

Research Article

A New Concept for the Restoration Passport of Ceramic Cultural Monuments

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Abstract

This article examines the challenges and nuances of managing restoration documentation for movable cultural monuments, particularly focusing on ceramic artifacts. The current system of documentation is critiqued for its lack of standardization and reliance on outdated practices that fail to meet the demands of modern restoration efforts. In response to these shortcomings, the author proposes a new, comprehensive model for a museum monument passport tailored specifically to ceramics. This model emphasizes the integration of detailed descriptions of technological characteristics, conditions of use, and types of damage, while also incorporating systematic monitoring to ensure ongoing preservation. The proposed passport model addresses the unique needs of ceramics, recognizing their typological diversity and the influence of factors such as production technology, environmental exposure, and usage history on their preservation. It advocates for a structured, questionnaire-based approach to documentation, which promotes clarity, reduces errors, and facilitates the standardization of terminology across restoration practices. The inclusion of schematic illustrations, classification data, and advanced technological descriptors enriches the depth of documentation while supporting easy digital integration for data management and monitoring. Central to the model is the prioritization of regular monitoring, enabling early detection of issues and timely intervention to prevent further degradation. The passport also incorporates provisions for documenting restoration efforts, including the analysis of previous interventions and their impact on the artifact's condition. This systematic approach not only enhances the scientific rigor of restoration activities but also ensures the authenticity and historical value of the artifacts are preserved. Future research directions include practical testing and adaptation of this model for various types of movable monuments, fostering international collaboration and unified standards for cultural preservation.

Keywords

Monument Passport, Museum Object, Ceramics, Restoration Documentation, Restoration, Monument Monitoring, Preservation Assessment

1. Introduction

One of the most important aspects of researching monuments is their scientific description, which is documented in the "Cultural Heritage Monument Passport" [1], approved by

the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation.

When a monument is damaged and requires structural reinforcement, cleaning from contamination, consolidation, and

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Received: 23 March 2025; **Accepted:** 7 April 2025; **Published:** 28 April 2025



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other interventions, a "Restoration Passport" is used, which is currently in effect in Ukraine and the Russian Federation. For architectural monuments, a passport form and rules for filling it out have been developed, approved by the Federal Service for Supervision of Compliance with Legislation in the Sphere of Cultural Heritage Protection (Rosokhrankultura) [2].

For movable cultural monuments, such as oil and tempera paintings, there are various methodological recommendations for filling out the restoration passport. [3-7] It should be noted that the passport is filled out in a free form, devoid of certain standards.

In the article by R. V. Shipina, despite the stated title "Methodology for describing works of decorative and applied art in the professional education of restorers", only references are given to domestic and international documents on the preservation of cultural heritage [8].

Since the publication of my first article, "On the Issue of Museum and Restoration Documentation Management" in 2000, almost nothing has changed [9]. The unified restoration passports developed in the 1970s for all types of monuments remain unchanged. This is due to the absence of a regulatory act that comprehensively addresses all issues related to movable historical and cultural monuments [10].

The deficiencies in the legislative framework for preserving cultural heritage in the Russian Federation lead to the fact that the procedures and conditions for preserving movable historical and cultural monuments are not legally regulated [10] (Мотастырев. 2015, p. 73). The 1978 UNESCO Recommendation on the Preservation of Movable Cultural Property [11], which includes a list of measures aimed at ensuring the preservation of monuments in museums, religious buildings, and private collections, remains relevant today.

The procedure for issuing a cultural heritage passport (historical and cultural monument) of the Russian Federation and the passport template adopted in 2016 based on Federal Law No. 73-FZ "On Cultural Heritage Objects (Historical and Cultural Monuments) of the Peoples of the Russian Federation" apply to immovable cultural heritage objects and are hardly suitable for movable monuments [12].

The restoration passport has long ceased to satisfy museum workers and restorers because a unified standard system for describing the preservation of ceramic artifacts has not yet been developed. This leads to the failure to meet the main requirement – the completeness and high level of restoration documentation.

According to the requirements, such documentation should include photographs, diagrams, drawings, field stage cartograms (for archaeological ceramics), and a description of the monument's condition at various stages of its study, restoration, and conservation, as well as ensure uniform terminology. Key sections such as "Monument Description," "Monument Condition," or "Previous Restorations" lack guidelines on what exactly needs to be noted in the description and in what order to do it.

Due to the fact that the monitoring of paintings is an es-

sentia issue for the preservation and conservation of this type of art work Dante Abate, Fabio Menna, Fabio Remondino, Maria Grazia implement their long-term project of 3D documentation [13]. About how digital 3D reproduction of paintings is used in practice to conduct a multi-stage analysis of the state of preservation and documentation of the effects of the restoration mentioned in an article by the authors' collective [14]. There are lectures given by restorers to draw the attention of scientists to archival data containing technical data and conservation projects architectural monuments to undermine and refute accepted facts and narratives of the history of architecture [15]. The need to make conservation documentation accessible and easy to use for various purposes is discussed by Maria Radin and Vesna Zivkovic [16]. They provide examples of a combination of internal and external management aimed at creating, using and managing data and information on the state of cultural heritage for conservation purposes.

The Russian Museum website noted that the existing system of organizing documents is extremely inconvenient for searching for information, and sections such as "Description of the state of conservation" have a free text description, making it difficult to monitor works.. It was stressed that "the unresolved restoration terminology and the subjective approach to describing conservation conditions create additional difficulties in the work." Therefore, a new form of forms for the computer information system CAMIS 5 was developed for the accounting and restoration departments of the restoration departments of the Russian Museum, as well as the network version of the subsystem "Restoration of museum values" for CAMIS 5 [17].

Thus, there is a need to adapt the generally accepted version of the passport to specific types of monuments.

Let's consider this issue using movable ceramic monuments as an example. These monuments represent extensive typological groups, including coarse ceramics from bricks to terracotta and fine ceramics such as porcelain, faience, and stoneware. Each of these groups has its own characteristics related to the production technology, composition of the original clay masses, firing temperature and degree, and artistic decoration. These factors influence the structure of the finished products, their mechanical, physical, chemical, aesthetic, and other properties, leading to the emergence of unique types of monuments as well as a variety of types of destruction [18]. This requires careful documentation and consideration during restoration and conservation.

Museum workers and restorers may miss important details when describing a monument because they are not specialists in the technology of this type of monument. The lack of standard terminology, assessment criteria for the monument's condition, and the freeform completion of documentation lead to inconsistencies and difficulties associated with restoration. This also complicates the processing and cataloging of data on computers, despite the abundance of

diverse information about the monuments in the passport.

2. Proposal for a New Passport Model for Ceramic Museum Monuments

2.1. Typology of Damage

Based on the aforementioned reasons, the author proposes a new descriptive and graphical passport model for museum monuments. This model is based on the typical belonging of the monument to a certain group - ceramics. The materials of each group of monuments are different, which requires an individual approach to their description.

It is evident that the most important task of museum conservation and restoration is to strengthen the damaged material structure of the monuments and to maximize the preservation of their authenticity [19]. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a detailed description of the monument's materials, identifying the features of its creation technology, determining the causes of destruction, and the extent of changes in its physical, mechanical, chemical, and other properties that have partially or completely changed over time. These changes can affect the monument's aesthetic qualities. Identifying the causes of these changes and the degree of monument destruction is a priority in pre-restoration research. Special emphasis should be placed on the circumstances that led to the monument's destruction. They can be divided into historically conditioned groups or types:

Type 1 – Unforeseen Constructive Flaws or Manufacturing Defects:

- 1) The initial (unsuccessful) creative idea of the author or an insufficiently thought-out design solution for the item creation tasks;
- 2) Production features (creation technology) of the item, resulting in unforeseen or new signs, properties uncharacteristic of similar items, or manufacturing defects;

Type 2 – Damage Related to Exploitation or Household Conditions:

Destruction occurring during the item's usage or due to conditions of its maintenance.

Type 3 – Damage Caused by Natural Impact:

- 1) Processes of natural aging of materials;
- 2) Adverse environmental conditions, including burial in soil (water), sudden changes in conditions when the item is excavated and/or storage conditions after extraction;

Type 4 – Errors in the Restoration Process:

Damage associated with unqualified restoration [20].

These types of destruction are historically conditioned as they are specific markers of the "existence" of the item, containing important information for researchers. This information can be obtained not only through visual signs but also through instrumental research. The aim is to establish clear parameters of the original properties changes of the item and express them in numerical or percentage terms. This approach will help preserve the

item's authentic properties, preventing many restoration mistakes [21]. For example, the most common mistake in restoration is the uncontrolled saturation of fragile archaeological items with various strengthening agents (consolidants), leading to the saturation of the item's open pores with foreign materials and changing its physical and mechanical properties to levels it initially did not have. A clear understanding by the restorer of how much the item's properties have changed compared to its original properties will allow them to accurately calculate the dose of the strengthening agent.

For the scientific description of ceramic artifacts, it is proposed to use a new format of forms in the form of questionnaires that already contain structured information on specified topics. Filling out the form will involve selecting the characteristics that match the required ones. This system has several advantages:

- 1) Clear sequence of description.
- 2) Standardization of terminology in restoration.
- 3) Mandatory response to each question eliminates omissions that may occur in freeform descriptions, even for experienced restorers.
- 4) The form should include a schematic image of the item from three or more positions with a coordinate grid.
- 5) The structured form allows easy entry of information into the computer for storage and further use.
- 6) Significant time savings in completing the passport.

2.2. New Passport Sections

The new model should include the following sections:

- 1) Catalog data of the monument:
 - a. Identification number.
 - b. Name.
 - c. Category.
 - d. Origin.
 - e. Author/Master.
 - f. Dimensions.
 - g. Materials.
 - h. Current status.
 - i. Location.
 - j. Photos and illustrations.
- 2) Identification and classification:
 - a. Belonging to a specific culture and time.
 - b. Belonging to a specific group (archaeological, household, toys, tableware, etc.).
- 3) Technological characteristics:
 - a. Material characteristics (porcelain, faience, pottery, majolica, etc.).
 - b. Homogeneity of mass and the presence of inclusions, their color, size, composition.
 - c. Presence of elements of different structure (reinforcements, fastenings, metal decor, etc.).
 - d. Forming method (hand molding, casting, pressing, pottery wheel, etc.).
 - e. Decoration (type of decoration and method of appli-

- cation, type of ornament or painting).
- f. Firing degree and conditions based on technological research (high temperature, low temperature, reduction, oxidation, etc.).
- g. Physical properties (density, strength, water absorption, etc.).
- h. Technological defects (cracks, deformations, color changes, surface bulging, glaze blistering, etc.).
- 4) Conditions of use:
 - a. Compositional integrity of the monument (fragmentation, number of fragments, size, losses - location, dimensions, etc.).
 - b. Condition of structural elements (body, glaze, slip, painting, gilding, etc.).
 - c. Wear of glaze, gilding.
 - d. Physical or chemical destruction, damage to decoration (peeling, delamination, chalking, etc.).
 - e. Deformations.
 - f. Mechanical damage (chips, dents, cuts, etc.).
 - g. For archaeology – characteristics of the find location (soil salinity, depth of burial, etc.).
 - h. Types of pollution
 - a) Surface contaminations: Dust, dirt, and other particles that can accumulate on the surface of the monument, deteriorating its appearance and complicating restoration.
 - b) Structural contaminations: Contaminants that can penetrate the ceramic pores, causing changes in its structure and damaging the material (stains, surface color changes, contamination of open pores, etc.).
 - c) Food residues, fats, scale, etc.
 - d) Dense soot or traces of soot on ceramic tableware from cooking over open flames.
 - e) Fusion with the surface of ceramics of foreign materials (sometimes present on ancient tableware).
- 5) Natural aging of monument materials:
 - a. Atmospheric conditions: Air pollution, presence of aggressive gases and dust can affect the surface of ceramics, causing color changes, glaze corrosion, and other damages.
 - b. Air humidity: Humidity is a critical factor for porous ceramics. High humidity can lead to the absorption of moisture and salts, causing cracking, delamination, and other structural damages. Low humidity, on the other hand, can lead to drying and brittleness of the material.
- 6) Biological damage:
 - a. Microorganisms: Fungi, bacteria, and lichens can destroy the structure of ceramics, penetrating porous materials and causing chemical changes.
 - b. Algae and moss: Under high humidity conditions, algae and moss can appear on the surface of ceramics, contributing to the material's destruction.
- 7) Previous restorations:

- a. Strengthening of structure and decoration (polymer impregnation, indicating the degree of reinforcement and materials).
- b. Changes in surface quality (becoming glossy, matte).
- c. Additions and their condition (material and quality of restoration completions).
- d. Color changes, misalignment of seams, and mechanical damage.
- e. Chemical damage and contamination from restoration materials (e.g., acid residues used for salt removal, gypsum for fillings, glue darkening and streaking, etc.).

3. Result

The result of the study and description should be an assessment of the monument's preservation [22], which addresses the following tasks:

- 1) Determining the degree and scale of destruction of the ceramic item.
- 2) Identifying the causes of destruction to eliminate or minimize their impact on the item.
- 3) Defining clear boundaries of the restorer's intervention.
- 4) Recording the condition of the monument at the time of examination for further monitoring.

These data can be easily grouped into a table. To make the table more portable and easily integratable into a computer program for monitoring the condition of the monument, a structured data format such as CSV (Comma-Separated Values) or JSON (JavaScript Object Notation) can be used. These data formats are widely supported by various software tools and databases.

Such an approach will ensure the structuring of data and simplify access to information about restoration activities. For greater clarity and ease of data management, the following approach can be proposed:

- 1) Main Table: The main table can include basic data such as identification data, storage conditions, technological features, etc. This will allow quick access to the main information about the monument.
- 2) Restoration Program: A separate application or document can be created, which will detail the restoration program. This will allow all information about restoration activities to be stored in one place, ensuring structure and ease of use.

To link the table with the application, a link or pointer to the corresponding section in the application or a separate document can be added to the main table. This will allow easy access to detailed information about restoration activities when needed.

To monitor the condition of the monument, the following additions can be made to the passport:

- 1) Update frequency:
 - a. Date of the last condition check.
 - b. Frequency of checks (annually, quarterly, etc.).

- 2) Responsible persons:
 - a. Name and contact information of the responsible curator or restorer.
 - b. Notes or comments from specialists for each check.
- 3) Additional photo materials:
 - a. Photos before and after restoration work.
 - b. Documentation of minor changes (appearance of new cracks, color changes, etc.).
- 4) Specific care recommendations:
 - a. Instructions for maintaining a certain level of humidity and temperature.
 - b. Recommendations for storage and transportation.

The necessity for a detailed description of the monument is due to the fact that both the monument itself and the traces of its usage are a kind of imprint of its historical existence. This is especially important for archaeological items, which serve as sources of our knowledge about the past of humanity. In restoration, it is important to preserve these traces rather than giving the monument the appearance of a new item, just made by the craftsman.

4. Discussion

Thus, the significance of the monument's passport for restoration is as follows:

1) Documentation of condition:

The passport provides a detailed description of the current state of the monument, including all detected damages and contaminations. Recording all details is the basis for a comprehensive study of the monument and gaining new knowledge, as well as planning restoration work and determining necessary methods and materials.

2) Historical value:

The passport records all historical stages of the monument's existence, which allows for the preservation of the historical integrity and authenticity of the object during restoration. This is especially important for its historical and cultural significance.

3) Planning restoration work:

The passport helps restorers develop an accurate work plan, taking into account all features and problems of the monument. This helps to avoid possible mistakes and minimize risks during restoration.

4) Scientific approach:

Describing the technological features and results of pre-restoration studies in the passport allows for a scientific approach to restoration. This facilitates the choice of the most effective and safe methods for restoring the monument.

5) Information base:

The passport serves as an important information base for researchers, historians, and restorers. It provides access to detailed information about the monument and its condition, facilitating research and knowledge exchange.

6) Monitoring and preservation:

Regular updates of the passport and monitoring the condi-

tion of the monument allow for timely responses to emerging problems and prevent further damages. This increases the longevity of the monument and contributes to its long-term preservation.

5. Conclusion

This article discusses the problems and features of maintaining restoration documentation for movable cultural monuments and proposes a new model of the passport of a museum-worthy monument. The research identified the following key points:

- 1) Need for Standardization: The current system for creating and maintaining restoration documents does not meet the needs of museums and restorers, leading to misunderstandings and errors in the description and assessment of monuments.
- 2) Problems of Outdated Approaches: Unified restoration passports developed in the 20th century do not meet modern requirements for restoration and monitoring, making them difficult to use under current conditions.
- 3) Advantages of the New Passport Model: The proposed model includes a detailed description of technological features, conditions of existence, and damages of monuments, as well as systematic monitoring of their condition. This improves the accuracy and completeness of documentation, leading to more effective restoration and conservation of monuments.
- 4) Importance of Monitoring: Regular monitoring of monuments is key to preventing further damage and extending their lifespan. It provides early diagnosis of problems and timely measures to address them.
- 5) Assessment of Ceramic Preservation: The assessment of the preservation of ceramic monuments addresses important tasks of determining the degree of destruction, identifying the causes of damage, and recording the condition of the monument at the time of the survey. This allows restorers to plan their actions clearly and minimize risks.

This article highlights the importance of developing and implementing a new model of the passport of a museum-worthy monument that meets modern requirements and standards. The data presented in the article can be supplemented and expanded. Implementing this model will improve the preservation of cultural heritage and ensure a higher quality of restoration work.

The prospects for further research include the development and testing of the proposed model in practice, as well as its adaptation for various types of movable monuments. The need to create unified standards and share experiences between museums and restoration centers will be an important step toward preserving our cultural heritage for future generations.

Abbreviations

ФГБОУ ВО	федеральное государственное бюджетное образовательное учреждение высшего образования [Federal state budget higher education institution]
СПГХПА	Санкт-Петербургская государственная художественно-промышленная академия имени А. Л. Штиглица - [St. Petersburg State Academy of Art and Design named after A. L. Stieglitz]
ИИМК РАН	Институт истории материальной культуры Российской академии наук [Institute of History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences]
СПб. РГТМУ,	St. Petersburg Российский государственный гидрометеорологический университет [Russian State Hydrometeorological University]

Author Contributions

Tatyana Nikolaevna Krasnova is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

This work is not supported by any external funding.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Biography



Tatiana Nikolaevna Krasnova is a candidate for a degree in the Graduate School Department of the D. S. Likhachev Russian Research Institute of Cultural and Natural Heritage (Heritage Institute). Moscow, Russian Federation. After graduating from the Kharkov Art and Industry Institute, she worked at the Restoration Center in Kharkov and taught restoration at the Institute. She headed the Kharkov Scientific and Methodical Center for the Protection of Cultural Heritage. 30 years of work experience in the field. She is a participant of many conferences, author of more than 60 scientific articles and 1 monograph "Research, Restoration and Preservation of Museum Ceramics", awarded the Diploma "Best Monograph" for 2017 by the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine.

Research Field

Tatiana Nikolaevna Krasnova: Materials and technology of ceramics manufacturing, Materials, in the restoration of ceramics, Types and causes of fracture of ceramic materials, Methods of preservation of archaeological ceramics, Theory of restoration.