



**Newsletter
Christmas &
New Year
2019-2020**





HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2020 / NEWS AND EVENTS



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

I am delighted to share this end of year newsletter with our students, friends, and supporters. 2019 has been a very dynamic year in the life of the Institute. It never ceases to amaze me what an amazing job the small but enormously gifted team of IOCS staff and

close collaborators manage to achieve every year. We are grateful to God for His blessing, which we experience in and through the people supporting the institute, our lecturers, and indeed our students.

I will keep this message brief and let the contents of this newsletter recall the highlights of this year. But, to put things in perspective, let me only underline two things.

Firstly, nothing spells out 'dynamic year' quite like moving premises (again!) and moving a great part of our offices into storage. Last year in March we moved back to the Institute's very first address at Wesley House on Jesus Lane, where IOCS started some 20 years ago. Not only did we rekindle a superb ecumenical partnership with Wesley House, strengthened by our long shared history and our common membership of

the Cambridge Theological Federation (CTF), but we set in motion a decade-long plan to establish our headquarters in bespoke premises at Wesley House. To accommodate the forthcoming building work, we have relocated to Westminster College until mid-2020, and we enjoy the wonderful company of our colleagues in the central CTF offices.

Secondly, we are working very hard behind the scenes to expand our postgraduate course offering, in the shape of a "trans-Atlantic Orthodox collaboration" with the California-based Saint Katherine University. With God's help, we are excited to offer jointly a new MA in Eastern Orthodox Studies in 2020.

I encourage you to support the Institute. *Consider a monthly donation, or, if it is not beyond your means, consider endowing a scholarship or a lectureship. Consider IOCS in your legacy. Or simply, spread the word about the Institute.*

On behalf of all at the Institute, I wish you a blessed feast of the Nativity, a happy New Year, and God's merciful blessings! Christ is born, glorify Him! Christ from heaven, come meet Him! Christ on earth, be exalted!

Father Dragos Herescu

THE 2020 CONVERSATION DAYS - FAITH AND FILM

We are preparing a very interesting series of Conversation Days for next year which will address a slightly unusual topic: FAITH AND FILM: A THEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF CONTEMPORARY CINEMA. Among the themes tackled will be: explorations of Tarkovski's *Solaris* and Scorsese's *Silence*, a reflection on the intersections between theology and science-fiction and many more!

Please note these dates in your calendars for the 2020 Conversation Days: 20 March, 24 April, 29 May and 19 June.

The programme of our Conversation Days is generally: 6.30 - 7.30 pm: First Session (presentation + Q&A); 7.30 - 8 pm: Refreshments; 8 - 9 pm: Second Session (presentation + Q&A).

We will return soon with more details on each of the Conversation Days, with a line-up which we promise will be impressive. Do watch this space!



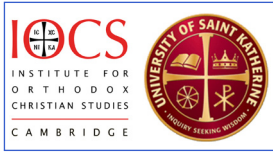
THE 2020 IOCS CONFERENCE ON FLORENSKY

We are pleased to announce our next annual conference, which will be taking place between **16 – 18 September 2020, at Wesley House, Cambridge.**

The conference will address the topic: '**FLORENSKY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY**'. For more details, enrolments and payments please keep an eye on our website, or ask to be notified.

Keynote speakers will include: Revd Prof Andrew Louth (Durham University), Prof John Milbank (University of Nottingham), Prof Bruce Foltz (Eckerd College).

COOPERATION WITH U.S. UNIVERSITY OF ST KATHERINE, CALIFORNIA / NEW MA IN EASTERN ORTHODOX STUDIES



Our Institute is very pleased to announce an exciting new cooperation between IOCS and The University of St Katherine, San Marcos, California, USA, (USK) following the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement for Academic Cooperation between our Institutions. Saint Katherine is a nationally recognized US-University that provides a balanced education in the liberal arts and sciences, founded and rooted in the life of the Orthodox Christian Tradition.

We are confident that this cooperative partnership will provide unique opportunities for study, research, and exchange for students based in either the US, the UK or elsewhere in the world, interested in university-accredited study programmes rooted in the theology and practice of the Orthodox Christian Tradition.

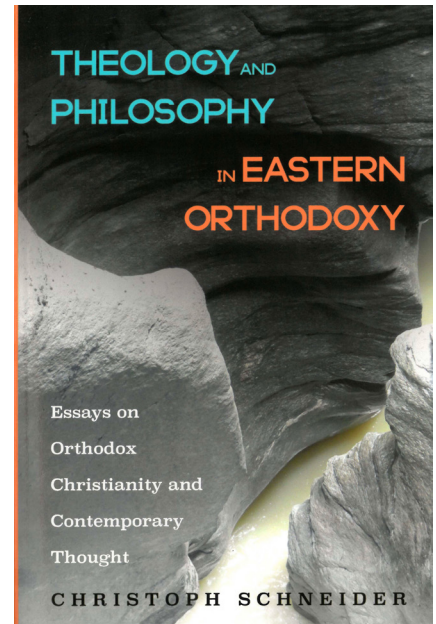
We are currently working, together with our friends from USK, towards developing a new Master's programme validated by USK and taught jointly by IOCS and USK. The new programme will be a Master of Arts in Eastern Orthodox Studies and we hope to be able to offer this course as early as the next academic year.



NEW! - THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY IN EASTERN ORTHODOXY

Christoph Schneider (ed.), *Theology and Philosophy in Eastern Orthodoxy. Essays on Orthodox Christianity and Contemporary Thought* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2019). Even in the twenty-first century, critical and creative engagement with modern and postmodern philosophy is still a rarity in Orthodox circles. This collection of essays makes a contribution to overcoming this deficit. Eight scholars from six different countries, working on the intersection between Orthodox thought and philosophy, present their research in short and accessible essays. Topics range from political philosophy to phenomenology, metaphysics, philosophy of self, logic, ethics, and philosophy of language. This book does not promote one particular approach to the relationship between Orthodox theology and philosophy. Yet all authors demonstrate that Orthodox scholarship is not confined to historical research about the Byzantine era, but can contribute to, and enrich, contemporary intellectual debates.

CONTENTS: ❖ *Introduction. The Quest for a Christian Philosophy*, Christoph Schneider ❖ *Theocracy, Sobornost', and Democracy. Reflections on Vladimir Putin's Philosophers*, Evert van der Zweerde ❖ *The Russian Postsecular*, Kristina Stoeckl & Dmitry Uzlaner ❖ *Orthodoxy and Phenomenology, Religious Experience in the Eastern Christian Tradition*, Christina M. Gschwandtner ❖ *Orthodox Theology and the Inevitability of Metaphysics*, David Bentley Hart ❖ *Orthodox Theology and Philosophy of Self*, Sergey S. Horujy ❖ *Orthodoxy and Logic. The Case of Pavel Florensky's Theory of Antinomy*, Paweł Rojek ❖ *Orthodoxy, Philosophy, and Ethics*, Rico Vitz ❖ *Orthodoxy and Philosophy of Language*, Christoph Schneider



HISTORY OF MONASTICISM - BOOK LAUNCH IN 2020 - VENUE/DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED

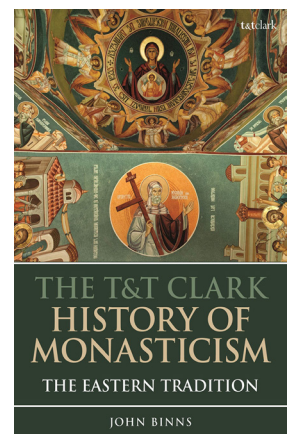
An important volume on 'History of Monasticism. The Eastern Tradition' by one of our Visiting Professors - and co-founders of our Institute - the Revd Dr John Binns was published this year by T&T Clark (Cambridge). IOCS is planning a book launch for next year - please keep an eye on our notifications and on our website.



We quote from the publisher's presentation: *'In this volume, John Binns creates a vivid, authoritative account that traces the four main branches of eastern Christianity, up to and beyond the Great Schism of 1054 and the break between the Catholic and Orthodox churches. Binns begins by exploring asceticism in the early church and the establishment of monastic life in Egypt, led by St Anthony and Pachomius. He chronicles the expansion, influence and later separation of the various Orthodox branches, examining monastic traditions and histories ranging from Syria to Russia*

and Ethiopia to Asia Minor. Culminating with both the persecution and the revival of monastic life, Binns concludes with an argument for both the diversity and the shared set of practices and ideals between the Orthodox churches, creating a resource for both cross-disciplinary specialist and students of religion, history, and spirituality.'

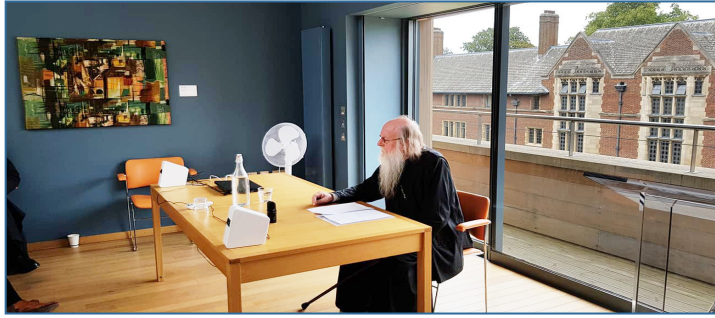
Our Principal, Father Dragos Herescu, wrote the Forward to the book, from which we quote: *'Taking the approach of the 'professional stranger' – to use a term one typically finds in ethnography – Father John has succeeded something that is quite rare: to write with the heart of a 'practitioner' and the mind of an 'explorer'. It will come as no surprise if, before long, this book will become both a landmark title in the field and set a benchmark for years to come.'*





SUMMER SCHOOL 2019

COMMUNITY, DIFFERENCE AND DIVISION IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH



In 2019 the Institute revisited the popular format of our international Summer School. Between 30-31 August 2019 we welcomed at Wesley House in Cambridge, participants from the UK, USA, Greece, Canada, Romania, Belgium, Nigeria, Ukraine, Russia and Egypt.



The speakers and their presentations in pictures: Revd Prof Andrew Louth (Durham University) – *The One Church: A Plea for Diversity* (top corner left); Revd Dr John Jillions (St Vladimir's Seminary, New York) *Differences and Discernment in St Paul's Corinth* (top corner right); Metropolitan Kallistos Ware – *Primacy and Synodality in the Orthodox Church* (second row); Dr Christoph Schneider on *Introduction: Unity, Difference and Division in Space and Time* (third row); Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff (IOCS) – *Beyond Ethnicity and Jurisdiction: Unity and Difference in the Orthodox West* (fourth row, right); Revd Prof Nikolaos Loudovikos (University Ecclesiastical Academy of Thessaloniki) – *What is Ecclesial Unity?* (fifth row, left); Revd Dragos Herescu (IOCS) – *Multiple Modernities = Multiple Orthodoxies? The Making of Religious Identity for the Orthodox Abroad and in the "Home Countries"* (fifth row, right); Dr Razvan Porumb (IOCS) – *The Fundamental and Enriching Complementarity of Pan-Orthodoxy: An Insight from the Ecumenical Scene* (bottom corner).



'One of the defining elements of the IOCS Summer School was the incredible hospitality of the staff and warmth of everyone involved - staff, lecturers, volunteers and participants. Really you can say Christ and His Love was experienced and present through the talks and the deep fellowship.'

Spyridoula Fotinis (Summer School Participant)



The help of our wonderful volunteers Ioana, Cristina and Cristina contributed greatly to the success of the event.





"IN THE IMAGE AND LIKENESS". HUMAN PERFECTION AND DISABILITY' - 5 APRIL 2019

Our first Conversation Day of the year was organised jointly with our friends from Wesley House, Cambridge and from the 'St John Chrysostom Orthodox Research Group' (Aberdeen). The two featured speakers in conversation were Revd Professor Frances Young OBE FBA (Emeritus Professor, University of Birmingham) and Dr Petre Maican (Université Catholique de Louvain). The speakers addressed this challenging topic with profound insight and sensibility.



CHRISTIANITY AND ECOLOGY: 'A TEMPLE NOT MADE BY HANDS: THE CHRISTIAN VISION OF CREATION AND ITS LITURGICAL ROOTS' - 4 MAY 2019

Our second Conversation Day of the year took place, suitably, in the welcoming surroundings of the beautiful garden of the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology - which co-organised the event with IOCS. The two featured speakers in conversation were: Dr Margaret Barker (speaking on 'The Biblical Vision for Creation') and Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff ('A Worshipping Cosmos: Liturgical Tradition and Ecological Implications').

'ORTHODOX AESTHETICS AND CONTEMPORARY ART' - 21 JUNE 2019

The last Conversation Day of the year was both a presentation and a workshop of musical and theological reflection. The special guest for the day was renowned composer and academic the Revd Dr Ivan Moody. Father Ivan illustrated his talks with musical pieces by himself, Sir John Tavener, Arvo Pärt and others. The audience were invited to dialogue and reflect on the theme of the day. A real feast!



THIS SERIES OF CONVERSATION DAYS WAS KINDLY SPONSORED BY DR AND MRS SEBASTIAN KOGA OF NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Recordings of all the talks from the Conversation Days and the Conference are available on [our YouTube channel](#).

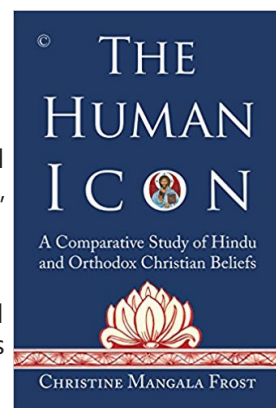
BOOK REVIEWS - THE HUMAN ICON

These past couple of years have seen the first reviews of our Research Associate, Dr Christine Mangala Frost's book - *The Human Icon: A Comparative Study of Hindu and Orthodox Christian Beliefs* - and they have been predictably positive! Here are some fragments:

'Anyone who wants to reflect on the connections and differences between Hinduism and Christianity would do well to read this book. Scholarly but accessible, it is written by a knowledgeable and experienced author, and deserves wide attention. [...] *The Human Icon* deserves to become a key text for any Christian engaged in conversation with their Hindu friends and neighbours.' (Tom Wilson, *Anvil*, Vol 34, Issue 1)

'Without judgement or obvious inclusion of cultural bias, the text provides an informative entry point for strengthening understanding of aspects of both religions. [...] The appeal of *The Human Icon* can be found in its sensitivity and appreciation to religious practice, belief, and devotion, and its discussion of influences and commonalities that increases understanding of Hinduism through the inclusion of a discussion of Christianity.' (Madhavi Venkatesan, *Reading Religion*, [readingreligion.org](#))

'Christine Mangala Frost has produced one of the few comparative theological studies of Hinduism and Eastern Orthodox Christianity. [...] The strength and appeal of *The Human Icon* are the personal experience and knowledge of its author in three religious traditions and her 'ongoing internal dialogue' with these traditions.' (Christopher D. L. Johnson, *Religion & Theology*, Volume 26, Issue 1, January 2019).



BOOK LAUNCH - ORTHODOXY AND ECUMENISM

A well attended book launch took place on the evening of 29 August, at the Divinity Faculty of the University of Cambridge - for Dr Razvan Porumb's book "Orthodoxy and Ecumenism - Towards an Active Metanoia". The three special guests gave very inspiring, thought-provoking responses: Dame Mary Tanner, Revd Dr John Jillions and Revd Dr Jeremy Morris. The presentations were followed by captivating discussions among those present on the themes of the book.

In the words of the Revd Dr John Jillions, Razvan's book is 'the most comprehensive, systematic and sustained theological argument on Orthodoxy and ecumenism that I know of. There are a lot of compendiums, lots of other books that bring together articles on specific different topics, but it is this one book that looks at the whole scope of things and offers something new.'

Copies at a discounted price are still available from the author. If interested, do contact him at grp29@cam.ac.uk.





IOCS STAFF CONTRIBUTE TO THE IOTA INAUGURAL CONFERENCE



A historic reunion: three academic directors, two principals, and two vice principals, from different ages of the Institute! An incredible joy for of us all to be together again!



At one of the Divine Liturgies during the IOTA Conference: Revd Dr Nathanael Neacsu (Theology Faculty Iasi, former Visiting Scholar of IOCS), His Grace Bishop Maxim of Western America (Serbian Orthodox Church), Father Dragos Herescu (Principal IOCS).



'PANORTHODOX UNITY AND SYNODALITY'

The whole IOCS staff and many of our affiliated lecturers and scholars were present between 9-12 January 2019 at the IOTA International Theological Conference on 'Panorthodox Unity and Synodality' in Iasi, Romania. The President of our Institute, Metropolitan Kallistos gave the keynote inaugural talk which was received with rapturous applause from a packed auditorium at the resplendent National Theatre of Iasi. The IOCS delegates participated in many of the sessions and presented papers at the conference. We left this grand inaugural conference with a sense of elation, positivity and gratitude for this precious blessing of being together with our Orthodox brethren from near and from afar. We were impressed



by the astounding level of organisation from IOTA (The International Orthodox Theological Association) and the Metropolitanate of Moldavia and Bucovina - matched by the warm hospitality of His Eminence Metropolitan Teofan and all our hosts in Iasi. The event truly showed the strength of Orthodox theologians and researchers coming together in dialogue. All participants are now looking forward to coming together again for the sequel, wherever that will take place - glory be to God!



IOCS PARTICIPATES IN 'HALKI SUMMIT'

The third 'Halki Summit' on the theme of 'Theological Formation and Ecological Awareness' took place in Istanbul from 31 May to 3 June 2019, hosted by His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople. The meeting brought together some fifty delegates from twenty countries. They represented more than thirty Orthodox theological schools, including IOCS, and also included some prominent Protestant and Roman Catholic environmental theologians who shared their own experience of integrating ecology into theological education. The event follows on from previous environmental 'Summits' in 2012 and 2015, as well as last year's Symposium on the island of Spetses (at which IOCS was also represented by Board members and associates Brandon

of monasteries, church school teaching, initiatives in land use, organic farming and concern for animals... (see further <http://www.halkisummit.com/hs3/session-summaries/>). IOCS Associate Lecturer Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff contributed to the session 'Developing an eco-theological mind-set' with a paper on 'A vision of creation', stressing the necessity of starting from a vision of creation as a whole – humanity included – united in service of God. Also, another long-standing friend and supporter of the Institute, Dr Christine Nellist elaborated on the work of the *Pan-Orthodox Concern for Animals*, a charity whose overarching mission is to incorporate compassionate care and friendly relationships with animals into academic and seminary curricula.

Participants shared the conviction that the environmental crisis calls the Orthodox tradition to live out the riches of

its theology of creation; and that this witness begins with a better understanding of our own tradition and its relevance to the demands and crises of our day. There was therefore a strong emphasis that this meeting should not be simply a gesture or a declaration of intent, but the beginning of a process to enhance

the curriculum and the formation provided by theological institutions. To this end, the final session introduced a continuation group coordinated by Tracy Gustilo (St Vladimir's Seminary), Katerina Pekridou (Council of European Churches), Elizabeth Theokritoff (IOCS) and Gayle Woloschak (St Vladimir's Seminary, International Orthodox Theological Association), to assist theological schools and institutions in working together and sharing ideas and resources. The object is that participants will continue the conversation among themselves, as well as drawing in other Orthodox theological schools who have not been involved in the Halki Summit or other initiatives of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

For IOCS, this is an opportunity to build on the interest in theology, science and environment already reflected in the curriculum and developed in recent Conversation Days, as well as to make new contacts among theological schools and theology faculties.



Gallagher and Elizabeth Theokritoff). A film of the Symposium, which was shown to Halki participants, is available here: <http://www.halkisummit.com/hs3/greener-attica/>. Apart from a break on Sunday for the Divine Liturgy at the Phanar and guided tours of the churches of Chora and Agia Sophia, this was an intensive working conference concerned with the development of Orthodox theological education, and formation in the widest sense. As Metropolitan John of Pergamon underlined in his keynote address, ecological awareness depends on restoring the Church's tradition of reverence for matter – something that cannot be achieved simply by intellectual theological education, but involves recovering consciously what we learn from childhood through eucharistic and sacramental experience. In the course of eight sessions, the nineteen speakers explored how to convey the relevance of ecology to theological formation, the development of curriculum so as to make the connections and improve the scientific literacy of graduates, the role

'LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE: LIVING AND BEARING WITNESS IN BRITAIN TODAY' - 24-27 MAY

'Let your light so shine: living and bearing witness in Britain today' was the theme for the 2019 conference of the UK Deanery of the Exarchate of Orthodox Parishes of Russian tradition in Western Europe, held between 24-27 May, at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Herts. Three of the speakers were from IOCS - Fr Dragos Herescu (IOCS Principal), Revd Dr Christopher Knight (IOCS Director and Associate Lecturer) and Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff (IOCS Director and Associate Lecturer). Audio recordings of the talks available on: <https://thyateira-deanery.uk/deanery-conference-2019-talks>



Revd Dr Christopher Knight, Father Dragos Herescu and Dr Elizabeth Theokritoff

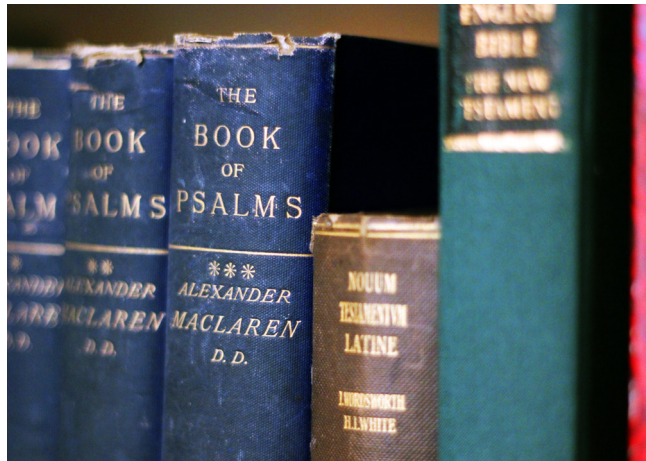
NEW!

The Institute for Orthodox Christian Studies, Cambridge is delighted to be able to offer a Sabbatical Scholarship in Cambridge over the summer of 2020 - for a period of two to three months. This scholarship will be addressed to postgraduate, doctoral or post-doctoral researchers tackling themes of relevance to Orthodox theology today. By spending time at our Institute, such researchers would benefit from access to the extensive network of libraries in this ancient academic city, from the expertise of our staff as well as

from the networking possibilities offered by an academic hub such as Cambridge. We will send out a call for applications early next year with more details about our requirements and we will select one of the candidates for the summer. Do keep an eye on our website!

We are able to offer this Scholarship through the generosity of one of our students and supporters, Mrs Kathleen Eden, to whom we are extremely grateful! We hope other friends could also contribute similar scholarships to serve the Orthodox academic mission in Cambridge.

SABBATICAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE SUMMER OF 2020!



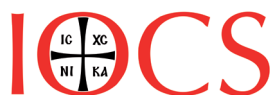
**IF YOU TOO ARE INTERESTED IN SPONSORING A SCHOLARSHIP IN CAMBRIDGE
PLEASE CONTACT OUR INSTITUTE AT THE EMAIL ADDRESS BELOW**

MA COURSES ALSO AVAILABLE BY DISTANCE LEARNING!

IOCS continues to offer, in collaboration with the Cambridge Theological Federation, two new Master's degrees: the [MA in Spirituality](#) and the [MA in Contemporary Faith and Belief](#). The new postgraduate degrees are accredited by Anglia Ruskin University and are open to both onsite and distance learning students.

The [MA in Spirituality](#) engages students in a lively debate on the meaning and role of spirituality in the context of Christian traditions as well as in today's multi-cultural and multi-religious environments. Students will be encouraged to relate the discourse of spirituality to a wide range of contemporary personal, professional and vocational questions, as well as to undertake a detailed exploration of some issues of significance in the contemporary context.

The [MA in Contemporary Faith and Belief](#) enables students to join a timely debate about the role of faith and belief in the contemporary world. Students will be encouraged to gain an in-depth understanding of some areas of theological and philosophical discourse in the contemporary academy, church and society, as well as to develop a critical understanding of the human condition as it contributes to major questions of contemporary philosophical theology.



INSTITUTE FOR
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C A M B R I D G E

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