

= Operation Flavius =

Operation Flavius (also referred to as the " Gibraltar killings ") was a controversial military operation in which three members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) were shot dead by the British Special Air Service (SAS) in Gibraltar on 6 March 1988 . The three ? Seán Savage , Daniel McCann , and Mairéad Farrell ? were believed to be mounting a bombing attack on British military personnel in Gibraltar . SAS soldiers challenged them in the forecourt of a petrol station , then opened fire , killing them . All three were found to be unarmed , and no bomb was discovered in Savage 's car , leading to accusations that the British government had conspired to murder them . However keys found on Farrel matched a hire car later found in Marbella (80km away) which was found to contain 64 kg of Semtex and detonators . An inquest in Gibraltar ruled that the SAS had acted lawfully , while the European Court of Human Rights held that , although there had been no conspiracy , the planning and control of the operation was so flawed as to make the use of lethal force almost inevitable . The deaths were the first in a chain of violent events in a fourteen @-@ day period ; they were followed by the Milltown Cemetery attack and the corporals killings in Belfast .

From late 1987 , the British authorities were aware that the IRA was planning to detonate a bomb at the changing of the guard ceremony outside the governor 's residence in the British Dependent Territory of Gibraltar . When Savage , McCann and Farrell ? known IRA members ? travelled to Spain in preparation for the attack , they were tracked at the request of the British government . On the day of the shootings , Savage was seen parking a white Renault in the car park used as the assembly area for the parade ; McCann and Farrell were seen crossing the border shortly afterwards .

After a military bomb @-@ disposal officer reported that Savage 's car should be treated as a suspected bomb , the police handed over control of the operation to the SAS . As soldiers were moving into position to intercept the trio , Savage split from McCann and Farrell and began running south . Two soldiers pursued Savage while two approached McCann and Farrell ; as they did so , the pair were said to make threatening movements , as a result of which the soldiers opened fire , shooting them multiple times . As soldiers caught up with Savage , he was alleged to have turned around to face them while reaching into his jacket ; he was also shot multiple times . All three were subsequently found to be unarmed , and Savage 's car was found to contain no explosives ; enquiries resulting from keys found on Farrell led authorities to a second car , containing a large quantity of explosives , in a car park in Spain . Almost two months after the shootings , the documentary Death on the Rock was broadcast on British television . Using reconstructions and eyewitness accounts , it presented the possibility that the three IRA members had been unlawfully killed . The documentary proved extremely controversial ; several British newspapers described it as " trial by television " .

The inquest into the deaths began in September 1988 . It heard from British and Gibraltar authorities that the IRA team had been tracked to Málaga Airport , where they were lost by the Spanish police , and that the three did not re @-@ emerge until Savage was sighted parking his car in Gibraltar . The soldiers each testified that they had opened fire in the belief that the suspected bombers were reaching for weapons or a remote detonator . Among the civilians who gave evidence were the eyewitnesses discovered by " Death on the Rock " , who gave accounts of seeing the three shot without warning , with their hands up , or while they were on the ground . Kenneth Asquez , who told the documentary that he had seen a soldier fire at Savage repeatedly while the latter was on the ground , retracted his statement at the inquest , claiming that he had been pressured into giving it . On 30 September , the inquest jury returned a verdict of " lawful killing " . Dissatisfied , the families took the case to the European Court of Human Rights . Delivering its judgement in 1995 , the court found that the operation had been in violation of Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights as the authorities ' failure to arrest the suspects at the border , combined with the information given to the soldiers , rendered the use of lethal force almost inevitable . The decision is cited as a landmark case in the use of force by the state .

= = Background = =

The Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) , now inactive , is a paramilitary organisation which aimed to establish a united Ireland and end the British administration of Northern Ireland through the use of force . The organisation was the result of a 1969 split within the previous Irish Republican Army , also known as " the IRA " (the other resulting group , known as the Official IRA , ceased military activity during the 1970s) . During its campaign , the IRA killed members of the armed forces , police , judiciary and prison service , including off @-@ duty and retired members , and bombed businesses and military targets in both Northern Ireland and England , with the aim of making Northern Ireland ungovernable . Daniel McCann , Seán Savage , and Mairéad Farrell were , according to journalist Brendan O 'Brien , " three of the IRA 's most senior activists " . Savage was an explosives expert and McCann was " a high @-@ ranking intelligence operative " ; both McCann and Farrell had previously served prison sentences for offences relating to explosives .

The Special Air Service (formally 22 Special Air Service Regiment , or 22 SAS) is a regiment of the British Army and part of the United Kingdom 's special forces . The SAS was sporadically assigned to operations in Northern Ireland in the early stages of the British Army 's deployment in the province , during which they were confined to South Armagh . The first large @-@ scale deployment of SAS soldiers in the Troubles was in 1976 , when the regiment 's D Squadron was committed . The SAS soon began to specialise in covert , intelligence @-@ based operations against the IRA , using more aggressive tactics than regular army and police units operating in Northern Ireland .

= = Build @-@ up = =

From late 1987 , the British authorities were aware that the IRA was planning an attack in Gibraltar and launched Operation Flavius . The intelligence appeared to be confirmed in November 1987 , when several known IRA members were detected travelling from Belfast to Spain under false identities . MI5 ? the British Security Service ? and the Spanish authorities became aware that an IRA active service unit was operating from the Costa del Sol and the members of the unit were placed under surveillance . After a known IRA member was sighted at the changing of the guard ceremony at " the Convent " (the governor 's residence) in Gibraltar , the British and Gibraltar authorities began to suspect that the IRA was planning to attack the British soldiers with a car bomb as they assembled for the ceremony in a nearby car park . In an attempt to confirm the IRA 's intended target , the government of Gibraltar suspended the ceremony in December 1987 , citing a need to repaint the guardhouse . They believed their suspicions were confirmed when the IRA member re @-@ appeared at the ceremony when it resumed in February 1988 , and the Gibraltar authorities requested special assistance from the British government .

In the weeks after the resumption of the changing of the guard ceremony , the three IRA members who were to carry out the attack ? Seán Savage , Daniel McCann , and Mairéad Farrell ? travelled to Málaga (90 miles [140 kilometres] along the coast from Gibraltar) , where they each rented a car . Their activities were monitored and by early March , the British authorities were convinced that an IRA attack was imminent ; a special projects team from the SAS was despatched to the territory , apparently with the personal approval of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher . Before the operation , the SAS practised arrest techniques , while the Gibraltar authorities searched for a suitable place to hold the would @-@ be bombers after their arrest . The plan was that the SAS would assist the Gibraltar Police in arresting the IRA members ? identified by MI5 officers who had been in Gibraltar for several weeks ? if they were seen parking a car in Gibraltar and then attempting to leave the territory .

= = Events of 6 March = =

According to the official account of the operation , Savage entered Gibraltar undetected in a white Renault 5 at 12 : 45 (CET ; UTC + 1) on 6 March 1988 . An MI5 officer recognised him and he was followed , but he was not positively identified for almost an hour and a half , during which time he

parked the vehicle in the car park used as the assembly area for the changing of the guard . At 14 : 30 , McCann and Farrell were observed crossing the frontier from Spain and were also followed . They met Savage in the car park at around 14 : 50 and a few minutes later the three began walking through the town . After the three left the car park , " Soldier G " , a bomb @-@ disposal officer , was ordered to examine Savage 's car ; he returned after a few minutes and reported that the vehicle should be treated as a suspect car bomb . This soldier 's suspicion was conveyed as certainty to Soldiers " A " , " B " , " C " , and " D " , who were ordered into positions to intercept Savage , McCann , and Farrell as they walked north towards the Spanish border . " Soldier G " ' s information convinced Gibraltar Police Commissioner Joseph Canepa , who was controlling the operation , to order the arrest of the three suspects . To that end , he signed over control of the operation to " Soldier F " , the senior SAS officer , at 15 : 40 . Two minutes after receiving control , " Soldier F " ordered Soldiers " A " , " B " , " C " , and " D " to apprehend the IRA operatives , by which time they were walking north on Winston Churchill Avenue towards the airport and the border . As the soldiers approached , the suspects appeared to realise that they were being followed . Savage split from the group and began heading south , brushing against " Soldier A " as he did so ; " A " and " B " decided to continue approaching McCann and Farrell , leaving Savage to Soldiers " C " and " D " .

At the same time as the police handed control over to the SAS , they began making arrangements for the IRA operatives once they were in custody , including finding a police vehicle in which to transport the prisoners . A patrol car containing Inspector Luis Revagliatte and three other uniformed officers , apparently on routine patrol and with no knowledge of Operation Flavius , was ordered to return to police headquarters as a matter of urgency . The police car was stuck in heavy traffic travelling north on Smith Dorrien Avenue , close to the roundabout where it meets Winston Churchill Avenue . The official account states that at this point , Revagliatte 's driver activated the siren on the police car in order to expedite the journey back to headquarters , intending to approach the roundabout from the wrong side of the road and turn the vehicle around . The siren apparently startled McCann and Farrell , just as Soldiers " A " and " B " were about to challenge them , outside the Shell petrol station on Winston Churchill Avenue . " Soldier A " stated at the inquest that Farrell looked back at him and appeared to realise who " A " was ; " A " testified that he was drawing his pistol and intended to shout a challenge to her , but " events overtook the warning " : that McCann 's right arm " moved aggressively across the front of his body " , leading " A " to believe that McCann was reaching for a remote detonator . " A " shot McCann once in the back ; " A " went on to tell the inquest that he believed Farrell then reached for her handbag , and that he believed Farrell may also have been reaching for a remote detonator . " A " also shot Farrell once in the back , before returning to McCann ? he shot McCann a further three times (once in the body and twice in the head) . " Soldier B " testified that he reached similar conclusions to " A " , and shot Farrell twice , then McCann once or twice , then returned to Farrell , shooting her a further three times . Soldiers " C " and " D " testified at the inquest that they were moving to apprehend Savage , who was by now 300 feet (91 metres) south of the petrol station , as gunfire began behind them . " Soldier C " testified that Savage turned around while simultaneously reaching towards his jacket pocket at the same time as " C " shouted " Stop ! " ; " C " stated that he believed Savage was reaching for a remote detonator , at which point he opened fire . " Soldier C " shot Savage six times , while " Soldier D " fired nine times . All three IRA members died . One of the soldiers ' bullets , believed to have passed through Farrell , grazed a passer @-@ by .

Immediately after the shootings , the soldiers donned berets to identify themselves . Gibraltar Police officers , including Inspector Revagliatte and his men , began to arrive at the scene almost immediately . At 16 : 05 , only 25 minutes after assuming control , the SAS commander handed control of the operation back to the Gibraltar Police in a document stating :

A military assault force completed the military option in respect of the terrorist ASU in Gibraltar and returns control to the civil power .

Shortly after the shootings , soldiers and police officers evacuated buildings in the vicinity of the Convent , while bomb @-@ disposal experts got to work ; four hours later , the authorities announced that a car bomb had been defused , after which Savage 's white Renault was towed from

the car park by an army truck . The SAS personnel , meanwhile , left Gibraltar on a Royal Air Force aircraft .

When the bodies were searched , a set of car keys was found on Farrell . Spanish and British authorities conducted enquiries to trace the vehicle , which ? two days after the shootings ? led them to a red Ford Fiesta in a car park in Marbella (50 miles [80 kilometres] from Gibraltar) . The car contained a large quantity of Semtex surrounded by 200 rounds of ammunition , along with four detonators and two timers .

= = Reaction = =

Within minutes of the military operation ending , the British Ministry of Defence (MoD) issued a press release , stating that " a suspected car bomb has been found in Gibraltar , and three suspects have been shot dead by the civilian police " . That evening , both the BBC and the ITN (Independent Television News) reported that the IRA team had been involved in a " shootout " with the authorities . The following morning , BBC Radio 4 reported that the alleged bomb was " packed with bits of metal and shrapnel " , and later carried a statement from Ian Stewart , Minister of State for the Armed Forces , that " military personnel were involved . A car bomb was found , which has been defused " . Each of the eleven British daily newspapers reported the alleged finding of the car bomb , of which eight quoted its size as 500 pounds (230 kilograms) . The IRA issued a statement later on 7 March to the effect that McCann , Savage , and Farrell were " on active service " in Gibraltar and had " access to and control over 140 pounds (64 kg) " of Semtex .

According to one case study of the killings , the events " provide an opportunity to examine the ideological functioning of the news media within [the Troubles] " . The British broadsheet newspapers all exhibited what the authors called " ideological closure " by marginalising the IRA and extolling the SAS . Each of the broadsheets focused , for example , on the alleged bomb and the potential devastation it could have caused without questioning the government 's version of events .

At 15 : 30 (GMT) on 7 March , the foreign secretary , Sir Geoffrey Howe , made a statement to the House of Commons :

Shortly before 1 : 00pm yesterday , afternoon [Savage] brought a white Renault car into Gibraltar and was seen to park it in the area where the guard mounting ceremony assembles . Before leaving the car , he was seen to spend some time making adjustments in the vehicle

An hour and a half later , [McCann and Farrell] were seen to enter Gibraltar on foot and shortly before 3 : 00pm , joined [Savage] in the town . Their presence and actions near the parked Renault car gave rise to strong suspicions that it contained a bomb , which appeared to be corroborated by a rapid technical examination of the car .

About 3 : 30pm , all three left the scene and started to walk back towards the border . On their way to the border , they were challenged by the security forces . When challenged , they made movements which led the military personnel , operating in support of the Gibraltar Police , to conclude that their own lives and the lives of others were under threat . In light of this response , they [the IRA members] were shot . Those killed were subsequently found not to have been carrying arms .

The parked Renault car was subsequently dealt with by a military bomb @-@ disposal team . It has now been established that it did not contain an explosive device .

Press coverage in the following days , after Howe 's statement that no bomb had been found , continued to focus on the act planned by the IRA ; several newspapers reported a search for a fourth member of the team . Reports of the discovery of the bomb in Marbella appeared to vindicate the government 's version of events and justify the killings . Several MPs made statements critical of the operation , while a group of Labour MPs tabled a condemnatory motion in the House of Commons .

= = Aftermath = =

The IRA notified the McCann , Savage , and Farrell families of the deaths on the evening of 6

March . In Belfast , Joe Austin , a senior local member of Sinn Féin , was assigned the task of recovering the bodies for burial . On 9 March , he and Terence Farrell (one of Mairéad Farrell 's brothers) travelled to Gibraltar to identify the bodies . Austin negotiated a charter aircraft to collect the corpses from Gibraltar and fly them to Ireland on 14 March . Two thousand people waited to meet the coffins in Dublin , which were then driven north to Belfast . Northern Irish authorities flooded the neighbourhoods where McCann , Farrell and Savage had lived with soldiers and police to try to prevent public displays of sympathy for the dead . Later that evening , a local IRA member , Kevin McCracken , was shot and allegedly then beaten to death by a group of soldiers he had been attempting to shoot at . At the border , the authorities met the procession with a large number of police and military vehicles , and insisted on intervals between the hearses , causing tensions between the police and the members of the procession and leading to accusations that the police rammed Savage 's hearse .

The animosity between the mourners and the police continued until the procession split to allow the hearses to travel to the respective family homes , and then on to Milltown cemetery . The Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) agreed to maintain a minimal presence at the funeral in exchange for guarantees from the families that there would be no salute by masked gunmen . This agreement was leaked to Michael Stone . During the funeral , Stone , who described himself as a " freelance Loyalist paramilitary " , threw several hand grenades into the congregation , before firing an automatic pistol at the gathered mourners , injuring 60 people . After initial confusion , several of the mourners began to pursue Stone , throwing rocks and shouting abuse . Stone fired on his pursuers , hitting and killing three . He was eventually captured by members of the crowd , who had chased him onto a road , and beaten him with rocks and makeshift weapons until the RUC arrived to extract him and arrest him .

The funeral of Caoimhín Mac Brádaigh (né Kevin Brady) , the third and last of the Milltown attack victims to be buried , was scheduled for 19 March . As his cortège proceeded along Andersontown Road , a car being driven by two British Army corporals , David Howes and Derek Wood , entered the street and sped past two teams of stewards , who were attempting to direct traffic out of the procession 's path . As the corporals continued along Andersontown Road , they came across the cortège , and mounted the footpath to avoid colliding with it . They continued until blocked by parked cars , at which point they attempted to reverse , but were blocked by vehicles from the cortège and a hostile crowd surrounded their vehicle .

As members of the crowd began to break into the vehicle , some using makeshift weapons , one of the corporals drew and fired a pistol , which momentarily subdued the crowd , before both men were dragged from the car , beaten and disarmed . Shortly afterwards , the corporals were dragged across the road to Casement Park , where they were beaten further . A local priest intervened to stop the beating , but was pulled away when a military identity card was discovered , raising speculation that the corporals were members of the SAS . The two were bundled semi @-@ conscious over a wall by IRA operatives , who jumped over the wall and forced the corporals into the back of a black taxi and sped away . The taxi took the corporals and the IRA men to an area of waste ground in West Belfast , the IRA men continuing to beat the soldiers en route . Six men were seen leaving the vehicle . The two corporals , apparently dazed from their injuries , staggered from the taxi , but were quickly restrained . Another IRA man arrived with a pistol taken from one of the soldiers , with which he repeatedly shot each of the corporals before handing the weapon to another man , who shot the corporals ' bodies multiple times . Margaret Thatcher described the corporals ' killings as the " single most horrifying event in Northern Ireland " during her premiership .

The shootings sparked the largest criminal investigation in Northern Ireland 's history , which created fresh tension in Belfast as republicans saw what they believed was a disparity in the efforts the RUC expended in investigating the corporals ' murders compared with those of republican civilians . Over four years , more than 200 people were arrested in connection with the killings , of whom 41 were charged with a variety of offences . The first of the so @-@ named " Casement Trials " concluded quickly ; two men were found guilty of murder and given life sentences in the face of overwhelming evidence . Of the trials that followed , many were based on weaker evidence and proved much more controversial .

= = " Death on the Rock " = =

On 28 April 1988 , almost two months after the Gibraltar shootings , ITV broadcast an episode of its current affairs series This Week , produced by Thames Television , entitled " Death on the Rock " . This Week sent three journalists to investigate the circumstances surrounding the shootings from both Spain and Gibraltar . Using eyewitness accounts , and with the cooperation of the Spanish authorities , the documentary reconstructed the events leading up to the shootings ; the Spanish police assisted in the reconstruction of the surveillance operation mounted against the IRA members as they travelled around Spain in the weeks before 6 March , and the journalists hired a helicopter to film the route . In Gibraltar , they located several new eyewitnesses to the shootings , who each said they had seen McCann , Savage , and Farrell shot without warning or shot after they had fallen to the ground ; most agreed to be filmed and provided signed statements . One witness , Kenneth Asquez , provided two near @-@ identical statements through intermediaries , but refused to meet with the journalists or sign either statement . After failing to persuade Asquez to sign his statement , the journalists eventually incorporated his account of seeing Savage shot while on the ground into the programme .

For technical advice , the journalists engaged Lieutenant Colonel George Styles GC , a retired British Army officer who was regarded as an expert in explosives and ballistics . Styles believed that it would have been obvious to the authorities that Savage 's car was unlikely to contain a bomb as the weight would have been obvious on the vehicle 's springs ; he also expressed his opinion that a remote detonator could not have reached the car park from the scenes of the shootings given the number of buildings and other obstacles between the locations . As the government refused to comment on the shootings until the inquest , the documentary concluded by putting its evidence to a leading human rights lawyer , who expressed his belief that a judicial inquiry was necessary to establish the facts surrounding the shootings .

The documentary attracted considerable controversy . On 26 April , two days before the programme was scheduled for broadcast , Sir Geoffrey Howe telephoned the chairman of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) to request that the authority delay the broadcast until after the inquest on the grounds that it risked prejudicing the proceedings . After viewing the programme and taking legal advice , the IBA decided on the morning of 28 April that " Death on the Rock " should be broadcast as scheduled , and Howe was informed of the decision . Howe made further representation to the IBA that the documentary would be in contempt of the inquest ; after taking further legal advice , the IBA upheld its decision to allow the broadcast . The programme was broadcast at 21 : 00 (GMT) on 28 April . The following morning , the British tabloid newspapers lambasted the programme , describing it as a " slur " on the SAS and " trial by television " , while several criticised the IBA for allowing the documentary to be broadcast . Over the following weeks , newspapers repeatedly printed stories about the documentary 's witnesses , in particular Carmen Proetta , who gave an account of seeing McCann and Farrell shot without warning by soldiers who arrived in a Gibraltar Police car . Proetta subsequently sued several newspapers for libel and won substantial damages . The Sunday Times conducted its own investigation and reported that " Death on the Rock " had misrepresented the views of its witnesses ; the witnesses involved later complained to other newspapers that " The Sunday Times " had distorted their comments .

= = Inquest = =

Unusually for Gibraltar , there was a long delay between the shootings and the setting of a date for the inquest (the usual method for investigating sudden or controversial deaths in the United Kingdom and its territories) ; eight weeks after the shootings , the coroner , Felix Pizzarello , announced that the inquest would begin on 27 June . Two weeks later (unknown to Pizzarello) , Margaret Thatcher 's press secretary announced that the inquest had been indefinitely postponed . The inquest began on 6 September . Pizzarello presided over the proceedings , while eleven jurors evaluated the evidence ; representing the Gibraltar government was Eric Thislewaite , the Gibraltar

attorney general . The interested parties were represented by John Laws , QC (for the British government) , Michael Hucker (for the SAS personnel) , and Patrick McGrory (for the families of McCann , Farrell , and Savage) . Inquests are non @-@ adversarial proceedings aimed at investigating the circumstances of a death ; the investigation is conducted by the coroner , while the representatives of interested parties can cross @-@ examine witnesses . Where the death occurred through the deliberate action of another person , the jury can return a verdict of " lawful killing " , " unlawful killing " , or an " open verdict " ; though inquests cannot apportion blame , in the case of a verdict of unlawful killing the authorities will consider whether any prosecutions should be brought . There was initially doubt as to whether the SAS personnel involved in the shootings would appear at the inquest . Inquests have no powers to compel witnesses to appear if the witness is outside the court 's jurisdiction , although the soldiers apparently volunteered after Pizzarello declared that the inquest would be " meaningless " without their evidence . The soldiers and MI5 officers gave their evidence anonymously and from behind a screen . As the inquest began , observers including Amnesty International expressed concern that McGrory was at a disadvantage , as all of the other lawyers were privy to the evidence of the SAS and MI5 personnel before it was given . The cost of the transcript for each day 's proceedings was increased ten @-@ fold the day before the inquest began .

In total , the inquest heard evidence from 79 witnesses , including the Gibraltar Police officers , MI5 personnel , and SAS soldiers involved in the operation , along with technical experts and civilian eyewitnesses .

= = = Police , military , and MI5 witnesses = = =

The first witnesses to testify were the Gibraltar Police officers involved in the operation and its aftermath . Following them , on 7 September , was " Mr O " , the senior MI5 officer in charge of Operation Flavius . " O " told the inquest that , in January 1988 , Belgian authorities found a car being used by IRA operatives in Brussels . In the car were found a quantity of Semtex , detonators , and equipment for a radio detonation device , which , " O " told the coroner , led MI5 to the conclusion that the IRA might use a similar device for the planned attack in Gibraltar . MI5 further believed that the IRA had been unlikely to use a " blocking car " (an empty vehicle used to hold a parking space until the bombers bring in the vehicle containing the explosives) as this entailed the added risk of multiple border crossings . Finally , " O " told the coroner that McCann , Savage , and Farrell had been observed by Spanish authorities arriving at Málaga Airport , after which he claimed the trio had been lost , and that the British and Gibraltar authorities did not detect them crossing the border .

Joseph Canepa , commissioner of the Gibraltar Police , was the next senior figure to testify . He told the inquest that (contrary to McGrory 's assertions) there had been no conspiracy to kill McCann , Savage , and Farrell . Canepa told the coroner that , upon learning of the IRA plot from MI5 , he set up an advisory committee , which consisted of MI5 officials , senior military officers , and the commissioner himself ; as events developed , the committee decided that the Gibraltar Police was not adequately equipped to counter the IRA threat , and Canepa requested assistance from London . The commissioner gave assurances that he had been in command of the operation against the IRA at all times , except for the 25 minutes during which he signed over control to the military . In his cross @-@ examination , McGrory queried the level of control the commissioner had over the operation ; he extracted from Canepa that the commissioner had not requested assistance from the SAS specifically . Canepa agreed with " O " that the Spanish police had lost track of the IRA team , and that Savage 's arrival in Gibraltar took the authorities by surprise . Although a police officer was stationed in an observation post at the border with instructions for alerting other officers to the arrival of the IRA team , Canepa told the inquest that the officer had been looking for the three IRA members arriving at once . When pressed , he told McGrory he was " unsure " whether or not the officer had the details of the false passports the trio were travelling under . Two days after Canepa 's testimony concluded , Detective Constable Charles Huart , the Gibraltar Police officer in the observation post at the border on 6 March , appeared . When cross @-@ examined , Huart denied

knowing the pseudonyms under which the IRA team were travelling . On cross @-@ examination , Huart acknowledged having been provided with the pseudonyms at a briefing the night before the shootings . Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) Joseph Ullger , head of the Gibraltar Police Special Branch , offered a different account when he gave evidence the following day . He told the coroner that the Spanish border guards had let Savage through out of carelessness , while the regular border officials on the Gibraltar side had not been told to look for the IRA team .

" Soldier F " , a British Army colonel who was in command of the SAS detachment involved in Operation Flavius , took the stand on 12 September . " F " was followed the next day by " Soldier E " , a junior SAS officer who was directly responsible for the soldiers who carried out the shootings . After the officers , the inquest heard from Soldiers " A " , " B " , " C " , and " D " , the SAS soldiers who shot McCann , Savage , and Farrell . The SAS personnel all told the coroner that they had been briefed to expect the would @-@ be bombers to be in possession of a remote detonator , and that they had been told that Savage 's car definitely contained a bomb . Each soldier testified that the IRA team made movements which the soldiers believed to be threatening , and this prompted the soldiers to open fire . McGrory asked about the SAS 's policy on lethal force during cross @-@ examination ; he asked " D " about allegations that Savage was shot while on the ground , something " D " strenuously denied . McGrory asked " D " if he had intended to continue shooting Savage until he was dead , to which " D " replied in the affirmative .

Several Gibraltar Police officers , including Special Branch officers , gave evidence about the aftermath of the shootings and the subsequent police investigation . Immediately after the shootings , the soldiers ' shell casings were removed from the scene (making it difficult to assess where the soldiers were standing when they fired) ; two Gibraltar Police officers testified to collecting the casings , one for fear that they might be stolen and the other on the orders of a superior . Statements from other police and military witnesses revealed that the Gibraltar Police had lost evidence and that the soldiers did not give statements to the police until over a week after the shootings .

= = = Civilian witnesses = = =

One of the first witnesses with no involvement in Operation Flavius to give evidence to the inquest was Allen Feraday , Principal Scientific Officer at the Royal Armaments Research and Development Establishment . He posited that a remote detonator could reach from the scenes of the shootings to the car park in which Savage had left the white Renault and beyond . On cross @-@ examination , he stated that the aerial on the Renault was not the type he would expect to be used for receiving a detonation signal , adding that the IRA had not been known to use a remote @-@ detonated bomb without a direct line of sight to their target . The following day , " Soldier G " (who had made the determination that the white Renault contained a bomb) told the coroner that he was not an explosives expert , and that his assessment was based on his belief that the vehicle 's aerial looked " too new " . Dissatisfied , McGrory called his own expert witness ? Dr Michael Scott , an expert in radio @-@ controlled detonation ? who disagreed with government witnesses that a bomb at the assembly area could have been detonated from the petrol station where McCann and Farrell were shot , having conducted tests prior to testifying . The government responded by commissioning its own tests , conducted by British Army signallers , which showed that radio communication between the petrol station and the car park was possible , but not guaranteed .

Professor Alan Watson , a British forensic pathologist , carried out a post @-@ mortem examination of the bodies . Watson arrived in Gibraltar the day after the shootings , by which time the bodies had been taken to the Royal Navy Hospital ; he found that the bodies had been stripped of their clothing (causing difficulties in distinguishing entry and exit wounds) , that the mortuary had no X @-@ ray machine (which would have allowed Watson to track the paths of the bullets through the bodies) , and that he was refused access to any other X @-@ ray machine . After the professor returned to his home in Scotland , he was refused access to the results of blood tests and other evidence which had been sent for analysis and was dissatisfied with the photographs taken by the Gibraltar Police photographer who had assisted him . At the inquest , McGrory noted and questioned the lack of

assistance given to the pathologist , which Watson told him was " a puzzle " . Watson concluded that McCann had been shot four times ? once in the jaw (possibly a ricochet) , once in the head , and twice in the back ; Farrell was shot five times (twice in the face and three times in the back) . Watson was unable to determine exactly how many times Savage was shot ? he estimated that it was possibly as many as eighteen times . McGrory asked Watson whether the pathologist would agree that Savage 's body was " riddled with bullets " ; Watson 's answer made headlines the following morning : " I concur with your word . Like a frenzied attack " . Watson agreed that the evidence suggested the deceased were shot while on the ground ; a second pathologist called by McGrory offered similar findings . Two weeks later , the court heard from David Pryor ? a forensic scientist working for London 's Metropolitan Police ? who had analysed the clothes of the dead ; he told the inquest his analysis had been hampered by the condition of the clothing when it arrived . Pryor offered evidence contradictory to that given by Soldiers " A " and " B " about their proximity to McCann and Farrell when they opened fire ? the soldiers claimed they were at least six feet (1 @. @ 8 metres) away , but Pryor 's analysis was that McCann and Farrell were shot from a distance of no more than two or three feet (0 @. @ 6 or 0 @. @ 9 metres) .

Aside from experts and security personnel , several eyewitnesses gave evidence to the inquest . Three witnessed parts of the shootings , and gave accounts which supported the official version of events ? in particular , they did not witness the SAS shooting any of the suspects while they were on the floor . Witnesses uncovered by the journalists making " Death on the Rock " also appeared : Stephen Bullock repeated his account of seeing McCann and Savage raise their hands before the SAS shot them ; Josie Celecia repeated her account of seeing a soldier shooting at McCann and Farrell while the pair were on the ground . Hucker pointed out that parts of Celecia 's testimony had changed since she spoke to " Death on the Rock " , and suggested that the gunfire she heard was from the shooting of Savage rather than sustained shooting of McCann and Farrell while they were on the ground , a suggestion Celecia rejected ; the SAS 's lawyer further observed that she was unable to identify the military personnel in photographs her husband had taken . Maxie Proetta told the coroner that he had witnessed four men (three in plain clothes and one uniformed Gibraltar Police officer) arriving opposite the petrol station on Winston Churchill Avenue ; the men jumped over the central reservation barrier and Farrell put her hands up , after which he heard a series of shots . In contrast to his wife 's testimony , he believed that Farrell 's gesture was one of self @-@ defence rather than surrender , and he believed that the shots he heard did not come from the men from the police car . The government lawyers suggested that the police car the Proettas saw was the one being driven by Inspector Revagliatte , carrying four uniformed police officers rather than plain @-@ clothed soldiers , but Proetta was adamant that the lawyers ' version did not make sense . His wife gave evidence the following day . Contrary to her statement to " Death on the Rock " , Carmen Proetta was no longer certain that she had seen McCann and Savage shot while on the ground . The government lawyers questioned the reliability of Proetta 's evidence based on her changes , and implied that she behaved suspiciously by giving evidence to " Death on the Rock " before the police . She responded that the police had not spoken to her about the shootings until after " Death on the Rock " had been shown .

Asquez , who provided an unsworn statement to the " Death on the Rock " team through an intermediary , which the journalists included in the programme , reluctantly appeared . He retracted the statements he made to " Death on the Rock " , which he claimed he had made up after " pestering " from Major Bob Randall (another " Death on the Rock " witness , who had sold the programme a video recording of the aftermath of the shootings) . The British media covered Asquez 's retraction extensively , while several members of parliament accused Asquez of lying for the television (and " Death on the Rock " of encouraging him) in an attempt to discredit the SAS and the British government . Nonetheless , Pizzarello asked Asquez if he could explain why his original statement mentioned the Soldiers " C " and " D " donning berets , showing identity cards , and telling members of the public " it 's okay , it 's the police " after shooting Savage (details which were not public before the inquest) ; Asquez replied that he could not , because he was " a bit confused " .

= = = Verdict = = =

The inquest concluded on 30 September , and Laws and McGrory made their submissions to the coroner regarding the instructions he should give to the jury (Hucker allowed Laws to speak on his behalf) . Laws asked the coroner to instruct the jury not to return a verdict of " unlawful killing " on the grounds that there had been a conspiracy to murder the IRA operatives within the British government , as he believed that no evidence had been presented at the inquest to support such a conclusion . He did also allow for the possibility that the SAS personnel had individually acted unlawfully . McGrory , on the other hand , asked the coroner to allow for the possibility that the British government had conspired to murder McCann , Savage , and Farrell , which he believed was evidenced by the decision to use the SAS for Operation Flavius . The decision , according to McGrory was

wholly unreasonable and led to a lot of what happened afterwards ... it started a whole chain of unreasonable decisions which led to the three killings , which I submit were unlawful and criminal killings .

When the coroner asked McGrory to clarify whether he believed there had been a conspiracy to murder the IRA operatives , he responded

that the choice of the SAS is of great significance ... If the killing of the ASU was , in fact , contemplated by those who chose the SAS , as an act of counter @-@ terror or vengeance , that steps outside the rule of law and it was murder ... and that is a matter for the jury to consider .

After listening to both arguments , Pizzarello summarised the evidence for the jury and instructed them that they could return a verdict of " unlawful killing " under any of five circumstances , including if they were satisfied that there had been a conspiracy within the British government to murder the three suspected terrorists . He also urged the jury to return a conclusive verdict , rather than the " ambiguity " of an " open verdict " , and instructed them not to make recommendations or add a rider to their verdict .

The jury retired at 11 : 30 to start their deliberations . Pizzarello summoned them back after six hours with the warning that they were " at the edge " of the time in which they were allowed to come to a verdict . Just over two hours later , the jury returned . By a majority of nine to two , they returned a verdict of lawful killing .

Following the inquest , evidence came to light to contradict the version of events presented by the British government at the inquest . Six weeks after the conclusion of the inquest , a Gibraltar Police operations order leaked ; the document listed Inspector Revagliatte , who had claimed to be on routine patrol , unaware of Operation Flavius , and whose siren apparently triggered the shootings , as the commander of two police firearms teams assigned to the operation . In February 1989 , British journalists discovered that the IRA team operating in Spain must have contained more members than the three killed in Gibraltar . The staff at the agencies from which the team rented their vehicles gave the Spanish police descriptions which did not match McCann , Savage , or Farrell ; Savage 's white Renault , meanwhile , was rented several hours before Savage himself arrived in Spain .

It emerged that the Spanish authorities knew where McCann and Savage were staying ; a senior Spanish police officer repeatedly told journalists that the IRA cell had been under surveillance throughout their time in Spain , and that the Spanish told the British authorities that they did not believe that the three were in possession of a bomb on 6 March . Although the Spanish government remained silent about the claims and counter @-@ claims , it honoured 22 police officers at a secret awards ceremony for Spanish participants in Operation Flavius in December 1988 , and a government minister told a press conference in March 1989 that " we followed the terrorists . They were completely under our control " . The same month , a journalist discovered that the Spanish side of the operation was conducted by the Foreign Intelligence Brigade rather than the local police as the British government had suggested . The Independent and Private Eye conjectured as to the reason for the Spanish government 's silence ? in 1988 , Spain was attempting to join the Western European Union , but was opposed by Britain (which was already a member) ; the papers ' theory was that Margaret Thatcher 's government placed political pressure on the Spanish , and that Britain later dropped its opposition in exchange for the Spanish government 's silence on Operation Flavius

= = Legal proceedings = =

In March 1990 , almost two years after the shootings , the McCann , Savage , and Farrell families began proceedings against the British government at the High Court in London . The case was dismissed on the grounds that Gibraltar was not part of the United Kingdom , and was thus outside the court 's jurisdiction . The families launched an appeal , but withdrew it in the belief that it had no prospect of success . The families proceeded to apply to the European Commission of Human Rights for an opinion on whether the authorities ' actions in Gibraltar violated Article 2 (the " right to life ") of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) . Issuing its report in April 1993 , the commission criticised the conduct of the operation , but found that there had been no violation of Article 2 . Nevertheless , the commission referred the case to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) for a final decision .

The British government submitted that the killings were " absolutely necessary " , within the meaning of Article 2 , paragraph 2 , to protect the people of Gibraltar from unlawful violence , because the soldiers who carried out the shootings genuinely believed that McCann , Savage , and Farrell were capable of detonating a car bomb , and of doing so by remote control . The families contested the government 's claim , alleging that the government had conspired to kill the three ; that the planning and control of the operation was flawed ; that the inquest was not adequately equipped to investigate the killings ; and that the applicable laws of Gibraltar were not compliant with Article 2 of the ECHR . The court found that the soldiers ' " reflex action " in resorting to lethal force was excessive , but that the soldiers ' actions did not ? in their own right ? give rise to a violation of Article 2 . The court held that the soldiers ' use of force based on an honestly held belief (that the suspects were armed or in possession of a remote detonator) could be justified , even if that belief was later found to be mistaken . To hold otherwise would , in the court 's opinion , place too great a burden on law @-@ enforcement personnel . It also dismissed all other allegations , except that regarding the planning and control of the operation . In that respect , the court found that the authorities ' failure to arrest the suspects as they crossed the border or earlier , combined with the information that was passed to the soldiers , rendered the use of lethal force almost inevitable . Thus , the court decided there had been a violation of Article 2 in the control of the operation .

As the three suspects had been killed while preparing an act of terrorism , the court rejected the families ' claims for damages , as well as their claim for expenses incurred at the inquest . The court did order the British government to pay the applicants ' costs incurred during the proceedings in Strasbourg . The government initially suggested it would not pay , and there was discussion in parliament of the UK withdrawing from the ECHR . It paid the costs on 24 December 1995 , within days of the three @-@ month deadline which had been set by the court .

= = Long @-@ term impact = =

A history of the Gibraltar Police described Operation Flavius as " the most controversial and violent event " in the history of the force , while journalist Nicholas Eckert described the incident as " one of the great controversies of the Troubles " and academic Richard English posited that the " awful sequence of interwoven deaths " was one of the conflict 's " most strikingly memorable and shocking periods " . The explosives the IRA intended to use in Gibraltar were believed to have come from Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi who was known to be supplying arms to the IRA in the 1980s ; some sources speculated that Gibraltar was chosen for its relative proximity to Libya , and the targeting of the territory was intended as a gesture of gratitude to Gaddafi .

Maurice Punch , an academic specialising in policing issues , described the ECtHR verdict as " a landmark case with important implications " for the control of police operations involving firearms . According to Punch , the significance of the ECtHR judgement was that it placed accountability for the failures in the operation with its commanders , rather than with the soldiers who carried out the shooting itself . Punch believed that the ruling demonstrated that operations intended to arrest

suspects should be conducted by civilian police officers , rather than soldiers . The case is considered a landmark in cases concerning Article 2 , particularly in upholding the principle that Article 2 , paragraph 2 , defines circumstances in which it is permissible to use force which may result in a person 's death as an unintended consequence , rather than circumstances in which it is permissible to intentionally deprive a person of their life . It has been cited in later ECtHR cases concerning the use of lethal force by police .

After the inquest verdict , the Governor of Gibraltar , Air Chief Marshal Sir Peter Terry declared " Even in this remote place , there is no place for terrorists . " In apparent revenge for his role in Operation Flavius , Terry and his wife , Lady Betty Terry , were shot and seriously injured in front of their daughter when IRA paramilitaries opened fire on the Terry home in Staffordshire two years later , in September 1990 .

Following Kenneth Asquez 's retraction of the statement he gave to " Death on the Rock " and his allegation that he was pressured into giving a false account of the events he witnessed , the IBA contacted Thames Television to express its concern and to raise the possibility of an investigation into the making of the documentary . Thames eventually agreed to commission an independent inquiry into the programme (the first such inquiry into an individual programme) , to be conducted by two people with no connection to either Thames or the IBA ; Thames engaged Lord Windlesham and Richard Rampton , QC to conduct the investigation . In their report , published in January 1989 , Windlesham and Rampton levelled several criticisms at " Death on the Rock " , but found it to be a " trenchant " piece of work made in " good faith and without ulterior motives " . In conclusion , the authors believed that " Death on the Rock " proved " freedom of expression can prevail in the most extensive , and the most immediate , of all the means of mass communication " .

= ?kami =

?kami (Japanese : 神 , literally " great god " , " great spirit " or " wolf " if written as 狼) is an action @-@ adventure video game developed by Clover Studio and published by Capcom . It was released for Sony Computer Entertainment 's PlayStation 2 video game console in 2006 in Japan and North America , and in 2007 in Europe and Australia . Despite the closure of Clover Studio a few months after the game 's initial release , a version for Nintendo 's Wii console was developed and produced by Ready at Dawn , Tose and Capcom , which was released in North America in April 2008 , in Europe in June 2008 , and in Japan in October 2009 .

Set sometime in classical Japanese history , the game combines several Japanese myths , legends and folklore to tell the story of how the land was saved from darkness by the Shinto sun goddess , named Amaterasu , who took the form of a white wolf . It features a distinct sumi @-@ e @-@ inspired cel @-@ shaded visual style and the Celestial Brush , a gesture @-@ system to perform miracles .

?kami was one of the last PlayStation 2 games selected for release prior to the release of the PlayStation 3 . Although it suffered from poor sales , the game received critical acclaim , earning the title of IGN 's 2006 Game of the Year . The Wii version has earned similar praise , though the motion control scheme has received mixed reviews .

A high @-@ definition port of the game was released on the PlayStation 3 via the PlayStation Network in October 2012 and for retail in Japan in November 2012 , supporting the use of the PlayStation Move motion controller . A sequel for the Nintendo DS titled ?kamiden was released in Japan in September 2010 , followed by North America and Europe in March 2011 .

= = Gameplay = =

The game has the player controlling the main character , Amaterasu , in a woodcut , watercolor style , cel @-@ shaded environment , which looks like an animated Japanese ink @-@ illustration (known as ink wash painting , sumi @-@ e) with other styles of art . The gameplay style is a mix of action , platform , and puzzle gaming genres , and has been noted by many reviewers to have

numerous similarities in overall gameplay style to The Legend of Zelda series , an inspiration that director Hideki Kamiya , a self @-@ proclaimed Zelda @-@ fan , has admitted has influenced his general game design . The main story is primarily linear , directed through by Amaterasu 's guide Issun , though numerous side quests and optional activities allow for players to explore the game world and take the story at their own pace . By completing quests , side quests and small additional activities (such as making trees bloom into life or feeding wild animals) , Amaterasu earns Praise , which can then be spent to increase various statistics of the character , such as the amount of health and number of ink wells for Celestial Brush techniques .

Combat is staged in a ghostly virtual arena , and Amaterasu can fight enemies using a combination of weapons , fighting techniques and Brush methods to dispatch the foes . At the end of combat , money (as yen) is rewarded to Amaterasu , with bonuses for completing a battle quickly and without taking damage . The money can be spent on numerous items from merchants across the land , including healing goods , better weapons , tools and key items for completing quests . The money can also be used to buy new combat techniques at dojos throughout the land .

Additionally , rare Demon Fangs can be earned through combat which can be traded for additional , unique items that are beneficial in gameplay but not required to complete the game . Weapons inspired by the Imperial Regalia of Japan (the Reflector , the Rosaries and the Glaive) can be equipped on Amaterasu as either main or sub @-@ weapons (one each) , and used in addition to other melee attacks that the player can have Amaterasu learn through the course of the game .

= = = Celestial Brush = = =

Unique to ?kami is the Celestial Brush . Players can bring the game to a pause and call up a canvas , where the player can draw onto the screen , either using the left analog stick on the DualShock controller , or pointing with the Wii Remote or PlayStation Move controller in subsequent remakes . This feature is used in combat , puzzles and as general gameplay . For example , the player can create strong wind by drawing a loop , cut enemies by drawing a line through them or fix bridges by painting on the broken one , amongst many other abilities . These techniques are learned through the course of the game by completing constellations to release the Celestial Brush gods (inspired by the Chinese zodiac) from their hiding spots . It is also possible to upgrade or modify certain Brush powers later in the game ; for example , the Celestial Brush power " Inferno " can gain a new power called " Fireburst " , which has a different drawing pattern , and allows players to create flames without relying on torches or other related items . The player 's ink for drawing is limited by the amount available in special ink wells , preventing the player from solely using Brush techniques to defeat enemies ; ink is restored in the wells over time when the Brush is not used .

= = Plot = =

(Please note that most character names below are the shortened names of the U.S. version .)

= = = Story = = =

The game is set in a Nippon (Japan) based on Japanese folklore , and begins with a flashback to events 100 years prior to the game 's present ; the narrator describes how Shiranui , a pure white wolf , and Nagi , a swordsman , together fought the eight @-@ headed demon Orochi to save Kamiki Village and Nagi 's beloved maiden Nami . Shiranui and Nagi seal Orochi at the cave .

In the game 's present , Susano , a descendant of Nagi and self @-@ proclaimed greatest warrior , breaks Orochi 's seal because he does not believe in the legend and wants to prove it false ; Orochi escapes and curses the lands , sapping the life from every living being . Sakuya , the wood sprite and guardian of Kamiki Village , calls forth Amaterasu , the sun goddess , known to the villagers as the reincarnation of the white wolf Shiranui , and pleads for her to remove the curse that covers the land . Accompanied by the artist Issun (an inch @-@ high creature known as a Poncle) , Amaterasu restores the land to its normal state .

Throughout her journey , Amaterasu is hounded by Waka , a handsome and strange but powerful individual who seems to have the gift of foresight and further teases Amaterasu and Issun to his own mysterious ends . Additionally , Amaterasu locates several Celestial Gods who have hidden in the constellations ; the gods bestow upon the goddess powers of the Celestial Brush to aid in her quest .

Soon , Amaterasu and Susano defeat Orochi to protect Kamiki Village and rescue Susano 's maiden , Kushi , recreating events from 100 years prior . This time , the duo are able to fully conquer the demon , causing a black , evil spirit to float northward . Amaterasu and Issun then embark on a journey across Nippon , befriending many people along the way through their good deeds , and removing Orochi 's curse from the land through defeating other demons that release similar dark presences , all of which float northward .

As Amaterasu travels to find the source of these evil spirits , she is brought to the wreckage of a ship able to travel through the stars : the " Ark of Yamato " , trapped in the frozen plains of Kamui . Waka appears and reveals himself as a member of the Moon Tribe , a long @-@ living race who used the Ark to escape from Orochi 's assault on the Celestial Plain and sail from the heavens ? unaware of the evil spirits imprisoned on the Ark ; the demons attacked and killed all but Waka himself , resulting in the Ark crashing to earth . Amaterasu enters the Ark , where she defeats all of the demons again , before entering the deepest part of the Ark . Within the bowels , Yami , the demon controlling all the evil spirits , appears and strips the Celestial Brush powers from Amaterasu , before engaging her in battle . Amaterasu also fails to recover her powers from Yami , who destroys the Celestial Gods , destroying her power and leaving her near death . Issun takes up his role as the Celestial Envoy and encourages all those they have helped to send their thoughts and prayers to Amaterasu , causing her to regain her powers and allowing her to destroy Yami , ridding all of the demons from both the Ark and Nippon . Amaterasu and Waka take control on the Ark and sail back to the Celestial Plain .

= = = Characters = = =

The player controls ?kami Amaterasu , the goddess of the sun , in the form of a white wolf . Amaterasu is referred to in the Japanese and European version of the game as a female , while in the North American version she was genderless . While Amaterasu , when endowed with ink power , is seen by the player with red markings , cloud @-@ like fur on her shoulders , and weapons on her back , most of the human characters in the game only see her as a plain white wolf ; some believe Amaterasu to be the reincarnation of Shiranui (the white wolf that fought Orochi 100 years prior to the game 's present) , and do not recognize her spiritual nature . If the player depletes their power by overuse of the celestial brush , Amaterasu will temporarily revert to this mundane white form . Issun , an arrogant , inch @-@ tall " wandering artist " seeking out the thirteen Celestial Brush techniques for himself , accompanies Amaterasu (whom he calls " Ammy " or " furball ") , and serves as a guide , dialogue proxy and as comic relief . He grows in character along with Ammy throughout the game , becoming her true friend , inspiration , and eventually her savior .

At the end of the game , Amaterasu encounters Yami , the main antagonist and final boss of the game who resembles a small fish inside a huge sphere , whose design is altered through the different stages of the battle . Yami is also the ruler of the demons . Before battle , he drains Amaterasu of her powers and leaves her as a plain white wolf . Amaterasu regains her powers throughout the fight , but , after the fourth round , Yami destroys them all again and leaves Amaterasu in a near @-@ dead state . However , when Issun gets everyone to believe in Amaterasu before the fifth and final round , she changes into her most powerful form and battles Yami , vanquishing him forever . In the final battle , Yami also has a huge clawed hand , which demonstrates the evil which comes from Humans ' hands . The word ' Yami ' means ' darkness ' in Japanese .

Two other characters also reappear several times within the quest . Waka appears to Amaterasu several times in the game as a beautiful young flute @-@ playing man in costume resembling a tengu (more precisely , a tengu dressed like a yamabushi , which is a frequent tengu appearance) .

He is aware of the goddess 's true identity and foretells her future and at times battles with her . He leads the Tao Troopers whose members Abe and Kamo are based on the two famous onmyoji Abe no Seimei and Kamo no Yasunori . Waka 's dialogue , dropping French affectionate terms at times , conveys a sense of familiarity with Amaterasu , as it turns out that Waka is much older than he appears and has walked with Amaterasu on the Celestial Plain hundreds of years ago . The other is Orochi , the eight @-@ headed demon and a major villain within the game which the player will encounter several times . Orochi repeatedly has threatened Kamiki village , demanding a sacrifice of a young woman . Each of its eight heads is infused with a different elemental magic power , but the entire demon is susceptible to a special brew of sake available only at Kamiki Village , allowing Amaterasu to defeat it while in its stupor . Amaterasu trusts Queen Himiko , the ruler of " Sei @-@ an City " who is killed by one of the demons .

Throughout the game , the player encounters several other characters that are inspired from Japanese folklore .

= = Development = =

?kami resulted from the combined ideas of Clover Studio . The game was originally built around " depict [ing] a lot of nature " , but had no central concept or theme , according to lead designer Hideki Kamiya . Kamiya eventually created a minute @-@ long demonstration movie showing a wolf running about a forest , with flowers blossoming in its wake , but still lacked any gameplay . Kamiya and other members of the team introduced ideas around the nature aspect and eventually led to the game 's initial prototype , which Kamiya admitted was " incredibly boring to play " . Kamiya suggested that he allowed so many ideas from the team that resulted in the development moving off @-@ target , including creating more of a simulation . Eventually , they settled onto the gameplay found in the final product .

The art in ?kami is highly inspired by Japanese watercolor and wood carving art of the Ukiyo @-@ e style , such as the work of Hokusai . ?kami was originally planned to be rendered in a more photorealistic 3D style . However , Clover Studio determined that the more colorful sumi @-@ e style allowed them to better convey Amaterasu 's association with nature and the task of restoring it . The change was also influenced by limitations in the PS2 hardware to render the photorealistic 3D graphics . As a result of the switch to the watercolor style , the idea of the Celestial Brush came about . Atsushi Inaba , CEO of Clover , noted that " Once we fixed ourselves on a graphical style and got down to the brushwork , we thought ' Wouldn 't it be great if we could somehow get the player involved and participate in this artwork instead of just watching it ? ' That 's how the idea of the Celestial Brush was born " . Original concepts for enemies included the use of dinosaurs , but the designs settled onto more demon @-@ like characters .

Amaterasu 's initial designs were aimed to avoid having the character look like " your pet wearing clothing " . The developers had considered having Amaterasu change into a dolphin when in the water and a falcon when jumping off a cliff , but dropped these ideas . Sakuya , designed around a peach motif , was envisioned with what were called " level 2 " and " level 3 " designs where the character would wear less clothing as the story progressed , but the " level 3 " appearance , effectively naked , was vetoed by Inaba . Waka 's character was aimed to be a Tatsunoko @-@ like character , with the hood designed to be reminiscent of those worn by the Gatchaman . Orochi in Japanese mythology is a gigantic creature , so lead character designer Takeyasu Sawaki designed the back of the demon to include a garden and palace ; this inspired the game designers to include a bell in those structures that would be Orochi 's fatal weakness in the game .

The localization team had to translate 1500 pages of text to make sure it made sense in a " native check " , because of lack of plurals in the Japanese language and the large number of characters and conditional conversations that the player could interact with . The team recognized that certain elements of the game would not be recognized by Western audiences , but left enough text and details to allow the players to look up the information for themselves . Only one puzzle in the game had to be changed as it required knowledge of the steps in drawing a kanji character which would be readily known for Japanese audiences ; for the Western release , these steps were

demonstrated in the game . The team noted that personalities of characters could be easily conveyed in Japanese text simply by the way sentences were constructed or slurred , a feature that could not directly be applied to localization . Instead , working with Kamiya , the team scripted the localization to either recreate the personality to match the Japanese version , or to create a whole new set of mannerisms for the characters as appropriate .

?kami was shown at the 2005 E3 Convention , approximately 30 % complete , with a planned release in 2006 . At this point , the game had much of the core gameplay , including the Celestial Brush and the combat system in place . The game was released a year later in 2006 . However , just a few weeks following its release in North America to strong critical reception , Capcom announced the closure of Clover Studio .

The ?kami : Official Complete Works art book was published by Udon in May 2008 . The game was re @-@ released under Sony 's " Greatest Hits " in Japan in August 2008 .

= = = Naming and allusions = = =

The title of the game is a pun ; the word ?kami (?) in Japanese means " wolf " . However , the kanji characters used as the title of this game (??) , pronounced identically , mean " great deity " , so the main character is a great wolf deity . The same characters (??) are also used to write the full name of the sun goddess Amaterasu @-@ ?mikami . The localization team opted to use shorter versions of Japanese names (for example , a boy named " Mushikai " was localized as " Mushi ") instead of replacing the names with Western @-@ style ones . Issun 's informal name for Amaterasu in the Western translation , " Ammy " , was inspired by Kamiya , and is similar in tone with the Japanese informal name , " Ammako " .

Throughout the game , ?kami includes several references (in visual effects , animation , or dialogue) to other Capcom titles such as Viewtiful Joe , which Clover Studios also developed . For example , Mrs. Orange 's technique for making cherry cake parodies Street Fighter 's Akuma 's Shun Goku Satsu , complete with a kanji word displayed on screen with her back @-@ facing the screen .

= = = Audio = = =

The music in ?kami was inspired by classical Japanese works . The final song , played over the credit sequence , " Reset " , is sung by Ayaka Hirahara . In May 2006 , Capcom released an official 5 @-@ disc soundtrack for ?kami in Japan . In the North American and European release , the player can unlock a jukebox to hear the in @-@ game music upon completion of the game . ?kami won the best score award at the 2007 BAFTA Video Games Awards .

Suleputer has also published another album , a piano arrangement , entitled ?kami Piano Arrange . It was released on 30 March 2007 . Mika Matsura both arranged the 10 songs , and performed it on the piano .

The characters ' speech in the game is actually created by scrambling samples of voice actors ' speech , with more emotional lines being created from voice work given in that emotion .

= = = Wii port = = =

The gameplay function of " drawing " or " painting " strokes on the screen led several journalists and gamers alike to believe that ?kami would be well @-@ suited for the Nintendo DS or Wii , both of which feature controls capable of creating drawing motions freely . After the game 's release , industry rumors of the game being ported to either console persisted , despite Atsushi Inaba of Clover Studio feeling that ?kami 's action @-@ based gameplay would not translate well to the console and statements from Capcom that there were " no plans for ?kami on Wii " .

However , at the 2007 UK Gamers Day , Capcom announced that Ready at Dawn would oversee porting and development of a Wii version of ?kami originally scheduled for release in March 2008 but subsequently pushed back to April 2008 . Christian Svensson , Capcom 's Vice @-@ President

of Strategic Planning and Business Development , stated that Capcom had received numerous requests from fans for the development of the Wii version , and that the ported game " specifically exists because of that direct communication , especially those we receive on our message boards (even if they 're sometimes mean to us) . " Ready at Dawn president Didier Malenfant has stated that , aside from the control scheme , the Wii version will be " an exact port of the PS2 version . " The lack of enhancements for the game caused several complaints from gamers , which Svensson addressed , stating that

Svensson reported that the original game assets given to them from Capcom Japan were incomplete , and even after requesting old hard drives and computers to recover more assets , Ready at Dawn was still required to recreate some from scratch . Furthermore , the game had to be recoded to change optimizations that were made for the PlayStation 2 version ; Svensson stated that " part of the reason we didn 't show it until we started showing it was because , if we showed it in a form that was anything less than near @-@ perfect , people were going to freak out " . Ready at Dawn 's creative director Ru Weerasuriya later reflected that porting ?kami to the Wii was a challenging task ? " we started with no assets and literally reverse @-@ engineered the whole thing back onto the Wii " ? they did out of love for the game , but the level of effort would preclude them from attempting such a port again .

In November 2007 , Svensson noted that the engine had been ported to the Wii , writing that " There are still several systems getting set up properly but there 's most definitely a Wii @-@ driven Amaterasu running around Wii @-@ rendered environments as we speak . " A listing posted at Capcom 's website for the game on 15 February 2008 revealed that the Wii version would support 480p and widescreen output , and IGN confirmed that the motion sensing of the Wii Remote would be used to perform the Celestial Brush features within the game . IGN 's hands @-@ on also cited small changes to the game such as additional motion @-@ sensing controls using both the Wii Remote and Nunchuck attachment , and the ability to skip cutscenes , but reported no other changes in content of the game .

Svensson noted that Capcom would not use television advertising for ?kami on the Wii , but would use online marketing , including art contests and a new website with " all sorts of things for fans to use to make stuff " . This site was made live on 3 April 2008 , featuring wallpapers , character artwork and fan @-@ created art for the game . Svensson further noted that " If [?kami for the Wii] did the numbers that we did on the PS2 , I 'd be very happy . This doesn 't need to be a mainstream success for this to be a success for the company . "

A " paper parchment " filter applied to all on @-@ screen elements that was readily apparent in the PlayStation 2 version was still included in the Wii port , but the effect was made much less significant . To help with drawing with the Celestial Brush , two different buttons on the Wii controllers were given brush functionality ; one button was assigned to provide free @-@ form strokes , while the other was set to draw a straight line from the starting point .

The final credits movie that was in the PlayStation 2 version of the game was removed from the Wii version , much to Kamiya 's regret as it removed the omoi ? " a combination of thoughts , emotions , and messages " ? from the game : " [The staff roll was] the omoi of everyone who worked on the project , put together in a moment of bliss held out just for those who completed the journey . It was a special staff roll for a special moment . And now it is gone . All of it It 's incredibly disappointing and sad . " A Capcom representative stated that the credits , a pre @-@ rendered movie , had the Clover Studio logo within it , and they had " no legal right to use the Clover logo in a game they were not involved with directly " . Since they also lacked the source to the credits , they opted to remove them entirely from the game . Ready at Dawn 's co @-@ founder Didier Malenfant also claimed that the Wii version of ?kami took up much more space on the game media than the PlayStation 2 version , and that the movie was cut in order to fit everything on a single game disk , however despite these claims , the credit sequence was restored in the Japanese release of the Wii version and revealed that the port was co @-@ developed by Tose , having provided additional planners , designers , programmers and test players . The images from the credits , although not the credits themselves , are still available as unlockable art .

Players have discovered that the cover of the North American Wii version of ?kami includes a

watermark from IGN , and traced the source to an image taken from IGN 's site . To make up for the error , Capcom offered for a limited time to replace the cover with one of three high @-@ resolution covers free of charge to users in North America . Because of delays in fulfilling the offer , Capcom shipped copies of all three covers to those that registered . They have since discontinued the offer , but have made the cover images available worldwide in high @-@ quality PDF files for users to download and print themselves . The European PAL version of the cover has no such error .

= = = High @-@ definition remaster = = =

In June 2012 , Capcom announced that a high @-@ definition remastering of the game , ?kami HD (?kami Zekkei @-@ ban ; roughly translated , ?kami Magnificent Version) , would be released worldwide for PlayStation 3 in October 2012 ; a retail product was released in Japan , while the game is available for download through the PlayStation Network in Europe and North America only . The decision boggled players , considering that the HD Japanese version of the physical copy of the game also came with the English , French and German languages respectively . The remastered edition supports the PlayStation Move peripheral , and Trophy support has been added . The remastering was done between Capcom and HexaDrive , who had previously worked on the high @-@ definition remastering of Rez .

= = = Sequel = = =

Sales of ?kami were considered somewhat poor for justifying a sequel ; in July 2009 , in response to users ' questions on the possibility of a sequel , Svensson stated that " I think we need a lot more people buying the current version before we seriously consider a sequel " . However , after the appearance of a Japanese trademark by Capcom on the word " ?kamiden " a few months before the Wii version of ?kami in Japan , many speculated that a sequel was pending . The September 2009 issue of Famitsu announced that ?kamiden was indeed a sequel to ?kami for the Nintendo DS , to be released by Capcom in Japan in 2010 , though without the input of the Clover staff . The game takes place nine months after the end of ?kami , with the player in control of Chibiterasu , a wolf puppy with the same powers as Amaterasu , but not yet at his full potential , and features the same style of gameplay , including the Celestial Brush using the DS ' touchscreen controls .

At the Electronic Entertainment Expo 2016 during an interview with Metro , Kamiya , now at Platinum Games , stated that he had ideas for ?kami 2 and Bayonetta 3 , though did not confirm if either game was in active development .

= = Reception = =

= = = Reviews = = =

?kami was acclaimed by critics , with a score of 92 @.@ 65 % on GameRankings , making it the eighth highest overall game of 2006 and second for the PlayStation 2 , behind Konami 's Metal Gear Solid 3 : Subsistence .

GameSpot gave it a 9 out of 10 and selected it as an Editor 's Choice , citing that its " visual design instantly stands out , but it turns out to be just one of many inspired aspects of this impressive action adventure game . " IGN gave the game a 9 @.@ 1 out of 10 , as being " beautiful , charismatic , engaging and one of the most original games you 'll play anytime soon . " Electronic Gaming Monthly 's three reviewers gave it a 9 , 9 @.@ 5 , and 9 out of ten , one saying : " I 'll be surprised if you can find a better game on any system this fall . " Newtype USA named ?kami its Game of the Month for October 2006 , heralded the pacing as " nearly flawless " and proclaimed " ?kami is that rarest of beasts : a game without any obvious flaws . Clover 's creativity and attention to detail are on full display here . Shame on any gamer who passes up this divine adventure . " Eurogamer scored the game 10 / 10 saying " Right from the start it conjures an atmosphere of being something

special , but to keep that level of quality up consistently over 60 hours ensures that this will be a game that will be talked about for years to come " . In 2007 , ?kami was named eighteenth best PlayStation 2 game of all time in IGN 's feature reflecting on the PlayStation 2 's long lifespan . Famitsu gave the game a near perfect score of 39 out of 40 , the 15th game to date to receive this score from the publication .

However , the game was noted to have some flaws . The game was criticized for its uneven difficulty . Reviewers have also noted some difficulty in getting the game to recognize the correct Celestial Brush patterns , as well as excessive amounts of dialog , particularly at the introduction , which was also hampered by the computer @-@ generated voices used instead of voice acting .

The Wii version of ?kami has received generally similar praise to the PlayStation 2 version , with GameSpot stating that the support for widescreen and the Wii controls " make it even more relevant today than it was in 2006 " . The use of the Wii Remote for the Celestial Brush was well received ; in GameSpot 's review , they noted that the Wii functionality with the Brush " improves the pace of the game " . However , other aspects to the controls were found to be weaker , particularly in combat . In their review , Nintendo Power recommended the PlayStation 2 version of the game over the Wii , stating that " Though you can overcome the drawing and attacking issues with practice (and by sticking to whip @-@ style weapons) , it 's a hurdle you shouldn 't have to leap . " The Wii version was given the Game of the Month award from IGN for April 2008 . It was a nominee for multiple awards from IGN in its 2008 video game awards , including Best Artistic Design and Best Use of the Wii @-@ Mote .

The high @-@ definition release on the PlayStation 3 was praised for being the " definitive " version of the game , with the rendering in 1080p helping to make the graphics style of the game stand out . Cam Shae of IGN did express some disappointment that the PlayStation 3 version did not attempt to address the " pop up " of far @-@ off objects due to draw distance , a limitation of the PlayStation 2 version . Oli Welsh of Eurogamer considered that the game remains as relevant as it was when it was first released in 2006 , being one of the few video games of the Zelda style .

= = = Awards = = =

?kami 's initial showing at the 2005 E3 Convention garnered several awards and recognition , including 1UP 's " Best PS2 Game " , " Best Game of Show " (second place) , and " Best Action Game " (third place) ; IGN 's " Best PS2 Game of Show " , and runner @-@ up for " Best of Show " and " Most Innovative Design " ; and X @-@ Play 's " Most Original Game " . GameSpy recognized it as the fifth best game showing for the convention .

Upon release , ?kami appeared as the " Game of the Month " for IGN , Electronic Gaming Monthly , and Game Informer . IGN , Edge Magazine and Game Revolution rated it as the best overall game of 2006 , while Game Trailers and Official PlayStation Magazine , named it best PS2 game for 2006 . IGN further awarded the game the " Best Overall " and " PS2 Adventure Game " , the " Best Overall " and " PS2 Artistic Design " , the " Overall " and " PS2 Most Innovative Design " , and the " Best Overall Story " . GameSpot awarded the game for the " Best Artistic Graphics " for 2006 . IGN named ?kami the 19th top game of all time in a 2007 list . In 2010 , GamePro ranked it as the fifth best game for the PlayStation 2 .

?kami has also won awards from outside the mainstream gaming press . The game earned the " Best Character Design " and only one of three Innovation Awards at the 2007 Game Developers Choice Awards . ?kami won the Grand Prize in the Entertainment Division of the 2006 Japan Media Arts Festival . On 13 August 2007 . It was also awarded the best " Animation in a Game Engine " , " Art Direction in a Game Engine " , " Outstanding Original Adventure Game " , and " Game of the Year " in the 2006 awards by the National Academy of Video Game Testers and Reviewers (NAVIGaTR) . ?kami was given an " Award for Excellence " from the Japanese Computer Entertainment Supplier ' s Association (CESA) at the Japan Game Awards 2007 and was later given 2009 CESA Developers Conference (CEDEC) award for " Visual Arts " . The game was awarded the " Best Anthropomorphic Video Game " in the 2006 Ursa Major awards . It also won the 2007 BAFTA awards for " Artistic Achievement " and " Original Score " .

== Sales ==

Okami sold 200,000 copies in North America in 2006, grossing approximately US \$ 8 million and ranking as the 100th best selling game of the year in the region. By March 2007, the total sales of the PlayStation 2 version were near 270,000. By comparison, Okami sold 66,000 copies in Japan for 2006. While it was initially thought that poor sales of Okami and God Hand (another Clover title released in the same time frame) were the cause of the closure of Clover Studio, it was later revealed that three key developers within Capcom and Clover Studios, Shinji Mikami (Resident Evil series), Hideki Kamiya (Devil May Cry series), and Inaba, had left the company, and the studio was dissolved, such that "now all the resources should be used more effectively and more efficiently since they are centralized." Inaba, Mikami, and Kamiya went on to form the video game development company "Seeds Inc", later merging with a company called "ODD" to become "Platinum Games".

On 30 July 2008, Capcom revealed that the Wii version of Okami had sold approximately 280,000 copies in North America and Europe since its release date. The Wii version debuted in Japan with a modest 24,000 copies sold in its first week in the region. It was the sixth best-selling game in Japan on 23 October 2009. Total sales for the game remained under 600,000 total units by March 2009, and was named the "least commercially successful winner of a game of the year award" in the 2010 version of the Guinness World Records Gamer's Edition.

== Legacy ==

Ben Mattes, producer for the 2008 Prince of Persia video game, cited Okami as well as Ico and Shadow of the Colossus as influences on the gameplay and artwork for the game. Capcom's Street Fighter IV is also stated to have character designs influenced by Okami with hand-drawn images and brushstroke-like effects. The Disney video game, Epic Mickey, uses similar drawing aspects as Okami, allowing the player to draw and modify parts of levels to proceed. The final boss, Yami, appears as the main antagonist and final boss in the crossover fighting game, Tatsunoko vs. Capcom: Ultimate All-Stars. Amaterasu appears as a playable character in Marvel vs. Capcom 3: Fate of Two Worlds and Ultimate Marvel vs. Capcom 3. After Clover's dissolution and most of its staff's subsequent reformation as Platinum Games, one of their next games, Bayonetta, contains several references to Okami; the most notable of these is when the title character transforms into a panther and, like Amaterasu, a trail of flowers and plant life follows her. For the 2010 San Diego Comic Con, Capcom raffled a limited run of T-shirts designed by Gerald de Jesus and iam8bit that placed Amaterasu and Chibiterasu (from Okamiden) into a homage to the Three Wolf Moon t-shirt.

In 2009, GamesRadar included Okami among the games "with untapped franchise potential", commenting: "Seriously, if Nintendo can make the same Zelda game every few years, then why can't Capcom release Okami 2?". In 2015, Amaterasu was featured in Archie Comics' Worlds Unite crossover between its Sonic the Hedgehog comic lines and Mega Man series. An Okami costume was included in Monster Hunter Generations.