

Wish

Wrap-Up

Lucy Robin

Intro

Angels, and Devils through the ages! Today we put on a wrap on Wish!

We're Lucy and Robin, and we'll be your guides through CLAMP's Wonderland!

Check-In

- SO BUSY
- I'm recording on my old headset mic today, since I'm currently visiting my boyfriend's family in Central Oregon.
 - I'm sitting at a very small desk, there are literally cows outside my window, and Happy is working in the next room. It's kind of lovely, actually.
 - I prefer my temperate valley, but the high desert is pretty in its own way.
- Robin is SO BUSY ECCO starts Dec 2nd and everything is on fire. At least Office Max is miraculously here and healthy!

Background (general)

- Aside from the manga itself, and some cameos in other CLAMP works, Wish has basically three extra pieces of media (as far as we could find).
 - There's a drama cd, which I could not find a translation of, unfortunately.
 - There's a short animation that basically amounts to a music video, which came out in 1997...
 - And an artbook that came out in 2001, which includes a new chapter which takes place after the end of the manga.
 - We can't discuss the drama CD, I'm afraid, but we're briefly going to discuss the other two!

MUSIC VIDEO

Background

- Originally put out in 1997 as part of the "Wish Gift Box" that was released to commemorate the end of the manga!

- Remember that this was the same year as the Rayearth OVA and the CLAMP School anime, and this music video was also released IN THEATERS before the first Cardcaptor Sakura movie, so we're in HIGH CLAMP TIMES FOLKS! (or well, we will be when our manga-discussion timeline really catches up.)
- The "Wish Gift Box" had a VHS tape with the music video and a cd with the songs, and a cute booklet with sketches and interviews and like, layouts/storyboards from the animation.
- I wish we had it TT__TT
- It was also included in their 15th Anniversary celebratory collection, CLAMPAZAR, in 2005. This collection included music from various series, as well as videos. Most were opening sequences from actual anime series, like CCS, but the Wish short was also included.
- The video itself includes two songs, both by Ali Project: "Wish" and "Enjeru Egggu no Tsukuri Kata ~ For Ruri & Hari" ("how to make an angel egg - for ruri and hari")
 - Ali Project are Takarano Arika and Katakura Mikiya, a duo who started out in 1988 with like, a prog rock album? And have been around making visual-kei-artisocratic-tinged pop rock and anime themes songs ever since.
 - Aaaaand Ali Project also did the CLAMP School detectives OP "Peony Pink"!

Summary

- It really reminds me of the CLAMP in Wonderland videos, because we're really just seeing shots of the characters interacting.
 - We fly down the street to Shuichiro's house, and through the garden, encountering characters as we go, finally ending with Shuichiro working on his motorcycle, with cherub Kohaku on his shoulder.
 - We then get a series of shots of the different characters doing their thing. Hisui and Kokuyo hanging out in a tree, Koryu and his minions causing trouble, and Kohaku transforming from cherub form so they can stand before Shuichiro as equals.
 - Koryu also gets a cool transformation scene! Honestly my Sailor Moon roots really went crazy here and I was READY for a full-length show TT__TT
 - Of note, there is no sign of teen Shuichiro here, so no spoilers!
- After the main sequence, there is another song that serves for credits. This one is a little bouncier, and focuses more on Koryu and his minions, though there is still a fair amount of screen time for the other characters (including Ushagi!).
 - I did love seeing Ruri and Hari, in cat form, chasing Kohaku's bird friends around.
- Not going super in depth here because they really are more fun to watch than heavy on, like, symbolism or anything. They're on youtube, so go watch 'em!

Discussion

- This was one of those things I knew existed, and tried desperately to find on like...I think actually Napster, just to totally date myself.
 - I believe I still have some random songs titled “Wish,” that have nothing to do with this music video, which keep getting transferred from computer to computer with all my other music files.
 - But yeah, it’s cute, and it’s very fun to see these characters animated. It gave me a little pang of longing for a Wish anime that never was.
 - Though, I mean...never say never! I would still be happy to see what someone might do with this series now.
 - Though...please give us a decent Tokyo Babylon anime first, thanks.
- Some thoughts from Robin?
 - Agreed! Totally agreed.
 - Fun typography animation for nerds who like that stuff!
 - We think we heard the sound effect used for pokeballs in this music video??
 - Seeing Shuichiro working on his motorcycle was really fun and gave me Oh My Goddess flashbacks.
 - In the ‘ending’ theme I love the harpist bird, that’s just straight-up me.
 - I...think that since these animations feel like an OP and ED, it just makes you think there’s a whole anime? And really gets me in this ‘where is this lost Wish series where all the pacing and stakes problems are solved and the shenanigans are cute and the cats and birds are always fighting and there are pretty magical-enby-transformations?’

ARTBOOK

Background

- This was released in 2001 (which, for context, remember that Wish ran from 95-98)
- Wish: ずっといっしょにいてほしい Memorial Illustration Collection (“I want you to stay with me forever”)

Summary

- We were able to get our hands on a translation of the bonus chapter that appeared in the Wish artbook, which was really exciting for me. I’ve owned this artbook since middle or high school, but I’ve never been able to fully understand what was happening in this chapter. And now I do!
 - So, to briefly summarize, this chapter takes place after the end of the 4th book, and follows Kohaku and reborn Shuichiro.
 - It opens with a familiar scene: Shuichiro going into the garden to find Kohaku chatting with their little bird friends.

- We're told that Shuichiro is now 18 (I believe he was 17 last time we saw him), and he's now in his third year of high school. In fact, today is the first day of school!
 - Apparently he's studying to get into a medical program, so he can be a doctor, just like OG Shuichiro.
- Kohaku asks him if he knows his schedule, since they would like to meet him at the station when he gets back from school.
- He asks Kohaku what they plan to do all day, and it's what you might expect: laundry, cleaning, etc.
 - They also are trying to learn to cook from Hisui, but it's a challenge for them, since they are so uncomfortable around food.
- Right on cue, Koryu shows up to mock them for their bad cooking skills.
 - To prove his point, he holds a dead fish out to Kohaku...and they promptly faint.
- The fish does come in handy, however, as everyone eats it for breakfast. And by everyone, we mean Koryu and his minions, but also Kokuyo, Hisui, and Shuichiro.
 - I love that they're still all eating together, like a family, damnit!
- Kohaku's not present, but Shuichiro has to head off for the day. Before he goes, he has something to say to Hisui about Kohaku, but we don't get to hear what it is.
- Kohaku rushes in, having just missed Shuichiro, since they got held up doing laundry.
 - They feel bad that they missed him, but Hisui counsels them not to get hung up on such things. Kohaku will be able to meet Shuichiro at the station later.
 - And Hisui stares at Kohaku for a moment...as if they know something.
 - But all they'll say is "I'm sure today will be a good day."
- When the end of the day rolls around, Kohaku meets Shuichiro at the station...and man, he is just so excited to see them, I love it.
 - After how stoic adult Shuichiro was, it's nice to see this Shuichiro actually express himself!
- Kohaku notices how excited he looks, and asks if something good happened.
 - It did in fact! He heard back from his grandfather.
 - Who, side note, looks exactly like OG Shuichiro's grandfather. It's pretty much implied that he is also a reincarnation. It's cute that he and Shuichiro have stayed tied together, as well.
- Anyway, apparently he is a chairman at Shuichiro's school, and he's pulled some strings so that Kohaku can join the school, if they want to.
 - Like, he'll deal with the documentation things, like how Kohaku has no ID or parents or anything.
 - He just needs Kohaku's approval, and it's a done deal.
- Shuichiro says that Hisui was also in support of this idea. It'll be good for Kohaku to actually learn things.

- So...do they want to do it? Do they want to go to school with him?
- Well, of course they do! But Kohaku worries they'll be too much of a bother.
- Shuichiro says they won't be a bother at all, but it's more than that.
- The couple share a tender kiss, and Shuichiro tells Kohaku that he wants to spend as much time as possible with them.
- They will always be together, because that is his wish.
- And it's Kohaku's wish, too.
- And, just so that the chapter doesn't end on too sappy of a note, the time of day catches up with them, and Kohaku pops into cherub form.
 - With a last joke about how they shouldn't join any after-school clubs in case they get caught out after dark, the chapter is over!

Discussion

- So, it was only 16 pages, but I really enjoyed this little story!
 - I love the idea of Kohaku going to school, and maybe having a life outside Shuichiro's house. It'll also be a great opportunity for them to learn more about earth, since they are still pretty naive about, well, most things.
 - And of course, it was great to see the characters again. This artbook came out in 2001, so about three years after the end of Wish, but you can already see how the artist's style has improved. They are still using the same basic style, but lines are a little cleaner, and actions are a little clearer. It just looks overall a bit refreshed and new. I'm sure it also didn't hurt that this was one chapter, instead of like 7, so they could really focus on it.
 - Overall though, I think my favorite part is getting to see some cute, truly romantic interactions between our main duo. Since we spent so many pages just waiting for them to realize their feelings for each other, it's nice to see them having comfortable couple moments without some looming threat.
 - I was discussing this with Ian of the CLAMPdown book, and he pointed out that their big kiss is slightly cut off; the panel cuts just below their lips, so we can't see their lips actually meet, but it's undeniably a kiss, and their body language shows how comfortable they are together.
 - On it's own, I don't think this is a big problem, but since there's a history of censoring queer kisses, this definitely rubs me the wrong way. As Ian pointed out, it reminds me of the infamous kiss in Yuri on Ice, where the camera cuts away right before you actually see the couple kiss, and many fans were left...unsatisfied.
 - But, I really don't think there's anything ambiguous about this kiss, and the framing does have a kind of gravitas to it, as if we're seeing their souls kissing more than these individual bodies. Since we know we're dealing with eternal love and reincarnation and everything here, I think there's a certain poetry to that, whether or not it was intentional.
- Robin thoughts?

- My understanding is that that panel exists in a more clearly-a-kiss-redrawn form, as well!
- But CLAMP really don't know kissing or anything sexual even when it's clearly happening, so I don't feel like this hits in quite as much of a shroedinger's queer way, more of just legitimately their comfort-level and sensibilities.
 - It's a cute little story that does also make me want to read more, and makes me feel very glad that Kohaku gets to kind of be a youth and connect with the new Shuichirou rather than just be ageless and immature at the same time forever--the idea that angels can grow means that being trapped in the reincarnation cycle might not be a torture! And it is SO nice to see how Nekoi's art just get SO bangin' by this point!

OTHER TOPICS

Discussion

I promised like, a comparative religions lecture and I got in WAY over my head, but here goes, folks.

When we started reading *Wish*, I was overwhelmed by questions that had nothing to do with the comic itself. Namely—where does this idea of angels and demons come from? What...are they supposed to be, according to whom? And how did any of this—which is definitely Western religious lore—end up in a Japanese romance comic about karmic suffering and reincarnation in 1995?

So angels and devils (I'm going to say demons and devils interchangeably here because that's kind of how they are in *Wish*) are iconic and widely understood—in pop culture. We know that angels are the good guys, pretty and pure and the servants or messengers or emanations of God and Heaven—usually with bird wings and white drapery gowns. They're often pretty girls with blonde hair, and they might play lyres or harps. Demons are ugly and bad—or maybe sexy and still bad—and they're likely to have hooves and goat legs and bat wings and horns and a tail and maybe goatee—and they might be red—and they're the Devil's messengers or servants or torturing squad. A lot of pop culture uses them, either in a very cartoony way as a visual metaphor for the good and bad influences on a character, or as actual characters themselves with these heavenly or infernal jobs (like in *Wish*) or even simply as denizens of two opposed places that may or may not be in open war against each other.

Some of this iconography does come from religion—namely Christianity and Judaism, though Islamic countries definitely have their own takes on these concepts—but some of it comes from literature—what we might flippantly call bible fanfiction. Namely, John Milton's epic poem *Paradise Lost*, where he poses the serpent in the Garden of Eden as a manifestation of Satan, and focuses on fleshing out Satan's backstory as Lucifer, a fallen angel who had rebelled

against God in Heaven and been cast out with his fellow rebels. That idea came up a little bit in the old Testament, but not nearly on the level that we now would recount as the known story. This poem, while not being any kind of holy scripture, is so influential on Christian's understanding of their own religion that it's basically in the canon—as is Dante's *Inferno*, or the *Divine Comedy*, where the author describes levels of hell and who gets tormented for what, and how, and the nature of the afterlife and its denizens.

Interestingly enough, a lot of what else we think we know about angels and demons comes, not from holy scripture, or the canon (and remember, the fanfiction term 'canon' comes from this term for what is considered to be the official holy scriptures in Christianity)—but folklore. And this folklore is very, very old. It is also complicated, because it is often where we get a better understanding of the context for the cultures who practiced the earliest forms of these religions and how they were related to the other cultures who practiced the other religions of antiquity. Namely, that angels and demons are often related to either gods and goddesses from other religions, or similarly supernatural beings with less authority and status than something as loftily titled as a god.

Backing up a TINY bit, here's about all we know about angels from the Hebrew bible: There are humanoid angels. We have context clues that they appeared as beautiful young men, and they served as messengers from God. These angels also mated with human women for a time and gave rise to the Nephilim, which were problematic enough that God sent the Flood (the one Noah built the arc to escape) to wash them away. But there are also non-humanoid angels, including Ophanim, Seraphim, and Cherubim, and those are the ones that look like wheels of wings and eyeballs and stuff. We still use the word cherubim, but we use it for 'cupids'—using an Ancient Roman Sex God's name for an Italian Renaissance decorative motif, the little flying naked babies called 'Putii.'

Almost nothing is told to us about the nature of angels and where or how they live, outside of their role as messengers. There are also the Watchers, which are very mysterious.

By the way, demons are not really in the bible. There are maybe mentions of evil spirits but even then it's unclear what that means. The Devil is barely extant at all—and the Satan (not Satan but a satan) mentioned in Job is more of a prosecutor in God's court (the nature of which is incredibly mysterious and not really illuminated in the bible) than the leader of the bad side. We'll get to where that idea really comes from later.

We get a lot more about angels and demons in Jewish folklore, which also connects to the folklore and mythologies, as I said, of all the other cultures from around that same time. It's easy to forget how what we see as disparate threads of history are really all happening at the same time, a woven tapestry. Ancient Greece, ancient Egypt, ancient Persia, and ancient India were in contact (as well as SO MANY OTHER CULTURES IN BETWEEN) and while the way they discuss each other in scripture tells one story, what we have from the historical record and folklore and actual written records tells another.

And part of what it tells us is that a LOT of things came from Zoroastrianism, often cited as the world's oldest monotheistic religion, though that's kind of reductive and some Jews would bristle at that—as might historians who are really interested in the ancient Egyptian Aten cult. Zoroastrianism is still a practiced religion, it began in about the 6th century BCE by King Zarathustra (or Zoroaster) of Persia (now Iran.) Now, depending on who you ask, Judaism developed from ancient Israelites around 500 BCE, but folklore and culture shows some big influence from Zoroastrianism—as it must, since Persia was right there, and these cultures had a lot of contact.

Zoroastrianism has a dualist cosmology—Ahuramazda is the good god and he struggles with but is also defined by his equal and opposite bad god, Ahriman. This religion was groundbreaking, philosophically, but was also a reaction to older Persian mythology which had lots of other gods and supernatural beings, some of which had been shared with (that may be euphemistic considering how much conquering back and forth was going on back then) with other cultures in the Mediterranean, such as the Babylonians.

But Zoroastrianism was in turn influenced by the Vedic traditions of the ancient Indian culture that eventually composed the Rig Veda. We're going to call this the Vedic culture or Vedic traditions. Which includes these beings called Ashuras and Devas. Ashuras and Devas were not analogous to angels and demons back then at all. In fact, modern Hindu scholars consider them more like the 12 Greek Olympian gods versus the Titans. The Devas, often called Devata in extant cultures, were divine good beings, but the Ashuras were more contentious and power-seeking and could be good or bad.

The Ahura in Ahuramazda is from Ahsura, though in Zoroastrianism the, let's say alignment of these beings is somewhat flipped. The ashura are the Good Ones, the deva became bad. And some of the imagery for these beings is traceable to the origins of angel and demon imagery—but especially Jewish folklore is influenced by being in a world where many cultures believed in supernatural beings that had good and bad influences over people. Ancient Egyptian culture had a lot of traditions around demons, that could possess people or do your bidding, for example.

A lot of ancient people who communicated with each other shared ideas about the supernatural and magic, even though magic of most kinds—especially kinds having to do with demons—was explicitly banned in Judaism and later Christianity. We have Greek texts that talk about Hebrew and Egyptian magic and consider it to be more powerful than their own, though no one from those cultures today would recognize it as anything to do with their religions—it was part of the folklore of the people in those cultures rather than religious practice. Which isn't the case with all rituals from all cultures of course!

So all of these ideas about good and bad spirits/beings/demigods coalesced over the years. Our conception of what demons/the devil look like, with these bestial elements, seems to come from gods such as the Canaanite Baal, Phoenician Moloch, or the Greek satyr-god Pan, Pagan

cultures who were often at odds with the Hebrews—hence the negative light their supernatural entities were cast in.

But the artwork we have of angels can also often be traced to Pagan gods and entities—like the Ashuras, celestial beings that fly through the air and have pretty cloth drapery—or the winged Goddess of the ancient Egyptians, Isis, who was worshipped by cults long into Roman times—the same time that Hebrew “cults” to Jesus were also flourishing.

Romans kind of appropriated other cultures—especially ones they just conquered—religions by way of Syncretism, where they just declared that their Juno WAS Hera, etc. I’m pretty sure that Sol Invictus was them trying to do this with Jesus and Apollo or something? ANYWAY.

Greek nymphs, and Vedic beings such as ashuras, devas, Lkshas (nature spirits) definitely have some parallels, and maybe even Valkyries, too-or at least our imagery and conception of these beings can all kind of coincide, and coincide with angel imagery as well.

So how do we go from wing-and-eyeball monsters and beautiful young men to...sexy anime angels and Touched By an Angel angels? And...wait, the angels in Wish don;t have gender, and I could have sworn that I’d always heard they didn’t have gender, too, growing up...but when I asked my dad about this when I was like 14 (probably after reading Wish or Sandman) he said basically what I’ve said here about angels in the bible versus folklore.

Well, all of this long period of antiquity, when these concepts were developed and these religions took root, is the start. Recall that Christianity took over Rome, and Christian Rome continued to be a power for like 400 years, conquering and over-extending itself across Europe and spreading Christianity. That means more Pagan cultures to be influenced by, more interpretations, and more visual evolution away from its roots. So one thing to note about angel imagery is that Romans portrayed Jesus as having a beard, like a Jewish man would have, but the angels were shaved like Romans. That shaved face was more exotic and maybe androgynous-looking further West in the beardier parts of Western Europe and the British Isles. Angels drifted more after the fall of the Roman Empire and through the Dark Ages, when Western Europe, now Christian, kind of was cut off from all of the philosophy and learning that was now centered in the middle east (who they were fighting stupid Crusades against.)

The ideals of beauty in the Middle Ages were pretty sallow and pale, and angels kind of exemplified that—though influence from Byzantine art may have kept eyes kinda big and halos kind of stylized.

By the way, did you know the Eastern Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire, didn't end until the 1400s???? History is absolutely wild and most of us have a very, very messed up version in our heads.

ANYWAY around that time, give or take 100 years sorry, we get the Renaissance, when western Europeans, uh, reconnected with the art and philosophy and learning from antiquity (after the Bubonic Plague just kicked their asses up and down the street and really made angel of death imagery more of a thing.) And especially with the Italian renaissance, that meant TONS of Greek mythology imagery sharing billings with Biblical imagery, influencing what people thought was beautiful or historically accurate or holy or sexy or any of the things people wanted to see in their art. And angels and demons REALLY took on the attributes of Greek nymphs and gods.

Later, much later, in the Romantic period, this was cemented but with even more reaching-back-to-antiquity-and-pagan imagery, which is definitely when Valkyries maybe got mixed up in there too. And the feminine angels, who might be nymphs, flourished. Not to mention Scandinavian Christmas traditions, which have Norse roots of course, really laying on the blonde angel girl in a white dress as a Christmas tree topper kind of stuff.

And eventually art culture, like paintings and operas, combines with folk culture like campfire stories and cautionary tales that preserve old Pagan traditions with Christian details, combines with pop culture like illustrations and advertisements and vaudeville and minstrel shows, and you get animation and cartooning in early America that really cement this simplified 'angel and devil' motifs.

About the androgynous angel idea—I'm not 100% why this is pervasive but it's not nothin'—even though there are 'male angels' in the Hebrew bible, modern Rabbinical tradition contains an idea that basically angels have no gender because they're just emanations of God which are programmed to be what they need to be for the 'mission' as it were—and this is definitely something that was re-interpreted as angels getting to pick their appearances, such as Aziraphale in *Good Omens*. But it wasn't meant that way, meant more of like...they have no will or shape until God forms it. But also in this tradition God isn't gendered, either. And there are parallels with that in Islam.

Speaking of Islam! Islam, blossoming from the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad in Arabia in the mid-500s CE, also has angels—in fact, Gabriel coming to him in a cave while he prayed was the beginning of his divine inspiration—and also directly refers to them as male and not feminized—though some artwork like from the Mughal era, when Muslims ruled India, shows Muhammad's attendant angels as more feminine anyway because art and culture are complicated and subjective. Also they look a LOT like Ashuras and Apsaras (kind of air nymphs)

So that's....a lot of stuff I've just brought up and I've barely scratched the surface. But it hasn't remotely answered the question of how this stuff got into *Wish*. And I have two threads to discuss there. One of them has to do with Japan's relationship with Christianity, which is very interesting. The other has to do with whether or not any Western angel lore is in *Wish* at all—because it isn't as though these foundational ashuras and devas and lakshas and Rakshas (vedic man-eating ogre-types) didn't persist into Japanese culture independently!

So I'm actually going to start there because I just think understanding how interconnected everyone is is incredibly important.

Because we discussed how the ideology that Wish's angels and God discuss is in fact very Buddhist to our reading, and I want to point out that while we traced so much back to those Vedic cultural traditions, I left out how two more religions are directed rooted in that culture—Buddhism and Hinduism.

Buddhism is old. We somehow gloss over this in the west for no acceptable reason, because it's one of the most pervasive and influential schools of thought in the world, and it stemmed from that culture, that part of the world, in about the 4th century BCE (Hinduism began to form around that time but wasn't caudified as we know it until 300 CE.) And Ashuras (or really Apsaras but frankly all of those beings) found roles in Buddhism, too, as gods or spirits that attended bodhisavas or the buddha. And they had lots of importance when Buddhism went through China, because they could be syncretized with their own gods and spirits—as they were throughout Asia, in ways that really differ from place to place.

But in Japanese there are terms like Tennyo and Tenshi (Tenshi is always translated to angel and is the word used in Japanese translations of the bible) that mean heavenly maiden (well, Tennyo can be male too) that are divine and celestial and usually drawn like apsaras or Ashuras—floaty ribbons/drapery and all. Wings can pop up on these images, too, though usually flying is done aided by like, clouds and fabrics that indicates wind movement, rather than wings.

And I'd say that the angels in Wish have more to do with these than they do with Hebrew biblical angels.

(Note that the Rakshas of India are very connected to later permutations of Japanese Oni, which are sometimes underworld guardians and sometimes mountain ogres, depending on the era and the tradition.)

BUT

But.

Japan does also have a fascination with angel imagery both from pop culture AND from more esoteric occult-like stuff (remember we've just come off from the Occult Boom.) And Japan has a long and storied history with Christianity.

Portuguese missionaries (we'll call them Catholic I think they mostly were though Jesuit may be more accurate) did land in Japan in like 1549 and spread it around a bit. This was still the Warring States period and THINGS WERE A BIT ON FIRE. Christianity was banned for about 250 years during the Edo period, but many of the converted Christians just went underground. Many kind of semi-syncretized with Buddhist deity Kanon, and Kanon sculptures still exist that had been secretly modified to be Mary statues, for example.

In the 1800s when Commodore Perry rolled up and, uh, euphemistically we'll say 'opened up Japan' that meant Christianity came with him—and a bit later the 'secret Christians' who had been maintaining their faith all that time came to a church that had been opened by French immigrants and declared their affiliation openly—but in general Christians came and influenced Japan a lot here, bringing their culture, just as they brought a LOT of culture back with them.

Then after WW2 you get the really messed up way that MacArthur basically just ran Japan as an American satellite, and there was a complicated attempt to bring enough Christianity to like, Americanize the country but not so much that the actually revolutionary teaching of Jesus might make people go too Communist. I'm being extremely flippant about some extremely contentious stuff here, forgive me, I have so much contempt for all of the political shit here, sorry.

But while there was Catholic and later Mormon presence that definitely influenced Japan, the occult boom brought all the most sensational, supernatural stuff from Western esotericism to the forefront.

And that means goetic demonology (medieval demon manuals that def cribbed from pagan deities and like, asserted infernal hierarchies of demons and stuff you could summon) and Gnostic Kabbalah with its hebrew-letters-as-magic-words type stuff and angels with specific domains and characteristics found only in folklore, and Masonic imagery and concepts (don't get me started) and even Gnostic Christian stuff that is very parallel to Buddhism including having the sense that the world is an imperfect construct (like Buddhism's Samsara) and we must escape the reincarnation cycle.

In the US, we also had interesting things going on with the occult and the angels/demons side of religion, too—the Satanic Panic was a response to a perceived evil, but at the same time if you watch 80s and early 90s Unsolved Mysteries its ALL 'my daughter came back as an angel to give me signs she's at peace now' and stuff like that. Not to mention the Protestant—and

particularly Charismatic Christian and Fundamentalist Christian obsession with the book of revelation and a fixation on the idea that there are demons subverting god's will and spreading Satan's and possessing people and influencing the world—ideas that have woven through culture forever but aren't explicitly explained or put forth in the bible at all, really, with very minor and obfuscated exceptions. I mean, Jesus can be read as an exorcist, right? Remember the story of how he dealt with the horde of demons known as Legion? And how he was tempted by an evil spirit while he was out fasting?

So things like *Touched by an Angel* and all of the complicated anti-Masonic stuff in *Twin Peaks*—that made it to Japan.

And I want to point out that one of the privileges of seeing pop culture from another country reference your own is that you get to see things from a new perspective, or at least catch a glimpse of one. And it also reminds us that the most sensationalist, goofy, over-the-top stuff is what makes it into pop culture (which has to be salacious and commercial and seduce folks into needing to turn the page and buy that tabloid and watch the next trashy episode)—just like how we tend to get that version of other culture's stuff!

So I'm sure had I not become fixated on Zoroastrianism and Vedic traditions I might have picked out more specific cultural touchstones that taught CLAMP what a 90s angel really was, but I'm sure you can just look at what movies and TV shows from the 80s and 90s made it over there and glean that. Combine that with their own cultural sensibilities about things that branched off into angels, demons, and Buddhist beings, and you get *Wish*.

So this was overly long and STILL SO UNSATISFYINGLY SIMPLIFIED AND REDUCTIVE

I skipped over Baha'i concepts of angels and (unrelated) Mormon concepts of angels which are somehow kind of similar—they both consider angels to be people who have died, like a holy spirit. Sometimes spirits of people yet unborn. But I didn't want to just....talk for the rest of time. I really encourage people to look into the anthropology, linguistics, theology, and esoterica I've brought up and find some new appreciation of history themselves!

And...I think its fitting that we have all of this eastern and western esotericism coming together, Because somehow that lies in the foundations of our next CLAMP series. 2022 will be the Year of Card Captor Sakura!

But first, if all goes well we'll have a little surprise for you for December!

Outro

Until then, you can follow us on twitter, Tumblr, and Instagram @Clampcastpod, on Facebook as Clampcast in Wonderland, and on our website clampcastinwonderland.com.

You can support us on Patreon, by making purchases through our Bookshop.org store, or just by writing a review or sharing this podcast with your friends.

Thanks for coming with us on our journey through CLAMP's Wonderland!

Until next time, remember that everything will be alright—

—and try not to lose an eye!

NATE RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- Should i be actually saying this stuff originates with the 'Indus River Valley Civilization' or is there a better term?
- >>> Little is actually known about the Indus River Valley Civilization(s) including their religious beliefs, so I would avoid that.
- Is 'Vedic' actually a good word for the more-connected-to-modern-India ancient culture that's like, the next step from that?
- >>> THIS is probably a better term for the sort of proto-Hindu/proto-Buddhist extended family of religious products, but IIRC Norse paganism is also technically Vedic so I'll do a little more digging on that (Veda = Edda).
>>> It would be the "Historic Vedic Religion", "Rg Vedic Religion" or "Brahminism" depending on the era, but Hinduism as we know it was already well-established by the 3rd Century AD.
- >>> Buddhism actually comes out of the pre-Hindu Vedic traditions, not Hinduism proper. Technically, Buddhism is actually older (by about 400 years) than Hinduism-as-we-know-it. The Japanese tenyo are basically equivalent to Buddhist apsaras.
- What do scholars think the introductions of christianity were? Like, Portuguese missionaries in ___ year, then something after the period of isolation ended, then post-war stuff, then occult boom?
- >>> Spanish and Portuguese Jesuits led the initial missions (with the Franciscans and other mendicant orders contributing) in the 16th Century, which would have been the late Sengoku period by Japanese reckoning. Nobunaga was initially tolerant of Christians in Japan, but his successor Hideyoshi was more wary and instituted the first crackdowns. Hideyoshi only banned Catholic missionary activity, however. Christianity itself wasn't banned until the Tokugawa Shogunate, which drove Japanese Christians underground until Emperor Meiji relaxed the religious laws. The first Protestant missionaries hit Japan during the Meiji Era. Mormon converts are basically all from the postwar Showa Era onward.
- >>> Japan was aware of Christianity fairly early on, but only "through the grapevine" as it were. You don't actually have Catholic missionaries on Honshu until the Portuguese are making regular voyages around the Horn of Africa tho.
- New question! Do you know when angels became associated with pretty winged people as opposed to eyeball monsters? Is this Medieval? Remind me the relationship between fall of the roman empire and the christian era so i have a sense of how long we're actually talking about for this imagery to evolve, I may be slightly missing a step or two. Romans...something...Charlemagne???? X...x
- >>> Okay so Christianity was just one of many mystery cults that were big in the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity. NOTE: this is "Late Antiquity" not "Late Roman". After converting to Christianity, the Roman Empire would rule most of Europe for another 450 years until the final collapse of the Western Empire. The Eastern Roman Empire (i.e. the

Byzantines) only fell after being conquered by the Ottomans in the 15th Century.

>>> Even after the collapse of the Western Empire, Rome held considerable sway over Europe due to being the seat of the RCC, which was basically all of Europe by the 5th Century. Charlemagne was a Frankish king who got the Pope's blessing, starting the trend of European monarchs answering to the Pope. Charlemagne conquered a lot of Europe and sort of laid the foundation for the Holy Roman Empire.

- >>> THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE IS JUST GERMANY, LOL. It doesn't even have holdings on the Italian peninsula. It is the First German Reich, which fell after being conquered by Napoleon. The Second Reich was ruled by the Prussian Hohenzollern Kaisers (that is "Caesars") until Germany's defeat in WWI. The Third Reich was from the end of the Weimar Republic until Germany's defeat in WWII.
- >>> Judaism has always had pretty bishonen angels. Those are called Messengers. They are almost certainly inspired by the Zoroastrian devas, which are in turn derived from the Vedic/Buddhist apsaras. Which also inspired the Japanese tenyo. Yes, Zoroastrianism is older than Buddhism, Hinduism, and Judaism as we know it. Mithra, who changes genders like shoes, is an Indo-Aryan deity that is often portrayed as having wings. Zoroastrianism was itself a response to older Aryan (i.e. Persian) religion.

In Mormonism, angels are human beings who either have died or those who haven't been born yet. The golden plates were revealed to Joseph Smith by the angel Moroni, who was able to do this because Moroni himself had buried them when he was alive in Pre-Columbian America. Mormons also believe that the usual Christian archangels were really important men. Michael was Adam, for example. Gabriel was Noah, etc.

The Western conception of demons is the convergence of ancient Egyptian traditions and the devas of Zoroastrianism. The word itself comes from the Greek daemonion. The Greeks used this for all disembodied spirits, good and evil. Zoroaster saw them as only ever bad, and the daevas of Zoroastrianism are the Hindu apsaras recast. Ancient Judaism equated them with the other Canaanite gods. This carried over into Christianity, wherein the conceptions of demons as rebel angels was solidified. Some of the most prominent demons in Medieval demonology are explicitly identified with certain pagan gods. Beelzebub is Baal, Astaroth is Ishtar, Moloch is... Moloch, and Satan himself is sometimes identified with the Egyptian god Seth. None of this is canon, however.

The bestial appearance of much of the Canaanite pantheon has informed the visual representation of demons in Christianity from the Middle Ages onward. The goat-like qualities of Moloch, Pan, and Dionysus (sometimes) is the source of the image we all imagine when we hear the word "devil".

The Islamic djinns are similar to the Greco-Egyptian conception of demons. In Islam, not all djinns are bad. Some are aligned with God (although these djinns who serve God are NOT angels), others are in league with Satan, while still others are more or less neutral. Basically men, only physically challenged.

In the Baha'i Faith (another Abrahmic religion), angels are similar to the angels of LDS Christianity. They are the fiery spirits of dead human beings who have literally burned away their own corruptible material forms.

Tenshi--often conflated with both valkyries and nymphs, which are of course very elemental
Also the elemental dragon kings of Chinese mythology

<https://www.quora.com/Where-in-Torah-does-it-say-that-angels-are-androgynous>

<https://www.quora.com/I-ve-heard-angels-are-androgynous-but-didn-t-they-have-sex-in-the-Bible-with-human-women>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angels_in_art

So...angels are not androgynous in the Torah or the Bible. The ones that are humanoid (the messengers, the Malachim, doers-of-work) are male--and part of the Flood story is the product of angels and humans, the Nephilim, being a problem and needing to be wiped out. Archangels like Michael and Gabriel are defined as male by the language of the texts, and we can probably interpret descriptions as being male, too. Now, not all angels are humanoid-looking. Ophanim, Cherubim, and other non-human-looking angels are from the book of Ezekiel, and yes they are described as like...wheels of eyes and wings and chariots and things. And we don't know if that's a metaphor or a translation error or straight up intentional, but those also exist and re-drawing with Ophanim and like, Goetic demons would be very charming~

But the concept of angels being androgynous is SO STRONG that it made it to Japan!

And I thiiiiink I've tracked down where this idea comes from, so...forgive me if I'm wrong, and feel free to let me know if you have more pieces of this puzzle.

But on the one hand, Rabbinical tradition AND some Islamic thought do consider angels in general--and sometimes even God--as genderless. In Rabbinical tradition, it is thought the Messengers are basically emanations or like, pre-programmed manifestations that do a specific thing, rather than like....a race of creatures that have their own will.

The Quran cites Allah as saying that angels shouldn't be depicted as female, but more modern Islamic art does kind of

Outro (edit for flavor)

In our next episode, we'll be discussing....

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Until next time, remember that everything will be alright—

—and try not to lose an eye!