

Texts and Contexts of the Oldest Runic Inscriptions



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4. BAD EMS (Hessen, Germany), fragment of a silver-gilt bow-fibula. In the Römisches-Germanisches Museum, Köln. It is dated 3rd th. 6th c. Found in 1878, probably Frankish (Werner 1935:329f.). The runes are clearly legible and inscribed in two parts opposite each other on the footplate, which is the only part of the brooch that remains. The runes read:]**madali**+ **ubada**[

𐌿𐌿𐌿𐌿𐌿+ 𐌺𐌿𐌿𐌿

There may have been more runes preceding]**madali** and following **ubada**[. The left half of the **m** is broken away with the rest of the brooch, the **l** is smaller than the preceding **a** and the next **i**. The little cross following **madali** may be a word-divider (Krause 1935:331ff.) or a Christian marker, cf. OSTHOFEN, below, nr. 34.

madali is according to Krause (1935:332) a PN, nsm., based on Gmc **mapla-* ‘redenswerte Sache’, with svarabhakti *-a-*: **mapala*, **maðala*. Cf. also OHG *mahal* ‘Gerichtsstätte, Versammlung’ (Gottschald 1982:337). The **d** rune in the inscription denotes the voiced allophone of *p*, according to Krause. ARUM (chapter nine, nr. 11) shows a parallel: **edæ** = *ēðæ* = *ēthæ* ‘oath’.

madali could be a man’s name, nsm. *ja*-stem *Madali*; or a woman’s name derived from *Madala*, nsf. *ō*- or *n*-stem (Kaufmann 1965:97).

In **ubada** the nasal before homorganic **b** may have been omitted; Krause (1935:332f.) reads *umbada*; a merger of *umbi* ‘around’ and

(gi)bada ‘consolation’. Another possibility may be a hypocoristic woman’s name: *U-bada* nsf. *wō*-stem; *-bada* cf. ON *boð*, OE *beadu* ‘battle’, cf. LOVEDEN HILL (chapter eight, nr. 7) *Sipæbed*.

