

# Bulgarian Historical Review

Издание на Института за исторически изследвания при БАН

Bulgarian Historical Review XLIV (2016) 3-4, 237  
ISSN 0204-8906

*Iryna Matiash*\*

## **The First Ukrainian Diplomatic Representation in Bulgaria: till the Beginning of the Institutional History of Ukrainian-Bulgarian Relations**

(Abstract)

The article covers the activities of the Embassy of the Ukrainian State / Ukrainian People's Republic in the Kingdom of Bulgaria in 1918–1921. The activity of the first diplomatic institutions of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Bulgarian Kingdom after the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty on February 9, 1918 became the beginning of the institutional history of Ukrainian-Bulgarian diplomatic relations. The purpose of the article is to clarify the role of the first representative of Ukraine in Bulgaria in the implementation of interstate agreements set out in the Brest Peace Treaty, the defense of state interests and the protection of the rights of citizens of their country. The Embassy of the Ukrainian State in Bulgaria arrived in Sofia on July 28, 1918. On September 7, Ambassador Oleksandr Shulgin solemnly presented his accreditation certificates. Tsar Ferdinand I conveyed greetings from himself and the entire Bulgarian people to Hetman Pavel Skoropadsky and the entire Ukrainian people and expressed his satisfaction in welcoming “the first Ukrainian minister at his court”. The activity of the Ukrainian diplomatic mission in Sofia lasted until the summer of 1921. The mutual establishment of diplomatic missions by the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Ukrainian State can be considered as a successful attempt to establish Ukrainian-Bulgarian interstate relations in accordance with the norms of international law. The choice of persons (Olexander Shulgin, Ivan Shyshmanov) who represented

---

\* *Iryna Matiash* is Doctor of History, Professor, Senior Research Fellow of the Department of History of International Relations and Foreign Policy of Ukraine, Institute of History of Ukraine of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, 4, Michael Hrushevsky St., Kyiv 01001, Ukraine; Head of the Scientific Society of History of Diplomacy and International Relations (Kyiv, Ukraine). E-mail: [sekretar@history.org.ua](mailto:sekretar@history.org.ua)

the state and their status were important. The election of this type of diplomatic mission as an embassy also showed mutual respect between the states. Diplomatic missions had similar tasks, albeit with a more pronounced economic interest on the Bulgarian side and a political one on the Ukrainian side. The Ukrainian mission made every effort to truthfully inform Bulgarian society about the Ukrainian national idea and Ukraine's struggle for state independence. The embassies of both countries ceased their activities due to circumstances beyond their control, but laid the foundations of Ukrainian-Bulgarian interstate relations, the main characteristic of which was mutual recognition and mutual respect.

**Keywords:** Embassy of the Ukrainian State in the Kingdom of Bulgaria; Olexander Shulgin; Ivan Shyshmanov; Ukrainian-Bulgarian relations; institutional history of diplomacy