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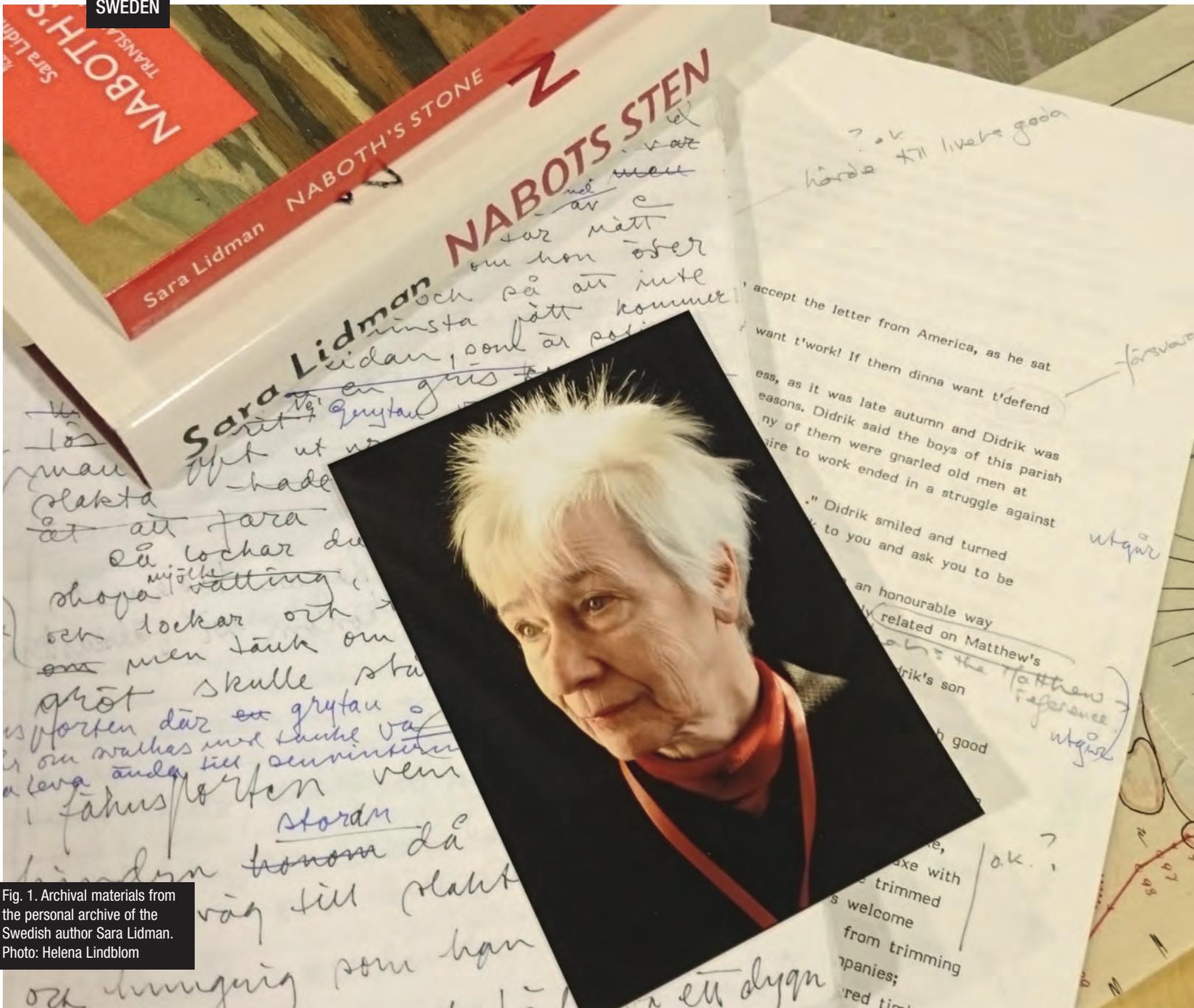


Fig. 1. Archival materials from the personal archive of the Swedish author Sara Lidman. Photo: Helena Lindblom

# RDA Exposing the archival secrets



Personal archives can contain many hidden treasures, but how can these be made more visible? A recent Swedish project at Umeå University Library used RDA to create linked data connecting archive and library materials. This can for example help you follow the thoughts of author Sara Lidman from manuscripts in research archives to actual published books in libraries.



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Archives and libraries have long worked with separate systems for creating metadata, but RDA (Resource Description and Access), a new cataloguing standard influenced by archival rules, brings possibilities to create linked data useful for archives, libraries and other interested parties.

The Swedish project, *RDA – An Opportunity for Library and Archive Collaboration*, has been run by Umeå University Library with support from Lund University Libraries, the National Library of Sweden and the National Archives. The aim of the project was to explore how RDA can be applied on archival materials and how FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographical Records) entities can be related to aforementioned materials.

#### Can an archive be a work?

FRBR is an entity-relationship model developed to give new perspectives on structure and relations in bibliographic records and authority records. The model describes entities in different groups, where group 1 contains the entities work, expression, manifestation and item. A work, defined as an abstract intellectual or artistic creation, is realized in an expression, which can be embodied in a manifestation.

An item is the physical form, a single copy of a manifestation. In this project it has been important to explore how RDA and FRBR can relate to archives and how archives can be related to the entities in FRBR group 1. The results suggest that an archive could be defined as a work or an aggregated work. Parts of the archive could then be defined as parts of an aggregated

work, to be compared with separate chapters in an anthology or separate articles in a journal.

#### Developing and evaluating models

To explore archival materials in relation to RDA and FRBR we developed several different models. All of the models have their own advantages and disadvantages. The models were exemplified with archival materials from personal archives from Lund University Libraries and Umeå University Library and evaluated in a workshop with participants from the National Library of Sweden and the National Archives.

The model recommended in the workshop is a flexible model, where the archive is regarded as an aggregated work and catalogued as a whole. Specific parts of the archive, such as manuscripts, can then be catalogued in detail as separate works in this aggregated work. This means that a book manuscript is searchable together with the printed edition of the book.

The flexible model is here exemplified by manuscripts of the book *Nabots sten/Naboth's stone* from the Swedish author Sara Lidman's personal archive, which is kept in the Research Archives, Umeå University Library (figure 1). In this example we connect manuscripts from the archive with a printed Swedish edition of *Nabots sten* and the printed English edition, *Naboth's stone* (figure 2, page 26).

#### RIMMF and RDA-toolkit

The archival materials have been catalogued in RDA using the open-source program RIMMF (RDA in Many Metadata

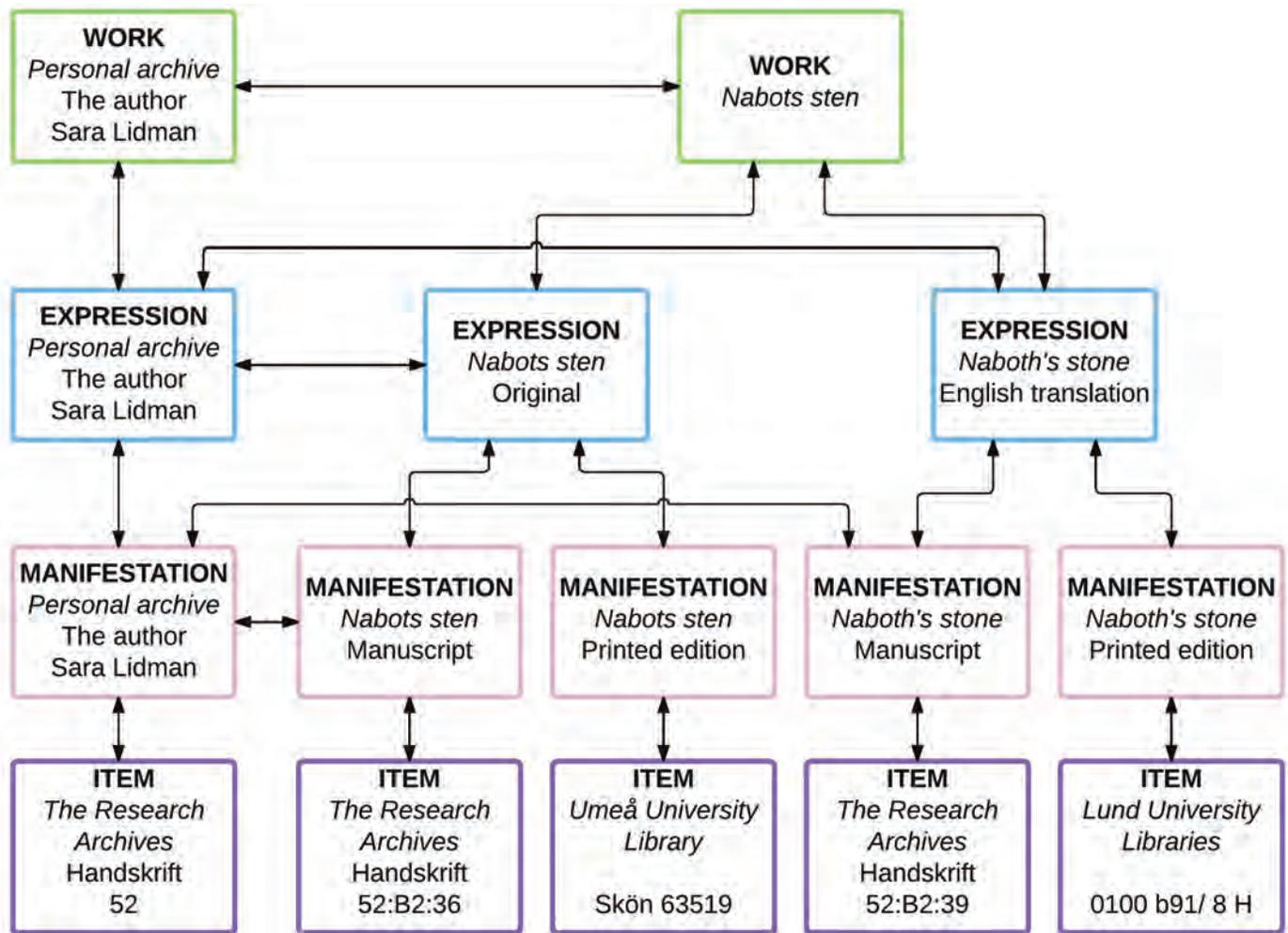


Fig. 2. An example of the flexible model for applying RDA (Resource Description & Access) on archival materials. The figure shows the connections between the personal archive of the Swedish author Sara Lidman and the work Nabots sten with its manifestations, including manuscripts from the archive. Illustration: Helena Lindblom

Formats). RIMMF follows the FRBR structure closely and is a good method to visualize RDA. The system is not very intuitive to work with, and it is complicated to share files. It also lacks a search function and is due to that not suitable for large scale cataloging. However, it is a well-functioning cataloging training tool when introducing RDA.

RDA toolkit has been used as a support tool in the cataloging process. The toolkit is a very important web based tool for cataloging in RDA, as it includes RDA instructions, workflows and mappings between RDA and MARC. The workflows are developed to describe how to work with different kinds of materials.

### Bring libraries and archives closer

It is important for libraries to join the development towards more open and linked data. Cultural institutions such as libraries and archives must cooperate to find the best ways to enhance and enrich metadata from different contexts, but open data can

be brought together in different ways. One alternative is that museums, archives and libraries keep their own ways of describing metadata with a search system creating a joint result list. Another way to go is to work with common standards for describing metadata.

It is very important to find the most economical way to handle limited resources, and that is why it is central to find the most effective ways for the cultural institutions to work together in creating authority data and bibliographic data.

This project shows that metadata can be enriched when two contexts, here exemplified with manuscripts from a personal archive and published books from different libraries, are brought together. Moreover, it shows that RDA has the potential to work as a standard for description of both archival and bibliographic materials. RDA brings the possibilities to create linked data which can be shared in the archival world, the library world and beyond.

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