

Alexandra Langton

A Comparative Analysis of Political Status: Hawaii, Cuba, the Philippines
and Puerto Rico

Advisor: Elizabeth Cohn, School of International Service
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Abstract:

This research addresses the prospects for permanent political status in Puerto Rico. On November 6, 2012 61% of the Puerto Rican electorate voted for statehood as the favorable political status option. This begs the question as to if this vote alone is sufficient for a change in political status. To determine whether or not Puerto Rico has met the necessary conditions to gain permanent political status, this research will address the conditions necessary for a territory to become a state or gain independence. Using a comparative case study model, this research compares Puerto Rico to Cuba, the Philippines, and Hawaii. Outmigration during territorial periods, strength of U.S. institutions, cultural similarities, strength of nationalist movements and mutual determination explain why Puerto Rico has not obtained permanent political status while other former U.S. territories have.

Introduction

On November 6, 2012, 61.5% of Puerto Ricans voted in favor of statehood as a political status option. Yet, is this self-determination sufficient for Puerto Rico to alter its political status to a non-colonial, permanent status? To answer this question, this research will compare Puerto Rico to three case studies of former U.S territories that obtained different forms of political statuses. This comparative analysis will explain the conditions necessary for territories to achieve non-territorial statuses, and thus determine whether or not self-determination is sufficient for political status change. For the purpose of this research, statehood and independence are the only options that constitute permanent political status.¹ The cases of Hawaii, the Philippines and Cuba will provide for an evaluation of the feasibility of a permanent political status option for Puerto Rico. The Philippines and Cuba obtained independence from the United States in 1946 and 1902 respectively, while Hawaii became the fiftieth U.S. state on August 21, 1959. Puerto Rico, on the other hand, retains its colonial status as an unincorporated territory of the United States. In 1967, 1993 and 1998 Puerto Rico had referendums concerning permanent status options; these results produced favorability for non-permanent political status options. Therefore, comparative analysis of the conditions under which the Philippines and Cuba gained independence and Hawaii gained statehood will explain why Puerto Rico maintains an intermediate colonial status.

Conditions for Statehood, Independence or Maintaining the Commonwealth: Three Views

Literature in the field of political status for territories includes a broad range of hypotheses as to what conditions have led territories to become states, gain independence or remain commonwealths. There are three prominent schools of thought that explain these

¹ Free Association has been excluded from this study due to the lack of scholarly evidence available and general lack of support for this option in political participation in Puerto Rico.

conditions: geographic, cultural and structural. Physical explanations suggest that relative size of a territory and its geographic proximity to the home nation determine status. The second school of thought, cultural explanations, includes language and race, arguing that cultural similarities or dissimilarities contribute to a territory either becoming independent or becoming a state. Finally, structural conditions for independence or statehood include type of government institutions, and self-determination in favor of a change in political status towards either statehood or independence.

Geographic Explanations

Two reasons why the U.S. Federal government will distinguish political status based on geography are size of the territory and physical geography in relation to the mother country.² These reasons explain why different U.S. territories are granted diverging definitions of non-permanent status, even among the different territories.

Using any normal indicators of size (defined as land area, population, or gross national product) the insular cases are all small territories. The significance of their small size in terms of political status is the limitation of economic potential.³ While poverty is not a necessary consequence of size, all the U.S. territories are, in fact, poor—each with a per capita income of more than one third less than the poorest state in the Union. The Federal Government does not foresee economic growth, and therefore does not seek radical political or economic change in the territory. The Federal view assumes that the status quo is the appropriate political status for these territories and justifies the maintenance of the commonwealth over incorporation into the Union. Thus, relatively small territories receive fewer inclusionary rights compared to what states enjoy.

² Arnold Leibowitz. *Defining Status: A Comparative Analysis of United States Territorial Relations*. Norwell, MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989. 89-100. Print.

³ Ibid., 88.

Additionally, U.S. legislative attitudes regarding trade illustrate the view that small territories are equally unsuitable for independence. The small size of U.S. territories makes them dependent on trade and limits the type of economy that they can have. Limited size of domestic markets, consequent limitations on large-scale production methods and lack of diversity of natural resources result in an inverse relationship between size and trade dependence. Trade dependence and structural openness of small island economies require them to maintain international competitiveness. Due to the aforementioned expectations of higher wages limitations of diversity of resources and production techniques, makes access to a U.S. market a critical character of these territories. So, the small island economy offers fewer and less promising development options than a larger one, and a path to independence for small territories poses possible ruinous effects. These effects include weak economic competitiveness, high dependence on imports and hindered economic growth.⁴

Physical geography has the greatest impact on a territory's political status definition according to the geographic theory of status.⁵ The government treats geographically distant territories as foreign because they are physically removed from the immediate experiences of the home country. Moreover, the closer a territory is physically the more inclusive definition of its political status. Geography provides the rationalization for congressional or executive action. To enact legislation that extends rights of territorial citizens, to maintain them, or extend recognition of political status, thus, depends heavily on size and location.

By mere counterexample, the geographic theory of determining status is unconvincing. In the cases of Hawaii and Puerto Rico, however, size is not correlated with the different outcomes

⁴ Nadim Khalaf. *Economic Implications of the Size of Nations*. Beirut: Brill Archive, 1971. 17-35. Print.

⁵ Leibowitz, 92.

in each case. The geography and population size of Puerto Rico and Hawaii in 1950 show that Puerto Rico had a larger population than Hawaii and geographic dimensions were very similar. In 1950, Puerto Rico had a population of 2.2 million and Hawaii had 400,000 inhabitants. Moreover, geographical dimensions are comparable Puerto Rico being 5,656 square miles and Hawaii 4,028 square miles.⁶ Despite the smaller population and similar physical area, Hawaii achieved statehood, while Puerto Rico remains a commonwealth. Thus, large size of a territory is unconvincing, in explaining the conditions for changing political status. Additionally, in terms of geographic proximity, while Hawaii is 2,000 miles from the west coast of California, Puerto Rico is slightly closer at 1,150 miles south of Florida.⁷ Additionally, size is an unconvincing argument for maintenance of territories over permanent status due to its reliance on vague interpretations to define capacity for permanent status.

Cultural Explanations

The second school of thought considers culture as preconditions for statehood,⁸ relying principally on elements of race and linguistic abilities. More specifically, cultural similarities of relative whiteness and the prevalence of the English language are necessary conditions for statehood.⁹ A critical component of nation building, or forming nation-ness is “objectification” or ethnic leaders’ desires to establish their group’s distinctiveness. Thus, nationalism stresses the cultural similarity of its adherence and, by implication, it draws boundaries vis-à-vis others, who, as a result, become outsiders in relation to the coherent nation. Language is one of the most

⁶ Lanny Thompson. *The Imperial Republic: A Comparison of the Insular Territories under U.S. Dominion after 1898*. “Pacific Historical Review”. 71.4 (2011): 535-574. Print

⁷ Ibid., 537

⁸ Referring to statehood for admission to the union of the United States, not statehood as independence

⁹ Richard Handler. 1988. *Nationalism and the Politics of Culture in Quebec*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. 6-12, 22-46. Print.

readily discernible characteristics and therefore the most convenient and frequently used nation-defining traits. Populations that exist outside of this formation of nation-ness threaten the hold that the nations' dominant culture has over the coherence and control over the nation.

Despite historical examples of the maintenance of national consciousness even in the absence of linguistic homogeneity, in the case of Puerto Rico, the prevalence of English is indeed a necessary condition for statehood.¹⁰ The 1989-1991 status deliberations in the U.S. Congress provide support of the necessary role of language. In these deliberations, the language amendment –that would include linguistic guarantees of Spanish under statehood–contributed largely to the failure of any determinant decision. Thus, the prospect of the addition of a culturally diverse territory did seem to be a difficult issue for Congress, and reflected the importance of at least some degree of cultural sameness for statehood.

Race is another cultural characteristic that affects political status. Similar to language, race represents an easily identifiable and commonly used cultural trait that contributes to the formation on nation-ness.¹¹ Additionally, race represents not only a precondition for statehood, but also for independence.¹²

During the Imperial Era questions of race expansion and citizenship were pressing issues and race played a crucial role in these decisions in regards to the newly acquired territory. Decisions to maintain territories were based on the nation's tradition of avoiding admission of territories that were too densely occupied by an "alien" race that could not be assimilated into the country.

¹⁰ Amílcar Antonio Barreto. *The Politics of Language in Puerto Rico*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001.21-25, 108-140. Print.

¹¹Handler, 26

¹² Eric L.T Love. *Race over Empire: Racism & U.S. Imperialism 1865-1900*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. Print.

The basis on which said alien population was measured was based on the following standards outlined by Senator William Henry Seward: inclusion of non-whites would have no discernable impact on the prevailing social order and “aliens” could be received and absorbed without disturbing the national harmony, impairing the national vigor or even checking the national progress.¹³ While white supremacy never stood alone in determining policies towards territories, on the critical expansion of nation building and status it was inseparable from politics.

On the other hand, imperialists did not want to give many of these culturally and ethnically diverse territories independence because they thought they were incapable of governing themselves. For example, in the Philippines, local inhabitants lacked “biology, blood, and stock”.¹⁴ Essentially signifying that the local groups in the Philippines were biologically distinct from Americans, and the whites that did inhabit the island were few. This implied that the inferiority of the colonized was interminable, and that the lack of racially similar people could not be overcome in terms of annexation. This view of racial difference that dominated colonial classifications of local groups stressed that these groups were “incorrigibly inferior and contributed to the American view of their incapacity for independent governance.”¹⁵

Finally, there exists a causal relationship between these cultural differences and the decisions taken on a federal level to maintain intermediate political status of peripheral territories.¹⁶ In the case of the U.S. Insular Cases,¹⁷ race plays a salient role in the decision-making process in

¹³ Frederic Bancroft. "Seward's Ideas of Territorial Expansion." Trans. Array *The North American Review*. University of Northern Iowa, 1898. 79-89. Print.

¹⁴ Love, 165.

¹⁵ Love., 184.

¹⁶ Leibowitz, 82.

¹⁷ U.S. Supreme Court decision establishing that full constitutional rights did not automatically extend to all areas under American control.

Congress that has led to the intermediate status of the existing U.S. territories.¹⁸ The designation of the Insular Cases suggests willingness to accord considerable impact to the concern of racial difference. The legal impact of these racial considerations has been discriminatory actions in favor of state-dwellers against residents of tangential territories. Supreme Court opinions emphasize public education as basically English-speaking secular programs that are crucial to a citizen's participation in the economic and cultural life. The favorable opinions toward English-speaking schools increase the social and political distance between U.S states and territories. Furthermore, these and other discriminatory decisions have embittered territory residents who become further alienated and culturally opposed to American judiciary and constitutional efficacy.

The cultural explanations of race and language provide perhaps the most convincing condition for statehood or independence. These issues have provided for constant points of contest in The United States Congress as reasons against admission of new territories. Moreover, since the cultural preconditions for statehood provide for a readily discernable and measurable trait of political status, research regarding this explanation can be more definitely justified.

Structural Explanations

The third and final school of thought that explains the conditions for political status change is structural interpretation of political status. A variety of explanations fall under this school of thought, some of which are more compelling than others. These explanations include structure and efficiency of government institutions, self-determination in favor of independence,

¹⁸ Leibowitz, 102.

and intention to fulfill international law obligations. The first, and principal, requirement for independence is the existence of a stable government established by the possession of an organized and reasonably effective administration. Particularly aspects of said administration include effectiveness in defense, police, justice, and finance, the social services being regarded as less essential.¹⁹ A model standard of efficiency and stability is not necessarily required as self-government would often be unattainable if the new state's government's institution were immediately required to perform to equal standards of the most highly developed nations.

The second requirement for independence is self-determination in favor of the proposed political change. Essentially, the majority of the public must support the proposed new form of government. Whether or not this decision is made democratically or not is somewhat irrelevant.²⁰ The third requirement is that a prospective independent state must have a clear intention to fulfill international obligations. For example, said state must provide the effective protection of native minorities as well as foreigners and their property.

Stable governments and self-determination are convincing preconditions for independence, however, some problems accompany these criteria. First, while self-determination is a strong evaluation of independence or statehood, Ritscher vaguely addresses that "the public" must vote in favor of this status. This qualification made on the requirements of self-determination undermines the accuracy and therefore the weight of the effective decision. This begs the question as to what part of the populations the decision involves. Thus, while self-determination is a necessary condition indeed for political status change, there must be a more

¹⁹ Walter Holmes Ritscher, *Criteria of Capacity for Independence*. Beirut, Syria: American University of Beirut, 1934. 46-122.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 114.

concrete definition of public. For example, does it indicate the electorate are also involved in this decision? To overcome this ambiguity, this research will define the public as eligible voters.²¹ Also, stability of government, while representing a valid concern for independent nations, does not vary among the four cases studies analyzed in this research. So, using it as a variable for differentiation of political status would contribute little to the existing debate and will not be included in this research.

A more compelling reasoning of structural conditions for political status change is the analyses of the historical conditions from the Northwest Ordinance.²² The interpretation of these conditions states that the majority of the electorate must desire statehood in order for such as status to be considered. Second, this perspective proposes that inhabitants of the proposed new state must be, and historically have been, sympathetic toward the principles of democracy as exemplified in the American form of government.

Finally, this view puts forward the idea that the prospective new state needs to have sufficient capital to support its share of the costs and contributions to the federal government. These last two points are persuasive. Possessing a similar type of government institutions is paramount for political and judicial compatibility. Thus, this point will be used to explain the role of consolidation of U.S. institutions and consequently cultural similarities later in the research. The point regarding sufficient resources, on the other hand, while persuasive remains vague and somewhat anachronistic. In the late 18th century the sufficient population to maintain

²¹ Eric Biber. *Price of Admission: Causes, Effects, and Patterns of Conditions Imposed on States Entering the Union*. "Journal of Legal History". (2004). 4. Print

²² Ibid., 2-12.

cost to federal government was 60,000 people.²³ All of the current and former territories from these case studies have exceeded this population since well before U.S. acquisition. Therefore, this point contains relatively weaker significance to the case study analysis.

Unique Contributions to Existing Literature

Of the above mentioned explanations of under what conditions territories change or do not change their political status, this research will draw on a selection of the strongest explanations as well as add to the present literature to include topics that are missing from the debate. Specifically, this research will use the conditions of outmigration during the territorial period, relative cultural similarities, strength of American-styled institutions in the territory, strength of nationalist movements, and mutual determination over self-determination to explain the conditions of changing territorial status.

Factors that Explain Differences

Five factors determined when and to what degree these territories and the United States Congress made definitive decisions about political status. While the explanation of these differences is not limited to the following arguments, they are illustrative of principal causes of territorial political status changes. The first three explanations string together a common notion of the institutionalization of Americanization and explain why or why not the U.S. government makes decisions based on political status. Next, the ideas of strength of nationalist movements and mutual determination explain the power of not only the U.S. government, but also the native populations of territories to negotiate political status.

Migration Patterns During the Territorial Period

Patterns of outmigration of American-born citizens to territories illustrate the degree of

²³ Ibid., 26.

influence that these citizens have on culture and internal organization of the territory. Large influxes of Americans into a territory can establish long lasting cultural and ties as well as influence changes in economic and social structures. As a result of these migration patterns, locals identify with the mainland in a way that would influence local attitudes toward independence vs. statehood. During the late nineteenth century, such migration occurred from the mainland United States to Hawaii. In this period, geography was being redrawn along oceanic pathways of economic flux. As a result, large quantities of Americans immigrated to the Kingdom of Hawaii to participate in the job opportunities that the plantations and geo-economic circumstances provided. In 1898, migration to Hawaii increased significantly, consisting primarily of laborers.²⁴ In fact, in 1890, the population distribution of Hawaiian natives to U.S. nationals was about 48,107 native Hawaiians and only around 1,000 Americans. However, throughout the first half of the twentieth century, this number spiked to 92, 211 Americans from the mainland and other U.S. Territories.²⁵ Thus, the high American population ensured that the Americans could (and indeed would) control Hawaii. Furthermore, the Americans in Hawaii were taking on new positions that white elite did not previously occupy. The American migrants included missionaries and landowners who, in the 19th and 20th centuries took over new positions of power and influence in the colony.

On the other hand, in Cuba, few American-born citizens lived on the island during the American colonial period between 1898 and 1902. Moreover, of the few Americans that did reside on the island, most were military personnel and civilian employees that were still stationed in Cuba after the Spanish-American War. In 1900, during the height of American territorial rule

²⁴ David Keanu Sai. *American Migration to the Hawaiian Kingdom and the Push for Statehood into the American Union*. Focus on Hawaiian History. (2001): Print.

²⁵ Appendix 1

in Cuba approximately 11,048 American military personnel and civilian employees lived in Cuba.²⁶ Most of these personnel left after the implementation of the Army Appropriations Act in 1901 and Cuban independence in 1902. The short time span of the presence of these American soldiers and the threats they presented to Cuban independence prevented significant American influence on Americanizing the people of Cuba through this group. However, another group of Americans who migrated to Cuba during the American colonial period were elite businessmen, landowners and entrepreneurs who emerged as a result of the expansion of U.S. market structures in Cuba during the colonial period.²⁷ While there was a large presence of these elites, their interaction with Cubans was not uniquely influential. The types of positions that the American migrants took on essentially replaced the roles and interactions that European elites who owned sugar plantations in the Caribbean had with Cubans. The white American elites that came to Cuba did expand the American market structure to Cuba, but since these few elites hired and greatly incorporated Cubans into these structures, they were still not fully American. In fact, Louis A. Pérez describes this phenomenon in the cases of the U.S. companies United Fruit Company, Benjamin Perkins & Osgood Walsh, and Guarantee Trust Company. Cubans—especially Cuban elites—were among the first to be incorporated into the companies when they arrived on the island.²⁸ So, while this group surely changed the trajectory of Cuban nationality and identity by implementing new U.S. markets, they did not make said identity significantly American.

In the case of the Philippines, this degree of American immigration was similarly absent. American presence in the Philippines accounted for less than one percent of the population in

²⁶ Appendix 2

²⁷ Louis Pérez. *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture*. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999. 140-146. Print.

²⁸ Pérez, 136-137.

1950, the majority of which were Protestant missionaries attempting to spread Protestantism to the Philippines.²⁹ The migration patterns during the territorial periods of the Philippines and Hawaii provide significant lessons in determining statehood. The impetus of white plantation farmers in Hawaii and the continued migration that followed ensured that if Hawaii were indeed to become a state, it would be a state dominated by white Americans rather than another ethnic group.

Puerto Rico did not experience a significant immigration of Americans. In 1950, around the time that Hawaii was granted statehood and the Philippines gained independence, the percentage of Americans who did not associate themselves as ethnically Puerto Rican in Puerto Rico was 0.6% of the population of Puerto Rico.³⁰ If one looks at the number of U.S. citizens in Hawaii during this same year, there is a stark contrast of nearly 50% American presence in 1950. However, this number has grown over time, and non-ethnically Puerto Rican Americans about for almost 7% of the population on the island.³¹

Relative Cultural Similarities

The idea of the presence of Americans exerting influence on territories connects to a larger idea of cultural similarities of territories. The more cultural similarities that a territory possesses to the home country, the greater the support that territory possesses for statehood. Conversely, great cultural difference such as language and race can lead the home country to favor either independence or maintenance of colonial rule. While all four case studies had unique cultural attributes that stood out from American culture, the degree of similarity varied among all four and contributed to the diverging political status of each.

²⁹ Guillermo Merlyn and L. P. Verora, *Protestant Churches and Missions in the Philippines*, vol. 1 (Valenzuela, Metro Manila: Agape Printing Services, 1982)

³⁰ Appendix 3

³¹ Appendix 2

In Hawaii, the substantial white presence of Americans led to the interbreeding and inter-marriage of Hawaiian natives with the white Americans.³² This interbreeding allowed for more social reproduction not only of racially white children, but also the values of the American parent. Since these new generations of Hawaiians represented a people more racially congruent with the American creed and no longer completely indigenous, they essentially became more American. Moreover, the presence of American migrants established a capitalist, democratic and widely Westernized culture.³³ The concept of pure native blood seemed almost absent in the mid 20th century, and Hawaii was not “sufficiently native” for independence and was, moreover, largely Americanized.³⁴ In addition to racial similarities, English language proficiency in Hawaii was also significant.

In 1850, the entire adult population of Hawaii spoke the native language and it was the language of formal education.³⁵ However, as English-speaking immigrants moved to the island and gained economic and political influence, the native language lost influence. By 1896, three years after the U.S. overthrew the local monarchy, English became the language of instruction for all public elementary schools. The President of the Republic of Hawaii, Sanford Dole, implemented Act 57 of the 1896 Laws of the Republic of Hawaii that banned Hawaiian language instruction in all public schools.³⁶ As a result, by the time of Statehood in 1959, English language assimilation was virtually complete and linguistic Americanization was achieved.³⁷ Native language instruction was not permitted in schools again until 1919 after Hawaii became a state

³² Kauanui, J. Kehaulani. *Hawaiian Blood: Colonialism and the Politics of Sovereignty and Indignity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008. 124-189. Print.

³³ Wilson, 26.

³⁴ Ibid., 27.

³⁵ Heinz Kloss. *The American Bilingual Tradition*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1977. 28-32. Print.

³⁷ Rolf Kjolseth. *Bilingual Education Programs in the United States: Assimilation or Pluralism?*. New York City, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1976. Print.

and could legislate language policy in schools. It is also significant to mention that while the United States does not have an official language, Act 57 of the 1896 Laws of the Republic of Hawaii established English as the official language of Hawaii. The territory of Hawaii was essentially set to different standards to other states that may not have had such strong institutionalization of native language.

In Cuba, race worked in two different ways. As Cuba did not have the significant presence of Americans on the island during its territorial period, there was not the same racial white dominance as was present in Hawaii. In fact, the large mulatto population in Cuba accounted for over a third of the population on the island. This provided some hesitancy to annex such a racially distinct citizenry. However at the same time, there were also American economic interests that favored annexing a largely black territory. The United States did signal the cultural inferiority of the island to the U.S. by instituting the Platt Amendment in Cuba, serving as an indicator that the United States viewed Cubans as unfit to govern themselves. In fact, Major George M Barbour exemplified this racism in his view that "under [U.S.] supervision, and with firm and honest care for the future, the people of Cuba may become a useful race and a credit to the world; but to attempt to set them afloat as a nation, during this generation, would be a great mistake." ³⁸ However, this annexation did not seek to bring Cubans into citizenry as equal members of society, but rather as economic tools. Race was a significant factor in U.S. attitudes toward Cuba as many Americans viewed Cubans as too dark to adhere to U.S. creed. Yet many southern states supported Cuban annexation as an opportunity to expand slavery in the United States.

Language played a stronger role in the rejection of Cuba as a culturally similar and

³⁸Aviva Chomsky, *US Responses to Cuban Independence, 1898-1998*. "Peacework". 01 1998: 13-27. Print.

Americanized territory. The strong institutionalization of the Spanish language in Cuba as a colony of Spain for over three hundred years led English to play a limited role in the lives of most Cuban citizens.³⁹ The United States, however, attempted to institutionalize English in elementary schools in Cuba in the early 20th century. This project was somewhat successful. Incorporation of English into every-day Cuban life also manifested itself in structural market elements of Cuban life such as English-language movies, radio, sports and crossword puzzles. For the most part, English was chiefly a skill that the elite and urban middle classes possessed. However, some English words extended to the lower classes such as baseball jargon. Thus, in the early twentieth century English in Cuba represented a valuable skill that allowed for career advancement and was a quasi-familiar element of colonial life in 1900. However, English still was not a skill that a majority of the population possessed. In fact, one can see the limits of linguistic assimilation attempts in the actual matriculation of English language learners in elementary schools. Near the end of 1901 only 6,267 out of a national enrollment of 159,267 elementary school children had received instruction English.⁴⁰ Thus, while it is clear that English language did permeate Cuban society in the early 20th century, it did not represent a dominant cultural trait on the island. Essentially, English was more of a function of social stratification than effective cultural assimilation that nationalist opposition greatly limited.⁴¹

The distinctness of culture in the Philippines is similar to that of Cuba in terms of both language and race. Debate in the U.S. over Philippine annexation in the early 20th century reflected a strong concern for cultural hegemony. Imperialist leaders such as President Roosevelt

³⁹ Alma Rubal-Lopez, Joshua Fishman, and Andrew Conrad. *Post-Imperial English: Status Change in Former British and American Colonies*. Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter, 1996. Print.

⁴⁰ Marial Iglesias Utset. *A Cultural History of Cuba During the U.S. Occupation*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: The University of North Carolina Press, 2011. 74-75. Print.

⁴¹ Pérez, 387.

and House Representative Carl Schurz used race as justifications for maintaining colonial rule over the Philippines and denying the Philippines permanent status. For example, Representative Schurz warned House members of the dangers of admitting such a racially diverse territory to the United States. He professed that “such votes...come from a population which in language, in traditions, habits and customs, in political social and even more moral notions are utterly unlike our people and can, under the tropical sun at least, never be assimilated.”⁴² Essentially, Schurz communicated the widely shared concern that admitting the Philippines would place savagery before civilization and the darker races before the whites.

Indeed, there were few racially white members of Philippine society during this period. Census evidence shows the degree of Caucasians as racial minorities in the Philippines. The 1905 Census showed that the "brown" race made up 99% of the island's residents, excluding Manila, which had a larger-than-average foreign and mixed population than the rest of the country. The yellow race included Chinese and Japanese and made up 0.06% of the population. Whites, including Europeans and Americans, made up 0.02%, and the census also counted a few “Negroes” in the islands who were discharged soldiers of the Negro regiments. While there are examples of white interbreeding with darker-skin Filipinos in the mid 20th century, this number was marginal. Only about 3.65 percent of Filipinos in the mid-twentieth century were of Caucasian ancestry.

Additionally, language represented an opposing force to American cultural sameness. First, the nearly three centuries of Spanish rule on the island led to the institutionalization of English not only competitive with native languages, but also the institutional of Spanish language. Although English speakers surpassed Spanish-speakers by more than ten times

⁴² Love, 186.

(4,259,549 to 417,3751), the 1939 U.S. Census shows that the only age group with more Spanish speakers was not among the older people, but among children under five years old (from 10,000 to 14,000). From these numbers one can conclude the danger of the reproduction of English language because Spanish had still a more stable base than English. Moreover, Spanish was still a more widely used language than English at home. Thus, the social reproduction of English had weak institutional strength, and prospect for cultural ties in terms of language of the Philippines to the United States. Moreover, the majority of the islands' inhabitants spoke Filipino (a language based on the native Tagalog) rather than English, which further challenged the potency of English language in the territory.⁴³

In the case of Puerto Rico, Congress and political leadership may also resist or delay prospects of permanent status option because of cultural dissimilarities. Just as the U.S attempted to limit sovereign governance because of racial perceptions in Cuba through the Platt Amendment in Cuba, part of the American rationale for occupying Puerto Rico was because of the perceived incapacity for the island to govern itself and its lack of well-defined cultural identity.⁴⁴ According to Jorge Duany, in the early 20th century, Puerto Ricans were often depicted as "racially and culturally inferior to Anglo-Saxons in world's fairs and museum exhibits; in the letters, diaries, and notebooks of American anthropologists; in academic journals and popular magazines."⁴⁵ These textual and visual forms of representation represented the attitudes towards the racial differences between the U.S. and Puerto Rico. However, despite these differences, the U.S. government did not explore independence because of the perceived

⁴³ Norma G Owen. *Compadre Colonialism: The Philippines Under American Rule*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1971. 195-227. Print.

⁴⁴ Jorge Duany,. " Nation, Migration and Identity: The case of Puerto Ricans." *Latino Studies*. 1.3 (2003): 425-444. Print.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 433.

need for American tutelage. Thus, race seemed to represent the driving cultural difference that justified commonwealth at the start of U.S. territorial rule in Puerto Rico. This conversation regarding cultural similarity persists today; however, language rather than race seems to dominate the conversation in evaluating Puerto Rican eligibility for statehood.

Puerto Rico has progressively incorporated English language into its schools and over 25% of Puerto Ricans speak English fluently, and over 50% have a good knowledge of the language. Compared to Cuba where the territorial period was so small that few language institutions were established and few native Cubans learned English. Race is a slightly more difficult trait to measure as racial equality has developed. In contrast to the white supremacist discourse of Teddy Roosevelt, in 2012 racial discrimination as a justification for colonial rule is an unacceptable political explanation. While this explanation may have been convincing in the early 20th century, today language seems to dominate the discussion of cultural dissimilarities.⁴⁶ Members of Congress such as Representative Paul Broun of Georgia argue that English is a prerequisite for Puerto Rican Statehood. In the most recent congressional bill calling for a plebiscite for Puerto Rican political determination, Representative Broun insisted upon an amendment requiring that English be the official language of Puerto Rico. The belief of Representative Brown and other congressmen such as Lamar Smith and Robert Brown who opposed statehood reflects the belief that annexing a territory where half of the population do not claim to have even a good knowledge of English would challenge the unity of the union. Even though English is not the official language of the United States, there seems to be a requirement for English language ability for statehood in the only body that could change Puerto Rico's

⁴⁶ Pedro Cabán. "Puerto Rican Studies: Changing Islands of Knowledge," *Centro Journal*, vol. 21, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 256-281.

commonwealth status.

Strength of U.S. Institutions

The consolidation of U.S. institutions in a given territory can also bring about statehood of native populations. The more successfully U.S. institutions are exported and integrated to a territory, the more likely it is that the territory will become a state. For example, if legal, government, or economic systems are successfully exported and integrated to a territory, it is more likely that the territory will become a state. This research will draw on the definition of institutionalization outlined by Samuel Huntington: autonomy, adaptability, complexity, and coherence.⁴⁷ Autonomy designates the ability of institutions to make and implement their own decisions. For instance, if a government agency is co-opted by an economic interest, it lacks autonomy. Adaptability represents the degree to which an institution is capable of adapting to changes in the environment. For example, the Marshall Plan institutions changed their mission from aided transitions to democracy in post-war Germany and Japan to alleviating poverty on a worldwide scale. Complexity establishes the capacity of the institution to create internal structures to carry out its goals and to cope with external factors. For example the local institutions in Belgium allowed for the country to provide health care, collect taxes, carry out its responsibilities despite eighteen months without a national government. Finally, coherence constitutes the ability of the institution to handle its own workload and form procedures that allow the institution to process tasks in a timely manner.

These components were present in American institutions in Hawaii. Hawaii had an American-style legal system, constitutional government, and the use of English in the courts,

⁴⁷ Samuel Huntington. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven and London: New Haven : Yale University Press, 1968. Print

schools, and in commerce.⁴⁸ American institutions in Hawaii remained autonomous, which was facilitated by Hawaiian desire for statehood. Even in the presence of the minority petitioning statehood, these institutions adapted and survived this opposition. Institutional goals to establish English as a major language, needless to say, were successful and represent the complexity of American presence to maintain this objective. For nearly sixty years, following the advent of these institutions, the Hawaiian government petitioned for statehood, representing an affinity for America and its autonomous authority over the island's institutions.

On the other hand, in the Philippines civil administration aimed to prepare the Philippines for eventual independence by strategically choosing leaders that would lead the new democracy. The United States attempted to create political institutions that stressed the patronage with the United States. As Philippine governor-general, William Taft allotted greater opportunities for local governments run by elites who had already developed a strong economic base throughout major regions in the latter decades of the Spanish era to ensure their cooperation with the U.S. This change came about through the deliberate creation of new political institutions by the American colonial leadership. As Benedict Anderson explains, "It was above all the political innovations of the Americans that created a solid, visible national oligarchy."⁴⁹ However, this form of government did not persist in the Philippines. In fact, it changed over time and by about 1913, a new group of "nacionalista" politicians emerged. Unlike the earlier politicians who relied on American patronage, the new political base collaborated to compete with rather than

⁴⁸ Rob Wilson. *Exporting Christian Transcendentalism, Importing Hawaiian Sugar: The Trans-Americanization of Hawai'i*. *American Literature*. 72.3 (2000): 522-542. Print.

⁴⁹ Benedict Anderson. 1988. "Cacique Democracy and the Philippines: Origins and Dreams." *New Left Review*, no. 169: 3-33.

collaborate with American political institutions.⁵⁰

This political evolution over the course of the colonial period represents a failure to achieve autonomy and complexity of the institutionalization of politics in the Philippines. The goal to spread the specifically American views of political organization was unable to adapt to the hostile, anti-American environment. Similarly external factors such as corrupt leadership hindered this institutional structure from consolidation. While the United States seemingly brought democratic values to the Philippines during its territorial era, “long term trends indicate that this consolidation is incomplete; democratic government was eliminated for a significant length of time after independence and there have been several issues with the executive power’s abuse since independence.”⁵¹ This failure established a lack of complexity in the institution of democracy.

Cuba had even weaker U.S. institutional similarity. In fact, institutional similarity in Cuba was much more adherent to Spanish structures as U.S. power over the island lasted for only four years between 1898-1902. Due to the transitory nature of American rule in Cuba, few of the institutions that scholars see in the cases of Hawaii and the Philippines became fully autonomous or adaptable to the revolutionary attitudes that called for local elections and institutions in Cuba. The strongest U.S. institution in Cuba was the U.S. military that stayed in Cuba until 1901 after the Army Appropriations Act that called for the U.S. military to withdrawal from Cuba and for adherence to independence of Cuban political and cultural institutions, thus establishing the lack of adaptability of U.S. forces to Cuban revolutionary will. However, the Platt Amendment to this act challenged this independence by insuring U.S. involvement in Cuban affairs and gave legal

⁵⁰ Paul Hutchcroft. "Strong Demands and Weak Institutions: The Origins and Evolution of the Democratic Deficit in the Philippines." *Journal of East Asian Studies*. 3. (2003): 259–292. Print.

⁵¹ Daniel R Allen. *Compliance and State-Building: U.S.-Imposed Institutions in the Philippine Colonial State*. Washington State University Press (2009): 91-92

standing to U.S. claims to parts of the island such as Guantanamo Bay legal base. This legal institution also portrayed weak coherence and adaptability to Cuban sovereignty in 1934, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt supported adoption of the amendment's provisions as part of his Good Neighbor policy. Thus, the relative success of institutional consolidation in Hawaii provided a smoother transition to statehood that lacked in the Philippine and Cuban cases.

On the other hand, in Puerto Rico, U.S. political and legal institutions are indeed strong. The nature of colonial rule and power of the United States Congress has allowed for American institutions that can make their own decisions, adapt to changing political temperatures on the island, create internal structures and manage their own operations. For example, in cases of drug trafficking and other federal offenses, criminals are prosecuted under U.S. Federal law by agencies such as the FBI. So the U.S. criminal justice is prominent in Puerto Rico. Moreover, while Puerto Ricans living in Puerto Rico do not pay federal income taxes, they do pay into and receive Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid benefits. However, these benefits are significantly lower per capita than benefits given to citizens of U.S. states.⁵² However, while these institutions are strong, there are institutions that are not completely Americanized. For example, while Puerto Rico has a civil law system based on statutes that remain from Spanish rule, and the United States has a common law system based on precedents. This provides an obstacle for the future of statehood. Merging these two contrastive legal systems would provide for varying interpretations of laws that would hinder constitutional integrities of equal protection under the law. So, this is one obstacle that the U.S. Congress must reconcile before deciding on statehood or independence.

Strength of Nationalist Movements

⁵² Social Security and Medicare Works for Puerto Rico State Report, 2012.

The Philippines and Cuba were the only territories acquired from the Spanish American War to gain independence. The comparable strengths of their nationalist movements help explain why these territories gained independence while others did not. The presence of strong individual leadership against colonial rule, active participation in wars against colonial powers and effective propaganda movements contributed to the strength of the Philippines and Cuban nationalist movement.

Philippine organized nationalist movements arguably began as early as the late eighteenth century with the writings of Luis Rodriguez Varela. Varela was a Creole who attended school in French, where he was inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. He published a series of books that stressed the ideas of social change for the rights of Filipinos on the island.⁵³ The philosophies of Voltaire and Thomas Paine additionally influenced the ideas of liberty and equality that made the islanders dissatisfied with their colonial condition and promoted mobilization against the Spanish. One example includes the revolt of 1823. Filipinos became outraged by the declaration that Spanish military officers outranked those appointed in Spanish colonies, including the Philippines. In June of 1823 the Creoles revolted under the leadership of Andres Novales. The revolt represented a greater discontent with the outward discrimination of the islands natives, and the desire for secession was evident in the cry, “Viva la Independencia” (Long Live Independence). That same year, another secessionist group formed, led by the Palmero brothers in response to the replacement of public officials with Spanish governors. The revolt is known as the Palmero Conspiracy, after the organizers the Palmero brothers. The brothers and their followers launched a plan to seize the government that the

⁵³ Usha Mahajani. *Philippine Nationalism, External Challenges and Filipino Response, 1565-1946*. Brisbane, Australia : University of Queensland Press, 1961. Print.

Spanish government ultimately thwarted. The Palmero Conspiracy and the revolt led by Novales are significant in Philippine independence. Although these early movements failed, they are important to analyze, for they establish evidence of long-standing, united opposition to colonial rule.

This idea of a united nationalist front becomes more evident as the Filipino nationalist movement evolved. Particularly, the notion that mestizos, indios and Creoles all regarded themselves as “Filipino” determined the strength of Filipino nationalist movements where similar unity was not present in other similar territories like Hawaii. Even though there are clear racial tensions and distinctions, the groups were all influenced by and acted in response to the aforementioned Enlightenment ideals and sought independent political status for the Philippines. Spanish Creoles even fought against Spanish rule in the Spanish-American War and later the Philippine-American War.⁵⁴ The Filipinos who fought with the Americans in the Spanish-American War became disenchanted and even more resolute for independence after American victory led to similar colonial status. This discontent led to the Philippine-American War from 1899-1902 that ultimately resulted in Philippine independence.

Finally, the Church and print media also illustrate the relative strength and far-reaching traits of Filipino nationalist movements. There are two distinct periods of propaganda movements to develop nationalism, the first of which occurred between 1860-1872. Religious leaders played a key role in propagating the independence movements. These efforts began with Creole priest, Pedro Peláez who fought for the rights of Creole, mestizo and Indio priests who the Penninsulars had replaced with Spanish priests. Peláez and other priests fought for

⁵⁴ Ibid, 145.

secularization of the clergy and the decline of Spanish influence in the Philippine clergy.

Additionally, Father José Apolonio Burgos led demonstrations in favor of independence and Jose Maria Basa headed a society of reformists who used a Spanish Journal, *Eco de Filipinas*, to expose problems in the Philippines and press on reforms that they sought for the country.

⁵⁵However, after Father Burgos died in the failed Cavite revolutionary uprising in 1872, the Peninsular Governor, Rafael de Izquierdo y Guitiérrez, attempted to prevent the spread of this increasing Creole ideology towards Filipino nationalism.

The failed uprising and proceeding rigidity of efforts to suppress nationalist movements led to the second period of propaganda movements in the Philippines that lasted from 1872-1892. The Creole clergy continued their aim for more equality of Creole, mestizo and indio representation in institutions such as the General Courts and previous movements to legalize Spanish and Filipino equality. Leaders of this later movement Marcelo del Pila and José Rizal voiced these objectives together in a newspaper entitled, *La Solidaridad*. Rizal published several other nationalistic works by himself such as *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*.⁵⁶ The Spanish government arrested Rizal in 1892, and his incarceration arguable ends the period of propaganda movements in the Philippines. However, the legacy of these propaganda movements against peninsular rule in the Philippines pushed the people towards revolution, rather than discourage the idea that revolution was not the solution for independence.

The U.S. gained control of the Philippines following the Spanish American War in 1898, a consequential antecedent for the Philippine-American War that would eventually led to independence. Immediately after the U.S. acquisition of the Philippines, President McKinley

⁵⁵ John Schumacher. *Revolutionary Clergy: The Filipino Clergy and the Nationalist Movement, 1850-1903*. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1981. Print.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 226.

sent a five-person task force, known as the Schurman commission to assess the conditions in the Philippines and make recommendations for further policy. This commission recommended that the U.S. maintain control of the Philippines despite popular support to the contrary in the Philippines. When the U.S. sent troops to the Philippines, war broke out, marking the beginning of the Philippine-American war and one of the most significant revolutionary actions of the nationalist campaign. The war lasted until 1902, resulting in the Philippine Organic Act that established a popularly elected legislature and extended the privileges of the United States Bill of Rights to the Filipinos. However, independence movements on the island continued, and a Philippine politician named Manuel Quezon headed a Philippine independence mission to lobby the U.S. Congress to pass legislation granting Philippine independence. This effort resulted in the Tydings-McDuffie Independence Act of 1934 that arranged for complete independence of the Philippines after 10 years of self-government under U.S. supervision.⁵⁷ Independence was granted as scheduled on July 4, 1946. Thus strong records of challenging colonial status through both soft and brute forces in favor of independence establish the strength of the Philippine nationalist movement. The advancement of these movements by the media, clergy, Quezon and Novales represent a similar organizational structure to the nationalist movements in Cuba.

Cuba demonstrated great strength of nationalist movements during its colonial period. The strong history of Cuban movements in opposition to colonial rule under the Spanish led the citizenry to vehemently reject and actively fight against the exchange from one colonial leader to another. While the United States government sought to maintain control over the island after the Spanish-American war, the strong nationalist sentiment made the justification of the

⁵⁷ Silbey, 57-59.

commonwealth status that or the even more quixotic option of statehood difficult. There is evidence for strong nationalist organization both under Spanish and American territorial rule.

Organized nationalist movements began in Cuba under Spanish colonial rule in mid 19th century.⁵⁸ The influence of the philosopher Pierre Joseph Proudhon played a significant role in the ideology of a mutualist society designed to create workers' organization free of state dominator-class influence. This ideology and the resultant worker organization influenced the first strike threat of Spanish labor organization in 1865 at the Hija de Cabañas y Carbajal y El Fígaro tobacco works in Havana. More than four hundred workers went on strike against the owner's unfair treatment by Creole elites. These early ideological movements engrained pathos that the Cuban people would not tolerate unfair treatment of citizens by a larger entity. The workers strikes are important antecedents to a larger and growing movement towards change and equality in Cuba. Moreover, this ideology influenced leaders who would be crucial to the ultimate independence movements against colonial rule such as the movement led by José Martí.

José Martí represents the significance of strong individual leadership for establishing cogent nationalist movements. Martí aided in resolving the racial tensions and aforementioned conflicts between dark and light skins.⁵⁹ While the aforementioned anti-colonial movements established a long-standing record of nationalist movements, this movement did not become unified until Martí rallied Cubans under a common nationalist movement in the 1880s. This movement established a common *patria* (or fatherland in English), and laid the foundations for

⁵⁸ Frank Fernández. *Cuban Anarchism: History of a Movement*. Tucson, AZ: Sharp Press, 2001. 16-19. Print.

⁵⁹ José Martí. "Letter to Enrique Trujillo." 6 July 1885, *Obras Completas*. Havana: Editorial Nacional de Cuba. 1963.

the Cuban Revolutionary Party. It is also consequential to mention that while the leadership of Martí and other individual leaders were crucial, the role of the Cuban people as a massive, unified force against colonial rule were paramount in achieving independence.

Print media and enduring warring against colonial rule also played a strong role in the development of Cuban nationalist movements. Newspapers such as *El Productor* and *¡Tierra!* promoted anarcho-syndicalism. These widely circulated media shaped and influenced the minds of the public against Spanish rule in the decade before Cuba's last war for independence broke out in 1895. Independence also represented a compelling political status for Cuba, because prior to U.S. colonial rule, Cubans had essentially been warring against Spanish colonial rule for twenty years. The nationalists' sentiments and perspective that independence was the only option for Cuban status manifested in the three wars Cuba fought against Spain: The Ten Years War from 1868-1878, then the little war from 1879-1880, and finally the Cuban War of Independence from 1895-1898. Cubans also participated ⁶⁰ in the Spanish-American War in 1898 that resulted in transferred colonial power from the Spanish to the United States.

Even under U.S. rule, nationalist sentiments and mobilization challenged U.S. strategic interest in annexing the island. Martí continued his opposition against colonial rule, overtly fighting U.S. intentions in Cuba even after the Treaty of Paris that would supposedly led to independence for Cuba. The Inter-American Congress in 1889 met to discuss a U.S. position in possibly purchasing or annexing Cuba made Martí increasingly alarmed. In an effort to prevent this expansionism and ensure Cuban independence, Martí consolidated the support of Cubans living in the United States. One way in which Martí achieved this objective was by appealing to

⁶⁰ Although the degree of coordination still is debatable among historians.

tobacco workers in Florida to unite and motivate islands inhabitant and expatriates. These pressures led to the establishment of a Constituent Assembly that made way for independent local elections. The combined force of these nationalist movements allowed for the termination of U.S. occupation and the fulfillment of the Treaty of Paris when Tomás Estrada Palma took office on May 20, 1902.

Compared to Cuba and the Philippines, Hawaii had significantly weaker nationalist movements, but that is not to say that such nationalist movements were absent from the colonial status debate. Hawaiians had a clear sense of national identity and there were indeed opposition movements to annexation. However, the Hawaiian population in the mid 20th century remained divided over the issue of annexation and the role of Americanization in that identity. In Hawaii there existed a conflict between the interests of the white haole population's desire for annexation and the indigenous supporters of the Kamehameha monarch for independence. According to Maia Lichtenstein, the anti-annexation and anti-American sentiments in the late 19th century "led the native Hawaiian population to unite around a new Hawaii modeled in the image of Western society".⁶¹ The nationalist movements in Hawaii, thus, represent a nationalism constituted by an institutionalized redefinition of American society. At this point in history, Hawaii was a unified, capitalist, Christian, literate society ruled by a weak monarchy and heavily influenced by the haole population. The creation of a new and divided Hawaiian identity emerged as a result of these struggles. Consequently, when time for plebiscite came, the Hawaiian population voted in clear majority for statehood. So, the role of the substantial

⁶¹ Maria Lichtenstein. "The Paradox of Hawaiian National Identity and Resistance to United States Annexation." *Penn History Review*. 01 2008: 48 Web. 17 Nov. 2012.

American population who had already assimilated to become part of this new, quasi-American identity played a consequential role in Hawaii transition from a territory to a U.S. state.

In Puerto Rico, one of the only attempts to resist Spanish colonial rule in Lares was short-lived and an immediate failure. This resistance took place in the city of Lares, on September 23, 1868 and ended that same day. The revolt in Lares was poorly equipped to match Spanish forces and, more importantly, did not exhibit strong enough leadership or inspire continuation of nationalist identity in Puerto Rico. Moreover, a Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP) did not emerge until fifty years later in 1946. However, even when it finally did emerge, the independence party had very little support on the island, representing only 10% of the population. Moreover, since, its founding, the PIP has historically waned in support, and in 2008 won less than 5% of the popular vote in the gubernatorial elections. Prior to the founding of the PIP in 1946, there is little evidence of strong or organized movements against colonial rule in Puerto Rico. However, it is important to point out that the independence movement enjoyed a period of relative popularity in the 1950's that included armed attacks against the pro-commonwealth governor, National Guard soldiers and an attack on Congress in DC. These movements included a massacre at Ponce and a more organized movement called "la revuelta nacionalista". These movements, however, were unique to this period, and based on party affiliation and plebiscite results, and preference for independence waned by the 1960's.⁶²

Mutual Determination over Self-determination

The idea of self-determination in favor of a new political status is indeed necessary in attaining statehood or independence. However, self-determination by itself is not sufficient. The

⁶² Edwin Meléndez. *Colonial Dilemma: Critical Perspectives on Contemporary Puerto Rico*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1999. 65-71. Print.

home country, in this case the United States, must also exhibit desire to either admit the territory or grant it independence. While Cuba and the Philippines did not conduct plebiscites to determine their independence, they both fought long-lasting, organized, and collective battles against the United States to earn their preferred status. Waging war and the significant strength of the nationalist movements seem to have represented a convincing portrayal of the true determination for independent status of the peoples of Hawaii and the Philippines.

The United States acknowledged and accepted Philippine independence on July 4, 1946 via the Treaty of Manila. The treaty recognized Philippine independence and relinquished all U.S. sovereignty over the islands. Ambassador McNutt of the United States signed the Treaty on behalf of the United States Senate and President Truman. This acceptance of permanent status for the Philippines together with the clear will of Filipinos as displayed by several years of war against the United States established mutual determination in Philippine independence. Similarly, in Cuba the intensity of support for independence was overwhelming. Participation in Cuban independence movements did not only include elite Cubans, but members of working-class society, and people of color. The ubiquity of participation in years of violent and draining wars manifested itself through white, black, mulatto and civilian leadership in the movement. By 1902, it became clear to the United States the powerful degree to which Cubans demanded independence. These movements led the United States to act on the will of the Cubans in favor of independence despite their economic interest in maintaining the island as a territory. The United States acquiesced mutual determination through the Army Appropriations Act of 1902. Although there were some extenuating problems regarding this act, Congress put forward a clear message that the U.S. was willing to make a decision based on the demands of the majority in Cuba. Neither the United States Congress nor the political leadership in Cuba and the Philippines

administered plebiscites to establish self-determination because the Philippine-American and myriad wars Cuba fought against both Spain and the U.S. illustrated clear majorities in favor of independence. Moreover, these indicators of local will were met by legal mechanism of acceptance by the United States through treaties and legislation. Thus, prior to achieving independence from the United States, both Cuban and the Philippines met the condition of mutual determination.

On the other hand, since Puerto Rico and Hawaii did not exhibit such clear self-determination through combat, the U.S. government has turned to formal voting to establish the will of territorial populations. In Hawaii, the U.S. government administered a plebiscite for political status that asked voters: “Shall Hawaii immediately be admitted into the Union as a state. Voters could choose either yes or no; there was no none of the above or alternate status option.”⁶³ The results of the plebiscite showed that of the 35% of the eligible voters who chose to participate in the plebiscite, 94% voted in favor of statehood. The choices for status in Congress did not hesitate to take this plebiscite the floor of Congress for vote; the plebiscite represented the will of only 35% of eligible voters.

Over the past twenty years, the results of Puerto Rican plebiscites have seen a gradual growth of support for statehood, and in the most recent plebiscite on November 6, 2012, Puerto Ricans voted in favor of statehood. However, this result does not provide as clear of a mandate for statehood as the results might suggest.

The Puerto Rican Electoral Commission administered the first plebiscite in 1967 that provided voters with three options: Statehood, Commonwealth and Independence.

Commonwealth in Puerto Rico represents the intermediate colonial status that Puerto Rico

⁶³ Appendix 4

currently possesses. Puerto Ricans upheld commonwealth with 60% and Statehood and Independence received 39% and 1% respectively. The next plebiscite in 1993 showed a dramatic growth in support for statehood.

The 1993 plebiscite the results showed that Statehood won 788,296 votes (46.3%); Commonwealth, 826,326 (48.6%); Independence, 75,620 (4.4%)⁶⁴. Five years later, in 1998 the Electoral Commission administered a new plebiscite with two new options: none of the above and free association. Voters favored the following outcomes: Commonwealth, 993 (0.1%); Free Association, 4,536 (0.3%); Statehood, 728,157 (46.5%); Independence, 39,838 (2.5%); None of the above, 787,900 (50.3%).⁶⁵ The addition of the “none of the above” option created an option for voters to delay decision on political status as the ballot already contained all political status options. By including a "none of the above" option, the format of the ballot disallowed a plebiscite indicative of any concrete indication of political status will on the island. Even commonwealth that had historically won the majority in past plebiscites lost out to the “none of the above” option. However, this discrepancy occurred because the none-of-the-above option was the option officially endorsed by the commonwealth party. The commonwealth party rejected the definition of commonwealth as described in the plebiscite, and as a result, endorsed none of the above. In effect, none of the above equated with commonwealth. There is a strong parallel between the commonwealth party’s strategy in that plebiscite and in the most recent one. In 1993, they rejected the definition of commonwealth in what they saw was a ballot that was tilted towards statehood. In order to counter this perceived bias, the party then sought a strategy that circumvented the definitions on the ballot, just like the 2012 ballot where the party rejected

⁶⁴ Puerto Rico. Election Statistics. 1993 Status Plebiscite Vote Summary *Elections in Puerto Rico: General Election, Plebiscite and Referendum Results Lookup*. San Juan, PR: , 1993. Print.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

the definition of the commonwealth as an Associated Republic that they thought the statehood party imposed on them.⁶⁶

In this most recent plebiscite on November 6, 2012 the Electoral Commission administered a two-part plebiscite on political status. This plebiscite is unique, for it represents the first plebiscite that shows an overwhelming majority in favor of statehood. The first question on the ballot asked voters, “Do you agree that Puerto Rico should have its present form of territorial status?”. Voters could choose yes or no. The second part of the ballot asked that, regardless of the answer the voter provided in the first part, to choose among three non-territorial status options⁶⁷ (Statehood, Independence, and Sovereign Free Associated State).⁶⁸

The results suggest that 61.5% of voters supported Statehood, 33.3% Sovereign Free Associated State. However, there are difficulties in establishing the true authority of these results. First, there is the problem of questionable notion of a Sovereign Free Associated Republic as a non-territorial option. The Commonwealth Party in Puerto Rico, the PPD (Partido Popular Democrático) rejected this option because it allowed the Statehood party in power in both congress and the governorship to define commonwealth for the commonwealth party. The official policy of the commonwealth party was to vote yes on the first question on the ballot and leave the second part blank. As a result, Puerto Ricans cast 466,337 blank votes on the second question of the ballot. The problem of how to deal with blank votes was also an issue of contention in the 1998 plebiscite that arrived all the way to the Puerto Rican Supreme Court. In the Supreme Court decision in 2009, *Suarez vs. Comisión Estatal de Elecciones*, the court established that any blank votes in plebiscites occurring after 2009 are invalid and do not count

⁶⁶ Alejandro Padilla. *El Vocero de Puerto Rico*. November 6, 2012. Accessed December 15, 2012.

⁶⁷ Appendix 5

⁶⁸ There is much disagreement whether or not a Sovereign Free Associated State is truly a non-territorial status option.

toward the outcome or mandate of the plebiscite as they distort the accuracy and spirit of the electoral process. The decision states that:

“La adjudicación de las papeletas en blanco y por personajes ficticios amplía de manera artificial el universo electoral y reduce la proporción de votos validos emitidos por las formulas en contienda. Ello obstaculiza e impide que se verifique en el escrutinio el mandato mayoritario por un cambio de status. Mientras tanto, la inercia concedería ventaja solamente a la condición existente, que prevalecería vigente al frustrase por un escrutinio engañoso la voluntad mayoritaria de cambio.”

[“Counting blank ballots and the votes of fictitious persons increases the artificiality of the electoral process and reduces the proportion of valid ballots cast by the options in contention. This hinders and prevents the scrutiny on the majority mandate for a change in political status. Meanwhile the inertia would only advance the existing condition which would remain in place because a deceitful counting of the votes would frustrate the will of the majority”].

Essentially, Puerto Rico can take the results of the plebiscite to Congress and it will represent a legitimate, legally sound mandate. However, supporters of the commonwealth status will undoubtedly point to the blank votes as evidence to question the accuracy of the results. Even if Congress does choose to accept these results, there are other factors that affect and drive Congress’s decision to act on admitting Puerto Rico as a state. While there is evidence of the House of Representative acting on Puerto Rican status, the inaction of the Senate calls into question the likelihood of mutual determination that was not present in the Hawaii case.

In 2009, the non-voting Resident Commissioner introduced a bill that Congress referred to the Committee on Natural Resources to provide for a federally authorized referendum regarding the political status of Puerto Rico. The bill, named H.R. 2449, would represent the first

federally sanctioned plebiscite in Puerto Rico, and the Democratically-led House of Representatives did indeed pass the bill. However, the Senate did not vote on the bill and there still remains no federally sanctioned plebiscite in Puerto Rico as of 2012.

Conclusion: Comparative Analysis:

The lessons from the territorial development into permanent status options with the Hawaiian, Philippine and Cuban cases can be applied in determining viable permanent political status options for Puerto Rico. The physical American influence explains why Puerto Rico did not become a state when Hawaii did at an early stage of territorial development. If Puerto Rico were to become a state, the local population would most certainly control it. However, this observation begs the question as to why Puerto Rico has not become independent like the Philippines if the US lacked a demographical presence in Puerto Rico the same way that lacked one in the Philippines? The answer to this question results from the relative pressures of the native populations of each territory. While the Philippines vehemently lobbied for independence in the first half of the 20th century, in Puerto Rico support of independence accounted for less than 5% of the voting population.

Moreover, the cultural similarities in Puerto Rico are further away from the similarities present between Hawaii and the continent at the time of statehood. First, while the English language was successfully exported to Hawaii, in Puerto Rico Spanish is still the primary language in the educational system and English is taught as a foreign language. Members of Congress such as Republican Representative David Camp believe that bringing in a Spanish-

speaking state would conflict with the integrity of U.S. nationalism.⁶⁹ On the other hand, Cuba and the Philippines had relatively few English speakers and the strength of the native languages of Spanish and Tagalog could justify independence as a political status option in the U.S. Congress. While in Puerto Rico there exists a slight majority of English speakers, and strong institutionalization of English language, this may not be sufficient when looking at this comparative analysis. More importantly, this weak majority does not seem to satisfy Congressional desire and English must become more widespread for Statehood status to reach fulfillment. This does not mean that Spanish must become secondary or that cultural language heritage will weaken.

Many Puerto Ricans, even those who support Statehood, find the English-language requirement concerning as it could threaten the cultural heritage of the Spanish language. However, by comparing Spanish with the case of indigenous languages in Hawaii, it becomes evident that a territory actually possesses more power to control language heritage as a state than as a territory. The tenth amendment of the United States Constitution establishes that all laws not explicitly stated in the Constitution are delegated to the state governments. As a territory, the U.S. Congress could mandate that Puerto Rico adopt English as the sole official language and that schools teach only English. This is exactly what happened in Hawaii during the early 20th century. However, only after Hawaii became a state did language concern linguists and state cultural heritage institutions such as Hui Ho‘oulu ‘ōlelo and the ‘Ahahui ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i. Similarly, Puerto Rico will gain greater legal authority to institutionalize and protect cultural heritage initiatives such as language as a state.

Also, the weakness of certain U.S. institutions may inhibit statehood in immediate

⁶⁹ David Camp. Legislation Voting Record. United States Government, 2011. Web. 22 October 2012. <<http://camp.house.gov/>>.

discussions of political status. While law enforcement agencies carry out U.S. federal law in Puerto Rico, there is not complete autonomy of U.S. legal institutions. The differences in judicial judgments of the civil and common laws will undoubtedly create institutional conflicts if statehood were to be achieved. On the other hand, Hawaii qualified as a statehood candidate at an early stage in territorial status because these institutions were already in place. A lack of such equivalences does not eminently prevent statehood in Puerto Rico, but it is a process that requires development that may not necessarily be on the top of U.S. agenda.

Moreover, the inaction of the U.S. Senate in 2009 and the general failure of Congress to provide legislation signaling support of political status change in Puerto Rico signals a lack of Congressional determination for Puerto Rican statehood. In Hawaii, on the other hand, Congress acted immediately to admit the island into the union after the plebiscite indicated a majority in favor of statehood. Thus, Puerto Rico will fail to reach the necessary mutual determination for statehood until Congress decides to act on the will of the people of the colony as it did in the cases of Hawaii, Cuba and the Philippines.

Furthermore, the comparative analysis of nationalist movements explains why two similar geographic and cultural territories such as Puerto Rico and Cuba had different political outcomes. One can attribute this difference to the divergent relative strengths of nationalist movements in each territory. While Cuba demonstrated strong nationalist organization against Spain and the U.S., Puerto Rico lacked similar institutionalization of any similar resistance or mobilized solidarity

Additionally, Puerto Rico lacked strong leadership while Cuba and the Philippines had leaders such as José Martí who organized strong, lasting nationalist movements. Even El Grito de Lares represents an example of revolutionary ideas, this event and the few others like it

illustrate how the independence movement in Puerto Rico were not as wide-spread or society wide as those in Cuba or the Philippines.⁷⁰ Moreover, the socialist party and left-wing leaders in Puerto Rico actually desired Statehood when the U.S. invaded during the Spanish American war. Thus, even at the early genesis of American colonialism in Puerto Rico, large organized movements for independence are lack the society-wide, collective characteristics that were so salient in the Cuban and Philippine cases.

Thus, even now that Puerto Rico has voted in favor of statehood, this does not guarantee that the United States Congress will grant it to them. In order for statehood to realistically be supported in Congress, it must occur during a time when it aligns with Congressional interest to act. It is important to consider that Congress is a body that acts based on the opinion of their constituency, not necessarily the results of a plebiscite that they did not sanction. The weakness of nationalists movements and lack of self-determination in favor of independence make independence a weak political status option. However, based on the limitations of English language, Congressional action, and complete compatibility of U.S. styled institutions in Puerto Rico, it can also reasonably be concluded that Puerto Rico will not gain statehood in the next few years.

⁷⁰ René Marqués. *The Docile Puerto Rican: Essays* . Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976. 35-73, 90-102. Print.

Appendix 1

HAWAIIAN KINGDOM CENSUS, 1890

Hawaiian nationals.....	48,107
Aboriginal (pure/part).....	40,622
Natural born Hawaiian nationals.....	7,495
Portuguese.....	4,117
Chinese and Japanese.....	1,701
Other White foreigners.....	1,617
Other nationalities.....	60
Aliens.....	41,873
United States nationals.....	1,928
Portuguese nationals.....	8,602
British nationals.....	1,344
German nationals.....	1,034
French nationals.....	70
Polynesians.....	588
Other nationalities.....	60

UNITED STATES CENSUS, 1900-1940

Migration from the continental U.S. and its territories to Hawai'i From 1900 to 1950, American migration from the continental U.S. and its territories to Hawai'i totaled 293,379.

1900.....	4,290
Other U.S. territories or possessions.....	6
Continental U.S.....	4,284
1910.....	11,674
Puerto Rico.....	3,510
Other U.S. territories or possessions.....	2,476
Continental U.S.....	5,688
1920.....	32,322
Puerto Rico.....	2,581
Other U.S. territories or possessions.....	18,784
Continental U.S.....	10,957
1930.....	85,282
Puerto Rico.....	2,181
Other U.S. territories or possessions.....	52,910
Continental U.S.....	30,191
1940.....	92,211
Puerto Rico.....	1,848
Other U.S. territories or possessions.....	36,139
Continental U.S.....	54,224

Source: Keanu Sai, David. "American Migration to the Hawaiian Kingdom and the Push for Statehood into the American Union." Focus on Hawaiian History. (2001): 1-2. Print

Appendix 2

Table 4. Americans Overseas at Military and Naval Stations: 1900

Location of station	Total	Officers and enlisted men	Civilian employees, etc. ¹
Total	91 219	87 538	3 681
Naval vessels	14 701	14 305	396
Cuba	11 048	9 666	1 382
Guam	147	147	—
Philippines	62 095	60 883	1 212
Puerto Rico	3 201	2 537	664
Tutuila [American Samoa]	27	—	27

Source: Twelfth Census of the United States: 1900, Volume I, Part 1, *Population*, table II.

Appendix 3

Table 2 *Foreign-born and US-born Populations of Puerto Rico, 1899–2000*

Year	Foreign-born					US-born			
	Total ^a	As % of population	Cuba	Dominican Republic	Spain	Total	As % of population	Continental US.	Outlying territories ^b
1899	13,872	1.5	N/A	N/A	7,690	1,069	0.1	1,069	N/A
1910	11,766	1.1	340	340	6,630	2,500	0.2	2,303	197
1920	8,167	0.6	264	220	4,975	2,729	0.2	1,617	1,112
1930	6,017	0.4	203	N/A	3,595	3,361	0.4	2,595	766
1940	5,039	0.3	307	N/A	2,532	8,078	0.5	6,639	1,439
1950	8,453	0.4	753	N/A	2,351	14,225	0.6	13,176	1,049
1960	10,224	0.4	1,070	1,812	2,558	52,116	2.2	49,092	3,024
1970	80,627	3.0	26,000	10,843	4,120	106,602	4.0	106,602	N/A
1980	70,768	2.2	22,811	20,558	5,200	199,524	6.2	199,524	N/A
1990	79,804	2.3	19,736	37,505	4,579	230,384	6.9	229,304	11,989
2000	109,581	2.9	19,021	61,455	3,800	245,589	6.4	233,508	12,081

Sources: For 1899, War Department, *Report on the Census of Porto Rico, 1899* (1900); for 1910–1930, Department of Commerce, *Census of the United States* (1913, 1921, 1932); for 1940–1990, US Department of Commerce, *Census of Population* (1943, 1953a, 1961, 1973, 1984, 1993); for 2000, US Census Bureau, “Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) Sample Data” (2002a), “Profile of Selected Social Characteristics: 2000” (2002b).

Appendix 4:

OFFICIAL BALLOT

SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 1959

VOTE ON ALL THREE PROPOSITIONS

Shall the following propositions, as set forth in Public Law 86-3 entitled "An Act To provide for the admission of the State of Hawaii into the Union," be adopted?

1. Shall Hawaii immediately be admitted into the Union as a State?

YES	
NO	
2. The boundaries of the State of Hawaii shall be as prescribed in the Act of Congress approved March 18, 1959, and all claims of this State to any areas of land or sea outside the boundaries so prescribed are hereby irrevocably relinquished to the United States.

YES	
NO	
3. All provisions of the Act of Congress approved March 18, 1959, reserving rights or powers to the United States, as well as those prescribing the terms or conditions of the grants of lands or other property therein made to the State of Hawaii are consented to fully by said State and its people.

YES	
NO	

To vote on a proposition, make an X in the square to the right of the word "YES" or "NO".

VOTE ON ALL THREE PROPOSITIONS

Appendix 5:

<p>PAPELETA OFICIAL OFFICIAL BALLOT</p>	 <small>COMISION ESTATAL DE ELECCIONES STATE ELECTIONS COMMISSION</small> MARTES, 6 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2012 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2012	<p>CONSULTA PLEBISCITE</p>
MODELO		SAMPLE
CONSULTA SOBRE EL ESTATUS POLÍTICO DE PUERTO RICO PLEBISCITE ON PUERTO RICO POLITICAL STATUS		
<p>Instrucciones: 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>		
¿Está usted de acuerdo con mantener la condición política territorial actual? Do you agree that Puerto Rico should continue to have its present form of territorial status?		
Sí / Yes _____		No / No _____
<p>Instrucciones: Irrespectivamente de su contestación a la primera pregunta, conteste cuál de las siguientes opciones no territoriales usted prefiere. <i>Instructions:</i> Regardless of your selection in the first question, please mark which of the following non-territorial options would you prefer.</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>		
<div style="text-align: center; padding: 10px;">  </div> <p>Estadidad: 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>Statehood: <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>_____</p>	<div style="text-align: center; padding: 10px;">  </div> <p>Independencia: 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>Independence: <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>_____</p>	<div style="text-align: center; padding: 10px;">  </div> <p>Estado Libre Asociado Soberano: 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 retendría los restantes poderes o autoridades jurisdiccionales. Si está de acuerdo, marque aquí:</p> <p>Sovereign Free Associated State <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> <p>_____</p>

Source: Comision Estatal de Elecciones del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico

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