

The presentation covers and deals with some of the issues raised by historians about the relationships between memory, its recording and History. Examples are founded on the French Institut National de l'Audiovisuel or Ina's practices of recording and archiving for history, it aims at highlighting some of the many contributions of broadcast media to oral history, in France at least.

Even though elsewhere in the world, notably in the US, the oral history movement started as early as the 30's when the first recording machines became available, in France it took a while longer for historians to consider oral sources and recorded oral testimonies as valuable historical material.

It actually happened in parallel with what has been called a « tidal wave of memory » ("déluge mémoriel") in the 1980's, a period when France started looking back on a recent past (notably WW2 & the collaboration episode and the French colonial past) and accepted criticism of « official » histories, demands for recognition and rehabilitation of repressed ones, and also it coincided with public openings of archives and the multiplication of commemorative events. During that period, history and memory somehow converged, even though for many historians they tend to go in opposite directions.

With his work « Les lieux de memoire » , Pierre Nora, one of the most famous practitioners of memory studies referred to this engagement in “memorialism” as the « duty of memory », highlighting the replacement of physical « lieux de mémoires » like monuments or museums for instance, with various historicized forms of memory aimed at commemoration and remembrance. This upsurge of memory is somehow simultaneous with an “acceleration of history,” a precipitation of time and events swiftly shifting from present to past .

It seems that broadcast media and journalists have played an important part in both these phenomena (the acceleration of time and the tidal wave of memory) and also that in some ways radio and TV, notably via the techniques they provide for setting up the interviews and recording them actually do contribute to the practice of oral history.

<http://prezi.com/si2kllatt64l/broadcast-archives-oral-history/>

