

DISCUSSION #3

Summarized by Harriet F. Beaubien***

This discussion session began with a clarification about the use of a superimposed piece of painted glass to compensate the La Farge inscription losses, rather than direct inpainting [VT,MCH]. Because of the relative instability of synthetic resin paints on glass ("cold paint") compared with vitreous paints, Higgins felt this type of separable compensation would be less problematic over time.

The Minai ceramics provided an opportunity to observe the lengths to which our predecessors have gone to reconstruct archaeological pieces for presentation in a fine arts context [EP,VG,TDW,MLC]. Many of these have undocumented provenance and unclear repair history, as evidenced by the complex sequence of fills. Craft showed additional slides and pointed out features of sherds manufactured for fill purposes; she noted in particular the beading up of glaze along their edges and slight differences in craquelure, gloss and color. These carefully crafted fills were reused in subsequent restoration campaigns in conjunction with plaster fills. She also mentioned that fired fill sherds have been used as a compensation technique for other objects, citing Greek Tanagra figurines and vases, majolica and Staffordshire wares.

The high value ascribed to Minai wares has given rise to objects such as one in the Buffalo Science Museum collection, mentioned as an example of a marriage of three or four different pieces [JT]. Disassembled now and mounted as separated pieces (pinned into an Ethafoam support) for a more archaeologically informative presentation, the "bowl" may be included in a possible exhibit about the Middle East antiquities trade which would highlight pastiches such as this.

Contributors to the discussion (listed alphabetically); presentors appear first, marked by an *asterisk:

MLC *Meg Loew Craft
MCH *Mary Clerkin Higgins
RL *Rosa Lowinger/Donna Williams
NR *Nancie Ravenel/Gordon Hanlon
VG Virginia Greene
EP Ellen Pearlstein
VT Valentine Talland
JT Jonathan Thornton
TDW Terry Drayman Weisser

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20560-0001