



In plain sight, the truth hidden in a shadow.



2018

YOUR STORY

Say my name: the enigma of Annastacia Palaszczuk's surname



by [GEORGE_HELON](#)



8th May 2018 6:47 AM

PAL-LA-SHAY you might be encouraged to say of our Queensland Premier's surname, but nothing could be more erroneous, culturally and historically insulting to those of fair dinkum Polish ancestry.

As a genealogist, etymologist and nomenclaturist (retired) I am occasionally asked by persons of Polish and eastern European descent to assist them with their family history research when the going gets tough.

When locating ancestors overseas appears an impossible task, and access to vital records seems an elusive dream, researchers often forget to utilise the simplest facts right in front them to elicit new avenues of enquiry - names!

It is interesting just how much information you can glean from an individual's Christian name, surname, and the names of the places they originate from.

In the case of our esteemed Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk, it is written in her Wikipedia biography that she is "the daughter of veteran state Labor MP Henry Palaszczuk, who was born in Germany to Polish parents."

According to the Palaszczuk family immigration records publicly available at the National Archives of Australia, Annastacia's grandfather Hipolit was born in Wolka/Wulce and her grandmother Ludviga/Ludwiga born in Racje/Rajca/Rajzca, Poland.

Now the surname PALASZCZUK is a blended patronymic derived from the word PALASZ (say, pow-w-ash), which in the Polish language means 'broadsword' - basically a nickname for a combative or fierce individual, a soldier - and the suffix CZUK (say, chook).

The suffix CZUK is particular to surnames found and originating in western Ukraine, an area that was once occupied by Poland.

CZUK (sometimes spelt CUK) when written singularly, means a 'mouth' or 'snout' in Ukrainian.

When used as a surname suffix, CZUK, sometimes transcribed CHUK, designates one as being the son of.

PALASZCZUK, basically, one who is the son of a soldier, or one who points out errors in others - someone who is censorious or pedantic?

As for the correct rendering of the name, the 'L' in the surname PALASZCZUK originally had a diacritical mark through it; this being best described as a forward slash '/' through the 'L'.

Annastacia is more rendiscent and common of an eastern Slavic (Ukrainian) Christian name than Polish.

The Polish rendering of Anastasia is Anastazja - not Annastacia; just as the correct form of Ludovica is Ludwika - not the eastern Slavic Ludviga or Ludwiga!

Wolka (usually spelt with a diacritical mark, or an apostrophe, over the o) is indicative of a hamlet, or a new settlement and is in most cases conjunctive with another appellation to form a place name, e.g. Wolka Lubieszowska.

Wulce on the other hand, more correctly spelt WOLCZE (the 'L' having a diacritical forward slash '/' through it) is now known as Volche, or Volchýe and located in the Ukraine about Turka (49°13' N x 22°53' E).

Now given that the surname PALASZCZUK is most certainly eastern Slavic, or Ukrainian in its origin, it is more than likely the family

originates from that area about Palashevka/Palashivka in the Ternopil Oblast in western Ukraine (48°58' N x 25°34' E) .

Palashevka is only 195.57 kilometres due east of Volche.

PALASZCZUK is a surname commensurate to that of an ethnic Ukrainian and for all intents and purposes the family originates from the Ukraine; it is not of Polish origin!

So why does our Premier insist on the pronunciation PAL-LA-SHAY?

Well, PAL-LA-SHAY does have a distinctively nice sound when elucidated, a bit like the French palais - a palace, especially a French government or municipal building.

Or could the pronunciation be more a case of family lore, or even an attempt by the Palaszczuk family to hide their true ethnic roots by passing themselves off as Poles.

Passing-off one's self as being of Polish ancestry was typical of an earlier era of immigration in the twentieth century when linguistic hostility prevailed against eastern Slavic (Ukrainian) families who tried to mask the stigma of their true ethnic identity and origins in order to cross international borders, emigrate, and assimilate into unwary foreign populations unacquainted with their history.

Of course, not saying that our Premier's family was involved in anything untoward or mischievous.

Eastern Europe was in turmoil, a bloodbath during the first decades of the twentieth century and the animosity between Poles and Ukrainians was particularly vehement as a result of a series of bloody conflicts and ethnic cleansing perpetrated mainly against Poles by Ukrainians over lands won by Poland during the 1919-1921 Polish-Soviet War.

The Polish-Soviet War saw the birth of the Second Republic of Poland (Polish, Rzeczpospolita Polska).

Poland had not existed as an independent sovereign state since the Third Partition of her lands by Prussia, the Austrian, and the Russian Empires in 1795.

To reduce the probability of further military and political aggression and

incursion into her newly acquired lands, the Polish State settled ethnic Poles (mainly those with a military background) along her eastern borderland corridor (the Kresy); this resulted in a well-entrenched animosity between Poles and Ukrainians which continues to this day.

And contrary to some claims and rumours, the name PALASZCZUK does not appear in any of the registers of the Polish nobility and our Queensland Premier is not a Princess.

#Helon

About me:

With William F. Hoffman I co-authored *First Names of the Polish Commonwealth: Origins & Meanings*. Polish Genealogical Society of America: Chicago, USA; 1998.

I am also the Australian representative of the Polish Nobility Association Foundation (PNAF) based in the United States of America.