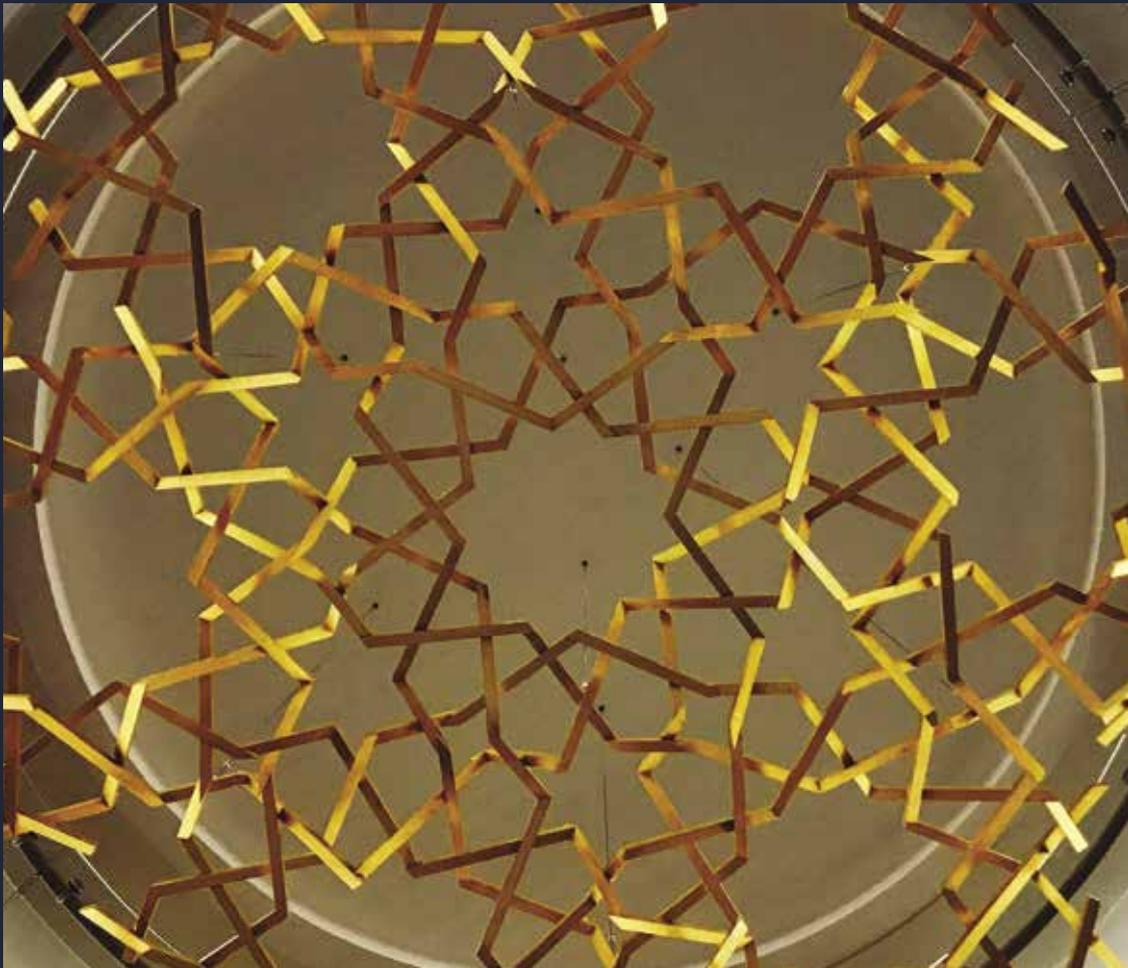




Woolf Institute

2021/22 Annual Publication





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*HRH The Princess Royal alongside Dr Ed Kessler, Founder President
& Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner, Executive Director (Woolf Institute,
Cambridge, May 2021)*

Credit: Shane Woodward, Photography



From our Executive Director Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner

Dear Woolf Friends,

As we look forward with measured optimism to beginning a normal academic year in Cambridge, we can take stock of what we have learned and plan for how we can best use new opportunities. Despite the pandemic, we were able to continue our work at full pace, as we became familiar with the, at first, strange techniques of online seminars, lectures, meetings and conversations. We have the opportunity now to combine the warmer and more natural atmosphere of face to face encounters with the unlimited range of the virtual encounter.

That the challenges of the past 18 months failed to stop us in our tracks is due to the unstinting support of our friends, trustees and benefactors, to the dedication of the Woolf home team and the continuing motivation of our wider Woolf community now spanning the globe.

In moving forward, I am delighted to pay tribute – not for the first or last time – to the vision and dedication of Ed Kessler, our Founder, for many years our Director and inspirer, and now our ‘Founder President’, who is enjoying a much deserved sabbatical in Ireland this year. He is a very hard act for me to follow as I take over the sole executive reign of the Institute, but his legacy gives me great

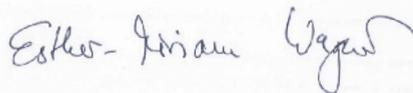
confidence in our future, as does the outstanding Woolf Institute team of staff and students.

The recent catastrophic events in Afghanistan show that there is no ‘new normal’, and that religious and cultural conflicts, often aggravated by economic and political rivalry, mean that the mission of the Woolf Institute is as vital as it ever was to our common future. We cannot allow extremism to create hatred.

This is a great responsibility for us all. We, at the Woolf, see ourselves as having a special role: We are an academic institution whose job is to inject mutual understanding and the realisation of what the great religions have in common, in opposition to those who try to make them enemies.

I hope you will enjoy reading this Woolf Institute 2021-22 brochure, which gives an overview of the Institute’s current research and teaching, and looks ahead at our events programme over the course of the coming academic year.

With my very best wishes,



The Year That Was



It is essential for institutions to turn challenges into opportunities: to learn, adapt, improve and grow.

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner



One of many Monday Team Meetings on Zoom

Diversity Study of England and Wales 2020

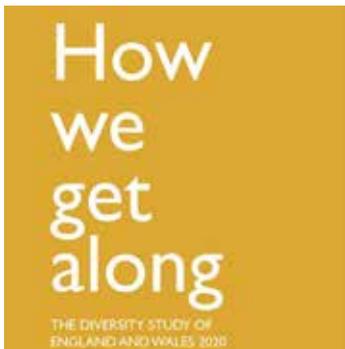
In November of 2020, we published **How We Get Along**, findings from the **Diversity Study of England and Wales 2020**. In essence, the report answers some fairly straight-forward questions.

What do we think of our neighbours? And what do they think of us? When it comes to race, religion and immigration, what divides us and what brings us together? Do we all share the same experiences of the diverse everyday world around us? Or is diversity something other people do?

To answer these questions, we surveyed 11,701 people across England and Wales, the largest study of diversity undertaken in the UK. We asked questions concerning the public's attitudes towards ethnic, national and religious diversity and their experiences of it.

To bring these issues closer to home, we invited respondents to share their attitudes towards a close relative marrying someone from a different background. We also explored our lived experiences of diversity both at work and among friendship groups.

We found a nation largely at ease with itself on matters of ethnicity and rather less so on religious issues. For example, attitudes towards intermarriage were more positive between ethnic groups than between faith groups. We also found regional variation as well as differences between groups defined by factors such as age, levels of education and voting preferences.



For a fuller description of our findings and conclusions: visit www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/diversity

Diversity in End of Life Care

During the pandemic, Dr Katherine O'Lone (who is affectionately known as Kitty) conducted a series of interviews with hospital chaplains, palliative care staff and community leaders across the UK in order to further the research previously undertaken for the **Diversity in End of Life Care Handbook**. The research questions were designed to help us understand how religious aspects of end of life care had altered and adapted during this unprecedented period. This situation had a profound impact on end of life care and will have ramifications that will be felt for many years to come.

What became clear during the interviews were the extraordinary efforts made by healthcare staff to meet the spiritual and religious needs of patients and their families in rapidly changing and challenging conditions. With the data collected, Kitty, working collaboratively with Emma (Harris), has put together a workshop for healthcare staff. The session participants focus on a case study from a hospital context during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and asks the question – what would you have done in this situation?



It is our hope that the training session we have put together will be an opportunity for healthcare staff to reflect on their experiences during an incredibly challenging time and to think about the ways in which end of life care has been affected and how to move forward.

Dr Katherine O'Lone

Workshop sessions supported by the James Tudor Foundation

Interested in a workshop for your hospice, hospital or care home?

Email diversityinendoflifecare@woolf.cam.ac.uk or visit www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/outreach/healthcare

Diversity in End of Life Care Handbook: bit.ly/3I2cp7B



**Diversity
in End of Life Care**

Gender and Religion Today



Gender is an especially salient feature of religion. In many parts of the world, and in many religious traditions, cultural and religious continuity is deeply connected to gendered and sexual practices. Because gender and religion intersect on such a basic level, it is crucial to understand them together.

Dr Lea Taragin-Zeller

Dr Lea Taragin-Zeller took the findings from her research project, *Religious Sisterhood: Encounters of Gender, Religion and Belonging in the UK* to inform the development of an online course and resources for teachers searching for new, accessible materials to support classroom teaching. The Gender and Religion Today resources centre on a series of short videos, offering a fresh way to teach and consider religion through the lens of gender. In each, scholars and activists, share their thoughts and experiences about aspects of gender and religion such as head covering, marriage and gendered sacred space. By giving voice to personal experiences, the resources allow

a more diverse understanding of each Abrahamic tradition, while highlighting points of similarity and difference. The new online course was launched in 2021 with participants joining from around the world – Bosnia & Herzegovina, France, Ireland, Italy, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, United Kingdom and United States. The online forum discussions really emphasised the work of the Institute, cultivating interfaith conversations and building bridges; difficult topics were greeted by the participants with agreement and disagreement within open and fair discussions in a safe space shared by the cohort.

The year that was

**Supported by Dangoor Education
& Randeree Charitable Trust**

Email education@woolf.cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/videos/series/gender-and-religion-today

Religious Sisterhood research project: bit.ly/3i6yuQP

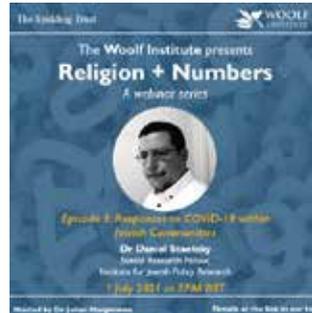


Events 2020/21



One of the silver linings during the difficult circumstances of the pandemic was our ability to connect to audiences worldwide through our various webinar series.

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner



We debated Religious Rights and Freedom of Speech and topical issues, such as the Zara Mohammed/Emma Barnett controversy.

Our collaborations with the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean produced ten webinars, which explored themes such as medieval Pilgrims, Queenship and Cult of Saints.

Our Religion and Society webinars gathered faith leaders to discuss how religious communities coped during COVID. We explored Deafness in religious contexts in a collaboration with CRASSH, Cambridge. In Shtick!, we looked at Humour and Satire in a religious context. The Religion and Numbers series investigated the quantitative side of religious studies. Middle Eastern Judaism and Islam recorded the courageous life stories of Middle Eastern women.

Missed the webinars? Watch the recordings:

www.youtube.com/user/WoolfInstitute/videos

www.facebook.com/WoolfInstitute

Welcoming New Trustees

“The Woolf Institute is a truly unique institution, which is lifted and carried by its extraordinary Trustees.”

Shabir Randeree CBE, Chair of the Board of Trustees



Lady Hale, the Baroness Hale of Richmond

Lady Hale retired in January 2021 as the country’s most senior judge - President of the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom. In 1984, she became the first woman to serve on the Law Commission, a statutory body which promotes the reform of the law. She was promoted to the Court of Appeal of England and Wales in 1999 and in 2004 became a ‘Lord of Appeal in Ordinary’ in the House of Lords.



Lord Carlile

Lord Carlile was called to the bar by Gray’s Inn in 1970 and became a QC in 1984. Between 2001-11, he was the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation. He was the Independent Reviewer of the Government’s new PREVENT policy and the Independent Reviewer of National Security Policy in Northern Ireland. He was appointed a Life Peer in 1999 and was awarded the CBE in 2012 for services to national security.



Simon Dangoor

Simon Dangoor is a Partner in the Asset Management Division of Goldman Sachs. He joined Goldman Sachs in 2004 after graduating with a degree in Natural Science from Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Simon is also a Trustee of the Spanish & Portuguese Jews’ Childrens Fund.

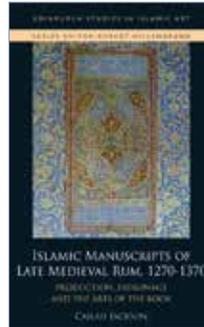
Events 2021-22

Our Events Programme 2021/22 will continue with a combination of in-house and virtual events. Join us for our exciting new events in the upcoming academic year - from our very popular annual research day to new series on engaging in similarities and differences between the Qur'an and Torah!

*We will also continue to address hot topics and pressing current issues as they occur in our **How to talk about...** and **Religion and Society series**, and are planning many more concerts, events and academic conferences that could not be featured in this brochure, so please check our events pages regularly in order not to miss out.*

As the pandemic situation remains dynamic, some events may move from in-person to online. For regular updates and the latest programme, see: www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/whats-on/events

Michaelmas 2021



Sister Texts? Comparing the Qur'an and Torah

Join us for an enriching 8-part series during Michaelmas and Lent where we will explore similarities and differences between the Qur'an and Torah. Led by Rabbi Elazar Symon, Alissa Symon, Mohammed Ahmed and Dunya Habash, the sessions will include Torah and Qur'anic recitation, semantic analysis of Hebrew and Arabic verses and lively debate and discussion related to various themes including the creation narrative, ethnic identity, esoteric verses and more. The group is open to both undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Cambridge. Spaces are limited so please sign up in advance!

Woolf Institute and the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean Webinar Series

11 October & 30 November, 17:00

In 2020-2021, the Woolf Institute and the Society for the Medieval Mediterranean, supported by a range of other organisations, organised a series of ten webinars entitled Medieval Mediterranean: Local and Global Perspective which drew in large international crowds. We are therefore continuing this successful collaboration in 2021-2022!

The webinars are organised on a monthly basis and will run throughout the year. To open the series, we will welcome the winner of the 2021 Dionisius Agius Prize, Dr Cailah Jackson (Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies) who will present her research on the Islamic arts of the book (calligraphy, illumination, illustration and bookbinding), in conversation with Dr Patricia Blessing (Princeton) and Dr Alison Ohta (Royal Asian Society). The second session on 'The Crusades and Memory' will take place on 30 November with Stephen Spencer, Francesca Petrizzo and Andrew Buck.

Michaelmas 2021



St Edmund's College
University of Cambridge

Freshers Event

19 October

The Woolf Institute has a close connection with St Edmund's College, with many of our researchers and students affiliated with the College. Together with our friends from the St Edmund's based Von Hügel Institute for Critical Catholic Enquiry and the St Edmund's Combination Room, we will organise a Fresher's Event to introduce the work of the Institutes to the new students at the College.

Interfaith Mixer

28 October, 18:00

Undergraduate and graduate students are invited for a social mixer to get to know the different faith societies operating 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. This event is led by the Living in Harmony team of the Woolf Institute in cooperation with the Jewish Society and the Islamic society of Cambridge.

Annual Research Day

4 November, 14:00 - 19:00

'Academic Speed-Dating' is how our Executive Director describes her preferred format for the Woolf Institute's Annual Research Day. Researchers and students associated with the Institute will present their work in five-minute presentations. The aim is to give a short, accessible insight into the breath of all our research in a single day. Among the many talks we will hear are: 'Sectarism in Iraq', 'Religion and Race in the UK', 'Minorities in the Abbasid Empire', 'Jewish-Christian Relations', 'Jews in Early Islam', 'American Involvement in Israeli Politics' and 'Evangelical Christians and Islam'.

This is one of our most popular annual events and you are encouraged to book as soon as possible.



Annual Research Day 2020

Lent 2022

Seminar Series: Antisemitism in Comparative Perspective

The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) and the Woolf Institute will convene this new seminar series.

Anti-Judaism, or the controversial term coined in the 1870s by Wilhelm Marr, 'antisemitism', is one of the most complex and, at times, perplexing forms of hatred. In the aftermath of the Holocaust, some contend that antisemitism illustrates the limitations of the Enlightenment and modernity itself. Manifestations of antisemitism emerge in numerous ideological based narratives and the constructed identities of belonging and otherness such as race and ethnicity, nationalisms and anti-nationalisms.

This seminar series aims to explore this subject matter in a comprehensive, interdisciplinary framework from an array of approaches and perspectives as well as regional contexts. Eminent scholars and researchers are invited to present seminar papers in an informal setting. To enhance the level of discussion, papers will be made available online one week prior to the seminar.

*For more information, please contact
Ira Guberman at ira.guberman@isgap.org*



*Professor
Hassan Abbas*

Hikma Fellowship Events

We are very pleased to continue our collaboration with the Hikma Foundation on the Lady Khadija Visiting Fellowship in Shi'i Studies, with the vision to promote Shi'i Studies in academia. The Fellowship is aimed towards a more reflective, decolonised and engaged approach to scholarship on Shi'a Islam, and is accompanied by a number of events. Last year's gatherings included two very well-received book launches with Father Christopher Clohessy and Professor Hassan Abbas; further webinars will be organised together with the Visiting Fellow over the course of the coming academic year.



*London Research
Day 2019 at
Mishcon de Reya*

London Research Day

Chosen presenters from our Annual Research Day in November will come to London and outline their work in six-minute presentations.

Easter 2022

Art of the Book: Arabic and Hebrew Calligraphy Exhibition

Two calligraphy artists come together to showcase the beauty of the written word. Featuring Arabic and Hebrew passages in a range of styles, this exhibition presents modern works inspired by the classical calligraphic tradition. There will be an opportunity for attendees to acquire the original works.



Ibn Arabi Lecture Series

This newly established Annual Lecture series, generously endowed by Hilary Williams Papworth in memory of Bill Papworth, derives its inspiration from Ibn Arabi's teaching, which naturally leads the student of his work towards an appreciation of the philosophical common ground underlying the triple tradition of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Speakers will be chosen on the grounds that their work and thought animates, inspires or illuminates significant issues of our time.



The late Bill Papworth with Hilary Williams Papworth

International Conference on Critical Contemporary Antisemitism Studies - Global Antisemitism: A Crisis of Modernity Revisited

The Institute for the Study of Global Antisemitism and Policy (ISGAP) and the Woolf Institute are holding an international conference on critical contemporary antisemitism studies. This interdisciplinary conference is timely, given the recent rise of manifestations of antisemitism globally. The conference is open to scholars and intellectuals engaged in the study of contemporary antisemitism across the globe regardless of school of thought, scientific approach, academic discipline or ideological view.

Antisemitism is one of the most complex forms of hatred. It spans history, affecting different societies, religious and philosophical movements and even civilisations. In the contemporary context of globalised relations, it appears that antisemitism has taken on new and changing forms that need to be decoded, mapped and critiqued. The aim of our conference is to explore this phenomenon from an interdisciplinary approach and to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and understanding pertaining to the origins and manifestations of antisemitism.



Iftar

Iftar meals have been a great opportunity for people to meet at the Woolf Institute. After the pandemic break, we look forward to hosting a lavish Halal meal again with our Muslim colleagues and students. The Woolf Institute invites you to break the fast in celebration of the holy month of Ramadan.

Art History from Below:

The Imagery of the Cairo Genizah



The Woolf Institute gave me the opportunity to see the intricate mingling of religious and secular art in the great treasure trove of Egyptian Jewish communities in the footsteps of history. As always, cultural assets and art bring human beings together in this exhibition.

Pinar Zararsız, Curator & Erasmus Scholar

Much attention, scholarship, writing and a number of exhibitions have been dedicated to the texts of the Genizah. Little focus, however, has been given to the professional and amateur visual decoration and drawings that were used to adorn the writing. The reason for this is perhaps the lack of beautifully illuminated documents as can be found in other collections – the images found in the Genizah are less professional in nature and could be considered folk art. Parallel to similar descriptions in history and linguistic study, this could be called art history from below.

The exhibition consists of 34 fragments from a range of documents, including marriage contracts, stand-alone drawings, literary works and page decorations in the Hebrew, Arabic and Coptic languages. Most of the images were drawn and painted during the medieval period especially in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras. Generally, local organic and inorganic pigment colours were used on papers and parchments. Some pages have been smudged or have faded. Many fragments are torn.

Supported by the Shoresh Charitable Trust

Visit in-person: enquiries@woolf.cam.ac.uk

View online: www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/art-history-cairo-genizah

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Ketubbah with Zodiac
and Jerusalem
(OR-1080-009-021-F)

Introducing our Director of Research: Dr Julian Hargreaves



Julian Hargreaves joined the Woolf Institute in January 2017 and became its Director of Research in May 2021. He is a social scientist whose research interests include: ethnic and religious minority communities; Islamophobia and Antisemitism; counter-extremism and counter-terrorism; social research methods (including survey work, statistics and social media analysis); and policy-related research.

“

As the Woolf Institute’s new Director of Research, my responsibilities are to preserve and improve. Alongside a duty to preserve our reputation for firstclass research into Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities, there is scope to improve the practical application of our findings. Whilst it is vital we preserve a scholarly approach to our chosen topics, we have an opportunity in the year ahead to improve our capability to react quickly to current affairs. To achieve our strategic aims, we must preserve the multi-disciplinary nature of research at the Woolf Institute. But to increase our standing among comparable institutions, we must aim to recruit a more permanent research team from a variety of academic and cultural backgrounds. In short, my job is to preserve all that is good within the Woolf Institute’s research tradition whilst helping to steer the improvements needed to guarantee our future success.

Research

Antisemitism Online

Dr Julian Hargreaves
jh970@cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/antisemitism-online

The Woolf Institute completed a study of antisemitism on various social media platforms in partnership with two leading British Jewish organisations: the Antisemitism Policy Trust (whose members form the Secretariat of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Antisemitism) and the Community Security Trust. Using innovative social media data analysis tools, the study addresses various questions concerning the extent online forms of antisemitism using social media data gathered from Google, Instagram and Twitter.

Previous research work in this area has established the nature of antisemitism online and the ineffectiveness of measures taken by social media companies to tackle it. The Woolf Institute took on the challenge of developing tools to measure, for the first time, the scale of the problem. Our work is intended to establish baseline measurements to guide future studies of antisemitism and other forms of hatred online.



The first of three reports – a study of data collected using Google image searches – was published in May 2021. We found that neither of Google’s two main “safe search” functions – one designed to protect the public, the other to assist web developers – had any effect on filtering out antisemitic content.

A second report – a study of Instagram hashtags and the links between antisemitism, conspiracy theories and anti-Israeli attitudes on the platform – is due to be published in September 2021. A third study of antisemitism and Twitter will be published towards the end of 2021.

From the webpage noted above, download the report, 'Unsafe Search: Why Google's SafeSearch function is not fit for purpose'.

Measures of Success: Evaluating the Impact of Interfaith Dialogue

Dr Katherine O'Lone
ko358@cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/measures-of-success-evaluating-the-impact-of-interfaith-dialogue

Establishing indicators and methodologies for determining what is effective in interfaith dialogue is of paramount importance given the growing recognition of its place as a vital feature of local and global conflict resolution repertoires.

Throughout the course of this project, Dr Katherine O'Lone has developed an evaluation framework that is centred on a multi-dimensional approach to success which consists of three domains of success: psychological, community and societal. The project will ultimately deliver a set of resources for local interfaith organisations which will include a flexible and practical toolkit for practitioners wishing to measure the impact of their project and to render the prospect of measuring complex concepts less daunting.

The toolkit includes a set of theoretically grounded indicators that will allow practitioners to measure and report the success of their work. The toolkit is now in the final draft stages and Katherine is currently refining it through focus group discussions with interfaith practitioners in the UK and abroad and seeking sites to test the indicators in applied contexts. The final toolkit will provide local interfaith organisations and practitioners with the relevant resources and tools to help them design and select the best possible methodology and measures to demonstrate the impact their work is having.

Do you work for a local interfaith organisation which is looking to evaluate the impact of its work? Would you like to learn more? Contact Katherine!

Trust and Transmission: The Impact of COVID-19 on British Jewish and British Muslim Communities

Dr Julian Hargreaves
jh970@cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/trust-and-transmission

The Woolf Institute has collected nationally-representative survey data to study the impact of COVID-19 on British Jewish and British Muslim communities.

Our survey asked questions concerning testing, symptoms, self-isolation and vaccination. Is the willingness to self-isolate and receive a vaccine higher or lower in Jewish and Muslim communities, and how do they compare to the general population?

We asked questions about levels of trust in various sources of public health information: from family, friends and local religious leaders, to news and social media, to the NHS and local authorities. Are faith communities less likely to ignore official public health messaging and more likely to follow guidance from a local rabbi or imam?

We heard media stories about ruling-breaking during the pandemic within both Jewish and Muslim communities. To what extent does statistical evidence support or challenge these accounts? Our survey included questions concerning adherence to Covid-19 rules and restrictions.

Our dataset and analysis will be made publicly available and a report of findings, conclusions and recommendations will be published in 2021.

WOOLF INSTITUTE PRESENTS

ANNUAL RESEARCH DAY

Learn about the latest research by
the Woolf Institute, with your host,
Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner

2pm on 4th November 2021

RSVP for this event:
<https://bit.ly/3ygNP5S>





A GRAND EVENING CONCERT will be given, under the patronage of Leopold de Rothschild, Esq., on WEDNESDAY Evening, July 9th, 1890, by the HEBREW CHORAL ASSOCIATION, in aid of the JEWISH HOME AND HOSPITAL FOR INCURABLES, Victoria Park, E. Vocalists: Miss Behrens, Miss Goldstein, Miss Sara Nordwald and Miss Adèle Myers, Mr. George Bartlett, Mr. John Dumbell. Elocutionist - Miss Mills. Chorus of 60 voices. Conductors - Mr. E. R. Jessiman and Signor de Barathy. Organist, Mr. D. M. Davis. The Programme will include F. H. Cowen's "Rose Maiden" and Mendelssohn's "Hear my Prayer."
Tickets 6d. and 1s., reserved seats 2s. 6d., Can be had of Mr. M. S. Salinger, 19, Gristle-row-road, St. Peter's-park, W., and at 4, Milk-street buildings, Chancery-lane, E.C.; or M. Barnett, Esq., 21, Portico-road, Maida-vale, W.; and at the hall.

Documentary History of Jewish-Christian Relations: From Ancient Times to the Present Day

Dr Ed Kessler
edk21@cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/documentary-history-of-jewish-christian-relations

This is the first comprehensive attempt to gather up to 200 key primary documents, which shed light not only on the theological context, but also on the social, political, economic and other contexts, which are central to Jewish-Christian relations. To be published by Cambridge University Press in 2023, the book will take the reader on a documentary journey through this mutually entangled and often difficult history and will contribute to a better understanding between Jews and Christians as well as providing a starting point for further research.

Anglo-Jewish Music-Making: Synagogue, Stage, Society

Dr Danielle Padley
dlp29@cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/anglo-jewish-music-makingsynagogue-stage-society

This project explores the everyday musical life of 19th century British Jews and those involved in Jewish musical activities, sacred and secular, professional and amateur.

As a means of surveying 19th-century Anglo-Jewish existence, music is rarely discussed, despite its presence within most aspects of religious, domestic and social life. In Anglo-Jewish histories, music is only occasionally mentioned as evidence for cultural assimilation, reduced to a shift towards choral worship and a preference among the wealthy for attending concerts over synagogue services. This project demonstrates that there was, in fact, a multiplicity in the types of musical activity experienced by Jewish performers, composers and audiences, dependent on social and financial status, gender, geography and religious observance.

Researching Languages

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner
emw36@cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/a-handbook-and-reader-ofottoman-arabic

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/late-judaeo-arabic-correspondence-of-ottoman-traders

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/wisdom-and-greatness-in-oneplace-the-15th-c-alexandrian-trader-moses-ben-judah-and-his-circle

Language is one of the most important factors of ethnic identity and of perceived community. There are other factors, such as religious belonging or colour of skin, but because language is something that an individual can, to a certain degree, control, it is perhaps the most decisive. In Britain in particular, issues of class and schooling play out in the realm of accents and dialects, and the way someone speaks conjures up perceptions about social standing and educational background. My research is mainly concerned with how the language of the main religious confessions differed (or did not differ) in the past. The sources I concentrate on come mostly from the Cairo Genizah, the giant waste paper basket of medieval Egypt; I work on how Jews, Muslims and Christians were schooled and wrote in their different scripts Arabic, Hebrew and Syriac, with a focus on the subtle differences in the texts produced between the different faith communities. The focus of my work may be very rooted in the pre-modern era, but the methodology is very transferable to sociolinguistic issues in Modern Britain. When someone speaks a language as a native speaker or to near proficiency,



Image design: Emma Heyn

they are much more likely to be fully acknowledged as an integral part of the community of speakers.

For me as a sociolinguist, it is remarkable to observe how the perceptions of minority communities in Britain have changed because generations of Muslim and Jewish native speakers of English have taken up prominent positions in the public domain. Much of this perception is rooted in notions of linguistic inclusion, and sociolinguistic work explores the facets of these phenomena.

Qur'an and Bible

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner
emw36@cam.ac.uk

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/quran-and-bible

One of the stumbling blocks in encounters and discourse between Muslim and Jews is the existence of negative (alongside positive) portrayals of the 'Other' in their Scriptures. Depictions of Jews (and Christians) in the Qur'an can (and have been) interpreted both for good and ill. Similarly, portrayals of the 'Other' in the Bible were later applied to Muslims (and Christians), both positively and negatively. Unless both sides of these portraits are addressed, they will remain serious obstacles to genuine dialogue and the fostering of better relations.

The Qur'an and Bible project explores 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.

Over the course of the academic year 2020-21, we held a reading group on the topic with eminent academics. We are currently working on a series of animated videos to convey the key messages explored in the sessions.

Read about the Reading Group:

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/so-close-and-yet-so-far-academic-gatherings-in-the-times-of-corona



Our PhD Scholars

In collaboration with the Cambridge Trust, we support PhD Scholars through the Woolf Institute Cambridge Scholarship.



Mohammed Ahmed



Dunya Habash



Alissa Symon



Sam Victor

Our Honorary PhD Scholars

Woolf Institute Honorary PhD Scholarships are also awarded to outstanding PhD scholars at the University of Cambridge whose research matches the focus of the Woolf Institute. These scholars are either self-funded or have been awarded a fullyfunded scholarship.



Ani Avetisyan



Hina Khalid



Christopher
Cooper-Davies

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

Recent alumni are now pursuing careers in academia at the London School of Economics and the Universities of Oxford and Chester.

Mohammed Ahmed, PhD Scholar

Asian & Middle Eastern Studies, St Edmund's College

Topic: The Representation of Jews in Tafsir Literature:
Al-Tabari's Qur'anic Exegesis

Period: 9th-century

Location: Baghdad and other centres of the Islamic world

Languages: Arabic

Interfaith implications:

This research will enable us to understand early Islamic attitudes towards Jewish communities, through the lens of religious texts. Exegetical texts offer an insight into how Muslim scholars such as Al-Tabari interpreted Qur'anic verses pertaining to Jews. I hypothesise that earlier exegetical texts were less critical of Jews, and later exegetical texts gradually hardened their attitudes towards Jews.

For this reason, negative attitudes towards Jews that seemingly have their origin from within Islamic scripture, can be shown to arise from later interpretive works of the Qur'an, not from the Qur'an itself. For this reason, this research has the potential to greatly improve the Muslim-Jewish encounter at large.

Forthcoming articles:

Islam and Judaism: Religious Attitudes and Identity in the Medinan Era

Judaeo-Islamic Scriptural Heritage: 'Isma and Sharaf in Ibn Kathir's Stories of the Prophets



A manuscript of the 30 volume Tafsir (Qur'anic exegesis) of Ibn Jarir Al-Tabari published in Egypt

Ani Avetisyan, Honorary PhD Scholar

Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, St John's College

Topic: Early Modern Judaeo-Arabic Medical Manuscripts of Matenadaran Collection

Period: 18th-century

Location: Ottoman

Languages: Judaeo-Arabic, Garshuni, Arabic and Hebrew

Interfaith implications:

My research goal is to examine unpublished and untapped collection of Early Modern Judaeo-Arabic medical manuscripts of Matenadaran. This work enabled me to include Garshuni, the Arabic language written in Syriac characters, to my language repertoire, meaning I was able to compare Garshuni texts 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.



Al-Tibb

Blogs:

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/early-modern-judaeo-arabic-medical-manuscripts

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/hebrew-language-and-jewish-culture-brusov-stateuniversity

Applying for Postgraduate Study at the University of Cambridge for 2022/23?

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/research/graduate-study

Christopher Cooper-Davies | Honorary PhD Scholar

History, St John's College

Topic: Shi'i Politics and Political Thought in Najaf

Period: 1908-1941

Location: Ottoman Empire and Iraq

Languages: Arabic, English

Interfaith implications:

This research assesses how the constitution of the Iraqi state under British colonial supervision impacted the political and religious identities of Shi'i Iraqis from the holy city of Najaf. Using journals and newspapers published in the city, I explore how Shi'i Iraqis constructed ecumenical discourses of religious and national unity between Sunnis and Shi'is, as well as narratives of dispossession and injustice, stemming from the unequal sectarian distribution of scarce resources in the nascent Iraqi state. The aim is to challenge tired narratives of 'sectarianism' and 'sectarianisation' dominating studies of confessional relations in the Middle East, to show how the coming of modernity, nation and state in Iraq engendered far more complex and, at times, tolerant and inclusive modes of political thought.



Excerpts from journals and newspaper published in Najaf



Aerial view of Najaf 1919

Dunya Habash, PhD Scholar

Music, St Edmund's College

Topic: Syrian Musicians in Turkey:
In Search of Syria's Cultural Imaginary
Period: Contemporary
Location: Istanbul and Gaziantep, Turkey
Languages: Arabic

Interfaith implications:

This research explores the musical manifestations of forced migration with a specific focus on Syrian musicians and artists in Turkey. In light of the contemporary Syrian refugee crisis, my thesis offers a timely combination of approaches in ethnomusicology and forced migration studies to investigate how Syrian musicians, as agents, embed themselves in their new homelands where changes in performance practice, physical space and cultural norms must be accounted for.

I seek to elucidate the social and artistic challenges Syrian musicians face in their efforts to adapt to their new host context and survive economically, to explore how they experience marginality and multiculturalism in Turkey, and finally, to extrapolate from their experience an analysis of the Syrian community's current social and cultural profile while displaced in Turkey. Although not a direct study of interfaith relations, exploring the experience of marginality, multiculturalism and artistic expression in the context of migration can lead to a better understanding of interfaith encounters. After all, interfaith encounters often spring from historical and contemporary forms of migration whether it is Muslims migrating to the West in the modern world or Jews leaving Spain in the 15th-century.



Arada Haffa

Blog:

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/the-hagia-sophia-or-the-great-mosque-of-ayasophia

Forthcoming Article:

“Do Like you Did in Aleppo”
Negotiating Space and Place Among
Syrian Musicians in Istanbul,’ *Journal
of Refugee Studies*

Hina Khalid, Honorary PhD Scholar

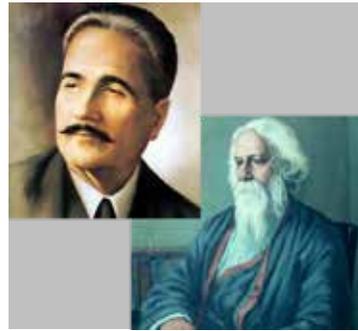
Divinity, Trinity College

Topic: Becoming Words of Witness:
The Motif of Co-Creation in Muhammad Iqbal
and Rabindranath Tagore
Period: Late 19th- and Mid-20th century
Location: Indian subcontinent (pre- & post-partition)
Languages: English, Arabic, Persian, Urdu and Bengali

Interfaith implications:

My research project, which proposes a comparative engagement between two influential philosopher-poets of the Indian subcontinent, will build on my academic training in cross-cultural theological and philosophical study. Through this particular project, I explore how the Islamic and the Hindu traditions have developed across the subcontinent in deep interrelation with one another, and how these shared devotional-philosophical 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 are richly suffused with a variety of conceptual-theological lifeworlds (Islamic mysticisms, Hindu philosophies, Western conceptions of modernity and so on), this research bears directly upon the possibilities of Hindu-Muslim interfaith dialogue, and I hope to draw on my findings to sketch some concrete parameters of such 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 patterns of Hindu-Muslim religiosity to re-think concepts of the nation and statehood, and the formulation of religious identities in a globalised world.

Selected Articles:

'At the Bedside: A Theological Consideration of the Role of Silence and Touch in the Accompaniment of the Dying', *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, 73.2 (2020): 150-159.

'Spiritual Death as Reorientation and Revival: Comparative Reflections on Śūnyata in Mahayana Buddhism and Fana in Sufism', *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society*', 68 (2020): 43-74.

Alissa Symon, PhD Scholar

Sociology, St Antony's College (Oxford)

Topic: Jewish Transnationalism: American Jewish Involvement in Israeli Politics (1981-2020, Israel/Palestine)

Period: Contemporary

Location: Baghdad and other centres of the Islamic world

Languages: Arabic

Interfaith implications:

In my thesis, I am investigating why and through which mechanisms American Jews intervene in Israeli Politics. On the right, neoconservative Jewish Americans are working with Evangelical Christians to strengthen Israeli holdings of the West Bank. At the same time, American Jewish progressives are working directly with Palestinian communities to make Israel a multi-ethnic democracy and bring Israeli occupation of the West Bank to an end. In my research, I hope to show how the Right's Judaeo-(evangelical) Christian alliance is battling the Left's Jewish-Palestinian alliance: Both sides continue to work tirelessly to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by furthering opposite visions for the Holy Land.

Blog:

www.israel-peace.com/a-big-tent-or-a-divided-community/



Sam Victor, PhD Scholar

Social Anthropology, Robinson College

Topic: Moral Understandings of Pluralism among White US Evangelicals

Period: Contemporary

Location: Tennessee, USA

Languages: English



Interfaith implications:

A core component of my fieldwork, which took place in the so-called American Bible Belt, examined white evangelical involvement in anti-Islamophobia activism.

For my interlocutors, this arena of social engagement presented numerous moral, theological and political challenges, since it destabilised their conventional understandings of the role of proselytisation in their encounters with religious others. The objective of my research is to highlight the lived experiences of people engaging in interreligious encounters and the ways in which they manage divergent moral ambitions, such as evangelism and pluralism.

Blog:

blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionglobalsociety/2021/04/whose-invisible-hand-is-it-covid-19-and-the-religious-marketplace-in-the-american-bible-belt/

Article:

'Can Evangelicals Be Pluralist? The Moral Dimensions of 'Conviviality' in Nashville', *Diversité urbaine* (2020): 20-1.

Forthcoming Articles:

"The Pilgrims of Russia-Town" and the Anthropology of Christianity:

Evaluative and Dialogic Frameworks in the Study of Pluralism' in G A. Jones & D. Rodgers (eds.)

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants:

The Enduring Relevance of the Chicago School of Sociology (University of Cambridge Press)

(With Fischer, E.) 'Wellbeing (& Happiness)' in J Laidlaw (ed.) *Cambridge Handbook of the Anthropology of Ethics and Morality* (University of Cambridge Press)

New PhD Scholars



Hope McGovern,
PhD Scholar

Computer Science, Robinson College

We are delighted to welcome Hope McGovern who has been awarded the Woolf Institute Cambridge Scholarship to commence her PhD studies in 2021 at Robinson College in the Computer Laboratory under the supervision of Dr Andrew Caines.

Hope's doctoral studies will focus on Natural Language Processing, a subfield of Computer Science that deals with applying computational techniques to human language. In particular, Hope will explore a computational analysis of religious language, as recorded in scriptural texts as well as ancillary religious writings, with an emphasis on comparing representations of religious concepts (e.g. mercy, justice, love etc.) across the three Abrahamic faiths. She also aims to use machine learning and deep learning techniques to produce tools for scholars in the digital humanities.

Prior to commencing her PhD studies, Hope completed an MPhil in Advanced Computer Science at Cambridge (2020/21), was a Fulbright Scholar in Vienna, Austria (2019/20), and attained a Bachelor's of Science in Engineering Physics (Hons) at Brown University (2019).



Madeleine Ary Hahne,
Honorary PhD Scholar

Geography, Pembroke College

We are also pleased to welcome back MPhil alumna Madeleine Ary Hahne.

Madeleine is the recipient of the Gates Cambridge Scholarship which funds her research at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in the Faculty of Geography. As of October 2021, she is an Honorary PhD Scholar at the Woolf Institute.

Before studying for her PhD at Cambridge, Madeleine earned her BA at Brigham Young University, Provo in International Relations with minors in Philosophy and Middle Eastern Studies. She then earned her MPhil from Cambridge University studying Muslim-Jewish Relations as a Woolf Institute Scholar. Madeleine interned in the White House for President Obama in 2016, then worked in international development on the Iraq and Lebanon team for the National Democratic Institute. She is currently a Graduate Student Fellow for Deploy/US, an organisation devoted to convening and accelerating climate leadership across the political spectrum.

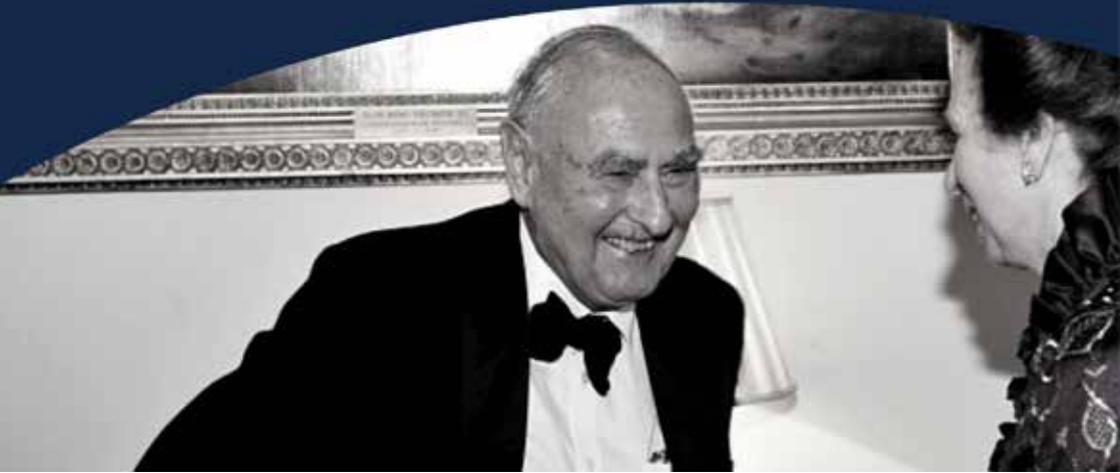
Madeleine's doctoral research focuses on how cultural and religious narratives around climate are formed, and how these narratives can transform real-world behaviour. She aims to direct her career toward advancing the cause of unity and peace through bringing people of diverse backgrounds together to create a healthier planet. She is supervised by Dr Mike Hulme.

William Kessler Essay Prize Competition

UK Undergraduate and Masters students are invited to submit a 1,500-word Essay which broadly addresses: Interfaith Encounters on Campus and in Academia, Secular Societies, Religious Followers, the Intersection between Race, Faith and Gender, or, How Interfaith Work can Benefit from Historical Research

Find more information on how to enter via

<https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/whats-on/william-kessler-essay-prize-competition>



MPhil Studies

In collaboration with the Cambridge Trust, we also support MPhil Scholars through the Woolf Institute Cambridge Scholarship. We acknowledge with thanks the support of the Willie and Jo Kessler Masters Scholarship offering students the opportunity to undertake the MPhil in Middle Eastern Studies: Muslim-Jewish Relations or other Masters programmes at the University of Cambridge relevant to our work.

Sophia Bor will commence her MPhil in Theology, Religion and Philosophy of Religion at the Faculty of Divinity (University of Cambridge). Her research will explore the reception of the biblical Joseph figure across ancient Jewish, Christian, and Islamic literature and consider his usage as a religious role-model. She will



focus on texts including Philo's *De Iosepho* and *De Somniis II*, and *Joseph and Aseneth*. Sophia studied Classics at undergraduate level and graduated in July 2021.

In 2020, Sophia was joint winner of the first William Kessler Essay Prize competition. Read her entry: <https://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/secular-societies-religious-followers-opportunities-challenges>



Summer School: Religion and Society:

From the Medieval to the Modern, 18–29 July 2022

The world is changing and there are growing opportunities to make a difference. We hope that our Summer School 2022 will motivate and inspire the next generation!

The 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.

Taught in our beautiful building in the heart of one of Europe's most historic destinations, students also have the opportunity to 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.



Only through the study of the past, of cause and of circumstance, we can thoroughly understand present issues, attitudes & actions.

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner

Led by Executive Director, Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner, Religion and Society from the Medieval to the Modern introduces students to the study of religion in society and to different aspects of the history of interfaith relations in Europe and in the Middle East. Students will explore themes such as communal identity and segregation policies, and have the chance to learn about contemporary and controversial issues such as Antisemitism and Islamophobia.

Find out more about the programme:

www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/study/summer-school

Calling all Alumni!



Over many years, I have been lucky to meet - in-person and virtually - some incredibly inspiring and remarkable students who are making a difference all over the world.

Dr Emma Harris



Be part of the Woolf Institute alumni community!

Get in touch. Tell us your story. Continue your journey with us. Email: alumni@woolf.cam.ac.uk

Media

Social Media

Catch up with the latest news and up-to-date event details on our social media streams. Look out for interesting interfaith articles and 'spotlight' features on staff and students. Watch recent lectures via our YouTube channel. Sign up for the weekly newsletter to receive the upcoming schedule: <https://bit.ly/2WcD73J>

Stay connected!



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'Making a Podcast Happen':**
[www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/making-a-
podcast-happen](http://www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog/making-a-podcast-happen)

Woolf Institute Blog

The Blog is themed around interfaith relations and encounter. From our most popular post, 'Moses as a Model for Effective Leadership' to book reviews (e.g. Martin Puchner's *The Language of Thieves*) and insights into our events and activities (e.g. *Entering into the World of the Cairo Genizah*), there is a topic of interest for everyone!



Check out the Blog:
www.woolf.cam.ac.uk/blog

Interested in writing for the Blog?
 Get in touch.
blog@woolf.cam.ac.uk

In the News

The Institute had a huge response in the media for the *How We Get Along* report, published in November 2020:

British press coverage (including online news media and local/regional press):
 The Observer; Mailonline, The Independent, i News, New Statesman, Prospect, Metro, Scottish Herald, Evening Standard (London) and Lancashire Telegraph.

International press:

PA Media (formerly Press Association, news story syndicated worldwide)
 CNBC - US
 NBC San Diego - US
 France 24 - France
 Jewish News
 Time of Israel.

British TV and radio coverage:

BBC One - Sunday Live television programme
 BBC Radio 2,
 BBC Radio London
 BBC Radio Cambridge
 BBC Radio Devon
 BBC Radio Kent
 LBC - Radio

Unsafe Search:

Why Google's Safesearch Function Is Not Fit For Purpose (published 10 May 2021) was reported in *The Times*, 11 May 2021.

Your Impact

Are you interested in supporting the Woolf Institute? Do you wish to support a particular aspect of our work? Would you like to discuss a tailored package of support? Please contact us at development@woolf.cam.ac.uk.

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Tax-efficient giving is possible in North America via CAF America and CAF Canada and in many European countries via TransNational Giving Europe. Please contact development@woolf.cam.ac.uk for more information.

Making a donation by giving shares is one of the most tax-efficient ways that you can give. In the UK, you can claim Income Tax relief on the current value of the shares and an exemption from Capital Gains Tax on those shares. For further information, please contact development@woolf.cam.ac.uk or your accountant.

Thank you for your support!
The Woolf Institute Team

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Our work to promote better relations between religions can be your legacy. A gift, however large or small, can be directed towards any area of our work. The most useful contributions are those for general purposes, as they allow us to respond to changing need in years to come.

By writing a Will, which can be a simple process, you make things easier for your family on your death. Even if you do not have a huge estate, it ensures that your property is left to those whom you wish to benefit. Making a gift in your Will is an opportunity to make a real difference to our work, even for those with current financial commitments. The Woolf Institute relies upon donations to invest in future generations of researchers, students and outreach activities, which will make a lasting impact on the world.

All gifts left to registered charities in a Will are exempt from inheritance tax in the UK and could reduce the inheritance tax due on your estate. In many other countries, a gift in your Will can have tax benefits. Ask your solicitor or accountant, or contact us at development@woolf.cam.ac.uk.

We are hugely grateful for every gift and thank you for considering us in your Will.



Tree of Life: Encounter, sculpture by Helaine Blumenfeld OBE.



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