

**SESSION ONE OF MEI-BISA SEMINAR SERIES:
THE WAR AND SHIFTING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN IRAN**

Speakers



Dr Marzieh Kouhi Esfahani is an Assistant Professor in Politics and International Relations of the Middle East at Durham University's School of Government and International Affairs. She is a member of the Institute for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and has served as Programme Director for the MA in International Relations and MA Politics and International Relations of the Middle East.

Her research focuses on the international relations and security of the Middle East and South Caucasus, Iran's foreign and security policy, and women in the Muslim world. She is the author of *Iran's Foreign Policy in the South Caucasus: Relations with Azerbaijan and Armenia* (Routledge, 2019) and has contributed chapters and articles focused on these topics.



Dr. Zeynab Malakouti is a Research Affiliate at the Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore, and a Senior Fellow at the Global Peace Institute, UK. She holds a PhD in International Law from the University of Leeds, UK. Previously, she served as an Assistant Professor at the UNESCO Chair for Human Rights, Peace and Democracy in Iran. Her interdisciplinary research lies at the intersection of international law and international relations, with particular expertise on Iran. Her latest book, *Counter-Terrorism Financing and Iran*, was published by Routledge.



Arash Reisinezhad is a visiting assistant professor at The Fletcher School at Tufts University. His research interests include geopolitics, security and strategic studies, foreign policy analysis, and Middle East politics. He is currently developing two book projects on Iran-China relations and the transforming geopolitics of the Middle East, along with two paper projects on Iran's nuclear program and the Iran War. He teaches courses on Middle East politics and the Great Power Competition. Reisinezhad is a trusted voice on emergent issues in the Middle East. His writing is frequently published in global media outlets and top academic journals. Reisinezhad is also a visiting fellow at the London School of Economics' Middle East Centre as well as a visiting scholar at Harvard University. Additionally, he has received fellowships from Harvard University. He is the author of *The Shah of Iran, the Iraqi Kurds, and the Lebanese Shia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) and *Iran and the Silk Road: From Road Geopolitics to Road Diplomacy* (University of Tehran Press).



[Moderator] Liu Jia is Research Fellow at the Middle East Institute, NUS. Jia earned her PhD in Government and International Affairs from Durham University, where she was honoured to be the H.H. Sheikh Nasser al-Mohammad al-Sabah Doctoral Fellow. Jia has also studied in China, Iran, Sweden, Jordan, worked in the UAE, and well-travelled across the West Asia/Middle East. She speaks Chinese, English, Farsi, and is learning Arabic. Jia's research focuses on two major areas: the politics of Persian speaking world and China-West Asia/Middle East relations.