Dani Shalet, "Entry on: Assassin's Creed Odyssey by Ubisoft , Ubisoft Montréal ", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Hanna Paulouskaya. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2022). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1516. Entry version as of November 07, 2026.

Ubisoft , Ubisoft Montréal

Assassin's Creed Odyssey

United States (2018)

TAGS: Alcibiades Ancient Temples Ancient Warfare Architecture Aspasia Athena Athens Atlantis Circe Deimos Delphic Oracle Greek Gods Greek History Greek Medicine Hermes Herodotus Hippocrates Labyrinth Leonidas Medusa Minotaur Odyssey Pericles Pheidias / Phidias Plato Pythagoras Socrates Sparta Spartans Sphinx Theseus



We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Assassin's Creed Odyssey
Studio/Production Company	Ubisoft
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2018
First Edition Details	2nd October 2018. Casting: Melissanthi Mahut (Kassandra); Michael Antonakos (Alexios).
Platform	PC, PlayStation 4, Xbox One
Official Website	The official site for *Assassin's Creed Odyssey* has also been repurposed for *Assassin's Creed Valhalla* (2020).
Available Onllne	It can be downloaded via Steam or Uplay (Ubisoft's store).
Genre	Action and adventure video games*, RPG (Role Playing Game)*
Target Audience	Young adults (18+)
Author of the Entry	Dani Shalet, Canterbury Christ Church University, ds622@canterbury.ac.uk

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

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Creators



Ubisoft (Company)

Ubisoft is a multinational videogames development company. Based in Montreuil, France, the company first started as a family-run software development company in 1985 but has since moved to the video games development world, creating, developing, and publishing titles for franchises such as *Rayman*, *Tom Clancy*, *Just Dance*, *Prince of Persia*, and, of course, *Assassin's Creed*. The company originally began in France, but has since expanded worldwide, with branches throughout the world, including Canada, Japan, China, and United States.

Prepared by Nanci Santos, independent researcher, nancisantos@hotmail.co.uk



Ubisoft Montréal (Company, Production Company)

Ubisoft Montréal is the largest video-game development studio in the world. Founded in 1997, as part of Ubisoft's expansion across Canada, the studio now has 3,000 employees, with a portfolio including games such as *Assassin's Creed* and *Far Cry*.

Prepared by Naomi Rebis, University College London, naomi.rebis@gmail.com

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Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

Fate of Atlantis.

Legacy of the First Blade.

Assassin's Creed Origins.

Assassin's Creed Valhalla.

Summary

Please note, this entry will contain spoilers for the game.

Assassin's Creed Odyssey is a game set in ancient Greece, during the Peloponnesian War. It is the prequel to the other games in the *Assassin's Creed* series. It follows the adventures of the "tainted one", who is either named Kassandra or Alexios. The player has the choice to play either as Kassandra or as Alexios. For this entry, the protagonist will be referred to Kassandra as she is the "canon" character.*

Kassandra is part human and part Isu, that is, descended from a race of godlike beings that created humans and were revered by them as gods. She is the granddaughter of the Spartan King, Leonidas through her mother Myrrine. As the player later discovers, Kassandra is also the daughter of the legendary philosopher Pythagoras of Samos.

The backstory of Kassandra is revealed to the player through the character's flashbacks of these traumatic childhood events. The more we learn about the main character the more that her backstory is revealed to the player. The backstory, Kassandra's Odyssey, starts when her "step-father" Nikolaos throws her infant brother off Mount Taygetos in the Peloponnese, at the behest of the Oracle of Delphi (who we later learn is being manipulated by an evil cult).** When Kassandra tries to rescue her brother from the ephors ("magistrates"), she accidentally pushes her brother and one of the ephors off the cliff. This enrages the other ephors who are present at the ceremony and they demand that Nikolaos throw Kassandra from the cliff as well. Nikolaos is torn between his duty as a good Spartan and a good father. After a great deal of hesitation he picks his daughter up and drops her over the cliff edge, to her death. It is a painful scene and fades out with her mother screaming in the background and beating

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on the chest of her husband, Nikolaos.

Kassandra miraculously survives the fall (though the player later learns that this is because she is a "demigod") and runs for her life towards the sea, trying to get away from the people that may be chasing her. She grabs a boat and sails away into the darkness. After what the player is led to believe is days, she washes up on the shores of the island of Kephalonia, where she is found by a man named Markos.

The game opens with the player viewing the beautiful Greek islands, and Kephalonia's temples and giant statue of Zeus, which, according to *Assassin's Creed* fandom, "was depicted as such (in the game) to mirror the geophysical phenomena of Mount Ainos, which was known for its thunderstorms".*** This beautiful landscape is viewed by the player through the eyes of Kassandra's eagle, aptly named, Ikaros. The camera then pans out to the protagonist who is sitting on the roof of her stone cottage playing with a spearhead (which is later revealed to be from the spear of King Leonidas, her grandfather) and humming a tune that her mother used to sing to her as a child. The game follows Kassandra on her quest from Kephalonia, as a poor mercenary who defeats a crime lord by the name of Cyclopes (who is named for the glass eye that he wears) and saves Barnabas (a sailor) from the Cyclops. Barnabas helps Kassandra off the island and becomes her constant companion throughout the game and accompanies her on all her adventures and reveals island myths to the player character as they progress through the plot.

Whilst fighting Cyclops' thugs, Kassandra runs into a politician by the name of Elpenor who asks her to kill a Spartan General, that goes by the title – the Wolf of Sparta – as he believes this is the only way to end the current war and turn it in favour of Athens. Kassandra agrees to do this as Elpenor offers to pay her well, but it is also her only way off the island of Kephalonia, as she wants to search for her mother, whom she lost many years ago.

Travelling to Megaris to find the Wolf of Sparta, Kassandra finds out that it is her father and meets his adopted son, Standor. Even though Kassandra tells Standor that he is her brother, he does not believe her and tells her that both of Nikolaos's children died when they were very young. That said, it does not stop Standor from asking Kassandra/Alexios to help him with a few problems that the Spartan army are facing and offers to introduce her to Nikolaos once these

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quests are completed (this reflects the "quest" element that appears throughout the game). Kassandra completes what she was asked to do and gets an audience with her "father" who is standing on a cliff edge, looking out on the beautiful landscape below. Here the player has a choice to either kick Nikolaos off the cliff, as an act of revenge for what he did to her and her brother, or to let him go. What decision the player makes will change the outcome of the story for good or ill. It is also in speaking with her father that she learns that her mother may still be alive, and that Nikolaos is not her biological father, only her adopted one.

Regardless of what decision the player makes, Nikolaos' helmet will be left behind to return to Elpenor who is now in Phokis. This is all the evidence that Elpenor needs to know that Nikolaos is dead. In a heated conversation with Elpenor, Kassandra finds out that he knew that Nikolaos was her father, and he shows no remorse for sending her after him, to kill him (later the players find out why). Enraged by this, she hunts Elpenor down to a cave, where he is hiding, and kills him. There she finds a theatre mask. This is her clue to the Cult of Kosmos who she later discovers are obsessed with her family's bloodline. At this stage of the game the reason as to why this is the case, is not revealed to the players.

Seeking answers and following clues, Kassandra ends up in Delphi where she meets up with the historian Herodotus who becomes her second close companion and (the player is left to assume) that he is documenting all her adventures. In Delphi, she finds out that the Cult of Kosmos will be meeting in the Sanctuary of Kosmos which is located beneath the Temple of Delphi. Donning Elpenor's mask and robes, she infiltrates one of the cult's gatherings. All the members are wearing black robes and either a "comedy mask" or "tragedy mask" to hide their identities. Though everyone is shrouded, she learns that the Cult is large and that its members are all influential figures throughout the Greek world. She also learns of a powerful weapon in their possession, it is a "demigod" by the name of Deimos. The player learns that this is her brother Alexios, who is angry, warped and twisted because of what his parents, and sister, did to him: in his version of events, it was his sister that pushed him off a cliff.

Kassandra is shocked to see her brother, and although she is shrouded, Deimos (in the version where a player is playing Alexios, Deimos is Kassandra) senses that she is an imposter, but instead of killing her, he kills another cult member. With so many questions

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unanswered about her family Kassandra sets off on a quest. Her first stop is the Oracle of Delphi. After her meeting with the Oracle, Kassandra discovers that she [the Oracle] is being threatened by the Cult of Kosmos, who is in turn forcing the Oracle to make prophecies in the cult's favour. This is when the extent of the Cult's influence is truly revealed to Kassandra.

Concerned about the cult's thrall over her brother and also concerned that they paid her to kill her own father, Kassandra pledges to save her brother and find her missing mother. Her odyssey takes her throughout the Greek islands. She travels from Lesbos, where she encounters Medusa, to Knossos in Crete, where she defeats the real Minotaur in King Minos' labyrinth. On her journeys she encounters the goddess Circe and Athena; the Daughters of Artemis; she meets ancient Greek figures like Socrates, Herodotus, Phidias, Pericles, Aspasia and Plato (to name a few); she battles Cyclopes and defeats an imposter Minotaur (a man in a bull mask) in Phephka, Crete; she has a battle of wits with a Sphynx; reunites her family (if the player plays the game in a certain way) and eventually defeats the corruption (The Cult of Kosmos) that is tearing the Greek world apart, causing a reverberation that is felt throughout the future in the *Assassin Creed* alternate histories which follow this prequal to the other *Assassin's Creed* games. Furthermore, Pythagoras her biological father bequeaths the staff of Hermes Trismegistus to her for safe keeping, until its rightful owner is born (the staff gives whoever possess it, immortality, or so we are led to believe). More of this is revealed in the *Fate of Atlantis DLC* that will be covered in another entry).

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* Kassandra is described by Ubisoft as the game's canonical hero. However, her male counterpart Alexios dominates the marketing and merchandise. On the significance of a female canonical hero in moving beyond the view that women characters do not sell games see Phillips at gamesindustry.biz, (accessed: September 16, 2022). See also Jorge Arenas, *Ubisoft Shocked to Find Players Prefer Alexios over Kassandra in Assassin's Creed: Odyssey* at boundingintocomics.com (accessed: September 16, 2022).

** When playing as Alexios, the infant sibling thrown from Taygetos is Kassandra and when playing as Kassandra it is a baby Alexios. Depending who the protagonist is will change their sibling antagonist.

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*** Quoted from assassinscreed.fandom.com (accessed: September 16, 2022).

Analysis

The game can be used to familiarise young people, and even adults, with classical myth and history. It draws from many texts including Plato's *Republic*, Homer's *Odyssey*, Hesiod's *Theogony* and Herodotus's *Histories*.

Like its predecessor *Origins*, the "virtual tour" mode enables players to learn about the history of ancient Greece, from the way the ancient Greeks lived, to the battle formations of Athenian and Spartan troops, to the role of women in ancient Greece.*

Visuals

The way the landscape of Ancient Greece is constructed as well as the islands and buildings that a player can visit, are remarkable. In order to produce accuracy of place the team reconstructed many ancient Greek sites — calling on experts to help — quickly realising that they were going to have to do this in order to give the game the setting it deserved.** The team decided desaturate the bright colours of ancient Greek buildings and sculptures in order to please the eyes of the player.

Selected Classical Components and Mythology

Isu

Running parallel to the main storyline is one that, like the other *Assassin's Creed* games involves beings called the Isu, who once ruled over the earth, and their powerful artefacts. The power of these beings was so unfathomed by humans that they thought of them as gods. The main three were Minerva, Juno and Jupiter, who were top Isu scientists dedicated to saving their people from a solar flare and annihilation. The series even refers to the Isu as *homo sapiens divinus*. This concept of divine, almost alien creators resonates quite strongly with the science fiction franchise *Stargate* where humans are enslaved by aliens that they worshipped as gods.

Although the Isu play a role throughout the *Assassin Creed* series, Kassandra is not introduced to them until she finds Atlantis, here a

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real place, and is gifted with the staff of Hermes Trismegistus: an artefact created by the Isu Hermes.

Furthermore, on her travels, Kassandra meets an Isu named Aletheia who is sympathetic to humans and was "repulsed by those among her people who embraced divine status".*** To help humans, Aletheia uploads her consciousness into the staff of Hermes Trismegistus so that she can train Kassandra to become its "keeper". In the *Atlantis DLC* the player gets to visit "simulations" of Hades, Elysium and Atlantis that were created by Aletheia, as a training grounds for Kassandra and as an extension, the main protagonist, Layla who is "controlling" Kassandra using the Animus (technology that appears in all of the *Assassin Creed* games that enable people to "play through" the past lives of their ancestors or repurposed DNA using inherited memories).

It is important to note that in these "simulations" the player, through the eyes of the hero, encounters other Isu who possess similar archetypes to their divine namesakes. Persephone rules Elysium as she wishes to escape her husband Hades; Hekate is portrayed as a witch, but also the keeper of keys and crossroads; Hermes is an inventor but also the Isu who brings souls to Elysium and Hades; Hades is the ruler of his realm and the brother of Poseidon and Zeus; and Poseidon is the high judge of Atlantis. Though in the main game the player is not introduced to many Isu, she is directly involved in her own Odyssey, and popular myths.

Medusa

The retelling of the Medusa myth is an example of a popular mythological story that has been rewritten with a modern audience in mind. Medusa's story is quite different than versions that are portrayed elsewhere in popular culture. For example, the 1980s version of the film *Clash of the Titans* shows Medusa's "run in" with Perseus, who beheads her and uses her head to turn the god Poseidon's Kraken into stone. In the current game, Perseus is not linked directly to the Medusa story arch, but is tied in with the Isu, as the protagonist must defeat Medusa in order to open a portal to Atlantis. The creature is found on the island of Lesbos in a petrified temple in the middle of a forest.

To start this quest, the player aids a woman a Non-Player Character named Bryce who is concerned that her lover, a woman called Ligeia

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has not returned from a quest, unusually for her. According to the game narrative, they must hide their love because it is a forbidden romance. As Kassandra and Bryce goes searching for the missing woman, they come across a ruined house. In the house there are love letters and trinkets that the two women gifted to one another. Apparently, Ligeia had gone off in search of a rare rose to gift to her partner.

The quest for Ligeia takes Kassandra and Bryce to an Isu Temple where they encounter and fight Medusa. Kassandra defeats Medusa although Bryce is killed. After the player defeats Medusa, they discover that Medusa was, in fact, the transformed Ligeia. With Ligeia-as-Medusa defeated and Bryce killed in the opening moments of the battle, the player is left with a sense of loss and helplessness as the rose that Ligeia picked for her lover is the only thing that remains after their deaths. ****

Minotaur

In *Assassin's Creed Odyssey*, the main protagonist is asked to find an artefact of Atlantis which is protected by the Minotaur, a mutated creature created by the Isu.

Though there are rumours of the true Minotaur being in Phephka on Crete, Kassandra travels to Knossos elsewhere on the island. At the palace at Knossos, she runs into a young boy who is waiting for his father to return from the Labyrinth. After going on a rather lengthy quest to help the boy find out what happened to his father, she procures the armour of Theseus (one of the only mentions of the original "hero" of the tale) and the boy gives Kassandra a key that belonged to his father, so that she can open the Labyrinth.

It is clear from its construction, as well as the overarching plot of the game, that the Labyrinth was built by the Isu, not the mythological character Daedalus. However, the game merely leaves this to the imagination of the player. The player finds out that it was built to protect the second seal of Atlantis. When Kassandra enters the labyrinth, it is evident that someone was there before her. There is a string marking the player's way through the Labyrinth, perhaps put there by the boy's father, or Theseus himself, though it is unclear through the narrative what happened to Theseus. Kassandra eventually finds the Minotaur, and after defeating it finds another artefact of Atlantis.

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* See further Colin Campbell, *Assassin's Creed Odyssey's Discovery Tour is an inspiring journey through ancient Greece* at polygon.com (accessed: September 16, 2022) and Rachel Kaser, *Ubisoft makes Assassin's Creed's educational 'Discovery Tours' free* at thenextweb.com (accessed: September 16, 2022).

** From Youssef Maguid, *Assassin's Creed Odyssey – The Game That Greece Built* at news.ubisoft.com (accessed: September 16, 2022).

*** Quoted from *Aletheia* at assassinscreed.fandom.com

**** See Tom Philips, *Assassin's Creed Odyssey's Medusa fight sets the stage for its most fantastic entry yet* at eurogamer.net (accessed: September 16, 2022).

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Alcibiades Ancient Temples Ancient Warfare Architecture Aspasia Athena Athens Atlantis Circe Deimos Delphic Oracle Greek Gods Greek History Greek Medicine Hermes Herodotus Hippocrates Labyrinth Leonidas Medusa Minotaur Odyssey Pericles Pheidias / Phidias Plato Pythagoras Socrates Sparta Spartans Sphinx Theseus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Coming of age Diversity Family Friendship Gaining understanding Heroism Historical figures History Humanity Identity Journeys LGBTQI Love Prediction/prophecy

Further Reading

Campbell, Colin, *Assassin's Creed Odyssey's Discovery Tour is an inspiring journey through ancient Greece*, available at polygon.com, Sept 10, 2019 (accessed: September 16, 2022).

Kaser, Rachel, *Ubisoft makes Assassin's Creed's educational "Discovery Tours" free*, available at thenextweb.com, May 15 2020 (accessed: September 16, 2022).

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