

## **Abbas Siavash Abkenar**

Abbas Siavash Abkenar is a Research Associate at the Leiden Institute for Area Studies, and an International Doctoral Candidate between the Leiden University School of Middle Eastern Studies, and the Department for the Studies of Asia and Mediterranean Africa, at the Ca' Foscari University of Venice. He is broadly interested in concepts of social-spatial theory and methods of complex systems analyses associated with cultural studies to understand modernities in conversion along the Afroeurasian transition zone. Much of his academic tenure is dedicated to the study of Iranian Christians and Jews as middleman agents in Iran-Europe relations since the rise of the Safavids. He received his BA in Italian Language and Literature from Tehran University, continuing his studies with a Farnesina's special scholarship at the Siena's University for Foreigners, and with CLE Erasmus Mundus master's degree (Bologna/Strasbourg). He then pursued another professional master's in religious studies at the Foundation for Religious Sciences John XXIII and the Giuseppe Alberigo European School for Advanced Religious Studies, focusing on the historiography and doctrines of the Abrahamic religions. Besides his academic activities, he works as a Sworn Translator to the Italian tribunals for Persian-Dari-Tajiki-Italian-English.