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**PUERTO RICO: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES  
AND ITS CARIBBEAN POSSESSION**

Diplomová práce

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci na téma „Puerto Rico: The relationship between the United States and its Caribbean possession“ vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího práce a uvedla jsem všechny použité podklady a literaturu.

V Olomouci dne .....

Podpis .....

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Puerto Rico, also known as the Isle of Enchantment, is an island in the Caribbean Sea that belongs to the United States. This island is the smallest of the Greater Antilles and its total area is about eight times smaller than that of the Czech Republic. As far as the population is concerned, there is about 3.8 million Puerto Ricans living on the island. What you maybe did not know is that more than twice as much Puerto Ricans live in the United States. You will meet the most Puerto Ricans in New York City, which is the second largest Puerto Rican city after San Juan, Puerto Rico's capital (see Appendix 1 A and B).

What is it that attracts the majority of the Puerto Rican population in the United States? The Puerto Rican migration to the United States has been mainly economically motivated and thus Puerto Ricans have left for the United States in order to find better-paid or any jobs at all, because high unemployment has long been an issue in Puerto Rico. It is true that the geographical proximity facilitates the migration. Moreover, since the 1940s transportation has considerably improved when steamships were replaced by planes. Nowadays, many low-cost airlines operates between the island and the mainland which makes the transportation available for everyone and which also contributed to a phenomenon of the back and forth migration.

Most importantly, Puerto Ricans have the US citizenship by birth which allows them to move freely between Puerto Rico and the United States. The official name of the island is the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, called Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico in Spanish. Puerto Rico has been a US territory since 1899 and at the head of Puerto Rico is the US President. This relationship and its future has been a much discussed topic. In 2012 referendum on the question of future status of Puerto Rico, it turned out that majority of the Puerto Rican population favours to become the 51<sup>st</sup> state of the United States. The final decision is, however, in the hands of Congress. Even though it cannot be expected that the situation of Puerto Rico's political status will be solved immediately, the US representatives had promised to take steps for settling the matter.

Although Puerto Rico officially belongs to the United States, islanders managed to maintain their distinctive culture and language. The official language of Puerto Rico is both, Spanish and English, but the majority of islanders speak Spanish. The fact that there is still a lot of Puerto Ricans who do not speak English fluently is among

the fundamental issues to be dealt with in the future. Provided that Puerto Rico should become a US state, it is argued that it would be necessary for them to become bilingual. And redress should start from scratch, from the education of Puerto Rican children. It has already been 115 years since Puerto Rico became a part of the United States and there are still people who do not speak English. It is need to say that Puerto Ricans have strong ties to their culture, and they try to avoid complete assimilation.

I mentioned that it has been over one hundred years since Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States. Not only this theses is concerned with the one-hundred year history between the United States and Puerto Rico, it pursues an objective to briefly describe the history of Puerto Rico since its discovery in 1493 by Christopher Columbus and subsequent colonization by Spaniards until the recent past.

Puerto Rico had been a Spanish colony for almost four hundred years until the island was ceded to the United States as a result of the Spanish-American War. The Spanish-American War also referred to as the Splendid Little War was a conflict between the United States and Spain over its possessions in the Caribbean and the Pacific Ocean, among them Puerto Rico. But before that, Spaniards left a huge imprint on the island, for instance the language. The opening chapter is going to deal with the island's history and the Spanish four-hundred-year long supremacy over the island.

The following chapters are going to be focused exclusively on the situation on the island and the US-Puerto Rican relations since it is the aim of this thesis to make a research on the relationship between the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. I hope that this work can serve as a stepping stone for those interested in this topic. It turned out that there is poor availability of literature on Puerto Rico in the Czech libraries and bookshops if you are not looking for tourist guides. Hence, I believe that someone who would like to learn more about this topic, can find this work useful not only for its content itself but as a source of literature that examines the US-Puerto Rican relations in more detail. I would like to note that almost none of this literature was available in the Czech Republic and prospective researchers have to rely on foreign resources or electronic databases. The U.S. Census Bureau's data have proved to be a useful source as well because it can provide general up-to-date information about a country and its people.

Apart from the aforementioned topics, a substantial part of the thesis is going to be about stateside Puerto Ricans, their community organizations and cities and areas

with the largest concentration of Borriqueños, a term that comes from Spanish and describes the population of Puerto Rico.

## 2 HISTORY OF PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico is today an unincorporated territory of the United States with Commonwealth status and it still raises a question of whether it should become an independent country or the fifty-first state of the United States. Puerto Rico, the smallest of the Greater Antilles, went through four centuries of the Spanish rule until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when it was taken over by the United States. In this chapter I am going to deal with the history of colonization of this Caribbean island from its discovery until the recent past.

### 2.1 The arrival of Spanish colonists to Boriquén

Boriquén<sup>1</sup>, as was the island of Puerto Rico called among the natives, was discovered during the second exploratory and business voyage of Christopher Columbus to America in 1493. The Spanish fleet reached the Caribbean islands on Sunday November 3<sup>rd</sup> and started exploring them. The fleet moored at today's Puerto Rico on November 19 and named it San Juan in honour of Saint John the Baptist. Later, in 1521 the island was renamed Puerto Rico, meaning 'a rich port' and its original name San Juan was given to the port itself, which became the capital of Puerto Rico. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was often spelled as 'Porto Rico,' the form as we know it today was officially altered in 1932.<sup>2</sup>

The smallest of the Greater Antilles, Puerto Rico was at first neglected by Spaniards. During the first days on the island, the Spanish colonizers did not see any people even though it was clear that the island was inhabited and they proceeded to other islands - bigger and more promising.<sup>3</sup>

In 1508 Juan Ponce de León was ordered by Nicolás de Ovando, the Governor of the West Indies, to colonize the island. Consequently, Ponce de León founded the first Spanish settlement in Caparra near today's San Juan. Ponce de León was a Spanish lieutenant who helped Columbus to suppress Indian uprisings in Hispaniola

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<sup>1</sup> In various resources you can meet with different spellings, such as Boriquén, Borinquén and Borikén, all of them referring to the same place, Puerto Rico.

<sup>2</sup> Clifford A. Hauberg, *Puerto Rico and the Puerto Ricans* (New York: Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1974), 175.

<sup>3</sup> R.A. Van Middeldyk, *The History of Puerto Rico: From the Spanish Discovery to the American Occupation* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1903), chapter 2, accessed November 22, 2014, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/12272/12272-8.txt>.



(today's Dominican Republic and Haiti) during his second journey to America and he is ascribed the discovery of Florida. He became the first governor of Puerto Rico.<sup>4</sup>

Puerto Rico soon became one of strategic places of the Spanish maritime colonies. Its strategic role was attributed to its position and its natural richness. With the discovery of gold, the island became of great interest to many people. Lots of adventurers arrived at the island in the hope of gaining some fortune from the gold. But it soon became clear that the process of mining was very strenuous and required certain skills, which most of them lacked.

That is why the Native Indians were soon engaged as the main labour force. They were compelled to work in mines and in the fields to ensure the subsistence of the island's population.

## **2.2 Encounter with the natives and its aftermath**

Despite the first impressions, it turned out that Puerto Rico was densely populated, with estimated number of thirty thousand people.<sup>5</sup> The aboriginal people were distributed on the whole island but naturally the majority of them resided in the coastal areas and along the banks of rivers.<sup>6</sup> They were called the Taíno people,<sup>7</sup> the descendants of Arawaks, and they supposedly came to Puerto Rico around 1000 and named the island Boriquén (while people were called Boriqueños), which means 'the Land of Great Lords.'<sup>8</sup> This peaceful civilization found its subsistence in farming. The most important crop was cassava which represented the main ingredient in bread production. Cassava (also called manioc) replaced corn that was so characteristic for the Central American cultures. In addition to farming, the Taínos also lived on fishing and hunting.

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<sup>4</sup> Kal Wagenheim and Olga Jiménez de Wagenheim, eds., *The Puerto Ricans: A Documentary History* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2008), 15f.

<sup>5</sup> The estimated number of the native population significantly varies. The most recent estimates fluctuate somewhere around 30,000 as in *Puerto Rico and the Puerto Ricans* by Clifford A. Hauberg or in *Culture and Customs of Puerto Rico* by Javier A. Galván who states that in the early 16th century there were between 30 and 40 thousand natives. Fewkes in *The Aborigines of Puerto Rico and Neighboring Islands* gives the number of 200,000 but even he admits that this estimate is quite overrated. A historian Fray Iñigo Abbad claims in his book from 1788 that there were between 100,000 and 600,000 native Indians at the time of the Spanish arrival on the island.

<sup>6</sup> Jesse Walter Fewkes, *The Aborigines of Puerto Rico and Neighboring Islands* (Tuscaloosa, University of Alabama Press, 2009), 21-23, accessed December 4, 2014, <http://edicionesdigitales.info/biblioteca/aboriginespr.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Translated from Oldřich Kašpar, *Dějiny karibské oblasti* (Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2002), 20–21.

<sup>8</sup> Javier A. Galván, *Culture and Customs of Puerto Rico* (Westport, Greenwood Press, 2009), 1.

This peaceful farmers and fishermen suffered a lot with the arrival of Europeans. After thousands years of existence, during which they were able to survive thanks to their skilfulness in the development of agricultural techniques, they were almost wiped out by the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. They were forced to exhaustive and hard work on plantations and in gold mines and this together with malnutrition and suicides led to their gradual disappearance after the arrival of Spaniards. “By 1530 small deposits of gold were almost exhausted and so were the Indians.”<sup>9</sup> Except of Puerto Rico, the Taíno people also inhabited Hispaniola and other islands of the Greater Antilles, including Cuba and Jamaica. Since then Puerto Ricans lived under the Spanish supremacy for approximately four hundred years.

The discovery of the New World resulted in a massive exchange, the cultural and biological exchange. The plants and animals in Europe and the New World were more diverse than their ways of lives. The transfer of vegetation caused revolution in the nourishment on both hemispheres. Europe did not know corn, potatoes or beans which played such an important role in the subsistence of the native population. What Europeans brought to the natives, were various diseases. And since they did not have any natural immunity to these diseases, they quickly and in large numbers succumbed to them. Even minor illnesses such as measles meant a disaster, not mentioning infectious diseases such as smallpox or typhus. Some tribes lost up to ninety-five percent of their population during the first century of European colonization. As a result, the colonists in the need of much more workforce, started to import slaves from Africa.<sup>10</sup>

Initially fearful Indians rose against their Spanish oppressor. The first attempts of defiance came in 1510 because they could not bear the harsh living conditions under the ‘encomienda system.’<sup>11</sup> But the Taínos did not stand much chance against the far more experienced adversary. After several attempts of rebellion, they were definitely beaten by their Spanish conqueror and those who did not die from diseases or were not killed, fled to neighbouring islands and only about one tenth of the original inhabitants were left in 1514.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 13.

<sup>10</sup> Translated from George B. Tindall and David E. Shi, *Dějiny Spojených států amerických* (Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 1998), 11–12.

<sup>11</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*. 18–21.

<sup>12</sup> Jim Stafford, *Puerto Rican's History and Promise: Americans Who Cannot Vote* (Philadelphia: Mason Crest Publishers, 2006), 20.

The foundation of ‘encomienda’ dates back to 1503 when the Queen Isabella’s order was introduced in Hispaniola. Previously unwilling to work in the mines or fields, by that order Indians were compelled to work for the Spanish colonizers. Although they were officially free men and they got paid for their work, the reality was different and the ‘encomienda’ could be called more properly a form of slavery. Its basis lied in that the Spaniards were assigned a certain number of Indians who worked for their white masters for six months at first, later eight months of a year and far from their families. They very often experienced malnutrition and after their work term was over they did not have enough strength to manage the long journey to their homes and died on their way.

The Indian uprising was the final straw for the Indian civilization in Puerto Rico. Devastated by diseases and hard work brought by colonialism, they “[...] would constitute a tiny, isolated minority, whose way of life would soon fade. Remnants of the Indian culture have survived, however, in many important ways: numerous Indian words were absorbed by the Spanish language; the Europeans learned many lessons of survival that enabled them to live in the New World; and intermarriage between Spaniards and Indians left a striking racial imprint that is still visible on many of the people of the Caribbean.”<sup>13</sup>

### **2.2.1 The Puerto Rican population**

Due to its rich history, which is connected with the Spanish colonization of the island, Puerto Ricans represent a rich diverse ethnic blend.<sup>14</sup> The indigenous people were Taínos, who did not survive on the island in consequence of the Spanish colonization. Illnesses and hard work decimated them very quickly, however, some of them got mingled with Spaniards and they were sometimes called ‘Indíos.’ Taíno men and unmarried women did not wear any clothes and created various paintings on their bodies instead. Married women wore knee-long aprons. But they decorated their bodies too. Apart from paintings they used shells, precious stones or feathers. Taíno men usually had more than one wife, depending on their ability to maintain the family.

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<sup>13</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 23.

<sup>14</sup> This chapter draws on Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 33f, 38–43, 48. – Galván, *Culture and Customs*, 7. – J. P. Sanger, *Report on the Census of Puerto Rico, 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1900), 23–32, 40, 55–57, accessed April 12, 2015, <https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1899portoriko.pdf>.

With increasing need for labour force, the importation of slaves from Africa started in 1513. Africans were used to work in gold mines or in agriculture, to cultivate tobacco and coffee plantations. While there were two hundred slaves in 1530 on the island, in 1553 there were already 1,500 legally imported slaves.<sup>16</sup> The 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century experienced a great increase in the number of slaves with the development of trade. Based on the figures in the adjacent table, which is based on the data from the Census of Puerto Rico from 1899, the number of slaves was growing until 1846, since then there was a steady decline enhanced by the abolition of slavery in 1873.

<b>Number of slaves in Puerto Rico<sup>15</sup></b>	
<b>1765</b>	5,037
<b>1794</b>	17,500
<b>1820</b>	21,730
<b>1846</b>	51,216
<b>1860</b>	41,738
<b>1872</b>	31,632

In contrast to other Caribbean islands, slaves formed only a low proportion of population to free white population. Freemen outnumbered slaves eight by one in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Cuba and Puerto Rico were an exception in having the majority of the white population unlike e.g. Jamaica with 97 percent of coloured population in 1899. The majority population in Puerto Rico were called ‘criollos’ who were born in Puerto Rico of no matter what race. In different literature, you can run into the term ‘jíbaro’ (or archaically Xivaro), referring to white rural peasantry. A large proportion of population is formed by mulattos, a mixed breed of the whites and the blacks.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau data from 2010, 76 percent of the Puerto Rican population are of white race, 12 percent of black or African American races, 3 percent are of two or more races.<sup>17</sup>

### **2.3 Three centuries on the Isle of Enchantment**

The importation of African slaves to Puerto Rico started in 1520 as a result of two interconnected factors.<sup>18</sup> As it was mentioned earlier, the Indian workforce had been reduced dramatically during the first decade of the Spanish colonization and soon afterwards the deposits of gold were depleted. Consequently, the island’s economy had to be transformed; mining was replaced by agriculture. Moreover, the Spanish king

<sup>15</sup> Figures available in Sanger, *Report on the Census of Puerto Rico, 1899*.

<sup>16</sup> Every imported slave had to be paid for so illegal slave trade developed as well.

<sup>17</sup> “Community Facts,” U.S. Census Bureau, accessed April 12, 2015, <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.

<sup>18</sup> Puerto Rico is sometimes nicknamed The Isle of Enchantment. This chapter draws on Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 13–26.

Charles V granted freedom to all remaining Indians on the island but only six hundred were left.<sup>19</sup> Thus, much more workforce was needed to cultivate sugar cane fields, and this was an incentive to bring the Africans as slaves to Puerto Rico.

Sugar cane cultivation did not, however, generate expected profits and the Spanish businessmen turned their attention to more promising neighbouring islands, while small farmers focused on different crops. The island was seen desirously by other naval powers though, and it kept its strategic role as a military base. As a relay port between Europe and America, Puerto Rico was interesting for commercial reasons as well. Other European fleets raised their interest in the island and the attacks of foreign armies which wanted to seize control over the island were quite often throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century.

During 1590s, Puerto Rico experienced two British attacks. The first and unsuccessful attempt took place in 1595 and was led by Sir Francis Drake. Three years later, the island was seized for almost five months by George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland. Fortunately for Spain, his men were hit by an epidemic and were forced to leave. One-month Dutch invasion followed in 1620 during which San Juan was burnt down. The British tried their luck again in 1797 when they wanted to take over Puerto Rico but they did not succeed and this attempt of General Sir Ralph Abercromby was the last try by Europeans to seize the island by force.<sup>20</sup> The cause of their failures was especially good defence of the Spanish army, effective fortification around San Juan, and the spread of diseases that often smashed the invading armies. Spanish built El Morro fortress in the first half of 16<sup>th</sup> century at the mouth of San Juan Bay.

Nevertheless, the 1700s and 1800s were periods of low economic production in Puerto Rico. In order to procure revenues into the state treasury, Spain imposed high taxes and quotas. The effect was reverse. High taxes only led to the development of illegal trade among Puerto Rico and the French, Dutch and British territories. Officially, export and import between Puerto Rico and Europe almost ceased, which meant no tax revenues for the crown. Only the upper class bought imported goods from Europe while lower class depended on its own production and cultivation, together with the smuggled goods from nearby islands.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Stafford, *Puerto Rican's History and Promise*. 20.

<sup>20</sup> Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 15–18.

<sup>21</sup> Stafford, *Puerto Ricans' History and Promise*. 21–22. – Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 27–33.

Throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Puerto Rico was neglected and functioned as military stronghold while the economic development was disregarded. The change did not come before the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. With the accession of the Bourbon dynasty to the Spanish throne at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, numerous reforms were implemented which also influenced the Spanish colonial possession. In 1765, Field Marshall Alejandro O'Reilly was sent to Puerto Rico in order to file a report on the island's situation and to propose reforms which would generate profits for Spain.<sup>22</sup>

The reforms [...] "included relaxing the monopolistic Spanish trade, discouraging contraband, and promoting European immigration to increase Puerto Rico's population base. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, Puerto Rico was to witness a large influx of immigrants from Spain [...], French Corsica, Germany, Italy, Holland, England, Scotland, and the United States. Most of these immigrants were attracted by land grants and other Spanish colonial government incentives given to individuals with enough capital to invest in agricultural development in different parts of the country. [...] [T]he Spanish colonial government actively encouraged commercial agriculture, focusing on sugar, coffee, and tobacco production. These products became the island's main exports to Spain and would continue to be important in Puerto Rico's agricultural economy until the mid-twentieth century."<sup>23</sup>

Puerto Rico regained Spain's attention also due to political movements during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In order to restore its influence on the island, the Spanish crown declared Puerto Rico an overseas province of Spain in 1809 and one year later the first Puerto Rican representative, Ramón Power y Giralt, was given a seat in the Spanish Cortes, the Spanish parliament. By 1820s Puerto Rico and Cuba were the only Spanish domains and Spain who wanted to reinforce its position on the island, imposed strict regime in the governing of the island. The independence movement grew stronger, and it resulted in 'Grito de Lares' (Cry of the Lares), an armed revolt led by Ramón Emeterio Batances. On September 23, 1868 about five hundred men took over the city of Lares in the north-west of the island, demanding abolition of slavery, independence from Spain and freedom of speech and press. Although the revolt was suppressed a few days later and the participants were severely punished, imprisoned, or sent into exile, it

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<sup>22</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 28- 31.

<sup>23</sup> Edna Acosta-Belén and Carlos E. Santiago, *Puerto Ricans in the United States* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006), 19.

represents an important event in the history of Puerto Rico. Spain agreed to a compromise in order to settle the unstable situation, which was followed by a series of reforms and by the abolition of slavery in March 1873. The pro-independence effort, however, continued and Spain had to make further concession. The Sagasta Pact was signed in 1897 which gave Puerto Rico a certain level of autonomy from Spain. Nevertheless, it was a short-lived period of autonomy as the Spanish-American war broke out the following year.<sup>24</sup>

## **2.4 From the Spanish colony to American territory**

The Spanish-American War was a war conflict between Spain and the United States over their colonial power.<sup>25</sup> As a result Spain lost its control over its possessions in the Caribbean – Puerto Rico and Cuba, and in the Pacific Ocean – the Philippines, Guam and other islands, in favour of the United States.

The USS Massachusetts with General Nelson Miles at the head landed near the town of Guánica in the south of Puerto Rico on July 25, 1898. Americans gradually took over the whole island from south to north under the pretext of a previous explosion of the US battleship Maine which was anchoring near Havana's coast. It was Spain who was accused of that act and which resulted in annexation of a part of Mexico and in the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico by American troops.<sup>26</sup> Later, Spain officially surrendered on October 18. The peace treaty, the 'Treaty of Paris,' was signed on December 10. The representatives of both countries (i.e. United States and Spain, Puerto Rico was excluded) met in Paris already on October 1<sup>st</sup> to negotiate the details of the Spanish surrender.

This was a new beginning for the Puerto Ricans who, above all, welcomed the end of the Spanish rule over their island. The situation looked promising, at least from General Miles's proclamation from the beginning of U.S. invasion on the island.

“Hence, the first effect of this occupation will be the immediate release from your former political relations [...] and to give to the people of your beautiful island the

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<sup>24</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 18–24. – Stafford, *Puerto Ricans' History and Promise*, 22–25. – Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 53–73.

<sup>25</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 23f. – César Y. Ayala and Rafael Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History since 1898* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 14f, 18. – Galván, *Culture and Customs*, 10. – Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 53f, 80,89f, 95.

<sup>26</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 35f.

largest measure of liberties consistent with this military occupation. We have not come to make war against a people of a country that for centuries has been oppressed, but, on the contrary, to bring you protection, not only to yourselves but to your property, to promote your prosperity, and to bestow upon you the immunities and blessings of the liberal institutions of our government.”<sup>27</sup>

The result of American occupation was quite precisely and rather negatively predicted by a Puerto Rican politician and journalist Mariano Abril even six years before the American invasion on the island. He comments on the possible outcome of American takeover of Puerto Rico which is going to be dealt with in more detail further in this chapter.

“To believe that *yankees* will grant us all their freedoms and all their progress just for our pretty face is nonsense. Yes, they would grant us those liberties which they judged to be adequate, in exchange for guaranteed and ample exploitation. Yes, we would have elevated trains [...], big, beautiful ports, [...], bigger factories and commerce than ever before; but all of this in their hands; taken over and exploited by them; because all those things are not achieved without large amounts of capital, which would be *yankee* capital [...]. And, after a few years, industry, commerce, and even our agriculture, would be monopolized by the *yankees* [...] And, as for liberties, we would have a *yankee* army, a *yankee* navy, a *yankee* police, and *yankee* courts, because they would need all of this to protect their interests. And this rich and beautiful Castilian would disappear from our lips, to be substituted for by the cold, barren English language...”<sup>28</sup>

## 2.5 First fifty years under the US rule

At first the country was governed by military administration.<sup>29</sup> Under the leadership of Generals John R. Brooke and Guy V. Henry the postal system, the police, the right of trial by jury, and Habeas Corpus<sup>30</sup>, together with free public schools were

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<sup>27</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 95.

<sup>28</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 84f.

<sup>29</sup> This chapter draws on Galván, *Culture and Customs*, 10–13. – Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 40–48, 93. – Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 107–110, 114–118.

<sup>30</sup> „Habeas corpus is a writ that is used to bring a party who has been criminally convicted in state court into federal court. Usually, writs of habeas corpus are used to review the legality of the party’s arrest, imprisonment, or detention.“ Cited from “Habeas Corpus,” Cornell University Law School, accessed March 6, 2015, [https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/habeas\\_corpus](https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/habeas_corpus).



reformed or introduced.<sup>31</sup> The U.S. dollar became the lawful currency and English the official language. In Spanish speaking Puerto Rico, this was a severe step and Spanish as an official language was not re-established until 1942 (together with English).

First change in the administration came with the Foraker Act<sup>32</sup> of 1900. The civilian government was established and Puerto Rico had governor and the Executive Council, both appointed by the US President. The Executive Council consisted of eleven members, only five of whom had to be Puerto Ricans. It was further settled that Puerto Rico was going to have its representative in Congress, the Resident Commissioner. Although elected by the people, the Resident Commissioner did not have any voting right. Then a 35-member House of Delegates was established, whose members were elected by people but their powers were limited to local issues and their decisions could have been vetoed by the governor or Congress.

The economic situation of the island was negatively influenced by import and export taxes imposed by the American government. This step made Puerto Rican goods, especially sugar, coffee and tobacco unattractive on the American market. Moreover, in 1899 a hurricane hit the island and devastated the island's coffee plantations and since then, coffee, originally the main crop, was replaced by sugar as the primary export article. The Foraker Act also brought some changes in the field of economy. Free trade between Puerto Rico and the United States was established which had an immense impact on agriculture.

With the arrival of Americans to Puerto Rico, sugar industry was on the rise with 331 percent growth between 1900 and 1910. By 1935 one third of cultivated land was taken by sugar cane (as opposed to 15 percent in 1899<sup>33</sup>), another third by coffee and tobacco together and the last third represented various subsistence crops.<sup>34</sup> Puerto Rican sugar accounted for fifteen percent of the US sugar market at that time. Despite the growing sugar industry, a lot of Puerto Ricans lived in poverty. The wages of sugar-cane workers remained almost the same for twenty years between 1900 and 1920 with a temporary increase during the war.<sup>35</sup> It is worth mentioning that except for the rising sugar industry, tobacco growing and with it connected cigarette manufacturing, and needlework industries were successful as well. The development of needle industry was

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<sup>31</sup> Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 40.

<sup>32</sup> Adopted from Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 40–42 and Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 110.

<sup>33</sup> Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 35.

<sup>34</sup> César Ayala, Rafael Bernabe: Puerto Rico in American Century. 35.

<sup>35</sup> Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 39.

more or less a result of the First World War. First, the American demand for French, Belgium and Japanese cloth and laces was cut off during the war and second, it grew bigger in reaction to declining coffee industry as the European selling markets closed down for Puerto Rican coffee producers. Both of them thus needed to be replaced. Mainly Puerto Rican women and sometimes whole families were employed to satisfy the US demand for embroidery and so on. In the early 1930s more than sixty thousand women were employed in the needle industry – which makes it the largest Puerto Rican industrial branch as for the number of employees, with the sugar industry right behind, exceeding this number only during the harvest seasons. And then, Puerto Rican coffee growers unsuccessfully asked for free access to the United States as a new selling market and with the unfavourable weather situation, coffee production considerably diminished after the war.<sup>36</sup>

With political attachment between the United States and Puerto Rico, the economic connection of the islanders to the US increased as well. Until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, before the arrival of Americans, the agriculture was in the hands of small farmers focusing mainly on coffee production. From the turn of the century the farm-based production was replaced by large absentee-owned corporations, usually from the United States. Despite the ‘Five-Hundred Acre Law’ of the Foraker Act, stating the maximum size of land that can be owned by a single owner, the sugar industry in Puerto Rico was controlled by four main corporations. These were connected to the oligopolistic trust of sugar companies controlling the US sugar market. The law had been ignored for forty years since there was no legal punishment for its violation. This led to gradual disappearance of local farms and to the increase in unemployment. The farmers started to work for these corporations, the seasonal character of this work, however, further boosted the unemployment rate, providing jobs only for approximately a half of the year. Those who were lucky to have a job received only little money though. In comparison to the prices of basic food, the wages were quite miserable and they were also subjected to taxation imposed by the US government. It was stated that about ninety-four percent of income was spent on food and what is more, a Puerto Rican paid from eight to fourteen percent more for the same food than a New Yorker.<sup>37</sup> As if it was not enough for Puerto Rico, the bad socioeconomic situation was reinforced by natural disasters. The island was hit by two hurricanes in 1928 and 1932 which led to

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<sup>36</sup> Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 35–50.

<sup>37</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 166.

the collapse of the coffee production accompanied by the economic crisis of 1929.<sup>38</sup> It should be mentioned that with the entry of US capital to Puerto Rico, there was a significant improvement in infrastructure, sanitation and better education was stressed; unfortunately the overall economic situation was still bad and poverty was visible everywhere.

Concerning the political situation, the Jones-Shafroth Bill<sup>39</sup> was signed by President Woodrow Wilson on March 2, 1917 as a reaction to the Puerto Rican demands to more self-government. The most important part of this bill commonly known as Jones Act granted Puerto Ricans the American citizenship. However, not all Puerto Rican representatives were in favour of US citizenship as they perceived it as a dead end in their efforts to gain independence and self-government. Among the critics of the bill was José de Diego, president of the House of Delegates, and Luis Muñoz Rivera, the then Resident Commissioner in Washington. They both argued that the Jones Act did not provide a solution to the question of political status of Puerto Rico and they found it unsatisfactory for the island's citizens to accept American citizenship without Puerto Rico having statehood. De Diego proposed that there should be a referendum on the question of citizenship. But it did not happen. Puerto Ricans had the right to refuse American citizenship but if they did, they would lose their voting right as well. Rivera and his Unionist Party were forced by the US officials to relinquish the independence in their political program otherwise the Unionists would not have been appointed to any of the government posts. They succumbed and adopted the idea of a free associated state for Puerto Rico in their program.

With the passing of the Jones Act, the governor had three instead of two advisors. They were the Commissioner of Education, the Attorney General – appointed by the President – and the newly designated Auditor – appointed by the governor himself. The ultimate veto power stayed in hands of the American governor and it was not until 1947 that the island had a Puerto Rican as its first governor despite the fact that the Resident Commissioner, Felix Córdova Dávila, demanded the right to elect Puerto Rico's own governor in the House of Representatives already in 1926. The problem was that American governors usually knew very little about Puerto Rican matters and were not thus very helpful. An unpopular part of the Jones Act was a regulation on the

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<sup>38</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 41f, 57–59. – Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 43–52.

<sup>39</sup> Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 43, 55, 61, 66, 73f, 88. – Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 123–139, 150f.

alcohol prohibition in poverty-stricken Puerto Rico since the rum sales procured significant revenues for Puerto Rico.

The 1930s in the United States were affected by the Great Depression and Puerto Rico was not excluded. Except for the bad economic situation in both countries, Puerto Rico was hit by two hurricanes with disastrous results in the agriculture. Unemployment followed. In this period, the migration to the United States, especially New York, started on a large scale and the independence movement grew stronger. In the following decade, Spanish was reintroduced as the official language along with English. This was an important step from the cultural point of view because language forms an indispensable part of one's culture and community. Currently, Spanish remains the official language but since there is an undeniable liaison between Puerto Rico and the United States, English has its place in public education as well. It was established as obligatory second language at elementary schools.

Puerto Rico had strategic function for the United States during the war period in the defence of the Caribbean. It served the United States as a military base, the same way it served Spain throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The United States used Puerto Rico and the rest of the Antillean islands as a shield to protect the Panama Canal with Puerto Rico playing a key role. As the relations between the United States and Germany with Japan were more and more strained, the US government pumped about thirty million dollars into building air and naval bases in Puerto Rico. The United States needed to keep good relations with the island and it definitely became a possession worth having. At that time, in 1943 a proposal for Puerto Rican independence was submitted to Congress. This topic raised discussion in Congress but the standpoint of war department was clear; it would be unwise to give independence to such a strategic island during the wartime and such a question should be discussed later.<sup>40</sup> And really, the years following World War II brought some changes to the Puerto Rican administration.

In 1947 the Craford Bill was passed, allowing the Puerto Ricans to vote and elect their own governor, without the US interference. The first governor elected by the Puerto Ricans became in 1948 Luis Muñoz Marín, a son of Luis Muñoz Rivera – one of the most influential political representatives of Puerto Rico. The representative of the Popular Democratic Party launched economic reform, known as Operation Bootstrap.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 188–194.

<sup>41</sup> Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 152f. – Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 80–86, 91.

It was a series of locally and federally funded programs that aimed at diversification of Puerto Rican economy which was heavily agriculture oriented. It started by opening small factories for the production of glass, cement or cardboard paper; i.e. basic products used for rum bottles, building of highways or houses and shipping export products.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, it soon turned out that such businesses were not profitable enough to grow bigger and thus significantly eliminate the unemployment. This approach was soon abandoned and it caught a different course. In the following phase, Operation Bootstrap granted tax advantages to companies which were going to relocate their production plants to Puerto Rico. As a result the electronics and pharmaceutical manufacturers (mostly from the USA) settled in Puerto Rico and gave rise to new employment opportunities for the impoverished Puerto Ricans. Consequently, in the years following the Second World War, the economic nature of the island had changed; most of people earned their living in industry rather than agriculture. It is stated that with the arrival of private capital about two thousand factories had opened with one hundred jobs available.<sup>43</sup> The World War Two veterans also had considerable impact on economy as they had received housing loans from the American government, another incentive to the flourishing insular economy.

## **2.6 The 1950s and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico**

The biggest political change came on July 25<sup>44</sup>, 1952 under the Harry Truman's presidency.<sup>45</sup> Puerto Rico gained a status of a commonwealth associated with the United States, commonly referred to in Spanish as 'Estado Libre Asociado,'<sup>46</sup> a free state associated with the United States. Law 600 allowed Puerto Ricans to draw up their own constitution, which only dealt with insular affairs and not with the relation to the USA. A big step forward, the constitution was, however, still subordinated to US federal laws in case of a conflict. Under the Constitution Act, Puerto Ricans already US citizens, were exempt of paying federal taxes, they had suffrage related to the local affairs and they could fly Puerto Rican flag again after more than fifty years, since it was a crime since 1898. The opponents of commonwealth argued that this kind of union with the US would prevent future and real independence or sovereignty and the new political

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<sup>42</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 195.

<sup>43</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 196.

<sup>44</sup> The date was chosen to mark the date of the US invasion to Puerto Rico in 1898.

<sup>45</sup> This chapter draws on Galván, *Culture and Customs*, 13f, 20–24.

<sup>46</sup> Galván, *Culture and Customs*, 13. – Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 195f.

scheme even provoked violent actions in Puerto Rico and in the United States where a group of Puerto Rican terrorists shot five congressmen in the House of Representatives in May 1954.<sup>47</sup>

The 1950s and 1960s led to major socioeconomic progress in the modern history of Puerto Rico. Even though there was still quite high unemployment and strong economic dependency on the outside world, education and medical care were made available for everyone. The 1960s also brought important political changes. First, Luis Muñoz Marín resigned on his post in 1964 after almost two decades in power as governor. Next, at the beginning of the decade Puerto Ricans asked Congress for more powers and home rule within the commonwealth and finally in 1967 a plebiscite took place. Puerto Ricans were to express their opinion on the question of political status of their homeland. The majority of electorate was in favour of a commonwealth with 60 percent of votes, 39 percent of voters gave preference to statehood and remaining voters chose the independence.<sup>48</sup> Later, with the creation of the New Progressive Party, efforts to enforce statehood strengthened and two more referenda were held in Puerto Rico. The pro-statehood feeling was stronger than ever before but it only received 46.3 percent and 46.5 percent compared to 48.6 percent and 50.3 percent<sup>49</sup> for a commonwealth respectively in 1993 and 1998 plebiscites.<sup>50</sup>

The years of economic growth in Puerto Rico were interrupted by recession in 1974 and 1975. Traditionally higher unemployment rate almost doubled ranging between seventeen and twenty-three percent in 1980s.<sup>51</sup> In order to mitigate its impact, the local and federal governments set up support projects or distributed food stamps. Consequently, the expenses rose to six billion dollars, six times bigger financial injection than in the previous years and programs. The nature of problem lied in the absentee-owned corporations operating in Puerto Rico. Even though they often generated solid incomes, they did not use that money again to invest it in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican industry lacked complementary industries for manufacturing and the

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<sup>47</sup> From Edward F. Ryan for the Washington Post in Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 204–207.

<sup>48</sup> Wagenheim and Jiménez de Wagenheim, *The Puerto Ricans*, 223ff.

<sup>49</sup> The 1998 referendum included five options (intentionally excluding the ‘Estado Libre Asociado’ option), they were statehood, independence, free association and the existing status of unincorporated territory (all of which the opposing Popular Democratic Party did not favour) and the last ‘None of the above’ (included in the ballot as a result of a lawsuit). So the percentage of votes stated above belongs to ‘None of the above’ option.

<sup>50</sup> Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 293f, 299.

<sup>51</sup> According to Ayala and Bernabe, the unofficial records are closer to 30 percent.

majority of necessary resources had to be imported and then exported again and nothing thus stayed on the island. One of the stimuli to Puerto Rican economy came in 1976 when the US companies were encouraged to invest their capital in Puerto Rico by granting them tax exemption up to twenty-five percent of their financial profits, profits generated in Puerto Rico not elsewhere. This attracted a lot of US companies which only declared their profits in Puerto Rico, and did not produce anything though. As a result, additional measure was taken and the Puerto Rican government imposed a tax on profits transferred to the United States with possible reduction if reinvested in Puerto Rico. The tax exemption attracted there the existing electronics and pharmaceutical industries which were newly supplemented by the petrochemical industry and together they provided thirty percent of jobs by the end of the 1980s. This support program was terminated during the Bill Clinton's presidency in 1996. The labour force participation is, however, still low and high unemployment rate makes a lot of islanders move to the United States and find a job there. Although the island remains a depressed area in the US context, when compared to the rest of Latin America, Puerto Rico is considered fairly affluent. Exclusively agriculture-oriented economy in the past, the industrial sector nowadays plays the primary role in the Puerto Rican's economy. Agriculture, of course, remains an integral part of island's economy, only there was a shift from sugar cultivation and production to livestock and dairy production as the main agricultural domain. Since Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands have long attracted many tourists, tourism is also a significant contributor to the state treasury. Nowadays, "Puerto Rico remains an unincorporated territory to which Congress has delegated more government functions than in the case of past territories (election of the insular governor, its own constitution)"<sup>52</sup> and it is considered one of the most stable economies in the Caribbean even though the country recently struggles with huge public debt.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 173.

<sup>53</sup> Ayala and Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century*, 267–272. – Galván, *Culture and Customs*, 12–14. – "The World Factbook: Puerto Rico," Central Intelligence Agency, last updated April 10, 2015, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/rq.html>.

### **3 LEAVING ‘LA PATRIA’**

This chapter is going to deal with the migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States, which will be referred to as the mainland.<sup>54</sup> Puerto Rico has been interconnected with the United States since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the countries keep a strong political and socio-economic link since then. In 1917 Puerto Ricans were given the US citizenship and they become the American citizens by birth so there are no legal constraints for them to move freely between the island and the mainland. But large-scale emigration to the US did not start before the end of the Second World War. As a result, there are currently more Puerto Ricans living on the US mainland than in Puerto Rico with 4.2 million compared to 3.8 million inhabitants. In this part I am going to deal with the factors that drove Puerto Ricans from their homeland, next I am going to compare the situation of Puerto Ricans on the island and the United States; in the field of economic conditions or prosperity, education and others. Some space is going to be given to other destinations than the United States, in the migration process of Puerto Ricans as this was an important part of the early migration. At last, I am going to focus my attention on the areas on the US mainland where the most of the Puerto Rican population is concentrated and their brief description. Puerto Ricans now represent the second largest Hispanic group in the US after Mexican-Americans.

#### **3.1 Migration waves**

There were several reasons that drove Puerto Ricans from their homeland, or as they call it ‘la patria.’ With different stages in the history of the island, different reasons made Puerto Ricans to leave their country. In general, we can observe, that migration takes place for several main reasons such as economic, political and social. This was also the case of Puerto Rico and the push and pull factors of their migration are going to be described below.

As there have been close economic and political ties, together with geographical proximity, the most of Puerto Ricans settled in the United States. In the early stages of emigration, some of them also went to Hawaii or various Caribbean Islands.

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<sup>54</sup> ‘La patria’ means homeland in Spanish



The emigration on a large scale did not start before the mid-1940s but the first emigration of smaller groups started much earlier and it can be divided into several phases. I am going to adopt the structure of Bonilla and Campos described in *Puerto Ricans in the United States of Acosta-Belén*.<sup>55</sup> In order to understand the motives of the Puerto Ricans for migration, it is necessary to know the historical background so the findings from the previous chapter are going to be used here and enriched with more profound details.

### **3.1.1 Phase 1: From the abolition of slavery to the US invasion**

The first phase of the Puerto Rican emigration corresponds approximately to the period between 1873 and 1898 and originated as a result of political and economic factors.<sup>56</sup> The political reasons that forced many Puerto Ricans to emigrate temporarily or for good were results of the Spanish absolutist rule. During the Spanish supremacy the proponents of more liberal regime under the Spanish rule and the pro-independence advocates had to leave the island in order to avoid persecution.

As far as the economic aspect is concerned, the nature of Puerto Rican economy had been changing. The country was neglected by Spain throughout the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century and it only served as a military post. The subsistence farming was accompanied by contraband trade with neighbouring islands. The illegal trade between the islands developed with the imposition of import and export taxes on all goods. Spanish crown wanted to generate more revenues but the effect was opposite and during these years the Spanish treasury was empty (as far as the income from Puerto Rico is concerned). The change in the situation was to come with the accession of Bourbon dynasty on the Spanish throne in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The main reason lied in the abolition of slavery in 1773. It caused high increase in (paid) workforce and there were not enough jobs to be provided for everyone and next, with increasing ties to the United States, the exportation of Puerto Rican goods grew and so did the emigration. Not all of the Puerto Ricans left for the United States since other Caribbean and Latin American countries were in need of manual

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<sup>55</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 42.

<sup>56</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 27–35, 41–43.

and agricultural workers; they were for example the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Panama and Venezuela.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, some of the well-off Puerto Ricans longed for higher education and thus travelled to Spain or other European countries and in later periods to the United States as well.

The economic and social advancement were not the only push factors. Throughout the nineteenth century some Puerto Ricans raised their voices and made a claim to the independence from Spain and demanded at least more civil liberties such as freedom of speech and freedom of press. The Puerto Ricans also sought to have a representation in the Spanish parliament. In order to avoid persecution from Spain they left the country or they were expelled. A great deal of them, however, continued their fight from exile.

### **3.1.2 Phase 2: From the US takeover to the Great Depression**

It was the year 1898 when Puerto Rico became possession of the United States.<sup>57</sup> It happened one year after the island was given more home rule and more freedom from Spain. Nonetheless, with the entry of Americans on Puerto Rican soil, a plenty of things had changed, including the nature of economy.

Until then, the agriculture-oriented Puerto Rico was based on small farm production. Nevertheless, the inflow of US money to the island caused decline in production on local farms and they were replaced by large haciendas owned by Americans. During this period we can observe internal migration. Because local farmers were not able to compete with large American companies, they had to close down their farms and earn their living somewhere else. They often got employed on those American haciendas or in the cities so there was visible movement from rural to urban areas. Not all farmers were able to find jobs though and they left Puerto Rico. They were often hired as contract labourers by US companies which sought cheap labour force in the Caribbean and Latin America. In 1900 there were still less than two thousand Puerto Ricans in the United States.

The economic situation of local workers was aggravated by a natural disaster. In 1899, Puerto Rico was hit by a hurricane San Ciriaco and caused considerable damage in agriculture, resulting in the growth of unemployment and subsequent

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<sup>57</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 27–39, 41–60.

poverty. At that time, between 1900 and 1901, labour migration to Hawaii<sup>58</sup> commenced and the whole Puerto Rican families moved westwards to this Pacific island.

Almost six thousand Puerto Ricans were hired in 1900 to work on sugar cane plantations. In order to recruit enough workers, travel expenses were paid for by the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association. The warmth-loving Puerto Ricans, however, faced many hardships on the way to Hawaii. Except for the fact that the journey was long and exhausting, they had to deal with climatic changes, which they were not prepared for. In Puerto Rico, they boarded on a ship which took them to New Orleans and from there they continued by train to San Francisco and finally from San Francisco to Hawaii by a ship.

As the redeployment of Puerto Rican workers started in November, weather conditions on the US mainland were far from what Puerto Ricans were used to, Puerto Rico's average temperatures range between twenty and thirty degrees Celsius throughout the year.<sup>59</sup>

It is true that a substantial part of hired workers did not even arrived in Hawaii and they got settled along the route. As a result of labour migration to Hawaii, a considerable number of Puerto Ricans settled in San Francisco, forming the second largest Puerto Rican community after New York (excluding Puerto Rico itself) until 1950. Others also settled in New Orleans or were dispersed in California.

Except for Hawaii, some of the Puerto Rican labour migration headed to nearby Cuba (to work in iron mines as well as on sugar plantations), the Dominican Republic or the US Virgin Islands (namely the island Saint Croix), a group of islands south-east of Puerto Rico which was bought by the Americans from Denmark in 1917. The greatest influx of the Puerto Rican immigrants experienced the United States though. Larger groups settled in the northeast of the United States, especially in New York and Chicago.

It was mainly the economic advancement and the search of jobs that motivated the Puerto Ricans to leave their homeland. On that account, the early 1920s were a period of rising migration. While employment opportunities on the island were

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<sup>58</sup> According to 2010 Census, there are currently 44,116 Puerto Ricans living in Hawaii, i.e. 3.2% of the total population of Hawaii.

<sup>59</sup> Data taken from "Average Weather in San Juan, Puerto Rico," World Weather and Climate Information, accessed April 1, 2015, <http://www.weather-and-climate.com/average-monthly-Rainfall-Temperature-Sunshine,San-Juan,Puerto-Rico>.

declining, the situation on the mainland was opposite. However, during the period of worldwide economic stagnation and recession, the migration slowed down. But not even the Great Depression, a period which started by a crash on the New York Stock Exchange in October 1929, completely stopped the inflow of immigrants from Puerto Rico. Small numbers of Borriqueños were still arriving, mainly to New York.

To summarize the economic situation in Puerto Rico, we must realize that the most of agricultural land was in the hands of large American corporations, which were technologically more advanced than usually small Puerto Rican farms. Agriculture originally oriented on coffee cultivation, switched to sugar production. This, however, led to an increase in unemployment since the seasonal nature of the sugar industry and newly opened tobacco and needle industry could not completely replace the amount of jobs formerly provided by the coffee industry. Here we come to the reason of migration in the early twentieth century. It was not only outer migration but inner as well, since the Puerto Ricans moved from rural to urban areas with the gradual Americanization of Puerto Rican land.

In addition to the economic aspect of migration, at the turn of the century enhanced by a natural disaster, new arrangement of political relations between the United States and Puerto Rico provided an incentive for migration on the mainland. In 1917 the Jones Act, granting Puerto Ricans the US citizenship, was passed. The islanders suddenly became American citizens and they were allowed to move freely between the two.

### **3.1.3 Phase 3: The Great Migration and the post-war period**

The large-scale emigration started after World War Two and this period from the mid-1940s to approximately mid-1960s is referred to as the Great Migration.<sup>60</sup> It was caused by several changes in society which went through economic reform; agriculture-based economy was gradually transformed into the industrial one. Moreover, overpopulated Puerto Rico suffered from high unemployment and resulting poverty and migration appeared to be a solution. At last, a big step came in the field of transportation; steamships<sup>61</sup> were replaced by airplanes in the 1940s.

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<sup>60</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 50, 69ff, 75–81. – Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 95–108.

<sup>61</sup> As Acosta-Belén and Santiago claim, the expression ‘s/he took a ship’ (‘se embarcó’ in Spanish) was commonly used to refer to someone who left Puerto Rico for the United States. And it became so popular that even after airplanes became the primary means of transportation, the expression continued to be used.

During this period, different kinds of migration can be noticed with regard to the direction of movement. First, Puerto Ricans were coming to the United States usually to seek economic prosperity or due to familial ties. Secondly, there was also a considerable amount of return migration. Third, there was also movement within the island itself, again from rural to urban areas due to the growing industrialization of economy. Fourth, a seasonal type of migration appeared when the wealthy Americans were coming to Puerto Rico for vacation.

As it was mentioned earlier, among the most important pull factors of migration was the improved transportation between Puerto Rico and the US mainland. The introduction of air travel between San Juan and New York significantly reduced travel times between the two towns with the largest concentration of Puerto Ricans. Moreover, the government invited the concerned airlines to introduce low-cost flights between San Juan and New York and later with Puerto Ricans expanding to other areas on the mainland, low-cost fares were established for Chicago and Philadelphia as well.

Relatively cheap and fast air travel created an abstract bridge between the island and the mainland, and this stimulated the phenomenon of return migration. The peak of return migration was registered towards the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s. Otherwise, the portion of those returning home from the United States was lower than the number of those flowing to the United States. This reverse phenomenon occurred during a period of economic stagnation in the United States and allegedly improved situation on the island. “The island became an example for the rest of the Caribbean, Latin America, and other developing countries of what an undeveloped country could achieve with the assistance and tutelage of the United States.”<sup>62</sup> From sociological point of view, many Puerto Ricans did not manage to adjust to the American way of life, which, mixed with strong national feeling, made them return to the island. The geographical proximity also influenced the back and forth mobility<sup>63</sup> of Puerto Ricans (also called commuter, circular, swallow, or revolving-door migration).<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 75.

<sup>63</sup> As Duany points out, migration has been traditionally perceived as a one-way and permanent phenomenon. However, the circular migration has been increasingly popular among some groups, especially in the Caribbean. The geographical proximity of these nations' home countries is one of prerequisites of back and forth migration, together with better availability of mass transportation. Circular migration is further subjected to economic situations in both countries, the home country and the US and some researchers perceive the back and forth migration as a flexible strategy of the Puerto Rican families to make a living and improve their socio-economic situation.

<sup>64</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 85. – Jorge Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island and in the United States* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 208–209.

While in the first half of the 1940s World War Two interrupted the migration, shortly after the end of the war, already in 1945 the migration increased with about 13,500 Puerto Ricans coming to New York and forty thousand a year later. One of the push factors was the overpopulation of the island.

With the arrival of Americans on the island, the living conditions had been improving considerably thanks to better health care, sanitation and better availability of drinking water for everyone. It was naturally accompanied by the decline of infant mortality and increase in life expectancy which led to the population boom. The annual increase of population in the early 1960s and the early 1970s was approximately 2.2 percent<sup>65</sup> which counts about fifty thousand people. Taken into account the total area of Puerto Rico, the island simply became overcrowded. For comparison, the total area of the island is more than thousand times smaller than that of the United States while the population growth was two and three times bigger in Puerto Rico in the 1960s and the 1970s respectively.<sup>66</sup>

The population explosion was accompanied by high unemployment, and while the official figures state it to be somewhere around fifteen percent, the unofficial estimates claim unemployment as high as thirty percent. The solution of government to this situation was the promotion of migration to the United States; even though the Puerto Rican government was criticized for this step as it created more ties and economic dependency between the US and Puerto Rican labour market. Nevertheless, there was a lack of workers on the mainland in the post-war period, another incentive for migration. Ironically, it was New York, a city where the population density was one hundred and fifty times higher than in Puerto Rico, which experienced the largest influx of the Puerto Rican immigrants.

Another solution to the overpopulation in Puerto Rico was the implementation of birth control policies, a step that was strongly opposed by the Catholic Church. The fact that American pharmaceutical companies introduced contraceptive pills to Puerto Rican market largely contributed to the official policy. In the 1950s there was huge trend of woman sterilization and about thirty-five percent of Puerto Rican women

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<sup>65</sup> "Population Growth," Index Mundi, accessed April 1, 2015, <http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/indicators/SP.POP.GROW/compare#country=cz:pr:us>.

<sup>66</sup> Within the Czech context, the total area is more than eight times bigger than that of Puerto Rico while the population growth in the early 1960s represented one third of that of Puerto Rico.

were sterilized, compared to thirty percent on the mainland. Consequently, the birth rate decreased enormously by forty-eight percent from 5.2 to 2.7 children per woman.<sup>67</sup>

In conclusion, the migration in the post-war period was a direct consequence of the Operation Bootstrap which was launched in 1950s with the aim to increase per capita income. The governing Popular Democratic Party set following complementary goals in order to achieve the economic advancement of the Puerto Rican citizens. They were the finding of selling market for Puerto Rican goods, to provide an incentive for American corporations to invest their money in Puerto Rico, to stabilize political situation in the country and to decrease the population growth.

“All of those conditions were rapidly met in Puerto Rico by the new Muñoz Marín administration. Family planning and population control initiatives to reduce births on the island and accelerated migration to the United States were given high priority. Access to the US domestic market was key to achieving economies of scale; thus a corporate federal tax exemption program was introduced and became a powerful instrument to attract US industrial capital. With the repression of the Nationalist movement and the imprisonment of most of the party’s high-profile leadership, the Puerto Rico-US political relationship provided a stable and welcoming environment for North American businesses.”<sup>68</sup>

### **3.1.4 Phase 4: Puerto Rican migration today**

An important change related to migration of the Puerto Rican population has been recorded in the censuses of 2000 and 2010.<sup>69</sup> Mainland Puerto Ricans have exceeded the islanders in number, and the overall majority of Puerto Ricans now lives on the US mainland rather than on the island. There were 3.4 million Puerto Ricans

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<sup>67</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 50.

<sup>68</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 76f.

<sup>69</sup> This chapter draws on Lizette Alvarez, “Economy and Crime Spur New Puerto Rican Exodus,” *The New York Times*, February 8, 2014, accessed April 11, 2015, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/09/us/economy-and-crime-spur-new-puerto-rican-exodus.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/09/us/economy-and-crime-spur-new-puerto-rican-exodus.html?_r=0). – D’vera Cohn, Eileen Patten and Mark Hugo Lopez, “Puerto Rican Population Declines on Island, Grows on U.S. Mainland,” *Pew Research Center*, August 11, 2014, accessed April 11, 2015, <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2014/08/11/puerto-rican-population-declines-on-island-grows-on-u-s-mainland/>. – Jorge Duany, “Mickey Ricans? *The Recent Puerto Rican Diaspora to Florida*” (paper presented at the Conference on “Florida’s Hispanic Heritage,” Institute for the Study of Latin America and the Caribbean, University of South Florida, Tampa, October 13-20, 2012), accessed April 9, 2015, [http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=las\\_hhfc](http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1019&context=las_hhfc). – Sharon R. Ennis, Merarys Ríos-Vargas, Nora G. Albert, “The Hispanic Population: 2010: 2010 Census Briefs,” accessed April 9, 2015, <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-04.pdf>. – Cohn, Patten and Lopez, “Puerto Rican Population Declines on Island, Grows on U.S. Mainland.”

on the US mainland in 2000, ten years later the number reached 4.6 million.<sup>70</sup> Whereas the mainland Puerto Rican population has been growing, the islanders are on a slight decrease with 3.8 and 3.7 million in 2000 and 2010 respectively. According to 2010 census, Puerto Ricans represent the second largest Hispanic group in the United States followed by Cubans and Salvadorans with about two-million population. While Mexicans, the leading group among the Hispanics and Latinos<sup>71</sup> in the United States, account for 63 percent of Hispanics or Latinos, Puerto Ricans constitute 9 percent, which makes one and a half percent of total US population. However, the Puerto Ricans on the islands form the ninety-six-percent majority.

In the recent years the largest outflow of Puerto Ricans from the island has been recorded since the Great migration of the 1950s and the 1960s. The push factors are nowadays socio-economic. In the period between 2006 and 2013, about 42 percent of migrants gave job-related reasons for migration to the United States and about 38 percent admitted that it was on the family-related grounds.

Puerto Rico has undergone an economic crisis since 2006 which had a considerable impact on the migration. The economic situation of the island is connected to that of the United States, which went through economic recession as well. The economic downturn in Puerto Rico was however reinforced by the end of tax exemption enjoyed by the businesses on the island and whose end caused many businesses to close down. Moreover, Puerto Rican economy has been largely indebted since the 1990s negatively influencing the damaged economy. The economic crisis in Puerto Rico had a direct impact on the decline of population where a large proportion of population, fighting with high unemployment, is dependent on the allotment of food stamps. The steady population growth since the 1700s was interrupted in the past years and the island is experiencing population decline.

According to Anderson Research International LLC, on average, 122 Puerto Rican left the island every day between April 2010 and July 2014. In 2010 about forty thousand Puerto Ricans left the island and this trend has been increasing since then as it is palpable in the following chart.<sup>72</sup>

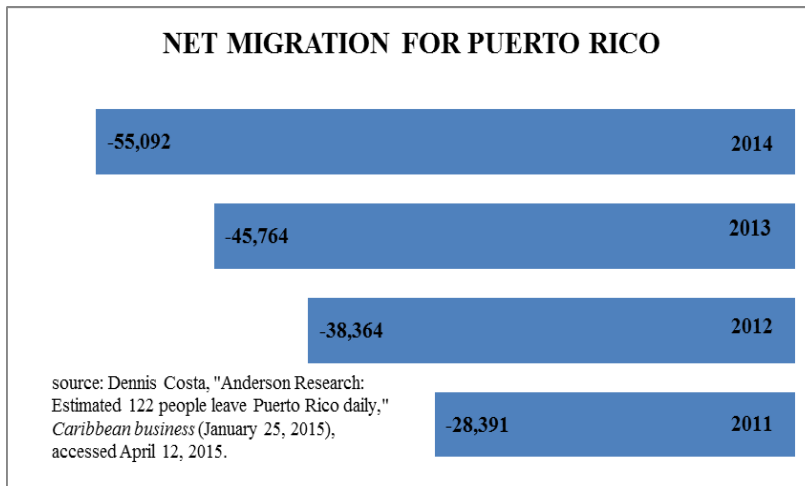
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<sup>70</sup> According to 2013 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the number of the Puerto Rican population reached 4.9 million.

<sup>71</sup> 'Hispanic or Latino' is defined in the 2010 U.S. Census as "a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race."

<sup>72</sup> Dennis Costa, "Anderson Research: Estimated 122 people leave Puerto Rico daily," *Caribbean business*, January 25, 2015, accessed April 12, 2015,





On the other hand, based on some researches and census data it was revealed that more educated people tend to stay on the island, while the less educated leave for the United States

where they are able to find rather unskilled jobs. The level of schooling has improved on the island and the bilingual workforce has increased as well.

There has been a trend of moving from the island due to the increase in crime rate, especially in San Juan. Crime rate goes hand in hand with high unemployment rate which reaches approximately 15 percent in Puerto Rico. Besides, the crime is also ascribed to expanding drug smuggling.

As for the outmigration, some experts talk about brain drain of professionals to the United States, especially nurses, doctors, teachers and engineers who seek better working conditions, including better salaries.

It must be noted that there are visible socio-economic differences among Puerto Ricans in different areas of the United States. Based on the U.S. Census Bureau and other data, it was found out that there are differences in household incomes and poverty rates in different parts of the United States. Florida is considered to have better proportion of white-collar jobs, educated people and better incomes than elsewhere in the United States.<sup>73</sup>

While median household income in Puerto Rico was 19,624 dollars in 2013, in the United States it was 53,046. Puerto Rico lags behind the poorest American state Mississippi which reaches up to 39 thousand dollars. While median household income of Puerto Ricans living in the United States revolves around 36,000 dollars. Annual per capita income was 11,068 and 28,155 dollars in Puerto Rico and the United States

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<http://ehis.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=e3982990-6224-4a48-8e55-e9163845cdee%40sessionmgr4002&vid=0&hid=4210>.

<sup>73</sup> According to 2010 Census data, the poverty rate in Florida is 18.3 percent, while New York exceeds this proportion by more than 10 percent and states like Pennsylvania, Massachusetts move around 40 percent.

respectively. The highest household income of the mainland Puerto Ricans is in Miami, Florida.<sup>74</sup>

Despite the fact that Puerto Rico has one of the most advanced economies in the Caribbean, it is the poorest in comparison to the United States and there is a significant gap between the island and the poorest American state which is demonstrated by the figures above. Compared to other Hispanic groups living in the United States, Puerto Ricans are among the poorer, they have, on the other hand, better education attainment than other Hispanic groups.

### **3.2 Distribution of the Puerto Ricans on the mainland**

New York has served as a gateway for immigrants from all over the world to the United States throughout history, and Puerto Ricans were not an exception.<sup>75</sup> Even though from the point of geographical proximity, we would assume that Florida has been the number one destination, the working opportunities, familial ties and later cheap air travel caused that most of the islanders chose New York City as their new home.

This chapter is going to deal with the areas with the largest concentration of the Puerto Rican population, which represents the second largest community of the Hispanic group. Puerto Ricans have shown great mobility within the United States so some space will be given to the change in their settling pattern. Puerto Ricans are said to be highly mobile within the United States. Their mobility is influenced by alternating periods of expansion and recession within business cycle though. Puerto Ricans have shown greater geographical dispersion in the past decades. While 80 percent of the mainland Puerto Ricans were settled in three states only (New York, New Jersey and Illinois), in 2000 the same proportion was dispersed in five additional states (Florida, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, California).<sup>76</sup>

It should be taken into account that the mainland Puerto Rican population has recently exceeded the number of Puerto Ricans in their homeland and thus stateside Puerto Ricans cannot be omitted in this paper.

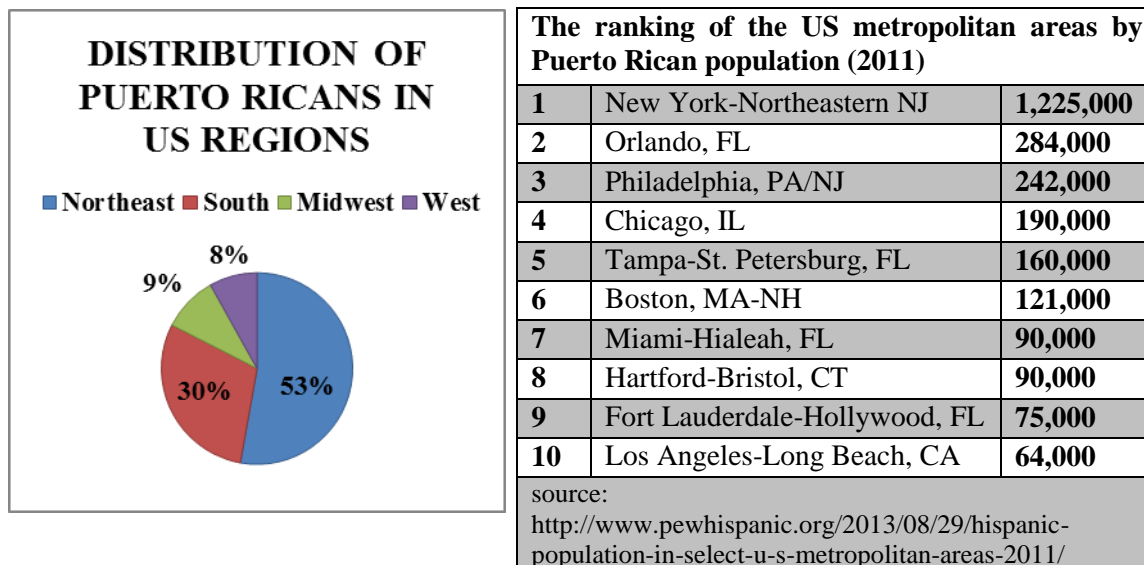
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<sup>74</sup> Data taken from “U.S. Census Bureau,” accessed April 10, 2015, <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/INC110213/72> and <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/IPE120213/00,12,36,28>.

<sup>75</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 85–97. – Ennis, Ríos-Vargas and Albert, “The Hispanic Population: 2010.”

<sup>76</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 89.

More than a half of the islanders on the US mainland are concentrated in the Northeast<sup>77</sup> and followed by the South, the Midwest and the West as projected in the chart below. Puerto Ricans are represented in all fifty states in lesser or greater numbers.<sup>78</sup>



The distribution pattern of Puerto Ricans on the mainland has changed though (for current state see the table above). Despite the fact that New York remains the most Puerto Rican-populated state in the US, there has been an outflow of Puerto Ricans from the northeast since the 1990s in favour of other US regions, especially Florida, and the island. Nowadays, the vast majority of Puerto Ricans is concentrated in New York, Florida, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts,<sup>79</sup> representing the top five US states with the biggest concentration of the Puerto Rican population. Puerto Ricans are traditionally significant contributors of population growth in the United States.

While in 1960 there were three fourths of all mainland Puerto Ricans settled in New York, only one half remained in 2012. The decline of New York Puerto Ricans in the 1990s meant their increase in Florida, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Texas. Florida has become the primary destination of Puerto Ricans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; in 2012 one third of all mainland Puerto Ricans was settled in Florida, while

<sup>77</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Northeast census region includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The Midwest census region includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The South census region includes Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. The West census region includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

<sup>78</sup> Data available in Ennis, Ríos-Vargas and Albert, “The Hispanic Population: 2010.”

<sup>79</sup> Ennis, Ríos-Vargas and Albert, “The Hispanic Population: 2010.”

in 1980 it was only 10 percent.<sup>80</sup> The outmigration from the Northeast towards the South can be ascribed to economic downturn in the 1970s. Besides it became visible that a part of the Puerto Rican population started to favour middle-sized cities which offered cheaper housing. This pattern can be partly visible from the figures stated by Acosta-Belen; while in 1980 thirty-two cities with the highest Puerto Rican population contained 63 percent of the total mainland Puerto Rican population, in 2000 these thirty-two cities contained only 46 percent of the Puerto Rican population.<sup>81</sup> The agricultural states in the northeast like New Jersey, upstate New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts have attracted especially seasonal workers.

### 3.2.1 New York City

The reasons why New York City became the most frequent destination of Puerto Ricans were predominantly economic.<sup>82</sup> New York offered the new arrivals many job opportunities, especially in low-wage, unskilled jobs. At the beginning they had to get used to bad weather. Harsh winters with a lot of snow and temperatures below zero were among the inconveniences that Puerto Ricans, who were used for mild weather and average temperatures above twenty degrees even in winter, had to face. They also contended with racial prejudice from Americans and were sometimes perceived as inferior, or a lower class.

The first immigrants started to flow in already in the nineteenth century as a result of the Puerto Rican-American commercial relations and with closer intertwining of both countries, the migration was increasing. As it was mentioned earlier, the large-scale migration did not start before the end of World War Two and the 1940s was when the Puerto Ricans' presence started to be noticed in New York. While in 1910, after the first ten years of the US rule over the island, there were 554 Puerto Ricans in New York accounting for 37 percent of the Puerto Rican population in the United States, in the 1940s, 61,462 Puerto Ricans comprised 85 percent of all Puerto Ricans on the mainland.

It is said that about ninety percent of Puerto Rican migrants chose New York City for the many job opportunities it offered. The most of them were employed in clothing industry, hotels and restaurants, laundries, cigar making, as domestic servants

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<sup>80</sup> Cohn, Patten and Lopez, "Puerto Rican Population Declines on Island, Grows on U.S. Mainland."

<sup>81</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 95.

<sup>82</sup> This chapter draws on Virginia E. Sánchez Korrol, *From Colonia to Community: The History Of Puerto Ricans in New York City* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994), 28–38, 53–67, 69–81.

or in the light industry. Since there was a lack of workers during WWI, unskilled labourers from other countries were recruited. The following period of the 1920s was a period of economic prosperity so more workers were needed. Moreover, new quotas limiting immigration from Europe were implemented during the 1920s and Puerto Ricans were favoured among the others.

The islanders were mainly settling on the Upper East Side of Manhattan in East Harlem, also known as the Spanish Harlem or El Barrio<sup>83</sup>. Other metropolitan areas with the biggest concentration of the Puerto Rican population included Washington Heights, Williamsburg, Greenpoint and the South Bronx. These were areas with a high percentage of low-income families and they were often perceived as a New York underclass. Since the 1990s there has been a decline of the Puerto Rican population in the Bronx, Manhattan and Brooklyn and the Puerto population spread to other areas including Suffolk County, Long Island, Queens and Staten Island.<sup>84</sup> (See a map of New York City in Appendix 2).

The distribution of Puerto Ricans in various neighbourhoods was largely dependent on employment opportunities in those areas, together with cheap housing, transport services and shopping possibilities.

Already from the early settlements, East and South Central Harlem and Brooklyn became the centre of Spanish-speaking communities with a lot of restaurants and grocery stores offering typical Puerto Rican and other ethnic food. There were also theatres, and various societies promoting Puerto Rican culture or support organizations serving the newly arrived citizens in this new environment. But while unskilled workers settled in Brooklyn, Puerto Rican professionals and those working in commercial sector stayed in Manhattan. The fact that the Puerto Rican doctors, lawyers or businessman did not settle in Brooklyn among the other Puerto Ricans, for the sake of community, was criticized by the former group.

The commercial sector started to develop in the late 1920s and many grocery stores, called 'bodegas' in Spanish, and restaurants were opened. They became important parts of the Puerto Rican community as they were selling typical Puerto Rican food, products and meals and eating-out became a social event. According

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<sup>83</sup> Spanish 'el barrio' can be translated as 'neighbourhood.'

<sup>84</sup> Sonia G Collazo, Camille L. Ryan and Kurt J. Bauman, "Profile of the Puerto Rican Population in United States and Puerto Rico: 2008," accessed April 7, 2015, [http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/acs/paa2010/Collazo\\_Ryan\\_Bauman\\_PAA2010\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.census.gov/hhes/socdemo/education/data/acs/paa2010/Collazo_Ryan_Bauman_PAA2010_Paper.pdf)

to the Porto Rican Brotherhood's estimate, there were more than two hundred Puerto-Rican owned bodegas in NYC in 1927.<sup>85</sup> An important place became 'La Marqueta,' an open-space market in East Harlem that was selling food and various products from the whole Caribbean. The market officially opened in 1936 and remains open until today, selling various ethnic foods.<sup>86</sup>

In order to increase their family incomes, some families took in lodgers. They were mainly relatives or friends who helped to pay the rent. In traditionally oriented Puerto Rican families, women usually did not get a job and stayed at home taking care of the family and the household. Nevertheless, sometimes it became necessity in poor families for women to find a job, in New York as well as in Puerto Rico. They often did piecework executed from homes and for little money so they could contribute to family incomes at least a little and do their housewife tasks as well. Women were also employed as skilled labour in the fields associated with Puerto Rico; they were needle and tobacco industries. When they stayed at home, women often took care of their working friends' children for a small fee. Singers and musicians earned some extra money at the weekends when performing at house parties since it became a popular leisure activity of the Hispanics between the 1930s and the 1950s.

Puerto Ricans showed high sense of community and that was also one of the reasons that drove more and more Puerto Ricans to New York, a city where they could have depended on the help of their families, friends and organizations. Monolingual Puerto Ricans also appreciated the fact that the densely populated neighbourhoods were Spanish-speaking and they were not forced to learn or improve their English. The English language became a priority only for those who wanted to improve their situation and find better jobs as English was required on higher posts. It was not that difficult to survive in New York with no or little knowledge of English as you could go to Puerto Rican shops, theatres, read Spanish newspapers, listen to the radio in Spanish as well or later watch television programs available in Spanish. However, children attending American schools were often disadvantaged in comparison with American students. If they did not understand or speak English on an advanced level, they usually lagged behind the Americans and they had to repeat some grades.

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<sup>85</sup> Jorge Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move*, 198–200.

<sup>86</sup> "La Marqueta," NYCEDC, accessed April 7, 2015, <http://www.nycedc.com/project/la-marqueta>. Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move*, 200f.

Thus, Spanish as the main spoken language, sticking to traditions and strong family ties became distinctive feature of the Puerto Rican community.

Even though there has been an outflow of the Puerto Rican population from New York after the 1970s, it remains the second largest city after San Juan with the Puerto Rican population and it deserves a further mention as it constitutes an important part of Puerto Rican culture on the mainland. The table below shows the comparison of the Puerto Rican population in New York and the United States from 1910 to 2010.

<b>TOTAL US AND NEW YORK CITY (NYC) POPULATION IN COMPARISON TO THE PUERTO RICAN POPULATION IN NYC AND THE UNITED STATES<sup>87</sup></b>					
<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Puerto Rican population in the US<sup>88</sup></b>	<b>Percentage of the Puerto Rican population in the US</b>	<b>Total population of NYC<sup>89</sup></b>	<b>Puerto Rican population in NYC<sup>90</sup></b>	<b>Percentage of the Puerto Rican population in NYC</b>
2010	<b>4,623,716</b>	1.5	8,175,133	<b>723,621</b>	8.9
2000	<b>3,406,178</b>	1.2	8,008,278	<b>789,172</b>	9.9
1990	<b>2,620,352</b>	1.1	7,322,564	<b>896,763</b>	12.2
1980	<b>2,036,411</b>	0.9	7,071,639	<b>860,552</b>	12.2
1970	<b>1,442,774</b>	0.71	7,894,862	<b>969,700</b>	12.3
1960	<b>892,513</b>	0.5	7,781,984	<b>429,710</b>	5.5
1950	<b>301,375</b>	0.2	7,891,957	<b>187,420</b>	2.4
1940	<b>69,967</b>	0.05	7,454,995	<b>61,463</b>	0.82
1930	<b>52,774</b>	0.04	6,930,446	<b>44,908</b>	0.64
1920	<b>11,811</b>	0.01	5,620,048	<b>7,364</b>	0.13
1910	<b>1,513</b>	0.002	4,766,883	<b>554</b>	0.01

### 3.2.2 Florida

Even though New York City remains a city with the largest concentration of Puerto Ricans on the US mainland, statistics have shown the declining trend in the

<sup>87</sup> Data collected from “History,” U.S. Census Bureau, accessed April 8, 2015, [http://www.census.gov/history/www/through\\_the\\_decades/fast\\_facts/2010\\_fast\\_facts.html](http://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/fast_facts/2010_fast_facts.html).

<sup>88</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 83.

<sup>89</sup> “Total and Foreign-born Population,” Department of NYC planning, accessed April 8, 2015, [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/1790-2000\\_nyc\\_total\\_foreign\\_birth.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/1790-2000_nyc_total_foreign_birth.pdf).

<sup>90</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 94. – Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 109.

past decades in favour of other regions in the United States.<sup>91</sup> Florida became the second state as for the number of the Puerto Rican population after New York in 1990s, replacing thus New Jersey in its second place.<sup>92</sup>

Despite the geographical proximity of Florida to the island, the majority of Puerto Ricans chose more distant New York as their primary settlement and migration to Florida did not start before the 1940s when a couple of high-up Puerto Rican businessmen bought vast farmland in Miami area and set up the first sugar cane Puerto Rican refinery in Florida. More Puerto Ricans started to flow in Florida in the 1960s as they acquired affordable plots near Daltona, Volusia County on the north-eastern coast.

First incentive for larger migration to Florida came as late as 1971 when Walt Disney World theme park opened in Orlando and brought about expansion of that region with a lot of vacancies available. Plus Puerto Rico in the 1970s experienced economic decline and any employment opportunities were welcomed. The Puerto Rican government also took some steps to ensure work for several hundred Puerto Ricans in the sugar cane industry in Florida and negotiated seasonal work contracts for them. Furthermore, Puerto Rican Migration Division established its office in Miami in 1978 in order to incite the recruitment of islanders to Florida, as well as to endorse US commercial activities and US tourism on the island.

The 1980s witnessed a large influx of Puerto Ricans too with culmination between 1990 and 2000. The increase of the Puerto Rican minority reached 142 percent. The economic stimulus was that Florida real estate agencies offered housing for reasonable prices and one of them even established its branch in New York City and Puerto Rico in 1989. From socio-cultural point of view, the newly arrivals could depend on the help of families and the Puerto Rican community which was already established in Central Florida and the situation became easier for them.

Florida offered lower cost of living in comparison to New York area and due to changes in New York economy, there was a decline in the light industry, particularly in the garment industry employing a considerable amount of Puerto Ricans. At the same time, new job opportunities emerged in the South and North-East of the United States

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<sup>91</sup> This chapter draws on Jorge Duany and Felix V. Matos-Rodríguez, "Puerto Ricans in Orlando and Central Florida," *Centro De Estudios Puertorriqueños, Hunter College (CUNY) policy report 1:1* (spring 2006), accessed April 14, 2015.

[http://latinamericanstudies.org/puertorico/Puerto\\_Ricans\\_in\\_Orlando.pdf](http://latinamericanstudies.org/puertorico/Puerto_Ricans_in_Orlando.pdf). – Duany, *Mickey Ricans?*, 1–23.

<sup>92</sup> Based on the U.S. Census Bureau's data from 2012.



which pushed many islanders there. Puerto Ricans started to realize the advantage of the closeness between Florida and Puerto Rico which did not influence their decision to leave for New York in earlier periods. Florida was half-Hispanic, as for the population and that could have been also one of the decisive factors for Spanish-speaking Puerto Ricans to move to Florida.

The biggest concentration of Puerto Ricans has been in Central Florida, including Orange, Oseola, Seminole, Polk, and Volusia counties with Orlando at its centre (see a map of Florida counties in Appendix 3). Population in the first four mentioned counties comprised 291,324 Puerto Ricans according to 2010 census. The second place as for the number of the Puerto Rican population in Florida belongs to Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties situated around Miami and Fort Lauderdale in the south with the population of 207,727. Another area densely populated by Puerto Ricans is Tampa Bay area with population of 143,886. The Puerto Ricans in west Florida are situated around Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater, in Hillsborough County and Pinellas, Pasco and Hernando counties.<sup>93</sup> The reason why the majority of Puerto Ricans settled in central Florida and not elsewhere, is ascribed to the fact that the south was populated by the dominating Cuban population, while Puerto Ricans wanted to establish their own community. With growing numbers of Puerto Ricans, they have gained political significance in Florida and have played an important part in the elections.

### 3.2.3 Philadelphia

Philadelphia and Chicago occupy the second and third position as for the number of Puerto Rican population.<sup>94</sup> Yet in 2000, Chicago was ranked number two.

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<sup>93</sup> Duany, *Mickey Ricans?*, 5.

<sup>94</sup> This chapter draws on Daniel Amsterdam and Domenic Vitiello, "Immigration (1930 – present)," The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia, accessed April 13, 2015, <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/immigration-1930-present/>. – Marisa Casellas, "El Barrio: Latino Relationships in North Philadelphia and Impacts on Puerto Rican Business," (senior thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2007), 6–14. – Carmen Theresa Whalen and Víctor Vázquez-Hernández, eds. *The Puerto Rican Diaspora: Historical Perspectives* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2005, accessed April 13, 2015, [https://books.google.cz/books?id=6W7rYQvSK-AC&pg=PA88&lpg=PA88&dq=puerto+rican+population+in+philadelphia&source=bl&ots=2\\_zFU4cw b&sig=Xm1h7geV7ML\\_cB6-wV9Lwnu81DI&hl=cs&sa=X&ei=9r8qVdGWNcb4ywOnzIA4&ved=0CCgQ6AEwATgK#v=onepage&q=puerto%20rican%20population%20in%20philadelphia&f=false](https://books.google.cz/books?id=6W7rYQvSK-AC&pg=PA88&lpg=PA88&dq=puerto+rican+population+in+philadelphia&source=bl&ots=2_zFU4cw b&sig=Xm1h7geV7ML_cB6-wV9Lwnu81DI&hl=cs&sa=X&ei=9r8qVdGWNcb4ywOnzIA4&ved=0CCgQ6AEwATgK#v=onepage&q=puerto%20rican%20population%20in%20philadelphia&f=false), 4, 32f, 88-91. – Audrey Singer, et al., *Recent Immigration to Philadelphia: Regional Change in a Re-Emerging Gateway* (Survey for the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings, 2008), 2ff, 23. – The U.S. Census Bureau's data.

The Windy City was, however, exceeded by Philadelphia based on 2010 census as supported in the table below.

<b>PUERTO RICAN POPULATION IN CHICAGO AND PHILADELPHIA AND ITS PERCENTAGE WITH REGARD TO THE CITY'S TOTAL POPULATION<sup>95</sup></b>							
2000				2010			
Chicago		Philadelphia		Chicago		Philadelphia	
<b>113,055</b>	3.9%	<b>91,527</b>	6%	<b>102,703</b>	3.8%	<b>121,643</b>	8%

This chapter is going to deal with the Puerto Rican population in Philadelphia followed by Chicago Puerto Ricans. Similarly to the previous chapters, it will be mentioned what was the primary motivation for choosing these two destinations and the specifics of their migration and settlement.

Eight-percent Puerto Rican minority in Philadelphia represents the biggest Hispanic group in the city, which counts 12.3 percent altogether. It is true though that Philadelphia was not a primary destination of immigrants during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even though, some Puerto Ricans settled in Philadelphia already in 1899, significant growth of the island's population came in the late 1950s. The first Puerto Ricans in Philadelphia were political exiles, who escaped Spanish oppression on the island, tobacco merchants or cigar makers, and mainly railroad workers. Others found their jobs in farming or canning industry.

The Puerto Rican migration to Philadelphia was a labour migration first of all. In general, Puerto Ricans in Philadelphia represented rather working class and white-collar jobs were rare. While women were employed in garment industry and other domestic work or in light industry, as in New York, men worked in manufacturing jobs and services, especially hotels and restaurants.

The period between the 1940s and the 1970s remains the region's second largest migration since the Second World War. The minorities concerned include not only Puerto Ricans but African Americans as well. Puerto Ricans were hired as a cheap labour force when the immigration restrictions after WWI and WWII limited the cheap work force from Europe.

While there were two thousand Puerto Ricans in the early 1950s, by the end of the decade the number grew to fourteen thousand. The number almost doubled by the 1970s and in 1990 there were about seventy thousand Puerto Ricans

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<sup>95</sup> Figures taken from the U.S. Census Bureau.

in Philadelphia. Further in the past, there was less than a hundred of Puerto Ricans in 1910 and 319 in the following ten years. Philadelphia is now said to have the fastest growing immigration population when compared to other regions.

First arrivals from the island settled in Spanish-speaking communities and later they established Puerto Rican 'barrio' in the north. After WWII, they were forced to move out due to the increasing housing prices. Together with the African-Americans, Puerto Ricans settled in Camden, New Jersey situated on the opposite bank of the Delaware River as Philadelphia. They lived in row houses and usually within a walking distance to their jobs.

Despite the fact that the city did not originally attract many immigrants, towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the situation had changed and the immigrants largely contributed to the economic growth of Philadelphia and had an impact on social and political life in the city. Puerto Ricans were the most numerous group among the Hispanics already in the 1950s, and still are, nevertheless, there was a decline in the Puerto Rican workforce in the 1960s due to the inflow of other immigrants from the Caribbean, namely the Cubans and Dominicans.

As far as the social status of Puerto Ricans in Philadelphia is concerned, they have paid for their reputation of being lazy and incompetent and even though they are welcomed as cheap labour force, they were not accepted into the majority community. They have lower educational attainment than other immigrant groups and this fact can be interconnected with their economic and social position. It was stated that 21 percent of Philadelphia immigrant population do not have high school (32 percent for the US) while about 41 percent of Puerto Rican adults in Philadelphia do not have a high school diploma (32 percent in Chicago), almost two times more than with African Americans. The same applies to incomes and poverty rates which are worse than those of African Americans.<sup>96</sup>

### **3.2.4 Chicago**

Although it is not the aim of this thesis to describe all Puerto Rican communities within the United States, Chicago represents an integral part of Puerto Ricans on the mainland with strong community with a number of cultural, social, political and

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<sup>96</sup> The yearly median household income of Puerto Ricans was 37,192 dollars between 2009 and 2013, while the national average in 53,000.

other organizations, that it should not be omitted in this work (organizations to be mentioned later).<sup>97</sup>

In the area on Division Street between California and Western Avenue is a neighbourhood commonly referred to as ‘the Little Puerto Rico.’ This neighbourhood is home to Puerto Rican community in Chicago and among the locals is known as ‘Paseo Boricua’ or the Puerto Rican Promenade (see Appendix 4 A). The symbolic frontiers of this quarter are marked by two huge iron Puerto Rican flags that span the street. They are symbols of the recognition of the Puerto Rican community in Chicago. You can find many Puerto Ricans restaurants, grocery stores and various organizations in the Little Puerto Rico.

The first Puerto Ricans came to Chicago from New York City in the 1930 but a larger wave came from the island in the late 1940s because one of local employment agencies, Castle, Barton and Associates, started to recruit workers from Puerto Rico in 1946. These early migrant settled in Woodlawn, the Near North Side, Lake View, Lincoln Park, Upton, the West and The East Garfield Park and the Near West Side while Lincoln Park became their primary settlement. Later by the 1960s more and more Puerto Ricans settled in the West Town and Humboldt Park, as a result of a relocation of low-income families from Lincoln Park. The neighbourhood called by Puerto Ricans ‘La Division’ was home to Mexicans, Poles and African-Americans too. In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Puerto Rican arrivals started to work in industrial sector, as steel workers, while women executed domestic jobs. They predominantly settled in downtown Chicago – the Loop – following their Mexican friends. In the 1980s and 1990s, educated islanders were recruited to professional positions in information technologies industry and following their jobs, they settled in Schaumburg and Naperville.

The Puerto Rican migration to Chicago and the United States as such, may be characterized as family migration. Typically, husbands left for the United States first in order to ensure housing and work and then the rest of the family followed.

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<sup>97</sup> This chapter draws on “Chicago’s Puerto Rican Story,” accessed April 15, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QSZZAKNdb2M>. – Ralph Cintrón, et al., *60 Years of Migration: Puerto Ricans in Chicagoland* (Chicago: The Puerto Rican Agenda, 2012), 1–14, accessed April 15, 2015, [http://www.puertoricanchicago.org/pdf/Full\\_report.pdf](http://www.puertoricanchicago.org/pdf/Full_report.pdf). – Gina M. Pérez, “Puerto Ricans,” *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, accessed April 15, 2015, <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1027.html>.

Historically, the 1960s were important for Puerto Rican community in Chicago since the first Puerto Rican Parade was held in 1966 when thousands of Puerto Ricans gathered on State Street and continued on Division Street. This event commemorating the Saint John's Day, which sought promotion and integration of Puerto Rican people into the mainstream, was marked by shooting of a Puerto Rican by a policeman. This event raised interest of Puerto Ricans in their socio-cultural, economic and political affairs in Chicago that many associations were established. Today, the event and the subsequent unrest are referred to as the Division Street Riot – a clash of thousands of Puerto Ricans and the police.

Many Puerto Ricans has recently moved away from the Humboldt park area into the suburbs. The suburban population tends to be more educated and more affluent than those living in the city. Among these areas are old industrial cities such as Aurora, Waukegan, Elgin and Joliet (see Appendix 4 B).

<b>PUERTO RICANS IN CHICAGO COMPARED WITH OTHER RACES AND ORIGINS</b>					
	<b>Puerto Ricans</b>	<b>All Chicagoans</b>	<b>Mexicans</b>	<b>African-Americans</b>	<b>Whites</b>
<b>population</b>	102,854	2,698,831	562,192	905,799	1,256,175
<b>median household income</b>	\$39,290	\$44,776	\$39,988	\$29,799	\$58,750
<b>households receiving food stamps</b>	27%	17%	20%	33%	8%
<b>high school diploma</b>	32%	23%	29%	28%	21%
<b>bachelor's degree</b>	9%	20%	7%	11%	27%
<b>graduate or professional degree</b>	4%	13%	2%	7%	18%
<b>house owners ~ renters</b>	36% ~ 64%	46% ~ 54%	47% ~ 53%	35% ~ 65%	46% ~ 54%
Source: this table was adopted from a research by a community organization The Puerto Rican agenda available on: <a href="http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/voorheesctr/Publications/60_Years_of_Migration.pdf">http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/voorheesctr/Publications/60_Years_of_Migration.pdf</a>					

The table above shows that the Puerto Rican population in Chicago have, as a minority group, lower incomes, lower educational attainment and lower house ownership rate than the total population of Chicago. These data when compared with other races can provide interesting findings. While median household income of Puerto Ricans is very similar to that of Mexicans, it is considerably higher than African

American median household income. However, both Hispanic groups significantly lag behind the whites in Chicago, with the difference being almost \$20,000.

Furthermore, Puerto Rican households receive more public benefits than Chicagoans in general. It is true that the rates are lower on the mainland than on the island, still the rates for receiving food stamps are quite high and comparable to those of African Americans. Mexicans' lower rates of receiving public benefits are ascribed to the fact that they are recent immigrants to Chicago. Similarly, Mexicans have lower educational attainment in comparison to Puerto Ricans which can be connected with a relation between the United States and Puerto Rico; as the US citizens, Puerto Ricans incline more to receive bilingual education unlike Mexicans and they have freer access to student's financial support.

In conclusion, Puerto Ricans has not succeeded in social and economic advancement during the first century as the US citizens, whether as a minority in Chicago or a subgroup of Chicago Hispanics; and there are still wide gaps between the majority population and the Borriqueños.<sup>98</sup>

### **3.2.5 Distribution of the Puerto Ricans on the mainland: Conclusion**

This chapter has shown that Puerto Rican migration to the United States was predominantly a labour migration. Historically, the most of Puerto Ricans are settled in the New York area but in the recent past they have become more dispersed over the United States. Nowadays, the greatest influx of Puerto Ricans is experienced in Florida with approximately one third of the mainland Puerto Rican population.

Despite the fact that Puerto Ricans are lawful US citizens since 1917, they do not completely fit in the majority population and mainstream culture. The most distinctive feature is definitely the language as Puerto Ricans' first language is Spanish. Although English is also an official language together with Spanish, not every Puerto Rican necessarily speaks English or is not a fluent speaker.

Recently, the mainland Puerto Rican population has exceeded the island's population. Most of the migrants seek more employment opportunities and economic advancement. Nevertheless, the previous subchapters have shown that as a minority group, Puerto Ricans lag behind the majority population in terms of education, economic and social position. The following table compares and summarizes some

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<sup>98</sup> Cintrón, et al., *60 Years of Migration*, 11–14.

economical and educational aspect of a Puerto Rican minority in different US metropolitan areas, mentioned earlier.

<b>PUERTO RICANS IN MAJOR US METRO AREAS<sup>99</sup></b>						
	<b>New York</b>	<b>Orlando</b>	<b>Philadelphia</b>	<b>Chicago</b>	<b>Miami</b>	<b>Tampa</b>
<b>Puerto Rican (PR) population</b>	1,204,103	278,072	239,082	196,913	215,001	139,771
<b>Median PR household income</b>	\$45,638	\$37,461	\$32,243	\$35,648	\$44,481	\$25,700
<b>PRs living in poverty</b>	27%	20%	35%	19%	17%	25%
<b>PR housing tenure renters ~ owners</b>	75% ~ 25%	48% ~ 52%	51% ~ 49%	51% ~ 49%	48% ~ 52%	50% ~ 50%
<b>PRs not finishing high school</b>	30%	19%	34%	24%	20%	21%
<b>PRs graduating with four-year college degrees</b>	14%	18%	10%	15%	24%	15%
Source: Adopted from <a href="http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/voorheesctr/Publications/60_Years_of_Migration.pdf">http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/voorheesctr/Publications/60_Years_of_Migration.pdf</a> , 5-8.						

<sup>99</sup> These Metro Areas are namely the Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area); the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA MSA; the Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL MSA, the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE MSA; the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, FL MSA; the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL MSA.

## **4 ORGANIZATIONAL BASE OF PUERTO RICANS ON THE MAINLAND**

It is not an unusual thing for a minority group living outside its homeland to unite into various organizations in order to get in touch with its countrymen and face together the hardships connected with migration or build together a community that would help them to preserve their culture including the language and customs. Puerto Ricans were not different. Despite the fact that they are born the US citizens they do not constitute the mainstream culture. With respect to their socio-economic situation they are sometimes perceived as a lower class and instead of economic betterment, they are confronted with racial discrimination and identity problems. Language issues are of great concern, since many Puerto Ricans lack the knowledge of English. The organizations were being established in order to address these and other issues and to serve the community. This chapter is briefly going to cover some of the most influential and visible organizations of all kinds from past to present.

### **4.1 The Migration Division**

In order to alleviate the impacts of migration and seek the improvement through community organizations, Puerto Ricans started to establish political and cultural organizations, mainly in New York City, and the Puerto Rican government participated as well.<sup>100</sup> Because Puerto Rican migration to the US mainland was predominantly labour migration, government's efforts aimed at providing information for workers, finding jobs and housing in the United States.

Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Puerto Rican government took on a role of a supervisor and promoter of migration to the United States and other countries and various state offices took care of the recruitment of agricultural workers to the United States and later evolved into organizations that promoted Puerto Rican community and culture in the US. Following the Great Migration, Puerto Rican government established the Employment and Migration Bureau in 1947 which was four years later renamed the Migration Division of the Department of Labor of Puerto Rico (later known as the Department of Puerto Rico Community Affairs). Since the biggest influx of migrants from Puerto Rico poured in New York City, its office was established there,

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<sup>100</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 163. – Duany, *Puerto Rican Nation on the Move*, 168–184, 203.



later extending to other cities such as Chicago and Philadelphia. Among the primary objectives of this office was to negotiate employment opportunities for Puerto Ricans and their recruitment and to find housing for those workers. Apart from that, the office helped the new arrivals with adjustment into the new environment. Furthermore, it advocated the interests of Puerto Rican workers with US authorities. The office was, however, criticized for the failure to become an umbrella organization of the mainland Puerto Ricans and it did not succeed in managing the Puerto Rican affairs and that was why other organizations were gradually emerging. The mainland Puerto Ricans also did not agree with the government taking care of migrant issues. In the early 1950s, there were more than two hundred Puerto Rican organizations dealing with various affairs, such as politics, social sphere, leisure activities, etc. By 1970, the most prevalent among Puerto Rican organizations in NYC were hometown clubs, formed by family members and their friends who came from the same area on the island. They cooperated with the Migration Division and became an important part of the US Puerto Rican community. Some of them organized trips to Puerto Rico in order not to lose contact with the island's communities and their mission was to provide help, work, financial support and other benefits to its members, especially after the Second World War. In 1971, the Department of Puerto Rican Culture was established within the Migration Division and it governed main cultural events in NYC. One of them remains the Puerto Rican Day Parade, a key cultural event which originated in NYC and later became an important part of Puerto Rican communities in various cities.

The Puerto Rican Day Parade<sup>101</sup> was first held in 1958 in New York City as Desfile Puertorriqueño and since then has become the most important event of the Puerto Rican community on the US mainland. Its formal objective is to promote Puerto Rican culture and customs and to enhance the national awareness, education and community engagement among Puerto Ricans. It has spread into numerous US cities with large Puerto Rican base, e.g. Chicago, Philadelphia, Orlando or Boston among the biggest, while the New York City parade remains the largest one. The parade takes place second Sunday in June and usually attracts tens of thousands of marchers and millions of spectators and the event also draws the city officials, celebrities and sponsors. The event is organized by the National Day Parade Inc., a non-profit tax

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<sup>101</sup> Information about the National Puerto Rican Day Parade available on "The Miracle on La Quinta: A Year in Review," The National Puerto Rican Day Parade Inc., accessed April 22, 2015, <http://www.nprdpinc.org/>. Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 166. Duany, *Puerto Rican Nation on the Move*, 195.

exempt organization. The Parade was originally held in Spanish Harlem and nowadays the procession takes place along Fifth Avenue in Manhattan.<sup>102</sup>

Currently, it is the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration (PRFAA)<sup>103</sup> that succeeded the Migration Division or rather its later branch the Department of Community Affairs. Settled in Washington, D.C., today's PRFAA differs from its predecessor in the subject matter of its work. "It does not offer employment and housing services, nor does it focus on migrants' needs or their transition into US society. Instead the office pursues a broad legislative agenda on bills and programs that affect both island and US Puerto Ricans and that maintain the flow of federal assistance to Puerto Rico [...] the PRFAA promotes economic and public policy initiatives [...] [and] coordinates Puerto Rico's lobbying efforts with the US Congress, the White House, and other federal agencies."<sup>104</sup> This executive branch of Puerto Rican government also has its offices in New York and Central Florida, due to the budget cuts some of the 13 mainland offices had to be closed down.<sup>105</sup>

#### **4.2 Political organizations: The Young Lords**

Following the 1950s when the United States experienced the greatest influx of Puerto Rican migrants, stateside Puerto Rican organizations sought educational, political and economic goals and opposed the assimilation.<sup>106</sup>

The most radical were political groups, which were also influenced by the civil rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s. It was a period when the questions of racial discrimination, inequality and social injustice filled people's everyday lives and Puerto

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<sup>102</sup> At the beginning of 2014, a federal investigation revealed that Carlos Velasques, who was responsible for the Parade's fund raising and financial management, and his company Galos Corporation, embezzled more than \$1 million from sponsors' donations since 2008. Consequently, all board members were compelled to give up their posts, even though there was no evidence of their participation in this misappropriation. Neither no charges were filed against Velasques. (Adopted from Winnie Ho, "After Inquiry, Puerto Rican Day Parade Replaces Board," *New York Times*, February 14, 2012, accessed April 22, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/14/nyregion/puerto-rican-day-parade-group-to-be-overhauled-after-state-inquiry.html>).

<sup>103</sup> See <http://www.prfaa.com/> for additional information. The website is, however, currently unavailable.

<sup>104</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 163.

<sup>105</sup> CB Online Staff, "PRFAA marks the anniversary of Florida office," *Caribbean business*, August 19, 2014, accessed April 18, 2015, <http://www.caribbeanbusiness.pr/news/prfaa-marks-anniversary-of-florida-office-99771.html>.

<sup>106</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 151f. – Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation*, 203. – Hauberg, *Puerto Rico*, 139–143. – Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, "Puerto Rico en mi corazón: The Young Lords, Black Power and Puerto Rican Nationalism in the U.S., 1966–1972," *Centro Journal XVIII, no.1* (fall 2006), accessed April 23, 2015, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=10ce4397-912f-441c-8e20-d41880318425%40sessionmgr4004&vid=0&hid=4205>.

Rican political organizations raised the pressing issues of their nation and worked in favour of people's advancement. The political status of Puerto Rico has been one of the most discussed issues. Except for that, they also asked for larger representation of Puerto Ricans in the city government, the same civil rights for everyone, a Puerto Rican or an American, some also fought against the compulsory military service for the islanders during the Vietnam anti-war movement. Some of these organizations were established in the United States and some developed from the island's mother organizations or political parties. Among the most visible was the group called Young Lords.

Prior to 1969, the Young Lords were one of many Chicago street gangs, composed mainly of young people, usually high school students or high school dropouts. In that year they, however, changed into a political group called the Young Lords Organization (YLO) and engaged in Puerto Rican affairs in Chicago. The group was already formed in 1959 by seven young Puerto Ricans in defence against various gangs of the Chicago Northside.

The beginnings of Chicago Young Lords are closely connected with Black Panthers and the Black Power movement, radical ethnic groups which fought for equal rights for the black in the white-dominated society. And since many Puerto Ricans faced racial discrimination on the mainland, even though they were classified among the whites, it raised a wave of activism.

They opened a café which served for their political, cultural and social debates. And the Young Lords did not stop at the debates only. They ran several programs in favour of the community. They for instance opposed the city's Urban Renewal Plan for changing the West Lincoln Park, densely settled by the Puerto Rican community, into a quarter for a white middle-class. The group was also interested in the health issues of the Puerto Rican community and managed to open a health clinic. They organized summer picnics, drug education programs and Christmas charitable event to provide impoverished families with food and other gifts. The group soon realized that these actions do not bring any improvement of the situation though and only mitigate the impacts. For that reason the Young Lords tried to reconcile with the belligerent gangs, among them nationally famous Blackstone Rangers, and they decided to focus their efforts towards the city authorities and federal offices.

The Young Lords inspired a New York-based organization the Sociedad de Albizu Campos, formed mainly by Puerto Rican college students, to create a New

York branch of the Young Lords, with consent of José ‘Cha Cha’ Jiménez, a leader of the Chicago party. It was at the time when the Chicago branch became more visible by making an alliance with the Black Panthers and the Young Patriots, a white Appalachian gang, which was called Rainbow Coalition.

Even though both groups followed the same goals, i.e. better health care, education and better housing conditions, some gender-oriented arguments led to separation of these groups in June 1970 and the New York chapter of the Young Lords became the Young Lords Party (YLP) and each group followed its own agenda. The YLP also issued a bilingual newspaper called ‘Palante’ (Moving Forward), which served as an important information channel for discussing the community’s pressing issues and thus raising awareness among the Puerto Ricans. The New York branch became in the end the most visible and influential from all of the Young Lords who spread into other cities, such as Philadelphia, Newark, Hoboken, Bridgeport and Puerto Rico.

The Young Lords focused their work on social and political activities. As a group formed mainly by young people, the Young Lords did not address only the urban youth but also college students, professionals and everyone who could help them in their efforts.<sup>107</sup> They worked for better conditions in the ‘barrios,’ and they were successful in their campaigns to ensure breakfasts for children in need, they also ran campaigns for detection of lead poisoning, diabetes or tuberculosis and others at health facilities and overall improvement of hospital services regardless of race or social status. Apart from that they fought for achieving better education and its adjustment for migrant children who did not master the English language completely. The New York Young Lords also organized garbage barricade by cleaning the streets from garbage and making a huge pile in the middle of a street as a response to the inability of the city’s government to improve the garbage collection, they fought against police brutality and for better treatment in prisons.

The group transformed into the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers’ Organization in 1972, a leftist organization that perceived the capitalism and racism as the main reasons of workers’ oppression, it focused on the workers’ rights rather than the community affairs and eventually dissolved by 1976.

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<sup>107</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 151.

“They [Young Lords] initiated direct challenges to the institutionalized discrimination faced by Puerto Ricans and in the process demonstrated the malleability of race and identity in a country where race and identity have long determined one’s access to the most essential human needs, even life itself. [...] In the final analysis, the Young Lords introduced significant interpretations of Puerto Rican nationalism that have remained largely unique in the historic discourse of island and mainland Puerto Rican political expression.”<sup>108</sup>

#### **4.3 Towards increasing education opportunities for Puerto Ricans: ASPIRA**

Aspira is a non-profit organization whose mission is “to empower the Puerto Rican and Latino community through advocacy and the education and leadership development of its youth.”<sup>109</sup>

The association was established in 1961 in New York City by Antonia Pantoja (1922–2002), a woman who had close relationship to education.<sup>110</sup> In Puerto Rico, Pantoja worked as a teacher but upon arriving to the United States she got a job in a factory as a welder. She later received a bachelor’s degree at Hunter College, NY and master’s degree at Columbia University. Her work in the United States is tied to various organizations dealing with Puerto Rican community and its struggles mainly in the field of education.

Aspira was given its name from Spanish, ‘aspira’ meaning to aspire, to strive. The group has been focused on improving educational attainment of Hispanic youth, reducing poverty and increasing household incomes for disadvantaged migrant families.

According to the U.S Census Bureau figures collected by Sánchez Korrol, there were only 331 Puerto Ricans (out of 21 thousand) in NYC who received academic diploma in 1963.<sup>111</sup> Such a low proportion prompted further educational efforts of Aspira as education can be the first stimulus for social change. Its efforts were not only aimed at students but older generation as well because they had to (and still should) understand the importance and benefits of higher education for their children.

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<sup>108</sup> Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar, “Puerto Rico en mi corazón,” 165.

<sup>109</sup> “Aspira,” accessed April 23, 2015, <http://www.aspira.org/book/what-aspiras-mission>.

<sup>110</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 154–160. – Sánchez Korrol, *From Colonia to Community*, 227–231. – “Aspira,” accessed April 23, 2015, <http://www.aspira.org/book/what-aspiras-mission>.

<sup>111</sup> Sánchez Korrol, *From Colonia to Community*, 230.

One of its main past achievement was a winning lawsuit in 1974 led together with the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund against the Board of Education. Aspira claimed and gained the right for Puerto Rican children for bilingual education at NYC public schools.

Aspira sees the main problem in high dropout rates of secondary schools students and has aimed at motivating the Puerto Rican and other Hispanic youth to finish high schools, further proceed to universities and encourage their interest in community affairs, which can be a chance for social improvement and more opportunities than there are for them in Spanish Harlem and other New York Puerto Rican or Hispanic neighbourhoods.

Need to say, Aspira not only works with Puerto Ricans, an essential proportion of its 'clients' is formed by Mexicans, Dominicans, Central Americans, South Americans, and Cubans, as well as Native Americans, African Americans, non-Hispanic whites, and Haitians, among others.<sup>112</sup> In the United States, there are today ten offices located from Illinois to Massachusetts and one in Puerto Rico. The headquarters is in Washington D.C. Through its educational programs and schools, Aspira currently serves over 85 thousand students every year. Originally, there was only one office in New York City. In 1969 three additional subsidiaries were opened in cities with large concentration of Puerto Ricans; they were Chicago, Philadelphia and Newark. The expansion was enabled thanks to two-year grant from the Ford Foundation, then prolonged for four years in total. Aspira developed its activities on the island as well, when another affiliate was opened in San Juan several months later and it has become the largest of all Aspira affiliates.<sup>113</sup>

#### **4.4 PRLDEF: Legal protection for Latinos**

“Chicanos and Puerto Ricans, following the model of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in its advocacy of improving the status of African Americans, established their own legal institutions to seek social justice and challenge the constitutionality of segregation.”<sup>114</sup> One of them was

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<sup>112</sup> “Aspira,” accessed April 23, 2015, <http://www.aspira.org/book/what-aspiras-mission>.

<sup>113</sup> Louis Nuñez, “Reflections on Puerto Rican History: Aspira in the Sixties and the Coming of Age of the Stateside Puerto Rican Community,” *Centro Journal XXI, no.2* (fall 2009): 43, accessed April 24, 2015, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=ef91afc1-d030-4b3e-a6bd-e13d09c4b80b%40sessionmgr4005&vid=0&hid=4103>.

<sup>114</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 154.

PRLDEF, the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund established in 1972 and today known as LatinoJustice PRDLEF.<sup>115</sup>

Sponsored by the Ford Foundation, this organization, advocating the interests of Puerto Ricans and other Latinos, was established by three young lawyers; Jorge Batista, Victor Marrero and Cesar A. Perales in New York. Their vision was to enforce fair treatment for Latinos and to fight discrimination through legal action.

Since its inception, the organization has been successful in its actions for the benefit of the Latin community. The first bigger achievement came in 1973 when the court decided that ballots have to be bilingual for parents at school board elections. It was later applied on NYC elections, New York State, Philadelphia and New Jersey, where ballots had to be bilingual in order not to disadvantage Spanish-speaking groups. Another achievement followed in 1974 when PRLDEF and Aspira won a lawsuit, which entitled Latin students to bilingual education in NYC public schools.

In the past two decades PRLDEF and other organizations and movements succeeded in Vieques case in 2003. The US Navy that had occupied the island of Vieques<sup>116</sup> since World War Two and used it as training ground for bombing practises, had to withdraw from the island in 2003 after more than a decade of mass movements, because it was proved that the bombing had harmful effects on people's health and the environment. Nonetheless, some health and environmental issues remain unsolved as there is still high incidence of cancer and other diseases among the island's population and it is still necessary to clean some parts of the island.<sup>117</sup>

The organization had been in financial troubles since the 1990s and the situation escalated at the turn of millennium. Fortunately, PRLDEF survived that dark period with the help of Mr. Perales, one of the founding members, who returned to the company in 2003. In 2008 the official name was changed to LegalJustice PRLDEF because the members felt that new this name would better reflect their work.

The aforementioned organizations represent only a fraction of all organizations and movements that have been established in the United States for the benefit of Puerto

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<sup>115</sup> This chapter draws on Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 154–159. – Joyce Wilcox, “Vieques, Puerto Rico: An Island under Siege,” *American Journal of Public Health* vol. 91, no. 5 (May 2001): 695-698, accessed April 24, 2015, <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=5fbda1cd-4843-416f-859a-baefd72b637c%40sessionmgr4005&vid=0&hid=4103>. – “Four Decades of Protecting Latino Civil Rights,” LatinoJustice, accessed April 24, 2015, <http://latinojustice.org/about/history/>.

<sup>116</sup> Vieques is an island situated east of Puerto Rico that is a part of Puerto Rico.

<sup>117</sup> Acosta-Belén and Santiago, *Puerto Ricans*, 222f.

Rican community. Not only have they been dealing with the most pressing issues of Puerto Ricans such as low education levels, high dropout rates of high school students, and a lack of motivation for education. The Puerto Rican community and other Latinos have also faced racial discrimination in the white-dominated US society and they have been disadvantaged due to their imperfect knowledge of the English language or foreign accent. As the US citizens, the islanders are often expected to have a good command of English, which is not always the case and which results in unfair practises towards the minority.

Nevertheless, reasons for establishing a community organization do not have to be problems only. Puerto Ricans are said to have a strong community feeling and are closely tied to their families. That is why, they have got together for the sake of the community, to preserve the traditions and language for future generations that were born on the US mainland or left the island as children.



## 5 POLITICAL STATUS OF PUERTO RICO

This chapter summarizes the political status of Puerto Rico, a topic which has provoked a lot of debates not only among Puerto Ricans but in the United States as well.<sup>118</sup> It has been a serious issue for Puerto Ricans whether to retain its Commonwealth status, or to become an independent state, or the 51<sup>st</sup> state of the United States. Obviously, every option has its pros and cons which should be taken into account but there is no overall consensus on which one it should be. This chapter briefly examines the history of Puerto Rico in the question of its status.

The official name of the island is the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico since 1952. The name is translated into Spanish as ‘Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico’ and as the name suggests, Puerto Rico is a freely associated state with the United States and the island belongs to the unincorporated territories of the United States together with American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands and other islands in the Pacific Ocean. The status of incorporation was defined by the Court as follows; incorporated territories are “those that are part of the United States and destined to become states of the Union,” while an unincorporated territory is described as “a territory that belongs to, but is not a part of the United States.”<sup>119</sup>

What does that mean for Puerto Rico? Because it is not one of the US states, the island is subordinated to the United States. The political ties between the island and the United States date back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century when Spain ceded this Caribbean island to the United States after their victory in the Spanish-American War. Perhaps it was an unhappy event for Puerto Rico since the war had stopped what might have evolved into Puerto Rican independence since a shortly before the US invasion, Spain granted the islanders more autonomy.

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<sup>118</sup> This chapter draws on Andrew E. Gerow, “Shooting for the Stars (and Stripes): How Decades of Failed Corporate Tax Policy Contributed to Puerto Rico’s Historic Vote In Favor of Statehood,” *Tulane Law Review* Vol. 88:3 (February 1, 2014): 627–650, accessed April 29, 2015, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=f56724d7-4cca-409c-8c06-53cc42971542%40sessionmgr112&hid=122>.

<sup>119</sup> Joel Colón-Ríos and Martín Hevia, “The Legal Status of Puerto Rico and the Institutional Requirements of Republicanism,” *Texas Hispanic Journal of Law and Policy* Vol 17:1 (March, 2011): 6, accessed April 25, 2015, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=da63184f-5008-4c90-b10e-e2dfd44d479d%40sessionmgr115&vid=0&hid=122>.

With the adoption of the Foraker Act in 1900, Puerto Ricans consented to the applicability of US laws in Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans have also been excluded from the presidential elections and do not elect their representative to the U.S. Congress, not one with a voting rights.<sup>120</sup> In the same way, they cannot freely break off their relation to the United States.

The governmental structure changed in 1917 with the Jones Act that established two-chamber legislature elected by public vote. It was reaffirmed that US federal income laws would not apply to Puerto Rico but the most significant change brought about by the Jones Act was extending of the US citizenship to Puerto Ricans.<sup>121</sup> Nonetheless, there had been a feeling of injustice among Puerto Ricans related to their relationship with the United States. In spite of being US citizens, the equality of their status with US-born population has been questioned and remains one of the most arguable issues. The controversy lies in the fact that unlike other (non-Puerto Rican) US citizens, Puerto Ricans cannot vote in general elections. Stateside Puerto Ricans with official residency in the United States constitute one exception. They are not subjected to this regulation and are eligible to vote in federal elections. For the islanders it means that they cannot choose those who enact laws, which they are obliged to obey, nor can they vote in the presidential elections.

So a lack of voting rights and deficiency of the self-government caused that Puerto Ricans questioned the democratic character of their relationship with the US. There had been American governors, appointed by the President, at the head of local government and Puerto Ricans did not get a chance to elect their first governor before 1947.<sup>122</sup>

Between 1901 and 1922 a series of Supreme Court trials<sup>123</sup> took place that became crucial in defining the US-Puerto Rican relations and in fact determined

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<sup>120</sup> Puerto Ricans are represented in the House of Representatives by the Resident Commissioner, currently Pedro Pierluisi, who serves as a non-voting member of the U.S. Congress for four-year term. Pierluisi has been in the function since January 2009, currently serving his second term. He is elected by the public.

<sup>121</sup> This was at the time when Puerto Rican political representatives did not at large agree with becoming the US citizens because for them it meant a certain end for the future independence. Nonetheless, Puerto Ricans had the right to refuse the American citizenship which at the same time meant losing the voting right in Puerto Rico. Over two hundred Puerto Ricans rejected it.

<sup>122</sup> The post was won by Luis Muñoz Marín, who served four four-year terms as the governor of Puerto Rico.

<sup>123</sup> The last of the Insular Cases was *Balzac v. People of Puerto Rico*. “Mr. Balzac was an editor of a Spanish Language newspaper in Puerto Rico who had been condemned to serve a jail sentence for certain comments alluding to the American Governor of the island that were considered libellous by the government. Under the applicable Puerto Rican law, Balzac did not have the right to trial by jury because

the future status of Puerto Rico. The outcome of these lawsuits was new interpretation of the US Constitution and its applicability to Puerto Rico and other US territories. It was decided that not all the provisions of the US Constitution can be applied to Puerto Ricans in spite of being the US citizens (and Puerto Rico being a US territory). These Supreme Court cases are commonly referred to as the Insular Cases.<sup>124</sup> There were two main consequences of the Insular Cases. Firstly, the constitutional protection did not apply to Puerto Ricans unless the fundamental rights were concerned and secondly, the Insular Cases do not provide an eventual guarantee of Puerto Rican statehood.<sup>125</sup>

In the case of the voting right for Puerto Ricans, the Supreme Court made the decision based on Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution. According to this, the constitutional protection and its applicability is related to the US states and not the US citizens. That is why Puerto Ricans have not been allowed to vote in US elections.<sup>126</sup> And it happened even in spite of Amendments XV, XIX, XXVI to the US constitution which give the US citizens, who are eighteen or older, the right to vote and

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his offence (libel) was classified as a misdemeanor. Balzac argued that he was entitled to a jury under the Sixth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution (author's note: nevertheless, the Sixth Amendment does not belong to the few fundamental rights which would apply to Puerto Ricans as well). [...] According to [Chief Justice] Taft, the question before the court was whether the U.S. Congress had enacted legislation incorporating Puerto Rico into the U.S. after the Foraker Act was adopted in 1900. Justice Taft noted that the Jones Act did not indicate by its title that its purpose was to incorporate the island [...] "Had Congress intended to take the important step of changing the treaty status of Puerto Rico by incorporating it into the Union, it is reasonable to suppose that that it would have done so by a plain declaration, and would not have left it to mere interference." [...] Justice Taft also pointed to the fact that the Jones Act included a bill of rights which contained many of the rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution but excluded the right to a trial by jury in civil and criminal cases. If it had been the intention of the Congress to incorporate Puerto Rico with the passage of the Jones Act, which would make applicable the U.S. Bill of Rights to Puerto Rico *ex proprio vigore* [by its own force], he argued, why was it thought necessary to create for the island a bill of rights and to carefully exclude the right to trial by jury? Regarding the most important provision of the Jones Act, that is, the extension of U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans, and in which Balzac based its allegations, Justice Taft expressed that conferring citizenship was entirely consistent with non-incorporation. [The extension only made Puerto Ricans equal with the American citizens and gave them an opportunity to move freely into the US or between the US and the island, and to enjoy all political and other rights] The problem, then, was not the application (or lack of application) of the United States Constitution to Puerto Rico, but the absence of self-government and the legalization of colonialism that took place in the Insular Cases." Cited from Colón-Ríos and Hevia, "The Legal Status of Puerto Rico," 8–9.

<sup>124</sup> For more information about the individual cases and their background see e.g. Edgardo Mélandez, "Citizenship and the Alien Exclusion in the Insular Cases: Puerto Ricans in the Periphery of American Empire," *Centro Journal Vol. XXV, no. 1* (spring 2013), accessed April 28, 2015, <http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=e2d13459-8c05-4c05-a833-0db83bf18475%40sessionmgr112&vid=0&hid=122>.

<sup>125</sup> Christina Duffy Ponsa, "Reconsidering Insular Cases," (speech given at a conference at the Harvard Law School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, February 19, 2014), accessed April 28, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJMWX84bnoE&feature=youtu.be>.

<sup>126</sup> Puerto Ricans without the official residency on the US mainland can vote in presidential primaries only, i.e. to choose the delegates who are going to elect the President.

which should not be denied or abridged on the grounds of age, sex, race or colour.<sup>127</sup>  
An excerpt from the Article II, Section 1 follows.

“Each state shall appoint, in such manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a number of electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States, shall be appointed an elector.”<sup>128</sup>

The years or rather decades that followed the Insular Cases were marked by general discontent of public over the political situation of Puerto Rico and by growing independence movement. The social and political climate further deteriorated during the Great Depression in the 1930s. In 1946, after Puerto Rican government passed a bill, Puerto Ricans were to vote for the first time in referendum on their political status. The bill was, however, vetoed at first by the governor Rexford G. Tugwell and then by the President Harry Truman in fear that the independence would win. Already tense political situation led to general violence launched by the nationalist movement. Firstly, there were series of uprisings in Puerto Rico, then an attempt to kill President Truman came, and then the nationalists attacked Congress, leaving several people injured. Nevertheless, with the commencement of World War Two and later the Cold War, Puerto Rico gained on its importance for the United States as it represented an important military base. This on the other hand, put a stop the debates on the independence. It was unthinkable that this strategic outpost could possibly end up in the hands of another power.<sup>129</sup>

On that account, some concessions were made in favour of Puerto Rico. Firstly, Puerto Ricans elected their own governor. Secondly, in 1950 the U.S. Public Law 600 was adopted. Based on the majority decision in a referendum, Puerto Rican government established the constitutional convention that was to draft the Puerto Rican constitution which was approved in a referendum in 1952 and it gave rise to the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico the same year.<sup>130</sup> It was declared that the constitution made invalid those

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<sup>127</sup> “Amendments XV, XIX, XXVI,” Legal Information Institute, Cornell University Law School, accessed April 29, 2015, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/overview>.

<sup>128</sup> “U.S. Constitution: Article II, Section 1,” Legal Information Institute, Cornell University Law School, accessed April 28, 2015, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/articleii#section1>.

<sup>129</sup> Colón-Ríos and Hevia, “The Legal Status of Puerto Rico,” 9–10.

<sup>130</sup> Nevertheless, the referendum was boycotted by the members of Puerto Rican Independence Party who were in strong opposition to the establishment of Commonwealth, which would, according to them, lead to “colonialism by consent.” Consequently only 59 percent of electors participated in the referendum. In case where majority of electors would vote against, Puerto Rico would maintain its status quo, which was

provisions of the Jones Act, which would interfere with the Puerto Rican internal affairs. It is true though that the final draft was subjected to the US government's modifications and corrections.<sup>131</sup> It was preserved that all US laws apply in Puerto Rico the same way they apply in the United States and that Puerto Rico still belongs to the United States as was declared in the preamble of the newly drafted constitution.

Despite this mention in the preamble of the Puerto Rican constitution, according to the decision of the UN General Assembly, not legally binding though, Puerto Rico was not non-self-governing territory anymore. Consequently, the United States became exempt of some of its responsibilities towards Puerto Rico. "Nevertheless, in 1980, the U.S. [sic] Supreme Court reaffirmed that Puerto Rico was still under the Territorial Clause of the U.S. Constitution, and that therefore it still was considered as a territory that belonged to the United States."<sup>132</sup>

Since 1952 the legal status of Puerto Rico and its relation with the United States has remained unchanged and there has been a call for a change but what kind of change should it be and the way of achieving it, remains unclear. Nowadays, the advocates of independence are in minority and the others either favour statehood or something like advanced commonwealth status.<sup>133</sup>

## 5.1 2012 plebiscite and the question of statehood

In 2012 a referendum on the political status of Puerto Rico was held after fourteen years.<sup>134</sup> The last plebiscite was different from its predecessors in 1967, 1993, 1998 in two ways; for the first time in history, the statehood was favoured

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the least favoured option among Puerto Ricans. See Colón-Ríos and Hevia, "The Legal Status of Puerto Rico," 10–13.

<sup>131</sup> The US Congress supplemented a provision that limited the powers of the Puerto Rican constitution by adding that all future amendments to the constitution have to be in accordance with the US Constitution and laws.

<sup>132</sup> Colón-Ríos and Hevia, "The Legal Status of Puerto Rico," 13.

<sup>133</sup> Colón-Ríos and Hevia, "The Legal Status of Puerto Rico," 14.

<sup>134</sup> This chapter draws on Andrew E. Gerow, "Shooting for the Stars (and Stripes): 635–638, 647ff. "Romney, Santorum argue over English as requirement of Puerto Rican statehood," CNN politics, accessed April 29, 2015, <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/03/15/politics/campaign-wrap/index.html>. – Mariano Castillo, "Puerto Ricans favor statehood for first time," CNN politics, accessed April 29, 2015, <http://edition.cnn.com/2012/11/07/politics/election-puerto-rico/index.html>. "Political Status with the US Unlikely to Be Changed," Latin America Monitor: Caribbean Vol. 32, issue 1 (January, 2015), 1f. – Johnny Smith, "Commonwealth Status: A good Deal for Puerto Rico?," *Harvard Latino Law Review* Vol. 10 (2007): 275f, 279f. – Pedro Pierluisi, "Setting the Record Straight on the Puerto Rican Plebiscite," *JURIST* (February 17, 2012), accessed April 29, 2015, <http://jurist.org/hotline/2012/02/pedro-pierluisi-referendum.php>.

by the majority of voters, and this plebiscite took place with previous consent of the US Congress.

It has become clear, that although not everybody is sure what the future status of Puerto Rico should be, Puerto Ricans definitely want a change and they are not satisfied with the current status. Despite the fact that the results are non-binding, the US representatives had promised to take the results of this referendum seriously. But for the enforcement of Puerto Rican statehood, consent of Congress would be necessary.

The referendum was held on the same day as the US general elections and Puerto Rico’s elections, that is, on November 6, 2012. The referendum had two parts. First part was a question ‘Do you agree that Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of territorial status?’ with a yes/no answer, and second ‘Regardless of your selection in the first question, please mark which of the following non-territorial options would you prefer.’ The voters could choose among statehood, independence and sovereign free associated state.<sup>135</sup> The results of the referendum are available in the table below.

<b>THE RESULTS OF 2012 PLEBISCITE ON PUERTO RICO POLITICAL STATUS<sup>136</sup></b>		
<b>Do you agree that Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of territorial status?</b>		
<b>Yes</b>	828,077	46%
<b>No</b>	<b>970,910</b>	<b>54%</b>
Total	1,798,987	100%
<b>Regardless of your selection in the first question, please mark which of the following non-territorial options would you prefer</b>		
<b>Statehood</b>	<b>834,191</b>	<b>61.2%</b>
<b>Independence</b>	74,895	5.5%
<b>Sovereign Free Associated State</b>	454,768	33.3%
Total	1,363,854	100%
Source: Figures available on “Elections in Puerto Rico,” accessed April 29, 2015, <a href="http://electionspuertorico.org/2012/plebiscite.vote.php">http://electionspuertorico.org/2012/plebiscite.vote.php</a> .		

The referendum and its results were denounced among the public for its form, which, according to the critics, did not completely reflect the will of Puerto Ricans.

<sup>135</sup> For the description of each option see the sample ballot in appendix 3.

<sup>136</sup> The blank and void ballots are not mentioned in this table because their percentage seems negligible, with the exception of blank ballots in the second part of the referendum. 26.5 percent which accounts for almost 500,000 of votes were left blank and these voters thus waived the possibility of choosing the possible future political status of Puerto Rico.

Still, the significant part of the Puerto Rican and US population has agreed that the results point out that Puerto Ricans want a change.

Prior to the referendum, the Puerto Rican Democracy Act was submitted to the House of Representatives in 2009 with a proposal for a two-step plebiscite and approved afterwards in April 2010. Even though the Puerto Rican government did not need a congressional consent to hold a referendum, this formality was necessary for future interaction between Puerto Ricans and the US Congress. Puerto Rican government wanted to secure Congress' future cooperation with regard to the results of the referendum and without this provision, Puerto Rican side was afraid that the US government would not react to the plebiscite as in the previous plebiscites, which were only approved by the Puerto Rican government and opposed by the federal. Moreover, Puerto Ricans sought consent with the Americans on the possibilities of its future status. The White House also commented on that issue, and prompted the legislators to some action in the resolution of Puerto Rico's political status.

According to the magazine *Latin America Monitor*, the status of Puerto Rico is unlikely to alter in the upcoming decade. It is said that the economic downturn and the population decline on the island caused that the majority voted for statehood. Paradoxically, it is assumed that if Puerto Rico became a part of the United States, the economic situation would worsen and population decline would further deepen. Under the current status of an unincorporated territory, Puerto Ricans are exempt of paying federal taxes (only incomes generated outside of Puerto Rico are subjected to taxation) and this would come to an end if the island adopted the statehood. Many foreign companies are thus motivated by the relatively low tax burden on the island and a potential change might lead to relocation of a part of these companies elsewhere. Local businesses would be affected as well, as their tax burden would increase and this would have negative impact on the island's economic health. Based on the data in *Latin America Monitor*, Puerto Rican residents spent 20 million dollars on taxes while the amount would have risen to somewhere between 2.2 and 2.3 billion dollars if Puerto Rico was a state in 2010.<sup>137</sup>

Another pressing issue of the island is the outflow of population to the US mainland. At present, there are more Puerto Ricans on the US mainland than in the island, which is a trend that negatively influences the dynamics of Puerto Rican

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<sup>137</sup> "Political Status With The US Unlikely To Be Changed," 1f.

economy. In case that Puerto Rico became a state, it can be assumed that the outmigration would further increase. As it was mentioned earlier, higher tax burden in Puerto Rico would boost the prices and consequently forced more Puerto Ricans out of the island.<sup>138</sup>

Even though Puerto Ricans gave consent for becoming the 51<sup>st</sup> state, the final decision is in the hands of Congress. But even US political representation is not unequivocal in their opinion. It has become clear that the issue of Puerto Rican statehood is not a question to be resolved overnight and it needs careful consideration as well as preparation.

A lot a debates revolve around the language. Puerto Rico is in spite of having two official languages mainly Spanish-speaking.<sup>139</sup> It was expressed that ignorance of the English language among a considerable part of the Puerto Rican population is of key concern. It has been argued that Puerto Ricans should become bilingual, something that has to be worked on since an early age and thus a reform of Puerto Rican education would be needed. Bilingualism with the Puerto Rican population represents an important aspect of their integration into the American society. On the other hand, the opponents of statehood fear that the integration into the American society would only lead to the loss of the Spanish language and gradually their culture as well.

Except for social matters, the economic and political affairs are taken into account in the first place. Statehood would finally bring Puerto Ricans the representation in Congress, voting representation of course.<sup>140</sup> Moreover, all Puerto Ricans could vote in presidential elections, for some a fundamental right, for them something they are denied right now. Finally, the political instability and constant debates on Puerto Rico political status would stop, which would probably have a positive impact on the situation on the market.

It is true, that these political changes would affect the US affairs too. As a state, Puerto Rico would be entitled to federal assistance. Despite the fact that Puerto Rico is the most economically advanced among Latin American economies, it is the poorest in

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<sup>138</sup> “Political Status With The US Unlikely To Be Changed,” 2.

<sup>139</sup> According to American Community Survey from 2013, 95 percent of islanders speak Spanish, 16 percent of whom claimed that they speak English ‘very well’ while 84 percent admitted to speak English ‘less than very well.’ Only 5 percent of the total population speak English only. The figures concern population 5 years and older. Available at “Language Spoken At Home,” American Fact Finder, accessed April 30, 2015, <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.

<sup>140</sup> Puerto Rico is represented in the US Congress by a Resident Commissioner who can vote in committees and he can submit new legislation, they cannot, however, vote in the final decision-making process.



the US context. While there is an average 16-percent poverty rate in the US, in Puerto Rico it is 46 percent. For the US treasury it would mean to give huge financial injections to the poor islanders.

But “[u]nder the current system, both the U.S. and Puerto Rican governments are subsidizing multinational corporations in an unsuccessful effort to stimulate the Puerto Rican economy”<sup>141</sup> which has turned out not to be a solution but rather patching up of an undesirable situation.

The future status of Puerto Rico has not been decided yet. Although the majority expressed the wish for statehood, the eight-percent difference does not show fundamental inclination for the statehood and it is not impossible that people’s opinion may alter in the future. This referendum and the previous ones have shown though, that it is unlikely for Puerto Rico to gain the independence in the future since the economic, political and cultural ties between Puerto Rico and the United States have strengthened during the past century and because it is not a wish of Puerto Ricans anymore.

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<sup>141</sup> Andrew E. Gerow, “Shooting for the Stars (and Stripes), 649.

## 6 CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that Puerto Rico is the smallest of the islands of the Greater Antilles with total area around nine thousand square kilometres, it is not definitely an insignificant and unforgotten island. On the contrary, Puerto Rico is an important Caribbean territory that has provoked a lot of debates over its relationship with the United States and its political status.

The primary goal of this thesis was to provide a historical overview of this island with the insight to the current socio-economic and political situation. It has turned out that Czech libraries and bookshops do not offer many publications for those readers who would be interested in this Caribbean territory from other perspective than that of a tourist as the majority of books consists of tourist guides. Consequently, I hope that this thesis may serve as a starting point for people interested in this topic as well as a source of publications that can be useful in further reading and study of Puerto Rico.

The Isle of Enchantment as is Puerto Rico sometimes called was originally inhabited by the Taíno Indians who lived mainly on fishing, hunting and farming. Taínos however did not survive the arrival of Spanish colonizers in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. Except for diseases that were brought by the Europeans and that decimated the indigenous population in large numbers because they did not have built immunity to them, Taínos were also forced to work in gold mines and in the fields in order to ensure a sufficiency of food for the white population. Nevertheless, Taínos who were small in figure were not used to such a hard work and often died of exhaustion or malnutrition. Therefore, there are no Taínos in Puerto Rico today and their culture is only partly visible in the language and Puerto Rican culture.

Owing to the lack of workforce on the island, Spaniards started to import African slaves who proved to be more efficient workers. The slave trade much expanded during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century until the 1840s since when there was a gradual decline in the number of imported slaves, until the slavery was completely abolished in 1873. The variety of races that had met on the island left a distinct racial imprint on the Puerto Rican population.

Puerto Rico had been under the Spanish supremacy for almost four hundred years, since 1508 until 1899. The Puerto Rican-Spanish ties were cut off by the Spanish-American war and Puerto Rico, also known as Boriquén, was ceded

to the United States. Short-lived self-government enjoyed by the islanders under the Spanish rule was replaced by military regime. In 1900 the Foraker Act that established a civilian government was adopted and Puerto Ricans had its representative in the US Congress, the Resident Commissioner. Nevertheless the Resident Commissioner, who is elected for a four-year term, has not had a voting right in the House of Representatives and thus cannot actively influence the decision-making process. The incumbent Resident Commissioner is Pedro Pierluisi since 2009.

With the arrival of Americans, there were among other things economic changes on the island. The agriculture-oriented economy of Puerto Rico, for which it was typical to have a big number of small farms, gradually became bought up by large and predominantly American companies. They operated mainly in sugar cane industry. Even though the American arrival meant huge improvement in various fields of the life on the island, such as sanitation, health, infrastructure or education, the majority population remained poor. The profits generated by sugar cane cultivation and subsequent processing filled up the pockets of American investors rather than that of Puerto Rican workers.

Puerto Ricans who called for more autonomy or even for independence were granted the US citizenship in 1917 under the Jones-Shafroth Bill. It was not a coincidence that this step came during the First World War, with the US citizenship, Puerto Rican men were called up for military service. Need to say, that the US citizenship brought many advantages to Puerto Ricans. Since then, Puerto Ricans have enjoyed free movement between the island and the US mainland which initiated mass migration to the United States.

Next significant step in American-Puerto Rican relations came in 1952 when Puerto Rico drafted its own constitution and officially became the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Five years prior to this event, Puerto Ricans had elected the first Puerto Rican governor for the first time in history and Luis Muñoz Marín held the office for almost two decades.

Originally, Boriquén was agricultural island but the necessary transformation came under the US control and the electronic, pharmaceutical and petrochemical industries became the main employers. Without any doubt, agriculture still has its place on the island, but the sugar, coffee and tobacco cultivation and production were by large replaced by cattle farming and dairy production. Tourism and accompanying services make up for a significant part of the island's economy as well and Puerto Rico which is

nicknamed the Isle of Enchantment, boasts beautiful diverse nature with mountainous region, a rainforest and amazing seaside.

But what was it that attracted Spanish, American and other colonizers who had tried to seize control over the island during the past centuries? It was its strategic position in the Caribbean that was decisive as the island lies half way between the North and Latin America and served as an important port between Europe and America. Spaniards had built a military base on the island with a system of fortification and that helped to protect it against the invaders. For Americans, Puerto Rico became a strategic outpost that helped to protect Panama Canal against the Germans and its allies during World War Two. Panama Canal that connects the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean has become a turning point in the international trade since its opening in 1914.

The following part of the thesis dealt with what started as a solution to the overpopulation of the island and has evolved into one of the main problems of the past years, the migration to the United States and massive outflow of Puerto Rican population from the island.

It is no surprise that Puerto Ricans have chosen the United States as their primary migratory destination. The geographical proximity ties the island and the United States together. However, if it were not for the fact that Puerto Ricans become US citizens by birth, they would not probably be allowed to move freely between the two.

Even though early migrants flew to the United States already in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the mass migration did not start before the end of the World War Two. The period between the mid-1940s and mid-1960s is generally referred to as the Great Migration. Migration to the United States appeared as a solution to the overpopulation of the island which was accompanied by an unfavourable economic situation. A great number of Puerto Ricans were unemployed and lived in poverty and thus often followed their friends or family members that had already been on the mainland. Apart from that, Puerto Rican economy went through the process of industrialization and that was also a reason which caused that many farmers became unemployed. In order to find a job, they either moved from the villages to big cities or right to the United States.

The largest concentration of Puerto Ricans has been in New York City and the most famous neighbourhood which is in Manhattan is called Spanish Harlem or 'El Barrio' in Spanish. Nevertheless, the settling pattern of Puerto Ricans has changed

over the time not only in New York neighbourhoods but in the whole United States. Although New York remains the largest Puerto Rican city after San Juan, the melting pot has experienced a decrease in number of Puerto Rican immigrants together with their outflow towards different US areas. Traditionally, Chicago and Philadelphia have been the centres of Puerto Rican community but recently a lot of Puerto Ricans have been concentrated in Florida, especially Central Florida in the surroundings of Orlando.

As I stated above, the migration of Puerto Ricans to the United States has become a serious problem since the number of stateside Puerto Ricans has exceeded the number of islanders by proportion 4.2 to 3.8 million. If anything is to blame, it is the economic situation on the island. Puerto Rico has been in a huge debt and high unemployment rate drives many Puerto Ricans away from the island and consequently, there is extensive outflow of the island's population.

Puerto Ricans are known for what is called return or circular migration. Since both countries lie in close proximity, and the transportation has become financially available, many Puerto Ricans tend to return to their homeland or circulate between the two countries whenever their economic situation requires so.

The next part of my thesis is concerned with stateside Puerto Ricans and organizations that they have established for the sake of their community. Puerto Ricans who are said to have strong sense of community, have got together and created numerous organizations, at first within a family and friend's circle and some of them later evolved into official organizations advocating the interest of stateside Puerto Ricans, and promoted their culture and customs. One of the first organizations was the Migration Division that was, however, established on the island and was run by the government and initially served the Puerto Rican workers on the US mainland or tried to facilitate people's arrival to foreign country by raising public awareness on the life on the mainland.

Apart from that, Puerto Ricans have established other kinds of organizations, among them educational, political or legal. Only a small fraction of them was mentioned in this chapter, but the most visible representatives were chosen in order to provide at least slight insight into the Puerto Rican community life through those organizations. A short mention in that chapter was left for Puerto Rican Day Parade, one of the most visible displays of Puerto Rican culture and an event that started in 1958 in New York. Nowadays, it is held not only in New York but in various cities throughout the United States and it attracts a lot of people everywhere.

The last chapter summarizes the political status of Puerto Rico in relation to the United States throughout the period of the US supremacy over the island. The focus is put on the last referendum that was held in 2012 – in this referendum Puerto Ricans expressed themselves for the first time in history in favour of statehood. The possible advantages and disadvantages of this option were discussed. Nevertheless, it is the US Congress who has the final say in the question of Puerto Rican status, this time the US politicians had promised to deal with this Puerto Rican matter. It is clear that current state of Puerto Rican affairs is very unsettling for majority population and it needs a solution, a viable solution. The future will show.

## RÉSUMÉ

Portoriko je nejmenší z ostrovů Velkých Antil, které se nachází v Karibském moři. Pravdou však je, že i přes svoji malou rozlohu, která činí něco kolem 9000 km<sup>2</sup>, patří Portoriko k velkým tématům dneška, alespoň v americkém kontextu. Portoriko s hlavním městem San Juan je přidruženým státem Spojených států amerických, v angličtině označovaný jako „Commonwealth.“ A právě politický statut ostrova vyvolává vášnivé debaty mezi Portorikem a Spojenými státy.

Portorikánci získávají narozením americké občanství, nicméně často se říká, že se jedná spíše o druhořadé občanství. Navzdory tomu, že jsou američtí občané, Portorikánci, kteří nemají trvalý pobyt na území Spojených států, nemohou volit amerického prezidenta ani zástupce kongresu. A jediný oficiální zástupce ostrova ve Sněmovně reprezentantů, také nemá volební právo. Portorikánci tudíž nemají možnost ovlivňovat zákony, které ale musejí dodržovat, či si zvolit svého prezidenta, kterým je právě prezident Spojených států.

Než se ovšem Portoriko stalo přidruženým státem USA, bylo dlouhá čtyři století pod nadvládou Španělska. A právě zmínkou o objevení Portorika začíná tato diplomová práce. Borikén, tak byl ostrov označován původními obyvateli, byl objeven v roce 1493 při druhé výpravě Kryštofa Kolumba do Ameriky, osidlování začalo ale až v roce 1508 a první osadu založil v blízkosti dnešního hlavního města Juan Ponce de León a pojmenoval ji Caparra. Ostrov byl původně pojmenován San Juan a přístav Portoriko, což v překladu znamená „bohatý přístav“ a v roce 1521 se názvy ustálily do dnešní podoby.

Původní obyvatelé ostrova byli Taínové, drobní zemědělci a rybáři, pro které byl střet s Evropany definitivní. Španělští kolonisté s sebou přivezli kromě nového jazyka, kultury a plodin i nemoci, kterým Taínové rychle podléhali. Ti odolnější byli však nuceni pracovat ve zlatých dolech a plantážích, aby zajistili obživu španělským dobyvatelům, což vedlo k jejich postupné likvidaci a Taínové byli následkem nemocí a těžké práce téměř vyhubeni během prvních třiceti let španělské kolonizace. Náhradou za ně byli do Portorika přiváženi afričtí otroci, kteří byli lépe stavěni na těžkou práci na kávových a tabákových polích.

Portoriko sloužilo jako vojenská základna, byli to však Španělé, kteří na ostrově vybudovali rozlehlá opevnění na obranu před útočníky, kteří se chtěli ostrova zmocnit.

Nejčastěji to byli Angličané a Nizozemci, kteří ostrov napadali v průběhu 16. a 17. století, díky dobrému opevnění a dalším faktorům se jim to však nepovedlo nebo jen na krátko a Španělé si ostrov udrželi. Pevnost El Morro v hlavním městě San Juan je dochována dodnes.

Ostrov také sloužil jako obchodní křižovatka mezi Evropou a Amerikou, což přinášelo nemalé peníze do Španělské pokladny. Nicméně 18. a 19. století bylo po ekonomické stránce slabší a Španělsko dočasně ztratilo o ostrov zájem. Zvednutím daní a kvót se však situace ještě zhoršila, protože se značně rozšířil nelegální obchod mezi okolními ostrovy a Španělsko se opět začalo o ostrov zajímat, aby navýšilo své příjmy.

19. století v Portoriku bylo ve znamení hnutí za nezávislost. První ústupek ze strany Španělska přišel v roce 1809, když Portorikánci dosáhli zastoupení ve španělském parlamentu. V druhé polovině 19. století se situace vyostřila a v roce 1868 Ramón Emeterio Betances se svými stoupenci obsadili město Lares a žádali zrušení otroctví a nezávislost na Španělsku. I když bylo jejich povstání poraženo španělskou armádou a většina povstalců byla zatčena a vůdci povstání byli vyhnáni do exilu, El Grito De Lares, jak bývá tato vzpoura označována, měla přímý vliv na další dění na ostrově. V roce 1873 bylo definitivně zrušeno otroctví a konečně v roce 1897 byla Portoriku přiznána částečná autonomie.

Nicméně Portorikánci si nově nabyté autonomie neužili dlouho, americká armáda obsadila ostrov 25. července 1898. Americké jednotky se vylodily u města Guanica na jihozápadě země a pokračovaly přes Ponce až na sever do San Juanu. Záminkou byl výbuch americké lodi Maine, která kotvila u pobřeží Kuby, a ze které Američané vinili právě Španělsko. Spojené státy válkou získaly několik španělských zámořských území, kromě Portorika také Filipíny a Guam. Válka oficiálně skončila 10. prosince téhož roku podepsáním Pařížské mírové smlouvy.

Zpočátku byl ostrov pod vojenskou správou Spojených států, než byl v roce 1900 přijat Forakerův zákon. Do vedení ostrova byl americkým prezidentem jmenován guvernér a byl zvolen stálý pověřenec (anglicky Resident Commissioner) do Sněmovny reprezentantů, který měl hájit zájmy Portorikánců, nicméně neměl hlasovací právo. Tento systém je vlastně platný dodnes. Od roku 1917 jsou Portorikánci navíc americkými občany.

Hospodářství Portorika bylo v té době zaměřené především na zemědělství. Typičtí drobní rolníci, kteří pěstovali kávu a tabák byli však s příchodem Američanů vystřídáni velkými společnostmi, které se zaměřili na pěstování a zpracování cukrové



třtiny. Tato změna s sebou nesla zvýšení nezaměstnanosti, protože malí zemědělci nebyli schopni konkurovat velkým firmám a tak přišli o svoji obživu a často se nechali zaměstnat právě u těchto firem. Jenže sezónní charakter tohoto odvětví více prohluboval nezaměstnanost na ostrově. Ve 30. letech pak přišla celosvětová krize a Portoriko bylo navíc zasaženo dvěma hurikány v letech 1928 a 1929. Situace se začala zlepšovat po druhé světové válce.

Jednak přišla malá změna v politickém uspořádání a to, že si Portorikánci poprvé v roce 1947 volili svého guvernéra, kterým se stal Luis Muñoz Marín, dlouholetý zastánce nezávislosti ostrova. V 50. letech byla navržena operace Bootstrap, která měla přispět k oživení jednostranně orientovaného hospodářství Portorika. Hlavní část tohoto programu tvořili vládami (americkou i portorikánskou) sponzorované aktivity, zejména daňová zvýhodnění společnostem, které by se rozhodli zavést svoji výrobu v Portoriku či jinak zde investovat. Ze zemědělsky zaměřeného Portorika se ekonomika země postupně měnila na průmyslovou výrobu a mezi hlavní odvětví se zařadil průmysl s elektronikou a farmaceutický průmysl.

Mezitím se v Portoriku ozývaly hlasy požadující samostatnost. Ta sice nepřišla, ale americká vláda schválila jistý ústupek, když 25. července 1952, přesně čtyřiapadesát let od obsazení ostrova Američany, prohlásila Portoriko přidruženým státem Spojených států, v angličtině označovaným jako Commonwealth, a Portorikánci si sepsali vlastní ústavu (ta je však podřízená té americké). Ne všichni vnímali tento krok pozitivně, pro obhájce nezávislosti Portorika tento krok znamenal uzavření cesty k budoucí samostatnosti. Od té doby se toho na poli politického dění mezi Portorikem a Spojenými státy moc nestalo.

Naposledy se v roce 2012 konalo referendum s otázkou budoucího statusu Portorika. Je nutno však říct, že dnes už si většina Portorikánců samostatnost nepřaje. V tomto referendu se většina voličů vyjádřila, že nesouhlasí se současným statusem a poprvé v historii většinu hlasů získala možnost, aby se Portoriko stalo 51. státem USA. Nicméně výsledek referenda není v žádném směru závazný a rozhodující slovo má americký kongres. Pravdou je, že tentokrát bylo referendum předem schváleno ve sněmovně a portorická strana tak věří, že se americká vláda konečně začne aktivně zajímat vyřešení portorické otázky.

Důležitým bodem v americko-portorických vztazích je bezpochyby migrace. Portorikánci, kteří jsou zároveň americkými občany, mohou volně cestovat mezi Portorikem a Spojenými státy. I když migrace do Spojených států probíhala už za dob

španělské nadvlády, a to jak z důvodů politických tak i ekonomických, největší emigrační vlna přišla po druhé světové válce a trvala až do poloviny 60. let. Důvodů bylo hned několik. Jednak to bylo období industrializace portorického hospodářství, které bylo spojeno se zvýšenou nezaměstnaností na ostrově a mnoho Portorikánců odcházelo do USA za prací. Také vysoká porodnost a lepší hygienické podmínky a dostupnější zdravotní péče na ostrově způsobily přelidnění, což vedlo opět k nezaměstnanosti velké části obyvatelstva a chudobě. A právě odliv značné části obyvatel se jevil jako vhodné řešení této situace.

Kromě ekonomických faktorů k masové migraci v druhé polovině 20. století přispěla i revoluce v dopravě, kdy parní lodě byly vystřídány leteckou dopravou. Navíc se jednalo o nízkonákladové linky, které umožnily Portorikáncům levnou a rychlou dopravu mezi San Juanem a New Yorkem, a později i Chicagem a Filadelfií (což byli hlavní centra, kam portorikánští přistěhovalci směřovali). Obě země navíc leží v těsné blízkosti, což přispělo k trendu zpáteční či kruhové migrace. Kdykoliv to ekonomická situace ostrovanů vyžadovala, přesunuli se dočasně za prací do USA a později se zase vrátili do vlasti.

Portorické orgány ale v současnosti řeší problém s odlivem obyvatelstva. Poslední sčítání lidu z roku 2010 ukázalo, že většina Portorikánců dnes žije ve Spojených státech a jejich odliv nadále pokračuje. Na vině je zejména špatná ekonomická situace na ostrově a vysoká nezaměstnanost, takže většina obyvatel odjíždí od USA za prací, kde i když pracují za minimální mzdu, daří se jim lépe než v Portoriku. A tak Portorikánci tvoří druhou největší skupinu mezi Hispánci ve Spojených státech.

Teprve budoucnost ukáže, jak se tato země s odlivem obyvatelstva vypořádá a jaké pokračování bude mít politický vývoj, jestli se Portoriko stane 51. státem USA a jestli to vůbec naplní očekávání jeho obyvatel, kteří jsou převážně nespokojeni se současným stavem. Bude vůbec možné spojení španělsky hovořícího Portorika a anglofonních USA nad rámec současného stavu?

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1**

A – Map of the Caribbean

B – Map of Puerto Rico

**APPENDIX 2 – NYC map**

**APPENDIX 3 – Map of the counties in Florida**

### **APPENDIX 4**

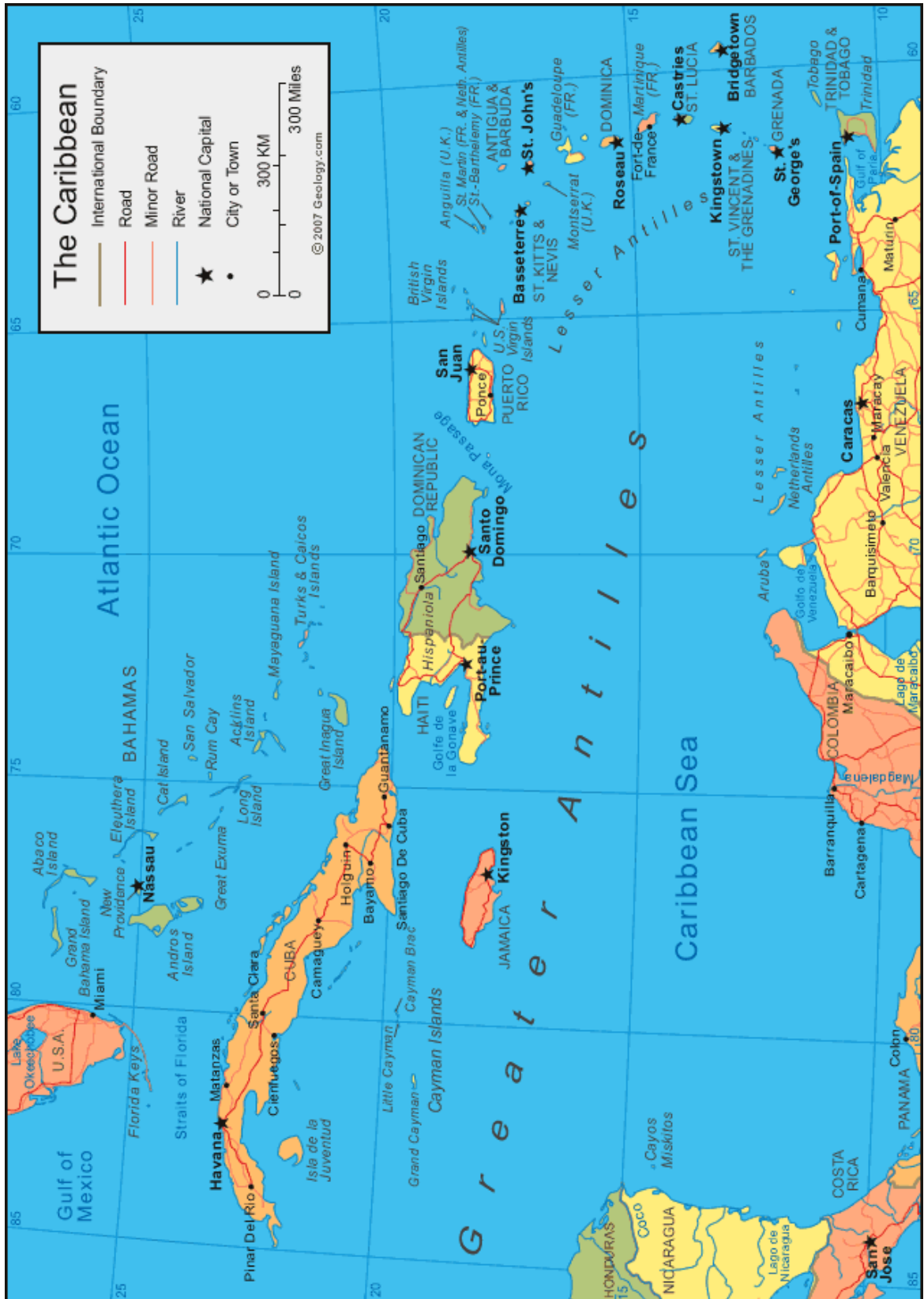
A – “The Little Puerto Rico.” The centre of Puerto Rican community in Chicago

B – Chicago suburban areas with the Puerto Rican population

**APPENDIX 5 – Sample ballot – plebiscite 2012**

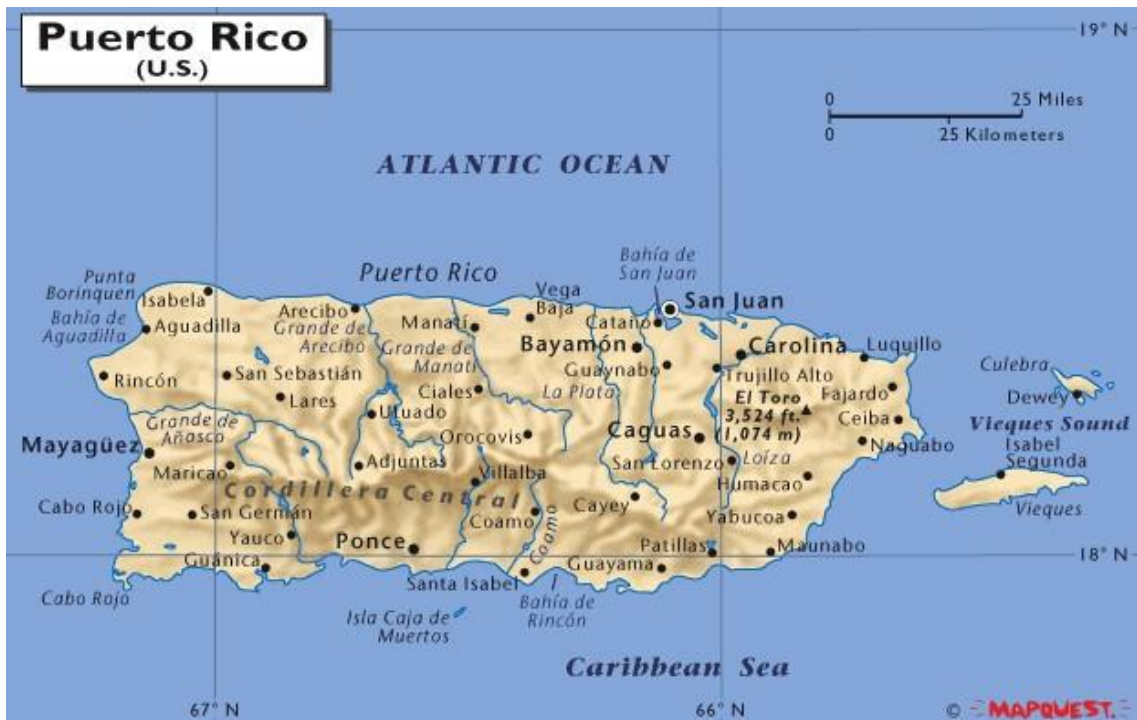
# APPENDIX 1

## A – Map of the Caribbean



Source: “Caribbean Island Sea Map,” Geology.com, accessed May 1, 2015, <http://geology.com/world/caribbean-satellite-image.shtml>.

**B – Map of Puerto Rico**



Source: “Caribbean Islands,” Caribbean-Tour.com, accessed April 1, 2015, [http://www.caribbean-tour.com/Puerto-Rico-\(USA\)-Weather.html](http://www.caribbean-tour.com/Puerto-Rico-(USA)-Weather.html).

## APPENDIX 2: NYC map



Source: "Maps," Frommer's, accessed April 20, 2015, <http://www.frommers.com/destinations/new-york-city/860038#sthash.x1ZkCnDu.EhIca4qE.dpbs>.



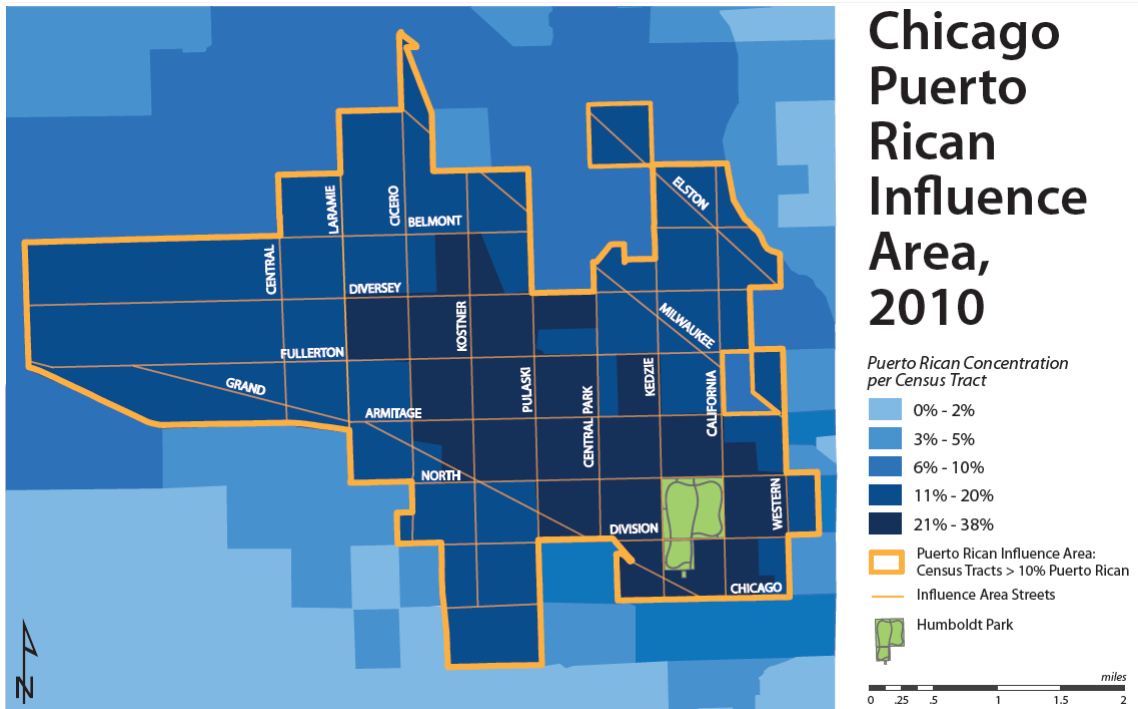
### APPENDIX 3: Map of the counties in Florida



Source: "Florida County Map with County Seat Cities," Geology.com, accessed April 1, 2015, <http://geology.com/county-map/florida.shtml>.

## APPENDIX 4

A – “The Little Puerto Rico.” The centre of Puerto Rican community in Chicago



Source: Ralph Cintrón, et al. *60 Years of Migration: Puerto Ricans in Chicagoland*. Chicago: The Puerto Rican Agenda, 2012, accessed April 15, 2015, [http://www.puertoricanchicago.org/pdf/Full\\_report.pdf](http://www.puertoricanchicago.org/pdf/Full_report.pdf)

B – Chicago suburban areas with the Puerto Rican population



Source: “Where we serve,” Red Top Valet Service, Inc., accessed April 1, 2015, <http://www.redtopvalet.com/7.html>

APPENDIX 5: Sample ballot – plebiscite 2012

<p><b>PAPELETA OFICIAL</b> <b>OFFICIAL BALLOT</b></p> <p><b>MODELO</b></p>	 <p>COMISIÓN ESTATAL DE ELECCIONES STATE ELECTIONS COMMISSION MARTES, 6 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2012 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2012</p>	<p><b>CONSULTA PLEBISCITE</b></p> <p><b>SAMPLE</b></p>
<p><b>CONSULTA SOBRE EL ESTATUS POLÍTICO DE PUERTO RICO</b> <b>PLEBISCITE ON PUERTO RICO POLITICAL STATUS</b></p>		
<p><b>Instrucciones:</b> Marque la opción de su preferencia. La papeleta con más de una (1) opción marcada en esta sección no será contabilizada. <i>Instructions:</i> Mark your option of preference. Those ballots with more than one (1) mark in this section shall not be tallied.</p>		
<p><b>¿Está usted de acuerdo con mantener la condición política territorial actual?</b> <b>Do you agree that Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of territorial status?</b></p>		
<p><b>Sí / Yes</b> _____</p>		<p><b>No /No</b> _____</p>
<p><b>Instrucciones:</b> Irrespective de su contestación a la primera pregunta, <b>conteste cuál de las siguientes opciones no territoriales usted prefiere.</b> <i>Instructions:</i> Regardless of your selection in the first question, <b>please mark which of the following non-territorial options would you prefer.</b></p> <p>La consulta con más de una (1) opción marcada en esta sección no será contabilizada. <i>Those ballots with more than one (1) mark in this Section shall not be tallied.</i></p>		
		
<p><b>Estadidad:</b></p> <p>Prefiero que Puerto Rico sea un estado de Estados Unidos de América, para que todos los ciudadanos americanos residentes en Puerto Rico tengan iguales derechos, beneficios y responsabilidades que los demás ciudadanos de los estados de la Unión, incluyendo derecho a la plena representación en el Congreso y participación en las elecciones presidenciales, y que se requiera al Congreso Federal que promulgue la legislación necesaria para iniciar la transición hacia la estadidad. Si está de acuerdo marque aquí:</p> <p><b>Statehood:</b></p> <p><i>Puerto Rico should be admitted as a state of the United States of America so that all United States citizens residing in Puerto Rico may have rights, benefits, and responsibilities equal to those enjoyed by all other citizens of the states of the Union, and be entitled to full representation in Congress and to participate in the Presidential elections, and the United States Congress would be required to pass any necessary legislation to begin the transition into Statehood. If you agree, mark here:</i></p>	<p><b>Independencia:</b></p> <p>Prefiero que Puerto Rico sea una nación soberana y totalmente independiente de Estados Unidos y que se requiera al Congreso Federal que promulgue la legislación necesaria para iniciar la transición hacia la nación independiente de Puerto Rico. Si está de acuerdo marque aquí:</p> <p><b>Independence:</b></p> <p><i>Puerto Rico should become a sovereign nation, fully independent from the United States and the United States Congress would be required to pass any necessary legislation to begin the transition into independent nation of Puerto Rico. If you agree, mark here:</i></p>	<p><b>Estado Libre Asociado Soberano:</b></p> <p>Prefiero que Puerto Rico adopte un estatus fuera de la Cláusula Territorial de la Constitución de Estados Unidos, que reconozca la soberanía del Pueblo de Puerto Rico. El Estado Libre Asociado Soberano se basaría en una asociación política libre y voluntaria, cuyos términos específicos se acordarían entre Estados Unidos y Puerto Rico como naciones soberanas. Dicho acuerdo dispondría el alcance de los poderes jurisdiccionales que el pueblo de Puerto Rico autorice dejar en manos de Estados Unidos y retendría los restantes poderes o autoridades jurisdiccionales. Si está de acuerdo, marque aquí:</p> <p><b>Sovereign Free Associated State</b></p> <p><i>Puerto Rico should adopt a status outside of the Territory Clause of the Constitution of the United States that recognizes the sovereignty of the People of Puerto Rico. The Sovereign Free Associated State would be based on a free and voluntary political association, the specific terms of which shall be agreed upon between the United States and Puerto Rico as sovereign nations. Such agreement would provide the scope of the jurisdictional powers that the People of Puerto Rico agree to confer to the United States and retain all other jurisdictional powers and authorities. If you agree, mark here:</i></p>

Source: "Official ballot - sample," Puerto Rico Report, accessed April 29, 2015.  
<http://www.puertoricoreport.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Sample-ballot2.pdf>.



## **ANNOTATION**

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The aim of this thesis is to provide general information about Puerto Rico, its history and its relationship to the United States. This Caribbean island is an unincorporated territory of the United States, officially known as the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The political status of Puerto Rico has been widely discussed and one chapter of this thesis deals with this topic and analyses the 2012 referendum in which the majority voted for Puerto Rico's statehood. The thesis is also concerned with stateside Puerto Ricans, who have outnumbered the island's population. In this chapter, I deal with migration waves to the United States and areas with the biggest concentration of the Puerto Rican population. The opening chapter gives an overview on the history of the island since its discovery by Spaniards and subsequent four centuries of the Spanish supremacy, which was terminated by the Spanish-American War in 1898 and was followed by the annexation of Puerto Rico to the United States.

## ANOTACE

**Autor:** Bc. Kateřina Entlerová

**Katedra:** Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

**Název:** Portoriko: Vztah mezi Spojenými státy a jejich karibským územím

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Cílem této diplomové práce bylo podat obecné informace o Portoriku, jeho historii a vztahu ke Spojeným státům americkým. Tento ostrov v Karibském moři je přidruženým územím Spojených států, označovaný jako ‘Commonwealth,’ a jeho politický status je předmětem mnoha diskuzí. Této otázce je věnována jedna kapitola, která analyzuje referendum z roku 2012, ve kterém se Portorikánci vyjádřili, že by se chtěli stát 51. státem Spojených států. Práce se také zabývá Portorikánci žijícími na území Spojených států, kteří v současnosti převyšují počet obyvatel samotného ostrova. V této kapitole se zabývám migračními vlnami do USA, a oblastmi s největší koncentrací Portorikánců. Úvodní kapitola podává přehled o historii ostrova od jeho objevení Španěly a následnými téměř čtyřmi stoletími španělské nadvlády, která byla ukončena španělsko-americkou válkou v roce 1898 a následným připojením Portorika k USA.