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Amsterdam Court Tells Dutch State to Stay Out of Crimean Artefacts Dispute

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An Amsterdam court ruled Wednesday that the Dutch government cannot participate in a legal fight over golden artefacts from Crimea.

The priceless artefacts had been on loan to the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam when Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in March 2014.

Now both the state of Ukraine and the Russian-controlled Crimean museums that lent most of the objects are demanding their return.

The Allard Pierson Museum has said it will not return the artefacts until a court has determined who their rightful owner is.

The Dutch state had also sought to intervene in the dispute, saying it want to ensure international law was followed.

But the Amsterdam District Court said the civil suit is only between the parties claiming

ownership — Ukraine and the museums.

The artefacts include a solid gold Scythian helmet from the 4th century B.C. and a golden neck ornament from the 2nd century A.D. that each weigh more than a kilogram.

A date for the court's ruling on ownership has not been set but is expected sometime after this summer.

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