



Max Planck Institute for  
Comparative and International  
Private Law | Hamburg

# AFTERNOON TALKS ON ISLAMIC LAW

*Dr. Gianluca Parolin*

Aga Khan University, London

"HD Jurisprudence.  
Egyptian Television Drama and Marriage Taboos"

Thursday, 5 December 2019 – 4 pm

Conference Room 1, 1<sup>st</sup> floor

All employees and guests of the institute as well as  
other interested parties are cordially invited to the lecture.

Nadjma Yassari

### About the Speaker:

Gianluca is Associate Professor of law at the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations at Aga Khan University, London, where he also leads the Governance Programme. He previously taught at the American University in Cairo and the Cairo University (2008-2015). He holds a PhD in Public Law from the University of Torino (2006). Gianluca's current research interests heavily focus on the transformations of the semiotics of law. Taking Egypt as a case study, he engages with two particular moments: an early articulation of a new semiotics for law and governance in the 19th century and contemporary articulations of different semiotics of law in popular culture.

### About the Topic:

The subject of the talk is part of a larger research interest in what affects our imaginary and expectations of how the law functions (especially in non-institutional or non-institutionally-policed settings). Gianluca has been exploring the functioning of Egypt's legal system through the lens of its extremely popular Ramadan television drama and will discuss some of its potentialities and theoretical underpinnings using the issue of marriage taboos as a case study. In his analysis, he will focus on two aspects of religious marriage in Egypt that escape state control and court enforcement (a non-institutionally-policed setting). In engaging with some fringe aspects of religious marriage, Egyptian television drama tests the boundaries of their social acceptability, sometimes by challenging, sometimes by reinforcing the taboos of its conventional articulation, as in the case of the extremely popular serial *Sābi' Gār*, in which the taboo of interfaith marriages is re-framed within the broader hypocrisy of interfaith social relations, and the non-denominational rules of gendered morality in Egyptian society.