

# Judgment on appeal regarding the ‘Crimean treasures’

16 July 2019

The Allard Pierson Museum (APM) has acted lawfully by retaining the disputed objects from Crimea in storage in 2014 and it is allowed to keep the so-called ‘Crimean treasures’ in its possession in anticipation of a final judgment in the legal proceedings. This is the judgment of the Amsterdam Court of Appeal as expressed in the interlocutory ruling of 16 July 2019.

## **Acted prudently**

According to the Court, the Allard Pierson had no way of reasonably assessing which of the interested parties was the due creditor. The Court: “The Allard Pierson has acted prudently in this situation and has taken all interests into consideration as far as possible: it has given the Ukrainian State and, subsequently, the Crimean Museums the opportunity to clarify their positions, it has consulted the parties with a view to an amicable settlement, and it has provided the parties the opportunity to have the dispute settled in court; in the meantime, the Crimean Treasures have been held in safe custody awaiting a final decision.”

The Allard Pierson is “satisfied with the very clear judgment that the Allard Pierson has acted lawfully in cancelling the handover and safely storing the objects until a final judgment is made. This has always been our intention and we are happy that the Court has now confirmed this.”

## **Handover**

Whether the objects will eventually have to be returned to the four museums in Crimea or to Ukraine has not yet been decided by the Court. The Court of Appeal has asked additional questions, which must be answered by the parties within a few months.

## **Allard Pierson’s position**

The case revolves around whether the disputed objects should be returned to four museums in the Crimea or to the Ukrainian State. Since Crimea split off from the Ukrainian State in March 2014, both parties have laid claim to the disputed objects. The Allard Pierson is faced with conflicting claims to the disputed objects.

In December 2016, the Court of Amsterdam [ruled](#) that the Allard Pierson had to hand over the disputed objects to the Ukrainian State. The Crimean Museums filed an appeal against this ruling.

[View the interlocutory ruling](#)