CHANGING PATTERNS OF COMMITMENT TO ISLAND HOMELANDS: A CASE STUDY OF WESTERN SAMOA

Cluny Macpherson
University of Auckland

This article uses remittances as a measure of the commitment of migrants and their children to communities of origin. The article outlines patterns of remittances and argues that there is no single unilinear shift in either migrants' or their children's commitment to the "island home." Rather, a range of commitment diverges over time as migrants review the value of maintaining links with communities of origin. Case studies are used to point to connections between certain factors that shape migrants' assessments and their remittance patterns. Possible consequences for the state of Western Samoa, which has come to depend on these remittances, are also considered. The article is based on data from Western Samoan migrants in New Zealand, but the factors identified may have more-general relevance in understanding orientations of other Pacific Islander migrant populations to their communities of origin and the consequences of changing patterns for those communities.

MIGRANTS' COMMITMENTS to their communities of origin may rest on complex emotional and social foundations. These assume considerable analytical and practical significance. Analytically, it is useful to establish how various foundations influence the character and durability of migrants' relations with their communities of origin. Practically, it is useful to understand how the foundations of migrants' links influence their willingness to invest financial, intellectual, and social capital in those communities. The bases of commitment to communities of origin may assume considerable practical significance for those concerned with planning and policy making in both the states from and to which migrants move. The volume and sustainability of migrant remittances to a number of Pacific states have become immensely important factors in national social and macroeconomic policy (Loomis 1990; Ahlburg 1991; Macpherson 1991; World Bank 1991).

Pacific Studies, Vol. 17, No. 3--September 1994

These foundations are of considerable academic and practical significance but are not easily operationalized: establishing satisfactory indices of commitment is problematical. Attitudinal measures on their own are unsatisfactory. Communities of origin often assume considerable importance in economically and socially marginalized migrant populations in urban industrial societies. This theme is evident in novels, for instance, such as Albert Wendt's *Sons for the Return Home,* in which a Samoan family lives in self-imposed exile in New Zealand, suffering various privations as they prepare for their return to the village. Similar sentiments are evident in poetry and popular music. In various popular Samoan songs the village is portrayed as the place in which people live correctly, behave well to one another, and life is good. The city is portrayed as the place in which migrants are troubled, disillusioned, and eventually disappoint their families. In such circumstances it is highly likely that attitudinal measures will reveal a strong, positive orientation to villages of origin. How, and indeed whether, this is translated into action is a separate issue.

One way of getting beyond the limitations of attitudinal measures is to add a behavioral indicator of how migrants relate to communities of origin over time. This is not to suggest that attitude and behavior are unrelated. Those who profess high levels of commitment could be expected to invest personal resources in the community and, as the basis of their commitment changes, so too would the nature and scale of their investment. On the other hand attitudes and behavior can vary independently. One readily available and widely used index of commitment is the volume of remittances migrants send. Unable to participate personally in the activities of the nonmigrant family and village, migrants may participate by proxy. Remittances reflect migrants' attempts to assess and translate spiritual and social bonds into some more-concrete and visible expression of commitment. The nature of individuals' commitment can then be established, albeit crudely, by examining the patterns of their remittances.

Considerable caution, however, is required in interpreting remittance data. That varying volumes of remittances reflect varying levels of commitment would be a misleading assumption. Fluctuations in volume may reflect shifts in either the capacity or propensity to remit, or indeed the interplay between these two, and it is important to distinguish between these and to establish their relative importance in any given situation. Structural factors, over which migrants have little if any control, may influence the volumes of remittances.

Declining remittance volumes need not necessarily reflect declining levels of commitment. A migrant community that remains highly committed to supporting kin in the community of origin may be prevented from doing so

when its members face increasing levels of unemployment as a consequence of, say, capital restructuring in metropolitan economies. Conversely, increasing volumes need not reflect increasing commitment. Increases may result from rising levels of economic participation, which mean that more members obtain employment and are able to remit. In an earlier essay (Macpherson 1991), I considered various political and economic factors that influenced Samoan migrants' capacity to remit and sought to resolve a technical question: How do these factors shape the volume of migrant remittances?

That essay raised, but did not attempt to answer, another set of important questions. What factors might influence Samoan migrants' propensity to remit? Even if technically possible for a migrant population to maintain a given level of remittance, would migrants be disposed to continue to send significant proportions of their income to Samoa? This raised a related question. Even if migrants were to maintain present levels, would their children replace them as remitters? These questions are important for both academic and practical reasons. Do migrants' commitments to their communities of origin, as reflected in remittances to people in those communities, change over time and if so, how and why? The pattern of commitment of migrants from small, apparently homogeneous societies are frequently assumed to be similar. This article acknowledges the possibility that migrants' orientations may be complex and sets out to establish the changes that occur over time and to identify the factors that shape them.

Some Methodological Issues

Studies that relate remittance volumes to total number of migrants tend to work with measures of such as per-capita remittances and to use these as the bases of statements about the declining capacity or propensity to remit. Though such indices over time can give an indication of general trends they are unsatisfactory for several reasons.[1] Even the best of these studies, such as Ahlburg's 1991 study of Tongan and Western Samoan remittance patterns, are unable to determine conclusively whether changing volumes are the consequences of changes in propensity or capacity.

First, such studies are unable to establish with confidence the relative importance of factors that influence capacity and propensity. Studies can, with complex statistical analyses, construct models of the relative importance of the various factors but are unable to answer the question of how migrants construct their activity. Such analyses can speculate on but cannot establish whether remittances represent repayment of past debts or insurance for the future or indeed both (Ahlburg 1991). Second, such studies provide little indication of the range of remittance patterns that produces

the notional per-capita remittance figure. For instance, a given per-capita figure may be produced by very different remittance conduct or "styles." The range of orientations to community of origin, which may exist even in relatively small migration streams from apparently homogeneous societies, may be masked in studies of this type.[2] Use of these indices can result in the conflation of diverse orientations and misleading analyses, as Hayes notes in a recent review of evidence from the Pacific (1991).

This problem of differentiation carries over into attempts to use aggregated data to understand changes in per-capita figures over time. Aggregated data cannot show how, if at all, an observed change is related to shifts in the remittance patterns. The range of orientations that shape the per-capita remittance figures may be converging or diverging significantly. Even where the early orientations of migrants in small streams are similar, these may diverge over time or under particular sets of conditions. To understand the range of commitments that produce the measures of central tendency somewhat, different studies are needed to get at the different remitter profiles.

Establishing the various remittance profiles that produce measures of central tendency is an advance but remains relatively crude. It is important to know what remittances mean to those who give them. Without an understanding of the beliefs and values that underlie remittance patterns, predicting how and why these might change over time (in terms other than the capacity to remit) is impossible. Consider, for instance, the cases of two migrants who remit 20 percent of their net incomes. The cases are apparently similar until we know that one remits to insure his intention to live and take an active role in political leadership in the community of origin. In this case the person will likely remit for as long as this aspiration is held. The other remits a comparable proportion of income to discharge certain responsibilities to her parents so she may be free to marry and pursue personal goals. In this case the remitting will likely cease as soon as the person considers her responsibilities discharged.

It is also useful to know something of why migrants remit. In the one case above the migrant chooses to do so for reasons connected with a set of social and religious beliefs to which she remains committed. In the other the migrant has little option because of the power of those around her to ensure that she remits for as long as she remains under their protection. Here again, this information has obvious practical significance. In the first case the remittances are likely to continue for as long as the person remains committed to the beliefs that underpin remitting. In the latter case the remittances are unlikely to continue after the person extracts herself from the circumstances in which she is effectively required to remit.

This article sets out to establish a range of remitter profiles by taking a group of migrants long resident overseas and showing how and why their commitment to their communities of origin and their remittance patterns have changed over time. This longitudinal approach can reveal some of the variety in cognitive, social, and economic factors that influence orientations and that lie behind the distribution at any given time. The article's value lies in its ability to link reliable longitudinal data on migrants' pyschosocial orientations and their remittances.

The Migrants

I draw my data from the Samoan population that has migrated, mainly from Western Samoa, to New Zealand in the period since 1945, and specifically on life-history, attitudinal, and remittance data from sixteen persons (eight men and eight women) from a peri-urban village ten kilometers from Apia, the capital of Western Samoa, who have been resident in New Zealand for a period of eighteen years. These people were chosen because they were brought up in similar circumstances in the same village and migrated at around the same time to similar unskilled and semiskilled occupations in the same center in New Zealand. The women were concentrated in the service and light manufacturing sectors and the men in the transport and construction sectors. In this respect they reflected the concentrations of Samoan migrants within the New Zealand labor market. All had been exposed to similar cycles of demand from family and village and to similar forces within the New Zealand labor market that might be expected to influence their capacity to remit. They also had been resident in New Zealand long enough to have moved through any life stages that might have influenced their willingness to remit. Good data were available from close contact with the group over a period of twenty-five years.

I focus on their propensity to remit and on factors that shape the ways they have made decisions to remit more or less of their income to communities of origin. The central questions posed are: Do migrants' orientations to these communities change at various points in migrants' life cycles? How and what, if any, factors seem to influence orientation? Ideally, at least for a sociologist, a larger data sample would have been collected and subjected to multivariate analysis to establish the relative importance of various factors. This article is, however, primarily exploratory. It is intended only to identify social, economic, and cognitive factors that shape patterns and to suggest propositions to be more-systematically tested by others using more-sophisticated analyses on larger data sets.

Some Data

If migrants' commitment is reflected in remittances, one would conclude that the general decline in the amount of money remitted suggests a weakening commitment to Samoa over time. In the early years after arrival in New Zealand, both men and women regularly remitted as much as 50 percent of their net incomes in any given year to kin in villages.[3] Over a period this figure declined until by the end of year 10 people were remitting on average between 5 and 10 percent of their net incomes. This decline is not a simple straight line, as Figure 1 shows.

Three phases in this process may be identified to explore certain questions: the period from arrival to year 3, years 4 to 7, and years 8 to 15. Does this pattern reflect fundamental shifts in attachment to home, and how do people explain this apparent decline in attachment to their community of origin?

Phase One

During the early years all of the migrants in the study group remitted significant and similar proportions of their incomes to Western Samoa. The remittances were made for one of two principal purposes: to provide major capital items for their families and either directly or indirectly to projects undertaken by the village. In the first category remittances were made to

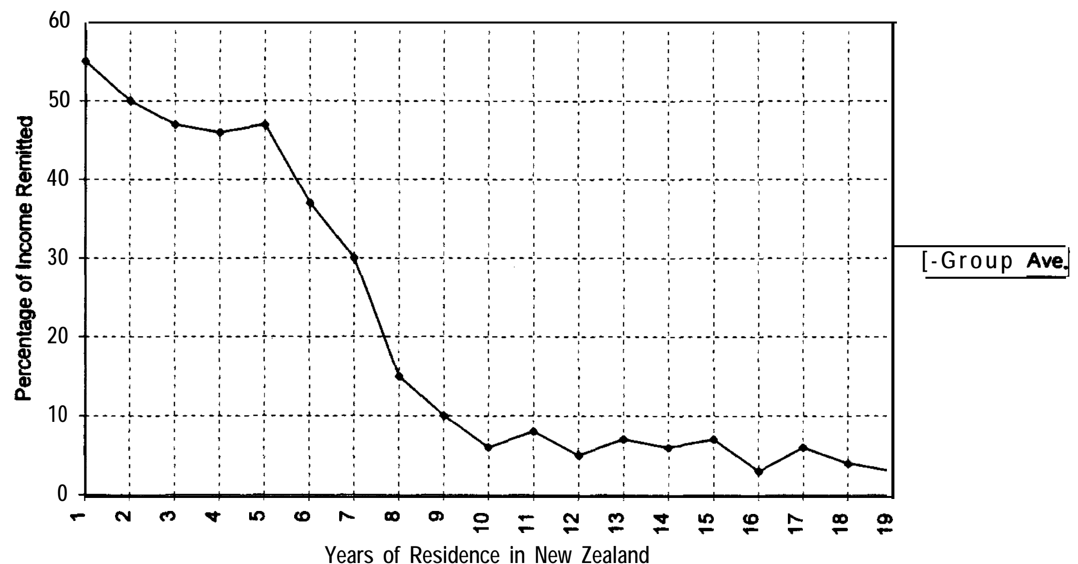

FIGURE 1. **Percentage of net income remitted by Samoans residing in New Zealand (*N* = 16; average for group).**

provide such assets as European-style houses built of permanent materials *(fale papalagi),* freehold land parcels, pickup trucks, cars, water tanks, boats and outboard motors, agricultural equipment, and household appliances and also to meet recurrent costs such as school fees and church collections. Decisions were shaped by the perceived needs of their families, in particular parents and siblings, and explained in those terms. In the project category remittances were made to provide such assets to the village as schools and access roads, to subunits such as congregations for church buildings and pastors' houses, and to women's committees for women's committee houses.[4] Though useful to distinguish between the different destinations of remittances, in fact most remittances were made to nonmigrant kin who determined how they were used. All of the people involved remitted similar proportions of their incomes. Their explanations of these high early levels point to the importance of a combination of factors: propensity, opportunity, social dynamics, and supervision.

Most believed strongly that the primary purpose of their migration was to help or support their *'aiga* and only secondarily to advance their own personal interests. The service provided to their families was one of several types (Meleisea 1991) and was not seen as an issue of personal choice. They had been chosen by their families to go to New Zealand to work. It was no more or less than the service, *tautua,* that young, single people are expected to provide for their families. The physical distance between migrants and the family was of limited significance--they were simply serving their family in a different location. As one young man noted, "My brothers go to the plantation to collect coconuts for copra. I go to collect money in the factory. It's the same thing: another way to serve the family."

This sort of statement should not surprise the reader. The family is a central institution in Samoan social organization and service to one's family is a central value in Samoan culture. The willingness to support village activities, both directly and indirectly, can be explained in similar terms. Families' status within a village are matters of considerable importance. The family's ability to mobilize its members and their resources shapes its status within the village. Thus migrants are likely to accept the importance of contributing to village activities by one route or another, for reasons connected with maintenance or enhancement of family prestige. As one of the group noted,

> If you don't take a part in the village things it reflects, not just on you, but also on your family. The contributions which my sister and I make to things like the pastor's house and the new women's committee house are really to be sure that our family can hold their heads up in the village. It would be embarrassing if a family with an

> important title could not do these things. It would demean the prestige of our title and *matai* [chief].

But statements like those above are more than simply a reflection of Samoan "public culture." There are other good reasons why those who made up this group were genuinely committed to the support of kin and village. As noted elsewhere the heads of families, who at the time chose those who were to go overseas, were conscious that certain people were more likely to recognize and discharge their obligations to the group than others (Macpherson 1973; Shankman 1976). When opportunities arose to send members to New Zealand they sought out people who had proven willing to serve the family without public complaint (Macpherson 1973; Meleisea 1991). Single people, and particularly single women, were most often chosen because they were known to be more reliable remitters than their male siblings (Shankman 1976). Also, households could more readily accommodate single migrants in accord with New Zealand immigration requirements that decreed a certain amount of living space per person in the dwelling where migrants proposed living, and their incomes did not have to support a spouse's kin group or dependent children.

If migrants' propensity to remit was important, so too was opportunity during that period. The demand for semiskilled and unskilled labor was strong and the group's basic incomes at the time were reliable, if not high. Augmenting basic incomes was relatively easy by working additional hours paid at overtime rates and on public holidays. At the time less well-paid work in service industries was also available for those who wanted second, and occasionally third, jobs. Members of the group regularly worked very long hours to take advantage of increased rates and five of the group took either casual or permanent second jobs. Steady, elastic earnings were only part of the explanation, however.

Migrants' capacity to remit was enhanced by the living arrangements typically engineered by their parents. Most moved straight into and boarded in established households headed by an older person, usually a relative. These arrangements reduced both their establishment and living costs. The combination of high incomes and low living costs insured relatively high discretionary incomes. But the living arrangements may have been important for another reason: a social dynamic that operated in this setting. These households often contained other young, single migrants, so that new migrants necessarily spent much of their time with people in similar situations. An established commitment to remit was the norm because remittances, as many noted, were regarded as tangible evidence of one's claims to love one's family. Competition between members sometimes acted as an additional

incentive to maintain high levels. Those who had lived in these households mentioned the informal competition that had developed and the lengths to which they felt compelled to go to keep up levels. Some had taken second jobs; some had started to work on Sundays; others had taken less-congenial and in some cases more-dangerous jobs that paid higher hourly rates or jobs in which more overtime was available. These accommodation arrangements provided a situation in which high discretionary incomes could be generated and in which social pressures to remit this income existed. But these factors alone could not on their own guarantee the high levels maintained over the early period.

Many parents believed that close supervision of young migrants' activities was necessary for both social and financial reasons and sought out migrant relatives whom they believed could and would provide it.[5] Many of the households were headed by such a person; usually an older relation acted *in loco parentis* and effectively controlled members' social and financial activities. In some households people surrendered unopened pay packets to the household heads, who deducted various charges and set aside a sum to be remitted, another to be banked, and returned a small sum in pocket money. In others people were simply required to provide proof that certain savings and remittance commitments had been met weekly. In yet other households less-formal control was exercised over income, and peer pressure seems to have produced much the same result in terms of commitment to remit.

Such supervision was not seen, at least initially, to be an unreasonable restriction on freedom by either parents or their migrant children. Most migrants accepted that supervision was appropriate at the time and that it was no more or less than they would have expected in Samoa. Most acknowledged that they could not have migrated without the assistance they received from the families to which they went and accepted a degree of control over their economic, religious, and social freedom in return for relatively inexpensive accommodation, access to employment, and social and emotional support. There were exceptions and these were cases where people believed that their "hosts" or sponsors were exploiting them. These accusations were usually muted (as one would expect) since there was often no formal agreement about what was "reasonable." In several cases people simply put up with the situation until they persuaded their parents to allow them to form, or move to, another household. But two of the group had, with the support of other kin, left households in which they felt that their income was being misappropriated.

For the first three years a commitment to family and village consumed considerable amounts of new migrants' time and money. The combination of commitment to parents and siblings who had remained in the village, rel-

atively high wages, low living expenses, peer pressure, and supervision led migrants in this group to invest considerable amounts of time and capital in their community of origin. This was true of both men and women and was reflected in the relatively high level of remittances maintained over the period.

Phase Two

In years 4 to 7 the proportion of net income per capita remitted declined, although the extent of this decline varied from case to case. Did this decline reflect a changing orientation to the community of origin and a reduced commitment to family? Not according to those involved. Members of this group remained committed to the idea that as unmarried members of the family they were bound to serve the family and that remittances were tangible expression of that service. It was also accepted as the means by which their family's prestige, and therefore their own, was maintained and enhanced within the village. Contributions were also justified by reference to the biblical injunction to care for parents and the Samoan belief that one is obligated to those "whose sweat one has eaten."

Stable, full-time jobs and reliable incomes were available throughout the period, as were casual and part-time work to supplement basic earnings. Many remained in households in which a commitment to support was both the attitudinal and behavioral norm. Some, who were required to move out of households to make room for newer arrivals, established similar arrangements and assumed leadership roles in them. A young woman created a household for her newly arrived sister and cousin and simply reproduced, with minor modifications, the arrangements in the household she had left. Her age, greater experience, and the dependence of newly arrived kin ensured that her management of the household and of their social and financial affairs was accepted without resistance. A young man who had resented what he considered excessive supervision adopted a different strategy to achieve the same end when forced to establish his own household. In place of the complex supervision of fare repayments, banking, and remittances, instead he led by example and used peer pressure to persuade members of his household to meet their commitments.

If people remained committed to their families in Samoa, earned good incomes, and were in situations in which tangible recognition of these obligations was the behavioral and attitudinal norm, why did per-capita remittance levels fall? Accounts suggest that the decline was the consequence of more-effective exploitation of families' resources in the early part of phase two and of declining demand in the latter.

Most of the migrants realized quickly that generating on their own the amounts of capital required for major projects would take a very considerable time and would force them to postpone certain personal plans. Some, for instance, wished to marry, to study, to travel, and to buy property but were reluctant to do so until they had met their family obligations. In an attempt to shorten the period required to meet their obligations, those who could brought relatives to New Zealand to work and help increase the rate of capital accumulation.[6] A typical example and explanation of this strategy ran,

> It's more use having a sibling working in the factory than in the plantation because we can build the new house [for their parents] more quickly, so when a vacancy occurred at work I brought her [a sister] here to work. It was much quicker with both of us working for the same end. We could earn more in one hour in the factory than in one week in the plantation cutting copra.

During phase two, migrants also sought to reduce the number of households that they were supporting. In phase one, migrants were supporting their parents' household and, either directly or indirectly, various related households in the village. The larger the number of related households supported in this way, the greater their potential to consume capital intended for particular projects. In an attempt to shift responsibility for the support of these households to others, most migrants brought members of those households to New Zealand to work. As a young man noted,

> I really respect my father's sister. She was like a mother to me when I was growing up. I got on well with her children, too, because we grew up together. So I was happy to help out with their expenses when I came. But I couldn't build the house for my parents because my parents were always giving the money I sent to my aunt to help her with some *fa'alavelave* [celebration of a life crisis--death, marriage, and so forth] or other. So after a while I brought her daughter F. here so she could support that side of the family. After that I brought my brother. Then F. brought her sister to help her. We were all staying together at that time and we decided to pay a fare for one of our other cousins so that he could look after his own parents.

Thus, the investment in a relative's fare was offset against a higher rate of savings and a shorter period needed to meet commitments. In the short

term cocontributors' remittances could be reduced and in the long term relief from high levels of commitment could be achieved earlier. This strategy represented a more-efficient exploitation of the families' resources and lay behind the rapid growth in the size of the Samoan population in New Zealand during the 1960s and 1970s. This was, however, only one of several factors that underlay the declining levels of remittances within the group during this phase.

Many of the large projects that had consumed large amounts of members' incomes in phase one were being completed and absolute levels of demand were falling. People spoke of the feelings of satisfaction on the completion of projects.

> When my cousin returned from Samoa with photos of the house we had built for my parents we were so proud. We were so happy that we cried. I don't want to seem proud but that house was one of the nicer houses in the village. Only the pastors house was better. In the photo, our parents were standing in front of the house and smiling. I know it is wrong but I tell you we felt very proud. . . . We thought we would have a break from saving, do T.'s wedding, and then try and buy them a car.

But people also spoke of the relief of being freed, even temporarily, of the continuous requirement of remitting and of the easing of interpersonal tensions that developed over time as individuals' personal plans were frustrated by the necessity of saving.

> When we sent the final money to paint the house and put on the guttering, I believe we were also secretly relieved. It had been a long time and we had lived like slaves for that house.

> Sometimes we had argued because one of us would buy something and not have enough for the *lafoga* [remittance]. You can understand how hard it is to go without new things when people around you seem to have everything.

> At other times we would get angry with the people in Samoa because money we sent for the house was spent on other things and I asked myself if we would ever finish the house. That's why L. and L. were smarter. They bought the materials through Burns Philp here in Auckland, and sent the carpenter to build their parents' house. That way there was no humbug. All the money was used to build the house.

With more migrants supporting the nonmigrant family and various major capital expenditures completed, absolute levels of demand declined. But this did not signal, for most, any significant change in orientation to Samoa so much as a more-effective exploitation of opportunity.

Phase Three

Around eight years after arrival, remittances had declined to the level I call phase three. Did this reduced level represent a declining commitment to homeland and family? Not according to those centrally involved. There was still general agreement on the importance of support for parents, siblings, and certain communal projects. Most still considered that they were privileged to have had the opportunity to migrate and that this carried continuing obligation. But the exact nature of this obligation and the ways in which people discharged it were starting to diverge within the group for the first time. This divergence is masked in a measure of central tendency and is not evident in Figure 1. In Figure 2 the remittances of four people who represent different patterns are charted to show the range of patterns that emerged during this period.

In each case the nature and causes of the reorientation differed. Each of the four profiles reflects individuals' changing circumstances, which in turn shape, both directly and indirectly, orientations to their families and villages. The cases illustrate the range of factors that influence longer-term commitments to these entities.[7]

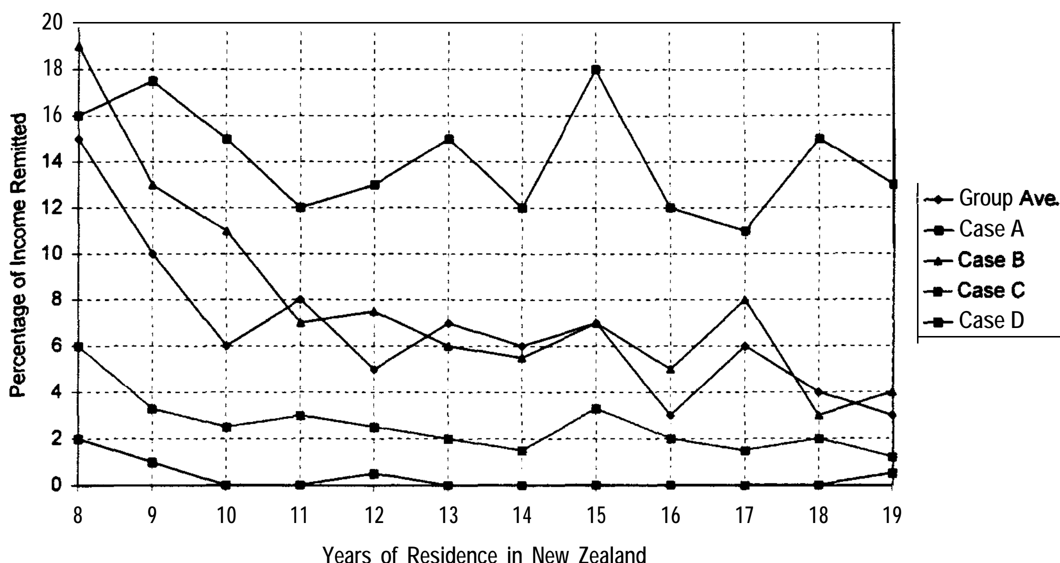

FIGURE 2. **Percentage of net income remitted during years 8 to 20 by four Samoans residing in New Zealand.**

Four Case Studies

The Case of A.

A. was a bus driver and with regular overtime had a good, stable income. His wife, also Samoan, was employed full time by a food manufacturer. They were buying a home and car, and each was supporting parents, siblings, and other family in Samoa. Each had a brother living in the household. A.'s father held a respected *matai* title in the village and A. was committed to the idea of service to both his *matai* and his parents.

To meet these obligations he remitted a fixed sum weekly to Samoa. This money was used to meet his immediate family's living expenses. He also met periodic requests for additional money from his parents. This money was used to meet extraordinary demands on the family and those placed on his father as a *matai.* Meeting these demands is essential to the maintenance of his family's status within the village and therefore indirectly to his own.

However, as he explained, the timing of these demands could not be anticipated. When they had occurred while he was single, he had taken additional part-time work as a security guard to meet them. Later he and his wife set aside money regularly to meet these contingencies but still found that they periodically exhausted this reserve and had to borrow against their home. Later they had organized a bingo game with another Samoan couple to generate a larger reserve fund for these crises or *fa'alavelave.* With the reserve they had been able to contribute to *fa'alavelave* in both his family and his wife's.

A.'s orientation to the family and village is explained in part by his commitment to Samoan ideology and Christian belief, and in part by his personal ambition. He remains committed to the Samoan belief in the correctness of service and the Christian injunction to respect his parents, and in these he enjoys the support of his wife. His father, with general support from the extended family, has asked him to consider returning to Samoa and taking his title. He proposes to do this and sees the invitation as recognition of his past service and of the truth of the proverb, "*Ole ala i le pule o le tautua,* The path to power is service." To insure that the family continues to support his claim he must prove that he is an appropriate candidate and his generosity to his parents is part of this process. In this course his wife, who is also the daughter of a ranking *matai,* is supportive.

The couple try to make regular vacation trips to Western Samoa, and A. has attended important village events like the opening of the new church. When he has been unable to attend he has made generous gifts through his parents. He has also taken a leading role in village fund-raising activities in

Auckland and has placed his home and resources at the disposal of *matai* visiting New Zealand in the course of fund-raising.

A.'s two children speak Samoan fluently and the Samoan language is used in their home and church. The children are taken to family activities and are encouraged to listen and observe. The children have attended a Samoan Congregational Christian Church congregation in which the Samoan language is used and take an active part in its activities. They have been taken to Samoa and encouraged to think of A.'s village in Western Samoa as their home in Samoa.

The Case of B.

B. is a supervisor in a manufacturing concern. He is married to a Samoan woman and had bought a home in a West Auckland suburb. Until year 10 both had worked in full-time jobs and had supported their respective families and villages. As a supervisor B. had access to employment openings in the company in which he worked and had been able to place siblings he and his wife had brought to New Zealand at various times. With their assistance B. and his wife had reduced their commitments over the ten years that he had been in New Zealand.

In year 10 B.'s wife became concerned about her widowed mother's situation and had brought her to New Zealand to live with them. The couple was required to enter a covenant with the government making them solely responsible for most of the costs of her care. When this became very expensive, B.'s wife brought her sister to live with them to share the physical and financial demands of caring for her mother. The sister has since become unemployed because of a factory closure and can contribute only labor to the mother's care. B.'s wife has since then only been able to find part-time work and much of her wage has gone to pay medical expenses. In the meantime B.'s hours at work have been reduced and his income has declined by 20 percent. In the past when additional money was required, B. was able to get part-time work as a doorman or security guard with his cousin. This extra work is no longer available and he now has periodic difficulty making the mortgage repayments on the house.

This reduced earning capacity has altered B.'s attitudes to the money he sends to his parents. B. would like to send more to Samoa but finds that increasingly difficult. In the past B. was content to send money to his parents and was not concerned by the fact that a significant proportion of the money was spent by his parents to meet their various commitments in the village, finding its way indirectly into village projects rather than the projects he would have preferred. When that happened he and his siblings

regularly had to "replace" money intended for one purpose and used for another. Then, he said, 'We never worried. It was easy then. I never really wanted to tell my parents how to spend the money. You know what Samoan children are like. It doesn't matter how old they are, they still don't feel able to give advice to their parents. I just thought it was their money to spend as they like and left them to it."

He admits that the amount his parents spend on village commitments has now become a serious problem. The brother and sister he brought to New Zealand are in similar situations and they have discussed bringing the parents to New Zealand. Although primarily concerned with the quality of care available, cost is also a major consideration: They believe that it would be less expensive to have their parents with them because they could control their expenses. The money would be spent directly on the parents and not leak into the village economy. As B. noted,

> You want to see how much they spend going from one *fofo* or healer to another. They spend a lot to hire taxis and give gifts to the *fofo* and then hire taxis to go to the hospital and buy medicines. If they were here we could just insure them and then take them straight to the medical center and claim back the money. We could save a heap. . . . And look at the old lady She is always giving money to this and to that. It's partly because she's such a generous and kind old thing. But I shouldn't say it but she is really a bit of a show-off and can't resist splashing her money around the village, which is a problem now.

Such an arrangement would also reduce certain other costs, such as the NZ$2,000 B. and his New Zealand siblings each spent twelve months ago to fly to their fathers bedside in Samoa when an overanxious sibling told them the old man was dying (in fact he had the flu) and the telephone charges incurred assuring themselves that the parents are well.

Neither B. nor his wife have political ambitions in the village. Their children are doing well in New Zealand schools and both believe their best interests are served by remaining in New Zealand. The children were taken to Samoa as infants but have little recollection of either the place or the relations there. They speak some Samoan, know many of their migrant relatives, and are active in Pacific Islands Presbyterian Church activities.

The Case of C.

C. is a forty-three-year-old male. He is employed as a salesman and specializes in selling to Samoans. He moves from one sales field to another as op-

portunities present, and his income fluctuates but is generally high. He married a part-Samoan woman who works part-time. They live with their four children and his nephew and niece. They are buying a house in a lower-middle-income suburb and expect to trade up to another area when their equity increases and when they are more confident about the New Zealand economy.

His father is dead, and his mother and all but one of his siblings live in New Zealand. His sister in Samoa has sent two of her children to live with C. and his wife and to attend school in New Zealand. C. and his siblings in New Zealand take turns looking after their mother. They have a very active and congenial family life, meeting regularly to eat, relax, hold family devotions, and discuss family matters. His wife's parents also live in New Zealand.

C., his wife, and their children have become very active members of a local Samoan Congregational Christian Church congregation. Both he and his wife hold office in church-based associations, and his children are active in the choir, Sunday school, and youth club. The local congregation has just built a new church and is now building a multipurpose hall. The church activities consume a lot of their time and income. The church has become the focus of their social and religious life and a source of personal recognition and status for both.

Although his connections with his sister in Samoa remain strong, his linkages with the village have weakened over time. He said that his aim always was to bring his whole family to New Zealand and that he has accomplished that. His sister wishes to remain in Samoa but he has brought her children to insure they get a good education and regards that as his most useful service to her family. He occasionally sends money to his sister but says that her husband is reasonably well off and should be able to afford to "support things in the village." He looks to his sister and her husband to "look after the *fa'alavelave* at that end" while he and his migrant siblings look after the *fa'alavelave* at the New Zealand end. As he noted wryly, "There's always plenty of *fa'alavelave* to go around. Beside that, the ones here are so expensive now we're really struggling without worrying about the ones there as well. Besides, S. [his sister] and her husband have more of an interest in what goes on there."

C. and his wife do not expect to return to live in the village although he notes if they lost everything they would still have a place to go. Their plans are shaped by their children, two of whom experience acute allergic reactions to an unidentified plant in Samoa and would not be able to live comfortably there, even though they identify strongly with Samoa, speak Samoan, and are committed to Samoan voluntary associations in New Zealand. His wife sees her future tied to that of her children and expects she will always be near them, so she has little reason to consider permanent,

long-term residence in Samoa. Her parents' presence in New Zealand also shapes her attitude to Samoa. She likes "to be able to help my parents and I do so. I usually take them food or some money to help out. But I don't send much to Samoa because there's not many of my family still there. Most are either here or in the U.S. or in Australia. We're all over the place."

The Case of D.

D. was employed as a clerk-receptionist and had remitted regularly during her first eight years. During that period D. also brought a brother and a foster sister to New Zealand and they had between them provided a piece of land, a house, and various household appliances for their parents. She had then married a European coworker and they were buying a house in a middle-income suburb and an expensive car.

D. still has siblings in Samoa and believes that now the migrants have provided the security of land and house, it is up to the resident siblings to provide for the day-to-day needs of their parents and family. She sends occasional small amounts of money directly to her parents for their use and sends regular gifts.

D. has little interest in the village. Her father has a title but she has little interest in village politics and no intention of returning permanently to Samoa. Although she once contributed directly and indirectly to village projects, she now sends nothing and has clashed with her parents and siblings over the use of money that she had sent them for a village project. Her attitude to the village has been shaped over time by her observation of village organization. In her early years in New Zealand D. had become increasingly angry with the way village projects had been managed and, in particular, with evidence of regular misuse of funds. She had formed a fairly negative view of the competence of village administration and was fond of noting that if she "ran the household the way the chiefs ran the village, her family would have been on the road and starving years ago." She has little to do with village activities in New Zealand, which she says are plagued by the same problems.

D. and her husband have high material aspirations. They hope to travel and to trade up in the housing market and expect to take on more debt to do this. These plans will consume their discretionary income for the foreseeable future. Her husband has little use for Samoan custom and discourages contact with relatives and contributions to *fa'alavelave.* He visited Samoa once and, though he liked D.'s family, did not like the country at all and now refers to it in disparaging terms. Her own feelings about Samoa largely mirror her husband's.

The couple's children have not been to Samoa though they have vacationed in Australia. They do not speak Samoan, have little contact with their Samoan relatives, and are in schools with few Samoan students. Although they acknowledge that their mother is Samoan, they have much more to do with non-Samoans and think of themselves, with encouragement from their parents, primarily as "Kiwis." D. and her husband attend a predominantly European church but their children do not.

Discussion

Various end uses of remittances have been distinguished in the cases discussed above. There are two reasons for making such distinctions. First, it is useful analytically to know whether commitments to various elements of the community of origin vary independently of one another and this may be reflected in remittance patterns over time as the above cases show. Second, planners may find it useful to know where remittances will enter the economy and for what purpose. Accordingly, the following end uses can be distinguished. Remittances are sent to family members to acquire capital assets and for personal use as living expenses. Migrants initially all remitted to a range of relatives but all sought in the early stages of residence to reduce that range to immediate family by sponsoring new migrants who would assume responsibility for the maintenance and expenses of more-distant relatives. These expenses include the costs of participation in village activities. Some of the money sent to individuals "leaks" into the village economy in the form of contributions to projects. Remittances were also contributed directly to village projects, at least in the early stages of residence in New Zealand.

Over time the migrants remitting patterns diverged. In the first three to four years of New Zealand residence a combination of factors produced similar remitting patterns, characterized by relatively high proportions of income contributed to kin and, both directly and indirectly, to villages in which close affective kin lived and in which the migrants had usually lived before emigrating. The kin groups and villages often referred to as a person's strong side, *itu malosi,* received the largest shares of all migrants' remittances. Varying amounts were also sent in the early phases to kin groups and villages with which migrants had weaker connections, known often as the weak side, *itu vaivai.*

During years 4 to 7 the proportions of income remitted fell as expensive major projects were completed, the number of migrants increased, and the responsibility for both major projects and living expenses was spread over a larger number of contributors. Throughout the period, however, the

migrants' views of their obligations to their families and villages remained remarkably similar and generally strong. This may be due in part to the fact that the range of kin for which they now remained responsible was in most cases shrinking as new migrants assumed financial responsibility for kin for whom they had formerly been responsible. By this time most were primarily responsible for a smaller group of affective kin that generally included parents and siblings. During this stage, however, some were starting to review the importance of maintaining their links with their villages and thus the scale of both their direct and indirect contributions to village projects.

Beyond years 7 and 8 migrants' circumstances and views of their obligations to their nonmigrant families and villages started to diverge markedly. In this period we see an increasing range of factors influencing decisions to remit. Though the range of factors varied with individuals and are unique, others were significant in all cases. The remainder of this study focuses on those factors of broad significance. The emphasis here is on the events and reasoning that seem to explain individuals' responses to these factors. No attempt is made to suggest how such orientations might be distributed in the Samoan population at large.

Capacity to Remit

Capacity is the central issue and must precede all other questions of whether migrants will be disposed to remit. Migrants' capacity to remit will be influenced by the general state of the economy and of the labor market in the state to which they have gone. These facts raise questions about the long-term viability of remittances. However, in the above cases, though each migrant has found discretionary income shrinking recently, all had, and still have, the resources to remit. This is significant because change in remittance patterns is, in each case, a reflection of shifts in willingness rather than in capacity to remit.

Distribution of Family

Probably the most important single factor in determining patterns of individuals' remittances was the distribution of family and, most particularly, parents and siblings. Where money may once have been sent to the *matai* in his or her capacity as head of the family, for a long time now it has been sent directly to migrants' parents and siblings (Shankman 1976). This is partly a consequence of the rapidly increasing numbers of *matai* titleholders created since independence (Schoeffel and Meleisea 1984), which means that many migrants' parents are in fact *matai,* and the increasing individualization of

resource control. Furthermore, as O'Meara notes (1987), there is an increasing tendency to de facto individualization of land tenure, which means that individuals may no longer be as dependent on *matai* for access to land. A private market in freehold land further frees individuals from dependence on *matai* in this respect.

The migrants in this study remitted money to Samoa to support parents and siblings. The rationale for this rested in part on Samoan custom and was embodied in Samoan proverbs quoted in support and in part on biblical injunctions, typically passages from Exodus 20 and from Deuteronomy 27:16. In some cases the Bible passages were quoted to justify a decision to support only parents and siblings by people who had formerly supported *matai* and a wider range of kin. One woman described the change in her thinking over time:

> After I had brought my cousins to New Zealand and helped set them up, I thought I would concentrate on looking after my parents and my grandmother. When I first came I also sent money to our *matai* but that was because he was my grandfather. When he died I stopped sending money to the family's *matai.* People said I should support the *matai* but I thought, why should I support him? He has his own children here and they should support him. When people criticized me I argued that the Bible says those who dishonor their parents will be cursed. It doesn't say anything about the *matai.* . . . People would say it's part of our custom. At those times I would argue that our family had created so many titleholders and argued about them so much that no one knew who the real titleholder was any longer. That's true in our family and it made them angry but they couldn't say anything.

The commitment to parents is significant because it means that support for parents will be spent where the parents are residing. Thus, in A.'s case, A. and his siblings will remit to their parents in Samoa for as long as his parents remain there. The high level of A. and his siblings' contributions to their parents reflects their awareness of the importance of ensuring that their father, as a *matai,* is adequately supported in this role. In A.'s case, his contributions to his parents are further intended to demonstrate the qualities of service the extended family expects in those aspiring to titles. B. has no such aspirations and his contributions to his parents in Samoa do not reflect this longer-term political interest in the way that A.'s do.

Levels and patterns of commitment to parents in Samoa may also be shaped by where one's siblings live. D. and two siblings in New Zealand

bought land and built a house for their parents. Then they left the expense of the day-to-day maintenance of their parents to their siblings remaining on the island. That option existed because there were enough siblings in Samoa to insure that their mother's needs were adequately met. Such an option did not exist for those like C. who had brought most of their siblings to New Zealand and were unable to depend on people in Samoa for their parents' day-to-day expenses. The commitments to parents meant that when those parents moved to New Zealand, or some other metropolitan center, individuals' remittances often dropped dramatically. Migrants remained committed to their parents but spent money in New Zealand rather than remitting it to Samoa. Thus, for instance, B.'s wife brought her mother to New Zealand and supports her. She now has greater control over her mother's expenses and is no longer being asked to replace money that her mother spent on other projects. Because she is able to support her mother in this way she no longer regularly remits to kin in Samoa. Furthermore, B. can now see the possibilities of this arrangement and is considering bringing his parents to New Zealand. If he does, his remittances to Samoa will drop as he assumes responsibility for his parents' maintenance in New Zealand.

As migrants' parents grow older their children will be faced with the choice between joining them in the village or having the parents join them in New Zealand. Many migrants are, for a variety of reasons, unwilling or unable to return permanently to Western Samoa (Macpherson 1985). New Zealand immigration regulations make family reunification one of relatively few grounds on which Western Samoans can now enter New Zealand permanently, and the number of migrants in families in which the "center of gravity" has shifted may lead increasingly to attempts to bring parents to New Zealand. This would result in a continuing process of family consolidation in New Zealand and eventually in a shift of the primary focus of family interests, activities, and expenditures.

Even those migrants who continue to support parents in Samoa are likely to stop remitting when their parents die. When C.'s father died his mother chose to move to New Zealand to live with C. and his siblings. At that point C. stopped remitting money to Samoa because, as he said, "I have no reason to go there any more. Our family is mostly here now. While our parents were there I was conscious of the need to look after them. But when our father died and our mother came here, that was it."

For a number of reasons, then, a significant proportion of the funds presently remitted to kin in Samoa will likely dry up as parents move to metropolitan locations and centers of family gravity shift. For a number of reasons this fact is significant and may be a source of concern to those in Samoa who presume that remittances will continue at existing levels for the foreseeable

future. Politicians, for instance, argue that people will still continue to support their villages even when parents and close kin no longer reside there. But this may not be the case for several reasons.

Parents, and to a lesser extent siblings, are the conduits through which a certain amount of remittances finds its way into the day-to-day exchanges and transactions that make up the village economy. As long as migrants' parents and siblings remain in the village some part of remittances will continue to enter the village economy, albeit indirectly and sometimes involuntarily Migrants with close kin living in a village have more information about, and more occasion to think about and to become involved in, village affairs, albeit indirectly. Events in the village may have more-direct consequences for their immediate families. Migrants are bound to consider the impacts of various decisions on their family's material interests, on their short- and longer-term political interests, and on the family's social status within the village. Maintenance of the status quo will have costs and the enhancement of the family's sociopolitical prestige will have higher costs. Conversely, as a family's center of gravity shifts in consequence of migration, less and less of the resources migrants contribute to family find their way into the village economy.

Villages have, however, always approached migrants directly for support for village projects and have in the past found it. The most popular current means of tapping this support is the *tusigaigoa* or census. On these occasions village representatives visit those towns in New Zealand, and occasionally Australia and the United States, in which migrant villagers reside. The purpose of the fund-raising is explained at a series of meetings. On a specified day, after a short period in which people raise the necessary money, migrants bring their gifts to a central location and "register" them publicly. The amount raised at these events depends on the size of the expatriate village population and the degree of support for the project; it can be considerable. It is not unusual for large villages to raise around NZ$20,000 in Auckland on a single day and similar, though generally smaller, amounts in Wellington and Christchurch. For some years the amounts collected on these occasions rose steadily. Some argue that this was a consequence of informal intervillage competition fueled by the representatives from Samoa who urged village migrants to remember what other smaller, less-significant villages had raised in recent similar events. There is some evidence, though, that these events are not raising the amounts they once did. People explain the declining returns as a consequence of the economic recession in New Zealand and argue that these will be reversed when and if the New Zealand economy rebounds. But the decline may be more than simply a temporary dip. It may also reflect attenuated connections with the village and

a growing selectivity among the migrants about which projects will be supported.

In New Zealand an individuals links with the village may become attenuated. Village collective activity in these circumstances is typically episodic and for much of the time the village remains a latent entity. Few migrant village associations have a long, stable existence. Village-based activities have tended to be occasional, recreational, and connected with fund-raising. In most cases, ad hoc village-based groups are formed to organize particular projects. These activities may raise interest in and commitment to villages in the short term but they tend not to lead to sustained interest and commitment. Many attend only to meet people they do not normally see and to relax. Many whose interests have shifted over time have little interest in and tolerance for the political formalities that are part of these events.

The reluctance of some migrants to become involved in projects run by people with a history of mismanagement of funds may make it more difficult for village groups to organize projects that can tap the migrant population. D. is a case in point. She compares the requirement that she manage her money carefully with the village's reluctance to do so. Another young woman's comment reflected both this new selectivity and a more-critical attitude to the management of village activity.

> I didn't give anything to the last fund-raising because I knew the people who were running it. They are crooks. No more, no less. They have been in charge of projects in the past and things have always gone wrong. Money, or raffle tickets, or materials have gone missing and we have been asked for more to make up the shortfall. They have played games with us. The people [in the village] don't have the courage to confront them because they are chiefs. When I was younger my parents asked me to support them and I did. Now my parents are dead and I know more and I think more carefully about these things.

Spouses' Attitude to Remittances

Where spouses share, or at least understand, the commitment to family and village, individuals' remittances need not cease after marriage. The level may decline as the couple faces basic costs of establishing a home and family. Spouses may accept the importance of family and village but wish to separate the two and to assign different priorities to each. Some spouses may wish to distinguish among members of the descent group on, say, the basis of genealogical distance. One woman explained the approach she and her husband had taken in the following way.

> I'm a Samoan so I understand why he wants to do all of the *fa'alavelave.* His father is a *matai* and is always ringing from Samoa with something else that needs support. But I don't want to be broke for the rest of my life. So we talked and agreed that for the close family, our strong sides, we would do things but that for the others, our weak sides, we would just make a token gesture. You have to do something like this in the end.

Not all Samoan spouses, however, share these commitments to family and village; some may wish to minimize remittances. Thus, a man who had married a New Zealand-born Samoan was surprised when his wife objected to the level of his support for his family, her attitude being more like a European's than a Samoan's in that respect. Given the rate of outmarriage in the Samoan migrant population, spouses' attitudes are likely to become more significant as a constraint on remittances. Studies have shown that even from early on, when ample Samoan spouses were available, one in three Samoans contracting formal marriages were marrying non-Samoans (Macpherson 1973). Non-Samoan spouses who do not appreciate the cultural importance of contributions to kin and village may discourage remittances. There are variations, of course. The two people in the group who had married other Pacific Islanders found that although their spouses, a Cook Islander and a Niuean, were not remitting, they appreciated the rationale for contributing and made no attempt to prevent them. The two in the group who had married Europeans had mixed experiences. D.'s husband discouraged remittances on the ground that it encouraged people to do nothing for themselves. L.'s husband was relaxed about remittances on the ground that his interpretation of the scripture required him to share with others.

The levels and patterns of remittances to villages will also be shaped by spouses' attitudes about the importance of villages. The Samoan spouses were predictably more aware of the importance of contributing to village projects than non-Samoans but, as the cases show, not all were equally relaxed about contributing. A. and his spouse have strong, positive feelings for their villages and are involved in a variety of ways. A. is encouraged to participate in village activities that will keep his claim to the family title alive and anticipates a central role in the village in the medium and longer term. His wife encourages his visits to the village and participation on the grounds that he should be as well known as the title to which he aspires. By comparison, B. and his wife are also aware of the significance of the village and hold strong, positive feelings for their respective villages. But as their incomes have contracted their interests and life-style have focused on New Zealand, their long-term plans have crystallized, and remittances have been curtailed in ways that reflect their lack of political ambition.

Spouses from other Pacific islands were more aware of the significance of participation in village affairs than those of European origin, although not always happy about the level of calls on income made by the villages. A Niuean spouse commented:

> We have villages too but they are not always doing things like Samoan villages. We have associations and choirs and that sort of thing. The village is important for me because it's a part of myself. The Samoans' villages seem to be doing things all the time. This year a new school, next year a church, next year a house for the pastor, next year a new organ for the church, next year a set of robes for the choir. . . it goes on and on.

European spouses were more cautious about the villages' demands for support. One was uncertain about contributions to village projects because neither he nor his spouse intended to live there and they could not see the value of investing in village amenities. The other held similar views but added that contributions to villages discouraged effort on the villagers' part and led them to unrealistic aspirations in view of their income and ability to construct and maintain such amenities.

Migrants' Aspirations

The third set of factors that shapes migrants' orientations to their village is connected with their residential and political aspirations. Remittances may be seen as a form of investment in some longer-term plan. Those who plan to return to the village are more likely to "invest," either directly or indirectly, in the village. Thus A., who has aspirations to office within the village polity, continues to contribute to village-sponsored activities whereas B. has no such aspirations and does not contribute. The most obvious investments are a person's physical presence and contributions in cash and in kind made in person. But even a proxy presence is evidence of a person's continued interest in the village. These investments keep the person "alive" on occasions when the village meets to celebrate itself. While all with kinship connections in a village can claim land-use rights and land on which to build a house, those who have shown evidence of commitment will have both a stronger claim and fewer reservations about pursuing such a claim.

Migrants who aspire to leadership roles within the village polity also know that contributions to the village will strengthen that claim. The strength of their claim within the family will be determined to some extent by evidence of their willingness to serve, *tautua,* the current *matai.* Service

consists ideally of both labor and the proceeds of labor. But migrants like A. may provide labor in family activities in New Zealand and cash for family activities in Samoa.

The future status of the titles to which they aspire will be determined to a large extent by the way in which the current incumbent conducts himself or herself in the position. It is in a migrant's interest to insure that the incumbent has the resources necessary at least to maintain, and preferably to enhance, the status of the title. This typically requires money that, in the hands of a competent *matai,* can be converted into sociopolitical capital in various public exchanges. Over time a competent *matai* with a combination of resources, skills, and personality can improve the status of a title within the village. Thus, those who aspire to titles will generally accept the value of cash contributions used to maintain the status of that to which they aspire.

Conversely, migrants who aspire to membership and eventually leadership within local activities may choose to invest in New Zealand. They will use their social and financial resources to enhance their status, and eventually their political power, within a local church congregation, for instance. For many the village of origin is being displaced by the urban church congregation--the new urban village--as a focus of attention and a source of status and identity These congregations meet regularly and provide opportunities for fellowship, worship, and a variety of religious, economic, and political roles. But, like villages, they too exert calls on members' funds to acquire land; build or acquire churches, pastors' residences, and ancillary buildings; and pay pastors' stipends. People who become involved in migrant associations often find that these provide a more-relevant center to which to contribute their energy and resources than the village. All that has changed in effect is their reference group, but this necessarily has a marked impact on remittances.

The growth of demands from local churches and associations causes certain conflicts for migrants who must now choose between their village of origin and new urban associations that have come to have increasing relevance for them and their children. One forty-four-year-old explained it in the following way:

> It's difficult for me. There is the *lafoga* for the church at Papatoetoe in which I am a deacon, and then the matai come from Samoa with another request for money. I still feel strongly about our village because I grew up there and some of my family are there still. But I have been supporting that place for a long time. Sometimes when I have been back to Samoa, I see the young ones just sitting around or playing cricket and I think why should I be getting up at five in

> the morning to work for the *palagi* when they just sit around. I want to support our pastor and church here because I am a deacon, my wife and I are in the choir, my children are in the Sunday school and *'au talavou* [youth group]. It is like our new village.

There is, of course, nothing to prevent people from expending resources in both home village and in migrant voluntary associations. There are, however, limits to the discretionary income available to invest, and individuals may decide splitting that income is ultimately counterproductive. Eventually people are forced to make judgments about expenditures and to decide where and on what basis to invest, as the following comment indicates.

> When we were asked to provide funds to reroof the church I asked myself, Why should I do that? My children are in school here. My brothers and sisters and their children mostly live in Apia or overseas and their children will not attend that school. L. and T. and I talked about it and we decided we would give something but just a token because things are tough here and we have to think of our own children and their future.

But this ambivalence to the village can be transformed where latent interests there are perceived to be threatened. Considerable amounts of money and effort may be invested to reassert influence in the village. The strength of this latent commitment may become apparent when, for instance, a titleholder dies and candidates for the vacant title are indifferent, or worse, hostile, to one's family's interests. One of the men involved in this study had withdrawn from his church and had resigned his job to travel to Samoa to contest the *matai* election and to protect his family's interest, which he believed was threatened. Although it is possible at any time for a given number of persons to reverse their orientation to the village, it is also unlikely that this involves large numbers of persons on a continuing basis. In cases that occurred during this study, there was typically a period of intense activity in which human and financial resources were mobilized for a specific purpose. When the crisis was resolved those involved typically resumed their former scale and pattern of giving.

Whether their children will see fit to replace them as remitters is a different issue, however.

New Remitters for Old?

The basis and strength of New Zealand-born children's attachment to their parents' communities of origin have diverged. The nature and causes of the

differences have been outlined in detail elsewhere (Macpherson 1984, 1991). It is sufficient, in an exploratory essay such as this, to examine the children of the migrants in the case studies to establish how their personal attributes and experiences might influence their attachment to Samoa.

Two sets of children, those of A. and C., speak Samoan well, participate regularly in Samoan family and church activities, and identify with Samoa. Both sets are potential remitters, but there is reason to believe that they will behave in quite different ways. In one case the children will almost certainly settle, at least temporarily, with their parents in Western Samoa. They have, through more-regular visits, a more-comprehensive and detailed knowledge of their family and village connections in Samoa. Links with these people and with the village are valued highly and are likely to be even more important to them in the future. A.'s working-age children send money both directly to cousins and to a half brother in Samoa and indirectly by giving money to their parents to send to both family and village in Samoa and by subsidizing household expenses.

An allergy will prevent C.'s children from settling in Samoa. Their knowledge of family and village connections in Samoa is limited. Much of their information comes indirectly from people passing through their home and is necessarily secondhand. Links with members of the family and the village are valued but have limited long-term significance. C.'s working-age children do not send money to cousins in Samoa because they do not have personal bonds with them. They will give their parents money to assist with family and village projects in Samoa when asked, but they do this out of respect for their parents rather than a personal attachment to the family and village. They do not usually take an active part in the activity and do not use opportunities it presents to extend their knowledge. They are, however, enthusiastic supporters of local family and Samoan church activities, and like their parents see these as their communities of interest.

B.'s children could settle in Samoa but seem unlikely to. Their knowledge of family and village connections is limited and comes largely from visiting relations. However, this does not reflect a lack of interest on their part. Unlike A.'s and C.'s children, B.'s children do not know enough Samoan to be able to follow the discussions of family and village affairs that go on around them. Their parents are happy enough to give them information when they ask. This lack of extensive knowledge is not a problem for them for their reference group comprises English-speaking children of migrants from Samoa, the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau and is presently based around evangelical Christianity. In this group status is defined to a large extent by people's commitment to church organization and youth mission and by formal academic achievements. While these children contribute to the family indirectly, their parents encourage them to spend their money in

education and church activities. They acknowledge their Samoan descent but tend to see themselves as Pacific Islanders in relation to other New Zealanders.

D.'s children have little knowledge of their Samoan relations or their mother's village. D. attends some family activities and the very occasional village project meeting but does not take the children. The children's contact with local Samoan family is confined largely to D.'s cousin married to a European, her children, and occasional visits from D.'s siblings. They have neither the information nor the language skills to gain much from these occasional contacts with kin. This became apparent to the children during a visit of D.'s parents. The grandparents and children could not communicate easily and each became frustrated and somewhat embarrassed by their inability. When they have sought information about the village and the Samoan branch of the family from their mother, they have been told that such knowledge is largely irrelevant to them, that their futures lie in New Zealand, and that they would be better served by improving their English and academic performance. Their attitudes toward Samoan society are shaped to a large extent by their parents, who tend to be critical of the *fa'a Samoa* (Samoan culture and custom) and depict it as a communalistic activity that makes all poor. This attitude to Samoa and Samoan society is shaped to a lesser extent by their peers, who are mostly non-Samoans and whose interests are in modern music, socializing, and dating. These children have little interest in remitting or reason to become remitters.

Conclusion

Over time migrants' orientations to village communities change in various ways. This is reflected by a decline in the proportions of their income remitted to people in those communities. A range of orientations is evident among long-resident migrants and is reflected in the pattern and scale of remittances. It is useful to distinguish between remittances to kin living in the community and those to the village community as an entity. Some migrants remit primarily to kin while others remit both to kin and community projects. Declining remittance levels do not signal declining support for Samoan custom and practice; they may simply indicate increasing expenditures on the same sorts of activity in New Zealand.

This is not to suggest that people must decide between one and the other or that the choices are mutually exclusive. It is, however, impossible for most Samoans to invest large amounts of time and energy in both locales. Most must decide where their primary interests lie and where their resources will be most effectively invested. The cases outlined above suggest some of the factors that may influence choice.

Those who have close kin in the village community remit more to those relatives for support and to permit them to take an active part in village activities in which funds are needed. When close kin join migrants in New Zealand, remittance levels tend to drop as money once remitted to support these people in Samoa is now spent on the same people in New Zealand. Money that once found its way into the Western Samoan economy is now no longer available.

Those who aspire to residence and leadership in Western Samoan village communities tend to remit a higher proportion of their incomes to those communities to create a stock of sociopolitical capital on which they can draw. Those who expect to continue their residence in New Zealand and to take an active role in Samoan activity there are forced to decide where to invest their time and resources. As the range of Samoan activities in New Zealand expands, an increasing number of opportunities are available to those migrants willing to invest in New Zealand.

Migrants' children represent a source of potential replacement remitters. They could, if they choose, remit money to either family or to villages in Western Samoa with which they have links. As with their parents, the prospects of New Zealand-born Samoans remitting to Western Samoa will differ markedly and will be determined by their parents' attitudes to Samoa, the nature of their links with family and village, their ability to communicate with kin and to build on their knowledge, the reference groups that they adopt, and the importance that Samoa assumes in their personal plans.

The next task for research is to gather a larger data sample and to subject some of the hypotheses suggested above to more-rigorous statistical analysis to establish the relative importance these factors assume in different groups' assessments of the value of investing time and money in Samoa. The next task for planners is to devise strategies that will reduce Western Samoa's dependence on remittances. It is not clear that the stock of new remitters who typically send large proportions of their income home will be replaced. The loss of a relatively small number of these new remitters could have a significant impact on the level of remittances to Western Samoa in the near future.

NOTES

I am grateful to the Rockefeller Foundation for a Rockefeller Fellowship in the Humanities, the Center for Pacific Islands Studies at the University of Hawaii, and the University of Auckland for the opportunity to research and write this article.

I am grateful to the following for reactions to a version of this article presented at the XVII Pacific Science Congress in Honolulu in 1991: Dennis Ahlburg, Department of Economics, University of Minnesota; Iosefa Maiava, United Nations Development Pro-

gram, Apia; Malama Meleisea, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies, University of Canterbury; Jan Rensel, Department of Anthropology, University of Hawaii; Stuart Rosewarne, Department of Economics, University of Sydney; Dr. Penelope Schoeffel, Crown Research Institute, Christchurch; and Caroline Sinavaiana, East-West Center, Honolulu.

1. One problem with synchronic studies of remittance patterns is that they are subject to periodic distortions. In the wake of Cyclone Ofa, which devastated Samoa in 1989, many people who had not remitted for some time sent money to friends and relatives. The result was that remittances to Western Samoa in the two months after the cyclone ran 70 percent ahead of the same months in the previous year. Although in this case the distorting factor is readily apparent, this is not always so.

2. In fact, it is misleading to separate orientations to community of origin from those of destination because orientations to one are shaped by experience-of the other.

3. These data come from annual income-tax returns filed between 1970 and 1986, which require people to indicate and to verify the amounts of cash remitted to support dependent relatives. The money was transmitted as postal orders in most cases and the names of the payees/recipients were listed receipts. Since the author was related by marriage to most of the remitters, the relationships of remitters and recipients were well known to him. Since a taxpayer was entitled to deduct one-third of the value of such contributions from his or her takable income, there is a clear incentive to provide evidence of all payments. The author helped complete the tax returns involved and routinely discussed patterns of remittances and purposes for which they were used. During the period the author was also party to protracted and unsolicited accounts of remittance activity and uses of remittances. The data do not include payments in kind or airfares paid and therefore understate the true value of remittances. The removal of tax deductions for such support of relatives from New Zealand tax regulations has since made it more difficult to trace individual remittances by this means.

4. During the 1960s and 1970s village work parties used to come to work in New Zealand. Their fares and living expenses in New Zealand were met by their families. Their wage packets were surrendered to the trustees each weekend and became the property of the project; work party members were given a token amount as pocket money.

5. This was considered especially important in the case of young women, who were considered especially vulnerable to the predatory interests of young men in the city. Many had been reminded of the symbolic importance of their conduct for their families and of the implications of "falling from grace."

6. Delays in bringing relatives occurred because offers of work were necessary to sponsor a relative's migration, and employees often had to establish a good work record before they were offered an opportunity to sponsor a relative.

7. These calls from villages to contribute to village projects and from families for smaller contributions to recurrent expenses come at the same time. Because these people are related and from the same village, the calls on their income in years 10 to 15 have tended to coincide. The call in year 10 was for the refurbishment of the pastor's dwelling, in year 12 for replacement of the church's organ, and in year 13 for the reroofing of the village school.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ahlburg, Dennis
1991 *Remittances and Their Impact: A Study of Tonga and Western Samoa. Pacific* Policy Paper, no. 7. Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University.

Haves, Geoff
1991 "Migration and Development in Polynesia." *The Contemporary Pacific* 3 (1): 1-58.

Loomis, T.
1990 "Cook Island Remittances: Volumes, Determinants; and Uses." In *Migration and Development in the South Pacific,* ed. J. Connell, 61-81. Pacific Research Monograph, no. 24. Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University.

Macpherson, C.
1973 "Extended Kinship among Urban Samoan Migrants in New Zealand: Toward an Explanation of Its Persistence in Urban New Zealand." Ph.D. thesis, Sociology, University of Waikato.
1984 "On the Future of Samoan Ethnicity in New Zealand." In *Tauiwi: Racism and Ethnicity in New Zealand,* ed. P. Spoonley, C. Macpherson, D. Pearson, and C. Sedgwick, 107-127. Palmerston North, N.Z.: Dunmore Press.
1985 "Public and Private Perceptions of Home: Will the Samoans Return?" In *Mobility and Identity in the Pacific,* ed. M. Chapman and P. S. Morrison, 242-262. Special issue, *Pacific Viewpoint* 24 (1).
1991 "The Changing Contours of Samoan Ethnicity." In *Nga Take: Ethnicity and Racism in New Zealand/Aotearoa,* ed. P. Spoonley, D. Pearson, and C. Macpherson, 67-84. Palmerston North, N.Z.: Dunmore Press.
1992 "Economic and Political Restructuring and the Sustainability of Migrant Remittances: The Case of Western Samoa." *The Contemporary Pacific* 4 (1): 109-135.

Meleisea, M.
1991 "*Tautua:* Some Observations on Service in Samoan Society" Paper presented to the XVII Pacific Science Congress, Honolulu, Hawaii, 27 May-2 June.

O'Meara, J. T.
1987 "Samoan Land Tenure." In *Land Tenure in the Pacific,* 3d ed., ed. R. Crocombe, 74-113. Suva: University of the South Pacific.

Schoeffel, P., and M. Meleisea
1984 " 'Like a Slippery Fish': Politics in Western Samoa." In *Politics in Polynesia,* ed. A. Ali and R. Crocombe, 81-112. Suva: University of the South Pacific.

Shankman, P.
1976 *Remittances and Underdevelopment: A Case Study of Western Samoa.* Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.

Wendt, Albert
1973 *Sons for the Return Home.* Auckland: Longman Paul.

World Bank
1991 *Pacific Island Economies: Toward Higher Growth in the 1990s.* Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.