

countered, and reimagined by the population" (Sharma & Gupta, quoted in Hull 2012: 26). But also within the structures proceduralism and aesthetics, the observance of „the correct bureaucratic rule“, or the use of the properly patterned language, can be of higher importance than the actual content of a document itself (Riles 1998).

Looking into structured documents, the connection between the materiality and performativity of these artifacts becomes more explicit. Structured documents make the content valid to be entered predictable. They act like a recording medium in a procedure (Lee 1980: 7–8) that filters unlimited diversity, and therefore reality (Star & Lapland 2009: 8). If we for example consider gender queries in standardized forms, we can easily see that all people not identifying with the binary gender system are being filtered out of statistics. Susan Leigh Star and Martha Lampland (2009: 8) indicate that such performatives become problematic in various circumstances, as for example minorities can be filtered out of distributive processes. Moreover this example demonstrates how ethics and values can be morally inscribed into seemingly sober standards. On a positive record though, just as making things invisible, standards can help pushing forward positive change, such as the inclusion of environmental standards into trade, for example (ibid.).

Another factor increasing and complicating bureaucratic procedures is the diffusion of responsibility (Lee 1980; Hull 2012: 115). As Lee (1980: 8) specifies, it is the act of giving permission that in many cases causes significant delay, because the initial action is being divided into sub-levels of granting permission, which of course causes wait times at each step of the queue. This can especially be observed with controversial cases, which then go up and down the organizational hierarchy, for no official alone wants to take responsibility and thus diffuses the process of permission (Hull 2012: 126). „I argue, rather, that the intensification of file-mediated decision making undermines the ability of superiors to isolate individual functionaries and hold