







Case 1 The relief

A private collector named Dr. Josephine von Falkenstein wants to hand over a relief as a permanent loan to a museum in Berlin.

The relief shows a woman in long robes. An inscription is carved on the side.

The museum staff report the object, as the sales history of the piece raises questions for them.



Starting clue 1

The papers show that a Prof. Schmidt from Göttingen imported the relief to Germany in 1961.

Starting clue 2

The documents are accompanied by a black-and-white photo of the relief.



Starting clue 3

Prof. Schmidt had exhibited the relief in a private collection in a villa in Göttingen.



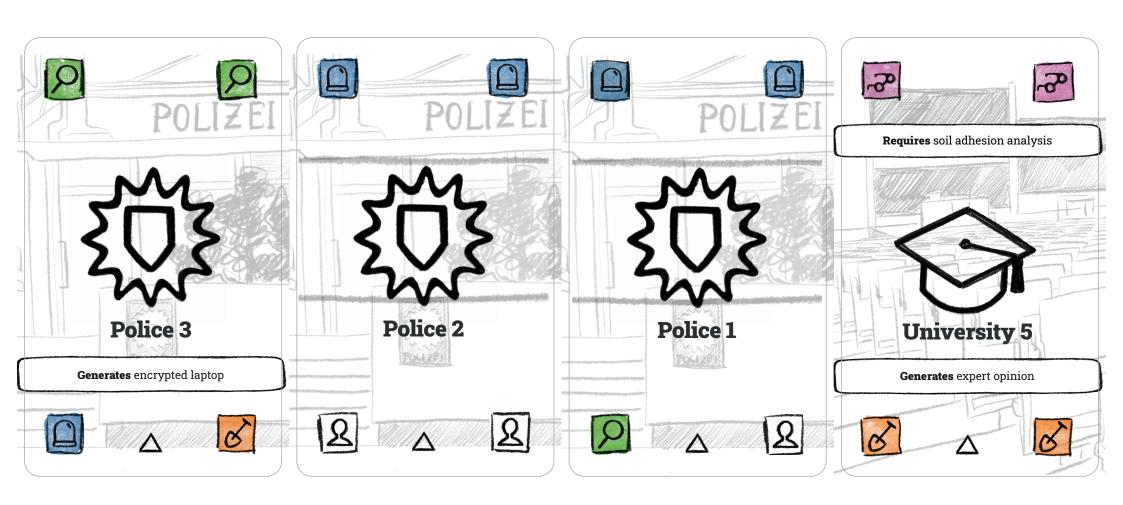


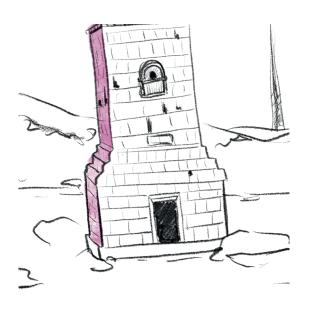
The object is not listed in the usual databases for lost objects.

The inscription on the object is clearly classified as Palmyrenic Aramaic by an ancient Orientalist.

The philologist at the institute can translate the inscription and date the object to the year 147 AD. He contacts colleagues from his department to inform them about the find.

A Near Eastern archaeologist comes forward, who was involved as a research assistant in an excavation in Syria. She thinks she recognizes the object.







A contact at the excavation site sends a photo of a grave from which the relief described is missing. Comparing it with the archaeologist's photographs, it becomes clear that this is the same object.



Police 1

Dr. Josephine von Falkenstein acquired the object at an auction from the Swiss art dealers Anton & Josef Pflümli. However, she denies knowing anything about the undetermined origin of the object.



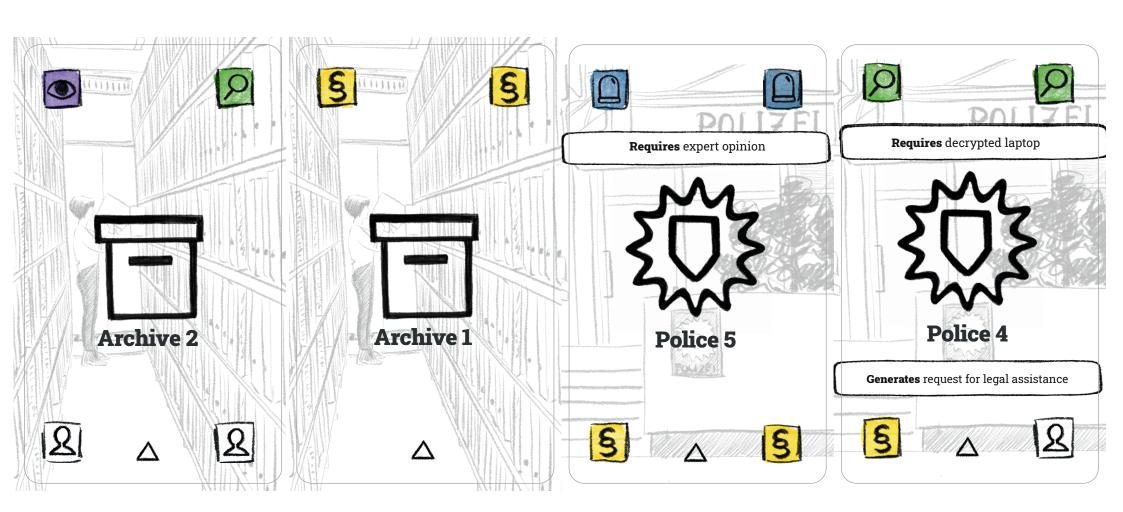
Police 2

The Swiss art dealer Pflümli claims to have acquired the object from a Hamburg dealer named Henry Langenbeck at a fair in Switzerland.



Police 3

During a search of the premises of fence Henry Langenbeck, a customs certificate for a box of the right size is found for "Souvenirs" from 2017, insured for 3,000 euros. An encrypted laptop is also found on the fence's premises.





Police 4

On the laptop there is an email with pictures of the object. It comes from a logistics company in Dubai.

Police 5

The state prosecutor charges the fence Henry Langenbeck. After presenting the evidence, he admits to having falsified # "Prof. Schmidt" as the provenance.

Archive 1

In the state archives, there is a death certificate for a Prof. Schmidt from Göttingen dated 1960.



Archive 2

An unencrypted USB stick found by government forces in a Daesh headquarters lists the purchase of a corresponding object in a table. Papers for import into Iraq are also stored on the stick.





Archive 3

A photo of the object appears in relation to the Antiquitas fair held in Switzerland in 2018. The previous owner is a Dr. Pascale in Paris, who is said to have imported the object in 1967.



Archive 4

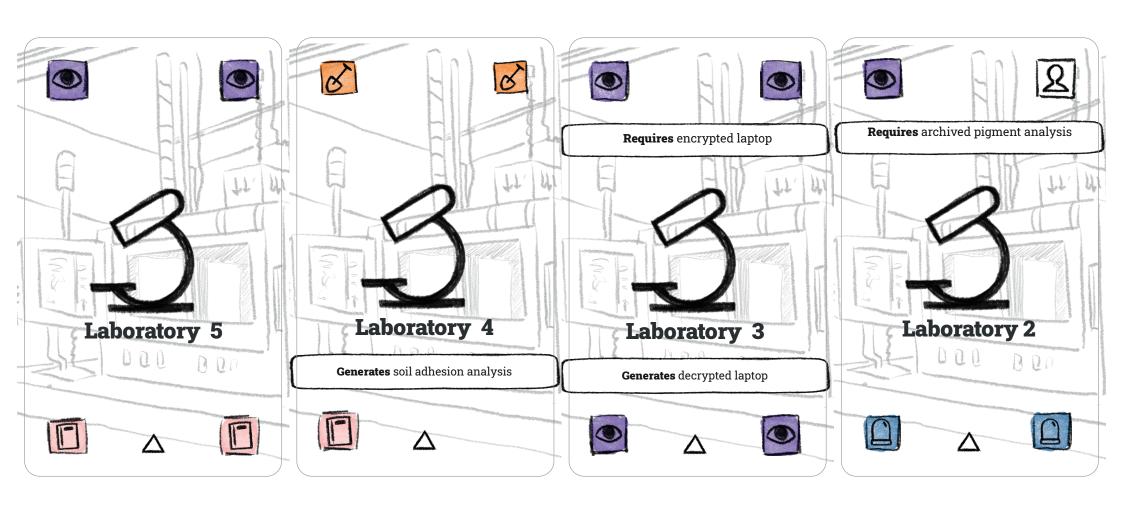
The catalogue of the "Antiquitas" fair refers to an analysis by an institute in Berlin, which confirms the authenticity.

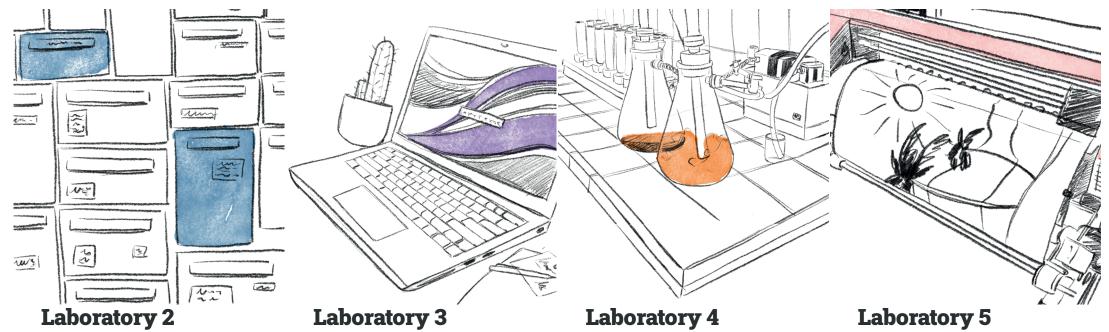
Archive 5

Prof. Schmidt owned a villa, but on Lake Constance in Switzerland. In Göttingen he lived in an apartment.

Laboratory 1

The black-and-white photo shows subtle traces of digital retouching.



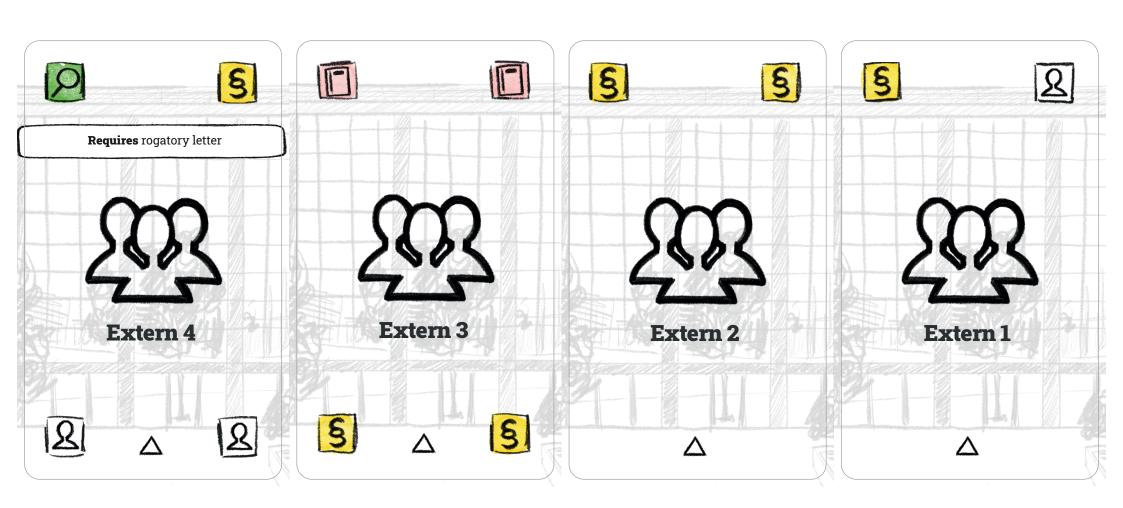


The account that paid for the analysis belongs to a shell company whose sole shareholder is an H. Langenbeck from Hamburg.

The encryption method is outdated and can therefore be deciphered. The laptop contains many emails in Arabic and pictures of various ancient objects.

Soil remnants suggest that the object was only recently excavated.

The document check reveals that the papers, which are said to be from the 60s, were printed on a digital printer.





Extern 1

Attention! Due to current military conflicts, antiquities from the Middle East are to be treated with particular caution.

Extern 2

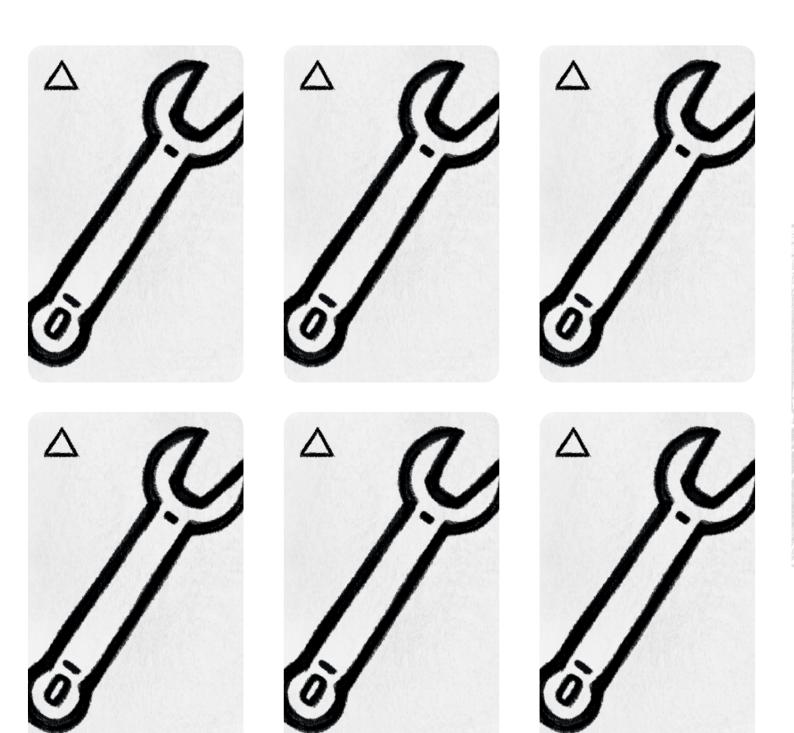
The state prosecutor draws attention to Article 11c of Regulation (EU) No. 1332/2013 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Syria.

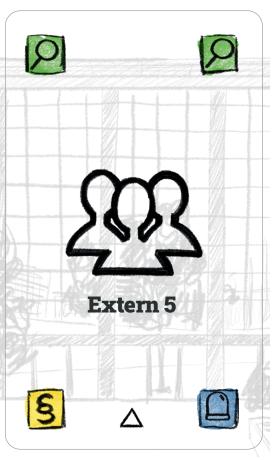
Extern 3

The Antiquities Act No. 222 of 1963, with addenda from 1969, 1974, 1977 and 1999, prohibits exports for private individuals.

Extern 4

Regular air tickets to Syria are found for the Dubai logistics company.





Extern 5

An international search warrant is issued. Officials in Dubai are securing an air waybill for the corresponding item which was sent from Basra.

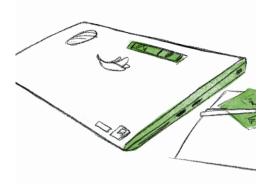
Expert opinion

An expert opinion compiled for the object by the curator.



Encrypted laptop

The encrypted laptop of the fence Henry Langenbeck.



Soil adhesion analysis

Examination of the soil remnants attached to the object.



Chemical analysis of the paint with which the object was painted.

Pigment analysis



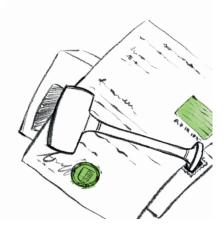
Decrypted laptop

It is now possible to search Henry Langenbeck's data for the origin of the object.

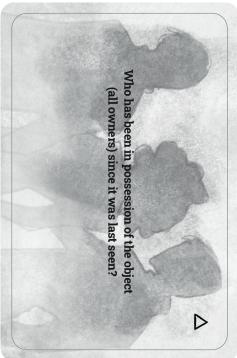


Request for legal assistance

Submission of a request to conduct a search of the logistics company in Dubai.

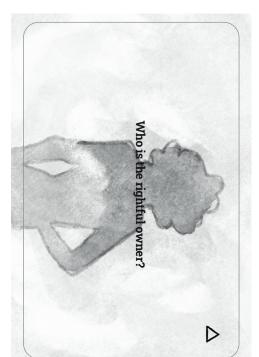












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