

ETHNIC/RACIAL STATISTICS:

BRAZIL AND AN OVERVIEW OF THE AMERICAS

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1. Introduction

Analysis of ethnic categories in population censuses may be structured around two main pillars: on the one hand, its role in providing a mirror image of political struggles for representation and, on the other, its use as a state tool for population management. In the case of the latter, like all classification carried out by official institutions, the statistical categorization of the different ethnic/racial groups in effect constitutes a practical intervention in society. This intervention occurs at two levels:

1. by providing the elements that shape a socially legitimated perception of the groups that make up that society;
2. by contributing data and analysis that not only give an accurate picture of social reality but also assemble the basic information that is essential for developing public policy (Solanke, 2007).

Applying an ethnic/social classification system therefore entails measuring a phenomenon that poses several different kinds of difficulties of both a theoretical/conceptual and empirical nature and in which the overlapping of political representations, scientific issues and statistical categorization becomes increasingly apparent.

The aim of this chapter is to provide a historical perspective on the evolution of the different forms of population classification in Brazilian statistics, dating back to the nineteenth century, before going on to carry out a comparative analysis between the different methods employed to investigate the ethnic/racial makeup of the population in the censuses of the countries of the Americas, using the case of Brazil as a point of reference. Brazil has an extensive database and in some ways has come to be seen as a role model on the subject for the Latin American region. To conclude, the article will focus on the current situation and expectations Ethnic/Racial Statistics: Brazil and an Overview of the Americas 265 for the immediate future with regard to the production of ethnic/racial statistics in the country.

2. Some conceptual clarifications

The statistical operation of census-taking has systematically presented ethnic/racial classification as an exclusively technical procedure. However, such classification is, in fact, an attempt to naturalize any physical and/or cultural attributes that may define racial or ethnic groups. In providing the categories of composition of the social world that are deemed "legitimate", the statistical apparatus tends to delimit understanding of it within a pre-elaborated frame in response to administrative and state intervention concerns (Simon, 1997).

Furthermore, the social construction of ethnic/racial identities is in turn informed by the way in which statistical institutions codify the respective groups. This intersection between the definition of supposedly scientific categories—and the resulting classifications—and the interests of specific groups within the population shows the eminently political nature of the census operation, both in the sense of being a means to help manage the polis and the Aristotelian concept of ordering the diverse parts that make up a community (Skerry, 2001). Despite their problematisation and juxtaposition of meanings, the concepts of (skin) colour, race, ethnicity, origin and ancestry tend to be used as categories for analysing social facts.

With regard to why censuses may or may not include a question concerning the ethnic/racial categorization of the population, there is consensus among a wide range of researchers that the reasons are complex and ever changing (Marx, 1998; Nobles, 2000, Bulmer, 2001; Skerry, 2001; Simon, 2001). According to a study by Ann Morning (2006), these reasons do not always point in the same direction and can be summarized as follows:

- inclusion: for the purpose of exercising political control over the different groups;
- non-inclusion: in the name of national integration of society;
- non-inclusion: discourse of national hybridity;
- inclusion: so that anti-discrimination policies can be justified.

Thus, since there have already been periods in which racial difference within the population has been used to implement a segregationist social order, more recently it has been put at the service of denouncing inequalities and implementing human rights and affirmative action policies.

However, methodological and substantive problems continue to challenge the assumptions on which the various classification efforts have been based. The objections appear to stem largely from the persistence within the social sciences of conceptual confusion over the notion of race and its often ambiguous relationship with the concept of ethnic group.

While in its current academic sense the term has been definitively distanced from the original nineteenth century biological notion, it is still possible to find references to the perceived physical characteristics of individuals as being the defining elements of reality, thereby naturalizing such attributes and thus concealing the fact that physical differences that are deemed significant, those that are perceived to be phenotypic variations, are the result of a specific social and historical construct.

Indeed, it was not just any visible, perceptible physical characteristic that was racialised. The historical process of European colonial expansion, slavery and the subsequent relations of domination between peoples and nations conferred specific meanings on certain physical features, later associating them with cultural expressions. And so relations between groups identified as racial or ethnic, when integrated within the context of the different countries, led to a range of different proposals for statistically classifying such groups. It should be stressed that

the effect that we call racial (in the sense of the social rather than the biological representation of differences) is, in fact, the result of an extremely complex combination of the visible characteristics of different human populations (hair type, eye shape, skin colour, body morphology) and symbolic operations on the skin which are ethnic or national marks. (Carvalho, 2008: 88).

Meanwhile, it is impossible to ignore the tension that exists between finding an acceptable ethnic/racial classification and at the same time ensuring that it will provide the distinction required by state instruments (Stavo-Debaugue, 2005). It has to be said that implementing a specific form of statistical categorisation means confronting the dual challenge of, on the one hand, successfully investigating the social reality of a specific ethnic/racial universe while, at the same time, helping, whether one likes it or not, to shape and legitimise the different names assigned to it.

The act of categorisation, when it manages to achieve recognition or when it is exercised by a recognised authority, exercises by itself a certain power: “ethnic” or “regional” categories, like categories of kinship, institute a reality by using the power of revelation and construction exercised by objectification in discourse. (Bourdieu, 1991: 223).

The two issues that arise in relation to this measuring process are:

1. What to measure: namely, identifying the most relevant aspects—the phenotype or physical appearance alongside origin or ancestry, and which groups to include in the categorisation: blacks, Roma (gypsies), indigenous people, etc.
2. How to measure them: if there is total consensus about using selfclassification as a criterion, in some cases supplementary questions on cultural features and language spoken may accompany it.

In the Brazil of the second half of the nineteenth century, the debate around constructing a sense of nationality and national identity was particularly important, reaching a peak during the first Republic (1889-1929). This debate was strongly influenced by the European racial theories and doctrines of the time and manifested itself in a systematic preoccupation with the multi-racial origin of the Brazilian people, which was seen as a source of social contradictions, an obstacle to the country’s development and a hindrance to the definition of a national identity.

The notion of race pervaded all those discourses, nevertheless encompassing views that reflected the broadest possible range of intellectual currents and conflicting opinions. These ranged from racist doctrines, according to which other groups were condemned by a ranking system that rendered them inferior to the white European population, to other categories of identification—blacks, Indians, *pretos*, *pardos*, *caboclos*, etc. [see below for an explanation of these terms]—, and more advanced interpretative discourses, which, as well as distancing themselves from a primitively essentialist view, fostered a culturalist conceptualisation that was more suited to the composition of the society.

While the concept of race does not in any way correspond—from the genetic viewpoint—to scientific reality, it does represent a social reality that stems from a common perceptual

organisation of references to human diversity, with evidence of its persistence as an extremely effective symbolic reality. Its strength lies precisely in the fact that it relies on a “natural” mark, which is immediately visible to the eye and passed down in a hereditary way, thereby making it possible to discursively generate actual social groups or categories that can be called racial.

There is now a recognised consensus that the notion of race permeates all social relations, pervades practices and beliefs and determines the place and status of individuals and groups within society. Thus, people can be identified, classified, ranked, protected or subalternised on the basis of the colour/race/ethnic group or origin attributed to them by whoever is observing them. However, when constructing an official classification system, race, as a concept, poses a problem in essentialising the “types” being categorised, which can help to legitimise a supposed order or hierarchy by relying on distinctions that are inscribed in the nature of things or beings. In order to avoid this problem and to overcome the essentialist thinking that sees practices as biological or cultural properties inherent to individuals or groups, reality is conceived as being relational, in other words, the result of a symbolic conflict between the occupiers of unequal positions (Bourdieu, 1980). This structural conflict is inherent to any complex society and manifests itself in the different ways in which the empirical world is categorised and represented. Scientific criteria simply record the state of the symbolic struggle for legitimacy between the different representations. In the case of features that go beyond physical appearance or phenotypic similarities, the incorporation of such differences within ideologies and social practices “confers on them a symbolic meaning, be it positive or stigmatised, forming what we can call race, racial groups or race relations” (Paixão, 2009: 2).

In this way, a contemporary definition of race aiming at being useful in the practice of social research should also consider the classificatory implications of the ways of thinking associated with the native or popular use of the term, a legacy of former academic conceptualisations. Thus, race should be understood as being a category that has been socially constructed throughout history based on one or more signs or features among the overall characteristics of individuals that stand out culturally: a symbolic representation of identities that have been fashioned from physical, cultural or other referents.

3. The importance of ethnic/racial statistics

Traditionally the legal apparatus of a country (its constitution, codes of law, etc.) penalises racial discrimination under civil or criminal law. However, cases of “indirect” or institutional discrimination require statistical tools in order to survey and investigate the apparently neutral social processes and practices that produce discriminatory effects because of their application (Simon, 2005).

Here we are in a field which, though falling within the realm of the construction of social indicators for studying inequality, extends to more conceptual spheres of how to think about the production of statistics. The idea is that ethnic/racial characteristics are attributed and considered surreptitiously, without the consent of the victims of discrimination and often in a way that is not totally apparent for the actual people involved in the appointment of candidates to a particular position in the workplace, for example. In this way, current procedures and practices are discriminatory simply because of their collective effects on groups. It is therefore on the basis of statistical data that it becomes possible to provide

evidence for and help combat subtle and concealed forms of social practice that produce inequalities. In other words, the indicators render the invisible visible (Simon, 2005).

4. A historical perspective of censuses and surveys in Brazil

4.1. Colour and race in population censuses

During slavery, terminology was developed for describing the appearance or physical features of the racial characteristics of individuals to be applied, for example, in the event that a slave escaped. The owners published “wanted” notices giving the best possible physical description, including details of variations in skin or hair colour and other noticeable features or marks, such as scars, in order to enable and facilitate identification and recovery of the person who had run away.

Based on that terminology an official system for the ethnic/racial classification of the country’s inhabitants in public statistics was established and applied in the first national population census carried out in 1872 when slavery was still in force. The categories used in the census were: white, *preto*, *pardo* and *caboclo*, with “*preto*” corresponding to the colour black and “*caboclo*” being used to identify the native populations¹.

Thus, ever since that first census, data on the colour and race of the Brazilian population have been available. Throughout the 140 years in which these characteristics have been investigated, practically the same categories have continued to be used in relation to that important question, albeit employing a wider range of implementation criteria. However, in this first enumeration exercise, which separated the population according to their civil status into “free men” and slaves, while the former selfidentified as far as their race was concerned, their owners classified the latter.

In 1890, when the second census took place, among the options given for answering the same question, the term “*pardo*” was changed to “*mestizo*” (mixed race) in the classification. At a time when racist doctrines held strong sway, distinctive features, the phenotype, the referent for the 1872 census, gave way to the idea of racial mixtures and *mestizaje* into the subsequent census classification. This *pardo*/*mestizo* category showed a significant increase between those first two censuses, influenced in part by that change (see Tables 9-1 and 9-2).

In the following two censuses, those of 1900 and 1920, racial classification was not included, while the one scheduled for 1910 did not take place. According to some intellectuals of the time, the continued hegemony in Brazil of racist doctrines of European origin characterized this period by a feeling of inferiority, given the composition of Brazilian society with its African and indigenous legacy. Therefore, it seemed better not knowing the actual racial structure of the population. The search for a national identity was taking place at the same time as proposals were being put forward to solve the black and indigenous “problems” by eliminating those racial population groups, either as a result of whitening, *mestizaje* with the white group— or even by subjecting them to genocide, directly or by systematically failing to ensure the conditions in which they would be able to reproduce.

At the same time, the country was pursuing a selective immigration policy, initiated in the second half of the nineteenth century, favouring immigrants of European or “Caucasian”

origin. Preference was given to Swiss, German and Nordic immigrants although, some time later, not without some misgivings, Italians and Spaniards, who were less valued but, from the point of view of the time, “at least white” came to be accepted. This plan for whitening the Brazilian population shows the other face of the *mestizaje* ideology—an ideology that supports the myth of an encounter of the three founding races of the country’s population and results in an “abstract celebration of the interpenetration of cultures” (Carvalho, 2003: 318) but which in practice denies the possibility of legitimately expressing black or indigenous racial identity. Furthermore, in any case, the *mestizo* was only accepted “as a transitory element that would lead to the establishment of a nation of whites” (Costa, 2006: 63).

Population censuses did not get under way again until 1940 as no statistical enumeration took place in 1930 because of political instability. In the new census the reference to native peoples, who had previously been classified as “*caboclos*”, was removed and the category “yellow” was added in order to take account of the contingent of immigrants from Japan. Starting in 1908, this steady migratory flow essentially continued until the 1930s, having been allowed despite protests from members of Congress opposed to it on the grounds that, given the “Africanisation” to which the country had already been subjected, its “Mongolisation” could not be tolerated. In the 1940 census questionnaire the terms “white”, “*preto*” and “yellow” were accepted as answers to the racial classification question but, in the event that any other response was given, the census takers were instructed to put a line in the corresponding space, which was later codified as “*pardo*”. The results of the 1940 census show how significant selective European immigration was for the “white” category, given that its relative share rose from 44% in 1890 to over 63% (Table 9-2).

The 1950, 1960 and 1980 censuses retained the same ethnic/racial categorisation, explicitly including the term “*pardo*”, the 1970 census being an exception in that the classification question was omitted. In the 1991 census, after a 101-year absence, “*indígena*” (“indigenous”) was reintroduced as a category, with the question heading changing to “colour or race” since “*indígena*” was supposedly a race and not just a “colour”, as the question was headed in the censuses taken between 1940 and 1980.

In 2000, we find all five categories, also used in household surveys, in the census questionnaire in the following order: white, *preto*, yellow, *pardo* and *indígena*. They also appeared in the 2010 census.

**Cuadro 1 - Población residente por color/raza.
Censos del Brasil - 1872/2000**

Año	Total	Color/Raza					
		Blanca	Preta	Amarilla	Parda	Indígena	Ignorada
1872 (1)	9.930.478	3.787.289	1.954.452	-	3.801.782	386.955	-
1890 (2)	14.334.215	6.302.198	2.097.426	-	4.638.795	1.295.796	-
1900 (3)	17.438.434	-	-	-	-	-	-
1920 (3)	30.635.605	-	-	-	-	-	-
1940	41.236.315	26.171.778	6.035.869	242.320	8.744.365	-	41.983
1950	51.944.397	32.027.661	5.692.657	329.082	13.786.742	-	108.255
1960	70.191.370	42.838.639	6.116.848	482.848	20.706.431	-	46.604
1970 (3)	93.139.070	-	-	-	-	-	-
1980	119.011.052	64.540.467	7.046.906	672.251	46.233.531	-	517.897
1991	146.815.791	75.704.924	7.335.139	630.659	62.316.060	294.131	534.878
2000	169.799.170	90.647.461	10.402.450	866.972	66.016.783	701.462	1.164.042

Fuente: IBGE, Censos Demográficos 1872/2000.

(1) En vez de Indígena fue utilizado Caboclo

(2) En vez de Parda fue utilizado Mestizo y en vez de Indígena, Caboclo

(3) No fue incluida la información de color/raza

**Cuadro 2 - Distribución de la población residente por color/raza,
Censos del Brasil - 1872/2000**

Año	Total(1)	Color/Raza					
		Blanca	Preta	Amarilla	Parda	Indígena	Ignorada
1872 (1)	100,0	38,1	19,7	-	38,3	3,9	-
1890 (2)	100,0	44,0	14,6	-	32,4	9,0	-
1900 (3)	100,0	-	-	-	-	-	-
1920 (3)	100,0	-	-	-	-	-	-
1940	100,0	63,5	14,6	0,6	21,2	-	0,1
1950	100,0	61,7	11,0	0,6	26,5	-	0,2
1960	100,0	61,0	8,7	0,7	29,5	-	0,1
1970 (3)	100,0	-	-	-	-	-	-
1980	100,0	54,2	5,9	0,6	38,8	-	0,4
1991	100,0	51,6	5,0	0,4	42,4	0,2	0,4
2000	100,0	53,4	6,1	0,5	38,9	0,4	0,7

Fuente: IBGE, Censos Demográficos 1872/2000.

(1) En vez de Indígena fue utilizado Caboclo

(2) En vez de Parda fue utilizado Mestizo y en vez de Indígena, Caboclo

(3) No fue incluida la información de color/raza

5. The indigenous population doubles between 1991 and 2000

The 1990s, at least in the Americas, were characterised by a reaffirmation or rescuing of identities that had been historically discriminated against. Just as the organised civil rights movement representing Afrodescendants succeeded in giving new meaning to the term “black” so that it came to denote pride in one’s ethnic origin, indigenous organisations also re-evaluated their identity. As well as being part of a broader continental movement, in Brazil this process also grew out of opposition to the military dictatorship’s geopolitical project during the 1970s to emancipate the Indians. Basically designed to expand the agricultural frontier in the Amazon region, the aim was to de-characterise indigenous groups by means of discriminatory legal differentiation. In 1980, FUNAI, the state body that in theory was supposed to look after indigenous interests in the country, proposed the establishment of supposed “Indianness criteria” (“*Crerios de indianidad*”) in which indigenous people were to be characterised as people who exhibit “primitive mentality, undesirable biological, psychological and cultural characteristics, the presence of a Mongolian or sacral spot, anthropometric measurements, psychosocial maladjustment, etc.” (CIMI, 2011: 1), a document which was widely rejected by Indians, anthropologists and indigenous associations (Carneiro da Cunha, 1992), resulting in the dropping of the proposal. In fact, the effect obtained was the opposite to what was wanted since it can be said that it led to the “reindianisation” of several indigenous communities.

But being Indian cannot be summed up in a question merely based on the appearance of constructed stereotypes but rather on a way of being, an “incessant [movement] of differentiation, not a massive state of preexisting stabilised ‘difference’, namely an identity” (Viveiros de Castro, 2006: 2). However, “indigenous” does not refer to an individual attribute but to a collective or relational movement in which “‘indigenous’ identity is ‘relational’ not only ‘in contrast’ to ‘non-indigenous’ identities but relational [...] first and foremost because it comprises intra-referenced and intra-differentiated transindividual collectives” (Viveiros de Castro, 2006: 4). There are indigenous individuals because they are members of indigenous communities, and not the other way round. The components of such communities have begun to reinvent “a culture and way of life—a relational world which, however restricted it may have been by the adverse conditions in which it was cultivated, never stopped being an expression of human life just like any other” (Viveiros de Castro, 2006: 8).

Moreover, in that regard the same author contends that there are no unauthentic cultures, given that there are no authentic ones either. Hence, no Indians, whites or Afrodescendants, or anyone else, can be seen as authentic or unauthentic. A visible consequence of these processes of identity affirmation was that, in the period between the 1991 and 2000 censuses, there was an extraordinary increase in the population who self-identified as indigenous, rising from less than 300,000 to over 700,000 (Table 9-1), in other words, a two and a half times increase, with its importance relative to the population as a whole rising from 0.2% to 0.4% (Table 9-2). The only possible explanation for this increase, which by far exceeds the chances of natural growth, is the above-mentioned process of the rescuing of previously relinquished identities or identity revaluation, which, in Brazil as well as in other regions, has also been witnessed in relation to the categories that represent Afrodescendants.

6. Ethnic/racial classification: the most detailed studies

In Brazil there have been three data-gathering exercises to try to increase knowledge of the categories used to classify the population by race in surveys and censuses: the first was the 1976 Pesquisa Nacional por Amostra de Domicílios–PNAD (Household Survey), the second was the July 1998 Pesquisa Mensal de Emprego–PME (Monthly Employment Survey) and the third was Pesquisa das características étnico-raciais da população–PCERP (Survey of the Ethnic/Racial Characteristics of the Population) in 2008, which will be looked at in more detail later.

The results obtained by spontaneously asking people about their colour or race in the cases mentioned provoked widespread debate about how many classification categories were in fact being used in the country and how many categories would best depict the state of racial diversity in Brazil. The number of answers received, over one hundred in each case, prompted doubts about whether it was possible to construct a representative system of racial classification to be applied in censuses and population surveys, with critics claiming that it would be too complicated and that no one would be able to say who is who in this country.

According to this view, supposedly grounded in the recognised mestizo origin of the Brazilian population and the lack of defined boundaries between the racial categories, it would be impossible to properly establish the identity of those who are Indian, black, etc. The spectre of the mestizaje ideology reared its head once again to demonstrate that it was not viable to have a reliable system of ethnic/racial classification and develop public affirmative action policies to be targeted at racial groups, given that it would be impossible to identify the beneficiaries—the sham of mestizo equality concealing, in fact, ongoing hegemonic racial prejudice.

However, what it is important to stress, and which has not been mentioned in the various criticisms, is that of all the names used to selfdefine race, just over half a dozen accounted for practically all the answers given (95%). In addition to the five standard categories used in censuses and surveys, they consisted of “moreno”² (literally, “brown”) or some other variant of it, such as “*moreno claro*” (“light brown”) or “*Moreno oscuro*” (“dark brown”), and had little statistical significance. Given the concentration of responses in this small number of categories, the claim that the country’s racial classification system is extremely complicated therefore evaporates.

Table 9-3. Breakdown for the spontaneous question on colour/race in the 1998 employment surveys and 1976 household surveys

Categories	PME/98	PNAD/76
Blanca	54.24	49.45
Morena	20.89	24.80
Parda	10.40	8.47
Preta	4.26	5.61
Negra	3.14	0.10
Morena clara	2.92	2.75
Amarilla	1.11	1.53
Mulata	0.81	1.24
Clara	0.78	1.50
Morena oscura	0.45	0.54
Oscura	0.38	1.08
Indígena	0.13	--
Otras	0.48	2.93
Total	100.00	100.00

Sources: PME, 1998; PNAD, 1976.

At any rate, it should be pointed out that the term “*pardo*” is still employed as a residual category, as it was when it first came into use, thereby generating a certain distrust of the classification, mainly due to its polysemous nature. Several different groups may use this category to self-identify, including both Afrodescendants or blacks and descendants of indigenous peoples, as well as immigrants from East Asia and their descendants. Moreover, in some places, such as the Central Western region of the country, it is also used to refer to historical/geographical origin or social/economic position.

To sum up, two points deserve to be highlighted: first, that nearly all Brazilians identify themselves according to a rather restricted set of representations of colour or race; secondly, that both the names given spontaneously and their relation to the standard predetermined categories have remained significantly stable. Thus criticism of the possibility of constructing and using a classification system in surveys and censuses is clearly inappropriate and unfounded (Petruccelli, 2007). The system of ethnic/racial identification used until now has proved to be not only heuristically interesting but also significantly useful in exposing existing social inequalities.

7. A comparative overview of the countries of the Americas

7.1. The identification of ethnic/racial groups

It is abundantly clear that during the 1990s there was a qualitative leap in interest across the countries of the region in knowing the pluri-cultural and multi-ethnic composition of their populations and that this interest has grown significantly in the censuses carried out since 2000. This has resulted in questions on people’s ethnic/racial identity being incorporated

into various sources of official data, as well as into population censuses and household surveys. The statistical tools employed have improved and data-gathering methodologies have been refined while respecting the rights of the population, in keeping with the growth in ethnic consciousness in the region.

As a result, current records show that 25 countries of the Americas included an ethnic/racial identification variable in the census round of 2000. It has therefore been possible to quantify the participation of the different ethnic/racial groups identified within the total population of each country. Indigenous nations were identified in nearly all countries (24) while Afrodescendants⁴ were found in just 18.

However, the devising of mechanisms for gathering data on the ethnic/racial identity of the population is still a sensitive issue that has even caused controversy in some fora and the addressing of which involves several actors. Answers are needed to the following: How should the questions be asked? Who should answer them? How should they answer them? What should they be asked?

Below is a summary of the progress the countries of the region have made in addressing these conundrums.

7.2. The adoption of basic principles

It should be noted that the adoption of “self-adscription” as a fundamental guiding principle of the formulation of the question on ethnic/racial identification reflects an agreed attitude of respect for the human rights of interviewees⁵. The use of the criterion of self-adscription or self-classification, by which the actual interviewees are the ones who decide how to identify themselves, values the subjective aspect of the answer, resulting in a more active determination of their ethnic/racial identification, since they themselves give “sense” to it. On the other hand, a second criterion, involving other possible methodologies, is aimed at detecting supposedly more “objective” aspects, such as language spoken, clothing used and physical features, to be classified by the interviewer, though with limited opportunities for using them.

As already highlighted, most of the censuses in the 2000 round included at least one question on ethnic/racial identification, formulated in accordance with one or other of the two above-mentioned criteria. While there were no problems in implementing the first, in relation to the second it did not always turn out to be appropriate for capturing data on Afrodescendants. For historical reasons, which will not be analysed here, this ethnic/racial category does not, generally speaking, fit the characteristics set out in Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization (ILO), in the sense of having its own name as a community, using a particular language and inhabiting a specific territory, other than in exceptional cases such as those from the community of *Palenqueros de San Basilio*, in Colombia, or occupying the region before the conquest. A variety of terms were used to refer to the autochthonous populations of the Americas, including “grupos indígenas” (“indigenous groups”) in El Salvador, “grupos étnicos” (“ethnic groups”) in Guatemala and Trinidad and Tobago, “pueblos originarios” (“originary peoples”) in Bolivia and “grupo poblacional” (“population group”) in Honduras. However, the ILO Convention recommends the use of “indigenous peoples”, together with a list of categories

giving the actual name of each people present in the country, thereby enabling them to be identified in greater detail.

With regard to countries that have been collecting data on Afrodescendants for some time, the questions concerning identification have been found to refer mainly to race and skin colour. Statistical data rely on the existence of races as a historically constructed social structuring concept because organised civil society representing Afrodescendants sees “race” and “skin colour” as the pillars around which those groups have constructed their own identities, and partly because in the course of colonisation the languages, traditions and beliefs that shaped their cultural identity became fractured.

For example, the Cuban census of 2000 included the question “What is your skin colour?” while the Colombian census of 2005 was unusual in that the question on identity alluded to “physical features” in order to try to obtain information: “According to your culture, people or physical features, are you or do you recognise yourself to be...?” In Brazil, the question, in both censuses and surveys, is asked directly: “What is your colour or race?”

In other national situations, however, the minorities of African descent have constructed an historical/cultural identity that differentiates them from the rest of the population as a result of using a dialect, living in a geographical enclave or giving a name to their community, for example, the *Raizales* and *Palenqueros* in Colombia and the *Yungas* in Bolivia. In such cases, it is possible to include the actual name of the community as a specific answer category.

Another challenge to the adoption of the criteria mentioned for formulating the classification question concerns the fact that household data-gathering is not always strictly based on the principle of self-description since the questionnaire is usually applied to the person found at home at the time of the interview. That person, sometimes called the “informant”, is the one who provides all the data relating to the residents of the household in question, and not just the data relating to the classification of ethnic/racial identity, as specified in the actual instructions on implementation of the questionnaire, for example, in Brazil⁶. Identification by another person is also allowed in the case of children and very young people who do not yet have enough experience of socialisation to have a strong ethnic/racial self-perception—even if they are present—and for people who, for a variety of reasons, are unable to provide such information.

In the circumstances mentioned, the classification of absent inhabitants and children and young people belonging to the household, whether or not present, is done by means of hetero-classification, either by a member of the household or, in some cases, by the actual interviewer who can add supplementary information to the declaration.

8. The criteria used in statistical data-gathering tools

8.1. How the question on ethnic/racial identity is formulated

Population censuses in most countries currently include a closed-ended or pre-coded question on ethnic/racial identification, the wording of which varies from case to case.

In one group of countries in which the main aim was to capture data on the population of indigenous origin, the wording of the question varied as follows: “Do you consider yourself to belong to...?”, “What population group do you belong to?” or “Do you consider yourself to belong to one of the following originary or indigenous peoples?” The 2000 census in Mexico is paradigmatic since it is the only case in which the names of the indigenous peoples appear in the question as follows: “Are you Náhuatl, Maya, Zapotec, Mixtec or from another indigenous group?” However, it does not include the names of the peoples in the answer categories, thereby making it impossible to see the numbers for each people or for individuals belonging to other groups, such as Afro-Mexicans, to self-identify as such. In Bolivia, on the other hand, the following options for answering the question in the 2001 census were given: Quechua, Aymara, Guaraní, Chiquitano, Mojeño, etc. (see Table 9-4).

In another group of countries, in which this time the aim was to include a complex population profile that was not confined to originary peoples but also included Afrodescendants, the question sought to determine ethnic/racial identity based on several different elements. As has already been stated, Brazil, which, together with the United States of America and Canada, has the longest history of ethnic/racial classification of the population in the Americas⁷, currently uses a pre-coded question in censuses and surveys, asking: “What is your race or skin colour?”. Other countries ask for ethnicity and race separately, as in the case of the USA, or for “your culture, people or physical features...”, as in the case of Colombia, or, as in Costa Rica in 2000, just ask to which culture the person belongs. In the case of the Cuban census, by contrast, as already mentioned, interviewees are only asked to say what their skin colour is.

Another approach used is to put two questions, as in the case of the Venezuelan census of 2001. The first asks about self-definition: “Do you belong to an indigenous people?” and if the answer is yes, there is a second open question so that the interviewee can tell the interviewer the name of the group to which they belong.

As already mentioned, in other situations minorities of African descent have identified themselves using their own names, such as, for example, the *Raizales* and *Palenqueros* in Colombia (2005 census) and the *Yungas* Ethnic/Racial Statistics: Brazil and an Overview of the Americas 281 in Bolivia in 2001, as well as the *Garífuna* in Honduras (2001 census) and Nicaragua (2005 census).

Another way of asking is to leave it to the interviewer to decide when to do so, as in the case of the Ecuadorian census of 2001 and the 2007 census in El Salvador in which, in the event that interviewees self-identified as indigenous, they were asked to which group they belonged. In Belize (2000), Guatemala (2002) and Jamaica (2001), interviewees were asked to which ethnic group or race they belonged. In addition to ethnic group or race, other less specific criteria, such as people or population group, were used in the cases of Colombia and Honduras.

Altogether, on examining the various criteria used either separately or together, up to ten different ways have been used to gather data on membership of an ethnic or racial group, focused around two main approaches: historical/cultural characterisation and classification according to physical features.

The USA, on the other hand, is characterised by having a centrally established standard system of racial classification for use in federal agencies. Thus, in 1977 the parameters of ethnic/racial classification were determined in a resolution known as Directive 15. As a result of criticisms and changes in legislation, in 1994 a committee was set up to examine different data sources, including the supplementary household surveys of 1996 and 1997.

Because of the work of that committee, the 2000 census contained some significant changes, compared to previous ones, reflecting the need to take account of groups with a multiple racial history. The most significant change made was that the option was given to select one or more categories to indicate racial identity. The idea that the multi-racial “phenomenon” was growing within North American society was therefore institutionalised without providing an official definition of what it was.

The efforts of multi-racial organisations were therefore successful in achieving some kind of result, albeit incomplete in that it did not meet their main demand that there should be a separate category for those who self-identified as being of multiple origins (Nobles, 2000: 144; Williams, 2006: 59). The debate between these two alternatives, having a separate identification category for people who consider themselves to be of multiracial origin or the option of ticking more than one of the answer categories provided in the questionnaire, may also influence discussion on the development of a more appropriate classification system in other countries.

Another change concerned how Hispanic origin was addressed. Thus, “Race” and “Hispanic Origin” were deemed to be two separate and distinct concepts. The 2000 census asked, on the one hand, whether the person was Spanish, Hispanic, Latino and, on the other, which race or races they considered they belonged to, allowing them to select “one or more” of the options offered. As a result of these changes, while the data on race from 2000 are not directly comparable with those obtained from the 1990 or earlier censuses, they do make it possible to give a more accurate picture of the state of the debate on ethnicity in the country. The example of the USA and the constant variations in the way in which the question on ethnicity and race is posed in its censuses contrasts significantly with that of Brazil. In this country, persistent resistance to the possibility of changing the configuration of the question on race and the answer categories provided has been grounded on the importance of carrying on with the historical data series to the detriment of the engagement to provide genuinely reliable statistics.

As for Canada, its population is the result of a multidimensional process of unequal contributions from the autochthonous populations, the “founding races” and more recent “allogeneic” immigration. Thus, in Canadian censuses from 1871 until 2001, the predominant method adopted for investigating the ethnic origins of the inhabitants was by using the dual criteria of place of birth, or nationality, and race, on the one hand, and mother tongue or language spoken, on the other. In the 2001 census, under the heading of “Socio-cultural Information”, 13 questions were asked, enabling the interviewees to be classified according to place of birth, nationality, citizenship, whether they were immigrants and, if so, date of arrival in Canada, mother tongue and language(s) known and used at home, the ethnic or cultural group(s) to which their ancestors belonged, whether they considered themselves indigenous

or aboriginal, their religion, etc. Having evolved over more than a century, the categorisation of ethnic groups has been considerably transformed. Origin is distinguished from language and all reference to paternal lineage and arrival on the continent has been given up. The classification turned towards a more subjective determination, “cultural” identification rather than ancestry. The 2006 census reproduced that whole set of questions exactly as they were in the 2001 census. Canada is an example of a country in which priority has been given to producing statistics that reflect social dynamics, in particular the race question, rather than to safeguarding the historical data series.

In both these countries, each of which has a high annual immigration rate, censuses and surveys include a series of questions on place of birth, citizenship and year of entry into the country for separating the native population from that born abroad. These data can be used to obtain a wide variety of information since they make it possible to distinguish between those who have citizenship as a result of being born in the country and those who have obtained it through naturalisation.

8.2. How the question on ethnic/racial identity is answered

As mentioned above, it is the interviewee who establishes his or her ethnic/racial origin by selecting one—and it is usually only one—of the categories included in the list provided in the census questionnaire⁸. The list usually comprises the names of the main indigenous peoples, Afrodescendants and other ethnic/racial groups who are present in the country. It may also include an open category option of “others” and may or may not ask for further specification. One group of countries— Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Paraguay—opted for a list of categories based on the names of indigenous peoples.

In Brazil where, as already mentioned, the census asks for race or skin colour, five categories are listed: white, *preta*, *parda*, yellow and indigenous. In the 2010 census, as will be seen below, if the answer is “indigenous”, the interviewee is then asked also to specify ethnic group and language spoken. This classification system has been systematically criticised for merging two aspects of the phenomenon of ethnicity, namely colour or appearance and ethnic origin, and including categories that are neither exhaustive nor exclusive, while at the same time being subjected to evaluation and possible future change by the country’s official statistics body itself.

Other countries (Ecuador, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala and El Salvador) include certain specific categories for Afrodescendants, such as “black” or “mulatto”. The term “Afro-(nationality in question)”, such as Afro-Ecuadorian, Afro-Colombian, etc., is also usually used. The Colombian census is the only one that includes a possible answer category for Roma people, commonly known as gypsies, thereby acknowledging their presence in the country. In countries in which the population is characterised by the presence of groups identified by the language they speak, usually derived from English, terms such as “black” (Belize and Guyana) or “negro inglés” (“black English”) (Honduras) are used. Other categories found were: “African” (Guyana), “Afro” (Uruguay) and “*afrodescendiente*” (“Afrodescendant”) (Colombia and Nicaragua).

Another example was provided by Uruguay where, in the classification system used in the 2006 Household Survey and the 2011 Census, the ancestry of interviewees was considered.

Lastly, intermediate categories are used to denote derivatives of the mixing of races, such as “mestizo”, “mixed” and “mulatto”. All of the 20 or so terms listed are also centred on the two main pillars of classification criteria already noted, namely racial markers and historical/cultural characterisation. The combining, or not, of these two criteria, which we can call, respectively, phenotypic and ethnic, or racial and cultural, has led to varying results across the different countries, depending also on which classification categories have been adopted. In Ecuador, for example, the inclusion of the term “mestizo” as one of the possible answers to the question “What do you consider yourself to be?”, while at the same time asking a question about the language spoken, resulted in an apparent underestimation of the country’s indigenous population in 2001. On the other hand, in the case of Colombia, the 2005 census obtained better estimates of both the indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations than the 1993 one did by broadening the scope of the question to include simultaneously the concepts of people, culture and physical features⁹ (Del Popolo, 2008: 28) rather than keeping to the notion of belonging to a community, as the previous census had done. El Salvador seems to have had the same experience as Ecuador when, in its 2007 census, it used the category “mestizo”, which was defined explicitly as the result of a “mixture of white with indigenous”, and limited the scope of the racial identification of “black” (“negro”) to just “race”. As a result, over 86% of the country’s inhabitants identified themselves as “mestizos” and almost 13% as “whites”. If we add the criterion of ancestry to these two classification criteria, namely the racial marker or phenotypic and the cultural factor, as Uruguay did in the 2011 census, it is the multidimensionality of the ethnic/racial phenomenon that needs to be given greater attention in the statistics of countries, probably by using more elaborate classification criteria and not limiting census questionnaires to just one or at most two questions on the issue.

8.3. Indirect methods of ethnic/racial identification

It has been possible to identify other methods of ethnic/racial identification, depending on the nature and use of the data sources. One of them is identification by surname, which is particularly complex. It requires the drawing up of the fullest possible list of surnames belonging to the target population, preferably with the help of civil society organisations. It has the drawback that, in some cases, there is ambiguity in the classification of individuals with those surnames who may not belong to the group in question. However, this approach has been validated to a certain extent by some local studies.

Another method of identification includes questions about the language spoken at home, which is deemed important for determining ethnicity, especially in the case of native American peoples, since language operates as a representation of people’s culture. Having a question on mother tongue also makes it possible to obtain the best possible information on the ethnic origin of the members of the household since, more recent generations may have learned, and may speak almost exclusively, the language of the country or region where they live.

However, questions on the customary language spoken in the household introduce supplementary elements of ethnic identification, often requiring questionnaires to be translated and the interviewers to be bilingual. The countries that include this method of

classification are: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela.

9. Methods of ethnic/racial identification by country

Below is a description of the types of questions that have been used by the different countries in their censuses.

Self-identification was used as a criterion in the 2000 round of censuses conducted by: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago and the USA. The joint criteria of self-identification and language were used by: Belize, Bolivia, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Venezuela.

As for the population investigated in the censuses, two countries stand out for having limited the age of interviewees: in Mexico, it was addressed to people aged 5 and over and in Bolivia to those aged 15 and over. While recognising that it is desirable for the whole population of each country to be identified in terms of ethnicity and race, it is also clear that children and adolescents generally have had insufficient experience of socialisation to allow them to have constructed an ethnic/racial identity. In addition, usually their parents or guardians answer the census questions rather than themselves. This being so, the age restrictions mentioned are seen as justified in those countries.

Lastly, since 1990 Peruvian censuses have used solely the criterion of the language in which the respondent learned to speak (mother tongue).

Of the 25 countries in the region that collect data on the ethnic/racial identity of the population, all except Cuba seek to capture data on the “indigenous” population, with 13 of them going on to identify the ethnic group/people to which they belong: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela. By virtue of the characteristics of its population, Cuba seems to be the only country that uses solely the categories of “white”, “mestizo” and “black” in its demographic statistics.

A summary of what has been described so far can be found in Table 9-3.

10. An overview of statistics in current Brazil

The persistence of structural, institutional and individual racism means that the notion of race, together with its correlates of ethnicity and skin colour, is still accepted as a political and analytical category. The importance of recognising the social inequalities that negatively affect segments of the population, and their connection with discrimination and racism, leads to a questioning of the supposed homogeneity of the population and the adoption, as a consequence, of ideas about the multi-ethnic, multi-racial and pluri-cultural nature of the society. Analysis of the records resulting from the codification of ethnic/racial identities provides a particularly important picture of how the identity markers of these categories have been formulated and constructed.

However, the classification of racial groups does not take place within a neutral setting: it is attended by a marked asymmetry between those doing the classifying and those being classified. A relationship of symbolic domination, interpenetrated by the current use of the categories of colour and race, is clearly present in such classification, in which it can be detected that:

The biological appearances and the very real effects that have been produced in bodies and minds by a long collective labour of socialization of the biological and of biologicisation of the social combine to reverse the relationship between causes and effects and to make a naturalised social construction [...] appear as the grounding in nature of the arbitrary division which underlies both reality and the representation of reality and which sometimes imposes itself even on scientific research. (Bourdieu, 2001: 3).

While the different ways of measuring this phenomenon have already been subjected to extensive methodological reflection, the questioning of how the representation of a person's colour and race is organised and designated only began more recently. The cognitive map of the perception of ethnic/racial variability is built on the socially determined conceptualisation of appearances, since all perception is informed and organised based on organising principles that are capable of selecting the relevant data (Magli, 1989). As far as the categorisation of ethnic/racial groups is concerned, it is extremely worthwhile to remember that, already back in 1835, Jean Maurice Rugendas said the following about his trip to Brazil: "Deciding the colour of such and such a person is less down to appearance and physiology than legislation and administration" (Rugendas, 1940: 65).

10.1. PCERP: A special survey on ethnic/racial identification in Brazil

Thirty years after classification by colour or race was reintroduced into Brazilian population censuses—as well as incorporated into other monthly or annual surveys—it was deemed essential to conduct a study to assess how the ethnic/racial characterisation of the population was being investigated and the results it was obtaining.

Meanwhile, during this period, many authors have turned to this issue and it became a focus of attention for academics in other countries. The conclusions reached by the different works published in Brazil range from endorsement of the classification system used by the *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística*—IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics), to outright rejection. The former include statements such as the following, based on analysis of the results of the 1976 PNAD household survey:

Though much criticised, the existing surveys that make it possible to assess some aspects of the classification system used by the *Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística*—IBGE for identifying racial groups suggest that they are appropriate for conducting empirical research into racial inequalities in Brazilian society. (Osório, 2003: 7).

Assertions made by critics of the system include the following:

The subtle and fluid character of the subjective identification of race in Brazil raises critical methodological concerns for analysts who use IBGE data to determine the racial composition of Brazil and for those who carry out comparative analyses of socioeconomic differentials by skin colour. (Wood and Carvalho, 1995: 2).

In this context, the IBGE is noteworthy for having undertaken, in the second half of 2008, a specific survey in order to investigate the most appropriate methods of capturing data on the ethnic/racial groups of the country's population, which is also intended to serve as a basis for a future improving of the classification system. The survey was called *Pesquisa das características étnico-raciais da população*–PCERP (Survey of the Ethnic/Racial Characteristics of the Population), and its stated aim was to investigate the construction and use of the terms people currently use to express their identity. In addition, its immediate objectives were to investigate the elements underlying racial classification terminology and design models for representing the different ways in which individuals and groups identify themselves.

What is expected is that, through this survey will supply detailed information on the different dimensions that shape the construction of those identities, such as origin, physical features, ancestry, etc. Two publications are today available, a first one with initial data from the survey in the form of tables of variables (IBGE, 2011) and a second one with studies and analysis (Petruccelli & Saboia, 2013), granting a basis for possible proposals in order to improve the current ethnic/racial classification system of the country's official statistics.

The aim of the exercise is to allow ethnic/racial identity to be expressed more reliably through the use of non-exclusive categories, therefore adopting the notion of the multi-ethnic and multi-racial nature of the population and reaffirming the importance of recognising the social differences that negatively affect segments of the population, as well as their connection with discrimination and racism.

When broadly compared with censuses and household surveys, the PCERP introduced a methodological innovation with regard to the identification by colour or race of the interviewee. It consisted in selecting just one person from each household, aged 15 or over, who answered exclusively with regard to their own ethnic/racial identity. As already mentioned, this is different from what happens in other statistical operations.

The current classification categories, which are presently inadequate for capturing the multiculturalism that characterises Brazilian society, could be turned into contextualised meaningful signifiers, corresponding to the many different elements of reality, based on the results of this survey. In this way, a new classification system, to be designed for future use, will allow the multidimensional expression of the identities of Brazilian society.

10.2. Ethnic/racial identification in the 2010 Brazilian population census

The restoration of racial classification in the 1980 census, despite the opposition of such eminent figures as Gilberto Freyre¹⁰, following its omission from that of 1970, coincided with the country's re-democratisation. The subsequent census scheduled for 1990 was eventually carried out in 1991 with a background of intense campaigning by social organisations representing the Brazilian "black movement", under the slogan of "*Não deixe sua cor passar*

em branco"¹¹. The preparations for the 2000 census included the testing-out of questions on colour or race and origin that were both open-ended/spontaneous and pre-codified. This test, involving four questions included in the Monthly Employment Survey for July 1998 (Petruccelli, 2007), failed to succeed in changing the established classification system involving the five options already mentioned: white, *preta*, *parda*, yellow and indigenous, essentially because there was insufficient time for reflection and the development of a possible alternative.

For the 2010 census, the earlier campaigning subsided and representatives of social movements invited by the IBGE to attend seminars on evaluation of the results of the PCERP survey were less keen to see possible changes in the classification system, given the relative progress of public policies on inclusion advanced by universities based on the current racial categories. The consolidation, yet again, of these categories, which refer to an "eclectic" reference system (Nascimento, 2006), fosters the continuity of a mixed classification criterion that includes appearance and ancestry and gives, through the ambiguous idea of "colour", what is deemed to be the official depiction of national identity. What has changed in this census is that the question on ethnic/racial classification has been reincorporated into the questionnaire applied to the entire population being studied; in other words, every inhabitant in every household in the country was asked about their race and skin colour and not just those who formed part of the census sample, as had happened between 1980 and 2000. This change has brought benefits such as the ability to analyse the data obtained with the desired level of disaggregation, according to both geography and classification categories.

Furthermore, in cases where the interviewees identified themselves as indigenous, they were also asked, for the first time in the history of Brazilian censuses, to which ethnic group they belonged and which language they spoke. This innovation, which brings the Brazilian census into line with that of other countries which also identify the ethnic groups to which the autochthonous population belongs, is perhaps the most important change made to the census in over a century of the history of statistics in this country.

11. Conclusions

Ethnic/racial population classification, which has been found in the majority of population censuses, has not yet spread to all countries of the Americas. However, in the 2010 census round, the number of countries that had used this topic increased, compared to the 2000 round, including, for example, the cases of Uruguay and Argentina, in 2011 and 2010 respectively, for the first time.

While current prospects for extending the number of countries are reasonable, the ways in which the data are obtained are characterised by the wide variety of approaches taken. From the conceptual point of view, the focus on measuring ethnicity, race and skin colour or identifying native peoples is juxtaposed with the variety of concepts and terminologies used, some of them discussed here, which stem from the multiple socio-cultural and linguistic reality of the countries of the region. In any case, it is significant that since 1959 the United Nations itself has continuously and repeatedly stressed (United Nations, 1959; 1969) that recommending international classification criteria is impossible: "Since countries collect data on ethnicity in different ways and for different reasons, and because the ethno-cultural

composition of a country could vary widely from country to country, no internationally relevant criteria or classification can be recommended” (United Nations, 2008: 140).

It therefore needs to be stressed that formulating surveys, censuses or any other type of statistical data collecting tool is not simply a conceptual or technical task but also a political one, in its broadest sense, part of a process in which the interests of states and groups are ideologically involved. It is therefore insufficient to turn to methodological principles for determining statistical enumeration strategies, without also considering the socio-political interpretations that closely accompany the construction of social representations. Continuous dialogue between institutions and social actors must be constantly encouraged and maintained in order to ensure that either one or more questions on ethnic/racial identification are included in the official statistics of countries which still do not have any, or that existing classification systems in those that do are improved. Since identity is expressed in many different ways, the interests in terms of political representations, the academic definition of specific issues and the construction of particular systems of statistical categorisation present, as pointed out at the beginning, many difficulties arising from the conflicting interests of groups that have been historically subalternised and the resistance there is to those groups being fully incorporated into the exercise of citizenship.

Lastly, while it is true that there have been found a wide variety of approaches and many different categories in measuring ethnic/racial diversity, it is nonetheless important to stress the crucial role the data obtained from surveys and censuses play in detecting the specific social/economic disadvantages and inequalities of the different groups.

Despite the variations in approach found in the different countries, the empirical frameworks they share with regard to identifying categories that have historically suffered discrimination make it possible to detect the opposition between dominant ethnic/racial groups and socially disadvantaged minorities, common to the structure of all societies. Nevertheless, conceptual and methodological decisions about which dimensions should be considered when devising the ethnic/racial classification system to be used by statistical measuring reflect not only technical positions but also the socio-political dynamics of the society in question. If the boundaries between phenotypic or racial categories and historical/cultural factors are not well delimited, either in theory or in practice, the application of one or other method of classification will clearly yield a variety of results within the same country. In any case, having such data, despite the noted limitations, makes possible the design and implementation of public policies aiming at compensating and correcting economic and social injustice to which the traditionally disadvantaged population groups in those countries, mainly Afrodescendants or indigenous peoples, are subjected.

Table 9-4. Comparative table of ethnic/racial classification questions

PREGUNTAS, CRITERIOS, CATEGORÍAS PAÍSES	Criterio de Identificación Censos Ronda 2000	Pregunta Censal	Categorías Censos	Criterio de Identificación Encuesta de Hogares	Pregunta Encuesta de Hogares 2000-2005	Categorías Encuesta de Hogares
1. Argentina	Auto-declaración	¿Existe en este hogar alguna persona que se reconozca descendiente o perteneciente a un pueblo indígena?	17 pueblos indígenas más la categoría "otro pueblo"			
2. Belice	Auto-declaración	To what ethnic group do you/does....belong?	1.Black, 2.White, 3.Chinese, 4.Creole, 5.East Indian, 6.Garifuna, 10.Mennonite 11.Mestizo, 12.Spanish, 13. Other 7. 8. y 9 grupos indígenas	Auto-declaración	To what ethnic group do you belong?	1.Black, 2.White, 3.Chinese, 4.Creole, 5.East Indian, 6.Garifuna, 9.Mennonite 10.Mestizo, 11.Spanish, 12. Other 7. y 8. grupos indígenas
3. Bolivia	Auto-Declaración Lengua hablada	¿Se considera perteneciente a alguno de los siguientes pueblos originarios o indígenas?	1. Quechua, 2. Aymará, 3. Guaraní, 4. Chiquitano, 5. Mojeño, 6. Otro nativo, 7. Ninguno	Lengua hablada	¿En que lengua habla habitualmente?	1.Español, 2.Quechua, 3. Aymará, 4.Guaraní, 5.Otra indígena,
4. Brasil	Auto-declaración	Sua cor ou raça é...	1.Branca, 2.Preta, 3.Amarela, 4.Parda, 5.Indígena	Auto-declaración	A cor ou raça do(a) __é:	1. Branca, 2.Preta, 3.Amarela, 4.Parda, 5.Indígena
5. Canadá	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	À quel(s) groupe(s) ethnique(s) ou culturel(s) les ancêtres de cette personne appartenaient-ils?	Abierta con 25 ejemplos	Auto-declaración	Quelles étaient les origines ethniques ou culturelles de vos ancêtres?	15 categorías, más "otros"
6. Chile	Auto-declaración	¿Pertenece usted a alguno de los siguientes pueblos originarios o indígenas?	8 pueblos indígenas más la categoría "Ninguno de los anteriores"	Lengua hablada en el hogar	Hay algún miembro de la familia que hable o entienda una de las siguientes lenguas?	8 lenguas indígenas
7. Colombia	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	De acuerdo con su cultura, pueblo o rasgos físicos, ... es o se reconoce como:	1. Indígena, 2. Rom, 3. Raizal, 4. Palenquero, 5. Negro(a), mulato(a), afrocolombiano(a) o afrodescendiente, 6. Ninguno de los anteriores	Auto-declaración (para los mayores de 10 años)	¿De cual de los siguientes grupos étnicos se considera usted?	1. Indígena, 2. Rom, 3. Raizal, 4. Palenquero, 5. Negro, mulato, afrodescendiente, 6. Ninguno de los anteriores
8. Costa Rica	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	Pertenece... a la cultura...	1. Indígena, 2. Afro-costarricense o negro, 3. China, 4. Ninguna de las anteriores			
9. Cuba	Auto-declaración	¿Cuál es el color de piel?	1. Blanco, 2. Negro, 3. Mestizo o mulato			
10.Ecuador	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	¿Cómo se considera...?	1. Indígena, 2. Negro (afroecuatoriano) , 3. Mestizo, 4. Mulato, 5. Blanco, 6. Otro	Auto-declaración (para los mayores de 12 años)	Usted se considera:	1. Indígena, 2. Mestizo, 3.Blanco, 4.Negro, 5.Mulato, 6.Otro, cual?
11.El Salvador	Auto-declaración	a) Es usted... b) Si Ud. es indígena, ¿a qué grupo pertenece?	a) 1. Blanco, 2. Mestizo, 3. Indígena, 4. Negro (de raza), 5. Otro b) 6. Lenca, 7. Kakawira (Cacaopera), 8. Nahua Pipil, 9. Otro	Auto-declaración	De acuerdo con sus antepasados y/o costumbres Ud. se considera de origen de algún pueblo indígena? 1.Si: A cual? 2.No 3.No sabe	1. Lenca, 2.Maya/ Cacaopera, 3.Nahuat/ Pipil, 4.No sabe, 5.Otros

			(especifique)			
12.EUA	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	a) Is this person Spanish/Hispanic/ Latino? b) What is this person's race: mark x one or more races	a) 1. No, 2. Yes, con 3 opciones más "Otro" b) 13 grupos más "Otro"			
13.Guatemala	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	¿A qué grupo étnico (pueblo) pertenece?	22 pueblos indígenas, afro-indígenas, ladino, otros	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	¿A qué grupo étnico pertenece?	5 grupos étnicos más Xinca, Garifuna, No indígena, Extranjero
14.Guyana	Auto-declaración	¿A qué grupo étnico pertenece?	1. African, Negro, Black, 2. Amerindian, 3. East Indian, 4. Chinese, 5. Mixed, 6. Portuguese, 7. Sirian, Lebanese, 8. White, 9. NS, 10. Other			
15.Honduras	Auto-declaración	¿A qué grupo poblacional pertenece?	1. Garífuna, 2. Negro inglés, 3. Tolupán, 4. Pech (Paya), 5. Miskito, 6. Lenca, 7. Tawahka (Sumo), 8. Chortí, 9. Otro			
16.Jamaica	Auto-declaración	To which race or ethnic group do you say you/...belong?	1. Black, 2. Chinese, 3. Mixed, 4. East Indian, 5. White, 6. Other, 7. N/S			
17. México	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	¿Es náhuatl, maya, zapoteco, mixteco o de otro grupo indígena?	1. Sí, 2. No			
18. Nicaragua	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	¿Se considera perteneciente a un pueblo indígena o a una etnia? ¿A cuál de los siguientes pueblos indígenas o etnia pertenece?	1. Sí, 2. No Para los que responden Sí: 13 pueblos indígenas, afro-descendiente y otros grupos étnicos	Auto-declaración	¿A cuál de los siguientes pueblos indígenas o etnia pertenece?	1. Mestizo, 2. Blanco, 3. Criollo, 4. Creole/ Afro-descendiente, 5. Miskito, 6. Mayagna (Sumu), 7. Rama, 8. Otro
19. Panamá	Auto-declaración	¿A qué grupo indígena pertenece?	1. Kuna, 2. Ngöbe, 3. Buglé, 4. Teribe, 5. Bokota, 6. Emberá, 7. Wounaan, 8. Bri Bri, 9. NS	Auto-declaración	Es usted indígena?	1. Sí, 2. No
20. Paraguay	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	¿Existe en este hogar alguna persona que se considere indígena o perteneciente a una etnia indígena?	17 grupos indígenas			
21. Perú	Lengua en la que aprendió a hablar	¿El idioma o lengua en el que aprendió a hablar fue:	1. Quechua, 2. Aymara, 3. Ashaninka, 4. Otra lengua nativa, 5. Castellano, 6. Idioma extranjero, 7. Es sordomudo(a)	Auto-declaración	¿Por su herencia o cultura se considera perteneciente a algún grupo étnico?	1. Indígena de la Amazonia, 2. Quechua, 3. Aymara, 4. Negro/Mulato/Zambo, 5. Mestizo, 6. Blanco, 7. Otro
22. Suriname	Auto-declaración	To which populational group does (N) belong?	1. Indigenous, Amerindian, 2. Maroon, Bushnegro, 3. Creole, 4. Hindostani, 5. Javanese, 6. Chinese, 7. Caucasian,			

			White, 8.Mixed, 9.Other, 10.Don't know, No answer			
23.Trinidad Tobago	Auto-declaración	To which ethnic group does (N) belong?	1.African, 2.Indian, 3.Chinese, 4.Syryan/ Lebanese, 5.Caucasian, 6.Mixed, 7.Other, 8.N/S	Auto-declaración	To which ethnic group does (N) belong?	1.African, 2.Indian, 3.Chinese, 4.White/ Caucasian, 5.Mixed, 6.Other ethnic group
24.Uruguay	Auto-declaración	¿Cree tener ascendencia?	1.Afro o negra 2. Amarilla 3.Blanca 4.Indígena 5.Otro (esp) 6.No sabe	Auto-declaración	¿Cree tener ascendencia?	1.Afro o negra 2. Amarilla 3.Blanca 4.Indígena 5.Otro (esp) 6.No sabe
25.Venezuela	Auto-declaración Lengua hablada	¿Pertenece a algún pueblo indígena?	1. Sí. 2. No			

Fuentes: Compiled by the author from the following sources; Del Popolo, 2008; Paixão, 2009; Antón & Del Popolo, 2008, Censo de Población, Encuestas de Hogares.

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Notes

1 These terms have developed very specific and often evolving connotations in Brazil. The term “preto”, which was first used in the 1872 census, refers to people of African descent and can be translated as “black”. The term “pardo”, which was also used in the 1872 census and can be loosely translated as “greyish brown”, has had an ambiguous meaning which has changed over the years. More than a colour, it has racial connotations, referring mainly to people of mixed African/white descent but also other people with darker skin,

2 The term “moreno” relates solely to skin or hair colour and has no racial connotations. Furthermore, it can be used as a way of avoiding racial identification. It refers to people whose skin is slightly darker than white and can even include those who are sun-tanned.

3 Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela.

4 Defined as descendants of sub-Saharan Africans who arrived during the period of the slave diaspora, including “groups that were physically and culturally mixed, who mainly identified with this common demographic matrix” (Paixão, 2009: 2).

5 ILO Convention 169 states that “[s]elf-identification as indigenous or tribal shall be regarded as a fundamental criterion for determining the groups to which the provisions of this Convention apply”.

6 http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/presidencia/noticias/noticia_visualiza.php?id_noticia=1602&id_pagina=1

7 The first Brazilian population census was carried out in 1872 and already included racial classification. In the case of the USA, the first census was carried out in 1790 and also included racial classification.

8 Only the USA allows more than one category to be ticked in the response.

9 Between the two dates, the indigenous population went from 1.6% to 3.4% and the Afro-Colombian population from 1.5% to 10.6%.

10 Gilberto Freyre. “O Brasileiro-sua cor?”, Folha de São Paulo, 5 December 1979, p. 3, cited by Nobles (2000: 119).

11 This can be loosely translated as “Don’t let your colour be left blank”. However, in Portuguese “branco” can mean both “blank” and “white”. The slogan is therefore a play on words, calling on the black population not to leave the answer to the question on colour blank and thus be counted as white.