

K1034 Condition Report

Conservation Started: 22/11/2011

Conservation Finished: 23/11/2011

Conservator: Cymbeline Storey

Time Taken: 5 hours

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Dimensions: (L) 38mm (W) 37mm (D) 32mm

Weight before: 5.67g

Weight after: 5.47g

X-ray: L54

Catalogue number: 457

Digital photography:

Taken with a Nikon Coolpix 4500 digital camera, under daylight or bulbs and Meiji Techno RZ Stereo microscope with an Infinity 1 camera (with analyses capture software) and fibre optic lights, 7-75x magnification. Taken before, during and after.

Annotation on any of the storage bags or boxes: SSH 09, 1001, 1971, 388 (in a triangle), 6/8/09

Description: Visual and microscopic examination using Meiji stereo microscope 7-75x magnification

Gold hilt fitting with beaded and twisted filigree decoration in an interlaced design in the centre and twisted beaded filigree wire (ie, beaded wire that has been twisted) around the edges. There are four empty fastening holes, two at each end. The back of the object is plain/flat gold with convex indentations corresponding to recessed areas between filigree strands on the front.

Associated Objects: None

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

The object is bent in an irregular V shape, and one of the four corners (where the fastening holes are) is torn and folded over on itself.

The outer surface is ~80% covered with compact, sandy soil. The back is ~50% covered with soil. Under 7.5x magnification a few small, glossy, black inclusions can be seen in the soil on the front as well as a patch of orange soil.

Visible filigree appears to be in good condition, with little flattening of high points. There are a few small dents in the filigree. The object is structurally stable. Visible gold has some superficial scratches but appears to be tarnish-free.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Analysis / Study

Aim: Partial cleaning

Materials: Soft natural/synthetic brushes, cotton swab, cocktail stick, thorn in pin vice/holder, water/IMS on metals

50% of the front of the object was cleaned to reveal the filigree. Only a small patch of the back was cleaned so that the paper K number could be attached.

The granular soil on the exterior/interior surface was mechanically removed or reduced where possible using a fine thorn tip secured in a pin vice and a small pure bristle brush. IMS or water was used to soften the soil to facilitate removal. Loose particles of soil were then removed with a small swab of IMS.

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.

A new storage box padded with white polyethylene foam was constructed to house the object.

Post-Conservation Condition/Findings:

Only half of the outer surface was cleaned to reveal the filigree. Cleaning revealed a complex filigree decoration composed of wires of various thicknesses. The two thin wires surrounding the chunky beaded filigree in the centre are very fine. Filigree types present are beaded, twisted (in herringbone configuration), and beaded wire that has been twisted. All filigree is secure and in good condition apart from a few dents. The high points of the beaded wire around the edge have been worn down in several areas.

The back of the object is plain/flat gold with convex indentations. It looks as if the base layer in areas between interlace filigree wires on the front was deliberately pushed downward to increase the appearance of depth, resulting in pronounced indentations on the back. There are a few patches of light orange tarnish on the back.

Analysis Undertaken:

XRF analysis of the object was performed. See document 'K1034 XRF Report'.

Samples:

1. soil from front
2. glossy, black inclusions in the soil on the front