

Time Travel, Yesilova 6000 B.C.

A short history of the Izmir region 8000 years ago

In 6000 B.C. there were several settlements on the coast and by the rivers close to the coast as it was an area rich in resources. The first settlers had arrived to the region 500 years earlier. The sea level was much lower than today and the little mound of Yesilova was situated on a green plain between two rivers. The people of Yesilova were farmers and grew wheat, barley and lentils. They had large herds of sheep, goat and cattle in the green fields surrounding the settlement. The economy was diverse as they also fished in the rivers, collected seashells, hunted game and gathered wild herbs.

The things the settlers of Yesilova couldn't make for themselves were traded with the settlements in the region and they had social relations with villages in a couple of days walking distance. Sometimes people came from the East and brought valuable stones and coloured clay to make pottery and tools, which was traded for seashells. Trading between the settlements in the region and even long-distance trade existed by this time.

The people in the settlements in the region were part of a tribe. The villages could vary in size between maybe 100-400 persons. Each village had a pattern/symbol they used as identification and to mark their goods. Probably the people in the tribe met at least once a year.

C. 6000 B.C. there was a dramatic shift in the climate, which brought drought to Anatolia. Many farmers were forced to move to find better-suited areas to live in. The people coming from the eastern part of Anatolia started to settle down in the more rainy and fruitful areas of the West. Those villages in the coastal region were getting a high population with new migrants and became more crowded.

At the same time there were changes in the society, social and economic transformations towards a more structured society with social differences. The villages started to be more organized controlled by a leader. The "chief of the village" probably controlled the collecting and storing of the food and sealed the containers in order to regulate the distribution of the food among the inhabitants.

New technology and innovations came to the area around this time. The traditional round houses, made up from mud bricks, wattle and daub and rushes, were changed into rectangular houses, indicating the social changes and alterations in building techniques and spatial organisation. Other innovations were red polished pottery, painted pottery, stamp seals and improvement in the agriculture. 6000 B.C. was a time of change.

Scenario

Yesilova - The Green Plain Settlement

People in the settlement on the green plain between the two rivers live a good life with plentiful resources. They have cattle, grow wheat, use wild herbs and plants, hunt wild animals and collect shellfish by the sea. The other settlements in the region are also doing well. But now times are changing. There is a lot of turmoil and unrest in the society. People feel uncertain and don't know which way things are going.

Everybody can see the change in the climate. There are big problems inland with extreme droughts and many people are forced to leave their homelands. It has been warmer the last years. There is less rain, sometimes the crops have not ripened and there have been too little pasture for the cattle. People don't know how to cope with the changes in the climate. Many of those living inland are looking for a better place, on the plain or on the coast. The inhabitants on the plain are not quite sure how to deal with all the immigrants coming from the inland.

Today some of the people from the inland have reached the village of Yesilova. The meeting with the inhabitants in Yesilova seems to be a little bit hesitant. But of course the Yesilova people take care of the newcomers and invite them into the village. They will have time to rest and stay for a couple of days. Together the two groups will come up with a solution what is the best for the visitors. Can they stay? Do they want to stay? Is there space for everybody on the plain and in Yesilova?

There are differences between the two groups, in the way they talk, in the clothing but also social differences. The Yesilova group has a leader, a chief, who takes all the important decisions and has seal stamps to illustrate his power. Everything has to be marked with his seal stamp and can only be opened on his permission. But there are also many similarities between the groups. How well will they get along with each other?

The newcomers are taken into the work in the village immediately. Some of them need new knives; others get other duties. They are hungry so food will be prepared. In order to emphasize the power and ownership in the village the chief's pattern and seal stamps are used in many ways. And of course the first night will be a common gathering with new necklaces, bracelets or rattles for some, and maybe even songs and dances.

At the same time as people are working, there is a lot of talk about life on the plain and life inland. How can we deal with the changing climate? Is there anything we can do? And what do we think about the social changes? One leader?

For how long time can the newcomers stay in Yesilova? Or maybe they want to move on to the next village on the plain? Can the two groups get along together?

Key questions

- How do we deal with the ecological problems and changes in the climate? Is it possible to live in balance with nature?
- Do we accept the social changes and bigger social differences in the society, in the village and in the tribe?
- Can we get along together, old inhabitants and newcomers? How?

Roles

- The visitors/students are the newcomers coming to the Green Plain Settlement.
- The adults are the people living in the village.

Names

Everybody choose his/her own name as an explanation of the character. Inspiration can be found in American Indian names but should be written in Turkish.

For example: *Lonely Wolf, Red Cloud, Harsh Wind, Wounded Eagle, Flooding River, Yellow Bull, Black Ox, Falcon's Paw, Pig's tooth, Wolf's tooth, Black Paw, Moon Light, Wild Rose, Purple Flower, Calm Water, Small House Sparrow, Yellow Butterfly, Spotted Lamb, Bouncing Gazelle, Quiet Turtle, White Cloud, Crying Star, Green Frog.*

Activities

- Cooking (soup of wheat/vegetables), baking bread.
- Make pots and stamp seals
- Make jewellery out of seashells, small stones and clay
- Flint knapping and training with the tools
- Building/repairing of houses
- Make patterns on a skin

Time Plan

08.00	Set up the place
09.00	Dress up, presenting of characters Initiation
09.30	Activities and key questions
10.30	Meal and discussions. Songs
11.00	End. Short reflection Clean up
12.00	Leave for Bornova municipality and continue the workshop

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