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FATE OF THE DIPLOMATIC ARCHIVE OF YEVHEN SLABCHENKO

World Library Collection of Ukrainica and diplomatic archive in its composition was the main occupation of Yevhen Slabchenko (Eugene Deslav) for many years. The concept of «diplomatic archive» he understood somewhat broader than currently admitted in the international law. He searched for originals and copies of international agreements, official documents of diplomatic missions and personal documents of diplomatic employees, maps and photographs of different times, printed materials on topics of international relations and diplomacy and included them to his collection.

In the case of the formation of «collection and archive» known Ukrainians, former diplomats — owners of large documentary collections: Mykhailo Yermiiv and Yevheniy Bachynskyi, were his closest advisers, consultants, and partially co-designers of concepts. Although the relationship between these two figures were strained, Ye. Slabchenko relied on their experience and knowledge, tried finding compromises in communication and planned to combine all collections to create Ukrainian museum and archival institution in a foreign land. His documentary collection, which contained unique sources on the history of Ukrainian diplomacy in the period of its formation in the era of the UPR and Ukrainian State, according to the owner's idea, in future had to make it to Ukraine.

Yevhen Slabchenko abruptly passed away on September 10, 1966. He left no regulations regarding the fate of the World Ukrainica collection and diplomatic archive. Shortly after his death, the documentary collection with the size «about 5000 dossier» was bought from his widow by well-known in France Ukrainian public figure Arystyd Vyrsta, musicologist, violinist and teacher.

Ukraine lost its chance to get this extremely valuable collection back. In the early 2000's, at the request of Leonid Cherevatenko Embassy of Ukraine in France reported the desire of prof. Vyrsta to sell the archive, but there were no funds for its acquisition. Documentary collection of Yevhen Slabchenko was bought by French film historian of Ukrainian origin Lubomyr Hoseiko. Diplomatic archive did not find its way home, among many documentary treasures, despite the dreams of their creators (Yevhen Bachynskyi, Mikhailo Yermiiv, Andrii Zhuk, Ivan Ohiyenko, Yan Tokarzhevskyi-Karashevych).

Documents that remain outside Ukraine, have a huge source potential for learning the history of international relations and prominent personalities of known diplomats. They can be called «diplomatic archive of Ukrainian emigration». It requires a special study in terms of structure and content of documents and source potential for research into the history of development of international relations of Ukraine, diplomats' prominent personalities and the history of diplomacy and in terms of possible return of these documents to Ukraine.