

Laonikos on the ethnonyms of the Hungarians

Laonikos Chalkokondyles mentions several data related to the history of the Hungarians. Here, I discuss the problematic use of the ethnonym *Παίονες* used in reference to the Hungarians. This form occurs from the end of the 12th century, and becomes widespread in the 14th-15th centuries. Its use is scholarly, and is preferred by a trend which aims to imitate the antique authors even by borrowing proper names from them. Due to the relative proximity of their homelands and the similarity of the names, the antique authors had confused the ethnic groups of the Paeoneans and the Pannonians. The incorrect identification was borrowed by the Byzantine authors, and the two ethnonyms started to be used as synonyms. After the Hungarians had settled down in the territory of the former province of Pannonia, they were also referred to as *Παίονες* and *Πάννονες*. Although the Hungarians used the same Latin terminology to refer to themselves in their written sources until the 12th century, it was probably unknown to Laonikos. However, he could have heard of Hungarian humanists learning in Italy and using the name *Pannonius* from his relative Demetrios, who might even have known some of them personally.

Keywords: Laonikos Chalkokondyles, the ethnonym of the Hungarians in Byzantine sources, Paeonian, Pannonian, archaism, Demetrios Chalkokondyles, Janus Pannonius.

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