Navigating Intimate Bureaucracies
Mismatched Realities of Türkiyeli Trans Migrants in Germany

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the lived experiences of *Türkiyeli* trans migrants in Germany by focusing on how transnational bureaucratic systems produce mismatched and often conflicting realities. Drawing from extensive ethnographic research in Germany, it examines trans migrants' struggles to navigate the *intimate bureaucracies* of medico-legal and administrative regimes that demand intrusive forms of recognition, yet, remain inconsistent across national and international frameworks.

The article demonstrates not only the conflicting and contradictory medico-legal and administrative realities that trans migrants are compelled to manage in their daily lives and the strategies they develop to negotiate these tensions, but also the possibilities for strategic manoeuvring, ambivalence, and alternative forms of belonging that such bureaucratic inconsistencies enable. Through trans migrants' narratives and an analysis of medico-legal frameworks, it shows how gender recognition, healthcare access, and legal documentation are continuously reconfigured across institutional settings, producing parallel and sometimes incompatible identities.

KEYWORDS

trans migrations, intimate bureaucracies, friction, medical gaze, intimacies

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ASLI: How do you feel about trans visibility here in Germany, I mean, among German citizens?

SERGEN: Well, I mean, one of my previous flatmates was like that – he was a trans man. I mean, they (German trans folks) are in a moment where their access to (related) information isn't like what ours used to be. They have much more access now.

A: You mean in a temporal sense, like, it's about the period or moment they're in?

S: Yes, exactly – that's one part of it. And there are rights here that have already been won, you know, and those are important things. They don't really have the same kinds of worries we have – like in Turkey – this constant thing of, »Oh no, I can't find a job because I'm trans«, and so on. I mean, of course, that exists here too, but not in a really comparable way. Here, they have rights, and they take those rights – by insisting on them, by pushing until they get them.

A: Do you also have those rights?

S: I do, but, well …

A: In practice?

S: You (I) do – if you (I) know how to fight for them.[1]
(Interview with Sergen on 31.1.2021)

Sergen[2], a transmasculine person, began his Ph.D. in a relatively large German city in 2020. He secured a well-paid academic position with full access to statutory health insurance – a significant shift after years of limited healthcare access in Germany as a master's degree student. Before this, he had been self-administering testosterone brought from Turkey, hoping that future costs would be covered under the statutory insurance, as it is typical for all residents. However, the insurance provider denied coverage, despite his submission of extensive documentation, including apostilled psychiatric and endocrinological reports from Turkey and supporting documents from a gynaecologist in Germany. Obtaining such documentation in Turkey is often an exhausting, invasive, and humiliating process for trans folk, requiring prolonged engagement with medical institutions, compliance, and collective support, which often functions as a lobbying strategy. Although Sergen had already navigated these hurdles within Turkey's healthcare system, he encountered new layers of bureaucracies and institutional fatigue in Germany. These entanglements – exacerbated by the complex demands of gender-affirming care, for example, hormones, surgeries, psychological and psychiatric support – place a compounded burden on trans migrants, particularly those who began gender-affirming processes prior to migration. Even when institutional expectations have been met, trans migrants often find themselves navigating mismatched responses and complex paperwork within the German healthcare and legal system. This paperwork is not only discursive but also

1 I have translated the interview excerpts shared throughout this paper, with as little intervention as possible, whilst remaining faithful to the context.
2 Sergen is a pseudonym. All interlocutors in this paper – and throughout the research – are referred to by pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality.

a result of a long process that requires negotiations and lobbying strategies. It also demands mental and bodily work for being recognised and passing as trans enough.

This paper builds on the migratory dynamics outlined above. It explores the mismatched experiences and perceptions of *Türkiyeli* [3] trans migrants in Germany, foregrounding how differentiated regulatory practices within state-governed institutions and the healthcare system create parallel lived realities that individuals must navigate. The state's bureaucratic and governing structures both in Turkey and Germany impose distinct, often conflicting expectations on trans migrants' bodies and subjectivities, leading to a form of mismatched existence that (re)complicates trans lives. The regulatory frameworks governing gender recognition, migration, and socio-cultural processes specifically require trans migrants to negotiate varying and multilayered identities within both public and institutional domains, exemplifying what I term *intimate bureaucracies*. This concept captures the paradoxical closeness and distance that emerge in interactions with the complex workings of state-governed institutions. I employ *intimate bureaucracies* here as a useful term to understand how these institutions work on intimately regulating individual lives.

Drawing on intimacies and trans studies literature, I examine how *Türkiyeli* trans subjectivities are rematerialised in terms of various forms of intimacy within social and medico-legal spaces of Germany. I ask what possible impacts their spatial and bodily trajectories have in reconstituting these intimacies, and how regulatory distinctions around gender and citizenship create a mismatched and ruptured [4] existence (Behrouzan 2016; Bayat 2025). These differentiated medico-legal regulations require trans migrants to fulfil inconsistent and even contradictory requirements related to documentation, gender markers – as administrative indicators – and legal identification. The seemingly rigid standards for name and gender marker changes – as well as trans migrants' access to gender-affirming care and ›same-sex‹ marriage – demand extensive, often invasive documentation that may be inconsistent with lived experiences and force individuals into incompatible realities in a transnational context. While these multiple and so-called incompatible realities place trans migrants in an emotionally and socially taxing position, trans migrants make creative efforts to playfully live beyond binary structures.

Based on ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with *Türkiyeli* trans migrants in Germany, this paper examines how differentiated bureaucratic and medico-legal regulations are navigated, negotiated, and reworked in everyday life. Many interlocutors, such as Sinan and Sergen, were affiliated with higher education and, therefore, accessed particular linguistic, educational, and transnational resources that helped their mobility and engagement with bureaucratic processes. Some others' experiences were based on more precarious conditions shaped by financial insecurity, unstable employment, and restricted institutional and socio-cultural access. This paper does not approach these narratives methodologically as fixed representations of trans migrations but rather as situated accounts emerging through unequal structures of gender, mobility, class, and education. At the same time,

3 The literal translation of *Türkiyeli* to English is *from Turkey/Türkiye*. This term is preferred because it is inclusive of the ethnic variety of peoples living in Turkey who may not identify as Türk or Turkish.
4 In this context, I use the terms *rupture* and *ruptured* as defined by Orkideh Behrouzan (2016) and further developed by Reza Bayat (2025). They conceptualise rupture as a processual and historically grounded condition in which everyday life is experienced as fragmented and narratives as fractured. Bayat (2025) highlights how Iranian refugees navigate their world through these ruptures, assembling fragmented lives from discontinuous experiences. I adopt this terminology in the same way as Bayat.

this study reveals how these regulatory distinctions create their own loopholes, which might be productive for trans ambivalence (Prosser 1998), resilience, and further fluidities. My broader study aims to contribute to the growing literature on queer and trans migrations by demonstrating how the state-governed medico-legal regulatory structures might fail in their very own standardisation project of trans subjectivities and bodies.

Institutional and Intimate Gaze on Migrant Bodies

States' involvement in the lives of their citizens and residents has long been at a sexual and intimate level, resettling the so-called »private sphere« in broader, core political contexts (Foucault 1978; Berlant 1997; Stoler 2002; Aretxaga 2003; Povinelli 2006). Socio-political and political-economic structures and regulations have been co-constituted along with and based on population management, which is closely related to intimacy. Bodies, as subjects of states, are claimed as the core/indispensable/irreplaceable entities of intimate knowledge. Thus, they are not simply static presences in the world, but *boundary projects* materialising themselves through social, cultural, and technological interactions (Haraway 1991). The exercise of (state) power within social structures and institutional frameworks has directed its focus closely to bodies and object-oriented information in the sense of material culture (Foucault 1973). However, these structures, simultaneously, have tendencies to produce spaces for negotiation and withdrawal through which subjects navigate, resist, or strategically disengage from the intimate interventions and demands of state regulations. This also reveals forms of agency that emerge within the constraints of state power, rather than outside of them.

Since the 18th century, when state power expanded biomedical knowledge as a useful tool to govern populations, the production of medical knowledge on bodies has become inseparable from what Michel Foucault calls the medical gaze, which enables medical practitioners to have the power of excluding individuals' *non-medical* experiences from their (health) stories (ibid.). This selective medical gaze can filter subject-related, complex realities as irrelevant material. Foucault's work has inspired a vast literature scrutinising the gaze as a political tool instrumentalised by state-governed institutions through the observation and supervision of citizens' – and non-citizens' – bodies. The observation of bodies and body-related medical documentations cannot be separated from this instrumental tool since the »bodies are maps of power and identity« (Haraway 1991, 180). From this perspective, the trans body, as a *medico-legal product*, provides both national and institutional gaze with an abundant map on which to work (Zengin 2024).

Medical examinations and practices, routinely administered by German medical commissions, constituted a central mechanism through which access to West Germany's labour market was regulated, especially in the 1960s, when Germany[5] began hosting large numbers of guest workers (Miller 2018). These assessments, often

5 Here, Germany refers specifically to the Federal Republic of *Germany* (FRG/West Germany) prior to reunification. The German Democratic Republic (GDR/East Germany) also received migrant workers during this period, although these migration regimes involved different countries of origin, legal frameworks, and forms of labour mobility.

perceived by applicants as invasive and humiliating, functioned as a form of biopolitical gatekeeping that disciplined and *anatomised* migrant bodies before entry to the country. The possession of ideal physical health conditions and provable fitness for labour, from facial features to intimate body parts that had previously undergone surgery, were constructed not merely as administrative requirements but as foundational criteria for the documentation of entry permits and the ratification of employment. Such criteria reflect a broader logic of operational selectivity, whereby the migrant body is produced as a legible entity only to the extent that it aligns with normative national ideals of productivity, health, and economic effectiveness. Institutional experiences of guest workers signify temporarily and contextually different dynamics from the recent migration waves to Germany, but this very institutional gaze motivated me to explore how trans migrant bodies are gazed at today through both documentational and physical materiality.

Considering that the ways of finding and sharing information on bodily and spatial transition processes require a particular proximity within institutional milieus in addition to trans migrants and communities, I employ the term intimacy in connection with the dynamic and dialectical relationship between body and space. Ken Plummer uses the term intimacy by referring »to an array of arenas in which we ›do‹ the personal life – doing body work, doing gender, doing relationships, doing eroticism, and doing identities« (2005, 77). Similar to the way Plummer (2003) defines it, I consider institutional practices within medicine and law as spaces of »the intimate«, due to their affective and material gaze on trans ways of being in the world. The state – and the institutions governed by the state – appear most intimate precisely where recognition is most fragmented. Nancy F. Cott states that, »no modern nation ignores the intimate domain, because the population is composed and reproduced there« (2006, 470). This intimate reach produces various forms of proximity for trans migrants, causing uneven and discontinuous connections and encounters in everyday life, which is constantly based on paperwork[6] – one of the central sources of migration fatigue.

Building on this institution-subject tension, I conceptualise *intimate bureaucracies* as paradoxical forms of closeness and relations created by state-governed medico-legal and migration regimes as the systems in which institutions require sustained access to the predominantly intimate dimensions of trans migrant lives: bodies, feelings, relationships, and biographical histories of trans. These forms of intimacy are not situated in reciprocality or decision-making. They are, instead, grounded in asymmetrical power relations, which reveal and impose themselves through systemic documentation practices, administrative surveillance, medical evaluations, and legal categorisations – also an attempt to make trans bodies manageable and controllable by state-governed institutions. At this point, intimacy becomes a technique of biopolitics and state governance – particularly governance through invasive proximity rather than at a distance by penetrating deeply into every moment of trans everyday life (Berlant 1998; Spade 2011; Snorton 2017; Zengin 2024). Aslı Zengin (2016) suggests that trans bodies are produced within national institutional frameworks as medico-legal objects. They are exercised through nuanced forms of regulation as

6 Literature on paper politics and the governing dimensions of administrative documents shows that documents are not merely records of bureaucratic trajectories but active and strategic tools that shape how people, legal rights, and social relations become legible to institutions. Paperwork, especially in the context of migration, might produce legal insecurity, differentiated forms of inclusion, and regulated everyday access to recognition, services, and rights. These administrative documentation processes, thus, contribute to the stabilisation of social orders by translating multilayered and complex lives into administratively recognisable categories. For extensive discussions on the politics of paper/paperwork and the governing dimensions of administrative documents, see Hull (2012); Horton/Heyman (2020); Nakueira (2024).

institutional products, shaping lived experiences in ways that are simultaneously personal and profoundly political. It emerges in my fieldwork that this production extends beyond the borders of a single nation-state, but is multiplicated across transnational regimes.

Navigating legal health insurance in Germany also prominently demonstrates this global dynamic. Sergen recounts that the health insurance provider refused to fund testosterone shots despite the fact that covering considerably more intrusive and costly surgical gender-affirming procedures is legally required. On the other hand, once he was identified as a cis(passing)-man, he was repeatedly asked to explain why his paperwork required him to be registered as female/*Frau* in Germany.

During our conversations, Sergen often shared his tiredness of feeling obliged to give never-ending explanations, because he has been hearing the same question since he started to live in Germany as a cis-passing person:

> »›Wait, you were a man and now you will be a woman?‹ And they needed to confirm this again and again. I mean, I would like to be registered as *Herr*, but all of your documents should correspond to your official identity, because you are not a citizen of this country, and when there is a mistake, it would easily haunt you rather than the insurance company or other official actors.« (Interview with Sergen on 31.1.2021)

Gender, here, does not navigate smoothly across institutional contexts: it requires perpetual re-articulation. I had known Sergen for three to four years from Turkey when I first began researching trans migrations in Germany. I had seen first hand how he dealt with bureaucratic challenges and the non-bureaucratic institutional structures that affected trans daily lives. These structures were unstable and constantly evolving in Turkey due to political uncertainty. Although there were many other reasons to have anxiety in Turkey as a trans person, the causes of worries were different for him due to the social and financial facets and layers of intimate interventions. Sergen's story highlights yet another way that bureaucratic procedures profoundly impact the lives of trans migrants in transnational frameworks. Despite obtaining deficit-oriented psychiatric and endocrinological evaluations through comprehensive documentation and state-approved procedures, he did not manage to fulfil the institutional prerequisites for official gender-affirming care – except for a report enabling him to access testosterone shots – in Turkey. His efforts in Turkey did not result in recognition in Germany either at first. However, the pressure of queer and trans activist efforts enabled him to retrieve his acquired rights.

Intimate Bureaucracies

This incompatibility entangles trans lives in multiple layers of legal, cultural, social, and institutional precarity. The regulatory architectures surrounding migration, gender recognition, and socio-cultural legibility require continuous negotiations. Trans migrants are compelled to manage fluid and multipositional identities across both institutional and public domains. In order to analyse this process, I borrow the concept of *bureaucratic intimacies* from Elif Babül (2017). She employs the term to

analyse the negotiations in Turkey on human rights training programmes, European integration processes, and, most importantly, human rights translations for government workers. Her study reveals the sensitivities, moralities, and rationalities that shape the governmental field in Turkey. I have also been inspired by Lauren Berlant's (1998) discussions on the institutions of intimacy. I use the term *intimate bureaucracies* in my analysis as it captures the paradoxical coexistence of affective proximity and structural alienation that emerges in everyday encounters with and within state institutions. These institutions exert intimate forms of regulation over trans lives, shaping the contours of lived experience in ways that are both personal and deeply political. Zengin (2016) also suggests that the trans body is approached and produced as a medico-legal product within national institutional frameworks. I am interested in how such intimate forms of regulations and institutional practices, and their (im)possibilities function within transnational contexts. I want to focus particularly on the question of how trans bodies and trans bodies' materiality are monitored by the institutional gaze and how this mostly medico-legal gaze collects and categorises intimate information on bodily materiality. Furthermore, I am interested in the possible overlap of this with migratory processes that are quite similar in terms of the categorisation – and colonisation – of identities and bodies. The question of who is and can be deemed ›trans enough‹, ›queer enough‹, or ›persecuted enough‹ leads to a surprising insight: the state appears most intimately when recognition is partial and fragmented.

These interactional experiences, characterised by ambiguity, confusion, repetition, and the demand for explanation regarding bodily materiality, cause incidents demonstrating how bureaucratic regimes come into friction and clash with trans lives. This friction[7] is not only an administrative disruption or technical inconvenience but also, or rather, a constituting feature of governance. Sergen is surveilled and gazed at in detail through his documentation medico-legally, but not recognised as a coherent subject by mismatching his recognition across institutions and documents. The requirement that all documents align with a singular and coherent *official identity*, particularly for non-citizens, exacerbates this vulnerability. Any inconsistency represents a potential risk, one that affects – or haunts – the individual rather than the institutions themselves. Consequently, bureaucratic intimacies become inherently linked to vulnerability, binding trans migrants to systems that simultaneously demand their compliance and expose them to harm. This mismatch is further exacerbated by the proliferation of transnational bureaucratic regimes. The regulatory substructures of Turkey and Germany dictate distinct – and frequently incompatible – normative yet ever-changing expectations regarding gender, embodiment, and juridical subjectivity. Medico-legal recognition achieved in one context or temporality may result in incoherence in another: a gender marker, medical classification, or legal status that is already recognised within one national framework may be rendered invalid or contradictory in another. And this does not simply cause a lack of recognition but the very production of mismatched realities.

The dialogue with Sergen that I shared above illuminates how these realities are perceived and – if possible – negotiated. He confronts his own experiences with trans folk who hold citizenship in Germany, underlining differences in temporal access to information, legal rights, and precarity. He acknowledges that discrimination and invisibility exist in Germany but also stresses that these experiences are not very

7 I employ the term friction within the same conceptual framework as Tsing's (2005). For a highly detailed and metaphorical exploration of the frictions that have inspired research across many disciplines, see Stoler (2002).

comparable to the state of affairs in Turkey, especially in terms of everyday security and employment. However, the presence of rights does not function ubiquitously for everyone and must be effectively claimed: »You have them if you know how to fight for them.« This sentence reminds us that availability and access to rights are mediated by the ability to navigate bureaucratic friction as a critical dimension of *intimate bureaucracies*. For this very reason, rights are not granted; they are achieved through tenacity, access to knowledge, and exhaustion by resonating with Babül's (2017) research on bureaucratic processes in Turkey, in which state practices take form through moral sensibilities and flexibility.

Mismatched Lives, Frictional Encounters

I would like to share insights from an interview with another research interlocutor, Sinan, a transmasculine person, doing a Ph.D. and working, like Sergen, at a German university. Unlike Sergen, he started his gender-affirming processes in Germany:

> »I am currently committed to German law, more precisely, let's say I have subjected myself to German law … In order for this marriage to be valid in Turkey, I still need to have my reproductive organs removed, but my own personal plan already includes this; this does not include the part that binds Turkey and most likely it will not, though.« (Interview with Sinan on 09.2.2021)

Sinan explained why he was making efforts to come to Germany in particular as follows:

> »It's very clear: I came here specifically because of the trans rights, the laws, and the healthcare options. I mean, the laws are brilliant, and the health-care system is great … No one asks you for anything here, and these health insurance organisations are actually obliged to cover all the costs.« (Interview with Sinan on 09.2.2021)

This explanation positions Germany as a site of prospective safety, institutional care, and recognition which is framed through a comparison embodied by the gender-affirming care system in Turkey. However, he first stressed the urgency of leaving Turkey, positioning migration not as mobility but as a compulsory response to uneven and precarious conditions in Turkey. On the other hand, his predicted and imagined realities in Germany – as a place where trans lives are anticipated to be less precarious and more liveable – are attached to certainty and clarity: »It's very clear.« For this very reason, he had planned to start his gender-affirming process in Germany when he was still in Turkey. He waited to have access to legal health insurance throughout his master's studies. In a similar way to Sinan, most of my interlocutors had waited and/or planned to start gender-affirming care in Germany for different reasons, such as self-preservation from everyday discrimination and violence, unemployment and unstable socio-economic conditions, and a lack of basic human rights' implementation. These imaginaries as a secure and rights-based location, however, were accompanied by an awareness of the ambivalences and exclusions

embedded within Germany. Some interlocutors also reflected on discriminatory experiences within medico-legal institutions, and housing and labour markets, as well as growing anxieties about the rise of right-wing and anti-gender politics in Europe. Even though Germany has continued to be perceived as offering comparatively broader access to gender-affirming care and (medico-)legal recognition than Turkey, this did not simply translate into a sense of long-term security. It is, therefore, crucial to mention that Germany has emerged simultaneously as a space of possibility and regulation, inclusion and exclusion, where trans migrants continuously negotiate precarious forms of liveability under changing and shifting sociopolitical conditions.

Following his gender-affirmation, Sinan subsequently got married to his partner in Germany, where same-sex marriage is legally recognised as distinct from Turkey. He interprets this process in connection with the occurrence of a double reality arising from both the legal recognition of gender identity and marriage:

> »I will go and receive consultancy (from German institutions): ›Tell me what documents are needed here (to apply for citizenship). One year is left, I can only collect the documents in one year, maybe even earlier because look, while I am a completely different person in my own country, I am a different person here: I'm married here, I'm a man; I'm a woman there, I'm single, so let's sort this out,‹ then maybe something extra can be done.« (Interview with Sinan on 9.2.2021)

Sinan's statement here captures the condition of a »double life« rebelliously and humorously by pragmatically repurposing it to shorten the waiting time for acquiring German citizenship (Koruyucu 2025, 185). The emphasis on a double life does not simply demonstrate differentiated social roles, but indicates the administrative production of multiplied selves across national frameworks. Being *a completely different person*, thus, does not express an internal perception of multiplicity but institutionally constituted ruptures, which compel the subject to adopt distinct and sometimes incompatible configurations of selfhood in response to various institutional gazes. This discrepancy constitutes not only the dichotomous review of instability-irregularity but also a possible evolvement in which bureaucratic inconsistency might be consolidated. At this point, cross-national inconsistencies might enable trans migrants, such as Sinan, to tactically – and productively – engage with intimate bureaucracies.

This disjuncture between two national bureaucratic systems intensified the affective burden of migration. In Sergen's case, the very same documents that had already cost years of mental, emotional, and social labour in Turkey were rendered insufficient or invalid. This mismatch led Sergen into even more intimate encounters within German institutions. In practice, this meant exposing immensely personal medical information – including details about his surgical history and hormone usage – not only to health insurance providers but also to non-governmental organisation workers and even human resources personnel at his workplace. On the other hand, Sinan started his gender-affirming processes in Germany as he planned prior to migration, but, again, this manoeuvre did not automatically mean that his experiences are free of negotiations. The production of double-life realities does not simply cause multiple ways of living in the world but, instead, it might function as a slippage which creates a potential for »getting lost« – a strategic use of *multiple selves* enabling trans migrants to find »off-track forms of resistance« (Koruyucu 2025, 188).

My fieldwork does not include people who have migrated to or sought asylum in Germany officially, or at least on paper, *solely* based on their gender identity or orientation. However, my interlocutors' experiences demonstrate that the post-migratory processes pose various institutional and medical challenges, especially for those who have undergone gender-affirming care. Health insurance companies play a critical role as implementing agencies. What trans migrants experience today within medico-legal structures is based on individualised responsibility of the healthcare perceivers/users. This stands contrary to the fact that gender-affirming care is officially covered by the statutory health insurance, regardless of the individual life/health situations of the residents. What is gazed at in trans migrant bodies – as well as documentation on bodies – has strong connections with the bio-medicalisation and psycho-pathologisation framework, which has increased the individual responsibility of healthcare recipients for their own health (Clarke et al. 2003). This stands in line with neoliberal discourses and subjectification processes approaching one's own health as a moral duty (ibid., 181).

Potentiality of (Forced) Deliberate Multiple Realities

Intimate bureaucracies apparently cannot fully discipline trans lives in transnational contexts. Loopholes, ambivalences, and ungovernability always remain. While I am – explicitly – aware of how exhausting, invasive, and challenging these institutional dynamics are for trans migrants, I also call upon engaging these processes through a more productive perspective. Experiences within these institutional milieus constitute sites enabling institutional rupture and dissonance in which the states' ideals on bureaucratic coherence and predictability reveal their own discrepancies. Regulating and governing projects of nation-states' administrative regimes towards populations through stabilised identities, predictable bodies, and rationalised subjectivities might result in generating the unpredictability and plurality they are committed to suppressing.[8] Requiring trans migrants to obtain and retain fixed identities, consistent narratives, and provable histories ends up being unreflective of the lived experiences which are reshaped through precarity, mobility, and shifting identity positions. Rather than perceiving these institutional interactions simply through the lens of marginalisation, I contend that the intimate bureaucratic structures also produce bureaucratic multiplicities themselves – contradictory, unpredictable, and asynchronous realities.

Intimate workings of state-governed institutions have tendencies of governing affective relationality of belonging and endurance. Jasbir Puar (2007) showed that institutional interventions on bodies fragment life by decelerating and subdividing them through structural and systemic expectations. While enduring the demanding institutional regulations, trans migrants resist and repurpose them by becoming trained navigators of incompatible regimes of legitimacy rather than simply victims

8 I was unable to discuss this in the present article due to its contextual limitations. However, the gaze on the streets and within social life is differentiated based on body features and expectations regarding passing – as cis/trans, PoC/white, gendered, and racialised bodily codes. Intimacy exists not only on the medico-legal plane but very much on the streets, involving experiences that significantly shape trans everyday life. Simultaneously, temporality also shifts according to these institutional contexts, in which everyday experiences vary considerably depending on the cultural codes of the space and location, as well as policing strategies. In Germany, these experiences take on new forms of intimacy in relation to the police and security institutions, the Criminal Report Check system, and systematic, structured, or socially internalised racism.

of the systemic intimate bureaucracies. It is crucial to mention here that I suggest that intimate bureaucratic structures open up spaces for multiple and unstable realities to emerge, while making insistent efforts to impose the opposite, rather than romanticising the exhaustion they create for trans migrants.

Tsing's (2005) conceptualisation of friction enables us to read bureaucracy not as a simple top-down instrument of administration and governance but as a site bearing potentials for resistance and creative interconnection across differences. Considered together with regulations and documentation on gendered bodies and trans subjectivities, intimacies occur through uneven frictional encounters by causing constitutive paradoxes. Tsing's conceptual vocabulary can be reoriented here through the notion of rupture, understood not as an exceptional break but as a processual condition through which uneven temporalities, affective residues, and institutional logics are carried continuously. Rupture refers here to the shared and intersubjective character of experience that unfolds over time, rather than isolated moments of crisis. This conceptualisation captures how overlapping regimes of governance remain transnationally entangled, and bureaucratic logics are carried across migration processes and inscribed into embodied practices of gender-affirmation, documentation, and survival. In the example of *Türkiyeli* trans migrants, Turkey and Germany do not simply present unconsolidated regimes, but rather their interconnectedness generates overlaps. Both Sergen's narration of his experience with the health insurance company and Sinan's articulation of a *double life*, thus, signify the institutional navigation and daily implication of persisting bureaucratically layered ruptures across multiplied political regimes. Ruptures that bring harm and exhaustion simultaneously unravel the limitations of bureaucratic projects of standardisation and inflexibility. Consequently, trans migrants' strategic navigation of these ruptures manifests the failure of intimate bureaucratic architectures to govern migration without leaving a remainder behind.

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