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Joseph J. Spengler, James B. Duke Professor of Economics, Duke University, has long been a member of the elite of the world's social scientists. He is deservedly one of the most honored of economists, having been President of the American Economic Association, the Southern Economic Association, and the Population Association of America and Vice President of the American Economic Association and the Economic History Association. He has served as administrator and consultant with the Federal government, the United Nations, and public and private foundations.

Professor Spengler's remarkable career as a scholar has been distinguished by extraordinary quantity of output -- books, articles (in more than fifty journals throughout the world), contributions to symposia and encyclopedias, edited anthologies -- and catholicity of interests. The enormous range of his erudition has encompassed topics in sociology, history, and political science as well as economics. Within economics, hardly a field is unrepresented in his voluminous writings, but his major efforts have been directed to three areas.

These areas are identified with the three sections of this book, although the entire volume is directed to the general subject of population. The first section, "History of Thought," includes Professor Spengler's classic essay on "Malthus's Total Population Theory." The second, "Theory," contains eight wide-ranging papers on the many facets of population analysis, highlighted by his American Economic Association address, "The Economist and the Population Question." The last section considers the strategic variable of population in the process and policy of "Development," including a prize-winning study, "Economic Factors in the Development of Densely Populated Areas."

The essays reprinted here are a representative sample of Professor Spengler's work, characterized by broad contextual scope, massive documentation, systematic integration of previous literature with his own organization and analysis, appreciation of the full complexity of the world, and deeply cultivated wisdom. In the best, traditional sense of the term, Professor Spengler is a scholar, providing an unusual, if not wholly unique, blend and balance of learning and sense. While not an elaborate spinner of models, he is a rigorous theorist; not an econometrician, he is thoroughly an empiricist; not personally attracted to seats of public power, he is an astute observer of policy-making.

This volume, in addition to its attractiveness to social scientists generally, will be a valuable supplement to junior-senior and graduate classes in Population and Development.