

= Xenoblade Chronicles =

Xenoblade Chronicles , known in Japan as Xenoblade (Japanese : ?????? , Hepburn : Zenobureido) , is an action role @-@ playing game developed by Monolith Soft and published by Nintendo for the Wii home console . Initially released in Japan in 2010 , it later released in Europe in 2011 , and was eventually released in North America in 2012 . A port to the New Nintendo 3DS was released worldwide in 2015 . Xenoblade Chronicles forms part of the Xeno metaseries , although no direct narrative connections exist to previous Xeno games , and incorporates aesthetic and narrative elements from both fantasy and science fiction . The game features navigation through an open world split into zones , side @-@ quests tied to party members ' affinity , and a real @-@ time action @-@ based battle system which incorporates the main character 's ability to see glimpses of the future .

Xenoblade Chronicles takes place on the frozen bodies of two warring Titans , the Bionis and the Mechonis . The people of Bionis , including the human @-@ like Homs , are in a perpetual war with the Machina machine race of Mechonis . Key to the Homs ' efforts in fighting the Machina 's Mechnon army is the Monado , a sword said to have been wielded by the Bionis . In an attack on his colony , the main protagonist Shulk sees his childhood friend Fiora killed . Having discovered his ability to wield the Monado , he sets out on a quest for revenge with his best friend , Reyn , and gathers more people as he goes on this epic quest .

The concept for Xenoblade Chronicles originated in June 2006 when the game 's executive director and lead writer , Tetsuya Takahashi , visualized and then constructed a model of two giant gods frozen in place with people living on their bodies . Development began that year under the title Monado : The Beginning of the World , though it was eventually rebranded with its current title in honor of Takahashi 's previous work . The script was worked on by Takahashi , anime writer Yuichiro Takeda , and in @-@ house Nintendo writer Yurie Hattori . The music was handled by six different musicians , including first @-@ timer and lead composer Manami Kiyota and industry veterans Yoko Shimomura and Yasunori Mitsuda .

The game was announced in 2009 under its original title , and released in Japan the following year . Despite releasing in Europe , its North American release remained unconfirmed until December 2011 , during which time a fan campaign called Operation Rainfall had drawn considerable attention to the game . Upon release , the game received critical acclaim as one of the best recent role @-@ playing games , while its port was praised for successfully re @-@ creating the game in portable form . It also met with commercial success in both Japan and the West . A spiritual successor by the same development team for the Wii U , Xenoblade Chronicles X , was released in 2015 . Xenoblade Chronicles was later rereleased on the Wii U 's Nintendo eShop in August 2015 in PAL regions , and April 2016 for North America .

= = Gameplay = =

Xenoblade Chronicles plays as a role @-@ playing video game (RPG) , where the player controls one character out of a party of three using the Wii Remote and Nunchuk or the Classic Controller . The game employs an open world design , with players able to freely navigate seamlessly interconnected environments . A day @-@ and @-@ night time cycle exists in the game , with the time of day often affecting in @-@ game events , quests , enemy strengths , and item availability : for instance , stronger enemy types appear at night . While time flows automatically and a day cycle repeats about every ten minutes in real time , players can adjust the in @-@ game clock to the desired time at any point . Additionally , while the game is about exploration , many areas , called " Landmarks " aid in traversing the land by serving as warp points , allowing the player to instantly return to that point at any time . The game also supports a " save anywhere " feature , where players can save at any point outside battle . The game also contains a New Game + mode , which pulls over much of the player 's progress from their first playthrough into future playthroughs .

Exploration , quest completion , and item collection are large parts of the gameplay . The player is encouraged to explore the large environments , which generally allow the player to visit whatever

can be seen in the horizon . While exploring , the player may choose to take on side quests from various non @-@ player characters that inhabit the game 's world , as they commonly involve locating certain items or killing a certain number of enemy characters . When the necessary requirements are fulfilled , the quests complete automatically without the player needing to manually notify in @-@ game characters of its completion , provided that the non @-@ player characters are generic @-@ named , e.g. , Colony 9 Resident and Defence Force Soldier . Item collection plays a role in the game in the form of the game 's " Collectopedia " . Scattered across all major regions of the game are glowing blue orbs , and upon coming into contact with the orb , the player is awarded an item at random , which is added to the player 's inventory . From there , the player may add the item to the Collectopedia , and when a certain number are collected during exploration , the player is rewarded with new items . Aside from the Collectopedia , there are also ether crystals to be found from fallen enemies or ether crystal deposits , which give the player access to a multifaceted " Gem Crafting " mini @-@ game , allowing for the creation of gems that may increase battle stats when equipped .

Many in @-@ game systems affect the general flow of gameplay . The " Affinity " system tracks the relationships between characters and locations in the game . " Location Affinity " tracks the interpersonal relationships between all of the game 's named characters , depicting to which degree they get along with one another , and a town 's general perception of the player 's controllable party . Completing quests can alter perception of the characters , and open up additional story sequences . There is also " Party Affinity " , which is strictly the level of affection between each party member , ranging from indifference to love . These affinities can be raised by having characters participate in battle together , giving gifts , or using the " Heart @-@ to @-@ Heart " system . These " Heart @-@ to @-@ Hearts " are intimate moments between two characters that can show more of a character 's personality , history , or thoughts , and can be initiated by having a certain level of Affinity between them . The Affinity system ties into how efficient characters work together in battle and gem crafting . The game also has an extensive customization system , which includes changing the characters ' outfits and weapons . These changes are directly reflected in the game , appearing in the field and even during scripted event scenes .

= = = Battle system = = =

Xenoblade Chronicles has a real @-@ time action @-@ based battle system , where the player manually moves the current lead character in real @-@ time , and party members will " auto @-@ attack " when enemies enter their attack radius . Manually input attacks , called " Arts " , may also be performed by the player , but in a limited fashion . Battle Arts are only available after a " cool down " period that occurs after every use , while character specific " Talent Arts " only become available after enough auto @-@ attacks are executed . Both party members and enemies have a finite amount of health points , and attacks deplete this value . Combat is won when all enemies lose their HP , but the game is lost if the player 's character loses all their HP and has no means of being revived . Health may be restored by the player by using healing Arts in battle , or the player may let characters ' HP regenerate automatically outside of battle . Winning battles earns the player experience points , which allows the characters to grow stronger by leveling up and learning new Arts . Arts for each character must be set by the player on their respective set up , called a " Battle Palette " , outside battles .

Several other systems are present to affect the flow of battle . The " Party Gauge " slowly fills as party members successfully land hits on the enemy players , and filling the gauge allows the player to chain multiple attacks together , for extra damage . All party members have an " aggro ring " around them as well ; the more actions a character performs , the larger it grows . Larger aggro rings lead enemies to focus their efforts on that respective character , leading to a strategic aspect of luring and diverting attention of enemies . Each character has a " Tension " gauge , which represents a character 's morale : at its highest point , characters have a high probability of dealing a critical blow and less chance of missing an enemy . The game 's " Vision " system , where main character Shulk can see glimpses of enemies ' future attacks , also factors into battles . With

knowledge of an enemy 's potentially dangerous attack , the player can prevent it from happening by alerting a teammate , allowing the player to activate one of their Arts , or by using an Art of their own to stop the attack . The Vision system is tied to the " Party " gauge , which is filled by boosting team morale , using Arts with special effects , and avoiding or dealing critical hits . The three @-@ tiered gauge gradually depletes outside of battle , and one tier is needed to either revive characters or receive visions . When all three tiers are full , the party can execute a chain attack .

= = Synopsis = =

= = = Setting and characters = = =

The setting of Xenoblade Chronicles originated in a world that was nothing but endless ocean , until two great titans , the Bionis and the Mechonis , came into existence . The two titans fought a timeless battle , until with one final strike , only their corpses remained , forever locked in combat . The gods have since become the home of multiple forms of life . The Bionis houses organic lifeforms including human @-@ like Homs , the diminutive Nopon , and a race known as the High Entia . The Mechonis is home to a hostile machine race known as the Machina . A key weapon used by the Homs in the battle against the attacking Machina is the Monado , a mystical sword linked to the Bionis which grants visions of the future to its wielder .

The game 's main character is Shulk , a scientist who lives in the settlement of Colony 9 on Bionis . During an attack by Machina warriors , called Mechon , Shulk comes into possession of the Monado . During his journey , Shulk is joined by Reyn , Shulk 's childhood friend and headstrong member of the Defence Force ; Dunban , a former wielder of the Monado and the brother of Shulk 's other childhood friend Fiora ; Sharla , a medic and sniper from Colony 6 ; Melia Antiqua , crown princess of the High Entia and a half @-@ blood ; and Riki , a member of the Nopon who is chosen as the hero of his village . Other important characters include Dickson , Shulk 's mentor ; Mumkhar , a cowardly soldier who was Dunban 's rival for wielding the Monado ; Egil , leader of the Machina ; and Alvis , a mysterious man who aids Shulk on his journey .

= = = Plot = = =

The game 's opening details events one year past , when Dickson , Dunban , and Mumkhar were fighting a Mechon army . Mumkhar deserts , and in the process of defeating the Mechon the Monado paralyzes Dunban 's right arm : in the present , Shulk studies the Monado in Colony 9 , where Dunban and Fiora live . Colony 9 is soon attacked by a group of Mechon led by a special Face Mechon called Metal Face . Dunban is almost killed when he attempts to use the Monado again , prompting Shulk to use it : he wields it with ease , and receives visions of the future from it . While the Mechon are driven back , Metal Face proves immune to the Monado and kills Fiora before fleeing . Swearing revenge against Metal Face , Shulk sets out together with Reyn , meeting Sharla and reuniting with Dunban on their journey . Guided by a vision from Shulk , the group travel to the High Entia capital to gain entry to Prison Island , joined by Melia and Riki . Shulk also meets Alvis , who is revealed to share Shulk 's ability to wield the Monado . Gaining entry , they encounter Zanza , a being who created the Monado and who offers Shulk the ability to destroy the Face Mechon , revealed to be humans inside Mechon mechs . Though Shulk accepts and the Monado is granted the ability to destroy humans , Zanza is killed by Metal Face and another Mechon called Face Nemesis during an attack on the capital . During the ensuing battle , Face Nemesis is damaged to reveal a recreated and amnesiac Fiora controlling it .

While initially disheartened by this , Shulk is rallied by his comrades and sets out in pursuit of Metal Face and Fiora . During a peaceful encounter with Fiora , Metal Face attacks them again , revealing itself to be Mumkhar . Egil then intervenes , spiriting Fiora away . On the way to the Mechonis , the party finally kill Mumkhar , then face off against Egil and Fiora . In the resultant fight , Shulk and Fiora are separated from the group . During their time together , Shulk successfully awakens Fiora 's

memories , and learns that another being was controlling her body . Reuniting with the group , they meet up with a friendly Machina named Vanea . She reveals that the Bionis and Mechnonis were initially at peace , before the Bionis ' god Zanza launched an unprovoked attack . Since the battle a year before , Egil has been working to convert the life of Bionis into Mechnon to render the Monado useless . Going to face Egil , Fiora is taken over by the other presence , the Machina goddess Meyneth . They reach Egil as he reactivates the Mechnonis and begins an attack on the Bionis , seeking to prevent the Bionis from using its population as food and save Mechnonis from another attack and the people of Bionis from extinction . Despite fighting him , Shulk manages to make him see that they both wish for a return to peace . At this point , Dickson appears and shoots Shulk , who is possessed by Zanza , Dickson 's master . Zanza uses the Monado to destroy Mechnonis , stealing Meyneth 's own Monado from Fiora 's body : the party narrowly escape with Shulk 's body , with Egil sacrificing himself so they can escape .

In the aftermath of the Mechnonis ' destruction , pure @-@ blooded High Entia begin transforming into Telethia , beings whose one purpose is to purge Bionis of life . While the party is initially helpless before the Telethia , Shulk awakens and manages to defeat a Telethia raid on Colony 6 , although Alvis is revealed to be a disciple of Zanza . Making their way to Prison Island , they defeat Zanza 's third disciple , the High Entia Lorithea , then Dickson . The party then travels to face Zanza , who declares the life of Bionis as simply his food and vessels . Zanza then offers Shulk the chance to become his new disciple . Shulk rejects the offer , and during the ensuing battle produces a third Monado : prompted by Alvis , the spirit of the Monado , which Shulk uses to destroy Zanza . Alvis then shows Shulk Zanza 's origins ; both Zanza , then named Klaus , and Meyneth were originally human scientists from Earth , working to create a new universe aboard a space station . The experiment ended in disaster , obliterating the universe and causing Zanza and Meyneth to be reborn as gods . Alvis was originally the artificial intelligence operating the experiment within the station . After the new universe 's creation , Zanza and Meyneth created life in their image , and Zanza created the cycle of Bionis out of fear that he would eventually die as his creations forgot of his existence and seek life beyond Bionis . With the current universe threatened with death , Alvis asks Shulk to remake the universe . Shulk , now a god , wishes for a world without gods , where everyone can decide their own fates . In the new universe , the survivors of Bionis and Mechnonis build a new settlement and live peacefully together , Fiora is restored to her Homs form , and both her and Shulk optimistically look forward to Alvis ' promise of endless worlds and races of people beyond their own .

= = Development = =

Xenoblade Chronicles was developed by Japanese development company Monolith Soft , with Tetsuya Takahashi forming the original concept and serving as the game 's executive director . Takahashi had previously worked in the 1990s on Xenogears , then on the Xenosaga trilogy after founding Monolith Soft in 1999 . Xenosaga was intended to be a six @-@ part series , but low commercial performances forced the planned Xenosaga series to be halved . After these events , the entire development team was in a state of low morale . The initial concept for Xenoblade Chronicles , of people living on the bodies of gigantic gods , came to Takahashi in June 2006 while the studio was finishing development on Disaster : Day of Crisis . Struck by his idea , he immediately committed it to paper and showed the draft to other senior staff , who were favorably impressed . One of them , an executive called Yasuyuki Honne , thought it would make a good 3D model and bought materials to create it . Construction began in July : during this period , younger staff acted as models so that Takahashi could establish which parts of the gods ' bodies could be used as habitable and navigable environments in various poses .

After the model 's construction , Takahashi decided to combine the model 's concept with an unrelated story idea , which became the basis for a new game after positive feedback from staff . Takahashi later said that one of the main reasons for developing the game was to bolster team morale after the commercial failure of the Xenosaga games . Development began over four years prior to its release , before the official release of the Wii hardware , with the first prototypes for the

game being developed in April 2007 . It was at this point that co @-@ director Genki Yokota was brought in by Nintendo to handle any system @-@ related issues due to his previous experience with RPGs . After being contacted regarding both Xenoblade Chronicles and fellow Wii RPG The Last Story , head of Nintendo 's licensing department Shinji Hatano said that the games should be made for a wide audience and using a " romanticist approach " . Takahashi was involved in every aspect of the game 's development , from its initial concept to the debugging stage . At the beginning of development , the game was going to be a stand @-@ alone title unrelated to the Xeno series , bearing the title Monado : The Beginning of the World . Later , then @-@ Nintendo president Satoru Iwata had the title changed to its current one to honor both Takahashi 's previous titles and the effort he was investing in Xenoblade Chronicles . According to Takahashi , the " Xeno " designation was more along the lines of a symbol , calling back to the previous works of Monolith Soft .

A key element of the game for Takahashi was creating an ideal balance between gameplay and story , something that he felt was lacking in other JRPGs which focused too much on story . Takahashi 's previous experiences with the Xenosaga games and Baten Kaitos : Eternal Wings and the Lost Ocean , which had been called out for being old @-@ fashioned when compared to other RPGs of the day , influenced his work in this regard . The mechanic of Shulk getting glimpses of the future became the foundation of the entire battle system . Takahashi briefly experimented with a turn @-@ based battle system that incorporated the feature , but it did not work out . In a separate issue , Takahashi decided against a transition between the environment and a battle arena was chosen by Takahashi as he felt such a transition would negatively interrupt the flow of gameplay . The game features a fully open world , which was described by Takahashi as " overwhelming , like an MMORPG " , describing the world size as being roughly equivalent to the Japanese archipelago . The scale of the world was derived from Takahashi 's wish to showcase the grandeur of the experience . In addition to this , the number and length of cutscenes was cut down significantly from those present in the Xenosaga games , with Takahashi considering such a development method as having become a " dead end " . The wish for an expansive world also became tied up with the wish to reward players for exploration , which entailed the creating of a huge amount of content creation such as items and accessories . The gameplay was influenced both by previous Japanese RPGs and Western RPGs .

= = = Scenario = = =

The scenario was created by Takahashi , Yuichiro Takeda and Yurie Hattori . Takahashi was responsible for creating the main concept , but as he was going to be director and executive producer , he was unable to also take on full script @-@ writing duties , so he asked Takeda to be his partner in creating the scenario . Takeda was a writer for anime who had previously collaborated with Takahashi on adaptations of the first Xenosaga game , in addition to writing the script for the Nintendo DS remake of Xenosaga and its sequel . Takahashi deliberately chose someone outside the video game industry as he wanted a different perspective on the story 's pacing . Hattori was brought in during the early development stages due to his experience scenarios for Nintendo games , which enables her to look at Takahashi and Takeda 's scenario from an objective viewpoint . A key element in the scenario was contrasting senses of scale , which Takahashi described as " contrasting the realms of the micro and the macro " , while the main story themes were characters embarking on a great and evolving journey , and overcoming a predetermined future . Despite multiple fantasy elements , Xenoblade Chronicles is based within a science fiction premise , although such elements were kept low @-@ key during the first part of the game .

Despite their earlier work together , it was the first time they were so intimately involved in a project . Takeda found working on the project more difficult than he initially anticipated : his standard writing form was for the anime series format , which was limited to 20 @-@ 25 minute episodes . With Xenoblade Chronicles , the volume of story and writing work was much larger and offered more freedom for dramatic expression . Conversely , his previous experience enabled Takahashi to easily plan the structure and scheduling for the game . During the initial writing stages , Takahashi did not

give precise instructions to Takeda : he instead gave a rough outline that they worked on together , then they passed the developing script between themselves , along producers Shingo Kawabata and Koh Kojima , to iron out rough elements . Takahashi compared it to playing a game of catch , something he was unused to doing for his game scenarios . The ending underwent revisions : while Takahashi and Takeda felt they had created a fairly explanatory ending , Hattori still felt unsatisfied . After a second look , Takahashi and Takeda realized that it would appear perplexing for someone outside the writing process , so they rewrote it to be more player @-@ friendly . The final script contained a large amount of dialogue : the sheer volume , which included dialogue spoken in battle , made for a difficult experience while recording . Due to all the effort , Takahashi was emphatic that as much of it as possible be used , although he sometimes felt that there was too much . In the end , some dialogue needed to be cut as testers felt that the characters talked too much . Takahashi 's overall writing style was made deliberately more mature and subdued than other games within the genre .

One of the elements that was of great concern to both Takahashi and Takeda was the main protagonist Shulk . Takahashi had noticed that , in the majority of RPGs , the main protagonist was all too easily disliked even if other characters became fan favorites . Consequently , one of the main priorities was to make Shulk as appealing as possible to players . During this process , it was suggested that Shulk be a silent protagonist , but there was a general wish from the staff for him to speak . In addition to this , Takahashi needed to confront the problem faced in any RPG with voiced characters , which was developing them suitably and writing appropriate dialogue between them . The companion character Riki was cited by Takeda as a favorite of his : on paper Riki sounded an unlikable character , but his voice and appearance acted as a counterbalance to his remarks . One of the scenes where Hattori had input was a scene between Shulk and Fiora which showcased their connection : the original scene had Shulk touching Fiora 's cheek , which Hattori felt would look " creepy " coming out of the blue . The scene was altered so Shulk touched her hand instead . One of the early concepts Takeda suggested was that one of the main protagonist 's party would betray them and become the final boss , but Takahashi rejected this idea as he felt it would run counter to player expectation . During the course of its development , the story underwent so many revisions that Takahashi forgot what his original concept was , although the basic framework remained intact throughout .

= = = Music = = =

Xenoblade Chronicles was composed for by six people : Manami Kiyota , music team ACE + (made up of Tomori Kudo , Hiroyo " CHiCO " Yamanaka , and Kenji Hiramatsu) , Yoko Shimomura , and Yasunori Mitsuda . As with other parts of development , Takahashi was deeply involved , constantly rejecting pieces due to what he felt was not fitting for the game . He admitted that this was due to early samples he had given the team for his vision for the music , which they had followed too faithfully for his liking . At Takahashi 's request , music production studio Dog Ear Records helped with the music production .

The music team was led by Shimomura , who was initially very confused by the odd naming of tracks , along with getting the opportunity of using sounds not normally used in her compositions , such as electric guitars . Kiyota had only previously done superficial work on video game titles , she accepted Dog Ear Records ' offer for her to compose music . ACE + was recommended to Takahashi by Dog Ear Records . Kiyota handled environmental tracks , while ACE + was in charge of battle tracks in addition to other musical pieces . The team 's main goal was to create music that went beyond the typical sound of RPGs . In hindsight , Yamanaka attributed the harmony of the six composers ' works to Takahashi 's organization and overall direction . The final score contained around ninety tracks . One of the hardest tracks for Shimomura was a nine @-@ minute track that Takahashi requested to match with a movie scene . Later , he said the track needed to change midway through , essentially necessitating the creation of two conjoined themes . The majority of the game 's music was written by Kiyota and ACE + . Shimomura created eleven tracks . The music was recorded at Burnish Stone Recording Studios . Among the musicians were violinists Yu Manabe and

Masahiko Todo . The chorus work was provided by Yamanaka , Kiyota and Masao Koori .

The ending theme , " Beyond the Sky " , was written by Mitsuda and sung by Japanese singer Sarah Àlainn , also known under the name Sarah Lin . He was brought in due to his previous experience with the soundtracks of Xenogears and the first Xenosaga game , and due to Takahashi 's long working relationship with him . When Mitsuda was contacted , the project was nearing completion , with very little development and composition work left . Despite this , before creating the main theme , Mitsuda asked if he could read the script , which was much larger than he anticipated . The track caused much stress to Mitsuda , who was tasked to create the game 's most important song , which needed to incorporate both the diversity of the entire rest of the soundtrack , and mesh with Takahashi 's grand vision for the ending of the game . Takahashi also personally wrote the original Japanese lyrics for the track . The lyrics were translated into English by Lisa Gomamoto .

An official soundtrack album for the game , Xenoblade Original Soundtrack , was released by Dog Ear Records on 23 June 2010 . It entered the Oricon charts at # 80 , and remained in the charts for five weeks . Upon release , the album received praise from critics : while multiple critics were surprised that Shimomura and Mitsuda 's contributions were less substantial than originally thought , they found the majority of the music composed by Kiyota and ACE + to be enjoyable . " Beyond the Sky " also received unanimous praise .

= = Release = =

Xenoblade Chronicles was first announced at the Electronic Entertainment Expo 2009 under its original title . Its official title and release window were not announced until the beginning of 2010 , alongside the announcement of The Last Story . The game released in Japan on 10 June 2010 . Over a year after its Japanese release , it was confirmed for release in European territories under the title Xenoblade Chronicles . This version included both the English and Japanese voice tracks . According to Adam Howden , Shulk 's voice actor , he was not given much information prior to his audition , and was never given the full script during recording . According to him , the translated script needed to be altered as some lines came out as longer or shorter than the Japanese originals , and he was told to give Shulk a neutral British @-@ accented voice . Concerning the game 's localization , Takahashi stated that while some minor changes were made in the English versions of the game , like some bug fixes , minor adjustments to gameplay balance , and slight rewriting of some written content , none of the changes led to any significant differences . Initially planned for release on 2 September 2011 , it was released two weeks early on 19 August . In addition to the standard edition , a special edition with a Classic Wii Controller was also released . It was later re @-@ released in Europe on the Wii U 's Nintendo eShop on 5 August 2015 .

Despite being confirmed for a European release , Xenoblade Chronicles did not have a confirmation of a North American release . Additionally , the game was absent altogether from Electronic Entertainment Expo 2011 , a major medium for promoting upcoming games in North America . In an interview on the French television station Nolife , Mathieu Minel , the marketing manager of Nintendo France , stated that Nintendo of Europe had desired to show the game at it , but Nintendo of America would not allow it , sparking speculation that it would not be released in North America . In response to this , a dedicated fan campaign was launched called Operation Rainfall . Its goal was to raise fan awareness of the situations felt by three Wii RPGs : Xenoblade Chronicles , The Last Story and Pandora 's Tower . Among the campaign tactics used by Operation Rainfall were emails , organized campaigns , online petitions , phone calls , and messages on Nintendo 's Facebook and Twitter accounts . One of the most notable efforts was a call to pre @-@ order the game via the original " Monado : Beginning of the World " placeholder on Amazon.com. Their efforts resulted in Xenoblade Chronicles becoming # 1 in the site 's pre @-@ order gaming charts , beating The Legend of Zelda : Ocarina of Time 3D and the PlayStation 3 bundle for Call of Duty : Black Ops . The campaign also received support from Mistwalker , the developers of The Last Story , and Xenogears and Xenosaga writer Soraya Saga . Takahashi later stated that they developed the game assuming that it would be released overseas .

In the months following these activities , Nintendo of America officially stated that there were no current plans to release the three asked @-@ for games in North America , despite acknowledging the great demand for the titles . Rumors eventually emerged that the title would see a North American release when it was listed on the website of gaming retailer GameStop . Soon after this , Nintendo officially announced that the game would be released in the region . In a 2013 interview , Nintendo of America president Reggie Fils @-@ Aimé revealed that Nintendo were considering an American release for Xenoblade Chronicles while Operation Rainfall was active , and that while the campaign did not factor into their decision , they were aware of it and took it into account while deciding whether the release would make a profitable release . Xenoblade Chronicles eventually released in North America on 6 April 2012 . It was released in North America as an exclusive to Nintendo 's American store , and GameStop 's website and stores . The eShop version released for North America from 28 April 2016 .

= = = Xenoblade Chronicles 3D = = =

A port for the New Nintendo 3DS , called Xenoblade Chronicles 3D , was released worldwide in April 2015 . It features StreetPass functionality , as well as compatibility with the Shulk amiibo . The port was originally announced in August 2014 alongside the New Nintendo 3DS . The port was developed by Monster Games , a frequent collaborator with Nintendo on well @-@ received ports . They were requested for the job by Nintendo as the staff at Monolith Soft were already working on the next Xenoblade title . Development on the port started between Autumn and Winter 2013 , and was faced with considerable problems as the processing power of the Wii was greater than the 3DS . The New 3DS ' increased power made the port possible , and its button layout meant that the original Wii Classic Controller button layout could be used without adjustment . As part of the alterations made to the title , much of the on @-@ screen information was moved down to the bottom Touch screen so as to de @-@ clutter the top screen , while the layout was carefully arranged so as to maintain the feel of the original as much as possible .

To maintain frame rate and the seamless transitions between environments , unspecified " technical tricks " were used . They also worked hard to include 3D capacity despite the resultant technical difficulties . The most difficult part of the development was getting the game 's scale to work within the new hardware . This entailed the creation of a new graphics engine with a custom visibility culling and complex level of detail systems . All of the environments were rebuilt and optimized for the new system while keeping the original aesthetic intact . The reason it was created for a portable platform rather than the new Wii U home console was that the sheer amount of content would make playing at home difficult for the modern gamer , who was becoming more used to on @-@ the @-@ go , quick gaming sessions . The port was originally going to be developed for the original Nintendo 3DS , but initial testing showed that the original platform lacked the memory and power to effectively run the game . Hearing about the New 3DS , it was decided to use its increased processing power to realize the game 's ambition .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical reception = = =

Since its release , Xenoblade Chronicles has earned unanimous critical acclaim from multiple outlets , earning perfect scores from Digital Spy , Joystiq , GamePro and RPGamer , and near @-@ perfect scores from most other video gaming websites and magazines . The game scored 92 / 100 on the aggregate site Metacritic based on 59 critic reviews . The game had the fourth highest ranking on Metacritic for all video games released in 2012 , tying with Thatgamecompany 's Journey .

The story was cited by many as being innovative and enjoyable despite a fairly standard premise , while its open nature was seen as a welcome change for the genre : IGN critic Keza MacDonald

said that she had been shocked out of expecting RPGs to be similar to the linear and story @-@ driven Final Fantasy XIII . Its battle system and handling of quests also received praise , with the latter being seen as a great improvement for the genre due to its user @-@ friendly workings . The one point that generally drew criticism were the graphics , with multiple critics disappointed that they lacked the polish of other contemporary consoles . IGN , Eurogamer and Edge Magazine cited the game as a triumphant comeback for the RPG , and a prime example of the genre . The battle system , and to a degree its general gameplay , was favorably compared by multiple critics to that used in Final Fantasy XII .

The New 3DS port also received a positive reception , scoring 86 / 100 on Metacritic based on 86 reviews . The port was generally received similar praise to the original Xenoblade Chronicles : many points of praise regarding its gameplay and story were shared with its original release , while new praise was given to the fact that an RPG of its scale had been successfully ported to the platform at all . Despite this , critics cited the graphical downgrade and lackluster implementation of 3D effects as detrimental factors , generally resulting in lower scores for the port when compared to the original game .

== Awards ==

At the 2011 Japan Game Awards , Xenoblade Chronicles received the " Excellence " award . In IGN 's Best of 2012 awards , the game was named " Best Wii / Wii U Game " and awarded with " Best Wii / Wii U Story " . It was also nominated in the " Best Overall Role @-@ playing Game " and " Best Overall Story " categories . In RPGFan 's " Game of the Year " awards that same year , it was named " Best Traditional RPG " , and was a runner @-@ up for " Best Combat " and " Best RPG " , losing both to Mass Effect 3 . It was also awarded the site 's " Reader 's Choice Best RPG " award , with 24 % of readers ' votes going to Xenoblade Chronicles , beating Persona 4 Golden to the award . In RPGamer 's " Best of 2012 " awards , it was named as the year 's best RPG , along with earning awards for " Best Story " and " Best Music " . At the 2012 Golden Joystick Awards , the game was nominated in the " Best RPG " category , although it lost to The Elder Scrolls V : Skyrim . Slant Magazine named it as " Game of the Year " in 2012 .

== Sales ==

During its opening week , Xenoblade Chronicles reached the top of Japanese gaming charts , selling 80 @,@ 000 units . By the end of 2010 , the game had sold over 161 @,@ 000 copies , making it the eighth best @-@ selling Wii game of the year , and eventually reached almost 200 @,@ 000 units by the end of 2013 . In the UK charts , Xenoblade Chronicles debuted at # 7 , and reached # 2 in the dedicated Wii charts despite stock shortages . According to Gamasutra , it was the fourth best @-@ selling game in the UK during its first week . In the US gaming charts , the game was excluded from the NPD Group 's monthly assessment due to it being a retailer exclusive . Investment banking firm Piper Jaffray estimated it to be one of the best @-@ selling games in the United States during the month of April 2012 , along with Mass Effect 3 and Prototype 2 . In a later interview , it was stated that the game sold better in the West than in Japan .

Xenoblade Chronicles 3D fared below par , selling merely 56 @,@ 932 copies in its first week in Japan . Roughly 78 @,@ 000 Japanese copies had been sold by the end of June 2015 . In the UK charts , the game debuted at # 27 , becoming the third best @-@ selling Nintendo product of that week . According to NPD Group figures , the game sold under 75 @,@ 000 , failing to enter the top ten . However , Nintendo stated that the game was the fifth best @-@ selling platform exclusive that week .

== Legacy ==

Since its release , the character of Shulk has been featured as a playable character in Super Smash Bros. for Nintendo 3DS and Wii U , an entry in Nintendo 's crossover fighting game series

Super Smash Bros. , being playable in both versions . Fiora was later featured as a playable character in the crossover game Project X Zone 2 , representing the Xeno series alongside Xenosaga character KOS @-@ MOS . Using experience earned from developing Xenoblade Chronicles and listening to feedback on the game , Takahashi and the team began work on a spiritual successor for the Wii U. Titled Xenoblade Chronicles X , it was first announced in 2013 , and eventually released worldwide in 2015 .