

Silhouette Mirage

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Translation Notes

This is a selection of interesting notes and lore tidbits I learned from my experience translating Silhouette Mirage. This is my first major translation project, and it's a big one! Almost 500 dialogue boxes, up to 4 lines per box, lots of talk-talk talking. It makes you question the Treasure guy who said all of their games are meant to be played in one sitting. TALKING.

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Anyway! These notes will cover terminology, murky details, decisions I had to make in translating, etc. Also included are the funny comics from the strategy guide (read from right to left of course). Major spoilers will be noted. Plus, there's going to be a translation comparison section. I consulted the official PS1 English version a very small number of times during my translation of the game and each time I was met with some flavor of malarky.

SECTION 1 ~ General Notes

“The Messenger of Justice”

Shyna is the “正義の使者” - Seigi no Shisha

“Shisha” can also mean “envoy” or “emissary” or anything like that. The original PreCure duo, for example, are the “Emissaries of Light”.

I went with Messenger, as did the official translation.

Names

Once you beat the game, you'll see each character has a romanized name in the credits, occasionally intentionally different than their name as rendered in Katakana. Some names have increased significance and plot twists, so I was cautious to treat those romanized names as THE names, especially given their absence from the game's original instruction manual. The more spoiler-y alternate/full names will be saved for the end.

Day of Parting

“Wakare no hi” – the day of separations, parting, farewells. At various points, Shyna interprets this both literally and figuratively, so its English translation needs to retain the double meaning.

Mooks

The mook enemies are known as “Cupid” and “Devil”.

PROJECT START



Shop

In Japanese, the currency is listed as “money”. For text limit reasons, I adopted the official translation’s format of “Age: Cost:”. In the original Japanese version, each Parasite declares its age and cost. A translation of that would be like “Yo I’m Glattony, I’m 1 year old!!! And cost 50!”.

An oversight: In the Japanese version, each shop item has the same yes/no message. The official translation uses synonyms for “no” for each message. Since this patch is built off of the work done to port the official translation, this ended up staying. I don’t really mind it.



Honorifics

I use Japanese honorifics only if the characters are Japanese. It’s notable that NO character in the game refers to Shyna by her name, instead using “onee-san, ojou-san,” and of course “Messenger of Destruction”. “Onee-san”, while literally translating to “sister”, is also typically used by kids addressing a girl older than them, but still young. Moments like these are translated like, “Hey lady!”

The instance where I DID translate an honorific literally is in the case of Moses, who, per the strategy guide, “refers to Shyna as ‘anego’ out of respect for her defeating him”. It is ever present in his dialogue and felt sensible given their dynamic. Anego means “big sister”.



Computer terms

The script and lore are littered with computer terms. Some examples include:

- “Shyna’s activation/start-up” – strategy guide
- “rebooting Edo” – self explanatory
- “Look him up” – stage 1, literally the same verb you use when describing using a search engine
- “Delete” – appears often
- “Transfer” – transferring data.

Moses

Shyna’s friend, named after the biblical Moses, who else. His beloved staff/partner (a pun) that he uses to open transfer spaces is named Exdeath (a play on “exodus”?). Inexplicably named “Bug” and given weird tics in the official english version.





Zohar

Each side of Zohar, the blue side, and the pink side, has their own gendered way of speaking. The blue one has a male voice and the pink one has a female voice. In the strategy guide, Zohar is referred to with both pronouns. By all accounts Zohar's blue side is male, and their pink side is female. It's not unusual at all to refer to someone just by their name, in Japanese, so in the game's script itself Zohar is never referred to with a specific gendered pronoun.

Every time you fight Zohar the fight may end with them in either form, with their dialogue varying. I tried the best I could to "gender" each form's speech but English speech just isn't gendered as aggressively as Japanese speech can be.

Due to limitations in the game's programming, it is impossible to have each character refer to Zohar with pronouns matching the current form they are taking. So in all instances, Zohar is referred to by name or with neutral pronouns.

What is a Half?

Intentionally left vague. Zohar is thought to be the only Half, the Guardian Angels are made in their image. Shyna is also a Half, possessing both elements in her body. However, everyone can only be one element or the other at all times, never both. Zohar's element-switching is described in the strategy guide as the other half entering a state of suspended animation, clearly of a different nature than Shyna who can change just by turning around.

Tutorial

Paraphrased for text limits. The Japanese is at times too long winded, and at times much more compact than the English would be. Each individual toss description, for example, states that the toss has "no attack power".

What requires the space of 6 characters in Japanese requires 16 in English.

Element

"Zokusei". The element of Silhouette and the element of Mirage. In the official translation it's "attribute". You can translate it either way.



SECTION 2 ~ Translation Comparison

A selection of random scenes from the game. I haven't read the full official script but they seem to like making things up.

WORKING DESIGNS



*all WD screencaps are from World of Longplays' PS1 playthrough

NEW TRANSLATION



*all translation caps are from a beta ver. of this new Saturn patch!

She talks like a robot for no reason. Also, the "Day of Parting", a pivotal event invoked many times in the Japanese script seems to have been removed from the game in favor of it being about whatever they wanted to make it about.



↑ Moses's random tics in the English PS1 version.
↓ Very soulful "she's stupid" joke



General differences

As you may have noticed, there are many biblical references, and they're treated as a matter of fact by this document. However, the official version excises a lot of them, while leaving others at random, i.e. Gehenna, Har, and Megiddo are all named after significant things in Jewish theology.

For all intents, the Japanese version is a story about an apparent savior on a mission to decide whether to restore a "ruined" world or to leave it as it is. It asks questions like, "should the people who failed so greatly be given another chance?". The religious tone is overbearing. More on this at the end of this document.

WORKING DESIGNS

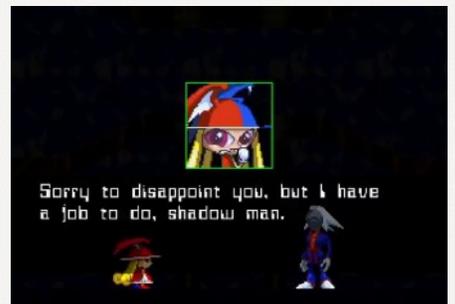
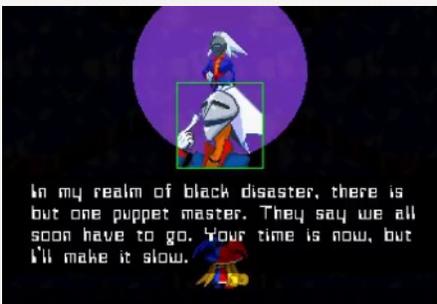
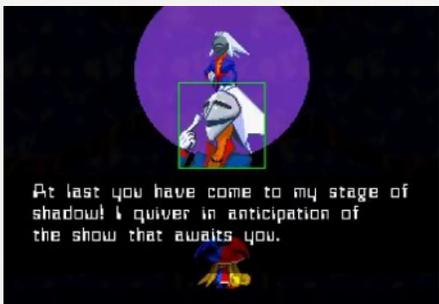


NEW TRANSLATION



Goliath talks like an actual caveman for no reason. (yes, he's somewhat formal in Japanese!!!) Steroid joke. He's like "ohoho! im a slave" making it weird that Shyna thinks she's pointing something out by saying he's just being used.

WORKING DESIGNS



NEW TRANSLATION



This is possibly the most made-up
Working Designs script.



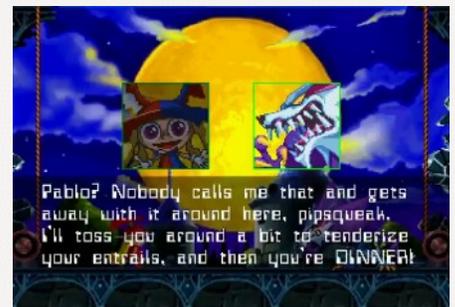
WORKING DESIGNS



NEW TRANSLATION



WORKING DESIGNS



NEW TRANSLATION



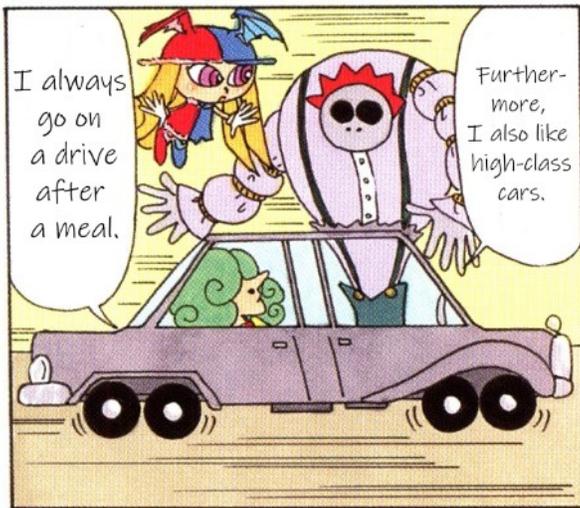
Doesn't start SUPER inaccurate but the scriptwriters' terminal lack of maturity gets the better of them. The interesting juxtaposition between how Paul starts the conversation talking about "Mr. Megiddo" and how he was "given" the castle and then Wolf Paul goes "SCREW MEGIDDO!! I STOLE HIS CASTLE!!" is gone in favor of... BWAHH I'M A WOLF I EAT PEOPLE

As mentioned previously →
Shyna is never referred to by name by other characters in the Japanese version.
In fact, in the original version of this scene, she's getting mad that Sarah WON'T say her name.

NEXT SECTION ~ STAGE BY STAGE NOTES

WORKING DESIGNS





SECTION 3 ~ Stage by Stage notes

Interesting stuff as you go through the game.

“Boy-girl” (area 1)

“Otoko onna”. It presents a challenge as it can mean more than a few things, and this sentence, at first glance, sounds derogatory. But not OFFENSIVELY derogatory; there’s many more words you can use. It can mean, “feminine boy”, “boyish girl”, or be used to refer to people who are intersex. Yet Zohar is a character multigendered in a fantasy way, and there is no word in English that conveys so much at once.

I initially gave in and rewrote the line, as “Are they a boy or a girl?”. However, before the patch was complete, I was watching Utena, and there, the subs say “boy-girl”. I think it makes *enough* sense, but mostly I just don’t want to have to rewrite the line.

The Working Designs translation omits this line and, at least in Stage 1, treats Zohar as male.

Paracelsus’s Alchemaru (area 2)

Paracelsus’s sword is “Alchemaru”. He’s named after a real life alchemist. So he uses the “Renkinmaru”, Renkin being Japanese for... alchemy! -maru is a common ancient name ending. In the official English version his name is Nardo.

Florist (area 2)

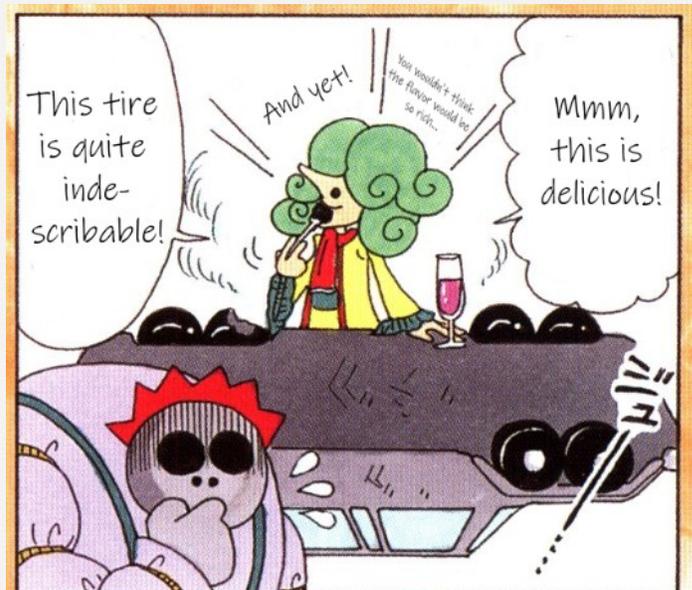
She does say “I’m already 20.” Interpret that how you want.

to try and surpass Tetra (area 2)

Tetragamaton i.e. YHWH.

Delilah (area 4)

Looks girly but he’s a guy. From Media City, he controls the flow of information to lead the scattered Mirages.



Silhouette is strength, Mirage is intelligence (area 3)

The most difficult bit of figurative language to translate in this script. "Intelligence" is the figurative meaning of the word used, while "head" is the literal meaning. There is a very minute callback to this line later on and I hope I retained the intent, but it's difficult.

Paul (area 3)

Named after the biblical "Paul". Oddly, in katakana both his name and the biblical Paul are spelled "Pauro". Before the "Day of Parting", he worked for an animal protection organization. He always longed to be stronger, because he didn't feel like he was helping the animals with his own power.



Princedom (area 5)

They speak in Kansai (I hate Kansai!!!). You get one more textbox from whichever head's on the side you decide to go to, but the result is the same.

Robots (area 5)

The robots in stage 5 speak in all caps to reflect how their dialogue is written only in Katakana. This is a common cliché for robots in Japanese fiction (i.e. Robo from Chrono Trigger).

"Relic of the past" (area 4/7)

On some occasions Shyna's referred to as "過去の遺産", the legacy of the past left behind by the people of the previous/old world. For its first, blatantly derogatory invocation, I translated it as "you relic!", for the second, "return the legacy of the past to the dirt!!" to make it as showy/explicit as possible.

"1-2!" (area 1)

A guitarist's sound-check.

"Let's hit 'em hard!" (area 6)

"ガッツーン", an onomatopoeia for slamming something.

"The bells aren't ringing yet!" (area 6)

Bells are the signal for the apocalypse.

NEXT SECTION ~ NAME CHANGES/ANALYSIS (SPOILERS!!!)





SECTION 4 ~ Names and Analysis

All profile information is translated from the strategy guide. All analysis-y information isn't explicitly canonical.

SHYNA NERA SHYNA

"Sinna Neutlarva Sinner"

Shyna's name is rendered in the credits and strategy guide as SINNA-NEUTLARVA-SINNER in English. "Sinner" obviously means one who's sinned, and Neutlarva is short for "neutral larva". This name cannot be extrapolated from the katakana (シャイナ・ネラ・シャイナ)

Following the Day of Parting, Shyna was meant to be the Messiah, but her awakening was faulty. "Neutral larva" is an appropriate description of her current state; she was born as a being stuck halfway, unable to be just Silhouette, or just Mirage. Considering she wields parasites with the motif of Christianity's 7 Deadly Sins as weapons, you can say that Shyna holds "Hell" (more later, concerning Gehenna) within her body and is a character that must carry the label of "Sinner" on their back.

Gehenna

The system that resides in Shyna's body. A mysterious program that guides her to Edo. The original significance of its name is a place in Palestine, once called "Ga-Hinnom", outside of the gates of Jerusalem. The bottom of the valley, where trash was thrown away as well as a place where they buried executed sinners and others who weren't given a proper burial. The form "Gehena" comes from Greek.

A very appropriate name for an existence that's tied to Shyna, who is simultaneously the "savior" and a "sinner".

Moses

As mentioned, Moses is Moses, and wields the staff "Exdeath". His place in the plot, as someone who assists Shyna against his own people, the Mirages, is similar to how Moses betrayed the king of Egypt to save the jews.

Elza

The site of the civil war.

Wild guess, but possibly a corruption of "Jerusalem"? The first three syllables of Jerusalem in Japanese are "e-ru-sa".

The Seven Heavens

The stages are named after the Seven Heavens. (unknown if this is the conventional order)

- 1 - Shamain
- 2 - Raqia
- 3 - Shehaqim
- 4 - Machonom
- 5 - Mathey
- 6 - Zebul
- 7 - Araboth



Har Birthclod

The narcissist that rules over the Mirages. He has absolute confidence in his power and views beings other than himself as trash, as is typical for a Mirage. As recorded in the Book of Revelations, the final battle between gods and devils is Harmageddon (a transliteration of the hebrew Har Megiddo). As with Megiddo, Birthclod means "one born from Clod".

Megiddo Birthclod →

The brutal ruler of the Silhouettes. His attire is that of a gentleman, but his character is decidedly not. He isn't happy with the current world and when he learns of Shyna's power, he meets her, hoping to use her to restore the world. As with Har, the origin of their name is Harmageddon. They are beings resulting from the division of Clod, Clod's wisdom, Har, Clod's power, Megiddo. They are a pair, bound by that origin.



Clod

A boy that was experimented on in the past world. Among the mutants that were produced by manipulating elemental molecules, this boy was subject to the most dangerous experiments. His anger at what happened in the past is palpable. A clod is a lump of earth. It is said that God created humanity from such a thing.

The 7 Deadly Sins and the 7 Parasites

Almost every name is a corruption of the way the sin's name would be in Japanese. This is indicative that their true nature is a plot twist. So, in the translation, their names are accurately rendered as corruptions rather than the names of the sins themselves. It is for that same reason that Shyna is Shyna and not Sinna.

- ・ スローサ = "sloth" = Surosa
- ・ グラットニイ = "gluttony" = Gurattoni
- ・ カビタス = "covetous" = Kabitasu
- ・ アンガラ = "anger" = Angara
- ・ エンビア = "envy" = Enbia
- ・ ラスティ = "lust" = Rasuti
- ・ プライディー = "pride" = Puraidi

In this translation patch,
their names are as follows.

Slotha, Covytous, Glattony, Angara, Envia, Lusty,
Pridy.



Sega...

↓ It's a mixed bath



Zohar Metatron (blue) and Zohar Sandalphon (pink)

The perfect "Half", possessing two elements in their body after the "Day of Parting". They are more or less aligned with the Mirages, but they're a loner and don't meekly follow orders.

When one element is active, the other is in a dormant state of suspended animation.

In scripture, Metatron and Sandalphon are twin archangels. Metatron in particular is known among the angels as a great angel, often referred to as the "lesser YHWH" or "King of the Angels".

...Since they're based off of two twins, Zohar possessing two alternating personalities and elements makes perfect sense.

Though there are also theories that Metatron was a bloodthirsty, cruel angel, regardless of anything, the fact that Metatron is the angel closest to God does not change.

The name of Zohar's true form, Sepher-ha Zohar is the formal name of an important book in Judaism. Though archangels were lower on the totem pole, the truth is they demonstrated power and ability matching the top ranks. Angels allowed to stand in the presence of god.

→
"You're not needed in this world."

Hierarchy of Angels

Here is a hierarchy of angels that roughly aligns with the ranking of the game's "G.A." bosses.

Highest orders

Seraphim
Cherubim
Ophanim

Middle orders

Dominions
Virtues
Powers

Lowest orders

Principalities
Archangels
Angels



Grigori Shemhazai →

Named after the Grigori, a group of fallen angels. Shemhazai, meaning "watcher", is the leader among them. In the game, Gregori is in charge of keeping watch over the shelter where Shyna sleeps.

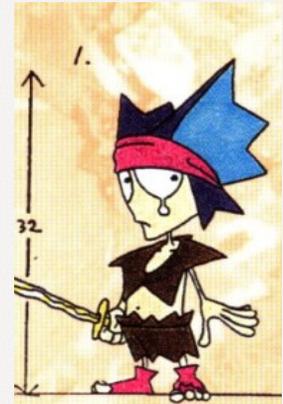


← Paracelsus

A wandering Silhouette warrior in search of a good opponent. He arrives in the town of Raqia when he hears about Shyna, but he's a little tired from the walk. A lone wolf, without friends, there's rumors he's bad at making them. No one has seen his secret technique. He's named after the real life german alchemist who innovated the concept of homunculi.

Paulus →

As previously mentioned, named after the apostle Paul. One of Christ's disciples. During Christ's life, he oppressed Him, but following His death he became an evangelist.



← Goliath the Philistine Warrior

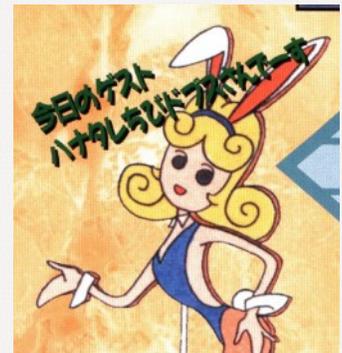
Introduced in the Books of Samuel, Goliath, who is a philistine and fought David.

Samson Hairpower

The guy whose hair contained his power.

Sarah →

Abraham's wife introduced in The Old Testament, who becomes obsessed with the devil called gambling.



Georg Faust

The guy who sold his soul to the devil in that famous story that was based off the real man Johann George Faust.

Delilah the Beauty

Utilizing forms of news media such as TV, the radio, and the internet, he is the manager of Media City that aims to control the scattered Mirages. A high class gourmet accompanied by the bodyguard Samson. There are many of low status who don't receive Hal's orders, who act upon the information Delilah gives. Furthermore, in the past world, he was a capable and popular host who glibly tried to solve every issue with his insincerity. In the "Book of Judges", Delilah is Samson's lover and the evil woman that delivered his hair to the philisitines.



Cupid

The lowest ranked Mirages, who always follow orders. They look cute, but under their masks lie dry, mummy-like faces. They're clever enough to pilot various machines. In Roman mythology, Cupids are the sons of the beauty god Venus.



Devil

Stupider than Cupids so they use their own head as a bomb. The lowest ranked Silhouettes. Only one candle stands in the pumpkin in their heads. They chase after Shyna to make a name for themselves. Obviously, devils are devils.

GUARDIAN ANGELS (G.A.)

Seraphim01

Har's beloved and strongest Guardian Angel. It was created to prioritize its own maintenance above all.

Because of how expansive the program to construct its body is, it's only transferred for the most important scenes.

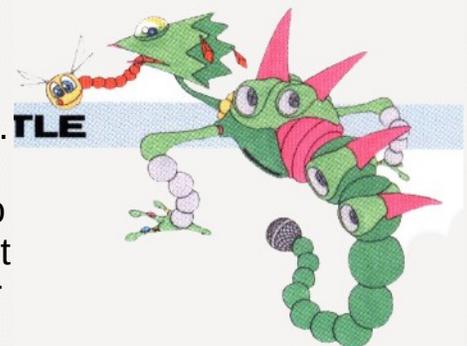
In scripture, the Seraphim have 6 wings and burn with the passion of God. They chant their holy song, appropriate for how Seraphim's arrival in the game is backed by an angelic chorus.



Malakim05

A chameleon-like Guardian Angel that absorbs elemental energy with its tongue. Invisible until it absorbs an element.

The small face on the tip of its tongue spouts nothing but words that'll rub you the wrong way to make it easy for it to absorb elemental energy. It's possible for them to represent either "Virtue" and "Power", but their ability to change their element via their own will aligns more with "power".



Dyunamis06

Its personality is very childish and simplistic, as it yearns for its parent, Har. She's a florist. The greek word "Dyunamis" is synonymous with the name of the angels ranked fifth, Virtues, as well as the ones ranked sixth, Power. Virtues were the first angels created by God, and they have the duty of patrolling the corridor that connects the first and second Heavens (Samhain and Raqia). She's a florist since the scent of roses is said to be a way Angels communicate with people.

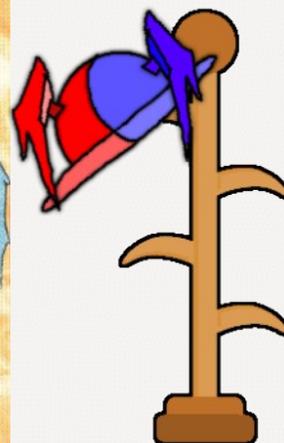


Princedoms07

It contains a stage in its body, so this is the Guardian Angel proud of being the largest. It has two heads, the Mirage side is a sheep, the Silhouette side is a goat.

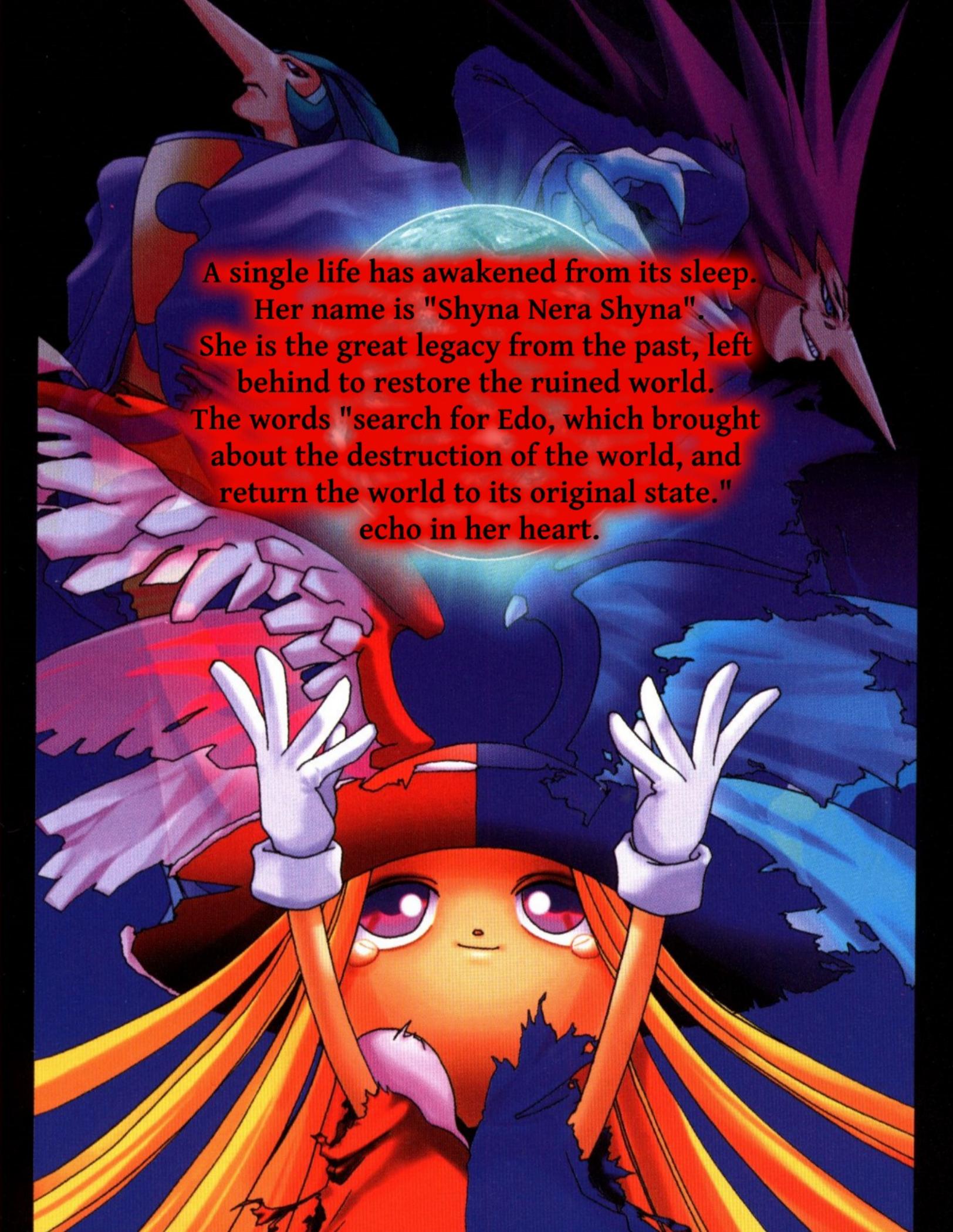
Named after the "Principality" class of angels. Principality angels preside over something greater than individual people. In other words, the fate of nations, the rise of civilizations, and even the world's history. As guardians of civilization, they are staunch defenders of faith. It's their nature to have a very strict sense of good and evil.

Perhaps the reason they're so large in the game is to represent the variety of roles they have played in Christianity, and perhaps it having two heads represents its stronger sense of "good and evil" over the other angels.



I'm beat!

END



A single life has awakened from its sleep.
Her name is "Shyna Nera Shyna".
She is the great legacy from the past, left
behind to restore the ruined world.
The words "search for Edo, which brought
about the destruction of the world, and
return the world to its original state."
echo in her heart.