

# LATE ANCIENT ADORNMENTS ON THE TERRITORY OF ROMANIA – A MEANS OF RELIGIOUS PROPAGANDA AT THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIANITY

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**Abstract:** Though unjustly considered minor, miniature arts served political propaganda, bringing the Roman artistic concepts to the provinces of the Empire. In the late ancient period, the phenomenon of religious propaganda appeared, this propaganda was done by using these objects of reduced dimensions, the new ideology of Christianity in formation. Among these, adornments are one of the most ornamental pieces which record the triumphant path of the new religion, these luxury items are suitable means of promoting the new forms and the new symbolics.

**Keywords:** *cloisonné, cabochon, au repoussé, torques, lunulae, saltaleone, chrismon*

Adornments are items which are a means of propaganda, even political one (they are luxury objects), but they are used especially for religious purposes, Christianity found in jewelry an appropriate vehicle for the new symbolics. Their reduced dimensions (just like gliptics) favours their spreading and penetration in the most remote areas. Ancient garments found on the territory of Romania reflect the transformations suffered in the technique of their execution, from the side effects obtained by alternating the mat areas with the bright ones of the gold leaf – from the 1st century A.D. –, to the *repoussage* combined with coloured stones – specific to the next centuries. In general, the adornments found in our country follow the features of the Roman jewels of the time, together with Hellenistic elements having an oriental influence (the spindles, the acanthus leaves).

Regarding the technique of metal working (either precious or not), the techniques used for creating adornments can also be found in toreutics. Old methods, such as hammering, pressing, polishing, fount, torsion, are completed in the Roman age by grain, tooling or specific techniques of the wandering populations (*cloisonné, cabochon*).

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Worn both by women and men, **rings** are the most numerous jewels that have been preserved on the territory of our country since ancient times. There were two types: digital (worn on the finger) and curl or temple rings (worn in the hair). The earliest digital rings that reached our times are those from the Dacian times: generally speaking, silver chain joints with one end put on the other, or bronze rings – as it is that from the necropolis from Cașolț (the County of Sibiu), with a sketched horse<sup>1</sup>.

In the Roman epoch, both in Dacia and in Scythia Minor, there were rings made of different materials, with a multitude of forms and decorations, those from Ulpia Traiana or those from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D., found in the Pontic fortress (Noviodunum – Isaccea, the County of Tulcea, Troesmis – Iglița, the County of Tulcea, Beroe – Piatra Frecăței, the County of Tulcea) (Fig.1); or those from the late thesaurus, from the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., from Histria – Istria, the County of Constanța – where, except for the earrings and the crosses, two rings of different forms and equal sizes were preserved (3,4cm height, 2,2cm diameter), but with different ornaments. One of them is artistically created: it has an exterior granulated part, decorated with the motif of the wheat ear in the middle part. Both rings have a piece of coloured glass in the centre, caught around a circle of pellets<sup>2</sup>. In the late ancient period, the rings from the barbarian hoards are added: the ring of the German chief Omharus (the treasury from Apahida I – the County of Cluj), with a dotted graved inscription, preceded by a cross; rings with embedded diamond- and cruciform-shaped gemstones, become mere ornaments, without engraving depth, so that they no longer are seal rings (from the culture of Sântana de Mureș-Cerneahov – Apahida: cruciform-shaped golden rings, with granates in *cloisonné*, in a polichrome geometric style). From the treasury of Someșeni (the County of Cluj), from a grave of a Christian German princess (from the middle or the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.<sup>3</sup>), there are three rings with diamond-cruciform batten<sup>4</sup>; from the treasury of Șimleu Silvaniei (the County of Sălaj) (around 400 A.D.), a protome zoomorphic ring was found and preserved. The hair rings have been used ever since the Superior Neolithic, from the Age of Bronze and from the beginning of the first period of the Iron Age: the objects made of gold from the treasuries from Ostrovu Mare, Curtea de Argeș, Buzău, Biia (the County of Alba) or the oval twisted

<sup>1</sup> Mihail Macrea, *Viața în Dacia Romană*, București, Ed. Academiei Române, 2007, p. 222.

<sup>2</sup> Em. Popescu, *Cap. VII. Cultura (Partea a IV-a. Dobrogea în secolele IV-VI)*, in Dumitru Protase, Alexandru Suceveanu (coord.), *Istoria românilor*, vol. II, *Daco-romani, romanici, alogeni*, București, Academia Română, Ed. Enciclopedică, 2010, p. 655

<sup>3</sup> Mihai Bărbulescu, *I. De la începuturile civilizației la sinteza românească*, in Mihai Bărbulescu, Dennis Deletant, Keith Hitchins, Șerban Papacostea, Pompiliu Teodor, *Istoria României*, București, Ed. Corint, 2007, p. 92.

<sup>4</sup> H. D și R. F. in Radu Florescu, Hadrian Daicoviciu, Lucian Roșu (coord.), *Dicționar enciclopedic de artă veche a României*, București, Ed. Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1980, p.316, s.v. *Someșeni*.

gold rings for hair from Brăduț (the County of Covasna); there are not so many rings from the time of the Dacians (three hair rings from the treasury of Rociu, the County of Argeș<sup>5</sup>), these were replaced by earrings in the Roman and late-ancient periods<sup>6</sup>.



Fig.1: Rings, 2nd-3rd centuries A.D., Noviodunum, Troesmis, Beroe (museum of Aegyssus)

From the paleochristian period – we mention here the bronze cruciform rings, found in the stream of Caraș and, respectively, in the Turkish Sacoșu (near Timișoara)<sup>7</sup>. We do not have reliable evidence referring to the Christian character of the rings with the inscription "Use it being happy" (Resculum, Bologa, the County of Cluj, Potaissa – Turda, the County of Cluj, Dierna Orșova, the County of Mehedinți, Sucidava – Celei, the County of Olt)<sup>8</sup>. Two types of seal rings – the one made of silver of Capidava – the County of Constanța, the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and the gold one from Tomis – Constanța – have two Greek carved inscriptions; it is interesting the fact that the monograms are not written from right to left (they were probably worn as a distinctive sign by an official person): Ioannes, a Semitic Christian

<sup>5</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 293, s.v. Rociu.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 195, s.v. *inel*.

<sup>7</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *Istoria Bisericii Ortodoxe Române*, vol. I, Iași, Ed. Trinitas, 2004, p. 90.

<sup>8</sup> Nelu Zugravu, *Geneza creștinismului popular al românilor*, București, Ministerul Educației, Institutul Român de Tracologie, Bibliotheca thracologică, XVIII, 1997, p. 179.

name frequently met in the inscriptions from the 4<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. in Scythia Minor (the monograms and this name have analogies in the commercial seals from the 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> centuries from Tomis, Sucidava, and also from Corint); respectively, AN(A)ST(A)SIE or A(U)XENTI(U)S (in the second ring). The importance of these pieces consists in the fact that they are the only ones having a monogram<sup>9</sup>.

Embellishing the ears of the ladies (but also the hair by using curl rings), **earrings** are another type of adornment largely spread in our country. Since the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age, curl rings were found in the two treasuries from Șmig (the County of Sibiu), Ostrovu Mare (the County of Mehedinți), Curtea de Argeș. Curl rings had the same form with the Dacian rings (individualized earrings were not found, but silver chain links which were used as earrings, having the dimension of a ring or of a bracelet). Before the Roman conquest, in the Pontic area, the Hellenistic earrings resembled chain links with an ornament placed in the opposite side where they were attached, or links of conic section, having a flimsy point which entered the hole of the ear, the thicker point ended in an artistic element, for example, the earrings found in Tomis, Callatis – Mangalia, the County of Constanța, or the oval ones from Tomis, dating from the 1st century A.D., probably having a gold leaf with the representation of Gorgon with Pegasus *au repoussé*<sup>10</sup>.

From the Roman period, what is specific to the provinces of Dacia and Scythia Minor (the 2<sup>nd</sup> – the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D.) are the chain links with ornaments: a gem stone or a metal element (Romula – Reșca, the County of Olt, Tomis, Callatis, Noviodunum, Troesmis, Beroe, Fig. 2), or pendant earrings, with a circular buckler (as those from Tomis, autochthonous products made from a gold leaf and ornamented with a palmette) (there are similarities with the earrings from Thracia)<sup>11</sup>; pearl rings were also found (like the one from Tomis). The earrings from Capidava, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., without a pendant, have the form of a disc decorated with a vegetal motif, having a green cylindrical bead in the middle, attached with a gold thread; there are similarities with a pair of earrings found in a tomb from Sexaginta Prista (Ruse, Bulgaria), the difference is that they have a pendant<sup>12</sup>. A unique piece of work is a pair of Roman earrings from the collection Orghidan which respects the Hellenistic model of the chain link thickened at one end, in this case having the form of a cornucopia decorated with filigree and druse (grapes, pomegranates, flowers) and made from gold leaf (the vine); from the cornucopia, a winged Eros springs – having his wings and the

<sup>9</sup> Zaharia Covacef, *Inele sigilare*, in *Pontica*, XXXV-XXXVI, Constanța, 2002-2003, p. 323-327.

<sup>10</sup> Radu Florescu, *Daco-romanii*, București, Ed. Meridiane, 1980, p. 149.

<sup>11</sup> Mihai Gramatopol, *Arta romană în România*, București, Ed. Meridiane, 2000, p. 136.

<sup>12</sup> Zaharia Covacef, *Considerații asupra unor articole de podoabă descoperite la Capidava*, in *Pontica*, XLII, Constanța, 2009, p. 466.

chest decorated with filigree, and the curls – by grain. The originality consists in the fact that the earrings are not made from gold leaf, but they are molten, this massiveness is specific neither to the Roman jewels, not to the Hellenistic ones<sup>13</sup>. From the 3rd century A.D., in the Roman provinces – the ornamental element consists in metal battens, decorated with geometric patterns or in gems attached in *cabochon* (Tomis). What is specific to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. are the polychrome earrings, with semiprecious stones<sup>14</sup>.



Fig.2: Earrings, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D., Noviodunum, Troesmis, Beroe (museum of Aegyssus)

In PaleoChristianity, there are earrings having a cruciform pendant, in *cloisonné* (the treasury from Histria, the 6th century A.D.): they weigh almost 8,9g and their length is of 6,3cm, being composed of an equal-arm cross (rounded at the ends) made from glass, enclosed by a gold thread with granules, and under the cross, there is a gold ball; the style entwines the Byzantine tendency with that of the migratory peoples, but the artistic achievement is modest<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>13</sup> Mihai Gramatopol, *op. cit.*, p. 133-134.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 136.

<sup>15</sup> Em. Popescu, *Cap. VII. Cultura (Partea a IV-a. Dobrogea în secolele IV-VI)*, in Dumitru Protase, Alexandru Suceveanu (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 653.

**The necklace**, worn around the neck and composed of several similar elements, reached our territory in Neolithic. We are left with gold necklaces from the Bronze Age and the beginning of the first period of the Iron Age: trumpery annulars (Turnu Măgurele); 5 silver bugles and 158 of gold from the treasury of Șmig (the County of Sibiu)<sup>16</sup>; spherical beads from gold leaf (Boarta, the County of Sibiu)<sup>17</sup>; flat, faceted beads, made of choral or white translucent glass (miniature amphorae (the Sarmatian necropolis from Chișcani, the County of Brăila, the I<sup>st</sup> century A.D.); glass beads or vitrified glass, coloured, imported (Cetățeni, Popești, Poiana, the County of Gorj)<sup>18</sup>. Beautiful paste glass beads, blue and purple, with white or yellow mosaic (having "the peacock eye") were found at Bâta Doamnei, the County of Neamț, they had been brought from the East<sup>19</sup>. Coloured glass pearls, melon shaped, from the Dacian fortresses, were found in the necropolis from Cașolț (the County of Sibiu) and Sopor de Câmpie (the County of Cluj)<sup>20</sup>. Anyway, before the Roman conquest, the Dacians preferred silver for jewels. The *torques* are simple stranded metal bar necklaces (Poiana) or ending in snake protomes (gold, silver, bronze), having a Dacian origin (Marca, the County of Sălaj, Slimnic, Mediaș, the County of Sibiu, Senereuș, the County of Mureș, Colțești, the County of Alba – a *torques* made from four twisted threads, two of them neat and the other two pearled, with two zoomorphic endings<sup>21</sup>. On the territory of today's Dobrogea, there were found, from the Hellenistic period, chains used by the Greeks: made of fine twined gold or of engraved semiprecious stones, or metal beads having an amphora shape, dies (Tomis, Callatis); glass beads were found in the Hellenistic tombs from Tomis.

After the conquest, these jewels become more and more refined. From the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., some forms of Hellenistic adornments are found in the Roman time: necklaces with motifs such as the crescent are specific to the embellishment of the Greek and Alexandrin East – these *lunulae* from the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. were found in the tombs of Tomis<sup>22</sup>. The necklaces found in the cities on the territory of Dobrogea are extremely refined, made of semiprecious stones or of glass, fixed in gold threads, for example a necklace from the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. (Tomis) with bitronconic pearls and a clasp from the thread having two rosettes<sup>23</sup>, or oval or round gold beads from the 2<sup>nd</sup> - the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D., from Noviodunum (Fig. 3) or Troesmis

<sup>16</sup> H. D. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 327-328, s.v. Șmig.

<sup>17</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 63, s.v. Boarta.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 107, s.v. colier.

<sup>19</sup> Silviu Sanie, *Civilizația romană la est de Carpați și romanitatea pe teritoriul Moldovei, secolele II î.e.n. – III e.n.*, Iași, Ed. Junimea, 1981, p. 68.

<sup>20</sup> Mihail Macrea, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

<sup>21</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 107, s.v. Colțești.

<sup>22</sup> Mihai Gramatopol, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 136.

(Fig. 4). A gold chain from Callatis is composed of 8 cornelians and a pendant with a feminine bust *au repoussé*. Imported beads from coloured glass were also found in the Southern Dacia (from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.); from the area of Drobeta or that of Dierna, we mention a gold chain with black cylindrical or facet agates and with a glass paste cameo (a white relief on a dark background), depicting Hercules fighting against Cerberus (the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.)<sup>24</sup>. Not even in the late ancient period do glass or vitrified glass beads miss, and also flat strings, having a *cloisonné* decor, for example the two simple strings (Pietroasa, the County of Buzău), made of massive cylindrical bar, the fragmented one has a runic inscription; the so-called "string-collar" is decorated in *cloisonné* with panels having vegetal motifs, embedded with semiprecious stones. Spherical and bitronconic octahedral glass beads remained (Târgșor, the County of Prahova) or were found on the territory of Dobrogea, at Beroe, the 4<sup>th</sup> century– the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Fig. 5) – a necklace with polyhedral glass and amber elements, worked according to the culture of the people living in Sântana de Mureș-Cerneahov, a proof of the coming in of the jewellery forms of the migrators<sup>25</sup>.



Fig. 3, 4: Necklaces, 2<sup>nd</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D., Noviodunum, Troesmis (museum of Aegyssus)

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 138.

<sup>25</sup> Radu Florescu, *Daco-romanii*, p. 171.



Fig. 5: Beads, semiprecious stones, Beroe (museum of Aegyssus)

Closely connected with the type of necklace adornment is the **pendant** – also worn at the neck, but it is a single jewelry – a semiprecious stone, a medallion, an amulet, a small cross etc. – in general on a chain. From the ancient times, the so-called Dacian *saltaleone* are very well known (silver entwined chains ending in pendants), like it is the one from Rociu (the County of Argeş), or the one from the treasury of Cojocna (the County of Cluj), ending in three nails, or the one from Bistriţa, ended in a triangular plate with a dotted decor). Having its origins in the dacian period also, we have a gold medallion with a feminine effigy, similar to the ones from the phaleras from Herăstrău, discovered in Popeşti. From the hellenistic time, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century has its origins a gold pendant from Tomis, decorated with the bust of a nature deity (Aphrodite?) in relief *au repoussé*; the style is late classic, with harmonious anatomic proportions (Fig. 6).





Fig. 6: Hellenistic medallion (museum of Tomis)

After the Roman conquest, specific iconography appears, especially mythological one – like in the case of the beater-shaped pendant-amulet of Hercules (Noviodunum), dating from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. by analogy with pieces from Bulgaria<sup>26</sup>. From the late ancient period, we are left with gold chains with figure pendants (Șimleu Silvaniei, Someșeni, Sf. Gheorghe): from the treasury of Șimleu Silvaniei (around 400 d.Hr.) comes a gold necklace made from a chain that ends in a topaz globe, having hung pendants (5 vine leaves, the figurine of a man in a boat, 47 models of different tools), the style being a mixture of the Byzantine tradition with the geometric polichrome style of the German migrators<sup>27</sup>; from the treasury of Apahida (the County of Cluj), we have a gold pendant with two opposite animal protomes, surrounded by 5 small bells at the end of a chain. From the treasury of Someșeni (the County of Cluj), it is very well known a big massive gold *pectoral* having the shape of a circular medallion, suspended by a weaving chain, with snake-shape ending catch; it was discovered at Someșeni, in a tomb of a Christian German princess (the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), and the monogram of Jesus Christ is rendered. The decor is in *cloisonné*, with two registers which bolster the balance of the composition with a geometrical structure: a lateral register with the motif of the peacock eyes, the other is central discoidal, with an inscribed cross with widened arms, with semiprecious stones (that are now missing)<sup>28</sup>. From the same treasury come the cruciform diamond pendants, a

<sup>26</sup> Mihai Gramatopol, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

<sup>27</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 327, s.v. *Șimleu Silvaniei*.

<sup>28</sup> Radu Florescu, *Daco-romanii*, p. 210.

polyhedral bush shaped bead (similarities with the products of the Merovingian goldsmiths<sup>29</sup>).

Among the PaleoChristian jewels, we have engolpion crosses (used by the hierarchs of the Eastern Church as ritual adornments) – as it is that from the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. from Capidava: a (Latin) bronze cross with clubs ends, which had a semiprecious stone in the centre and on the bottoms attached in *cabochon* (they are perished now, having been burnt in the fire that destroyed the late settlement). Inside, the cross had a saint relict<sup>30</sup>. Again in Scythia Minor, they were found, in the treasury of the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. from Histria, two red gold crosses of 20 carats (of 4,4cm and respectively of 3,5cm heigh). They are similar regarding the shape, the style and the technique: small gold battens firstly gated and then agglutinated. The big one has flared arms, with a red stone in the centre; the incised lines in the shape of a fir branch decorate the arms; at the intersection angles of the arms, there is a rosette; in the middle of the decorative net, one can see the *chrismon* surrounded by a circle. The small cross has a granat in the centre, surrounded by a ring of granules; the decor is identical with the one from the big cross; the endings of the arms are less flared and they have only the holes where the gold granules were ingrained. The execution of the jewels is modest<sup>31</sup>. Sucidava – Izvoarele, the County of Constanța is the place where fifteen small plumb crosses have their origin, two made of bronze and two of silver, most of them are fragmented (the 4<sup>th</sup> - the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.)<sup>32</sup>; one of the crosses made of plumb is relief decorated, imitating pearls<sup>33</sup>. Gold crosses were found in Callatis, too, from the 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. (Fig. 7), also having precious stones in the middle, with the widened endings of the arms. Small crosses were also found in the Trajan Dacia – for example, a cross imported from Porolissum – Moigrad, the County of Sălaj (Fig. 8)<sup>34</sup> – a plumb pendant from the 5<sup>th</sup> - the 6<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D., of 5cm heigh, a Latin cross now corrupted, briefly worked and having a decor formed of pointed circles and a later made hole which replaced the hanging link (what places her among pectoral crosses)<sup>35</sup> –, templets of burnt clay were discovered – as the one from the 5<sup>th</sup> – the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. from Sânmiclăuș (the County of

<sup>29</sup> H. D. și R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 316, s.v. *Someșeni*

<sup>30</sup> Radu Florescu, *Capidava*, București, Ed. Meridiane, 1965, p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> Em. Popescu, *Cap. VII. Cultura (Partea a IV-a. Dobrogea în secolele IV-VI)*, in Dumitru Protase, Alexandru Suceveanu (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 653.

<sup>32</sup> Radu Vulpe, Ion Barnea, *Din istoria Dobrogei*, vol. II, București, Ed. Academiei R.S.R., 1968, p. 500.

<sup>33</sup> V. Culică, *Obiecte de caracter creștin din epoca romano-bizantină găsite la Pîrjoaia – Dobrogea, în Pontice*, II, Constanța, 1969, p. 356.

<sup>34</sup> Dumitru Gheorghe Tamba, *Porolissum. Mic ghid arheologic*, Muzeul Județean de Istorie și Artă-Zalău, Zalău, 2007, p. 18.

<sup>35</sup> Nicolae Gudea, *În legătură cu o nouă descoperire cu caracter creștin la Porolissum*, in *Acta Musei Porolissensis*, Zalău, VI, 1982, p. 155.

Alba<sup>36</sup>) or the ones from Străulești (Bucharest), Dulceanca (the County of Teleorman), Budureasa (the County of Bihor), Ploiești, Cândești (the County of Vrancea), Izvoru Dulce (the County of Buzău), these being a proof of the series production of these pieces. These materials belonged to the local population that remained in the area after the Visigoths and the Taifals went away in the Empire<sup>37</sup>. Also the east of Moldavia also offers such objects such as the ones from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D., they are in a reduced number and their dating is uncertain, such as the nacre crosses from Barboși (the County of Galați): a 2cm pendant-cross made from nacre was discovered in a house (the coins from Severus Alexander date it in the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.<sup>38</sup>) – a rectangular pendant with a cross made from interior fret sawing<sup>39</sup> – characterized by Ion Barnea as having a "probable, but not absolutely certain Christian character", because of the too early data<sup>40</sup>; moreover, again at Barboși, a nacre 1,7cm<sup>41</sup> small cross was discovered, as a piece of jewelry to be applied on wood or on cloths or worn as an amulet<sup>42</sup>: with equal arms and slightly spread at the endings and terminated in an angle (dated from the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. by the coins from Heliogabalus – 218-222 A.D.) (similarities can be made with almost identical crosses from the Crimea and Palestina, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.<sup>43</sup>). Templets and jigs for producing Christian objects, especially small crosses were discovered at Davideni (the County of Neamț), Traian (the County of Bacău), Costești (the County of Iași), Botoșana (the County of Suceava). A templet made from an elephant's bone, discovered in Costești has the images of three characters<sup>44</sup>. Crosses – like the bronze one from Davideni (the County of Neamț), the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century – the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., or the one made from plumb discovered in Ruginoasa (the County of Iași) –, but templets for crosses were also found in many settlements from Moldavia in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. They were local products, which indicates the fact that a big number of the inhabitants of the area in this period were Christianized (Traian, the County of Bacău, Davideni, Botoșana – where workshops for teeming small crosses were discovered)<sup>45</sup>. Also from the extra-Carpathian space, from the necropolis of Mihălășeni (the County of

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<sup>36</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

<sup>37</sup> Nelu Zugravu, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

<sup>38</sup> Virgil Lungu, *Creștinismul în Scythia Minor în contextul vest-pontic*, Sibiu – Constanța, Ed. T.C. Sen, 2000, p. 24.

<sup>39</sup> Dan Gh. Theodor, *Creștinismul la est de Carpați, de la origini și pînă în secolul al XIV-lea*, Iași, Ed. Mitropoliei Moldovei și Bucovinei, 1991, p. 75.

<sup>40</sup> Nelu Zugravu, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>42</sup> Virgil Lungu, *Creștinismul în Scythia Minor în contextul vest-pontic*, p. 24

<sup>43</sup> Dan Gh. Theodor, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>44</sup> Mircea Păcurariu, *op. cit.*, p. 93; Mihai Bărbulescu, *I. De la începuturile civilizației la sinteza românească*, in Mihai Bărbulescu et al., *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>45</sup> Nelu Zugravu, *op. cit.*, p. 416.

Botoșani), we have three circular medallions from teemed glass, oriental imports from Syria and Egypt<sup>46</sup> probably, just like others of this type discovered in the former provinces of the Roman Empire – Balcanic, Sicillian, German regions: analogies with glass or faience representations from Panonnia (the necropolis from Keszthely-Dobogo or on the territory of Poland, from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D., or of the Crimea, from the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries A.D.)<sup>47</sup>. But analogies can also be made with glass medallions found in Tulcea and Babadag-Topraichioi<sup>48</sup>. A medallion is olive, with a relief turtle ingrained on one of the faces, the second is blue and has a representation of a front-seen feminine bust, similar to the imperial effigies on the coins<sup>49</sup>, the third is olive and it has the image of Daniel as a orant, flanked by two lions. The first are pagan, the last one is PaleoChristian (they are dated from the 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.)<sup>50</sup>.



Fig. 7: Gold crosses (museum of Callatis)



Fig. 8: Plumb crosses, Porolissum (museum of Sălaj)

**The fibula** is a wire stich with a leg, an arch and a bristle that has appeared on our territory since the Bronze Age, it became a jewel in the Iron Age – Ostrovu Mare (the County of Mehedinți), Apulum (Alba Iulia); from Trestiana (the County of Vaslui), there are two bronze fibulae with a spring leg and wire stich protective object having the shape of a buckler decorated with punched circled<sup>51</sup>. There are several types of fibulae from the Dacian times: with zoomorphic motifs, sometimes having the shape of gammée cross (Șaeș, the County of Mureș), with bows, sometimes with the battle-axe shape

<sup>46</sup> Octavian-Liviu Șovan, *Zorile creștinismului în nord-estul Moldovei – repere arheologice* (3), in *Forum cultural*, anul VI, nr. 1, martie, Botoșani, 2006 (20), p. 5.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>48</sup> Idem, *Un mormânt cu medalioane romane de sticlă din necropola de la Mihălășeni (jud. Botoșani)*, in *Arheologia Moldovei*, XI, Academia Română – Filiala Iași, Institutul de Arheologie – Iași, Universitatea „Al. I. Cuza”, Iași, 1987, p. 232.

<sup>49</sup> The first time, it appears as a front representation on a coin – of the Empress Licinia Eudoxia (the wife of Valentinian III from 437 A.D.). *Ibidem*.

<sup>50</sup> Dan Gh. Theodor, *op. cit.*, p. 79-80.

<sup>51</sup> L. R. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 342, s.v. *Trestiana*.

of the leg (Cojocna, the County of Cluj), with a rhombic buckler decorated with semicircular incisions (Șaeș, Merii Goala, Sărăcsău, the County of Alba) or with a sword shape pendant (the treasury from Suseni, the County of Mureș)<sup>52</sup>, or with a deltoid buckler decorated with incisions, bends and beads (Sărăcsău). Fibulae were found, having a buckler decorated *au repoussé* with an effigy (Bălănești, Coadă Malului)<sup>53</sup>, those from the treasury of Bălănești have a leaf shape, with a detailed feminine figure, with a curled combing and a tiara.

After the Roman Conquest, in the two Roman provinces – and even outside them (in Poiana, Răcătău, Brad) – fibulae from the 1st century A.D. could be found, they have several types, "powerfully profiled", trumpet-shaped, "with eyes", Nauheim (spoon-shaped)<sup>54</sup>, the type brought from the Empire: for example, the crossbow fibulae – Ulpia Traiana, from the 3rd century A.D., made of iron, with a very curved body, with a 8 spire resort<sup>55</sup>, or those from Libida, the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. (Fig. 9), made of golden bronze, with a leg twisted beneath (these are not specific to the Romans, but they were brought from Germany<sup>56</sup>); there are also the fibulae of the Vârtope type: three anchor-shaped fibulae from Ațel (the County of Sibiu), Beroe (the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) (Fig.10). Moreover, enamelled fibulae can be found, from the 2<sup>nd</sup> – the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D. (this practice was sorbed by the Romans from the Celtic Gallia and spread in Dacia) – therefore, import pieces from Gallia, Germany, maybe even local ones (a workshop in Tibiscum?)<sup>57</sup>. The special military-type fibulae from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. were discovered at Săpata de Jos (the County of Argeș) and, respectively, at Porolissum, they are almost identical: they have the word "RMA" ("R(O)MA") fretted; furthermore, the letter-shaped fibulae from Porolissum and Sântămăria de Piatră (the County of Hunedoara), the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., are rare<sup>58</sup>. The cross-shaped fibulae having bulbs at the end belong to the late epoch: Apahida – with the batten decorated *en creux*, and also those bulb-ended: Ațel, the County of Sibiu, or those found in the County of Bihor or at Apulum, Potaissa, Micia, Sucidava – Celei)<sup>59</sup>; Tomis, Histria. The fibulae of the Sântana de Mureș-Cerneahov type (Alexandru Odobescu, the County of Ialomița) are made of bronze, with the leg twisted beneath and having a half disc, or the fibulae having a deltoid

<sup>52</sup> H. D. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 325, s.v. *Suseni*.

<sup>53</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 154, s.v. *fibulă*.

<sup>54</sup> Silviu Sanie, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>55</sup> D. Alicu, S. Cociș, *Podoabe romane de la Ulpia Traiana*, in *Apulum*, XXV, Alba Iulia, 1989, p. 227.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>57</sup> Sorin Cociș, *Fibule emailate din Dacia romană*, in *Apulum*, XXIII, Alba Iulia, 1986, p. 159-167.

<sup>58</sup> Idem, *Fibule cu inscripție din Dacia Romană*, in *Acta Musei Porolissensis*, Zalău, XI, 1987, p. 160-161.

<sup>59</sup> Sever Dumitrașcu, *Fibule romane de tipul „capete de ceapă” descoperite în Crișana*, in *Crisia*, VI, Oradea, 1976, p. 35-57.

head and a rhomboidal leg (from the Christian necropolis (?) of the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. from Botoșani). Among all the jewels of the migrator peoples, fibulae are those which were mostly sorbed by the autochthonous people: those made of silver, with a half disc, having north-Pontic origins, brought by the Goths, for example those found in Napoca – Cluj-Napoca or those from Apulum – one made of silver and the other – of bronze (the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.)<sup>60</sup>. Like all the adornments of the migrators, (the big) fibulae are covered in precious stones placed in metal or in pendants; the forms cleverly take up the Roman ones, the execution is delicate. Ten pairs of big fibulae made of golden silver – two circular pairs, two ending in lion heads, the others of the half disc type, decorated with garnet cabochons and also a fibula with bulb ends and an onyx disc (from the treasury of Șimleu Silvaniei, around 400 A.D.) – shows a mixture of the Byzantine style with the geometric polychrome style of the German migrators<sup>61</sup>. A big fibulae from the tomb of a German princess from Starchiojd (the County of Prahova), made of silver, has a half disc with zoomorphic bumps (bird heads)<sup>62</sup> with gold elements; the decor is a netting of warm and *cloisonné*; it is a type of jewel which is characteristic for the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.<sup>63</sup>. The fibulae with hominoid endings discovered at Plenița and Coșoveni (the County of Dolj) are also barbaric, or the digital ones or with buttons from Drobeta, Histria, Dinogetia – Garvăn, the County of Tulcea, Beroe. The onion-ended fibulae or the digitate ones from Dobrogea have a controverted origin (German or Slavonic) and dating (the 6<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.), the most valuable one is the big fibula from Histria (19,8cm length), in teemed and golden bronze, ending in a sketched animal protome, having an excised geometric decor: spiral motifs, completed by 11 semiprecious stones<sup>64</sup>; the same type of fibula is the one from Beroe, ended in a motif that suggests an animal head. Zoomorphic fibulae also belong to the migrator peoples, with *cabochon* and *cloisonné*: from the "Treasury of Pietroasa", we are left with a big bird of prey shaped fibula, the body ornamented with *cabochon* and four gold pendants; a pair of identical fibulae (and also of the "bulb-headed" type, just like the big one), united by a bird-shaped chain, in *cloisonné* and *cabochon*; there is also an identical fibulae with the pair, but it is small and simple. The groups of sparkling stones create a certain rhythm of the "composition" on each of these pieces' body, there are subtle visual dialogues established among them; clarity and order somehow annihilate the impression of overagglomeration of the decor.

<sup>60</sup> Mihail Macrea, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

<sup>61</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 327, s.v. *Șimleu Silvaniei*.

<sup>62</sup> The motif of the bird head is preferred by the Goths who adopted it from the Iranian and the central Asian repertory. Cf. Ecaterina Dunăreanu-Vulpe, *Tezaurul de la Pietroasa*, București, Ed. Meridiane, 1967, p. 45.

<sup>63</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 317, s.v. *Starchiojd*.

<sup>64</sup> Radu Vulpe, Ion Barnea, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 497.



Fig. 9: Fibula, Libida (museum of Aegyssus)

Fig. 10: Fibulae, Beroe (museum of Aegyssus)

For the PaleoChristian period, a beautiful fibula comes from the extra-Carpathian space, (from an inhumation tomb from Barboși): made of gold, with an onion bulb shape for the ends, with the arch having a ring-barked inscription in Latin with the name INNOCENS (of the deceased) (name that belongs to the early Christian onomatology of the time, but also to the pagan religious one<sup>65</sup> (the second half of the 3<sup>th</sup> century A.D.<sup>66</sup>) (dated by the coins from Claudius Gothicus, 268-270 A.D.)<sup>67</sup>. Furthermore, the fibule from the 6th century from Davideni is PaleoChristian, having the image of a nimbed face on the arch, it may be Christ: details of the beard face can be distinguished, represented in a very small space (the entire piece has 4,8cm). Analogies can be made with the fibule that belongs to the same century, found at Odarci (Dobrič), Bulgaria, having a nimbed face surrounded by 4 birds<sup>68</sup>.

**The bracelet** has embellished the arms (or the forearms) of women since Neolithic times. Dating from the first Iron Age, a gold bar bracelet with crescent-shaped ends and with an engraved linear ornament was found at Pipea (the Village of Nadeș, the County of Mureș)<sup>69</sup>; bracelets with a linear and hachured decor, with geometrical motifs that have their origin at the end of the Bronze Age, from the treasury from Șpălnaca (the County of Alba)<sup>70</sup>. The Dacians left us with their typical spiral bracelets, as it is that dating from the end of the Iron Age from Băiceni (the County of Iași), having rock-goat

<sup>65</sup> Nelu Zugravu, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

<sup>66</sup> Victor Henrich Baumann, *Sângele martirilor*, Constanța, Ed. Arhiepiscopiei Tomisului, 2004, p. 41.

<sup>67</sup> Virgil Lungu, *op. cit.*, p. 24; Dan Gh. Theodor, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>68</sup> Ioan Mitrea, *Romanitate și creștinism în secolele V-VI în lumea satelor din spațiul carpato-nistean*, in *Zargidava*, I, Bacău, 2002, p. 28.

<sup>69</sup> H. D. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 275, s.v. *Pipea*.

<sup>70</sup> L. R. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 328, s.v. *Șpălnaca*.

protomes at their ends. Other simple circular Dacian bracelets end in sketched heads of animals: the treasury from Sâncrăieni (the County of Harghita), or the one from Poiana (the County of Galați) – snake heads; snake protomes are also the ends of the one-spiral bracelets from Totești (the County of Hunedoara); from the treasury of Slimnic (the County of Sibiu), we have the bracelets with horse heads or the spiral bracelets from the treasuries of Cojocna (the County of Cluj), Bălănești (the County of Gorj), Rociu (the County of Argeș), Coada Malului (the County of Prahova)<sup>71</sup>. After the Roman Conquest, bracelets continued to be used: bracelets with free, closed ends or with a closing system were found at Ulpia Traiana – in analogy to the other provinces<sup>72</sup>; it is frequently met the type of metal bar bracelet, with thickened ends: a silver bracelet from a later settlement (the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) comes from the Fortress Bănița (the County of Hunedoara)<sup>73</sup>, or with sketched snake protomes: Velț (the County of Sibiu), Șimleu Silvaniei. Similarities between the gold bracelets that belong to the treasury from Suluc (the County of Tulcea) with pieces from Apahida and Someșeni prove the fact that they were re-used in the Roman period<sup>74</sup>. An extraordinary bracelet from the point of view of form and decoration is the one discovered in Orșova (now to be seen at the Museum of Vienna): it is composed of a closed circular gold strand, having three hanged pendants – one is just a square bar, the other two are each made from a square bar connected with other square- and triangle-shaped bars<sup>75</sup>.

**The tiara**, a sign of power, but also a jewel worn on the forehead, has existed ever since the beginning of the first Iron Age. Two golden tiaras were found at Galeșu (the County of Constanța): cone head, having the borders ornamented with three arrays of hammered relief points. From the Hellenistic period, in Dobrogea, the Greek tombs preserve narrow metal ribbons ornamented with linear motifs *au repoussé* (Tomis, Neptun, ornamented in the centre with a false gem from blue glass attached in *cabochon*, surrounded by leaves from golden leaf<sup>76</sup>).

The crowns from bay laurel leaves made from golden leaf (Apulum, Callatis) are the tiaras specific to the Roman age: two leaves were probably left from a tiara (it may have been made from textile, given the holes on these elements), tooled by compression in the gold leaf (Beroe).

The Hun migrants have rich and extraordinary artifacts, their tiaras, found in the extra-Carpathian territory, are characterized by the ornaments with gems in *cabochon* (deltoid granates, for example, as in the case of the

<sup>71</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 68, s.v. *brățară*.

<sup>72</sup> D. Alicu, S. Cociș, *Podoabe romane...*, in *Ap*, XXV, Alba Iulia, 1989, p. 229.

<sup>73</sup> H. D. și R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 57, s.v. *Bănița*.

<sup>74</sup> Mihai Gramatopol, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

<sup>75</sup> Radu Florescu, Ion Miclea, *Tezaure transilvane la Kunsthistorisches din Viena*, București, Ed. Meridiane, 1979, p. 38.

<sup>76</sup> Radu Florescu, *Daco-romanii*, p. 152.



item from Gherăseni, Buhăeni, the County of Iași, from the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.) or with pearls (the treasury from Conțești, the County of Iași, the same century)<sup>77</sup>. The golden tiara from Rotopănești (the County of Suceava) also needs to be mentioned<sup>78</sup>.

Therefore, the fingerprint of Christianity is more than visible, the new religion influenced the art of garments especially from the point of view of the symbolics which decorate these items.

Anyway, each type of jewelry records the transformations that took place in the period of Late Antiquity, concerning form, ornaments and the ancient technique, going as far as the aspect of PaleoChristian ones.

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<sup>77</sup> R. F. in Radu Florescu et al. (coord.), *op. cit.*, p. 132, s.v. *diademă*

<sup>78</sup> Mihai Bărbulescu, *I. De la începuturile civilizației la sinteza românească*, in Mihai Bărbulescu et al., *op. cit.*, p. 91.

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