The Berthier-Delagarde Collection of Crimean Jewellery in the British Museum and Related Material

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with contributions by
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edited by D. Kidd and B. Ager
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps A, B</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Background to the Collection</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by A. Albabin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Geographical Background of the Crimea</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Summary of the Ethnic History of the Crimea</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The History of the Collection in the Ukraine</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Summary of Previous Research</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Collection</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Júlia Andrási</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The History of the Collection in the West</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archival Information</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Original Composition of the Collection</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archive Photographs</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcripts of Letters</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Catalogue of the Collection</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Júlia Andrási</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artefacts of the 4th–7th Centuries AD</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mounts</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horse Harness Fittings</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buckles</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Byzantine and Related Material</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plates 1–49</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appendix 1</strong></td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Roman Jewellery of the 2nd–3rd Centuries AD</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late-Antique and Sarmatian Material</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plates 50–59</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appendix 2</strong></td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Early Material</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Material, 9th–13th Centuries AD</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objects of Unknown Date</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objects without Numbers, Apparently Berthier-Delagarde Collection</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plates 60–64</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commentary on Select Items and Groups in the Collection</strong></td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Aleksander Albabin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sarmatian and Alan Objects</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hunnic Polychrome Style and the Kerch Vaults</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mid-Danubian Connections</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chronology of Select Brooches and Buckles</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Byzantine Connection</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medieval Material</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figures</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific Report</th>
<th>151</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>by Susan La Niece and Michael Cowell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compositional Analysis</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of the Technical Examination</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Techniques</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plates 65–71</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figures</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliographic Abbreviations</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Place-names Mentioned in the Catalogue</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concordance of Catalogue and Registration Numbers</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colour Plates 1–4</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Location map of Europe to show the areas covered by Maps A and B

Map A The Carpathian Basin and Black Sea region

Note: Archaic place names are shown here in bold.
Map B Burials of the 4th–10th centuries in the Crimea
Map B continued Burials of the 4th–10th centuries in the Crimea
General Background to the Collection

Aleksander Aibabin

The geographical background of the Crimea

The Crimean peninsula is situated on the northern coast of the Black Sea (Pontus), and has a total area of 26,000km². The north-eastern coast of the peninsula is washed by the Sea of Azov (Lake Maeotis) and the Sivash lowland extends in the north from the Perekop Isthmus to the Tongue of Arabat. Its dramatically indented northern shore is washed by the Sivash, a shallow lagoon which has a deep bed of silt and forms an extension of the Sea of Azov. A sandbar separates it from a number of shallow lakes. High air temperatures lead to the evaporation of the salt water in the lagoon and lakes, and the concentration of salts in the water reaches 17%. In ancient times salt was extracted from the lakes and was exported round the whole northern Black Sea shore. The north-western part of the Crimea terminates in the Tarkhankut Peninsula, and the eastern part in the Kerch Peninsula, separated from the Taman Peninsula to the east by the Strait of Kerch. The distance from Perekop in the north to Cape Sarych in the south is 195km, and from Cape Tarkhankut in the west to the Strait of Kerch is 325km. Since ancient times the shallow Sea of Azov and the bays of Karkinitska and Yevpatoriya, all warmed by the sun, have been famous for an abundance of commercial fish such as herring, khamsa (called anchovy by the ancient Greeks and Byzantines), steer, mackerel, grey mullet, beluga (white sturgeon), sturgeon and stellate sturgeon. Other sea-food included Black Sea crabs, oysters and mussels. Crab claws were used as adornments in the early-medieval period.

The Crimea consists of two topographical regions: the plain and the mountains. The plain forms part of the Black Sea coastal steppe, and is connected to it by means of the Perekop Isthmus. There are few rivers in this region: the Kacha (69km), Alma (84km), and western Bulganak (52km) rise on the north-western slopes of the mountains, cross the Alma plain and flow into the Black Sea. The longest river, the Salgir (238km), crosses the foothills and the plain and flows into the Sivash. In summer the rivers are almost completely dry. The steppes, with their low humus blackearth and chestnut-coloured earth, are suitable for arable farming, but the hot, dry climate has prevented its development there. Beginning in the 1st millennium bc a succession of nomadic tribes arrived to pasture their cattle seasonally on the Crimean steppes, transferring their herds in the early spring when succulent fresh grass appeared. In summer the grass withered under the sun, and the nomads drove their herds to the high-water flood meadows situated on the steppes along the coasts of the northern Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

The Crimean mountains extend for 160km along the southern and south-eastern shores, from the Heraclean Peninsula on the outskirts of Sevastopol to the village of Koktebel near Feodosiya (ancient Theodosia). They consist of three ridges: the First, or main, Ridge, is the highest (1,200–1,545m above sea level), and adjoins the narrow southern coast; the Second Ridge consists of foothills rising to 600–700m; and the Third, outer, Ridge, extending from Cape Feolent to Simferopol, rises to 250m. In the north it borders the steppe.

The mountains of the Second and Third Ridges are concentric, and consist of limestone. Their south-facing slopes are steep, and precipitous in parts, while the northern slopes are gentle, and both are covered with forest-steppe. Both ridges have numerous gentle slopes, or flat terraces, covered with blackearth soil forming highland plateaux well-suited for arable farming. The area between the First and Third Ridges contains the fertile, blackearth valleys of the rivers Chorna (Chernaya), Belbek, Kacha, Alma, and Salgir, with their tributaries and numerous springs. To the north of Sevastopol the Chorna and Belbek rivers form extensive, fertile flood plains where they flow into the Black Sea. Soft wheat, large-grained rye and barley were grown. Near the hillforts, open settlements and monasteries of the early-medieval period wild grapevines grow. Market-gardening, horticulture, viticulture and wine production developed, and in many hillforts evidence for wineries has been found.

The First Ridge consists mainly of marl, limestone, shale and, to a lesser extent, sandstone and conglomerate. The highest mountain, Roman-Kosh rises above Hurzuf (Gurzuf), reaching a height of 1,545m. The ridge declines abruptly and ends near the town of Staryi Krym. The high mountain massif of the First Ridge descends steeply into the sea. Its tops are smooth, creating flat plateaus called the ‘yayla’ (mountain pasture). They are covered with lush, rich meadow grass, and were used for transhumant cattle-breeding. Forests extend on the northern slopes from the spurs of Ay-Petri to Staryi Krym.

The southern coast extends from Cape Sarych to Sudak. This comprises the southern slope of the First Ridge, which has a width of 3–6km, and a narrow coastal strip of sand and pebble, some 5–60m wide. The foot of the slope is covered with bushes and low forest consisting mainly of juniper and oak trees. The coastal part of the slope is traversed by the shore line by ridges of slate and limestone with deep ravines. Only small patches of land are suitable for arable farming and there are few fresh-water springs. The arid slope to the east of Alushta, along to the coast near Feodosiya, is everywhere traversed by ridges and ravines. It should be noted that features of the modern relief along the southern coast differ from those of the early-medieval period. Due to earthquakes and landslides, which still occur today, the medieval ground surface has been covered with thick layers of soil from the upper terraces. The mountain roads and paths, which take advantage of passes through the First Ridge, unite the uplands and the southern coast into one region known as highland Crimea.

The combination of steppe and mountains, the natural connection with the Eurasian steppe to the north, and the
maritime environment on three sides of the Crimea contributed both to the influx of nomadic peoples and to the impact of cultures from the Mediterranean region.

A summary of the ethnic history of the Crimea

The Classical background
The Crimea became part of the of ancient Greek sphere of interest in the 7th century BC. In the last decades of the century and at the beginning of the 6th, Greek colonists founded an emporium on the shores of the Strait of Kerch, which grew into the city of Panticapaeum (Παντικάπαιον – the ‘fish way’). In the 6th century BC Theodosia was founded on the east coast, Cercinitis (modern Yevpatoriya) on the west coast, and, at the end of the century, Chersonesus, later known to the Byzantines as Cherson (Map B:1), was established on the shore of a bay in the south-west. Very soon the Greeks colonised the Kerch Peninsula and the territory between Chersonesus and Cercinitis, founding a number of small towns and settlements and, in 480 BC, the Greek towns on the Kerch and Taman Peninsulas united to form the state of Bosporus. Its capital was at Panticapaeum and the same name was applied by ancient writers to the Kerch Peninsula, to the Strait of Kerch, and to the state itself. In the 4th century BC, however, Demosthenes used the name for the port of Panticapaeum. From the 1st century AD, in the works of Roman and Byzantine writers such as Pliny the Younger, Zosimus, Stephen the Byzantine, Procopius of Caesarea, and others, the city of Panticapaeum was called Bosporus (Map B: 37).

During the 3rd century BC the Iranian-speaking Scythians, who led a nomadic way of life, settled in the Crimean foothills. A Scythian state developed with its capital at Scythian Neapolis (Map B:29), a site which has been identified with the Petrine Rocks in Simferopol.

During the 1st century AD the southern border of the Bosporan kingdom lay somewhere near Theodosia. The late-Scythian state occupied the highlands of the Third Ridge, from the outskirts of Theodosia to the fertile lower reaches of the rivers Chorna, Belbek, Kacha and Alma. The Heraclean Peninsula belonged to Chersonesus. At the very beginning of the 1st millennium AD the Iranian-speaking Sarmatians first appeared in the Crimea, and, from the 2nd century, began to play an important part in Bosporus. In the south-western Crimea they lived alongside the Scythians in the same hillforts, and buried their dead in the same cemeteries.

Between 63 and 66 AD, at the request of the Chersonites, the Roman administration sent an army under Plautius Silvanus from Lower Moesia to the Black Sea coast. The Romans built the fortress of Charax on the southern coast (Map B:12) and quartered a garrison there. The Bosporan kingdom became politically dependent upon the Empire and, from the 2nd century AD, the Roman garrison in Chersonesus tightened its control of the coast and the adjoining part of highland Crimea. Small Roman garrisons appeared on the shores of Balaklava Bay and in the Scythian hillfort of Alma-Kermen at Zavtine (Zavetnoye), on the left bank of the River Alma (Map B:7). From the 1st century AD the Alans and Sarmatians (groups of Iranian-speaking, Indo-European nomads) were living between the lower reaches of the Volga and Don and in the northern and eastern Azov regions, as far as the middle reaches of the River Kuban. Cemeteries of the 1st to 2nd centuries in this region contained barrows covering a long entrance-pit (dromos) with a burial chamber and side-chambers. The tombstone of Iraque, chief translator in Hermonassa, testifies to the fact that at the beginning of the 3rd century, under King Sauromatus II (173/174–210/211), there were active relations between the Kingdom of Bosphorus and the Alans.10 Rostovtzev considered that it was the peaceful penetration of Bosphorus by the Alans and Sarmatians in the first half of the century which led to the Iranization of this state. Its inhabitants, including their rulers, had Iranian names, wore Sarmatian and Alanic clothing, and used the same Alanic pottery as that found on the banks of the Rivers Don and Kuban.11

In the first half of the 3rd century various Germanic tribes invaded the northern Black Sea coast. According to Jordanes, they first settled near the northern shores of Maeotis in lands occupied by the Alans and Sarmatians. A group of Alans from the Azov region joined the Germans, while the rest moved to the Crimea. According to written sources both Alans and Sarmatians participated in Gothic raids on the Danubian border provinces of the Roman Empire after 242. Driven from the Azov region by the Germans, the Alans probably occupied those regions of the Crimea which were not occupied by the Scythians in the 2nd century and the first half of the 3rd. Near the slopes of the Crimean Third Ridge, Alanic cemeteries appeared in the second quarter of the 3rd century (Map B: 31, 33). Vaults and graves with burials in side niches have been excavated. They differ from the late-Scythian ones, but were typical of the Alans of the Azov region and Dagestan. Dark-clay pottery vessels, covered with a black burnish, have been found in them, similar to pots manufactured by the Alans of those regions.

In the 240s, while attempting to reinforce the Danube frontier, the Romans changed their military policy towards the Crimea. They withdrew their garrisons from highland Crimea and Bosporus, a new situation which the Germans exploited. The Chronicle of John Zonaras, a 12th-century writer, records that, after pillaging in Italy, Macedonia and Greece during the reigns of Trebonianus Gallus and Volusianus (252–253), a group of ‘Scythrians’ (Germans), had reached Bosporus and crossed the Sea of Azov, devastating several towns. According to Zosimus the Germans seized the city of Bosporus in 256. At that time the Germans and Alans probably moved to the south-western Crimea, where they destroyed the late-Scythian settlements and their capital at Neapolis. The Germans settled the lower reaches of the River Chorna and the southern coast, and cemeteries with typically Germanic cremation burials appeared there (Map B: 5, 12, 15). The Alans allied with the Germans and settled in the western, European, part of Bosporus and in the south-western Crimea.

The migration period
The period of the Great Migration began with the invasion of the northern Caucasus region by the Huns in 370–375. Some scholars consider that they were Turkish neighbours of China who began their westward migration in 155–160, although others deny any connection between the Hunnic and Turkic languages. According to Ammianus Marcellinus, during the
reign of the Emperor Valens (364–378) the Huns conquered both the Tanaite Alans on the lower reaches of the Don, and the Goths under Ermanaric on the steppes of the northern Black Sea coast. According to Zosimus, in the 13th year of the reign of Valens in 376, they expelled a section of the Goths and their allies, who then crossed the Danube into the Roman provinces. Many Byzantine historians tell a story about the Huns hunting for a bull or fallow deer, when they saw the Bosporan Strait, crossed it, and appeared on the western, European coast; by all accounts during the reign of Valens. Probably only a small group of Huns crossed the strait on their move to the West. No sign of destruction at the end of the 4th century has been revealed either at Kerch, the capital of the Bosporan state, or in smaller towns and settlements. Nor are there any Hunnic burials of this period in the Crimea.

The Huns engaged in nomadic cattle-raising on the steppes they had conquered. The diversity of burial rite testifies to the polyethnicty of the barbarians who had joined the Hunnic alliance, which included those Alans and Germans who had remained on the Black Sea coast. Objects decorated in the new polychrome style came into fashion among them and in the territories controlled by the Huns. These were gold adornments of solid metal, or with gold foil overlay, and inlaid with red garnets, which became widespread from the end of the 4th century until the beginning of the 6th. They included female jewellery, such as diadems, temporal pendants, and bracelets, as well as male belt- and shoe-buckles, belt-ends, sword- and dagger-mounts, and horse-harness fittings.

At the beginning of the 5th century the Huns, who were firmly established on the northern Black Sea coast, began to use the Crimean steppe for the seasonal pasturing of their cattle. These groups belong the nomad burials with polychrome goods which have been discovered in the eastern Crimea near Feodosiya on the mountain of Koklyuk (Map B:34), in Stepnoye at the former Kalinin kolchoz (Map B:42), and at Belyaus (Map B:40). At the same time the Alans left the high ground of the Third Ridge bordering on the steppe and moved away to the mountains, for fear of their new neighbours. The Alanic cemeteries at Neyzats and Druzhne (Druzhnoye) (Map B:33 and 31) were abandoned. In the south-west of the Crimea a further group of cemeteries with vaults and graves constructed in typically Alan fashion appears at this time, e.g. Skalyste (Skalistyoye) (Map B:28), Bakla (Map B:27), and Luchyste (Luchistooye) (Map B:16). Deprived of their steppe pastures, the Alans had to master a new type of pastoral economy and radically alter their way of life. Because the mountain pastures were not very extensive they began to employ transhumance in cattle-raising, reduced the size of their herds, and changed their agricultural strategy. In the spring, summer, and warm autumn months they drove their herds to the mountain pastures, while for the rest of the year they grazed them near the settlements. Usually they raised sheep, cattle and horses, but arable farming became more significant, involving the cultivation of soft wheat, barley and large-grained rye.

The Alans of the Crimea entered the sphere of political interest of Rome in the East, as the Emperors tried to strengthen their position in the region. An inscription of 370–375 from Chersonesus records the quartering of a detachment of ‘ballistarii’ in the city, while another of 387–388 records the presence there of an army commanded by the tribune Flavius Vitus. Under Theodosius I the city walls were fortified.

Constantinople played a major part in the conversion of the local barbarians to Christianity. In 381 the ecclesiastical diocese of Cherson was in existence, spreading Christianity among the population of highland Crimea. At the end of the 7th century that region still remained part of the diocese. Having accepted Christianity, the Crimean Goths probably rejected cremation in the mid-5th century and adopted an Alanic burial rite more appropriate to their new religion. They abandoned their old burial grounds and began to bury their dead in the cemeteries of the Alans. The latter in their turn adopted the fashion for Gothic jewellery, such as brooches and buckles.

After the death of Attila in 453, and the defeat of the Huns at the battle on the River Nedao in Pannonia in 454, their alliance collapsed. According to Jordanes many of its tribes returned to the Black Sea coast, where the Goths had lived previously. Jordanes mentions the Hunnic tribe of the Altziagiri on the steppe near Cherson. According to Procopius, the steppe between Cherson and Bosporus was occupied by the Hunnic Kutrigurs. The nomad burials at Chykarenko (Map B:39), Marfivka (Marfovka) (Map B:35), and Izobline (Izoblinoye) (Map B:41) should be attributed to them.

Byzantines and Goths

Byzantine historians record the activities of Byzantium in the Crimea under the Emperor Justinian I (527–565). Gort, the ruler of the Bosporan Huns, was baptised in Constantinople during the very first year of Justinian's reign, and this act signified the transfer of the tribes under his control to that of the Empire. He returned to Bosporus with a detachment of Germans, who had been recruited in Spain, under the command of the tribune Delmatus, but a group of Huns who refused to accept Christianity seized the city and crushed the Byzantine garrison. The Emperor then sent two detachments of Gothic federates from Moesia to Bosporus under John, Count of the Euxine Shore, and the officers Godila and Baduria. They brought the city back under Byzantine rule and Justinian ordered the fortification of the walls of Cherson and Bosporus. On the southern coast the fortresses of Aluston and Gorzubiti were built, probably to protect coastal shipping.

In the 6th century the way of life of the nomads who had returned to the northern Black Sea after the break-up of the Hunnic alliance is described by Jordanes: ‘The Altziagiri roam from place to place over the steppe in summer, dependant on [where] forage for their cattle might be; in winter, returning to the Pontic sea, [they live] near Cherson where the greedy merchant brings his goods from Asia.’ It follows from this that the Altziagiri pastured their cattle to the west of the Sea of Azov on the Pontic steppe, which, according to Procopius, belonged to the Kutrigurs. Each writer probably used different names for the same nomads, and in the first half of the 6th century the descendants of the Huns were at the same stage of nomadic existence as their predecessors. In spring the Kutrigurs pastured their cattle on the Crimean steppe, where, following the spring rains, the grass grew thick and lush. The heat of summer then dried up the small rivers and the grass withered, forcing the Kutrigurs to move to new pastures on the...
flood-plains of the lower reaches of the Rivers Dnieper and Bug. In late autumn they returned to their winter settlements in the Crimea. The nomads sold furs and other goods in Bosphorus. Burials with Kutrigur grave goods of the 6th to 7th centuries have been discovered on the Crimean steppe and in the lower reaches of the Rivers Dnieper and Bug. They were buried in pits dug into existing barrows and then covered with wood, the bodies being orientated with the head to the north-east or north-west.

According to Procopius the Goths lived in the territory of Dori, situated ‘on this coast’, i.e. on the same shore of the Black Sea as Cherson, Bosphorus and Gorzubiti. He describes the territory of the Goths in three paragraphs:

15. The region of Dori itself is in the highlands. The soil is neither stony nor dry, but very good, and gives good fruit. 16. In this territory the Emperor did not build any towns or fortresses because the people cannot bear to be kept inside walls, liking best of all to live on the plains. 17. As it seemed their country is easy of access, having protected these passes with long walls he saved them from anxiety about the intrusion of enemies.

According to the text of paragraph 16, the coast between the fortresses of Aluston and Gorzubiti should not be considered part of the territory of Dori, since we know that the Emperor did not build fortresses there. The narrow strip of coast from Hurzuf to Foros, some 2.5–3 km wide, also differs from the description in paragraphs 15–17. Its steep slope, traversed by ravines and several small rivers, and with its detrital soils, could hardly be a fertile plain fit for intensive arable farming. It could not have supported the families of the three thousand warriors, which, according to Procopius, was the number of the Goths ready to muster on the Emperor’s summons. A single archaeological culture has been revealed belonging to the combined population of Alans and Goths on the southern coast and in highland Crimea. It was clearly this territory which was called the country of Dori, i.e. the fertile land in the regions of the Rivers Chorna, Belbek, Kacha and Alma flowing through the mountains (which are not very high), and the plateaus of the Second and Third Ridges. The plateaus themselves approximate to those described by Procopius.

In the Latin Grammar of Priscian, written earlier than the works of Procopius (during the reign of Anastasius 491–518), two exercises mention a town of Dori near the Pontus. In neither example does the author give the precise location of the town, which he describes in different ways. In one case it is called ‘Dory ... nomen oppidi Pontici’, and in the other ‘hoc Dory ... nomina civitatium’. It is quite obvious that both examples are borrowed from some historical or geographical treatise which mentioned the ‘oppidum’, or ‘civitas’, of Dori, situated in the Pontic region. The use of the same name for both the oppidum and the region suggests the location of the former within the latter. In more recent sources, narrating events from the beginning of the 8th century and its second half, information is given about the fortress of Dori-Doras in Gothic territory. From this we may assume that the oppidum of Dori sprang up in the Gothic region before the end of the 5th century, and that a fortress was built in the post-Justinianic period, but before the beginning of the 7th century. Only on the fairly inaccessible plateau of Manhup (Map B:20) have farms been discovered which are contemporary with the Dori of Priscian, and objects associated with a fortification of the second half of the 6th to 8th centuries. This is probably the location of the oppidum of Dori.

In his treatise, De Aedificiis, Procopius names the inhabitants of the mountains, the Goths, as allies of the Romans, who, in response to the wishes of the Emperor, took part in all his military campaigns. Procopius says of the inhabitants of Dori:

Being up to 3,000 in number they are perfect in military matters, and in agriculture in which they themselves are active, and they are the most hospitable among peoples.

According to Firsov, in the mid-6th century the population did not exceed 60,000. Dozens of cemeteries of this period have been discovered, testifying to the large population of Dori. Such cemeteries were situated on the slopes, as at Luchyste, Suuk-Su (Map B:14), Kekeneiz (Map B:9), Koreiz (Map B:11), Simeiz (Map B:10), in the ravine of Karalez at Manhup, Chufut-Kale (Map B:24), near the Chernaya Rechka (Map B:5), on the slope of the height of Sakharna Holivka (Sakharnaya Golovka) (Map B:3), and in other places. Near the cemeteries at Hurzuf and other sites the associated rural settlements have been discovered. In the paragraph quoted above Procopius describes the inhabitants as warriors and farmers, who cultivated the soil with their own hands, and without slave labour. The grave-goods from their cemeteries show no evidence of great wealth, or social differentiation. Their status as allies of Byzantium encouraged the retention of military democracy in the rural communities of Dori.

In 576 the Turks with their allies, the Utigurs, seized Bosphorus, and in 581 they threatened Cherson. Influenced by these events, during the last years of his reign Justin II (565–578) built a wall and tower in Cherson. Under the Emperor Maurice (582–602) the Duke of Cherson restored imperial authority in Bosphorus in 590. The material from excavations in highland Crimea testifies to the fact that, under these emperors, fortresses were erected on the plateaus of Manhup, Eski-Kermen (Map B:17), Chufut-Kale, and Bakla (Map B:27). From the text of the Historia Syntoma ('Breviaria') of Nikephoros we may conclude that these were the residences of the archons. By the beginning of the 8th century these fortresses had probably become the centres of administrative districts, and were most likely under the jurisdiction of Cherson. Byzantium also used the fortresses as places for holding exiles. In his Collectanea Anastasius the Librarian gives the names of Euprepius (died 655) and Theodorus (died 667), who were exiled first to Cherson and later to the strongholds of neighbouring tribes. The garrisons of such fortresses were recruited from among the Alans and the Crimean Goths, and the soldiers lived there with their families. They produced moulded pottery, grew cereals, and engaged in cattle-raising and horticulture for their own needs. At Eski-Kermen and Bakla they cut dozens of pits into the rock to store grain. Beginning probably in the 7th century, the Alans acquired the skill of wine-making. Byzantine amphorae, red-slipped pottery vessels, and glass brought from Cherson in the second half of the 6th and 7th centuries, have been found during excavation of the fortresses.

The Empire attempted to strengthen the position of the Church in the south-western Crimea. It was probably to further this aim that, at the end of the 6th to 7th centuries, the Byzantines built large basilicas in almost all the fortresses.
mentioned above, with the exception of Bakla. A large, three-nave basilica has been discovered in an early-medieval settlement in the upper Karalez ravine. A.L. Yakobson thought that monumental buildings in the south-western Crimea were built by gangs of masons from Cherson. In the 6th century churches were also built by rural communities. Christian symbolism became very popular after the mid-6th century: the Alans wore buckles and finger-rings with symbols such as monograms and crosses, and amulets. There were changes in burial practice, too: from the beginning of the 7th century Christian gravestones begin to appear in the cemeteries of highland Crimea. The burial ceremony differed slightly from that of the previous period and the Roman Pope Martin I, exiled to Cherson in 665, called the inhabitants of the region adjoining the city pagans.

Byzantine policy stimulated the assimilation process in highland Crimea. In the 6th to 7th centuries the Alans and Goths shared the same burial rite and costume. Alan women wore contemporary Germanic fashion such as temporal pendants, brooches and wide belts fastened by eagle-headed buckles, and also a wide variety of small Byzantine buckles, or large buckles with attachment-plates decorated in repoussé with crosses, lions or tigers. Warriors were armed with daggers, narrow, single-edged broadswords, or sabres with slightly curved, single-edged blades.

The steppe nomads

Around 630 Organ and Kuvrat united the nomads of the northern Black Sea coastal steppe into Great Bulgaria. Following Kuvrat’s death, and due to the activities of his sons, Great Bulgaria disintegrated into five tribes between 642–668. One of his sons, Bavbaian, inherited pastures with his tribe on the eastern coast of the Sea of Azov and on the northern coast of the Black Sea. Soon afterwards Bavbaian and his Bulgars were subjugated by the Khazars who came from Berzilia, an area located either in northern Dagestan, or in the general north-west Caspian region.

Oriental historians bear witness to the Turkish origins of the Khazars, whose name is connected with the Ko-sa tribe of the Blue Turks. From the 630s the ruler of the Khazars was called a ‘khagan’. In the 660s the Khazars still retained their nomadic economy, roaming the steppe all year round, and, greedy for new pastures, they seized those of the Bulgars in the steppes of the Azov and Black Sea regions. Barrows over Khazar graves with riches in the side walls appeared on the lower reaches of the Dnieper and Bug, and in the Crimean steppe, in the last quarter of the 7th century. In the entrance pit was buried a horse with its harness and, in a niche with the head orientated to the north-east, a man with a weapon or a woman with her jewellery. The accompanying grave-goods indicate the social status of their owners. In the graves of ordinary warriors simple copper-alloy belt-sets are found. At sites such as Portove (Map B:43) and Syvashivka (Sivashovka), rich warriors were buried with weapons, gold or silver belt-sets, bridled horses, and grey-ware vessels. The Khazars chose the lower Dnieper region for the burial of their khagans, e.g. at Pereshchepino, and the graves of military chiefs were discovered at Hladikvia (Kelegei), Yasinovo, and Novi Sanzhary (Novyye Senzhary). At Glodosy and Voznesensk funerary temples have been excavated similar to those built in Mongolia and Tuva at the end of the 7th and first half of the 8th centuries to commemorate Turkish khagans.

The war with the Bulgars culminated in a Khazar attack on Byzantine towns on both shores of the Bosporan Strait, where archaeological excavations show evidence of destruction in the last quarter of the 7th century. At the same time several neighbouring small towns perished. The narrative of Theophanes and Nikephoros regarding the exile of Justinian II to Cherson in 695 indicates that the Khazars seized the whole of the Crimea. In 704 the exiled Emperor escaped to the Gothic fortress at Doros (Manhpup), where, beyond the reach of the Byzantine administration, he took the opportunity to make contact with the kaghan of Khazaria. The latter permitted him to settle in Phanagoria and gave him his sister as wife. In response to a request from the Emperor, however, the kaghan ordered his provincial governor there and the archon of Bosporus to kill Justinian. But he managed to escape and regain power in Constantinople. A ‘ha-pakid’, a provincial governor who ruled Bosporus for the kaghan, is mentioned in a document now kept in Cambridge. In ancient Hebrew the word means ‘the chief of a detachment or garrison’. The walls of the citadel built by the Khazars have been excavated in the maritime area of the city. They even seized Cherson, for in 711 a punitive expedition sent to the city by Justinian II captured a Khazar ‘tudun’ there, a senior administrator close to the kaghan.

Under Khazar pressure in the last quarter of the 7th century the Bulgars under Bavbaian began a migration to the eastern and central parts of the Crimea. In Bosporus they settled next to the Khazar citadel in the maritime quarter. There, over the ruins of the Byzantine period, they built houses with five walls and fenced yards lacking any regular planning. The walls of the houses are laid on stone foundations in the so-called ‘herring-bone’ style, using clay for mortar. The Bulgars were accustomed to such masonry in the eastern-Caucasus region. There were domestic buildings and hearths in the yards. It should be noted that in other districts of the city the Alan and Greek Christian population survived.

From the end of the 7th century the Bulgars, deprived of their steppe pastures, adopted a mixed arable-pastoral type of economy. They divided up the land not occupied by the Alans and Goths among their families. On the Kerch Peninsula and in the foothills settlements arose with yurt-shaped dwellings, half dug into the earth, with moulded pottery characteristic of the Bulgars.

On the coast of south-eastern Crimea the Byzantines founded a craft and trading settlement at Sogdaia (Sudak) (Map B:30), which is first mentioned in the Anonymous Ravenna Cosmography of the 7th century as ‘Sugdabon’. The earliest seal found there dates to the beginning of the 8th century and belonged to Kyriakos ‘apo hyparton’, the chief logothete of Constantinople. Under the patriarch German the new diocese of Sogdaia was established and, in 740, Bishop Stephen (known as Saint Stephen of Surozh after his canonization) arrived in Sogdaia from Cappadocia.

After the mid-8th century new Bulgar tribes moved into the Crimea, which was controlled by the Khazars following a crushing defeat inflicted on the khaganate by the Arabs in the Dagestan steppes. Dozens of new settlements emerged in these areas of the peninsula. Their house-walls were built in
herring-bone style and the yards were fenced. Cemeteries with typical Bulgar burials in pits containing wooden coffins have been found near the settlements. The Crimean economy began to grow rapidly and the Bulgars adopted farming, which became the basis of their economy. Blacksmithing, spinning, weaving, and the manufacture of jewellery, pottery and glass developed. Trade developed with the territory of the Crimean Goths and large workshops with several kilns for the manufacture of amphorae and jugs were established, whose products are found in all Bulgar settlements. Jewellery made by Bulgar craftsmen also came into fashion among the Alans and Goths.

After the setbacks suffered by Justinian II, Byzantium became reconciled to the loss of almost all her possessions in the Crimea and maintained friendly relations with Khazaria. The Emperor Leo III (717–741) sent an embassy to the khagan and married off his own son, the future Emperor Constantine V (741–775), to the khagan’s daughter.

In the 8th century the Khazars permitted a Gothic diocese on their territory. Its bishop took part in the Council of Iconoclasts in 753 and the diocese is included in the Notitia Episcopatum of 787. It comprised a see with its seat at Doros (Manhup) and dioceses were created for the spreading of Christianity to other regions of Khazaria, among them the diocese of Khotisiri, with its seat at Phullai in the eastern Crimea. In 786 a confrontation between the local church authority and the Khazar administration occurred when, to judge from the text of the Life of John the Goth, the Khazars quartered a garrison in Doros. The population of Gothia, led by John, rose up and expelled them. During the subsequent repression John was captured and sent to a Khazar prison at Phullai, and the seat and diocese of Manhup were destroyed. After their victory the Khazars built fortresses on the plateaus of Kyzy-Kermen and Manhup. At the same time they allowed loyal Bulgars to settle on the banks of the southern Bug and in the mountains and their settlements were established even in the neighbourhood of Cherson. The Gothic, Phullaiian and Sogdaian dioceses were in abeyance for several decades and not mentioned again until the reign of the patriarch Nikephoros (806–815). But Cherson and northern Klimata, i.e. highland Crimea, are named among the regions belonging to the diocese of Cherson.

At the end of 830 relations between Byzantium and Khazaria improved. The successor to Theophanes reported the arrival in Constantinople of an embassy from the khagan in the year after the election of John the Grammarian as patriarch in 838. They asked the Byzantines to build a fortress for them between the Rivers Volga and Don and, in the winter of 840–841, Petrona the ‘spatharokandidatos’ built the fortress of Sarkel for the Khazars, on the instructions of Emperor Theophilos (829–842). He suggested to Theophilos that a theme (administrative district) be created at Cherson. The Emperor appointed him ‘strategos’ of a theme founded in the summer of 841, called on seals the theme of (five) Klimata (regions), to which Cherson was later added. The Byzantine historians Theophanos and Constantine Porphyrogenitus referred to the mountain region adjoining Cherson by that name. The mountain fortresses in the neighbourhood of the city also became part of it and the other regions of the peninsula remained under their control. In 860 the Khazars unsuccessfully besieged one of the fortresses and Byzantium probably retained control over them.

In 860–861 Constantine the Philosopher, who led a mission from the Imperial capital to the Khazar khagan, stayed in the Crimea. According to legend, having learned that the population of Phullai performed pagan rites, he went there to the plateau of Tepsen in the eastern Crimea and persuaded the local people to adopt Christianity. In eastern Crimea and other Bulgar settlements small temples with walls built in the herring-bone style typical of the Bulgars have been discovered. It should be noted that many small temples were built in the second half of the 9th century on the foundations of Byzantine basilicas destroyed during the uprising of John the Goth. The Khazars adopted Judaism in 861 at the time when the Bulgars of the eastern Crimea became Christians again. Some time later the Hungarians probably expelled the Khazars from the eastern Crimea, wiping out the garrison of Bosporus. Makarova thinks that the Khazar citadel of the city was burnt down in the third quarter of the 9th century. A letter from the patriarch Photius to the Archbishop of Bosporus in 875 helps to date the expulsion of the Khazars from the city. It supports the archbishop’s plan of baptizing all the Jews of Bosporus, an action nobody would have entertained if the city were still occupied by the Khazars. In the last quarter of the 9th century the city belonged to Byzantium and, by the end of the century, the remains of the Khazar citadel had been pulled down and the whole port district was re-planned. The Magyars traded freely in the market of Bosporus. In 943 the Khazars carried out their last recorded raid on Byzantine territory in the Crimea.

The Magyars were expelled from the steppes of the northern Black Sea coast by the Pechenegs, Turks who had invaded the region in 889. They engaged in nomadic cattle-breeding, and blocked Khazar access to the Byzantine possessions on the Kerch peninsula. Constantine Porphyrogenitus located the Pechenegs as follows:

Pachinakia ... is very close to Cherson, and even closer to Bosporus. As these people of the Pachinakitik, who live near the region of Cherson, are unfriendly towards us, they may take the field against Cherson and carry out raids and ravage both Cherson itself and the Klimata.

Constantine’s testimony is supplemented by archaeological remains. Pecheneg graves are found only in the Sivash region, dug into earlier barrows with the head to the west, and with belt-mounts, sabres and adornments of the 10th century. In one of them there was a horse skull and parts of its legs together with the bones of a man. It is most likely that the Pechenegs moved into the Crimean steppe with their herds for only a short while in the 10th century. According to the same writer, the Pechenegs undertook missions for the rulers of Byzantium in Rus’, Khazaria and Zichia. Leaving hostages in Cherson, they guarded the caravans and embassies leaving for those countries, and received money and precious gifts as commission in return. They traded with Cherson buying belts, silk, velvet, pepper, red Parthenian leather and other goods, while the townspeople purchased wax and skins from the Pechenegs and sold them to Byzantium.

At the end of the 9th to 10th century the population of the Klimata gave up their old pagan traditions. They abandoned almost all their cemeteries, with the vaults, graves and burial
structures associated with pagan burial rites. Temples were constructed next to many of them, and around them cemeteries appear with burials in graves of stone slabs, or in stone tombs. Judging by the few epitaphs found in highland Crimea, the population of the Klimata knew Greek, and some of them had Greek names. By the end of the 10th century it is most likely that the assimilation process in the formation of the highland Crimean population was complete, absorbing Alan, Goth and Roman elements united by Christianity and Byzantine culture.

On Bakla in the 10th century, and at the beginning of the 11th on Eski-Kermen, they built new town areas and temples. The main temple on Eski-Kermen was rebuilt and both fortresses grew into small towns. In the 10th and 11th centuries the towns and fortresses of the barbarians most probably defended the approaches to Cherson, as they had done before.

In the 1050s groups of Turkic-speaking Kipchaks – the Polovtsi as they were called in the Russian Chronicles – occupied the Don and Azov steppes, forcing many Pecheneg tribes to move to the Byzantine borders. Burials with horse skulls and bones appear in the second half of the 11th century in the foothills near the Crimean territories of the Empire. In the closing decade of the century the hordes of the Polovtsi divided the steppe between them, and the Don horde began to control the Crimean steppe. The Pechenegs roaming there probably joined them, maintaining their traditions even into the 12th century. The grave of a Pecheneg prince has been found on the outskirts of Simferopol dating back to the end of the 11th or beginning of the 12th century, with stirrups and gilded silver bridle-mounts decorated with foliate ornament and black niello. At the end of the 11th to 12th centuries the Polovtsi actively traded with Cherson and settled there, and it was Polovtsian merchants who helped an impostor pretending to be Constantine, a son of the Emperor Romanos IV Diogenes, to escape from the city, to which he had been exiled in 1091.

The Polovtsi occupied the major part of highland Crimea during the 12th century when the Arabian geographer Idrisi wrote: ‘The road from Cherson to Yalita (Yalta) is in the country of the Cumans (the Polovtsi).’ Cherson still controlled its neighbouring fortresses, however, as witnessed by a letter of Bishop Theodoros dating between 1222 and 1240 in which he wrote: ‘Not far from Cherson the Alans live according to their own wish and that of the Chersonites, as a certain protection and guard.’ According to the report of William of Rubruck, who visited Sudak in 1253, the fortresses situated between Cherson and Soldaia (Sudak) paid tribute to the Polovtsi. Arab historians confirm that Sudak still belonged to the Polovtsi in the 13th century, and was a major centre for their transit trade. The material from archaeological excavations on the peninsula confirms the statements of medieval writers. In the 12th to 13th centuries, Polovtsian burials in timber-covered pits dug into earlier barrows spread on the steppe and foothills. In many of them, besides a coat of mail made of thick iron wire, arrow and spear-heads, sabres, buckles, and the bone parts of bows and quivers, there were skeletons of horses with stirrups and bits. Realistic sculptures of 12th-century date, carved in dense, white limestone come from the Crimean steppe. They represent a man and a woman with braided hair, wearing a helmet, or a hat with a caftan, and holding a vessel in their hands. Their weapons and adornments are clearly visible and the tallest is around 1.65m high. Such sculptures were always put in high places, in specially prepared sanctuaries. All the statues were cut from local stone and a workshop where they had been carved was found in one of the medieval quarries near Yevpatoriya.

The history of the population in the peninsula is usually derived from the reports of Late-Roman, Byzantine and Arab writers, hagiographic literature, epigraphic inscriptions, and Khazar documents. Such information is fragmentary, however, and not always reliable. Researchers in the last third of the 19th century began, therefore, to turn their attention to archaeological finds in order to reconstruct the ethnic history of the Crimea.

The history of the collection in the Ukraine
Artefacts similar to those of the Berthier-Delagarde Collection were found and recorded in Kerch from the first third of the 18th century, and, on the southern coast of the Crimea, from 1889 onwards. After the Crimean War of 1854–1856 similar ornaments, buckles and brooches were conveyed to the British Museum, and, in the second half of the 19th century, to the museums of Stockholm and Berlin. It was the arrival of such material in the West that stimulated scientific interest in the Crimea there, and these comparative collections were used together with local material to illustrate the complex interrelationships of the European ‘Migration Period’.

Lieutenant-General Alexander Livovich Berthier-Delagarde, the owner of the collection, was a military engineer and an outstanding historian, who was born in Sevastopol in 1842. From the end of the 1860s until the 1890s he built ports in Odessa, Kherson, Rostov, Sevastopol, Yalta and Feodosiya; he also constructed the mains water system and shipyards of Sevastopol and Feodosiya, and the Feodosiya railway. In 1880 he joined the Odessa Society of History and Antiquities and, in 1916, became a member of the Taurida Scientific Archives Commission. He was the author of 30 monographs and articles on the history, archaeology and numismatics of the Crimea, which appeared in the publications of these scientific societies and of the Imperial Archaeological Commission. His works show he was both a specialist with a wide range of interests and a skilful analyst. During the construction of the port at Feodosiya, he organised the first archaeological rescue excavations in the blocks of the ancient city, and in the citadel and port installations of medieval Caffa, which overlay them.

Over several decades he collected ancient and medieval artefacts and coins, which originated from Olbia and its neighbourhood, from the lower Don and Kuban regions, from Kerch, from ancient Chersonesus and from the southern Black Sea coast of the Crimea. According to N.I. Repnikov, the owner of one of the estates at Hurzuf handed over to Berthier-Delagarde in 1809, nine gold, silver and copper buckles from the area of Suuk-Su (Map B: 14), near Hurzuf, along with jewellery and beads. Here in 1905 the general financed the excavation of an early-medieval cemetery by Repnikov. The finds were made over to the Museum of the Odessa Society of History and Antiquities and Berthier-Delagarde proposed the transfer of all his property and collections to the museum in a letter to the council of the society, dated 1 November 1919. He
died in Yalta on 21 February 1920 and in accordance with his will, his house, library, archives and collections were to be transferred to the Taurida Scientific Archives Commission. His collection was housed in the Taurid museum, but was not registered. According to the will the collection could be sold for cash to support the society, but how his sister came to remove the collection, or a part of it, remains unknown. She appears to have commissioned Alexander Volgenin in Paris to sell the ‘Dark Age’ part of the collection to the British Museum in 1923. The items are partly recorded in photographs kept among the holdings of the Museum of Crimean Republican History and Local Lore in Simferopol (file 2237, nos 62–24; for further details and analysis, see Andrási below).

Subsequently dozens of cemeteries and burial mounds, dating from the 3rd to the 13th century, have been excavated in the Crimean Peninsula from the end of the 1920s up to the present day (see Map C).

**A summary of previous research**

In the monographs published at the end of the 19th and in the first third of the 20th centuries the populations of early-medieval Bosporus and highland Crimea were considered to be Goths. This was due to the similarity of jewellery found distributed from Kerch and Hurzuf to western Europe, including goldwork inlaid with red garnet in the polychrome style, silver and bronze buckles with attachment-plates terminating in eagles’ heads, and radiate-headed brooches. Rostovtzeff thought that the polychrome style had originated among the Alans in the 3rd century AD. He systematically dated the material too early, however, because his main interest did not extend beyond the beginning of the 3rd century. Those Alans who left Bosporus to escape from the Huns, to eastern and western Europe and north Africa, took with them gold objects (or objects covered with gold sheet) with rich, garnet-inlaid polychrome decoration. These included female adornments such as diadems, temporal-pendants, bracelets, belts and footwear; and male items such as buckles, mounts for belts, swords and daggers, and horse harness fittings. This view was supported and developed by Matsulevich, who considered that the Alanic jewellers of Bosporus not only created the polychrome style, but also devised a new female jewellery set consisting of a large, eagle-headed buckle and a pair of radiate-headed brooches. The new fashion spread from Bosporus to the south-western Crimea and on to other parts of Europe. Following Matsulevich many scholars regarded Bosporus as an arbiter in the European fashion for such items of personal costume and horse-harness. Minaeva and Alföldi both associated the objects with inlaid work, from Kerch and other regions with the Huns and accordingly restricted the period of polychrome decoration to the last quarter of the 4th to the mid-5th century, or 375–456. Werner rejected the theory that the polychrome style was spread by fugitives from the northern Black Sea coast, associating it with the increased wealth of the Hunnic nobility at the beginning of the 5th century in the Black Sea coast and Danube regions, who were of diverse ethnic origins. The style was based on Bosporan, Sarmatian-Alan, provincial-Roman and ancient Germanic jewellery traditions and, in his view, the graves with polychrome objects at Kerch, on the steppe, and in the Danube region, were all contemporary. He further defined Bosporus as ‘a centre of Hunnic dominance’ in the first half of the 5th century. Zasetskaya reached the same conclusion and endeavoured to establish the uniformity and contemporaneity of the above-mentioned burials in the last quarter of the 4th and first half of the 5th centuries.

Ambroz divided the polychrome-decorated objects into two stylistic groups according to their technology of manufacture, ornament, and colour. His first group contained objects covered with gold sheet decorated with stamping or twisted wire and with cabochon settings with large, polished cornelian or blue glass inlays, which he compared with the decoration on belts and officers’ helmets, made from the mid-3rd century in provincial-Roman workshops. According to him this style spread from that region to the Crimea and North Caucasus. His second group contained objects decorated predominantly with small, red garnet inlays on a gold background with green pastes in the corners between the garnets. He proposed that this new polychrome style appeared in the Danube region in the first decades of the 5th century, and then spread to Bosporus and other territories conquered by the Huns.

**Previous studies of the chronology**

The chronology of the cemeteries in Bosporus and the south-western Crimea was formulated in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and in the 1920s. The first researchers of the cemetery at Kerch dated the periods of burial on the basis of the coins of the 2nd to 5th centuries from the excavated tombs. In the cemetery at Suuk-Su the early-medieval burials were covered by a layer of earth following landslides into which flat graves were dug. Repnikov divided the burials of the lower layer into three stages according to the coins, namely those of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th to 7th centuries. De Baye, who published the material from Suuk-Su in France, dated them to the 5th to 7th centuries. But specialists in the typologies of Crimean radiate-headed brooches and eagle-headed buckles concluded in the early 20th century that these had been manufactured in the 6th to 7th century, contradicting the coin-based chronology of the cemeteries at Kerch and Suuk-Su. Matsulevich noted that at Suuk-Su coins of the 3rd to 5th centuries were found together with objects of a later period. He divided the material from these cemeteries into four groups, dating the small, inlaid sheet brooches to the first half of the 4th century; polychrome objects inlaid with red stones to the second half of the 4th and the beginning of the 5th centuries; the Kerch radiate-headed brooches and eagle-headed buckles to the end of the 4th to 5th century; and objects of the same type from Suuk-Su to the 6th–7th century. In his corpus of European radiate-headed brooches Kühn defined the Kerch brooches as the earliest group of the 5th century.

The chronology for Bosporus and Suuk-Su proposed by Matsulevich was soon revised, however, by Werner, who proved that the same Kerch brooches had been modelled on patterns from the Danube region. He attributed the Danubian brooches with lozenge-shaped feet to the second half of the 5th century and the Kerch type to the 6th century or to its first half, assigning the eagle-headed buckles, radiate-headed and large sheet brooches from the lower layer at Suuk-Su to the second half of the 6th and first half of the 7th centuries. The dating of this layer was substantially supported by Pudovin. Ambroz further divided the grave groups with polychrome...
The assemblages excavated from hundreds of burials of the second half of the 3rd to the 7th centuries in Bosporus into four stages: 1) the first half of the 3rd century; 2) the 4th century; 3) the 5th century; and 4) the second half of the 8th to 9th century. He concluded that Bosporus in the 4th to 7th centuries was not a sufficiently large economic centre to be able to supply jewellery to the peoples of the steppe, from the Dniester to Kirgizia, and the Caucasus as well as western Europe and north Africa.

The assemblages evoked from hundreds of burials of the second half of the 3rd to the 7th centuries during recent decades have been classified in my publications. Analysis of the burial stratigraphy of the multi-layered vaults at Kerch and Luchyste (Luchistoye) (Map B: 16); the absolute chronology is based on the dating of coins and imported objects. The burial stratigraphy at Luchyste corroborated Ambroz’s dating of the typological development of eagle-headed buckles. The lower layers there contained buckles with their loops hinged to the attachment-plates by short, folded flaps while, the buckles in the upper layers had long, folded flaps. In such multi-layered vaults objects typical of the earlier assemblages came from the lower layers, and those typical of the later assemblages came from the upper ones. The earliest group of assemblages was attributed to the second half of the 3rd century, and the latest to the second half of the 9th century.
77. Pletnëva 1982, 27
78. Aibabin 1985, 191–202; Pletnëva 1990, 49, 82, 86
79. Aibabin 1985, 102
81. Chichurov 1980, 63–5, 163–5
82. Golb and Pritsak 1982, 116–17
83. Makarova 1965, 70–6
84. Chichurov 1980, 63–4, 163–4
85. Novoseltsev 1990, 144
86. Pletnëva 1991, 104
87. Pletnëva 1982, 52
88. Gadlo 1968, 83, figs 21–2; Gadlo 1980, 133–4; Baranov 1990, 36–41
89. Ravennatis Anonymi 1860, 175
90. Vasiliev 1936, 117; Obolensky 1966, 492; Nesbitt and Oikonomides 1991, 182
91. Chichurov 1980, 60, 63–4, 106
93. Aibabin 1991, 48
94. Vasiliev 1936, 113
95. Ahrweiler 1971, 58–62
96. Romanchuk 1976, 9–23, 140, fig. 4; Baranov 1990, 133–9, figs 52–3
97. Zuckerman 1995, 269; Gadlo 1968, 64
98. Zuckerman 1997b
100. Phorbius Patriarch 1983, 132
101. Khvodson 1869, 27
102. Mosin 1931, 323
103. Artaimonov 1962, 340, 350
104. Pletnëva 1982, 24
105. Constantin Porphyrogenitus 1899, 37, 157
106. Constantin Porphyrogenitus 1899, 43, 274
108. Aibabin 1993b, 130
110. Aibabin 1991, 49
111. Pletnëva 1981, 214
114. Anna Commena 1965, 266
115. Garkavi 1891, 244
116. Kulakovský 1968, 17
118. Brun 1880, 133; Tintagiazen 1884, 26
119. Pletnëva 1974, 54–73
120. Bich 1950, fig. 23; Ashik 1849, 72 no. 209
121. Khvorzin 1890, 5; Repnikov 1906
122. Macpherson 1857
123. Martin 1894; Görze 1907
124. Repnikov 1906a, 106–7
125. Repnikov 1907, 102, pls XII–XVI
126. Repnikov 1907, 102
127. Dalton 1924a, b
128. de Baye 1888, 2–3; de Baye 1892, 1–16; de Baye 1908, 3–43; Shern 1897, 1–15; Salin 1904, 123, 193, 204; Repnikov 1907, 19.2; Görze 1907, 1–15
129. Rostovtzeff 1922, 124–218; Rostovtzeff 1923a, 145–61
130. Matsulevich 1926, 41–51
132. Minaeva 1927, 112–13, 123; Alford 1932, 12, 36–7
133. Werner 1956, 86, 90–1
134. Zasetskaya 1968, 56–2; Zasetskaya 1993, 38
135. Zasetskaya 1978, 54, 69
136. Martin 1991, 55, fig. 22:1
137. Klumbach 1973, pls 1–9, 11–21
138. Ambroz 1989, 23–7; Ambroz 1992, 8–10
140. Kulakovský 1881, 20–2; Shkorpil 1907, 1–2
141. Repnikov 1906a, 109–10
142. de Baye 1908, 22
143. Salin 1904, 32, 124, 129; Görze 1907, 33; Åberg 1919, 73, 94, 118
144. Matsulevich 1926, 41–51
145. Kühn 1940, 94, 99, 100
146. Werner 1950, 161; Werner 1960b, 29–32
147. Werner 1950, 164
149. Ambroz 1971, 102; Ambroz 1981, 21–2; Ambroz 1985, 300–2; Ambroz 1992, 48–50
150. Tejral 1973, 21–9, 57–61; Tejral 1987, 36; Tejral 1988, 295
151. Aibabin 1979; Aibabin 1984; Aibabin 1987; Aibabin 1990; Aibabin 1993b; Aibabin 1995
The history of the collection in the West (Archive Plates 1–10)

Alexander Berthier-Delagarde (1842–1920)

Lieutenant-General Alexander Lvovich Berthier-Delagarde was born in Sevastopol in 1842. He became a military engineer and, after his retirement in 1887, took part in excavations, either directing them or financing them himself. He also built up an outstanding personal collection of archaeological jewellery and coins. According to Markovich the collection still belonged to him in 1919, but it was not mentioned in his will made on 5 January 1920.1 After his death in February 1920 the Hellenistic, Roman and early-medieval objects in his collection were taken to France, where members of his family emigrated. But the documentation was bequeathed to the Taurida Scientific Archives Commission (Simferopol), and is at present kept in the Crimean Regional Museum, Simferopol. (For Berthier-Delagarde’s biographical details, see Kropotkin and Shelov.)

The purchased part of the collection

The museum bought 150 pieces, 71 of which appear on the photographs sent by Volgeninov. According to Volgeninov the collection was gathered during several tens of years. Prof. Minns has seen this collection in Russia and he knew personally Mr Berthier Delagarde. The authenticity of the objects can be guaranteed.

He also noted that ‘there was nothing sold from his collection, nor was anything added to it after the death of Mr Berthier-Delagarde.’

Rostovtsev saw the collection itself and remarked that ‘the Sarmatian and Gothic part of the collection is a real beauty. (It) appears to be quite unique, not comparable to any collection of which I know.’ He assured Dalton that the museum should at least buy ‘the Sarmatian and Gothic sets.’ He also drew attention to a Sarmatian necklace with a stone engraved with the figure of Sauromatos II, King of Bosporus. But, according to his letter, Smith did not pay it special attention since it was mounted on a screen with classical objects and was therefore not, apparently, included in the purchase, unlike two gold earrings (presumably identifiable with cat. nos 84–85) and gold fibulae (cat. nos 100–103) which were specially pointed out by Smith as being ‘among the classical jewellery, where they were distinctly out of place.’ Apart from two screens (Archive Pls 5–6), where three of these fibulae appear, the museum purchased the entire contents of each screen, but we can only presume this is the case with the remaining 57 pieces, the contents of two or three screens for which we do not have photographs, on the basis of the conclusions below. As Volgeninov mentioned in his letter to Smith on 17 June: ‘(Barbaric) things you found among classical gold work (that golden earrings + fibules – barbaric style) I have marked and included in the purchasing part of the collection.’ This implies that the purchase had to conform with the screens Volgeninov provided and that he was prepared to make only a few exceptions at Smith’s special request, which is supported by the fact that the enamelled brooches of provincial-Roman origin appearing amongst later pieces were also purchased (cat. nos 93–99), but were transferred to the Greek and Roman Department straight afterwards (Archive Pls 3a, 4).
Archival information

The photographs from the Simferopol archives (Pls 2b, 3b, 4b, 8b, 10)
The British Museum holds five further photographs received from the Taurida Scientific Archives Commission, Simferopol. They are similar in style to the screens supplied by Volgeninov and three especially (Archive Pls 2b, 3b and 8b) bear strong resemblance to the ones retained by the department (Archive Pls 2a, 3a, 8a). There are, however, slight differences between the two sets of screens. The layout of the jewellery on each ‘pair’ of photographs is similar, but differs in the exact position of each item. A further difference is that, under the kolt on Archive Pl. 2a, is the silver cicada brooch (cat. no. 16), which is, on the other hand, missing from the screen of the Taurida Archives (Archive Pl. 2b) and is replaced by a gold earring. This earring appears, however, on Volgeninov’s fifth screen. The British Museum purchased neither the earring nor the whole contents of this screen, apart from two of the gold fibulae already mentioned above. Alterations were made in the case of screen no. 3 as well, which originally contained 16 carefully arranged objects (Archive Pl. 3b), but was later supplemented with four Roman brooches and two earrings.

The implication is that the photographs in the Taurida Archives had been taken first, possibly for Berthier-Delagarde’s own purposes, or, alternatively, shortly after his death, when his documentation was bequeathed to the Commission. The screens the British Museum received from Volgeninov were possibly photographed before the collection left Russia, to serve as documents for the family or for a future sale. The fact that the majority of the objects are numbered supports this idea, since one of Volgeninov’s letters records that the numbers had fallen off after the collection had left Russia. By the time of the second photograph the earring had been replaced by the cicada brooch and got mounted onto screen no. 5. That would also explain why aesthetic considerations were disregarded in the second set of photographs. The British Museum retained one further photograph of a screen (Archive Pl. 1) containing 28 pieces, each of which was included in the purchase of 1923, but not illustrated on any of the Taurida Archives’ photographs. There is, however, a photograph of a screen among the latter (Archive Pl. 4), the whole contents of which (23 pieces) were also purchased by the museum. Although it was not included among the eight photographs in Volgeninov’s possession (Archive Pls. 1, 2a, 3a, 5, 6, 7, 8a, 9), the screen was certainly taken to Paris, as it appears on the photograph. Slight changes, however, similar to those described above (the position of the pieces, or the addition of a few objects), may also have occurred.

The same cannot be said about photograph no. 10, which also appears only in the Archives of Simferopol. It illustrates a number of earrings, a row of beads and a filigree cross, of which only the last was bought by the British Museum. This screen may have been altered before the sale, since there is no mention of the cross being specifically requested in the correspondence between Volgeninov and Smith.

Difficulties with the documentation of the 1923 purchase
The only written documents relating to the purchased part of the collection that survive are the correspondence concerning the purchase, and a list of objects with catalogue numbers, descriptions and provenances in the departmental archive. The latter is typed, with hand-written corrections and additions, and was presumably prepared by Smith in Paris in the course of the purchase, and later completed by him in London. He noted on it that the original catalogue numbers of the objects were missing in 70 cases. Dalton wrote to Volgeninov asking for the original catalogue to be sent to London in order to complete the list. The catalogue had been ‘drawn up by Mr Berthier-Delagarde himself with all his notes’ according to Volgeninov, who sent it to Smith with the purchased objects marked in red and a note that ‘there were originally numbers on every object, but they were lost during the long journey from Russia.’ The catalogue was returned on 17 August 1923 by registered post, but there is no further mention of it, its contents or location in the archives, or in later specialist research. Smith’s subsequent departmental registration presumably made use of it in conjunction with the corrected version of his preliminary list. He made many corrections to this list, but one is especially significant: the typed version had originally recorded the wheel-brooch (cat. no. 15) with the incorrect catalogue number ‘211,’ which was later emended with a hand-written note to the correct number, i.e. 271. One of the photographs sent by Volgeninov, however (Archive Pl. 1), shows the brooch with the number 271 clearly visible and legible on its front. Smith presumably looked at each object when making the list and could only have made such mistakes because some of the numbers of the objects had been lost or damaged during the journey from Russia (as mentioned by Volgeninov in his letter). This implies that this set of screens was photographed at a time when the objects still had their numbers, i.e. before the collection left Russia.

All the information about the objects given in the register corresponds with what is written in the list, except for the old catalogue number 311 (cat. nos 63–69) where the note referring to it in the list as ‘horse harness’ is missing from the register. Since this made use of Berthier-Delagarde’s own notes, the detail is crucial for the interpretation of a whole series of objects as the fittings of possibly a single horse-harness, for it suggests the association of the set of mounts (cat. nos 31–43), buckles (cat. nos 44–56), and strap-attachments (cat. nos 60–62) with the above strips (see cat. nos 63–69).

The information given in the list also leaves a number of unanswered questions. It is a puzzle, for instance, how Smith managed to identify the catalogue numbers in about 40 of the originally missing 70 cases, when only 30 objects in the register lack the old catalogue numbers. This may imply that the pieces were illustrated in the catalogue and could thus be identified with their numbers. It is also puzzling that some of the objects have the same catalogue number (e.g. cat. nos 22, 88, 89 and 112–115); as noted by Volgeninov himself: ‘there are 320 numbers in the catalogue, but in reality there are more objects, as some of the objects bear the same number.’ There are three objects with the same old catalogue number ‘287,’ but only one of them, the finger-ring fragment (cat. no. 135), is annotated ‘Kerch 1900’; the two armlets (cat. nos 17 and 18) have no further information. It is either a simple mistake in copying the relevant data from Berthier-Delagarde’s catalogue, or else should be added to the unsolved questions concerning his cataloguing system.
One of the most fundamental difficulties is that it is uncertain what is really meant by the ‘provenance’ of the objects. In his letter of June 1923 Rostovtsev stated that the collection was unique, partly ‘because the provenance of all objects is well known,’ but did not give the source of his information. He was probably referring to the details in Berthier-Delagarde’s catalogue, as had also been used by Smith to complete his list. In both the list and the register are given the location (Kerch, Caucasus, Olbia, Hurzuf [Gurzuf], Kuban, Cherson, ‘Eltine’ [probably Eltigen], or Maikop) and date (the earliest 1893 and the latest 1912) for 115 of the total 157 catalogue numbers. The register suggests that these are the provenances of the objects, although Smith’s preliminary list does not indicate the nature of the information.

We know from contemporary Russian sources that in some cases provenance does not mean the findspot of the object, but might rather indicate the place and date of purchase. Seventy-two items are annotated ‘Kerch,’ with dates between 1893 and 1909, but the findspots for only an insignificant number of them can be independently derived from contemporary sources. They are as follows, beginning with the buckle (cat. no. 82) published by Repnikov as found at Suuk-Su in 1899, and given to Berthier-Delagarde. 7 Repnikov’s published photograph is kept in the archives of the St Petersburg Institute of History. 7 The register’s ‘Kerch 1900’ cannot possibly, therefore, refer to the findspot. The kolt (cat. no. 87) is published by Kondakov as found in the Kuban area 8 so the registration details ‘Kerch 1893’ again appear to refer to something other than the findspot: possibly the place and date of acquisition. The 11 settings (cat. no. 29) are all under one old catalogue number (153), and the information in both the preliminary list and the register reads: ‘Kerch 1894 (different excavations).’ 8 Since it is highly unlikely that Berthier-Delagarde collected them from different excavations in Kerch in the same year, it may be that he purchased them in Kerch in 1894 and that they derive from several sites. A shield-shaped mount in the Museum of Warsaw is identical with cat. no. 92, and is published by Fettich as found in the Dnieper region. 7 It possibly belongs to the same set or collection, but these (are) not identified in catalogue,’ which may mean that even Berthier-Delagarde himself did not have any information about them, especially as they do not appear on the preliminary list and do not have old catalogue numbers attached to them.

The earliest published photograph of the collection is the one in the Illustrated London News for February 1924 and in volume 4 of the Antiquaries Journal, in the same year. 9 It illustrates only a small part of the collection (21 pieces), but importantly shows the gilt-silver buckle (cat. no. 74) with what appears to be its original tongue. The present location of the tongue is unknown and the buckle is now associated with a non-matching one of brass (cat. no. 79).

The gold figure of a hare (cat. no. 127; no. 1 in both the preliminary list and the register) unfortunately remains untraced.

The original composition of the collection

Pieces not in the British Museum

As already stated above the British Museum bought less than half of the collection as offered by Volgeninov, acquiring the full contents of only three of the eight screens illustrated on the photographs provided during the sale (Archive Pls 1, 2a, 3a), together with the full contents of one of the five photographs kept in the Simferopol Archives (Archive Pl. 4) and a further four pieces (two on Archive Pl. 5, one on Archive Pl. 6 and one on Archive Pl. 10). This leaves a total residue of 122 objects illustrated on photographs (Archive Pls 1–10) about which nothing is known of either their later history, or present location. The majority of these pieces formed the Late-Antique, ‘Greek part’ of the collection mentioned in Volgeninov’s letters, but nevertheless included important pieces highly relevant to the purchased half, since the division of the contents of the screens by date or culture was sometimes flawed.

The most significant is a sword-pommel of great historical value (Archive Pl. 7 bottom), which Rostovtsev noted was on sale in Paris in 1923. 10 He further remarked that it was beautifully decorated with a gold foil overlay, jade and coloured stones similar to one in the Hermitage. The pair of earrings on screen no. 7 (mid-section, one at either side) is an important parallel to the earring (cat. no. 4) and to the pendants of the necklace (cat. no. 9), both of which were in the
purchase of 1923. It is also noteworthy that on the top of screen no. 9 is a pair of earrings very similar to cat. no. 109. One of the photographs in the Taurida Scientific Archives Commission (Archive Pl. 10) illustrates 34 beads published by Kondakov, said to be of gold and found in Cherson. Among the objects on sale in Paris there was also a Sarmatian necklace with a stone engraved with the figure of Sauromatos II, as noted by Rostovtsev in one of his letters to the British Museum. This necklace was also not included in the purchase and is hard to tell whether it is illustrated on any of the screens for which we have photographs. According to Volgeninov there were 18 screens altogether in Paris, 8 of which are preserved on the archive photographs, and 2 further screens are possibly illustrated on the archival photographs in Simferopol.

It is not known what the other eight screens held, as no photographs of them survive. According to the figures above, however, they displayed nearly 200 pieces, so quite a large collection of jewellery remains to be located.

In his 1908 address to the French Archaeological Society, Baron de Baye referred to an important group of jewellery from Suuk-Su, which he had seen in the collection of Berthier-Delagarde:

(...) une série de bijoux très remarquables fut remise à M. Berthier de la Garde. ... Avant me rendre à Gourzouf à Sououk-Sou-je m'étais arrêté à Yalta pour étudier la belle collection archéologique de l'ingénieur Berthier de la Garde. Naturellement, les objets provenant de Sououk-Sou avaient plus particulièrement fixé mon attention, et leur possesseur a bien voulu m'en donner des photographies, que je suis hereux de soumettre à la Société.12

The cemetery of Suuk-Su, near Hurzuf (Gurzuf) in the south of the Crimea, is one of the most important Early-Medieval sites in the peninsula. But only one piece in the British Museum is given the provenance of Suuk-Su in the register: the polyhedral-head earring (cat. no. 8). One of the buckles (cat. no. 82) is supposed to have been found there, too, as already mentioned above, and the annotation 'Kerch 1900' may record only the place and date of purchase. Berthier-Delagarde may have bought this piece together with a whole group of other objects at the same time. The same annotation is given to a further 16 items, including some unique pieces of jewellery (cat. nos 7, 10, 11, 14, 16, 72, 73, 78, 80, 86, 103, 105, 109 and 135; inventory nos 1923,7-16,52–66 and 72), all of which may therefore also come from Suuk-Su. But the question arises whether the group referred to was really from Suuk-Su, or whether de Baye misinterpreted the source of his information, since Berthier-Delagarde's archaeological material is constantly described as objects of 'Suuk-Su type' by Cherepanova.13 The inverted commas may indicate that he was quoting from the collector's own documentation, in which case Berthier-Delagarde may have designated a large part of his collection as Suuk-Su type and showed it to de Baye as such. Alternatively, if indeed such a group of jewellery was from Suuk-Su, did it remain among the objects which the British Museum purchased some 15 years later? The group may have been sold before the majority of the collection travelled to France. It is clear that individual items from the collection were disposed of, as is shown by the present location of two eagle-headed buckles, originally published by Repnikov in 1907.14 This photograph is also kept in the St Petersburg Institute of History.15 One of the buckles is recorded in the museum of Breslau (now Wrocław, Poland) in 1912,16 the other was in Berlin in 1913.17

Some objects said to belong to Berthier-Delagarde's collection were published in contemporary literature, but there is no further information about them. Among them are a gold bead from Kuban and a gold earring from Kerch, both of which were published by Kondakov.18 Also a list of objects all found at Suuk-Su in 1899, which were given to Berthier-Delagarde by the landowner, Berezin, was published by Repnikov.19 These comprise gold polyhedral-head earrings, penannular silver bracelets, buckles, blue glass and rock-crystal beads, and a pottery mug. We cannot be certain whether any of them were included in the British Museum purchase, apart from one buckle (cat. no. 82). Unfortunately, only five of the objects are published in photographs, including this buckle, the two eagle-headed buckles mentioned above as being sold a few years later; a small silver armlet20 and a copper-alloy buckle.21 The further history of the last two items is unknown.

It would be very interesting to know whether there are any other pieces kept in other museums or collections. They might either have been acquired from Berthier-Delagarde himself before his death in 1920, or come from France (after the British Museum purchase of 1923) and be associated with the names of Volgeninov or Beliawsky. Volgeninov remarked that Mme Beliawsky (Berthier-Delagarde's sister) living in Menton, France, was 80 years old and quite ill. He did not mention any other member of the family by name, so the question arises once more regarding the fate of the part of the collection not bought by the British Museum. It could have been auctioned after the death of Mme Beliawsky, or sold as a whole, or piece by piece. But where are the objects now? The sale catalogues of the 1920s and 1930s available in London unfortunately do not record any details of them, but the French auctions of the time were not so systematically catalogued and published that the documents available today can be relied upon.

Notes
1. 2. Markevich 1928, 145
3. Kropotkin and Shelov 1971, 140–2
4. Markevich 1928, 145
5. These photographs were given to the British Museum by Professor Aleksandr Albain
6. Repnikov 1907, 141, pl. XIV:4
7. Kropotkin and Shelov 1971, 140–2
8. Repnikov 1907, 141, pl. XIV:4
9. These photographs were given to the British Museum by Professor Aleksandr Albain
10. Repnikov 1907, 141, pl. XIV:4
11. Kropotkin and Shelov 1971, 140–2
12. Repnikov 1907, 141, pl. XIV:4
13. These photographs were given to the British Museum by Professor Aleksandr Albain
14. Repnikov 1907, 140–1, pl. II:23
15. Rostovtsev 1923, 36
16. Repnikov 1907, 141, pl. XIV:4
17. These photographs were given to the British Museum by Professor Aleksandr Albain
18. Repnikov 1907, 140–1, pl. II:23
19. Rostovtsev 1923, 36
20. Repnikov 1907, 142, pl. XVI:13
21. Repnikov 1907, 142, pl. XVI:13

14 | The Berthier-Delagarde Collection of Crimean Jewellery in the British Museum and Related Material
The Berthier-Delagarde Collection of Crimean Jewellery in the British Museum and Related Material

The Collection

Archive Plate 2b – from Simferopol. Taurid Scientific Archives Commission
Archive Plate 3b — from Simferopol, Taurid Scientific Archive Commission
Archive Plate 7 - supplied by Volgenov
The Berthier-Delagarde Collection of Crimean Jewellery in the British Museum and Related Material

Archive Plate 8b – from Simferopol. Taurid Scientific Archive Commission
Dear Mr. Dalton,

I have seen the collection of Mr. G. Lagrange. My impression taken from photos was right. As far as I see there is no one fake in the collection. My second impression was also correct. I mean the fact that the Greek, Hellenistic and Roman part contains certain things (some of them being excellently beautiful) but the Sassanian and Gothic part appears to be quite unique, not comparable to any collection of their kind I know. The collection is unique because there are no things of a later date in this collection, everything being of the 6th and the 12th cent. If because there are lots of fine specimens of gold and precious stones, real objects, and if because the presence of all the objects is still known. My advice to you is to come and to see the collection. The photos gives no idea of the
total value of this set of things. And my second advise is to buy at least the Sassanian and Gothic sets. Among the Sassanian set there is e.g. one piece in a necklace chain with an engraved stone showing the figures of Sassanid kings of Persia. Also, among the Gothic - a wonderful dress with an inscription ZWS. Among the collection a necklace and cross of the 12th cent. I do not see why you should not buy the whole collection, the difference in price would be of an great importance, and there are some fine things among the great jewels.

I enclose a card with the address of an antiquarian who has bought valuable Sassanian and Gothic objects, that of Jaostronn. There are some Sassanian things of importance but there are also some fakes. So Gothic things of importance.

I am looking to answer yours sincerely for reply.

Andrai
Dear Mr. Dalton,

Thank you very much for your kind letter. The Jewish and Samaritan things do not form the majority of the objects in the collection of Berthier-Delagarde. But this minority is the best part of the collection, not only from the historical but also from the artistic point of view. The Greek and Roman jewels are of little value with few exceptions. If sold separately, they will not bring in very much money. I repeat that my impression is that the Samaritan and Jewish part of the collection is a real beauty. The first good collection of such things which I have seen.

My opinion is that half of the price for the whole collection is rather too little than too much for the Samaritan and Jewish part. But the question of the price is the affair of Volgyeroff. We may decide it as he likes. However, it is evident to me that without the Samaritan and Jewish things the collection loses its importance both artistic and scientific.

Thank you very much for the splendid photos which you had the kindness to send me. I will send full use of them.

Yours sincerely,

Rostovtsov.
May 30th 1923.

Dear Sir,

I have referred your letter to the Director of the Museum. Though the amount suggested by you for the non-Greek part of the Berthier Delegard Collection, viz., £1650, may prove more than we shall be able to give, he thinks it very desirable that the things should be examined. My colleague Mr. Reginald Smith, whose work here is concerned with Barbaric art, will therefore be prepared to come to Paris without delay, and I should be much obliged if you could mention a day and hour when he could visit you and make notes of the collection. He would be able to call on you next Monday, June 4th or on either of the two following days, Tuesday 5th, or Wednesday 6th. It is important that we should know as soon as possible which day you choose, and at what hour in the morning Mr. Smith could come; it would no doubt take him a considerable time to make the notes which we should require.

Awaiting your early reply,
N. A. Volgeninoff,
Yours faithfully,

July 11th 1923.

Dear Sir,

You will be pleased to hear that Mr. Reginald Smith arrived safely with the collection, which has now been listed as you desired, but the numbers are missing in no less than 70 cases. Most of the others are legible, and I should be glad to have at your early convenience corresponding extracts from your Catalogue. As so many cannot be identified, I venture to suggest that you should send your Catalogue here by registered post to enable us to make an extract of the part that concerns us, and I would guarantee to send it back in a fortnight. This would save you a deal of trouble, and enable us to identify most of the items without numbers.

The Trustees meet on Saturday, and I anticipate that they will authorize the purchase, in which case the amount would be forwarded with as little delay as possible but please let me know at once whether it is to be made payable to yourself or to Madame Beliawsky.

Yours sincerely,

O.M. Dalton

 Archive Plate 13a O. M. Dalton's letter M. A. Volgeninov on R. Smith's visit to Paris in order to view the objects
 Archive Plate 13b O. M. Dalton's letter M. A. Volgeninov mentioning the missing numbers and the 'Catalogue'
Transcript of M.I. Rostovtsev's letter to O.M. Dalton describing the importance of the collection (See Archive Pl. 11)

Dear Mr Dalton

I have seen the collection of Berthier-Delagarde. My impression taken from photos was right. As far as I see there is no one fake in the collection. My second impression was also correct. I mean the fact that the Greek, Hellenistic and Roman part contains common things (some of them though unusually beautiful) but the Sarmatian and Gothic part appears to be quite unique not comparable to any collection of which I know. The collection is unique 1) because there are no things of a late date in this collection, everything being of the IIIrd and the IVth cent.; 2) because there are lots of fine specimens in gold and precious stones, real objects of art 3) because the provenience of all the objects is well known. My advise [sic] to you is to come and to see the collection. The photos give no idea of the value of this set of things. And my second advise [sic] is to buy at least the Sarmatian and Gothic sets. Among the Sarmatian set there is e.g. one find: a necklace (chain) with an engraved stone showing the figure of Sauromates II, King of Bosporus. Among the Gothic – a wonderful cross with an inscription ΦΗΣ ΖΗ. Among the Christian a necklace and cross of the XIth cent. I do not see why you should not buy the whole collection: the difference in price would be of no great importance and there are some fine things among the Greek jewels. I enclose a card with the address of an Antiquarian who has bought another important collection of S. Russian antiquities, that of Mossono [?]. There are some Sarmatian things of importance, but there are also some fakes. No Gothic things of importance. I am leaving to-morrow for Italy.

Yours sincerely
M. Rostovtseff.

Transcript of M.I. Rostovtsev's letter to O.M. Dalton on the collection (See Archive Pl. 12)

the 26 of May 1923

Dear Mr Dalton

Thank you very much for your kind letter. The Gothic and Sarmatian things do not form the majority of the objects of the collection of Berthier Delagarde. But this minority is the best part of the collection not only from the historical but also from the artistic point of view. The Greek and Roman jewels are of little value with few exceptions. If sold separately they will not bring in very much money. I repeat that my impression is that the Sarmatian and Gothic part of the collection is a real beauty. The first good collection of such thing [sic] which I have seen. My advise [sic] to you is to come and to see the collection. The photos give no idea of the value of this set of things. And my second advise [sic] is to buy at least the Sarmatian and Gothic sets. Among the Sarmatian set there is e.g. one find: a necklace (chain) with an engraved stone showing the figure of Sauromates II, King of Bosporus. Among the Gothic – a wonderful cross with an inscription ΦΗΣ ΖΗ. Among the Christian a necklace and cross of the XIth cent. I do not see why you should not buy the whole collection: the difference in price would be of no great importance and there are some fine things among the Greek jewels. I enclose a card with the address of an Antiquarian who has bought another important collection of S. Russian antiquities, that of Mossono [?]. There are some Sarmatian things of importance, but there are also some fakes. No Gothic things of importance. I am leaving to-morrow for Italy.

Yours sincerely
M. Rostovtseff.