

## SHARED HERITAGE

# Can you research an object?


### WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

This is about research. Research gives a museum knowledge, which it then makes publicly accessible. By means of an exact description in an archive (inventory) and proof of its origin (provenance), the object can be classified into known contexts.

| Archival card 2 |                |           |                             |  |                       |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Inventory no.   | Object         | Material  | Site                        | Period   | Location              |
| I. 6163         | Mshatta Facade | Limestone | Mshatta, Present-day Jordan | Beginning of 2nd century AH/ 1. half of 8th century AD | Museum of Islamic Art |

| Detail        |                                   |          |      |                          |  |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|----------|------|--------------------------|--|
| Inventory no. | Object                            | Material | Site | Period                   | Location   |
|               | Photo: Mshatta Facade at the site |          |      | around 1321 AH / 1903 AD | Brandenburg State Office for the Preservation of Monuments |

The remains of the palace of Mshatta stood near Amman the capital of Jordan.

In the early 20th century, German engineers helped the construction of the Hejaz Railway to connect Dammam and Medina. This railway line passed close to the site and the facade.

In Berlin, stories about Mshatta were received with great interest.

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TOTAL OF 90 MINUTES



THE EXERCISE CONSISTS OF FOUR PARTS



THREE PERSONS OR MORE



MUSEUM, INTERCULTURAL, PARTICIPATION



PLACEMAT, VIEWING OF SOURCES, GROUP PRESENTATION

# What questions do you have for the object?

## HOW IS IT DONE?

Images of the Mshatta Facade are positioned visibly for everyone (or displayed on the wall with a projector). The group divides into small groups. Each small group should have no more than five people. All small groups sit around their own table. A large sheet of paper is placed on each table. Now the sheet is divided according to instructions on action sheet A and research questions are collected

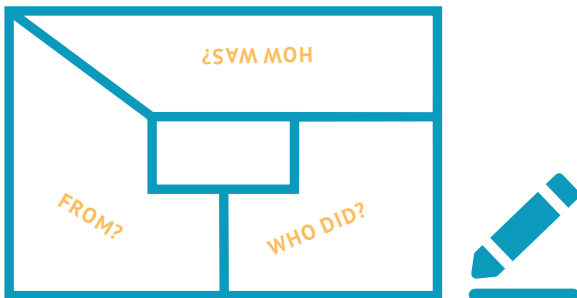
## GOAL

- Start on the topic through discussions
- Collect ideas for the continued collaboration
- Filter out important questions



## EVALUATION

All questions are clearly displayed on the wall and compared together. If there are concordances, a key question might be defined for the entire group.



APPROX. 20 MINUTES



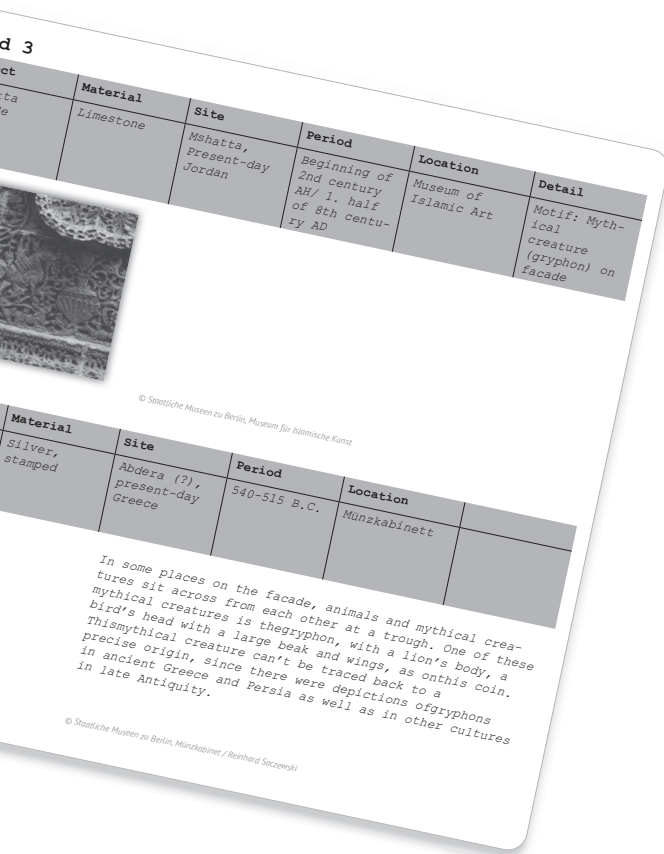
THREE PERSONS OR MORE



INFO SHEET MSHATTA FACADE,  
LARGE SHEETS OF PAPER:  
ROLL OF WRAPPING PAPER OR  
PAPER TABLECLOTH,  
COLOURED PENCILS,  
TABLES AND CHAIRS



# Where does information about the object come from?



## GOAL

Joint research  
Viewing of sources  
Preparation Presentation of results



## WHAT COMES NEXT?

You have now approached the object with your own questions. Now look for answers to two questions together that are often asked by museum visitors. Your research results may also give you answers to some of your questions.

## HOW IS IT DONE?

Depending on interest, two equally strong research groups can be formed, each of which pursue one question. The archival cards provide information.

## OVERVIEW OF THE ACTIONS

**Action sheet B:** How did the facade get into the Museum? The participants research the origin and journey of the object to the museum.

**Action sheet C:** What can you see on the facade? The participants research the displays on the facades along with their origins.



APPROX. 30 MINUTES



THREE PERSONS OR MORE



**ACTION SHEET B:**  
FIVE ARCHIVAL CARDS,  
MSHATTA FACADE INFO SHEET,  
PENS, PAPER

**ACTION SHEET C:**  
FOUR ARCHIVAL CARDS,  
MSHATTA FACADE INFO SHEET,  
PENS, PAPER

# What did you find out?

## WHAT COMES NEXT?

After the groups have worked on their question, they present their results to the other group.

## HOW IS IT DONE?

Each group presents its results. Each presentation is immediately followed by feedback from all participants and questions are asked. The group leader monitors the time, moderates the questions and concludes each round of presentations with an appreciative summary of the discussion.

## TIPS FOR FURTHER IDEAS

If you have any questions that you couldn't answer with the archival cards, use the Internet. Here as well, check the sources you're using and present them critically!

## GOAL

Presentation of results  
Feedback from all



APPROX. 30 MINUTES



THREE PERSONS OR MORE



MSHATTA FACADE INFO SHEET, ARCHIVAL CARDS, OWN NOTES

# Can you research an object?

## THIS IS HOW IT COMES TOGETHER

You have formed your own questions and pursued two additional questions. It's possible that the results also answered your own questions. But research never stops: What was answered? Which questions remain open? Where and how can you continue?

### GOAL

Shared reflection on the whole exercise



#### Archival card 1

| Inventory no. | Object         | Material  | Site                        | Period   | Location              |
|---------------|----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| I. 6163       | Mshatta Facade | Limestone | Mshatta, Present-day Jordan | Beginning of 2nd century AH/ 1. half of 8th century AD | Museum of Islamic Art |

#### Detail

| Inventory no. | Object  | Material | Site                  | Period                   | Location |
|---------------|---|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------|
|               | Photos of the diagonal view on site from the east |          | Museum of Islamic Art | around 1321 AH / 1903 AD |          |



There were lengthy discussions about which culture and period the Mshatta Facade were from.

It was proposed that the work was created in Late Antiquity, a pre-Islamic period or later. The different motifs on the facade caused this ambiguity.

After decades, there was general consensus that this is an early Islamic work of art. Because early Islamic art builds on pre-Islamic artworks.

© Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Museum für Islamische Kunst, Fotoarchiv, Platten-Nr. 4170 / H. Burchardt

## HOW IS IT DONE?

In conclusion, the group leader asks all participants to take another look at the placemat paper sheets with the questions. Afterwards, everyone in succession can say a sentence about the knowledge they gained personally: What is your research result for the day?



APPROX. 10 MINUTES



THREE PERSONS OR MORE



PLACEMAT PAPER SHEETS  
WITH THE KEY QUESTIONS  
FROM PART 1