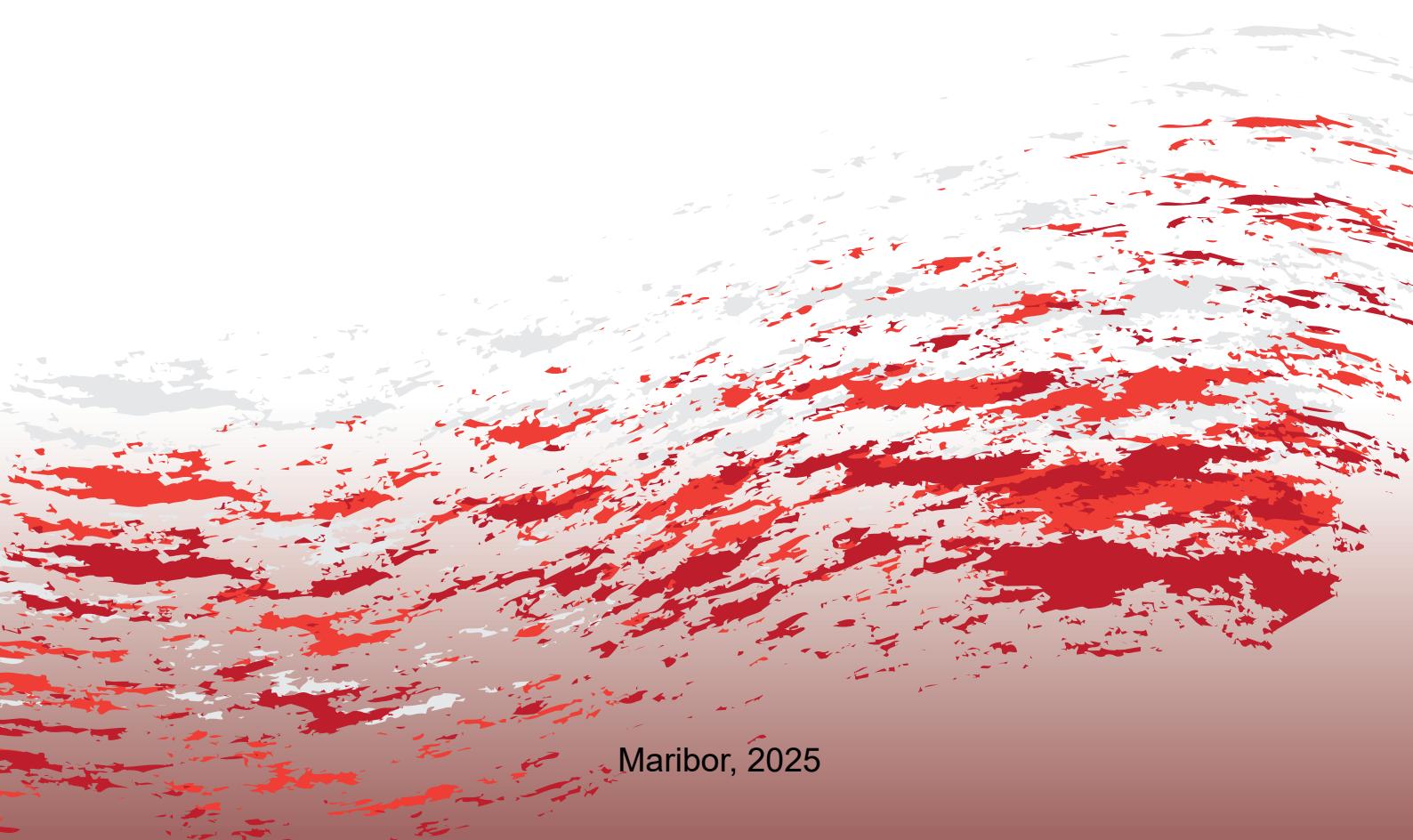




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DESCRIBING CORFU CRIMINAL COURT ARCHIVES USING RIC-CM

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Abstract:

In the General State Archives of Corfu, a substantial archives of the Corfu Criminal Court is preserved, containing details of court trials dating back to 1700. Covering the period from 1815 to 1864, the Criminal Court fonds consists of 275 files containing court records from the period of the Ionian State. Among these, researchers will find 2,698 case files from the Criminal Court "Processi Corte Criminale" which were selected for this study. In particular, this work focuses on describing the Archives of Corfu's Criminal Court (and specifically describing the homicide cases) during the period of the Ionian State (1815-1864) using the Records in Contexts Conceptual Model, a high-level conceptual model developed by the International Council on Archives (ICA) for the definition of archives, records and other related entities.

Keywords:

Archives, Conceptual Models, Metadata, RIC-CM, Criminal Court, archival description

Izvleček:

Popisovanje arhiva Krfskega kazenskega sodišča s pomočjo modela RIC-CM

V Državnem arhivu Krfa je shranjen obsežen arhiv krfskega kazenskega sodišča, ki vsebuje podrobnosti o sodnih procesih vse od leta 1700. Fond kazenskega sodišča zajema obdobje od leta 1815 do leta 1864, obsega pa 275 map s sodnim gradivom iz obdobja jonske države. Med temi je 2698 podmap s spisi sodnih postopkov kazenskega sodišča, t. i. „Processi Corte Criminale“, ki so bili izbrani za to študijo. Prispevek se osredotoča zlasti na popis arhivskega

gradiva Kazenskega sodišča na Krfu (še posebej na popis obravnavanih umorov) v obdobju Jonske države (1815–1864) z uporabo konceptualnega modela Records in Contexts, tj. konceptualnega modela na visoki ravni, ki ga je razvil Mednarodni arhivski svet (ICA) za popisovanje arhivov, zapisov in drugih povezanih entitet.

Ključne besede:

arhiv, konceptualni modeli, metapodatki, RIC-CM, Kazensko sodišče, popisovanje

1 Introduction

The key role of archives as cultural institutions that preserve collective memory and their significance in cultural heritage management must be highlighted at every opportunity. Equally important is the need to make their collections more widely known and to enhance their educational and historical role.

Looking to the future, studies on the history of archives — encompassing texts, documentation, and record-keeping — offer undeniable benefits to both researchers and society at large. For over 500 years, archives have been instrumental in shaping knowledge in the Western world. These studies have recently experienced a wave of renewal, rooted in institutions and disciplines that have shaped the modern history of archives, beginning with innovative interdisciplinary perspectives. Naturally, any renewal must now take into account technological advancements, which may bring about even greater changes to archival practices than those introduced by the advent of paper in the Middle Ages (Bautier, 1968; Burke, 2000).

The Ionian State (1815–1864) was established in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. Following the Treaty of Paris in 1815, the Ionian Islands became a British Protectorate. British rule integrated the region into the balance of power system established at the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815). British policy aimed to construct a new hierarchical structure and develop a state apparatus based on British standards of the time, while incorporating pre-existing institutions and established ruling class.

Therefore, the Ionian Islands serve as a prime example of social, economic, political, and cultural osmosis in the Mediterranean world, not only in the 19th century but also in earlier periods. By the time the islands officially came under British protection in 1815, they had already absorbed various political, social, and cultural aspects of 18th- and 19th-century modernity.

It is worth noting that the General State Archives of Corfu hold invaluable material for researchers. Corfu was the first place on Greek soil to establish an organised archival institution, dating back to the islands' Venetian era (Nikiforou, 2008)¹. In the General State Archives of Corfu, a substantial fonds of the Corfu Criminal Court is preserved, containing details of court trials dating back to 1700.

Archival science has introduced metadata standards like Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and Encoded Archival Context for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families (EAC-CPF), utilising XML to enhance the organisation and processing of

¹ The Community of Corfu asked the Venetian authorities to establish an archival institution in 1443.

historical archival records. These metadata schemas, based on standards from the International Council on Archives (ICA), such as ISAD(G) and ISAAR(CPF), provide structured methods for data organisation but face challenges in representing complex relationships. With advancements in semantic web technologies, there is a shift toward conceptual models and ontologies. In response, the ICA began developing the Records in Contexts Conceptual Model (RiC-CM) (International Council on Archives, 2023) to establish a unified, high-level archival conceptual model.

This work focuses on describing the fonds of Corfu's Criminal Court created during the period of the Ionian State (1815-1864) using the Records in Contexts Conceptual Model. In particular, the paper analyses the main entities (e.g., the actors related to each case, key case activities identified, related locations) used in a criminal case and proposes a RiC-CM model for capturing the main metadata required to describe not only the records themselves but also the associated activities performed by the key actors (i.e., agents, according to RiC-CM notation). This paper is a case study aiming to set up an approach for describing how the information related to a criminal case can be modelled using the RiC-CM. To the best of our knowledge, it is the first attempt to describe Criminal Court archives using the RiC-CM standard.

2 Related Work

CourtDocs Ontology (Vafaie et al., 2023), an application ontology developed for the Wiedergutmachung project, a pilot initiative launched by Germany's Federal Ministry of Finance, focusing specifically on archival records tied to reparations and individual claims filed following the end of the Second World War, aims to represent historical court proceedings, focusing on three central concepts: Archival Documents, Legal Processes, and Agents. For the representation of archival documents, the RiC-O ontology (International Council on Archives, 2024) was chosen due to its flexible structure and detailed level of granularity. On the other hand, PROV Ontology was used for modelling Legal Processes and Agents. Additionally, to enhance interoperability, CourtDocs links to and reuses concepts from CIDOC-CRM (CIDOC CRM Special Interest Group, 2024) to represent the historical and cultural contexts of agents involved in the Wiedergutmachung process.

In (Sack et al., 2021), the differences between RiC-O and ArDO (an ontology designed for describing the dynamic hierarchical nature of archival records) in modelling archival hierarchies are examined. As the authors mention, RiC-O offers general and flexible classes, such as `rico:RecordResource`, `rico:RecordSet`, `rico:Record`, and `rico:RecordPart`, which can be adapted based on how archival resources are utilised in specific contexts. Hierarchical structures are established by associating archival resources with distinct entities that define their hierarchical positions. In contrast, ArDO employs a more rigid class hierarchy, explicitly combining archival resource types (e.g., individual records or collections) with the hierarchical levels at which resources are organised and preserved.

In (García-González and Bryant, 2023), the authors present the process of transforming the existing data available in the EHRI Portal, sourced from institutions around the world as well as EHRI's archival specialists, into a Knowledge Graph aligned

with Records in Contexts (RiC), contributing to an emerging network of Linked Open Data (LOD) sources.

As RiC-CM is a relatively recent conceptual model in archival science, only a few approaches for mapping archival metadata schemas to RiC-CM have been presented. A notable example is the RiC-O Converter (Clavaud, Francart and Charbonnier, 2023), an open-source tool that translates archival descriptions from EAD and EAC-CPF formats into RDF/XML files conforming to the RiC-O ontology, effectively implementing mappings between these formats.

As RiC-CM continues to be studied, new extensions are being developed to enhance the representation of knowledge for specific types of archives. ITDT (Mikhaylova and Metilli, 2023) is an extension of RiC-O that facilitates the representation of architectural records and the contextualization of architectural projects, their implementation processes, and participating entities. The ontology effectively represents common architectural records—including drawings, reports, bid documents, and photographs—and captures the various phases of architectural projects along with associated participants.

As historical archives contain cultural information, there have been several efforts toward semantic mapping between RiC-CM and CIDOC CRM, the state-of-the-art conceptual model for cultural heritage. CIDOC CRM is an event-based conceptual model, and the entities E5 Event and E7 Activity share the same meaning with the entities RiC-E14 Event and RiC-E15 Activity of RiC-CM. In (Cardoso de Oliveira, Marks Löw and Bragato Barros, 2024), the authors observe that, although the taxonomical structures exhibit some similarities at first glance, significant differences emerge upon deeper semantic analysis. ArchOnto (Koch, Ribeiro and Teixeira Lopes, 2020) is a data model represented as an ontology, based on CIDOC CRM, used for describing over 3.5 million archival records held by the Portuguese National Archives and originally described according to the ISAD(G) standard.

In (Bountouri et al., 2023), mappings are presented for: the main RiC-CM entities (focusing on record-related entities) to CIDOC CRM entities, the main RiC-CM attributes to CIDOC CRM properties and entities (or property paths), and the primary record-related relations of RiC-CM to CIDOC CRM properties and entities (or property paths).

3 Overview of Records in Contexts – Conceptual Model

Records in Contexts Conceptual Model (RiC-CM) (International Council on Archives, 2023) is a high-level conceptual model for the definition of archives, records and other related entities, which is gradually implemented by archival organizations, along with the corresponding ontology (RiC-O) (International Council on Archives, 2024). Records in Contexts Conceptual Model (RiC-CM) provides a comprehensive framework for describing, contextualizing, and relating archival resources.

RiC-CM v1.0.2 defines 19 entities and 85 relations (without counting inverse relations). Figure 1 illustrates the RiC-CM entities hierarchy. A key entity of RiC-CM is given by the concept of the RiC-E02 Record Resource, which can manifest as a RiC-E03 Record Set, a RiC-E04 Record, or a RiC-E05 Record Part. These entities encompass archival materials at all scales, from entire archives down to individual record

units or their sub-divisions. RiC-E06 Instantiation further refines the model by distinguishing the intellectual content of a record resource from its physical or digital carriers, ensuring each record or record part is accurately traced to its tangible or electronic form.

Alongside record-focused entities, RiC-CM encompasses RiC-E07 Agent, which details persons, groups, families, and even a process or system (e.g., RiC-E08 Person, RiC-E09 Group, RiC-E10 Family, RiC-E11 Corporate Body, RiC-E12 Position, and RiC-E13 Mechanism) involved in creating or managing records. RiC-E14 Event records events in time and space, with RiC-E15 Activity highlighting purposeful actions that produce or modify archival materials.

RiC-CM also defines supporting entities such as RiC-E16 Rule (and its sub-entity RiC-E17 Mandate) to characterise governance and authority, RiC-E18 Date for chronological details, and RiC-E22 Place to link entities with specific geographic contexts. In this way, RiC-CM offers an integrated model for describing not only the records themselves but also the broader network of agents, events, rules, dates, and locations that collectively frame the life cycle and significance of archival resources.

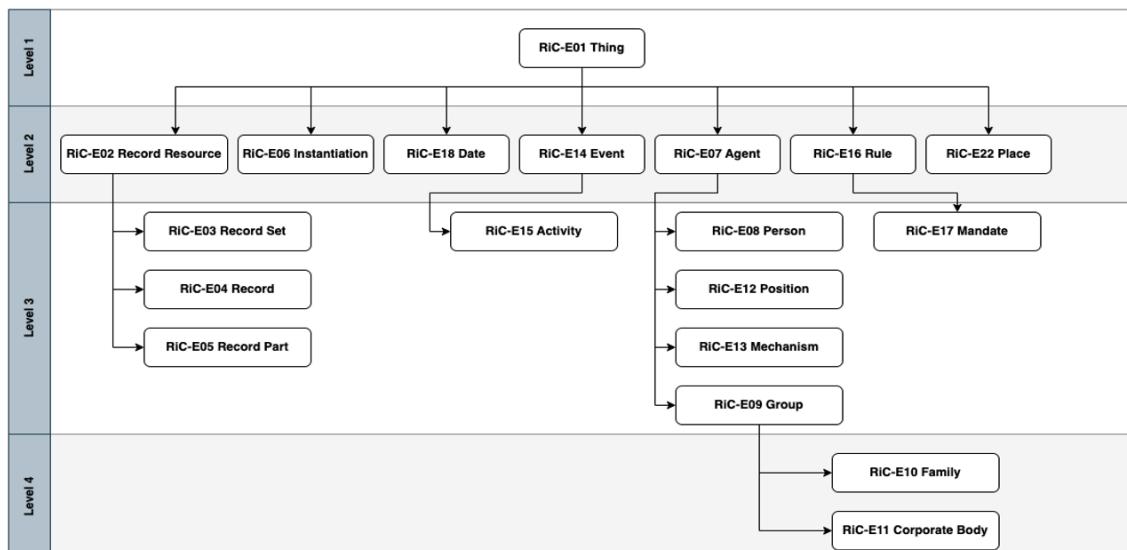


Figure 1 - RiC-CM Entities Hierarchy

4 Corfu Criminal Court Archives

In 1817, the British granted the Ionians a Constitution, which outlined provisions for the administration of justice. Covering the period from 1815 to 1864, the Criminal Court fonds comprises of 275 Folders / Files (Filze) containing court material from the period of the Ionian State. Among these, researchers will find 2,698 case files from the Criminal Court “Processi Corte Criminale” which were selected for this study² (Figure 2 depicts an example of an archival folder/file).

Only the files marked “Processi Corte Criminale” (case files) were selected for this study (see an example in Figure 2). Each subfile corresponds to a single case. It included roughly 20 to 200, or sometimes up to 300, handwritten pages on sealed paper that was purchased especially for the bureaucratic needs of the government. The first cases (from 1815 to about 1830) did not have a cover, but then a cover was added that had the number of the case, the number of pages, the name of the defendant, the name of the plaintiff or the ex-officio prosecution, the crime, and whether the defendant was under arrest, released on bail or escaped arrest³. Figure 3 depicts an example of a file cover. The first document after the cover is the indictment from the Advocate Fiscal’s office that gives the description of the crime and the catalogue of the witnesses. The Advocate Fiscal (or Public Prosecutor), who was appointed by the Senate and approved by the High Commissioner of the Ionian State, was responsible for the initial examination of each case, collecting all available evidence, taking depositions from the victim, accused, and witnesses, and ensuring their appearance in court. Each case underwent a thorough investigation, as evidenced by the comprehensive nature of the case files.

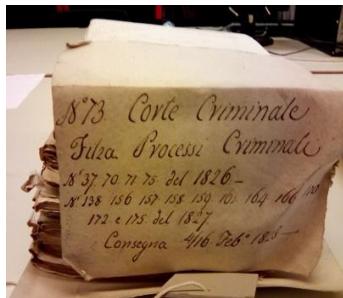


Figure 2 - Example of a Folder/File

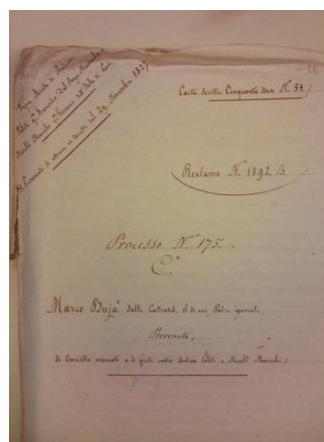


Figure 3 – File (Case) Cover

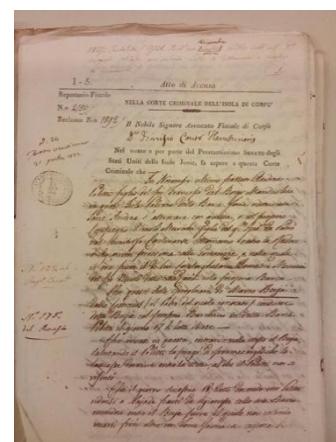


Figure 4 - First Page of the Indictment

² Note that the archive studied in this paper has not been digitized and the figures presented in this work are photographs taken only for illustrative purposes.

³ Defendants, unless charged with homicide or crimes against the state, could be released on bail. If no guarantor could be found to pay the required bond, the defendant remained in custody until trial. Some defendants, however, managed to evade arrest and chose to flee the Ionian State rather than stand trial.

Once the examination was completed, the Prosecutor would draft the indictment (Atto di Accusa) and submit it, along with all supporting documents and evidence, to the Criminal Court (see Figures 4 and 5). The President and the two Judges of the Criminal Court were also appointed by the Senate and approved by the High Commissioner (see an example of a document in Figure 6). So, each sub-file corresponds to a single case and includes handwritten documents such as the indictment, depositions, minutes of the trial, writs, affidavits, recognizances, inquisitions, calendars, bills, and on occasion confessions. The files also include the court verdict⁴ (Dimitriou, 2021). (Examples of such records are depicted in Figures 5-10).

A major part of these files' significance lies in the fact that the records were routinely generated by public services as part of their operations, and therefore, they are unmediated and authentic historical sources. Through these records, we follow the judicial procedure. When a crime was committed, the local authorities were the first to be called upon. A network of selected locals, including the Primates, the Local Governor or Stationmaster, Constables, Dékarhi (Capi Decima), Peníntarhi (Capi Cinquantina), Militiaman, Volunteers who patrolled the streets at night, were involved. Doctors (Forensic doctors) were also summoned to examine victims and provide professional assessments (see an example of such a record in Figure 7). The local authorities would then compile a report on the incident, record witness testimonies, gather evidence, apprehend suspects, and present them to the Advocate Fiscal (Gazzetta, 1819).

⁴ Sentencing records from 1,292 cases reveal that penalties were imposed in accordance with the law, with due consideration given to aggravating and mitigating factors. The penalties ranged from fines and compensation to the death penalty (Penal Code, 1851). In total, 454 cases resulted in acquittals (431 men and 23 women). Additionally, 33 individuals were convicted in absentia, classified as "Absent" (Assente), having evaded arrest. The death penalty was imposed in 18 cases, including 11 cases of premeditated homicide and 3 cases of piracy. In the remaining 788 cases, sentences were handed out in accordance with legal provisions. A total of 747 men and 41 women were convicted, amounting to 839 cases with guilty verdicts. This indicates that 65% of the 1,292 defendants were found guilty and sentenced. A particularly common punishment for men was forced labour in public works while shackled with chains. The duration of this punishment varied depending on the crime committed.



Figure 5 - Indictment example

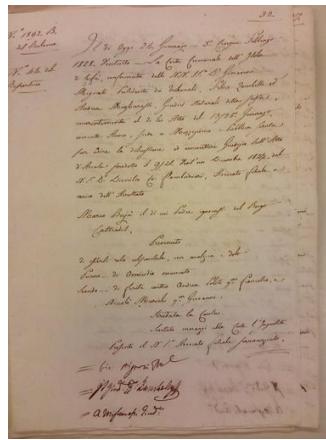


Figure 6 - Setup of Judicial body

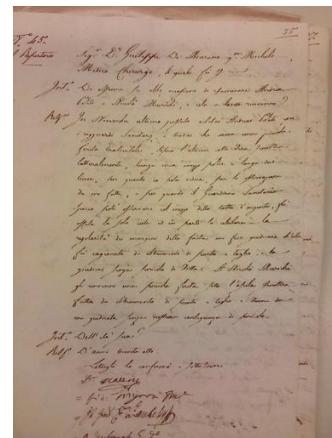


Figure 7 – Doctor's Statement

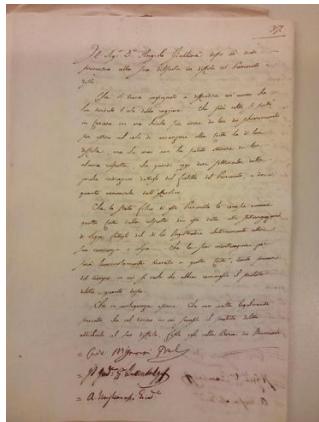


Figure 8 - Part of Defence Lawyer Statement

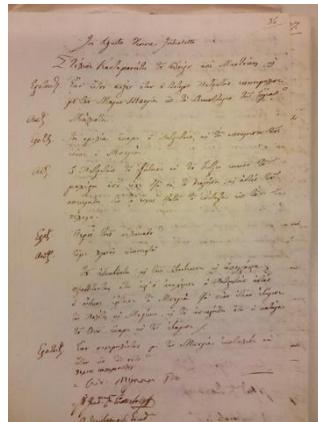


Figure 9 - Part of Witness Statement

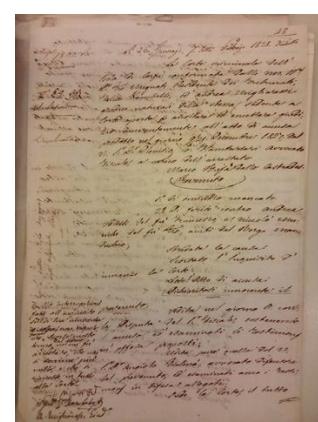


Figure 10 - Court Conclusion - First Page

The judicial system and legal framework generally require that a complaint be filed under oath by an individual or legal entity – the plaintiff – who had suffered moral or material harm. In the absence of a plaintiff, prosecutions were initiated Ex Officio⁵. The plaintiff and the defendant were represented by legal counsel during proceedings. If the defendant was impoverished and could provide official documentation proving their financial hardship, the court appointed a lawyer for him (Avvocato dei Poveri) to represent them (see an example page of such a document in Figure 8). As mentioned earlier, the Advocate Fiscal gathered evidence on behalf of the victims and provided insight into their attitude and that of the accused. He also took into account any

⁵ According to the records 1,401 men and 225 women filed complaints, while Ex Officio prosecutions amounted to 1,067 cases.

aggravating or mitigating circumstances related to the crime and he was required to establish whether the accused acted with intent, premeditation, or malice aforethought⁶.

Although the Corfu Criminal Court Archives are well-preserved in physical form by the General State Archives of Corfu, there is a significant need for properly describing the archives through standardised metadata in order to make them more accessible, discoverable, and interoperable with other archives and research resources. By implementing detailed and structured metadata, this valuable resource can be catalogued in ways that highlight its unique content, facilitating efficient searches, retrieval, and understanding for researchers, historians, and the general public.

Considering that the analysis of these judicial records, alongside the procedural framework in which they were applied, provides invaluable historical and legal insights, it would be highly beneficial to develop tools for organising, representing, and contextualising the information they contain. By doing so, this wealth of knowledge would become more accessible and useful to the research community.

5 Modelling Corfu Criminal Court Archives Using RiC-CM

This section focuses on presenting the (conceptual data) model describing the Corfu Criminal Court Archives of the period between 1815 and 1864, and specifically, the archives of the Criminal Court “Processi Corte Criminale”. To describe the model, we use RiC-CM and initially present the structure of the archives. Then, we focus on the main activities that took place in homicide cases and produce the archival records, along with the related actors participating in these activities. Although we focus on homicide cases, the majority of the activities and relevant records also model other types of criminal cases.

To present the model, the following notation is used. Rounded boxes are used to represent instances of RiC-CM entities, while labelled edges connecting these instances represent relations between entity instances. The label of an edge is given by the name of the relation considered. Attributes of the entities are also represented by directed edges labelled by the name of the attribute, but the target of these edges is given by a text value (i.e., the value of the attribute). Furthermore, we consider that each instance of an entity is associated with a unique identifier, given by a Universally Unique Identifier (UUID)⁷, using the attribute *RiC-A22 Identifier*. Due to space limitation, we omit to present all the instances of the entities; hence, only the entities representing a single instance are associated with a UUID in the following representations.

⁶ A total of 2,671 first defendants were recorded, providing a significant sample for analysis. Among them, 2,546 were men (94%) and 125 were women (5%), clearly indicating that criminal activity was predominantly male.

⁷ A UUID (Universally Unique Identifier) is a 128-bit value used to uniquely identify information resources, minimizing the risk of duplication [<https://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc4122>].

5.1. Describing the structure of the archives

Let us, now, focus on how the structure of the archives is modelled. Figure 11 illustrates the part of the model describing the structure of the archives. In particular, an instance of the entity *RiC-E03 Record Set*, with attribute *RiC-A36 Record Set Type* equalling “Fonds”, is used to describe the Corfu’s Criminal Court Archives. General State Archives of Corfu, which is a public organisation, holds the Corfu’s Criminal Court Archives; hence, an instance of the entity *RiC-E11 Corporate Body* is used to associate it with the instance representing the Criminal Court Archives through the relation *RiC-R039 is or was holder of*. The instance of the *RiC-E03* entity which is used to represent the Corfu’s Criminal Court Archives is also associated with a *RiC-E18 Date* instance describing the period 1815-1864. This date instance is a range given by a start date and an end date defined using additional instances of the *RiC-E18* entity. Since this date range applies to all the cases of the archive, we use the relation *RiC-R081* to associate the instance of the date period with the instance of the archives.

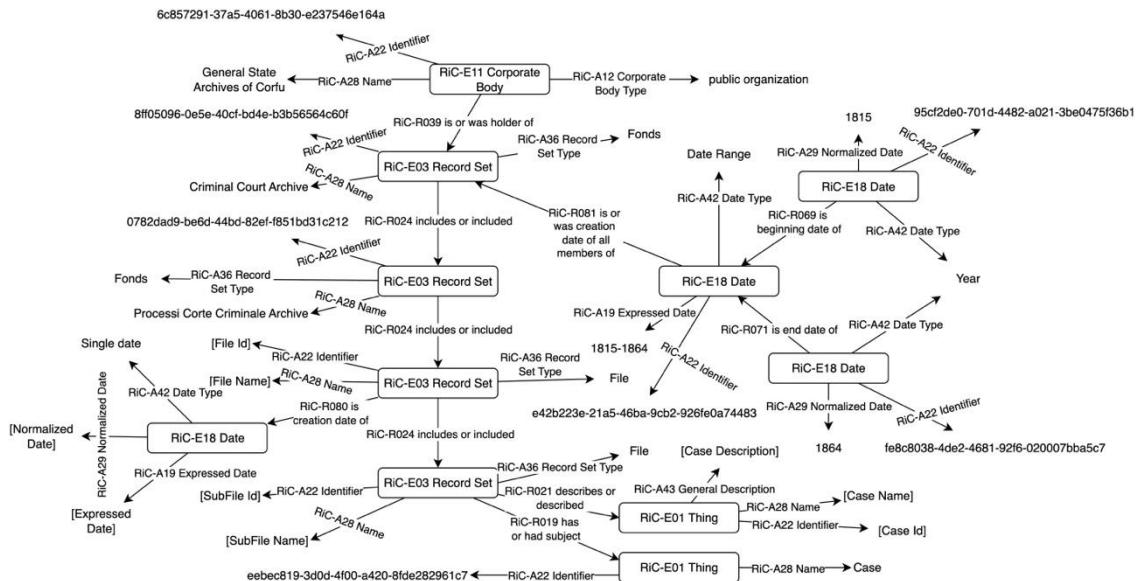


Figure 11 - Structure of the Archives

To describe that the Criminal Court Archives includes the archives of the Criminal Court “Processi Corte Criminale”, a new instance of the entity *RiC-E03 Record Set*, with attribute *RiC-A36 Record Set Type* equalling “Fonds”, is used and it is associated with the instance representing the Criminal Court Archives through the relation *RiC-R024 includes or included*. Since the archive of the Criminal Court “Processi Corte Criminale” contains multiple files, we use the same relation to associate the instance of the entity representing the archive with multiple instances of the *RiC-E03* entity. Each of these instances represents a file of the archive. To facilitate better comprehension and to enhance readability, Figure 11 omits the full set of instances representing archival files. Rather, a single representative instance is depicted as a placeholder for all such cases. Each file instance has type (*RiC-A36*) “File” and it is associated with the file name; e.g., the file depicted in Figure 1 has the name “N°73 Corte Criminale”. Each file is also

associated with its creation date (see the “Consegna” in Figure 2) which is given by an instance of the *RiC-E18* entity and is connected with the corresponding file instance through the *RiC-R080* relation. Since the file creation date might have been expressed in both the new (Gregorian) and old (Julian) calendar (the creation date of the file illustrated in Figure 2 is 16 Feb 1828, according to the new calendar, and 4 Feb 1828, according to the old one), we could consider two instances of the *RiC-E18* entity, representing the two dates. Furthermore, the entity instance representing the file is assigned with two identifiers, the first identifier is given by the file identifier (e.g., in Figure 1, the file ID is “73”) and the second identifier is a UUID. Note that by implementing the model using Records in Contexts Ontology (RiC-O), these identifiers can be distinguished according to their type.

The subfiles of each file are similarly defined and associated with the corresponding file using the *RiC-R024* relation. The name of the subfile is given in the subfile cover; e.g., the name of the subfile depicted in Figure 3 is “Processo N° 175”. Notice here that the subfile includes 3 main numbers into its cover (see Figure 3), one number (“Processo”) referring to the criminal case documented in the subfile, one number (“Reclamo”) referring to the identifier of the corresponding criminal complaint (if exists), and one (typically, it is written in pencil in the top right corner of the cover) referring to the subfile identifier as it was given by Archives of Corfu. As a subfile identifier (apart from the regular UUID identifier), we use the identifier given by Archives of Corfu.

To specify that each subfile includes the records of a certain case, a case is modeled both as a process (see the instance of the case process in Figure 12), including all the activities performed for a case, and as a concept, serving as the intellectual construct that organizes and contextualizes the subfile containing the records generated and accumulated in relation to that process. For the latter, an instance of the entity *RiC-E01 Thing* is used, one for each case (see Figure 11). Since RiC-CM does not define a certain entity to describe the “Case” concept, an instance of the *RiC-E01* entity is considered, for each case, with name (*RiC-A28*) given by the case name and the identifier given by the case ID. This case instance is associated with the corresponding subfile instance through the relation *RiC-E02*. For example, to describe the subfile whose cover is illustrated in Figure 3, one instance of the *RiC-E03* entity and one instance of the *RiC-E01* entity are used. The instance of the *RiC-E03* entity has the name “Processo N° 175” and identifier “16”, and the instance of the *RiC-E01* entity has identifier “175”. The second instance of the *RiC-E01* entity, in Figure 11, represents the concept “Case”, it is defined as a single instance for all subfiles, and it specifies the subject of each subfile.

5.2. Describing the main activities and records

This section focuses on describing the main records of the archive, as well as the main activities documented in these records and the actors involved in these activities. The approach modelling these records is the following. A main case activity is defined for each case (see Figure 12). This activity acts as a container of all activities performed for each case, represents the overall case process and includes (as sub-activities – see Figure 13) all the required activities performed and documented through the archival records included in the case’s file. Note that for better readability, in the figures presented in this section, we highlight the instances of the activities presented in each figure (boxes with thick lines). In addition, the instance of the *RiC-E03 Record Set* representing the

corresponding case file is also highlighted (through a grey-coloured shape) to show the association of each record with the case file.

The main case activity depicted in Figure 12 is associated with a case file. The record set instance representing this case file is associated with the case activity through the relation *RiC-R033* to show that the case file documents the corresponding activity. Furthermore, we associate the instance of the case activity (i.e., the case process) with two important agents participating in an individual case. These actors typically represent the “Plaintiff” and the “Accused” of each case. To model these types of actors, we initially use two instances of the *RiC-E12* entity for each case and associate them with the activity instance representing the case process through the *RiC-R058* relation. In essence, the instances of the *RiC-E12* entity are used to specify the “Plaintiff” and the “Accused” roles participating in the case. Each of these roles is associated with specific person instances (instances of the *RiC-E08* entity) to specify the exact persons holding each role in the case. Personal information about the “Plaintiff” and the “Accused” persons, such as gender, name and profession, are extracted from the records and associated with the instances of the *RiC-E08* entity. It is worth noting that the birth date is described through an additional instance of the *RiC-E18* entity. In addition, to specify that a certain person-instance is either the “Plaintiff” or the “Accused” of a case, we use the relation *RiC-E08*.

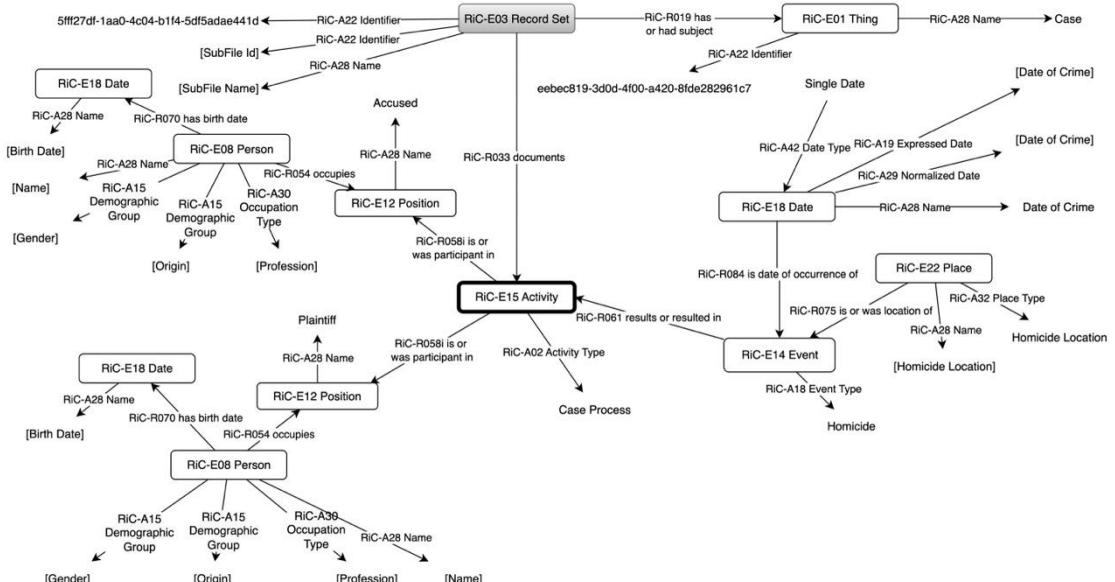


Figure 12 - Modelling Case Process

The case process is conceptually associated with a criminal event, and specifically with a homicide that took place at a certain location and time. To model this information and describe that a case process was triggered by such an event, initially, an instance of the *RiC-E14* entity is used (see Figure 12). Such an instance represents the homicide event, and it is associated with an instance of the *RiC-E22* entity, describing the location where the homicide took place. The relation *RiC-R061* is used to describe that the

specific instance of the case process was the result of the specific homicide event, and the relation *RiC-R075* is used to associate the event with the specific location where it took place. Furthermore, the relation *RiC-R084* is used to associate the instance of the event to a certain instance of the *RiC-E18* entity, describing the date and time the event took place.

Each case, now, has a certain set of activities taking place during the case process. Such a set of activities includes the forensic medical examination, calling witnesses, taking witness statement, the appointment of a defence counsel, the composition of the indictment, the trial process, and the computation of the trial expenses, where each of them produced certain records included in the case file. Figure 13 depicts these activities and shows how they are defined as sub-activities of the main activity describing the case process. In particular, for each case a single instance of the *RiC-E15* entity, representing the case process, is associated with one or more instances of the *RiC-E15* entity representing the individual activities performed for the case; e.g., a case might have multiple instances representing the activities performed to take the witness statements (see an example page of a witness statement in Figure 9) and a single instance for describing the trial process. To associate the instance of the *RiC-E15* entity representing the case process with the instances representing the activities that took place for a certain case, we use the relation *RiC-R006*, as illustrated in Figure 13.

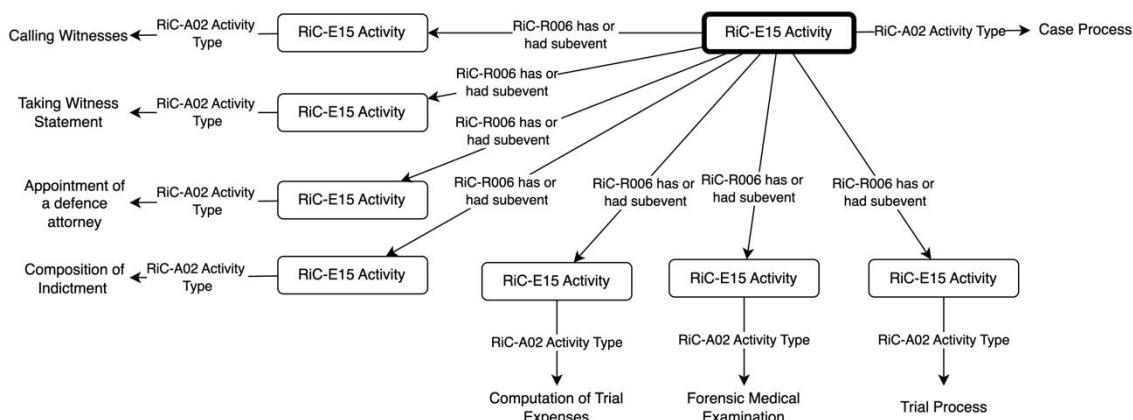


Figure 13 - Main Case Activities

Figures 14 and 15 present, in more detail, an analysis describing the records produced by each activity performed during a case process (i.e., the sub-activities depicted in Figure 13). The relation *RiC-R033* is used to associate the instance of the *RiC-E04* entity (representing an archival record) with the corresponding activity that the record documents. In addition, these figures illustrate the actors involved in each activity. Notice that, in Figures 14 and 15, each record instance is included in the instance of *RiC-E03* entity representing the corresponding case file, using the relation *RiC-R024*.

Figure 14(A) illustrates the forensic medical examination (instance of the *RiC-E15* entity) which is performed (*RiC-R060*) by a forensic doctor and the result of this activity produces the forensic medical opinion (instance of the *RiC-E04* entity). The record produced is included (*RiC-R024*) in the file of the corresponding case. Similarly, Figures

14(B), 14(C), and 14(E) describe the composition of the indictment, the computation of the trial expenses, and the appointment of the defence counsel, as well as the records produced by these activities (i.e., the indictment, the trial expenses document and the appointment order of defence counsel, respectively). For each witness, there have been identified two records, one through which the executing police called her and one recording her statement; hence, we consider two different instances of the *RiC-E15* entity (see Figure 14(D)), one for calling each witness and one for taking her statement. Since certain records have parts worth describing (e.g., the bail paper – see Figure 14(B)), we use an instance of the entity *RiC-E05 Record Part* to define them and the relation *RiC-R003* to associate this instance with the instance of the corresponding record (*RiC-E04*).

The trial process (depicted in Figure 15) is distinguished from the other case activities since it consists of multiple activities, where each of them produces a specific part of the trial records. To simplify the model, in Figure 15, we only illustrate the main trial activity (as an instance of the *RiC-E15* entity). The document recording the trial records is modelled through an instance of the *RiC-E04* entity and each distinguished part of this document is explicitly described through an instance of the *RiC-E05* entity, which is associated with the instance of the *RiC-E04* entity representing the trial records through the *RiC-R003* relation. For example, the parts of the trial records documenting the appointment of a judicial panel (see an example page of such a part in Figure 6) and multiple testimonies are modelled as instances of the *RiC-E05* entity (see Figure 15).

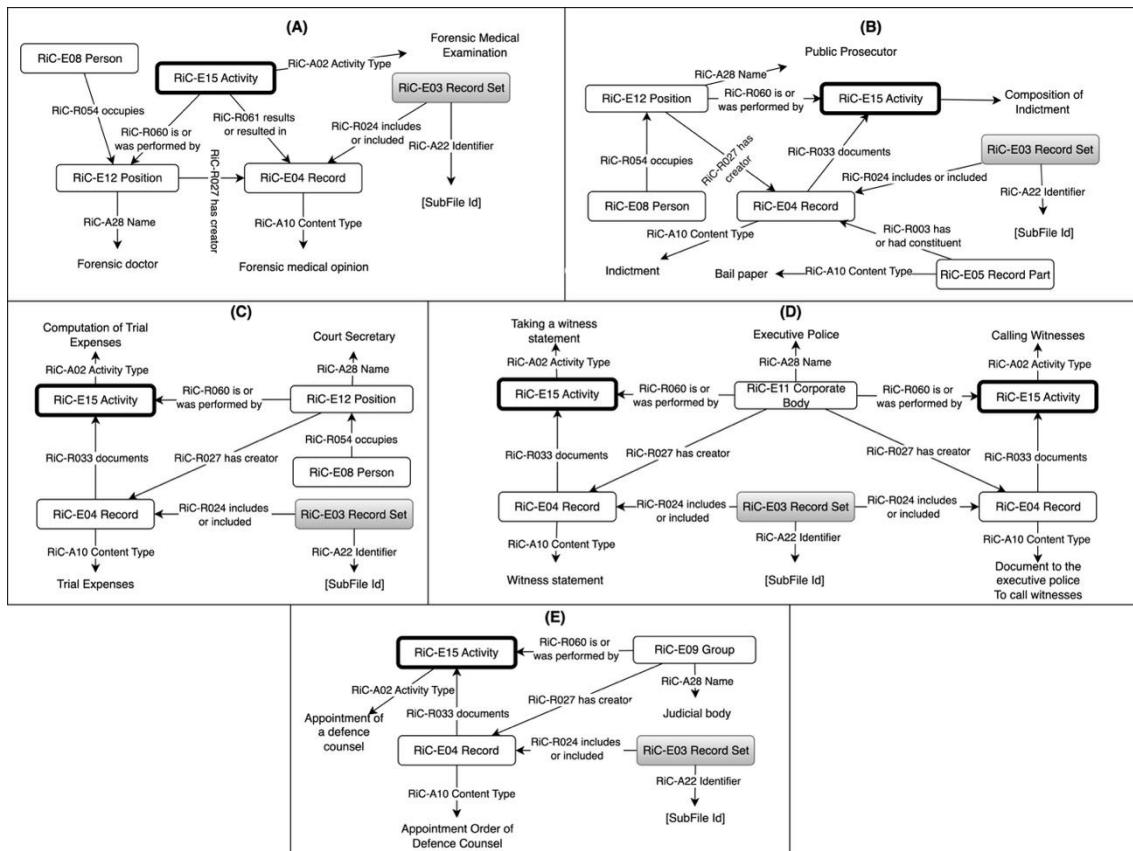


Figure 14 - Case Activities & Records Produced

The activity of judicial decision-making was central to the trial process. Such an activity also produces the court's conclusion and the imposed sentence. Thus, we model the activity of judicial decision-making using an instance of the *RiC-E15* entity and associate it with the instance representing the trial process through the relation *RiC-R006* (see Figure 15). Such an activity produces a record documenting the court conclusion (see an example of the first page of such a record in Figure 10), which might include a part referring to the imposed sentence. Since the imposition of a sentence is part of the judicial decision-making activity, an additional instance of the *RiC-E15* entity is used to represent this activity, as well as it is associated with the instance of the *RiC-E15* entity representing the judicial decision-making activity and the record part representing the sentence.

To conclude the description of the model, each instance of the entities *RiC-E04 Record* and *RiC-E05 Record Part* presented in this section is associated with one or more instantiations representing the physical form of the record or record part, e.g., a digitized document, a set of digital images, a traditional record on paper. These instantiations are modelled using instances of the *RiC-E06* entity and are associated with the corresponding records (instances of *RiC-E04* entity) and record parts (instances of *RiC-E05* entity) through the relation *RiC-R025 has or had instantiation*. Furthermore, if an instantiation of a record or record part is given by a set of images, we can use the relation *RiC-R008 precedes or preceded* to specify the order of the instances of the *RiC-E06* entity representing these images.

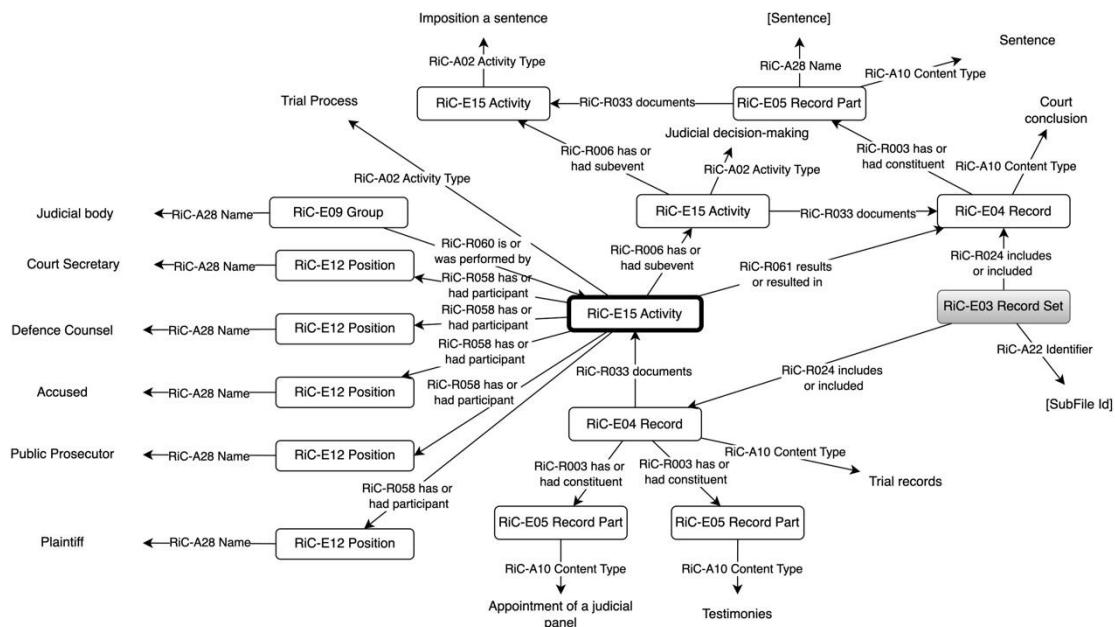


Figure 15 - Trial Activity

6 Conclusion

The proposed model demonstrates that the Records in Contexts Conceptual Model (RiC-CM) can effectively describe complex historical court archives. The data model clarifies how information in a Criminal Court archive can be organised according to RiC-CM principles. Applying RiC-CM to the Corfu Criminal Court Archive offers a method for ensuring consistent metadata across various records. This not only preserves the context of each case more accurately but also makes those records easier to retrieve, compare, and analyse for researchers and archivists.

Future research could explore RiC-O in line with the proposed RiC-CM data model, particularly within digital repositories and semantic web technologies for documenting the Archive and linking related collections. By examining how these historical archival records can be systematically documented, this research promotes greater accessibility, interoperability, and long-term preservation of important legal and historical data.

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POVZETEK

POPISOVANJE ARHIVA KRFSKEGA KAZENSKEGA SODIŠČA S POMOČJO MODELA RIC-CM

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V Državnem arhivu Krfa je shranjen obsežen arhiv krfskega kazenskega sodišča, ki vsebuje podrobnosti o sodnih procesih vse od leta 1700. S pariško pogodbo iz leta 1815, po koncu napoleonskih vojn, so Jonski otoki postali britanski protektorat. Leta 1817 so Britanci Joncem priznali ustavo, v kateri so bile opredeljene tudi določbe glede pravosodja. Arhiv kazenskega sodišča zajema obdobje od leta 1815 do leta 1864 in obsega 275 ovojev (map) s sodnimi spisi, ki vsebujejo skupno 2698 podmap. Vsaka podmapa predstavlja eno kazensko zadevo in vključuje dokumente, kot so obtožnice, pričanja, zapisniki sojenja, sodne naredbe, pisne izjave, priznanja, zaslišanja, razporedi, računi, sporadična priznanja in sodbe. Spisi so velikega pomena tudi zato, ker so jih javne službe ustvarjale rutinsko, v okviru svojega delovanja, tako da gre za avtentične zgodovinske vire. Čeprav je gradivo kazenskega sodišča na Krfu v fizični obliki dobro ohranljeno, pa obstaja velika potreba po ustreznem popisu v skladu s standardiziranimi metapodatki, da bi bilo gradivo bolj dostopno, najdljivo ter interoperabilno z drugimi arhivi in raziskovalnimi viri. Z oblikovanjem podrobnih in strukturiranih metapodatkov je mogoče ta dragoceni vir katalogizirati tako, da se poudari njegova edinstvena vsebina, kar raziskovalcem, zgodovinarjem in širši javnosti olajša učinkovito iskanje, pridobivanje in razumevanje informacij.

Arhivska znanost je oblikovala metapodatkovne standarde, kot sta kodirano arhivsko popisovanje (EAD) in kodirani arhivski kontekst za korporacije, osebe in družine (EAC-CPF), ki uporabljajo XML za izboljšanje ureditve in obdelave zgodovinskih arhivskih zapisov. Te metapodatkovne sheme temeljijo na standardih Mednarodnega arhivskega sveta (ICA), kot sta ISAD(G) in ISAAR(CPF), in zagotavljajo strukturirane metode za urejanje podatkov, vendar se soočajo z velikimi izzivi, ko gre za predstavljanje kompleksnih razmerij. Z razvojem tehnologij semantičnega spleta pa se je začel premik h konceptualnim modelom in ontologijam. ICA je tako začel razvijati konceptualni model

Zapisi v kontekstih (Records in Contexts (RiC-CM)) z namenom vzpostavitev enotnega arhivskega konceptualnega modela na visoki ravni.

To delo obravnava popisovanje arhivskega gradiva kazenskega sodišča na Krfu z uporabo konceptualnega modela RiC-CM. Delo analizira zlasti glavne entitete (npr. akterje v posameznih primerih, ključne dejavnosti v okviru teh primerov, povezane lokacije), ki se uporabljajo v kazenskem postopku, in predлага model RiC-CM za zajem glavnih metapodatkov, ki so potrebni za opis ne le samega gradiva, temveč tudi povezanih dejavnosti, ki jih izvajajo ključni akterji (tj. agenti v skladu s terminologijo modela RiC-CM). Čeprav je predmetni članek študija primera, je – po najboljšem vedenju avtorjev – to prvi poskus popisa arhivskega gradiva kazenskega sodišča z uporabo razmeroma novega standarda RiC-CM, njegov cilj pa je predlagati metodologijo, s katero je moč podati informacije, povezane s kazenskim postopkom.

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