UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE PERSON CLASS IN CULTURAL HERITAGE MODELS

What Makes a Person a Person?

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BACKGROUND

The cultural heritage domain draws on many KOSs to prepare and provide data

Domain models define and describe important entities of interest and their relationships

Variations in the way these models describe and represent common entities have taken on new significance in emerging online environments

For example, what is a Work?

WHAT IS A PERSON ANYWAY?

"Person" is a key entity in almost all cultural heritage domain models

Persons are
- sources of data
- creators of resources
- consumers of resources
- even the resources themselves

Personhood is usually associated with creative responsibilities and rights

Formally defining a person is challenging though
- Spirits? Animals? AI? Fictional characters?

THE STORY SO FAR…

- Changing Depictions of Persons in Library Practice: Spirits, Pseudonyms, and Human Books (Dobreski & Kwaśnik, 2018)

- Recreated Actors and Attribution: An Analysis of Film Crediting Practices (Dobreski & Thompson, 2020)

- Dimensions of Personhood in Cultural Heritage (Dobreski & Kwaśnik, 2021)

Dimension	What Qualifies as a Person?	What Does Not?
Life	living, once living, assumed to have lived	not or never living (artificial intelligence)
Actuality	real, exists, existed	fictional, imaginary
Biology	human species	non-human (animals, personae, spirits)
Agency	has created, has creative capacity, has creative intention	no creations or creative capacity
Individuality	individual, individual identity	unidentified, undifferentiated

GOAL & APPROACH

How has the person concept been modeled within the cultural heritage domain?

How is it distinguished from other kinds of entities?
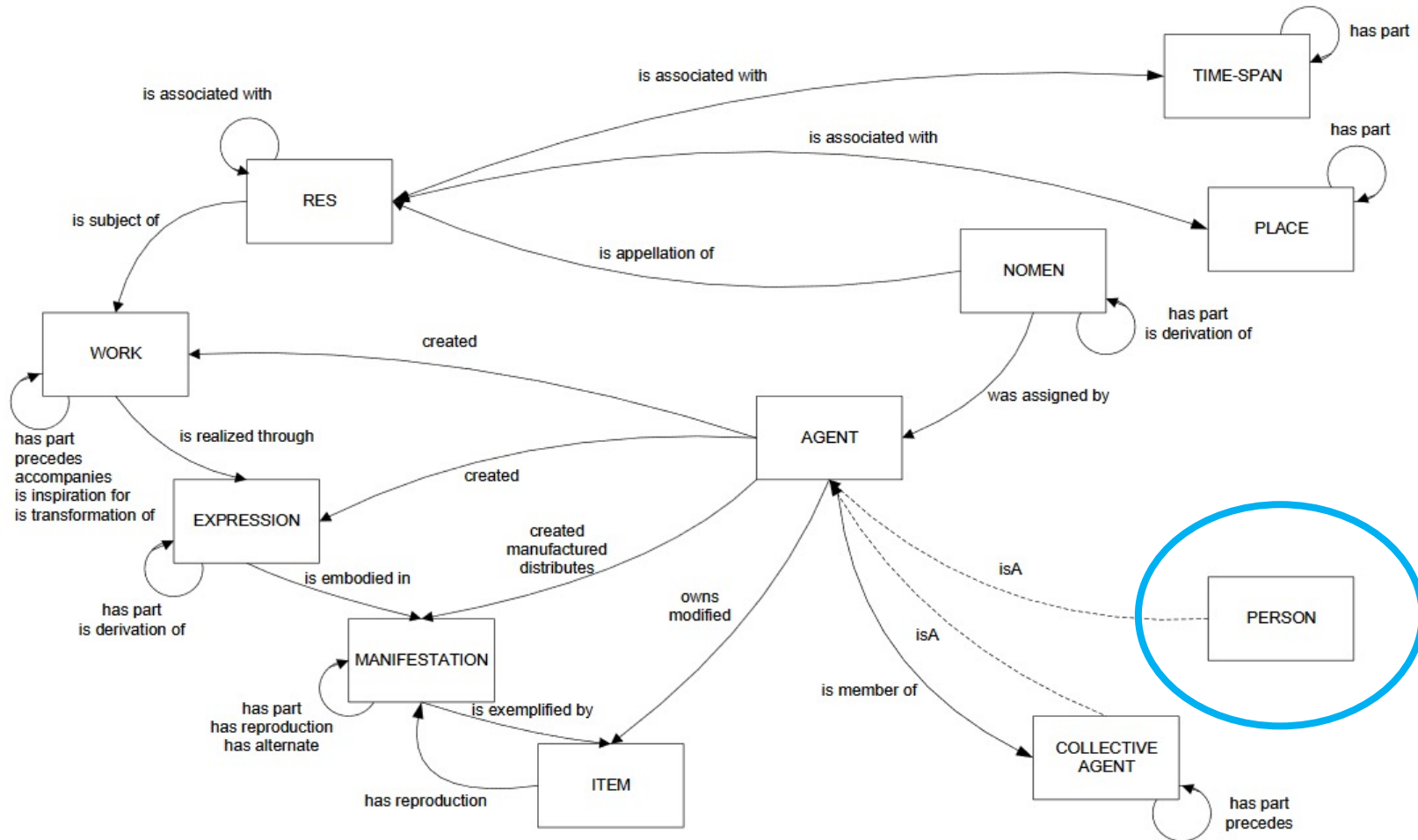
What does this tell us about personhood?

Approach:

▪ Three conceptual, domain models from the cultural heritage community

▪ Content analysis

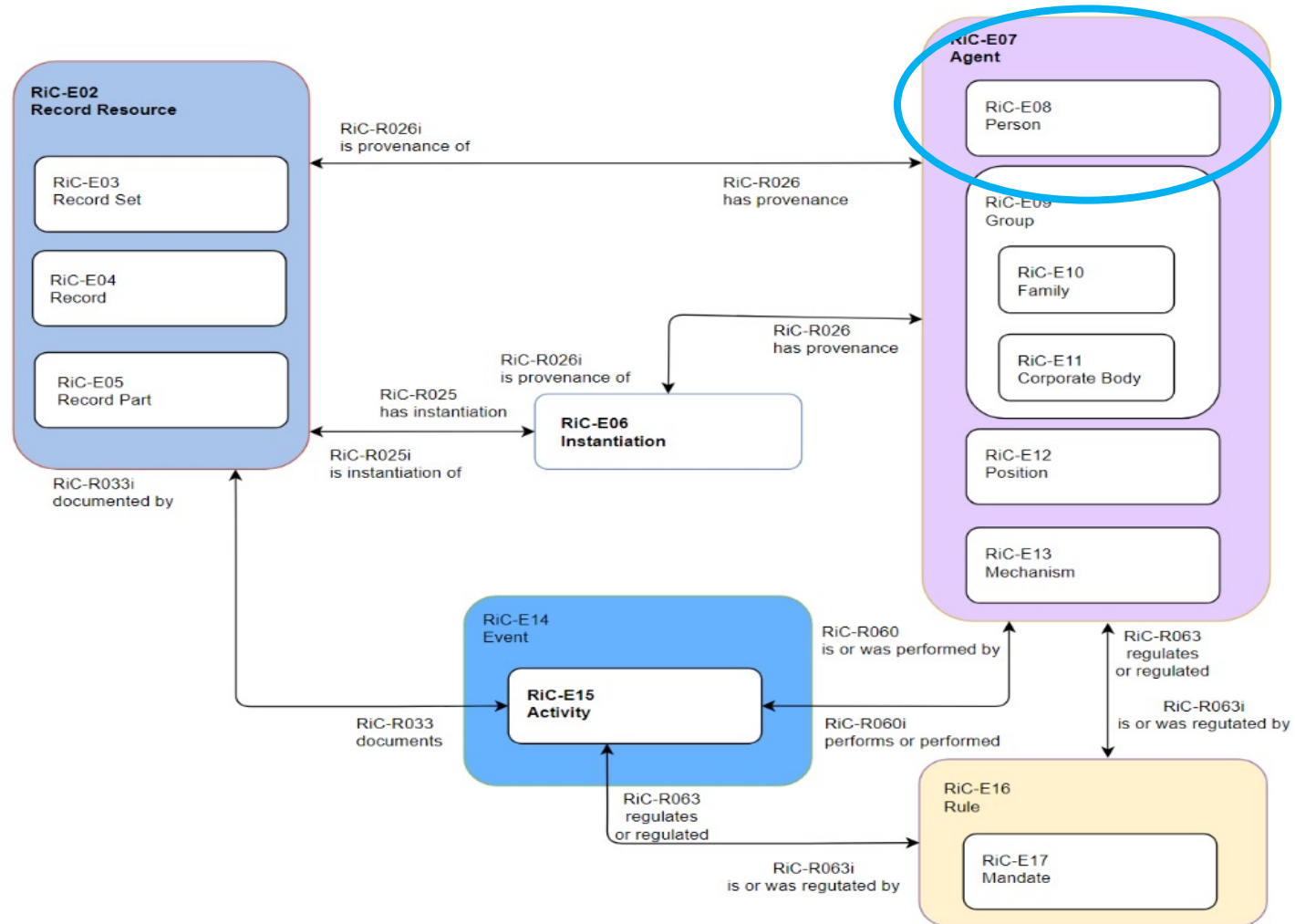▪ Emphasis on Person class & unique properties and relationships

CIDOC CONCEPTUAL REFERENCE MODEL (CIDOC CRM)
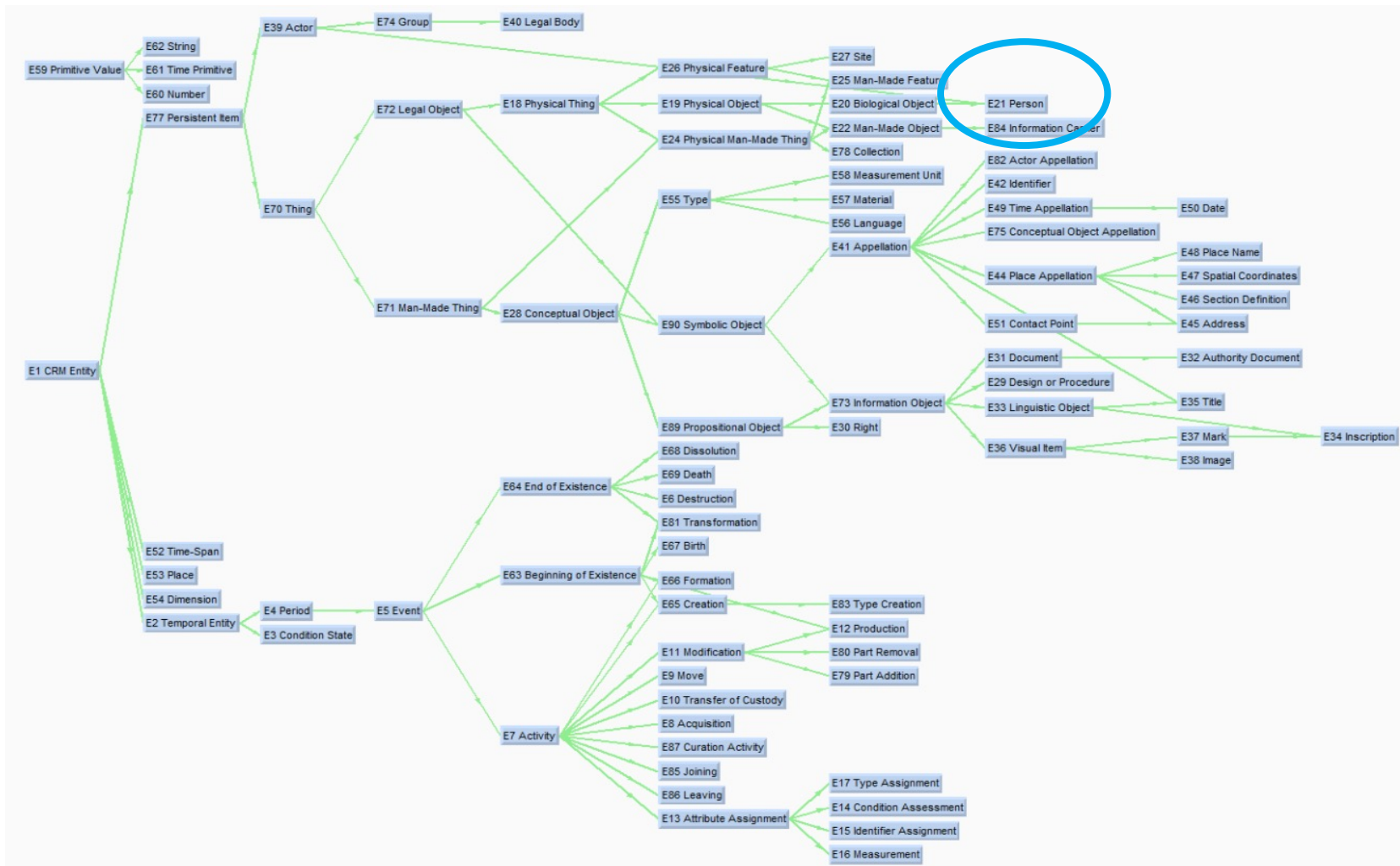
LIBRARY REFERENCE MODEL (LRM)

RECORDS IN CONTEXT CONCEPTUAL MODEL (RIC-CM)

DEFINITIONS & HIERARCHY

CIDOC-CRM

This class comprises **real persons who live** or are assumed to have lived. Legendary figures that may have existed, such as Ulysses and King Arthur, fall into this class **if the documentation refers to them as historical figures**...

Entity E1 → Persistent Item E77 → Thing E70 → Legal Object E72 → Physical Thing E18→ Physical Object E19 → Biological Object E20 → Person

LRM

An individual human being. The entity person is restricted to real persons who live or are assumed to have lived. Strict **proof of the existence of a person is not required**, as long as there is a general acceptance of their probable historicity...

Res → Agent → Person

RiC-CM

A **human being with a social identity** or persona. Person is a kind of Agent (RiC-E07). Most commonly, a human being (biological person) has a single coeval social identity or persona. In everyday discourse, this is the "real person."

Thing → Agent → Person

EXAMPLE PROPERTIES & RELATIONSHIPS

CIDOC-CRM

Inherited
is identified by, shows features of, is composed of, is current owner of, is located on, is depicted by

Unique
has parent, is parent of, gave birth, was born, died in, was father for

LRM

Inherited
Category, Note, Contact information, has appellation, is member of, owns, is subject of

Unique
Profession/Occupation

RiC-CM

Inherited
Name, History, Legal status, is creator of, performs, has jurisdiction, has end date, is subject of

Unique
Demographic group, Occupation type, is owner of, has intellectual property rights on, has teacher, has ancestor

FINDINGS

CIDOC-CRM: 82 features, <u>6 unique to Person</u>

LRM: 20 features, <u>1 unique to Person</u>

RiC-CM: 77 features, <u>24 unique to Person</u>

Unique features show four themes:
1. Biological and Familiar Relationships
2. Organizational and Work Roles
3. Social Relationships
4. Rights

UNIQUE FEATURES

Theme	CIDOC-CRM	LRM	RiC-CM
Biological/familial relationships	was father for, gave birth, died in		has ancestor, has child, has sibling
Organizational/ work roles		Profession/ Occupation	Occupation Type, is leader of
Social relationships			has teacher, knows
Rights			is owner of, has intellectual property rights on

IMPLICATIONS

Cultural heritage models limit personhood to real, biological humans

Persons are distinguished from other entities via:
- Work activities
- Limited range of biological and social relationships
- Specific rights

What about other entities displaying these properties though?
- Can an animal social media star have an occupation?
- Can a virtual avatar have intellectual property rights?
- Can a chatbot be your friend?

FURTHER QUESTIONS

Why are some aspects of personhood incompletely or inconsistently modeled?
- Gender-related parenting relationships but no gender properties
- Surrogacy? Adoption? Other familial scenarios?

Why have been persons modeled in this way? Information resources and materialism…?

Have persons been too narrowly modeled? Or not modeled enough?

Can we, and should we, model other kinds of creators, creations, and contributions to the cultural record?

CONCLUSION

The uniqueness of the person entity in cultural heritage centers on biological/familial relationships, social relationships, work roles, and rights

Cultural heritage KOSs model persons to the exclusion of other creative agents

Other kinds of creators and creativity are culturally relevant, and should be considered

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