The aim of this conference is to create a space of discussion concerning the transcultural dimension of the Mediterranean understood as a region defined, in the first place, by the phenomena of exchange and circulation of ideas. The Mediterranean crossroad between Europe, Middle East and Africa, fully established already at the end of Antiquity, takes a new shape at the brink of late Middle Ages and early Modernity. The proposed approach is to identify the spheres of interference between the Islamic and Christian worlds (contemplated in their plurality and mutual inter-penetrability). Tracing a relation between culturally locatable origins and the hypothetical transcultural consequences of such processes of interference, we might come to important conclusions, valid not only for the history of ideas as an academic discipline, but also for the contemporary perception of the shared Mediterranean heritage.

The transcultural hypothesis the organizers would like to propose as a discussion topic deals with the aspiration of transcending the cultural and confessional division, undoubtedly predominating in the Mediterranean world during the contemplated period (that may be taken as broadly as going from the 11th to the 17th century). Many European and Mediterranean figures, such as Ibn Arabi, Ramon Llull, Guillaume Postel or John Dee appear to have fallen in the temptation of moving into the interstices between the culturally established and delimited orthodoxies. By what spiritual and intellectual means did they attempt to inhabit those unstable zones? Did they leave behind any blueprint of a non-hegemonic universalism that might be recuperated in our times, helping to build a harmonious future of the region? Is there a diagram of transgressive relationships across the plurality of cultures, denominations and intellectual traditions to be read in the variegated Mediterranean heritage?
Transcultural Mediterranean: in search of non-orthodox and non-hegemonic universalism(s)

30-31 May 2018

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