

K 1439 Condition Report

Conservation Started: 31/5/13

Conservation Finished: 3/6/13

Conservator: Deborah Magnoler

Time Taken: 2.25 hr

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Dimensions: (L) 21 mm (W) 5 mm (T) 1 mm

Weight before: 0.84g

Weight after: 0.80g

Catalogue number: 558

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.

A gold panel decorated with an intertwining filigree pattern, possibly a stylised snake. The panel is slightly curved and tapers on one side so that one end is narrower than the other. The back appears to be plain and mark-free.

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

Partly covered by a compact layer of soil. This object may have been wet sieved. Some of the original gold surface appears where there is no soil and the dark encrustation has flaked away. These areas appear bright, but the yellow gold might have been discoloured by a red tinge, perhaps due to the iron content of the soil.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Study

Aim: Total cleaning

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

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.

Possible 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.

A storage box padded with white polyethylene foam was made for housing 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: The back of the object is partly covered by an encrustation or layer of fine silt mixed with what appears to be dark orange iron corrosion. There is also a patch of a pale green material in this area, which might suggest copper corrosion. The front is greatly affected by a dark encrustation adhering closely to the gold surface; this too has the appearance of Fe corrosion. It is unlikely that considerable quantities of Fe or Cu be contained in the object, so these encrustations are likely to have been deposited on the surface during burial, perhaps by the close proximity of a different object.

Samples:

None – insufficient soil.