

# MECHANISMS OF UNOFFICIAL DIPLOMACY THE CASE OF FRANTIŠEK ZACH'S ACTIONS DURING THE 1844 ALBERT NUGENT VISIT IN BELGRADE

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## Introduction

As Hans Henning Hahn stated in his study about the limitations of foreign policy in exile, the sole existence of this kind of political activity almost entirely depends on the abilities and personal connections of émigrés.<sup>1</sup> He demonstrated this argument in the case of Hôtel Lambert and the role which its leader, Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, played in this process. Hahn stated Czartoryski himself as the first precondition for the existence of Polish exile foreign policy. Without its leader, the Hôtel Lambert would neither have been created nor have established the massive structure of unofficial embassies (Polish agencies) throughout Europe.

While accepting his statements, it still should be noted that neither he, nor any other author who has conducted research on the Czartoryski organization's Balkan interests,<sup>2</sup> have yet paid specific attention to

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<sup>1</sup> H. H. Hahn, *Possibilities and Limitations of Foreign Policy in Exile: Adam Jerzy Czartoryski's Hotel Lambert in Western Europe, 1831–1840*, [in:] *Eastern Europe and the West*, ed. J. Morison, London 1992, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> A. Cetnarowicz, *Tajna dyplomacja Adama Jerzego Czartoryskiego na Bałkanach. Hotel Lambert a kryzys serbski 1840–1844*, Kraków 1993; M. Handelsman, *Pierwsza stała misja polska w Belgradzie w XIX w.*, Paryż 1929; Idem, *Czartoryski, Nicolas I et la question du Proche Orient*, Paris 1934; J. Skowronek, *Polityka bałkańska Hotelu Lambert (1833–1856)*,

the possibilities and limitations of activities in the lowest tier of Hôtel Lambert structure or, therefore, on the operational mechanisms which agents followed during the course of their missions. The actual work of agents was, after all, not fully under the control of the Paris centre, which could choose their location and goals, appoint or revoke them and support them with resources (material as well as personal), but, in the end, the success or failure of the mission was in the hands of these agents in the first place.

The goal of the present study is to analyse these operational methods, which, if followed, could allow agents to achieve successful results of their work. As a particular case study for this research, I have chosen to analyse the actions of František Zach (1807–1892), a Hôtel Lambert agent in Belgrade between 1843–1848 during one specific event—the visit of Count Albert Nugent to the Serbian capital during the first two weeks of April 1844.

Albert Nugent (1816–1896) was the eldest child of Austrian military commander Laval Nugent von Westmeath<sup>3</sup> and like his father, he pursued a military career. Yet, he gained much more renown as an advocate and agitator of Illyrism, than as an army officer. Despite the fact, that he had an Irish, not a Slavic ancestry, Nugent adopted the Illyrian idea and quickly became one of the most active members of the movement. He voluntarily conducted many risky actions like smuggling of propagandistic journals from Serbia to Croatia (and *vice versa*) or even acquisition of firearms.<sup>4</sup> Thanks to this enthusiasm, he was nicknamed “The Croatian lion.”<sup>5</sup>

Nugent appeared in Belgrade in April 1844 without proper preparation and, in his activities and decisions, he totally ignored the fact that his agenda was considered to be suspicious if not even dangerous. Considering the huge amount of risk, which Nugent’s actions could cause, Zach immediately took the role of his guide and spent the whole two weeks in following and directing the count.

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Warszawa 1976; P. Żurek, *Hotel Lambert i Chorwaci 1843–1850*, Warszawa 2005; P. N. Hehn, *Prince A. Czartoryski and the South Slavs*, „The Polish Review” 1964, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 76–87; K. Popek, „Niewygodny, acz bezsilny partner.” *Współpraca Hôtelu Lambert z bułgarskimi działaczami narodowymi w latach czterdziestych XIX wieku*, „Zeszyty Naukowe UJ. Prace Historyczne” 2017, vol. 144, no. 1, p. 119–135, etc.

<sup>3</sup> For more detailed information about Laval Nugent and Nugent family in general see: C. Würzbach, *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Österreich. Zwanzigster Teil*, Wien 1869, pp. 428–434.

<sup>4</sup> V. Žáček, *František A. Zach*, Praha 1977, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> P. Żurek, op. cit., p. 81.

Based on the analysis of these events, I have stated two research questions. What kind of general operational mechanisms could be detected in Zach's actions during this timescale and what were the consequences, potential and real, of Nugent's stay in Belgrade? How successfully could Zach have avoided the negative results of this unpleasant scenario?

The study is divided into two parts. The first provides the description of the most important events which occurred during Nugent's stay in Belgrade and the second uses this description as a foundation for answering the research questions.

Consequently, the aim of presented results is not to only contribute to the knowledge about the Serbian mission of Hôtel Lambert or its Balkan interests *per se*, but on the specific example of one member of a wide established site of unofficial diplomatic representatives (agent, emissaries, etc.) and also to deepen the general knowledge about this second, hidden dimension of international relationships in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

### Zach's description of Nugent's visit to Belgrade—a course of events

According to Zach's report, he first became aware of Count Albert Nugent and his engagement in the Illyrian movement in December 1843 during a dialogue with another Illyrian agent, Stjepan Verković.<sup>6</sup> At that time, Nugent was on a mission in Constantinople, where he tried to use his family name and status to gain an audience with Ottoman officials as well as British and French diplomats. Zach became rapidly interested in the Illyrian movement and supplemented his next report to Michał Czajkowski in Constantinople with a letter<sup>7</sup> for Nugent in which he asked him to visit Belgrade during his journey back from the capital of the Ottoman Empire.<sup>8</sup> Czajkowski approached Nugent in January 1844 and quickly attracted his attention to the possibility of cooperation with Hôtel Lambert. They mutually agreed that any

<sup>6</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 23.12.1843, Biblioteka Książat Czartoryskich w Krakowie [BCz] 5390 IV, p. 146.

<sup>7</sup> As an attachment to the letter, he also sent the sketch of the house of bookseller Vosarović where Zach has inhabited the apartment, see: Zach à Czajkowski, 6.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 461.

<sup>8</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 30.12.1843, BCz 5390 IV, pp. 159–160.

member of the Illyrian movement would contact the main agency in Constantinople and, therefore, Czajkowski himself, only through Zach, who would serve as a mediator. Also, it was stated that Nugent would visit Zach in Belgrade on his way from Constantinople, which he did not execute and, instead, travelled directly to Zagreb.<sup>9</sup>

Piotr Żurek assumed that Nugent's decision was caused by his need to consult over next steps with Ljudevit Gaj, which is the same assumption that probably led Czajkowski to give Zach recommendation to establish a correspondence with Nugent and not necessarily wait for their planned meeting.<sup>10</sup> The Polish agent in Belgrade followed the advice of his supervisor, but despite this, he did not possess any kind of information about Nugent's plan to visit the Serbian capital. In the report from the 30 March 1844, Zach wrote that he had received information, though he immediately questioned its veracity, that Nugent has visited Vienna and currently should be in Novi Sad, with Constantinople as the final destination of his journey.<sup>11</sup> His doubt was confirmed during the evening of the same day when Count Albert Nugent suddenly appeared in his room.<sup>12</sup> It was quite an irony that the unexpected visitor entered the room at the very same moment when Zach was receiving news about Nugent's arrival from Timotije Knežević. The Polish agent made it very clear that his cooperation with Stjepan Car<sup>13</sup> from the previous weeks had nothing to do with this visit, since Nugent and Car could not meet and, therefore, the count was conducting the trip on his own.<sup>14</sup>

Immediately after Nugent entered Zach's room, which according to reports was between 8pm and 9pm in the evening, the two agents, accompanied by the aforementioned Timotije Knežević, began to discuss Nugent's surprising (and, for Zach, almost shocking) decision to visit Belgrade without any proper preparation.<sup>15</sup> The count had decided to take advantage of the fact that he possessed an Austrian passport, although issued in June 1843, and, by avoiding Zemun, where he would be almost certainly have been halted by its *Militär-Commandant*, Gen-

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<sup>9</sup> P. Żurek, op. cit., pp. 81–83.

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem, p. 86.

<sup>11</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 30.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 450.

<sup>12</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 6.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 461.

<sup>13</sup> For more information about Car's visit in Belgrade and his cooperation with Zach, see: P. Żurek, op. cit., pp. 86–87.

<sup>14</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 6.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 461.

<sup>15</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 477.

eral-Major Maximilian Ungerhoffer,<sup>16</sup> he was able to reach Belgrade without any inconveniences. This decision also shows that Nugent was well aware that his previous activities would lead to denial of a request for a new passport.

During the conversation, Zach persuaded the Illyrian agent that he must firstly visited the Austrian consul, Colonel Nikolaus Filipović, who, even though in the service of the Habsburg monarchy,<sup>17</sup> still possessed Serbian ancestry and, were the political situation to rapidly shift, would possibly join the national cause.<sup>18</sup> Nugent agreed to the plan and so did Ilija Garašanin, Serbia's Interior Minister, to whom Zach went during the same evening to refute any suspicions that he was somehow engaged in Nugent's careless actions. Garašanin's opinion and approval were crucial for Zach's activity. Polish agent has arrived in Belgrade only in the fall of the previous year and it was Garašanin who took the role of his mentor and guide. Minister helped him with the language barrier, introduce him into Belgrade society and explain the geopolitical situation of the region. Garašanin even monitored Zach's correspondence. Consequently, Zach did not want to conduct any action without informing Garašanin and ask for his opinion and advice.

The proposed plan expected that Nugent would ask Colonel Filipović to introduce him to Belgrade high society and arrange meetings with the Serbian political elites, above all, with Prince Alexander Karađorđević. Following such steps would then allow Nugent to negotiate with Garašanin, Stojan Simić or his brother Alexa without the suspicion of Austrian spies. Before the departure, Nugent was also ordered to make some unfavourable quotes about Serbia and the possibility of cooperation with its government, which was intended to disprove the idea of a mutual agreement between the Illyrian movement and the Serbian government.<sup>19</sup>

However, Zach intended to wait another twenty-four hours so that he would have enough time to make all necessary preparations for the successful realisation of this plan. His decision was made on the assumption that he possessed this preparatory time because none of the

<sup>16</sup> *Militär-Schematismus des österreichischen Kaiserthumes*, Wien 1847, p. 77.

<sup>17</sup> A. Cetnarowicz, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>18</sup> "(...) un homme dévoué à l'Autriche, mais qui pourtant est encore allez Serbe pour que l'avenir de son pays ne lui soit pas tout-a-fait indifférent, mais c'est un de ceux qui ne veulent pas les mettre a table que quand tout le dîne est déjà servi." Zach à Czajkowski, 6.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 461.

<sup>19</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 6.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 462.

Austrian officials had been aware of Nugent's arrival.<sup>20</sup> Since the first Austrian report about Nugent's arrival in Belgrade was written by Colonel Filipović on the 4 April, Zach's assumption proved to be correct and neither the Austrian spies nor the officials were aware of Nugent's visit before the actual meeting with Filipović, which happened on the 2 April.<sup>21</sup> However, the registry of the Austrian military headquarters in Zemun shows that Nugent crossed the Austrian-Serbian border on the 26 February and the 13 March; therefore, at least some Austrian officials must have been aware of Nugent's journey to Serbia.<sup>22</sup>

During the next morning, while the count was spending some time in a bath, Zach arranged a meeting with Stefan Hrkalović and Izidor Stojanović—the latter agreed to host Nugent in his house for the rest of the day, which was situated in an isolated spot outside the city. Nugent departed for Stojanović's house approximately around noon, accompanied by Pavao Čavlović,<sup>23</sup> another Illyrian agent who was residing in Belgrade, although, contrary to Nugent, his mission was prepared and ordered by Ljudevit Gaj.<sup>24</sup> Zach, along with Hrkalović, joined them at dinner and instructed Nugent how to proceed during his stay in Belgrade.

Following the plan, Nugent went to visit Colonel Filipović on the 1 April, but, since no Austrian official was present, the count had to return on the next day. In the meantime, he spent time at the house of Emanuel Jokić,<sup>25</sup> which was also approved by Radovan "Raja"

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<sup>20</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, pp. 477–478.

<sup>21</sup> Bericht des k.k. Obersten Philippovich an Fst. Metternich dto. Belgrade 4. April (1)844, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv [HHStA], Informationsbüro (1791–1909) [IB], Zentralinformationsprotokolle (1834–1848) [ZIP], 1844, 26/160, pp. 6–7.

<sup>22</sup> P. Žurek, op. cit., p. 87.

<sup>23</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 478.

<sup>24</sup> D. Bataković, *The foreign policy of Serbia (1844–1867)*. Ilija Garašanin's *Načertanije*, Belgrade 2014, p. 140.

<sup>25</sup> According to the report from general Ungerhoffer to Metternich count Nugent was staying at the house of Emanuel Jokić: "Die neuesten aus Belgrad erhaltenen Nachrichten über den Grafen Nugent lauten dahin, daß er daselbst bei einem sicheren Emanuel Jokič (Privatier u. bekannter Kundschafter der gegenwärtigen serbischen Regierung) sich aufhalte." Bericht des G. M. Ungerhoffer an Fst. Metternich dto Semlin 8. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 29/188, p. 9; On the other hand Zach did not mention the first of the name of Jokić, but instead wrote a short description of Jokić's family, according to which it could be assumed that Jokić was a son of Petar Jokić, judge, former military commander and companion of Karađorđe: "(...) Nugent soit logé dans le maison de Mr. Jokić dont sa famille jouit de la meilleure reputation parmi les patriotes, surtout a cause du père, aujourd'hui juge, mais autrefois voisin de Karatjortje a Topola et des premiers commencements son compagnon d'armes inseparables." Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 478.

Damjanović,<sup>26</sup> the Belgrade police director, who had visited Zach on the previous day to consult on Nugent's stay in the capital.<sup>27</sup>

The count finally visited Colonel Filipović on the 2 April and, according to Zach's report, the Austrian consul was greatly surprised to see Nugent entering his mansion. It was already mentioned that Filipović's first report about Nugent's visit in Belgrade was dated on the 4 April and, therefore, the plan to hide the count from the eyes of Austrian spies until he voluntarily visited the consulate was successful. During the conversation, Filipović asked Nugent about his intentions in Serbia to which the count replied that his visit was only the result of his desire to travel, to meet people, and to see the country, therefore, he should be provided with a passport which would allow him to conduct his planned journey.<sup>28</sup> He also presented Filipović his wish to meet Prince Alexander Karađorđević and other members of the Serbian government and asked for the colonel's willingness to help. Zach recorded in his report that Filipović firstly agreed to introduce Nugent to no one but Stojan Simić, since the count was in Belgrade without any official position. However, when Nugent returned the next day, Filipović had changed his mind and only sent his corporal to accompany Nugent to visit Alexa Simić.<sup>29</sup> Filipović himself did not mention any of these events in his report, he only acquainted Metternich with Nugent's request, which he refused, and then confirmed that the count had had a meeting with the Simić brothers and some other persons. According to the information which Filipović received, Nugent declared in this meeting that he intended to stay in Belgrade only for a short time, then visit some other Serbian places and return back home.<sup>30</sup>

Consequently, Nugent was allowed to meet many prominent Serbian officials, besides the already mentioned Simić brothers, and also the former prime minister, Stefan "Tenka" Stefanović and, most of all, Prince Alexander, who received Nugent in an audience on the 5 April. Their conversation immediately revolved around Illyrism, but the Prince was completely deaf to the count's arguments and clearly declared that Serbs would not give up their name and join the Illyrian

<sup>26</sup> In his reports Zach used only the nickname "Raja".

<sup>27</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 478.

<sup>28</sup> Bericht des k.k. Obersten Philippovich an Fst. Metternich dto. Belgrade 4. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 26/160, p. 6.

<sup>29</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 479.

<sup>30</sup> Bericht des k.k. Obersten Philippovich an Fst. Metternich dto. Belgrade 4. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 26/160, pp. 6–7.

movement. Nugent later confided to Zach that, in his opinion, the Prince's ideas were certainly influenced by Colonel Filipović.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, Prince Alexander's disinterest in any discussion about potentially joining the Illyrian movement soon proved to be the lesser issue, because the Ottoman authorities became suspicious and decided to interfere with Nugent's presence in Belgrade and proclaimed him a dangerous person.<sup>32</sup> Zach was fairly sure that Colonel Filipović and General Ungerhoffer were the ones to blame for the engagement of Ottoman officials, although, in their reports, neither of the Austrian representatives detailed their role in the whole process. Filipović even stated that the governor of the Belgrade fortress, Hafiz Mehmed Pasha, became suspicious about Nugent's activities after some of his letters were intercepted in Zemun.<sup>33</sup> Ungerhoffer asserted that he had been also contacted by Pasha asking whether Nugent should be expelled from Serbia or allowed to continue his journey.<sup>34</sup>

The Serbian government answered Pasha's comments with the distinct statement that Nugent had arrived with a valid Austrian passport, which must be respected and, therefore, they would not banish the count from its territory.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, both Filipović and Ungerhoffer approached Nugent with the request to avoid travelling deeper into Ottoman territory.<sup>36</sup> In particular, the letter which was sent by Ungerhoffer on the 11 April was very clear about Pasha's decision to warn every Ottoman governor about the possible travel of a dangerous person and that, in that case, Nugent should be returned to the Ottoman borders with an armed escort.<sup>37</sup>

Nugent discussed this matter with Zach and Garašanin and, di-

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<sup>31</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 480.

<sup>32</sup> "...un homme dangereux pour la Porte." Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 481.

<sup>33</sup> Bericht des k.k.Obersten Philippovich an Fst. Metternich dto Belgrad 11. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 28/175, pp. 2–3.

<sup>34</sup> Bericht des G.M.Ungerhoffer dt. Semlin 11. April (1)844 an Fst. Metternich, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 28/181, pp. 15–16.

<sup>35</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 481.

<sup>36</sup> Bericht des k.k.Obersten Philippovich an Fst. Metternich dto Belgrad 11. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 28/175, pp. 2–3.

<sup>37</sup> "Vous comprendrez maintenant, que de moment ou un gouverneur d'une province turque vous regardez comme suspect, il en communiquera a tous les gouverneurs des autres provinces de la Turquie européenne et ça conséquenu on vous empêchera certainement à continuer votre voyage projeté. Je vous engage donc avec instant d'abandonner la continuation de votre voyage projeté à travers les provinces Turques, pour ne vous pas exposer à une insulté ou même à être renvoyé forcement par les autorités turques." Zach à



rected by them, he went to visit the governor on the next morning, the 12 April. At the meeting, he protested against this denunciation and reminded that he had fought on the Ottoman side at the battle of Saint Jean d'Acre<sup>38</sup>, had been a friend of the Porte, and always defended it against her enemies.<sup>39</sup> Even though Hafiz Pasha did not accuse Nugent of anything and just informed him that this opinion about his person was quite common in Belgrade society, nothing that Nugent could say would diminish the consequences of the events of previous days.

Probably the most challenging situation for Zach to manage during Nugent's stay in Belgrade was a controversy concerning Kovačević's deployment to Bosnia. It all started on the 7 April when a Belgrade pandour named Toma Tomić asked for a *teskere* (Ottoman passport). However, the real intention of this request was to provide Kovačević with a fake identity which would allow him to undertake a conspiracy mission in Bosnia without causing any suspicion. He even covered his travel to Bosnia by a statement that he was going to visit his parents. Kovačević, under the identity of Tomić, left Belgrade on the 9 April, the same day when Hafiz Pasha visited Prince Alexander Karađorđević to discuss Zach's presence in the capital and, more importantly, the same day when Ahmed Effendi recognized Tomić with the group of fellow pandours and immediately confronted him. Zach wrote in his report that all of this had been reported to him by Garašanin during the evening of that day and so a quick mutual decision had been made to send a courier to Kovačević with the instruction to destroy every letter he was carrying. The Polish agent was persuaded that Austrian officials also shared their part in the revelation of this plan, since an unnamed Austrian corporal had met Kovačević on the stairs of Jokić's residence, where Nugent was living. Because they had cooperated with Ahmed Effendi, who, according to Zach was paid by Austrians on a regular basis, then they could easily connect one hint with another. These details were given to Zach during the evening of the 10 April and, since he assumed that Pasha would order the Bosnian authorities to seize Kovačević, he ran to "Raja" who then sent a letter to the police

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Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 482; Bericht des G.M.Ungerhoffer dt. Semlin 11. April (1)844 an Fst. Metternich, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 28/181, p. 16.

<sup>38</sup> Nugent was most probably referring to the battle of Acre, which occurred on 3 November 1840. During the fight, the combined Austrian, British and Ottoman forces have taken the city from the Egyptians, who fled after a heavy naval bombardment.

<sup>39</sup> "Je suis l'ami de la Porte et je la défendrais toujours vis-a-vis de ses ennemies comme par exemple la Russie." Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 482.

chief in Šabac, in which Zach instructed him to turn left on Užica and wait for subsequent orders. Fortunately for Zach, Effendi informed Pasha about the whole situation no earlier than after Nugent's audience on the 12 April, the day when the Polish agent sent the third despatch to order Kovačević to immediately return to Belgrade and act as though he had never left. Based on Zach's report from the 20 April, his letters were delivered to Kovačević before he left Serbian territory and, therefore, he was able to return to Belgrade before causing more complications.<sup>40</sup>

The whole controversy was successfully resolved, at least at a first sight, and, after a few more discussions over the next two days Nugent finally agreed to Zach's proposal to follow Ungerhoffer's advice and not continue in his travel, but return to Croatia. Before the actual departure, Nugent promised to Zach that he would send a man to Bosnia to inform about Kovačević's forcibly cancelled mission and also to help with the establishment of Ludwik Zwierkowski-Lenoir as the Hôtel Lambert agent there.<sup>41</sup> The Illyrian agent finally set out on his voyage from Belgrade to Zemun and then back to Croatia on the 13 April.<sup>42</sup>

### Zach's actions during the events—mechanisms of an unofficial diplomacy

The events of the first two weeks of April 1844 offer not only a quite interesting story about the unexpected visit of the Illyrian agent, Albert Nugent, to the Serbian capital and Polish agent František Zach's effort to keep the negative consequences of this unpleasant surprise as limited as possible, but they are also an appealing case study of the working mechanisms of Zach as a role-model of agents in the service of Hôtel Lambert, or, in the general view, even as a member of a widespread network of unofficial diplomacy during the first half of the 19th century. During the course of action, Zach proved that he had his own working standards which he used to follow during his activities and that he also tried to use these mechanisms immediately after being involved with Nugent and his imprudent improvisation.

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<sup>40</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 499.

<sup>41</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 486.

<sup>42</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 500.

As a result of my research, I was able to classify four categories of Zach's working method: valuable planning, constant awareness of risk, a wide network of reliable contacts, and importance of official cover. The worthiness of the presented case is that it specifically shows how these mechanisms were utilised in the real situation and also how (un)-successful they were with regard to the consequences of a surprising affair such as Nugent's visit to the Serbian capital.

The importance which Zach put on preparation of every step and, even more, the criticism which he addressed to Nugent for his omission of this procedure is clearly evident in all his related reports.<sup>43</sup> In his report from the 13 April, he even presented his own view of the count as a person wherein he did not forget to mention that Nugent was a devoted man with good heart and loyal character, who was willing to sacrifice everything for the ultimate goal of the union of Southern Slavs, but that his thoughts were very unstable, he was not able to consider every possible option and consequences, and his plans usually disappeared as quickly as they were created.<sup>44</sup>

On the other hand, Zach proved his ability to construct precious a valuable plan promptly after the potential danger—related to Nugent's presence in Belgrade—had arisen. During the same evening, he was able to persuade Nugent to follow his ideas and Ilija Garašanin that he had no share in the irresponsible actions of the count. This assurance also led the Serbian minister to help Zach with the execution of his plan. Even though Zach did not mention it specifically, it could be assumed from the text of his report, that he got the idea of unfavourable quotes about Serbia which Nugent should publicly proclaim before his departure from the country, during the conversation with Garašanin.<sup>45</sup> *Inter alia*, it is not without interest that Zach saw his guidance to Nugent not only as a mission to avoid the imperilment of him or his companions, but also as an act which would gain him solid gratitude from these men—gratitude that could come in handy during future events. In this matter, he specifically named Garašanin and police chief Raja Damjanović.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> "M[onsieur] Nugent est arrivé sans plan arrêté." Zach à Czajkowski, 6.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 466; "Son voyage en Servie, où il apparu subitement, sans avoir pris des mesures préparatrices, était une faute." Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, pp. 480–481.

<sup>44</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 480.

<sup>45</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 6.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*.

As already stated in the text above, the idea to wait another day to make all required preparation and to escort Nugent into isolation to avoid a possible revelation proved to be right and Austrian officials first obtained information about the count's arrival to Belgrade only on the 4 April; thus, at the time when he voluntarily reported his presence in the city. The willing reporting to the Austrian consul may look odd on a first sight, after all, from this moment onwards, every step of Nugent in the Serbian capital was ordered to be monitored by Austrian agents, but it was actually the distinct illustration of Zach's experiences and knowledge of local conditions. The Austrian representatives would sooner or later certainly find out about Nugent's stay in Belgrade. As was mentioned earlier, even though Filipović and Ungerhoffer were not aware about the count's arrival into the capital, his crossing of the Serbian borders was registered and, therefore, his presence in Serbia must have been known to at least some members of the Austrian apparatus. However, the sudden discovery of Nugent's incognito arrival to Belgrade would have caused a much worse scenario than the plan that he followed. In this matter, Austrian representatives (with the help of the Ottomans) were able to stop Nugent's further journey and also compromised Kovačević's mission to Bosnia, but, on the other hand, neither of the Serbians were accused of conspiracy, despite the fact that Filipović's and Ungerhoffer's reports mentioned persons like Emanuel Jokić, Izidor Stojanović, Simoen Militunović<sup>47</sup> and, above everyone else František Zach. However, the consequences of his position will be mentioned later.

From the first moment after his arrival, Nugent agreed to follow the ideas that Zach had presented to him, but the course of events proved to be much more complicated and the counselling to the count much more of difficult task that Zach probably thought. However, he should have had a clue since Stjepan Car had told him during their meeting in Belgrade that even Ljudjevit Gaj did not have full confidence in Nugent, not because of his loyalty, that was unquestionable, but because of his temper and lack of countenance.<sup>48</sup> According to his report, the Polish agent had his own experience with these characteristics very quickly. Nugent wanted to conceive many projects that were totally

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<sup>47</sup> "(...) Emanuel Jokič, (...) dem als Emissar bekannten Franz Zach, (...) dem dortigen Professor Isidor Stojanovich, dem serbischen Dichter Simon Millutinovich." Bericht des G. M. Ungerhoffer and Fst. Metternich dto Semlin 8. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 29/188, pp. 9–10.

<sup>48</sup> P. Žurek, op. cit., p. 86.

inappropriate for a man in his position and it was Zach who was then forced to stop him or, as in the case of Kovačević, tried to save situation. On one occasion, for example, Nugent voluntarily offered to carry a petition signed by the friend of the exiled Serbian ministers, Avram Petronijević and Toma Vučić, and persuade them to return to Belgrade,<sup>49</sup> despite the fact that they had never met before and, as a son of Austrian general, he would certainly look suspicious. On the other hand, he wanted to withdraw from the project of memorandum for the British ambassador in Constantinople, Stratford-Canning, the idea on which he agreed with Czajkowski during his time in the Ottoman capital.<sup>50</sup> Zach even wrote that Nugent has required guidance like a child.<sup>51</sup>

Taking into account this incaution, it is interesting to see that, at least according to reports to Vienna, Austrian officials were not completely sure about the true intentions of Nugent's visit to Belgrade or his journey in general. In the first message from the 4 April, there is an assumption, based on the dialogue between Nugent and Filipović, that, after his stay in the capital, he intended to spend some time at the countryside and then return home.<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, four days later, General Ungerhoffer wrote that he had received confidential information about Nugent's aim to set on a voyage to Greece.<sup>53</sup> Yet, in the report from the 11 April, Ungerhoffer mentioned that Hafiz Pasha declared to Filipović that he has thought about issuing an order which would disallow Nugent to travel to Bosnia and Albania.<sup>54</sup> In his letter to Nugent, which was mentioned earlier in the text, Ungerhoffer did not mention his next destination, but only advised the count to not try to travel further into the Ottoman empire, because he would be expelled. The final message related to Nugent's visit to Belgrade Ungerhoffer received almost two weeks after the count's departure. An anonymous confidant provided the general with information about revolutionary activities planned in Bosnia. According to a confession

<sup>49</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, pp. 486–487.

<sup>50</sup> P. Žurek, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>51</sup> "(...) le diriger comme on guide un enfant." Zach à Czajkowski, 13.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 486.

<sup>52</sup> Bericht des k.k. Obersten Philippovich an Fst. Metternich dt. Belgrade 4. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 26/160, p. 7.

<sup>53</sup> Bericht des G. M. Ungerhoffer an Fst. Metternich dt. Semlin 8. April (1)844, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 29/188, p. 10.

<sup>54</sup> Bericht des G.M. Ungerhoffer dt. Semlin 11. April (1)844 an Fst. Metternich, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 28/181, pp. 15–16.

from Pera Popović, a Belgrade police officer, Count Nugent was chosen to be a head of this revolution and he had arrived in Belgrade to conduct all necessary preparation; however, any outbreak of revolution was then postponed until Petronijević and Vučić would return to the Serbian capital.<sup>55</sup>

Even though a situation in Bosnia was considered to be unstable<sup>56</sup> and a revolution was a real threat,<sup>57</sup> Albert Nugent was certainly not planned to be its leader and neither was his visit to Belgrade somehow relevant to any potential insurrection in Bosnia. Regardless, these false messages (Bosnian revolution, Greece as final destination) are an interesting illustration about the limits of clarity of information received from the unofficial sources—network of spies, confidants, agents, etc.

However, despite the fact that not every gained information would be correct, the existence of a wide network of contacts and companions was a crucial precondition to achieve any kind of result at all. That is the reason for which Zach worked precisely on his own network and, even though he had been in Belgrade just for a few months, during the guidance to Albert Nugent, this human capital of his proved to be a decisive factor.

Especially important was the role of Ilija Garašanin, who was Zach's main advisor during his early time in Serbian capital and therefore was almost directly responsible for the position that Zach established. Possibility to consult actions and get valuable advice from a member of the Serbian government was without a doubt an inestimable advantage. Moreover, Zach also shared a mutually trustworthy relationship with the Belgrade police chief, Raja Damjanović, who even used to come to Zach to collect information on a regular basis. Having the police chief on his side was obviously a huge advantage for Zach in his mission, which involved many not quite legitimate or legal activities. This alone is an excellent statement of the extraordinary network of people which Zach established around himself and which provided him with information, resources, and many other helps. It is not a surprise that, despite being astonished by the arrival of the unexpected guest, he still rapidly reacted and knew very well whom to visit with a demand for help (for example, the idea of hiding Nugent in Izidor Stojanović's house).

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<sup>55</sup> Bericht des General Majors v. Ungerhoffer an Fst. Metternich dto. 29. April 1844 zu Semlin, HHStA, IB, ZIP, 1844, 34/219, pp. 4–5.

<sup>56</sup> J. Skowronek, op. cit., pp. 92–93.

<sup>57</sup> P. Žurek, op. cit., p. 83.

The last defined mechanism which I have identified as a crucial part of unofficial diplomacy is the importance of institutional cover. Zach served in Belgrade as an agent of Hôtel Lambert and it was the support of Czartoryski's faction which allowed him to establish his position there (and even travel to Serbia and begin his mission). However, since Hôtel Lambert was not an official institution, not a diplomatically recognised representation of the late Polish government, he could not actually cover his activity by proclaiming his service to this institution. Except his own abilities, he was constrained to rely on the willingness of the French consul in Belgrade—since he possessed a French passport—to stand in his favour if unpleasant circumstances arose.

This was evident after Nugent finally left the Serbian capital. Despite Zach's effort to minimise the negative consequences, it was impossible to completely avoid them. On the 14 April, the day after Nugent's departure, the French consul, Achille Codrika, summoned Zach to his residence and presented him with the complaints he had received. The Polish agent assumed that it was Ahmed Effendi who had visited Codrika and spoke against him.<sup>58</sup> However, according to the report of the French consul, Hafiz Pasha was the one who informed him that, during the last few days, Count Nugent—an agitator and a suspicious man in the eyes of Porte—had stayed in Belgrade and, during that time, had been meeting Zach on a regular basis.<sup>59</sup>

Zach mentioned in his report that Codrika started to lecture him immediately he entered the room. The consul warned him that he had already lived in Belgrade for few months without getting a proper occupation and, on the other hand, was seen to be companying with people marked as dangerous. Also, his passport had a specific note written on it, "pour l'orient directement", meaning that he had left France for political motives. Therefore, he should be more careful and avoid meeting suspicious people.<sup>60</sup>

It should be pointed out that Codrika was certainly not fond of Zach's presence in the Serbian capital at all. He did not wish to cooperate with him in any way and was willing to help Zach only when the possession of a French passport did not give him any other

<sup>58</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz 5390 IV, p. 500.

<sup>59</sup> Codrika à Guizot, ministre et secrétaire d'État au Département des Affaires étrangères, Direction politique, Belgrade le 29 April 1844, Archives Diplomatiques [AD], Correspondance politique des consuls [CPC], Turquie—Belgrade, 1841–1844, pp. 436–437.

<sup>60</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, pp. 500–501.

alternative.<sup>61</sup> It is hard to tell if his stand was based on his opinion on Zach's mission and activities, or whether he was just cautious, since, during the mentioned dialogue with Zach, he proclaimed his doubt about Nugent's loyalty and the possibility of him being an Austrian agent,<sup>62</sup> or whether he just disliked Zach as a person. According to Mathieu Jestin, who studied the history of the French consulate in Thessaloniki where Codrika had served as consul from 1832–1833, his colleagues thought of him as a violent and lunatic person, absolutely inappropriate for any important position in the diplomatic service.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, it is possible that it was about personal characteristics after all. This theory could be proved also by his successor, Durant de Saint-André, who was able to establish a cordial friendship and, later, also an intensive cooperation with Zach.<sup>64</sup>

Either way, Zach came to Codrika's residence prepared, at least according to his own words, and explained his behaviour during Nugent's visit in Belgrade mainly as an attempt to avoid more compromising actions, which happened anyway.<sup>65</sup> Then, they engaged in a conversation about the French support for the Serbian government and the necessity to not destroy this relationship by some dubious actions. In his report to Paris, Codrika only mentioned that he presented to Zach his warnings, which were sincerely accepted and followed by a promise to be more cautious.<sup>66</sup> Zach provided more details, but with the same result, the consul confirmed to him that the French protection over his person was still valid, but that he should be prepared to be under surveillance, since General Ungerhoffer had reported him to the Ottoman authorities as a dangerous man.<sup>67</sup>

However, without the French passport, the consequences would have been far more radical. Nonetheless, Zach still expected a worsening of the situation and asked Czajkowski for his next orders. In his own opinion, leaving Belgrade was inevitable because Austrian intrigues would now focus on his person and, in this situation, he could

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<sup>61</sup> J. Skowronek, op. cit., pp. 92–93.

<sup>62</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, pp. 501–502.

<sup>63</sup> M. Jestin, *Salonique (1781–1913). Une histoire consulaire de la question d'Orient*, Paris 2018, pp. 67, 93.

<sup>64</sup> J. Skowronek, op. cit., pp. 92–93.

<sup>65</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, pp. 500–501.

<sup>66</sup> Codrika à Guizot, ministre et secrétaire d'État au Département des Affaires étrangères, Direction politique, Belgrade le 29 April 1844, AD, CPC, Turquie—Belgrade, 1841–1844, p. 437.

<sup>67</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 501.



not conduct any meaningful activities, neither was he in a position to get any cover from Garašanin, because the Serbian government would not risk such action.<sup>68</sup> It turned out that Zach's concerns were not completely proper. The records of the Austrian Informationsbüro show that Habsburg interests in his operations were indeed highly raised after the March 1844,<sup>69</sup> even though his name is also present in the report from earlier dates. On the other hand, he was not forced to leave Belgrade and his position during the next months (especially after the change of French consuls) became even more solid.<sup>70</sup>

## Conclusion

A complete suppression of the unpleasant consequences which followed Nugent's irresponsibility was almost an impossible mission. Yet, with the quick intervention and application of his operational methods, Zach was able to keep undesirable results to as much of a minimum as possible. His specific plan, though created almost in the spark of the moment, along with a wide network of trustworthy companions, with and without any official position, and his constant awareness of complication, all of which helped him to carefully lead his steps during the first two weeks of April 1844 and brought a more positive conclusion, that even he had expected. Protected by his French passport and the institutional cover of Hôtel Lambert, he maintained his position and avoided a termination of his mission despite the official protest from the Ottoman authorities, supported by the intrigues of the Austrian representatives.

Undoubtedly, it was an exhausting task and his cry "Dieu soit loué!"<sup>71</sup> after he found out that Kovačević had received his letters in time and did not cross the Serbian-Bosnian borders is worth a thousand words.

Regardless of the fact that Zach would probably gladly omit this whole scenario, the presented case is an extraordinary testimony which visibly exploited his operational mechanisms and, thus, provides not only an interesting story to tell, but also valuable knowledge about the

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 506.

<sup>69</sup> Indices zu den Zentralinformationsprotokollen 124–128, HHStA, IB, Indices zu den Zentralinformationsprotokollen 1834–1848 [IndZIP], 1844–1848.

<sup>70</sup> V. Žáček, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>71</sup> Zach à Czajkowski, 20.04.1844, BCz, 5390 IV, p. 499.

real form of unofficial diplomacy. Zach was a specimen example of an agent, a member of the hidden dimension of international relationships and diplomacy, which worked even harder than official representatives to promote the interests of his party.

In this sense, the results of the present study are not only an extension to the knowledge of Zach's and Hôtel Lambert's Serbian mission, but also a new piece in the still unresearched mosaic of the functioning of unofficial diplomacy in the first half of the 19th century.

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### Abstract

The article analyses the operational methods of unofficial diplomatic representatives in the first half of the 19th century. Its results are based on a case study of mechanisms applied by František Zach, an agent of Hôtel Lambert in Belgrade, during an unexpected and problematic visit of Count Albert Nugent, agitator of Illyrian movement, in the Serbian capital in April 1844.

Keywords: Hôtel Lambert, conspiracy, Austrian empire, Illyrian movement

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