

Introduction to the Botswana Notes and Records Volume 51

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Botswana Notes and Records have a long history of publishing a broad range of material on Botswana. The journal provides a space for both Science and Social Science research, personal views and reflections, and historical and current information. The 51st volume of the journal continues with this tradition and provides new considerations on Botswana from a variety of fields and sources.

Nick Walker and William Samuel Downey open the volume with an archaeological paper titled ‘An Early Date for the Stone Age at Kgale View in Gaborone, Botswana’. Their research focuses on archaeological material recovered from a construction site in the capital city, Gaborone. As such, their paper demonstrates the potential contribution of salvage archaeology to understanding our past, especially where construction work opens up deep trenches with profiles, often exposing otherwise hidden relics. Walker and Downey’s research adds to the limited Stone Age chronology in Botswana, providing the oldest recorded cultural dates in the country. Their findings also suggest the re-use of Early Stone Age artefacts by those in the later periods and posit the notion that modern cognitive abilities may have existed earlier than previously thought.

The linguist, Herman Batibo follows up with an article providing ‘A New Perspective on the Origin of the Stem *-tswana* in the Name’. He observes that, little attempt has been made to investigate the origin of the stem *-tswana*, the root of the Setswana ethnic name. Through a historical and comparative linguistics approach, to explore the possible origin and development of the stem *-tswana*, his study re-examines and re-interprets data from earlier studies. Batibo argues that as names are usually not given by speakers of a language, but by their neighbours, tracing the origins of names should not only focus on the speakers themselves. The paper also contends that there was a shared culture and identity among many of the people in the interior of the Southern African region, despite the various names that have been given to those cultures and peoples over time. He concludes by noting that the use of the stem *-tswana* has an extensive history in Southern Africa with many different meanings and connotations.

The historian Bruce Bennett presents an article on ‘Women Chiefs and Pre-colonial Tswana Patriarchy’. A commonly held belief is that in traditional Tswana society women could not be *dikgosi* (chiefs) in their own right, though they could be regents. However, Bennett’s paper argues that there is historical record to indicate that, although it was not common, women could in some circumstances be *dikgosi*. The paper focuses on one of the traditional *morafe* (chiefdom or polity) founders (Mohurutshe/Lehurutshe) and the historical references to the fact that this *dikgosi* may have been a woman. Bennett argues that female chiefs may have constructed themselves as ‘social males’. This would have helped resolve the problems posed by agnatic succession but it could also explain why there is so little memory of female *dikgosi* in Tswana history. He also suggests that, due to close proximity and common traditional practises, comparisons with other Sotho-Tswana societies can be helpful in identifying the possibility of female *dikgosi* in Tswana history.

Langtone Maunganidze’s ‘Getting to Grips with Gatekeepers in African Migrant Research’ examines the methodological challenges and ethical dilemmas posed by gatekeepers in migration research.

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The paper focuses on research in contentious terrains, particularly the movement of undocumented Zimbabwean migrants in Southern Africa. This paper also explores how the negotiated transactions and interactions between researchers and gatekeepers continue to influence the research discourse in the African context. Maunganidze argues that gaining access to research sites and (or) populations is an ever evolving, multi-layered and complex power balancing art which is characterised by compromises and trade-offs as each party seeks to protect its own interests. He suggests that, as central elements to securing entry, access and consent, gatekeepers have a profound capacity to both enable and constrain data collection.

A second paper which considers the role of gatekeepers in ethnographic research is by Gabriel Faimau and Camden Behrens with the title 'The Use of the Qualitative Approach and Digital Ethnography in the Study of Religion and New Media: Reflections from Research Fieldwork in Botswana'. At the outset, the paper notes that the analysis of the practical strategies developed by researchers prior to and during research fieldwork is commonly neglected in the existing literature on religion and new media. As such, practical questions, methodological issues and the ethical concerns encountered by researchers are often overlooked. Drawing from their field notes and fieldwork experiences during a 2016-2017 study in Botswana, the paper reflects on the use of a qualitative approach and digital ethnography in the study of religion and new media. By examining the ethical and methodological issues encountered during the fieldwork, they advance two related arguments. First, while interpersonal and communication skills are necessary for the success of fieldwork, researchers of religion and new media also require practical skills to deal with the complexity and ambiguity of issues around access to research sites and ethics throughout the research process. Second, research on the manifestation of religion in the new media should not only focus on the circulation of narratives by religious institutions on their new media outlets; but also on the dynamics of personal stories shared within a religious community and the impact of these stories on individuals and religious institutions when they are widely circulated online.

France Maphosa, Christopher Ntau, and Malatsi Seleka's paper titled 'Appraisal of Participation and Rural Development in Botswana: The Case of Mmankgodi Village' investigates the nature and extent of beneficiary participation in rural development planning and management in Mmankgodi village in the Kweneng District. Their study shows that there was limited beneficiary participation in the identification, initiation, implementation and evaluation of rural development projects in Mmankgodi. Low levels of participation was attributed to a number of factors, including: the centralised nature of rural development processes in Botswana; disjointed participatory structures; lack of a participatory framework; ineffective participatory forums; and the negative perceptions of development workers towards community input in development projects.

Kabo Diraditsile and Gosego Ivy Mmehanyana contribute 'The Dynamics of Prolonged Child Residential Care in Botswana: Prospects for Alternative Child Care Systems'. Using the Attachment Theory as a guiding framework, their study explores the effects of prolonged residential care on children. Their findings indicate that prolonged residential care for young children can cause developmental delays, attachment problems, health concerns as well as poor scholarly achievement. As such, residential care should be utilised on a temporary basis and/or only if it is necessary and in the best interests of the child. Additionally, their research suggests that family-based alternatives such as foster care, kinship care and adoption are preferred options for the long-term wellbeing of the child.

As the collection of government revenue, through taxation and customs duty, is critical for service delivery it is important that both are managed efficiently. This is the theme of Emmanuel Botlhale's paper on 'Tax and Customs Duty Administration in Botswana'. Botlhale's research focuses on the Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) and its role in ensuring effective tax and custom duty administration in the face of post-2007 fiscal strictures. His study notes that key achievements by BURS include improvements in: tax, customs and excise assessment; administration and revenue performance; and cost of col-

lection. However, inadequate tax legislation, taxpayer non-compliance, the tax gap and other operational challenges require reforms in order to ensure more effective tax administration in Botswana.

In the Notes Section, career diplomat Ceasar Lekoa, Botswana's former Ambassador to Australia, addresses the critical theme of Botswana's foreign policy in the context of the multilateralism discourse. He discusses the country's multilateral policy in pursuit of socio-economic development and how this policy has served Botswana well over the past 50 years since independence in 1966.

Onalenna Kelebile follows up with an interesting note on the survival of a small traditional RA Bailey Store with a history spanning more than 120 years in a radically changed environment characterised by trendy ultra-modern malls with renowned international retailers shops.

Sandy Grant's note focuses on the 1971 discovery of two *bojale* (female regiment) drums of the Bakgatla-baga-Kgafela in Mochudi. The sensational discovery attracted the attention of the country's, then only, magazine, *Kutlwano*, which was published by the government of Botswana. One drum would then be kept at the National Museum and Art Gallery in Gaborone on temporary loan.

The diary entries by Jonny Gumb during his 2003 visit to Mochudi, Gaborone and some of the villages in the environs are a fascinating read. These have been edited by Sandy Grant. Gumb served as a volunteer in Mochudi under the auspices of the British based Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) starting in the early 1960s. On his return in 2003, he witnessed a society that had changed radically in terms of development but also found some of his old friends and acquaintances who received him warmly.

The final note by Michael Brook deals with the story of diamonds in Botswana. He describes the different components that make up the Botswana Diamond Pipeline today and their development over time. This includes the: diamond supply chain; prospecting and mining; processing and recovery; rough diamond sorting; valuation, sales and marketing; polishing and cutting, and, finally, diamond jewellery manufacturing and retail.

This volume provides an array of research from a variety of fields including Sociology, Archaeology, History, Social Work and Linguistics. But it also provides a reflection on conducting social science research in Southern Africa and the challenges that this can present. The volume provide insights into Botswana's history and development while also considering the difficulties the country faces in addressing contemporary issues such as taxation, participatory rural development and children in need of care. The variety of contributions makes this a dynamic volume with a wealth of knowledge on Botswana.