

ACŢIA

MVSEI  
NAPOCENSIS

58 / 1 / 2021



MINISTRY OF CULTURE  
NATIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF TRANSYLVANIA

**ACTA MVSEI  
NAPOCENSIS  
58/I**

PREHISTORY-ANCIENT HISTORY-ARCHAEOLOGY

CLUJ-NAPOCA  
2021

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ISSN 1454–1513

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## MAURIC FROM APAHIDA (MAURICIUS ≈ MAURICUS)

ÁDÁM SZABÓ

*Memoriae István Bóna\**  
(Heves 1930 – Dunaújváros 2001)

DOI 10.54145/ActaMN.I.58.11

**Abstract:** Based on scattered finds, besides the well-known I<sup>st</sup> (1889) and II<sup>nd</sup> (1968/1969) “princely” graves in Apahida (Romania, Cluj County), dated to the Gepidic age (5–6 centuries AD) (Pl. I), there must have been a III<sup>rd</sup> princely grave there. Apart from these scattered finds, a sealing with a monogram (*symbolum*), found in Apahida – and kept in the Hungarian National Museum – (Pl. II/1–3) refers to the same.

The retrograde monogram on the ring indicates that the sealing was not only a personal jewel, but also a functional tool used for authentication. Although the ring’s precise site in Apahida is unclear, it is still interpreted in connection to the I<sup>st</sup> grave of Onachar, as a similar reading of the monogram is suggested to the one [*Ona(c)har|us*, cf. Szabó 2020a-b] that stands on the naming. As the letter O of the naming does not appear in the monogram, and the letter M of the monogram does not appear on the naming, the presumption of identical names in case of the two rings can undoubtedly be turned down. Based on its shape, the monogram is a block or box monogram, which can be dated to the period between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century AD (Pl. III/1). According to the characteristics of the monogram type, it shows every letter of the word and each letter appears only once. Monograms from this period usually contain either personal names or office names, with genitive ending. Due to these reasons as well, the former readings: *Marc(us)* [J. Hampel], *Audomariuș* [I. Bóna], *Mariaș* [J. Spier], *Omacar(?)* [C. H. Opreanu] are not adequate. Former literature suggested and used Latin and Greek as reading languages for the monogram. A Greek reading must be considered because there might be a Σ i.e. C (i.e. *sigma lunata*) letter, on the right side of the imprinted monogram (Pl. III/2). Based on the structure of the monogram and the reading rules of the monogram type, furthermore with regards to all the solutions provided by the identifiable letters conjoined in alphabetical order, the monogram gives the Latin MAURICI (nom. Mauricius or Mauricus as well) reading (Pl. III/3, 5). A not likely, speculative Greek ΜΑΥΡΙΣΙ (nom. Μαυρις) solution (Pl. III/4) could be considered at most a Graecism because of the Latin *-i* instead of a Greek *-ou* for the genitive ending. The “Germanized” nominative version of the name without the Latin ending is MAURIC (Mauric). Until now, the name was unknown in Germanic milieu. The *-ric* (*-rik*, *-rich*) ending might have contributed to the use of the name in Germanic milieu.

The sealing was made in a Christian milieu, and its owner was probably a Christian, which is indicated by the long- or Latin cross (*crux immissa*) on the ring head over the monogram (Pl. III/1). Based on the cross and in the context of the Age (5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD), it is uncertain whether the ring-owner belonged to the Roman, Byzantine or Arian church. I have found no long- or Latin

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\* The obituary published by Trogmayer 2001, 7–8.

cross paired with a Greek monogram, consequently the ring and its owner must be of Western origin. His name may be related to the soldier martyr Mauricius from Agaunum (Saint-Maurice, Valais canton, Switzerland) and the spreading popularity of his cult among Christians. The name refers to the centre and point of origin of the St. Mauricius (Saint Maurice) cult, the territory of the Burgundian Kingdom, conquered by the Franks in the first quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD.

Compared to the western Germanic type of the finds, namely the artefacts from the I<sup>st</sup>-II<sup>nd</sup>-III<sup>rd</sup>(?) “princely” graves from Apahida [cf. Gáll et alii 2017, 26–28, nos. 9–10, 11–13], it can be assumed, that *Mauric from Apahida* – who can be examined in the same context –, was a western Germanic *regulus* who fled either from internal political conflict or from the Franc conquest.

Similarly to the *regulus* “*Onachar from Apahida*” [*Ona(c)har|us* ≈ Aunacharius, cf. Szabó 2020a-b], who – based on his name and personal artefacts – had also western Germanic connections, Mauric i.e. Mauricius or Mauricus also settled in the confine of the Gepidic world. He might not only have had a role in the appearance of the eastern Merovingian culture in Transylvania [cf. Dobos 2019], but also in the rise of the settlement in Apahida or its vicinity as a regional political-administrative centre. The damages on the surface of the sealring with monogram indicate its presumably longer usage in a kind of “chancellery” practice.

**Keywords:** Late Roman Age; Early Byzantine Age; Transylvania; Apahida; Gepidic Kingdom; Mauric; sealring; monogram; eastern Merovingian culture; 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.

**Rezumat:** Pe lângă binecunoscutele morminte „princiare” I (1889) și II (1968/1969) de la Apahida (România, jud. Cluj), datate în epoca gepidică (secolele V–VI p. Chr.) (Pl. I), dacă ținem cont de existența unor descoperiri răzlețe, trebuie să fi existat acolo și un al treilea mormânt princiar. Pe lângă aceste descoperiri, o altă piesă găsită la Apahida întărește această presupunere, anume un inel sigiliu cu monogramă (*symbolum*), care se păstrează la Muzeul Național Maghiar (Pl. II/1–3).

Monograma retrogradă de pe inel indică faptul că piesa nu era doar o bijuterie personală, ci și un instrument funcțional, folosit pentru autentificare. Deși localizarea exactă a punctului de proveniență al inelului cu monogramă nu s-a realizat, se presupune în continuare că există o legătură cu mormântul I, cel al lui Onachar, deoarece există o similitudine între lectura monogramei și cea de pe inelul cu nume [*Ona(c)har|us*, cf. Szabó 2020a-b]. Deoarece litera O de pe inelul cu nume nu apare în monogramă, iar litera M a monogramei nu apare pe inelul cu nume, prezumția existenței unor nume identice în cazul celor două inele poate fi exclusă. După formă, avem de-a face cu o monogramă bloc sau în cartuș, databilă în perioada cuprinsă între secolele al V-lea și al VII-lea p. Chr. (Pl. III/1). Pe acest tip de monogramă este redată fiecare literă a cuvântului în parte și fiecare literă apare o singură dată. Monogramele din această perioadă conțin de obicei fie nume personale, fie demnități, cu terminația la genitiv. Și din aceste motive, lecturile anterioare *Marc(us)* [J. Hampel], *Audomariuș* [I. Bóna], *Mariaș* [J. Spier], *Omacar(?)* [C. H. Opreanu] nu sunt potrivite. În literatura anterioară de specialitate au fost sugerate pentru lectura monogramei atât limba latină, cât și limba greacă. O lectură în limba greacă trebuie luată în considerare, deoarece ar putea exista o literă Σ, adică C (sigma lunată) în partea dreaptă a monogramei (Pl. III/2). Pe baza structurii monogramei și a regulilor de lectură pentru acest tip de monogramă și, pe lângă aceasta, ținând cont și de soluțiile oferite de literele lizibile unite în ordine alfabetică, monograma oferă lectura în limba latină MAVRICI (nom. Mauricius sau Mauricus) (Pl. III/3, 5). O soluție puțin probabilă, speculativă, în limba greacă, ΜΑΥΡΙΣΙ (nom. Μαυρις) (Pl. III/4) ar putea fi considerată cel mult un grecism, datorită genitivului latin în *-i*, în loc de genitivul grecesc *-ou*. Varianta „germanizată” a numelui la nominativ, fără terminație latină, este MAVRIC (Mauric). Până acum, numele nu era necunoscut în mediul germanic. Terminația *-ric* (*-rik*, *-rich*) ar fi putut contribui la utilizarea numelui în spațiu germanic.



Inelul cu sigiliu a fost confecționat în mediu creștin, iar proprietarul său era probabil un creștin, indiciu oferit de crucea lungă sau latină (*crux immissa*) de pe capul inelului, deasupra monogramei (Pl. III/1). Pe baza crucii și ținând cont de contextul epocii (secolele V–VI p. Chr.) nu este sigur dacă proprietarul inelului a fost aparținător al bisericii romane, bizantine sau ariane. Nu am identificat vreo cruce lungă sau latină asociată cu o monogramă grecească, prin urmare inelul și proprietarul său trebuie să fie de origine occidentală. Numele său poate fi legat de soldatul martir Mauricius din Agaunum (Saint-Maurice, cantonul Valais, Elveția) și de popularitatea în creștere a cultului său în rândul creștinilor. Numele se referă la centrul și originea cultului Sfântului Mauricius, teritoriul Regatului Burgund, cucerit de franci în primul sfert al secolului al VI-lea p. Chr.

Comparând artefactele din mormintele „princiare” I-II-III(?) de la Apahida [cf. Gáll et alii 2017, 26–28, nr. 9–10, 11–13] cu descoperirile vest germanice, se poate presupune că Mauric din Apahida – care poate fi plasat în același context – a fost un regulus germanic occidental, care a fugit fie din cauza conflictului politic intern, fie ca urmare a cuceririi zonei de către franci.

Similar cu așa-numitul *regulus* „Onachar din Apahida” [Ona(c)har|us ≈ Aunacharius, cf. Szabó 2020a-b], care – judecând pe baza numelui și a artefactelor personale – avea și legături vest germanice, Mauric, sau Mauricius sau Mauricus s-a stabilit și el în spațiul lumii gepidice. Este posibil să fi avut un rol nu doar în apariția culturii merovingiene răsăritene în Transilvania [cf. Dobos 2019], ci și în ascensiunea așezării de la Apahida sau a vecinătății acesteia ca centru politico-administrativ regional. Deteriorările de pe suprafața inelului sigiliu cu monogramă indică utilizarea probabil mai îndelungată a acestuia într-un soi de practică „de cancelarie”.

**Cuvinte cheie:** perioada romană târzie; perioada bizantină timpurie; Transilvania; Apahida; Regatul Gepid; Mauric; inel cu sigiliu; monogramă; cultura merovingiană răsăriteană; secolele V–VI p. Chr.

1. The hereunder publication is the text of a lecture titled “*Az apahidai Mauric*” (*Mauric from Apahida*), delivered in December 2020 at the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Ősi írások / Ancient Scripts* conference in Budapest.<sup>1</sup> It is also the continuation of the lecture “*Az apahidai Onachar*” (*Onachar from Apahida*) delivered at the 1<sup>st</sup> *Ősi írások / Ancient Scripts* Budapest conference in December 2019 and published in English and Hungarian versions since. The latter addresses the reading of the Apahida (Romania, Cluj County) namering (Pl. I),<sup>2</sup> while this writing deals with the Apahida sealring i.e. monogram ring (Pl. II/1–3), for the decryption and reading of which I had no suggestions last year. This is why both in the lecture and published material I have emphasized the possibility of a different reading of the monogram ring, as compared to the namering. I have also traced theoretical (‘ad absurdum’) possibilities in an attempt to consider previous readings supported in the literature as plausible [I. Bóna: *Audomariuc*, C. H. Opreanu: *Omacar(?)*],<sup>3</sup> as they arose in connection to the namering.

<sup>1</sup> Here I wish to thank for the invitation and comments from the organiser of the conference, academic counsellor Bence Fehér, to thank Zsuzsa Hajnal, Erwin Gáll, Alpár Dobos, Attila Kiss P. and Péter Kovács for their opinion on the manuscript, their professional advice and hints on the literature, Zsuzsa Hajnal for the photographs, the imprint and the photograph of the imprint, Erwin Gáll for the map, Zsófia Masek and Zsófia Rácz for their notes on the PPT presentation of the lecture. Thanks to Noémi László for translating this article into English.

<sup>2</sup> Szabó 2020a, 277–291 and Szabó 2020b, 201–226. Muzeul Național de Istorie a României. Arch.n.: 54580. Cf. also Werner 1967–1968, 120–123 and Popescu 1976, 394. no. 437b.

<sup>3</sup> Bóna 1986, 147; Bóna 1989, 79–80; Bóna in: Bóna et alii 1993, 41; Bóna in: Bóna et alii 1999, 8, and Opreanu 1999, 926–928 = AE 2007, 1193b: *Omacar(?)*; Opreanu 2014.

Nevertheless the name signalled in the monogram cannot even theoretically be considered identical with the name on the namer, as this begins with the letter O, which is formally absent in the monogram. There are two reasons why the upper part of the Latin R or Greek P (Rho) cannot stand for the letter O.<sup>4</sup> 1. In the monogram type of the age, the letter O is either tangentially and quite recognisably linked or it stands separate,<sup>5</sup> the upper part of a P (Rho) or R can only exceptionally be considered an O – there might be a possibly erroneous item beside the case deconstructed here, but even there only the form is slightly similar<sup>6</sup> – and in very rare cases the letter is omitted<sup>7</sup>. The letter form O could at most appear as a frame of the monogram, which in lack of any parallels is even less probable than to consider the upper part of the Greek P or Latin R to be a letter O. Consequently, either in a Greek or a Latin reading, the monogram needs to be read without the letter O.<sup>8</sup> Another possibility is that of the letters AU standing for the sound O, and in the age this is present in both combinations, such as Odoacer monograms spelt as Audo(acar) as well as the name Aunachar spelt as Onachar.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless in this case a

<sup>4</sup> Considered a more frequent phenomenon by Feind 2010, 20 – but the following examples and almost all the known examples contradict it, see note no. 5 and see note no. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Ld. BMCV- 29, 30 (Vand.): II. Theodosius; 44, 45: Odoacer [erroneous reading in the communication, the monogram is: A<sup>^</sup>V<sup>^</sup>D<sup>^</sup>O that is Audo(acar)]; 50, 51, 57, 58, 59, 78 (Ostrog.): Theoderic [in the communication appears, for no reason, as Theodoric]; 32 (Vand.): Zeno [in three variants]; 32, 33 (Vand.): I. Anastasius [in two variants]; 33 (Vand.): I. Justinianus [uncertain reading, as there is no letter O in the name, the use of the Latin Dative is superfluous, the independent O might at most be part of a Greek Genitive -ou ending, the ending -ou was, in later monograms, linked, see below]; 171, 173 (Benev.): Grimoald [still a block monogram, originating from later than the discussed period]. See the same facsimile in Feind 2010, 320; RIC 10: – II. Theodosius nos. 1–5, I. Leo nos. 1–6, Zeno nos. 1–14, Iulius Nepos no. 1, Odoacer no. 1 [on reverse side of coins] – quoted in facsimile Feind 2010, 346. See also PLRE II, 3, 1: nos. 5, 7, 20, 31, 32, 33A, 35; PLRE II, 3, 2: nos. 43, 50, 69; PLRE III, 3: nos. 75, 77, 78, 85, 98, 102, 103; PLRE II, 3, 5: nos. 153, 159, 169, 171, 177; PLRE II, 3, 6: nos. 181, 186, 187, 188, 189, 198, 199, 200, 206, 207; PLRE II, 3, 7: nos. 215, 218, 220, 221, 235, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 245; PLRE II, 3, 8: nos. 246, 246–250, 254–257, 262–268, 274, 275, 278, 280; PLRE II, 3, 9: nos. 282, 291, 313, 314; PLRE II, 3, 10: nos. 321, 337–339, 347; PLRE II, 3, 11: nos. 357–358, 366, 372–373, 377, 380, 384, 386, 388; PLRE II, 3, 12: nos. 401–402, 405–406, 410–411, 414–415 – these, even though they belong to type, most are more removed in time and of a more complex structure, reaching towards the form of cross monogram; those containing the omega are also listed here – quoted also in facsimile Feind 2010, 334–345. Cf. also Bulgaria Plate block or cubic monograms II–VI, see the same in Feind 2010, 322–326. DO 1–11–12, 27, 31: I. Anastasius, see the same facsimile in Feind 2010, 327. See also Orghidan 1–3, quoted in facsimile Feind 2010, 330–332 block or cubic monogram drawings. See also drawings by Shumen, Tarse and Zacos, see op. cit. facsimile, Feind 2010, 347–353, 364–381 – with letters O linked tangentially to one of the monogram letters without exception for block monograms. Further examples: <http://www.ancientcoins.ca/monograms/monograms.html>.

<sup>6</sup> See BMCV 31[a] (Vand): I. Leo – exceptional, maybe flawed monogram, O is the upper part of an R-like sign, in another variant (31[b]) O is tangentially linked to a stem; 55 (Ostrog.): Theoderic – O in a form similar to the lower part of a retrograde B; RIC 10: Gundobad no. 1 – quoted by facsimile Feind 2010, 346. Here O could be at most read into the upper part of the B, but during the phonetic notation the almost silent O between D and B must have been omitted.

<sup>7</sup> See BMCV 46 (Ostrog.): Theoderic [in the communication appears, for no reason, as Theodoric]; 55, 78, 87 (Ostrog.): Theoderic – C instead of the formerly independent O on earlier monograms. See the same facsimile in Feind 2010, 320. DO 1- 192: I. Justinianus, see the same facsimile in Feind 2010, 327. PLRE III, 9: no. 307 – quoted facsimile Feind 2010, 342. RIC 10: Gundobad no. 1 – quoted facsimile Feind 2010, 346. During the phonetic notation the almost silent O between D and B must have been omitted.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Szabó 2020a, 283–284 and Szabó 2020b, 208, 212–214.

<sup>9</sup> See RIC 10: Odoacer no. 1 [on reverse side of coins] and Szabó 2020a, 283–284 and Szabó 2020b, 208, 212–214: Ona(c)har.

beginning such as AU>O makes no sense in the first place, while in the second, by reading the same letters repeatedly into the interpretation would lead to an inauthentic reading of the remaining letters, laden with emendations. This would carry sense neither as a word on its own, nor as an abbreviation, be it a Germanic, a Romanised Germanic or any other name variant, read in a Greek or Latin context. 2. Based on the monogram type – block or cubic monogram<sup>10</sup> – the reading should as a rule start from the centre outward, a reading from the edges going inward is exceptionally rare, only one instance of such a reading is known.<sup>11</sup> This means that none of the peripheral letters could be considered a leading element of the name if any centre-focused reading might make sense, or there should exist a very strong theory backing a peripheral reading, which is not the case here.

2. Owing to the very character of the monogram, the monogram ring offers several readings while the language it should be read in is also not evident at first. The monogram type and the letters embrace both a Greek and a Latin reading. The attempts at reading the monogram in the 123 years gone by since its surfacing and becoming known were made difficult by the fact that it was considered to belong to the owner of the namer with a much more legible inscription, and thus it was considered to be carrying the same content. To make things even more complicated, the reading of the namer was far from precise before 2019/2020. As for the letters O and M, forming a point of connection for readings based on a similar content of the two rings, we could see how there is no M on the namer and there is no O on the monogram ring. The rightful supposition that the monogram could only stand for a Germanic name expressed using either Greek or Latin letters, did not help much to simplify the matter. Considering the age appropriate for the dating of the ring, that is the 2<sup>nd</sup> half or 3<sup>rd</sup> third of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, one must also take into account the possibility of a person of Germanic origin, born in a Christian or Christianised milieu<sup>12</sup> – receiving a name of Latin or other origin.<sup>13</sup>

3. The oval, single-articulated frame head of the large size gold signet ring designed to be worn on a thumb or over a glove contains a Latin cross (*crux immissa*) and an engraved retrograde monogram (Pl. III/1). The diameter of the ring is 3,1–3,3 cm; that of the ring head is 1,2–1,7 cm; the width of the strap is 1,3–0,7 cm; the strap is 0,6–0,35 cm thick. The ring weighs 54,9 g.

The ring, not excessively worn, nevertheless, on account of its surface marks, put to use for a longer period of time, is only related to the 1<sup>st</sup> Apahida “princely” Onachar grave based on the literature [ring inscription: *On^a(c)har|us*].<sup>14</sup> In the year 1889, in his first publication occurring after the surfacing of the grave, Henrik Finály does not

<sup>10</sup> “Block- oder Kastenmonogramme” cf. Fink 1981, 75–86; Feind 2010, 20–21. [I use “Kastenmonogram” as cubic monogram here.]

<sup>11</sup> See BMCV 31 (Vand): I. Leo – exceptional monogram, the reading starts from the side on both variants; 55 (Ostrog.) – In this case the T in the initial Th was represented by applying a bar over the left stem of the central H, thus the initial sound actually does stand in the centre. See similar facsimile in Feind 2010, 320.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Gáll – Mărginean – Peter 2019, 27–34.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. e.g. Köbler 2014 Anhang 2.: Biblisch-gotischen Namen.

<sup>14</sup> See Gáll et alii 2017, 26, no. 9. Cf. Finály 1889, 305–320; Csallány 1961, 222–223; Horedt, Protase 1972, 174–220; Kuhn, Werner, Horedt 1973, 36–367; Bóna 1986, 146–149; Harhoiu 1987; Kiss 1987; Bóna 1989, 75–83, 79–80; J. Cseh in Bóna et alii 1993, 40–41; Kiss 1995; Oanță-Marghitu 2014, 615–619; Kiss P. 2015, 89–90; Vida 2016, 47–49; Rácz 2018.

mention this ring at all.<sup>15</sup> The ring was sent to the Hungarian National Museum in 1897 by the Alba Iulia jeweller Dávid Springer, naming Apahida as the place of origin. József Hampel recorded the data on the place of origin with a question mark in the inventory book under the number (MNM RT-N) 27/1897.2. The objects brought together with this ring (27/1897.1 and 27/1897.3), but especially the boar-head decorated pendulum are the only links backing the belonging of the ring to the Apahida grave I. Nevertheless there is no data available demonstrating the surfacing of the said objects together. Consequently, despite accepting the data on the place of surfacing, there is nothing to prove beyond a doubt that this ring surfaced in the very same grave I. or Onachar in which the namer and cross ring definitely surfaced (Pl. I).

4. From among known contemporary, almost contemporary and remotely contemporary Byzantine, Italian/Ravenna and Burgundian monograms belonging to the same type, the monogram on the ring shows close formal similarities with the ones of Theodosius II (402–450), Leo I (457–474), Gundobad (473–516), Iulius Nepos/Ricimer (474–475), Zeno (474–475, 476–491), Odoacer (476–493), Anastasius (491–518), Theoderic the Great (474/493–526), Iustinus I (518–527), Iustinianus I (527–565), and with various monograms known from the flip side of coins manufactured beginning with the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century in the Sirmium mint.<sup>16</sup> The monograms of the type are mostly Latin. In the 5<sup>th</sup> century only the monogram of Basiliscus (475–476) and a few monogram variants of Zeno (474–491) are Greek, and the trend did not change during the first half of the next century.<sup>17</sup> These examples show how the use of this monogram type spread from Byzantium beginning with the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, and by the second half of the same century it spread in the West, especially among persons at the top of the administrative hierarchy.

5. There are several ways to decipher and read the monogram, based either on a Greek or on a Latin linguistic base (but not mixing the two), in Nominative or Genitive form, as a Germanic, a Latin name or on of some other origin. Nevertheless, each of these variants based on any identifiable letter of the monogram will fail to even remotely resemble the text on the namer, in any of its earlier or present readings. This difficult and complicated relation generates at first reading doubts related to the two rings belonging to the same person. In 1905, taking into consideration only the letters identifiable on their own, J. Hampel suggested the Latin-based reading *MARC(us)*.<sup>18</sup> In 2010, Jeffrey Spier suggested Greek based *MARIAΣ* (Genitive), as referring to the deceased wife of the “Goth or Gepidic Omharus”.<sup>19</sup> J. Hampel set out in the right direction, beginning the reading with the letter M, nevertheless he did not take the united letters into consideration, consequently he

<sup>15</sup> Finály 1889, 305–320.

<sup>16</sup> For the Sirmium mint see latest Gennari 2019, 63–252.

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. BMCV- no. 29, 30 (Vand.): II. Theodosius; no. 31[a-b] (Vand): I. Leo; no. 32, 33 (Vand.): I. Anastasius; no. 32 (Vand.): Zeno; no. 33 (Vand.): I. Iustinianus; nos. 44, 45: Odoacer; nos. 46, 50, 51, 55, 57, 58, 59, 78, 87 (Ostrog.): Theoderic; nos. 171, 173 (Benev.): Grimoald. DO 1.- nos. 11–12, 27, 31: I. Anastasius; no. 192: I. Iustinianus. Demo 2017, 80–95/95–111. Gennari 2019, 162 and 163–249. Rauch 2015, no. 786. RIC 10: – II. Theodosius nos. 1–5; I. Leo nos. 1–6; Gundobad no. 1; Iulius Nepos no. 1; Zeno nos. 1–14; Odoacer no. 1. For further examples cf. <http://www.ancientcoins.ca/monograms/monograms.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Hampel 1905 (1971), 698.

<sup>19</sup> Spier 2010, 15.

omitted letters from his reading and he also interpreted the monogram in the Nominative case, which guaranteed failure. The significance behind the reading by J. Spier is that he emphasized the difference between the monogram and the name on the namer, and was methodically correct when omitting the letter O, and, just like Hampel, beginning the word with the central letter M. In his suggestion nevertheless he failed to consider the large size of the ring while he also included a certain letter (A) several times into his reading and omitted others (I, V). Despite his good start, his reading is thus inadequate.

6. By accepting Apahida as the actual site of origin, it seems probable that the ring might have surfaced in the scavenged grave of a contemporary person buried on the same perimeter. As in graves of the same period usually only one namer or signet ring was discovered,<sup>20</sup> the monogram ring should be analysed and interpreted in a different Apahida context as compared to that of the namer. With emphasis on the exceptional occurrence, J. Spier tried to back the improbable view in the literature regarding the origin of the two rings in the same grave by stating that Onachar had taken the ring of his formerly deceased wife to his own grave. But the size of the ring denies it having ever belonged to a woman, while on the other hand it must probably have been buried with its owner, who thus could not have been Onachar, whom we know as a consequence of the fact that he was buried with his own ring. István Bóna and also *Ștefan Matei* have already suggested the probable existence of a III<sup>rd</sup> “princely” grave, based on a belt buckle that would not fit among the objects of the two known graves<sup>21</sup> and also on other, smaller finds.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, beside the well-known finds of the two “princely” graves (I and II)<sup>23</sup> several contemporaneous pieces of attire are known that heighten such suppositions based on objects not yet seen under the light of any certainty, pointing towards the existence of a further “princely” grave or even other places of burial in the area (Pl. I).<sup>24</sup> Thus, taking into consideration the doubts related to the belonging of the namer and the monogram ring to the same person and to readings of the two inscriptions targeting the same name, and also the evidence supporting the basic difference between the two rings, a specific archaeological context of its own can be recommended for the monogram ring on site, the precise location of which is yet to be discovered.

7. The monogram belongs to the group of block or cubic monograms (“Block- oder Kastenmonogramme”). The type was in use between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries both on Eastern and Western Roman territory. The type was characteristically arranged around the central letter, with each letter occurring only once, it contained ligatures that don’t necessarily signal related letters. The monograms of the age also contain case-specific endings.<sup>25</sup> On a formal basis, the monogram ring shows no definite sign of belonging either to the Greek or to the Latin context. Similarly, the Latin or long cross above the monogram (*crux immissa*) is specifically related neither to Eastern Roman, Byzantine nor to Western Roman, i. e. Ravenna cultural circles. Still, one thing I have not yet seen, and that is a definitely Greek

<sup>20</sup> Listing many examples Szabó 2020a.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. also Oanță-Marghitu et alii 2009, 227–233.

<sup>22</sup> Matei 1982, 387–392.

<sup>23</sup> See Gáll et alii 2017, 26–27, no. 9 and no. 10, 195–196/3–4 Pls. Cf. Harhoiu 2013, Abb. 15. a good summarising photo of the objects in graves I and II.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. also Matei 1982, 387–392. See Gáll et alii 2017, 27–28, nos. 11, 13.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Feind 2010, 20–21; Cf. also Fink 1981, 75–86.



lettered monogram displaying a long cross.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless one cannot state based only on the form of the cross<sup>27</sup> that the object comes from an Arian environment, consequently the contemporary Arian Germanic states might not necessarily be involved in an analysis of the religious relations around the ring, while they also cannot be definitely excluded.<sup>28</sup> Finally, chronological and also structural aspects hinder any suggested reading starting from the left-hand side of the imprint from being adequate (Pl. III/2).

8. István Bóna recommended a Greek reading of the monogram, on a formal basis and also because of the last sign is also readable as a Σ (Sigma). He considered the content of the monogram similar to that of the namering and the two rings to belong to the same owner. He formulated accordingly his reading starting from the side and containing several repeated letters: “The imprint lends both the interpretations of the names OMARIVΣ and AVD-OMARIVΣ, and the name is by no surprise similar to the one read on the second ring.”<sup>29</sup> In other instances, he stated the following: “Audomharjis/Omharius ... The original, more complete first part of the name begins with the word AVD readable on the monogram sealing of the grave and might be interpreted as ‘happiness-salvation’.”<sup>30</sup>

As a different possibility, the formerly quoted J. Spier suggested a reading emphasizing an exceptional character and containing repetitions of letters, based on a Greek basis: *MARIAΣ* (Genitive).<sup>31</sup> Omitting the irregular repetition of the letter *A*, in a comment to this, Bence Fehér suggested the possibility *MAPIΥΣ* (Nominative) for consideration, and this is left aside as a possibility to be commented upon hereunder only due to the Genitive case required by the function of the retrograde monogram.

I have listed a series of probable or imaginable, Greek based complete and abbreviated variants without the letter *O* in 2019, with readings starting ‘ad absurdum’ from the side and having no Genitive ending which guaranteed poor results from the very beginning. These were: *PAMΙΣ* (Ramis), *PAMYΣ* (Ramus), *PAMYΣΙ* (Ramusi), *PAYΙΣ* (Ravis), *PAYΣ* (Raus), *PAYΣIM* (Rausim) etc. but none of these can be sustained as a real or adequate name or abbreviation in the given context.<sup>32</sup> One of those is real though: *PAYΣ* (Raus), it occurs in a Germanic context in a 3<sup>rd</sup> century source (Cassius Dio 72.12) as a Hasdingi Vandal name. The name also appears in a 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century *Alpes Maritimae* inscription fragment.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless the strong letter *M* in the monogram excludes this possibility, as it also excludes all variants without an *M*. Along the same train of thought we might examine the name *PAMΙΣ* (Ramis), which appears in a 1<sup>st</sup> century source as a Germanic Chatti feminine name (Strabon 7.1.4). Finally, as a name-part, an abbreviation, *PAYΣIM* (Rausim) might surface as a theoretical possibility, as a shorter version standing for, say Rausimodus (see Zosimos 2.21.1 and 3).<sup>34</sup> From among the listed variants, the latter falls

<sup>26</sup> Cf. above notes nos. 5, 6, 7 and 16.

<sup>27</sup> For characteristics of cross types in the first millennium cf. Dávid 2012.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Kiss P. 2019, 369–408.

<sup>29</sup> Bóna 1986, 147; Bóna 1989, 79–80.

<sup>30</sup> Bóna in: Bóna et alii 1993, 41. Cf. also Bóna in: Bóna et alii 1999, 8.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Spier 2010, 15.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Förstemann 1856, 1030, 1034–1035; Schönfeld 1911, 182–186, especially 184.

<sup>33</sup> CIL V 7975 = CAG 6, p. 647, *Alpes Maritimae*, Cemenelum (France / Alpes Maritimes County / Tourrette-Levens): *D(is) M(anibus) | Rausi*.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. also Kovács 2013, 193–211.

closest both in space and time to the probable origins of the Apahida monogram ring. It is impossible to establish the ethnicity of the person, but it seems to be a Sarmatian leader. The name is abbreviated, but beyond the reading originating in a flawed starting point, it has no other relation to the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> century Germanic community in Apahida.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, as I have previously quoted, based on Latin, J. Hampel recommended the reading MARC(us), while C. H. Opreanu recommended the reading OMACAR(?), considering the monogram to bear the same text as the namerings.<sup>36</sup>

9. Be it based on Greek or on Latin, in the Nominative or Genitive case, two further aspects need to be taken into consideration when reading and interpreting the monogram. One is that the name signalled by it does not at all begin with the letter P (Greek)/R (Latin), but with another letter displayed in the centre of the monogram, as J. Spier and B. Fehér rightfully noted. The monograms of the era are arranged around a central letter. The other aspect, further emphasized, is that the owner, supposed, based on the context and the other possibly related finds, to belong to a Germanic milieu, having been born in the third or fourth quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, might not have had a Germanic name. Finally, an absolutely valid rule is that the same letter cannot be taken several times into account in the same reading. The monograms of the age were edited with an eye for completion, or names were abbreviated before entering into a monogram.

The monogram is usually a name, but it can also be a title.<sup>37</sup> Here we are dealing with a name, both in Latin and in Greek reading. No known Latin or Greek title can be formed out of the letters, not even if one disregards the rules for creating monograms active in the age.

10. The Latin reading of the monogram is a real possibility, especially taking into consideration the location and medium where the ring had surfaced. On the other hand, the monogram rings of the age used for authentication and the monograms on the back side of coins are usually Latin-based, even in Byzantium. The Latin letters of the monogram, presented in alphabetical order and in an anagram are the following: A, a; C, c; I, i; I, i; M, m; R, r; V, v. (Pl. III/3). The central letter is M, the others are linked to that. One might suggest the possibility of a P, p, owing to the form inherent in the letter R, r, but only if the reading would vouchsafe the possibility. The short bars attached to the stem on the right side of the print add up to form a letter C, anything else is out of the question. The upper part of the letter M forms the letter V, its left side, with a bar, forms the letter A, as well as the stem and leg of the letter R. The two stems of the letter M could furthermore be interpreted each as a letter I, while the one on the left side of the print can act as a stem for the letter R, while the right side one as the curve of the letter C. There is no letter standing on its own in this monogram. The set of letters ACIIMRV contains a much greater number of possible combinations than the set of intelligible Germanic, Greek or Latin names it can generate. Excluding from the very beginning the names discussed above beginning with the letter R and setting out from the central letter M of the monogram, and disregarding nonsensical variants, the series of letters can be arranged into the Genitive variant of an

<sup>35</sup> With the same starting point the monogram would even yield the less plausible *PRIAMYΣ* (etc.) name, with a P extracted from the R, as it would be possible in cases properly backed up, but is pointless here.

<sup>36</sup> Hampel 1905 (1971), 698; Opreanu 1999, 926–928 = AE 2007, 1193b. Cf. also Opreanu 2014.

<sup>37</sup> A summary cf. Feind 2010.

actual name, MAVRICI, which is certainly *Mauricius* or maybe *Mauricus*, in Nominative and *Mauric* without the Latin ending, in a possibly “Germanised” form (Pl. III/5).

11. For a long period of time, the language recommended to read the monogram was Greek. One of the reasons was the form of the monogram, presumed to be related only to Byzantium, the others the form of the first letter on the right side of the print, which in Greek reads Sigma ( $\Sigma$ ), and the letter form in this case is a *sigma lunata*. The form of the monogram cannot decide the language of its reading. Similar monograms were in use in the Eastern part of the past Roman Empire already at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century while during the second half of the same century it spread westward. 6<sup>th</sup> century examples are numerous, occurring not only on signet rings but also on the reverse sides of coins and on elements of the built heritage.<sup>38</sup>

From a formal or scientific viewpoint the possibility of there being a Sigma (C i.e.  $\Sigma$ : *sigma lunata*), in the monogram is real. Based on this, the monogram should be examined for an eventual Greek reading. First of all, it should be noted that I found no evidence at all of Latin crosses being used on definitely Greek monograms. The identifiable Greek letters in the monogram, in an alphabetical order, and in a sort of anagram are the following: A,  $\alpha$  -Alpha; I,  $\iota$  - Iota,  $\iota$  -Iota; M,  $\mu$  -Mu; P,  $\Pi$ ,  $\rho$  -Rho;  $\Sigma$ ,  $\sigma$ ,  $\varsigma$  -Sigma; Y,  $\upsilon$  -Upsilon (Pl. III/4). The shared, connected or linked stems of P+M and M+ $\Sigma$  with the monogram display each a letter (I) Iota, M (Mu) and Y (Upsilon) are in a nexus (ligature), the upper part of the Mu forms the Upsilon. The left side of the printed Mu with an added bar also forms a letter A in nexus or ligature. The series of letters A, I, I, M, P,  $\Sigma$ , Y contains a much greater number of possible combinations than the set of intelligible Germanic, Greek or Latin names it can generate. Excluding from the very beginning the names discussed above beginning with the letter R a monogram and setting out from the central letter M (Mu) of the monogram, the letters form the Nominative or Latin Genitive form of a valid name: MAYPIΣI (Μαυρισι), or Μαυρις in Nominative. The Greek reading yields the same name as the Latin does, but with a Latin Genitive ending of *-i* instead of the Greek *-ou*. If it had to be read in Greek, the monogram is in the Greek style instead of actually being in Greek. There is a lesser possibility for a name in the Nominative: MAYPIΣ (Μαυρις) as the retrograde character of the monogram (Pl. III/1–2), its function of authentication, requires a Genitive ending. From among the letters of the monogram, this ending could only be an I interpreted in Latin. The theoretical Greek reading could also be justified by a phonetical transcript, in case of which the sound C or rather the sound group CI of the Latin becomes a Sigma ( $\Sigma$ ). This would back up the original form of *Mauricius*, as *Mauricus* would have rather been written with a Kappa (K) in Greek.<sup>39</sup> The phenomenon points toward the possibility of the name *Maurici* in Genitive being told the engraver, who heard and recorded it as *Maurisi*.<sup>40</sup> All this is obviously valid if the monogram is Greek, which, as we have seen, is not only hardly probable, but rather is not Greek.

12. A special case surfaces thus with this monogram: it bears the very same name in both languages considered. Based only on the writing or its language thus one cannot

<sup>38</sup> Contemporary and later use in the East and West of monogram rings cf. Hilberg 2000, 63–122. Cf. also note 5.

<sup>39</sup> For linguistic aspects of the matter cf. Väänänen 1963, 55–56; Mihăescu 1978, 196, 199–200; Fehér 2007, 388–389.

<sup>40</sup> For this cf. e.g. Kajanto 1963, 77, 82; Kajanto 1965, 206.



definitely establish the place of manufacturing of the ring. The geopolitical situation and wide network of relations of the site make both a Byzantine and a Western origin plausible.<sup>41</sup> In this specific age the long or Lain cross (*crux immissa*) lends no definite solution to the matter, even though the lack of long crosses on Greek monograms pushes the interpretation towards a Latin linguistic medium. Taking these into consideration and summing up the aforesaid, the Latin variant needs fewer arguments and explanations to hold, especially with regard to the Latin nature of the ending required by the function of the object (*-i* and not *-ou*), also to the medium known for the use of names ending in *-ric* (*-rich*), and to the presumably Western origin of the ring owner (Pl. III/5).

13. In the context of the Apahida “princely” graves and finds, and marked by his ring as well,<sup>42</sup> the owner must have been a Western Germanic man of higher rank, who lived to see his death on the Northern-North-Eastern periphery of the Gepidic world of the day. He might not have been a king, but he must have been a regional leader of unknown status issuing documents authenticated with his monogram seal. He must have belonged to a Christian milieu, accounted for by the cross on the ring. Despite his supposedly Germanic origin he bore a Latin name instead of a Germanic one, which occurs more than once on the territory of the former Roman Empire both in the early and late imperial ages, with formal variants of Maurus such as Mauricus and Mauricius.<sup>43</sup> In his original milieu he must have used the name without the Latin ending, e.g. simply as ‘Mauric’, the ending of which in this form was similar to the *-ric*, *-rik* (*-rich*) endings of names of highly ranked Germanic leaders known as *regulus*. Besides its original context this might have been a further nudge to use and incorporate the name. But the name of the Apahida Mauric of the age (approximately the last quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century – the first quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century) is less related to the Mauricus or Mauricius names of the early imperial age than to the early Christian martyr Mauricius, with whose name the names of Christian Mauricius/Maurikios<sup>44</sup> of the late Roman and early Byzantine ages.<sup>45</sup> Among other names known in Germanic / Gepidic milieus so far, this one is certainly a novelty.<sup>46</sup>

14. According to the legend, the Christian soldier of Nubian origin, known only from the legend or from his martyr act by the name of Mauricius, was an exemplary officer of the Thebais (Theban) Legion of the Roman army. He was martyred in Octodurum/Agaunum in the fourth quarter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, in 284 or 286, or at the beginning of the next century, in 302.<sup>47</sup> He was later canonised under the name of Saint Mauricius

<sup>41</sup> Cf. generally Halsall 2007; historical and archaeological aspects cf. Kiss 1991; Bóna et alii 1999 (introduction by István Bóna, authors: Ágnes B. Tóth, János Cseh, Zsolt Gallina, Károly Mesterházy, Margit Nagy); Schmauder 2002; Schmauder 2003; Prohászka 2008; Quast 2001, 431–452; Kiss P. 2015; Masek 2018; Vida 2018; Rác, Vida 2018; studies in the volume Vida, Quast, Rác, Koncz 2019, with special emphasis on Dobos 2019, cf. with the earlier literature.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Garipzanov 2018, especially 147–148.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Kajanto 1965, 206; OPEL III 68.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. PLRE II, 3, 854–862. – In the PLRE collection regarding the period before 527 (II) the name does not appear among persons of higher rank featured in the sources, which, taking into account adults recorded beginning with 527, shows a trend of popularity for this name rising in the last quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>45</sup> For naming habits in the early Christian era cf. Kajanto 1963.

<sup>46</sup> For known Gepidic names cf. Bóna et alii 1993, 26–52; Haubrichts 2019, 57–81.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Eucherius Lugdunensis, *Passio Acaunensium martyrum*. In: *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Latina* 5737 and Bruno Krusch (Hrsg.), *Monumenta Germaniae historica. Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum* III.

(Maurice, Moritz, Móric), his consecrated day being the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September. His cult developed soon in the neighbourhood. A church was built in 390 above his remains transferred to Agaunum (Saint-Maurice/canton Valais/Switzerland). Beginning with 515, under the Kingdom of Burgundy,<sup>48</sup> a royal monastery (abbey) was founded and an institutional cult developed. The cult of Mauricius spread from the site of his martyrdom to the entire Roman world both in Western and Eastern territories and it flourishes to this day.<sup>49</sup> The spreading of the cult and the name is reflected in related names occurring on the territory of the former Roman Empire. According to the known names, Saint Mauricius becomes more popular beginning with the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, in what pertains to adult man in leading positions, registered after 527.<sup>50</sup> Probably the name of the Byzantine emperor Maurikios (Tiberius Mauricius)<sup>51</sup> born in 539 in Arabissus, Cappadocia, who ascended to the throne in 582 and ruled until 602, to later become a saint of the Eastern Church is also related to the martyr of Agaunum. The emperor's name also demonstrates the gradual spreading of the cult and of the name towards the Eastern realms of the former Roman Empire.

15. The presumably late, second half or third quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> century attachments in the tomb of the Apathida Onachar show connections to Western territories under Franc rule,<sup>52</sup> the name points to the same fact, while the fibula suggests an earlier held, high Western Roman/Italian office.<sup>53</sup> 'Mauric's' name offers the same points of connection. The point of origin for the spreading of this name seems to be related to a territory occupied by the Saal Franks during the first third of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, in continuation of their expansion started by the end of the previous century. The Franc king Chlodimir<sup>54</sup> ordered the killing of the ruler of the Kingdom of Burgundy, Sigismundus (Saint Sigismund, son of the law-maker Gundobad<sup>55</sup> known by his monogram as well) in the year 523. In 532, the Franks defeated the Kingdom of Burgundy, then they divided it in 534.<sup>56</sup> Beside the Franc conquest, a series of inner political tensions by the beginning of the 520s might have triggered the migration of certain high ranking personalities from the territory. Ostrogotho, wife of the Burgundian king Sigismund and daughter of Theoderic the Great, tried to secure the throne for their son Sigeric instead of Sigismund, but the latter had

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Passiones vitaeque sanctorum aevi Merovingici et antiquiorum aliquot, Berlin 1896, 32–39 (Cf. Tokodi 2018, 353–358 – Hungarian translation of the legend). See also Woods 1994, 385–395 (=Woods 2018, 229–240) with the topic of the Mauricius legend. Cf. also Carrié 2005, 9–35 (=Carrié 2018, 197–228) with the war history aspects of the Mauricius legend.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Sécrotan 1868; Drew 1972.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Suckale-Redlesfen 1987. Occurrences in the Carpathian Basin and elsewhere cf. Bálint 2006, 281–289. For general outlook and the afterlife of the Mauricius cult cf. Sággy 2014, 337–346. See generally e.g. Világtörténet 8 (40) year 2018/2, each study written on Saint Mauricius.

<sup>50</sup> In the 395–527 CE collection of PLRE II there is no Mauricius, as opposed to the 527–641 CE collection of PLRE II, which presents 10 known high ranking persons named Mauricius.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Whitby 1988; PLRE II, 3, 855–860.

<sup>52</sup> See Schmauder 1998; Quast 2015. Cf. also Opreanu 2005, 7–10.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. also e.g. Rummel 2005, 376–379. For details on Onachar see Szabó 2020a, 283–284 and Szabó 2020b, 208, 212–214.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Klaniczay 2000, 67–68.

<sup>55</sup> RIC 10: Gundobad no. 1. Cf. Drew 1972.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Sécrotan 1868; Drew 1972; Périn, Kazanski 1996.

the pretender killed in 522.<sup>57</sup> Outstandingly enough, the name of the contemporary or even compatriot Sigeric shows a specific structural similarity to the name form of Mauric, signalling perhaps a naming trend that cannot be here and now reinforced.

16. In the form of a strong supposition one might consequently formulate more or less the same as was formulated in the case of the contemporary and “neighbourly” Onachar, backing the statement with Western type Apahida objects and names of Western origin. Mauricius or ‘Mauric’, owner of the monogram ring, must have fled his land due to inner political tensions or an attack from the Franks, settling among the Gepids<sup>58</sup> by the first quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, latest. Through his wife Ostrogotho, the circles of the Burgundian Sigismund must have had stronger connections with the Italian Ostrogoth state, and through this, with the Gepidic Kingdom based in Sirmium, as well as with the Gepidic people living in the area of Transylvania and the region of the river Tisza in a political-administrative organisation of a yet unknown type,<sup>59</sup> the medium must have thus been not entirely foreign for the refugee. Irrespective of all this, connections between Gepidic and Burgundian people reaching back to mid-5<sup>th</sup> century have already been demonstrated.<sup>60</sup> Apahida was situated in the Northern, North-Western region of the Gepidic world, high ranking personalities fled from the West might have settled here in greater safety. These “*reguli*” constituted a sort of political centre in the region,<sup>61</sup> while the monogram ring might reflect a practice of chancellery there. Lacking the title *rex*, based on the rings and finds, the supposed centre cannot be considered a royal one. Along with their companies, the *reguli* of Apahida might have been the earliest bearers of the “Eastern Merovingian culture” on Transylvanian territory, more specifically along the river Someşul Mic,<sup>62</sup> *Onaharus* – ‘*Onachar*’ and *Mauricius* – *Mauric* among them.

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<sup>57</sup> Cf. Dailey 2015, 87–88.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. wide context e.g. von Welck, Wiczorek, Hermann 1996 and studies in RPMK 2006.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. general context e.g. Wolfram 1997; Arnold 2014; Vida 2018, 9–23 with earlier literature.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. e.g. Martin 2007, 313–319; Kiss P. 2015, 89–101; Kovács 2021, 89–90.

<sup>61</sup> On the topic of various Gepidic centres compare Bóna, Nagy 2002–2005; B. Tóth 2006.

<sup>62</sup> Dobos 2019, 111–142. A chronological analysis of Gepidic sites along the river Someşul Mic and a map of their positions: Gáll et alii 2017, 136–142, map 3. For Merovingian cultural influences in the Carpathian Basin cf. also Bóna 1987, 149–151; Vida 2018, 9–23.

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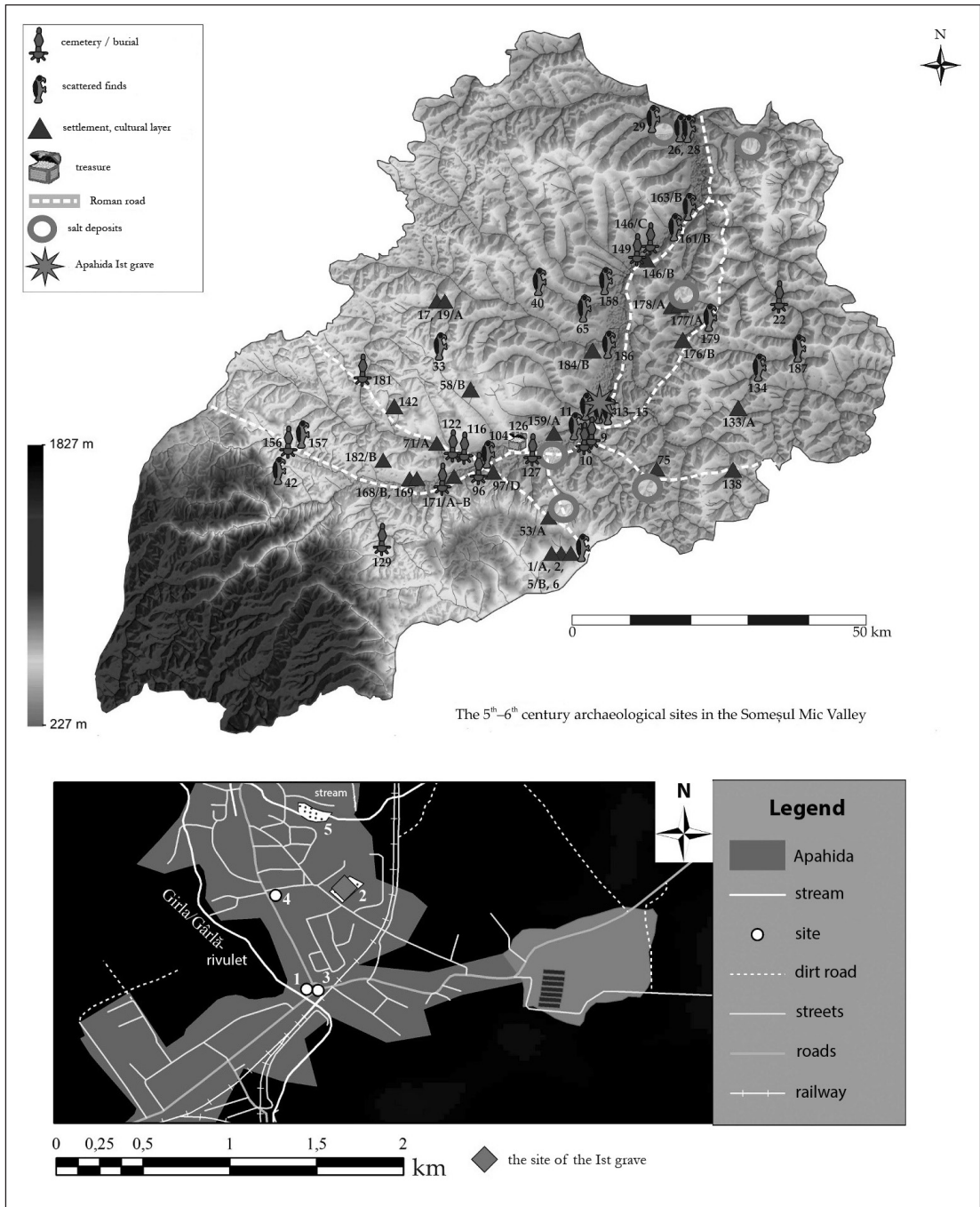
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PI. I. Gepidic age sites along the river Someșul Mic and Apahida (Erwin Gáll).



Pl. II. 1. The Apahida monogram sealing, top view (Zsuzsa Hajnal); 2. The Apahida monogram sealing, side view (Zsuzsa Hajnal); 3. The Apahida monogram sealing, ground view (Zsuzsa Hajnal).



**Pl. II. 1.** The retrograde monogram of the Apahida monogram sealring (Zsuzsa Hajnal); **2.** The print image of the monogram on the Apahida monogram sealring (Zsuzsa Hajnal); **3.** The Latin letters of the Apahida monogram sealring (Ádám Szabó); **4.** The possibly Greek letters of the Apahida monogram sealring (Ádám Szabó); **5.** The letters of the Apahida monogram sealring forming the word MAVRICI (Ádám Szabó).