

# Notes about Xenosaga

gene m. stover

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## 1 What is this?

These are my notes about the game Xenosaga.

Xenosaga contains many references to many different things in life, so I made some notes.

For fundamental notes about the story or game, I recommend other sources in Section 4. Here, I'm mostly recording subtle details.

## 2 What is Xenosaga?

Xenosaga is a series of games for Playstation 2 & other platforms. As of 2005 July 12, two episodes have been released.

title	platform	publisher	release date
Xenosaga 1: Der Wille zur Macht	Playstation 2	Namco	2003 February
Xenosaga 2: Jenseits von Gut und Bose	Playstation 2	Namco	2005 February

Some relevant web sites include:

- Official site: <http://www.xenosaga.com/>
- Xenosaga 1 at GameFAQS: <http://www.gamefaqs.com/console/ps2/data/519264.html>
- Xenosaga 2 at GameFAQS: <http://www.gamefaqs.com/console/ps2/data/917917.html>

## 3 The Notes

**Dammerung** The German word “dammerung” means “twilight” in English.

See the entry for Elsa for some interesting details.

**Durandal** is a very popular name in video games these days. Looks like it was originally the name of the sword of Roland. [?]

**Elsa** is or has been many things. Looks like the oldest reference on Wikipedia is for the lioness which inspired the book *Born Free*. [?] I'm betting that the lioness is not the inspiration for the name of the ship in Xenosaga. Maybe the game designers just liked the name.

*2005 October 14*: The author Elsa Berstain (1866-1949) (a.k.a. Ernst Rosmer) wrote a play called "Dammerung: Schauspiel in Fünf Akten". The title translates to "Twilight: A Drama in Five Acts". During World War 2, she was imprisoned in a German concentration camp because she was Jewish, but because she was a prominent person, she was not put to death by the Nazis.

**Gnosis** is already a word in the English language. Here is the relevant part of the definition from Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary [?]: "esoteric knowledge of spiritual truth held by the ancient Gnostics to be essential to salvation".

Aleister Crowley mentions a group called the "Sovereign Sanctity of the Gnosis" on page 59 of [?].

**Hilbert effect** In the history of the real world, David Hilbert was a mathematician.<sup>1</sup> The Hilbert effect of Xenosaga, by which the extradimensional Gnosis are made vulnerable, might be a reference to Hilbert space, which are important to quantum mechanics.

**Kukai Foundation** Kukai was a Japanese monk, scholar, artist, founder of Shingon Buddhism, calligrapher, engineer, linguist(?), & writer. [?]

I thought I read recently<sup>2</sup> that *kukai* also means forever sacrificing, or something like that. I can't find a reference now.

**Realians** Realians are synthetic organic, manufactured humanoids.

The term "realian" is probably a reference to "realien" from *Tomorrow's Eve*, a novel by Mathias Villiers de l'Isle-Adam. He died in 1889, so the novel was written before 1889. *Tomorrow's Eve* also introduced the term "android".

Late in Xenosaga 1, there is mention that the first Realians were manufactured by Tyrell Corporation. Of course, Tyrell Corporation is the manufacturer of Replicants, another set of synthetic organic humanoids from the movie *Blade Runner*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><http://babbage.clarku.edu/~djoyce/hilbert/>, <http://aleph0.clarku.edu/~djoyce/hilbert/problems.html>, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hilbert-program/>

<sup>2</sup>Recently would be about 2005 July 3.

<sup>3</sup>And yes, *Blade Runner* was inspired by the novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*, by Philip K. Dick.

Nowadays, we think of robots as mechanical, but note that in the play *Rossum's Universal Robots*, by Karel Capek, the work in which the word *robot* was first used, the robots were synthetic organic, not mechanical.

**Woglinde** She was a character in Wagner's Ring cycle. [?]

## 4 Links

1. The official(?) Xenosaga web site is at <http://www.xenosaga.com/>.
2. GameFaq<sup>4</sup> has FAQs, reviews, & message boards for many versions of Xenosaga at <http://www.gamefaqs.com/search/index.html?game=xenosaga&x=0&y=0>.

Also see the references in the Bibliography.

## A Thanks

- Thanks to Namco for making Xenosaga.
- Thanks to Patrick for information about Elsa & Dammerung.

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<sup>4</sup><http://www.gamefaqs.com/>