



How disciplines change and grow through research: the case of diplomatics

The methodological approach

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June 22, 2007

A methodological framework encompass...

- Guiding principles and postulates defined in a given field;
- Methods to be applied within a study;
- Procedures to be used by the researchers.

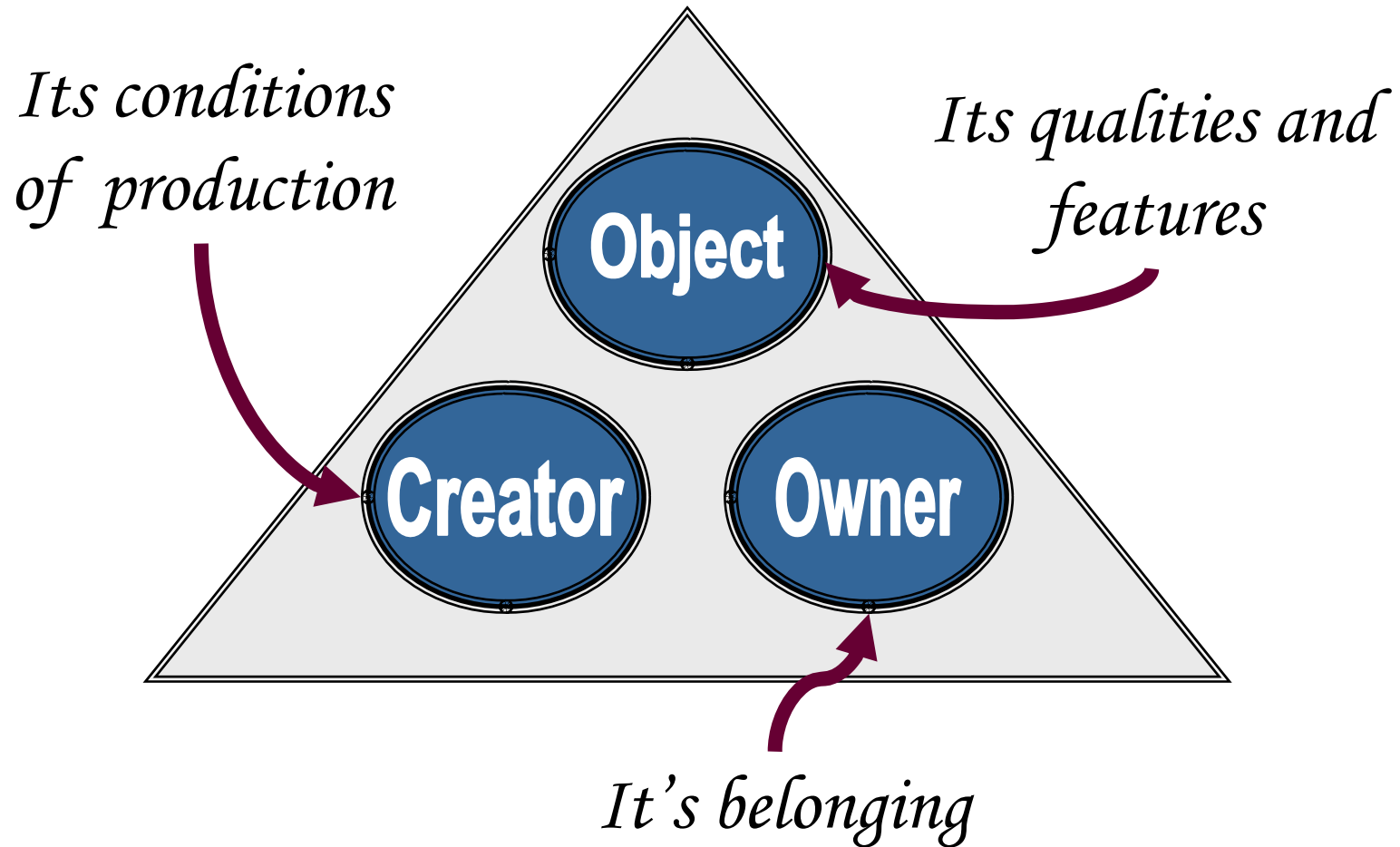
The Needs

- The records and their contexts are changing in the digital realm.
- Observation of the physical manifestations of the records is not enough to understand these changes.
- Need of internal view on what creator are doing and how they conceived the concretes manifestations which are resulting from their action.
- Contextual analysis can complete the Diplomatic method

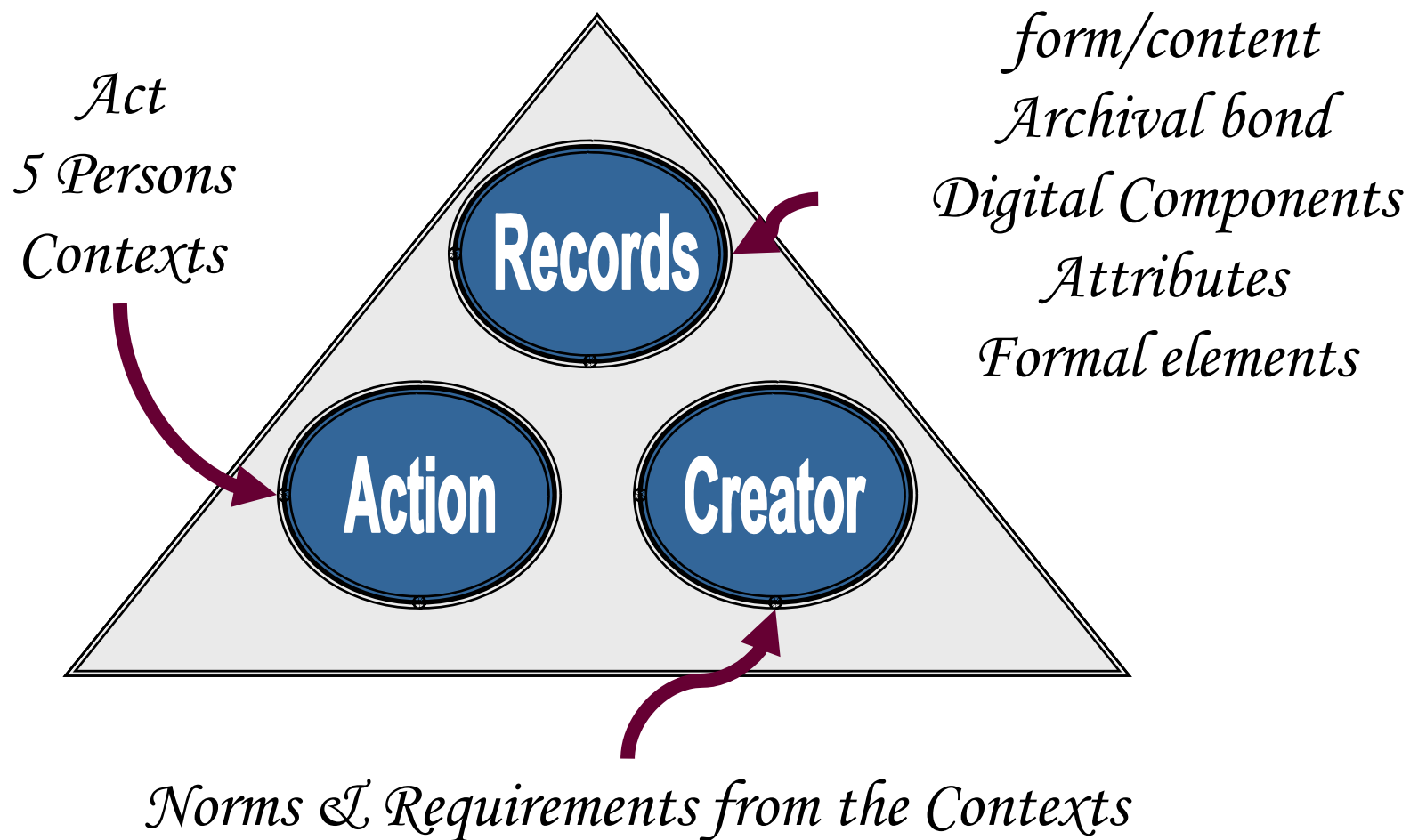
The Contextual Analysis

- *“Material culture is meaningfully constituted”*
- Material and immaterial dimensions are always embodied in an object.
- These are direct and indirect causes of the object.
- Both should be considered in the analysis.

The direct causes of the object



The Diplomatic Method



IP2 Template for Diplomatic Analysis

Object

1. To be identified as a record, the digital entity must possess a **stable content** and a **fixed documentary** form, and be **affixed to a medium**
2. A record must **possess** an **archival bond**, defined as the relationship that links each record to the previous and subsequent record participating in the same action and, incrementally, to all the records that participate in the same activity.

Ip2 Template for Diplomatic Analysis

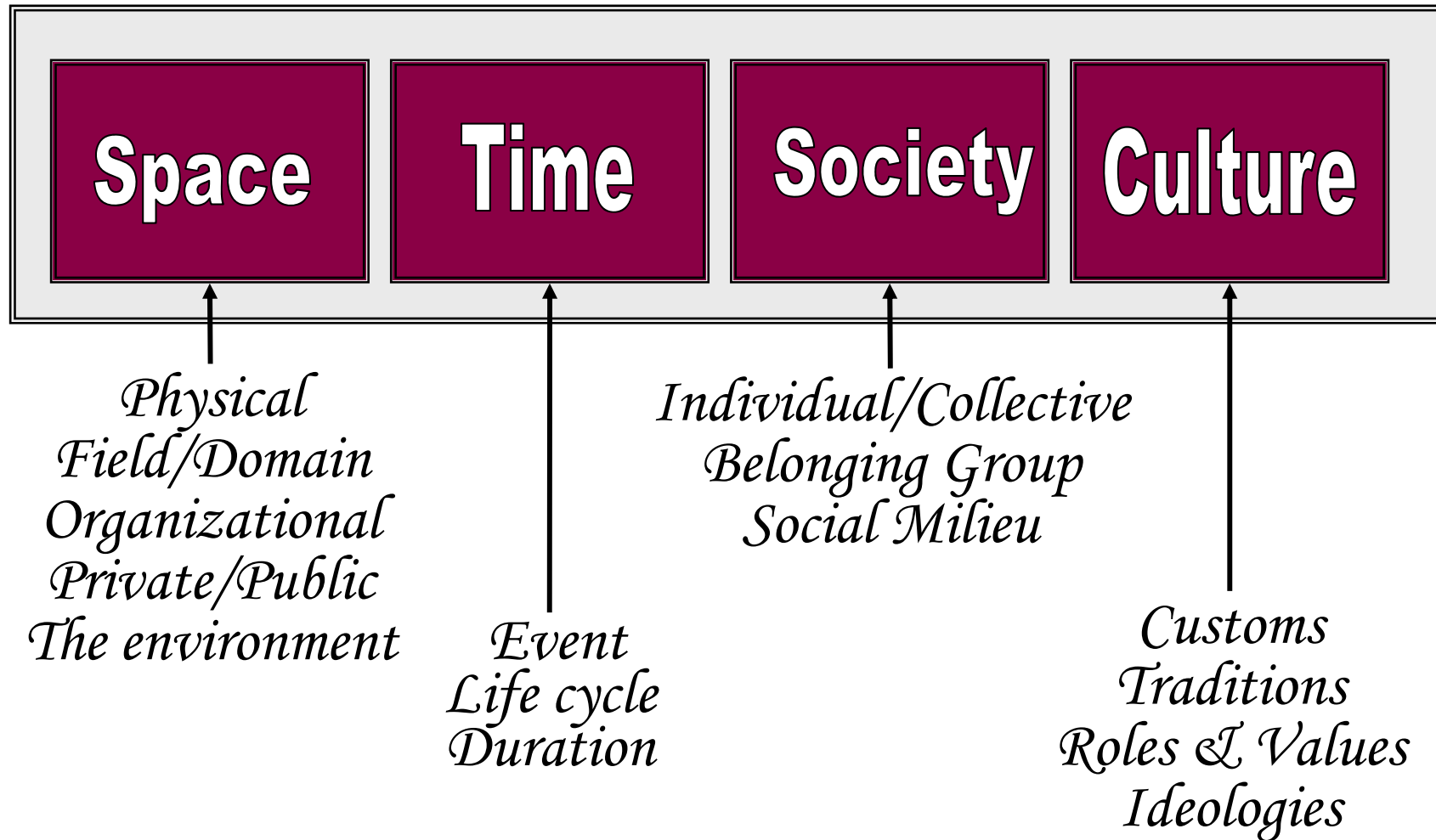
Action

3. A record must also participate in an action, defined as the conscious exercise of will by the author or by an external person, aimed to create, maintain, modify or extinguish situations. A record **results** as a **natural by-product of the action**.
4. The creation of digital records must **involve five persons**: author, writer, addressee, creator, and originator

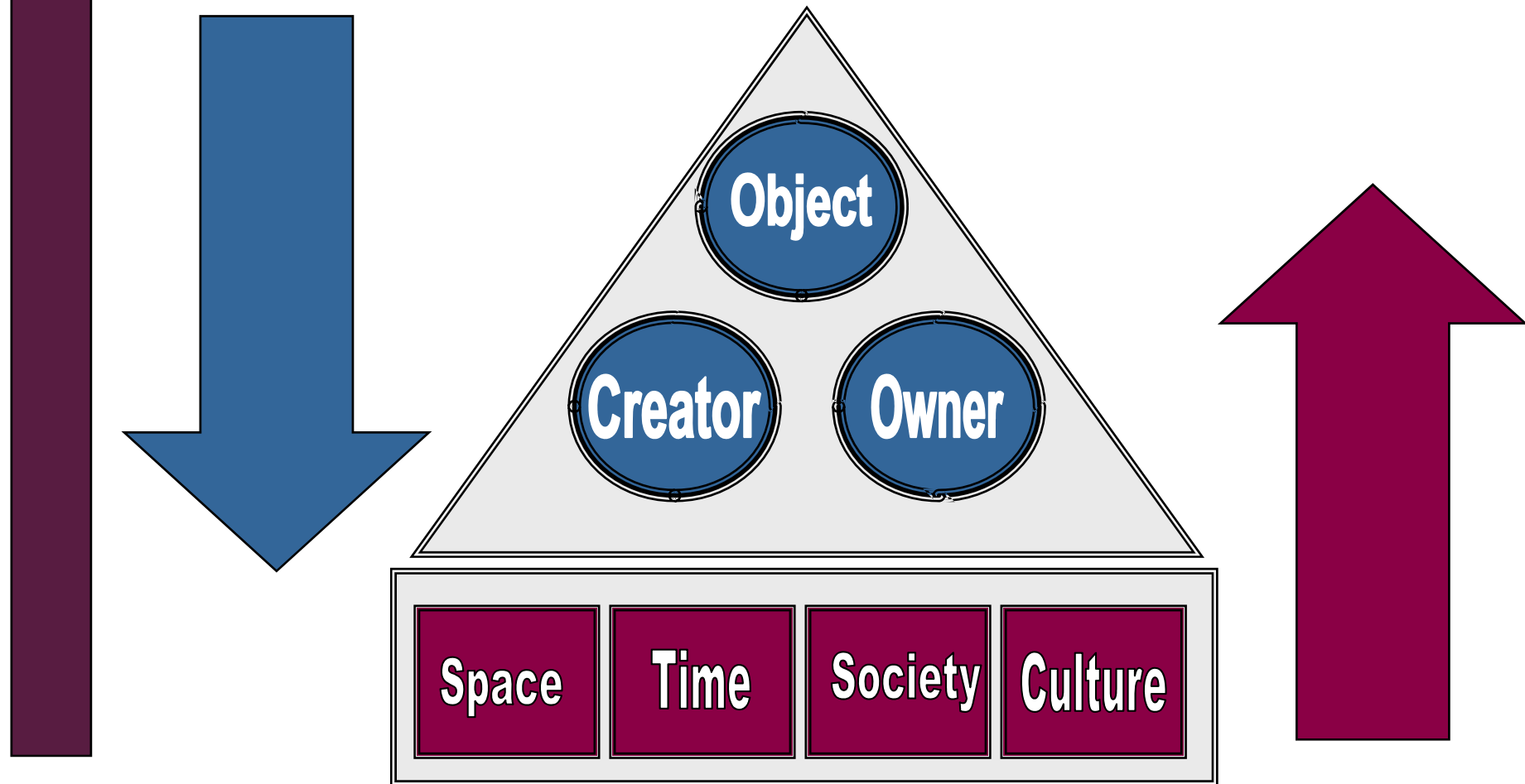
IP2 Template for Diplomatic Analysis Creator

5. A record must possess an identifiable framework within which action and record creation **take place**. This framework consists of **five contexts**: juridical-administrative, provenancial, procedural, documentary, and, technological contexts, from general to specific.

The indirect causes of the object



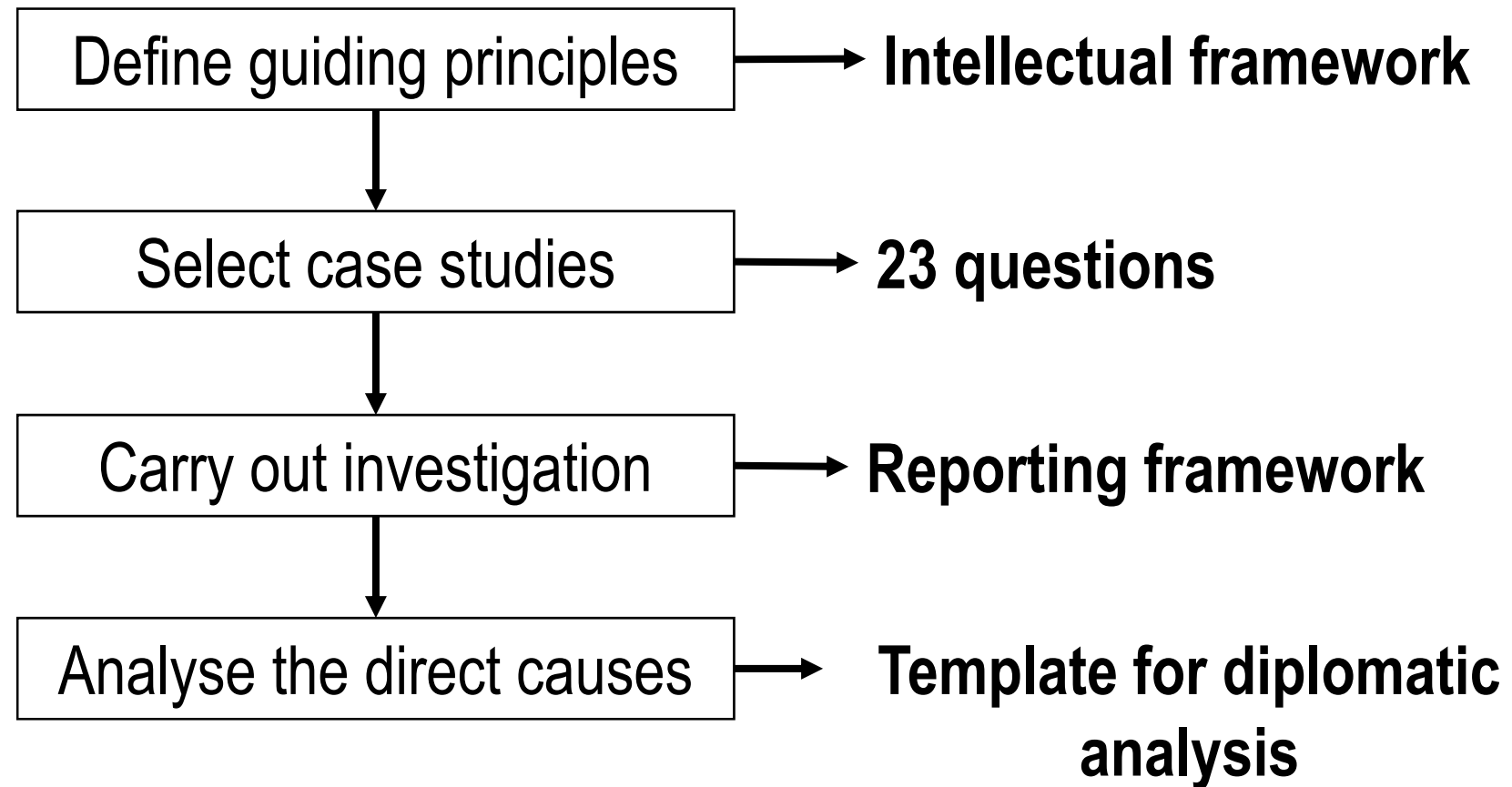
The Analytical Methodology



The Step-by-Step Case Study Method

Actions

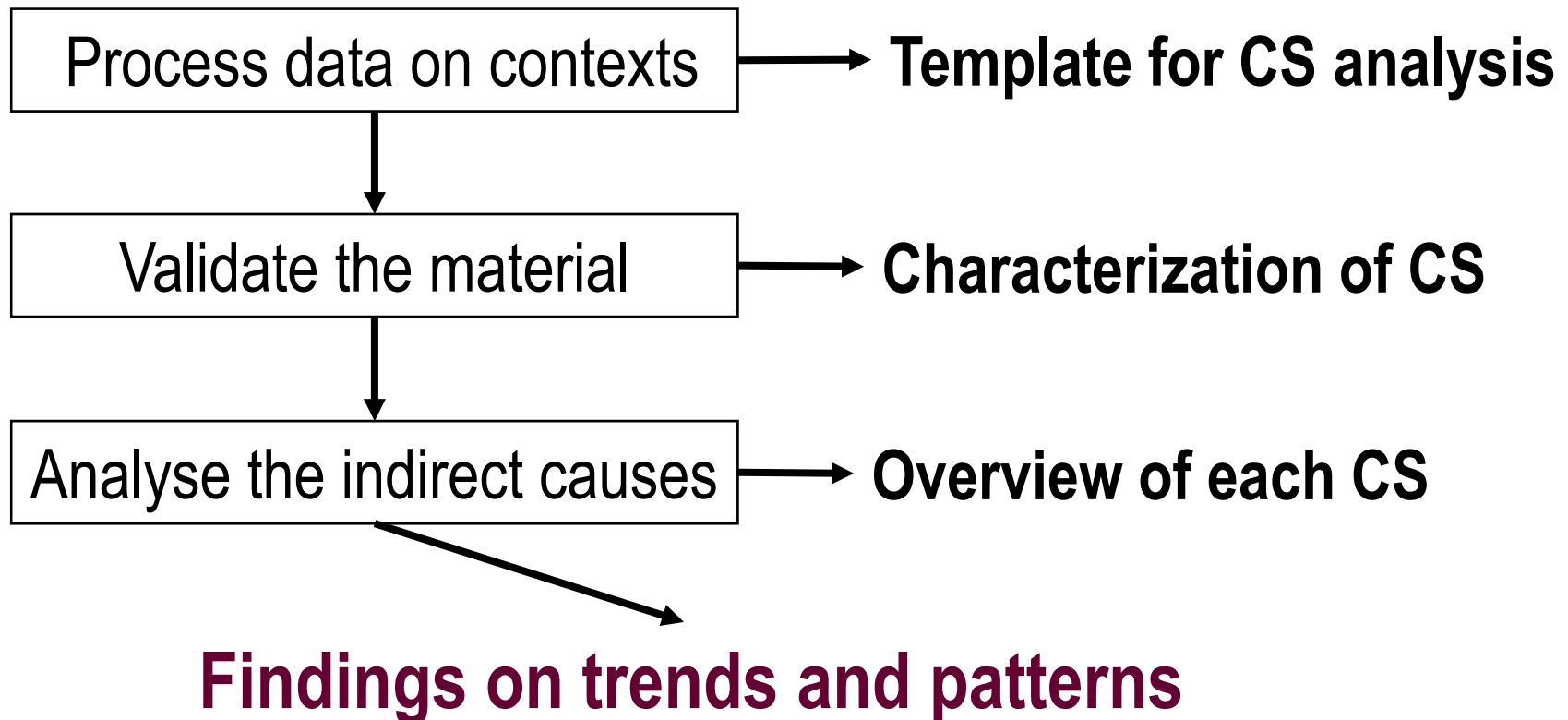
IP2 Tools



Ip2 Step-by-Step Case Study Method

Actions

Ip2 Tools



a) The Space & the Milieu

- An important collaborative dimension is underpinning the process of records creation.
- The contributing creators are often remote from each others and from the production environment.
- Due to the different environment in which the records are created, the records making and keeping practices may be not consistent.

Effects on the Records

- The individualistic nature of the creation process is increased, especially in fields where this is already the case.
- Documentation on the process and its products may be dispersed, not linked, partly or not captured.
- The preservation of the materials as a cohesive whole is underestimated or just not seen by remote collaborators.

b) The Culture & the Milieu

- General purposes are the same than traditionally.
 - Tradition is moving to digital environment;
 - Traditional activities are carrying out in a new way.
- Activities are changing.
- New aspects are integrated.
- New uses are emerging.

Diplomatic Analysis Results

Entities that NOT satisfy the requirements of a record :

- 1) Lack of stability of the content and fixity of the form: former data cannot be retrieved and/or reproduced.
- 2) Not products or by-products but end products.
- 3) Some entities can be partly or potential records

Effects on the Records

- An item can be a record or not, according to the timeline of its creation process.
- Form can change and the entity can be a potential record.

c) The Time

- A structuring effects comes from the youthfulness of the integration of IT in the current life and practices;
- A wide range of effects on the records:
 - nascent business process, “work-in progress” creation mode; linkage with the availability of software and the ease of using in, lack of standards, lack of awareness of the threat of the technological dependence and obsolescence; belief in the permanence of CD or DVD. And more....

Effects on the Records

- Cultural practices related to the uses of the IT are not mature enough to make possible to predict their stability in a short-term.
- Solution which are developed today in order to address electronic records issues, will inevitably have to be adapted to the cultural evolution in the future.

Sources

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- Hodder I, and Hutson S. Reading the past: Current approaches to interpretation in archaeology. Cambridge university press, 2003