

GENERAL CENSUSES AND VITAL STATISTICS IN THE AMERICAS

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GENERAL CENSUSES AND VITAL STATISTICS IN THE AMERICAS

An annotated bibliography of the historical censuses and current vital statistics of the 21 American Republics, the American Sections of the British Commonwealth of Nations, the American Colonies of Denmark, France, and the Netherlands, and the American Territories and Possessions of the United States

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PREFACE

The development of censuses and vital statistics in recent decades has resulted in a rapid increase in both the variety and the quantity of data published by the governments of the countries of the Americas. At the same time, the expansion of research and administration into the international field has made it essential that private scholars and governmental personnel have ready access to the demographic statistics of all countries. In 1938 a group of population students in the United States began the discussion of possible ways by which collections of the censuses and vital statistics of the world might be completed and made available for research and operational uses. Their deliberations resulted in a plan which was endorsed by the Eighth American Scientific Congress in the following resolution:

WHEREAS: Since the collection in a single depository library of all population, census, and statistical publications throughout the world would be of invaluable assistance to the students of population and national problems in the American Republics,

The Eighth American Scientific Congress

RESOLVED: To endorse through the Inter American Statistical Institute the creation of a special census unit in the Library of Congress of the United States and that it urge the governments of this Western Hemisphere to cooperate in this enterprise.

In accordance with this resolution, a Census Library Project was initiated in the Library of Congress in the fall of 1940 as a cooperative project of the Bureau of the Census and the Library of Congress. The advisory committee to the Library of Congress on the Project consists of the following persons, representing the agencies indicated: Luther H. Evans, Library of Congress; Philip M. Hauser, Bureau of the Census; Stuart A. Rice, Inter American Statistical Institute; Richard O. Lang, American Statistical Association; Frank W. Notestein, Office of Population Research, Princeton University; and Frank Lorimer, Population Association of America.

It became apparent during the early period of the operation of the Census Library Project that the completion of the collections was only one aspect of the problem of making international census and vital statistics materials available to students in the Americas. Consequently, the scope of the Project was expanded to include the following functions: (1) Cooperation in the completion of the collections of the Library of Congress in the fields of census and vital statistics for all countries, (2) the compilation of analytical bibliographies to facilitate the use of the collections, (3) the provision of reference and consultant services in the population field, and (4) the execution of such special studies as should be deemed advisable by the sponsoring agencies.

The exigencies of war necessitated an immediate shift of emphasis from this long-range program to the servicing of the immediate needs of governmental agencies. National censuses constitute the basic source of statistical information on peoples, economies, and cultures, as well as the primary analytical data in such diverse fields as manpower potential, racial heterogeneity, and industrial distribution. Changes in birth and death rates reflect the changing impact of war on the morale, health, and vitality of peoples, while the level of mortality and the specific causes of death reflect health hazards in various parts of the world.

The sudden expansion of the need for information and analysis of these and many other types of problems made questions of the adequacy, availability, and timeliness of census and vital statistics data one of immediate practical concern. A previous publication of the Project, "Recent censuses in European countries, a preliminary list, 1942," indicated that systematic bibliographical coverage was a primary first step in meeting the emergency situation.

It is hoped that the present bibliography relating to the population censuses and current vital statistics of the Americas will be not only an aid in the immediate problems of locating source materials but also a contribution to the development of statistical cooperation and intellectual understanding among the peoples of the Americas. It has been compiled by a limited staff, subject to the continuous pressure of immediate tasks. It is offered as an initial attempt at a comprehensive picture of the official sources of demographic statistics in the Western Hemisphere, not as a definitive study of the resources of any one area. Such definitive studies can be made only in some future period when the leisurely pursuits of scholarship are again possible, and even then, they must be made individually in each country, preferably by students from the country itself. In the meantime, it is hoped that this bibliography of the source materials for all the nations will not only facilitate the use of available statistical data but also stimulate the exchange of information and publications among the various nations. If these results are attained it will represent a step in the development of that demographic center in the Library of Congress which was envisioned in the resolution of the Eighth American Scientific Congress.

This study of the demographic publications of a hemisphere represents the cooperative activity of many persons and agencies. The compilation of check lists of the censuses of the countries of Latin America was started by Jesse H. Shera, the first supervisor of the Project. Responsibility for the arduous task of compilation of sources for the enlarged study was shared by Henry Dubester, Mary M. Kieron, Muriel McKenna, and Margaret Stone, past or present members of the Project staff, and Beatrice Sattler of the Office of Population Research of Princeton University.

Special acknowledgment should be made of the continued encouragement of Luther H. Evans, Chief Assistant Librarian of the Library of Congress; Philip M. Hauser, Assistant Director of the Bureau of the Census; Frank W. Notestein, Director of the Office of Population Research of Princeton University; and Halbert L. Dunn, Chief, Vital Statistics Division of the Bureau of the Census, who was a member of the Committee on the Census Library Project from the time of its inception until recently. The cooperation of many members of the staffs of both the Bureau of the Census and the Library of Congress is also acknowledged, although the staff of the Census Library Project alone should be held responsible for errors, whether of commission or of omission.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1579, forty years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Philip II of Spain ordered a survey of the physical, social, and economic resources of all the territories subject to the Crown of Spain. Whether or not this survey constituted the first census in the Americas, or whether it was a census at all, is immaterial. It emphasizes the antiquity of that search for quantitative data which has been so omnipresent a characteristic of the colonies and nations which developed on the new continents. The extent to which the general realization of the need for accurate and detailed information on resources, economy, and people led to the development of national censuses and vital statistics differed widely from country to country, and even from period to period within the same country. The development of demographic statistics in each country has been related intimately to the general social, economic, and political history of the country, and influenced by the vicissitudes of particular events and the presence or absence of outstanding individuals especially interested in the field.

It is only within a recent period that any considerable proportion of the political areas of the Americas have had any permanent census staffs, or even continuing plans for the census taking. In addition, there has been little cooperation or coordination between countries in the time, methods, techniques, or scope of census enumeration and publication. The problem of locating source materials for the study of the population history and the population problems of the various regions of the Americas thus becomes quite difficult. There have been many attempts to grapple with this problem of discovering source materials and making them accessible to the scholars of the various nations. *The Economic Literature of Latin America*, compiled by the staff of Harvard University's Bureau for Economic Research in Latin America, includes a brief résumé of the census history of each of the nations of Latin America.¹ *The Handbook of Latin American Studies*, initiated in 1935 by the Committee on Latin American Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies, includes annotated citations to the demographic publications of the various countries.² Notes on the demography of the countries of Latin America are published regularly in the *Boletín de la Oficina sanitaria panamericana*. In addition, this Bureau issues compilations of the vital statistics of the various countries.³ *Population Index*, the quarterly journal issued by the Office of Population Research of Princeton University and the Population

¹ Harvard University. Bureau for Economic Research in Latin America. *The economic literature of Latin America, a tentative bibliography*. Compiled by the staff of the Bureau of Economic Research in Latin America, Harvard University, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1935-1936. Vol. I. Latin America, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Vol. II. Latin America. Mexico and Central America, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, the West Indies, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Panama Canal. Z 7164.E2 H36

² The following citation refers specifically to the last issue covered for this bibliography: Burgin, Miron, ed. *Handbook of Latin American studies: 1940*. No. 6. A selective guide to the material published in 1940 on anthropology, archives, art, economics. . . . Edited for the Committee on Latin American Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1941. 570 pp. Z 1605.H23 1940

³ Oficina sanitaria panamericana. "Demografía de las Repúblicas Americanas." Reimpreso del *Boletín de la Oficina sanitaria panamericana*, enero, 1940. Oficina sanitaria panamericana, Publicación No. 142 Washington, 1940, pp. 15-30.

Association of America, includes citations to the current official and unofficial population literature of the Americas.⁴ The report on the *Statistical Activities of the American Nations, 1940*, edited under the auspices of the Temporary Organizing Committee of the Inter American Statistical Institute, includes for each of the cooperating countries a report on statistical activities written by one or more statisticians of the country itself.⁵ In addition, the editors presented summary statements for each country on the statistical organization, the national population censuses, the principal government agencies which compile statistics, and the principal official serial statistical publications (latest issue). Finally, the *Inter American Statistical Yearbook, 1942*, prepared under the direction of Raul C. Migone and sponsored by the Argentine Commission of High International Studies, contributed directly to the present bibliography in that it facilitated the process of checking on the completeness of coverage and on the sources available.⁶

The compilation of a systematic bibliography of the official population literature of two continents within a limited time period would have been impossible without heavy reliance on these prior publications. Particularly valuable were the reports on the statistical systems and statistical activities of the various countries published in the *Statistical Activities of the American Nations*. The editorial staff was also peculiarly fortunate in having free access to the master author files of *Population Index*, which are housed in the offices of the Census Library Project.

This report on the *Population Censuses and Current Vital Statistics of the Americas* consists of a separate report for each of the 21 American Republics, Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the colonies and territories of the British Commonwealth of Nations, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, and the United States. Insofar as the nature of the basic data permitted, each report consists of 3 sections: a historical note; a list of all the published national population censuses located, with annotation of the most recent one; and an annotated list of the sources for current vital statistics and population estimates. In many cases, a fourth section was added on other current national population statistics, including especially life tables and statistical atlases and compendia.

Obviously, it was impossible to outline any general *a priori* plan which could be followed to permit uniform and comparable coverage in a bibliography of the publications in countries as diverse as Argentina, Paraguay, French Guiana, Canada, and Greenland. To attempt to achieve complete comparability in the reports for all countries would have been to sacrifice the guiding principle of service and utility for the unattainable goal of uniformity. Actually, the coverage of past censuses is least complete for countries with a long history of census taking and a massive published literature. The official statistical organizations of such countries usually provide check lists of their own publications. It is probable that either they or other individuals or organizations within the country have compiled and published detailed histories and bibliographies of the statistical development and publications of the country.

The policy with reference to the inclusion of provincial census and vital statistics has also differed from country to country. Provincial or city censuses and vital statistics are of unquestioned importance in any country; they become of para-

⁴ Office of Population Research of Princeton University and Population Association of America, Inc. *Population Index*. Vol. I, 1935 to date. Last issue: Vol. IX, No. 2. Princeton, New Jersey, 1943.

⁵ Inter American Statistical Institute. Temporary Organizing Committee. *Statistical activities of the American nations, 1940*. . . . Edited by Elizabeth Phelps. Washington, Inter American Statistical Institute, 1941. xxxi, 842 pp.

⁶ Migone, Raul C., Director, with Aberastury, Marcelo F., Assistant Director, and Fuente, Emilio, and Iturraspe, Jorge E., coauthors. *Inter American statistical yearbook*. Issued under the auspices of the Argentine Commission of High International Studies. New York, The MacMillan Co.; Buenos Aires, El Ateneo; Rio de Janeiro, Freitas Bastos y cia, 1943. 1066 pp.

Z 7164.D3 P83

HA 175.S75

mount importance only in countries in which there are no current and detailed national censuses or vital statistics. Similarly, there has been no rigid rule on the treatment of censuses other than population censuses when taken separately and not as an integral part of a general national census which included population. In most cases, inclusion has been limited to the most recent census, with no attempt at comprehensive historical guides in such diverse fields as industry, agriculture, manufacturing, distribution, employment, and unemployment.

The problem of what constitutes a census has been an ever-recurring one to which no satisfactory answer has been found. Scientific studies of the validity of population censuses or vital statistics in any particular country necessitate not only formal analysis of the published results for the country as a whole and its various regions, but also knowledge of the process of enumeration and tabulation used in each case, and the particular physical, economic, or political factors influencing the completeness and accuracy of the schedules secured for the various regions and classes. It is probable that such a comprehensive study of validity is the task of the census and vital statistics staffs of the individual countries. Certainly it is not a task to be undertaken with a limited staff for all the countries and colonies of two continents. In any event, the purpose of the present study has not been that of the evaluation of the inclusiveness and quantitative validity of the various censuses, but rather that of offering to research students a guide to the quantitative or partially quantitative data available in the official publications of the various countries. Hence the censuses included in the present compilation are essentially those enumerations or partial enumerations which are accepted as censuses by the statistical bureaus of the various countries. Evaluative comments, where they are included, are based on the comments and analyses included in the published reports of the country itself.

The form and contents of this bibliography reflect one of the primary motives in its compilation—service to the war agencies of the Government of the United States. A careful coverage of the materials in the Library of Congress was followed by searches for missing publications in the Columbus Memorial Library of the Pan American Union, the Army Medical Library, and the libraries of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, the Department of Commerce, the Bureau of the Census, and the Inter American Statistical Institute. Call numbers are included for Library of Congress holdings, or, for the materials not yet classified, the location within the Library. If publications were located elsewhere in Washington, the name of the library is given.¹

¹ The following abbreviations are used: *Govt. Publ. R. R.*—Government Publications Reading Room of the Library of Congress; *Pan. Am. Union*—Columbus Memorial Library; *Pan. Am. San. Bur.*—Library of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau; *Dept. of Comm.*—Department of Commerce Library; *Bur. of Cen.*—Bureau of the Census; *Inter Am. Stat. Inst.*—Inter American Statistical Institute.