Stanford

Xinru Ma

Research Scholar

Walter H. Shorenstein Asia Pacific Research Center

Bio

BIO

Xinru Ma's research focuses on nationalism, great power politics, and East Asian security with a methodological focus on formal and computational methods. More broadly, Xinru's research encompasses three main objectives: Substantively, she aims to better theorize and enhance cross-country perspectives on critical phenomena such as nationalism and its impact on international security; Methodologically, she strives to improve measurement and causal inference based on careful methodologies, including formal modeling and computational methods like natural language processing; Empirically, she challenges prevailing assumptions that inflate the perceived risk of militarized conflicts in East Asia, by providing original data and analysis rooted in local knowledge and regional perceptions. Her work has been published in the Journal of East Asian Studies, The Washington Quarterly, the Journal of Global Security Studies, and the Journal of European Public Policy, and in edited volumes through Palgrave. Her co-authored book - Asian Power Transitions: Internal Challenges, Common Conjecture, and the Future of U.S.-China Relations - is forthcoming with the Columbia University Press.

At SNAPL, Xinru will lead the research group in collaborative projects that focus on U.S.-Asia relations. One of the projects will contrast the rhetoric and debates in US politics surrounding the historical phenomenon of "Japan bashing" and the current perception of a "China threat." By applying automated text analysis and qualitative analysis to textual data from various sources such as congressional hearings and presidential speeches, this project uncovers the similarities, differences, and underlying factors driving the narratives surrounding US-Asia relations. She will also provide mentorship to student research assistants and research associates.

Before joining SNAPL, Xinru was an assistant professor at the School of International Relations and Diplomacy at Beijing Foreign Studies University, where she led the Political Science Research Lab, a lab committed to closing the gender gap in computational methods and political science research by offering big data methods training and professionalization workshops to students. Prior to that, Xinru was a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University (2019-2020), and a pre-doctoral fellow at the Department of Political Science at Vanderbilt University (2018-2019). In 2023, Xinru was selected as an International Strategy Forum fellow by Schmidt Futures, an initiative that recognizes the next generation of problem solvers with extraordinary potential in geopolitics, innovation, and public leadership.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- Social Science Research Scholar, Walter H. Shorenstein Asia Pacific Research Center

Publications

PUBLICATIONS

- **Why Vietnam is not Balancing China: Vietnamese Security Priorities and the Dynamics in Sino-Vietnam Relations** *JOURNAL OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES*
  Ma, X., Kang, D. C.

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