

K1114 Condition Report

Conservation Started: 06/03/2013

Conservation Finished: 06/03/2013

Conservator: Cymbeline Storey

Time Taken: 2 hours

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Dimensions: (L) 24mm (W) 12mm (D) 4mm

Weight before: 1.89g

Weight after: 1.84g

Catalogue number: 571

Digital photography:

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

Annotation on any of the storage bags or boxes: None noted

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

Fragment of straight silver strip with niello inlay decoration in a geometric design on one side. The top border is 3.5mm wide, solid/undecorated silver gilt containing one intact and one partial fastening hole. The silver area is divided by niello channels into triangles and 5-sided, 'tooth-like' pieces. The fragment is bent and slightly convex when viewed from the front. The longest edge is the top (gilt) edge; the bottom, right and left sides are break edges.

Associated Objects: TBC

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

All edges apart from the top of the gilded border are breaks.

Front: Some soil coverage; it has no remarkable features and it is generally a thin layer apart from a few thicker patches. Soil also fills channels where niello is missing and the fastening holes. There is general surface abrasion. The gilt border has patchy grey tarnish and the ungilded areas have tarnished to a consistent, dark grey colour. The niello inlay is in a geometric pattern of straight and angled lines. Some of the niello is missing; the channels contain soil.

There is a dent in the top edge of the gilded border. An area of the gilded border has numerous cracks in the gilding, with the gilding curling up off the surface. This area will probably require consolidation to prevent loss of gilding flakes.

Back: The back is ungilded and heavily tarnished to a consistent dark grey colour. There are several recent scratches and a thin layer of silver chloride corrosion.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Study / Analysis

Aim: Total cleaning

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

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. 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 area of the border with peeling gilding and one of the niello channels required consolidation to avoid detachment/loss with handling or transportation; Paraloid B72 (ethyl methacrylate copolymer) 20% w/v in acetone was applied with a small paint brush. See 'K1114 Treatment Details' for location of consolidated areas.

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 storage box padded with white polyethylene foam was made for housing the object.

Post-Conservation Condition/Findings:

Soil removal has revealed a silver surface with a fine layer of silver chloride corrosion and an empty niello channel with a pronounced line down the centre. It is unclear if the line is a deliberate mark (i.e., a keying mark) or a crack.

The gilded border has several distinct dents on the edge and patchy tarnish. The back has a thin layer of silver chloride corrosion.

Key Features:

- Straight silver strip fragment with gilded border and niello inlay
- Niello in geometric design

Samples:

1. soil
2. niello fragment