

PRESS STATEMENT

Summons Proceedings Items from Crimea

On Wednesday, 5 October 2016, the Amsterdam District Court will hear the case concerning the disputed items from the exhibition ‘The Crimea: Gold and Secrets of the Black Sea’ of the Allard Pierson Museum. The crux of the case is whether these disputed items should be returned to the four museums in the Crimea or to the Ukrainian state.

From February to August 2014 the Allard Pierson Museum held the exhibition ‘The Crimea: Gold and Secrets of the Black Sea’. The exhibition centred on items originating from four museums in the Crimea and one museum in Kiev.

During this exhibition, the Crimea seceded from Ukraine. The four museums in the Crimea are of the opinion that the borrowed items should be returned to them. The Ukrainian state maintains that the items are state property and as such should be returned to Kiev. The Allard Pierson Museum is thus faced with competing claims.

On 20 August 2014 the Allard Pierson Museum made it known that it was not in a position to make a decision in this matter. As this is a complex and unique case, the museum decided to safely store the disputed items until more became clear.

In the autumn of 2014 the four Crimean museums initiated summons proceedings against the Allard Pierson Museum. The Ukrainian state subsequently became a party in the proceedings. The oral proceedings will take place at the Amsterdam District Court on 5 October 2016.

The Allard Pierson Museum’s position remains unchanged – this is a very complex case in which the museum cannot determine who the rightful claimant is and to whom the items should be returned.

Because the case is pending before the Court, the Allard Pierson Museum will refrain from any further comment.