

= Persona ( series ) =

Persona ( Japanese : ????? , Hepburn : Perusona ) , also known as Shin Megami Tensei : Persona , is a series of role @-@ playing video games developed and primarily published by Atlus . The series is a spin @-@ off from Atlus ' Megami Tensei franchise , and was originally based on the high school setting of Shin Megami Tensei If .... The first entry in the series , Revelations : Persona , was released in 1996 . There have since been eight further console titles ( four main entries and four spin @-@ off titles ) , with another ( Persona 5 ) in development . The series takes its title from the beings used by characters in battle , manifested from a character 's personality .

Persona began as a spin @-@ off based on the positively @-@ received setting of If .... Its trademark features include a high school setting , a group of students as the protagonists , a silent protagonist similar to the mainline Megami Tensei franchise , and combat using Personas . Since the release of Persona 3 in 2006 , the main series has used a social simulation function called Social Links , which is directly linked to how Personas evolve . Central character designs are by series co @-@ creator Kazuma Kaneko ( Persona and the Persona 2 games ) and Shigenori Soejima ( Persona 3 onwards ) . Its overall theme is exploration of the human psyche and how the characters find their true selves . The series ' recurring concepts and design elements draw on Jungian psychology and archetypes , along with multiple world mythologies and popular literature .

Revelations : Persona was the first role @-@ playing Megami Tensei title to be released in the West . Beginning with Persona 2 : Eternal Punishment , the English localizations began to remain faithful to the Japanese versions , at the insistence of Atlus . The series is highly popular internationally , becoming the best @-@ known Megami Tensei spin @-@ off and establishing Atlus and the Megami Tensei franchise in North America . Following the release of Persona 3 and 4 , the series also established a strong following in Europe . Since the release of the first Persona game , the series has sold six million units worldwide , forming a substantial part of the Megami Tensei franchise 's total sales . There have been numerous adaptations , including anime television and theatrical series , novelizations , manga , and stage plays .

= = Titles = =

= = = Main series = = =

Revelations : Persona is the first entry in the series , was released in 1996 in Japan and North America for the PlayStation . A port to Microsoft Windows was released in Japan in 1999 . The game was later ported to the PlayStation Portable ( PSP ) : it was published in 2009 in Japan and North America as physical and digital releases , and 2010 in Europe as a digital release . Set in the town of Mikage @-@ cho , it follows a group of high school students from St. Hermelin High , who are forced to confront an outbreak of demons in their hometown .

Persona 2 : Innocent Sin is the second entry in the series , released in Japan in 1999 for the PlayStation . After the success of Persona 's PSP port , a port of Innocent Sin was greenlit . For this version , adjustments were made so that it played more like its sequel , along with added features and a new scenario . The port was released in 2011 in all regions . Set in the coastal city of Sumaru , the story follows Tatsuya Suou , a student of Seven Sisters High , as he confronts phenomena generated by reality @-@ altering rumors .

Persona 2 : Eternal Punishment is the third entry in the main series , released in 2000 in Japan and North America for the PlayStation . Like Innocent Sin , it was remade for PSP , and included a new scenario by the game 's original writer . The remake released in Japan in 2012 , but did not reach the West . The original version was re @-@ released worldwide on PlayStation Network ( PSN ) in 2013 in response to this . Set shortly after the ending of Innocent Sin , the story follows Maya Amano , a supporting character from the previous game , as she confronts a similar rumor @-@ created threat along with Tatsuya .

Shin Megami Tensei : Persona 3 is the fourth entry in the main series . Developed for PlayStation 2

( PS2 ) , it released in 2006 in Japan , 2007 in North America , and 2008 in Europe . Persona 3 FES , a director 's cut featuring new content and an epilogue , was released in 2007 in Japan and 2008 in North America and Europe . The main portion of FES was later ported to the PSP as Persona 3 Portable : it featured a few enhancements such as a female playable character and the ability to control all characters in battle , and some content was adjusted or removed so it could fit on a portable platform . The story takes place in the town of Iwatodai , following a group of students known as " SEES " who fight monsters that appear during a time known as the Dark Hour .

Shin Megami Tensei : Persona 4 is the fifth entry in the main series , released on the PS2 in 2008 in Japan and North America , and 2009 in Europe . The success of Persona 3 Portable inspired the creation of a portable version of Persona 4 . As using the PSP would result in cutting too much content , it was instead developed for PlayStation Vita , which allowed for new features and content . This version was titled Persona 4 Golden . Persona 4 takes place in the rural town of Inaba , where a group of students investigate a series of killings related to a realm known as the Midnight Channel .

Persona 5 is the sixth entry in the main series , currently in production for PlayStation 3 and PlayStation 4 . It is set for release in 2016 in Japan and internationally in 2017 . Persona 5 will be set in Tokyo and will follow a group of students as they adopt the guises of thieves to tackle the city 's corruption and attain freedom from imposed societal pressures .

= = = Spin @-@ offs = = =

Persona 3 received a Japan @-@ exclusive spin @-@ off online game titled Persona 3 : The Night Before ; it follows a similar cycle of daytime activities and night time combat as the original game , with one player being chosen as the party leader each night . After its closure in 2008 , a new free @-@ to @-@ play browser game titled Persona Ain Soph was released that year ; the gameplay focused on players fusing Personas and confronting a threat known as the Qliphoth . Staying exclusive to Japan , it closed down in June 2010 . A fighting game sequel to Persona 4 , Persona 4 Arena , was released in arcades in Japan in 2012 . Console versions were released in 2012 in Japan and North America , and 2013 in Europe . A sequel , Persona 4 Arena Ultimax , was similarly released in Japanese arcades in 2013 , then released in 2014 in all regions for consoles . A standalone spin @-@ off for the Nintendo 3DS , Persona Q : Shadow of the Labyrinth , was released worldwide in 2014 ; it features the full casts of Persona 3 and 4 , and is classed by Atlus as an official entry in the Persona canon . A rhythm game set after the events of Persona 4 Arena Ultimax , Persona 4 : Dancing All Night , was released worldwide in 2015 .

Several Persona mobile games have been made in partnership with other Japanese mobile companies such as Bbmfi . Their first partnership was in 2006 with the development and release of Megami Ibunroku Persona : Chapter of the Foreign Tower of Emptiness , a 3D dungeon crawler set within the environments of the first Persona game . The companies later collaborated on two mobile titles based on the Persona 2 games : Persona 2 : Innocent Sin - Lost Memories in 2007 , and Persona 2 : Eternal Punishment - Infinity Mask in 2009 . Both titles carried over the basic gameplay functions of the original games tailored for mobile phones . Many mobile spin @-@ offs are related to Persona 3 : there is an RPG side @-@ story titled Persona 3 Em , an action game prequel set ten years prior to Persona 3 titled Aegis : The First Mission , and an alternate version of Persona 3 featuring different characters titled Persona 3 Social . Multiple Persona 3 @-@ themed puzzle games have also been developed . An online mobile RPG set around the high school featured in Persona 3 , titled Persona Mobile Online , was released in 2009 . Persona 4 likewise received a mobile spin @-@ off , this time a card game titled Persona 4 The Card Battle .

= = Common elements = =

= = = Gameplay = = =

The gameplay of the Persona series revolves around combat against various enemy types : Demons , Shadows and Personas . Main combat takes place during dungeon crawling segments within various locations . The way battles initiate varies between random encounters ( Persona , Persona 2 ) or running into models representing enemy groups ( Persona 3 onwards ) . Battles are governed by a turn @-@ based system , where the player party and enemies each attack the opposing side . Actions in battle include standard physical attacks using short @-@ range melee or long @-@ range projectile weapons , magical attacks , using items , guarding , and under certain conditions escaping from battles . During battle , either side can strike an enemy 's weakness , which deals more damage than other attacks . For Persona 3 and 4 , a key element in battle is " One More Turn " : should a party member or enemy land a critical hit , they gain an extra turn . If all enemies are knocked down by critical hits , the party can perform an " All Out Attack " , with all party members attacking at once and dealing high damage . Each party member is manually controlled by the player in all but one Persona title : in Persona 3 , all the party apart from the main character are controlled by an AI @-@ based command system . The general gameplay has remained consistent across all Persona games .

Each Persona game also includes elements unique to them . In Persona , battles take place on a grid @-@ based battlefield , with characters ' and enemies ' movements dictated by their placement on the battlefield . This system was abandoned for the Persona 2 games : the party has free movement across the battlefield , and is assigned a set of moves which can be changed in the menu during and in between battles . In Persona and Persona 3 , there is a lunar phase tied to gameplay , time progression , and the plot . In Persona 4 , this was changed to a weather @-@ based system , where changes in the weather keyed to the story affected enemy behavior . Persona 5 introduces elements such as platforming and stealth gameplay to dungeon exploration .

= = = = Personas = = = =

A defining aspect of the series is the Personas , manifestations of a person 's psyche . Many Personas used up to Persona 3 are inspired by Graeco @-@ Roman mythology . In Persona 4 they are based on Japanese deities ; Persona 5 will use characters inspired by popular fictional and historical outlaws . The summoning ritual for Personas in battle varies throughout the series : in early games , the party gains the ability to summon through a short ritual after playing a parlor game ; in Persona 3 , they fire a gun @-@ like device called an Evoker at their head ; in Persona 4 , they summon their Personas using Tarot cards ; in Persona 5 , they will be summoned through the characters ' masks .

Personas are used for types of physical attack and magical attacks , along with actions such as healing and curing or inflicting status ailments . For all Persona games , all playable characters start out with an initial Persona , which evolves through story @-@ based events and use during battle . In multiple Persona titles , two or more Personas can be summoned at once to perform a powerful Fusion Spell . In Persona 3 and 4 , only the main character can wield and change between multiple Personas ; the other characters use a single Persona . During the course of the game , the player acquires more Personas through a system of Skill Cards , represented by Major Arcana Tarot cards . Each skill card represents a different Persona family , which in turn hold their own abilities inherent to that family . Multiple Personas can be fused together to create a new Persona with improved and inherited abilities : these range from fusing two Personas in the Persona 2 duology , to fusing up to twelve in Persona 4 .

A system introduced in Persona 3 is Social Links , a form of character interaction tied to the growth of Personas . During their time outside battle , the main character can interact with and grow a particular Social Link , which acts as an independent character growth system tied to a Persona family or Arcanum . As the main character 's relationship with the character representing a Social Link grows , its rank is raised and more powerful Personas related to the Social Link 's assigned Arcanum can be summoned and fused . Attributes related to the main character 's social life can also be used to improve their Persona abilities , such as their academic abilities and social aptitude . An updated version of Social Links will be featured in Persona 5 . In Persona and the Persona 2

duology , there is a Negotiation mechanic carried over from the Megami Tensei series , in which player characters can talk with enemies and provoke certain actions depending on their dialogue choices . Some responses yield Skill Cards for use in creating new Personas . Negotiation was removed from later Persona titles , although Atlus staff considered the Social Link system and aspects of Persona Fusion to be a " disguised " version of it .

= = = Setting and themes = = =

The Persona series takes place in modern @-@ day Japan , and almost always focuses on a group of high school students . The exception to this is Eternal Punishment , which instead focused on a group of adults . The setting has been described as urban fantasy , with extraordinary events happening in otherwise normal locations . The typical setting used is a city , with a noted exception being the rural town setting of Persona 4 . Although they are typically stand @-@ alone titles that only share thematic elements , the Persona games share a continuity , with elements from previous titles turning up in later ones . Persona and the Persona 2 games shared narrative elements which were concluded with Eternal Punishment , so Persona 3 started out with a fresh setting and characters . The first in the series is Persona , set in the year 1996 . This is followed by the events of Innocent Sin and Eternal Punishment in 1999 . At the end of Innocent Sin , the main characters rewrote events to avert the destruction of Earth , creating the Eternal Punishment reality , with the original reality becoming an isolated Other Side . Persona 3 and subsequent titles stem from Eternal Punishment . Persona 3 is set in 2009 to 2010 , and Persona 4 is set two years later in 2011 to 2012 . The Persona 4 Arena games and Dancing All Night take place in the months following Persona 4 . Persona Q takes place in a separate enclosed world which the characters of Persona 3 and 4 are drawn into from their respective time periods . The main character of each Persona game is a silent protagonist representing the player , with a manner described by the series ' director as " silent and cool " . When the writer for new story content in Eternal Punishment 's PSP version wished for the main character to have spoken dialogue , this was vetoed as it went against the series tradition .

A central concept for the series is the Collective Unconscious , a place generated by the hearts of humanity and from which Personas are born . According to the official Persona Club P3 book , the Collective Unconscious was generated by the primitive life on Earth as a means of containing the spiritual essence of Nyx , a space @-@ born being whose presence would cause the death of all life on Earth . Her body was damaged by the impact and became the moon , while her psyche was left on the surface and locked away at the heart of the Collective Unconscious . The fragments of Nyx 's psyche , known as " Shadows " , are both a threat and a crucial part of humanity 's existence . To further help defend against hostile Shadows , people generated the deities that exist within the Collective Unconscious , many of which manifest as Personas . Nyx appears in Persona 3 as the antagonist . Two recurring characters generated by the Collective Unconscious are Philemon and Nyarlathotep , the respective representatives of the positive and negative traits of humanity . In Innocent Sin , the two reveal that they are engaged in a proxy contest as to whether humanity can embrace its contradictory feelings and find a higher purpose before destroying itself . Philemon makes appearances in later Persona titles as a blue butterfly . A recurring location is the Velvet Room , a place between reality and unconsciousness that changes form depending on the psyche of its current guest . Its inhabitants , especially an enigmatic old man called Igor , aid the main characters by helping them hone their Persona abilities .

The central theme of the Persona series is exploration of the human psyche and the main characters discovering their true selves . The stories generally focus on the main cast 's interpersonal relationships and psychologies . There is also an underlying focus on " the human soul " . Many of the concepts and characters within the series ( Personas , Shadows , Philemon ) use Jungian psychology and archetypes . A recurring motif are the " masks " people wear during everyday life , which ties back to their Personas . This motif will be more overtly expressed in Persona 5 through the main casts ' use of masks in their thief guises . Each game also includes specific themes and motifs . Persona 2 focuses on the effect of rumors on the fabric of reality ( referred to by the developers as " the power of Kotodama " ) ; Persona 3 employs themes involving

depression and the darkness within people ; Persona 4 focuses on how gossip and the media influences people 's views of others ; and Persona 5 will show how the main characters pursue personal freedom in a restrictive modern society . A recurring element in the earlier entries is " The Butterfly Dream " , a famous story by the Chinese philosopher Zhuang Zhou . It ties in with the series ' themes , and also with Philemon 's frequent appearances as a butterfly . Philemon 's original appearance was based on Zhuang Zhou . The character Nyarlathotep is based on the character of the same name from H. P. Lovecraft 's Cthulhu Mythos , and the Mythos as a whole is frequently referenced in Persona 2 . The Velvet Room was based on the Black Lodge from Twin Peaks .

= = Development = =

The Persona series was first conceived after the release of Shin Megami Tensei If ... for the Super Famicom . As the high school setting of If ... had been positively received , Atlus decided to create a dedicated subseries focusing on the inner struggles of young adults . The focus on high school life was also decided upon due to the experiences of the series ' creators , Kouji Okada and Kazuma Kaneko : according to them , as nearly everyone experiences being a student at some point in their lives , it was something everyone could relate to , representing a time of both learning and personal freedom . In their view , this approach helped players accept the series ' themes and the variety of ideas included in each title . Kaneko in particular tried to recreate his experiences and the impact it had on him during his time with the series . The main concept behind the first game was a Megami Tensei title that was more approachable for new and casual players than the main series . The abundance of casual games on the PlayStation reinforced this decision . The game 's title , Megami Ibunroku , represented the title 's status as a direct spin @-@ off from the series . It was later dropped to further define Persona as a standalone series . After the success of Persona , Innocent Sin began development , retaining many of the original staff . During the writing of Innocent Sin , it was decided that the world of Persona 2 needed a different perspective than that of the current protagonist . This decision laid the groundwork for Eternal Punishment .

The conceptual Persona 3 was submitted to Atlus in 2003 by Katsura Hashino , who had worked as a designer for multiple Megami Tensei titles and had been the director for Shin Megami Tensei : Nocturne . Gaining Atlus ' approval of the concept , development started in the same year , after the completion of Nocturne and the Digital Devil Saga duology . Ideas were being passed around about Persona 4 , but the title did not begin official development until after the release of Persona 3 . Preparations for Persona 5 's development began in 2010 . The team decided to shift towards more challenging story themes , saying that the shift would be more drastic than that experienced with Persona 3 . Persona 4 Arena and its sequel were the first non @-@ RPG collaborative project in the series : its success inspired the creation of both Persona Q and Dancing All Night . Beginning with Persona 3 , a dedicated team originally referred to as " 2nd Creative Production Department " has handled development for the series . The team was later dubbed " P @-@ Studio " . Aside from Atlus , other developers have helped develop entries in the Persona series . During the pre @-@ production stage of Persona 4 Arena , Hashino approached Arc System Works after being impressed by their work on the BlazBlue series . For Dancing All Night , development was initially handled by Dingo , who were well known for the Hatsune Miku : Project DIVA series . Citing quality concerns , Atlus took over development .

= = = Art design = = =

The two character artists for the Persona series are Kazuma Kaneko , a central artist in the main Megami Tensei series who designed characters for the first three Persona games , and Shigenori Soejima , who worked in a secondary capacity alongside Kaneko and took Kaneko 's place as the character designer from Persona 3 onwards . While designing the characters for Persona , Kaneko was inspired by multiple notable celebrities and fictional characters of the time , along with members of Atlus staff . In Persona and Innocent Sin , the main characters all wore the same school uniforms , so Kaneko differentiated them using accessories . For Eternal Punishment , the main cast were

adults , so Kaneko needed to rethink his design procedure . Eventually , he adopted the concept of ordinary adults , and gave them designs that would stand out in @-@ game .

Soejima 's first major work for the series was working on side characters for Persona 2 alongside Kaneko . Kaneko put Soejima in charge of the series ' art direction after Persona 2 as Kaneko did not want to imprint his drawing style on the Persona series , and also wanted Soejima to gain experience . Soejima felt a degree of pressure when he was given his new role , as the series had accumulated a substantial following during Kaneko 's tenure . In a later interview , Soejima said that although he respected and admired Kaneko , he never consciously imitated the latter 's work , and eventually settled into the role of pleasing the fans of the Persona series , approaching character designs with the idea of creating something new rather than referring back to Kaneko 's work . For his character designs , Soejima uses real people he has met or seen , looking at what their appearance says about their personality . If his designs come too close to the people he has seen , he does a rough sketch while keeping the personality of the person in mind . For his work on Persona Q , his first time working with a deformed Chibi style due to its links with the Etrian Odyssey series , Soejima took into account what fans felt about the characters . A crucial part of his design technique was looking at what made a character stand out , then adjusting those features so they remained recognizable even with the redesign .

Starting with Persona 3 , each Persona game has been defined by a different aesthetic and key color . It is one of the first artistic decisions made by the team : Persona 3 has a dark atmosphere and serious characters , so the primary color was chosen as blue to reflect these and the urban setting . In contrast , Persona 4 has a lighter tone and characters but also sports a murder @-@ mystery plot , so the color yellow was chosen to represent both the lighter tones and to evoke a " warning " signal . According to Soejima , blue was the " color of adolescence " , and yellow was the " color of happiness " . For Persona 5 , the color chosen was red , to convey a harsh feeling in contrast to the previous Persona titles and tie in with the game 's story themes . Its art style was described as a natural evolution from where Persona 4 left off .

= = = Music = = =

The music of the Persona series has been handled by multiple composers . The one most associated with the series is Shoji Meguro , who began working on Persona shortly before he officially joined Atlus . His very first composition for the game was " Aria of the Soul " , the theme for the velvet room and a recurring tune within the series . During his initial work on the series , Meguro felt restricted by the limited storage space of the PlayStation 's disc system , and so when he began composing for Persona 3 , which allowed for sound streaming due to increased hardware capacity , he was able to fully express his musical style . His main worry for his music in Persona 3 and 4 was the singers ' pronunciation of the English lyrics . He was unable to work on the Persona 2 titles as he was tied up with other projects , including Maken X. The music for Innocent Sin and Eternal Punishment was handled by Toshiko Tasaki , Kenichi Tsuchiya , and Masaki Kurokawa . Tsuchiya had originally done minor work on Persona , and found composing for the titles a strenuous experience . Meguro returned to work on the series in Persona 5 . For this game , Meguro used its themes for inspiration , and used elements of acid jazz to achieve the right mood . Meguro also wrote the theme song for Persona Q ; the rest of the soundtrack was handled by Atsushi Kitajoh and Toshiki Konishi .

= = Release = =

The series consists of ten games ( main titles and spin @-@ offs ) , not counting re @-@ releases and mobile titles . Persona was the first role @-@ playing entry in the Megami Tensei franchise to be released in the West , as previous entries had been considered ineligible due to possibly controversial content . As examples of this content were in a milder form for Persona , the restrictions did not apply . According to Atlus , Persona and its sequel were to test player reactions to the Megami Tensei series in the West . The greater majority of Persona titles were either first

released on or exclusive to PlayStation platforms . This trend was broken with the release of Persona Q for the 3DS in 2014 . All the Persona titles have been published by Atlus in Japan and North America . An exception in Japan was the Windows port of Persona , which was published by ASCII Corporation . After 2016 , due to Atlus USA 's merger with Sega of America , Sega took over North American publishing duties , although the Atlus brand remained intact .

Due to the company not having a European branch , Atlus has generally given publishing duties to other third @-@ party publishers with branches in Europe . This frequently results in a gap between North American and European release dates ranging from a few months to a year or more . For Persona 3 , Atlus gave publishing duties to Koei . For Persona 4 , European publishing was handled by Square Enix . Persona 4 Arena was originally published in Europe by Zen United after a long delay , but the digital rights were eventually returned to Atlus , resulting in the title being removed from PSN . Atlus ended up re @-@ publishing the digital PlayStation version in Europe . They had previously digitally published the PSP port of Persona in Europe and Australia . Arena Ultimix was published in Europe by Sega , who had recently purchased Atlus ' parent company . It was speculated that this could lead to a new trend that would shorten the release gap between North America and Europe . A regular publishing partner was Ghostlight , whose relations with Atlus went back to the European release of Nocturne . A more recent partner was NIS America , which published Persona 4 Golden , Persona Q , and Dancing All Night . Atlus ' partnership with NIS America ended in 2016 , with NIS America citing difficulties with the company since its acquisition by Sega as reasons for the split . As part of their statement , NIS America said that Atlus had become " very picky " about European partners , selecting those which could offer the highest minimal sales guarantee on their products . Sega of America and Atlus USA eventually entered into a partnership with European publishing company Deep Silver to publish multiple titles in the region , including Persona 5 .

= = = Localization = = =

The localizations for the Persona series are generally handled by translator Yu Namba of Atlus USA , who also handles localization for multiple other Megami Tensei games . Another prominent staff member was Nich Maragos , who worked with Namba on multiple Persona games until moving to Nintendo of America prior to 2015 . The localization of Persona was handled by a small team , which put a lot of pressure on them as they needed to adjust the game for Western audiences : the changes implemented included altering names , changing the appearance of characters , and removing numerous cultural references . An entire alternate main quest was also removed . After Persona , it was decided that future Persona games should be as faithful as possible to their original releases . Namba 's first localization project for the series was Eternal Punishment . For the release of Innocent Sin , there was a debate over whether to release it , as it contained potentially controversial content including allusions to Nazism . In the end , due to staff and resource shortages , Innocent Sin was passed over for localization in favor of its sequel Eternal Punishment . Later , when the company developed the PSP ports , the team released the ports of Persona and Innocent Sin overseas so fans attracted by Persona 3 and 4 would be able to easily catch up with the rest of the series . The localization for Persona was completely redone , reverting and restoring all the previously altered or cut content . The port of Eternal Punishment was not localized due to " unusual circumstances " , so the company released the original version on PSN instead .

For the localizations of Persona 3 and 4 , the team incorporated as much of the original content as possible , such as using Japanese honorifics and keeping the game 's currency as yen rather than changing it . As a general rule , they incorporate cultural elements from the original versions unless they would not be understood by the player , such as with certain jokes . Nevertheless , some changes had to be made . In one instance , the character Mitsuru Kirijo was originally an English speaker , but her second language for the localized version was changed to French due to her cultured appearance . School tests also needed to be changed due to similar language @-@ based issues . The Social Links were originally called " Community " , but this was changed as the word " Community " had a very specific meaning in English . The new name was inspired by the way the

character Igor made reference to the concept using words such as " society " and " bonds " . Some in @-@ game Easter egg references were also changed : in Persona 3 references to Shin Megami Tensei by a character in an in @-@ game MMORPG were changed to reference earlier Persona games , while mentions of a fictional detective in Persona 4 were altered to reference the Kuzunoha family from Eternal Punishment and the Devil Summoner series . Character names have also needed adjustment , such as the stage name of Persona 4 character Rise Kujikawa , and the way characters referred to each other was adjusted to appeal more to a western audience . Persona 5 is planned to be localized in this fashion .

The titles of games have also been altered . The banner title for Persona was changed from Megami Ibunroku to Revelations , principally because the team thought the latter title sounded " cool " . The Revelations title was removed for Innocent Sin and Eternal Punishment . After the successful release of Nocturne , the " Shin Megami Tensei " moniker was added to the series title to help with Western marketing . This has not been the case for some titles : Persona 4 Arena 's original title , Persona 4 : The Ultimate in Mayonaka Arena , was shortened as it sounded awkward , and the " Shin Megami Tensei " moniker was dropped as it would have made the title too long . The same change was made for Persona 4 Golden , with the team also dropping the " The " present in the Japanese title as it would have looked and sounded odd in Western territories . Persona 5 was also released in the West without the moniker .

= = Reception = =

Since the release of Persona in 1996 , the series has sold 6 @.@ 2 million units worldwide by the end of the 2014 / 2015 fiscal year , forming a large part of the total sales of the Megami Tensei franchise . The first Persona was referred to at the time as a sleeper hit , and the success of it and Eternal Punishment helped establish both Atlus and Megami Tensei in North America . In Europe , the series did not become established prior to the release of Persona 3 and 4 , both of which were highly successful in the region . According to Atlus CEO Naoto Hiraoka , the main turning point for the franchise was the release of Persona 3 , which was a commercial success and brought the series to the attention of the mainstream gaming community . Persona 4 received an even better reception . The Persona series ' success has allowed Atlus to build a strong player base in the West , contributing to the success of other titles such as Catherine .

The Persona series has been referred to as the most popular spin @-@ off from the Megami Tensei franchise , gaining notoriety and success in its own right . According to io9 's James Whitbrook , the series has become notable due to its balance of normal life and fantastic elements , commenting that " that 's much less common [ in the West ] , and the way the series portrays urban fantasy through that lens is what makes it so different , especially from what you would normally expect from Japanese RPGs " . Nintendo Power , in an article concerning the Megami Tensei series , cited the Persona series ' " modern @-@ day horror stories " and " teams of Japanese high @-@ school kids " as the perfect example of the franchise . Persona was mentioned in 1999 by GameSpot 's Andrew Vestal as a game that deserved attention despite not aging well , saying " Examining Persona reveals three of the traits that make the series so popular - and unique - amongst RPG fans : demonology , negotiation , and psychology " . The game has been named as a cult classic . Persona 3 was named by RPGamer as the greatest RPG of the past decade in 2009 , and RPGFan listed Persona 3 and 4 in second and fourth place respectively in their similar 2011 list . Persona 3 was listed by Gamasutra as one of the 20 essential RPGs for players of the genre . Persona 4 was also listed by Famitsu as one of the greatest games of all time in a 2010 list .

As well as gaining critical acclaim , the series has been the subject of controversy over its content . This controversy began with the localized banner title of the original Persona , which raised concerns due to its religious implications . Kurt Katala , writing for 1UP.com in 2006 about the controversial content of the Megami Tensei franchise as a whole , mentioned Innocent Sin 's references to homosexuality , schoolyard violence , and Nazism , considering them possible reasons why the title was not originally released in the West . In 1UP.com 's 2007 game awards , which ran in the March 2008 issue of Electronic Gaming Monthly , Persona 3 was given the " Most



controversial game that created no controversy " award : the writers said " Rockstar 's Hot Coffee sex scandal and Bully 's boy @-@ on @-@ boy kissing 's got nothing on this PS2 role @-@ player 's suicide @-@ initiated battles or subplot involving student @-@ teacher dating " . Persona 4 has in turn been examined by multiple sites over its portrayal of character sexuality and gender identity .

= = Related media = =

The first anime adaptation of the Persona series , a television series titled Persona : Trinity Soul , aired in 2008 . It was animated by A @-@ 1 Pictures , directed by Jun Matsumoto , written by a team that included Yasuyuki Muto , Shogo Yasukawa , and Shinsuke Onishi , and composed for by Taku Iwasaki . Its characters were designed by Soejima and Yuriko Ishii , while Persona designs were done by Nobuhiko Genma . It was distributed internationally by NIS America . Trinity Soul takes place in an alternate setting ten years after Persona 3 , making it a non @-@ canon entry in the franchise . An anime adaptation of the original Persona 4 , Persona 4 : The Animation , was aired in 2011 . The 25 @-@ episode series was produced by AIC ASTA and directed by Seiji Kishi . In 2014 , a series based on Persona 4 Golden , titled Persona 4 : The Golden Animation , was produced by A @-@ 1 Pictures . This series , which retains the cast of the original adaptation , dramatizes the new material included in Persona 4 Golden , focusing on the protagonist 's encounters with new character Marie . A standalone prequel anime created by A @-@ 1 Pictures , Persona 5 The Animation : The Day Breakers , is set for release in September 2016 prior to the game 's release .

The original Persona 4 anime series was made into a condensed film adaptation titled Persona 4 : The Animation - The Factor of Hope ; it was released in Japanese cinemas in 2012 . Persona 3 has also been adapted into a series of anime films produced by AIC ASTA and featuring staff from Persona 4 : The Animation , released in cinemas in Japan and licensed for release overseas by Aniplex . The four films are titled # 1 Spring of Birth , # 2 Midsummer Knight 's Dream , # 3 Falling Down , and # 4 Winter of Rebirth . They were released from 2013 through to 2016 . For both Persona 4 : The Animation and the Persona 3 film series , one of the main concerns was the portrayal of the lead characters , which were originally dictated by player actions .

Persona was adapted into an eight @-@ issue manga series titled Megami Ibunroku Persona , originally serialized in 1996 and later reissued in 2009 . A second spin @-@ off manga , Persona : Tsumi to Batsu , was released to tie in with the release of the Persona 2 games . Set within the same setting of the Persona 2 games , it follows a separate story . In its 2011 reissue , new material was added that connected the manga to the events of Innocent Sin . Persona 3 and Persona 4 have both received manga adaptations , serialized in Dengeki Maoh . Another manga based on Persona Q was also serialized : two separate manga storylines , based on the two storylines featured in the game , were written and dubbed Side : P3 and Side : P4 . Multiple novels based on Persona 3 and 4 have also been released .

Three stage plays based on Persona 3 have been produced under the banner Persona 3 the Weird Masquerade . They received limited runs and featured separate performances for the male and female versions of the game 's protagonists . The three plays are titled Ao no Kakusei , Gunj? no Meiky? , and S?en Kessh? . Persona 4 was also adapted into two stage plays , both produced by Marvelous AQL and receiving limited runs in 2012 : Visualive and Visualive the Evolution . A stage play based on Persona 4 Arena was likewise given a limited run in December 2014 , and one based on Persona 4 Arena Ultimax is planned to run in July 2016 .

Atlus has created or hosted media dedicated to the Persona series . A dedicated magazine originally ran for ten issues between 2011 and 2012 , and has been irregularly revived since then . An official talk show released on the official Persona website and Niconico , Persona Stalkers Club , began in February 2014 . Hosted by freelance writer Mafia Kajita and actress Tomomi Isomura , it was designed to deepen the connection between Atlus and the Persona fanbase . Concerts featuring music from the Persona series have also been performed , and some have received commercial releases on home media in Japan . Action figures and merchandise such as clothing related to Persona 3 and 4 have also been produced .

