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***Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Habsburg
Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century***
(Abstract)

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Keywords: Habsburgs, monarchy, empire, early modern Europe, Reformation, Counter-Reformation, Catholic Reformation, Confessionalization, the Conciliarism, Trident, council, censorship, political theology, Pietas Austriaca, eucharist, celibacy, jesuit.

ARGUMENTATION

To the more numerous statements on the existence of common political destiny of the European countries in recent decades should correspond an historical reflection on the first supranational projects and the member states of early modern Europe. Such an approach is over the rigorous historical interest and consists a necessary investigation of the past for a mature assumption on the future. Essentially, currently facing with the visible limits of multiculturalism, a foray in history may help to understand the deep roots of religious and political plurality of our continent. In this historical and current horizon of interest, Habsburgs and their monarchy has a privileged place, the fact that they applied in history one of the most abiding and interesting supranational political projects, whose trademark has been since his beginnings, the ethnic and religious diversity. This political project was dominated by a deeply inclusive and universalist vision of the Habsburgs, but also by many local particularities, who created so many tensions and difficulties, sometimes insurmountable.

A major milestone in the history project of the Habsburgs is the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, two great spiritual events that transformed all early modern Europe and in whose ambience was born the Habsburg Monarchy.

Practically, Central European Habsburg Monarchy begun fragile to mark out with the union from 1527 of the hereditary territories of the Kingdom of Hungary and Bohemia, in the person of Ferdinand I of Habsburg. The territorial expansion was going to match a political agenda, Habsburgs were facing the situation to manage a very complicated confessional file, in which the conflicts between the Catholics and the Protestants have increased and threaten their political stability, but also the young monarchy. The Reform was the argument used by the representatives of privileged states in their opposition in front of the sovereign and his projects of state centralization. So, Habsburg's drama was double: to manage the political state affairs and not betray their own conscience. From this perspective requires that the subject is itself a very important reflection about the leader's role, which must choose, between the state interests and his own beliefs.

However, this grants a priority area in studying the history of the Habsburg Monarchy in the Reform century. Approaching such a subject relating to the Habsburg monarchy allow to identify different Reform and Counter-Reform typologies, with developments and timelines so different during this complex historic area and dominated by many local particularities, that influenced the Habsburgs political and religious attitudes and decisions. Regions like Austrian hereditary countries, Hungary and Bohemia represent historical and geographical sequences where the Reform progress reconstitution, undefeated in the first half-century, parallels the Habsburg efforts to strengthen control and save the Church. All these are challenges, but also the argument that a singular reconstruction effort through a history such as the Habsburg Monarchy, in a century as the sixteenth century is almost an impossible effort. Besides, a scientist dedicated to this area of research must have access to an impressive archival material, written in over 10 languages and spread in the Central European archives funds, we add the fact that it's very hard to critically assume the historiography written on this topic more than a century. When discouragement comes from the vastness of the documentation field, the challenge is that this history offers itself alive and full of surprises and rewards your efforts by the human and historical world that it opens up and by the surprise finding people genuinely motivated by their faith, but are willing to seek a common path of dialogue and coexistence, in an atmosphere of peace and moderation.

There is still a question mark for anyone who deals with the history of monarchy, on the fact that it speaks more about her sunset and too little about the assembly moments. In this horizon of the monarchy beginnings can glimpse the main features of the Habsburgs, but also the road which these sovereigns, animated by sincere religious and political ideals, will follow through their history. Also in this research approach I tried to capture the historical context in which the monarchy was formed, the surprise through it was built, the sovereigns difficulties they had organizing the important Central European heritage as a centralized monarchy, but also major religious tensions that will have to manage.

It should be said that this complex history of the Habsburg Monarchy it's not been joining the researchers around common solutions, about deep understanding about the state from of which they have been embodied in history, and one of the purposes of this research is to answer, why historians have to explain themselves in front of such an historical space and of sovereign as the Habsburgs. All these explanations lead to one answer that the Habsburgs were a paradox in history, because they were at the same time kings and emperors, they led practically a monarchy, in witch the authority was not all over theirs, that they were good Catholics, but also open to a moderate approach to faith.

Therefore, during this research we seek to see the history background where the Habsburg monarchy was born, but also to find the answer to the question why the reform has been successful in almost all Central European space? If reform was a absolute novelty or other spiritual and intellectual energies have prepared the success? What were the energies by which the Catholicism was revived? How far went the Habsburgs in their faith? Who was the champion of religious scenes of the sixteenth century? If theological dialogue and moderation theology was an alternative to Reformation and Counter-Reformation? How the Habsburgs defined their own political theology? All these are issues that the research aims to follow and to find an answer, convinced that history never has a final answer. As a novelty that I wish to emphasize is the desire to try to reconstruct the religious profile of the Habsburgs, which was their relationship with the Church, reform solutions they proposed, and which was their theological vision whereby they will restore the unity of the Church, not only between Catholics and Protestants, but also between Catholics and Orthodox. All these I pursued in the last chapter of this study, convinced that can not ever provide a complete and final response and will be a challenge to other historians to approach the religious aspect of the Habsburgs, in a new interpretation offered by the modern concept of political theology.

Chapter I: Introduction

- I.1. Reference material
- I.2. Current status of research and new historiographical trends
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Past decades historiography tried to overcome the confessional difficulties and rigidities which have dominated the approaches of Reformation and Counter-Reformation, in witch the historical interpretations were related to justify their religious beliefs and adherence. Without claiming complete factual reconstruction of a history, the study of Reformation and Counter-Reformation could provide the opportunity for new readings and interpretations of sources, with the focus on local features, as parts of a single major European phenomenon.

From the very beginning it must be said that an investigation of sources that reconstructs the history of Habsburg space can not be made without the certain linguistic resources and intellectual availabilities, for which the historians dedicated to such a

discouraging issue are more few, in terms of skills and intellectual effort, and challenging at the same time from the perspective of historic and human researched area, but also from the the results part.

Approach such a issue requires consultation and browsing a huge archival material, written in over ten languages, spread in the archives funds from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Italy, who were part, partially or entirely, from Habsburg monarchy. From this great diversity of genres and languages of the sources, much of the documentary material is stored disparate in Austrian regional archives, Graz and St. Pölten, less in the central archives of Vienna, Österreichische Staatsarchiv and Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv. An important documents fund for the province of Styria, on the classic case of Counter-Reformation dealt by the Habsburg sovereigns, is found in Graz regional archives. In Styria archive are some documents funds related to the religious history of the sixteenth century, divided by type: monasteries and settlements, the bishops. The biggest fund is related to religious issues in the sixteenth century, grouped in over 200 cases.

The reflections on the historiography concerning the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in their first century of coexistence or the evolution of this religious phenomenon circumscribed to an historical and political context can be considered a challenge, but an intellectual effort often arid. More, the right and critical choice of historiographical major works can be a challenge as tough as that of handling the subject itself, as the diversity of information sources, and especially by the topic vastness under which the subject was approached, as the positivist historiography, as well that of today. Therefore it is necessary, in the first place, for the researcher and the historian to operate as a chronological selection, but qualitative as well of the main historiographical works devoted to the subject, which must critical assume.

The historian Reinhart Koselleck, the exponent of the new German historiography grouped around the Bielefeld's school, said that history is more than what concepts can understand or express, just as the concepts forward more than their strict historical functionality. Starting from this statement, we can say that any historiographical approach must, necessarily, be preceded by a survey of concepts that define the period or phenomenon studied and their semantics evolution, as a minimum of assuming and knowing the subject history.

If we look at the past decades historiography on studying religious phenomena that have dominated the Reformation century we see that has reached the cultivation of a truly "battle of definitions", an artificial thing for historians whose views continues to be divided and can not expect a agreement on the terminology used. Regardless of the terms that historians prefer in their studies they feel the need to explain, reality that points out that the outcome of such an approach is not so sure. Are these alive historiographical debates the confirmation that we face a problem not cleared up yet? Therefore, the analysis of the main historiographical opinions can explain somehow the understanding of this period, provides to historian the arguments to prefer one or other definitions.

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In the context of Europe political geography of the late Middle Ages, no other state is more difficult to define than the Habsburg monarchy. The monarchy image in the

sixteenth century is less one of a pre-modern state, but rather that of a conglomerate state, built on the background of dynastic or territorial arrangements specific to medieval political thought. All these customise further the image of the monarchy related to other European countries, placing the Habsburgs in the position of an interesting historic and political paradox, that of a universal empire without a strong political unity and of some sovereign lacking of unquestionable authority.

Added to this is the fact that the historians judgments and evaluation on the political and historical fate of the monarchy are on one hand tributary to the profound anachronism of its historical sunset, while on the other uncritically glorifies, but unilateral condemns an historical route that no other state has had in European history. These historical facts have also fueled nostalgies, especially between the wars and the post-communist period, in which the Habsburg monarchy was seen as a “true cradle of nations” and like the experiment of a successeful cosmopolite culture that could be reactivated as the ideal model for a political and economic transnational cooperation between the states built on the ruins of the Habsburg Empire in Central Europe.

Therefore, for the historian engaged in the study of this period and the state form that the Habsburgs have embodied in history can be a real challenge choosing the correct term that defines the political form and state led by the Habsburgs.

For most researchers, the terms used don't get a simplifying agreement, which requires, necessarily, a short comparative approach of major labels and names that Habsburgs received throughout their history: Habsburg Empire, Habsburg Monarchy, Danube Monarchy, Austrian and Austro-Hungarian Empire, Austria and the House of Austria. From the beginning it must be said that not all these notions have a precise historical legitimacy, some of them aren't political and historical concepts and are tardive and can be applied only during a certain period of Habsburg's history. In this category falls perhaps the most frequently used term, that of Habsburg Empire, although requires some historical and methodological explanations. Others are circumstantial and define the Habsburg state in relation to political developments on the European scene during the late modernity, as that of Austrian Empire or Danube Monarchy.

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As a phenomenon that marks the birth of the modern spirit in Europe, the protestant Reform is not only the exclusive product of the XVI century in the history of the Church, but it was, naturally, conditioned by a long history, by all the Christian unfulfilled spiritual needs, being prefaced by Humanism, but also by the noisy movements of the Pre reform, and by Hussite Crisis. The Reform has not been a phenomenon that arouse out of the blue, but she appeared on unprepared ground and has benefited from the cultural and spiritual upheavals of Renaissance and Humanism, which have emphasized the need for change within religious and intellectual life. The desire for spiritual renewal, critical spirit had moved the old edifice of the Church, which monopolized for centuries the whole spiritual and knowledge arsenal. The appearance of another society type, secularization of culture,

as a product of the Renaissance and Humanism, were the premises of some spiritual claims, intended to relocate the entire edifice of medieval mental world.

But this horizon of expectation made that the movement initiated by Luther as a spontaneous protest to conquer almost immediately the hearts and consciences of men from all walks. The Reform spread rapidly in all Habsburgs hereditary countries, but and beyond, in the new possessions, finding echo as in the souls of ordinary people, but also among local elites, religious or secular. Not in all hereditary countries of the Habsburg monarchy the Protestantism had the same fate, but, in almost the entire Austrian space, the Reform experienced a remarkable success in the first decades. The Reform entered the Habsburg hereditary crown countries since the first decade, by influences coming from neighboring Germany and Switzerland.

The Reformation meant in the first place a change of theological language, articulated in Scripture, that could be read in vernacular language and that was received with enthusiasm by the people whose spiritual expectations were little rewarded by scholastic theology. This explains the impressive success of Lutheran books and pamphlets, which transformed the Reform into a veritable denomination of the book. In support of this new proclamation of the Reformation came the emergence and development of printing, which ensured the availability of the Bible, which led to its relocation, in the edifice of faith as infallible authority in matters of theology and life.

Although they are not quite as visible in the geography of the Habsburg monarchy in the sixteenth century the border provinces of Styria (Steiermark), Carinthia (Kärnten) and Carniola (Krain, Krajina) are not absent from the map of areas where the Reform has entered since its first dawn. Located in a border area, at the junction of German, Italian and Croatian world, these provinces carried the mark of open societies where cultural exchanges have influenced her cultural and political profile. One of the particularities of these border provinces was also the vulnerability to military threats, especially Ottoman, which increased the feeling of uncertainty, but also their strategic importance for the monarchy. When the Ottoman threat was looming increasingly at the borders of Habsburg monarchy, these border provinces were the first affected by the Turkish raids.

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As one of the oldest European monarchies, Hungary had a rich history before entering in the political orbit of Habsburg monarchy. The Apostolic Kingdom of St. Stephen had a remarkable political development, consolidating at the end of the fifteenth century as a Renaissance monarchy, with a special cultural and economic dimension, comparable to that of England and France. In the Middle Ages, Hungarian kingdom was structured as an outstanding regional power, assuming the role to coagulate around their strength core several countries and medieval nations from Central and Eastern Europe. All these brilliant historical realities are in stark contrast with the situation of XVI century, when postcorvinian Hungary lived quickly its sunset, moving towards a tragic outcome.

English historian Robert Evans defined the established relations, from the sixteenth century, between the political elite in Hungary and the Habsburg dynasty, by the highly suggestive expression “limited rejection”. These complicated relationships have oscillated over the next centuries between claimed independence from the medieval privileges old

shelter and the concessions imposed by the new political power, decisively influencing political and religious attitude of the Habsburgs in the last space of the St. Stephen crown.

The collapse of medieval Hungary in 1526 led to the outbreak of an osmano-Habsburg rivalry for the territories legacy of former Apostolic kingdom. For several years, there was a political competition between Ferdinand of Habsburg and John Zapolya for inherit the throne of Hungary. Transylvania was not excluded from this political rivalry and it became from this moment a bone of contention almost permanent in the disputes between the Habsburgs and Ottomans.

In the years following the final collapse of Buda (1541), Transylvania crown was disputed, by turn, by the successor of John Zápolya, John Sigismund protected by his mother, queen Isabella, daughter of Polish king Sigismund I August and by the ambitious monarch Ferdinand of Habsburg, became, from 1556 the heir of the crown of Charles V.

Certainly, the most important thing that the XVI century Hungary brought was its rich humanistic heritage, whose apogee was reached during the reign of King Mathia Corvin(1458-1490), fact noticed by many contemporary. This fact is relevant not only for the correct understanding of the spiritual and intellectual ambience that dominates the world of the old apostolic kingdom, on the eve of the Reformation, but rather for revealing the deep status quo where the old Catholic faith was and whose deeply unhappy fate was bound to the Hungarian humanism.

Though located at the border of Protestant world, Hungary was close to the countries in which the Reform appeared, as through its political ties developed in time, but especially by the spiritual and cultural ones, mainly activated during European humanism. The Reform has heavily penetrated in the Central Eastern Europe area and made many countries of this political and geographical area to become, towards the end of XVI century, preponderantly Protestant. This quick attachment to the Reformation ideas can be explained on one hand, through the world's expectations in front of an obvious religious renaissance, while on the other, through the favorable religious and political circumstances, based especially on the Ottoman danger. Are added to these that Hungary carried, in the sixteenth century, mark of a divided and decentralized society, which made the Protestant-style ideas to flow smoothly, but also for the dissidents to find in their new religious ideas a safe refuge.

The presence of Queen Mary, sister of King Ferdinand I and the wife of deceased King Ladislaus of Hungary, in an often arid Reform landscape announces that beyond the solutions of some or others of the main actors of the religious scene, irene spirit, the humanist moderation and opened up to dialogue will pave the way for a new religious horizon. So Mary heralds Maximilian II and opens the perspectives onVienna at the end of century, that begins to be dominated by an authentic irene spirit.

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V.1.3. Ferdinand I's religious policy, between the theology of moderation and freedom of belief

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V. 2. Jesuits and Catholic revival in Bohemia

V. 3. The casual balance of the Sixteenth Century

The positioning of Bohemia at the boundaries of the Holy Roman German Empire and Polish and Hungarian kingdoms represented an historical premise that influenced

decisively its political and religious development, over the centuries. This neighborhood has made the kingdom of Bohemia exposed to pressures and influences of all kinds coming from the German world, oscillating between a fragile independence which tried hard to preserve it in relation to the Holy Empire, as an hereditary monarchy, and between a vassalage that Czech sovereigns have negotiated with German kings in time. Beyond these neighborhoods, Bohemia was not a border region, but it was fully integrated into the European world.

With an highly complex historic and religious past, at which was added the Hussite Crisis, which imposed a religious dualism, the territory of Bohemia Kingdom was defined in the sixteen and seventeen century as a veritable bastion of Protestantism and the center of the Slavic inspiration Lutheranism. The Reformation in Bohemia is not just a variation of the main Protestant inspiration current, but was an important stage in the religious and social evolution of the country, built on the principles of religious plurality.

In Bohemia, the Protestantism, both the Lutheran as well as Anabaptism, entered from the earliest Reformation dawn, where they developed a large missionary action and gained a considerable number of followers. The Lutheran influences have split the Utraquist Church, favouring in the same time the germanization of the elites, especially in Moravia and Silesia. The remarkable success of Luther's ideas in the souls and consciences of the Czechs clerics and believers is explained by the fact that, many of the German reformer's ideas were related to those of Jan Hus, condemned by the Council of Konstanz (1416) and which were familiar to Bohemia from a long time.

The Unity Church of Brethren has become the Reformation's first free Church, abandoning the principle of parochial organizing and adopting a model more related to the Anabaptism of the congregations free from followers. This explains in a certain measure the fears that local authorities and the Habsburg sovereign had towards this Church, who take it alike the Anabaptist dissidences and which they never have recognized.

The policy pursued by the Habsburgs to conquer Bohemian religious scene was the policy of small steps and small victories. First, the emperor has extended his control over the Utraquist Church, directly appointing the Consistory. In this context, the neo-utraquists fought to obtain from the Habsburg sovereign the recognition of their exclusive rights to organize themselves, using more tricks.

Counter-Reformation aimed the creation of a new academic atmosphere in the spirit of the Tridentine reform, in which will be trained the new Catholic intellectual elite.

Another remarkable event, for the institutional revival of the the Catholic Church was the restoration of Prague Archdiocese(1572) and appointing a reform-minded bishop in the person of Antonín Brus z Mohelnice and the apostolic nunciature in 1581, which will increase even more the dynamic of the Catholic camp. In Moravia the bishop of Olomouc encouraged the settlement of the Society of Jesus since 1566. The colleges and universities implantation led to the formation of Catholic intellectual elite in the spirit proposed by the Council of Trident. The University of Olomouc became, since 1578, the pontifical seminary headquarters *Colegium Nordicum*, of the missionaries training for Scandinavia, Prussia and the Baltic countries, but also for the Orthodox Christianity from Ukraine and Russia.

Rudolf II has published on 9 July 1609 a chart of rights and privileges, *Majestát* (Letter of Majesty, *Majestätsbrief*), which guarantee religious freedom for the Catholics as well as for the three Protestant states (nobles, knights and city inhabitants). It prohibited to any senior to impose their personal confession to his vassals, practically canceling the principle of Augsburg Peace from 1555. It was also established by this document that the following confessional disputes will be solved through negotiations. The Letter of Majesty, no matter how short was the duration of its implementation, has found a special place in the

collective imaginary of the Czech nation, because it's a milestone in the history of religious tolerance in Europe.

The failure of moderate Counter-Reformation from the sixteenth century opened the radical solution era which attempted to resolve religious issues, and this was the war. The negotiations table, compromises, Interims, all had become outdated notions, which will not bring the settlement of religious disputes. The idea of temporary solutions will be abandoned entirely in favor of some realities settled by force of arms. After the Thirty Years War and by signing the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 will confirm the entire European confessional configuration, which we have today.

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The period between 1518-1525 marked a living spread of the Lutheranism across Central and Northern Europe, and University of Wittenberg, where all Luther's colleagues have accepted his theological position became the main center of irradiation of the the new evangelical doctrine. "The Lutheran revelation" answered perfectly to the spiritual mood that was in Germany, giving an expression to the patriotism but also to the German world aversion towards Latin Italian civilization.

The conflict's end between Protestants and Catholics came in 1555 when, at Diet of Augsburg, called on 25 September, has proposed a religious armistice formula, through the Catholicism and Lutheranism could live together. Peace came after the agreement between Ferdinand I and the states, as a solution to the religious crisis that it deepened, but also as an update to the empire's eternal peace from 1495 (Ewiger Landfrieden), proclaimed by Maximilian I of Habsburg.

The Treaty of 1555 was accompanied by a secret agreement, negotiated between Ferdinand I and the states, known as *Declaratio Ferdinandeae*, which guaranteed to lutheran sovereigns and cities the right to continue the Reform, except the states placed under the authority of the Episcopal Church, which will remain Catholic. This amendment introduced with the approval of Protestant states, ensured the survival of the Catholic communities, by the fact that the properties belonging to the Catholic Church (*reservatum ecclesiasticum*) had their integrity guaranteed, leaving opened the possibility of reconversion to the old faith.

A cynic might say that the Peace of Augsburg only delayed the violent solving of the confessional conflict, until the next century and, so, perpetuated German fragmentation, despite the fact that the surrounding powers have that asserted ever more as young and strong monarchies. Then, an idealist might say that at Augsburg had foreshadowed a horizon in which the religious and civil medieval authority will leave the site in politics for an rational secularism, that will lead to a broader tolerance of people's disparate beliefs. And finally, a realist might say that Augsburg moment was a short-term armistice, useful, in the hard

conflict between two exhausted religious sides, which could be achieved at the intersection between religious imagination and tough daily religious realities.

No one can deny that the presence of this constitutional principle has a great impact on the new religious Europe and it led to the development of some unique tolerance forms across the Europe of religious wars, as it was for Netherlands and Transylvania.

The coexistence of a confessional plurality, in which every religion lived protected by religious and legal privileges, carefully watching the balance of territorial status quo's and numerical domination, was one of the main features of the political constitution of the Holy Empire. Despite all interconfessional tensions, tending to increase, the religious situation of the Empire led to the preservation of a relative balance and peace, without major political events. In the coexistence between Catholics and Protestants became an everyday experience, the efforts and attempts of each party to seek advantages to other's detriment.

In the past half century it abounds with small peace concluded in different parts of the Habsburg Monarchy, attempting to calm the social and religious atmosphere, but also to delay even more the confrontation between the two religious blocs, becoming more active and powerful. If the first Habsburg rulers have shown enough sympathy to the ideals for moderate reform, that they saw applied in the Church, with the coming of the new generation of leaders, mostly educated by the Jesuits, the entire vision will change, leading to an outcome. For all that, the balance of sixteenth century will not be final, but still a compromise, except some Habsburg provinces, where things were cut by force, as in Styria case.

But the history of this half century is one with ups and downs, in which the small Protestant victories will be followed by Catholic replies, but in which both Austrian countries of the Habsburg Monarchy and in Hungary things have changed.

The small revival in the time of the Catholic Archbishop Miklós Oláh brought the the Jesuits in Hungary who have managed to establish several schools, such as in Trnava (Nagyszombat), which operated between 1561 and 1567, in Turóc (1586) and, by the century's end in Vagsellye. Even though at that time Transylvania wasn't incorporated into the Habsburg monarchy, is worth mentioning, that same Jesuits that have come in Hungary, arrived in Transylvania, where, in 1571, founded the Jesuit college from Cluj, college at which learned the future Cardinal Péter Pázmány.

The beginning of the seventeenth century marked a revival of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, which will state more powerful to the Hungarian religious scene, from the second half century. This period wasn't devoid by trials of conciliation, but also by some peace negotiations, that would relocate the relations between confessions.

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VII.1. Habsburgs and the Church

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VII.4. Habsburgs and *Pietas austriaca*

Even from the so far exposure of the paper work can be drawn what was the vision of these rulers of the Church, and how they translated in political terms their religious ideas, is important to see, even drafted, which were the main lines that defined the broad concept of Habsburgs political theology. Although this new concept, that defines how the theological discourse produce social and political effects, may seem inappropriate being

attached to the Habsburgs, yet its use is legitimized by the fact that their faith and religious beliefs had produced, in the studied epoch, various political effects. Elements related not only to the Habsburgs faith and that are the investigation subject through the concept of political theology are the relation with the Church, the Reform, communion under both species and the Conciliarism. All their beliefs, if it remained in the private sphere of faith were just some theology rules, but for the fact that were transposed in actions, have become elements that define a clear political theology. Hence the difficulty, since where is theology and where politics begins, but for present time the two spheres of the human universe are conditioning and intermissing each other.

In this world it's hard to talk about originality at least regarding the political theology particular to an historical period of transition from medieval to modern world. For example in order to understand the kind of sovereign and the nature of political power that the Habsburgs have assumed, requires an analysis of key features that define the christian monarch and the Empire in early modern period. For the Habsburgs, according to the historical circumstances, but also the virtues and family traditions that they have assumed, we can speak of political theology, from which the sovereigns have built their own image and historical mythology. Without being entirely original, the Habsburgs have borrowed many cultural and political models that define the Christian monarch, and start since the early Church era.

In relation with the Church, The Habsburgs pursued on one hand to moderate the Church's actions and its political claims restricting their interference in leading, well as financial privileges. Not because the lack of respect, but because their great state-building project had in Church a major obstacle, at least in the sixteenth century. On the other hand, they were firmly committed to defend the Catholic Church before the destructive effects of Lutheranism, aware of the importance that this institution has for their image of faith defenders. Faced with the call to defend the unity and orthodoxy of faith that the Habsburgs declared it strongly, but especially as reply to the religious challenges, Sovereign's attitudes varied from firmness and sustained action against heretics, to compromise, depending on the moment historical circumstances.

If in the political attitude, the state reason was always first, regarding the theological beliefs, the Habsburgs were not always situated on the sharp line of Church dogmas, and the influences they received from many people, as Lutheran provenance, as well as humanist provenance, made them to be moderate in their theology. Towards the Church, the Habsburgs had another responsibility namely the reform, that they insistently demanded and for which they made many compromises with the Protestants, assuming the arbitrator role between the two parties involved in the religious conflict. But the big challenge for them was the transposition into reality of Habsburg's great reform dream which was the Council. Their intention was sincere, was the Church's response an appropriate one?

If finally the Trident moment proved a success for the Church and a disappointment for the Habsburgs, however the road to council was a challenge as big as the Council itself. The searches, the pressures, the Habsburg's sovereign irritations which accompanied the council's preceding moments have intensified the dissensions between the Pope and the Emperor.

Ferdinand prepared for the Council agenda a second reformative memorandum completed in 1563. This second Libellus, contained in addition to the two main points discussed a year ago, the communion and the celibacy and other difficult issues, how were the changing of fastening sistem, the introduction of vernacular language in Church's worship, as well as maintaining the polyphonic vocal music in the Church. Ferdinand's

small victory was that in April 1564, Pope Pius IV gave him the dispensa for the introduction of the communion under both species in Habsburg monarchy.

Even if many of Ferdinand's proposals have not been taken into consideration, though some reforms approved by Trident Council which have improved the moral and intellectual image of the Church, due to sovereign's determination and his lifelong beliefs of which has not abdicated in any case. Even if there were voices between the Council's participants, who were against the communion under both species, though all the present hierarchs praised the determination and strong convictions of Ferdinand I, but also the generous support that has given to Jesuits mission in Austria.

The Counter-Reformation has brought a different approach to the religious and political message which the Habsburgs have placed into a true baroque decor, building their own pantheon and religious piety. Not only ideological, but also for reasons related to Counter-Reformation policy, the Habsburgs managed through this *pietas austriaca* to become models of piety and faith. That's why in all this religious context, the Habsburg ruler was the first kneeling in an attitude of Eucharist veneration, the first that opened a liturgical procession in the city and the first offering himself as a model of humility and christian service. The stake was doubled, besides the religious one, which proposed an articulated faith after tridentine model, was the political one, because very ters expressed, the Habsburgs Catholicism meant loyalty. Agreed that there were other Catholic countries in Europe, but in none of them the religious piety was so a used tool in political legitimacy, in terms of a truly imperial ideology, as it was in Austria and Spain.

Actually, the sixteenth century only prepared the elements that will contribute in the next century to the full affirmation of *Pietas Austriaca*, whose main architect was the emperor Ferdinand II.

The Eucharist and its dedicated feast are Church's health signs and the victory mark of the reforming Habsburgs Catholicism before the Protestantism. One may find that, the Eucharistic worship and the sacrament itself played a major role in Habsburgs thinking, from the nature of the reforms they have proposed to the Pope and to Trent Council, who had an obvious Eucharistic dimension. Around the Eucharist was built the entire moderate theology of the Habsburgs, about the extending of the communion right from the chalice for laity to, like a *Pietas Austriaca* extension on the Protestants which they hoped to regain for Catholicism.

If the Eucharist was the Habsburgs victory weapon and the key of their piety, she was also the solution to solve the religious schism, this underlines again a deep attachment of these sovereign, to the fate of the Church with which were identified, at least the two first centuries of Reformation.

CONCLUSIONS

The background of this century's history was prepared by Humanism and Renaissance, that created the intellectual environment favorable to new ideas, including in religious sphere, but they built also a veritable paneuropean dialogue platform, where following ideas of the Reform have got abroad without any barrier, between the intellectual elites, but also to the ordinary people. On this line, may seem paradoxical, but the Humanism marked the first drama of Catholic Christianity, that it has created not only one type of culture, that show abroad their laic roots, but also institutional weakened the Church, leaving it discovered in front of Reformation theological argument.

Looking retrospectively, to the religious history of the sixteenth century in the Habsburg monarchy, we can say that it was the century of missed opportunities and

middle solutions, but not that of final resolution. Neither political, but not religious either the sixteenth century did not bring final resolution of the situation, the interims or temporary agreements are preferred. In managing the delicate religious issues, the Habsburgs preferred to act conjunctural, articulating their actions depending on political or social circumstances, that don't favored them, at least in the first half-century.

The Counter-Reformation was differentiated from territory to territory depending on the freedom of action that the sovereign had, as well as community had. Thus the Habsburgs sovereigns had to assume with ability the role of arbitrator in the confessional disputes to save the social peace, assuming the main pawn role in the fight against the Protestantism.

Even if the Habsburgs were firmly committed to restrict the territorial and political effects of the Reformation they didn't from an inquisitorial height, but with a carefulness related more to diplomacy than to theology, finding that certain concessions in dogma can reunite the Church, that they hoped so much. The Habsburg ruler did not dare to offend the Protestant, imposing the principles of Augsburg peace in his territories, hoping that a dialogue and a set of concessions can solve the problem better. Therefore, may seem a bit ventured, but we can say, as a conclusion regarding the theological attitude of the Habsburgs against Lutherans, that it's not a very Catholic one, but clearly remains dependent to theology and to Calixtine liturgical practice, who made a veritable career in epoch. Not accidentally the negotiations from Prague in 1526 with the moderate Ultraquists, Interim of Augsburg in 1552, but also the repeated requests made by Ferdinand to the Pope see in believers communion under both species the minimal theological concession that may build an unity dialogue. The solution of such compromise was to adopt a true "via media", between Rome and the Protestant Reformation that would have led to a kind of Central European Anglicanism.

Since nobody was willing to make concessions, the war proved once again that is not a solution, but contributory to the drawing the Europe's religious boundaries, in the lines are today. The religious clashes of the seventeenth century had "left the religious map of Europe cast in bronze", after the expression of historian Pierre Chaunu. From that moment, the confessions pulled back inside, preoccupying to establish their own doctrines and positions in the new religious European constellation, attempting, but unable to forget the confrontation from which no one came out victorious.

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