

K119 Condition Report

Conservation Started: 25/05/2012

Conservation Finished: 25/05/2012

Conservator: Cymbeline Storey

Time Taken: 3.5 hours

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Dimensions: (L) 20mm (W) 11mm (H) 6mm (Th) beaded wire edge 1mm.

Weight before: 0.88g

Weight after: 0.85g

Catalogue number: 415

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 and after.

Annotation on any of the storage bags or boxes: None

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

Five-sided gold panel (possibly hilt fitting). The corners of the object are curved rather than pointed. The front of the fitting is decorated with beaded and twisted filigree in the following scheme:

Around the perimeter is one strand of beaded filigree. Next to this are two strands of twisted filigree in opposing directions. Along the centre is a vertical line of two strands of twisted filigree in opposing directions. On either side of this central line are three 'rolled scrolls' of beaded filigree. On the right side there is an additional 'fish-hook' shape of beaded filigree, so the design is not symmetrical. Above the scrolls on each side is one beaded filigree spiral.

There are three circular fastening holes; one near the summit and one in each of the bottom corners. All are empty apart from soil. Each fastening hole is surrounded by a single beaded filigree wire.

Associated Objects: None known at present.

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

The object is bent so that it is convex from the front. It is particularly bent on one end. There is a tear in the gold at the summit; the resulting space is filled with soil.

The front is ~75% covered with compact, sandy soil with no remarkable features or inclusions. The soil obscures part of the decoration.

Some of the filigree is lifting from the surface due to distortion of the object, but it appears to be stable and intact. Some of the high points of the filigree are worn down.

The back is plain/flat gold that is ~10% covered with soil. There is a lip of gold around each of the fastening holes, suggesting that they were punched from the front.

There is general surface abrasion as well as a few recent/fresh-looking scratches.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Display

Aim: Partial cleaning

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

The granular soil on the exterior 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.

No soil was removed from the back or from inside the fastening holes.

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. A strip of Tyvek (spun bound polyethylene fibres) was used as a cushion for the object and to help lift it out of the foam.

Post-Conservation Condition/Findings:

Cleaning clarified the filigree design, which is asymmetrical and features beaded and twisted filigree wires. There are six rolled scrolls, two spirals, and one 'fish-hook'. Each fastening hole is surrounded by a single beaded wire.

The filigree is secure, though lifting from the surface in the centre due to distortion. One small section of the beaded wire around the perimeter is missing; otherwise the filigree appears to be complete/intact.

The gold is tarnish-free and has general abrasion.

One of the rolled scrolls shows an error in manufacture; the bottom half of the scroll does not loop around enough times.

Key Features:

- Gold panel with beaded and twisted filigree decoration (hilt fitting?)
- 'Rolled scroll' filigree; a mistake in one of the scrolls
- Three fastening holes filled with soil

Samples:

1. soil from front