

# VI

**MIRNA OSOBNO /**  
**MIRNA PERSONALLY**



## MIRNA NEMIRNA DUHA

*Tatjana Aparac-Jelušić*

*Mrkopalj, Hrvatska*

Mirna? Sve – samo ne mirna! To dokazuju i njezin život i njezina postignuća.

Bio je velik izazov pridružiti se toj bujici ideja i otkrivanju novih dimenzija unutar profesionalnog okvira kojem smo se srčano posvetile, svaka iz vlastite perspektive.

Teme koje su zaokupljale Mirnu nisu najčešće bile u fokusu mojih zanimanja, ali bilo je i takvih koje su nas zaista približile. Jedna od najranijih bio je AKM kao novi koncept u promišljanju mogućnosti i budućnosti tzv. baštinskih ustanova, zatim digitalizacija pisane baštine i temeljni koncepti organizacije informacija. Ova posljednja tema bila je ujedno i područje moje izobrazbe uz Mirnino svesrdno upućivanje i vođenje na putu otkrivanja jezgrenih sadržaja u polju informacijskih znanosti. Nezaboravno je kako me je Mirna podučila da razumijem promjene koje su se na prijelazu stoljećâ događale u bibliografskom svijetu, od teza Pat Oddy do semantičkog *weba* i njegovih izazova za knjižničare. Neizmjereno sam joj zahvalna na nesebičnom prenošenju vlastitih spoznaja u tom inspirirajućem okruženju.

AKM je posebna priča koja evocira niz susreta, dvojbi i nesigurnosti u početku, prije svega povezanih s nemogućnosti predviđanja kako će kolege iz arhivske i muzejske zajednice prihvatiti ideju suradnje i zajedničkog rada na iznalaženju novih integrativnih modela koji ostavljaju svakoj od disciplina mogućnost daljnjeg produbljivanja teorijskih spoznaja u vlastitom „dvoristu“, ali i pozivaju na sustavno istraživanje mogućnosti razvoja u novom digitalnom okruženju. U tom kontekstu, i u nekoliko drugih situacija, Mirna je osjećala ograničenja sredine u kojoj je inercija duha proizlazila iz preopterećenosti pragmatičnim pitanjima i rutinskim postupcima. Tražila je nove mogućnosti djelovanja pa se AKM nametnuo kao logična posljedica i kao podatan okvir za intelektualne izazove. Mene je time nadahnula i pridobila za svoje nove „bitke“.

Na ovom mjestu posebno ističem našu suradnju na planu sveučilišnog obrazovanja i znanstvenog djelovanja. Pokrenuti i razvijati nove studentske programe u polju informacijskih znanosti bio je trnovit put kojim se nije moglo kročiti bez vrhunskih stručnjaka poput Mirne. Koliko me sjećanje služi, kad je bila iscrpila snage pokušavajući profesionalno i na temelju znanstvenih postavki djelovati unutar naše krovne knjižničarske ustanove, pomalo umornu i nezadovolj-

nu, uspjela sam je pridobiti na iznimno važan korak u njezinu životu: ulazak u akademsku zajednicu. Moji su se argumenti temeljili na vjerovanju da izvrstan stručnjak može i treba obrazovati, pa i odgajati, nove generacije budućih stručnjaka. Mirna je te argumente prihvatila i unijela sve svoje znanje i energiju u rad s mladima, rezultat čega su deseci „zaljubljenika“ u organizaciju informacija, AKM ideju, digitalizaciju. I na tome sam joj beskrajno zahvalna.

Kao što vlastito iskustvo pokazuje, vjerujem da će Mirna i dalje biti sve samo ne mirna, darujući i svojoj obitelji i stručnoj zajednici ono najbolje od sebe.

## IFLA WITH MIRNA

*Marie-France Plassard*

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The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) is not only an organisation where you make the most interesting professional contacts, but where you also start priceless friendships. I have indeed, during my long involvement with IFLA, met colleagues which I now consider as close friends, ones with whom you do not discuss only ISBDs, RDA or UNIMARC... but whichever interests you share.

This is the case for Mirna Willer whom I first met in 1991 in Florence at a UNIMARC/CCF Workshop, sponsored by Unesco, where the future of UNIMARC was discussed and a Permanent UNIMARC Committee (PUC) established. This was implementing Resolution n°5 issued at the Seminar on Bibliographic Records held in Stockholm before the IFLA General Conference, August 1990. The resolution read: "That a permanent committee be established by the IFLA UBCIM Programme to oversee UNIMARC promotion and development". The main objective of the PUC would thus be to control the UNIMARC format in accordance with the principles of Universal Bibliographic Control.

I was at the time Programme Officer for the IFLA Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC (UBCIM) Programme and one of the organisers of the meeting and Mirna was a member of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Common Communication Format (CCF).

At the end of the Workshop the first meeting of the Permanent UNIMARC Committee (PUC) took place, comprising, besides experts from the USA and the UK, representatives from countries using UNIMARC as their national format. Fernanda Campos, from the National Library of Portugal, was elected as the first Chair of the Committee in which Mirna participated first as a standing member. I was new in the field at the time and I'll always be thankful for the friendly and cooperative attitude of those experts. We were engaged in this new venture and we all wanted very much for it to be successful.

Mirna became over the years Secretary of the PUC and finally its Chair, a position she held from 1997 to 2005. We worked very closely together; there were long phone calls between the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (where the UBCIM Programme was hosted) and the National Library of Croatia in Zagreb. Since

I was responsible for the minutes of the meetings I listened very closely to the discussions where Mirna was attentive to all members' arguments while being quite firm on the points she wanted to raise and eventually solve. I could always depend on her if some technical details escaped me; she would provide a very clear explanation.

During her tenure, important UNIMARC works were prepared and published. Second edition of the *UNMIMARC Manual/Bibliographic Format* was produced, followed by updates. Mirna was the editor of the *UNIMARC Manual/Authorities Format* which was the result of long discussions and email exchanges. Several translations (coordinated by IFLA HQ and the PUC) appeared.

We were invited by various countries to present the UNIMARC format the main role of which was "to facilitate the exchange of bibliographic information and thus allow a better dialogue between libraries". One very important meeting was the Workshop on UNIMARC and CDS/ISIS held in Budapest on 22 June 1993. Its main purpose, besides presenting the format, was to demonstrate the possibilities offered by the Mini CDS/ISIS software distributed free of charge by Unesco to accommodate UNIMARC records.

Prior to this meeting, the National Library of Portugal had prepared under contract with the UBCIM Office UNIBASE, a UNIMARC demonstration database which was presented by Fernanda Campos to participants, all from eastern Europe, and distributed to them. The use of UNIMARC with mini CDS/ISIS software was thus demonstrated. Later that year, a workshop with the same theme took place in Barcelona during the IFLA General Conference.

During a week spent in the beautiful Republic of Crimea where I was invited with some of the UNIMARC specialists by the organisers of the Crimean international forum, the Russian National Public Library of Science and Technology and especially, Yakov Shraiberg, in order to present the format's latest developments, participants were amused to observe pages of the *UNIMARC/Manual Bibliographic Format* scattered out on the sand of a Black sea beach. They were being explained to some of the Conference attendees by our specialists from the UK, the late and sorely missed Brian Holt and Alan Hopkinson.

Parallely, the meetings of the PUC but also of other associations which Mirna and I both attended, e.g. ISSN meetings, gave us the opportunity to see each other in different settings: Lisbon, Washington, D.C., Rome, London, Paris, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vilnius, to give only a few names. We share interests in music and paintings; we would thus rush in our spare time to go to concerts and museums.

I remember a wonderful weekend in Marina, Croatia, where Mirna invited

me to her family house after we had attended an ISSN meeting in Ljubljana. The Dalmatian coast is one of the most spectacular I know.

Within IFLA, not only did we work together on UNIMARC but on other IFLA projects, for example the Working Group on Minimal Level Authority Records and the ISADN created in 1996 and renamed in 1999 Working Group on the Functional Requirements and Numbering of Name Authority Records (FRANAR). Mirna also cooperated with articles and reviews to the journal, *International Cataloguing and Bibliographic Control (ICBC)* of which I was the editor.

After I retired in 2003, we met at WLIC every year; Mirna updated me on the latest UNIMARC developments as well as on the ISBDs, since she was a member of the ISBD Review Group which she chaired from 2011 till 2015.

All those years I have admired Mirna for being able to conciliate, sometimes difficult thing for women, her very busy professional life with her family life. I know she will continue to stay busy after her retirement and that we will stay in touch, now and then going to an exhibition or a concert in Paris, Zagreb, London..., as she once told me half-jokingly when I was deploring the fact that we would not meet at WLIC anymore.

## MIRNA WILLER – SOME MEMORIES

*Dorothy McGarry*

*Los Angeles, USA*

Anyone who has worked with Mirna Willer at the National and University Library in Zagreb, at the University of Zadar, with the International UNIMARC Format, or with the ISBD Review Group (International Standard Bibliographic Description Review Group) knows what an exceptional person she is. She is dedicated, knowledgeable, hard-working, caring, and she still can be fun to be with and talk with.

I first met Mirna at the University of California, Los Angeles in the early 1990s where she was visiting Elaine Svenonius, Professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science. It was a very pleasant meeting, and I looked forward to seeing her again. We worked together for many years within IFLA, and I saw her again in Los Angeles in the late 1990s, I think, when she returned for an additional visit.

In 1994 there was a meeting held by the Division of Bibliographic Control in Vilnius. Mirna was there, and she was so kind as to show me around Vilnius, where she had been before but I had not. It was a delightful time.

Mirna was involved with organization of the meeting held in Zagreb in 2005 for the 100th birthday anniversary of Eva Verona. It was an excellent meeting, with many interesting papers and good fellowship among the participants. Mirna held a reception at her home for many participants from abroad, and it was very nice to see her lovely home.

In 2003, a Study Group on Future Directions of the ISBD was formed. Mirna and I were both members of the original seven-member SG. Although we worked virtually for much of the time, for the first two years we had the pleasure of short, in-person meetings in Frankfurt, staying in housing generously provided by Die Deutsche Bibliothek. We worked long hours, discussing and deciding on issues, coming to consensus, and enjoying each other's company. The final evening we were there, Mirna and one of the other members cooked dinner in the kitchen at the housing building, and we talked and laughed a great deal. We were discussing the feasibility of a consolidated ISBD instead of continuing the seven separate ISBDs along with the General ISBD. After deciding consolidation was best, the Study Group worked on the consolidation. All of the members commented with good ideas, expressed well. There was full participation by all of

the members and consensus on the issues, making the Study Group a delight to be on. The Preliminary Consolidated Edition was published in 2007.

Mirna was chair for several years of a sub-group established after the 2009 Review Group meeting with a project for an ISBD/XML Schema. The main objectives of the Review Group were: (1) to build a consensus on the *raison d'être* of moving the ISBD into the web environment, and define possible uses of such a product; and (2) to develop an ISBD/Linked Data procedure. Later Mirna served as a member of this group and continued to provide excellent comments. This group later was renamed the Linked Data Study Group.

Mirna was one of the editors of an issue of *Cataloguing & Classification Quarterly* on “ISBD the Bibliographic Content Standard,” published in 2014, which helped bring the ISBD to the attention of many throughout the world who may not have thought about it before. She was also author or co-author of many articles.

Mirna became chair of the ISBD Review Group in 2012, following Elena Escolano, and continuing the tradition of excellent chairs for the RG. As with her predecessors, John Byrum and Elena, Mirna led the meetings excellently, encouraged comments, listened well, and elicited consensus and good will among the members. In 2015, she indicated she didn't want to be selected for a second term, although she remained a member of the Review Group. Massimo Gentili-Tedeschi became the new chair in 2015. While Mirna was chair, she assured that reports from Study Groups were presented at each meeting, and she stood up for the ISBD in the Cataloguing Section, where a few members were not convinced the ISBD was still important. Her reports to the Standing Committee of the Cataloguing Section were always clear and complete. When, as then chair of the RG, she was added as an ad hoc member of the Committee on Standards, she represented the ISBD activity excellently.

Mirna has contributed a great deal to the work of the ISBD as well as to the other groups with which she worked. And through it all, despite all the serious work that was done, she provided an atmosphere of collegiality and interest and fun.

## MIRNA WILLER AND LITHUANIA

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A talent reminds of an ocean... It astonishes and entices, attracts and fascinates... Such a metaphor comes to mind in association with Professor Mirna Willer. What amazes is the unfathomable horizon of her knowledge, her ability to delve into the depth of the issue and perceive its very essence, as well as her generosity in sharing her knowledge with everyone who needs it.

When I first met Mirna at the UNIMARC meeting in Budapest in 1993, I realized that she was an extraordinarily gifted person. Even then the panorama of her scientific interests and activities was wide-ranging: a consultant for computerisation and developer and implementer of the library information system and standards at the National and University Library in Zagreb. These interests and activities were brought to a more advanced level when she started working as a professor of information organization at the departments of information sciences in Zadar and Osijek, where she continued and further developed her involvement in the history and theory of the alphabetical author-title catalogue, cataloguing rules, bibliographic descriptive standards, MARC formats, heritage and publisher metadata schemes, organization of bibliographic information with special focus on old books and Web information objects, conceptual models of bibliographic and authority data, digital Web archives, bibliographic standards and models for the Semantic Web, linked data as well as interoperability and harmonization of heritage standards, models and cataloguing rules. Mirna's professional career involved the positions of the Chair of the IFLA Permanent UNIMARC Committee, member of the Working Group on FRANAR, the Chair and member of the ISBD Linked Data Study Group and the Chair and member of the ISBD Review Group and other professional bodies. She deserves a more comprehensive analysis and evaluation of her professional merit than what this brief memory contains. I regret that, because of unfavourable personal circumstances, I have not been able to present a more exhaustive analysis of Mirna's professional activity, its impact and added value as well. I shall confine myself to expressing gratefulness on behalf of myself and Lithuania's librarians' community for her contribution in the transformation of this country's bibliographic control as re-

gards its computerization: developing rules for machine readable cataloguing, training Lithuania's librarians and communicating the outcome of her research in Lithuania.

Mirna's most significant contribution to Lithuania's national culture is her effort in establishing the linguistic support for the Integrated Information System of Lithuanian Libraries (LIBIS) and the National Bibliographic Data Bank. Owing to her concern and effort, the so-called Knowledge Base was implemented, which makes the foundation for the linguistic support of LIBIS and the National Bibliography Data Bank by accumulating the national cataloguing practice as well as recommendations and documentation offered by international organizations. It allows standardizing the preparation of bibliographic and authority records and their transferring to LIBIS and the National Bibliographic Data Bank, monitoring the input of the data and ensuring the interoperability of bibliographic and authority records and their access.

When developing LIBIS and the National Bibliographic Data Bank, there was shortage of skills in machine readable cataloguing. And once again we were lucky to receive the assistance of Mirna, who travelled throughout Lithuania at its most complicated period after the restoration of Lithuania's independence, when, because of the oil embargo, indoor temperatures were nearly the same as outdoors. But she did not complain about the inconveniences and patiently and attractively explained particularities of UNIMARC to Lithuanian specialists. Nowadays, when many of these events and challenges have faded from our memory, there is a genuine wish to express sincere gratitude to Mirna for her enormous patience, persistence and generosity in sharing the knowledge that we needed so much.

Another aspect of Mirna's activities in Lithuania is her contribution to the research communication in this country. She was generously sharing her knowledge in the scientific journal *Bibliografija* and at research conferences as well as involving her colleagues into these efforts. With her assistance, there were numerous international events held in Lithuania regarding issues of UNIMARC, the organization of bibliographic information, standardization and the Semantic Web. Such undertakings were a great incentive for Lithuanian librarians to embark on the path of reform.

It is noteworthy that Mirna's system thinking abilities allowed her envisioning a distant perspective. An argument for her broad outlook could be the conference and school *Authority, Provenance, Authenticity, Evidence* held at the University of Zadar in October 2016 on her initiative, which modified the course of my research as it encouraged investigation of authenticity and provenance in the digital

space. Therefore, my contribution in this publication is explicitly related to the impact of research communication carried out by Mirna and her colleagues.

I would like to finish with the assessment that, as a result of the immense effort done by Mirna and her associates, the world's libraries considerably augmented their opportunities to embrace the Semantic Web and provide user-oriented information. I would like to express sincere gratitude to Professor Mirna Willer for her contribution to the culture of Lithuania.