

CAT 599 - Silver panel with dancing warriors

K621, K793, K1008

Condition Report

Conservation Started: April 2016

Conservation Finished: April 2016

Conservator: Kayleigh Fuller

Time Taken: 1 hour

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Dimensions: 36 mm (L of largest), <0.5mm (Th)

Weight before: 0.80g

Weight after: n/a

Digital photography:

Taken with a Canon EOS digital camera under daylight bulbs and Photomicrographs taken using Keyence VHX-1000 3D digital microscope with LED and/or fibre optic lights, 20-200x magnification.

Description: Visual and microscopic examination using Meiji stereo microscope 7-75x magnification. Fragments of a sheet panel in silver showing dancing warriors. Just three fragments remain, two re-joined. It is possible they are from the same panel, though they could also be fragments from a pair of panels. The pattern was made by impressing the sheet from the reverse with a die. It probably originally showed two identical warriors with 'horned' headdresses and dressed in tunics, based on known examples from other sites. Each probably held a pair of spears, and possibly also a sword in the other hand (on the evidence of the other examples). The sheet does not appear to have been gilded. (CF)

Label information

Associations:

Helmet material

Pre-Conservation Condition: Visual and microscopic examination using Meiji stereo microscope 7-75x magnification.

The silver has embrittled greatly and therefore the panel fragments are heavily corroded with the edges folded over and damaged. The impression has been flattened slightly which makes it hard to interpret the pattern overall.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Study

Aim: Cleaning/ Reassembly

Materials: Soft natural/synthetic brushes, thorn in pin vice/holder, IMS on metals, 50:50 water/IMS on metals, cotton wool swabs, cocktail stick, Paraloid B72

Treatment at British Museum Prior to treatment at Birmingham Museums Trust

The granular soil on the front and back was mechanically removed or reduced where possible using a

fine thorn tip secured in a pin vice and a small pure bristle brush. 50:50 IMS/water was used to soften the soil to facilitate removal. Loose particles of soil were then removed with a small swab of IMS.

The corrosion products were left in situ; corrosion was not active and can be further cleaned or stabilised at a later date.

The paper K number was adhered to the back with HMG brand Paraloid B72 (ethyl methacrylate copolymer) from the tube, applied with a cocktail stick.

An association between fragments K621 and K793 was made initially.

Appropriate packing in Plastazote cut outs and crystals boxes.

Further treatment at Birmingham Museum).

Fragments attached previously at the British Museum were re-adhered as they detached.

Joins were made between K621 (0.33g) and K1008 (0.22g).

Dimensions were 35mm (L) x 20mm (W) x <1mm (Th)

K793 (0.25g) was boxed with these joined fragments.

Dimensions were 13mm (L) x 15mm (W) x <1mm (Th)

Each of the die impressed sheet fragments were appropriately packed in an individual crystal box with inserts cut out of the plastazote lining in the suspected position of the original die pattern. Small fragments were placed into gelatine capsules or sample vials. The box was fitted tightly to prevent movement and further breakage. This also aided in correct final photography of the main die impressed sheet panels.

Post-Conservation Condition/Findings:

Key features:

- Dancing warriors
- Silver sheet panel

Samples:

None – insufficient soil.

References:

E.S. Blakelock, XRF analysis of silver foils from the Staffordshire Hoard. British Museum Science Report PR0744-14, British Museum Research Report, (2014) unpublished

Shearman, F., 2014 'Silver gilt sheet/Frieze 8B Caenby Type Condition Report' British Museum reports

Shearman,F., Camurcuoglu, D., Hockey, M., and McArthur, G. 2014 *Department Of Conservation And Scientific Research: Staffordshire Hoard Die-Imprinted Sheeting Conservation Report*. Unpublished report for the British Museum