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## DOCTORAL THESIS

(Summary)

"Easterners and Westerners at the Council of Konstanz (1414-1418)"

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Keywords: Council of Konstanz, Papal Schism, Sigismund of Luxembourg, Manuel the II Palaiologos, Causa Unionis, Causa Fidei, Haec Sancta, Martin V, Jan Huss, Late Middle Ages, Eastern Church, Western Church.

The Council of Konstanz (1414-1418) was one of the most important councils in the history of the Catholic Church, having a significant impact on its structure and direction during the Late Middle Ages. By resolving the Western Schism and electing a single pope, the Western church was able to bring a certain level of stability and unity to the Church. However, the deep problems of reform were not completely resolved, leaving the ground prepared for the religious unrest that was to follow.

The title of the doctoral thesis, "Easterners and Westerners at the Council of Konstanz (1414-1418)", refers to the participation and interaction of representatives of the Eastern and Western churches in the Council of Konstanz, held between 1414 and 1418. The title illustrates not only the physical presence of representatives of the two branches of Christianity, but also the complexity of the interactions and the long-term impact of these events on European religious history.

In the first chapter of the thesis, the introductory one, the relevance of the research of the Council of Konstanz (1414-1418) in the history of the Catholic Church and medieval Europe, is presented from various perspectives: a. Overcoming the Great Papal Schism (1378-1417); b. Strengthening the authority of the council; c. The Reformation of the Church; d. Solving political crises; e. Contribution to the evolution of the concept - the nation state; g. Discussions on the union between the Western Church and the Eastern Church.

The purpose of this doctoral thesis is to highlight the Council of Konstanz from the perspective of general historiography, as well as to enrich the Romanian historiography with updated information about this religious, but also geopolitical meeting of the late Middle Ages. At the same time, it aims to elucidate the question of Romanian researchers, which is whether or not the union between the Eastern and Western Churches was obtained at the Council of Konstanz (1414-1418).

In this introductory chapter, the methodological aspects of the thesis were also presented. As for the writing of the doctoral thesis, the working methodology was focused on the analysis of

sources, literature and studies. At the same time, an analysis of the evolution of the Council of Konstanz in sources, in foreign and Romanian historiography is presented.

Chapter II, entitled „*The historical context of the Council of Konstanz. The outbreak of the Papal Schism*”, focuses on the events leading up to the meeting of the Council of Konstanz. This analysis revolves around the Council of Konstanz as a consequence of events that began with the year 1377, when Pope Gregory XI (1329-1378) moved the papal residence from Avignon to Rome, at the insistence of Catherine of Siena (1347-1380). In Rome, Pope Gregory IX and the papal curia clashed with the alliance of the Italian population, an alliance that reached its peak immediately after the pope's death. The analysis also describes the way in which, after the death of Pope Gregory XI, two concurrent popes existed within the Western Church, Pope Urban VI – supported by the Italian cardinals and Pope Clement VII – supported by the French cardinals. Therefore, one can notice that two obediences were formed and they continued to elect new popes, leading to the consolidation of the Western schism.

In this chapter are also presented the negotiations between the theologians of the time who tried to find a solution for the elimination of the papal schism as quickly as possible. These discussions led to the meeting of the Council of Pisa (1409), where Pope Gregory XII and Pope Benedict XIII were deposed from the papal seat. The Council Fathers began preparations for a new election, which happened eleven days later. The Archbishop of Milan, Petros Philargi, was elected pope, taking the title of Pope Alexander V (1339-1410). It is worth mentioning that popes Gregory XII and Benedict XIII did not comply with the provisions of the council and did not renounce the statute, leading to the birth of a new obedience. After the death of Alexander V, Pope John XXIII was elected, who was the promoter of a council to eliminate the papal schism. Next, the two conferences of Como and Lodi are analyzed, in which certain details regarding the future council were established. The Como Conference was held on the 13 of October 1413, and represented a meeting between the emissaries of Pope John XXIII, the emissary of the Greeks – Manuel Crysoloras (1350-1415) and King Sigismund of Luxembourg (1368-1437). The Conference of Lodi, which took place in December 1413, had the diplomatic role and the task of establishing the organization of the future Council of Konstanz. The meeting was possible due to the negotiations between Cardinals Zabarella and Challant with Sigismund of Luxembourg.

The third chapter addresses the three central themes of the Council of Konstanz (1414-1418): "*Causa unionis*" (Unification of the Church), "*Causa fidei*" (Faith) and "*Causa*

*reformationis*" (Church Reformation). One of the main objectives of the council was to put an end to the Western Schism (1378–1417), a period marked by the simultaneous existence of several rival popes, each supported by different factions. This schism caused great confusion and divided Western Christendom. With the help of the decisions of the council, the three rival popes of the time were deposed: Pope John XXIII (1410-1415), Pope Benedict XIII (1394-1417) and Pope Gregory XII (1406-1415). Finally, in 1417, a new pope, Martin V (1417-1431), was elected, thus restoring the unity of the papacy. The council considered and judged issues related to heresies, the most notable being the sentencing and burning at the stake of Jan Hus and Jerome of Prague in 1415, because of their reformist views, considered heretical by the ecclesiastical authorities.

This section also included the issue of John Wycliffe, who was also tried and convicted as a heretic. As a result of the research, a subchapter was created in which some aspects of the church reform and the decisions taken by the participants of the council are analyzed. By the authority of the council, paths of ecclesiastical reform were proposed, both in terms of clergy and ecclesiastical practices. Although several reforms were implemented, many of them were considered insufficient and did not fully address the problems within the Western church of the Late Middle Ages, which ultimately contributed to the outbreak of the protestant reformation in the following century.

Chapter IV is entitled "*Current Discussions on the Receiving of the Council of Konstanz*". In this chapter, the understanding of the decisions of the council in specialized historiography is analyzed and compared. According to some theologians, the Konstanz Decrees should be analyzed from the perspective of the significance of medieval theological concepts and the development of medieval ecclesiology. At the same time, in the research of the Council of Konstanz, in the course of time, the question about the attitude of the newly elected pope, Pope Martin V, regarding the evolution of the conciliar theory, immediately after his election, was also raised. The question that many researchers asked themselves was whether he continued to support this movement or became a perfect fighter against conciliar theory. Further reference is made to the confirmation or invalidation of the decrees "Haec Sancta" and "Frequens" by the newly elected pope. At the end of this chapter, a debate is proposed on the decree "Haec Sancta", respectively whether or not it can be considered the truth of faith. It is worth mentioning that the opinions of researchers are divided, and this topic remains in a continuous debate. The decree "Haec Sancta" has encountered problems of receiving straight from its presentation at the Council of Konstanz. Contemporary

theologians have analyzed these issues and asked themselves numerous questions about its dogmatic authenticity.

Chapter V is outlined around the question whether or not the union between the Eastern Church and the Western Church was obtained. The chapter deals with the preliminary discussions between the Westerners and the Byzantines regarding the participation of the Easterners in the Council of Konstanz (1414-1418). The contribution of King Sigismund of Luxembourg is also mentioned here. For example, in 1411, Sigismund of Luxembourg initiated a permanent correspondence with the Byzantine emperor, emphasizing the importance of uniting the two churches to stop the Turks from advancing, but also in the context of the liberation of the Holy Land.

Next, details about the two Byzantine delegations, as well as the Polish-Lithuanian delegations are presented in this chapter. The role and purpose of these delegations within the council is also analyzed. As the research shows, the Byzantine delegations tried to discuss a possible union between the Eastern Church and the Western Church, and the Polish-Lithuanian delegations marched for the conversion of the Ruthenians of the Byzantine Rite to the Western Church. The first Byzantine delegation was coordinated by the renowned scholar Manuel Chrysoloras, who died at the beginning of the council. The second Byzantine delegation consisted of Nikolaus Eudaimonioannes, who was very close to the imperial family. In his company were his son Andronikos and Johannes Baldynteros, both laymen. The first Polish delegate to deal with the Ruthenian question was Andrei Laskaris. He claimed that although the people of the Byzantine rite settled cruelly and stubbornly in the Schism, through their ritual, ceremony and tradition they did not harm the Western church in any way. They were against Rome because of their priests who had hardened them, and their duty now is to pray for their souls and to make an effort for the realization of the union. At the end of the chapter, the delegation led by the Metropolitan of Kiev, Grigorie Țamblac, who was commissioned by the Polish king Władysław II Jagello and Vitold of Lithuania to discuss the question of the Ruthenians, is analyzed.

Chapter VI proposes a further research on the Council of Konstanz. From the analysis of the research material we can conclude that the following topics require an in-depth study: 1. The correspondence between Sigismund and Manuel II Palaiologos - analyzing the content and context of the letters exchanged between the two leaders, in order to better understand the political and diplomatic relations of the time; 2. "The Chronicle of Richental"—a detailed examination of this

chronicle, with an emphasis on how the events of the council are presented and interpreted, as well as its impact on the historical perception of events; 3. The Orthodox Response to the Ecclesiology of the Council of Constance; 4. The evolution of the conciliarist movement – analyzing how conciliarist ideas evolved and influenced the Church and European politics in the post-conciliar period; 5. Digital literature – to access, analyze and interpret historical sources related to the Council of Konstanz, as well as to develop new methodologies for historical research.

In the last part of the doctoral thesis there are the conclusions, through which this study proves that it has achieved its goal and managed to justify its need in the Romanian theological research space. The sermon entitled "A Ruthenian bishop", in the annexes, is a novel document that has not been published in Romania. In the doctoral thesis there is an analysis of this discourse, but in the future a full translation is needed. The bibliographic apparatus of the doctoral thesis is based on foreign literature, because this council has been researched less in the Romanian space.

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