

THE ANIMUS ARCHIVES

MARCH 2019



Kassandra The

EAGLE

BEARER Assassin's Creed
Odyssey

WHAT'S INSIDE?

Welcome to Issue 1 of The Animus
Creed Community Magazine by

The Animus Archives is a quarterly
for fans of the Assassin's

Our readers will have full access
puzzles and more!



**Archives, the first ever Assassin's
The Ones Who Came Before!**

**fan project full of bonus content
Creed series!**

to exclusive articles, interviews



Inside Issue 1

- Our Community
- Community Corner
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The Animus Archives

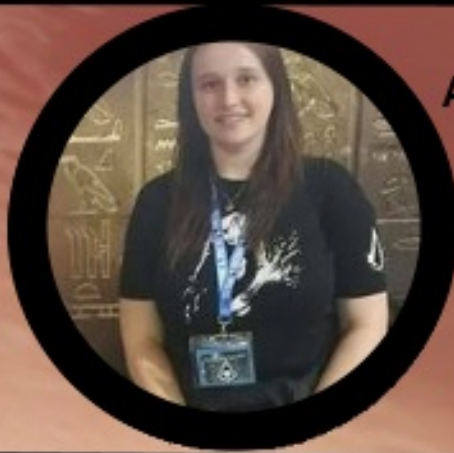


Contributors



Colum Blackett

Community
Admin



Ashlea Buckley

Editor



Graphics by Snowfire & McHeisenburglar

"For the first issue of The Animus Archives, we are looking to develop our content on a new media platform, something which has never been done before within the AC Community. I can't wait to see the response from our readers!"

- Colum Blackett

"This new project is extremely exciting to be a part of. We wanted a new way to bring content to the AC Community in a new, fun and creative way. We hope that you all enjoy this new project as much as we have enjoyed making it!"

- Ashlea Buckley



We first started developing the project back in October of 2018, but due to work schedules could not progress further with the project.

We are hoping to release four issues a year.

THOSE WHO OPPRESS
THE WEAK
WILL LEARN TO FEAR THE
SHADOWS



We would like to say a huge thank you to community member Snowfire, who has created some fantastic graphics for the project

OUR COMMUNITY

Where can you find us?


You can find The Ones Who Came Before on the following social media platforms:

- Facebook - Twitter - Weebly - Youtube - Instagram

Recent Projects

- We recently launched a new social media initiative titled Community Polls. Every Tuesday we will be collecting feedback from our fans on a range of Assassin's Creed related topics.
- Over the festive period, we held our very first community creations competition, where we encouraged members of our talented fanbase to help us prepare for Christmas. Below is the winning entry by Twitter user @MrGamper. We will be running more Community Creations rounds in the future. Look out for round 2 which will be taking place around Easter 2019!
- After three months of carefully monitoring our content in order to prevent spoilers, we finally removed our anti-spoiler filter! This means that you can now discuss anything AC Odyssey (main game) related with other members of TOWCB Community. To celebrate the removal of the filter, we released our review of the game, which you can find in this issue of The Animus Archives

Future Projects



- We're looking to release three more issues of The Animus Archives in 2019, so your feedback is very much appreciated to help us improve!

- This summer, two of our admins Col and Ash will be visiting Italy for the first time. Look out for our game vs reality photos!

- This year, we would like to redesign our website. If you feel that you could help us with this, please send us a message.

- We recently released a new round of Quick Fire Community Questions, where we sat down with Chris from The Precursor Box. You can find the full interview in this issue of The Animus Archives.

- Last year, we collaborated with Access the Animus to raise money for Eagle Heights Wildlife Foundation. We are looking to do something similar this year, as the campaign was a success, and managed to raise money for a fantastic cause. If you would like to be involved in the 2019 Charity Project, feel free to send us a message!



COMMUNITY CORNER

Back in 2016, we wanted a way to showcase fan content on our social media channels.

This led to the creation of Community Corner, which can be found on Twitter via the hashtag #TOWCBCCommunityCorner. Every week on a Sunday, we select something that the community has created, and share it with our fanbase. The Assassin's Creed Community is extremely talented, so this is just one way in which we can help to promote projects.

Keep an eye on our social media channels every sunday to stay up to date on Community Corner activity.



Scottish Assassin cosplay by Caleb Allen



Hidden Blade art by Instagram user
@Jackonda_ttx



KASSANDRA

PHOTO OF THE DAY



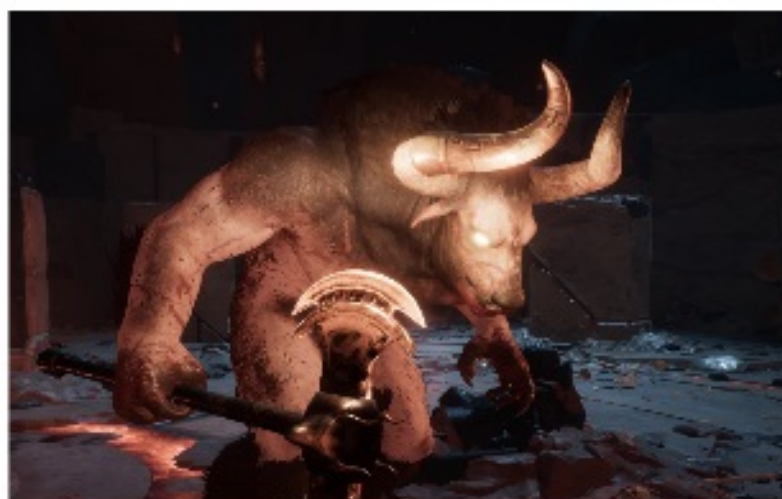
The introduction of photo mode in Assassin's Creed Origins brought with it a surge of creativity, inspiring community members to take part in virtual photography. Although the practice existed long before the addition of photo mode, it made it easier for gamers to capture every moment.



Bayek protecting Egypt from above

Many of the shots captured would not have been possible without the photo mode tool, meaning that players had more freedom than ever before.

This surge of creativity inspired TOWCB admins to create a community showcase feature known as 'photo of the day', where we select and share our favourite photos from the most recent Assassin's Creed games.



The mighty Minotaur

As of March 30th 2019, we are currently selecting your photos from Assassin's Creed III Remastered. Unfortunately the remaster was not given the photo mode tool, but this had not stopped the community, who are capturing moments that demonstrate the newly improved graphics.

To be in with a chance of a photo of the day feature, simply share your shots via the Twitter hashtag #AssassinsCreed.

All screenshots shared will be credited.



Left - Screenshots by Community Admin Col

Shay Cormac, before he took a different path

The Assassin's Creed Community is full of interesting individuals and groups who strive to make it a better place. We here at TOWCB created the Quick Fire Community Questions series to find out more about projects these passionate fans are working on. So far, we have interviewed cosplayers, community admins, merchandise collectors and graphic designers.

SATIN DRESS
PHOTOGRAPHY



Jessica Kerr in her Cassandra costume.
Photo by Satin Dress Photography.



Quick Fire Community Questions- Round 5

Chris Reilly from The Precursor Box

Colum: Hey Chris, thank you for joining us for Round 5 of Quick Fire Community Questions! Please could you tell our readers a little bit about yourself?

Chris: Thanks for having me. Well I'm Chris Reilly and I'm the main creator of a little passion project, The Precursor Box. I'm 30 years old and from a wee place called Scotland. I lived in Florida for 5 years where I met my wife Cherie and I was in the British Army but had to leave because of an injury during my training, I am currently working to get back into the Army.

Colum: When did you first play an Assassin's Creed game, and what were your initial thoughts?

Chris: The first time I played an AC game was 2007 with the first game. I was 19 and my true love in gaming had always been the Grand Theft Auto series but this was about to change forever. I went to my friend's house and he said he just got this new game called Assassin's Creed, but he wasn't far into it and didn't quite understand what was going on. he put it on, and he started a new game so I could see the beginning. Straight away I was intrigued because it started out in a present day setting but I'm looking at the back of the box and the pictures all show what seems to be a medieval setting, but then sure enough Dr Warren Vidic starts to explain the animus to us and then we get pulled into 1191. This whole concept was very exciting to me and then as soon as I seen that you were able to climb buildings and free run your way across the rooftops, I knew I had to buy this game.

Colum: What about AC made you love the games? What made you a fan in the first place?

Chris: It really started to get my full attention in Assassin's Creed 2 because I started to find the glyphs. Once I finally seen The Truth video, I was kind of blown away. I realized that there was a lot more going on in this series than I first thought. So, I definitely love the stories that that have been told but honestly the thing I love the most is the Assassin's Creed itself. I think there is so much there to explore and a lot to learn from it.

Colum: Which Assassin's Creed game is your favorite, and what do you think about the new direction of the franchise?

Chris: My favourite game is a hard question so I'm going to cheat and name 2. First off, I love Assassin's Creed 3. I love the Native American side of the story and the frontier has seen some of my fondest gaming moments. My second has to be Assassin's Creed Origins. I think it's the almost perfect blend of old-style AC and the new style. I wouldn't have removed social stealth but was happy with everything else in the game.

As for the new direction of the franchise, I will admit I was sold from the beginning when they announced Origins but less so about Odyssey, that's down to the fact that it takes place before Origins and I'm in the camp that Odyssey should have been a spin off "An Assassin's Creed Story" game. But I have enjoyed Odyssey and I can't wait to see what happens next.

Colum: Do you have any predictions for the 2020 game?

Chris: Well the rumor is it's going to be in Rome set in between Origins and Odyssey if I remember correctly, So I wouldn't be surprised if that ends up being true.

Colum: What is 'The Precursor Box' project, and what will it bring to the Assassin's Creed Community?

Chris: The Precursor Box is a passion project that my wife and I are creating. We are a multimedia community project and at the center we will have a website/forum for all things AC related, without the worry of things like social matters or politics being brought into it. I know from personal experience and from talking to many others there is no real good place for the fandom to come together because of these problems. I know a lot of people don't really like going to the official Assassins Creed forums and Reddit is a complete riot. So, we are creating a place where that type of behavior won't be tolerated. We will feature and promote the fans of everything Assassin's Creed related from games, movies, comics, cosplay, virtual photography & more. Eventually I want to start putting out YouTube videos doing in depth lets plays and Character profiles & more.

Col: Are there any challenges you are currently facing in the creation of your community. If so, is there anything our readers can do to help?

Chris: Right now its just about trying to get the word out there and trying to build a following. All that I ask is for people to read what were about and if they like the sound of it for now please follow us on Twitter/Facebook, and please share with any Assassin's Creed fans you know.

Colum: One year from now, what do you think 'The Precursor Box' community will look like?

Chris: One year from now we will have everything up and running and I just hope people come check us out and find a home.

Colum: Are you planning on attending any events this year, such as EGX, Comic Cons or meet-ups?

Chris: Sadly no. this year is already stacking up to be my busiest yet.

Colum: Do you collect Assassin's Creed merchandise? If so, what is your favorite item?

Chris: I've never been a big collector myself, I've always just bought the games/comics although lately I've been eyeing up a few collectables.

Colum- What is your favorite part of being a member of the AC community?

Chris: Honestly, it's the passion the fans have for the series. There is so much amazing content created around the AC franchise by the fans. I want to give a shout out to @Loomer979 & @White24Room I love the work they have done and have found inspiration in both.



THOSE WHO SEEK THE LIGHT
MUST FACE THE
DARKNESS



ASSASSIN'S CREED ODYSSEY

PRESS ANY KEY

Assassin's Creed Odyssey Review

By Colum Blackett

"Fun but flawed in the eyes of the lore"

The reveal of Assassin's Creed Odyssey marked a new direction for the franchise, with a focus on giving players the chance to craft their own experience. For some, it was the beginning of an identity crisis for the series, with the removal of both the Assassins and the Creed, making the title almost invalid. For others, it was a fresh start for the series, entering a new chapter full of opportunity which would allow the player to control the sexual identity and decisions of the protagonist. It was clear that the franchise was no longer going to be constricted by the Animus, and would for the first time ever be letting players make their own decisions over character selection, dialogue and other aspects of the game. Odyssey takes the franchise even further in the journey towards becoming a fully-fledged RPG, and builds upon the blocks left behind by Origins.

My time playing Assassin's Creed Odyssey has been a bumpy ride, bringing about a mixture of emotions. The key question I asked myself when purchasing the game was: Can you have an Assassin's Creed Game



without the Assassins or the Creed? The short answer is yes, as Odyssey proves that it can be done from an ideological perspective, as tyrants and liberators exist in all historical societies. Should it have been done though? That's a more difficult question to tackle. So before we examine that in more depth, let's take a look at the game itself.

From the outside, Odyssey looks like 300 crossed with Assassin's Creed Origins, combining the brutality of Ancient Greek conflicts with aspects of the previous entry. Moments after beginning the game, it becomes clear that this is far more than a retexture of a previous game. For the first time ever, players can select a character, a decision that cannot be undone once made. The choice comes down to two Spartan mercenaries. Cassandra or Alexios. This is due to Layla's modified Animus accepting pages from the lost book of Herodotus, and DNA from the Spear of Leonidas, which projects a potential version of what history could have looked like, rather than what it was really like. For this to happen, the established animus lore of the franchise has been bent all over the place, removing issues such as desynchronization and bleeding effect consequences. The half-siblings have exactly the same choices, lines and even sexual partners, making the whole selection process rather peculiar. According to previous entries, Layla should be desynchronizing immediately, but let's roll with it for now. I wasted no time in selecting Cassandra, turning the difficulty up to Nightmare Mode, and enabling exploration mode for my first playthrough.



The World

Ancient Greece in Assassin's Creed Odyssey mixes together a wide range of contrasting environments, creating a beautiful experience for the player. When you're not being attacked by the many enemies of the world, you can use photo mode to take in the stunning views and capture the moment. Although Odyssey feels familiar due to the graphical similarities to Assassin's Creed Origins, the sandy deserts of Egypt feel a great distance away from the green fields of Greece. Venture to the coast and watch the waves hit the shore, or listen to the teachings of Sokrates in a bustling crowd. Whatever you choose to do in the game, you'll be met with dynamic, ever changing scenarios that make you wish you had a time machine to visit it all for real. The game does a fantastic job at providing memorable locations in such a large open world, with new surroundings still being discovered after 100 hours of play. The tone of the world can also change in a moment, quickly going from a sunny, clear day, to a stormy, misty night, full of dangers lurking in the dark. You don't want to be lingering around the woods of Attica after the sun goes down. The player discovers the Greek world along-side Cassandra (Or Alexios) after they finally manage to leave the small island of Kephallonia. behind. You'll meet a colourful cast of characters along the way too. Who could forget the legendary warrior Testikles, or the tales told by your right hand man Barnabas, an ever



loyal companion when facing the gravest of dangers. Following the Misthios on their journey are Ikaros (Senu's Great Great Grandfather.... Possibly) and Phobos (At times the slowest horse to ever exist), who provide constant assistance throughout the game.

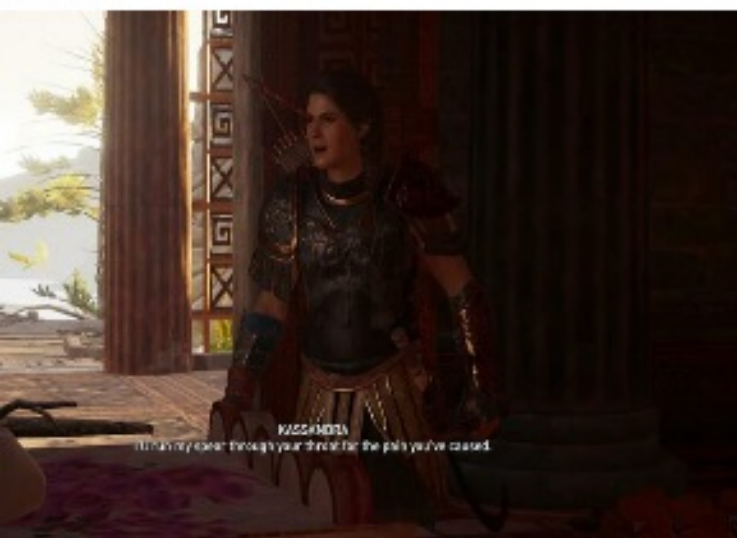
My first ten hours of gaming were spent synchronising viewpoints. Little did I know that this task would be never-ending, as the map for the game is absolutely enormous. After many hours free-roaming the wild lands of Ancient Greece (on nightmare mode), I began to notice that I had barely gained any XP at all, and that it had been a real graft to level up. In comparison to the enemies (and animals) of the land that all wanted me dead, I was an extremely weak

opponent. By not doing missions (as the game clearly intended), I felt like I was being punished, and had to suffer the consequences. Without missions, it can take the player several hours to increase significantly in XP or levels when choosing to free-roam. This graft to progress can create a disparity between the gamer and the world, where you leave your gaming session wondering what you have actually accomplished. Unlike other RPG games such as Skyrim, the game has no intention of rewarding players for wandering the world, with XP awards being almost microscopic at times. Bigger actions on the other hand, such as completing missions or eliminating rival mercenaries are heavily awarded with XP, which can rapidly increase your level.

Before approaching a mission, I find myself scouting out the surrounding areas in order to pick a suitable battleground in case of conflict. A nice cliff or wall can be the difference between life and death, thanks to the Sparta Kick ability which can be used to defeat even the strongest of enemies. The surroundings can be critical to a successful fight, and creates an element which players can exploit to their own advantage. For example, I recently led a group of Athenians to a Lions den, before finding a vantage point to weaken the enemies with carefully timed arrows. Natural resources within the world also play a key role in the progression of the misthios. Trees and Iron can be harvested to upgrade weapons, or upgrade the ship, improving the chances of winning in combat. The game introduces a refined crafting experience in comparison to the time consuming efforts that were required in Assassin's Creed III. To craft arrows, players simply collect wood and pelt, and head to the inventory. You can now even select auto-craft for arrows, meaning the game does it all for you. One feature that I particularly liked in AC Odyssey was the ability to dismantle weapons at any time. This allows the player to gain more wood or pelt where necessary.



Although the world can be used to your advantage, it can also provide surprises for those who wander in to unknown terrain. Enemy attacks can come unexpectedly, and you may find yourself facing skilled warriors with level counts way above your own. The best way to stay alive is by carefully selecting your gear, and by making sure you keep upgrading/engraving when you visit your local blacksmith. One thing that I did notice when delving in to the world of Assassin's Creed Odyssey is that actions have consequences. Thanks to the new dialogue selection system, the choices that you make in your playthrough can have repercussions. For example, by choosing to spare the infected residents of Kefalonia, the player learns later in the game that their homeland has become host to a foul plague. For the rest of the game, Cassandra or Alexios must live with the burden of knowing that they could have prevented the spread of the deadly disease. This is just one example of many of how the choices you make in game affect the world around you. Everything from the side you choose, to the targets you kill can be carefully contemplated by the player. The game does not force you to kill targets (other than cultists), and it is up to the player to decide which Nation Leaders/Mercenaries they wish to assassinate or spare. In doing so, they know that their decisions shape the land, and contribute towards the suffering or prosperity of the people. These huge decisions can feel like rewriting history at times, and should really be prevented by the Animus (which clearly isn't doing its job properly these days). A good example of this is when Cassandra confronts The Wolf of Sparta (whom she thinks is her father). The player can choose to kill or spare Nikolaos, a decision which should be fundamentally impossible within the Animus.



Abilities

Odyssey introduces a wide range of abilities that the player can unlock, which can be selected depending on the gamer's preferred play-style. Each of three skill trees focus on a different core aspect of your chosen character. The Hunter, Warrior and Assassin tress all contain abilities which can cause devastating damage to opponents. The only problem with the ability system is that you can only select four for combat and four for archery at a time. It's a shame that the game restricts your access to all of the abilities at once, but it does make the player select the most appropriate for their game. I personally tried to blend a mix between stealth and combat, in order suit the way I found myself playing the game. Let's be honest, there's nothing a good old

Sparta kick won't solve, but it's best to stay on the safe side and select useful ones like healing for example. You never know when a fight is going to break out, and it's good to have a way to recover should you take some damage. The Spear of Leonidas has some extremely powerful abilities attached to it, which only seem to get stronger as you progress through the game. After killing members of the Cult of Kosmos, you can take the Spear to the Ancient Forge, where it can be upgraded. This allows you to increase your strength even further, and unlock even more devastating abilities.

Although the game has a great range of abilities, I felt that some of them should not have been locked away. For example, special arrows such as fire, poison or explosive all fall under an ability tree, rather than a simple purchase from a blacksmith which I expected. You'll find the same goes for smoke bombs, which also fall under an ability tree. It feels like the game really does wish for the player to level up and grind, rather than handing all the tools available straight away. Ikaros also does not have abilities, as was the case in Assassin's Creed Origins. I think it would have been interesting to introduce abilities like the following: "Theft from above". "Distraction noise". "Stone drop". You get the picture, there's loads that could have been implemented. Maybe in the next game we'll be able to send our eagle to steal ammo from enemy camps. That being said, I cannot imagine playing the game without abilities. Conquest battles without healing, shield stealing or overpowered archery attacks would be an absolute nightmare! They really do add an extra element to the game, and unleash a lethal force when enough adrenaline is built up.



Combat

The sheer ruthlessness of the game is revealed early on when we begin our odyssey as Leonidas at the battle of Thermopylae, where the legendary 300 Spartan warriors faced the Persian forces. Here we get a small taste of the revamped combat system that tests the reaction time of the player, and makes you think on your feet. Mistakes are punished when fighting opponents, and can lead to a grisly death for the player. Combat is extra difficult due to the removal of the shield, which was a useful defence mechanism in *Assassin's Creed Origins*. Instead, players must learn to block, duck, dive and roll away from incoming attacks, something which can only be accomplished through practice. The new combat system can be cruel when you're learning how to play the hard way, especially if you choose to play on Nightmare difficulty. This frustrating process of witting down enemies one at a time is due to the impressive range of fighting of styles, and enemy attacks that can come out of nowhere. Death can come for the protagonist in the blink of an eye, leaving you wondering where you went wrong. The new combat system can be cruel when you're learning how to play the hard way, especially if you choose to play on Nightmare difficulty. This frustrating process of witting down enemies one at a time is due to the impressive range of fighting of styles, and enemy attacks that can come out of nowhere. Death can come for the protagonist in the blink of an eye, leaving you wondering where you went wrong.



With such an array of kill moves, fighting styles and enemies, every foe is better dispatched one at a time, as to avoid being attacked from behind. The initial problem with the combat system that will contribute towards your death on countless occasions is the lack of a healing potion. Instead, regaining health is locked behind an ability that the player must select early on to be in with a chance of recovering during combat. Other than the lack of healing without an ability (I didn't know about this without Google search), and enemy attacks somehow going through each other, the combat system is probably the most advanced in the franchise, and could even be the most brutal. Kill moves thoroughly triumph over the mightiest of warriors, and provide satisfaction after an intense battle to the death. Enemies glow red when they are

ready to unleash a power attack, something which the player cannot defend themselves from at all. All you can do in this situation is roll away and hope for the best. I know that if it were possible, many players would have opted for a shield to protect themselves from incoming attacks. In this way I guess the combat differs from the previous entry, and allows you to adopt a different fighting style.

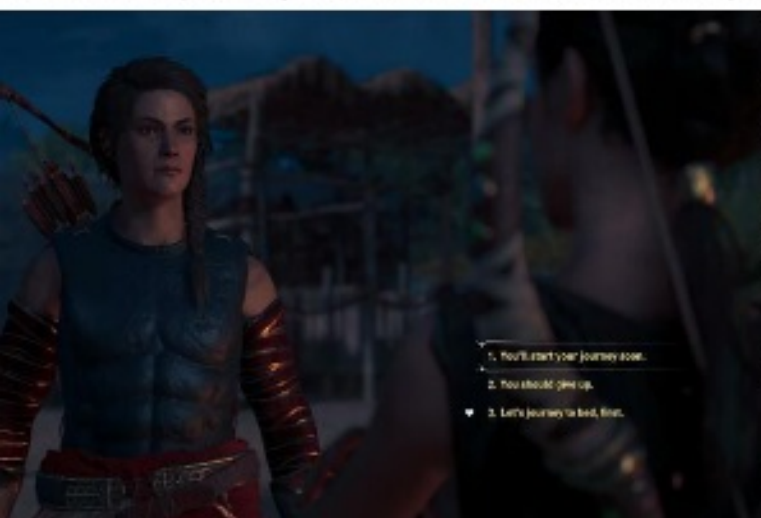
After an epic encounter with an enemy, you can loot the body to discover nothing of great value at all. After killing an Athenian Archer, I looted his pockets to discover a "slice of goats cheese". Not exactly what I had in mind. At times the loot dropped from enemies can be extremely unsatisfactory, with archers dropping limited arrows after firing what felt like a thousand in your general direction. You can sometimes get lucky and find decent weapons or gear on the higher ranking enemies, but generally I wouldn't get your hopes up after taking down a low ranking soldier. Mercenaries and Cultists on the other hand drop fantastic loot. It's definitely worth taking them out one by one, just to gain some better items for your arsenal. I found the loot in the game to be generally disappointing, and I spent hours and hours grafting in the wilderness to find wood, just to craft more arrows. The Loot within enemy bases is much better if you're looking for something special. One feature that I particularly liked about *Odyssey* is that when looting a weapon rack, the player always picks up a new item. The game allows you to steal the best Athenian (or Spartan) weapons, and use them against them.



Dialogue Options

Dialogue options are a strange addition to the franchise, something which I never expected to occur as long as the animus is still operational. The choices available to the player are endless, especially in side missions, where Cassandra can change the tone of a conversation extremely quickly. One thing you will notice quickly however is her lust for sex at every opportunity. During serious conversations, the game finds a way to make the situation sexual, something which I found to be quite distracting. Other times, I found the choice I selected didn't overly reflect what was actually being said, making it feel like the dialogue option was pretty pointless. One thing that I did like about the dialogue options however were how you could gain extra information from characters by selecting a question. This allows for the player to learn more about the upcoming quest, and think of a strategy in which to proceed.

Odyssey is full of choices, and the dialogue system reflects that in full. Players have the option to turn down quests and come back to it later, something which is extremely useful when you're way below the recommended level. After sinking several hours into the game every day, I found myself at times skipping through dialogue in cutscenes and choosing to read the subtitles instead. This is no disrespect to the voice actors in any way, who did a great job with the characters. It simply saves time. There are moments however where I wish I had not done this, as the game quizzed me and made sure I was paying attention. My first real noticeable quiz came when I first attempted "Lore of the Sphinx". I skipped the cutscenes without paying attention, and was presented with a selection process for riddle answers. I guessed of course and was killed by the Sphinx for not paying attention. I liked the way in which the game made sure I was still listening, and gave me options in which to choose. Other than a few overly sexual options, and some which didn't reflect the choice, I think the game did a good job at presenting alternative branches which could create interesting consequences. This is definitely a feature that Ubisoft should use again in games like Far Cry and Splinter Cell, but I'm still not sure about its place in the Assassin's Creed Universe I might be open to it's return in the Modern Day aspects though.



Stealth

One of the core pillars of the Assassin's Creed franchise is stealth, enabling the player to become one with the crowd and neutralise enemies without being spotted. As stealth is such an important element to the franchise, you would expect the game to make missions specifically for this, but this is not the case. When you begin the game, stealth is nearly impossible,

- 1) Attempt an assassination, risking exposure.
- 2) Sparta kick him off the cliff.

In any other Assassin's Creed game, I would pick 1 of course, knowing that my hidden blade would kill the enemy every time, but Odyssey carries on the problem that Origins introduced. Not every character can be stealthily assassinated from behind, or above, no matter what you do. You'd think a knife to the throat would slay even the mightiest of foes, but the game seems to have other ideas about this. Even with full Assassin damage on your weapons, a stealth attack may only deal half the damage you would expect to a captain or brute. You can find yourself above an alerted enemy, but unable to perform an air assassination, something which I found to be a particular problem. The stealth in Odyssey is flawed, and that makes me worry about future entries. When walking with a crowd in Athens for example, a paid mercenary will spot you from a mile away and attack on sight. Long gone are the days of 'blending', where a crowd could mask your position.



The game is slightly limited when it comes to ranged attacks. All you can do from distance is shoot an arrow, which probably won't do much damage to an enemy of the same, or higher level (even with a headshot), or you can try get up close and personal. Neither guarantees an instant kill, and exposes your position immediately. I found that the best stealth attack in the game is actually the spear throw ability, which can be used to quietly kill your opponents. As one of the fundamental strengths of the franchise, I really want to see this aspect improved in future entries. The simple introduction of tools such as throwing knives or bombs would make a difference to the stealth element. Alongside the whistle, rock throwing like was the case in Far Cry 3 would be a fantastic tool to distract guards. The closest right now to this is fire an arrow, or throw a lit torch, both of which alert enemies. Stealth is certainly an optional approach in the game, and many missions don't even try to accommodate it. For example, the conquest battles cannot be fought from the shadows, and force the player to use the combat system time and time again. One thing that I did like about stealth in Odyssey however was the range of cover from the environment. Tall grass and bushes are frequent across the land, so you can attempt to be stealthy whenever you feel like it.

As stealth is such a vital part of the Assassin's Creed series, I really hope that the team behind the next game go back to the drawing board and work out the kinks, because for some reason it is extremely difficult in Odyssey, and almost prevents the player from carrying out a quiet assassination. It's clear to me that more tools need to be given to the player in order to become a stealthier character. For example, Poison darts, smoke bombs, throwing knives and rock throwing would be a massive step forward in comparison to what we have to work with right now.



Assassin's Creed elements

Odyssey is the first game in the franchise to take place before the establishment of the Assassin Brotherhood, which began in Ancient Egypt (The Hidden Ones). For this reason, the game was always going to struggle with incorporating 'AC elements', as many of the key founding pillars had yet to be introduced. Although the game does attempt to remind players that it is an Assassin's Creed game, it acts almost like a fanservice rather than dedication to previous entries. Origins had some of the best White Room death conversations in the franchise, but Odyssey removes these pivotal moments, and replaces assassination targets with a 'Shadow of Mordor' style system. This means that players don't really know

anything about the people they are hunting in the Cult of Kosmos, even after investigations have been conducted. Although the Cult control Ancient Greece and different aspects of society, the player doesn't have motivation to hunt down targets other than gaining better loot and crossing a name off a list. Previously, games would invest players in their targets, and make an emotional connection to their kill. A great example of this is when Connor finally assassinated his father, Haytham Kenway. When I think back on my Odyssey, I could maybe name two or three targets that I actually know anything about or remember. It seems that the members of the cult only exist to give the player something to do in the game, which is a shame when you think about the great experiences we have had hunting notable targets down in past entries.





At its core, that's what the Assassin's Creed franchise is all about. It does however, present a story where one individual and a few friends chose to battle the controlling forces, rather two opposing groups. It's pretty disappointing to see that Darius, a major figure in the Assassin's Creed lore has been sidelined to DLC content. Although the DLC looks 100x more like an Assassin's Creed entry than Odyssey, I can't help but feel unimpressed that players are having to pay extra to get the full AC experience. The outfits provide a constant reminder than this is an AC Game, allowing players to equip hoods when tackling the adventures set by Ubisoft. I was overall impressed with the outfit customisation options, especially when the visual customisation system was introduced. One thing however that was noticeably missing was the Legacy Outfits, which have been present in the franchise since the early games. It would have been pretty cool to see the Altair outfit getting some photo mode attention, but unfortunately they didn't make an appearance.

The best Assassin's Creed lore elements in the game can be found in the Modern Day sections, where you play as Layla reading her emails. Here you will find a whole array of callbacks to previous instalments, and even transmedia products such as Last Descendants and Heresy. The death of Charlotte de la Cruz is featured in an email, alongside mentions of key Assassins, such as William Miles, Harlan T Cunningham and Galina Voronina. My favourite reference was the presence of Kiyoshi Takakuraa, a member of the Japanese Brotherhood who was first introduced in Assassin's Creed Initiates. The Modern Day story is always progressing, with Layla being promoted to Cell Leader, but the games tend to focus on pretty boring aspects of the story. When you compare the comic book modern day story aspects to the games, we have one clear winner. This has led to it losing its importance for many fans, with some calling for its removal. I hope that for the next game, we can restore the Modern Day conflict, and see a full scale battle between the Assassins, Templars and Instruments of the First Will.



Conclusion

Rating: 7.5/10

- Odyssey is at its best when it is presenting the player with meaningful side missions that connect to each other. You can play a full arc that all links to each other, creating a chain of stories which you can follow. Here we get to see the protagonist in different situations, and presents the player with a great blend of sarcasm, humour and seriousness.
 - Kassandra is a breath of fresh air as a female protagonist, when compared to the cold, serious tone we experienced as Aya. She was great all the way through, and I am so glad I didn't choose Alexios.
 - Sexual decisions feel unnecessary and out of place, becoming incredibly distracting when playing the game. It's a novelty which has well and truly worn off for me. It doesn't add anything to the game.
 - Great range of enemies and kill moves. The combat and brutality of the game provide hours of satisfactory fighting experiences.
 - At times the world feels too big. Imagine it without fast travel...
 - One thing that fans can take away from Odyssey is that Ubisoft intends to provide a ton of additional content for future games. The post-launch content is going to keep players busy for a long time, meaning great value for money.
- Overall: The game is fun, but flawed in the eyes of the Lore. It bends the Assassin's Creed lore in ways that cannot be justified. I hope that for the next game, Ubisoft listen to the Community, and try to make the game more 'AC' than this one.

ASSASSIN'S
CREED
ODYSSEY



GAME TIME

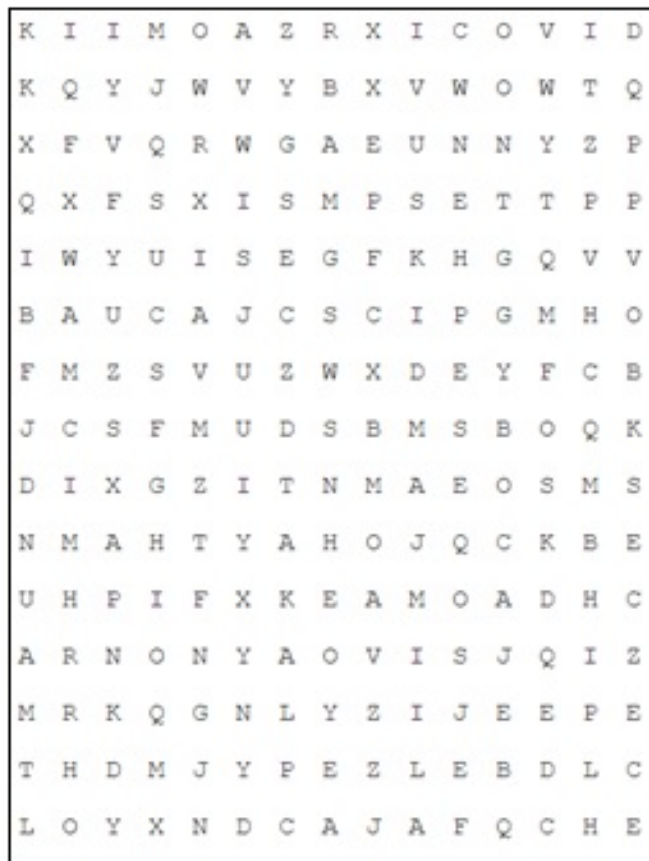
Arno
Evie
Jacob
Assassin
Ezio
Desmond
Haytham

Word Search:



Assassins Creed Characters:

EZIO
KENWAY
ODEJA
AGUILAR
AYA
BAYEK
DESMOND
ALTAIR
KASANDRA
EVIE
JACOB



Quiz:

- 1) Who built the sanctuary beneath Monteriggioni?
- 2) What was the name of Jacob and Evie's Mother?
- 3) What was the name of the Chinese Templar faction that was targeted by Shao Jun?
- 4) Who was Ezio Auditore's first assassination target?
- 5) What was the name of Altair **ibn-La'Ahad's** first born son?



FEEDBACK

Thank you so much for taking the time to read our first ever Assassin's Creed fan magazine! As you can imagine, this project took many months of planning and coordinating to become a reality, and we are extremely proud of how it has developed from a couple of notes in a journal, to a project we can all get behind and support.

This is our first effort at making a magazine for the community, and we have many more ideas to make future issues even bigger and better!

Here are a few questions you can answer to help us improve:

- What did you think of issue #1?
- What sort of content would you like to see in future issues?
- Where did you find out about the project?
- Would you like your content to be featured in a future issue?

All feedback on the project is deeply appreciated!

You can contact our admins via Facebook Message, Email (Theoneswhocamebefore@gmail.com), or Twitter Message



"Giving up is a sure way to failure." - Ezio Auditore

NEXT TIME

Look out for issue #2 of The Animus Archives in June!

Here's some of the things you can expect:

- Brand new articles
- Product Reviews
- Fan Contributions
- 5 Year Anniversary Preparations
- Behind the Scenes
- Giveaway



Assassin's Creed III
Remastered

Available Now!

