

birth of Christ" was written verbally and completely, and not replaced by one letter; say, the "IIIrd century since the birth of Christ" instead of "X.III century". With time, the information that the letters "X" and "I" at the beginning of the above formulas mean the first letters of the names Christ and Jesus was lost. The letters were ascribed their numerical values instead (figures having been earlier denoted by letters), viz., X = ten, I = unity, i.e., "X.III" and "I.300" started to be naturally read as the "13th century" and "one thousand and three hundred years", which led to shifting "backwards" by 1,000 years the part of documents that made use of the spelled form of writing dates, e.g., "IIIrd c. since the birth of Christ" instead of the abbreviated (X.III c.). In other words, the 1,000-year shift is the difference between the spelled form of writing dates and the abbreviated form. A similar mechanism could, in the author's opinion, have led to the appearance of various dates "since the creation of the world", e.g., the Byzantine date of 5508 B.C.

Since earlier each letter of the alphabet was associated with a figure (A=1, etc.), numbers were denoted by letters in ancient documents. We now formulate a hypothesis, viz., that the original basic dates with which the count from a particular year started might have been written in literal abbreviations making up a meaningful short verbal formula such as in the above example. This "word-date" was an abbreviation of the expanded verbal formula describing an event which was a basis for one or another calendar. Denoting figures verbally, and counting years subsequently from the first "word-date", the figures were replaced by letters (1 by A, 2 by B, etc.), which led to a rapid distortion of the first "word-date", and all the subsequent ones became senseless from the standpoint of the language in which they were written. It is clear that the original meaning of the first "word-date" was soon forgotten. Thus, in a long range of the meaning of the word-dates, e.g., consecutive years from the creation of the world, we can attempt to find those rare original word-dates which not only possess a meaningful reading as an abbreviation of expanded verbal formulas, but also correspond to authentic events which form a basis for the given calendar. We illustrate this by the example of the above date 5508 B.C. We have already seen that the events related to Hildebrand in the 11th c. A.D. could serve as a reference point for counting years since the birth of the Christ, i.e., for the period "A.D." We distinguish two basic dates relating to Hildebrand, viz., 1073, his election as a pope [74], [44], and 1075, the year of Cencius' conspiracy against Gregory Hildebrand ([44], [44*] V.4, pp.155-156) and, at the same time, the year of a lunar eclipse related by the early Christian authors to the Crucifixion, which was traditionally believed to have occurred in the first half of the 1st c. A.D.

Re-calculating these two dates in terms of those since the creation of the world according to Byzantine and Russian tradition, we obtain (6581 = 1073 + 5508), and (6583 = 1075 + 5508). Now, writing the figures as letters in accordance with the traditional rules (see [275], p.150), we obtain the word-dates 6581 = ≠ SΦΠA, 6583 = ≠ SΦΠΓ. The sign "≠" distinguishing word-dates from other words is regarded today only as the formal notation of "one thousand". However, we cannot exclude the possibility of its being a distorted form of writing the letter I (Jesus) in the original, (see also the above identification of the letter "I" with "1,000" in writing, e.g., the year I.300). Further, the letter Φ was also written as Θ (see the old Russian texts). Taking into account these two remarks, we obtain the following word-dates,