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# 5 **New approach for optimizing the interpretation and** 6 **representation of the degree of historical-archaeological** 7 **evidence in the virtual reconstructions**

8 **Irene Cáceres-Criado<sup>1</sup> · Diego Francisco García-Molina<sup>2</sup> · Francisco Javier Mesas-Carrascosa<sup>3</sup> · Paula Triviño-Tarradas<sup>3</sup>**

9 <sup>1</sup> Doctoral Program in Agricultural, Food, Forestry and Rural Development Engineering at the University of Córdoba (Spain)

10 <sup>2</sup> Department of Graphic Engineering, Design and Engineering Projects of the University of Jaen (Spain)

11 <sup>3</sup> Department of Graphic Engineering and Geomatics of the University of Cordoba (Spain)

12  
13 Corresponding author: [ig2trtap@uco.es](mailto:ig2trtap@uco.es); + 34 957 21 84 56

## 14 **Abstract**

15 Virtual reconstruction is defined as the visual recovery of a building or object through the creation of a three-dimensional model  
16 of the asset to be reconstructed, in a historical context. To provide the degree of veracity to the virtual reconstructions performed  
17 in the scope of heritage, the so-called historical-archaeological evidence scale emerged. Some authors have already used this  
18 methodology to provide their reconstructions with the degree of evidence, although none of the current propositions of evidence  
19 scales have been standardised to date. Moreover, it is still important to disseminate such scales as much as possible, since it has  
20 been shown that neither experts in this field of knowledge nor common users know about this methodology.

21 The aim of this study was to design and create a new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale based on the  
22 achromatism and implement it in the ‘Baker’s House’ at the archaeological site of Torreparedones (Baena, Córdoba, Spain).  
23 To carry out this investigation, it was essential to compare and analyse each proposition of historical-archaeological evidence  
24 scale. The qualitative and quantitative studies about the existing scale propositions also played a fundamental role in the  
25 realisation of this work. These results, in addition to the chromatic study, support the creation of a new proposition of historical-  
26 archaeological evidence scale, designed for any type of viewer. Each phase of the study met the quality standards established  
27 for this type of research.

28 **Keywords** Baker’s House · virtual reconstruction · historical-archaeological evidence scale · quantitative-qualitative study

## 29 **1 Introduction**

30 In the archaeological scope, virtual reconstruction plays a  
31 fundamental role as a research tool (Machete et al. 2021;  
32 Moskvina et al. 2021; Rebec et al. 2022). Regarding the  
33 interpretation of heritage, the historical-archaeological  
34 evidence scale designates the representation of the degree  
35 veracity of virtual reconstructions through the use of colour.  
36 To date, three historical-archaeological evidence scales have  
37 been used in the scientific literature: 1) the pioneering  
38 proposition, i.e., the historical-archaeological evidence scale  
39 developed in the Byzantium 1200 project (Byzantium 1200  
40 2) the proposition of P. Aparicio and C. Figueiredo (Aparicio  
41 and Figueiredo 2017); and 3) the more recent proposition  
42 used for the reconstruction of the Mosque-Cathedral and river  
43 landscape of Córdoba (Spain) (Ortiz et al. 2018).

44 The first two propositions of historical-archaeological  
45 evidence scale are distinguished by the fact that their evidence  
46 levels (10 levels in total for both) are inverted with respect to  
47 each other. For the proposition developed in the Byzantium  
48 project, the evidence levels are ordered from greater to lower  
49 veracity (Byzantium 1200), whereas the scale proposed by  
50 Aparicio and Figueiredo is ordered from lower to greater levels  
51 of historical-archaeological evidence (Aparicio and Figueiredo  
52 2017; Aparicio 2016; Aparicio et al. 2021). Although the levels  
53 were inverted, their colours were not modified, and thus they  
54 have a very similar colour range of warm and cool colours.  
55 However, the third proposition uses a colour range from dark  
56 greens to browns, with eight levels of historical-archaeological  
57 evidence (Ortiz et al. 2018).

58 Table 1 shows the bibliometric study conducted on the  
59 implementation of the historical-archaeological evidence  
60 scales throughout history.

61 **Table 1** Bibliometric study on the implementation of the existing historical-archaeological evidence scales.

Reference	Applied scale	Item	Levels	Chromatic gradation
<a href="http://www.byzantium1200.com/">http://www.byzantium1200.com/</a> (Byzantium 1200)	Byzantium 1200 project	Byzantium city around 1200	10	From warm to cool colours (greater evidence-lower evidence)
Aparicio 2016	Aparicio & Figueiredo	The crenellated tower of San García, Algeciras (Spain) (17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> century). Virtual recovery of a military structure using technology	10	From cool to warm colours (lower evidence-greater evidence)
Aparicio and Figueiredo 2017	Aparicio & Figueiredo	The historical-archaeological evidence degree of virtual reconstructions: toward a graphic representation scale	10	From cool to warm colours (lower evidence-greater evidence)
De Mota and Valle 2018	Aparicio & Figueiredo	Archaeology of the military orders in Castilla-La Mancha and the virtual reconstruction of its heritage	10	From cool to warm colours (lower evidence-greater evidence)
Ortiz et al. 2018	COR_16	Proposal for the improvement and modification of the scale of evidence for the virtual reconstruction of cultural heritage: A first approach to the Mosque-Cathedral and the river landscape of Córdoba (Spain)	8	Colour range from greens to browns
Rodríguez-Hernández et al. 2021	Aparicio & Figueiredo	Virtual 3D reconstruction of the “Fortified tower” of the Ulaca Oppidum (Solosancho, Ávila, Spain): much more than an image	10	From cool to warm colours (lower evidence-greater evidence)
Aparicio et al. 2021	Aparicio & Figueiredo	Virtual 3D reconstruction of Gauzón Castle (Castrillón, Principado de Asturias, Spain)	10	From cool to warm colours (lower evidence-greater evidence)
Cáceres-Criado et al. 2022	Aparicio & Figueiredo	Graphic representation of the degree of historical-archaeological evidence: the 3D reconstruction of the “Baker’s House”	10	From cool to warm colours (lower evidence-greater evidence)

1

2 Each of the existing propositions of representation scale  
3 uses specific colours. Behavioural scientists have reported  
4 that colour affects the reactions of the human organism  
5 produces certain physiological reactions, creates emotion  
6 states and draws attention (Sierra et al. 2000).  
7 Most experts agree that it is ideal to reflect the degree  
8 historical-archaeological evidence in the virtual  
9 representation of a heritage asset, for the sake of clarity  
10 authenticity. The graphic representation of the degree  
11 historical-archaeological veracity, with a new proposition  
12 evidence scale, considers the objectives set in projects  
13 conducted in the scope of virtual archaeology (López  
14 Menchero and Grande 2011; SEAV 2011; The London  
15 Charter).

### 17.1.1 Literature review

18 Previous studies have carried out the virtual reconstruction  
19 the Baker’s House, at the archaeological site  
20 Torreparedones (Baena, Córdoba, Spain) (Cáceres-Criado et

21 al. 2022). This heritage asset, as is indicated by its name, is  
22 characterised by the presence of the base of a Roman bread  
23 oven, as well as the foundation of what could have been a  
24 rotatory mill (Morena et al. 2016; Morena et al. 2019). It has  
25 three constructive phases: late Republican Roman phase; late  
26 Imperial Roman phase; and Modern-Medieval phase. The  
27 virtual reconstruction is focused on the second phase (late  
28 Imperial Roman phase).

29 For the correct dissemination of the scientific work  
30 performed in this Roman house, the historical-archaeological  
31 evidence scale was considered a key element. The debate was  
32 about which of the propositions of historical-archaeological  
33 evidence scales would be the most suitable for the graphic  
34 representation of the archaeological remains found. The  
35 existing propositions were compared by implementing them in  
36 a specific area of the Baker’s House (Cáceres-Criado et al.  
37 Pending to be published in lectures Notes in Mechanical  
38 Engineering). Based on the amount of reconstructive units  
39 presented by the virtual reconstruction, the results of such study

1 showed that the best option was the proposition of Pablo Aparicio and César Figueiredo (Cáceres-Criado et al. 2022). At this point, a question emerged, which motivated the present study. The scientific character of the evidence scale raises doubts about its objective: Is the evidence scale designed only for experts in the field of archaeology or is it aimed at the viewers of the archaeological sites?

8 The creation of a new proposition of evidence scale is considered appropriate to attain a visual representation scale that can be easily employed and understood by any type of viewer. To this end, it is fundamental to reduce the evidence levels and the modification of their colours. Moreover, previous studies provide data that support the creation of the new proposition.

15 Furthermore, one step further would be to understand evidence scaling as a technique for evaluating virtual reality systems. The virtual reconstruction of a heritage asset together with the infographic of the scale of evidence helps with the visual interpretation of the veracity of the work carried out. This topic could be included in the so-called "Museums of the 21st century", where users would learn about the heritage asset and the 3D reconstruction work, for example, with virtual reality screens (Puig et al. 2020; Baradaran-Rahimi et al. 2022; Scavarelli et al. 2021; Hammady et al. 2021).

## 27 1.2 Research aim 47

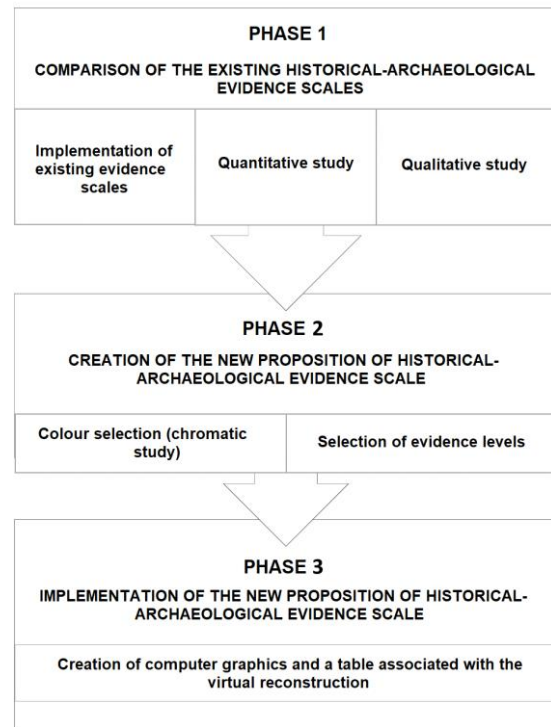
28 The present study aims to disseminate archaeological work through the use of a new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale. This proposition is supported by a quantitative and qualitative analysis made for the 'Baker's House' at the archaeological site of Torreparedones.

33 The main objective of this study was to generate a proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale for virtual reconstructions as a universal, understandable and applicable criterion for both experts and viewers in general. The aim is to provide the public with greater understanding of both the archaeological heritage and the scientific work conducted in the heritage assets.

## 41 2 Methodology 61

42 The present work was conducted in three methodological phases (Fig. 1): comparison of the existing historical-

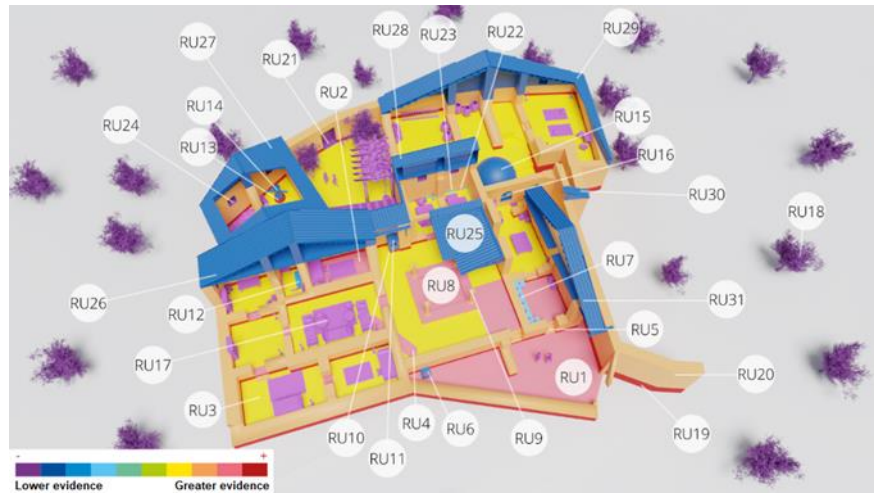
archaeological evidence scales; creation of the new historical-archaeological evidence scale; and implementation of the new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale.



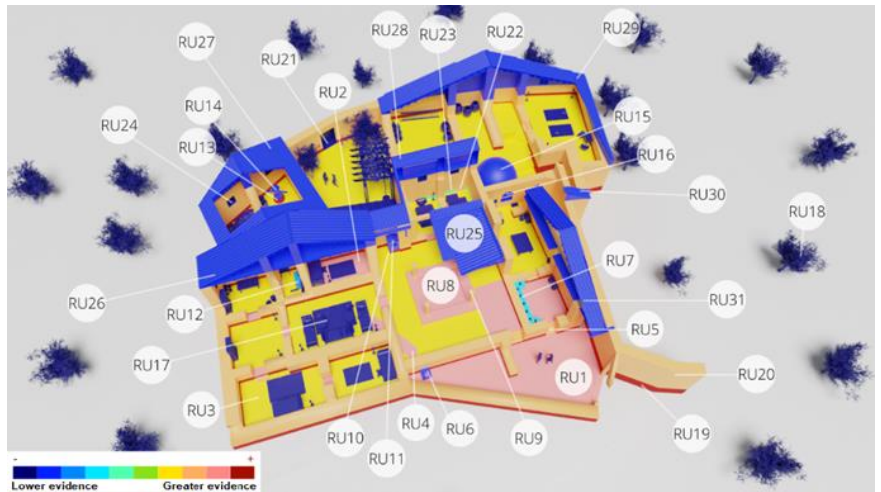
48 **Fig. 1** Methodological phases.

50 Regarding the first phase of the study, it is important to take into account that the creation of a new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale is based on the existing historical-archaeological evidence scales. After knowing these, they are compared with each other in order to establish common criteria and differences. As was previously mentioned, the building in question already has a virtual 3D reconstruction (Cáceres-Criado et al. 2022), in which the evidence scale proposed by Pablo Aparicio and César Figueiredo (Cáceres-Criado et al. 2022) was implemented (Fig. 2). The comparison of the existing evidence scales required the attainment of computer graphics of the heritage asset from each of the propositions. To this end, the rest of the scales were implemented in the Baker's House at the archaeological site of Torreparedones (Fig. 3 and 4).

1 **Fig. 2** Application of the evidence scale proposed  
2 by P. Aparicio and C. Figueiredo in the Baker's  
3 House virtual reconstruction.



13 **Fig. 3** Application of the evidence scale proposed  
14 in the Byzantium 1200 project in the Baker's  
15 House virtual reconstruction.



23  
24 **Fig. 4** Application of the evidence scale proposed  
25 by Ortiz et al. in the Baker's House virtual  
26 reconstruction.



35 In the first phase of this study, and based on the existing  
36 propositions of historical-archaeological evidence scales,  
37 quantitative study was performed as a result of the Topic  
38 Seminar 'Scientific Representation in Archaeology through  
39 the Use of Digital Technologies': Implementation of evidence  
40 scales in the Mosque-Cathedral of Córdoba and in Gauzón

Castle', which was held on March 4th 2022 at the University of Córdoba. This totally anonymous study was carried out on-line and face-to-face, depending on the modality chosen by each attendee. The questionnaire consisted of 18 closed questions (In Table 2 "Appendix"), which were answered after

1 receiving the information presented by Pablo Aparicio and  
2 Rafael Ortiz.

3 The answers obtained in the questionnaire were  
4 statistically analysed, which is why information about gender,  
5 age and education was gathered. The mean of these answers  
6 was calculated and an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was  
7 performed to compare the variances between the means of the  
8 'gender', 'age' and 'education' categories in each of the  
9 questions proposed in the questionnaire.

10 Moreover, before the Topical Seminar, a meeting was held  
11 with professionals of this professional category  
12 (archaeologists) with the aim of solving doubts about the  
13 propositions of historical-archaeological evidence scales.  
14 After explaining the propositions, since many of the attendees  
15 did not know about their existence, questions were asked  
16 Pablo Aparicio and Rafael Ortiz in an interview at the  
17 mentioned seminar (In Table 3 "Appendix").

18 The aim of the second phase of the study was to assign  
19 colours and evidence levels for the new proposition, which  
20 required a thorough search for bibliographic material related  
21 to the symbology of the colour associated with people. From  
22 this bibliographic search regarding colour assignment for the  
23 new scale proposition, it was observed that colours with a  
24 greater wave length (e.g., red and orange) cause a greater  
25 physiological activation than green (Díez et al. 2000; Wilson  
26 1966). This is frequently described as a stimulating, energetic  
27 and vital colour. On its part, yellow is less exciting than red  
28 (Schaie and Heiss 1988), being associated with vitality, mirth  
29 and fun (Sharpe 1974). In regard to the colour green, its  
30 excitation potential is more limited (Schaie and Heiss 1988),  
31 being associated with safety, comfort, calmness, quietness,  
32 youth and freshness. The coolest colour of the chromatic  
33 wheel is blue, and the preference for it is thought to indicate  
34 good control over emotions and behaviours (Díez et al. 2008).

35 A recent study conducted in Spain about the emotional  
36 connection with colour shows the concepts associated with  
37 each colour (Bazán 2018; Corbin), including the following:

- 38 - Blue: tranquility, calmness, peace, serenity, stillness,  
39 relaxation, quietness, harmony and well-being.
- 40 - Green: mirth and life, tranquility, serenity, relaxation,  
41 quietness, calmness, peace and hope.
- 42 - Red: strength, passion, mirth, life, energy, love, heat,  
43 intensity, vitality, optimism, beauty, emotion, power,  
44 fire, dynamism, self-esteem, action, revolution and  
45 struggle, effort and excitement.
- 46 - Purple: serenity, tranquility, peace, relaxation, calmness,  
47 mirth and happiness, balance, harmony, well-being,  
48 women, femininity, freedom, beauty, profoundness,  
49 transformation and spirituality.

- Yellow: mirth, fun, light, luminosity, life, liveliness,  
energy, positivity, good vibes, heat, warmth, tranquility,  
peace, optimism and happiness.

- Orange: mirth, optimism, fun, energy, strength, vitality,  
life, liveliness, spark, creativity, warmth, heat, showy,  
intensity, cheerfulness and sympathy.

In addition to the meaning of the colours, several studies  
show that the preferences for them change throughout life  
(Dittmar 2001; Mohebbi 2014; Terwogt and Hoeksma 1995).  
This could be attributed to the alterations in the discrimination  
of colours and also to the decrease of the functions of the  
mechanisms present in sight with ageing (Dittmar 2001).

The change in colour preferences in older people could be  
attributed to the alterations in the discrimination of colours and  
in visual images, the yellowing of the lens and the decrease of  
the function of the blue cone mechanism with ageing.

After selecting the colours and evidence levels for the new  
proposition, the last phase of the study was conducted. These  
colours and evidence levels were implemented in the virtual 3D  
reconstruction of the Baker's House, obtaining computer  
graphics of the virtual model and a table associated with such  
graphics presenting information of the evidence levels that  
correspond to each reconstructive unit.

### 3 Results and discussion

The representation of the degree of historical-archaeological  
evidence of the 'Baker's House' through a new scale  
proposition required the comparison of the existing evidence  
scales. Their implementation in the Baker's House provided  
results of their use in this heritage asset (Table 4). On the one  
hand, the scale proposed in the Byzantium 1200 project  
(Byzantium 1200) is closer to the proposition of Aparicio and  
Figueiredo (2017) than to that of Ortiz et al. (2018). It could be  
said that the second proposition is more recent than the first  
proposition and, thus, it is an improved version of it. Their  
colour range is quite similar and, in both scales, warm colours  
represent greater historical-archaeological evidence, whereas  
cool colours represent lower evidence. Both scales are very  
visual, and each of the evidence levels are easily identified.  
Regarding the third proposition (Ortiz et al. 2018), it is visually  
very different from the other two propositions. The colour  
range is different, and the reduction of the evidence levels is  
observed in the computer graphics, showing less colours.  
Visually, the evidence levels are not so easily distinguishable,  
due to the similarity between their colours, unlike in the other  
two propositions.

Level of evidence	Colour Byzantium 1200	Definition Byzantium 1200	Byzantium	Colour Aparicio and Figueiredo (2017)	Definition Aparicio and Figueiredo (2017)	Colour Ortiz et al. (2018)	Definition Ortiz et al. (2018)
1	Dark Red	Exists in its original form		Purple	Imagination	Dark Green	Still existing in its original form
2	Light Red	Partially or with modifications		Dark Blue	Conjecture based on similar structures	Teal	Still existing with modifications
3	Orange	Photographs or plans available		Blue	Basic textual reference	Light Teal	Detailed graphical evidence
4	Yellow	Archaeological information		Light Blue	Descriptive textual reference	Brown	Slight graphical evidence
5	Light Green	Detailed graphical evidence	graphical	Green	Simple graphical reference	Dark Brown	Archaeological hypothesis
6	Light Cyan	Simple graphical evidence		Yellow-Green	Detailed graphical reference	Orange	Textual evidence
7	Cyan	Textual and comparative evidence		Yellow	Basic archaeological information or simple base plans	Light Yellow	Based on similar structures
8	Blue	Textual evidence		Orange	Strong archaeological and documental evidence in photographs and detailed plans	Light Grey	Based on historical context, nature and culture
9	Dark Blue	Based on similar structures		Pink	Still existing (or partially existing) with modifications		
10	Dark Purple	Imagination		Red	Still existing in its original form		

1

2 Regarding the colours used in the pioneer scale (Byzantium 1200) and in the proposition of Aparicio and Figueiredo (2017), several observations emerged. Firstly, the colours selected are not pure, that is, their value and intensity are altered as they are mixed with achromatic colours (white and black). These colours identified as pastel colours stand out less, despite corresponding to warmer colours. For instance, by mixing orange with white, this colour loses purity and thus yellow stands out over orange, in spite of the fact that the latter is warmer. Likewise, the use of pink in the historical-archaeological evidence scale would alter the colour range, since pink results from modifying the intensity of the colour red. Lastly, regarding the proposition of Aparicio and Figueiredo (2017), the colour purple does not allow the proposed evidence scale to go from cool to warm colours, since purple is not a cool colour. Purple results from mixing the primary colours blue and red, which would imply inverting the chromatic circle, obtaining a scale of warm to cool colours.

21 Moreover, from the proposition of Ortiz et al. (2018), it is worth mentioning that the colour palette used is too large and difficult to understand for the users who are not familiar with colour theory. By modifying the attributes of the colour palette, the proposition of evidence scale is little intuitive, since it uses atypical colours that result from the mixture of primary and secondary colours. To sum up, it is a much personalised palette and, thus, it is poorly universal.

29 The evidence levels also show differences between the two propositions. Firstly, the evidence levels of the pioneer proposition (Byzantium 1200) and the proposition

32 Aparicio and Figueiredo (2017) are quite similar. The difference lies in the fact that the Byzantium project orders the levels from higher to lower veracity, whereas the second proposition orders them from lower to higher evidence level. Although the levels are ordered in the opposite manner, the colours associated with them are the same for both propositions, with the warmer colours corresponding to greater evidence and the cooler colours corresponding to lower evidence. Regarding the evidence levels proposed by Ortiz et al. (2018), there are significant differences with respect to the previous propositions. In this case, the authors reduced the levels from 10 to 8, ordering them from greater to lower historical-archaeological evidence. Moreover, another difference lies in the veracity levels aimed at the archaeological hypotheses. Ortiz et al. (2018) associate them with lower veracity compared to the graphic evidence, whereas the two previous propositions associate the archaeological hypotheses with greater veracity compared to the graphic evidence.

51 As was previously mentioned, and as a result of the Topical Seminar held in the University of Córdoba, a live interview was carried out with Pablo Aparicio and Rafael Ortiz. Different aspects are worth highlighting from such interview. Firstly, Aparicio and Ortiz consider each other's propositions to be correct, and they answered most of the questions with similar answers. They both thought about the same type of audience when they created their propositions of evidence scales, i.e., both experts of the discipline and the general public. This is different from the selection of colours, since, although both of them considered all types of audience, the interpretation of the colours from all viewers is different for each proposition.

1 While the colours used by Pablo Aparicio are focused on the  
 2 use of the chromatic wheel, Ortiz et al. (2018) use a more  
 3 difficult palette in terms of colour theory. Furthermore,  
 4 according to Pablo Aparicio, the works that implement the  
 5 proposition of evidence scale and its corresponding colour  
 6 show its validity for any type of reconstruction, where  
 7 Rafael Ortiz could not carry out independent studies in the  
 8 Mosque-Cathedral, thus they could only validate the evidence  
 9 levels and the corresponding colours of their proposition  
 10 said heritage asset. Although each author has implemented  
 11 the scale in a larger or smaller number of scopes, they both  
 12 agree that their scales are being used with increasing  
 13 frequency to support virtual reconstructions, and they also

know that they are being used in other countries. Lastly, it is  
 worth highlighting that they both agree that this research field  
 should be taught in subjects at universities, and they are doing  
 everything they can to disseminate it, both in their workplace  
 and through teaching.

Additionally, as a result of said Topical Seminar, the  
 questionnaire was administered and completed, with the  
 participation of 30 people. To obtain the results of this  
 questionnaire, the mean of each of the questions (except for the  
 first three: gender, age and education) was statistically  
 analysed. Moreover, the variance of the means of the 'gender',  
 'age' and 'education' categories with each of the questions was  
 also explored. Next, Table 5 shows the results of the analyses.

27 **Table 5** Statistical results obtained from the questionnaire.

Question	Mean	ANOVA ( 'Gender' variable)	ANOVA ( 'Age' variable)	ANOVA ( 'Education' variable)
4	1.37	Pr(>F): 0.271	Pr(>F): 0.74	Pr(>F): 0.0746
5	2.07	Pr(>F): 0.546	Pr(>F): 0.866	Pr(>F): 0.71
6	2.50	Pr(>F): 0.184	Pr(>F): 0.69	Pr(>F): 0.0885
7	1.90	Pr(>F): 0.491	Pr(>F): 0.848	Pr(>F): 0.0757
8	2.27	Pr(>F): 0.64	Pr(>F): 0.118	Pr(>F): 0.854
9	1.73	Pr(>F): 0.101	Pr(>F): 0.236	Pr(>F): 0.298
10	1.90	Pr(>F): 0.00375	Pr(>F): 0.213	Pr(>F): 0.0568
11	1.23	Pr(>F): 0.489	Pr(>F): 0.147	Pr(>F): 0.706
12	1.20	Pr(>F): 0.253	Pr(>F): 0.708	Pr(>F): 0.0233
13	1.43	Pr(>F): 0.607	Pr(>F): 0.0361	Pr(>F): 0.705
14	1.20	Pr(>F): 0.346	Pr(>F): 0.119	Pr(>F): 0.959
15	1.83	Pr(>F): 0.345	Pr(>F): 0.466	Pr(>F): 0.00863
16	1.86	Pr(>F): 0.626	Pr(>F): 0.312	Pr(>F): 0.208
17	1.80	Pr(>F): 0.279	Pr(>F): 0.596	Pr(>F): 0.726
18	2.59	Pr(>F): 0.412	Pr(>F): 0.0086	Pr(>F): 0.00539

28  
 29 For the correct interpretation of the results of the means,  
 30 is important to take into account that not all questions have  
 31 the same number of response options. Question 1, 2 and 3  
 32 not focused on the historical-archaeological evidence scale  
 33 as they were used to characterise the respondents.  
 34 Focusing on the most interesting results for the creation  
 35 a new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale  
 36 it is important to highlight that, regardless of gender, age  
 37 education, the mean value in question 4 was 1.367. This  
 38 indicates that over half of the respondents (maximum mean  
 39 value: 2) had heard about the evidence scale for the first time  
 40 In question 5, half of the respondents agree that this is due  
 41 the fact that virtual reconstructions are not usually  
 42 accompanied by an evidence scale (mean value: 2.07). For  
 43 questions 6 and 7 (maximum mean value: 4), the respondents  
 44 answered that they knew between 1-5 and 5-10 virtual  
 45 reconstructions, and that, among these, between 0 and 16  
 46 were accompanied by a historical-archaeological evidence  
 47 scale. Regarding question 8 (maximum mean value: 3), the  
 48 respondents stated that the information presented in the  
 49 evidence scale reached the general public (mean value: 2.27)

The rest of the questions (9-18) belong to the Likert scale  
 on the level of agreement or disagreement (maximum mean  
 value: 5). As can be observed in Table 5, except for question  
 18, none of them exceeded the mean value of 2. This indicates  
 that, from question 9 to 17, the respondents 'strongly agreed',  
 with some of the questions being close to 'agree'. However,  
 question 18 obtained a mean value of 2.59, being close to  
 'neither agree nor disagree' regarding the opinion about the  
 colours used in the proposition of Ortiz et al (2018).

After the analysis of variance (ANOVA) carried out for the  
 'gender', 'age' and 'education' categories with each of the  
 questions, the following results were obtained:

- With respect to the 'gender' category, for all  
 questions, except question 10, the p value was over 0.05,  
 exceeding the 5% significance level, which shows that gender  
 did not influence the responses at 95% confidence level. In  
 question 10, the p value was below 0.05, which indicates that  
 gender did influence the responses given to this question, thus  
 the null hypothesis was accepted.

- For the 'age' category, for all questions, except for  
 questions 13 and 18, the p value was over 0.05, exceeding the

1 5% significance level, thus age did not influence 445  
 2 responses at 95% confidence level. Regarding questions 446  
 3 and 18, the p value was below 0.05, thus age did influence 447  
 4 responses given in these questions, and the null hypothe448  
 5 was thereby accepted. 449

6 - In the 'education' category, except for questions 50  
 7 and 18, the p value was over the 5% significance lev51  
 8 showing that education did not influence the responses at 9552  
 9 confidence level. For questions 12 and 18, the p value was 53  
 10 over 0.05, indicating that the null hypothesis was accepte54  
 11 since education did influence the responses given in the55  
 12 questions. 56

13 Based on the fact that this project pursues a proposition  
 14 focused on the common viewer, without losing its scientific  
 15 character, we firstly evaluated the historical-archaeological  
 16 evidence levels to be shown. The aim was to obtain a very  
 17 visual scale, without excessive information, that can be  
 18 understood by any person regardless of their age or education.

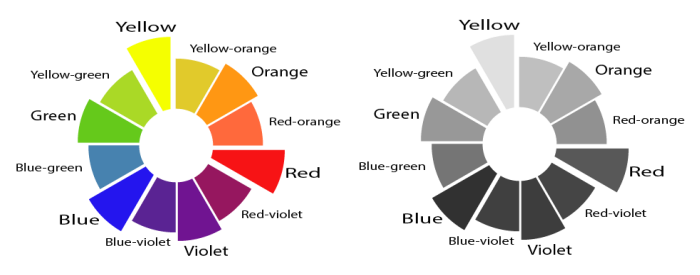
19 Since virtual reconstructions are created to show how a  
 20 heritage asset was in a specific time (López-Menchero and  
 21 Grande 2011), we believe that, visually, the archaeological  
 22 remains that require highlighting the least are those that ar57  
 23 preserved, as, due to the fact that they can be personally58  
 24 observed, their intensity should not be highlighted in the59  
 25 evidence scale implemented in the virtual reconstruction60  
 26 Therefore, this would imply ordering the evidence levels from61  
 27 lower to greater historical-archaeological veracity, with the62  
 28 former being associated with a greater visual colour intensity63  
 29 64

30 Furthermore, it is important to consider that not all visitors65  
 31 of archaeological sites are experts of the discipline, thus, the66  
 32 greater the number and information of evidence levels, the67  
 33 greater the difficulty to interpret them. To solve this, it was68  
 34 decided to reduce the historical-archaeological evidence69  
 35 levels, in order to omit information of these which not all70  
 36 users know how to interpret. Based on the existing71  
 37 propositions of evidence scales, six historical-archaeological72  
 38 veracity levels are proposed:73

- 38 1. Elements of the historical and natural context74  
 39 Elements close to the historical and natural context75
- 40 2. Representation through compared architecture76  
 41 Structure or object represented by compared77  
 42 architecture or similar contemporary elements.78
- 43 3. Archaeological hypotheses. Information based on  
 44 the result of the archaeological excavations.

4. Textual references. Textual description of elements.
5. Graphic references. References of elements in drawings, prints or paintings.
6. Preserved archaeological remains. Structure or object preserved in the present.

As was previously mentioned, the intensity of the colours is fundamental in the present proposition. Some studies show that one of the attributes of colour is value (Edwards 2004; De Grandis 1985). By transforming the chromatic scale to achromatism, the value scale can be observed (Fig. 5), which shows the darker and brighter colours of the chromatic wheel. In other words, the intensity of each colour can be observed.



**Fig. 5** Transformation of the chromatic wheel to achromatism.

As was previously mentioned, the discrimination of colours can be affected by age (Dittmar 2001; Mohebbi 2014; Terwogt and Hoeksma 1995; therefore, it is important to use colours that can be distinguished from each other by their intensity. The new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale aims to denote the levels of lower veracity with darker and more intense colours, while associating the greater veracity levels with clearer and less intense colours. To this end, it was fundamental to transform the chromatic wheel to achromatism, thus observing the intensity of the colours. Moreover, the 3D model was essential to apply the different groups of colours and verify how they worked in it. After several colour tests performed in the 3D model, it was decided to select a scale composed of warm colours, from greater to lower intensity (Table 6). Analog colours were used to create a warm colour scale. The discrimination of the primary colour blue and the secondary colour green is due to the pursuit for a gradation without leaps in the chromatic wheel, thus creating a visually harmonious scale.

**Table 6** Evidence levels and their associated colours of the new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale.

Level of evidence for virtual reconstructions	Definition	Colour	RGB	HEX
1	Elements of the historical and natural context		67 0 82	430052
2	Representation through comparative architecture		134 0 45	86002D
3	Archaeological hypotheses		227 27 36	E31B24
4	Textual references		243 84 47	F3542F
5	Graphic references		255 245 55	EA9F4E

1

2 In order to accurately evaluate the intensity (brightness or  
3 darkness of the colours used), the scale of greys associated  
4 with the colours used was created. Additionally, this scale  
5 was used to calibrate the degrees of value of the selected  
6 colours (Edwards 2004). As can be observed in Table 7, the





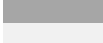

scale of greys corresponding to the selected colours shows  
different intensities among them, with the levels of lower  
historical-archaeological evidence being more intense than  
those of greater veracity.

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**Table 7** Scale of greys of the veracity levels of the new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale.

Level of evidence for virtual reconstructions	Definition	Colour
1	Elements of the historical and natural context	
2	Representation through comparative architecture	
3	Archaeological hypotheses	
4	Textual references	
5	Graphic references	
6	Preserved archaeological remains	

14

15 The 3D model played a fundamental role in the selection  
16 of colours, as it was used with different colour values until  
17 was appropriately adjusted. In the scale of greys, it was  
18 confirmed that the selected colours were optimal to show  
19 evidence scale from greater to lower intensity. This was also

tested in the 3D model to verify that the same effect was  
obtained (Fig. 6). Lastly, the outer terrain of the Baker's House,  
which is not part of the veracity of the heritage asset, is  
associated with a neutral colour, which does not stand out  
among the colours that correspond to the evidence levels.

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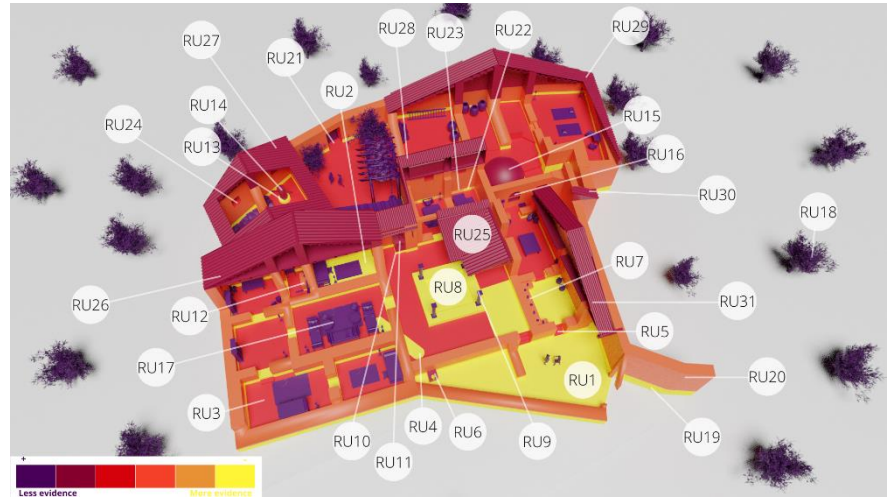
**Fig. 6** Render with the implementation of the new scale proposition in the Baker's House in colour and in scale of greys.



32 Therefore, the new proposition of historical-archaeological  
33 evidence scale has six levels of veracity (Table 6). The  
34 colours of greater intensity show the levels of lower  
35 historical-archaeological evidence, whereas the brighter  
36 colours (less intense) represent greater veracity. The  
37 implementation of the new proposition of evidence scale

produced computer graphics with 31 reconstructive units (Fig.  
7). Next, we present the table associated with the historical-  
archaeological evidence scale of the 'Baker's House' (Table 8).  
This table identifies the number of the reconstructive unit, the  
evidence level, a brief description of the element or structure,  
the chronology and the corresponding bibliography.

**Fig. 7** Computer graphics of the new proposition of historical-archaeological scale for the digital reconstruction of the *domus*.



**Table 8** Identification of the RUs, evidence levels, name, description, chronology and bibliography of the new proposition of historical-archaeological evidence scale of the virtual reconstruction of the Baker's House of Torreparedones.

RU	Evidence level	Name	Description	Chronology	Bibliography
1	6	Pavement made of large stone slates	This building technique consisted in extending a bed of <i>opus incertum</i> and irregular flagstone paving, being a parallel technique to the one used in the paving of the streets of the city of Torreparedones.	Early Roman Empire	(Moreno 2015)
2	6	Pavement of <i>opus signinum</i>	Pavement of <i>opus signinum</i> in the room identified as <i>cubiculum</i> .	Early Roman Empire	(Morena et al. 2016; Morena et al. 2019)
3	3	Non-preserved pavement	Pavements of the <i>domus</i> that are not preserved.		
4	6	"A <i>bagnarola</i> " water tank	Supplied with rainwater gathered in the roofs, given its location in one of the corners of the <i>atrium</i> .	Late Roman Republic	(Morena et al. 2016; Morena et al. 2019)
5	3	Stairs	Stairs proposed for bridging the different levels of the rooms.		
6	2	Latrine	The presence of a limestone slate that stands out in size in all the pavement could be an indication of the location of the latrine hole.		(Morena et al. 2019)
7	4	Structure designed for the sale of bakery products	Garret made of large 20cm-high slates, located in the southern half of the space.		(Morena et al. 2019)
8	6	<i>Impluvium</i>	Square pond that gathers rainwater and discharges to the street through a canalisation system connected to a larger canalisation system.	Early Roman Empire	(Morena et al. 2016; Morena et al. 2019)
9	3	<i>Impluvium columns</i>	First building phase of the <i>atrium</i> .		(Morena et al. 2016; Morena et al. 2019)
10	6	Base of the <i>lararium</i>	Square structure that could correspond to the base of the recess that held the figurines for domestic worship.	Early Roman Empire	(Morena et al. 2019)
11	2	<i>Lararium</i>	Due to its chronology and location, it seems to correspond to a variant of the <i>aediculae</i> type, pseudoaedicular, characterised for being made of walls or a solid block, with an inner recess-like cavity, where domestic worship figurines would be placed, crowned by a gable.		(González 2003; Corrales et al. 2016)
12	4	Kitchen structure	Masonry structure		(Morena et al. 2019)
13	6	Circular base associated with the rotatory mill	Circular base of slightly over 1 m in diameter that seems to correspond to the base of a rotatory mill.	Early Roman Empire	(Morena et al. 2016; Morena et al. 2019)

14	2	Roman rotatory mill	Formed by two hollow cones placed upside down, one over the other, with the grain remaining between the two cones and being milled by the friction between the two cones.		(Flores 1993; Morales 2008)
15	2	Oven vault	In Augusta Emerita, an oven was recovered, which presented an access similar to the one in the <i>domus</i> of Torreparedones, consisting of a small passable entrance up to the very mouth of the oven, embedded in a square structure. Similarly, the floor of the oven preserved in Torreparedones is typologically identical to that of the bread oven of the 'Birds' House' and that of the <i>domus</i> of the Planetarium (Itálica, Seville, Spain).	Early Roman Empire	(Bustamante and Salido 2014; Luzón 1975)
16	2	Oven mouth	It has a diameter of 4 m and it would have been covered by a vault, being embedded, at least in the upper part by a wall, with side openings for putting in and taking out the products to be baked and the fire wood.	Early Roman Empire	(Morena et al. 2019)
17	1	Roman furniture	Roman furniture associated with each space.		
18	1	Vegetation	Contemporary vegetation in time and space.		
19	6	Skewback of the walls of the <i>domus</i>	The walls were built with rammed earth and <i>opus incertum</i> for the plinths, resorting to irregular bonds of limestone, which is the natural local rock, applying plaster as the final layer.	Early Roman Empire	(Morena et al. 2019)
20	4	Elevation of the walls of the <i>domus</i>	Since the total height of the walls of the <i>domus</i> is not preserved, the work of Vitruvius was selected. It is important to take into account that the ratio relationships established by Vitruvius are approximate.		(Díaz 2014)
21	3	Access to the western area	Without archaeological evidence, it was decided to create an open door to the <i>hortus</i> , since there must have been an access in the production area to introduce the elements for their use.		(Cáceres-Criado et al. 2022; Cáceres-Criado et al. 2022)
22	6	Preserved parietal decoration	Ornamental technique in which a mortar coating is repeatedly hit with a mold containing the embossed decoration. Then, the coating is covered with pure lime or mortar.	Early Roman Empire	(Morena et al. 2016; Morena et al. 2019)
23	5	Parietal decoration	This type of decoration has also been found in other Roman sites. The archaeological work conducted in Beatas Street (Cartagena, Spain) recovered panels decorated with embossed motifs.		(Fernández et al. 2005)
24	3	Windows	In the Villa de las Musas (Arellano, Navarra, Spain), a window grill was discovered. The preservation of this type of elements helps in their 3D reconstruction, as well as in the calculation of the size of the hollows.		(Mezquíriz 2004)
25	2	<i>Atrium</i> cover	<i>Compluvium</i> / <i>impluvium</i> system		(Díaz 2014; Adam 1996)
26	2	Cover of the southern rooms	Large gabled cover that discharges the rainwater into the <i>atrium</i> and into the street located south of the <i>domus</i> .		(Díaz 2014; Adam 1996)
27	2	Cover of the storage and milling area	Spaces E-37 and E-38 consist of a hip roof that discharges rainwater into three areas: the northern area ( <i>hortus</i> ), the street located south of the <i>domus</i> and the street located west of the <i>domus</i> .		(Díaz 2014; Adam 1996)
28	2	Cover of the <i>tablinum</i> and <i>cubiculum</i>	The <i>tablinum</i> (E-11) and the <i>cubiculum</i> located in the northern area (E-12) consist of a shed roof that also discharges into the <i>atrium</i> , since, otherwise, the rainwater would go to the open corridor of the western area of the <i>domus</i> .		(Díaz 2014; Adam 1996)

29	2	Cover of the service area	where there are no canalisations or storage structures. The other cover is the one that covers spaces E-22, E-23, E-24, E-26, E-28, E-31 and E-46, with a gable roof, which discharges the rainwater into the <i>hortus</i> and into the northern area of the <i>domus</i> .	(Díaz 2014; Adam 1996)
30	2	Cover of the woodshed	Shed roof proposed for the closing of space E-32, identified as woodshed.	(Díaz 2014; Adam 1996)
31	2	Cover of the commercial area, redistribution area and latrine	Spaces E-15 and E-16 are composed of a gable roof, discharging, on the one hand, into the western area of the <i>domus</i> , and, on the other hand, into the eastern area. The closing of spaces E-36 and E-13 consists of a shed roof that would be the continuation of the previous cover, discharging the rainwater into the 'porch'.	(Díaz 2014; Adam 1996)

1

## 2 4 Conclusions

3 The application of a colour scale in virtual reconstructions  
 4 a valid tool to show the degree of veracity of the work  
 5 conducted. Therefore, the existing propositions of each  
 6 historical-archaeological evidence scale are considered  
 7 optimal for such purpose. However, the selection of  
 8 evidence levels and colours is key for their easy and  
 9 unequivocal understanding.

10 Although no negative results were obtained in the  
 11 questions about the existing propositions of historical-  
 12 archaeological evidence scales, the open debate in the Topical  
 13 Seminar showed aspects that needed to be addressed. Thus,  
 14 we decided to create a new proposition that encompasses several  
 15 aspects and which can reach the general public, regardless of  
 16 their education with respect to the topic.

17 The achromatic wheel is fundamental to show a scale  
 18 where the order of the colours is important. The colour  
 19 scale in this study was used to adjust the degree of value  
 20 each colour and thus obtain a scale of greater to lower visual  
 21 colour intensity. To increase the understanding of the  
 22 evidence scale for any type of viewer, regardless of their age  
 23 or education, it was decided to reduce the evidence levels.  
 24 It was observed that the presentation of very detailed  
 25 information in the evidence levels may lead to mistakes in

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48 **Table 2** Quantitative study presented in the Topical Seminar held in the University of Córdoba.

Questions	Response options
1. What is your gender?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Man;</li> <li>• Woman</li> </ul>
2. What is your age?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-30 years;</li> <li>• 30-40 years;</li> <li>• Over 40 years</li> </ul>
3. What is your academic training?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arts and Humanities;</li> </ul>

26 terms of their visual understanding, since the evidence levels  
 27 increase, with the consequent increase of visual fatigue in the  
 28 identification of each colour.

29 As is shown by the results of the questionnaire, there is still  
 30 a great percentage of people who do not know the historical-  
 31 archaeological evidence scale. To solve this issue, it is  
 32 fundamental to disseminate the scale, highlighting its value in  
 33 research studies and in the sites of the heritage assets. The  
 34 historical-archaeological evidence scale for virtual  
 35 reconstructions is a useful tool to systematise the existing  
 36 information about the assets, further disseminate them, and  
 37 finally, assess the virtual reconstruction creation process. In  
 38 addition to facilitating the correct interpretation of the  
 39 archaeological work, this scale would help to correctly interpret  
 40 heritage assets, presenting them in explanatory panels of the  
 41 archaeological sites, in mockups, museums..., etc. Therefore,  
 42 its use should be encouraged, which is the best way of  
 43 disseminating it, to pursue the creation of a universal and  
 44 unique language.

## 45 Appendix

46 See Table 2 and Table 3.

- Science;
  - Health Sciences;
  - Social and Legal Science;
  - Engineering and Architecture.
  - Other
4. Is this the first time you heard about the historical-archaeological evidence scale?
    - Yes;
    - No
  5. Why do you think you did not know about the historical-archaeological evidence scale?
    - Its lack of dissemination;
    - Virtual reconstructions are not usually accompanied by an evidence scale;
    - I am not interested in this topic;
    - Lack of training in the Degree of Archaeology
  6. How many virtual reconstructions do you know?
    - 0;
    - 1-5;
    - 5-10;
    - Over 10
  7. How many of these virtual reconstructions are accompanied by a historical-archaeological evidence scale?
    - 0;
    - 1-5;
    - 5-10;
    - Over 10
  8. In your opinion, what kind of audience receives the information presented in the historical-archaeological evidence scale?
    - Experts in the field;
    - The general public;
    - Both
  9. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, do you think that the use of a historical-archaeological evidence scale is a good option to accompany a virtual reconstruction?
    - Likert scale\*
  10. As is proposed by P. Aparicio and C. Figueiredo in one of their studies, the historical-archaeological evidence scale contributes to the creation of a language for all professionals of the field. Do you agree with this?
    - Likert scale\*
  11. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, is the name “historical-archaeological evidence scale” descriptive?
    - Likert scale\*
  12. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, do you consider that the historical-archaeological evidence scale helps to disseminate and correctly interpret not only the heritage asset but also the archaeological work conducted?
    - Likert scale\*
  13. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, if it were compulsory to accompany virtual reconstructions with historical-archaeological evidence scales, do you think this would help the general public to understand the archaeological remains?
    - Likert scale\*
  14. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, do you think it is convenient for the tourist to accompany the information
    - Likert scale\*

presented in the explanatory panels of archaeological sites with the historical-archaeological evidence scale of the virtual reconstruction?

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 15. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, what do you think about the evidence levels proposed by P. Aparicio?        | • Likert scale* |
| 16. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, what do you think about the evidence levels proposed by R. Ortiz?           | • Likert scale* |
| 17. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, what do you think about the colours used in the proposition of P. Aparicio? | • Likert scale* |
| 18. In a scale of 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Agree and 5 being Strongly Disagree, what do you think about the colours used in the proposition of R. Ortiz?    | • Likert scale* |

1 \* Likert scale composed of the following options: Strongly Agree; Agree; Neither Agree nor Disagree; Disagree; Strongly Disagree.

2 **Table 3** Qualitative study carried out with Pablo Aparicio and Rafael Ortiz

Questions	Response Pablo Aparicio	Response Rafael Ortiz
1. Everyone agrees that the evidence scale, in addition to its scientific value, has an educational and informational purpose, but what is the target audience? Experts in the discipline, common viewers or both?	“Exactly, both. I think it is very important that the scale does not lose its educational character and that looking at the caption with the warmer or cooler gradation along with the image of the virtual reconstruction should be enough for anyone to understand which areas have a greater or lower level of evidence. Subsequently, we could expand them with further information for the study”.	“From my point of view, I think that the evidence scale is useful for all audiences, and it grants transparency to the virtual reconstructions, for both technicians and the general public. In our case, when we started working with the scale, we saw that it had to be reduced, and the change of colour was due to the work we began, where we made several propositions and talked to all the technicians involved”.
2. What did you consider for the selection of colours?	“In this sense, since we based our work on the proposition developed in the Byzantium 1200 project, considering the need for standardising the scale, we believed it would be most interesting to keep using colours similar to those used in the Byzantium project, basically because we understood that they worked very well. We made small changes in the colours, that is, we adjusted the colours in a way that they could be distinguished. However, as was previously commented, purple may be a bit confusing, and it should be recalculated a little”.	“Solving the problem related to the work we were doing and also in the colours that were used in geographic information systems. We attempted to create a scale of colours that solved the problems regarding the consideration of warm colours – cool colours that existed in the previous propositions”.
3. Do you think that your proposition is the most appropriate one for any virtual reconstruction regardless of the number of reconstructive units	“It should be. The aim is to make this proposition useful for any kind of virtual reconstruction. I was able to apply it to all virtual reconstructions that I have carried out to date. There was not one virtual reconstruction in which I said ‘it’s impossible here’. However, in some cases, it is necessary to reduce a little, such as the number of reconstructive units; otherwise, it can be difficult. In other cases, it is necessary to merge reconstructive units into a single unit. The case of Elephantine City is paradigmatic; it was possible to apply it to the entire city, and I believe that it allows the viewer to clearly see the evidence level of each area. We must also be aware that the evidence scale must be flexible and that its use depends on the excavation team or scientific team. It is important to understand that this is a tool that shows the evidence level and that we must apply it in each case as clearly as possible”.	“Unlike Pablo Aparicio, we always work in the same scope, so I cannot really answer that question. Since we always work on the same thing, the Mosque-Cathedral, we cannot export this information to other virtual reconstructions”.
4. As has been previously mentioned, many of the archaeologists who	“I get emails from Italy, UK, etc., and I see that its use in virtual reconstructions is increasing.	“As Pablo Aparicio says, the use of the historical-archaeological evidence scale is increasing, in

attended this seminar did not know the historical-archaeological evidence scale. What do you think this is due to?

Moreover, I teach in the MSc of Virtual Heritage and in the education platform of Koré, and there we aim to disseminate the use of the evidence scale, also through seminars like this. It is important to use it in our workplace to increase its dissemination, as well as to modify it if necessary, although it would be good to modify it in a consensuated manner in order to achieve its standardisation”.

Spain and in other countries, such as Portugal, Italy, etc., so a greater number of people will surely know it soon”.

5. One of the attending archaeologists proposed the following: “The main disadvantage is the scarce training given to archaeology students. Greater dissemination and analysis of this system would considerably help in this matter”. Do you think that it would be possible, from research, to show the relevance of the evidence scale, even teaching it as part of a subject in the university?

“Education is essential for the application of knowledge. I think it would be very good to explain this tool in universities, since, as has been explained, it can be applied not only to virtual reconstructions, but also to traditional historical drawings, and it allows providing a scientific section. To date, when virtual reconstructions were performed, if you were very lucky you could find an article that explained how it had been done, but their veracity was never addressed. Therefore, I think it is a very important tool that came here to stay”.

“Yes, but it is important to highlight that there are still archaeologists who do not understand digital technologies, so universities should start changing some things to highlight the relevance of this scope, which is widespread”.

1

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## 9 Conflicts of interest

10 The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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