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PERSONA 5

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Assignment 2 - Review on an RPG 3D Game

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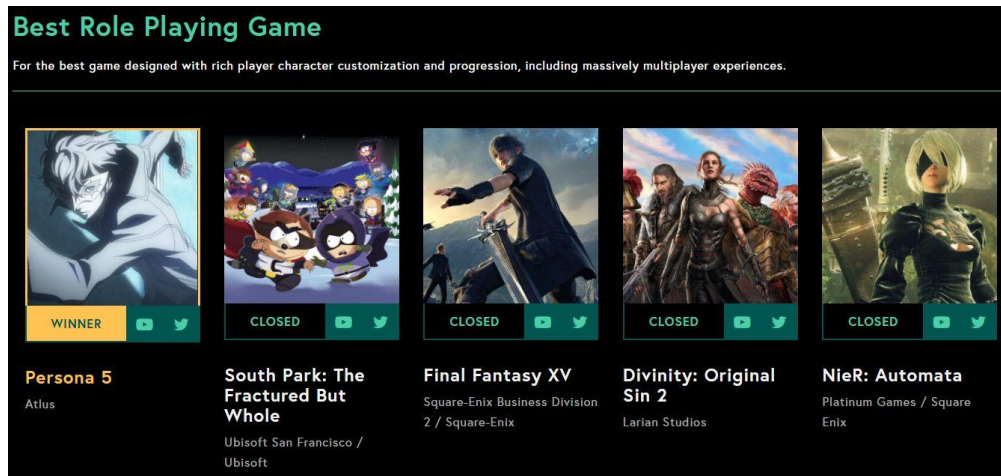
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BACKGROUND OF THE GAME



Persona 5 is a Japanese Role-playing game developed by Atlus, Persona series started as a spin-off for the famous Shin Megami Tensei series, but as its huge fan base increased it became one of the best JRPGs ever created in the same weight class as the huge JRPG games like Final Fantasy and Dragon Quest.

The game was first announced in 2013 and its release date was delayed to 2016 instead of its original release date 2014 for the purpose of further improvement in the game's quality.

According to WWW.thegameawards.com, Persona 5 was one of the top 5 candidate games for Game of the year awards 2017 along with The Legend of Zelda: Breath of the wild (Game of the year), Super Mario Odyssey, PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds, and Horizon Zero Dawn, the game was rewarded as the best role playing game for 2017 which is given to "the best game designed with rich player character customization and progression, including massively multiplayer experiences", including several Game of the Year awards and accolades.

Persona 5 delivered over two million copies worldwide by the end of 2017 making the best selling entry in the overall of Shin Megami Tensei franchise.

Persona 5 entered almost all the top RPG games lists in different websites, and some consider it to be the absolute best RPG Game ever created.

ELEMENTS OF THE GAME

Persona 5 continued on the successful idea of combining the **RPG Turn-based dungeon crawling** gameplay and the **social simulation** which was first introduced in Persona 3, The game takes an average of 96 hours according to WWW.howlongtobeat.com (I personally took over 130+ hours to experience).

ART DIRECTION



I've always loved the Art direction of Persona games, each Persona game has a theme with an art style matching that theme.

Persona 3 choses the color blue and the atmospheres of the game were so dark and gloomy, Persona 4 had a more cheerful theme of friendship which was presented by the color yellow, as for Persona 5, they chose the color Red to



represent the exciting and frightening life of the Modern day as the game is taking place in Modern Tokyo.

Characters design: characters are drawn in an anime style and that shows in the dialogues and the cutscenes, the character

design reflects their personality which gave different approach and feel towards each different character.

The Personas: of the game are designed based on mythical creatures and legends with a fitting art style to that aspect, each character has his own persona which design fits to the personality of that character.



Stylish menus: such as the shops, during fight, Persona list and many others are stylish and give the feel of heavy excitement so that the player never feels bored scrolling between the different menus and managing things due to the nature of the game where the players is required to spend a lot of time on different menus.

There were two ways to represent the events of the story:

- **The anime cutscenes:** used flashy high-quality anime style to represents the scenes, that fact by itself pulls anime fans such as myself to this game to enjoy the moments of the various events of the game's story, even though the anime cutscenes weren't many but the little that were put in the game felt great and satisfying enough.
- **The Gameplay graphics:** uses dialogue boxes with anime drawings and the 3D models of the characters which is used to represent most of the game's story events throughout the game.



The city of Tokyo: was full of details and presented many facts and locations of Tokyo in a stylish way, the crowds on the streets, the Train stations, the Malls with the crowded shops, The Shujin Academy, the events of the city and a lot more.

MAIN CHARACTERS



Playable Characters:



The main Protagonist aka Joker

A second year high schooler student of Shujin Academy with a criminal record of violating a famous Politician, anonymously known as the leader of the Phantom thieves of hearts and known between his teammates as Joker, he has enough will power to access the velvet room and to fuse Personas and the only character with the capability to use multiple personas during the fight.

Ryuji aka Skull

Student of Shujin Academy, his abusive father abandoned him and his mother, but Ryuji got the opportunity to become a star athlete of his school's track team to ease the burden on his mother, the first partner who joins the Protagonist in the team of the Phantom thieves.





Ann aka Panther

A Model who is kind and compassionate, lived years of isolation due to her good looks where people felt jealous of her easy methods and assured future as a Model, but was taught by her only friend Shiho how to prevent the people's opinions about her from getting into her emotions, Ann is the first person to identify the true nature of innocence of the main Protagonist with the false criminal record.

Yusuke aka Fox

An honor artist student at Kosei High school, never knew his father and was orphan at a young age after his mother died in an accident, discovered his passion for art after discovering the famous painting of a woman looking down with a soft happy expression called Sayuri made by his teacher and guardian Artist Ichiryusai Madarame who refuses to reveal the meanings behind the painting.



Makoto aka Queen



After her father died in his job as a Police officer three years ago, her lawyer elder sister **Sae Nijima** took care of her sister Makoto, she is an honor student and the president of the student council of Shujin Academy, was assigned by the president of the school to look after the case of the phantom thieves since their target was a teacher from Shujin Academy which makes everyone a suspect in the school, but later on Makoto Joins the Phantom thieves due to her agreement on the justice ideals of the Phantom thieves.

Morgana aka Mona

A talking black cat who claims to be human and dislikes being treated as a cat despite his attitudes as a cat, he first meets the protagonist in the first Palace of the game and helps the Phantom thieves in their first heist and became one of their members, he's aiming to reach the depth of Mementos to regain his true human form while helping the Phantom thieves in their journey.



Haro aka Noir

Haru is a polite and lighthearted girl, she is the daughter of Kunikazu Okumura the president of Okumura foods company, she was raised with a fancy family which holds a status, Haru's father is forcing her by arranging a marriage with a fiancé named Sugimura from another high-status family despite her disliking Sugimura and wanting to live a normal life without relying on wealth.



Futaba aka Oracle

Futaba is an isolated girl with social anxiety bordering on agoraphobia, she lives in a room with her adoptive father Sojiro Sakura where she communicates with the world through the Internet, she is a smart hacker.

She blames herself and gets blamed by her relatives for her mother's death because of her Mother's suicidal note stating that she got sick of raising Futaba alone, which later on get discovered as a fabricated letter made by the agents of Conspiracy who are trying to steal her mother's researches of the Metaverse world.





Goro Akechi aka Crow

Akechi is the illegitimate son of the politician Masayoshi Shido, despite being a student in high school, he has the passion and intelligence of being a detective which allowed him to work with the Police in solving hard cases, he appears to the public as the man pursuing the Phantom Thieves as he disagrees with their actions and view of justice, but later on in the story appears that he works to assassinate the enemies of his father Shido using the metaverse.

Support Characters:

Sojiro Sakura

Sojiro used to be a former government official, after Wakaba (mother of Futaba) suicided, Sojiro decided to take care of her daughter Futaba to keep her safe from her mother's potential enemies who are after her researches.

Sojiro owns Café Leblanc where he keeps the main protagonist and acts as his guardian.



Sae Nijima

Sae is an intelligent public prosecutor and the elder sister of Makoto Nijima, acts as her sister's guardian after the death of her father who was a police officer.

Sae got assigned to handle the Phantom Thieves of Hearts' case, after the leader of the Phantom Thieves was caught she arranged a meeting with the protagonist to listen to his story and learn about the methods behind all the activities of the phantom thieves.



Igor

Igor is an important figure in the universe of Persona, he is the host of the Velvet room, guides the main Protagonist through his “rehabilitation” during the protagonist journey.

Later in the game he’s revealed as an imposter to the real Igor called Yaldeboath.

Caroline and Justine

The Twins who act as servants in the Velvet room, they help the main protagonist to fuse Personas and sacrifice Personas, aswell as assisting him and their master Igor in the rehabilitation of the Protagonist.



Masayoshi Shido

Shido is famous politician known for his charisma and a representative in the National Diet of Japan, The main Protagonist stopped him when he tried to harass in a back alley which made him use his position and connections power to ruin the Protagonist’s life by giving him a falsified criminal record.



ENVIRONMENT OF THE GAME (TOKYO)



the game's has months and days system, the player can choose his own activities each day, some factors such as the weather, city events, Game's story and season could limit the activities you can do in each day.

The game takes place in Tokyo, the capital city of Japan, with the same locations modeled after the real locations of Tokyo which gives you the feeling that you really are experiencing the life of a Japanese high schooler living in Tokyo, the environment includes the aspects of Tokyo such as the crowded streets, walking busy men, traditional places, Arcades and more.





There are two ways to spend your day:

1- The real world:



you can spend your time in the real world moving around Tokyo and doing different activities such as:

Meeting one of your confidantes to strengthen the bond and rank up an arcana, applying and going for a job to improve your stats and earn some money.

You can use the train to move around the different locations of Tokyo, in each location the player can walk around listening to people's whispers and thoughts of the crowd around him, interact by talking with people, go shopping for items and weapons and many more different activities based on the player's choices.

2- Palace or Mementos:



The Metaverse is a place where a cognition and collection of people's negative and corrupted thoughts are blended taking physical shape, if an individual's desires and corrupted thoughts are significant enough then a personal Palace is created which takes physical form of that individual's

perception and cognition and be ruled by his/her shadow Self, each Palace is protected by Shadows who act as servant to the Palace's ruler, deep inside the Palace lies the treasure, a physical form of the wicked or negative thoughts and desires of the ruler, including his/her perception on the people around them.

STORY



The game starts with the main protagonist appearing as a thief trying to escape a casino with the help of his teammates, but gets caught by the police who take him into an isolated room for questioning, after being drugged, the Public

Prosecutor Sae Nijima meets the protagonist, the leader of the Phantom Thieves and start asking him to try to recall the activities and actions of the Phantom thieves, then the game starts as the flashbacks of how it all began.

The protagonist is being accused for a crime of violence against a figure Politian who got injured, after being put in probation he transfers to Shujin Academy and was sent to his parent's friend Sojiro Sakura who owns Cafe Leblanc and allowed the protagonist who's chained down by the rules of the modern world to stay and live in the second floor of the cafe.

Later on the protagonist discovers a way to reach a metaverse through an unknown mysterious phone app where he sees his school Shujin appears as a castle in that other world, as the story progresses you find out that this castle is actually a Palace of one of the elite sports teachers of the school called Kamoshida, and that teacher views the school as his own castle as he is well known in the school for his Talents and accomplishment in coaching the volleyball team and being one of the best athletes in Japan, despite the fact, Kamoshida is abusing and harassing students behind the scene, but due to his position in the school the other teachers and the school director seem to condone his actions.



As the story progresses the protagonist makes partners of teenagers from his school and starts exploring the Palace in that other world where he sees the

students inside the Palace are being viewed as servants to Kamoshida as this is Kamoshida's view towards his students, until they met a cat called Morgana inside the Palace who explains that they need to get into the deepest part of the Palace and steal the treasure



which holds Kamoshida's very desires, doing so should result to stop Kamoshida from seeking his corrupted desires and force himself to confess for his crimes, but they're required to anonymously spread the news around the school stating that they're going to steal Kamoshida's desires and force him to confess his crimes, by doing so, the consciousness and fear of Kamoshida will rise which results to the treasure taking a physical shape inside the Palace in order to allow them to steal it.

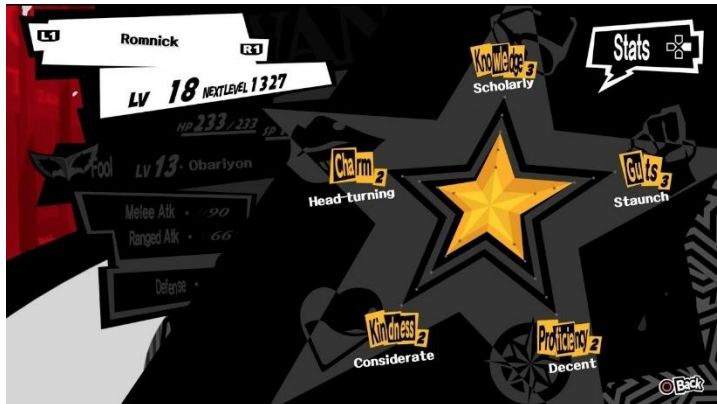
The group succeeded in stealing the treasure which resulted to a change of heart to Kamoshida, Kamoshida surrendered himself and confessed everything to the Police, the news were spread around Japan and people started calling them The Phantom Thieves of hearts, then a fan website appeared called the **Phan site** which takes requests of famous figures of people who also deal some illegal actions behind the scenes believing that the Phantom thieves can accomplish what the Police of Japan can't do and change their hearts, from here the journey of the phantom thieves starts as they come across different famous figures such as Kaneshiro who's Palace viewed people's cognitive existences as ATM machines as Kaneshiro sees everyone around him as a source of income due to his hidden dirty dealings from behind the police putting people in dept, and the president of Okumura Foods company who's Palace viewed his employees as only tools who work without stopping to raise his greedy wealth without consideration on his employees limits.

Throughout the story the members of the phantom thieves teenage group increase and the people of Tokyo vary between supporters and opposers to the phantom thieves and their methods, because the phantom thieves are changing the hearts of people which is questionable if they actually have the right to force people's hearts to change and if that is how true justice should work, but the

phantom thieves continued due to their frustrations against the corrupted adults since those adults can't be stopped due to the modern society system which usually favors those with position and connections.

The phantom thieves keep targeting different requests in the Phan site after they confirm that the person requested is truly making bad deals behind the scenes and unstoppable by the Police, as the story progresses they start targeting bigger figures with high connections who are hard to deal with, and people kept on trusting the phantom thieves and their justice.

STATS



the main protagonist has stats describing different aspects of his personality (Knowledge, Guts, Charm, Kindness, and Proficiency) which allows him to interact with the different systems in the world of Persona 5 and increase his relationship with the confidantes,

each can be further developed by performing different activities during the day based on the player's choices.



Different scenarios and activities can increase different stats, Knowledge could be gained by answering the questions during classes and studying in the school's library during the day or studying at the dine during the night, the level of knowledge helps getting high marks in the final exams to get in the top 10 students

which could be recognized by the other class mates and results to an increase in the Protagonist's Charm level, applying for a job in a flower's shop and working as a servant can potentially increase the level of Kindness, applying to work in a Beef Bowl Shop and creating infiltration tools in his room can increase the proficiency, going to the movie theater to watch movies and reading a book when grapping a seat in the train can improve a certain stats based on the Movie or book's genre the player chooses, some activities and confidantes require certain level of stats to be able to access them.



There are still various different ways to increase stats, this feature kept me active and addicted to perform the different activities around Tokyo.

CONFIDENCES



Confidences are the people whom the protagonist creates a bond with, by creating a bond with a friend the protagonist will start spending time with that friend and learn more about his/her life strengthening the bond between each

other, each time the protagonist meets one of his confidences the rank of a certain



arcana will increase, the Protagonists checks his Mobile phone every day for messages from his confidences who wish to meet, this feature of the game was specifically so enjoyable to me, I loved seeing different personalities of those characters and learn about

the different kinds of people's lives such as high school friends, a lawyer, a famous Shoji Player, a Hacker, a Model, a Politician, an Artist, a clinic Doctor, a Model Gun's shop seller and many more people, I had so much fun reading through the dialogs and replying to the conversations to help them in their various problems of life, in some cases I get to choose a suitable gift based on their personality for a potential extra level up in the Arcana, or choosing a place to spend our time in, to psychology lovers such as myself, this feature of the social simulation in the game gets me more attached to the characters and always seeking to learn more about them.



DUNGEON CRAWLING GAMEPLAY



Accessing the Palace: Each section of the Game's story will handle a certain corrupt adult with a Palace to change his heart, to access his/her Palace the player is required to find 4 pieces of information to be inputted in the Metaverse Mobile Navigator app: Full name of the target, his title, location of the Palace and the form the Palace is taking (which is observed based on the personality of the target), the player is required to move around Tokyo looking and asking around for these information.

When accessing the Palace the player will be required to finish the heist and steal the treasure before the deadline date which is set based on the events of the story.

Palace's treasure: the player is required to go through the different challenges and puzzles while fighting his way through the shadows of the Palace, when the player reaches the depth of the Palace he can send a calling card to the target in the real world which will cause the treasure to take physical shape and the player will play the final day in the Palace and fight the shadow version of the target as the boss fight and steal his treasure.



Security level: Each Palace has a security meter, the player is required to stealth ambush enemies to keep the meter low, if the player keeps being discovered by the shadows the security level will rise, if the security level hits 100% the player will be kicked out of the Palace.

Sensing skill: The player has the ability to use the protagonist's sensing skills to see through hidden stuff, this skill comes in handy to highlight specific paths when the player is lost or highlights hidden treasures which contain items and equipment inside the different stuff of each Palace.

Fight Gameplay: In each Palace there are Shadows securing it, the player can approach those Shadows by touching them to enter a party of strategic turn-based gameplay style against that Shadow, or the player can stealth ambush the Shadow to have an advantage of turns in the fight.

During the fight the player will control up to 4 characters against the enemy, each character has a **life bar (HP)** and **Persona Magic bar (MP)**.

Elements of the fight:

1- **Persona Skills:** There are different types of skills that can be dealt using Personas:

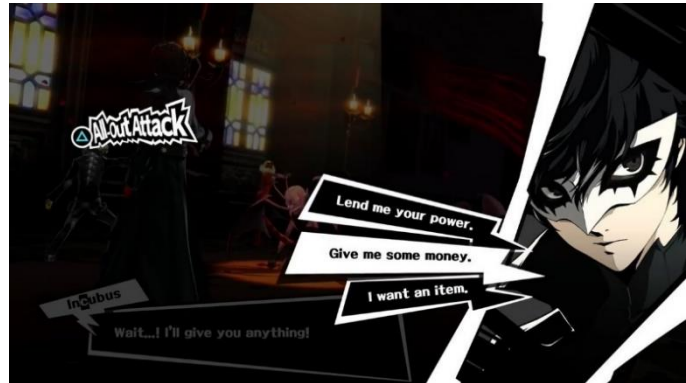
- **Physical Skills:** spending from the HP meter to deal a physical attack.
- **Magic Skills:** Spending from the MP meter to deal a magic attack using Elements like fire, Ice, Electric, Wind, Psychokinesis, Nuclear, Bless, curse, Almighty and Ailment.
- **Heal/Support Skills:** Spending from the MP, used for different assisting mechanics such as healing, reviving, and Ailment cure.
- **Support Skills:** used to powerup the Team such as increasing the Team's Attack, Defense, and Agility, as well as decreasing the same factors against the enemy team.
- **Passive Skills:** imbedded skills in personas to counter certain attacks.
- **Gun Skills:** deals gun damage to the enemy.



2- One more: when attacking the enemy's weakness or successfully dealing a critical attack, the enemy will be knocked down giving the player an extra turn which can potentially deal more damage to the fallen ally or giving the turn to another ally using the Baton Pass.

3- Hold Up: if the player successfully knocked all the enemies down, the player enters the Holdup status where he chooses one of the following:

- All-out-Attack: the whole team will perform a powerful attack on all the enemies.
- Lend me your power: the Protagonist will start a conversation with the enemy and tries to understand the personality of the shadow, if succeeded, a contract is made and the enemy will become one of the Protagonist's Personas, but if failed, the persona will drop an Item instead.
- Give me some money: will cause the enemy to drop money.
- I want an item: will cause the enemy to drop an item.



4- In each character's turn the player is able to choose one of the following options:

- **Persona**: Summon your Persona and use Persona Skills on the enemy, the main Protagonist is the only one capable of using multiple Personas, he can switch Personas only once during his turn.
- **Attack**: Attack the enemy using the character's Melee weapon.
- **Guard**: choose to just guard to reduce the damage of any upcoming attack until the next turn.
- **Item**: there are different types of Items to use, some used to regain health like potions, some could cause Status Ailments on the enemies or cure and recover from Status Ailments to help oneself or a teammate, some are used to revive a fallen ally and more.

- **Gun:** Attacking using a gun raise the chances of knocking down an enemy or sometimes used to finish off enemies with low health, but has a limited amount of bullets.
- **Order:** Only accessible by the Main Protagonist, used to order teammates to swap characters in the fight, it can also be used to set an automatic order for each teammate to act on their own, but most players including myself set it to “Act freely” to control each Teammate by yourself.
- **Baton Pass:** A mechanic accessible when you knock down an enemy and gain a “One More”, during the extra turn the current character can give his turn to another teammate who gains an extra damage potential in his/her given turn, if that character deals another critical attack and knock another enemy down he can make another Baton pass, Baton Pass can be repeated as long as the attacks knock different enemies down.
- **Analyze:** Allows the player to analyze any enemy for its skills, strengths and weaknesses, but these are discovered based on trial and error.
- **Rush:** Lets the fight automatically plays with all the Team dealing only normal Melee attacks, this option is used later in the game when the player is already high in level and assured to win the simple fights to save time.

Equipment: The player can equip each character with different type of equipment such as Melee Weapons, Ranged Weapons, Armor and Accessories as a preparation before fights.

Safe rooms: are rooms that can be found in different sections of the Palace, these rooms aren't accessible by the shadows of the Palace and the player can use those rooms to consult with the team members to observe the situation, save the game, recover HP, and fast travel to other safe rooms or the Palace entrance, if the player died during a fight then he has the option to go back to the safe room.



Mementos: is a Palace which contains the cognition of the whole population of Tokyo, the player will keep receiving requests from the Phat site website of corrupted adults who deserve a change of heart.

Mementos consists of many floors going deep below, the player will go through the randomized formed dungeons of mementos fighting the shadow versions of the requested target to steal their treasures of desires and change their hearts, the gameplay mechanics are the same as the normal Palaces as the player will fight shadows throughout, each time the player beats a Palace and progresses in the story, a new path is opened in Mementos for further exploration, by the end of the game when the player reaches the depth of it, Mementos becomes the final dungeon in the game.



THE VELVET ROOM



The velvet room is a place which exists between dream and reality hosted by Igor with a servant/s, this room is invisible from everyone and only accepts those with high spiritual sensitivity and strong will as guests.

The Velvet room's concept , form and theme changes in each Persona game, in Persona 3 it appeared as a huge elevator, in Persona 4 it appeared as a room inside a big fancy moving car, in both Persona 3 and 4 the Velvet room accepted the main protagonists as honored guests, while in Persona 5 it had a change of pace where it appears as a prison which holds the protagonist as a prisoner inside one of its cells with two servants Caroline and Justine guiding the protagonist through his journey of rehabilitation but using harsh treatment, which reflects how the protagonist is chained and imprisoned by the rules and expectations of the modern society which turns to criminal acts to fulfill their desires for freedom.

The Velvet room is used as a house to summon and fuse different Personas, in the game the player is able to access the Velvet room through specific spots in Tokyo and the Metaverse, it appears as a blue room and only can be seen by the protagonist.

The player can use the velvet room for one of the following options:

- 1- **Persona Fusion**: each Persona has skills, weaknesses, strengths, Level and belongs to an Arcana category, the main protagonist must

have the same level as a certain Persona in order to be able to use that Persona.

There are four types of Persona fusion:

- Normal Fusion: The player can fuse two personas to create one powerful persona, the fused persona can inherit any skills from the two fused personas based on the player's choice, if the Rank level of the Arcana is high (which is gained by meeting the confidence of that specific Arcana category to raise the confidence) then the fused Persona will level up higher during the fusion and potentially gain more skills.
 - Advanced Fusion: Allows the player to fuse more than two specific Personas to potentially create a powerful rare Persona.
 - Fuse by result: Displays a list of Personas available to be fused based on the Personas the player has at the moment.
 - Network Fusion: (I never used this feature but I believe it allows the player to share personas and fuse with other friends online through the internet).
- 2- **Strengthen Persona**: Allows the player to sacrifice one Persona for the purpose of strengthening and leveling up another Persona.
 - 3- **Itemize Persona**: Allows the player to sacrifice one Persona in exchange to different equipment such as item, clothing, weapons and materials.
 - 4- **Explanations**: Instructions of everything the player needs to know about the Velvet room.



SOUNDTRACK



Persona had always been known for their well written soundtracks and Vocal songs matching each Persona game's theme, Persona 5 incorporated heavy acid jass and aimed to sound more realistic than the previous Persona games matching the game's visuals.

In many different parts of the game each OST plays in the right moment matching the situation of each section, OST's of the Palaces matched the theme the Palace is taking, during the different events of the story the music played gives the feel of sadness, excitement, happiness, alertness depending on the scene, I found myself stopping in many moments of the game just to appreciate the Soundtrack which was a huge factor to continue playing the game for hours without stopping.

Some OSTs were playing the instrument version during the first parts of the game, as the story progresses, the vocal version of the same OSTs plays with fitting lyrics to the situations which added more depth to the experience of the game the more I progressed throughou.

PERSONAL OVERALL REVIEW

I honestly don't know where to start to describe my impression on this Fantastic game, Persona series are one of my favorite videogames of all time and Persona 5 just broke through all of its fans expectations including myself with its rich content, so don't get surprised by the number of pros I'm going to mention:

PROS

- **Rich story:** the story certainly had so many depth into it, it started full of mysteries, the fact that the player (me) knows that the main protagonist is already captured and you're basically playing the previous events before he got capture raised my curiosity to know how everything happened and this was a smart idea from the story writers, the story kept me guessing through its different events, the more I progress the more I know more and collect the facts and pieces of the story together, at the same time I come across more mysteries and unexpected discoveries, it had a huge plot twist in the middle of the game and an exciting moment by the final stages of the story, they succeeded in creating the different feels of sadness, happiness, excitement, Comedy and more! In some moments I cry of sadness, in some others I cry from laughter and sometimes cry from happiness, it's rare for games to make such a rich story which leaves us the players satisfied from the very beginning to the very end.
- **Great Soundtracks:** personally speaking, soundtracks are a huge factor to enjoy the game, and Persona series never disappointed me, each and every OST was memorable had its own feel, the fact that they use vocal songs with relatable lyrics makes us players more attached to the game and nostalgically remember it when listening to its soundtracks in the future.
- **Stylish Art:** some players never really consider it but for me I have a strong belief that the stylish fitting art in videogames could play a huge factor for the player to get attached and continue playing without really stopping,

especially in JRPGs where the players spends most of his time scrolling through the menus, the anime drawings were well drawn in the cutscenes and the dialogues, the graphics were well made aswell.

Persona 5 has by far my second favorite art direction of all time (the videogame "The World Ends With You" takes number one in my list).

- **Enjoyable gameplay:** even though the Turn-based gameplay system seem to be dating out specially that the huge game final fantasy changed it's long known turn-based gameplay into an action rpg in their latest Final fantasy xv game, yet Persona 5 stayed true to their Genre and developed the turn-based gameplay to be top tier and super enjoyable, the new gameplay elements such as Baton Pass and Strengthening Personas added more depth to the already perfect gameplay since the previous entries of the series, with keeping all the good old elements of fusing personas, making huge all-out-attacks, attacking enemy's weakness and using different strategies in the fight.
- **Huge exploration opportunities:** Tokyo was well modeled in this game, with so many details and places to explore and discover, and the stats system gives huge motivation to keep on leveling up the personality of the main protagonist through the various activities around Tokyo.
- **Lovely characters:** all the characters of the game never felt out of place and each character had their own unique well written characteristics and personality, and it's been always a joy to learn more about each character and their lives and problems.
- **Enjoyable social simulation experience:** the confidence system is one of my most favorite features since Persona 3, each different confidence had a completely different personality and life than the other, getting to know those characters and helping them by solving their different problems of life was so fun and made me learn a lot and relate to their experiences as they can be found in our real lives, I appreciate how the creators put the time in creating separate stories of each of those confidences.
- **Palaces:** the whole idea of the metaverse and Palaces which display the view of the corrupted adult was so deep, each Palace was well designed and presents the mind of its ruler, I had so much fun exploring the different themes and minds of people and learning the different people's views to the world around them.

CONS

- **Easy Bosses:** it's just a personal opinion coming from someone who experienced the true difficulty with the previous Persona bosses of especially Persona 4, Persona 5 bosses just required less skill and strategy compared to the previous Persona games.
- **Very long to beat:** this could be a positive or a negative point to different people, to me it was a big positive but I included this point as it might be a factor for some players to avoid this game but trust me.... Don't! as it deserves its length due to its rich content.
- **Might Not be appealing to those who dislike anime and Japanese stuff:** I still recommend the game, it might be the opening door to those who dislike Japanese stuff, because I consider Persona 5 as one of the greatest representatives to how the Japanese games and animes could be so rich of content, engaging and fun.

SPREADING HUMANITY AND ISLAMIC KNOWLEDGE

I chose Persona 5 specifically because I found it one of the most suitable games for this exact topic, the points I made are best understood by those who finished the game because they are the ones who can see the clear picture and observe the ideas I'm trying to deliver by relating them with the ideas of the game, while writing this review I knew that it is impossible to cover everything about the game so there is no better way than experiencing the game, all these points are mostly based on my personal understanding and the researches I made on the internet and by watching some youtubers videos who expressed their understandings and observations of the game's deep philosophy.

As we have seen in the confidence experience of the game, the main protagonist went through the different problems of different personalities and lives of people which are based on major problems Japanese people are facing in their society such as the suicidal attempts, isolation from society, not finding their place in life, unacceptance of self, and many more.

THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

We notice that the seven deadly sins were presented in each Palace of each target throughout the game, as we saw in the story of Kamoshida and how he used his position as an elite sports teacher to have the freedom to harass the students of Shujin Academy (Lust), how Madarame used his pupil artists to draw paintings for



him and claims to be his own (Vanity), how Kaneshiro views the people as ATM machines as shown in his Palace as this is his perspective of people who are put in dept due to his actions (Gluttony), how the cognitive self of Futaba

had her isolation and trauma due to the false suicidal note made by the agency which made her question her whole life and her mother's opinion on her (Wrath), how Okumura worked his employees with no rest without consideration to their humanities as well as forcing his daughter to marry a man from a high status family without considering her feelings as his daughter (Greed), how Sae Niijima abandoned the sense of true justice due to her will to win the case (Jealousy/Envy), and the people of Tokyo letting the life going with the flow relying on simple solutions as the Phantom Thieves doing all the work (Sloth).

CORRUPTED ADULTS CAUSE MORE CORRUPTED ADULTS!

I noticed in my journey through the Palaces that by the end of each Palace I learn the true reasons which drives each one of those corrupt adults to have those desires, to find out that what created their desire for one of the seven deadly sins is their past experiences with the already corrupted society, take an example of Kaneshiro, after defeating Kaneshiro's Shadow boss, his shadow self expressed Kaneshiro's mind in this conversation:

Kaneshiro: You're right... I'm a poor, ugly... idiot... how am I supposed to live a normal life like this...? It's all because of our society! Weak people can't lead a happy life, no matter what they do! I'm a victim too, you know!? Yeah, none of this is my fault!

Yusuke: The more you talk, the more pathetic you sound.

Kaneshiro: I just wanted a place where I could belong! You got that, don't you!?

Ann: All you did was surround yourself with people you could use, solely for some easy money!

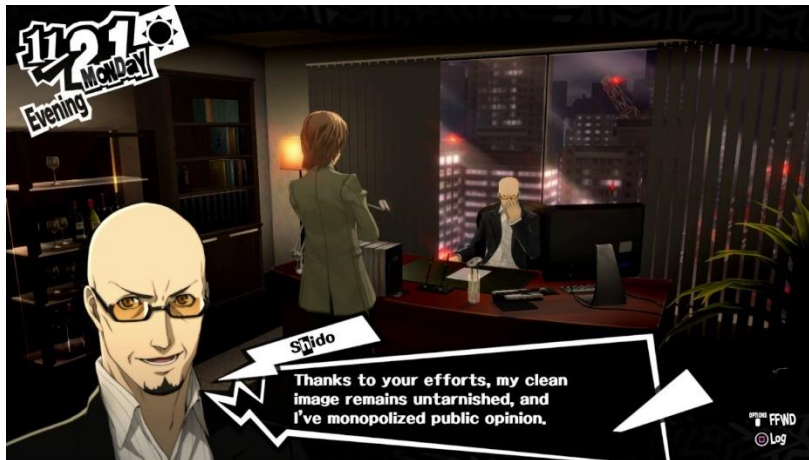
Ryuji: And you think you're the only one who's gotta deal with bein' labeled? Me... and all these other guys(referring to his Phantom Thieves teammates)... We're all fightin' against that!

We notice in this conversation how Kaneshiro's source of desire came from the kind of life he had in the past, I'm not saying that he had the right of forcing people to be in dept for him as he was applying the role of the strong controlling the weak, but we just need to understand the source of problems in order to know how to solve them practically, reforming society is not such an easy task and what the Phantom Thieves tried to accomplish is changing the hearts of those corrupted



adults to turn back into their original pure true selves which cause them to confess after acknowledging their sins after the change of heart.

As presented in the themes of the game, usually normal citizens have close to no power over the rules and policies which are being controlled by the strong who rule the weak, the politician Masayoshi Shido who was obsessed with Pride used illegal methods, ruining the main protagonist's life by giving him a false criminal record,



assassinating his enemies behind the scenes, his obsession with fame and position caused him to do all the illegal means to reach his goals which displays how connections and position could change a person into a heartless one who doesn't care

about others or view them as humans, the story of the protagonist with Shido shows why people fear speaking of those with position and only those with connections and illegal actions rule, this is where the rule of the Phantom thieves comes as they anonymously change the hearts of those targets to make them confess their crimes, but is it really true justice?

THE MESSAGE OF PERSONA 5

The following is written based on the Persona 5 philosophy observation of the youtuber “Alecndxr” in his video (The Messages of Persona 5’s True Ending):

There are two of the prisoners within the depth of Mementos:

- 1- those who are submitting themselves to what they believe is fate and giving themselves up to the inescapable boundaries set upon themselves by Modern society and the world staying safe in a psychological comfort zone, they desire enslavement and an easy ride through life by accepting the way the Modern society goes despite not having the choice to choose or think yet somehow they feel free from pressure and anxiety.
- 2- those extremist (Palace rulers) who use their desire and lust for power to rule over others, What the Phantom thieves were trying to accomplish was eliminating their desires completely until those extremist lose their instincts, we see an almost forced ignorance with an Artificial existence that could lead to a loss of our choice, true freedom and our humanity, yet this is still a type of desire just an extreme passive one, seeking happiness out of a learned helplessness.

Yaldaboath (the imposter of Igor) decided that the world should be reformed through rehabilitation which was the point he’s trying to prove yet this could lead to complete destruction of the current world, the Phantom thieves have the belief that the social reform could be accomplished through the change of hearts and continued to believe that people have the capability to better themselves.

The game had Three endings:

- The good ending: if the protagonist agreed to Yaldaboath’s deal to revert the world into one where crime and distortion is rampant and the Phantom thieves are adored for exposing those crimes but this leaves the society to remain stagnant and indolent which is implied to be the path to decay.
- The bad ending: If Goro Akechi won, this could result to the destruction of the world making the leaders of the Palaces rule and all the hard work made by the Phantom thieves would’ve been for nothing

- The true good ending: if the protagonist refused to yield both idea to reform society then the story will lead to an ending where the protagonist becomes



a trickster and transcend both extremes, one that embraces human nature spirit and primal desire yet one that is fulfilled by those needs enough to have no need to reach an extreme which means it is implied that a seed has planted in the minds of the people and it is up to the adults to lead society into one that is desirable and beneficial.

In the final moments of saying goodbyes to Morgana, Morgana said the following:

"The whole world is a product of cognition... ..not just the Metaverse. It can be freely re-made... The same goes for you, and everyone else. Soon a new world will come. One where mankind isn't held captive. The world will shine brightly as long as you hold hope in your hearts. Remember... There's no such thing as the "real" world. What each person sees and feels-- Those are what shape reality. This is what gives the world infinite potential. Even if you feel that only darkness lies ahead... As long as you hold hands together... See it through as one... ..the world will never end! The world exists within all of you...!"

—Morgana, Persona 5



His words suggests that the world is what we see and holds the view that the world is entirely mentally constructed and true reality is not a product of physical interactions, while most of the fans on the internet were crying because of Morgana's Goodbyes as a character, I

was crying because of how effective and deep Morgana's words were, as it kept me thinking of how our world or reality is going and how we can still improve ourselves, as Ryuji said: "If you wanna change the world, all you've got to do is just look at it differently".



when the Phantom Thieves changed the heart of Shido, people still didn't fully accept the situation as if nothing will really satisfy everybody, this is the Sunnah of life and that's how Allah SWT created the nature of human, no matter how much evil you see in this world, that doesn't really mean every single person is bad in this world and there is always room for improvement as Morgana said "Even if you feel that only darkness lies ahead... As long as you hold hands together... See it through as one... ...the world will never end! The world exists within all of you...!" and Muhammad PBUH said "The relationship of the believer with another believer is like (the bricks of) a building, each strengthens the other" interlacing the fingers of both his hands. [Al-Bukhari and Muslim], we might never be the perfect humans yet we have the capability to change into better persons InShaAllah.

CONFIDENCES



The main Protagonist made such a good example of a person who opens bond with various people and solving their life problems, it requires a smart and understanding person to

understand those different minds and help each and everyone of them based on their personality and troubles, this idea can be manipulated by making the Protagonist spread the Islamic teaching through his treatment to those confidences, making a good example of a good Muslim could result to many people agreeing with your religion and ideals as the confidences were liking the main protagonist for his care and attributes.

In the story of the confidence of the fortune teller Chihaya Mifune, she predicted bad luck to some of her customers, until the main protagonist opened a bond with her and proved her wrong using his ability as a Phantom Thief to change hearts to help those customers in their personal problems which made falsified their told bad fortune, during the last meeting of Chihaya's confidence, she reaches the conclusion that reading the fortune of people from the cards doesn't really decide their future and fate can't simply be manipulated or decided by any human, destiny is written and decided by Allah SWT.