

# Anthropomorphic pendants of the Middle La Tène bronze belts: Women who knew what they wore?

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*A bronze pendant decorated with red enamel was found at Gradina in Privlaka, a fortified settlement of the Scordisci in eastern Slavonia. The pendant probably hung on an anthropomorphic ending of a bronze belt consisting of lyre and rectangular segments. This has been confirmed by the direct comparison with the anthropomorphic pendant ending with two identical clepsydra pendants which was found at the Scordisci cemetery in Novi Banovci. Bronze belts including lyre segments are a characteristic item of the Middle La Tène female costume, especially in the southeastern Carpathian Basin or the area inhabited by the Scordisci. Considering the exceptional creativity and skills required to make anthropomorphic pendants, it can be assumed that bronze belts of that shape, richly decorated with multicoloured enamel, were worn by women who had a prominent status in the community. Also, the bronze pendant from Privlaka, along with other finds from the trial excavations, indicates that Gradina in Privlaka was already inhabited in the Middle La Tène, with the current data indicating that the greatest settlement intensity was recorded in the Late La Tène.*

**Key words:** *anthropomorphic pendants, bronze belts, female costume, Privlaka, fortified settlement, eastern Slavonia, Scordisci, identity, status*

The fortified settlement of Privlaka–Gradina, located on the River Bosut near Vinkovci in eastern Slavonia, is one of the rare multilayer prehistoric settlements along the Bosut river that have been the subject of trial or rescue excavations. The trial excavations, undertaken some forty years ago, collected important data on the intensity of settling Gradina in the Late Iron Age and its complex fortification system.<sup>1</sup> Since Gradina was on the front line during the Croatian War of Independence, there have been several site surveys in the last few years to establish the damage to the site.<sup>2</sup> On those occasions, many surface finds of pottery and metal were collected. They include a bronze pendant decorated with red enamel, which was found in 2017.

The pendant is rectangular, with slightly convex long sides, in the shape of a clepsydra (Fig. 1: 1). Each of the two short sides has a single hoop measuring 1.2 cm in diameter. In the middle of the pendant there is a depression that has a round protrusion along each shorter side. The red enamel has been partly preserved in the depression. The back of the pendant is smooth. The pendant is 4.2 cm in length, 1.3 cm in width, and 0.2 cm in thickness.

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<sup>1</sup> Majnarić-Pandžić 1979; 1984; 1996: 260; Dalić 1998. The excavations at Gradina identified layers of the Sopot culture and the Bronze Age groups Belegiš I and II, followed by the layers of the Scordisci settlement.

<sup>2</sup> The site surveys included both hills and the area around Gradina, where many surface finds of the La Tène culture were also collected. We would like to thank our colleagues Hrvoje Vulić and Boris Kratočil from the Municipal Museum in Vinkovci for the finds collected at the Privlaka–Gradina settlement.

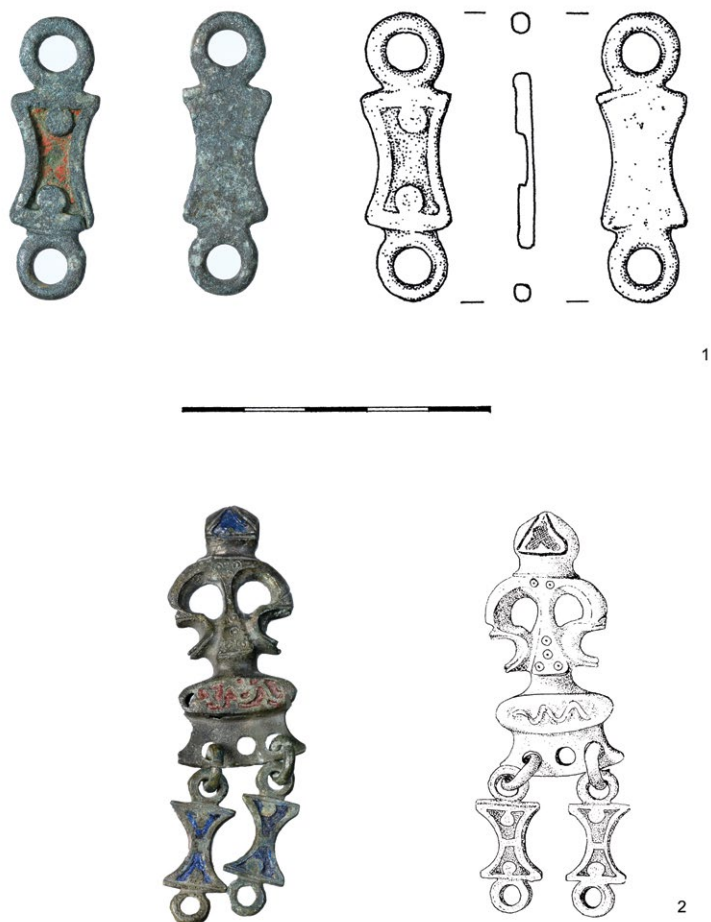


Fig. 1. 1: Gradina in Privlaka; 2: Novi Banovci (photo: I. Krajcar, fototeka AMZ; drawing after: Todorović 1974).

The pendant probably hung on an anthropomorphic pendant of the kind recorded at the ends of bronze belts made of lyre and rectangular segments. This is confirmed by direct comparison with the anthropomorphic pendant 13 cm long, discovered in Novi Banovci, which ends with two identical clepsydra pendants (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 37, 89, Pl. XXVI: 4). The only differences are the more pronouncedly convex long sides and a rib in the middle resulting in two smaller depressions (Fig. 1: 2).<sup>3</sup> Considering the shape of the upper part, it can be assumed that the pendant from Novi Banovci hung at the end of a belt that included lyre segments, as confirmed by the finds of such segments, one of them decorated with blue enamel on the loop.<sup>4</sup>

Considering the overall shape of the pendant from Novi Banovci, it is assumed that it represents a stylised female figure. The upper part of the pendant is shaped like a lyre segment. The head is represented by the perforated loop for the hoop. The loop includes an arrow-shaped depression filled with blue enamel that has a groove on each side. It is followed by the lyre-shaped body which is decorated along the middle, in the triangular upper part, with two ring-and-dot motifs, while the raised triangular lower part has four motifs of the same kind. The curled sides, which represent the arms, make contact with the middle of the body and end with a small protrusion on each side ending with a groove. The lower part has an elongated transversal oval widening which is decorated on the front side with a wave relief pattern and surrounded by depressions filled with red enamel. The lower part has three semicircular protrusions, also done in relief. The lyre-shaped part of the pendant, as well as the oval widening at the bottom, are hollow. The lower part of the pendant, under the oval widening, looks like a fan-shaped plaque with three small holes at

<sup>3</sup> The anthropomorphic pendant originates from a cemetery with several weapon items, costume and jewellery items, and ceramic vessels, which have been dated from the Early to the Late La Tène (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 36–38, Pls. XXVI–XXVIII: 1–6, 8; Pl. XXIX: 6).

<sup>4</sup> We thank Dr. I. Drnić from the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb for the photo of the pendant from Novi Banovci.

the bottom. In both outermost holes there are hoops with clepsydra pendants hanging from them. These pendants have a smaller hoop on each narrow side, like the pendant from Gradina in Privlaka. The middle part has a depression with a round protrusion on each short side and a rib in the middle dividing the depression into two smaller parts. The depressions in these pendants are filled with blue enamel. The pendant has alternating depressions with blue enamel at the ends, while the middle contains red enamel. The back side of the pendant is flat (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 37, 89, Pl. XXVI: 4; Todorović 1974: 102, Fig. 80; Jovanović B. 1983: 45, Fig. 2; 1987: 838, Pl. LXXXIII: 1; Majnarić-Pandžić 1998: 332–333, n. 156; Popović 2002: 351, Pl. II: 5; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 9). The anthropomorphic pendant from Novi Banovci is considered to be one of the most beautiful examples of the lively colour effects created by belts made of lyre and rectangular segments. Considering the lyre segments found at Novi Banovci, it can be assumed that the anthropomorphic pendant was at the end of such a segmented bronze belt.

The current findings indicate that such complex belt endings usually appear on belts comprising various combinations of lyre and rectangular segments, as testified by the upper part of these pendants, which is shaped similarly to the lyre segments. This points to conceptual similarities in the forms of segments and pendants. However, anthropomorphic pendants were occasionally found at the ends of belts consisting of rectangular segments only. Still, it should be pointed out that most finds include only the pendant without other parts of the belt, or just a final portion of the belt with a few segments and the pendant, making it impossible to reconstruct the composition of the entire belt. Very few finds include entire belts ending in a pendant where the entire composition is known.

### ***Anthropomorphic pendants of the Middle La Tène bronze belts***

Currently, the anthropomorphic pendant from Novi Banovci is a unique composition, with the closest parallel in the clepsydra pendant from Gradina in Privlaka. As we pointed out, considering the lyre-shaped upper part and other preserved segments, it is the ending of a belt containing lyre segments and probably rectangular segments.

The geographically closest parallel is the chance find of a part of a belt with lyre and rectangular segments and an anthropomorphic pendant from Bačko Gradište (Fig. 2: 1). The complex pendant is topped by a loop for the hoop with a small wart-like protrusion (*Endpuffer*). In the upper part there is a rectangular field decorated with two parallel S-depressions linked with the middle part, shaped as a lyre, which may consist of stylised opposing bird heads. In the lower part of the pendant there is another rectangular field with two S-depressions with another perforated round protrusion on each side. The lower part has a rectangular plaque with three holes for small hoops, which hold three pendants ending with stylised animal heads (Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXIV: 1; Pl. XXXV: 13–14; Todorović 1968: Pl. L: 1; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 17; Jovanović M. 1991: 30–31, Figs. 1–2; Popović 2002: 351, Pl. II: 4).<sup>5</sup>

Several anthropomorphic pendants from belt ends have been found at Hungarian sites along the Danube and the Tisza, sharing the same characteristic shapes: the upper part has the shape of a lyre and spherical thickenings linking it with the rectangular plaque on the lower part of the pendant. Also, there are smaller spherical thickenings linking the upper sphere with the lyre portion of the pendant on each side. The plaque is richly decorated with various relief motifs surrounded by depressions filled with red enamel. The smaller pendants hanging from the bottom of the plaque also have different shapes. The pendants have a flat and smooth back. In spite of their different shapes, the pendants have conceptually similar compositions, with each pendant displaying some peculiar details of decorative motifs and shapes of terminal pendants.

The Bőlcské–Madocsahegy site included a part of a bronze belt consisting of lyre and rectangular segments, ending with a richly enamelled pendant (Fig. 2: 2). The upper part of the pendant is shaped like a lyre segment, with an upper triangular depression and a lower droplet depression above the spherical

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<sup>5</sup> Most finds from Bačko Gradište, originating from destroyed graves, can be dated to LT C2, which is also the probable date of the remains of the belt with the pendant.

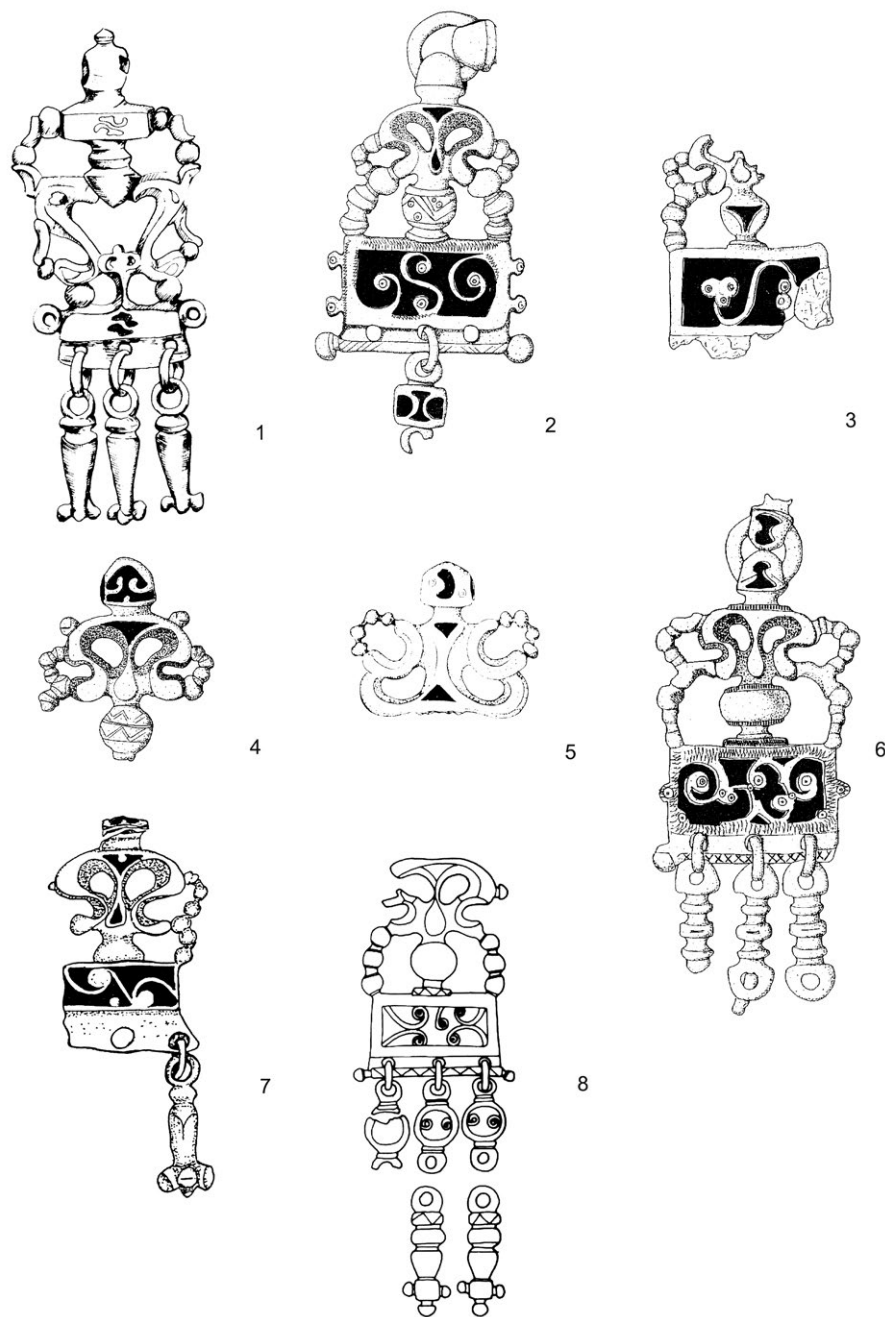


Fig. 2. 1: Bačko Gradište (after: Skordisci 1992); 2: Bölcske–Madocsahegy (after: Challet 1992); 3: Cece–Hardpuszta (after: Challet 1992); 4: Unknown site in Tolna (after: Challet 1992); 5: Sárosd (after: Stanczik & Vaday 1971); 6: Szentes (after: Challet 1992); 7: Hejőkeresztúr (after: Hellebrandt 2006); 8: Telești (after: Rustoiu 2008a).

middle, which is decorated with zig-zag lines alternating with ring-and-dot motifs. The lyre element on both sides has three spherical thickenings linking it with the upper corners of the rectangular plaque containing relief motifs of tendrils and spirals surrounded by depressions. The tendrils and spirals end with spherical terminals decorated with a ring-and-dot motif. Along the edges of the plaque there is a zig-zag line decoration, while both sides have two small oval protrusions which are also decorated with a ring-and-dot motif. At the bottom of the plaque there are three holes above a horizontal bar decorated with diagonal incisions and ending with a hemispherical knob on each side. The middle hole has a preserved hoop with a hanging pendant that consists of a rectangular plaque with a smaller hoop on each side. The plaque has two hemispherical depressions and a clepsydra depression between them. All the depressions are filled with red enamel (Tischler 1890: Pl. B2; Hunyady 1942: 104; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 17, Fig. 5: 9; Eluère 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 5; Szabó 1989: 29, Pl. V: 6; 1992: 154; Challet 1992: 102, Fig. 60; Rustoiu 2008a: 131, Fig. 63: 8; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 1).

A similar, only partly preserved pendant hung at the end of a belt that probably came from the cremation grave at the Cece–Hardpuszta site, as testified by the traces of burning on the segments (Fig. 2: 3). This belt also consists of lyre and hollow rectangular segments, which have edges with a groove or linked crescent-shaped depressions with ring-and-dot motifs between them. The ring loops of the lyre segments have triangular depressions with a groove on each side. There is a preserved part of a pendant with a lyre element in the upper part and a spherical thickening in the middle, which also has a triangular depression with slightly convex sides and a groove on each side. The lower part of the pendant has a rectangular plaque with a spiral motif; each end of the plaque has a trefoil motif consisting of three circles decorated with ring-and-dot motifs. The relief spiral and trefoils are surrounded by depressions filled with red enamel (Sellye 1939: 47, Pl. I: 1–14; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 17; Challet 1992: 102, Fig. 61; Horváth & Keszi 2004: 45, Fig. 346).<sup>6</sup>

This group should probably include the fragment of the upper part of the pendant originating from an unknown site from Tolna County, with a missing lower rectangular plaque (Fig. 2: 4). The loop, which used to have a hoop, has a depression of a complex conception, while the top of the upper part of the lyre shape has a wide triangular depression with a smaller circular protrusion. There is also a preserved central spherical thickening which is decorated with two double zig-zag lines separated by a horizontal strip with notches (Stanczik & Vaday, 1971: 21, Fig. 5: 1a–b; Challet 1992: 103–104, Fig. 63; Rustoiu 2008a: 131, Fig. 63: 3; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 6). Considering the described pendants that were preserved together with belt segments, it can probably be assumed that this pendant also hung at the end of a belt consisting of lyre and rectangular segments. Another similar find is the fragment of the upper part of a pendant, originating from the Sárosd site, which hung on a belt consisting of lyre and rectangular segments (Fig. 2: 5). The preserved upper part of the pendant has a crescent-shaped depression on the loop and a ring-and-dot motif decoration on each side. The upper part of the lyre shape has two opposing triangular depressions. The lower part of the pendant has not been preserved. The belt probably included the rectangular segment with a groove along each edge and the segment shaped like a double lyre. Also, one segment has traces of burning, so the belt probably originated from a cremation grave (Tompá 1937: 112, Pl. 53: 4–5, 8; Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXV: 2–3; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 19, Fig. 5: 5a–b; Rustoiu 2008a: 131, Fig. 63: 4; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 2).

Aside from the sites in southeastern Transdanubia, similar pendants have been found at sites along the Tisza river. The finds from Szentés include a belt pendant and a loop from a segment, which was probably lyre-shaped, where a spherical and a triangular depression are linked (Fig. 2: 6). The upper part of the pendant is lyre-shaped, turning into a massive spherical thickening above the lower part, where the corners of a rectangular plaque are connected with the lyre part. The plaque is decorated with relief motifs of linked tendrils ending with small spherical terminals that have the ring-and-dot motif. The tendrils are surrounded by depressions, while the edge of the plaque is decorated with a series of zig-zag incisions and a single ring-and-dot motif in each lower corner, while each narrower side of the plaque has a small hemispherical protrusion, again with a ring-and-dot motif. At the bottom of the plaque there are three holes above a decoration in the form of several X motifs between a single line on each side. A hemispherical protrusion has been preserved in one lower corner of the plaque. Each of the three holes has a hoop holding pendants with perforated hemispherical ends and with three narrow thickenings between each of them, the middle one being the largest (Tischler 1890: Pl. B4; Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXIV: 2; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 20, Fig. 5: 6; Eluère 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 3; Challet 1992: 103, Fig. 62; *Schätze aus der Keltenzeit in Ungarn* 1998: 84, cat. no. 177; Rustoiu 2008a: 131, Fig. 63: 7; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 3). The Szentés finds also included a fragment of a lyre segment and hollow rectangular segments decorated with a groove along the edges or with enamel. One rectangular segment has two triangular depressions separated by a narrow diagonal rib (Tischler 1890: Pl. B5; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 21; Challet 1992: 103, Fig. 62). The other segment has a zoomorphic buckle on the side, while the body of the segment has a rectangular depression with enamel. Also, a preserved loop has a connected circular and triangular depression like the one on the loop of the pendant (Tischler 1890: Pl. B6; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 21; Challet 1992: 103, Fig. 62). The first publications believed that these rectangular segments originated from an unknown site, but they were later linked with the Szentés pendant.

<sup>6</sup> The grave also contained an iron knife with a bent blade and ribbed handle ending with a ring.

A similar pendant was found at the Hejőkeresztúr cemetery (Fig. 2: 7). Its preserved part includes only the lower portion of the hoop loop, which was decorated with a depression filled with red enamel. The lyre-shaped upper part of the pendant has an upper triangular depression and a lower droplet depression, while the middle has an oval thickness. The lyre part of the pendant has spherical ribs linking it with the upper corners of the rectangular plaque that is decorated with a spiral with spherically widened ends and relief tendrils surrounded by depressions. The ending has a trapezoidal terminal that probably had three holes. The final one has a hoop holding a zoomorphic pendant similar to the ones from Bačko Gradište (Hellebrandt 2006: 208–209, Fig. 3: 11; Fig. 9).

This variant should probably include the pendant of a belt from the Kunszentmárton–Bokonya site along the Tisza, which was also probably hung on the end of the belt consisting of a combination of hollow rectangular and lyre segments.<sup>7</sup> The mostly preserved anthropomorphic pendant has a loop with a triangular depression with red enamel, but the pendants hung from the lower rectangular plaque are missing. The upper part of the pendant is lyre-shaped, turning into a massive spherical thickening above the lower part, where three spherical thickenings connect the corners of a rectangular plaque with the lyre part. The plaque is decorated with a relief motif of a lying spiral with a single tendril on each side, surrounded by depressions. There were probably three holes at the bottom of the plaque. The remains of the belt have been dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC (Kovács 2017: 15, 21, 83, cat. no. 203).

The described pendants have a parallel in the one from the cremation grave of a woman from the Telești site in Oltenia. The belt consisted of lyre and rectangular segments which had a groove along the edges and were hollow on the lower side. At the end of the belt, there was a pendant with a lyre-shaped upper part (Fig. 2: 8), while the middle part has a spherical thickening above a narrow oval thickening, decorated with a zig-zag line, towards the rectangular plaque. The plaque is decorated with relief motifs of tendrils with curling ends, surrounded by depressions. At the bottom of the plaque there are three holes and a bar decorated with a zig-zag line, ending with a hemisphere on each end. The holes have hoops holding pendants with a round middle having two relief ring-and-dot motifs. At the end there were profiled zoomorphic pendants. The grave has been dated to LT C1, and it is believed to prove the mobility of the women who brought such belts to the territory beyond the area of their production (Rustoiu 2004–2005: 54–55, Fig. 1: 6–13; 2008a: 128, Fig. 62: 6–13; 2008b: 38, Fig. 5: 6–13; 2011: 167, Fig. 5: 6–13).<sup>8</sup> There is another end pendant similar to the one on the belt from Kiskunfélegyháza, originating from an unknown site. The preserved round part of the pendant has two depressions with a spiral rib between them. The lower portion of the pendant has a rectangular part with a protruding sphere in the middle, while each side has one round protrusion. It ends with a round terminal (Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 21, Fig. 5: 7a–b). Considering the oval thickening in the middle and the rectangular plaque in the lower part, this group might include the fragment of the pendant from the Včelince site in eastern Slovakia. The central oval thickening is decorated, like some pendants from the Hungarian sites, with a zig-zag line. The rectangular plaque is decorated with an exceptionally complex composition, and the pendant ends with four holes above a horizontal bar with a hemisphere on each end (Bujna 2011: 116, Fig. 49: 4).

In spite of bigger formal differences, this pendant variant could include the uniquely shaped pendant at the end of the belt from Kiskunfélegyháza along the Tisza river. The belt consists of rectangular segments, some of which are decorated with enamel. The pendant has a loop with depressions, crossed by a hoop, under which there is a lyre element with lower curled ends finishing with realistically shaped opposing bird heads. The lyre body has relief ring-and-dot motifs surrounded by depressions. The curled sides in the lower part are linked with a bar that has three narrow discoid thickenings, the middle one being the largest. On the lower part there is a trapezoid plaque with a round protrusion on each side bearing a reverse ring-and-dot motif surrounded by a depression. The plaque is decorated with two fields, each of them with a relief

<sup>7</sup> Along with rectangular segments, there is a preserved zoomorphic buckle with a rectangular lower part decorated with two relief tendrils surrounded by depressions. Interestingly, the preserved lyre segment decorated with red enamel can be ascribed to variant C, which is characterised by a spherical lengthening of sides after contact with the middle body (Kovács 2017: 15, 21, 82–83, cat. no. 199–204).

<sup>8</sup> The grave from Telești also contained glass beads and two bronze fibulae, one of which was destroyed by burning, and the other having a preserved semicircular bow with a spiral consisting of two large coils and a high-set external chord. The foot is caught in the bow closer to the spiral, as testified by the remains of the clasp.

spiral surrounded by a depression. At the bottom of the plaque there are three holes, with one of the side holes preserving a pendant with a round middle part that also has a relief ring-and-dot motif (Sellye 1939: Pl. II: 14–20; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 18). This pendant, therefore, has a different shape than the others, primarily by its lyre-shaped middle part ending with realistically shaped bird heads and depressions.

A belt from another site along the Tisza river also ends with a uniquely shaped lyre pendant (Fig. 3: 1). It is the belt from the Jászberény-Öregerdő site, on which some segments show traces of burning, which indicates a probable find from a cremation grave.<sup>9</sup> The lyre-shaped pendant has a hoop going through a loop which has concentric circles, one of them containing red enamel. The loop and the lyre element are connected by a triangular thickening that has depressions of the same shape with a small round protrusion with a point in the middle. The S-shaped sides are linked in the lower part, giving the pendant its lyre shape. On the lower side there are crescent-shaped thickenings linked by a bar with three holes holding smaller profiled pendants (Hild 1898; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 17, Fig. 2; Fig. 6: 1–2; Fig. 7: 1; Eluère 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 4; Challet 1992: 96, Fig. 50; Kovács 2016: 192, Fig. 2; 2017: 21, 69, cat. no. 165). A pendant with a lyre shape has also been found at the end of a belt in cremation grave 6 at the Farnos cemetery (Fig. 3: 2). Even though a part of the segments was damaged by burning, it can be seen that the belt was mostly made of hollow rectangular segments with a groove along the edges, while the middle part of a smaller number of segments has a diagonally divided rectangular field with four triangular depressions. One of these decorated segments has a zoomorphic buckle on the side. The belt buckle is shaped as a stylised horse head with a leaf-like upper part, while the lower part has a rectangular section decorated with triangular depressions like the mentioned segments. The same decoration can be seen in the upper part of the pendant, which has a lyre-shaped lower portion with a groove along the edges. At the end there are three holes with hoops holding three pendants ending with a hemisphere (Hellebrandt 1999: 27, Pl. IX: 6a–f; Pl. X: 1a–b, 2a–b, 3).

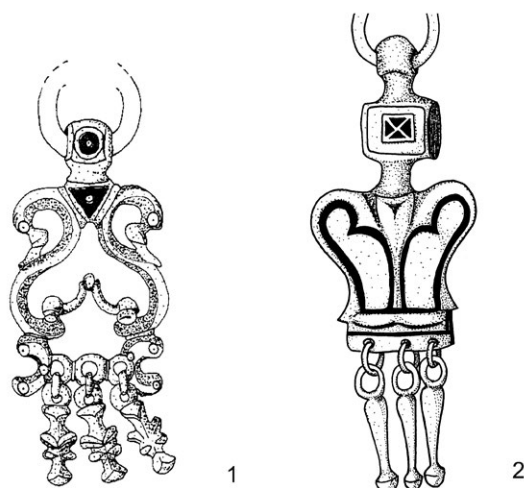


Fig. 3. 1: Jászberény-Öregerdő (after: Challet 1992); 2: Farnos, grave 6 (after: Hellebrandt 1999).

The S-shaped sides are linked in the lower part, giving the pendant its lyre shape. On the lower side there are crescent-shaped thickenings linked by a bar with three holes holding smaller profiled pendants (Hild 1898; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 17, Fig. 2; Fig. 6: 1–2; Fig. 7: 1; Eluère 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 4; Challet 1992: 96, Fig. 50; Kovács 2016: 192, Fig. 2; 2017: 21, 69, cat. no. 165). A pendant with a lyre shape has also been found at the end of a belt in cremation grave 6 at the Farnos cemetery (Fig. 3: 2). Even though a part of the segments was damaged by burning, it can be seen that the belt was mostly made of hollow rectangular segments with a groove along the edges, while the middle part of a smaller number of segments has a diagonally divided rectangular field with four triangular depressions. One of these decorated segments has a zoomorphic buckle on the side. The belt buckle is shaped as a stylised horse head with a leaf-like upper part, while the lower part has a rectangular section decorated with triangular depressions like the mentioned segments. The same decoration can be seen in the upper part of the pendant, which has a lyre-shaped lower portion with a groove along the edges. At the end there are three holes with hoops holding three pendants ending with a hemisphere (Hellebrandt 1999: 27, Pl. IX: 6a–f; Pl. X: 1a–b, 2a–b, 3).

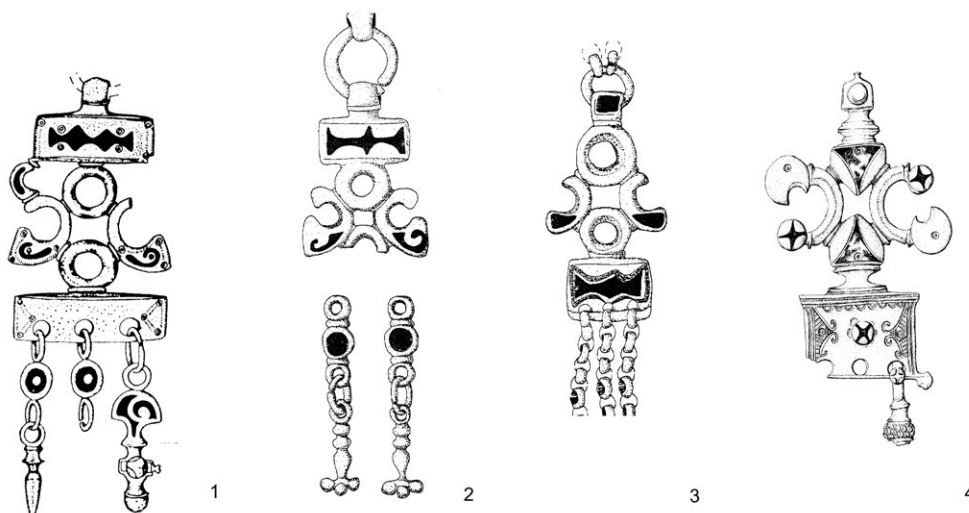


Fig. 4. 1: Vezenseny-Kisdebrecen (after: Stanczik & Vaday 1971); 2: Unknown site (after: Challet 1992); 3: Udvari (after: Challet 1992); 4: Obišovce (after: Pieta 2010).

<sup>9</sup> The belt has a zoomorphic buckle decorated with enamel in the lower part, consisting of hollow rectangular segments, most of them decorated only with a groove along the edges, while some segments have variously shaped depressions filled with enamel.

A particular variant of pendants at the end of belts is the pendant with a middle part shaped like two parted rings which are linked by a relief crescent-shaped protrusion on each side, partly giving a lyre shape to the pendant. A common characteristic of these pendants is that the upper and lower parts, above and below the ring, each have a rectangular plaque decorated with variously shaped depressions. Additionally, the lower plaque has holes where pendants are hung.

This variant should probably include the pendant at the end of the belt found in the inhumation grave at the Vezensy–Kisdebreccen site along the Tisza (Fig. 4: 1). The belt was located in the woman's stomach area, making it possible to reconstruct the way it was carried and buckled.<sup>10</sup> At the end of the belt there is a pendant of complex composition; at its top, under the loop, there is a rectangular field decorated with a depression consisting of a single triangle on the edges and two rhombs in the middle which are connected. On each side of the depression there are two ring-and-dot motifs, while each corner of the plaque has one more ring-and-dot motif linked to the shorter edges by a series of tiny notches. Below, there is the middle part of the pendant with two smaller parted rings in the middle, which are linked on each side by a relief crescent-shaped protrusion, with one side having a preserved extension linking this thickening with the lower corner of the upper plaque. The side protrusions were S-shaped and had narrow depressions and ring-and-dot motifs connected by a series of tiny notches. On the bottom of the pendant there is another rectangular plaque, longer than the upper one, which is decorated by three ring-and-dot motifs along each shorter edge; these motifs are also connected by a double series of tiny notches. The lower longer side has three holes with hanging hoops with different pendants that also have round or complex depressions. The grave has been dated to LT C1 (Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 8–12, Fig. 1: 1; Fig. 6: 4–5; Fig. 7: 2; Eluère 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 2; Challet 1992: 96, Fig. 51; Kovács 2017: 15, 21, 74, cat. no. 175).<sup>11</sup>

A parallel for the pendant from the grave in Vezensy has been found at another unknown site in Hungary: a part of a belt with lyre segments that have two triangular depressions on the body (Fig. 4: 2). The pendant, which probably hung at the end of the belt, has the upper part with a rectangular field and a depression, shaped as a composition consisting of one triangle on each end connected with a rhomb in the middle. Under the plaque there are two parted rings, with the lower being preserved only in the upper half, which are linked on each side by a relief crescent-shaped protrusion that has a widened lower part and a depression. The lower rectangular plaque has not been preserved, but there are two known pendants that probably hung from it. The pendants are complex: the upper part consists of a round thickening with a depression, while the upper and lower parts each have a smaller hoop. The lower part of this pendant is connected with narrow profiled pendants (Challet 1992: 104, Fig. 64; Bujna 2011: 118, Fig. 49: 12) of the kind found on the pendants from Bačko Gradište and Hejőkeresztúr.

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<sup>10</sup> The belt consists of rectangular segments with a rib along the longer edges, which are mostly undecorated, while a smaller number of segments, located in the part closer to the belt end, is decorated with the motifs found on the zoomorphic buckle and pendant, filled with red enamel. The buckle has the shape of a stylised horse head with prominent eyes and muzzle, while the body has two ring-and-dot motifs. The lower rectangular part of the buckle has a spiral-shaped depression filled with red enamel and a ring-and-dot motif in the middle of each spiral end. Each corner has another ring-and-dot motif. Three segments have a depression shaped as a composition consisting of one triangle on each edge and a rhomb in the middle, with another two ring-and-dot motifs on each side. Each corner has one more ring-and-dot motif, connected by a series of tiny notches along the shorter edges. One of the segments has two opposing crescent-shaped depressions and three ring-and-dot motifs on each side, linked by a double series of tiny notches. This segment has a zoomorphic buckle on the side, also shaped like a stylised horse head, which used to connect with the hoop on which the pendant hung.

<sup>11</sup> Aside from the belt, the grave contained a bronze bracelet, a bronze ring, a ceramic spindle-whorl, and a ceramic vessel shaped like a graphitized situla pot decorated with a vertical comb decoration.

<sup>12</sup> The Udvar belt, which is sometimes described only as originating from a site in Tolna County, belongs to the Gk-E belt group according to the classification of J. Bujna. This group is characterised by double chains made of small-diameter bronze rings connecting larger bronze hoops. The belts, which are entirely made of bronze, i.e. have bronze chains linked with larger bronze hoops, are distinct as the Gk-E2B group, with five variants based on buckle shape (Bujna 2011: 92–94, Fig. 38). Belts made of double iron chains connected with bronze hoops of a round or strap cross-section belong to the Gk-E2F group, also with variants based on buckle shape (Bujna 2011: 89–91, Fig. 37: 2–7). J. Bujna differentiates the Udvar belt (Bujna 2011: 94, Fig. 38: 4) from the Tolna County belt (Bujna 2011: 94, Fig. 38: 6), which he associates with different variants.



Interestingly, a part of a similarly conceived pendant was included in the belt from Udvar, which belongs to a completely different type of bronze belts.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the Udvar belt belongs to the Gk-E2B-B group according to the classification of J. Bujna and has a zoomorphic buckle with a triangular depression filled with red enamel. The lower part of the buckle has a hoop, while the loop has a rectangular depression. At the end of the belt there is a pendant (Fig. 4: 3) which, as pointed out, looks like the one from the Vezensy belt and from the unknown site. The top of the pendant has a loop with a rectangular depression, crossed by a hoop that is linked with the rest of the belt by a double chain. Under the loop there are two parted rings which are connected on each side to a crescent-shaped protrusion with a depression on its wider lower side. The lower ring is linked with a rectangular plaque with a depression shaped as a composition consisting of a single triangle on each end connected with a rhomb in the middle. There is a groove along the edges of the middle motif. At the bottom of the plaque there are three holes holding three long chains that are connected at the ends in the loop of a profiled pendant with a hemispheric thickening at the end (Tischler 1890: Fig. on p. 226; Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXIV: 8; Eluère 1973: 318, Fig. 2: 1; *Schätze aus der Kelteneit in Ungarn* 1998: 84, cat. no. 171; Challet 1992: 93, Fig. 45; Bujna 2011: 94, Fig. 38: 4, 6). Even though the Udvar pendant is missing the upper rectangular plaque when compared with the above examples, it is certainly interesting to see this pendant on a completely different type of belt. It might be a secondary use of an exceptionally decorative pendant on the form of a belt which, considering its composition, has few possibilities for enamel decoration.

Considering some shape characteristics, this variant of the pendant might include the pendant from the Obišovce site, even though its larger rectangular plaque at the end brings it close to the Bölske variant (Fig. 4: 4). At the top there is the hoop loop with a small wart-like protrusion (*Endpuffer*) under which, after a biconical thickening, there are two parted triangular widenings, each with a single large triangular depression with convex sides and a ring-and-dot motif near the bottom. There is a groove along the edges of the triangular depressions. Each of these triangular widenings is connected on the side with a crescent-shaped protrusion where one side ends with a round plaque with a cross-shaped depression, while the other side has a larger crescent-shaped plaque with a ring-and-dot motif. Interestingly, one side has the larger crescent-shaped widening on the upper side, and the other on the lower side, and vice versa. In the lower part of the pendant there is a rectangular plaque with parallel grooves on the edges, while the middle part has a hemisphere with an X-shaped depression. The upper edge of the plaque, under the grooves, is decorated with a series of garlands; along each shorter side, there are two connected tendrils defining a hatched space that contains a ring-and-dot motif. There are three holes at the bottom of the plaque, with a profiled pendant hanging from a side hole (Pieta 2010: Fig. 8: 16; Bujna 2011: 116, Fig. 49: 5).

At the end it should be mentioned that there are other known shapes of pendants at the end of bronze belts, which are also quite varied. Still, it can be noticed that the belts made of rectangular and enamel-decorated segments have equally richly decorated pendants, as testified by the belt from an unknown site in Tolna County (Hunyady 1942: Pl. XXXIV: 3–3a; Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 20; Challet 1992: 96–97, Fig. 52; *Schätze aus der Kelteneit in Ungarn* 1998: 84, cat. no. 172).

### **Middle La Tène bronze belts with lyre segments**

As already pointed out, anthropomorphic pendants appear most often at the ends of belts made of various combinations of lyre and rectangular segments. It is a characteristic shape of the Middle La Tène female costume that is most numerous at the Middle Danube sites, especially those associated with the Scordisci (Todorović 1968; 1971; 1974; Majnarić-Pandžić 1970; Jovanović B. 1982–1983; 1983; Guštin 1984: 340; Popović 2002). Aside from their segments, the belts consist of zoomorphic buckles, hoops connecting the segments, and possibly pendants at belt ends, with different shapes, the most frequent being those believed to have an anthropomorphic shape. The segments, buckles, and pendants, often have variously shaped depressions filled with multicoloured enamel, showing all the richness of their shapes and colours. Belts with lyre and rectangular segments are considered to be among the most decorative examples of the level of technical knowledge and skills in the Late Iron Age.

In earlier research, bronze belts containing lyre segments were most often analysed within the group of belts with rectangular segments of the “Hungarian type”, which were found in the greatest number at

the sites in the eastern Carpathian Basin (Reitinger 1966; Stanczik & Vaday 1971; Eluère 1973; Rustoiu 2004–2005; 2008a; 2011). The large number of belts with lyre segments found on the territory inhabited by the Scordisci, which also has belts consisting of other types of segments, made it possible to define them as a particular “Scordisci type” (Challet 1992: 76).<sup>13</sup> Also, large numbers of belts with lyre segments have been found in the neighbouring area of southeastern Transdanubia, especially at the sites in the Fejér and Tolna counties, but they are also known from the Tisza valley sites (Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 25). The most recent finds indicate that belts with the described composition also appear at the Drava valley sites (Dizdar 2011: 110, Fig. 3: 1) and as far as Lower Carniola (Križ 2009: 322, cat. no. 46).

Unfortunately, no single bronze belt has been found so far in any of the discovered grave assemblages on the territory inhabited by the Scordisci, meaning that there is a lack of data on the circumstances and contexts of the finds, making it impossible to make a more precise chronological evaluation of their production, use, and laying into graves. It is the reason why the bronze belts with lyre and rectangular segments from the territory inhabited by the Scordisci, which are assumed to originate from richly furnished graves of women, are dated to the period from the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC (Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 15, 21, 37; Jovanović 1982–1983: 31–32; 1983: 52–54; Guštin 1984: 340, App. 1: 49; Jovanović 1987: 838, 840–841; Popović 2002: 350–351). Segments are often damaged by burning, which means that the dead were burned in their clothes with particular costume items, including the belts. Also, the finds of lone segments or buckles at some sites can provide no data on the composition of the belts.

On the basis of the belt found at Hrtkovci it has been assumed that belts could have consisted of two symmetrical halves (Jovanović B. 1982–1983: 27, 31; 1983: 49–50), but this cannot be established with certainty since no belt has been preserved in its entirety. Considering the belt compositions, i.e. the structure and distribution of the segments, B. Jovanović classifies belts into four variants: - belts consisting of lyre segments only; - belts consisting of alternating lyre and rectangular segments; - lyre segments on the final part of the belt ending with the pendant; - lyre segments on the part of the belt with the buckle (Jovanović 1982–1983: 31; 1983: 51).<sup>14</sup> V. Challet distinguishes two types that correspond to the previous classification. The first type comprises belts combining lyre and rectangular segments, while the second type comprises belts consisting of lyre segments only (Challet 1992: 101–104). Belts combining lyre and rectangular segments are singled out by J. Bujna as belts of the Gk-S group, which he divides into four types, with Gk-S-D being the “Scordisci type”, characterised by stylised lyre segments (Bujna 2011: 116–118, Fig. 49). Still, considering the finds up to now, it is still impossible to single out the belts consisting of lyre segments only (Bujna 2011: 118). The closest find to that type is still the burning-damaged belt with lyre segments from Pecka Bara, where no segments of other shapes have been found (Jovanović B. 1983: 51, Fig. 8; Fig. 10; Popović 1990: 169; Popović & Sladić 1997: 103, Fig. 4: 2; Popović 2002: 350–351).

Considering the body shape of the lyre segments,<sup>15</sup> it is currently possible to distinguish three variants (Dizdar 2015: 191, Fig. 3; Dizdar 2018: 18): variant A, represented by segments with curled sides which, after the contact with the middle of the body, end with a small protrusion (e.g. the belt from Hrtkovci: Jovanović 1982–1983: 27–29, Figs. 1–2; 1983: 47, 49, Fig. 7; Fig. 9; *Skordisci* 1992: 123, cat. no. 45, Pl. XIII; Popović 2002: 350, Pl. II: 1; the belt from Bački Monoštor: Jovanović 1982–1983: 29–30, Fig. 3; 1983: 47, Fig. 6 etc.); variant B, in which the mentioned protrusions, after the contact with the middle of the body, do not exist or are barely visible (e.g. Osijek: Todorović 1974: Fig. 114; Jovanović 1983: 47, Fig. 5; Popović 2002: 351, Pl. II: 2; Surčin: Majnarić-Pandžić 1970: 47, Pl. LXI: 5–7; Jovanović 1983: 46, Fig. 4; Beljarica: Todorović 1971: 158, Pl. LXXI: 6; 1974: Fig. 59; Jovanović 1983: 46, Fig. 3); variant C, characterised by the

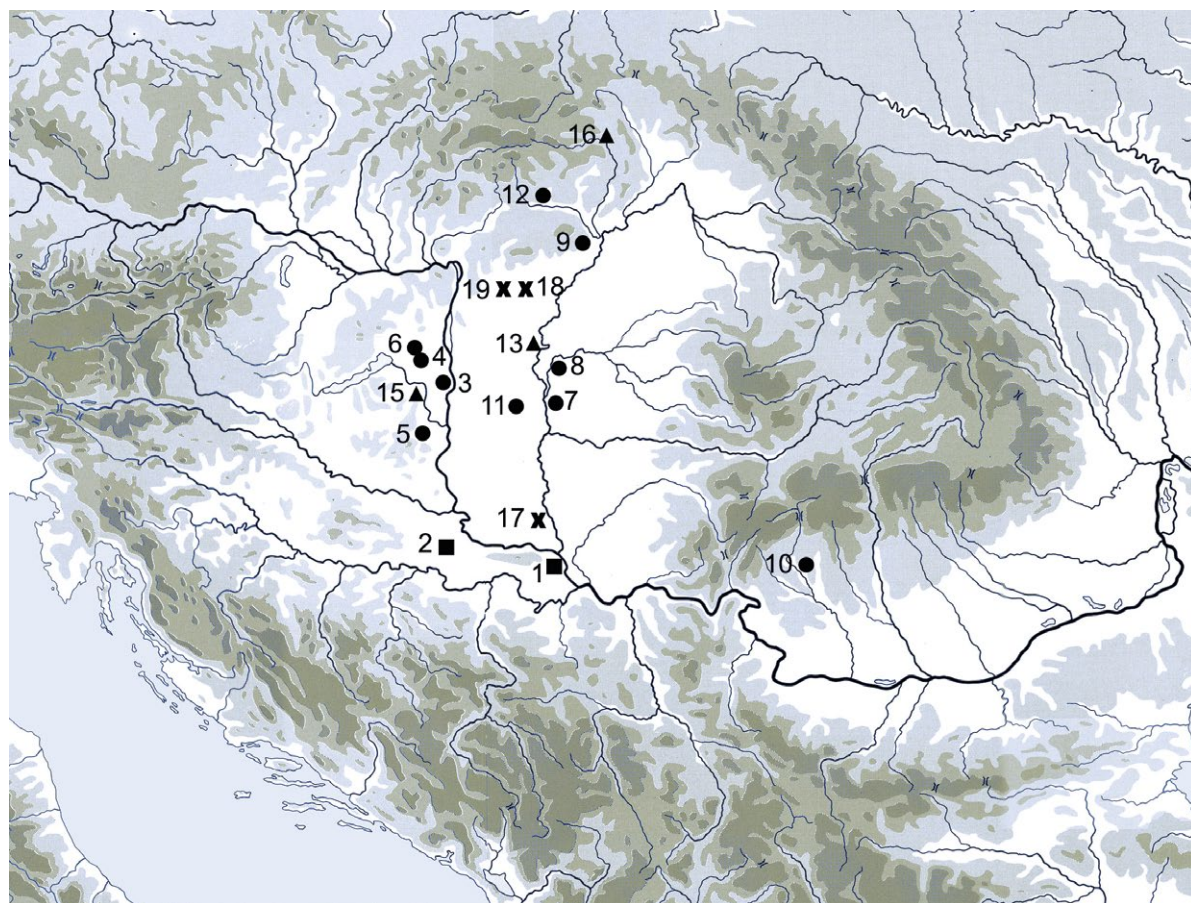
<sup>13</sup> Considering the shapes of the segments, V. Challet proposed a classification of bronze belts into seven types (Challet 1992: 73–76, tab. 12).

<sup>14</sup> The differences in shape between the lyre segments probably point to the existence of several workshops for their production; it is believed that the segments of simpler shape were produced in the workshops of the Scordisci (Jovanović 1982–1983: 31–32; 1983: 56–57; Popović 2002: 35; Bujna 2011: 116–118).

<sup>15</sup> The parts of such belts include rectangular segments which are usually hollow, with a groove along the edges, and which are sometimes accompanied by enamel-decorated segments. Belts with lyre segments are only exceptionally combined with rectangular segments decorated with enamel and having a low rib along the two longer edges.

lengthening of the sides after the contact with the middle of the body and their closing in the middle, with 8-shaped side protrusions and hemispherical ribs on the lower part (e.g. Zvonimirovo, grave LT 29: Dizdar 2011: 110, Fig. 3: 1; Novo Mesto–Kapiteljska Njiva, grave 390: Križ 2009: 322, cat. no. 46). The sides of most anthropomorphic pendants are shaped similarly to variant C.

On the basis of rare discoveries in funerary complexes, it can be assumed that bronze belts consisting of lyre and rectangular segments appeared at the end of LT C1 (Stanczik & Vaday 1971: 25–26; Bujna 1982: 337; Hellebrandt 1999: 86–88; Rustoiu 2002: 30; 2004–2005: 54–55; 2011: 167–168), with the open issue of the lower extent of their wearing, which is set to the beginning of the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC for the Scordisci. However, since their presence in the Late La Tène graves has not been recorded yet, it would mean they can be dated up to the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, i.e. to LT C2 (Challet 1992: 106–107; Bujna 2011: 116–118, 143), as shown by the finds from the Zvonimirovo cemetery (Dizdar 2011: 110) and the enamel-decorated fibulae, especially those of the Boljevci variant (Dizdar 2014).



Map 1. The distribution of anthropomorphic pendants with variants: ■ Novi Banovci variant: 1. Novi Banovci; 2. Privlaka. ● Bölcske variant: 3. Bölcske–Madocsahegy; 4. Cece–Hardpuszta; 5. Unknown site from Tolna County; 6. Sárosd; 7. Szentés; 8. Kunszentmárton–Bokonya; 9. Hejőkeresztúr; 10. Telești; 11. Kiskunfélegyháza; 12. Včelince. ▲ Veszény variant: 13. Veszény–Kisdebrecen; 14. Unknown site in Hungary; 15. Udvari; 16. Obišovce. X other finds: 17. Bačko Gradište; 18. Jászberény–Öregerdő; 19. Farnos, grave 6.

## Conclusion

The bronze pendant with red enamel from Gradina in Privlaka is important not only for the discussion of the Middle La Tène female costume of the Scordisci, but also for another reason: its dating. The pendant can probably be dated to LT C2, confirming that Gradina was already inhabited in the Middle La Tène, even though the highest settling intensity was recorded in the Late La Tène. In any case, this is not a solitary

Middle La Tène find from Gradina, since the excavations in the dike of the rampart of the “lower hillfort” found a kantharos with a tall conical neck and a biconical body set on a taller bell-profiled foot (Majnarić-Pandžić 1984: 25, Pl. 3: 2; Dizdar 2013: 295–296, Fig. 114: 1). On the basis of these characteristics, the kantharos is also associated with the Middle La Tène. The finds of the pendant and kantharos testify that Gradina was certainly inhabited in the Middle La Tène already, but there remains the open issue of whether the settlement was fortified since it was first settled or if the rampart was erected in the Late La Tène. A similar chronological sequence of settling can be seen in other researched fortified settlements of the Scordisci in the areas of eastern Slavonia and western Sarmatia (Dizdar 2001: 99–100, 108), just like the best-known Scordisci settlement of this kind – the one at Gomolava.

The pendant found at Gradina, considering its direct parallels with the anthropomorphic pendant from Novi Banovci, prompted the analysis of such complex and richly decorated objects at the ends of bronze belts consisting of lyre and rectangular segments. In fact, each of the found bronze belts, with different combinations of segments and buckles and pendants, actually represents a unique shape, even though some similarities in shape characteristics can be noticed. Since variously shaped segments are included within belts in an uneven rhythm, it is very hard to make a precise typological classification of belts, especially when only their fragments have been preserved, which is the most frequent case, as most of the known finds are not accompanied by data on the context of their discovery. Still, the insights up to now lead to the conclusion that the belts combining lyre and rectangular segments, often with anthropomorphic pendants on their ends, were a product of Middle Danube workshops, including those active on the territory of the Scordisci.

However, the analysis of the pendants, which are most often located on the ends of the belts that include lyre segments in their composition, showed narrower distribution areas of particular selected variants. It can probably be assumed that the pendant from Gradina in Privlaka was at the end of an anthropomorphic pendant like the one found in Novi Banovci, which is certainly one of the most beautiful specimens because of its shape and the colour effect created by using blue and red enamel. There is another known anthropomorphic pendant found on the territory of the Scordisci, but the pendant from Bačko Gradište currently represents a unique shape. The greatest number of pendants found until now belongs to the Bölcske variant, which is characterised by the lyre-shaped upper part which is connected by a spherical thickening, usually decorated with zig-zag lines, to the rectangular plaque on the lower part of the pendant. The lyre-shaped part of the pendant usually has triangular and drop-like depressions, while both sides of the lyre element are connected with the upper corners of the rectangular plaque. The plaque is richly decorated with various relief motifs surrounded by depressions filled with red enamel. At the bottom of the plaque there are three round holes; under them, there is often a horizontal bar with a hemisphere on each end, and there are smaller pendants of different shapes hanging from the holes. Even though the pendants of the Bölcske variant have different shapes, they still have conceptually similar compositions, with each pendant displaying some peculiar details of decorative motifs and shapes of terminal pendants. Along with the pendant from the eponymous site, this variant can also include the pendants from the sites in southeastern Transdanubia along the Danube (Cece-Hardpuszta, an unknown site from the Tolna County, Sárosd) and those along the Tisza river (Szentés, Kunszentmárton–Bokonya, Hejőkeresztúr), some of which certainly originate from cremation graves (Map 1). This variant can also be associated with the pendant from a grave found at the Telești site in Oltenia and perhaps the pendant from the Včelince site in eastern Slovakia. The pendant from Kiskunfélegyháza along the Tisza river shows bigger formal differences; interestingly, it was on a belt consisting of rectangular segments only. In fact, the pendant has a lyre-shaped middle part with realistically sculpted bird heads. Some can be considered as separate forms: the lyre-shaped pendant that was probably in a cremation grave at the Jászberény–Öregerdő site and also consisted of rectangular segments only, just like the belt from cremation grave 6 at the Farnos cemetery, which also ended with a unique lyre-shaped pendant.

A special variant – Vezseny – consists of pendants with a middle part shaped like two parted rings which are linked by a relief crescent-shaped protrusion on each side, partly giving a lyre shape to the pendant. A common characteristic of these pendants is that the upper and lower parts, above and below the ring, each have a rectangular plaque decorated with variously shaped depressions. Additionally, the lower plaque has holes where pendants are hung. Aside from the inhumation grave at Vezseny, a similar pendant was found at an unknown site in Hungary at the end of a belt consisting of lyre segments. There is

a particularly interesting belt from Udvar, of a completely different shape, which included a similarly shaped final segment with hanging chains. Considering some shape characteristics, this variant (with very remote similarities) might include the pendant from the Obišovce site, even though its larger rectangular plaque at the end brings it close to the Bölcske variant too.

The anthropomorphic pendants of the Novi Banovci variant are currently known from only two sites associated with the Scordisci (Map 1). On the other hand, the pendants of the Bölcske and Vezseny variants are more to the north along the Danube and the Tisza, with their distributions clearly overlapping. The distribution of the separate variants of anthropomorphic pendants matches the distribution of bronze belts combining lyre and rectangular segments identified in the largest number on the same territories, i.e. with the Scordisci and in the southeastern Transdanubia between Lake Balaton, the Danube, and the Drava, while a smaller number of finds has been recorded along the Tisza river. This is no surprise, since anthropomorphic pendants are found most often on belts that include lyre segments in their composition.

Also, the distribution of particular forms of belts and pendants points to the probable locations of the workshops producing them, and it can be noticed that the areas of distribution of different forms sometimes overlap. This might indicate the possibility that particular workshops could have produced belts and pendants of different types, which would be indicated by the composition of particular belts made of different segments. On the other hand, particular belts or segments found outside of the basic area of distribution, such as the belt with a pendant in the grave from Telești, could point to the mobility of the women who wore them or the master craftsmen who made them. Also, there could have been exchange and trade of such exceptionally complex objects; there could have been cultural transfers and exchanges of ideas and knowledge necessary for their production. But such finds are certainly proof of established contacts, often between distant areas. Conceptual and formal similarities of belts and segments testify about intense contacts taking place on the territory of the Middle Danube area in the Middle La Tène. Belts made of rod-shaped segments and belts with rectangular segments, without those lyre shapes, also end with different pendants that most frequently follow the forms of the segments themselves, which also applies to the anthropomorphic pendants that include a lyre element in their composition.

Even though pendants of different variants follow some common formal characteristics and display conceptually similar compositions, each pendant still represents a unique and original craft product with recognized particularities in decorative motifs and shapes of terminal pendants. In fact, each pendant might be described as individualized, which could indicate that they were produced according to the orders of the women who owned and wore them (Rustoiu 2004–2005: 54). Also, belt segments and pendants have differently shaped depressions which were filled with multicoloured enamel, creating an exceptional colour effect on the costume of the women who wore such belts. On the other hand, the form of the anthropomorphic pendant itself probably hides a symbolic meaning too, especially for the women who wore such belts and sent signals to other members of the community. Such an exclusive and exceptionally valuable costume item might have been owned only by women who had a special status within the community; belts with anthropomorphic pendants could have belonged to women from a particular social group which was defined by the different knowledge and skills they had, for example. In any case, bronze belts consisting of lyre and rectangular segments with anthropomorphic pendants represented an important part of the visual identity of women, who were aware of what they wore, and for that reason the pendants were burned and buried together with them in the Middle La Tène.<sup>16</sup>

Since bronze belts with anthropomorphic pendants were probably worn by women who had a prominent status in the community for a reason (knowledge, skills etc.), we dedicate this paper to respectable professor Mirjana Sanader, who always taught us to have an industrious, persistent and inventive approach to the study of even the most complex archaeological challenges before us.

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