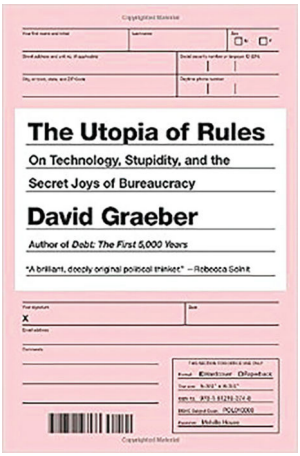
NEW BOOKS

Elena Gudova

"All Power to the Imagination!": A Leftist Critique of Bureaucratic Violence, Technologies and Rationality



Book Review: Graeber D. (2015) *The Utopia of Rules: On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy*, New York: Melville House, 272 p.

GUDOVA, Elena — PhD Student, Junior Research Fellow, Laboratory for Studies in Economic Sociology; Lecturer, Department of Sociology, National Research University Higher School of Economics. Address: 20 Myasnitskaya str., Moscow, 101000, Russian Federation.

Email: egudova@hse.ru

Abstract

In the preface to *The Utopia of Rules*, David Graeber states that his book does not attempt to build up a new theoretical approach to bureaucracy but it is rather an essay collection with a focus on three bureaucratic features: violence, technology and rationality. However, the cornerstone of bureaucracy seems to rest on both unexpected and anticipated effects of creativity and imagination, whether related to the work of government officials and origins of sovereignty, force fields and contemporary science development, or superheroes and comic book history. Graeber not only illustrates why our life has been organized around filling out forms (p. 44), but gives it a wider scale through an anthropological understanding of bureaucratic practices and technologies. The interesting thing is that he never gives a precise definition of what bureaucracy really is and where we can find it, but in the disenchanted modernity and modern capitalist economy it seems to be omnipresent.

The book is divided into four thematic parts: the first is the structural violence and deliberate stupidity of bureaucratic institutions; the second questions scientific development and claims that we have moved from poetic to bureaucratic technologies; the third one is rationality and playfulness and their relation to human nature; and the last one (in an Appendix) considers the link between creativity and violence and the role of bureaucracy in it.

Keywords: bureaucracy; imagination; neoliberalism; capitalist markets; democracy; anarchism; violence; technology; rationality.

The Utopia of Rules by David Graeber is an essay collection with a focus on three bureaucratic features: violence, technology and rationality. However, Graeber's critique of bureaucratic practices always corresponds to human imagination and issues of rationality and creativity.

If we all know the irrationalities of bureaucracy and could possibly create any kind of social order we like, why would we still construct a reality where bureaucracy dominates? Or even this way: why do we need and like bureaucracy after all? Graeber gives this question a very broad answer. In the introduction "The Iron Law of Liberalism and the Era of Total Bureaucratization" he analyzes both

historical and economic preconditions of bureaucratic order, and also makes a point that capitalist markets should not be opposed to bureaucratic government. In fact, capitalism requires a lot of red tape and is supported by structural forms of violence, which are produced by filling out forms.

In the "Dead Zones of the Imagination. An Essay on Structural Stupidity," Graeber continues the point stated in the introduction about violent bureaucratic technologies. This is a *structural form* of violence — a form of pervasive social inequality which is backed up by the threat of physical harm and implemented through thousands of rules and regulations. Violence simplifies communication and abandons any need of interpretative labor. Those at the very bottom of any social inequality are meant to figure out what is going on, while those at the top just let things slide. The inequalities supported by structural violence create dead zones of imagination — places where interpretative labor no longer works, communication is broken and we end up with paperwork relations.

In the section, "On Flying Cars and the Declaring Rate of Profit" the author states that we are deceived by all the great technological ideas of twentieth-century science fiction. Democratic progress requires market competition (and hence more forms and regulations), and poetic technologies of the scientific revolution sink in bureaucratic ones. For Graeber the main question is not whether we will ever have flying cars in a system, where scientists should already know what they are going to create when they apply for a grant (and no imagination allowed). The question is whether we are able to have flying cars and teleportation and all other science fiction things in a contemporary capitalistic system.

"The Utopia of Rules, or Why We Love Bureaucracy after All" is the last essay considering the rationality of bureaucracy. Graeber examines the philosophical origins of rationality in the Middle Ages and Romanticism and suggests that bureaucratic technologies sneaked into all spheres of human life (and imagination) through the ideas of public good provision, mixing calculative and substantive types of rationality and deprived humans of playfulness and creativeness. And this is important because bureaucracy is founded on a fear of free play, and the violence it creates allows humans to play only rule-bounded games — bureaucratic games, state-supporting games, market games.

The Appendix of the book, called "On Batman and the Problem of Constituent Power," shows us once again that bureaucracy creates forms of structural violence and enforces stupidity, but above all it is really boring. The rule-abandoning dark forces and violence are at least creative. No superheroes act, they just react, while real imagination is a feature of villains.

This review follows the structure of the book — each of the four parts is based on the chapter (except the Appendix, which is not reviewed separately). The structure of the book is not always easy to follow, because the material is very wide and detailed. However, the author's point is quite clear: structural violence and bureaucratic technologies challenge human imagination, and this is not because of the contradiction between state and market.

"We Demand Rigidly Defined Areas of Doubt and Uncertainty!"[1]

One can find a variety of origins for the Weberian ideal type bureaucracy: the Hegelian philosophy of right and views on the government; individual and public good [Shaw 1992; Sager, Rosser 2009]; Smith's and Marx's ideas of division of labor and specialization [Lewin, Minton 1986]; and the evolution of patrimonial authority [Gaydenko, Davydov 1991; Maslovskiy 1997]. Graeber gives multiple reasoning to it as well: political and economical implications (liberalism and market economy), evaluation and accounting technologies, and our psychological necessity to eliminate free play and creativity from rule-bounded game.

[1] Douglas Adams, "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy".

How did we end up in a society where every single movement and phenomenon is bounded by documents, accounting procedures and a crowd of civil servants? First of all, Graeber argues against the liberal's suggestion, that bureaucratization is a drag on capitalism. According to him, despite the fact that we mentally relate democracy with 'the market' and bureaucracy with 'the state', maintaining a free-market economy requires a thousand times more paperwork than a Louis XIV-style absolute monarchy (p. 9). One could state that bureaucracies are substitutes for impersonal market regulation mechanisms, which government uses to increase efficiency. From this point of view not a single profit-seeking enterprise is influenced by bureaucratization till the moment the government comes in, because it is against the nature of the firm [von Mises 1993]. But markets do not simply emerge, there always has to be something to do with the state.

If in the very beginning of the twentieth century the question was whether there is a way to run the government more like the market, the policy of corporatism simply adapted bureaucratic techniques to the private companies. Initially emerging in financial and corporate circles, estimation procedures and performance measuring gradually expanded to other spheres of life such as medicine, education, social policy, etc. This is what Graeber calls cultural transformation and the 'age of total bureaucratization'.

The age of total bureaucratization has its own iron law: any market reform introduced to reduce red tape has directly the opposite effect of maintaining the total number of regulations, paperwork and government employees (p. 9). This effect can be caused by simple implementation of legitimating practices and institutional myths with no regard for efficiency [Meyer, Rowan 1977], which often results in unreasonable credentialism. Such a capitalistic cult of documents, certificates and diplomas also corresponds to the idea of materiality: documents not only exist as instruments of bureaucratic organization, but rather constitute bureaucratic roles, knowledge, ideology, practices and sometimes even organizations themselves [Hull 2012a; Hull 2012b].

As far as the bureaucratization of everyday life means the imposition of impersonal rules and regulations, this type of adjustment can only work if backed up by the threat of force (p. 32). It can be substituted by the increasing meaning of social control and technologies, but at the end of the day it does not actually matter, because what really matters in that system, according to Graeber, is value (where he refers to Marx).

Value extraction in bureaucratic systems builds upon rationality (which refers to Weber) or, as we can call it 'technical efficiency', the way things are done. However, there is a huge difference between 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness': while the former is about *input-output ratio*, the latter is about an absolute level of either *input acquisition* or *outcome attainment* [Ostroff, Schmitt 1993]. We could relate this to the distinction between formal and substantive types of Weberian rationality, which can partially explain why much of bureaucrats' work is an evaluation of things, and why rational means may lead to irrational ends and red tape. This lack of reason is exactly the point where one might need the threat of force to back it up, at least as long as it is lucrative. Graeber states this in a more sarcastic way: "Whenever someone starts talking about the 'free market', it's a good idea to look around for the man with the gun" (p. 31).

This trend of financialization accompanied by growing technological advancement and social control has a lot in common with the classical issues of property, elites and power and, according to the author, is a self-sustaining web. Filling out forms in this case is not just an annoying obligation (and eventually it is not an anti-market invention), but a rather crucial element of the social order, which lies at the very heart of capitalist economy. And it is quite logical, Graeber claims, that we have the simultaneous development of force-employing institutions and financial institutions. As for bureaucracy, its function above the linkage between the two institutions is also in the implementation of violence, but in its *structural* form.

"Are You an Idiot? — No, Sir, I'm a Dreamer!"[2]

Because violence for Graeber is not only a form of physical or mental harm, but can also take a structural form, he starts from a classical Lipsky street-level bureaucracy example: taking care of his mother's health involved so many senseless paperwork activities, that by the time he eventually resolved the problem with her medical insurance she passed away. In Graeber's terms it happened not just because of bottom-line effects and dysfunctions of bureaucratic systems, but because they are originally organized in such a way "as to guarantee that a significant proportion of actors will not be able to perform their tasks as expected" (p. 48).

The perfect order may never be attained, either because bureaucratic rules and regulations prescribe or proscribe an ideal sort of behavior with no effort put into its local interpretation [Hoag 2011] or because of a total ignorance of practical skills and acquired intelligence of indigenous people (*metis*) [Scott 1998]. In this way paperwork and bureaucratic procedures may complicate the existing social order, because they embed new rites of passage: the person can no longer become married, born, dead or mobilized for military service (at least with a proper social recognition) without a document-based ritual. Paperwork does not only prolong any liminal stage of these rituals, but is a liminal creature itself: they [bureaucratic procedures] are at once inanimate — lazy automatons, blindly serving larger powers — and animate — nefarious, self-interested obstructionists [Hoag 2011].

Graeber further highlights, that the senselessness of bureaucratic life and inability to rely on any reason or values directly leads us to the necessity of violence. And bureaucracy is dealing with a more subtle form of violence, a *structural* one, which implies "threats of physical force that lie behind everything from enforcing rules about where one is allowed to sit or stand or eat or drink in parks or other public places, to the threats or physical intimidations or attacks that underpin the enforcement of tacit gender norms" [Graeber 2012]. Structural violence is a form of pervasive social inequality which is backed up by the threat of physical harm (p. 57). Bureaucratic structures lack sense exactly in order to and because of this violent simplification, they are stupid not only as they produce stupid behavior, but rather as they manage social situations which are based on structural violence (p. 57).

Violence may be the only way of human communication which does not require real acts of communication: you hit a man over the head hard enough, and any interpretations or justifications become irrelevant (p. 67–68). Representatives of bureaucracy do not involve what the author calls 'interpretative labor' — part of the human communication based upon decoding an interlocutor's motives and perceptions. If normal communication requires imaginative identification (the actual knowledge of the social relations and their work) and sympathetic identification (sympathy or 'compassion fatigue'), communication based on structural violence creates lopsided structures of the imagination — an actual inequality in the ability and necessity of performing interpretative labor. Those on the bottom will always have to spend a great deal of energy trying to figure out what is going on, while those on the top of any social inequality let things slide. This is the very reason why bureaucracy will always produce absurdities (p. 81).

Bureaucracies are about simplification and schematization and, as Graeber puts it very strictly, they are *confronting human imagination*. The suggested 'reality' (the way bureaucracy constructs it) is not a welcoming place due to the fact that it systematically threatens us with violence. We imagine things we would like and bring them into being, according the social construction of reality, but why would we bring into being many disastrous events and phenomenon if we had an opportunity not to do so?

David Graeber claims that the contradiction between 'reality' and 'imaginary' often confuses two definitions of imagination: the 'transcendent notion of imagination' and 'the soul beyond any mere rationality' (p. 91–92).

[2] "Scrubs" My Old Man TV series episode.

The first one refers to what is simply beyond any reality and remains the same (one cannot change it because it does not actually exist), and the latter one is immanent, adapting and caught up in the projects of action. This latter type of imagination is responsible for interpretative labor (and communication respectively) and struggles with structural violence of *real* bureaucratic principles, senselessness and schematization. In that sense our inability to act creatively and use imagination to avoid violent outcomes is the very reason for inequality and alienation in capitalism. And this is the answer to the question stated above.

The only exception which seems logical here is revolution. If all so-called institutions of democracy and bureaucratic apparatus are intentionally alienating human imagination, 'revolutionary moments' disrupt unequal structures of imaginative identification and re-create everything around them (p. 100).

However, these movements demand a lot of work and power. A revolutionary should not only have the power to institutionally push forward ideas, but to escape the 'dead zones of imagination' — the spaces where interpretative labor no longer works due to the structural violence and its boredom and absurdity. These dead zones originate not from the lack of reflexivity, but merely from miscommunication — we can not ask the official representative for an explanation, we have to figure it out ourselves. And this is the point where bureaucracies can make anyone look stupid.

"Since When can Weathermen Predict the Weather, Let Alone the Future?"[3]

Since technological progress in the twentieth century has been so impetuous, we should have probably been using all those science fiction devices so far, but we are not. This conspicuous absence of flying cars is a secret shame of the new millennium, which makes us skeptical and uncertain both about past historical narratives of progress and future advancement. The only sphere we have actually developed is information technologies, or technologies of simulation. Graeber is very sure that beyond this layer of hyper-real images and surfaces lies a secret awareness that all our expectations turned out to be a lie.

Although our expectations about the future were not so unrealistic, we did not manage to come close to the picture of the world of 2015 as painted in the 1970s[4]. David Graeber gives us two interconnected explanations, a political and a bureaucratic one. As he puts it, "there appears to have been a profound shift, beginning from the 1970s, from investment in technologies associated with possibilities of alternative futures to investment in technologies that furthered discipline and social control" (p. 120), "yet even those areas of science and technology that did receive massive funding have not seen the breakthroughs originally anticipated" (p. 130) (antithesis).

A political explanation is somehow obvious: there is a need to fulfill state interests, or the importance of military services and technologies, (as well as of grandiose projects such as the Human Genome Project in the USA or the whole Skolkovo project in contemporary Russia), plus the obligation to meet the demands of a neoliberal economy.

Bureaucratic explanation deals with resource allocation schemas and the growing influence of managerial logic. As progress was always presented as a problem that needed to be solved, the solution was 'democratic', i.e. 'bureaucratic': a creation of expert committees and panels to determine which inventions would be approved (p. 118). This development triggered a power inequality between the scientific community and the resource-streaming institutions. In this situation nothing path-breaking can result, because the research is mostly driven

[3] "Back to the Future" movie (1985).

[4] There is still a place for pride and irony. Available at: http://www.vedomosti.ru/lifestyle/galleries/2015/10/21/613716-nazad-buduschee-kak-kompanii-povtoryayut-izobreteniya-legendarnogo-filma (accessed 29 November 2015).

by political, administrative and marketing imperatives, and scientific labs and institutions are forced to adopt language, sensibilities and organizational forms that originated in the corporate world (p. 133).

This subject has been previously recognized by many scholars in organizational studies, higher education, economic sociology and other fields [DiMaggio, Powell 1991; Thornton, Ocasio 1999; Scott 2004; and etc.]. However, Graeber is far more precise in his vision of scientific development: the bureaucratic spirit suffuses every aspect of intellectual life and creativity, and intellectual competition looks more and more like market competition. This why we do not have time-travelling machines yet — how could there be a scientific breakthrough if scientists are involved in a huge paperwork competition where they need to persuade investors that they do already know what they are going to discover? (p. 135)

Similar to the first essay on violence, this part of the book on technology is about opposition between bureaucracy and imagination. Modern science has moved from poetic to bureaucratic technologies: if poetic technologies used rational and technical means to bring wild and impossible fantasies to life, bureaucratic technologies no longer encourage fantastic aims. Administrative imperatives have become not the means but the end of technological development (pp. 141–142).

For Graeber the ultimate question is not whether we are able to pull back and give all power to the imagination, but whether there is a possibility for innovation within the framework of contemporary corporate capitalism (p. 146). Our technologically sophisticated society is not doomed to exist on the basis of capitalism. Why? Because bureaucracies are actually not drags on capitalism but outcomes, and the pace of change cannot be held back forever by hostile bureaucratic obligations to fill out more and more forms.

"Guys, Rules are Good! Rules Help Control the Fun!"[5]

The third essay in the book is on rationality and value. Rational efficiency and value-neutrality are the very basics of any bureaucratic system, but they are not the only features of bureaucracy. Graeber gives 'our secret joy of bureaucracy' justification in multiple reasons and turns it in into four theses.

In his first statement Graeber observes the implication of bureaucratic technologies through the ideas of welfare state and public good provision. Thus, the origins of the German welfare state and public goods provision were a state's alternative to what might leftist parties and trade unions have offered (maybe by the terms of revolution). And this alternative combined the administrative structure and military (i.e. hierarchical) principles with fulfilling social demands. The first example of such a kind was the German post office.

Postal services have always been a strategic sphere of state operation and administration, which has two main sets of reasons: economic and non-economic. Economic reasons are usually considered a natural monopoly production technology and economy of scope [Priest 1975; Sidak, Spulber 1996], while non-economic reasons are providing universal postal service and security of the mail stream [Campbell Jr., Gharbi 1992; Richard 2000]. But we could also put here information and communication, and power of the state legitimation as well.

In his *Imagined Communities,* Anderson states that there were three institutions of governmental power which influenced the form, function, and mechanical reproduction of colonized zones: census, mapping and museum. These institutions "profoundly shaped the way in which colonial state imagined its dominion — the nature of the human beings is ruled, the geography of its dominion, and the legitimacy of its ancestry" [Anderson 2006: 168]. The formal apparatus of the census conjured up the delimiting territory where, for political purposes, they ended. By this sort of demographic triangulation, the Census filled in politically the formal topography of

[5] "Friends" The One With The Kips TV series episode.

the map. And the postal service provides an objectification: a zip code. This may seem naïve, but the Zone Improvement Plan (ZIP) coding system explicitly presented to the citizen the fact: no mailbox equals no rights.

The phenomenon of the German post office was wanted and needed, both at the top and at the bottom. Its magnificent efficiency, as author mentions it, was not only a modern Wonder of the World, but an organizational model for the Soviet Union, US Federal Government, private businesses and many other structures and institutions. The United States even created the term '*postalization'* to express the mixture of nationalization processes and practices of bringing in postal principles of organization. But then something went wrong, demonized our whole perception of the postal service and linked it with all the sins and absurdities of government malfunctioning.

Graeber suggests that convincing the citizens that government does not really work was a political campaign (the neoliberal one) with the postal service as a state representative at the forefront. But it was not particularly necessary, because postal services as an outcome of military-based communication system operate on the basis of bureaucratic technologies, not poetic ones. Moreover, postal services were not about communication, they were actually against it — or at least they strictly framed communication[6] (p. 163).

In his second statement the author proposes that the rational grounds of bureaucracy are far too pretentious. The efficiency and impersonality of bureaucratic principles and *postalization* mix up two understandings of *rationality*: means and ends (or calculative and substantive types of it). There are different philosophical traditions, which could be divided into branches of rationalism and empiricism. If it was for the ideas of David Hume and Francis Bacon to defeat Rene Descartes' ideas, we might now be living in a different world where rationality is only a way to assess the reality more or less as it is, not a value in itself. And from this point of view it could have been *imagination*, not *rationality*, that sets humans apart from animals and forms our lives (p. 171).

In medieval philosophy, rationality was a way to achieve union with the divine, and not surprisingly it described the Kingdom of Heaven as a giant cosmic administration (i.e. in Dante's *Divine Comedy*). Bureaucratic principles cultivated on this attitude to rationality never claim to be anything less than a grandiose cosmologic scheme (p. 173). So why would one want to change it, metaphysically speaking?

The era of Romanticism proposed another vision of rationality and gave more power to the soul and imagination. Interestingly, the invasion of social life with bureaucratic technologies was manifested in the vast development of fantasy literature. But the characters, plots and subjects become more and more alike, and this is not because of the classical fairytale morphology named by V. Propp. Bureaucratic principles sneaked into the imagination — which is the third statement.

Graeber highlights that in a fantasy world only evil people maintain systems of administration (p. 183). And what is more important, fantasy literature negates basic principles of bureaucracy, as he suggests in the following points:

1. The division between good and evil creates such absolute values that it is impossible to be value-free neutral.

2. There are different races and creatures with different qualities, which makes it impossible to be indifferent and provide equal treatment.

[6] That explains why we do have perusal of correspondence and privacy of correspondence which are both performed by the state and military services.

3. Legitimate power is usually based on pure charisma, legitimate rulers do not employ the structural form of violence to enforce the rules.

4. Fantasy is about storytelling and narration, while bureaucratic operations are mechanical.

5. Bureaucratic principles are transparent (or at least pretend to be); while in fantasy riddles and puzzles lie in the core of the story (pp. 184–185).

But this does not mean that bureaucracy is absent from Fantasyland. Unification and accounting principles (i.e. through a computer or tabletop RPG) allow us both to escape an oppressing bureaucratic reality and feel that still it is a better and safer world.

And here Graeber questions imagination as *playfulness*. We do not make a distinction between a *game* and a *play*. It is a crucial point, because a game is rule-governed action, while play is a pure expression of a creative energy. "Games, then, are a kind of utopia of rules" (p. 191–192). What does it have to do with bureaucracy? Actually a lot. In that sense bureaucracy is founded on a fear of play.

Why would that be? Along with administration and politics, sovereignty is a key feature of the state, and sovereignty is understood as a legitimate monopoly on violence. Creative and imaginative play is a freedom for itself and does not fear violence. Therefore it is a distant relative to sovereignty, something out of control, and out of system, and out of the state.

Playfulness and the freedom it generates are limited by social structures and institutions. Still, on the other hand, pure play-based and game-based worlds are only ideal types. And it is not as bad as it may seem, since we can always find a combination of playfulness in real world conditions. The question is whether we are able to win back our playfulness and imagination from filling out forms.

A contradiction between bureaucracy and imagination in Graeber's opinion is rooted very deeply in our social life and perceptions. Structural violence and omnipresent bureaucratic technologies challenge the natural playfulness and creativity of a person. And this is not the creativity honored by Hans Joas [e.g., Joas 1996], it is the liberating freedom of action, not only reaction. It leads to the fair question of whether there can be a creative form of peaceful existence in the society we have built, because only dark and violent forces seem to be able and willing to smash structures and offer something in its place. Superheroes lack imagination, while the villains are relentlessly creative (p. 211).

Certainly *The Utopia of Rules* is an intellectual and profound critique of the existing neoliberal capitalism and free-market economy. Graeber's book is not an intricate scientific book, and his arguments are not hard to follow, despite the fact that he never gives bureaucracy a definition. Perhaps it was his idea to give the phenomenon a multi-dimensional leftist critique with a whole lot of real life linkages. And this interpretation would be reasonable, since to put all the pieces together the reader needs to be imaginative.

References

Anderson B. (2006) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London; New York: Verso.

Campbell Jr. L. I., Gharbi E. M. (1992) The Future of the Universal Postal Union. Crew M.A., Kleindorfer P.R. (eds). *Regulation and the Evolving Nature of Postal and Delivery Services*, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 7–44.

DiMaggio P. J., Powell W. W. (1991) The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields. Powell W. W., DiMaggio P. J. (eds). *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Studies*, Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 62–83.

Gaydenko P., Davydov J. (1991) *Istoriya i ratsiolnal'nost': sotsiologiya M. Weber i veberovskiy renessans* [History and Rationality: Sociology of Max Weber and Weberian Renaissance], Moscow: Politizdat (in Russian).

Graeber D. (2012) Dead Zones of the Imagination: On Violence, Bureaucracy, and Interpretive Labor. The 2006 Malinowski Memorial Lecture. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, vol. 2*,* no 2, pp. 105–128.

Hoag C. (2011) Assembling Partial Perspectives: Thoughts on the Anthropology of Bureaucracy. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, vol. 34, no 1, pp. 81–94.

Hull M. S. (2012a) Documents and Bureaucracy. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 41, pp. 251–267.

Hull M. S. (2012b) *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Joas H. (1996). *The Creativity of Action*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lewin A. Y., Minton J. W. (1986) Determining Organizational Effectiveness: Another Look, and an Agenda for Research. *Management Science*, vol. 32, no 5, pp. 514–538.

Maslovskiy M. (1997) *Teoriya burokratii Maks Max Weber i sovremennaya politicheskaya sotsiologiya* [Max Weber Theory of Bureaucracy and Modern Political Sociology], N. Novgorod: Izd-vo NNGU (in Russian)

Meyer J. W., Rowan B. (1977) Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 83, no 2, pp. 340–363.

Ostroff C., Schmitt N. (1993) Configurations of Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency. *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 36, no 6, pp. 1345–1381.

Priest G. L. (1975) The History of the Postal Monopoly in the United States. *Journal of Law and Economics*, vol. 18, no 1, pp. 33–80.

Richard J. (2000) Recasting the Information Infrastructure for the Industrial Age. Chandler Jr. A. D., Cortada Jr. J. W. (eds). *A Nation Transformed by Information: How Information Has Shaped the United States from Colonial Times to the Present*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 55–106.

Sager F., Rosser C. (2009) Weber, Wilson, and Hegel: Theories of Modern Bureaucracy. *Public Administration Review*, vol. 69, no 6, pp. 1136–1147.

Scott J. C. (1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.

Scott R. W. (2004) Competing Logics in Health Care: Professional, State, and Managerial. Dobbin F. (ed.) *The Sociology of the Economy*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 267–287.

Shaw C. K. Y. (1992) Hegel's Theory of Modern Bureaucracy. *American Political Science Review,* vol. 86, no 2, pp. 381–389.

Sidak J. G., Spulber D. F. (1996) Protecting Competition from Postal Monopoly, Washington, D.C.: AEI Press.

Thornton P. H., Ocasio W. (1999) Institutional Logics and the Historical Contingency of Power in Organizations: Executive Succession in the Higher Education Publishing Industry, 1958–1990. *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 105, no 3, pp. 801–843.

Von Mises L. (1993) *Byurokratiya. Zaplanirovanniy khaos. Antikapitalisticheskaya mental'nost'* [Bureaucracy. Planned Chaos. Anticapitalistic Mentality], Moscow: Delo, Catallaxy (in Russian).

Received: October 30, 2015.
Citation: Gudova E. (2015) "All Power to the Imagination!": A Leftist Critique of Bureaucratic Violence, Technologies and Rationality. Book Review: Graeber D. (2015) *The Utopia of Rules: On Technology, Stupidity, and the Secret Joys of Bureaucracy*, New York: Melville House. *Journal of Economic Sociology = Ekonomicheskaya sotsiologiya*, vol. 16, no 5, pp. 140–149. Available at http://ecsoc.hse.ru/2015-16-5.html