

The Christian-Jewish dialogue has been thriving in the last few decades, gaining both public and scholarly attention. In most cases, this dialogue has taken place between representatives of more open flanks of both Christianity and Judaism, and involved participants who have a religious attitude typically termed “liberal”, in a sense that both parties are united by a similar political and cultural vision that transcends the differences between them. Dialogue seems to be an outcome of the weakening of radical voices, who allegedly regard relations with another religion with hostility, and to the growth of moderate religious approaches, which enables rational and pragmatic inter-faith discussions. Jewish-Christian dialogue, in other words, is judged to be a phenomenon pertaining to the secular/liberal setting of the postwar Western world, and is carried out through the means of a modernized and moderated universal religious language.

However, this common understanding of the nature and scope of Jewish-Christian dialogue is limited in two respects. First, it does not cover the entire range of dialogical phenomena. As the studies discussed at the workshop suggest, several dialogical initiatives do not adhere to liberal criteria, which assume a rational agreement about the place of religious commitment and its contribution to a diverse society. In fact, one can find dialogical inclinations in surprisingly illiberal settings. Second, the liberal narrative of the Jewish-Christian dialogue focuses mainly on the geographical and political settings of Europe and North America; it omits other types of dialogue that stem from other landscapes and their unique concerns. These non-western initiatives are grounded on alternative religious grammars and are oriented towards other sets of political agendas, which often explicitly rejects the liberal program.

In order to overcome a narrow approach to religious dialogue, our workshop shall focus on two topics. First, an empirical examination of a variety of projects that have been performed in contexts that are normally not deemed amenable to the dialogical logic (narrowly understood). Shedding light on such initiatives, often neglected by the liberal framework of dialogue, contributes in and of itself to the understanding of the Christian-Jewish dialogue in its variety. Second, a critical inquiry of the variety of dialogical initiatives enables us to interrogate the logic behind the very concept of dialogue itself. The workshop attempts to formulate a grammar suitable for the dialogical variety, and to think anew, with a theoretical language befitting of this

multiplicity, even phenomena that up until now have been narrowly understood through the liberal grammar of dialogue.