How Development Aid Changes Societies: Disciplining Mozambique through Structural Adjustment

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Abstract

Sociological literature on risk draws attention to two aspects. First, it argues that risk, especially technological risk, is the dominant feature of modern society. The work of Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Scott Lash has been central to this understanding. Second, while this literature is informed by a deep mistrust towards the claims of science it suggests, as a way out or, at any rate, as a way of coming to terms with risk, a reflexive attitude. This has been nicely summed up by Ulrich Beck with his call for the re-invention of politics. To put it simply, Beck argues that citizens must challenge the authority of politicians and scientists in defining what an acceptable risk is.

The identification of risk with modern society articulates two ideas which are central to this contribution. First of all, it reduces the notion of risk to “technological risk”. This is, in its turn, premised on the assumption that risk is the result of the development of (scientific) knowledge. In this sense, then, risk is an unknown phenomenon in non-modern societies. What these societies have is uncertainty. Secondly, developing countries are assumed to be non-modern societies which are the passive victims of risks generated in and exported from modern societies. Accordingly, research has tended to concentrate on how these countries are affected by such risks as pollution, inappropriate technology as well as vulnerability to natural disasters.

Debate in sociology is not monolithic, however. Niklas Luhmann’s path-breaking distinction between danger and risk, where the former refers to phenomena that occurs without conscious human agency and the latter to conscious, calculated human agency, provides a theoretical framework to develop critical analytical instruments to address the problem of risk. As far as social scientific assumptions regarding developing countries are concerned, Luhmann’s distinction allows one to question the idea that developing countries do not know risks, only uncertainty. The production of risks can, indeed, be seen as an anthropological constant. Everyday life is made possible by the ability of individuals to translate danger into risk, i.e. taking calculated risks. This is suggested to us by the phenomenological distinction between the non-problematic and problematic areas of everyday life. The transition from the former to the latter is marked by the process of translating danger into risk.

In this sense, then, it is not that risks are not present in developing societies. In fact, to the extent that uncertainty is prevalent in these societies risks have the function of reducing it. Added to this, however, these societies are faced with risks produced elsewhere and brought to them by processes of transnationality. Such risks come as danger, in Luhmann’s understanding, which has to be locally domesticated. The vulnerability of these societies is associated with their inability to domesticate such dangers.

These thoughts bear directly on the manner in which development aid is conducted in Africa. Indeed, any attempt at identifying ways out of the impasse into which African development seems to have manouvred itself into must start from an analysis of the way in which development aid, through its intervention into local contexts, actually changes societies. There are two aspects worth a closer attention. On the one hand, I would like to articulate the notion of development aid with the sociological concept of risk. Drawing from literature on transnational risks I will attempt a genealogy of development aid along these lines drawing from the nature of the relationship between the industrially advanced North and the developing South. I will describe and analyse how development aid utilises insurance
language to define developing countries as a “risk” to be contained. Due to their poverty, resentment and political instability these countries are seen as sources of danger to the industrialised North. Developing aid has the important function of translating these dangers into risks for the industrialised North and in so doing – through development policy – it generates dangers that developing societies are unable to domesticate. More often than not, the failure of developing countries to implement development policies successfully can be explained by the fact that such policies often appear as dangers which they are unable to tame. They create problems of their own. On the other hand, it appears necessary to describe and analyse the ways in which local communities in developing societies address the uncertainty created by development policy and, thereby, produce ever new situations that are hardly captured by the worldview underlying international development discourse. On the basis of empirical work I have been carrying out in Mozambique, I want to show that addressing uncertainty involves the conscious production of risks. I will also endeavour to show the limits of this production with particular reference to the constraining effect transnational risks, in the form of structural adjustment prescriptions, have on national governments in Africa.

My contribution, therefore, aims basically at taking a fresh look at the very concept of development. I want to suggest that there is a lot to be gained conceptually from rejecting the idea that development, as practised now, is about improving people’s livelihood. My case study will show how development changes societies in ways that often run counter to its purported aims. Only by seeing development as that it really is, namely an agent of radical and overwhelming social change, can we begin to understand the impasse in African development.

1. How natives misbehave

A Portuguese sociologist and lawyer, Boaventura de Sousa Santos, once remarked that the social sciences at the moment are faced with the problem of producing a critical social science (1999). This is reminiscent of Habermas’ observation to the same effect in his passionate plea for a communicative dimension to social action. Sousa Santos appeals to social scientists not to be content with researching what exists, but also to seek to describe, reconstruct and rehabilitate what does not exist because it cannot or it should not exist. He distinguishes two forms of knowledge, namely regulatory-knowledge and emancipatory-knowledge\(^1\). The former, which is made possible by the ideological need to produce order is, in his opinion, typical of modernity, while the latter, which draws its legitimation from an ethics of solidarity, provides elements for a truly emancipatory epistemology. These remarks should set the scene for a critical reflection on the role of development aid in the production of non-Western countries – particularly African – as social realities.

In Mozambique, the country on which I will concentrate in this reflection, particularly with reference to structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), the most intriguing problem\(^2\) faced by the social sciences is not so much the inability to produce a critical theory, but rather its uselessness. Sousa Santos suggests that what is lacking at the beginning of a new millenium is a totalizing alternative project which might usher in a critical theory. I believe that even more important than that is the lack of a critical space which might give coherence and legitimacy to the many critical remarks that are levelled upon the prevailing epistemological and political order. In a sense, therefore, it is not so much the absence of a critical theory that is a problem,

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1 In the Portuguese original he calls them „conhecimento-regulação” and „conhecimento-emancipação”, respectively.
2 This is how Sousa Santos describes the absence of a critical social theory; he says that absence is the most intriguing thing about contemporary social science.
but rather the difficulty of making plausible any project which seeks to locate reality beyond what is given. Even at the risk of inviting Hacking’s ire (1999) I suggest that plausibility is a social construct to the extent that its existence is a function of social, economic, cultural and political interests. Such conditions establish the limits of coherence and understanding which any social phenomenon needs in order to impose itself as real.

In the critical comments made against SAP in Mozambique and elsewhere in Africa there is no absence of alternative visions of totalizing social projects. What is absent are the normative contexts within which the totalitarian violence of SAP could be seen as an aggressive negation of other realities and, above all, as an incentive to action.

One could suggest, following the French sociologist, Jean Baudrillard, that the reality produced by structural adjustment is a simulacrum: it is something that is produced as a representation of something that does not exist. It is an illusion in Baudrillard’s strict sense, but also in the much broader sense of Nietzsche, i.e. knowledge that is functional to the will to power. Having come this far we should return to Sousa Santos’ conceptual distinction and argue that, as we shall see further below, structural adjustment is based on regulatory-knowledge which uses a discursive horizon that is deeply ingrained in emancipatory-knowledge. In other words, the epistemological project of structural adjustment aims essentially at producing a clearly defined normative and ontological order. In this sense, then, structural adjustment is directly implicated in regulatory-knowledge. At the same time, however, the epistemological project which legitimates development aid creates the conditions for its reproduction through the use of a social discourse full of emancipatory references such as “social dimension”, “social capital”, “participation”, “ownership”, “capacity-building”, “alleviation”, etc. Such a discourse makes all forms of criticism against the order of things innocuous.

This paper is precisely about these two moments, namely the production and legitimization of an illusion. The illusion in question is Mozambique in the context of structural adjustment. My point is that within the framework of structural adjustment Mozambique is not an essential ontological category. It is rather an artefact of external intervention into a local social space. This does not make Mozambique less real. On the contrary, its artificiality is constitutive of its reality. To put it differently, Mozambique is the product of a will to power which in the process of constructing reality also creates the conditions that are necessary for its reproduction. This view draws from Foucault’s notion of “governmentality” (see Foucault 1991 and Burchell et al 1991).

The central analytical concept in this entreprise is “disciplining”. Drawing from Foucault, who understood power as a relational concept, I am interested in evoking the concept of power in articulation with the problem of transforming subjects into objects. The anlytical pertinence of this concept does not end at the moment when we can observe its exercise. In fact, it is precisely in its effects, in the material and social conditions which it creates in order to reproduce itself that it is possible to appreciate with even more analytical gain the extent to which it is a useful concept. Thus, I am interested in casting a look at the ways in which external interventions in local social contexts within the framework of structural adjustment transform subjects into objects, i.e. how a whole society, a whole political system, an economy cease to ontological categories in their own right with their own agendas to be constituted into objects for the intervention of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. I call this process “normalisation” with reference to the analytical framework suggested by the notion of “governmentality”4.

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3 I use this notion with the same meaning Maffesoli gives it in his book of the same name (Maffesoli 1994).
4 Ian Hacking (1990) applies the notion of normalisation with a meaning close to how I wish to use it. He identifies normalisation with the taming of chance. In his view the taming of chance occurred at the same time as the „making up of people“ (ebd.:3).
This concept of “normalisation” describes the process through which social actors act in line with a norm established by those who hold power and, in so doing, internalise the structures of regulation and authority that are imposed on them from outside. Through normalisation power appears to the individual as something worth striving for. The point is that structural adjustment programs, as instruments of a will to power of a totalitarian neo-liberal project, frame the normalisation process within which the government of Mozambique voluntarily submits itself to the power of Bretton Woods institutions without being aware of it.

2. The disciplinary functions of structural adjustment

Among the “many things that deserve a critique” the structural adjustment programmes of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund figure prominently. No analysis of the condition of the African continent is complete without a look into the role of the Bretton Woods institutions. While such a look would be critical and mostly negative it still would show the importance which the policies of these institutions play in the constitution of the economic, political and social reality of the societies in which they operate. This importance is not limited to interventions at the level of the State. It also encompasses the much lower levels, especially the level of everyday-life, where the effects of macro-economic interventions are felt. Indeed, it is on this level that higher-level interventions are translated into practice, domesticated and stabilised in the way in which individuals and social groups strive to make everyday-life predictable. It is in everyday-life, to borrow a phenomenological concept, that the highly problematic world of structural adjustment is integrated into the non-problematic world of everyday-life. There it is taken for granted.

In fact, what makes structural adjustment relevant for the constitution of the reality of African countries is precisely its overwhelming ability to destabilize everyday-life. It is the way in which it imposes itself on the social horizon as the sole source of problems in need of a solution. Fully saturated with problems, interests and cleavages which reflect the priorities of structural adjustment the resulting social reality is a bastard reality, the expression of a totalitarian vision which legitimates itself through an emancipatory discourse.

Reflection on structural adjustment in Africa has tended to emphasize its immediate material consequences (see Simsa’a 1998, Riddell 1992, Mlambo 1993, Cheru 1995, Sahn et al 1997, Carmody 1998, Konadu-Agyemang 1998). This reflection takes its cue from a critique of the economic and political rationality underlying such programs (see in this respect Gibbon 1996, Harvey 1996). One criticizes, above all, the neo-liberal model on which such programs are based, one deposes the ascendancy of the so-called “Washington consensus” and one regrets the absence of alternatives (Green et al 1994, Please 1992).

In the specific case of Mozambique one criticizes the Washington Consensus (Abrahamsson 1995), but also the contradictions of the economic model such as in the case of the famous cashew-nut issue and its perverse effects on the political and social stability of the country. Joseph Hanlon’s work is, in this respect, a compulsory reference, for it articulates a special

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5 Again I am drawing from Sousa Santos who wonders why it is so difficult to produce a critical theory “when there is so much to criticize”.
6 Careless readers might be tempted to interpret this paper as being apologetic to Mozambique. I happen to think that the responsibility for Africa’s problems in general and for Mozambique’s, in particular, say, 95%, lie squarely at Africans’ and Mozambicans’ feet. This paper is about the remaining 5%.
7 For an account of this concept see the special issue of the International Social Science Journal (2000).
8 In the early nineties the World Bank Office in Maputo, Mozambique’s capital city, forced the government to stop subsidising the cashew-nut industry. The Bank argued that Mozambique stood to gain from exporting raw cashew-nuts to India. The government of Mozambique reluctantly accepted the Bank’s advice only to learn, a few years later, from a study commissioned by the Bank itself that the policy was wrong! (Details of this controversy can be read in Pitcher 2002)
sensibility to the history of the country with an incredulous attitude towards neo-liberal discourse (especially Hanlon 1991). While the graphic description of the social impact of structural adjustment may indeed illustrate its negative side and may trigger off what Sousa Santos would call a “critical theory”, i.e. a theory that writes the ethnography of what is forbidden, ignored and oppressed, critical reflection on the World Bank and the IMF ignores what is more insidious in structural adjustment: the totalitarian neo-liberal project. Critiques wander off into details while at the same time accepting the terms of analysis imposed by the Washington Consensus. In fact, the mere rejection of the articles of faith of the Washington Consensus, namely trade, financial and exchange rate liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation does not constitute a significant challenge. It merely recoups the very restricted terms and ideologically tainted ways through which structural adjustment insinuates itself in people’s everyday-life and misses the much more global project which frames and gives coherence to each one of the elements that are criticised. It is timely and plausible to criticise the World Bank for its misguided cashew-nut policies in Mozambique. But even more pressing is a critical reflection which articulates deregulation and privatisation as well as the superstitious belief in the invisible hand of the market with a broader project of inventing a reality whose sole raison d’être is none other than the social reproduction of the Washington Consensus. If one should strive for a critical theory it appears that one should concentrate efforts against the narcissism of neo-liberal practices and discourses, as in pointing to and unmasking its Orwellean designs it may be possible to recover alternatives. This is the reason why this paper does not tread the same beaten paths of criticising the material consequences of structural adjustment. Instead, it places the project itself at the centre, i.e. that which gives coherence to what is criticised. Such a project neither gains concrete forms nor does it materialise itself in the implemention of liberalisation policies. Rather, it acquires shape and visibility in the representation of what makes Mozambique, and, for that matter, any African country, possible. In other words, the totalitarian violence of the neo-liberal project, to use Maffesoli’s useful expression, is to be found in the colonisation of native spaces and bodies as well as in the imposition of limits to the articulation of alternative visions. The totalitarian neo-liberal project gains shape in the silences which it imposes, in its ability to make the longings, projects and expectations of the Other only articulate within the bounds of the Washington Consensus. The analysis will therefore focus on the disciplinarisation of Mozambique with reference to the process of normalisation. The main feature of this process is the resort to technologies of power which bear on what I want to call (a) the invention of actors, institutions and, generally, (b) the social construction of Mozambique

3. Normalisation

Mozambique joined the IMF in 1984, but introduced its SAP in 1987. The immediate reason for joining the Fund was an economic crisis that the country began to feel in a painful way in the eighties. This crisis manifested itself in several ways. On the one hand, it was manifested in the inability of the national economy to meet the needs of the internal market and, on the

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9 Unlike Michael Lynch (2001), who in his review of Hacking’s „The Social Construction of What?” (1990) suggests that the latter somehow is fundamentally opposed to constructivism – he writes, for example, that Hacking vacillates between ambivalence and indifference (p.241) – I see Hacking’s statement as a useful clarification of the notion of social construction. Indeed, his call for a specification of the sense in which the notion is used in a given context is as welcome as are the implications he draws, namely (a) that the construct is bad and (b) that the world would be a better place without it (1999:6). I take up his point in arguing that with SAP we are witnessing the social construction of Mozambique. I think the ensuing construct is bad and we could do without it. My analysis is deeply normative.
other, in the inability of the State to meet its international financial obligations. The causes of
of the Mozambican economic crisis are the stuff debates on the feasibility of eccentric
projects of economic emancipation (see Hanlon 1984, Saul 1985) are made of. When the
country became independent in 1975 the new government, with a Marxist-Leninist
persuasion, chose scientific socialism as the way to development. In economic terms the
socialist option translated into the introduction of a planned economy and the nationalisation
of companies and services. While the jury is still out on whether the nationalisation policies
were contingent or part and parcel of Frelimo’s revolutionary project and on whether, given
Mozambique’s colonial heritage, the country had really any alternatives to the centralisation
of economic decision-making, there seems to be consensus on the role such an option played
in the crisis that brought the country to its knees (see Cahen 1987). In addition, one should
mention political factors such as South Africa’s war of destabilisation against Mozambique as
well as the protracted and bloody civil war which brought the country to a standstill over a
period of 16 years (see Andersson 1992; Finnegan 1992; Gersony 1988).

From a sociological point of view it is extremely difficult to characterize Mozambique before
the introduction of SAP. This is because any attempt at describing Mozambique then will
resort to a linguistic repertoire which actually reconstructs reality in a biased manner. Indeed,
the choice is between telling the story of SAP from the point of view of the Bretton Woods
institutions or from the point of view of its critics. In the first case what happened before the
introduction of SAP might be described as economic irresponsibility and political
irrationality. I will come back to this issue. In the second case, however, one might tell the
story of a daring project of political and economic emancipation which was violently and
rudely destroyed by an international financial and economic conspiracy to deliver the country
to the neo-liberal fanaticism of the New Right (see, for instance, Hanlon 1991,
Abrahammsson and Anders 1995).

So where should the story begin? Since it is so difficult to tell the story from the beginning we
might do worse than telling it from its continuation. In other words, it might be sensible to tell
the story from the moment when Mozambique began to be disciplined. Disciplining consists
of several elements. As indicated above, these elements are part of what I call normalisation.
Each one of those elements is a pillar under the neo-liberal totalitarian project. The logic
behind such a project is the transformation of Mozambican bodies into objects of power, i.e.
the re-invention of the country as a local space for external intervention. In Foucault’s
language we are dealing with technologies of power which, in this instance, are institutionally
framed by SAP. In fact, more than a programme that aims at correcting structural economic
imbalance, SAP is above all a project of normalisation in the most profound sense. It
establishes the norms of conduct which guide the behaviour of the individuals in question.
The invention of actors and the visibility of the country are the main elements of disciplining.
Through them the World Bank and the IMF are able to produce the ideal type of a social actor
and social institutions which are the foundation stone for the construction of a new reality. It
is on the basis of this central axis that the normalisation of knowledge on the country will
occur, a condition which is necessary for the institutional reproduction of the World Bank and
the IMF. The conspiracy between, on the one hand, the invention of actors and the visibility
of the country and, on the other, the rationalisation of knowledge on the country produce
perverse effects which manifest themselves in the form of trivialisation of politics and the
economic mystification of the country.\footnote{I have written on the trivialisation of politics (Macamo 1999, 2002)}

3. 1 The invention of actors
Sociology, through its concept of socialisation, teaches us that the existence and maintenance of a social order depend on the functionability of certain institutional and normative mechanisms. According to Parsons’ functionalist sociology social systems maintain and reproduce themselves on the basis of the work of certain institutions such as the family and the school. Marxist sociology, especially the schools which engage with the concepts of hegemony and ideology, accepts this functional view of society. Its dissent consists in the introduction of conflict into the perspective. The argument then is that socialisation is functional to the extent that it legitimates relations of production.

In the immediate post-colonial period the ideal of public service in Mozambique was subordinated to the dominant political ethic: serving the people. Civil servants had to be altruistic and honest, they had to respect public goods and seek political and not material reward for their efforts, they had to be morally upright. In a nutshell, civil servants had to be righteous in every respect. Many observers do pass a certificate of moral cleanliness to the government of Frelimo (see Hanlon 1991). Such cleanliness was not only conditioned by the adopted ideological orientation. It was also related to the strong influence of Protestantism on Mozambican nationalism (see Cruz e Silva 1996). The flames of this Protestantism were not only fanned by the rejection of exploitation of man by man but also by a strong aversion to moral degeneration which, in the eyes of the nationalists, Portuguese colonialism had brought into the country. Indeed, Samora Machel’s early political speeches – he was Mozambique’s first President – emphasize ethical issues. In nearly all the speeches he delivered on his triumphal journey from the North to the South of Mozambique to proclaim the independence of the country in 1975 it is not so much capitalist exploitation that worries him, but rather moral degeneration in urban areas.

While this public service ideal was challenged on many occasions – especially in everyday-life in the form of what James Scott labelled as “the weapons of the weak” – its assertion was part of the hegemonic project of the powerholders. In fact, it was through the public condemnation and repression of deviance that the revolutionary project legitimated itself. One of the most important inventions of the poscolonial powerholders was a character named “Xiconhoca”11. It was the antithesis of the “new man”, the revolutionary ideal. Xiconhoca’s most important characteristic was not so much his hostility to the revolution as his doubtful moral conduct, which was thought capable of undermining the whole project of social transformation.

While in the immediate aftermath of independence “Xiconhoca” was a strawman that was functional to the image of the “new man” which the new regime wanted to impose, with the worsening economic situation in the eighties this nemesis of the revolution began to acquire real contours in public life. The ideal of public service and integrity was questioned by the civil service, the top echelons of which started laying claims to privileges similar to those enjoyed by the members of the nomenklatura. At the time, such claims were severely criticised both by the political establishment as well as attentive observers. The general tone of such criticisms was Marxist in orientation. It saw those claims as the assertion of bourgeois values which were bad for the revolution (Hanlon 1984, Saul 1985). To put it differently, the problem was seen in structural terms. Indeed, the emergence of the so-called neo-bourgeois tendencies was seen as a result of the party’s relaxation of its leading role in society. The party reacted by increasing repression, particularly with the reintroduction of corporal punishment, the introduction of capital punishment and, generally, the increase in prison terms for so-called economic and political crimes.

Since the problem had to do with the corrosion of the ideal of public service and less with ideological orientation repression did not have a significant impact on general behaviour. And since the problems faced by the country were essentially economic, and therefore technical,

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11 This was a cartoon character which appeared in every official publication caricaturing the „enemies of the revolution“.
the dependence of the party on the technical expertise of the civil service made the small cultural revolution which Frelimo initiated in response to the crisis of its own system unviable. The Bretton Woods institution further encouraged the corrosion of the ideal of public service. As a matter of fact, SAP also had its own ideal of public service. In contrast, however, this public service was not geared towards fulfilling the goal of a socialist society, but it was rather anchored in an essentialist view of human nature. This view drew ideologically from the neo-liberal notion of homo economicus.

The accompanying ethics to the neo-liberal essentialist view of human nature replaced whatever was left of revolutionary altruism with the individualism and competitive spirit that were necessary to set free the entreprising energies held so long in check by the revolutionary ideal. This was the context within which SAP, with all its institutional apparatus of incentives, emoluments as well as the introduction of an ethics of meritocracy, established a new profile of public service as a norm. Frelimo’s “new man” gave way to SAP’s “homo economicus”.

There are interesting parallels between Frelimo’s and Bretton Woods’ ideal of public service. Both were characterised by integrity and public service for the sake of political goals. The fulfillment of this ideal, however, became hostage to the institutional context within which both ideologies operated. Thus, while Frelimo’s “new man” had to choose between the altruism propagated by the revolution and his natural preservation instinct, neo-liberal “homo economicus” was faced with the choice between the literal maximisation of his own benefits and the acceptance of the sacrifices which were necessary to restructure the economy. In both cases the normative context within which social actors operated was tempting. In the case of Frelimo the nomenclatura-system upon which the distribution and exercise of power was based created favourable conditions for its abuse. In the case of SAP it is the revolution of rising expectations which creates an environment favourable to corruption.

Generally speaking, SAP creates conditions for the emergence, legitimation and sedimentation of a new type of social actor. These conditions are subjective and structural. They are subjective to the extent that they give indirect legitimacy to individualism. They are seen by social actors as an opportunity to emancipate themselves from the social demands that are made on them. At the same time, however, these conditions are structural to the extent that the rolling back of the State and the pauperisation that SAP means to a lot of people increases the pressure on traditional social networks.

3.2 The visibility of the country

Disciplinary power is based on panoptical power. The subject of power must be opaque, that is it must visible from outside and blind inside. In his most recent book James Scott (1998) gives the State forms of seeing which are the basis upon which it establishes its upper-hand over society. To this end, States use standardisation and uniformisation to make society visible at the same time as they regulate it. SAP also consists of standardising and uniformising elements. Through them countries are rendered visible to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These elements are carried into the countries in question in the form of what is euphemistically called “capacity building”. These are bureaucratic reforms the main manifest function of which is to render the State efficient and functional. In reality, however, the latent function of “capacity building” rests on the possibility of rendering the country transparent to Bretton Woods institutions.

Indeed, one of the main priorities of any SAP is acquiring the ability to apprehend a country in numbers. In other words, the success of SAP depends on whether it can quantify a country. In Mozambique a lot of energy was spent in the modernisation of the systems of collection and treatment of statistical data. The reality of the country was reduced to numbers. Already in the

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12 Theodore Porter has, to my knowledge, provided the most incisive critique of the role of numbers in science and public life (Porter 1995).
colonial period the process of making the colonial State stable had largely depended on the quantification of society. The General Directorate for Native Services\textsuperscript{13}, for example, kept records of all indigenous authorities. These records did not only have the names of the headmen, but also, and fundamentally, the number of inhabitants of both sexes, the number of huts and cattle (all types). Counting, as an instrument of power, has a long tradition behind it (see particularly Hacking 1990 and Porter 1995).

Since the introduction of SAP Mozambique has been improving its ability to sum itself up in numbers through the sophistication of its statistical means and the inclusion of an increasingly larger number of variables into the definition of what the reality of the country is. The reduction of the country to numbers does not only meet the need of providing more systematic information for better intervention. It also allows these institutions to keep their cold attitude towards the social impact of their policies. Numbers are cold, factual, they do not carry emotions. When suffering and happiness, poverty and affluence, famine and abundance, employment and unemployment are reduced to numbers, percentages, proportions, trends and frequencies they become the same thing. They are just numbers.

Michel Foucault identifies the emergence of a new form of bio-politics with the growing ability of the State to count its resources. Those resources range from the human potential all the way to the natural and material potential of a given territory. As a matter of fact, the reduction of a territory to numbers, to statistics, constitutes one of the most efficient, and pernicious, ways of social regulation. On the other hand, the reduction is also a way of making reality visible in a certain manner. Thus, reducing Mozambique to numbers does not only make the work of the World Bank and the IMF easy. It also allows this reality to be classified according to pre-determined ways. It is on the basis of such a classification that the IMF and the World Bank can plan their intervention. In other words, gross domestic product does not only reveal the weakness or vigour of the Mozambican economy, but also where the country is to be located on the hierarchy of countries and what kind of advice and recipes it needs.

This process of producing the visibility of the country is at the root of the tendency of these institutions to ignore the specific conditions of a country. In spite of Mozambican protests the World Bank and the IMF were never interested in knowing, for example, why the country was unable to honour its external financial commitments. The civil war, military and economic destabilization by South Africa as well as the international economic order have never been computed into the models these institutions apply. The reason why this is the case has less to do with any pre-conceived ideological attitude, but rather more to do with their established bureaucratic procedures which consist in classifying, categorizing and dishing out universal recipes. The world, in the neo-liberal vision, is a simple place in which, strangely enough, not social action is important, but rather the ability to model it.

3.3 The rationalization of knowledge of the country

Through the invention of social actors and institutions SAP acts directly on the country. It moulds the country to its strategic and functional interests. Reduced to numbers and run by actors with the ideal profile the country becomes real to the World Bank and the IMF. This shape manifests itself through the process whereby knowledge about the country is rationalized inside these institutions. Experts, special desks, programmes and dossiers on Mozambique emerge giving reality to the numbers which the National Directorate for Statistics, the Centre for Investment Promotion, the Centre for the Promotion of Exports, etc. feverishly bring forth in their quantificatory drive.

\textsuperscript{13} This was the colonial State institution in charge of native affairs according to the colonial classification of the population in „assimilated“ (Portuguese or Africans who met certain official requirements) and „natives“ (Africans who were not as yet „civilized“).
Since the introduction of SAP the World Bank and the IMF have established themselves as the most important and reliable sources of objective knowledge on Mozambique. Their press desks produce up to date and detailed information on the various sectors of social, political and economic life of the country and their experts assert themselves as the people who really know Mozambique. To the extent that this is the case not only does the processing of information on Mozambique fulfills the goal of making Mozambique real to these institutions, but it also allows them to impose their view of Mozambique as the only valid one. The knowledge held by the World Bank and the IMF constitutes itself into some form of official discourse, i.e. into the only valid and reliable source of information on the true reality of the country.

4. SAP and Risk Strategies

The theoretical perspective that is informed by the notion of governmentality makes a political and analytical assumption which identifies the stage of modernity in which we live with the triumph of neo-liberal discourse (Dean 1997). This neo-liberal discourse translates itself into practices of domination which have found in the World Bank and the IMF, through their SAP, an ideal tool. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000) have declared imperialism dead and finished. In its place they see the “empire”, a new form of global sovereignty, whose logic of domination is bio-politics, that is the control of life. Hardt and Negri draw from Foucault. The “empire”, this new form of global sovereignty, is a totalizing project which is coherently articulated by neo-liberal assumptions, especially in its concrete manifestations in developing countries.

Neo-liberalism, as a technology of domination, asserts itself through its ability to represent reality. This representation is made possible by the definition of a discursive field within which the exercise of power is rationalized. In other words, neo-liberal discourse defines concepts, specifies objects and borders and produces arguments and justifications (see Lemke 2001) which are the basis upon which the ability of governments to deal with problems rests. Discourse structures forms of intervention in the fields which have been defined to that end. This structuring, which presents itself in the form of agencies, procedures, constitutions, legal forms, etc., produces, as it were, the object and subject of the management of political rationality. In his analysis of two specific forms of neo-liberalism Michel Foucault establishes an unbroken line from German Ordo-liberalism which led to the social market economy (1991) and the Chicago School’s neo-liberalism which led to the superimposition of the economic sphere over all others 14.

Each one of these forms of liberalism had a specific form of governmentality. In the Ordo-liberal form of the Freiburg School the dominant idea was that capitalism was an institutional economic entity which had constituted itself historically. For this reason it was seen as being open to political intervention. In the liberalism of the Chicago School, however, the dominant idea is that social regulation should be based on the “homo economicus” ideal. This is the only legitimate way of political intervention (see Foucault 1988). As a result of this capitalism is seen as having two historical stages. In the first stage social policy plays a much bigger role and has the function of creating the historical and social conditions that are necessary for the emergence and functioning of the market. In the second stage social policy is geared towards making responsible individuals.

The creation of social and historical conditions for the emergence of the market took a very peculiar form, namely the socialisation of risk through the creation, development and institutionalisation of the welfare state (see Ewald 1991, 1993). Making individuals responsible, however, took a different path, namely it depended on the reform of the welfare

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14 See also Rose and Miller 1992, O’Malley 1996.
state along lines known as “new prudentialism” (see Dean 1997, Rose 1996). Unlike the
socialisation of risk the “new prudentialism” produces society by making aggregate estimates
of ideal wellbeing standards for identifiable population groups and also by categorizing
certain marginal groups as posing high risks to society at large and therefore requiring being
kept at a distance.
My point in this paper is that the neo-liberal totalitarian project has transferred these risk
strategies, namely epidemiological risk and case-management risk (see Dean 1997 for a fuller
exposition of the concepts) to the international arena. Indeed, relations between the centre and
the periphery are dominated by neo-liberal discursive practices which look at the periphery
like at a vast terrain of disorder and chaos which threaten the integrity of the centre. This
disorder and chaos need to be tamed and made predictable. The instrument that is used to
achieve that goal consists of the risk strategies mentioned above. The World Bank and the
IMF are in this sense footsoldiers who, through SAP, are unleashed on to the world in the
service of a large neo-liberal masterplan to replace imperialism with the empire.
SAPs are ways of taming disorder and risk. Often SAPs are criticized for ignoring the
specificities of the countries into which they intervene, but if one looks closely one will
realise that this is related to the logic of domestication of disorder. In fact, SAPs do not
intervene into a specific country. They intervene into an idea which is consistent with a
specific type of country. This is the basis upon which they intervene.
We can illustrate this with Mozambique. The categories that made the country visible to the
World Bank and the IMF were not its particular history, i.e. Portuguese colonial rule, armed
liberation struggle, socialist post-colonial experiment, civil war, destabilisation, natural
disasters, etc. The categories that made it visible were: command economy, corrupt
politicians, highly indebted poor country, etc. Each one of these categories is like a model
which does not define a single country, but rather a group of countries. The categories seek to
reconstruct an ideal-type. Through these general categories Mozambique, as social reality, is
rendered visible to the Bretton Woods institutions and can be defined as a terrain for
intervention.
The definition as a terrain for intervention operates according to a logic imposed by the
strategy of risk. Epidemiological risk, for example, abstracts a set of factors on the basis of
which practical outcomes in the wellbeing of the population are posited against the
background of given practical actions. SAP draws from the Washington consensus and its
belief that the economic, social and political assumptions underlying the market economy are
the best foundation for wellbeing in the world. It is on that basis that SAP insists on general
neo-liberal assumptions which are ignorant of the specific conditions of a country. Such
conditionalisms as “good governance”, “transparency” and “accountability” to name just a
few of the concepts used by the World Bank and the IMF, establish a norm which actually
defines the ideal form of conduct within the empire. When the Mozambican government
imposes upon itself fiscal and monetary discipline which runs counter to any survival instinct
that a democratically elected government would nurture and when it pursues such
contradictory policies as decentralisation and strengthening of traditional authority it is not
only governing (ruling) in the strict sense of the word. It is also submitting to the disciplinary
logic of normalisation.
Case-management risk is different. Here it is not aggregate numbers that count, but rather the
identification of “at risk” cases which pose a threat to the health and wellbeing of the general
social fabric. Poverty in the developing world is a problem because it poses a security threat
to the developed world. Poverty and underdevelopment always raise the ghost of uncontrolled
migration, drug trafficking, criminalisation of the state, terrorism, etc. These are problems
which are perceived as threats in and to the developed world. As a consequence, the best way
to deal with them is to transform them into calculated risks. In this ways potentially dangerous
countries are identified and policies are designed whose main aim is not to solve the problems
those identified countries have, but instead just mitigate their effects. The proclamation of Mozambique as a HIPC, for example, does not solve the country’s debt problem. Fortunately, noone says it does. Quite on the contrary, at the very same time that more than two thirds of Mozambique’s debt are written off the country is made Eligible for more debt\footnote{According to Oxfam, a British NGO, Mozambique’s debt increased by about US$3000 million per annum between 1980 and 1994. In the nineties the IMF itself forecast that debt service would rise to US$400 million in 2000 before stabilising at an average value of US$435 million in the year 2005. It is interesting to note that most of this debt was from the IMF itself. It doubled from US$18 to US$30 million between 1996 and 1998. The debt before the World Bank also doubled from US$8 to US$30 million in the same period of time and it is expected to rise to over US$70 million in 2015. The irony of these figures lies in the fact that the World Bank and the IMF went to Mozambique to help the country free itself from debt!} (footnote 13). The proclamation is in this sense just a preventive measure to keep the country vegetating and to innoculate the centre against the side effects of the pathologies in the periphery.

SAP operates within the framework of a logic that is particular to the times in which we live. This logic articulates a neo-liberal totalizing project which extends to the whole world insidious ways of controlling life. The reason why such forms are insidious is because neo-liberalism uses a discourse which is simultaneously geared towards regulatory-knowledge and emancipatory-knowledge. Indeed, through its disciplinary practices, neo-liberal discourse subjects the periphery to the hegemonic power of the centre. Regulatory-knowledge imposes a norm which countries stripped of their identity – rather like ‘Zombies’ (Comaroff & Comaroff 1999) -, a typical feature of millenial capitalism, must follow if they want to exist. At the same time, however, it is a discourse that glorifies freedom, emancipation and everything that is good and useful about modernity to such an extent that the persistent rejection of modernity by the periphery appears just irrational.

SAP invents Mozambique. Without SAP Mozambique cannot be visible to the donor community. The logic behind SAP, as we have seen, is the neo-liberal totalizing project. This project is not interested in the development of countries like Mozambique. It is instead more interested in containing the hazards which economic backwardness and political instability at the periphery pose to the centre. These hazards are translated into risks according to strategies which on the one hand identify desired aggregate outcomes and, on the other, they isolate groups considered to be “at risk” so that they do not contaminate the rest. In this connection, development aid is an end in itself. To put it differently, aid is given so that aid can be given. SAP turned Mozambique into one of the largest recipients of development aid in Africa. According to Joseph Hanlon more than two thirds of the country’s essential imports are financed by external donors (Hanlon 1996). One of the main objectives of SAP was precisely to correct the balance of payments. The massive support given to Mozambican imports reveals that this goal has not been achieved yet. It might really be the case that the main aim of development aid is to make the country more dependent on development aid.

This analysis aims at being critical. The critical position that is being suggested does not rest on a single vision of structural alternatives. The idea is to show that we are dealing with a perennial structural logic, but rather with a historical contingency. Neo-liberal power is not essential to the natural order of things. It constitutes itself in the subjection of other historicities. It is discursive power que insinuates itself in the conditions of possibility of social reality. Identifying its presence and the forms through which it reproduces itself at the expense of the objects which it produces may be a fundamental contribution towards the production of a critical theory which celebrates real emancipation.

5. Conclusion
What I tried to show in this paper is not the evil nature of the Bretton Woods institutions. That would be too simple an argument. What really interests me is the ability to provide elements for a diagnostics of our time from a very specific example. To this end I chose SAP in Mozambique. There is a logic behind the practices connected with that example which has not been theorised. Such a logic seeks to domesticate local contexts by turning them into targets and recipients of development aid.

Unlike the general critique of development aid, which sees it as an instance of an evil plan to impoverish the periphery, I prefer to see SAP as a concrete manifestation of a social project which articulates itself in discursive and institutional practices consistent with an established political ideology. I would rather see SAP as a continuation of domestic politics in the industrialised world with other means. I accept the idea that SAP corresponds to a real impulse to help and provide relief. When I look at the technologies of power which such a social project mobilises I come to the conclusion that the logic behind such a humanitarian impulse betrays its own objectives. SAP can neither stabilize nor allow for the development of these societies. SAP is at the service of an altogether different agenda, which consists in containing the risk which economic backwardness in such countries as Mozambique poses to the stability and security of countries of the North.

Would Mozambique be better off without SAP? I think not. Mozambique, as indeed most developing countries, need SAP. At the same time, however, such countries should acquire the ability to define room for manoeuvre within the structural logic in which they find themselves. They need a critical theory with which they could subvert the logic of the regulatory-knowledge underlying the neo-liberal totalitarian project. Elements of such a critical theory can be found in the way in which local communities cope with development aid.

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This paper outlines the complex historical legacy and structural adjustment efforts in Mozambique in addition to reviewing recent economic developments. An in-depth analysis of new and more reliable national accounts data show that macroeconomic stabilization has occurred through recovery from a suppressed outset. Yet, easy import substitution has now been used up, and structural transformation on the export side remains to be addressed. Moreover, a coherent development strategy geared towards poverty reduction is still to be implemented. The government budget also remains problematic, and aid dependency continues. Accordingly, fundamental ... This paper outlines the complex historical legacy and structural adjustment efforts in Mozambique in addition to reviewing recent economic developments. An in-depth analysis of new and more reliable national accounts data show that macroeconomic stabilization has occurred through recovery from a suppressed outset. Abstract. This paper outlines the complex historical legacy and structural adjustment efforts in Mozambique in addition to reviewing recent economic developments. An in-depth analysis of new and more reliable national accounts data show that macroeconomic stabilization has occurred through recovery from a suppressed outset.