

COLLABORATIVE INDIGENOUS ARCHAEOLOGY IN TURKEY?: THE SARDIS  
CASE

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

By

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May 2022

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## ABSTRACT

Since the early 1900s, the archaeological site of Sardis in Salihli-Turkey has attracted archaeologists as a rich informational resource on Lydian, Hellenistic, Roman, and Late Antique Anatolia. As excavations continued, archaeologists' interaction with the local population has based on labor and domestic service exchange. This labor exchange has begun to be questioned as part of archaeological ethics in post-colonial and post-imperial geographies. Through this master's research, I aimed to understand whether Indigenous collaborative archaeology methodologies could be applied in Turkey. Adapting Indigenous collaborative archaeology in post-imperial contexts like Turkey can provide a more ethical and collaborative framework than traditional forms of local-archaeologist interactions. To assess the applicability of this methodology, I collaborated with the sixth-grade students and the social science teacher of Bahçeşehir College-Salihli Campus School, which is two and a half miles away from Sardis. As part of our partnership, we designed nine informational panels for the archaeological site. The results showed that Indigenous collaborative methodologies have a great potential to make archaeology more locally responsive and ethical in Sardis and in Turkey more generally. This partnership allowed us to establish a reciprocal relationship with the Bahçeşehir School. While I was able to use students' and teachers' ideas to design visitor-friendly materials, the school has promoted archaeological heritage awareness among its students and encouraged them to participate in extracurricular projects despite the Covid-19 pandemic. In conclusion, traditional outreach methods are still helpful in educating the local public about heritage stewardship; but involving them additionally as research partners helps archaeologists diversify their interactions with local populations in line with the global movement towards archaeological ethics.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Having studied Archaeology and Art History and History at Koç University-Turkey, Ece Erlat worked in various archaeological excavation projects, museums, and non-governmental organizations to develop herself as both an archaeologist and an educational outreach professional. In 2019, she documented Byzantine period heritage destruction in Ayvansaray-Istanbul for her bachelor's thesis. Erlat is currently a Fulbright Scholarship recipient and a master's student at Cornell University, conducting her research on the applicability of collaborative Indigenous archaeology methodologies in Turkey. After gaining experience as a Teaching Fellow in Culver Academies, she plans to begin her doctoral studies in the 2023-2024 academic year. For her doctoral dissertation, Erlat continues to combine archaeology education and collaborative Indigenous methodologies to enhance community archaeology in Turkey.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Canan Namver, Müjgan Mirçık, and wonderful students of classes 6-A and 6-B: you are the reason why this research idea came into reality. A “thank you” is not enough to express my gratitude for your dedication, enthusiasm, and creative contributions to our partnership. The same goes for Mustafa Keleşoğlu. Despite being a game designer, he accepted this partnership without hesitancy and helped me gain confidence as an educational content designer. I believe that these individuals deserve to be the co-authors and co-creators of this master’s thesis rather than being addressed in the acknowledgments section.

Next, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my committee chair, Frederic Wright Gleach. This research would not have been possible without his immense understanding, kindness, empathetic support, and academic guidance. In addition to advising thesis related matters, he has been a valuable individual to consult when navigating my career as an international graduate school. I would also like to thank my minor committee member, Sherene Baugher, and ad hoc member, Jeffrey Perry. They have been valuable scholars who introduced me to the engagement and outreach aspect of academia. Through their encouragement and forward-thinking vision, I started searching for my interdisciplinary identity within the realm of archaeology education. I would like to send my wholehearted thanks to Theresa “Tess” Pendergrast, who has become both a mentor and a friend. Through her unique character and justice-motivated idealism, she continuously encouraged me to pursue my interest in pedagogy, education, and teaching. Sincere thanks also go to Nicholas Cahill, Bahadır Yıldırım, Annetta Alexandridis, Benjamin Anderson, and Gencay Öztürk, whose valuable comments have helped me ensure scientific accuracy in the informational panels. Last but not least, I would also thank Maia Dedrick as the unofficial member of my thesis committee. She has read several drafts of this thesis, provided feedback on each panel, and encouraged me to share my research with other Cornell students during the Community Engagement class in Fall 2021.

I would not be able to conduct this research at Cornell University if I did not receive the financial and legal assistance of The Fulbright Foreign Student Program. Since day one of my master's studies at Cornell University, both the Institute of International Education (IIE) and the Turkish Fulbright Commission in Ankara helped me fulfill my Fulbrighter goal of enhancing mutual relationships between the United States and Turkey through academic and cultural exchange.

Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to my family, friends, and former academic advisors and mentors at Koç University.

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## 1. Introduction

*“...the only excuse for doing archaeology is to work for a more democratic world, not in a grandiose sense motivated by a belief in abstract social justice, but at the interpersonal and community level where repercussions and results of humanistic endeavor for a small group of people can be seen and foreseen.”*

*(Pyburn 2009: 165)*

Being an archaeology student in the early 2020s means witnessing paradigm-shifting changes in the field. As a master’s student at Cornell University, I was able to experience how the Native American and Black Lives Matter movements are reshaping our approach to deceased and living research partners in the United States. Graduate students are now demanding specific changes in academic archaeology; they are an integral part of anti-colonial discussions. As an international student from Turkey, being a part of this movement has inevitably led to a critical self-reflection: How can we change our approach to be more ethical towards our underserved research partners in Turkey? Can certain principles of anti-colonial archaeology be applied in Turkey? Is it possible to adapt collaborative archaeology methodologies of Indigenous and Black communities to the Middle East?

These questions became the primary reason I decided to conduct a collaborative archaeology project for my master’s thesis. Between June 2021 and December 2021, I collaborated with the Bahçeşehir College-Salihli Campus students and teachers. Through this collaborative relationship, we collectively designed eight informational panels and one visitor map for the future young audiences of the Sardis Archaeological Site in Turkey.<sup>1</sup> By enabling

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<sup>1</sup> While the official name of the school is Bahçeşehir College-Salihli Campus, I will use “Bahçeşehir School” to ease the reading experience.

Bahçeşehir School to become one of the major decision-making parties in this project, I wanted to give a voice to certain local groups who have fewer opportunities to engage with archaeologists and thus contribute to a site-based excavation project.

I was fortunate to have a group of archaeologists and museum specialists who have asked the same questions before. Thanks to them, public and community archaeology has begun to plant its seeds in Turkey.<sup>2</sup> Yet there is still a long way to go.

There is a significant gap in Turkey between a) the number of public and community archaeology projects and b) the number of scholarly publications on these public-facing projects. Apart from a handful of high-quality publications, the only way to receive accurate information about these unpublished side projects is to contact the archaeological team and local museums. Unless one has time, patience, and Turkish speaking skills, tracking every archaeological site and institution with a community service project is complex.

Furthermore, these projects in Turkey tend to adopt a top-down approach in which the local community is not the producer but the consumer of products and services created by archaeologists. Equal research partnerships are at stake within the world of archaeology; thus, there needs to be an internal motivation to question how to deconstruct our hierarchical relationships with the local communities of Anatolia.

By providing a detailed account of my partnership with the Bahçeşehir Middle School, I want to present a written report for public and community archaeologists actively working in

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<sup>2</sup> I purposefully use the term “collaborative archaeology” when describing the partnership established with the local community as part of my research. I will refrain from using the term “community archaeology” to define our partnership with the Bahçeşehir School. I have taken this decision mostly because there was not adequate time and resources to conduct detailed interviews to understand whether the teachers and students of the Bahçeşehir School identify themselves as a community. However, to avoid confusions and respect terminological decisions made by the authors of cited publications, I use the terms, “public archaeology” and “community archaeology” when describing similar projects previously conducted in Turkey.



Turkey. My primary goal is to share what kinds of successes and limitations they could expect to experience if they decide to conduct a collaborative project with local educational institutions in Turkey. I hope this thesis will become one of the guiding case studies for prospective managers of such collaborative initiatives.

In the first section of this thesis, I discuss the history of the Sardis Project in light of local-archaeologist relationships. In the same section, I contrast this past with the current demands of the Bahçeşehir School students and educators. In the second section, I propose collaborative archaeology in the U.S. as a solution for the communicational gap in the ongoing archaeological projects of Turkey. The third section concentrates more on reporting our partnership with the Bahçeşehir School. After the detailed methodological narrative in this section, I conclude this thesis in the fourth and fifth sections with a thorough evaluation of our project partnership and future plans.

## 2. The Past and Present of Local Relationships in Sardis

### *2.1 How It All Started*

This small-scale project began forming during my first meeting with Prof. Nicholas Cahill, the excavation director of Sardis, in April 2021. As I was searching for a potential thesis topic that combined archaeology and education, Cahill suggested that I design interpretive panels for the young visitors of Sardis. Creating materials for young visitors was already in his mind, and he was looking for someone to realize these plans. At the end of our meeting, I excitedly volunteered for this project.

However, there was a problem. How could I design these panels without knowing what young visitors would like to learn about Sardis? There was the danger of dedicating weeks for each informational panel and eventually creating something that would not satisfy the needs of children and thus would not be beneficial for school and family groups either.

With the encouragement of Prof. Cahill, I spent April and May 2021 searching for a suitable community partner that would be willing to design these panels together with an archaeologist-student. My ideal community partner was a middle school because I wanted to see the panels from early adolescents' and educators' perspectives. Having started my search for a potential partner school candidate in the nearby villages of Sart Mahmut and Sart Mustafa and the town of Salihli, I was fortunate to receive an enthusiastic response from the Bahçeşehir School in Salihli.

Having agreed on our partnership and completed the federal Institutional Review Board (IRB), we conducted our first meeting with students in June 2021. During this meeting, I realized how prejudiced I was thinking about the contributive potential of local schools. Even though archaeologists in Turkey are mostly inclined to categorize certain local communities with no

labor and service-based benefits as “visitors,” Bahçeşehir School educators and students clearly wanted to become more than an annually visiting school group.

This was evident in the early statements of both the administrators and educators of the Bahçeşehir School. The assistant principal, Canan Namver, was highly interested in this project as their 6th-grade students were newly admitted to the school and could not participate in any extracurricular projects during the pandemic. Furthermore, as a newly established school in Salihli, Namver also expressed the need to introduce the school to the wider Salihli community through such partnerships. Similar enthusiasm has also been shown by the middle school social science teacher, Müjgan Mırçık. She stated her students’ lack of archaeological knowledge and – through this partnership– wanted to raise heritage awareness among the young generation.

Before discussing my first interaction with Bahçeşehir educators and students in more detail, it is useful to provide historical background on local community-Sardis archaeological team interactions. Such a historical analysis reveals that Sardis has a short history of archaeologist-teacher collaborations from the late 1960s that could be revived in 2022.

## ***2.2 Shovelers, Cooks, Drawers, and Visitors: What the Local Community Means to Us***

Similar to other post-imperial and post-colonial research contexts, archaeologist and non-archaeologist interactions in Turkey have primarily been based on labor and domestic service: while archaeology creates an economic opportunity in villages and towns underserved by private and public establishments, local communities provide labor support, site protection, housing, food, and other daily necessities for archaeological teams (see Mickel 2021 for a general discussion on Turkey). In addition, when an archaeological site has potential for heritage tourism, local labor begins to adapt to the demands of the increasing visitor population (Breglia 2005). As a result, archaeologists –either directly or indirectly—encourage the economic and

social development of the local area for tourism purposes (Breglia 2005). Some of these positive consequences are the increasing employment opportunities for locals in the heritage industry and the gradual increase of regional prosperity through governmental and private investments in health, transportation, and school facilities.<sup>3</sup> For more than three hundred years, this mutually beneficial system has shaped the way archaeological teams and local populations establish partnerships in the Middle East and Turkey specifically.

Sardis is no exception to this historical system. Famously known as the contact zone between the “Western” and “Eastern” civilizations of the Classical past, this archaeological site has always fascinated early travelers and archaeologists. It was “the capital of ancient Lydia where King Croesus ruled, [...] the place where gold money was first coined, the Anatolian capital of Persians after the Greek-Persian Wars, a free Greek city after Alexander, a city of prominence under Roman rule, the seat of the “Seven Churches of the Apocalypse” (Yegül 2010: 61).

As early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century, certain travel accounts suggest that locals provided guidance, housing and food, and physical labor to incoming traveler-researchers (Diaries of Robert Wood, John Bouverie, and James Dawkins on Sardis n.d: 16,20). More detailed accounts of such interactions, however, come from Prof. Howard Crosby Butler, Princeton University scholar and the first excavation director of Sardis. If Butler’s colonial-imperial sentiments are put aside, his memoirs suggest a highly dependent relationship with locals as labor, housing, food, construction, and transportation resources (Butler 1922: 58-60).

Prof. George A. M. Hanfmann, the second excavation director of Sardis, has extensively recorded the excavation team’s interactions with the locals of Sart Mahmut and Sart Mustafa

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<sup>3</sup> Notable ethnographic example to this case is Ayfer Bartu-Candan’s research on Küçükköy and Çumra communities near the Çatalhöyük Archaeological site. For more information, please see Bartu Candan 2000.

villages. Some excerpts from his book, *Letters from Sardis*, suggest that –Similar to Butler– Hanfmann and his team were highly dependent on local resources (Hanfmann 2014).

Hanfmann’s era, however, marks a change in the Sardis team’s approach to the local community. What is significant for this thesis, in particular, is the participation of schoolteachers in several excavation seasons in the 1960s. The 1967-dated letters mention two schoolteachers, Hamdi Özkahraman from Salihli and Hüseyin Özlü from one of the Sart villages, participating in the excavation as “draftsman” and drawer, respectively (Hanfmann 2014: 277). During the late 1960s, it was significant and forward-thinking for an archaeological team to collaborate with schoolteachers to benefit from their occupational skills for site-based projects. This could be interpreted as an approach to go beyond traditional labor-based interactions and experiment with building constructive relationships with other local populations who may have less opportunity to work together with archaeologists.

Even though Hanfmann’s practice was exceptional, we do not have sufficient written accounts from subsequent excavation directors to understand whether such a collaborative environment continued to be nurtured. Yet, many positive things were happening – and would continue to happen– in Sardis to enhance community relationships in the long run. The ongoing excavations under the directorship of Prof. Nicholas Cahill, for example, take a significant step by developing digital educational programming (Harvard Art Museums, *Excavations, and Research at Sardis* 2021 Lecture: 51:51-53:40, 57:51-58:08.). During my interviews with Prof. Cahill and Gencay Öztürk, a Sardis team member and archaeology educator, I learned that a visitor center could also be built in the near future (Nicholas Cahill and Gencay Öztürk, pers. comm.). According to Öztürk, if this project could be realized, one of the plans is to design an educational space within the visitor center for local children, family groups, and school trips

(pers. comm.). In line with contemporary developments in public archaeology, Sardis is becoming a site where both locals and visitors can obtain concise and easily understandable information through both in-person and digital means.

I want to pause here and ask a critical question: Even though there are ongoing public-oriented projects in Sardis, can these initiatives reach their local audiences fully? Do these initiatives help us establish constructive and positive relationships with the local communities?

There are no studies done in Sardis to understand local communities' response to recent public-oriented projects. Yet, one study shows the communicational discrepancy between nearby villages and the archaeological community. According to Kersel and Luke (2008), due to the underground antiquity trade, local communities in this region approach the archaeological heritage as an economic resource (299-300). What is more alarming is that both archaeologists and illicit traffickers are active in this region under the competitive pressures of accessing the archaeological materials first. Under such a tense environment, it is inevitable for the locals to view archaeologists through a lens of suspicion (Kersel and Luke 2008: 306-207). According to Kersel and Luke, in addition to misinformation about archaeology and archaeologists, locals have difficulty understanding the methodologies of scientific excavation (Kersel and Luke 2008: 306-307). Having conducted extensive interviews with local villagers in the vicinity of Sardis, Kersel and Luke have one piece of advice for archaeologists: we “must balance [our] own interest[s] in the past with how [our] modern-day hosts perceive [us]” (308).

Fourteen years have passed since Luke and Kersel's article, but their advice still remains valid. Even though the Bahçeşehir School community does not consist of local villagers, I witnessed the consequences of communicational disconnection on the educators and students of Salihli. For educators, Sardis –despite being only a couple of miles away– is mostly a memory

from their childhood. As for children, it is the material evidence of the Turkish nation's achievements and a source of skepticism towards international archaeologists. In the following sub-section, I will be discussing why establishing a robust relationship with the local population requires more than producing visitor programming on a top-down basis. I believe that the solution is to go back to Hanfmann's era and re-establish some of the collaborative environment with local educators on a more comprehensive and inclusive level.

### ***2.3 Becoming Project Partners: What the Bahçeşehir School Community Wants***

In 2021, Allison Mickel's research brought Çatalhöyük Archaeological Project's local laborers to the forefront and showed how scientific knowledge production alienates those individuals from site-based research (Mickel, 2021). I would like to add more to Mickel's research on Çatalhöyük-Turkey and argue that alienation is not only experienced by the local site workers of Central Anatolia but is also the experience of local populations in Western Anatolia who may have a different social and economic background compared to agricultural village communities and thus may not interact with archaeologists as seasonal laborers. Administrators, educators, and students of the Bahçeşehir School in Salihli exemplify those individuals. Compared with the site workers, educators of Salihli lack the opportunities for daily interaction with the archaeologists.

This, however, contrasts sharply with the way archaeological sites are embedded in their memory. Self-identified as locals, Mrs. Namver, Mrs. Mırçık, and an anonymous principal assistant have memories of the Sardis from their childhood years as student participants in school trips:

*“When we were little, they [the schoolteachers] always took us there [Sardis] during our school days. Most of us went there many times, right...?...we were always taken there when we were in elementary and middle school. Let's see*

*Sart [Turkish name of Sardis], let's do a picnic there; we were always taken there.” (Anonymous testimony, Interview on 06/09/2021, 02:08,90-02:38,85)*

It is important to note that, despite their decreased connections with Sardis as adults, these educators feel a sense of responsibility for preserving the archaeological site. However, according to them, international archaeologists are better stewards of the archaeological heritage compared to the local community:

*“But after a while, even if it is close to us somehow, you take care of it [Sardis] from there [the U.S.], but we cannot take care of it from here [Salihli]. We cannot provide care and attention.” (Anonymous Testimony, Interview on 06/09/2021, 02:38,85 - 02:53,82)*

Among Bahçeşehir educators, Mrs. Mınçık was the one that continued her strong connections with Sardis during her undergraduate studies. During her social science teacher training at the Ege University in İzmir, she took a class on archaeology and focused on Sardis for her class project. Due to her knowledge of Sardis and role as a social science teacher, Mrs. Mınçık is assigned by the school administration to lead annual school tours to the archaeological site. Being able to see the site from a visitor's perspective, Mrs. Mınçık proposed new ideas to enhance visitor engagement at the site, such as a visitor map and informational teacher and parent booklets, during our first meeting:

*“...I think there may be helpful information in this way [referring to creating teacher booklets on Sardis]. Of course, not every question has an answer, this is not possible, but I think that at least certain questions can have answers.” (Müjgan Mırçık, Interview on 06/09/2021, 08:48,45 - 09:25,31)*

Among all the Bahçeşehir educators, there was also a concern for raising archaeological heritage awareness among the young generation of Salihli residents. I understood the reasons behind their concern during our first meeting with the students conducted after I met with Mrs. Namver and Mrs. Mınçık in June 2021.



Because Sardis is only two and a half miles away from Salihli, about 71% of the students have visited Sardis before (see Appendix G, question no.1). Furthermore, among those students, many can recognize symbolic landmarks, such as the restored Bath-Gymnasium Complex, when their photos are shown. About 94% of these trips are conducted by family members, suggesting that older generations in Salihli –potentially due to higher education levels compared to villages– could have a heightened sense of archaeological awareness and belonging that they aim to transfer to their children.

Despite the positive survey results, what concerned me is the following: even though most of the students visited Sardis, it does not mean that all did. Furthermore –perhaps due to the less informative and more leisurely atmosphere of these Sardis visits– some students had difficulty imagining an archaeological site, and Sardis in particular. In order to understand the level of curiosity among the students, I wanted them to answer the survey questions, “What are the things that interest you the most when visiting an ancient city?” and “If you were to visit the ancient city of Sardis soon, which of the following questions would you like an archaeologist to answer for you?”(see Appendix G, questions no.4 and 6). Some of the students have strongly stated that they were not interested in Sardis. These students asked for Mrs. Mınçık’s assistance in answering those survey questions. Having realized the puzzlement students were experiencing, Mrs. Mınçık began to remind them of key information they covered as part of the social sciences curriculum. Following this quick recap, one of the students gave the following answer:

*“I believe its history is already something that many people are curious about, but what I wonder the most is it [Sardis] being the place where the Lydians found the money...I mean, we are the first people to have found the money!”(Student answer to the first survey, June 17, 2021)*

In my opinion, the high levels of familiarity with Sardis among students are optimistic, yet, the nationalistic sentiments taught to young generations are concerning. The archaeology curriculum and its utilization for legitimizing national and political identities since the establishment of Turkey in 1923 is a well-researched topic by many scholars (Atakuman 2008: 224-226, 130; Güler-Bıyıklı and Aslan 2013). An example of this case is the topic of Anatolian Archaeology, which is a part of the 5th-grade social sciences curriculum. As part of the educational agenda, Hittite, Urartu, Lydian, and Phrygian civilizations are presented as the political, economic, societal, and cultural building blocks of the contemporary Republic of Turkey (Atakuman 2008: 220; Bartu-Candan 2007: 97; Güler-Bıyıklı and Aslan 2013: 260-261). Without delving too much into the early Republican period of Turkey, it can be said that the curricular discourse of “Anatolian Civilizations” is the reinterpretation of archaeological knowledge for ethnic, political, and geographical claims of contemporary Turkey (Atakuman 2008: 220; Bartu-Candan 2007: 97).

What is promising is that certain students’ lack of interest in Sardis –or their nationalist answers– does not mean that they are not curious about archaeology or archaeological sites. Mrs. Minçık stated that she is surprised by the questions posed by her students during school trips to Sardis:

*“...sometimes, out of nowhere, such a question comes from a student that there are times when I get stuck in a surprising way...I should answer that question at that moment, in order not to discourage the child, in order not to dull their curiosity at that moment...” (Müjgan Mırçık, Interview on 06/09/2021, 08:48,45 - 09:25,31)*

As mentioned previously, Luke and Kersel’s article, “Valuing the Past: Perceptions of Archaeological Practice in Lydia and the Levant” (2008), brought forward the need for archaeologists actively excavating in Western Anatolia to strengthen their dialogue with local

communities (315). Even though their research partners mainly were from nearby villages, I make a similar argument for the educators and young generation of Salihli. The current picture suggests that educators want to become active participants in site-based projects to benefit from and contribute to raising heritage awareness among local children. Like Hanfmann's era, it is possible to encourage local educators –and even their students– to contribute to archaeological projects with their professional and experience-based knowledge. Such a collaborative methodology could help younger generations develop a sense of belonging towards the archaeological heritage they are surrounded with while fulfilling educators' goals of conveying a sense of stewardship among their students.

In the following section, I will argue why collaborative archaeology can become a solution for both the issues mentioned above and offer a promising future for community relations in Sardis.

### **3. Finding the Middle Ground: Collaborative Archaeology in the U.S. and Turkey**

#### ***3.1 Collaborative Archaeology***

As mentioned previously, I suggest that solid community relations lie in inviting those passive audiences to take active roles in archaeological excavations. Yet, what does our understanding of collaborative archaeology entail? Due to its subjective nature, the definition is as complex and multifaceted as the activity itself: for some, collaborative archaeology is a sub-discipline of public archaeology (McDavid 2015), a postcolonial movement (Lyndon and Rizvi 2010; Silliman 2008), a form of modern activism (Kiddey 2018), an alternative pedagogy (McDavid 2015; Nassaney 2004; Young 2021), primarily an ethnographic activity (Hamilakis and Anagnostopoulos 2009), a developed form of postprocessualist theory (Simpson 2009),

applied anthropology (Shackel and Chambers 2004), a co-creative methodology (Bollwerk et al. 2015), and even a subtly populist and neoliberalist service (Gonzalez and Ruibal 2019).

Within this terminological complexity, I believe it is more pragmatic – and thus feasible – to focus specifically on one of the major defining features of collaborative archaeology: power-sharing. Since 2002, archaeological ethics –particularly in post-colonial contexts– advocated for research partnerships that provide equal training opportunities, access to archaeological knowledge, and empowering responsibilities to non-archaeologists (Atalay 2012; Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2016; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2007; Jameson 2019; Marshall 2002; Nicholas 2011; Nassaney 2021; Silliman and Ferguson 2010). When collaboration is interpreted through power-sharing, it offers new ground for going beyond the traditional labor, or domestic service-based interactions archaeologists have with locals in Anatolia.

### ***3.2 “Collaborative” Archaeology in the U.S. and Turkey<sup>4</sup>***

Compared to the U.S., research partnerships with non-researchers are a recent practice in Turkey and the Middle East in general (LaBianca et al. 2021; Moser et al. 2002; Tully 2009; Vries 2013; Paz 2010). As early as the mid-1960s, collaborative practices began to emerge in the U.S. (Watkins & Nicholas 2014: 3794). A generalized analysis of the history of BIPOC partnerships in the U.S. shows that collaborative practices were a result of both external pressures (Agbe-Davies 2014: 1601; LaRoche and Blakey 1997; Marshall 2002: 212–213; McDavid 2014: 1596; Shackel 2014: 6994; Watkins & Nicholas 2014: 3798) and internal

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<sup>4</sup> In this thesis I choose to cite the most prevalent and long-lasting public and community projects in Turkey. There following projects have conducted public-facing projects on a much smaller scale and thus are mostly not recorded through the means of academic publishing: Göbekli Tepe, Akçalar, Aşağı Pınar, Güvercinkayası Höyüğü, and Klazomenai. For more information about these projects see Ricci and Yılmaz 2016: 46 and Özdoğan et al. 2010.

questionings (Agbe-Davies 2014: 1601; Hodder 2014: 6083; McDavid 2014: 1592; McDavid & Brock 2015: 161–162).

The history of public and community-oriented projects in Turkey, on the other hand, is relatively short and straightforward. Even though the earliest example of public archaeology could be Halet Çambel's initiatives in Karatepe-Aslantaş during the 1930s (Gürsu 2019: 87; Çambel 2010), the seeds of community archaeology effectively were laid by Ian Hodder during his directorship of the Çatalhöyük Archaeological Project in Turkey. Being one of the leading theorists of postprocessual archaeology, Hodder has introduced the concept of multivocality to Turkey. Çatalhöyük has become a pioneering and progressive site where both top-down and bottom-up types of partnerships were implemented from the 2000s onwards.

Even though they are not as long-standing as Çatalhöyük, there are a number of education, tangible/intangible heritage, ecotourism, and site management projects in Turkey worth citing (for Küçükyalı ArkeoPark see Ricci and Yılmaz 2016; for İvriz Project see Maner and Menteş 2018; Maner and Menteş 2019; for Aspendos and Pisidia Projects see Gürsu 2019; for Aphrodisias Project see Emir 2018).

As the low number of published case studies suggests, public-oriented archaeology in Turkey is still in its infancy. Furthermore, when analyzed in detail, it is understood that many of these case studies have something in common: concentrated emphasis on on-site management and heritage tourism. Apart from certain exceptions, these well-known case studies adopt a top-down approach to providing educational and tourism-based economic opportunities for the locals and the general public.

It must be noted that, within Turkey's context, such a system is perhaps necessary to comply with international and national legislation and thus receive political and financial

support. Since the concept of “world heritage” began to include cultural, spiritual, and religious aspects of local communities through the 2003 Intangible Heritage Convention, local communities’ inclusion in the heritage preservation processes began to attain more formalized attention and significance worldwide (UNESCO, 2015; UNESCO World Heritage Center, n.d.; von Droste, 2012, p. 11). In alignment with these developments, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey adopted a more inclusive approach toward archaeological site management with Policy No.26006, Concerning Management Planning and the Determination of Management Areas, in 2004. This policy highlights “collaboration with local communities” as an essential component of site preservation and management (Alan Yönetimi ile Anıt Eser Kurulunun Kuruluş ve Görevleri ile Yönetim Alanlarının Belirlenmesine İlişkin Usul ve Esaslar Hakkında Yönetmelik 2005; Orbaşlı 2013: 242; Saraç 2014).

The bureaucratic challenges significantly impact how public-facing projects in Turkey are forming their interactions with the non-archaeologist stakeholders. Equal attention toward archaeological heritage preservation and local community welfare is understandable in a context where there are no other potential ways to ensure financial and legalized support except complying with UNESCO-approved trends and the 2004 legislation. UNESCO has an unavoidable influence on project design: a generalized attempt to simultaneously benefit both the archaeological site and local community through universalized goals like development, conservation, capacity building, raising heritage awareness, and a sense of belonging can be observed in project descriptions. While these may seem promising, there is the danger of transforming the local community into an entity fully dependent on heritage tourism, resulting in a new power tension within the community.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> A great case for this instance is documented by Lisa C. Breglia in Chichen Itza. For more information, see Breglia 2005.

According to Gürsu, an additional bureaucratic challenge is the internal tensions between small municipal establishments and the central government.<sup>6</sup> While small municipalities consider themselves part of the local community and are willing to support such partnerships, the legislative and bureaucratic systems could prevent municipalities from acting independently from the central authority. Moreover, the bureaucratic system makes it challenging not only to get legislative approval but also to secure governmental funding for public-facing projects conducted as part of archaeological excavations (Gürsu, pers. comm). This barrier makes executing wide-scoped collaborative archaeology projects relatively tricky in Turkey.

Bureaucratic challenges aside, some archaeologists state that implementing public-oriented archaeology projects in Turkey is challenging because there is little to no bottom-up demand from local communities, or these demands are not vocalized (Çiğdem Maner, pers. comm.). As a result, the public and community projects are driven mainly by an ethical obligation from the archaeologists and inevitably done through top-down methodologies.<sup>7</sup>

Yet, Turkey is an excellent case for making lemonade out of life's lemons. Under the conditions of the economic crisis that Turkey has been facing since the mid-2010s, it is more difficult for such projects to be funded by the local and central governments, making archaeologists look for international sponsors that consider the impact value of funded projects. That is why— despite the continuing top-down trend— there is also an upward trend toward understanding the “impact value” of public-facing projects, eventually leading to more relationships being formed with local communities. (İşıl Gürsu, pers. comm.).

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<sup>6</sup> Hodder (2000) has extensively commented on the influence of municipal and governmental tensions in public-facing archaeological activities at Çatalhöyük in his article, *Developing a Reflexive Method in Archaeology*.

<sup>7</sup> Based on Atalay's historical description, the current trends in Turkey could be said to resemble 1970s community archaeology in the U.S. See Atalay 2012: 59-60: “We gain some insight into why collaboration gained ground in archaeology during the early to mid-1990s... The emphasis on public interaction and education was driven primarily by two needs: to gain public support for site preservation and to secure funds.”

Where do K-12-targeted projects stand within this political and financial context? The above-mentioned situation also has repercussions on in-school partnerships. Because site management, heritage awareness, and stewardship go hand-in-hand, educational projects have mostly the top-down goal of developing student content to support archaeology and heritage taught as part of formal school curriculum (for Limyra see *Çocukların Limyra'sı* n.d.; for Aktopraklık ArkeoPark see Karul 2010; for Sagalassos see *Sagalassos'u Keşfedelim* n.d.; for Yeşilova Höyük see Derin 2010; for Aşıklı Höyük see Özbaşaran 2010 and *Kültür Ortaklaşması ve Toplumsal Paylaşım Projeleri* n.d.). Moreover, similar projects are produced by public/private museums and independent consultants (for Batman Museum see Pulhan 2019; for Mardin Museum İbrahim Eker pers comm; for Komet Culture and Arts Museum Kit Project see Komet Kültür ve Sanat Projeleri n.d.). Given a lack of stewardship and heritage awareness education in the K-12 curriculum, such top-down approaches could be necessitated by external factors independent from archaeologists.

An exception to this trend, however, is Çatalhöyük. When archaeological team members are producing educational content, the opinions of educators (Bartu Candan 2007; Mickel 2021: pp. 88–89; Sert 2009), site workers (Çatalhöyük 2010 Report: 119; Çatalhöyük 2011 Report: 110–111), and local communities (Atalay 2007: 255–256, 265; Atalay 2010: 423–26: Atalay, pers. comm.) are taken into consideration.

All the projects mentioned above result from only the past three decades. This may suggest the significantly fast and positive change in archaeologist-local community relationships in Turkey. Yet, I argue that we can take existing initiatives a step further and establish a less hierarchical relationship with our audiences. The impact of a top-down approach to the local community is felt in how archaeological teams form K-12 relationships. Within the confines of



this master's thesis, I thus ask: Is it possible to popularize Çatalhöyük's approach to designing educational materials collaboratively with non-archaeologists? When developing educational public programming, is it possible to consider local K-12 members as equal project partners?

The answer is yes. I believe that –to achieve this—archaeologists in Turkey should look to the other side of the Atlantic Ocean and learn more about archaeologist-Indigenous community partnerships in the U.S.

### ***3.2 Collaborative Indigenous Archaeology with the Bahçeşehir School***

The core principle of Indigenous archaeology is to include Native Americans' voices in archaeological projects. By enabling them to participate equally, archaeologists seek to promote the inclusion of non-Western and non-academic knowledge systems in scholarly research. Primarily because of its critical approach and social justice-centered perspective, I argue that some of these Indigenous archaeology approaches could be applied to post-imperial and post-colonial geographies of the Middle East.

One of them is Colwell-Chanthaphonh -Ferguson's concept of the "collaborative continuum."<sup>8</sup> According to Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson (2007), collaboration is "forming a group of co-researchers, creating the conditions for group learning, acting on the inquiry question, and making meaning by constructing group knowledge. (9, 22)" Even though the prescription for a collaborative partnership is clear, "collaboration" represents an ideal state of equality, which can only be attained by moving back and forth between different stages of resistance, participation, and collaboration (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2007: 9-10).

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<sup>8</sup> Apart from Colwell-Chanthaphonh-Ferguson's collaborative continuum, there are other variations of how collaboration is interpreted. Some of the noteworthy interpretations are the following: Little and Shackel's (2014) emphasis on civic empowerment" (100), Nassaney's (2021) guidelines on "authentic collaboration," Colwell-Chanthaphonh's (2016) expansion of collaborative continuum with colonial control and community control, collaborative Indigenous archaeology of Silliman (2008) and postprocessualist take on collaborative archaeology (McDavid 2004).

The flexibility in Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson's collaborative continuum provides a theoretically sound basis for how collaboration can be implemented in Turkey. Firstly, the collaborative spectrum provides communities the time and training to be active knowledge producers. Secondly, it offers archaeologists the time to find their methodological voice while being bound by site management regulations and international heritage politics.<sup>9</sup> Going back and forth along the continuum allows both parties to establish reciprocal partnerships by blurring the distinction between top-down and bottom-up approaches during a trial-and-error period.

Atalay's (2012) Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) methodology solidifies Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Fergusons' theory by putting some of its principles into practice. To summarize, CBPR is the co-creation of knowledge by both researchers and non-researchers (Atalay 2012: 74-75, 83). This methodology advocates data collection as a collective activity and attempts to include non-scholarly knowledge as a significant asset in archaeological research (Atalay 2012: 74). According to Atalay, knowledge creation should be done in full participation, acknowledge "community-identified concerns and problems," and benefit both parties (Atalay 2012: 83).

Despite targeting primarily Native American communities in the U.S., Atalay has attempted to apply CBPR in Çatalhöyük-Turkey (Atalay 2007: 251). As Çatalhöyük was preparing itself for UNESCO World Heritage nomination, Atalay aimed to encourage the Küçükköy community to actively participate in formal site management meetings (Atalay, pers.

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<sup>9</sup> Some archaeologists argue the need for establishing structured guidelines for collaborative archaeology projects in MENA (see Moser et al. 2022, Tully 2007). I do not think they are highly applicable to Turkey as a) Turkey was not formally colonized over decades as many of the MENA countries did, and b) some MENA countries like Jordan (LaBianca et al. 2021) already have an established international and national basis for community archaeology projects making such guidelines easy to put into practice.

comm.). To achieve this ambitious aim, Atalay first conducted extensive interviews to understand locals' demands from the archaeological team, collaboratively prepared educational materials through regularly organized town meetings, and trained young interns among village residents to bridge the communicational gap between locals, governmental representatives, and archaeologists (Atalay 2007: 255-256, 265; Atalay 2010: 423–26; Atalay, pers. comm.). Through her activities in Çatalhöyük, Atalay sought to “develop and answer research questions that meet community needs (Atalay 2007: 257).” Atalay’s attempt in Çatalhöyük increases the potential of CBPR to be applied more widely in this geography.

When collaborative methodologies and participatory ethics of Indigenous archaeology are combined, we infer that non-hierarchical K-12 partnerships should substantially benefit archaeological sites globally. There are a significant number of published site-management projects not only with Indigenous but also with BIPOC communities in the U.S. (for noteworthy examples, see Flint Stone Street Ancestral Recovery and Waapaashiiki Siipiiwi Mound Project (Atalay 2012), Levi Jordan Plantation (McDavid 2004), Ferguson et al.’s (2015) work with the Hopi Tribe). Similar relationships could be established with local educators and students, who have been alienated from their local heritage through nationalist discourses of ethnic origin, Eurocentric notions of Classical Civilizations, or simply through the way archaeological excavations are conducted in the Middle East centuries.

Like the contributions of Indigenous populations to archaeological research through spiritual and cultural knowledge, educators can provide a pedagogical background that archaeologists do not possess. Moreover, it could also be argued that children have more experiential, innate forms of knowledge that derive from their lived experiences. Like archaeologists who want to reach out to Indigenous communities with respect, archaeologists

active in the Middle East can –through educator and student collaborations– ensure that K-12 and family-oriented educational content satisfy their audiences’ cultural and linguistic background and their informational needs.

Turkey presents opportunities and challenges in implementing collaborative archaeology practices in ongoing archaeological projects. Yet I argue that a transformation from top-down to non-hierarchized archaeologist-local community relationships is possible. To achieve this, we first must think outside of the box, turn our direction to post-settler communities, and adapt Indigenous archaeology for similar partnerships with local communities and K-12 institutions in Turkey.

In the next section, I summarize the methodology of our collaborative work with Bahçeşehir School students and teachers and discuss the panel design process in light of an inspirational case study from Çatalhöyük-Turkey.

#### **4. Our Partnership with The Bahçeşehir School and Panel Design Process**

##### ***4.1. An Inspiration for this Project: Çatalhöyük and Southampton Visualization Team (SVT)***

One of the main inspirations for this project came, rather unsurprisingly, from Çatalhöyük. Southampton Visualization Team (SVT)’s contributions to educational initiatives in Çatalhöyük are not mentioned outside seasonal excavation reports. However, it is an exemplary project in which archaeologists and locals worked together for youth and visitor programming.

Between 2009 and 2017, the SVT team designed seventeen panels for the South and North Areas of the site, five children’s panels for the “on-site family trail,” and thirty-four labels for the experimental houses (Figures 1 and 2) (Çatalhöyük 2009 Report: 163; Çatalhöyük 2013 Report: 300-302; Çatalhöyük 2014 Report: 182; Çatalhöyük 2015 Report: 201; Çatalhöyük 2016 Report:

238; Çatalhöyük 2017 Report: 302). Local site guards, in addition to visitors, undergraduate students, illustrators, graphic designers, and archaeologists, were a critical partner for gathering visitor data, understanding what kinds of questions visitors ask about the site, and assessing through which mediums their curiosities, needs, and demands can be addressed (Çatalhöyük Report 2009: 164, 165; Çatalhöyük Report 2010: 117; Çatalhöyük Report 2011: 110-111, Çatalhöyük Report 2012: 273, Çatalhöyük Report 2014: 185, Çatalhöyük Report 2017: 280). During the design process, local guards were first interviewed and then regularly consulted for feedback on the design process (Çatalhöyük Report 2010: 119, Çatalhöyük Report 2011: 110-111).

This project inspired me because an academic team's partnership with the local population and graphic designers proved successful for educational content preparation. Eventually, I decided to follow a similar methodology throughout my collaborative relationship with both Bahçeşehir School and Mustafa Keleşoğlu, the graphic designer.

#### ***4.2 Establishing a Collaborative Methodology***

Bahçeşehir was one of the very few schools willing to dedicate time and effort to an online project that a) would be conducted during the pandemic and b) be extended into summer holidays and two academic semesters. Given that managing the density of formal curriculum during the pandemic was highly pressuring on both students and teachers in Turkey, Bahçeşehir School has shown exceptional interest, effort, and dedication to this project's success.

Another critical element for selection was the school administration's efforts to familiarize their middle school students with Sardis through annual archaeological site visits. Given that extracurricular trips are both financially and temporally challenging for schools,

visiting a local site with students is an exceptional teaching goal within the intense educational context of Turkey.

Some of these advantages exist primarily because Bahçeşehir School is a private institution. Readers might question this choice, as Sardis is surrounded by two villages, Sart Mahmut and Sart Mustafa, that provide a significant amount of contemporary labor and domestic support for the archaeological site and are served by the public schools. Unfortunately, however, working with a public school in Sart was not possible under the pandemic conditions. Given that internet is not stable in many of Turkey's villages, ensuring the sustainability of online collaboration via Zoom was at best a faint possibility. Furthermore, I could not plan short-term research trips to Turkey due to uncertainties related to international travel during the pandemic and Fulbright-related visa renewal processes. Apart from these logistical constraints, receiving project permission to work with a public school was an additional constraint. Such bureaucratic approval needs to be granted directly from the Ministry of National Education of Turkey, and it cannot be obtained within the short time frame of this project.

After agreeing on our partnership, I created a tentative methodology for our meetings. During our first meeting, I chose to adopt a quantitative methodology as recommended by Gould (Figure 3). According to Gould (2016), many case study-based collaborative research projects insufficiently explain their data collection, management, and interpretation strategies (5). Routinizing quantitative data collection among archaeologists to standardize collaborative methodologies is essential (Gould 2016: 5).

In this quantitative stage, I conducted surveys with Mrs. Minçık's students. The student survey aimed to understand how familiar they are with the Sardis archaeological site and what they would be willing to learn during their future visits. More targeted questions sought to

understand what curiosities arise when they look at the photos of the Synagogue structure (for Synagogue panels, see Appendix A). There were also additional questions to learn about students' visual design preferences.

The survey with Mrs. Mınçık was more focused on understanding her experience, both positive and negative, of conducting school trips to Sardis and her observations of student behavior on the site.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, I wanted to learn what kinds of questions she anticipates receiving from her students if Synagogue is visited in the future.

However, following such a rigid quantitative methodology put me in the position of a researcher collecting data from subjects, which was a discomforting experience for Mrs. Mınçık, the students, and me in the short run. Mrs. Mınçık has expressed this as well. As we discussed how to show the draft panels to her students, she suggested that I follow a Q&A-based conversation to communicate with students. This made me change my methodology to a qualitative one (Figure 4). Rather than surveying, I learned students' opinions on the Synagogue and Temple of Artemis panels through a structured-but-flexible conversation. Furthermore, after consulting with Mrs. Mınçık, I prepared a simple activity sheet to understand students' curiosities for the second group of panels on the Temple of Artemis.

Somewhat unexpectedly, the qualitative approach helped me collect more constructive information from the students during our second and third meetings. The questions I asked were straightforward (e.g., visual design focused questions like “What do you think about the cartoon character? Did you like him/her?” and textual content focused questions like “What do you think about this text? Do you find it interesting? If you were standing in front of this panel, would you read it?”). The students began to trust me, found encouragement amongst each other, quickly

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<sup>10</sup> Even though I share student survey results, because Mrs Mınçık is not an anonymous individual, the details of teacher survey are not shared for confidentiality purposes.

joined the conversation, and provided comments that allowed me to look at the Synagogue and Temple of Artemis panels from a unique and creative perspective.

Unfortunately, however, I was late to realize that students were having trouble understanding Sardis and the concept of a panel during our first and second meetings. This was addressed by Mrs. Mınçık, who told me that some students –despite participating in class activities—wish to learn more about Sardis and what a panel is. Per Mrs. Mınçık’s suggestion, I prepared a PowerPoint for our third meeting to answer students’ questions. I observed the increasing participation level among students when a more ordered – yet still conversational – experience was presented to them.

I agree with Simpson and Williams (2008) that the rigid structure of survey questions detract from seeing their impact on the community partners (p.69). Following their argument, I chose to adopt a self-reflective position to evaluate my experiences from a critical standpoint. This helped me become more aware of the power dynamic between me, Mrs. Mınçık, and the students. While the power hierarchy was always there, conscious attempts for its mitigation through humility, empathy, and respect have hopefully strengthened our relationship. The comments I received from students reflected their youthful gaze towards the world outside, thanks to the relaxed atmosphere of our interactions— their contributions were to-the-point, witty, and creative, which challenged me to think in ways that I am not able to think both as a young adult and an academic.

#### ***4.3 Designing the Panels***

Due to my lack of knowledge and skills in graphic design and Adobe Creative Cloud, I worked with a local graphic designer, Mustafa Keleşoğlu, to ensure the panels were visually appealing. Because I conducted this project during the pandemic-related economic crisis in



Turkey, this served a second social purpose: to financially support an unemployed artist during these uncertain times. Mr. Keleşoğlu's work was funded through the Cornell Institute Archaeology and Material Studies (CIAMS)'s Hirsh Archaeological Research Grant.

Our collaboration was based on the following methodology: I was doing the archaeological research, deciding on the overall theme of the panel, writing the labels, selecting appropriate visual imagery, and finally sketching the panel layout. Having completed this initial step, Mr. Keleşoğlu and I would conduct regular Zoom meetings to turn my ideas into a finished product. During our sessions, we used the ShareScreen feature of Zoom for me to provide comments as the design was taking shape via Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop.

Because Mr. Keleşoğlu is primarily a game designer, he proposed to design panels to reflect current aesthetic trends among the young generation. Each structure had a designated historical character inspired by inscriptions and sculptural remains. Additionally, two child characters, one male and one female, are designed to ask Bahçeşehir students' questions about these historical figures.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the lion mascot —named by Bahçeşehir students as “Ozi” — encourages students to follow specific verbal commands and actively participate in these learning experiences.

Additionally, thanks to Mr. Keleşoğlu's knowledge, core user experience (UX) design principles were also applied to provide young audiences with a structured reading experience. The Q&A-style texts allowed us to minimize long paragraphs and provide information in a

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<sup>11</sup> I initially wanted these figures to cater young LGBTQI+ audiences as well. Unfortunately, however, designing LGBTQI+ child characters could have attracted negative attention in a geographical context where traditional gender norms are strongly prevalent. That is why Mr. Keleşoğlu and I were more inclined to design a cis-male and a cis-female. Also, certain feedback providers found the first version of these characters “too white.” After several new trials, Mr. Keleşoğlu and I decided to update the characters to its current format (see Appendix L). Yet, I acknowledge that these figures are not inclusive enough to cater Kurdish populations that are living in Western Anatolia. That is why further revisions are necessary in consultation with the students and educators of the Bahçeşehir School.

layout that resembles text messages, a popular way to communicate among the young generation.

The panels were designed under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism's "Instructions on Entrance, Information and Direction Signs for Museums and Archaeological Sites."<sup>12</sup> Thus all the panels were either 120x90 or 160x180 cm, with minimum 28-point Arial font. The only exception to this rule was two Synagogue panels (see Appendix A). The Synagogue floor is covered with restored mosaics requiring a lighter and less destructive panel to be placed on site. To achieve this, I used the panel size, 140x50 cm, chosen by the Çatalhöyük team and approved by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for archaeologically sensitive areas (Çatalhöyük Report 2015: 299).

Apart from visual design, many variables need to be considered when designing textual content. Because there are no scholarly guidelines on creating informational boards specifically for open-air archaeological sites, I focused on primary educational theories and museum exhibit label writing methodologies. The main educational theories I consulted were Howard Gardners's Multiple Intelligence Theory (Gardner 2011), short term memory, long term memory, and main principles of information processing (Recognition, Attention, Rehearsal, Organization, Meaningful Learning, Visual Imagery) (Snowman et al. 2008), and Explicit Instruction methodologies (Hughes et al. 2017). As for exhibition design, I prioritized applying some of the well-known rules of exhibition label writing (Serrell 1996), paid particular attention to various case studies from family-friendly museums in the U.S. (Rand 2010), and focused on understanding student and teacher experiences with museum exhibits (Young 2021).

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<sup>12</sup> For more information on informational panel design rules, please visit <https://teftis.ktb.gov.tr/TR-264479/muze-ve-oren-yerleri-giris-bilgilendirme-ve-yonlendirme-.html>.

Lastly, Profs. Annetta Alexandridis and Benjamin Anderson from Cornell University, in addition to Sardis excavation directors Prof. Nicholas Cahill from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Bahadır Yıldırım from Harvard Art Museums, were consulted to ensure archaeological accuracy in the panels.<sup>13</sup>

#### ***4.3.a Panels for the Synagogue***

The first group of panels is designed for the Synagogue, which is one of the most-visited structures of Sardis. Its restoration in the 1960s enables visitors to imagine the structure's past appearance.

During our meeting, I learned that the students are most curious about why and how this structure was built (see Table 1 and Appendix G, question 6). Another frequently asked question was the function and symbolism of the lion figures, mosaics, and the fountain inside the building. The number of students interested in building material and historical facts, in comparison, was low.

Based on these results, we designed four panels that primarily answered the questions about the function and decorative materials.<sup>14</sup> The 140x50 cm panels focused on explaining various usages of the courtyard and main hall while drawing attention to the function and spolia-based characteristics of some of the main decorative elements. The 120x90 cm panels aimed to a) build a connection between children's contemporary daily life (school, family) and the Jewish population of Sardis and b) encourage tactile experiences through seeing and observing the

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<sup>13</sup> Additional comments have been taken from Gencay Öztürk and Çiğdem Maner. Öztürk suggested corrections regarding the Turkish translation of Sardis ("Sardes"). Maner, on the other hand, recommended the character names to be written in the way they are spoken in Turkish (e.g., "Moskine" instead of "Moschine"). Necessary revisions have been made based on their comments (see Appendix B, D, and F)

<sup>14</sup> See "Resources Used for Designing Informational Panels" for the extended bibliography consulted during the design process.

shapes and colors of the wall and floor mosaics. The primary historical character for these panels was Samoe, a rabbi-teacher whose inscription is exhibited in the main hall of the Synagogue.

While these panels follow models of “good museum label” design based on theoretical and methodological guidelines, I faced some challenges. My biggest challenge was related to minority issues in contemporary Turkey and the ethical responsibility to address this on the Synagogue panels. Because this topic is beyond the scope of this thesis, I refrain from delving into the history of the Jewish community residing in the Manisa region in the late Ottoman period (for more information, see Shaw 1991). Educational materials produced as an alternative to Turkey’s ethnically homogenizing formal curriculum can address these erasures. Even though the Synagogue structure in Sardis has excellent potential for this initiative, it would also threaten the ongoing positive relationship of the Sardis team with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. That is why my efforts to enhance the young generation's knowledge about the religious and ethnic minorities of Anatolia were limited to brief, keyword-like explanations of the terms such as Jewish people, Torah, and Synagogue. These keywords are still significant for students in Turkey as the students learn very little and thus are unaware of the historically significant minorities in Anatolia.

#### ***4.3.b Panels for the Temple of Artemis***

The second group of panels is designed for the Temple of Artemis, which attracts special attention from Christian tourists.

While the first meetings for the Synagogue panels were survey-based, we refrained from this methodology in the ongoing sessions. That is why Mrs. Mınçık and I have shared an activity sheet with the students to learn what questions arise when they look at various photos of the Temple of Artemis (see appendices G and H for the activity sheet and its results).

According to the results, as with the Synagogue, Bahçeşehir students were most interested in the structure's function and construction methodology. However, in contrast to the Synagogue, students were additionally curious about its past appearance and interior elements. While the students did not want any historical facts in the Synagogue panels, most of them mainly wanted to learn the construction date and the commissioner of the temple. Moreover, they were particularly curious about quantitative and qualitative characteristics (how big, how long, the oldest and most important artifact found in the temple, etc.) that set the temple apart from Sardis monuments. Lastly, the abundance of rectangular holes carved in the marble slabs has also attracted observable attention from the students.

The usage of 160x180 cm panels for the temple panels allowed me to answer many of the questions outlined by the students. In the first panel, the children meet with the main character of the Temple, Moschine, a temple priestess from Hellenistic Sardis, and learn what “temple” and “Artemis” mean. The second panel aims to explain what the temple looked like in the past and inside. The third one mainly focuses on Church M for Christian tour groups and provides a chronology for history-enthusiasts. The fourth, and the last panel, go through some of the primary construction methodologies of Hellenistic and Roman Sardis.

Like the Synagogue panels, the design process proved challenging for non-design-related reasons. One of the students indicated that they wanted to learn who started the excavations at the Temple of Artemis in the activity sheet. This request means that I must mention Howard Crosby Butler and the colonial style of early 20th-century excavations. Additionally, certain archaeologists have also suggested that I design a child panel on the mechanical parts of the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century railroad system exhibited on-site. But how can I discuss this ethically questionable past without whitewashing some historical facts?

Eventually, I decided not to design a panel about Butler and these mechanical remains. If a child panel is to be prepared for this feature, I believe that the content should be decided collectively with the Sardis excavation team, where the realities of early 20th-century labor issues should be considered.

Apart from these ethical dilemmas, another difficulty that arose both in the Synagogue and Temple of Artemis panels was logistical. It is academically challenging to “translate” archaeological research to children without altering their informational and interpretive depth. This has been especially difficult in an archaeological site like Sardis, where archaeologists have not previously produced any educational materials. Lastly, for evident reasons, it is also not feasible to answer all the student questions in a textually limited space.

#### ***4.3.c Visitor Panel***

In alignment with Mrs. Mınçık’s request, we also designed a visitor panel in addition to the Synagogue and Temple of Artemis panels (see Appendix E and F). This panel was more guiding rather than informative: main visitor routes, directional signs, and rest and parking areas, and each touristically significant monument was locationally marked. The visitor panel included less text and focused more on visual communication with incoming visitors.

When discussing this panel, Mrs. Mınçık has also shared her opinions and comments as much as the students did. Thanks to her, we noticed some grammatical errors in our “thank you” note to Bahçeşehir School added on the lower part of the visitor panel.

Because this project was short-lasting, we could not produce panels for all the monuments in Sardis. But the experimental nature of our collaborative partnership revealed many strengths, weaknesses, and potentials that can be further developed in the future. In the last

chapter, I will be discussing these in detail by providing anecdotes from our third—and final—meeting with the Bahçeşehir School students, Mrs. Mınçık and Mrs. Namver.

## **5. Evaluation of Our Collaboration and Moving Forward**

When we started this project with the Bahçeşehir School, I was worried that we would not be able to sustain our partnership in the long run. My negative stance mainly derived from the unknowns of running a partnership-based archaeological project that had not been initiated for Sardis before. My worries have been replaced by a hopeful vision toward future collaborations that can happen in Sardis.

During our last class meeting with students, I asked them several questions to evaluate our partnership from their perspectives, such as: did you find our partnership interesting? Did you enjoy designing panels with an archaeologist from Sardis? What adjectives would you use to describe our collaboration (fun/informative or boring/confusing)? Would you like to continue designing panels together in the future? If we continue this project, how do you think we can improve our classroom meetings? Would you like to visit Sardis together in the future?

Students' answers suggest that this project has fulfilled two of its main goals for student participation. Firstly, it has increased their curiosity towards Sardis on an observable level. Many students are excited to host Sardis archaeologists in their classroom once the Covid restrictions ease. While most of them are eager to see the panels after their placement, they also expressed their desire to visit Sardis with archaeologists regardless of the panels and their on-site placement.

Secondly, I am happy that some students have recognized my efforts to transform them into equal project contributors. Having understood that I value their questions, comments, and feedback, they became more vocal in expressing their ideas to archaeologists. Some students

went beyond the project's scope and even shared their future-oriented proposals: if the project is continued in the future, the students want to collect data amongst themselves through class presentations. By presenting each draft panel to their classmates, they first wish to discuss each panel together and then vote collectively to decide what kinds of revisions they want as 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Lastly, they want to inform the archaeologists and design team of the voting results. These results are very significant: the more they became confident in expressing themselves, the more they engaged with the project. The more involved they feel, the closer this project realizes the collaborative ideals proposed by Colwell-Chanthaphonh -Ferguson and Atalay.

In addition to this proposal, some students also expressed their hopes for the archaeological team to participate in more technologically advanced public programming projects in Sardis. Most of their technological programming demands centered on QR code-based phone applications, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) platforms, and audiovisual materials presented through on-site screens. Their enthusiasm to continue this project with an improved methodology and new products suggests that —if continued— the future of our partnership could center more on digital visitor programming.

During our evaluative meeting, positive sentiments also came from Mrs. Minçık and Mrs. Namver. Similar to the student's comments, both educators want this project to continue, want to meet with the rest of the Sardis team, and wish to visit the site in-person with archaeologists. Somewhat unexpectedly, Bahçeşehir's social media posts have increased the interest in Sardis among the Bahçeşehir School's parent community. This unanticipated consequence may widen the future partnerships to include interested parents.

While the future is promising, I also think that focusing on problems is as necessary as the positive outcomes and future directions.



To not be trapped in Pollyannaism, problems faced during our partnership should be shared transparently with the readers. First, I believe the pandemic to be one of our biggest challenges. Even though we started our partnership when the Bahçeşehir School was fully online, we had the majority of our meetings when the classes were in-person during the 2021-2022 academic year. This meant that highly contagious Covid-19 variants, namely Delta and Omicron, occasionally spread among 6<sup>th</sup> graders. As part of Bahçeşehir's Covid-19 protocol, 6th-grade classes transformed from in-person to online throughout the quarantine period. While the teachers were trying to adapt to these varying teaching modalities quickly, I could empathize with Mrs. Mınçık and Namver's conditions and be flexible with scheduling class meetings. Yet these changing circumstances were challenging from the researcher's perspective. Daily uncertainties have become a part of our lives during the pandemic; however, the temporal conditions of master's research add another level of pressure to complete all the class meetings timely regardless of extraordinary life conditions.

Another challenge caused by the Covid-19 pandemic was the changing international travel rules, limiting my travels to Turkey. While using teleconferencing applications like Zoom has allowed us to connect despite geographical barriers and time zones, it has also posed particular challenges. An internet connection problem affected the Bahçeşehir School between December and February. In addition to Covid 19-related delays, we postponed our meetings due to technical difficulties.

Experiencing Covid-19 and technical barriers at the same time has inevitably made us reflect on the project's sustainability during the remaining half of the 2021-2022 academic year. As a result, we decided to change our plans. Instead of designing a third group of panels for the

Bath-Gymnasium Complex in February, we decided to do a concluding meeting and end the project instead.

Even if the above-mentioned issues had not occurred, we nevertheless would have experienced challenges. One of them was the social science curriculum's density, pressuring examination schedule, and the inevitably demanding teaching responsibilities of Mrs. Mınçık. It was inevitable for Mrs. Mınçık to be under administrative pressure to manage this project and conduct classes simultaneously. To balance school hierarchies and consider all community participants' well-being, I also decided to primarily follow the timeline provided to me by Mrs. Mınçık.<sup>15</sup> Even though my initial plan was to meet with students once a month, I could only conduct three class meetings in seven months. From a researcher's perspective, three sessions are not enough to collaboratively design panels for all touristically significant monuments of Sardis. However, considering the performance pressure on the teachers and students in Turkey, I was fortunate to work with highly accommodating educators who valued our partnership.

Another inevitable challenge was the shortness of class hours, which impacted establishing a mutually beneficial relationship with the students. While I learned important things from them that significantly influenced panel designs, I questioned whether they could learn enough about Sardis. An example of this is our last meeting. To address this issue brought up by Mrs. Mınçık, I decided to separate a large segment of our previous meeting to talk about Sardis and gather student comments on their satisfaction with this project. However, because of the limited time, I had to choose only two out of four draft Temple of Artemis panels to present to the students. While the meeting benefited the students on an educational level, I could not gather feedback for

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<sup>15</sup> During our meeting, Sonya Atalay has also shared similar challenges she faced with social hierarchies inherent in Turkish culture. Even though she primarily wanted to work collaboratively with local teachers and students, she was mostly referred to the local governor ("muhtar") and school principal for designing Çatalhöyük comic books (Atalay, pers comm).

two of the remaining Temple of Artemis panels unshown to students. In sum, it was challenging to equally consider the benefit of this project to both parties and organize thirty-minute class meetings accordingly.

While these drawbacks did not significantly affect the research agenda, they did not help create the best environment to shift students' preconceived ideas towards archaeology and archaeologists. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, the nationalistic formal curriculum negatively impacts the young generation. I believe that media also has a similarly negative influence on students.

Despite having a Turkish name, speaking Turkish fluently, and being a native resident of a city an hour away from Sardis, some students did not believe that I was a local and from Turkey. Some of them jokingly told me that I was an “American spy during our first meeting.” Some students posed questions regarding the international and local archaeologist ratio at Sardis. At the end of our first meeting, one of the students shared TV news about an international archaeologist “stealing” artifacts from Turkey in the 1960s.

Even though there is no research done to analyze media's impact on public understanding of archaeology, SARAT's general survey shows that television (37%) and the internet (34%) are the most popular mediums to access information about archaeology (SARAT 2018: 12).

Unfortunately, however, the representation of archaeology –and international archaeologists in particular—in these media forms is inevitably influenced by Turkey's hostile foreign policy. An example is Turkey's 2016 regulations on active international archaeological excavations. Due to increasing political tensions with Austria in 2016, some of the historical excavations like Ephesus and Limyra were put to a halt by governmental authorities (N.A. 2016; Erbil 2021). Two years later, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism added two new requirements for “foreign

excavations”: have an assistant excavation director from Turkey and recruit 51% of the excavation team from local archaeologists (Erbil 2018).

While these regulations are presented in media as attempts to nationalize archaeology, they also paint a negative image of international archaeologists. Kersel and Luke have already proved the negative prejudice among the local population near Sardis due to the antiquities trade.<sup>16</sup> Given the existing historical tensions regarding Anatolian archaeological materials’ exhibition in museums outside of Turkey, all the elements, when combined, inevitably influence the perception young generations have towards an international archaeological excavation conducted close to their residence.

Moving forward, in addition to building collaborative partnerships, it is equally significant to create accessible educational materials for local populations. Archaeologists have the power and responsibility to connect with the younger generation, which must be regarded as the future stewards of archaeological heritage in Turkey. The adverse effects of formal curricula and media suggest that we must change our approach to archaeological research, encourage the public to participate in project partnerships, and attempt to correct their biased perspective toward archaeology and international archaeologists in the meanwhile.

This was also proposed by Sonya Atalay, who –during her interaction with the Küçükköy residents—had to focus firstly on community education before the collaborative partnership (Atalay 2010: 423, Atalay pers comm). While collaborative archaeology remains vital for Turkey, these outcomes may suggest that it may not be possible to adapt all aspects of collaborative Indigenous archaeology to Turkey entirely. Thus, I suggest that Ferguson and Colwell-

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<sup>16</sup> Gencay Öztürk, pers. comm.

Chanthaphonh's collaborative continuum is a useful starting point for CBPR projects that may need to be adjusted based on Turkey's social, cultural, and political conditions.

A short online search on Sardis demonstrates why education should be the starting point for collaborative projects in Turkey. Most of the up-to-date information produced on Sardis is in English; however, the students and teachers are native Turkish speakers with limited English reading and speaking abilities. A short web search on Google with the keyword "Sardis" produces semi-scholarly information on Wikipedia, Britannica, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Harvard Art Museums' websites for an English-speaking audience. On the other hand, for a Turkish-speaking audience, the online learning opportunities are limited to a short description on Wikipedia and brief overviews of the archaeological site provided on the Ministry of Tourism and Culture's websites.<sup>17</sup> While the Sardis Archaeological Exploration's website is an abundant resource, its target audience is archaeologists, and due to the academic language, it is less accessible to local communities.

Not having adequate and accessible information about Sardis in the Turkish language is alarming as non-scholarly and nationalist discourses become the primary resources for Turkish-speaking young generation. As mutually beneficial projects are being established with local communities, archaeologists can also embody the responsibility to educate their partners about the scientific purposes of archaeology, illegal antiquities trafficking, excavation methodologies, and heritage protection, to name a few.

Even though archaeological education is essential to a certain point, my overall stance is that this outreach should be done beyond traditional methodologies. We live in a globalized and technologically connected world, which means that we can think outside of the box and address

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<sup>17</sup> These two websites are the following: <https://kvmgm.ktb.gov.tr/TR-51373/sardes-antik-kenti-ve-bintepeler-lidya-tumulusleri-mani-.html> ; <https://www.kulturportali.gov.tr/turkiye/manisa/gezilecekyer/sart>

some of the longstanding issues of archaeological research design. I strongly argue that, for the specific case of Turkey, the future lies in our ability to turn towards the other side of the Atlantic Ocean and take inspiration from post-colonial and post-imperial archaeologies. A feasible and straightforward way to start this initiative is to include local educators' and children's diverse knowledge and skillsets for public and educational programming.

As mentioned earlier in this section, Bahçeşehir School and I have long-term visions that include a less hierarchized relationship with students, digital programming, and parent participation. Per students' demands, our short-term plans concentrate on visiting Sardis together in June 2022 to see the monuments and interact with other archaeologists during an excavation season. At the same time, our collective wish is to see at least one of the panels placed on site (physically or digitally), mainly because this project has been done to address a visitor-oriented need at the site. However, the final decision is dependent on the excavation director Nicholas Cahill. My hesitancy is the archival storage of the panels for future consideration. If the signs are never built, the students and teachers could perceive that their work is rejected by the professional archaeologists at Sardis, which may lead to more alienation and increased negative ruminations about the site and its archaeologists. That is why I would like to end this thesis with an optimistic note that we will visit the site with the students and educators not only to see the monuments but also to (digitally/physically) access some of the panels and celebrate the outcome of our collaborative work.

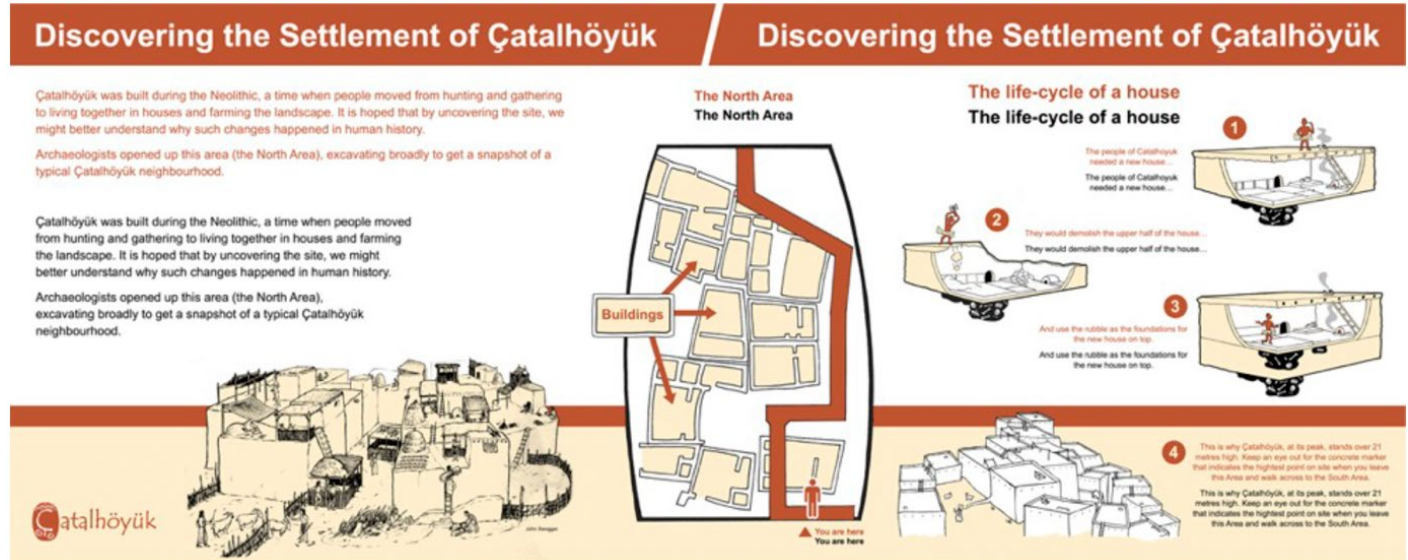
## **6. Conclusion**

Being an archaeologist in the 21<sup>st</sup> century means that we—both at an individual and collective level—are making a decision: Do we want archaeological excavations to happen the same way? Or do we want to make more ethical interactions with local non-archaeologist

communities? I addressed this question in this thesis by focusing on Sardis as a case study. Through our collaboration with the sixth-grade students and teachers of Salihli-Turkey, we designed nine informational panels for future young visitors to the archaeological site. Our partnership was a valuable opportunity to reflect on local-archaeologist relationships in Sardis since the early 1900s, track specific problems, and attempt to address them through collaborative interactions.

Additionally, this small-scale project also examined how collaborative Indigenous methodologies of the United States could be applied to post-colonial and post-imperial geographies of the Middle East. While traditional educational outreach methods are essential to shaping future stewards of archaeological heritage, it is equally important to value their knowledge systems and benefit from them through project partnerships. Bahçeşehir School's students and educators, thanks to their pedagogical and experiential knowledge, curiosities, positive attitude, and persistent motivation, have been the primary reason our collaboration was successful. Even though collaborative archaeology is a new endeavor in Turkey, they are a testimony that such partnerships have a significant potential to make archaeology more inclusive and creative in different parts of Anatolia.

## FIGURES AND TABLES



**Figure 1**

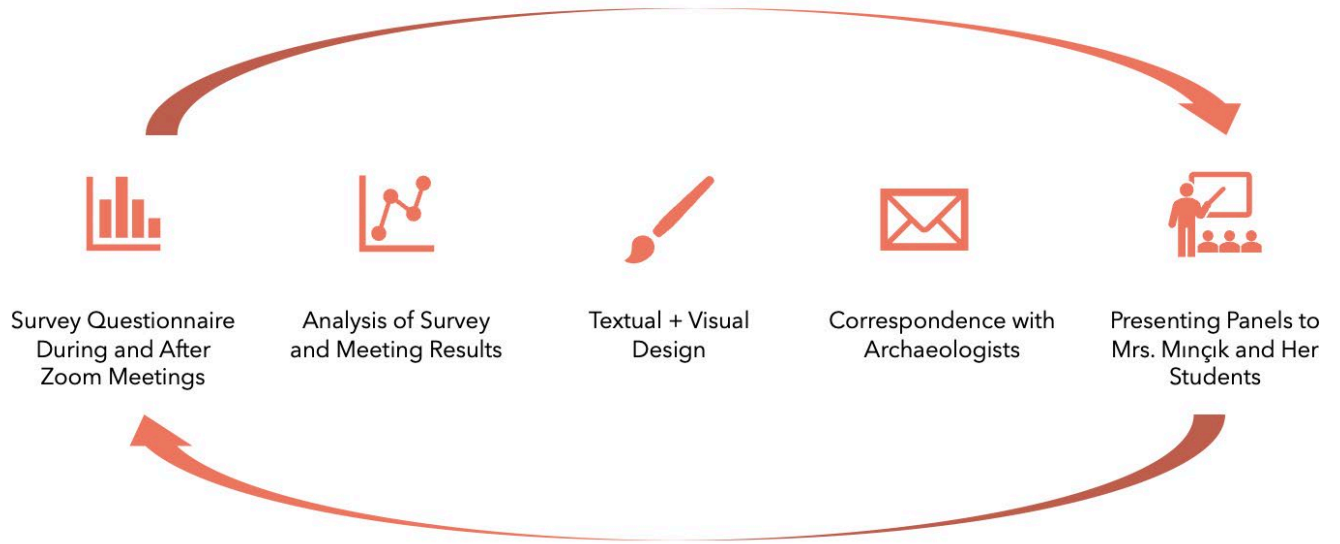
One of the panels designed for the North Area – Çatalhöyük (Source: Çatalhöyük Report 2013: Figure.30.13)



**Figure 2**

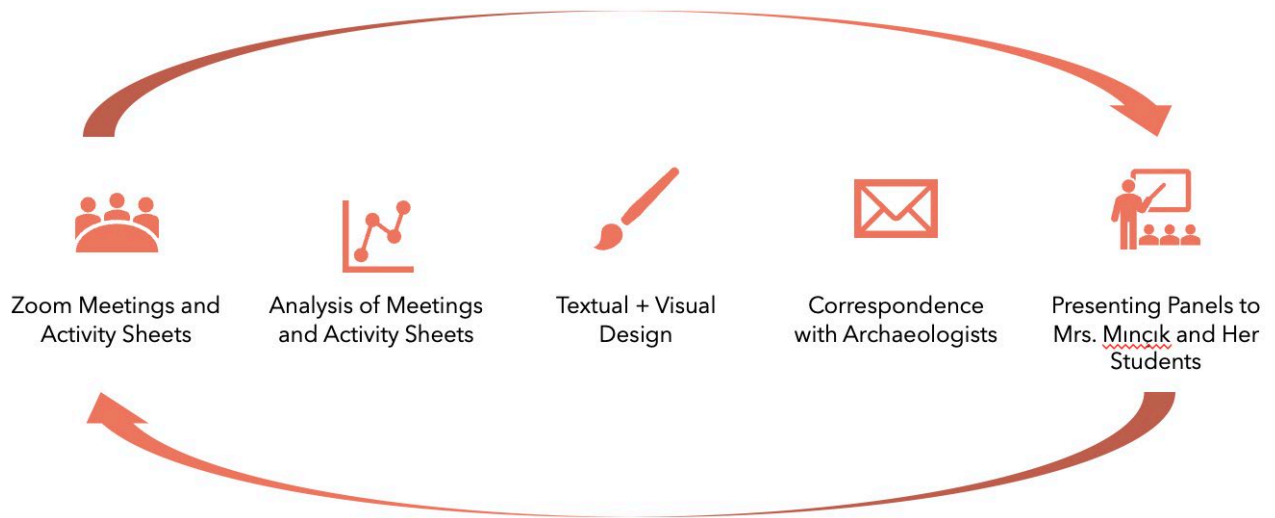


One of the children's panels for the on-site family trail (Source: Çatalhöyük Report 2016: Figures. 22 and 23)



**Figure 3**

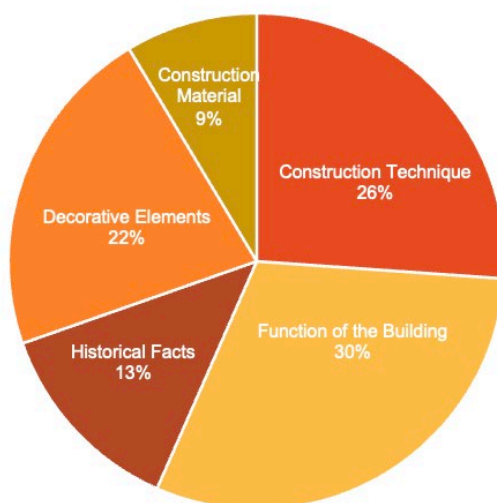
The infographic showing our initial methodology of correspondence with the Bahçeşehir School



**Figure 4**

The infographic showing the updated methodology of correspondences with the Bahçeşehir School based on Mrs. Mıncık's feedback

What Students are Curious About: The Synagogue  
(Answers to Survey Question No.6)



**Table 1**

The chart shows students' questions about the Synagogue based on percentages.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: Draft Informational Panels for the Synagogue

**Sinagog / Ön Avlu • Synagogue / Forecourt**

● TÜRKÇE ● ENGLISH

● **Merhaba! Ben Samoe. Sinagog'un din öğretmeniyim.**  
Şu an durduğun yerden yüzyıllar önce birçok Yahudi geçti. Sinagog bizim ikinci evimizdi. Burada Tanrı'ya dua eder, sosyalleşir, öğrenir, önemli konular konuşur ve birbirimize yardım ederdik.

● **Hello! I'm Samoe. I am the religion teacher of the synagogue.**  
Centuries ago many Jewish people stood where you are standing now. The synagogue was our second home. Here we would pray to God, socialize, learn, talk important matters and help each other.

● **Neden ortada bir çanak var ?**  
● Why is there a fountain in the middle

● Yahudiler için temizlik önemliydi. Ellerini ve ayaklarını bu çanakta yıkadıktan sonra onundeki kapılardan ana oda'ya girer ve dua ederlerdi.  
● Cleanliness is important to Jewish people! Before we pray in the main room, we wash our hands and feet in this fountain for ritual cleansing.

● **Yahudi kimdir?**  
Ataları Orta Doğu'da yaşamış ve tek tanrılı bir dine tapan kişilerdir.

● **Who are Jewish people?**  
A community whose ancestors lived in the Middle East and worshiped to one god.

● **Sinagog nedir?**  
Yahudilerin tanrılarına tapmak için inşa ettiği bina.

● **What is a synagogue?**  
The building Jewish people built to worship their god.

● **Şu an buradasınız**  
● Now you are here

**KEŞFET / DISCOVER**

● Yerdeki mozaiklere bak! Hangi şekilleri ve renkleri görüyorsun?  
● Look at the mosaics on the floor! What shapes and colors do you see?

● Eskiden ana avlunun nasıl görüldüğünü merak ediyorsan, QR kodunu telefonunla tara!  
● If you are wondering how the main courtyard used to look like, scan the QR code with your phone!

## • Sinagog / Ana Oda • Synagogue / Main Room

TÜRKÇE ENGLISH

• Burası Yahudilerin dini ayinlerini yaptığı yer. Eskiden sağında ve solundaki duvarlarda tahta sıralar vardı. Biz oralara ya da yere otururduk. Bilge yaşlılar da **mermer sıralara** otururlardı. Yaşlılar **kartallı masada** duran Torah'ı okumaya başlayınca ayin başlardı. Herkes onlara eşlik ederdi.

• Jewish people performed their religious ceremonies in this room. There used to be wooden benches on the walls to the right and left. We used to sit there or on the ground. Community elders sat on the **marble benches**. When the elders began to read the Torah standing at the **eagle table**. Everyone would recite with them.



DİNLE / LISTEN !

• Eskiden bu odada 1000 Yahudi aynı anda dua edermiş! Onların seslerini duyabiliyor musun?

• 1000 Jewish people used to pray in this room at the same time! Can you hear their voices?

• Avlu • Forecourt

• Ana Oda • Main Room

• Şu an buradasınız • Now you are here

• Mermer sıralar • Marble benches



• Önündeki **aslan heykelleri** ve **kartallı masayı** görüyor musun? Bunları yıkılmış binalardan getirdik.

• Do you see the **lion statues** and the **eagle table** in front of you? We brought these from demolished buildings.

• Aslan heykeli • Lion statue



• Neden Yahudiler bu kalıntıları Sinagog'a yerleştirmiş ?

• Why did the Jewish people place these remains in the Synagogue ?



• Biz Yahudiler Sardis'e sonradan göç ettik ve yerel halkın bizi kabul etmesini istedik. Bu kalıntılar ile atalarımızın aslında çok uzun zamandır Sardis'te yaşadığını iddia ettik. Bu iddia bizi yerel halkın kabul etmesini sağladı.

• We migrated to Sardis later and wanted the local community to accept us. With these remains we argued that our ancestors lived in Sardis for a long time. This made the local community accept us.



• Kartallı masa • Eagle table



# SİNAGOG AYNI ZAMANDA BİR OKULDU!

## THE SYNAGOGUE WAS ALSO A SCHOOL!

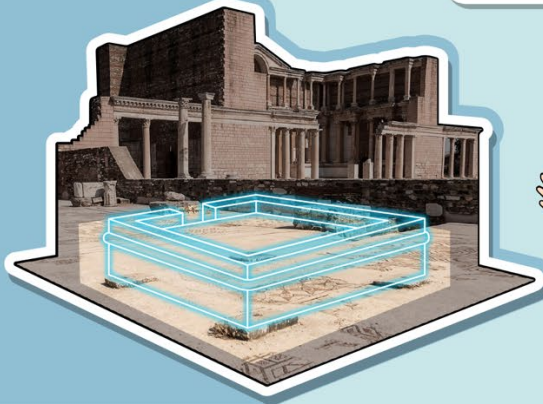
• Nasıl yani?  
• How?



- Sağındaki kitaplıkta eskiden Yahudilerin kutsal kitabı Torah duruyordu. Torah'ı öğrencilerimle okur ve tartışırdık.
- I used to store The Torah, our holy book, in the library to your right. I used to read the Torah with my students in our classes.



- Solunda ise Torah'ı öğrettiğim bir masa vardı. Öğrencilerim yere ya da tahta sıralara otururdu.
- I taught the Torah on the table to your left. My students would sit on the floor or on wooden benches.



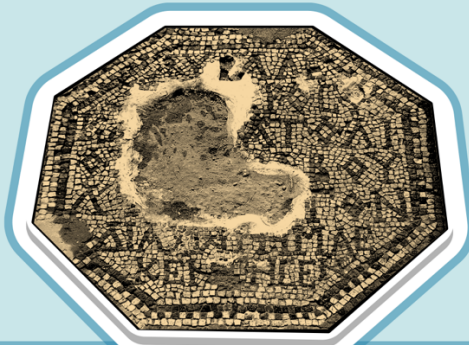
### DÜŞÜN / THINK



- Öğretmen Samoe'nin okulu senin okulundan farklı mı? Evet ise, neden?
- Is Teacher Samoe's school different from yours? If so, why?



- Merhaba! Benim adım **Aurelios Alexandros**.  
Ben ve ailem yerde gördüğün mozaiklerden birini yaptırдық.  
Adımız unutulmasın ve hep hatırlansın diye mozağin ortasına bunu yazdırdık.
- Hello! My name is **Aurelios Alexandros**.  
Me and my family had made one of the mosaics you see on the floor.  
We have written our name in the middle of the mosaic so that  
we are not forgotten and always remembered.



**"Ben, Aurelios Olympos, karım ve çocuklarımla verdiğim sözü yerine getirdim."**

**"I, Aurelios Olympos, kept my promise with my wife and children."**



#### KEŞFET / DISCOVER !

- Yere bak! Mozaiklerin ortasındaki siyah-beyaz harfleri görüyor musun?  
Bu dil Antik Yunanca. Günümüzde kimse Antik Yunanca konuşmuyor.  
Bu yazılardaki harfler tanıdık mı? Değilse, neden değil?
- Look down! Do you see the black and white letters in the middle of the mosaics?  
This language is Ancient Greek. Nobody speaks Ancient Greek today.  
Are the letters in these mosaics familiar to you? If not, why?

## APPENDIX B: Revised Informational Panels for the Synagogue

### Sinagog / Ön Avlu • Synagogue / Forecourt

● **Merhaba!**  
Ben **Samoe**. Sinagog'un **din öğretmeni**yim.  
Burada dini ayinlere yardım eder ve öğrencilerime ders veririm."

● **Yahudi kimdir?**  
Ataları Orta Doğu'da yaşamış ve tek tanrılı bir dine tapan kişidir.  
● **Who are Jewish people?**  
A community whose ancestors lived in the Middle East and worshiped to one god.

● **Önüme bak! Çanakçı görüyor musun?**  
● **Look ahead! Do you see the fountain in front of you?**

● **Hello!**  
I'm **Samoe**. I am the **religion teacher** of the synagogue.  
Here I would help with religious rituals and give classes to my students.

● **Sinagog nedir?**  
Yahudiler Sinagogu önemli kararlar almak, sosyalleşmek ve yardımlaşmak için kullanırlardı.  
● **What is a synagogue?**  
Jewish people used the Synagogue to take important decisions, socialize, and help each other.

● **Şu an buradasınız**  
● **Now you are here**

● **Neden burada bir çanak var?**  
● **Why is there a fountain?**

● **Yahudiler için temizlik önemliydi.**  
Bu çanakta yıkandıktan sonra ana oda'ya girer ve dua ederlerdi.  
● **Cleanliness is important to Jewish people.**  
Before we pray in the main room, we wash in this fountain for ritual cleansing.

● **Hadi şimdi ana odaya geçelim!**  
● **Let's enter the main room now!**

● **Eskiden ana avlunun nasıl görüldüğünü merak ediyorsan,**  
**QR kodunu telefonunla tara!**  
● **If you are wondering how the main courtyard used to look like,**  
**scan the QR code with your phone!**

● **Ana Oda** ● **Main Room**

● **Avlu** ● **Forecourt**

1 **TÜRKÇE** **ENGLISH**

## • Sinagog / Ana Oda • Synagogue / Main Room

- Sinagog aynı zamanda Yahudilerin dini ayin yaptığı bir yerdi. Bilge yaşlılar **mermer sıralara** otururlardı. Yaşlılar **kartallı masada** duran Torah'ı okumaya başlayınca ayin başlardı.
- Synagogue was also a place for Jewish people to do religious rituals. Community elders sat on the **marble benches**. When the elders began to read the Torah on the **eagle table**, the ritual would start.



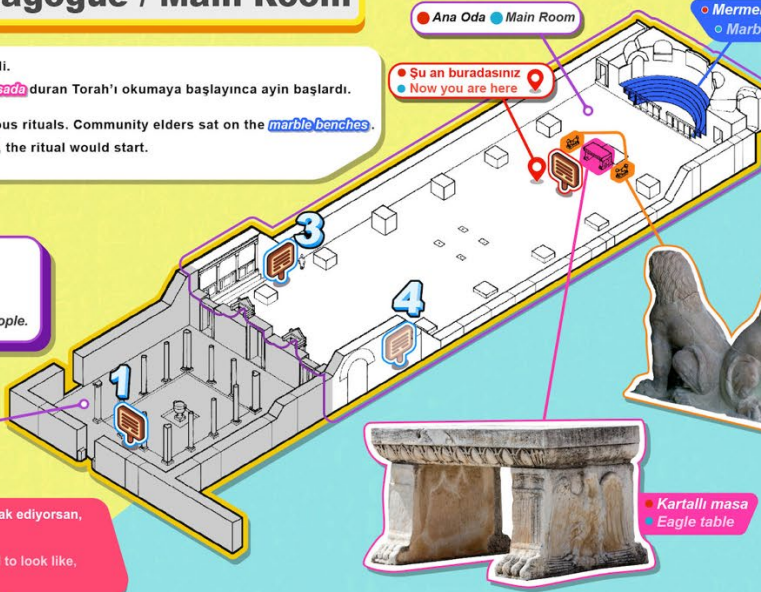
• **Torah nedir?**  
Yahudilerin kutsal kitabı.

• **What is Torah?**  
Sacred book of the Jewish people.

• **Avlu** • **Forecourt**



- Eskiden ana odanın nasıl görüldüğünü merak ediyorsan, QR kodunu telefonunla tara!
- If you are wondering how the main room used to look like, scan the QR code with your phone!



• **Ana Oda** • **Main Room**

• **Şu an buradasınız**  
• **Now you are here**

• **Mermer sıralar**  
• **Marble benches**



- Önündeki **aslan heykelleri** ve **kartallı masayı** görüyor musun? Bunları yıkılmış binalardan getirdik.
- Do you see the **lion statues** and the **eagle table** in front of you? We brought them from demolished buildings.

• **Aslan heykelleri**  
• **Lion statues**



- **Neden Yahudiler bu kalıntıları Sinagog'a yerleştirmiş?**
- **Why did the Jewish people place these remains in the Synagogue?**



- Bazı Yahudiler Sardes'e göç ettikten sonra yerel halkın onları kabul etmesini istediler. Bu kalıntıları Sinagoga yerleştirerek **atalarının çok uzun zamandır Sardes'te yaşadığını iddia ettiler**. Bu iddia Sardeslilerin onları kabul etmesini sağladı.
- When some Jewish people migrated to Sardis, they wanted the locals to accept them. They placed these remains in the Synagogue, **to say that their ancestors lived in Sardis in the past**. This made the Sardis people accept them.



• **Kartallı masa**  
• **Eagle table**





● Sinagog Okulu ● Synagogue School



● TÜRKÇE ● ENGLISH

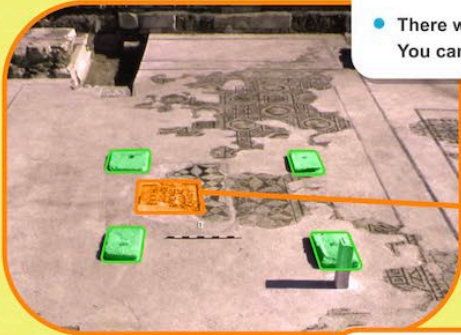


- Samoe, bir öğretmen olarak derslerini Sinagog'da mı veriyordun?
- Samoe, were you giving classes in Synagogue as a teacher?

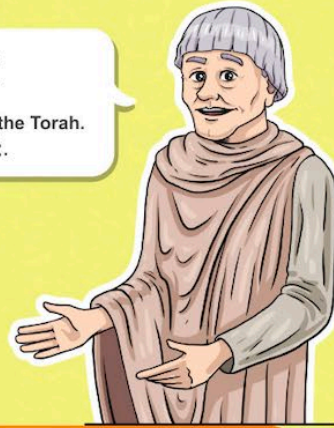


- EVET!  
Sağındaki dini kitaplıkta eskiden Torah duruyordu.  
Torah'ı öğrencilerimle okur ve tartışırdık.
- YES!  
I used to store the Torah in the book shrine to your right.  
I used to read the Torah with my students in our classes.

- Torah nedir?  
Yahudilerin kutsal kitabı.
- What is Torah?  
Sacred book of the Jewish people.



- Öğretmenin Torah'ı öğrettiği bir masa vardı.  
Bu masanın dört ayaklarını solda görebilirsin.
- There was a table where the teacher taught the Torah.  
You can see four feet of the table on the left.



- Bu masanın altında bir mozaik var.
- Bu mozaikte benim ismim yazıyor: "Samoe, Rahip ve Bilgelik Öğretmeni'nin yemini"
- Under this table, there is a mosaic.
- My name is written in this mosaic: "Vow of Samoés, Priest and Teacher of wisdom"



- Masaya doğru yürü ve yere bak! Mozaik'i görebiliyor musun?
- Walk towards the table and look below! Can you see the mosaic?

● Dekorasyon ● Decoration

3

● TÜRKÇE ● ENGLISH



- Samoe,  
Duvardaki ve yerdeki **renkli şekiller** ne?
- Samoe,  
What are the **colorful shapes** on the walls and the floor?



- Bunları Sardesliler Sinagog'u süslemek için yaptırmışlar.  
**Gelin duvar süslemelerini yaptıran aileyi dinleyelim!**
- The Sardis people made these to decorate the Synagogue.  
**Lets listen to the family who decorated this wall!**



"...eşim Regina ve çocuklarımla birlikte tüm kaplamaları ve resimleri Tanrı'ya armağan ettim."

"...with my wife Regina and our children, I gave out of the gifts of God all the revetment and the painting of the bay."



- Merhaba! Biz duvardaki kaplamaları yaptık.  
Adımız unutulmasın diye de **yukarıya** bunu yazdırdık.
- Hello! We had made the wall decorations.  
We wrote our name **above** so that we are not forgotten.

Regina



KEŞFET / DISCOVER !

- **Yere bak! Yerdeki süslemeleri görüyor musun?**  
Bunların ismi **mozaik**. Mozaiklerde hangi renk ve şekilleri görüyorsun?
- **Look down! Do you see the decoration on the floor?**  
They are called **mosaic**. What shapes and colors do you see in these mosaics?



## APPENDIX C: Draft Informational Panels for the Temple of Artemis

● **Artemis Tapınağı**
● **Temple of Artemis**


● TÜRKÇE
 ● ENGLISH


● **Merhaba!**  
Benim adım **Moschine**. Ben bu **tapınağın rahibesi** yim. Eskiden bu **tapınağı korur** ve **Artemis için ayinler yapardım**.

● **Hello!**  
My name is **Moschine**. I am the **priestess of this temple**. I used to **guard this temple** and **perform rites for Artemis**.

● Tapınağı görmek için aşağıdaki haritanın fotoğrafını çek ve **haritayı takip et!**

● To tour the temple, take a photo of the map below and **follow the map!**






**Artemis**

● **Moschine, Artemis kim?**

● **Moschine, who is Artemis?**



● **Artemis** Sardis'teki bebekleri, çocukları, hamile kadınları ve ölüleri koruyan bir tanrıça.


● **Artemis** is a goddess protecting babies, children, pregnant women and dead people in Sardis.

● **Bize göre tanrıça Artemis böyle görünüyordu.**  
This is how we imagined goddess Artemis to look like.

**DÜŞÜN \ THINK!**

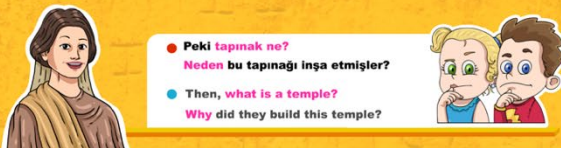
● **Bu resimde Artemis kutsal hayvanını (geyiği) kucagında tutuyor. Sen Artemis olsaydın senin kutsal hayvanın ne olurdu?**

● **Here Artemis is holding her sacred animal (deer) in her arms. If you were Artemis, what would your sacred animal be?**



● **Peki tapınak ne? Neden bu tapınağı inşa etmişler?**

● **Then, what is a temple? Why did they build this temple?**

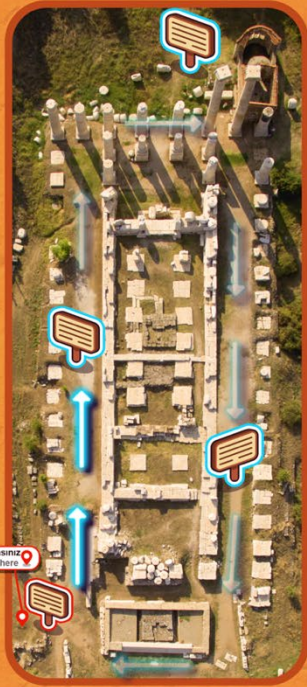


● Eskiden her bir kent kendine bir tanrı ya da tanrıça seçer ve ona bir tapınak yaparmış. İnsanlar tapınakların **tanrı ve tanrıçaların evi** olduğunu düşünürmüş.

● Biz Sardisli Artemis'i kentimizin tanrıçası seçtik. **Bu yüzden Artemis'e bir ev yaptık.**

● In the past, each city would choose a god or goddess and build a temple for them. We thought temples were the **home of gods and goddesses**.

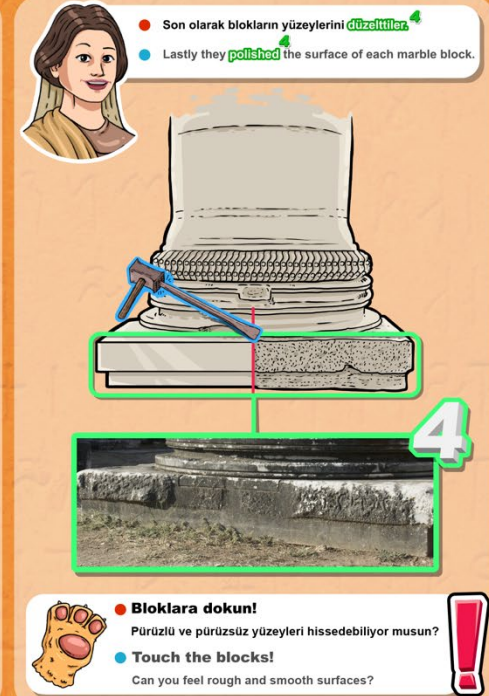
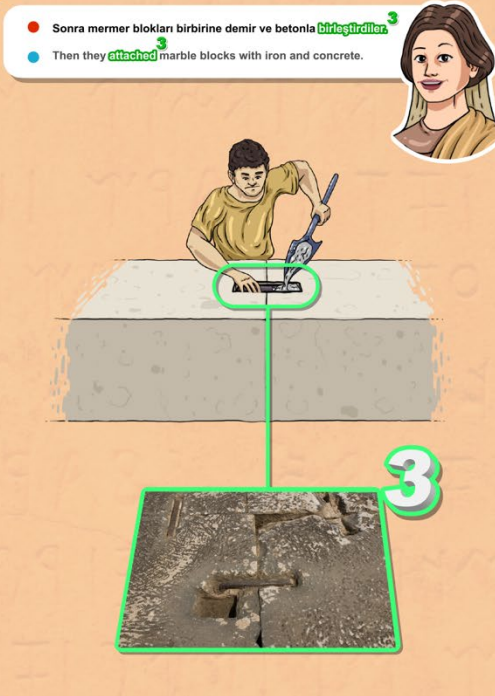
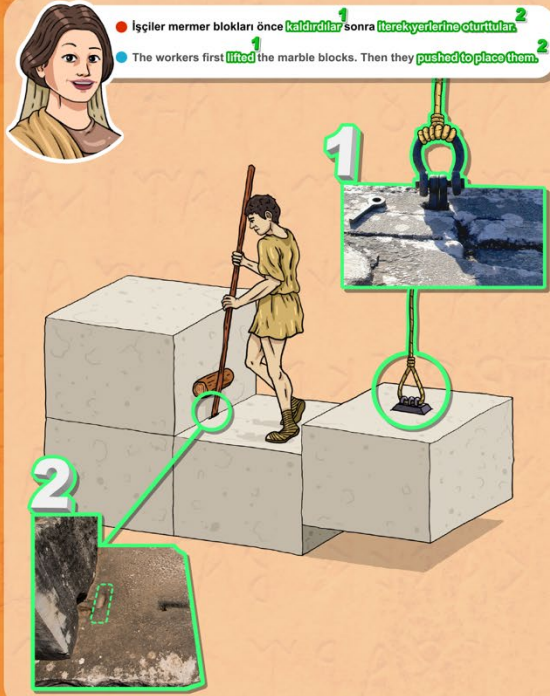
● People in Sardis chose Artemis as the goddess of our city. That is why **we build a house for Artemis**.



● Tapınağın İnşaatı ● Construction of The Temple

● TÜRKÇE ● ENGLISH

● Moschine, bu tapınak nasıl yapıldı? ● Moschine, how was this temple constructed?



**BUL / FIND**

- Artemis Tapınağında işçilerin kaldırdığı en büyük mermer blok **23 ton** ağırlığında! Bu mermer blok şu an yerde duruyor. Onu bulmak için haritayı kullan!
- The largest marble block lifted by the workers weighs **23 tons**! This marble block is now lying on the ground. Follow the map to find it!

**23TON 23TONS**



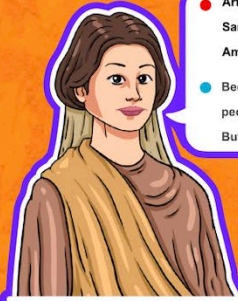


## ● Tapınağın Eski Hali ● Temple in The Past

● TÜRKÇE ● ENGLISH

● Moschine eskiden bu tapınak nasıl görünüyordu?  
İçinde neler vardı?

● How did the temple looked like in the past?  
What was inside?



● Artemis Tapınağı çok büyük olduğu için Sardisliler hiçbir zaman inşaatı **tamamlayamadılar**. Ama tamamlasalardı tapınak **sağdaki** gibi görünecekti.

● Because the Temple of Artemis was so big, people in Sardis **not able to complete** the construction. But if they did, the temple would look like the image **on the right**.



● Şu an buradasınız  
● Now you are here

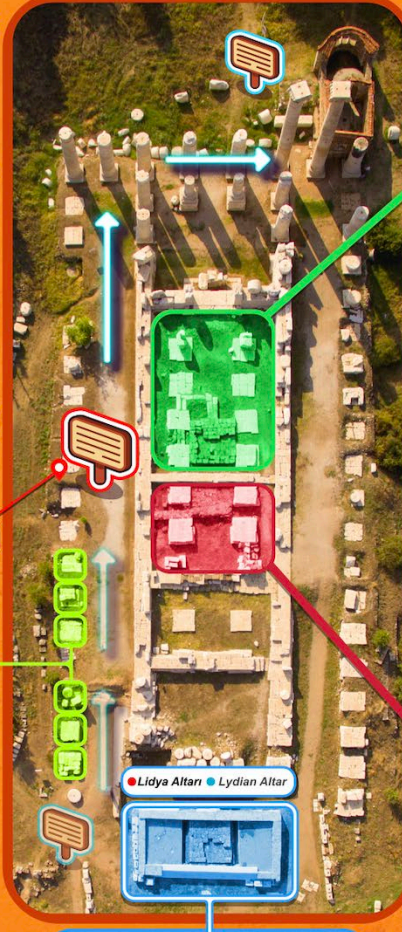


● Kare alanlar  
● Square areas

BAK | LOOK

● Arkadaki **kare alanları** görebiliyor musun? Bunlar tamamlanmamış kolonlar. Eğer inşa edilselerdi **yukarıdaki gibi** görüneceklerdi.

● Can you see the **square areas** behind you? These are incomplete columns. If they were completed, they would look like the columns **above**.



● Lidyia Altarı ● Lydian Altar

● Burada Artemis için öküz **kurban** ederdik.  
● Here we used to **sacrifice** oxen for Artemis.

● Solunda **Roma imparatorları ve ailelerinin** kocaman heykellerinin durduğu bir oda vardı.

● On your left there was a room with huge statues of **Roman emperors and their families**.



● Roma imparatorunun eşi **Faustina**'nın kafası.

● The head of Roman Emperor's wife, **Faustina**.

● Roma imparatoru **Antonius Pius**'un alt dudak ve çenesi.

● Lower lip and chin of Roman Emperor, **Antonius Pius**.

● Sağında **Artemis**'in devasa heykelinin bulunduğu bir oda vardı.

● On your right there was the room with a huge statue of **Artemis**.





## Kilise M • Church M



- Moschine, bu **tuğla yapı** da ne?
- Moschine, what is this **brick building**?



- Kilise M
- Church M

- Hristiyanlık yayılınca Sardisliler Artemis'e inanmayı bırakmışlar. Bu yüzden bu **kiliseyi** inşa etmişler.

- When Christianity began to spread, Sardis people stopped worshipping Artemis. That is why they built this **church**.



- Peki Moschine, tüm bunlar **ne zaman** olmuş?
- So Moschine, **when** did all of these things happen?

- Bunu öğrenmek için **sağdaki** zaman çizelgesine bak!
- Check out the timeline **on the right** to find out!

### BUL | FIND



- Sardislilerin grafiti yaptığını biliyor muydun? Sardisliler Artemis Tapınağını Hristiyan yapmak için duvarlara birçok **haç resmi kazımışlar!** **Haritayı takip et ve yerlerini bul!**
- Did you know that the Sardis people made graffiti? They **carved crosses** on the walls to make this temple more Christian! **Follow the map and find their place!**





## APPENDIX D: Revised Informational Panels for the Temple of Artemis

● **Artemis Tapınağı**
● **Temple of Artemis**


● TÜRKÇE
 ● ENGLISH


● **Merhaba!**  
Benim adım **Moskine**. Ben bu **tapınağın rahibesi** yim. Eskiden bu tapınağı korur ve Artemis için ayinler yapardım.

● **Hello!**  
My name is **Moschine**. I am the **priestess of this temple**. I used to guard this temple and perform rites for Artemis.

● Tapınağı gezmek için aşağıdaki haritanın fotoğrafını çek ve **haritayı takip et!**


● To tour the temple, take a photo of the map below and **follow the map!**






● Moskine, **Artemis kim?**

● Moschine, **who is Artemis?**







**Artemis**

● **Artemis** Sardes'teki bebekleri, çocukları, hamile kadınları ve ölüleri koruyan bir tanrıça.


● **Artemis** is a goddess protecting babies, children, pregnant women and dead people in Sardis.






● Bize göre tanrıça Artemis böyle görünüyordu.


● This is how we imagined goddess Artemis to look like.






● **Peki tapınak ne?**  
**Neden bu tapınağı inşa etmişler?**


● Then, **what is a temple?**  
**Why did they build this temple?**






● Eskiden insanlar birçok tanrı ve tanrıçaya taparmış. Bu yüzden onlara evler yapmışlar. **Biz bu evlere tapınak diyoruz.** Sardesliler, Artemis'e en büyük tapınağı yaparak onun kenti **koruyacağına** inanmışlar.

● People used to worship many gods and goddesses. That is why they build them homes. **We name each home a temple.** By building the largest temple for Artemis, Sardis people believed she would **protect** the city.



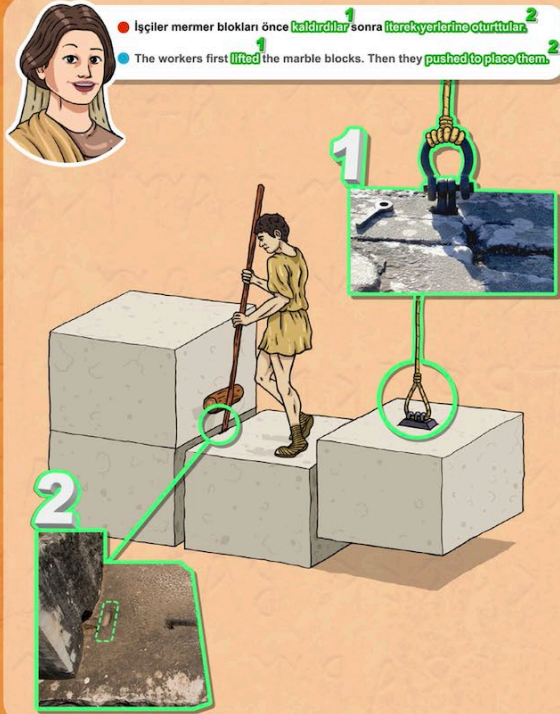




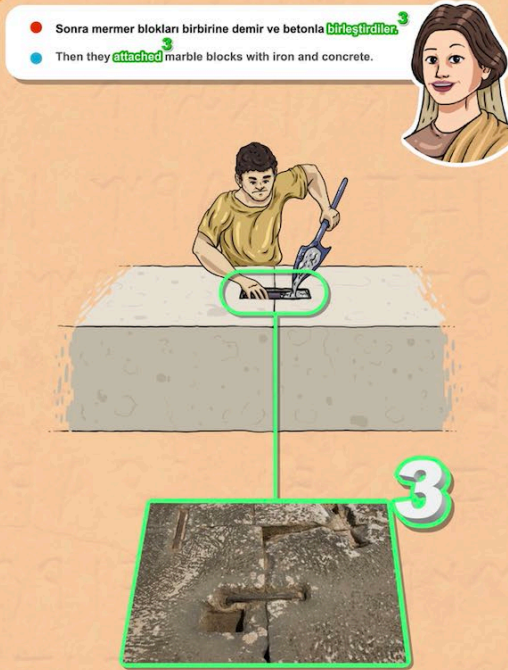
## ● Tapınağın İnşaatı ● Construction of The Temple

● TÜRKÇE ● ENGLISH

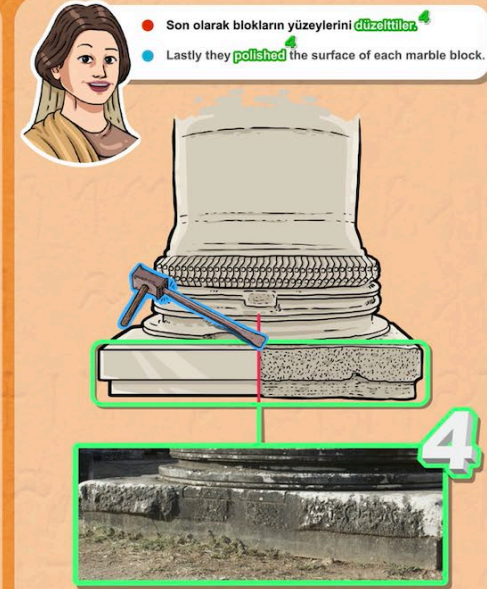
● Moskine, bu tapınak nasıl yapıldı? ● Moschine, how was this temple constructed?



- İşçiler mermer blokları önce **kaldırdılar** sonra **ilerek yerlerine oturtular**.
- The workers first **lifted** the marble blocks. Then they **pushed to place them**.



- Sonra mermer bloklar birbirine demir ve betonla **birleştirdiler**.
- Then they **attached** marble blocks with iron and concrete.



- Son olarak blokların yüzeylerini **düzeltiler**.
- Lastly they **polished** the surface of each marble block.

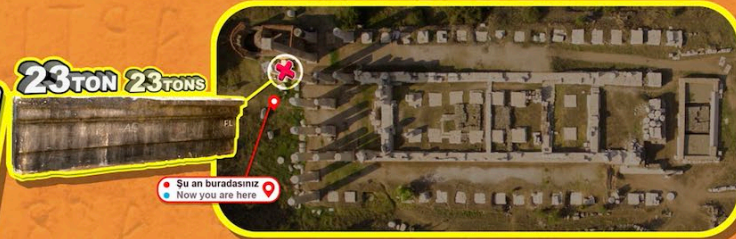


- **Bloklara dokun!**  
Pürüzlü ve pürüzsüz yüzeyleri hissedebiliyor musun?
- **Touch the blocks!**  
Can you feel rough and smooth surfaces?



### ! BUL / FIND

- Artemis Tapınağı inşaatında işçiler **23 ton** ağırlığında bir blok kaldırmış! Bu mermer blok şu an yerde duruyor. Onu bulmak için **haritayı kullan!**
- Workers lifted a **23 ton** block for constructing the Temple of Artemis! This marble block is now lying on the ground. **Follow the map** to find it!



● Şu an buradasınız  
● Now you are here



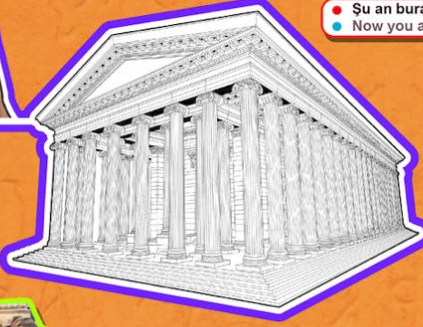
## ● Tapınağın Eski Hali ● Temple in The Past

● TÜRKÇE ● ENGLISH

- Moskine, eskiden bu tapınak nasıl görünüyordu? ● Moschine, how did the temple looked like in the past?  
İçinde neler vardı? What was inside?



- Artemis Tapınağı çok büyük olduğu için Sardesliler hiçbir zaman inşaatı **tamamlamadılar**. Ama tamamlasalardı tapınak **sağdaki** gibi görünecekti.
- Because the Temple of Artemis was so big, people in Sardis were **notable to complete** the construction. But if they did, the temple would look like the image **on the right**.



- Şu an buradasınız ● Now you are here



BAK / LOOK

- **Kare alanları** görebiliyor musun? Bunlar tamamlanmamış kolonlar. Eğer inşa edilselerdi **yukarıdaki gibi** görüneceklerdi.
- Can you see the **square areas**? These are incomplete columns. If they were completed, they would look like the columns **above**.



- Kare alanlar ● Square areas



● Lidya Sunağı ● Lydian Altar

- Burada Artemis için öküz **kurban ederdik**.
- Here we used to **sacrifice** oxen for Artemis.

- Burada **Roma imparatorları ve ailelerinin** kocaman heykellerinin durduğu bir oda vardı.
- Here was a room with huge statues of **Roman emperors and their families**.



- Roma imparatorunun eşi **Faustina**'nın kafası.
- The head of Roman Emperor's wife, **Faustina**.
- Roma imparatoru **Antonius Pius**'un alt dudağı ve çenesi.
- Lower lip and chin of Roman Emperor, **Antonius Pius**.

- Burada da **Artemis**'in devasa heykelinin bulunduğu bir oda vardı.
- And here was a room with a huge statue of **Artemis**.





## ● Kilise M ● Church M



- Moskine, bu **tuğlayapı** da ne?
- Moschine, what is this **brick building**?



- Kilise M
- Church M

- Hristiyanlık yayılınca Sardesliler Artemis'e inanmayı bırakmışlar. Bu yüzden bu **kiliseyi** inşa etmişler.
- When Christianity began to spread, Sardis people stopped worshipping Artemis. That is why they built this **church**.



- Peki Moskine, tüm bunlar **ne zaman** olmuş?
- So Moschine, **when** did all of these things happen?

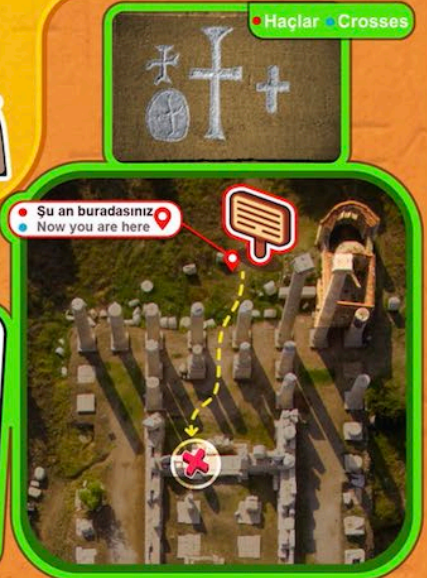
- Bunu öğrenmek için **sağdaki zaman çizelgesine** bak!
- Check out the timeline **on the right** to find out!



### BUL \ FIND



- Sardeslilerin grafiti yaptığını biliyor muydun? Sardesliler Artemis Tapınağını Hristiyan yapmak için duvarlara birçok **haç resmi kazımışlar!**
  - Did you know that the Sardis people made graffities? They **carved crosses** on the walls to make this temple more Christian!
- Haritayı takip et ve yerlerini bul !**
- Follow the map and find their place!**





## APPENDIX E: Draft Visitor's Panel



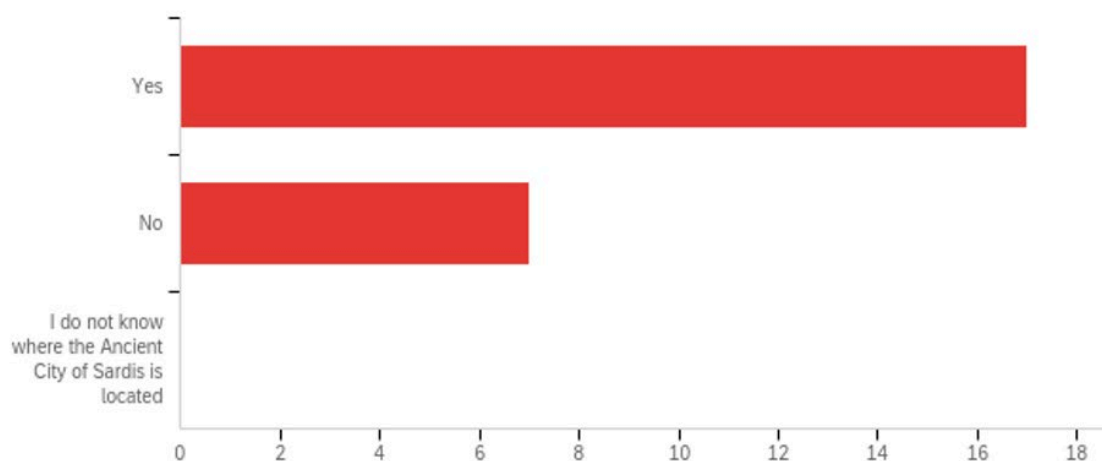


# APPENDIX F: Revised Visitor's Panel

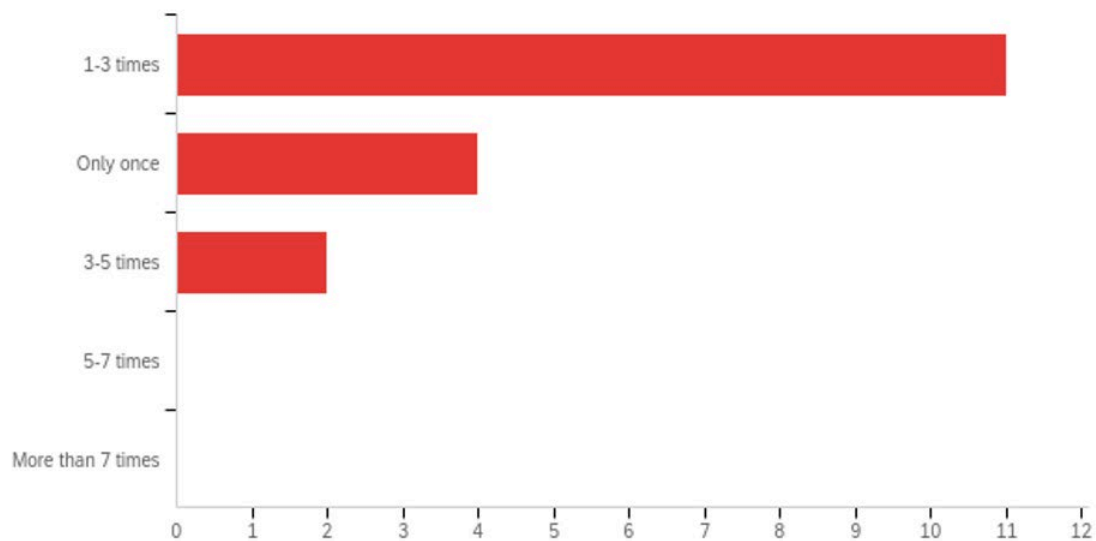


## APPENDIX G: *Survey Questions and Results*<sup>18</sup>

### 1. Have you visited the Ancient City of Sardis before?



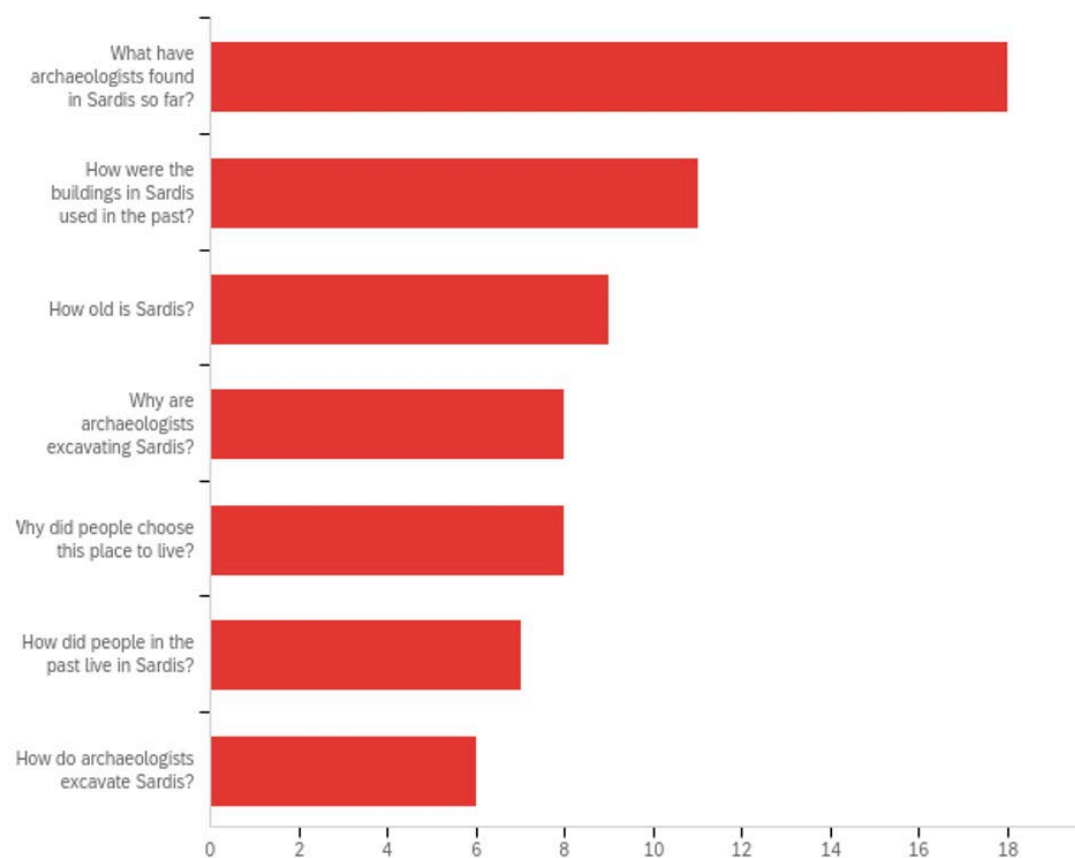
### 2. How many times did you visit Sardis?



<sup>18</sup> The results of this survey are translated into English for Anglophone readers.



**5. If you were to visit Sardis soon, which of the following questions would you like to know the answer to? (You can pick up to three options)**





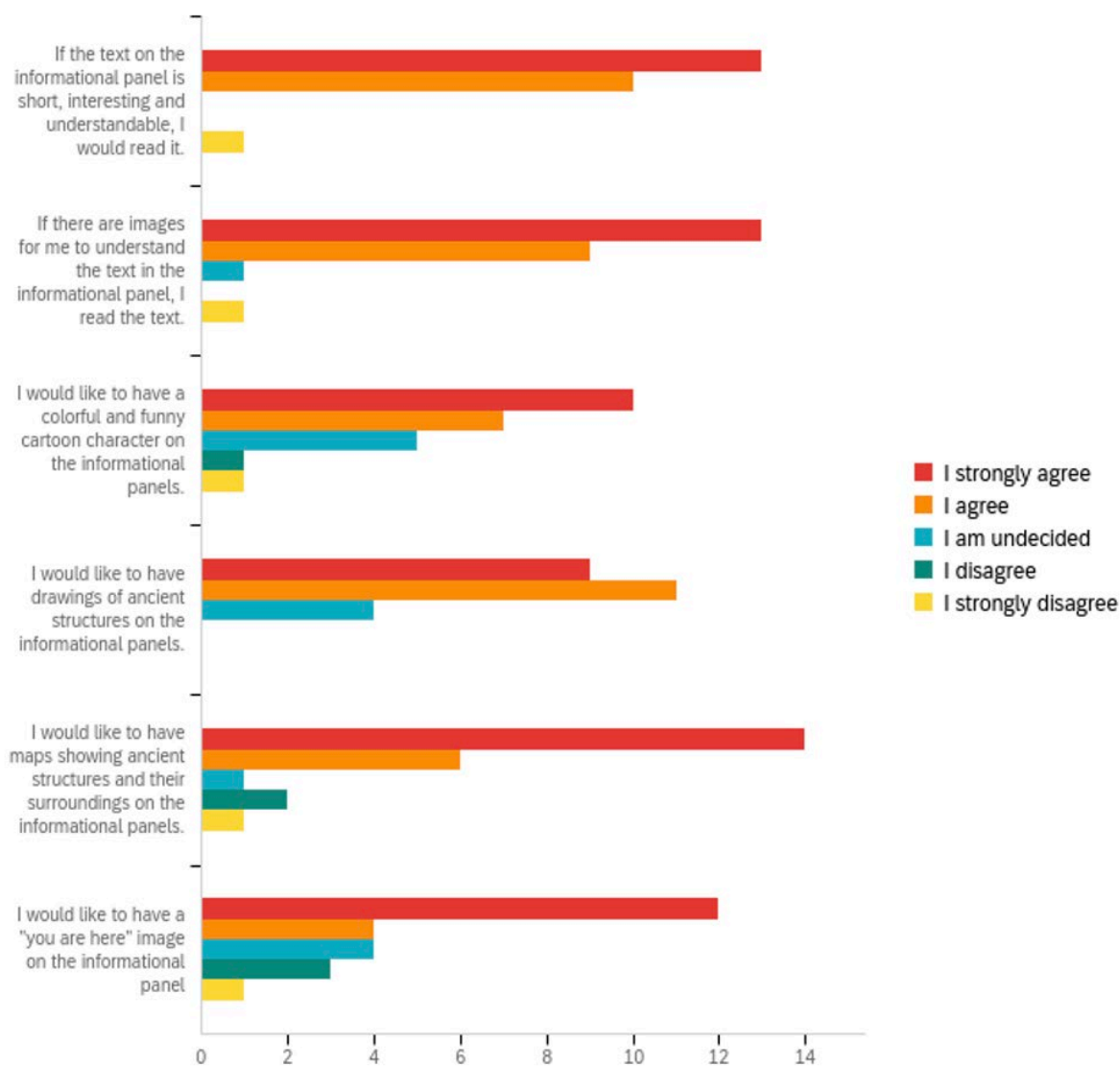


6. If you were to visit Sardis soon, what would you be most curious about this building in the photo above?

construction  
date floor material  
sculpture middle  
**structure**  
**construct**  
past fountain typelion  
space meaning people  
shape made meant  
**function** the  
awesome



**7. Can you answer the following sentences by ticking one of the options (I strongly agree / agree / undecided / disagree / strongly disagree)?**



8. Which of the following objects or persons would you like to accompany you in Sardis as a mascot character?

☐



Lion figure on a coin found at Sardis

☐



A bowl found in Sardis



☐



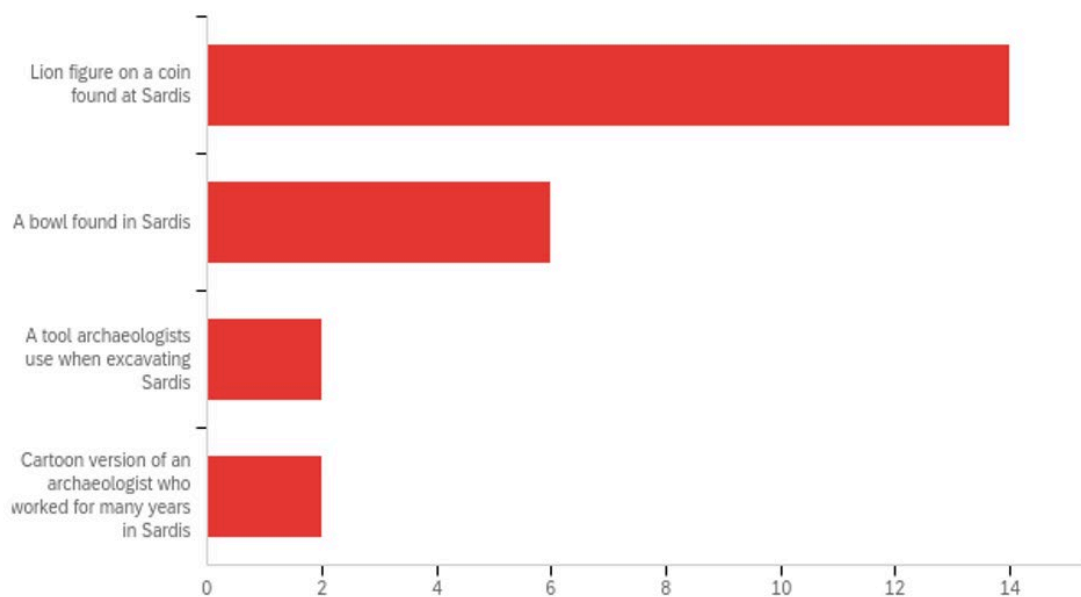
Cartoon version of an archaeologist who worked for many years in Sardis

☐

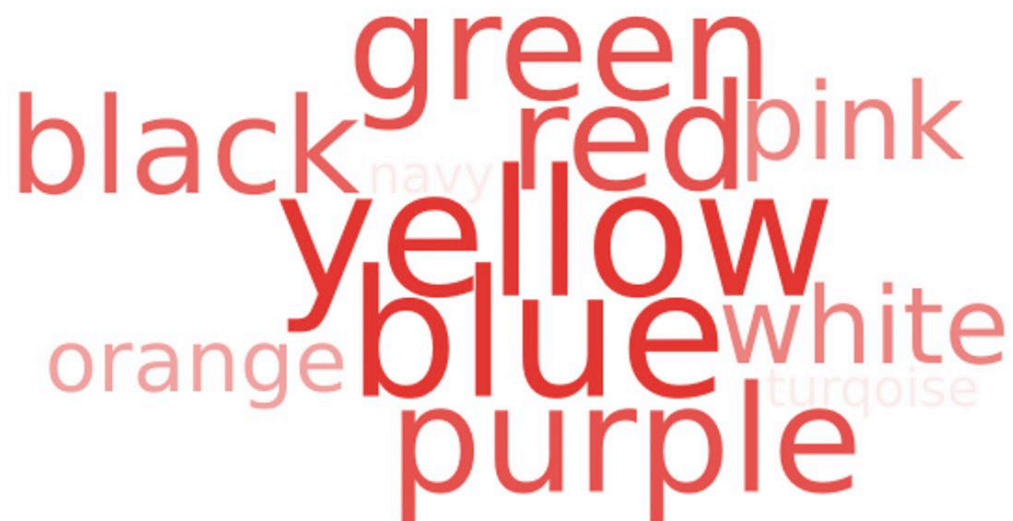


A tool archaeologists use when excavating Sardis

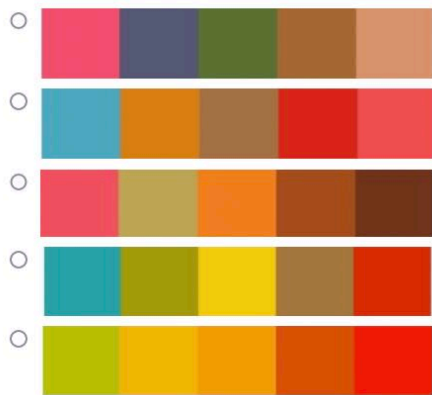
8. Which of the following objects or persons would you like to accompany you in Sardis as a mascot character?



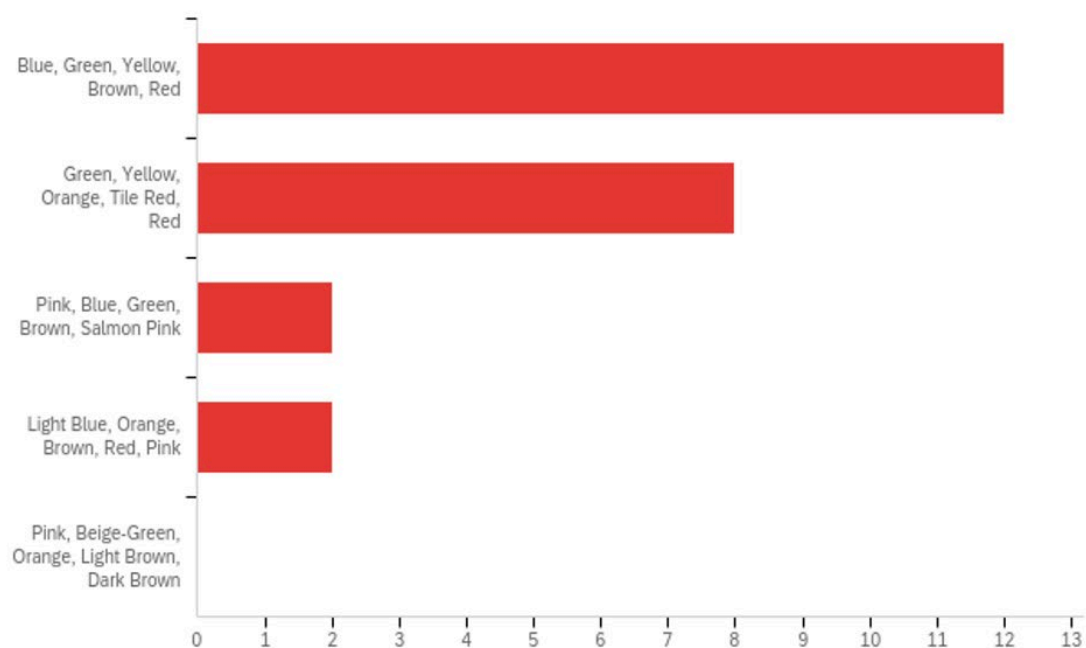
9. What are your favorite colors? (You can write up to three colors)



10. If you could decide the colors of the information panels, which color group would you choose? (You can pick only one option)



**10. If you could decide the colors of the information panels, which color group would you choose? (You can pick only one option)**



**APPENDIX H: *The Activity Sheet for Designing Informational Panels for the Temple of Artemis***<sup>19</sup>

Name, Surname:

Class:

Hello, I'm Ece! I hope you like the panels we designed.  
Now we will start designing the panels for a new structure. I'd love to know  
what you're wondering about this building.

Thank you very much in advance for completing this activity sheet!



Imagine visiting the Temple of Artemis, the structure in the pictures above,  
on a class trip...

- a) What would you be most curious about this building? What would you like to know about this building?

---

<sup>19</sup> The activity sheet is translated into English for Anglophone readers.

b) What questions would you like archaeologists to answer about this structure? Can you circle the questions you are wondering about the most?

Why did they build this building?

What is a temple? Who is Artemis?

What used to be inside this building?

How did they build this structure in the past?

What did this structure look like in the past?

What is the long platform in the upper left picture?

What is the brick structure in the upper right?

What are the rectangular cavities in the second row, middle photo?

Who is the person in this statue on the lower right? What did this statue look like in the past?

Who built this building? When was this building built?

**APPENDIX I: *Students' Response to the Draft Informational Panels Designed for the Synagogue***<sup>20</sup>

1. Make a reading order for each panel
2. Write with a bigger font. Write essential words larger than other words. Increase the line spacing to ease the reading experience. An exclamation point could be added after significant textual parts.
3. Add information about the construction material of the Synagogue.
5. There could be arrows in the panel to encourage visitors to look in that direction. The arrows can also be functional to lead the visitor in a direction. There is confusion regarding the direction visitors should follow when visiting the Synagogue.
6. Make Samoe (the main character of Synagogue panels) older and bearded!
7. Add a picture to show what the Synagogue looked like in the past.
8. Include more digital components and potentially touch screens. There can also be more QR codes on each panel. QR codes can also show the direction the visitor should follow.
12. The sides of the horizontal panels are empty. Fill them up with decorative elements.
13. The family in the second vertical panel does not look like a family. Write down the names of the family members.
14. Panel design could be a mixture of old and new. An example is incorporating cuneiform tablet-like writing in the background and modern design in the foreground.

---

<sup>20</sup> The student responses are translated into English for Anglophone readers.

## **APPENDIX J: *Student Responses to the Activity Sheet on the Temple of Artemis***<sup>21</sup>

### **All Answers to Question A**

1. I wonder how these pillars were built in ancient times without scaffolding.
2. What year is it from?
3. By whom was it found (which archaeologist)?
4. When was it done?
5. How long did it take to construct it?
6. When was it done?
7. What is it made of?
8. I would like to know its history.
9. Why is the remaining half of the human head[sculpture] missing?
10. Why are there square shapes on the stones?
11. I'm curious about the story [of the Temple].
12. What was used when constructing this building?
13. How was this building made?
14. I wondered what this building was constructed for.
15. I wondered what this temple used to look like.
16. How long did it take to construct the Temple?
17. Why did Sardians construct this temple?
18. How long is this temple?
19. How heavy is this temple?
20. Why did they construct this temple?

---

<sup>21</sup> The student responses are translated into English for Anglophone readers.



21. When did they build the building?
22. Has anyone lived in this temple?
23. I am curious about the history of the temple.
24. I wonder when it began to be constructed.
25. I'm curious about the story of the temple.
26. Who lived in the temple?
27. Why were these towers(columns?) built?
28. It is a structure made by which civilization?
29. What are its features?
30. For which purpose was this temple constructed?
31. How was this temple constructed?
32. When was it constructed?
33. I'm curious about the stories of this temple.
34. I wonder how this temple was made.
35. What was it made for?
36. What function[s] does this temple have?
37. I'm curious about its story.
38. I wonder how these shapes (decorative elements, columns, marble blocks?) are made.
39. Why did they build this structure?
40. When did they build this structure?
41. What does this structure tell[us]?
42. Will someone be describing the building to the visitors?
43. Why did they build this structure?

44. What is the most important aspect of this temple?

45. Which part of the temple is the oldest?

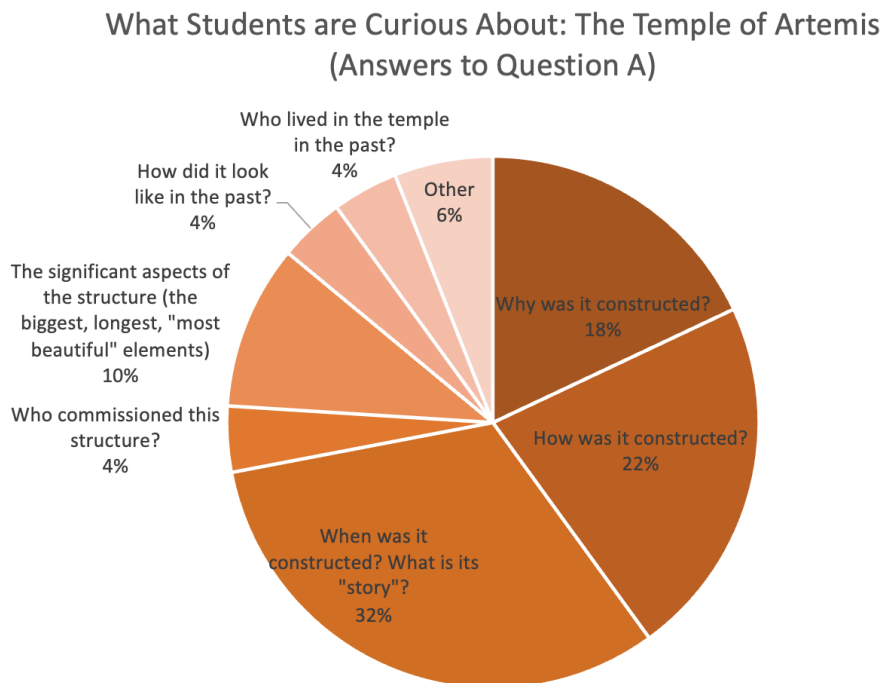
46. How was it constructed?

47. What used to be inside this temple?

48. By whom was it built?

49. What year is this building from?

**The answers above could be categorized as the chart below:**

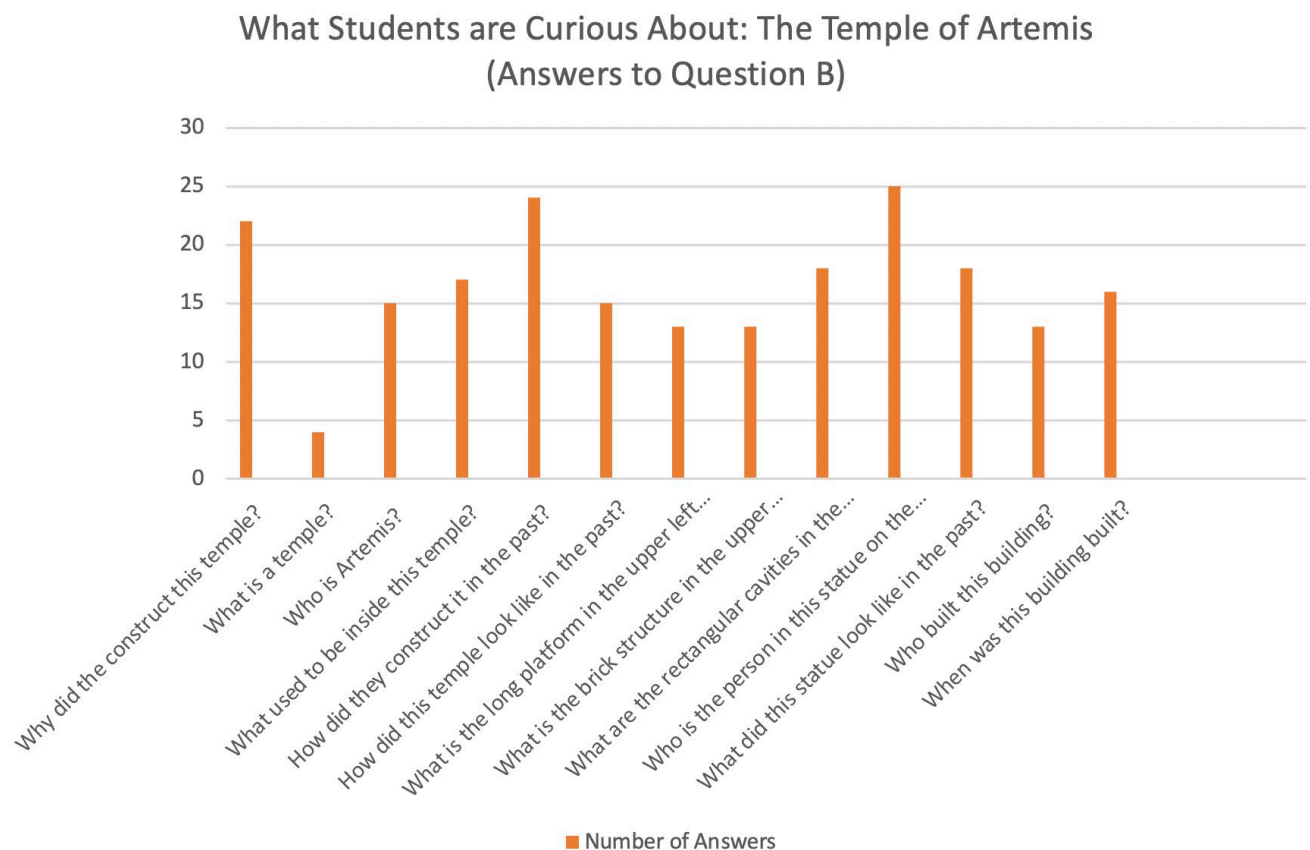


### **All Answers to Question B**

- Why did they build this building? (22 answers)
- What is a temple? (4 answers)
- Who is Artemis? (15 answers)
- What used to be inside this building? (17 answers)
- How did they build this structure in the past? (24 answers)

- What did this structure look like in the past? (15 answers)
- What is the long platform in the upper left picture? (13 answers)
- What is the brick structure in the upper right? (13 answers)
- What are the rectangular cavities in the second row, middle photo? (18 answers)
- Who is the person in this statue on the lower right? (25 answers)
- What did this statue look like in the past? (18 answers)
- Who built this building? (13 answers)
- When was this building built? (16 answers)

The answers above could be visualized as follows:



**APPENDIX K: *Students' Response to the Two Draft Informational Panels Designed for the Temple of Artemis and the Visitor Panel*** <sup>22</sup>

**a) For the panel, Construction of the Temple:**

- The green color could be changed with another color that can create more contrast with the orange background.
- The letters are too small, and thus the writing is difficult to read.

**b) For the panel, Temple in the Past:**

- The picture on the upper left could be changed with another image that is easier to understand for young audiences.
- The letters are too small, and thus the writing is difficult to read.

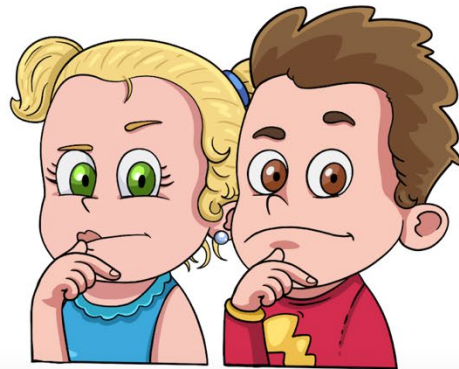
**c) For the Visitor Panel:**

- The colors of the “thank you” note could be less pale.
- There are grammatical errors in the “thank you note. They need to be corrected.

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<sup>22</sup> The student responses are translated into English for Anglophone readers.

**APPENDIX L: *Updates on Child Characters' Design***



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