

Libraries in the Universities of the World

Dr. Eells recently returned from a two-and-a-half year trip around the world, following four years of service in Japan as Adviser on Higher Education.

THE AVERAGE NUMBER of books reported in over 1500 university and college libraries throughout the world is slightly over 138,000 volumes. The largest average size of university libraries are found in Europe with an average of more than 260,000 volumes; the smallest in the universities of South America with an average only one tenth as great, less than 26,000. Those of the United States are slightly below the world average, with 125,000 volumes per institution, although the world's two largest university libraries are found in the United States.

These figures are based upon data reported in the most recent and comprehensive reference volumes, *Universities of the World Outside U.S.A. 1950* and *American Universities and Colleges 1952*, both published by the American Council on Education, Washington, D.C. The first named volume gives some information on 1959 foreign institutions of higher education in 85 countries. In many cases, however, this information is limited to the name and location of the institution and perhaps the names of one or two of its administrative officers. Reasonably complete "exhibits" are found for 855 institutions.¹ Of these,

¹Of the total of 1959 no less than 717 are located in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. For none of these is a complete and adequate exhibit given although

666, or 77%, report the number of volumes in their libraries.

It should be noted, perhaps, that some institutions reported number of volumes in round numbers only, usually to the nearest 1,000 volumes, but occasionally to the nearest 10,000 or even 100,000 volumes. Among the 666 foreign institutions included in this study 65% reported thus in round numbers. In the case of the 900 institutions in the United States the similar percentage is 25. For the entire group of 1566 institutions it is 42. It is believed, however, that such approximations make little or no difference for the analysis of this article which deals for the most part with totals and averages. More accurate reports might make slight changes in the relative ranks of the individual libraries listed in Table II, but the intention there is to indicate the general ranking of the major university libraries and their distribution by countries, not to fix the exact rank of each with complete statistical accuracy. This would require original data not only more nearly exact in statement but also in definition of the term "volumes." The figures given here are of course no better than the sources from which they have been taken, but the two reference works used are probably the best that have been produced with comparative and world

for a few of the larger institutions the number of volumes in the library is indicated in round numbers. Omitting the Soviet institutions, 1242 remain. The analysis in this article disregards the Soviet university libraries except in Table II where the four largest are included.

TABLE I

Summary of Libraries in Universities of the World

Region	Number of Institutions Having Exhibits	Number Reporting Volumes in Library	Percent Reporting Volumes in Library	Total Volumes Reported	Average Volumes Per Reporting Institution
Europe	424	271	64	70,480,675	260,076
United States	892	890	100	111,471,183	125,429
Asia	307	209	68	22,698,564	108,606
Australasia	17	13	77	1,128,564	86,813
North America (Except United States)	97	65	67	5,521,021	84,939
Africa	29	19	66	1,289,946	67,892
South America	187	89	48	2,297,857	25,819
TOTAL	1,953	1,556	80	214,887,810	138,103

TABLE II

Libraries in Universities of the World Reporting More than 500,000 Volumes Each

Institution	Country	Volumes
1. Harvard University	United States	5,500,000
2. Yale University	United States	4,056,276
3. Leningrad State University of the Order of Lenin	U. S. S. R.	3,600,000
4. Stanford University	United States	2,743,079
5. University of California	United States	2,717,763
6. University of Illinois	United States	2,476,954
7. University of Paris (Sorbonne)	France	2,056,300
8. Columbia University	United States	2,009,898
9. Moscow M. V. Lomonosov State University of the Order of Lenin	U. S. S. R.	2,000,000
10. Charles University of Prague	Czechoslovakia	1,900,000
11. University of Oxford	Great Britain	1,874,000
12. University of Chicago	United States	1,844,173
13. University of Minnesota	United States	1,600,000
14. Kyoto University	Japan	1,565,440
15. University of Strasbourg	France	1,537,692
16. Cornell University	United States	1,500,000
17. University of Michigan	United States	1,454,676
18. University of Basel	Switzerland	1,359,679
19. University of Vienna	Austria	1,350,000
20. State University of Leiden	Netherlands	1,300,000
21. Odessa L. L. Mechnikov State University	U. S. S. R.	1,300,000
22. University of Toulouse	France	1,290,376
23. Tokyo University	Japan	1,276,804
24. Friedrich Wilhelm University of Berlin	Germany	1,236,017
25. Helsinki University	Finland	1,200,000
26. Princeton University	United States	1,200,000
27. University of Leipzig	Germany	1,200,000
28. University of Heidelberg	Germany	1,200,000
29. University of Oslo	Norway	1,200,000
30. University of Pennsylvania	United States	1,194,808
31. University of Warsaw	Poland	1,150,000
32. George August University of Göttingen	Germany	1,115,000
33. Duke University	United States	1,040,000
34. Northwestern University	United States	1,031,000
35. Friedrich Alexander University of Erlangen	Germany	1,000,000
36. Royal University of Upsala	Sweden	1,000,000
37. State University at Liege	Belgium	1,000,000
38. University of Bologna	Italy	1,000,000
39. University of China	China	1,000,000
40. University of Ghent	Belgium	1,000,000
41. Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg	Germany	953,785

(Continued on next page)

TABLE II—Continued

Institution	Country	Volumes
42. Brown University	United States	950,000
43. University of Texas	United States	935,000
44. New York University	United States	925,000
45. Laval University	Canada	919,818
46. Ohio State University	United States	910,000
47. Indiana University	United States	900,000
48. Johns Hopkins University	United States	873,116
49. Rhenish Westphalian Technical University of Aachen	Germany	828,000
50. Keiogijuku University	Japan	800,000
51. Masaryk University of Brno	Czechoslovakia	800,000
52. University of Zagreb	Yugoslavia	800,000
53. Victor Babes University	Rumania	800,000
54. University of Toronto	Canada	791,723
55. Virginia Polytechnic Institute	United States	784,047
56. Friedrich Schiller University of Jena	Germany	782,300
57. Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg	Germany	780,000
58. University of Rome	Italy	777,622
59. Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich	Germany	750,000
60. University of Wisconsin	United States	750,000
61. State University of Utrecht	Netherlands	744,500
62. University of Washington	United States	733,429
63. State College of Washington	United States	720,000
64. National Peiping University	China	713,189
65. University of Hawaii	United States	709,479
66. University of Geneva	Switzerland	700,000
67. University of Nancy	France	700,000
68. University of Cincinnati	United States	690,000
69. Dartmouth College	United States	679,785
70. Western Reserve University	United States	664,079
71. State University of Iowa	United States	646,623
72. University of Lyon	France	635,000
73. University of Virginia	United States	630,633
74. University of Lille	France	630,000
75. University of Missouri	United States	625,000
76. Eberhard Karls University at Tübingen	Germany	619,000
77. University of Pittsburgh	United States	617,000
78. Rutgers University	United States	616,180
79. University of Southern California	United States	605,996
80. Higher Normal School	France	600,000
81. Johann Wolfgang Goethe University of Frankfurt	Germany	600,000
82. University of Hamburg	Germany	600,000
83. University of Oklahoma	United States	591,000
84. Peabody-Vanderbilt-Scarritt	United States	589,765
85. Rhenish Frederick William University of Bonn	Germany	585,000
86. University of North Carolina	United States	581,682
87. University of Cambridge	Great Britain	574,200
88. University of Montpellier	France	573,401
89. University of Oregon	United States	553,918
90. Cuza-Voda University of Jassy	Rumania	550,000
91. Saint John's University	China	542,253
92. Royal Conservatory of Music	Sweden	540,000
93. University of Pavia	Italy	537,000
94. Louisiana State University	United States	532,485
95. University of Rochester	United States	531,119
96. University of Kentucky	United States	530,000
97. Washington University	United States	527,346
98. University of Edinburgh	Great Britain	522,000
99. Catholic University of Louvain	Belgium	500,000
100. Hebrew University	Israel	500,000
101. Kiev T. G. Shevchenko State University	U. S. S. R.	500,000
102. University of Cagliari	Italy	500,000
103. University of Dublin	Ireland	500,000
104. University of Gothenburg	Sweden	500,000

wide data on educational factors. Table I summarizes the significant data for 1556 university and college libraries in 71 countries. It may be noted that for the world as a whole four-fifths of the 1953 institutions for which institutional exhibits are given reported number of volumes in their libraries. The proportion reporting is approximately two-thirds or higher for all except South America where slightly less than half of the institutions gave this information.

Table II lists the 104 institutions reported as having the largest university libraries—all with 500,000 volumes or more. Only nine are reported with more than two million volumes each and six of these are in the United States. Harvard University stands out preeminently as having the world's largest university library.

In the class from one to two million volumes each are 31 institutions, of which eight are in the United States. In the class of less than a million but more than a half million are found 64 institutions, of which 28 are in the United States.

Number of institutions classified by countries in the entire list of 104 are as follows: United States, 42; Germany, 14; France, 8; Italy and U.S.S.R., 4 each; Belgium, China, Great Britain, Japan, and Sweden, 3 each; Canada, Czechoslovakia, Netherlands, Rumania, and Switzerland, 2 each; and Austria, Finland, Ireland, Israel, Norway, Poland, and Yugoslavia, 1 each.

All of the universities reporting libraries of more than 500,000 volumes each are in Europe, Asia, and North America. The largest university library reported in Africa is that of Fouad I University (renamed the University of Cairo since the abdication of King Farouk) with 340,526 volumes. The largest reported in South America is that of the University of Chile with 300,000 volumes. The largest reported in Australasia is that of the University of Sydney with 298,973 volumes.

Table III gives a classification of the 1556 university libraries for which data are available according to number of volumes reported. It may be noted that more

TABLE III

Classification of Libraries in Universities of the World by Number of Volumes Reported										
Size	Total Number	Total Percent	Africa	Asia	Australasia	Europe	North America	South America	United States	
5,000,000-5,999,999	1	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
4,000,000-4,999,999	1	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
3,000,000-3,999,999	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
2,000,000-2,999,999	5	0.3	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	
1,000,000-1,999,999	30	1.9	0	3	0	19	0	0	8	
900,000-999,999	7	0.5	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	
800,000-899,999	6	0.4	0	1	0	4	0	0	1	
700,000-799,999	14	0.9	0	1	0	7	1	0	5	
600,000-699,999	15	1.0	0	0	0	6	0	0	9	
500,000-599,999	21	1.4	0	2	0	11	0	0	8	
400,000-499,999	28	1.8	0	2	0	11	1	0	14	
300,000-399,999	40	2.6	1	6	0	17	1	1	14	
200,000-299,999	82	5.3	0	13	1	17	3	3	45	
100,000-199,999	205	13.2	5	36	3	47	11	1	102	
75,000-99,999	97	6.2	0	18	2	11	1	3	62	
50,000-74,999	188	12.1	1	28	3	22	7	2	125	
25,000-49,999	422	27.1	6	33	1	33	8	10	331	
1-24,999	394	25.3	6	66	3	64	31	69	155	
TOTAL	1556	100.0	19	209	13	271	65	89	890	

than half (52.4%) of the libraries have less than 50,000 volumes each; that less than one-sixth of them have more than 100,000 volumes each. Only 6% have 500,000 volumes or more as already listed individually in Table II.

Table IV presents information on the average number of volumes in the higher educational institutions of each of the 71 countries covered in this article. The first two columns give the number of institutions in each country for which exhibits were available and the number of these which

reported number of volumes in their libraries. For 25 of these countries, mostly the smaller ones, reports of volumes are complete for all of the reporting institutions in the country. The largest of the countries for which this is true is Japan where library data were given by all of the 55 reporting universities. On the other hand there are only four countries for which the average is based upon less than half of the reporting institutions in those countries. It will be noted that all of the larger averages are for countries in Europe.

TABLE IV

Average Number of Volumes Reported in University Libraries in Various Countries of the World			
Country	Number of Institutions Having Exhibits	Number of Institutions Reporting Library Information	Average Number of Volumes in Reporting Libraries
1. Yugoslavia	2	2	605,000
2. Switzerland	10	4	594,920
3. Rumania	4	3	503,222
4. Czechoslovakia	12	9	370,205
5. Netherlands	10	9	368,766
6. Germany	59	52	301,502
7. Finland	9	8	295,519
8. Great Britain and Northern Ireland	29	25	291,711
9. France	62	38	288,465
10. Israel	2	2	260,000
11. Norway	7	7	252,777
12. Austria	13	13	234,345
13. Ireland	6	5	217,000
14. Italy	37	26	201,421
15. Argentina	6	3	196,544
16. Sweden	16	13	196,338
17. Belgium	19	17	192,194
18. Japan	55	55	189,559
19. Hungary	6	3	177,528
20. Spain	16	8	165,519
21. Lebanon	3	3	135,187
22. Canada	39	33	135,178
23. Poland	16	13	129,583
24. Chile	6	5	128,811
25. Egypt	5	4	126,132
26. United States	892	890	125,429
27. Pakistan	3	2	118,430
28. Australia	9	8	106,787
29. China	87	78	101,177
30. Hong Kong	1	1	98,690
31. Union of South Africa	10	9	76,880
32. Portugal	6	3	76,314

TABLE IV—Continued

Country	Number of Institutions Having Exhibits	Number of Institutions Reporting Library Information	Average Number of Volumes in Reporting Libraries
33. Burma	1	1	70,000
34. India	33	27	64,209
35. Greece	11	5	61,696
36. Dominican Republic	1	1	60,000
37. Korea	12	11	59,674
38. New Zealand	7	5	54,854
39. Denmark	10	7	52,359
40. Iceland	1	1	51,000
41. Ceylon	2	1	50,000
42. El Salvador	1	1	50,000
43. Mexico	30	17	43,843
44. Malaya and Singapore	3	1	40,000
45. Panama	1	1	40,000
46. Philippines	14	11	29,735
47. Peru	11	9	29,203
48. Colombia	12	8	27,775
49. Turkey	10	6	26,372
50. Cuba	5	5	26,000
51. British West Africa	2	2	24,000
52. Bulgaria	3	1	20,000
53. Ecuador	5	4	18,947
54. Bolivia	8	6	17,013
55. Syria	1	1	17,000
56. Anglo-Egyptian Sudan	1	1	15,000
57. Siam (Thailand)	4	4	14,109
58. British East Africa	1	1	12,500
59. Haiti	1	1	10,000
60. Malta	1	1	10,000
61. Paraguay	3	1	9,278
62. Costa Rica	2	2	8,500
63. Mauritius	1	1	8,000
64. Brazil	64	52	7,425
65. Venezuela	4	1	6,000
66. Afghanistan	1	1	4,000
67. Iran	2	1	3,000
68. Honduras	1	1	2,328
69. Indo-China	1	1	2,250
70. Nicaragua	3	3	1,833
71. Iraq	3	2	617

Please Note

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