



Max Planck Institute for  
Comparative and International  
Private Law | Hamburg

# AFTERNOON TALKS ON ISLAMIC LAW

*Prof. Arif A. Jamal*

National University of Singapore, Faculty of Law

"Authority and Plurality in Muslim Legal Traditions:  
The Case of Ismaili Law"

Thursday, 14 November 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:

Arif A. Jamal is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore. He studied politics at McGill University and law at the University of Toronto and was called to the Bar of British Columbia. Subsequently, he undertook post-graduate work in the UK earning an LL.M. degree, focusing on Islamic law, at the School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS), and then his doctorate at the Faculty of Laws, University College London (UCL). He has held visiting appointments with the law schools of the University of Trento, Tel Aviv University and City University of Hong Kong. In addition, he has been a Visiting Researcher with the Islamic Legal Studies Program at Harvard Law School and an academic visitor at the law schools of the University of Auckland and the University of British Columbia. Arif's research and teaching interests include law and religion, law in Muslim contexts, and legal and political theory.

### About the Topic:

Islamic law is often said to be very pluralistic due to its interpretational variations. At the level of sources, however, accounts of Islamic law have generally emphasized the reliance on a set of major 'roots' of law, with other lesser sources. This talk discusses on the case of Nizari Ismaili law in historical as well as contemporary terms, elaborating its authority structure, especially the concept of Imamatus and the role of the Imam, as well as using it to strengthen the case that plurality in Islamic law can and should be extended to a plurality of sources as well as of rules.