

that freedom, that play, that is highly feared. The further arrangement of the game in adding rules to it becomes experienced as a freedom and a massive complex of bureaucracy, in fact curtailing freedom instead of enhancing it, is the result:

„Whether motivated by a faith in „rationality“ or a fear of arbitrary power, the end result of this bureaucratized notion of freedom is to move toward the dream of a world where play has been limited entirely – or, at best, boxed away in some remote location far from any serious, consequential human endeavor – while every aspect of life is reduced to some kind of elaborate, rule-bound game. It’s not that such a vision lacks appeal. Who hasn’t dreamed of a world where everyone knows the rules, everyone plays by the rules, and – even more – where people who play by the rules can actually still win? The problem is that this is just as much as a utopian fantasy as a world of absolute free play would be. It will always remain a glimmering illusion that dissolves away as soon as you touch it“ (Graeber 2015: 204–205).

Bureaucracy, as a consequence, seems to be an ever-expanding relationship between the state and its population, curtailing freedom and containing society into something that Weber called the „Iron Cage“. The aspects of materiality and performativity of bureaucracy were discussed not only to shed light onto rarely considered aspects of governance but also because they play a central artistic role in this very work, RMC, as they become mirrored, subverted, and exposed.

MAX WEBER & THE IRON CAGE

„The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order“ (Max Weber 2005: 123).

Max Weber’s work on bureaucracy is most dominantly linked to the aspects of rationality, efficiency, and impersonality. Before stepping into Weber’s concerns about a potential Iron Cage, it might be valuable to discuss these claims: does the game we are forced to play hold up to its promise of efficiency, rationality and impersonality? David Graeber is examining these