TURKS, HUNGARIANS AND KIPCHAKS
A Festschrift in Honor of Tibor Halasi-Kun

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Printer
Harvard University
Office of the University Publisher

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 75-15418

Cover design prepared by Nicholas Oberling
THE NAME OF THE PECHENEGS IN IBN HAYYÂN S AL-MUQTABAS*

Uli Schamiloglu

The name of the Pechenegs has come under scholarly scrutiny on numerous occasions.¹ For one thing, the name Pecheneg itself is one of the few words from the language of this Turkic-speaking group, to have come down to us.² For another, though the importance of the role of the Pechenegs in the history of western Eurasia in the 9th-12th centuries A.D. is well known,³ identifying them in the contemporary sources is a task hindered by the differing forms of the name under which they are recorded.⁴ In this contribution in honor of my mentor, Tibor Halasi-Kun, I would like to examine briefly a previously

*An earlier version of this paper was delivered at the 26th annual meeting of the Permanent International Altaistic Conference held in Chicago, August 15-20, 1983. The transliteration system used in this article is based on the Republican Turkish alphabet.


unattested form of this name found in a source only recently made available, the fifth volume of the Al-muqtasabas of Ibn Hayyān.

Ibn Hayyān (987-8-1076) is generally considered the greatest historian of medieval Spain; the extant volumes of his Al-muqtasabas are similarly considered the most important contemporary literary source for the history of Andalusia under the Spanish Umayyads (r. 755-1031). Following the discovery of a unique manuscript of the fifth volume of this work in Rabat in the 1960's, P. Chalmetta published an article outlining the new contributions of this source, together with selected passages in French translation. Among the sections which Chalmetta highlighted in his article is the notice on the appearance of the Turks (i.e., the Hungarians) in the upper border region of Andalusia in 942. This section includes a passing mention of a people whom Chalmetta translates as the “Pechenegs (Petchenêgues),” though it was not until Chalmetta’s recent publication of the Arabic text of the fifth volume of the Al-muqtasabas (based upon which a Spanish translation has also appeared) that the corresponding text of this passage could be consulted. The following is an English translation of the passage referring to the Pechenegs based on the Arabic text:

The one who reported their matters said that their land [i.e., the land of the Turk = the Hungarians] is in the far east, and that the Pechenegs (Bacanak بقاناك) neighbor them to the east that, the land of Rūma is in the direction of the qibla [i.e., Mecca] from them, and that the land of Constantineople is a little bit off to the east from them. To their north is the city of Morava (Marawa) and the other cities of the Slavs (Şaqaliba). To the west of them are the Saxons (ŞXŞNŞ) and the Franks (Ifrance). To get to the land of Andalusia they traversed a long distance (a part of which is) desert . . . . [There follows a break in the text.]

However, in a note regarding the form BŞNAQ, which is found on the same page, the editor makes the following comments (here translated from the original Arabic):

The reading is not clear. It is (qad takūna) BŞNAQ. See the Al-murūc of Masʿūdi, volume 2, pages 59-64. It thus appears that the manuscript originally used the form BŞNAQ, which the editor replaced with the form (or, rather, with one of the forms) found in Masʿūdi's Murūc ad-dāhab. The next question, of course, is whether or not this form BŞNAQ can indeed be identified with the name of the Pechenegs.

In the first half of the 9th century the Pechenegs settled in the area between the Ural-Emba and Volga rivers. Then, in the 830's, they resettled in the upper Severskiy Donets and Kuban' river basins, forcing out the Hungarians residing there. (Of course, by Hungarians we mean here only one group from among the many ancestors of the present-day Hungarians). Three years later, again forcing out the Hun-

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9 Al-Muqtasabas (V), Arabic text p. 482 = ms. p. 325. For an English translation and study of this notice, see my “The Hungarian Raid on Spain of 942 A.D.,” AEMAE (forthcoming).
10 Though the phrase qad takūna can mean ‘could be,’ the editor uses this phrase in his appended Errata (‘Idāfāt,” Ar. p. 580) to mean ‘should be, actually is.’
11 This corresponds to Masʿūdi, Murūc ad-dāhab wa-maʿādin al-cawāhir, ed. Ch. Pellat, Les Prairies d’or, i (Beirut, 1966), pp. 236-238.
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garians, they took over the whole of the southern Ukraine, where they were to remain until their move to Pannonia, this move took place gradually from the 10th-12th centuries. Since there is no single date for a mass Pecheneg flight to Pannonia, the Pechenegs would fit the geographical location given in the *Al-muqtabas* both in the time of the Hungarian raid on Spain of 942, as well as in the lifetime of Ibn Ḥayyān, though it should be kept in mind that our author was writing a work of compilation.

Once we accept that BSN4Q can and probably does refer to the Pechenegs, in which case we may read this form of their name in Arabic as *Baṣāndāq*, we return to the question implicit in the editor’s emendation of the text, namely how such an unusual form of the name of the Pechenegs is possible. To appreciate just how unusual this form is, it may best be compared with the following list (not intended to be exhaustive) of the names of the form of the Pechenegs found in the most important contemporary descriptions of these people in the Islamic sources written in Arabic and Persian:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Name</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>864, 883</td>
<td>Ibn Xurdāḡbīh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>903</td>
<td>Ibn al-Faṣḥī</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>921-2</td>
<td>Ibn Faḍlān</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca. 930</td>
<td>Ibn Rusta (from Cāyḥānī)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>942+</td>
<td>IBN ḤAYYĀN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>951+</td>
<td>Ḫṣaṭxārī (from Bālxī)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

952-3 Misʿar Abū Dulaf (in Yaqūt) |
956-7 Maṣʿuṭī |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a.</th>
<th>b.</th>
<th>c.</th>
<th>d.</th>
<th>e.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
<td>a.</td>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
<td>b.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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14 For the sake of uniformity I have given where possible the dates found in Miquel, *La géographie humaine*, i (Paris-The Hague, 1967), especially pp. XVI-XXXVI. Variant readings, which I have not given, will be found in the critical apparatus to each of the editions cited below.


Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb (in Bakrī) 22

982-3  Ḥudūd al-‘alām

(from Cayhānī) 23

IBN ḤAYYĀN

؟1057

Kāşgārī 27

[a. Oğuz: ]

988  Ibn Hawqal (from Balxī) 24

[ b. Oğuz: ]

البجانية

البجانية

973-1050+  Birūnī 25

a. Bakrī (from a.

Cayhānī) 28

b. 

البجانية

البجانية

22 Bakrī, Al-masālik wa-l-mamālīk, ed. A. A. El-Hajji, The Geography of Al-Andalus and Europe (Beirut, 1968), p. 181 (the editor indicates [p. 179, n. 4] that the form on p. 179 is a reconstruction from what he considers to be a corrupt form in the manuscript).


25 a) This form is given in the Persian-language Kitāb at-taḥfīm li-annā ‘at ‘at-taṣānim, ed. C. Hūmā’i (Tehran, A.H. 1359/1939-40 A.D.), p. 200. (On the Arabic and Persian versions of this work, see C. A. Storey, Persian Literature. A Bio-Bibliographical Survey, ii/1 [London, 1958], pp. 44-45.) This form is also given in n.179 (p. 284) to the Russian translation of Birūnī’s Kitāb tāhīd nilayāt al-amākin li-taḥfīh masūfāt al-māsākīn, which is in his selected works: “Opredenenie granits mest diya uтоcheniya rasstoyaniy mejdu naselennymi punktami,” Izbrannye proizvedeniya, iii (Tashkent, 1966), 81-269 (the reference to the Pechenegs is on pp. 95-96); b) Tāhīd, Macallat ma’ḥad al-maṣṭūtāt al-‘arabīyya 8 (Cairo, 1962), p. 46; cf. the incomplete form found in the facsimile of one of the manuscripts of the Taḥfīm published in The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology, ed.-trans. R. R. Wright (London, 1934), p. 145. An unlikely form with a čim and a qāf (البجانية) given in n.92 (p. 295) to the Russian translation of the Taḥfīm (“Kniga vrazumleniia načatkam nauki o zvezdax,” Izbrannye proizvedeniya, vi [Tashkent, 1975] 21-258) is presumably a typographical error, since the translation is based on this work by Wright and Hūmā’i (Izbrannye proizvedeniya, vi, pp. 16-18).


27 Ḏūhāyli Lāgāt-it-Türk tıpsızbašan, ed. B. Atalay (Ankara, 1941): a) p. 245; b) pp. 20 and 25; c) p. 41; d) p. 245; and e) p. 245; and Kitāb dīwān lūgāt at-Turk, ed. A. Emiri, i (İstanbul, A.H. 1333): a) p. 404 (the form بیانک in the edition is without the fathā which is discernible in the facsimile); b) pp. 27 and 30; c) p. 57; d) p. 404 (the form بیانک in the edition is without the fathā which is discernible in the facsimile, but gives an additional sukān which is not discernible in the facsimile); and e) p. 404.

28 a) The Geography of Al-Andalus and Europe, p. 151; and b) M. Défrémery, “Fragmentes de géographes et d’historiens arabes et persans inédits relatifs aux anciens peuples du Caucase et de la Russie méridionale [1],” Journal Asiatique 13 (1849) 457-522, especially pp. 460-461 and 463-465; and A. Kunik and V. Rozen, Izvestiya al-Bekri i drugih avtorov o Rusi i Slavyanax, i (St. Petersburg, 1878), pp. 42-45. (Part of this text is also quoted by Marquart, “Über das Volkstum der Komanen,” p. 97, n. 3. See as well the forms given above by Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Person/Place/Text</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1099 | Idrisi | Ibn al-As'fir | a. Ibn al-As'fir
| 11th century | Marwazi (from Cayhān) | Dīnāq | a. Dīnāq
| | | b. Dīnāq | b. Dīnāq
| 1160 | Aḥmad ad-Ṭūsī | ʿAfsī (from Cayhān) | 13th century
| ca. 1179-1229 | Yāqūt | Cayhān | 7.
| 1208 | Fāxr ad-Dīn Mubārakshāh | ʿAfsī | 13th century

It becomes clear from the above list that the form of the name of the Pechenegs in Ibn Ḥayyān’s work may be one of the earliest attestations of this name in the Islamic sources. The tradition originating with Cayhānī for the description of the peoples of the western Eurasian steppe and represented by Ibn Rusta, the Ḥudayd al-ʿilam, Gardīzī, Bakrī, Marwāzī, ʿAfsī, and later writers is certainly one of the most important and has been studied in detail. Another important tradition originates with Baṣrī and is represented by Ṣafarī and Ibn Ḥawqal. Though these works have themselves served as the basis for even later works which include descriptions of the Pechenegs, the work of Ibn Ḥayyān represents one of the few original

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32 Muʿcam al-buldān, i (Leipzig, 1866/Tehran, 1965), pp. 470 and 839. (See also the forms given above by Mīṣʿar Abū Dulaʿīf.)
34 Al-kāmil fi t-tārīḵ, i (Beirut, 1965), p. 339. (This text is also quoted by Golden, “The People NWKRDH,” p. 24.)
36 Ṭār al-bilād wa-anbāʾ ar-al-bād (Beirut, 1960), p. 580. (Note also the other possible forms on pp. 580 and 611.)
37 Cāmī’ al-hikāyaṭ wa-lāmiʿ ar-rivāyaṭ, ed. V. V. Bartol’d, Turkestan v ėpoxu mongol’skago nasest-viya, i: Tekstii (St. Petersburg, 1898), p. 99.
39 See the references and discussion in Miquel, La géographie humaine, i, especially pp. XXIII-XXV and 92-95; and Gy, Győrffy, A magyarak elődeiőrő és a honfoglalásról. Kortársak és kronikáskot híradásai (Budapest, 19752), pp. 84-94. An example of a later transmitter of Cayhānī is Širkullah Šihabeddin; for excerpts of his Behcet ʿuṭ-tavārīḵ, see de Hammer, Sur les origines russes, pp. 106-108.
40 See the references in Miquel, La géographie humaine, i, p. XXVI; and Czegeledy, “Zur Mescsheder Handschrift,” pp. 230-231.
forms for the writing of their name in the Arabic script and is completely independent of these other traditions. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing whether this form of the name reached Ibn Ḥayyān through oral transmission or in a written form, nor do we know what languages may have served as an intermediary for this report. It is also not possible to determine which of the orthographic norms for the various Arabic-speaking regions of the Caliphate might have served as a basis for the transcription of this name. Given these circumstances, the best path open to us is to treat this transcription according to the norms for an Arabic text written in Andalusia.41

The form BŠNAQ in the Al-muqtasabas differs from the other attested forms because of the medial - epidemic - of the final -Q (qaf).42 The final qaf presents, surprisingly enough, fewer complications than the medial šin. K. Czedló has proposed in his discussion of the Old Hungarian title found in the form KNDACQ (which may be read kundáciq and which is interpreted by him as *kündačik [in our transcription *kündačik]) that the final qaf may be viewed as an unaspirated stop (as opposed to the aspirated stop kaf). Therefore, the presence of a qaf would not necessarily dictate, in contrast to later orthographic tradition in the Turkic world, that this word has back vowels.43 In Andalusia, in fact, the letter qaf originally represented Spanish g, and only later did it come to represent q as well.44 These explanations remove, I would think, any obstacle to seeing in BŠNAQ a form with front vowels.45

As for the medial šin, the proper reading of this letter in the form BŠNAQ has important implications. In Arabic texts from other regions and periods, šad, cim, and šin represented the c of foreign words (what Persian would later represent with šim). In Andalusia, however, cim (the medial letter which, with only one exception, is found in all of the eastern spellings of the name of the Pechenegs) represented the g ([g]) or [گ]) of medieval Spanish, and only later represented the affricate ʃ (in our transcription [ʃ]) and fricative ʂ (in our transcription [ʂ]), as well as ts and dz46 Šin, on the other hand, stood for the cunaminal ŝ ([ʃ]) of Andalusian Spanish,47 while šin usually stood for ʃ of Spanish orthography.48

For a foreign name, depending on how it was transmitted, šin can no doubt have stood for ʃ; but in this instance in the Al-muqtasabas there is no doubt that the šin in the name of the Saxons, written Saksun (ŠXSNS), represents what was in all likelihood an unvoiced s in the original name (German Säch-

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42 See also n.25 above.
44 Steiger, Contribución, pp. 208-218; and Entwistle, The Spanish Language, pp. 125-126. (Entwistle often seems to base himself on Steiger, though he simplifies Steiger’s transcription.)
45 Cf. the view of W. Bang ("Über den Volksnamen Besenyő," Tutan [1918] 436-437), who considers the word to have originally had back vowels.
48 Steiger, Contribución, pp. 136-143; and Entwistle, The Spanish Language, pp. 109-110 and 123-125. (Entwistle transcribes orthographic ʃ as [ʃ].)
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sen, Old Saxon sahsö). This was probably pronounced by Andalusians with a cacuminal [ʒ], and may be compared with the form SKWN ("SKW3N) in Bakrî (a fellow Andalusian). One must keep in mind, however, that in the Arabic of Andalusia there was seemingly a confusion between the phonemes /s/ and /s/, and /s/ and /ș/, as well as between /s/ and /ș/ (which only compounded the difficulties posed by the similarity of their appearance when written). It would be possible to presume that the șin in the name of the Pechenegs represents some sort of s (unvoiced, voiced, palatal, or velar), though it could clearly stand for ș as well.

It would be very tempting simply to dismiss the form given by Ibn Hayyân as a hapax legomenon. The Old Tibetan form of the name of the Pechenegs must be read with a medial ʧ, as must the forms in the Russian chronicles. The Islamic sources giving a medial ʧ, and presumably the form given by Ibn al-Faqîh as well, also suggest that the name of the Pechenegs had a medial ʧ. There is, however, one very important consideration which forces us to dwell further on this matter, namely the Hungarian form of the name of the Pechenegs: Besenyo (Hungarian 's' = ʂ). The form is important in this regard because it goes back to either *Bâjânâk or *Bâçânâk. It is, in fact, just one of a series of Turkic loanwords in Hungarian with an ʂ (Hungarian orthographic 's') for Common Turkic ʧ. In the received tradition of Hungarian historical linguistics, the phonetic changes in these loanwords are explained by a development of ʧ > ʂ (orthographic 'ʧ' > 's') in Hungarian. In 1975, however, Tibor Halasi-Kun proposed that a change ʧ > ʂ had taken place in Middle Kipchak and that these loanwords in Hungarian were borrowed from a form already in ʂ (instead of Common Turkic ʧ). Implicit in this argument is that, like the name Besenyo, these words often represent the Pecheneg layer of the Kipchak Turkic loanwords in Hungarian. Though this important reformulation has already provoked reaction, it is an idea which merits

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50 The Geography of Al-Andalus and Europe, p. 158.

51 Corrente, Grammatical Sketch, pp. 48-50.

52 I am grateful to Ch. Beckwith for bringing this point to my attention. See also T. Moriyasu, "La Nouvelle interprétation des mots Hor et Ho-yo-hor dans le manuscrit Pelliot tibétain 1283," AOCH 34 (1980) 171-184, especially p. 182.

53 See the references in n.4 above. It has been noted that the forms indicating ʧ in the Polish Latin sources are corrupted borrowings from the Russian sources: see A. M. Șcerbak, "Znaki na keramiike i kirpiçax iz Sarkel-Beloy Veji (K voprosu o yazike i pis'mennosti peçenegov)," Trudi volgo-donskoy arxeologiçeskoy ekspeditsii, ed. M. I. Artamonov, ii, Materiali i issledovaniya po arxeologii SSSR 75 (Moscow-Leningrad, 1959), 362-389 + I-XXVII, especially p. 368, n.34 (who follows P. Golubovskiy, Peçenegi, torki i polovtst do nashestviya tatar [Kiev, 1884], pp. 34-35).

54 TESz, i, p. 288.


57 In his learned article, A. Róna-Tas expresses the view that it is possible to see a ʧ > ʂ development in Hungarian in the 9th-10th centuries, and that the ʂ (< ʧ) development in the modern Turkic languages quoted by Halasi-Kun is fairly recent ("On the History of the Turkic and Finno-Ugrian Affri-
further consideration. Depending upon how it was transmitted to Andalusia, this form of the name of the Pechenegs in Ibn Ḥayyān’s Al-muqtabas might just well be the first attestation in an Islamic source of the  özelli of their name. Whether this is the case or not, however, the form of their name found in this work certainly represents an important new orthographic tradition.

cates,” AOH 36 [1983] 429-447). His argument does not, however, explicitly rule out the possibility of a  özelli change taking place in Old or Middle Kipchak. He also admits that the data of the Mamlūk Kipchak linguistic monuments still await an authoritative study. (In fact, if one may see it as a possibility for certain Hungarian dialects, what is to prevent a similar change in Kipchak Turkic dialects in the same period in the same linguistic area?) On the other hand, if the name was transmitted to Ibn Ḥayyān through a Hungarian intermediary, the form in BšNAQ might reflect phonetic changes taking place in Hungarian. In that case, not only might the medial -u- represent a change in Hungarian, but the final -Q ([g]) might also reflect what was on its way to eventually becoming a final ő in Hungarian. (On the change -ő > -ő- in the Hungarian of this period, see G. Bárczi, Magyar hangtörténet [Budapest, 1958], p. 122; L. Ligeti, “Régi török jövevényszavaink és a vitás etimológiák problémái,” A magyar nyelv török kapcsolatai és ami körüliük van, i, Budapest Oriental Reprints A1 [Budapest, 1977], pp. 182-188, especially pp. 184-185; L. Benkő, Az Árpád-kor magyar nyelvű szövegémlekei [Budapest, 1980], pp. 71-72, 179-180, and 207-208; and G. Bárczi, et al., A magyar nyelv története [Budapest, 1982], pp. 116-117 and 142; as well as Halast-Kun, “Kipchak Philology and the Turkic Loanwords in Hungarian, I,” pp. 162 and 201-207.)
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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 75-15418

Cover design prepared by Nicholas Oberling