

ALEX HASKINS

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EDUCATION

2020 PhD in Political Science, University of Chicago (expected in June)
 2015 MA in Political Science, University of Chicago
 2013 MA in Theological Studies, Harvard Divinity School
Concentrations: Religion, Ethics and Politics; East Asian Religions
 2011 BA in Government & Legal Studies (Honors) and Asian Studies, Bowdoin College

DISSERTATION

“Contested Realms of Empire: Domination and Resistance in Nineteenth-Century China and Japan”

This project interrogates the bounds of empire by recovering neglected discourses of resistance to foreign domination in nineteenth century East Asia. During this period, European empires encountered several difficulties in expanding into East Asia, due in no small part to how actors like the Qing statecraft reformers and Tokugawa daimyo and political elite resisted Western colonial ambitions in these contested spaces. However, recent scholarly accounts have placed too much emphasis on how political elite in China and Japan either modernized technology or pushed for treaty re-negotiation, to the neglect of the broader discourses about domination that informed these efforts. In this project, I argue that by recovering the discourses around domination and resistance, we nuance our theoretical and historical understanding of global realms of empire, but also resist narratives of “Asian modernization”. I do this by foregrounding how the seeds of new understandings of realms of empire in both China and Japan were developed during this period. Drawing on an array of primary sources in classical and modern Chinese and Japanese—some of which have never been translated into English—I foreground the political thought of two influential East Asian scholar-officials: Wei Yuan (1794-1856) and Sakuma Shozan (1811-1864). I contend that their shared framework of “learning foreign conditions to master the foreigners” attempts to resist foreign imperial domination with political, military, and economic techniques of empire.

RESEARCH FIELDS

History of political thought (East Asian, Western European); Modern political thought; Global and comparative political theory; Empire and colonialism; International law & legal thought; Religion & politics

PUBLICATION & WORKING PAPERS

Peer-Reviewed Article

Alex Haskins, “Montesquieu’s Paradoxical Spirit of Moderation: On the Making of Asian Despotism in *De l’esprit des lois*,” *Political Theory* 46, no. 6 (December 2018): 915-37. doi.org/10.1177/0090591718780215

Working Papers

“Law, Trade, and the Problem of Poverty in the Celestial Empire” (under review)

“...To Master the Foreigners’ – Sakuma Shozan on Building Imperial Wealth and Power” (in preparation)

“Using Knowledge of Foreign Conditions...’ – Wei Yuan on Scholarship and Foreign Learning” (in preparation)

“Liberty’s Imperial Visions – Tocqueville and Mill on China and the End of Empire” (in preparation)

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, & GRANTS (WHILE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO)

2019-20	Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation MMUF Dissertation Grant (\$25,000)
2019	American Political Science Association (APSA) Travel Grant (\$200)
2019	Ford Foundation Doctoral Fellowship, Honorable Mention
2018-19	Mustard Seed Foundation Harvey Fellowship (\$16,000)
2018	Social Science Research Council Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant (\$500)
2018	American Political Science Association (APSA) Travel Grant (\$200)
2018	UChicago Inclusive Pedagogy Award [in collaboration with Joseph Lampert and Ann Heffernan for <i>Classics of Social and Political Thought II</i>] (\$2500)
2018	Huayu Enrichment Scholarship Award [Chinese language study in Taiwan] (\$1600)
2018	US ED Foreign Language and Area Studies [FLAS] 2018 Summer Fellowship [for Chinese, UChicago] (\$7300)
2018	U.S. Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Critical Language Scholarship (declined)
2017-18	US ED Foreign Language and Area Studies [FLAS] 2017-2018 Academic Year Fellowship [for Chinese, UChicago] (\$28,000)
2017	Social Science Research Council Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant (\$1500)
2017	Grodzins Prize Lectureship Award [for “Modern East Asian Political Thought”] (declined)
2016	Prestage-Cook Travel Grant (\$300)
2016	Social Science Research Council Pre-doctoral Research Grant (\$3000)
2016	US ED Foreign Language and Area Studies [FLAS] 2016 Summer Fellowship (declined)
2015	Ford Foundation Pre-doctoral Fellowship, Honorable Mention
2013-17	Social Sciences Division Fellowship, University of Chicago (~\$21,000 annually)

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS & COMMENTS

2019	“Talented Officials: Popular Dimensions of Anti-Colonial Imperialism.” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting
2019	“Wealth, Power, and the Imperial Drive Toward Counter-Domination in Japan.” East Asia Transregional Histories Workshop, University of Chicago
2019	“Heading the Body Politic – China, Virtuous Rulers, and Human Flourishing.” University of Wisconsin – Madison Early Modern Conference
2019	“Rule of Law in the Celestial Empire’: Upending the Foundations of Chinese Despotism, 1759-1776.” Political Theory Workshop, University of Chicago
2018	“Catalytic China’ – Liberty and the Chinese State in Western Political Thought, 1822-1862.” American Political Science Association Annual Meeting
2018	Discussant. “Naoroji, Liberalism, and the Origins of Representation in Colonial India.” Tejas Parasher. Political Theory Workshop, University of Chicago
2018	“Sakuma Shōzan on Foreign Learning.” East Asia Transregional Histories Workshop, University of Chicago
2017	Discussant. “To Be Authentic: A Confucian Theory of Rights.” Jingcai Ying. American Political Science Association Annual Meeting
2017	“The Spirit of Erasure’—Asian Despotism in Montesquieu’s <i>Spirit of the Laws</i> .” UCLA Medieval and Early Modern Conference

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Political Science Association, American Historical Association, Association for Asian Studies, Association for Political Theory, Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy

SELECTED TEACHING & ADVISING EXPERIENCE

(As Instructor)

2019 SOSC 15200: *Classics of Social and Political Thought II* (Winter)
 2017-Present PLSC 29800: *Political Science Department BA Thesis Colloquium*
 2017 *Office of the Provost Leadership Alliance Summer Research Program* (Summer)
 2017 SOSC 15300: *Classics of Social and Political Thought III* (Spring)

(As Teaching Assistant)

2018 HIST 23008: *Montesquien's Spirit of the Laws* (Autumn)
 2017 PLSC 28701: *Introduction to Political Theory* (Winter)
 2015-16 SOSC 15100-15200-15300: *Classics of Social and Political Thought I-III* (Autumn-Winter-Spring)

SERVICE

Manuscript Reviewer: *American Journal of Political Science, European Journal of Political Theory*

Panel Organizer

2019 "Popular Politics and the Legacies of Empire" [in collaboration with Tejas Parasher],
 American Political Science Association
 2018 "China in Modern Political Thought – Legacies and Lessons", American Political Science
 Association

LANGUAGES

Native: English
 Speaking: Mandarin, Japanese, Korean
 Reading: Classical Chinese (*wenyanwen*), French

REFERENCES

Jennifer Pitts, Ph.D • Professor of Political Science and the Committee on Social Thought
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