

Százhalombatta-Földvár

An introduction to Bronze Age Civilizations in Hungary

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Getting to Know Százhalombatta-Földvár

- S-F on the right bank of Danube River (approx. 30 mi. SW from Budapest)
- Unusually large and well-preserved Bronze Age **tell settlement**
- In archaeology, a tell or tel (derived from Arabic: تَلّ, tall, 'mound' or 'small hill'), is an artificial mound formed from the accumulated remains of mudbricks and other refuse of generations of people living on the same site for hundreds or thousands of years.





Locating Hungary

Locating Pest County, Hungary



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Locating Archaeological Site

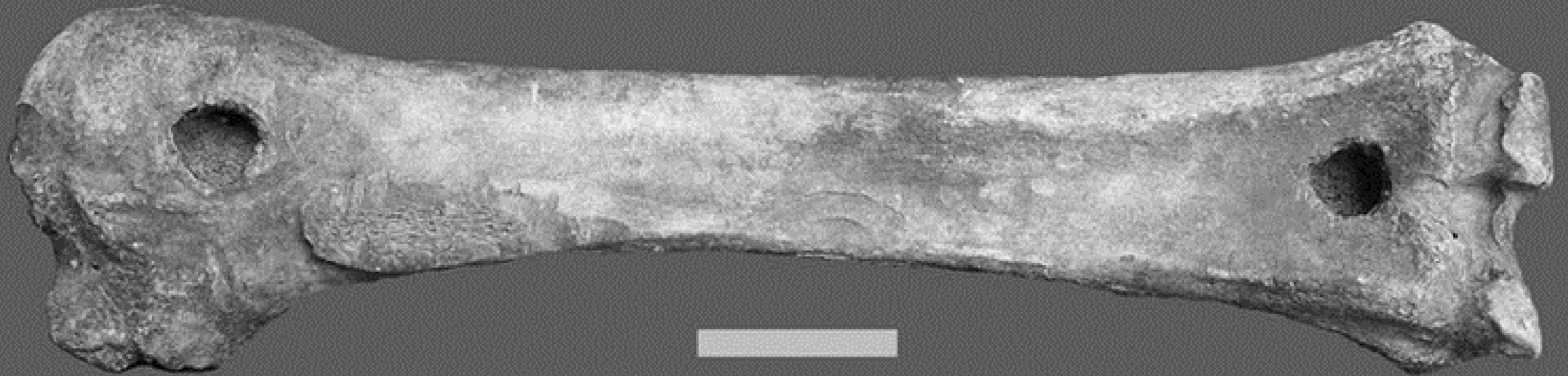






Meet the Diggers



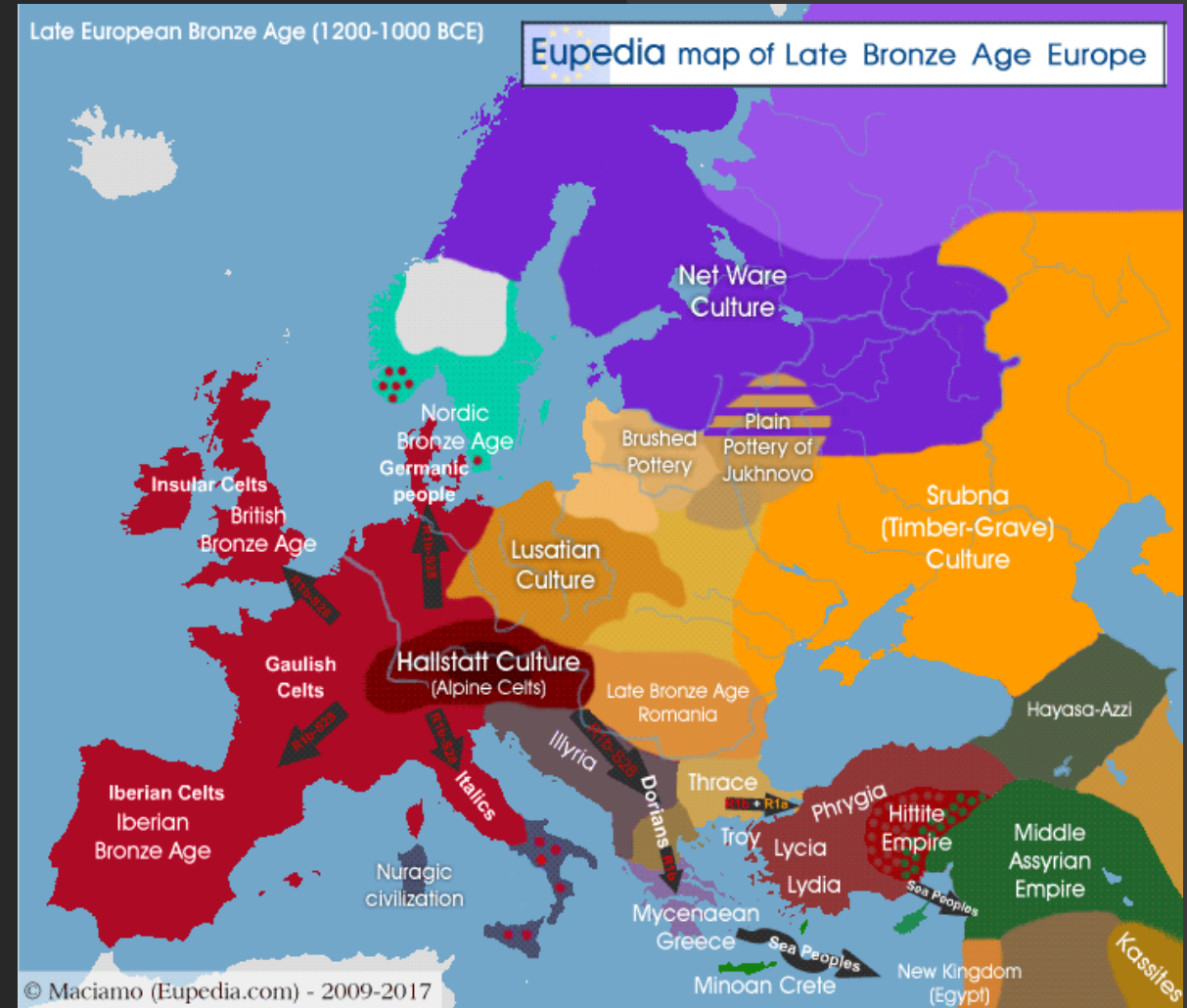


When was the
tell settlement
occupied?

- Continuous settlement from early through middle Bronze Age and then reoccupied in late Bronze Age and early Iron Ages
- Bronze Age in Hungary (2800-800 BCE)
- NOTE: the Bronze Age persisted in this region long after the transition to the Iron Age in Mesopotamia and Anatolia
- Most S-F artifacts represent 2000-1400 BCE

Who called Százhalombatta-Földvár Home?

- Tell Dwellers (distinguishable from those who lived in hinterlands)
- Occupied a comparatively densely populated area (i.e., they were the city folk of this region and period)
- Current archaeological projects challenging preexisting notion that S-F was the primary chiefdom in region (no signs of inordinate amount of status goods or large storage deposits)
- Resided in single-family homes (variation in house styles, but some common features)
- Houses: 16-26 ft. wide X 26-40 ft. long
- No written records (so, a “pre-historic” civilization)
- Connected generally to Hallstatt culture that predominated in Central and Western Europe during the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age



Theme # 1: The Social Significance of Pottery





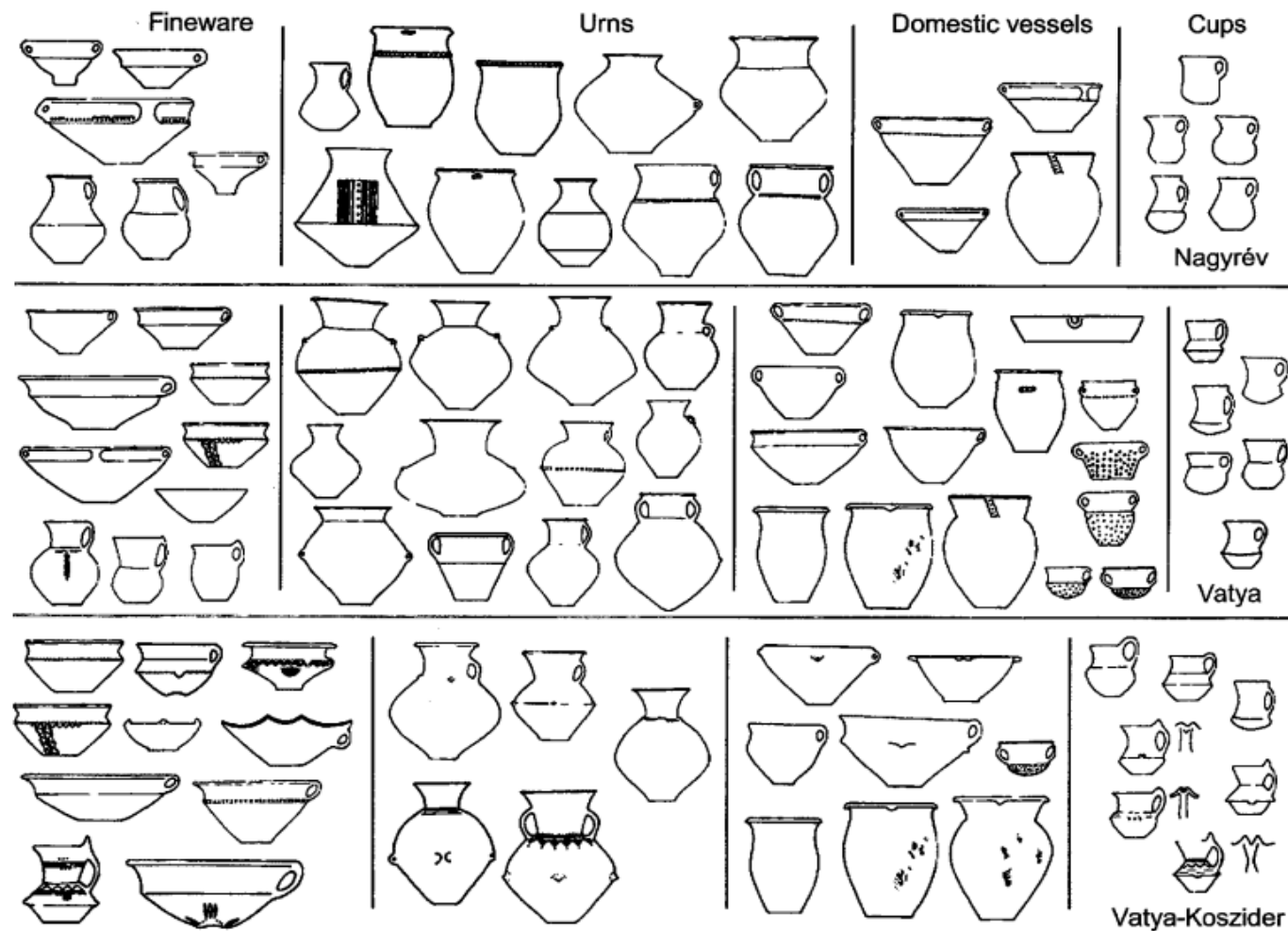


Figure 2. Vessel form variability at Százhalombatta for the Early Bronze Age (Nagyrev), Middle Bronze Age (Vatya) and Late Middle Bronze Age (Koszider).

What can we learn from pottery?

- Almost all pottery found produced locally
- Highly variable – from rough hewn to intricate
- Suggests improvement over time but also different levels of attention to detail based on ultimate use of piece (everyday ware to special occasion ware and even highly-decorative pottery)
- Location and variable size of kilns as well as “signatures” among pieces suggests that some in community specialized in pottery making (Specialization of Labor)
- Potters may have attained elite status in this social order (The place of Specialized labor in social hierarchies)
- Evidence that pottery production done “in community” as opposed to in isolation (may have even been “performative”)



Theme # 2: Making Archaeological Research Accessible



Archaeological Park

- Archaeological Park concept in 1990
- Idea of the late Ildikó Poroszlai (former director of the Matrica Museum) Obtained support of municipal government.
- Opened as an open-air museum in 1996
- Dual Mission: education and preservation
- Five mounds containing the remains of Bronze Age and Iron Age settlements remains on the property
- Replicas of period houses with vessels and clothing and even livestock
- Site for “experimental archaeology”







Sources

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