

K1652 Condition Report

Conservation Started: 15/04/2013

Conservation Finished: 16/04/2013

Conservator: Cymbeline Storey

Time Taken: 2 hours

Including digital photography, report, conservation and packing.

Dimensions: (L) incomplete 15mm (H) incomplete (wall) 5mm (W) 11mm (Th) walls 1mm

Weight before: 1.27g

Weight after: 0.86g

Catalogue number: 590

Digital photography:

Taken with a 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

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

Slightly curved, rectangular fragment of silver gilt strip thought to be a 'helmet crest' (TBC). Two of the four edges are breaks. The fragment is gilded on the front and ungilded on the back. The gilded face has an incised zoomorphic interlace decoration (interlaced zoomorph bodies with heads with depressed rings as eyes at the finished short end).

Associated Objects: TBC

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

The object is a silver gilt fragment; two of the four edges are old-looking breaks covered with a thin layer of soil. The fragment is generally rectangular but slightly curved. It is flat.

There is a thin film of orangeish soil on the front. The back is completely covered with a thick layer of soil and cannot be seen. There is an unknown dark (possibly organic) deposit in the soil on the back.

The gilded areas of the object have moderate orange tarnish and general surface abrasion as well as some deposits of bumpy, purple corrosion (likely silver chloride). The finished edge is also covered with what appears to be silver chloride corrosion. The tarnish is likely from burial.

Treatment: Carried out using a Meiji stereo microscope

Purpose: Study

Aim: Partial 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/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.

Silver chloride deposits on the front were reduced using a thorn in a pin vice to make the zoomorphic decoration more legible. No attempt was made to remove corrosion products from the back of the object; they can be removed at a later date if desired.

The paper K number was adhered to the interior 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:

During conservation some black material (possible organic?) was uncovered in the soil on the back. It was retained in sample vial 2 for future study/analysis.

Deposits of corrosion (likely silver chloride) on the back were left in situ and can be removed at a later date if desired.

The front of the object has patchy dark tarnish (likely from burial); the areas of heaviest tarnish correspond to the areas with the greatest soil coverage pre-conservation. The gilded surface has general abrasion.

The zoomorphic design can now be seen fully. There are a total of four eyes corresponding to four (?) heads with open jaws. The eyes are depressed/punched rings.

Fine, regular, old-looking scratches cover the back – possible working/filing marks from manufacture.

Key Features:

- Fragment of 'helmet crest' strip (TBC)
- Silver gilt with zoomorphic interlace decoration on front; creatures have depressed rings for eyes
- Dark deposit in soil on back might be organic material (TBC)

Samples:

1. soil – back
2. black material in soil on back