

The Maikop Treasure

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To properly begin the story of the so-called Maikop treasure, one must say at least a little about M. A. Merle de Massoneau. The founder of the Bank of the Orient in Paris, he had worked for a long time as the director of the Russian royal vineyards in the Crimea and in the Caucasus. His position clearly indicates not only his material wealth, but also his high social status, and explains as well as the regular work-related trips he had to take between the Crimea (where he lived in Yalta) and the Caucasus.

During the nearly twenty years he lived in Russia, de Massoneau had amassed a truly enormous, unique collection.¹ Several documents allow us to judge its size. Robert Zahn, a famous German archaeologist, for example, informs Berlin about de Massoneau's collection: "The collection contains various Greek and Roman antiquities, typical for the south of Russia. Furthermore, it seems to me that the wares made during the time of the great migrations (golden decorations, etc.) are very good, the Islamic ancient objects as well as the medieval objects from Circassian tombs (a large collection of weapons) are all very rich."²

According to the purchase inventory, 956 inventory numbers from de Massoneau's collection, bought on May 30, 1907, went to the Berlin Museum's Department of Prehistory alone. This constitutes approximately one half of the collection — in his already cited letter, Dr. Zahn writes that the entire collection, bought for 95,000 DM, was divided among three departments of the Berlin

Museum. The Prehistory Department contributed 45,000 DM (of which 42,500 DM came from Mr. Von Diergardt), while the Department of Near Asian Art and the Classics Department contributed 25,000 DM each [Damm 1988, pp. 65-66]. I do not know the number and character of the items acquired by the Department of Near Asian Art, as they have little relevance to the archaeology of the Black Sea area. However, according to the purchase inventory on June 14, 1907, 809 inventory numbers went to the Classics Department.³ The overwhelming majority of these items were found in the ancient cities of the Bosphoran Kingdom, 5th century BCE — 3th century CE, and in the synchronous barbarian monuments which belonged to the Scythian, Sarmatian, and Meothian areas. And this is not surprising, as the main excavation sites in Russia during the 19th and early 20th centuries were ancient Greek cities: Olbia, located in the mouth of the Southern Bug river; Chersonesus, on the southern tip of the



Fig. 1. Gold plaque in the shape of a winged, walking griffin. Adornment of a fabric. H. 3 cm. 5th c. BCE.

Crimea; Panticapaeum, on the eastern side of the Crimean Peninsula; and Phanagoria, a town on the Taman Peninsula. Also extensively excavated were the barrows of southern Russia, primarily in the Crimea, the nearby steppes of the lower Dnieper River's left bank, and the northwestern Caucasus (from Taman to Maikop). Not long prior to de Massoneau's arrival in Russia, long-term excavations of extremely wealthy barrows such as the Major Bliznitsa, Seven Brothers and Karagodeuashkh in the northwestern Caucasus, and the Nymphaeum barrows in eastern Crimea, were concluded. During de Massoneau's stay in Yalta, the most famous Scythian barrows in Crimea were excavated: Golden, Talaevskii,





Fig. 2. Gold plaque in the shape of a walking stag. Adornment of a fabric. H. 3 cm. 5th c. BCE.

Dert-Oba, and Kulakovskii (1890-1895). Meanwhile, discoveries were made of the Deev and Oguz barrows a little to the north in the steppes of the modern Kherson region, and of the Shulgovka and Ushakovskii barrows further to the east, near the Azov Sea and the lower Don River areas. The richest finds of the times, however, were made in the Maikop area. First and foremost comes the Maikop barrow itself, the richest burial from the 3rd millennium BCE ever seen outside of Greece; the First Ul'sk barrow, the tallest in the area south of the Kuban River at 15 meters high, the central part of which alone contained the skeletons of 360 horses; and finally the rich Kelermes barrows,



Fig. 3. Gold plaque — appliqué with a bent upper edge. Adornment of a wood vessel. H. 5 cm. 5th c. BCE

as well as those of Kostromskoi, Kurdzhipis, etc. Sensational discoveries followed one another in quick succession. The names of A.E. Lutsenko, I.E. Zabelin, V.G. Tizengauzen, N.I. Veselovskii, and others were widely known in Russia and western Europe. Thousands of gold and silver decorations, vessels, weapons and horse trappings, including masterpieces of ancient Asian and ancient Greek art found in the South of Russia at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, constituted a veritable archaeological boom. Newspapers and journals regularly reported more and more sensational discoveries, and collecting antiquities became a fashionable and prestigious activity.

Unfortunately, this "gold fever" led to a troubling increase in grave robbing and to the appearance of large amounts of archaeological materials on the black market. Unlimited possibilities for private collectors were thus created, the best example of which is perhaps the collection of Merle de Massoneau.

In 1907, de Massoneau considered the unstable political situation in Russia and sold his collection to the Berlin Museum. The sale was formalized on May 30, 1907. However, this sale represented only a part of antiquities from Russia that belonged to de Massoneau. In 1922, a catalog of the remainder of the de Massoneau collection was published in Paris. Exhibited for sale, this "remainder" contained 117 lots of various gold, silver, bronze, ceramic marble and ivory objects from the Cimmerian Bosphorus.⁴

I do not know how many of the items exhibited for sale in 1922 were actually sold, but I do know that one John Marshall, an agent of New York Metropolitan Museum's department of Greek and Roman antiquities bought 32 gold plaques from the de

Massoneau collection on August 11, 1924, plaques that were not described in the catalog above.⁵ The meaning of this small purchase is difficult to overvalue: of the six types of plaques represented, four types (30 plaques) have direct analogs in among the materials of the Classics Department of the Berlin Museum, where there are 282 plaques of these types [Greifenhagen, 1970-1975, I, p. 60, Fig. 37, 1-3; p. 58, Fig. 33, 1-2].

The Berlin plaques constitute a part of the collection the Classics Department bought in 1913 from Karapet, an Armenian merchant⁶ who declared the items came from the famous Chmirev barrow excavated in 1910 [Veselovskii 1909-1910, pp. 127-129; figs. 190-202]. Sometime later it was shown that the same four types of golden plaques were represented by 38 items among the several hundred in the collection of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Philadelphia, USA). This collection was acquired by the museum in 1930 under the name of the "Maikop treasure." It is worth noting that the collection of the Berlin Museum's Classics Department (acquired in 1913) and of the University of Pennsylvania Museum share more than ten other types of golden wares, represented by many items.

The similarity of a significant number of items belonging to the three different collections attracted the attention of Mikhail Ivanovich Rostovtzeff, who in 1931 came to the conclusion that here was a single "very rich discovery, made [as he thought] in 1912 in the Kuban region, probably in the Maikop area, and subsequently sold to three (or more?) parties," namely the Berlin, Metropolitan, and University of Pennsylvania museums [Rostowzew 1931, p.



Fig. 4. Bronze harness plaque in the shape of a wolf's head. If this plaque is turned with the wolf's head pointing down, then a mountain goat's head, facing right, is clearly visible. L. 5 cm. 4th c. BCE.



368]. Rostovtzeff emphasized that bronze details of a set of horse trappings from the Berlin collection indicated the Kuban origin of the items in this collection [Rostowzew 1931, p. 367]. It is necessary to add that the University of Pennsylvania collection contains many items analogous to those in Berlin. Moreover, it appears that some items from the University of Pennsylvania and Berlin originate from one complex.

Not doubting the unified nature of the University of Pennsylvania and Berlin collections, Rostovtzeff then determined their date using a black-figure kilikos (from the University of Pennsylvania museum — A.L.) that he dated to no later than the first half of the 5th century BCE. Note that Rostovtzeff is dating only the part of the collection that belongs to the Scythian times [Ibid.]

In 1970, Adolf Greifenhagen published a catalog of gold and silver decorations from the Berlin Museum's Classics Department [Greifenhagen, 1970-1975]. Of this fundamental, two-volume publication, we are concerned with 1) Materials bought from de Massoneau in 1907 (Vol. I, Figs. 18-28) and 2) Materials from Maikop bought in 1913 (Vol. I, Figs. 29-38).

1. Items bought from de Massoneau (more than 250 in number) are typical for Greek

local populations during Scythian-Sarmathian times. Only a few (about 10 types of items) are characteristic of not Greek but rather Scythian, Meothian, or Sarmathian monuments from the south of Russia. Thus we will return to consider them later.

2. To precious items published under the "Maikop" designation, Greifenhagen adds 45 items, mostly made of bronze but some also of silver and iron, from the same collection the museum had acquired in 1913. Let us note immediately that 13 out of the 45 published items made of bronze, silver and iron belong to the pre- and post-Scythian times [Greifenhagen, 1970-1975, Vol. I, p. 56, Figs. 25-28, 31-34, 39-43].

During my work on the Maikop collection in the Classic Department of the Berlin Museum, I discovered that in 1913 significantly more items were acquired than Greifenhagen could publish. The problem was that a number of items had disappeared during the Second World War. However, brief information regarding these items remained in the museum's inventory. According to this document, there were about 40 more exhibits (more actual objects) in addition to those described by Greifenhagen. The majority of the items which had disappeared were made of bronze, although some were made of stone, bone, glass, clay, silver and gold. Most of the bronze items were horse-

towns in the northern Black Sea area and their necropoli. Meanwhile, practically any of these objects can be seen in monuments of

trapping details, some manufactured during pre-Scythian times and some made in the Scythian animal style. This unpublished material completes Rostovtzeff's observations regarding the unity of the three collections in the University of Pennsylvania, New York, and Berlin (Classics Department). Apart from the four types of golden plaques on which Rostovtzeff's argument depended, we now possess a much larger material from Scythian times as well as pre-Scythian, Sarmathian, and medieval eras.

The unity of the three parts of the collection is beyond argument when its fourth part is also considered. Again it is impossible to not appreciate Rostovtzeff's foresight when he wrote in 1931 about "three (or more?)" (emphasis mine—A.L.) buyers of the once unified collection. I mean the part of de Massoneau's collection that went to the Prehistory Department of the Berlin Museum also in 1907, at the same time that another part of the same collection was being acquired by the Classics Department of that institution.

We can only be surprised at the fact that objects of the same type, and plainly identical, could lie in adjacent departments of the same Berlin museum for almost a century, and that none of the specialists paid this fact much attention. In this regard, it is interesting to note that as soon as the famous scholar Robert Zahn found out from its 1925 publication [Alexander 1925, pp. 180-181, Fig. 7] that the Metropolitan Museum had bought golden plaques from de Massoneau's collection, he pointed out to his New York colleagues the fact that identical objects existed in the Classics Department of the Berlin Museum, where he worked, while the bronzes from the neighboring Department of Prehistory

remained unnoticed. Meanwhile, the part of de Massoneau's collection that went to the Prehistory Department contained 88 items of pre-Scythian, Scythian, Sarmatian and medieval times.⁷ Sixteen bronze details of horse trappings, fashioned in the Scythian animal style and that belong to this part of de Massoneau's collection were published by H. Shmidt,⁸ six of which were published again by Johannes Potratz [Potratz 1960, p. 61, Fig. X.26, XI.28-31; Potratz 1963, p. 80, Fig. 59]. One more was published by Ellis Minns [Minns 1942, P. 1, Ill. I], while none of the rest, as far as I know, was ever published. It is necessary to add that some items disappeared during the Second World War and are known to me only from the surviving old negatives and from drawings made in the museum inventory (IIIId 7015-7035).

It seems we will never be certain of the method de Massoneau used to divide his collection as he prepared it for sale. It is clear that, being a good businessman, he understood that if his entire enormous collection was sold at once, its market value would be lowered. De Massoneau was probably correct in his financial calculations. In negotiating with the directors of the combined Royal Museum in Berlin, he offered to sell the items he knew would interest the directors of specific departments.

Thus the Classics Department in particular bought the items originating from ancient towns and their necropoli located in the northern Black Sea area [Greifenhagen 1970-1975, Vol. I, pp. 41-53, Figs. 18-28]. Meanwhile the Prehistory Department acquired the largest part of the de Massoneau collection, where the most notable material consisted of the treasures from the time of the great migrations. Perhaps it was their illustrious

company that kept the one hundred or so bronze, iron, and ceramic items characteristic of pre-Scythian, Scythian, and Sarmatian periods from being noticed. From the above letter by Dr. Zahn, it is known that the collection offered to the Berlin Royal Museum was bought in its entirety.

Six years later, in 1913, the second half of the de Massoneau collection was delivered to Berlin by some merchant named Karapet, and was offered by him as materials from the Chmurev barrow located in the steppe on the left bank of the Dnieper River. As we see, everything was done to disassociate the name of de Massoneau from the collection on sale. After all, by that time de Massoneau had not been living in Russia for a long time, he had sold his collection, and the Chmurev barrow was located far enough from Crimea and northwestern Caucasus, the origins of at least 90% of de Massoneau's archaeological collection. The strategy seemed to have worked — half of the items was bought by the Classics Department of the Berlin Museum, which, as Greifenhagen rightly noted, now became the largest depository of antique jewelry from the south of Russia after the Hermitage in St. Petersburg [Greifenhagen 1970-1975, Vol. I, p. 10]. The second half of the collection was acquired by Ercole Canessa, at the time the most famous antique dealer in the world.⁹ It remains unclear whether Canessa had bought this part of the collection in Berlin, or whether it was first delivered to Paris, where de Massoneau now lived and where one of Canessa's galleries was located. It is only known that Canessa moved his collections from Paris to Italy in 1914, due to the outbreak of the First World War.

When the Italian government decide to allocate a special

exhibition area for Canessa's collections in the Italian pavilion of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco, his materials were delivered from Genoa.

In 1915, in the context of this exhibition that was the biggest cultural event of the year, Canessa showed his collections and published a catalog, where Scythian treasures were shown in the U.S. for the first time [Canessa 1915, lot no. 2]. In the catalog, "treasures found in the tombs of the Scythian region of the Caucasus — Greek work (VI century BC)" were published as number 2. Then there was a brief list of all exhibited items, all of them characterized as Scythian except for one silver cup that was said to belong to the "period of the Sacae" [Ibid.].

After the San Francisco exhibit had closed, Canessa wrote to the museum of the University of Pennsylvania about the possibility of its buying a number of items from him, as well as about some photographs he had sent the museum. Certain Scythian objects, offered to the museum along with Greek and Roman antiquities, are first mentioned in the June 26, 1916 letter from Canessa to Stephen B. Luce, then director of the Mediterranean Section of the museum.

The Scythian items, however, did not interest the museum at that time. In the July 10, 1916 letter, Canessa asked Luce to return him the photographs of the Scythian items, which was done immediately — on July 12, Canessa wrote that he had received the photographs.

One year later, Canessa organized an exhibit in his New York gallery, where, according to the catalog's "Greek and Roman Goldsmith Work" section, he was selling the same treasures from a Scythian tomb from the 6th

century BCE [Canessa 1917, Lot no. 1]. The characterization of this lot is identical to that of the San Francisco catalog from 1915. In the next and the largest catalog of the Canessa collection, published in 1919, the section "Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Objects" opens with lot #78, where the materials that interest us are introduced as treasures discovered in the Kuban region in the Caucasus, in Southern Russia. In short, although the entire lot is dated to the 6th century BCE and the already familiar silver cup is still said to be from the period of the Sacaе, the objects are no longer purported to come from the same complex [Canessa 1919].

All items are divided in three sections: A — gold and silver wares; B — bronze objects; and C — objects manufactured from various materials, such as clay, stone and glass. In all, the list of items completely repeats the lists from 1915 and 1917.

In 1929, Canessa died, and a year later, in the last week of March 1930, the American Art Association and Andersen Galleries organized a sale of his collection in New York. A catalog was released for the sale, where under #120 material dated to the 6th century BCE and called the "Maikop treasure" was published [Canessa 1930]. The catalogue prefaced the incomplete list of items (given alphabetically, from A to P), with a statement that the objects had been found in the Kuban region in the Caucasus in 1912, while the Foreword, which emphasized the most notable materials, explained that the "famous 'Maikop treasure' (#120), [had been] unearthed at the excavations in Scythia during 1912" [Ibid., Foreword, Classical Antiquities section]. The previously mentioned silver cup (listed here under the letter "O") was defined in this catalogue as Sassanian [Ibid.].

In comparing these four catalogs (1915, 1917, 1919, and 1930), it is impossible not to note the low level of scholarship evident in the characterization of the material that interests us. After all, these catalogs had come out after the publication of Minns' *Scythians and Greeks*, not to mention the publications in Russian and German, and it is surprising that neither Canessa himself nor the American Art Association (publishers of the 1930 catalog) used the numerous opportunities for making the chronology of the collection offered for sale more exact.

The museum of the University of Pennsylvania approached the acquisition of the collection published in 1930 as the "Maikop treasure" in a completely different manner. The museum consulted the most important world specialist of ancient history, art, and archeology of southeastern Europe of the first millennium BCE, M.I. Rostovtzeff, who had worked as a professor at Yale University since 1925. A brilliant scholar of Classical Greek and Roman antiquities, Rostovtzeff had received world recognition as the best specialist in the area of Scytho-Sarmathian archeology. His monographs have become classics of world archeology and art history, having received the highest regard of their contemporaries, and they remain relevant today.¹⁰ And it was Rostovtzeff who, after familiarizing himself with the Berlin part of the collection, had repudiated all efforts to connect the Scythian materials offered for sale with the Chmurev barrow, defining with absolute precision the Kuban origins of the objects that he had examined, manufactured in the Scythian animal style .

The archive of the University of Pennsylvania Museum has preserved five hand-written letters from Rostovtzeff related to his participation as the chief

expert in the question of the acquisition of the Canessa collection by the museum.

Honoring the museum's request, Rostovtzeff and a colleague from the museum, Helen Fernald, arrived in New York one week before the day of the auction, and visited the Andersen Galleries, where they examined the materials of lot #120, named the "Maikop treasure." Earlier, however, in a March 12, 1930 letter to the director of the museum, Horace H.F. Jayne, Rostovtzeff had already noted the variety and the importance of the collection based on its description in the sale catalog, and had recommended that the museum buy it. In a March 24, 1930 letter, the secretary of the museum, Jane M. McHugh, asked Rostovtzeff to send the museum an official memorandum regarding the value of the planned acquisition. It remains unknown when Rostovtzeff sent his memorandum (the document lacks a date — A.L.), but it must have been between the 25th and the 28th of March, 1930, as the auction happened on March 29.

Its brevity and precision, clarity and exactitude differentiate this document that defined the fate of this outstanding collection of Black Sea area antiquities.

I feel it is necessary to give the full text of this document [Transcription from original in the Museum Archives]:

The Museum of the University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia
Memorandum

The inspection of the Scytho-Sarmatian antiquities of the collection Canessa, which I carried out with Miss Helen E. Fernald in New York at the Anderson Galleries gave following results.

1) The so-called Maikop find is not one find but consists of various sets which belong to various times. All of these sets belong however to the circle of the Asiatic so-called Nomadic civilisations. The sets, as far as I can see, are the following.

A. Set of Scythian antiquities of the early Vth cent. B.C. It is a part of a find which was probably made in the region of the river Kuban (N. Caucasus) in 1912 and of which the largest part (the most important articles) came to Berlin (Antiquarium) and another (small) part to the Metropolitan Museum. The objects in the Canessa collection are interesting and give a good idea of the Scythian burials of the Vth cent.

B. Set of miscellaneous Scythian antiquities of the IV-IIIrd cent. B.C. with a slight admixture of still later things. Representative, and of little value.

C. Objects from a Sarmatian burial probably from N. Caucasus and of the Ist-IInd cent. A.D. Interesting and late.

Especially good is a bronze fibula plated with gold.

D. A silver bowl and some parts of a bridle of a late grave, probably of the time of the Avars or still later (VII-VIII cent. is just a guess). Rare, interesting and representative.

2) As far as I was able to see all the Scytho-Sarmatian objects are genuine. I saw no forgeries among them.

Very truly yours
M. Rostovtzeff

The University of Pennsylvania museum had thanked Rostovtzeff numerous times for his work, and invited him to work at the museum, but only on January 30th, 1932 was he able to stop for a day in Philadelphia on the way from Washington D.C. to Connecticut and work with the "Maikop treasure."

The result of this work was a more detailed letter from Rostovtzeff concerning the objects that constitute the Maikop collection. The undated letter was sent to the museum in the first week of February 1932, since in a letter dated

February 9, the director of the museum, Dr. Jayne, thanks Rostovtzeff for his help in defining the objects in the "Maikop collection." In his last letter, Rostovtzeff came to the conclusion, after a more thorough acquaintance with the "Maikop collection," that a number of bronze wares undoubtedly originating in the Kuban region corresponds to the Scythian gold of 6th-5th centuries BCE. At the same time, he does not dare attribute to the same part of the collection certain other items, which, as it turned out later, were from the Bronze Age or the pre-Scythian times. In comparing the gold objects from the Scythian era with one another, Rostovtzeff notes that some of the objects have parallels with objects from the Crimea and the banks of the Dnieper River. He does not exclude the possibility of their origin in the Kuban region, but, taking into account the differences in the colors of the gold, some technological methods of manufacture, and the thickness of the plaques, he leans towards the possibility that these items constituted their own group.

Rostovtzeff further emphasizes a relatively small group of Sarmatian objects, noting the strings of beads that belong to that and earlier periods. Taking into account the presence among the beads of some Egyptian scarabs and figures of recumbent lions, he advises asking for a consultation from Egyptologists. The third part of the material consists of medieval objects, which Rostovtzeff, not being a specialist, declines to characterize.

In conclusion, Rostovtzeff expresses his readiness to publish the Scythian and Sarmatian objects if the relevant photographs are sent to him.¹¹

It is unclear from his later letters to the museum whether he had received the requested



Fig. 5. Gold diadem (Two fragments) decorated with filigree and enamel. L.8.1 and 5.7 cm. 5th century BCE.



Fig. 6. Gold earrings decorated with filigree and granulation. H. 2.6 cm. 5th c. BCE.

photographs and whether he wrote the planned article (even if it were written, it remained unpublished — A.L.).

Returning to the time immediately preceding the auction of the Canessa collection, let us note that during the March 21, 1930 meeting of the Board of Managers of the Museum, the possible acquisition of the Scytho-Sarmatian collection was discussed. A member of the Board since 1916, a well-known businessman and benefactor, William Hinckle Smith, decided to buy the Maikop collection for the museum. This present to the Museum seems especially generous considering that it was offered at the time of the Great Depression, when numerous banks and companies went bankrupt and the economic situation was not favorable to such impressive donations.

It appears that we will never know why the museum, not expressing interest in buying Canessa's collection earlier, now decided to acquire it during the Great Depression, or why Smith supported the museum's decision. I think, however, that the terrible warning by Andersen Galleries that it might sell the Maikop collection (lot #120) piece by piece played a significant role

in the museum's decision [Canessa 1930, Lot no. 120]. Here was a real chance that the treasure would cease to exist as such, having been divided among many private collections of antiquities. Considering the tastes of the collectors at the time and the principles of collection creation, no doubt house wares and work tools made of bronze and iron, a third of the collection, would have simply disappeared. I think generations of professional and amateur lovers of ancient history ought to be grateful to Mr. Smith and the University Museum for saving this magnificent collection of antiquities from southern Russia. The importance of the Pennsylvania acquisition increases many times when it is understood that this is at once the only large archeological collection from Eastern Europe in North America as well as a part of the world's largest collection (outside of Russia) that describes the material and spiritual culture of tribes inhabiting the steppes of the northern Black Sea area and the foothills region of the northwestern Caucasus for 4500 years, from the 3rd millennium BCE to approximately 1400 CE.

More than a hundred years ago Merle de Massoneau had begun amassing the collection that only in the 1930's found its permanent owners. The museums of Berlin, New York, and the University of Pennsylvania, as well as Cologne became the owners of the largest collection of antiquities from Eastern Europe outside of Russia. Many revolutions had now died down, two world wars had passed, the Soviet Union had appeared and disappeared, and the Russia free of Communism returned to the world community. Nazism was destroyed in Germany, which after a forty year division became one again and entered the united Europe. The objects created by generations past and saved by the museums for future ones had

become mute witnesses of modern history. Unfortunately, the storms of history did not spare the objects themselves. In particular, many rich finds from royal Scythian barrows (Aleksandropol, Chmurev, Mordvinovskii) that had been preserved in the Kharkov Museum of History disappeared during the Second World War. I had had the opportunity to work with many objects damaged by fire in the same war in the museums of Ukraine and Germany. I was truly happy when in 1989, during my first visit to the Berlin Museum's Prehistory Department, I saw some Bronze Age objects that before the war had been kept in the Kherson museum of local history. Thanks to the kindness and collaboration of the scholars from Berlin, these objects bought by the museum from a private party had been returned to the Kherson museum by the early 1990's.

During the course of my work with the Berlin part of the Maikop collection, I encountered again the consequences of the Second World War. The reader already knows that some of the objects preserved by two departments of the Berlin Museum had been damaged by fire, while some others were broken and survived in fragments, and still others disappeared altogether. Happily,



Fig. 7. Gold bracelet decorated with rams' heads (one broken) on the fittings. Diameter 7 cm. 5th c. BCE.

both departments had inventory books, compiled respectively in 1907 and 1913. These professional books included the objects' inventory numbers, their brief descriptions, including their dimensions, and most importantly sketches of these objects, the quality of which can be ascertained by comparison with actual surviving items.

In this manner, because of their descriptions in the inventory books, the hope of recovering these objects still exists. The first step in this necessary direction is the corresponding publication of these materials using the archival information, not only the descriptions and sketches but also surviving photographs and negatives. Naturally, the catalogue of the proposed publication of the Maikop collection would include all information known to me regarding the missing objects along with their inventory sketches and photographs. I hope such a publication would become the property of many specialists and amateurs of the museums in the Old and the New Worlds, of major auction houses, and relatively small antique galleries and stores. After all, the very existence of such a publication would not only return a missing archeological source to world history, but also fulfill a fiscal function important to all in the museum profession: wherever these objects appear, people must know they are being sought, that they had been stolen during the Second World War and must be returned to the rightful owners, the Berlin Museum's Departments of Prehistory and Classics.

It is said that wars are not over until the last soldier is buried. I would like to add: and not until the monuments of material and spiritual culture of the past, ones that belong to all of humanity, are returned to museums from which they were stolen.

I think that returning stolen art treasures is an important moral and ethical problem of modern times, one that must be addressed by organizations such as UNESCO as well as by the scientific and cultural communities of the world. I am an optimist, and I have some reasons for being one. Think, my dear reader, how we could hope that after the Second World War the world could see again, for example, treasures brought by Schliemann from legendary Troy. With efforts by the world community it has happened already [Tolstikov and Treister 1996]. Similarly, a day will come when we will discover that items that had disappeared from de Massoneau's collection are found! The proposed book will help this process; that reason alone makes it worth writing and publishing. And so I would like to hope that the introduction of the world's largest collection of antiquities from the northern Black Sea area, a collection that is virtually unknown to specialists in Russia, Ukraine, and Georgia, and to all who are somehow connected to the study of civilizations of the Eastern Mediterranean, will be a positive impulse for a thoughtful analysis of this multifaceted archaeological source.

Now this book is ready. We in the University of Pennsylvania are waiting for sponsors' and donors' help which we need for publication of "The Maikop Treasure."

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- Canessa 1930
An important collection of rare and valuable antiquities: Gothic and renaissance furniture, important Italian Renaissance bronze, stone

& marble sculptures, primitive paintings & early wood carvings, rare Greek & Graeco-Roman sculptures & pottery, gathered from famous European collections, by the late Ercole Canessa ... New York: American Art Association, Anderson Galleries, Inc., 1930

Catalogue 1922

Catalogue des antiquités grécques, romaines et barbares du Bosphore Cimmerien. Paris, 1922.

Greifenhagen 1970-1975

Adolf Greifenhagen. *Schmuckarbeiten in Edelmetall.* 2 vols. Berlin: Staatl. Museen Preuss. Kulturbesitz, Antikenabteilung, 1970-1975.

Minns 1942

Ellis H. Minns. *The Art of the Northern Nomads* (Annual lecture on aspects of art, Henriette Hertz trust of the British Academy, 1942). London: Milford, 1944 (first published in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 18).

Potratz 1960

Johannes A. H. Potratz. "Skythische Kunst." *Orientalia*, N.S. 29 (1960).

Potratz 1963

Johannes A. H. Potratz. *Die Skythen in Südrussland: Ein untergegangenes Volk in Südosteuropa.* Basel: Raggi, 1963.

Rostowzew 1931

Mikhail Ivanovich Rostowzew [Rostovtzeff, Rostovtsev]. *Skythien und der Bosphorus.* Berlin: H. Schoetz, 1931.

Shmidt 1927

Hubert Schmidt. "Skythischer Pferdegeschirrschmuck aus einem silber Depot unbekannter Herkunft." *Prehistorische Zeitschrift*, 18 (1927).

SKIFIKA 1993

SKIFIKA. Peterburgskii Arkheologicheskii vestnik No. 5 (St. Petersburg, 1993). [Special

number containing writings by and about M. I. Rostovtzeff.]

Tolstikov and Treister 1996

Vladimir Tolstikov and Mikhail Treister. *The Gold of Troy: Searching for Homer's Fabled City.* Intr. Irina Antonova, tr. Christina Sever and Mila Bonnichses. New York: H. N. Abrams, 1996.

Veselovskii 1909-1910

Nikolai Ivanovich Veselovskii. ["Raskopki N. I. Veselovskogo v Kubanskoi obl."] *Otchet Arkheologicheskoi komissii.* 1901-1910 (1913).

Notes

1. Referencing the letter by D. von Bothmers (December 12, 1961), the literature contains a mistaken report that de Massoneau had accumulated his collection over five years (1890-1895) — see Greifenhagen 1970-1975, Vol. I, p. 41; see also Damm 1988, p. 65). At the same time, the latter article (p. 67) notes that among early medieval materials from the de Massoneau collection, the most important are those discovered in Kerch, in the tomb opened on May 24, 1904. Clearly, de Massoneau continued to enlarge his collection at least as late as the second half of 1904.

2. Archive of the Berlin Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte, #1128/07 (translation from German mine — A.L.).

3. Information kindly provided me by the keeper of the collection of de Massoneau, Dr. Gertrud Platz (her letter to me of August 21, 2002).

4. Catalogue 1922. Objects offered on sale originated in eastern Crimea, the Taman Peninsula and the neighboring Kuban regions.

5. Archive of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Letter no. 58 of John Marshall.

6. Antiken Abteilung Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Inventory Book, p. 35 (Protocol of July 8, 1913).

7. If we are talking about medieval items, we should remember that at the end of 1935 and beginning of 1936, 673 items were sold (according to Diergardt's will) to Cologne's Römisch-Germanisches Museum. Two hundred of them, well preserved after the war, became the theme of a special publication. All these items belong to the time of the great migrations and are dated to the 4th-6th centuries CE. See Damm 1988, pp. 65-210.

8. Schmidt 1927, pl. 9. Two objects published here do not belong to the de Massoneau collection, namely a plaque in the shape of a moose (inv.#7036), from the P. Mavrogordato collection, and a part of some bimetallic (bronze, iron) object in the shape of a horse leg (inv.#5826), from the collection of R. Virhov.

9. For Canessa's activities in the world antiques market, see Catalogue 1915, Introduction by Prof. Arduino Colasanti.

10. His important books include *Antichnaia dekorativnaia zhivopis' na Iuge Rossii* (1914), *Ellinstvo i Iranstvo na Iuge Rossii* (1918) [his *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia* is a separate work and not merely a translation of this into English — ed.], *Skifiia i Bospor* (1925), and *The Animal Style in South Russia and China* (1929). For a complete listing of Rostovtzeff's works concerning the study of southern Russia, see SKIFIKA 1993, pp.9-11.

11. Archive of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Letter of M. I. Rostovtzeff, undated, early February 1932.