



LECTURE BY DR. MOHAMMAD MAGOUT

## OTHERNESS IN THE OTTOMAN SYRIAN PRESS: REPRESENTATIONS OF SOCIAL DEVIANCE AND RELIGIOUS HETERODOXY

While *Otherness* has been a central topic of research about Western perspectives on “the Orient”, the concept has rarely been addressed in research about perspectives from the Orient on the rest of the world.

However, the Ottoman Syrian press that emerged in the final decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century contained its own representations of “the other(s)”. This otherness was in part a reproduction of Western notions of otherness or their re-orientation by urban elites toward marginal communities in their vicinity. Yet it also contained elements from traditional sources in the region, especially in relation to heterodox religious minorities in Syria such as Alawites, Ismailis, and Yazidis.

The lecture will explore some of the notions of otherness as articulated in a number of early Arabic periodicals founded by Ottoman Syrian journalists and their diaspora and place them within the ideological and intellectual landscape at the time.

Mohammad Magout is a postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Islamic Studies, Freie Universität Berlin, where he is conducting the research project *Religion in the Early Arabic Press in Beirut: An Intellectual History* (funded by the German Research Association). Magout earned his PhD from the University of Leipzig with a dissertation on Nizari-Isma'ili students in London, which was published under the title *A Reflexive Islamic Modernity: Academic Knowledge and Religious Subjectivity in the Global Ismaili Community* (Ergon, 2020). From 2016 to 2020, he was a senior researcher at the Humanities Center for Advanced Studies “Multiple Secularities: Beyond the West, Beyond Modernities” at the University of Leipzig. Most recently, he carried out research about religion in the life of Emir Abdelkader at the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies, University of Zurich.



**WEDNESDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2024 | 4:15 PM**

**BERLIN GRADUATE SCHOOL MUSLIM CULTURES AND SOCIETIES**

Hittorfstr. 18 | 14195 Berlin