

**Schmidt Johanna Maj**

**A Show of Hyper-piety? – IS' Destruction of World Heritage and the Outcry of the International Public  
no paper**

Set in the context of the deliberate destruction of world heritage by IS that has been geared towards the media and the international outcry that such actions provoke, I seek to demonstrate that the very meaning of and relation to objects, as the ancient artefacts in Mosul, needs to be taken into account from different perspectives. Why and by whom is the destruction of these statues condemned? And why does IS see the destruction of these “idols” as a necessity? In reference to Saba Mahmood, I argue that the different registers of rage or injury that are expressed by the provocateurs and the public are grounded on different semiotic and ethical norms. I claim that the common interpretation of IS' acts of destruction as a political “show of hyper-piety” is based on the Protestant semiotic ideology and unable to see aspects of theological reasoning that are expressed in IS' iconoclasm.

**Bio:**

Johanna Maj Schmidt obtained her undergraduate degree in Politics, English-Speaking Culture, and Performance Studies at the University of Bremen. She completed a masters programme in Art and Politics at Goldsmiths University of London and, as an Intercollegiate, she took part in the MSc Comparative Political Thought at SOAS, School of Oriental and African Studies. She has been a speaker at conferences at Oxford University, SOAS, and at the Annual Conference of the Society for Intercultural Philosophy at the University of Vienna. Johanna is currently enrolled at the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, the art academy of Leipzig, in the Media Art programme.

