even his acres are not a political asset to Alexis, for they are all too young to have recorded any real influence in the affairs of the community and in any case they are absent for most of the time. These factors would not be of much importance in the lives of most men in Moholoholo, for as I have often stressed, public prominence and influence is generally avoided and interest in community affairs is normally entirely subordinate to interest in family, or at most, descent group matters. But Alexis Makota is an exception. He wants to lead, to direct people and affairs, to be consulted and respected.

The exploration of motives is nearly always doomed to yield inconclusive or spurious results, but one or two general observations about Alexis are relevant here. He has a large family, large fields, a permanent and relatively well paid job, a good education and many contacts with white people; all this probably contributes to his feeling that he is worthy of respect above that due to most other men. He, like Makota, is often constrained to teach, to instruct and to exhort, even though his status gives him no mandate for this. Pitson and court cases are often protracted by long and tedious discourses, interlarded with sound and progressive sentences when Alexis ...as to speak. At a recent court hearing, taking a complaint by a woman that her neighbour's pig had eaten vegetables in her garden, Alexis quoted a section of the laws of Leretheli, which he claimed had bearing on the matter, spoke of the need for neighbourly co-operation, and from there moved on to an explanation for adapting modern agricultural methods, the
reasons for exhaustion of the soil, the depletion of pastures, the tragedy of soil erosion, the malnourishment of children, the correct way to obtain the best prices for crops sold, the value of work, and how the white man succeeds when the black man fails. This occupied about thirty minutes, and was received at its conclusion with heavy irony by several of those present. People will normally listen appreciatively to an exposition of the traditional law and custom given by one who is an acknowledged expert in the field. The speaker will generally be as brief as possible and will claim nothing or his own authority. The most appreciated exponents of the law are those who do not claim to teach but only to pass on accurately what they have learnt from a wiser generation, without the stamp of their own interpretation or imperatur. Alexis is often mistrusted and ridiculed because he neglects these directives and violates people's sensitivity. People have told me they actively dislike Alexis because he adopts a position of superiority towards them. They want to learn because they generally are aware that external forces are at work modifying their lives and making their traditional practices obsolete and ineffectual, but they do not want to be instructed by one who speaks to them as if they were backward children. With the exception of Mahathe Alexis knows more about these wider economic forces, and of ways of using or countering them, than anyone else permanently resident in the community and most people recognize this. Their feelings towards him are therefore ambivalent. He has an expertise which they want, but they distrust and dislike his and fear that any influence he may gain he will use to exploit
Alexis's desire for leadership is therefore self-defeating as long as he tries to propagate his influence as an individual vis-à-vis the community. But he shares many interests, qualities and aspirations with Makatho. They are in fact near neighbours. They can discuss with one another, and with no one else in the community, the progressive ideas and projects in which lie the hopes of each to achieve local influence and support. Although Alexis has not abandoned the traditional spheres of the court hearing or suitable occasions to promote himself, an alliance with Makatho has grown closer since his ascension to the headship and especially since his 'progressive' era began. Since the establishment of the Soipopo Makatho and Alexis have worked extremely closely together in formulating policy, trying to hold the organisation together when others were losing interest, arranging the financial affairs of the association, and especially in conferring with government officers and other visitors to the valley. I have explained how the Soipopo can serve Makatho as a vehicle for her own political interests, while serving the economic interests of its members. Alexis can likewise use the Soipopo as a field within which to gain support. Neither he nor Makatho feel entirely competent to consult representatives of government on technical, financial or organisational matters by themselves, and so each consults the other on these points. There is mutual support at present. Makatho needs Alexis's advice, and Alexis, by being consulted and asked to be present
at meetings with influential outsiders increases his fund of expertise and his reputation in the community as one who possesses first hand information on important matters which are beyond the grasp of most people. But Makato’s alliance with Alexis is restricted by her deep suspicion of him, while she recognizes his utility for her she fears his notorious duplicity. She described him to me as ‘a snake in the grass’. She recalls an event some years ago when he was carrying favour with both Jabe and Batata by giving such confidential information on the other’s next move in the boundary dispute.

Now Makato’s habit of consultation with Alexis, which began in the context of the Dalaba, has overflowed into the sphere of headmanship affairs, and this constitutes a trespass on the traditionally demarcated area of the headman’s letona. It is the letona’s duty, among other things, to represent the headman when she is absent and some urgent matter needs to be handled; he should receive visitors to the community and after finding out their business, name and background, conduct them to the headman; in the absence of the headman he should receive visitors himself and hear their business; the headman should consult him before making any important decision and before convening a nittoo or court hearing. The letona is Martini Tumusata, a senior member of the Makoro descent group. He takes his responsibilities seriously, and.is aggrieved that Alexis, and not he, is consulted on virtually all matters concerning the community and that Alexis and not he attends to visitors. Partly this is
are to geographical factors. The road from Rome ends in a
village at the headman's house, and Alexis's house is thirty
yards down the hill from there. It is therefore very easy for
Nabatene to summon Alexis when she wants to talk or when
someone has arrived, and easy for Alexis to be called
when Nabatene is absent and a visitor has arrived. Martine
lives at a distance of twenty minutes' hard walk over rough
terrain, and this is a clear discouragement to communication
between him and Nabatene.

Martine was elected by the people of Makwalela to suc-
cede his own elder brother, who had been *lekwa* under Jobere.
The election was held shortly after Nabatene's succession.
Martine did not succeed by virtue of his kinship with the
previous *lekwa*, for the position is not hereditary, but the
status of a candidate is important in determining who shall
be appointed. The brothers Lemaneleka are strong candi-
dates because the weight of their descent group has enabled
them, more than most men, to retain the traditional network
of kinship bonds and mutual obligations. These men, and
other senior men in the group, have a profound knowledge of
and interest in the traditional law, and it is perhaps this
last factor which is decisive in determining their choice as
*lekwa*. A less tangible factor seems to be that men of this
descent group have a certain self-confidence and an air of
personal security which men of less extensive groups often
lack. I think it is also very likely that Jobere and Nabatene
favour a *lekwa* from Makwalela in order to bind this group
more closely to the community.
Martins is, as Nobatho once assessed him, "a man who respects himself". He is now 69 years old, and has four sons and a daughter. He has an average sized land holding and cattle enough to plough it himself. Sometimes he builds for others as an extra source of income. He is a superb soccer fan. Martins likes to be independent in all things, and although his standard of living is barely higher than that of most others in the community I have not known him to suffer the acute seasonal shortages of food that oblige many people to fall back on the charity of kin or neighbours.

He is a traditionalist in the sense that he continues to uphold in his own household many of the old rules which regulate behaviour within the family. He maintains, for instance, the correct distance from his sons by eating apart from them; his daughters-in-law observe the same avoidance known as 'alopena'; he is one of the very few fathers who still manage to be a patriarch and to control all the important activities of the family members. His kinship relations absorb much of his interest and he is involved in a wide network of reciprocal duties to relatives and neighbours, assisting some with agricultural work, some with locust, attending and assisting at weddings and funerals, and attending their court cases in this and neighbouring communities.

Martins is also a progressive man. In 1957 he was awarded a 'Foster Farmer's Certificate' in recognition of his relatively high standards of farming. He continues to use high grade seed and fertiliser when he can afford them, but he has not joined the Soipopo. Martins himself has only...
achieved Grade 8 schooling, but his children are all well
educated: one son has Std 6, his daughter Std 9, and another
son is at the university in his second year. In spite of
his slight formal education Martina can read and write
readily well, but speaks no English.

These attributes are not far from ideal for a traditional
African, and even for a LEADERS under most modern conditions in
African. But due to Habatho’s development orientation, with
its attendant set of new relationships with government officials
and whites, its financial complications and organisational
innovations, Martina’s usefulness is curtailed. Alexia now
advises and assists Habatho in the field of her main interest
which is development, improvement and progress, while Martina
assists with court hearings, matters concerning internal order,
justice, and so on. I have already mentioned the criticism
that has been levelled at Habatho for handing over too much
of the headman’s responsibility to Martina. Frequently she
does not even attend court hearings. At first the LEADERS
used to bring their decisions to her for her approval before
announcing them to the court, but more lately they have to
issue their decisions on their own authority because Habatho
has not been available. Habatho is really neither interested
nor competent in the traditional law, and therefore is pleased
to hand over this part of her affairs more or less entirely
to Martina. But Martina is not gratified by this because it
is time consuming and the responsibility given exceeds that
customarily allotted to the LEADERS and he does not wish to
lay himself open to the charge that he is illegitimate.
achieved Grade 9 schooling, but his children are all well educated; one son has Std 6, his daughter Std 9, and another son is at the university in his second year. In spite of his slight formal education Martina can read and write well, but speaks no English.

These attributes are not far from ideal for a traditionalジャギ, and even for aジャギ under most modern conditions in ジャツ. But due to Nhatho's development orientation, with its attendant set of new relationships with government officials and whites, its financial complications and organisational innovations, Martina's usefulness is curtailed. Alexa now advises and assists Nhatho in the field of her main interest which is development, improvement and progress, while Martina assists with court hearings, matters concerning internal order, ジャツ, and so on. I have already mentioned the criticism that has been levelled at Nhatho for handing over too much of the headman's responsibility to Martina. Consequently she does not even attend court hearings. At first theジャギ used to bring their decisions to her for her approval before announcing them to the court, but more lately they have to issue their decisions on their own authority because Nhatho has not been available. Nhatho is really neither interested nor competent in the traditional law, and therefore is pleased to hand over this part of her affairs more or less entirely to Martina. But Martina is not gratified by this because it is time consuming and the responsibility given exceeds that customarily granted to theジャギ and he does not wish to lay himself open to the charge that he is illegitimately
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The strained relations between
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Rock was elected chairman, and for
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extending his authority. On the other hand Alexis does not merely complement him as advisor to the headman, but encroaches on rights which traditionally belong to the latevo. Mabatho is at least as likely to consult Alexis as Martinus about land matters, for instance. Also, since Alexis is secretary of the latevo, he is reasonably well informed on most of the matters handled by Martinus, and hence able, at least in principle, to offer Mabatho advice which she would otherwise have sought from her latevo. This has caused great enmity between the latevo and Alexis, and resentment by the latevo of Mabatho for undermining the status of Martinus. Mabatho is suspicious of both Alexis and the latevo, the former for his personal reputation and the latter for their history of loyalty to Sateto. This triangular relationship may be represented as shown in the diagram opposite.

The strained relations between Mabatho and the latevo are illustrated in the behaviour of Brick latevo, an younger brother of Martinus. At the inception of the Boipopo Brick was elected chairman, and for the first few months of the association's existence he was active in promoting its interests and in convening meetings. I have described the decline in active participation which the Boipopo suffered due to the social pressures exerted by non-members. But these reasons would not have applied to Brick in the same measure as to most other members, for his descent group gave him far more immunity from the bores of the opponents of the association, and also ensured him at least a minimum of economic co-operation from others. But Brick was one of the
first to become dilatory about his duties within the Bopllope. He even slowed down his work on the Bopllope store house, for which he was being well paid by the association, and ultimately stopped altogether. There are several explanations for this conduct. Firstly, even though he was the elected chairman, it was actually Mabatho, followed by Alexia, who took the dominant roles in meetings and in making decisions, and this made his partly redundant and also resentful. In the second place his loyalty to the Bopllope excelled co-operation and to some extent an identification with Alexia and Mabatho. The latter both used the Bopllope as a political forum for the advancement of their influence and therefore had the progress of the association at heart. Rock also had the interests of the Bopllope at heart, but for different reasons, since he had economic interests in it and also was its chairman. The strained relations between Martins, and Mabatho and Alexia placed Rock in a position of divided loyalty, for association with one, unless the circumstances, was a betrayal of the other. Kinship loyalty was out and Rock has withdrawn, for most practical purposes, from the Bopllope. In this concluding section I shall examine the political significance of the events which I have described in this chapter.

1. Mabatho suffers from a lack of support among her subjects and in performing her role as headman she must devise means of correcting this if she is to continue to act as headman.

2. In enquiring after the reasons for this lack of support we have to consider the problem of legitimacy, and this must be done from several points of view.
a) The legitimacy of the headmanship as an institution is questioned, most especially by young people and R.C.P. supporters, who often do not accept the headmanship as a legitimate form of authority. They regard it as a survival from former times which has no useful function in the modern world. It is a symbol, for them, of backwardness. It is a representative of an Establishment which does not have the interests of the people at heart, but which wishes to preserve the hereditary privileges of a ruling class.

Nabatheo has tried to counter this allegation by giving away some of her land for public purposes and by devoting herself to progressive reforms on behalf of her subjects. So far these measures have not proved successful. Her transfer of land is suspect and the Asiyopo has not yet captured the public imagination.

b) The legitimacy of Nabatheo as the incumbent of the headmanship of Melokhong ha Philip is also questioned by some, who point out that although she has been nominated by her husband's kin she has not yet been formally presented to the chief, nor has she been gazetted. This argument is not often used by her subjects, and even if she is able to establish her formal legitimacy by becoming gazetted she disposes of only one problem, in relation to her affines (especially Botswana), and this will not materially affect the amount of support given her by her subjects.

c) The most serious objection to Nabatheo's legitimacy is based on her alleged inability or unwillingness to perform
her role adequately. This objection, which is often used by her subjects as a reason for their lack of support of her, is based on the idea that even if the incumbent of traditional status is legitimately appointed to that status, he must still validate his incumbency by proper performance.

I have dealt at some length on the definition of 'proper performance' given by Jobare and the inherent difficulty, or even virtual impossibility of Habatha, or indeed probably any successor, in meeting these expectations. Accordingly Habatha has tried to establish herself in a role which will meet the problems raised under both a) and b). She has tried to show that the headmanship still has a legitimate (in the sense of beneficial) function in the community, and that she herself is a good headman, so defined. The headman, according to her interpretation, should provide the impetus and leadership to the community in its effort to adjust to modern circumstances, which otherwise threaten to overwhelm the community.

Habatha faces the problem that the traditional allegiance of the people to the headmanship has been weakened by the dissolution of community ties, the loss of authority and economic privileges of the headman, and the independence of the younger people. On the other hand she is seriously threatened by the traditional bonds, such as those which hold the Ntunyung descent group together, and by the traditional criteria of headmanship according to which she is assessed unfavourably.
As an innovator she faces the problem that traditional institutions command too little support to form the basis of progressive movements, even if they could accommodate themselves to radical change, but they are nevertheless valued sufficiently to prevent people from adopting more efficient organisational forms, especially where these conflict with the traditional institutions.

3. Habatho's endeavours to win political support correspond closely with what Barth (1963) terms an "enterprise". The entrepreneur is distinguished from the "incumbents of institutionalised, or traditional, statuses" (page 6) by three principal characteristics:

a) the entrepreneur's concentration on one type of value: "profit".

b) the entrepreneur's more experimental, innovative and less institutionalised activities, which are based on a rational calculation of profit.

c) the entrepreneur's greater willingness to take a calculated risk where another might opt for the security of a response dictated by tradition.

An interesting situation arises when the entrepreneur is also the incumbent of a traditional status, as with Habatho. There is no necessary contradiction here since "entrepreneur" is not a status, nor is it a role with rights and obligations. It is as Barth says (page 6) "an aspect of a role"; it relates to actions and activities which are concerned "with manipulating persons and resources" in the pursuit of profit. To the extent that these "actions and activities" are not a
part of the traditional role, there is bound to be some conflict between performance and expectations, which is the case with Habatho.

I have shown that Habatho has been maximising political values through activity directed clearly towards this end and also by means of converting her economic assets into political assets (land into favourable public opinion and cash, and food into communications and ingratiations with influential outsiders). Secondly Habatho has departed from the norm established by precedent for the headman and, acting on a 'deductive prognosis' has taken a new approach to the definition and prosecution of the headman's duties. Thirdly, her new line involves considerable risk because her enterprise, which is centred on the Beiyogo, is by no means certain to succeed, and even if it does it may not bring with it the support of crucial groups. Failure, on the other hand, will incur loss of the economic assets so far invested and almost certain political and social discredit.

The physical survival of the people of Noklaoxorong will depend on their ability to adapt economically to the factors that are the present cause of their poverty. Before the establishment of the Beiyogo only a few individual, sporad., and ineffectual attempts to adapt, to innovate, had been made. It seems inevitable that ultimately Habatho's lead must be followed, although whether this movement will be soon enough for Habatho to reap the benefit of her pioneering it is too early to say. Her most formidable obstacle at present is probably the Natumanong/secret group, whose support will not
be fully secured until the conflict between Martins and Nabatho subsided, if then. But time may be on Nabatho's side, because, firstly, time will almost certainly erode the solidarity of the descent group, and secondly, the new agricultural methods are demonstrably superior to the old. In addition, B.C.P. opposition to the project may decrease after the next election, if, as is expected, a landslide victory is won by the government party.

Few of those who have joined the new institutions have done so with complete conviction, and many, like Rook, have more faith in their faltering traditions than in what Barth (page 8) calls the "dependable promises" of the entrepreneur. New forms of organization and new ideas are still regarded with ambivalence by most people. There is deep suspicion on the one hand and admission of their value and necessity on the other. The promoters of these innovations are often regarded as potential exploiters and as people who are selling out their Basotho traditions in order to adopt the ways of the white man while at the same time the value of their ideas may be accepted. In these circumstances the political entrepreneur has a large source of potential clients in the community if he can offer them real material benefits in return for their support, but he always has to take into account the suspicion and animosity that his operations will generate in their initial stages. If he can keep his enterprise going long enough to allay people's fears about his motives and intentions his chances of success are greatly enhanced. The community is thus in transition, moving away
from traditional forms towards some future state, and this
movement is propitious for the entrepreneur, especially when
the main-spring of the enterprise is so closely related to
the inevitable trend of the economy as is the case in
Kochbekong.

As the economic independence of the community decreases
so its ties with the wider world must increase. In the first
instance subsistence farming must be supplemented with wage
labour. In the second instance technology must be imported
in order to bolster the dwindling local productivity. Fur-
thermore involvement in the traditional type of small scale
politics is giving way to increasing involvement in national
and party politics. It appears feasible only to a limited
extent for individuals to make their own wider contacts and
to translate these experiences into meaningful action within
the community. Thus the great majority of men in Kochbekong
have worked in mines and industry in South Africa, as parts
of immensely complex technical and organisational processes,
and yet they do not themselves apply the most elementary
techniques of modern agriculture, although they are generally
aware of them. There are numerous derelict implements in
the villages, some of them lacking only a few bolts and a cog
available cheaply at Thorn's store. Many of the ploughs
and planters in use work appallingly inefficiently because
of some minor defect or maladjustment. The benefits of fab-
tilizers, high grade seeds, insecticides, etc., are also com-
mon knowledge, but even though money may be available for
their purchase, they are not adopted. In other words, contact
with raw ideas, even when accompanied by an appreciation of
their value, does not entail adoption. This is as even when
people appear to want to adopt innovations which appear attract-
ive to them, because they want to escape their present poverty.

From another point of view the government of Tanzania urgen-
tly wishes the people to adopt modern agricultural methods
and provides various services and agents for this purpose.
Most relevant to this case are the agricultural credit ser-
vices and the agricultural extension service.

We are thus faced with the situation that the people
want more food from their land, and the government is prepared
to assist them with money and advice. The combination would
appear to provide an ideal setting for the successful adoption
of agricultural innovations.

Experience with agricultural development projects the
world over indicates, however, that this is not so, or that
the rate of diffusion of innovations of this kind is very
slow – much slower than that desired by the promoters of the
projects.

4. It has been suggested by Geertz (1959), Wolf (1966) and
Frenzen (1969), that a frequent precondition for the adoption
of innovations in a traditional community is the ‘culture
broker’. This is an individual who straddles two cultures,
the ‘national’ as defined by the aspirations of the national
leaders, and the local community, representing one to the
other in a two-way process of communication. Geertz, in
describing the Javamwe Kijali, a local religious leader, says:
"He is becoming, or attempting to become, a new kind of broker for a different sort of culture, that of the nationally centred, metropolitan-based, intelligentsia-led, 'New Indonesia'. And, as such, he has increasingly found himself occupying a new social role pregnant with possibilities both for securing and enhancing his social power and prestige, and for destroying the essential foundations of it." (1959: 222)

This description could apply as well to Nkatho, including the final foreboding phrase. The 'essential foundations' of the headman's role, as of the Kijaji's, are role performance according to traditional expectations. The headman has no 'mandate' to innovate radically, he lacks what Parsons (1951) calls 'permissiveness'. Nkatho's activities thus lack the validation of tradition, and there is no other source of validation on the basis of which the headman is given a 'mandate'. This, at least, is the situation as seen from the point of view of the community. The government is anxious to confer on the headman the mandate to innovate, and speeches by high officials often emphasize the community leadership role of headmen and chiefs in rural development programmes.

But all this does not alter the local view of what the headman's correct role is. Nkatho, however, has accepted her mandate to innovate from the government, in spite of the misgivings of many of her subjects. She no longer seeks the approval of her own subjects alone, but clearly needs the approval of what Wolf (1956: 1075) calls 'nation-oriented' individuals. Thus, according to Wolf:

"The position of these 'brokers' is an 'exposed' one, since, James like, they face in two directions at once.
They must sense some of the interests of groups operating on both community and national level, and they must cope with conflicts raised by the collision of these interests."
(1966: 1067)

I have mentioned the 'prophetic words' of the village medium vis-à-vis when Mahatho was appointed headman by the Mahathoaman, raised the objection that she was a 'Zulu', a foreigner, and therefore unacceptable to the people. Since that time she has been frequently criticized by her subjects for relying on and associating with outsiders, and particularly whites. The reasons for this fear and dislike of external relationships are probably many and complex. I suggest, on the basis of many conversations, that the people are aware that beyond the cliffs of Makholong there are powers, embodied in whites, government officials, and others, which could arbitrarily destroy or deeply modify their traditional way of life in a direction unknown and incomprehensible at present. The nature of these powers is only dimly perceived, but it is thought that the government could, by passing laws, alter the land tenure system, control grazing use, enforce soil conservation measures and so on, in ways that might be very harmful to local and individual interests, although perhaps beneficial to national interests. Whites have almost limitless powers of exploitation at their command and the ruthlessness to carry them out, according to some local views. They (all whites are akin for many purposes) might also prevent men from entering South Africa to find work. Relationships with such outsiders appear to invite attention to Nkholchong and so to bring nearer the day when disruptive
external intervention in local affairs begins. At the same time people realize the deficiencies of the local economic system and want assistance. This ambivalence does not avert hostility and suspicion from Mahatho who forms the main point of contact with the outside world. The praise given her by visiting officials, and the influential visitors who come to her house, may increase her esteem since her subjects see that she, but not they, can use these external relationships to some advantage. But because they do not know the full implications of these relationships, or where they will lead, and because such cosmopolitanism defies traditional expectations, Mahatho's motives and actions are constantly under a cloud of suspicion.

Mahatho is in a 'marginal' position in her community. This may be seen as both cause and result of her entrepreneurial activities and her 'business'. She has become marginal because of her refusal to identify exclusively with traditional values and expectations and to limit the extent of her social relationships. At the same time she has only been able to engage in her unorthodox activities and relationships because she is not rigidly confined to traditional behaviour patterns by a complex and integrated web of kinship and other local relationships which normally result in severe social constraints to perform according to traditional expectations.

"One of the most consistent attributes of such brokers is an uneasy cultural or social identification, which appears to be highly instrumental to the mobility and innovative behaviour essential to the role." (Press, 1969: 207)
In the limited available literature on culture brokers I have not found any clear exposition of the motives of these individuals. The Kijazi, according to Coetzee, cuts out the ground from under his own feet in the sense that his brokerage violates the traditional conservatism of his office. But it seems to be principally activated by the desire 'to assure and enhance his social power and prestige'. The examples given by Wolf and Preuss seem to imply that the Mexican brokers which they describe are activated partly by the desire for public prominence and partly by ideals of national progress. Makato seems to have a much more clearly formulated purpose and intention in her brokerage, and it is for this reason that I have described her, in addition, as an entrepreneur. 

She is seeking a highly specific form of profit, political support among her subjects, and the enterprise is accompanied by great risks and uncertainties which she is prepared to meet on the basis of her deductive premises.

The entrepreneur and the broker may or may not share the same qualities. The entrepreneur does not necessarily assemble two cultures, as several of the examples given by Barth (1965) show. The broker does not necessarily have the highly specific profit orientation of the entrepreneur. But there is no reason why the two should not coincide in one individual. In fact many of the same qualities, e.g. innovativeness, marginality, mobility, are characteristics of both.
The practice and the effects of placing have been exhaustively discussed in Jones, (1951, 1966); Duncan (1966) and Linton (1958), among others. My own information does not add to the principles of placing described in those works. I shall therefore keep this section brief.

The original sense of the word 'placing' was the creation by an important chief of a new position within his area, over which he appointed one of his sons. The origin of the custom was in the early days of the Nsotho nation when large tracts of Nsotho were either uninhabited or unadministered (from Nsotoo's point of view). Nsotoo himself and many of his senior chiefs married extremely large numbers of wives - up to one hundred. It was from the senior households of these polygynous families that sons were chosen and appointed to administer outlying areas of their fathers' territories. Nsotoo is said also to have placed a number of his brothers and a few commoners in this way (cf. Jones, 1966: 62). In its early stages, then, placing was a device whereby efficient administration over an expanding area could be maintained, and it was also a way of meeting the problem of accommodating some of the principal rivals to the succession.

The system appears to have worked well, and as mentioned in Chapter II, to have promoted good two-way communications between the great chiefs and the people. It was also seen
according to Jones (1966: 62) as a means whereby chiefs
divested themselves of the heavy economic burdens of their
numerous offspring and personal dependents. Eventually,
however, too factors began to render placing more and more
difficult and disruptive. These were the adoption of the
system by chiefs of lesser rank and even by headmen (e.g.
Samoa), and the gradually increasing density of the admin-
istrative system, in the form of placed chiefs and headmen,
over the whole country. Probably by the beginning of this
century, the disruptive effects of placing had begun to out-
weigh the advantages.

The desire of ward chiefs and even of sub-chiefs to
place several of their sons could not be accommodated with-
out displacing petty authorities at the bottom of the hier-
archy, or without creating anomalous situations such as that
in Philipi's area where he and the sub-chief placed over him
shared the same area, and where the authority of the new
chief was minimal. He was granted, on arrival, a small
area known as 'bokina pere' (a knee-heeling area), which
is a place where he could plough and allocate a little land
to his immediate followers (cf. Duncan 1966: 57), thus avoid-
ing total dependence on his subordinate. This again is an
index of Philipi's strength, for a more common event was
the displacement or the total usurpation of authority from
the local headmen by the incoming chief.

By the mid 1930's the situation created by placing was
critical and there was extreme instability among the small
chiefs and headmen who feared displacement. In 1938 the
government decided to try to stabilise the situation by gazetting a limited number of chiefs and headmen, and by refusing recognition to any authority so gazetted. It listed 1,500 chiefs and headmen, and Jones estimates (1951: 39) that at least an equal number considered they had a right to recognition. I have already mentioned that Jobere received recognition and this greatly reinforced his position in subsequent disputes concerning his legitimacy as headman of that area. However, Jobere told me, when we riding on a boundary inspecting expedition, that he had lost several sections of land on his borders in the course of the numerous conflicts with various neighbouring chiefs and headmen. There are no well demarcated reasons or lines to separate one headman's area from another. Tress, rocky ridges, rivers, and lines between various natural features are used as boundary markers, but since there are no maps recording them it is easy to substitute one tree or large rock for another. The consequent boundary disputes are endemic, and constitute a major proportion of the litigation in the higher courts. The case between Jobere and Matete illustrates the type of difficulty that arises over boundaries. One of the basic disagreements between the two parties has been what area was actually 'pointed out' by Jumurana when he placed his brother over a part of his territory. Some witnesses claimed that they heard from their fathers that a certain area, not including the Valley had been pointed out, and some gave contrary, second-hand, evidence. It is now clearly impossible to sort out which boundary was actually indicated so the issue has to be decided on other, more accessible
The current system of registration of chiefs and headmen precludes the possibility of any further placings, so that its interest is now confined to the historical understanding of the development of the traditional administrative system.
ALLOTTING AND ACQUIRING LAND

Lesotho’s Law No. 8, promulgated in 1922, stated:

"All chiefs and headmen must by law provide people living under them with lands to cultivate."

In 1946 this was amended to: "Every chief and subchief and every headman has the power to allocate land in his area for cultivation."

The distinction between the law and its amendment reflects a profound change that has overtaken the rural populace of Lesotho as land shortage has become acute.

In the normal way a man will regard himself as being eligible for agricultural land when he marries. The reason stated by newly married men on the official land application forms is often simply "le mana. ke na le mosali." and sometimes is added "le basoa" - "I am a man. I have a wife ...... and children.". A man without land, but with dependents, is in a precarious position. He must either get one of the scarce local jobs, set up as an entrepreneur, or go to the mines. Local jobs are not only scarce, but often temporary or liable to unexpected termination. Entrepreneurship is open only to those of rather special and unusual temperament-al traits, and it usually requires capital. Mining may be excluded because of physical disabilities, and in a number of local cases mining has caused physical disabilities that prevent or delay further employment in this sphere. Although yields are generally very low - of the order of one half to
three bags of maize or sorghum per acre - and farming compares unfavourably with most wage employment as an economic activity, land is nevertheless regarded by most people as the primary source of economic security. A job can be terminated in an instant, at the inscrutable will of an employer, and total economic disaster may ensue if there is no land to fall back on. Admittedly, hail, early frost, drought, insects, witchcraft, other peoples' cattle and other natural or unnatural disasters may afflict the growing crop, but total failure is rare. Also reasons can generally be found. And then there is always next year, which is more than can be said for a lost job.

Land Rights

Under the Lesotho system of land tenure, the term 'land' has three distinct referents. In its most general use it refers to arable fields. These are distinct with respect to the rules governing their use from building and garden sites. And both of these are distinct, again, from grazing areas.

Building and Garden Sites

Unlike other types of land, house and garden sites are inheritable, along with their improvements. A man's legitimate heir will thus acquire this property on the death of its owner, without recourse to the local chief or headman.

If a man leaves his village permanently, and makes no other arrangements, his garden and house site and their improvements revert to the chief for re-allocation, although
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