Austria-Hungary's “Civilizing Mission” in the Balkans. A View from Belgrade (1903-1914)

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Summary/Abstract: The conflict between Serbia and Austria-Hungary in the years preceding the First World War is looked at in the global context of the “age of empire”. The Balkans was to Austria-Hungary what Africa or Asia was to the other colonial powers of the period. The usual ideological justification for the Dual Monarchy's imperialistic expansion was its “civilizing mission” in the “half-savage” Balkans. The paper shows that the leading Serbian intellectuals of the time gathered round the Srpski književni glasnik (Serbian Literary Herald) were well aware of the colonial rationale and “civilizing” ambitions of the Habsburg Balkan policy, and responded in their public work, including both scholarly and literary production, to the necessity of resistance to the neighbouring empire's "cultural mission".
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Austria's civilizing mission. — Universal Suffrage. Upon. In history, when the activities of Austria-Hungary in the Near East have suddenly been made a world-issue by the outbreak of the most terrible war in the history of civilization, the aims and methods of the dual Monarchy are of paramount significance. Situated upon the outskirts of central Europe, in the debatable region between the West and the East, Austria stands in a peculiar sense as the connecting link between civilization and. In the east, the mission of Austria has been suggestively indicated by the flow of the Danube. Eastward and southward, with the current of the mighty river, have Austrian cultural and industrial activities gone hand in hand. Relations between the Balkan nations. Texts of French scholars and journalists' reports from the Balkan battlefields influenced the shaping of images of the Balkans and its peoples in the French public. At the same time, the official French policy during the Balkan Wars (1912–1913) changed its attitude towards the Balkans and the survival of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. Luis Léger, member of Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, in papers: Les Slaves du Sud. in the civilizing mission in the mentioned area. 

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