



Dear Woolf Friends,

If you visit East Germany, where I was born and raised, any time in late March and April, you will be greeted by bushes full of Easter eggs and nests of eggs on the ground in many gardens and public parks. Germany may be most famous for its Christmas markets and Christmas tree decorations, but Easter still holds a very special place.

The celebration of Easter has many pre-Christian elements. The beginning of Spring was the most important rite of passage in pagan calendars. The eggs, symbols of fertility, still echo this past as well as linking Easter in the Christian church, marking the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Jewish Passover marking the escape of the Israelites from slavery, and the pagan start of the new year after winter.

Easter permeated East German life in more ways than simply decorating the public squares and parks. Goethe's *Osterspaziergang* 'Easter stroll' was the one poem memorised by school children up and down the country when I was a child. I can still recite most of it and whenever I do, it catapults me emotionally back to the start of spring and the decorated eggs of my childhood.

I have often associated the strong devotion of East Germans to Easter with the close proximity to Slavonic countries, where Orthodox Easter is by far the most important holiday of the Christian calendar.

Today Eastern Germany is still deeply suffused with Slavonic heritage – Slavs lived there until the medieval period and many names of towns and

villages are Slavonic in origin. One of Germany's biggest ethnic minorities are the Sorbians, a Slavonic-speaking people who live mainly in Saxony and Brandenburg. Their take on Easter eggs is famous and the beautifully decorated Sorbian painted eggs are sold in markets all over Germany in the approach to Easter.

Personally, I love seeing the eggs hanging on the bushes, for not only do they give me echoes of my childhood, but they are also a universal symbol of hope in springtime, and mirror the joy of the resurrection for Christians on Easter Sunday as well as the new life after the Egyptian exile in Jewish Passover celebrations.

With best wishes,

Dr Esther-Miriam Wagner
Executive Director, Woolf Institute



Upcoming Events

4 April

Antisemitism from
without and Racism
from within.



27 April

Woolf Institute in
New York



3 May

Kessler Celebration



9 May

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



6 June

Woolf Institute
Garden Party



10 - 21 July

Woolf Institute
Summer School






**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](#)

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 25th 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](#)

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

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