In the Making

MAPA: Co-Creating New Narratives for the 21st Century

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Abstract

This article presents the MAPA Social Innovation Lab and elaborates on the elements of the process that influenced and/or led to the construction of new narratives based on a plurality of views and multiplicity of people from different social classes and in different positions of power. It addresses the short period during which the lab itself was held, the tensions that arose on account of the characteristics / particularities of the group's participants, and the breadth and complexity of a co-constructed narrative. The social innovation lab was held in 2019 and was based on Theory U. It consisted of 37 leaders invited to rethink a social model anchored in the feminine-masculine duality starting from the central question: What does the new narrative of feminine and masculine values for the 21st century look like? We present three central principles that underpin the process and, from the point of view of a movement still under construction, we consider important issues for developing a MAPA experience as well as the limitations and possibilities that became (and have become) evident over the course of our MAPA journey.

Keywords

Introduction

Argentine philosopher Enrique Dussel (2014) proposes elements for contemplating Latin American society from a decolonial, epistemological point of view, meaning a view that recognizes the Eurocentric and universalist nature of modern political and economic systems and that seeks to shape new possible worlds from a political process of liberation that reveals the pluriverse: a diversity of historically invisibilized concepts, models, mental structures, and historical and transcendental arrangements. In 2019, the MAPA Social Innovation Lab was created and held in Brazil as a space to co-shape a new possible world from such a point of view.

The MAPA Social Innovation Lab was conceived by Renata Sbardelini, founder of the creative consulting firm Suindara Radar e Rede. The impetus to create MAPA came from Sbardelini's felt sense of a need to explore the "pain related to being a woman in today's world." She felt that her own experience of this pain was more than personal, and that creating a space to explore the theme further would serve a broader community. Initially, she conceived of the project as a space for exploring female identities, values and narratives, but later reconceptualized it to include a broader understanding of gender as a cultural construction that permeates the dynamics of relationships with others, with nature, with work, with consumption, and as a way of being.

From this vision, Sbardelini proposed that the objective of the Lab would be to reimagine the current social model anchored in feminine-masculine duality using three questions as a springboard:

– What constitutes feminine and masculine values in the 21st century?

– What is the relationship between feminine and masculine values that guides our behavior and the individual and collective decisions we make?

– What do the new narratives of feminine and masculine values for the 21st century look like?

The name MAPA (map) was chosen because its meaning goes beyond the idea of a graphic representation of a territory: the concept of map also contains creative power that connects individuals, territories, and realities; "open, it is connectable in all its dimensions, dismountable, reversible, susceptible to receive constant modifications" (Deleuze & Guatarri, 1995, pp. 20-21).

The MAPA Social Innovation Lab took place August 2019. The journey lasted five days and was based on Theory U methodology for social innovation (Scharmer, 2007, 2018). There were thirty-seven participants in the lab, the limit suggested by the facilitator so that the development of the planned activities could happen with enough time for exchanges, speaking and listening. The participants were hand-picked based on relevant areas of action for the proposed discussion, such as political change, environment, communication and culture, technology and innovation, social entrepreneurship, and education. Within these areas, MAPA Social Innovation Lab chose to work with leaders with a recognized track record in their fields, areas of influence and/or activism and who influence and produce content in and for their institutions, communities, and for society at large.

In this article, we seek to identify key elements of the five-day process that helped create the opportunity for a collective construction of new narratives to emerge from a heterogenous group consisting of individuals who come from different social classes and spaces of power. We point to three key elements: opening with vulnerability, group plurality/heterogeneity and opening to multiple knowledge systems. The first two are part of the lab design and the third is an element that emerged from the group dynamics. We suggest that the first two elements created the conditions for the third element to emerge.

Methodology

The reflections presented here are based on the direct experience of two of the co-authors, Renata Sbardelini, who first came up with the MAPA Social Innovation Lab and, by extension, the MAPA Project, and Danielle Almeida, both leaders during the five-day laboratory, and on the process analysis of the third co-author, Liliane Ramos. Ramos' analysis draws on the "Sistematização" internal

document, intended to be a written record of the MAPA Social Innovation Lab activities. It was written by an anthropologist who worked for two years with the Suindara team on planning the lab and witnessed the lab's activities specifically for organizing its record. The document includes participants' comments during the MAPA Social Innovation Lab process, transcribed from the audio and video recording of all activities, and observational input from both the anthropologist and from Renata Sbardelini. It allowed us to go back to key moments throughout the five-day journey to draw out relevant themes. All participant quotes included in this article are drawn from the "Sistematização" and are shared here with their permission.

The sense-making—or data analysis—was carried out from an interpretive ethnographic perspective (Geertz, 1989) that privileges the meanings that the actors attribute to the situations experienced, acting reflexively on social processes and managing their consequences. In the specific case of this work, two of the co-authors participated directly in the process analyzed, which includes a subjective relationship with the object of the discussions presented. We believe that this relationship, once made explicit, did not constitute an obstacle but their participant status enhanced the analysis, as Geertz believed.

The three key elements presented in this article emerged from the sense-making discussions among the authors, who sought answers to the following question: what were the fundamental aspects of the process that generated engagement of the participants with the lab proposal, creating the opportunity for a collective construction of new narratives to emerge from a heterogeneous group of individuals from different spaces of power? For this purpose, the confluence of the visions of the three co-authors, who assumed different perspectives in the realization of the lab (in the case of Sbardelini and Almeida) or had an external view of the process (in the case of Ramos), was enriching. The "Sistematização" document made it possible to return to the specific comments expressed during the lab by participants, and to draw conclusions from these about the relevance of various elements to the process. The group met six times over the course of four months to review the Sistematização data and draw out key themes.

Certainly there were many planned and emergent aspects contributed to the results generated in the lab. We chose to highlight the three described here because we feel they offer insight into the challenge of creating conditions for the group's openness and engagement with the lab's objectives, allowing, through the process, the participants to build on and deepen the complexity of the initial questions raised.

Perspective on Feminine and Masculine Values

From the beginning of the MAPA Social Innovation Lab planning, the lab organizers conceptualized gender as a culturally constructed identifier, with qualities and functions defined by interpretation of the nature of bodies, which is developed neither naturally or impartially, thereby reinforcing masculine

domination and authority (Butler, 2003, p.37). Simone de Beauvoir (1989/1949) stated that no woman is born a woman, she becomes a woman. As such, a differentiation process takes place that does not happen in a horizontal and balanced way, but is expressed on the level of actions and ideas through an apparatus of power. In this sense, according to Marilyn Strathern (2006), to transform this apparatus it is not enough to compare people defined by their gender from a vision of supposed intrinsic qualities. It is necessary, rather, to understand how these qualities relate to social conventions, so that these conventions can be changed.

In conjunction with the theories of de Beauvoir (1989/1949) and Strathern (2006), we understood that this cultural process transcends individual relationships between men and women. A masculine bias when interpreting social space can be identified with the constitution of the modernity thought itself, as Sorj (1992) pointed out, and this bias is expressed through dualisms like individual/social, public/private, mind/body, rational/emotional and nature/nurture(culture). Nevertheless, Sori stresses that this bias does not assume, in today's terms of behavior, a universal content or rigid forms. From this interpretation, Western culture is recognized as essentially patriarchal, wherein elements like war, hierarchy, valuing growth and controlling reason permeate everyday life and interactions, including the leadership models pursued in government, business and even social action (Bhat & Sisodia, 2016). It is also a Eurocentric culture, which invisibilizes particular concepts, mental structures, and historical arrangements of the global south (Dussel, 2015).

Muraro and Boff (2002) have proposed that it is possible to reshape coexistence through a balance between the feminine and masculine values that reverberate within us as individuals and in our relationships with others and with nature. In this reconfiguration, it is crucial to recognize a heterogeneous manifestation of feminine and masculine values and of their impacts in different social groups (Rosaldo, 1995). Only in this way do we avoid the risk that, in seeking to transform existing systems, we establish new conventions of control and power (Eisler, 1988), limiting our understanding of a social model to simplified dualities.

When we, the MAPA Social Innovation Lab, opted to address the feminine and the masculine in terms of values, we sought to take a critical look at the prevailing logic of these cultural processes and structures of power, to recognize their underlying historical development, and to create space for building new narratives that could transform the structures of prejudice, inequality, and power asymmetry. It was then decided that men would also be invited to the dialogue.

Brazil is among the five countries with the largest gaps in gender inequality in Latin America. In 2019, when the lab was held, Brazil ranked 95 out of 155 countries surveyed for the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum, 2018). The scenario of imbalance between men and women in the country produces significant social injustices in political and economic participation. In

2019 the labor market participation rate for women was 54.5 %, while among men it was 73.7 %. In addition, in Brazil women receive, on average, 77% of the value of men's income. In 2020, Brazil had only 14.8% women parliamentarians in office in the lower chambers, the lowest rate among South American countries (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística [IBGE], 2021). The *We Need to Talk to Men* report pointed out that 81.2% of men and 94.8% of cisgender women consider that there is a lot of male chauvinism in Brazil, and more than 50% of the participants believe that there is a lot or extreme inequality of rights and opportunities between men and women in the country (UN Women, 2016).

The female and male values were summarized in three key social symptoms to be addressed during the lab, presented on the first day of activities as context:

1. Gender Gap: despite all the progress made by women since the mid-twentieth century, there are still notable gender gaps. For example, according to the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum, 2018), to date there is still a 32.0% average gender gap that remains to be closed. The largest gender disparity that informs this gap is in the area of political empowerment, and gaps also remain significant in economic participation and opportunity. The report projections indicate that the overall global gender gap will close in 108 years across the 106 countries covered in this report.

2. Gender Identity: the construction of gender identity is associated with imprisoning stereotypes for both men and women. The We Need to Talk to Men Report (Brazil Country Office of UN Women, 2016), pointed out that "the place of men" in society is still largely built on heterosexuality, the culture of the hero, the role of the provider, being a strong worker and emotionally reserved, group strength, and virile capital; and "the place of women" is still largely constructed from the role of the caretaker, purity, beauty, and fragility.

3. A Polarized World with a Power Imbalance: Our worldwide value system remains anchored in the polarization of a binary culture. In this system, polar opposites often associated with male/female, such as public/private, society/individual, rational/emotional, science/spirituality and man/woman, fight for positions of control and power. According to psychologist and mythologist, Murdock (2013), our task is to heal the internal split between masculine and feminine that produces these polarities, welcoming the tensions that arise from this process. This would be a delicate balance, that demands a subtle integration of the feminine and masculine aspects of oneself. That would reflect on the re-balancing of social relations, as well as in the balance of life on earth.

Based on personal experience, the data about gender gap and gender identity, and the proposition of Murdock (2013) and Muraro and Boff (2002) that it is possible to reshape coexistence through a balance between the feminine and masculine values, described above, Sbardelini hypothesized an explanation of the current scenario as a starting point for the lab. She proposed that the root cause of these symptoms may be the historic rupture of a holistic view of the feminine and masculine archetype, when masculine archetypes overshadowed feminine archetypes and came to shape the power structures that guide society and consequently our model of the world, extending to business, government, education, marriage, religion, family.

Lab Format and Structure

The MAPA Social Innovation Lab was an action research project, a methodology that starts with a collective problem and then collectively pulls in participants who represent the situation being researched as co-protagonists to engage in building knowledge and changing reality (Thiollent, 1985; Peruzzo, 2016). We were particularly influenced by socially critical action research as described by Tripp (2005, p. 14), a type of action research that starts from the recognition that in society there are one or more dominant systems that produce injustice, which demand transformation at different levels.

There is no single way of applying action research, and the field has drawn from different theoretical sources and has undergone extensive methodological development (Bradbury, 2006). The MAPA Social Innovation Lab used Theory U, developed by Otto Scharmer (2007, 2018) as its action research methodology. Theory U is based on the idea that the quality of change generated by any intervention is a function of the level of awareness of the people involved. It emphasizes the intelligences of mind, heart, and deepest will to support individual transformation and sensing into the future that wishes to unfold.

As an awareness-based method for changing systems, Theory U is practiced by recognizing leadership's blind spot—the source of our thoughts and actions—and developing processes "to build the collective capacity to shift the inner place from where we operate" (Scharmer, 2018, p.10). The emphasis is on promoting a transition from ego-system awareness (silo view) to eco-system awareness (systems view). There are three main stages to the process, each with a particular focus and set of practices.

The initial stage is that of *sensing*, creating spaces for "suspension and wonder," a suspension of judgment, deep listening and the incorporation of other ways of seeing/perceiving the world and of understanding problems. The second movement is *presencing*, a combination of the words "presence" and "sensing" to denote a process of individual and collective connection with common purpose and future potential. Finally, there is the stage of *realizing*, in which the agents of the journey explore, as a group, possibilities for action, aiming at the co-construction of a shared future that wants to emerge (Scharmer, 2018).

Given the complexity of the guiding question of the MAPA Project, we realized we needed a methodology that could seize the sparks of the future, but also enable participants to visualize the system and perceive themselves as part of that system in order to co-create new narratives for it from within. The MAPA Social Innovation Lab took place over five consecutive days (August 12-16, 2019) from 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. every day. Save for August 14, the lab was held at Serviço Social do Comércio (SESC) facilities.

MAPA Program Schedule	
Day One	- creating a landing strip - understanding the MAPA starting point - opening up the collective experience of the Lab participants
Day Two	- delving deeper into understanding feminine and masculine values as a contemporary collective phenomenon - guest futurist presented: "Gender Identity, Where does the Future Point to?" - researcher and consultant presented: "The Feminine from an African Descendant Matrix" in counterpoint to the Eurocentric view of the theme - specialist in study of new masculinities presented discussions on gender from a masculine perspective - psychiatrist who pioneered in Brazil the work with transsexual people presented a scientific view on the studies of gender identity and sexual orientation
Day Three	journey to Rio Silveira Indigenous village to experience perspective on men/women, feminine/masculine through the Indigenous cosmovision.
Day Four	returned from the Rio Silveira Indigenous village to hear voices from the field and for sense-making, identifying emerging insights and preparing a draft of new narratives
Day Five	- dedicated to identity, to reflecting on what the week's experiences meant personally, professionally, and socially for each participant-leader - prototyping of next steps from a point of view applied to reality.

Figure 1: MAPA Program Schedule.

Holding a Space for Competing Narratives

The MAPA Social Innovation Lab experience built on the initial questions shaping the lab and expanded them, leading to the creation of multiple narratives around gender and gender values. In this section, we identify three key elements of the Lab process that led to this outcome and allowed multiple

narratives to emerge. Two of these principles—opening with vulnerability and group plurality/heterogeneity—were part of the process design. They are highlighted here because they were considered key conditions for the third principle, openness to multiple knowledge systems, to emerge spontaneously from the dynamics established by the group itself. As mentioned above, the comments shared here are drawn from the Sistematização and are shared with permission of the participants. Because gender identity and sexual orientation identity became a central theme of the lab, we share these identifiers. Participant names have been replaced with pseudonyms.

Opening with Vulnerability

The first principle, opening with vulnerability, was crucial for creating a bond with participants and facilitators. The MAPA Social Innovation Lab's guiding questions emerged from the resonance of Sbardelini's personal restlessness in the collective context: a reflection on what is feminine that she has carried throughout her life and that led her to project her questioning of social relations more broadly. As Sbardelini reported in an article for the Brazilian edition of Marie Claire magazine, where she was invited to talk about the MAPA Social Innovation Lab:

> The MAPA project is born out of a pain. From a wound associated with my feminine. When my mother became pregnant, she had a strong depression, which lasted until I was nine years old, which made her unable to be with me in the intensity that a child needed for bonding. This brought me the constant feeling of loneliness, abandonment, and not being loved. Later on, I understood that the wound in my story was also a collective wound, and one of the ways I found to dialogue with this pain was to start designing a project in which I could understand and help find solutions for being a woman in today's world (Sbardelini, 2019).

In the initial contacts to invite the lab participants, Sbardelini chose to speak openly about those points in her trajectory that had led her to reflect on the role of women in the world. MAPA participants connected with this in two regards. Like Sbardelini, many immediately recognized the importance of the proposed theme because it spoke to issues they deemed important and that merited urgent discussion. Second, Sbardelini's openness was seen as an invitation to build an empathic bond. Sbardelini's *acknowledgment of her own vulnerability* and the construction of the Lab's initial questions out of the *resonance of her individual vulnerability in the collective sphere* contributed to trust building. Already on the first day of lab activities, Sbardelini kicked off the lab summarizing the motivations for the process that she had shared with the participants. As recorded in the Sistematização document, this opening had an emotional tone. Sbardelini addressed a moment in her childhood when she knew for herself that what made her happy was to make others happy, and then a second feeling, which unfolds through her trajectory as a woman, an experience

from which she also inherited deep pain. The wound that forged her feminine side gave her the need to think of a project that worked with women as a collective (Sistematização, p.6).

This personal and human connection was fundamental because it inspired the participants' openness to the process from the recognition of their own places of pain. On the first day, when the participants introduced themselves in the plenary, their speeches reflected this openness. Aline, a White woman, explicitly recognized the identification with pain mentioned by Sbardelini:

> It was through entrepreneurship that I started my healing journey, allowing myself, forgiving myself for being a woman. (...) Also understanding that we have the same pains, I place myself at the disposal of the universe to try to help in this mission so that men and women can live together in peace (Aline).

Carlos, a Black man who works in the outskirts of São Paulo, added complexity to the pain associated with the imbalance between female and male values, adding the perspective of race and economic class:

> I connect romantically with everyone, but in practice, what moves me is to be alive, to be here, to be able to share. And what drives me, in fact, is life. This year is my 30th birthday, if I were to talk about a label, it is "bandido". The label issue has always bothered me, taking me out of my place. One of the reasons we are here, I believe, is that even labels need to be signified along with the narrative. When we talk about feminine and masculine, we already understand this gender barrier that we still have. We are learning to listen to each other, as men and as women, and all those who don't understand themselves in the body they inhabit (Carlos).

The presentation of the participants in their vulnerabilities, continuing the movement started by Sbardelini, was a fundamental aspect for the sensing stage (Scharmer, 2007), promoting the opening for the recognition of the other and the genuine listening to the different worldviews. As Camila, another participant, synthesized in an activity still on day one,

> We cannot build from scratch, we need to build from the pains that led us here, they are the ones that will lead us to a forward movement, of impulsion and reconstruction (Camilla, White, woman).

Opening with vulnerability also meant opening to vulnerability, which shaped the atmosphere or culture of the lab and helped create the conditions for multiple narratives to be spoken and heard. At the end of the first day, Joana, an artist and White woman, proposed to the group the importance of committing to a "first person" narrative. She reflected that "our narratives are being co-constructed more from a general narrative and less from an intimate narrative" and called on the group to let the "raw and naked construction of a personal

narrative" emerge. Opening with vulnerability legitimized that, since the beginning of the activities, the participants could bring their personal experiences to the discussions. This characteristic of the process accentuated the heterogeneity of the narratives and paved the way for the deepening of the discussions based on the recognition of the complexity of the issues raised and their impacts on different realities.

Group Plurality/Heterogeneity

As reinforced in the invitation and in the opening of the process, there was not just one pain, but pains, plural, to be acknowledged. Therefore, MAPA's social lab adopted the practice of intentionally choosing participants based on a second principle, that of *group plurality / heterogeneity*. This element was crucial to the setting up of the playing field: in order for the lab process to potentially transform social structures, different points of view had to be represented and expressed during the process. In addition to ensuring points of views from representatives in different fields, such as political change, environment, communication and culture, technology and innovation, social entrepreneurship, and education, we were keen on guaranteeing a true diversity of racial, gender, age, class, and socioeconomic social markers since social differences are structured by these markers and, therefore, the proposed discussion would be ineffective in the absence of such.

The representation of women was essential due to the motivation of the lab and the underrepresentation of women in leadership and decision making spaces (Gender Gap Report, 2018); the representation of Black people because they make up 53% of the Brazilian population, who also occupy few places of power and decision making (IBGE, 2015); the representation of Indigenous people to aggregate the knowledge of native peoples; and the representation of transgender people because they broaden the perspective of gender vision in Brazil, the country with the highest number of murders of transgender people in the world (Transgender Europe, 2021). Other groups considered relevant by the curators were not represented, such as people with disabilities and refugees, because, within the limit of the number of participants, they favored having more than one voice per group, especially from the most overlooked and undervalued groups in society.

There was also an attempt to minimize the power relations. This was manifest by the care taken to establish the necessary conditions for each leader's participation. For example, although there was no remuneration for participating in the lab, participants from low-income groups were consulted at the time of the invitation about the need to receive an allowance, since suspending their economic activities for five days could mean a significant reduction in their income and put their survival conditions at risk. This allowance made it possible for those in this situation to participate in the process and have their voices represented.

There was also a concern to avoid reinforcing possible contexts of domination that could derive from the professional positions occupied by the participants, which included leadership positions in recognized private and social institutions. To this end, as Sbardelini recalls, participants were initially asked not to define themselves through their job titles. One of the sponsor's representatives, for example, introduced herself saying: "I am from Natura, I work there in the areas of innovation, marketing and sustainability," deliberately omitting that she held a senior vice-presidential position.

Brazil is a socially diverse and complex country, so the objective of having different points of view represented was not, and could not be, to come up with a comprehensive representation of all existing social segments. Although we looked predominantly at pre-defined groups, the intent behind the search for plurality and heterogeneity was to set up a baseline of several worldviews and experiences woven together through radically different personal and professional contexts. The group's principle of heterogeneity pressed upon the MAPA Social Innovation Lab precisely to enable a field in which alliances, connections, and historical and cultural divergences could be made explicit, allowing the participants to be moved by and respond to whatever emerged. Through heterogeneity, the lab was dynamically ripe not only for the pursuit of cognitive knowledge, but—most importantly—for dramatizing the pluriverse of its constitution, what we call the *opening to multiple knowledge systems,* the third structuring principle of the MAPA Social Innovation Lab.

Opening to Multiple Knowledge Systems

Over the five-day immersion, participants learned of the several nuances inherent to many mobilizing issues, such as the concept of gender and the feminist movement, the interplay and tension among gender, race and class, the questions that pervade transgender identity, the perspective of masculinities and our relationship with nature, and also confronted the tensions surrounding such issues.

A turning point occurred on the second day of the lab. After the presentation of specialist Dr. Alexandre Saadeh, a psychiatrist who works with the transsexual population, the specialist guests who had been slotted to speak next sensed the discomfort of Rodrigo, a transsexual man, and relinquished spontaneously part of their lecture time so that the transsexual leaders would have the chance to be heard.

Rodrigo and Sabrina, a transgender woman, explained how problematic it was that they were not given an opportunity to talk about their own experiences and worldviews on the official lab agenda. Rodrigo began:

> It's just that I have been deeply bothered by the fact that you talk about us with me here and with Sabrina here. Even more after yesterday, when we talked about the importance of speaking in first person. Why tolerate our silence? Why tolerate us in the

margin? This seems like a small thing, but the consequences of this are fatal. When some people look at me, or at people like me, I wonder how they think, "will there be gender in the future?" But I go to the bathroom and people remind me that this gender exists. So, this future will only exist if we are alive, and it is difficult.

Sabrina emphasized the importance of listening to direct personal experiences to fulfill the lab's goal of building a new narrative from plural perspectives:

> The main point for me is that we are telling stories and we need to be careful. Not only to be careful that these stories are correct, but that they are also complete. (...) So, the story that would have been told here if it didn't have my presence and Rodrigo's would be a story that would have talked about the future, would have talked about institutions, but would not have had a first-hand view which is what we are trying to bring here. Concrete, tangible experiences, from people who experience this and not just people who have studied it from a neutral or academic point of view.

This emergent aspect of the process reinforces that a truly participatory process presupposes the right and ability of people to express themselves on issues and decisions that affect them and intend to disseminate knowledge about them (Bradbury, 2006). This pillar is important for liberating "the muted voices of those held down by class structures and neo-colonialism, by poverty, sexism, racism and homophobia" (Bradbury, 2006, p.10). Although the organizers of the lab were aware of this principle, the episode pointed out blind spots and allowed, in fact, the emergence of what we call the opening to multiple knowledge systems, for a few reasons.

Firstly, a cisgendernormative and heteronormative bias was identified that neither the lab organizers nor the other participants had identified or perceived as negative. Rodrigo's interjection and the subsequent opportunity given to express the pain that the situation had provoked and reinforced enabled other participants who had not initially been affected by the situation to recognize the oppression of cisgendernormative and heteronormative social roles, to recognize themselves as protagonists in such oppression, and to pull back the veil on their own privileges. On the fourth day, Roberta, a White woman, spoke about this feeling in a plenary report to the group:

> I still feel a lot of shame for being able, from day one, to access the amount of prejudice I still have inside me and the times I was completely complacent and omitted. My shame is because I always had a choice. Maybe my role here is this insignificance, and I think I owe it to all of you who have been insignificant and irrelevant in so many forums, so I think that's where I fit in.

Secondly, it was the group itself that autonomously reorganized the speaking spaces in conjunction with input from the guest speakers present; neither the

facilitators nor Sbardelini played any part. And it was not by chance that these guests who embraced Rodrigo's remarks were a Black woman, Gabriela, and a Black man, João. As Gabriela recalls, both recognized the importance of being able to raise one's voice as a way of claiming places of power since both work to claim and reclaim spaces of power in their daily activities and activism. Right at the beginning of his presentation, Gabriela emphasized:

> In many spaces, Black people, trans people, gays, lesbians are present, but not in all spaces are they given the floor. Speaking is an important process to build society, and while few can speak, society will always continue to be formatted by a few. We are talking about individual pains, but we are also talking about a collective that has suffered systematic violence, that has experienced a high feminicide rate, that makes Brazil the country that kills the most trans people and I find it worrying that this is not a *collective pain*.

João also highlighted the importance of including Rodrigo's and Sabrina's experiences in the ongoing process:

> We need to go beyond the impression that we need to overcome or ignore some things. some things can't be ignored or overcome. so if we use with or from maybe it's better. So, when we think about pains it is with those pains and not *beyond them*.

The emphasis on representativeness addressed by Gabriela and João allowed all lab participants to become aware of the elements that make up the very system that had provoked Rodrigo's discomfort. Once again, the group was able to experience the social microcosm in which subaltern groups develop their own strategies for occupying spaces of power and for offering mutual support.

 At the end of this day, the lab participants reported in plenary their perceptions and feelings about the episode and described the new dimensions that the episode brought to the recognition of individual and collective pains: "We are talking about the first person, but no one has commented whether it is the first person singular or plural," said Marcos, a heterosexual White man. José, a gay White man emphasized the change of perspective that the experience brought to the discussions:

> We need to understand that there are discussions about coexistence and there are also discussions about survival in this process. As long as we need to talk about the level of survival of certain groups, which I think is the issue of pain, then we cannot give ourselves the privilege of discussing only coexistence (José).

It bears noting that, though the participants had taken a first step in this direction following Sbardelini's very personal opening talk, it was only after the powerful statements made by Rodrigo, Gabriela, João, and others that it dawned on participants that their personal pains, representing collective pains, could in fact be heard. It was only at this point that the most privileged of the group

began to force themselves to recognize their own blinders, to face a short-sightedness that had thus far not been brought to their attention (and certainly not in such raw expression), and to accept that unintentional violence was committed by virtue of their privilege.

Co-Creating New Narratives

Questioning the world and our model of society based on the question "What are feminine and masculine values in the 21st century?" showed us that it is impossible to make a direct leap towards one new narrative. Rather, we need to open to a multitude of narratives that take into consideration nature, various social causes, struggles, corporeities, historicities, cultures and experiences that coexist in this same time and space. To build multiple narratives it is crucial and urgent that we acknowledge and denounce the many forms of domination and construction of inequalities that act and impact on our personal and collective relationships; only then might we start to draw and live and tell stories focused on the dignity of each and every person and/or collective. As Fricke (as cited in Brydon-Miller et al., 2003) proposes, this was a process that sought to stimulate personal commitment, with individuals being subjects of their history and the social contexts on which they depend. Inevitably, this became a multidimensional process that welcomed struggle and uncertainty, which makes action research more energizing and full of possibilities (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003). Through the MAPA process, the group built on and deepened the complexity of the initial questions raised concerning masculine and feminine values, connecting them with the power relations related to gender, race, social class, economic class, and humankind's relationship with nature. Instead of co-creating a single narrative for the 21st century in response to the initial questions, the lab led to the group's identifying the need for multiple narratives.

The MAPA Project has also shown that, in this moment of anguish and uncertainty aggravated by Covid-19, a process of deep-diving into our dark depths and unknown shadows as individuals and as a society is critical so that solutions can be co-designed based on recognition of privilege and suspension of prejudice and judgments. It is a search, as Dussel (2014) proposed, for a change of attitude toward the demands of life on Earth, forging a space in which cultural differences are put into relationship dialogically and creatively to transform the structures of domination and power. The process implemented by the MAPA Social Innovation Lab, based on carefully cultivated spaces, intentional design, with the needed time for preparation and the curation of the participant group (both the heterogeneity and the individuals' positions as leaders), pointed out, as presented, important elements for this. Some blindingly clear lessons were learned: the process must be collective and heterogeneous; conflict and acknowledging vulnerabilities are the paths to structuring a network of care and respect; and we must build together whatever we wish to share as a value.

As Bradbury (2006) pointed out, action research, as an emergent, evolving, and educational process, urges us to observe its practical and lasting

consequences. After the five days of collective immersion, MAPA participants spontaneously connected through a group messaging app, naming the group called MAPA Lovers, and indicated their willingness to build a network of dialogue, solidarity, and strategic agency based on the supportive community that had been formed by the shared MAPA Project experience. The group remains active at the time of writing. In addition, the group's reflections related to power relations of gender, race, social class, economic class, and humankind's relationship with nature were systematized by Suindara in the open-access publication upon which the findings in this paper are based, and in a documentary with the record of the process (both available at projetomapa.net). Finally, in 2021, Suindara developed an online course, via WhatsApp, a literacy in ten themes that emerged from the Lab, called MAPA E-learning: Narratives for the 21st Century. The course is aimed at all hierarchical levels of companies and organizations, and relied on the participation of eight leaders who were in the lab as presenters and guest experts in the classes. The goal is to expand the reach of the knowledge field produced in the MAPA lab and the positive impact.

A new future is emerging, and the MAPA experience convinces us that this desirable future can be built with many hands, be spread by many different voices, and be based on freedom, empathy, compassion, respect, plurality, and affection.

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