Describing and revealing the semantics of excavation notebooks

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Abstract - Full length paper

The CRMarchaeo model, as an extension of CIDOC CRM, has been created to enhance interoperability among the information systems that support the archaeological excavation processes, by revealing the semantics of the activities related to these processes. The model provides a language, specified by a set of classes and properties and enables the integration of documentations of the various aspects of archaeological excavations. It aims at sharing and formalizing knowledge that the archaeologists have achieved during their activities in the field and has been recorded in various ways.

This paper exploits CRMarchaeo to describe formally the content of *excavation notebooks* that document the daily digging process and, therefore, constitute the very essence of archaeological archival material. The paper explores the possibility of the existence of a common ground for the management of archaeological records from raw excavation data recorded in the notebooks and aims at recognizing the correlations between such data. Moreover it suggests potential additions to the CRMarchaeo, as a result of its practical use on real archaeological issues extracted from the experience from the specific archival material (excavation notebooks).

As a case study for this research are used the organization system and samples of the excavation notebooks used at the excavation of the ancient settlement located in Karabournaki on the northern coast of the Aegean, in the area of Thessaloniki. The site reveals the remains of a settlement occupied from the Late Bronze Age down to Roman times. The systematic excavation on the site for over 20 years has provided an impressive amount of information that is kept in the excavation notebooks.