Let's look at this picture! It was taken around 1908 in former German Cameroon. What do we see?

An airship model. Yeah, it's really nice! Does it fly?

A blackboard where is written: "Luftschiff Christian Plath Kamerun"

A bicycle. Yeah, they had bicycles back then, too. Even in the jungle.

Some trees in the rainforest. One of them is really big.

This is Christian Plath a German colonizer.

Sophie Plath is the companion of Christian Plath.

But who is this man? We don't know his name. But he seems to have made the construction of this airship possible in the first place.

What about a common data repository of people, groups, events and places which are related to colonial history?

Well, we have already one and it's inside Wikidata!

Why do we use Wikidata?

Entries are not limited to authors or "important" personalities. Everyone can participate, independent of origin and professional background.

Once data has been created, they are open and can be used immediately for other projects. It is possible to describe persons, events or objects through the use of non-Western categories. The data is part of the Linked Open Data cloud and can therefore contribute to new findings.

Why do we know much more about the colonizers than we do about the colonized?

Can we expect more findings if we look at Colonialism not as a national but as an European phenomenon?

We don't know his name. But he seems to have made the construction of this airship possible in the first place.

... because even if the use of Wikidata properties is well defined, there are still too many different ways to describe the same facts. This would lead to data inconsistency.

To discuss this question the WikiProject European Colonialism was created.

www.wikidata.org/wiki/Wikidata:WikiProject_European_Colonialism

So let's work together!

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Archive guide to the German Colonial Past directed by Prof. Susanne Freund www.archivfuehrer-kolonialzeit.de

A project funded with support from the German Federal Foreign Office

Pictuers (from left to right, from top to bottom)
1) unknown author: Colonial Picture Archive, University Library of Frankfurt/Main
2) Zeichnung der Teilnehmer der Kongokonferenz 1884 - public domain
3) The Rhodes Colossus - public domain
4) Ibrahim Mbouombouo, ruler of Bamun (c. 1860 - 1933)

Is he a king, a sultan or a mfon?

One example of possible outcome
Places of birth and places of death of people related to German colonial history

"Luftschiff Christian Plath Kamerun"

So let's work together!

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www.archivfuehrer-kolonialzeit.de/thesaurus

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