

BOARD GAMES STUDIES

COLLOQUIA VIII

WELCOME **TO** **OXFORD**

St. Aldates Parish Centre

April 27th to April 30th, 2005

OXFORD, THE CITY OF DREAMING SPIRES

Oxford is a small city based around the 39 colleges. Dating from the 8th century and said to have a religious foundation at the Christ Church site, the university was first described by Gerald of Wales in 1188 and within a century the large buildings had appeared. The 'dreaming spires' have been the inspiration for many, including Lewis Carroll, Colin Dexter (who wrote the *Inspector Morse* TV series actually set in Oxford) and Harry Potter's Hogwarts Hall.

The town is well suited for walking tours, either with groups or by oneself. All the colleges, museums, libraries and churches are close together. These attractions are well served by shops, cafes and restaurants as well as many very good public houses which serve meals as well as ales.

St. Aldates Parish Centre is at 40 Pembroke Street, near to the corner with St. Aldates and opposite Christ Church College. It is within walking distance of all the colleges, the Covered Market which contains many fascinating shops, Blackwells the booksellers, theatres and pubs such as the Eagle and Child, The Mitre and The Bear. 'The Alice Shop' is a few steps away in St. Aldates; it is a must for all interested in the stories by Lewis Carroll.

A word of warning, the town is full of students and bicycles so be careful crossing roads and lanes.

PROGRAMME FOR WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27TH 2005

9:30 THE QUEST FOR THE LOST GAME

Gaspar Pujol

The game of *Caixó* (Box), played on the island of Minorca, is about to disappear. It is a rare variant of Backgammon now played by less than one hundred people.

10:15 THE USE OF BOARD GAMES TO ENHANCE PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN'S PROBLEM SOLVING

Pedro Palhares

Based on the mathematical education principle of problem solving as the main learning experience children should be offered.

11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:30 THE DESIGN AND MAKING OF BOARD GAMES AND PLAYING PIECES

John Firth

Working in wood and ceramics, this craftsman is creating new and exciting designs for both board games and their playing pieces.

12:15 THE ARRIVAL AND SPREAD OF PACHISI FROM INDIA

Irving Finkel

Certain American scholars have proposed that Parcheesi made its appearance in the USA prior to the first publication of the English equivalent. Recent research demonstrates the primary existence of the English commercial game, and also provides a tantalising clue as to the means whereby the game first reaches these shores.

1:00 LUNCH BREAK

2:15 THE GAME OF GOOSE IN ADVERTISING: A STUDY IN BOARD GAME DESIGN

Adrian Seville

Little work has been undertaken about the adaptations of board games for advertising purposes. This study outlines the three main methods for creative design in this genre.

3:00 PLAYGROUNDS – THE WORLD IN A GAME

Janine Schiller

Reise durch die Schweiz has been studied to identify methodological criteria that can be adapted to the analysis of other board games presented in map form.

3:45 TEA BREAK

4:15 HALMA: THE QUEST FOR VARIANTS WITH COMPLETE RULES

Andrew Perkis (read by Irving Finkel)

Flaws in the rule sets for Halma have prevented its play in organised competitions and stultified its refinement into more satisfactory formats which would provide a richer playing experience. This study looks at the technical issues of the game and puts forward three effective approaches to deal with the problems the rules raise.

5:00 to 6:30 FREE TIME

6:30 Reception with Lawrence Taylor of the Alice in Oxford Shop.

PROGRAMME FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2005

There is a wealth of museums and historic buildings to be seen in Oxford. Thursday morning is free time when you may choose which to visit. Members of the AGCA will be coming to Oxford that day and you may wish to meet up with someone from the group and decide your own programme.

Places to visit:

- **Museum of Oxford** is dedicated to the history of Oxford and its university. There is an Alice Exhibition
- **Ashmolean Museum** developed from a 'cabinet of curiosities' and it displays antiquities from the Palaeolithic to the Victorian periods, from Egypt and the Middle and Far East to Europe and Great Britain.
- **Pitt Rivers Museum** displays archaeological and ethnographic objects from around the world.
- **Alice's Shop** is the Old Sheep Shop immortalised in 'Through the Looking Glass'. As well as being a shop, it displays original artwork and many fascinating 'Alice' related objects.

10:00 and 12:00 BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY

Twenty people will be selected to have the Behind the Scenes tour with Dr. Lambert. **The visits will be restricted to non British members.**

1:45 BGS members and those members of AGCA who wish to come will meet at 1:45 at the

Christ Church College entrance in St. Aldates for the tour **ALICE IN OXFORD**. Charles Dodgson was a Christ Church fellow and mathematics tutor but he is best known as Lewis Carroll, author of 'Alice in Wonderland'. His stories were inspired by the 10 year old daughter of the college's head, Alice Liddell. This tour centres on Christ Church and is a wonderful opportunity to explore the places known to Alice. Tour will last about two hours.

Thursday evening will be free time to relax and enjoy Oxford.

As AGCA members will be in Oxford, arrangements have been made to have dinner with them at the Quod Restaurant in the High Street about 6:30. This is housed in a Georgian banking hall which is very close to Christ Church College. This meal is not included in the programme and is paid for individually.

PROGRAMME FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 29TH 2005

9:30 WARRI EXPERTS AND COGNITION

Pascal Gygax, J Retschitzki and R Richardson

Identifying the processes that differentiate expert from non-expert players has been studied since the 19th century. This study offers a new perspective on our understanding of Warri experts' cognition.

10:15 WARRI GRANDMASTER'S REPRESENTATIONS OF EXPERTISE: A systematic analysis of strategy during tournament games

R Richardson, J Retschitzki and Pascal Gygax

This study focuses exclusively on the subgroup of expert players, how they learnt the game, how they teach the game and insights into the role of emotions during the game. The study gives an account of the trends that have emerged.

11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:30 RULES OK

David Parlett

What are the rules of a game and who authorises them? What sorts of rules are there, how can they best be expressed, and how do they get to be changed?

12:15 BRAZILIAN INDIGENOUS GAMES

Mauricio de Araujo Lima

The existence of the Jaguar Game gave birth a unique expedition in Brazil. For over sixty days a team visited eight Indian villages with the purpose of getting to know the games, the toys and the playful activities of the Indian people in Brazil. And now, the results of the expedition are shown in the film Brazilian Indigenous Games.

1:00 LUNCH BREAK

2:15 SELECTABLE RULE BASED GAMES

Dr. John Rankin and Mr. H Seera

New board games can evolve based on rule set popularity and a generic game can be constructed in generalisation of the wide variety of traditional board games. The research shows that flexible rule set games can be more interesting.

3:00 APPLICATION OF THE NETWORK THEORY IN THE DYAMICS OF BOARD GAMES

Cosimo Cardellicchio

Networks appear to arrange through scale-free and dynamic aggregations of items and board games and players seem to follow the same aggregation rules of other phenomena.

3:45 TEA BREAK

4:15 BAROZZI'S RITHMOMACHIA

Jorge Nuno Silva

Francesco Barozzi, a sixteenth century Italian, is studied together with a historical survey of the game and an English version of his manual.

5:00 AFRICA HIDDEN INSIDE A SMALL HOLE: Mancala games played in Dominican Republic

Viktor Bautista i Roca

No mancala games played in Spanish speaking America have been described. This study details the research into *Hoyito*, played in Western Dominican Republic. It is a game different from all other mancala games described until now, both in Africa and in the Caribbean.

PROGRAMME FOR SATURDAY, APRIL 30TH, 2005

9:30 NEW HISTORIES OF ANCIENT GAMES – THE FINDS FROM JIROFT

Ulrich Schadler and Anne Elizabeth Vaturi

Until now the history of the family of backgammon games could be traced back to ancient Rome and ancient India. The artefacts found at Jiroft establish that this group of games are the oldest still being played.

10:15 NEW PROBLEMS ON OLD SOLITAIRE BOARDS

George I Bell and John D Beasley

Some old solitaire boards are brought down from the literature, dusted off, and re-examined. Some remarkable games are displayed on them.

11:00 COFFEE BREAK

11:30 POST –UND REISESPIELE IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF COMMUNICATION

Mayari Granados

Travelling by post or stagecoach was the only regular traffic for many centuries. At the beginning of the 19th century a new racing game appeared taking this as its subject.

12:15 RACE AND IMPERIAL CULTURE IN BRITISH BOARD GAMES OF THE 19TH CENTURY

Richard Huzzey

This paper will attempt to use British board games of the nineteenth century to reflect on the place of race and imperial culture in the popular sphere.

1:00 LUNCH BREAK

2:15 JAQUES BOARD GAMES, 1850-1900

Richard Ballam

A study into the history of this company and the games for which it is famous. Some of the games were derived from existing games while others were based on current events, sports and the world in general.

3:00 AIDS TO ORIGINALITY

Eric W Solomon

This study proposes a formal system for classifying game objectives at a more detailed level than the 'objective class'. It is suggested that this can aid the inventor's quest for originality.

3:45 TEA BREAK

4:15 THE MAD KING'S GAME or The Rakshasa Way of Playing Chess

Maria Schetelich

Sanskrit texts on the Indian games of chess (*catranga*) at times refer to peculiar or "incorrect" playing, i.e. not following the prescribed rules and sometimes call these deviations "the Asura or Rakshasa way of playing". In Indian mythology Asuras or Rakshasas are the demons or anti-gods who are a constant source of trouble to the gods because of their rashness and their insatiable hunger for fighting. It might well be that one of the variants of Indian chess - "The Mad King's Game", in which a king without his army stands up against his fully equipped adversary - reflects this image of the Asuras or Rakshasas.

7:00 DINNER AT THE MITRE INN