Universalism and Diversity in the List of 2,000 Biographies Every Wikipedia Should Have

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A demographic
research

WIKIMANIA
SINGAPORE

The list of 10.000 articles every Wikipedia should have: a short history

- A list of 1.000 to "invigorate [smaller Wikipedias], and ensure that they each contain a minimum of information that will be of use to users" (Danny, 2004)
- 140 biographies, including 32 in "Women in history" section.
- Wikid77 created the list of 10.000 articles in 2008, to handle more voices and more diversity: https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/List_of_articles_every_Wikipedia_should_have/Expanded
- We will center on biographies: they should be 2.000, currently has 1.913 individual humans.

Universalism
the belief that some items are equally valuable for everyone

Diversity
the idea that local knowledge may be relevant for everyone

01
Methods

How was the analysis made?

Preparing the list for analysis

1

Wikidata
Extract all the biographies Wikidata items.

2

Pagepile
Build a pagepile with all the items.

3

Quickstatements
Add P5008 (on focus list of Wikimedia project) with timestamp to items.

Defining location: three approaches

P19

Birthplace, they may migrate after birth.

P27

Problematic, because of political change.

P551

Residence, only filled when this is different from birthplace. Not consistent.

The problem of continents

Rudyard Kipling

Asia

Barack Obama

Oceania

Cristiano Ronaldo
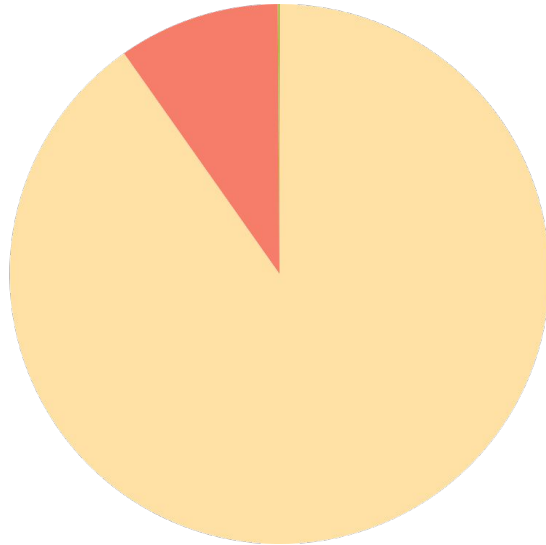
Africa

Ancient Rome or France

Undefined continent

02

Results

Gender, location, time⋯

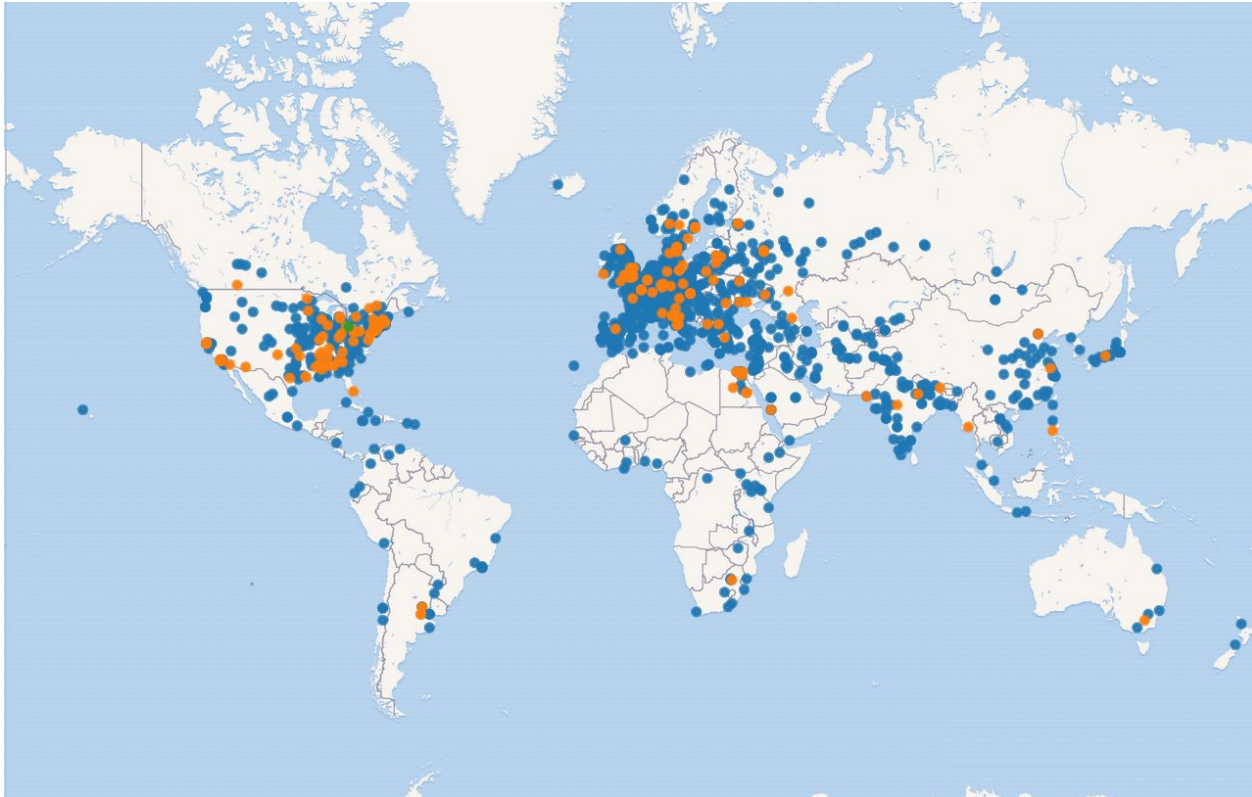# Gender

Male
1.726 males

Female
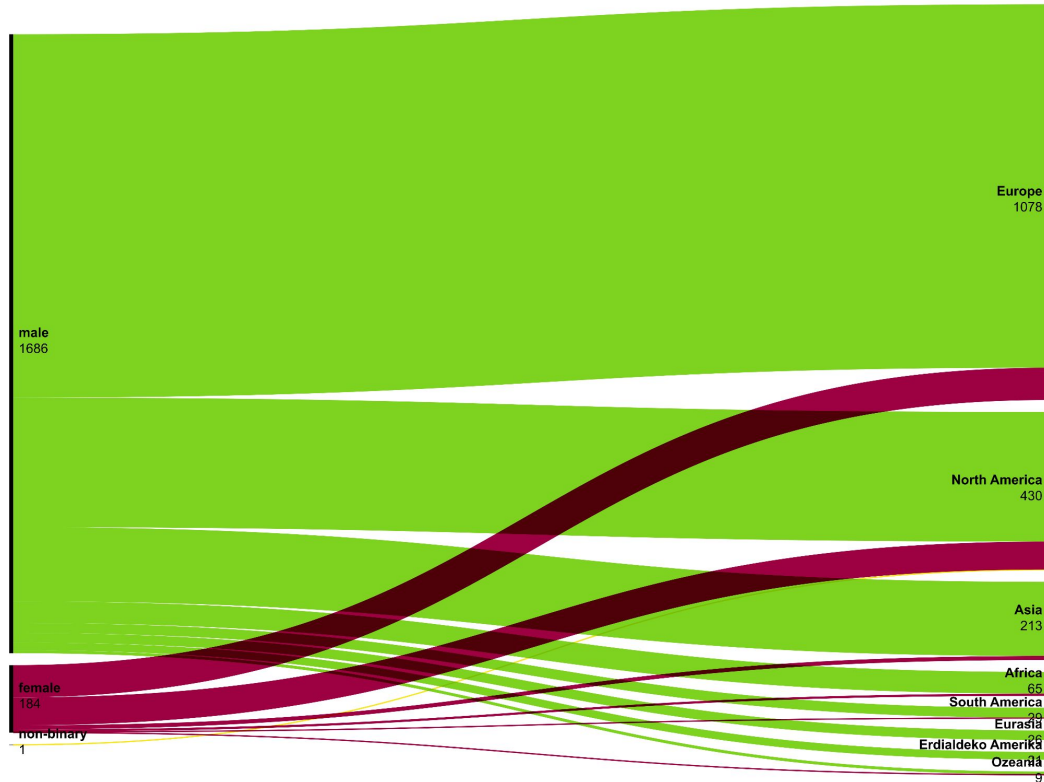185 females

Other/Unknown
Judith Butler /
Jack the Ripper

Location

Location by gender

Location by current sovereign country

Location by gender and continent

Time: when were they born?

- 20th century: 751 biographies
- 19th century: 533 biographies
  - (⅕: 1890s)
- 18th century: 154 biographies
- 1900s: 132 biographies (most represented decade)

These people come with the template

And I think they represent well our current status: white caucasic, with males in front and piggy-back women.
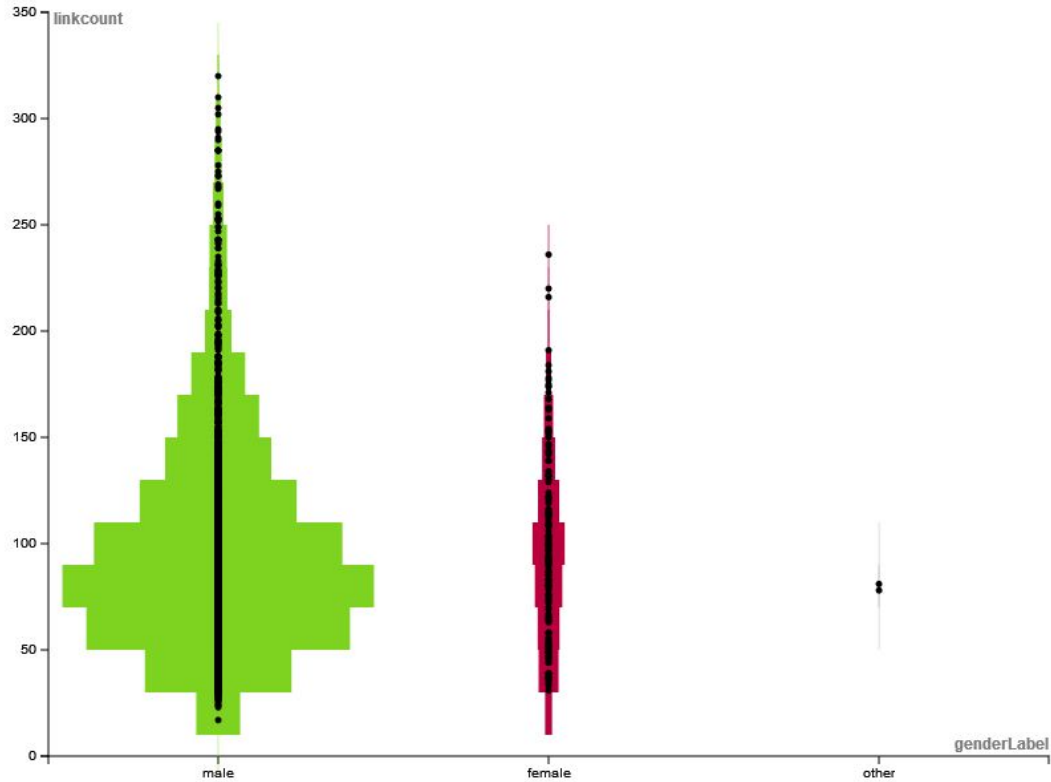
03

Language coverage

Language coverage per gender

Some statistics

Females

96,27 links per biography.

Most links:
Elizabeth II (236, 39th)

Less links:
Luciana Aymar (31)

Males

98,57 links per biography.

Most links:
Barack Obama (320, 1st)
Jesus (310, 2nd)

Less links:
Ihor Turchyn (17)

04

Are there better options?

The problem of lists is that they are finite. Adding someone would require discussing who is out.

BTS

1 Most known K-Pop group.

2 0,5% of Korean GDP

3 All other pop stars in the list are anglophone (including ABBA)

Rigoberta Menchu

1 Nobel Peace prize laureate.

2 Only two women from Latin America (both Argentinian)

3 No indigenous American women.

Karena Kapoor

1 More than 60 films.

2 Best box-office actress in India of all times.

3 34 US actors, only 2 indians (both classical)

Oksana Chusovitina

1 Only person with 8 Olympic participations.

2 No women from Centra Asia in the list.

3 There are 8 boxers from the US.

Ramon Llull

1 Medieval catalan philosopher, theologian and encyclopedist

2 Precursor of combinatory.

3 A fifth of europeans are from the British Isles.

Making a list is taking sides.

There's no 'view from nowhere'.
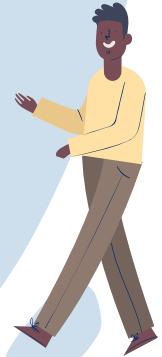
The-wisest-man
-from-London
doesn't exist.

This is a
sum-zero game.

An universal list presenting more people from New York state than from all of Africa doesn't seem universal at all.

It can be done!

Thank you!
Eskerrik asko!
Terima kasih!