

Edogawa Ranpo

The Urth list — 7 messages, 4 voices, 31 Oct 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3533>

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James Wynn — 31 Oct 2002, 17:00

Anyone here familiar with the works of Edogawa Ranpo? He's (apparently) an influential Japanese children's mystery author who died about 1964. I was wondering about his (remotely possible) influence on Wolfe, but I can't find any of his works in English.

-- Crush

Michael Andre-Driussi — 31 Oct 2002, 17:28 · follows James Wynn

Crush wrote:

Anyone here familiar with the works of Edogawa Ranpo? He's (apparently) an influential Japanese children's mystery author who died about 1964. I was wondering about his (remotely possible) influence on Wolfe, but I can't find any of his works in English.

"Edogawa Ranpo" was the pen name of a Japanese author (the name itself is a not-really-disguised "Japanification" of "Edgar Allan Poe"). I associate Edogawa Ranpo's work with Japanese Gothic, with weird psycho-sexual imagery; I was not aware that he wrote any work for children, but I wouldn't be surprised if it is true.

Movies have been made of his work, and I've seen (I think) two: one called "Trousseau" and the other, name I can't recall, but it involved a castle near a cliff overlooking the sea, and the habit of a nobleman there to ride his horse at gallop toward the cliff at a certain hour of the day.

Now Crush, what trace, however obscure, led you here?

=mantis=

James Wynn — 01 Nov 2002, 16:32 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis asked

Now Crush, what trace, however obscure, led you here [to Edogawa Ranpo]?

Crush responds

This is the sort of libertine association that wedges itself so firmly in the craw of Roy and others and to which Agia once referred as "imagination plus". Yet, the fact remains that my starting point was associating Crane (from the Long Sun) with the god Ranpo:

<http://gene-wolfe.tripod.com/chems.htm>

So here's a peek into the twisted way I think. Imagine you're a writer who is a fan of Edogawa Ranpo whose detective fiction (like your own) is known for it's weird touch. You also have a long time interest in alchemy. You naturally know that the word comes from the same origin as Egypt, which intersects with your other interest in ancient mythology. So eventually you come across a picture of the Egyptian *god* Chem standing next to this other god, Ranpo. Don't you think that god other would stick in your mind? Now your writing a story about a guy who is also

a something of a detective, and your going to riff of concepts based on the word "chem". Maybe you'd work Edogawa in in the same way you have in the past with Jorge Borge....

Nice theory, but the probability wave shrinks when one learns that the author's name is not "Ranpo" but "RaMpo". The connection is still plausible when one considers the name game Wolfe plays throughout the Long Sun with connections as tenuous as Silk = Sand. Yet, clearly the connection is now as thin as a spider's thread (if I may play the game as well).

--- Crush

James Wynn — 01 Nov 2002, 16:18 · follows James Wynn

mantis asked

Now Crush, what trace, however obscure, led you here [to Edogawa Ranpo]?

Crush responds

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Roy C. Lackey — 01 Nov 2002, 17:53 · follows James Wynn

Crush responds

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Interesting slip you made there; I wonder if alga appreciates it? <g>

-Roy

James Wynn — 01 Nov 2002, 18:56 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy said

Interesting slip you made there; I wonder if alga appreciates it? <g>

Oops! My apologies to Alga. I hope if she gives a hoot one way or the other, she appreciates it.

--Crush

Alice K. Turner — 02 Nov 2002, 01:34 · follows James Wynn

Roy said

Interesting slip you made there; I wonder if alga appreciates it? <g>

Oops! My apologies to Alga. I hope if she gives a hoot one way or the other,
she appreciates it.

--Crush

She does. With some surprise that she never noticed it before.

BTW, the Gnostic primer, the easiest and most available text, spelling out all the surviving myths, remains THE GNOSTIC RELIGIONS by Hans Jonas. There is, of course, a lot of on-line stuff by now.

-alga