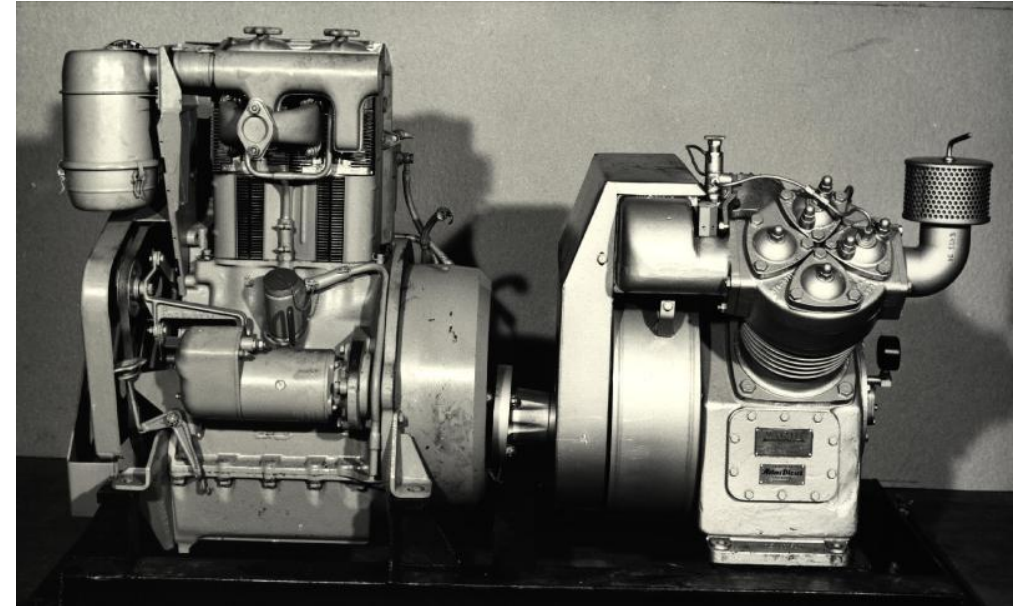


Aggregates in BIBFRAME: Two Approaches

Matias Frosterus and Marja-Liisa Seppälä
BIBFRAME Workshop in Europe 2026

Aggregates in brief

- Official RDA contains the aggregate model
- An aggregate is a manifestation that embodies multiple expressions
- Almost everything is theoretically an aggregate
 - E.g., a book with a cover that has a picture
- In practice, only manifestations that embody multiple expressions that we want to catalogue separately are modelled as aggregates



Dieselmoottori – kompressorit – aggregaatti
Suomen Rautatiemuseo, [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)

Why am I here?

- We in the National Library of Finland have been working on how to represent aggregates in BIBFRAME
- We want to ensure that the cataloguer can fully implement both Official RDA and BIBFRAME in their work
- Finnish extension of BIBFRAME, BFFI released in the beginning of 2025
 - We'll get back to this at the end, but the bulk of this presentation is about implementing aggregates in “regular” BIBFRAME



Types of aggregates

- An augmentation aggregate
 - A manifestation with supplementary content supporting a main work
 - In BIBFRAME, these can often be tackled using bf:supplementaryContent, bf:tableOfContents, or bf:illustrativeContent if full descriptions are not needed
- A collection aggregate
 - A manifestation with expressions of two or more independent works
- A parallel aggregate
 - A manifestation with multiple expressions of a single work
- An aggregate can exhibit features of multiple types



How to represent aggregates in BIBFRAME?

- The lean way: just an Aggregate Manifestation



- The complete way: using also an Aggregating Work



Lean way: just an Aggregate Manifestation

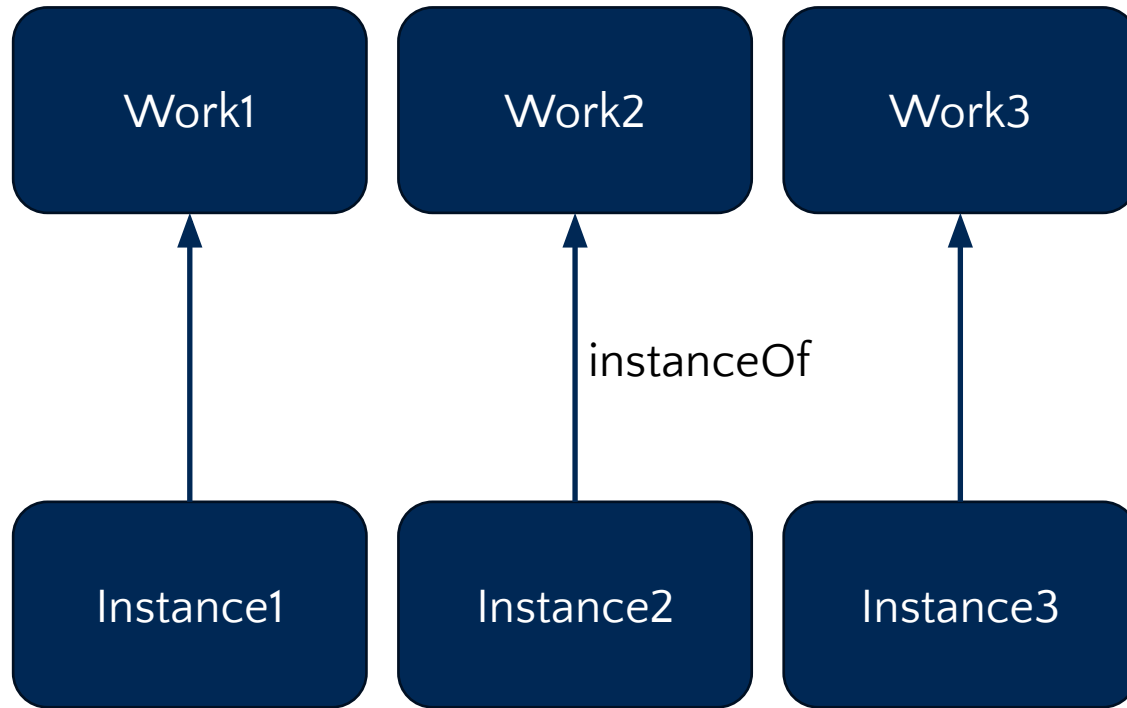
- An aggregate with several works and their instances
- Realized using an Instance representing the aggregate
 - Links to all the works comprising the aggregate



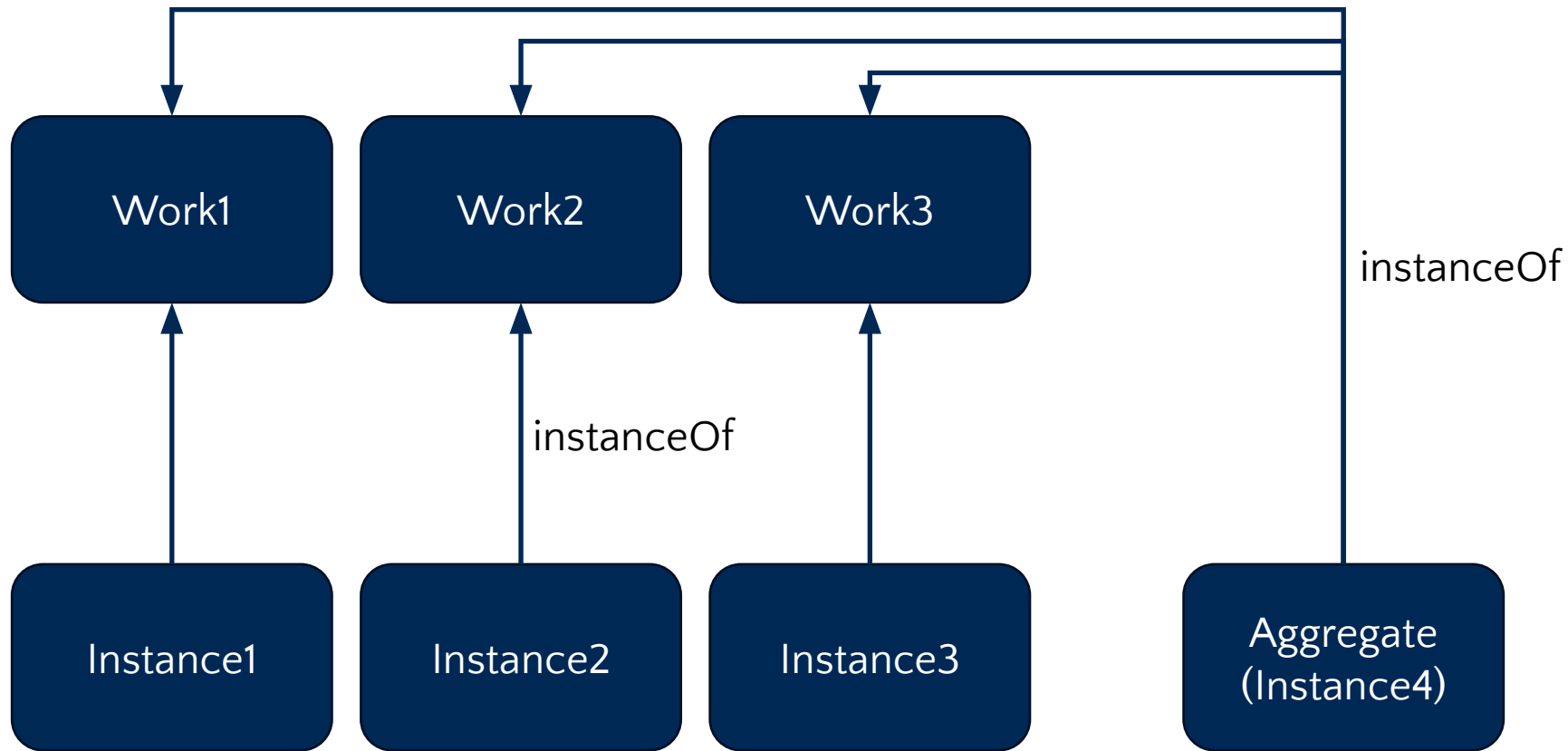
His name is Toope ("Doofus") – he is orange



Lean way: just an Aggregate Manifestation



Lean way: just an Aggregate Manifestation



Lean way: just an Aggregate Manifestation

- The Aggregate Manifestation Instance contains information related to the whole aggregate
- For example
 - A book series where individual books form a continuum and are represented by instances and works as usual
 - An aggregate Instance representing the series
 - Connected to each of the individual Works
 - Title refers to the title of the series
 - Carrier, media, provisionActivity and such of the whole series
- Suggestion: add a new subclass of Instance called Aggregate

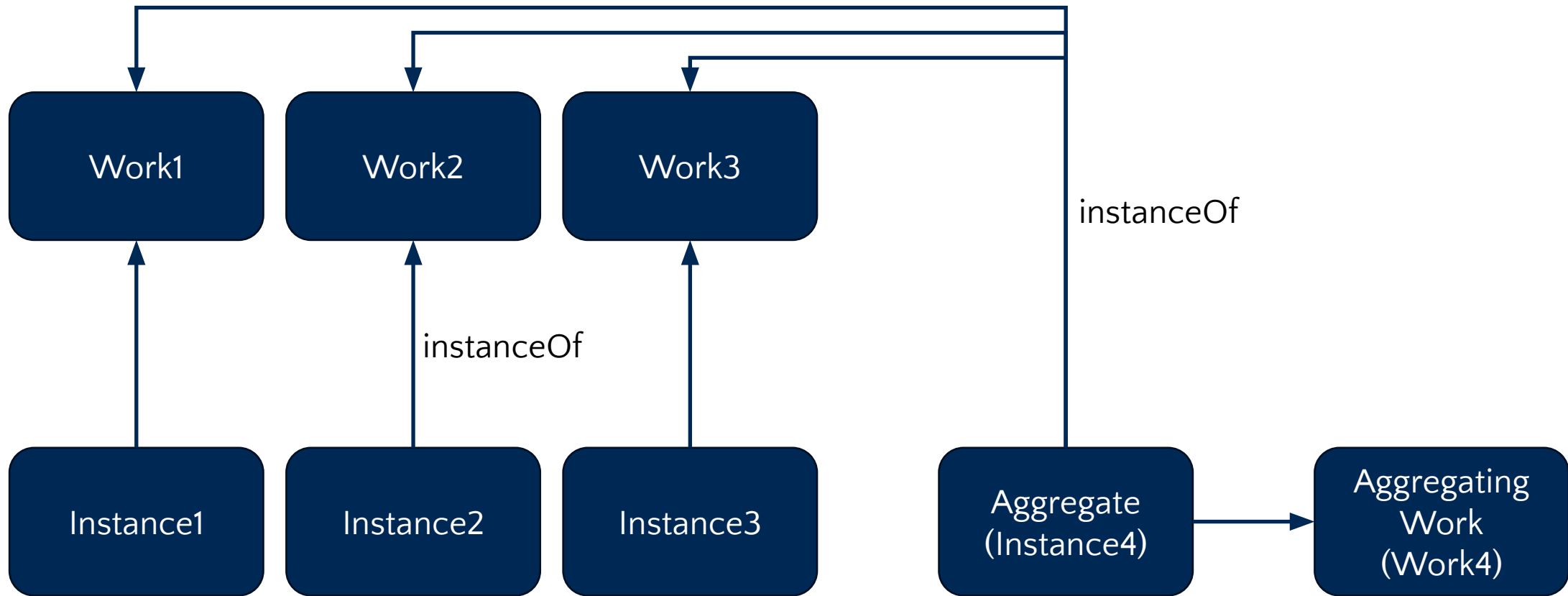


Complete way: using also an Aggregating Work

- An aggregating work is the plan for the aggregate
- One noteworthy distinct feature is the aggregator agent



Complete way: using also an Aggregating Work



Complete way: using also an Aggregating Work

- Again, the aggregating work contains information related to the whole collection aggregate but this time on the work level
 - Genre, intended audience, language, etc.
 - Including the RDA properties related to representative expressions
 - Primaty Contribution in the role of an aggregator by the aggregator agent
- One exception to the modelling is with diachronic aggregates where there are relationships between the aggregating work and the individual aggregated works
- Suggestion: Add AggregatingWork as a subclass of Work and add aggregator as a role



An even more complete way: separating expressions and works

- Aggregating Work and Aggregating Expression
- Not neatly doable in BIBFRAME
- In BFFI, the Finnish extension of BIBFRAME, we divided the bf:Work into bffi:Works and bffi:Expressions
 - Also includes subclasses for Aggregate, Aggregating Expression and Aggregating Work
 - Allows the implementation of the whole aggregate framework provided by Official RDA
 - When interpreted as regular BIBFRAME, requires collapsing bffi:Work into each of its bffi:Expressions resulting in bf:Works





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