



アクションアドベンチャー

ラ・ムラーナ

(C)KOBAMI 2005
RC789



MSX

LA-MULANA

ユーザーズ マニュアル
USER'S MANUAL

Welcome

Thank you very much for downloading the MSX-style game "LA-MULANA."

La-Mulana is a game that was designed to remind those gamers tired of the "super graphics, easy gameplay" types of games commonplace on modern consoles just how fun the old style of games can really be. Even though the great MSX games never got much recognition in the face of the "Famicom army," it's hard to express the feelings of just how fun they were to the people that did play them.

We here at GR3 Project really hope you enjoy our original game in that vein, La-Mulana.

From the developers:

For those used to the new-style of really easy games, it may be very hard to beat La-Mulana. But that's OK. We're looking for those gamers that could in days past defeat Druaga, bring the baby back safely from the clutches of Gallious, and sealed the Evil Crystal.

This game is our challenge to the players out there. We hope you can do your best and conquer us!

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

CPU: MMXPentium166MhZ+ Windows Machine

RAM: At least 32MB free

Graphics card: One that can at least display 8-bit Color

Sound Card: One that can play PCM.

As a rule of thumb, any computer that can run DirectX 7 or later should work.

Special mode: MIDI playback Roland SC-88 or better recommended.

※La-Mulana's key bindings, music settings, etc are stored in the "lamulana.ini" fle. Once you change settings they should remain that way the next time you play. If the controls or sound start acting strangely, sometimes deleting this fle will help. You can change from Windowed to Full-Screen mode by pressing Alt+Enter. If you do so in the middle of the game it may distort the display.

- Unless there are missing pages or pages out of order, we will not reproduce this manual. Download it again.
- Of course, this game will not actually work on an MSX computer.
- You don't need to turn off the power when removing the cartridge, since this isn't a cartridge in the first place.
- This is a delicate program so please do not disassemble it.
- When playing games for long periods of time, try to take a 10-20 minute nap so it won't impact your work the next day.
- This product is an original production of GR3 Project. Other products have influenced it but it is an original production. We don't care what other people say, it's an original production! If you think this game is "artistic theft" please replace those words in your mind with more convenient words like "parody" or "homage" instead.
- Questions regarding this product's story or game content will be accepted on this site's "Hint Bulletin Board."

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-An Ancient Legend-

It descended to this land.
It came from the sky.
Alone in this world, an immobile body.

Go back, go back to the sky.
I want to return, I want to return to the sky.

My children, help me!
My children, return me to the sky!
That is the reason you were born!

A folk song from the "Race that sees the travelers off"
Translation: Shorn Kosugi



-Professor Lemeza-

It was all very sudden.

I had returned to my study, relieved after finishing a lecture at the university, when an envelope was delivered--one with no return address or indication who had sent it.

The stamp had indicated it had been sent months ago, and it appeared to have traveled a long distance; it was grimy and worn.

It was a suspicious envelope, but once I opened it I had a pretty good idea of who sent it. It couldn't have been worse, either.

"I finally found it. I win!"

That was what was written in familiar writing on the scrap of paper, the only contents of the envelope aside from a single coin etched with symbols I had never seen the likes of before.

That handwriting was definitely his. The letter was short but confirmed his confidence, and picturing his laugh of triumph, my relief at the prospect of a long-awaited vacation dancing before me was shattered and replaced by an indescribable sense of defeat.

But at the same time, my soul was lit by the fires of competitiveness and curiosity...

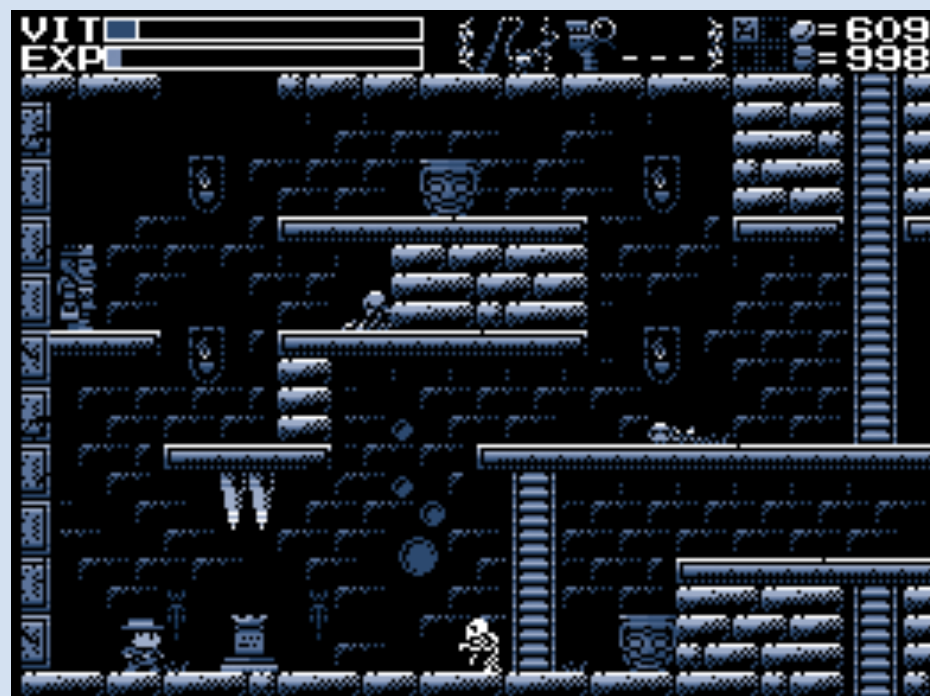
There had always been rumors of an ancient civilization from which all civilizations sprang. Did such a thing really exist? No, it couldn't possibly be so. I was going to see it with my own two eyes, prove it, and shatter that old man's delusions. And in the unlikely case that he was right, I had to see it for myself even more urgently.

I prepared for my journey, with the nagging premonition that I was in for the adventure of my life.

My destination: the legendary land of La Mulana.



How to play



GAME SCREEN : The screen where the main game is played.

- 1: This game is designed for one player, and can be played with the keyboard. You can start the game with the space bar.
- 2: The object of this game is to control the hero, Professor Lemeza, and solve the riddles within the mysterious ruins of La Mulana.
- 3: Lemeza's equipment and items can be reviewed on subscreens with the function keys. Use his faithful super laptop MSX to proceed on the adventure.
- 4: Many weapons are hidden within the ruins. Collect them, and after carefully deciding what weapon would be the best to use in your situation, pick one from the subscreen.
- 5: The Hero has VIT (Vitality) and EXP (Experience). VIT starts at a level of 8 and drops when you are hit by enemies, their shots, or traps, and this maximum will increase by 9 each time you pick up a "Life Jewel" item. EXP increases as you defeat enemies, and when the meter is full, your VIT will completely be restored. If VIT reaches 0, the hero dies and the game is over. There are apparently other ways to restore VIT.
- 6: Weights and Keys are essential for proceeding through the game. Weights especially can be used all over the place.



SUBSCREEN: Pick weapons, display Items and ROM cartridges, turn on the MSX, and pick game settings.

Press the function buttons and to bring up the subscreens for Items, Rom Cartridges, MSX activation, and Game Settings. Each is very important when adventuring so be sure to learn how to use them.

Controls

Scene	Key	Explanation
Game Screen	← →	Move to the left and right.
	↑	Climb ladders. Jump. Grab onto walls.
	↓	Descend ladders. Enter stores. Use Weights.
	SPACE	Use your Main Weapon.
	M	Use your Sub-Weapon. Turn off your Scanner.
	F1	Pause. Press again to unpause.
	F2	Opens the Item screen. Press again to return to the game.
	F3	Opens the Rom Cartridge Screen. Press again to return to the game.
	F4	Opens the MSX software screen. Press again to return to the game.
	F5	Opens the Options screen. Press again to return to the game.
	A~Z	Used to enter and cast spells.
Item Screen	← → ↑ ↓	Move the cursor.
	SPACE	Change a Main or Sub-weapon.
Rom Screen	← → ↑ ↓	Change Slots and pick Cartridges.
	SPACE	Pick a Cartridge or Slot.
Shops	← →	Pick an Item. Select an answer to a question.
	SPACE	Decide on an item or answer. Scroll the conversation.
	↓	Leave the shop.
Game End	ESC	A confrmation screen appears. Decide with the RETURN key.

	F6	Change Screen Strech mode (Hardware stretch/Software stretch)
	F7	Change Window Size （1024x768、 512x384、 256x192）

Adventuring Basics



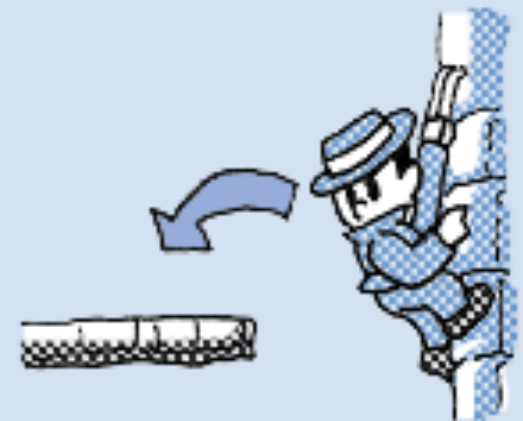
The core of the adventure is to solve the puzzles and mechanisms within the ruins. The methods to solve then vary quite a lot; some require pressing switches, others require you to place Weights on Daises, others require you to defeat enemies....

Weights especially are critical to get through the game. They activate mechanisms, and some doors are opened with them as well. They are a lot like keys within the ruins. Try not to waste them.



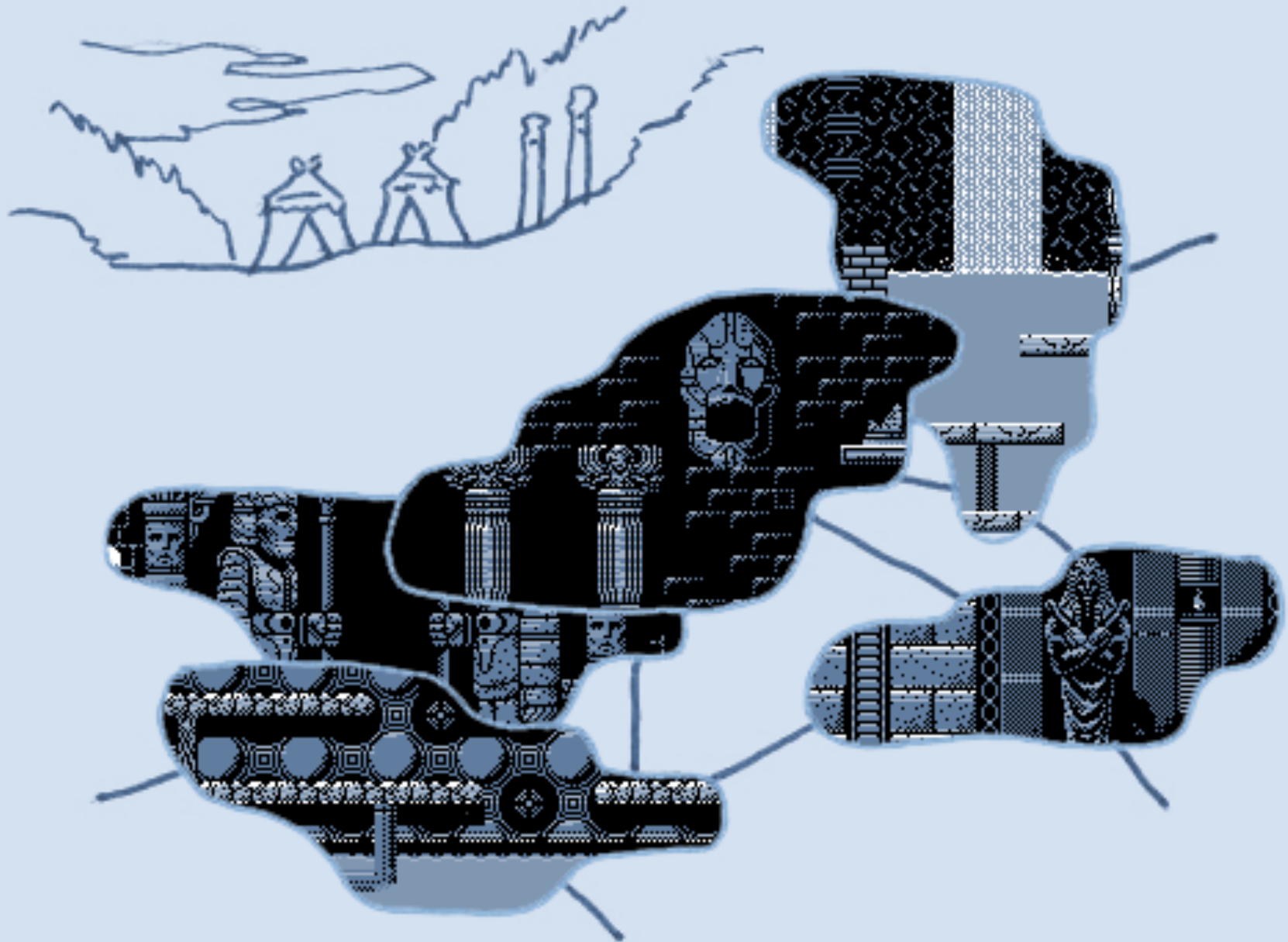
The Hand Scanner is also critical to your adventure. After all, there is nobody inside the ruins to give you hints. You'll have to search for hints yourself. Examine ancient tablets and skeletons with your scanner! You might find something!

Some puzzles require more than just a sharp mind. You'll need to use your reflexes to explore all the corners of the ruins too! For example, if you reach a place where you immediately think "is there a way to get up there" reflexes and action may be just what you need!



It seems the ruins of La Mulana are protected by a holy power. This is why it is not easy to be a grave robber or invader here. Don't destroy or touch things at random. He who defiles the holy ruins will have divine retribution brought upon him! Proceed with caution when solving puzzles!

Map Layout



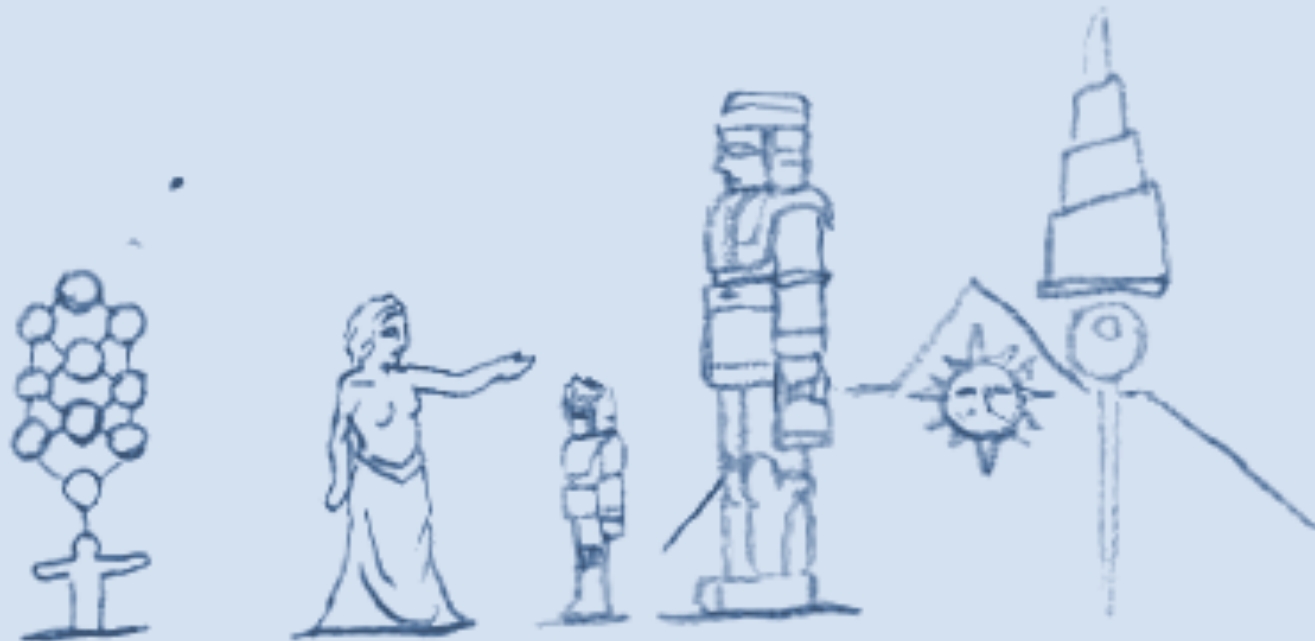
The ruins can be entered from the "Traveller's Village" on the surface. You'll need the Elder's permission to enter them.

The ruins are divided into multiple areas called "Fields," which together form the complex as a whole. Within the Fields lie the remains of a great variety of remains of an ancient civilization, with many mechanisms and traps. You must find Gates to travel from Field to Field. The fields operate by a mysterious power and are connected in complicated ways.

If you learn how the Fields are connected, what lies within each, and the quickest routes to reach each specific one, your adventure will become a lot easier!

Advancing through the game

- When you start the game you will begin at the village on the surface.
- There are pots and boxes left on the surface and in the ruins. Useful items for your journey are sometimes hidden inside. You can find and stock up on money, weights, and Sub-Weapons with them.
- Monsters are everywhere inside the ruins. You will earn EXP for defeating monsters, and if you're lucky, they might drop an item too.
- Raise money and buy what you need from the shops in the village. There are shops hidden within the ruins too.
- There are treasure chests inside the ruins. They are sealed, and you must figure out the mechanism to open them.
- You will need to figure out many mechanisms not only to open treasure chests, but also to open your way onward. These vary from those that can be solved by pressing a single switch to those that require you to solve multiple puzzles. The further you get into the ruins, the tougher it gets.
- If you find yourself running out of VIT, find a safe place to defeat enemies and build EXP. If you've gotten something extra good, you might want to return to the surface and save your game too.
- There are mechanisms that will spring traps should you operate them wrong. It's important to read hints from the ancient tablets, think carefully, and avoid touching mechanisms you don't need to.
- There are some big monsters called "Room Guards." Until you defeat them, you will not be able to leave the room, and they will assault you with fierce attacks. However, the reward for defeating them is not to be sneezed at. Surely, something important lies beyond them!
- Giant monsters called "Guardians" sleep in the Fields. Defeat the Guardian and that Field is as good as cleared. The fights with the Guardians are probably going to be rough. Check your stock of Sub-Weapons and challenge them only when you're really ready.
- As you defeat Guardians and collect Items, you will run into a single, big riddle. This is the secret of La Mulana! What is La Mulana, and what is Lemeza researching? We hope that you can use your skill and ingenuity to solve that mystery.



Super Notebook Computer MSX



A bunch of die-hard enthusiasts continued to use the MSX computer, but because of its simple design, its use spread throughout the world among adventurers, mountain climbers, and spies, who wanted them for its speedy operation and reaction. In response to the wishes of these hard-core users, the manufacturers released the new standard Super Laptop MSX. All software is provided on cartridge and disk, and as soon as you open the computer, it starts right up. It remains quite expandable and old MSX cartridges and external devices like the Hand Scanner work without needing any sort of setup.

Its storage medium is still just tapes and disks, but that hasn't changed its rave reviews from the enthusiasts.

Unit type: Super Laptop MSX F2-XV

Maker: S.ONY

CPU:Z99000 Memory: 8Kb, additional memory contained within the cartridges

HDD: None

Options: Waterproof case/Heatproof case (Sold separately) Advanced models with 2 cartridge slots and an internal disk drive also exist.

All functions of Lemeza's favorite Adventurer Custom Model can be called up just by pressing the function keys.

F2: Item Screen

Displays all items gotten, and allows selection of weapons.

F3: ROM Cartridge select screen

Selects cartridges to put in the MSX.

F4: Software Run Screen

Runs the software inserted into Slot 1.

F5: Options screen

Items

Name		Effect	
	Whip	The Hero's Main Weapons	Professor Lemeza's starting weapon.
	Chain Whip		A whip made from a chain.
	Mace		A weapon with a spiked iron ball at the end of a chain.
	Knife		A versatile knife.
	Keyblade		An old, heavy ornamented sword.
	Axe		An axe usde to in a downward-chopping motion.
	Katana		A Katana perfectly suited for "Iai-nuki" attacks.
	Shuriken	The Hero's Sub-Weapons	A weapon said to be used by Japanese Ninjas.
	Throwing Knife		A thrown knife that travels along the ground.
	Spear		A weapon used to attack enemies directly below.
Name		Effect	
	Flare	The Hero's Sub-Weapons	Launches a ball of fre directly above you.
	Bomb		A weapon that deals damage with a powerful blast. The blast can hurt the Hero too.
	Pistol		The ultimate killing device.
	Ankh Jewel		A jewel used to destroy Ankhs.
	Hand Scanner		Can be used to examine anything.
	Buckler		Can block weak enemy shots.
	Silver Shield		Can block strong enemy shots.
	Angel Shield	You can fnd these in shops, pots, and from enemies.	Can block virtually any enemy shot.
	Shuriken		Increases your Shuriken stock.
	Throwing Knives		Increases your Throwing Knife stock.

Name	Effect		Name	Effect
 Spears	You can find these in shops, pots, and from enemies.	Increases your Spear stock.	 Heatproof Case	Lets you use your MSX in high heat.
 Flares		Increases your stock of Flares.	 Detector	Its buzzer rings in the presence of a hidden shop.
 Bombs		Increases your stock of Bombs.	 Grail	Allows you to return to areas you have visited and recorded by pressing 0-9 on the Item Screen.
 Ammunition		Bullets for the Pistol.	 Lamp of Time	Something will happen when you press the RETURN key!
 Coin		Needed to buy Items in shops.	 Body Armor	Reduces damage.
 Weights		Needed to operate mechanisms and solve puzzles.	 Talisman	Someone dropped this inside the ruins.
 MSX	An MSX laptop.		 Scripture	Doubles the rate at which you gain EXP.
 MSX2	An MSX2 laptop with an internal disk drive and two cartridge slots.		 Gauntlet	Allows you to use weapons better.
 Shell Horn	Plays a mysterious melody when you solve a puzzle.		 Ring	Makes you more nimble-fingered.
 Waterproof Case	Lets you use your MSX underwater.		 Glove	Gets obstacles out of your way quickly!

Items

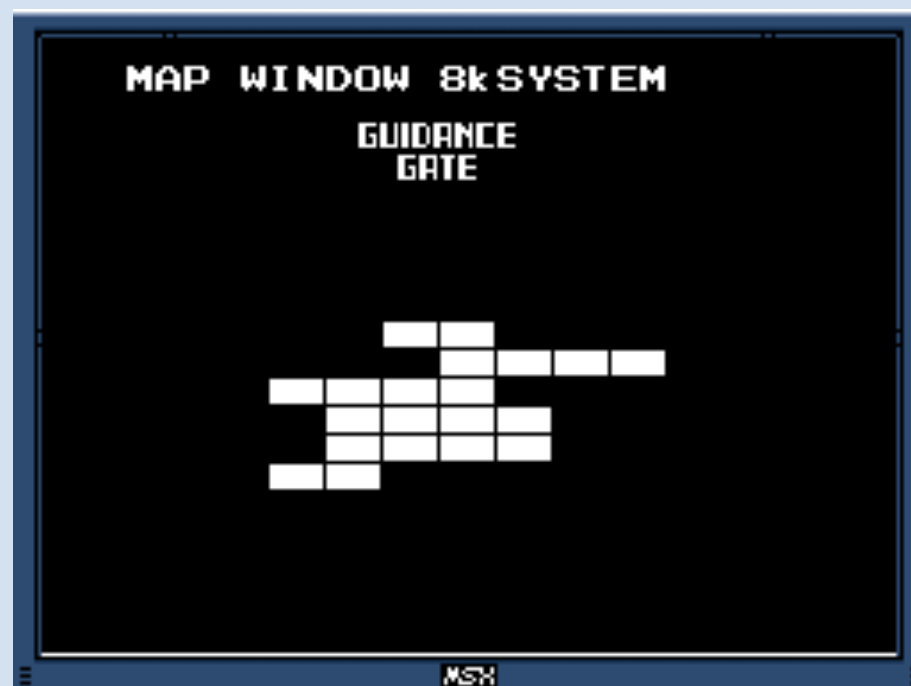
Name	Effect	Name	Effect
 Endless Key	A key to the Endless Corridor.	 Book of the Dead	Nullifies the "Anubis" enemy's attack.
 Twin Statue	Modeled in the shape of "Imprisoned Twins."	 Perfume	Destroys the dead.
 Bronze Mirror	Reflects the invisible!?	 Ocarina	Do you hear a voice from somewhere...?
 Boots	Speeds up the hero's movement.	 Anchor	It's very heavy.
 Feather	Lets you do a double jump.	 Woman Statue	A mud statue in the shape of a woman.
 Bracelet	This is useful!	 Mini Doll	From your point of view, this doll is pretty small!
 Dragon Bone	Opens the seal deep within the ruins.	 Eye of Truth	The truth is behind you...
 Grapple Claw	Lets you grab onto walls.	 Serpent Staff	A staff decorated with the relief of a snake.
 Magatama Jewel	Used for casting spells.	 Ice Cape	A cape made out of ice.
 Cross	Keeps you from getting hurt by the "Soul" enemy.	 Helmet	Great for training!

Name	Effect	Name		
 Scalesphere	How do fsh breathe?	 Treasure	Treasure that someone hid somewhere.	
 Crystal Skull	It supposedly has the power to warp spacetime. What was it made for?	 Life Jewel	A limited number of these are hidden in the ruins.	Increases the Hero's max VIT.
 Wedge	A mysterious, out-of-place artifact.	 Map		A map of a Field.
 Plane Model	This mysterious model also is pretty out-of-place.	 Conception Seal	Items that operate like keys within the ruins.	Opens Conception Locks.
 Flywheel	It looks like a piece of machinery.	 Birth Seal		Opens Birth Locks.
 Pochette Key	It's sort of like a key...	 Life Seal		Opens Life Locks.
 Container	Wonder what this is good for?	 Death Seal		Opens Death Locks.◦
 Diary	This diary is a memento of your father.	 ROM Cartridge	MSX Software.	A cartridge for the MSX1.
 Mulana Talisman	It holds the secret of the ruins...	 ROM Cartridge		A cartridge for the MSX2.
 Pepper	Ahh-choo!	 Disk		A disk for the MSX2.

Rom Cartridges



Press F3 during the game to get to the ROM Cartridge screen. Here you can pick the cartridges to put into the Super Notebook MSX. A lot of the ROM cartridges are old and long ago broken, but some of them have special functions. In addition there are combinations of cartridges that will produce special effects when both loaded into the system. If you discover them, maybe the results will be fun or handy....!?



Put the Ruins RAM into Slot 1 and press F4 to run the Map Display software. There are several cartridges that will run software other than the Ruins RAM program as well.

For some reason there are lots of MSX Cartridges in the ruins of La Mulana. Maybe other adventurers brought them along with them, or a bored collector hid them amongst the ruins... Amongst them are some rare ROMs that the enthusiasts would get really excited over! Try and find them!

Running ROMs

Cartridges that run with the F4 Key

Cartridge	Function
Ruins RAM 8k	If you have the right map, displays the map of the Field you are in.
Ruins Ram 16k	Makes the map display function more useful.
Shin Synthesizer	Music Mode.
+	Full Map display mode.
+	
+	
+	
+	Music mode iwthout limits.
+	

Cartridges with special effects

Cartridge	Effect
10x Cartridge	The Elder Xelpud will save your game.
Glyph Reader	Instantly decodes any ancient glyphs.
Diviner Sensation	
Q-Bert+Diviner Sensation	
+	Drains your life.
+	Makes you die with a single hit.
+	Increases "Blink time" after you get damaged.
Arctic Adventure + Comic Bakery	The Grail will warp you to Rear Fields.
+	Makes you a better stabber.
Hyper Rally + Road Fighter	Displays hidden messages.
Salamander + Gradius 2	
+	
+	
Seal of El Giza + Maze of Gallious	Gives you an extra Coin whenever you pick one up.
+	
+	Powers up your whip.
+	
+	Reduces "refresh" time for Fairies and the Lamp.
+	
+	

Options Screen



Pressing F5 will take you to the Options Screen.

CONTINUE

Lets you start off from where you saved. Pick a save fle.

MUSIC Device

La Mulana has two music modes. The frst is an SSC-like basic mode. The second will only work if you have external hardware equal to or better than a Roland SC-88, but is an arranged MIDI mode. Pick whichever you prefer.

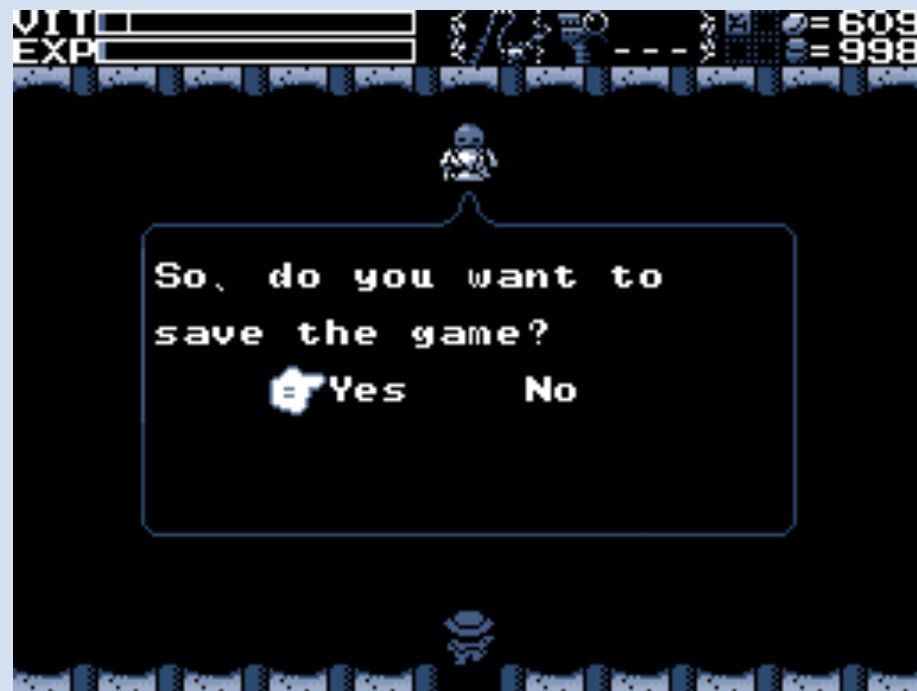
VOLUME

Alters the volume of the BGM. You can change the balance between the music and the sound effects here.

KEY SETTING/JOY SETTING

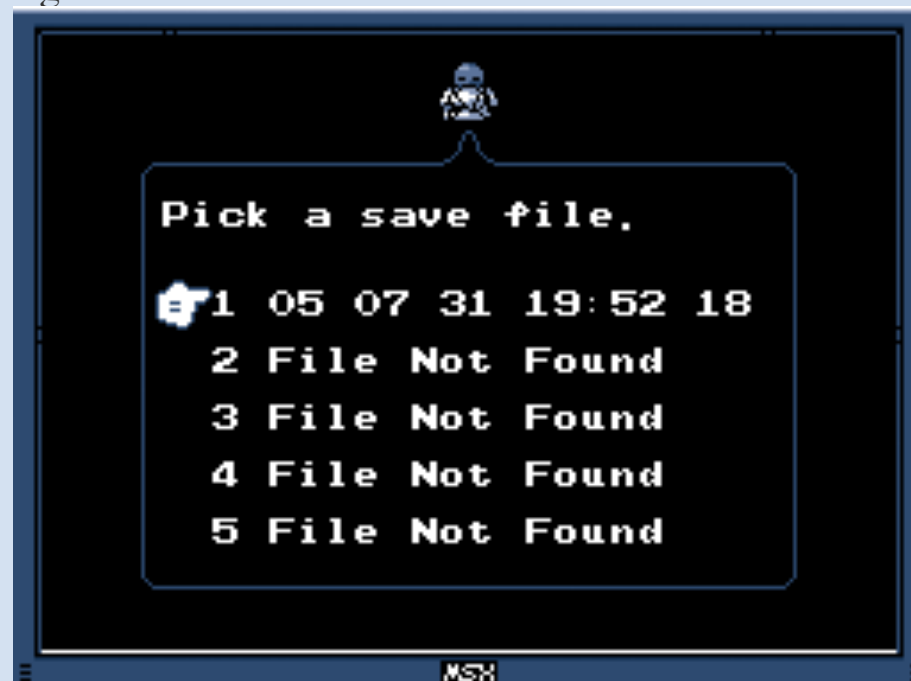
Lets you change the key mappings used in the game. You can change the movement, main weapon, and sub-weapon keys. Use the guide to reassign each key.

Saving and Loading



SAVE

Talk to the Elder Xelpud with the 10x Cartridge inserted into your MSX and you can save your game. Pick a slot and have your adventure in your MSX. The number of slots available depend on the quality of your 10x Cartridge.



LOAD

You can load your game by picking CONTINUE on the title menu or from the Options menu in-game by pressing F5. Pick a slot and you can continue off from that point.

Characters



LEMEZA KOSUGI (Player)

Archaeologist. Age 31. Third-generation Japanese.

His grandfather is a descendant of Japanese ninjas. Currently he teaches at a university while using infiltration techniques taught to him by his grandfather to investigate ancient ruins.

He is proud of and respects his grandfather, but feels ill will toward his father, who never came home from work one day when he was a young boy, and is always at odds with him. He says that he became an archaeologist to show up his father.

Lemeza is an MSX enthusiast who always carries his MSX laptop with him, and is actually a quite skillful computer engineer. He doesn't have any particular dislikes, but loves curry.

SHORN KOSUGI

Historian. Age 62. Second-generation Japanese.

A famous authority on anthropology and history, and Lemeza's father. He is also skilled in biology and astronomy. He searches for the origins of humanity, claiming "Humans descended from monkeys, but not by evolution alone."

Several years earlier, from his studies of ancient civilizations and astronomy, he came up with the bold theory that "there is a civilization from which all civilizations descended" and afterward disappeared.

Shorn is quite healthy, and sports a tough physique and incredible hardiness not expected of a man in his 60s.



ELDER XELPUD

His age is unknown.

He is the elder of the "Guardian tribe" that protects the ruins of La Mulana. He is an old friend of Shorn, and actually met Lemeza when he was a child, though Lemeza was too young to remember.

Xelpud holds to the tradition of his clan in protecting the ruins, but is remarkably easy-going and does a lot more than "protect the ruins of La Mulana" and is actually quite a technophile. He even set up a hydroelectric power generator for his personal use by the waterfall on the outskirts of the village.

However, thanks to his efforts, his village has become quite prosperous for being in the middle of the jungle. Xelpud is famous on the Internet as an MSX expert.

Techniques

The ruins of La Mulana are very complex. If you just wander around without thinking you'll quite possibly get lost. If you don't think ahead about what you should do next and set yourself a goal, you'll probably get stuck!

The professor set out on his journey fully prepared but everything he had was seized at the airport. Only by screaming "These are souvenirs!" at the top of his lungs was he able to keep his whip and MSX. Therefore, resist the urge to plunge onwards, and prepare yourself in the village. Get some money from the pots and enemies on the surface. Have you gotten everything you need? If there's still something you want, search for money in the ruins and go back to do some more shopping. You'll definitely need a Hand Scanner, 10xCartridge, and Glyph Reader. Once you get enough money you'll want an MSX2 as well. However, there are dangerous spots on the surface as well. Be careful when you're just starting out.

Once you're all ready, start exploring the ruins. You'll start from the "Guidance Gate," the entrance to the ruins. There are monsters lurking about the ruins. While it may sound heroic to conquer them all with just your whip, you should search for other weapons. There is a "Life Jewel" in the Guidance Gate. It raises your VIT level as well as restoring all your VIT at the same time, so use it well.

For those that aren't yet confident to explore the ruins, first try to solve the puzzles in the Guidance Gate. Once you've got some confidence you can start thinking about exploring some other Fields. Those who are confident in their abilities can explore various Fields from square one. It might be a good idea to start to collect useful items for your adventure from the beginning. Just be careful not to do anything reckless!

If you have the 10xCartridge in your MSX, the Elder Xelpud will save your game. You can only save your game on the surface. While your vitality level is still low, use the village as a base, and if you get tired and hurt, return there and save. That way you can proceed without worry.

It's not clear how many there are in total, but there are many Fields inside the ruins. If you solve the riddles in all the Fields, you will come close to discovering the secret of La Mulana. Those that decide to proceed with caution may want to take the Fields one at a time, whereas the more adventurous may want to explore at will. There isn't a pre-set order in which all the fields must be cleared, though you may need items from one Field to solve all the riddles in another.

Of course, the deeper into the ruins you get, the tougher the monsters become and the trickier the mechanisms and riddles get. You can proceed however you like, but if you solve riddles and don't pay attention to how the ruins change accordingly, that's not very archaeologist-like! Map out the area around you so you can get an understanding of the Field as a whole.

Don't forget that you are an archaeologist! Try not to miss changes in the ruins, things that seem out of place, or strange mechanisms just because you didn't look them over carefully enough!

Enemies



AMPHISBAENA

A snake guardian with heads on both ends of its bodies. As both heads attack simultaneously, you should consider escape to be impossible.

Guardians (9 in total)

These are gigantic monsters that are said to be the protectors of the ruins of La Mulana.

Their presences and attacks are overwhelming!



VIY

A demon that sleeps deep within the earth. It's so gigantic that it can't move well on its own, and it can't even see without its minions there to open or close its eyelids. It protects areas deep within the ruins of La Mulana.



BAPHOMET

A demon said to live in Hell, it is actually a Guardian that protects the area near La Mulana's core. Baphomet is said to enthrall humans, gather groups of witches and hold Sabbaths.



BUER

A monster with the head of a lion and the legs of horses. Its legs spin around freely, kicking all that approach to death.

BEELZEBUB

He is said to be a ruler of Hell that takes on the form of a fly, but in actuality he is a guard that diligently watches over the core of La Mulana.

Monsters (82 in total)

Other monsters that live in the ruins.



MYRMECOLEO

A monster that is a cross between a lion and an ant. It doesn't do much, and is isn't very dangerous unless you get close.

Room Guards (30 in total)

Mid-sized monsters that are stationed in La Mulana's important rooms. They guard important items or passages. Some are almost as powerful as the Guardians!



BAT

A monster that carries the souls of the dead, with the body of a hawk and a head of a human.



BAT

Ordinary bats that fly about the ruins. There are a lot of them, and they will prove a lot tougher to deal with than you might expect.



SKELETON

An undead monster, it is the bones of the dead which have had a soul restored to them. Even if you attack it it will just break to pieces and get up again. You will have to keep attacking it until it stays down for good.

Enemies



MASKED MAN

A member of the original inhabitants of La-Mulana.



RONG XUANWANG CORPSE

A headless horse. It is said that seeing this beast is an omen of one's impending death, but legends speak of it being from as large as twice the size of a human to as small as a rabbit.



ANUBIS

A monster with the power of death. Just being in its presence is fatal.



FISHMAN FAMILY

Monsters that are fish with legs. It can move on land but soon starts convulsing due to difficulty breathing. Warrior-types have an iron pipe filed with oxygen in their crotch. But the lord of the fishpeople is a proud fish. It is said there is some good in his heart, but whether this is true is unknown.



MUDMAN

Mud people that are said to be the primeval form of humans. Not much is known about them.

A final note

The end of the fifth age for the Aztecs is the year 2012.

I've learned this sort of strange archaeological trivia. By the way, is everyone enjoying La Mulana?

This game took a long time to develop. As you might have figured out, it has a lot of influence from the famous MSX game "Maze of Gallious" and up until the middle of its development, we were hoping to make a game that was like Gallious but surpassed it. But midway through the year at a big debugging meeting we realized something.

"This game is reasonably fun, but overall it just doesn't feel right."

Yes, we had designed an even greater variety of maps, items, and monsters that Gallious had, but in the end, what we had was nothing but a cheap Maze of Gallious knockoff. Realizing this would not do, we got together and thought about it.

Naramura wondered if it might not be possible to incorporate the sense of tension in newer games like Metal Gear into La Mulana. After thinking about it for about an hour (Pretty quick!) we decided to put in the fear of death into La Mulana.

Let's say you were an archaeologist. You're standing in front of a dark hole that you can't see the bottom of. Would you jump in? In real life, your response would probably be, "Heck no!" After all, you don't know what's down there. Or say you're in a room filled with corpses and a bunch of switches. Would you just press them haphazardly at random? In this case too, you'd probably never do something so reckless. We wanted to try to incorporate this type of tension--a "Proceed with caution" type of feeling into the game.

Recently--or actually a lot earlier than that, a lot of games have been set up so that "if you just check everything, the puzzle is easily solved" and "if you screw up, just reload" and a lot of people have been thinking, "are these sorts of games really all that fun?" So what would happen if we took those two trends away from gamers used to easy games?

With this in mind, we ended up making La Mulana a lot harder than we had been intending when we started the project. We tried to make it so that people wouldn't get hopelessly stuck everywhere, but if you just whack walls at random without thinking you'll die. If you think "Ooh, a treasure!" and run charging toward it without thinking, you'll die. If you just operate a mechanism without thinking about how it works, you may end up not ever being able to get a specific item. If you think "I'm trapped! I'm going to warp out!" and do so, you won't be able to get back into that room from the outside. Once you do finally manage to find your way back in, you may be confronted with an even more obnoxious mechanism to overcome than before. If you make enough big mistakes it will even become quite tough to complete the game.

To be honest, we have our doubts whether or not people will like a game that has elements like "If you make a mistake there's no going back" and "There's always the tension requiring you to think ahead." But at the same time we have confidence that it makes La Mulana a deeper game for it. Some people may think "this game is a pain!" But we hope you can find enjoyment with a "to keep this from being a pain, I'd better think before acting" sort of playstyle. We think if you use your wits to the fullest, the sense of accomplishment you'll get when you finally finish the game will all the more rewarding.

So, it took us 5 years to make La Mulana, how do you feel about it? We'd love to hear your thoughts.

Oh yeah, earlier there were some guys who finished our earlier game, GR3--the result of our blood, sweat and tears--in just 2 days. OK, then here's a challenge! Can you beat this game in only two days? We bet it'll take you at least 3! Don't be a coward! But La Mulana is a pretty open-ended game. There's no set order to clear things so you can try to finish the game with a weak character or save most of the bosses later. There are plenty of secrets for those people that complete the game. We dare you to find all the ROM cartridges! We dare you to find all the cartridge combinations!

We'll be waiting for you beyond La Mulana!

