

Dr. Thaatchaayini Kananatu

Contact

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Profile

Academic with lecturing experience, teaching law for both undergraduates and postgraduates. Chevening Scholar with multidisciplinary research interest in socio-legal scholarship, legal mobilisation, as well as in the intersections of law, race and gender.

Academic Work Experience

July 2016 – current

**Lecturer in Law at Department of Business Law & Taxation,
School of Business, Monash University, Malaysia**

Teaching: Currently Chief Examiner, Unit Coordinator and Lecturer for *Ethics and Global Corporate Governance*, and *International Trade Law* for postgraduate students undertaking the Master of International Business; and *International Trade Law* for undergraduate students. Previously lectured *Corporate Social Responsibility and Business Ethics*, and tutored *Malaysian Business Law*. Maintained an average SETU score of 4.5/5.

Teaching & Learning Initiatives: Developed assessments and marking rubrics using the Research Skills Development (RSD) Framework for the International Trade Law module; Completed the Foundation for Effective Teaching under the Monash Continuing Education Excellence Development (CEED) programme; Developed the unit *Ethics and Global Corporate Governance*.

Engagement:

Department coordinator (2019 onwards), School coordinator for the Diploma in Higher Education Studies (DHES) programme (2017 – ongoing); School Academic Progress Committee member (2018 – ongoing); RSD Adoption and Dissemination Committee (2018 – ongoing); Committee member of the International Conference of Gender and Sexuality in Asia (COGEN) 2018; Committee member of the Genderworks Conference 2017; Mentor for the Sudanese Refugee community-based organisation under the Social Protection Fund for Refugees Project with UNHCR (2018).

March 2015 – June 2016

**Law Lecturer at Centre for Commercial Law and Justice,
Sunway Business School, Sunway University, Malaysia**

Teaching: Lectured and tutored for the subjects: *Law and Society* (1st Year BSc. Psychology), *Business Law* (1st Year Business), *Introduction to Law* (Diploma in Business).

Teaching & Learning Initiatives: Selected for the Employee Development Programme at Lancaster University, United Kingdom (14th – 18th March 2016).

Engagement:

Research Committee member for the Association to Advanced Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation (2016).

May 2009 – November 2014
Lecturer at Monash University, Malaysia (Sessional)

Teaching: Lectured *Media Law* and *Global Cities* at the School of Arts and Social Sciences as well as tutored in *Cultural & Communication Policy*. Tutored in *Business Law* at the Department of Business Law & Taxation, School of Business. Guest Lecture on *Social Movements and the Law* in the Contemporary Issues in Asia Module (Masters Programme in the School of Arts and Social Sciences).

Also lectured *Malaysian Constitutional & Administrative Law* at Taylor's Law School, Taylor's University, Malaysia (August - December 2014).

October 2006 – May 2009
Law Lecturer at Taylor's Law School, Taylor's University, Malaysia

Teaching: Lectured for the University of Reading (U.K.) LLB Law twinning programme. Conducted lectures and tutorials for second year undergraduate students in *Equity & Trust* and *International Law*.

Engagement:

Organizer and Academic Advisor for the Human Rights Colloquium in 2009; Academic advisor for the Law Debate Society, Coach for the Taylor's law moot team that participated in the LAWASIA Moot Competition 2008 and Phillip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition 2008.

Education

2010 – 2014 Monash University, Malaysia
PhD in Arts

Obtained a PhD with distinction (Pass With No Amendments).

Title of the PhD thesis is *The Mobilization of Indians in Malaysia: The Role of the Law in Ethno-Cultural Minority Mobilization* (e-thesis link: <http://arrow.monash.edu.au/hdl/1959.1/965727>).

A sociolegal study that explored the role of the law and rights in contentious or social movement politics of an ethno-cultural minority group in Malaysia. The research took an innovative multidisciplinary approach by using sociolegal and politico-legal theories as well as a single case-study method to develop a unique theoretical framework. Conducted extensive interviews of political leaders, lawyers, non-governmental organizations and community leaders to gather empirical data. This was used to investigate to what extent international human rights law, Malaysian constitutional rights and civil liberties were used to frame the social grievances and injustice experienced by the Indian minority group in Malaysia. The research broke new grounds in understanding the link between law, rights and ethno-cultural (or racial) minorities in illiberal democratic or authoritarian political settings which can be applied to countries like Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka. The research found gaps in the study of human rights in illiberal polities and the study of human rights consciousness in grassroots or bottom-up mobilization of vulnerable groups such as minorities.

The thesis was reviewed by Dr. Petra Mahy, Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, University of Oxford. See: <http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/12505>.

**2001–2002 Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, United Kingdom
LLM/Masters in International Law**

Completed a Masters degree by dissertation in International Law with focus on human rights, minority rights, state relations, bilateral and multilateral treaties, international and transnational organizations like the United Nations and the International Court of Justice. The following sub-specializations were undertaken:

- *International Human Rights Law*: Researched and produced a paper on racial minorities. The Masters dissertation was on *The Right to Self-Determination and Minority Protection: A Case of the Tamils in Sri Lanka*. The dissertation explored the tension between secession, autonomy, minority rights under international human rights law and the state's right to sovereignty.
- *International Law*: Participated in a Model United Nations, representing Malaysia in an international security issue. Presented a paper at the International Law Colloquium in Oxford Brookes University on the role of minority protection in anti-terrorism as well as internal security laws and regulations.
- *International Banking Law*: Researched and wrote a paper on the legal implications of electronic banking and cross-border financial transactions.

Obtained a distinction in International Law and a merit in International Banking Law, International Human Rights Law, Advanced Legal Research Methodology and the Masters dissertation.

**1997–1999 Cardiff University, Wales, United Kingdom
LLB/Bachelor of Laws (Honours)**

Graduated with a second class honours degree. Subjects completed included Equity & Trusts, Evidence, European Community Law, Company Law, Discrimination & Law, Land Law, Maritime Law, Sociology of Law, and Tort. First year subjects completed in INTI College, Malaysia were English Legal System, Constitutional Law, Criminal Law, Contract Law and Legal Skills.

**Professional
Qualifications**

**1999 - 2000 Legal Profession Qualifying Board, Malaysia
Certificate of Legal Practice (CLP)/ Malaysian Bar Examination**

Passed in first sitting. Subjects completed: Civil Procedure, Criminal Procedure, Evidence, General Paper (Contract & Tort), & Professional Practice (Land Law, Advocacy, Ethics, Bankruptcy & Probate).

**Scholarships/
Awards**

2010 – 2013 Monash University Higher Research Degree Scholarship
A full sponsorship of PhD tuition fees for three and half years with stipend.

1997 – 1999 British High Commissioners Chevening Award
A sponsorship of tuition fees for two years of law undergraduate studies.

**Academic
Publications**

Journal Articles:

Goh, J. N., & Kananatu, T. (2019). Mak nyahs and the dismantling of dehumanisation: Framing empowerment strategies of Malaysian male-to-female transsexuals in the 2000s. *Sexualities*, 22(1–2), 114-130.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1363460717740256>

Kananatu, T. (2018). The Politico-Legal Mobilisation of Ethnic Indians before Malaysia's 2018 Election. *The Round Table*, 107(6), 703-716.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00358533.2018.1545938>

French, J., Koh, S. M., & Kananatu, T. (2018). The 14th General Elections and the Changing Business Environment in a “New” Malaysia. *Journal of International Business Education*, 13, .
<http://www.neilsonjournals.com/JIBE/abstractjibe13newmalaysia.html>

Book chapters:

Kananatu, T. (2016). A Sociolegal Study of the Indian Minority in Malaysia. In D. Jayasooria & K.S. Nathan (Eds.), *Contemporary Malaysian Indians* (pp.173-188). Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia.

Other publications:

Kananatu, T. (2017). Law, Gender and Mobilisation: The Case of the *Mak Nyahs* in Malaysia. *Praxis* (Thomson Reuters).

Kananatu, T. (2016). Young Indian Women in Malaysia & the Eleventh Malaysia Plan: Beneficiary or Blindspot? In *Reviewing the 11th Malaysia Plan (2016-2020): Tapping the Opportunities & Plugging Into the Provisions* (pp.71-73). Kuala Lumpur: Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia.

Kananatu, T. (2012, October 23). Gay Activism in Singapore: A Review of “How Does Law Matter to Social Movements? A Case Study of Gay Activism in Singapore” by Lynette Janice Chua. *Dissertation Reviews*. Retrieved from <http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/1538>

**Non-Academic
Publications**

Fictional work:

Kananatu, T. (2018). The Bundle and the Suitcase. In D. Mukherjee & S. Bakar (Eds.), *Bitter Root, Sweet Fruit* (pp.192-205). Petaling Jaya: Word Works.

Kananatu, T. (2007). In God's Belly. In D. Mukherjee (Ed.), *Silverfish New Writing* (pp.123-135). Kuala Lumpur: Silverfish.

Editorial work:

Aruleswaran A. (2010). *Changing with Lean Six Sigma*. Amazon.

**Conferences/
Presentations**

Academic conferences:

12th – 14th November 2018 - Monash University, Malaysia

Presented a paper on “Legal Identities, Cross-Dressing, and Gender Dysphoria: Contesting Gender Identity in the Malaysian Courts’ at the *International Conference on Gender and Sexuality in Asia (CoGen)*.

11th – 13th December 2017 - University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia

Presented a refereed paper on ‘Using the Researcher Skill Development Framework to Construct Marking Rubrics for Law Assessments’ at the *International Models of Engaged Teaching and Learning (I-MELT) Conference*.

1st – 3rd December 2016 - Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia

Presented a paper on ‘Law, Race and Group-Differentiated Rights in Malaysia: From the Colonial Past to the Post-Colonial Present’ at the *Law and Society Association of Australia and New Zealand Conference*. Attended the University of Southern Queensland’s *International and Comparative Law Colloquium on Legal Transplants*, 23rd – 24th November 2016.

24th – 25th June 2014 - Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia, Malaysia

Presented policy recommendations in a paper on ‘Law and Minorities: A Case-Study of Indians in Malaysia’ for the 11th Malaysia Plan (2016-2020) *Public Policy Research Consultation on Contemporary Malaysian Indians*.

21st – 23rd March 2013 - KoGuan Law School, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Shanghai, China

Presented a paper on ‘Law, Minority Group Identity and Rights: The Legal Mobilization of Indians in Colonial Malaya (1890-1957)’ at the *Third East Asian Law and Society Conference*.

10th March 2012 - St. Anthony’s College, Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom

Presented a paper on ‘Legal Mobilization in Post-Colonial Malaysia: The Law as a Political Tool for Marginalized Groups’ at the *Southeast Asian Studies Symposium: Contemporary Issues in Southeast Asia*.

13th November 2011 - Monash University, Malaysia

Presented a paper on ‘Law and Mobilization of Ethnic Minority Groups: the Case of the Indian Dalits and Malaysian Indians’ at the *International Young Scholar’s Conference*.

15th October 2008 - University of Malaya, Malaysia

Presented a paper on ‘Strategies and Legal Opportunities for Ethnic Movements in Malaysia’ at the *Proceedings of the International Conference on Ethnic Relations*.

Invited speaker:

25th November 2017 – North-South Initiative, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

Invited to speak on 'The Mobilization of Indians in Malaysia' at a public forum on *Social Movements in Malaysia: From Protest Movements to Reform Movements* organised by Institute of Ethnic Studies, National University of Malaysia.

26th August 2017 – Armada Hotel, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

Invited to speak on ' ' at a public forum on *A National Consultation on Malaysia's Indian Dilemma* organised by the Democratic Action Party of Malaysia.

31st May 2015 – Putra World Trade Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Invited to speak on 'The 11th Malaysia Plan: Perspectives For Young Indian Women in Malaysia' at the *2nd National Symposium on Reviewing the 11th Malaysia Plan (2016-2020): Tapping the Opportunities & Plugging Into the Provisions* organised by the Institute of Ethnic Studies in collaboration with Malaysia's Prime Minister's Department.

**Research
Grants/
Projects**

Monash School of Business Seed Grant – RM 10,000

(25th Jan – 31st December 2018)

Project Title: 'Legal and Policy Protection of Minority Language Education – Tamil Schools in Malaysia'

The study analyses the laws and policies pertaining to minority language education in Malaysia, using the Tamil schools as a case-study.

Monash Education Academy Travel Grant – AUD 2,000

(25th July – 31st December 2017)

External grant awarded to attend and present a refereed paper at the I-MELT Conference in Adelaide, Australia.

Global Asia in the 21st Century Seed Grant – RM10,000
(November 2016 – November 2017)

Project Title: 'Rights, Gender Identity and Ethno-Religious Identity in the Malaysian Legal System (1957 – 2016)'

The study analysed the 1957 Federal Constitution of Malaysia, Malaysian civil laws, Islamic *Syariah* laws, and judicial decisions made from 1957 to 2016, in order to trace the changes in the interpretation and re-interpretation of gender identity as well as ethno-religious identity in the context of rights.

Proficiencies

- Excellent language proficiency in English (Written and Spoken); good proficiency in Bahasa Malaysia (Written and Spoken); and moderate proficiency in Tamil (Written & Spoken).
- Excellent computer proficiency in Google Apps, Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, Excel and Outlook. Experienced in educational software such as Blackboard, Moodle, Panopto, Socrative, and Padlet.
- Excellent researching, writing and editing skills.