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Abstract

Why do some countries employ a single ministry to administer all foreign aid activities while others have a number of different ministries to manage their aid programs? This question should interest not just the historians of foreign aid, but also those engaged in contemporary policy. Additionally, it has a strong bearing on the rise of emerging donors, as many of the new donors are also at the stage of forming bureaucracies for giving aid.While Japan has been relatively successful in integrating agencies at the implementation level (e.g., the establishment of new JICA in 2008), centralization at the ministerial level is lagging far behind and decision making is confusingly multi-centric. The 2003 DAC (Development Assistance Committee) peer review of Japan highlighted that "Japan's aid system remains one of the most dispersed and complex among DAC members, which presents clear challenges for co-ordination." Having multi-centric bodies making decisions about the use of the ODA (Official Development Assistance) has repeatedly been criticized, both domestically and internationally, as inefficient and ineffective.

I argue that the inability of the government to unify its administrative system should not be seen as sheer failure. The very continuation of such failure for the past 60 years should also be viewed as achieving something successfully, if unintended: the involvement of a wide range of constituents from the private sectors, and preparing more broad-based Japanese economic cooperation. Like in the assessment of any other policy, the costs and benefits of administrative unity should be carefully weighed. I would further claim that quasi-governmental corporations, which functioned as a mediator between ODA related ministries and the private sectors, played a significant role in expanding the constituents of economic cooperation within Japan. In the field of economic cooperation, only the costs of a dispersed system have been pinpointed without due attention being given to its potential benefits.

Keywords: aid administration, unification, quasi-governmental corporations, economic cooperation, Japan

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1. Degree of centralization

Why do some countries employ a single ministry to administer all foreign aid activities while others have a number of different ministries to manage their aid programs? This question should interest not just the historians of foreign aid, but also those engaged in contemporary policy, since it has a strong bearing on the rise of emerging donors as many of the new donors are also at the stage of forming bureaucracies for giving aid (Emma 2012; Sato and Shimomura 2012).[1] Compared with Western donors, Japan has been relatively successful in integrating agencies at the implementation level (e.g., the establishment of new JICA in 2008). However, centralization at the ministerial level is lagging far behind and the decision making is confusingly multi-centric. A Development Assistance Committee (DAC) peer review of Japan conducted in 2003, highlighted that the fact that "Japan's aid system remains one of the most dispersed and complex among DAC members, which presents clear challenges for co-ordination" (DAC 2004). Having multi-centric bodies making decisions about the use of ODA (Official Development Assistance) has repeatedly been criticized, domestically and internationally, as inefficient and ineffective.

I argue that the inability of the government to unify its administrative system should not be seen as sheer failure. The very continuation of such failure for the past 60 years should also be viewed as achieving something successfully, if unintended, involving a wide range of constituents from the private sectors and preparing more broad based Japanese economic cooperation. Like with the assessment of any other policy, the costs and benefits of administrative unity should be carefully weighed. A larger system must come with its own costs, which have been criticized and debated. It is worthwhile to look into the positive aspects of a multi-centric system. In this regard, I claim that quasi-governmental corporations, which functioned as a mediator between ODA related ministries and private sectors, played a

[1] Aid reception will likely influence how aid is provided (Sato 2013). Emphasis on self-determination and South-South cooperation among emerging donors is one such demonstration of how negative lessons from the reception of Western aid is converted.

significant role in expanding the constituents of economic cooperation within Japan. In the field of economic cooperation, only the costs of a dispersed system have been pinpointed without due attention to its potential benefits.

Overseas provision of aid is not the simple reversal of the receipt of aid. While assistance from abroad can be channeled and mediated through diverse agencies that require minimal domestic expertise on the receiving end, donors must invoke sector-specific expertise that eventually needs to be tailored to the foreign situation. In addition to the capacity to mobilize existing skills and knowledge in respective sectors, assistance must eventually be packaged as part of a diplomatic strategy and reflect, at least in theory, the demands of the taxpayers.

In this regard, successful foreign aid provision requires penetration through two main filters within the government: the range of line ministries that have the resources and expertise (including their ability to mobilize the private sector), and the implementing agencies that transform the resources into concrete actions and programs. The need for consolidating technical expertise and diplomatic goals is reason enough for the governments in some countries to establish a unified aid ministry. For example, the UK and Germany have created ministry-level administrative focal points for overseeing foreign aid, while most other countries concentrate aid function in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In New Zealand, for example, the ODA budget is separated and treated independently from that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Library of Congress 2012).[2]

On the other hand, many countries continue to rely on dispersed and seemingly fragmented institutions to carry out aid practices. Should this be considered as representing poor governance and a lack of willingness of the government to rationalize? Or should we view a

[2] For an analysis of different administrative patterns, see DAC (2007).

decentralized multi-centric system of aid as possibly achieving something else at the expense of bureaucratic efficiency?

This paper begins by reviewing the literature, which has implicitly strengthened the common belief in the benefits of a centralized system. The second section discusses the various forces which were working towards administrative centralization in the 1950s in Japan, underscoring the critical role of the private sector. I argue that the quasi-governmental corporations, mostly engaged with the technical cooperation implementation, acted as conveners of the mobilization of resources in the private sector. The third and final part of the paper focuses on the positive aspects of the failure to unify the system, and argues that the decentralized system, perhaps unintentionally, has enabled the expansion of private sector constituents, which eventually became the vital infrastructure for making Japan one of the largest donors in the 1980s. The government's subsequent inability to enforce radical merging and rationalization can also be explained by the proliferation of these quasi-governmental agencies, most of which had been established in the 1950s.

2. Literature review

Unlike the literature on foreign aid strategies, the administrative aspect of international cooperation has attracted less attention than warranted. Comparative studies are rare and most of them focus on periods from the 1970s without much attention on the origin of the system in the postwar period.[3] Among the available literature on aid administration in Japan, Gotō (1979) represents one of the earliest systematic examinations of the subject from an international perspective. Rix (1980; 1993) and Orr (1990) highlight the finding in the inter-ministerial politics of aid that ministerial interests often override national interests. Kato (1998), in his

[3] Shiroyama (2008) makes a unique effort to examine the administrative issues of countries who receive aid from a comparative perspective.

comparison of German aid, offers a valuable contribution to the study of ODA networks including the business sector. Building on Kato (1998), a more recent effort by Ashitate (2011) focuses on the role and networks of the private sector, particularly the NGOs, in aid policy formulation.

There are common shortcomings in these works. First, they focus mostly on the 1970s and 1980s when Japanese aid was already a popular topic of international attention. Those who examine the 1950s focus on the reparation process rather than the domestic bureaucratic conditions. It was in the 1950s that the basic structure of aid administration was formed and thus deserves further research. Second, analysts assume, often implicitly, that administrative unification is desirable, focusing only on the negative aspects of bureaucratic plurality without weighing the costs or considering the possible benefits. Rix (1993, 72) succinctly summarizes the costs of plurality:

> Responsibility for aspects of aid policy is extremely diverse, involving eighteen central ministries and agencies plus several implementing agencies. Traditionally, competition between those bodies has confused the purposes of Japan's aid and obstructed effective overall direction of the programme.

Third, works in this field pay no attention to the role of quasi-governmental corporations, the key catalysts for involving the private sector along the lines of state plans (Sato 2014). The focus on technical cooperation is justified on the basis that only this area was considered real "aid" since it was fully funded by the government despite its marginal volume in proportion to GNP (Pempel 1977, 751). This paper suggests a re-examination of the long-held belief that diversified administration hampers economic cooperation.

Japan, in its early phase of development through the 1950s and 1960s, provides rich insights into the question of why certain countries have multi-centric aid administrations. These can be summed up as follows: 1) Japan was the first non-western donor that struggled to define its own model of foreign aid as part of its economic development strategy. The ideological drive of the Cold War that dominated western aid for decades was less of an issue during the formative period of Japanese economic cooperation (Schraeder 1998, 2) the Japanese government sought to unify its aid administration because of periodic pressure to rationalize its fragmented institutions, especially in the periods when major administrative reforms (gyōsei kaikaku) to reduce and streamline the number of government agencies were attempted.[4] Even though such aspirations were never fully fulfilled, careful examination of the proposed solutions in each period reveals what "economic cooperation" meant to the stakeholders; and 3) the expansion of economic cooperation, despite the government's failure to implement total administrative unity, prompts us to examine the mechanism of how the "two filters" functioned in executing aid policies.

Contrary to the conventional inclination to lament on the state's failure to unify its administration, this paper posits that the repeated failures had unacknowledged, positive side effects at two levels: first, the necessity for cross-ministerial coordination triggered interaction among multiple ministries pertaining to economic cooperation, and facilitated the specialization of ministerial expertise; second, governmental and quasi-governmental agencies in the formative period of economic cooperation allowed the "structural inclusion" (Arase 1994, 172) of private exporters and engineers to participate in state-led policy, which enabled the extension of their footprint into various parts of Southeast Asia. In short, the diverse representation, which made the field of economic cooperation lively and engaged, was made available by the absence

[4] An example of the most recent effort is the establishment of the Council on Overseas Economic Cooperation (Kaigaikeizaikyoryokukaigi: 海外経済協力会議) on April 28, 2007. It was chaired by the Prime Minister and Chief Cabinet Secretary, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Treasury, Economy and Trade, and abolished in October 21, 2012.

of a centralized ministry, and eventually led Japan to become one of the largest development donors in the 1980s. The lack of a unified ministry was perhaps at times useful for the government to obfuscate its potentially unpopular intent, while showcasing it at other times. For example, the emphasis on infrastructure, a Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)[5] mode of thinking, was highly criticized as being too commercial in the 1980s and 1990s, but was held back by the human security agenda propagated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA). The increased concentration of western aid to the social sectors (e.g., health and education) and the demands of the recipients for more infrastructure, facilitated China's rise in this field and the subsequent re-appreciation of Japanese aid.

While one should be careful about overemphasizing lessons gathered from a single country study, the evolution of aid bureaucracies in Japan points to some general trends on how the process of "becoming a donor" can trigger a particular form of relationship among the ministries as well as among the government ministries and business communities. Through the extensive use of primary sources in the Diplomatic Archives, I analyze the ministerial interests that constantly hindered the unification of administrative bureaus engaged in economic cooperation, and argue that an apparently fragmented system has its own benefits at a particular time and in a particular context in the history of aid administration in Japan.

3. Unrealized demands of administrative unity

The central problem caused by the failure to unify can be attributed to the blurred link between planning and impact (Gotō 1979). When many agencies are involved, it is difficult to determine whether a government policy as a whole is consistent and effective. Arase (1994, 197) describes this issue in a straightforward manner:

[5] The current Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry,

> Given the pluralist view that Japanese policymaking is vertically segmented between conflict-ridden bureaucratic actors, and is ill coordinated between subgovernmental structures, how is it possible for the sixteen bureaus to preside over the world's largest ODA program without paralysis as the expected outcome?

One of the first comprehensive reports highlighting the eminent need for administrative unity was a 1961 study by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs entitled, "State and the Future Problems of Overseas Economic Cooperation" (MoFA 1961). The report was drafted as a guide for the newly organized Overseas Economic Cooperation Council OECC, Taigaikeizaikyoryokushingikai: 対外経済協力審議会) in response to the increasing demand for effective economic cooperation.[6] The study addressed salient problems pertaining to economic cooperation, including supply shortages, the insecure legal and economic status of dispatched experts, and an absence of coordination between financial and technical entities. Moreover, it also brought to light the rising need for coordination among traditional donors, and the need to increase the absorptive capacities of Japan to host foreign trainees. The report acknowledged these issues as imminent and recommended establishing a "comprehensive agency that handles overall technical cooperation matters" (MoFA 1961). By doing so, technical cooperation would "establish itself as a distinct field" (MoFA 1961). The rationale for the establishment of such an independent agency was further elaborated as follows:

> The present system of technical cooperation has too many subcontractors, and none of them have the stable status necessary to handle government initiatives on its behalf. The multiplicity of such implementing agencies not only invites inefficiency, but also makes

[6] The establishment of the OECC was one of the major recommendations proposed by the LDP Special Committee on Overseas Economic Cooperation (LDP 1960; Glimpses of Asia 1960).

closer coordination based on comprehensive plans extremely difficult.

Such forces for administrative unity came ostensibly from the government (i.e. the Liberal Democratic Party). Yet, as we shall examine in the next section, various business communities were the major driving forces demanding the unification of the decision-making system in the administration of economic cooperation.

3.1 Pressures from the business community

Since the prewar times, Japanese politics has been strongly influenced by prominent business men (especially *Zaibatsu,* the industrial and financial business conglomerates). The peculiar economic conditions of postwar Japan further invited private sector participation in the field of foreign economic cooperation. From the beginning of economic cooperation in the early 1950s, it was clear that Japan's financial capacity would not allow it to respond to demands from those who claimed reparations. It was thus decided that capital lending and investment by the private sector should supplement the shortages. The affinity between all governmental and business stakeholders made it natural for Japan to expand its economic engagement with Southeast Asian countries. Most importantly, the arrangement allowed reparations to effectively play a role as "a vanguard of Japanese exports, allowing countries in Southeast Asia to familiarize themselves with Japanese capital" (LDP 1960, 110). Public-private partnerships also empowered the "trading companies（Sōgōshōsha:総合商社）to extend their business in this region quite readily, enabling the foundation of heavy chemical industry products from Japan to proliferate" (Kashima 1973, 9). This style of "economic cooperation" has been

carried over to the more recent ODA grant practices, which consist of the provision of Japanese domestic products.

At the technical level, economic cooperation includes reparations, direct private investment, Yen credits, deferred payments, and technical cooperation. The problem lies at the normative level. Economic cooperation, as characterized by MITI in 1958, is "mutually beneficial" for the providers and the receivers, and is a telling example of the common understanding of the term "economic cooperation" of that period. MITI's argument against "aid" includes the perception that "benevolent cooperation based on friendship and goodwill generated by a political-diplomatic initiative will invite suspicion on the side of less developed countries with regard to the political intention behind it, and might also work against racial consciousness, leading to ethnic independence" (MITI 1958, 1).

The concept of "mutual benefits" allowed enough room for business entities to play a role. However, private participation in economic cooperation projects was never smooth, forcing companies to go through segmented bureaucracies for permits, which subsequently became the basis of their demands for administrative unity. Private companies were the vanguard in project implementation, and many of them had already accumulated a certain level of experience in Southeast Asia.

Demands from the business community, often consolidated by the Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren: 経団連)[7] had significant political influence within the government.[8] Fujiyama Aiichiro, the first Minister of Foreign Affairs to propose a unification plan, was an influential businessman from pre-WWII times. Nagano Shigeo, who became the chairman of the newly reformed

[7] The current Japan Business Federation,

[8] Caldwell (1972, 29) points out that the survey teams sent out by the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (OTCA) were often headed by top Japanese businessmen. On the general connection between the business community and foreign policy, see Misawa (1973).

Overseas Economic Cooperation Council, was also the head of the Chamber of Commerce. Influential figures from the business community increasingly occupied key positions in the government, either as advisors or politicians.

Not just the top elites, but also various companies initiated their own plans to supplement state projects in the field of technical cooperation. From 1954 to 1959, 3,982 private sector engineers and experts were dispatched abroad – more than 17 times as many as those from the public (governmental) entities who dispatched through the Colombo Plan (MITI 1960, 229). Southeast Asia absorbed 77% of these professionals. It was in 1966 that the government initiated its direct involvement with Yen Loans scheme, which was previously handled by the private sector (Ando 1992). This shift demonstrates that by this time the Japanese government had developed the financial capacity to be directly involved in development finance. International criticism of Japanese commercialism was increasing.

A joint statement by the Japan Association of Corporate Executives (Keizaidoyukai: 経済同友会) in February 1968 summarizes the frustration within the business community, and why they wanted the government to unify aid administration:

> In this country, opinions on overseas economic cooperation often conflict with each other although each ministry's opinion reflects its sincere concern for national interests. The situation often makes aid policy a mere product of inter-ministerial compromise. More importantly, it takes an astonishing amount of time to come to a compromise, which ends up harming the flexibility of aid and drastically diminishes its impact. In many cases, we are forced to pay much higher prices than the original target, with more generous conditions because procrastination heightens the aid recipient's feelings, which is not even appreciated. This situation that could have been avoided if aid policies had been

formulated with more swiftness. This makes us wonder why we engage in aid at all. And this makes us wonder even further whether anyone is seen to take responsibility for any of this (MoFA 1969).

In short, business sectors were in fierce competition with their European and American counterparts in the Southeast Asian market, and they could not tolerate the high transaction costs of having to deal with various sections of the government.

3.2 Initiatives within the government

In analyzing movements within the government, Rix's (1993, 95-100) classification of the level of administrative unity is useful: an independent structure with its own minister, a new structure within MoFA, and a consultative model based on the existing structure, but with more functional coordination. Japan clearly belongs to the consultative model, i.e., the least unified model, but the point is that influential figures from the private sector played a major role in the "consultation."

Economic cooperation began as the joint initiative of the MoFA, Ministry of Finance (MoF), MITI, and Economic Planning Agency (EPA). It has gradually expanded to include other ministries, and by February 1979, ten ministries and agencies were officially acknowledged as members of the steering committee on foreign aid management (Gotō 1979, 75).[9] As the number of economic cooperation-related agencies expanded, in 1959 the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) naturally led a move toward unification by setting up a special committee within the LDP to follow up on the matter. Because no dominant ministry was responsible for economic cooperation, the special committee in the LDP played a critical role in setting up the basic

[9] Gotō (1979, 75-6) points out that since the inception of the initial "four ministry/agency system", customarily each ministry had the power of veto over the others. Thus coordination efforts were time-consuming and preference was given to less controversial projects.

institutions for economic development. As a result of the leadership given to the politicians, many of whom were former businessmen or had strong ties with industry, private sector could insert their agenda more effectively. As bureaucrats obtained the power to plan and implement economic cooperation projects, the coordinating role of the LDP declined; however, the links between the business sector and ministries were effectively maintained by the quasi-government corporations.

The initial move to consolidate various economic cooperation stakeholders in Asia burgeoned in 1953. The Vice Minister of MoFA, Okumura Katuzō issued a policy statement summarizing the mood of that period. His proposition emphasized the importance of private sector initiatives in carrying out economic cooperation projects with the government having a supportive role (ESB 1954, 49). The basic formulation outlined in the Okumura plan was then approved as a Cabinet Resolution on December 18, 1953, with an additional statement: "economic cooperation should respect the position of the recipient country, and should be on good terms with the development plans of the UN and other third parties" (MoFA 1953). The establishment of the Society for Economic Cooperation in Asia (Ajia Kyokai: アジア協会) as a "private" implementing agency in 1954, which combined seven existing organizations related to Asia into one, was a seminal event (Kashima 1973, 34).[10]

As part of the efforts to coordinate ministries pertaining to economic cooperation, the government organized a roundtable session of four permanent secretaries from MoFA, MoF, MITI, and EPA on January 11, 1957 (MoFA 1957). Director General Ishida from the Foreign Exchange Bureau, representing the MoF, criticized his own ministry by saying that:

> …one of the cancers of the whole issue of economic cooperation is that the Budget Bureau

[10] The Society for Economic Cooperation in Asia (*Ajia Kyokai*) was established as a private foundation to carry out governmental missions in the field of technical cooperation (Sato 2014). The proportion of subsidies from the government in the overall budget of the Society for Economic Cooperation in Asia amounted to 47% as of 1961 (Ajia Kyokai 1961).

(of MoF) has randomly reduced the MoFA's budget proposal without consultation with the Foreign Exchange or Finance Bureaus, which have a strong connection with economic diplomacy. The people at the Budget Bureau generally lack sensitivity when it comes to foreign relations, and often make hasty decisions based on their own biases (MoFA 1957).

A MoFA internal memorandum dated October 13, 1958 entitled "The Relationship between Economic Cooperation Agency（経済協力庁）and other Ministries", outlined the basic principle of unification, which laid the foundation for subsequent discussions on the topic:

The Economic Cooperation Agency will be mandated to plan and coordinate matters related to economic cooperation from a diplomatic perspective as well as to be engaged in negotiations with foreign counterparts… The authority to implement economic cooperation projects will remain in the hands of each ministry for both private as well as government funded ones. Other than matters agreed among the ministries, there shall be no concentration of mandates to this new agency. Therefore, each ministry should adhere to each administrative command, or related quasi-governmental corporations in the implementation of economic cooperation (MoFA 1958b).

The recommendation from the Provisional Commission for Administrative Reform（Rinjigyōseichosakai: 臨時行政調査会）in September 1964 follows along the lines of the above hypothesis that institutional reform should be retained at a modest level. The recommendation stated that the Economic Cooperation Bureau should be given the authority to coordinate the administration of economic cooperation, and thus similar functions within the Economic Planning Agency should be consolidated into the structure of this new bureau mandate (MoFA 1965).

In the 1970s when Japan was already acknowledged as one of the major economic powers, there was even stronger external pressure to increase the ODA budget, again sparking a debate on the unification of aid administration. In a meeting of the Overseas Economic Cooperation Council on December 23, 1970, the idea of "consolidating the administrative mandates presently dispersed among the various ministries into a new Ministry (or Agency) of Economic Cooperation for the purpose of unilateral operations (ichigenteki unyō: 一元的運用) in economic cooperation policies" was put on the table. However, this proposal resulted in the creation of a Ministerial Council on Overseas Development Cooperation (Taigaikaihatsukyoryoku kakuryokaigi: 対外開発協力閣僚会議), and a Promotion Office for Overseas Development Cooperation (Taigaikaihatsukyoryoku suishinhonbu: 対外開発協力推進本部). The basic mandates of each ministry remained largely unchanged.

Since then, repeated efforts have been made within the government toward centralized decision making. However, no single institution has been created to handle all mandates in a centralized way. Various councils of higher command were established within the authority of the MoFA. The ministerial-level council, which was established in 2007, was abolished after five years in 2012. A centralized ODA ministry has continuously been unattainable in Japan.

4. Discussion: A closer look at the benefits of a multi-centric system

The consistent failure to unify aid bureaucracy should not be viewed simply as negative; the process, rather than the result of the struggle, has created positive side effects that strengthened the foundation of subsequent economic cooperation. Thus, "failure" should be seen as the positive outcome of achieving something other than the original goal of a unified aid organization. If this outcome is not acknowledged, the eventual "success" of Japan becoming one of the largest development donors in the 1980s is hard to explain.

I find three mechanisms through which benefits have been generated by the presence of diversified agencies: 1) increasing specialization of participating stakeholder; 2) the stronger need for communication between stakeholders; and 3) inclusion of private sector participation. The stimulating interaction between these mechanisms has helped to form a firm foundation for economic cooperation projects.

Before delving into these points, let us examine the possible reasons for *not* unifying aid administration. During the 13th meeting of Technical Aid Sub-Committee under the Overseas Economic Cooperation Council, Masaki Sawaki (then the Director-General of the Economic Cooperation Bureau of MoFA) outlined the following reasons why the establishment of the Economic Cooperation Agency has not evolved despite general agreement among the ministries on the need for such a unified institution (MoFA 1971):

1) The budget for this new agency could not be secured.
2) The new minister overseeing the new agency could not be granted a sufficiently high status, given the implicit hierarchy of existing ministers (e.g., Justice, Foreign, Treasury, Industry and Trade, etc.), which would restrict his power to initiate new projects.
3) The extra function and staff of this new ministry would only increase transaction costs at the operational level. Transferring the economic cooperation mandates from MoFA to the new agency would also create an obscure mandate for the rest of the diplomats in embassies whose main function is to implement economic cooperation projects.

Having a stand-alone ministry was not considered feasible, primarily because of its potential overlap and conflict with existing institutions.[11] The absence of unification led to a

[11] This may be the key difference with Germany, which perceived international development as independent from foreign policy, and thus independent from the policies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

proliferation of economic cooperation-related agencies, particularly through the spread of quasi-governmental corporations. Within the government, competition among the ministries promoted further division of labor in handling aid projects of their own, while heightening the need to communicate with each other. These processes had the overall effect of expanding the total volume and range of economic cooperation. Let us elaborate on each of these points.

First, specialization within ministries was promoted. An increasing number of ministries beyond MoFA started to send development experts into the field. In the 1990s, out of 30,445 experts dispatched abroad, only 25.9% were from JICA. The rest were personnel recommended by various ministries: the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (14.9%); Science, Education and Sports (13.9%); MITI (12.5%); Construction (7.3%); Transportation (6.2%) (IC Net 2001). Figure 1 represents the quantitative trend of offices and divisions established within the various ministries related to international cooperation. We notice a constant rise of activities by ministries and agencies, while the four main ministries (yon shō chō: 四省庁) have remained more or less constant, or rather have declined since the late 1990s. The trend implies an increased participation by ministries in fields that traditionally had a domestic focus. Governmental offices such as Police, Environment, Justice, and Labor are among the noticeable actors that have recently become salient in technical cooperation projects.

In the round table discussion held in 1988, then Director-General of the Economic Cooperation Department of the MoFA, Matsuura Koichirō, acknowledged that “Japanese bureaucracy is unique in terms of building up technical and macro-economic knowledge stocked in each ministry, a kind of expertise hard to find in other countries” (Someya, et al. 1988).

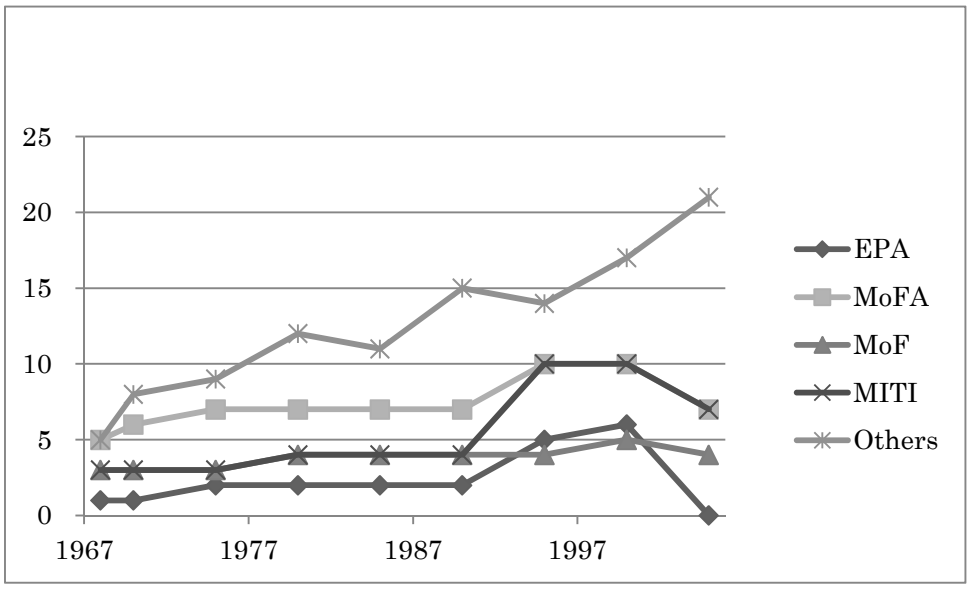

Figure 1. Number of offices and divisions in the major ministries related to economic cooperation

Source: author based on OECF Research Department, ed Catalogue of Economic Cooperation related Organizations (various year 1968-)

Second, interministerial communication and exchange of personnel became more active not simply out of necessity to coordinate, but because each related ministry had a certain sense of ownership over the portion of ODA budget which that they had command of. This sense of ownership would not have been nurtured if there had been a single ODA ministry from the beginning.

Coordination efforts among the related ministries under "communication committees" had existed since 1951 under the coordination of the Economic Stabilization Bureau（ESB: 経済安定本部）(MoFA 1951). The need for greater inter-ministerial coordination intensified in 1954 as a result of Japan's official membership of the Colombo Plan. The demand for the government to invest its own budget for the purpose of economic cooperation also intensified.

Despite the growing demand for personnel, the government was stringent in fixing a cap on the total number of staff in charge of economic cooperation. The fixed number of staff (定員)

facilitated the involvement of staff seconded from other ministries. Rix (1980, 96) documents this in detail as follows:

> …personnel in the MFA's Economic Cooperation Bureau in April 1976 totaled 134, 39 more than the number allocated in the budget….Its fixed staff included 13 transferred from other ministries (Finance, Construction, Agriculture and Forestry, Home Affairs, Transport, Posts and Telecommunications), while officials were also seconded from ministries, banks and semi-governmental organisations.

It is reported that 70~80% of the embassy attaché of developing countries handling economic cooperation projects were non MoFA staff dispatched from other ministries, quasi-governmental corporations, or private companies (IDJ 1983).

Third, opportunities for private sector participation opened up. In 1994, the number of experts from the private sector exceeded that of the government (IC Net 2001). Although it is hard to determine whether there was greater private sector participation because of the absence of centralization, the large number of quasi-governmental corporations supplying and mobilizing private sector resources would not have been justified if economic cooperation had been managed under a single ministry. Quasi-governmental corporations provided a platform where private companies and engineers were able to extend their activities in Southeast Asia.

The examples of quasi-governmental corporations established in the 1950s under MITI included International Management Association (日本シオス協会) the Institute of Developing Economies（アジア経済研究所), the Japan-Thailand Economic Cooperation Society（日タイ経済協会） the International Development Center of Japan（国際開発センター), and the Engineering and Consulting Firms Association, Japan（海外コンサルティング企業協会). Most

of these organizations received 75% of their budget through subsidies from MITI (JCCM 1975).[12]

The above-mentioned corporations were particularly useful for any government who wished to engage with the private sector but could not do so by contacting individual firms due to their prime concern for "fairness." The structural inclusion of the private sector, covering a wide range from infrastructure to agriculture, could not have been possible if the ministries were centralized into one.

As the number of quasi-governmental corporations grew, and the Japanese economy experienced "the bubble" period in the late 1980s, many of them became vulnerable. This criticism was not just because the corporations became the target of criticism based on the parachuting of high-ranking public officials into management posts known as "amakudari" (天下り), but more because the private sector started to distance itself from such quasi-governmental corporations. By then, private sectors were able to collect their own information without relying too much on intermediary organizations, while the Ministry of Finance began to attack the "sanctuary" of the ODA budget in each ministry.[13] A member of the House of Councilors, Shuichi Hojo criticized in 1960 as follows:

> The government recently is plagued with the bad tendency to create whatever organizations into quasi-governmental corporations….I don't understand why. My guess is that by doing so, government intends to avoid blame and responsibility. Moreover, such organizations offer the means of escape from pressures to rationalize and downsize the government…I believe these (implementing) jobs should be undertaken by the government directly (Hojo 1960)

[12] The total volume of subsidies to these corporations amounted to 1,090 million yen on average between 1946 and 1955, and declined to 419 million yen from 1956-1965. The figure then declined again to 330 million from 1966 to 1973 (Institute of Policy Sciences 1974, 31).

[13] I thank Mr. Araki Mitsuya, Chairman and Executive Director of the International Development Journal Co., Ltd. for this insight during the interview conducted with him on July 8, 2014.

As Hōjō rightly points out, while the process of division of labor equipped each organization with specialized skills and functions, they soon became internalized as vested interests. Therefore, there was little incentive in the ministries themselves to rationalize and centralize such corporations and the affiliated departments in each ministry. Radical merging and reorganization became increasingly difficult, not to mention their complete abolishment. The outcomes of having a wider range of stakeholders includes the cost of an inability to centralize. The drawbacks of failing to unify include lack of transparency, the weakness or absence of stakeholders that are strong in other systems, slow decision making, and a system which does not allow overall ODA evaluation at the cross-ministerial policy level.

It was felt that these drawbacks were not strong enough to require the implementation of a radical reform to centralize at the ministerial level. The reason why unification in Japan has remained at the consultative level is probably due to the large number of personnel and the significant stakes attached to the corresponding quasi-governmental corporations. Yet this outcome should not blind us to its positive role in the incipient years of economic cooperation, which had the effect of spreading the constituents.

Japan's continuous reliance on the economic cooperation models that were established in the 1950s, even as the rest of the world shifted its emphasis to development, started to become a problem in the 1980s. The private sector had nurtured its own capacity to formulate projects without much reliance on information from the quasi-governmental corporations. The transition became harder as time went by as change would have involved a threat to vested interests, such as senior positions, which had been occupied by retired government officials from related ministries. Institutional separation of economic cooperation and development, on the other hand, was occurring in countries like Britain and Germany. We are yet to examine whether Japan can still address global issues with ODA budgets that essentially are in the hands of ministries that strive for national interests.

5. Conclusion and implications

This paper began by considering the facts behind the question of why some countries have a single agency to administer all foreign aid activities while others have their aid programs organized in a more multi-centric structure. By examining the case of Japan, which has experienced constant attempts to unify its dispersed aid administration, I argued that its repeated failure to achieve centralization produced the positive outcome of spreading domestic constituents, and thus laying a sturdy infrastructure for subsequently expanding the larger volume of development cooperation. However, as Japan became a major donor in the 1980s, the catalyst that connected the functions of the public and the private sectors, as served by the quasi-governmental corporations, became somewhat of a burden. This was especially so in the sectors where private companies had already established their capacity to establish business relations with developing countries without government support.

Despite intense critiques from the Western community over Japan's "commercialism" in the late 1980s, and the apparent shift to align with the international standard of untied aid that emphasizes global issues such as poverty and environmental conservation, Japan's institutional foreign aid set-up founded in the 1950s has remained more or less stable.[14] The relative absence of criticism of Japanese aid today is partly due to a general decline in public interest, although the "return" of commercial aid and emphasis on national interests, i.e., the dominant style of economic cooperation in the 1950s, may have been playing a role. The main difference in public-private division of labor between the 1950s and today is that previously the private industries were dependent on the government to set up an enabling political condition that would allow normal trade and investment after the war.

[14] This is not to say that no progress has been made in the unification efforts. The establishment of JBIC (combining OECF and Japan Ex-Im Bank) in 2008, and the new JICA (merging parts of JBIC and old JICA) were major moves.

Considering the contemporary implications of this study, the effect of overseas aid provision within the donor countries first becomes apparent. While there has been much advancement of our understanding as to how aid might affect the government and business sectors of the recipient countries (e.g., Remmer 2004), research has little to say about the parallel effect of aid on the donor countries and society at large. The study of emerging donors should pay attention to its impact on domestic constituents as much as their impact on aid recipient nations.

Second, economic cooperation projects can reveal aspirations of business sector communication within the context of aid. In Japan's case, business representation at the higher levels of councils, and at the implementation level, was mediated by quasi-governmental corporations. The involvement of the private sector from the very beginning of economic cooperation was an economic necessity. The intricate connection between the government and business communities, on the other hand, became a constraint on the international community, which aims to implement agendas such as global environmental protection or poverty reduction that does not have immediate links with domestic business interests. We see a similar approach now taken by China, where many projects are formulated by private sector initiatives (Sato et al. 2011).

Third, the cost of expanded constituents came with its own increase in vested interests, which became harder to downsize when the government turned out to be too large; the ODA budget also dwindled dramatically. Japan's experience poses an interesting question regarding how much a market should take care of the shifting needs of foreign aid and how governmental institutions can arrange themselves in preparation for its changing role. While some observe that Chinese aid has a structure similar to the Japanese aid of the 1970s (Brautigam 2009; Sato et al 2011), further analysis is needed to compare the various ways that the private-public division of labor, and their communication, is arranged within their respective administrative system. The

difference may help us explain how Chinese aid may follow a path distinct from that of the Japanese.

Is there a future for aid unification? Unarguably, Japan needs clear and consistent aid policies, but the appropriateness of a unified "aid ministry" is conditioned by historical context. In the 1950s when Japan needed to secure as many participants as possible, dispersed ministries with various quasi-governmental corporations were useful in forming constituents for economic cooperation, which did not have a firm domestic base. Today, as "ODA" has become a popular term and there is pressure to cut its budget further, this may be the right time to consolidate aid-related mandates into one, perhaps independently from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs whose policies are necessarily tied to "national interests."

An important question regarding Japanese foreign aid is not whether it is gravitating toward commercialism or national interests in the narrow sense. Rather, we should ask whether the domestic expansion of aid-related industries has had a positive effect on the plight of people in recipient countries through the creation of constituents. This question must be addressed by examining not just ODA, but more importantly by analyzing how private entities left commendable legacies in Southeast Asia. The commitment of the private sector during the initial period of economic cooperation paved the way for Japan's later contribution to global issues; the benefits of non-centralized system should be evaluated through a positive lens in the countries that are emerging in the field of foreign aid today.

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Abstract (in Japanese)

要約

世界の援助行政を見渡すと、一部の国は特定の省庁に政府開発援助に関連する業務を集中させているのに対して、他の国々では業務が多省庁にまたがって分散しているのが分かる。日本は後者に属する国であり、それゆえにDAC（開発援助委員会)から批判の対象になってきた。援助行政は一元化されるべき、というのが国内外での「常識」だからである。一元化論があまりに支配的であったためであろうか、援助が多元的な省庁体制の下で実施されることのメリットについては、これまで分析対象になってこなかった。

そこで本研究では、援助黎明期における1950年代から60年代の日本を対象にし、援助行政が多元的に構築されていった過程、特にその中でも特殊法人が果たした役割を考察する。特殊法人は、自ら経済協力を実施する体力をもたなかった政府に代わって、安定的に事業を行えるようにするための組織的工夫として立ち現れたもので、それが各省庁に作られることで、多様な民間とのネットワークが構築されていった。この工夫によって、民間企業は特殊法人から政府情報を獲得できた一方、政府は、特定の民間企業だけを支援できないという制約を克服できたのである。

日本では複数省庁にまたがる援助体制が民間のリソースを広く動員する上でプラスの働きをし、援助大国へ向かうにあたっての裾野を広げる役割を果たした。この過程で設置された特殊法人の一部は後に形骸化し、天下りの温床として非難の対象になっていくが、そのことをもって日本援助の多元性や特殊法人の機能を否定すべきではない。援助行政の発達過程は、各国に固有の条件の中で考察されなくてはならならず、援助行政における一元化論についても、各国固有の文脈に照らして検証しなくてはならない。

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