

Aspects of Western Sāmoa Migration to American Sāmoa

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The study looks at both the historical and current trends affecting population movements between American Samoa and what was formerly called Western Samoa (now Samoa). In pre-Christian times, Tutuila, the major island of American Samoa was a colony of Samoa, and was ruled directly from Samoa, firstly under the Malietoa chiefs, and then under the Tui Atua, or ruler of the Atua District in Samoa. Its main function then, was to provide Samoa with both food and auxiliary forces in times of war. Also, it was a kind of penal colony for political dissidents from Samoa. Thus, it was a place largely avoided by Western Samoans.

However, with the colonial division of the Samoan group in 1899 by Britain, Germany and the United States, and with the improved economic conditions in the American territory, more and more Western Samoans migrated to the territory to exploit the economic opportunities available there. This trend became marked during the Second World War, intensified in the 1960s and into the present period for several reasons.

Firstly, American Samoans migrating to the United States sought to have their relatives join them in American Samoa both as domicile caretakers and as domestic help. Secondly, Samoans were able to find employment there, especially in the fish canneries of Van Camp and Start Kist. The study thus shows the reasons why and the extent of Samoan migration to the American territory, a trend which continues strongly today.

During the last four decades (1960-2000), Western Samoan migration to American Samoa has increased to such an extent that according to conservative estimates, almost one third of American Samoa's 2,000 population is Western Samoan-born. This paper attempts to trace the extent of this migration, suggest reasons for it and evaluate the possible consequences.

Several factors account for recent increases in Western Samoan migration to American Samoa. These include, among others, kinship ties, better economic opportunities in American Samoa and using the territory as a stepping stone for onward migration to the United States. But it was not always this way, before the Second World War, there was very little migration from Western Samoa to American Samoa, largely because American Samoa was seen as a 'poor' area, in terms of lack of land and other natural resources.

In the 1950s, when the wartime economy had abated somewhat, the territory actually experienced a loss of population as residents migrated to the United States and Western Samoans returned to their homeland.

Western Samoans, however, were to return in significant numbers from the 1960s onwards, as the United States government poured millions of dollars into the territory and American Samoa for a time became one of the most prosperous territories in the South Pacific.

EXTENT OF MIGRATION

The Good Times

Before World War II, the rate of migration between the two Samoans was relatively balanced, as C.B. Park states:

Although there was a large volume of population exchange between the two Samoas before 1949, there is no evidence that either side gained any population through such exchange. As observed earlier, not only does the growth rate for the two decades 1920-1940 roughly correspond to the natural increase rate, but the relevant records of Western Samoa for the period 1922 to 1940 show that the number of emigrants almost balanced the number of immigrants (1979:24).

Nevertheless, the turning point in increased Western Samoan migration to American Samoa may be said to have its origins in the war years, when increased economic opportunities in American Samoa brought about largely by the influx of thousands of United States military personnel (Gray 1960, Davidson 1967), attracted many Western Samoans seeking better economic prospects.

The United States military personnel were also stationed in large numbers in Western Samoa and their presence helped to expand the cash economy on a more extensive scale through the employment and revitalisation of business entrepreneurship among Samoans.

The boom in the cash economy brought about by the United States' military in both Samoas, primarily through construction of roads, airports, medical and other facilities, and purchase of local produce and imported goods, increased social expectations amongst Samoans, and established once and for all the permanency of the cash economy.

But obviously, the economic opportunities were in American Samoa's favour and, therefore, the balance of migration became uneven with more Western Samoans entering American Samoa than the reverse. Thus Park said that in the early 1940s:

With the outbreak of the Second World War Pago Pago became a busy centre of operations providing more opportunities for employment than usual; this resulted in the immigration of a large number of Western Samoans. During the period 1940-1950, the population of American Samoa as a whole increased by as much as 46.7 per cent. McArthur estimated that immigration from Western Samoa probably contributed more than one fifth of this increase (1979: 24-25).

The war years were boom years in both Samoas as far as their economies were concerned. Gray commented that in American Samoa while cutting of copra (till then the territory's main source of cash income) had ceased:

an unprecedented amount of money from other sources was infused into the islands. The pay of the Fita Fitas and of the Samoan Marines, and wages paid to Samoans who worked at skilled tasks or on construction and other projects filtered back through the several *matai* (chiefs) to other members of the workers' families. Marines and sailors ashore with money to spend brought a wave of prosperity to the local merchants, who increased their own purchases accordingly and thereby added to the government's customs revenue ... In brief, the war brought a money economy into American Samoa and left it relatively rich, and the government's surplus, carefully invested, made it one of

the few governments in the world which was more prosperous in 1945 than it had been in 1941 (1960:244).

For Western Samoa, the arrival of American forces in 1942 resulted for a great many Samoans in a prosperity that they had never previously known. As Davidson said:

Work was available, at high wages, on constructional work of many kinds, in unloading ships, and, for those with a good knowledge of English, as interpreters. Restaurants and new stores were opened wherever there were large groups of Americans; women undertook laundry work; and there was a seemingly unlimited market, at inflated prices, for foodstuffs and illegally manufactured liquor (1967:157).

In addition, as in American Samoa government finances were in a much better position at the end of the war with government revenues more than doubled and the public debt wholly repaid (Davidson 1967:158).

A series of events, however, were to lead to a rapid recession in both Samoas. But whereas Western Samoa had extensive customary lands on which to depend in times of dire straits, this was not the situation in American Samoa where fertile land was scarce.

The Bad Times

The 1950s saw a reversal of economic fortunes as American Samoa was hit by a prolonged period of drought, a declining job market, a cost-price squeeze and other unfavourable conditions (Park 1979:24-25).

The economic impetus generated by the wartime projects of the United States military had dwindled by the early 1950s leading to extreme economic insecurity among the territory's inhabitants. This was further exacerbated by the United States government's decision to transfer the administrative responsibilities for the territory from the Navy, which had governed the territory since annexation in 1900 to the Department of the Interior as of 1 July, 1951.

Among the *fitafita* (Samoan Naval Guard), there was much concern about their future role but this problem was resolved by the Navy when it decided to transfer all of the *fitafita* (together with their dependents) to work at its naval base at Pearl Harbour, Honolulu. This marked the first mass migration of Samoans to the United States (cf Gray 1960:263).

The result was that thousands of *fitafita* and their dependents moved to the United States during the 1950s in a series of movements, and this represents a significant landmark in the demographic history of the territory. For this led to a process of chain migration in subsequent years, a process still continuing today.

The transition from a military to a civilian form of government in the 1950s, saw the first steps taken by the people of the territory, with guidance from the Interior Department, to take more responsibility for local government administration within the ambience of traditional American democratic institutions such as the legislature, executive and judiciary.

The new changes, however, were largely symbolic and affected the economy very little. From the takeover by the Interior Department on 1 July, 1951 to 1961, the territory's economy remained relatively stagnant largely as a result of the then largely hands-off United States policy. This policy, implemented since annexation in 1900, involved interfering as little as possible with the internal affairs of the territory.

With a lack of jobs signalled by the departure of the United States military and the resulting downturn in the territory's economy, more Western Samoans left the territory to return to their land-rich country where at least the subsistence economy could ensure their survival in the absence of readily-available cash. Speaking of numbers, Park says:

At the 1950 census, 1,908 persons born in Western Samoa were living in American Samoa. This number decreased to 1,729 in 1956 and to 1,704 in 1960, recording a decline of more than 10 per cent in a decade. On the other hand, only 105 people who were born in American Samoa lived in Western Samoa in 1951, but this number increased to 1,437 in 1961. Thus, during the 10-year period of 1950-1960, American Samoa lost to Western Samoa over 1,500 people, including those Western Samoans who returned home (1979:24f).

Most of the 955 residents recorded for 1940 would be Western Samoans. The peak is reached in 1950 and then a decline of 204 by 1960. This reduction in numbers is insignificant. In contrast, 105 American Samoan-born persons lived in Western Samoa in 1951 and 1,437 by 1961. Thus, over this period of declining economic opportunity, American Samoa lost to Western Samoa over 1,500 people, including those Western Samoans who returned home (Park 1979:24f). But by and large, migration movements between Western and American Samoa remained relatively balanced reflecting the situation before the Second World War. In 1960, for instance, there were 1,704 Western Samoans living in American Samoa, and in 1961, 1,437 American Samoans were living in Western Samoa (a difference of only 267 persons).

Development Breakthrough

The turning point however, occurred in the 1960-70 decade, and as in the war years 1941-1945, the renewed upsurge in Western Samoan migration to American Samoa was due to the new economic opportunities in the territory. This time, however, the economic momentum that gripped the territory was not the outcome of a wartime economy, but the result of an enlightened social, economic and political strategy initiated by the Kennedy Administration to compensate for decades of United States neglect of the territory, a neglect brought to the attention of President Kennedy by a famous article in the *Reader's Digest*.

To implement the new administration policy of modernisation of social, economic, political and physical infrastructures, President Kennedy appointed a veteran administrator, Rex Lee, to be governor of the territory. The services of this skilled administrator were supplemented by massive inputs of federal funds which enabled the construction of large public projects including, the new Tafuna International Airport, modern road networks, an ambitious educational television service, public buildings such as the Lee Auditorium and a modern luxury hotel, then called the Intercontinental.

This sudden massive expenditure of federal funds beginning in 1961 boosted the American Samoan economy to levels never seen before, and probably never since. And it laid the foundation for the modern economy of the territory. Suddenly, due to a political decision, employment opportunities were seemingly everywhere, not just in the public sector but also in the private sector, especially in the tuna canneries at Atu'u. The modernisation of the territory's economy had begun at last after some 60 years of benign neglect.

Not surprisingly, the new economic opportunities in the territory attracted many Western Samoans in search of jobs. Thus, by 1970 the number of Western Samoan-

born residents of American Samoa had reached 4,545, a net gain of 2,841 made up mostly of over 2,000 Western Samoans who emigrated to American Samoa during the last five years of the 1960s (Park 1979:24f). For the same period in Western Samoa, the number of American Samoan-born dropped from 1,437 to 1,021, an indication of return migration to the territory.

Despite stricter regulations introduced from time to time by the American Samoan government to control immigration, Western Samoan migration into the territory does not appear to have been curtailed after 1970. For instance, the 1974 census shows that there were 7,384 Western Samoan-born persons in American Samoa, 2,839 more than in 1970, and this is almost equal to the total population increase of American Samoa during the 1960-1970 federal intercensal period.

According to Park, the total enumerated population of American Samoa in 1974 was 29,155, and the number of persons born in Western Samoa constituted over 25 per cent of the population in that year (1979:24f). Further, "the largest concentration of Western Samoans was in the age group 15-29 in which Western Samoans constituted 40.3 per cent of the population, followed by ages 30-44 years with 36.9 per cent and ages 45-59 years with 28.8 per cent" (Park 1979:25).

The American Samoan census of 1 April, 1980, shows that of a total population of 32,297, 30 per cent were Western Samoan-born. This amounts to 9,689 persons and compares well with the figure given by Dr Connell who estimates that for 1981, the Western Samoan-born population of American Samoa was 10,507 (1983:36). Indeed the number of Western Samoan-born residents of the territory continues to rise. In the 1990 federal census for instance, the figure increased to 31.5 per cent (14,714 persons), and for the 2000 census dropped slightly to 30.9 per cent (17,712 persons).

Census figures are generally more reliable than those provided by the Immigration Division of the Government of American Samoa. This is illustrated in a 1979 article on the population of American Samoa by Park already mentioned. In it he expresses an opinion that the 1974 census might have understated the population of Western Samoan-born residents. He bases this account on a report by the Immigration Division, which states that as of 22 July, 1973, there were 7,721 Western Samoans (or over 30 per cent of the total population) residing in the territory of whom more than 1,500 were being investigated regarding their legal residence status. He also took into consideration another report by journalist Robert C. Miller (1977) which stated that, there were about 14,000 aliens living in American Samoa "some 12,000 of whom or 41 per cent of the total population were Western Samoan ..." (Park 1979:25).

It has been clearly demonstrated, in part through my own field work, however, that there are serious discrepancies in statistics kept, for instance, by the Immigration Division on the one hand and other government agencies such as the Department of Tourism on the other. Even Park attests to this (1972: 32f).

The main culprit is the method of collecting statistics on arrivals and departures in American Samoa. Incoming passengers are required to fill in forms but are not required to do so on departure, as is the case in Western Samoa. Instead when leaving the territory they are required to surrender only the stub of the incoming card. Because the surrender of this stub is either not enforced or insufficiently checked (many a time I

have left American Samoa without being asked for this stub), it follows that many departing persons, visitors and transients do not surrender these stubs with the resultant chaos in accurate statistics. The Immigration Division, therefore, is partly responsible for this situation and it follows that departure statistics supplied by immigration are unreliable and that census data are far more preferable for exercises of this sort.

If, therefore, the figures relating to the Western Samoan-born population in American Samoa using official census data are summarised, the following are the results:

Table 1. Western Samoan-born Population of American Samoa

Year	No	% Increase	% Annual Rate
1940	955		
1950	1,908	99.8	10.0
1956	1,729	-9.4	-1.6
1960	1,704	-1.4	-0.4
1970	4,535	166.1	16.6
1974	7,384	62.8	15.7
1980	9,686	31.1	5.2
1990	14,714	51.9	5.2
2000	17,712	20.3	2.0

Source: American Samoa Statistical Yearbook 2001

In comparison, American Samoa's population figures using the same sources are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Population of American Samoa

Year	Total	% Annual growth rate
1900	5,679	
1901	5,563	-2.0
1903	5,888	2.8
1908	6,780	2.8
1912	7,251	1.3
1920	8,058	1.3
1926	8,763	1.4
1930	10,055	3.4
1940	12,908	2.5
1945	16,493	4.9
1950	18,937	2.8
1956	20,154	1.0
1960	20,051	-0.1
1970	27,159	3.0
1974	29,190	1.6
1980	32,297	1.8
1990	46,773	3.7
2000	57,291	2.0

Source: American Samoa Statistical Yearbook 2001

From a low of 955 out of a total American Samoan population of 12,908 in 1940, the Western Samoan-born population of American Samoa had increased to 17,212 out of a total American Samoan population of 57,291 in 2000. Thus, from 1940 to 2000, a span of 60 years, the Western Samoan-born population of American Samoa had increased by 16,757 persons, whilst the American Samoan population had increased by 44,383. The Western Samoan-born population increases over the same period averages at 279 per year (1.7 per cent), whilst the American Samoan population averages at 740 persons per year (1.7 per cent). In terms of numbers there is a wide discrepancy but in terms of percentages the increases are equivalent.

REASONS FOR MIGRATION

Migration is rendered easier if there is a substantial amount of homogeneity between the peoples of host countries and migrants. Thus, in Australia, the White Australian policy officially implemented by the Commonwealth's Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, was designed primarily to create a "white British Australia from which all others would be excluded" (Jupp 1991:46). The policy which was to last 74 years was intended to promote homogeneity in the Australian population in terms of social, economic, political and cultural outlooks, presumably for the sake of establishing a stabler society.

In the Samoan islands, cultural homogeneity already existed before the partition of the group by the United States and Germany in 1900 as a result of the second Treaty of Berlin, 1899 (Gilson 1970, Davidson 1967). Travel and migration between Western and American Samoa had been an established fact for many centuries, before the European discovery of the islands by Dutchman Jacob Roggeveen in 1722. Such links are recorded in both oral history and tradition and attested to by genealogical connections which stretch back to the earliest settlement of the Samoan archipelago circa 1000 BC. Present trends must, therefore, be seen as partly a continuation of these old patterns of travel and visitations between kin. Other factors of course are involved, for instance, economic ones.

Traditionally, the Samoans are a single people with a common origin. Although they live on an archipelago of islands that stretch from Saua, Manu'a, in the east to Analega, Savai'i, in the west, they have a common culture today as they have always since time immemorial. The political division of the islands in 1900 did not substantially affect cultural homogeneity, the kinship networks, the ideology and the psychic bonds that have always united the Samoan people.

For the most part, people in both Samoas are related by blood. It is extremely rare to find a Samoan who does not have a relative on the other side. All speak the same language though there are minor variations in idiomatic usage, have the *matai* and *'alga* system (chiefly and extended family system), share common beliefs and practices, and so on (Freeman 1983, Gilson 1970, Mead 1969, cf. Moyle (ed) 1984, Stair 1983, Turner 1984, Va'a 2001).

This universal homogeneity in cultural beliefs and practices plus the prevalence of consanguineal and affinal kinship links throughout and between the two Samoas, inevitably leads to facilitation of travel and migration between Western and American Samoa. The fact that on a per capita basis American Samoa is the wealthier of the two 'countries' today, means that more Western Samoans are migrating to American Samoa to seek better economic opportunities than the other way around.

Historical Ties with American Samoa

American Samoa consists of two main island groups: the Manu'a islands and Tutuila, with Aunu'u close by. Western Samoa's relations are based not only on consanguineal ties, but also with traditional political alliances. The Manu'a islands not only form the oldest geographical part of Samoa, but also the oldest known political organisation of the archipelago. Until they were annexed by the United States, along with Tutuila in the early 1900s, they formed an independent political unit under the rule of their king, the Tui Manu'a.

Manu'a's isolation from the other islands to the west may have been due firstly, to her cultural primacy vis-a-vis the rest of Samoa and secondly, to her relative geographical distance from the main centres of power in the western isles. The cultural primacy of Manu'a is due to the widely-held belief (as preserved in myth and legend) that Manu'a was the place where Samoan culture, in most of its major aspects originated. Thus, to Manu'a has been attributed the origin of the notion of kingship (cf Tui Manu'a, Tui Toga, Tui Fiti, Tui Atua, Tui A'ana), the *matai* system, chiefly oratory, kava ceremony and Samoan crafts such as housebuilding. Other customs such as the *feagaiga* system have also been attributed to Manu'a.

Thus, from a Samoan point of view Manu'a is the sacred land, the centre of the earth (hence 'moa' meaning centre and sa-moa meaning the clan at the centre), the parent figure in both a biological and cultural sense. It was from Manu'a, the fountain of ideal and practice that Samoan culture spread to the western isles. And like a true parent, once the children were grown up they were left to fend for themselves.

This isolation of Manu'a has been noted by Gray who said, "Manu'a apart, for the small islands took little part in general Samoan affairs from the time of the Tongan wars [circa 1250 AD] until the twentieth century, the main political currents flowed in 'Upolu, Manono and Savai'i" (1960:17). And Davidson excluded Manu'a in his discussion of the kingship dispute between Tumua and Pule in Western Samoa because it was not involved (1967:24).

Tutuila, the most densely populated island of American Samoa presents a different picture. Situated between the Manu'a group and the western isles, it traditionally was politically allied with Western Samoa, that is it served as a satellite of the political power centres in Western Samoa. Tradition has it that Tutuila was originally 'owned' as a tributary territory of the Malietoa title in Western Samoa. The Malietoa, however, 'lost' Tutuila to Atua district as the result of a war and since then (circa 1750) Tutuila became a tributary territory of the Atua district on the eastern end of 'Upolu island, Western Samoa.

With the partition of the Samoan group between the United States and Germany in 1900, the Atua chiefs 'lost' those traditional rights over people and lands in American Samoa. Fear of the restoration of those rights over lands, titles and other privileges on the part of the Tutuilan chiefs has often been cited as one of the main obstacles towards a political union between the two Samoas.

Today, the former political links between Tutuila and Western Samoa are perpetuated in the *fa'alupega* (honorific salutations) of the traditional districts of Tutuila and in many of the important *matai* titles in the territory with a Western Samoan origin.

As well as political links, Tutuila also served as a place of exile for the leaders and supporters of disgraced or defeated political parties from Western Samoa. Thus, the renegade cannibal son of Queen Tafau, Tupu'ivao (of the Salemulu'aga clan), was exiled to Tutuila as was a defeated candidate for the Tafa'ifa title (king of Samoa),

Va'afusu'aga Tole'afua. No doubt many others went there voluntarily or so exiled. Thus, the historian Gray said of Tutuila:

Tutuila remained subordinate to the Atua district of 'Upolu. In its secondary role, Tutuila was used as a place of banishment for 'Upoluan chiefs who made themselves obnoxious in their own vicinities. When one such was banished, the Tutuilans were notified in advance so that they could make the victim run the gauntlet upon landing. There is a tradition that the senior talking chiefs of Tutuila, the Mulitau'opele and the Leoso, were at first satraps appointed by the 'Upoluan to manage the penal colony of Tutuila, and that their seniority consequently antedates that of the Tutuilan high chiefs (1960:17).

And Davidson said, "The island of Tutuila formed part of the district of Atua, of which the main part was in 'Upolu but in practice it was little concerned with the affairs of the rest of the district" (1967: 24).

Historically speaking, therefore, the Samoan people have always shared common cultural beliefs and practices, that is, they shared a common cultural identity and they still do so today. Apart from slight local variations in linguistic and cultural practices and emphasis (which one needs to learn from one's hosts) the basic cultural symbols are everywhere the same and understood.

But homogeneity in culture does not entail the right to enter freely on the part of Western Samoans, into what is euphemistically called 'an American possession'. New international political realities have superseded traditional ones, and so what may be said to be a new social and political order has prevailed (though this is true only in a relative sense because the de facto political division of the Samoan islands has not affected the biological and cultural unity of the islands). What then is the explanation for increased Western Samoan migration to American Samoa?

The obvious answer of course is that for Western Samoans, American Samoa is perceived as a land of better economic opportunities. And they are able to enter the territory because a relative or a friend in American Samoa has agreed to act as a sponsor by providing an entry permit. This permit may be extended if the Immigration authorities accept the reason for the extension, but even if this is not granted the visitor may overstay. Again this would not be difficult to accomplish if the sponsor connives at the act, or if the visitor has a large network of relatives or friends among whom he could hide.

Most Western Samoans in the territory, however, are legal residents. These include:

- Western Samoans who have lived in the territory since the 1950s and 1960s.
- Western Samoans who are residents under a family reunion programme (for example, parent of a spouse of an American Samoan national).
- Western Samoan-born residents who have at least one parent of American Samoan nationality.
- Western Samoan-born residents with close relatives who are American Samoan nationals.
- Western Samoans with special skills needed in the territory (for example, doctors, nurses, dentists, journalists, accountants, engineers).
- Western Samoans who can work in jobs shunned by most American Samoan nationals (for example, domestics, labourers, farmers, caretakers, fish cannery cleaners).
- Western Samoan spouses of American Samoan nationals and adopted children.

- Close friends, relatives and business associates of influential public servants and political leaders in American Samoa.

It is probably fair to say that of the Western Samoan-born population of American Samoa, 14,714 in 1990, and 17,712 in 2000, most are legal residents and that only a relatively small number are overstayers.

Another suggested reason for the high rate of Western Samoan migration to the territory would be the traditional *malaga*. These are visiting parties of Samoans who travel to another village for both social and ceremonial purposes. The *malaga* maybe social insofar as it maybe a courting party (to make a marriage proposal on behalf of their chief to a village *taupou* or ceremonial maiden), or it maybe a cricket or other sporting team or it maybe just a holidaying group. The *malaga* maybe ceremonial insofar as it may comprise a group of relatives travelling to take their fine mats, food and money to a funeral, wedding, birth, church or house dedication.

Several years ago I was part of a *malaga* of 20 people from the village of Faga, Savai'i, who went to American Samoa to contribute thousands of fine mats and United States dollars on the occasion of the death of a woman from Faga who had been married to an American Samoan national. At the end of the ceremonies several members of the group were kept back by the host to assist with his business affairs. In my opinion most visitors from Western Samoa to American Samoa enter as members of a *malaga*, and immigration statistics will probably bear this out.

Often many *malaga* members decide to stay, either voluntarily or at the request of their hosts for one reason or another, but usually to help out with family chores. If a substantial number of these numerous *malaga* to American Samoa every year decide to overstay, one can imagine the huge resultant increase in the Western Samoan-born population of the territory.

But note that such overstaying is usually possible only with the connivance of the hosts themselves. It is not haphazard. It is American Samoans who are applying for the extensions (and getting them if they have political clout), and it is American Samoans who are encouraging their kin and friends from Western Samoa to overstay. And this leads to the question, why?

Take as an example, the 1984 arrival statistics provided by the Economic Development and Planning Office of the Government of American Samoa. These show in no uncertain terms the frequency of travel by Western Samoans to visit their relatives in American Samoa. A total of 24,475 Western Samoans visited relatives in American Samoa, compared with 684 from Tonga (the next largest group), 230 from New Zealand (third largest) and 55 from Korea (fourth largest).

Also in 1984, Western Samoans head the list of those who went to American Samoa for employment with 4,362 followed by United States citizens (1,026), Koreans (242), New Zealanders (164), Filipinos (161) and Tongans (150). And they also top the list for transit passengers with 2,751 followed by United States citizens (2,363), Tongans (642), New Zealanders (452) and Australians (252). Among those who visited for business purposes only the United States has more visitors with 2,822, followed by Western Samoa (1,423), New Zealand (664) and Australia (274). No Western Samoan went as a tourist.

When the 1984 figures are compared with 2001, a total of 88,650 people visited the territory in 2001, of which 35,868 were Western Samoans. Of the Western Samoans, 19,814 are listed as visiting relatives, followed by 677 from China, 414 from Tonga, 276 from Fiji, 217 from Philippines and 76 from Korea. When compared with the 1984 figures, Western still retains top place, China has taken over second place from Tonga, and Fiji has replaced Korea in fourth place. This in turn reflects recent demographic

movements in the territory involving the increase in Chinese businesses and the hiring of Fijians as domestics.

Of the 2001 visitors who went to American Samoa for employment, Western Samoans topped the list at 5,479, followed by New Zealanders 399, Tongans 324, Philippines 248 and Fiji 120. When compared with 1984, New Zealand has taken second place from the United States, and Tonga third place from Korea, again reflecting increased involvement of New Zealanders with business interests in the territory and Tongans with their kin.

Transit visitors to the territory in 2001 totalled 1,994, the largest groups of which came from the United States with 1,065, followed by Western Samoa 451, New Zealand 241 and Tonga 57. Compared with 1984, the United States has displaced Western Samoa at the number one spot and New Zealand has displaced Tonga at the number three spot. There has been a drastic reduction of numbers in all cases, perhaps indicating an improvement of air services in other parts of the South Pacific region.

Visitors who went to the territory in 2001 for business purposes totalled 7,689, of which the biggest groups came from the United States with 3,289, followed by New Zealand 1,935, Western Samoa 1,522, and United Kingdom 122. When compared with 1984, the major change is that New Zealand has overtaken Western Samoa at number two, and United Kingdom has emerged as a new force at number four.

During 2001, 6,535 visitors went to the territory as tourists of which the vast majority, 3,888 were from the United States, 1,917 from New Zealand, 306 from Australia, 66 from Germany, 58 from United Kingdom and 57 from Japan. The figures may be regarded as standard since most of the tourists to the South Pacific come from the United States and Australasia. But the surprising development is that while none came as a tourist from Western Samoa in 1984, 22 are listed as tourists in 2001.

The figures are strongly suggestive first, of strong family ties between the two Samoas and second, of other strong ties (that is, business and employment). Thus, the vast majority of those who went to the territory to visit relatives were Western Samoans, 24,475 in 1984 and 19,814 in 2001 (next biggest groups being Tongans, 684 in 1984 and Chinese, 677 in 2001). Western Samoans also head the list for those who went to the territory for employment with 4,362 in 1984 and 5,479 in 2001 followed by United States citizens with 1,026 in 1984, and New Zealanders with 399 in 2001. Western Samoa was displaced from second place in the category of visiting for business purposes but then the Western Samoan total of 1,423 in 1984 actually increased to 1,522 in 2001, an indication of the stable business ties between the two Samoas. These figures speak of a close affinity, despite the different political administrations in the relationships between the Samoan peoples.

Many, if not the majority of Western Samoans who visited relatives in American Samoa in 1984 and 2001 went there as part of a *malaga* group. The usual means of transport for such visits would be the inter-island ferries, especially in the case of large travelling parties such as those invited to take part in American Samoa's Flag Day in April. While there is a need to gather data from other years for a more detailed picture, the 1984 and 2001 statistics would probably be typical of Western Samoan travel to American Samoa in the last 30 years or so.

REASONS FOR OVERSTAYING

But even with kin, there is a limitation to the application of the maxim, 'my house and mine are yours' as befits the niceties of conventional Samoan hospitality. So the reason for the ready acceptance of Samoan overstayers must lie elsewhere. I suggest two reasons: firstly, the need to replenish the effective size of family households and

secondly, the need to engage effectively in the traditional competition for status. Both have one thing in common, the loss of population to the United States.

In American Samoa, for example, whole families have been leaving the territory for the United States since the mass migration of Navy personnel and their dependents in the 1950s. The result has been unoccupied houses and lands or perhaps a few family members left behind to care for communal property and obligations such as *fa'alavelave* and church donations. If their kin from neighbouring Western Samoa have been 'pushed' into going to American Samoa in search of economic opportunities, imagine the effects of the 'pull' from their American Samoan relatives who would want them to stay and help augment their family household size, influence and power (including economic power).

Among the chiefly families, the loss of manpower through migration to the United States poses a severe problem in the context of ceremonial exchange and, therefore, of chiefly competition for status. While as Meleisea has claimed (1990), the money sent home by migrants tends to perpetuate and intensify the competition for status in the traditional arena, it is also true that 'a bird in hand is worth two in the bush'. This means that a readily available corps of *'au tautua* (people who serve their chiefs), living together with their chief and regularly contributing cash, food, services, et cetera, for the personal and ceremonial needs of the chief is often to be preferred.

In my own family in Fagatogo, American Samoa, our chief's efforts to induce us to migrate to American Samoa have failed largely because we have already established permanent roots, among our other families in Western Samoa. And because so many members of our Fagatogo *'alga* (extended family) have dispersed to other villages and foreign countries. Our chief was compelled to provide land for distant relatives and sometimes total strangers (all Samoans) where they could live in return for *tautua* (service).

When he bought freehold land at Tafuna later, he did the same thing. The end result was that he was able effectively with the help of strangers to meet his traditional obligations to his *'alga*, networks, village, county and people of American Samoa, and not merely 'meet' but to excel in them. This tradition has been carried over by his son who is the current titleholder.

In another recent example, a high chief of Nu'uuli village, American Samoa, invited a group of Western Samoan citizens from my village of Faga, Savai'i, to settle on her traditional lands at Nu'uuli in return for *tautua*. Thus, while paying no rent the Western Samoans were expected to contribute money, fine mats, food and services to their host, as often as this was required. In return their host acted as their immigration sponsor and 'protector' in the context of the village and district. Thus, a complex of social relationships, which did not normally conform to the standard as defined in strictly kinship terms was established. These villagers have in turn induced their other relatives to join them in Nu'uuli, thus setting in motion the well-known process of chain migration.

These two examples are from my own personal experience but I venture to assert that they are not unique, that this custom is prevalent in other parts of American Samoa. Therefore, it may be said that the rapid increase in the Western Samoan-born population of American Samoa is central to the social reproductive process there, in which Western Samoan migrants, legal and illegal serve as replacements for the continued loss of the indigenous American Samoan population to the United States. Western Samoans provide not only 'serving people' to their kin, or sometimes total strangers in American Samoa, they also provide both skilled and unskilled workers, such as doctors for the LBJ Medical Centre and fish cleaners for the Van Camp and Star Kist companies. Western Samoa is thus an important provider of human resources for

SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TERRITORY'S POPULATION

The statistical information provided in the territory's censuses, both local and federal, point conclusively to the significant impact of Western Samoans on the territory's population both past and present. As of the 2000 federal census, 57 per cent of the territory's population of 57,291 were born in American Samoa, but 31 per cent, 17,712 persons were born in Western Samoa. The United States provided six per cent and other places another six per cent.

Most of the 17,712 Western Samoans in the 2000 census are residents of American Samoa, while the rest are either on temporary visas or overstayers, many of whom are eventually caught and deported to Western Samoa if they have not already left. The government of American Samoa has over the last decade (1995-2005) instituted stringent measures to discourage overstaying. These include retaining passports of Western Samoan travellers and payment of an entry permit fee of US\$10.00 at the Tafuna International Airport.

The American Samoan authorities might have gone too far, however, for in 2005, the Western Samoan government responded by toughening up its own immigration procedures involving American Samoan nationals who, since mid-2005 are required to use a passport to travel to Western Samoa (previously they needed only a Certificate of Identity), and also to have to pay an entry permit fee. These have been called sarcastically by the Western Samoan government as 'reciprocal arrangements'.

The so-called reciprocal arrangements by Western Samoa have caused a lot of ill-feeling among American Samoans especially the politicians, but the Western Samoan government is serious about the new arrangements and has even gone to the extent of establishing an immigration office in American Samoa to process applications for visas to visit Western Samoa. These are also being supported by a wide cross-section of the Western Samoan public. Needless to say, the new measures have led to a significant drop in travel between the two Samoas but this is to be expected in the light of these new developments. It is probable of course that due to the close kinship ties of the people in both Samoas and their traditional mutual dependence, that travel between the two groups will return to previous levels.

Table 3. Western Samoans as percentage of Am. Samoan Population

Year	WS-born	Am. S. Popn	
1940	955	12,908	7.4
1950	1,908	18,937	10.1
1960	1,704	20,051	8.5
1970	4,535	27,159	16.7
1980	9,686	32,297	30.0
1990	14,714	46,773	31.5
2000	17,712	57,291	30.9

Source: American Samoa Statistical Yearbook 2001

Table 3 shows that from a low of 8.5 per cent the number of Western Samoans in the territory almost doubled to 16.7 per cent in 1970, and then almost doubled again to 30 per cent ten years later. From 1980 to 2000, the number of Western Samoan-born in the

territory has remained in the 30 (and up) per cent level: 30 per cent in 1980, 31.5 per cent in 1990 and 30.9 per cent in 2000.

The statistics up to 2000 show quite clearly the preponderance of the Western Samoan-born population in American Samoa, almost one third of the total population. This is not surprising as I have argued earlier because of the traditional and kinship ties between the two parts of the Samoan archipelago. These ties have been reinforced further in the last few decades, due firstly, to the loss of population to the United States, and the subsequent replacement of such losses by Western Samoan kin, and secondly, by the availability of low cost labour from Western Samoa principally for the fish canneries at Atua. (In fact, there have been regular visits to Apia in the past by cannery officials to hire locals for employment in American Samoa).

Western Samoans of course are not the only foreign-born residents of American Samoa. Others include, Tongans, Fijians, Chinese, Filipinos, Koreans and other Pacific Islanders. The Western Samoans, however, form the majority of these foreign-born as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Percentages of Foreign-born and Western Samoan-born

Year	% Foreign-born	% WS-born
1950	13.2	10.1
1960	12.0	9.0
1970	26.1	17.0
1980	43.0	30.0
1990	45.3	32.0
2000	43.3	31.0

Source: American Samoa Statistical Yearbook 2001

Largely because of this exodus of American Samoan nationals to the United States, the population of the territory has been shaped by international migration as evidenced by the relative proportions of foreign-born persons over the years. In 1990, for instance, 45 per cent of the population were foreign-born compared to only 12 per cent in 1960 (Secretariat of the Pacific Community 1999:25).

According to the Secretariat report, most of the migrant flows to the territory have been from Western Samoa, Tonga and other Pacific island countries, mainly for employment reasons. Further, American Samoa has served "as a gateway for people wishing to migrate to the United States mainland" (Secretariat of the Pacific Community 1999:26). The latter is true for Western Samoans as for other Pacific Islanders such as Tongans.

The report, therefore, recommended that in view of the substantial migration flows to and from American Samoa, that the government should set up an efficient system of gathering accurate information on migration "in order to keep track of changes in the population size and structure", and that immigration should be better controlled to ensure that there would be "less burden on the territory's" services such as health and housing" (Secretariat of the Pacific Community 1999:26).

At the moment, however, the main problem from a migration point of view is the high numbers of migrants from neighbouring Western Samoa. But given the kinship and

economic ties, it is difficult to see how the migration issue can be resolved satisfactorily from the point of view of both Samoas, relatives and governments alike.

Most Samoans would like to see an open door policy, such as the one existing between the United States and Canada. Under this scheme, no visas will be required for travel by indigenous Samoans between the Western and American Samoa, but this has its dangers primarily from an economic point of view. American Samoa, for instance, with limited lands and resources is incapable of hosting large *malaga* parties from Western Samoa or people in search of jobs, and Western Samoans may not enjoy the likelihood of American Samoan kin demanding their portion of family lands. These are not unrealistic aspirations on the part of Samoans on both sides of the archipelago, and therefore, in the absence of a solid economic and political union, it is very likely that travel restrictions will continue to be imposed to ensure that the interests of both Samoas will continue to be protected.

It is very likely that entry based on visas imposed by both Samoas will continue indefinitely. Opening the door to free entry will be foolhardy because it will allow unscrupulous Samoans to exploit any rational system put in place. Visas, on the other hand will facilitate the recording of visitors and their travel histories and enable government authorities at both ends to regulate the flow of inter-Samoa travel, based on economic necessity, kinship obligation and other worthwhile reasons.

Thus, future conditions for inter-Samoa travel by Samoans may include the following:

- A visitor must be sponsored by a relative or alternatively have the economic means to support his/her stay in the foreign jurisdiction to ensure economic survival.
- A visitor must use proper identification, for example, an official passport so that such a person's movements to and from a country can be monitored.
- A visitor may not be entitled to social welfare benefits, unless he or she has earned the right to be a permanent resident.
- A visitor may not work unless he or she first obtains a work permit, preferably prior to being admitted into a foreign jurisdiction.
- To discourage cheating, failure to observe these rules should be heavily penalised.

It is quite possible that recent changes in the immigration procedures of both Samoas represent a first step towards the establishment of a more durable set of immigration policies.

CONCLUSION

While it is likely that both countries will adopt immigration procedures that distinguish them as separate state entities, the one independent, the other a ward of the United States Congress, a special relation characterises the ties between them. These ties as I have said before are based on both biological, linguistic and cultural relationships, which stretch back to the beginning of Austronesian settlement of the archipelago in 1200 BC.

In the last few centuries, Tutuila and Aunu'u have been politically aligned with the major power centres in Western Samoa, such as Pule and Tumua. This linkage was terminated only when the islands were partitioned between the United States and Germany in 1900.

Tutuila, for instance, served as the place of political exile for the enemies of the mālo (government) in Western Samoa, including the cannibal prince, Tupu'ivao, and political dissident Va'afusu'aga Tole'afua. It also served as an important source of soldiers for the dynastic wars of the various political factions in Western Samoa during much of the nineteenth century.

These ties are not easily cut because they are based on centuries of social and political connections and implanted in the national consciousness of the Samoan people, their awareness of a common cultural origin and destiny. They are further reinforced in modern times as a result of mutual dependence for sources of population and cultural revitalisation. American Samoa, on the one hand gains from the labour and the cultural influences of the Western Samoans.

Western Samoans on the other hand gain from economic opportunities offered by the territory, such as employment in the fish canneries. That explains the existence of a strong presence of Western Samoans in the territory as the statistics indicate. These figures in my view do not represent the outcome of a reckless invasion of the territory by Western Samoans as some believe. Rather, they represent the unstated but realistic configurations of social and business requirements of the territory, which are heavily dependent on kinship and ethnic ties with Western Samoa.

In short, the market defines population increases and decreases in the territory. When the Western Samoan population increases too much, the territorial government and leaders clamp down on Western Samoan migration as happened in 2005. When it is too little, it is encouraged. This to me seems to be the logic of the American Samoan population policy with regard to Western Samoans, and one that has been consistently followed since the second World War.

The negative rhetoric that has accompanied the recent changes in the entry requirements of both Samoas, unfortunately hides the reality of a deep-seated interdependence among Samoans. As stated before, Western Samoa is dependent on American Samoa for economic opportunities and American Samoa is dependent on Western Samoa for people.

In this complementarity of relations is to be found the key to the future social, economic and political welfare of both Samoas.

Note

¹ Western Samoa is now officially Samoa but for purposes of this article I retain the old name to avoid any confusion between the use of American Samoa and Western Samoa.

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