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# [Overview Assessment]

This is a self-valuation of what Project;Hypatios’ notable accomplishments and weaknesses. This will may have biases from developer’s perspective but in attempting to be neutral (like Timekeepers), this is the best try to judge the game neutrally from developer’s perspective:

* Hypatios strengths (from dev’s perspective):
  + **Gameplay Mechanics:** while the FPS combat not the best, it has significant mechanics that impacts the player’s gameplay (perk upgrade). The perk system, kThanid Serum, alcohols, foods + consumables, object interactions, mini-games, status effect/ailments/diseases, Sindom stock market and buyable upgrades were pretty good.
  + **Weapons:** We think the weapons is good and varied enough. We provide many weapons and unique ones like Smart Pistol and Sentry PDA for people who cannot shoot.
  + **Assets and Cluttering:** Almost all of the 3d models were created from scratch while the textures were mostly from external sources. The levels were cluttered pretty well.
  + **Graphics and Visuals:** Visually, we think the game looks pretty good for an indie game.
  + **Philosophy & Timekeeper Testaments:** The philosophical messages were deliberately included and including its potentially controversial ones. It may contain errors and it is not perfect but we reckon it is mandatory to include because at the time this game was made, the world was spiraling into period of confusion where religions, artificial intelligence, LGBT, progressivism, nationalism and many others all clashed together in this current epoch. Its philosophical messages were inspired from Nietzsche, Hegel, Marx, post-Structuralism and many others.
* Neutral:
  + **Gameplay Loop:** We think not all people would like the repetitiveness nature of Hypatios.
  + **Game Design:** Hypatios game design will invoke mixed reaction.
  + **Kaiser, Sixtusian Empire and Timekeepers:** It is a pre-existing worldbuilding from the main developer’s OC. The worldbuilding was all intentional as a parallel perspective on the human’s history and a revolt against the increasingly ‘generic-ness’ of today’s art work. However, it was constrained by its limited development resources and may contains errors.
* Hypatios weaknesses:
  + **Main Story:** It was shit and we know it. Cutscenes were awkward and the story is an after-thought, not in the priority list at all. Its lore dumping by Emperor and Timekeeper Testaments made it worse. Without voice acting, all characters in helmet & expressions were non-existence: it was basically doomed from the start and we have already predicted it. In addition, rogue-like were a challenging genre to make story.
  + **Dialogues:** It is predicted, player would skip many of the game’s cutscenes and dialogues especially lack of voice acting, uninteresting character designs.
  + **Chamber 3:** It has atrocious layout and confusing.

What we predicted in the reviews (before the game’s release):

* Player will complain the physics bugs primarily caused by dashing.
* The ambiguity of the story and its bad storytelling.
* Chamber 3 sucks.
* Praises maybe directed at the atmosphere, visuals, side-activities, content and gameplay?
* Criticism mostly directed at its lackluster storytelling and game design.

# [Development Problems]

The development of **Project;Hypatios** is a train wreck. It was intended to be only as a game made only 4 months for a competition but it was then decided to be commercial game thus expanding the scope of the game and the development of around 26 months. It was a ‘team-made’ game however it was always primarily made by the main developer before ended up a totally solo project which then the team fell apart.

The main developer had a major skill gap with the rest of team and then the main dev had also ego and pride to insert its own story which ruined the project and sanity of its team members. In addition, the team were mostly focusing on college which cannot forced into developing an uncertain game project.

The main dev had created over 20 video games for 10 years (9 years in Unity) but had never made any money of it. Hypatios is a desperate attempt by the main developer to commercialize Hypatios and sell the game.

# [Main Dev Problems]

The main dev had claimed that it has aggressively pursued game development since childhood that it nearly destroyed his life, it claims the following:

* Dreams and lies of successful indie game development that earned a lot of money. The main dev was initially sparked from the indie game frenzy of the mid-2010s:
  + Minecraft, Undertale, Stardew Valley, Flappy Bird, Unturned.
  + Where many solo indie developers became highly successful. Over time however, it became clear it was survivor bias and the main dev was naïve to think a successful game was easy.
* An isolation from social life. It was the combination of lacking confidence in one’s self and doctrine of not socializing people too much until became a successful person or successful indie developer.
* In high-school, the developer claimed it was aggressively pursuing game development and ruined its grades.
* The main dev claimed it went to college twice and quitted twice because of its grades which is again, ruined by its aggressive pursuing being a successful solo developer. Mistakes repeated.
* For the longest time, the developer isolated itself greatly in its home for its obsession for being a successful game developer. By the time, it realizes, it was socially lagging behind.

The main dev started game dev in 2014 (Unity) which there was absolutely lack of support, and ecosystem for game development in Indonesia during the 2010s. The government cannot simply be blamed as it has a different ‘spirit of the nation’ and Indonesia is simply not geared towards innovative, creative, research-based industry like game developers. Indonesia is a country where it was dictated by the developed countries from its consumers goods and its entertainment, it is a consumerist country lacking in domestic production.

It was living at the right time for indie dev but at the wrong place (developing country).

## The Two Phases

The main developer had two major phases: 2014-2019 and 2019-2023.

* **First Phase** (2014-2019), the dev primarily focuses on making casual games, focused on the ‘big bucks’ and only the success. Low poly games and ‘cheap shitty games’ were popular in this era.
* **Second Phase** (2019-2023), the dev primarily focuses on combining his lore and primarily focus on creating great game. This is happening in conjunction with COVID pandemic which the dev foolishly used the opportunity to quit college and focuses on only making video games. This is the current phase which is Hypatios part of Second Phase.

The obsession of creating casual games with cheap, low poly games had detrimental effect, as the developer only focuses on gameplay and not learning fundamentals.

This stagnated the dev’s skills and the big opportunity cost is not learning 3d modelling and programming properly. Many years and time wasted creating games by self-learning, no mentors or reckless decisions. It was the dev’s stubbornness and naiveness thinking it could create a successful indie game.

The dreams and lies of indie game developers of the 2010s has significantly ruined the dev’s life, it claimed.

## Finale Game

The main developer had intended **Project;Hypatios** as its final game. Mentally drained, never made any money, aggressive competition in the indie game market and college failures, the main developer had intended a complete stop from game development or at least, a long break from it.

Quitting game dev after Hypatios especially after the breakdown of the team and the dev’s sanity is truly the betterment for all.

For the dev, game development is nothing but bad memories and wasted time. The development was not all in pain and has its “*little achievements*” but in the grand picture: a bleak future, knowing the game most likely fails. However, the skills that comes with it are all invaluable experiences.

But still, the aggressive pursue of wanting creating a commercial game and becoming a successful solo developer that totally fucks up the dev:

* A lot of wasted time.
* Total destruction of the dev’s social life and social skill.
* Damaged, irreparable relationships with friends.

All aspects of the main dev’s creation like Sixtusian Empire, Timekeeper and Kaiser was unleashed in this game because there will be slim opportunity to express its creations in the future hence it could only be done in this game: **Hypatios**.

It was for the longest time, the wait to unleash the ‘beast’ in the best way possible and all of the dev’s skills under one game for its repressed feelings & its failures in life were accumulated under this game from its dialogues, book lore and writing including this **candid assessment**.

# [Bad Direction]

The game had plans for its story but it was constantly changing and not prioritized. Lacking in skills and resources, the story was simply a desperate attempt to ‘finish the game’ and eliminate scope creeping. It defines how long the game is and how many levels should be in the game.

After seeing how the cutscenes were poorly executed and how bad the story was conveyed, we knew then narratively, it will be a disaster. With this in mind, the only good measure is to add ‘philosophy’ and main dev’s OC through the books and its conversation.

It was a desperate attempt to fix the narrative and give meaning to the game. With it, most of narrative seemed like a duct tape fix, lacking any storyboard to execute the storyline.

Due to indecisiveness and a constant change of the game’s direction, the game was never given a proper marketing and main dev had never really communicate with the team because the project was very directionless, unclear. By the time the game was put on Steam, Hypatios team was a totally dysfunctional team.

The development of the game itself has significantly sapped many manhour and resources; an already stretched too thin resources basically the marketing is obviously going to fail. Plans exists for the marketing but it was clear inexperience and being students attempting to market will be a bad decision. However, this may explicitly read as an ‘excuse’ as other indie solo developer has achieved much greater success with lesser quality product. It is the luck that determines a game’s success.

It would make sense that Western’ indie games will prevail first while the non-Western indie games must be pushed away. It is a game theory, a contest for the spotlight. It was a system that was rigged from the beginning.

An unexpected success was slim, and even if it is, it will not be near its release, it’s probably at least half of a year after its release.

# [To Let it Fail]

At the point of Hypatios’ release, no matter if the game fails or success, the dev, Immortality, declared to quit game development after stuck in perpetual failure for 10 years. It has exhausted every possible method to make a good solo game, hence **emancipation**, know it can do nothing to make any games anymore.

Failure at this stage, has become ‘comfort agony’. Failure is the ‘default stage’ for the dev.

Success of Hypatios is only like a side-reward at this point. It was an utter submission to failure.

It was like a ‘time loop’ where ‘failure’ is almost seems eternal in the 10 years of game development. An eternal stage of failure. And when a person accepted that he is inferior and a failure, it will accept as it is like a slave, conforming to the system. It accepts its failure and its inferiority.

## Maybe Constant Failure is Alright

There is a little paradox where sometimes the little rewards might instead thrust people into worse version of themselves. A person might not improve itself if one thinks itself successful. Only by constant failure and accepting inferiority does a person dives itself, self-reflection and correct its mistakes.

There was a big ego, stubbornness and very biased of the main dev that it can become successful once it made a casual game. Unknowingly, there was some kind ‘invisible hand’, luck and ‘some greater force’ (publisher, powerful backing or youtuber) that somewhat enabled its success. When a person gets complacent by its success, it will refuse to learn new things and stuck with whatever. Failure will cause a person to be the **greatest version of one’s self**.

## Roguelite of Hypatios

There were several major reasons why Hypatios is roguelite:

* It is a ‘safe’ genre for indie developers.
* Time loop meant the assets and levels will be reused. Since the levels will be the same, this would significantly cut the playtesting.
* Updating the game was simple. Since the game was designed to lasts 5-30 minutes per run meant the levels will be revisited constantly. A direct contrast to linear games where once the game finished, the player may no longer replay the game.
* Changes in the game’s level during an update could be explained in the lore as ‘Timekeeper Disturbance’ which some things change upon Aldrich’s death.

# [A ‘Constructed Narrative’]

It was clear this is intended as a ‘stupid’ story of like a successful person’ background of: “Working as a gas station service then became CEO”. It was clear this is some kind of desperate narrative or marketing to push the product. Or for some pathetic story for one’s sorry ass. Either people take it as ‘cheap story’ for sensationalism, ‘constructed narrative’ or not:

This a genuine of the true story of recklessly pursuing straight path towards a goal: be a successful solo developer and ignoring everything else in the path, hence destroying the potentiality one’s self.

A cautionary tale to not chasing things in a straight path.

## Indie Development Scene

With the saturation of indie game market, not all game will prevail:

* The ratio of developers is increasing compared to its players meaning new innovative games will die and with such saturation, only the ‘familiar’ games will be played.
* Forcing a game marketing into people’s throats will be inorganic growth and unnatural. A game is best when it is organic growth/mouth-to-mouth.
* If many have tried and didn’t like it, then it is ‘letting it die’, accepting the game is garbage.

With the prospect regarding Indonesian’ game development industry trajectory: it will be bright, very bright. The cost to develop a game in Indonesia will be at least: x3 times cheaper than Japan, South Korea or Europe; and many times, cheaper than the US.

What the main dev predicts is that, many game developer studios will die in the West and only the strongest one/niche/the best of the best survive, as it become totally unsustainable and hyper-competitive. Only game publishers are the only sustainable business in the game dev industry, as the money and finance world were dictated by the West. Those publishers will ‘outsource’ or ‘invest’ in third-world countries and dictate/assess the product to make. Conversely, the consumers will be most profitable if catered to the West audience, as again, the Western gamers has the money to buy games easily.

In the other hand, China will be the greatest threat as Chinese game dev scene is raising absolutely rapidly, its weak currency enabled cheap development and they will inevitable gain significant portion of the global market. The only way to avoid crossing path with the Chinese is to make a game that has some narrative, a branding/franchise to distinguish itself. Relying only on gameplay/graphics without narrative or being branded as a ‘generic game’ will spell doom to Indonesian game developer.

According to the dev, the best way to thrive in the difficult, narrow passage is the following:

* An ‘artistic game’ with unique and distinct narrative that cannot be done by bigger game studios or ‘too risky’.
* Being indie or small, make risky, niche game is an absolute to survive. Any ideas that sound ‘good’ and ‘safe’ is more than likely already taken by game studios. No one would dare to criticize a ‘small’ indie developer. Making offensive things is good.
* China and other countries are mostly likely unable to make an ‘artistic’ game with unique narrative that is potentially political or an attack to some identity. We could use this as our advantage if we can ‘packaging’ it nicely.
* Standing out from the masses. Being different while able to ‘sympathize’ and ‘understandable’ by many is the core of successful ‘art’ game.

## Timekeeper Testaments

The Timekeeper Testaments is an incomplete book that is far from finish. It is planned to be continued later.

# [Madness of the Current Epoch]

## Madness of the Indie Scene

One of the great madness of the indie scene is that the degeneracy of some indie developers of pursuing shit graphics. The main goal of creating games with bad graphics stemmed of ‘getting rich quick’. Most were in the mindset of being able to make games with low effort while getting success and rich quick. This is clear survivorship bias.

It is not the ‘retro’ graphics is the problem but rather, the reaction of people and its frenzy. Those who saw ‘low-effort’ games evoke the reaction of ‘I can make game like this’ only for it to fail. Greatly overestimating one’s ability. As the game increasingly saturated with retro graphics, it will then become stale as it is only a trend. With it, the market will mature and only the popular ones will triumph. The rest will die as the competition gets fiercer.

There is a game theory, where one will triumph the other.

The low poly, PS1, N64, pixel art is all pursued by indie developers with no clear idea other than low effort and self-imposing limitations. The stupid self-imposing limitations locked one’s potentiality to create better games hence they only make pixel arts or low poly pathetic models.

The famous indie games on the market are invoking the ‘self-deprecating’ behavior, high transparency and revolution against the capitalists who had exploited people. It is absolutely funny how the pro-capitalist rhetoric in the 90s/2000s becomes increasingly turns to negative in this decade which explained the ‘self-deprecating’ and pro-indie behavior in the video game industry:

* The NES, SNES, PS1 and PS2 graphics were to evoke the nostalgia of the masses who were estranged by the current era, they lived in a world they no longer know about.
* With retro games existed for a generation and what works has been proven, it meant indie developers only need to cheat, analyze and do ‘quality of life’ improvements.

In Indonesia there had been an urge of UMKM (small-micro scale enterprises) or small indie studios. However, the fetishism of small indie studios is absolutely ridiculously unsustainable. The madness fetishism of Western indie developers who wants to solo dev is extremely skewed with survivor bias. 10,000 small size indie studio will inevitably use some kind of similar strategy; a common pattern. This increased its competition and the wiggle room will be very tight. It is similar to the basic theory of division of labor. The more ‘indie’ you are, the more you will be a generalist, stretching too thin across marketing, programming, art and becoming the best of none. Only by establishing an ecosystem of a medium-sized game studio (50-100 people) which has 8-10 teams develop its own game (essentially ‘indie-dev’ within a company), could it possibly sustain and establish a good game development environment: sharing resources, knowledge, skills and manpower; some specialist who were already

## Madness of Today

The unresolved ideological conflict of religions, progressivism, LGBT, political ideology and countries are issues that will explode in the future if left untreated. It is the madness of many ideologies and movements in the world that is sometimes has its elements opposite of each other or contradict others. Timekeeper Testaments and the lore attempts to address its problems by not only analyze it but by dumping the humanity’s history to the trash by introducing a parallel history with the existence of aliens/extraterrestrial race and have the Sixtusian Empire rewrote humanity’s history like how European overrides the history of the natives and other cultures in a somewhat ‘cultural genocide’. The game’s heavy lore and it takes a parallel world of the Sixtusian Empire so we can observe our history in the least bias perspective.

When religion institutions and the Age of Enlightenment philosophies co-exist in the same space, it is from the main dev’ perspective: an utter madness. Obsolete ideologies dated from the medieval somewhat still prevalent even with the existence of continental philosophy. It is according to the dev: “Madness of our Epoch”.

## Madness of the Lore

Because we are humans, the Sixtusian Empire’s arrival on Earth is intended as a story instrument to tell the story from a human (our) perspective of the world hence why there is humans on the lore. The Sixtusian Empire as an external threat is the only way for humans of different values and cultures to unite under one banner. It is a grand narrative ‘against the external threats’ or ‘the other’, with the Sixtusian Empire’s colonization of Earth as the easy point for humans like us to understand the lore of Hypatios.

The Timekeepers is the result of the game’s roguelite genre. It is one who has the ability to relive the same moments over and over after dying: a time loop. The Machine of Madness is a plot device, a ‘macguffin’, the ‘artifact of the universe’ intended to give the Kaiser absolute control of time and give the story of ‘**great** **man theory’** that changes the state of the galaxy within a short timeframe. The lore: Elistar Empire, United Dionary Empire and Alpha Empire is main power of the galaxy for around several millennia. The Kaiser, Sixtusian Empire and Machine of Madness was intended to mark a ‘total overhaul’ of the galactic power balance. Kaiser being the Timekeeper with powerful background, possess Machine of Madness and being in the right place and time are ingredients basically all mixed up together into one powerful destructive force that screw up the galaxy.

The game references Kaiser and Machine of Madness quite a lot because the consequence is clear: if one could rewind time (only Timekeepers can experience time vortex) then everything is under one’s control and it will obtain forbidden knowledge from the future and bring it to the past to screw up the past.

In the ‘great man theory’ usually a great man is only possible because it is the product of its time. Kaiser being a Timekeeper and the Machine of Madness intended to eliminate the historical factor as much as possible and totally elevated the Kaiser as single-handedly changed the course of fate of the galaxy without the help of the non-Timekeepers.

Due to resources constraint and our perception of historical period & time has already been contaminated with *Georgian* calendar, the year of like 2044 (Kaiser’s fall) is the universal date similar to human’s date because if uses Sixtusian’ calendar, it will fuck up the worldbuilding and made it unnecessarily complicated.

The lore of Hypatios can be ridiculous: The Elven and Titan (Elder Race) seems idiotic and especially their intervention of the lesser race (humans, Dionarian, Safarian) but these two races are intended as a story instrument of how the Kaiser could easily take over the galaxy: by simply stealing its knowledge and technology.

Things exists due to as a storytelling device and its somewhat believability:

* **It is set in space & sci-fi modern setting, where the races are living in each their own planets**. This could easily a fantasy world which was the very first intention of the lore but the problem is that fantasy setting meant magics: which will unnecessarily complexify the worldbuilding and the primary reason is that there is big urge to add our/human history into the lore or else people could not relate to the world.
* **High complexity lore.** It was complex because it was the main dev’s life long constructing on its lore and world because establishing a parallel world in the dev’s brain is mandatory to maintain sanity in the world where nothing makes sense and create ‘delusions’ to prevent fall to the materialist world/animalistic instincts. The dev’s claimed when one time it abandoned the lore for some time, it ended up following its short-term instincts and incapable of doing any long-term strategy.