

BABEȘ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY, CLUJ NAPOCA

FACULTY OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

**CHRISTIAN GEMS IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH (1st-4th c.)
APPARITION, PLACES OF PRODUCTION, SPREADING, SUBJECTS, TYPOLOGY**

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My work called „Christian gems in the ancient church (1st-4th c.). Apparition, places of production, spreading, subjects, typology” is a study of old universal history with implications especially in the minor arts and in connection with stone sculpture (glyptics). As there was no model for the study of Christian gems, it was necessary going through the entire or almost the entire ensemble of glyptics bibliography, in order to get an idea in connection with Christian gems, their role and importance in the ancient Church.

After a briefly review of the history of the Roman Empire (IIc.-IVc.) and the history of the Christian church in the same period, I did an important excursus concerning the spectrum of "classical" gems, improperly called here heathens, excursus which was the basis for the study of Christian gems because they have taken entirely, on one hand, the dates in connection with raw material of gems, processing methods, and on the other hand the religious message, social, intimate by carriers of gems. Since there was no work of synthesis about Christian gems, in this work I have tried to cover the main problems of Christian gems without tending to be exhaustive. Considering that the topic of Christian gems is varied and widely diversified, I tried to describe a general picture with eight types of Christian gems, each category containing several types of images, which suggests several ateliers involved in the production of gems. Many of this Christian gems are very beautiful both in terms of artistic achievement and in coloristic.

My thesis is divided into eight parts: part - I - presenting the introduction and the working method; part -II- the history of that era; part -III- the history of the Church in that era; two parts (IV-V) about the history of gems with a focus on heathen gems, ante christian; three parts about Christian gems (VI-VIII) which, naturally, they are the most extensive; coming next are the concluding scientific parts: abbreviations and bibliography, bibliographical abbreviations, list of illustrations and 47 drawings with illustrations (maps, tables, typical Christian artifacts organized thematically).

The keywords mainly refer to the topic of Christian gems (the Old Testament, the New Testament, Christian symbols, symbolic images, christological gems, gnostic gems, biblical scenes etc.).The chapters keep an evolution as any scientific work require: Chapter I presents the purpose of the work, working method and presentation, the basis of informations and a timeline of research.

Chapter II represents a brief history of the Roman Empire that tries to explain how the Roman civilization has followed on economic, military, administrative ways the highest level of culture. Among the crafts that formed the economic culture of the provinces, it is also mentioned the minor art or crafts that produced little artifacts, including gemstones and cameos.

Chapter III presents the history of the Church in the first four centuries; the stages of its evolution; transition from the persecuted Church to illicit and then to the free Church. It is suggested the role of gems in order to spread the Christian faith and the extraordinary role they played in catechesis, respectively spreading of teachings as images.

Chapters IV and V present a wide range of supposedly "pagan" gemstones that have had on one hand a role in spreading elements of heathen faith and a certain orientation inside the epochs arts. Collecting heathen gems began in Roman era and it was developed, resulting in the existence of huge collections of gems and cameos which today constitutes the basis for the great museums not only in the former territories of the Roman Empire, but also outside of it (e.g. New York, Leningrad etc.). The biggest ones are obviously located on the territory of the former Empire (Paris - multiple collections, London, Vienna, Munich, Rome). Collecting and researching of gems began later in the small and young countries (Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria etc.).

Chapter VI presents the classification of Christian gems. It is for the first time when this part of minor art it is presented in the romanian archeology: the Christian art of gems (considered trivial in relation to the value of heathen gems about which there was written extensively). This restitution has a major importance, especially now when Christian history is studied more widely in Romania. In some parts of Christian archeology, the present work can even play the role of determinant, bringing to light new information about the christianization of peoples from Dacia and inferior Moesia. The paper shows that Christian gems present a very comprehensive, beautiful and complex iconography.

I have tried on several occasions and also in case of gems type to make a typology of iconography, which I believe it can be a breakthrough in this archaeological realm.

I would like my work to be an important beginning for Christian archeology in Romania because in romanian archeology was written less about gemstones and I mention here Gramatopol who had dealt (in the philosophical way) with the gnostic gems type Abrasax (Gramatopol 1981, p.89) and, more broadly about the Christian gems themselves and gnostic Christian gems from dacian provinces, authors N.Gudea and I. Ghiurco (Gudea-Ghiurco 1988, p. 43-44) talk in their book about early Christianity on the territory of the three Dacia provinces.

I believe that the present work offers a wide range of Christian symbols and symbolic images, many datable, including those from Dacia, and it will be useful for creating a better image of primitive Christianity also in Dacia, leading to enrichment the educational material in romanian archeology.

Keywords:

Christian gems, gnostic gems, glyptics, iconography, historical sources, origin, spreading, representation, topics, provenance, symbology (anchor, cross, dolphin, Good Shepherd, chrismon etc.), biblical scenes, minor art, Christian art, gemology, cult, ornaments, communities, collections, archaeological discoveries, deities, animals, reptiles, fish, birds, pastoral scenes cameo, catalogs.