



Durham
University

Department of School of Government and International Affairs

Academic Taster Session

Presented by Dr. Ferran Perez
Mena (Assistant Professor of
International Relations of East
Asia)

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The School of Government and International Affairs (SGIA)

SGIA in subject league tables for Politics and International Relations:

- Top 100 in the QS world rankings 2024 for Politics and International Relations
- 8th in the UK overall in the Complete University Guide 2024

Cosmopolitan community:

- Nearly half of academic staff international
- Students from over 50 countries

Graduate employability:

- 7th in the UK for Politics Graduates Prospects (Complete University Guide 2023)



Top 10

UK Department

8th in The Complete
University Guide

Why Study at SGIA?

1. Offer a wider range in substance and approach

- **Full substantive range** in International Relations, Political, International, and Global Theory, Regional expertise (Europe, East Asia, and Middle East), and Security & Peace Studies
- **Wide range of methodological approaches** to studying politics and IR, spanning normative, conceptual, qualitative, quantitative and computational approaches
- **PG Programmes tied to SGIA Research Centres** providing students with an academic home within SGIA

2. Inclusive student-centred learning geared towards employment and further study

- **Institutionalised student involvement** at all levels
- Broad-range or **SGIA-specific student support**, e.g., first-generation scholars network
- **Active learning and authentic assessments**
- **Career-** and lots of **research-focused events**



More on SGIA Master Programmes and Student Life

Our Postgraduate Taught Courses



MA International Relations

This course provides you with the systematic knowledge and intellectual tools to critically review developments in the theory and practice of international relations.



MA Politics and International Relations (Political Theory)

This course enables you to evaluate, in a sophisticated and critical fashion, theories and paradigms within the broad field of politics and international relations.



MSc Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding

This course provides you with skills in negotiations, conflict mediation, conflict-sensitive programme design and management, and urban peacebuilding.



MSc Defence, Development and Diplomacy

This course explores conflict, conflict intervention and post-conflict reconstruction through the lenses of defence, development and diplomacy.



MA Politics and International Relations of the Middle East

This programme provides you with the knowledge to critically review developments in the theory and practice of politics and international relations in the Middle East.



MA International Relations (East Asia)

This course provides you with a comparative and historical perspective, taking account of East Asian political and economic factors.

Highlights



Serbia field trip

Read about Lizzie's field trip experience to Serbia and Bosnia Herzegovina as part of her DGSi programme.



Day in the life of a PG politics student at Durham

Wondering what it's like to be a PG student in the School of Government and International Affairs?

Social feeds

Tweets from @Durham_SGIA

-  **SGIA Durham** @... · Dec 19, 2019
Wishing everybody a happy Christmas break and a great new 2020! We will be back in January.
2 14
-  **SGIA Durham** @... · Jul 29, 2021
We are delighted to announce we have several excellent new members of staff starting with us in August/ September for the new academic year!
1 14

<https://www.durham.ac.uk/departments/academic/school-government-international-affairs/postgraduate-study/taught-courses/>

Academic taster – Seminar - 2 hours

You could find a seminar like this one in one of our Master's degree programs:

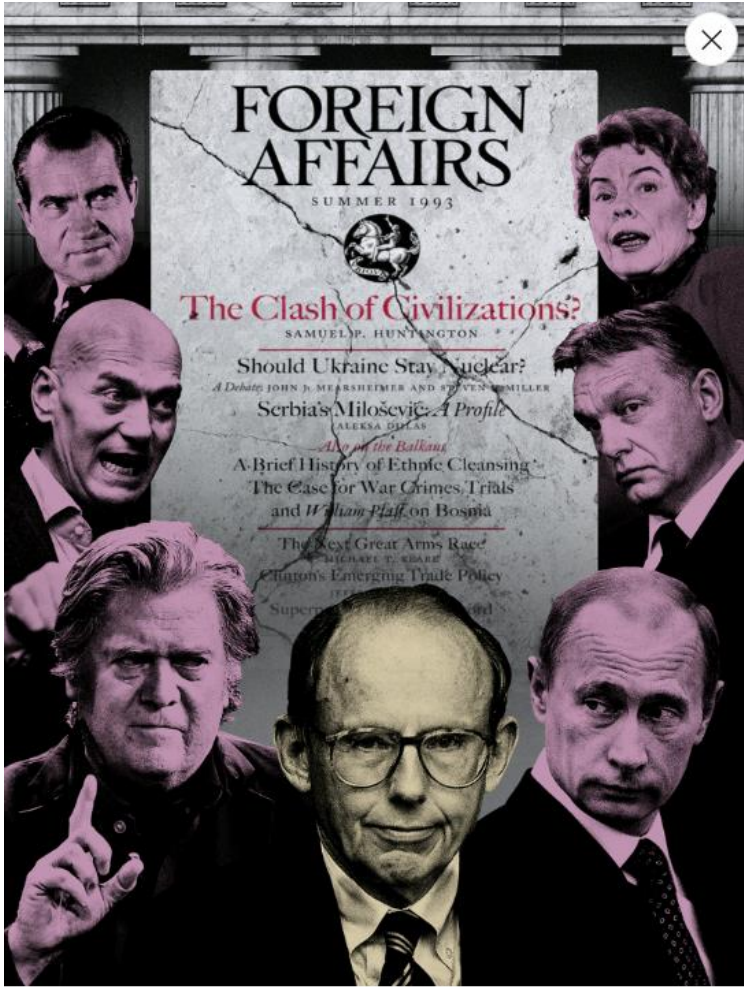
MA International Relations

MA Politics and International Relations (Political theory)

MA International Relations (East Asia)

- The Politics of East Asia (optional/core)
- International Relations Theory (core)

"The Revival of 'Civilisations': Exploring 'Civilisational Politics' in the Era of Great Power Competition"



Seminar aims

- To understand and analyse the rise of ‘civilisational politics’ in contemporary world politics
- To critically discuss some examples of contemporary civilisational politics

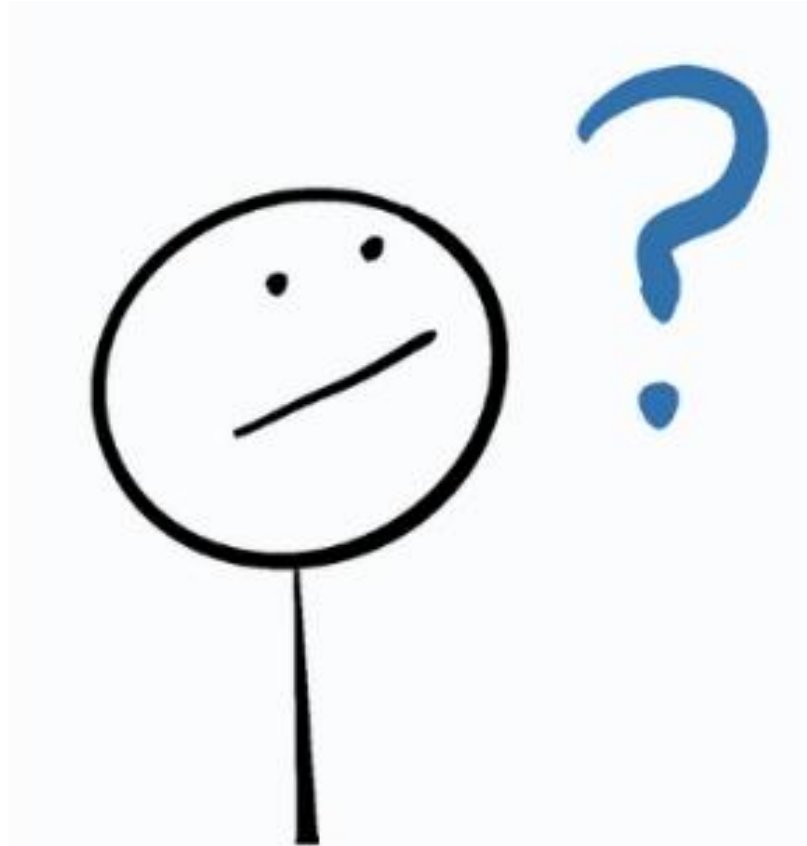
Structure of seminar

Concepts on 'Civilisational politics' – 10 minutes

Questions about Civilisational politics – 10 minutes

Critical Discourse analysis of 'civilisational politics' in world politics – 15 minutes

What do you know about “civilisational politics”?



Some concepts: ‘civilisational state’ and a ‘civilisational identity’

The ‘civilisation state’, claims to represent not only a particular nation or religion, but an exceptional civilisation (Anchan and Vijaykumar 2022)

Civilisational identity: “civilisational identity as the highest form of cultural identity, and the broadest assertion of a common collective identity” (Huntington 1996) – (i.e) China’s “Confucian identity”, West and Christianity

What is ‘Civilisational Politics’?

“Nonstate actors, states, and international organizations are increasingly talking and acting as *if civilizations*, in their “plural” sense, exist and that relations between them matter in world politics” (Bettiza 2014, 2)

- i.e Vladimir Putin’s use of civilisational politics in the Valdai Club – Russia as a civilisational state

“*As strategic frames of reference*” (Petito 2011, 767)

- i.e Donald Trump’s defence of “Western civilisation”

“*An organizing principle* for a growing range of social actions, international institutions, and practices. (...) as social and political actors frame international politics in civilizational terms, so actions, institutional arrangements, and practices structured around managing inter-civilizational relations are emerging” (Bettiza 2014, 2)

- i.e China’s new “Global Civilisational Initiative”.

The context of the rise of Civilisational politics

- Discursive politics of contestation against the International liberal order and great power competition
- Effects of globalisation after the end of the Cold War
- A new wave of conservative and global far-right discourses

Questions

- Do you think the concept of “civilisational politics” is useful for understanding contemporary world politics? Why or why not?
- What are the shortcomings of this analytical concept?



Critical Discourse analysis – 15 minutes

Task: noting key words, expressions, and imaginaries employed by these three leaders. (Duration: 15 minutes)

Xi Jinping's conversation with Donald Trump: [Xi: We call ourselves descendants of the dragon \(youtube.com\)](#)

Donald Trump's speech: [Trump: Western civilisation is under threat - YouTube](#)

President Erdogan's speech: [President Erdogan delivers Centenary Speech \(youtube.com\)](#)



Trump's Warsaw speech pits western world against barbarians at the gates

*David Smith
in Washington*

Xi Quotes

The cultural missions in the new era are to further advance cultural prosperity, to build a leading country in culture and to foster the modern Chinese civilization.

在新的起点上继续推动文化繁荣、建设文化强国、建设中华民族现代文明，是我们在新时代新的文化使命。

— President Xi Jinping

At a meeting on cultural inheritance and development in Beijing on Friday, June 2, 2023

The main principles of Russian foreign policy

Russia's foreign policy concept, the Russian President emphasized, is based on the idea that Russia is an "original civilization state", which is also "the main principle of international order."

Conclusion

- “Civilisational politics” is increasingly becoming an important factor in shaping contemporary world politics.
- Civilisational politics serves as a discourse to legitimise new forms of great power competition, contestation international liberal order and the politics of a new conservatism and global far-right.

I Look Forward to Your Durham/SGIA/Seminar Questions



Contact us

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uk**