



---

Dear Woolf Friends,

Each year, the Institute takes a small and distinguished delegation of supporters and patrons from across the three Abrahamic faiths to cities with particularly interesting religious and interfaith histories. In past years, we have visited Jerusalem, Rome, Sarajevo, Astana and Almaty, and Istanbul. This year's trip would take us to the heart of the Arabian peninsula, to Abu Dhabi, Riyadh and Madinah.

After traveling in from all over the world and meeting up in Abu Dhabi, the tour started off with a celebration of the beauty of Islamic architecture and decoration by visits to the Qasr al Watan (Palace of the Nation) and Sheikh Zayed Mosque. By great coincidence or divine intervention, our trip coincided with the opening of the spectacular Abrahamic Family House, which brings together a mosque, a church and a synagogue. Designed by the British-Nigerian architect Sir David Adjaye, the three prayer halls are all of identical size and in close proximity, and this shared sacred space allows for the intermingling of people of different faiths.

Our interfaith group was able to participate in the first ever Shabbat service in the synagogue inside this new structure, a temple with beautiful acoustics and a vaulted ceiling covered in a massive copper veil. We were wonderfully entertained by the newly appointed Rabbi and his wife and engaged in interfaith scriptural reasoning and dialogue on the spot in a mixed audience of Jewish, Muslim and Christian participants.

The stunning church features big wooden beams hanging from the ceiling, which made Miriam exhale in surprise when entering the structure and feel like a medieval peasant entering a mighty cathedral for the first time. It is a designated Catholic space, and Roman Catholics are the third most populous faith group in the UAE. We also visited the separate Saint Joseph's Cathedral complex, a lively site with masses in multiple languages scheduled throughout the day. Our conversation with Bishop Paul Hinder and Brother Derek showed us how the church supports thousands of Catholic immigrant workers, many of whom are in Abu Dhabi without their families.



## Upcoming Events

27 April

Woolf Institute in  
New York



3 May

Kessler Celebration



9 May

14th Century Authors  
as Readers north and  
south of the  
Mediterranean



5 June

Reading Group:  
Qur'an and Bible



6 June

Woolf Institute  
Garden Party



10 - 21 July

Woolf Institute  
Summer School



The mosque of the Abrahamic Family House is a carved white stone structure full of light and air, which invites prayers in a dazzling surrounding. After the mosque visit, we had the great honour of visiting Sheikh Abdallah bin Bayyah who has had a crucial impact in countering extreme interpretations of Islam. His vision is for a tolerant Islam open to other faiths and peoples in the pursuit

of harmonious coexistence. The Sheikh hosts world religious leaders in his annual Forum for Peace. It was a lovely encounter with one of the world's greatest peace seekers.

We then traveled to Riyadh together and we were shown the most amazing hospitality in meetings, lunches and dinners hosted by the British Ambassador Neil Crompton, by Faisal bin Abdulrahman bin Muammar and staff members from the organisation *Salam*, and by various Woolf Institute Patrons and supporters. Some British Embassy staff became part of our group and made delightful company. Our encounter with researchers at the King Faisal Centre for research and Islamic studies enabled us to engage in some very interesting discussions before touring their exhibition. We were privileged to visit the studio of internationally recognised artist Abdalnasser Gharem whose fascinating work challenges traditional Saudi boundaries. And we were absolutely delighted to attend a fascinating meeting with HRH Princess Reema, Saudi ambassador to the US. She recounted the efforts being made to promote the role of women in society and its attempt in modernising itself while seeking to maintain political stability, expanding tourism to the holy sites, upholding its faith and developing an alternative economy to oil. For Ahmed, someone who was born and raised in Saudi Arabia, seeing the rapid social changes in favour of a more inclusive and accepting society was pleasantly surprising. To be in Saudi Arabia while it undergoes a social and political rapid transition, and to witness these changes first hand was a breath-taking experience for us all.

For many of us, a major highlight was our day trip to Madinah which included a visit to a date farm. To our delight we were each given the opportunity to plant a date palm and to see some of the city's attractions, such as the Museum in the Hijaz railway station, Mount Uhud and the remainders of the lava which stopped just short of the city of Madinah in the last volcanic outbreak in 1256 CE.

We were also able to see the outside vast Masjid al-Nabawi (the Prophet's Mosque). This is a major Islamic pilgrimage site and its striking Green Dome rises above the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed. The non-Muslims of the group were not permitted inside the mosque but those of Muslim faith joined the thousands of pilgrims praying inside the mosque and its surroundings.

One of the most extraordinary of our many art encounters was a neon interfaith installation which we came across by chance when we visited the studio of Ahmed Mater and other fellow artists. For Judy this encapsulated the relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Islam - such a simple but powerful work.

Everywhere we went we were treated with the utmost graciousness, and so many old and new friends in Abu Dhabi and in Saudi Arabia extended a warm hand of friendship to us all and made this unforgettable, eye-opening and perception-altering experience possible for us, for which we are truly grateful.

With best wishes,


Judy Dangoor *Friend of the Woolf Institute*

Esther-Miriam Wagner *Executive Director, Woolf Institute*

Ahmed Zaidi *Member of the Development Council, Woolf Institute*







## WOOLF INSTITUTE KESSLER CELEBRATION

Join us to celebrate the 25 year  
legacy of our Founder President Dr  
Edward Kessler MBE on the  
occasion of his birthday


MAY

3

14:00-17:00

**JOIN US FOR:**

- Celebratory birthday cake and bubbles
- 'Leading Women': a panel discussion of shifts in women's leadership in the Abrahamic faiths
- Formal unveiling of our renamed building





### KESSLER CELEBRATION

Join us at the Woolf Institute for our Kessler Celebration on 3 May 2023. We will be celebrating the legacy of our Founder President, Dr Edward Kessler MBE, on the occasions of his birthday and the Institute's 25th anniversary.

The celebration begins at 14:00 and will include:

- Birthday cake and presentations
- 'Leading Women': a panel discussion on the shifts in women's leadership in the Abrahamic faiths over the past 25 years
- Formal unveiling of our newly renamed building


Events will conclude at 17:00. We look forward to celebrating together with Woolf Institute alumni and friends.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

**WEBINAR 9 MAY@17:00**

Woolf Institute and the Society for the Medieval  
Mediterranean present:

## 14th Century Authors as Readers north and south of the Mediterranean



### WEBINAR 9 MAY @17:00

This session focuses on evidences on late medieval authors' act of reading and studying. The two speakers analyze two cases dating back to the 14th century, relating to two different geographical and cultural contexts: the French monarchy and the Mamluk sultanate. Michèle Goyens examines the multiple traces left by the translation work on the pseudo-Aristotelian text *Problemata*,

carried out by Evrart de Conty, active at the court of Charles V of France. Elise Franssen deals with al-Şafadī's Tadhkira, reconstructing the author's reading and his library from his notes.

Speakers: Professor Michèle Goyens (KU Leuven) and Élise Franssen, Post-doctoral researcher, (Université de Liège).

Chair: Benoit Grevin

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

## Woolf Institute In New York

27 April 2023



### THE WOOLF INSTITUTE IS GOING TO NEW YORK

At the end of April, The Woolf Institute will be visiting New York. We will be meeting alumni and friends, and Dr Katherine O'Lone will be giving a talk entitled '*Belfast; Have the Ghosts Left?*' based on her research. This will take place at the Cambridge in America premises at 1120 Avenue of the Americas.

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. In this talk, Dr Katherine O'Lone will explore the psychological and moral landscape of post-conflict Northern Ireland. Dr O'Lone argues that we can better understand peace by exploring the patterns surrounding how people think about reconciliation, forgiveness and justice in the aftermath of violent conflict. In Northern Ireland, despite the passage of twenty-five years since the GFA, the scars of 'The Troubles' continue to influence how people reason and think about moral issues, such as fairness, harm and justice. The conflict has ended but this talk suggests the ghosts are still there.

The talk will be followed by questions and discussion, and a reception to which all are welcome.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

[FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT FLORA MOFFIE](#)

# Eid Mubarak

## Eid ul-Fitr 1444

Eid Mubarak to all our friends, colleagues, supporters and Muslims around the world!

Eid Ul Fitr celebrates the completion of the holy month of Ramadan and is marked by exchanging food and gifts with family and friends.

### TURNING THE OTHER CHEEK

*Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute*

TELL THE UKRAINIANS TO TURN THE OTHER  
CHEEK AND YOU'D PROBABLY GET SHORT  
SHRIFT. SO WHAT DOES THIS ADVICE  
REALLY MEAN?



#### PODCAST: TURNING THE OTHER CHEEK

In the blue corner: National Anthems and military marches; in the red corner: protest songs. Politics and music often coincide.

How practical is Jesus's advice to turn the other cheek? Some see it as an example of the excessive passivity of Christianity. Others think it's the only way to get out of an endless spiral of violence. Meryem Kalayci and Tim Stevens discuss the matter without coming to blows.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

### COMING SOON

*Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute*

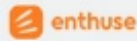
## LOVE THE OTHER

CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION

Become a Friend of the Woolf Institute  
for as little as £10 a month



Click here to donate



Donate

**Woolf Institute** | [woolf.cam.ac.uk](http://woolf.cam.ac.uk)

Woolf Institute - Improving Relations between Religion and Society Reg. Charity No. 1069589, a Company Limited by Guarantee, Co. No. 3540878, registered in England and Wales, registered office as above.

Woolf Institute | Madingley Road, Cambridge, CB30UB United Kingdom

[Unsubscribe development@woolf.cam.ac.uk](mailto:development@woolf.cam.ac.uk)

[Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [development@woolf.cam.ac.uk](mailto:development@woolf.cam.ac.uk) powered by



Try email marketing for free today!