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Cathrine Bublatzky (Heidelberg)

## Photo-Documentation and Post-Truth?! The Role of Press Photo Awards and Transnational Representation Politics in Iranian Photo-Documentation

The international World Press Photo 2017 awarded the second place in the long-term project category to the Iranian photographer Hossein Fatemi and his project *An Iranian Journey*. The nomination sparked a controversy among professional photojournalists when an external report revealed some photographs of the documentary series as being staged. While discussions in online blogs and forums critically questioned the ethics of both, the profession of photojournalism as well as of international photo award committees, the notion of 'self-Orientalist' imagery became a serious issue that several respondents in the field of photojournalism indicated throughout this controversy. Whereas the journalism industry can be accused for supporting self-oriental imagery, it is the aim of this paper to provide critical insights into the complex and contested regime of the photographic situation (Ariella Azoulay), the notion of truth telling, and the inherent practices of contemporary cultural representation that affects photographers and photographed persons alike. This talk refers to the recent research about Iranian photographers who live and work in the European Diaspora and my interest in investigating photography as central cultural practice of negotiating identification and belonging in transnational migration contexts.

Cathrine Bublatzky is a trained photographer and anthropologist based at the Heidelberg Centre for Transcultural Studies (Heidelberg University) where she holds the position as assistant professor at the department of Visual and Media Anthropology. After her studies in South Asian History and Visual Anthropology and a PhD project about contemporary Indian art and related politics of representation in the international art world, she is currently working on migrated professional photographers from Iran who live and work in the European Diaspora. In her publications, research and teaching she focuses on contemporary art, migration, photography, and the regions of Europe, South Asia and Middle East. In 2017 she was awarded a fellowship from the ELITE Postdoc-Program (Baden Württemberg Foundation) for her project "Contemporary photography as a cultural practice by diasporic Iranians in Europe" (2017–2020), and in 2018 a research grant by the German Research Foundation for the scientific network "Entangled Histories of Art and Migration: Forms, Visibilities, Agents" (2018–2021).

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**Wo?** Hörsaal 14 / Großer Übungsraum (Raum 01-715), Forum 7, Becherweg 4, 1. Stock,

**Weitere Informationen:** [www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de](http://www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de)