

# Exploring Contemporary Shi'ism in European and Middle Eastern Contexts

**A Glance at the Recent Evolutions of Shi'ism in the Region**

**April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**10 AM – 5 PM**

CENTRO DI RICERCA COOPERAZIONE  
CON L'EURASIA, IL MEDITERRANEO  
E L'AFRICA SUBSAHARIANA - CEMAS



**SAPIENZA**  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



# Exploring Contemporary Shi'ism in European and Middle Eastern Contexts:

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## Welcome by the Scientific and Organizing Committee

The current online study day on Shi'ism in Europe is a unique opportunity for young and senior scholars to deliberate on each other's concerns and research outcomes in a particular collaborative atmosphere. We are honored to contribute to this first online study day on Shi'ism in collaboration with some scholars motivated by the shared objective of mapping the research agenda on Shi'a studies in some European and Middle Eastern countries. These contributions will certainly help us understand the multiple ways in which Shi'ism evolve in the European and Middle Eastern contexts.

Since antiquity, the Mediterranean basin has constantly been witnessing episodes of cultural clashes and encounters between civilizations. Thus, the region was not unfamiliar with cultural diversity and during the early Middle Ages Shi'i dynasties ruled in Asian, African and European sides of the basin. Due to this presence long before the recent migratory influx, it seems that there is not any historical discontinuity in the Shi'i presence in Europe. However, from sociological viewpoint there is a significant difference between the former and the current presence of Shi'is in Europe. The contemporary socio-political conditions in the region are the main responsible of this difference that ignites curiosity about the emerging tendencies of Shi'ism and its recent evolutionary patterns.

The study of contemporary Shi'ism in Europe that examines the life-experience of Shi'is through anthropological and sociological approaches is a relatively neglected area of research and Shi'is have so far been subsumed under broader general narratives of mainstream Islam. This negligence is higher where Islam is a relatively young phenomenon such as in southern Europe. Obviously the socio-political tendencies of the Asian countries of the Mediterranean basin and their relation with Europe have an impact on both migratory influx and the European policies for managing the religious minorities. Hence, the situation of Shi'is in Europe cannot be fully understood without considering both departure and arrival points.

In view of these observations, the study day sets itself the following objectives:

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1. Inspecting the state of the art in research into the contemporary Shi'ism, which has been so far analyzed through anthropological or sociological lens.
2. Creating a network of scholars who are active in this field of study which can become a permanent knowledge sharing platform.
3. Offering free and easily accessible insight to scholars, stakeholders and students interested in this topic.
4. Raising awareness amongst the European academic community concerning the social responsibility of universities on inclusion in relation to the migration phenomenon.
5. Sharing field practices towards sustaining institutional strategic planning, as this proved to be the most successful and sustainable approach to addressing challenges of migration.

The event is jointly organized by Sapienza University of Rome, Research Centre for Cooperation with Eurasia, the Mediterranean and sub-Saharan Africa (CEMAS), Institute of Political Studies "S. Pio V" Observatory on the Mediterranean (OSMED) and the Association for the Study of Persianate Societies ASPS's for the Virtual Events series n. V.

We hope that this event will facilitate scientific exchange on the contemporary Shi'ism and introduce new research ideas and collaboration opportunities between scholars of this field of study.

## **Scientific and Organizing Committee:**

Prof. Carlo G. Cereti – Sapienza University of Rome

Prof. Francesco Anghelone – Institute of Political Studies "S. Pio V" Observatory on the Mediterranean (OSMED)

Prof. Leonardo Capezzone – Sapienza University of Rome

Dr. Mino Mirshahvalad – University of Turin

Dr. Shirin Zakeri – Sapienza University of Rome and Institute of Political Studies "S. Pio V" Observatory on the Mediterranean (OSMED)

# Exploring Contemporary Shi'ism in European and Middle Eastern Contexts:

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## Panel I: *General overview*

10:00-11:45 AM

1. Abbas Ahmadvand, Shahid Beheshti University, *Western Shia Studies in the Liquid Modernity Time: A Domestic Historiography Experience*
2. Oliver Scharbrodt, University of Birmingham, *'My Homeland is Husayn': Transnationalism and Multi-Locality in Shia Contexts*
3. Ingvild Flakerud, University of Oslo, *A New Generation Twelver Shiites in Europe: What knowledge and competence are necessary to live a Muslim way of life?*
4. Emanuelle Degli Esposti, University of Cambridge, *Finding a 'Shi'a voice' in Europe: minority representation and the unsettling of secular humanitarianism in the discourse of 'Shi'a rights'*

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## Abbas Ahmadvand

He is an Associate Professor and Senior Researcher of Shahid Beheshti University. Using the approach of cultural history, Ahmadvand has studied specialized fields such as the history of Shi'ism, Islamic history and civilization and the history of Iran. He has published his research in English, Arabic, and Persian and Spanish, inside and outside Iran, which includes 15 books and about 120 research papers, encyclopedia entries and conference papers. His most recent work (Shi'ism, some key concepts: Candle & Fog Publishing, Lodon, 2021) is a book that, along with Sofia A. Koutlaki, has edited and translated some of the most important key concepts of Shi'ism.

### ***Western Shia Studies in the Liquid Modernity Time: A Domestic Historiography Experience***

Islamic or Shi'ite Studies in the West are a science that is strongly linked to various cultural, social, political, and economic developments in the West. By using the approach proposed by Anthony Giddens in the design of late modernity and then conceptualized by Zygmunt Bauman in liquid modernity, the present study seeks to show that the age of modern liquidity is a period that emphasizes individualism and at the same time uncertainties, and the living human in the age of liquid modernity is in fact a tourist who moves in the midst of all Different kinds of relationships throughout his life. The rising tide of Muslim migration to various regions of Europe and the birth of later generations of these immigrants has made Islam and its believers, including Shiites, a domestic issue for Western scholars. They no longer can study Islam from an external and neutral point of view as a religion. This has caused the Islamic Studies of the West and Shiite Studies to undergo fundamental changes. For example, Abbas Ahmadvand's previous researches show that the concept and relevance of Islamic studies scholar have changed from a Christian Western scholar to a Muslim Western scholar or a non-Muslim or Muslim Eastern scholar. The aim of the present study is to identify the characteristics of Shiite Studies of the West in the age of liquid modernity and to draw attention to the recording and documenting of the history of this attitude and new approach among the collection of Western Islamic studies.



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## Oliver Scharbrodt

He is a Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Birmingham. His research covers the intellectual history of modern Islam, Sufism, Twelver Shiism and Muslim minorities in Europe. He is the author of *Islam and the Baha'i Faith: A Comparative Study of Muhammad 'Abduh and 'Abdul-Baha 'Abbas* (London: Routledge, 2008) and co-authored *Muslims in Ireland: Past and Present* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015). He is one of the editors of the *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe* (Leiden: Brill). Currently, he leads a project, funded by the European Research Council (ERC), investigating the transformation of clerical authority in Twelver Shiism since the late 1950s.

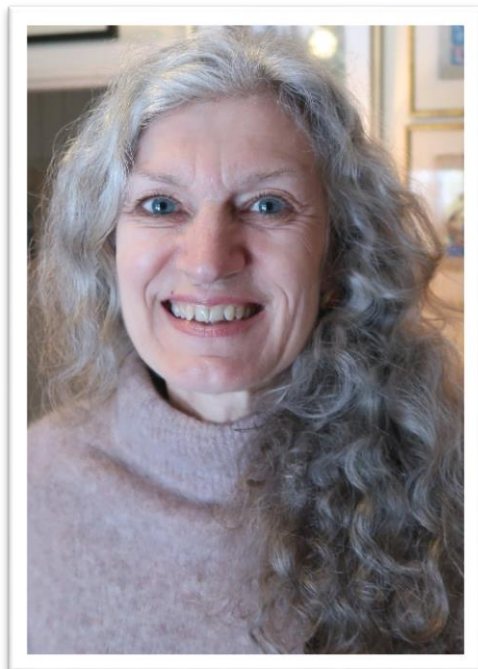
### ***'My Homeland is Husayn': Transnationalism and Multi-Locality in Shia Contexts***

'My homeland is Husayn (*watani al-husayn*)' is a prominent eulogy on the third Shi'a Imam Husayn. It articulates an identification with Husayn that transcends territorial boundaries and allegiances and suggests that a Shi'a's true homeland is not the town where one was born or one's country but Husayn. While Husayn's shrine in Karbala is an important destination of pilgrimage (*ziyara*) and hence allows Shi'is to ritually perform their allegiance to Husayn at this physical site, the eulogy moves beyond transnational identifications. The eulogy is 'supralocal' (Tweed 1997: 85) as it pronounces a vertical connection with the transcendental: Husayn as the ultimate isthmus between God and humanity. As such, the eulogy suggests an ideational and emotive connection to Husayn that not only transcends but defies the limitations of physical spaces and territorial boundaries and unites the Shi'a in their collective memory of his martyrdom.

This paper will discuss some recent debates on the relationship between religion and space, in particular as they arise in relation to migrant or diasporic religious communities in the West. By distinguishing between different spatial scales (the local, the national and the transnational) and between different types of spaces (physical, social and discursive), this paper discusses how the multi-local trajectories of global Shi'i networks, ritual practices and discursive identity formations around the veneration of the *ahl al-bayt* can be conceptualised and analysed by adopting a transnational perspective. Shi'a presences, as minorities in particular, are embedded in particular local and national contexts and entertain multi-local and supra-temporal orientations. They are part of transnational networks, engage with global articulations of 'Shianness' and as local actors are affected by, respond to and participate in a transnational public sphere of global Shi'a Islam.

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## Ingvild Flakerud

She has specialised in the study of Twelver Shiism in Iran and Europe. Her research interests include Muslim visual material culture and aesthetics, gender issues, the ritual as a site for social and ethical discourse, and Twelver Shia migration to the West. She is the co-editor of *Muslim Pilgrimage in Europe* (2018) and has contributed to publications on Muslim visual culture and aesthetics, women as ritual performers, and Muslim ritual practices. She also produced an ethnographic film introducing Iranian Shia women as ritual performers ("Standard-bearers of Hussein. Women commemorating Karbala," 2003).

### ***A New Generation Twelver Shiites in Europe: What knowledge and competence are necessary to live a Muslim way of life?***

In this paper, I examine self-organised activities among the current generation of young Shia adult in Norway regarding religious formation. Which methods do they employ to shape and educate themselves as Twelver Shia Muslims and which topics are introduced during their meetings? The presence of Twelver Shia Muslims in Scandinavia is related mainly to the migration of people from the Middle East and Asia since the late 1960s, first as labour migrants and subsequently as refugees and asylum seekers. Like in every country in Europe, Twelver Shiites in Norway constitutes a minority within the broader Muslim minority group. Denominational religious education in this situation is provided for by the local mosques and a few religious elementary schools. But with the coming of age of a generation young adult

Twelver Shiites who share several common features and experiences, such as speaking a common language, i.e., Norwegian, belonging to a religious minority, and raised in a public school system preparing citizens for participation in a democratic society, we can observe some changes. The last ten years have witnessed the establishment of several self-governed groups of young Muslims seeking to educate each other in the Shia faith. These activities include study circles, lectures, and film screenings. My analytical assumption is that by establishing an overview of methods applied and analysing topical issues presented, we can gain insight into what knowledge and competence is considered important and relevant to young Shiites living in Northern Europe today.

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## Emanuelle Degli Esposti

She is a current Research and Outreach Associate at the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge, where she specialises in the encounter between minority Islam and European secularism. She holds a PhD and MSc from SOAS, University of London, and a BA from Oxford University. Dr Degli Esposti's current research examines the public forms of activism undertaken by Shi'a Muslims in Europe, and seeks to illuminate the ongoing encounter between Islam and Europe, as well as the evolving dynamics within and between different Islamic sects. Her work has appeared in journals including *Politics, Religion, State & Society*, *Religions*, and *Contemporary Islam*, and she is currently working on a monograph entitled *Not That Kind of Muslim: Sectarian Belongings and the Making of British Shi'ism* (University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).

### *Finding a 'Shi'a voice' in Europe: Minority Representation and the Unsettling of Secular Humanitarianism in the Discourse of 'Shi'a Rights'*

In contemporary Europe, where the hegemony of modern secular governance remains largely uncontested, how do minority religious communities – especially Muslims – negotiate the tension between religious duty and forms of secularised civic belonging? This paper takes Twelver Shi'a Muslim activism in Europe as a starting place to interrogate the encounter between Islamic and secular values. In particular I examine the emergence of what I call the discourse of 'Shi'a rights' through which Shi'a Muslims are seeking to gain minority recognition within the European context. Combining elements of Shi'a Islamic ethics with the language of secular humanitarianism, the discourse of 'Shi'a rights' is emancipatory and outward-facing while simultaneously being exclusionary and particularistic in the way it promotes specific understandings of what it means to be 'Shi'a'. Crucially, I argue that this ambivalent nature of 'Shi'a rights' is a product of the encounter with secular liberal governance, especially the secular ideal of religious equality. Rather than representing a natural division between religion and society, contemporary secularism cultivates particular ethical attachments that ultimately serve to problematise the status of religious minorities. A focus on 'Shi'a rights' in Europe thus serves to illuminate the fractures and fissures that contemporary secular discourse seeks to hide.



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## Panel II: *Case studies*

12:15-1:00 PM

5. Avi Astor, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, *Public Lamentation Processions and Civic Performativity among Shia in Barcelona*

6. Fouad Gehad Marei, University of Birmingham, *Lebanon: Shi'ism in a House of Many Mansions*

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## Avi Astor

He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and is part of the Research Center for the Sociology of Religion (ISOR). He has written on a variety of topics related to religion, culture, and identity. He is the author of *Rebuilding Islam in Contemporary Spain* (Sussex, 2017). His work has appeared in several prominent journals, including *Theory and Society*, the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Qualitative Sociology*, the *International Migration Review*, the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, and the *International Journal for Urban and Regional Research*.

### ***Public Lamentation Processions and Civic Performativity among Shia in Barcelona***

This paper examines the civic dimensions of Shia public lamentation processions in Barcelona. Recent work on diasporic religiosity has emphasized how public rituals serve as a stage for religious minorities to become visible, assert their rights, and gain recognition. Although this focus has yielded important insights, it has led scholars to overlook alternative forms of civic performativity that, while less conspicuous, are nonetheless crucial for understanding how religious minorities demonstrate deservingness of inclusion in the polity. We challenge this assertive bias in the study of public religiosity by drawing attention to more “conciliatory” forms of civic performativity, or performative practices that demonstrate qualities associated with civility (e.g., respect for local norms, compliance with the law, and openness to dialogue and compromise). We highlight various features of local Shia leaders in Barcelona that dispose them toward conciliatory rather than assertive forms of civic performativity, most notably their migration trajectory and socio-structural location.

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## **Fouad Gehad Marei**

He is a Research Associate at the University of Birmingham. His research focuses on Islamic religiosities, piety, Shi'i politics, Islamic eschatology, and jihadi violence. He has research experience in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, and is particularly interested in conflict and post-conflict dynamics. His ongoing research examines Shi'i ritual practices and cultures in the Middle East and the diaspora. Fouad has previously worked at the University of Erfurt and the Free University of Berlin in Germany, and the Orient Institute in Beirut, Lebanon. He also consulted governments and think tanks on regional politics and has been involved in developing and implementing conflict stabilisation and transformation programmes. Fouad holds a PhD from Durham University.

### ***Lebanon: Shi'ism in a House of Many Mansions***

Lebanon is a multi-confessional country with an established consociational democracy based on power sharing between 18 officially recognised sectarian communities. Even though Shi'is make up around half of the country's total population, they account for a meagre 2 percent of the global Shi'i population. Despite this, Lebanon's Shi'i community plays an important role in the cultural and political life of the broader Shi'i world, out of all proportion to its size. In contrast to Iraq and Arabic-speaking countries of the Gulf, Lebanon is home to a vibrant Shi'i milieu made possible by its consociational political system and sectarian political culture. Coalescing this milieu is Hizbullah, arguably the most established Shi'i movement and political party in the Middle East. Lebanon is also a hub for Shi'i institutional and ideational networks, and its capital, Beirut, serves as a cultural-artistic epicentre for a vibrant and transnational Shi'i mediascape. In my presentation, I show how the life-worlds of Lebanon's Shi'is is distinct, shaped thoroughly by the community's entanglement in a) the complex alliances and power-sharing arrangements characteristic of the Lebanese political system, b) geopolitical alignments and regionwide politics of hyper-sectarianisation, and c) the dynamics of protracted conflicts (not only in Lebanon and between Lebanon and Israel, but also further afield in countries including Syria, Iraq and Yemen). I proceed with an exploration of the present and future of Shi'i politics and the Shi'i community's life-world in Lebanon, highlighting in particular transformations in contemporary modes of Shi'i religiosity, shaped by a) the socioeconomic leap the community has witnessed since the turn of the twenty first century, b) the generational shift (from a wartime generation born into and socialised in the context of the country's 1975-1990 civil war to the post-war generation), and c) contemporary mobilisations of the Shi'i community in response to the Syrian conflict (2011-).

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## Panel III: *Case studies*

2:30-5:00 PM

7. Mino Mirshahvalad, University of Turin, *Creating the Shi'i Sacred Space in Italy*

8. Marios Chatziprokopiou, University of Thessaly, *Performing Ashura in Piraeus: towards a Shiite poetics of 'cultural intimacy'*

9. Ghiath Rammo, Sapienza University of Rome, *Relations between Yazidis and Shiites in the new millennium*

10. Mina Moazzeni, Shahid Beheshti University of Tehran, *Book Review Shiite Studies in the West*



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## **Minoo Mirshahvalad**

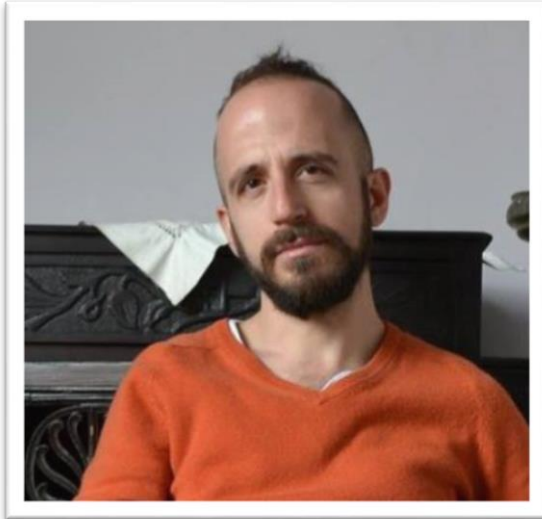
She obtained her PhD in Sociology of Cultural and Communicative Processes at the University of Turin. Her dissertation was the first study in Italy on Shi'i communities that analyzed the impacts of Italy's socio-political tendencies on the Shi'is' religious practices. The results of this study has been so far disseminated through a monograph, several peer-reviewed articles, a book chapter and numerous seminars and conference papers. In autumn 2020 she collaborated with the University of Pisa in a research project on the Islamic movements. Since 2020 she has been a member of International Society for the Sociology of Religion (ISSR).

### ***Creating the Shi'i Sacred Space in Italy***

The purpose of this first study on Shi'i gathering places in Italy is to demonstrate how Twelvers create sacred space in a country where they cannot have mosques. A by-product of the Italian model of secularism is that Islamic communities are not considered religious entities and hence are not allowed to build mosque. The absence of mosques has generated two main changes in the sense of the sacred space. First, the creation of the space of gathering does not maintain the standards established by senior Shi'a authorities based in Iran and Iraq, but has developed its own mechanism. Second, online communities have emerged to compensate for the absence of mosque. Therefore, in this peninsula we witness a significant change in the form of the Shi'a religious gathering places comparing to what we see in the Shi'a heartlands. This paper is the fruit of three years of fieldwork undertaken in 13 Italian cities between 2016 and 2019, when 89 Shi'is were interviewed in semi-structured manner and their places of worship were visited. Ethnography and participant observation were other empirical methods of data collection, while the existing literature on Islam in Italy and the Shi'a religious manuals has made the theoretical backdrop to the core analysis. The Durkheimian dichotomy between sacred and profane is called into play for the definition of nine strategies that are adopted by Shi'is in Italy to consecrate their places of gathering both within online and offline spheres. I will demonstrate how the Shi'i places of gathering in diaspora have become unprecedented sacred entities that do not correspond to any of the conventional categories of the Shi'i sacred places such as mausoleum, mosque and *husseiniya*, yet are endowed with a certain sacredness.

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## Marios Chatziprokopiou

He is currently a postdoctoral researcher and a teaching fellow in performance studies at the University of Thessaly, Greece. He earned an MA in social anthropology (École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales de Paris), and a PhD in theatre and performance studies (Aberystwyth University). He has been a fellow at the Research Centre for the Humanities in Greece. He has taught courses on anthropology, theatre and performance in several universities. His articles appear in international edited volumes and peer-reviewed journals. He has presented performances and lecture performances in Greece and abroad. His research interests focus on performances of migration and refugeeness,

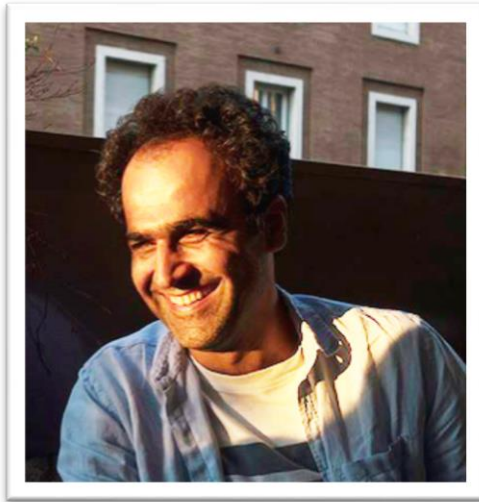
contemporary re-readings of ancient drama, performances of gender and sexuality, performances of religiosity, and ritual performances of lament.

### *Performing Ashura in Piraeus: towards a Shiite poetics of 'cultural intimacy'*

This paper examines the performance of the Ashura in Piraeus as performed by a group of Pakistani Shia Muslims, with a particular emphasis on the Greek political and cultural context. Combining ethnographic fieldwork with archival research, I explore how this ritual is mediated by Greek media and film. The presentation aims at unfolding Greek neo-orientalist and islamophobic discourses regarding the 'Asian excess' or 'backwards barbarism' of lament, in connection to similar arguments from the Muslim world. These rhetorics are juxtaposed with more tolerant views, but also with arguments of my interlocutors themselves regarding the 'cultural intimacy' of their ritual lament with Greek embodied practices of religiosity. Finally, dominant narratives of the 'national self' are juxtaposed with the discourses and practices of the migrant Shiite community of Piraeus, focusing on the symbolic and practical uses of blood: from murderous threats of Neo-Nazi groups against them, to their rejected intention for a blood-donation campaign parallel to the Ashura.

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## **Ghiath Rammo**

He is a Ph.D. student in Philology and History of the Ancient World at the Sapienza University of Rome and his research explores the cults and traditions of Yazidism. He holds a BA in Archaeology from the University of Aleppo - Syria. Between 2004 and 2010, he participated in the archaeological excavations in Tell Mardikh (Ebla), Syria. In 2013 he co-founded the Cultural Association “L’Asino d’Oro” in Rome.

### ***Relations between Yazidis and Shiites in the new millennium***

The relationship between the Yazidis and the Shiites in Iraq in particular, was shrouded in some ambiguity in the last century, for several inaccurate reasons, some of which are historical, namely linking the Yazidis to the Muslim caliph Yazid bin Muawiyah (683-647 A.D.) who ordered to fight Hussein bin Ali in the Battle of Karbala in 680 A.D., and some of them are politically linked. The Iraqi regime used some Yazidis to suppress the 1991 uprising in the south. The relationship between the Yazidis and the Shiites converged after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, as Yazidis and Shiites were both participants in government positions or members of the new Iraqi parliament. The relationship entered a new phase after ISIS took control of the Yazidi cities and villages in the Sinjar region, as well as after the liberation of that region from the Islamic State, in a geographical area where militias and alliances abound.

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## Mina Moazzeni

She is a graduate Student of Iranian Studies at Shahid Beheshti University. She is currently working on her master's thesis with the title "A Comparative Study on the Relations between State and Religion in the Sassanid and Safavid Era". Her research interests include the historical sociology of Iran, state-religion relations, and gender minorities and women in Iran. She also has academic background and fluency in German and English language.

### *The Shiite Studies in the West*

Until the Islamic Revolution in Iran, most Islamic studies by Orientalists were based on Sunni readings of Islam. The lack of Shiite sources and references in Western languages in Western libraries, the selective confrontation of some Orientalists with existing Islamic sources, and the extent of the West's historical encounter with Sunnis from Andalusia and Sicily and eastern Europe, especially the Balkans to the Indian and southern subcontinent and East Asia is one of the factors that has led to the neglect of Shiite studies in the West. However, some Shiite studies have been conducted in the West. The book *Shiite studies in the West* consists of six articles in which the most important Shiite studies of Orientalists are presented. In the first article of this book, the important issue of typology in Western Shiite studies is discussed. This article shows the impact of the studies of previous centuries in the twentieth century by chronicling the studies of previous centuries. The second article examines new research in the history of early Shiism and the third article, by translating and examining the case of the entry "Shia" in the encyclopedia of the Qur'an, examines the place of studies and Shiite knowledge of Western scholars in the mentioned encyclopedia.

The fourth article has been compiled in the field of cognitive approaches in jurisprudential studies and examining the position of Shiite jurisprudence in these studies. The fifth article shows the religious developments of the Safavid era in the studies of Safavid scholars. The sixth article examines the documents of the Shiite articles of the *Encyclopedia of the Islamic World* and the *Leiden Encyclopedia of Islam*. This book is one of the few works that describe and analyze Shiite studies in the West and has been published in Persian in Iran.



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## *Scientific Committee:*



### **Carlo G. Cereti**

Full professor of Philology, religions, and history of Iran, Department of Sciences of antiquity and a Rector's delegate for International cooperation and development at Sapienza University of Rome. He is also Senior Fellow and Coordinator of the Class in Humanities at the Scuola Superiore di Studi Avanzati and the Director of the Winter School in Cultural Heritage of the Near and Middle East at Sapienza University of Rome. Professor Cereti is a Consulting editor of *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, a Member of: Editorial Board of *Iran and the Caucasus* and *The Journal of Persianate Studies* and Advisory Board of *Vicino Oriente* and *Studi e Materiali di Storia delle Religioni*.

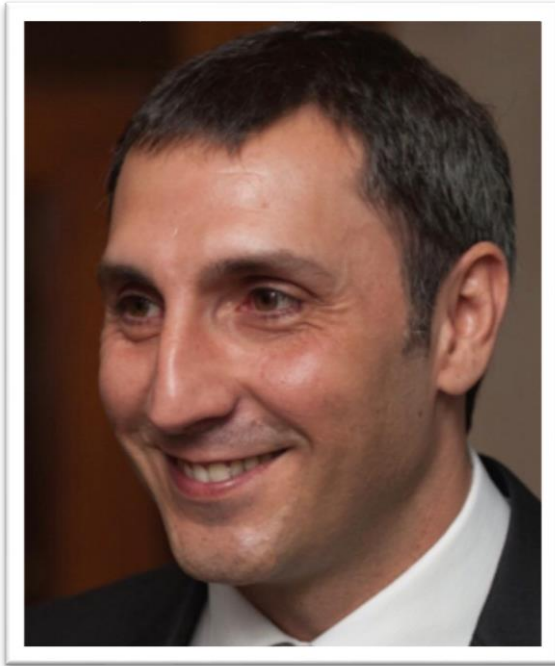


### **Leonardo Capezzone**

Associate professor of History of Islamic Countries at Italian Institute of Oriental Studies, Sapienza University of Rome. He is Historian of the Arab-Islamic Middle Ages, he devoted his research to classical Arabic literature, Shi'ism and forms of political and religious dissent in Islamic society between the 8th and 10th centuries. Professor Capezzone is a member of the Institute for the East "C.A. Nallino" and the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean; he has also translated numerous Arabic poetic and literary texts.

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## **Francesco Anghelone**

Ph.D in History of Europe at Sapienza University. He is the Scientific coordinator of the historical-political research area of the Institute of Political Studies "S. Pio V ", where he is also the coordinator of the editorial board of the *Observatory on the Mediterranean* (OSMED).

Professor Anghelone is a scholar and analyst of international relations in the Mediterranean area, he is editor of the annual "Atlante geopolitico del Mediterraneo". He also teaches a course in international relations history at the faculty of Literature and Philosophy, Sapienza University of Rome.

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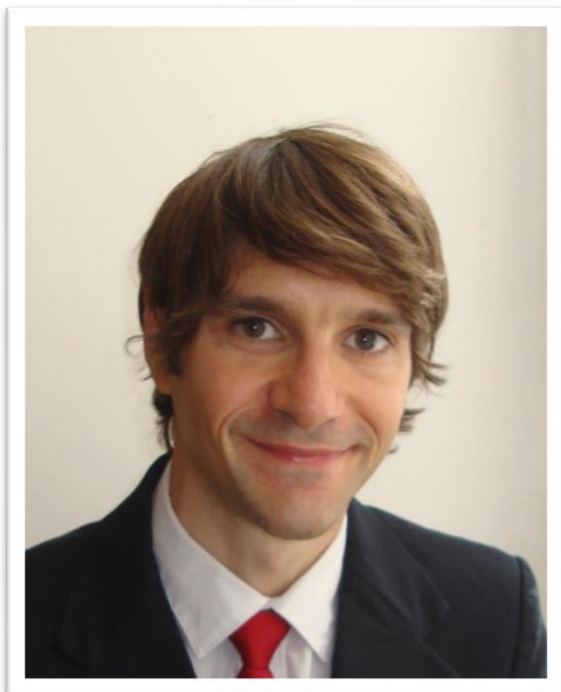
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## *Panel Moderators, introduction and conclusion:*



### **Shirin Zakeri**

Ph.D. in History of Europe from Sapienza University of Rome. Her research interests include History, Religion, Culture, and International affairs in the Middle East and Iran. She is Research Fellow at CEMAS, Research Centre of Sapienza University of Rome and Adjunct Professor in the Master of Peace Studies at the American University of Rome. She is a member of the editorial board of l'Osservatorio sul Mediterraneo (OSMED), Institute of Political Studies, "S.Pio V".



### **Diego Pagliarulo**

Ph.D, is a writer, lecturer, and researcher in the fields of history and international affairs. His main research interests are international security, American foreign policy, Mediterranean and Middle Eastern affairs, and European politics. Diego is a contributor at OSMED, a lecturer in political science at John Cabot University, and an instructor at Temple University Rome Campus.