

THE SAMOAN AIDSCAPE:
SITUATED KNOWLEDGE AND MULTIPLE REALITIES
OF
JAPAN'S FOREIGN AID TO SĀMOA

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By

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I would like to dedicate this dissertation to all who work at the forefront of the battle called “development,” believing genuinely that foreign aid can possibly bring better opportunities to people with fewer choices to achieve their life goals and dreams.

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ABSTRACT

This study is a postmodern geography of foreign aid that explores the Aidscape – multiple realities of aid seen, experienced, and talked about from the viewpoints of donors, recipients, and observers at different scales. It focuses on the flow of bilateral aid from Japan to Sāmoa, an independent nation in the Pacific Islands region. In this dissertation, I ask whether foreign aid merely promotes dependency of recipients when its multidimensional impacts are taken into consideration.

Among academic observers, critical aid studies view foreign aid as furthering dependency assuming that aid primarily facilitates the donor’s interests while undermining the economy, social fabric, and accountability of recipients. Many academic studies debate whether aid is inherently incapable of assisting the development of recipients due to the world system that defines the donor-recipient relation. These views have predicted for some decades now that MIRAB (migration, remittance, aid, and bureaucracy) societies like Sāmoa would continue to struggle with chronic dependency on aid. My study moves beyond this scope of analysis and explores the complexity and interconnectedness of the impacts of aid holistically with the original idea of Aidscape.

Borrowing ideas from Appadurai’s “-scape” and Soja’s concept of Thirdspace, I coined the term Aidscape to conceptualize foreign aid as a spatial practice that produces culturally hybrid, politically connected, and socially reflexive space composed of constantly changing realities in both lived and imaginary worlds. I use the human geographical concepts of *situated knowledge* and *lifeworld* to explore the multiplicity of accounts of aid constituting the Aidscape. With these concepts, the study explores the Samoan Aidscape of aid impacts in overlapping but disjunctive physical, mental, and

social spaces at international, national and grassroots levels. In this Samoan Aidcape, I find the coexistence of aid dependency and development. That is, aid helps enhance opportunities of recipients for improvement at national as well as grassroots levels, although it promotes dependency.

This study employs mixed field methods including in-depth interviews, participant observation, and surveys with questionnaires conducted during my fieldwork in Sāmoa in 2006, and interviews with aid officials in Japan in 2007.

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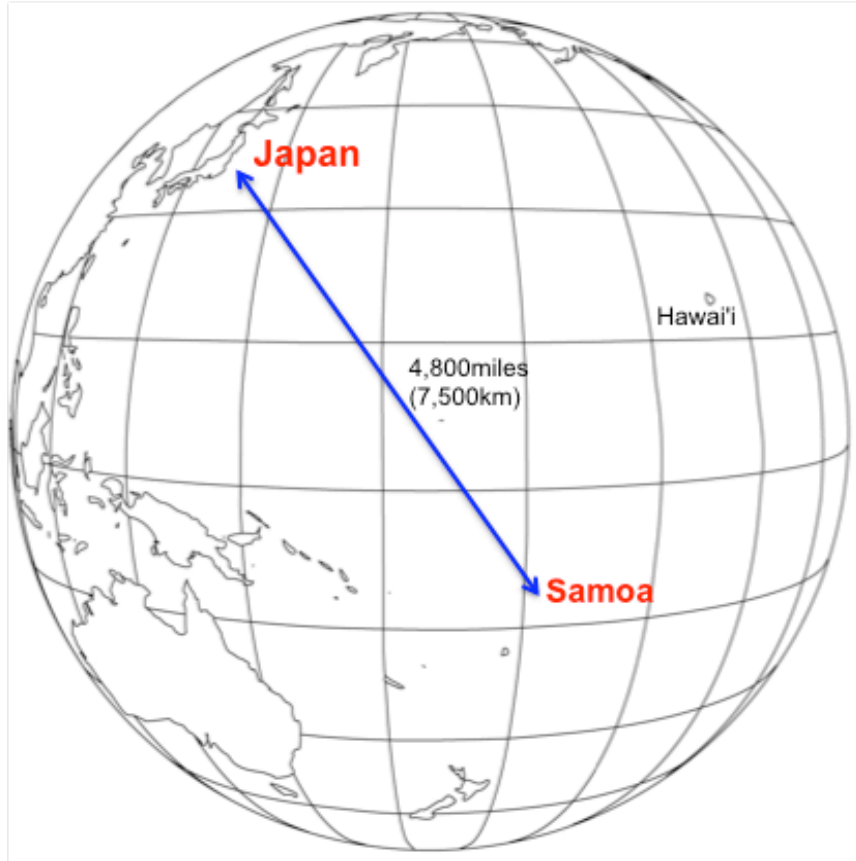
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

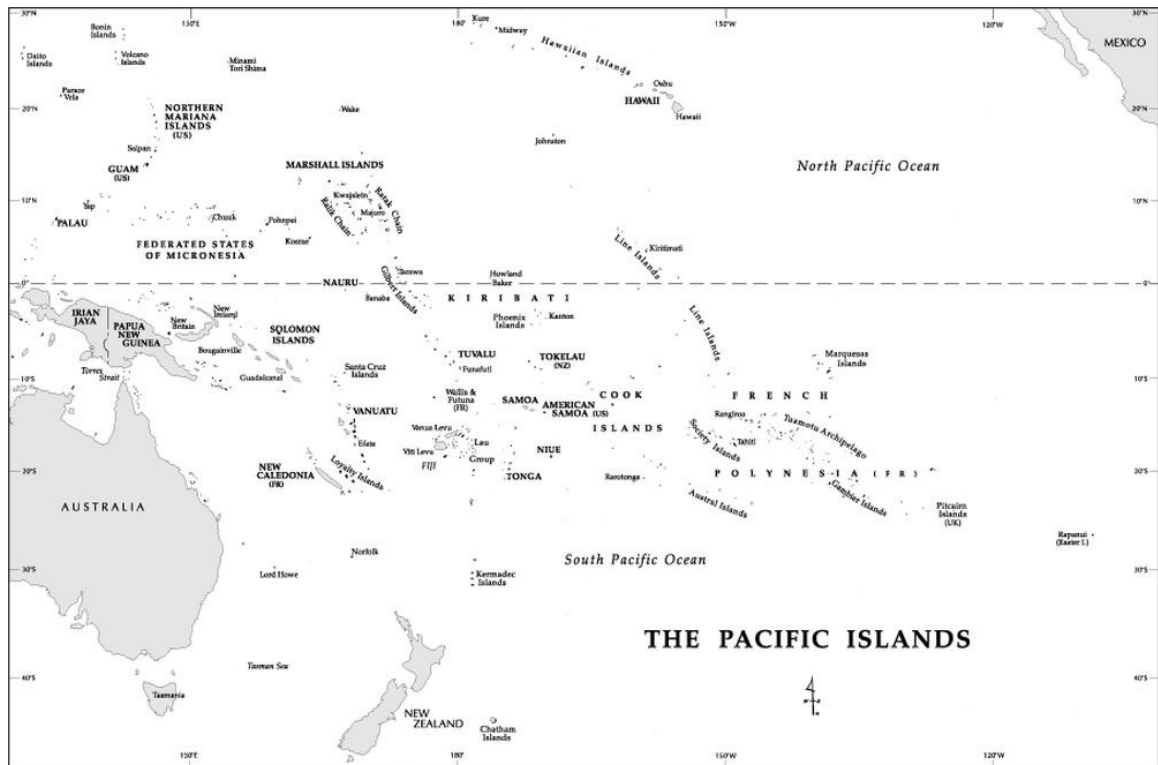
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANU	Australian National University
AusAID	The Australian Agency for International Development
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EPA	Economic Planning Agency of Japan
EU	The European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
IWC	International Whaling Commission
JBIC	Japan Bank for International Cooperation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOCV	Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
LDC	Least Developed Country
MITI	Ministry of International Trade and Industry of Japan
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan
MOF	Ministry of Finance of Japan
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
MOX	Mixed Oxide
NZAID	New Zealand's International Aid & Development Agency
NUS	National University of Sāmoa
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
PALM	Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting
PNG	Papua New Guinea
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
YES	Yazaki EDS Sāmoa

Figure 1.1. Location Map of Japan and Sāmoa



Source of base map: Bruce Jones Design Inc., 2012.

Figure 1.2. Map of Pacific Islands Region



Source: Manoa Mapworks.

CHAPTER 1 TOWARD A NEW GEOGRAPHY OF FOREIGN AID

This is a study of the geography of foreign aid with a particular reference to the flow of bilateral aid from Japan to Sāmoa. Prevailing critical geographies of aid from structural and political economy approaches have greatly contributed to our understanding of aid especially in terms of vertical linkages and the inequalities in the donor-recipient relation. Critical studies commonly view foreign aid as a sophisticated instrument facilitating donors' interests while undermining the economic and social situation of recipients. In their discussions, aid dependency is viewed as unconstructive, not helping recipients achieve self-sustainable development. Aid becomes an unstable and temporary resource that eventually furthers recipient's reliance on external assistance. Much of the received literature debates whether foreign aid is inherently incapable of assisting the development of developing countries. In this dissertation, I attempt to move beyond this scope of analysis and propose an alternative framework that approaches the complexity of foreign aid holistically. It is not my intention simply to discuss the pros and cons of foreign aid, but to present an overall picture of the multidimensional impacts of aid that are fluid, incomplete, ill-defined, and equivocal. It is hoped that such a nuanced view will yield insight into understanding the effectiveness of foreign aid especially at the grassroots level.

My study employs diverse viewpoints and stories about aid constructed at different scales and in different cultural domains, and presents an Aidscape—a complicated social space of aid that is a culturally hybrid, politically interconnected, socially reflexive, constantly changing entity with multiple truths and realities. It focuses on Japan, one of the world's largest bilateral aid donors with a non-Western heritage, and Sāmoa, a recipient of moderate per capita aid, and critical aid observers. The study examines their respective discussions constructed around the aid from Japan to Sāmoa and proposes a holistic approach to argue that foreign aid does more than promote dependency among recipients.

Sāmoa, a least developed country (LDC) with a population of slightly over 187,000 is located in the center of Pacific Islands region. The country annually receives over

US\$50 million of grant aid on average, which accounts for about a quarter of the national revenue. This statistic may lead some people to wonder if Sāmoa will ever become fully self-sufficient without external assistance. In fact, Sāmoa's economy has been repeatedly described by the term MIRAB, the acronym for **m**igration, **r**emittance, **a**id, and **b**ureaucracy, which epitomizes apparently chronic dependency on remittances from overseas relatives and foreign aid for macroeconomic growth and sustainability.

While not entirely dismissing this popular view of aid as abnormal or worrisome, I would like to assert that the “problem” assumed in the dependency viewpoint is *situated knowledge*. It is only one component of a complex reality of the Samoan Aidscape observed from particular points of view based primarily on Western notions and economic norms. In Sāmoa, the impacts of foreign aid are myriad; yet, its multidimensionality is obscured when the analysis is limited to one specific culture, scale, and style. To understand what is really going on in Sāmoa in terms of aid, I propose to shift the view from one point to many.

In this study, I expand the range of viewpoints from predominantly Western theoretical perspectives to include Japanese cultural concepts and Samoan socio-cultural practices. I examine stories about Japan's aid to Sāmoa constructed internationally and locally, and collect different realities at both state and grassroots levels. Through the various narratives, the study aims to explore the unique Samoan Aidscape in which foreign aid is a stable source of economic growth, an effective tool of negotiation, a gift without strings, a work of non-profit-seeking public service, and an opportunity for life change that actually carries forward social and economic development. Ultimately, I argue that aid dependency and development can coexist in aid recipients like Sāmoa.

The final goal of this study is to demonstrate the necessity of a holistic approach in studying cross-cultural and multi-scale activities such as foreign aid. A holistic approach expands the perspectives to embrace culturally distinctive and underrepresented viewpoints while acknowledging the arguments by structuralists and political economists.

In this dissertation, I use the term foreign aid to refer generally to official development assistance (ODA), a form of aid that meets the following three conditions. ODA is financed by a government or governmental agencies, focuses on economic development and social welfare of developing countries, and contains more than 25% of

grant elements in its amount.¹ ODA can be a transfer of financial resources, technical assistance, or commodities. Finally, ODA can take the form of grants or concessional loans through bilateral donors (government to government) or multilateral donors (channeled through international organizations). This study centers on the flow of bilateral grant ODA particularly from Japan to Sāmoa. In this study, with the exception of Chapter 2, the term foreign aid is used instead of ODA, as accepted by a wider audience referring to this international development activity.

1.1. Research Questions

The main question I pose in this dissertation is: **Is foreign aid merely a source of promoting dependency?** To approach this question, I identified five popular lines of reasoning behind the aid dependency view: 1) Aid is a sophisticated tool of control that allows donors to exploit recipients for their interests while deteriorating economic and social conditions of recipient countries; 2) Aid is free income and undermines incentives to build state capacity and accountability; 3) Aid is non-reproductive rent that crowds out industrial development; 4) Aid is a discourse that maintains ideological Western domination over recipients; and 5) Aid is not sustainable because it is susceptible to donors' social, economic, and political situations. These preset ideas about aid are used popularly to construct the argument on why aid promotes dependency. I apply these lines of reasoning to the case of Japan's aid to Sāmoa and examine their relevancy. The questions posed through these views may overly focus on the true/false nature of critical discussions on foreign aid; though here they will be guidelines for my study to explore the complicatedness and betweenness (both true and false) of aid impacts. In addition to these key questions, this dissertation asks a methodological question: **How can a concept of an Aidscape contribute to geographical studies of foreign aid?**

To tackle the questions posed, I employ several overlapping approaches and conceptual frameworks—the postmodern geography concept of multiple realities, my original concept of Aidscape, Donna Haraway's *situated knowledge*, and the humanistic approach of *lifeworld*. These human geography concepts help to navigate this

¹ These are three prerequisites of ODA established by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1961.

dissertation in exploring dissimilar views of aid and forge fragmented truths in the complex social space called the Samoan Aidscape.

1.2. Conceptual Frames

1.2.1. Postmodern Geography and Multiple Realities

...the interpretation of reality is a product of the observer's cultural positioning, whose depiction of it will be in culturally specific language. There is no neutral or value-free observation post. In this sense knowledge is created by different cultural groups for different purposes rather than being empirically discovered, fixed and true for all times and all observers (Howe 2000: 1).

As Howe argues, diversity in perspectives is a reflection of one's distinctive cultural positioning or simply, viewpoint. We observe or experience the same event, but we often talk about what we saw or experienced differently as dissimilar viewpoints were employed in the interpretation. In this way, the reality of foreign aid can be talked about differently according to the references employed to interpret the reality. For instance, the ways in which aid recipients perceive, react to, and live with foreign aid may differ from the ways in which donors and observers interpret the recipient's experiences with aid. Similarly, the ways in which aid observers analyze the purpose of aid may be far distant from the actual intention of aid donors. Such divergence in understanding the reality of aid has not been studied sufficiently and is emphasized in this study.

In doing so, I approach geography with a postmodern conception of multiple realities, which interprets reality as a human construction that displays dissimilar faces according to the observer's viewpoint. This concept acknowledges different descriptions of the reality of Japan's aid to Sāmoa seen through culturally unique viewpoints, namely Japanese and Samoan. It also enables the study to explore unlike realities of aid constructed within the same cultural domain but under different milieu. For this study, I look particularly at how scales (i.e., national and grassroots), localities (i.e., urban and rural), and socioeconomic backgrounds (i.e., career women and factory workers) have affected the ways in which different groups of Samoan people distinctively interpret their experiences with aid and development. The study attempts to illustrate the existing disconnect in social space between local elite and the rest of the civil society, although local elite often represent "local" voices to national as well as international audiences. I

hope these different versions of reality will flesh out some “cultureless” and “scale-less” depictions of foreign aid described in previous discussions.

1.2.2. Aidscape and Thirdspace

Borrowing the neologism Arjun Appadurai created with the use of suffix “scape,” the term Aidscape is my original effort to illustrate a holistic picture of the complex, hybrid, interconnected, and disjunctive space of foreign aid woven by diverse interests, goals, and policies from a range of actors from different cultural domains at different scales with different levels of realities. Like Appadurai, I created the term “Aid-scape” to be a framework for examining complicatedly intertwined space that cannot be analyzed satisfactorily with the popular core-periphery (donor-recipient) dualistic approach.

Appadurai’s “scapes” (1990) are flows of different things including people (ethnoscape), information (mediascape), and global capital (financescape) that are now a reality of every part of the world. Appadurai recognizes these flows have been very intense over recent decades, making “place” a more complex space. Within and between these flows, he also discerns disjuncture, seeing local and global elements quite insistent and enduring, though never truly unitary. This is the viewpoint that encourages me to find gaps in the Aidscape.

I conceptualize Aidscape as “Thirdspace,” according to Edward Soja’s concept (1989, 1996), that is, a spatial realm that displaces binary ways of thinking by encompassing both ways and everything else in-between. In *Postmodern Geographies* (1989), Soja drew some ideas from French Marxist Henri Lefebvre’s *Production of Space* (1991) and theorized space as a socially produced entity or spatiality that consists of both “the physical space of material nature and the mental space of cognition and representation” (Soja 1989: 19). Spatiality, in other words, is a consequence of interrelating and overlapping three spaces of physicality, mentality, and sociality. Drawing on this concept of space and spatiality, Soja developed three modes of spatial thinking, which are Firstspace (perceived space in Lefebvre’s term), Secondspace (conceived space), and Thirdspace (lived space).

Firstspace is the material outcomes of human activity and behavior that are apparent and empirically measurable. Secondspace is constructed in psychological or cognitive

forms that are expressed in written or spoken words, creating representation and ideology. Thirdspace is a space of actual social practices, lived experience of the material world, and realization. It is a space that draws upon both Firstspace and Secondspace and also includes all other real and imagined spaces simultaneously (Soja 1996: 11). For Soja, Thirdspace challenges the conservative modes of thinking that divide the world into binary oppositions. In this conceptualization, Thirdspace is both material and ideological, absolute and relative, subjectivity and objectivity, knowable and unimaginable, structure and agency, everyday life and unending history, and the West and the rest (Soja 1996: 57).

Through employing the concept of Thirdspace, I approach foreign aid as a spatial practice that constitutes overlapping realms of physical, mental, and social spaces—that is Aidscape. The term Aidscape allows this study to examine the space produced by foreign aid as threefold. First, the study looks at physical space produced by foreign aid, which includes the physical landscape and mobility pattern of recipient country altered by social and economic infrastructures built by aid-funded projects. Second, it analyzes the mental space of aid, which is how foreign aid is understood, talked about, written about, and influences people's ways of thinking. Thirdly, it reveals the social space of aid that is produced by living with, using, and practicing foreign aid. The social space of aid also refers to the spaces that are produced as results of a set of dialectical relations between things, as Lefebvre would say (Lefebvre 1991). These relations include the ones between donor and recipient, donor and project, recipient and project, donor and donor, recipient and recipient, project and project, state and civil society, and international organization and donor state that are built at different levels. Each dialectical relation produces a social space that is interconnected and superimposed on all others, constituting hyper-complex social space of foreign aid.

Further, as Soja says, since Thirdspace can be a “creative recombination and extension” built on Firstspace (real material world) and Secondspace (interpreted imaginary world) (Soja 1996: 4), the term Aidscape enables the study to approach both lived and imagined realities of aid concurrently. While foreign aid is actually practiced and experienced by donor and recipient, the observer talks about and imagines the experience of donor and recipient, constructing similar as well as dissimilar versions of

aid reality. These lived and imagined realities of aid are both important components that comprise the space of foreign aid. These realities are, however, not fixed but constantly changing as they reflect time, locality, and positionality of agents. Conceptualizing Aidscape as Thirdspace also recognizes the changing and incoherent nature of space produced by aid. “Thirdspace is a purposefully tentative and flexible term that attempts to capture what is actually a constantly shifting and changing milieu of ideas, events, appearances, and meanings” (Soja 1996: 2).

In this study, the term Samoan Aidscape refers to a constantly shifting, hybrid spatial entity in which both lived and imagined experiences of the aid to Sāmoa are constructed, creating interrelated, overlapping, and disjuncture layers of aid reality. By applying this holistic term Aidscape the study hopes to discover understudied multidimensional realities and impacts of aid that are embedded in the everyday life of Sāmoa.

1.2.3. *Situated Knowledge*

While the term Aidscape enables the study to encompass diverse stories about aid, another core concept employed to frame this dissertation is *situated knowledge*. *Situated knowledge* is a term coined by the feminist scholar Donna Haraway to symbolize the situationality and partiality of knowledge we produce. Haraway (1996:116) contends that “all eyes, including our own organic ones, are active perceptual systems” through which one builds specific ways of seeing, translating, and producing knowledge. Therefore, no knowledge is neutral and bias-free. Knowledge also is not always complete, but a partial perspective linked to the contexts in which it is constructed (Nightingale 2003). *Situated knowledge*, therefore, makes sense to a particular group at a particular point of time and space, that is, a particular situation.

I did not fully understand this concept introduced in my first geography theory seminar until I got into the field and fully realized how fragile and fluid are the process of academic research and its outcomes. The fieldwork process made me acutely aware of the limitation of research in which I, a researcher, could only participate and observe incompletely, and thus only partially understand the domain of information I initially aimed to explore. The field methods employed for this dissertation such as an ethnographic approach and participant observation were limited to providing a

moderately good understanding of the tiny space of reality I shared with the informants at that time of research. My emotions as well as physical and psychological strengths confined the scope and understanding of information. At the same time, I was conscious of the reflexive aspects of the study such as positionality, personality, and timing of interviews that provided highly situational and momentary information. Information obtained in specific circumstances only allowed a discussion of particular portions of the reality of Japan's aid to Sāmoa while many other versions of reality remained undiscovered. This research could have been redesigned with different methodologies to avoid or ease some of the issues faced during my fieldwork. Nevertheless, the partiality and situationality of research processes remain the same as long as human subjects, or what Haraway calls a perceptual system, is involved in a study. After all, it is physically and psychologically impossible for a researcher to be a "all-seeing and all-knowing" (Rose 1997: 305). Consequently, Haraway's *situated knowledge* emerged as the most effective framework to make theoretical sense of my field experience and the disjuncture of information gathered for this study. In other words, my field experiences provided the empirical evidence, which supports the validity of Haraway's argument and the applicability of her concept to my study.

The concept of *situated knowledge* acknowledges that my research findings and the stories about foreign aid explored are partial, but still valid. At the same time, since the notion of partial reality implies the idea that other portions of reality exist, this concept can support the postmodern perception of multiple realities also employed in this study. It explains further that multiple realities result not only from seeing through different cultural lenses as explained in the previous section, but also from our limited capacity to observe wholly. With this concept, I frame this dissertation as a collection of fragmented narratives and partial realities about Japan's aid to Sāmoa. Some narratives may make sense only to Japanese or Samoans who share the same or similar perceptual systems while other stories are widely accepted by aid observers in academia and journalism. The concept of *situated knowledge* helps the study to shed light on realities of foreign aid that are not otherwise taken into consideration unless the privilege of partial perspective is acknowledged.

1.2.4. Humanistic Approach and *Lifeworld*

The term *lifeworld* originates from the German philosopher Edmund Husserl's concept *lebenswelt*, which refers to "immediate experiences, activities, and contacts that make up the world of an individual or corporate life" (Oxford Dictionary 2005).

Lifeworld is the horizon of everyday doings—i.e., watching, listening, touching, feeling, smelling, eating, moving, and so forth—through which all things come to have functions and meanings. It is a dynamic viewpoint in which we live and the world is lived.

One's *lifeworld* may differ from that of others even though they all share the same physical environment. Humans and cats, for instance, share the same physical space, but they have different *lifeworlds* as some items in the cohabited space like window sills or space underneath of chairs have distinctive significances for both groups (Agre and Horswill 1997). Similarly, the *lifeworld* of adults is different from that of children. The two kinds of *lifeworld*, however, may overlap in some ways while both *lifeworlds* constantly change in the course of aging.

In Geography, the concept of *lifeworld* became a popular frame in the 1970s and 1980s for understanding places and environments through paying attention to the role of human agency. It was part of the humanist turn in the discipline, opposing the positivist understanding of "spatial science" that analytically separates subjects and objects, thoughts and actions, and people and environment. For human geographers such as Anne Buttimer, the employment of *lifeworld* as an analytical framework was an attempt to "bring our ways of knowing into closer harmony with our ways of being in the world" (Buttimer 1976: 277).

Lifeworld provides a way of understanding that man is "anchored in a physical and social world, which influences the meanings and the intentionality of his consciousness" (Buttimer 1976: 280). While the *lifeworld* was an accepted phenomenological concept, geographers emphasized the interrelation between humans and the environment where both humans and environments play active roles—in shaping human experiences and meanings. In other words, meanings and values can change as one's surroundings change.

The human geographic concept of *lifeworld* also directs attention to the importance of the mundane experiences of everyday life (Cosgrove 2000: 499; Ley 1977).

According to Buttimer, the *lifeworld* is “the culturally defined spatio-temporal setting or horizon of everyday life” in which “preconsciously given aspects of behavior and perception reside” (Buttimer 1976: 277). Within this taken-for-granted world or *lifeworld* personal meanings of all things are embedded and attributed to external phenomena and environment. Studying the *lifeworld* of individuals, therefore, elucidates lived experiences, which can be a richer source of insight than critical knowledge produced by outsiders (Buttimer 1982: 47).

In this dissertation, the concept of *lifeworld* helps explore the meanings of foreign aid and development to the recipients through understanding their direct experiences in everyday life. The *lifeworld* approach furthers the previous studies of foreign aid with structuralist approaches that take little account of the recipient agency particularly at grassroots level. Understanding the recipients’ *lifeworld* of aid may differ significantly from the understandings of outsiders—aid donors and observers—about recipients’ perceptions of and reactions to aid.

Furthermore, the concept of *lifeworld* encourages the study of different meanings of aid and development that may exist among the citizens of a recipient country with distinctive backgrounds. The *lifeworlds* of different groups of Samoans are examined to reveal how their unlike experiences in everyday life have differently shaped their respective meanings of aid, development, and life goals. As stated above under the section on Postmodern Geography, understanding such differences is important, given that local elites often speak for all Samoans including less powerful social groups.

Although this study focuses on the human agency of the recipient community in the analysis of aid impacts, it does not intend to overly centralize human experiences. Structural constraints and socio-cultural obligations that influence the consciousness and actions of recipients especially in relation to development are also considered. As Pickles argues, individual *lifeworlds* are never entirely disconnected from the social, political, and economic structures in which people live (Pickles 1987).

With these four conceptual frameworks—Postmodern Geography of multiple realities, Aidscape, *situated knowledge*, and *lifeworld*, this dissertation tackles issues related to the critical geographies of foreign aid, development and dependency, Japan’s

history and motives of aid, and multidimensional impacts of aid on the Samoan landscape.

1.3. Critical Geographies of Foreign Aid

1.3.1. The Construction of the Need of Aid

In the world of capitalism, poverty is usually characterized in material terms such as “lacking what the rich could have in terms of money and possessions” (Rahnema 1992: 158). Yet, being poor did not necessarily mean “underdeveloped” until the notion of development and underdevelopment was invented (Shrestha 1995). Poverty became a synonym of underdevelopment when the notion of development and underdevelopment was first invented and implanted in people’s minds in an Inaugural Address given by President Harry Truman on January 20, 1949. In this speech, Truman addressed economically less advanced parts of the world as “underdeveloped areas,” defining their poverty-stricken, miserable living condition as a result of their “primitive” and stagnant economy. Through this speech two million of the world’s people became the subjects of underdevelopment (Esteva 1992: 7).

Truman proposed to assist the development of these areas through applying modern science, technical knowledge, and an economic system that brought the Western material progress. He declared that:

For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people....I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life (Harry S. Truman Library & Museum 2010).

The aid critic William Easterly refers to this moment as the birth of foreign aid with “the rationale in terms of poverty, and the optimism that foreign aid programs can make a big difference” (Easterly 2002: 226). Since then, developed countries have gained the legitimacy of their intervention in solving the “problem”— the development of the underdeveloped (Lee 2000b: 865).

Development critics like Arturo Escobar see development as a discourse through which underdevelopment is imagined and the needs for development are constructed (Escobar 1995b: 212-213). If development is the discourse that constructs the needs of “Others,” I argue one such constructed need is foreign aid. As proved by the histories of

Western countries that progressed without foreign aid, aid is not a prerequisite to become developed (Bauer 1976: 95; Bauer and Yamey 1982: 57). Nevertheless, aid has become a requisite for the development of developing countries especially after the end of WWII. By the 1950s, foreign aid, in fact, was already one of the four major ingredients of economic development strategies aside from capital accumulation, industrialization, and development plans (Escobar 1995a: 74).

While a range of geopolitical, economic, and humanitarian implications can be discussed in the construction of need of aid, I emphasize a particular line of thought that urged Euro-American leaders to initiate a large-scale of foreign aid. The idea that poverty turns a country or people toward communism prevailed during and after WWII; thus, the removal of poverty was indispensable to inhibit the influence of communist forces. Since poverty was seen through a capitalist viewpoint and defined as the lack of development or material progress, the development of materially poor areas became the foremost mission of non-communist leaders. It was believed that this mission would be achieved only through deploying aid.

The inevitability of foreign aid was rationalized by modernization thinkers of that time who advocated the linear path of material progress as a universally ideal model of development. One of the most influential figures in this school was the American economic historian Walt W. Rostow. In his famous book entitled *Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960), Rostow theorized the process of development as a sequence of five stages of economic growth accelerated through the accumulation of capital and productive investment. According to his analysis, only Euro-American countries and Japan have reached the final stage of high mass-consumption as a modern industrialized state. Traditional societies, on the other hand, are stagnating at the first stage of progress due to the inaccessibility of modern science and technologies, and people's frame of mind that placed a ceiling on production possibilities (Rostow 1960: 4). For traditional societies to enter the next stages of self-sustaining growth, Rostow argues that a considerable alteration is required in the social structure and political system. Such substantial change will not occur endogenously, but may happen through external intrusion by more advanced societies that shakes a well-established traditional society fundamentally (Rostow 1960: 17). For this reason, he underlines the

undeniable need of foreign aid and Western intervention in the development of materially poor areas. The credibility of this theory was supported by the Marshall Plan of 1948, which was considered a great success in rebuilding the war-devastated economy of Western Europe countries.² Rosenstein-Rodan had similar line of thought, arguing that the need of developing countries for the development was a “big push” or substantial help from advanced countries (Rosenstein-Rodan 1943).

Although later criticized for their ethnocentric assumptions, these development theories and the notion of “take-off” or “big push” through foreign aid were leading arguments among conventional development thinkers in the 1960s (Easterly 2010: 1097; Peet and Hartwick 1999: 83). In fact, Rostow was one of the most influential figures in shaping the U.S. aid policy during the Cold War period. In his book *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid* (2001), Pearce discussed the ways in which Rostow rhetorically promoted his theory of modernization to the American leaders, calling their attention to the inevitability of providing large-scale aid to the economic development of developing countries in order to combat the spread of Soviet’s communism. One of those leaders was President John F. Kennedy who, by drawing key ideas from Rostow’s theory, convincingly and tactically answered the questions about foreign aid, making himself a distinguished leader (Pearce 2001: 29).

President Truman proclaimed the commitment of developed countries to help the underprivileged for humanitarian reasons, but President Kennedy actually put Rostow’s theory in action by diffusing Western innovation and capitalism to developing countries in the name of development. In his Inaugural Address of 1961, Kennedy pledged an indefinite term of commitment to support materially poor areas, emphasizing that proper allocation of foreign aid could cast off poverty. Kennedy established the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) as well as the Peace Corps to carry on the mission at both international and grassroots levels (USAID 2011). The scope of foreign aid was

² The Marshall Plan of 1948 is commonly referred to as the origin of large-scale aid. It was initiated by U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall to help rebuild the economies of devastated Western Europe after WWII in order to combat the spread of communism. Through this program the U.S. provided US\$19 million (Lee 2000a: 17; Peet and Hartwick 1999: 41). Rostow was also involved in deliberations of this Plan (Corbridge 2004: 267).

expanded in this way but the universal applicability of Rostow's theory and the indispensability of aid for development remained questionable (Mikesell 2007: 38).³

Accordingly, the need of foreign aid, at least in the case of the U.S. aid, was constructed initially as a means of pursuing national geopolitical interests, coinciding with donors' humanitarian ideals (Friedman 1958: 501). European aid donors including Britain and France did not have such a clear rationale as the U.S. in providing aid since the main objective of their foreign aid was to maintain close political and economic ties to former colonies for the sake of mutual interests (Mikesell 2007: 4-5). Either way, foreign aid was not born as a genuine act of humanitarianism.

1.3.2. Critics of Aid: Bauer, Easterly, and Bureaucracy

While some advocate that foreign aid is necessary in the process of development, others oppose this view, claiming the fundamental ineffectiveness of foreign aid in helping advance developing countries. Since the 1960s, Peter Bauer, a development economist and well-known aid critic, relentlessly argued against the "take-off" or "big-push" models which support aid as a way to stimulate the economy of developing countries (Bauer 1966, 1975, 1976; Bauer and Yamey 1982). Bauer asserts that economic achievement produces assets and money rather than assets and money producing economic achievement. Therefore, foreign aid alone is not capable of stimulating the economy (Bauer and Yamey 1982: 58). Bauer argues that people's economic attitudes, social institutions, and political arrangements are the required criteria for material progress, not so much available natural resources and market opportunities. A low level of material achievement evident in developing countries is a sign of weak determinants of development. To strengthen the required determinants, foreign aid is not an effective means because it focuses more on the symptoms of development such as economic growth and material progress rather than determinants. Therefore, even if aid improves existing economic conditions, it cannot promote long-term development unless recipient countries built up those societal determinants (Bauer 1976: 100-101). "If a

³ In this regard, Kennedy's aid programs including the Alliance for Progress that aimed to help economic development of Latin America appeared as a site for Rostow to test the applicability of his modernization theory (Pearce 2001).

country, or rather a people, cannot readily develop without external gifts, it is unlikely to develop with them” (Bauer 1976: 100).

Rather, Bauer regards foreign aid more as a potential source of harm than a source of benefit, pointing out especially the fungibility of aid that leads to misspent funds and corruption. Because aid, especially bilateral aid, is what Bauer calls a “government-to-government subsidy,” recipient governments have the tendency to substitute aid for national revenue to spend on their own interests and objectives rather than developmental activities suggested by donors. He looked at cases from Asia and Africa where aid was misallocated to the projects that resulted in diverting the recipients’ limited human and natural resources away from productive use and impoverished their citizens (Bauer and Yamey 1982: 61-62). Bauer sees such fungibility or the substitutability of capital as the most critical and counterproductive aspect of aid, needlessly increasing the power of recipient governments to eventually erode civil society (Bauer 1966, 1976).

Following Bauer’s tradition, William Easterly, another prominent aid opponent, criticized the credibility of “take-off” and “big push” models for several reasons (Easterly 2001, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2009). Although it has declined, the practice of tied aid has helped repatriate more benefit to donor countries through their own firms and contractors undertaking aid-funded projects. To enhance their benefit, aid donors design aid projects in such way that they can pursue their own political, military, and economic agendas through selling weapons and food, or intervening in international conflicts (Easterly 2009).⁴ At the receiving end, Easterly reported that many recipient government officials spend foreign aid—particularly the loan that comes in the form of cash—on personal matters. Such misappropriated loans are eventually taxed to the citizen of borrowing country for repayment. Like donor countries, recipient governments often spend aid money on their prioritized projects without considering the compliance with the local need for development.⁵ They also tend to allocate aid to projects from which their families and political supporters can best reap benefit (Shleifer 2009: 384).

⁴ A good example is the U.S. aid, a large portion of which is spent on military support for Israel (Shleifer 2009: 382).

⁵ According to the economist Lant Pritchett, for instance, as little as 8% of the officially measured need of machinery and equipment in Africa during the last 30 years, was transferred into actual machinery and equipment (cited in Easterly 2001: 94).

In addition to corruption practiced at both donor and recipient government levels, some funds may be diverted to other agencies involved—e.g., project contractors from donor side, regional offices, consultants of recipient country—before aid reaches actual recipients. As it passes through these stages, the budget intended for the original purpose becomes smaller.⁶ On top of all these obstacles, a designated recipient must be accountable for carrying out the project as planned. Unfortunately, it is not always a case even at grassroots level—e.g., teachers with aid-financed equipment stay at home while farmers who are supposed to use provided fertilizer retain old techniques (Shleifer 2009: 384). Consequently, in some cases only a tiny portion of aid provided has reached the intended recipients and actually borne fruit. For Easterly, therefore, it is not surprising that world poverty has yet to be reduced dramatically despite over US\$4.6 trillion worth of aid disbursed to developing countries for the poverty reduction since the 1960s (Easterly and Williamson 2011: 1930).

Both Bauer and Easterly attribute the root cause of failed aid to the bureaucracy-oriented nature of system of foreign aid that allows both donor and recipient governments to manipulate the outcomes. According to Easterly, bureaucracy works best “where there is high feedback from beneficiaries, high incentives for bureaucracy to respond to such feedback, easily observable outcomes, high probability that bureaucracies’ effort will translate into favorable outcomes, and competitive pressure from other bureaucracies and agencies” (Easterly 2002: 226). Regrettably, the bureaucracy of foreign aid is seldom successful because designated aid beneficiaries of recipient countries are often unable to give critical feedback that makes aid agencies fully responsible for unfavorable outcomes. In other words, unlike private firms, bureaucracies do not suffer from the adverse consequences of their actions (Easterly 2002: 244). Therefore, foreign aid allows bureaucracies to continue to pursue policies that even exacerbate poverty (Bauer and Yamey 1982: 60). For this point, Easterly criticizes Rostow’s theory which is indifferent to the accountability of either aid donor or recipient governments for the “take-off” aid (Easterly 2002: 223, 2010: 1097).

⁶ Reinikka and Svensson’s study (2004) in Uganda reported that only 13% of aid budgeted to school projects actually reached designated recipients (cited in Shleifer 2009: 384).

For Bauer and Easterly, bilateral aid is neither necessary nor sufficient for development, but can be harmful to the recipient society. It brings about cultures that pamper the wants of both donor and recipient governments resulting in governmental unaccountability for corruption, exploitation, and inhospitable environments that not only block opportunities for development, but also aggravate the living condition of the recipient society. Foreign aid, therefore, should cease.

1.3.3. Aid and Dependency Theory

While some aid critics including Bauer and Easterly criticize the internal system of aid, others look at the global system in which foreign aid is practiced, for external causes of aid ineffectiveness. Those critics commonly take a neo-Marxist approach, identifying aid as a sophisticated apparatus of control that ties recipients more closely to the world capitalist system in which donors can pursue and promote their own interests in recipient countries. This school of aid critics can be represented best by Teresa Hayter, who calls foreign aid a “new form of imperialism.”

In her book entitled *Aid as Imperialism* (1970), Hayter argues that the conditionality of aid promotes the subordination of recipients by rendering them subservient to the interests of donors and obligated to follow “international” principles and standards defined by donors (Hayter 1970: 151-152). Such an imperialist attitude is particularly evident in the U.S. aid, as President Kennedy clearly stated in 1961, “foreign aid is a method by which the U. S. maintains a position of influence and control around the world” (Hayter 1970: 5). Hayter contends that these imperialist donors are stunting and distorting the development of developing countries rather than helping them. As a result of receiving such neocolonial aid, recipient countries experience episodically aggravated economic conditions, become more vulnerable to manipulation and dependent further on aid. Since the 1970s, this viewpoint became popular among people who dissent against the need of aid (Gibson 1994; Hayter and Watson 1985; Ratuva 1994; Slatter 1994; Weissman 1974).

Other groups of aid critics, whom Holdar (1993: 458) refers as the realist school, look particularly at the way in which donors strategically use aid to enhance and advance their national economic, diplomatic, and geopolitical interests in the international arena

(Grant and Nijman 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Howard 2005; Islam 1991; Power 2003; Ratuva 1994; Tarte 1998a, 2002; Yanagihara and Emig 1991). David Arase (1996a), who calls Japan's aid "buying power," examines the way the Japanese government tactically uses aid projects to expand the country's trade and markets into recipient countries, criticizing it for repatriating far more profits to Japan than what the country disburses as aid. Greg Fry (1997) criticizes the Australian government for using aid manipulatively in order to dump unwanted refugees from Afghanistan onto their aid recipients in the Pacific including Nauru, calling the aid project the "Pacific Solution." In these discussions, aid is defined typically as a means of maintaining, if not strengthening, the economic and political superiority of donors in the world order while exacerbating the inequalities in power relations between donors and recipients. Consequently, aid recipients come to face more challenges in economic development, which urges them to seek more support from aid donors.

Accordingly, both schools view foreign aid as a source of furthering dependency of recipients rather than stimulating economic development. Although the realist critics are not necessarily neo-Marxist theorists, the underlying ideas of both schools are rooted in structuralist theories such as the dependency theory that looks at structural constraints on the development of developing countries. Dependency theory, also known as the theory of underdevelopment, emerged in the 1960s in Latin America as a critical response of structuralist theorists to the modernization school's arguments on development that prevailed at that time. Modernization theorists including Rostow view development as a universal linear path from a traditional state to modern society, arguing that the developmental path that brought the West material progress can be diffused to other parts of the world (Blaut 1993: 53). Structuralists opposed such a view, counter-arguing that development is not a natural process, but a result of capitalist practices that relied on the exploitation of others to extract surplus.

Neo-Marxists including economist Andre Gunder Frank and sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein look at critical spatial divisions constructed by the global spread of capitalism, examining how the core (industrialized countries) has expanded at the expense of the periphery (former colonies/raw material providing areas) through unequal terms of trade and exchange (Isbister 1998: 44-51; Wallerstein 1979: 7). According to

their viewpoint, Europe's development was achieved by a combination of "brutal conquest, colonial control, and the stripping of non-Western societies of their peoples, resources, and surpluses" (Peet and Hartwick 1999: 107). They predict that development is impossible at the periphery as long as a developing country is exposed to the dialectical relations governed by the rule of capitalism. Peripheral countries, instead, become more dependent economically on the core countries as a result of uneven exchanges. This line of thought is the popular reference with which dependency theorists attribute world poverty to the super-exploitation by the monopoly capitalism of developed countries. Many dependency theorists argue that development of a peripheral country becomes possible only by detaching itself from the world imperialistic-capitalist system (Frank 1967: 277). Otherwise, the periphery will remain in a vicious cycle of dependency and poverty. From this standpoint, most development theorists see dependency and underdevelopment as synonymous, although it is not necessarily true (Peet and Hartwick 1999: 111).

In the viewpoint of dependency theorists, foreign aid represents a clever device of industrialists that drives and binds recipient countries inevitably into the core-periphery relation to be controlled by aid donors. Integrating the agenda of a neoliberal economy into the aid regime, for instance, multilateral aid donors like the World Bank can push developing countries to open their infant economies to the global market where heated competition and exploitation awaits them (Slatter 1994). As a designed result, aid recipient countries at the periphery become economically vulnerable and hence more dependent on donors for assistance. For this reason, dependency theorist critics see aid as a source of furthering dependency.

The emergence of dependency theory contributed significantly to geography and other disciplines in the social sciences by opening up a new way of analyzing the experiences of developing countries undergoing capitalist development (Peet and Hartwick 1999: 122). Dependency theory, however, has in turn been criticized for its ethnocentric views that neglect the possibility that capitalism could be a constructive source for development also at the periphery. In fact, development is possible at the periphery without detachment from the capitalist system as proven by the economic success of Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea. In this regard, some dependency

theorists fail to grasp the actual situation of non-Western countries because they derived their ideas primarily from a Western rationality combining scientific knowledge, capitalist ideology, and Western histories of development. Consequently, they rule out options for alternative styles of development that might endogenously emerge from distinct social, cultural, political, and historical conditions, with or without foreign aid.

Moreover, as they focus on structural constraints, dependency theorists tend to ignore the role of human agency, overlooking the responses of developing countries to external forces in the process of development. Aid critics in this school, therefore, often blind themselves to the possibility that aid recipients also utilize foreign aid to pursue their own interests. This is a critical lack in this school, because understanding the ways that recipients react to the given sources is as important as understanding the ways that imperialists and realists manipulate aid. From this standpoint, Bertram and Watters developed MIRAB, an economic model unique to the Pacific Island countries, which looks at the ways in which societies react to the constant flow of foreign aid and continued migration.

1.3.4. MIRAB Model

In the mid 1980s, the New Zealand economist Geoffrey Bertram and the geographer Raymond Watters developed the MIRAB model to describe the emerging pattern of economy based on **m**igration, **r**emittance, **a**id, and **b**ureaucracy (whereby the acronym MIRAB was coined) unique to some Pacific Island states (Bertram 1999; Bertram and Watters 1984, 1985, 1986). The Pacific is the region that receives some of the world's highest per capita aid while the remittances from overseas make a large portion of GNI of many states.⁷ Originally, MIRAB was created as a way to challenge the prevailing structuralist perceptions that identify remittances and foreign aid as unconstructive sources and characterize Pacific economies as dependent, vulnerable, and unpromising (Connell 1980, 1987; Gibson 1994; Shankman 1976; Ward 1989). Bertram and Watters attempted to describe the stability of aid and remittance based economies and explain

⁷ According to OECD statistics of 2010, the Pacific region receives US\$221 per capita aid, which is almost ten times higher than the per capita aid of US\$24, the average of all recipients. It is followed by Africa with US\$47 per capita aid, Europe with US\$37, Latin America with US\$19, and Asia with US\$10.

why the small island states exhibit relatively higher standards of living than that predicted by modernization as well as dependency theories.

According to Bertram and Watters, the MIRAB economy began to form in the 1950s to 1960s as a transition from the former colonial export economies (Bertram and Watters 1986: 47). During this transitional period, geographers and anthropologists working in the Pacific Islands conducted studies to examine how Island farmers were responding to new opportunities including wage employment in the expanded bureaucracy owing to an increase in British aid (Kiribati), expanded income sources through French aid with the rise of tourism (the Society Islands), and outmigration to urban Suva (Fiji) (Brookfield 1977; Finney 1965; Watters and Banibati 1984). In the case of Sāmoa, a significant change in terms of wage employment opportunities occurred during the last stage of colonial administration, opening up the door to migration to New Zealand together with the expansion of government employment funded by aid (Bertram and Watters 1986: 50). In this way, a growing tendency evident in these former colonial and agrarian societies, was to shift from productive activity to “fast money” through aid and migration (Bertram and Watters 1986: 46).

In their initial study, Bertram and Watters looked at the cases in Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Kiribati, and Tuvalu, and examined how these societies sustained their economies through the remittances from relatives who migrated overseas and the constant inflow of foreign aid that supported a large bureaucracy (Bertram and Watters 1984, 1985). Later, this MIRAB model came to be applied to a wider range of islands within and outside the Pacific including Sāmoa.⁸

In the MIRAB societies, Bertram and Watters saw these two flows of resources—migration and aid—as the locomotives harnessing their unique economies. Their constructive view on the flow of migration was influenced by those studies that identify migration as the profitable allocation of labor, denying the traditional view that regards outmigration as an upfront developmental loss to the community of origin. A study by George Marcus looked at the evolving Tongan diaspora, examining how Tongans utilize

⁸ Aside from the countries mentioned above, Easter Island, French Polynesia, Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, and Tonga are also classified as MIRAB economies. Melanesian states, especially Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, are often excluded from the discussion of MIRAB mainly due to their limited access to overseas migration (Hayes 1993).

their given offshore as well as onshore opportunities to expand their scope of activities in seeking options (Marcus 1981: 62). This study posed a question on the applicability of the concept of nation-state in analyzing migration movement in peripheral areas where people have distinctive views on geography. For Tongans, the national border is not necessarily a boundary that limits or shapes their movements when searching for opportunities. Their determinant factor is family, by which they decide to migrate and with whom they are equipped to be mobile. With help of internationally spread family networks, Tongans move across national boundaries and look for better opportunities for the sake of family. Thus, the family serves as the key unit of analysis when studying the movements of Tongans as well as other people from family-oriented societies.

Inspired by this study, Bertram and Watters looked at movement in the MIRAB society where family rather than individual takes the crucial role in decision-making. They identified the islanders' outmigration as a household strategy to allocate available labor units rationally for collective goals. The migrated Islanders maintained strong emotional ties to family back home through sending remittances and reciprocal visits, despite physical distance. Such family ties helped establish the globally extended network, through which Pacific Islanders can secure the flow of overseas remittances and outmigration to internationalize their economic activities (Bertram 2006: 2; Bertram and Watters 1985: 501). Bertram and Watters call this practice "transnational corporation of kin," referring to the similar ways in which transnational corporations allocate resources and transfer incomes within their network units (Bertram and Watters 1985: 497). Consequently, outmigration in the MIRAB society is not a loss to the host society as seen traditionally, but is the society's evolved response to seizing niches of opportunity in the global capitalist system.

Another flow of MIRAB is the nexus of aid and bureaucracy. As in Rostow's theory, modernization theorists suggest the use of foreign aid as supplementary investments and savings for recipients to "take-off." In the case of MIRAB economies, aid does not function as a source of investment, but works as a direct supplement to local incomes and consumption. According to Bertram and Watters, aid supplies more than half of the budget of governments in those Island societies, financing 40 to 100% of the salary of public sector servants (Bertram and Watters 1985: 499). Given the fact that government

is the dominant employer on the Islands, aid then provides income to a large number of households.⁹ In other words, because of the aid flow, a MIRAB society can afford to have a disproportionately large government sector to create much needed wage employment for local residents to sustain their daily life. Since the opportunity to earn cash is already provided by government employment as well as outmigration, local residents are unmotivated to expand local production activities (Bertram and Watters 1985: 512). In this context, aid cannot function as a source of productive investment.

Commonly, such economic systems as MIRAB based on migration, remittance and aid are regarded as transitional and unsustainable largely because the flow of both remittance and aid are considered susceptible to providers' economic, social, political, and emotional conditions. Many studies predicted the decline in both aid and remittance to the MIRAB societies for various reasons including economic recession in donor countries or a decrease in the willingness of migrants to remit (Ahlburg 1991; Campbell 1992; Connell 1987, 1990, 1991; James 1991; Shankman 1976, 1993). To oppose such a view, Bertram and Watters argue that the MIRAB economy is a durable and persistent model for a considerable period of time. They consider MIRAB as a self-reproductive system through the steady inflow of remittances and grant aid. In their view, the flow of remittances is protected since the multinational corporation-like kin network maintains the strong tie between migrants and families back home. Likewise, they see the flow of aid as being secured for a long term, given the geopolitical significance of those Island nations as well as the sense of obligation the donors established toward the former colonies (Bertram and Watters 1985: 513). Accordingly, MIRAB is a sustainable economic model at least for the Island nations studied by Bertram and Watters.

The MIRAB model became a credible explanation to the question posed by economists regarding the paradoxical and incomprehensible situation of Island economies that prevailed in the 1980s. Such situation, often called the Pacific Paradox, refers to poor economic performances in spite of the high level of aid and public investments (Bertram 1999: 106). MIRAB also became a popular term among scholars

⁹ Public sector employment accounts for 90% of total wage employment in Tokelau, 85% in Niue, and 80% in Kiribati while Cook Islands and Tuvalu have lower ratios of 52% and 60% (Bertram and Watters 1985: 500). Bertram and Watters consider the large public sector a result of the aid objectives set by the donors or former colonizers who prioritized the upgrading of health, education, and communication in order to improve living standards (Bertram and Watters 1985: 508).

who study the movements of Pacific Islanders, arguing both pros and cons of this model as well as its unique economic structure (Ahlburg and Brown 1997; Ahlburg and Song 2006; Brown 1997, 1998; Brown and Connell 2004; Connell 1980, 1990, 1991, 2006; Evans 1999; Fepulea'i 2005; Gershon 2007; Hayes 1991a, 1993; Hooper 1993; James 1991; Liki 2009; Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004; Macpherson 1985, 1992, 1994; Macpherson, et al. 2000; Munro 1990; Poirine 1998, 2006; Shankman 1976, 1993; Va'a 2001). Fewer studies looked at the role of aid and bureaucracy in the MIRAB economy, possibly because studying the impact of aid is too broad.¹⁰

Since its introduction, MIRAB has been criticized for various reasons. Munro contested the use of the term “transnational corporation of kin,” arguing that multinational corporations are grounded in economic individualism and capital accumulation while the geographically extended kin groups are more concerned with reciprocity and common goals, governed by quite different rules of economic objectives (Munro 1990: 65). Hooper pointed out that the MIRAB argument lacks a discussion on the unfavorable effects foreign aid has brought to village economies (Hooper 1993). Others just do not appreciate this kind of economic model for development, pointing out that remittance and aid should not be counted toward GDP, a common index of economic well-being, because they are not earned by Island residents (Pollard 1995: 12).

A constant and major critique comes from the modernization theorists with growth-oriented viewpoints who cannot see the sustainability of the MIRAB model. They emphasize the fragility of depending on migration, remittance, and aid as central economic sources (Bertram 1999: 115). While the sustainability of a MIRAB economy is still debated, more recent studies found evidence to support the argument of Bertram and Watters (Baldacchino and Bertram 2009; Baldacchino 2006; Bertram and Poirine 2007; Fraenkel 2006; Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004, 2009; Poirine 2006). In her study of Samoan movements, for example, Lilomaiava-Doktor (2004) found the firm commitment of the migrated Samoans to remit motivated by socio-cultural reasons rather than economic or altruistic purposes that are prone to decline over time. In another example, Poirine

¹⁰ Some researchers attribute this partly to the lack of available and reliable data related to the aid to the Pacific Islands (Fraenkel 2006: 18-19; Hughes 2003: 4; Toatu 2002: 31-32)

asserts that the flow of foreign aid to the Pacific is stable, emphasizing the geostrategic value of Island states for the donors even after the Cold War (Poirine 1998: 88-89).

A fundamental difference between the MIRAB model and other development theories lies in the definition of dependency. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, Bertram and Watters developed this model as a challenge to the structuralist argument that defines the remittance and aid-based economy as dependent and hence unsustainable. Bertram and Watters do recognize the dependent nature of the MIRAB model; nevertheless, they do not view dependency as a mechanism of furthering poverty and underdevelopment, as seen in Latin America. They, on the other hand, see the overt dependence on large countries as a privilege given to Pacific Island states through the process of decolonization in order for them to maintain the status quo. In other words, MIRAB is an outcome of the activities that small nations lacking in economic resources had undertaken to seize all available opportunities for moving forward. Bertram in particular defines dependency in a positive light by taking the stance that as long as the economic model is durable and sustainable, it does not matter whether or not the economy is self-reliant because the Western model of independent economy is not always the best for every developing country (Bertram 1993: 257). If MIRAB societies cannot become self-reliant without sacrificing current living standards, then, depending on external assistance should be considered a feasible way of development for Pacific Island states (Bertram and Watters 1985: 508).

The creation of the MIRAB model is a significant contribution to understanding the uniqueness of Pacific Island economies and their probable sustainability. Ironically, this model at the same time highlights the incapacity of Pacific Island states to self-sustain their economies without depending on external resources (Hayes 1991b: 1; Pirie 1995: 7). Moreover, MIRAB became a term to symbolize underdevelopment of Pacific Islands when most development theorists defined dependency as a synonym for underdevelopment, believing dependency precludes the emergence of autonomous capitalist development (Peet and Hartwick 1999: 111). Today, the term MIRAB seems to be used more frequently to underline the susceptibility and gloomy future of Pacific economies rather than the durability of the dependent economy.

Dependency theorists argue that, due to the unequal relations positioned by the world economic systems, aid recipient countries will experience episodically aggravated economic and social conditions that simply make them more dependent on aid. To verify the applicability of this view to MIRAB societies such as Samoa, I will next look closely at five popular lines of reasoning behind the assumption that aid furthers the dependency of recipients on aid.

1.3.5. Reasoning #1: Aid as Donor's Tool of Exploitation

The first popular reasoning about aid to promote dependency is in the light of dependency theory. This school of interpretation, as discussed in the section above, is associated with two streams of thoughts claimed 1) by the neo-Marxist school that identifies aid as a sophisticated instrument through which imperialist donors promote their agendas to recipient countries, and 2) by the realist school who sees aid as a strategic tool by which donors obtain what they want from recipients. Both schools see aid as a donors' tool that lures recipients into the exploitative world system in which aid donors reap benefits at expense of recipient countries. According to their analysis, donors' specific interests are included in the conditionality of aid whereby recipients are required to follow certain guidelines in order to be an eligible aid receiver (Teaiwa 2002: 1). Therefore, aid is seen as a destructive force that undermines the ability and opportunity of recipients to develop while worsening their economic and social conditions. As a result, recipients will further depend on donors for external assistance instead of achieving economic independence. In short, aid promotes dependency due to the world system that allows donors to exploit recipients. As common in the structuralist approach, this line of reasoning looks primarily at structural constraints inherited in the system of foreign aid while portraying recipients as passive victims who find no way of detaching themselves from the exploitative aid.

The MIRAB societies in the Pacific are not an exception to this reasoning. In the case of Japan's aid, according to Teaiwa, the donor gives aid only where it gets access to tuna fishing and withdraws aid where it gets nothing in return (Teaiwa 2002: 11). Due to such manipulative aid, local residents are experiencing declining living standards and increasing poverty (Gibson 1994: 148). The MIRAB governments, on the other hand,

find it difficult to withdraw themselves from receiving such aid because they have grown used to relying heavily on aid for running the country (Ratuva 1994: 236). The only means they usually find is to seek more aid in order to fix the problem currently faced. After all, they are in a vicious cycle of aid dependency.

1.3.6. Reasoning #2: Aid as Free Gift that Undermines State Accountability

The second reasoning is derived from the view represented by Bauer who sees aid as an intergovernmental subsidy that undermines the accountability of recipient government. According to Bauer, substantial differences exist between the resources developed locally and the resources given freely from abroad as an instrument of development. When resources are produced endogenously and utilized locally, the personal qualities and attitudes, social institutions, and economic opportunities are encouraged to develop simultaneously. These constituents of a society interact and grow to become a basis for furthering material progress. However, when resources are received from abroad as grant aid, the valuable process of building social constituents required for development is lost. That is why Bauer maintains that foreign aid can hardly bear fruit (Bauer 1976: 103).

This is especially true in a MIRAB society where aid substitutes for the vast majority of public spending for which the recipient government is primarily responsible. Having funded a large portion of national revenue, the government does not necessarily need to ensure things like gaining public support for building a system of domestic revenue collection. As the government's efficiency does not noticeably affect the flow of revenues, it is reasonable to assume that they are unmotivated to reform policies and institutions to build developmental capacity. Instead, the government comes to seek more aid because it is still easier than dealing with the politically difficult task of improving revenue collection, even if they need to devise policies that meet the interests of donors (Moss, et al. 2006: 14-15).

The critical risk of aid, according to Bauer, is that it increases the money, patronage, and power of the recipient governments unreasonably, resulting in misallocation of resources, corruption, and erosion of society (Bauer and Yamey 1982: 60-62). Because bilateral aid is a government-to-government subsidy, it allows the recipient government to pursue policies that patently retard economic growth and exacerbate poverty or to

implement projects that do nothing to promote development (Bauer and Yamey 1982: 60). In the worst cases, aid money is used to finance personal matters of government officials, leaving little for the people who desperately need that support. Accordingly, aid creates an inhospitable environment to cultivate the accountability of recipient government.

In fact, many have reported that the accountability of MIRAB states for foreign aid is weak (Friberg, et al. 2006; Heinecke, et al. 2008; Hughes 2003; Overton 2009). Their low accountability can also be attributed to the assumption that the recipient governments cannot seriously see the end of aid. They believe that donors would continue providing aid out of moral obligations towards former colonies, given the fact that aid has never been withdrawn so far (see Heinecke, et al. 2008: 65-66). Without accountability required for the recipient governments, extreme aid critics like Hughes (2003) assert that aid continues to “fail” the Pacific while the Pacific will come to depend more on aid (Ranis 2011: 77).

1.3.7. Reasoning #3: Aid as Hindering Industrialization

The third reasoning originates from the argument that foreign aid crowds out the growth of industry. This view identifies aid as an economic rent, comparable to oil export revenues, that causes the so-called Dutch disease—the exchange rate is held up by an increase in revenues from a large inflow of foreign currency, which impairs the competitiveness of manufacturing sector and hence discourages beneficial exports (Bauer and Yamey 1982: 60).

In the case of MIRAB society, the impact of rent income from foreign aid is presumably larger due to a disproportionately large public sector financed by aid. The unfavorable impact of aid on industrial development can be explained from four angles. First, when the aid-financed public sector drives up local wage rates and dominates resources, few incentives are left for the development of the private sector. Both domestic and foreign investors are discouraged because the overvalued exchange rate and higher wage would raise the cost of resources required in the private sector and consequently reduce the profits of capitalist activities (Ahlburg 1991: 53). Second, because bilateral aid finances mostly public sector activities, the aid polices and projects

are designed to improve the public sector, but not necessarily to encourage the development of the private sector. Third, since the large public sector in every MIRAB society is centered in the capital town, it stimulates domestic migration, driving people away from rural areas and hence retarding agricultural development. Lastly, the large public sector that provides a secure source of cash income through employment to a significant portion of households reduces people's incentives to undertake marginal productive activities. All of these discourage private sector development, indicating that aid crowds out industrialization of recipient country. This outcome is ironic since foreign aid is supposed to be a boost for "taking off" to the stage of industrialization, according to Rostow's theory. Without the growth of new industries, MIRAB societies have few choices but to remain dependent on aid in order to maintain the current living standard, although aid itself is retarding industrialization. This is why aid is seen as promoting dependency.

1.3.8. Reasoning #4: Aid as Discourse

The next reasoning is in line with the development critics who take into consideration of Foucault's notion of discourse—the system of knowledge through which power is maintained—claiming development as discourse. Arturo Escobar (1993) asserts that development is the discourse through which the needs of developing countries for development have been assessed and measured by the policy makers of aid donors. Through the discourse about development, the Pacific Islands have been characterized as small and remote nations with poorly endowed natural resources, unable of achieving economic independence without external assistances. The need of foreign aid to the Pacific Islands is constructed accordingly. As these characterizations of the Pacific Islands became authoritative knowledge, Pacific leaders, too, were convinced that their countries needed foreign aid to move from underdeveloped to developed.

One good example of how discourse about development works is the study of Australian aid by Greg Fry. According to Fry (1997: 305), Australia framed a gloomy picture of the Pacific, portraying the Pacific region as in danger of "falling off the world map." Apparently, it was a warning to Pacific Island states to restructure their economies; otherwise all the Islands will face "doomsday" or disastrous situations by

2010 (Callick 1993). In reality, the construction of negative images of the Pacific was Australia's strategy to encourage Pacific leaders to move in accordance with their interests in the region. Australia wanted to develop Pacific Islands through restructuring economies as a way of maintaining regional security, believing that underdevelopment was a source of political instability that induces insecurity (Fry 1997: 332-336). A critical point is that Pacific leaders chose to reform their economic structures, not only because it was the conditionality of aid, but also because they accepted the gloomy picture of the Pacific constructed by Australia.

Why the Pacific leaders accepted the gloomy picture could be related to what Peet and Hartwick call academic dependency. Academic dependency describes intellectuals of developing countries who have been trained in Western systems and become dependent on Western countries for knowledge about everything (Peet and Hartwick 1999: 137-138). These intellectuals are prone to value Western knowledge and technologies over their indigenous knowledge and institutions. Unintentionally or intentionally, they agree with the argument of modernization theory that all countries should follow Western path to development because of the incapacity of developing countries to achieve development without external assistance. Considering the fact that the majority of Pacific leaders have studied abroad, it can be assumed that Western notions and norms influenced their mindsets to be less skeptical about the Australian construction of the gloomy picture of the Pacific.

Not only Pacific leaders and the elite, but also recipient communities as a whole may become academically dependent on Western knowledge through accepting foreign aid as discourse that gives authority to certain principles and instructions oriented by notions and norms of donors. Aid projects, for instance, often require a recipient community to learn new skills and computerized methods even if the community already has their own traditional knowledge in the same field. As a result of participating in such projects, the recipients may come to feel de-skilled and lose self-confidence, seeing themselves as subservient manual labor (Gegeo 2000: 76). Having lost their pride in self-reliance, they come to seek further Western knowledge that comes with aid, believing that is a way to becoming like the donor country. In this context, aid can be regarded as instrument that

repeatedly reminds recipients of their incapacity for endogenous development and need of external assistance. This is why aid is considered as promoting dependency.

1.3.9. Reasoning #5: Aid as Unsustainable Source

The last reasoning is associated with the popular view that claims foreign aid is an unstable source of development. An unstable flow of aid may not directly promote the dependency of a recipient country; but the presumption is that the sustainability of the economy hinges upon the durability of existing and future sources of income (Ahlburg and Song 2006: 109). In this context, the unstable aid flow can cause economic development to be unsustainable and urge a recipient country needing secure available income sources to depend further on aid.

The sustainability of aid over time has always been questioned in the discussion of development, given that notion that the availability of aid all depends on the situation of donors and of international community. Aid may experience a significant drop due to events such as an economic crisis in a donor country, directional change in foreign affairs, a paradigm shift in international aid policy, the breakout of war, and political and religious crises. The susceptibility of aid is a serious concern especially in the MIRAB societies where aid finances a sizeable portion of national revenue and public sector activities—i.e., “aid” and “bureaucracy” features of this economic model (Ahlburg 1991; Connell 1991; Friberg, et al. 2006; Pollard 1995). In the case of New Zealand aid, Overton reported that a major public sector reform in the donor country in the late 1980s resulted in a considerable reduction of their aid budget, hitting hard on the bureaucracies of recipient countries (Overton 2009: 5). Two-thirds of civil servants in Cook Islands, for instance, left their jobs while the rest endured a 65% pay cut (Stanley 2004: 324).

Accordingly, economic models like MIRAB, which hinge upon foreign aid, seem vulnerable and are likely to become more fragile when other main sources of income such as remittances are also susceptible. Bertram, however, asserts that the MIRAB model is sustainable and looks at the correlation between the two, aid and remittance, to maintain the economic equilibrium. In a MIRAB society, a reduced flow of aid often results in urging its citizen to migrate overseas and remit more in order to fulfill the need. In Cook Islands, after the major layoff in the public sector mentioned above, many

residents left the country to seek work abroad (Overton 2009: 5). For this reason, Bertram sees this correlation between aid/bureaucracy and migration/remittance in a positive light.

Nevertheless, the argument that aid promotes further dependency on external assistance including aid still remains. The major aid donors to the MIRAB societies including New Zealand, Australia, and the U.S. are also the main countries that host migrants from the island states. Thus, an economically unfavorable event occurring in those donor countries may result in a significant reduction in the inflow of both aid and remittances to recipients. In other words, a major reduction in aid may result in further outmigration, but more migration does not necessarily guarantee a larger flow of remittances to offset the lack of aid. In time, the recipient governments seek aid more from other donors like Japan and China, although the flow of aid from the Asian donors may be thin, reflecting scarce colonial and geopolitical ties to the recipient countries. Because their income sources are not stable, the recipient governments have always to search for available sources in order to maintain the status quo. In this sense, an unstable flow of aid can promote dependency on aid.

These five reasons are most popularly used to support the argument that aid promotes further dependency of recipient countries. In addition, aid projects involving robust infrastructure may also promote aid dependency. When infrastructure is built to high standards, the costs of maintenance are often too burdensome once the facility is complete and handed over to recipients. So the recipient government has to depend on the donor for maintaining it or else the infrastructure may be slowly transformed into a so-called “white elephant.”

1.3.10. Beyond Dependency and MIRAB

The lines of reasoning discussed above sound convincing; yet, as pointed out previously, the weakness of these arguments is that Western rationality and knowledge are their dominant points of reference. Although the economic model established by Bertram and Watters is innovative, both dependency theory and the MIRAB argument are still built primarily upon the events and phenomena interpretable into Western terms. In other words, neither of them explains the culturally hybrid and geographically

interconnected, complex reality of aid. They reveal only part of the realities faced by these countries and seen through a specific viewpoint. In this regard, Richard Wartho, a New Zealand geographer, asserts that dependency of the Pacific is a view based solely on Western notions of space and mobility, describing only one part of a complex reality (Wartho 1994: 218).

In attempting to explore beyond the conventional views of dependency, this dissertation will incorporate non-Western notions and norms into its analysis of aid with reference to the five lines of reasoning discussed above. More specifically, the Japanese epistemology of aid, revealed in the next chapter and Samoan notions of development, explored in Chapter 4, will be incorporated into this analysis of Japan's aid to Sāmoa. If the Japanese epistemology of aid—how Japan's aid has evolved and how Japanese understand the meaning of aid—is included in the analysis, unknown implications of Japan's aid to Sāmoa may surface. Similarly, if Samoan notions of development—how Samoans construct the meaning of development and are motivated to achieve their developmental goals—are taken seriously into consideration, the understudied impacts of aid in Sāmoa may be revealed.

These propositions are drawn from the outcomes of my preliminary research conducted in Sāmoa in 2003 and 2004. I encountered local residents who had very different awareness and evaluations of Japan's aid based on community and individual benefits. They judged the impacts of aid projects primarily on whether they could reap immediate benefit for their livelihood. Using this frame of reference, actual aid recipients at the grassroots level saw the impact of foreign aid rather differently from many researchers. Such outcomes motivated me to explore many more realities of aid with the use of references other than Western knowledge to tackle the question whether foreign aid is merely a source of promoting dependency.

1.4. Locale of Samoan Aidscape

1.4.1. Economic Landscape

Sāmoa is an independent nation lying at the heart of the Pacific Ocean, south of equator with the geographic coordinates of 13°35'S and 172°20'W. In December 2011, the country changed to the western side of the international dateline to be in the line with

Australia and New Zealand. Sāmoa consists of two larger volcanic islands of Upolu and Savai'i, fringed by coral reefs and lagoons, and eight adjacent islets that are inhabited and uninhabited (Fig. 1.3). The country's total land area is 1,133 square miles (2,934 square kilometers) with exclusive economic zone of 46,330 square miles (120,000 square kilometers), providing home to approximately 187,000 people who are predominantly Samoans and part Samoans.

Figure 1.3. Map of Sāmoa



Source: Mappery (Mappery.com).

Compared to the standards of other least developing countries (LDCs), Sāmoa has relatively good social conditions with lower mortality rates, higher literacy rates, longer life expectancy, higher level of food availability, and stable politics. Yet, as of 2012, Sāmoa is still classified as one of the world's 48 LDCs listed by the United Nations.¹¹

According to archaeological evidence, the first human settlement of the Samoan archipelago is believed to be around 1500 B.C. The Dutch explorer Jacob Roggeveen was the first European to sight Sāmoa in 1722, followed by the French explorer Louis de Bougainville who named the islands “Navigator Islands” in 1768. These visits opened the way for missionaries and traders from Europe and the U.S. to come to Sāmoa in pursuit of their respective interests. The conflicting interests of Germany, Britain, and

¹¹ With the recommendation from the UN, Sāmoa is going to graduate from the status of LDC to the status of Developing Country by 2014.

the U.S. resulted in the Treaty of Berlin of 1889, then the Tripartite Convention of 1899, which divided the Samoan archipelago into two. Germany took over the islands west of 171°, which became Western Sāmoa (now the independent state of Sāmoa) and the U.S. took over the administration of the eastern islands, now American Sāmoa. Britain agreed to give up Sāmoa in return for taking control of the northern part of Solomon Islands and territories in West Africa from Germany. After the outbreak of WWI, New Zealand administered Sāmoa first as a mandate and later as UN trusteeship. In 1962, Sāmoa became the first nation in the Pacific Islands region to achieve independence.

Despite the long history of colonial administration, Sāmoa retains the *fa'aSāmoa* (the Samoan way of life) and its various traditional institutions including the extended family, customary land, and a system of chiefly titles, known as the *fa'amatai*. These traditional institutions ensure a redistributive economic system at the grassroots level that provides a safety net for everyday life in village. Yet, Sāmoa is not an exception to the rapid change of globalizing world in which land is further commercialized, wage earning is more frequent, and family life becomes more nuclear especially in the urban area. In fact, the government is working toward the establishment of a system that allows the lease of customary land by investors, agreeing with aid donors that communal land is an obstacle to the foreign direct investment which could help diversify Sāmoa's economy (ADB 2008a: 20).¹²

Traditionally, Sāmoa's economy is classified as MIRAB, relying on narrow income sources of foreign aid, family remittances from overseas, agriculture including fishery and forestry, small-scale manufacturing, and tourism. As in other MIRAB societies, the prospects for Sāmoa's economy have been described typically as grim, due to the country's geographical remoteness from the core market, small labor pool and domestic market, and limited natural resources (ADB 1998, 1999; Bank of Hawaii 1997; Jayaraman and Ward 2002; Knapman 1986; Shankman 1976; World Bank 1995). In these analyses, Sāmoa's economic base is usually depicted as unpredictable and unstable. Foreign aid and remittance are susceptible not only to economic fluctuations of donors

¹² About 80% of land in Sāmoa is customary land owned by extended family and village, while the government owns 16% and 4% is freehold land. Since this customary land system does not appeal to foreign investors, Sāmoa has the second-lowest rate of foreign direct investment among all Pacific Island countries (ADB 2008a: 20).

and host countries to Samoan migration, but also to situational changes faced by the money providers. Levels of aid and remittance were expected to decline when Sāmoa lost its geopolitical significance following the end of Cold War or when migrants of the new generation were less willing to remit and connect to family in their genealogical homeland (Bank of Hawaii 1997: 11; Watanabe 2000).

Although the tuna fishing industry has grown moderately, agricultural production has not grown significantly for a number of reasons. Agriculture is vulnerable to natural disasters including two devastating cyclones that hit the country in 1990 and 1991, followed by another calamity, a taro blight disease that ruined one of its major export crops (ADB 1998). Tourism was also viewed as unpromising because more than half of the visitors, transnational Samoans visiting their families, are not identified as genuine tourists (Government of Samoa 2011). Without any major plan for improving transportation, accommodation, and tourist attractions, tourism was not considered to be an immediate source of significant economic growth (Bank of Hawaii 1997). Furthermore, economists including Knapman predicted that aid and remittance would crowd out agriculture and other potential industries, resulting in a loss of skill and reduction in the country's capacity to produce (Knapman 1994: 340). Consequently, Sāmoa appeared to have little potential for economic development during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Addressing the vulnerability of MIRAB economy, aid donors including Australia, New Zealand, and Asian Development Bank (ADB) repeatedly advised the government of Sāmoa to implement a major economic reform, so-called structural adjustment, in order to reduce the reliance on narrow income sources and become competitive in neoliberal economy for the sake of sustainable development. Kerslake's study on structural adjustment undertaken in Sāmoa reported that the government was actually not willing to adopt this policy but felt it was imperative as the country was facing a serious economic crisis with deep debt, high inflation, shortage of imports, and poor economic growth (Kerslake 2007: 123-128). In the early 1990s, the government embarked on structural adjustment in line with reform agendas proposed by aid donors including the reduction of public sector spending, building of state capacity, privatization of state owned enterprises and services, and removal of protective trade policies (Overton 2009:

5).¹³ Since the mid 1990s, Sāmoa's economy began to grow steadily and significant progress was made with an average growth of 4.3% annually during the last decade (ADB 2008a: 3).¹⁴ The diversification of economy has also made major progress with a much-downsized public sector, which currently accounts for 9% of GDP. Growing tourism and construction industries account for 20% and 14% respectively (Government of Samoa 2012). Given these desirable outcomes, multilateral aid donors like the World Bank and ADB saw the economic restructuring program undertaken in Sāmoa as one of the most successful cases in the Pacific Islands region. Today, Sāmoa's economy generates a GDP per capita of US\$2,750.50 and its outlook is quite bright, according to ADB (2008b).

1.4.2. Donor Landscape

The economic reform undertaken by the government was given credit for the successful growth; though, increased economic performance can also be attributed to Sāmoa's relatively stable political and social systems, as well as constant inflow of foreign aid and overseas remittance. In reality, aid and remittance still play major roles in Sāmoa's economy as grant aid accounts for about one quarter of the national revenue while remittances account for 20% of GDP on average (Government of Samoa 2008: 4). External assistance has had substantial effects not only on the economy but also on social and physical landscape of Sāmoa.

As to the impact of foreign aid, numerous aid projects have contributed to the development of the country since its independence in 1962. Examples of large-scale infrastructure funded by aid are hospitals, a university, a polytechnic, an airport, ferry ports, wharf, markets, and government buildings; small-scale projects include school buildings, health centers, water supply and so forth. Upgrades of transportation systems such as roads, buses, and ferries, as well as telecommunication, electricity, and water

¹³ According to Jayaraman and Ward, the structural adjustment policy was introduced to Sāmoa by IMF in the late 1980s, but was interrupted by the two cyclones and taro leaf blight (Jayaraman and Ward 2002: 99).

¹⁴ In 2009 and 2010, Sāmoa experienced negative growth first time in last 15 years. This poor performance was attributed mainly to the downsizing of Yazaki EDS Sāmoa, the country's largest contributor to manufacturing industry, due to the decline in demand in its major export automobile market in Australia (Government of Samoa 2012: 4).

systems were all funded by foreign aid. These projects have dramatically changed the space of Samoan daily life, making it impossible to live without many things associated with foreign aid.

Foreign aid also funded the development of soft infrastructure that includes scholarships and technical training for human resource development and public education. Since these soft projects are commonly designed to change practices and behaviors of recipients, they have brought some ideological alterations to ways of living and thinking. Accordingly, foreign aid has brought physical and ideological alternations at different levels, creating multidimensional impacts on the Samoan landscape.

Traditionally, Australia, New Zealand, the EU, and Japan have been the top four bilateral donors to Sāmoa, although it varies every year depending on the size and number of ongoing projects. Since mid 2000, grant aid and concessional loans from People’s Republic of China have increased significantly making China one of the top-four donors to the country (see Table 1.1). Other bilateral donors include the U.S. whose aid to Sāmoa centers on sending Peace Corps volunteers while Britain provides aid in a form of debt relief. Sāmoa also receives aid from Arab states under Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries as well as from India and Cuba under South-South Commitment efforts. As to multilateral aid, the country currently has five major partners including the ADB, World Bank groups, WHO, the European Commission and UN agencies including UNDP, FAO, and UNESCO who implement various types of programs including balance payment support and technical assistance in budgeting national revenue.

Table 1.1. Aid to Sāmoa from Major Donors (US\$ million)

Donor	2000	2005	2009	2010
Japan	11.51	12.52	15.97	27.02
Australia	13.76	12.05	20.91	29.56
New Zealand	6.37	8.27	10.34	16.79
EU	26.88	36.59	9.04	18.00
China			28.87	90.00
ADB	12.3	8.06	5.65	26.00
World Bank	5.41	4.47	1.69	40.00
UN agencies	2.4	2.28	1.94	2.80

Source: These figures are from Aid & Debt Management, Ministry of Finance, Government of Sāmoa, except for Japan, which are taken from MOFA.

In addition, Sāmoa has access to a wide range of support and programs through regional organizations like the Secretariat of the Pacific Community of which Sāmoa is a member (Government of Samoa 2010a: 29-30). With the exception of Arab states, all the donors to Sāmoa are signatories to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005. Therefore, donors like New Zealand, Australia, and the EU repeatedly use such terms as “partnership” to emphasize their commitment to the Paris Declaration agreements of coordination, harmonization, and alignment with recipients’ priorities in developmental activities (Government of Samoa 2010a: 13). These donors usually employ a sector approach rather than one-time project that requires further involvement in the recipient government and a long-term commitment. Each donor has both similar and dissimilar interests in Sāmoa.

New Zealand, one of the oldest top four donors to Sāmoa, initiated its aid from a sense of responsibility toward the former colony. Since independence in 1962 till the mid 1980s, a large portion of the aid from New Zealand was utilized to finance day-by-day costs of government (including running schools and health facilities) and developmental activities to help the transitional period of the newly independent nation. Then the aid paradigm gradually shifted from general budget to specific development projects implemented mainly in the areas where New Zealand has specific expertise to offer. In the 1970s, New Zealand still viewed aid as a means to maintain the ties and responsibilities to Sāmoa as well as other former colonies in the Pacific. In the early 1990s, New Zealand experienced a major cut in its aid budget not only as a part of its own structural adjustment policy but also because the donor government saw inefficiency in recipient bureaucracies financed by their aid (Overton 2009: 5). Around the same time, New Zealand shifted the direction of aid again, from implementing top-to-bottom type projects to the attitude of working together with recipients. Under the slogan of partnership, NZAID, or New Zealand aid agency, now works closely with the government of Sāmoa especially in areas such as building state capacity in order to successfully plan and administer aid projects. NZAID also coordinates with other key donors including Australia and ADB on implementing projects together in such key areas as poverty reduction. New Zealand centers its aid on education, health, and governance,

showing the legacy of the colonial tie. The government of Sāmoa, on the other hand, views New Zealand as a somewhat flexible donor in terms of assistance arrangements (Government of Samoa 2010a: 35).

Australia has been another top-four donor since the 1970s, accounting about 30% of a total bilateral aid provided to Sāmoa. During 2011 to 2012, Australia was estimated to provide over US\$40 million to Sāmoa through both bilateral and multilateral channels. Traditionally, Australian aid or AusAID provides assistance to such key areas as public sector reform, health, education, and natural resource management (Wendt 2000: 151). In these areas, AusAID coordinates with other major donors like the World Bank, ADB, EU, and NZAID to work together with the recipient government. Since the 2000s, however, it seems that the real focus of AusAID has shifted to strengthening the security of Sāmoa. AusAID finances defense cooperation programs and an Australia-Sāmoa Police program, which includes the supply of patrol boats and the training of maritime surveillance for Samoan police (Australian Government 2011: 8). This shift can be attributed to the view that the political instability of the region, especially in Melanesia, became a serious threat to Australia's national security since 9/11/2001 and the terrorist bombings in Bali in 2002. Thus, Australia may have felt the strong need to tighten up regional security through aid projects, given the assumption that politically unstable Melanesian states may become a "base for terrorism or their collapse could result in high numbers of refugees to Australia and New Zealand" (Overton 2009: 6). Similar to New Zealand, Australia currently emphasizes partnership with its recipient countries such as Sāmoa, clearly stating that AusAID intends for the two countries to work together to meet common challenges (Australian Government 2011: 2). Through this partnership, Australia plans to take a more active role in making policies and budgeting for developmental activities for Sāmoa. For this purpose, AusAID programs are basically delivered only through Sāmoa's government systems (Australian Government 2011: 11).

The EU is another traditional donor who began providing aid to Sāmoa in 1975 under the terms and conditions set by the Lomé Convention to assist the development of small countries in the Pacific, Caribbean, and Africa. The aid from the EU has centered on the water sector, disbursing 85% of its aid budget to support the improvement of water supply, water resource management, sanitation, and sewage. In focusing on a single

sector, the EU demonstrates a strong commitment to budgeting and managing results (Government of Samoa 2010a: 69).

The People's Republic of China established its diplomatic relations with Samoa in 1975 and first provided aid in 1976. China increased its aid after the two countries made a technical cooperation agreement in 1995, which included US\$1.18 million in the form of grant aid (Siaosi 2010: 68). Since the mid 2000s, the inflow of Chinese aid has grown strikingly, making China the largest donor to Sāmoa. According to Iati, China provides aid to Sāmoa for strengthening diplomatic relations, through which the donor can promote its One China policy and growing economy (Iati 2010: 159). As its motivations in aid differ from Western donors, China does not attach a set of conditions to its aid as a way to instruct the recipient government in developmental activities (Iati 2010: 157). Chinese aid does not take a sector approach to be involved in the system of the recipient government in terms of budgeting or planning aid projects. In contrast, Chinese aid is based on the request from the recipient government whereby the donor can meet Sāmoa's priorities for developmental activities. The construction of numerous government buildings and facilities was initiated by the government of Sāmoa, not China (Iati 2010: 159). Aside from the government buildings, Chinese aid centers on large-scale infrastructure including a new sports complex for the 2007 South Pacific Games, upgrading the rugby stadium, and improving roads around urban areas (Iati 2010: 158). In this context, Chinese aid can be seen as an influential source of altering the Samoan landscape visually.

Although recently overtaken by China, Japan is still a major donor to Sāmoa, which I will examine in the next chapter. In addition to these bilateral donors, several multilateral donors are always in the country implementing numerous aid projects. While some donors coordinate with each other to implement projects together, not all donors agree on any joint strategy or procedures in Sāmoa. The absence of such agreement allows aid projects to be undertaken with different systems and philosophies, creating unnecessary confusion and conflict among the recipient government officials and citizens. These confusions and conflicts are components of Aidscape yet to be examined carefully.

Donors may have different interests in providing aid, but all of them indicated they would continue providing assistance to Sāmoa despite the recent global economic crisis.

The government of New Zealand, for instance, announced in 2009 an increase in its aid to Sāmoa as a way to strengthen their partnership (Ah Mū 2009). The Japanese government whose economy is facing one of the worst crises in its history also pledged an increase in its aid to the Pacific Island recipients including Sāmoa. The popular view that foreign aid is susceptible to the economic condition of donor countries has not held true in the case of Sāmoa. A new challenge, however, arose because of a change in Samoa's economic condition. In 2006, the UN Committee on Development Policy announced Sāmoa's graduation from the category of Least Developed Country by 2010 and its move into the Developing Country classification. This decision was primarily based on Sāmoa's consistent economic growth and significant progress in human development that exceeded the level of LDC criteria. It was not necessarily good news for the government of Sāmoa because this graduation implies a major reduction in the inflow of grant aid and change in the concession of borrowing and debt service (Government of Samoa 2006a). Subsequently, Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sa'ilele Malielegāoi requested the UN to postpone the graduation until the year 2014 in order for his country to become ready to receive less external support for furthering development. As of 2009, grant aid together with concessionary loans made up 46% of the government budget (Government of Samoa 2009a: 6). Overall, whether or not Sāmoa has bright economic outlook is still debatable.

1.5. Methodology

1.5.1. Research Method

In order to describe the Samoan Aidscape, this study collected narratives, perspectives, pictures, numbers, and other types of information from scholarly articles and books, government documents, media sources, documentary films, lectures and presentations, peer discussions, and daily conversations (see Table 1.2. Main Research Conducted). Various methods and instruments were used including both archival and online research, in-depth interviews, informal interviews, participant observation, and survey with questionnaires. The main field research in Sāmoa was conducted for eight months from April to December 2006. Prior to this research, two two-month preliminary sets of research were conducted in Sāmoa in 2003 and in 2004 mainly to collect

background information, in addition to one two-week research follow-up study in 2007. The interviews with key Japanese informants were conducted in Japan in 2007.

Table 1.2. Main Research Conducted

Questions	Respondents	Location	Instrument	Date
Japan's aid in general	N/A	Hawai'i	Literature	2007-2009
	Japanese officials	Apia, Sāmoa	Interview	Jul-Nov 2006
		Tōkyo, Japan	Interview	Jul 2007
Japan's aid to Sāmoa	Japanese officials	Tōkyo, Japan	Interview	Jul 2007
		Apia, Sāmoa	Interview	Jul-Nov 2006/ Aug 2003/ Jul 2002
	Samoan officials	Apia, Sāmoa	Interview	Jul-Nov 2006/ Jul 2002
	Other donor country officials	Apia, Sāmoa	Interview	Sep-Nov 2006
	Japanese scholars	Tōkyo, Japan	Interview	Jul 2007
	Samoan scholars	Apia, Sāmoa	Interview	Jul-Nov 2006
	Samoan citizens	Apia, Rural Upolu, & Savai'i	Survey	Sep-Nov 2006
			Interview	Sep-Nov 2006/ Aug 2003/ Jul 2002
<i>Talanoa</i>			May-Nov 2006	
Development views and lifeworld of Samoans citizens	N/A	Hawai'i	Literature	2009
	Samoan scholars	Apia, Sāmoa	Interview	Jul-Nov 2006
	Samoan business owners	Apia, Sāmoa	<i>Talanoa</i>	Jul-Nov 2006
	Samoan citizens	Apia, Rural Upolu, Savai'i & Yazaki Samoa	Survey	Sep-Nov 2006
			Interview	Jul-Nov 2006
			Participant Observation	Apr-Nov 2006
			<i>Talanoa</i>	May-Nov 2006
Aid in practice	Japanese aid workers	Apia & Savai'i, Sāmoa	Survey	Sep-Nov 2006
			Interview	July 2007/ Jul-Nov 2006/ Jul 2002

			Participant Observation	Apr-Nov 2006
			<i>Talanoa</i>	May-Nov 2006
	Samoa recipients	Apia & Savai'i, Sāmoa	Survey	Sep-Nov 2006
			Interview	Jul-Nov 2006/ Aug 2003/ Jul 2002
			Participant Observation	Apr-Nov 2006
			<i>Talanoa</i>	May-Nov 2006

During fieldwork, I interviewed a total of 79 people formally; 69 were digitally recorded while 10 were manually recorded (see Appendix C for the list of quoted interviews). Samoan interviewees include government officials, scholars, business owners, recipient community representatives, a NGO representative, teachers, students, factory workers, office workers, hotel workers, and village residents in both urban and rural areas. Japanese interviewees include JICA officials, scholars, aid-related experts and contractors, volunteers, a governmental organization representative, and a company vice-president residing both in Japan and Sāmoa. The interviewees also include representatives from AusAID, Chinese Embassy in Sāmoa, the EU, and NZAID, and a British business owner residing in Sāmoa.

In addition to these formal interviews, numerous conversations and dialogues were collected in casual settings while working, strolling, and eating together, and sharing the space of living in Japan, Sāmoa, and Hawai‘i. The method of “frequent talk” about my research and findings was used with my families and friends to ask questions and test my ideas about Japan’s aid, Sāmoa, and development in general. I was privileged to use this method with my academic colleagues and generous professors in Hawai‘i to discuss and reshape my ideas. Some ideas were shaped also by the discussions held in my classes, Geography of the Pacific and Geography of Japan, which I have taught for seven years at University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa.

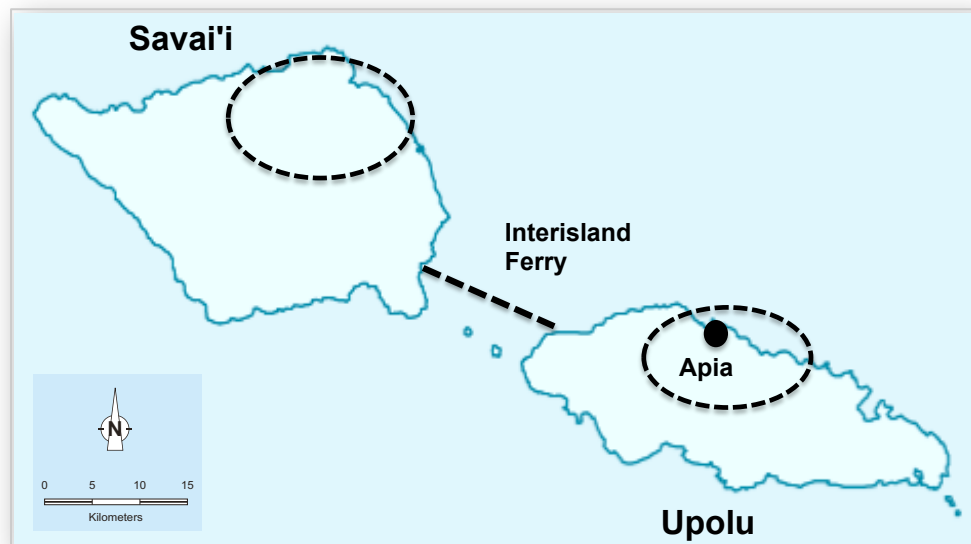
Two types of surveys with questionnaires about Sāmoa’s development and Japan’s aid were conducted in Sāmoa in 2006. One was distributed to Samoan residents and the other was distributed to Japanese volunteers working in Sāmoa (see Appendix B). A

total of 800 surveys were distributed to Samoan residents of a semi-urban village in Upolu and two villages in Savai'i; workers at government offices, office for NZAID, Yazaki EDS Sāmoa factory, a local company in Apia, and a hotel in Savai'i; teachers at one school in Apia and two schools in Savai'i; and students at National University of Sāmoa. Out of 800 distributed, a total of 508 survey sheets were collected. Twenty surveys were distributed to Japanese volunteers residing both in Upolu and Savai'i with 16 returns. Since they are not randomly selected participants in a statistical sense, the outcome of the survey may not be considered representative.

1.5.2. Field Sites

The two focal sites for the fieldwork are the capital city Apia and Sālemanu, a pseudonym for a village in northwestern Savai'i (Fig. 1.4. Map of Field Sites). The two sites helped understand differences and similarities in the space of everyday life in urban and rural Sāmoa and in the ways the residents see development, aid, and goals of life.

Figure 1.4. Map of Field Sites



Source of base map: Tsukui International, Ltd. 2007.

At both sites, I stayed with families of my Samoan friends for many years. The family in Apia was my base for research while participating in various daily and occasional events taking place in the urban Samoan life. During the eight months of fieldwork, I stayed

with these two host families for the length of roughly four months each, though I went back and forth between the two families throughout the fieldwork period.

Apia represents the urban space where foreign as well as domestic capital, markets, wage employment, and aid funded large-scale projects are all concentrated.

Approximately 40% of the population live in the Apia urban area that generates about 70% of the national income (ADB 2004). Along with the rise of development projects that have taken place largely in the capital town, the residents of Apia have been experiencing the fastest pace of social as well as environmental change in the country. Further, an increasing number of Samoan families are staying on the freehold land in Apia, living in lifestyles different from those of rural villagers. This rapidly growing town population resulted in constructing a spatial division in everyday life within the same space called Apia.

Sālemanu in Savai'i represents a typical remote village where Samoan traditions and customs strongly exist. Mainly through living together with the host family in Sālemanu, I observed the village life on the ground through participating in the space of their everyday life. Sālemanu is a small village located on the north central coast of Savai'i, with a total population of less than 300. In this village, the majority of residents live on the combination of subsistence and small-scale commercial agriculture, fishing, and remittance while some households have family members with paid jobs at nearby resort hotels or construction sites. The village is distant from Apia geographically as it takes four to five hours to get there by bus and ferry with limited numbers of public buses running through the area.

My host family in Sālemanu owns a medium-size store, selling daily necessities for village life. The family also runs a small-scale canteen, providing snacks and drinks for nearby public schools. My Samoan host mother, who is the head of this family, runs these businesses with the help of 12 family members, although this number changes all the time as people constantly move in and out. In this family, I participated in as many daily and occasional family activities as possible through taking multiple roles including adopted Japanese daughter, guest of honor, shopkeeper, geography tutor, family photographer, and researcher. Since they own the small business, they may not best to represent a typical Samoan family in village because not all households have a regular

source of cash income. Yet, the family provided an ideal window for witnessing the village life through their store, a central spot of gossip and events taking place in the small village space.

1.5.3. Field Experiences

Ethnography, participant observation, and the indigenous Pacific method of *talanoa* (talk freely) were the key methods employed for the fieldwork.¹⁵ These field methods are considered the most applicable instruments to explore *lifeworld*—process and meanings of social activities embedded in everyday life—on the Samoan Aidscape (Herbert 2000: 551). In many senses, however, these field methods were questionable, for they did not capture the situations in which I found myself. Customarily, the method of ethnography and participant observation requires a researcher to spend a considerable amount of time together in order to see people’s point of views and to collect the insightful narratives. At the same time, the researcher is required to keep a polite distance from informants in order to reduce the subjectivity and maintain scientific eyes (Tedlock 2000). In the process of living together and sharing the space of everyday life, I became too close to my host families—“research informants.” As a result, I felt unable to ask personal questions related to family budget or other more sensitive issues, and to record such personal stories as quarrels among family members. For similar reasons, the use of the *talanoa* method was not effective. The *talanoa* approach enables a researcher to become closer to informants by removing social barriers existing between researcher and those researched. Ironically, for the sake of my interviews, it was necessary to restore barriers in order to create a polite distance with informants who had become close friends. The more I got to know informants the more the struggle with these methods increased. I experienced situations in which I felt seeking information that furthered my research seemed morally unacceptable. This led me to question if there is a way to fully understand the perspective of informants without being emotionally close to them.

¹⁵ *Talanoa* is a common term in the Polynesian language family, which literally means talk freely. It is used popularly in research especially in the field of Pacific Islands Studies (Fepulea’i 2005; Vaioleti 2006). The concept of *Talanoa* was developed by Sitiveni Halapua (2003) as a process that provides an open environment for community to address their concerns without rigid forms of protocol. *Talanoa* also is a process of building relationships through which people become able to express frankly in a face-to-face storytelling setting without concealment.

Questions on research ethics as such can possibly be solved with the use of consent form. In the field, written consent forms were signed by all of my formal interviewees after I explained the purpose of this study. Nevertheless, I realized that consent forms only work in the ways Western-trained researchers expect when informants comprehend the implications of ethnographical study. In Sālemanu, and in many other rural villages in Sāmoa, residents have relatively good access to agricultural land, but their sources of cash income are very limited due mainly to the lack of employment opportunities. With the limited cash income, they are trying hard to meet cultural and social obligations that require money. From such a standpoint, ethnographic research—spending a considerable amount of money and time in order to understand the everyday life of other people—is beyond their understanding. In other words, ethnographic study is a luxury or “hobby” that only the world’s small, privileged population can enjoy while the majority of people in places like Sālemanu could not afford it. Considering their unfamiliarity with the general objective of ethnographic study—scientific description of other people’s behaviors and attitudes, I was unsure if it was fair to interpret the consent I obtained from the informants in Sālemanu as their full agreement on the use of shared information for my academic purposes. For this reason, although most informants signed consent forms, some of the very personal stories and moments shared by the family members and close friends have not been included in this dissertation. Struggling with these methods has taught me the limitation of any academic research with human subjects.

As mentioned previously, gathering information in the field is conditioned by such factors as positionality and personality of both researcher and the researched, as well as locale and timing. Presumably, my position as a Japanese female student researcher did affect my interactions with informants while the personality of informants also influenced how I interpreted them, their responses, and even communities to which they belong. Similarly, the locale of informants and timing of interview affected the outcome of the interview. A good example is the interview with a new EU representative to Sāmoa, from whom I could obtain no substantial information primarily because he joined the EU and was deployed to Sāmoa just three months ago. His former colleague would have had more information, but the timing of fieldwork and interviews influenced the selection of interviewees and kind of information obtained. Such conditionality and situationality of

research findings have taught me to admit the incompleteness of my study no matter how profoundly I investigated.

Simple fortune sometimes governed who would and would not talk to me. Samoan state officials were one instance. Among many with whom I tried to make an interview appointment, only two officials accommodated me by granting an interview smoothly while others expressed their unwillingness by rejecting or ignoring my interview request, or not showing up for the interview appointment. In addition, other factors that I could not fully control, such as my physiological strengths and personality, limited the selection of potential participants, the scope of participation, and hence my research findings. These experiences added to my understanding that human observation and knowledge are always partial, regardless of methods employed.

As a Japanese proverb says, every failure is a stepping-stone to success. These lessons from the field illustrate how limited, partial, situational, conditional, and therefore incomplete a research can be. The limitations and fragmentalities I experienced in the field are the empirical evidence with which I finally grasped the concept of *situated knowledge*, a classic geography concept that I could not comprehend completely in the classroom. A deeper understanding of this concept appreciates that outcomes from the “failed” field methods may be partial, fragmented, and inconsistent, but still make perfect sense.

1.6. Language, Limitations, and Research Accountability

In this dissertation, Japanese and Samoan terms and phrases are frequently used especially for the terms with no fair equivalent term in English. Interviews with Japanese persons were all conducted in the Japanese language while both English and Samoan were used with Samoan informants. The survey with questionnaires for Japanese volunteers was conducted in Japanese while the survey for Samoans was in Samoan (see Appendix B). For interviews and surveys, I translated from Japanese into English as well as from Samoan into English with the help of my Samoan language teachers. Living in a cross-language space for many years, I am fully aware that translating from one language into any other language is risky. Especially “when a concept is enclosed in the context of a radically alien language, something is inevitably lost in translation” (Andrade 2001:

34). I, therefore, often translated sentences contextually rather than literally. In addition, despite the three years of language lessons at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and interactions with native Samoan speakers for a considerable length of time, my proficiency in the Samoan language is very far from the native level. This lack of language proficiency definitely limited my observations and data collections especially in understanding the nuance of narratives shared by Samoan informants.

1.7. A Path to Approaching the Samoan Aidscape

This dissertation examines the Samoan Aidscape, a Thirdspace with constantly changing spatial entity of different perspectives and narratives constructed around the practice of aid from Japan to Sāmoa. It explores multiple realities and multidimensional impacts of aid through situating the viewpoint in Japanese cultural concepts, Samoan traditional notions and socio-cultural practices, and in light of aid observers. The study approaches the question whether foreign aid promotes dependency on aid by looking at the applicability of the five preset conditions popularly used for the argument of aid and dependency. These arguments identify aid as a tool of control, free income, non-reproductive rent, discourse, and unsustainable income source that furthers dependency.

Chapter 2 discusses Japan and foreign aid, searching for Japanese epistemology of foreign aid. It provides a preface to Chapter 3 where the applicability of the view of aid as the donor's tool of control in the case of Japan's aid to Sāmoa is assessed. By briefly reviewing the history of Japan's ODA and contemporary debates on the aid, the chapter examines how Japan's aid evolved, why, and in what forms. It also explores the understudied meanings of Japan's ODA by employing Japanese concepts such as *honne* (real motive) and *tatemae* (public statement) and Japanese ways of doing things. The goal of this chapter is to elucidate why Japan gives aid in the ways it does.

Chapter 3 examines Japan-Sāmoa relations in the context of foreign aid and scholarly discussions, and imaginary components of Samoan Aidscape, constructed around it. It reviews the prevailing scholarly discussions about Japan's aid to Sāmoa and other Pacific Island countries in terms of what motivates Japan to aid the Pacific. The chapter challenges some of the popular arguments through the Japanese cultural concepts and ways of doing aid explored in the previous chapter. Ultimately, the chapter seeks to

find Japan's *honne* in providing aid to Sāmoa and evaluates the validity of the view that identifies aid as a tool of control.

Chapter 4 investigates contemporary Samoan views on foreign aid and development by looking at the roles of family and socio-cultural obligations in the rapidly changing society. It addresses the preset ideas about aid believed to promote dependency associated with the views that identify aid as non-reproductive rent, argue aid as discourse, and see aid as unsustainable. Furthermore, it examines the degree to which aid has affected the growth of industry, people's developmental mindset, and the sustainability of economic development. While the chapter uses original statistical data to frame general Samoan perceptions toward Japan's aid, the *lifeworld* approach is used to explore the taken-for-granted dimensions of everyday experiences where different meanings of aid and development are reflected by the milieu in which they are embedded.

Chapter 5 presents snapshots of lived component of the Samoan Aidscape, illustrating how the foreign aid that is planned and imagined, is actually practiced and lived, creating a complex reality of multidimensional linkages and limitations that shape the space of everyday life in Sāmoa. It looks at issues around control, credit, people, and uneven effects, four areas of overlapping but disconnected aid space, and examines the accountability of Samoan government to implement aid projects with regard to the view that sees aid as free gift. The ultimate goal of this chapter is to use grassroots illustrations to rethink the meaning of aid dependency and development in developing countries like Sāmoa.

Chapter 6 concludes this dissertation with a review of the different *situated knowledge*, and multiple realities and multidimensional impacts of Japan's aid to Sāmoa explored in the previous chapters. It also summarizes the key features of Samoan Aidscape, which are continuously MIRAB, family-oriented industrialization, psychological dependency, complex interconnectedness, tug of war between donor's control and recipient accountability, disjunctive layers of the reality of aid and development, and constantly changing stories and perspectives. Through these realities and impacts, the chapter examines the applicability of aid dependency views to this flow of aid and answers the question of this dissertation whether foreign aid is merely a source

of promoting dependency. Lastly, the chapter discusses what this holistic concept of Aidscape can contribute to geographical studies of foreign aid.

CHAPTER 2 JAPAN'S ODA

2.1. Introduction

ODA is conducted based on international responsibility and humanitarian standpoints; that ODA is Japan's single important tool for contributing to further development or peace and stability in the international community; that for benefit of the country's continued economic development, it is critically important for Japan, a small country that lacks natural resources, to maintain friendly ties with developing countries that have interdependent relationship with Japan (MOFA 2006).

In the ODA Charter of 2006, the Japanese government stated the purpose of foreign aid, more popularly called Official Development Assistance (ODA).¹⁶ Because the country does not have a military force, ODA is the sole tool by which Japan pursues mutually beneficial relationships with other countries in the international arena. In the scholarly discussion on foreign aid, however, the tendency has been to view Japan's ODA as a sophisticated tool of control over recipients to pursue its own interests. Ultimately, recipients of Japan's aid become more dependent on Japan for assistance. To begin to verify the applicability of this view to the case of Sāmoa, I will first examine Japan's intentions in giving, trying to understand the Japanese epistemology of foreign aid. This chapter therefore focuses on the donor side of the stories about aid that constitute the Samoan Aidscape. A brief review of the history, purpose, and contemporary debates on Japan's ODA will illustrate why Japan gives aid in the ways in which it does. The chapter examines the realities and meanings of Japan's ODA found in various sources in order to illustrate foreign aid as not one fixed activity, but as a constantly changing spatial practice composed of numerous interrelationships at international and national scales.

First, the context of descriptions about Japan as big and small country, or influential and insignificant power at the international level will be reviewed. This question accommodates Japan's shifting view of foreign aid from the mid-1940s to the present. Second, the Japanese cultural concepts of *honne* (real intention) and *tatemaie* (public statement) will be considered in the analysis of certain elements of Japanese diplomacy in

¹⁶ In this chapter, the term ODA is used in reference to foreign aid mainly because the term ODA is more popularly used in Japan than its Japanese term *seifu kaihatsu enjo* or *aido* ("aid").

order to explore the understudied meanings of ODA unique to Japanese. This chapter is based primarily on a literature review and the interviews conducted in Japan and Sāmoa in 2003, 2006, and 2007.

Figure 2.1. Map of Japan



Source: geology.com

2.2. Japan: A Big and Small Nation

Japan is an island nation that consists of five main islands and approximately 3,000 surrounding smaller islands, stretching along the Pacific coast of Asia, toward Siberia in the north, Taiwan and the Philippines in the south, and the Northern Mariana Islands in the east. Because of its wide range of latitudes, Japan has a variety of climates, having a cool temperate climate in north while enjoying subtropical climate in the southern islands. This island nation is big and strong in view of its population size and annual GNP. Japan's total population as of 2011 is approximately 127.8 million, the world's tenth largest country. This large population produces a great value of output with GDP per capita of about US\$45,000 making Japan one of the strongest economies in the world.

Yet, Japan is also a small and vulnerable country considering its land size and degree of self-sufficiency (Fig. 2.1). Japan's total land area is approximately 145,000 square miles (about 375,000 square kilometers), which is slightly smaller than the state of Montana in the U.S. About 80% of the national land is mountainous, leaving a small portion for agricultural use. Due to the limited national land for cultivation and the process of advancing industrialization, many people left agricultural work especially during the high economic growth era in the 1960s to 1970s, which resulted in lowering food self-sufficiency. Currently, Japan has less than 40% food self-sufficiency, and is the world's biggest net food importer. Japan also relies heavily on foreign countries for energy and raw materials for its extensively developed industries. In this regard, Japan as a country is a dependent economy that must maintain good relationships with the international community in order to secure necessary imports.

Foreign aid has been a most effective tool for the Japanese government to maintain good foreign relations. Japan provides multilateral aid to international organizations including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, and the United Nations (UN) and is one of the largest donors to these recipient organizations. Japan also is one of the largest bilateral donors, providing different types of bilateral aid including grants, concessional loans, and technical cooperation. From 1945 to 2003, the nation disbursed a cumulative total of US\$221 billion in aid to 185 countries and regions. It has dispatched approximately 70,000 experts and more than 25,000 volunteers to a total of 166 countries and regions, and accepted about 27,500 trainees from 176 countries and regions (MOFA

2006). Apparently, Japan is still a powerful aid donor, although its national budget for ODA has recently fallen significantly due to the country's economic recession. In 2009, Japan provided a total of US\$9.5 billion as ODA, 65% of which was bilateral aid.¹⁷

To understand Japan's diplomacy with foreign aid, the Japanese traditional concept of *honne* and *tatemae*, akin to Goffman's frontstage and backstage at the individual level, or theory and practice at the system level, will be employed.

2.3. *Honne* and *Tatemae*

In Japanese society, the set of concepts *honne* (real intention) and *tatemae* (public statement) describe how people's stated purposes differ from their actual motivations. The *honne* and *tatemae* dualism is a fundamental element of Japanese life that greatly contributes to the virtue of the Japanese way of doing things. *Honne* involves inner feelings while *tatemae* literally means "façade." *Tatemae* is one's public persona with which Japanese behave as they are expected to behave according to their social positions or circumstances, regardless of their *honne*. As the society places a great emphasis on *wa* (harmony) in human relationships, it is socially correct not to express one's *honne* in public so as to avoid confrontation and maintain harmony. Since Japanese are accustomed to this dual concept, they can easily and skillfully differentiate *honne* and *tatemae* embedded in everyday as well as official dialogues (Davies and Ikeno 2002).

The *tatemae* hedging is not only a social protocol used on the small scale, but also a significant political tool employed by leaders of Japan who maintain the difference between public disclosure and personal opinion (Fledman 2005). Generally speaking, Japanese government officials are reluctant to express explicitly anything beyond the official and broadly accepted view before a large audience. Instead, they hedge with *tatemae* by speaking in general terms and giving loose and ambiguous statements of philosophy and policy that can be interpreted in many ways. By doing so they can at least appear to say something professionally and preserve an image especially when they have little interest in or standing on a particular issue (Fledman 2005: 51).

¹⁷ Up to 2000, Japan was the world's largest donor for ten consecutive years. The ODA spending of \$9.5 billion in 2009 made Japan the 5th largest aid donor, after the U.S., France, Germany, and Britain. Of the bilateral aid Japan provided, US\$2.2 billion was given in a form of grant aid, US\$3.1 billion in technical cooperation, and US\$0.7 billion in loan (Statistics Bureau 2011: 129-130).

The use of *tatemae* diplomacy is not limited to domestic affairs but is also used in foreign affairs. Popularly, a prime minister makes comments on some international conflicts by saying with phrases like “Japan would *maemuki ni torikumi masu* (Japan would make positive efforts to solve it).” This is a typical *tatemae* statement to convey a sense of effort when prospects for accomplishment are small. The *honne* of this statement is: No plan or policy will be prepared by the Japanese government to embark on the issue. For such situations, the government often pledges ODA as an effective means to cover up evasive attitudes. This kind of *tatemae* aid is understandable for Japanese, but it may confuse non-Japanese audiences including aid critics who try hard to read the hidden meanings of Japan’s ODA which has no meaning other than diplomacy. Nester and Ampiah (1989), for example, questioned why the Japanese government did not undertake a major shift in policy toward the Middle East in the 1970s while it increased the ODA to the region. In the cases like this, taking the *honne/tatemae* dualism into account was necessary to understand the reality of Japan’s ODA. The following section traces the history of Japan’s ODA and how its role and meaning has been changed over time. It illustrates the context of Japan’s ODA that surfaces its *honne*.

2.4. Genealogy: The Multiple Realities of Japan’s ODA

2.4.1. Born as War Reparation

Japan’s ODA was born as war reparations the Japanese government paid to the countries in Southeast Asia under the guidance of U.S., the leading power of the Allied occupation of Japan between 1945 and 1952. While the Potsdam Declaration of 1945 prohibited Japan’s right to conduct any foreign policies independently, the U.S. took the initiative in conducting Japan’s war reparation negotiations. The initial reparation program nicknamed the Pauley Mission began in 1946 and lasted for three years. In 1949, Major General Frank R. McCoy, the U.S. member of Far Eastern Commission, announced that the U.S. would completely withdraw the war reparation program from Japan. The Allied countries resented this high-handed maneuver of the U.S. and urged a more agreeable settlement to be discussed at a conference in San Francisco. At this conference, the U.S. foreign policy advisor John Foster Dulles embarked upon a series of negotiations with Allied countries for a peace agreement with Japan. With Dulles’

proficient bargaining power, 48 Allied nations signed the Peace Treaty at San Francisco in 1951, allowing Japan to restore its independence and terminate the war reparation program (Takemae 2002).¹⁸ This agreement was much more favorable to Japan than the Japanese government had originally anticipated.

Supposedly, the war reparation was the compensation for the physical and psychological damage caused by the Japanese aggression on the Asian landscape during WWII. However, it became a convenient justification whereby not only Japan, but also the U.S. could pursue their own interests. The U.S. actually contrived to negotiate the Japanese peace agreement with the Allies. The foremost inducement for this decision was for Japan to sign another treaty with the U.S. in return. According to Takemae (2002), Washington was pressuring Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida to concede to the indefinite-term presence of U.S. forces and military bases in Japan, in exchange for a generous treaty agreement. In fact, just four hours after signing the Peace Treaty, Prime Minister Yoshida signed the US-Japan Security Treaty, allowing the U.S. to pursue its geopolitical agenda in East Asia (Takemae 2002). As a result of this treaty, Japan still hosts over 90 U.S. military bases and facilities on its national land.

On the other side of coin, the war reparation program brought a strategy for rebuilding Japan's devastated post-war economy while concluding the reparation negotiations. Under the Peace Treaty agreement, Japan paid the reparation in service, which included the construction of large-scale infrastructure. Through these projects, Japan expanded its markets into Southeast Asia, which helped revive its own economy. It was a win-win situation for Japan economically and diplomatically. As the Japanese government was seeking stimuli to boost the devastated economy, this windfall gave them an idea to launch Japan into the new arena of foreign relations such as foreign aid. At the same time, the war reparation program initially concentrated the geographic pattern of Japan's ODA in Asia (Yanagihara and Emig 1991: 38). During the next few decades, the government dramatically increased the amount of ODA, making Japan the largest donor country in the world.

¹⁸The Peace Treaty of San Francisco was formally implemented on 28 April 1952. Instead of signing this Treaty, some Allied countries like China later made separate peace agreements with Japan in 1952 while Russia is still pending.

2.4.2. Keizai Kyōryoku as Investment

From the 1950s to the 1970s, given the fact that the term *keizai kyōryoku* (economic cooperation) was used more widely than the term *kaihatsu enjo* (development assistance), it can be assumed that Japan's *honne* in aid during this time was primarily economic. In the studies of foreign aid, Japan's economic interests have extensively been discussed (Arase 1996; Hirata 2000; Kaneko 2006; Nishigaki and Shimomura 1999; Orr Jr 1989-1990, 1990; Rix 1989-1990; Yoshikawa 1999). In a sense, economically motivated aid at that time was not hidden but discussed openly in government publications. The MOFA (2003) states in the pamphlet *Japan's Official Development Assistance: Accomplishment and Progress of 50 years* that the objectives of ODA up to the 1970s were to expand Japan's overseas markets and to secure imports of raw materials from recipient countries for Japan's rapidly growing industries. Through the activity of disbursing aid, a beneficial effect on the Japanese economy was highly expected. David Arase (1996b) calls such economic-oriented aid "buying power," meaning that Japan gains more than what it spends as ODA.

In the early-1950s, Japan's economy did not look promising. When the Treaty of San Francisco marked the end of Allied occupation in May 1952, Japan regained the status of a sovereign nation after an interval of seven years (though Okinawa and other islands did not revert to Japan until 1972). The nation at that time was heavily dependent on overseas countries for the supply of food, energy, and raw materials with the support primarily from the U.S.¹⁹ Since American aid would soon be curtailed, Japan's true independence seemed to hinge on how quickly the economy would grow and acquire sufficient foreign exchange to expand exports. Yet, the outlook for a rapid expansion of exports was bleak for several reasons. Firstly, Japan had lost the markets in its overseas territories as WWII ended. Secondly, some Allied countries including Britain and France strongly opposed Japan's admittance to international trade agreements such as GATT, which created substantial trade barriers for Japan's exports (JBIC 2003b: 27-28).²⁰

¹⁹ From 1946 to 1956, Japan received a total of approximately \$5 billion from the U.S. in the form of aid. The U.S. aid was mainly used to finance the emergent procurement of daily needs and imports of industrial materials (Furuoka 2007). It financed nearly 40% of Japan's imports between 1945 and 1951 (Takagi 1995: 6).

²⁰ Japan was finally invited to join GATT in 1955, although 14 GATT countries including Britain and France invoked the Article 35 of the trade agreements that allowed the signatories to withhold application

Thirdly, when China joined the Korean War in 1950, the U.S. banned trade with China, causing serious disruptions for the Japan-China trade. Fourthly, the U.S. procurement for the Korean War that had created a small economic boom for the postwar economy disappeared when the armistice was signed in 1953. Consequently, Japan had accumulated a US\$2 billion trade deficit within the first six years of independence (JBIC 2003b: 21).

To revive the economy, Japan needed to enhance economic growth, which required an increase in imports. This however would aggravate the trade balance deficit and use up the stock of foreign exchange.²¹ So the government had to restrict imports and tighten finance while expanding exports. As for potential markets, the domestic market was still too small and the Euro-American markets were too competitive. Since China was not an option, the Southeast Asian markets appeared the most promising. But for this trade to be successful, Japan had to first settle the war reparation negotiations with the countries in the region.

To this end, Japan initiated reparation negotiations in 1951. The negotiations did not go smoothly at the beginning, however. According to Article 14 of the Peace Treaty, the reparation was to be paid by Japanese people's service while the reparation should not throw any foreign exchange burden upon Japan. The Southeast Asia side was not happy about such externally determined guidelines, considering the damage inflicted on their countries during WWII. The two sides eventually managed to negotiate by reinterpreting the meaning of "service" in the Article to include the transfer of capital goods from Japan (JBIC 2003b: 30-31). As a result, many of the reparations were paid with capital goods including the construction of infrastructure and industrial plants, based on the requests made by recipient governments.

The first agreement was made with Burma (currently Myanmar) in 1954, for which Japan constructed a hydroelectric power station in the Balu Chaung region. Negotiations followed with the Philippines in 1956 to construct roads, railways, and dams; with Indonesia in 1958 and South Vietnam in 1959 (JBIC 2003b: 30-31; Yoshikawa 1999: 60-

of tariff concessions from Japan. Therefore, negotiation over the Article 35 had been the important task of the Japanese government in the international trade relation for a long time. Britain and France finally withdrew the use of the Article 35 in 1962 (JBIC 2003b: 28).

²¹ This situation was so-called *kokusai shūshi no tenjō* (ceiling on international balance of payments), which created a severe obstacle for Japan's economic development until the 1960s (JBIC 2003b: 21).

61). For the countries that renounced their reparations including Laos and Cambodia, the government provided grants instead of “reparations,” as an appreciation of their renunciation, calling them quasi-reparations. These grants also provided capitals goods and constructed infrastructure (Yoshikawa 1999). Accordingly, the war reparation obligation came to finance the development projects of recipient countries rather than compensating for the suffering of the people in Southeast Asia caused by Japan’s aggression. It was in this context that the reparation program was replaced with *keizai kyōryoku* (economic cooperation) and for this reason, the Japanese government sees war reparations as the origin of Japan’s ODA (Arase 1996: 28).²²

Fortunately for Japan, the *keizai kyōryoku* not only fulfilled its war obligation, but also helped carry out the government’s foremost mission of expanding exports. The funds for these reparation-related projects were distributed to Japanese firms that actually undertook the project, instead of being distributed directly to the recipient governments. This arrangement created an ideal business opportunity for the Japanese firms to advance into the targeted markets in Southeast Asia. These reparation procurements were still marginal relative to the demands for exports rising domestically, but the significant contribution of *keizai kyōryoku* opened the window to new overseas markets that Japanese firms desperately wanted. In the meantime, *keizai kyōryoku* became a strategically important tool to increase exports and boost Japan’s economy. Because of this experience, the term *keizai kyōryoku* is still often used interchangeably with the English term ODA as well as the Japanese term *kaihatsu enjo* (development assistance), suggesting the legacy of Japan’s economic-oriented aid.

In the mid-1950s, when the government finally reached the war settlement with Burma, Japan was at the beginning stage of so-called “take off” for further industrialization, requiring more secure sources of raw materials. For that, *keizai kyōryoku* appeared as a desirable tool for Japan to establish an interdependent relationship with recipient countries that have rich and undeveloped natural resources. A strong voice rose from politicians and the business circle, demanding the increase of favorable *keizai kyōryoku*. According to Arase, such pressure influenced the

²² The term *keizai kyōryoku* (economic cooperation) began appearing around 1952 when the government was discussing the way to promote Japan’s exports possibly by participating in economic cooperation projects to Southeast Asia implemented by the U.S.(JBIC 2003b: 34).

government's decision over the direction of ODA (Arase 1996: 41). In 1954, Japan joined the Colombo Plan to support the cooperative economic and social development of Asia and the Pacific. This marked the official beginning of Japan's ODA (MOFA 2006a).²³

At that point, Japan was, however, financially incapable of providing the long-term assistance required to develop natural resources in those countries (Arase 1996: 38; JBIC 2003b: 35-36). In this context, Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi proposed a bilateral scheme for yen loans that would solve all problems. In 1958, the government started bilateral yen loans as part of the World Bank Consortium. The first yen loan went to India in 1958 for the development of an iron ore mine in Goa. It offered the repayment of US\$50 million with a three-year grace period in return for assuring the stable supply of iron ore to Japan for the next ten years (Arase 1996: 39-40; Yoshikawa 1999: 63). Subsequently, the government provided bilateral yen loans to other countries for the projects to develop the ground for natural resources, including the development of oil fields (Indonesia), submarine oil fields (Myanmar), natural gas (Myanmar), iron and steel mills (Brazil), and copper mines (Zaire) (Arase 1996: 41-49; MOFA 2007e). The import of raw materials from these resource development projects ensured the stable supply of raw materials for the nation's rapidly advancing industrialization. The government called these yen loan projects *kaihatsu tōshi* (developmental investment), implying the *honno* that aid is "an investment in developing a supply of strategic raw materials for Japan" (Yoshikawa 1999: 65).

Further, the yen loan projects were closely linked to the Income Doubling-Plan of 1960 proposed by Prime Minister Daisaku Ikeda to double the national income within ten years. This export-oriented policy redirected Japan's industrial structure from light to heavy by promoting the export of heavy industrial products and securing the markets for heavy industry firms (Hirata 2000: 48-49). In achieving this goal, the yen loan projects that financed large-scale infrastructure played an important role. Such aid projects included the building of hydroelectric power dams (Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, and Nepal) and thermal power stations (Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam),

²³ The actual beginning of economic cooperation was in the following year, 1955, when Japan received trainees for technical training and dispatched specialists. The total amount for this aid was 38.4 million yen or about US\$358,000 (Utsumi and Murai 2006: 32).

and the construction of a shipyard (Malaysia) (MOFA 2007e; Utsumi and Murai 2006: 36-37; Yoshikawa 1999). In the mid-1960s, yen loan aid came to account for more than half of the entire ODA budget (Kaneko 2006: 57-58).²⁴ During this period, ODA was a way for Japan to reintegrate into the world economy. In 1964, Japan joined the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), setting out to become a leading donor indeed.²⁵

2.4.3. Japan, Inc.

In his book entitled *Buying Power*, Arase (1996b) argues that Japanese private firms were key players in the implementation of *keizai kyōryoku* at the beginning and growing stage of ODA. Since some private firms had experience in designing and implementing development projects in developing countries from pre-war times, their views and policy recommendations were often incorporated in the formulation of ODA from the early stage. From there, Japanese private firms increasingly gained control over the implementation of aid projects in tactical coordination with both Japanese and recipient governments, and ultimately came to govern the “aid industry”—businesses opportunities associated with ODA. To a large degree, the Japanese government helped establish a culture of ODA in which Japanese firms can reap greatest benefits, believing that benefit to Japanese firms would serve the best interest of the nation (Kaneko 2006: 56-57). In this political economy context, ODA appeared as a most worthwhile international business affair as if Japan were a commercial company jointly operated by the public and private sectors of the nation. For this reason, some scholars including Murai (2006) call Japan “Japan, Inc.,” emphasizing the mercantile-driven nature of state affairs including ODA at that time.

Apparently, negotiations of war reparations had taken place at the government level. Yet, some of the reparation-related projects were actually initiated by Japanese consulting firms or trading companies who identified potential development projects in the designated reparation recipient countries. These companies proposed ideas for

²⁴ The proportion of loans in the total amount of ODA has decreased considerably. For 2011, loans accounted for 11.5% of the entire ODA budget while grant aid accounted for 37% and technical cooperation for 51.5% (Statistics Bureau 2011: 130).

²⁵ DAC is a forum for selected member countries of OECD to discuss and set guidance for issues surrounding the development of developing countries.

development projects to the recipient governments, persuading them to request the Japanese government to fund their identified projects under the war reparation scheme. A good example of this procedure was the construction of a hydroelectric power station in Burma, which was funded under the war reparation negotiation of 1954. One year prior to this negotiation, Yutaka Kubota, the president of Nihon Kōei, the pioneer and largest consulting firm in the construction industry in Japan, visited Burma during his business trip to Southeast Asia in order to research some potential dam construction sites. Kubota was a dynamic businessman, who had undertaken numerous development projects, mainly the construction of large-scale dams, in Korea, Hainan Island, and Manchuria under the Japan's colonial administration. On this trip, he had a chance to meet the vice-minister of Ministry of Civil Engineering and Construction of Burma, to whom Kubota suggested the construction of a hydroelectric power dam at the Balu Chaung River. Kubota proposed that this large-scale project be requested officially from the Japanese government for funding as part of the war reparation. In the process of reparation negotiation between Burma and Japan, Kubota played the role of moderator and persuaded Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida, who was originally reluctant to accept this proposal. Kubota told Yoshida that this project would prime the pump for Japan's exports and would bring enormous benefits to private firms. Upon his successful persuasion and negotiation, the Japanese government agreed to fund the Balu Chang Dam construction (Arase 1996: 30-31; Sumi 2004: 130-133).

Nihon Kōei won the contract as the consulting engineer and Kajima Construction Company was appointed by Kubota as the main contractor for this construction. The Balu Chang Project became the first overseas project undertaken by the Japanese construction firm in the postwar era. This project set the pattern for reparation-related projects as well as subsequent ODA projects in terms of public-private sector coordination for Japan's aid.²⁶ In other words, aid became an important source of business for Japan, Inc. Meanwhile, this project set the foundation for Japan's request-based ODA. As to the request-based system, MOFA explains that it is a way to respect the recipient's sovereignty by giving priority to a recipient's request (Arase 1994: 179-

²⁶ Other dam construction projects including the Da Nhim Dam project in South Vietnam, the Nam Ngum Dam in Laos, and the Karangates Dam in Indonesia, were also initiated by Kubota (Sumi 2004: 135-137).

180; Furuoka 2007: 10). Regardless of what *tatemaie* says, the history of ODA revealed that Japan's *honne* for the request-based aid was to give Japanese business a boost in developing markets. This private firm driven, request-based system has become the core fuel for running the mechanism of the notorious "tied aid."

2.4.4. Tied Aid

Tied aid refers to a type of aid that comes with strings attached to procure goods and services produced in the donor country. One of the major criticisms of tied aid is that it obligates recipient countries to purchase donor-designated, uncompetitive priced items, which results in reducing the overall value of aid. Tied aid, on the other hand, guarantees sales for the designated private firms of donor countries in unfamiliar markets of recipient countries for their products and services. In this sense, tied aid is a clever method by which donors can expand their buying power via recipients.

The scenario of Japan's tied aid was commonly as follows. First, consulting or trading firms identify potential projects, and potential recipient government to make an official request for the Japanese government to fund the projects under the aid scheme. In doing so, Japanese firms might even bribe high-ranking local officials in order to use them as insider collaborators to lobby for their projects. It has repeatedly been reported that some recipient governments helped Japanese firms to exploit the tied aid projects as they found interests at either individual or national level or both in doing so, often by accepting a bribe from these companies (Arase 1996; Ashitate 2007; Inoue 2006; Sumi 2004; Yoshikawa 1999). Second, when the project request was submitted and the Japanese government approved the request, then, the private firm contacted appropriate bureaucrats and members of Diet who were influential over ODA implementation to help them rig the public bidding for the projects and the procurement for the project equipment (Arase 1996: 31; Furuoka 2007: 11; Yoshikawa 1999: 161-162). Evidently, bribery still remains a common practice among the member of Japan's aid industry (Murai 2006).²⁷

²⁷ Top officials of Pacific Consultant International, the leading consulting firm in the field of construction, confessed to Asahi Newspaper that giving public servants overseas a kickback is the key ingredient in winning the bid in the ODA business (Yoshikawa 1999).

Through these lucrative contracts with the tied aid projects, Japanese firms advanced their businesses' opportunities in recipient countries. Concurrently, the mechanism of tied aid helped politicians and high government officials enjoy their collusive relationship. Such corruption often resulted in lowering the quality of ODA projects and overcharging for goods and services. This is the nature of aid vulnerable to corruption that Bauer criticizes (see Chapter 1). Given that, it can be argued that Japanese firms, the Japanese government, and recipient governments were responsible for some ODA projects that failed to deliver their initial objectives (Yoshikawa 1999: 161-162). Nevertheless, tied aid continued to account for 100% of Japan's ODA projects until the 1970s when the criticism from international community for its protectionist behavior became intense.

2.4.5. *Gaiatsu* and the Geographic Distribution

From the mid-1970s to the 1990s, as the nation made significant achievements in economic development, Japan dramatically increased its ODA budget and became one of the largest donors among the DAC (Development Assistance Committee) members. During this period, Japan's ODA was diversified in terms of its geographic distribution, implementation system, and types of projects, shifting toward less economic-oriented and untied aid. In this process of change, *gaiatsu* (external pressure) was one of the most influential factors (Arase 1996; Hirata 2000; Miyashita 1999; Orr Jr 1990; Rix 1989-1990; Yamamoto 1989-1990; Yanagihara and Emig 1991; Yoshikawa 1999). *Gaiatsu* in the context of foreign relations generally means pressure from foreign countries particularly from the U.S. "Specifically, Tōkyo is highly sensitive to U.S. reaction to its foreign aid policy, and it often changes the course of action under explicit or tacit pressure from Washington," said Miyashita (1999: 696). Since the reparation time, the U.S. had been involved in shaping Japan's ODA both openly and secretly. As Orr (1990: 113) mentions, diplomatic protocol definitely makes it difficult to identify which American activities actually influence the Japanese government's decisions about ODA. Yet, some cases explicitly indicate American pressure. Official records of these cases can be traced as far back as the 1960s when the U.S. presidents began to openly request Japan to support the American interests in aid, calling it "burden-sharing" (Orr Jr 1989-

1990: 109-131; Yoshikawa 1999: 87-88). One consequence of such American pressure can be found in the way in which the geographic distribution of Japan's ODA was altered.

Until the mid-1970s, Japan's ODA had been distributed predominantly to Asia, for such key reasons as its origin in the war reparation to the Asian countries, the nation's close proximity to the region, and its resource-oriented motivation that identified Asia as an ideal area for *kaihatsu tōshi* (development investment). Yet, the Asian concentration was also a result of American influence over Japan (Yoshikawa 1999: 88). In the 1970s, when the U.S. urged its allies including Japan to share its economic burden in stopping the spread of communism into Southeast Asia, Taiwan, and South Korea, Prime Minister Eisaku Satō responded by increasing Japan's aid to these Asian countries to stabilize their economies. Consequently, Japan's ODA continued to concentrate highly on Asia, Southeast Asia in particular, even after the completion of war reparations.

In the 1980s, after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, the U.S. strategic focus shifted to the Middle East. During this period, Japan expanded its geographic distribution again, disbursing a larger amount to regions other than Asia including the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa. Japan's ODA especially to the Middle East increased considerably from 0.8% in 1972 to 24.5% in 1977. In its publication *50 Years of Japan's ODA*, MOFA stated the reason for this significant increase was economic: "The Middle East in particular had high priority in Japan's ODA encouraged by the First Oil Shock in 1973" (MOFA 2004a). Such reasoning is plausible; yet, Yoshikawa (1999: 88-90) regards the resource-oriented motivation as *tatemaie*. He argues that Japan's *honne* was the pressure from the U.S. who demanded Japan to increase its aid to their strategically interested countries in the Middle East and Africa including Pakistan (neighbor of Soviet-influenced Afghanistan), Turkey (strategically important in the Middle East), Egypt (key to the peace in Arab-Israel conflict), Sudan (geopolitically important in the rise of regional instability), and Jamaica (preventing from allying with Communist Cuba and growing interest in the Caribbean Basin) (Orr Jr 1990: 109-119). In view of these events, the geographic pattern of Japan's ODA distribution is not a product of Japan's strategy but a reflection of the U.S. geopolitical interest that changes from time to time.

One might wonder why Tōkyo was so sensitive to the U.S. pressure, considering Japan's rising economic and political power in the world. Miyashita (1999) attributes Japan's sensitivity to its asymmetrical dependency on the U.S.—Japan depends more on the U.S. than vice versa. Although Japan has successfully restored economic and political wealth, the U.S. remains as a big brother, providing not only the largest economic market but also security to a nation that has no military. Under Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, which went into effect on May 3, 1947, Japan forever renounces war as a sovereign right of the nation as well as the use of military force as means of settling international disputes. Japan now has a military-like self-defense force called *Jieitai*, but the scope of their activities especially outside of the territory of Japan is somewhat limited, at least on the surface. To fill the vacuum in the national security, the US-Japan Security Treaty promised that the U.S. military stationed in Japan will provide defense in the case of external attack.

For this reason, Japan is more likely to cooperate with American interests than confront, weighing the risk of damaging the Japan-US relation against the cost of giving aid to countries where Japan has few interests (Miyashita 1999). Kimio Fujita described his experience as the director of Economic Cooperation Bureau in MOFA in the mid-1980s, at the time of President Reagan when the U.S. was facing deficit finances:

Since the U.S. did not have enough funds, every time an international crisis occurred, they asked us, the rich nation, for all kinds of things. In this situation, ODA was one of the very few effective and active tools that the U.S. recognized in avoiding the conflict between the two countries (Fujita 2003: 114).

In this way, ODA was and still is a most effective item of barter with which Japan ensures markets and national security in the context of the Japan-US relations.

2.4.6. *Gaiatsu* on the Quantity and Quality of Aid

Another type of *gaiatsu* is criticism from the international community, which has extensively influenced Japan's ODA. In the 1970s, as Japan recorded large economic surpluses, the U.S. and other donor countries increasingly pressured Japan to enlarge the volume of ODA. Although its net disbursement was already increased, Japan's ODA budget at 1970 accounted for only 0.23% of GNI, which was one of the lowest and below

the average of 0.34% among DAC members (Lancaster 2007: 115).²⁸ At the Bonn G-7 Summit in 1978, Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda agreed to double the disbursement of Japan's ODA within three years. Subsequently, the government continued to double its ODA budget until 1992. This resulted in an annual spending increase over six fold to reach \$9.2 billion (Kōdansha 2008). MOFA states this sudden increase was an endogenous action when "Japan realized that Japan is in a position to promote economic cooperation for developing countries from its own standpoint" (MOFA 2003). Nevertheless, it was likely that Japan responded to *gaiastu* (Hirata 2000; Lancaster 2007; Yanagihara and Emig 1991).

As a result of the dramatic increase, in 1989, Japan became the largest single donor of ODA to multilateral development agencies including the World Bank, ADB, and IMF. In the following year, Japan finally surpassed the U.S. and became the number one bilateral aid donor in the world. Around this time, MOFA began to propagate the idea that "ODA is a necessary expense of a nation with great economic power" or "ODA is an essential responsibility of a peaceful and wealthy nation to the world community" (Kaneko 2006: 69). Statements as such indicate a shift in Japan's ideology about the benefit of ODA, from a straight economic approach to a more horizontal view of providing ODA to improve Japan's image, which ultimately brings benefit to the nation.

In the 1980s, criticism rose especially from other aid donors who questioned the quality of Japan's ODA including its commercially oriented allocation of projects. Historically, Japan's ODA had concentrated highly on large-scale physical infrastructure projects such as the construction of dams, ports, and roads. This pattern originated in the way in which the war reparation-related projects were initiated by private Japanese firms. Until the late-1980s, Japan continued the same allocation pattern in which infrastructure construction accounted for 55% of the total ODA projects. This rate was twice as high as the DAC average of 27% and different from DAC norms that focus on basic human needs and poverty alleviation (Lancaster 2007: 119; Yanagihara and Emig 1991: 50-51). The DAC and other donors pressured Japan to allocate its ODA more to soft infrastructure including primary health care and education, and to be less commercial.

²⁸ The target of ODA/GNI ratio set by DAC is 0.7%. Japan's aid has not been improved in terms of this ratio as the ODA budget at 2009 accounted only for 0.18% of GNI (Statistics Bureau 2011: 129)

In response to growing criticism, Japan increased a number of projects aimed to improve social infrastructure and services, from less than 10% to around 30% of the entire ODA project (Lancaster 2007: 119). Nevertheless, those projects still involved the construction of physical facilities such as hospitals and school buildings (Lancaster 2007: 119). Altering the allocation pattern based on physical assets was difficult because of the request-based system that motivates Japanese consulting firms to identify potential aid projects primarily in the fields of their expertise such as construction, so that they can manipulate the bid. That said, as long as the private sector was involved, Japan's ODA could not become purely humanitarian.

Accordingly, the orientation of Japan's ODA was shaped and reshaped by *gaiatsu* in terms of its allocation pattern, quantity, quality, and so forth. Orr (1990: 479) attributes Japan's responsiveness to *gaiatsu* to a fear of becoming isolated from the international community as Japan once was during and after the WWII. Because Japan is a nation of limited resources with no military force, the country must rely on other countries. For that, the government, especially MOFA, has been working hard to improve the nation's image in the international community by building a good relationship with foreign countries and regions. In this context, ODA is the most important and effective means of diplomacy that will eventually bring benefit to Japan in securing nation. Besides this security purpose, there is a more humanistic reason why Japan is sensitive to *gaiatsu* on its ODA. Japan takes heed of it because the country sees foreign aid as an instrument to improve the national prestige. To explain this further, it is necessary to go back to the early stage of postwar when Japan was a recipient of foreign aid.

2.4.7. The Origin of Diplomatic Motivation

After WWII, Japan received an enormous amount of foreign aid particularly from the U.S. in order to recover from the confusion and devastation of the postwar period. When the Japanese government embarked on becoming an aid donor in the mid-1950s, Japan was yet to be financially ready since the nation was still working on rebuilding industries and social infrastructure of its own with international assistance including loans from the

World Bank.²⁹ Although Japan joined the Colombo Plan, the government did not have sufficient foreign currency to implement such cooperation. In fact, when Japan invited the first group of trainees from neighboring Asian countries in 1955 to study rice cultivation and machine maintenance under the economic cooperation scheme, the government needed to apply for U.S. aid to cover the costs of their airfares and other related expenses. In other cases, the government had to undertake technical cooperation projects with financial assistance from the UN (Fujita 2000: 17). This strange status of being an aid donor-recipient made the Japan-funded Asian trainees surprised upon their arrival in Japan. They saw the sheer poverty evident in the country and noted that some of living conditions and other circumstances were worse than that of their own countries (Fujita 2000: 18). Realizing that Japan was not a most wealthy country, they must have wondered why Japan tried so hard to bite off more than it could chew.

Japan wanted to become an aid donor because it seemed a sensible way to regain recognition as a respected member of the international community following its defeat in WWII. Until Japan was admitted into the UN in 1956, the country had yet to be accepted back to the international community because of its aggressive wartime activities. Because of this experience, international recognition was something that the postwar Japanese urgently needed in order to restore the dignity and national pride they lost with the defeat (Yoshikawa 1999: 60). To achieve this goal, Japanese leaders thought that taking part in international cooperation through aid was a viable way to nurture the world's respect since the war reparation program had already carved the path (Fujita 2000; JICA 1994). In this way, another *honne* of Japan's ODA is the diplomacy deeply rooted in the belief that national pride could be regained from becoming a top aid donor thereby gaining international recognition. For this reason, the government is sensitive to the *gaiatsu* on ODA, considering it may interrupt Japan's image as respectable aid donor.

²⁹ Loans from the World Bank that accumulated from 1953 to 1966 reached \$860 million, making Japan the second largest borrower following India (Nishigaki and Shimomura 1999: 144). The assistance was used for 34 development projects including the construction of railways (e.g., the Tōkaido Bullet train from Tōkyo to Ōsaka), highways (e.g., the Tōmei Highway), and dams (e.g., the Kurobe hydroelectric dam) (Furuoka 2007: 5).

2.4.8. Diplomatic Aid: *Otsukiai Enjo* and *Omiyage Gaikō*

Accordingly, Japan provides aid for diplomacy. Such diplomatic aid can be best represented by *otsukiai enjo* and *omiyage gaikō*. *Otsukiai enjo*, which literally means sociability aid, describes aid that is principally for the sake of friendship or for the preservation of *wa* or harmony. The aid that is provided as a result of pressure from the U.S. can be categorized as *otsukiai enjo* since its main purpose was to preserve a good relationship with the U.S. The function of another diplomatic aid, *omiyage gaikō*, is more explicit as it is a souvenir, which high-ranking Japanese officials bestow on a country visited. This diplomatic souvenir is commonly given in the form of aid projects or an increased amount of aid to the host country. *Omiyage gaikō* is used not only as a souvenir Japanese diplomats bring, but also as a gift from Japan to take home, when top-ranking officials from overseas visit Japan or when Japan hosts a conference that invites leaders from particular regions (see Chapter 3).

The function of *otsukiai enjo* and *omiyage gaikō* is obvious to the eyes of Japanese. Although the government may give some plausible *tatema*e statements in presenting the aid, their *honne* is normally not more than diplomacy—to give a good impression of Japan. Nevertheless, some aid critics are puzzled when they try to dig out hidden intentions of such purely diplomatic aid. This often results in constructing theories that are far from the reality of Japan's ODA. One geographer mystified by cross-purposes in Japan's aid to China is Muldavin (2000). In his article *The Geographic Paradox of Japanese Development Assistance to China*, Muldavin carefully analyzes Japan's aid policy toward China, arguing that is paradoxical. Japan's policy does appear paradoxical when one tries to read the *tatema*e policy for *otsukiai enjo* or *omiyage gaikō* that barely contains meanings. If he had taken into account of the *honne* of diplomatic aid, the apparently paradoxical situation would have become more explainable.

2.4.9. Untying Aid

In the 1970s, an increased *gaiatsu* on Japan demanded the government untie its ODA. Since its creation in 1961, the DAC strongly encouraged its member donors to increase the proportion of untied aid, aid that invites all interested parties to the bid for the procurement of goods and services. Despite the DAC suggestion, Japan's ODA was

almost entirely tied to its purchases, procurements, and contracting. In the early to mid-1970s, as the international criticism of Japan's yen loans for its unsatisfactory project results—environmental degradation and burden of repayments—became intense, the government declared its intention to untie aid. Since then, the number of untied projects gradually increased. By 1987, untied aid came to account for 72% of yen loans, which is much higher than the DAC average of 55% in the same year (Yanagihara and Emig 1991: 52-53).

Still, Japan's ODA was criticized, firstly because only yen loans were being untied, leaving grant aid and technical cooperation being tied; secondly, suspected collusion between Japanese bureaucrats and the private sector to ensure that Japanese firms would still win a large share of aid contracts (Lancaster 2007: 120). Further, Kaneko (2006: 72) pointed out that some potentially misleading statistics obscured the actual situation of “untied.” The percentages indicated the proportion of untied aid was often based on the number of projects undertaken, but did not necessarily represent a proportion of untied projects in the total amount of money spent as yen loans. In other instances, the contractors who won the bids were local to recipient country but controlled by Japanese capital (Preeg 1991: 115-116). In view of these arguments, the numeric figures did not always reflect the degree of untied at the grassroots levels.

Meanwhile, a counterargument grew domestically. Nishigaki (2000: 60) argued that the share of contracts won by Japanese firms was no longer high at all, dropping from 52% in 1982 to 27% in 1988 (Orr Jr 1990: 67). In fact, Japanese firms, especially in the field of construction and engineering, were fiercely lobbying against the government's decision on further untying aid (Lancaster 2007: 120). Consulting firms claimed that their intermediary role had been the key for successful transfers of Japanese technology, so they should be entitled to have the project orders. Trading companies, on the other hand, showed their loss of interest in the aid industry, saying that furthering untying aid made their business more difficult. They were no longer guaranteed of winning the bid even for the projects they originally identified (Orr Jr 1990: 65).

The former director of MOFA's Economic Cooperation Bureau Masamichi Hanabusa (1991: 92-93) argued that it was not fair to attack the Japanese way of ODA because DAC criteria for assessing the quality of aid were based primarily on the norms

of Western donors for their own development agendas and were often different from that of Japan. Yoshikawa argued that the quality of ODA should not be judged by the tying status or the amount repatriated to Japan, but needs to be evaluated by how ODA is effectively and efficiently deployed (Yoshikawa 2003: 373). Even though the international community criticized commercially driven ODA, without the economic benefit, Japan could not possibly have been able to disburse a large amount of aid annually to a wide range of recipients. Therefore, the primary concern should be whether or not Japan's ODA was valuable to the majority of recipients.

Despite these counter arguments, the Japanese government proceeded with untying aid in response to the *gaiatsu*. It was not only outside observers who criticized the quality of Japan's ODA but also Japanese taxpayers who began to question the effectiveness of aid in terms of whether their tax money spent as ODA was wisely used. As the government furthered untying aid, which would possibly bring less direct benefit to the donor nation, more Japanese citizens began to pressure the government for a clearer explanation about principles of ODA. Such pressure arose domestically, called *naiatsu*.

2.4.10. *Naiatsu*

In the mid-1980s, *naiatsu* (internal pressure) on the government to reform Japan's ODA began to grow especially when Japanese media started to investigate issues around ODA and alert the public to the realities and ineffectiveness of Japan's ODA. One example is a special issue entitled *Enjo Tojōkoku Nippon* (Japan: The Developing Country of Aid) published by Asahi Newspaper Company in 1985 which revealed the collusive relationship between the public and private sectors in operating ODA (Asahi Shinbum 1985). In the following year, ODA received much public attention when the so-called Marcos scandal revealed the institutional corruption of yen loan projects in the Philippines under the President Ferdinand Marcos. This scandal disclosed the shady inner workings of Japan's ODA that made Japan's aid contractors systematically pay a 10-15% of kickback of yen loans to Marcos and his family in the 1970s (Arase 1994: 114). Following this shocking news, the media began to expand its coverage of ODA, raising the awareness of citizens on how ineffectively their taxes were spent in the

developing world. Ironically, the extensive media coverage of the Marcos scandal helped promote the previously unfamiliar English term “ODA” to the general public in Japan (Hirata 2000: 119-120).

In the wake of the Marcos scandal, voices from civil society about the re-evaluation of ODA became loud, although not many nongovernmental organizations (NGO) were involved in the ODA issues until the late-1980s. REAL (Reconsider Aid Citizen’s League) led by Sophia University Professor Yoshinori Murai was the first nongovernmental group dedicated to ODA issues that looked into unsuccessful cases of aid projects and misused funds in order to pressure the government for improvement (Hirata 2002: 13). REAL asked the government to clarify the ODA policies and create a transparent system of procedures. It was, however, not easy for the government to clarify the direction of ODA because the four ministries that operate Japan’s ODA had conflicting principles and interests, making coherent aid difficult.

2.4.11. Fragmented Administration

Until the new century arrived, the four ministries that played leading roles in ODA implementation were Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and the Economic Planning Agency (EPA). In this so-called four-ministry system, each ministry had its own interests and agendas related to aid. Theoretically, MOFA prioritizes diplomatic interests and foreign policy in ODA while MOF controlled the budget for yen loans and other *keizai kyōryoku* (economic cooperation) activities. MITI pursues economic agendas in ODA through maintaining close relations with private firms promoting Japanese goods and services. EPA undertakes overall economic planning for the nation. Under these four ministries, other semi-governmental organizations work intimately with the ministries in coordinating and implementing ODA projects. Those organizations include the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) that manages yen loans, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) that coordinates and implements technical cooperation and later grant aid projects.³⁰

³⁰ JICA was formally called the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA), established in 1961 as an official government agency to handle technical cooperation usually when Japanese capital equipment was exported to recipient countries.

The role of each ministry and organization is vertically and horizontally intertwined at different levels, making the implementation of ODA cumbersome and opaque. At the same time, the vertically segmented administration made the process of ODA implementation rather slow, taking at least two or three years to actually start a project unless it has a special priority (Yoshikawa 1999: 82). Because it involves a wide range of actors with diverse interests, a certain amount of rivalry exists within the four-ministry system. In the case of tied aid, distinctive viewpoints about the use of ODA particularly between MOFA and MITI created disagreement on the direction of the nation's aid.³¹ As its main interests lie in diplomacy, MOFA has tried to meet OECD's suggestion to untie aid while MITI continued to see tied aid as a reasonable form of *keizai kyōryoku* for the nation's economy. Such sectoral rivalry has made Japan unable to establish a sole ministry or institution that organizes and operates all aid affairs in the coherent way that other donors do (Arase 1996: 71; Yoshikawa 1999: 69).

Another instance of fragmented interest is the use of diplomatic aid. From the perspective of MOFA, *otsukiai enjo* (sociability aid) and *omiyage gaikō* (souvenir aid) are diplomatic practices necessary to improve Japan's image and strengthen foreign relations. However, such a less economically and politically significant flow of aid is not always welcomed by MITI whose central concern in ODA is economic advancement of the nation. Therefore, each proposal for diplomatic aid must be treated as an individual case according to its diplomatic significance to Japan in the context of worldly affairs. Due to such bureaucratic negotiations and the impromptu nature of the diplomatic aid, it is difficult for the government to set forth consistent policies for ODA.

Consequently, the four-ministry system fragmented the interests of ODA, making Japan incapable of developing coherent national aid goals. For this reason, it may be inaccurate simply to assume that Japan's ODA is entirely economic-driven even if that is

³¹ Apparently, the Ministry of Economics, Trade, and Industry (METI or formerly MITI) still prefers to use the term *keizai kyōryoku* (economic cooperation) to refer to ODA in their official publications. In response to my e-mail inquiry about the use of term *keizai kyōryoku*, a METI representative explained as follows. There is no difference in meaning between the two terms, *keizai kyōryoku* and ODA as far as the government policy is concerned. In a wider context, there is a slight difference between the two terms, however. While the term ODA is limited to the development assistance officially organized by the government, the term *keizai kyōryoku* includes assistance organized by private firms or NGOs (E-mail Communication May 1, 2008). This comment implies the connection between the Ministry and private firms in its operation of aid projects drawn from the ODA budget and possibly from other private funds.

the case of MITI. Unfortunately, some aid critics failed to see this nature of fragmented interests and constructed an economic-driven theory to describe incorrectly the various ways in which the aid from Japan operates.

2.4.12. The *Tatemaie* Charter

In 1992, the government responded to both *gaiatsu* and *naiatsu* demands and created an official statement that clearly outlined principles of ODA. This ODA Charter of 1992 was the first official document that laid out the main objectives and philosophies of Japan's aid. The Charter stipulated four main principles: 1) humanitarian considerations, 2) promotion of the interdependent relationship between Japan and the partner countries, 3) environmental concerns in socioeconomic development, and 4) support for self-help efforts of developing countries for their economic development. The Charter also stated that Japan does not provide aid for military use or the production of mass destruction weapons and missiles. This declaration provided a coherent rationale for Japan's ODA, making it less opaque and more open to public scrutiny. Along with the adoption of a Charter, the government established several organizations to undertake research and strengthen evaluations and training programs as a way to improve the operation of ODA. Meanwhile, MOFA began to promote the national importance of ODA through such activities as creating the International Development Plaza in Tōkyō, extending its ODA home page, and publishing annual reports that aim to gain wider public support (MOFA 2004b).

Despite all the efforts the government made, I see this Charter as *tatemaie* aimed primarily to smooth over what was lacking in ODA such as a clear philosophy, humanitarian concerns, and transparency which had been pointed out by the international community as well as the taxpayers. In other words, the principles outlined in the Charter are not necessarily the real objectives of Japan's ODA but are merely a response to criticism received. Japan may not have been capable of endogenously creating coherent policies for ODA for two reasons. First, the fragmented interests and on-going competitions of the four-ministry system of aid hindered Japan from unifying decision-making authority at cabinet level (Rix 1989-1990: 463). Secondly, because their reflexive nature that tries to please different types of *gaiastu* and *naiatsu*, the Japanese

government responded to fluctuating demands and dealt with each claim on a case-by-case basis, which made the orientation of ODA also fluctuating. For these reasons, Japan could not establish concrete and coherent policies to guide the entire ODA operation. This lack of coherent policy remained the same even after ODA launched a new phase in the 21st century.

In the mid-1990s, Japan's ODA fell considerably, largely due to repercussions of the collapse of the bubble economy in earlier years. It has steadily decreased since, dropping Japan from the top to a lower ranking donor.³² The government has faced the challenge of promoting public support for ODA in order for Japan to get back to the position of the world's largest aid donor. In this context, the government announced the new direction for ODA and revised its Charter.

2.5. Challenges to Japan's ODA in the 21st Century

2.5.1. Sadako Ogata and New JICA

In 2003, the government revised the ODA Charter for the first time in 11 years, in order to:

...further upgrade Japan's ODA in terms of strategy, mobility, transparency, and efficiency, as well as promoting a wider range of public participation and clear understanding about ODA, domestically and internationally, with the consideration of internal and international changes of the environment for ODA (MOFA 2004b).

The new ODA Charter claimed to encompass the view of diverse groups within and outside of Japan and to strength the collaboration with NGOs. Some institutional reforms were also announced in the Charter. MOFA would come to play a central role in coordinating and implementing ODA while JICA would become an independent institution that implements aid activities without the supervision of MOFA. One most remarkable reform decisions was the appointment of Sadako Ogata as the President of JICA.

Ogata was a dynamic leader with both academic and empirical knowledge about development. She served as the UN High Commission for Refugees from 1991 to 2000 after serving in the UN as an independent expert and Japan's representative for many years. She was also an outstanding academic figure who served as Dean, Professor, and

³² Japan ranked number five on the ODA donor rankings for the fiscal year of 2007.

Director of various academic institutions including Sophia University and the International Christian University in Tōkyō after receiving a Ph.D. in Political Science from University of California at Berkeley. With this strong background in the field of development, Ogata set an ambitious agenda for the new JICA based on humanitarian principles with a great emphasis on the field-based approach.

Since Ogata's appointment was non-traditional in a sense that the president of JICA is usually retired elite from MOFA, this decision was expected to bring a major change to Japan's ODA. Under Ogata's direction, poverty alleviation, peace building, and NGO partnerships became the areas of focus with a regional strengthening of Africa for JICA. This modification would help gain the respect of the international community and the DAC members, and thereby would improve the overall image of Japan's ODA. Meanwhile, Ogata's popularity as an admirable world development leader would also improve the image of JICA and help promote support particularly from Japanese taxpayers for ODA.

In October 2008, JICA merged with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), forming the single agency that provides all types of aid—technical assistance, grant aid, and yen loans—for the first time in Japan's ODA history. This new JICA is one of the world's largest bilateral aid agencies with a network of 97 overseas offices and financial resources of approximately \$8.5 billion. Apparently, the direction of Japan's ODA was shifting but challenges remain.

2.5.2. The *Kanryō* System

Ogata set forth grand goals, yet Japan's bureaucracy or *kanryō* system rendered Japan unable to achieve the objectives of ODA outlined in the Charter. Unlike the English term bureaucracy, the word *kanryō* does not refer to government officials in general, but refers specifically to the elites of the National Civil Service who occupy high-ranking positions in the central ministries. Japan's *kanryō* are neither politicians nor ministers, but are more powerful than politicians in some senses. The *kanryō* hold *de facto* control of the government in that a large portion of bills proposed to the Diet are commonly drafted by the *kanryō* (Ikuta 1995: 4-5). Many Japanese recognize the problem of the *kanryō* system, but still feel that “on the whole the elite bureaucrats are

intelligent and industrious and no one else could do a better job” (Ikuta 1995: 6). Because educational credentials count highly in the society, Japanese in general regard these elites as the brightest graduates from prestigious national universities, most commonly Tōkyō University, who have successfully passed the toughest Level One Entrance Examination for the National Civil Service.

The candidates of *kanryō* are labeled a “career group” to distinguish themselves from “non-career groups” who entered the ministries with a pass on other levels of examinations. While the *kanryō* represents a small percentage of the entire national-level officials, the career group holds nearly 100% of highest positions attainable including all administrative positions, vice-ministers, and director-generals. The non-career group, on the other hand, has basically little chance of taking such high positions with few exceptions. In this system, career group officials dominate the top strata of Japan’s ODA administration.

A most critical impediment of the *kanryō* system is that these elite officials who may be the brightest are not necessarily experts in every field to which they are assigned. MOFA officials, for instance, represent Japan in the international development meetings but they do not necessarily have strong backgrounds in the field of development. In addition, as their jobs rotate every two to three years, they can gain little knowledge and experience from the field assigned, which results in being unable to propose innovative approach to development (Lancaster 2007: 129). This situation differs from that of other donor agencies whose human resources have extensive knowledge of development.

Moreover, this system of *kanryō* was a serious obstacle to the pursuit of Ogata’s field-based approach proposal. The field-based approach aimed to decentralize administration by delegating more authority from Tōkyō to overseas offices in order to strengthen grassroots aid programs. However, according to the *kanryō* system, those dispatched to the “field” especially in least developed countries (LDC) were expected to be non-career officials who are not likely to reach top-ranking positions that have a say in future ODA. Basically, with few exceptions, the career group officials who would later make decisions over ODA were not dispatched to aid recipient LDCs. In the case of MOFA, a typical overseas assignment for the career group was to take a position at an

embassy or consulate in big countries like the U.S. for a few years. Ultimately, they had little “real” experience in the kind of developmental fields to which Ogata refers.

In Ogata’s plan, by transferring decision-making authority, Japanese embassies, consulates, and JICA offices in aid recipient countries would become the regional centers of ODA from which Japan could more readily assist work to meet local needs.

Regrettably, I would argue that her proposal could not work effectively as long as the *kanryō* system stays in place. In parallel, because the *kanryō* system rarely recruits members outside of the career group, personnel with grounded knowledge and experience in the field of development are unlikely to reach positions that could effectively influence Japan’s ODA orientation. For these reasons, even Ogata’s plan was not able to alter ODA fundamentally.

2.5.3. No Strategy

Japan’s ODA is an activity led by the government bureaucracy. The bureaucratic red tape makes it difficult to change the orientation of Japan’s ODA *per se* and to develop an aid strategy. Despite what aid critics may argue, Japan has yet to develop a concrete strategy in its ODA. In an interview I conducted in Tōkyo, Hōsaku Tsukuri of JICA clearly stated that his foremost assignment as the director of the Aid Strategy Team was to create a strategy for Japan to design and implement its ODA in order to make aid more effective to national interests.³³ Tsukuri commented on some of the common criticisms on Japan’s strategic use of its aid (e.g., buying a vote or fishing right):

I wish Japan had those strategies like critics say so that we could have used aid in a more productive way. As far as strategy is concerned, Japan’s aid has never been smartly planned. It has been more of a potluck type of unplanned activity. That’s why, under the new President Ogata, we are now trying to create so-called strategies. I see these critiques as a useful guideline with which we can create the strategy.

To develop an effective aid strategy, Japan needs to grasp the societal situation of each recipient country and region. In that, ODA evaluations may be useful. Japan has a relatively well-established ODA evaluation system that employs a variety of methods and professional evaluators and researchers. This evaluation system, however, has yet to be fully established in terms of integrating feedback into improving aid projects and

³³ Interview with Hōsaku Tsukuri (pseudonym) was conducted at a meeting room in Institute for International Cooperation in Tōkyo on June 5, 2007.

operations. Under the supervision of MOFA, for instance, JICA has established the visiting scholar system to invite researchers and academics from various fields to investigate projects and programs funded by Japan. The researchers conduct detailed studies of ODA projects and write reports for \$7,000 each. JICA also organizes an open forum at which aid scholars, development experts, journalists, JICA officials and those interested exchange their ideas about the new direction of Japan's ODA. Nevertheless, these reports are released to the JICA library without receiving much attention, while the ODA forum becomes merely a place for socializing.³⁴

Besides, even if aid officials had actually paid the needed attention to the outcomes of evaluation or were motivated by forum discussion and became passionate about changing the ODA orientation, the red tape of the *kanryō* system did not encourage voices from the lower strata to be heard. A voice for change will likely be listened to only when the top *kanryō* sees it is necessary. In other words, without a *kanryō* suggestion, there will be no change. For these reasons, I believe it will take some time for Japan to establish effective aid strategies.

2.5.4. *Kokueki*: For Japan's Benefit

In the context of Japan's long recession since 1991, public support for ODA fell severely. A public opinion poll on Japan's ODA conducted annually by the Office of the Prime Minister indicated a decline in public support. According to the 2007 survey, 23% supported an increase in ODA, which was a significant drop from 35% in 1995. Those who wanted to reduce ODA as much as possible rose from 12% in 1995 to 23%, and 3.2% even felt that Japan should completely stop ODA (MOFA 2008). Under these circumstances, promoting *kokueki* (national interests) became a crucial mission of the Japanese government.

Generally speaking, Japanese taxpayers became reluctant to support ODA in light of the severe financial limitations the society is facing. Japan had a severe cut in National Health Service while facing the worst unemployment rate in the postwar period. Meanwhile, taxpayers doubted the accountability and opaque nature of Japan's ODA, asking whether Japan's ODA was truly helping developing countries, whether aid

³⁴ A personal communication with a JICA contracted researcher on June 4, 2007.

recipients actually appreciated it, and whether ODA wasted the money drawn from their tight budgets. In addition, a series of scandals at MOFA associated with ODA exposed in the last several years had a significant impact on public opinion. In 2007, JICA President Ogata urged Japanese taxpayers to “take a great interest in developing aid and the long-term benefits to Japan as well as the poor countries by such a course of action” (JICA 2007). But the citizens needed to hear explicit explanations of the *kokueki* of ODA.

In response, Prime Minister Shinzō Abe stated the benefit of ODA to the Diet as follows:

Through supporting the development and stability of developing countries, ODA plays an important role in contributing to the peace and prosperity of international community. ODA, at the same time, contributes to expand national interests in a way that it helps Japan improve its relationship with developing countries, which is beneficial to the nation that relies heavily on overseas countries for natural resources and markets (Kantei 2008).

The aforementioned JICA official Tsukuri added to this statement, telling me:

Among the government elites, the security of natural resources is not the mainstream understanding of kokueki through ODA. As Prime Minister Abe stated, the bilateral ODA aims to contribute to the peace and stability of the international community. This is based on the belief that the peace and stability are achieved only through the development of economy and security assisted by economic and military cooperation. Since Japan cannot provide military support, ODA is the sole means of providing the cooperation. Without cooperation, foreign trade-oriented countries like Japan cannot survive in the international community. But this kind of logic is not easily understood by ordinary citizens. So the government frequently uses different kinds of explanation according to a type of the audience. Sometimes they emphasize humanitarian reasons and on other occasions, they use the security of resources as an explanation for ODA. I support this as a necessary technique to promote public support considering the diverse interests of citizens.

According to Tsukuri, the *honne* of Japan’s ODA understood by Japanese leaders is to repatriate long-term benefits by building a peaceful international community through aid-driven economic development. But the public needs more tangible evidence to ensure that the ODA money is effectively spent and that Japan’s ODA is appreciated by the recipient communities. To gain a wider public support, MOFA expanded efforts to promote ODA, which included updating the ODA homepage, broadcasting TV programs, distributing ODA e-mail magazine, dispatching lecturers to conduct lectures on ODA, and inviting the public to visit an ODA site. In addition, JICA supported MOFA by

holding many activities to promote public support for their international cooperation activities. The presence of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) seemed, however, the most effective way to gain recognition by the general public.

The JOCV program, established in 1965 under the jurisdiction of JICA, had dispatched a cumulative total of about 35,000 volunteers to 87 countries as of 2009. These volunteers, who are Japanese citizens between 20 and 39, usually spend two years in a recipient community, and live and work together with the community while pursuing their respective assignments in cooperative activities. To recruit more participants, JICA advertises the JOCV program extensively through different media such as TV, posters, magazines, Internet, and recruiting fairs. Often times, former volunteers themselves become a medium to acquaint people with the program and its mission. These advertisements typically feature pictures of grassroots cooperation activity undertaken in developing countries that appeal to people's volunteer spirit and humanity. Such scenes include young Japanese males working and sweating together with local people to bore a well in a community somewhere in Africa or a Japanese nurse taking care of malnourished infants at a temporary clinic built in a thatched hut somewhere in rural South Asia. With the establishment of the Senior Volunteer Program in 1999, which invites experienced citizens between the ages of 40 and 69, JICA enhanced the range of activity in the field of technical assistance.

Because these volunteer programs involve ordinary Japanese, the names JOCV or JICA are more recognized by the general public than ODA itself. A dilemma is that while the mission of JOCV is relatively well understood, not many Japanese recognize the activities conducted by JOCV or JICA as part of Japan's ODA effort. People tend to think of ODA as an activity undertaken in the *kanryō* domain that has little to do with their daily life. In this regard, MOFA may need to change the method of promoting ODA to the general public.

Accordingly, the Japanese government is required to have various rationales to satisfy many stakeholders while removing obstacles to popularizing ODA activities among taxpayers.

2.5.5. Kao No Mieru Enjo

One of the main obstacles to making the Japanese public more aware of ODA is its invisibility—taxpayers cannot see the outcomes of ODA. As untying aid proceeded in the 1980s, Japanese firms and experts became less involved in aid projects. Meanwhile, as a response to the criticism of unsympathetic yen loan projects, the government established financial grant aids in 1978 to replace the loan burden of some recipient countries. This debt relief aid accounted for 20 to 30% of the entire ODA, but unfortunately was not well recognized by the people of either Japan or recipient countries. These transitions in the ODA orientation detracted from the visibility of Japan’s ODA, making it “faceless aid.”

As more support from Japanese citizens was needed, the government tried to promote the actual presence of Japan to recipient communities (Yoshikawa 2003: 374). The government has adopted the slogan of *Kao No Mieru Enjo* (aid with a face or visible aid) as a way to strengthen the visibility of aid. As part of this *Kao No Mieru Enjo* effort, MOFA created the ODA logo mark that symbolizes the face of Japan (Fig. 2.2). The logo design features “a red circle suggesting the *Hinomaru* of Japan (the national flag) on its left side and a blue circle suggesting the earth on its right side, and the two hands are reaching out to embrace each other” (MOFA 2006). This “face” was made into stickers to be put on equipment or on plaques attached to the buildings funded by Japan’s aid. This logo is also commonly drawn on the walls of school buildings or water tanks funded by the grassroots aid (see Chapter 5). In addition to the logo, MOFA

Figure 2.2. ODA Logo



uses the *Hinomaru* (Japan's national flag) with the phrase "From the People of Japan." This flag was created to ensure that the face of Japan is visible especially in situations where aid assistance and supplies are sent to a site of emergency from multiple donors. Yet, the best face of Japan, according to a MOFA official, is the face of grassroots actors including volunteers and experts who work and live with recipient communities.³⁵

2.5.6. Scandals

Another obstacle in popularizing ODA among the public is scandals. Due to frequent scandals revealed in the past—the corruption of MOFA officials, Marcos of the Philippines and Suharto of Indonesia to name two, the public has already constructed some dark images of ODA. Thus, the government is particularly sensitive to losing public support through any more scandals. In my personal interview conducted with Kimio Fujita, the former President of JICA, he said, "the worst scandal is often created by mass media as they pick up a small thing and stir it up as a great fuss."³⁶ He explained this with an example from Bhutan. In 1998, it was reported that a Japanese consulting firm diverted about US\$20,000 from ODA funds designed for a telecommunication project to purchase vehicles for Bhutan's government officials for personal use. Some major Japanese newspapers such as Asahi and Nikkei wrote this up as ODA corruption (Hirata 2000: 121). Fujita commented on this 'scandal':

It was not even the scandal that mass media clamored against. It was more a simple administrative mistake. Because there was some left over budget money, the project staff bought a van which was not included in the initial project budget. It would have been no problem, if the staff member had asked Tōkyo and obtained permission. But, because such process usually involves much paper work and takes a long time, he skipped it and bought the van. Then, a journalist picked up on that, and made it a big scandal. Because it became a big scandal, the government had to stop ODA to Bhutan for a while as a penalty. That was very bad because small countries like Bhutan who need aid suffered because of the exaggerated nature of the mass media report. Mass media didn't think about the consequences.

Whether such use of the ODA budget is considered corruption is not the main argument here. Rather, the way in which the Japanese government handles "scandals" is the issue.

³⁵ An e-mail communication with a MOFA official, June 5, 2008.

³⁶ Interview with Fujita was conducted at the main lobby of the JICA Institution in Tōkyo, on June 4, 2007.

In this case, Japan suspended aid to Bhutan as a penalty for the misuse of ODA and to apologize to Japanese taxpayers. But the suspension of aid only punished the recipients in Bhutan, a community that was not directly involved in this scandal and that needed support from Japan. Instead of penalizing the recipient for the sake of glossing over the mistake, Japan should have used this scandal for something productive and constructive—for instance, as a reason to reform the budgeting system or simplify the paperwork for purchasing extra equipment. At the same time, Fujita's comment implies that in a worst case, the Japanese government might conceal things that can be taken as scandals in order to keep stories out of the media. Such concealment, however, would only compromise Japan's ODA, even if the government can maintain a good image. Ironically, the government is trying to hide some of the realities of ODA at the same time promoting the visibility of Japan's ODA under the slogan of *Kao No Mieru Enjo*.

As of 2007, Japan's national debt was approximately \$8 trillion, the highest among industrialized countries. Due to the imperative fiscal reconstruction, the ODA budget had been reduced since 1998, resulting in a significant drop of 30% in 2007 from its peak in 1997. The government announced it would continue to curtail the ODA budget by 2 to 4% annually until at least 2011. As of 2009, Japan ranked the number five on the ODA donor rankings after the U.S., France, Germany, and Britain (Statistics Bureau 2011: 129). A drastic reform of the inner-workings of ODA is essential in order to make effective use of the declining budget and to gain public support rather than simply promoting a false face that covers up the actual picture of Japan's ODA.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter illustrated the uniqueness and plurality of Japan's ODA in terms of its evolutionary path, meanings, and contemporary functions through situating Japanese concepts as a key point of reference. It stepped back from the Samoan Aidscape to see how multiple narratives and perspectives have constituted aid on the part of the donor Japan.

Japan's ODA began as war reparation and became a pillar of foreign policy in the 1970s and 1980s, and by the 1990s Japan had become a powerful aid donor. In this process, Japan failed to develop philosophical goals of ODA unlike other major donors

including the U.S., (military and security purposes), Britain (post-colonial arrangements), and France (territorial connections) who have clear-cut objectives for disbursing aid. From the beginning, these Western donors had a strong mission to promote “the Third World development” based on the President Truman’s famous proposal (see Chapter 1). Differences in Japan’s aid start from the fact that Japan began without comprehensible intentions other than compensating for war damages. Since it joined the aid process later than other main donors, Japan had to catch up with the Western concepts and principles of aid and shape its ODA to become more like other donors. For this reason, Japan’s ODA has been more reactive than deliberate and this “catch up to the West” is a reason why Japan has been disbursing aid. In short, the Japanese epistemology of foreign aid is different from that of Western donors.

Accordingly, this chapter confirmed the necessity of understanding historical background and epistemological uniqueness in studying Japan’s aid. Without understanding such uniqueness, the studies would create their own versions of reality, an imaginary reality that is often far from the reality in which Japanese live. Neither imaginary nor lived realities, though, are negligible components of Aidscape where scholarly views and donor perceptions of foreign aid intersect, clash, and negotiate, creating disjunctive but somewhat overlapping stories and spaces.

Within the Japanese epistemology of aid, I found that the underlying *honne* of Japan’s ODA is more practical and simple than it has been argued and imagined. Japan gives aid because aid is convenient, available, and effective in again becoming a leading country in the international community. In the Japanese mindset, being a top aid donor is a passport that provides membership into the Western league that dominates the world of foreign aid. Therefore, it is likely that even after the country gained international recognition as the leading donor, or even with a tight national budget, Japan will continue to disburse ODA as long as other Western donors continue to do so. In this regard, the popular view that identifies aid as the donor’s sophisticated and focused instrument of control is hardly applicable to the current operation of Japan’s ODA.

The next chapter will examine how Japan’s multiple aid agendas have brought ODA to Sāmoa and other Pacific states, and the applicability of critical views of Japan’s aid in the actual context of Sāmoa. The *honne* discussed in this chapter will be traced into the

Samoa Aidscape, and compared to other imagined realities of Japan's ODA to Sāmoa constructed in aid observers' discussions.

CHAPTER 3 JAPAN'S AID TO SĀMOA

3.1. Introduction

This chapter approaches the Aidscape of Japan's aid to Sāmoa through literature and interviews conducted with JICA officials and Pacific specialists in Japan and Sāmoa. It represents different readings of realities—imaginary, lived, and in-between—that constitute the Samoan Aidscape. The previous chapter looked at the ways in which Japan's *honne* (real intention) and *tatemaie* (public statement) in aid have shifted over the years. Applying some of the discussions from the prior chapter, this chapter investigates Japan's *honne* motives and *tatemaie* strategies in its aid to Sāmoa and the Pacific.

While critical aid studies attribute “true intentions” to Japan's aid, this study suggests a disjunctive reality: Japan has little knowledge, little organization, and a weak agenda toward the aid to Sāmoa. Japan provides aid to Sāmoa simply because, as the famous mountaineer George Mallory would say, Sāmoa is there.³⁷ In this regard, I find that the popular structural view that argues donor's exploitative aid must be questioned in each instance. The critical view that aid furthers dependency of recipients is also questioned in this chapter, and found hardly applicable. To verify this point, the chapter will review the background of the Japan-Sāmoa relationship in the context of foreign aid and examine arguments about Japan's aid to the Pacific Islands region to see how they fit the case of Sāmoa. *Tatemaie* statements will be peeled off to reveal different understandings of Japan's aid to Sāmoa, which can be concealed in the same context. I try to demonstrate the multiple nature of relative power and instrumentality inherited in the Samoan Aidscape.

3.2. Sāmoa on Japan's Mental Map

3.2.1. The Japan-Sāmoa Diplomatic Relationship

Japan's first aid to Sāmoa was disbursed in 1968 in the form of technical assistance, which invited two participants from Sāmoa to Japan for various training programs (JICA

³⁷ George H. L. Mallory was a mountaineer on the first three British expeditions to Mt. Everest in the 1920s. Mallory gave the answer “because it is there,” when asked why he wanted to climb Mt. Everest.

Samoa 2007: 3; MOFA 2007a).³⁸ In 1973, Japan established diplomatic relations with Sāmoa, after the dispatch of first volunteer group in 1972, followed by the disbursement of the first grant aid in 1977. An office for volunteers was set up in Apia in 1975 while the office for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Sāmoa was set up in 1988. After 1986, aid to Sāmoa continuously increased (Fig. 3.1). During the 1990s, Japan doubled its aid to Sāmoa, which accounted for 45% of the entire foreign aid provided to the recipient country (Wendt 2000). Since then, Japan has almost always been one of the top four bilateral donors to Sāmoa along with New Zealand, Australia, and the EU. Today, China is rapidly closing the gap.

Figure 3.1. Sāmoa’s Prime Minister Tuilaepa and Japan’s Former Prime Minister Koizumi



Source: Japan-Sāmoa Summit Meeting in Tōkyo (Kantei 2005)

As of 2006, Japan had disbursed a cumulative total amount of approximately US\$212 billion of grant aid and technical assistance, which included dispatching 422 experts and researchers, sending 477 volunteers, and accepting 710 Samoan trainees (MOFA 2007a). Japan’s grant aid has funded much of the economic and social infrastructure in Sāmoa, which includes the reconstruction of the fisheries port and

³⁸ According to the ODA Project Search on MOFA homepage, the first technical assistance to Sāmoa was provided in 1973, but the ODA report of 2007 issued by the JICA Sāmoa office states as 1968.

market (1980) and its expansion and renovation (2005-2006), the construction of Mulifanua and Sālelologa port facilities (1984), the building of the terminal and facilities of Faleolo International Airport (1985), the inter-island ferries Lady Sāmoa II (1987) and Lady Naomi (1997), the expansion of Apia port (1988-1989) and its repair (1992) and improvement (2001-2003), the upgrading of rural electrification in Upolu, and the rebuilding of the national hospital in Tuasivi (1993) and its update (2006), the construction of seawalls in Apia (1993), the development of rural telecommunications (1994-1995), the upgrading of the National University of Sāmoa (1995-1996), and the extension and upgrading of Sāmoa Polytechnic (2004-2006).

Japan's grant aid also includes grassroots grant aid projects, aimed to support smaller-scale projects. Grassroots grant aid as of 2007 had helped a total of 44 school buildings reconstructions and 20 water tank construction projects, and upgraded the equipment at rural clinics and educational facilities. More recent grant aid projects as of 2008 include the upgrading of inter-island ferry Lady Sāmoa III, and the renovation of fishery port and facilities in Apia. Non-project aid of \$100 million was also provided to help the government of Samoa to "secure payment for imports of goods that are urgently needed" (Embassy of Japan in New Zealand 2008). In December 2007, the two governments agreed on the first ODA loan to Sāmoa, totaling of about \$42.5 million for the expansion of Sāmoa Power Sector. In cooperation with ADB, this project aimed to support Samoa's Electric Power Corporation's Investment Plan of 2008-2015, which included the construction and renovation of power plants and improvement of related facilities (JBIC 2007). With this project, Sāmoa became the third country in the Pacific Islands region after PNG and Fiji, to receive a yen loan from Japan.

Accordingly, Japan and Sāmoa have already established a strong connection in the context of foreign aid. The aid from Japan has been one factor transforming the geography of Sāmoa and making it a different place year by year. Unfortunately, not many Japanese taxpayers who contribute to Japan's ODA budget know about such a seemingly well-established diplomatic relationship, not even knowing where the country called Sāmoa is located on the globe.

3.2.2. A Perceptibly Distant Place

Sāmoa is located at the latitude and longitude coordinates of 13.35° S and 172.20° W, about 4,700 miles (7,500 kilometers) southeast of Tōkyo, Japan (Figs. 1.1, 1.2). For Japanese, the physical distance and weak historical ties have led to perceiving Sāmoa as unknown place. Some Pacific islands hold special historical meanings to those Japanese who lost family members there during the battles of the Pacific War.³⁹ Unlike these islands, Sāmoa was not marked on Japan's strategic map with one exception, when the islands were once almost attacked by the Japanese Imperial Navy as part of strategy to block the enemy's supply route between Australia and Hawai'i. After the Battle of Midway, the Imperial Navy changed its plan and Sāmoa disappeared from the strategic map. Since then, Sāmoa barely appears on any Japanese geopolitical maps.

Economic ties to Sāmoa are also relatively weak, at least in the view of Japanese, despite decades of transformations brought partially by Japan's aid. Only a few Japanese companies including Yazaki EDS Sāmoa (YES) are based in Sāmoa. YES is an export-oriented manufacturing plant established in 1991, owned by Japan based multinational company called Yazaki Sōgyō. The company was invited by the government of Sāmoa to establish a plant on the island with lucrative incentives including various tax exemptions, free lease of government land, and cheap non-unionized labor. YES produces wiring harnesses for vehicles, exporting 100% of the products to the automobile industry in Australia. The impact this Japanese factory has brought to Sāmoa is prominent in terms not only of economy, but also of employment opportunities. Since its establishment, YES has been the biggest private company in Sāmoa currently hiring approximately 1,000 local employees.⁴⁰ At the peak in the late-1990s, the company hired more than 3,500 workers to operate two shifts, but dramatically cut down the number of employees especially after the Lehman shock in 2008. Although more males work on the shop floor than before, the main labor power is still provided by Samoan women in their

³⁹ During the WWII, more than two million Japanese soldiers and civilians died in the Pacific Islands including the Solomon Islands, PNG, the Marshall Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Guam, Palau, Kiribati, and Nauru. Over 60 years after the war, Japanese war veterans and bereaved family members visit island battle sites, war shrines, monuments in the Pacific to pay respect to their loved ones who died there.

⁴⁰ As of June 2012, YES hires about 900 locals with four Japanese managers dispatched from the mother company in Japan and three Filipino technical supporters from EMI, an affiliate of Yazaki group located in the Philippines.

20s to 40s. The company has so far hired thousands of Samoan workers from throughout the country, making most residents know the presence of this company called Iāsaki in Samoan. “MIRAB” is thus a bit outdated as a catalog of the Samoan economy that now includes another component, the export-oriented labor-intensive manufacturing plant. In Japan, on the other hand, very few Japanese know of the existence of this factory on the distant island in the Pacific.

Japan’s trade relations with Sāmoa are not strong either. Japan’s exports to Sāmoa as of 2005 were about \$22 million while imports from Sāmoa accounted for \$427,000. Many of the items exported from Japan to Sāmoa are vehicle and electrical components including wires, conduit, plugs, and fuses used at YES.⁴¹ The major import item, on the other hand, is Samoan noni juice. Noni juice is also imported from other countries including China, Indonesia, and French Polynesia so that Japan’s market is not dependent on Sāmoa. After all, Sāmoa is Japan’s number 150th partner in exports and 180th in imports.

These weak economic and trade ties can be attributed to inconvenient transportation between Japan and Sāmoa. The inconvenience also affects tourism. With no direct flight connection between the two island nations, a trip from Japan to Sāmoa with a stopover in New Zealand takes over 24 hours.⁴² Such long traveling-hours removes Sāmoa from the list of ideal destinations for the Japanese tourists who typically have only five to six days of vacation. Only around 500 to 600 Japanese on average visit the island annually (Government of Samoa 2011: 10). Most of those tourists are ODA related personnel including businessman and researchers, or families and friends of JICA staff and volunteers, while others live in Australia or New Zealand and visit Sāmoa on their working-holiday visas.⁴³ Very few “genuine” tourists visit Sāmoa from Japan.

⁴¹ The import of vehicles from Japan increased since a new law to switch the roadside from the left to the right hand drive came into effect in 2009.

⁴² Another popular route to go to Sāmoa from Japan was via Fiji. However, Fiji’s national airline Air Pacific withdrew its service between Nadi, Fiji and Tōkyo in March 2009, making Sāmoa a less attractive destination to the Japanese tourists with tight schedules.

⁴³ Working-holiday program is designed to provide opportunities for young people between the partner countries to deepen their understandings about other parts of the world. It allows the visa holders to engage in work, study, and travel in the partner countries including Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, South Korea, and Britain.

Some islands in the Pacific including Hawai‘i, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and Palau hold strong genealogical ties to Japan through a large numbers of Japanese descendants living on these islands mainly as a consequence of labor migration. Sāmoa does not have such strong human ties to Japan even through about 60 Japanese nationals currently reside in the country. Among them, the majority are temporary residents who are JICA related personnel, volunteers, and dispatched employees of the aforementioned Japanese company while fewer than 10 are permanent residents of Sāmoa. On the other hand, about 70 Samoans currently live in Japan. Some of them are on the Japanese government scholarships and others are married to Japanese nationals. A few are on rugby contracts playing for Japanese rugby teams. Konishiki and Musashimaru, the popular former sumō champions, are both Samoans who resided in Japan. Unfortunately, they are better known in Japan as Hawai‘i locals than as Samoan. For all these reasons, Sāmoa remains in the realm of the unknown place on the Japanese mental maps.

Since they know little about Sāmoa, Japanese have very little knowledge about Japan’s aid to Sāmoa. In fact, this aid is diminutive from a donor standpoint. The total amount of Japan’s aid annually distributed to Sāmoa accounts for about 0.2 to 0.3% of the entire budget of Japan’s bilateral aid.⁴⁴ Japan is the main aid donor to Sāmoa, but Sāmoa is definitely not a major recipient of Japan’s aid. For Japan, even the Pacific Islands region as a whole is not a major recipient since the total amount of aid disbursed to all recipients in the region accounts for only 1% of the entire ODA. Therefore, both the Japanese government and mass media pay little attention to the issues around recipients in the Pacific region.

In the Pacific, on the other hand, the impact of Japan’s aid has drawn a fair amount of attention from other donors, scholars, and journalists from the region. They have been speculating about Japan’s ulterior motives for aiding the Pacific, attributing the *honne* (real motive) to the donor’s diplomatic and economic interests in the region. The next section looks at some scholarly discussions about Japan’s aid to the Pacific and examines how they fit the case of Sāmoa. Many of these discussions ask whether the donor tactically uses aid to manipulate recipients for its own interests.

⁴⁴ In 2006, Japan’s aid to the Pacific Islands region was approximately US\$76.19 million, which accounted for 1.0% of the total bilateral ODA. Within the disbursement, the assistance to Sāmoa was \$16.82 million, 16% of the aid to the Pacific region and 0.16% of the entire ODA (MOFA 2007d).

3.3. Critical Aid Studies: Why Japan Gives Aid to the Pacific

3.3.1. The Diplomacy-Oriented Viewpoint #1: A Security Council Seat

Two main viewpoints about Japan's aid to the Pacific Islands are discussed popularly among scholars and journalists within and outside the region. The first viewpoint is based primarily on Japan's diplomatic motivation while the second focuses on the donor's interest in the region's marine resources. Aid critics who take the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint frequently point out that Japan increases the aid to the Pacific when the nation has specific agendas such as candidacy for permanent membership in the Security Council of the UN and its pro-whaling proposal at International Whaling Commission (IWC) (Gillespie 2001; Greenpace 2007; McNeill 2007; Thomson 2006). They argue that the Japanese government uses its aid as a diplomatic checkbook in order to buy votes from Pacific Island recipients. Although the Pacific Islands are small in terms of terrestrial size, population, and the total amount of aid received, their votes are equal to those of the U.S. or China in most international forums. In this context, the vote held by small nations like Pacific Island countries is the best buy with foreign aid.

Obtaining a permanent seat in the UN Security Council is the most important agenda in Japan's foreign affairs today. The Security Council membership is Japan's long-standing dream, because it would clear Japan's name as a loser, enabling the nation to finally line up with the five victorious allies in WWII who currently occupy the other permanent seats. To achieve this diplomatic agenda, according to the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint, Japan fully utilizes its ODA. Twelve of the 22 nations and territories of the Pacific region including Sāmoa hold votes in the UN General Assembly. All of the vote holders are recipients of Japan's aid and have been supportive of Japan on this matter.⁴⁵

While scholars with the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint criticize Japan for the calculating usage of aid, Island leaders, on the other hand, usually consider the aid-votes exchange in a constructive way. Fiji's ambassador to Japan, Ratu Tevita Momoedonu regarded supporting Japan for its bid for the Security Council seat as fair reciprocation for Japan's continuous help for Island nations (Magick 2005). Such support from the Pacific recipients is considered by the Japanese government as the evidence of a deep

⁴⁵ The 12 Pacific nations that hold UN membership and the dates they joined are FSM (1991), Fiji (1970), Kiribati (1999), Marshall Islands (1991), Nauru (1999), Palau (1994), PNG (1975), Sāmoa (1976), Solomon Islands (1978), Tonga (1999), Tuvalu (2000), and Vanuatu (1981).

trust Island leaders have in Japan (Magick 2005). Seemingly, both the donor and the recipients agree that they have succeeded in building mutually beneficial relationships through aid. One may question here if Japan's aid to the Pacific provides a mutually beneficial relationship, then, why do some scholars and journalists see this flow of aid in a negative light?

The central argument of the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint lies in the idea of invasion of democracy. When a donor pursues its benefit through providing aid, it often sets some conditions upon recipients in order to generate the benefit. Even if proposed conditions are agreeable and bring no or little obvious harm to aid recipient nations, such conditionality attached to foreign aid threatens the self-determination of the recipient as a sovereign nation. Even with no direct coercion, aid recipients may feel pressure and lose their ability to express their own opinions and freedom of choice (Gillespie 2001). In this context, giving and receiving aid becomes problematic because it generates unnecessary pressure on recipients. Therefore, conditional aid is regarded as controlling.

From this viewpoint, journalists from the Pacific region such as Samantha Magick (2005) point out that Japan manipulates the conferences with Island leaders for its own ends. The Japanese government used, for instance, the Japan-Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) as a platform to speak to Island leaders collectively about Japan's international ambitions, especially the desire for the UN permanent seat.⁴⁶ At the same summit, Japan announced a vast increase in aid to the Pacific region. As the two items were announced concurrently, Magick believed that Island leaders felt an obligation to return a favor to Japan, saying "Japan's UN-focused strategy is clearly working" (2005: 3). Like Magick, some aid critics see the concept of mutual benefit as merely a gesture performed by Japan whose real intention is to manipulate the votes through aid, which eventually impairs the integrity and democracy of Pacific recipient nations.

In addition, the UN vote may bring a tough decision-making challenge to Island leaders in the near future when they are caught between two major donors, Japan and China. China is the only Asian country that holds a UN Security Council permanent seat

⁴⁶ MOFA initiated a summit-level meeting in Tōkyo in 1997 to discuss openly issues with leaders from Pacific Forum countries in order to build close cooperative relationships between the two groups. Since 1997, the PALM summit has been held every three years. The 6th PALM meeting was held in Okinawa in May 2012.

and is the Council member who strongly opposes Japan's bid for the seat. If both donors attach their opposing diplomatic agendas to their aid as condition, then, Pacific governments will have to choose Japan or China at the risk of losing the other significant donor they did not support. In this sense, aid is not unconditional.

3.3.2. The Diplomacy-Oriented Viewpoint #2: The Whaling Battle

The second viewpoint about Japan's diplomacy-oriented aid centers on whaling. Allegations of Japan's vote-buying activity have arisen most severely with the issues associated with the International Whaling Commission (IWC). In 1986, the IWC adopted a moratorium on commercial whaling, and since then, the Japanese government has been lobbying to lift this ban. In the lobbying activity, anti-whaling governments and organizations accuse Japan of using aid to manipulate the IWC votes. As evidence, a growing number of Japan's aid recipient countries with no or little tradition of whaling including several Pacific nations, have joined the IWC. For Island leaders, issues around the IWC votes are more complicated than those of the UN votes, because the region's major bilateral aid donors take opposing sides over commercial whaling.

Among 80 members at the IWC, Japan, Norway, and Iceland are the three key pro-whaling countries that practice whaling under scientific research permits. On the other hand, the Pacific's largest donors including Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S. take anti-whaling positions. Australia and New Zealand in particular have aggressively attacked Japan on the manipulative use of aid in whaling issues. As for the Pacific, at present, six nations including Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu are members of the IWC. None of them has a history of commercial whaling while all of them are recipients of Japan's aid. Japan, Australia, and New Zealand have been the top three bilateral donors to Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Nauru since 2001. Although the U.S. provides the most aid to the Marshall Islands and Palau under the Compact of Free Association, Japan has been the second largest donor to these countries since their independence. In the Solomon Islands, Japan is becoming a key donor since its aid doubled in 2004, mainly in the field of fisheries development. These are the kind of links aid critics with a diplomatic-oriented viewpoint point to in their arguments.

Greenpeace Japan (2007) examined the relation between Japan's fisheries grant aid and the IWC votes, finding that the Japan Fisheries Agency (JFA) which implements the fisheries aid also is the agency governing Japan's whaling-related activities under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF). According to the Greenpeace report, among 33 countries that voted with Japan at the IWC meeting in 2006, 22 countries have received Japan's fisheries aid since 1994. Moreover, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) often invites fisheries ministries from Japan's aid recipient countries including Pacific nations before IWC meetings. These connections are not seen as accidental from the diplomatic-oriented viewpoints.

Conversely, the Japanese government denies the link between aid and the IWC votes. JFA, for instance, states explicitly on its homepage that no support for Japan at the IWC is required in order to receive Japan's aid (JFA 2008). A main counterargument the Japanese government employs is that Japan provides aid also to anti-whaling countries including Brazil and Argentina (Embassy of Japan in New Zealand 2006).⁴⁷ Whether Japan actually uses aid for buying the IWC votes requires further examination, but the Pacific nations have definitely been deeply involved in this whaling battle initiated by the opposing donors.

A good example can be illustrated with the Solomon Islands. Since its independence, Solomon Islands have received a vast amount of aid chiefly from Australia and New Zealand. Before the 2005 IWC meeting held in South Korea, Australia's Environment Minister, Senator Ian Campbell visited the Solomons, Kiribati, and Marshall Islands, to lobby against Japan's proposal for resuming commercial whaling. Senator Campbell told Island leaders that they should not be swayed by Japan's aid but preserve their own stances on whaling as a sovereign nation (Johnson 2006). In response, Solomons' Prime Minister Sir Allan Kemakeza promised the Australian governor that, although the Solomons had voted with Japan in the past, their delegation this year would abstain from the vote on resumption of commercial whaling. Nevertheless, at the South Korea meeting, the Solomons and other five Pacific nations voted for the Japanese

⁴⁷ Japan's statement was challenged in 2001 when Masayuki Komatsu, a senior official from JFA, told an Australian TV news program that Japan, as a country with no military power, uses aid as a sole diplomatic tool to influence the whaling vote (BBC News 2001). His comment created a big controversy as it was taken as confirmation of the argument that Japan manipulates IWC votes through aid. JFA withdrew Komatsu's comment, saying that he was quoted out of context.

proposal of pro-whaling, which greatly disappointed the Australia and New Zealand governments.

Responses from the Solomons to this event were inconsistent. The government's spokesman Alfred Maesuila refuted the allegation, saying the Solomons' stance on pro-whaling had nothing to do with Japan's aid. However, a comment made by Foreign Relations representative Joses Wawari Sanga implied the influence of Japan as aid donor over Solomon's IWC vote. Tione Bugotu, the chief officer from the Solomon Fisheries, told a TV program that the Japanese government paid "millions of dollars" to his department in exchange for support at the IWC and cheap access to the country's tuna (ABC News Online 2005). Accordingly, issues around the IWC votes seem confused, implying a low level of transparency.

The whaling controversy is likely to bring more difficulties to Pacific governments when they set their stances, especially after the creation of a South Pacific Whale Sanctuary agreement. In 2006, Australia and New Zealand enlisted the agreement of seven Pacific countries including Cook Islands, FSM, Fiji, French Polynesia, Niue, Sāmoa, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu to work together on the conservation of Pacific Island Whales and Dolphins.

This battle will not end anytime soon because the opposing donors have fundamental differences in perceptions about whaling. In pro-whaling countries such as Japan, the fisheries agency is in charge of the whaling issue, which indicates that the whale is a consumable marine resource. In anti-whaling countries including New Zealand and Australia, on the other hand, environment ministries handle the whaling issue, signifying that the whale is part of the environment to be conserved. Because the two groups have different interests and goals regarding whaling, it is difficult for them to reach mutual agreements. Sāmoa is not a member of the IWC, so to date has not had to cast a vote for or against whaling. Sāmoa will likely soon be further involved in this growing battle since Japan, Australia, and New Zealand are all encouraging Sāmoa to join the IWC to support their respective policies about commercial whaling (McNeill 2006; Thomson 2006).

3.3.3. The Diplomacy-Oriented Viewpoint #3: The Nuclear Highway

The third viewpoint on the diplomacy-oriented aid is related to nuclear energy. Japan is one of the world's largest nuclear energy users with more than 50 reactors, generating about one-third of the nation's electricity. The Japanese government plans to increase the nuclear industry since they consider nuclear power generation the most stable energy supply for a country that relies on imports for approximately 80% of the nation's energy needs (The Federation of Electric Power Companies of Japan 2002).⁴⁸ Continuing and growing this nuclear-based power system, Japan has two major problems. "Leaving aside the question of overall safety, the most difficult issues for the nuclear industry are where to build new nuclear facilities and where to dispose nuclear waste," said Ronni Alexander, a professor at Kobe University (Alexander 2001). In terms of where to dispose of nuclear waste, two possible solutions can be considered: to export it or to reprocess it. Either way, Japan needs support from the Pacific Island states and, according to the critics with the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint, Japan uses its aid to win this support.

In early-1970s, Japan had a functioning reprocessing plant in Tōkai village in Ibaraki Prefecture with a reprocessing capacity of 210 tons per year. Because this plant was too small to reprocess the country's used nuclear fuel entirely, the government searched for alternative plans. Surveys in 1972 and 1979 led the Japanese government to conclude that disposing large amounts of nuclear waste domestically with the shallow land burial method was impractical due to the nation's dense population and the high-level of seismic activity. Instead, the Science and Technology Agency of Japan proposed to dispose low-level radioactive wastes in the ocean northeast of Ogasawara Islands. This controversial plan was conveyed to the international community in 1980 and strongly opposed by the member countries of the Pacific Island Forum (formerly the South Pacific Forum) especially Micronesian states. In response to the opposition, the Japanese government sent delegation teams to Guam, Australia, New Zealand, Sāmoa, Fiji, and PNG to explain the nature and safety of the proposal. As the delegation team

⁴⁸ After the devastating tsunami attacked the northern part of Japan in 2011, this attitude toward nuclear energy has been challenged for fundamental change.

encountered strong opposition at each place, the Japanese government had to modify the proposed plan for dumping the nuclear waste in the Pacific Ocean.

In 1985, Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone paid an official trip to Fiji and PNG as the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit the region. On his way to Fiji, at the National Press Club in Canberra, Australia, Prime Minister Nakasone announced the suspension of the dumping plan for an indefinite period as well as the donation of US\$50,000 to University of the South Pacific (MOFA 1985; Ogashiwa 2001). Although it was called off, the nuclear dumping proposal shook Island leaders to finalize provisions of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (SPNFZ). In August 1985, the SPNFZ, known as Treaty of Rarotonga, was established to prohibit the manufacture, possession, stationing, and testing of any nuclear explosive device in Treaty territories as well as the dumping of radioactive waste at the Pacific Ocean.

As Japan could no longer dispose nuclear waste in the ocean, at least in the Pacific, the country came to depend on the alternative method of reprocessing spent nuclear fuel at plants in Europe. Once again, the Japanese government needed support from the Pacific countries in order to use the Pacific waters for shipping the nuclear waste from Europe to Japan.

Since 1969, Japan has had over 160 transshipments of used nuclear reactor fuel to the reprocessing plants at La Hague, France, and Sellafield, Britain, where plutonium and uranium are extracted from spent fuel for reuse. By the 1990s, Japan needed to bring these accumulated reprocessed nuclear fuels back to the nation. In 1992, the Japanese vessel Akatsuki Maru carried the first shipment of separated plutonium from France to Japan. The Akatsuki Maru went south along the west coast of Africa, around the Cape of Good Hope, across the Indian Ocean and north through the Tasman Sea and through exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of several Pacific nations including the Solomon Islands, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, and the FSM. This shipment received international condemnation including a strong objection from the Pacific Island Forum members. Considering the international disagreement in addition to the domestic opposition to the use of plutonium resulted in the withdrawal of the type of nuclear waste transshipment. Instead, from mid-1999 to early-2001, plutonium was returned to Japan as mixed oxide (MOX) fuel (Maclellan 2002; World Nuclear Association 2007). Shipments took the

same route as the one the Akatsuki Maru took—via the Tasman Sea and the Pacific waters.

In addition to plutonium and MOX, Japan transshipped twelve shipments of immobilized high-level radioactive waste (HLW) from France to Japan between 1995 and 2007. According to Citizen’s Nuclear Information Center, with those shipments, Japanese nuclear corporations sent approximately 7,100 tons of spent fuel to France and transported about 38 tons of plutonium back to Japan (White 2009). For the past nuclear shipments, two routes have been taken in addition to the Pacific route: one goes west across the Atlantic Ocean, across the Caribbean Sea, and through the Panama Canal while the other goes southwest across the Atlantic, along the coast of Latin America, and around the Cape Horn (see Table 3.1.).

Table 3.1. Japan’s Nuclear Shipment Routes

	Vessel	Route	Departed	Arrived	Date Completed
1	Pacific Vintale	Latin America/ Cape Horn	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	October 12, 1995
2	Pacific Tale	Cape of Good Hope/ Pacific	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	July 29, 1997
3	Pacific Swan	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	September 26, 1998
4	Pacific Swan	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	July 26, 1999
5	Pacific Swan	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	August 21, 2000
6	Pacific Swan	Latin America/ Cape Horn	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	May 17, 2002
7	Pacific Sandpiper	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	June 11, 2002
8	Pacific Swan	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	June 2, 2004
9	Pacific Sandpiper	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	July 20, 2005
10	Pacific Sandpiper	Cape of Good Hope/ Pacific	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	April 26, 2006
11	Pacific Sandpiper	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	April 20, 2007
12	Pacific Sandpiper	Panama Canal	Cherbourg France	Mutsuogawara Aomori	August 30, 2007

Source: <http://www.fepec.or.jp/present/haikibutsu/high_level/yusou/index.html>

Among the three routes, the Panama Canal route is used most frequently for the shipment of HLW presumably due to lowest cost. The Pacific route, however, was chosen for the most controversial shipments including the first shipment of plutonium in

1992 and the two shipments of MOX in 1999 and 2001. This route was also used for the shipment of HLW in 1997 and in 2005. Hefferman (2002) attributes the selection of the Pacific route to the perception that the Pacific nations are weaker in opposition than other en route states in the Caribbean and Latin America.⁴⁹

Contrary to the prediction, Japan received strong protests from Pacific governments, church groups, and NGOs. In 1999, for instance, a rally organized by Pacific students from University of the South Pacific took place outside of the Japanese embassy in Suva, Fiji. Church groups and NGOs in Fiji placed advertisements in newspapers, calling for ending the shipment of nuclear waste passing through the region. Further, Island leaders condemned Japan for violating the Treaty of Nuclear Free South Pacific while some of the Island governments were actually ready to refuse ships crossing in their territorial waters (Alexander 2001; Maclellan 2002).

Meanwhile, Island leaders held discussions with representatives from Japan, France, and Britain over the creation of a liability regime to compensate the Forum member countries for the nuclear shipment. Island leaders were particularly concerned about possible economic losses as a consequence of an accident involving the nuclear shipment that would harm not only the region's environment but also its industries including fisheries and tourism (Maclellan 2002: 31). At these conferences, no agreement was reached. In response, the Japanese government sent a delegation to some Island nations, asking for the region's understanding about the nuclear shipments via the Pacific Ocean. They also invited Island leaders to visit Japan for a nuclear seminar where the safety of nuclear shipment program was explained. On these occasions, the Japanese government emphasized Japan's position that nuclear energy is an essential to Japan's energy industry and actually reduces the use of fossil fuel as well as greenhouse gases that cause global warming (Maclellan 2002).

In such situations, the aid critics including Alexander (2001) and Maclellan (2002) look at how Japan tactically uses aid as an effective tool of negotiation. When Island leaders asked Japan to agree to set the liability regime for the compensation, the Japanese government refused to talk about it but they instead offered aid. In 2000, Japan donated

⁴⁹ According to MOFA's Conference Secretary, the shipment route is decided individually based on a type of ship taken for a transport (MOFA 1997).

US\$10 million to the Pacific Forum to establish a “goodwill” trust fund to address concerns over possible incidents during shipment of nuclear materials through the region. This fund made an annual interest of some US\$500,000, which could be used to finance the Forum’s projects in the field of environment, energy, and tourism (Maclellan 2002: 32). This Forum is the premier political and economic policy organization in the Pacific region, with which Japan negotiated nuclear issues.

Unlike the UN and IWC votes that could be negotiated with each nation individually, Japan needed regional support for the nuclear waste issue. For this, the Japanese government increased the volume of aid to regional organizations as a way to persuade Island leaders to give Japan regional support for the nuclear transshipment. In 1987, when the Pacific was doubtful about Japan’s nuclear dumping proposal, the Japanese government announced an increase in its bilateral aid to the Pacific region from US\$24 million to US\$98 million in addition to annual financial assistance to the Pacific Forum. Between 1988 and 2000, Japan had contributed a total of US\$6.7 million to the Pacific Forum Secretariat, making it one of the largest bilateral donors to the organization’s activities (Maclellan 2002: 33). All these events appear to the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint as the way Japan uses aid to smooth things over and exercise power.

In some cases, the influential role of Japan’s aid over the nuclear transshipment was more explicitly described. According to Maclellan, after his visit to Japan, the President of Kiribati and the former Chair of Pacific Forum Teburoro Tito turned his opinion around to support Japan’s plan in return for receiving an aid package for the improvement of Kiribati’s electricity supply (Fiji Daily Post 2001: 40; Maclellan 2002). In contrast, a large aid package to the Solomons for the construction of airport terminal was at the risk of suspension after the country’s Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulafa’alu stated that his government was thinking of charging Japan for using their waters for the nuclear shipment. Although their veracity has not been part of my research, these stories highlighted the public suspicion about Japan’s aid and somewhat added credibility to the argument made by the aid critics.

According to the aid critics with a diplomacy-oriented viewpoint, the UN Security seat, the IWC vote, and nuclear maritime shipment are the three main objectives for which Japan uses foreign aid to negotiate advantageously with Pacific recipients.

3.3.4. The Resource-Driven Viewpoint: We'll Show You Our Love for Tuna in Aid

Another discussion about Japan's motives for aiding the Pacific is usually constructed from a resource-driven viewpoint. Aid critics with this viewpoint center their discussions on the region's fisheries, a potential source of development for nearly all Pacific Island states that have the substantial advantage of 200-nautical mile EEZ and abounding migratory tuna stocks. Due to the lack of infrastructure, capital, and human resources, Pacific states have been relying on external assistance for the development of fisheries. For that, Japan has been providing a considerable amount of grant aid. This fisheries aid is the one most commonly criticized as an instrument through which Japan exploits the region's tuna stock (Alexander 2001; Barclay 2008; Bohane 2006; Johnson 2002; Petersen 2002; Tarte 1998a; Teaiwa 2002: 9). In these critical discussions, Japan is described typically as a powerful donor who uses aid to induce recipient countries to comply with the terms and conditions of fishing access in favor of Japan while developing the region's fisheries for their own resource interests.

Surrounded by sea, Japan has a long and rich history as a fish-eating culture, which emerged in the ancient Jōmon period. Among all kinds of fish, Japanese particularly love *maguro* (tuna), which is most popularly eaten raw as *sashimi* or *sushi*. Since people have a huge appetite for *maguro*, Japan has been the world's greatest consumer of tuna, annually consuming about one-third of the global consumption.⁵⁰ Today, Japan imports more than half of its *maguro* from over 60 different countries. Of the trade partners, the top ten by overall amount are neighboring Asian countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, China, Philippines, and Indonesia, followed by Australia, Vanuatu, Seychelles, and Croatia as of 2007 (JFA 2009). Besides Vanuatu, other Pacific nations such as Fiji, FSM, and Palau are also important trade partners of Japan principally for bigeye, yellowfin, and albacore.

Although relying greatly on imports, Japan is still the biggest catcher of *maguro*, accounting for approximately 20% of the global haul.⁵¹ Since the 1960s, Japan's *maguro*

⁵⁰ In 2004, Japan consumed 0.58 million tons of tuna, accounting for about 28% of the total consumption of 2.08 million tons (WWF Japan 2008).

⁵¹ In recent years, Taiwan became great tuna catcher as well, competing with Japan for the greatest tuna haul. In 2006, Japan's catch accounts for 21.8% of the global haul while Taiwan had 17.9%. The next

catch had been stable until hitting the peak in 1984 with approximately 0.78 million tons, but it gradually dropped to 0.5 million tons in 2004. This drop was due to a number of reasons.⁵² In the 1960s, Japanese vessels were able to fish *maguro* everywhere outside the territorial waters under the freedom of high seas, in addition to the fact that not many countries besides Japan were fishing for tuna at that time. Therefore, the *maguro* industry particularly for *sashimi* use was predominately operated by Japan. Since the mid-1970s, however, the *maguro* fishing by other countries rapidly increased, causing a major decline in abundance of tuna. Around the same time, the concept of the 200-mile EEZ came to be widely recognized by the international community, providing coastal states with oceanic jurisdictions to control their marine resources, primarily fishing and seabed mining.⁵³ As a consequence, Japan and other distant water fishing nations were no longer able to fish within 200-nautical-miles of other countries without gaining agreements from them. These agreements were made basically by paying for a fishing license or purchasing fish from the vessels owned by the country (MOFA 2009).

Meanwhile, restrictions on tuna fishing even beyond the territorial sea zone became tightened around the 1970s, leading to the establishment of regional organizations to govern terms and conditions of fishing the highly migratory species of *maguro*.⁵⁴ However, the western and central Pacific areas did not have such organizations to rigorously monitor fishing until recently. The lack of organized administration created situations in which foreign vessels for pelagic fishing had relatively easy access. Purse seine activity, for instance, was restricted in the eastern Pacific under U.S. legislation regarding dolphin-safe tuna, but was permitted in the western and central Pacific. The easy access to tuna helped raised the popularity of this area among distant water fishing countries. To Japan, it was particularly attractive considering the proximity especially

countries are Mexico (14.9%), Philippines (14.9%), Spain (14.4%), Indonesia (12.6%), France (8.7%), and South Korea (8.3%) (JFA 2009).

⁵² Since the mid-1970s, the world's tuna fishing has rapidly grown, making it five-fold to six-fold bigger than that of the 1960s (JFA 2005).

⁵³ EEZ or exclusive economic zone defines oceanic jurisdiction for all nations. It established a 200-nautical-mile limit on a nation's EEZ whereby a nation controls the undersea resources, primarily fishing and seabed mining, for a distance of 200 nautical miles from its shore. The EEZ was set under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention that went into effect on November 16, 1984. Starting with Sāmoa and Cook Islands in 1977, the majority of the Pacific Forum member countries declared their EEZs in the late 1970s (Tarte 1998a: 90).

⁵⁴ Currently, five organizations supervise global tuna fishing including Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) established in 2004, which monitors the western and central Pacific.

during the oil crisis in the mid-1970s (Tarte 2003). As a result, about 30% of the global catch of tuna came from this area. If skipjack was included, the western and central Pacific Ocean provided about half of a total global catch of tuna (JFA 2005).⁵⁵

The tuna that traverse the Pacific Islands region are bluefin, bigeye, yellowfin, and albacore in addition to skipjack. While the most profitable *maguro* or bluefin are caught dominantly within the EEZ of Australia, most other *maguro* are caught in eight Pacific nations of FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, PNG, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu. Presently, about 60% of Japan's total catch of *maguro* are caught in the western and central area, but this increases to 70% if skipjack is included. For skipjack in particular, Japan relies heavily on this area as it accounts for about 90% of the entire catch (it was 99.5% of a total catch in 2004).⁵⁶ Technically, skipjack is not really *maguro* and its market value is much lower than other *maguro* such as bluefin or southern bluefin. Yet, skipjack is a significant fish as it is the material for producing *katsuobushi* (dried bonito), an essential ingredient for Japanese cuisine. Accordingly, the western and central Pacific Ocean became an indispensable fishing ground for Japan's tuna industry.

In the 1960s to 1970s, major items imported from the Pacific to Japan were mostly natural resources including nickel from New Caledonia, copper from Bougainville, and timber from PNG. At the same time, Japan's large trading companies including Itōchū and Mitsui set up joint ventures in fisheries with several countries in the region. One of those businesses was the Solomon Taiyō, which started in 1973 as a joint venture of the Solomon Islands government and the Maruha Corporation (formerly Taiyō Gyogyō Corporation), a Japan-based multinational fisheries company.⁵⁷ The situation of "easy" fisheries in the region, however, transformed when the concept of EEZ, established in the late 1970s, gave new political power to the Pacific states over their marine resources. Around this time, the Japanese government strikingly increased its aid to the Pacific, according to the aid critics with the resource-oriented viewpoint.

⁵⁵ The total catch of tuna from this area in 2007 was approximately 2.4 million tons, valued at US\$3.8 billion (SPC 2008).

⁵⁶ Until 1990s, skipjack was caught almost entirely within the EEZ of Japan, but a rapid decline in its abundance in the territorial sea led to it being imported.

⁵⁷ The Maruha Corporation withdrew from the joint venture as the political situation of the Solomon Islands became intense with the overthrow of the Ulufa'alu government in a coup (Barclay 2008).

Sandra Tarte, in her series of studies (1998a, 1998b, 2002, 2003, 2005), examines how Japan has been strategically using aid and associated assistance in developing and securing favorable terms of access to fishing grounds within the Pacific's EEZ. At the early stage of Japan's aid to the Pacific, fisheries aid accounted for about one-third of its grant aid for building infrastructure in the fisheries sector. For some countries such as Tuvalu, the share of the fisheries grant aid was as high as 99% (Tarte 2003: 6). Tarte observed that although its area of cooperation has been diversified in later years, Japan's aid to the Pacific remains fisheries-oriented. In addition to the grant aid, Japan's technical cooperation also centered on fisheries, sending experts, trainers, volunteers, and study groups to support the development of Pacific tuna industries while transferring technologies and know-how to handle *maguro* in specific ways favored by Japanese buyers for *sashimi* use. Accordingly, Tarte argued that aid is the foremost apparatus of Japan to secure what they want from the Pacific.

For most Pacific Islands states, fisheries related incomes are derived from licenses sold to foreign-owned fishing vessels, operation of locally owned fishing vessels, export of tuna and other fish both fresh and processed, and the employment of local residents in fisheries (Tarte 2002: 14). In this context, the development of fisheries financed by Japan's aid can be considered beneficial also to Pacific states even if the fisheries projects were intended primarily for Japan's benefit. According to Tarte's study, however, some of the fisheries projects undertaken by Japan did not bring the kind of benefit expected by the recipient communities. In Nauru, the fisheries port was not built according to local preference, while the wharf constructed in Kiribati was too shallow to accommodate fishing vessels (Tarte 2002: 20). Similarly, Edo reports that a fish market constructed in Sāmoa was too big for the local community's absorptive capacity (Edo 1986: 49). In such cases, fisheries facilities ended up as what Tarte calls "white elephants" (Tarte 1998a: 15) or useless monuments to development.

Sadly, those misdirected projects made the recipients feel less than appreciative of Japan's aid, although their appreciation is what most of the Japanese taxpayers want to hear. A Tongan senior official said, Japan tends to "give the wrong kind of aid, which only serves to irk people" (Tarte 2002: 24). Tarte attributes the failed projects to the way the Japanese government prioritizes their benefit in developing fisheries before the

capability and needs of Pacific recipients in actually operating fisheries. In short, the fisheries aid is merely a grand gesture.

As regards to the access fee, Petersen (2002, 2006) argues that it has been small in comparison to what Japan obtained from the region. Until the 1990s, Japan paid 1~2% of catch value as access fees, calculated under the per vessel system. The access fees were commonly paid in a form of fisheries grant aid from JFA or technical assistance provided by sub-governmental organizations such as JICA and OFCF (Tarte 2003: 10).

Considering the seasonal uncertainty in tuna harvests, Japan should pay up to 40% of catch value as access fee, in the opinion of Petersen. In that case, the access fee would be more than double of the amount Japan currently provides as aid to the Pacific (Petersen 2006: 135). If access fees were set at more appropriate levels, all the countries with substantial levels of Japan's fishing activity would generate more income through access fees than through receiving fisheries aid from Japan. Moreover, Petersen argues that maximizing access fees would increase the region's revenue, which would in time generate the necessary capital for the region's development. If this were the case, the Pacific's economic development would become more viable without Japan's fisheries aid.

Taking the standpoint of the aid dependency argument, Petersen further criticizes Japan's fisheries aid for worsening the Pacific. Because fishing access fees are paid in a form of aid, it has diminished the transparency of access fee arrangements, resulting in weakening bargaining position of recipient governments over fishing access. This low bargaining power would further be weakened by the terms and conditions on which aid would be provided and withdrawn. The Pacific states, therefore, would become more dependent on aid, which would eventually stifle the region's own efforts in fisheries development as well as economic development in a broader sense (Petersen 2002: 2).

In contrast to Petersen's view, Island officials see Japan's fisheries aid relatively positively despite the link between the aid and fishing accesses. According to the interviews Tarte conducted (2002: 19-20), officials from Nauru and PNG see making the terms of access arrangements favorable to Japan as a necessary condition for receiving its aid—meaning, no access, no aid. An official from Kiribati, on the other hand, regarded the fishing access as an effective bargaining tool to negotiate with Japan over aid—meaning no aid, no access. Although their views are rather different, overall, Island

officials are tolerant of the conditional aid, seeing it as an understandable arrangement if mutual benefit is considered.

According to Tarte, the Pacific's bargaining power with Japan has improved through the establishment of regional fishing organizations and arrangements (Tarte 2003: 22). At the early stage, it was relatively easy for Japan to establish bilateral access arrangements with Pacific states of abounding tuna resources. As the largest bilateral aid donor, Japan enjoyed an advantage over access arrangements on an unequal playing field (Teaiwa 2002: 9). By the 1980s, however, tensions between Japan and some Pacific states rose when the latter became unsatisfied with the rate of return. As a way of building up their bargaining powers, the Pacific states forged themselves together and established regional organizations including the Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) that focuses on fisheries. With the establishment of regional organizations, pelagic fishing nations including Japan were required to make access arrangements multilaterally through regional organizations rather than bilaterally with individual states.

One example of multilateral arrangements is the Nauru Agreement of 1982. The Nauru Agreement is a sub-regional agreement on terms and regulations for tuna purse seine fishing licenses in the western and central Pacific Ocean. The signatories of this agreement are the region's largest tuna producers including FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, PNG, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. Tuna stocks valued at US\$3 billion a year are caught within the EEZs of these nations. The Japanese government initially opposed the establishment of such agreements as it would limit their use of purse seine to fish *maguro*, but they had to find some negotiable lines since Japan cannot give up the world's richest tuna ground. Besides, the increasing rivalry between Japan and other pelagic fishing nations enhanced the bargaining power of Pacific states while weakening that of Japan.⁵⁸ This can be regarded as a sign of shifting over time in the relative balance of power between Japan and the Pacific states in favor of the Pacific.

⁵⁸ In 1986, the U.S. made bilateral agreements with FFA that agreed to pay a 10% rate of return while other Asian countries such as Taiwan and South Korea paid 2~3%, which was still higher than that of Japan (Matsuda 1992; Tarte 2003: 20-22).

3.3.5. Regional Security and The Kuranari Doctrine

The last common, but least popular, discussion about Japan's reason for aiding the Pacific is related to the U.S. and the regional security. Aid critics with this viewpoint consider that since the late 1980s, Japan added security purposes to its ODA policy in accordance with a strong request by the U.S. government to share the burden of global security (Tarte 1998b). This shift in aid direction can be identified with the creation of so-called Kuranari Doctrine, Japan's diplomatic proposal to support the Pacific's regional affairs. This doctrine was originated in a speech titled *Working Towards the Pacific Future Community*, given by the former Minister of Foreign Affairs Tadashi Kuranari in Fiji in January 1987. In his speech, Minister Kuranari laid out the Japanese government's five-point policy for the Pacific Islands nations, stating that Japan would support the independence and self-governing of each nation, regional cooperation, political stability, economic development, and personnel exchanges (MOFA 1987). Kuranari also pledged to double the quantity of aid, in addition to US\$2 million for the establishment of a Pacific Island Fund within the UNDP to facilitate a new level of relationship between Japan and the Pacific Island states. For the very first time in the postwar era, the Japanese government unveiled its intentions to provide assistance to the region. For this reason, Kuranari's speech has been interpreted commonly as the "doctrine" of Japan's aid to the Pacific (Tarte 1998a: 150-192).

Pacific governments took this speech as an indication of Japan's firm commitment to the region's affairs including fisheries matters. Some aid critics, in contrast, interpreted the real intention of Kuranari Doctrine as a way for Japan to support the U.S. for combating the spread of communism by tying the Pacific states to Japan through aid (Rix 1989-1990; Tarte 1998a: 7). In the mid-1980s, the Soviet Union launched an inroad into the Pacific by making a fishing agreement with Kiribati in 1985 and with Vanuatu in 1987. In rivalry with the Soviets, the U.S. improved their fishing access agreements with Pacific states, increasing the return rate up to 10% of a total catch. As strongly requested by the U.S., Japan increased the amount of aid to the region. This increase is the one Minister Kuranari mentioned in his speech in Fiji. For this reason, the Kuranari Doctrine is often considered a turning point of Japan's emphasis on the aid to the Pacific to

promote regional security (Takeda 1993: 242). This view lost its credibility after the end of Cold War; nevertheless, it remains an explicit example of Japan's strategic use of aid.

These stories and discussions about Japan's motivations in aiding the Pacific are constructed through particular points of view, namely diplomacy-oriented, resource-oriented, and security-oriented viewpoints. While some stories are derived from lived experiences, others are based on imaginations, assumptions, and opinions, constructing different levels of Japanese motivations. The next section looks at the ways the Japanese government responds to those critiques and then attempts to unfold *honne* in their *tatema* statements.

3.4. Japan's Aid to the Pacific in the Donor's View: *Honne*, *Tatema*, and Between

3.4.1. MOFA's *Tatema* Explanations

In the booklet called *Kunibetsu Dēta Bukku* (Data By Countries), MOFA explains the significance of Japan's aid to the Pacific Islands region as follows:

The Pacific Islands are our neighbors who share the Pacific Ocean with Japan. Therefore, the stability and development of the region are inseparable from the security and prosperity of our country. Although the sizes of national lands are small, the Pacific Island nations hold an immense Exclusive Economic Zone, which provides an important fishing ground for Japan's deep-sea fisheries industry, as well as major routes for maritime transportation. Further, some of the Islands such as Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau, have strong historical ties to Japan, with the Japanese descendants accounting for about 20% of their populations. The Pacific Island states have great expectations to receive assistance from our country for self-support efforts on the development of their economies. Fulfilling their expectations would also bring meaningful outcomes to Japan in its diplomatic relations (MOFA 2007b).

Accordingly, Japan's reasons for aiding the Pacific are the regional security, fishing access, historical ties, and diplomatic relations with Pacific states. Similarly, the brochure published by MOFA entitled *Nihon to Taiheiyō no Shokoku: Taiheiyō Shima Samitto* (Japan and the Pacific Island Nations: Japan-Pacific Islands Forum Summit) (MOFA 2007c) outlines three major points of importance of the region to Japan as historical ties, support for the UN vote, and marine resources. Given the fact that these two booklets are both written in Japanese, it can be implied that their primary audiences are Japanese citizens, namely taxpayers. In this context, it is understandable if these

publications by MOFA emphasize the *kokueki* (national interests) in providing aid to the Pacific.

In his interview with *Pacific Magazine*, Kazuo Kodama, the Deputy Director-General of the Asian and Oceania Affairs Bureau in MOFA, explained further the significance of Japan-Pacific relationship. While Kodama denied that Japan's aid is conditional, he alluded to the link between aid and the UN votes, suggesting his view that such level of link should not be considered "tied aid," but a "mutual benefit" (Matus 2003). In a different interview, Kodama referred to the support from the Pacific governments for the UN votes as "evidence of how much trust they have in Japan" (Magick 2005). In his view, Japan earned this support through building a good friendship with the Pacific nations, not by force through so-called conditional aid. For Kodama, therefore, the rise of Chinese power is not a threat but an opportunity for Japan to strengthen the Japan-Pacific relationship (Matus 2003).

Accordingly, the "official" explanations for Japan's motivations in aiding the Pacific are colonial obligation, diplomatic interests in the votes at international organizations, maritime transportation, and securing fishing access. These explanations, however, are not overly convincing or applicable for some countries in the region such as Sāmoa. Although the country is a member of UN, Sāmoa is not a member of the IWC. As to the nuclear transshipment, on any route, Japan's vessels do not pass directly across the Samoan waters, although Japan would probably appreciate Sāmoa's support on the nuclear issue at regional forums such as the Pacific Forum. With respect to the *maguro* resource, unlike FSM or Solomon Islands, Sāmoa does not have particularly abundant fishing grounds for either tuna or skipjack. Aid critics such as Teaiwa (2002: 14) say "Japan gives aid where it gets [fishing] access and withdraws aid where it gets none." Japan has not so far had a fishing access agreement with Sāmoa, but still provides fisheries grants to this recipient (Tarte 1998a: 94). Consequently, except for the case of the UN Security Council seat vote, neither critical aid arguments nor the generalized MOFA explanations can be applied in the case of Sāmoa. This fact can possibly lead to the argument that Japan's core *honne* in aiding Sāmoa has yet to be unfolded.

3.4.2. Why Does Japan Aid Sāmoa?

Why is Japan still keen on aiding Sāmoa, if Sāmoa does not have what Japan wants in return for aid? According to Tarte, Japan's aid to non-fisheries nations in the Pacific such as Sāmoa is a giveaway whereby Japan can improve the overall relationship with the region and hence with the nations of abundant fishing ground (Tarte 2002: 18). MOFA, on the other hand, explains that Japan provides aid to Sāmoa, firstly because they need it (MOFA 2007a: 969), and secondly because it is a token of Japan's gratitude for Sāmoa's diplomatic support (Kantei 2005). An interview conducted with Tsutomu Moriya, Resident Representative of JICA Sāmoa Office, shed a different light.⁵⁹

In the history of Japan's aid, regional strategy was not taken into serious account. Within this context, the government often encounters new proposals like aiding Africa, which was proposed at the recent G8 summit. Given such international proposals, the Japanese government now discusses the significance of aiding Africa or Japan's future relationship with Africa, then, decides, for instance, to allocate half of the entire ODA budget to Africa. But because Japan has no clear regional strategy, government officials like the Prime Minister want to dance around the issue. Along with the rapid increase of budget, Japan now provides aid in every area, allocating it throughout the world. But to the Pacific region, only 2% of the entire ODA budget is given. You might think 2% is tiny but it can be seen as big at the micro-economy level.

How do you explain why Japan provides aid to Sāmoa?

It's not an easy question to answer why Japan provides aid to Sāmoa since, as I mentioned to you earlier, Japan's aid has no regional strategy. I've been frequently asked the same question by, for instance, students from NUS (National University of Sāmoa) when they came to the JICA office for an interview with me. They often ask me "Why does JICA help our country so much?" Some even ask me straight, "Maybe Japan wants to take over Sāmoa?" So I usually give three reasons. One is to gain Sāmoa's support for the UN votes, although this has been criticized. As Japan wishes to establish its place in the UN, votes from the Pacific region are highly regarded. Secondly, it's economic. It's for fisheries issues including fishing access agreements and IWC votes, although Sāmoa is not directly linked to these issues. And the last one is about the nuclear waste shipment via the Pacific. Considering that this shipment brings necessary energy to Japan to operate nuclear power, gaining support from the Pacific region on the shipment is important. Probably these are too political and economic-oriented, but are the main reasons as far as the significance of aid to Sāmoa at the macro scale is considered.

⁵⁹ Interview with Moriya was conducted at the JICA Sāmoa Office in Apia on July 10, 2003.

Among recipient states in the Pacific, Sāmoa has received one of the largest amounts of aid from Japan. Do you think the Japanese government somehow perceives of Sāmoa as special in the region?

I don't think so....but since Sāmoa gained independence in '62 as the first in Polynesia, and has a strong identity. Also, the country has a well-established system to receive foreign assistance. I think I could say Sāmoa is an easy country to work with. Plus, Sāmoa has capability of handling large-scale projects smoothly, for these reasons we can deploy the projects like we have now. But we don't otherwise consider Sāmoa as special in the region.

As Moriya indicates, Japan has few strategies in its aid to Sāmoa and to the Pacific as a whole, despite what the prevailing viewpoints argue. This is not surprising considering that Japan has barely any strategy in its entire ODA (see Chapter 2). Moriya's comments also imply that Japan has little direct interest in Sāmoa.

An interview with another Resident Representative of JICA Sāmoa, Junji Ishizuka gives additional hints to understanding why Japan aids Sāmoa.⁶⁰

What stance does Japan take in aiding Sāmoa?

Australia, for instance, is now tackling challenging issues like improving the tax system or strengthening the police power. Because these will affect on their homeland security, they are taking initiatives [in the development of Sāmoa]. As for education, they are working on the human resource development from the stance of future skilled migrants from Sāmoa that Australia would like to have. So their attitudes are completely different from that of Japan. To us, those things do not so much matter because we are 8,000 kilometers away from here, and have almost no stake directly from Sāmoa to Japanese nationals.

So then, why has Japan provided aid to Sāmoa for such a long period of time?

Well, one is that Sāmoa is a country sympathetic to Japan. And because Sāmoa has a long history [of being independent], Sāmoa is being sort of an opinion leader in the Pacific region. So if we can secure the trust of this country, Sāmoa would talk to Tonga, Vanuatu, and Fiji on our behalf. Of course, political stability is important, but we also value Sāmoa's influential position in the region, although we have little economic interests. And.....(long pause). Overall, Sāmoa is friendly, and has high potential.

Does it mean that Sāmoa would support Japan in various fields?

Politically speaking, it does not only mean that one UN vote, but Japan is expecting Sāmoa's influence in the region. Financially speaking, the aid to the Pacific only accounts for 2% of the entire budget, and within the budget, Sāmoa accounts about

⁶⁰ Interview with Ishizuka was conducted at the JICA Sāmoa Office in Apia on July 3, 2006. Ishizuka succeeded Moriya who completed his three-year duty in Sāmoa and moved to the next assignment in Mongolia. Ishizuka also completed his duty in Sāmoa and returned to Japan in 2007. Since 2007, Yoshifusa Shikama has been Resident Representative of JICA Sāmoa Office.

10%. So it's only 0.3 or 0.4% of the total budget. Because of small economic effect, I think the budget is correspondingly small...

According to the two JICA representatives, the reasons for Japan's continuous assistance to Sāmoa are 1) Sāmoa's sympathetic attitude towards Japan's candidacy for the UN Security Council seat and other diplomatic agendas; 2) the nation's potential to be an intermediary between Japan and other Pacific Island states, and 3) its political stability and capability of handling large-scale aid projects. In other words, they confirmed that Japan has hardly any "strategy" in aiding Sāmoa.

One might still argue that Japan tactically uses aid to gain support on the UN votes, but I would say that is not considered strategy if the term strategy means "a carefully devised plan of action to achieve a goal" (Encarta World English Dictionary 2004). In the case of the UN votes, I see aid as representing *omiyage* (souvenir) through which Japan hopes to give a good impression to recipients rather than as a planned device. Reasons such as Sāmoa's political stability and influential position in the region are not strong incentives for Japan to use the aid strategically. Rather, they are merely *tatemaie* and convenient factors that help the Japanese government rationalize aid to Sāmoa. As Moriya mentioned in the interview, the Japanese government "searches" for reasons to provide aid in order to gain approval from Japanese taxpayers. If the government did aid for Africa, it is reasonable to think they would do it for Sāmoa.

A critical point here is that both representatives mentioned the quantity of aid to Sāmoa as minuscule from the Japanese perspective. This diminutive allocation is a key to understanding the Japanese government's *honne* for aiding Sāmoa. Because its amount is small to the degree that it has almost no positive or negative effects on the entire ODA venture, the government can provide aid to Sāmoa without having specific interests. Besides, as Ishizuka mentioned, the societal situation of Sāmoa seldom affects directly on Japan due to the scarce ties between the two countries except ODA. Therefore, it is affordable for Japan to be spiritless in this flow of aid rather than strategic. It seems that the Japanese government thinks—if there were no harm, then, it would possibly be wiser to continue aiding Sāmoa because it could promote Japan's name as a generous worldwide aid donor. Plus, Sāmoa might support Japan's important diplomatic missions such as the UN vote in return for aid. Consequently, Japan rarely has concrete reasons for aiding Sāmoa. In other words, Japan aids Sāmoa because Japan "discovered"

Sāmoa on the map of developing world, to provide aid. This is one *honne* of Japan's aid to Sāmoa I found.

If the reason is that simple, why have critical aid observers been attributing Samoa's case to something that they imagine to exist? Given a lack of understanding of the *honne/tatemae* dualism, their analyses are often confused with the government's *tatemae*. They try to read the government's statements or activities that may sound somewhat strange, but these are usually *tatemae* reflecting on and reacting to what critics say about Japan's aid. Partly because of such misinterpretation, their arguments are frequently off the track in some realities, although they may make perfect sense to some audiences. Professor Izumi Kobayashi from Japan Institute for Pacific Studies, on the other hand, attributes this gap in understanding to the lack of knowledge about Japan's political economy among the scholars and journalists who construct instrumental arguments.⁶¹ As a result, they fail to take such important elements of Japan's ODA as the *kanryō* system (Japanese bureaucracy) into their analyses. To fill the gap, I will take the implications of *kanryō* system into account and reinterpret the ways the Japanese government handles the aid to Sāmoa and to other Pacific states.

3.4.3. The Pacific On The Edge of *Kanryō* Mental Map

Otsukiai enjo (sociability aid) is aid offered principally for the sake of friendship or for the preservation of harmony (see Chapter 2). Japan's aid critics such as Robert M. Orr use the term *otsukiai enjo* to describe the aid flows to Pacific Island states where Japan places little political and economic significance (Orr 1990: 89). This view can be supported by the origin of the aid to the Pacific. Japan began providing aid to the Pacific region partly as a response to the pressure from OECD to diversify its ODA allocations. The first aid was provided to PNG in 1969, which followed by Sāmoa and Tonga in 1973.⁶² Sāmoa was most likely chosen because Sāmoa was one of few independent states

⁶¹ Interview with Professor Kobayashi was conducted at the meeting room in Japan Institute for Pacific Studies in Tōkyo on June 4, 2007.

⁶² Tarte (1998a) says it was started in 1975 with a fishery grant aid to PNG, but according to MOFA, the first aid to the Pacific was a technical assistance provided to PNG in 1969. MOFA says it was followed by the aid to Sāmoa in 1972 in a form of technical assistance. But the report issued by JICA Sāmoa says the first aid to Sāmoa was provided in 1968. The inconsistency in the information published by the governmental organizations may imply how little the government pays attention to Japan's aid to the Pacific.

in the region when Japan was searching for potential recipients to further the diversification of ODA allocation.⁶³ In short, the aid to Sāmoa was started without specific intentions. This tradition continues to the present. Therefore, it is no wonder that *Samoa Observer*, the most widely distributed local newspaper in Sāmoa, describes Japan's aid projects as "in stark contrast to the USA foreign policy that is based upon a country's worth and strategic benefit to Washington" (cited in Crocombe 2007: 247).

A foremost reason for not having specific intentions, I would argue, is that MOFA officials see the share of aid to Sāmoa as too small to need well-laid plans. Therefore, they continue organize and implement aid to Sāmoa relatively randomly. Such an unmotivated attitude towards not only Sāmoa but also the Pacific Islands region as a whole is deeply ingrained throughout MOFA as well as the entire Japanese government. From their viewpoints, the Pacific Islands appear as an inconsequential region at the edge of their mental map where they set the world hierarchy according to such sources of motivation as strong political and economic initiatives or wide media coverage (Tarte 1998a: 163). In this regard, Japan's interest in aid to the Pacific remains small.

Evidence for the dismissive view of the Pacific region can be found in the MOFA's English homepage on ODA. While it carries sections that focus on the aid recipient countries categorized by region, there is no section set for the Pacific region. This may give the homepage viewers an impression that the Pacific is not on the Japan's aid map. When I asked the Aid Policy and Management Division of MOFA why the Pacific region was not on their homepage, they replied that information in English about the aid to the Pacific was limited.⁶⁴ This, however, was not a convincing answer since MOFA had already published some information about Japan's aid to the Pacific in English. It suggests that aid to the Pacific can easily be overlooked by MOFA. Furthermore, the organizational structure of MOFA also reflects the world order of the *kanryō* map that belittles the Pacific. Among nearly 70 different divisions in MOFA, the Oceania Division that deals with aid to the Pacific does not receive much attention or admiration. "This division is very minor and is always fighting with other ministries for budget," said

⁶³ I sent a few e-mails of inquiry to MOFA about the selection of Sāmoa, but received no answer, although MOFA responded relatively quickly to my other inquiries. The lack of response suggested they had perhaps had no specific reason for providing ODA to Sāmoa.

⁶⁴ My e-mail inquiry was written in Japanese and sent to the Aid Policy and Management Division of MOFA via oda@mofa.go.jp on June 16, 2008. I received the response on June 20, 2008.

the abovementioned Professor Kobayashi (Magick 2005). Because the Oceania Division is a minor department, *kanryō* elite officials with influential voices are rarely assigned to this division. If any elite officials are assigned to the Oceania Division, they are likely to take charge of big countries within the region such as Australia. New and highly motivated officials assigned to Island affairs may soon be disillusioned by the belittling view of the Pacific that has prevailed in the Ministry. Yoshikazu Ōyama, former JICA specialists to Pacific Islands, says:

At present in MOFA, aid to the Pacific is administered by the officials temporarily transferred from other ministries. General affairs of Pacific Islands are handled by non-career officers with a title of kikakukan (senior project officer), not by the division chief who is an elite kanryō, which is the usual case in other divisions. By looking at these human resource arrangements, it already implies how little interest the government placed in developing a foreign policy strategy for the Pacific Islands region. Because of that, the budget obtained for MOFA or JICA in the Pacific region is only a tiny amount. Plus, I don't think the current non-career officials in charge have enough guts to work for a budget increase.⁶⁵

As Ōyama predicts, without a strong voice and able *kanryō* officials, an endogenous change in the aid strategy to Sāmoa is unlikely anytime soon.

Unfortunately, the government's attitude has influenced the Japanese public who also regard the Pacific region as insignificant in terms of Japan's aid. A public poll conducted by MOFA in 1987 indicated that, the Pacific Island countries were of least priority in future ODA (Tarte 1998a: 171). Although this survey was conducted more than two decades ago, public opinion on regional importance in foreign affairs has not changed dramatically.

3.4.4. Nobody Knows the Pacific

As already discussed, Japan has no strategy in its aid to Sāmoa, nor are they likely to make one. Unlike AusAID or NZAID who have a team of regional experts profoundly involved in their ODA ventures, MOFA has no expert specializing the Pacific Islands to develop the aid strategy for the region. Despite MOFA's plentiful human resources with the graduates of top universities, some aspects of the *kanryō* system prevent its officials from becoming experts in any particular fields. One element is rotation of officials from

⁶⁵ This quote was taken from my e-mail interview with Yoshikazu Ōyama (pseudonym) conducted on January 28, 2008.

one division to another every few years before they become an “expert.” Another obstacle is the recruitment restraints based on competitive examinations with age limitations to eliminate so-called professionals—people with long experience and deep knowledge of a particular field.⁶⁶ A handful of Japanese scholars and experts specialize in the Pacific region; yet, MOFA’s recruitment system does not allow the Ministry to employ the necessary human resources. As a result, MOFA has few officials who have sufficient knowledge to understand underlying concerns and needs of the Pacific Island states (Tarte 1998a: 161).

A good example of MOFA’s thin understanding about Pacific affairs was the first PALM summit. The first PALM, held in Tōkyo in 1997, invited 14 Island leaders from the Forum member countries. It was the first time the Japanese government took an initiative and showed an interest in discussing “ways to promote trade, investment, and tourism between Pacific Island countries and Japan, and to encourage economic self-reliance” (MOFA 1997). Island leaders wished to use this opportunity to ask Japan for more aid and better fishing arrangements in addition to the expansion of trade and tourism (Finin and Wesley-Smith 1997). The Japanese government, however, failed to propose an official agenda for the summit so Island leaders were uncertain about its purpose (Field 1997). This two-day summit scheduled multiple events to entertain the leaders including a tea ceremony attended by Emperor Akihito, but its keystone—discussions and negotiations—seemed poorly organized. The keynote speaker Japan’s Prime Minister Ryūichi Hashimoto was unable to deliver his scheduled address to mark the new beginning of Japan-Pacific relationship due to “urgent political business.” The summit outlined “a range of issues of concern and cooperation—economic and private sector development, public reform, fishing, climate change, youth exchanges and more—but contained no action agenda or plans for implementation” (Maclellan 2002: 34). The leaders were happy that MOFA promised to continue assistance to the Pacific region despite the government’s decision to reduce the entire ODA budget by 10%. Still, they were rather disappointed not only by the absence of Prime Minister Hashimoto but also

⁶⁶ Not only MOFA but also the majority of central ministries have restrictions on their recruitment based on examination results and age. In 2006, some ministries including MOFA finally opened their tight doors and started the mid-career employment system that officially has no limitation on age, although a pass of respective examinations is still required. The effectiveness of this new recruitment system has not been reported yet.

because substantive negotiations did not happen (Alexander 2001: 138; Kobayashi 2000; Maclellan 1997).

Some critical journalists from the Pacific interpreted the superficiality of the first PALM summit as Japan's unwillingness to clarify its real intention in the region and to work closely with Island leaders (Field 1997). On contrary, I interpret that the vagueness was not a sign of unwillingness to cooperate, but a result of uncertainty about what to do. The *honne* is that the Japanese government invited Island leaders and held the PALM summit without a specific agenda other than diplomatic notes. For the Japanese government at that time, holding the PALM to demonstrate their concern for the Pacific Islands was more important than the content of the summit itself. Therefore, it was organized in such way that MOFA officials could squeeze out some showcase meeting agendas from limited information for the sake of holding the summit. On this unproductive summit, the government spent about US\$700,000 (Crocombe 2007: 237; Pareti 2003). The significance of this act of diplomacy may appear illogical for those who are unfamiliar with Japanese bureaucracy. But this costly summit is a typical performance of the Japanese government who prioritizes the maintenance of *tatemaie*, a façade with little substance. The story of the first PALM illustrates that without understanding the nature of Japanese bureaucracy, interpretations of Japan's aid would likely be inaccurate.

3.4.5. Reflexivity as Strategy

One might then ask how, without having profound knowledge, experts, policy, and strategy, the Japanese government could make specious explanations and comments about the aid to Sāmoa and the Pacific as shown above. As discussed in Chapter 2, Japan's aid policy in general is reflexive, deriving from what aid critics said or what recipients requested. MOFA's comments about aid to Sāmoa and the Pacific basically rephrase what critics say. For instance, the statements made by MOFA about the significance of aid to the Pacific coincide with the arguments on Japan's motivations made by Pacific scholars and journalists. Such coincidence supports the view that the Japanese government is using the scholarly arguments to rationalize their aid to the Pacific and emphasize the *kokueki* (national interest) in aid in order to persuade

principally the Japanese taxpayer. In other words, the government needs explanations to “do” aid to the places such as Sāmoa. When no convincing justifications are easily available, they borrow the reasons someone else has constructed for Japan’s aid.

My interview found that Moriya of JICA Sāmoa highlighted three reasons for aiding Sāmoa that reflect what critics argue. This suggests that he used the ready-made reasons to answer the interview questions; possibly thinking it would be safe to use the “published” explanations. He, too, admitted that because Japan has no regional aid strategy in aid, he usually answers questions in this way. Moreover, I would venture to say that the Kuranari Doctrine is not an exception to this reflexive origin. While may be regarded highly as the Japanese philosophical proposal for the aid to the Pacific, it appears to be a synopsis of what has been said about the particular flow of aid. One may argue that it is not the bureaucrats echoing the critics, but the critics who obtained their phrases from the bureaucrats in the first place. I find such counterarguments unrealistic knowing that Japan’s *kanryō* lacks human resource with sufficient knowledge about the Pacific region to construct such substantial arguments.

Because no endogenous explanation of the reasons for Japan’s aid to the Pacific has surfaced, the actual operation of Japan’s aid to the Pacific remains senseless, unguided and sometimes “mysterious.” Ironically, scholarly discussions on Japan’s aid to the Pacific earned credibility when Japanese bureaucrats such as Kuranari accepted the constructed reasons as Japan’s real intentions. Through their repetitive use, the externally constructed reasons became more credible and eventually began to be seen as the truth. In this production of knowledge, the truth that is accepted as plausible may cover up another reality.

One example of this category of truth is the popular argument of using aid to buy IWC votes. Certainly, the Japanese government has lobbied for the resumption of commercial whaling. In particular, the Whaling Division in Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) and people heavily involved in the whaling industry are strongly opposed to the 1989 moratorium. Nevertheless, the whaling issue is a quite minor concern in Japan’s current foreign diplomacy. Generally speaking, today’s Japanese including *kanryō* officials care little about whether or not commercial whaling is resumed, mainly because whales are no longer an essential resource for contemporary

Japan. Therefore, regardless of what critics say, the Japanese government most likely does not spend a vast amount of time and money to buy the IWC votes from non-whaling Pacific states. Natsuo Temaekawa, the program formulation advisor of JICA Sāmoa, commented the popular allegation about the IWC votes:⁶⁷

Politically, the government uses the whaling issue as an explanation for the national interest especially because the national interest is always in the conversation of aid. Some people even say, don't send aid to where Japan finds no national interests. But we are (from here he started to try hard to hold back his laugh while talking) working hard not for the whaling issue... We are providing support because we want to eat whale meat (laugh)... Never thought, this aid project would contribute to the whaling issues or earn one vote (laugh)...

This interview illustrates that for people like Temaekawa who work for Japan's aid to the Pacific on the ground, the IWC vote-buying argument is a remote matter.

Furthermore, if the Japanese government had been manipulating the Pacific's votes through aid, government officials like Moriya of JICA may not have admitted buying IWC votes was related to Japan's aid to Sāmoa. He would have probably used a better explanation for Japan's intentions, considering that as the Representative of JICA, his foremost mission is to promote a good face of Japan. Instead, Moriya used the ready-made explanations as an easy answer. The aforementioned JICA specialist Ōyama says,

*In the ODA field, smart ones can use prevailing arguments including nuclear transshipment, UN votes, war compensation, and most recently global warming as timely information in order to rationalize the necessity of aid to the Pacific, and they can talk plausibly on the surface, but that's all.*⁶⁸

Unfortunately, because Japanese concepts and systems are seldom taken into account by many aid critics, the government's *tatemaie* statements invite misunderstandings and help construct the imaginary realities of Japan's aid to the Pacific as seen in the argument on whaling battle. Japan's IWC vote-buying aid activity is the reality constructed through the viewpoint of anti-whaling governments and organizations, which is not the reality shared by the majority of Japanese.

⁶⁷ Interview with Natsuo Temaekawa (pseudonym) was conducted at a meeting room in the JICA Sāmoa office in Apia on September 28, 2006.

⁶⁸ Quote is taken from my e-mail interview with Ōyama conducted on January 4, 2008.

3.4.6. Fiscal Budget-Oriented Implementation

The next question is, how can MOFA still implement aid to the Pacific with such an unprincipled system? An answer is, they do it randomly according to the allocated annual budget. In implementing aid projects, the Japanese government also uses the reflexive method, what Ōyama calls *mogura tataki*. *Mogura tataki* or mole whacking is a popular game found in game arcades anywhere in Japan. To play this game, a player first puts in a coin and stands in front of the machine with a waist-high platform full of holes. Then the player waits for *mogura* or moles to start putting their heads up randomly, and whacks as many of them as possible in the allotted time with a large plastic hammer (Garrison, et al. 2002: 404). Ōyama sees Japan's aid to the Pacific similar to *mogura tataki*.

The Oceania Division selects projects to implement in a random way as requests or ideas pop up within the given budget and time. Some projects were chosen based on a request from a recipient government, the official method of Japan's aid. But others were selected rather casually, for instance, in accordance with *gaiatsu* (external pressure) or what critics suggest. In the process of selecting projects, geographical and sectoral distributions are often considerations; but balancing the budget allocated for the particular fiscal year is more important.

A story from Moriya of JICA Sāmoa about the large-scale grant aid project for the development of Apia Port illustrates this budget-juggling implementation of aid.

Are there any special reasons for Japan to provide large scale grant aid to Sāmoa that exceeds to US\$20 million, which is rare in ODA?

Not really. It is true that the grant aid exceeding US\$20 million is rare, but I heard that it was simply because there were some grant projects that were not implemented that year for various reasons.

In Sāmoa?

No, the left over budget happened at the global level. It seems that this Apia port project was started, as there was some leeway in the budget to be used. And the plan for this project went bigger and bigger, and eventually grew as the large project of US\$20 million. This project to construct a new wharf 165m in length at Apia Port would have enormous impact on Sāmoa's economy....It was in a sense the Samoan government's earnest desire for which Prime Minister Tuilaepa was working hard on Japan to take this project.

This comment describes the impromptu and budget-oriented nature of Japan's aid to the Pacific. At the same time, it reveals that the largest aid project ever implemented by Japan in Sāmoa was not the result of careful planning with a well thought-out budget, but was a response to Prime Minister Tuilaepa's ardent lobbying at a time when funds were available globally. The selection and implementation of aid projects are swayed most influentially by the fiscal budget. The Japanese government must implement more projects or expand original plans when funds are leftover in the designated budget while they have to cancel or postpone projects when there are deficits.

In fiscal year of 2005, Japan provided no grant aid, no grassroots aid, and no technical cooperation to Sāmoa. According to Temaekawa, the JICA Sāmoa official, the sudden drop in ODA disbursement was due simply to the fact that Japan had not enough funding left to budget aid to Sāmoa for this fiscal year after disbursing emergency aid to tsunami relief in Sumatra in the previous year. JICA Sāmoa office, therefore, had to wait until the next fiscal year to receive a new budget to continue to implement projects. In this way, Japan's aid implementation resembles *mogura tataki* with which the player inserts another coin to restart whacking *mogura* for the next given time period. While critical thinkers often detect an instrumental meaning in seemingly unusual shifts in ODA allocation, the meanings may be simpler in the case of Japan's aid to Sāmoa.

3.4.7. Omiyage Gaikō (Souvenir Diplomacy)

Generally, aid critics try to read meanings not only in a sudden drop of aid, but also in a sudden increase. In the case of Japan's aid, no significant reason usually exists for unexpected change in aid amounts. Often times, the Japanese government pledges an increase in aid at summits and other diplomatic occasions attended by high-ranking officials from developing countries. This aid is commonly considered *omiyage* (souvenir), a part of Japan's diplomatic rituals scarcely attached to a carefully planned tool of manipulation. Because the presentation of *omiyage* aid repeatedly reoccurs with Japan's big agenda, it appears if the Japanese government was asking a favor through aid.

The government announced a funding package worth US\$4 million and the increase of some US\$160 million at the PALM 2000. An increase in aid package was also announced when Prime Minister Nakasone and Minister Kuranari visited the region on

diplomatic missions in the 1980s. Some aid critics interpreted these sudden increases in aid as part of Japan's lobbying strategy for their diplomatic agendas such as IWC vote and nuclear waste shipments (Gillespie 2001; Greenpace 2007; Maclellan 2002).

Conversely, I would interpret this increased aid as part of *omiyage gaikō* through which the Japanese government tries to impress the recipient. The *omiyage* aid given at the PALM 2000 was possibly a gift to please Island leaders who may have been disappointed otherwise at the summit when the government gave evasive answers on important points. Similarly, the *omiyage* aid Prime Minister Nakasone and Minister Kuranarai brought was primarily to give their visits to the region some class and to avoid friction between Japan and the Pacific Island states. These diplomatic *omiyage* may not be purely genuine in the sense that they are used to please the recipient. Still, these are mere souvenirs that contain few strings attached.

Furthermore, the Japanese government may not even consider these increases as significant considering the entire ODA budget. In fact, the government regards a million-dollar grassroots aid project as *omiyage*. According to Kimio Fujita, the former Director-General of JICA, Japan started its grassroots aid initially as an *omiyage* for ambassadors to bring to their newly assigned countries since they have otherwise little to contribute at the beginning.⁶⁹ This story confirmed how casually the Japanese government perceives of some of the aid projects. If the government views the whole of grassroots aid as *omiyage*, then, the "tiny" increase in aid to the Pacific can certainly be seen as a diplomatic gesture without hidden meanings.

3.4.8. Fisheries Aid For Food Security

Having said all this, however, I do find an undeniable level of correlation between fisheries grant aid and fisheries access agreements between Japan and Pacific states. According to Ōyama, the former JICA specialist to Pacific Islands, fisheries grant aid and fishing access agreements seem to be connected. "These two work like a synchronized

⁶⁹ Interview with Fujita was conducted at the main lobby of the JICA Institution in Tōkyo, on June 4, 2007. Unlike other forms of aid, grassroots aid is basically undertaken directly by the Embassy of Japan to respective recipients that are under their jurisdiction.

instrument through which each anticipates the wishes of the other,” said Ōyama.⁷⁰ For this reason, he sees Japan’s fishery grant as the aid for Japan’s *kokueki* (national interest).

Those connections can be attributed to the way in which Japan’s fisheries industry is managed. Japan’s fisheries industry is co-managed by the three groups of stakeholders including fisheries business people, Japan Fisheries Agency (JFA), the fisheries division of Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF), and the Ministry’s *gaikaku dantai*, a thick layer of government-affiliated organizations sitting between the first two. In making policies and managing funds for the nation’s distant-water tuna fisheries, these stakeholders work closely through the practice of *amakudari*—former government officials finding employment in the private sector—or the *shukkō* system—seconding officials to another office or company temporarily (Barclay and Koh 2008). Japan’s fisheries aid is rooted in this unique structure of fisheries industry. While fisheries aid is provided at the request of recipient governments, the request is often initiated by Japanese fisheries business people who lobby generally through a channel of *gaikaku dantai* to allocate fisheries aid to the country with whom they have access negotiations (Tarte 1998a: 93-94). Following dialogue between JFA, *gaikaku dantai*, and fisheries business people, the request for fisheries aid is approved. Its fund is derived from the ODA budget appropriated to MAFF.⁷¹ Japan’s fisheries grant aid thus recurrently overlaps with the interests of Japan’s fisheries industry.

Technically, linking aid to fishing access agreements does not violate the ODA main rules, although such link is considered “tied aid” and discouraged by OECD.⁷² As fisheries aid is derived from the nation’s ODA budget, it should not be tied to profit from donor countries through fishing access agreements. Nevertheless, fisheries aid is tied to fishing access since it is initiated to secure Japan’s fishing grounds. The former Minister of MAFF Masatoshi Wakabayashi clearly stated the joint origin at the Upper House Financial Committee held in October 2007, saying “the fisheries grant was started with the purpose of securing Japan’s fishing grounds through supporting the development of

⁷⁰ This quote was taken from e-mail interview with Ōyama (pseudonym) conducted on January 24, 2008.

⁷¹ While MOFA administers more than 60% of the entire ODA budget, the rest is appropriated to other ministries for their respective applications. For instance, the vast majority of ODA from the Ministry of Finance goes to Japan Bank for International Cooperation, while Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology uses ODA for international student exchange programs.

⁷² The ODA’s main rules include promoting recipients’ economic development and welfare, containing a grant element of at least 25%, and being undertaken by the public sector.

fisheries industries of aid recipient countries”(Tōyama 2007). This grant aid was developed after the establishment of the EEZ that shrank the “open sea” for Japan to fish.

Japan has a long tradition of government intervention in the development of the economy, in which fisheries development is not an exception. The government has been subsidizing the fisheries industry through a wide range of programs with public money. In this tradition of political economy, the government can rationalize the use of the public money—ODA—to secure the nation’s food and protect cultural heritage in certain fields of food production such as distant-water fisheries (Bestor 2004). Especially in view of MAFF whose foremost mission is securing food, the use of fisheries grant, which is derived from this Ministry, to help sustain the nation’s distant-water tuna fishing is seen as reasonable conduct (Barclay and Koh 2008: 160). Such use of fisheries aid can be strongly supported by Japanese taxpayers who are sincerely concerned about the nation’s low food self-sufficiency. According to the opinion poll conducted by the Prime Minister’s Office in 2000, 95% of respondents called for the government to enhance national food security in light of Japan’s continuously declining food self-sufficiency ratio. Currently, Japan has about 40% food self-sufficiency on an intake calorie basis, the lowest among industrialized countries (MAFF 2003).⁷³

Bestor (2004: 167) argues the mass media also played a significant role in the discourse about Japan’s food dependency, fanning the citizen’s fear about the future food security. This fear helped legitimize the government’s continuous support for the fisheries industry even through aid. In light of this situation, some outspoken bureaucrats such as the JFA senior official Komatsu made some aggressive comments to justify the use of foreign aid for the national interest in fisheries (see footnote 47). Although he later overturned his opinion, Komatsu’s earlier comment reflected the Japanese government’s *honne* regarding fisheries aid (Barclay and Koh 2008: 162). This logic, however, did not necessarily apply to Japan’s aid provided by other ministries since each ministry has different goals and principles related to aid. This ministerial difference is another reason why the Japanese government was not willing to discuss fisheries issues at the PALM, which was organized by MOFA to achieve diplomatic aims. It also explained

⁷³ According to the same poll, 78% of Japanese are concerned about the stability of nation’s food security in the future (MAFF 2003).

why the Kuranari Doctrine, a initiated by MOFA, did not include fisheries issues in its agenda (Tarte 1998a: 164).

While the government's *honne* behind fisheries aid became somewhat clear, this aid seemed to have a low level of transparency in its operation, leaving some corruption allegations unexplained. The dubious operation of fisheries aid can be attributed to the misconception prevalent among Japanese citizens that the ODA was a national project operated entirely by MOFA. Such misperception allowed other ministries such as MAFF to receive little attention and criticism about their aid projects, resulting in obscuring their operations. Although the demand for an effective evaluation system is growing internationally, MAFF has only just established an evaluation system to assess whether fisheries aid projects meet the standard suggested by OECD.

Another concern is the MAFF's close relation with its *gaikaku dantai* and fisheries industry that creates an unhealthy environment in which their *kanryō* officials are susceptible to corruption and scandals (Barclay and Koh 2008).⁷⁴ Some scandals are related to excessive company-sponsored *settai*, an entertaining of *kanryō* officials by industry people, including an invitation to wining and dining at fancy restaurants. According to the Japanese anthropologist Takie Sugiyama Lebra (2004: 116-123), *settai* is a most popular Japanese way to show one's hospitality typically through entertainment that removes social barriers. Such *settai* ranges from wining and dining at casual restaurants to expensive golf-*settai* or even a payment of a guest's travel and hotel bills at resort. Lebra describes *settai* as a culturally endorsed activity that does not normally arouse suspicion, although it could possibly become associated with an illicit form of hospitality that helps create structural corruption (Lebra 2004: 122).

Conducting *settai* is legal in Japan; nevertheless, this *settai* culture may be misunderstood especially in cross-cultural settings with clearer distinctions between hospitality and bribery. A story about a Grenadian representative to the IWC illustrates this point.⁷⁵ The Grenadian man told ABC Australia news about his experience of being

⁷⁴ In May 2007, the Minister of MAFF Toshikatsu Matsuoka committed suicide when suspected of misuse of public funds (Barclay and Koh 2008: 149). Unfortunately, such a corrupt environment is not unique to MAFF, but pervades Japan's ministries.

⁷⁵ Grenada is an island nation in the Caribbean with the population of about 110,000. Grenada is considered a case of Japan's vote-buying aid. Grenada has been a member of IWC since 1993 and Japan has been one of top bilateral aid donors to this recipient.

bribed when he was invited to Japan to discuss issues related to the IWC. “I would get to an airport and someone would meet you at the airport and pay for your expenses and give you money for your expenses,” he said (ABC News Online 2005). While the Australian news interpreted this as Japan’s vote-buying activity, I would see it as part of standard *settai* in Japan that important guests would likely receive from their hosts. As a way to show hospitality, the hosts would do things such as arranging transport, sightseeing or dining, and even paying hotel bills and other expenses. These *settai* activities may make the guests a bit suspicious if they know little about the Japanese custom.

By and large, I find that the situations around fisheries aid may not be as institutionalized as some aid observers suggest—Japan tactically uses its aid for the nation’s fisheries diplomacy. Considering the no-strategy, no-policy operation of Japan’s aid to the Pacific as well as its fiscal budget-oriented nature, it is unrealistic to think that MAFF has institutionalized some tactics in order to use fisheries grant aid to bribe Pacific governments. As discussed above, given the current practice in which individuals from fisheries agency or industry usually initiates fisheries aid, it is difficult to agree with the state-oriented buying-aid view. Rather, I would think if the manipulative use of either public money (i.e., ODA) or private money (i.e., company’s *settai* expenses) is actually practiced in the negotiation process of fisheries access, it would have been seen at the grassroots level involving, for instance, some Japanese fisheries individuals and Island officials, but not at the state level as part of the system of fisheries aid. If the Japanese government as the donor were to be involved in bribing practiced around fisheries aid, I would suspect that their part is to overlook the corruption as long as it would produce a situation favorable to Japan. While ODA is supposed to be a government-to-government event, in the arena of fisheries aid, the Japanese government is much less proactive than aid critics usually argue. Understanding such peculiarity of Japan’s fisheries aid would help reveal more of the *honne* underlying Japan’s aid.

3.4.9. The Problem of Knowledge and Geographical Scale of Analysis

This chapter indicated gaps between the motivations for Japan’s aid imputed by aid observers and the “actual” situation understood by donors. These gaps or misfits arise from misattributions, from overgeneralizations, and from lack of precision in

geographical scales of analysis. Some of these gaps are wide, describing different realities. Professor Kobayashi says:

From the standpoint of someone like myself who was actually involved in Japan's aid operation, most of the academic arguments about Japan's aid appear as a joke in a sense that their arguments are based on spurious predictions, only existing within the imaginary world of academia. I'm not interested in the critical aid studies because, to me, they are a source of disappointment, exhibiting how little the researchers know about the reality of Japan's aid.⁷⁶

Professor Kobayashi attributes the wide gaps to the inductive approach with which scholars and journalists have constructed the academic reality of Japan's aid to the Pacific.

The inductive approach provides researchers a powerful tool to develop arguments based on empirical data, but it risks arriving at ungrounded general truth constructed from a number of single instances (Holt-Jensen 1999). This weakness becomes more vulnerable when the data are collected through a cross-cultural setting where certain activities contain different and unthought-of meanings. Put this argument into the context of Japan's aid to the Pacific. In analyzing this flow of aid, aid observers who lack the understanding of certain Japanese concepts (e.g., *honne* and *tatemae*), behaviors (e.g., reflexive policy), and practices (e.g., *omiyage* giving and *settai*) that constitute Japan's aid and interpret their empirical observations in their own cultural terms constructing a kind of reality that makes little sense to Japanese I have interviewed. The stories around the IWC vote are good example. Similarly, statistical data can be misinterpreted if aid observers are not aware of Japan's budget-oriented nature and random selection so they try to read meanings possibly hidden in the fluctuations in the amount of aid allocated.

Ultimately, some observers, including Gillespie, frame Japan's aid to the Pacific as a sophisticated instrument of coercion and manipulation.

At this point, the lines between appreciation, coincidence and coercion inevitably begin to blur to everyone except those who were in the direct negotiations. Moreover, it is important to note that Japan has continually explained that its overseas aid programme "was not linked to voting policy." Nevertheless, it is increasingly

⁷⁶ Interview with Professor Kobayashi was conducted at the meeting room in Japan Institute for Pacific Studies in Tōkyo on June 4, 2007.

possible to assert that coercion, via manipulation of ODA, may be becoming an increasingly recognised tactic by Japan (Gillespie 2001: 7).

Apparently, these aid observers construct their arguments based on the preconceived assumption that Japan has certain intentions and strategies in aiding the Pacific. With that assumption, their first objective is to consider Japan's aid in relation to its interests in the region. In this construction of argument, inductive approach is risky as it allows researchers to substantiate their assumptions by employing the empirical data as evidence to support their arguments. As a result, certain activities related to Japan's aid to the Pacific come to be represented in a way that occupies much of the scholarly Aidscape.

In this way, the use of geographical overgeneralization in cross-cultural studies including study of foreign aid can contribute significantly to the misrepresentation of "Others." Western donors in general initiated their foreign aid with well-defined purposes guided intellectually by modernization theories like Rostow's theory. In the case of U.S., aid was started with the special mission of combating the spread of communism while for other donors like Britain it was a means of tying former colonies to their interests (see Chapter 1). Such epistemology of aid is what critics commonly employ as the philosophical frame with which to construct their arguments against aid activities. In their view, foreign aid is regarded as an effective operating force of the Western discourse about development that neglects non-Western institutions. Concurrently, the donors can promote their economic and geopolitical interests to the recipient through aid and eventually control and exploit them (Holder 1993: 453). In this regard, foreign aid is a "new form of imperialism" (Hayter and Watson 1985), a kind of "buying power" for wealthy countries (Arase 1996), and a "sophisticated instrument of control" (Weissman 1974). These critical arguments on foreign aid are commonly overgeneralized to Japan's aid to the Pacific, however.

Japanese epistemology and teleology of foreign aid differ from those of Western donors and are deeply rooted in Japan's 70 years of unique aid history (see Chapter 2). Japan's aid started in the 1940s as war reparation. It was initiated by the U.S., not by the Japanese government. Later, aid became a convenient means for Japan's economic advancement; though, the Japanese government has seldom had well-defined purposes and strategies in its aid. Therefore, those critical arguments about foreign aid based on

the well-planned activities of Western donors are one situated side in the analysis of Japan's aid. In other words, I scarcely found the relevancy of the views that identify aid as sophisticated tool of manipulation or as discourse that promotes Western superiority in the development, to Japan's aid to Sāmoa and the Pacific. Unfortunately, not many aid critics focusing the Pacific region acknowledge the uniqueness of Japan's aid, thus represent this significant flow of aid in partial or misinformed ways.

3.5. Conclusion

This chapter presented the part of Samoan Aidscape where the stories constructed from different viewpoints create gaps in or multiple versions of the “reality” of Japan's aid to Sāmoa. The analyses through the lens of structuralism typically see aid as dispossessing the Pacific and manipulating small countries. While critical aid studies tend to over-generalize “the Pacific,” I found that the differences between Sāmoa and other Pacific nations were important under closer analysis. Through situating Japanese concepts and meanings of aid as a point of reference, the Aidscape of Japan's aid to Sāmoa is a zone of simple, weak, and fortuitous policy on the part of Japan.

Japan's aid critics such as Arase and Tarte also employed the dual concept of *honne* and *tatemae* as well as the system of *kanryō* in their analyses, seeing Japan's *honne* as economic. Tarte in particular sees the real motive of Japan's aid to the Pacific as the development of Pacific fisheries for securing Japan's *maguro* industry. This chapter confirmed the truth of Tarte's argument to the point that fisheries grant aid is in fact initiated to secure Japan's fishing grounds. Yet, I found that concluding Japan's aid to the Pacific is driven by resource interest is an oversimplification because fisheries aid is only one category of various aid projects implemented in the region. To some Pacific recipients such as Sāmoa, the core portion of aid provided by Japan is derived from the ODA budget from MOFA whose goal of aid is to build good partnerships with recipients in the international community. In short, the economic motivation does not elucidate the *honne* of Japan's aid to Sāmoa.

For the same reason, diplomacy is not the only motivation of aid provided from Japan to Sāmoa or elsewhere. As illustrated throughout this chapter, Japan's *honne* in its aid to Sāmoa is both resource and diplomatic, but is mostly represented by lack of

interest. Japan began aiding Sāmoa without particular interests as a result of geographical diversification of ODA allocation. Since then, Japan has not found specific interests yet in the country due mainly to the lack of knowledge, human resources, and motivation to search out the interests. In this regard, the prevalent structuralist view that the donor's manipulative use of aid subordinates the recipient is a situated one not borne out in the history of this flow of aid. Even if Japan's aid somewhat furthered the dependency of Sāmoa on external assistance, I would argue that it would not necessarily be because Japan's aid was exploitative, but because other components of the Samoan society combined with particular elements of Japan's aid, creating the environment for resource exchanges.

This chapter explored the understudied reality of Japan's aid to Sāmoa situated in Japan's political economy and the lived experience of Japanese aid actors—taking JICA officials and Pacific specialists as a main point of reference. This reality is rather distant from the realities commonly discussed by aid observers. Both are significant components of the Aidscape that is the ontologically and epistemologically hybrid and complex space of multiple realities. In the next chapter, I look at further components of the Aidscape through situating Samoan socio-cultural practices and meanings of development as a point of reference.

CHAPTER 4 DEVELOPMENT, AID, AND *FA'ASĀMOA*

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the recipient part of the Samoan Aidscape and looks at changes in Sāmoa's socio-economic geography at both macro- and micro-phenomena levels through situating Samoan practices and meanings of development as points of reference. It addresses such questions as how the recipient government and grassroots community similarly and dissimilarly view aid and development; how Samoan families react to an expanding money economy; whether life is improved at the grassroots; and what the strains and dilemmas are for young women in today's Sāmoa. Through answering these questions, the chapter examines the applicability of the preset ideas about Sāmoa's aid dependency framed with the views of aid as donor's manipulative tool and a hindrance to industrialization. In this chapter, the *lifeworld* approach is used to explore the taken-for-granted dimensions of everyday experience where grassroots meanings of development and aid are embedded. I find that what used to be termed "subsistence affluence" is still a reciprocal society but with increasingly what Appadurai calls "disjuncture," making Sāmoa a multiple and moving place for Samoans themselves.

To answer the questions of this chapter, I employed various field methods, including a survey with a questionnaire, *talanoa* (talk freely), and formal interviews with government officials, Samoan teachers and scholars, Japanese volunteers, and ordinary citizens in town as well as villages. Stories were collected through participant observations of everyday life in urban and rural families during field research in 2006 and through living in Savai'i and working in Apia since 2009. The chapter begins with a description of living conditions in Sāmoa today especially in terms of livelihood at the grassroots level, which sheds light on the essence of everyday life in this recipient country with moderate per capita aid.

4.2. Socio-Economic Geography of Sāmoa

4.2.1. Easy Life in an LDC

The UN divides countries into three categories of Developed, Developing, and Least Developed. Because these classifications are primarily based on socio-economic indexes of countries, the label Least Developed Country (LDC) is often interpreted as the world's

poorest countries where people are living under tough conditions, facing death from starvation, wide-spread disease, or civil conflicts. As of 2009, 49 countries in the world are classified as LDCs, and Sāmoa is one of them. Sāmoa's living conditions, however, are relatively promising and peaceful especially when compared to LDC countries in Africa. In fact, in response to my questionnaire, Samoan citizens gave quite positive perspectives about their living conditions with 65% of participants saying life in Sāmoa is easy.⁷⁷ Those who see life in Sāmoa as easy reasoned predominantly that they can *'ai fua* (eat for free) and *nofo fua* (stay for free).

In Sāmoa, people say they can survive without having money since traditional institutions such as the land tenure system secures their access to land for subsistence agriculture while family and communal network systems of sharing resources help provide for their daily needs. Therefore, they say, life is easy. While they emphasize the easiness of life, one third of the survey participants, note the high cost of living as the biggest social problem in today's Sāmoa. The two views—easy life and the high cost of living—seem to be contradictory. This contradiction represents the developmental stage of today's Sāmoa where people are wavering between the old and new principles of living in the rapidly changing society. This is a manifestation of the Samoan Aidscape where diverse histories, interests, aspirations, policies, norms, and practices intersect, constructing fragmented realities and diverse meanings of development and aid.

4.2.2. Livelihood Conditions

Since the government began to reform the country's economy for further development in the late 1980s, many significant changes have surged into the Samoan landscape. The standard of living has improved rapidly and dramatically especially in terms of convenience. For instance, a rural electrification project was completed by 2004 and nearly 90% of population has access to safe drinking water. Almost all roads on the two main islands, Upolu and Savai'i, have been developed and this considerably improved people's mobility. The progress of telecommunication systems has also been remarkable. Within a few years, cell phone technology has extended coverage

⁷⁷ My 11-question survey (see Appendix B) was conducted during fieldwork in 2006. The questions ask about Samoa's developmental stage and the recognition and role of Japan's aid in Samoa's development. I distributed 800 surveys at various locations on both the islands of Upolu and Savai'i; 508 were returned.

throughout the country. Even in a very rural village, the majority of families, if not all, own at least one or two cellular phones. Although their coverage areas are still limited to around the capital city Apia, the services of high-speed internet and cable TV are also available.

In parallel, adopting neoliberal economic principles has resulted in a significant increase in the import sector, changing Apia into a city with an overflow of new commodities from the U.S., Asia, and neighboring countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji. The flow of new commodities especially from China and other Southeast Asian countries has surged even into rural parts of Sāmoa, quickly changing the trend of village stores.⁷⁸ It does not necessarily mean that every Samoan currently enjoys material abundance and convenient lifestyle, however. As a result of opening the market, inflation has increased significantly, reflecting the substantial increase in prices of both imported and local products (KVA 2007: 6).⁷⁹ At the same time, the expenses of a convenient lifestyle have spurred the need for cash, causing economic hardship especially among the people who have limited sources of cash income. Attempts at economic reform did not successfully increase the country's very limited employment opportunities, leaving about half of the economically active labor force in unpaid family activities. Even with paid employment, many families cannot meet their needs because the cost of living is too high compared to their wages. As of 2010, the government set the minimum wage at SAT\$2.40 (about US\$1) per hour for public sector and SAT\$2.00 for workers in the private sector.

To see whether or not this minimum wage makes economic sense, one can examine some examples of costs of daily food. In Sāmoa today, imported frozen chicken is the cheapest source of protein unless one goes fishing. The cost per pound is nearly the same as the minimum hourly wage. A tin of *'eleni* (tinned herring), another most popular protein, costs around SAT\$3, more than the hourly wage. If these prices were put into American terms based on the current federal minimum wage, one would pay US\$7.25 for one pound of frozen chicken, US\$7.50 for one can of herring. McDonald's in Sāmoa can

⁷⁸ This could be considered as one of the results of Sāmoa's decision to join the World Trade Organization in 2006; though Samoa did not officially join until 2012.

⁷⁹ Between 2005 and 2006, for instance, inflation increased from 1.8% to 3.8% within the year (KVA 2007:6).

be considered a luxury restaurant since one combo meal would cost the equivalent of approximately US\$48 in American terms!⁸⁰ These comparisons may not be economically precise; but they illustrate the extremely high cost of living in this country. In addition, based on the government's price zoning system, shops that are farther from the capital city of Apia can charge higher prices for certain products, while others remain unregulated by the government. This means the people residing in rural areas such as Savai'i pay more, despite having fewer opportunities for wage employment (Lesā 2009).

In Sāmoa, the majority of people can live off the land if they work hard on plantations and constantly go fishing or hunting. Even without hard work and daily fishing, they can still survive by just eating naturally grown breadfruit or bananas mixed with coconut milk. Nevertheless, they still need to purchase some daily necessities including salt, sugar, tea, soap, and toothpaste. Above all, people want to eat something different if it is affordable. Families need money not only for the basic necessities, but also money for children's education and socio-cultural obligations. Sending a child to a government school is not free in Sāmoa even when the government waives tuition. Students are still required to pay for other expenses including school uniforms, examinations, occasional fund raising, lunches, and transportation (Tauasosi 2010: 146). Most importantly, people need money for family, village, and church commitments that require monetary contributions (Tafuna'i 2006: 107). Despite the popular paradise image of Samoans not needing money to live, people definitely need cash to sustain their daily life. To meet their needs, many of the families receive financial support from overseas relatives. The remittance part of the MIRAB oriented economy is still important.

The Samoan economist Afualo Wood Salele argues that the minimum hourly rate should be at least SAT\$5 (approximately US\$2).⁸¹ As a government economic advisor, Salele recommended the hourly rate of SAT\$5 is what the labor market demands in

⁸⁰ Because of the high price as compared to the wage, McDonald's remains one of the expensive "casual" restaurants in town, where not many locals can afford to go regularly. I observed the customers there about 10 years ago appeared to be mostly Caucasians who were probably expats and volunteers living in Sāmoa and tourists, and some Samoans who were probably from wealthy families or overseas. But now, maybe because they offer inexpensive items like SAT\$1 ice cream, more locals visit McDonald's to enjoy the atmosphere of the world's most famous fast food restaurant!

⁸¹ Interview with Professor Afualo Wood Salele was conducted at his office in National University of Sāmoa (NUS) on October 27, 2006.

today's Sāmoa based on the nation's GDP per capita.⁸² He is confident in his view that the increase of wages would enhance people's purchasing power and thereby strengthen the nation's economy. But the government did not increase minimum wages to the recommended rate, which resulted in failing to enhance people's purchasing power especially as the consumer price index, for instance in food, increased 13.5% between 2008 to 2009 (Government of Samoa 2009). Consequently, although subsistence production and tradition of sharing help sustain Samoan life, many residents remain mere onlookers in the exciting change, only wishing to have more money so that they can be part of these advancing times called "development" (Lesā 2009). From this perspective, life in Sāmoa is not at all easy. This stage of Sāmoa's development is seen somewhat differently by the government and people in the village, as follows.

4.2.3. From LDC to Developing Country in 2014

In *Our Sea of Islands* (1994), Epeli Hau'ofa argues that the smallness and remoteness of Island nations exist only in people's minds. In the context of the global market economy, however, Sāmoa definitely represents a small and remote nation in terms of its population, size of market, and geographic distance from the world's economic centers. Sāmoa's economy is still commonly classified as MIRAB (**m**igration, **r**emittance, **a**id, and **b**ureaucracy) to emphasize its dependent nature. The MIRAB oriented economy did transform Sāmoa to a degree over a generation, but continued to justify the treatment of Sāmoa as an object of development. As the MIRAB model is regarded as unsustainable and fragile, aid donors repeatedly suggested the government of Sāmoa to reform the country's economic structure and diversify economic sources rather than heavily relying on aid and overseas remittances (see Chapter 1). In the 1980s to early-1990s, Sāmoa's economy was challenged by successive natural disasters such as cyclones and crop diseases damaging the agriculture-based national economy. Apparently, the economic reality of Sāmoa was not as promising as Hau'ofa might argue.

In the early-1990s, the government of Sāmoa embarked on the structural reform in line with the reform agendas proposed by aid donors. The results were positive with the annual economic growth rate increased to an average of 4.3%. Many donors commented

⁸² Sāmoa's GDP is US\$525 million and GDP per capita is US\$2750.50 as of 2007 (ADB 2008a).

that the economic restructuring program undertaken in Sāmoa was one of the most successful cases in the Pacific region. Having achieved good economic performance and improved social indicators, the government currently sees the country's developmental stage in a relatively affirmative light. They say with confidence that the quality of life in Sāmoa has significantly advanced (Government of Samoa 2005). For the government, the next stage of Sāmoa's development is to provide "improved quality of life for all" (Government of Samoa 2008: 5). To ensure this vision, the government's Strategy for the Development of Sāmoa (SDS) 2008-2012, highlighted seven prioritized areas for the improvement. These areas include the development of sustainable micro-economy, creation of employment supported by private sector development, improvement of education and health care, community based development, strengthening governance, development of sustainable environment, and disaster risk management. Accordingly, the government defines development as a better quality of life and enhanced opportunity underpinned by progress in the economy and social services. In achieving these goals, the government looks for continued support from aid donors or "development partners" as they are now called.

At present, the government faces the challenge of preparing to receive less foreign aid when the country graduates from a LDC to a Developing Country by 2014. Receiving less aid would leave the government some important development agendas such as debt management. The country's external debt has significantly dropped from 100% of GDP in 1992 to 11% in 2009 (Government of Samoa 2009a: 6). Nevertheless, the deficit is financed largely by concessional loans and grant provided by aid donors as a result of the LDC status. The government needs immediate development of a strategy to manage future financing (KVA 2007).

Another agenda that warrants the government's immediate attention is poverty reduction. Some argue that poverty does not exist in Sāmoa in terms of starvation, because people have an access to "free food" from their customary land or from neighbors (KVA 2007). Poverty does exist, however, if access to basic services and amenities are considered. According to the ADB report of 2004, about 20% of the households are living below the national poverty line and experiencing some degree of economic hardship (ADB 2004; KVA 2007: 3). The participants in ADB's survey

describe their economic hardship as due also to the poor quality of government services including water supply, education, health, power, transportation, sealed roads, access to market, and communication facilities (ADB 2002: 10). Considering that foreign aid has supported extensively the improvement of these public services, poverty reduction will possibly become harder when aid is reduced. Especially since one of the government's economic reform agendas is to continue reducing public sector spending, the quality of public service is unlikely to improve greatly, even if the reform helps further economic growth. For these reasons, the question of whether or not Sāmoa has enough time to prepare itself for a reduction in aid by 2014 is difficult to answer. Yet, the government seems to be confident of this in official documents and interviews conducted for this study (Government of Samoa 2006a; KVA 2007: 3).

4.2.4. Forecast on Aid: Government Accountability and Grassroots Perspective

Noumea Simi, the Assistant Chief Executive Officer of Aid Coordination and Debt Management at the Ministry of Finance, talks positively about the graduation in relation to the decrease in aid:⁸³

Overseas development assistance is reducing certainly to lower levels than that of 10 years ago, but we always believe that is not a negative thing because when we have less [aid], we become a better manager, and use aid more effectively, so that our goals and objectives are still met.

Apparently, her comment portrays the government's high degree of confidence to meet this challenge. The country will be receiving less aid; though "we simply welcome the opportunity if there is for additional support to Sāmoa," said Simi. In line with the government's view, the aforementioned Samoan economist Salele sees further aid not as a necessity, but as a bonus. "Sāmoa will need to move forward without external support at one point, but it's always good to have extra support," said Salele.

During my fieldwork, I found such a relatively relaxed view toward a reduction in aid very common especially among so-called elites. While it can be interpreted as a sign of confidence, the relaxed view can be attributed partly to the proposition that they cannot see seriously the end of aid, thinking that donors will never completely withdraw

⁸³ Interview with Simi was at her office in the government building at Mulivai, Apia conducted on September 26, 2006.

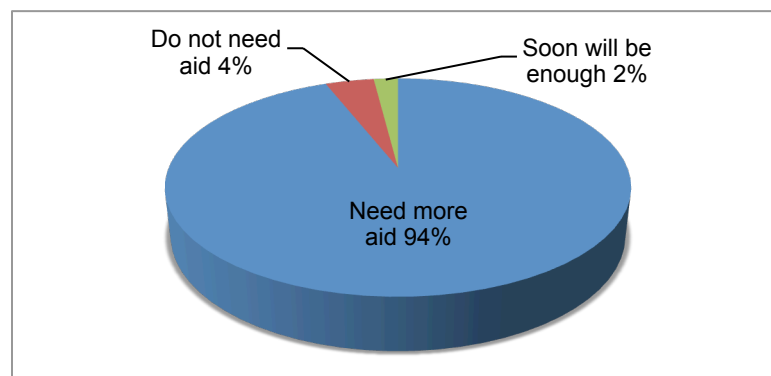
aid from Sāmoa for various reasons. It is understandable, considering the fact that all bilateral donors constantly announce an increase in their aid to Sāmoa (see Chapter 1). Heinecke, et al. attribute this kind of relaxed view to the low level of government accountability for astutely managing aid (2008: 65-66). My interview with Simi, on the other hand, emphasized the government’s accountability, refuting the critical views such as the argument by Helen Hughes (2003) that Pacific governments waste aid.

When I read the article by Hughes, I thought it was rather simplistic view on what happening in the Pacific countries. It doesn't reflect the integrity and maturity reached by the different Pacific Island countries. To say that aid has made a lot of countries worse off, well certainly that is not the case of this country... I can say that we have become very efficient managers as far as development cooperation is concerned. I think our partners have also seen the impact of the support they have provided. So we can't say that the money has been thrown into the river, as Hughes seems to say.

Hughes claimed “aid has failed the Pacific” but it has not failed Sāmoa, according to Simi. The government’s accountability will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

The grassroots perspective on the future of aid suggests a bit more sense of urgency. In my survey conducted in Sāmoa, 94% of the 508 respondents suggest that Sāmoa definitely needs more foreign aid as many of them see some lack of resources in their country. Only 4% perceive that Sāmoa has received enough aid and needs no further foreign assistance; another 2% said that Sāmoa would soon have enough aid (Fig. 4.1).

Figure 4.1. Further Need of Aid



Source: Tsujita Questionnaire, 2006, Respondents = 508.

This indicates that the grassroots community thinks their country is currently not ready to receive less foreign aid.

While the government lists developmental agendas, a certain degree of gap seems to exist between the government and grassroots community in understanding the status of Sāmoa's development in relation to foreign aid. I attribute such gap to the assumption that the government and grassroots community have different definitions of development and thus identify needs differently. As discussed above, the government defines development with a textbook description, saying it is a better quality of life underpinned by socio-economic progress. On the other hand, a grassroots meaning of development was rooted in the *fa'aSāmoa* (Samoan ways), defining it almost always with family or *'āiga*. To understand further grassroots definitions of development, I next examine what are the sources of motivation for Samoan people to move forward.

4.3. Grassroots Frames on Development

4.3.1. *Fa'aSāmoa* and Development

I find firstly that the overall mentality of the Samoan definition of development must be understood within the framework of *fa'aSāmoa*. While the term *fa'aSāmoa* is commonly translated as the Samoan way, others have different interpretations. Sāmoa's historian Mālama Meleiseā describes *fa'aSāmoa* as “a framework for action based upon the social structure of the *'āiga* (family), the *nu'u* (village), and the authority of *matai* (chiefs and orators) and *fono* (village councils)” (Meleiseā 1992: 23). The Samoan geographer Sa'iliemanu Lilomaiava-Doktor says that *fa'aSāmoa* is “what Samoans do and value; it gives people guidance, role, and responsibility, and why they do what they do” (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004: 171). Another Samoan geographer Asenati Liki regards *fa'aSāmoa* as a knowledge system, through which Samoans think, see, and conceive of the world (Liki 2007: 73). Collectively, *fa'aSāmoa* is fundamental to the Samoans and Samoan life.

As no cultures and traditions are static, in the course of over 2000 years of Samoan history, the meaning of *fa'aSāmoa* has varied depending on time and space. In the process of development, *fa'aSāmoa* principles have been modified by adopting new ideas, rules, and commodities brought through aid-funded projects. Yet, the underlying significance of this tradition survived. It is because, according to Va'a, Samoans are good at compromising between new and old principles and can retain as well as change

the rules according to the need from time to time (Va'a 2006: 113). A result of these changes is today's *fa'aSāmoa*, said Va'a. He believes *fa'aSāmoa* and development coexist successfully.

Conventionally, traditional institutions and development are seen not compatible. Weber's classic theory, for instance, defined family-oriented system as an unfavorable social character for economic development because collectivism retards the growth of individuality necessary to foster the spirit of capitalism (Weber 1976). Influenced by this theory, economists and aid donors attributed Sāmoa's low rate of economic growth to traditional institutions rooted to the Islands' daily life (Connell 1990; Shankman 1976; The Economist 1991: 35).

The credibility of Weber's hypothesis came to be questioned when family-oriented societies in East Asia began to develop their economies remarkably fast especially in the 1980s. To explain the unexpected growth occurring in East Asia, culturalists re-characterized the family-oriented system as an ideological orientation to foster a new form of capitalism, called network capitalism (Seoh 1991; Triandis 1988; Wei-ming 1996).⁸⁴ Network capitalism theory looks at how extended-family systems actually sustain economic growth through building reciprocal relationships among members to achieve the common goals. In this view, traditional institutions are powerful forces that foster rapid economic growth. This theory does not provide a foolproof hypothesis to the case of Sāmoa; yet, its core argument supports the idea that different forms of capitalism can possibly develop in Sāmoa with its unique family-oriented system and other traditional institutions. In fact, Salele sees *fa'aSāmoa* and associated traditional practices as a central contributing factor to the growth of Samoa's economy. "If you look closely at those cultural activities, you'll see how largely they have affected the growth of our economy," said Salele. The following sub-sections, searching for grassroots definitions of development, look closely at how Sāmoa's family-oriented system interrelates with developmental activities.

4.3.2. The 'Āiga

⁸⁴ It is also called Confucian capitalism since the theory originally looked at the correlation between the Confucian ethic and the high-speed industrialization of East Asia.

‘Āiga (family or extended family) is the central element of *fa‘aSāmoa*, which provides the spiritual foundation of Samoan people as well as the basic unit of society.⁸⁵ Since every Samoan belongs to an *‘āiga*, an individual is regarded as a part of the *‘āiga* system. Each *‘āiga* is headed by a *matai* (chiefly titled person) who is responsible for representing the family at the *fono* (village council of *matai*), settling family disputes, looking after family interests such as land and titles, advancing the family honor, and guiding family for the benefit of all (NUS 2006: 42).

In this system of *‘āiga*, individual interests come after the family interests. All family members are expected to work together for the betterment of the family, according to their respective roles and responsibilities directed by *fa‘aSāmoa* principles. For this reason, a good person is considered the one who sacrifices himself/herself for the sake of family (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004: 176). Traditionally, the roles of support and sacrifice are taken mutually for the economic and political advancement of their members as well as the entire extended family (Va‘a 2006: 120). In this framework, a chief incentive of Samoans for development—take an action and move forward—can be understood as *‘āiga*. Actually, 75% of the participants in my survey answered that advancement of family is the reason they seek wage employment and work hard to earn more money. This means that for them, “development” is the betterment of *‘āiga* economically.

As the developmental activities of Samoans center on the *‘āiga*, the main reason for overseas migration is to improve the status of *‘āiga* (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004: 181). When New Zealand, the former administrative power, opened its door to Samoan citizens in the 1960s, out migration became a popular household strategy for bettering family. Since then, Samoan families have expanded their *‘āiga* networks horizontally throughout not only the islands but overseas countries including New Zealand, Australia, the U.S. and American Sāmoa.⁸⁶ Almost as many Samoans reside overseas as live in the homeland, remitting money consistently to their families and communities in the islands. This is the nexus of migration and remittance that constitutes the MIRAB economy. As in other MIRAB societies, overseas remittances play a significant role in Samoan daily

⁸⁵ The term *‘āiga* generally refers to immediate family or family members who live in the same household but in this section, it also refers to familial descent group or extended family, called *‘āiga potopoto*.

⁸⁶ Following independence in 1962, New Zealand provided about 1,000 Samoans per annum an entrance to the country. In the 1970s to 1980s, the flow of migration to New Zealand doubled as the demand for Samoan labor increased (Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004: 141).

life especially of the families who have few alternative sources of cash income. At the same time, remittances have been a main source of the national economy, accounting about 20% on average of Sāmoa's GDP (Government of Samoa 2008: 4). While such migration-remittance based economy is typically described as unsustainable, new studies with cultural approaches reanalyzed the role of remittances in the context of *fa'aSāmoa*, revealing its sustainable nature (Fepulea'i 2005; Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004). Along with these studies, some aid donors including the World Bank seem to have shifted their viewpoints from neglecting to acknowledging the integral role of migration and remittance in sustaining the Island economies (World Bank 2006).

In understanding further the psychological mechanism of *'āiga* system in the context of development, two practices of *fa'aSāmoa* such as *tausi mātua* (filial piety) and *fa'alavelave* (family event) will be examined in detail to show how these traditional institutions work in motivating Samoans.

4.3.3. Tausi Mātua (Filial Piety)

A key motivation factor in working hard for the *'āiga* can be found in the Samoan concept of *tausi mātua* (the care for parents). *Tausi mātua* is a reciprocal obligation between parents (including adult relatives) and children; parents take care of children who then serve their parents in return for the *alofa* (love) and care they received when they were young. Typically, children's self-sacrificing dedication to parents continues into adulthood because in the context of *fa'aSāmoa*, they are forever regarded as children of their parents regardless of their age and social status. Supporting parents is an inevitable cultural duty and a crucial social obligation that represents Samoan's love for parents (Fiaui and Tuimaleali'ifano 1997: 10).⁸⁷

Moreover, having been influenced by the Biblical Commandment that requires children to honor their parents, Samoans in general strongly believe that by serving elders especially parents, they will be blessed in return. In this frame of mind, parents are the central reason for Samoans to work diligently for the *'āiga*. Ultimately, betterment of *'āiga* means helping parents to maintain or improve their status economically as well as

⁸⁷ A documentary film titled *I Can Get Another Wife, But I Can't Get Another Parent* portrays the vital presence of parents in the life of Samoans.

socio-culturally. Such improvement includes various activities including sending remittances regularly, providing better medical treatment, funding a trip to see overseas relatives, purchasing a vehicle, and building a new Western style house. To complete their mission of *tausi mātua*, children usually make their best efforts, even though their goals of support are often more than they can financially afford.

A case in point is the employees of Yazaki EDS Sāmoa (YES) factory.⁸⁸ According to the interviews I conducted with the YES workers, their main motivation for work at this factory is to be able to care for the financial needs of parents (or *tausi mātua*) (Tsujita 2002).⁸⁹ As is their purpose, their weekly salary basically goes to cover the family obligations. Beyond that, the majority of employees borrow as much as they can to help with family expenses. Many wage earners, including those at YES, often obtain loans from the National Provident Fund (NPF) since this institution offers the lowest interest rate of 9.5% of the amount borrowed (as of 2012). All government employees and most other wage earners make contributions to NPF. Any member can borrow up to half the amount of his/her total contribution without any collateral. Major banks such as ANZ Bank offer an interest rate of 16 % for small loans, starting from SAT\$300 (US\$115) up to SAT\$3,000 (US\$1,150). Besides NPF and banks, several money-lending companies in Apia and two in Savai'i provide small to medium loans, starting from SAT\$100 (US\$38) to SAT\$5,000 (US\$2,000) or more. Their interest rates are as high as 20% on average although it depends on amount and length of loan.⁹⁰ Consequently, the borrowers often have literally nothing left in their hands in spite of their hard work. At YES on Friday when weekly wagers receive pay envelopes, some employees find only a few coins left in the envelope after the deduction of loan payments.

In this context, having a paid job means being able to obtain loans for *'āiga*, parents in particular. The wage employment does not necessarily meet their material needs, but

⁸⁸ See Chapter 3 for the background of this Japanese wiring factory.

⁸⁹ Participant observation research was conducted at YES for my Master's thesis in 2001. I interviewed workers while working on the assembly line (Tsujita 2002). I also conducted a follow up study and again worked as a shop floor operator for one month in 2006. Since September 2010, I have been working for YES as interpreter/translator mainly for the company's Engineering Department.

⁹⁰ To obtain a loan at any institution, a proof of having stable income such as letter of employment is usually required. Loan repayments are commonly deducted directly from a borrower's wages from the workplace. Parents cannot take out a loan on behalf of their children, but they can ask children to borrow money for them. It is also prevalent to borrow money from coworkers, employers, the women's committee, or church organizations.

helps the factory women fulfilling their socio-cultural duties as daughters with filial piety. Without wage employment, they would be sacrificing at an equal level by doing something else for the family. The practice of *tausi mātua* can be seen most evidently at the time of *fa'avelave* (mutual support for life cycle events).

4.3.4. *Fa'avelave* (Family Event)

Fa'avelave, which literally means entanglements, is Sāmoa's core social transaction that requires obligatory contributions to life cycle events such as births, deaths, marriages, title bestowals, church openings, and so forth. It can also be little matters such as baby-sitting or looking after the house. According to Sāmoa's Head of State, Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Taisi 'Efi, *fa'avelave* is an interruption by which families have to "reorganize their day or week in order to rally family members for enough resources to meet their obligations" (Samoa Observer 2009). Among the most common *fa'avelave* obligations are providing money, labor, traditional exchange items such as fine mats, and food items including cartons of tinned herrings, salted beef, corned beef, cows and baked pigs. These *fa'avelave* contributions, especially the ones for funerals, are quite costly.

In general, funerals in Sāmoa are expensive as their ceremonies involve numerous exchanges of both traditional and non-traditional items between the families of deceased, in addition to gifts of money, fine mats, and food to attending orators and affinal kin groups (Yamamoto 1990). Additional expenses commonly include the cost of the coffin, monetary gifts for pastors for their attendance and conducting the service, and fees for placing obituaries in newspapers and on TV. An average size funeral may cost around SAT\$40,000 to 50,000 (approximately US\$15,500 to 20,000). To meet this high cost and expectation, a family often takes out a large loan.

Ilalio explains that a general reason for this costly funeral practice is the Samoans belief that giving the deceased a lavish funeral shows the family's love and respect for the person (Ilalio 2009). As the principles of *fa'aSāmoa* put loving and caring for the 'āiga foremost, immediate family members of the deceased in particular feel strongly obligated, if not willing, to hold an extravagant funeral to prove their love for the family as a socio-culturally appropriate Samoan. Needless to say, if it is the funeral of a parent,

children often spend more than they can afford financially in order to demonstrate the depth of their love for the deceased parent in the form of an extravagant funeral as the last *tausī mātua*. Even if the funeral is not of a parent, children still try to contribute beyond their financial capacity in order to *tausī mātua* for their parents' obligatory portion of contribution to the funeral.

Because of the obligatory aspects and frequency of *fa'avelave*, many Samoans have a negative attitude towards it (Lesa 2009; O'Meara 1990: 79). I frequently heard people complaining about numerous *fa'avelave* that rarely allow them to have spare money, saying “*tele fa'avelave, e leai se tupe* (plenty of obligations, no money).” Yet, they continue investing service on *fa'avelave* not necessarily because they feel they have no other choice, but primarily because they believe in the Samoan philosophy of *tautua* (service)—their rewards lie in their obligation to the *'āiga* that promises egalitarian reciprocity.

As with *fa'avelave*, people usually try their best to meet the needs of the *'āiga* for church contributions because *lotu* (act of worship or church) is a most influential aspect of Samoan life in many ways especially in the village. In Sāmoa today, more than 99% of the population are Christians who are affiliated with various denominations. Although denominational differences exist, church contributions typically include money, labor, and material gifts for various occasions such as new church buildings, retirement and new appointment of pastors, and contributions for the organization. For these contributions, church members commonly obtain loans, sell livestock, or ask extended family on island and abroad for financial support. Due to the *de rigueur* aspect and high frequency, *lotu* contributions have been challenged by the community who blame the monetized church activities for the poverty in Sāmoa (Kolia 2006: 137; Lilomaiava-Doktor 2004: 193).

Some Samoans see *fa'avelave* and *lotu* as contributing to the economic hardships of families at the grassroots level. At the national level, however, these socio-cultural practices seem to be driving the growth of Sāmoa's industry, forming a unique orientation of capitalism underpinned by the *'āiga* system and *fa'aSāmoa* principles. To investigate further this phenomenon, Sāmoa's industrial development in relation first to foreign aid and then to *fa'aSāmoa* will be examined in the following sector.

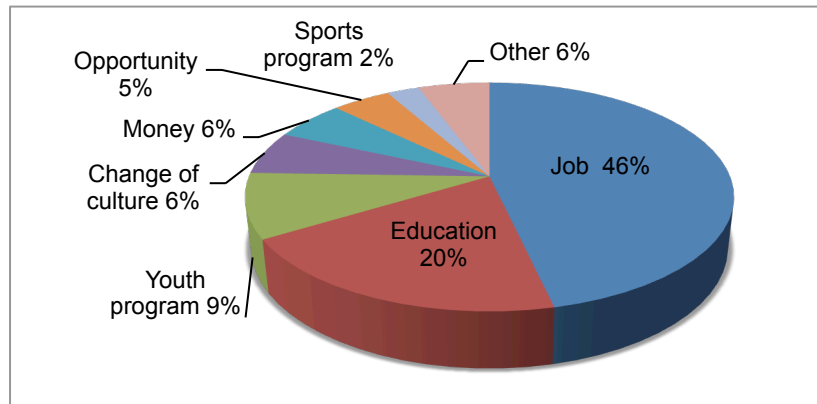
4.3.5. Aid, *Fa'aSāmoa*, and the Growth of Industry

Like other MIRAB societies, Sāmoa has a large public sector financed by foreign aid. Currently, over 6,000 public servants work for the government, which accounts for one third of the total numbers of paid workers in the country.⁹¹ In the conventional aid dependency view, such aid-financed large public sector is seen as a hindrance to industrial development because it drives up local wage and dominates human resources, leaving few incentives for private sector development (see Chapter 1). In the case of Sāmoa, this view may not so be applicable. First of all, the government of Sāmoa designates different minimum wage rates between public and private sectors, currently setting SAT\$2.40 per hour for workers in the public sector and SAT\$2.00 for the private sector (as of 2012). Therefore, it is not evident that the public sector is driving up the local wage and discouraging private investors.

Conversely, minimum wage setting seems to be more of a mutual agreement between the two sectors, with which the government can secure the required human resources by holding the higher wages. My MA study at YES factory, the largest employer in the private sector, found that it was actually the government who requested the company to set their rates lower in order to prevent government workers from seeking jobs at this Japan-owned company (Tsujiita 2002). Moreover, although Sāmoa has a large public sector supported by foreign aid, the demand for wage employment is much greater. According to my survey, about half of the participants see jobs as the need of Sāmoa today particularly for youth (Fig. 4.2). This result contradicts the argument on MIRAB society by Bertram and Watters that an aid-financed disproportionately-large public sector fulfills the need of cash income access, demoralizing local residents to engage further with production activities (Bertram and Watters 1985: 512).

⁹¹ According to the survey conducted by Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labor, about 12,700 people are engaged in wage employment in the private sector (Government of Samoa 2010b: 8). The latest report by Sāmoa Statistics Bureau indicates that a total number of public servant as of 2009 is 6,170 (Government of Samoa 2009b: 40).

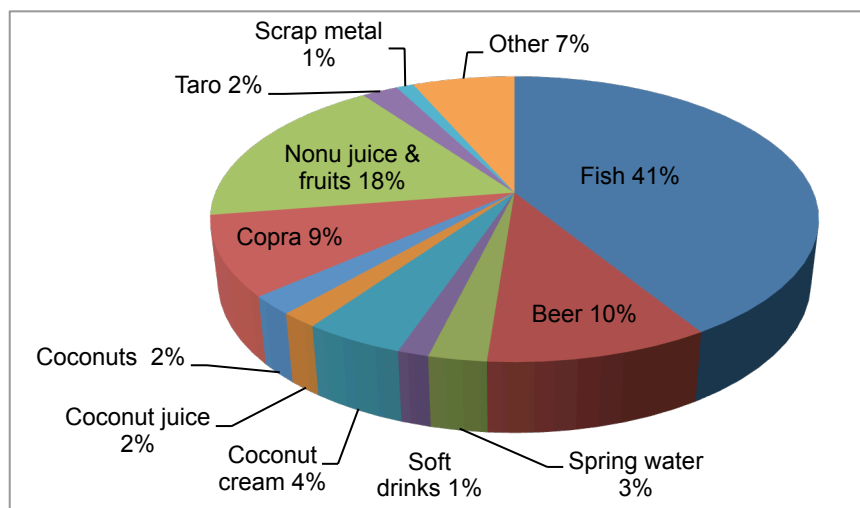
Figure 4.2. Needs for Youth



Source: Tsujita Questionnaire, 2006, Respondents = 508.

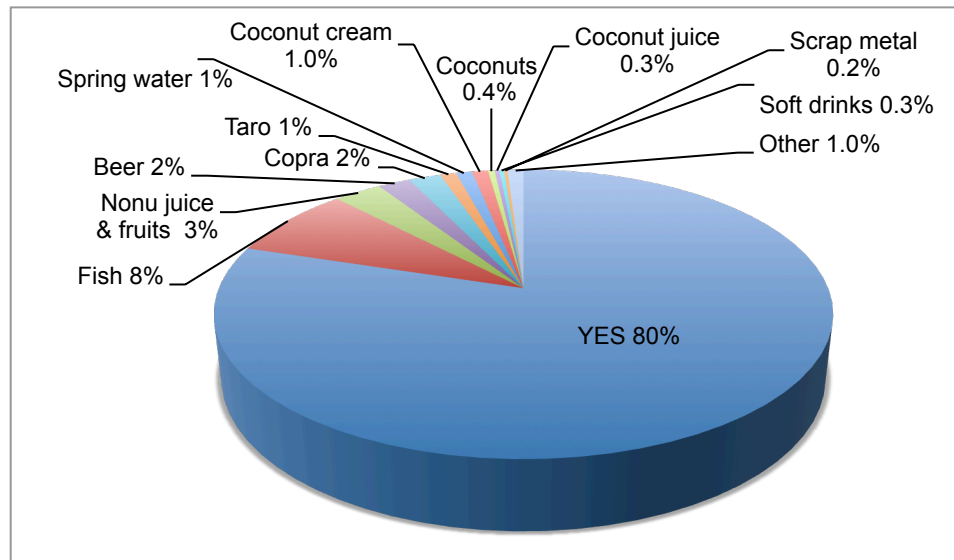
Secondly, the aid dependency theory argues that aid impairs the manufacturing sector and exports as it increases foreign exchange rates and weakens the competitiveness (see Chapter 1). Ahlburg reported that the manufacturing sector in Sāmoa is less developed than in other countries with similar per capita GDP (Ahlburg 1991: 37). However, the manufacturing sector in Sāmoa is actually doing much better than it appears in official records when the YES factory is included (Figs. 4.3, 4.4).

Figure 4.3. Sāmoa’s Exports without YES Operation



*Total of export without YES for 2011 was SAT\$29.5 million.
Source: Central Bank of Samoa, 2011, Export by Commodity.

Figure 4.4. Sāmoa’s Exports with YES Operation



*This figure is estimated based on the assumption that YES accounted for 80% of total exports. Source: Central Bank of Samoa, 2011, Export by Commodity.

Normally, the operation of this biggest contributor to manufacturing sector does not appear as merchandize earning and hence does not count toward GDP (Fraenkel 2006: 18). Wiring harnesses for automobile assembled at this plant are categorized as “service” or “export processing” since almost all components and materials used are imported from Japan and other Asian countries with the exception of labor that is locally provided. Due to this categorization of YES operation, the actual growth of Sāmoa’s manufacturing sector has been obscured.

The output of YES normally account for around 80% of the entire export product, generating about SAT\$90 to 120 million (over US\$40 million) per annum.⁹² Sāmoa at the same time has been receiving a high level of foreign aid. Thus, the growth of the manufacturing sector has not been hindered by foreign aid. Moreover, in the case of YES, aid seems to be playing an opposite role to what the aid critics commonly say. YES Japanese managers say that, not to damage the good relationship between Japan and Sāmoa established through foreign aid, the Yazaki headquarters feels a responsibility to keep this factory in Sāmoa and continue providing employment opportunities for local

⁹² For the year 2010-2011, total exports without YES is approximately SAT16 million while it becomes over SAT90 million with YES operation (personal communication with a YES manager).

residents. In this particular context, aid can be regarded as a source of encouragement rather than discouragement to Sāmoa's manufacturing sector.

Not only manufacturing, but also other industries seem to be growing rapidly despite the constant influx of foreign aid to the country. The practices of *fa'aSāmoa* including *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* are the driving factors of the growth in some areas. As described in the above section, today's *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* contributions involve heavily capitalized practices with the exchange of a large quantity of imported food items. At one funeral in Savai'i I observed, in addition to many other items, over 100 cartons of tinned herring exchanged between the families of the deceased.⁹³ Considering this was an average size funeral, one can imagine how much money, labor, and time are involved in the giving and redistribution of goods on these occasions. At *fa'alavelave* events like these, substantial amounts of imported food, typically tinned herring and corned beef, are exchanged. As the demands for these products have grown, it has directly affected the development of wholesalers and retailers. The country's largest wholesalers Ah Liki Limited, for instance, seems to have established some contracts with companies in Chile and Asian countries, manufacturing the tinned herring with original labels exported exclusively to Sāmoa. The expansion of wholesale and retail businesses have helped associated businesses such as shipping and transportation that deliver boxes and boxes of canned food nationally and internationally. Most likely, this development was supported, not hindered, by such aid projects as the one funded by Japan to construct a new wharf in Apia to accommodate more vessels anchoring simultaneously. Furthermore, the government's structural reform policy that reduced trade barriers has contributed to the development of industries as such.

In addition to the wholesalers and retailers, some other businesses benefit directly from *fa'alavelave*. Examples are those businesses that buy *fa'alavelave* goods including traditional items like fine mats and tinned fish for cash and resell them to other people needing them for their *fa'alavelave*. Another example is the growth of money transfer businesses that have branches in both Apia and Saleloga, and villages on both islands as a

⁹³ One carton contains two dozens of tinned herring. For *fa'alavelave* exchanges as such, tinned herring in tomato sauce seem to be used more popularly. This is because tinned herrings in tomato sauce are the cheaper item among other popular import canned food items including herrings in oil, corned beef, sausage, and spaghetti.

result of frequent remittances from overseas for *fa'avelave*.⁹⁴ The growth of money lending business can also be added to the same category (see the above section of *fa'avelave*). These businesses would otherwise have not developed as noticeably as they have now if *fa'avelave* were not so frequent and extravagant.

Similarly, people's commitment to *lotu* is helping the development of industry, the construction sector in particular, through outstanding donations spent on the building of churches and ministerial facilities. One example is the rebuilding of the 14,560 square-foot Temple of Latter Day Saints at Pesega, near Apia in 2005 (Government of Samoa 2006a). This temple may be exceptional in terms of construction scale; still, it is not uncommon for one church building to cost more than SAT\$1 million (US\$400,000). Not only these enormous projects, but also smaller scale church construction or renovation projects are ongoing throughout the islands. These church projects have significantly contributed to the growth of the construction industry as well as hardware businesses since a large portion of materials used for construction are imported.

Accordingly, people's monetary engagements with *fa'avelave* and *lotu* activities at the microeconomic level have considerably affected the development of Sāmoa's economy. In other words, without *fa'avelave* and *lotu* people would have spent less money and therefore contributed less to the macro economy. In this regard, I would view *fa'aSāmoa* as practices that serve dynamic factors of economic development. As of 2012, this trend does not seem likely to disappear any time soon, so industrial development will probably be sustainable for some time. My view, however, conflicts with the conventional arguments rooted in Weber's theory that sees traditional institutions as a hindrance to sustainable economic development. Connell (1990), for instance, identifies *fa'avelave* as money-eating activities that cause economic hardship among Samoan families and negatively impact development. MacMaster, on the other hand, sees *fa'avelave* as unproductive practices driven by remittances that undermine the incentive to work (MacMaster 1993). An underlying problem with these arguments, I would argue, is that their economic-oriented view neglects the socio-cultural and spiritual values of these practices. They fail to see how traditional institutions could actually

⁹⁴ According to the study of Lilomaiava-Doktor of the Samoan Diaspora community (2004: 274), half of the remittances sent to Sāmoa is usually used for some kinds of *fa'avelave*.

motivate and rationalize Samoans to engage further with economic activities. This point is often misunderstood particularly by non-Samoans, as was the case in my experience.

Although I have contributed to various *fa'avelave* of my Samoan families and colleagues at YES, I do not fully understand the value of participating in *fa'avelave*. I contribute reluctantly when I seldom see the equity in giving and receiving activities between extended families. But Samoans see the fairness of *fa'avelave* redistribution differently. A Samoan friend explained this seemingly complicated mechanism of *fa'avelave* simply: “*Palagi* (westerners) put their money into banks for their financial security, but we Samoans invest in humans; it's just a different way of being secure for the future” (O'Meara 1990: 34). For Samoans, the *āiga* network is not merely a system of material redistribution but also a spring of reciprocity through which contributions collected are redistributed among the members according to the need, but not necessarily evenly with respect to the amount invested. Through *fa'avelave*, Samoans reaffirm their membership in the *āiga* system that provides social and spiritual security. Therefore, generally, they contribute generously to extended family they may not have met yet. With this framework of egalitarianism, people continue to participate in *fa'avelave* even when they complain about financial difficulties or the frequency of events. As outsiders fail to understand the rationality in a practice, *fa'avelave* appeared as a socio-cultural obligation that only eats up one's savings.

Lilomaiva-Doktor explains further the Samoan rationale for *fa'avelave*:

The solution for Samoans [when financially challenged] is not to reduce their degree of involvement in tradition but to increase their access to the resources needed for that involvement, thus keeping their communities alive, integrated, and distinctive (Lilomaiva-Doktor 2004: 284).

A financial challenge due to *fa'avelave* and *lotu* contributions would not cause Samoans to withdraw from the *āiga* network but urge them to look for wage employment, ask for more frequent remittances, or seek access to migrate overseas themselves in order to remit more money. These economic activities aimed toward the betterment of *āiga*, eventually contribute to the growth of national industry. This unique cycle of economic activities, I argue, can be regarded a sign of new type of capitalism growing in Sāmoa. Unlike more conventional capitalism based on private ownership of capital, the spirit of Samoan capitalism is fostered by the *āiga* system that stimulates

people to keep engaging with economic activities while *fa 'aSāmoa* principles including *tausi mātua* rationalize their family-oriented conduct. Samoan capitalism may not promote individual accumulation of wealth; yet, it serves as an engine of national economic development. In this regard, traditional institutions and economic development co-exist in Sāmoa.

Within this family-oriented framework of economic development, high levels of foreign aid do not necessarily crowd out the growth of industry. Despite what has often been discussed, I argue that aid in Sāmoa rarely undermines people's incentive to work primarily because aid does not provide Samoan families with what they need—cash for monetary contributions, a secure source for earning money, and most importantly, reaffirmation of *'āiga* membership. Nor does aid retard industrialization because with or without foreign aid, people still contribute to *fa 'alavelave* and *lotu* thereby helping industry to grow. Thus, the aid dependency view that sees aid as a hindrance to industrialization is not applicable to Sāmoa.

Accordingly, I found that the betterment of *āiga* motivates Samoans to move forward and is a key spiritual as well as economic factor of development at the grassroots. Within this framework of development, the projects and activities people notice, participate in, and value are ones that directly affect the improvement of their family and the community, either church or village. Using this framework, the following section explores how Samoans at the grassroots see the Japan's aid to Sāmoa in comparison to the viewpoint framed at government level.

4.4. Japan's Aid Seen through the Recipient Viewpoints

4.4.1. Government View on Japan's Aid

Aid critics argue that Japan strategically uses aid to buy votes from Pacific recipients at the International Whaling Commission or for a UN Security Council seat. The aforementioned aid coordinator Simi disagreed with these arguments popular among aid observers with diplomacy-oriented viewpoints. According to Simi, some of Japan's aid used to be tied, but currently no strings are attached. Instead, Sāmoa has established an open relationship with Japan in which both countries benefit from reciprocal support. In this reciprocal relationship, Sāmoa supports Japan “in the international arena particularly

if there are political issues concerned,” said Simi. She implied Sāmoa’s supports of Japan’s diplomatic agenda, but clearly rejected the central argument of the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint that aid threatens the self-determination of recipient countries. Simi believes such critical views are groundless.

It’s a bit difficult to agree with such view, from the perspective of the one who handles all the external assistance and working in the area of negotiating with different aid donors. Well, there were practices and some forms of tied aid in the past. Though, in our current relation with Japan, I don’t think my government, has any way had its position compromised because of such a viewpoint. As far as I can judge, we have a very open relationship with the government of Japan, just as we have with all our partners. We have a big say in our position in the international arena and we are at liberty, there’s no strings attached when we make our position and all.

She emphasized that Sāmoa’s relationship with Japan is interdependent, not dependent; cooperative, not manipulative; and overall mutually beneficial.

Simi commented further on Japan’s aid:

We perceive of Japan’s strength as probably one of the few donors who are able to assist in the area of providing infrastructure. It was our biggest advantage that we were able to give them a large-scale infrastructural work....Maybe not reluctant but Japan is not yet ready to come to the way we do things now through sector wide approach. They still prefer to provide assistance on parallel basis rather than working through a scheme that we currently have with other partners like Australia and New Zealand, which is pulling resources together, and developing ideas together from the beginning.

Since the Paris Declaration in 2005, OECD promotes harmonization of aid donor’s goals and recipient’s principles in the context of development. The aid harmonization policy encourages a donor and recipient to work together from the stage of planning and financing resources as a way to ensure a sense of ownership and capacity of recipients and to ultimately enhance the effectiveness of aid. Sāmoa’s other main donors such as Australia, New Zealand, and EU are following this Declaration principle and put insights and resources into designing developmental projects. As Simi sensed, the current system of Japan’s aid cannot provide regional specialists and the long-term commitment required for aid harmonization (see Chapter 3). Presently, the orientation of Japan’s aid does not comply with the operation of recipient government; yet, Simi added:

We are quite happy with their [Japan's] process because we have a coordinating mechanism in place, so we are able to take assistance in whatever forms come in to the country.

Whether or not Japan follows the Declaration principle has little impact on Sāmoa, according to Simi. This may suggest a lax attitude of the recipient government towards Japan's aid or flexibility in dealing with various forms of aid. Either way, the government representative emphasized that Japan's aid works effectively and that the donor and recipient have appreciative relations with each other.

One may argue that Simi is positive about Japan's aid because her job depends on foreign aid. An accurate assessment of her comment is difficult; yet, given the reflexive and no-policy nature of Japan's aid, it is understandable if Sāmoa sees Japan as an "easy" or "friendly" donor. From the recipient side, all interviewees from JICA, AusAID, NZAID, and Chinese embassy acknowledged Sāmoa's good governance in handling aid, which suggests that Sāmoa's self-determination as a sovereign nation is not threatened by the conditions, if any, attached to Japan's aid. In addition, Simi's view is similar to that of Hon. Sir Geoffrey Henry, former Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and the chairman of Pacific Forum, who asserted that Japan's aid to the Pacific is a two-way process in which both donor and recipient earn a win-win situation through mutual giving (MOFA 2007c).⁹⁵ All these points lead to the conclusion that, the popular view of aid as instruments of neo-imperialism is not applicable to the donor-recipient relations between Japan and Sāmoa at least at the national level.

4.4.2. The Role of Japan's Aid and Recognition at the Grassroots

While the government views Japan as a donor to large-scale infrastructure, recipients at the grassroots see it differently. According to my survey, the most well-known aid project funded by Japan is the grassroots grant aid projects that helped the construction of school buildings.⁹⁶ Some 86% of the survey participants mentioned school construction

⁹⁵ Sir Henry's comment at one of the Forum meetings was a response to a question about Japan's aid being tied to the exploitation of Pacific fishery. Henry criticized the view on exploitative aid as denying the control of aid by Pacific governments (MOFA 1997).

⁹⁶ As of 2008, Japan's grassroots grant aid has been awarded to 113 projects, of which 62 projects are related to the improvement of school buildings and facilities. The percentage of the school development projects has increased in recent years. Between 2003 and 2008, the projects related to school development accounted for about 90% of all grassroots grant aid projects.

projects supported by Japan's aid. This high recognition is attributed to the fact that 44 out of 62 school-related projects were the reconstruction of primary schools owned or co-owned by 52 respective villages. Because Japan has helped the improvement of village properties such as primary schools where their family members attend, people clearly recognize this aid project, which meets their definition of "development"—betterment of family. In this frame of thinking, Japan is viewed as a helper who has contributed to the development of 52 villages through the construction of primary school buildings. In the same frame of observation, the construction of water tanks is known modestly.⁹⁷ Of the survey participants, 21.5% mentioned this grassroots project that helped the development of village facility.

The high level of recognition can also be attributed to the visibility of these grassroots projects at the village scale. Based on the *Kao No Mieru Enjo* (aid for the visibility of donor) policy that promotes the visibility of Japan's aid, all the projects funded by Japan are required to have the logo mark that symbolizes Japan's aid. For the school building projects, the logo mark is commonly drawn on one of the building walls on a very large scale, which catches the eye. Data is not available to confirm the effectiveness of these "advertisements;" nevertheless, interviewing grassroots recipients affirms that Japan is known best as the aid donor who builds schools. The JICA Sāmoa official Natsuo Temaekawa also recognized that grassroots aid is most known by Samoan recipients when the taxi drivers repeatedly commented to him that JICA is the one that builds schools.⁹⁸ Ironically, grassroots aid is a fringe project in the sense that it accounts for only 5% of the entire budget of Japan's aid to Sāmoa.⁹⁹ The main pillar is the combination of larger scale grant aid projects and technical support, which are not as well known as the grassroots aid.

The survey results indicate that large-scale infrastructure projects funded by Japan's grant aid are not well recognized by Samoan society (Fig. 4.5). Only about 5% of the participants mentioned projects such as the upgrading of the National University of

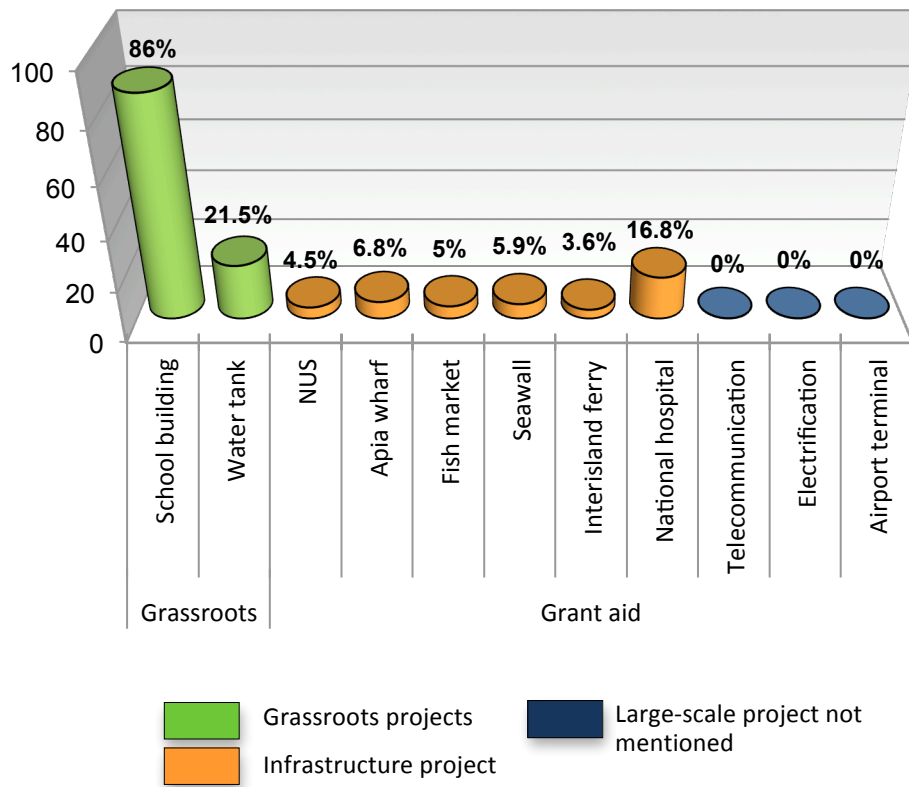
⁹⁷ As of 2008, grassroots aid had been awarded to install water tanks and catchments in 21 villages and communities.

⁹⁸ Interview with Temaekawa (pseudonym) was conducted at JICA Sāmoa office in Apia on September 28, 2006. Officially, grassroots projects are not under the jurisdiction of JICA but in Sāmoa, JICA Sāmoa often supervises them due to the absence of the Japanese embassy that administers the grassroots project.

⁹⁹ This percentage varies depending on the number and scale of grand aid project concurrently running within the same fiscal year.

Sāmoa (NUS)(2004-2006, 1995-1996), the development of Apia port (2001-2003, 1988-1989), the expansion of fisheries market, port, and facilities (2005-2006, 1980, 1977-1978), the construction of seawalls (1992), and the building of inter-island ferryboat Lady Sāmoa II (1987). No participants mentioned the construction of the international airport terminal (1985-1986), development of rural telephone lines (1994-1995), or rural electrification (1992-1993) despite the large scale of these projects.

Figure 4.5. Recognition of Japan’s Aid Project



Source: Tsujita Questionnaire, 2006, Respondents = 508.

Such low degree of recognition can be attributed to the fact that these infrastructure projects are not seen as aid directly helping the development of *āiga* and communities even though they do so indirectly. Similarly, only 3.6% of the participants mentioned the Lady Sāmoa II although this ferry has dramatically improved the mobility of every inter-island traveler. On the other hand, 16.8% of the participants mentioned the upgrading of the national hospital (1993). This moderate recognition may be because people view the

hospital as an important place for the family so by Japan's help to improve the place; Japan helped the betterment of their family.

Another possible reason for the meager recognition of the infrastructure projects is very little visibility of the donor name in the project. Take the Lady Sāmoa II for instance. On the ferry, a plaque on the cabin wall indicates that the boat is “from the people of Japan,” but few travelers recognize this.¹⁰¹ Similarly, the projects on the development of rural telephone lines and rural electrification carry no such advertisement displaying the donor's name. Consequently, very few know about Japan's contribution in developing the rural electricity and communications system that have brought light to village life.

Whether or not it is important to recognize the donor's name is debatable. Still, the survey results indicate that to gain good recognition from Samoan recipients, the goal of projects needs to align with their framework of development—the betterment of *āiga*. In addition, a certain degree of visibility in a project outcome (i.e., building, water tank, ferry, etc.) may be helpful to gain the recipients' recognition at the grassroots.

In the field, people like my host mother in Savai'i repeatedly made comments such as, “Japan's aid is not good because it's only helping the government but not the family. Families in Sāmoa are the ones that are poor and suffering most but not the government that is rich!” Such views were also indicated in the survey. Almost all participants of the survey commented positively on Japan's aid, mentioning its vast amounts and the significant role it has been playing in the development of their country. While well recognizing its impacts on Sāmoa, only 9% of the survey participants consider that Japan's aid has had some effects on their daily life. Three possible reasons may account for this. Firstly, a weak linkage between the government and grassroots community in the context of development obscures individual recipients from seeing the progress of country as something that helps improve their daily lives. Thus, the recipients rarely identify effects from the larger picture that Japan's aid is improving the quality of their life through helping the development of country.

¹⁰¹ Actually, when I presented my paper at the National University of Sāmoa, no one in the audience recognized the Lady Sāmoa II as Japan's gift.

Secondly, grassroots recipients give credit to Japan for helping the government develop the country, but the credit for developing the country goes to the government of Sāmoa so they do not necessarily see themselves as beneficiaries of Japan's aid. This presumption can be supported by an attitude towards Japan's aid by the science teacher Poto Sainisi who was awarded a scholarship by the government of Japan to study abroad.¹⁰² While appreciating the opportunity she was given, she does not think Japan's aid had any effect on her life. Poto said she did not apply for the scholarship funded by Japan, but the government of Sāmoa awarded her this scholarship based upon her outstanding grades. She thus appreciates the government of Sāmoa for giving her this opportunity, but not necessarily the donor of the scholarship that happened to be Japan. Japanese taxpayers may be disappointed to hear such stories, but this attitude toward the donor is understandable.¹⁰³ Some aid projects including scholarships have definitely had impacts on the life trajectory of recipients; yet, donors do not often receive as much acknowledgement as they expect.

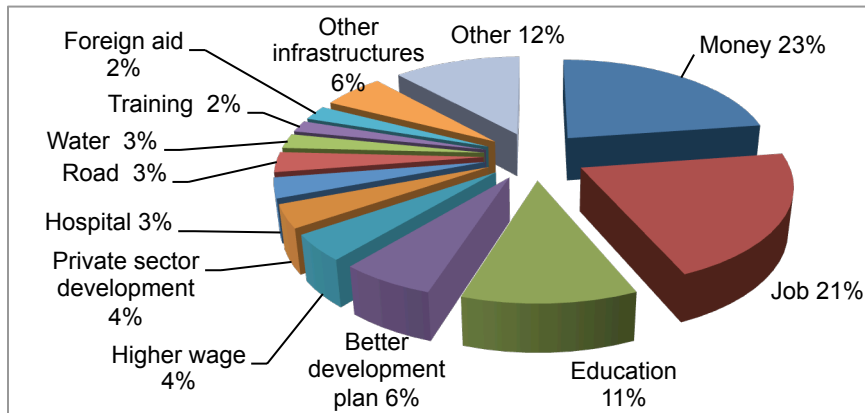
Thirdly and most significantly, grassroots recipients see that Japan's aid rarely meets their immediate needs in daily life; therefore, they hardly recognize its effects on their developmental paths (Fig. 4.6). According to the survey, about 23% of the participants said that money was needed for Sāmoa's development while another 25% brought up paid employment and higher salary as needs. If development is framed in terms of improvement of family, what people perceive of need for development is better access to cash mainly for *fa'alavelave* and *lotu*. In their view, Japan's aid has not done much to meet these needs.

In contrast, some of the survey participants recognize the effect of Japan's aid on their daily life through personal experiences like attending the school that Japan helped to build. Others see the aid impact from a larger picture and say that without Japan's support, Sāmoa would not have had resources for its development.

¹⁰² Interview with Poto Sainisi was conducted on July 13, 2006 in the staff room at the college where she teaches.

¹⁰³ I can easily relate to Poto. The scholarships and grants I received in my graduate life allowed me to continue schooling and conduct research. In spite of that, I rarely acknowledge the fact that the scholarship donors have greatly helped improve the quality of my academic life.

Figure 4.6. The Need for Sāmoa's Development



Source: Tsujita Questionnaire, 2006, Respondents = 508.

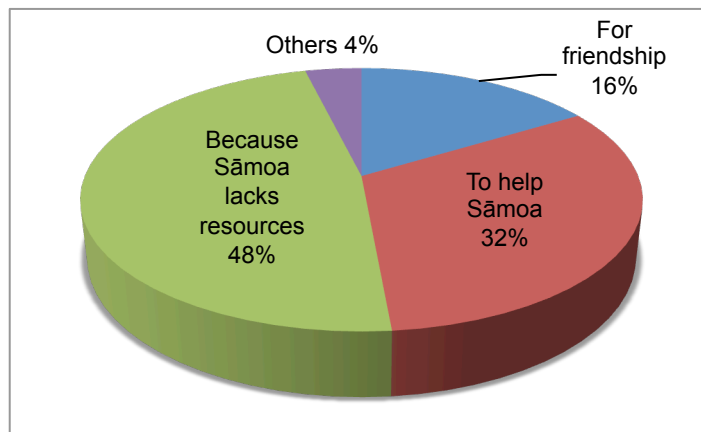
Although it did not receive much recognition, Japan has provided aid for the extension of the fisheries wharf and facilities and sent specialists to the agriculture sectors to support income generation. Yet, none of the projects straightforwardly generated income for individual families at the village level to gain grassroots recognition. Neither has Japan funded projects for the creation of jobs, although it provides training programs and scholarships to help individual recipients gain marketable skills. Regrettably, only 5.7% of the participants see infrastructure—the core area of Japan's assistance—as an immediate need for Sāmoa's development. This view is rather different from that of the government of Sāmoa that sees the improvement of infrastructure as a critical need for the country's development and therefore values Japan's support in that respect.

Consequently, according to my survey, Japan's aid hardly meets what people currently want—money and good jobs—so the grassroots recipients seldom recognize the effects of Japan's aid in respect to their needs. If an ultimate goal of foreign aid were to help the recipients to meet their needs, then Japan should expand its areas of assistance to focus on the creation of jobs especially with higher pay. Whether or not their needs actually help the betterment of their life is a different story, however.

4.4.3. Views of Japan's Aid Agenda and Future

The survey participants identified three major reasons for Japan's aid (Fig. 4.7). About 48% thought Japan provided aid because of the insufficiency of Sāmoa's resources and economic strength. This response can be interpreted as an influence by the Western donor-made discourse about development inherited from modernization theories that emphasize the need of aid for fulfilling the lack of developing countries for "take-off." It is understandable considering the fact that this is a line of reasoning for providing aid used in the school textbook prepared by aid projects.

Figure 4.7. Japan's Purpose for Aiding to Sāmoa



Source: Tsujita Questionnaire, 2006, Respondents = 508.

32% of the participants considered the purpose was to help Sāmoa's development and 16% perceived Japan's support was out of friendship with Sāmoa. These answers indicate the reflection of the statements used by either Japanese government or the government of Sāmoa for the explanation of Japan's aid to Sāmoa. While the majority of participants see the aid from Japan as constructive, some survey participants were more skeptical about Japan's intentions. About 2% of the respondents showed some degree of suspicion about Japan's hidden agenda to take over Sāmoa. "Such suspicion is common in Sāmoa," said aid coordinator Simi. Not only Japan's aid but also any inflow of non-Samoan items, either aid or people, to the country could invite a certain level of skepticism. This kind of skepticism can be considered a legacy of colonialism.

As discussed in the above section, both the government and grassroots community suggest that Sāmoa needs further development assistance from overseas countries like Japan. Only 6% of the survey participants say that Sāmoa has enough or nearly enough aid. This may be a symptom of psychological dependency by which people preconceive foreign aid as an indispensable ingredient of Sāmoa for progress although they seldom recognize its effectiveness on their own developmental path. Such preconceptions, however, are understandable, considering the fact that the majority of the survey participants have grown up seeing their country as a recipient of foreign aid. Since aid is a part of the Samoan life they have been living, it is probably difficult for them to imagine Sāmoa not receiving foreign aid at all.

Contrary to the Samoan views, Japanese people in Sāmoa have mixed views about the future of Japan's aid to Sāmoa. I conducted a survey among Japanese volunteers working in Sāmoa, which asked approximately the same questions. About 11% of the respondents perceived that aid to Sāmoa is unnecessary and should be discontinued completely. Another 75% suggested that future aid should focus only on certain areas including the improvement of medical treatment. Only 11% agreed with the continuation of aid under current conditions. Comparing this result to the Samoan views above, one may find psychological dependency on aid among Samoan recipients.

The Japanese volunteers' reasons for urging the discontinuation of aid can roughly be categorized into three: 1) Aid has been wasted due to the lack of human resources in the recipient community to make good use of the assistance; 2) The recipients have become all too used to assistance and take the benefit of aid for granted; and 3) Sāmoa is not in need of aid since the country is well endowed. The areas in which volunteers saw the need for assistance are the improvement of medical services including facilities and human resources, and the development of educational programs including training and pedagogy. None of them mentioned the need of aid in the improvement of infrastructure, which is the specialty of Japan's aid, or in the improvement of income generation and creation of jobs, which are the main demands of Samoan recipients.

In addition to the survey, a total of 16 Japanese persons who have lived in Sāmoa and been involved in Japan's aid projects were interviewed. Except for JICA Sāmoa officials, all of my interviewees perceived that Sāmoa needs no further foreign aid. The

majority of the interviewees view Sāmoa as a moderately developed country with the people who do not crave for food and further knowledge, so no further assistance is needed. One of those Japanese, Takeshi Ōumi, works for a construction company that undertakes aid projects.¹⁰⁴ He has been dispatched to several different projects and has built large-scale infrastructure in several developing countries. Through such experiences, he finds that Samoan recipients are not hungry for knowledge and techniques that aid projects bring, which may suggest they have received more than enough external support. Therefore, “Japan’s aid should be given to people who are actually eager for knowledge and so truly appreciate our support,” said Ōumi. I, however, see such comment as a result of misinterpreting the Samoan work ethic in which, for instance, workers seldom record information since their communications are mostly verbal. Not taking notes, however, suggests lack of interest to a Japanese. In reality, many Samoan workers are actually eager to learn but simply learn in different ways.¹⁰⁵

Whether Sāmoa has had enough foreign aid cannot be assessed adequately only from these donor viewpoints. Yet, their opinions suggest that some areas of foreign aid are not effectively allocated. Unfortunately, these voices from the forefront of aid are unlikely to be considered when the Japanese government outlines the next assistance plans to Sāmoa. Japan lacks a kind of aid evaluation system that can incorporate feedback from the field into the next stage of planning and implementation. Neither will the grassroots voices of Samoan recipients about their immediate needs be likely to be taken into account if the foremost priority of the government of Sāmoa is to utilize Japan’s aid to build as much infrastructure as possible before graduating from LDC status.

Accordingly, while both the government and grassroots recipients claim the need of further aid, the ways in which they perceive the role of Japan’s aid differ. I attribute these differences to the dissimilar definitions of development framed unconnectedly at national and grassroots levels. This kind of disjuncture discussed by Appadurai (1990) cannot be understood by such conventional approaches as nation-state that tend to homogenize a society. A risk of not understanding the existing disjuncture is that

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Ōumi (pseudonym) at the lounge of Aggie Grey’s Hotel in Apia conducted on October 28, 2006.

¹⁰⁵ This is also a concern at YES where the top management always needs to advise workers to take notes at any meetings they attend. Tone’s study on cross-cultural communication in Samoan construction industry reported a similar case (Tone 2005: 238).

development policies and projects designed by the government would not improve the quality of life in the ways in which people at grassroots wish. This does not necessarily mean that meeting the needs of grassroots recipients should be the first priority, especially when sustainability is considered. Rather, the respective developmental goals of different groups of stakeholders should be addressed in order to prevent aid projects from improving the life of one group at the expense of other groups. Sāmoa is not particularly diverse in terms of class, ethnicity, and religious belief. Still, some fundamental developmental disjuncture exists not only between government and grassroots community, but also between different social groups, which will be explored next.

4.5. Developmental Gaps in the *Lifeworld*: Values, Youth, and Women

4.5.1. A Spatial Division among Apia Girls

Though “development” may be progressing on some scales, the ways in which “modern” practices spread are uneven. This involves the power of customary ways and traditional practices, even ones now seen as controlling of youth and women. Developmental gaps between Apia and rural parts of Sāmoa have always been discussed especially in the context of rapidly advancing centralization of Apia. Today, the urban area of Apia accounts for more than 40% of the country’s population and generates 70% of the national income. The governmental sections, politics, industries, businesses, top private schools, and entertainment are predominantly in Apia, creating significant developmental gaps between the capital city and rural villages in every segment of daily life. Living outside of Apia, one has to travel to the city for almost every important business and the travel cost is not cheap.¹⁰⁶ Especially for the residents from Savai‘i, going to Apia is still a daylong event, the capital city remaining a distant place economically and psychologically despite the improvement of transportation.

A developmental gap exists not only between Apia and rural Sāmoa, but the gap in wealth and social status is also widening within urban Apia. In my interview, economist Salele disagreed that there is increased social polarization in Sāmoa, saying that he hardly

¹⁰⁶ From my research site in Savai‘i to Apia, the cost of transportations including local bus and interisland ferry is about SAT\$50 (US\$20) or more for one round trip.

sees the desperate need of cash even by the group at the bottom of economic strata. His observation is that some people cannot afford as many material goods as others due to insufficient cash income. Nevertheless, such lack of material goods hardly affects their basic subsistence because the wished-for items are not the necessities of life. Some may not have a stable access to cash income, but they have alternative means of sustaining their living underpinned by a combination of communal land system and the *'āiga* network. In this context, Salele argued, the different level of material possessions is not necessarily a gap in wealth.

People may debate on this topic; nevertheless, I did observe a gap between the two groups of young Samoan women living in Apia. The first group of girls, I call the “bling-bling girls,” are in their late 20s to early 30s and from relatively wealthy Samoan families. The name bling-bling girls illustrates the way they dress up with expensive clothes and shiny gold accessories. The bling-bling girls are working women with a variety of jobs in the private sector including hotel owners, shop owners, and NGO representatives. Their salaries allow them to travel overseas frequently and own brand-new cars. All of them grew up in Apia with families that reside on freehold land where people live individually without the village intervention. The other group is the Yazaki girls, also in their late 20s to early 30s, who work on the factory assembly lines for the starting hourly rate of SAT\$2.20 (about US 90 cents). The Yazaki girls are mainly from villages, some from town area and the others from outside Apia. Normally, they are living under the strict village and parental rules and are tied to socio-cultural obligations described previously. Their average weekly pay is only around SAT\$150 (approximately US\$60) even with overtime hours including Saturdays. The majority of their salaries go to the family, as helping their family is their main purpose for working. In many ways, the lifestyle of these two groups of Samoan women is dissimilar.

One Saturday evening, I was invited to the wedding anniversary party of one of the bling-bling girls. The party was held at the poolside restaurant of the luxurious Aggie Grey's Hotel Resort with about 100 guests who are family and friends of the couple. Because of the comeliness of the couple, their stunning dress, the outstanding location, and the beautiful organization, their anniversary party was just like a clip from a Hollywood movie that every woman dreams of. The food buffet was lavish and there

was an open bar to entertain guests. Throughout the night, I wondered whether Sāmoa is still a LDC. *Sāmoa has a population like this who have a much higher standard of living than most of us in Japan or in Hawai‘i!*

On the next day, Sunday, I was invited to another party organized by a Yazaki girl to celebrate her baby’s first birthday. The party was held at her family’s house located in a village on the outskirts of Apia. When I got there I thought the party was over because there were no decorations, no cake, no gifts, nor anything else in this traditional Samoan style house that indicated a birthday party. There were no guests, but a few adults and several children were lying on the floor. As I did not see my Yazaki friend, I apologized to the people in the house for coming late. One of them got my friend who was in the cooking house behind the main house. She came into the house with a plate of food for me, saying that she was waiting for me to eat together but others have already eaten. She told me that no one else was invited to the birthday party besides me. We ate the food that consisted of two pieces of fried chicken, taro, and *palusami* (taro leaf cooked with coconuts cream) and chatted for a while. Later I played with the children who are her younger brothers and sisters. Her husband was at work. I brought small gifts for the baby and the family, but regretted that I did not bring a birthday cake. When I left the house, I could not stop comparing the two parties I had attended on one weekend and the profound differences in living environments between the two groups of Apia girls.

These events led to the realization that social link between the women of these two groups is relatively weak although all of them are living in the same urban area of Apia.¹⁰⁷ They are residing separately in the fairly different social spaces that are constructed by “modernizing” aspects of everyday life. Take the mode of transportation, for instance. As the bling-bling girls have their own cars, they do not ride a public bus so do not roam around the central bus station. For Yazaki girls, on the other hand, the bus station is a most popular spot for socializing while waiting for their sole means of transportation, the public bus. In this spatial setting, even if the bling-bling girls and the Yazaki girls are on the same road at the same time, they do not share the same social space. As there is little chance their paths would cross, they experience and perceive the

¹⁰⁷ I got to mingle with both groups and observe their lives from a close distance only because I was a researcher—outsider—who searched out connections to both groups for the sake of my study.

reality of transportation in Apia differently. In short, they are living in two distinctive *lifeworlds*.

Their dissimilar ways of socializing are another example. The bling-bling girls frequently go out for lunch, dinner, clubbing and party at town's hot spots and luxury restaurants, enjoying their meals over made-in New Zealand wines. To such spots and restaurants, few Yazaki girls would go unless invited by someone. In general, they hardly ever dine out, eating lunch at the factory canteen and dinner at home. If they have occasions to eat out, those are usually church functions or *fa'alavelave* related events. On the payday, Yazaki girls are often seen enjoying their munchies from takeaways stores located around the central bus station, normally sharing one plate with one or two friends. Some Yazaki girls do go out clubbing at such places as RSA, one of the oldest clubs in town, or drink Vailima, a local beer. The two groups of young Samoan women do similar things around the same time within the same urban space, but they rarely share the space of everyday life.

One might argue that such spatial separation is common in every big city of the world due to the human behavior that prefers to associate with the people of the same class, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, and interests. Yet, Apia is not a big cosmopolitan city like New York or Tōkyo where over 10 million of people coexist in the same physical space. Apia is a small city of 20 square miles (60 square kilometers) with a population of about 38,000. The vast majority are of the same ethnic origin. It is the kind of place where everyone knows everyone's business. That is why this palpable separation of social space between the Samoan women in the same age group is notable.

These girls coexist in the small physical space within which they construct their respective *lifeworlds* that rarely overlap. This disjuncture is what I call a developmental gap. The gap is, of course, made of a different level of material possessions, as Salele argues, but also a combination of diverse aspects of the everyday lives they live. As they have different *lifeworlds*, they probably define development differently and will take divergent paths to achieve their respective versions of a better life. In the next section, the life courses taken by the bling-bling girls are contrasted with that of Yazaki girls.

4.5.2. Divergent Developmental Paths

One may attribute the gap between the two groups of Apia women to their family backgrounds. In fact, the majority of bling-bling girls were born into a relatively wealthy family; yet, more aspects of life must be taken into account. Growing up in Apia, for instance, the bling-bling girls had better access to schools that use English intensively and are equipped with modern technology. As a result, they became more marketable in jobs with good salaries than their counterparts from rural Sāmoa. As they live on freehold land—outside of the village jurisdictions, they could take opportunities without interference from village rules and restrictions, which probably provided wider choices for a better developmental path. All these aspects of life have shaped them to become women with clear visions about their own life goals.

Their families may be rich, but the bling-bling girls are hard workers with a good sense of how to manage money. As Samoan daughters, they too contribute to *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* to maintain the *'āiga* network and for the sake of their parents. Knowing their own financial capacity; however, they set the limit of monthly contributions according to their earnings and divert funds from following months if an unavoidable *fa'alavelave* with a large amount occurs. If some money is left, then they save for the next need, taking out loans only when absolutely necessary. They probably inherited such practice from their parents who do not practice extravagant *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* contributions at the expense of children, although they do value Samoan traditions. One mother told me, “I didn't want to take any chances away from my children because of *fa'alavelave*, even though my extended family criticize me for being stingy.”¹⁰⁸ Those parents do not expect their children to take out large loans that absorb most of their salaries. Learning, probably from the parents, they gained knowledge of wisely handling socio-cultural obligations as Samoans and managing to live successfully between tradition and modern life. In this sense, the great inheritance of bling-bling girls is not necessarily the family wealth but the way to manage their lives by setting up clear priorities on their developmental paths.

Such management skills seem lacking among some families in both urban and rural villages. Take the Yazaki girls for instance, working at the factory that is a new addition

¹⁰⁸ Personal communication.

to the Samoan Aidscape. These young women are also linked to the global economy through their labor, but their earnings in the factory are for their families, and many feel compelled to contribute even more than they earn. Many, if not the majority, of them have taken out loans for family matters that take up most part of their earnings. Because their foremost priority is the betterment of family, they often borrow money beyond their financial capacity. A danger observed is that, living on the same islands, people always see extravagant *fa'alavelave* events, outstanding church contributions, and affluent possessions owned by well-off Samoans and come to desire the same. They then try to sustain a similar lavish lifestyle without sufficient consideration of the monetary responsibility attached to it and so frequently end up in deep debt. To a certain degree socio-cultural pressures from village or from church community urge them to consume beyond their means. Still, I observed the tendency for people to consume based on wishful thinking rather than their current financial competence. Such consumption pattern may be rooted in the fact that they can ask *āiga* for financial support when necessary. However, people failing to make loan payments on time have been sent to court and sometimes to jail. It indicates that some aspects of this economic cycle may need to be altered, although the wishful consumption is a part of the economic activities that contribute to the growth of national economy as discussed above.

In a similar line of thought, Samoan journalist Mata'afa Keni Lesā encourages fellows Samoans to resist the materialism and the excessive contributions fueled primarily by the spirit of competition:

Traditionally, gift giving in the fa'aSāmoa is about the thought, not a show. It's about reciprocating alofa (love) of one family to another, not to embarrass the lesser families who don't have much. Most cultural events these days have been turned into a show of pride and a display of how well off one's family is... (Lesā 2009: 1)

He stresses that a key to gain control over life is to change one's mindset and understand one's own limitations. Lesā's proposal may appear impracticable especially to people in the village where the socio-cultural competition is acute. For that, some forms of government intervention may be helpful to restrict such competition. It definitely takes time to change people's mindset; yet, the change may be worth the investment. The following story of Manumalo, a young woman from Savai'i, proves the practicability and reliability of this proposal.

4.5.3. Development Path of A Young Samoan Woman¹⁰⁹

Manumalo, a 32 year-old woman, is the mother of two children and married to a husband of European ancestry. She is originally from southwestern part of Savai'i that has no major industries and very few opportunities for paid jobs. From there, she successfully carved her development path by clearly setting her goals of life and believing in her ability to do so. She moved to Apia when she was 16 to attend high school in Apia, staying with her brother and his family. After graduation, she obtained a job working as statistics enumerator at the labor department earning SAT\$1.15 an hour. As most Samoan daughters do, she sent most of her pay to her parents in Savai'i to help with their financial needs especially for *fa'alavelave*. But at one point, seeing a different kind of life in Apia, she realized that she had to change the way she lived.

I realized that if I keep doing that, there would be nothing left for me. What about my future? If I got married and had kids, where am I going to have money to raise my own children? Then I thought I'd have to change my life that is controlled by my parents.

She went back to Savai'i and explained to her parents that she would send money for them when necessary, but would keep at least half of her pay for her sake. Her father eventually agreed with it as the mother strongly supported her. Traditionally, Samoan daughters are brought up in an environment that discourages them to speak up and speak back to parents. "But I was different and lucky," she continues:

Unlike other parents in Savai'i, my parents always listened to me and gave me good advice. Knowing that, I was able to speak up. I think that's the big difference between me and other girls. So I really appreciate the way my parents brought me up, especially my mum.

When she moved to Apia and started to mingle with friends of European ancestry, Mamumalo began to see a big gap in lifestyle between them and girls in Savai'i. It urged her to change her mindset toward goals of her life.

I just didn't want to end up my life like other girls in Savai'i, being controlled completely by parents, and continue living in the small world, without knowing the big world surrounding them, and end up just like my parents or their parents, staying home with no job asking kids for money. I didn't want to stay in that circle.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Manumalo (pseudonym) was conducted at a restaurant lounge at Kitano Tusitala Hotel (currently called Tanoa Hotel) on November 30, 2006.

Growing up seeing countless numbers of young women in Savai'i doing what she calls "losing" their lives, Manumalo was indeed determined not to lose her life but live fully.

To end the vicious cycle, Manumalo came to the realization that she needs to control her life. Since then, she moved to a job with higher pay in Apia, in American Sāmoa and even in Japan, working as Polynesian dancer. Currently, she manages a hotel in Apia while working on a new project to build another hotel in Savai'i. Her capital still goes back to her parents and village, but with her investment mindset, she manages to reduce obligatory contributions. Manumalo attributes her success to her parents who have supported her efforts to gain control over her own life. For this reason, she identifies education of Samoan parents as key to the development of Sāmoa and its people. Samoan parents need to encourage children to set their own life goals and live their own lives fully, said Manumalo.

In today's Sāmoa, many people are facing the challenges of juggling two kinds of worlds, traditions and new principles, in the rapidly changing living environment. Some Samoans attribute the growing gap in wealth to their family backgrounds, while others see it as a result of frequent *fa'alavelave* that has eaten up their incomes. This short biography shows that one's birthplace and family background are not everything that determines her/his life trajectory. Manumalo was growing up in an ordinary household in a rural village where opportunities, especially for youth, for development are very limited with the power of customary ways shaping their life trajectories. Though, she accomplished a kind of life she had desired. Her story proves the existence of young Samoan women who have the ability to live with the two opposing worlds and carve a developmental path by their own hands to achieve their life goals. In the case of Manumalo, a key to carving the path was her determination to achieve a better life and supportive parents, although a range of other factors enhanced her ability to do so. She demonstrated the feasibility of Lesā's proposal above that with firm determination, anybody can juggle the two worlds and successfully carve a path that leads to a better life.

This section on the bling-bling girls, Yazaki girls, and Manumalo illustrated the unevenly adopted "modern" practices as Sāmoa emerges from LDC to a status of developed country. I found disjuncture in developmental paths taken by these Samoan

women in selecting choices within both “tradition” and “modernity.” Such divergent paths exist not only between Apia women but also between Apia men, between people in Apia and rural villages, and between villages in Upolu and Savai‘i, dividing the entire population into multiple groups. After all, Sāmoa is not as homogeneous as sometimes suggested.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter explored the multiple and changing realities for Samoans in the context of aid, demonstrating the fluid nature of aid recipients’ experiences that constitutes the Samoan Aidscape. Both the government and grassroots recipients generally appreciate Japan’s aid and desire further assistance. Conversely, Japanese volunteers and the UN think that Sāmoa is no longer a LDC with a serious need of foreign assistance. However, the lack of jobs and high cost of living are a reality experienced by the grassroots community.

The government of Samoa proposes developmental agendas in various fields to enhance people’s developmental opportunities; yet, Samoans at the grassroots view the needs of Sāmoa differently. Some say money and jobs are the immediate need while others view the ability to resist excessive socio-cultural contributions and education for Samoan parents as a key to success. I found that these differently defined needs result from different definitions of development and different developmental activities taken based on the different definitions. Identifying the areas of further needs for development of Sāmoa is not within the scope of this chapter. Still, I emphasize the importance of understanding the existing divergence in the developmental needs within the country of 187,000 people who are relatively less diverse in terms of ethnicity, class, and religion. Such understanding is necessary for the government to achieve its aim of bringing “even” development for all levels of Samoans.

The chapter looked closely at the microeconomic activities in today’s Sāmoa, finding truth in Lash and Urry’s claim that “the economy is increasingly culturally inflected and that culture is more and more economically inflected”(Lash and Urry 1994: 64). The result of such inflection is the birth of Samoanized capitalism based on the *āiga* and *fa’aSāmoa*. Foreign aid definitely is a component of Samoan capitalism although the

grassroots recipients rarely recognize its direct effects on their own developmental paths. This unique economic phenomenon attested to the inapplicability of the conventional argument that traditional institutions and economic development are not compatible, for the case of Sāmoa. Individual and family situatedness in *lifeworlds* closer to customary village relations, or closer to the monetized urban economy, do create divergent developmental paths, all within this developmental Aidscape.

In this chapter, some of the prevailing preset ideas about aid to further dependency were examined. The aid critics speculate about Japan's manipulative use of aid to Sāmoa, but the recipient government reports no compromises in the aid. The critics see foreign aid as a hindrance to industrialization, but Sāmoa's industry is growing through the capitalized socio-cultural practices despite high levels of aid. This suggests that critical viewpoints both of MIRAB stagnation and of the linear underdevelopment are not applicable to Japan's aid to Sāmoa. Two other preset ideas about aid dependency—government's accountability and dependency mindset—were briefly examined in this chapter, but will be discussed further in the following chapters. The next chapter will explore the lived reality of Samoan Aidscape in terms of how Japan's aid is performed, experienced, and received at the grassroots level, shaping the space of daily life in this recipient country.

CHAPTER 5

THE SAMOAN AIDSCAPE IN PRACTICE

5.1. Introduction

The preceding chapters have explored a range of constituents of the Samoan Aidscape with a focus on the Japanese epistemology of foreign aid, aid observers' discussions on the aid to Sāmoa, and Samoan grassroots definitions of aid and development. In this chapter, I approach the lived reality of the Samoan Aidscape as a hybrid living space that encompasses the views of all the constituents explored in the previous chapters—the respective cultures of different aid donors, the Samoan government's developmental goals, and grassroots participants' communal and individual obligations and aspirations for a better life. These varying viewpoints often clash and match, and sometimes negotiate, but interconnect at various levels, constituting the complex space of everyday life in Sāmoa. This chapter investigates how policies of Japan's aid to Sāmoa are actually practiced in the complex space and have created multidimensional impacts at the grassroots level.

Situating the viewpoint at various spatial units of analysis, the chapter analyzes the performance of aid in four somewhat overlapping areas: control, credit, people, and the uneven geography of development. It looks at 1) issues in control of infrastructure construction projects funded by Japan at different scales; 2) issues in assuring credit to Japan as the donor, and keeping Sāmoa-Japan relations in a good light; 3) issues concerning grassroots actors including Japanese volunteers and Samoan hosts; and 4) issues in the importance of aid to local development and uneven spatial allocation and social benefits. Through these issues, the chapter examines the applicability of ideas about Sāmoa's aid dependency framed as free income that undermines the government's accountability. It also considers meanings of dependency and development at the grassroots in relation to foreign aid.

From interviews and participant observation, I find that aid performance sometimes succeeds, sometimes fails, and frequently is a complicated set of disjunctive connections and limitations on power from all sides. In such a messy reality, aid is more than a source of promoting dependency and this is the picture this chapter aims to portray. The

chapter begins with a picture of a typical night that illustrates how embedded the practice of foreign aid is in the space of everyday life in this recipient country.

5.2. A Typical Night in the Samoan Aidscape

A group of people in a family home in Sālemanu, Savai‘i were talking about *Iāpani* (Japan) as the *Tala Fou*, a local evening news program on TV, broadcast the hand-over ceremony of a Japanese aid project on their island.

News Reporter:

This morning, the government of Japan officially handed over the water tanks to the village of Mauga in Savai‘i to help alleviate chronic water shortage in the village water system. This project worth SAT\$100,684 (about US\$42,000) was made available under Japan’s grassroots grant aid program. On behalf of the government of Japan, Mr. Mizuo Tameta, a representative from the Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, extended his best wishes to the Mauga village, hoping this project will contribute to the improvement of the water supply for the village residents. Mr. Tameta said the government of Japan would like to continue as much support as possible until every Samoan can enjoy a good quality of life in a safe environment. As usual, the hand-over ceremony opened with speeches by the donor representative, the Prime Minister of Sāmoa and a village mayor emphasizing the benefit of the completed project to the recipient community and to Sāmoa as a whole. The ceremony was followed by traditional activities such as ‘ava (kava) ceremony, *sua* (presentation of baked pigs and fine mats), and Samoan dance and music performed by the members of recipient village. This news report on Japan’s aid project was followed by other news on aid reporting on an agreement for a new construction project signed between the governments of China and Sāmoa. The report showed the Prime Minister Tuilaepa and a Chinese representative shaking hands with big smiles. As the news went on, the gathered family audience started talking about *Saina* (China).

“*Oka*, so many gifts from *Saina*. The ferry, pool, and water tanks, and now another government building!”

“It’s good, they help Sāmoa, but it’s not good, because they only help the government, not us.”

“Why do they give many gifts?”

“Maybe they want to send more Japanese and take over Sāmoa, hahaha.”

“Japanese or Chinese?”

“What’s the difference? They all look the same!”

The family roared with laughter and moved on to another topic.

This night gathering is an example of the lived reality of the Samoan Aidscape where foreign aid has become an everyday event. News about foreign aid presentations such as these are broadcast on TV and radio, and reported in newspapers all the time. New construction projects funded by aid are seen in town and around the islands. In fact, the majority of the country's major infrastructure projects including land and maritime transportation systems, airports, water, power, telecommunication systems, hospitals, governmental buildings and vehicles, markets, have been funded by foreign aid. Such aid projects have vastly altered the physical and ideological landscape of Sāmoa, creating an environment in which almost no day goes by without some association with something related to foreign aid. In this living space, aid sometimes becomes such a normal part of everyday life that its effects and effectiveness are obscured. To understand the embedded effects and effectiveness, the following sections look at interwoven issues of control, credit, people and uneven development, which surround aid projects such as the water tank project in Mauga mentioned above.

5.3. Control of Aid in the Untying Process

5.3.1. The Downside of Untied Aid

Control of resources and projects from the top to the bottom (donor to recipient) is a theme of constant discussion in the Aidscape. At every spatial scale of project implementation, I heard debates and frictions as to the conditionality, channels, and control of resources. One case is a result of intertwined interests and policies related to *kokueki* (Japan's national interests) and untying aid.

As part of untying aid policy, OECD instructs aid donors to restore the right of the recipient government to select contractors and material suppliers for aid projects, as it ultimately increases the value of aid received. This instruction is based on the estimation that the goods and services purchased with tied aid cost 15 to 30% more than that of untied aid (OECD 2001: 2). Va'aelua Nofo Va'aelua, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ministry of Works, Transport, and Infrastructure of Sāmoa values this untied aid policy particularly because it provides a cost-effective way by which the recipient government can maintain the infrastructures funded by aid.

Currently, the Japanese government provides a one-year guarantee on the infrastructure projects funded under the grant aid. Repairs of any defects found within the first year are carried out under the grant aid scheme. But from the second year, repairs and maintenance are the responsibility of the recipient government unless a follow-up project is implemented for restoration work on the infrastructure. The CEO Va‘aelua who has been working with Japan’s aid for 20 years has a positive view of the change in Japan’s aid guided by the untied aid policy.¹¹⁰ According to him, Japan’s aid used to be heavily tied, especially in terms of equipment. “All the materials, machines, and other equipment had to be imported from Japan or Japan-designated places to meet Japanese standards,” said Va‘aelua. Since the projects were tied to the Japanese standard and materials, the maintenance the government of Sāmoa was required to undertake was costly. Untying aid, however, reduced the cost of maintenance by providing the recipient cost-effective access, for instance, to locally supplied building materials to maintain the infrastructure.

In a response to the CEO Va‘aelua’s comment, Takeshi Ōumi, the Japanese project manager for the Polytechnic reconstruction, explains the supplier selection for building materials used for this project.¹¹¹

Basically, we took into account the accessibility when we organized the route of materials. For instance, paint. It must be repainted, so we bought the painting materials locally. We finished up painting with materials locally available. For ceiling and flooring materials, we could have purchased locally but the ones with better durability were expensive if purchased locally, so this time brought them from Japan and third countries. In this way, I think there is almost no such a situation that the CEO mentioned especially if sustainability is concerned.

Accordingly, the recipient and the donor seem to have different views on the selection on materials used for aid projects. The recipient sees it primarily from an economic standpoint while the donor is concerned with durability. Such a difference in priorities of aid may diminish the benefit of aid projects as follows.

Power blackouts happen frequently in Sāmoa especially in Savai‘i. They may last for several hours in both day and night. According to Denki Kawahara, a Japanese senior

¹¹⁰ Interview with the CEO Va‘aelua Nofo Va‘aelua was conducted at his office at the Ministry of Work, Transport, and Infrastructure in Apia on November 3, 2006.

¹¹¹ Interview with Takeshi Ōumi (pseudonym) was conducted at the lounge of Aggie Grey’s Hotel in Apia on October 28, 2006.

volunteer dispatched to the Electric Power Corporation (EPC) in Sāmoa, an underlying cause of the chronic blackouts lies in the current system of untied aid that grants freedom of purchase.¹¹² Kawahara explains:

Why are there frequent blackouts?

It's a good question. It's not easy to analyze all the factors, but first of all, the equipment is very old. Most of the equipment added has been secondhand. Secondly, since the electrification is being installed along the coastal area, rain and salty wind constantly whip the electric wires, causing the wires to contact each other and short out. Thirdly, because of the tight budget, fewer power poles were installed than needed. So, as you probably noticed, the distance between the poles is so much longer than standard. Because of that, the wire hangs loosely, making them easily damaged.

Aren't those equipment items funded by Japan's aid?

Not all of the equipment used. Japan funded some equipment for installing the power poles, power transformers, compressors, and electric wires.

Didn't Japan provide enough funding?

If it's tied aid, all the equipment is provided through Japan. But since it's untied, the recipient receives the money to purchase the equipment from anywhere they like. In doing so, they tend to buy cheaper equipment so that they can buy more. Because the cheap equipment usually has poor quality, even just a little unstable electric current causes a blackout. Transformers are the same. Because the ones installed here are cheap stuff, oil leakage affects the cooling system and ends up causing frequent blackouts.

As Kawahara mentioned, there are other causes of chronic blackouts. Yet, his story tells that, as far as sustainability is concerned, restoring the choice of materials and equipment to the hand of recipients does not always ensure the effectiveness of the aid.

Then one might ask how a wise use of aid can be identified. If cost is a major consideration in aid effectiveness as the CEO Va'aelua suggests, then the way in which the EPC used the aid is reasonable because electricity has been available in spite of frequent blackouts. But if the main objective of rural electrification project is to provide stable power to meet the growing electricity consumption, then it appears the outcome of this aid project is not satisfactory. In heavily electrified countries like Japan, the latter makes better sense because effects of a blackout on the society even for one second are enormous so stability in providing power is an inevitable requirement. At this

¹¹² Interview with Denki Kawahara (pseudonym) was conducted in a meeting room in the company to where he was dispatched, on November 24, 2006.

developmental stage, Sāmoa can afford to choose cost effectiveness over stability since the need for stable power is not yet as great as in the power consuming countries like Japan. Still, the unstable power supply from EPC affect the operation of some local companies such as the YES factory where numerous machines are used for the manufacturing process.¹¹³ The government of Sāmoa may soon need to reevaluate the priority in aid-funded electrification projects as the development of industry and improvement of living standards require a stable power system to move forward.

As illustrated, choices of material supply given by the untied aid policy raised the question about the sustainability of the aid project. Generally, Japan's construction project is designed on the assumption that materials and equipment used for the project meet the quality by Japanese standards. As seen in the case of EPC, recipient countries do not always select the materials that have the standard of quality the donor expected. This mismatching of material quality is likely to cause a project to fail to achieve initial goals. The durability of infrastructure, for instance, may not be guaranteed as the recipient government selects the materials that have lower quality than the standard designated by Japanese civil engineers. Thus, the recipient may end up spending resources on maintenance that would have been unnecessary if the designated quality of materials were used initially. If the facility is built to high standards with required materials, however, as the CEO Va'aelua mentioned, the maintenance cost becomes too burdensome, which may entail the recipient government continuing to depend on donor for the maintenance. Without the maintenance, the facility will otherwise become a "white elephant." That said, improving the quality of aid is a complicated process that requires compromise at various levels. Despite the OECD instruction, untied aid does not necessarily increase the value of aid without bridging the gap in the priorities of aid project between the donor and recipient.

¹¹³ This is a serious concern at YES since almost all machines used at the factory are designed with the assumption that the power supply for the machine is stable. Sudden cut offs and an unstable power supply not only hinder smooth manufacturing but also shorten the life span of expensive machines. The company has own generator that is used only as a measure against blackouts, not for daily production due to the high cost of running.

5.3.2. An Obstacle in Untying Aid: Labor

In the process of untying aid, the question of bringing labor from donor countries is a concern. Russell Hunter posed this question to the Samoan readers in the local newspaper *Samoa Observer*:

But what about the consultancy industry that has boomed in the past decade or so? Far more cogent commentators than this one have argued convincingly that this kind of foreign aid has in fact stunted the progress of professionals and managers in the island region. In some cases two generations after independence some island states continue to rely on overseas consultants in key government and developmental positions. Why train—and pay—local people when foreign governments are prepared to send in expertise for free? So we continue to see aid workers in the islands earning more than the Prime Minister and in some cases more than the local captains of industry (Hunter 2010).

In a response to the question posed, Takeshi Ōumi, the project manager for the Polytechnic reconstruction, explains the labor situation of Sāmoa in this way:

To tell the truth, the skill of local workers here is relatively low compared to the workers in other developing countries I have been dispatched to. It's because they don't have experience. The ones with experience and skills move overseas, I heard. Prior to this project, I thought it is manageable to hire the workers with little skills, especially for the long projects like ours that have two construction phases. Even if they don't have experience initially, they will gain skills while working and will become good workers by the time of the second phase. Since the content of the two phases are almost same, I thought it should be no problem hiring inexperienced workers. But I was wrong. The workers didn't learn as much as expected. They don't remember how they worked on the first phase by the time of second phase. They forgot all about what they did on the first phase. I couldn't believe it because I never met workers like that in Japan or even in other developing countries.

Ōumi attributes these attitudes of workers largely to the lack of their ability in learning. Their slow pace of learning, however, may not necessarily be a lack of ability, but differences in learning styles and difficulties in their surrounding environment. Ōumi continues:

Another problem was the lack of willingness to share skills among the workers. We divided the workers into groups and placed respective team leaders and taught the leaders how to do it, expecting them to hand on the knowledge to their team members. But they didn't share what they learned with others. They kept the gained knowledge as their own property and didn't hand it on to the next worker. With that attitude, even if we show how to correct the mistakes to the leaders, they don't pass on what they learn, and overlook the same mistake their under workers are making. So many times we had to redo everything because of that. I don't know why they don't share

skills. Sāmoa is very unique in this sense because I never experienced such in other countries. It's a fatal problem in developing human resources.

The problem of sharing skills and knowledge is not unique to the workers at this aid project. Interviews and conversations with local residents identify the lack of sharing knowledge as a common problem found at work places in Sāmoa. Actually, this has been one of the major concerns at the YES factory especially in developing human resources (Tsujiita 2002). According to Samoan managers at the factory, because the opportunities to learn are not available for every resident in the country, some Samoans consider new techniques as prestigious instruments with which to elevate themselves in the labor market or even in the society. They are thus reluctant to share newly gained techniques with others because they think that once they share, their knowledge is no longer special and their market value decreases.¹¹⁴ Consequently, a delay in technological transfer to a recipient country is caused not only by the tied aid project that brings foreign experts and workers as Hunter claimed above, but also the lack of willingness among project participants to share the knowledge acquired. Ironically, such lack hinders the development of human resources in a country that has a strong tradition of sharing.

Furthermore, the delay in human resource development limits the process of untying aid that aims to increase the benefit of aid projects. According to Mitsuru Sekkei, the chief architect for the Polytechnic project:¹¹⁵

Using aid to the greatest extent, we try our best to design buildings as good quality as possible. But to achieve this goal, the human resources that are locally available often do not have the required capacity. I usually take into account such issues when designing, but it still has limits. During the research period, I usually walk around town and look around the buildings, and consider the level of local construction techniques, but it's difficult to grasp the scope of ability of local carpenters within a limited time. At the same time, I wish to build as best as we could as a way of transferring our knowledge and techniques...

His comment suggests that in order to provide the recipient with the opportunity to learn new techniques through an aid project, the content of project must be suitable to the situation of local labor market. If a recipient country does not have a sufficient number

¹¹⁴ According to a Japanese machine specialist that visited YES, this tendency is not unique to Sāmoa, as he has had similar experiences in Yazaki factories in other developing countries including China, India, and Indonesia (Personal communication in March 2011).

¹¹⁵ Interview with Mitsuru Sekkei (pseudonym) was conducted at a restaurant lounge of Aggie Grey's Hotel in Apia on October 30, 2006.

of skilled laborers required to carry on a high tech project, the donor must provide some experts to train local workers through working together on the project. Although technical transfer is one of the benefits aid can provide, if local workers are unwilling to share skills learned from the project, as in the case of Sāmoa, the donor has to continue bringing experts to implement a project. In this situation, the donor can use “unskilled local laborer” as a convenient reason to bring own laborers, limiting the benefits aid could bring. This unproductive cycle indicates that untying aid in a true sense is more complicated than restoring choice to the recipient, requiring grappling with such situations in the recipient country as the donor-perceived “work ethic” of local laborers.

5.3.3. Kokueki (National Interests)

Untying aid has restored the choices of recipient countries over the goods and services for aid projects, but at the same time it has lessened considerably the involvement of Japanese firms in Japan’s aid. While the policy of untied aid is widely adopted, a growing opinion argues against the untying of grant aid. Such opinion resulted from Japanese taxpayers who asked their government about *kokueki* (national interests) in providing aid during times of serious economic crisis (see also Chapter 2). The aforementioned Japanese construction contractor Ōumi said:

I don’t know why it has been criticized. Why it is wrong for Japanese firms to gain benefits through the government’s ODA? The Japanese government’s responsibility is to protect Japanese citizens as well as the benefits of Japanese firms. So the government is carrying on their responsibility of protecting the benefits of Japanese firms. Since the loan aid has been untied, no guarantees exist for Japanese firms to carry on the project. But grant aid is FREE of charge (emphasized with the hand gesture), I would say it loud, what’s wrong with seeking benefits through giving contracts to Japanese firms?

The criticism of aid in seeking national interests is partly based on the notion that aid is to help the development of recipient countries, but not to seek the benefit of donors.

Still yet, if we can gain benefits as a result of helping the development of recipients, I think that is something to be appreciated, not something to be criticized.

The aforementioned architect Sekkei agrees with Ōumi:

I perceive such a critical viewpoint on aid as natural and consider it good. Without such constructive criticisms, the aid would not be improved. Therefore such criticism is healthy. But, I don’t necessary agree with it 100%. In my personal opinion as a

taxpayer, aid money should be circulated, giving back also to the Japanese citizen. I think aid should provide a kind of win-win situation in which Japan and Sāmoa can cooperate with each other for long-term mutual benefit. If it's a win-lose situation in which only the recipient gains benefit, then, a criticism arose from Japanese taxpayers, asking why we continue such aid. So it's important to keep the balance between the benefit of recipient and of donor.

In addition to these two Japanese aid actors, my survey with JICA volunteers indicates that about 75% agree that Japan's grant aid should bring some benefits back to Japan.

The Samoan recipient at the grassroots also perceives tied aid differently from popular criticism. Faifale Lāpoa, the owner of a local construction company that undertook numerous infrastructure projects funded by Japan's aid, evaluates the system of tying aid in a positive light, saying:¹¹⁶

Whether it's tied or not, those large projects are good because they bring jobs to locals who have no jobs otherwise. They can learn new construction techniques too. Because Sāmoa has not enough advanced construction materials, what else we can do but import them from Japan? So I don't think we are tied. Plus, it's a free gift from Japan, what do we have to complain about?

From his standpoint, the benefit of aid, whether or not it is untied, is seen making not much difference at the receiving end as far as construction project is concerned. On the donor side, however, as the provision of untying aid limited the involvement of Japanese firms in aid projects, fewer firms and taxpayers in Japan have interests in supporting Japan's aid. More frequently and severely, they question their government about providing aid that repatriates little benefit to the citizens of the donor country. Such questions are raised not only in Japan but also in other aid donor countries where untied aid weakened public and political support on aid, influencing the reduction of already tight aid budgets (OECD 2001).

Untying aid is based on the philosophy that aid should focus on the benefit of recipient but not of donor. From this standpoint, the practice of repatriating aid benefits to the donor has been observed negatively and so discouraged. The stories above illustrate, however, that the practice of untying aid has created the problems at another level, involving the complexity of improving the performance of aid. As a solution to the problem caused by untying aid, the Japanese government adopted the policy called *Kao No Mieru Enjo* (aid with donor's face) to promote the strong presence of Japan in

¹¹⁶ Interview with Faifale Lāpoa (pseudonym) was conducted at his residence in Apia on June 16, 2002.

recipient countries. In Sāmoa, this policy helped Japan in gaining some recognition from the grassroots recipients (see Chapter 4), but it also resulted in further questions on such practices of aid as promoting donor's name and the significance of untying aid (discussed in 5.5.1.).

5.4. Control of Aid and Sense of Ownership

5.4.1. Grassroots Aid Project and KVA

The importance of local ownership of an aid project has been discussed for more than two decades. While aid donors talk about local ownership, both Wendt and Tone found a sense of ownership lacking among Samoan recipients in their respective studies (Tone 2005; Wendt 2000: 156-157). The Japanese government also talks about the vitality of local ownership, stating its grassroots aid projects require the participation of the recipient community as a way to promote ownership. The effectiveness of this aid practice is ambiguous, however.

According to my survey conducted in this study, grassroots projects have the highest recognition by the recipient communities among all projects funded by Japan's aid (see Chapter 4). A common complaint repeatedly heard, however, was about the involvement of KVA in the projects. KVA is a local consultant firm that monitors grassroots aid projects on behalf of the Embassy of Japan in New Zealand. Grassroots projects are arranged so that Japan provides funds while the recipient community provides manpower and prepares materials for the project. Due to the absence of a Japanese Embassy in Sāmoa, the Embassy in New Zealand entrusts KVA to monitor closely the progress of grassroots projects and procurement of required materials. The recipients of this aid, however, tend to view the KVA as a hindrance to successfully completing the project. Such recipients include Tupe Elēlava, the treasurer of 'Aumea Primary School in the central Savai'i that was awarded Japan's grassroots aid to reconstruct the school building:¹¹⁷

I don't know why KVA came into the project and told us what to do and how to do. We could have done everything on our own. We could have used cheaper timbers for the school since we have a timber company right in our village, but KVA told us

¹¹⁷ Interview with Tupe Elēlava (pseudonym) was conducted at his residence on July 23, 2006.

where and what to buy and checked all the materials we bought. What's most disagreeable is KVA took consultant fee from our funds for school.

The JICA Sāmoa official Natsuo Temaekawa explains the role of KVA in implementing grassroots projects:¹¹⁸

Basically, we provide funds to the recipient, but because the fundamental rule for the grassroots project is for the recipient to undertake everything, the recipient has to budget the funds and get a quotation, and submit receipts for every item they purchased to the Embassy in New Zealand. It's quite a job. So I think it's easier for the recipient if KVA takes over the job.

How do you assess the need of KVA in carrying over a grassroots project?

Actually, no project was done so far without the help of either JICA or KVA. Because this isn't the money you as recipient can use freely, you must obtain the approval from the Embassy even just to write one check. Upon the approval, then, you can finally write a check for the item you obtained the approval for. Since its start, the grassroots aid has basically been operating in this way. JICA used to undertake the job, but now the Embassy entrusts it to KVA considering the overloaded responsibility of JICA. Because we consider KVA is taking over the job that the recipients supposed to do according to the project agreement, the cost for KVA is covered by the awarded funds. If the recipients can do everything by themselves, there is no need for using the KVA.

According to Temaekawa, the grassroots aid recipient at this point is given little choice but to accept the KVA to take over their responsibility.

Due to the strict monitoring by KVA, however, some recipients perceive EU funds as better. The EU has micro-project programs that have helped numerous village level projects including the reconstruction of school buildings similar to Japan's grassroots aid.¹¹⁹ But its operating style is different from that of Japan. The EU program is undertaken under modestly relaxed rules that entrust the vast majority of arrangements to the recipient community. It requires a recipient to cover 25 to 35% of a total value of the project awarded. Payment can be made in any forms including cash, labor, transportation, and materials, which shows the flexibility of a program that

¹¹⁸ Interview with Natsuo Temaekawa (pseudonym) was conducted at a meeting room in the JICA Sāmoa office in Apia on September 28, 2006.

¹¹⁹ According to Raymond Papa'ā (pseudonym), the CEO of the EU Micro-project Program Office in Samoa, this small-scale aid was first implemented in 1995. Since then, it has supported between 50 to 100 projects annually in the economic and social development of Sāmoa at the grassroots level. Interview with Papa'ā was conducted at his office in Apia on October 30, 2006.

accommodates local standards.¹²⁰ Japan's aid, on the other hand, is operated under the rigid rules, not being able to respond to various situations faced by different recipients. Such inflexibility is a common dissatisfaction among the recipients of Japan's aid. As KVA enforces rigid rules, the recipients questioned having the local firm around their awarded projects.¹²¹

Conversely, some Samoan recipients perceive rigorous stewardship as imperative in implementing grassroots project successfully. A local resident of 'Aumea village reported that a few village residents sneakily took timber and other construction materials from the school project site. Knowing such behavior, she believes that the school reconstruction would not have succeeded without KVA being alert to missing materials. Likewise, the principal of Lau'ele'ele Secondary School in northern Savai'i maintains that grassroots project should be placed under some degree of strict monitoring in order to achieve the initial goals.¹²² His school was awarded EU funds for the construction of a school building with eight classrooms, but only six were completed. The principal attributed this to a lack of oversight of the school committee who used money from project funds for communal school affairs activities including drinking beer after meetings.¹²³ The principal said that even with his position at school, it was not easy to control the activity of the committee since they hold the authority over the school affairs. Given that every district school operates under a similar situation, he believes external authoritative figures like KVA to monitor aid projects are beneficial.

The property of aid is misused not only by school committees but also by government figures who sometimes add non-work related stopovers on their aid-related trips to see their families overseas.¹²⁴ The EU Micro-project officer Papa'ā attributes the

¹²⁰ Actually, when visiting the EU micro-project office in Savalalo, Apia, I felt the atmosphere of office was very friendly and localized in a sense that all the employees were Samoans or long time residents of Sāmoa. This contrasts to the JICA Sāmoa office, which was very formal and Japanese even with the presence of several local staff.

¹²¹ Unfortunately, no representative from the KVA was interviewed. The president of this firm rejected my request due to the contract with the Embassy of Japan in New Zealand that restricts their words about their roles in Japan's grassroots aid without permission.

¹²² Interview with the principal of Lau'ele'ele Secondary School (pseudonym) conducted at the school staff room on August 2, 2006.

¹²³ Papa'ā of the EU Micro-project Program also mentioned that *'ai tupe* (misuse of funds) is one of the most popular problems in carrying out the grassroots projects.

¹²⁴ The owner of a local travel agency shared this information with me. Some may not see this as misuse of aid funds as the main flights go to Japan from Sāmoa stop anyway at Australia or New Zealand where their

misuse of aid property to the fact that the recipient has yet to develop a sense of ownership of an aid project. He argues that the grassroots recipients in general perceive the aid funds not as their own money, but still as donor money, so they tend to waive the chance of using the fund wisely. Therefore, a key to achieving the goal of grassroots aid projects is to strengthen the sense of ownership among local stakeholders, said Papa‘ā. The study on the aid funded construction projects in Sāmoa by Tone (2005) also concluded that promoting local ownership is one of the key imperatives for a successful aid project. Japan’s grassroots aid, too, was initially designed to promote a sense of ownership by sharing the responsibility of project with recipient community. Ironically, the idea of sharing responsibility came to entail the involvement of KVA, resulting in distancing the recipient from developing a sense of owning the project.

5.4.2. “Stealing” or Common Property?

While the involvement of KVA is an obstacle from the recipient viewpoint, a hindrance in implementing projects most popularly mentioned by Japanese aid workers in Sāmoa was pilfering. Takeshi Ōumi, the project manager for the Polytechnic reconstruction, reported:

Sāmoa is a safe place but has plenty of sneaky thieves. Not only tools, but they also take anything like nails. The funny thing is, they don’t seem to feel guilty for taking it. Like this guy, it was obvious that he snitched the tool because it disappeared only after he passed the place where the tool was stored. So I told him to bring back the missing tool, then he brought it back without a word, as if nothing happened. I wonder what’s all this? I wonder if frequent stealing is related to the Samoan culture of sharing, and that’s why they don’t see it as pilfering ...I don’t know...

Were there any affects of pilfering on the project?

Because things imported brought from Japan or imported from other countries were stolen and cannot be replaced locally, it definitely affected the construction. Sometimes it was too late to reorder the replacement from Japan because we found out the materials or tools are being stolen when we were about to use them. Pilfering happens in projects in other countries, but not as frequently as over here.

Such a problem at aid project sites is not new, however. In his book entitled *Just Like An Army* (1997), Shiro Chiba, the manager of a construction project in Sāmoa, tells a similar story about missing construction materials. In 1981, Chiba was dispatched to Sāmoa by a

extended families happen to live. Yet, if those stopovers are unnecessary otherwise, then it is considered as misuse.

Japanese construction firm to undertake one of the first projects funded by Japan's grant aid. His project was to construct school buildings for Avele College in Apia and Vaipōuli College in Savai'i. Chiba discusses pilfering in his book:

We were almost on the last stage of the construction. We finally reached this stage after managing the serious lack of materials as if we were skating on thin ice. But we found out that more than half of the rope to sustain the skylight on the ceiling was missing. Actually it was not missing but had been stolen. Why I could say with certainty that it was stolen, because we checked the inventory numbers prior to this. When we were about to use it, we found only the half left. Because the deadline was nearly there, I called for Faifale [Samoa manager] to bring all the workers and ask them about the missing rope. But the result was no one knew about it. ... (Long after the incident, the manager did find the guilty party and said to Mr. Chiba...) I'm sorry that one of my employees stole the material when you were working very hard on the project coming from all the way from Japan." I responded him as if I didn't remember, "Is that right?" But it was the moment that I felt a pride and loyalty of Samoan people represented by Faifale (Chiba 1997: 274).

Faifale had worked for numerous construction projects funded under Japan's grant aid in the 1980s to 1990s. In the interview conducted in 2006, he recalled the frequent pilfering.¹²⁵

Actually, it wasn't the only incident, but the pilfering of tools was happening frequently. I even found the missing tools from our projects were being sold at the local market. I gave my employees a warning about stealing, but some of them just can't help it. I was too ashamed to tell the Japanese that our tools were sold at the market...

Even though Chiba's experience was about 20 years ago, I would think the situation of pilfering in aid projects has not improved significantly.¹²⁶

Stealing of course is not a norm in Sāmoa where people are taught rigorously at home, church, school, and everywhere that stealing is sin. Nevertheless, pilfering is very common everywhere throughout the islands including the YES factory where it is the foremost reason for the termination of employees. One may attribute high frequency of stealing to the Samoan tradition of sharing that provides ambiguous understanding about ownership—mixing up the act of borrowing with that of stealing.¹²⁷ Another possible reason for the frequent pilfering is the tendency of the society to tolerate stealing if its act

¹²⁵ Interview with Faifale Lāpoa (pseudonym) was conducted at his residence in Apia on June 16, 2002.

¹²⁶ Stealing of construction materials was also a serious concern when China was working on the update of Apia Park.

¹²⁷ A long term Samoan resident explained, "in the mind of some Samoan people, it is not stealing but borrowing, they just never return."

is triggered by care, love, and responsibility for the family although it is understood as legally wrongdoing (Reid 1990: 57-58). Yet, frequent pilfering of aid property may be a sign of lack of local ownership. Even though the recipients are participating in implementing the aid projects, because of those projects are externally funded, they have trouble in developing a sense of ownership (Wendt 2000: 157). This supports Bauer's argument on the ineffective system of aid that externally provided resources such as foreign aid hinder the process of building social constituents required for development (Bauer 1976: 103). Apparently, pilfering is not fatal in implementing aid projects; however, the chronic stealing might already have contributed to the delay in improving the quality of aid projects as illustrated in the story of school construction. If so, this area may require some sort of monitoring.

The stories above exemplify some contradictions in relation to control of aid. Control over aid is an issue from top to bottom that may prevent recipients from developing a sense of ownership of aid projects. Japanese donors come from a culture that thinks of itself as strictly disciplined in terms of money and property. A question posed is: shouldn't the donor "let go" of control over aid especially for the grassroots recipient to gain a sense of ownership of aid? In such situations, while supposed to encourage development, aid becomes a source of friction, influencing relationships between donor and recipient.

5.5. Credit to the Donor

5.5.1. A Reality of *Kao No Mieru Enjo* (Aid with Face): Over-Visible Aid

The Samoan Aidscape is a place in which Japan aims to make a good name for itself while struggling to distinguish itself from China in the Samoan mind. It is also where Japan tries to smooth over incidents that cast Samoa-Japan relations in a negative light in both countries. In this sense the lived reality of Aidscape is one of underlying promotions and tensions.

Kao No Mieru Enjo literally means aid whose face (donor's name) can be seen. This policy framework adopted by the Japanese government aims to strengthen the visibility of Japan in contributing to the international community through providing aid. This policy was created primarily as a response to the growing criticism among the Japanese

public that Japan's aid has been faceless as a result of untying aid, which discouraged the involvement of Japanese firms in aid projects. The *Kao No Mieru Enjo* policy therefore seeks to encourage Japanese taxpayers to support the country's diplomatic obligation of providing aid. In other words, the donor government hopes to demonstrate to the Japanese citizens how deeply the recipients appreciate Japan's aid that comes from their tax payments (see also in Chapter 3).

As part of the *Kao No Mieru Enjo* promotion, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) posts special articles on its homepage and sends out a periodical e-mail magazine that reports aid related activities and the reactions of the recipients to awarded projects. Such reports include hand-over ceremonies of grassroots projects, thank you letters from recipient communities, and pictures of big smiles of recipient children, all of which express the gratitude of the recipients to Japan's aid and its founders, the Japanese people (Nanami 2007: 5). The MOFA also created the logo for the ODA as a way of promoting the visibility of Japan's aid. In addition to the national flag, this ODA logo is attached to every item funded under Japan's aid scheme, except the human assistance such as Japanese volunteers and experts.

As Sāmoa has received numerous projects funded by Japan's aid, this ODA logo is seen everywhere in the country. For large-scale donations, such as school building projects funded by the grassroots aid scheme, the logo mark is commonly displayed prominently on the building walls. Even small donations such as audio-visual equipment and individual chairs in a lecture hall at National University of Sāmoa (NUS) all have stickers with the ODA logo attached. Other aid donors such as the EU indicate their funding of projects visually, but their signs are smaller than those of Japan. Visually, these signs helped strengthen the presence of Japan's aid in Sāmoa. Even so, some Japanese may feel shamed by seeing the large logos too often especially when their unharmonious color coordination contrasts with Sāmoa's rural landscape. Then, one may ask: *Why does Japan need to advertise its aid activities?*

In the case of aforementioned Mauga village, located on the northwest of Savai'i, Japan funded the water tanks for every household in the community under the grassroots aid scheme. This helped alleviate a chronic water shortage in their present community water supply system. The donation included 39 water tanks with the capacity of 3,000

gallons to 5,000 gallons, worth SAT\$100,684 (approximately US\$40,500). Every one of the 39 water tanks had a logo mark drawn on the middle of tank body. As the majority of the tanks were installed right next to the household that uses water from the tank, water tanks with the ODA sign are scattered about the village. These advertised water tanks contrast with the local scenery, making one wonder if the village was owned by Japan and why aid could not be anonymous.

The installation of the ODA sign is not clearly mentioned in the contract of grassroots aid projects. Neither, is there a standardized format for the way in which the logo is installed. The JICA Sāmoa official Natsuo Temaekawa describes the installation of the logo:¹²⁸

Basically, for all assistance from Japan or through JICA, the sign is to be installed. So even though it's not clearly mentioned in the contract, we usually directly ask the recipient, "Please, install the logo" when we make the contact. We've never asked them to make it that big, though. We appreciate that, but feel a bit ashamed too, because I'm Japanese...

Some Japanese residing in Sāmoa, on the other hand, tend to perceive the big logo sign in a supportive manner. They rarely take the ways the ODA signs are currently displayed as over-done since they agree that the face of aid donor should be clearly visible. Some even consider that the existing style of promotion is not effective enough so the Japanese government as well as JICA should make further efforts to strengthen the visibility of Japan's aid in Sāmoa and elsewhere. Nevertheless, multitudes of ODA signs have helped promote Japan's visibility to the Samoan recipient. According to my survey conducted in Sāmoa, 86% of the participants mentioned the school building projects as Japan's aid (see Chapter 4).¹²⁹

The recipients of grassroots aid interviewed do not mind having the ODA sign on the donations such as school buildings or water tanks received from Japan. One reason for this is that the signs do not appear as much of a distraction to their eyes as they might to a Japanese visitor. For them, it may be natural that the aid-funded items have the names of donors attached, in a similar sense that many commodities—car, TV, DVD player, and so

¹²⁸ Interview with Natsuo Temaekawa (pseudonym) was conducted at a meeting room in the JICA Sāmoa office in Apia on September 28, 2006.

¹²⁹ The correlation between the size of ODA signs and the level of recognition of project is not identifiable, however.

forth—display the name of brands or companies. Living in an environment where the aid donations are a staple of daily life, the recipients may have grown accustomed to living constructively with the “aid billboards.” Plus, they may not mind having the big aid advertisement if it is in return for receiving the free gifts.

In my visit to Mauga in 2009, three years after the tanks were donated, I observed that the logos on the water tanks had begun to fade, suggesting that the logo will likely disappear completely in the near future if it is not repainted. Without such visibility, the recipients could easily forget Japan, the donor of the project. It denotes the vacuity of the *Kao No Mieru Enjo* effort that only promotes the surface presence of Japan through the visible impact. The *Kao No Mieru Enjo* policy has altered the scenery of Samoan landscape, but has yet to promote the true appreciation of aid in the heart of recipients that Japanese taxpayers wish to receive.

5.5.2. *Malo Saina!*: Japan and China on the Samoan Mental Map

In contrast to the grassroots aid projects, my survey found that the infrastructure projects are not well recognized by the Samoan recipient, despite the large-scale and longer lengths of each project. One possible reason for the low recognition is that these donations have no eye-catching ODA signs. For those infrastructure projects, the presence of Japan is low profile as the ODA sign or the name “Japan” is usually carved obscurely into the plaque attached to the donated buildings.

The low recognition is also attributable to the fact that Samoan recipients often confuse Japan and other donors especially China.¹³⁰ Living in the Aidscape where multiple donors have brought a boom in large-scale building construction, people do not correctly remember the donor for each construction. To Samoan recipients, it is especially difficult to distinguish accurately between things Japanese and things Chinese largely because they look the same in some ways. Firstly, the styles of their projects look the same. Japan provides grassroots aid and volunteers, but its core projects are large-scale infrastructure similar to those of China.¹³¹ Japan has constructed infrastructure

¹³⁰ China in this chapter refers to People’s Republic of China.

¹³¹ China also donates the “soft” aid, sending volunteers and providing scholarships, but those are much smaller in terms of number as compared to that of Japan. The Chinese volunteers include medical doctors and language teachers.

including a hospital, airport, university, and wharf while China has constructed governmental office buildings, upgraded Apia Park, and built the Sports Complex for the 2007 South Pacific Games.

Secondly, Japan and China are both new aid donors to Sāmoa who began providing aid in the 1970s. Japan's began to increase its assistance to Sāmoa in the 1980s while China's aid grew in the 1990s. China has a strong historical connection to Sāmoa from the Chinese laborers imported under the German administration who set down the roots of Chinese descendants in the country. Yet, as an aid donor, China is new. Both Japan and China are geographically distant places that otherwise have little political and economic connections to Sāmoa.

Thirdly, Japanese and Chinese people appear the same, as both groups talk and behave in foreign ways. Although smaller than European-Samoan descendants, a fairly large population of Chinese descendants lives in Sāmoa.¹³² But the vast majority of them do not speak any Chinese language so have a culturally weak tie to China in their daily space. Consequently, China is as foreign as Japan. All these similarities between Japan and China confuse the Samoan recipients in identifying one country from the other.

A key factor for the confusion, however, is the Samoan mental map that is framed upon an ambiguous geography of the two countries. In the Samoan language, *Saina* literally means China or Chinese, but it commonly refers to Asia and Asians as a whole. Some Samoans may think China and Japan are the same country with two names or perceive of Japan as part of China. I could see this confusion in my geography questionnaire among secondary school students.¹³³ Generally speaking, Samoan people make few distinctions between Asian countries. Recently, Korean and Filipino soap operas have become popular and are regularly shown on TV. As they followed the soap

¹³² Most of the Chinese descendants living in Sāmoa are mixed Samoan and Chinese, referred to as *afa Saina* (half Chinese). Recently, a rapidly increasing number of new Chinese residents in the country run businesses including wholesaling, electric appliance stores, sundry goods stores, and restaurants.

¹³³ For this, a brief survey was conducted in geography classes of Year-11 to Year-13 at Vaipouli College, one of the top government secondary schools located in Savai'i. Students were given four choices for the answer to the question: what is the geographical relation between Japan and China? The choices are 1) Japan and China are the same country with two different names; 2) Japan is the name of a district that belongs to China; 3) China is the name of a district that belongs to Japan; and 4) Japan and China are two different countries. In the Year-11 geography class, the students' answers were divided almost equally into the four. As the class level goes up, more students answered correctly. Still, even in the Year-13 class, only a little more than half of the students chose the correct answer.

operas, many Samoans could distinguish between Korean and Filipino drama, but still typically referred to the soaps as *ata Saina* (Chinese movies) regardless of the recognized differences. In this manner, Asian countries appear as one broad cultural entity called *Saina* on the Samoan mental map.¹³⁴

With this mental map, Samoan recipients confuse Japan's aid with Chinese aid. In fact, my survey found that many of the participants mistake Chinese donations as Japan's aid. The most popular infrastructure projects mentioned as "Japan's aid" were the upgrading of Apia Park, building of Swimming Pool and Sports Complex for the South Pacific Olympic Game, and construction of governmental office buildings. All of them were funded by Chinese aid, however. Considering the confusion, Japan's effort on *Kao No Mieru Enjo* needs to figure out an effective way to promote the "correct face" to Samoan recipients.

The Chinese government may have, however, a better tactic to promote its presence in the recipient country than the Japanese government. First of all, China has an embassy in Sāmoa, a geopolitically distant country with the population of little over 187,000. This suggests that the Chinese government attaches importance to their diplomatic relations with Sāmoa. From the embassy, the government puts out various promotion activities to the Samoan public. Such activities include issuing visas to China, awarding scholarships to local residents, broadcasting TV programs that introduce China and its culture and history, issuing commemorative postage stamps featuring the 30th anniversary of the China-Sāmoa diplomatic relations, and inviting influential Samoan figures and business owners to visit China for various purposes.

The TV programs seem to be working fairly effectively especially in bolstering China's image among Sāmoa's intellectuals. As the Chinese programs help to remove some of the preconceived negative images about China, Samoan viewer became less suspicious of China's motives while Japan remains somewhat mysterious. Apparently, the Chinese government has established a well-grounded system of promotion, which

¹³⁴ In Sāmoa, especially in the village, people habitually refer to me as *Saina* even though they know very well that I am Japanese and the proper Samoan term for Japanese is *Iāpani*. Every time my host family mentions something about me to someone outside the family, they refer to me as *Saina*. When I walk around the village, children who do not know my name call me out "*Saina! Saina!*" On many occasions, I tried to correct them, saying that "'*O a'u 'o le Iāpani, 'ese 'ese le atunu'u* (I am Japanese, different country)." In a response, they usually say "*Io, Iāpani, Iāpani* (Yes, Japan, Japan). But in a next minute, they go back to the old habit referring to me as *Saina*."

implies that this donor has a clear vision in providing aid to Sāmoa and other developing countries.

In the interview, Sun Sue, the aid coordinator from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Sāmoa explicitly said that the foremost purpose of Chinese aid to Sāmoa is to ask the government of Sāmoa to continue support the China's One China Policy.¹³⁵ Although China may have some hidden agendas with respect to its aid (Wesley-Smith 2007), the stated purpose is reasonable enough to convince the Samoan recipients. Since the purpose of China's aid is clear, the target of aid projects and the style of promotion seem to be prepared concretely. Chinese aid focuses on large-scale buildings and facilities like the Sports Complex for the South Pacific Games and various government buildings that have visible impacts and strengthen the Chinese presence in the country. In this respect, Chinese aid is implemented strategically while Japan's aid has neither clear goals nor strategy so its promotion appears out of focus.

In terms of Japan-China relations in the context of aid to Sāmoa and the Pacific, Professor Akio Watanabe, the president of the Research Institute for Peace and Security refers to China as Japan's rival (Magick 2005). As this aid specialist perceives, China could become a strong competitor against Japan given the fact that China is the only Asian country that holds the UN Security Council permanent seat and they strongly oppose Japan's bid for the seat. If Japan's aid to Sāmoa is attached to the UN votes, then, the government of Sāmoa will possibly encounter the situation in the future in which they have to choose one prominent donor or the other (see also Chapter 3). Considering the fact that neither donor country has strong connections to Sāmoa aside from the aid, one may ask on what basis this recipient will make that choice.

Such decision-making is, however, improbable for several reasons. Firstly, because China's foremost diplomatic objective in the aid at this point is to promote its One China Policy, China would probably not want to make an enemy out of Japan at the same time

¹³⁵ Interview with Sun Sue (pseudonym) was conducted in the lounge of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Sāmoa located in Vailima, Apia, on October 4, 2006. Besides Sāmoa, six states in the Pacific region support the One China policy, not establishing the official relations with the Republic of China (Taiwan). The six Pacific states are Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, PNG, Tonga, and Vanuatu. The other six states that recognize Taiwan as an independent nation are Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu.

antagonizing Taiwan. Secondly, as of 2007, China still is one of the largest recipients of Japan's aid and also one of most important trading partners of Japan. Thirdly and most critically, considering that Japan's aid in general rarely has any regional strategy, it is unrealistic to think that the Japanese government has any plans to challenge China in providing aid to small-scale recipients like Sāmoa. For those reasons it seems unlikely, that Japan and China would become rivals to win the support from this recipient over their opposing diplomatic agendas. Knowing Japan's no-purpose aid to Sāmoa, Japan's stance on China will probably not alter dramatically even though the Japanese government decided to open its own Embassy in Apia in January 2013 with some plausible intentions.¹³⁶

5.5.3. The Downside of *Kao No Mieru Enjo*

Although they often confuse Japan and China, the majority of residents in Sāmoa recognize Japan as one of the aid donors to their country. In this respect, the *Kao No Mieru Enjo* effort has strengthened the visibility of Japan's aid to the Samoan recipients. Nevertheless, the ultimate target of *Kao No Mieru Enjo* is not the recipient community, but the Japanese taxpayers from whom the Japanese government needs to gain support by emphasizing the effectiveness of Japan's aid. In this context, the recipient community serves as an intermediate medium through which the aid effectiveness is expressed. In other words, the Japanese government uses appreciation from the recipient community to convince the Japanese public to use their hard-earned tax money for carrying on ODA activities. Therefore, the Japanese government dislikes anything that happens in the field that implies thanklessness or malice in respect to Japan's aid. They are particularly sensitive to the mass media when negative incidents involving aid activities are reported widely to the public. Scandal revolving around aid would become fatal since the Japanese taxpayers already have some dark images of ODA due to numerous incidents revealed in the past.¹³⁷ Considering such background, the Japanese government has a

¹³⁶ According to a Press Release, the opening of this Embassy is to advance cooperative relations with Sāmoa in the international arena since Japan places strategic importance on the Asia Pacific region. Sāmoa has been one of the most important partners for Japan's South Pacific diplomacy.

¹³⁷ In the personal interview conducted with Kimio Fujita, the former President of JICA, he said, "a worst scandal is often created by mass media as they pick up small thing and stir it up as a great fuss" (see also

tendency to hide anything that could become a source of scandal related Japan's aid. Having inherited the same stance as a governmental agency, JICA Sāmoa tries to conceal events that could illustrate conflict between Samoan recipients and Japan. One such incident follows.

In 2006, a male JICA volunteer stationed in Apia was attacked by a group of Samoan males who broke into the flat he was renting with other tenants. The intruders probably did not aim at this Japanese volunteer for personal reasons, but they unleashed a fierce attack on him and took valuables from the house. He was found seriously injured by his flat mate who soon took him to a hospital. The details of this incident are not clear since the JICA Sāmoa office concealed this unpleasant incident. According to a volunteer colleague of the victim, the JICA office did not investigate the background of the incident, but instead told the victim as well as all the JICA staff and volunteers not to tell anyone anything about the incident. In response, some of the volunteers stood together and urged the office to conduct further investigation into the safety and security of Japanese residents and reasons why attacks and robberies occur frequently in Apia. Nonetheless, the JICA office quieted them, saying that because the volunteers are representing Japan to the recipients, they must first be concerned about maintaining the good face of their country, Japan, in the recipient country. The JICA office ended this case by sending the injured volunteer back to Japan.

In view of the *Kao No Mieru Enjo* policy the JICA office may have felt the need to keep a tight lid on information about the incident since it could have led to a misunderstanding about the Japan-Sāmoa relation in the context of aid. The Japanese government might have been pressured to stop providing aid to Sāmoa if the public had interpreted this incident as a sign of the recipient's antagonism against the donor Japan. Yet, the attitude of the JICA office towards the incident also implies that JICA is not capable of improving the performance of aid on the spot as they hide such inconvenient truths. Because the JICA office monitors aid projects most closely on the ground, the trustworthiness of their project evaluation may be called into question.

Chapter 2). Interview with Fujita was conducted at the main lobby of the JICA Headquarters in Tōkyo, on June 4, 2007.

Accordingly, credit and good public relations are one of the more important returns the Japanese government expects from aid. This stance reflects Japan's *honne* (real intention) in aiding Sāmoa and confirms that the donor government has no specific agenda aside from promoting its name to the international community. Japan therefore does not want to be repaid with any kind of trouble especially while working on *Kao No Mieru Enjo*—"to show one's face" or, as some might say, "to show the flag." Such performance of aid has shaped the Samoan landscape as a space of billboards advertising Japan's face. In this space, individual misfortunes such as an attack on a Japanese volunteer are considered obstacles to the harmonious relations that Japan is trying to maintain in image and reality. Despite the effort of promoting good face, Japan and China are still confused on the Samoan mental map. These are the lived reality of Samoan Aidscape associated with credit and appreciation.

5.6. The People of Aid: Volunteers and Hosts in the Aidscape

5.6.1. Volunteer Program and Highly Mobile Population

While aid policy is created at national and international levels, aid is implemented by people at the grassroots level who form another layer of the Aidscape, including Japanese volunteers and their local counterparts paired with one another to deliver development assistance. Issues in this human embodiment of aid in Sāmoa concern the mismatch of volunteers with the recipient's needs, their language adequacy, and the number of volunteers dispatched.

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program (JOCV) program was established in 1965 under the jurisdiction of JICA to provide technical assistance through skilled Japanese citizens between the ages of 20 and 39. As of 2009, the program had dispatched approximately 33,600 young Japanese to over 80 developing countries. Similarly, the Senior Volunteer program was started in 1996 to dispatch experienced citizens between the ages of 40 and 69, with skills in various fields for technical assistance. Both programs aim to support the socio-economic development of recipient countries at the grassroots level.

The motivations of volunteers for the participation in programs vary, though one of the popular motives is that this volunteer program provides an opportunity to live and

work abroad with a modest amount of funding. In general, each JOCV volunteer is entitled to receive an advance allowance of about US \$4,000 for preparation, a reasonable monthly living allowance in the field, and a reserve fund of about US\$24,000 for the restart after returning home. In the case of Sāmoa, the monthly allowance for one volunteer is about SAT\$1,000 (about US\$400), which is equivalent to a monthly salary of supervisor level at private companies and of senior assistant level at public schools. Although the residential space for volunteers is supposed to be provided by the recipient community, in reality, it is largely funded by the JICA Sāmoa office mainly for security reasons. The Senior Volunteer program provides participants with similar funds in addition to the privilege that they can bring their spouse with the funds provided by JICA to their mission.

When looked at it from this angle, participating in the volunteer program has its advantages. The reserve fund of US\$24,000 is quite appealing to many participants, fresh graduates in particular, especially considering the bleak employment situation in today's Japan. In fact, in my survey conducted with JOCV volunteers in Sāmoa, one third of the participants responded that the reserve fund is the key determinant factor for their participation in the volunteer program. On the other hand, another one third said that they would join the program regardless of the financial support. Sachiko Ureshi, a mathematic teacher, said:

*When I was 16, an ex-JOCV came to our high school, and presented her experiences as overseas volunteer. Her exciting story opened my eyes to the new world and since, I've been looking forward to joining the JOCV. As soon as I graduated from high school I applied for the program, but I was told to reapply after college since I was too young and didn't have many skills. I went to college and applied again on my graduation. So I was very happy when I finally got this opportunity last year!*¹³⁸

While the program sounds attractive, volunteer missions in Sāmoa are not always stimulating and rewarding, but sometimes disappointing and culturally shocking.¹³⁹

A common disappointment experienced by the JOCV in Sāmoa is the mismatch of recipient's needs and volunteer's skills. This makes the volunteer an ineffective laborer and sometimes a useless resource for the project to which he or she is assigned. Otoko

¹³⁸ Interview with Sachiko Ureshi (pseudonym) was conducted at my room at the host family in Savai'i on July 15, 2006.

¹³⁹ This may be true in any volunteer programs worldwide, not only the JOCV program in Sāmoa.

Mae, a science teacher, for example, found no laboratory and experimental equipment at the assigned school, although conducting laboratory exercises was her main task according to the request submitted by the school.¹⁴⁰ Instead of teaching laboratory, she was requested to teach all science classes to cover the duty of the only science teacher who had resigned prior to her arrival. Without the preparation and guidance, handling the unexpected assignment was difficult.

Seibi Kuruma was dispatched to a local vocational training school to strengthen programs in the field of automobile mechanical engineering, but upon the arrival, he found out that his assigned school did not even have a department or a curriculum to conduct classes, as per the request made. In the face of disappointment, Kuruma tried to start the department of automobile engineering; however, the school principal repeatedly rejected his proposal due to insufficient funds. So Kuruma had to shift the focus of lessons from the fairly costly automobile to affordable small agricultural machines, although agricultural machinery was not the area of his specialty.

Midori Kango, a registered nurse, recalls that her supervisors repeatedly told her she was not the kind of human resource the hospital had requested. The mismatching of their needs and her specialty was a very unpleasant encounter in the field that wounded her pride as an experienced registered nurse. These three volunteers eventually managed to adapt to difficult situations, but many volunteers could not overcome the challenges and ended up giving up their missions. Such mismatches may not be unique to the JOCV program but are a common concern among any volunteer programs.¹⁴¹ Still, all the JOCV volunteers interviewed attribute the mismatching to the current process of evaluating the needs of recipients in accepting requests.

According to the report MOFA published (2002), one vital cause for these mismatches are the “insufficient research of the background of such requests.” The contents of a request are decided based on the discussion between a volunteer coordinator and a recipient community. Yet, the process of finalizing the request is often casual, usually involving a short period of time of investigation by the volunteer coordinator who

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Otoko Mae (pseudonym) was conducted at a private residence in Savai'i on August 11, 2006.

¹⁴¹ Dr. John Mayer, a former Peace Corps volunteer in Sāmoa, said that American volunteers, too, encounter similar problems although they do not have the English language barrier (personal communication).

is often without the knowledge required in the field of request to assess the needs of the recipient.

Resident Representative of JICA Sāmoa Office, Junji Ishizuka, on the other hand, attributes the mismatching to the high mobility of Samoan society that disrupts the work environment.¹⁴² In Sāmoa, people constantly move around domestically as well as internationally at a rather fast pace, looking for better opportunities. Because people move actively, the manpower situation of work places changes constantly and quickly. In contrast, the process of requesting a volunteer takes time due largely to the bureaucratic system of Japan's aid through which the JOCV program is implemented. From the time of request to the arrival of the requested volunteer usually takes approximately two years or longer. Therefore, when a volunteer actually arrives in Sāmoa, the needs of the work place may have already shifted resulting in an apparent mismatch.

Furthermore, the high mobility of the recipient society directly affects the JOCV program policy requiring each volunteer to have a Samoan counterpart in the assigned work place for the purpose of transferring the knowledge she/he brings. In the case of Mae, the abovementioned science teacher, her Samoan counterpart had transferred to another school a few weeks before her arrival, expecting a higher salary. Instead of co-teaching the subject and developing new curriculum for strengthening students' understanding, Mae simply became a substitute teacher to take care all the science classes. Similarly, in the case of Noriko Hatake, an agricultural science teacher, her counterpart resigned upon her arrival so she had to teach all classes for six grades while taking care of the school vegetable farm planned for the practical training. Consequently, these volunteers became just manpower to fill the vacuum in human resources without pursuing their task of passing knowledge and skills on to the recipient community.

For this reason, volunteers rarely recognize any effectiveness of volunteers like themselves in the field of human development. This low recognition is not unique to the volunteers in Sāmoa, but JOCV volunteers in general. According to the survey conducted by MOFA, 30% of respondents see the need of Japanese volunteers in Japan's

¹⁴² The interview with Junji Ishizuka was conducted in Japanese at the JICA Sāmoa Office in Apia on July 3, 2006.

aid recipient countries as low (MOFA 2002). The MOFA denies such a view by saying that the volunteers often fail to recognize the need for their activities due to their relatively short period of mission. MOFA asserts that volunteers have been in high demand for the transfer of knowledge and skills so the JOCV is in fact greatly needed by recipient countries (MOFA 2002).

While MOFA emphasizes the demand for Japanese volunteers, my interviews found that some recipients perceive the JOCV as a useful instrument to obtain extra support from JICA. In pursuing the mission, every JOCV is entitled to JICA's financial support. For instance, volunteers can purchase equipment based on their assessment on the need of assigned work place with the consent of their local supervisor. Volunteers can also recommend their colleagues to be awarded JICA scholarships and to participate in overseas training programs. By hosting a volunteer, the recipient community could enhance their opportunities to acquire equipment, scholarships and training opportunities, which they could not otherwise easily obtain through JICA. Manuia Atina'eina, a representative of the NGO Women and Development explained:¹⁴³

We requested JICA for financial support to buy some technical equipment for our grassroots project on income generation. We wanted to purchase weeding tools to rent out for organic nonu farmers. We talked to local JICA personnel to consider our request, but he said it doesn't really match with the objectives of their grassroots aid. We asked him to consider our proposal anyway. But, meanwhile, I heard a story about Japanese volunteer from other NGO reps... it'd be easier to first request JICA for a volunteer and then request funds through the volunteer. So we already submitted the request to JICA and are waiting for their answer.

Similar stories were told also by JOCV volunteers themselves, indicating that the use of volunteer program to obtain extra funds is a grassroots strategy widely practiced in this recipient country. On a different note, according to Kuruma, one of his co-volunteers purchased as much equipment as possible for his work place regardless of the necessity of those items. This volunteer did so as a form of protest against Japan's aid to Sāmoa, which he perceived as a total waste of national taxes that seldom meets the real need of people at grassroots level. He thus spent the aid on local consumption that at least directly benefited the receiving end.

¹⁴³ Interview with Manuia Atina'eina (pseudonym) was conducted at her office in Apia on October 30, 2006.

The high circular mobility of population is an important component of Samoa's MIRAB economy (see Chapter 1). However, as illustrated above, it hinders the development of human resources as far as transferring of knowledge through aid is concerned. The lack of counterparts is not unique to the volunteer program but also is a problem to other aid projects implemented by Japan and by other donors. In fact, JICA Sāmoa Ishizuka commented that one of the most challenging social aspects in implementing projects in Sāmoa is a shortfall in capable human resources to transfer knowledge and technology.¹⁴⁴ Due to the high mobility, the person in charge of aid projects changes frequently, making it difficult to develop an organizational capacity on the recipient side, said Ishizuka. He continues:

To cope with the high mobility, we have shifted the way we see the development of human resources in Sāmoa. Instead of seeing it within the national boundary of Sāmoa, we try to see it regionally. Even though aid-funded trained Samoans are moving to New Zealand or Australia, if we see the Pacific region as a whole, it is still contributing to the development of region. Plus, remittances from those who migrated contribute a lot to Sāmoa's economy. If we see things from such perspective, investing aid in a highly mobile population is not unconstructive.

The high mobility of skilled labor, however, is a serious concern at any work place in Sāmoa (Government of Samoa 2010b: 15-16). The private companies may not share the same view with Ishizuka, however. YES is one of those private companies that suffers from the high turnover of trained employees. For instance, among a large number of employees the company has sent to Japan for training, only a few are still working today. People may migrate for various reasons, but opportunities such as the Samoan Quota scheme that annually grants residential visa in New Zealand for up to 1,100 citizens of Sāmoa attracts some senior employees. Due to this scheme, every year YES loses several employees who have more than ten years of service to the company. The Japanese managers, too, understand that migrating to New Zealand may bring a better future; even so, they cannot hide their disappointments when skilled employees in whom the company has invested for many years, are selected by the Quota and leave the job. Mobility of employees is a challenge for private companies like YES because, according to a Japanese manager, it directly affects profits. It may also affect the implementation of aid projects but they are not for profit so aid can afford to invest in the highly mobile

¹⁴⁴ From the aforementioned interview with Ishizuka.

population. In this regard, the fact that aid is not a profit-making venture, which allows donors to be tolerant of unsatisfactory outcomes, may benefit recipients in some way. Easterly's criticism on the bureaucratic nature of foreign aid harming the recipient society does not apply as far as the development of Samoa's highly mobile population is concerned.

5.6.2. Language Competencies of Volunteers

Lacking counterparts is a problem but lack of the communication tools to pass on that knowledge is an additional problem. Many volunteers interviewed mentioned their lack of proficiency in the Samoan language as a barrier in pursuing their missions. Because Samoan is often used in classrooms especially in rural schools, volunteer teachers experienced some degree of difficulties in communicating with students. Upon their arrival, all the volunteers are required to participate in a Samoan language course as part of the JICA training. Intensive language lessons are conducted every day for three weeks, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The language lessons are followed by practical training, which places each volunteer in a designated Samoan family in a village as a way to practice their Samoan at first hand. After the completion of the training program, volunteers can request JICA for the additional language lessons, which consist of seven hour and half lessons. However, such a short period of language training does not provide enough skills for volunteers to conduct classes effectively using the Samoan language. The special education teacher Tokuko Betsu is an example.

Betsu holds B.A. in special education and has seven years of experience working at schools with children who need special education. Having worked with four local teachers and thirty-two students, she considers the improved speaking of the Samoan language to be the most important task for volunteers working in Sāmoa. So she took the additional language lessons after the regular training and has become more confident about teaching in Samoan. Yet, she is concerned.

Dealing with other teachers was okay, because they managed to understand my broken English, but dealing with children was very difficult. Since they understand things in Samoan best, I have to talk to them in Samoan, but they hardly understood me as my pronunciation in Samoan was unclear. It is very important for the children in Special Ed to learn proper pronunciation. But I can't do it for them. When I think

of this, I wonder whether my speaking to them in Samoan with improper pronunciation is really helping them or not. Sometimes I think that it would be much better if, instead of sending me here, JICA could fund other local teachers to develop a better teaching technique in this field.

Similar to Betsu's experience, many of the volunteer teachers perceive the lack of their Samoan proficiency as a central obstacle in the classroom. However, their Samoan colleagues perceive the hindrance differently.

Samoan colleagues see one of the two major obstacles for Japanese volunteers in pursuing their duties as the lack of English proficiency, not the Samoan language.

Lotolelei Fai'āoga, one of Betsu's co-workers, commented:¹⁴⁵

Her Samoan isn't the matter because she doesn't necessarily talk to children in Samoan or even in English in that matter. What we [local teachers] expected from her was to pass on her teaching techniques to us, because we've been seeing that she has some excellent teaching methods and tools, and we really want to learn that. But because of the language barrier, we can't really communicate, so we have to be patient and learning only from watching over what she does.

Similar to this teacher, members of other recipient communities repeated that the volunteers' lack of English proficiency made communication with them difficult. From their viewpoint, the volunteer program does not effectively allow the transfer of knowledge. One vocal teacher even asked straightforwardly:

*Why does Japan keep sending us the volunteers who don't even speak English?
How can they be of help?*

To answer the first question, JICA Sāmoa Ishizuka said:

If we take the English fluency into a serious consideration, then, we'll have insufficient volunteers to dispatch.

Generally speaking, the level of English proficiency among Japanese is low even though English is one of the five main subjects taught everyday at school throughout the six years of junior-high and high school education. In fact, Japan has the lowest English proficiency in Asia after Laos and Cambodia (Clark 2000). One reason for the low proficiency is the demographic reality that more than 95% of the country's population speak Japanese as the first language. Thus, people have almost no need and no opportunities for speaking in English in daily life once they graduate from school.

¹⁴⁵ The interview with Lotolelei Fai'āoga (pseudonym) was conducted at her office in Apia on July 8, 2003.

Consequently, people forget the English they have learned. In this respect, there will be not enough qualified volunteers to dispatch if a high level of English proficiency is required for volunteer missions. In other words, the JOCV Kuruma said:

The JOCV program doesn't require a high level of English proficiency. That's why it provides a great opportunity with which people from different backgrounds can join the volunteer work.

By setting the level of language proficiency low, JICA can secure the resources to run the volunteer program.

In addition to the lack of English proficiency, some recipients pointed out JOCV's relatively little experiences in their fields which leads to questions relating to the counterpart system. The principal of a Methodist High School Uvae Aupito shared his view on Japanese volunteer teachers.¹⁴⁶

Our Japanese volunteer is doing her best, which we appreciate. But we originally wanted someone much older than she, someone who can match our staff members in terms of age, someone who has longer experience. We've had many volunteers from everywhere, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and Peace Corps. But they are young and have little experience in teaching, so they tend to be unprofessional in many ways. Our Japanese volunteer is young and she has only one or two years of teaching experience in the classroom. With that short experience, what she can offer to her counterpart who has 30 something years of experience in teaching? She can be a good resource to fill our need in the shortage of staff, though...

Similar comments were made by the staff of other recipient schools. It is not impossible, but is difficult for young volunteers with relatively short experiences to give an opinion on teaching techniques to someone who has much longer experience than they. In many cases, volunteers themselves recognize their limitations in teaching techniques so they stay behind and serve simply as manpower rather than trying to pursue their initial mission of transferring knowledge.

A young volunteer Kazuko Dekiru, a mathematics teacher is one of the exceptions. She also has only two years of experience in teaching at cram schools, but according to her Samoan supervisor, she has outstanding teaching methods that opened the eyes of local math teachers. So the local teachers requested JICA to have her conduct a workshop on the improvement of teaching techniques. Later, she was also invited to

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Uvae Aupito (pseudonym) was conducted at his office in the Methodist High School in Apia on October 2, 2006.

other workshops to pass on her teaching techniques. This suggests that the length of teaching experience is not always the matter, but the lack of skills in teaching among the volunteers is a concern for the JOCV program.

As a response to the inexperience of young volunteers, JICA started the Senior Volunteer program that aims to dispatch volunteers with longer more specialized experiences. Yet, the senior volunteers in general also lack the English proficiency necessary for knowledge transfer. So one may question the point of dispatching volunteers who are not equipped to pursue their missions. According to the Representative Resident of JICA Sāmoa Moriya:

I consider the JOCV program has two main objectives. One is technological assistance. I deliberately do not use the term technological transfer. With the purpose of technological assistance, young people with some techniques would have experience of living in a developing country. Such experience would give them an enormous impact on their life course and their future. With the experience, those young people would become great resources of Japan in the future. This is the second objective.

MOFA also states that the secondary objective of JOCV program is for “the development of human resources of Japanese youth and return of the developed resources to Japanese society” (MOFA 2002). Similar benefit is expected by running the Senior Volunteer program as it provides an opportunity for senior citizen to find a purpose of their life around retirement. Given that the initial objective of technological transfer has been rarely achieved, it can be argued that the Japan’s volunteer programs are primarily for Japanese.¹⁴⁷

Whether the JOCV program has been contributing to the Japanese society is also questionable, however. The MOFA report continues:

...some ex-volunteers are struggling to convey their experience back to the society. Difficulty in employment is one example. Some friction occurs when they try to introduce other cultures or diversified values to Japanese society. It indicates that Japanese society is still immature to accept full of ex-volunteers' experience. It is, therefore, necessary to improve understanding of the Japanese people about JOCV programs and promote education of their international understanding, so that Japanese society may properly evaluate experience of ex-volunteers and accept many different views (MOFA 2002).

¹⁴⁷ Other volunteer programs like Peace Corps have a similar objective as one of their mission goals.

That said, Japan's volunteer programs have yet to achieve the benefit expected either by recipients or the Japanese donor.

5.6.3. A *Honne* of the Request-Based Policy

Generally, under Japan's request-based aid policy, assistance begins with a request from a recipient country. According to MOFA, this policy respects the sovereignty of a recipient country by prioritizing their requests. As part of Japan's aid projects, a volunteer of both JOCV and Senior Volunteer programs will be dispatched based on an official request by the government of a recipient country for the volunteer. The request-based policy found in the field seems to work at a different level, however. A good example can be illustrated with the story of volunteer coordinators for these programs.

Volunteer coordinators in recipient countries work as a mediator between volunteers and recipient communities in the context of development assistance. One of their main duties in the field is to evaluate the effectiveness of volunteers in the recipient community and the need for further assistance. However, my interviews with Japanese volunteers in Sāmoa revealed that some coordinators seemed to have negotiated requests for unnecessary assistance for their own sake.¹⁴⁸ According to the interviewees, the coordinators have tactically asked the recipient communities to continuously accept Japanese volunteers when neither the recipient nor former volunteer saw the need of a replacement. Kuruma, the aforementioned automobile engineer, said:¹⁴⁹

I didn't think my replacement was needed, knowing our school environment where automobile engineers like me can be utilized very little. But my coordinator fairly strongly persuaded me to reconsider my opinion on the replacement in writing a report for JICA. He told me that it's easy to recruit volunteers for automobile engineers but not agricultural mechanics that I suggested, so the requirement for the replacement should be automobile engineers. I could stick to my opinion, because I know the school situation much better than the coordinator. But I didn't. I knew one of my fellow volunteers was in a fairly heated dispute with this coordinator over his replacement, and I didn't want to be in a situation like him, knowing that I still have some time left in Sāmoa, and needed to deal with this coordinator. So I conceded and accepted the coordinator's demand to support his view on my replacement.

¹⁴⁸ Some interviews were conducted officially while others were part of personal conversations with volunteers.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Seibi Kuruma (pseudonym) was conducted in my room in the host family's house on June 4, 2007.

In a similar manner, some volunteers were strongly persuaded by volunteer coordinators to alter their thoughts about their replacements. Kawahara, the aforementioned senior volunteer dispatched to EPC, commented on the continuation of unnecessary assistance.¹⁵⁰

Even after the JICA office told a recipient this would be the last volunteer so there would be no replacement to be sent, when new coordinators came, they asked the recipient to make a new request. They pleaded with the recipient to continue accepting volunteers in order to keep up the numbers of volunteers in Sāmoa, regardless of the conditions of the recipient community. If they don't do that, the number of volunteers will decline, so they are desperate for recruiting new requests. That's why they beg the recipient to make a request, asking them to submit the papers for the request. I personally want them to stop doing it, begging the recipient to accept senior volunteers. That's not right.

Why are they desperate to keep up with the number of volunteers to that extent?

It is because there is a fixed quota of volunteers to be dispatched. JICA Sāmoa has an employment quota and they received the budget in accordance with the quota. Therefore, they have to use up the budget by sending the number of volunteers suited to the budget.

According to Kuruma and Kawahara, the volunteer coordinators are “selling” unnecessary assistance due primarily to the budget-oriented system of Japan’s aid that induces local JICA offices to use up the budget allocated by avoiding a decline in the numbers of volunteers in a recipient country. This opposes to the initial objective of the volunteer programs that aims to help the recipient community to become independent without the assistance. The interviewees also attribute the attitude of the coordinators to the fact that they are hired on a three-year contract by JICA. They are usually reluctant to do anything that might negatively affect their contract renewal. For these reasons, the coordinators work hard to keep up with or even increase the number of volunteers to be dispatched. Regrettably, such performance has had negative impacts on the donor-recipient relationship.

The senior volunteer who was dispatched to one of the EPC offices is an example. One day when he was still new to his post, he was invited, with another senior volunteer consultant from Germany, to a social gathering organized by the EPC staff. After a few

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Denki Kawahara (pseudonym) was conducted in a meeting room in the company to which he was dispatched, on November 24, 2006.

drinks, the chief executive of the EPC office commented frankly to the Japanese senior on the *honno* (real intention) of the particular project:

You know what? We didn't want Japanese any more. But then JICA sent you guys to us, so we reluctantly accepted you. To be honest, we didn't need your help at all.

Because he was looking forward to working with his Samoan colleagues and using his expertise for the development of EPC, such comments were unsettling. Kawahara, who shared this story about his Japanese colleague added:

This is to show how little they [EPC] expect from us, Japan. At EPC, I sensed that all the employees don't like Japanese. I think it's a result of reluctantly accepting volunteers, specialists, and materials imposed by JICA regardless of their will. They accepted Japan's assistance only because it is offered or are asked to accept it. Because of that, instead of favoring Japan, they begin to dislike Japan and treat us, volunteers, unwillingly.

Since these comments based on personal experiences may not represent the view of entire recipient community; still, it suggests that in such cases the unwanted aid has degraded the value of aid and brought down the spirit of Japanese volunteers.

This is a lived reality of Samoan Aidscape constructed through the performance of Japan's aid that is budget-oriented, request-based, and not strategic. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Japanese government provides aid to Sāmoa without having clear policy guidelines because its aim is partly to utilize the allocated ODA budget. Implementation of aid projects is therefore fairly random based on the recipient's request. Yet, the request-based policy can also be distorted as stories above attest. This budget-oriented, non-strategy aid has sometimes resulted in unnecessary aid that created an environment in which Samoan recipients take the development assistance for granted and feel obligated to accept it. Many informants actually indicated that Sāmoa accepts Japan's aid primarily because it is freely offered, implying their low recognition of the indispensability of the assistance. Such views among Samoan recipients have led some Japanese specialists and volunteers to conclude that Japan's aid to Sāmoa should end (see Chapter 4). Accordingly, the viewpoints of donor and recipients are interrelated, constituting the fluidity of the Aidscape realities. While the Japanese government has been trying to gain recognition as a good donor from international and domestic audience, ironically, aid as request-based, budget-oriented, and non-strategic has contributed to some unappreciative views of Japan's aid.

5.7. Uneven Geography of Development: The Need for Aid and its Uneven Effects

5.7.1. A Different Reality of Aid Dependency

The lived reality of the Samoan Aidscape was observed in villages benefiting from the structures and effects of aid, but an uneven geography of development remains a vivid dimension of aid in practice. The lived reality of the Aidscape is also one in which modest local successes are observable despite the impossibility of benefits of aid portrayed by some development theories, including aid dependency theory. Aid dependency theory argues that as a result of receiving constant aid, recipients lose their ability to improve by their own hands and become more dependent on aid donors for bettering their own life. When Sāmoa's economy is categorized as MIRAB, this aid recipient country is often viewed as entangled in such aid dependency. My study also has identified some of the aid dependency existing in Sāmoa. In fact, the vast majority of Samoan residents who participated in this study see further need of foreign aid for the development of their country. Yet, Sāmoa's dependency on aid has more mixed results than the theory predicts. The story of Lau'ele'ele Secondary School represents one good example.¹⁵¹

Lau'ele'ele Secondary School, a district school, used to be located on the northern coast of Savai'i. The school had two wooden structured buildings lying along the lagoon, accommodating about 300 students commuting from nearby nine villages. On February 2nd, 1990, Cyclone Ofa devastated the school.¹⁵² The school buildings facing the lagoon experienced the full onslaught of the cyclone, and were completely knocked down by strong winds. Fortunately, no one was injured.

Because they lost the school buildings, teachers and students had to shift their classes to alternative locations. The school committee and teachers decided to seek support from the villages in the district to provide large-size houses to be used as temporary classrooms. The villages agreed to host the classes on a one-term rotation. The principal of Lau'ele'ele Secondary School recalls those days:

¹⁵¹ This story is reconstructed from the interview with the principal of Lau'ele'ele Secondary School (pseudonym) conducted at the school staff room on August 2, 2006.

¹⁵² Cyclone Ofa struck Sāmoa on February 2, 1990, creating large waves and strong winds for a couple of days and causing extensive damage especially along the northern coast of both Upolu and Savai'i (Rearic 1990).

We started our temporary classes in Faleuta village because this village is nearest to our old school location. Usually, we had eight classes using different fale tele (Samoan style large house commonly used for meeting) offered by different families in the village, but sometimes we had to combine classes, because the family had fa'alavelave to use the house. It wasn't easy to conduct classes in that way, because the houses are scattered about the village, so students had to make a dash to get to other locations for next classes. Even on rainy days. It was also difficult time for us teachers too especially in terms of communication, because we didn't have a staff room or any place for us to discuss and work together on school matters and events. For the same reason, we couldn't conduct assembly activities like morning assembly, singing assembly, sports, and so on. We managed to finish terms but it was all patchwork...

Having operated the temporary school for two terms, the teachers realized the limitations they faced and sought assistance for the reconstruction of school on a permanent location. A local business family offered a portion of their land to be used for rebuilding the school for free but funding was needed for the school buildings. To raise the funds, the teachers conducted various fund raising activities including a *fiafia night* (entertainment combined of Samoan music and dance) performed by students. Much time was spent practicing singing and dancing and cutting back on classroom time.

We were so busy back then, between the preparing fiafia and conducting classes. Students too, were very busy, practicing dancing and singing, while catching up with homework. We ended up cutting back a lot of school hours, especially before the show, as we had to decorate the place of performance as well as ourselves. We usually put fiafia nights on Saturdays, rotating the villages in the district. Sometimes we put a show on weekdays when we were asked. As we performed at night, students were all tired on the next day, attending school with absence of mind. But fund raising was quite successful especially since our students' parents donated a lot when we performed at their villages.

Consequently, they managed to raise sufficient funds to put up a simple school building with six classrooms. Although one building was a little cramped to accommodate all students, Lau'ele'ele Secondary School was opened at the new location.

Some time later, a school committee member brought information about the EU micro-project program that funds the construction of school buildings. Straightaway, the school committee and teachers discussed EU funding and decided to apply for the construction of another building. Their application was approved and the construction of a new concrete structured building with six classrooms was undertaken under the EU micro-project program.

Encouraged by the success with this foreign aid, the principal sought other funding opportunities. He wrote a letter to New Zealand High Commission for the installation of water tanks on their school compound. The High Commission provided the funds to install two water tanks under the New Zealand small grant aid scheme. The school continued seeking foreign support for additional school facilities. At the suggestions of the Ministry of Education, in 2005, a Japanese volunteer was dispatched to Lau‘ele‘ele Secondary School to help strengthen the mathematics and science curriculum. Through the volunteer, the school committee and teachers learned about Japan’s grassroots grant aid, and applied for funds for the reconstruction of school building they put up after the cyclone of the early 1990s.¹⁵³

In the view of dependency theory, this school appears to have become more dependent on foreign aid than ever. The principal, however, commented on the aid dependency theory as it relates to his school.

How do you see such argument that points out the loss of ability of recipients to improve by their own hands as a result of receiving successive aid?

It’s true. We could improve our school by our own hands, but now we depend on aid to build school facilities. We could do fund raising again but we depend on other people because it’s easy. It’s easy, because we don’t need to spend so much time on practicing dance, preparing for fiafia, and cutting back class hours. It’s true that we are losing our ability to do so, but think about all the hardships we’ve been through; I think it’s okay to depend on the extra support. It’s a little help for us, especially for students as they can concentrate on schoolwork instead of dancing for raising funds.

This principal, like Samoan economist Salele, sees continued or additional aid as a bonus (see Chapter 4). He was not discouraged when Japan’s grassroots aid was not forthcoming and planned to continue looking for alternative funding opportunities to improve the school facilities.

The story of Lau‘ele‘ele Secondary School illustrates that the aid dependency at the grassroots level is not a monochrome symptom of receiving consecutive aid, but is a multipronged reaction to extra support in the process of development. The teachers came to rely on external support more than their own efforts. Foreign aid, at the same time, was a means of improving the school environment without the sacrifice of students. In

¹⁵³At the time of the interview in 2006, the principal and school committee were waiting for grassroots grant aid from Japan for which they had applied in 2005. The following year, 2007, they found out their application was not selected as the funds for that fiscal year were allocated to the projects proposed by other grassroots communities.

this context, dependency and development can be seen as coexisting in the same space. Aid does promote the dependency but may have a positive impact on development on the ground. In such cases, small successes are observable on the local scale where leaders look to project funding as a way to improve their facilities. If Japan is not the funder, another donor may be. The lived reality of grassroots in the Samoan Aidscape is a scene where people proudly point to improvements they made with aid.

5.7.2. The Fragmented Aidscape of Uneven Development

In Sāmoa, almost all large-scale infrastructures including hospitals, airports, ferry ports, roads, and markets were built with the support of foreign aid. Some of these projects, however, seem to have created an uneven geography of development. Some much-needed infrastructural improvements are not happening, as seen in the case of Māli‘oli‘o River in Savai‘i.

The Māli‘oli‘o River runs from the country’s highest mountain Mt. Silisili through a district northwest in Savai‘i that consists of three villages including Samalaeulu. The main road of Savai‘i (Fig. 5.1) veers from the coast and goes inland to these villages where the residents use it as an access to schools, churches, and nearby stores.¹⁵⁴ This road is maintained relatively well but has a fundamental problem at places such as Samalaeulu where it crosses the Māli‘oli‘o River. The Māli‘oli‘o River is usually dry, but flash floods during the rainy season cut off vehicle access to the main road at the deep ford. When it rains heavily, the river becomes impassable even on foot (Fig. 5.2). The flash flooding of the river affects not only on the main road, but also on nearby work roads leading to village plantations, which also become impassible (Government of Samoa 2007). Flooding usually subsides on the same day or in a couple of days, but occasionally continues for a week or longer. The loss of access to the main road and work roads severely impacts people’s mobility and daily lives.

When the Māli‘oli‘o River is flooded, the residents of the districts north of the River must take the main road in the counterclockwise direction to travel southward in order to go to Salelologa to catch the interisland ferry or reach the national hospital in Tuasivi.

¹⁵⁴The Vai‘a‘ata road, which goes through the southern part of the district, would be an alternative route for the main road if it were better maintained (Government of Samoa 2007). As of 2009, this road is only sealed as far as Patamea, a village next to Samalaeulu.

Figure 5.1. Road Map of Savai‘i

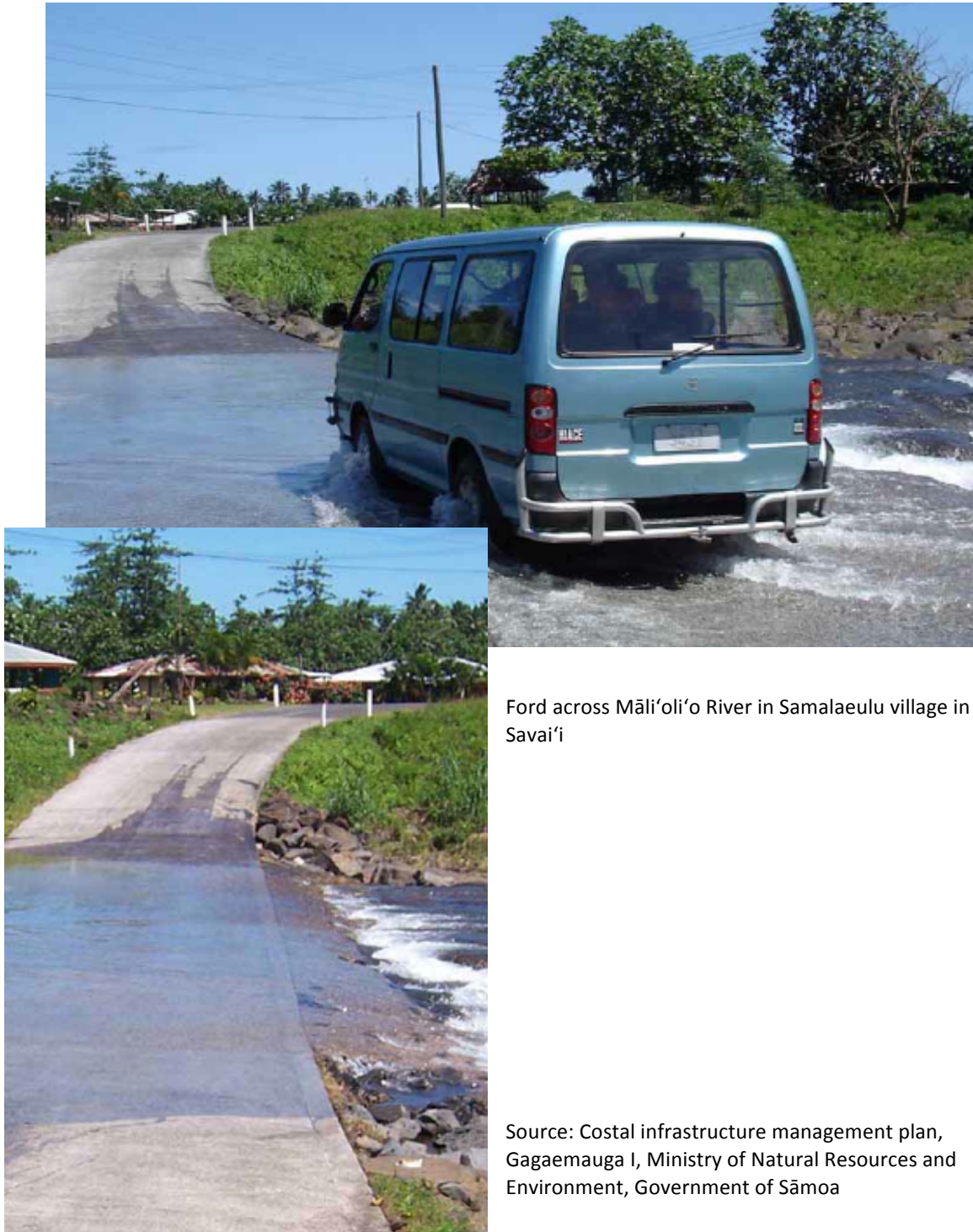


Source: ADB, Country Partnership Strategy Samoa (2008)

Taking this route takes much longer time, but people have no alternative means.¹⁵⁵ In this geography of Savai‘i, flooding of the Māli‘oli‘o River became a serious problem especially when other rivers are also flooded, completely cutting off the access to the main road. In 2005, Sāmoa experienced severe flooding that severely damaged island infrastructure (Government of Samoa 2006b). During this time, the Māli‘oli‘o River flooded for a few weeks. Similarly, other rivers in the western Savai‘i were also flooding, causing many residents to be stranded between the inundated rivers. No delivery trucks could come to village shops in this district during the flood because all of them come from either Apia or Salelologa. So the major daily necessities at village shops including sugar, salt, flour, rice, oil, milk, diapers, and tinned fish were gone by the end

¹⁵⁵ Taking this main road to drive around Savai‘i takes about three to four hours depending on the speed and the familiarity with the road. In addition to the interisland ferry, planes run by local companies fly between the two islands. Yet, considering the high cost of airfares, the ferry is the main source of public transportation for most Savai‘i residents.

Figure 5.2. Māli'oli'o River



Ford across Māli'oli'o River in Samalaeulu village in Savai'i

Source: Costal infrastructure management plan, Gagaemauga I, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Government of Sāmoa

of the second week. This phenomenon has been a problem for nearby residents for years.¹⁵⁶

The aforementioned CEO of Ministry of Works, Transport, and Infrastructure Va‘aelua recognizes the problem of infrastructure with fords of such rivers as the Māli‘oli‘o River.¹⁵⁷ In the interview, he said:

The plan has already been approved for the construction of the bridge, to cover Samalaeulu and other places in Savai‘i, but the only hold up is lack of funding.

As this CEO says, the improvement of the Māli‘oli‘o River seems to have been in the government’s development plan.

In 2007, the construction of bridge over the river was again proposed as part of the Coastal Infrastructure Management Plan co-signed by the district representatives and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. As of 2012, the bridge construction has not begun, however. It indicates the possibility that the delay of bridge construction is more than lack of funding especially considering the fact that Sāmoa has been receiving a large amount of aid from various donors for many years.

In recent years, the top priority of the government in terms of infrastructure projects seems to have been the construction of large-scale governmental facilities around Apia. Those projects include a modern sports complex with the aquatic center at Faleata for the 2007 South Pacific Games and a Police Headquarters building on Beach Road in addition to government offices and conference buildings in town. Given the fact that all of them are multi-million tala projects funded by foreign aid, the lack of funding is not a persuasive reason for not constructing a single bridge, which might cost less than a million. In point of fact, the government did fix the roads and bridges in Apia that led to the main venue of the 2007 South Pacific Games within a very short period of time as part of preparation for hosting an international event. The CEO says,

We have no choice but to fix all the roads that link to the Game facilities. That’s our priority at the moment, so others are for the second step.

¹⁵⁶ In his book, the aforementioned Japanese contractor Chiba wrote about adventures on the overflowing Māli‘oli‘o River in 1981.

¹⁵⁷ Interview with the CEO Va‘aelua was conducted at his office at the Ministry of Works, Transport, and Infrastructure in Apia on November 3, 2006.

His comment implies that although the government may be financially able to construct bridges, but need of fixing the rural infrastructures like the road connected to the Māli‘oli‘o River is not seen as immediate. Unfortunately, the reality of aid allocation may not match the government’s stated developmental goal of providing a better quality of life for “every” Samoan (see Chapter 4).

Such uneven allocation of aid can be interpreted as a sign of lacking accountability by the recipient government. The country’s aid decision makers are aware of the chronic flooding of the Māli‘oli‘o River and associated problems; but a bridge over the river has not been constructed. People in Savai‘i, on the other hand, attribute the delay in development projects on their island to the lack of political influence. They often comment on the absence of influential politicians originating from their districts to lobby the government to allocate more aid projects on Savai‘i. Proving such statements is beyond the scope of this study; yet, I was informed that some politicians exercise influence over the allocation of aid projects. In an interview, the JICA Sāmoa official Temaekawa mentioned that his office sometimes receives phone calls from local politicians asking JICA to approve grassroots aid projects in their villages of origin. According to him, those calls become more frequent around the time of national elections, which suggests that development is used as campaign pledge of some Samoan politicians.

The problem with those unfixed rivers is a concern that affects not only the nearby residents, but is a critical drawback that may spoil Sāmoa’s overall plan for development as it cuts off the spatial linkage between infrastructures. Take the development projects in the field of health for example. Japan and other donors have implemented a multitude of projects on the improvement of the national hospitals at Tuasivi and Apia, which include reconstructing hospital buildings, upgrading medical equipment and other facilities, dispatching volunteer doctors and nurses, providing training for local doctors and hospital staff members, and awarding scholarship for local medical students.¹⁵⁸ In addition, Japan donated paved roads, an interisland ferry, and reconstructed ferry ports

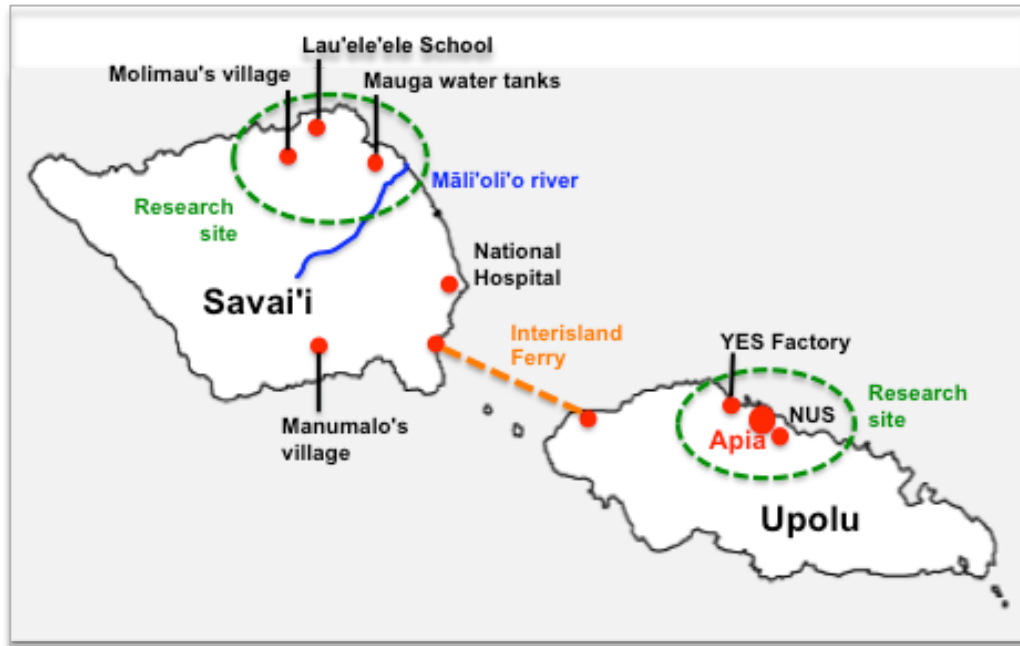
¹⁵⁸ While Japan, Australia, and New Zealand have been the major donors in improving the area of health, China is becoming a leading donor in this field. They are funding various projects including the reconstruction of the national hospital in Apia, the construction of ministerial building for Ministry of Health, and sending volunteer doctors.

under its grant aid scheme, which dramatically improved the mobility of residents especially for the travel between the two islands. With all these infrastructures developed, patients from Samalaeulu, for instance, can take the well-paved road to go to the national hospital in Tuasivi or catch a ferry to go even to the national hospital in Apia for the best medical treatment in the country, and receive the benefit of aid provided to Sāmoa. This benefit is lost when the rivers overflow and block the main road that connects the village with the hospital, the ferry port, and the hospital in Apia. As a result, these infrastructures become spatially fragmented to the Samalaeulu patients who are now stuck between the overflowing rivers and cannot utilize the provided treatments. On this point, the aid projects implemented for the medical improvement may not be considered fully successful. This case of unfixed rivers shows the importance of spatial linkage between the infrastructures to be taken into consideration in the country's overall development plan especially in terms of budget allocation.

In an interview, the aid coordinator Noumea Simi stated that the government carefully considers equal allocation of foreign assistance to each sector (see Chapter 4).¹⁵⁹ The story above indicates that the current allocation of aid for infrastructure construction seems to be unevenly distributed, however. I would consider that upgraded office space for government employees is a need but the projects like Māli'oli'o River should be completed in a timely manner. Perhaps the improvement of the fundamental infrastructure that ensures accessibility across the islands even in the time of floods should be considered before building elaborate government buildings. Without appropriate priorities, the goal of providing a better quality of life for all Samoans is unlikely to be achieved.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Simi was conducted at her office in the government building at Mulivai, Apia on September 26, 2006.

Figure 5.3. Map of Research Sites



Source of base map: Tsukui International, Ltd. 2007.

5.7.3. Uneven Development: A Matter of Life and Death

In Apia, many projects funded by foreign aid are dramatically changing the townscape day by day. Especially around the area called Mulinu‘u where the government seems to have gathered buildings and facilities for governmental institutions and affairs, the scenery has altered considerably within last several years. The building of the Prime Ministers’ Office is eye-catching, representing one of tallest buildings in the country while the Ministry of Law and Court is a magnificent colonial style building for their new courthouse, resembling European architecture. Currently, another high-rise building funded by Chinese aid is under construction, which will accommodate the Ministry of Finance office spaces. Viewing the fast pace change of this area and looking at these modern buildings, the standard of medical service in this country comes to mind, and calls into question Samoa’s further need for aid and the ways in which it is to improve the quality of life.

The story of Molimau, who died from cancer at age of 62 in 2008, illustrates the meaning of life and death in a least developed country.

Molimau was a farmer living in a remote village in Savai'i with his wife and two sons (Fig. 5.3. Map of Research Sites). One late afternoon, while cleaning the yard with a chainsaw, he fell to the ground from the ladder and broke his left arm. The family immediately took him to the national and only hospital on the island, which is a one-hour drive from their village. While driving, the family thanked God for providing them their own car because no public transportation is available after 4:30 pm in their area. They were also thankful that it was not heavily raining; otherwise, their old car might have been stuck in the flooded Mali'oli'o River. Unfortunately, it was one of those nights that no on-call doctor was available since only two doctors regularly station at this hospital. The family spent the night at the hospital and decided to take Molimau to the main national hospital in Apia the next day.

Their trip began at 4:00 am and caught the first interisland ferry sail to Upolu. They reached the emergency room at the national hospital about 9:00 am but again no doctor was readily available. Molimau developed high fever as he travelled far and waited long. When a doctor finally arrived in the afternoon, he only prescribed some medications. Because this doctor did not have sufficient experience in anesthesiology to estimate the patient's reaction, he doctor wished to get a second opinion. This did not happen for a few days and by then, Molimau's condition had worsened. The decisions that needed to be made were critical but two and half weeks later, the doctors finally decided to send Molimau to New Zealand for treatment. Molimau received government's funding for his medical treatment in New Zealand and the cost of travel, but the family needed to seek support from extended family for his wife's airfare to accompany Molimau.

Molimau was treated at an established hospital in the south Auckland. Six months later, Molimau's arm was amputated because it was not recovering successfully. Soon after, Molimau was diagnosed with bone marrow cancer in the third stage. He stayed in New Zealand for another six months for the cancer treatment funded also by the government. After 12 months of hospitalization in New Zealand, the government funding was cut. Molimau needed frequent blood transfusions and wanted to stay in New Zealand, but this was not financially feasible as treatments cost over NZ\$2,000 a day. Molimau had no choice but to return to Savai'i.

Molimau and his family were happy to be together again but after the first week, their struggles began. Molimau needed constant blood transfusions, but no blood bank exists at the hospital in Savai'i. So the family needed to find their own donors, which was not an easy task. Some people were fearful of donating blood and hospital policy allowed only males in their 30s to 40s to donate blood in addition to the condition that potential donors had to have matching blood types.

As is the practice in Sāmoa, nurses provided medical care but the family was responsible for monitoring the patient 24 hours a day and preparing his food, bed and bath. This is particularly difficult for small families with working members who had to take turns staying in the hospital, preparing food at home to take, looking for potential blood donors while working.

Despite the family's cordial care and effort, Molimau passed away in 2008, four months after he was sent back to Sāmoa. Until his last days, Molimau did not give up

on the hope to go back to New Zealand for a better medical treatment, but his wish did not come true.

As I witnessed this family's struggle, I was disappointed at the standard of medical care in Sāmoa that does not match that of developed countries. I could not stop thinking if Molimau were in Japan or in the U.S., he could have lived much longer or at least could have received a much better treatment. A *palagi* friend who is a long time resident of Sāmoa said that Molimau's family may have been more accepting of the realities of Sāmoa's medical care, although they were upset about the loss of the father. Through years of living in Sāmoa, she realized that the Samoans, especially in rural villages, are good at accepting the situations in which they have little choice. People must reconcile themselves to living in environments with limited opportunities. In the cases like Molimau's, people may be thankful that he was at least given the chance to go to New Zealand for better medical treatment. The story of Molimau brought me the realization of the standard of life in developing countries such as Sāmoa in spite of flashy changes happening daily on the surface of the Aidscape.

Improved medical care for all Samoans continues to be a challenge in spite of a considerable amount of aid provided from various donors including Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and China. In early 2012, the construction of building for the Ministry of Health financed by Chinese aid was completed while the reconstruction of national hospital buildings in Apia also funded by Chinese aid was underway. Despite these infrastructure projects, there are still some days when no doctor is available in the night at the national hospital in Savai'i. The shortage of doctors continues to put pressure on both doctors and their patients. More private clinics have emerged in recent years but they are expensive and not a viable option for some Samoans.¹⁶⁰ Health issues are controversial; yet, are only one example of the complexities of Samoan Aidscape and multidimensional impacts brought by foreign aid.

The story of Lau'ele'ele School, Māli'oli'o River, and Molimau uncovered other dimensions of grassroots realities of Samoan Aidscape lived by different groups of aid recipients. These realities revealed that aid is a source of dependency and uneven development, but at the same time it could also provide an access to needed infrastructures including classroom facility, bridge, hospital, and an advanced medical treatment for bettering the everyday life of residents, once an appropriate development plan is put in place.

¹⁶⁰ These private clinics commonly charge a range of SAT\$30 to \$50 per visit while the charge at national hospitals is usually SAT\$5.

5.8. Conclusion

The four areas of issues explored in this chapter examined ways in which Japan's foreign aid to Sāmoa is situated within the space of everyday life on the Samoan Aidscape. Control is contested from top to bottom, Japan's good name is promoted on the landscape and in the media, volunteers and hosts have different perspectives, and improvements do and do not happen in woefully uneven ways. These issues constitute the lived reality of the Samoan Aidscape.

The government of Sāmoa is recognized by donors for having good governance and being accountable for handling aid projects (see Chapter 4). Yet, the rationale for government's allocation of aid is sometimes dubious and raises questions about whether or not aid helps to achieve the country's developmental goals. This finding supports the argument by Bauer and Easterly that free gifts such as foreign aid undermine incentives to build the state accountability, often resulting in misallocation of resources. Because bilateral aid is a government-to-government subsidy, it allows the recipient government to determine the needs of the country from their perspective. Unfortunately, the needs determined from the government's perspective may not be the same as that of villagers at the grass root levels. As seen in the case of Māli'oli'o River, the government has delayed the implementation of an eagerly awaited project that directly affects the mobility of nearby residents. Such an attitude of the government can be interpreted as their low level of accountability that is rooted in the assumption that donors would continue providing aid, as discussed by Hinecke et al (2008: 65-66). If so, the popular viewpoint that aid as free income promotes dependency, is applicable to Sāmoa.

The chapter examined how some policies of Japan's aid have affected on the delivery of aid at grassroots level. The policy of untying aid has restored the selection of suppliers to the government of Sāmoa, which helped reduce the maintenance cost of aid-funded infrastructures. Yet, it has resulted in lowering the standard of infrastructures provided, posing a question of sustainability. Tied aid that discouraged the involvement of private firms has pressured the Japanese government to promote a strong presence of Japan in the recipient countries. This promotion has affected the attitude of JICA who hides the "inconvenient" truth about Japan's aid to Sāmoa. Japan's request-based policy has allowed volunteer coordinators to allocate unnecessary volunteers, which eventually

degraded the value of Japan's assistance. Having received unneeded projects or people, the recipient communities have failed to develop a sense of ownership, which has caused the misuse of aid budget and pilfering of project materials.

A constructive effect of bureaucratic aid was also found on the ground. Sāmoa's highly mobile population has been a challenge in implementing aid projects and transferring knowledge through the projects. Nevertheless, because aid does not seek profit, it can continue investigating on the high mobile population who may not bring an expected result for the human resource development of Sāmoa. Such investment may contribute to Sāmoa's economy when migrated Samoans with skill gained through aid funded project, send more remittances back home.

Accordingly, my grassroots observations illustrated the complex lived space of Samoan Aidscape in which desires and thoughts of diverse aid actors are intricately intertwined at various levels and all parties try to reap as much benefit as possible out of aid. At the international and national level, foreign aid plays political, economic, and diplomatic roles, but for the grassroots participants, aid is also an opportunity to live abroad, a chance to elevate one's socio-economic position, an opportunity to learn new skill and knowledge, a way to gain extra support and much more. Because the impacts of aid are multidimensional, the effectiveness of aid cannot be evaluated accurately without a holistic approach that looks at linkages between donor and recipient from different angles.

The last chapter will summarize the diverse viewpoints and multiple realities about Japan's foreign aid to Sāmoa explored in the previous chapters and reexamine the applicability of the five preset ideas about aid dependency to the case of Sāmoa. A review of different *situated knowledge* about aid will support the conclusion that aid dependency and development do coexist in aid recipients like Sāmoa.

CHAPTER 6 AIDSCAPE AND FURTHER

6.1. Goals and Questions of This Study

This study charted a postmodern geography of foreign aid through exploring the multiple realities of aid seen from different viewpoints. The main purpose of the study was to examine whether foreign aid is still merely a source of promoting dependency of recipients when the interconnectedness of aid-related activities and their multidimensional impacts are taken into analysis. I have taken Japan's aid to Sāmoa as my case study, investigating different viewpoints of the aid donor Japan and of the recipient Sāmoa, and in light of aid observers. Through different narratives and experiences of aid, the study has looked at the applicability of the preset ideas about Sāmoa's dependency on aid framed with the five popular views of aid dependency. These views identify aid as a tool of control, a source of undermining government's accountability, a hindrance to industrial development, a powerful discourse, and an unstable economic source—all of which further dependency. My original idea of Aidscape, the postmodern notion of multiple realities, and the human geographical concepts of *situated knowledge* and *lifeworld*, were employed to explore the multiplicity of accounts of aid with the MIRAB model that focuses on the overall argument on aid based development and associated dependency. The ultimate goal of this study has been to forge a space for aid studies to embrace both theoretical understandings and empirical realities yet recognize the divergence between the theory and reality of foreign aid.

When I explained the purpose of this study to Sakana Senmon, a Japanese expert to an international organization in the Pacific Islands region, he explained:¹⁶¹

Japan's aid is the government's protocol for international relations. The government prepares projects according to the set national budget and provides aid to respective recipient countries. In this context, the foremost mission of JICA people is to carry over the budget-oriented projects without any slips. Therefore, they know little about what's actually going on in Sāmoa even if they say something plausible. Samoan recipients, on the other hand, as they rarely see political implications of Japan's aid, only say thank you Japan for giving them many things. Because they all are seeing

¹⁶¹ Interview with Sakana Senmon (pseudonym) was conducted on October 29, 2006 at his office in Apia. He served as a fishery specialist to the Pacific Islands region for one of the United Nations' organizations for over 30 years.

the aid at different levels, there of course is a gap. So what's the point of conducting the research to link such obvious gap?

As Senmon commented, the disjunctive aid realities this study explored may simply be a natural product of seeing foreign aid from different angles by a variety of informants. Japanese donors, Samoan recipients, and aid observers frame the roles of Japan's aid to Sāmoa differently according to their respective cultural and epistemological standpoints. In this regard, one may question whether the expected outcomes of this research still contribute to our understanding of foreign aid, as Senmon implied.

The value of this study, however, is its straightforward examination of the diverging viewpoints, which previous studies of foreign aid have underrated. Even if the divergence in seeing aid realities is obvious, exploring dissimilar viewpoints is still crucial to understand especially the impacts of aid that may seem unthinkable, foreign, and unrelated to particular perspectives and situations. Without recognizing the “unexpected” impacts of aid, one cannot make a fair overall judgment of aid effectiveness. Therefore, the findings of this study can further our understanding of aid through considering multiple viewpoints.

6.2. Methodological Endeavor

This dissertation attempted to explore the complexity of a space produced by foreign aid and the partiality of the reality of aid seen from particular viewpoints. Its fundamental idea is similar to how John Isbister (1998: 59) describes the underlying problem of trying to make sense a variety of development theories by comparing society to a ball of tangled string. Because the string is tangled, the ball has no coherent pattern or way to adequately describe its interconnectedness and meanings. Cutting a cross section through the ball to describe the pattern of the flat, cut surface may be one way of analyzing this ball. Yet, the ball can be cut at any number of different angles and displays different patterns for different explanations. All the explanations may be true, but they are only part of the truth of the complexity of the ball of string. The same problem occurs when one tries to describe the complexity of the social space produced by foreign aid. Many studies with different approaches have tried to explain why poverty still remains despite the injection of considerable amounts of aid. All explanations provide insights; yet, are partial.

To tackle such partiality, I centrally employed my original idea of Aidscape, the postmodern notion of multiple realities, and geographic concepts of *situated knowledge* and *lifeworld* to frame this dissertation as a collection of overlapping but disjunctive realities of Japan's aid to Sāmoa seen from different viewpoints. I used these conceptual frameworks as I came to realize through my field experience that knowledge is not singular but plural within cultures, languages, and social spaces. Though foreign aid is borne of a modernist assumption about a place and people evolving in a uniform way, I found only postmodern notions of multiple realities and partial truths could make academic sense to my research findings.

In the field, I employed a variety of methods including interviews with government officials, aid agent officials, experts and volunteers, and grassroots participants in Sāmoa and in Japan. Through an ethnographical approach and participant observation, I observed the *lifeworld* of both urban and rural families in Sāmoa during the eight-month fieldwork in 2006. I also distributed 800 survey sheets to Samoan residents and 20 to Japanese volunteers, and collected 508 and 16 sheets respectively. As a participant observer in Sāmoa, I heard many personal stories that I have not enumerated or quoted directly in this dissertation for ethical reasons. Struggling with ethnographic methods has taught me the limitation and partiality of any research that involves human subjects. Moreover, my physical strength and patience were sometimes challenged to the limit so that further research seemed impossible. I have learned to admit the incompleteness of my study no matter how profoundly I investigate. The concept of *situated knowledge* has accommodated these limitations and the incompleteness I experienced by allowing research to be partial, fragmented, and inconsistent. Such impartiality, fragmentation, and situationality are all part of the Aidscape.

Within the concept of Aidscape, this study has approached Japan's aid to Sāmoa holistically and portrayed an overall picture of this flow of aid in terms of its complex interconnectedness at different levels involving a range of actors with diverse interests, goals, and policies. The concept of Aidscape as Thirdspace has enabled the study to explore the impacts of aid in overlapping realms of physical, mental, and social spaces, including the alternations of Sāmoa's physical landscape and mobility patterns, Japanese and Samoan perceptions about aid and development, and the donor-recipient

relationships between Japan and Sāmoa at international, national and grassroots levels. This concept that challenges binary thinking has allowed the study to investigate dual components of Japan's aid to Sāmoa in terms of its structure and grassroots agency, its practice in history and everyday life, its impact on micro- and macro-economy, its knowable and unimaginable truths, and theory and reality. The lived realities observed in the field differ from imagined realities constructed through theory-driven discussions, but both are important components constituting the Samoan Aidscape.

The notion of multiple realities has given meaning to the divergent understandings of reality of Japan's aid to Sāmoa while the concept of *situated knowledge* has assisted the exploration of different realities about this flow of aid. It has situated Japanese cultural concepts and systems of political economy, Sāmoa's family-oriented principles and socio-cultural practices, and aid observers' discussions as key points of reference. The concept of *lifeworld*, on the other hand, allowed an exploration of grassroots meanings of aid and development embedded in the everyday life of Samoan recipients and Japanese volunteers. Through these conceptual frameworks, the study has explored the multidimensional impacts of Japan's aid to Sāmoa and concluded that foreign aid has done more than furthering Sāmoa's dependency on aid. The next section reviews the different stories and viewpoints about Japan's aid to Sāmoa and development explored in this study.

6.3. *Situated Knowledge* and Multiple Realities of Japan's Aid to Sāmoa

6.3.1. Realities of Japan's Aid to Sāmoa Seen from Japanese Viewpoints

My review of the Japanese viewpoints looked closely at the history of aid and explored where Japan's *honne* in foreign aid lies. Japan's aid, or ODA as it is more popularly called, was born in the 1940s initially as war reparations to the countries in Southeast Asia and later grew into *keizai kyōryoku* (economic cooperation), which helped rebuild the nation's once devastated economy especially from the 1950s to 1970s. During this period, Japan's aid was 100% tied and often initiated by private firms. Such commercially oriented aid was intensively criticized externally (i.e., OECD and other aid donors) as well as internally (i.e., Japanese taxpayers). This criticism resulted in shifting the direction of Japan's ODA from commercial to diplomatic. Since the 1980s, ODA has

been a necessary diplomatic apparatus for Japan, a nation with very limited natural resources and no military force. The government also disburses diplomatic aid namely *otsukiai enjo* (sociability aid) and *omiyage gaikō* (diplomatic souvenir) for improving foreign relations and Japan's reputation in the international community.

Reviewing the history of Japan's aid revealed the ways in which the Japanese government currently operates ODA. Because Japan's aid was initiated by the Allied administration to serve as war reparation, the government seldom had any strategy or concrete policy in disbursing aid. The tradition of no strategy and no policy continued even during the time aid-funded projects were utilized also for securing the nation's natural resources. It was private firms, rather than the government, initiated these projects. Although the government uses aid for diplomatic purposes, even to the present, Japan has yet to develop any tangible strategy in designing and implementing ODA.

The absence of aid strategy can also be attributed to the Japan's unique system of *kanryō* (bureaucrat) that hinders fundamental change in aid orientation. Developing an effective strategy in aid, for instance, requires specialists and knowledge from various fields including regional geography and geopolitics. However, the Japanese government is unable to recruit required human resources in order to design and implement strategic aid due to educational elitism strongly embedded in the *kanryō* system that eliminates the desirable candidates. As a result, elites with little knowledge about the Pacific region make decisions on Japan's aid to Sāmoa and other Pacific countries. Therefore, this flow of aid cannot be strategic.

Without having a clear strategy and specialists to direct the projects, Japan's aid to Sāmoa is driven primarily by the ODA budget. My interview with the JICA Sāmoa Representative revealed that the number of projects implemented in Sāmoa depended on the aid budget allocated to the Pacific region in the particular fiscal year. Because of the budget-oriented nature, projects were randomly implemented without a careful plan. Such unsystematic selection of projects works conveniently with the request-based policy of Japan's ODA. The former JICA specialist compared this accidental system to the popular game *mogura tataki* (mole whacking), describing the way that the Japanese government takes up projects randomly requested by recipients. Further, in the case of JOCV program in Sāmoa, the number of volunteers dispatched was influenced by the

allocated budget rather than the needs of the recipient. I found that such fiscal budget-oriented nature has reduced Japan's ability to direct aid projects appropriately.

The study has explored the unique epistemology of foreign aid the Japanese have constructed in the course of ODA history. Since Japan joined the world of foreign aid later than other major donors, Japan had to catch up with the Western concepts and principles of aid and shape its ODA to become more like other donors. However, because it was initiated as war compensation, Japan's aid is not predicated on modernization ideas such as Rostow's theory that promotes Third World development through aid for the sake of donors. For the postwar Japanese government, aid was the only way to regain respect from international community and restore the national pride lost with the defeat of WWII. It also allowed Japan to join the Western league of aid donors that dominated the world. Therefore, Japan's ODA has been more reactive than deliberate. With this "catch up to the West" mentality, the Japanese government continues disbursing ODA despite the country's economic crisis. Accordingly, Japanese epistemology of foreign aid is different from that of Western donors.

Situating the Japanese ontology and epistemology of aid as a point of reference, I found that Japan's *honne* in disbursing aid to Sāmoa is as follows. Sāmoa is one of the LDC countries to which Japan can provide aid in such a way as not to divulge anything that could have an adverse effect on Japan's reputation in the international community. This finding may be less than satisfactory for critical aid observers who look for the inherited inequity in power in the donor-recipient relation that induces donor's manipulative use of aid. Yet, these are the realities of Japan's aid to Sāmoa when Japanese viewpoints are considered.

6.3.2. Realities of Development and Aid Seen from Samoan Viewpoints

The study investigated the socio-cultural references employed to frame Samoan understanding of development and aid at the grassroots level. In the context of *fa'aSāmoa* (Samoan ways), the *'āiga* (family or extended family) influences almost every aspect of Samoan life. Within this *'āiga* oriented system, *matai* (chief) are the decision makers for the extended family, but parents hold the most influential position in terms of shaping the developmental path of children regardless of their ages. The traditional

concept of *tausi mātua* (filial piety) teaches Samoans to put parents before themselves and work hard for the desires of parents. This practice is encouraged by the Christian principle of honoring parents as well as the *fa'aSāmoa* principle of *tautua* (service) that guarantee rewards for service provided. In this socio-cultural context, needs and goals of individuals are greatly predisposed by *'āiga* and parents in particular. Consequently, development came to be understood as a means to provide for the betterment of *'āiga*, especially one's parents.

Today, according to the grassroots voice, the foremost need of Samoans especially in village is cash income. They need money primarily for the family to fulfill their socio-cultural and religious obligations including *fa'alavelave* (family events) and *lotu* (church) contributions. As these traditional practices become more capitalistic the needs for cash in Samoan life become imperative, even though people are not starving. The societal change from subsistence to cash economy has affected the way that people frame the goal of bettering the *'āiga*. Therefore, many people especially in the village see development as an opportunity to be more adequately equipped for contributions to *fa'alavelave* and *lotu*, which improve the socio-cultural status of family, particularly of parents, in the community. In other words, at the grassroots, development is seen as an opportunity that provides better access to cash income. My study revealed that stable access to cash income may not improve the living situation of *'āiga* in reality, however. As the story of Yazaki factory women illustrated, wage employment may only temporarily satisfy materialistic desire, but does not necessarily improve the *'āiga* per se without enhancing one's capacity of handling household finance.

The study has applied these grassroots definitions of development to analyze the way in which Samoans view Japan's aid to Sāmoa. According to my survey, Samoan residents recognize Japan as a major aid donor to Sāmoa who helps reconstruct local school buildings. Japan's key projects, large-scale infrastructure development, however, are not well recognized. Although these infrastructure projects including construction of interisland ferry have considerably improved the mobility of local residents, very few see the improvements brought by Japan's aid in their daily lives. The reasons for this divergence in recognition can be attributed to the fact that Japan's aid does not take into consideration the Samoan definition of development. While the grassroots recipients

identify money and wage employment as the foremost need of bettering *‘āiga*—development, Japan’s aid has seldom funded the projects that directly support the improvement of individual households. The grassroots recipients see Japan’s infrastructure aid projects rather as helping the government meet its responsibility to improve infrastructure. These are the realities of Japan’s aid to Sāmoa seen from the viewpoint of grassroots recipients.

This study has also looked at the way in which the government of Sāmoa defines development and the role of Japan’s aid in the country’s development. I collected government viewpoints through interviews with government officials as well as literature. For the government, development means the growth of economy and industry, the improvement of infrastructure, and the advancement of human resources. With this frame of development, the government perceives Japan as a key donor in the country’s infrastructure development. In my interview, the aid coordinator Simi described Samoa’s relationship with Japan in the context of aid as interdependent and mutually beneficial, denying the popular critical view that Japan’s aid to Sāmoa is oriented by resources and diplomacy. According to Simi, the government would like to receive further aid from Japan even after the graduation from LDC in 2014, although Sāmoa is confident in moving forward with less aid.

While the government’s comment lacked a sense of urgency toward aid, my survey results indicated that the vast majority of grassroots recipients definitely see aid as necessary for furthering the country’s development. The study has attributed this gap in seeing the need of aid to the fact that the government and grassroots recipients defined the meanings and priorities of development differently. The government has stated that its main goal of development is to provide a better quality life for every Samoan. Yet, some of the prioritized government projects have little direct impact on improving the daily life of grassroots recipients especially those living outside of Apia. According to my observation, the current priorities of government seemed to have centered on upgrading governmental buildings and facilities before 2014. These projects have rarely helped fulfill the immediate needs of grassroots recipients for development—an opportunity for bettering *‘āiga*. Therefore, the grassroots recipients have a stronger sense that further aid is needed than government. This finding suggests the importance of

taking into consideration the existing disjuncture between national and grassroots levels in the process of development in Sāmoa.

6.3.3. Lifeworld of Samoan Girls

Through studying the *lifeworld* of young Samoan women, the study has revealed that developmental gaps exist in today's Sāmoa. The comparison between Yazaki girls and the bling-bling girls has illustrated how two groups of young women from different socio-economic backgrounds live in the separate spaces of everyday life in Apia, a city of only 20 square miles (60 square kilometers) with a population of about 38,000. The two groups of women all belong to the same cultural, age, and religious group. Yet, differences in socio-economic backgrounds have shaped their patterns of daily life including means of transportation, places to frequent, and ways to celebrate events rather differently, creating an invisible spatial division in their living spaces. Consequently, they have constructed respective *lifeworlds* that rarely overlap. As they live with different *lifeworlds*, they have different meanings and priorities for bettering their lives.

Both groups of women contribute to *fa'alavelave* and *lotu*, and help fulfill the need of parents, performing the duty of a Samoan daughter. The bling-bling girls have learned from parents how to balance their life priorities through negotiating between old and new principles. They contribute to socio-cultural obligations; yet, set the limit so that they can save for their own needs and future. Yazaki girls, on the other hand, spend most part of their earnings for family matters in addition to the loans they have taken out also for the family. As they prioritize the betterment of family, they have little money and opportunities left for their own purposes. The story of Manumalo, who has lived in both lifeworlds, has shed light on a key to achieve a successful developmental path by juggling traditional obligations and one's own life goals. In her case, her determination to achieve a better life and supportive parents underpinned her success. Manumalo, therefore, identified the immediate need of Sāmoa for development as education for parents to be supportive of children in achieving their own life goal. Her story proved that geographical location or family background do not always determine one's life trajectory.

I observed that such dissimilar *lifeworlds* exist not only between women living in Apia but also between men residing in Apia, between people in Apia and rural villages, and between villages in Upolu and Savai'i. The study has suggested the importance of paying sufficient attention to this trend because developmental disjuncture is emerging, not in a big cosmopolitan city, but in Sāmoa, a country with relatively little diversity in terms of ethnicity, class, and religion. This study has confirmed that grassroots approaches such as *lifeworld* are valuable in analyzing different definitions and needs of development embedded in taken-for-granted part of everyday life.

6.3.4. Realities of Aid Imagined by Aid Observers

The study reviewed the reality of Japan's aid to Sāmoa and the Pacific as discussed by aid observers. Their analyses through structuralist and realist viewpoints typically identify Japan's aid as manipulative, serving for donor's economic (the expansion of market), resource (tuna), and diplomatic (Security Council seat, vote at International Whaling Commission (IWC), and the shipment of nuclear waste) interests in the region. In this view, the conditionality of Japan's aid is highlighted when the Japanese government increases aid package at certain times. The government often announces an increase in aid to the Pacific region at regional conferences where they express Japan's diplomatic desire for the UN permanent seat. When Prime Minister Nakasone visited Fiji to announce the suspension of the plan to dump nuclear waste in the Pacific Ocean, he also announced the donation of aid package to the regional institutions. Aside from these announcements, the government often invites fisheries ministries from Japan's aid recipient countries including Pacific nations before IWC meetings where members vote over the moratorium on commercial whaling. Some aid critics including Maclellan (2002), on the other hand, see a sudden decrease in Japan's aid as the Japanese government's way to penalize recipients who did not support Japan's diplomatic agendas. In this manner, critical thinkers suspect hidden agendas in seemingly unusual shifts in aid allocation.

According to the analysis of some aid critics, the Japanese government strikingly increased aid to the Pacific in the late 1970s when the Pacific states gained bargaining power over their marine resources with the establishment of EEZ. Tarte's study (1998a)

indicated that about one-third of the early stage of Japan's aid to the Pacific was fisheries aid, which built infrastructure for the development of region's fisheries industry. Some of the facilities funded by Japan's aid, however, ended up being "white elephants" as they did not carefully consider local need and capacity for maintenance. In contrast, Japan, through fisheries aid, has successfully expanded its tuna fishing ground to the western and central Pacific Ocean where Japan currently catches 70% of a total haul of tuna including skipjack. As a main donor, Japan holds a privileged position of paying a small fishing access fees equivalent to 1~2% of catch value, through fisheries grants aid or technical assistance. Petersen (2006), therefore, argues that if Japan had paid appropriate access fees, countries with substantial levels of Japan's fishing activity would have generated more income through fishing access fees than through Japan's actual fisheries aid. Accordingly, the realities of Japan's aid to the Pacific discussed by aid observers suggest the image of Japan as a manipulative donor who enjoys the buying power of foreign aid.

6.3.5. Honne and Tatemaie Realities

The study has also looked at the ways in which the Japanese government explains Japan's intentions for aiding Sāmoa and the Pacific. The government's official explanations normally include colonial obligation (to Micronesia), diplomatic interests in the votes at international organizations, maritime transportation, and securing fishing access. Especially to Japanese taxpayers, the government emphasizes the importance of aid to the Pacific countries as it eventually brings *kokuetsu* (national benefit) through building good relationships with recipients. This study, however, has revealed that these explanations are *tatemaie* copied from what aid critics said about Japan's motivations in aid. The Japanese government uses the critiques and gives plausible reasons to this flow of aid primarily to convince Japanese citizens who may otherwise disapprove of aiding the Pacific, a region physically and psychologically distant from Japan.

While critical aid studies attribute "true intentions" to Japan's aid, I found that presently, the Japanese government is unable to develop any strategy or concrete policy for aid to the Pacific recipients because of its inflexible *kanryō* system, lack of human resources, and lack of geo-political interest in the region. In other words, Japan seldom

has specific agendas in disbursing aid to Sāmoa or other Pacific countries despite what the Japanese government officially explains.

One exception is Japan's fisheries grant aid to the Pacific region. I found an undeniable level of correlation between fisheries grant aid and fishing access agreements between Japan and Pacific recipients. Such correlation occurs when people in the Japan's fisheries industry lobby the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) to allocate aid to the country where they wish to negotiate fishing access. In fact, fisheries aid was initiated in order to secure Japan's fishing grounds through supporting the development of fisheries industries of aid recipient countries including Pacific Islands. My study, however, argued it is too extreme to conclude that fisheries aid is an evidence of Japan's institutionalized system of aid to manipulate the Pacific recipients.

First of all, given the fact that the government itself lacks knowledge and human resources necessary to develop strategy and objectives of aid to the Pacific, it is difficult to imagine that an individual ministry, MAFF, could develop its own strategy to tactically use fisheries aid to manipulate the Pacific recipients. Secondly, such a conclusion oversimplifies Japan's aid as well as the Pacific Islands. Fisheries aid is only one component of Japan's aid, which is derived from the ODA budget allocated to MAFF, a ministry whose foremost mission is securing food for the nation. Since Japan has a tradition of state subsidization of nation's industries including fisheries, using aid to secure fishing access is reasonable and supported by Japanese taxpayers. For this reason, the government emphasizes the use of fisheries aid to the Pacific for *kokueki*. However, Japan's aid to some Pacific recipients such as Sāmoa is derived more from MOFA, a ministry whose top priority in aid is diplomacy and maintaining Japan's good international reputation. Aside from MOFA and MAFF, other ministries have respective principles in disbursing aid to Sāmoa and to other Pacific countries. Moreover, in contrast to Solomons or Micronesian states, Sāmoa does not have particularly abundant fishing grounds for tuna. In short, the resource-driven viewpoint on Japan's aid is hardly applicable to Sāmoa. Similarly, the diplomacy-oriented viewpoint does not fully elucidate Japan's aid to Sāmoa either. Although Sāmoa is a member of UN, it is not a member of IWC. Unlike some Melanesian and Micronesian states, Sāmoa's maritime territory is not used for Japan's nuclear shipment.

Japan's *honme* in its aid to Sāmoa I have found is best represented by lack of specific interest. Japan began aid to Sāmoa as a result of geographical diversification of ODA allocation pressured by international aid community in the early 1970s. The government selected Sāmoa to be a recipient of Japan's aid in the Pacific following Papua New Guinea most likely because Sāmoa was one of few independent states in the region at that time. Japan continues to aid Sāmoa because Sāmoa is entitled to receive foreign aid according to the UN classification, is politically stable and is able to handle large-scale aid projects, and is a relatively safe place to send Japanese experts and volunteers. As it has few decisive factors to provide aid, Japan also has no definite reason to stop it. It seems unlikely that Japan will withdraw aid from Sāmoa unless some critical events occur in Sāmoa and mass media sensationalize them as scandals in the operation of ODA. Otherwise, Japan will continue disburse aid to Sāmoa even when Sāmoa graduates from a LDC and moves to the status of a Developing Country. Such explanations may be unsatisfactory to the aid observers who try to discover the conspiracy of Japan's aid. Nevertheless, this is the reality of Japan's aid to Sāmoa discovered through situating Japanese concepts and epistemology of aid as a point of reference.

6.3.6. Geographic Scales of Analysis and Epistemology of Foreign Aid

My study revealed that a weakness of frameworks popularly used in critical aid studies is the lack of understanding of the diversity in geography and epistemology of foreign aid. Aid donors like Japan have a distinctive epistemology of foreign aid born out of its unique geography, history, culture, politics, economy, and religion. Many studies, however, have analyzed Japan's aid on the assumption that Japanese have similar epistemologies of aid to Western donors. Although differences also exist in the philosophy of foreign aid among Western donors, their underlying principles are rooted in the modernization theory that rationalizes Western superiority in the process of development and approves the deepening of capitalism in emergent nations. The basic goal of American aid, for instance, is to develop underdeveloped areas by transferring Western scientific knowledge and technology in order to reduce poverty that stimulates anti-American elements including communism and terrorism. Japan's aid, however, is not rooted in such philosophy of modernization as it was initiated as war compensation,

not as an endogenously developed tool of its own advancement. Therefore, the studies based on this assumption often fail to comprehend the *honno* of Japan's aid.

The lack of understanding of epistemological diversity becomes more vulnerable if a study extrapolates from a narrow base of empirical data using an inductive approach. Studies on Japan's aid to the Pacific tend to over-generalize "the Pacific" based on few instances from one part of the region. As a result, they have constructed a kind of reality that is distant from the realities experienced by both Japanese aid actors and Samoan recipients. My study, therefore, concluded that understanding geographical diversity within the region is crucial to accurately analyze the implications of Japan's aid to Sāmoa.

Accordingly, the study has explored the different stories and experiences that constitute multiple realities of Japan's aid to Sāmoa and diverse meanings of aid and development through situating a viewpoint at every geographical unit of analysis. The next section summarizes key features of the Samoan Aidscape discussed in this study.

6.4. Features of the Samoan Aidscape

6.4.1. MIRAB

Sāmoa has been described as a MIRAB economy underpinned by the two nexuses of migration-remittance and aid-bureaucracy. These concepts are important features of the Samoan Aidscape. Sāmoa has constant flows of foreign aid and remittances from migrated relatives, accounting together for about half of Sāmoa's GDP. As in other MIRAB societies, aid to Sāmoa finances a large public sector, which undertakes the vast majority of developmental projects funded by both bilateral and multilateral donors. Almost all large-scale social and economic infrastructures, which have dramatically altered Sāmoa's physical landscape, have been funded by foreign aid. Soft infrastructures including technology, training and school materials, scholarships, and overseas experts and volunteers have been also funded by aid. "Foreign aid" has been part of the everyday life of local residents who see, hear about, and experience it with and without noticing. In addition to the infrastructure mentioned previously, aid contributes to household incomes of people employed in the aid-financed public sector as a form of

salary. Although its size has been reduced, the public sector still is the largest employer in Sāmoa, currently providing one third of the country's wage employment.

Aside from internal migration, overseas migration based remittance has also played a significant role in the everyday life of Sāmoa. Facilitated by the programs like the aforementioned Samoan Quota scheme or other kinds of visa support, people are continuously migrating to New Zealand, Australia, American Sāmoa, and elsewhere, looking primarily for better jobs or educational opportunities to earn money to remit to family back home. Remittances are used for a range of purposes, from major *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* contributions to the payment of household bills or school tuition. Overseas relatives remit not only money but also goods in kind which include vehicles, clothes, and electric appliances. As a consequence of such remittances, many households without stable cash income may possess luxury items such as flat screen TVs or 4WD vehicles. Even though some people predict a decline in overseas remittances, they still account for 20% of GDP on average. In these respects, the study found Sāmoa actually a MIRAB society.

6.4.2. Industrialization

Although Sāmoa is rightly described as MIRAB society, a unique mechanism of economy has developed within the MIRAB framework. This mechanism is oriented by *'āiga* and stimulated by the needs to participate in socio-cultural obligations. The study discovered that this *'āiga* oriented mechanism converts MIRAB into an economic system compatible with industrialization.

Having secured sources for cash income through wage from public sector and remittances, the MIRAB argument predicts that residents of such society would have less incentive to work on marginal productive activities, which would hinder private sector development and industrialization. My study, on the other hand, has found that people's demand for cash income in Sāmoa is greater than what public sector employment and remittance can provide. The increased need of money for *fa'aSāmoa* practices including *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* contributions has motivated people to seek additional sources of household income including wage employment and more overseas migration. The efforts of family members have increased household income, but in many cases it still does not

meet the need for increased spending. In this context, the constant inflow of foreign aid and the remittances currently received do not necessarily discourage people to work or hamper private sector development.

Consequently, Sāmoa has developed a moderate sized private sector, currently providing two thirds of country's wage employment for about 12,000 people. This was achieved fairly by the government's efforts to develop the private sector in accordance with structural adjustment agendas proposed by aid donors including the privatization of state owned enterprises and removal of protective trade policies. The study has found that the latter agenda, the removal of trade barriers, has worked fairly with industrialization. One good example is Yazaki EDS Sāmoa (YES), a Japanese owned wiring factory. This multinational factory was established in Sāmoa in response to the lucrative offers by the government that included various trade exemptions and a supply of cheap labor. Since its establishment, YES has contributed significantly to Sāmoa in terms of the creation of wage employment and development of manufacturing and trade sectors. The presence of foreign investments such as YES contradicted the Dutch-disease theory, which argues that aid as free rent impairs the manufacturing sector and exports through increasing foreign exchange rates and weakening competitiveness. It also challenges the argument that a large aid-funded public sector in MIRAB countries drives up local wage rates and leaves few incentives for private investors. This company's current starting hourly rate is SAT\$2.20, which is lower than that of public servants. Nevertheless, local residents have taken jobs at YES so that they can support their family and parents in particular to fulfill daily needs that include their socio-cultural obligations. The Samoan Aidscape is built upon a MIRAB economy, but it now includes an offshore assembly factory.

Moreover, the study has discovered that the growth of some other industries is also fueled by people's contributions to *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* related activities. As a result of increased need for imported food items used for those socio-cultural occasions, wholesale and retail businesses have expanded dramatically. Similarly, the construction of numerous church buildings funded by *lotu* contributions have helped expand the country's construction industry as well as hardware businesses that import construction materials. The expansion of these industries has been supported also by a set of

government's policies that might be called neoliberal, which reduced trade barriers, as well as by aid-funded projects like Japan's project on expanding Apia wharf to anchor plural vessels.

Remittances from overseas *'āiga* are one of the main sources of income for many families especially the ones with no member with wage employment to meet *fa'alavelave* and *lotu* obligations. As people spend more on the contributions, the need for frequent remittances increases. Consequently, constant remittances have stimulated the growth of money transfer businesses in Sāmoa. Frequent contributions might have caused some financial hardships in livelihood of Samoan household but eventually have helped the development of national economy. In this context, remittances, too, did not necessarily hinder Sāmoa's industrialization.

Accordingly, Sāmoa has developed a moderate level of industries based on MIRAB. A key engine for the growth of industry was Samoan people's commitment to *fa'aSāmoa* practices fueled by their love for the *'āiga*. The study did not investigate the long-term sustainability of such development; yet, it found no sign that Samoans would reduce their degree of involvement in *fa'aSāmoa* practices. Instead, my survey result indicated a high demand for wage employment. This implies that people's further commitment to the highly capitalized socio-cultural obligations, will encourage further expansion of industries, although the growth of economy may slow down at times. This *'āiga*-stimulated development Samoanizes the MIRAB model was found in the Samoan Aidscape.

6.4.3. Psychological Dependency

Dependency can be material or psychological; both types of dependency are discussed by aid observers. This study did not analyze specifically the further material need of foreign aid to Sāmoa but instead looked at different viewpoints on the continued need for aid, constituting the Samoan Aidscape. Through interviews and surveys, I found that both the government and local residents of Sāmoa see aid as necessary for the country's development, although the degree of their senses of urgency differed. These views were interpreted as a sign of psychological dependency. This psychological dependency was attributed to the feeling of uncertainty local residents developed for the

future of their country without aid since the majority of the survey participants have never seen Sāmoa not receiving any foreign assistance. According to my survey, about 85% of Japanese volunteers residing in Sāmoa, on the other hand, do not see the need for further aid in this country except in a few areas of support.

As discussed in the section above, the government's view toward a reduction in aid by 2014 was relatively relaxed. The study interpreted their relaxed view not necessarily as a sign of confidence in progress without external assistance, but as an outcome of experiencing a constant increase in aid by all major donors. Such increases prevented the recipient government from realizing how soon aid to Sāmoa might possibly end completely. In other words, their relaxed view is the reflection of their unconscious dependency on foreign aid with a firm belief of its continuity.

Since the majority of the population has grown up with foreign aid, they have most probably been influenced by the Western-made discourse about development embedded in aid project policies. In fact, my survey results indicated that about the half of respondents see the reason for Japan's aid as the insufficiency of Sāmoa's resources and economic strength. This supports a discourse that emphasizes the necessity of foreign aid to fulfill the lack in developing countries for development. Yet, I did not find concrete evidence for the kind of intellectual dependency that devalues traditional knowledge in comparison to new ideas and methods introduced by aid projects. Acquiring new skills and methods through aid projects would enhance a job opportunity or elevate one's status; therefore, people are willing to learn but reluctant to share what they learn with others. Learning new techniques, however, did not necessarily lessen the value of traditional knowledge because the project participants saw the new ideas as ways to update old methods but still retain the basic principles of old ways. According to the Samoan anthropologist Va'a (2006), this is how Samoans has been maintaining the *fa'aSāmoa* principles in the course of colonialism and development. They compromise old principles with new ideas according to the need, but retain the underlying significance of tradition. In this context, aid recipients do not necessarily belittle their traditional ways even if they depend on aid psychologically for progress.

Compromising is a strength of *fa'aSāmoa* which allows Sāmoa to maintains its uniqueness while the islands are inundated with foreign items and ideas brought by aid

projects, migrated relatives, tourists, and mass media. This strength is an element of the Samoan Aidscape in which what Appadurai calls disjuncture occurs.

6.4.4. Disjuncture

In his study of “–scapes,” Appadurai looks at the increasingly intense flows of people, information, technologies, global capitals, and ideologies that force cultures and spaces to be homogenized. Within and between these flows of globalization, he discerns disjuncture in which local elements are quite insistent and enduring. One disjuncture I found in the Samoan Aidscape was different definitions of development framed by the government of Sāmoa and the grassroots community. The government framed development with a globalized definition—the growth of economy and industry, the improvement of infrastructure, and the advancement of human resources. Based on this definition, they set the developmental objectives that comply with that of aid donors and allocate aid projects accordingly. The grassroots definition, on the other hand, was deeply rooted in *fa’aSāmoa* and framed within the context of the *‘āiga*. Regardless of the new ideas and items, and foreign capital that brought significant changes in the living environment of Sāmoa, the *‘āiga*-centered ways of doing and thinking have endured and motivated Samoans to move forward for “development” or the betterment of *‘āiga*. The study has discovered that these divergent definitions of development have affected the development projects implemented by the government to meet the immediate needs of local residents. Therefore, it suggested the importance of taking into consideration such disjuncture especially in designing development projects. Otherwise, aid projects will never be effective as far as the grassroots community is concerned.

Another significant disjuncture explored was the different *lifeworlds* of Apia girls. This case study revealed that disjuncture emerges not only where local elements do not mesh with global elements, but also where local elements themselves do not connect with each other. The two groups of Apia girls resided in the same small city where the speed of change is fastest, but experienced different realities of development as they lived in the separate *lifeworlds*. This difference in experiencing development is what I called the developmental gap. Understanding such a gap is crucial in order to avoid situations where, for instance, an aid project that focuses on Apia girls has improved the life of

bling-bling girls at the expense of Yazaki girls. I highlighted this case particularly because disjuncture is emerging, not in the big city with culturally, ethnically and religiously hybrid populations, but in the small city of Apia among the Samoan women of similar ages with the same religious background. If the disjunctive layer of reality is emerging among Apia girls, it could emerge among Apia men or among any groups in Sāmoa or elsewhere. This kind of disjuncture cannot be analyzed satisfactorily with the core-periphery approach popularly used in the aid studies. Therefore, it warrants more attention.

6.4.5. Interconnectedness

The Samoan Aidscape is disjunctive, but at the same time it is like a ball of tangled string, the analogy mentioned above, in which all elements are complicatedly connected creating no coherent pattern. The study has explored some elements of Japan's aid to Sāmoa that are interconnected at various levels within and across different segments of the Samoan Aidscape. Such interconnections include the link between the evolution of Japan's aid and the U.S. geopolitical interests, the relation between Japan's aid policy and the critiques of Japan's aid, the interrelation between the definition of development and the perspective on the aid effectiveness, and the interaction between the grassroots encounter and the perception of the need of aid. One that best represents the complexity of interconnectedness is the area associated with untying aid.

As discussed in the section above, the international effort of untying aid has required donors to transfer the selection of suppliers and contractors for aid projects to recipient governments. This change has helped the government of Sāmoa to reduce the cost of maintenance for aid-funded infrastructures. In the case of EPC, however, it has resulted in purchasing low quality materials that result in frequent power cuts and pose questions about the project's sustainability. At the donor side, on the other hand, untied aid has resulted in the less involvement of Japanese firms in aid projects to repatriate less *kokueki*. In reaction to this change, Japanese taxpayers have begun to pressure the government more to promote a strong presence of Japan in the recipient countries to at least earn their gratitude. To cope with the citizen's demand, the Japanese government adopted the policy called *Kao No Mieru Enjo* to promote Japan's name primarily through

attaching eye-catching logo marks to the projects undertaken by Japan. This promotion has transformed the Samoan landscape into a giant “aid billboard” to advertise Japan. Meanwhile, the *Kao No Mieru Enjo* policy has affected the way in which JICA handles incidents locally. JICA Sāmoa hid the incident involving a Japanese volunteer because they took it as a potential source of lowering Japan’s name in Sāmoa and harming the relationship between Sāmoa and Japan. Because “inconvenient truth” in such case would be hidden, Japan’s aid would possibly have fewer chances to be improved with an untied aid policy that aims to improve foreign aid.

In this way, all elements of Japan’s aid to Sāmoa are by and large interconnected at different levels across time and space. Because of such interconnectedness, if one element such as untying aid policy were changed, it would affect all other areas connected locally and globally to the altered element. Some effects can be predictable while others are not even imaginable due to the complexity of interconnectedness. For this reason, the impact foreign aid brings is multidimensional and multicultural and hence requires a holistic approach.

6.4.6. Control and Accountability

Donor’s control and recipient accountability are another type of connection found in the Samoan Aidscape, which requires a certain level of equilibrium between the two. The aid critic Bauer (1976) repeatedly argued that externally provided resources such as foreign aid undermine the accountability of recipients because they bypass the process of developing a sense of ownership. As represented by the case of Māli‘oli‘o River, the study has revealed the lack of the government accountability for appropriately allocating aid projects in some sectors. In the sector of infrastructure development, the government seemed to have prioritized the construction of governmental office buildings in Apia that do not necessarily promote development. At the same time, they use the lack of funding as a reason for not completing some key projects that would dramatically improve the mobility of rural communities. In this regard, Bauer’s argument that bilateral aid has increased the power of the recipient government needlessly and resulted in misallocation of aid resources is accurate.

At the grassroots, I found an opposite case that the recipient community was not accountable due to the rigid control placed over aid project. Through the stories of grassroots aid projects and experiences of Japanese aid workers, the study has revealed that pilfering of aid property is very common partly because the recipients have a relatively weak sense of ownership of the project. To promote a sense of ownership, Japan's grassroots aid required the recipient community to share responsibility by providing manpower and preparing materials for the awarded project. It also employed the local consulting firm to closely monitor the project in terms of progress and the procurement of materials. Because of the strict control, the recipient community felt that they were given little authority over the project to gain a real sense of ownership. In this regard, the current system of Japan's grassroots aid has failed to cultivate recipient accountability although projects are completed as initially designed.

Moreover, the case of the Electric Power Corporation (EPC) project has posed further questions on the interrelation between donor's control and recipient accountability concerning tied aid. The process of untying aid has restored the selection of project materials to the government of Sāmoa as a way of increasing the value of aid received. According to the CEO Va'aelua, removing the restriction over materials has helped reduced the cost of maintenance of aid-funded infrastructures. Nevertheless, the study found that it did not necessarily increase the value of aid as far as long-term benefit is concerned. As a result of selecting cheaper materials with lower quality for the EPC project, Sāmoa still faces a problem with frequent blackouts. It indicated the need of thorough consideration on the equilibrium between donor's control and recipient accountability as removing control does not automatically build accountability. For this case, clarifying the priority in aid-funded project—sustainability or the cost of maintenance—was needed before removing the control on material selection.

These stories have suggested that a certain degree of control may be necessary in order for the recipient to be accountable, although the control should not only be donor driven. Because control and accountability are opposite forces like a tug of war, the best result of aid may be expected when the two are at the right equilibrium.

6.4.7. Fluidity

Accordingly, the study discovered the features of the Samoan Aidscape that are continuously MIRAB, but moving forward with industrialization. People are psychologically depending on aid for Sāmoa's development, although they do not belittle their traditional knowledge. The elements of the Aidscape are connected intricately like a ball of string but are also disjunctive, carving different meanings and paths of development. These features of the Samoan Aidscape are not static, but constantly changing according to a shift in time, ideas, events, structures, agents, regulations, and others that are associated with aid donors, recipient, and observers. Such shifts may include Sāmoa's graduation from LDC status and a variety of events that may occur if the international community shifts the paradigm of foreign aid, if Japan reforms the *kanryō* system, if the IWC removes the ban on the commercial whaling, if YES factory closes down, if New Zealand changes the immigration regulations, or if my positionality as researcher shifts. Because the segments of the Aidscape are interconnected and interplay, a shift in one area would affect the components of other segments, as illustrated in the case of untied aid. This chain of changes would affect the stories and experiences of aid that constitute the Aidscape. Therefore, the features of the Samoan Aidscape are always changing and continuously fluid. In other words, the Aidscape as Thirdspace, as Soja says, is an exploratory and flexible concept that attempts to capture the constantly and quickly changing reality of foreign aid.

With the concept of the Sāmoa Aidscape, the study has explored the complex, hybrid, interconnected, but disjunctive layers of the reality of aid that are both lived and imagined. The study has also investigated into different *situated knowledge* about Japan's aid to Sāmoa and uncovered culturally and spatially diverse realities of this flow of aid and its multidimensional impacts. Through these multiple realities and impacts explored, I now examine the applicability of aid dependency views in the case of Japan's aid to Sāmoa and answer the question of this dissertation whether foreign aid is merely a source of promoting dependency.

6.5. Aid and Dependency

6.5.1. Aid Dependency Views in the Samoan Aidscape

Aid dependency theorists argue that, due to the unequal relations positioned by the world capitalistic system, aid recipient countries will experience aggravated economic and social conditions that entail them to further depend on aid. I examined the validity of their arguments to the case of Sāmoa with specific reference to Japan's aid through considering the five popular lines of reasoning that lie behind the aid dependency view. These five views identify aid as a sophisticated tool of control that manipulates recipients, as free income that undermines recipient accountability, as non-productive rent that hinders industrialization, as a discourse that propagates the Western superiority, and as an unsustainable source that increases the susceptibility to donor's social and economic conditions. All of these views explain the mechanism of aid that promotes further dependency of recipients.

In the case of Japan's aid to Sāmoa, I found three of the five views are less than applicable, while one is fairly valid and another one is in between. Despite the popular critiques, the study has found that the Japanese government hardly uses its aid to manipulate Sāmoa and its resources. They do not even have clear guidelines for disbursing aid due to the lack of human resources and their interests in Sāmoa that prevented Japan's aid to be strategic. Therefore, the view that identifies aid as sophisticated tool of control is not applicable. Neither is seeing aid as a source of hindrance to industrialization relevant to Sāmoa. The study has confirmed that Sāmoa has developed a moderate level of industries despite the constant influx of aid from Japan and other donors as well as overseas remittances. It has discovered further that the growth of some industries has been supported by aid projects including the expansion of Apia port funded by Japan. The view that emphasizes the susceptibility and unsustainable aspects of aid is also found as less than applicable. In spite of the fact that Japan's economy has been facing one of the worst conditions in the post-war era, it regularly announces an increase in aid to Sāmoa and to the Pacific region.

On the other hand, the study has revealed the lack of recipient accountability both at national and grassroots levels where aid resources seemed to be misallocated and misused. Such lack was identified as a result of freely and continuously given aid that

prevented recipients from developing a sense of urgency and ownership. Therefore, I found this view is fairly relevant to the case of Sāmoa, although the study did not examine whether or not the lack of accountability is attributed specifically to Japan's aid.

The study could not clarify whether aid as discourse has propagated the modernization ideas of Western superiority in the process of development to Samoan recipients. It assumed that the Western influence has been permeated through the country as Sāmoa has a long history of receiving aid, which has brought a significant amount of Western ideas and technologies. Nevertheless, it has also found that Samoans do not necessarily belittle traditional ways although they adopt the new ways as they compromise old and new. In this context, the existing psychological dependency on aid was interpreted, not necessarily as a result of influenced by the discourse, but rather as a sign of fear for unknown future without aid. Therefore, I found it difficult to clarify whether aid has influenced Samoans to accept the idea of the Western superiority in development. As for Japan's aid in particular, this idea is not relevant primarily because Japan's aid is not rooted in modernization theories, although Japan's aid might have promoted the status of Japan somewhat as donor through the *Kaono Mieru Enjo* policy.

Examining the applicability of these views led to the conclusion that Japan's aid has contributed slightly to creating the environment in which Sāmoa can continue depending on aid. Yet, it has also helped the study to explore the betweenness (both true and false) of aid impacts and conclude that Sāmoa's aid dependency is *situated knowledge*, which describes one aspect of complex reality of the Samoan Aidscape. I confirmed that foreign aid to Sāmoa is a source of more than promoting dependency.

6.5.2. Coexistence of Dependency and Development

As discussed above, the aid dependency views contain some truths as evidence of aid dependency can be easily found in today's Sāmoa. At the same time, the study has found that Japan's aid to Sāmoa is more than a source of dependency. It has provided ways for the recipient government to improve the country's infrastructures, support for grassroots community to reconstruct school buildings and install water tanks, and access to new skills that enhance one's opportunity for a better job abroad to send more remittances. In these respects, aid has actually supported the development of Sāmoa, although it has

promoted dependency. The dualistic role aid has played in Sāmoa was seen in the story of Lau‘ele‘ele Secondary School, which illustrated both pros and cons of receiving continuous external support. As a consequence of receiving aid to build the school building, the school community came to depend more on external resources rather than their own, but they no longer needed to sacrifice class hours for the improvement of school facilities. This case posed the question whether or not such situations are a symptom of aid dependency particularly considering the condition of grassroots communities like Lau‘ele‘ele School where given opportunities for self-progress are very limited.

In the context of such dual roles, I have argued the coexistence of dependency and development in the space produced by foreign aid. Sāmoa’s industry was another example, which has grown moderately despite the constant influx of aid and remittances on which the country depends for both national and household economies. In this case, I found that the two seemingly opposing forces—dependency and development—are moving forward together mainly because the determinant factors of both forces are the same—Samoan people’s sense of obligation to *fa’aSāmoa* practices and their love for *‘āiga*.

Moreover, the study has explored the coexistence of dependency and development at the transnational scale through examining the case of transferring knowledge by aid. Transferring knowledge to Samoan recipients through aid projects has been a challenge due to the high mobility of Samoans. My study has suggested that transferring knowledge to the highly mobile population can be seen as reproducible by shifting the viewpoint from the nation-state context to the transnational context. From the transnational perspective, aid that transfers knowledge is considered enhancing opportunity for recipients to be equipped to migrate overseas and remit more money. Further remittances may promote further dependency at microeconomic level; though, it eventually helps the growth of the national economy. In this regard, foreign aid produces the transnational space in which dependency and development can coexist.

Accordingly, situating the viewpoint at different geographic scales, the study has achieved the goal of this dissertation to confirm the coexistence of aid dependency and development in aid recipients like Sāmoa.

6.6. Japan's Aid to Sāmoa, Unfinished Geography

The concept of Aidscape and *situated knowledge* allowed this study to holistically approach the hybrid space of foreign aid and explore the multiple realities of Japan's aid to Sāmoa. The outcome of the study does not offer a firm answer to such questions as whether Japan should continue aiding Sāmoa. Rather, it provides a collection of stories situated in various grounds to rethink the ways in which the effectiveness and further need of aid are currently discussed and evaluated.

The effectiveness and further need of Japan's aid to Sāmoa are understood differently among different groups. The government of Sāmoa evaluates Japan's aid as somewhat effective while the grassroots recipients rarely see its effect on their development path. Yet, both say Sāmoa needs further assistance from Japan. The majority of Japanese volunteers and specialists dispatched to Sāmoa see no need for further assistance to this recipient except to such areas as health care because the country overall is sufficiently developed. Nevertheless, the Japanese government officially announced the continued support to Sāmoa for an indefinite term. Such a decision will draw criticism from Japanese taxpayers if they find out the aid to Sāmoa is not so effective and taken for granted by the recipient. Aid critics continue discouraging the further flow of aid to Sāmoa as they see Japan's aid as less than effective but exploitative. Samoan intellectuals, on the contrary, support the continuous flow of aid because they see it as bonus allowing the country to move forward.

Despite the differences in views, it is most likely that the Japanese government will continue to disburse aid to Sāmoa primarily for two simple reasons; one from the donor side and another from the recipient side. Japan will continue its aid to Sāmoa because there is no reason to stop it. Feedback from former volunteers and specialists as well as JICA funded researchers may suggest the ineffectiveness and hence the discontinuance of aid to Sāmoa. Such feedback, however, would not be utilized effectively due to the incapacity of the current ODA system to incorporate onsite evaluation into policy and action. With this present condition, the only possibility that Japan will stop aiding Sāmoa, I found, is if the media finds a scandal in aid and sensationalizes it to Japanese taxpayers. Otherwise, Japan would probably continue disbursing aid to Sāmoa as long as

Sāmoa remains a country that is entitled to receive foreign aid. Sāmoa, on the other hand, will one day reach the point where her government no longer sees the indispensability of Japan's aid as the country's basic infrastructure is sufficiently developed. The government of Sāmoa, however, would probably not mind receiving unnecessary aid as a bonus offered by Japan to update infrastructures.

Whether or not further aid would effectively improve the quality of Samoan life is ambiguous. Due to the weak evaluation system of aid, Japan cannot improve the effectiveness of its aid to Sāmoa anytime soon. Sāmoa, on the other hand, can possibly make the aid more effective in achieving its goals if they are more accountable. The government representative Simi stated that Sāmoa holds the consolidated position in negotiating with donors over projects. If so, Sāmoa can coordinate with Japan to implement projects first in the areas that directly improve the quality of daily life. However, as seen in the case of Māli'li'o River and the story of Molimau, the government of Sāmoa may not prioritize the improvement of such areas as rural infrastructure and medical service that most directly shape the feature of everyday life space especially in villages. In these regards, whether further aid would dramatically improve the quality of life remains in question.

Still, I do not necessarily suggest the discontinuance of Japan's aid, or any foreign aid, to Sāmoa. Instead, I would suggest rethinking the effectiveness of foreign aid from different angles to see outcomes of aid beyond. As an example, take the story of Molimau that shows uneven development. If foreign aid were allocated in a different way and had dramatically improved the health service of Savai'i, Molimau might have still been alive. In this regard, his story can represent the misallocation of foreign aid that failed to advance health services and bring benefit to grassroots recipients. However, this story can be translated differently by situating one's viewpoint in the *lifeworld* of Savai'i residents where the meanings of development and benefits of aid are embedded.

In places like Savai'i with very limited resources for any areas of life improvement, Molimau would have faced a much worse situation if no foreign aid had ever been provided to Sāmoa. He would not have had treatment in New Zealand for one year on government funding. There would have been no big inter-island ferry to transfer the patient from Savai'i to Upolu smoothly by the next day, no paved roads throughout

Savai'i that allowed Molimau's family to drive easily to the hospital, and no hospital opened after certain hours to take the patient in the first place. The inter-island ferry, paved road, and national hospital renewal were funded under Japan's aid scheme. That is to say if Japan or other donors had never provided aid to Sāmoa, the quality of daily life in Savai'i at least in these areas would have been lower than the present. Therefore, I would like to emphasize that although its benefits were unevenly distributed, aid has brought some improvements of life space to Sāmoa. These improvements may be seen as minuscule and beneath notice in the view of some aid observers particularly in comparison to much bigger benefits that aid may repatriate to donors. But they are tangible advancement in the everyday life of Savai'i residents. In other words, aid observers and Savai'i residents live in the two different *lifeworlds* where they construct separate definitions of benefit of aid. Unfortunately, such divergence is insufficiently taken into analysis in the critical discussion of aid.

Living in the *lifeworld* of convenient lifestyle and advanced technology, some aid observers may not be able to relate to the *lifeworld* of developing countries in a real sense although they can imagine the life out there. As they use their own *lifeworld* standard and experience instead, they often fail to explore the value of foreign aid understood in the *lifeworld* of grassroots recipients in developing countries where aid is one of very few means of improving status quo. In critical aid studies, therefore, micro-phenomenal benefits of aid as seen in the case of Lau'ele'ele School are usually taken for granted while focusing on negative effects observed at national level. In the extreme, these assessments become over-generalized and overemphasize the unsuccessful aspects of projects, concluding in the way that Helen Hughes (2003) did that no further aid is necessary because it only "fails" recipient countries.

It is crucial to continue critically looking at the ineffective and inefficient aspects of foreign aid in order to improve its quality, applicability, and sustainability. But in doing so, I strongly suggest to look at the effectiveness of aid through various viewpoints in terms of scale, geography, culture, epistemology, history, economy, religion, international laws, foreign relations, and so forth, in order to explore multidimensional impacts of aid. Otherwise, our understanding about the effectiveness of aid remains unilateral, judgmental, and subversive rather than comprehensive, constructive, and

encouraging improvement. Currently, Sāmoa is undergoing various evaluations as the country prepares to graduate from a LDC and move on to the status of Developing country. These reviews seem to be driven by reformists urged by outside parties. Whichever the direction Sāmoa takes, I hope the decisions about aid to Sāmoa will be based on the multiple perspectives including the ones that acknowledge grassroots benefits aid would bring to the country.

6.7. The Samoan Aidscape and Further

This study has tried to contribute to geographic study of foreign aid with the idea of an Aidscape. It is ontologically a hybrid and multiple space while it is epistemologically many streams of positionality and situatedness. Borrowing Soja's concept of Thirdspace, I have tried to demonstrate a new holistic approach to foreign aid that explores and encompasses many "Other-ways" of seeing the roles and impacts of aid that construct multiple realities of aid. The study attempted to see aid as spatial practice in which all elements are interconnected multidimensionally rather than vertically connected political activity taking place only at international level. It sought to accommodate different viewpoints on aid and development from different socio-cultural domains and from different scales.

My study finds the Aidscape is one of diverse stories, perspectives, and realities about Japan's aid to Sāmoa, the meaning of development, and the needs of Sāmoa. These narratives are not neutral, like all narratives, since they are collected through specific methods and at a particular moment of history. In other words, they are reflections of *situated knowledge* and I, as researcher, am a component of this Samoan Aidscape. Therefore, additional research on Japan's aid to Sāmoa by different researchers with different methods would reveal other phases of critical issues related to this flow of aid. Such issues could include the idea of interdependency, environmental degradation, increased crime, out migration, brain drain, and tsunami recovery.

Throughout my graduate studies, I have studied "development" and learned how development has failed to deliver promises and frequently brought unsatisfactory changes to developing countries. In the field, I have witnessed disappointed outcomes of foreign aid and uneven development. I am, however, an optimist in the sense that I still believe

foreign aid can be a useful source of improvement and progress of life in developing countries. With this attitude, I hope this study can provide a space to encounter and acknowledge unfamiliar ways to frame and exercise foreign aid while considering the impacts and effectiveness of aid from an angle other than one's own. Today, critical aid studies propose the end of foreign aid, while families in Savai'i run around looking for potential blood donors for their loved one. Foreign aid may be a manipulative political apparatus, a profitable economic device, and a convenient diplomatic tool, but it becomes a feasible source of life improvement especially for less powerful social groups when one shifts one's situated point of view.

APPENDIX A
Pictures of the Samoan Aidscape

Kao No Mieru Enjo



Water tank funded under Japan's grassroots aid scheme



Water tank donated by Japan before *Kao No Mieru Enjo* policy was implemented



Water tank donated by the aid from Switzerland.

Kao No Mieru Enjo



School building funded under Japan's grassroots aid scheme. ODA logo is often painted on the wall.



The construction of science laboratory at a government school in Savai'i funded by Japan's grant aid in the 1980s. This lab is currently not used.



The reconstruction of school building funded by EU.

Kao No Mieru Enjo



Aid sign boards seen everywhere in Sāmoa.



Faceless aid?



The “faceless” indication of Japan’s donation placed in the interisland ferry Lady Sāmoa II.

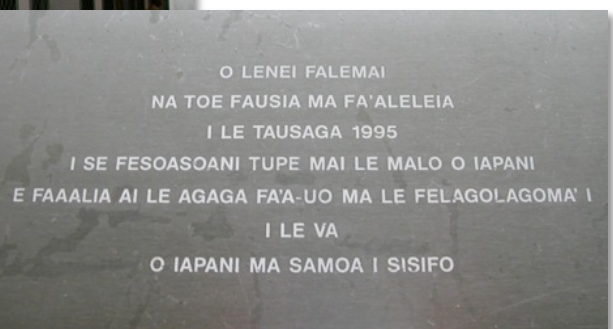
National Hospital in Savai’i

Its main building was funded by Japan’s grant aid.



The plaque attached to the hospital building says: “This hospital was rebuilt and renovated in the year 1995.

This is to show a symbol of friendship and partnership between Japan and Western Sāmoa.”



of

Governmental buildings and facilities funded by Chinese Aid



Ministry of Law and Court funded by Chinese aid



Ministry of Health



Government offices



Ministry of Women



Ministry of Finance



Accommodation for Chinese construction workers who came with Chinese aid.
Gym used for South Pacific Olympic Game of 2007.

APPENDIX B
Survey questionnaire for Samoan residents

‘O le su‘esu‘ega i fesoasoani mai Iāpani

‘O le fa‘amoemoe o lenei su‘esu‘ega ina ia e mālamalama ai i le manatu o tagata Sāmoa e tusa ‘o fesoasoani mai Iapani. Leai se fesili ‘ole‘ā fa‘ailoa ai lou suafa. E lēai fo‘i se tali ‘ole‘a fa‘ailoa atu i le malo po‘o se kamupani. ‘O le mea lea, fa‘amolemole, e te tali i ia fesili ma le fa‘amaoni. Fa‘afetai tele lava mo lou fesoasoani mai i la‘u su‘esu‘ega.

Ma le fa‘aaloalo lava,
Masami Tsujita, Univeseti o Hawai‘i i Mānoa

<Personal Background>

1. Age:	2. Gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Tama <input type="checkbox"/> Teine	3. Marital Status: <input type="checkbox"/> E le‘i fa‘aipoipo <input type="checkbox"/> Fa‘aipoipo <input type="checkbox"/> Ua tatala le fa‘aipoipoga
4. Galuega:	5. Nu‘u ua ‘e nofo ai:	6. Nu‘u na ‘e fānau ai:
7. E to‘afia tamaiti?		8. Lotu:
9. ‘Ao‘aoga: <input type="checkbox"/> Primary School <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary/College (<input type="checkbox"/> 9yr <input type="checkbox"/> 10yr <input type="checkbox"/> 11yr <input type="checkbox"/> 12yr <input type="checkbox"/> 13yr) <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary (<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> BA <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Others)		

<Fesili e tusa ‘o Sāmoa>

1. I lou manatu, e mata e faigōfie le ōlaga i Sāmoa pē lēai? ‘Aiseā?
2. ‘O ā ni fa‘afitauli o lo‘o tutupu i Sāmoa i taimi nei?
3. ‘O ā ni mea e mana‘omia i le atina‘eina o Sāmoa?

Fa‘amolemole, va‘ai itulau i tua.

4. 'O ā ni mea e mana'omia e tupulaga o Sāmoa?
5. 'Aiseā 'e te faigaluega ai?

<Fesili e tusa 'o fesoasoani mai lapani>

1. Fa'molemole, lisi mai ni mea o lo'o i Sāmoa na fesoasoani mai ai lāpani?
2. 'O le ā lou manatu i fesoasoani mai lāpani?
3. 'E mata o lo'o afaina lou ōlaga i fesoasoani a lāpani?
4. I lou manatu, 'aiseā 'ua fesoasoani ai lāpani mo Sāmoa?
5. Fa'amolemole, lisi mai ni atunu'u o lo'o fesoasoani mai iā Sāmoa?
6. 'E te manatu o lo'o mana'omia pea e Sāmoa se fesoasoani mai fafo pē leai? 'Aiseā?

Fa'afetai tele lava mo lou fesoasoani i leni su'esu'ega. Manuia le aso.

English Translation
Study on Japan's Aid to Sāmoa

The purpose of this study is to learn local perspectives and responses to Japan's aid to Sāmoa. No question that reveal your identification is included and no risk to participate in this survey. Therefore, I will appreciate your honest opinion on the following questions. Thank you very much for your time and participation.

Masami Tsujita, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Sāmoa

1. What do you think whether or not life in Sāmoa is easy?
2. What are problems faced by today's Sāmoa?
3. What are needs of Sāmoa in terms of development?
4. What are the needs for youth in Sāmoa?
5. Why do you work?

Japan's aid

1. Please name the projects in Sāmoa that are funded by Japan?
2. What do you think about Japan's support to Sāmoa?
3. How has Japan's aid affected on your daily life?
4. What do you think why Japan has been supporting Sāmoa?
5. Please name other countries that support Sāmoa?
6. Does Sāmoa need more supports from overseas countries?

Survey questionnaire for Japanese volunteers in Sāmoa

サモアにおける日本の援助についてのアンケート

月 日

このアンケートは、サモアでご活躍中のボランティアの皆さんのご意見を参考に、日本の援助の現場における視点を考察するために、実施するものです。匿名式となっており、あなたのプライバシーを特定するような項目はありません。この調査は学位論文のプロジェクトの一部であり、いただいた回答はアンケートの目的以外には一切使用しませんので、是非、率直なご意見をお聞かせください。

ハワイ大学地理学部 非常勤講師 辻田 真美

設問1 あたなに関する情報を教えてください。

1) 年齢	2) 性別 <input type="checkbox"/> 男性 <input type="checkbox"/> 女性	3) 結婚 <input type="checkbox"/> 未婚 <input type="checkbox"/> 既婚 <input type="checkbox"/> 離婚	4) 出身地
5) 最終学歴 <input type="checkbox"/> 中学校 <input type="checkbox"/> 高等／高等専門学校 <input type="checkbox"/> 専門学校 <input type="checkbox"/> 大学 <input type="checkbox"/> 大学院		6) 派遣前の職業	
7) サモアでの役職(できるだけ詳しく)		8) サモアでの滞在期間 年 月	

設問2 国際協力にボランティアとして参加したきっかけを教えてください。

設問3 応募から派遣にいたるまでのプロセスの中で、改善されると良いと思う点がありますか？

設問4 帰国後の活動支援資金である国内積み立て金の制度がなかったとしても、このボランティア活動に参加されましたか？

参加している 参加していない どちらかわからない

設問5 現在の派遣先で一番苦勞された(又はされている)事は何ですか？

設問6 JICA サモア事務所の対応について評価を教えてください？

満足 どちらかと言えば満足 どちらかと言えば不満足 不満足

設問7 上記の設問で「どちらかといえば不満足」「不満足」と答えられた方は、その理由を教えてください。

設問8 現在の日本のODA(開発援助)プロジェクトや運営方針には、皆さんのように現場で活躍された方の声が十分に反映されていると思われますか？

思う どちらかと言えば思う どちらかと言えば思わない 思わない

設問9 上記で「思わない」「どちらかと言えば思わない」と答えられた方は、その理由を教えてください。

設問10 近年「ODAをもっと日本の経済発展に反映させるべき」という意見が出されるようになりましたが、あなたもそのように考えますか？

強く同意する やや同意する あまり同意しない まったく同意しない

設問11 サモアに対する援助は今後も続けるべきだと思われますか？

思う 思わない どちらとも言い切れない

設問12 上記のように考える理由を教えてください。

設問13 設問10で「思う」「どちらとも言い切れない」と答えられた方は、サモアへの援助が、日本の国益に何も反映しないとしても、続けるべきだと思われますか？

思う どちらかと言えば思う どちらかと言えば思わない 思わない

設問14 サモア又サモア人にとって、「ディベロップメント」とは何を意味すると思われますか？

御協力ありがとうございました。

English Translation
Study on Japan's aid to Sāmoa

The purpose of the survey is to understand Japan's aid to Sāmoa from the viewpoint of Japanese volunteers who stand in the forefront of ODA field. This survey is being conducted as a component of a dissertation for a doctoral degree at University of Hawai'i. It is anonymous and includes no question that may reveal your identification. Therefore, I will appreciate your honest opinion on the following questions. Thank you very much for your time and participation.

Masami Tsujita, Department of Geography, University of Hawai'i

1. Please tell me about your background
2. What made you participate the volunteer program?
3. Are there any aspects of the JOCV program do you think should be improved?
4. Did you still participate the volunteer program even if the program did not offer a reserved fund for restart after returning home?
5. What are the difficulties you had or have at assigned work place?
6. How do you evaluate the work of JICA Sāmoa office in relation to JOCV?
7. Why do you say their work is unsatisfactory?
8. Do you think today's ODA projects and implementation policy reflect the voices from grassroots actors of Japan's aid such as JOCV?
9. Why do you think grassroots voices have rarely been incorporated?
10. Do you agree with such opinions as Japan's ODA should reflect national interest?
11. Do you think the aid to Sāmoa should be continued?
12. Why do you think so?
13. Do you think Japan should continue providing aid to Sāmoa even if it does not reflect national interest?
14. What you think what "development" means to Samoan people?

APPENDIX C
List of interviews quoted

	Name	Pseu- donym	Title	Place	Date	Language
1	Izumi Kobayashi		Professor	Tōkyo	July 4, 2007	Japanese
2	Hōsaku Tsukuri	√	JICA official	Tōkyo	July 5, 2007	Japanese
3	Kimio Fujita		Former president of JICA	Tōkyo	July 4, 2007	Japanese
4	Tsutomu Moriya		JICA Sāmoa resident representative	Tōkyo	July 10, 2003	Japanese
5	Junji Ishizuka		JICA Sāmoa resident representative	Tōkyo	July 3, 2006	Japanese
6	Yoshikazu Ōyama	√	JICA fishery specialist to Pacific Islands	Tōkyo	July 4, 2007	Japanese
				E-mail	Jan 4, 2008	
				E-mail	Jan 28, 2008	
7	Natsuo Teraekawa	√	JICA official	Sāmoa	Sep 28, 2006	Japanese
8	Wood Salele		Professor	Sāmoa	Oct 27, 2006	English
9	Noumea Simi		Samoan government official	Sāmoa	Sep 26, 2006	English
10	Takeshi Ōumi	√	Japanese aid contractor	Sāmoa	Oct 28, 2006	Japanese
11	Poto Sainisi	√	Science teacher	Sāmoa	July 13, 2006	English
12	Manumalo Olaga	√	Hotel owner	Sāmoa	Nov 30, 2006	English
13	Sun Sue	√	Chinese government official	Sāmoa	Oct 4, 2006	English
14	Seiji Kuruma	√	JICA volunteer	Sāmoa	Jun 4, 2007	Japanese
15	Denki Kawahara	√	JICA volunteer	Sāmoa	Nov 24, 2006	Japanese
16	Sachiko Ureshi	√	JICA volunteer	Sāmoa	July 15, 2006	Japanese
17	Otoko Mae	√	JICA volunteer	Sāmoa	Aug 15, 2006	Japanese
18	Manuia Atina'eina	√	NGO representative	Sāmoa	Oct 30, 2006	English
19	Tokuko Betsu	√	JICA volunteer	Sāmoa	Oct 30, 2006	Japanese
20	Lotolelei Fai'āoga	√	Teacher	Sāmoa	July 8, 2003	English
21	Faifale Lāpoa	√	Business owner	Sāmoa	Jun 16, 2003	English
22	Pule Aoga	√	School principlal	Sāmoa	Aug 2, 2006	English
23	Va'aelua Nofo Va'aelua		Sāmoa government official	Sāmoa	Nov 3, 2006	English
24	Mitsuru Sekkei	√	Japanese aid contractor	Sāmoa	Oct 30, 2006	Japanese
25	Uvae Aupito	√	School principlal	Sāmoa	Oct 2, 2006	English
26	Tupe Elēlava	√	School committee treasurer	Sāmoa	July 23, 2006	Samoan
27	Raymond Papa'ā	√	EU official	Sāmoa	Oct 30, 2006	English
28	Sakana Senmon	√	Fishery expert	Sāmoa	Oct 29, 2006	Japanese

GLOSSARY JAPANESE AND SAMOAN WORDS

Japanese Words

<i>amakudari</i>	the practice of retired government officials finding employment in the private sector
<i>gaiatsu</i>	external pressure
<i>gaikaku dantai</i>	government's affiliated organizations
<i>hinomaru</i>	Japan's national flag
<i>honne</i>	real intention, underlying motive
<i>kaihatsu tōshi</i>	developmental investment
<i>kanryō</i>	the elite of the National Civil Service who occupy high-ranking positions in the central ministries.
<i>kao no mieru enjo</i>	aid with visibly emphasized donor's face
<i>katsuobushi</i>	dried bonito
<i>keizai kyōryoku</i>	economic cooperation
<i>kikakukan</i>	senior project officer
<i>kokueki</i>	national interests
<i>maguro</i>	tuna
<i>mogura tataki</i>	mole whacking game
<i>naiatsu</i>	internal pressure
<i>otsukiai enjo</i>	a kind of aid that aims to maintain good relationship
<i>omiyage gaikō</i>	a kind of aid used as diplomatic souvenir
<i>settai</i>	entertaining guest or client
<i>shukkō</i>	the practice of seconding officials to another office or company temporarily
<i>tatemaie</i>	public statement, façade
<i>wa</i>	harmony in social relationship, peace, concord

Samoaan Words

<i>'ai fua</i>	eat for free
<i>'āiga</i>	family or extended family
<i>alofa</i>	love
<i>ata Saina</i>	Chinese (Asian) movies
<i>'eleni</i>	tinned herring
<i>fa 'alavelave</i>	family events
<i>fa 'aSāmoa</i>	Samoaan ways of doing, seeing, and thinking
<i>fiafia night</i>	entertainment combined of Samoaan music and dance
<i>fono</i>	village council of <i>matai</i>
<i>Iāpani</i>	Japan
<i>lotu</i>	church
<i>matai</i>	chief
<i>nofo fua</i>	stay for free
<i>nu 'u</i>	village
<i>palagi</i>	westerners, non-Samoan person
<i>Saina</i>	China
<i>tausi mātua</i>	filial piety
<i>tautua</i>	service

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