EXPLORING POLYVOCALITY IN ONLINE NARRATIVES OF FRENCH COLONIAL MEMORY THROUGH WEB ARCHIVES: Methodological and ethical considerations

Polyvocal Interpretations of Contested Colonial Heritage (PICCH) is a European project involving five national partners and coordinated by Prof. Daniela Petrelli (Sheffield Hallam University). Alexander Badenoch (Utrecht University) is responsible for the Dutch team, while Pia Borlund (Oslo Metropolitan University) leads the Swedish team. PICCH explores how archival material created in a colonial mindset can be reappropriated and reinterpreted to become an effective source for decolonization and the basis for a future inclusive society.

The French team at Aix-Marseille University, coordinated by Sophie Gebeil (PI), comprising Véronique Ginouvès (archivist), Christine Mussard (historian), Pauline Savéant (Ph.D. student) and Mara Bertelsen (research assistant), in partnership with the INA (Institut National de l’Audiovisuel), mobilize diverse archives to study colonial and postcolonial narratives. French web archives are crucial for studying the evolution of the multiple narratives published online in recent years on the polyvocal memories of colonization in the Maghreb and its postcolonial consequences.

A European network on the Decolonization of Digital Audio Visual Archives

Focus: The online remembrances of the 1983 March for Equality and Against Racism

How does it work?

Extracting code by machine is not sufficient. Human intervention is also necessary to clean the data in accordance with scientific objectives, and this cleaning process is documented as well. The results are still undergoing analysis.

Conclusion

Beyond the results, the project demonstrates the strength of multidisciplinary work and collective efforts. The analysis of a corpus extracted from web archives is slated for publication in the proceedings of the RESAW conference Exploring the Archived Web During a Highly Transformative Age (eds. S. Gebeil and J.-C. Peyssard), Firenze University Press, forthcoming end 2024.

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