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Libraries Powering Transformation

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Speaker

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From Local to Shared

Transformative Cataloguing in Linked Data Environments

Tiziana Possemato · @Cult – Share Family

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THE TRANSFORMATION

Not Simply a Format Change

The transition from MARC to BIBFRAME is often presented as a change in metadata format — but the transformation is much deeper: conceptual, professional, and organisational.

Records become entities

Persons, works, and publications become identifiable objects connected through explicit relationships.

Systems become connected

Institutions share and reuse entities rather than maintaining isolated records.

Cataloguing becomes collaborative

Responsibility for creating, maintaining, and governing shared entities is distributed.

A STRUCTURAL OBSTACLE

Libraries Depend on Record Providers

Many libraries have built their catalogues through agreements with bibliographic agencies or commercial companies. This model provided efficiency but shaped staffing and workflows around receiving and importing records — not creating or governing metadata autonomously.

Internal expertise has decreased

Cataloguing departments equipped for autonomous metadata governance are less common.

New software alone is not enough

Moving towards shared entity management requires organisational change, not only new tools.

BEYOND COPY CATALOGUING

Cataloguing Is Now a Spectrum
Coordination → Cooperation → Participation

Local and copy cataloguing should no longer be treated as the only alternatives. Libraries should be able to choose among models rather than remaining dependent on one.

1

Local

Data created and maintained within one institution.

2

Copy

External record imported and adapted locally.

3

Cooperative

Local and central systems interact; information flows in both directions.

4

Shared

Institutions work directly on common entities.

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LEARNING THROUGH PRACTICE

URBE and Parsifal: Real Data, Real Errors

The URBE library network and the Parsifal project show that libraries can approach new cataloguing models through practice rather than theory. Cataloguers encounter concrete problems — duplicate persons, incorrectly merged entities, wrong relationships, unreliable identifiers — and learn by correcting them together.

Shared corrections

Collaborative problem-solving builds understanding of entity-based cataloguing.

Distributed quality control

Shared cataloguing is a form of quality governance based on professional expertise and institutional responsibility.

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Collaboration Becomes Operational

The Parsifal dashboard turns collaboration into a structured workflow — comparable in some respects to Wikidata, but controlled by a professional community of cataloguers with defined institutional responsibilities.

01

Review errors

Identify issues from automated processes or cataloguer input.

02

Move records between entities

Reassign records to correct entities as needed.

03

Request targeted corrections

Direct correction requests to the responsible institution.

04

Resolve entity conflicts

Check external identifiers and resolve entity conflicts collaboratively.

Tools Are Not Sufficient — Shared Entities Need Shared Governance

JCricket supports navigation and editing within the Share Family entity knowledge base. But an entity editor alone cannot create a shared cataloguing model. The Share Family community is developing **Best Practices** for collaborative entity management through JCricket addressing key governance questions:

When to enrich, create, merge, or split

Clear criteria guide decisions on entity lifecycle management.

How to assess external identifiers

Standards for evaluating and linking to external sources.

What remains local

Provenance and accountability define the boundary between shared and local data.

Open Metadata Enable Alternatives

Cooperative models are especially important when based on open metadata. Openness changes the relationship between libraries and providers — libraries can become active contributors to shared knowledge infrastructures rather than only consumers of records.

Reusable across systems

Open metadata can be inspected, linked, corrected, enriched, and reused.

Governed by communities

Libraries participate in governing their data rather than receiving it through closed channels.

Less provider dependency

Providers continue to offer essential infrastructure, but openness shifts the balance of agency.

Entities Become Shared Infrastructure

The infrastructures, workflows, and governance structures for shared entity management are still being developed.

The real transformation

Not simply from MARC to BIBFRAME — but from record production to collaborative governance of interconnected entities.

Metadata as infrastructure

Metadata become a shared infrastructure that libraries themselves can help create, improve, and govern.

Entity modelling does not simply change the objects of cataloguing; it changes how a professional community comes to know them together.

Thank You!

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Learn more

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share-family.org

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