



Dear Woolf Friends,

Last month, I had the opportunity to return to Belfast for the first time in nearly 10 years. Having done my MA there, it is a city I once knew well; our Woolf Institute Forgiveness and Future-building project offered an opportunity to return.

I went with my colleague, Dr Justin E. Lane, who is leading on the computational component of the project that will create a simulated environment that acts as a powerful tool for policy makers. Justin and I met in Belfast as MA students at Queen's and to return together after a decade was an opportunity to reflect on how the city had changed and how it had not. We met a series of extraordinary people who attempt to confront the past to inform the future. We spoke with people on both sides of the traditional divide (Loyalist vs. Republican), whose lives had been profoundly marked by The Troubles.

Two main concerns were raised by everyone we spoke to, regardless of political persuasion. The first was an issue of legacy, in particular that this had not been adequately addressed by the Good Friday Agreement. The second, related, issue was identity. Belfast has always been a city of identity: your name, where you live, your school, which football team you support, the language you speak are all markers of identity and they put you one side or the other. In the aftermath of Brexit, tensions surrounding the protocol have greatly exacerbated identity concerns. For those Republicans that we spoke to there was a sense of confidence in their identity, one not matched by the anxiety felt on the Loyalist side.

The Good Friday Agreement was signed on 10th April

1998 and for the most part, put an end to the decades-long conflict that raged in Northern Ireland. The trendy cafes and restaurants on Botanic Avenue and the regenerated city centre seem a different world to the beleaguered and battered city that appeared in the media during the 70s and 80s. However, pockets of the city are still deeply tied to the past, and Brexit has reopened questions of identity, to a degree that was not the case 10 years ago. If anything can destabilise this society, it will be due to perceived threats to identity. The Forgiveness and Future-building project aims to better understand the psychological mechanisms involved in post-conflict identity and how the role of forgiveness can inform and stabilise contested legacies.

Best wishes,

Dr Katherine O'Lone
Research Fellow and Outreach Manager, Woolf
Institute

Upcoming Events

30 May @17:00

Online
Antisemitism: From
Words to Actions



1 – 5 June

Patrons' Tour -
Istanbul
(By invitation only)



6 June @17:00

Populism and
Antisemitism



7 June @14:00

Jubilee Garden
Party
(By invitation only)



7 June @17:00

Archives and
record-keeping in
medieval Eastern
Mediterranean



12 June @14:00

The Written Word:
Timeless Arabic &
Hebrew Calligraphy



13 June @17:00

ABC's of Antisemitism:
Literary Theory,
Difference and
Jewishness





DOHA GLOBAL AWARD FOR INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

On Thursday the Woolf Institute received the Fourth Doha global Award for Interfaith Dialogue!

We were honoured to have our founder president Dr Ed Kessler to accept the award from HE Mr Soltan bin Saad Al- Muraikhi, Minister of State, and Prof Ibrahim Saleh Al- Naimi, Chair of the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH](#)

READ OUR LATEST BLOG

**JERUSALEM'S HOLY PLACES:
WHAT'S NEXT?**

by Dr Ed Kessler MBE



BLOG POST: JERUSALEM'S HOLY PLACES - WHAT'S NEXT?

By Dr Ed Kessler MBE

Jerusalem is the focus of attention around the world. Last month's convergence of Passover, Ramadan and Easter was a reminder that it's also a focus of contention, nurtured by radicals and activists who exploit the religious calendars and periods of tension. Jerusalem's significance for Jews, Christians Muslims is derived primarily from a cocktail of religion, history and politics. It is

central to national, religious, and political discourse, at the heart of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and crucial to its resolution...

[CLICK HERE TO READ THE BLOG](#)

WEBINAR 7 JUNE @17:00

Woolf Institute and the Society for the Medieval
Mediterranean present:

**Archives and Record-keeping in
the Medieval Eastern
Mediterranean**



**WEBINAR: ARCHIVES AND RECORD-KEEPING IN THE MEDIEVAL
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN.**

TUESDAY 7 JUNE @17:00

It is well known that writing was important in medieval Muslim societies and research is increasingly showing there to have also been considerable energy invested in the production and preservation of written documents. In a region whose history has been written disproportionately using narrative texts rather than original documents, the recognition of its archival history has major potential to reshape our understanding of this period and region. In this webinar we discuss archiving in the medieval Arabic-speaking Eastern Mediterranean, covering an extended period from the time of the Fatimid caliphs to the demise of the Mamluk sultans (10th to 16th centuries CE). We present three case-studies which showcase a diverse range of historical actors, exploring state record-keeping, the archival practices of religious scholars, and the preservation of legal documents, to illustrate the rich and complex archival history of this region.

The speakers are Prof Marina Rustow, Dr Benedikt Reier, Dr Daisy Livingston. The session will be chaired by Dr Alessandro Silvestri.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

EXHIBITION OPENING 12 JUNE @14:00

The Written Word: Timeless Arabic & Hebrew Calligraphy



JOUMANA
MEDLEJ



MICHEL
D'ANASTASIO



MAAIDA
NOOR



THE WRITTEN WORD: TIMELESS ARABIC & HEBREW CALLIGRAPHY

SUNDAY 12 JUNE @14:00

Three award-winning calligraphy artists come together to showcase the beauty of the written word. Featuring Arabic and Hebrew text in a range of styles, these original masterpieces present modern works inspired by the classical calligraphic tradition. As an institute dedicated to educating the public about the heritage of the Abrahamic faiths, this exhibition offers an exciting event that explores some of the creative, artistic productions developed across various Abrahamic communities over time.

Featuring works by Joumana Medlej, Michel D'Anastasio, and Maaida Noor, all of whom will join us on the opening day to share their insights working as calligraphy artists over the years. See back page for artist biographies.

Please join us in the Shasha Suite for a reception at the Woolf Institute on Sunday 12 June 2022 from 14:00 - 17:00 to meet the artists and browse the collection of the original works. There will be an opportunity for attendees to purchase these originals. The artwork will be reproduced and featured in the building in an exhibition until the end of the year.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

The Woolf:

Within Living Memory

CALLING ALL ALUMNI OF THE WOOLF INSTITUTE

Were you a student at the Woolf? What was it like? Did it change your life? We are collecting memories from our alumni about their experiences of studying in Cambridge at the Woolf Institute, particularly those who studied here in the early days of the Institute. Please tell us where you came from, what you

studied, what your first impressions of Cambridge were and how your research at the Woolf affected you and the decisions you took afterwards. What are you doing now? Have you kept in touch with people you met back then? Do you come back to Cambridge?

We would love to hear from you. If you would like to contribute a short piece of around 300 words, please send it to Liz Winter at ejw39@cam.ac.uk, together with any relevant photos you have.

We look forward to hearing from you.

[CLICK HERE TO SEND IN YOUR MEMORIES](#)

BELIEVING AND BELONGING

Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute

IS RELIGION AS MUCH ABOUT COMMUNITY AS
COMMUNION?



PODCAST: BELIEVING AND BELONGING

Is religion as much about community as communion?

Lots of us feel the need to believe in something in order to make sense of the world whether it takes the form of religious faith, the provability of science, or some singular strongly-held theory. But belief does not necessarily satisfy another great human need, the need to belong to a community. Joining Ed Kessler, Danny Smith and Grace Davie explore.

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN](#)

COMING SOON

Naked Reflections Podcast x The Woolf Institute

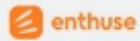
DIASPORA COMMUNITIES

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