Meeting the Conditions of Being a Diaspora

- *The Case of the Cuban Diaspora in the United States of America.*

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Abstract

This thesis aims to observe and distinguish if the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. still meets the conditions of being a diaspora. To examine this purpose, the thesis answer the three following research questions: 1. How has the immigration of Cubans in the United States of America developed over the years? 2. What are the features of the present Cuban Diaspora in the United States of America? 3. Has the Cuban Diaspora changed its affiliation towards its homeland or host land? To answer these questions a theoretical framework has been made with three main points of what characteristics a diaspora has, which has been summarized from different researcher’s definition of the meaning of diaspora. The study is a case study, which will be formed by the method of a qualitative desk study, using the tool of process tracing. This for the ability to collect and process vast amounts of data, systematically go through the historical process of the Cuban diaspora in the U.S. that leads up to the present time and then analyze this with the theoretical framework. The conclusion of this essay shows a change within the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. but is unable to point out clear that the diaspora does not meet the conditions of the chosen framework. The conclusion states that further research needs to be done within this area.

Keywords: Cuban Diaspora, United States of America, Diaspora Studies.
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1. Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Introduction, Research Problem and Relevance
The Cuban population in the United States of America consists of roughly two million Hispanics of Cuban origin (López, 2015). This is compared to the total number of Hispanics in the U.S. which the Census Bureau estimated was 54 million people in the year of 2015 (CNN, 2017). The Cubans have enjoyed a special treatment and place within the U.S. immigration laws. With the Cuban Adjustment Act (established in the year of 1966), Cuban immigrants received benefits outcompeting other migrant groups (Rosenblum & Hipsman, 2015). As an example, Cuban immigrants received green cards, permanent residency, in the U.S. after being physically present within the country for one year (Rusin, Zong & Batalova, 2015). Guilermo J, Grenier (2015) writes that this privilege, enjoyed by Cubans, is a rather unique migration policy (Grenier, 2015). The Cuban population has additionally enjoyed financial aid from the U.S. Government which assisted them with integrating to the U.S. and helped them reach economic success (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.248; Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p.1). Why Cubans enjoyed these privileges is in one way connected to the harsh relationship between Cuba and the U.S. during the cold war. From the U.S. perspective, Cuban immigrants was “poster-boys” that showed the superiority democracy had over communism (Eckstein, 2009, p.12). By this, Cubans become a diaspora in the U.S. Diaspora indicates for example when a group of people with the same heritage resides in another country than their traditional homeland (a more extensive explanation will be developed in chapter three) (Sheffer, 2003, p.9).

However, in 2014 a new announcement came. This was the news of normalization of diplomatic ties between the U.S. and Cuba which may affect those who immigrate to the U.S. in the future as well as Cubans who already reside in the country. This comes after the President of the U.S (at the time), Barack Obama, announced together with Raul Castro, President of Cuba, the shift of policies between the two countries. The shifts could bring substantial changes within the current immigration policies that both countries have earlier adopted and could therefore bring changes to the migration of Cubans to the U.S (Rosenblum & Hipsman, 2015). Henceforth, the new pathway could therefore influence the unique place
and passageway that earlier migrating Cubans have enjoyed when migrating to the U.S. and strongly affect the favorable status that the Cubans have had in the country as immigrants.

Hence, it is intriguing that polls from Florida International University, asking Cubans living in the U.S. about their opinions through a set of questions, (2016) show both a majority support for the re-establishment of diplomatic ties (69%) and within the younger respondents, a total of 87% supports the new policy shifts (Florida International University Poll, 2016, p.3). One may wonder why the Cuban Diaspora in Florida seem to favor these shifts when they may bring substantial and potentially negative change to their preferential status as migrants in the U.S. Henceforth, one could also examine if their affiliation become closer towards the host country (U.S.) rather than their homeland (Cuba).

Even though there exist several studies concerning the importance of and different impacts a diaspora may have on its surroundings (See Vertovec 2005; Peréz 2014; Haney & Vanderbush 1999; Shain & Aryansinha 2006; Baser & Swain 2008) as well as on what constitutes a diaspora (See Cohen 2008; Sheffer 2003; Safran 1991; Bruneau 2010) there is less research concerning the question if diasporas over time change their relationship and affiliation to host and home countries and if, during that transition, they might cease to meet the conditions defining a diaspora. Henceforth, what does this potential shift tell us about diasporas and how they act.

The relevance of this research area is that it could contribute to the understanding of diasporas and their potential change of status and essentially their shift of affiliation from the homeland towards the host-land. This is moreover connected to their willingness, and means at hand, to influence either their homeland or host-lands politics. This is furthermore of great importance because of their increasing role they play in international relations and its activity may have an impact on both the host country as well as the homeland through different aspects. The relevance in observing whether a diaspora stop meet the conditions of being a diaspora is of great concern for how involved actors, such as a homeland and host-country, should or could interact with the group. The deteriorated status as being a diaspora could therefore have impacts on what influence theses diaspora groups could enjoy.

1.2. Diasporas in the Literature
During the past decades, research concerning the phenomenon of diasporas actively engaging in politics has become increasingly common. There is a growing consensus that diasporas are communities with transnational bonds that play an increasingly more important role in
different matters that affect their homeland (Shain & Aryasinha, 2006, p.108-109). The reasons behind this increase in influence are several but some may be new technologies within the field of communications and an environment within the host countries more prone to the establishment of multiculturalism (Vertovec, 2005; Adamson, 2015, p.291) Numerous examples exist of diasporas that have engaged in political activities (communities such as the Jewish, Armenian-Americans and Cuban-Americans) and several countries view their own diaspora, that is present in another country, as a significant actor and asset (Countries such as Israel, India and Armenia). They could assist their homeland with different measures, for example through sending of remittance back home (Vertovec, 2005) or engaging in politics by connecting people across different states and borders, leading to the exchange of notions, influences and capital (Adamson, 2015, p.291). Therefore, it may not come as a shock that an increasing amount of research is directed towards the possible impacts and importance different diasporas may have on both the host-land as well as the homeland (Shain, 2007, p.128; Haney & Vanderbush 1999, p.341)

Diaspora influence on host country politics can be substantial. People, within different diasporas have pursued the possibilities of influencing policies towards their homelands. Example of these different diasporas is: the Irish, the Jewish and the Iraqi. The Iraqi Diaspora and its Lobby group has even been ascribed as the ones pushing the United States of America in to war in Iraq (DeWind & Segura, 2014, p.3-4), thereby showing the potential influences that diasporas could have, both with their new host country and homeland. For the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S, evidence seems to show that the group has consistently exerted power in influencing the harsh U.S. Policies against Cuba with focus on isolating and promote a regime change in the country (Pérez, 2014, p.132; Haney & Vanderbush 1999).

Michel S. Laguerre (2006) explains activities of “diasporic politics” what it is and how it is conducted by examining the Haitian-American Diaspora (Laguerre, 2006, p.14). “Diasporic Politics” is the activity within diasporas where members of this community seek to influence both host country, which they reside in, and their home land. The aim is moreover to influence the policies and political performs that both countries practice. These actions that members of a diaspora may take are wanted by the host country as well as the homeland because of the opportunity to either strengthen or undermine a governmental regime (Laguerre, 2006, p.14). The activities of diasporic politics could therefore be a tool to have an impact on politics in both countries (host and origin) and the chief actors are the diaspora.
With facts of earlier statements, both impacts diasporas could have on different actors in general and that the Cuban Diaspora have had an influence on their homeland and host-land, it could be of high relevance to study the Cuban Diaspora even further. Thus, Cuba constitutes a great case to put under the microscope because of its historical roots, evidence of influence and the contemporary shifts of attitude from the U.S. and Cuban Government earlier stated.

Diaspora research is not a new phenomenon. As earlier stated in 1.1. studies have both focused on potential impacts diasporas may have and what constitutes the concept. Research about specific diasporas is also not something new. Ivan Djuric (2003) evaluated the impact the Croatian Diaspora had in mobilizing attitudes towards their home society, namely Croatia. The method used was a discourse analysis to analyze writings between 1980-1995 (Djuric, 2003, p.113). Moreover, Michael Jacobsen (2003) wrote a paper on the Chinese Diaspora and this groups coherence. Jacobsen questions this coherence and argue instead that diasporas constitutes of several layers instead of just one (Jacobsen, 2003, p.1). Gary Yia Lee investigated the case of the Hmong Diaspora and how this group recreated their culture. Furthermore, the research evaluated what spur the diasporas to hunger for their past (Lee, 2008, p.125-126). Moreover, Jorge Durand (2010) searched to illuminate the character that the Peruvian emigration had by conducting surveys of household around Lima, Peru (Durand, 2010, p.12).

1.2.1. Studies concerning the Cuban Diaspora
Research about the Cuban Diaspora is not a new phenomenon and has neither solely been confined to the Cubans residing in the U.S. even though there exist several studies that focus on Cubans in the U.S. Mette Louise Berg (2009) wrote an article examining the relationship between politics and memory among Cubans living in Spain, the article was based on a seventeen months long multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork (Berg, 2009, p.305). Rodolf Bonnin and Chris Brown (2002) evaluated the purpose in life by comparing 104 recent Cuban exiles to 98 Cuban-Americans, the instrument used in this research was the Purpose in Life Test (PIL) (Bonnin & Brown, 2002, p.468). Madeline Zavodny (2003) researched about the difference in earnings and assimilation between Cuban Immigrants in the U.S. by compiling data from U.S. Census (The year 1980 and 1990) (Zavodny, 2003, 2004-206). Kelly Woltman and K. Bruce. Newbold (2009) evaluated the process of assimilation of Cuban immigrants by using data from the U.S. Census (the year 1990 and 2000) and using a Double Cohort Method wherein both age and the time for arrival in the U.S. was considered (Woltman & Newbold,
Moreover, Chris Gerard, Guillermo J. Grenier and Hugh Gladwin (2012) used Logistic Regression to compare data from six surveys between 1995 and 2008 to evaluate the hypothesis that exile politics among Cuban-Americans in South Florida have contributed to their loyalty towards the Republican Party (Gerard, Grenier & Gladwin, 2012, p.42-43).

This thesis hopes to add a new perspective through this case-study by observing the possible transformation and changes within the Cuban Diaspora and therefore whether the diaspora still should be a diaspora.

1.3 The Objective and Research Questions

The objective with this thesis is to use the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. as a case to analyze if it is possible to observe through the history if the diaspora may have changed its affiliation from its homeland towards its host land and therefore might decrease or cease to meet the criteria of being a diaspora. To operationalize this, the thesis will therefore conduct a case-study to qualitatively illuminate a set case. The main question throughout the thesis is if the Cuban diaspora still is to be considered a diaspora. To assist, several research questions has been posed.

- How has the immigration of Cubans in to the United States of America developed over the years?
- What are the features of the present Cuban Diaspora in the United States of America?
- Has the Cuban Diaspora changed its affiliation towards either its homeland or host land?

The first question is to establish the characteristics of the Cuban Diaspora in the United States of America, in order to analyze how these traits, coincide with the chosen theoretical framework and established definition of diaspora and its political dimension, later in the analysis chapter. The second question is in line with the objective to observe if and how the Cuban Diaspora has stopped being a diaspora by comparing it to the selected framework. This second question aims at giving the results and being able to outline a timeline to show how the diaspora have developed throughout the years, this to be able to observe any change of affiliations. The third question is constructed to assist in observing whether the Cuban Diaspora has changed its affiliations either towards their homeland or host land. This will help in understanding whether the Cuban Diaspora have either retained the characteristics of a diaspora, that will be outlined in the theory chapter, with their affiliation towards their
homeland, or if they have changed their affiliations towards their host land, and therefore may not meet the conditions of being a diaspora.

The method in this thesis is a qualitative, desk-study aiming to collect large amount of data to explain the case of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. Process-tracing will be applied to observe a historical period and from this gather information about what causes an outcome. As for the theoretical framework, this will be developed out of different diaspora researchers where the most common characteristics (from these researchers) will be comprised in to three set points that will be used as the analytical framework in the analysis chapter.

1.4 Outline and Structure of this Thesis.

Chapter two will introduce the methodology chosen to conduct the research for this thesis. Information about the method, what data will be collected from which sources, which delimitation and limitations exist and ethical consideration will all be handled under this section.

Chapter three explains the chosen theoretical and/or conceptual framework that has been chosen for this thesis. Here, a description of the analytical framework and the concept of diaspora will be thoroughly explained together with a literature review about what is already out there in the research about diaspora studies.

Chapter four will be devoted for presentations of the findings for this thesis. Here, the focus will be at answering the research question number one and two, in order to retain necessary knowledge and information with the aim of fulfilling the objective.

Chapter five will consist of the analysis. Here, the findings and the answers from it will be analyzed through the scope of the chosen theoretical framework. Mainly, the last question, number three, will be analyzed.

Chapter six will consist of a conclusion of the thesis, where potential recommendations and future research on the topic will be brought up.
2. Chapter Two: Methodological framework

This thesis will be conducted as a qualitative desk-study. This, to fit the objective of the thesis, to research if it is possible to determine whether the Cuban Diaspora still meets the conditions of being a diaspora. By doing a qualitative desk-study, the aim is to extort as much knowledge from the existing literature to contribute to the science and study of diasporas with a possible new perspective on how to interact and view diasporas. The reason for choosing a qualitative methodological design is the focus of using a thick and deep description of the case (Vromen, 2010, p.249). The Study does also explain the Cuban Diaspora in the past through different waves that leads up to and explain the present time. Ariande Vromen explains the qualitative method as: “qualitative research seeks to explain the outcomes in individual cases”. (Vromen, 2010, p.255). This study does not contain any statistical methods nor do it focusing on questions of ‘how many’ to explain causality as a quantitative study would (Vromen, 2010, p.249).

This qualitative method will use the tool of process-tracing. As George and Bennet (2005) puts it, “It is a useful method for generating and analyzing data on casual mechanism.” (George & Bennett, 2005, p.223) and that it “attempts to trace the links between possible causes and observed outcomes.”(George & Bennett, 2005, p.6). Simply, it is focusing to gather information and puts this in a systematical historical perspective and throughout this find out causal mechanisms and explanations for a specific outcome (George & Bennett, 2005, p.205-210). Which the evolution of the Cuban diaspora does explain with help of the different waves combined with the theoretical framework.

Furthermore, this study will involve a case-study. The choice of this design for this thesis is based on that the study examines one case: the case of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. and its treatment of one context (Yin, 2007, p.60). This study does also comprise a deeper knowledge and explanation and understanding of the Cuban Diaspora through a historical notion, which is received from different sources. Whereas this study fulfills Denscombe’s factors for recognitions which are, 1: the depth of the study, 2: the thing that makes it special and 3: the use of various data-sources (Denscombe, 2016, p.94).

2.1. The Case Study

The Cuban Diaspora is a suitable case to study because of different factors. The Cuban Diaspora, mostly located in Florida, has been residing in this location during a long period of time, since at least the 1960’s (López, 2015). Since Fidel Castro took power, it is estimated
that over one million Cubans have emigrated to the U.S. (Eckstein, 2009, p.11) This is 89 percent of the total size of Cuba’s Diaspora in the world, indicating that Cubans mostly has emigrated to the U.S. (Eckstein, 2009, p.11) This moreover reinforces the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. to be a suitable case-study.

The historical aspect gives room for observing potential developments over time, connecting the chosen method of process-tracing, within the Diaspora. This hopefully means that one can observe if something has changed since the 1960’s. Arguably one of the most important factors is the one concerning the influence that the Cuban Diaspora have showed to have on both their host-country and homeland (Pérez, 2014, p.132; Haney & Vanderbush 1999). This links the case with the relevance and research problem earlier stated as the thesis observes a case where the diaspora has exerted influence and where there has been a recent change of attitudes between the homeland and host-country.

2.2. Data

The data that will be collected is mostly comprised of secondary sources but with a few primary sources. The primary sources will mostly be the ones connected to the different authors explaining the characteristics of a diaspora. Another important primary source will be polls from Florida International University conducted by Dr. Guillermo J. Grenier and Dr. Hugh Gladwin, who have done interviews with Cuban-Americans, in South Florida, concerning their attitudes and opinions about present U.S.-Cuba Policy (FIU, 2016, p.7) These polls will be of utter importance to gain necessary information and knowledge about the opinions of Cubans, who is part of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S., in present time. To some extent, a lot of focus will be on a poll from the year of 2016. This could be a weakness but the reason for this is that this poll has included historical trends from their earlier polls into this one. Moreover, information from the PEW Hispanics Research Center will also be utilized. This Research Center collects information and conducts surveys about Hispanics in the U.S. The relevance of this data is to gain necessary knowledge about Cubans residing in the U.S. Furthermore, secondary sources covering diaspora studies will be utilized to give the full picture of what the concepts is, have been and where it is going and therefore to include as many different authors as possible. Together with this, data will be collected that can give the historical picture of the Cuban immigration in to the U.S. from the 1960’s.
2.3. Ethical Considerations

Even though this thesis aims at applying the methodology of a desk-study, the author realizes the potential need for some ethical consideration. Firstly, the results of this research may be indicating whether the Cuban Diaspora still meets the criteria’s of being a diaspora. This could offend people strongly feeling a connection to a Cuban Diaspora with a shared culture and emotions. Therefore, it is important in the conclusion to highlight this.

2.4. Delimitations and Limitations

One delimitation has been done concerning the selection of the Cuban Diaspora in U.S. to be under the microscope. This is already explained in 2.1. The choice of consuming polls covering Cubans in Florida is connected to the high level of location of Cubans here. This places more weight on the relevance of observing this part of the diaspora. A limitation connected with this is that even though there is a high concentration, and majority, of Cubans living in Florida, one cannot neglect the fact that Cubans have migrated to more location within the U.S. as well as other destinations in the world. Therefore, this thesis will be very caution to not generalize the potential results of this research. The opinions of the respondents of the chosen polls should not be generalized and applied to others. Because of this fact, the limitation is that the possible results could be confined to the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S as for now.

Moreover, a limitation is concerning the language. As the author of this thesis does not master the Spanish language, all sources will have to be either written or translated in to English. This could be a limitation as it confines the sources to one language. Furthermore, the choice of doing a desk-study rather than a field-study hinders the research to do interviews which could assist the thesis further. By doing interviews the thesis could gain more knowledge from people being part of the Cuban Diaspora that could answer the research questions in another way than collecting data through literature can.
3. Chapter Three: Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This chapter will outline the concept of diasporas and outline the analytical framework that will be applied during the analysis part.

3.1. The Concept of “Diaspora” and its Development in the Literature

The concept of diaspora within social science is a relatively young phenomenon which has gone through development during the recent decades (Anteby-Yemini & Berthomiére, 2005, p.262). Up to the year of 1993 the dictionary “New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary” defined the term as “…all those Jews who live outside the biblical land of Israel.” But in this year, 1993, the dictionary also included the additional text: “…the situation of people living outside their traditional homeland.” (Sheffer, 2003, p.9). The first explanation from the dictionary could be argued to link the diaspora to a religious meaning but the addition of the latter explanation lays the foundation for a more modern definition.

The word “diaspora” has its origins in the Greek vocabulary and the interpretation of the word “Galut”, another word but with roots within the Hebrew language. It is based on both “Speiro” and “Dia”, the former indicating to sow and the latter a preposition meaning over.

In ancient Greece, the term indicated both migration, colonization and to some extent destruction. In Hebrew, the term was focusing on the resettlement of Jews outside of Palestine after the Babylonian exile (Anteby-Yemini & Berthomiére, 2005, p.262; Kenny, 2013, p.2-3, p.5; Cohen, 1997, p.ix; Vertovec, 2005). There exist other historical cases than just the one with the Jews. Armenians migrated on a large scale throughout the history with different reasons and did moreover not enjoy any independent state between the years of 1375 and 1991. This was when the Republic of Armenia was proclaimed (Kenny, 2013, p.6-7). Of this, one can undertake that the history of the term “Diaspora” have existed for an extensive period. Although, within the social science field of research, both the concept and term is rather new. It is only since around the 1980’s the concept has gained ground as a way of describing people dispersed from their homeland. This was an effect of the failing attempts of assimilation theories, during the 1970’s, to both explain and be models for the integration of migrants in their new countries. The view before 1970’s was therefore one were migrants were mainly expected to “adapt” to the local culture rather than developing an own community within the host-country (Anteby-Yemini & Berthomiére, 2005, p.262).

Instead of the assimilation theories trying to describe the integration of humans into the new host country, the spotlights within social science was directed towards explaining how and
why different groups created their own communities that they hold on to even when residing in the new host-country (Antebayemini & Berthomiere, 2005, p.262-263). This marks an initial starting point within the social science field were the concept of diaspora began to be developed. Even though spotlights were directed towards the concept, and the application of it increased, this was considered to expose some weaknesses concerning the concept. This was discussed by Alain Medam (1993) whom pointed out that the content and frameworks of diaspora was getting too large and numerous. Therefore, Medam (1993) states that “…the diaspora’s concept – arising mainly from the Jewish experience of the exile and dispersal- has to be actualized and precised.” (Medam, 1993, p.1). Medam was not alone in doing this kind of observation about the concept. James Clifford (1994) discussed the different approaches and issues at hand in defining a “traveling term” (Clifford, 1994, p.302) as he puts it. Moreover, Clifford points out the need of defining the term and insists on that the focus should therefore rightly be here. This because issues exist surrounding what constitutes and is, or should be, included in the concept (Clifford, 1994, p.306).

These two authors both point out a need, at the time, in defining the concept properly and precise. This indicated that there existed an issue with the concept. Therefore, an area for investigation was to study and develop the concept to be able to recognize which is the ideas and attributes that constitute a diaspora to separate this from other already existing concepts within the field of social science (Antebayemini & Berthomiere, 2005, p.263) This is in line with Robin Cohen’s (1997) introduction in his book “Global Diasporas: An Introduction” wherein the recognition is made concerning that the common usage of the concept diaspora is mainly being utilized “casually” and in an “untheorized” or “undertheorized” practice (Cohen, 1997, p.x).

Several different concepts of diaspora have been developed since the initial spark, during the late 1970’s and start of the 1980’s, to an astonishing magnitude (Kenny, 2013, p.9; Brubaker, 2005, p.1). This development could be divided into have taken two different courses. One had its focus on the case of the Jews, where a diaspora had attributes and characteristics such as living in exile, migration, holding on to old traditions, language and culture and at the same time having the drive and longing for the return to their homeland. The other course was having its origin in the British cultural studies where the emphasis was rather directed towards identity issues (Dufoix, 2015, p.10). These two different courses were opposed to each other, whereas the first one had attributes more leaning towards a territorial centered, with a political angle, perspective of diasporas. The second one leaned more towards an emancipatory, de-
territorialized and cultural perspective (Dufoix, 2015, p.10). Consequences of these developments could be seen as having created the possibility to use the concept of diasporas in a whole range of different circumstances by choosing between different meanings of the word, “diaspora”. Different examples of use could therefore be: migrant community, minorities or simply members of any group which are dispersed across territories and space (Dufoix, 2015, p.10; Brubaker, 2005, p.3) Even though the concept had gone through these developments one area seemed to have been underrepresented within the literature, namely the political dimensions of diasporas (Anteby-Yemini & Berthomiére, 2005, p.264).

The notions of diasporas differ significantly (Cohen, 1997, p.ix) and this concludes the complexity surrounding the concept of diaspora. Stéphan Dufoix (2015) words describe this as following: “Within the last century, the old religious sense of “diaspora” was successively supplemented by new layers of meaning. But the latter did not replace the former. Each new layer represented a new opportunity, adding up to the previous one.” (Dufoix, 2015, p.11).

This indicates that the development of the concept “diaspora” since the 1980’s has been characterized of different perspectives leading to people giving the concept different attributes. All different ideas therefore contributed to the whole, giving whomever the opportunity to utilize the concept in whichever way suitable. In some way, this has established the concept of diaspora to consist of almost any kind of migration, not only the most known cases of for example the Jews and the Armenians but also migrating traders, workforces and even colonizers (Kenny, 2013, p.1, 9).

It could be an issue if the concept is inflexibly defined but there is also a problem with the concept left to open-ended as this (Kenny, 2013, p.1, 9). It could be an issue because, being an open-ended concept is linked to the development of the concept to comprehend more and more. This leads to the concept being stretched out, meaning that it loses its usefulness and power to be able to distinctively tell what a specific diaspora really constitutes of (Brubaker, 2005, p.3). With other words, a concept being stretched out may lose its strength in picking out a clear phenomenon as in “This is a diaspora because of these characteristics”. With this said the concept of diaspora seems to have been developed in to encompassing a lot more than previously and could be argued to have traits of being conceptually stretched. This could be seen to be strengthened by authors such as Medam (1993), Clifford (1994) and Cohen (1997) pointing out a need to theorize the concept.
3.2. The features of a diaspora

This chapter will introduce different authors’ explanations of what a diaspora may be constituted of. This could be evidence of both the similarities as well as differences that exist in the literature within diaspora studies. Mainly three authors will be introduced, the objective with this outlining is to be able to establish an analytical framework to be applied to the case of the Cuban Diaspora. This is connected to the objective with the thesis, to observe whether one could see if the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. have changed its affiliation, and transformed, towards either the host-land or homeland, and in this sense if they still meet the conditions of being a diaspora.

3.2.1. Sheffer’s Diaspora

Lisa Anteby-Yemini and William Berthomiére (2005) highlighted Gabriel Sheffer’s focus to develop concept of diaspora to cover more than just the Jewish experience. This because evidence indicated that there could have been cases of similar structure before this (Anteby-Yemini & Berthomiére, 2005, p.263). Sheffer later come to develop three criteria that, through his perspective, should be included in a definition concerning a diaspora. These criteria were: That a group develop and maintain a collective identity for all the people of a diaspora, the presence of an internal institution (organisation) that is dissimilar from both the homeland and host country and contact with the homeland through, for example, remittances (Anteby-Yemini & Berthomiére, 2005, p.263).

From Sheffers work “Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad” (2003, p.9-10) He sets out the following definition of a diaspora:

an ethno-national diaspora is a social-political formation, created as a result of either voluntary or forced migration, whose members regard themselves as of the same ethno-national origin and who permanently reside as minorities in one or several host countries. Members of such entities maintain regular or occasional contacts with what they regard as their homelands and with individuals and groups of the same background residing in other host countries. Based on aggregate decisions to settle permanently in host countries, but to maintain a common identity, diasporans identify as such, showing solidarity with their group and their entire nation, and they organize and are active in the cultural, social, economic, and political spheres. Among their various activities, members of such Diasporas establish trans-state
networks that reflect complex relationships among the diasporas, their host countries, their homelands, and international actors.

To summarize the quote from Sheffer (2003) a diaspora is described as containing following traits: I. “Social-political formation” who has migrated by either being pressured or doing it willingly; II. The migrating population resides and lives as a minority within one, or more, host country(ies) with; III. Same or shared ethno-national origin with a common identity, IV; They maintain contact with homeland and V. diaspora members are active in different areas such as cultural, economic, social and political issues (Sheffer, 2003, p.9-10).

3.2.2. Michel Bruneau’s Diaspora

Several other authors have described what characteristics should be included in describing a diaspora, one being Michel Bruneau (2010). In the work “Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods” (2010), edited by Rainer Bauböck and Thomas Faist (2010) Bruneau is included in one chapter called “Diasporas, Transnational Spaces and Communities”. Here, Bruneau discusses the different traits of the concept of diaspora. The author implies here that the most common characteristics of a diaspora proposed by most authors, studying diasporas, could be constructed as following: I. The population to be called a diaspora has been in pressure, dispersed to several residences beyond the instant, neighbourhood of the place of origin; II. The destination of the migration follows the already established pattern of migration, meaning that those immigrating is linked with people who have already immigrated in to a host country. This, because the people whom are integrated in the host country works as a portal into both the labour market and the new host country in general. The people here, who have already migrated, also have the functions as “guardians” of the ethnic or national culture of the diaspora; III. The migrating population retains a high degree of shared identity, among its diaspora, even though they are integrated in to the society of the host country. This indicates that they do not assimilate. A strong notion of community among the diaspora is at play; IV. The group called diaspora moreover also preserve and improve exchange relations with each other, within the diaspora, as well with people from the place of origin; V. The migrating diaspora has an experience of dispersion in history. Through generations this identity has been transmitted from one to another, VI; These diaspora groups is tending to be autonomous, social formations and therefore independent from both the host country and homeland. This is the fact because of all the cultural, political and religious
associations alive within a diaspora (Bruneau, 2010, p.36-37)

3.2.3. William Safran’s Diaspora

William Safran (1991) has also contributed to the diaspora studies by proposing six characteristics for a diaspora. In his work “Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return” (1991), included in the Journal “Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies” Vol.1, Nr.1, 1991, the author elaborates thoroughly (Safran, 1991, p.83-84). The six characteristics for a diaspora is as following: I; The population in mind have been dispersed from a specific original place to other, peripheral and foreign destinations, II; The population have and shows a collective memory of the homeland they have been dispersed from, III; The population have a notion that they will never fully be accepted in the host country they arrive and reside in, therefore they isolate or alienate from it; IV. The population has the understanding and view that their homeland is the ideal and best home, this is the home which the population eventually will return to; V. The population have a collective commitment to either maintain or restore their homeland, in the sense of security and prosperity, and VI. Continued relationship and contact with their homeland (Safran, 1991, p.83-84; Ryang, 2001, p.55-56; Anteby-Yemini & Berthomière, 2005, p.264).

Of all these different examples of characteristics that authors have developed throughout the years, a few will be collected as the most common ones compared to each other. Out of this, an analytical framework will be developed and later utilized in the analysis chapter.

3.3. Analytical Framework

This part of the thesis will outline the analytical framework that will be applied in the analysis chapter. Earlier in this chapter different features of a diaspora have already been drawn from different authors. Now the aim is to collect those characteristics that are most common for all the authors in their definitions. The aim with doing this is connected to the earlier parts which described the concept of diasporas to have been conceptually stretched and inflexible. Therefore, this is an effort to simplify the concept and to being able to apply this on the case of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S.

With this analytical framework, the objective is to have narrowed the focus down to certain points (characteristic) that will assist in observing and answering the question concerning if the Cuban Diaspora still meets the conditions of being a diaspora out of the chosen framework.
Firstly, all three different explanations include the notion of a set population being dispersed from one homeland to a new, host land. Moreover, the authors describe these population as ones having the same place of origin. Two out of the three chosen explanations also include here the condition where the population have been *pressed* or *willingly* to do this. This will be the first point in this thesis analytical framework: **I**. A set population that by pressure or willingly is dispersed from their homeland to a new host land. Secondly, all chosen explanations describes that the population in mind show a shared identity and collective memory of their homeland while residing within the new host land, this indicates, that two of the explanations include, that the population do not assimilate fully with the host land. Therefore, point number two is: **II**. The population shows a shared identity and collective memory of their homeland; the population do not fully assimilate with the host land. Thirdly, all explanations include the notion that the population in mind keeps contact and tries to remain connected with the place of origin. This is the third point: **III**. The population in mind keeps contact with the place of origin. This is all the characteristics that could be drawn out of the explanations included in this theory chapter which is common for all authors:

- **I**. A set population that, by pressure or willingly, is dispersed from their homeland to a new host land.
- **II**. The population show a shared identity and collective memory of their homeland; the population do not fully assimilate with the host land.
- **III**. The population in mind keeps contact with the place of origin.

In summary, an analytical framework has been established. This analytical framework is comprised of three main points that all the authors included in the theory chapter touch upon and mentions as being characteristic of a diaspora. Therefore, these points, or characteristics, is the most common ones used as an explanation of what constitutes a diaspora at least by the chosen authors. The points are described as in the previous list and will be used in the analysis chapter one by one, by being applied on the different waves and present Cuban Diaspora (in the U.S.) that will be presented in the Findings Chapter. This to hopefully observe if the Cuban Diaspora meets these characteristics in present time and therefore if they still should or could be a diaspora still.
4. Chapter Four: Findings

In this part of the thesis, the findings will be presented in a descriptive state. The aim with this chapter is to gather and structure the necessary data and knowledge to fulfill the objective with the thesis. This chapter will moreover attempt to answer the research questions with a clear descriptive structure, namely these two: I. How has the immigration of Cubans in to the United States of America developed over the years and; II. What are the features of the present Cuban Diaspora in the United States of America?

4.1. The Historical developments of the Cuban Diaspora

From the time when Fidel Castro took power in Cuba, around the year of 1959, and up to the early years of the 2000s it is estimated that roughly over one million Cubans (Eckstein, 2009, p.11) have emigrated from Cuba into the U.S. These Cubans was at the time 89 percentages of the country’s (Cuba) total diaspora in the world, indicating that most Cubans have migrated and resided in the U.S. (Eckstein, 2009, p.11)

The Cuban Diaspora has an origin before the revolution in the year of 1959. Before the revolution, it is estimated that up to 124.000 Cubans had already emigrated from Cuba into the U.S. (Torres, 1999, p.42) and overall, up to 200.000 had migrated from Cuba. Out of these, 10.000 resided specifically in South Florida, U.S. (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.249) The reasons for the earlier migration was several but the economic and political environment during the 1950’s was the foundation where Cubans become motivated enough to start a departure (Torres, 1999, p.42). The Cubans who emigrated from Cuba before the revolution might be separated into three clusters. It was: I. Laborers; II. Professionals and highly educated people and; III. To some extent, Political Exiles (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.249).

The flow of migration from Cuba in to the U.S. have always had an international feature to it. The relationship between the U.S. and Cuba has always been colored by antagonism and suspicion. This is a consequence of the overthrowing of an U.S. supported regime in 1958 by Fidel Castro and the new allied, Soviet Union, that Cuba attracted (Felter et al. 2017).

Firstly, the government in the United States of America did not welcome the revolution in Cuba which affected their relationship with each other. U.S. Had at the time vital, economic interest in Cuba where many companies (on the island), in the mining industry and public utilities, was under U.S. power. Most, if not all, of these companies come to be nationalized during the early stages of the revolution (López, 2015, p.35). Furthermore, U.S. also had political interests too in the region in general and Cuba. This revolution confronted the place
and power U.S. had in the region by changing the power structure. The revolution was also seen to have the risk of being “exported” to other countries in South and Central America (Torres, 1999, p.54).

The history of the migration from Cuba into U.S. after the revolution could be observed in different waves and stages (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.249; PEW Hispanic Center, 2006, p.2; Duany, 1999, p.69; Fulger, 2012; Woltman & Newbold, 2009, p.73). The next parts to follow in this chapter will go through the different waves which will lead to a full established picture of the history and development of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S.

4.1.1. The First Wave, The Exiles with Hope between 1959-1962

On the first day of the new year, January the first in 1959, the at the time President Fulgencio Baptista had fled his country, Cuba. Batista was devoted to the military and had for his time as the leader of Cuba been focusing on the upper and middle class of the society. His administration was known for torturing and oppressing the opposition and the style of governing was considered conservative. The socio-economic living standards was highly differentiated between rich and poor Cubans, especially because of the biased, focus towards the upper class needs and benefits in the society from Batista. Batista had to flee from Fidel Castro, whom led a populist movement that had succeeded in capturing the people of Cuba’s inspiration for a new Cuba. Castro announced himself as a Marxist-Leninist with alliance to the Soviet Union in the east (Eckstein, 2009, p. 10). The revolution sparked a wave, the first wave with a starting point of the first of January, of Cubans emigrating from the country. The first wave emerged in the year of 1959 and endured till around the year of 1962 and are called in some circles as “the True Exiles”. The Cubans who migrated during this period was members of the upper and upper-middle class, the elite of Cuba, who had a great deal to lose with the political and economic changes that would arrive with the revolution (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.249-250; López, 2015, p.35; Pedraza-Bailey, 1985, p.9; Zavodny, 2003, p.203). People also had to flee, a lot of Cubans migrating during this wave was devoted and loyal supporters of the Batista regime. These followers had to flee from persecutions, provocations and summary executions, where the accused received no fair treatment (López, 2015, p.35). This first group of exiles from Cuba enjoyed great benefits and support from the U.S. Government. This, in form of both financial aid and sympathy, during the heights of the “Cold War”, with the Cuban migrants and their devotion for anti-communism. (Berg, 2014; Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.250; Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p.1; Fulger, 2012). The U.S. Government also made it easier for the Cubans offering them a refugee status, which removed
restrictions that other migrant groups with other nationalities had to respect and follow (Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p.23). For the U.S. Government, this first wave of Cubans became “poster people” to show the world the superiority democracy had over communism, indicating that Cubans fled the latter to enjoy the benefits of the former (Eckstein, 2009, p.12). Subsequently, the America people showed solidarity against the communist threats from the island of Cuba. Characteristics of the exile migrants arriving in U.S. during this wave was for example the notion of a close return to Cuba. For these people, the exile was only a temporary condition that was supposed to be solved so the exiles could return to their beloved Cuba soon (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.250; Pedraza-Bailey, 1985; p.10). This view was shared with the U.S. Government who worked with the conviction that the new leaders from the revolution would perish and be removed fast (Torres, 1999, p.54).

Because of the notion of a possible return to the island, the first wave of Cubans was referred to by Silvia Pedraza (1996) as “Those who wait”. The political activity of the first wave of migrants was mostly hostile and violent towards the government in Cuba where the most noticeable action was the “Bay of Pigs” invasion of Cuba. These Cubans living in exile in the U.S. and involved in the “Bay of Pigs” was named “Freedom Fighters” for trying to overthrow Castro’s Government because the exiles had no trust or confidence and devotion for the revolution (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985, p.9). Moreover, the migrants of the first wave have by different sources been referred as the “Golden Exiles” because of their socio-economic standards and status as the elite and upper-middle class. This gave them the tools and necessary conditions to establish themselves as the economic and political leaders within the Cuban Community in U.S. With other words, this “Golden Exile” set the standard and tone for the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. and their stance towards the Government in Cuba (Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p.23; Eckstein, 2009, p.22; Fulger, 2012; Perez, 2013, p.597-598; Woltman & Newbold, 2009, p.73).

The Cubans who chose to migrate from the island were not much loved by the followers of the Cuban revolution or Fidel Castro himself. Castro said the following lines in the wake of the revolution: “Those who escape their duty, taking the road to the north, have lost the right to be worthy sons of la patria” (Torres, 1999, p.51) and Cubans leaving was referred to as “worms” and traitors. The reprimand from the Cuban Government towards people leaving was to strip him or her of their national identity (Torres, 1999, p.51). Moreover, Cubans migrating and leaving Cuba have in general not been allowed to even visit close families by the Government (Berg, 2006, p.302-303) By different estimates, between 200.000-248.000,

4.1.2. The Second Wave for Freedom, between 1965-1973

The Cuban Missile crisis made it tougher for Cubans to migrate in to the U.S. This, because flights were suspended between Miami and Havana (Zavodny, 2003, p.203). Between the year of 1963 and 1965 roughly 67.500 Cubans arrived in the U.S. (Eckstein, 2009, p.12) but 1965 become a starting point for a new wave of migration from Cuba and the “Freedom Flights” (Eckstein, 2009, p.12). After the unsuccessful attempt by the U.S. and the “Freedom Fighters” to overthrow Castro through the Bay of Pigs invasion on the 17 of April in 1961, the Government in Cuba soon announced it alliance with the Soviet Bloc as well as proclaiming the true, social characteristics the revolution had (López, 2015, p.36). Moreover, the failure of The Bay of Pigs became a crack in the hopes and dreams of the first wave exiles to overthrow the Government in Cuba (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.250). Still, the earliest migrants were fully committed to overthrow Castro and eventually return to Cuba (Eckstein, 2009, p.17).

The developments and the alliance with the Soviet bloc drove more people to migrate or even flee from Cuba. Many Cubans actively searched for opportunities to leave the island (López, 2015, p.36). The second wave of migration was mostly comprised of middle-class Cubans, or “Petite bourgeoisie” (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.250). This wave of migration was endorsed by Washington in the U.S. by allowing Cubans to take flights to the country (Eckstein, 2009, p.12). It was in the year of 1965 that the president of the U.S, Lyndon B. Johnson, approved the so called “Cuban Refugee Airlift” but Cubans did also migrate through the ports of Camarioca in the beginning of this wave (López, 2015, p.36-37). Moreover, both presidents of Cuba and the U.S. developed lists of refugees whom wanted to depart from Cuba. This was called the “Memorandum of Departure” and demanded that both governments agreed on it. This led to the establishment of two daily flights from Cuba to U.S. and it was those flights who were called the “Freedom Flights”. (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.250-251; Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p23-24) The Cubans of the second wave was referred to by Pedraza (1996) as “the ones who search”. Even though the Cuban Government extorted repression against the opposition, and many migrated because of this a new factor emerged and it was an of an economic character. Cubans searched for economic opportunities that were not present on the island (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.251). Furthermore, the characteristics of the second wave migrants from Cuba was mostly elderly, parents to the ones who had already leaved the island, and females. In the beginning theses was also mainly members of the upper class but
towards the end of this period, members of the middle sector were also included in this migration wave (Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p.24)

The Cubans of the second wave together with the first wave found themselves separated from their relatives because of the Cold War context. Instead, the migrants needed to adapt to the life in U.S. rather than looking back. The effects of this was as an example called “De-Cubanization”, wherein the Cuban migrants had to assimilate to the new host land, the U.S. (Rothe & Pumariéga, 2008, p.251). Together with this, migrants from the first and second wave continued in their new host-land to memorise and think back at Cuba through their “Shared, pre-revolution lenses” (Eckstein, 2009, p.22) and their view of Cuba which the revolution had created was mainly from their own imagination, this because they left so early afterwards and had not really encounter the “New” Cuba. This led to their own view of both how Cuba should be and how it was after the revolution even though they had no own experience of the lives on the island. An estimate of 260.000 Cubans left Cuba between 1965 and 1973 (Eckstein, 2009, p.12, p.22).

4.1.3. The Third Wave, the Mariel Event in 1980
The “Mariel Boatlift” has its starting point in the year of 1980. A desperate bus driver rammed the gates to the Peruvian Embassy in Havana. The driver was in desperate need of political asylum and with his act, thousands of other Cubans followed. The people stayed on the grounds of the embassy to express their desire to leave the island (Rothe & Pumariéga, 2008, p.251). This exodus lasted for a few months and laid path for approximately 125.000 new Cuban migrants in the U.S. The “Mariel Boatlift” was characterized as an uncontrolled, massive migration that did not have any clear process (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985, p.22; López, 2015, p.37). Another aspect that made this wave stand out against earlier waves was the racial composition. The first two waves, 1959-1962 and 1965-1973, were different compared to the following after 1980. Here, the majority had been the elites and upper-middle class, after 1965, U.S. Government policies did also favor the relatives to the ones already been migrating to the country, so therefore the majority was still “white” Cubans. The “Mariel Boatlift” and its composition of the Cubans migrating was more reflecting the real racial division of the Cuban people (Zavodny, 2003, p.204; Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p.24) and could be one of the most varied, racially, migration waves of Cuban migrants from Cuba (Woltman & Newbold, 2009, p.74).
Moreover, most the Cubans migrating during this phase were blue-collar workers. With other words, they were representing the working-class in Cuba and one important aspect here was that many had also grown up during the revolution, this led to the hard truth that they were not accepted by the earlier migrants already established from the two first waves in the U.S. (López, 2015, p.37). The people from the working class felt disappointed by the revolution and that Cuba could not offer the workers what they had expected to come with the revolution. This was a reason for their departure to U.S., the hopes to get a better life. Therefore, the Cuban migrants from this wave was referred to by Pedraza (1996) as the “those who hope” (Rothe & Pumarięga, 2008, p.251) In general, the Cubans migrating from Cuba after 1980’s and onwards have tended to have more economic reasons for leaving rather than the same, political convictions and anti-Castro views earlier migrants have had before the 1980’s. Cubans residing in the U.S. and who migrated after 1980’s and onwards to therefore hold more moderate views, politically, towards their homeland, Cuba, and they have more ties to the present Cuba than older migrants. (Bishin & Kofstad, 2011, p.1). In this sense, the “political exile” that characterized earlier waves was progressively shifting towards “economic exile” (Woltman & Newbold, 2009, p.74).

Moreover, the boats from the port of Mariel could be seen to have included two types of people, the Cubans who by themselves wanted to leave but also Cubans who were sent by the Government to the U.S. Moreover, a lot of these migrating Cubans were met by a Government in the U.S. who was for the first time not sure if they wanted to accept these immigrants. Media focused a lot on the characterization the Cubans from this wave had; 40 percentages of all migrants during this wave was “black” and parts was also criminals released and sent from Cuba. The public opinion in the U.S. started to change towards showing less respect for the Cuban migrants (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985, p.22). Even though the “Mariel Boatlift” event was characterized by migration under chaotic and uncontrolled manners, the established immigration policies in U.S. for the Cuban migrants remained (Grenier & Pérez, p.25).

If the people from the first two waves was considered to have been “forced” to accept “De-Cubanization”, in other words that the Cuban Communities in the U.S. had to adopt to the new life in their host country with no attachment to Cuba, the wave of the Mariel Boatlift was seen to introduce “Re-Cubanization” into these same communities. This wave introduced new methods to stay in contact with family, relatives and their homeland, Cuba, through for example telephone communication (Rothe & Pumarięga, 2008, p.251).
4.1.4. The Final Wave, In the Year of 1994

The fourth wave of Cubans migrating has an origin in the consequences of the collapse of the Soviet Block in 1991-1992. This led to the halt of financial support Cuba had enjoyed from this block for several years since its alliance started. As a result, Cuba received an economic crisis that forced them the Government to act, an action that would be called the “Special Period”. The Government introduced changes that was in total contradiction to the revolution and was “Capitalism to save Communism” (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.253).

On the eleventh of August 1994, the Cuban Government announced its decision to not detain any Cuban who tried to leave Cuba with the aim to migrate in to the U.S. This was a result of recent, tragic and violent events earlier month during the same year. The events included Cubans who had tried to leave by any means, helicopters, boats and even homemade rafts and one incident stood out; A Cuban Government boat tried to prevent a hijacked tugboat with Cubans to leave for U.S. The result was tragic, around 40 people drowned. Therefore, the Cuban Government in the end authorized Cubans to leave and promised to not intercept them at sea. As a result, the U.S. Coast Guards intercepted 37,000 Cubans on rafts under one month (Grenier & Pérez, 2003, p.25). The intercepted Cubans was put in to camps on different location, for example the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo. This wave brought change to the status as “Political Exiles” that the Cubans migrating from Cuba had enjoyed. It was, at the time, president Bill Clinton who issued a decree that put a new title for the migrating Cubans, namely “Financial Immigrants” (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.253). With this wave, both the U.S. Government and the Cuban Government approved a quota for migration of Cubans in to U.S. This became an annual quota of 20,000 Cubans who could migrate each year (Rothe & Pumariega, 2008, p.253; Eckstein, 2009, p.13).

4.1.5. Summary of all the Waves

Overall, this historical approach to describe four different waves have given a picture of both the differences as well as the similarities concerning the waves of migrations from Cuba in to the U.S. The waves stretch from 1959 up to 1994 (as is the last, major event to be called a wave) and do show the different characteristics each of these waves have had compared to each other. In the next part of this chapter, the present-day Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. will be explained and described. Therefore, the present-day Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. will be including all these different characteristics from each wave.
4.2. The Features of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. at Present Time

Susan Eckstein (2009), in her work “The Immigrant Divide: How Cuban-Americans Changed the U.S. and their Homeland.”, explains that the Cuban Diaspora is composed of Cubans with varying views and backgrounds. This Because the Cuban emigrants have grown up and lived during different times with different occupations. This has led them to adopt differently in the U.S. as well as having diverse views on their homeland, Cuba (Eckstein, 2009, p.2).

Moreover, the population of the Cuban Diaspora and the Cuban Community in the U.S. is characterized by different class backgrounds and status today, this because of the different waves and phases the Cuban migration in to U.S. has taken (Duany, 1999, p69-70).

In the year of 2013, the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) indicated that the Cuban Diaspora was constituted of 2,200,000 people whom was either native Cuban or reported as having Cuban ancestry or race (Rusin, Zong & Batalova, 2015). The Cuban Diaspora is mostly located in South of the U.S. (78%) and a total of 68% lives in Florida (López, 2015). In the year 2000, the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. was equally divided by Cuban migrants who arrived before 1980’s and after. In the year 2007, this division had turned in favor of the post-Mariel migrants who now constituted most of the whole Cuban Diaspora with 52,8%. (Bishin & Klofstad, 2011, p.1). The Cuban Diaspora has come to evolve in to being greatly diversified between the different waves in terms of socio-economic standards. The constant flow of Cuban migrants from Cuba, under favorable conditions from the U.S. Government, are starting to show an effect on the constitution of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. (Grenier, 2015).

An interesting survey mentioned in Gustavo López (2015) called 2013 PEW Research Survey asked the question whether Cubans felt like a “Typical American” or “Very different from a typical American” a total of 55% of the Cuban adults described themselves as “Typical American”. This could be compared to Hispanic people, not Cubans included, in general in the U.S. where only 49% would describe themselves as a “Typical American” (López, 2015). Moreover, by the year of 2008, estimates were that most of the Cubans in the U.S. (58,2%) were also U.S. citizens. Together with this, Cubans enjoy far more political representations than other groups with Hispanic origin. As an example, in Florida’s state legislature eleven out of thirteen electives with Hispanic origin are of Cuban ancestry (FIU Cuban Research Institute, 2011, p.39).
D17 is the title the date December 17, 2014, received as when Barack Obama, at the time President of the United States of America, announced the reinstatement of diplomatic ties between the U.S. and Cuba. This event in 2014 seems to have had a great impact on how Cuban-American see the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba. By a poll conducted by the Florida International University in 2016 called “2016 FIU Cuba Poll: How Cuban-Americans in Miami view U.S. Policies Toward Cuba” (2016), their first poll after the D17, the attitudes of Cuban-Americans in the Miami-Dade County, located in Florida, seems to have shifted towards a pro-engagement one instead of isolation of Cuba. For example, recent Cubans arriving in the U.S. together with second generation of Cuban-Americans seems more likely to oppose a continuation of the existing embargo than older exile Cubans living in Florida. (FIU Poll, 2016, Foreword). This information reveals that there seems to exist a shift of attitudes connected to the demographic context of the Cuban Diaspora.

The people who conducted these polls are Dr. Guillermo J. Grenier and Dr. Hugh Gladwin (FIU Poll, 2016, Forewords). The authors explain in the forewords of the poll result paper that the shifts of attitudes are to some extent a consequence of both demographic changes within the Cuban Diaspora as well as connected to the year of arrival to the U.S. For example, the historical exiles arriving with the first wave (as earlier explained) is losing ground as the newer arriving Cubans together with the second-generation Cuban-Americans is increasing their size in the total population of the Cuban Diaspora. (FIU Poll, 2016, Foreword). Since the 1990’s, over 500,000 thousand new Cuban migrants have entered into the U.S. This has transformed the composition of the demographics of the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. With this, changes have come to how Cuban-Americans view the relationship with the U.S. and Cuba (Lopez & Krogstad, 2014).

The difference between earlier Cubans’ integration within the Cuban Diaspora, in their new host land, seems to be a consequence of both time of arrival but also with difference in racial composition in the different waves. The first exiles arriving with the first wave had different political views then later Cuban migrants. The first exiles were strongly against the Castro Government. This is in comparison to later Cuban migrants who may have been born and grown up during Castro Government leading to different views and understanding about the government (Fulger, 2012). This is to some extent present in present time political affiliation among Cuban-Americans in the U.S. In general, over time, Cuban residing in the U.S have for a long time mostly been supporting and leaning towards the Republican Party, this even though Hispanics at large, in the U.S. have been supporting the Democratic Party (Krogstad,
2014; Girard, Grenier & Gladwin, 2012, p.42). But as now, there seems to be a shift here too. Cubans migrating after 1990’s tend to lean towards the Democratic Party and in contrast, Cubans migrating before 1990’s showed more affiliation towards the Republic Party. In the election of 2012 in U.S. 49% of the Cubans voting in Florida voted for Barack Obama (Democrat) and 47% voted for Republican Mitt Romney (Lopez & Krogstad, 2014). This is important because the shift of political party affiliation could have an impact on the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba, because Florida is a key state for at least the three most recent elections in the U.S. (Girard, Grenier, & Gladwin, 2012, p.42) You could therefore argue that Cubans residing in Florida, where up to 68% of Cubans living in the U.S. are located (López 2015), have an impact through their choice of political affiliation and how they vote. The Poll from Florida International University (2016) reveals that the democrats as a party affiliation within the Cuban Diaspora is a majority in two age categories, namely the ages between 18-39 and 40-59 even after 2014 when the announcement of normalization of diplomatic ties had been made (FIU Poll, 2016, p.23).

The opinions and attitudes of the Cuban-Americans in the U.S. have as earlier presented, seemed to change. In several different areas, attitudes have shifted towards the opposite direction. For example, the support for the embargo, presently active toward Cuba, have decreased in an extraordinary pace. Throughout the 1990’s, generally 84% of the Cuban respondents would support the continuation of the embargo toward Cuba, this has decreased to only, on average, 37% from the 2000’s up to present day (2016) (FIU Poll, 2016, p.26).

Another important result from the Florida International University poll is the one concerning sending remittances or other products to Cuba. Here, overwhelmingly 72% of Cubans, within the Miami-Dade County (state of Florida) who arrived after 1995 answer that they do send back money to both relatives and friends who still lives on the island. This indicates that they do keep contact with the homeland, Cuba. In contrast to this, only 25% of Cubans who migrated before 1980, answer the same (FIU Poll, 2016, p.19). This too indicates, although going against the post-1995, that the Cubans before 1980 do not interact and do not keep the same contact with their homeland, Cuba, which is supported by earlier facts been presented in this chapter. Although one need to observe that sending remittances could just be a kind gesture rather than showing an interest in the homeland.

Moreover, this is connected to earlier stated facts, the attitudes of the Cuban Diaspora seem to be under a shift, well connected to the demographic changes of the Cuban Diaspora. This is
intriguing when one connects this with earlier parts of the findings, where it is stated that the opinions, views and backgrounds are radically different between those Cuban migrating before 1980’s and afterwards. One could wonder what the consequences will be of an even further demographic transition within the Cuban Diaspora in the future.

As an example, we have the “Bay of Pigs” in 1961 when trained Cuba exile returned to Cuba with the hopes of overthrowing the Castro Regime because all the exiles had no hope or confidence in the revolution. On the island of Cuba though, these “Freedom Fighters” come to fight against Cubans who supported and showed total faith in Castro’s revolution. Then, roughly nineteen years after the “Bay of Pigs”, these two different sides met once again through the “Mariel Boatlift” in the year of 1980. Some of the Cuban migrants during this wave was the ones who defended and stood up for Cuba during the “Bay of Pigs”. Therefore, these two sides represent different political views and understandings about the revolution and are part of the Cuban Community, and the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985, p.10-11). This is of utter importance in realizing the vast difference in views, memories and identities within the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S.
5. Chapter Five: Analysis

After the findings have been presented, this chapter will apply the analytical framework established in chapter three. This chapter will answer the last research question: Have the Cuban Diaspora changed its affiliation towards either its homeland or host land? The aim with this is to test the objective with the research, namely to observe whether it is possible to tell if the Cuban Diaspora, throughout history up to present time, has changed its affiliation towards host-country rather than homeland and therefore if it is possible to distinguish if the Cuban Diasporas in present day still meets the conditions of being a diaspora. To do this, the thesis will apply the analytical framework from chapter three, the three most common characteristics from the different authors describing what a diaspora should be consisted of. These points will be applied on the different waves and on the present time diaspora.

5.1. Point One: “A Set Population”

The first point of all three points from the analytical framework is: “A set population that, by pressure or willingly, is dispersed from their homeland to a new host-land”.

If you look closely to the first wave (1959-1962), the case could be argued to be rather clear. The Cubans migrating now was both pressured and leaved willingly after the revolution. They were pressured in the sense that the new government did not tolerate dissidents that expressed other views than the new that the revolution brought with. This led to the case where thousands of Cubans migrated to a new host-land, mostly the U.S, and resided. The background these Cubans had led to the adoption of the title “Exiles” which indicated that they were political refugees pressured to leave their homeland. You could argue that the first wave is a clear case where a set population, the Cubans, is pressured, by the government through oppression and persecutions, to leave their homeland and find a new host-land, the U.S. to reside within.

When evaluating the second wave (1963-1975), this wave shows similarities with the first one. During this wave, Cubans was to some extent pressured to leave in the sense that there existed no room for their ideologies. Followers of the old Batista government was still persecuted to some degree and oppressed, this made them leave the Island. The wave also included a “new” group of Cuban migrants: A major part was relatives to the ones who already had migrated. This could be argued to be different to the first wave. This, because you could debate whether they were pressured or not, maybe these Cubans are more in line with
leaving willingly to be near their relatives, and to seek better economic opportunities, who
had already resided in the U.S.

Analyzing the third wave (1980), we can see here that the characteristics of this wave differ
from the first two waves. Still, you could argue that, to an extent, these Cubans migrating now
was still a set population that was is either willingly or pressured to leave their homeland,
Cuba. What differs is that during wave the racial composition was more representative for the
Cuban people in general on the island. There is also a division here between the reasons for
leaving. Cubans migrating on and after 1980’s was more characterized by economic reasons,
with a hope for a better life in the U.S. because their homeland had failed them in achieving
what they wanted. Another important aspect here is that parts of the wave was sent to the U.S.
by the Cuban Government, these were mostly criminals and convicted citizens. You could
argue here whether this follows the line with the first point from our analysis tool, namely to
be pressured or willingly leave the homeland. You could argue that the Cubans who was sent
to the U.S. did not leave or migrate, therefore do not fully fulfill this point. With other words,
for some of the migrants the choice was not theirs to leave and migrate to the U.S.

If you look closely to the fourth wave (1994), you could see similarities with the third wave,
in its constitution of the Cuban population and their reason to leave the country. Now, the
reasons were created more or less because of the collapse of the Soviet bloc, where the
economic status of Cuba deteriorated quickly. To some extent, one could argue that the set
population was both pressured as well as willingly leaving the island because of the occurring
situation on the island, economically. As together with the third wave, this wave has changed
much of the original causes for migrating and leaving Cuba. From the 1980’s and onwards the
reasons have more leaned towards being economical ones rather than political. It is with this
last, great wave that also the title of the Cubans migrating to U.S. changed: Now they were
referred to as “Economic Immigrants” instead of “Political Refugees”.

If you look closely to the present-day (All four waves) Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. it is
becoming most interesting. As the thesis has already discussed during the findings and
analysis chapter, much of the facts seems to point to the realization that the Cuban Diaspora
in the U.S. is divided in to at least two different parts connected to the time of arrival and
departure from Cuba. Even though this could be argued a clear division the facts remain, the
Cuban Diaspora is a set population but it is hard to argue whether it is a set population with a
set background, this because the Cuban Population in the U.S. differ concerning their
backgrounds. This, together with the realization that the already existing Cuban Community in the U.S. did not fully accept the later coming arrivals create an image that maybe the Cuban Diaspora today is not to full extent a set population. What one cannot argue against is the fact that the Cuban Diaspora is constituted of a set population, Cubans, that have migrated from Cuba.

In summary, even though facts seem to point to the direction that the Cuban Diaspora is under demographic change where the newer arrivals of Cuban migrants differ from the earlier arrivals, the findings underline that the Cuban Diaspora is still a set population that either by pressure (earlier immigrants) or willingly (newer migrants) was dispersed from its homeland, Cuba. Hence, the Cuban Diaspora meets the condition for point number one in being a diaspora as the chose analytical frameworks has put forward.

5.2. Point Two: “Shared Identity and Collective Memory”

The second point from the analysis framework is: “The population shows a shared identity and collective memory of their homeland; the population does not fully assimilate with the host-land”. This is an important characteristic because this is what connects the population who has been dispersed in their new host-land with each other but it also indicates whether the population is integrated into the new society and if they then have changed their affiliation towards the host-land further than their homeland or not.

If you look closely to the first and second wave (1959-1962 & 1963-1975), one could argue that this part of the population show tendencies in having shared identity and with a collective memory. These first two waves were characterized mostly by Cubans who was members of roughly the same part of society, upper class and upper-middle class. These Cubans also shared similar realities which they felt they left on Cuba when either being pressured to leave or leaving willingly. The migrating Cubans from these two waves also show a shared view about Cuba and the Castro Regime, often expressing their disagreement with the new government through their anti-Castro engagement. One could also argue that this part of the population show a special, shared identity in the sense from which parts of the society they come from, their backgrounds and their goals with the migration and creation of a Cuban Diaspora. The Cubans arriving during the first and second wave have also been considered the orchestrators of the Cuban Community and its composition of political views and attitudes. Lastly, as stated in the findings, because of its disconnection with Cuba during the Cold War, the first and second wave of Cubans was “forced” in trying to adapt in to the new,
everyday life in the U.S. This could be seen to have forced them to in some extent disconnect them from the reality on Cuba and therefore they created their own reality of how the situation and life was on the island of Cuba.

Evaluating the **third and fourth wave** (1980 & 1994), point number two from the analytical framework reveals a division between the former two waves and these two. It is under this point this division could be argued to be as clear as it can be. The Cubans migrating during these waves have different views and understandings of the Cuba they left compared to the earlier two waves. Now, under these waves, Cubans left for other reasons and with other memories of Cuba. These Cubans had been either born or grown up under the new government and did therefore not share the same views and memories as the first two waves. As it comes to the political, one can also conclude from the findings, that much of the Cuban Diasporas attitudes is a production of the thoughts and ideas from the first and second wave. The Cubans arriving during the third and fourth wave could be having different views when it come to the “new” Cuba, after the revolution, that they were born during or grew up under. To conclude these waves, as with the same as the first two waves, these Cubans arriving now also show tendencies, although different from the former arrivals, to have a collective memory and shared identity together. It is in the last part, present-day Cuban Diaspora, that it is interesting to investigate further this point.

Analyzing the **present-day** (All four waves) Cuban Diaspora, the notion of a shared, collective memory is hard to find. Much of the findings tells us a different story, a story where there is a division between Cubans arriving before and after 1980’s. These Cubans memories seems to differ in what their view is of their homeland and what attitudes should be towards Cuba. To some extent, findings indicate that the first two waves had the opportunity to establish themselves and their view as the primary one within the diaspora but later arriving Cubans seems to show different attitude and memories of their homeland. When the first waves show hardline, anti-Castro attitudes the later arriving waves show more of a moderate and calm attitude. One could argue that this is a consequence of the great difference in their backgrounds and during what time they grew up. This could be argued to be evident in the polls included in the findings, where more support is shown for a friendlier and an-isolating attitude towards Cuban and the government. To conclude, with the Cuban Diaspora in the U.S. one can argue that the total population do not show, at this present-day, a shared and collective memory and identity, they do share the identity of being Cubans, but when it comes
to the memory and background they have, Cubans may be being different compared to each other.

Moreover, the notion of adult Cubans describing themselves more as “Typical American” than not is interesting, one could argue this to be an indication that at least the adult Cubans included as respondents in these investigations show that even though they are Cubans, part of their identity has become to be a typical American, how now this could be. This is an interesting part because it could reveal if the Cuban Diaspora in general are starting to show more to see themselves as Americans integrated into the society in America rather than having a desire to go back to Cuba and therefore showing tendencies to assimilate into the host-country’s society. Although, one must consider the fact that this results from the investigation was for adult Cubans. It would be interesting to have this question, if they would describe themselves as “Typical Americans” or not, as a reoccurring question to ask to trace whether one can observe a tendency where Cubans describe themselves more and more as solely Americans.

In summary, as stated, much of the findings indicate that the present-day Cuban Diaspora in the U.S, with its difference within the population concerning the memory and shared identity, does not fulfill and meet the conditions of point number two. The findings in this thesis indicates that the diaspora does not show a shared identity nor collective memory.

5.3. Point Three: “Keeping Contact with the Place of Origin”

The third and last point from the analytical framework is: “The population in mind keeps contact with the place of origin”.

By observing the first and second wave, the notion of keeping contact with the place in origin is debatable. The fact that relatives and people, close to the Cubans from the first waves, migrated during the second wave, indicates that maybe the natural contact one would have with their homeland, the relatives, disappeared. That these two waves were also was cut off from their homeland, much because of the cold war, seems to indicate that this point furthermore is not fully reached by these two waves. It is during the first waves the term “De-Cubanization” appears that reinforces this notion of being cut off from their homeland, Cuba. Although, the first two waves did have contact but maybe under a more negative aspect, by conducting political, sometimes violent acts such as the “Bay of Pigs”. The findings rather indicate that the Cubans migrating here showed tendencies for assimilation. One example is
the results from the polls which indicated that only 25% of the respondents arriving before 1980 sent remittances back to Cuba.

If you examine the third and fourth wave, the characteristics under point three is different compared to the first two waves. The Cubans who migrated during these waves migrated for different reasons than the first. They kept more in contact with their relatives and close ones who stayed behind on Cuba. These waves could be argued to fulfill point three to more extent then the former two waves because of this fact. Also, as contrast to the first two waves, 72% of Cubans arriving after 1995 answered the poll that they do send remittances back to Cuba and therefore having more contact with the place of origin then the first two waves.

Evaluating the present-day (All four waves) Cuban Diaspora, it is hard to determine to what extent the Cuban Diaspora today keep contact with their place of origin. It is a division between keeping contact or not to the extent of sending remittances and having relatives still living on the island of Cuba. The findings have not gained enough data to fully answer whether the Cuban Diaspora keeps contact with the place of origin because of the division within the diaspora.

In summary, the findings chapter has not gained enough data to be able to answer the last point and determine whether the Cuban Diaspora meets this condition in still being a diaspora. Although, one could argue that this division indicates that they do not fulfill the point because of this.

Moreover, the three points combined cannot fully determine if the Cuban Diaspora have changed its affiliation towards the host-country rather than the homeland. Although, parts of the Cuban Diaspora have showed tendencies to both assimilate and integrate to the U.S. society. The absent of a clear a coherent answer to the last research question leaves room for further research.

5.4. Does the Cuban diaspora still meet the condition of being a diaspora?
With all points discussed and analyzed it is now time to combine all and see whether one can observe if the present-day Cuban Diaspora in U.S. meets the conditions of still being a diaspora by the chosen analytical framework.

The different points applied on all the different waves shows us a reality, in the Cuban Diaspora, that is colored by differences among its population. Even if some waves show traits that fulfills the points, other waves could point to the right opposition. This makes it hard to
analyze whether the Cuban Diaspora at present time should be considered as still being a diaspora in the sense of the chosen analytical framework.

The different polls included in the findings chapter do also reveal that a demographic change within the Cuban Diaspora is at hands, indicating that something is truly happening within the population of this group. Especially because the traits that the first waves, being the “golden exiles” and “true exiles”, show may not be as present in the later waves. This leads to the debate about if the Cuban Diaspora do still meet the conditions of the points presented as the analytical framework. The change of title, within the U.S. government from “political refugee” towards “economic immigrant” do also indicate that something is happening in the U.S. about their view of the migrating Cubans. This, together with the recent events of policy changes brought up in the introduction, could be a signal that the Government in the U.S. has started to change its attitude and approach in seeing the Cubans in the U.S. as diaspora and instead as a Community.

If we look to the different points analyzed it is only one point, number two, where the findings in this thesis points to that the Cuban Diaspora does not meet the condition. Throughout the other points enough data has not been gained to fully state whether the Cuban Diaspora still meet the conditions of being a diaspora. Although, analyzed findings could be argued to show tendencies where the diaspora is changing, with different attitudes among the diaspora itself. This indicates that something is happening within the diaspora.

To finalize, out of the analyzed findings one could not draw the conclusion that the diaspora does not meet the conditions of being a diaspora but rather solely state that the diaspora may not be as homogenous. That the diaspora does not meet point number two could be argued show at least a decrease in this case of still being a diaspora. Therefore, the status of the group is questionable. The group could be in transition phase where it slowly decreases in meeting the conditions to be a diaspora.

The results of this thesis could indicate that the established concept of diaspora may not be as useful anymore and that the concept may go through a transition. The result that a diaspora may go through transitions and decrease in the sense of being a diaspora may indicate that a new concept needs to be developed that covers this phase. If this may lead to a possible new strand of research is for the future to see.
6. Chapter Six: Conclusion

This thesis has followed the objective of observing whether the Cuban Diaspora have changed its affiliation towards the host-land or homeland to determine if the group should be viewed and considered still meeting the conditions of being a diaspora. The results have been mixed but out of the analytical part one can draw that the Cuban Diaspora shows tendencies in decreasing in the sense of being a diaspora and that its status is questionable. There is much more research to be done for one to fully determine whether the Cuban Diaspora should be considered as a diaspora and if this is suitable to apply on other diaspora groups.

What this research contributed to the studies of diaspora and what does this mean for future research about these groups? The hopes with this thesis was to open and look through a new perspective on diasporas. The thesis illuminated a different angle in understanding and observing diasporas. The results they may go through transitions and decrease in being a diaspora may reveal a new area for investigations. This is connected to the relevance and objective earlier presented with the importance in understanding the potential impacts diasporas could have on homeland and host relationship.

For future research, this thesis has hopefully developed a new perspective in interacting and observing diasporas that could lead to new theories and concepts that can explain the developments and potential disappearances of diasporas. Much more is needed to be done still to fully observe and determine if a group cease to be a diaspora.

For future research, field-studies would be needed to be conducted to fill in blanks that this thesis has left and to support the results from this thesis. Interviews may bring substantial knowledge to this strand of research. Even though the result may indicate that the Cuban Diaspora may go through a transition phase where a new and different concept could be needed, it is not certain that this could be applied on other diaspora groups around the world. Therefore, a lot more research is needed to be done for example by maybe use more cases to study with the same approach used in this thesis.
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