

Woolf Institute

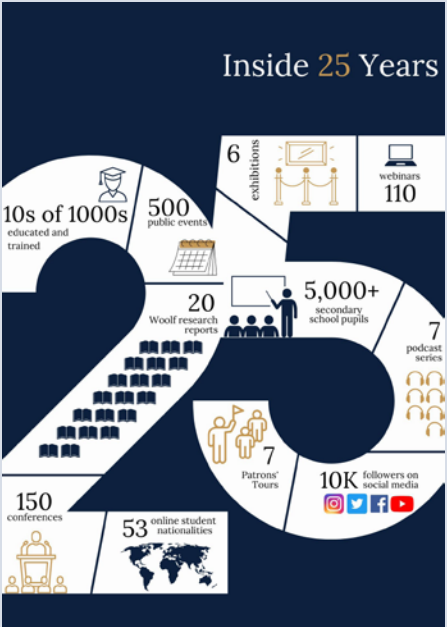
2023/24 Annual Publication



Since 1998, the Woolf Institute has been working towards building tolerance and fostering understanding between religion and society through education. The Institute conducts rigorous academic work to emphasise and bring about positive interactions between the Abrahamic faiths and support the public understanding of the concerns and needs of members of the Abrahamic faiths in secular Britain. By answering practical and theoretical questions concerning aspects of religious identity, culture and practice, the Institute translates research into policy recommendations and public engagement that improve relations between those of different beliefs.



WOOLF INSTITUTE IN NUMBERS



Over 25 years, we have educated and trained tens of thousands of university scholars, online students and practitioners from 53 countries. We have published 20 Woolf research reports, run 500 public events and 150 conferences. Since moving into our permanent home, we have launched 6 photographic exhibitions, run over 100 webinars and created 7 podcast series. We have educated more than 5,000 secondary school students and have over 10,000 social media followers.

Front cover image: Millat Ibrahim "The Creed of Abraham" by Saad al Howaidi, 2023

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CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

Centre for Jewish-Christian Relations logo, where it all started



Founders Dr Ed Kessler MBE and Revd Prof Martin Forward, 1998



Doha Conference of Interfaith Dialogue, 2011



Pilgrimage on Wheels, 2008



First Chair of the Board of Trustees Clemens Nathan with Dr Ed Kessler, 2010

The Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life – convened by the Woolf Institute – chaired by Baroness Elizabeth Butler-Sloss, 2014



The Woolf Institute's new building was completed in September 2017



Woolf Institute Royal Patron HRH The Princess Royal met Lord Woolf CH and Dr Ed Kessler and civic dignitaries at the official opening of the Woolf Institute's new home in April 2018

HRH The Princess Royal with Dr Ed Kessler and Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner – celebrating the transition of leadership, May 2021



Alumni Event: Woolf Institute: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, May 2023

The Patrons' Tour explored the interfaith history of London, January 2023



Roxanne from The Cardozo Kindersley Workshop hand painting the finishing touches to our newly named building, March 2023



Baroness Hale attending the Garden Party prior to her lecture, 'Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Speech', June 2023

Woolf Institute 25th anniversary dinner at St James's Palace in the presence of HRH The Princess Royal in 2023. Scholars – including Dr Katherine O'Lone – spoke about their current research



Woolf Institute Annual Garden Party, June 2023



INTRODUCTION FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In this fast-paced world with its relentless drive for change we confront uncertainty every day. It is present in how we live, how we relate to one another, in what we can take for granted and what we know to be true. The old familiar patterns of life turn like a kaleidoscope into shapes we don't recognise and languages we don't speak. Technology, which brings the promise of cures and solutions, also undermines our existence, and we are unsure how to control the boundaries even as we break them down.

And as we grapple with the speed of these changes, we are besieged by external threats; the ravages of climate change on our landscape and cities; war in Eastern Europe and increasing tensions in other parts of the world; the pandemic and its after-effects on so many aspects of our lives.

For many of us, these threats and uncertainties have led to a sense of disorientation, accompanied by diminishing optimism in a stable thriving future. A little while ago I attended a workshop of educational leaders where we were asked to draw in colour pencil our vision of the world in fifty years. It was astonishing how few of us had really thought about what life would be like that far ahead, probably because we are so shaped by the short-term goals society we inhabit.

More worrying, however, were the results of the artistic efforts of the workshop. Most of the pictures produced were of depressingly dystopian landscapes. It became clear we all shared enormous concern about how we could navigate a route to a positive, happy future or had much sense of what that could look like.

This loss of trust in a secure future has a worrying tendency to lead to detachment and alienation, especially in diverse communities. When we're threatened, whether by invisible or tangible forces, our instinct is to hunker down and find safety in the small, nuclear communities we know and trust, and to regard anyone else with suspicion.

Yet we know that this behaviour is the very thing which unsettles and divides us. It is the antithesis of a cohesive homogeneous society where people understand the stranger, accept the diverse and embrace the different.

Our only hope of tackling and resolving the challenges we face is to unite forces. But we can't do that unless we first listen, learn and understand one another. The stranger must be our friend. This is true most of all in societies where faith differences divide people. The Woolf Institute was founded 25 years ago to provide a safe forum for discussion, awareness and learning about these religious differences and it has grown each year as the need for understanding becomes more urgent.

Sharing knowledge about our faiths helps us make sense of life. We find the common values and objectives and we respect the differences. Working together allows us to draw on faith networks to tackle contemporary issues through religious motivations. In terms of climate change, for example, the concept of stewardship of the earth is crucial to bring about changes that will secure sustainable life on the planet. In terms of conflict, it is reconciliation rooted in religious practice which can help overcome divisions between warring factions. And combined faith leadership of different backgrounds can help provide moral and ethical guidance for the management of futuristic constructs like artificial intelligence.

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The rich heritage of our different religions offers us knowledge and insight with which we can tackle the seemingly impossible challenges of our fractured societies. Through our faiths we find meaning in the world and our place in it, and by understanding one another we hope to share the burden of the challenges of climate change, war, famine, and our destructive responses to man-made problems. Nothing seems so bad or so insurmountable when it's faced together. By understanding one another we help shape resilience and create trust in the path of humanity, and the future begins to look like a different place.

But we don't and can't work alone. We draw strength from the support of every one of you and thank you for all you have done to enable our work to continue and flourish. This anniversary year has brought us together in wonderful ways on many occasions and perhaps the greatest pleasure has been reconnecting with so many alumni and friends. We hope you will stay in close touch, read our weekly newsletters and that many of you will choose to continue your support as we forge ahead. We offer you our grateful thanks and look forward to the next quarter century together.

Esther-Iman Geyer

REFLECTIONS ON THE YEAR THAT WAS



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1. The Iftar at Leighton House Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, attracted a crowd of MPs, members of the House of Lords, faith leaders, philanthropists and journalists, while another Iftar at the Woolf Institute connected us to Muslim communities in Cambridge.

2. Woolf Institute Executive Director, Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner and Chair of Trustees, Shabir Randeree CBE at the Annual Garden Party in June 2023.

3. The Patrons' Tour 2023 took us to the UAE and Saudi Arabia to explore the religious landscape on the ground.

4. The law firm Mishcon de Reya kindly hosted our annual London Research Evening 2023.

5. Our Patrons' Tour to London took us to see the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chief Rabbi, imams at the East London Mosque and to Bevis Marks Synagogue.

6. During the so-called Kesslerfest on 3 May 2023, we celebrated the birthday of our Founder President Dr Ed Kessler and the naming of our Kessler Family building with an alumni session and a panel on female authority in faith leadership.

7. The first Peter Gilbert Prize went to Shalom Auslander who delivered a engaging lecture in February 2023.

8. Our 25th Anniversary dinner was very kindly hosted by our Royal Patron HRH The Princess Royal in St James's Palace and attended by many of our longtime supporters and friends.

9. Our Annual Garden Party was followed by a most intriguing lecture by our Trustee, Baroness Brenda Hale.

© Theo Wood

EVENTS 2023-24

Our Events Calendar 2023-24 will continue with a combination of in-house and virtual events. Join us for our exciting new programme in the upcoming academic year – from our very popular Research Day to the first lecture in the Ibn Arabi Series and events celebrating the Institute's Silver Jubilee.

You can become involved as we facilitate encounter between members of different communities, address hot topics and pressing current issues and organise high level academic debates on important issues. We are planning many more events than feature on the following pages, so please check our Events webpages and the Events bar in our weekly newsletter, This Week at Woolf.

For the latest programme: www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/whats-on/events

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk to receive our weekly newsletter, This Week at Woolf.



12 October 2023, 17.00-18.30

UNIVERSAL CIVIL MARRIAGE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGIOUS RITES

A lecture by Professor Rebecca Probert FBA, FAcSS (University of Exeter Law School) which will be followed by a panel discussion on the theme of the talk.

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk

17 October 2023, 18.00-19.00

INTERFAITH MIXER

Undergraduate and graduate students are invited for a social mixer to get to know the different faith societies in Cambridge and learn about the Woolf Institute mission and available facilities. The evening will focus on life on campus as a student of faith; the opportunities, advantages and challenges which may arise.

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk



Starting 18 October 2023,
Wednesdays 16.00

ADVANCING A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF CONTEMPORARY ANTISEMITISM

Building upon the success of last year's collaboration, ISGAP is delighted to announce the continuation of the ISGAP-Woolf Institute Series for this year. Titled 'Advancing a Conceptual Framework for the Critical Examination of Contemporary Antisemitism', this seminar series is an integral component of ISGAP's prestigious Fellowship Training Programme on Critical Contemporary Antisemitism Studies, Discrimination and Human Rights at the Woolf Institute.

In contrast to the descriptive nature often seen in studies of antisemitism, especially in its modern contexts, this series addresses the pressing need for an interdisciplinary conceptual framework. By exploring the socio-economic, political, cultural and ideological dimensions of antisemitism(s) within the context of neoliberal globalisation,

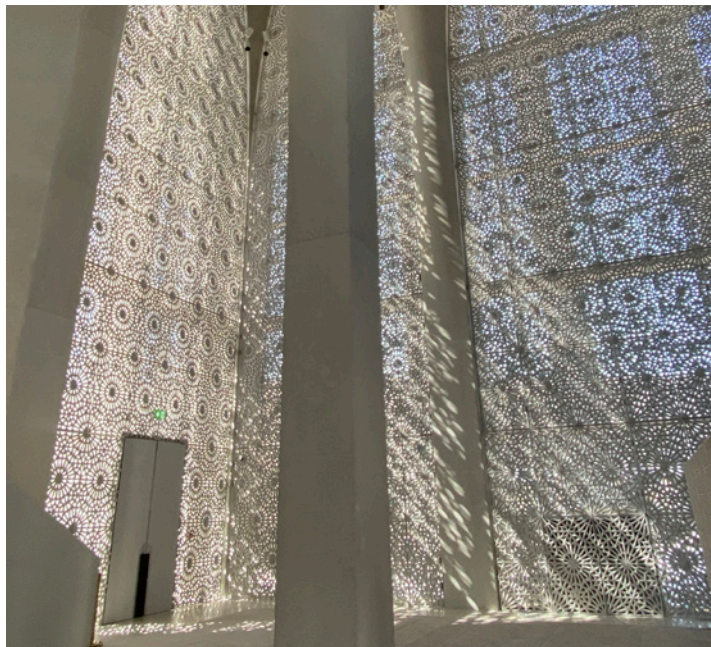


we seek to develop innovative tools for analysis. In today's complex landscape marked by the challenges of globalisation and the crisis of modernity, it becomes crucial to critically engage with antisemitism(s) and its impact on democratic principles and values.

In a post-modern era, where Western intellectuals have at times been reluctant to confront the multifaceted nature of antisemitism, this seminar series takes a proactive approach. We aim to decode and map the re-emergence of antisemitic discourse and violence, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue to effectively address this deeply rooted form of hatred. Through virtual presentations by leading experts in the field of critical contemporary antisemitism, hosted at the Woolf Institute, we are committed to advancing our understanding and strategies to combat antisemitism's persistent challenges.

Please see the website and newsletter for further details.

EVENTS 2023-24



QUR'AN AND BIBLE READING GROUP

The Qur'an and Bible project seeks to explore the relationship between the two scriptures, and their similarities and differences. What tools are available and which methods exist that can be applied to the interpretation of Scriptures, including problematic passages? The project studies Muslim and Jewish scriptures alongside one another, brings in classical rabbinic interpretations and the Hadith and Tafsir, and offers recommendations to interpret and discuss the texts (including hostile passages), in ways that further understanding between and among the Jewish and Muslim communities, foster dialogue and overcome prejudice and bias.

Since October 2021, we have convened a regular reading group, convened by Rick Sopher and chaired by Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner, on the topic in which eminent academics from universities in the UK, USA and Abu Dhabi gather regularly to discuss aspects of the relationship between the Torah and the Qur'an.

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk if you would like to join the group. Please see the website and newsletter for forthcoming dates.

1 November 2023

ANNUAL RESEARCH DAY

Join the Woolf Institute to hear from its multidisciplinary researchers from around the world. For one day, the Woolf Institute research team will convene in Cambridge to discuss their research and propose ideas for the future. We hope that this event will offer a unique opportunity to evaluate and further develop our diverse research into contemporary religion and society.

Contact development@woolf.cam.ac.uk



8 November 2023, 17.00-18.30

IBN ARABI LECTURE: FAITH IN THE MUSEUM

The Woolf Institute is delighted to welcome Neil MacGregor as its first speaker for the Annual Ibn Arabi Lecture Series, endowed by Hilary Williams Papworth in memory of Bill Papworth. Neil MacGregor was Director of the British Museum from 2002 to 2015. He is currently Founding Director of the Humboldt Forum in Berlin.

European museums have long thought of themselves as secular civic spaces, heirs of the Enlightenment, and – especially in the French tradition – operating outside the religious realm. Yet the civic world they inhabit has changed radically in recent years. In many countries, religion is now politically centre-stage, and not only in India and Russia, Turkey and the United States; in a way unimaginable a generation ago, every European state now has to take a view on Islam. Everywhere, indigenous communities expect their beliefs to be respected in the display of their artefacts – or by a decision not to display them. What does this mean for museums? Can you show religious art without exploring the thought world which shaped it? Can you present objects of faith without, in some measure, endorsing the assumptions they embody?

Register for free tickets: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ibn-arabi-lecture-faith-in-the-museum-by-neil-macgregor-tickets-666847267127

20 November 2023

LEICESTER PATRONS' TOUR

Each year, the Institute takes a delegation of supporters and patrons to cities with a particularly interesting religious (and inter-religious) history, meeting local faith, community and political leaders to gain a sense of the history, religion and culture of a country. In past years, we visited Jerusalem, Rome, Sarajevo, Astana and Almaty (Kazakhstan), Istanbul, Abu Dhabi and Riyadh.

We have now started exploring the religious landscape of British cities too, with a trip to London in January 2023. Our next excursion will take us to Leicester, one of Britain's minority-majority cities.

Our aim is to learn more about faith leaders' priorities for the communities they represent and serve, and about the challenges they face. We want to explore what role interfaith engagement can play in facilitating us coming together as a society, and the ways in which the Woolf Institute's research and public engagement can best support religious communities in Britain.

Contact Claire Curran: cc640@cam.ac.uk

EVENTS 2023-24

SOCIETY FOR THE MEDIEVAL MEDITERRANEAN WEBINAR SERIES

Together with the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean and supported by CSIC IMF, University of Munich, the Medieval Studies Research Group at the University of Lincoln, Leicester Medieval Research Centre and Ghent University, we are running a termly webinar series focusing on history of the religiously diverse societies around the medieval Mediterranean. The webinars attract historians from around the world.

21 November 2023, 17.00-18.00

APPROACHING THE EARLY MEDIEVAL IBERIAN ECONOMY FROM THE GROUND UP

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk



WOOLF, 25 YEARS OF AN IDEA: A CELEBRATION

The Institute will launch its book, a history of the Woolf Institute from its original conception to today. The story is told through articles, interviews and contributions from the people who were there and whose memories illustrate the unfolding narrative of this extraordinary place. Throughout the book we have a timeline of world events alongside key moments in the development of the Institute. The book is well illustrated and beautifully designed and will be compulsive reading for anyone curious about how one man's inspiration fostered an academic institute whose cry for understanding, collaboration and reconciliation in religious divide is heard across the world.

Please see the website and newsletter for the event date. Contact Claire Curran: cc640@cam.ac.uk



11 December 2023, 17.30-18.30

CHANUKAH CELEBRATION

The Institute will host a light meal with music and the lighting of the Menorah to celebrate this festival of lights. We invite Jewish colleagues, students and friends to join us alongside Woolf members and friends of other faiths to celebrate and learn about Chanukah together.

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk

1-7 February 2024

WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

Since 2010, the United Nations have marked World Interfaith Harmony Week at the beginning of each February. During this week each year, the UN encourages member states and people of faith within them to 'spread the message of interfaith harmony and goodwill'. At Woolf, we will bring together some of our longstanding events alongside new events, all aimed at enriching and celebrating our own contributions to and experiences of interfaith harmony.



Monday 5 February 2024

WILLIAM KESSLER ESSAY PRIZE AND INTERFAITH MIXER

This year we will bring together the announcement and celebration of our student essay competition, the William Kessler Essay Prize, with an interfaith mixer for university students. Our student guests will enjoy refreshments, interfaith encounter, and networking as well as short presentations from the shortlisted candidates and the presentation of the prize. See page 53 for details of the competition.

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk

CAMBRIDGE INTERFAITH CONNECTION

Also, during World Interfaith Harmony Week, the Cambridge Interfaith Connection will meet for its first gathering of 2024, hosted by Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue. See page 29 for more about this local interfaith initiative.

Please see the website and newsletter for the event date.

Contact Dr Elizabeth Phillips: erp31@cam.ac.uk



7-8 February 2024

WOOLF INSTITUTE CONFERENCE 2024: MILESTONES AND TURNING POINTS

Following the Woolf Institute's 25th anniversary year, we will be hosting our second annual conference in February 2024, on the subject of 'Milestones and Turning Points'. Papers and panels presented by researchers and practitioners will explore how these themes (taken individually or collectively) contribute to the understanding, interpretation, or application of religious practices in historical and contemporary context.

Contact Dr Danielle Padley: dlp29@cam.ac.uk



LONDON RESEARCH EVENING

Seldom, if ever, have the questions of religious response to climate change, Muslim and Jewish women's interfaith interactions in Britain, Judeo-Arabic medical manuscripts in Armenia and faith in mental health be discussed in the same evening, in the same room. But this is what you will find at the London Research Evening where a group of PhD scholars from the Woolf present their work to an invited audience of patrons, trustees, supporters and friends. Our patron, Lord Harry Woolf and his wife Marguerite are always enthusiastic attenders as are many of those who have worked with the Institute over the years, whether as trustees, patrons or donors. Their keen interest in the current research topics is hugely important to our students.

The short presentations will summarise the salient points of the work, highlighting the academic challenges the student faces and give context to questions many of which will broaden our knowledge and challenge our thinking. The presentations are followed by a reception and dinner where the conversation will continue as the evening unwraps and no doubt many insights and connections will be made. It is an evening greatly prized by all who attend and a highlight of our academic year.

Please see the website and newsletter for the event date.
Contact Claire Curran: cc640@cam.ac.uk



ANNUAL IFTAR

Iftar meals have been a great opportunity for people to meet at the Woolf Institute. The Institute will host a lavish Halal meal with our Muslim colleagues and students. We invite you to break the fast in celebration of the holy month of Ramadan.

Please see the website and newsletter for the event date.
Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk



4 June 2024

ANNUAL GARDEN PARTY

The Woolf Institute is delighted to invite our Friends & Supporters to the Annual Garden Party. This event is open to members of the Friends of the Woolf and by invitation. Join the Friends to become part of these special events. See page 62 for details.

Contact Flora Moffie: fm547@cam.ac.uk



INTRODUCTION BY DR ELIZABETH PHILLIPS

April marked the anniversary of my arrival at Woolf in the new post of Public Engagement Fellow. In this first year I developed a public engagement strategy and a three year plan for the development and delivery of programmes to implement the strategy. Our strategy recognises that successful and meaningful programmes reaching beyond the academy are not one-directional or one-sided. It is not only about outreach and public education, it is also about engagement which is mutual and interdependent. We engage with many people, groups, and sectors outside the institute to share our learning as well as to learn from them – to disseminate our expertise as well as to explore and partner with important faith and interfaith communities, relationships, networks and realities.

Some of our public engagement centres around our research. We seek to learn from relevant individuals and organisations beyond the academy as we design and carry out our research. We consult with relevant public bodies to better understand our findings along the way. And we consider how our research can make a lasting impact through ongoing programmes arising from the research findings, which may include resources for schools such as the Living in Harmony programme, training for practitioners such as the Religious Diversity in End of Life Care programme or informing public policy.

Other public engagement centres around our commitment to fostering encounter between people of different faiths, and between these communities and wider society. This includes ways we use our beautiful building as a convening space, public events which aim to bring diverse groups together and initiatives focused on creating opportunities for interfaith encounter. I am pleased to announce a new partnership between Woolf and a local interfaith initiative in Cambridge. You can read more about each of these engagement programmes on the following pages.

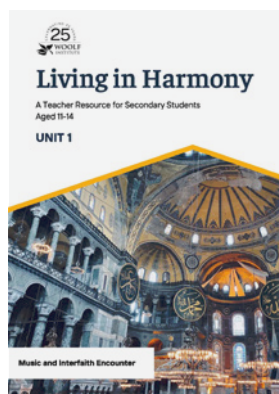


ENGAGING WITH SCHOOLS

Engagement with schools has been part of Woolf for most of the Institute's history. In 2001 CJCR along with The Society for Dialogue and Action produced Valuing Diversity, a guide for secondary school teachers linking interfaith experience with citizenship and religious and moral education. Teaching Our Own and Other Faiths in Schools, brought together Woolf and Dr Mary Earl (Education Faculty, University of Cambridge) to research religious education in the UK and the US, resulting in RE-framing Education about Beliefs and Practices in Schools (2015), which argues for teaching about beliefs and practices in terms of meaning-making rather than 'religions', emphasising the relevance of the subject to all students.

2017 saw the launch of Living in Harmony, which would become one of the Woolf Institute's most successful public engagement programmes. Originally a study of the shared past of Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities in Aleppo and Baghdad, the project explored how various faith communities lived together for centuries in the Middle East, sharing local culture. Arising from this research, Woolf PhD Scholars Dunya Habash and Alissa Symon created an interactive session designed for secondary schools to introduce the importance of relations between Jews and Muslims through exploring how music created a sense of communal belonging in the past and may continue to create a sense of commonality among various faith and non-faith communities in Britain today. Living in Harmony sessions have now been delivered to over 5000 secondary students.

This year Dr Elizabeth Phillips has researched current scholarly trends in religious education, conducted an online survey of RE teachers and designed an RE teachers focus group which was conducted by Woolf PhD scholar, Peach Hoyle. Based on the findings from this research, Dr Phillips is leading the development of a portfolio of resources, aimed at Key Stage 3 learners with additional guidance on use for Key Stage 4, which can either be used independently by teachers or delivered in person by Woolf scholars. These will include a new range of video resources to be commissioned in the coming year. The first two sets of resources in this portfolio are currently in development.



As she nears the completion of her PhD, Dunya Habash has joined the Institute as our Public Engagement Coordinator, for a spring-summer project focused on developing the next phase of Living in Harmony. Bringing together her scholarly expertise with her experience developing and delivering the Living in Harmony workshops, she is creating a new series of Living in Harmony resources highlighting historic interfaith cultural engagement, including units on music, architecture and science which can be used as a series in Religious Education or across the curriculum in the relevant subject areas.

As part of her PhD scholarship, Peach Hoyle is working on expanding the Gender and Religion Today resources created by former Woolf Research Fellow, Dr Lea Taragin-Zeller, whose research project, Religious Sisterhood: Encounters of Gender, Religion and Belonging Today (2019-2020) focused on grassroots female interfaith initiatives. Peach is redeveloping the schools resources – which look at gender in relation to topics such as marriage, sacred texts, rites of passage and activism for social change – to align with the new schools resource portfolio.

*Left: Living in Harmony curriculum cover
Below: Dunya Habash engaging with alumni at the KesslerFest*



RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN END OF LIFE CARE

The Religious Diversity in End of Life Care project equips healthcare professionals and volunteers to care sensitively and respectfully for Jewish, Muslim and Christian patients and their loved ones at the end of life. Very few people working in end of life care, from doctors to nurses to care home aides to volunteers in hospices, have an opportunity to receive training in the religious dimensions of the experiences and needs of people who are dying and their loved ones. A lack of awareness surrounding what patients may require or desire in relation to their personal faith and religious practice can lead to unnecessary suffering for patients, unintended insensitivity on the part of practitioners, and avoidable stress or conflict with families and loved ones within the care setting. Our vision is for end of life care that strengthens communities and helps diverse groups to feel better able and more comfortable accessing local hospitals and hospices, and helps diverse individuals feel seen and honoured as they approach death.

This year saw us reaching the end of Phase Two of the project, and planning and preparing for Phase Three to launch in the coming year. Building on previous Woolf projects [Life and Death in Judaism and Islam (2010), Bridging the Gap: Strengthening Relations between Hospices and Muslims of Britain (2015), and Advance Care Planning and Muslim Communities (2016)], in Phase One of the project (2016-2019) we developed and delivered a training programme in person to over 450 doctors, nurses, care home workers, chaplains and volunteers in hospices and palliative care. And we published the companion resource, Diversity in End of Life Care: A Handbook on Caring for Jewish, Christian and Muslim Patients. In Phase Two of the project (2020-2022), Dr Katherine O'Lone conducted research on end of life care during COVID-19, interviewing healthcare workers and chaplains, and we created an updated edition of our handbook including her findings. Adapting to the pandemic, we developed an online training session delivered to over 100 practitioners.

In Phase Three of the project, we will bring together everything we have learned thus far to update and expand our training offerings to include new video resources, in-person training days at the institute for practitioners in the Cambridge area, and a series of online training sessions available to practitioners across the UK. Our aspiration is that end of life care professionals and volunteers, properly trained in the religious dimensions of end of life care, will help to deliver increased dignity for countless numbers of patients and their families.

Right: Religious Diversity in End of Life Care Handbook cover.



Religious Diversity in End of Life Care

A handbook on caring for Jewish, Christian and Muslim patients





PUBLIC POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Several of our research projects at Woolf have included particularly significant engagement in public policy arenas this year, in the UK and beyond.

Led by Dr Katherine O'Lone, the Forgiveness and Future-Building project has engaged with various senior policymakers and key international stakeholders. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – the UN's lead agency on international development – invited the team to Jordan to discuss the research and its potential applicability to the region following successful meetings with the programme's Bosnian and Palestinian offices. The project will be featured in the forthcoming UNDP Human Development Report. In the UK, the project team has engaged with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and accepted an invitation to present its work to the FCDO's network of conflict analysts and data scientists.

Following successful engagement with policymakers across the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in 2022 and 2023 as part of the ongoing Woolf Diversity Study programme, Dr Julian Hargreaves was invited in February

2023 to discuss the DLUHC's cohesion and counter-extremism policy as part of Dame Sara Khan's Independent Review of Social Cohesion and Resilience. Later that month, Dr Hargreaves joined a second group organised by Belong and the University of Kent to review and improve the DLUHC's measurement of social cohesion.

As the Faith in Mental Health project team continues working on its fieldwork and data analysis, Jamilla Hekmoun and Seherish Abrar have engaged successfully with key stakeholders across the mental health and wider public and charity sectors. The Woolf Institute has joined forces with the Centre for Mental Health, one of the UK's leading mental health campaign and lobbying organisations. Working together on a series of briefing notes for policymakers, we aim to raise awareness of mental health issues within Muslim communities and amplify the work done by organisations working locally to support them.



In December 2022, the International Centre for Counter Terrorism published a legal and policy study of Islamist extremism and the UK Government's counter-extremism strategy. Since then, its co-authors, Maaha Elahi and Dr Julian Hargreaves, have presented its findings, conclusions and recommendations to hundreds of staff across the public sector. The study has been used to frame difficult conversations led by the Woolf Institute on the many issues connected to previous attempts to define and tackle extremism within Muslim communities and some of the opportunities available to those wishing to improve future community relations.

Above left: Dr Katherine O'Lone and Bertie Aherne



ENCOUNTER

In early 2022, members of Beth Shalom Reform Synagogue invited members from Cambridge mosques, churches and the local Baha'i community to join them for an event reflecting on the tragic outbreak of war in Ukraine. Participating faith communities reciprocated over the next year, and events were hosted by Downing Place United Reformed Church, Cambridge Central Mosque and the Cambridge Baha'i Community, each with its own theme.

The Woolf Institute is pleased to announce a new partnership with this local initiative, in which we will manage the administrative needs of the group, publicise it more broadly to other faith communities in Cambridge and facilitate its ongoing gatherings. The group's current steering committee includes representatives from the four founding faith communities as well as the Cambridge Hindu Forum, and recently agreed the initiative's new name: Cambridge Interfaith Connection.

The Cambridge Interfaith Connection seeks to bring together people of faith in Cambridge so that we can learn about one another's traditions, understand one another better, extend hospitality to one another and become friends. We are open to people of all faiths, and we gather three times a year, taking it in turns to host one another.

Our September event immediately followed Rosh Hashanah as well as marking the beginning of this new phase in partnership with the Woolf Institute, thus the theme 'Beginnings'.

PUBLICATIONS



APOCALYPTIC THEOPOLITICS

October 2022 saw the release of the latest book by Dr Elizabeth Phillips. *Apocalyptic Theopolitics* (Cascade Books, Theopolitical Visions series) brings together a selection of her scholarly essays on eschatology, ethics and politics, as well as a selection of sermons preached in the chapels of the University of Cambridge arising from that scholarly work. These essays and sermons explore themes ranging from ethnography to Anabaptism and Christian Zionism to Afro-pessimism. Drawing on a wide range of authors from Flannery O'Connor and Herbert McCabe to James Cone and M. Shawn Copeland, this collection provides insight into the fields of Christian ethics and political theology, as well as ethnography and homiletics. She challenges theologians to interdisciplinarity in their work, and to keep historical and traditional sources in conversation with contemporary sources from critical and liberative perspectives. She challenges Christians to engage in apocalyptic practices which name and resist the false pretences of the political status quo. And she challenges preachers to call their congregations to moral and political faithfulness, opening up possibilities beyond both the squeamish evasion of politics in some preaching traditions and the didactic political partisanship of others. William T. Cavanaugh (DePaul University, USA) writes, 'Elizabeth Phillips is one of the English-speaking world's wisest guides through the thickets of political theology. . . This volume illustrates how eschatology, properly understood and practiced, is not a fringe concern but is at the heart of Christian political witness. Clear, insightful, interdisciplinary, and always attentive to lived Christian practice, this book is a joy to read.'

wipfandstock.com/9781725290273/apocalyptic-theopolitics/

Above right cover image: 'Synagoga and Ecclesia in Our Time' by artist Joshua Koffman and commissioned by Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia



WISDOM AND GREATNESS IN ONE PLACE

The Alexandrian Trader Moses ben Judah and his Circle

Dr Dotan Arad and Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner

The manuscript collections of the Bodleian Library contain a corpus of dozens of documents from the archive of Moses ben Judah. One of the leaders of the Jewish community in Alexandria, Moses was a prominent businessman and in contact with numerous individuals in Cairo, Crete, Sicily and other places. This book publishes his documents, many for the first time, translates them into English and analyses them within their historical and linguistic context, improving our understanding of the communal life of Alexandrian Jews in the late Middle Ages. In addition to a study of spiritual and family life, of community organisation of the Jews of the Eastern Mediterranean Basin, and of commerce in the Mediterranean, the book also makes an important contribution to the study of Judaeo-Arabic at a linguistic watershed moment.



A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF JEWISH-CHRISTIAN RELATIONS

Until now, there existed no comprehensive history of Jewish-Christian relations over 2000 years in a single volume. Whilst Ed Kessler co-edited *A Dictionary of Jewish-Christian Relations* with Neil Wenborn in 2004, and Ed wrote *An Introduction to Jewish-Christian Relations* in 2010, this publication provides the 'missing' third book: a one-volume *Documentary History*.

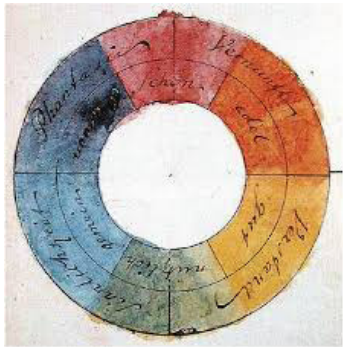
The manuscript was completed in summer 2023 and will be published by Cambridge University Press in autumn 2024. It offers a chronological and thematic approach illustrating the various developments in the 2000 year history of Jewish-Christian relations worldwide, including a collection of primary documents. An accessible publication aimed at scholars, teachers and students, clerics and lay people, and anyone interested in the history of religion, the *Documentary History* also provides a commentary on each document, shedding light on the Jewish-Christian relationship at the time it was written.

When asked for his motivation, Ed said that 'as a teacher I have often wanted my students to read an accessible and authoritative one volume history of Jewish-Christian Relations. Whilst there have been huge changes and a massive improvement in the Jewish-Christian relationship, I thought there was a need for this resource which will enable the reader to understand what occurred during the encounters between Jews and Christians over 2000 years as well as how and why.'

Information on the launch of *A Documentary History of Jewish-Christian Relations* will be available on the Woolf website in summer 2024.

WOOLF DIVERSITY STUDY

Dr Julian Hargreaves



Following the successful launch of the Woolf Diversity Study in 2020 (known previously as the Diversity Study of England and Wales 2020), the Woolf Institute is publishing findings from the project's new survey in 2023.

The Woolf Diversity Study is the largest known survey of ethnic, national and religious diversity undertaken in the UK. In partnership with Survation, a leading market research and polling company, we have surveyed over 10,000 adults living in England and Wales.

As before, we asked questions concerning people's attitudes towards ethnic, national and religious diversity within British society and local communities. Is diversity good for British society? Is it good for local communities? We also asked about the pace of change. Has diversity increased too much in the past ten years?

This time, we added new questions on local trust. Survey respondents were invited to describe the number of people in their local area known well enough to ask for a favour. We used follow-up questions to understand how many of these come from an ethnic or religious background different to the respondent's own. In response to the UK Government's Levelling Up White Paper, and to further explore some of its major themes, we surveyed the popularity of various local activities. How many people volunteer locally, and how often? We also explored local priorities. Which features of local life make somewhere a good place to live? And which most need improving? Our findings, conclusions and recommendations, along with selected data will be made publicly available for all.

Supported by the Kessler family

FORGIVENESS AND FUTURE-BUILDING

Dr Katherine O'Lone



This project seeks to i) explore patterns surrounding intergroup cooperation and social stability after conflict and ii) to understand people's moral reasoning surrounding forgiveness and revenge in the aftermath of prolonged violence. The project focuses on three post-conflict locations (Northern Ireland, Bosnia and South Sudan). Despite the significant variation in terms of politics, religion, ethnicity and geography, the project is interested in determining whether there are patterns surrounding people's moral concerns and cooperative behavioural tendencies and how such patterns can be used to inform policy to sustain social stability. One of the goals of the project is to provide materials for constructive practical use by policy makers, NGOs and political leaders. To do this the Woolf Institute is collaborating with researchers at CulturePulse who have developed purpose-built AI technologies to better understand the mechanisms underpinning conflict and social stability. This type of methodology enables us to explore and discover the conditions under which – and the mechanisms by which – individual and social variables change in the artificial society. And secondly, this approach can provide policy makers with a powerful analytic and forecasting tool which allows them to test out different policy outcomes before they are implemented in the real world.

Supported by an anonymous foundation



ANGLO-JEWISH MUSIC MAKING: SYNAGOGUE, STAGE, SOCIETY

Dr Danielle Padley



For this project, Dr Danielle Padley is undertaking an anthropological survey of Jewish community music-making in Victorian England. Specifically, she is looking at activities cultivated for working-class Jewish communities, and their role in connecting these communities to, and distinguishing them from, the wider Victorian public. It is the first study to examine a broad spectrum of Jewish musical activity in England outside of Jewish worship, within the framework of a Victorian England strongly defined by its religious (predominantly Anglican) and musical cultures.

'Anglo-Jewish Music-Making' incorporates research into professional and amateur musical activities of both a sacred and secular nature, with discussions including the establishment of Jewish choral societies and other music groups, the influence of music education in schools, routes to professional training, and Jewish performers on the operatic and concert stage. It aims to demonstrate the diversity of the Jewish lived experience, frequently overlooked in Anglo-Jewish histories and British music studies, which has shaped Jewish life and worship in England today. As such, it also notably features discussions of the role of women as musicians, music leaders and philanthropists.

The project requires the study of archival material from a wide variety of sources, including the Victorian Jewish press, musical journals and periodicals, school and college records and reports, concert reviews and programmes, genealogy documents, musical scores and synagogue records. As both a music historian and practitioner, Danielle disseminates her research through both written and oral media, reflecting the project's theme of people, communities and their music.

Supported by an anonymous private donor

FAITH IN MENTAL HEALTH

Dr Julian Hargreaves, Jamilla Hekmoun and Seherish Abrar



Faith in Mental Health (FiMH) combines the development of educational materials on faith, interfaith and mental health with a policy-related study on mental health service provision in England and Wales. It examines the relationships between Muslim communities, organisations that represent and serve them in the mental health sector, and NHS or private mental health services. The FiMH team is led by Dr Julian Hargreaves and Jamilla Hekmoun, our new Research Fellow.

FiMH identifies and analyses examples of successful collaborative and integrative approaches within the provision of mental health services for Muslim communities. By doing this, we will understand what works, and how religious literacy may be encouraged across the mental health sector. We will also examine how trust can be developed between service providers and users from Muslim and other faith backgrounds. We will analyse relationships between statutory, voluntary, and community mental health services, particularly those which may focus on Muslim mental health, and determine how these partnerships could be strengthened. The aim is to celebrate and amplify these local success stories and use them to create national policy recommendations suitable for England and Wales.

The FiMH project team are currently conducting interviews with mental health practitioners and are organising two in-depth case studies. Findings, conclusions, and policy recommendations will be published in 2024.



RESEARCH

HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-LINGUISTIC RESEARCH AT THE INSTITUTE

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner



While most of the research projects at the Woolf Institute are concerned with contemporary social sciences, we also understand the importance of approaching all topics from a historical perspective. Our Executive Director Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner works on historical themes, such as the Cairo Genizah and Early Modern Jewish merchants, with a new book on Alexandrian Jewry of the 15th century just due to be published. Many of our students and research affiliates also focus on historical studies which range from the Abbasid caliphate, medieval Jewish Egypt and Spain, to early modern medical traditions shared between the faiths.

The historical projects are concerned with relations between religious communities in the pluralist societies of the Middle East and Spain. Through these investigative projects, the Institute continues to contribute to rigorous academic debates on the relations between the different faiths, as well as promote a renewed understanding in modern society about ways in which different religious communities can coexist and share spaces in a prolific and productive manner.

Another focus of study is socio-linguistics, as language is one of the most important factors of ethnic identity and of perceived community. Because language is something that an individual can, to a certain degree, control, it is perhaps the most decisive. We investigate how religious affiliation influences linguistic choices in speech and writing.

Right: Chandelier in the
Qasr al-Watan, Abu Dhabi





COMMISSION ON THE INTEGRATION OF REFUGEES

The Commission on the Integration of Refugees is an independent commission convened by the Woolf Institute and began its work in September 2022. It strives for a society where everyone, including refugees, feels welcome and part of a strong, cohesive community. Bringing together opposing views and diverse experiences, the Commission has heard from refugees and asylum seekers from across the UK, engaged with local councils, economists, security and police forces, lawyers, third-sector workers, business leaders, clinicians, education and health experts, academics, faith leaders and policy makers from across the political spectrum.

It is clear that faith communities play a hugely significant role in furthering refugee integration and our conversations with national and local faith leaders have drawn out examples of best practice. We hope that one of the outcomes of our work will be helping each community learn from the work of their peers.

During the last 12 months, we have taken evidence at hearings in urban and rural locations, undertaken a Call for Evidence, initiated a survey of the views of refugees, examined UK Govt Policy from 1997-2022 and commissioned financial modelling with economists from the LSE to provide the costs and benefits of our proposals.

Following the well-established Woolf Institute model, we are working together to overcome differences and find common ground. All Commissioners agree this is vital in fixing the broken asylum system and offering practical solutions to refugee integration.

The Commission expects to issue its report, with recommendations, in the spring 2024.

ISLAMIST EXTREMISM

Dr Julian Hargreaves and Maaha Elahi



The UK Government's counter terrorism and counter extremism strategies have been among the most sensitive issues within Britain's faith communities. A study conducted at the Woolf Institute and published recently by the International Centre for Counter Terrorism, a world-leading research centre based in The Hague, sought to engage current debates from a new perspective.

With co-author Maaha Elahi, a Cambridge alumna and pupil barrister, Dr Julian Hargreaves completed a legal and public policy analysis of *Shakeel Begg v British Broadcasting Corporation*, a British libel case brought before the High Court in 2016.

Begg v BBC, as the case is now known, provides a lens through which current debates on extremism and counter-extremism in the UK may be analysed. More specifically, the authors use their analysis of the case to address criticisms levied against the UK Government's counter-extremism strategy, including the controversial use of the term 'Islamist extremism'.

The article offers two main arguments. First, that the judgment in *Begg v BBC* has been undervalued by politicians and policymakers in the UK, as well as by scholars, journalists and other commentators. Second, that Lord Justice Haddon-Cave's judgment in *Begg v BBC* provides a useful framework for those wishing to define, identify and tackle extreme forms of Islamism, and extremism of any kind, in the UK and elsewhere.

Since its publication, the study has been presented to senior officers from the Metropolitan Police Service and Counter Terrorism Policing, receiving praise from both organisations, and to hundreds of staff working for local authorities and other public bodies across England and Wales, with positive feedback from Muslim and non-Muslim colleagues.

PHD, HONORARY PHD & MPhil SCHOLARS

The Woolf Institute and the Cambridge Trust collaborate on a scheme of scholarships to support outstanding postgraduate students (PhD and MPhil) at the University of Cambridge.

The award, known as the Woolf Institute Cambridge Scholarship, supports PhD Scholars whose research is focused within the multidisciplinary study of relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims and MPhil Scholars studying for the MPhil in Middle Eastern Studies: Muslim-Jewish Relations at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies. The MPhil scholarship is provided by the Willie and Jo Kessler Masters Studentship.

Woolf Institute Honorary PhD Scholars are awarded to outstanding PhD Scholars at the University of Cambridge whose research matches the focus of the Woolf Institute. These Scholars – known as Ian Karten Scholars – are either self-funded or have been awarded a fully-funded scholarship.

We acknowledge with grateful thanks our donors – Humanitarian Trust, Ian Karten Charitable Trust, Spalding Trust and the Kessler Family – who have allowed us to provide these Scholars with academic and career support and to include them as valued members of our community.



MUSLIM PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN BRITAIN: A STUDY ON TEACHER IDENTITY

Maryam Bham, Honorary PhD Scholar
Education, Lucy Cavendish College

This research complements the continuing discourse on religion in the British education system and explores how British Muslim Primary teachers experience and negotiate their personal and professional identities in schools in Britain. Maryam's analysis further explores how individual perceptions and connections relate to how Muslim Primary teachers experience the construction of their identity, and how this is reflected in their everyday working environment. The findings of this research hope to inform educational stakeholders and policy makers about the challenges and opportunities faced by Muslim educators, promoting the creation of inclusive and supportive learning environments.



Right: *Intersecting Identities: A Muslim Woman Contemplates on Leonardo Da Vinci's Copy of 'The Last Supper' at the Royal Academy of Arts (RA) in Piccadilly*

PHD, HONORARY PHD & MPHIL SCHOLARS



EDI FESTIVAL: RELIGION, KINGSHIP, POLITICS AND ETHNICITY IN ILE-IFE

Akeem Adagbada, Honorary PhD Scholar
Divinity, Selwyn College

Akeem is a first year PhD candidate in the Faculty of Divinity under the supervision of Dr Jörg Haustein. Akeem's ethnographic research focus is on the Edi Festival in Ile-Ife, Southwest Nigeria. This is an annual festival that celebrates and memorialises the heroic acts of the 12th century Queen Moremi. The first part of his work involves engaging with the British missionary colonial archives to understand how they engaged with Yoruba Orisa worship ('religion'), the Edi Festival and the Ooni of Ife (the king). The second part of his study will involve the contemporary context of the Edi Festival today in Ile-Ife. Through this, Akeem will more broadly interrogate the questions of Yoruba identity, ritual, politics, global diaspora gaze, rupture and/or continuity as ways of exploring indigenous perceptions of change and their creativity more generally, with an aim of understanding how traditional Yoruba Orinà worship continues to intersect and interact with the two Abrahamic Faiths: Christianity and Islam. Akeem's PhD research will bring together the following disciplines: Theology, Anthropology of Religion and African Religious Studies.



Main Image:
Edi Festival
in Ile-Ife,
Southwest
Nigeria
Left: The Cairo
edition of al-
Tabari's Tafsir

JEWS IN EARLY ISLAMIC TEXTS

Mohammed Ibrahim Ahmed, PhD Scholar
Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, St Edmund's College

In the early prophetic era, relations between Muslims and Jews were generally sound, and this was reflected in positive rhetoric found in passages of the Qur'an and in the Constitution of Medina. However, due to political reasons, there was a breakdown in relations in the Medinan period, leading to later Qur'anic passages reflecting disapprobation towards Jews. Thus, one can see how the Qur'an, which was compiled over twenty three years according to the traditional Islamic narrative, represents changing attitudes towards Jews depending upon the political climate of the time. Mohammed's research examines commentaries on the Qur'an, and he posits that Jews are used as literary tools (anti-exemplars) in order to demonstrate 'what not to do' to the Muslim audience.

EARLY MODERN JUDAEO-ARABIC MEDICAL MANUSCRIPTS OF MATENADARAN COLLECTION

Ani Avetisyan, Honorary PhD Scholar
Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, St John's

My research goal is to examine unpublished and untapped collections of Early Modern Judaeo-Arabic medical manuscripts of Matenadaran. This work enables me to include Garshuni, the Arabic language written in Syriac characters, to my language repertoire, meaning I am able to compare Garshuni text with Jewish and Muslim texts and study the linguistic links between the three Abrahamic traditions. I hope that through the discovered material we will gain more insight into the connections between different religious groups in the Middle East during the period spanning the tenth to nineteenth centuries.

PHD, HONORARY PHD & MPHIL SCHOLARS



BUILDING ZION IN THE ANTHROPOCENE: THE COMPLEX WAYS RELIGION AND GEOGRAPHY INFORM CLIMATE BELIEF
Madeleine Ary Hahne, Honorary PhD Scholar
Geography, Pembroke College

As a ‘wicked’ problem, or a problem so complex as to be nearly impossible to fix, climate change is most effectively addressed when nearly everyone plays a part. This research seeks to encourage opportunities for engagement by building understanding of the worldviews of traditionally disengaged groups. It uses The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS, colloquially known as ‘Mormon’) as a case study. This unusually centralised religion prioritises de-localising spaces and unifying practice across the globe. However, on the question of climate change, the church is nearly silent, leaving believers to develop their own opinions. What little data is available about climate change beliefs among American church members show that they are more likely to dismiss the claims of anthropogenic climate change than their otherwise identical demographic counterparts. This suggests that something about their religious belief drives this scepticism. However, anecdotal evidence (rigorous research here is scant to non-existent) indicates that international church members are not so likely to question climate science, indicating that non-religious forces may actually predominate. This research seeks to uncover this complex dynamic by undertaking research in three sites with diverse climate impact and cultural heritage: Utah, Samoa, and London. Madeleine has recently completed the first two legs of her research and will be conducting her final fieldwork phase in London this summer.



Main Image: St. George Temple in Saint George, Utah near where Madeleine's fieldwork took place
Below right: A 12th century copy of al-Tabari's Tafsir: commentary of the Holy Qur'an

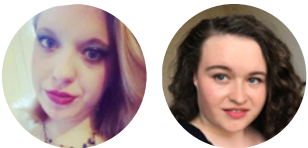
Credit: Tuxyso/Wikimedia Commons/CC-BY-SA-3.0

NETWORKS OF POWER IN EARLY ISLAMIC GOVERNANCE
Aliya Abdulkadir-Ali, Honorary PhD Scholar
Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, Clare College

A central question in early Islamic history is that of the origin and consequence of tribal, dynastic and sectarian conflicts. The root of factional divisions in Islam goes back to ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān r. AH22-34/644-656CE and ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib r. AH34-42/656-661CE. Both ‘Uthmān and ‘Alī were killed by rebels, and their deaths sparked a feud that fuelled subsequent wars. The primary sources, compiled by early 9th century ‘Abbasid historians, often emphasise the dominance and nepotism of the ‘Abd Shams clan and the marginalisation of ‘Alī and the Banū Hāshim from power.

From the sources, I have been able to bring together genealogical data on 25 of ‘Uthmān’s governors and 19 of ‘Alī’s as well as data on ten of ‘Uthmān’s wives and their children and eight of ‘Alī’s wives and his 22 children. My initial observations on ‘Uthmān’s governors are that they were mainly from his clan or close loyalists that used marriage as a political tool to maintain power. The preliminary assessment on ‘Alī’s appointments is that four of his first cousins from the Ibn ‘Abbās family occupied gubernatorial roles, including the well-remembered Ḥadīth transmitter, ‘Abdallāh b. ‘Abbās who was also the forefather of the founder of the ‘Abbāsīd dynasty, ‘Abdallāh al-Saffah. The overall picture that emerges is that ‘Uthmān used a careful marriage strategy to maintain the authority of the northern Arabians. The significance of these findings is that ‘Uthmān drew strength and loyalty through his and his governors suitable marital ties and ‘Alī’s short and unstable caliphate was due to his limited advantageous marriages and appointing governors with similar lack of connection.





THE MEDIEVAL KARAITE TRANSCRIPTIONS OF HEBREW INTO ARABIC SCRIPT PRESERVED IN THE FIRKOVITCH COLLECTIONS

Lina Brüssel, Honorary PhD Scholar
Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, Gonville & Caius

The Karaite Dār Simḥa synagogue in Cairo (Egypt) preserved an astounding amount of medieval handwritings spanning the entire panoply of Jewish and Muslim intellectual activity from the 9th to 16th century. In the second half of the 19th century, the Crimean-Karaite manuscript hunter Abraham Samuel Firkovitch acquired nearly 20.000 fragments, mostly stemming from the Dār Simḥa synagogue, and sold them to the Russian National Library (St. Petersburg). The rich material of the Firkovitch collections remained inaccessible to Western scholars for the larger part of the 20th century and to this day is scarcely explored.

Lina Brüssel's PhD project is dedicated to the phenomenon of medieval Karaite manuscripts containing transcriptions of Hebrew biblical and liturgical literature into Arabic script. Interpolated in different literary genres, these texts serve as a highly valuable source for the reconstruction of the most renowned medieval pronunciation tradition of Hebrew (Tiberian). Lina's supervisor Geoffrey Khan has edited and analysed a large number of Karaite transcription manuscripts contained in the Cairo Genizah and the British Library collections. The transcription manuscripts in the Firkovitch collections (382, 80 of which contain vocalisation signs), on the other hand, remain almost completely unexplored by scholarship so far.

The PhD project will present a typological classification of the entire Firkovitch subcollection of Hebrew texts written in Arabic script ('Firkovitch Arab. Yevr.') alongside a thorough analysis of selected manuscripts.

Below: Image credit, from the collections of The National Library of Russia, The National Library of Israel. 'Ktiv' Project, The National Library of Israel. Bottom: Little Amal puppet representing refugee children at an Open Iftar event attended by the Women's Interfaith Network



MAKING CHANGE TOGETHER: INTERFAITH ENCOUNTERS AS SPACES FOR THE EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS WOMEN'S AGENCY IN THE BRITISH PUBLIC SPHERE

Peach Hoyle, PhD Scholar
Divinity, Jesus College

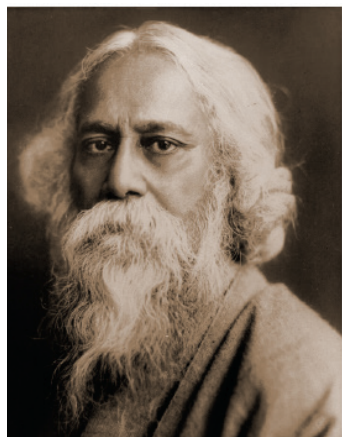
Peach's research looks at the role of women's interfaith spaces in Britain, considering whether and how they provide space for religious women to make or resist change within their religious communities and the broader public sphere. Using participant observation, discourse analysis and interviews, their study will consider the 'representation gap' formed by the marginalisation of religious women in mainstream religious representative organisations and secular feminist organisations. Peach is looking specifically at themes of violence, authority, and legitimacy to understand how religious women navigate the discourses which govern religion and gender in the secular state. Their work will investigate whether women in interfaith spaces challenge or claim authority, and whether the activities that conventionally dominate women's interfaith facilitate change-making in the public sphere.

Methodologically this study draws from the anthropological tradition of 'lived religion', which engages with religion through the experiences of individuals. This has been used extensively as a tool to highlight the diversity of women's experiences of religion, and to challenge the portrayal of religious women as being only passive victims of patriarchal oppression. Peach's research will engage with questions about multiculturalism and cultural cohesion, a discourse in which religious women figure heavily as a symbol. More broadly it will contribute to the discourse about secularism and contested minority rights.

PHD, HONORARY PHD & MPHIL SCHOLARS



Allama Muhammad Iqbal



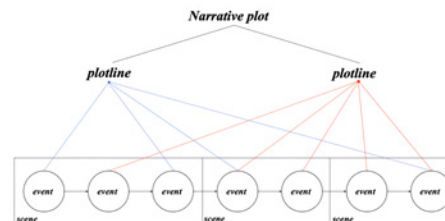
Rabindranath Tagore

BECOMING WORDS OF WITNESS: THE MOTIF OF CO-CREATION IN MUHAMMAD IQBAL AND RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Hina Khalid, Honorary PhD Scholar
Divinity, Trinity College

My research project, which establishes a comparative dialogue between two influential philosopher-poets of the Indian subcontinent, builds on my academic training in cross-cultural theological study. In my dissertation, I explore how the Islamic and the Hindu traditions have developed across the subcontinent through lived and literary interactions, and how these shared devotional idioms have shaped what it means to be a South Asian Muslim and Hindu today. By focusing on the works of Tagore and Iqbal, both of whose writings represent a fertile confluence of varying conceptual-theological streams (Islamic mysticisms, Hindu philosophies, Western conceptions of modernity, and so on), I hope to draw on my findings to sketch some concrete parameters of Hindu-Muslim interfaith dialogue. This will involve reflecting on how certain creative modes of cultural expression (such as devotional poetry and song) in the Indian subcontinent have long served as sites where rigid communitarian differences are somehow suspended or transcended, as well as drawing on some shared modes of Hindu-Muslim religiosity to re-think concepts of the nation and statehood, and the articulation of religious identities in a globalised world.

Below: The figure shows the concept of 'narrativity' broken down into analytical smaller units.



EXAMINING THE POWER OF STORYTELLING THROUGH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Hope McGovern, PhD Scholar
Computer Laboratory, Robinson College

Storytelling is at the very heart of the human experience. From the epics of Homer to the jeremiads of political commentators, narratives help us to make sense of our present, our past, and — we hope — our future. The last decade has seen an astronomical increase in the capability of artificial intelligence (AI) systems to dissect, categorise, and generate language; however, text understanding of narrative with today's technology is still in its nascent stages, and generating narrative, which is experiencing a bubble of popularity due to large pre-trained language models such as ChatGPT, remains something of a parlour trick with little of the coherence, relevance, and resonance we find in our best-loved tales. My work uses techniques from Natural Language Processing and Deep Learning to perform higher-level narrative analysis and generative control of long-form narrative text. These systems have a broad array of potential downstream applications ranging from plot-based recommender systems, more coherent text generation models, AI writing assistance, and AI tools for literary and cultural analysis. As a case study of this analysis, I examine religious narratives contained in the Hebrew Bible/Christian Old Testament.



A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE EMOTIONAL GEOGRAPHIES OF BRITISH MUSLIM WOMEN'S SAFETY IN SOCIAL SPACES

Ayesha Ulhaq, Honorary PhD Scholar
Divinity, Selwyn College

Ayesha's research focuses on the emotional geographies of British Muslim women's safety in various settings, including home, public spaces and third spaces.

Emotional geographies is a field of study that investigates the interplay between emotions and the physical and social environments that we inhabit. Ayesha's research is particularly concerned with understanding how gender, religion and societal structures influence the emotional experiences of British Muslim women across diverse spaces. Her work will examine public, private and third spaces, shedding light on the factors that contribute to feelings of vulnerability, safety, fear, comfort, as well as risk, danger and threat.

Ayesha's research attempts to strengthen the relationship between communities, the public and academia, by involving communities in crucial phases of the research process through participatory approaches and innovative methodology.

INTRODUCING NEW PHD & HONORARY PHD AND MPhil SCHOLARS



**JUAN MORENO GONZALEZ,
PhD SCHOLAR**

Juan's research aims to investigate the relationship between grammarians and grammatical theory in Jewish and Arabic traditions as a case study for cross-cultural development of ideas. He will focus on the period from the 10th to the 13th century in the geographical area of al-Andalus (modern-day southern Spain). This study aims to determine the nature and extent of this relationship and explore its implications in the field of grammar, as well as in related disciplines such as poetry and philosophy. By analysing primary and secondary sources, the project aims to understand the development of grammar in Hebrew and Arabic within their social and intellectual contexts, drawing as well upon concepts from Walter Benjamin's understanding of art and Stephen Greenblatt's cultural poetics to explore the interplay between language, reality, and human existence. Natural Language Processing techniques will be applied to examine intertextual relationships between Hebrew and Arabic grammatical works, revealing insights into the history of Hebrew grammar and its connection to the Jewish community in al-Andalus and its relationship with the dominant Muslim culture of the time.

Prior to commencing his PhD studies, Juan completed the MPhil in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies by Research at Cambridge (2022/23). During his undergraduate degree, Juan was a visiting student at Kuwait University and The Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He obtained his BA (First class Honours, 1st of his class) at the Complutense University of Madrid (2022).



**EMMA OLSON,
PhD SCHOLAR**

Emma's doctoral project will explore the role of sound, music and speech in interreligious encounters in the 13th-14th century trans-Pyrenean frontier of southern Francia and northeastern Iberia, at a time when Christian rulers were working to expand and solidify their control over multi-ethnic, multi-religious populations with a long and complicated history of sharing their cities. There, no sole authority or culture could dictate or contain noise production. Christian church bells and civic trumpets competed and blended with the muezzin's call to prayer and the Jewish shofar; forms of Mozarabic and Latin chant struggled to differentiate themselves through slight variations in musical modes; Christian troubadours and Muslim juglares performed in the same courts; and secular and ecclesiastical authorities experimented with methods of regulating the sounds of speech and song with new written recording technologies. Emma will locate and analyse examples like these as 'sonic violence': opportunities for medieval people to weaponise sound, but also productive moments of intense interaction, communication and interfaith exchange. Ultimately, she hopes to understand how sonic violence performed power, difference and faith in this culturally rich but indeterminate and contested region.

Emma received a BM in Music Performance from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and an MA in Medieval Studies from Yale University.



**NOAM PERL TREVES,
MPhil SCHOLAR**

Noam will undertake the MPhil in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (Muslim-Jewish Relations) in October 2023, under the supervision of Professor Yaron Peleg. He will be affiliated to Lucy Cavendish College.

Noam's research will span the Arab-Jewish identity of Yemenite immigrants residing in Palestine throughout the 20th century. He is interested in analysing the relations between non-Jewish Palestinians and Yemeni Jews in the pre-1948 period. By studying the history of the Yemenite agricultural settlements and the exchanges they had with neighbouring Arab villages, Noam will question the possibility of a unique Yemeni Arab-Jewish identity. He intends to use several resources for this purpose: written and oral testimonies of Yemenites and non-Jewish Palestinians, Arabic and Hebrew language press, as well as documents from the Central Zionist Archive.

In 2023, Noam completed his undergraduate studies at Sciences Po Paris (Cum Laude). He earned a distinction for his final dissertation exploring the impact of colonisation on the relationship of Maghrebi Jews and Muslims in France.

INTRODUCING NEW PHD & HONORARY PHD SCHOLARS



**HANNAH PETERSON,
HONORARY PhD SCHOLAR**

Hannah Peterson is a Cambridge Trust International Scholarship recipient and an Honorary Woolf PhD Scholar who will commence her studies at Clare Hall in October 2023.

Hannah's research focuses on how religious nationalist movements negotiate and gain traction across faith borders. Specifically, her study compares the mechanisms by which Christian Nationalist discourse and culture are translated and adopted by members of two non-Evangelical religious groups in the United States - Orthodox Jews and Latter-day Saints - in the context of the 2024 presidential election. Hannah is supervised by Prof. Patrick Baert at the Department of Sociology.

Prior to commencing her PhD, Hannah completed an MA in Sociology and Anthropology at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a BA in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences at Bar Ilan University. She also interned at the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations in New York, where she worked on General Assembly Second Committee resolutions related to agriculture and sustainable development.



**RUBY HAJI NAIF,
PHD SCHOLAR**

Ruby's PhD research explores interfaith relations' potential as an innovative approach to foster the two-sided integration of Muslim Syrian refugees/immigrants in Germany. Specifically, I will examine the role of religion in the integration process and its impact on the experiences and challenges faced by these refugees/immigrants. By analysing the 'House of One', a multifaith worship house located in Berlin, my study aims to shed light on the effectiveness of interfaith relations in integrating Muslim Syrian refugees in Berlin, Germany. Rather than solely examining the success or failure of existing integration processes, my research takes a more comprehensive approach by seeking to understand the unique experiences of Syrians in Germany, with a particular emphasis on the House of One and other interfaith initiatives.

Ruby is a former recipient of the Woolf Institute Cambridge Scholarship supported by the Willie and Jo Kessler Masters Studentship. Ruby completed the MPhil in Asian and Middle Eastern Studies (Muslim-Jewish Relations) in 2022/23.

William Kessler Essay Prize Competition



UK undergraduate and graduate students (Masters level) are invited to submit an essay (up to 1,500 words) which broadly addresses one of the following topics:

- Interfaith Encounters on Campus and in Academia
- Secular Societies, Religious Followers; Opportunities? Challenges?
- Modern Identities - the Intersection between Race, Faith and Gender
- Lessons from the Past: How Interfaith Work can Benefit from Historical Research

Essays will be judged by the Woolf Institute's leading academic staff. The top six essay writers will be invited to present their essays at the Woolf Institute which will take place at the beginning of February 2024. An expert panel will then select the winner, who will receive a prize of £250. In addition, the top three essays will be published on our website and social media platforms.

Essays should be sent as a Word or pdf document to education@woolf.cam.ac.uk

12 DECEMBER 2023 Competition Deadline

10 JANUARY 2024 Shortlisted essays announced

5 FEBRUARY 2024 Presentation Event

SUMMER SCHOOL

RELIGION AND SOCIETY FROM THE MEDIEVAL TO THE MODERN

STUDENT REFLECTIONS 2023

Grady Call

The Woolf's Summer School was incredible! The lectures provided me with a solid understanding of the historical context of interfaith work and introduced me to challenging concepts that forced me to adjust my paradigm. The environment was incredibly supportive and wholly positive, with experiential activities that supplemented in-class discussions. Even with the intellectual rigor, however, the Woolf's faculty and fellows were always inclusive and empowering; they were actively interested in the students. I had mentors and friends who cared about me and my work and left equipped with the knowledge and skills to confidently engage in both scholarly and practical interfaith work.

Janai Wright

I have now for the second consecutive year been a participant in the Woolf Summer School, and once again it proved to be an informative and preparatory experience. The Institute has given me and the other participants conversations, networking and experiences that have prepared us to return to our schools and communities to create change in our own spheres of influence. In this whole experience, the Woolf has drawn me and the other students into their family community with an active engagement in our learning and progression. I am more versed in contemporary and controversial religious issues, practiced in interfaith conversation, and connected with the people in this field. I'm grateful for what I'm able to take from the Summer School to home organisations, such as the Student Council for Interfaith Engagement at BYU.

McKay Bowman

The Woolf Institute Summer School was a transformative experience. Every morning I woke up excited for class knowing I would be taught by a new scholar, with a new perspective, on a new subject. That said, some of the most impactful moments for me occurred outside the classroom. Being able to speak informally with the scholars over lunch and in between class sessions was incredible; they were approachable, interested in what I had to say and encouraging. I left the Woolf Institute with greater confidence in my abilities to make meaningful contributions academically, priceless relationships with experts in my field of interest, and ideas on how to make a difference at BYU and in my local community. I'm thrilled I'll be able to take back what I learned at the Woolf Institute and implement it with the work that is being done through the Council for Interfaith Engagement and Interfaith Student Association.



CALLING UNDERGRADUATES! JOIN US IN 2024.

The world is changing and there are growing opportunities to make a difference.

Our 2024 Summer School aims to increase tolerance and interdependence through the design of a curriculum and a learning environment conducive to academic study and fostering understanding of the diversity of beliefs, attitudes and perspectives.

The Summer School is scheduled to take place between 8 and 19 July next year.

This programme of study will draw on the research and teaching expertise of academics and doctoral scholars at the Woolf Institute, as well as academics within Cambridge. Given the remit of our work, the curriculum will include an interdisciplinary approach to the study of interreligious and interfaith relations.

Students will be taught by Cambridge academics in a beautiful new building in the heart of one of Europe's most beautiful and historic destinations, and take in some of the local experiences from punting on the River Cam to visiting the Fitzwilliam Museum and attending a traditional Friday night Sabbath meal.

Find out more about the programme:
www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/summer-school

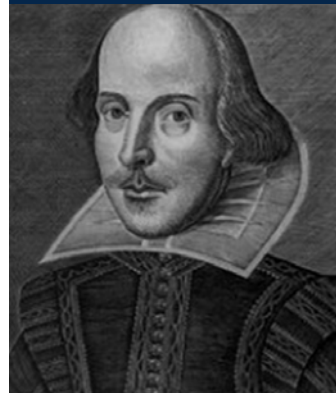
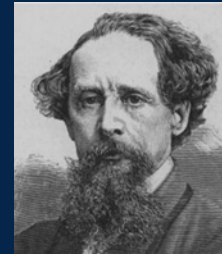
*Top left: Summer School 2023 cohort
Below left: Formal Dinner at St John's College
Right: Grady, McKay and Janai with fellow
Summer School participants, Grace and Lincoln*



BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY WOOLF INSTITUTE INTERNSHIP

“ I was first introduced to the Woolf Institute as an attendee of the first Summer School programme, during which time I became so impressed with the work of the Institute that I decided to pursue an internship. I had the opportunity to work as the BYU-Woolf joint intern for three months and am grateful and honoured that the Institute has welcomed me back! As an intern, I participated in many of the ongoing projects including research, event preparations, assisting in an intensive course and the annual publication. I was also able to participate in the Commission for the Integration of Refugees and the Diversity in End of Life Care outreach project. Beyond all of these projects, I have been invited to a series of unique experiences that have been no less than surprising – from sitting in an intensive course learning about the lived experience of Jews and Muslims, to standing in a formal gown in St. James's Palace meeting HRH The Princess Royal, to touring a local Cambridge synagogue. Overall, it was an immense pleasure to be a part of this particular community of people who understand well the exigency of advancing religious understanding for the sake of human flourishing. Unlike most interns elsewhere, I did not experience my work as a dry means-to-an-end endeavour ultimately aimed at adding a nice polish to one's resumé. Rather, I experience it as a vivid and deeply meaningful opportunity to engage in the warp and woof of the Institute and in a way that increases my professional development as a result. I hope to be connected to the Woolf Institute for the rest of my academic and professional career and its community for the rest of my life! ”

BYU
BRIGHAM YOUNG
UNIVERSITY



REPRESENTATIONS OF JEWISH- CHRISTIAN RELATIONS IN LITERATURE

Join this online course to engage with various texts and visual representations from English Literature through the lens of interfaith studies, to understand the narrative of deep-seated prejudices and to recognise the value of dialogue to dispel these views. In the 21st-century, what can we learn from literary works to effect greater understanding between one another?

The course takes place in a Virtual Learning Environment. There are two live-time meetings where participants have the opportunity to meet each other, engage with the topic and share their learning experiences. Participants will mainly interact in online text-based forums. These forums are not live so comments and responses to the weekly tasks can be added at any time during the week. You can access the course whenever it is convenient for you, day or night, from anywhere in the world.

Following introductory case-study sessions on Geoffrey Chaucer and William Shakespeare, participants will explore nineteenth century works by Maria Edgeworth, Charles Dickens and George Eliot and their 'literary friendships'.

For application form and further details: <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/online-courses/representations-of-jewish-christian-relations-in-literature>

SOCIAL MEDIA

We took our 25th anniversary celebrations online with our #Woolf25 series. Throughout the year, we looked back at key milestones in the Woolf Institute's history and shared these memories with our alumni, friends and followers.

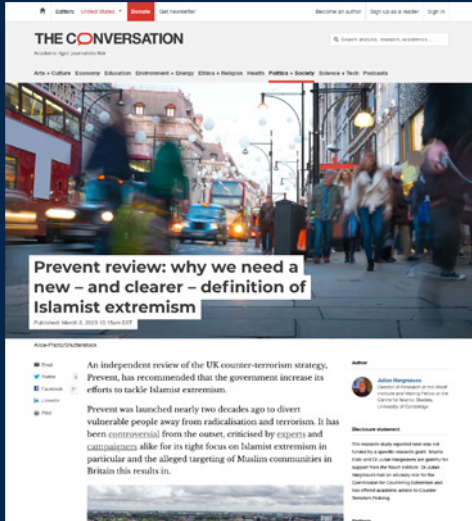
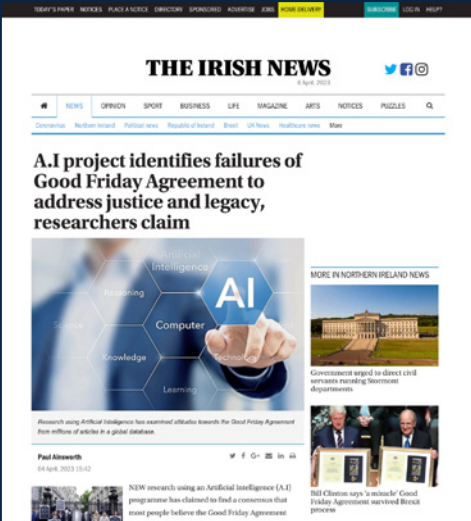
HAVE YOU FOLLOWED US YET?

Stay up to date with Woolf research, news and events by engaging with us on social media. Scan the QR code to follow us.



MEDIA

The Woolf Institute has continued to enjoy more sustained attention thanks, in no small part, to the efforts of our media communications partners, Jersey Road PR. They have given us the tools to communicate our mission and work across national, local and specialist media. Over the last academic year, we have seen:



FRIENDS OF THE WOOLF

Our Friends' support is vital, now more than ever. We are hugely grateful for the contributions made by our Friends that allow us to continue our research and outreach initiatives, and ensure our work is translated into real life impact.

In recognition of this support, we launched Friends of the Woolf scheme to mark the 25th anniversary of the Woolf Institute.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

- Advance notice and priority booking to selected Woolf events.
- Invitations to Friends-only occasions and social gatherings with opportunities to engage with staff, researchers and scholars.
- Regular newsletters, This Week at Woolf.
- Membership pin, a re-imagination of our beautiful art installation, Confusion.
- Access to our Library Collection and reading rights.

And above all, we hope the start (or continuation) of a special relationship with the Woolf Institute, a feeling of belonging to our warm and welcoming family.

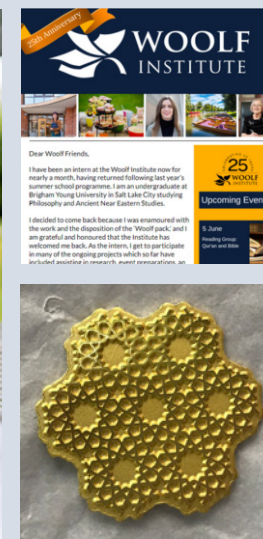
In the future, we plan to open the Friends' Lounge - overlooking the grounds of Westminster College and our impressive marble sculpture, Tree of Life: Encounter.

Join the Friends of the Woolf by making a regular donation and help us to continue to educate and inspire the leaders of the future. Or become a Lifetime Friend of the Woolf with a one-off donation of £1,998, acknowledging the year of our establishment.

JOIN US TODAY!

Be part of our extended Woolf community and enjoy a special relationship with the Institute. woolf.enthuse.com/donate

Contact the Development Team at development@woolf.cam.ac.uk for more information.



ALUMNI

We have a diverse and global alumni community, drawing from Masters' programmes, PhDs, online courses and Summer Schools. We are proud of every one of you and our role is to provide alumni with a lifelong connection to the Institute. Your relationship with the Institute continues long after you have completed your studies.

We want you to keep in touch with us, wherever you are in the world. Contact alumni@woolf.cam.ac.uk to receive the regular newsletter, This Week at Woolf, and hear about the latest news, events and how you can support our work.

Are you visiting Cambridge? Let us know in advance. We would be delighted to welcome you to the Institute and introduce you to current scholars and researchers.

How would you like to connect with the Institute? Let's have a conversation – contact alumni@woolf.cam.ac.uk. If you know of alumni with whom we have lost contact, please do ask them to re-connect with us!

Top left: Austin Tiffany, PhD alumnus and Director at Good Faith Partnership, speaking at the launch of the Virtues of Faith report at Westminster Hall, July 2023

Top right: MSt alumna Emma Cameron visited the Institute from New Zealand in July 2023.

Below left: Online course alumna, Büşra Elmas, returned to the Institute in 2023 as a Visiting Scholar from Bursa Uludağ University (Turkey) & Summer School participant.

Below right: Travelling with the 2023 Summer School cohort from Brigham Young University, 2022 Summer School alumni Emma Marcois and Landon Wilson met their fellow alumna, Janai Wright, Woolf-BYU intern and designer of this Annual Publication.



DEVELOPMENT

The Woolf Institute started with a vision and huge determination. Today, it is one of the very few academic centres in the world, focusing on the challenges of interfaith relations and conflict, trying to construct solutions together for a better world.

We have grown tremendously over our 25 years, and our alumni and academics have changed their societies and contributed to an understanding and shared sense of purpose whose impact is felt widely.

If you share our passion to build a better world through understanding and collaboration, please help us continue our work.

We rely heavily on our donors to support our work. Every gift makes a difference and we are immensely grateful to everyone who gives to the Institute and enables us to keep our voice clear and engaged in the geopolitical debate about faith, conflict and society. Your gifts will have huge impact in the coming months and years. We sincerely thank you individually and collectively.

MAKING A GIFT

All gifts, no matter how large or small, are greatly appreciated and make a difference. If you would like to make a gift, visit <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/support-us/making-a-gift> for more information about ways to give.

Please contact Development at development@woolf.cam.ac.uk if you would like to discuss your gift or are interested in leaving a legacy.

If you would like to pay directly into our bank account, the details are:

UK PAYMENTS

Account name: Woolf Institute
Account number: 00011470
Sort code: 40-52-40
Bank name: CAF Bank Ltd

OVERSEAS PAYMENTS

Correspondent (intermediary) bank
SWIFT/BIC code: MIDLGB22XXX
Bank name: HSBC
Address: City Corporate Banking Centre,
Queen Victoria Street, London EC4N 4TR

BENEFICIARY BANK

SWIFT/BIC code: CAFGBB21XXX
IBAN number: GB97CAFB40524000011470
Account name: Woolf Institute
Bank name: CAF Bank Ltd
Address: 25 Kings Hill Avenue,
West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

US TAXPAYERS

US taxpayers can give via Cambridge in America. Contact development@woolf.cam.ac.uk for further details.



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