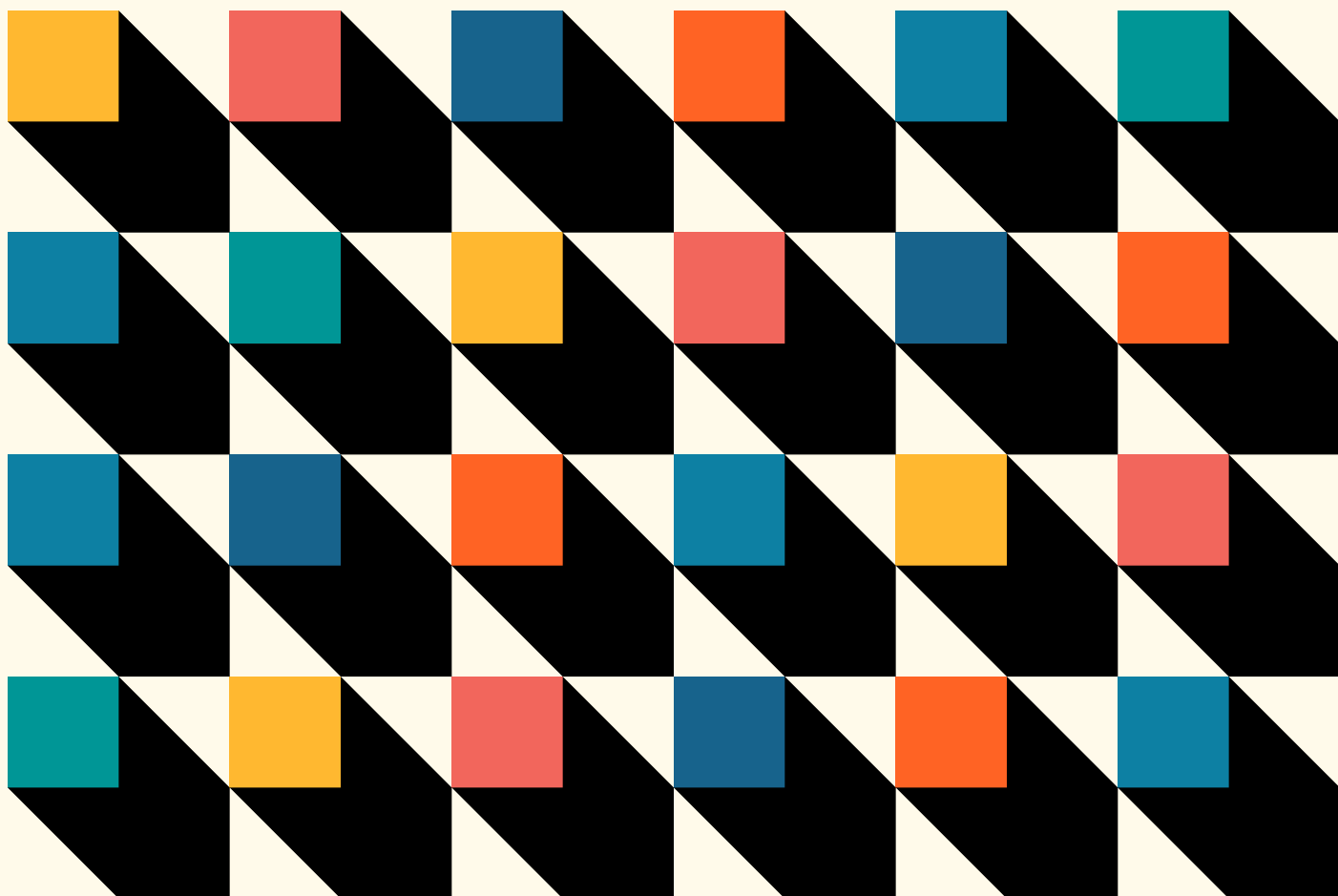




Afro-Mediterranean Mobilities: Cultural Exchange, Knowledge Production, and Race, 1500-1750

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
26-27 April 2027

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This invitation-only workshop emerges from the intellectual and collaborative framework established by BADEMS, *The Cultural History of the Black African Diaspora in Early Modern Spain*, an ERC-funded project based at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). BADEMS is conducting research to understand more fully the cultural histories of Black Africans in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Iberia by foregrounding their roles as cultural creators, linguistic mediators, and agents in the making of early modern Blackness. Through its sustained engagement with cultural history, literary studies, and linguistics, BADEMS seeks to demonstrate the importance of recovering the movement, practices, and intellectual contributions of Black communities within Iberia and across its wider imperial and diasporic networks. This workshop grows directly from that scholarly intervention by expanding its geographical and conceptual frame toward the broader Afro-Mediterranean world and aims to create an intellectually rigorous and collaborative space for rethinking the histories of Blackness, race, and cultural production across the early modern Afro-Mediterranean world.

BADEMS proposes a **three-part workshop** that will consist of two virtual meetings via Teams, and an in-person meeting in Barcelona in April of 2027 aiming at a **special issue**.

The aims of this workshop are twofold:

1. To create an opportunity for shared expertise and dialogue between specialists working on Southern Europe (especially Spain, Portugal, and Italy), and the African continent. With regard to the African continent, we are especially interested in approaches that capture the connectedness of Africa (both North and South of the Sahara) and Southern Europe. We bring these regions together due to our interest in the significance of their historical contacts and the circulation of people, knowledge, and culture that these contacts implied.
2. To centre the normalcy of contact and exchange between racialized minorities and to understand how this contributed to the production and circulation of knowledge and cultural practices as well as to the production and circulation of racialized constructions of difference.



Historical and Scholarly Context

Building on recent scholarship highlighting the histories of Black communities in Europe and North Africa during the early modern period, this workshop centres the movement of people and ideas across the Afro-Mediterranean world in order to understand more fully the contours of Black life and Blackness in the Iberian empire from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. Through a closed call for papers from scholars in Iberian, African, Islamic, Black, and Jewish Studies, we seek to foster scholarship that engages with, expands upon, and challenges a set of guiding questions central to the workshop's broader intellectual aims, including the including, but not limited to, the following:

- How did enslaved, free, and freed Black people contribute to the production of knowledge and culture and its circulation between Europe and Africa during the early modern period?
- What ideas about language—particularly African languages—circulated throughout the Afro-Mediterranean world during this time? How did reliance on linguistic in-formants, translators, interpreters, and other kinds of language workers inflect (nascent) language ideologies?
- What do racializing discourses have in common across southern Europe and Africa? How did racialized individuals negotiate, contest, and/or (re)produce circulating constructions of race?
- What ideas about the relationship of Iberia (including al-Andalus and Sepharad) to Black Africans (and Africa, more broadly) circulate across the Afro-Mediterranean world during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries?