The Sarmatian and Alan objects
The Berthier-Delagarde Collection contains an interesting group of artefacts dating between the 1st and 4th centuries AD that are typical of the Sarmatians and Alans of the northern Black Sea coast. These tribes were neighbours who lived together in Bosporus and shared an identical polychrome style of jewellery.

One of the most important pieces in this group, and indeed of the whole collection, is of star quality: a jade scabbard-slide ornamented with scroll-work (cat. no. 116, Pls 57–58). It is said to be from the Kuban area, presumably from a Sarmatian burial, and was shown to be of Chinese manufacture by Rostovtsev, demonstrating the immense distances that prestige objects travelled across the steppe. These slides are of a long-lived type and found on swords from Sarmatian cemeteries of the 2nd to 3rd centuries, occurring also in a grave of the second half of the 5th at Voskhod kolkhoz. A similar slide was found together with other objects on the Messaksudi estate, Kerch, in 1918, and is now exhibited in the Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St.-Germain-en-Laye. The finds were identified as a grave assemblage of the second half of the 3rd century by Rostovtsev. In addition it has been shown recently that Messaksudi also sold an oval buckle with a long tongue of Variant 3. These buckles occurred in the Crimea from the last quarter of the 4th century and other buckles from the grave complex (with an attachment-plate hinged by means of a folded flap) were made in the earlier half of the century, suggesting that Kazanski’s dating of the assemblage to the last 3rd of the 4th century is most likely correct.

A pair of garnet-inlaid gold earrings (cat. no. 109, Pl. 54) is similar in construction, decoration and technique to those found in Sarmatian graves of the second half of the 1st century, in the northern Black Sea coastal steppe. A much later piece, a temporal-ependant from Kerch (cat. no. 1, Pl.1), has a triangular, gold sheet base, decorated with garnet and green glass cabochons, twisted and beaded wire, granulation, and three pendants on chains. A similarly-decorated piece from the Diergardt Collection has been ascribed to the 4th century. The period of manufacture of these pendants may be established in the northern Black Sea coastal steppe. Two openwork, cast copper-alloy attachment-plates from belt buckles are decorated with Sarmatian emblems (cat. nos. 114–115, Pl. 56). Almost all the analogous pieces have been found in Kerch, leading Shkorpil and Solomonik to assume that mounts of this type were made in Bosporus in the 1st to 3rd centuries. In a grave at Chersonesus a buckle with a similarly-decorated attachment-plate was found with a coin struck between 180–192 and at Chernaya Rechka, vault 35, one was associated with brooches of the second half of the 3rd century. Belt-ends and buckles with Sarmatian emblems can probably be dated to the latter half of the 2nd and the 3rd centuries and appear all over the area of Sarmatian settlement, particularly in the Bosporan Kingdom. The emblems on serially-produced buckles are probably a general feature, while those on gold objects and harness mounts may have a more personalised significance.

Commentary on Select Items and Groups in the Collection
Aleksander Aibabin

The Berthier-Delagarde Collection of Crimean Jewellery in the British Museum and Related Material
from graves on the Messaksudi estate at Kerch,\textsuperscript{41} from burials at Timashevskaya, of the second half of the 3rd century,\textsuperscript{46} and from the Stavropol region.\textsuperscript{37} There are also temporal-pendants, bracelets and a buckle from contemporary graves in the Dnieper, Don, and Kuban regions.\textsuperscript{48} Comparable material comes from Crimean graves of the first group such as Chernaya Rechka 2, 3, 35 and 45; from Druzhne (Druzhnoye), vault 1 and grave 24 (with a coin of 250)\textsuperscript{46} and Belbek III, grave 2.\textsuperscript{48} The grave at Kishpek was dated by the author to the Hunnic period, that is to the end of the 4th to 5th centuries, and is an assemblage of major importance which was well excavated, but poorly published. Ambroz and Kuznetzov dated it to the second half of the 3rd/beginning of the 4th century,\textsuperscript{39} but on the basis of its buckles of Keller type A it belongs rather to the first half of the 4th century.\textsuperscript{48} Ambroz ascribed its decorative details to the early polychrome style, which appeared in the Roman provinces in the second half of the 3rd century.\textsuperscript{40} It should be noted that prototypes of the Kishpek-type mounts were found in 1986 in a Sarmatian grave dated to the end of the first/ beginning of the 2nd centuries, in a burial mound on the outskirts of the town of Azov. The oval gold mounts from Azov, like mounts nos. 17 and 19, are each decorated with a large, red, oval chalcedony (cornelian) with bevelled edges and such objects probably combined elements from both Late-Roman and early-Alanic jewellery traditions.\textsuperscript{41} In conclusion it should be noted that such ornaments and horse harness-mounts of the second half of the 3rd–4th centuries enable us to advance stronger arguments for the existence of an early-Alanic polychrome style in Bosporus and the North Caucasus. The appearance of such objects, and the fashion for them, may be connected with the alliance between the Roman Empire and the Bosporan Kingdom.

The copper-alloy horse bridle-ring (\textit{cat. no. 60, Pl. 30}) appears on an archival photograph of the collection in the Crimea, supporting three small silver attachment mounts. Rings with such small mounts were found in burials of the second half of the 3rd century at Kerch,\textsuperscript{39} and in a contemporary catacomb at Budynovskaya Sloboda.\textsuperscript{42} In the North Caucasus iron rings with small attachment mounts continued in use later.\textsuperscript{43} Elongated mounts cut from thin silver sheet for use on horse-harness are similar to those from Sarmatian burials of the second to third centuries (\textit{cat. nos. 63–69, PIs 31–32}) and are considered by some to be for funerary use.\textsuperscript{44}

The Hunnic polychrome style and the Kerch vaults

Mounts and jewellery of gold and gilt silver abundantly decorated with garnet in the Berthier-Delagarde Collection are typical of the polychrome style which arose among the tribes of the Hunnic alliance, according to Werner and Ambroz. The old idea that the Huns caused great destruction in the Crimea is incorrect, and Bosporus, for instance, was occupied by them. The Kerch tombs contained the bodies of the Bosporan royalty or elite, who had adopted elements of Hunnic fashion and also had access to Late-Roman imports, such as glass vessels, silver plates and costume accessories. Items like shoe-buckles do not, therefore, serve as ethnic identifiers. The main distinction between the older Bosporan style of jewellery, with individual inlays (often cabochon garnets, or glass paste in single collets), and the new style is the innovation of multiple flat inlays mounted in cloisonné cell-work. It is therefore significant that the Hunnic occupation of the Crimea occurred after they had reached the middle Danube (see below).

A gold buckle with an attachment-plate inlaid with a garnet (\textit{cat. no. 72, Pl. 34}) is similar to the buckle (\textit{cat. no. 47, Pl. 28}) in the form of its loop and tongue. Buckles with inlaid plates of similar type have been found in Hunnic-period graves in the north-western Black Sea coast, the North Caucasus and the Urals.\textsuperscript{45} A gold buckle with a faceted circular loop, tongue, and plate inlaid with garnets (\textit{cat. no. 70, Pl. 33}), and a buckle-tongue grooved at each end (\textit{cat. no. 71, Pl. 34}), are typologically close to objects of 5th-century date.\textsuperscript{46} These and the other Hunnic-period pieces in the collection lack context and associations. However, previous scientific excavations provide rich data that help establish the cultural milieu of closely related pieces. Zasetskaya attributes the Kerch vaults 154/1904 and 165/1904, in which buckles of the same type as those of the Berthier-Delagarde Collection were found, to the end of the 4th and first half of the 5th century.\textsuperscript{47} These two family burial-places contained, respectively, 11 and 10 skeletons.\textsuperscript{48} At first the dead were interred on ledges, and later on the floor.

On the central ledge of vault 154/1904, with skeletons 5 and 6, were found circular buckles of Variant 3 of the last quarter of the 4th to first half of the 5th century.\textsuperscript{49} On a ledge to the left in burials 7 and 8 were glasses with blue spots of types I-B and I-E,\textsuperscript{50} which can be assigned to much the same period,\textsuperscript{51} contemporary circular buckles of Variant 3,\textsuperscript{52} a fragment of a sheet brooch with settings for inlays,\textsuperscript{53} and gold spacer-tubes.\textsuperscript{54} On the right-hand ledge in burials 9, 10 and 11 were found a glass with blue spots of I-B Type,\textsuperscript{55} from the first half of the 5th century,\textsuperscript{56} gold spacer-tubes, and earrings with amber and cornelian inlays.\textsuperscript{57} On the floor in burial 1 were found circular buckles of Variant 3,\textsuperscript{58} while in burial 2, which overlap the first one, were two sheet brooches with feet of Variant 21/IIA,\textsuperscript{59} a gold wreath with an impression of a coin of Valentinian I (364–375), spacer-tubes and mounts,\textsuperscript{60} and a large buckle with an attachment-plate decorated with a rosette.\textsuperscript{61} In burial 3 were circular buckles of Variants 3\textsuperscript{62} and 5, made in the first half of the 5th century.\textsuperscript{63} In burial 4 were a large buckle with an animal head on the tongue of Variant 1\textsuperscript{64} and a circular buckle of Variant 3.\textsuperscript{65}

On the central ledge of vault 165/1904 lay burial 4 with a sheet brooch of Variant IBB,\textsuperscript{66} a brooch similar to Danubian examples from graves of period D2 (410–440),\textsuperscript{71} and a bone pxy. In burial 5 were a gold wreath decorated with an impression of a coin of Sauromatius II (173/174–210/211),\textsuperscript{72} circular buckles of Variant 3\textsuperscript{73} and 5,\textsuperscript{74} buckles with imitations of the animal heads on the tongues of Variant 2,\textsuperscript{75} and a saddle with bells.\textsuperscript{76} On the right-hand ledge of burial 6 were sheet brooches of Variant 21/IIA.\textsuperscript{77} On the left-hand ledge of burial 9 was a circular buckle of Variant 4 of the first half of the 7th century\textsuperscript{78} and in burial 10 there were two sheet brooches of Variant 21/IIA.\textsuperscript{79} On the floor of burial 3 lay circular buckles of Variants 3 and 4,\textsuperscript{80} belt-ends with turned-up edges,\textsuperscript{81} and fragments of a pair of sheet brooches with appliqués of Smolin type.\textsuperscript{82} It is assumed that buckles with rosettes on the attachment-plates (\textit{cf. cat. no. 76, Pl. 38}) were in use in the Danube region around 420–454,\textsuperscript{83} or in period D2 of 410–440,\textsuperscript{84} and sheet
brooches of Variant 21/IIAA, with feet expanding at the top, in the first third of the 5th century,29 or in period D2.30 Two sheet brooches of Smolín type are dated by Werner and Ambroz to the second half of the 5th century,31 and by Tejral to period D2/D3 of 430–455.32 while Bierbrauer dates them to the first half of the 5th century.33 Judging by the location of the burials similarly dated by the buckles, glasses, and brooches of Variants 21/IBB and 21/IIAA, interments began on the central ledges of both vaults. In vault 154 this took place at the end of the 4th or the beginning of the 5th century, and in vault 165 in the first quarter of the 5th century. During the first half of the 5th-century burials were interred on side ledges. The latest burials were placed on the floor: in vault 154 at the beginning of the second half of the 5th century; and in vault 165 in the second half of the century. At Kerch a roseate-decorated Danubian buckle and brooches of Variant 21/IIAA were in use at least at the beginning of the second half of that century, and brooches of Smolín type were in use during its second half.

The necklace (cat. no. 9, Pl. 4) consists of gold spacers, garnet pendants and a biconical pendant set with a blue stone. Two similar spacers come from Luchyste (Luchyste), vault 41 (Map B: 16), and a necklace of 11 spacers from Chernaya Rechka, vault 11/1980, together with a buckle with an oval loop, attachment-plate and long tongue, and red-slipped pottery of the first half of the 5th century. Others were found in Kerch, vault 154/1904 (burial 2), of the early second half of the century, with two sheet brooches of Variant 21/IIAA (according to Ambroz), and a buckle with a roseate-decorated attachment-plate.34 Similar garnet pendants were found on a necklace from Maikop35 with a 5th-century pendant in the form of a cicada.36 The garnet-inlaid gold earring (no. 6) closely parallels those from Kerch, vault 154/1904, on the right-hand ledge of burial 9 of the first half of the century.37

Further exceptional Hunnic-period pieces include a gilt copper-alloy mount with polychrome inlays (cat. no. 27, Pl. 19), thought to be a belt-fitting with parallels at Kerch, Muslyumovo, and in the Diergardt Collection.38 Another type of belt mount, with circular attachment-plate and suspension loop (cat. no. 26, Pl. 18), came into fashion at the beginning of the 5th century.39 Other pieces, such as the garnet or glass-inlaid studs (cat. nos 28–29, Pls 19–20), may be of this period, but appear later, too.

The mid-Danubian connections

A small group of gold and garnet pieces in the Berthier-Delagarde Collection are unusual or unparalleled in the Crimea, but find analogies farther west. They include a gold oval brooch inlaid all over with garnets from Kerch (cat. no. 14, Pl. 8) which is unique in the Crimea. It may belong to a 5th-century group of south-Russian/Danubian brooches identified by Werner.40 Gold lunate and tear-shaped pendants with garnet settings (cat. nos 10–11, Pl. 6) are dated to the second half of the century by analogy with an Ostrogothic burial at Gáva.41 Parallels to the gold finger-rings with garnet-inlaid, geometric bezels soldered to sheet bases (cat. nos 12–13, Pl. 7) have not been found in the Crimea, but related examples occur in Gepid burials of the second half of the 5th century.42

A gilt-silver, garnet-inlaid, wheel-shaped brooch with trapezoid projections (cat. no. 15, Pls 8–9) was among the objects sold by A. Volgeninoff in 1923.43 It is similar to brooches thought by Werner to be 7th-century Frankish,44 but, as noted by Andrési (Catalogue above), the best parallel is from the Danube region (unpublished). A pair of gold earrings have hoops of twisted wire and polyhedral beads inlaid with lozenge-shaped and triangular garnets (cat. no. 7, Pl. 3). Similar pieces appear in other museums45 and have been found in Ostrogothic burials of the second half of the 5th/beginning of the 6th centuries.46 They contrast with the local Crimean products and only one other example has been found in the Crimea, which must be seen as an import, perhaps from the mid-Danube region. Local forms of earring are represented in the collection, such as the garnet-set gold example with a smooth wire hoop most probably from Suuk-Su (cat. no. 8, Pl. 3; Map B: 14). In graves here47 and at Luchyste (Luchyste)48 gold earrings with polyhedral beads inlaid with red and blue glass were associated with sheet brooches and eagle-headed buckles of the second half of the 6th and 7th centuries. At Luchyste some 20 gold examples were found and it was noted that, while the 6th-century pieces had garnet inlays, those of the 7th were inlaid with glass. A wider date range is provided by the gold earrings with smooth hoops and solid polyhedral beads in the collection (cat. no. 6, Pl. 3). This very simple cast form is a long-lasting type in the Crimea, where it is associated with grave-goods from the 5th to the first half of the 7th centuries.49

It is generally accepted that cicada brooches of the same type as that in the collection (cat. no. 16, Pl. 10) were worn in western Europe, the Balkans, and the Caucasus during the 5th to 6th centuries.50 In the Crimea, however, they were in use from the mid-5th century to the beginning of the 7th and their appearance may be associated with the introduction of mid-Danubian elements by the Huns.51 In addition to this influence on brooch styles, cast radiate-headed brooches of Variant 1 were manufactured in the Crimea using Danubian prototypes in the first half of the 6th century and brooches of Variant 2 in the second half of the 6th to the 7th centuries (see p.145 below).

A large silver buckle from Suuk-Su has a rhomboidal attachment-plate decorated with a four-petalled setting containing light-coloured glass (cat. no. 82, Pls 43–4). Its S-shaped scrolls and zoomorphic figures were retouched with a graver after casting. In its construction, method of attachment to the belt, and form and decoration of the loop and tongue it closely resembles eagle-headed buckles of south-Crimean type. Ambroz considered that south-western Crimean buckles of this type from Skalyste (Skalistoye), Suuk-Su, Aromatne (Aromat) (Fig. 7: 3), and Chufut-Kale (Map B: 28, 21, and 24), were the products of Crimean jewellers descended from Gepid craftsmen who had migrated to the peninsula, and he regarded their decoration as a much devolved variant of the mid-Danubian style.52 The Crimean craftsmen used not only elements of Gepid style, such as animal heads, coloured inlays, and pecking eagles, but also motifs from Scandinavian animal Style I, including animal heads with gaping mouths at the bases of the attachment-plates and pairs of couchant animals at the terminals. Local jewellers used only the general outlines of this borrowed decoration, altering some minor details and greatly distorting others. The buckles have folded plates, not shorter than 30mm, at one end of the attachment-plates to secure the loops; i.e. the same length as on the attachment-plates of the eagle-headed, south-Crimean buckles of Variant V.
Ambroz considered this feature demonstrated the existence of these buckles in the second half of the 7th century.\textsuperscript{17} At Chufut-Kale one was found with an eagle-headed buckle of Variant V in vault 7, while another was found at Skalyste associated with a buckle of that date in vault 288 (Fig. 7: 1, 2, 4).\textsuperscript{112}

The chronology of select brooches and buckles

There is considerable discussion concerning the chronology of some types of Crimean brooches and buckles, which is reflected in the evident discrepancies between the dates ascribed to the same objects by western and eastern-European scholars. The situation is briefly summarised below.

There is a pair of radiate-headed brooches in the Berthier-Delagarde Collection with triple-knobbed, semi-circular head-plates and lozenge-shaped foot-plates (cat. no. 21, Pl. 13). They are garnet inlaid and decorated with cast, chip-carved, concentric rhomboidal patterns on the foot-plates, and scroll-work on the heads. Such brooches are divided into two variants according to the decorative techniques used. In the first part of the 6th century brooches of Variant I in the Danube region and Italy were chip-carved.\textsuperscript{114} At Cherson, vault 14/1914, such brooches were associated with grave-goods of this period and examples from Kerch are to be similarly dated.\textsuperscript{106} The decoration of Crimean Variant 2 brooches was retouched with a graver after casting and their later dating has been established by association in closed assemblages from the southern Crimea. At Suuk-Su burial 155 contained grave goods of the first quarter of the seventh century,\textsuperscript{113} and at Luchyste (Luchistoye), vault 77 (skeleton 8), there was a buckle with a repoussé cross on its large rectangular attachment-plate (Fig. 1: 1, 3), which is characteristic of that century.\textsuperscript{119} In the Crimea brooches of Variant 1 were probably made using Danubian prototypes in the first half of the 6th century, and brooches of Variant 2 were produced there in the second half of the 6th to the 7th centuries.

Another pair of silver brooches differ from the above in the scroll decoration of their foot-plates (cat. no. 20, Pl. 12). Kühn named them the Kerch-type.\textsuperscript{120} Brooches of this type have been found mainly at Kerch, but also at Cherson, Suuk-Su, vault 162, Luchyste, vault 54 in burial 12 (Fig. 2), in the Dnieper region,\textsuperscript{114} the Danube region, and Germany.\textsuperscript{119} The Danubian prototypes of Kerch-type brooches were decorated with deep chip-carving and were made in the second half of the 5th and first half of the 6th centuries.\textsuperscript{121} The controversy over the chronology of Kerch-type brooches is reviewed in one of my articles.\textsuperscript{131} Ambroz stated that Kerch-type brooches came into fashion not earlier than the first half of the 6th century, remaining in use into the second half of the 7th and somewhat later.\textsuperscript{122} Only three closed assemblages with Kerch-type brooches are known. At Kerch, grave 19, they were associated with a red-slipped bowl\textsuperscript{123} of Hayes 3-type H (Fig. 3: 5)\textsuperscript{146} and analogies to Form 3H from Greece are attributed both to the first half of the 6th century,\textsuperscript{125} and also to its latter half.\textsuperscript{126} At Suuk-Su, vault 162, and Luchyste, vault 54, in burial 12 (Fig. 2) these brooches were found with eagle-headed buckles,\textsuperscript{127} which have rectangular attachment-plates cast with a bird’s head, such as an eagle or falcon, on the terminal. They are divided according to ornament and size into the south-Crimean forms, known only in the south-west, and the Bosporan ones.

Silver buckles from south-western Crimea have massive loops with a row or two of cast, S-shaped scrolls and opposed, stylised animal heads, facetted tongues, and rectangular or trapezoidal attachment-plates with bird-headed terminals. The flap hingeing the loop to the plate is moulded and riveted, and a wide leather belt was inserted, secured by copper-alloy studs. These studs also connected it to copper-alloy strips behind for additional attachment. Onto the loop and tongue, around the edges of the attachment-plate, and on the eagle head, were soldered cylindrical settings inlaid with red and blue glass, garnet or cornelian. Sometimes animal figures were cast at the bases of the tongues. There are eight decorative variants of attachment-plate\textsuperscript{128} and the buckles are divided into five variants according to the length of the folded attachment-flap: I - 10–14mm; II - 16–22mm; III - 23–27mm; IV - 28–30mm; V - 31–38mm (Figs 4 and 5).\textsuperscript{129} Buckles of Variant I are dated by a coin of Justinian I (527–565) and by objects of the second half of the 6th century at Suuk-Su.\textsuperscript{130} The period of buckles of Variant II is defined by the grave-groups from Suuk-Su, grave 77, with a coin of 597–602\textsuperscript{117} and from grave 124 with large silver sheet brooches of Variant IB-2, of the first half of the 7th century.\textsuperscript{132} Buckles of Variant III from Suuk-Su, graves 61 and 89, were found together with sheet brooches of Variant IB-1, of the first half of the 7th century, and at Luchyste, vault 10, layer 4, with sheet brooches of Variant IB-2 (Figs 3: 2, and 5: 1).\textsuperscript{133} Buckles of Variants IV and V, with long folded hinge-flaps, come from grave-groups with objects of the second half of the 7th century.\textsuperscript{134} In vault 257 on the slope of Eski-Kermen (Map B: 17) one burial contained an eagle-headed buckle of Variant V with a pendant made from half a Byzantine gold coin of 629–641, and a bronze Byzantine cross of the second half of the century; the other burial contained a silver coin of 668–685.\textsuperscript{135} As mentioned above, there were buckles of Variants IV and V in the upper layers of the multi-layer vaults 10 and 38 at Luchyste, and buckles of Variants II and III, with shorter folded flaps, in the lower layers.\textsuperscript{136}

The radiate-headed brooches of Kerch type from Suuk-Su, vault 162, and Luchyste, vault 54, burial 12, are of interest since they were associated with eagle-headed buckles of Variant IV.\textsuperscript{137} These brooches were probably used in Bosporus in the second half of the 6th and the first half of the 7th centuries, and in the south-western Crimea in the second half of the 7th century.

Gilt-silver brooches of Aquileia type (cat. no. 19, Pl. 11) are larger than the previous type. On both the head and foot-plates there are schematic running foliate scrolls, finished with a graver, and settings with red inlays. The foot is pierced by two holes and cast with knobs: an important feature of the Aquileia type, which is divided into three variants according to the decorative technique. Variant I includes brooches from the end of the 5th and the first half of the 6th century with deep chip-carved and punched decoration, found in Italy, France and the Danube region. Pecking birds cast on the sides of the foot-plate replace the knobs.\textsuperscript{138} Variant 2 includes examples from the Berthier-Delagarde Collection, the Danube region,\textsuperscript{139} and Luchyste, vault 77, on which the decoration is finished with a graver; and Variant 3 includes brooches from Kerch and the Kuban region with cast ornament.\textsuperscript{140} Kühn dates brooches of Variants 2 and 3 to 450–550.\textsuperscript{141} Werner to the first half of the 6th century,\textsuperscript{142} and Ambroz to the second half of the 6th to the 7th centuries.\textsuperscript{143} The brooches from Luchyste were found with a
7th-century silver buckle with a large rectangular attachment-plate decorated with a repoussé cross. Examples of Variant 3 were found at Kerch with a B-shaped buckle of Variant 1-2, of around 550–650, on a ledge in vault 78/1907; also in vault 152/1904 in the upper layer, above the layer with a burial of the late 6th century; and, in vault 180, with a belt-set of the second half of the 7th century (Fig. 3: 4). These data enable us to define the period of Aquileia-type brooches, Variants 2 and 3, as from the end of the 6th and the 7th centuries.

The silver-gilt buckles in the collection inlaid with either red glass (cat. no. 80, Pl. 41), or garnet (cat. no. 81, Pl. 42), should be included in a typological group of the Bosporan eagle-headed buckles. These are almost all from Kerch (Fig. 6: 5–6), with two from the slope of the Eski-Kermen plateau in highland Crimea, and are shorter than the south-Crinian ones, not exceeding 134 mm in length. Their loops are decorated with rows of scrolls and the attachment-plates with cylindrical collets inlaid with almandine or red glass, which are imitated on some buckles by solid cylinders with engraved circles representing the inlays. The plate of one of the buckles is cast with a central rectangular opening, which is filled by a support for a cornelian-inlaid setting inserted from beneath. The plates of some buckles are cast with trapezoidal panels and eagle heads, and others with rectangular panels, as on the south-Crinian buckles. In the proportions of their rectangular plates, the S-shaped scrolls, rectangular or trapezoidal panels, and eagle-headed terminals, the Bosporan buckles are close to those from the Danube region, Koin and northern Serbia, Cipau, and the 6th-century layer at Iatrus. A rectangular opening in the plate of one of the Kerch buckles (Fig. 6: 5) is characteristic of Gepid buckles. The Danubian eagle-headed buckles are usually dated to the first half of the 6th century, but some burials containing similar buckles are dated to 567–600. The Bosporan buckles from the slope of Eski-Kermen, grave 315, were found with sheet brooches of Variant 2B-3 of the 7th century (Fig. 3: 3); at Kerch, in the vault of 1875, with buckles of Variant III with rectangular attachment-plates of the first half of the century; in vault 152 in a layer covering a burial of the second half of the 6th century; and, in vault 180, with a belt-set of the second half of the 7th century. In the upper layer of Kerch vault 163, two burials were found, with an eagle-headed buckle in the first (Fig. 6: 1) and a buckle with two bird heads on the terminal of the plate in the other, just opposite the entrance to the chamber.

Bierbrauer considers that Ostrogothic eagle-headed buckles were in use in Italy until the arrival of the Lombards in 568. A buckle of similar type was found, however, in the cemetery at Kranj, Slovenia, which was in use between 500–600 and where, in the upper layer of vault 163, burials were probably deposited in the second half of the 6th century. As in Bosporus eagle-headed buckles began to be made locally using Danubian prototypes, but later than in the Danube region and not before the second half of the 6th century. At Kerch they were in use until the end of the 7th century.

The Byzantine connection

Some Byzantine objects in the Berthier-Delagarde Collection have the provenance of Kerch and are unique in Bosporus (cat. nos 74–75, 78, 90–92). They are discussed individually below, with several of the more outstanding, unprovenanced pieces.

The Byzantine buckles first appear in the first half of the 6th century (cat. nos 73–74, Pl. 35), which seems to agree with details in Procopius about the subjection of this region to Byzantium under the Emperors Justin I (518–527) and Justinian I (527–565). The second buckle has an oval loop, the ribbed decoration of which imitates twisted and beaded wire, and an attachment-plate with S-shaped scrolls cast and finished with a graver. It is recorded on a photograph in the Berthier-Delagarde archives, showing a tongue with a rectangular base containing two inlays (Fig. 6: 4). Similar buckles were in use in the second half of the 5th and the first half of the 6th centuries in the Danube region, Germany and other areas. A cast, copper-alloy buckle with an oval loop, triangular-section tongue, and an oval attachment-plate with a cross-shaped setting inlaid in red and green glass is typical of the Byzantine periphery (cat. no. 78, Pl. 40). In the Crimea such buckles came into fashion from the beginning of the 6th century and, in the Caucasus, in the first half of the 7th. A gilt-silver buckle (cat. no. 75, Pl. 37) consists of a broad oval loop, a faceted tongue with a lion’s head terminal, and a triangular attachment-plate with round lobes, ribbed decoration and a central triangular panel containing a clear glass inlay with three blue spots. It is similar to Byzantine buckles from Skalyote (Skalistoye) and Chernov, vault 62/1909 (Fig. 6: 2–3), in a burial of the first half of the 6th century, and to a buckle with a triangular plate in a contemporary grave from Dyurso. A gilt-silver buckle with a broad, B-shaped loop, a tongue with a dog’s head on the front, and a plate with an eagle-headed terminal and garnet inlay (cat. no. 73, Pl. 36) is similar to those found in Kerch, vaults 113/1904 and 78/1907.

As such buckles were not known beyond the frontiers of Bosporus, we may assume that they were manufactured there. In these pieces local craftsmen combined details from Byzantine types, such as the forms of the loops and tongues, with Germanic styles such as the eagle-headed terminals of the attachment-plates.

One of the two cast, copper-alloy Byzantine buckles in the collection, with acanthus leaves on a pelta-shaped attachment-plate, belongs to the Syracuse type (cat. no. 88, Pl. 46), which forms the most numerous group of the 6th to 7th century found on Byzantine territory. In the north-western part of Cherson, in two properties of district III, the remains of bronze-casting workshops were found, and the chemical analyses of the slag, bars and half-finished products from the sites are identical to those of the Syracuse-type buckles kept in reserve collections. In 1996–7 skin-divers found many pieces of slag, defective Syracuse-type buckles, and ‘heraldic’ mounts from belt-sets, etc., on the sea-bed off the south-eastern coast of Cherson, and there were, no doubt, jewellers’ workshops making such pieces in this district of the city.

A Byzantine polychrome belt-set of the second half of the 7th century from Kerch (cat. nos. 90–92, Pls 47–49) is identical to those found in the graves of nomad nobles from the neighbouring steppes at Portove (Portovoye) (Map B: 43) and Belozerka. These pieces are particularly important and rare, and are characterised by the use of silver for the main parts and the sparing use of gold for granulation or cloison-work. Only one is known from the north-Crimean steppe, at Portove, and such sets probably reached the nomads via Bosporus.
According to Malalas the nomads traded their goods for Byzantine merchandise there. 

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

Notes
1. Rostovtsev 1930, 339, figs 255–6
2. Khazanov 1971, 12, 14, 25, figs XIV:9–XV:5; 8, 9; Maksimenko and Bezuglov 1987, 186–7, 190, fig. 1:27
3. Zaetskaya 1986, fig. 155; Ambroz 1989, 44
4. Rostovtzeff 1923a, 122–37
5. Beck et al. 1988, fig. 1:1
6. Aibabin 1990, 28, figs 2:26; 22:8–11
7. Aibabin 1990, 27–8, figs 2:10; 22:3; Kazanski and Legoux 1988, 13–14, fig. 9:4
8. Beck et al. 1988, 70
10. Damm 1988, 126–7, figs 75–6
11. Berkin (Zaetskaya) 1961, 148, 150, fig. 4:2
12. Skripkin 1977, 113–4, fig. 3:42
13. Savovsky 1977, fig. 5:2; Bezuglov and Zakharov 1989, 55
14. Magomedov 1979, 59, 61, fig. 3:3
15. Bezuglov and Zakharov 1989, 55, fig. 2:1
16. Gushchina 1974, 41, fig. IV:4
17. Bichir 1977, pl. 24:12
18. Ambroz 1966, 51, pl. 9:12
19. Skripkin 1977, 102, fig. 2:20–2; Bezuglov 1988, fig. 2:17
20. Ambroz 1966, 52; Skripkin 1977, 107, fig. 2:9, 12
21. Diaconu 1971, 240, pl. VII:7–8; Aibabin 1990, 18, fig. 8:5
23. Vinogradov and Petrenko 1974, fig. 2:5–6; Savovsky 1977, figs 5:3; 61; Skripkin 1977, fig. 3:10–17; Romanovskaya 1986, 79, fig. 2:7;
24. Ambroz and Kopylov 1989, 176, fig. 2:4–6; Ambroz 1989, 25,
25. Skorpol 1907, 14, fig. 5; Skorpol 1910b, 31–4, fig. 4:5, 12; Solomonik 1950, 132–4, fig. 76
26. OIA 1890, 34, 130, fig. 18; Anokhin 1977, 154 no. 280 27;
27. Babenchikov 1963, pl. XV:4
29. Vysockskaya 1972, fig. 43; Gushchina 1974, fig. III:10:145; Skripkin 1977, fig. 4:30–20; Gudkova and Fokeev 1984, fig. 1413–14;
31. Gushchina 1966, 74, fig. 1:6; Savovsky 1977, 65–6, fig. 5:2; Bezuglov and Zakharov 1989, 44, 55, figs 2:11–14;
33. Gushchina 1974, fig. 4:4
34. Ambroz 1989, 25–6; Kuznetsov 1993, 92
35. Ambroz 1989, 30–5; Kuznetsov 1993, 92
37. Bichir 1977, 18–7, fig. V:1–2; VIII:1–6
38. Ambroz 1992, pl. 1:5
39. Ambroz 1992, pl. IV
40. Romanovskaya 1986, 77, fig. 2:1
41. Gushchina 1966, 74, fig. 1:6; Savovsky 1977, 65–6, fig. 5:2; Bezuglov and Zakharov 1989, 44, 55, figs 2:11–14;
43. Gushchina 1974, fig. 4:4
44. Ambroz 1989, 25–6; Kuznetsov 1993, 92
45. Ambroz 1989, 30–5; Kuznetsov 1993, 92
46. Babinski and Boiko 1991, 87–90, figs 22:1–4; 26:27
47. Bichir 1977, 18–7, fig. V:1–2; VIII:1–6
48. Ambroz 1992, pl. 1:5
49. Ambroz 1992, pl. IV
50. Romanovskaya 1986, 77, fig. 2:1
51. Gushchina 1966, 74, fig. 1:6; Savovsky 1977, 65–6, fig. 5:2; Bezuglov and Zakharov 1989, 44, 55, figs 2:11–14;
The Berthier-Delagarde Collection of Crimean Jewellery in the British Museum and Related Material
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Aibabin

Figure 1 Buckle (1) and brooches from Luchistoe from skeleton 12 in vault 54.

Figure 2 Buckles (1, 3) and brooches (2, 4) from Luchistoe from vault 77.

Figure 3 1, 2 – brooches from Luchistoe from vault 10; 3 – brooch from Eski-Kermen from grave 315; 4 – brooch from Kerch from vault 152/1904; 5 – red lacquered bowl from Kerch grave 19/1904.

Figure 4 1, 2 – Buckles from Luchistoe from vault 42.
Commentary on Select Items and Groups in the Collection

Figure 5 1-3 – Buckles from Luchistoe from vault 10.

Figure 6 Buckles: 1 – from Kerch from vault 163/1904;  2 – from Skalistoe from grave 447a;  3 – from Chersonesus from vault 62/1909;  4 – Berthier-Delagarde collection cat. no. 74;  5 – from Kerch from grave 1/1905;  6 – from Kerch from a vault 152/1904.

Figure 7 Buckles: 1–2 from Skalistoe from vault 288;  3 – from Skalistoe from vault 321;  4 – from Aromat from vault 1.