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1C. Colonialism and Resistance in the French Pacific/ Colonialisme et résistance dans le Pacifique français

«L'Indochine et les possessions françaises d'Asie Pacifique dans la statistique publique française : reflet d'une politique coloniale? »

"Indochina and French possessions in Asia Pacific in the French public statistics: a reflection of colonial policy? "

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1C. Colonialism and Resistance in the French Pacific/*"Indochina and French possessions in Asia Pacific in the French public statistics: a reflection of colonial policy?"*

The formation of the French colonial empire in the nineteenth century and the beginning of the French occupation of Indochina (1862) prior to the installation of a central public statistics in France. In 1833, Adolphe Thiers, Minister of Commerce, established a specialized office that gradually fill this function is responsible for population censuses, and the coordination and production of administrative statistics. This office became the General Statistics of France (SGF) remaining until 1941.

However, given the weakness of its budget, the office remains craftsmanship. SGF does not coordinate more than it centralizes statistical territories. These statistics come colonial administrations which have neither the skills nor the fiscal and moral credits needed to clarify the situation of the Empire.

Awareness of the need to improve the data leads to some initiatives in the central administration of the Colonies and the SGF in the early twentieth century. They are the beginnings of what would later be the statistical overseas territories.

Even went through the school, the colonial civil servant remains versatile and isolated. It must make quick decisions in a context of chronic under supervision of the territory. This environment is not conducive to the development of colonial statistics. The city does not really encourage it since most economic and administrative metropolitan statistical assimilate colonies abroad. Regular and consistent administration of Customs sets slow to distinguish Overseas abroad.

Those responsible for the administration of the colonies do not know how to gather information and have no directive or no credit for doing so. They are too few to install solid structures or networks of information collection. The information they have on the territories are unreliable. Tables of population and those on foreign trade are often fanciful. They aim to further demonstrate the effectiveness of management information to local administrators. The imperfection statistics also seen as a way to avoid angering superiors or metropolitan counterparts.

A first improvement appears in the metropolis when the FMS is able to centralize and publish some administrative data from 1878. Retrospective she then publishes directories that have some information about the colonies, but colonial statistical activity begins to emerge.

The slowness of the organization of the colonial administration, which involves several ministries until the creation of the Colonial Office in 1894, is a cause of the blockage. This is followed by the creation of the Colonial School in 1889 that allows administrators to define a specific body, but that is not trained in statistics.

The peculiarities of Indochina

Late compared to other colonized territories, and later organized the territories which form the Indochinese Union ((Cochin China, Annam, Tonkin, Cambodia joined by Laos in 1893) are in a particular situation.

Until the Second World War, Cambodia and Laos, which play a role especially for buffer states are considered marginal in the colonial projects of France in Southeast Asia. Vietnamese territories are more highly valued, but the statistics are also underdeveloped. They are much less than those of other Asian countries in Southeast. Even in the field of population, the misconceptions of the situation in French Indochina is striking.

This shift can be interpreted as a sign of lack of interest or inability 'of the colonizer? Is the witness of a particular management colonial area? What is it reflects and what are its consequences?

Indochina and the French possessions in Asia Pacific in the French public statistics: a reflection of colonial policy?

Development in four stages:

1 / A statistical lighting that nobody wants

2 / The turn of the 1920s

3 / scaling in France under the Occupation

4 / INSEE statistics and Indochina, a late priority

1C. Colonialism and Resistance in the French Pacific/*"Indochina and French possessions in Asia Pacific in the French public statistics: a reflection of colonial policy?"*

1 / A statistical lighting that nobody wants

Weak statistical institution in France (33 person for the SGF in 1907)

In France as in the rest of the Empire, public officials, are too few to establish permanent structures for collecting data and those they meet in the territories are uncertain. Tables of population and foreign trade are of questionable reliability. They aim to further demonstrate the effectiveness of management information purposes only. Administrative overseas are not encouraged to develop these data because even the metropolis, the statistic is undervalued.

A first improvement appears, however, when the FMS is able to centralize certain administrative data. From 1878 she regularly publishes directories retrospective presenting and commenting on more or less comprehensive administrative series. Information colonies are rare because they are not centralized before the creation of the Ministry of Colonies. The curiosity of the colonizer is limited.

In the most uniform and regular series such as Customs Overseas rest assimilated abroad. The situation persists even when Customs published the first quarterly indices of foreign trade volume in 1912. It was not until 1932 that the differentiation appears and Liberation for the overseas territories are defined by area.

These shortcomings have reinforced the weakness of the SGF, unable to control the origin of the information provided by the central and local administrations.

The advancement of knowledge advance more quickly in the field of population, but it concerns only a few colonies. Weak documentation explains that the colonies Bulletin SGF issued each quarter from 1911, then monthly after 1924, only delivers little specific information on the Overseas Territories. Even when statisticians institution professionalized and their numbers are increasing, statistics colony is left to the responsibility of local authorities and socio-economic knowledge does not improve.

Work at the General Statistics of France at the beginning of the Twentieth century
Un établissement artisanal

Conditions de travail à la SGF au début du siècle.



Awareness of the need for change ...

Legislative pulses at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

The Finance Act 1900 removes the subsidies of the metropolis and establishes the principle of financial autonomy of the colonies. In doing so, it requires to count, but without increasing the resources allocated to do so. Under the supervision of the territories continues since 5000 finds that French officials in the colonial administration in Indochina in the 1930s, which is the maximum. The inadequacy of these numbers says that investigations are delegated to provincial chiefs. These practices, and the habit of identifying the "useful people", the taxpayer or potential workers such as the isolation of certain mountain regions discourage any attempt to change and condemn the systematic under estimates. Administrators themselves note that only 25-30% of taxpayers would be entered on the tax roles.

A first attempt at rationalization occurs in February 1909 when Millies Lacroix, Colonial Secretary transmits a circular hundreds of pages to all administrative and technical services colonies requiring them to present specific types of tables in 65 quantized data . The information requested concerning all areas covered by the administration (demography, trade, industry and agriculture) and activities of all kinds of technical, economic and local social services.

The circular prescribes, for example, to indicate the distribution of population by age and sex, which involves regular population censuses while no such operation has never been performed. However, it contains no information on how to collect the information requested, nor on the technical development of the tables.

The lack of technical precision and excessive mandatory requirements make this circular totally unsuited to actual capacity of the colonial administration.

In 1910, a new Directive requires local authorities to assess the population of their jurisdiction. She still has no methodological precision and causes no more change than 1909. Officials territorial governments therefore continue to provide quantitative information as they can and nobody can control them. However, the initiative Millies-Lacroix interested statisticians SGF and the scientific community seeking to improve knowledge in this area.

2 / The turn of the 1920s

The administrative organization and evolution of collection processes change over twenty years. Indochina is a pioneer field since receiving the first statistical service overseas, even before a colonial office statistics appear to the Ministry of Colonies (1934)

Authorities installed in Indochina, the top resident of Tonkin particularly serious doubts on the value of approximate information to administer the territory.

Experience shows that the development of more reliable statistics is possible. This is the 1901 census conducted by the French administration of Cochin, which is an exception. Thanks to the tenacity of the lieutenant governor at the time and because the territory focuses a strong French presence, operation is both early and most comprehensive of the colonial period. It responds to the Finance Act 1900, which encourages knowledge to better manage available resources. The census is done without intervention statistician. He noted local administrators who rely on recruiters scholars selected from the local population. It passes through the distribution of newsletters per household (no personal information), stakeholders are paid, the census is made compulsory and universal. It thus fulfills a mission of general interest. The operation is not renewed at this scale.

In Indochina, the statistical era begins later. It is driven by Albert Sarrault, who was Governor General (1911-13 and 1916) is Minister for the Colonies in 1920. Sarrault seeks to highlight the colonies and enhance their demographic potential. The idea is well received by Maurice Long, the Governor General in Indochina. This new policy will lead to the first population census covering the entire population of the French empire extreme east in 1921. Long also supports the creation in 1923 of the first statistical service Indochina Lucien March, former director of the FMS also encouraged.

Service of general statistical Indochina

In 1922, André Lochard, Mining Engineer, Director of Mines and economic services of Indochina, created in Hanoi General Statistics Indochina. The parallel organization in Paris of a statistical unit in the Ministry of Colonies with two statisticians led in 1936 to the publication of the first statistical yearbook of French West Africa. Indochina was the first colony of the empire have such a service, even before the Colonial Office. The creation of this service aims to statistics from the French colony at the same level as those of neighboring countries. In 1923, SGF off a statistician as manager, then assigns volunteers to supervise the execution of locally recruited staff.

The Hanoi Service begins collecting data on the years 1913 to 1922 with local governments to publish in the Statistical Yearbook of Indochina in 1927. This book follows a first synthetic publication encrypted information relating to Colony under the title Statistical Atlas of French Indochina test, a mining engineer had published in 1914. In 1931, a new volume covering the years 1923 to 1929 and is broadcast on a third year 1930 and 1931 was released in 1932. These publications are complemented by a monthly statistical supplement included in the Economic Bulletin published by Indochina economic services of the colony.

Precariousness

The service has a precarious existence. Between 1927 and 1929 and then 1939 and 1946, he has three statisticians (Ulmer, Bournier, Smolski), then Smolski alone, which will more than half of his career in Indochina. These specialists are supported by a dozen employees at best. Henri Georges Ulmer and Bournier detached from the FMS and will be charged upon return to create the statistical office of the Colonial opened in 1933 (cf. infra).

This uncertainty is due. The service is funded by the Territorial Authorities that reduce its budgetary allocations and retrograde in 1932 to a mere office of the Economic Affairs Division of the General Government, which does not justify the posting of new specialists SGF. New budget cuts in 1934 confined its work to achieve the directories prevent it from carrying out its own investigations. Because of these restrictions, the positions Ulmer and Bournier are deleted.

Of knowledge gaps

Indochina from 1921, population censuses are the only major statistical operations. We do not use real leaves households, except in Cochin in 1901 and Cambodia where the population is larger metropolis. Population and mortality are largely underestimated. Bournier clear that even in Saigon many Europeans have never heard of the 1931 census a few months after the event. The absence of electoral map does not facilitate the task for rural areas. According Smolski, the margin of error census is 10% in Cochin, 20 to 25% in Tonkin and up to 50% in some province of Annam in 1931. Consequently the volume of the population is not assess and manipulation of directors obsessed with the need of population growth have free rein

Bournier explains this by the general misunderstanding of the requirements of statistics, it also denounces the lack of machine, the conventional counter (see photo) used in France since 1901 is not before 1936 in Indochina.

The three general censuses, 1921, 1926 (tentative) and 1936, organized in Indochina, and are only made in 70 years of French presence, are bad. In 1901 in Cochin and the 1921 Cambodia are exceptions. Counts are approximate, they are made by village leaders who can overcome the reluctance of people fearing the IRS ... The lack of civil registration system prevents state to correct the data, except in Saigon and Hanoi.

Le classi compteur imprimeur



Originally the statistical office of the Ministry of Colonies

Both specialists return Indochina (Bournier and Ulmer) are allocated to the Ministry of Colonies. Their salaries are paid from general government until they return to their home administration. These compilers provide a bridgehead department, which allows the FMS to have the information at the source and to lay the foundations of future colonial statistical service in early 1934. They centralize colonial statistics. They complement the sparse information retrospective Directories and Bulletin SGF publishing the first Statistical Yearbook 1936 AOF and a monthly bulletin from the following year. The service hosts a third statistician return Hanoi in 1938.

Awareness of the shortcomings of the colonial statistic is then more vivid. In 1938, the Higher Statistical Council created a committee dealing with colonial questions and demands to implement specialized services in territories overseas territories. colonial statistics. In 1939, a decree created a documentation service and general economic statistics at the Ministry of Colonies without providing any statistician. With a workforce of 130 people in 1938, SGF has not the means to bring about change. Service colonial statistics it is set in 1943.

Efforts to improve the colonial statistics are interrupted by mobilization. The material gathered in the department is dispersed. The only achievements of the period remains the Indochina service demonstrates its strength. It continues to operate under the direction of a statistician SGF during the war when he is completely cut off from the metropolis. It publishes two directories then survives political changes from 1945 to 1946.

3 / The release of the Occupation

It was not until World War II when the Empire is cut from the Metropole for breakthroughs emerge. The creation of the National Statistics Service (NSS, 7000 people Liberation) causes the change of scale necessary for the development of statistical work in France. New methods of investigation and the use of punched cards used to receive and process a lot of information while the SNS installs three regional offices in North Africa.

Meanwhile, the Central Statistics Service (SCS) is created at the Colonial Oct. 2, 1943. Their managers, statisticians detached from the SNS, establish specific guidelines for administrations overseas on information to communicate. The service is under the authority of the Secretary of State for the Navy and the Colonies. Another major change during the occupation, the Colonial School introduced a statistical education, which prepares the change in attitude of students when they enter active duty.

The Colonial Service of Statistics (CBS)

Georges Bournier is reinstated SGF on his return from captivity in 1941. Upon the creation of the NHS, it has an organizing project of the colonial statistic that is approved by the Director of SNS, René Carmille and submitted to the Government in 1942 . This is an ambitious project that plans to allocate 67 statisticians in the department. This project begins to realize when the decree of 2 October 1943 created the Colonial Service Statistics at the State Secretary of the Navy and the Colonies. The Act of 20 March 1944 gave him an official existence. SCS works closely with the NHS who appoints three directors, three attached and committed three plus three secretaries and two typists assigned by the Secretary of State.

The first task of SCS is to reconstruct the inventory of the material collected from the colonial government before the war in order to get in shape and spread. This synthesis is performed with makeshift. The testimony of Ms. Hello, recruited SCS Liberation (interview at his home in 1991) specifies the repetitive nature of the copy job and emphasizes its archaic aspects. It allows you to publish an interim edition of the Statistical Yearbook of French possessions for the years prior to the war in 1944. As stated in the introduction to this book, the goal is to respond to the vagueness, see the lack , the statistical documentation. On 30 December 1944, the SCS sends to local governments precise instruction on how to collect the statistical nature of the documentation and to communicate the organization of local services. Annual edition of the Yearbook is envisaged.

Structure therefore exists at the Liberation, he no longer fail to develop and implement local levels equipped with tabulating machines in the colonies. Africa first and then Indochina will be equipped.

4 / INSEE statistics and Indochina, a priority

Two sections of the Finance Act of 27 April 1946 creating the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies for the Metropolitan Economic and Overseas France (INSEE) and the charge:

- To establish and update the statistics on the status and movement of people in the Metropolitan France and overseas;
- Coordinating the methods and means of government statistics and subsidized or state-controlled private bodies;
- Centralize information and unify the classifications and statistical codes;
- To give and to maintain perpetual inventory of the economy;
- Observe the economic developments in France, overseas and abroad

The development of colonial statistical therefore incumbent and he will work closely with the Central Statistical Service of the Ministry of France Overseas Territories.

Le logo de l'INSEE de 1946 à 1969



Compared to the pre-war context is completely changed. The need for quantified information is recognized by the men of the Reconstruction. Structural reforms introduced since the Liberation (nationalization, planning, national accounts, etc.), Pledging to build economic and social democracy are statistical priority.

Unlike the pre-war colonial statistic is not left out, even if credits are limited. Bournier present an ambitious new project that plans to recruit 93 metropolitan and 67 Aboriginal Statistics for Overseas Department 25, 14 to Indochina, 16 AOF (Togo), 12 for AEF (Cameroon), 10 Madagascar, Reunion 2 for New Caledonia, Guadeloupe and French Guiana, Martinique and 6 to 1 for Oceania and Somalia. Can be seen, Indochina is well placed in this project, statisticians are aware of the delay. These requests will never be satisfied.

Service general statistics of Indochina created in 1923 is considered a priority. INSEE it affects young people attached formed in his school application. This service is expanding and running until 1954. It is headed by an interim director Nguen Vietnamese Thieu Lau and renamed Statistical Service of Vietnam in 1946. It diversifies its investigations, begins to cover the economic and improves knowledge demographic. It is not the lack of credit, but it is the political circumstances (first Vietnam War) that hinder its growth.

The first rookie of the service, Suzanne Frelon and Marthe Sombrun attached INSEE, arrived in Saigon in November 1946 upon leaving school INSEE.

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Suzanne Frelon says:

"Statistics at the time was a life of adventure. In any case we live like this. We arrived in Saigon after three days of flight. The country was still very upset, we could not leave the city without the thank you grenades exploded on the road. Our living conditions were basic, we stayed in an office. We strictly keep our schedules and when we had a home with friends, a jeep came to fetch us at 8 o'clock in the morning. Our job was firstly to mount a statistical service, secondly to observe the prices, wages and especially to construct indices of consumer prices and surveys on family budgets. We also would gather all available at the time for newsletters and statistical yearbooks. Felix Rosenfeld, head of service, passion reconstituted with a library of over 1500 volume "

The Indochina Service

Service of general statistical Indochina received reinforcements in November 1946 when two attached INSEE are affected.

The decree of July 1947 states his administrative position: it is under the authority of the Economic Adviser to the High Commissioner and it is installed in Saigon with central government.

After transfer Hanoi archives, the service opens a vast documentation center at the end of 1949.

Publishes two directories statistics cover the years 1943-1946 and 1947-1948 and rebroadcasts the Economic Bulletin of Indochina. Unlike the pre-war staff conducted investigations on the evolution of prices, wages and family budgets used to construct an index of consumer prices.

Policy and institutional changes in Indochina from 1950 (attachment to the Department of State Partners) opened a period of transition. The service keeps its staff and its missions to its attachment to the Institute of emission states of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam in 1952. Then He becomes the Service of Economic and Financial Studies. It is headed by a director of the INSEE surrounded by three attached from January 1953.

The organism lives shortly after the Geneva Accords. Thereafter, the participation of French statisticians implementation of national statistical services in this region is highly solicited. But INSEE does not have sufficient funds to meet them.

Own political will to INSEE

The Application School offers instruction on colonial issues taught by an inspector general of the colonies to student administrators second year as well as auditors. Closon, the Director General of INSEE exerts constant pressure on governments to get loans detachments specialists. Despite this determination, financial and political obstacles to the improvement of knowledge. They manifest themselves in particular through the difficulties of recruiting specialists for mentor local services. Indeed, compared to directors and attached for the hexagon, the formation of a statistician overseas requires an additional year which comes from the time required between the decision of the local authorities, the and affectation.

Closon calls this process "administrative nightmare" in 1949. It states that voted appropriations already expired when the agent is ready to go and need to get more, which is only possible in the no change of government ... It calls to respect a certain logic: if France has felt obliged to bear the burden of all directors and judges overseas, it can absorb "this tiny imperial expenditure" which is the training of statisticians for the Overseas Territories.

Recruitment of statisticians dropper

Specialist positions for Statistical Services in the Territories are created outside the actual budget allocated to the INSEE. Voluntary candidates for Overseas are selected by the same contest and follow a similar school to other students in the School of Application (a year for two years and tied for administrators, statisticians) but their education is funded by FIDES and the budgets of the host territories. They are then posted to the Ministry of Overseas France that affects outside the metropolis.

On their return, their reintegration into their original body depends on the vacancy or the creation of a corresponding position. So not only promotion is not guaranteed but the difficult conditions under which they perform their duties to make their priori unattractive career. Therefore, statisticians overseas are clearly distinguishable from their colleagues by INSEE.

Table 2. Administrateurs et attachés affectés à l’Outre-mer entre 1945 et 1958
(non compris l’Afrique du Nord et les DOM-TOM)

source: « Le développement de la statistique d’Outre-mer... »

Pays ou groupes de Pays	1945		1947		1953		1959	
	Adm.	Attachés	Adm.	Attachés	Adm.	Attachés	Adm.	Attachés
AOF	1	1	2	2	5	7	7	15
Togo						1		1
Cameroun		1		1	1	2	2	3
AEF	1	1	1	1	2	5	2	7
Madagascar				1	1	2	3	4
Indochine			2	2	1	4		
SCS Paris	3	3	3	3	4	5	4	7
Missions					4	4	4	4
Ensemble	6	5	10	8	18	30	22	41

A thankless role

The tasks of these statistical services overseas consist first to develop a critical survey of the literature and demonstrate its utility to local administrations. These inventories can publish directories that are maintained and are supplemented by regular reports (monthly or quarterly).

The work program aims to improve agricultural and demographic statistics territories and the study of price and standard of living of their populations. This work is coordinated by the SCS and the INSEE publishes a monthly statistical bulletin overseas from 1947 as well as supplements studies' or 'statistics' periodicals.

Each publication highlights the inaccuracy of previous assessments. Earlier demographics eg rebounded 10-25%. The application of mercurial price shows that the value of exports recorded by the customs services of territories (FOB accounting) is often greatly underestimated. The vagueness of the definition used by customs statistics such goods leads to confused and drinking water or bleach as old tickets at face value.

The work of local services are facilitated by the installation of central punched cards which are also responsible for counting the investigations. The tabulating equipment and attachments that frame come from INSEE unlike technicians (foremen, chief operators, operators, instructors) who are recruited contractual Métropole.

The difficult working conditions

Statisticians and attached the service do not investigation, but rely on administrative documents they publish. They publish a total of 12 statistical yearbooks covering Indochina from 1913 to 1922 and from 1947 to 1948 and monthly statistical reports.

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Some tips to conclude

The slow development of the colonial statistical prevents decide, ignorance of the demographic and economic changes of the colonial presence casts the largest blur on the impact of colonization. For Indochina in particular, the uncertainty in the available demographic information cast doubt on the benefits of colonization. As shown Magali Barbieri, the population growth during the colonial period was largely based on estimated ...

Awareness of these gaps raises questions on the responsibility of "decision maker" who, as in the metropolis territories deprive a tool to facilitate and guide the action. Is this a sign of incompetence or that a tactical finesse to ensure some peace? The existence of an efficient statistical service in Indochina was too short to be able to decide, but it certainly has some of the milestones of development.

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