), movies, theatre and radio dramas, websites, apps, and even gamification (Erenli 2013). The synthesizing concept of "historical culture" (Grever & Adriaansen, 2017) can be used to describe this network of formal and informal sources on the national past made available to young. Historical culture may therefore be conceived as the outer, societal, side of an inner, individual, historical consciousness, maintaining an overarching societal structure enabling "the complete range of activities of historical consciousness" (Rüsen 1997, p. 38). If the external societal infrastructure fails to convey accurate social representations of history (Assmann, 2010; Paez, Bobowik, & Liu, 2017), it is crucial to appreciate the phenomena that might arise when historical teaching finally gives young generations the previously denied information about the ingroup's past violence (Leone, 2017). Our present study explores young citizens' reactions when a communicator chooses to narrate unpleasant historical facts generally kept silent: in this case, colonial crimes perpetrated by the Italian Army during the invasion of Ethiopia (1935-36).

EVIDENCE OF SELF-CENSORSHIP ABOUT THE ITALIAN COLONIAL PAST

Although many decades have passed since these serious wrongdoings, colonial crimes perpetrated by the Italian Army against Ethiopians are still under-represented in the social discourse about the Italian past (Pivato, 2007). Recently, a mention of these historical facts has finally been included in Italian textbooks (Cajani, 2013). However, an in-depth analysis of seven history textbooks currently used for high-school Italian students (usually aged 18 years when studying this topic) has shown that these narratives are very short and schematic, accounting for only a few pages of the whole history curriculum. Moreover, many of those texts convey facts elusively, and only a minority of them describes these war crimes using clear and straightforward words (Leone & Mastrovito, 2010). The already scarce and evasive communication in textbooks not having reached the broader national historical culture, these war crimes remain unknown to the large majority of Italians (Leone, d'Ambrosio, Migliorisi, & Sessa, 2018; Leone & Sarrica, 2014; Pivato, 2007).

Because Italy's colonial empire was quickly dissolved after the collapse of Fascism, historical accounts of European colonial expansion have barely mentioned it until now. Consequently, its serious wrongdoings are often ignored — an international historiographical oblivion, worsened by the language barrier, replicating the social silence of Italian historical culture on this period of the national past (Labanca, 2015). In this situation, receiving a clearer narrative may have an impact on young Italians' group-based emotions, and on what Carretero (2017) proposed to call their "imagiNation." This term refers to the way in which imaginations stemming from historical narratives about the national past merge with representations of contemporary national community, confounding the historical "we" with the current "we." For young generations, still ignorant of these past crimes, such unexpected and serious historical information, previously silenced, may abruptly change the image of the moral decency of their country.

The long-lasting self-censorship on Italian colonial crimes against Ethiopians is a startling, yet not rare, phenomenon characterizing intergroup relations after mass violence. Examples of social silence with regard to past intergroup violence may be seen in the present-day historical cultures of several countries. To quote only a few, we can observe and may remember the denial in Turkey of the Armenian genocide (Bilali, 2013; Hovannisian, 1998); the cover up of French collaboration with Nazi occupation (Campbell, 2006); or the avoided mention of native Americans during U.S. Presidents' official speeches on Thanksgiving day (Kurtiş, Adams, & Yellow Bird, 2010).

More generally, recent studies on intergroup reconciliation processes have demonstrated the crucial importance of acknowledging moral responsibilities for past ingroup wrongdoings (Vollhardt, Mazur, & Lemahieu, 2014). However, emerging evidence has also shown difficulties in self-criticism for previous generations' violence, worsened by older generations' self-censorship or even denial of past misdeeds (Leach, Zeineddine, & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013).

Certainly, a silence immediately following the end of intergroup violence can be protective, due to the need of restoring a sense of "normality" in everyday life (Eastmond & Selimovic, 2012). However, if an overt and clear acknowledgment of atrocities committed does not replace this first protective silence, no reconciliation can be reached among groups of former enemies (Vollhardt et al., 2014). In fact, if intergenerational narratives fail to reach those born after the end of violence, the memory of past ingroup crimes may slowly disappear, as "a gradual seepage of knowledge down some collective black hole" (Cohen, 2001, p. 13). Intergenerational silence can therefore indirectly affect reconciliation processes. Reconciliation, in fact, is based not only on the difficult social and psychological processes of acknowledgment for consequences of past violence, but also on intergenerational change, introducing new individuals into the social forum while old ones gradually disappear (Arendt, 1958). Intergenerational narratives of the national past are therefore crucial in bridging the gap between generations. However, young people are not passive receivers of previous generations' narratives, but elaborate their contents according to their own original points of view. In the present study, we addressed a very specific aspect of elaborations made by new generations of narratives on their ingroup's history, observing young people's cognitive and affective reactions to the breaking down of a previous choice for silence and denial of ingroup crimes made by older generations.

BREAKING DOWN LONG-LASTING SELF-CENSORSHIP:
DO EFFECTS OF PARRHESIC OR EVASIVE NARRATIVES DIFFER?

The basic assumption of the research we report here is that when breaking down a long-lasting intergenerational silence on past ingroup crimes, communicative strategies matter. Foucault (1983) developed a taxonomy of truth-speaking strategies on the basis not of epistemic, but of pragmatic criteria of classification. He proposed that when a difficult truth is to be faced, communicative truth-speaking strategies may be classified according to their expected effects on receivers. The most empowering strategy for receivers is, in Foucault's opinion, the parrhesic one. Foucault applies the ancient Greek rhetorical term for "speaking plainly," parrhesia, to a communication style that chooses to openly and fearlessly present receivers with a truth that hurts, yet enables them to better understand their current situation.

In line with Foucault's (1983) taxonomy, we decided therefore to label as "parrhesic" a text describing Italian colonial crimes in a clear and straightforward way and as "evasive" a text describing these same crimes in a vaguer way. In the present research, we aim to test Foucault's theoretical assumptions that a parrhesic narrative about previously ignored ingroup wrongdoings will have different effects on receivers from those of receiving less straightforward information. More specifically, when receiving a narrative text, readers usually complete open information with implicit assumptions about the issue at stake (Eco, 1995). In a situation of collective self-censorship (Bar-Tal, 2017), however, these assumptions cannot be drawn on, because there is no common knowledge. Due to the current self-censorship on Italian colonial crimes, therefore, we think that our participants will not be able to fill in the gaps, when they are exposed to a more evasive text.

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We expect that, when presented with unexpected historical information on silenced facts that are not clearly stated, readers cannot go beyond the information provided, in order to immediately fully understand such surprising historical past. Parrhesia should have the effect of increasing support for reparative actions, via an increase in group-based emotions that are critical of the Italian ingroup. In social psychological research, group-based emotions are feelings about the current goals and past actions of a group. They correspond, thanks to collective identification, to the kind of feelings that an individual might have about his or her own goals and actions (Smith & Mackie, 2015). Therefore, they can vary over time, responding to appraisals of past, present, and future events.

According to this broad and consolidated study of intergroup emotions in social psychology, we expect the maintaining of a decent moral image of one's own ingroup to be one among these basic aims, due to the close intertwining of personal and social aspects of identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). That is why being exposed to previously silenced knowledge of the ingroup's past crimes may elicit group-based emotions, both immediately after receiving this information and some time later.

Unpleasant ingroup-directed emotions, in particular, often accompany the realization of the truth of misdeeds — contemporary or historical — by one's national or ethnic group. A large literature of emotional responses to national wrongdoing and personal prejudice has been examined empirically. Among these are guilt, shame, ingroup-directed anger, and more generalized discomfort (for reviews, see Leach & Cidam, 2015; Pagliaro, 2012). Internalized, self-conscious emotional responses, such as guilt and shame, are associated with more consistent and internally motivated attempts to deal with historical burdens, compared to discomfort, anxiety, and other emotional responses which focus externally on the disapproval of other people (Devine & Monteith, 1993). Within the category of shame, a further distinction can be observed between more internalized forms of shame, involving concern for the true moral essence of the group, and less internalized forms of shame, involving concern only for the group's public image (Allpress, Barlow, Brown, & Louis, 2010; Allpress, Brown, Giner-Sorolla, Deonna, & Teroni, 2014). It is the more internalized shame which better predicts positive attitudes and helping intentions toward harmed outgroups.

However, guilt and shame are not perfect motivators to improve future relations with groups harmed in the past. Because they involve the self, they can also be threatening, and lead to defensive processes in an attempt to cut off the unpleasantness at the root. Thus, for example, trying to avoid guilt feelings can lead individuals to dehumanize groups that their own country has harmed in the past (Castano & Giner-Sorolla, 2006). There is also evidence that guilt is a fairly weak motivator of action in a group-based context, compared to shame, sympathy focused on the outgroup, or anger focused on the ingroup (Leach et al., 2013; Lickel, Steele, & Schmader, 2011). This may be because guilt — an emotion involving individual responsibility for harm — is easily denied by members of subsequent generations. Shame, however, is defined as attaching to collective reputation, and thus a person can still feel shame in the eyes of the world for the misdeeds of his or her nation, even though many years have gone by.

Hypotheses on Reactions to Parrhesic versus Evasive Narratives about Self-Censored Italian Colonial Crimes

Considering all these theoretical advances, we may put forward the following hypotheses about reactions to parrhesic versus evasive narratives:

Hypothesis 1. Evaluatively, the parrhesic narrative will increase acknowledgement of the wrongness of the country's past actions, compared to the evasive one.

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Hypothesis 2. Cognitively, the details of the parrhesic narrative will be remembered better after time has passed than the vaguer language of the evasive narrative.

Hypothesis 3. Affectively, the parrhesic narrative will increase levels of ingroup critical emotions, for example, ingroup-directed anger and disgust as well as shame and guilt.

Hypothesis 4. Behaviorally, the parrhesic narrative will increase support for collective reparative actions targeting the former victim group.

Our ideas about the evolution of these processes over time are more speculative. On the one hand, the defensive processes of denial mentioned above could operate immediately upon presentation of the text, but dissipate over time, such that the ingroup critical reactions above would be observed more after the passage of time. However, defensive processes may be elaborated over time, and are more applicable when the immediate shock of the revelation has faded. In that case, we would expect ingroup critical reactions to be reduced instead of increased at Time 2. Finally, interactions between immediate versus delayed effects on the one hand, and parrhesic versus evasive text on ingroup colonial times on the other hand, may be expected as well. While a fearless communication of discomforting truth about the ingroup can make group-based emotions arise immediately, more indirect hints about past ingroup misdeeds might lead to emotional effects showed later in time; that is, a kind of sleeper effect (Kumkale & Albarracín, 2004) might occur for participants presented with a more evasive text.

PRESENT STUDY

Case Topic

The subject of the study was war crimes committed by the Italian Army during the colonial invasion of Ethiopia (1935-36). Although recently included in Italian history textbooks seventy years after the end of the war (Cajani, 2013; Leone & Mastrovito, 2010), this historical episode is still largely ignored in the general social discourse of Italian contemporary society, as well as by general historiography on European colonial expansion (Labanca, 2015). Previous research by Italian historians shows that widespread social denial has characterized these crimes (Labanca, 2004), aided by a popular social myth (identified by Italian history scholars as Italiani, brava gente: cfr. Del Boca, 2005; Volpato, Andrighetto, Mari, Gabbiadini, & Durante, 2012) depicting Italian people as good and generous in their everyday life and incapable of any cruelty as soldiers.

Research Design

The research followed a mixed 2 (condition, between subjects) × 3 (time, within subjects) experimental design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions ("parrhesic text" vs. "evasive text"). Texts were built by manipulating the wording of the same historical narrative in order to describe Italian colonial crimes either clearly (using words such as "poisonous gas" or "deportations") or in a mild, euphemistic way (using words such as "unconventional weapons" or "attempts at repression"). Comparisons within subjects tested differences between reactions by the same participants when observed at the baseline Time 0 (before reading the historical text on Italian colonial crimes), at Time 1 (immediately after reading the parrhesic vs. evasive historical text to which they were randomly assigned), and Time 2 (a week later).

More precisely, Time 0 measures were designed to check whether participants were ignorant of

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Italian colonial crimes during the invasion of Ethiopia (1935-1936). At Time 0, we also aimed to collect a first list of self-report emotions, stirred up when thinking about Italian colonial times, to be used as a baseline for appreciating changes after receiving the historical information on ingroup's war crimes. At Time 1, we observed reactions of participants immediately after reading the parrhesic versus evasive historical text, inviting them to self-assess again their emotions when thinking about Italian colonial times. Finally, at Time 2, we collected reactions of participants a week after reading the historical text.

Participants

Participants were 72 Italian university students (40 men, 32 women). Their age ranged from 18 to 28 years, with a mean of 22.10 (SD = 2.71). At Time 1, 37 participants were randomly assigned to the condition of reading the parrhesic text about Italian colonial crimes in Ethiopia, and the other 35 participants to the experimental condition of reading the evasive one.

Procedure

Data were collected on two different occasions, in July 2016 and in November 2017. Students were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. Measures are described more fully in the section below.

The procedure unfolded in three stages: Time 0 (T0), Time 1 (T1), and Time 2 (T2). At the beginning of the study (T0), each participant was invited to sit alone in a room and received a first questionnaire inquiring about knowledge of historical facts of Italian colonialism, who eventually told them about this period of the Italian history, and their self-reported emotions when thinking about this period.

Then, a researcher entered the room and, after collecting the first questionnaire, invited the participant to read the text on a computer screen and to follow further on-screen instructions. After that, the researcher left the room. This started the experimental manipulation, where each participant was randomly assigned to read either a clear and straightforward (parrhesic) or a mild (evasive) text on the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. Texts were built by manipulating the wording of a single historical narrative on colonial crimes, taken from a textbook currently used in Italian high schools (Fossati, Luppi, & Zanette, 2012). The narrative, comprising roughly 600 words, described the invasion of Ethiopia by the Italian Army. Both texts conveyed the same contents: the reasons for invasion, Ethiopia's cultural and economic advances before the invasion, crimes committed during the invasion, political circumstances leading to them and subsequent international reactions, and finally the negative consequences of the invasion for both Ethiopia and Italy.

However, in order to vary the parrhesic versus evasive nature of the description, certain words were changed. These words referred to: a) weapons used ("repeatedly bombing using poisonous gas forbidden by international treaties" in the parrhesic text vs. "using unconventional weapons" in the evasive text); b) reasons for Italian violence during the invasion ("to destroy resistance" in the parrhesic text vs. "to oppose local fighters" in the evasive text); c) means used to counter Ethiopian resistance ("repeated acts of violence: fires, destructions, mass killings, and deportations" in the parrhesic text vs. "attempts at repression" in the evasive text); and d) the aftermath of Italian crimes ("after the international sanctions against Italian aggression" in the parrhesic text vs. "after these facts" in the evasive text). Immediately after reading the text, participants were further asked to report again their emotions about Italian colonialism (T1 emotions).

At T2, one week later, participants were invited back for a debriefing after being asked to judge whether seven sentences, assessing their memory of the text read the previous week, were true or false. Six statements referred to the text read and were therefore different according to the condition (parrhesic vs. evasive). The statements were used to check the after-effects of the manipulation of historical texts. The seventh statement asked for an assessment of the seriousness of crimes committed by the Italian Army, and was the same in both experimental conditions. Finally, participants reported, for the third time, their emotions about Italian colonialism, including a more detailed measure of self-conscious emotions. After being briefed, participants received an explanation of the procedure and were asked to authorize the use of their data. All participants accepted the procedure and agreed to the use of their data for the purposes of research.

Measures

Baseline measures at T0 were the following. Knowledge of Italian colonial crimes was indirectly tested, by asking participants to state whether they were familiar with historical events occurred during Italian colonial times (yes or no questions). If they stated they did, participants were asked to describe in writing the events they remembered (open-ended question). Afterwards, emotions related to Italian colonialism were self-assessed, using a list of 18 emotions: angry, indifferent, afraid, proud, disgusted, uneasy, happy, guilty, ashamed, surprised, contemptuous, sad, puzzled, embarrassed, disappointed, outraged, embittered, disturbed. For each emotion, participants rated how much they felt that way, from 0 = not at all, to 5 = completely.

Dependent variables, as measured at T1 and T2 were the following: at T1 and T2 participants reported their self-assessed emotions when thinking about Italian colonialism using the same list of 18 emotions used at T0.

Memory and understanding of the historical text on Italian colonial times were assessed at T2 by a list of six true/false sentences recalling contents taken from the historical text read (for instance, the sentence "Italians used unconventional weapons against Ethiopians" was used for participants who read the evasive text, while the sentence "The Italians used toxic gases against the Ethiopians" was used for participants who read the parrhesic text). These measures were used also as a manipulation check. Together with the recognition of contents included in the text (either parrhesic or evasive) read a week earlier, at T2 a true/false answer to a same sentence ("After reading the text, it is possible to claim that the Italian Army committed serious crimes during the invasion of Ethiopia") was used to assess the moral judgment of Italian colonial crimes, grasped in the two different conditions.

At T2, some emotion measures, in addition to the list of 18, assessed specifically group-based self-awareness of guilt, social shame, and moral shame. Participants expressed their agreement, ranging from 1 = I strongly disagree to 7 = I strongly agree, with 11 sentences expressing various nuances of self-conscious emotions (e.g., "I feel ashamed because of the way in which we behaved to Ethiopian people"). These sentences, taken from Allpress et al. (2014), were adapted to the specific context of Italian colonialism. Three of them referred to social shame (alpha =.90; e.g., "Thinking about how Italy could be seen for its behavior toward the Ethiopian population makes me feel ashamed"). Five of them were related to moral shame (alpha =.89; e.g., "I am ashamed to be Italian because of the way we treated the Ethiopian population"), and three were related to guilt (alpha =.81; e.g., "Although I have done nothing wrong I feel guilty about the behavior Italians had toward Ethiopians").

Finally, to explore their reparative intentions, at T2 participants declared their degree of agreement with a list of possible reparative actions that Italy could enact toward Ethiopia (ranging from 1 = I completely disagree to 5 = I completely agree). A list of six reparative behaviors was proposed to participants, describing

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economic help, humanitarian help, better information provided by school and media, and official acknowl-edgments of past historical responsibilities. An average of these items (alpha = .77) was used as a scale for reparative intentions of participants toward the group of former victims.

RESULTS

As we assumed when selecting our topic, none among the Italian university students participating in the study spontaneously recalled the crimes committed by the Italian Army during the colonial invasion of Ethiopia when declaring their knowledge of this period of national history at Time 0. Moreover, 75% of respondents declared they did not have any knowledge about this national episode. These results show that, for most participants, the historical information we later presented was either completely novel, or not pre-viously held strongly in mind.

Cognitive Effects

At Time 2, showing retention of the information received a week earlier, participants who read the parrhesic text had a significantly stronger assessment of the seriousness of the Italian crimes as compared with participants assigned to reading an evasive text. In fact, only 68.4% of participants assigned to the evasive text condition recognized the seriousness of Italian Army's colonial crimes, while 94.3% of partici-pants in the parrhesic text condition did, χ^2 (1, N = 70) = 7.65, p = .006. This shows an effect of the language used reaching beyond the immediate context of learning.

Emotional Effects

Table 1 shows the main descriptive statistics of an ANOVA comparing emotions self-assessed at T0, T1, and T2. This within-subjects comparison was repeated in both experimental conditions to grasp the different timing of reactions after reading a straightforward or a vaguer and more elusive information about self-censored colonial crimes.

Results of the repeated measures ANOVA with emotions across three times (within factor) showed that some of the emotions associated with the national colonial past scored higher immediately after reading the historical text on self-censored ingroup crimes (Time 1), and remained higher one week later (Time 2). Interestingly, some of these emotions significantly increased for all participants after reading the text; in con-trast, some other emotions increased only when the crimes were narrated in a parrhesic and straightforward way. Moreover, random assignment to the two conditions was not compromised by chance differences, as there were no differences between conditions at Time 0 before the manipulation (all ps > .18).

Referring to the within-subjects comparisons, main effects showing differences between Time 0, Time 1, and Time 2 were found for: anger, $F(2, 134) = 9.87$, p < .001; disgust, $F(2, 134) = 5.61$, p = .005; outrage, $F(2, 130) = 3.88$, p = .023; contempt, $F(2, 130) = 5.93$, p = .003; shame, $F(2, 130) = 5.25$, p = .006; pride, $F(2, 134) = 12.03$, p < .001; bitterness, $F(2, 134) = 4.954$, p = .008. More precisely, anger was signifi-cantly increased immediately after reading the parrhesic text, rising from the mean of M = 1.11, assessed at T0, to M = 2.00. After a week, self-assessed anger of participants exposed to the parrhesic text significantly

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decreased to M = 1.54, that, however, was still higher than the initial self-assessment of anger. Similarly, immediately after reading the parrhesic text, participants showed a significant increase in disgust (from M = 1.52 to M = 2.29), contempt (from M = 1.29 to M = 2.09), and outrage (from M = 1.40 to M = 1.94).

TABLE 1
Descriptive statistics of experimental conditions by Time ANOVA: Emotions

Emotion	n	n	Parrhesic		Evasive		Total	
	Parrhesic	Evasive	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Anger-T0	37	35	1.11$_a$	1.02	1.18$_a$	1.06	1.14$_a$	1.09
Anger-T1	37	34	2.00$_b$	1.30	1.32$_a$	0.95	1.67$_b$	1.14
Anger-T2	35	35	1.54$_c$	1.12	1.06$_a$	0.88	1.31$_a$	1.02
Disgust-T0	37	35	1.52$_a$	1.35	1.26$_a$	1.23	1.39$_a$	1.29
Disgust-T1	37	34	2.29$_b$	1.25	1.32$_a$	1.15	1.81$_b$	1.28
Disgust-T2	35	35	2.09$_{cb}$	1.20	1.32$_a$	1.20	1.71$_{cb}$	1.21
Contempt-T0	37	35	1.29$_a$	1.56	1.21$_a$	1.31	1.25$_a$	1.43
Contempt-T1	37	34	2.09$_b$	1.26	1.24$_a$	1.17	1.67$_b$	1.28
Contempt-T2	35	34	1.82$_b$	1.21	1.15$_a$	1.12	1.49$_{ab}$	1.21
Outrage-T0	37	35	1.40$_a$	1.28	1.25$_a$	1.36	1.33$_a$	1.31
Outrage-T1	37	33	1.94$_b$	1.28	1.28$_a$	1.20	1.61$_b$	1.28
Outrage-T2	35	34	1.86$_b$	1.26	1.38$_{ab}$	1.12	1.62$_b$	1.21
Shame-T0	37	34	1.11	1.30	0.91	1.05	1.01$_a$	1.18
Shame-T1	37	34	1.66	1.23	1.13	1.26	1.40$_b$	1.26
Shame-T2	35	34	1.51	1.27	0.97	1.09	1.25$_{ab}$	1.21
Pride-T0	37	35	0.43$_a$	0.91	0.62$_a$	0.85	0.52$_a$	0.88
Pride-T1	37	34	0.31$_{ab}$	0.93	0.31$_b$	0.93	0.32$_b$	0.75
Pride-T2	35	35	0.26$_{ac}$	0.89	0.15$_c$	0.88	0.20$_c$	0.69
Bitterness-T0	37	35	1.60	1.43	1.38	1.20	1.49$_a$	1.32
Bitterness-T1	37	34	2.09	1.24	1.68	1.03	1.88$_b$	1.15
Bitterness-T2	35	35	1.63	1.19	1.44	1.07	1.54$_a$	1.13

Note. For each emotion, if two means have a different letter in the same row (Parrhesic vs. Evasive) or column (T0, T1, T2), this indicates that they are significantly different, p < .05. For Total, a different letter in the column indicates that the two means are different, p < .05.

A somehow different profile across time was present, when referring to self-conscious emotions, linked to the ingroup image. Here, a specific decrease in pride was shown by participants exposed to the evasive text, who self-assessed a significantly lower level of this positive self-conscious emotion immediately after reading the historical text (from M = 0.62 at T0 to M = 0.31 at T1), and remained low in pride also after a week (M = 0.15). The evasive communication may have reduced pride via a more indirect but long-lasting processing, in contrast to the more short-lived moral outrage emotions aroused by the emotive

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language in parrhesic accounts. Because of this apparent difference between self-conscious and other emotions at Time 1, we scheduled additional measures of negative self-conscious emotions at Time 2, with the idea that these might be higher in the evasive than the parrhesic framing.

Specific Self-Conscious Emotions

A week after receiving information on Italian colonial crimes they previously ignored, participants were presented with a set of sentences referring to feelings of moral shame related to the Italian misdeeds against Ethiopians (alpha = .90; e.g., "I am ashamed to be Italian because of the way we treated the Ethiopian population"), of image shame (alpha = .89; e.g., "Thinking about how Italy could be seen for its behavior toward the Ethiopian population makes me feel ashamed"), or guilt (alpha = .81; e.g., "Although I have done nothing wrong, I feel guilty about the behavior that Italians had toward Ethiopians"). Table 2 shows ANOVA findings. Looking at each emotion separately, the main effect of the conditions was significant for moral shame and social shame: $F(1, 65) = 10.28$, $p < .002$, and $F(1, 65) = 4.19$, $p = .045$, respectively. The difference was not significant for guilt, $F = ns$. In addition, the main effect of emotions was significant, $F(2, 128) = 31.07$, $p < .001$: independently from conditions, moral shame was higher than social shame and guilt. The Conditions x Emotions interaction was not significant, $F(2, 128) = 2.00$, $p = .14$.

TABLE 2
Descriptive statistics of Experimental conditions (Time 2)

	Condition					
	Parrhesic text (n = 33)		Evasive text (n = 33)		Total	
Emotions	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Moral shame	4.71	1.36	3.63	1.38	4.17a	1.46
Social shame	3.98	1.28	3.35	1.24	3.66b	1.29
Guilt	3.07	1.32	2.65	1.26	2.86	1.30

Note. In the total column, the different letter indicates that the two means are significantly different, $p < .006$.

Collective Behavioral Intentions

Reparative Intentions

The mean of the reparative intention items showed that participants scored relatively high (M = 3.59, SD = 0.56). First, we wanted to see whether change in emotions from baseline (Time 0) to Time 2 could predict reparative intentions at Time 2. We averaged change scores for anger, disgust, and outrage together ("hostility" emotions), because of their conceptual similarity (for Salerno & Peter-Hagene, 2013, outrage is a combination of high anger and disgust). Then, we ran a regression analysis on reparative intentions, with the change scores (T2-T0) for hostility emotions, guilt, shame, contempt, pride, and conditions as predictors. In the regression, we also introduced as predictors the interaction between conditions and change score for each emotion.

The model was overall significant, $F(11, 32) = 2.76$, $p = .01$. The only significant main effects were: changes in pride, $F(1, 32) = 6.14$, $B = -0.77$, $p = .02$, and changes in contempt, $F(1, 32) = 18.3$, $B = 0.41$, $p < .001$. But the only (marginally) significant moderation by conditions involved pride, $F(1, 32) = 3.07$, $B = 0.64$, $p = .09$: decrease in pride had a stronger effect in the parrhesic than in the evasive condition. Increased ingroup contempt and diminished pride over time best predicted reparative responses.

Finally, for the specific self-conscious emotions of moral shame, social shame, and guilt, we could not look at change because they were only measured at Time 2 (Table 3). A regression analysis with these three emotions as predictors showed that reparative intentions were associated with moral shame ($\beta = .45$, $p = .02$) and, to a lesser extent, with social shame ($\beta = .34$, $p = .04$).

TABLE 3
Regression model predicting reparative intentions from the self-conscious emotions of social shame,
moral shame, and guilt (Time 2).

	B	SE(B)	β	t	p
Moral shame	0.18	0.07	**.45**	2.53	.02
Social shame	0.15	0.07	**.34**	2.16	.04
Guilt	−0.09	0.07	−.20	−1.32	.20

Note. SE = standard error. βs in bold are significant.

DISCUSSION

Overall, this experiment showed that the wording used in exposure to nationally incriminating incidents can make a difference in their impact. Speaking parrhesically, or simply and directly, had an increased effect compared to the evasive message retaining the cognitive acceptance of ingroup responsibility. Parrhesia also had an immediate effect increasing ingroup critical emotions, whether other-blaming such as anger and outrage, or self-blaming such as shame. Although these emotions decreased a week later, they stayed at a somewhat higher level among people who had read the parrhesic message. Thus the parrhesic message showed signs of increased retention of emotional reactions to ingroup culpability.

It is also interesting that shame, contempt, and a reduced sense of pride rather than other candidate emotions such as guilt or anger, predicted support for reparations at Time 2. Because it does not require taking personal responsibility, but only vicarious identification with the damaged image or morality of the group (Lickel, Schmader, Curtis, Scarnier, & Ames, 2005) shame (together with its corollary, reduced pride) may by itself be a more viable collective emotion than guilt. In this respect both image-focused shame and moral shame drove support for reparations independently. While outrage is a particularly socially engaged collective emotion that in other contexts has been show to drive moral judgments over and above either anger or disgust alone (Salerno & Peter-Hagene, 2013), the "cold" emotion of contempt for ingroup perpetrators (Fischer & Giner-Sorolla, 2016) and a corollary reduction in collective pride seemed to be more strongly associated with support for reparations in the longer term. Taken all together, these changes of group-based emotions seemed to be linked to a deep sense of the injustice perpetrated by the ingroup (Hutcherson & Gross, 2011; Nabi, 2002; Rozin, Lowery, Imada, & Haidt, 1999). However, before drawing some conclusive remarks, a brief overview of the present study and of its aims is in order.

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The present study provides some evidence of the pragmatic effects of different rhetorical strategies used to convey to young descendants of perpetrators historical information of past ingroup violence silenced by a long-lasting social denial (Cohen, 2001). Because of self-censorship (Bar-Tal, 2017) from older generations, knowledge of these historical facts can be neither included into the personal historical consciousness (Seixas, 2017) of brand-new young citizens, nor represented in the socially widespread historical culture (Grever & Adriaansen 2017). In Western societies, the latter acts as a kind of external infrastructure encompassing all formal and informal everyday activities (school teaching, literature, movies and theatre, leisure, fashion, etc.) meant to build a socially shared representation of national history (Assmann, 2010; Paez et al., 2017). In particular, by presenting participants with a clear and straightforward account — that, according to Foucault's (1983) theoretical proposal, we have called parrhesic — or with an evasive one, brushing over these socially ignored facts, we wanted to explore effects of these different communicative choices when breaking down intergenerational silence on past ingroup wrongdoings.

More generally speaking, our study aimed to give a specific contribution to recent research that takes into account the need for acknowledgment of past crimes committed by the ingroup for enhancing reconciliation processes (Vollhardt et al., 2014). It also supports arguments for the rarity of self-criticisms about mass violence enacted by previous generations (Leach et al., 2013), because it explores a topic case when a massive self-censoring (Bar-Tal, 2017) of ingroup past crimes can be observed both in history textbooks, and in the overall national historical culture.

Although this social amnesia about the Italian colonial crimes perpetrated during the occupation of Ethiopia was explored in some previous studies (Leone & Mastrovito, 2010; Leone & Sarrica, 2012, 2014; Leone et al., 2018), this topic still remains under-represented in the field of research on current consequences of colonial past. Results of the first part of the present study show the effects of this specific situation of social silence, since 75% of Italian university students declared to have no knowledge whatsoever about this period of the national past.

These results appear congruent with a recent review of research on current history teachings in former colonizer nations, showing how a "selective myopia" still disseminates uncritical versions of history among their young generations (Mycock, 2017). Such bias in the historical culture of Western nations is one among the many serious risks that currently threaten peaceful intergroup coexistence (Volpato & Licata, 2010). However, although being part of this general "myopia" of post-colonial nations, the Italian case appears to be very specific due to the particular historical features of Italian colonial invasions that made it possible to completely erase these facts from both national and international representations of colonial past (Labanca, 2015). The issue of reactions to the breaking of such long-lasting social silence, and of effects of different coping strategies with this dangerous yet necessary communicative choice, seems to be therefore an interesting and still under-investigated area of study.

Our results showed how a clear and straightforward narrative on past colonial crimes, as opposed to an evasive one, seemed to allow participants to better grasp the negative moral consequences of these historical events in relation to the ingroup. These evaluative and cognitive effects of the parrhesic narrative could be linked to the lack of a general historical culture available for young Italian participants, that has made it impossible for respondents to fill in the informational gaps of the evasive narrative. Naturally, a better understanding of the seriousness of crimes committed by the Italian Army during the invasion of Ethiopia cannot be severed from group-based emotions of participants after reading these unexpected historical texts.

To conclude, we can advance the idea that, when societal self-censorship (Bar-Tal, 2017) makes intergenerational narratives completely avoid information on past ingroup crimes, reconciliation would do best to openly and clearly narrate violence to younger generations instead of letting it disappear down the

overwhelming "black holes" of intergenerational silence. However, when this silence is broken down, group-based emotions have to be closely scrutinized, in order to distinguish if and how they can help the social reparative action of younger generations. Our study suggests that, by clearly stating past ingroup crimes, parrhesic narratives seem far more apt than milder ones to provoke group-based emotions allowing young citizens to acknowledge the injustice perpetrated by the ingroup in question. These emotions may, in turn, be a resource helping young participants to understand the need of reparative actions and to acknowledge that, when time elapses and new generations of citizens come to the social scene, young people are entitled to morally judge the old ones.

In accord with this idea, our results seem to suggest that, when finally informed of past ingroup misdeeds, young people are enabled, thanks to emotions such as outrage or shame, to at last express their own third-party morality (Rozin et al., 1999), stepping back from confusing overtones sometimes hidden in the feeling of sharing collective guilt (Arendt, 1945) with previous generations. In this context, when a long-lasting societal self-censorship (Bar-Tal, 2017) is eventually broken down, we did not observe the kind of reactions against the threat of guilt or shame that caused more defensive responses to clear speaking about ingroup responsibility, for example, in Castano and Giner-Sorolla (2006). Moreover, data suggest that group-based shame, both moral and social, can be evoked a week later, perhaps when narrative contents have been fully grasped. These self-conscious emotions may be a more effective spur to reparative intentions than guilt or anger, letting young generations advance in their reconciliation processes with social groups of former victims. It is very interesting that, once again, clear accounts of the past seem to be far more apt than milder ones to evoke such lasting moral and social shame. Evasive accounts, by contrast, only reduced levels of pride in this time frame.

However, and rather interestingly, these are only exploratory data, in a very recent and complex field of study, with many limitations. In particular, the fact that group-based emotions were explored only by participants' self-assessment and, a week later, by their agreement with pre-arranged sentences expressing moral shame, social shame, or guilt for past ingroup actions. Similarly, reparative intentions were measured only by agreement with reparations described by pre-arranged sentences. Effects of social desirability may certainly be expected, due to these kinds of measures, and the need for behavioral observations to complement these data has to be taken into account in further research. Previous studies, based on non-intrusive video-recording of participants when reading on the computer screen the narrative of historical crimes committed by the Italian Army during the colonial invasion of Ethiopia, have evidenced behavioral expressions of surprise and negative emotions, such as sadness, disgust or anger, observed when participants were presented with a parrhesic account of Italian colonial crimes (Leone & Sarrica, 2012, 2014; Leone et al., 2018). This observational methodology could be conveniently used in future studies, to complement self-report evaluations of one's own emotions. However, this procedure needs to be further developed, to better distinguish emotional reactions from other expressions of doubt and of focusing (as in the case of behaviors, such as frowning or bending forward toward the screen). Furthermore, reparative intentions could be complemented in future studies by behavioral measures of actual actions undertaken toward the group of former victims.

Additionally, the present study manipulations are based only on words. It would be interesting to test how manipulating images, clearly showing ingroup crimes or evoking a vaguer if not nostalgic, representation of colonial past, can change the effects observed. Finally, these powerful effects of parrhesic accounts of past ingroup crimes when breaking an intergenerational silence can be compared with other situations when a different historical awareness and culture on past ingroup crimes is shown. For instance, it would be informative to verify whether these same effects of moral and social shame would emerge when

the past ingroup crimes described are well known. It could help to disentangle effects due to the cruelty of the crimes described from effects related to breaking social silence.

In summary, this study showed that, despite long lasting silence on ingroup crimes and without a socially shared historical culture on the period when these crimes were committed, the young Italian participants presented with a parrhesic narrative of these past misdeeds seemed able not only to acknowledge the moral responsibilities of older generations, but also to take a moral distance from them. A week later, we observed high levels of outrage, social and moral shame, and a reduced sense of pride — that is, group-based emotions that enhanced young generations' agreement with reparative actions. However, the present study also suggests that much more research is needed to understand why, among self-conscious moral emotions, shame seems more apt than guilt to lead to intergroup reconciliation, and to understand when, in the social life of the perpetrators' group, the time comes to break down self-censored narratives about past misdeeds, finally letting young adults judge the moral responsibilities of older generations.

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