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Letter to the editor

The author's reply

I appreciate the letter by Nashan [1] in response to my article titled "A revealing scandal: The German transplant scandal between structural failures, moralizing rules, and ambivalent manipulations" [2]. In response to his comments, I would like to make the following clarifications.

I am grateful for the two missing references by Nashan et al. [3,4], which provide an inside perspective on transplantation in Germany by renowned medical and legal experts, who have shaped the German transplantation system for decades. In these articles, as well as in his reply, Nashan gives more detailed information about the changes and consequences that followed the scandal, all aimed at making the processes more transparent and scientifically based. My article, as Nashan mentions, serves as an "outside view". As such, it offers an anthropological analysis of the German transplant scandal, based on a variety of methods such as participant observation, narrative interviews, document and media analysis, which takes into account contextual and more structural factors that led to or were revealed by the transplant scandal. These more structural aspects, which are closely linked to the country's federal political system, have also been identified elsewhere as problematic factors [5,6].

One of the main points of my article concerns the moralizing features of the six-month abstinence rule, which remains in place. While Nashan provides more detailed information on the revised guidelines for organ allocation to patients with alcoholic disease, he gives no further information on the six-month abstinence rule and its current state of implementation.

Clearly, the German transplant system has introduced significant changes to improve its transplant system, such as the introduction of an

interdisciplinary transplant conference in 2018. Nevertheless, structural issues remain, and the persistently low number of organ donations is just one factor that reveals challenges for the national transplant system at a more structural level. It is these broader factors and their impact on individual lives and everyday life that an anthropological analysis allows.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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