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ENIGMATIC *HARANDON*

After her father's death in 2012, Mrs Magdalena Bernacka, née Łukasiewicz, a resident of Katowice (in Upper Silesia in the South of Poland), set about ordering the documents of her family. She discovered that in the 19th century the name Łukasiewicz (meaning: Lucas' son) had been accompanied by the additional epithet *de Harandon*. The Łukasiewicz's being a family of landed gentry, the nobiliary compound name *de Harandon* might suggest that Harandon had been an estate's name.

Eager to learn more about her ancestors, Mrs M. Bernacka travelled to the Ukraine to the village Kadubiwka (near Cherniwtsi) where her Łukasiewicz family had lived during the 19th century. She asked the local people about the name of Harandon but it meant nothing to them.

So Mrs M. Bernacka clicked *Harandon* on the Google search engine and read two letters which emerged. One of them had been written by a Mr Richard Harandon, a British citizen of Polish roots. In the letter Mr R. Harandon informed Steven von Schenk, his putative relative with Austrian roots, of their mutual ancestors living during the 19th century in the former Polish state's South-East territories known as Galicia, and which had belonged to the Habsburg Empire between 1772 and 1918. At that time the Polish ancestors of Steven von Schenk wrote their full name as Łukasiewicz von Harandon and considered Harandon a place name (*nomen loci*), perhaps a name of a castle that had been a property of the family in the remote past.

Mr Richard Harandon's father came to the United Kingdom, as did many other Polish ex-servicemen, just after World War II. When he took the decision to remain in that country he put *Harandon* in the documents as his last name so as to make things easier for the British on phonetic grounds, the "exotic" form Łukasiewicz being very difficult to pronounce¹.

¹ It is Richard Harandon's current view that his father, who certainly had Armenian blood, possibly first came across the association of Harandon with Łukasiewicz while reading Count Uruski's "Herbarz szlachty polskiej" ("Armorial History of the Polish Nobility"), as Richard

His son, Richard, born in England in 1955 and active professionally as a languages consultant and translation agency proprietor, uses *Harandon* as his sole last name. Of course, its pronunciation is no problem for English-speakers; still it seems to be more “exotic” even than Łukasiewicz (Lucas’ son) as far as its meaning is concerned. This is really enigmatic.

Prof. Krzysztof Stopka of the Jagiellonian University, Cracow, who researches into the history of Polish Armenians has told me that in 16th and 17th century documents *Harandon* was not a place name (as it seemed to become later) but a *personal* name of frequent occurrence. Other similar forms were also used then: Arandon, Arendon, Arudon, Hayrandom, Kharandan.

A Polish Armenian descending from an old family, Mr Andrzej Bohosiewicz, put within my reach a document from the end of the 17th century. It is written in Armenian and contains a list of debtors. They are mentioned by one name only preceded by the Polish title *pan* (spelled with Armenian letters) meaning “gentleman” (nowadays just “Mr”). Most of the names in the list are common Christian names used by Armenians: Bedros (= Peter), Boghos (= Paul), Kirkor (= Gregory), Margos (= Marc), Baghdasar (= Balthasar), Simavon (= Simon), Zadig (meaning, in Armenian, “Easter”), Vartan (name of Iranian origin) etc. Among them there is also a certain “*pan Harandon*”.

So the matter is clear: Harandon initially was a personal name. As time went on it ceased being given to persons and, in the 19th century, was reinterpreted by some as a place name. But its origin and etymology is not clear.

With regard to the fact that until the middle of the 17th century, most Polish Armenians spoke a Turkic (and not Indoeuropean Armenian) language called Armenian-Kipchak we could expect that *Harandon* is a name of Turkic (Kipchak) origin. But it is not. The specialist in Armenian-Kipchak, Professor Edward Tryjarski (Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw) cannot find any explanation of the name *Harandon* based on Turkic linguistic material.

As for me, I see in *Harandon* a corrupt (under Turkic influence) form of *Harutyun* (see below) or a possible contamination of two elements: an indigenous Armenian name to which an Iranian name was added. The first is the Armenian masculine name *Harutyun* (< Old Armenian *Yarowēiwn* = “Resurrection”) based on the verb *yaṛnem* “I get up” (corresponding to the Greek *ornymi*).

In the second part of the name (if it is not just corrupt *Harutyun*), I am inclined to detect the Iranian name known from Firdawsi’s (Ferdowsi’s) *Šāhnāma*

Harandon recalls his father saying that the family was descended from a certain Armenian, Jan Harandon, who also appeared in the relevant volume of Uruski’s work. Richard Harandon’s father had then allegedly determined the line of descent (having the signet ring to prove it!), though the exact manner in which such descent might have existed was never made fully clear to his son! At all events, Harandon was never regarded as a place name in the UK Harandon household, but rather simply an Armenian surname, no mention every being made of the use of a nobiliary “de” or “von”.

(*Šâhnâme*) as *Faridun*. The name corresponds etymologically to Avestan *Θraētaona-* and Old Indic *Traitana-* (M. Mayrhofer, *A Concise Etymological Sanskrit Dictionary*, vol. I, p. 537: *Traitanaḥ* – a name of a deity”, Heidelberg 1956).

In Middle Persian the name should have had the form **Frēdōn* which should yield to **Hrēdon* when borrowed by ancient Armenians (like *Hrahat* which corresponds to New Persian *Farhād*, Avestan *Fraδāta-*, cf. H. Hübschmann, *Armenische Grammatik*, 1897 (reprint 1972), p. 48). Two names: *Harutyun* and **Hrēdon* could mix to *Harandon*.

An Uzbek friend of Mrs M. Bernacka, Mr Sheroz Karimov, has found an Ossetic word *xærændon* which sounds like *Harandon*. But it has nothing to do with our name because it means “an eating-house, a restaurant”). Such a word can hardly become a personal name, to say nothing of the Armenian-Ossetic relations which almost did not exist in the last millenium.

There are some problems, however. The name **Hrēdon*, which I suppose to be the second part of *Harandon*, is not mentioned in H. Adjarian’s *Dictionary of Armenian Personal Names*. So I have to admit that the above presented explanation of the origin of *Harandon* is far from being fully convincing. It is just a starting point for further study.

Recently Professor Edward Tryjarski has informed me of the hypothetical initial value of the term *Harandon*. He is currently studying Armeno-Kipchak documents preserved in the Viennese Mekhitarian collection of manuscripts. On page 94 v^o of the document registered by J. Dashian as *Codex Mechitharistarum Vindobonensis 446*, he found a text, written at the end of the 16th century (19 March 1044 of the Armenian era), where a person was mentioned as a *kʰafali harandonnung uruyū*. The last word (*uruy*, *uruq*) was used in the *Codex Cumanicus* in the probable meaning of “generation, progeny, family”. So the whole expression *kʰafali harandonnung uruyū* could mean “(a man descended from) the family named Harandon of Kaffa”. *Kaffa* is the 13th century name of the old Crimean town *Theodosia* (now: *Feodosia*).

This is very important, as now we know (thanks to Prof. Tryjarski’s findings) that *Harandon* was probably an ancestral (tribe’s?) name. It could be derived from a place name. If so, I think we can connect it with *Hirand* (“name of a river in Georgia; also of a town in the neighbourhood of Isfahān”, according to F. Steingass, *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, London 1892, p. 1496) or with *Ærydon*, *Ardon* (name of a river and a town in North Ossetia, cf. Ossetic *don* “river”, Avestan *dānu-* “river”). Still the etymology of *Harandon* remains enigmatic.

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To end with I would like to inform the reader that the name *Harandon* has reoccurred recently on the wall of a villa in Rabka, a health-resort in Southern Poland. It was built in 1937 by Stefan Łukasiewicz de Harandon, Mrs Magdalena Bernacka's grand-father.

I thank Mr Richard Harandon for having corrected my English (and further added to my material, see footnote 1).