

TSH: Rip van Winkle and John Duns Scotus

The Urth list — 6 messages, 4 voices, 04 May 2010

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Stephen Hoy — 04 May 2010, 06:53

Half-baked thoughts, thought I'd share them in case someone finds something useful thereby.

The philosopher/theologian John Duns Scotus is found by lining up three iterations of the Zwart Black line,

- Ieuan, a representation of John in Welsh, which matches his brother Emlyn's Welsh name.
- the two Dunns, Baxter and George
- Alexander Skotus (presumably an alias used by Zwart)

'Alexander' heads round to Johannes Duns Scotus via Scotus' treatises elaborating the views of Aristotle. The Greek philosopher Aristotle tutored Alexander the Great. I'm not sure what more to make of this--I can't get past thoughts about Don DeFore on the TV show Hazel.

As to Bax's familiar, Winker/Winkle suggests a link to the story of the Urashima Taro, a Japanese Rip van Winkle who went away to fairyland for a few days and returned home only to find years had passed.

Strengthening this

supposition is the second half of the fox's name, Inari, which refers to a Japanese god of success & prosperity, often depicted as an old man riding a white fox.

Mr Thalassocrat — 04 May 2010, 11:45 · in reply to Stephen Hoy

On Tue, May 4, 2010 at 4:23 PM, Stephen Hoy <stephenhoy at yahoo.com> wrote:
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Nice!

It reminds me that Bax describes himself to Martha as being of Scots descent. He also says that the name "Dunn" comes from a town there (I think). Wikipedia says that Duns Scotus was named after Duns in Scotland (so I guess his name is really "John of Duns in Scotland").

Less interestingly: I assume that "Ted" is short for "Theodore", "gift of God". But presumably "Doris" also comes from the Greek for gift (despite the silly assertion on name sites on the net that its best meaning is "Dorian woman"). No idea what that means; probably nuthin'.

But off on a tangent - do we know what Ted did for a living? My guess is real estate, and that "Ambrosius" when he wasn't in faerie was the "A" in "A & I Inc", and that Ted worked for him. And also, as I said before, that Ted is/was Goldwurm.

I have an image of small town real estate sharks with second lives as sorcerers fighting magical battles with each other. Apart from anything else, it sounds like a good concept for a sit-com ...

Gwern Branwen — 04 May 2010, 12:48 · in reply to Stephen Hoy

On Tue, May 4, 2010 at 2:53 AM, Stephen Hoy <stephenhoy at yahoo.com> wrote: ...

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Strengthening this supposition is the second half of the fox's name, Inari, which refers to a Japanese god of success & prosperity, often depicted as an old man riding a white fox.

Whoa, I don't see any connection there at all. I don't remember Urashima Taro being connected with foxes/kitsune at all - dragons, if anything. Nor did I ever hear of Taro as being rewarded with great wealth, and I'm not sure about there being any Rip van Winkle-style time travel in the story.

gwern

Roy C. Lackey — 04 May 2010, 17:57 · in reply to Mr Thalassocrat

Andrew quoted and wrote:

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That may be, but the surname Dunn came to Bax and George by way of adoption (17). I don't see how the surname is or can be related to the Zwart Black line. Martha said she was a Scot, but her original surname of Murrey is closer, in terms of color, to Black than Dunn.

-Roy

Mr Thalassocrat — 05 May 2010, 02:06 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On Wed, May 5, 2010 at 3:27 AM, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:

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I think Duns Scotus' name is just a nice little easter egg - anyway, I hope understanding TSH doesn't require reading all of Duns Scotus' works :)

Small correction: Martha's original surname was "Murray", of course.

Roy C. Lackey — 05 May 2010, 04:01 · in reply to Mr Thalassocrat

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Small correction: Martha's original surname was "Murray", of course.

You are, of course, quite correct. That's three I've made in the last couple weeks!

-Roy