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DEPUTY ACTIVITY OF YEROTEI PIHULIAK IN THE AUSTRIAN PARLIAMENT

Abstract. *The article is dedicated to the analysis and comprehension of the parliamentary activity of Yerotei Pihuliak in the Vienna Parliament at the beginning of the 20th century. The research is based on archival documents, publications from that period, and contemporary historical studies.*

The article explores key aspects of Ye. Pihuliak's political career, his contribution to defending the rights and interests of the Ukrainian population in the complex socio-cultural and political situation of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Special attention is given to Ye. Pihuliak's stance on issues of national equality, education, assimilation, and interaction with other ethnic groups.

The attempts by Ye. Pihuliak to promote interethnic dialogue and his efforts to overcome discrimination against the Ukrainian population in Bukovyna are analyzed. The article also reveals his approaches to the development of education, infrastructure, and social issues in the region.

Keywords: *Ye. Pihuliak, biography, parliamentary activity, State Council, Bukovyna.*

Андрій Кліш (Тернопіль)

ДЕПУТАТСКА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ ЄРОТЕЯ ПІГУЛЯКА В АВСТРІЙСЬКОМУ ПАРЛАМЕНТІ

Стаття присвячена аналізу та осмисленню парламентської діяльності Єротея Пігуляка у Віденському парламенті на початку ХХ ст. Дослідження ґрунтується на архівних документах, публікаціях того періоду та сучасних історичних дослідженнях.

Стаття розглядає ключові аспекти політичної кар'єри Є. Пігуляка, його внесок у захист прав та інтересів українського населення у складній соціокультурній та політичній ситуації Австро-Угорської імперії.

Особлива увага приділяється ставленню Є. Пігуляка до питань національної рівноправності, освіти, асиміляції та взаємодії з іншими етнічними групами.

Аналізуються спроби Є. Пігуляка сприяти міжнаціональному діалогу та його дії щодо подолання дискримінації, спрямованої проти українського населення в Буковині. Стаття також розкриває його підходи до розвитку освіти, інфраструктури та соціальних питань в регіоні.

Стаття має за мету розширити розуміння історичного контексту та важливості парламентської діяльності Єротея Пігуляка у Віденському парламенті, сприяючи глибшому аналізу ролі України в європейських політичних процесах того періоду.

Дослідження парламентської діяльності Єротея Пігуляка вказує на його важливий внесок у політичне життя Австро-Угорської імперії на початку ХХ століття. Він виступав за права та інтереси українського народу у складній політичній обстановці того часу. Його парламентська діяльність свідчить про його стійке прагнення до соціальної справедливості та захисту прав українців. Є. Пігуляк активно виступав проти дискримінації та нерівності, особливо щодо українського населення. Його дії спрямовувалися на захист національних інтересів та створення сприятливого середовища для розвитку української громади. Є. Пігуляк сприяв міжнаціональному

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діалогу та співпраці в умовах різноманітності етнічних груп у Буковині, що може служити прикладом взаєморозуміння та толерантності в політичному співтоваристві.

Ключові слова: Є. Пігуляк, біографістика, парламентська діяльність, Державна рада, Буковина.

The growing interest in our nation's historical past contributes to the development of civil society and the formation of its ideology. Every nation has its own history, which is personalized, as socio-political processes pass through individual experiences. In this context, the study of the activities of Ye. Pihuliak, a prominent Bukovynian socio-political figure, in the Vienna Parliament at the beginning of the 20th century is particularly relevant.

Parliamentary activity of Ye. Pihuliak has not yet become the subject of a separate scholarly investigation. Some aspects of his political activities are highlighted in the works of O. Dobrzanskyi¹, V. Botushanskyi², Yu. Melnychuk³, M. Nykyforak⁴, V. Pylypchuk⁵. Certain biographical details about Ye. Pihuliak can be found in encyclopedic publications⁶ and his autobiography⁷.

The proposed article aims to analyze the parliamentary activities of Ye. Pihuliak within the «Slavic Center» faction of the State Council at the beginning of the 20th century.

Yerotei Pihuliak (1851–1924) was a prominent Ukrainian educator, publicist, prose writer, poet, and socio-political figure. He actively participated in political activities, notably becoming one of the main ideologists and leaders of the national movement in the 1890s. In 1906, he co-founded and led the tactics of the «National Council of Rusyns in Bukovyna» (also known as the National Democratic Party). From 1903 to 1906, he was a member of the interethnic association of Bukovyna's parliament deputies called the «Free Thought Union». Additionally, he played a crucial role in founding the grassroots movement for Ukrainians in Bukovyna, heading societies such as «Narodny Dim», «Ruska Besida», the political organization «Ruska Rada na Bukovyni», the first Ukrainian peasant credit cooperative «Ruska Kasa», and the establishment of the «Sich» society in Bukovyna. He served as a deputy in the State Council from 1898 to 1918 and in the Bukovyna parliament from 1890 to 1918. Ivan Pihuliak mentioned him in his speech: «One of the best fighters for the liberation of Orthodox Ukrainians from the Romanianization yoke of the consistory and the metropolis was Yerotei Pihuliak, a member of the «Ruska Besida», an envoy to the parliament and the parliament who fought for a whole 30 years [...] against Romanian usurpers until he saw the success of his hard work in 1917»⁸.

In December 1900, as a result of the elections to the State Council, Ye. Pihuliak was elected as a deputy from Bukovyna. He declined to join the «Ruskyi Klub» (headed by Yu. Romanchuk), whose members included both Ukrainian national democrats and Moscow sympathizers. Instead, Ye. Pihuliak became a member of the «Rusko-Narodnyi Klub» led by O. Barvinskyi. The group led by Yu. Romanchuk repeatedly attempted to persuade Ye. Pihuliak to join their ranks. However, he emphasized that all the achievements of Galician Ukrainians at the end of the 19th century were entirely due to O. Barvinskyi and joined the «Rusko-Narodnyi Klub»⁹.

The choice of Ye. Pihuliak was not random; rather, it was a well-founded political decision. Among all Ukrainian parties in Halychyna, the Christian Socialists stood out for their inclusivity. This was because their leaders, especially O. Barvinskyi, maintained close relations with Ukrainians from the Dnieper region and Bukovyna. Additionally, leaders of oppositional national democrats showed little enthusiasm for collaboration with representatives from Bukovyna. In O. Barvinskyi's memoir, «Reminiscences of My Life», information is provided about an incident where Ukrainian activists from Bukovyna, Stepan Smal-Stotsky, and Ye. Pihuliak sought assistance from Yu. Romanchuk and were refused¹⁰.

Supporters of O. Barvinskyi opposed opposition politics and desired to cooperate with other conservative Slavic groups. Therefore, they joined the «Slavic Center» faction, which included not only Ukrainians but also 9 Slovenes, 2 Czechs, and Polish supporters of Stanisław Stojałowski. The presence of the latter in the faction was short-lived; soon they joined the Polish Circle¹¹. Some Slovenian researchers argue that only four Ukrainian deputies from Halychyna – O. Barvinskyi, Dluzhanskyi, Mandychevskyi, and Hladyshovskiy – were members of the «Slavic Center», omitting the mention of the deputy from Bukovyna, Ye. Pihuliak. However, their assertion that Ukrainians periodically joined and left the «Slavic Center» is inaccurate, as Ukrainians represented the faction from its inception until 1904 without interruptions.

Cooperation within the «Slavic Center» was mutually beneficial for all its participants¹². Members of the faction had the opportunity to gather a sufficient number of signatures for submitting parliamentary inquiries and could be included in parliamentary committees. Thus, they had the chance to effectively

represent the interests of their constituents. In particular, Ye. Pihuliak was a member of five parliamentary committees.

Ye. Pihuliak actively advocated for the use of the Ukrainian language in the educational sphere and submitted four proposals aimed at supporting Ukrainian education in Bukovyna. He emphasized the need for the use of the Ukrainian language in the Orthodox school for boys and in the Ukrainian-German parallel classes in Chernivtsi, demonstrating his commitment to preserving the cultural identity of Ukrainians in the region.

Additionally, Ye. Pihuliak advocated for the establishment of a Ukrainian gymnasium in the northern part of Bukovyna, which could contribute to the strengthening of Ukrainian education and the development of national consciousness among the youth. His initiative regarding scholarships for Ukrainian gymnasium students aspiring to become Orthodox priests reflects his desire to support the youth, who could play a crucial role in preserving and developing Ukrainian cultural heritage in Bukovyna¹³.

Ye. Pihuliak believed in the significant potential of parliamentary governance; however, he repeatedly expressed his disappointment with the actual functioning of the parliament: «I look amazed at that chaotic commotion and constant excitement, and it seems to me that all of it could rather be likened to a noisy herring hunt than to the serious work on laws»¹⁴. His criticism reflects realism and a critical view of the legislative body's work, as well as his desire to improve the system to ensure a more orderly and productive form of parliamentarism.

Ye. Pihuliak made a notable speech in the Vienna Parliament, where he focused on social inequalities and injustices among different nationalities within the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy at the beginning of the 20th century.

In his speech, the deputy drew attention to the historical aspect of this inequality, particularly concerning the Ukrainian people. He conveyed the idea that past events influence the present, illustrating how territorial conquests and the expansion of power resulted from wars and conflicts. Ye. Pihuliak paid special attention to the position of Ukrainians, who were divided among different states.

He emphasized that Ukrainians, who became part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, underwent a certain development. However, laws designed to protect all nationalities in the monarchy were effectively utilized only by stronger nations. Ukrainians did not enjoy the same privileges as other nationalities, particularly in the field of education.

Ye. Pihuliak highlighted the discrimination in access to education, pointing out existing disparities: while there was a higher school for Germans and Jews, Ukrainians were limited to only a six-grade public school. He noted that the majority of students in this school were Ukrainian children, but their access to education was restricted, whereas German and Jewish children had separate classes for learning. This served as an example of national discrimination in history and indicated how policies of inequality in access to education could impact the development of society.

The deputy highlighted the unjust treatment of different ethnic groups in Bukovyna at the beginning of the 20th century. He presented statistical data indicating that Bukovyna was home to over 268,000 Ukrainians, 50,000 Germans, and 82,000 Jews. Despite Ukrainians constituting a large majority in the region, they had only a six-year elementary school in Khotyn, later reduced to five years to create a separate class for 5 German and 24 Jewish children. Even in this school, Ukrainian children found it difficult to learn, as some subjects were taught in German in the first grade. This confirmed the inequality in the treatment of different ethnic groups in Bukovyna at that time¹⁵.

Analyzing the consequences of this situation, Ye. Pihuliak pointed out that the insufficient education of Ukrainians made them more vulnerable in society. The deputy noted that different nationalities had varying levels of education. In this context, he argued that Ukrainians were losing even their church and were forced to receive spiritual guidance from priests who did not understand their language and could not meet their needs. Ye. Pihuliak emphasized that this could lead to the exacerbation of interethnic conflicts in the country.

Ye. Pihuliak asserted that linguistic discrimination against Ukrainians in Bukovyna led to their oppression in other areas, particularly in the judiciary and healthcare. He noted that the requirement to know the Ukrainian language was not mandatory for appointments to positions, resulting in the appointment of incompetent officials to positions in villages with Ukrainian residents.

The policy where officials were not obliged to be proficient in the Ukrainian language had a negative impact on the sphere of education and the intellectual development of the Ukrainian community in Bukovyna. Ye. Pihuliak pointed out that this practice led to Ukrainians having less intelligentsia, which, in

turn, contributed to poverty. He emphasized that the state did not advocate for the interests of Ukrainians and did not provide support for their development.

The issue of the functioning of the Ukrainian language in Bukovyna was particularly serious, and Ye. Pihuliak pointed to an example of the prohibition of private use of the Ukrainian language even among the teaching staff of the Ukrainian gymnasium in Chernivtsi.

Discrimination against Ukrainians in Bukovyna extended not only to secondary but also to higher education. Ye. Pihuliak pointed out that the senate of Chernivtsi University did not admit Ukrainians, even though they successfully enrolled in other universities¹⁶. His conviction was that Ukrainians in Bukovyna faced challenges due to non-Ukrainian-speaking officials, hindering their personal and professional development. Ye. Pihuliak compared the situation of Ukrainians in Bukovyna to what they experienced in the Russian Empire.

The deputy also analyzed the situation with Orthodox churches and the mass emigration of people from Bukovyna. He argued that providing land and material resources did not solve people's problems in the long term, especially when they lacked the necessary education and skills to utilize these resources.

Ye. Pihuliak emphasized that the rejection of all state and public taxes and the increase in land allocations did not guarantee the well-being of the people. Noting that the cause of poverty was lack of education, he pointed out how this limited people in the proper utilization of the provided resources and in protecting their rights and interests¹⁷.

Ye. Pihuliak actively supported addressing crucial economic issues for Bukovyna. Analyzing the idea of creating water and rail transport arteries in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, he argued that these projects might be beneficial for many regions, but they would not be profitable for Bukovyna. Ye. Pihuliak emphasized the need for an individual approach to the development of different regions under one state and the importance of paying attention to various aspects such as education, intellectual development, and improving living conditions¹⁸.

He discussed not only major projects but also underscored the importance of addressing issues related to citizens' betterment, education, and opportunities for personal growth. Ye. Pihuliak pointed out language barriers hindering people's engagement in various fields and emphasized the importance of clear and accessible laws for citizens¹⁹.

The deputy proposed specific measures to improve the lives of Ukrainians, such as enhancing education, establishing a fund to curb emigration, and creating a special fund to settle peasants' debts and acquire land for them.

Ye. Pihuliak expressed concern about the negative impact of usurers and small banks on the people. He believed that such financial institutions were deliberately created to deplete the population's funds and called for control over their activities, urging limitations on their autonomy through laws. The deputy also noted issues in the alcohol industry and called for state regulation of the sale of alcoholic beverages.

Regarding the allocation of budgetary funds, Ye. Pihuliak advocated for an equal and fair distribution among various nationalities within the monarchy.

Comparing the situation of Ukrainians in Halychyna and Bukovyna, the deputy highlighted that in Halychyna, Ukrainians had their own church, patriotic priests, and managed to establish four gymnasiums. On the other hand, Ukrainian residents of Bukovyna faced difficulties in defending their rights, especially concerning religious and educational institutions²⁰.

It was interesting that the majority of members of the «Slavic Center» were Catholics and Greek Catholics, while Ye. Pihuliak was Orthodox. Voters repeatedly asked him about his membership in the Catholic faction, to which Ye. Pihuliak responded that regarding religious beliefs, every member of the «Slavic Center» had a «free hand»²¹. Such an approach indicates an understanding of the importance of religious freedom and the rejection of discrimination based on faith within the faction.

On December 2, 1901, Slavic gatherings took place in Prague regarding the establishment of a Slovenian university in Ljubljana. About 3,000 Czechs, Slovenes, and Croats participated. On behalf of Ukrainians, Deputy Ye. Pihuliak delivered a speech, expressing support for the «prompt establishment of a Czech university in Bern and a South Slavic one in Ljubljana». Simultaneously, as a son of the 30-million Ruski people, he appealed to Slavic brothers to support their efforts in founding a Ruski university in Lviv²². Ye. Pihuliak's speech at the gathering reflected an understanding of the importance of education for national revival and emphasized the need for support not only for local but also for global educational initiatives. His call to support the establishment of a Ukrainian university in Lviv indicated the formation of unity and mutual support among Slavic nations in the cause of education.

On November 8, 1904, in Lviv, a congress of Ukrainian deputies from the State Council and the Regional Sejm took place. The majority of delegates demanded that supporters of O. Barvinskyi leave the «Slavic Union» and join Ukrainian deputies who were united in the «Ruskyi Club». Ye. Pihuliak noted that Ukrainian society and the political environment could not properly evaluate the cooperation with Slovenes and Croats in the Vienna Parliament.

Under such circumstances, O. Barvinskyi had no other choice. As he wrote: «After the discussion during the break before the vote, Deputies St. Stotskyi, Ye. Pihuliak, and Vasyloko approached me and asked not to object to the merger. I stated that to prove that I was not motivated by personal ambitions or other motives brought against me, I would agree to this and implement it in the «Slavic Union». However, I take you as witnesses that the «Ruskyi Club» and the People's Committee will not draw the necessary conclusions from this event, as they only want to distract us from the Union, through which we have achieved much for our people»²³.

The examination of Ye. Pihuliak's parliamentary activities highlights his significant contribution to the political landscape of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the early 20th century. He advocated for the rights and interests of the Ukrainian people in a complex political environment of the time. His parliamentary endeavors demonstrate a steadfast commitment to social justice and the protection of Ukrainian rights. Ye. Pihuliak actively opposed discrimination and inequality, especially concerning the Ukrainian population.

His actions were directed towards safeguarding national interests and creating a favorable environment for the development of the Ukrainian community. Ye. Pihuliak contributed to interethnic dialogue and cooperation in the diverse ethnic landscape of Bukovyna, serving as an example of understanding and tolerance within the political community.

In general, Ye. Pihuliak's parliamentary activities have left a significant mark in history and had a crucial impact on the subsequent development of the Ukrainian national movement in Bukovyna.

¹ О. Добржанський, *Національний рух українців Буковини другої половини XIX – початку XX ст.* [The National Movement of Ukrainians of Bukovyna in the Second Half of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries], Чернівці, Золоті литаври, 1999, 574 с.; О. Добржанський, *Український національний рух на Буковині другої половини XIX – початку XX ст. у взаєминах з національними рухами інших народів краю: конкуренція та співпраця* [Ukrainian National Movement in Bukovyna in the Second Half of the 19th – Early 20th Century in Interaction with the National Movements of Other Peoples of the Region], in «Українці і їх sąsiedzi na pryestzeni wieków: polityka, gospodarka, religia, kultura i życie codzienne», Słupsk-Warszawa, 2022, s. 329–342; О. Добржанський, *Бажаємо до України*, Одеса [Wishing for Ukraine], Маяк, 2008, 1168 с.

² В. Ботушанський, *Нариси з історії формування і функціонування владних структур на Буковині (друга половина XIX – початок XX ст.)* [Essays on the History of Formation and Functioning of Government Structures in Bukovyna (Second Half of the 19th – Early 20th Century)], Чернівці, 2020, 160 с.

³ Ю. Мельничук, *Політичний чинник у релігійному процесі Буковини (на матеріалах газети «Буковина» (1885–1909))* [Political Factor in the Religious Process of Bukovyna (Based on the Materials of the «Bukovyna» Newspaper (1885–1909))], in «Наукові записки Інституту журналістики», 2016, т. 4, с. 68–73.

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⁵ В. Пилипчук, *Єротеї Пігуляк – політичний портрет* [Yerotei Pihuliak – Political Portrait], in «Österreichisch-ukrainische Rundschau», 2000, № 10, с. 35.

⁶ *Пігуляк Єротеї* [Yerotei Pihuliak], in: Українська мала енциклопедія: 16 кн.: у 8 т. / проф. Є. Онацький. Накладом Адміністрації УАПЦ в Аргентині, Буенос-Айрес, 1963, т. 6, кн. XI: Літери Пере – По. с. 1375; С. Юсов, *Пігуляк Єротеї* [Yerotei Pihuliak], in: Енциклопедія історії України: у 10 т. / редкол.: В. А. Смолій (голова) та ін.; Інститут історії України НАН України, Київ, Наукова думка, 2011, т. 8: Па – Прик. с. 228.

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¹¹ *Польське Коло у Відні* [Polish Circle in Vienna], in «Руслан», 1901, ч. 119, с. 2.

¹² For more details on the cooperation between Ukrainian and Slavic deputies, see: А. Кліш, Р. Лехнюк, *Співпраця слов'янських депутатів християнсько-суспільного напрямку у Державній раді наприкінці XIX – на початку XX ст. (за українськими джерелами)* [Cooperation of Slavic Deputies of the Christian-Social Direction in the State Council at the End of the 19th – Early 20th Century (According to Ukrainian Sources)], in «Проблеми слов'янознавства», вип. 65, 2016, с. 167–177.

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¹⁴ М. Никифорак, *Буковина в державно-правовій системі Австрії*.

¹⁵ *Русини на Буковині. Промова пос. Єротея Пігуляка в державній раді* [Ruthenians in Bukovyna. Speech by Deputy Yerotei Pihuliak in the State Council], in «Руслан», 1902, ч. 37, с. 1–2.

¹⁶ *Русини на Буковині. Промова пос. Єротея Пігуляка в державній раді* [Ruthenians in Bukovyna. Speech by Deputy Yerotei Pihuliak in the State Council], in «Руслан», 1902, ч. 38, с. 1.

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¹⁸ *Бесіда посла Пігуляка при дебаті над редложенєм водних доріг* [Conversation of Deputy Pihuliak during the Debate on the Proposal for Waterways], in «Руслан», 1901, ч. 119, с. 1–2.

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²¹ *Справозданє посла Пігуляка* [Report of deputy Pigulyak], in «Руслан», 1901, ч. 141, с. 1.

²² *Борба за руский університет* [Struggle for the Ruski University], in «Руслан», 1901, ч. 266, с. 1–2.

²³ ІЛ НАН України, ф. 135, од. зб. 48, арк. 468–470.

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