The Christian-Jewish dialogue has thrived in the last few decades, gaining both

public and scholarly attention. In most cases, this dialogue takes place between

representatives of more open flanks of Christianity and Judaism, and involves

participants who have a religious attitude typically termed “liberal,” meaning united by a similar political and cultural vision that transcends the

differences between them. This dialogue seems to be an outcome of weakening

radical voices, who allegedly regard relations with other religions with hostility. It may also be due to the growth of moderate religious approaches, which enable rational and pragmatic

interfaith discussions. Christian-Jewish dialogue, in other words, is a

phenomenon that pertains to the secular/liberal setting of the postwar Western world, and

is carried out through a modernized and moderated universal religious

language.

However, this understanding of the nature and scope of Christian-Jewish

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

importance 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 Christian-Jewish dialogue focuses mainly on the geographical and political

settings of Europe and North America; it omits narratives stemming from

other landscapes and their unique concerns. These non-Western initiatives are grounded

on alternative religious grammars and oriented towards other sets of political

agendas, which often explicitly reject the liberal program.

In order to overcome a narrow approach to religious dialogue, our workshop will

focus on two topics: an empirical examination of projects performed in contexts deemed unamenable to the dialogical

logic (narrowly understood) and a critical inquiry of these dialogical initiatives. Shedding light on such initiatives, often neglected by

liberal dialogue frameworks, enables us to interrogate the logic behind the very concept of

dialogue itself. The workshop attempts to formulate a theoretical language suitable for the

dialogical variety, and to think differently about phenomena that, up until now, have been narrowly understood through

liberal dialogue.