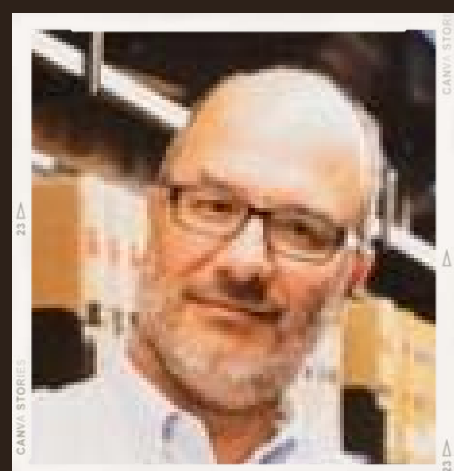


COMPARATIVE PUBLIC LAW
SPEAKER SERIES

CONSTITUENT POWER IN MULTILEVEL CONSTITUTIONS: THEORY, COMPARISON AND CASE SELECTION

SPEAKER:



PROFESSOR NICHOLAS ARONEY
THE UNIVERSITY OF
QUEENSLAND

MODERATOR:



**ADJUNCT PROFESSOR
KEVIN Y L TAN**
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF
SINGAPORE

**Wednesday 6 August 2025
5.00PM TO 6.30PM (SGT)
Block B Classroom 3-6
NUS (Bukit Timah Campus)**

Register here by 3 August:
<https://tinyurl.com/cals250806>
For enquiries, email cals@nus.edu.sg



COMPARATIVE PUBLIC LAW SPEAKER SERIES

CONSTITUENT POWER IN MULTILEVEL CONSTITUTIONS: THEORY, COMPARISON AND CASE SELECTION

ABSTRACT

The theory of constituent power offers a way of making sense of the proposition, core to the self-understanding of contemporary liberal-democracies, that popular power is the source of legitimate public authority. However, federations and other multilevel systems present a puzzle for the concept of constituent power. This is because constituent power is usually attributed to a unified people, whereas federal systems are often predicated on the existence of a plurality of constituent peoples.

With some limited exceptions, there has been little examination of how a pluralised locus of constituent power might function in federal and multilevel systems. This gap in the literature is significant because there are many prominent federal and multilevel democracies in which the nature and locus of constituent power has had important legal ramifications, such as Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Malaysia and the United States, as well as, in a different way, the European Union.

This paper will examine the possibility of a pluralised concept of constituent power and explore its ramifications for constitutional law. It will approach the question both theoretically and empirically, closing with some remarks about comparative methodology and case selection in the study of plural constituent power.

SPEAKERS' BIO



PROFESSOR NICHOLAS ARONEY (THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND)

Nicholas Aroney is Professor of Constitutional Law and Executive Director, Centre for Public, International and Comparative Law at the University of Queensland. He is also an External Fellow of the Center for Law and Religion at Emory University. His work focuses on constitutional law, comparative federalism and law and religion. His books include: *The Constitution of a Federal Commonwealth: The Making and Meaning of the Australian Constitution* (Cambridge, 2009), *Sharia in the West* (2010), *The Future of Australian Federalism* (Cambridge, 2012), *The Constitution of the Commonwealth of Australia: History, Principle and Interpretation* (Cambridge, 2015), *Courts in Federal Systems: Unitarists or Federalists?* (Toronto, 2017), *The Routledge Handbook of Subnational Constitutions and Constitutionalism* (Routledge, 2021) and *Christianity and Constitutionalism* (Oxford 2022).



ADJUNCT PROFESSOR KEVIN Y L TAN (NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE)

Kevin YL Tan specialises in constitutional and Administrative Law, the Singapore Legal System, Singapore Legal History and International Human Rights. He is Adjunct Professor at the Faculty of Law, National University of Singapore and Senior Research Fellow at the S Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University. He has published widely in his fields of expertise and is author and editor of over 60 books on law, history and politics. He is also currently Editor in Chief of the *Asian Journal of Comparative Law*.