

ZHAO, WANGYIN  
Durham University  
Mobile: 44-(0)7763437970;  
Email: [Wangyin.zhao@durham.ac.uk](mailto:Wangyin.zhao@durham.ac.uk)

## EDUCATION

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**Durham University, Durham, UK** Sep 2022 – Mar 2026 (expected)

ESRC-Funded Ph.D. student in Politics

Thesis: “Disaster for Whom”: The Conditional Impact of Natural Disasters on Civil Conflicts

Supervisors: [Prof. Patrick M Kuhn](#) and [Dr. Anouk S. Rigterink](#)

- Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods(Sep 2022 – Sep 2023)
- Doctoral fellow at Empirical Studies of Conflict (ESOC), Princeton University(Sep – Dec, 2025)

**London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), London, UK** Sep 2021 – Sep 2022  
MSc International Relations (Research)

**The University of Nottingham Ningbo China (UNNC), Ningbo, China** Sep 2017 – Jun 2021  
BA (Hons) International Studies

- With one year abroad at Brunel University London(2019 – 2020)

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Civil War; Natural Disasters; Causal Inference; Quantitative Methods; GIS;

## Publication

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1. Zhao, W. (2025), “The Impact of Natural Disasters on the Ongoing Civil War: the Role of Spatial Configuration of Territorial Control”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Online first, available: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00220027251346912>.

## WORKING PAPER

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1. Buffering the Disaster: How Extractive Companies Dampen Post-Disaster Conflict
    - Presented at NERD Workshop, and 2025 UCL Conflict & Change Workshop
  2. Anticipated Power Shifts, Commitment, and Civil War Violence (, with Mahmoud Osman)

## CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

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2025 Empirical Studies of Conflict (ESOC) Lab Meeting, Princeton University (Online)	Feb, 2025
2025 UCL Conflict & Change Workshop, London	Feb, 2025
Northeast Research Development (NERD) workshop at Durham and Newcastle	Nov, 2024
2024 Conflict Research Society (CRS) Annual Conference, Edinburgh	Sep, 2024
2024 European Political Science Association (EPSA) Annual Conference, Köln	Aug, 2024
2024 UCL Conflict & Change Workshop, London	Mar, 2024
Northeast Research Development (NERD) workshop at Durham and Newcastle	Nov, 2023

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING

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Essex Summer School in <b>Machine Learning for Social Scientists</b>	2024
PhD course on <b>GIS and the Geography of Armed Conflict</b> by NTNU and PRIO	2023
Oxford Spring School in Advanced Research Methods ( <b>Causal Inference</b> )	2023
ECPR Virtual Summer School in <b>Panel Data Analysis</b>	2022
Essex Summer School in <b>Introduction to Quantitative Methods in R</b> (online)	2020
Essex Summer School in <b>Introduction to GIS, Geospatial Data and Spatial Analysis</b> (online)	2020
Peking University Summer School in Research on <b>Quantitative History</b>	2019

## GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIP

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ESRC NINE Doctoral Training Partnership Studentship (October 2022 – March 2026)  
ESRC NINE DTP Research Training Support Grant 2023, 2024  
Durham University School of Government and International Affairs PGR funding 2023, 24, 25  
Durham University Centre of Institution and Political Behaviour Internal Research Funds 2022, 23, 24  
Ustinov College Travel Awards (Durham University) 2024  
Presidents' Scholarship, UNNC 2020  
Zhejiang Province Scholarship 2020  
Zhejiang Exchange Scholarship 2020  
Head Scholarship, UNNC 2018, 2019

## AWARDS

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Top Student Award for BA (Hons) in International Studies, UNNC 2021  
Zhejiang Provincial Excellent Graduates 2021  
The Best Student of Year, UNNC 2020  
Outstanding Student Leader, UNNC 2020  
Silver Award (Brunel Volunteers Award) 2020

## TEACHING

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UG Course: <b>Research Politics and International Relations</b> (TA), Durham University	2023 – 2025
Student evaluation 2024: 79.1% "Satisfied" or "Definitely satisfied"	
Student evaluation 2025: 77.7% "Satisfied" or "Definitely satisfied"	
UG Course: <b>Introduction to Comparative Politics</b> (TA), Durham University	2024 – 2025
Student evaluation 2025: 64.7% "Satisfied" or "Definitely satisfied"	

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**The International Social Science Review Journal (by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd)** May 2022 – Nov 2022  
Managing Editor

**Research Assistant** July 2022 – Nov 2022  
ESRC-Funded project – Nonviolent Repression and the Escalation of Conflicts over Self-Determination (NRECS) by [Dr. Micha Germann](#) from Bath University.

**Research Assistant** July 2021  
Work on the research by [Dr. Joy Spiliopoulos](#) about the Filipino nurse migration and return migration; and immigration policies in destination countries namely UK and Southeast Asia

**The Institute of Asia and Pacific Studies, UNNC** Jun 2020 – Jun 2021  
Research Intern for research projects of Cultural and Creative Industries

## SKILLS

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- Software: R, GIS (GeoDa, QGIS, ArcGIS), NVivo, LaTeX, GitHub
- Language: Mandarin (Native), English (Fluent)