COLLECTING ETHNIC AND RACIAL DATA IN CENSUSES AND SURVEYS: THE LATIN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE IN THE CASES OF BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, MEXICO AND PERU

Fernando Urrea-Giraldo[1]
Universidad del Valle

Diego Alejandro Rodríguez-Sánchez[2]
Universidad del Valle
Facultad de Ciencias Sociales

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to analyze the experience of four Latin-American countries with different traditions and methodological perspectives on the gathering of ethnic and racial statistics of Afrodescendant and Indigenous population groups. A particular emphasis is made on the appearance of the multicultural ideology in the four societies, since the mid 80's, and in the 20th century until today; and on its relation to the previous frame of reference based on the ideology of miscegenation. The four societies exemplify to a fair extent the variability within the Latin American and Caribbean region on the collection of statistical data for ethnic and racial groups. We also introduce the extent to which we believe the development of the methodologies is related to the particular historical context, as grounded in long term patterns of relation between the races and ethnic groups. We take the three societies with the biggest population volume in the region (Brazil, México and Colombia), plus the Peruvian case, all of them with differentiated ethnic-racial patterns.
Keywords: ethnicity – race – demographic statistics – Latin America.

COLECIONANDO DADOS SOBRE ETNICIDADE E RAÇA EM AMOSTRAS E CENSOS: UMA EXPERIÊNCIA LATINO-AMERICANA PARTIR DE ESTUDOS CASOS DO BRASIL, COLÔMBIA, MÉXICO E PERU

Resumen: El objetivo de este artículo es analizar la experiencia de cuatro países latinoamericanos con diferentes tradiciones y perspectivas metodológicas sobre la recolección de estadísticas étnico-raciales para las poblaciones afrodescendientes e indígenas. Se hace un énfasis particular en la aparición de la ideología del multiculturalismo desde mediados de los 80 en las cuatro sociedades, y en el siglo XX hasta hoy día; y también en su relación con el marco de referencia previo, basado en la ideología del mestizaje. Las cuatro sociedades ejemplifican la variabilidad existente en la región Latinoamericana y del Caribe en lo referente a la recolección de información estadística para grupos étnicos y raciales. Incluimos igualmente una reflexión sobre el grado en que el desarrollo de las diferentes metodologías está relacionado a los contextos históricos particulares, en tanto se encuentran fundamentados en patrones de relación entre los grupos étnicos y raciales en la larga duración. Tomamos las tres sociedades con el más grande

---

[1] E-mail: furreagiraldo@yahoo.com
[2] E-mail: diealerod@gmail.com

7

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

volumen poblacional (Brasil, México y Colombia), más el caso peruano, todos con patrones étnico-raciales diferenciados.
Palabras clave: etnicidad – raza – estadísticas demográficas – América Latina.

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to analyze the experience of four Latin-American countries and their respective traditions and methodological perspectives on the collection of data on ethnicity and race, both for Indigenous and Afrodescendant (black) populations, but also for white, *mestizo* and Asian populations. The focus of the paper is on the developments on the conception of race and ethnicity that occurred during the 20th century and in the 21st century, in particular after the appearance of the multicultural ideology since the mid-eighties and during the nineties, up until today. The choosing of these four national societies to introduce the Latin American experience is explained by the fact that due to their differences and similarities and the particular histories behind their data, one can draw a general picture of the state of ethnic-racial statistics in the region and the current debates on the subject. For that purpose, we take the three largest societies in the region in terms of their population size (Brazil, Mexico and Colombia) but with differentiated ethnic-racial patterns, plus the case of Peru.

Brazil, since the nineteenth century, follows a classificatory scheme by skin color; at present, according to the 2010, census it shows that more than half of its population self-recognized as black under two of the most important historical categories (*preta* and *parda*).

On the contrary, the other three countries have built their statistics under a paradigm more on the ethnic side close to the identification of the Indigenous groups, although for Colombia, as we will see, since the year 1993 the black population was introduced into the statistics national system. Mexico produces a long lasting indigenous tradition using different categories that go from the use of the Amerindian language, through the permanence in a territory and self-identity, while the case of Peru is closer to the Mexican model, but with interesting variations.

The particularity in the Colombian case is the equally important presence of black and Indigenous people in its whole population, at least in demographic

8

terms, with a higher weight in the first group than the second one, but with a broad tradition on the count of the Indigenous population, and in some aspects similar to the Mexican model. In Mexico and Peru, on the contrary, there is a considerable major historical demographic Amerindian presence that is reflected in the statistics of Indigenous population. In these two countries, the weight of black population is much smaller. It is only in the last decade, that these two countries have shown an increasing interest for the statistical visibility of black minorities in their respective societies.

One of the most interesting features that characterize these four societies is that throughout the history of their demographic statistics, the count of black and Indigenous population, or of Asian origin, has been present as part of the practice of the national statistics institutes, although with variations of degree according to the historic reference period. Of course, this phenomenon has to do with the historical forms of construction of the four nationalities in racial and ethnic terms, which come from a Portuguese or Spanish colonial past and then imperial or republican in the nineteenth century, during the 20th century until the 21st century.

However, with the arrival of multiculturalism, the long term (*longue durée*) racial and ethnic representations that have participated in the configuration of these societies as nations have suffered significant transformations. One of them has to do with the demands made by ethnic and racial organizations to the State, in every country, for statistic censuses, continuous records and sample surveys in which the ethnic-racial variable would have to be included. In second place, for Afrodescendant and Indigenous population sectors, but for other ethnic groups as well, it is increasingly important to study the socio-demographic and socioeconomic differentials between different population groups, where the statistic visibility of the white and *mestizo* population is also of interest. This means, that the theme of measuring social ethnic-racial inequalities has gained more strength in the region due mostly to the multiculturalist discourse. The Brazilian and Colombian cases are exemplary of the multiculturalist influence. Both countries have made important developments in terms of affirmative action policies for ethnic-racial population; only until very recently have these policies

9

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

been instated in Peru. In the case of Mexico, special policies have been established for bilingual education, "Intercultural Universities" in remote areas of the country and training for indigenous interpreters in judicial courts.[3]

The goal of this paper is to make a comparative analysis of the type of ethnic-racial statistics between the four countries, especially for the Indigenous and the black population, highlighting the different historical national contexts, and outlining the type of ethnic or racial model that prevails in the four cases; how this model has been reflected in the categories used in the censuses, permanent records and sample surveys; and finally to show some results in terms of type of measurement according to the multiculturalist paradigm of self-recognition either by ethnicity or skin color (race), in census statistical records since the year 2000.

The paper will present historical statistics from the 20th century until today on Afrodescendant and Indigenous population groups for the four societies based on the information of the national statistic institutes and household surveys, mostly carried by the respective institutes in each country or other institutions.

Now under the contemporary predominant multiculturalist influence, we will introduce for the four cases information on socio-demographic metadata on ethnic-racial populations for comparative purposes, including those categories used to make visible the white and *mestizo* population. In the construction of this paper, it was made an extensive use of systematized information of the various statistics institutes of the four countries, systematized by CELADE (Latin-American Center of Demography) of ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin American), as well as the systematization that the IDB (Interamerican Development Bank) has been doing on ethnic-racial statistics for various countries in the region.

Beginning with an analysis of the most recent statistical records on the sizes of Indigenous and Afrodescendant populations for most of the countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region, the paper moves on to the analysis of the historical context in which the production of statistics on these two population

---

[3] HERNÁNDEZ, Aída. et al. **El estado y los indígenas en tiempos del PAN**: Neoindigenismo, legalidad e identidad. San Ángel: CIESAS, 2004; SALDÍVAR, Emiko. Estrategias de atención a la diferencia: El programa de educación intercultural de la Ciudad de México. In: YANES, Pablo; MOLINA, Virginia; GONZÁLEZ, Oscar (Org.). **El triple desafío.** Derechos, instituciones y políticas para la ciudad pluricultural. México: Gobierno del Distrito Federal, 2006.

10

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

groups has been grounded. This includes a contextualization of the history of the production of these categories in the respective countries, based on historiographical sources for the four societies on the nation's social representations of race relations and the different ethnic and racial population groups.

The paper finishes with an analysis of the metadata of the most recent ways in which data on ethnic and racial groups is being collected, and the influence of the multiculturalist frame of reference to explain the changes and emphasis placed in questions.

Main trends on ethnic-racial data in Latin America and the Caribbean countries in the XXI Century

In the Latin American and Caribbean region, recent efforts have been made to obtain statistical information regarding Indigenous and Afrodescendant population. The four countries that are the focus of this presentation aren't the only ones which have information on the relative sizes of these two population groups. These countries, in which many advances have been made on the topic, are themselves cases or representations of the very different kinds of questions related to the different and at times divergent ways in which the issue of the statistical visibility of ethnic and racial identities has been addressed.

As it is shown in Table 1, starting from the round of censuses of 2000, and up until 2010, most of the 23 countries listed have started to gather information about specific ethnic or racial groups. Some of those countries, as it is the case of Cuba and Brazil for the Afrodescendant population, and other countries for the Indigenous population way back to the 1970's,[4] but also it could be said that before 1950`s. Many changes have occurred in the various forms countries use to establish who belongs to, identifies with, comes from or is from a particular ethnic group or race, as would be shown later in this presentation.

Today, and in stark contrast to the situation back in the 90's, most of the Latin American and Caribbean countries now have information on Indigenous or

---

[4] SCHKOLNIK, Susana. La inclusión del enfoque étnico en los censos de población de América Latina. **Notas de Población**, Vitacura, v. 89, p. 57-100, 2009.

11

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

Table 1: Afrodescendant and Indigenous percentage weights of population in 23 Latin America and Caribbean countries:

Afrodescendant populations – still many lack the inclusion of questions for the Afrodescendant population. The use of population censuses as well as nationally representative surveys remain still the two main sources of information on the size and particular features of these population groups, as was the case in the 90's.[5] Especially in the case of Brazil, there is already an outstanding amount of information on not just census data on race, which Brazil has been gathering since 1872 (Figure 2), but also in many of the current main national surveys back to the late 70`s, and on major life events records (births and deaths) as well as epidemiological surveillance events of mandatory registration and other social issues.[6] Colombia, after 2005 census, extended the ethnic-racial question to the mandatory event registration records as well.

Some of the countries haven't even yet implemented questions on this sort in their respective censuses, or have done so only in a limited fashion, asking only about Indigenous peoples. Chile and Mexico, for example, haven't yet collected information on Afrodescendant population in any kind of survey.

---

[5] Ibidem. p. 74.

[6] See PAIXÃO, Marcelo Jorge de Paula; ROSSETTO GIACCHERINO, Irene. **Levantamento das fontes de dados estatísticos sobre a variável cor ou raça no Brasil contemporâneo**: terminologias classificatórias, qualidade das bases de dados e implicações para as políticas públicas. 35º Encontro Anual da ANPOCS. Grupo de Trabalho 30: Relações raciais: desigualdades, identidades e políticas públicas. 2011.

2000 and 2010 census rounds, household surveys by national statistics institutes and LAPOP survey

Countries	Total Population	Year	Afrodescendant population	Percentage	Year	Indigenous Population	Percentage
Argentina	36,260,130	2001			2001	1,117,746	3.1
	LAPOP	2008		1.7	2008		1.8
	40,117,096	2010	149,493	0.4	2010	955,032	2.4
Belize	322,100	2006	108,225	33.6	2006	27,056	8.4
Bolivia	8,274,325	2001			2001	5,146,630	62.2
	LAPOP	2008		0.7	2008		17.9
	10,027,254	2012	16,902	0.2	2012	4,194,545	41.8
Brazil	169,799,170	2000	76,415,236	45.0	2000	734,127	0.4
	186,112,794	2010	96,795,294	50.7	2010	817,963	0.4
	LAPOP	2010		51.3	2010		1.8
Chile	15,047,652 (*)	2002			2002	692,192	4.6
	LAPOP	2008		0.6	2008		6.2
	15,429,759 (*)	2012			2012	1,714,677	11.1
Colombia	Quality of Life Survey/DANE	2003		7.9	2003		2.1
	42,954,279	2005	4,311,757	10.6	2005	1,458,212	3.4
	LAPOP	2010		10.4	2010		2.4
Costa Rica	3,810,179	2000	72,784	2.0	2000	63,876	1.7
	4,301,712	2011	334,437	7.8	2011	104,143	2.4
Cuba	11,269,400	2002	3,905,817	34.9	--	--	--
Dominican Republic	9,378,819	2010					
	LAPOP	2010		89.0 (**)	2010	0	0
Ecuador	12,156,608	2001	604,009	5.0	2001	830,418	6.8
	14,483,499	2010	1,041,599	7.2	2010	1,018,176	7.0
El Salvador	6,163,000	2010	357,454	5.8	2010	412,921	6.7
Guatemala	14,027,000	2000	5,040	0.04	2002	4,610,440	41.0
Guyana	LAPOP	2010		34.8	2010		9.7
Honduras	7,466,000	2000	58,818	1.0	2001	427,943	7.0
Jamaica	LAPOP	2010		96.6	2010		2.7
Mexico	97,483,412	2000			2000	8,383,573 5,946,488	8.6 a 6.1 b
	107,550,697	2010			2010	16,455,257 16,025,054	15.3 a 14.9 b
	LAPOP	2010		2.3	2010		5.7
Nicaragua	5,743,000	2000	23,161	0.5	2005	443,847	8.6
Panama	3,454,000	2010	313,289	9.2	2010	417,559	12.3
Paraguay	6,158,000	2010		2.5	2002	88,529	1.7

13

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

Countries	Total Population	Year	Afrodescendant population	Percentage	Year	Indigenous Population	Percentage
Peru	Continuous National Survey ENCO/INEI	*2006*			*2006*		*18.3* a
				2.4 b			*27.0* b
	24,637,541 (*)	2007			2007	3,919,314	15.9 a
	LAPOP	*2010*		*4.5*	*2010*		*3.3*
	Household National Survey ENAHO/INEI	*2010*		*3.1* b			N.A
Trinidad and Tobago	LAPOP	*2010*		*68.0*	*2010*		*30.3*
Uruguay	Extended National Household Survey /INE	*2006*		*5.9*	*2006*		*3.8*
	LAPOP	*2010*		*5.0*	*2010*		*1.1*
	3,286,314	2011	262,905	8.0	2011	164,316	5.0
Venezuela	23,054,210	2001			2001	506,341	2.2
	LAPOP	*2010*		*5.5*			
	27,227,930	2011	15,138,729	55.6(***)	2011	725,141	2.7

(*) Population of 5 years and older.

a) Only linguistic criteria for population of 5 years and older; b) Only ethno-racial self-recognition criteria, for the population of 5 years old and older in 2000, and 3 years old and older in 2010.

(**) Including the categories "indio", "black", "mulatto" and "Afro-Dominican". Emic term, "indio", is nearer to mestizo, but as racial mixture of white, black and Indigenous people, for most of Dominican population.

(***) Grouped as follows: 52.1% as "Moreno", 2.8% as "black" and 0.7% as "Afrodescendant".

Sources: round of censuses in Latin America and the Caribbean 2000 and 2010, according to the Latin American Demographic Center of the United Nations, and sample surveys of national ststistics institutes and LAPOP (Latin America Public Opinion of Vanderbilt University).

One of the most remarkable features of the whole process of inclusion of Indigenous and Afrodescendant populations in the different national statistical systems, more than a decade after it began, is the increasing weight of the populations in each national society. This general trend is present in almost all of the countries listed, with the exceptions of the notorious and highly controversial

14

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

one represented by the Bolivian census of 2012 for the Indigenous populations and the Argentinian case.

Already surrounded by allegations related to the decision of the government of rejecting the inclusion of the term *mestizo* (mixed race) on the basis that it does not represent any socially constructed group as aboriginal people,[1] the huge drop of around 20% points between the 2001 census and the most recent 2012 census is explained mostly by the fact that the phrasing of the question was significantly altered from its original version in 2001. The 2012 question asked 15 year old and older individuals whether they belonged (or made part) or identified with an Indigenous nation. This could be understood as a reference to a shared Indigenous political community, which differs greatly from the 2001 question which solely referred to the identification with an Indigenous as aboriginal people, not a nation and certainly not an issue of belonging to one (La razón (2013).

In the Argentinian case, the drop in the indigenous population weight is also related to different methodologies used to capture this population. In the 2001 census, the question asked was directed to identify whether at least one of the household members was considered indigenous, which then served to build a framework for further surveys that were exclusively made for the Indigenous population identified in that way. In the 2012 case the question was made to all individual members and referred to self-recognition as an Indigenous person.

The countries that have collected information on Afrodescendant population do show the pattern of increasing relative weight of this group in their respective total population, as is shown by the cases of Brazil, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Colombia. The estimates for these two last countries are not solely based on census data, given that there is only information on the relative sizes of the Afro-Uruguayan and Afro-Colombian populations based on nationally representative surveys (Table 1).[2]

---

[1] The same arguments were said for the 2001 census debates, a census conducted before the current government was in office.

[2] The Colombian 1993 census also included for the first time one question on ethnic-racial self-identity. The results for the Afro-Colombian population represented very poorly the actual size of this population group, at around 1.52%, whereas for the case of the Indigenous population, it was around 1.61%

15

For other countries, such as Peru, the only data there is on Afrodescendant population comes from nationally representative surveys. In the case of Cuba, the 2002 census, as it is a long tradition in the history of its population statistical records, has been gathering statistics on race on the basis of skin color. In its most recent estimate (2002 census), there remains a fairly high non-white (black, mulatto) population (34.9%, Table 1).

Venezuela included in its last census of 2011 for the first time a question for Afro-descendant population that included the term of "Moreno" as part of the self-identification methodology, a perhaps too ambiguous term for its national context and its connotations. The result was the estimation of a fairly and unexpected size for that particular population group. For its Indigenous population however, Venezuela also undergoes the general trend of increased visibility (Table 1).

Note that for the four countries with the LAPOP survey it was possible to obtain a percentage of the two populations (Afrodescendant and Indigenous) from a standardize question that employs the use of racial categories with the exception of Indigenous[3] (see Table 1): for Brazil 2010, 51.3% Afrodescendant and 1.8% Indigenous; for Colombia, 10.4% and 2.4%; for Mexico, 2.3% and 5.7%; and for Peru, 4.5% and 3.3%. Data variations by LAPOP versus other sources (census and official household surveys by national statistics institutes) are very close for Brazil and Colombia, but very distant on Indigenous population for Mexico and Peru; they only appear close with Afrodescendant population in Peru.[4]

How statistics mirror historical differential processes of Indigenous and Black population presence in the four societies

The four countries under consideration in this paper have ethnic-racial statistics throughout the 20th century, as it is seen in graphs 1 to 4; three of them (Brazil, Mexico and Peru) even back to the the 19th century. This reveals that in the

---

[3] Ethnic-racial question in LAPOP in Spanish countries: ¿Do you consider yourself a white, mestizo, indigenous, black, mulatto, or other? Afrodescendant is equivalent to black and mulatto for the Table 1. In Brazil is the following: "Você se considera uma pessoa branca (white), preta (black), parda (brown), indígena (Indigenous) ou amarela (yellow)?"

[4] Due to the actual sizes of the LAPOP samples, they are not considered to serve the purpose of estimating the actual or relative size of ethnic or racial population groups; the results that are obtained serve only illustrative purposes and should be taken cautiously.

16

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

respective historical phases of construction of the nation state, the demographic element represented by Indigenous (Mexico and Peru and in a lesser degree Colombia) and black or Afrodescendant (Brazil and Colombia) populations was a determinant one.

It is noteworthy to remember that in the Brazilian case, it was only after the disappearance of the Brazilian empire that the abolition of slavery was finally promulgated in 1888, that is in the period of transition from the Empire to the Republic, while at the same time in the three other countries, the respective Republics were already functioning, with the temporary exception in Mexico were two short periods of an imperial or monarchical regime in the 19th century were experienced (periods 1821-1823; 1863-1867).

Modern demographic statistics in these four societies have included the ethnic-racial variable. For Mexico there have been 13 censuses, for Brazil and Colombia 9 census and for Peru 7 throughout this historical period. This is a key aspect to the understanding of the underlying reason that explains why this variable is important in the tradition of population censuses in Latin-American and Caribbean societies.

The differences between the four countries are very important as the four graphs indicate. In the first place, the Afrodescendant population in Peru and Mexico has been historically invisible for the official statistical record, due to the fact that the historical processes of nationality construction in the two countries centered much more in the miscegenation ideology on the Indigenous-white binary couple. This phenomenon has to do with the significant demographic decline of the enslaved black populations imported from Africa in the viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru since the XVIII century, due to the big demographic weight of the Indigenous populations that served as a resource for labor in their respective economies.

This phenomenon was relatively minor in the Peruvian society; which in turn explains the reasons why the demand of the Peruvian population that is recognized as Afrodescendant, concentrated in the coastal region, has gained importance recently. According with Benavides et al. (2006) the Afrodescendant population in Peru reaches a figure close to 5.0%, but the Continuous Household

17

Survey of 2006 gives a figure of 2.4% and for the 2010 ENAHO (Household National Survey), 3.1% (to see Table 2).

Figure 1: Indigenous and Afrodescendant Population in the Brazilean Censuses (from 1872 to 2010)
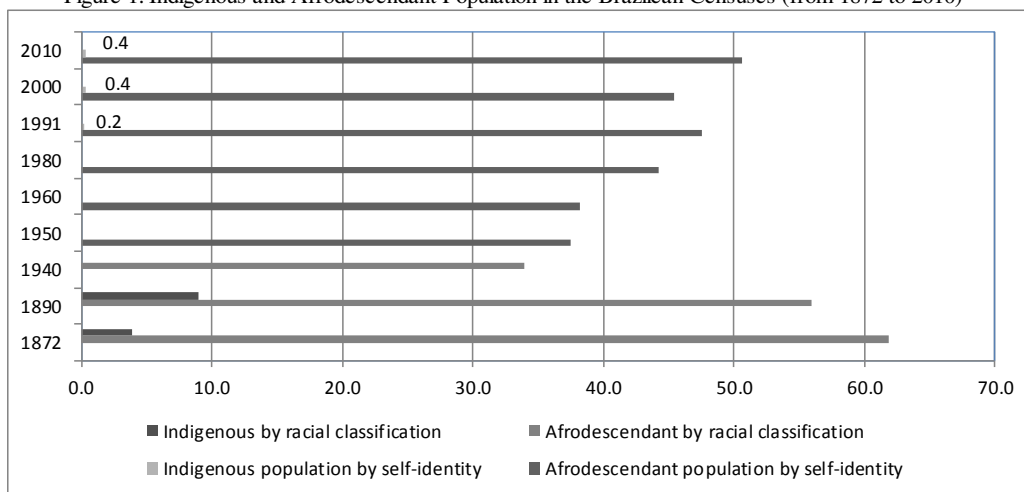

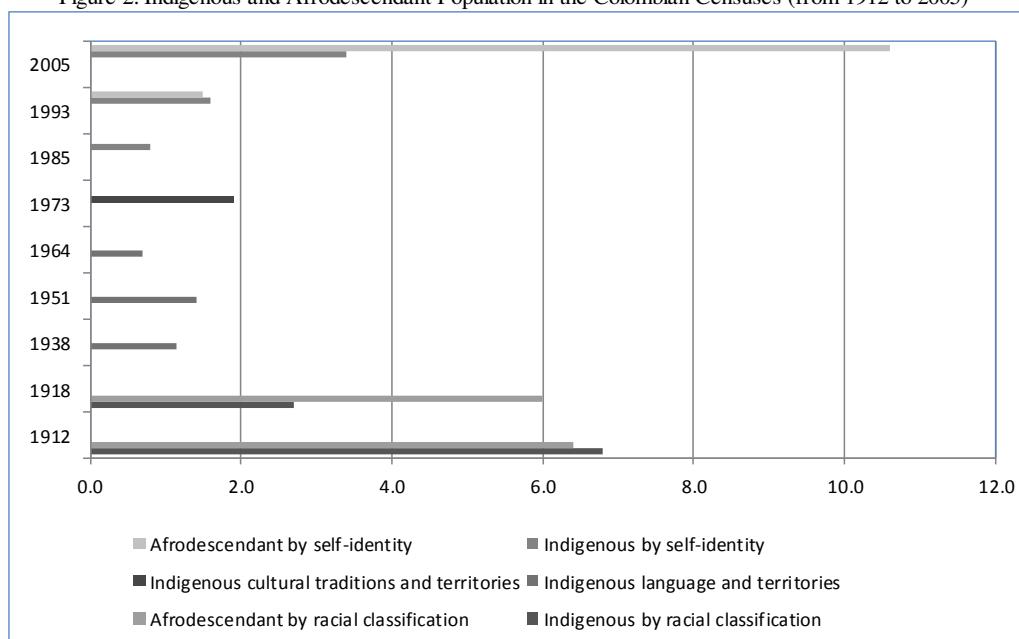Figure 2: Indigenous and Afrodescendant Population in the Colombian Censuses (from 1912 to 2005)

18

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

Figure 3: Indigenous Population in the Mexican Censuses (from 1895 to 2010)

■ Etnic self-identification   ■ Racial classification
■ Indigenous Language
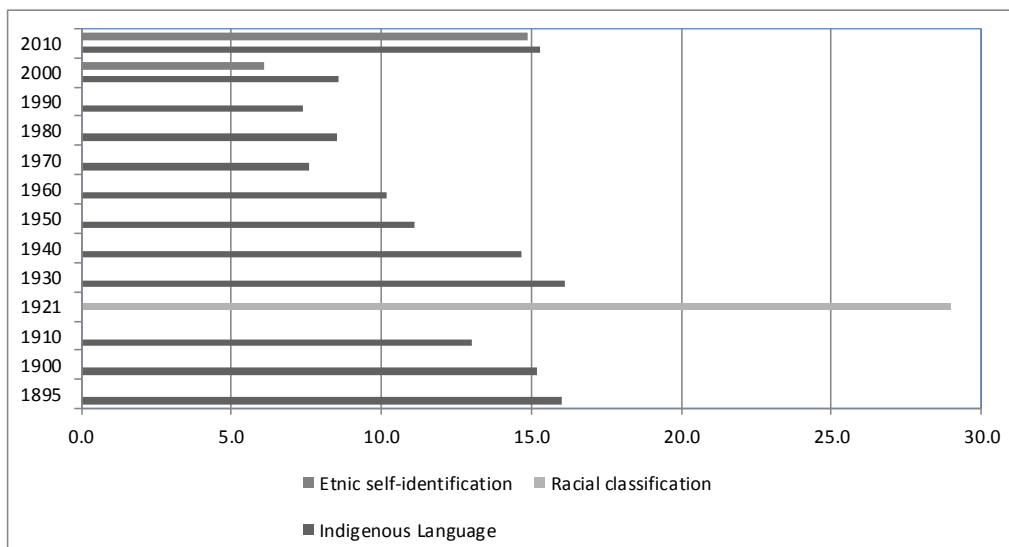
Figure 4: Indigenous Population in the Peruvian Censuses (from 1876 to 2007*)

■ Self-identification
■ Customs and clothing
■ Indigenous language (spoken or mother language)
■ Racial classification
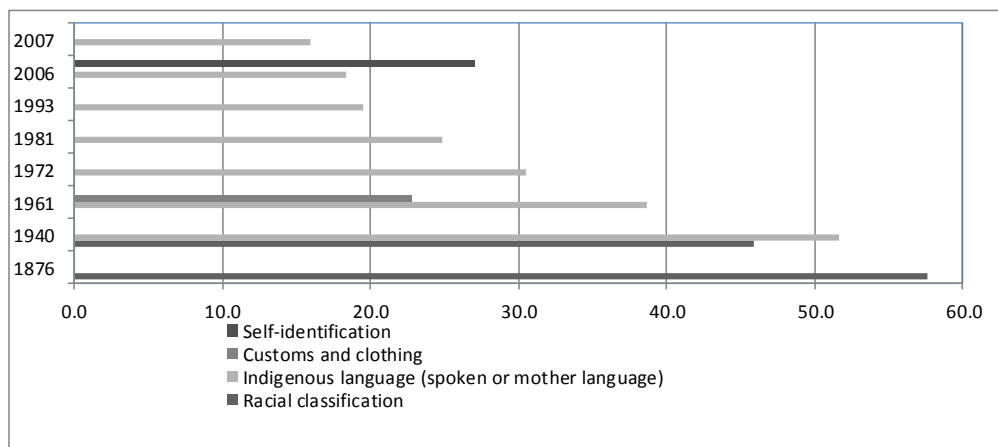
* The year 2006 is the Continuous National Survey/INEI.

In the case of Brazil, an opposite phenomenon developed regarding the Indigenous population. It is only for the 1872 and 1890 censuses that the Indigenous in Brazil marked an important demographic percentage participation in the available historical records. In the major part of the XX century however, as it is observed in the figure, they disappear from the statistical census system. It is only in the last three censuses (1991, 2000 and 2010) that the Indigenous came again back to the radar of the population census, but this time showing a very reduced percentage weight compared to the initial figures (See also the absolute results in Table 1 for Brazil).

19

Colombia's particularity compared to the other three countries is that both populations (Afrodescendant and Indigenous) have a relative importance, taking into account the minor percentage weight in the whole of the country, which also marks a notorious difference with regard to the other three countries. This tendency has to do with the historical pattern of an important black population presence in the colonial period without ever reaching the magnitudes presented in Brazilian case (or of other societies like Cuba and Caribbean countries).

This explains why in the New Granada and during the Great Colombian Republic (XIX century) the slavery regime was not supported in a great scale plantation economy, focusing instead on alluvial mining exploitation, cattle ranch and domestic servitude. Something similar happened in other Andean societies and in the viceroyalty of the New Spain, but in these cases these regions counted on a much more abundant reserve of Indigenous labor. In a different way from Brazil as well, the Indigenous population in Colombia from very diverse regions survived, in spite of their demographic decline during the colonial and republican periods.

However they did not reach a level as high as it is recorded in the cases of Mexico and Peru, because in these two societies the Amerindian populations at the arrival of the Spaniards were much important in demographic terms, a difference that is also explained by the fact that the Amerindian populates had more complex political systems of imperial organization (Azteca and Inca), than in the cases of the Amerindian populations established in New Granada territory.

The ways and forms of statistical classification of Indigenous and Afrodescendant populations in the four societies started suing external or hetero-classification systems through racial criteria on behalf of the interviewers, influenced in the models of colonial classification (castes), but above all for the racialist eugenic ideology prevailing since the end of the 19th century up until the 30's and 40's of the 20th century. Thus, the Indigenous in Mexico were classified through race criteria before 1930; in the case of Peru until the year 1940; and in the Colombian case till before 1938. In Brazil, as noted before, no census records appear between 1940 and 1980 for this population group.

20

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

Since the decade of the 30's, the Indigenous population started to be identified through the original language, the spoken and mother tongue (Mexico, Peru and Colombia), and in Colombia also through cultural practices related with a specific territory, but also including clothing or garment.

The former eugenic paradigm was actually changed by the cultural approach because the "race" ideology came to be highly discredited. The self-identification (self-recognition) methodology firstly appears, for the Indigenous population, in the Brazilian census of 1991, in Colombia in the year 1985 and in Mexico in the year 2000. In Peru it still hasn't been used yet in a census exercise. It was firstly applied in the 2006 Continuous National Survey.

For the Afrodescendant population the differences are more notorious. In the first place, Brazil marks the main difference with relation the other three countries and the whole of Latin-American and Caribbean societies, with the exception of Cuba[5].

Brazil statistical system is actually the country with the most extensive records of information on ethnic-racial composition of their population, since their first "modern" census (1872) from the racial criteria. The year 1940[6] Brazil moved on to the "skin color" category and finally in the 1991, 2000 and 2010 census they make color and race equivalent. As Petruccelli says

> during the slavery terminology was developed for describing the appearance of 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 color (...)

---

[5] Cuba is the other country of the region that in their population census since the colonial period uses the color and race categories (see "Censos en Cuba", 2010), in spite of some variations. The 2002 census asked the question ¿What is the skin color? (Make just one mark): white, black, mestizo or mulatto. After Brazil, the Latin American country with the largest slave population brought from Africa was Cuba, due to large sugar plantation system since the colonial period, which lasts until the eighties in the nineteenth century with slave labor. The Cuban economy until the final abolition of slavery in 1886 worked mostly with slave labor. Cf. PIQUERAS, José Antonio. Censos lato sensu. La abolición de la esclavitud y el número de esclavos en Cuba. **Revista de Indias**, Madri, v. LXXI, n. 251, p. 193-230, 2011; PETRUCCELLI, Jose Luis. Chapter Nine: Ethnic/Racial Statistics: Brazil and an Overview of the Americas. In: ANGOSTO FERRÁNDEZ, Luis Fernando; KRADOLFER, Sabine (Org.). **Everlasting Countdowns: Race, Ethnicity and National Censuses in Latin American States.** Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012, p. 269-271.

[6] For a detailed analysis see PAIXÃO, Marcelo. La variable color o raza en los censos demográficos brasileños: historia y estimación reciente de las asimetrías. **Notas de Población,** Vitacura, n. 89, 2009, p. 196-199.

21

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

> Based in that terminology an official system for the ethnical-racial classification was established and applied in the first national population census carried out in 1872 when slavery was still in force (...) Thus, ever since that first census, data on the color and race of the Brazilian population have been available (....) practically the same categories have continued to be used in relation to that important question, albeit employing a wider range of implementation criteria.[7]

In the 1872, 1890 and 1940 censuses classification was made through hetero-classification on behalf of the interviewers, but since the 1950 census it started to be made through self-classification, all the way to the most recent census in 2010.[8]

Miscegenation and Multiculturalism' influence on Statistics on Race and Ethnicity

In several Latin American and Caribbean countries, the political elite established as a representation on the relationships between the different races, what later came to be called the ideology of miscegenation; a conception shared by large urban social groups in their respective populations. The ideas behind miscegenation were hegemonic during almost 50 years, from 1930 to almost 1980. Since the thirties, this ideology became part of the modernization process that many of the countries in the region underwent. In some countries it focused around ideas of racial harmony and cohabitation between black (African origin), white (European origin) and Amerindian Indigenous, as in Gilberto Freyre's Brazilian society, as perhaps the most exemplary case of these ideas in the region.[9]

The Mexican Indigenous model was also one of miscegenation. But in contrast with Brazil's image of harmony, the miscegenation model refers to an image of the mestizo population as the best representation of the Mexican nation. This conception of Mexico and Mexicans as *mestizos* had an enormous impact up until the 70's in the marking on Mexican identity from the Mexican Revolution onwards.

Since the beginning of the 30's, Colombian and Peruvian recently formed urban elites tried to develop a social discourse of miscegenation more akin to the

---

[7] PETRUCCELLI, Jose Luis. Op. Cit., p. 269.
[8] PAIXÃO, Marcelo. Op. Cit., p. 197.
[9] COSTA RIBEIRO, Carlos Antonio. Classe, Raça e Mobilidade Social no Brasil. **DADOS:** *Revista de Ciências Sociais*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 49, n. 4, p. 833-873, 2006.

22

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

representations of white and mestizo population groups, but with an important support among the popular classes (especially among Indigenous and Afrodescendant people); mostly achieved through the influence of the liberal and Apra political parties in each nation and also seen in the development of indigenism and indigenist policies, as part of national ideology of miscegenation.[10]

Nevertheless there were strong differences between the two countries. Through Gaitán's left wing movement in Colombia during the forties and after with Velasco Alvarado's military government in Peru (1968-1975), the miscegenation ideology in these two countries was supported as well by Indigenous, black people and mestizo groups from low class origins.[11]

However the elite in these four countries always preferred a different kind of miscegenation model, a more "whitened" miscegenation that could have guaranteed that the black and the Indigenous elements of their constituent populations would progressively disappear.

During this time period in which the miscegenation ideologies were at their most, governments placed emphasis in a more culturally driven approach (language spoken, mother language, customs and clothing, Indigenous territories) for the collection of statistical data on Indigenous populations, instead of racial categories. With Brazil's exception, the other three countries, Mexico (since 1930), Colombia (since 1938) and Peru (since 1940), only collected information on Indigenous population for the most part or the whole of the 20th century, as it is shown in figures 1, 2, 3 and 4.

But this model wasn't going to last any longer. The appearance of social indigenous movements and combined with the influence exercised by international institutions, were to bring a renovated perspective on how to frame anew the issue of race and ethnic relations in Latin America.

The presence of the multiculturalist discourse developed in the constitutional changes of the countries and the sustained support of the international cooperation agencies, previously goes through the political

---

[10] SALDÍVAR, Emiko. **Prácticas cotidianas del estado**: Una etnografía del indigenismo. Madri: Plaza y Valdés, 2008.
[11] As it is seen in the writings of BELAÚNDE, Víctor Andrés. **Peruanidad**. Lima: Comisión del Centenario de V. A. Belaúnde, 1987.

23

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

representativeness crisis in the national States, between the 70's and 80's, and the irruption of ethnic-racial movements, in particular indigenous ones, that put in question the imaginary of integrated nations through the urbanization and social modernization processes.

As Gros puts it (2010: 15-16, and explored further in other parts of his work),

> Contrary at what is expected, the uprising of the ethnic reivindications has been one of the phenomenons that have marked Latin America during these last twenty years. Not one country has escaped this process, in spite of the numeric importance of Indigenous population. Focused around territorial questions, the respect for native cultures, the right to a bilingual education, the defense of natural resources, the acknowledgement of a certain form of autonomy, these identity reivindications have been greatly politicized with the passing of years, and are part of the "new social movements" that have caught the attention of observers. In that precise moment a democratic renovation was affirmed in the region and the globalization process was accelerated; these reivindications manifest in their own way, but with strength, the national-populist model crisis that had taken a prominent place since the thirties in Latin America.
> The national populist model, which had taken charge of the liberal project of a *mestizo* nation construction, was fixed on the idea of ensuring the construction of culturally homogeneous societies around strong States (...) It was all about organizing a mestizo society, culturally hybrid, made of individuals, but strong individuals brought together around a collective project of development and independence (...) It is, then, this indigenous world separated by multiple borders (linguistic, territorial, community, cultural) that, at the end of the 20th century, moves in a progressive (and unequal) way to fight against the deterioration of their existence conditions and against new forms of exclusion. And they do it building a new ethnic discourse that appeals to history, to a community situation (and of interest) and to a pan-community solidarity. Between the several reasons presented by the specialists to account for this "indigenous awakening" we can point out the Indigenous community crisis and the appearance of new actors. A crisis in the economy and of the values sped up by demographic growth (that make the traditional territories extremely exiguous and disrupts the access conditions to resources and work), reinforced by the irruption of the market in the core of rural economies, the development of education (carrier of new values) and the entrance of new beliefs and religions, etc.

Therefore, from the beginning of the 80's a new political dimension was added to the debate on racial and ethnic relations in Latin America and the Caribbean region. The multiculturalism ideology, of course with particular

24

differences by countries, became the main frame of reference for the collection of data and the debate on race and ethnicity. This ideology appears as a new proposal of national imaginary that replaced the former *mestizo* nation, as it is explored a bit further later in the paper.

There is now no longer an ethnic and racially homogenous population created by that elite's miscegenation ideology. The former reigning paradigm of a *one mestizo* nation was confronted with the challenge of a multi-ethnic and multi-racial nation, divided in ethnic-racial majorities and minorities. In this regard, the developments around the ILO's 169 Convention and then the Durban meeting (2001) had a considerable impact in the transition to this new model of conceiving race and ethnicity and has influenced to a large degree the new ways in which countries have started to collect ethnic and racial data.

Analysis of contemporary metadata on the issue of ethnic and racial classification

Table 2 shows what types of questions have been used (or are being used) for the classification of Indigenous and Afrodescendant populations in the four countries under study. As it follows from the big influence of multiculturalism, currently all countries ask individuals to self-identify by various criteria on a pre-defined group of ethnic or racial (cultural or physical attributes like skin color) identity that represents Indigenous or Afrodescendants, of both.

25

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

In Mexico, a category for Afrodescendants has not been yet formulated within the statistical system. In Peru up until now they haven't introduced a question in the census for this population group either, even though it has been introduced in the Continuous National Survey 2006 and in the Household National Survey ENAHO since 2001 (see Table 2);[12] it is expected to be included for the 2017 census.[13]

Table 2: Comparative table of ethnical-racial classification questions in the four countries in census and household surveys, 2000 census round						
Questions / Criteria / Categories Countries	Identification criterion of 2000 census round	Census question	Census categories	Identification criterion of household surveys	Questions of household surveys 2000-2010	Household surveys categories
Brazil	Self-adscription	Sua cor ou raça é… (your colour or race is…) For all the population. Until the 2000 census, this question applied only in the enlarged sample census, but for the 2010 census questionnaire was applied to the entire population universe.	1.Branca (white) 2.Preta (black) 3.Amarela (Yellow) 4.Parda (Brown) 5.Indigena (Indigenous)	Self-adscription	Sua cor ou raça é… (your colour or race is…). **All the household surveys by IBEGE**	1.Branca (white) 2.Preta (black) 3.Amarela (Yellow) 4.Parda (Brown) 5.Indigena (Indigenous)
Colombia	Self-adscription and Language spoken (only for Indigenous, Raizal and Palenquero)	De acuerdo con su cultura, pueblo o rasgos físicos…es o se reconoce como (According with your culture, aboriginal people or physical features….you are or self-recognize as) For all the population.	1.Indígena 2.Rom (gitano) 3.Raizal 4.Palenquero 5. Negro(a), mulato(a), Afrocolombiano(a) o Afrodescendiente 6.Ninguno de los anteriores (1.Indigenous 2.Rom or gypsy 3.Black islander Caribbean 4. Black from San Basilio's Palenque 5.Black, Mulatto, Afrocolombian or Afrodescendant 6. None of the above)	Self-adscription	De acuerdo con su cultura, pueblo o rasgos físicos…es o se reconoce como (According with your culture, aboriginal people or physical features….you are or self-recognize as). **Only in 2006 and 2007 national household surveys on labor and quality of life; in 2010 and 2011 for Bogota by DANE**	1.Indígena 2.Rom 3.Raizal 4.Palenquero 5. Negro(a), mulato(a), Afrocolombiano(a) o Afrodescendiente 6.Ninguno de los anteriores (1.Indigenous 2.Rom or gypsy 3.Black islander Caribbean 4. Black from San Basilio's Palenque 5.Black, Mulatto, Afrocolombian or Afrodescendant 6. None of the above)

Questions / Criteria / Categories Countries	Identification criterion of 2000 census round	Census question	Census categories	Identification criterion of household surveys	Questions of household surveys 2000-2010	Household surveys categories

[12] The question on ethnicity is used in various ENAHO since 2001. VALDIVIA, Martín. Etnicidad, Antecedentes Lingüísticos y la Salud Materno Infantil en el Perú. **INEI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática)**. Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo, Lima, July 2007.

[13] SULMONT, David; VALDIVIA, Néstor. Chapter Seven: From Pre-Modern 'Indians' to Contemporary 'Indigenous People': Race and Ethnicity in Peruvian Censuses 1827-2007" In: ANGOSTO FERRÁNDEZ, Luis Fernando; KRADOLFER, Sabine (Org.). **Everlasting Countdowns: Race, Ethnicity and National Censuses in Latin American States**. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012.

26

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

Mexico	Self-adscription and Language spoken	For persons of 5 year old and older ¿Es náhuatl, maya, zapoteco, mixteco o de otro grupo indígena? Are you náhuatl, maya, zapoteco, mixteco or other indigenous group? ¿(NOMBRE) habla algún dialecto o lengua indígena? ¿Qué dialecto o lengua indígena habla (NOMBRE)? Do you speak a native dialect or indigenous language? If yes, indigenous dialect or language that you speak.	1. Yes 2. No		
Peru	Language in which the person learned to speak	¿El idioma o lengua en el aprendió a hablar fue: (the idiom or language in which you learned to speak was:_____?)	1.Quechua 2.Aymara 3.Ashaninka 4.Otra lengua nativa (Other native language) 5. Español (Spanish) 6. Un idioma extranjero (A foreign language) 7.Ustes es sordomudo (Your are deaf-mute).	Self-adscription	¿Por su herencia o cultura se considera perteneciente a algún grupo étnico? By their heritage or culture do you consider yourself belonging to an ethnic group? **Applied in Continuos National Survey, 2006 (Encuesta Nacional Continua) by INEI, for persons of 5 years old and older. The same question was used in the Household National Survey (ENAHO) in 2010 (for persons of 3 years old and older). Since 2012 the Household National Survey (ENAHO) by INEI has the following question: Por sus antepasados y de acuerdo a sus costumbres ¿Usted se considera de origen.....? According to your ancestors and customs from what origin do you consider yourself?** 1.Indígena de la Amazonia (Amazonian Indigenous) 2.Quechua 3.Aymara 4.Negro/Mulato/Zambo (Black/Mulatto/Zambo) 5.Mestizo 6.Blanco (White) 7.Otro (Other). In ENAHO 2012 the categories are: 1.Quechua 2.Aymara 3. Nativo o indígena de la Amazonia (Native or Amazonian Indigenous) 4.Negro/Mulato/Zambo/Afroperuano (Black/Mulatto/Zambo/Afroperuvian) 5.Blanco (White) 6.Mestizo (Mestizo) 7.Otro (especificar) (Other (specify)).

In Colombia the question for Afrodescendants includes three great categories (Raizal, Palenquero and Black/Mulatto/Afrocolombian/Afrodescendant). Note that black and mulatto come together as Afrocolombian and Afrodescendant (see Table 2). Nevertheless, in the 1993 population census the "black community" ("*comunidad negra*") category was introduced as a proposal for the self-recognition of black people, but in an equivalent form as Indigenous ethnic group. This last category impede the self-recognition of black urban population and the one located in large rural zones of

27

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

Colombia, since its use was restricted to a determined region of the country that obtained ethno-territorial rights.[14]

The ethnic-racial question of the 2005 census and DANE's household surveys in Colombia doesn't have the "white" and "mestizo" categories as it is the case in Peru (ENC and ENAHO) and of course Brazil (branco, white), since it uses the category "none of the above" to include all the people that do not ascribe as Indigenous, Afrodescendant or Rom. This last category of Rom or gypsy group only appears as a census category and in the household surveys in Colombia, not in the other three countries.

In Colombia, Mexico and Peru categories for the self-recognition of populations of Asian or oriental origin do not exist, in spite of their relative importance, especially in Peru and Mexico. In Brazil these populations have the racial or skin color category "Amarela" (yellow), which alludes to the Japanese population and its descendants in this society. This category was included in the census of this country in 1940 due to the important immigration from Japan that occurred.[15]

Discussion

The ethnic-racial statistics in the population census of these four Latin American countries analyzed and in other countries of this region have been a constitutive element of the representations of these nations during the 19th and 20th centuries.

The statistical records reveal that in these societies there are different population weights for the people African origin and Amerindian groups, very diverse European and Asian origin groups, and their descendants with an also, very differentiated, miscegenation process among them. In this region, the ethnic and racial dimension was already a part of the population censuses, well before the arrival of multiculturalism in the 80's. Brazil has been the society where there is a well-established racial paradigm, as it is seen in its census history, whilst in the

---

[14] BARBARY, Olivier.; URREA, Fernando. **Gente Negra en Colombia: Dinámicas Sociopoliticas en Cali y el Pacifico.** Medellin: Editorial Lealon; Cidse/Univalle; IRD; Colciencias, 2004.
[15] PAIXÃO, Marcelo. Op. Cit., p. 196.

28

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

other three countries there is a clearly different approach based on a more cultural perspective for Indigenous population; a perspective that came to consolidation back in the 30's.

With the arrival of multiculturalism in the 80's, the theme of ethnic-racial identity and self-recognition is widespread in a good part of the great region.; be it of the kind that asks under an ethnic or racial affiliation criteria or by an identification with the ancestors' origins. The factor of recognizing oneself as belonging to a determined Indigenous or African descent community, can explain the growth of the participation that the figures reveal. This phenomenon explains the observed growth of Afrodescendants and Indigenous in almost all countries, as it is seen in Table 1 with the most recent data available at the time of this presentation.

The outstanding presence of the multiculturalist discourse described earlier is of tremendous important in understanding the main frame currently use in the region. This discourse was developed mostly through important constitutional changes[16] occurred in the great region and thanks to the sustained support of international cooperation agencies. But it is also related to the crisis of political representation of national States, between the 70's and 80's, to which one has to addition the emergence of significant ethnic-racial movements with particular demands for social inclusion and visibility.

Indigenous movements challenged the imaginary of integrated mestizo nations, that had supposedly occurred through the processes of urbanization and social modernization that had driven the white-mestizo elites during the last decades (before the 80's). But the also newly formed black middle classes and also certain Afrodescendant lower class sectors (urban and rural) in their involvement in the struggle against social inequalities. These two groups have realized that the place the occupy is affected by secular pigmentocratic patterns of inequality that are embedded in contemporary social structures, that in turn have restricted the chances of upward social mobility, together with elements of persistent racism and

---

[16] Since the 80's, 90's and the first decade of 21st century, there are new constitutions in several Latin American countries where the issues on ethnic-racial groups is included (for example, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Venezuela, Chile, Argentina, Panama, etc.).

29

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

discrimination. Afrodescendants have very recently started to demand the application of policies for their recognition and redistribution of social wealth.

It hasn't been solely multiculturalism's arrival in the last two decades the sole player in the advent of these new wave of increased emphasis on ethnic-racial statistics and inequality in the region. Since the 80's and mostly through the 90's the Latin American and Caribbean region lived a period of constitutional reform. These new constitutional developments explicitly incorporated ethnic minorities' rights and in particular the aborigine and Afrodescendant people under the prescriptions stated from a human rights perspective. Here the United Nations organisms (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, ILO, UNFPA, FAO, ECLAC-CEPAL) played a crucial role, and more specifically through the new social developments pushed forward by the ILO's 169 Convention and the Durban conference (2001). The influence of different United Nations entities in the public policies directed to Indigenous and Afrodescendants had also an effect in how the national institutes of statistics worked.

Other key actors in this process have been financing multinational agencies like the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), that have provided technical support and resources for the elaboration and enhancement of ethnic-racial statistics since the 90's, and during the last decade to the national statistics institutes and ethnic-racial organizations. Other international financing agencies like the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations, as well as other American foundations have also contributed to these developments.

According to Petruccelli,[17] and based on the work of Morning,[18] the different national contexts of these four diverse societies have developed four main types of frames or perspectives on whether or not to include the ethnic-racial dimension in their respective statistical systems (census, nationally representative surveys, life event register, etc.).

---

[17] PETRUCCELLI, Jose Luis. Op. Cit., p. 265.
[18] MORNING, Ann. **Ethnic Classification in Global Perspective**: a Cross-National Survey of the 2000 Census Round. New York: New York University, 2006.

30

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

It is from that analytical model that we can perhaps better understand the developments on the issue that have occurred in the Latin American and Caribbean region. We hypothetically propose the following typology for the region:

a) In favor of inclusion: for the purpose of exercising political control over the different groups. Historical records during the 19th and 20th centuries in the four countries and other Latin American and Caribbean countries were probably kept for this particular use, until the 80's and 90's, when the transition to the multiculturalist paradigm came about.

b) Non-inclusion: discourse on national hybridity. An example could be drawn from the period of Getulio Vargas in Brazil.[19]

c) Non-inclusion: in the name of national integration of society; for example the citizenship recognized by the nation, which forbids all policy of differentiation by race, color, ethnic group, etc. It could be the French tradition.

d) In favor to inclusion for the purpose of anti-discrimination policies can be justified, especially through multiculturalism policies: 1. ethnic-racial statistics as part of the symbolic, cultural and political recognition (anti-discrimination actions); and 2. These statistics can serve as tools for socioeconomic redistributive policies or material reparation policies, as affirmative actions in university education in Brazil and Colombia, and regarding other social issues (health programs, employment, housing, etc., especially in Brazil). The ethno-territorial rights policies for Indigenous and black rural communities, and even for some groups located in urban areas in Colombia[20] and Brazil.[21]

---

[19] A fifth posture in favor of inclusion could be portrayed as that of "national hybridity (miscegenation from the Indigenous). This case could be represented in the Mexican case during the period of Lázaro Cárdenas in the 30's.

[20] In Colombia, constitutionally recognized territory for indigenous populations and Afrodescendant communities in the Pacific region, as well as other regions in the country, are of a size of about 37 to 38 million has. The 2005 Colombian census included a question to identify whether the dwelling in which the household lived was located in one of these protected territories. The exercise was unfortunately not a success due to problems related to the completion of the survey in certain parts of the country.

[21] The Brazilian state, to the end of 2012 announced a special program to identify and sketch the territories known as "quilombos", a program that is going to cost 600 million dollars, and that might favor 3350 families in 26 rural communities in that country, as it was published by http://noticias.terra.com/america-latina/brasil/brasil-otorga-tierras-a-descendientes-de esclavos,7c9a94ce0132b310VgnCLD2000000ec6eb0aRCRD.html Accessed July 30, 2013.

31

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

In this last type, statistical visibility (we all count) as a requirement from that multicultural discourse, must go through the different entities of the State and sometimes other areas of civil society. If you aren't being counted, you're being taken into account.

In this respect, ethnic-racial statistics can be seen as a political effect or result of the emergence of identity movements, of new forms of legitimacy within the National States, mostly achieved through multiculturalism, but also due to the appearance of new discourses within the social sciences in the academic field.

Now, with respect to the use of census and other statistics that collect information on race or ethnicity or some mixture of the two, we must make a final comment on the double role these statistics are currently playing. The Colonial history of the countries in the Latin American and Caribbean region explain why this racial and ethnic dimension has been so important in socio demographic terms, and still continues to do so. The current use is of a double nature. There is not only an interest in knowing how is the society composed in terms of their respective social groups, and certainly not even an issue of sole visibility. There is a political side to the current debate that places the debate in terms of political awareness in the continuous struggle for equality and social justice.

The debate is still divided between two main currents, as we have tried to show in this paper. There is, on the one hand, the issue of ethnic and racial statistics offered by the multiculturalist proponents of the international organizations as ECLAC-CEPAL, where only minorities ought to be racially or ethnically identify, as it is the case of Indigenous or aboriginal groups, and also Afrodescendants, but only to the extent that they themselves recognize as being part or identifying as belonging to one of these groups.

On the other hand, there is the Brazilian approach that countries like Cuba or the Dominican Republic (which we couldn't unfortunately expand and critically examine) follow as well, and that asks in a straightforward manner on the racial identification (color of the skin, for example) of the individual, regardless of any cultural interpretation; an approach that the proponents following the multiculturalist wave criticize on the basis that, due to their foundation on conceptions of race, do not allow one to clearly distinguish among groups whose

32

categories are too fluid, as would be the case of *Mulatto*, *Pardo*, *Mestizo*, *Moreno* or even white (regardless to them of the actual degree of fluidity of an Indigenous or Afrodescendant identity actually is, and that for the multicultural perspective rest on supposed solid ground).

The use of other methods of classification, done not by the individual themselves but by an external agent (the interviewer for example in a survey or census scenario, the so called hetero-classification), is out of the question for organizations as ECLAC.

The problem with some of the arguments made against the use of racial categories, the identification of "majority" groups or the use of external classification methods is that they miss the point that has been recently presented by the findings of researchers in the region. With the use of experimental surveys like PERLA and more standard ones like LAPOP which combined the different methodologies and perspectives discussed in this paper, these researchers have been able to show that the picture of inequality that emerges when using varying ethnic and racial classificatory criteria is quite different.

Social inequalities are better portrayed or better observed when hetero-classification techniques are used, a point that will surely push the debate even further perhaps destabilizing the current multicultural ideology. One has to remember that ethnic-racial statistics are above all social inequality markers; and that as social constructions, they aren't a set of fixed (essentialized) identities. The ethnic-racial statistics are themselves historical and therefore changing, just as their likely uses or misuses are.

References

BARBARY, Olivier.; URREA, Fernando. **Gente Negra en Colombia: Dinámicas Sociopoliticas en Cali y el Pacifico.** Medellin: Editorial Lealon; Cidse/Univalle; IRD; Colciencias, 2004.

BELAÚNDE, Víctor Andrés. **Peruanidad**. Lima: Comisión del Centenario de V. A. Belaúnde, 1987.

33

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

BENAVIDES, M.; TORERO, M.; VALDIVIA, N. **Afrodescendientes en América Latina - pobreza, discriminación social e identidad**: el caso de la población afrodescendiente en el Perú. Lima: GRADE, 2006.

ACTO por el Aniversario 40 del primer Censo de Población y viviendas de la etapa revolucionaria, realizado el 6 de septiembre de 1970. **O.N.E.**: Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas e Información. Republica de Cuba. Disponível em: <http://www.one.cu/20100906seisdeseptiembre.htm>.

COSTA RIBEIRO, Carlos Antonio. Classe, Raça e Mobilidade Social no Brasil. **DADOS:** *Revista de Ciências Sociais*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 49, n. 4, p. 833-873, 2006.

ENAHO. **Encuesta Nacional de Hogares**. Household National Survey, 2010.

ENCO. **Encuesta Nacional Continua**. Continuos National Survey, 2006.

GROS, Christian. **Nación, identidad y violencia**: el desafío latinoamericano. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Universidad de los Andes, CESO, IFEA, 2010.

HERNÁNDEZ, Aída. et al. **El estado y los indígenas en tiempos del PAN**: Neoindigenismo, legalidad e identidad. San Ángel: CIESAS, 2004.

MORNING, Ann. **Ethnic Classification in Global Perspective**: a Cross-National Survey of the 2000 Census Round. New York: New York University, 2006.

PAIXÃO, Marcelo Jorge de Paula; ROSSETTO GIACCHERINO, Irene. **Levantamento das fontes de dados estatísticos sobre a variável cor ou raça no Brasil contemporâneo**: terminologias classificatórias, qualidade das bases de dados e implicações para as políticas públicas. 35º Encontro Anual da ANPOCS. Grupo de Trabalho 30: Relações raciais: desigualdades, identidades e políticas públicas. 2011.

PAIXÃO, Marcelo. La variable color o raza en los censos demográficos brasileños: historia y estimación reciente de las asimetrías. **Notas de Población,** Vitacura, n. 89, 2009.

PETRUCCELLI, Jose Luis. Chapter Nine: Ethnic/Racial Statistics: Brazil and an Overview of the Americas. *In:* ANGOSTO FERRÁNDEZ, Luis Fernando; KRADOLFER,

34

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.

Sabine (Org.). **Everlasting Countdowns: Race, Ethnicity and National Censuses in Latin American States.** Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012.

PIQUERAS, José Antonio. Censos lato sensu. La abolición de la esclavitud y el número de esclavos en Cuba. **Revista de Indias**, Madri, v. LXXI, n. 251, p. 193-230, 2011.

SALDÍVAR, Emiko. Estrategias de atención a la diferencia: El programa de educación intercultural de la Ciudad de México. *In:* YANES, Pablo; MOLINA, Virginia; GONZÁLEZ, Oscar (Org.). **El triple desafío.** Derechos, instituciones y políticas para la ciudad pluricultural. México: Gobierno del Distrito Federal, 2006.

SALDÍVAR, Emiko. **Prácticas cotidianas del estado**: Una etnografía del indigenismo. Madri: Plaza y Valdés, 2008.

SCHKOLNIK, Susana. La inclusión del enfoque étnico en los censos de población de América Latina. **Notas de Población**, Vitacura, v. 89, p. 57-100, 2009.

SULMONT, David; VALDIVIA, Néstor. Chapter Seven: From Pre-Modern 'Indians' to Contemporary 'Indigenous People': Race and Ethnicity in Peruvian Censuses 1827-2007". *In:* ANGOSTO FERRÁNDEZ, Luis Fernando; KRADOLFER, Sabine (Org.). **Everlasting Countdowns: Race, Ethnicity and National Censuses in Latin American States**. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012.

URREA, Fernando; VIÁFARA, Carlos; VIVEROS, Mara. From Whitened Miscegenation to Tri-Ethnic Multiculturalism. *In:* TELLES, Edward. **Pigmentocracies**: Social Science Findings from the Project on Ethnicity and Race in Latin America (PERLA) in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

VALDIVIA, Martín. Etnicidad, Antecedentes Lingüísticos y la Salud Materno Infantil en el Perú. **INEI (Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática)**. Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo, Lima, July 2007.

VALDIVIA, Néstor. **El uso de las categorías étnico/raciales en censos y encuestas en el Perú**: Balance y aportes sobre el uso de esta categoría para el análisis social y las políticas publicas. Lima: GRADE, 2012.

35

Rev. hist. comp., Rio de Janeiro, v. 8, n. 1, p. 7-35, 2014.