



Archaeological Ceramics Restoration Project, San Gemini, Italy 2012

Course: SG203B - Introduction to Conservation of Archaeological Ceramics – Part 2, Workshop

Instructors:

Prof. Elena Raimondi (Project Conservator / Restorer)

Prof. Elena Lorenzetti (Archaeologist)

Student's name:	Emily S. Addis
University:	Temple University

FINAL CONSERVATION REPORT

Reference data and description

Inventory number 608474 US 329 Vasetto (beaker). Excavated from S. Maria in Pantano from 1 d.c. Vasetto is wheel thrown fine earthenware and used as a cup/beaker. It is an ovoid shape with a flat bottom. The clay body is very fine, and the fabric color is buff with traces of a red slip. It is decorated by engraving, with 8 horizontal lines around the entire width of the body. The lines are situated in close pairs (grouped by 2 with larger spaces in between pairs). There is one deformation from production (lines visible on the clay body which are not part of the engraved decoration). There are a number of different tempers in the clay fabric. There are no visible inscription or production marks, nor any visible writing or labels.

Condition report

The remnants of the clay body are broken into 10 fragments. Two fragments of notable size are those that make up the foot and lower portion of the body. Much of the rim has survived in small sherds. There is a fair amount of dark soil encrustations situated in both the interior and exterior of the pot. The encrustation on the bottom of the interior is a slightly different material, which was more difficult to remove. There were small gypsum inclusions at various places. There were neither previous restoration attempts nor any notable recent damage. There are scarce traces of a red slip, and visible brushstrokes on the ceramic surface revealing the direction of the brushstrokes from when the slip was applied.

Restoration

1. Documentation

We made three different documentation accounts; photographic documentation, graphic documentation using photo print outs, and a written documentation. The sherds were photographed before, during, and after cleaning. Additionally, they were photographed in their appropriated positions (held together using masking tape). I then removed the tape and took photographs of the fragments of the vasetto down around the pot in relation to their proper position. I removed the tape from my pot fragments using water and ethanol and took photographs. Photographs were taken with the dental wax applied and secured with masking tape. Additionally, we used print outs of our "before" pictures and traced the outline of our fragments and their fractures with black marker. Outlines of the decoration, manufacturing errors, and encrustations in orange, blue, and green, respectively. I made a written documentation of the vasetto before beginning the cleaning which examines and explains the state of the fragments prior to the restoration. The observations from this documentation are written above (Condition report).

2. Cleaning (which method you used, its characteristics, how and why)

To remove the encrustation, I chose to clean mechanically using a scalpel. Removal of the encrustation using a chemical method of cleaning was not necessary. In most cases the ceramic body was softer than the encrustation and

required a delicate touch. Most of the encrustation was fairly easy to remove with the exception of an accumulation of hard encrustation around the interior of the base. I removed what I could without causing damage to the object, and a small amount of the hard encrustation remains. After cleaning, we consolidated the objects using an acrylic solvent (Paraloid B72) in acetone. The pieces were completely submerged in the acrylic resin bath and removed after 5-6 minutes.

3. Bonding

I applied a resin of 2.5% Mowital B6OHH (2 layers) followed by 3 layers of 5% Mowital B6OHH as a consolidation agent for the fractures in preparation for joining. Acrylic resin (20 %Paraloid B72) in acetone was used as the gluing agent. I applied the glue generously and held the fragments in place giving the glue a chance to partially dry before stretching masking tape on both the front and back fragments to secure the sherds in place. I removed the excess gluing agent from my pot using acetone on a cotton swab.

4. Filling

We made fillings using Plaster of Paris-based filler mixed with cellulose resins (Polyfilla). Of the available pigments, I used only raw sienna (used the most), and raw umber (about 1:4 ratio between raw umber and raw sienna) and a small amount of burnt sienna. I made a plaster sample and applied paraloid 2.5 as a protection consolidate and yielded the best color match for the ceramic body. Dental wax was inlaid on the inside of the vasetto to back the plaster fillings. I heated the wax with a hairdrye and used my fingers to shape the wax along the inside of the vasetto. After the wax had cooled in its proper shape, I positioned the wax into the lacks and secured it with masking tape. I used this method on three lacks: one very large and two smaller ones. There were two lacks in the rim, which I have decided to replace to protect original fragments of the rim from breaking off. I molded the wax against the original parts of the rim and then fitted it to two areas where the rim is gone. Then, I reinforced the wax surrounding the rim with masking tape. After mixing and applying the plaster to the lacks I allowed the plaster to dry before removing the dental wax. In addition to the lacks, I applied plaster to most of the fractures to hide the glue and fill spaces where light shone through the fractures. I worked mechanically with a scalpel to clean the plaster from the fractures and used a cotton swab with water to further remove excess plaster. After the plaster in the lacks had dried I worked the surfaces mechanically with a scalpel to reach the best shape.

5. Other notes

Most of the red slip was found preserved under the encrustation although only fragile flecks have survived.

Photo (before)



Photo (during)



Photo (during)



Photo (during)



Photo (after)



Photo (after)

