

## CHRONOLOGY RELATED TO THE BEGINNING OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

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March 11, 2016

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I began a renewed study of the beginning of the Ottoman Empire, for the impact it has in the study of the fifth and sixth trumpets of the book of Revelation. I will not deal here with the biblical and theological issues involved in the study of these prophecies. This I did in my books dealing with the trumpets, as you may see above on my web page. I want to expand my knowledge of history, to know how firm is the foundation of our faith. I expect to write more after reading, from the original, the story of George Pachymeres, the contemporaneous and only writer of the Battle of Bapheus. I bought his books on the History corresponding to that time, at a special price of 470 dollars (originally more than one thousand dollars, which I will receive from the post office the next Tuesday).

The point of discussion lies principally in the fact that Pachymeres dated the battle of Bapheus on July 27, without giving the specific year. The English 18th Century historian Edward Gibbon reached the conclusion that the date corresponded to the year 1299, as Petrus Possinus had dated it nearly two centuries earlier. But the Austrian orientalist Joseph von Hammer, in the first part of the following century, rejected the date of Possinus and Gibbon, and placed that battle in 1301, and then later he revised it to 1302. Why? Because he tried to synchronize the Ottoman and Byzantine chronologies, on the basis of an identification of the battle of Bapheus with Koyunhizar, an assumption rejected today by the specialists, as we will see below.

Even so, most historians today keep the date 1302 suggested by von Hammer, because they prefer to follow the order of events found in the History of Pachymeres. This procedure poses several problems, as we will see in this study. Before considering these issues, let us deal with some key facts that show us the importance of the year 1299 for the beginning of the career of Osman, the founder of the Ottoman Empire, and his first attempts to penetrate into the land of “unbelievers.”

**1. Two coins with the inscription, “Ostman ibn Ertogrul.”** Several modern authors denied the succession in lineage of Osman from Ertogrul. But these coins found in recent times show that he was, indeed, son of Ertogrul, Paul Lindner, *Explorations in Ottoman Prehistory* (The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2010 [originally 2007], 18,98. Lindner doesn't say that these two coins were struck in 1299, but he brings evidence of other similar coins dated in 699 (1299/1300), struck in dies common in Anatolia in that year. Lindner suggests that these coins were struck in Sogut by Osman in that very year (*ibid*, 98-100) and, as a matter of fact, he found an impressive increase of similar coins dated in 1299.

“I examined the traditions of Ottoman independence and brought to bear evidence from an unexpected source, leading to the discovery that the year A.H. 699 [1299 AD] had an importance throughout Anatolia, as the coinage demonstrates,” *ibid*, 118.

**2. Severe winter.** The snow in the mountains causes the water to grow and overflow the Sangaris river in Spring, reaching its peak in the Summer (See *Enciclopedia Britannica*, III, “Black Sea,” 707). This fits the story of Pachymeres concerning the year when Bapheus was seized. “Lower temperatures, stronger storms, and continuous precipitation have the same

impact” (Lindner, 112). “Wet or snowy weather has two effects on the flock, one direct and immediate, the other lingering... Falling snow, one of the forms of late winter precipitation in upper Phrygia, bewilders the sheep, may stop them in their tracks, and prevents their grazing... In bad weather, then, the animals suffer. Over a few days or weeks, the suffering turns to sickness, wasting, and death, especially for the kids, who cannot endure cold or wet” (Lindner, 112). Lindner believes that this bad weather caused Osman to move to the plain and take Bapheus, because in addition, it destroyed the defenses of that city.

The Byzantine emperor who had to meet the kral of Serbia in Thessalonica for concluding the marriage of his daughter with the kral, could not leave Constantinople because of the hard winter at the end of the year 1298. Albert Failler, « Chronologie et composition dans l’Histoire de Georges Pachymères (livres VII-XIII), » dans *Revue des Études Byzantines*, 48, 1990, 37.

“In 1298, protected by the snows of a very severe winter, which had closed the routes west from Iran, Sülemish murdered Bayinjar and Bujukur and revolted against Ghazan Khan while simultaneously spreading the rumor that Ghazan had already been dethroned in a coup... Winter prevented the Ilkhan from responding until February 1299,” Rudi Paul Lindner, *Explorations in Ottoman Prehistory* (The University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 2010 [originally 2007]), 92,93.

“After the severe winter of 1298-1299 the Turks had crossed the Byzantine borders along the Meander,” Dimitri Korobeinikov [Wolfson College, Oxford Bizantine Seminar 3], February 2006. An extended version of this paper was published in *Osmanskii mir i osmanistika. Sbornik statei k 100-letiiu so dnia rozhdeniia A.S. Tveritinovoi (1910-1973)*, eds. I.V. Zaitsev and S.F.Oreshkova (Moscow, 2010), 215-239.

**3. Severe storm in March 4, 1299.** Steve Emse found that a contemporaneous Egyptian historian reported a flood in Jumada I, day 29, year 698. The Julian equivalent is March 4, 1299. The month of that severe storm in Cairo, according to him, coincides admirably with Pachymeres, who said that the storm preceding Bapheus fell also in March. See also Lindner, 112.

The “medicanes” (Mediterranean almost cyclone storms) used to be born in Northern Africa and land in Turkey, in/or Greece, in Italy, France and Spain. So, what happened in Spring 1299 is, according to the book of Lindner, something exceptional occurring once a century. In the following webpage, we may see one medicane born in Lybia and reaching Greece. So, a storm in Cairo should fall in Turkey.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean\\_tropical-like\\_cyclone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean_tropical-like_cyclone)

In the next webpage we find a tremendous rain that touched strongly Istanbul, Marmara in the north, and Aegean in the south.

<http://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/torrential-rains-paralyze-daily-life-western-turkey>

This is not all what we have to say on this issue. In the next page of his book, in reference to the next month (April to be more precise), the Egyptian historian reported the decisive battle that led the Alans to join the Byzantine emperor. They were sent immediately to Bapheus, because

the storm in Spring had damaged the protections of the city. For more details, see the separate document of the Alans.

**4. The three years drought.** The Egyptian historian we are considering also reported an earthquake on the 23rd of Dhu-Hijja, 702, which is Aug. 8, 1303, the exact date Pachymeres reported his earthquake. He also reported a three year drought in reference to Taktai, at the same time of the earthquake. The start of the drought being 699, or Aug, 1300. Pachymeres confirms that from the spring to autumn of 1301, there was an unusual drought.

This historical testimony makes impossible to place the battle of Bapheus in the three years following the year 1299. Bapheus fell under the Ottoman Turks because of the flood which overflowed the river Sangarius, and during all that time there was a significant drought. Modern historians recognize a drought for the year 1301, which pushes them to move to the year 1302 for the battle of Bapheus. But they cannot either support a historical testimony of a flood for the year 1302.

**5. The year 1299 is extremely relevant in the history of the Ottoman Empire.** “The Ottoman sources ascribed to Osman in A.H. 699/C.E., 1299-1300” (Lindner 17). “It is with (Osman) that Ottoman history begins” (ibid, 17-18). “Ottoman sources... produce a date of 699/1299-1300” for the Ottoman independence of Seljuks.

- “In 1914, Efdaleddin, a member of the Ottoman Historical Society..., published an article in which he discussed the date on which the Ottomans became independent of the Seljuks. His article contained the results of researches sponsored by the Ottoman government, which had sought to find the appropriate date on which to celebrate the anniversary of the Ottomans’ independence and foundation as a polity. Efdaleddin published quotations from a number of Ottoman sources... which he melded together to produce a date of 699/1299-1300. “Most... [“later scholars”] have concurred with his date” (ibid, 81).

- “It is significant that these conquests [Bilecik and others in the land of unbelievers in 699/1299] are said to have been Osman’s first sovereign acts as the independent leader of an army” (ibid, 84-5). “There was an understanding in all the early Ottoman traditions, that these conquests were something special, opening up the lower Karasu and thus the Sangarius... There is also an understanding that these fortifications had fallen at about the same time, namely, in the year A.H. 699 [1299/1300]” (ibid, 87-8).

- “In two early sources composed just after 1396 by the scholar Shams-al-Din Muhammad ibn al-Jazari, who had come to Bursa and joined the court of Bayezid..., there appears a notice of the capture of Bilecik in A.H. 699 [1299]. Osman’s power now was not that of a chief within easy reach of the plateau; he was now poised to capture historic cities and their agricultural hinterlands. It is no wonder that the Ottoman historical memory should associate these conquests with independence from a weak Seljuk overlord” (Lindner, 88). “Bilecik is the key to the route down the Sangarius” (Lindner, 84), that is, to the fortress of Bapheus.

### **The battle of Bapheus**

It is striking that the Byzantine historians like Pachymeres consider the battle of Bapheus as a turning point in the history of the Turks in the conquest of the Byzantine Empire.

“Where and when does Ottoman history begin? The Byzantines first found Osman and his tribe worth special notice and attention in... the battle between the forces of Osman and Mouzalon at Bapheus, a place just outside Nicomedia” (Lindner, 16). “For the Byzantine chronicler George Pachymeres..., Osman became a man worth watching... as a result of the battle of Bapheus” (Lindner, 82-3).

“One of the decisive battles of the Ottoman conquest,” A. Failler, “Les Émirs Turcs,” 97.

Since all the earlier Ottoman sources agree that the beginning of the Ottoman Empire took place in the year 1299, why do modern historians date the battle of Bapheus in the year 1302? In addition, the authors that I studied give no evidence of a severe winter or abnormal rains for the year 1302. Modern historians place that exceptional bad weather in 1302 because it is inserted in the story of Bapheus which they believe to have happened in that year. By the way, the severe winter in 1298/9 gives additional evidence of an abnormal weather which seems to have been accompanied by strong storms in Spring and in the Summer, and which caused undoubtedly, the overflow of the river as depicted by Pachymeres in the battle of Bapheus.

“There are middling variations in precipitation from year to year, but an extremely wet spring occurs every generation or so” (Lindner, 110). “A nuisance in May becomes a tragedy during March if a once-in-a-generation inundation occurs” (Lindner, 111).

The only external documentation of a severe weather given by historians is that of 1298/9.

### **Reasons why modern authors date the battle of Bapheus in the year 1302.**

**1. An attempt to synchronize the byzantine chronologies with the Ottoman chronologies, by identifying the battle of Bapheus with the battle of Koyunhisar.** But that connection proved to be wrong.

“Attempts to match the Ottoman and Byzantine chronologies together, with Bapheus as common to both chronologies, have been unsuccessful... No battle in the Ottoman chronicles accord well with the description of Pachymeres...” (Lindner, 103, n.3). “No battle description in the early Ottoman sources matches Bapheus as Pachymeres recounted it” (Lindner, 83).

- I wrote on December 5, 2015, to Dr. Colin H. Imber (Professor of Middle Eastern studies at Univ. of Manchester, England, who had written this: “... modern historians have over-optimistically identified [Koyunhisar] with the Bapheus in Pachymeres.” He answered me this on December 7:

“Ottoman tradition (from the 15th century) mentions Koyunhisar as the site of Osman's victory over the Byzantines, with the result that later historians conflated it with Bapheus. However, looking at the Ottoman texts it became obvious to me that the Koyunhisar story is a fabrication that came about via folk etymology of place names and the existence of a shrine, to which the name of an Ottoman 'martyr' became attached. I discussed this (and

other legendary material) in an article entitled 'the Ottoman dynastic myth' in Elizabeth Zachariadou (ed.), *The Ottoman Emirate (1300-1389)*, Crete University Press, 1993.”

## **2. An attempt to follow the order of events told by Pachymeres.**

The History of Pachymeres is the only source available today for the battle of Bapheus. Failler recognizes that « le livre X [of Pachymeres] couvre... les années 1299-1302 ». Since the story of Bapheus comes toward the end of that book, most historians today, following the example of von Hammer, place the date of Bapheus in the year 1302. But Pachymeres—as recognized by historians—moves back and forth in his History between earlier and later dates.

In addition, historians have to admit that there are contradictions in both the Ottoman and Byzantine sources. They tend to prefer Pachymeres because he was a contemporaneous writer, and is free from Muslim dreams and zeal in bringing out the religious character of their wars. Moreover, the Ottoman sources were written one century later, and contain many legends.

It is for those reasons that historians have to reconstruct the story resorting to any available external information or to a literary critique. They consider the book of Pachymeres and the other sources as a kind of puzzle that we have to accommodate by painstaking effort.

As a conclusion, they warn constantly on the many “comes and goes” and “excursuses” found in the History of Pachymeres. Let me share some expressions of Albert Failler in this sense, found in his paper “Chronologie et composition dans l’Histoire de Georges Pachymères (livres VII-XIII),” where the story of Bapheus is inserted. I will translate into English only one of his impressive number of equivalent statements found throughout the pages of his extensive paper. The other statements I will include at the end without translating them from French, after the conclusion of this summary.

“The former chapter has shown how the historian [Pachymeres] proceeds by anticipation. In other places he works in retrospect for clarifying an event or the behavior of a man. This hovering over the times is the mark of the literary work and the sign that a material per se unrefined and limited in its signification suffers an elaboration and a refinement. *L’Histoire de Georges Pachymeres is not a lineal chronicle of times and events*, but a chart [or array] which illustrates sequences and consequences, causalities and hazards, by exposing and juxtaposing them... More frequent are the anticipations” (p. 11).

**3. The time when the Alans came to fight for the emperor as mercenaries.** This story is interpreted as taking place in the year 1301 or 1302, with the possibility of having taken place at the end of 1299. This is a point under discussion that we will deal with carefully in a separate document. According to our current historical studies, the date for the coming of the Alans in Byzantine lands is the first half of the year 1299.

## **Conclusion**

Lindner concludes his book by telling us, “I do not claim that the reconstructions offered here are the only possible or valid ones... The origins of the Ottoman enterprise, an enterprise that looks much like the Roman and byzantine empires..., will remain a subject of discussion for years to come... Not all is as clear as we would like it to be” (*Explorations in Ottoman Pre-History*), 120. There are, however, several important facts which concur with the conclusions of

the majority of historians on both sides, Turkish and Western historians. One of them has to do with the year for the beginning of Osman's career as the founder of the Ottoman Empire. That year is the year 1299, as it is confirmed in the Turkish touristic guides in connection with the foundation of Sogut, the first capital of the Ottoman Empire. For some, Osman declared his independence on January 27, 1299. Others give other dates, always in 1299..

The analysis of Byzantines sources, notably that of Pachymeres, leads modern historians to recognize that his History has many “comes and goes” and “excursuses.” Once the attempts to synchronize the Ottoman and Byzantine chronologies proved to be wrong, the date 1302 for the battle of Bapheus is weakened. On the contrary, the date of July 27, 1299, is strengthened.

We believe by the reasons given above, that the battle of Bapheus is one of these “anticipations” and “retours” of Pachymeres according to modern historians (I don’t need to translate these two French words employed by Failler). As a matter of fact, I didn’t find any precise information that supports, beyond any doubt, the date 1302 for the battle of Bapheus. It is evident that Pachymeres goes back to the year 1299, the date of the beginning of Book X, to tell the story of that battle, as Gibbon understood it when he wrote on he matter. The date July 27, 1299, fits better with all the earlier Ottoman sources which make prominent the year 1299 for the beginning of the Ottoman Empire, with the adoption of Sogut as the capital of the new empire, and his first significant advances toward “the land of unbelievers.”

Why did Osman proceed to take Bapheus, just some few months after assuming his new independent role at the head of his new rulership? As Lindner specifies it (but in my view with a wrong date), the bad weather made Bapheus vulnerable and this fact offered him a significant opportunity to take that step, with appropriate lands to feed his herds. After proving that Bapheus had nothing to do with Koyounhisar, the acceptance of the date offered by Gibbon for the battle of Bapheus in the year 1299 is, indeed, the best conclusion we can arrive at. Pachymeres returns to the story he had begun in the year 1299, to tell the most important military inroad of the Turks into Byzantine territory.

One more thing. We, Seventh-day Adventists rely on a divine confirmation of this historical date, in the testimony given by E. G. White in the book *The Great Controversy*, pp. 334-5. Our current available historical sources also support that view. The same happened over several decades concerning the dates given for the prophecy of 2300 days/years, when most historians cited different dates for the events announced by prophet Daniel, until some archeological discoveries in the midst of the former century came to our support. In addition, an increase in astronomical knowledge became more prominent to confirm the dates given by our pioneers, and confirmed by the Spirit of Prophecy (see my book, *The Apocalyptic Times of the Sanctuary* (2015). “Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed” (2 Chr 20:20).

We are expecting to receive more information on these studies in the research undertaken by Dr. Kenneth Matthews and Steve Emse. I am discussing with them several remarkable points, in this historical puzzle which requires to take into account many facts, some of which neglected by historians. It is striking that those studies are not coming from Washington DC (the BRI) or Andrews University, but from the periphery of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, even by brothers who are not theologians. God may raise stones to proclaim our prophetic message, well founded in our historical legacy, if those who were called by God to do it don’t do it.

## More statements in French.

« En annonçant l'exkursus... » (Les Émirs Turcs, 99). « Le chapitre précédent a montré comment l'historien procède par anticipation. Ailleurs il opère des rétrospectives pour éclairer un événement ou la conduite d'un homme. Ce survol du temps est la marque de l'oeuvre littéraire et le signe qu'un matériau en soi brut et limité dans sa signification subit une élaboration et un affinement. L'Histoire de Georges Pachymérés n'est pas une chronique linéaire du temps et des événements, mais un tableau qui illustre des séquences et des conséquences, des causalités et des hasards, en les exposant et en les juxtaposant... Plus fréquentes sont les anticipations » (Chronologie..., p. 11).

« Le récit est d'ailleurs plus linéaire; les anticipations et les retours en arrière, qui existent ici également et qui confèrent son unité rédactionnelle à l'oeuvre, sont tout à la fois moins nombreux et plus faciles à analyser » (p. 6).

« La date reste donc imprécise. Et d'autant plus imprécise qu'elle est au départ d'une anticipation sur le récit » (p. 9).

« On voit une fois de plus que la division du texte en chapitres est postérieure à la rédaction et que les titres auraient dû être placés en marge plutôt que dans le texte. Le troisième [fait de l'histoire] est un retour en arrière par rapport au deuxième (1290 également, mais un peu plus tôt dans l'année) » (pp. 14,15).

« Alors que les événements précédents et suivants seraient rapportés dans un ordre chronologique strict, ce passage constituerait, selon le premier éditeur de l'Histoire, une longue anticipation... ; celle-ci pourrait en effet être justifiée par le mode de composition qu'on a vu l'auteur adopter à maintes reprises et qui consiste à transcender l'ordre chronologique, quand la logique du récit y invite » (p. 31).

« Seul le chapitre 26, qui traite des relations entre les Tatars et les Bulgares et en offre un aspect panoramique dans un ensemble de retours en arrière et d'anticipations, pose des problèmes de chronologie. Dans les autres chapitres de la fin du livre IX, l'Histoire n'offre par endroits qu'une chronologie indécise, mais des sources parallèles permettent de la préciser et montrent que les événements sont rapportés, ici aussi, dans l'ordre chronologique » (p. 37).

« La défection des Alains et les événements qui en résultèrent (X, 19-22) sont relatés par anticipation, et l'historien revient ensuite à la situation politico-militaire (X, 23-26, 30) et ecclésiastique (X, 27-29, 31-33) de l'année 1302 et, plus précisément, du printemps 1302. L'arrivée des trières vénitiennes et leur démonstration devant le palais impérial sont précisément placées une année, jour pour jour, avant le meurtre d'Alexis Rhaoul » (pp. 47-8).

« Mais reprenons l'ordre du récit dans l'Histoire. Le chapitre 23 (« Sur les navires vénitiens qui abordèrent à la Ville ») marque un retour de l'auteur à la ligne chronologique du récit, après une longue anticipation,

où Georges Pachymérés décrit l'expédition de Michel IX et la défection des Alains, en conduisant son récit jusqu'au meurtre du grand domestique Alexis Rhaoul par ces derniers, sans doute vers le printemps 1303. C'est à cet endroit précis que l'historien revient à la ligne chronologique du récit, après une anticipation qui couvre une année entière » (p. 50).

« L'étude des procédés de composition que l'écrivain utilise de manière habituelle justifie l'imbrication des deux récits et nous éclaire sur le rapport chronologique des deux faits : la démonstration de la flotte vénitienne devant Constantinople est postérieure au départ de Michel IX pour l'Asie et antérieure d'un an à la mort d'Alexis Rhaoul; autrement dit, elle suit presque immédiatement le départ du jeune empereur » (p. 50).

« Le procédé de composition est trop habituel chez l'historien... Le chapitre 11 est, dans sa première et dans sa majeure partie, un retour en arrière et le rappel d'un événement antérieur de deux saisons » (p. 77).

« Le livre X couvre ainsi les années 1299-1302 [including the battle of Bapheus].... Le récit épouse la continuité chronologique; il s'en écarte rarement et seulement pour des anticipations ou des retours en arrière d'étendue très limitée » (p. 44). « Revenant en arrière » (p. 82).

## THE ALANS AND THE BATTLE OF BAPHEUS

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April 2016

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Today (April 27, 2016), we could overcome the most serious obstacle in the research on the battle of Bapheus, in the search for a balanced assessment of the different sources. The Alans, who had been warring for Nogay, the Mongol Khan who dominated the Western side of the Mongol Empire, participated in the battle of Bapheus. Pachymeres said that they offered their services as mercenaries for the byzantine empire when or after Nogay died in his last battle against his rival Toqtay. Modern historians believe that this happened in the year 699 of the Hegira, that is, from September to the Fall of the next year 1300. In consequence, this seemed to be the most formidable barrier to overcome, if we wanted to keep the date of July 27, 1299, confirmed by E. G. White (though, some dispute that her real intention was to confirm the exact day).

**What were the solutions we were seeking?** Here I share two of them.

1. I was seeking an alternative translation of the statement of Pachymeres. I wrote to Greek societies in the USA. Steve did the same thing with specialists in the Greek language. All of them recognize that the text is complex and enigmatic. This led me to further study of Greek grammar, from which I concluded (along with those specialists in the Greek language), that the statement dealt with the time when Nogay died, or after his death (despite some different translations offered).

One possibility is that in the summary account of their move to fight for the emperor, Pachymeres could have included the death of Nogay in his last battle, using a literary figure of synecdoche to refer to that war by its final outcome. In other words, during the war of two years duration in which Nogay died, the Alans left. Clear facts indicated that Nogay could not prevail due to his age and other problems, with several people trying to desert him while he was still alive. Under this situation, he and his sons became extremely treacherous.

[Let me give an example of this literary style, found in the Bible. Num 7:1 says that an offering was to be brought “on the day when,” which is interpreted as “when” the sanctuary was inaugurated, that is, when the tabernacle was anointed (v. 10), more definitely “after” completing its erection and priestly anointing (v. 84), without specifying a definite day. This is the conclusion of modern Jews on this passage which, otherwise, is hard to understand and, in fact, caused troubles to the Jewish interpreters along the centuries. See details in my book, *The Apocalyptic Times of the Sanctuary*, chap 2, p. 45, n. 5].

2. Even so, we felt that we had to review more carefully and in depth, the historical documentation.

Two contemporaneous authors placed the date of that decisive battle in the year 699, but one of them dated the beginning of that Mongolic war in the year 697, and the other in the year 698. This led some current historians to doubt the chronology of those events, even regarding the date of Nogay’s death. One of them believed that Pachymeres seemed to place it earlier.

I had therefore some doubts regarding the authenticity of the testimony of the two or perhaps three contemporaneous Arabs, because they didn’t agree on the beginning of the war, and also because since the year 698, when the king of Bulgaria died, until the year 700 (1298/9-1300/1), there was chaos in the succession of the king, attributed by modern historians to the fact that Nogay was fighting against Toqtay or had died and could not intervene anymore in that kingdom.

I was also questioning in my mind the date 699 for the death of Nogay, because the numismatic evidence is leading to the review of some concepts on the study of this period of time in history. I found a historian who is teaching at the University of Hungary, and who discovered that evidence. This historian stated that in the decade of the year 690 of the Hegira, the coins appeared with the name of Nogay as khan, and his son Ceke as sultan. But starting in the year 698, the name of Ceke began to appear in the

coins as khan. Some authors who believe that Nogay died in the year 699 of the Hegira, suppose that it had to do with a co-regency. But a certain kind of co-regency existed under the title of sultan for Ceke. Why did he change the title sultan for that of khan in the year 698?

Today, Steve Emse found a contemporaneous book translated from Arabic into French in the 18th century, which in my view is decisive. Google is copying all the oldest books of the world, which don't have copyright, and offering them free on the internet. There, clearly, the beginning of the war between Nogay and Toqtay is dated in the year 697, and the decisive battle in the year 698 (not in the year 699), more definitely, between March and April of 1299.

The value of the reference of this contemporaneous Arab author (Egyptian), is that he was basing his history on the archives of the government of Egypt, which refer to the news as they were being received in Egypt. The confusion of the other contemporaneous Arab historians can be understood when we realize that the Mongols employed the Chinese calendar, which determined the years with name of animals. One year was the year of rats, another year was named the year of cats, etc. But the contemporaneous Egyptian author who dated the crucial battle in the year 698, took into account the news that were coming to Egypt when that battle took place.

The French historian in the 18th Century who brought the reference of the Egyptian historian misspelled the Arab letters contained in the name Nogay. Steve could obtain the original Arab document and confirmed that it was a reference to Nogay. There were two tremendous battles between Nogay and Toqtay. The first one was won by Nogay, and Toqtay fled. This is referred as taking place in the year 697. The second and decisive battle where many also died, according to the Egyptian historian, took place in the year 698. He doesn't mention the death of Nogay in that battle, but the conclusion is obvious since no other significant battle took place among these two Mongol contenders. Still more, the same Egyptian historian referred in the former page of his book, to an equivalent flood told by Pachymeres for the year when Bapheus fell. See details in my separate document on Bapheus.

Pachymeres tells us that the Alans had been always Christians and were not comfortable with the new Muslim faith that Nogay had adopted. Therefore, they asked the emperor for permission to move into the byzantine empire, to fight for the emperor. Tired of the brutalities of the Mongols, the Alans thought (though sadly mistaken as they would realize later), that they could live better in the Byzantine territories. The emperor urgently dispatched a small group of Alans to the region of Bapheus.

If the arrangements took place between March and April, we can understand the urgency of sending them to Nicomedia in the same year, before July 27, 1299. The heavy winter and the tremendous storms had destroyed all the defenses for the city of Bapheus, and covered the moats or pits that surrounded the city with mud and sediment. An army was therefore urgently necessary to protect the people there.

In this context, it seems clear that if the date of the battle of Bapheus was the following year, there would be no reason to send the Alans, urgently, to Bapheus, much less in the year 1302. As a matter of fact, most of the Alans spent more than one more year preparing themselves to fight under the leadership of the emperor's son. [Keep in mind that Pachymeres wrote that the Alans moved to the Byzantine empire when Toqtay died. If that mongol khan died in the year 1299, there was no reason to urge them to Bapheus three years later].

Brief, the specification of the exact time when the Alans moved to Byzantium was the last historical barrier that we were trying to overcome. There is much more to write on this fascinating story, and on the problems found by modern historians in connection with the chronology of that date. We didn't know how to overcome that barrier, but we were praying and researching, and believed in the Spirit of Prophecy. And God was rewarding our efforts. Glory be to His Name."

I am not giving the exact historians reference here because this will be offered in a book by Dr. Kenneth Matthews and Steve Emse.

## Something more on the history of the Alans

The history of the Alans in that epoch was sad and unfair. Many historians, specially Romans, ended by consider them as bad mercenaries. But today they are being vindicated. Even Pachymeres brings out how they were betrayed by the Romans in the midst of the war.

When the Alans requested the emperor to move to his territory, the emperor Andronicus was excited. He knew that, thanks to them, Nogay had overcome in so many battles. Andronicus considered the Roman troops as weak and not fitted for war. But he made a mistake, putting the Alans to make war together with the Byzantines. Those peoples could not get along in such an enterprise.

A second mistake of the emperor was to divide the Alans in three groups. At that time, the units were composed usually of tümens, which implies in round numbers, 10,000 soldiers. Toqta and Nogay had armies of 20 or 30 tümens, that is, 200,000 or 300,000 warriors. But the tümen of the Alans was weakened with that division of the Alans required by the emperor, in three groups. They protested to the emperor, arguing that in the war under Nogay, they always fought together, helping each other in the battles. But their services were urgently needed, and his will prevailed.

Andronicus sent near 2,000 Alans to Bapheus. Even so, no one had expected a Turkish army which would fall upon that city, so unexpectedly and so large under the command of Otman. The Alans fought heroically, defending the city. The Roman soldiers took profit of the Alans resistance, and covered by them, they escaped, leaving them alone in the struggle, so that all of them perished.

When one year later, the rest of the Alans went to the war under the orders of the emperor's son (they didn't care at what the Roman generals said), they didn't want to be betrayed as their fellows had been in Bapheus. When surrounded by the Turks, the Romans were scared, and tried to escape again. The Alans decided to leave also, and return to their country. They considered that their contract with the emperor had reached to an end, and requested Toqtay to receive them.

Some historians don't believe that they would request Toqtai to move to his Mongol army, because they think that they had fled from Toqtay when Nogay died. But nowhere are we said that they fled from Toqtay. On the contrary, this fact could suggest that they had escaped from Nogay and his son when the war didn't have yet finish, and even few before Nogay's death, or immediately after his death.

The emperor tried to hinder the Alans to leave, and sent an army requiring to render back all the weapons they had received. The Alans didn't care and killed the high Roman leader, close to Andronicus. At that moment, the Alans realized their mistake, and asked the emperor forgiveness, and promised him to stay a little more to fight for him. The emperor forgave them, but made a third mistake. He put them to fight with the Catalans who had also come as mercenaries in behalf of the empire.

Differing from the other peoples who violated women in the war, the Alans had a strict honor code. They respected the women of the overcome peoples. In a certain moment, some Alans saw several Catalans harassing a woman to dishonor her. The Alans intervened to defend the woman. During the night, a good number of Catalans fell upon the Alans who were sleeping, and killed about 200 Alans, including one of their principle leader. The Alans reacted and the quarrel began. The emperor tried to stop the fight as he could. But the poison remained between these two peoples, and exploded later again with dramatic massacres in both sides.

Later on, the Alans were admitted in the Bulgarian kingdom, and left the Byzantine empire. 150 years after the battle of Bapheus in July 27, 1299, the emperor surrendered his will to the Ottoman sultan. The master of the game was, from that time on, the Turkish sultan. And 391 years later and 15 days, in August 11, 1840, the Ottoman sultan surrendered his independence to the European powers. The masters of the game were now the higher European countries.

What a history that of our world! Wars, and wars, and wars. Would it finish some day? While we are in this world not. But the dawn appears in the distance of a better world.

## THE YEAR 1299 AND THE BATTLE OF BAPHEUS

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(April 2016)

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The year 1299 was a key year for the interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets of Revelation in the Millerite interpretation, and in the Seventh-day Adventist Church which emerged from the Millerite movement. In the chronological chain of events expected to happen, according to these two trumpets of Revelation, we find the years 1449 and 1840. Those chronological events were considered in our church as fulfilled prophecies, which in turn was confirmed by a congress of our church toward the end of the 19th Century. Many evangelists are still giving seminars on the trumpets, keeping the historicist legacy that we received from Protestantism in the former centuries.

During the first half of the 20th Century, we can see an increasing resistance to the chronological interpretation of the fifth and sixth trumpets by reasons that I discussed in other papers and books. (See my webpage: [www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com](http://www.adventistdistinctivemessages.com)). No one dared, however, to deny openly an interpretation which counted with the approval of a *Congress of the General Conference*, and the confirmation of the Spirit of Prophecy three or four years later, in the book *The Great Controversy*. Some variations to the first four trumpets began to appear in the second half of the 20th Century. The authors of these innovations didn't realize how far this new trend could lead others in the future to a denial of all the historicist legacy of the trumpets. However, the fifth and sixth trumpets of Revelation were untouched by the fact that E. G. White had clearly backed the chronological fulfillment of these prophecies.

The last decade of the 20th Century changed dramatically the prophetic picture in our seminars, especially at Andrews University, with an influence that reached many colleges of our church in the world. Today, even some Austrian leaders in the Biblical Research Institute, dare to reject openly the historicist torch that we received from our forefathers, and leave the church in an interpretive chaos which erodes even the foundation of our church as a prophetic movement raised by God to give the last message to the world. As a matter of fact, the sixth and seventh trumpets are clearly linked with the historic experience of our church after the Millerite disappointment, and our view of the ministry of Jesus in the Most Holy in the seventh trumpet (Rev 9,10,11).

### **The historical fulfillment of the fifth trumpet**

Here we will not discuss the biblical interpretation of the trumpets. We did it in former papers and books (see reference above). Neither will we bring for consideration in this paper the dates easily demonstrable historically, and their importance for the fulfillment of prophecy, concerning the years 1299, 1449, and 1840. Our concern has to do with the date of the battle of Bapheus, where we are in our research, and the best way to approach the matter.

According to Pachymeres, the contemporaneous byzantine historian, the tremendous defeat of Bapheus turned on the alarm, by the first time, on the serious Turkish threat for the Eastern Roman Empire. Pachymeres gave the day and the month of that battle, but not the year. The Millerites and our pioneers, as well as our evangelist, even today, use to quote the 18th Century historian Edward Gibbon who concluded that the battle of Bapheus took place in the year 1299. However, since Joseph von Hammer in the 19th Century, most historians dated that battle first in 1301, and finally in 1302. Therefore, the standard historical view today is that Bapheus fell under the Turks in July 27, 1302.

In order to study in depth the historical evidences that led modern historians to the year 1302, I bought some books, and especially the five big volumes of the History of Pachymeres, the only contemporaneous and direct source that we have for the Battle of Bapheus. I spent about 500 dollars to obtain them at a

special price. I could also find in the internet the extensive papers of Albert Failler on the history corresponding to that time, and many other documents. Failler was the French translator of the historical volumes of Pachymeres, and his translation and commentaries published in 1999, are the standard for modern Western historians today.

After sharing with many in the internet my first conclusions, Dr. Kenneth Matthew, a physician living in Collegedale where I also live, called me to talk to me. He, and Steve Emse, a business brother who lives in Connecticut, have been reviewing the history of that time for about more than one year. They shared with me some of their findings and their problems in their historical research, and the way they expected to solve those problems. At the beginning some of their conclusions made me shudder. I could see that Steve Emse was turning upside down the chronological construction of Albert Failler, the Western authority on the history of Pachymeres, in matters which, at first glance, seemed to me unnecessary.

Since that moment, I started an intense historical research with Steve that lasted about three months, with ten and more exchanges per day in the internet. Dr. Matthews and Steve spent a lot of money to translate Latin, Arab, and Greek documents. Steve Emse has an ability to find documents in the internet that I don't have. Documents that I couldn't find in my research, he could get them. He is the one who helped Edwin de Kock to gather the tremendous amount of documentation related to the employment of the title Vicarius Filii Dei. We discussed the different materials, comparing them with other documents. Since I speak French, and many documents are in French, even the History of Pachymeres, Steve uses to send me French documents which I summarize, bringing out the most important points for our research. Frankly, I am impressed by his patient and meticulous research, his honesty in the way he deals with the problems found in the way, and the solutions sought for those problems.

Greek, Latin, Arab, Mongol, Ottoman, Catalan and Venetian documents, are taken into account in this research. The Alans and the Catalans were mercenaries in the Byzantine empire. We were also in touch, by the internet, with Greek scholars in the discussion of the grammar on key passages, and with other specialists on the history of that time. So, for the construction of a chronology of events, we have to take into consideration all those documents. Steve found several mistakes of Albert Failler in his translation which I could verify, and I was impressed on how that scholar takes for himself some liberties in his translation, to try to fix the text with his chronological construction.

### **Principles to be taken into account**

How different can history be seen when we can obtain the contemporaneous sources! An entire book could be written only in connection with the chronology of events which are related to the battle of Bapheus. Since Dr. Matthews intend to public a book with all these findings, I decided not to prepare a document from my own perspective of an extensive history like this, before they publish their book. So, here I want simply to emphasize some general personal conclusions and principles which we should keep in mind when we deal with these historical issues.

1. The history of that time is really complicated, because sometimes, the testimonies of contemporaneous sources contradict themselves. This is recognized by modern historians who are constantly trying to chose between this or the other source. One of them reached the conclusion that nothing is sure before the year 1302.

2. In consequence, we have to be humble in our conclusions, and show what are the problems found by historians in their conclusions, and what are the evidences that allow us to believe in the year 1299 for the battle of Bapheus.

- For instance, several evidences make hard to believe that the battle of Bapheus took place in the year 1302 (in my view, this is practically impossible). Among several evidences, let me share just one. We

find a French historian who commented, briefly, a letter wrote by bishop Athanase from Constantinople to the emperor who was in Thessalonica. The emperor was there for a little more than one year. That letter cannot be dated after the year 1302, because after returning from Thessalonica in the year 1300, the emperor didn't leave Constantinople, neither for the death of his son. The bishop urges the emperor to return to the capital to face the greatest evils that were threatening the empire, among them, the invasion of the Turks.

- The French historian believes that the letter should have been written after the year 1302 when, supposedly, took place the battle of Bapheus, because the Byzantines took then conscience by the first time of the tremendous threat of the Turks. But he admits that it is impossible to date that letter in the year 1302, because the emperor left to Thessalonica in the beginning of 1299, and returned one year and some months later (some think that he went possibly for just one year). This is easily understandable when we date the battle of Bapheus in July 27, 1299, and the letter of bishop Athanase just after that battle.

3. Another important remark in the book of Pachymeres is that those who were protecting the walls understood that the destruction of the defenses of Bapheus was a manifestation of the wrath of God; and the fall of Bapheus was likewise felt in the empire, especially among the priests, as another evil that came from God. They didn't know, undoubtedly, that they were apocalyptically right. They were suffering the beginning of the second 150 years of the fifth trumpet, understood as God's scourge.

4. When dealing with the historical fulfillment of the prophecies, we have to present the evidences in a way that is winsome. Since the "hour" in the sixth trumpet does not necessarily require to be considered as part of the period of prophetic time involved, (as I prove it in my book *The Apocalyptic Times of the Sanctuary*), we can put the emphasis in the importance of the year there involved. As generally admitted, the independent military expansive wave of Otman, the founder of the Ottoman Empire, started in the year 1299. It was in that year that his capital was established in Sogüt as an independent state.

- Once clearly seen the importance of the year, we may consider, as another possibility for the interpretation of the prophecy, the specific day of July 27, 1299, without imposing it in a dogmatic way, but admiring how the events took place.

5. E. G. White did the same. She introduced the fulfillment of the prophecy emphasizing the year which, in connection with the fifth trumpet in the year 1299, reached to the year 1840 in the sixth trumpet. Then, she referred the calculations of Josiah Litch, and how his anticipation in August 11 fulfilled "exactly the prediction." What prediction? That of the prophecy of Rev 9 or that of Josiah Litch? Both. Because the prediction of Josiah Litch, based in his own calculations, was fulfilled in the year when the prophecy was fulfilled. In August 11, 1840, the Sultan of Constantinople submitted to the European nations. Other events which took place later in the same year 1840, as the submission of the Pasha of Egypt to the European nations after a first resistance, also fulfilled the prophecy.

**Conclusion.** Be courageous! Preach freely about these prophetic issues! Don't become distracted by what several theologians are saying today! Believe in God and in the way He leads His church through the Spirit of Prophecy! We are living in the time of the seventh trumpet when the devil is trying to raise the power of Rome for the third time, through a resurrection of the papal political and religious power. Rome, the headquarters of the devil, is to receive its last blow in the seventh trumpet, for the way it deceives the world and counterfeits the kingdom of God. Jesus is to assume soon the kingdoms of this world, and reign forever and ever not in Constantinople, not in Rome, but in the New Jerusalem.