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Abstract

The paper presents the results of a research study over methods of digitalizing rare books and special collections in the Bulgarian libraries. The conclusions are based on browsing, collecting and gathering the array of digital copies of the Bulgarian Revival books (1801–1878) found in distinct digital libraries and repositories. The discussed subject has in common with various academic disciplines taught in Master and Bachelor programs of the Library Studies Department of ULSIT related to book history, Bulgarian book publishing and digitalizing library collections. The main purpose of searching and collecting the available digitalized metadata on Bulgarian Revival books (1801–1878) is to incorporate the empirical data within the framework of the “Digitalization of the repertoire of books from the Bulgarian Revival (1801–1878)” project. One of the objectives of this project is to integrate all the existing bibliographical information and digital content into a single information retrieval system.

The research also concerns the methodology for digitalizing rare books and special collections recommended by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and its feasibility in the work practice of Bulgarian libraries. In order to draw the necessary conclusions some of the most problematic approaches are reviewed and compared to the Guidelines for Planning the Digitization of Rare Book and Manuscript Collections (IFLA, 2014). Part of the most problematic areas in digitalizing special collections among the Bulgarian libraries includes: absent user agreements, terms of use; non-user friendly software, navigation and search engine of the digital platform; incomplete or missing descriptive, structural, technical and administrative metadata; lack of stable permanent links which restricts citing and the popularization of the digital copy; correcting unique traits, missteps like missing or replaced pages etc. made during the print process which reduces the authenticity of the original; excessive photo shop processing aiming to improve the aesthetic appearance or suboptimal resolution; cropping and adjusting of the document; capturing individual pages when in folio method is appropriate.

A significant part of this study is based on quantitative and observational methods. Therefore, it provides general information on the numbers of digitalized items in various Bulgarian revival books collections as well as chronological indicators of the digital objects by the year of their publishing (1801–1878).

keywords: [bulgaria](#), [special collections](#), [c19](#), [digitalization](#), [digital libraries](#), [ifla](#), [digitalization of the repertoire of books from the bulgarian revival \(1801-1878\)](#).