

# TALES OF PHANTASIA

## Translation v1.0 (SLPM 860232)

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### 1) Introduction

Introduction by throughhim413

In late August 2007, Gemini and I had just finished up work on our first project together. We had great success with it and were eager to decide on a new project. Having worked on a text translation of Tales of Phantasia previously, I suggested the idea. Gemini had also done some preliminary investigations into the game, so it seemed like a logical choice for a project. Despite our knowledge that another team had been working on the project for several years, we decided to go ahead with it anyway. Our first several weeks saw rapid progress, enough to catch the attention of more than a few people. Inevitably, it resulted in opinionated reactions from all sides and attempts to turn the patches into some sort of competition.

Multiple hacks for single games are not uncommon, this is far from the first time it has been done. Our project is not about racing, nor is it about trying to one-up anyone else. We pursued Tales of Phantasia because we truly enjoy the game and wanted other people to have a chance to enjoy it in English. Obviously, comparisons between the two projects are inevitable. However, as we have always expressed, there will always be a place for multiple interpretations of a game. We have put forward our best work and we now leave it up to a discerning public to make the decision about which one suits them best. We have put exhaustive effort into ensuring that you will have the absolute best experience with Tales of Phantasia. My translation philosophy and the specifics of the hack are explained below. We would like to thank all of those who have supported our project from the beginning as well as those who have joined along the way.

Rough Timeline:

- August 22: Menu translation & hacking started;
- August 24: Project announced;
- September 1: Menu translation complete;
- September 5: Script extraction complete & script translation started;
- October 11: Script translation 35% done;
- October 27: Script translation 45% done;
- November 25: Script translation complete and skit translation started;
- December 3: Skit translation complete;
- December 9: Bug fixes & menu layout reworks complete;
- December 10: Beta testing begins;
- December 16: Prologue completely subbed;
- December 23: Patch finalized;
- December 25: Translation released.

## 2) How to apply the patch

In order to fully understand this procedure you have to know a little about backup copies, otherwise go Google (especially to find the necessary programs) and then come back here. That said, let's go for the procedure:

- First of all you need about 800~850 MB on your Hard Disc, or the procedure may fail.
- Create the game's Iso using one of the many disc rippers around the net (example: Alcohol 120% or CDRWin). If you are using Alcohol 120%, be sure to use the Playstation profile and uncheck any option regarding sub-channels;
- You should have a .bin or .img file somewhere in your Hard Disc, so it's time to patch it;
- open the Phantasia (the patcher) and use the browse buttons to complete the 2 file fields, the first with the ISO patch, the second with the patch path;
- click on "Patch it!" and wait until the process is complete (should take about 4-5 minutes on fast discs);
- once it's done, close the patcher and open your favorite image burning program, select the cue+bin/img file to burn and prepare a blank disc for the recording;
- play! ;D

If the patch is not compatible with your Iso, the patcher will produce an error and stop you from proceeding. The patch cannot be applied on already translated Isos, so please don't even try to "update" an already patched version of the game. And please, do not try to patch unsupported image files like .nrg (Nero Burning Rom). THEY ARE NOT IN THE BROWSE DIALOG FOR A REASON!

## 3) Notes

### About hacking (by Gemini)

It's nice sometimes to find a really easy game to hack, especially after you've just released a nightmarish patch. :P Tales of Phantasia is one of those game programmed so good that it's a pleasure to work on them and changing the code is just a matter of time without involving any terrific headache. But, of course, no game out there is perfect, and ToP is not an exception to this rule.

First of all, the game was in a urgent need of a VWF for menus and dialogues, because you can't really fit much text having serious space-on-screen constrains. It was really easy to do for menus, as they are programmed so good, but when it came to dialogues... Well, it wasn't really something painless as I expected it to be. :P The game used a strange way to read text that involves a static buffer containing a re-encoded version of the dialogue to show, which could be translated in C++ to something like this:

```
unsigned long dial_buffer[4][16];
```

This means that you can have 16 characters for each line of text, so it's virtually impossible to translate decently. I had to increase that limit by A LOT, like 127 characters per line, the max amount you can write for a dialogue line, so that means I moved ALL the accesses to that buffer, something really time consuming and boring, especially when you have to debug through the errors you include in the process.

Speaking about dialogue, there is something that makes both hackers and translators totally neurotic: LINE BREAKS! ToP uses a simple algorithm to insert automatic line breaks for battle ability/item descriptions, as the battle and in-game menus have different horizontal resolutions, so the same string might not fit in battle while it does for the other menus. I changed that algorithm to manage Windows style automatic line breaks, so now the game has most of the strings on a single line and the game does all the necessary check and line carriage. This way we didn't need to format all the dialogues while looking for overflowing characters on screen. A real time saver, boys. ;D

Now the most important thing code wise: subtitles! Yeah, the game has several spoken dialogues with no subtitles, so I had to implement those as well. The most important aspect of that was the Skit engine, which was also the easiest to do because it basically need only some Text Box additional events, since they all work using the same event scripting language for maps. I wrote a

little program to manage skit event table and subbed about 75 scenes (out of 258) for a test. But just having the subs there wasn't enough, so I added a centre alignment effect (to simulate the movie sub effect) and I moved down the dialogue 12 pixels, in order to have more space on screen and to avoid text to be rendered behind the characters' portraits.

This done, the skit part was complete, but one more complicated task was ahead: spoken prologue battle! Heh, that battle engine is REALLY evil. Battles were probably coded by a separate sub-group of developers, because they share only ONE routine with everything else in game, so this made a little difficult the subbing. First of all I had to find out how in the hell the prologue was performing that "scripted event" sequence, but when I found it also disappointment was there: the whole thing is just a bunch of C code. :P They went for the easy route and didn't even care to recycle the scripted event system. >\_> Anyway, I knew how the game was checking if the battle was the prologue of a standard fight, so I made a few tests to see if it was possible to hook the 16x16 font printing routine to the voices, and it was pretty easy actually. So I added the subs with my voodoo tricks, but they were only showing after the black screen (when Edward says "Mine is to command the abounding light of heaven..." or, if you prefer Japanese, "天光満つる所に我は在り") because the code responsible for that part is not included into the scripted sequence, but it's located in a totally different routine. Not only the code is separate, but the game is printing ABSOLUTELY NOTHING when the screen is black, so even hooking my printing routine there would have been totally useless because the primitive list for drawing is totally ignored. In a nutshell, I made the game print even there for an instant by placing the XA playing call directly into the Battle GFX initialization routine so that it would have drawn the sentence on screen for a single frame (the screen is not updated while the subtitle is there ;D), played the audio sample, wait for a while until the reproduction is complete, and then start the usual battle code.

As for the other stuff, it was basically a big layout work, with strings, windows and cursors to move around, so really nothing complicated, except for the fact that I had to think A LOT on how to redraw some menus, like the Name Entry (I really like how it is now). There were also some problems with the fonts, like unaligned numbers (they are "linked" to the words before them), textures overwritten from Arche's mini-game (that was easy to fix, though :P) and other strange programming problems. Fortunately all the bugs and technical issues are now solved, and I'm happy on how it all turned out.

The patch also features other invisible hacks, like a dictionary encoding and DTE (i.e. 1 byte corresponds to 2 characters) since the game's kernel cannot be expanded in any way (or to say better, section pointers are embedded in like 100 different routines) and we needed a lot of additional space for the translation. I also added an Ability name selector at the beginning of the game (which should make happy Romanized name haters :D), a splash logo for team credits and an anti-piracy/eBay screen (just in case some idiots have the "wonderful" idea of selling translated copies of the game).

### **About translation (by throughhim413)**

At time I feel like messing with Tales of Phantasia is a nightmare. Other times I enjoy it. Comparisons to DeJap's (in)famous SFC translation will always persist. While I respect DeJap for their work on Tales of Phantasia, as a translator, I disagree with some of their practices. My philosophy is a more hands-off approach. Call it literal if you will, but I do not believe that a script should be made inherently more interesting on the whims of a single person. What I hope to present to you is Tales of Phantasia as it has been available for years. Everything is translated and emphasis was given to making the script natural, entertaining, and most importantly, accurate. If Tales of Phantasia is truly a game worth playing (which I believe it is), it does not require a translator to spice it up. As a translator, my work was to make the dialogue natural, to make funny things funny, to make lame things lame, and to make subtle things subtle.

I don't make arbitrary changes to the script unless they're called for. I am of the opinion that a translation can be both natural and accurate. Perhaps this translation won't be enough to convince people of that way of thinking, but it represents what I consider to be an ideal translation.

## Skits

These are difficult to translate without having a full English dub in the game. The great majority of these skits rely heavily on wordplay and puns for humor. I made attempts to keep the original intent of the jokes intact, but as for the dialogue and specifics, anyone who has the faintest understanding of Japanese will instantly realize that many of the gag skits have been changed. Given the style they are presented in, a literal translation would have demanded heavy explanation. With no way to explain these things properly in game, priority was given to making them interesting rather than sacrificing their entertainment value. Ideally, both were true, but in the worst cases, natural English was given priority.

## The Aselian Timeline

The Aselian Timeline is a mess, just let me say that first. For those unaware, Tales of Symphonia (GC) is a prequel to Tales of Phantasia. As such, there are countless connections, both blatant and subtle between the games. However, this readme is not meant to describe those. My purpose is to say that when it made sense (and when Symphonia was accurate), naming conventions followed the Symphonia model. Spelling differences are certainly a factor however.

## Ability Names

Initially, the release was to contain only romanized ability names. However, we later decided to include English translated version as well. This option is available each time the system is booted up. The setting will be saved until the system is hard reset. This choice has no effect on save data and you can safely switch between the two as you desire. The naming conventions for the ability names are unrelated to Namco's US localizations. While Namco's set are not necessarily any better or worse, but we felt they lacked the appeal of the original Japanese versions in most cases.

## Ōgi

One of the few Japanese words left in the game, Ōgi (sometimes romanized as Ougi) are secret skills. In ToP, Ōgi refers to the secret abilities that Cless can obtain from Ōgi Texts or special events. Ōgi combine two abilities and can be used in combination with standard attacks and abilities.

## Methodism

According to ToP canon, Methodism does not depend upon the power of mana. It is a restorative technique based upon drawing energy from earth and the wind. Of course, we won't mention that the earth and the wind both draw their power from the Spirits, whose power is based on mana... Regardless, while Sorcery vanished with the withering of the World Tree, Methodism did not. Please be aware that the names Methodist and Methodism are not references to the sect of Christianity, but rather to an ancient school of Greek medicine. That is not to say that Mint's titles and techniques are not religious in nature.

## Magic vs. Sorcery

These terms are generally considered interchangeable in English usage, but they have more detailed usages in ToP. I use the term magic to refer to any kind of spell or supernatural power that relies on the power of mana. In other words, Sorcery, Klarth's Summoning, and Magitech are magical because they rely on mana. Sorcery is a subset of magic developed by the Elves and Half-Elves.

## Sound Test

As much as we love Tales of Phantasia's English track list, we made the (perhaps) controversial decision to re-imagine the track names. Tracks like "Castle of the Dhaos" were changed to "Dhaos' Castle". I recognize the role of nostalgia and tradition as well as anyone. However, we felt it would make little sense to leave blatant mistakes in the sound test of an otherwise well-translated game.

## **4) Known bugs**

There are no fatal bugs in the patch, but there is a little detail with the subbed prologue. The original has Edward saying "Mine is to command the abounding light of heaven...", then the screen fades in and the music starts. When we recoded the prologue in order to add subtitles, the black screen at the beginning of the sequence suffered a little slowdown, which translated in having the music play about ½ second before it is actually supposed to. I do not consider it a real bug because the game made almost the same thing in the original (sentence, one second pause, start playing music), but we will try and solve it in the next release, if any will be truly necessary.

## 5) FAQ

Q: Does this patch also include the PSP battle sprites?

A: No. We will NEVER because it is highly illegal to release part of ANY game. We will probably come up with a solution so that you can copy the sprite files from your PSP Iso into the Psx game, but there is no plan about this for now.

Q: Is this translation compatible with the *-put name here-* version?

A: It is compatible with all the versions of the game, or at least it should. If your ISO is not compatible the patcher will give you a CRC32 error on sector 22 or 23 and will stop the procedure.

Q: I'm not a Windows user. Is there any way to use the patcher on Linux/Unix/MacOS?

A: I don't know if there is something to run the program on Mac systems, but Linux can execute it under Wine (tested by Chester).

Q: Is this patch 100% compatible with real hardware and PC/PSP emulators?

A: It works totally fine on real hardware, but it has some problems on emulators. ePSXe tends to cut some XA audio samples (i.e. some Skits won't play at all), but pSX works totally fine, and probably PCSX, too. As for the PSP emulator (POPS), it works fine most of the times, but testers experienced some totally random freezes, like when casting one of Arche's spells or when leaving Undine's cave, not to mention slowdowns when casting Ice Tornado, so save as much as you can. Also, the game is reported to crash on version 3.52 and 3.70 when entering two treasure rooms in Dhaos' Castle, right after you beat the four Ninjas guarding the Derris Emblems. However, the game can be cleared even without entering those rooms.

Q: Can I release a pre-patched version of the game on emule or any other P2P?

A: No, and please don't do it. It is highly illegal to release hacked versions of games, probably even more than releasing the unpatched games themselves. Also, if you happen to find any of those pre-patched Iso releases, please contact us immediately.

Q: Can I sell the translated game on eBay?

A: Of course, not. As for the previous entry, please contact us if you see any copy of the translated game floating on eBay. Even with the anti-eBay/piracy logo, some bastards just can't resist from making easy money on completely free stuff.

Q: Are the old saves compatible with the translated game?

A: Yes, they are, even though there are a few problems with names. Rhea's name will always appear as a bunch of nonsensical letters because the game stores that string as a variable. As for the other characters, you have the same problem, but you can solve it by renaming them from the Status screen.

Q: Is there any way to switch the ability nomenclature in game?

A: We wanted to have an option in the Customize menu, but there was no time for it, so we left it only at the boot. Anyway, yes, it is possible to switch from Romanized to translated and vice versa using a cheat device such as Action Replay or Game Shark. If you want the Romanized names insert 8000FFF8 0000, and if you want translated names insert 8000FFF8 0001.

Q: Why is the Monster Encyclopedia not sorted by name?

A: Because FAQs and guides use that order for the encyclopedia, so resorting all the enemy entries would have meant having a totally different list, making the guides difficult to consult, if not useless at all. We could have made a list with the original vs. new order, but it wasn't really necessary as it is just a useless surplus to the gaming experience. Maybe it would be cool to have the enemy list sorted, but do we really need it? Hmmm, hmmm... No.

Q: Can you help me to translate ToP into my own language?

A: We do support foreign translations, but only if done directly from Japanese. Sorry guys, but we won't send you our programs and text dumps if you plan to translate from the English script, so please avoid sending emails if you can't understand Japanese or if you don't have anybody who can translate for you.

## 6) History

- 12/25/2007: first public release.

## 7) Special thanks

- Beta testers: Chester, Darkness Savior, GameFire|bTd, Hisoka, KT Kore, Sephiroth 1311, and Soluzar;
- pSX Author, for his emulator and for some tips regarding the intro;
- All our supporters!
- You, for downloading the result of our hard work on this game! :D

## 8) Credits & Contacts

- Gemini: Hacker and programmer;
- throughhim413: translator.

Project blog news: <http://zettazero.wordpress.com/posts/>

Project page: <http://www.crosser.altevista.org/forums/index.php?showtopic=124>

If you have any reports for bugs or typos with the translation, send an email to [geminimewtwo@hotmail.com](mailto:geminimewtwo@hotmail.com) or [AbsoluteZeroTranslations@gmail.com](mailto:AbsoluteZeroTranslations@gmail.com).