

Summary

An excavation team from the Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw worked at Dendera in Upper Egypt in the years 1999–2002 under direction of the present writer. As a marginal activity, members of the team took photographs not connected with the subject of their field work. We tried to observe both the past and the present day of Dendera.

We worked in the urban area of Dendera, and more precisely in the eastern part of the ancient town. Dendera (Tentyris or Tentyra) was from time immemorial the capital of the VIth Upper Egyptian nome.

Our site was situated between the eastern wall of the main temple precinct and the gate being a remnant of the so-called Eastern Temple, in a large empty field which used to be a part of the town. Our expectations of an interesting discovery were satisfied by finding – among other objects – a number of decorated stone blocks in the northern part of the site. In the eastern part we found a portion of the ancient town structures of the First Intermediate Period (22nd century BC). A lot of pottery found at the site gave our French colleague Sylvie Marchand a possibility to establish a firm chronology of the remnants of this part of the town.

The expedition was a joint French-Polish undertaking by the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale and the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo (The University of Warsaw). The French mission was directed by Dr. François Leclère of the IFAO. The Polish team, an independent mission financed exclusively by the PCMA, worked under supervision of professor Adam Łukaszewicz (The University of Warsaw).

The famous temple of Dendera built in the late Ptolemaic and early Roman period is of particular interest and therefore has been described in a more detailed way in the Polish text above. The temple of Hathor is an enormous building, rich in decoration and texts. Studies carried out by our French colleagues bring an amount of knowledge about the structures of the temple precinct and throw light on the religious life of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt.

The rural life of the present day village of Dandara has been to us an equally important subject. We took pictures of some inhabitants and their houses, of animals, fields and crops.

We wish to express our thanks to the Egyptian authorities and to our French partners of the IFAO with whom we had the privilege to cooperate at one of their favourite sites.

During our stay in Egypt we took a great advantage of the benevolence and hospitality of the Egyptian authorities that permitted us to work in Dendera and cooperated in a most efficient way. This text is a modest way to express our gratitude and sympathy to Egypt and the Egyptians.

Summary

In this brief study concerning ἔξακόσιοι ἔξικοντα ἔξ, the number of the Beast in the Apocalypse of St. John, a general outline of the *status quaestionis* is followed by some ideas concerning the possible equivalents of the Apocalyptic number. The writer proposes M. NEPOYA = 666 and discusses Trajan as a possible interpretation. While Ulpius (ΟΥΛΠΙΟC) is difficult, since it supposes a stigma instead of a sigma, the equivalent of 666 for M. Nerva is regular. As regards Tragianas (ΤΡΑΓΙΑΝΑC), also equal to 666, it is a version of Trajan's name which occurs in the Babylonian Talmud, along with other similar variants with slightly different vowels.

The writer discusses the Roman emperors who are the possible prototypes of the Beast in the successive redactions of the Apocalypse. In conclusion, he agrees with the idea that the original Apocalypse could have been written under the Flavians, with Nero as the Beast who had been wounded and revived (a pseudo-Nero). In that version, the second Beast who is also a wonder-worker, could be Vespasian. His reputation of a thaumaturge is well-documented. The count of the „kings” (17.10–11) indicates Domitian as the last one. That belongs to the second redaction of the text. Some features of Nero are certainly similar to those of Domitian. That fact may have facilitated the making of the new redaction. Both Nero and Domitian perished as a result of a wound. The prophetical statement concerning Domitian (εἰς ἀπώλειαν ὑπάγει 17.11) is certainly to be taken as a *vaticinium ex eventu*. Therefore that redaction of the text must date to the period after Domitian. New features were added under Trajan, transforming the description of the second beast into an allegory of that emperor. Especially the war in the East and the Jewish uprising of A.D. 115–117 may have enriched the prophetic message with new colours.

It is certainly significant that 666 may be considered a kind of a negative counterpart of 888, the number of Jesus (Ιησοῦς).

It is a question, whether the ominous number may have originally concerned Nero. That was only possible if the count was not made in Greek (*nrw qsr* = 666, according to Lupieri). It is rather difficult to imagine that a Greek reader could guess a name written in a non-Greek cipher. Anyway, the new political situation inspired the new interpretation of the beast. It was probably during Trajan's reign that 666 for Trajan was inserted. M. NEPOYA, the name of Trajan, seems to be the

Greek transcription of the Latin form „M. Nerva” and not a genitive of the Greek form Νέρονας. Trajan, whose military career belongs to the reign of Domitian, corresponds to the description of the second beast being a servant of the first one (i.e. Domitian).

The language of St. John’s Apocalypse is obviously influenced by the Book of Daniel, with addition of some original ideas based upon the realities of the time. For example, the horns of the beast, and especially the description of the two horns of the second beast „similar to the Lamb” may be inspired not only by the pattern of Daniel 7, but also by the laurel wreath of a Roman emperor as represented on coins.

As to the Whore of Babylon, the writer remains sceptical with regard to the interpretation of that Apocalyptic character by Edmondo Lupieri as a symbol of Jerusalem and not of Rome. The traditional interpretation seems more adequate. While there is no doubt that Jerusalem is often qualified as a „prostitute” in older prophetic writings, in the Apocalypse allusions to the situation of the city on the sea and to its political power over the whole world seem to exclude the religious capital of Israel. It is probable that the image of the city as a prostitute sitting on a beast with seven heads explained in the text as seven hills (αἱ ἑπτὰ κεφαλαὶ ἑπτὰ ὅρη εἰσὶν, ὅπου ἡ γυνὴ κάθηται ἐπ’ αὐτῶν 17.9) was influenced by the figure of Roma sitting on seven stones (i.e. the hills of Rome) as represented on coins of Vespasian (BMC II 774, pl. 34.5).

The mark on the hand and forehead of the followers of the Beast seems to be a tattoo similar to the χάραγμα on hands and foreheads of Roman soldiers. The official application of such signs seems to have been a practice of Roman authorities in the second century AD, confirmed by some sources including an ostraca from Dios in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, published by Hélène Cuvigny (O. Dios inv. 568).

Such marks belong also to the *répertoire* of Mithraic signs and it is noteworthy that the number 666 is a gematric equivalent of the phrase ΘΕΟΣ ΜΙΘΡΑΣ ΖΕΙ (for ζῆ) = 666.

The Rider on the White Horse, „the faithful and true one”, is the principal character of the vision of the war against the forces of evil. If the description of the future victory was already present in the first version of the Apocalypse, it was probably a reflexion of the realities of the *bellum Iudaicum* of Nero’s and Vespasian’s time. At any rate, the ultimate description of that war seems to be an allegory of the Jewish uprising and/or of the Parthian war under Trajan. The mention of the morning star may be perhaps even connected with the interpretation of the name of the later Jewish leader Bar Kokhba (Bar Koseva) as „Son of the Star” (cf. Num. 24.17).

It is obvious that the text of the Revelation of St. John cannot be taken as a historical record written in code. However, it contains allusions to actual facts hidden under the conventional language of a prophecy.

Summaries

The narrative of Jan Długosz about the origin of the name of Prussia

Jan Długosz (Joannes Dlugossius), a Polish historiographer writing in Latin in the 15th century, in his description of Prussia mentions the origin of the inhabitants of that country. In his times Prussia was ruled by the Teutonic Order, but was still inhabited by the subjugated Baltic population of the Prussians. According to Długosz's fancy tale, the name of Prussia and of its inhabitants derives from king Prusias of Bithynia, a ruler known from the history of Rome's wars with Hannibal. After the defeat, Prusias allegedly left with his people for a coast in the far North (*in aquilonarem oram*) and his new country on the Baltic took its name from the king.

That naïve and erroneous explanation can be easily dismissed as just one of those numerous false or fantastic etymological and aetiological stories which fill the pages of ancient and medieval literature. The only thing which is true in that story is the existence of kings of Bithynia: Prusias I (230–182 B.C.) and Prusias II (182–148 B.C.).

Their name has no explanation in Greek. The Bithynians were a branch of Thracians. Three important ancient cities of Asia Minor bear the names of Prusa and Prusias. These names (Prusa, Prusias *ad Hypium* and Prusias *ad mare* – formerly Kios) derive from the names of their royal founders. In Lycia there was an old town named Prostanna. That name was probably connected with the people named *Prst*, the Philistines, known from Egyptian texts of the late New Kingdom. The similarity of the name of *Prst* to other anthroponyms, ethnonyms and toponyms in various regions of the ancient world raises the question of the meaning of that appellation and of the itinerary of the *Prst* in their migrations.

The name of the Prussians and the horse

There might be a connection between the name of the Prussians and a number of words deriving from the Indo-European *pr* and *prs*. Thracian names like Πρασιάς

λίμνη may be mentioned as an example. The Prasii (Πράσιοι), an ancient people of India, gave name to a region called Πρασιακή by the Greeks.

The Indo-European names of the horse also derive in part from *prs*. The German word *Pferd* is often explained as deriving from the Latin *veredus*. However, in reality it was *veredus* that came from *peredus*, formed from **perd* (*Pferd* or Dutch *paard* and ultimately from the root *prd/prs*). *Peredus*, *Pferd* and *paard* are onomatopoeic. They ultimately refer to horse's snorting. That name of the horse is also etymologically related to the Greek word πέρδομαι, an equivalent of the English verb *fart*. The old German words *hors* and *hros*, Dutch *ros* and German *Roß*, also stand in some relation to *prs*.

In old Polish a mare is sometimes (or regionally) called *prus* (like a Prussian). *Pr!* was in Poland a traditional carter's cry to stop the horses.

However, the actual connection (if any) between the name of the horse and the ethnonym of the *Prst* (and, perhaps, of the Prussians) is still *sub iudice*. A possible linguistic relationship between the name of the Prussians and the name of *Prst* (Philistines) is, however, not improbable. That does not imply a real identity of those peoples. The names of peoples are unstable. Like languages, they can be transmitted from people to people. The name of the Baltic Prussians was not their own ethnonym, but an appellation used by their neighbours as a general name of the entire Prussian community, which was a large tribal federation.

The reeds

Herodotus mentions a Thracian tribe of the Trausi. Similar names are known in various parts of Europe. In early medieval Prussia there was a settlement of Truso recorded in written sources. That site was recently discovered and identified with a high degree of probability. The name of Truso can hardly be a direct reminiscence of a Mediterranean prototype. However, there are similar names in other countries of Indo-European language. It seems that those names may convey the meaning of 'reed' (*trus-*, Greek θρύον). An old Polish family name Truszk apparently has its roots in the same word. Thus, the name of Truso may mean 'a place of reeds'. The ethnonym of Etrusci/Tusci may also be related. The same may be also valid for the names like *Troismis* etc. in the Thracian region. Also the rare word θρωσμοί which occurs in Apoll. Argon., II 823 probably refers to places full of reeds on the river Hypios which is ίλνόεις. It is even possible that the name of Troy, otherwise Ίλιος, is connected with the word ίλύς "mud", and refers to the neighbouring swamps.

The Philistines

The origin of the Philistines (Hebrew *Pilištîm*, Greek Φιλειστίμ (*Septuagint*), the *Prst* of the Egyptian sources) is still much discussed. Their identity with the Pelasgi is, however, uncertain. In the Egyptian sources the *Prst* are also called *Pwrst*, *Pwrsti* ('Pulasti'). According to the Bible (*Amos* 9,7) the Philistines came from Kaptor (Crete).

The name of the important city of Pelousion on the eastern border of Egypt is, in the present writer's opinion, connected with the *Prst* ('Pereset/Peleset'). The decisive evidence for such origin of the name of Pelousion can be found in Plutarch who states that the name of that city came from Maneros, also called Pelousios or Palaistinos: Μανέρωτα τοῦτον εἶναι. τινὲς δὲ τὸν μὲν παῖδα καλεῖσθαι Παλαιστινὸν ἢ Πηλούσιον, καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἐπώνυμον ἀπ' αὐτοῦ γενέσθαι κτισθεῖσαν ὑπὸ τῆς θεοῦ (Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 17, 357 E).

The *Prst* have left their traces in Asia Minor (the town of Prostanna/Prustanna). It seems also probable that the personal name of Prusias and consequently also the names of the cities of Prusa and Prusias in Bithynia may be a mark of the route of the *Prst* through Asia Minor.

Prst were a wandering people. Their affinity to the Thracians is very probable. Anyway, the linguistic kinship between the Indo-European languages such as Thracian or Geto-Dacian and the Baltic Prussian seems to be confirmed beyond doubt.

Therefore we may suppose that there was a connection between the name of the Philistines and that of the Prussians. The wandering ethnonyms, without real identity or affinity of the peoples involved, are a current phenomenon in world's history. We must also again lay emphasis on the fact that the name of the Prussians was not their own appellation but a name given by their neighbours to that loose confederation of Baltic tribes.

On the other hand, the traces of the Pelasgians (possibly identical with *Prst*) in the Western Mediterranean, the legends about the wanderings of the fugitives from Troy in the West (Iberia), as well as the stories about invasions from the East (e.g. in Ireland), must not be *a priori* qualified as a pure fantasy or mystification.

The problem is open. The present writer is not convinced that we can exclude the possibility of long distance migrations at the end of the Bronze Age, including contacts between the Mediterranean and Central Europe.

The Slavs

According to Anonymus Gallus 'Polonia septentrionalis pars est Sclavonie' (*Galli Anonymi Chronica et gesta ducum sive principum Polonorum* ed. C. Maleczyński, Cracoviae 1952, prohemium, s. 6 n.).

The authors of the Byzantine period who write about Sclavini (or Sclaveni) and Antae, state that in old times they had a common name of Spori, who might perhaps be identical with Σέρβοι, an Asiatic people mentioned by Ptolemy (V 8) as a part of the Sarmatae.

Procopius who states that Slavs have red hair and fight almost nude, may reproduce the *topoi* originally concerning Celts.

Jordanes, who knew the names of Sclavini and Antae, identified them with the Venetae: *ab ortu Vistulae fluminis per immensa spatia Venetorum natio populosa considet. quorum nomina licet nunc per varias familias et loca mutentur, principalius tamen Sclavini et Antes nominantur* (Jordanes, Getica 34, ed. F. Giunta, A. Grillone, p. 16).

A Western European inevitably associates the Slavs (*Slaves, Slawen, Slavi* etc.) with the word 'slave'. However, the Latin noun *sclavus* did not exist in antiquity. It belongs to the medieval Latin. The question of the appearance of the word *sclavus* = *servus* has been thoroughly discussed by Ch. Verlinden. According to Verlinden the noun *sclavus* in the sense of 'slave' appears for the first time in Germany in the 10th or 11th century (Ch. Verlinden, 'L'origine de "sclavus" = esclave', ALMA 17, 1943, p. 125). Verlinden considers the Koblenz tariff of 11th century a decisive evidence of the change of meaning of *sclavus*. According to him, in that text (*pro unoquoque sclavo emticio* etc.) the word *sclavus* becomes a common noun meaning 'slave'. In the 13th century (the date of 1238 is sure) in France and in Italy that meaning is already firmly established. In the texts by Matthew of Paris (*Chronica Maiora*) and Jacobus de Vitry (*Historia Hierosolymitana*), *sclavus* and *sclava* are equivalents of 'slave'.

Verlinden quotes a legal text from Italy dated 1127, which contains a prescription: *ut nullus nullaque qui queve ex Christiana religione sunt, pro servo et ancilla detineantur, sine legitima culpa, exceptis his qui ex Sclavorum gente geniti sunt.* According to that text the *Sclavi* were considered *servi par excellence*.

For Latin speakers, the name of the Slavonic Serbi implied a possible confusion with *servi*. Perhaps the application of the name of *sclavi* to all slaves (*mancipia*) could to a certain extent be accompanied by the erroneous opinion that some Slavs call themselves *servi*? The perseverance of that error reflects a biased and malevolent attitude towards the Slavs.

Slavonic slaves, captured by Germans in central Europe and exported in large numbers to the Mediterranean countries, were in the Arab world still called Slavs: *saqaliba*. An echo of that name can even be found very far away from the Mediterranean, in the name of the so-called Sacalavs of Madagascar.

Piast and Rzepka

The true significance of the names of the legendary ancestors of the Piast dynasty, ruling over Poland from time immemorial until 1370, remains unclear. Piast's legendary father called Chościsko bears a rather ridiculous nickname meaning 'tail' which – in the author's opinion – may also refer to penis. In Latin the original meaning of *penis* was 'animal tail'. *Cauda* also had the same double meaning.

The name of Popiel, Pąpiel or Pumpil, the legendary tyrant of early-Medieval Poland, seems to be a nickname meaning (*rex*) *Umbilicus*. In the legend of the founder of the Piast dynasty we have apparently some 'anatomical' nicknames, which have parallels also in the classical world (suffice it to mention Augustus calling Horace *purissimum penem et homuncionem lepidissimum*). In some languages both *umbilicus* and *penis* often refer to the mean stature of individuals.

As far as Repca or Rzepka (also Rzepica, Rzepicha), Piast's wife, is concerned, a direct reference to a part of human body apparently cannot be found in her name, since *rzepka* means in Polish 'turnip' (Latin *rapa*). The turnip is in Poland a proverbial symbol of good health (cf. a saying 'sound as a turnip' = 'sound as a bell'). The name Rzepka seemingly conveys only the idea of a sound woman.

The crucial point, however, is the exact meaning of the name of Piast. In the oldest manuscripts of the story, his name has the form *Pazt*, whereas the form *Piast* found in later manuscripts seems to be a deliberate distortion. Various explanations of the name *Pazt* can be found in numerous published discussions of the subject. The later form 'Piast' is another matter. The connection of Piast with *piasta* 'hub' (of a cart-wheel) is not a credible etymology, as well as the derivation from the noun *piastun* ('fosterer'), or from the verb *piastować* ('to foster'). A later, now the most popular, version of the story regards Piast as a village wheelmaker.

It is also probable that the form *Piast* was influenced by a possible (but not attested) appellation ultimately deriving from the name of the Balkan tribe of the *Piastae* (or *Pehastii*). That does not imply such origin of the real person, if any, concealed behind the legendary progenitor of the dynasty.

Jacek Banaszkiewicz has demonstrated that the myth of Piast shows clear affinities to the Mediterranean mythology. He proposes the explanation of *Pazt* as an archetypal nourishing hero, in terms of Dumézil's interpretation of Indo-European mythology. Indeed, *Pazt* in an episode of the legend feeds his guests, and subsequently, as a good ruler, probably also feeds his people.

The name of *Pazt* may certainly be connected with the Polish verb 'paść' almost identical with its Latin equivalent *passo*. That verb, however, has a double meaning – in the active voice it means 'to tend animals as shepherd'. The present writer proposes the explanation of *Pazt/Past* as 'shepherd' (in Polish: *pasterz*), a word apparently meant to indicate a rustic individual and not a leader.

‘Piast’, the later medieval version of *Patz*, might contain a trace of the name of a tribe called *Piastae*. That may perhaps be a reminiscence of the period when the Slavs contacted the peoples of the Byzantine Balkans.

The story told by *Anonymus Gallus* was written by an author familiar with the *répertoire* of ancient and medieval stories. His aim was certainly to produce an official dynastic legend. In the present writer’s opinion *Gallus* used as a basis some elements taken from the stories about a ‘king-shepherd’, *re-pastore*. He certainly also had some knowledge of local tales which undoubtedly are the source of the ludicrous nicknames of the legendary ancestors of the dynasty. We know that *Gallus* was not unaware of meaning of some Polish words, but probably was not an expert in Polish.

Still another problem is the historicity of *Patz*’s (or *Piast*’s) progeny. If we admit the local origin of the first historical ruler of Poland, Mieszko I (cf. Ch. 7), his ancestors mentioned by *Gallus* can hardly be a pure invention. A dynasty ruling over a vast country could not forget the progenitors. We can hardly imagine them hiring a foreign monk to fabricate an entirely fantastic pedigree, including Mieszko’s father. If we accept the names of the followers of *Piast* as genuine, also their true meaning is certainly relevant.

Semovit (*Siemowit*) apparently means ‘the (true) scion of the family’, and *Semomysl* (*Siemomysh*) ‘he who thinks /or: takes care/ of his family’. These appellations (perhaps epithets or sobriquets) seem to insist on the legitimacy of the dynasty. We are allowed to think that in reality *Semovit* was by no means a legitimate ‘scion of the family’. Most probably, he seized power in a *coup d'état*. His ancestors were more or less anonymous. Perhaps in a popular tale they were designed by ridiculous nicknames.

Dagome iudex

Dagome iudex is the *incipit* of the famous medieval document mentioning the boundaries of the early-medieval Polish state. The document is not an original, but a summary of a document which does not exist any more. The extant text was written by a Church official *Deusdedit* within the years 1083-1087. The descripton of the boundaries refers to the late 10th century, apparently to the last years of Mieszko (who died in 992), whose person would be supposedly hidden behind the appellation *Dagome iudex*. His wife *Ote* is styled *senatrix*. His two sons are mentioned by name.

Schinesghe (*vel sim.*), the name of the Polish state, is a strange deformation of *Gniezno*, otherwise known as *Gnezdun civitas*. The author disagrees with the identification of *Schinesghe* as *Szczecin*. He attempts to explain the way in which that form could be coined (probably as a result of a phonetic error of a scribe writing a dictated text). He also tries to reconstruct the probable old pronunciation of the name of *Gniezno*.

The author also comments on the possible location of Poland's early boundaries and on the etymology of the name 'Mieszko'.

The puzzling name of Dagome (Dagone), which in the opinion of most researchers must refer to the prince otherwise known as Mieszko, does not appear in any other text. That name was already explained in various ways, including a version of Dago or Dagobert, which according to some researchers implies a foreign origin of the prince.

Jerzy Dowiat saw in Dagome a version of Digoma, a name known from the *bulla* of Gniezno of 1136. Although the names ending in *-oma* are well attested on the Polish territory, also a possibility of a non-Slavonic, perhaps Thracian or Illyrian etymology of the name of Dagome=Digoma could be taken into consideration, including as parallel the name of the Thracian king Dikomes of the first century B.C.

The present writer does not agree with the interpretation of Dagome/Dagone as Mieszko I. I identified Dagome (or Dagone) with Dagan, a church official confirmed in the *Querfurt Chronicle*, who was probably a legal guardian of Misico and Lambertus, the sons of Ote, Mieszko's widow, who after 992 moved to Germany. The „donation” must belong to the years between the death of Mieszko I in 992 and 996. The document known as *Dagome iudex* was therefore apparently an act of usurpation of sovereign rights to the Polish state by the widow of the late prince. That claim was certainly directed against Bolesław, the eldest son of Mieszko who is not mentioned in the document. When the present writer first published his interpretation, he was not aware of a parallel independent research by Krystyna Łukasiewicz from Canada, who also could not accept the idea of Dagome=Mieszko, and who in her research on the person of Dagome found out that at an early stage of his career he was a monk known as Tagino *vel sim.* Łukasiewicz considers him a legal representative of the claims of Ote in his quality of a *iudex*. However, in my opinion, the title of *iudex* may more probably indicate that at the date of the document (992–996) Dagan was already a high official at the imperial court. Łukasiewicz does not mention the *Querfurt Chronicle*. The present writer, who only recently became aware of Łukasiewicz's research, agrees with most of her conclusions, except the idea that the names Misico et Lambertus (*filii eorum*) refer to one person with a double name.

At any rate, the result of Łukasiewicz's successful work is impressive. Together with the independent observation by the present writer on the passage of the *Querfurt Chronicle*, it represents a reliable explanation of the enigma of Dagome and can serve as a basis for further research on the person of Dagone/Dagan.