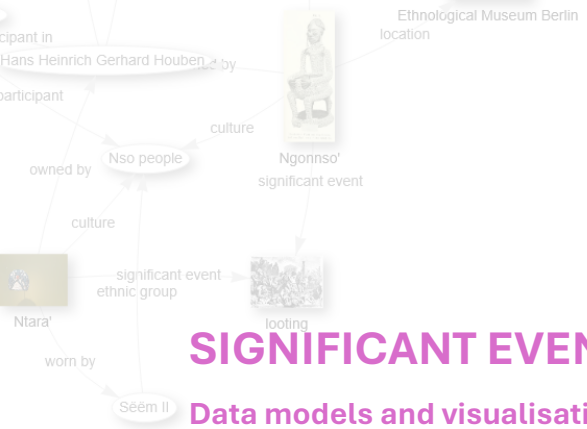

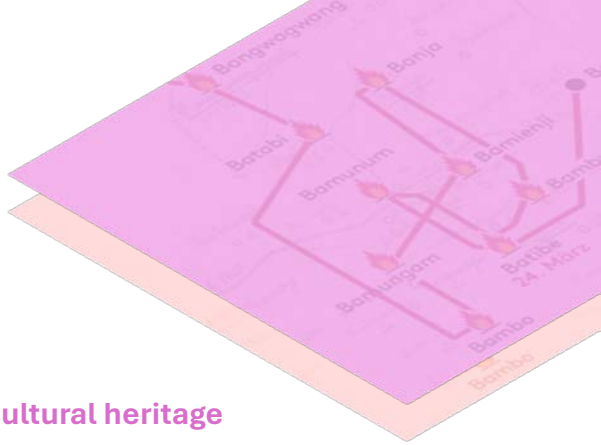

SIGNIFICANT EVENT: "LOOTING"

Data models and visualisations of the plunder African cultural heritage

15 September 2025

Hybrid Lab, Technische Universität Berlin (Marchstr. 8, 10587 Berlin)

Organised by Wikidata Project TheRoK , research project "Repertory of Colonial Plunder" (TU Berlin), Wikimedia Foundation, German Lost Art Foundation

This event will take place in English.

This workshop aims to bring different perspectives on historical data modelling around the history of looted African heritage found in German museums. Born from a cooperation between the Institute for Art Studies of the Berlin Technical University and Wikimedia Germany, it is open to museum staff, provenance researchers and data scientists concerned with documentation on the presence of African belongings in German museums that have been acquired through violent means. The workshop will be led by Yann LeGall (TU Berlin) and Lucy Patterson (Wikimedia Deutschland) founding members of the Wikidata project "The RoK" in 2022.

For this event, we propose an exchange between data practitioners and researchers to evaluate **three different approaches** to research data on colonial context provenances:

1. models structured around historical figures (officers, so-called "collectors")s
2. research departing from significant events ("punitive" expeditions, thefts)
3. data emanating from repositories and citizen science.

These different approaches will meet around **three axes of reflection** that will drive the discussion on provenance research data modelling between the workshop participants:

i. how to tackle bias (racism, androcentrism, eurocentrism…)
ii. how queries and visualisations of provenance might help researchers, community members and museum practitioners in supporting their work (for instance identifying patterns, supporting restitution processes, mapping contexts of acquisition…)
iii. how to integrate oral history more prominently in data

Concretely, the organisers have chosen **three case studies** that exemplify the diverse challenges posed by data modelling for looted African heritage and colonial contexts:

a) the battle of Adibo and the loot from this battle (today in Leipzig and Berlin) → see query here

b) the German attack of Bafut and Mankon (a.k.a. Bandeng) in today's Cameroon (1901-1902) → see Q132131325 & Q132137746

c) the looting and restitution of Ngonnso' → see query here

PROGRAMME

HYBRID (ONSITE & ONLINE), ONLY ON SITE

9:30	**Arrival**
10:00	**Welcome** Lucy Patterson & Yann LeGall
10:15	**Input 1: agent-centred approaches in Proveana** Juliane Kraske (Proveana, German Lost Art Foundation)
10:45	**Input 2: event-centred approaches in "A Repertory of Colonial Plunder"** Yann LeGall (Wikidata Project "The RoK", TU Berlin)
11:15	**Input 3: object-centred approaches** Lucy Patterson & Mohammed Sadat Abdulai (Wikimedia Deutschland)
11:45	**Break**
12:00	**Responses to the data from different fields** Laurel Zuckerman (Open Art Data) Wikimedians of Cameroon (joining online, names tbc) Lisa Quade (CCC portal) Romy Köhler (PAESE, Universität Bonn)
12:30	**Discussion / Q&A session**
13:15	**Lunch break**
14:00	**Breakout sessions** - how to tackle bias (racism, androcentrism, eurocentrism...) - how queries and visualisations of provenance might help researchers, community members and museum practitioners in supporting their work (e.g., identifying patterns, supporting restitution processes, mapping contexts of acquisition...) - how to integrate oral history more prominently in data
15:00	**Tea / coffee break**
15:15	**Presentation of group work** **in form of a "to-do list" for institutions, research projects and practitioners**
16:00	**Closing remarks** moderated by Lucy Patterson & Yann LeGall

18:00	⚠ **Seydelstraße 18, 10117 Berlin** ⚠
	German Lost Art Foundation seminar series Talk by Laurel Zuckerman (Open Art Data)