

Professor Fred Morton, Transboundary Scholarship, Development of Electricity and the Knowledge Economy in Botswana, 1957-2016

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Abstract

Focusing on production of electricity in Botswana, this paper is a quest for interdisciplinary research approaches on social history based on contributions of Professor Fred Morton to the historiography of Botswana and Southern Africa. Professor Morton demonstrated interdisciplinarity as unavoidable when attempting to understand how the past is linked to the contemporary social history of Botswana. Before 1957 the development of electricity supply in Botswana was driven by technical information from Lesotho and South Africa. Officials based within Botswana put pressure on their seniors in Mahikeng (colonial Botswana's administrative headquarters located in South Africa), to develop electricity within Botswana and increase supply. Mahikeng ignored this demand through a series of advisory technical and controversial consultancies produced by experts from Lesotho, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Technical information was solicited on a regular basis from 1963 when it was decided to transfer the territorial headquarters for a future independent Botswana to Gaborone. Along the development in and around Gaborone, there was increased private capital investment and demand for electricity as a barometer of the pace of development in the country. This laid a foundation for a strong partnership between private and public capital. Between 1979 and 1985 plans were developed so that Botswana would depend on local skills in the energy production. The Botswana Energy Master Plan, which was launched in 1985 and revised in 1996 has remained the main framework for subsequent efforts to increase electricity supply and diversify sources of energy between 2016 and 2030.

Keywords: Professor Fred Morton, interdisciplinarity; social history; regional relations; stone walls; knowledge economy.

Introduction

Professor Fred Morton is an extraordinary amateur whose footsteps many shall follow. Thus, the quality, value, methods, and practical implications of his works will make it imperative for several generations of historians to pursue diverse inspirations in Morton's scholarship and legacy. My survey of Morton's diverse scholarly works reveals that he presents history as a tool for development policies in modern Botswana and Southern Africa (Morton 2005; Morton 2010; Morton 2018). In many works, he addresses linkages between the past and the present at family and community levels. Here I attempt a preliminary appreciation of Morton's contribution to historiographies of Botswana and Southern Africa. The discussion is presented in three themes summarised from his published works. One further theme is advanced as a case study that discusses application of his inspirations and research methods to demonstrate that history is a usable discipline in shaping current government policies.

Firstly, Morton's scholarship is a platform from which to draw diverse streams of knowledge. Secondly, he crosses from history to archaeology and anthropology. Morton is an excellent example of interdisciplinary integration on Botswana and Southern Africa. Thirdly, Morton transferred field research methods and values into the classroom for his students as they prepared their future professions. These were further deployed to academic conferences. He extended these as conference roundtables that resembled American Town Hall political meetings with mass participation. I develop the fourth theme

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for this discussion by calling attention to how historical studies on Botswana could or should turn their energies to social history generated by the development of supplies of electricity in the country. The history of using leading intellectuals or experts in providing electricity to the wide population constitute critical aspects of social history in Botswana from the late 1950s. The parameters of this social history are clearly marked, for example, by the Bechuanaland Protectorate (colonial Botswana) administration's acceptance of a report of experts in February 1957 to the time that the post-independence government of Botswana adopted a policy on sources for national renewable energy in 2016. These decisions aimed at increasing supply of electricity to the national population.

Electricity is the kingpin of sources of energy in Botswana while energy is a dynamic element in broad and sustainable development. This is a case study method that requires a comprehensive exploration and analysis of a single phenomenon as Starman (2013) debated. Some key conclusions in the case study highlight and confirm developments affecting the nation or a specific community at large.

This paper shows how the development and expansion of electricity supplies in Botswana are social histories that enrich studies of economists and engineers on how and why diverse sources of energy are being developed in Botswana. The quest by historians for multidisciplinary social research is bound to clarify works of researchers, such as economists, who focus on contemporary policies and utility of theoretical models in development of energy supplies in Botswana. Interdisciplinarity is a movement strongly advocated for by the University of Botswana (Tabulawa 2017) where Fred Morton was Professor of History for many years until his retirement in 2020.

Platform

The diversity of themes in Morton's scholarly publications is impressive and often responds to contemporary major historiographical debates. His unique style is often to start by stating his position in historiographical settings. The writings are time specific and that makes Morton's scholarship embrace diverse seasons. For example, labour history has been an enduring theme in African studies since the 1960s. Studies on experiences of labour in Britain and Africa were recognised as an important defining theme in social history. In significant contributions, Morton collaborated with Elizabeth Eldredge to study the circumstances in development and utilisation of slave labour in what became South Africa and the eastern and south-eastern parts of Botswana. There are deep insights in his studies of labour mobilisation in precolonial societies of Botswana. His studies are situated in the pre-colonial Tswana states that transcend boundaries of succeeding colonial territories and post-colonial states. For instance, cattle rustling in south-eastern Botswana or north-western South Africa (the then Transvaal Boer Republic), revealed Tswana political economies poised against unequal accumulation and seeking fair inclusive distribution (Morton 2009).

One central theme in the studies is continuity of conflict, collaboration, and negotiations. Morton brings out reconciliation and accommodation; a rich and continuing influence reflected recently in Christine Porsel (2017). A graduate from Morton's undergraduate classes at the University of Botswana, Unaludo Sechele, in her doctoral thesis submitted at the University of Free State in 2019 demonstrates strong post-colonial trade and community ties between Botswana and South Africa between 1966 and 2014. As if to complement Morton and Sechele, Frederick Marx Malambo, conducted a perceptive study for an MA history thesis submitted at Zambian Open University in 2020 on a long history of the construction of the Kazungula Bridge across the Chobe/Zambezi River between Botswana and Zambia. Malambo presents efforts and struggles of Sir Seretse Khama, founding president of independent Botswana (1966-1980), and Dr Kenneth Kaunda, first President of Zambia (1964-991). The fifth president of Botswana, Mokgweetsi Masisi, and the sixth president of Zambia, Edgar Lungu, commissioned the Bridge in May 2021 in a ceremony attended by regional leaders of Southern African Development Community (SADC) among others.

These postgraduate studies are rich streams advancing integrated studies which Fred Morton founded. Here, there is no claim of direct influences of Morton's studies, but historiographical complementarity is traceable. Sechele demonstrates economic collaboration for co-existence between sworn opponents on apartheid and struggles to end that oppressive system. Malambo (2020) shows that apartheid South Africa delayed construction of the Kazungula Bridge from the 1960s to the 1980s by pointing out that there was no common border between Botswana and Zambia. The arch enemy of apartheid South Africa and a champion of armed liberation in Southern Africa, President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, in the new millennium also objected to the construction of the bridge for the same reason apartheid South Africa had advanced that there was no shared border between Botswana and Zambia. The apartheid regime set terms for its domination if the bridge was to be constructed (Malambo 2020). Further, South Africa wanted to sabotage advances of liberation and freedom struggles in South Africa which Botswana and Zambia unreservedly supported. On the other hand, Mugabe wanted to protect revenue from transit trade over the Beitbridge (Zimbabwe/South African border) which he feared would be diverted to Kazungula Bridge. The strength of transborder studies standing on Morton's scholarship on eastern Botswana and north-western South Africa was so enduring that fake reasoning of apartheid South Africa and that of armed struggle champion, Mugabe, could not break Botswana's regional ties.

Yet, Morton's works point to further research required on other borders of Botswana. The research agenda Morton set is complex and long-term. Despite my lack of swimming skills, in 2009 I stood near the centre of Lake Ngami in Botswana's Northwest District. The Lake had dried up at the time. That Lake could be filled by sharing water from the upper Zambezi River. This would supplement seasonal floods from Angola and Namibia in northern Botswana. Lake Ngami is a remnant of a transboundary Lake Makgadikgadi. The drying up of these lakes is a story of great fascination that the nineteenth century Scottish missionary, Dr David Livingstone, found among the local people and he linked it to the Tower of Babel in the Bible. Livingstone (1866) considered the story to come from cracked heads. That view may reveal how unusual he was in creating fame for himself by ruling out the possibility of an earlier Christian visitor who found multilingualism in the area as comparable to the Tower of Babel experience. This also highlights a continuing intellectual fascination about the character of David Livingstone, which thus justifies expanding Morton's transborder studies from precolonial era to present day Botswana. This is further inspired by recent claims that the Makgadikgadi has evidence of the origin of humankind, comparable to that at the Olduvai Gorge in East Africa (Chan *et al.*, 2019). Continuing interest in dredging water in north-western Botswana call for transborder longitudinal research like that of Morton in south-eastern Botswana where he discusses possibilities of present-day Botswana benefiting through tourism from the labour or stone walls of their ancestors (Morton 2018 and Biagetti *et al.*, 2021). Here is a case on usefulness of history for development and making a case for greater recognition of history in education syllabuses in Southern Africa.

There is a longstanding campaign by Batlokwa in Tlokweng near Gaborone in search of land. At one point they claimed that Ruretse (commercial freehold land/farms next to Phakalane) were on land belonging to them. Ruretse was the property of Botswana's founding President Sir Seretse Khama and his wife Ruth Khama called Ruretse ('Ruth and Seretse') who subdivided a portion and sold it. Morton would write an article in a local newspaper explaining the history of Ruretse going back to the pre-colonial period. He argued that initially the land belonged to Bakwena of Kgosi Sechele I and after the British imposed their colonial rule, the Bakwena under Kgosi Sebele II handed it to the British colonial authorities. They in turn gave it to the chartered British South Africa Company and it became freehold farms of the Gaborone Block outside tribal control (Morton 2018). The Batlokwa had come from South Africa and sought sanctuary in Sechele's territory, Moshaweng (later called Tlokweng). The quality and significance of Morton's article saw it published in the *Botswana Notes and Records* volume 50 (2018).

This was a celebratory volume commemorating the journal's 50th anniversary and published in honour of Sir Ketumile Masire, Botswana's second president (1980-1998). Morton's article attracted the attention of the local *Sunday Standard* newspaper. It noted that 'The Ruretse issue has never gone to court but if it does, it is likely that the documents that Morton bases his research on, will form part of the evidence' (*Sunday Standard* 9 December 2018).

Integrating Interdisciplinary Research

As a scholar trained on central African historiographical linkages with African regional research, I see that Morton's work has instructive parallels to works of Jack Thompson (1994) or Leroy Vail (1983 and 1989) in linking the past and contemporary history of events. Thompson researched on the missionary activities of Donald Fraser, a Scottish Missionary who worked in northern Malawi, especially among the Ngoni. Fraser's assignment followed pioneering work of Dr David Livingstone who visited the present-day Victoria Falls in Zambia, in 1855. Livingstone gave an enduring honour to the reigning British imperial monarch, Queen Victoria, who had ascended to the throne in 1841, the year that Livingstone sailed for the Cape Colony and later reached the Land of Bakwena of Kgosi Sechele whom he baptised into Christianity. The name from the local Toka-Leya for the Waterfall is *Nsyuungu Namutitima* ('boiling water'). A Sotho group, the Kololo who traversed the area, referred to the fall as *Mosi-oa-Thunya*, meaning the smoke that thunders. After several visits and travels in central Africa, David Livingstone died on 1 May 1873 at Chitambo village in Central Province of Zambia Shepperson (1973).

In following the footsteps of Livingstone, Donald Fraser became one of the most influential Scottish missionaries in northern Malawi where he worked between 1897 and 1926. Despite drawing inspiration from Livingstone, the studies of Shepperson and Jack Thompson demonstrate that Fraser was of superior character than Livingstone. Fraser died in 1933 and was cremated in his native Scotland. His ashes were buried in Ngoni land in Malawi, next to the grave of the first Ngoni pastor whom Fraser had trained. According to Thompson (1994), the legacy of Fraser lay in his promoting Christianity and literacy as tools for eradicating constraints on progressive and indigenous innovations. Thompson also observes that Fraser promoted integration of indigenous knowledge and skills with external or European ones. It is also said that Fraser trusted and encouraged integration of Ngoni traditions with Christianity. He also organised open sermons where the Holy Communion was served; a practice that was common in Scotland. Hence, the Ngoni found these services easy to embrace the way it was with their cultural dances. These seeds for fusion and independence were paralleled by concerns of Vail (1983 and 1989) that ethnic orientations and separations planted during the colonial rule weakened development of the postcolonial state in efforts to build the nation state.

These historians of Central Africa and Southern Africa, like Morton, wrote about the past with strong and clear demonstrations of the utility of history and its relevance to the present. Morton's research on the Tswana in Botswana and South Africa also presents historical knowledge in ways that show how history is linked to archaeology, anthropology, current scholarly and practical concerns. Interdisciplinarity makes historical research a study of both the past and the present. These horizontal and vertical linkages distinguish Morton's interdisciplinary work. Horizontal links deal with relations between disciplines. Vertically, Morton analyses evolving changes from the distant past towards the present realities. This reflects a long tradition of persistent research. It also displays an open mind that was willing to learn from research undertaken by scholars outside the discipline of history. Such scholarly collaboration seems for Morton, to be generated by the realities he investigated. Morton (2010:21-46) demonstrated how, in their struggle to secure space and resources essential for their pastoral economy, the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela combined collaboration, diplomatic manoeuvring and confrontation in relations with the Boers and British government between 1840 and 1920.

In a perceptive discussion on reconnecting current Tswana communities with stone walls which their ancestors constructed, Morton (2018) admirably mixes historical, anthropological, and archaeological research in ways advocated by leading scholars on mixed research methods such as Maxwell (2016). Heritage studies are strongly integrated. One strength of historical research is to see development as a longitudinal accumulation of experiences, attitudes, and skills. History reveals layers of building bricks. As an example, Morton reconstructed precolonial, colonial, and post-colonial histories of the Batswana in south-eastern Botswana and north-western South Africa with visible changes and continuities. He gives the Tswana diverse senses of living, continuity, collective connections with the past, and links with kin across the border in South Africa. The Tswana in south-eastern Botswana stand as objects of ongoing projects since the end of colonial rule and current policies of the Botswana government on rural electrification (Greenberg 2012) or community engagement in tourism (Bolaane and Kanduza 2008; Republic of Botswana 2009 and 2016). Bequeathed to Botswana and Southern Africa is a set of mixed research methods and a political economy history with complex pointers that inspire a variety of engagements.

Capitalist penetration in north-western South Africa and south-eastern Botswana forcefully removed present Tswana speaking populations from their ancestral settlements. These foreclosed current proposals since the 1880s land alienation was unregulated and Voortrekkers (Boers) with better weapons were to write the history of victory as Etherington (2001) demonstrated for many parts of South Africa. In north-western South Africa, the loss of land with stone walls to private landowners was an unrepairable destruction of a cultural identity and histories of diverse communities. When the colonial state was formally established in modern day Botswana and South Africa, land alienation was consolidated and thus closing possibility for legal restitution. Modified and weakened social connections to the stone walls exist in memories of the Tswana in Botswana and South Africa. Morton's (2009) mixed methods research demonstrated these connections beyond the Ngwaketse of south-eastern Botswana to include demonstration of strong social, economic, and political links among the Bakgatla-ba-Kgafela.

Yet continuity in inclusive traditions through integration with new democratic institutions and economic orientations have contributed immensely to building post-colonial Botswana. Robinson and Parsons (2006) convincingly explained that democracy and economic progress in post-colonial Botswana was, to a large measure, rooted in pre-colonial institutional practices. The way historical, anthropological, and archaeological research are integrated in one department at the University of Botswana may sustain mixed research horizontally and vertically. This challenges prospects for research in the Department of History among both undergraduate and post-graduate students. These challenges include the extent to which historical knowledge is an attraction among young people. Practical teaching and learning methods associated with archaeology and anthropology will promote learning history.

Less successful in the region are similar efforts in Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) which has been presented as a reign of autocracy through a monarchy-in-council. Even recent transformation of the country's name from Swaziland to Eswatini are efforts to indigenise global progress in governance. Similarly, the founding president of Zambia, Kenneth Kaunda, attempted to develop a social welfare economy based on local values and cultural valuation of people as superior beings because they were created in God's image. In contrast, scholars such as Robinson and Parsons, Porsel, and Morton make more convincing analyses of transitions and sustenance of indigenous institutions from pre-colonial to post-colonial Botswana. This is an old theme in African historiography as Jacob Ajayi demonstrated in the 1970s on continuity of African institutional practices during colonial rule. The past lives in terms of continuity of content and methods of teaching about the past. Further reflection may deal with environments of building and revising these dynamics of change. Yet, Morton is first class in embracing a combined use of emerging methods and technology in teaching and research.

Enacting

Professor Morton started working at the then University of Botswana and Swaziland (UBS), sometimes also called University Collage of Botswana, in 1976 and retired for his native United States in 1988. After he returned to teaching at the University of Botswana in 2008, I attended some of his classes where he enacted proceedings of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). The proceedings at the World Trade Centre at Kempton Park (Johannesburg) were conducted between December 1991 and May 1993 (O'Malley 2001). Morton enacted the main meetings focusing on debates that promoted tolerance of diversity, collaboration, integration and promotion of human dignity and all forms of justice. This appeal to sensory values conveyed knowledge and aimed at transforming attitudes of learners.

In terms of the CODESA meetings, a new South Africa was expected to build unity in diversity. Professor Morton made students to imagine and feel they were participating in the CODESA meetings. Students were put in groups to represent sections of participants at CODESA. This transporting a class into an imagined reality takes history to a contemporary situation that builds courage for participation. Understanding increases because of interest in enacting CODESA I and CODESA II which made the classes lively, and learning was student-centred. There was high class attendance. In fact, some students invited friends from other courses in History and outside the History programme. The use of information communications technology (ICT) was the dynamic behind student-centred teaching and learning. Students were exposed to stimulating ways of acquiring research skills as they were also stimulated into imagining future professions they would join. This is a unique legacy on use of advanced technology bequeathed to teaching and researching history in Botswana and elsewhere in Southern Africa.

There is more in this inexhaustible legacy. A town hall style or round table discussion during a conference of the Southern African Historical Society (SAHS) hosted by the History Department at the University of Botswana in June 2013 was a rare enactment of group and focused learning and debate. This was the first SAHS conference held outside South Africa in about a generation, and Professor Morton was the chairman of its local organising committee which did a splendid work. Margaret Nasha, the then speaker of Botswana's national assembly, who happened to be one of Morton's first crop of history research students in 1976, was the guest speaker at the conference. At the conference a select group of scholars, which included Professor Morton, debated Paul S Landau's impressive 2010 book *Popular Politics in the History of South Africa, 1400-1948*. This was in essence, a multiple review of Landau's publication. I found it captivating that Paul Landau was part of the panel and responded to the reviews. This was an opportunity normally not given to authors; only after their works have been reviewed and published in journals. This is a familiar style in North American academic conferences. It is thus an unusual offer of an enrichment in style and inspiration to intellectual debates in Botswana and Southern Africa. These rewards to Botswana and Southern Africa, come through Prof. Morton's long association with research on Botswana and neighbouring countries. Interestingly, anthropological research style finds opportunity for future growth in indigenous scholars, though increasingly produced in history institutions outside Botswana. Despite that, there is a growing community of young scholars that Morton's work challenges.

The famed History Department's student research project was started in 1976 by Morton and his local colleague, Professor Thomas Tlou. Initially, the students focused on researching and writing an aspect of history of one district in Botswana, but later students focused on districts of their choice (Morton 2016). The student research project became a gold standard for the Department of History and was the first of its kind in the whole of the Southern African region (Bennett 2016). The quality of some of the research essays, which formed part of the student's BA degree programme, was so good that they were revised and published in respectable journals. All Batswana historians and archaeologists in the Department of History went through this process. The student research project continued into the new millennium with some of its graduates obtaining scholarships for MA in History at Trent University in Toronto, Canada, through

a special arrangement with Department of History at Trent (Makgala 2019). Professor Tim Stapleton facilitated the process at Trent. When he relocated to the University of Calgary, still in Canada, two of his Batswana students followed him and completed doctorates on history of the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) and the Botswana Police Service respectively.

History as a Framework for Social History in Development Knowledge on Providing Electricity

In this preliminary reflection on aspects of Fred Morton's contributions to research on the history of Botswana and Southern Africa, I attempt to draw attention of historians working or to be working on social history of Botswana to include research on development of electricity in the country. Morton's interdisciplinary approach of integrating history, archaeology, and anthropology to show institutional transformations in communities over the ages is so refreshing that I yearn for this multidisciplinary when I see works of economists on energy services in Southern Africa. Morton brings out history as effort to understand human experiences. Developments leading to provision of electricity have massively generated numerous positive contributions to the economy of Botswana. These include employment, heating, lighting, and energy used in diverse situations and industries.

There is a corresponding interest among geographers and economists. In responding to concerns about climate change, Gwebu (2002) touches on the role of the community in generating plant-based production of energy, especially in rural Botswana. Economists, armed with theoretical models, examine relations between theoretical variables (Chingiro and Mbulawa 2017). Maswabi and Kim (2018), point out that the benefits from developing energy services in Botswana are minimal because the country relies on imported technologies. Dependency on imported electricity for Botswana, a country with about 212 billion tons of coal, which is about 70% of known coal reserves in Africa, is likely arising from lack of focus on communities. In a population of about 2.02 million in 2016, 75% of the urban population had access to electricity compared to 57% of the rural population despite rural electrification having been launched in 1973 (Botswana National Archives and Records Services (BNARS), July 1973; Republic of Botswana 2009). This low access to electricity in rural areas points to resource abuse as fuel wood and biomass are the cheapest, and therefore, most regular sources of energy. A plan evolved between 2007 and 2009 had hoped to raise local electricity supply from 18% of consumption to exporting 75% of production at Morupule power plant in Palapye. Thus, Botswana was expected to produce more than 80% of what it consumed and imported annually, mainly from South Africa, up to 2013. Further, the Electricity Supply Act of 2007 has not produced sufficient capacity for Independent Power Producers (IPP).

In part, it is only historical research that will bring out the virtues of longitudinal studies in demonstrating lessons of success or failure from assessing continuity and change. Scholarship on what appears to be current issues tends to miss usefulness of the past in emphasising models and relations between theoretical variables. History of development is often situated in particular circumstances or policy initiatives that respond to crises or attempt to find solutions to challenges facing human beings. This paper sees the ways electricity has been provided as chains of expansion seeking inclusivity; that rural communities and low-income urban communities be included in utilisation of services of modernity. The initial focus of providing electricity for an elite in the then tiny Gaborone Village settlement in the 1950s had become, from about 1970 after independence, a broad programme for rural electrification (to include rural populations) and diversifying sources of energy in the country. Therefore, historical research is imperative because it focuses on communities and community controlled institutions, instead of models or abstract variants in theoretical frameworks.

Between 1956 and 1985 the development and expansion of the supply of electricity in Botswana followed closely advice of experts (Kanduza 2008). That is history and use of historical knowledge documents. There was a systematic use of the knowledge economy; itself an appreciation of the imperative

for skill diversification. In October and November 1956, the Southern Rhodesia Electricity Supply Commission (SRESC) sent experts to advise the colonial administration in Botswana on prospects of expanding electricity supply at Francistown and Lobatse. These were the territory's only two urban centres at the time. The SRESC reported to the colonial government in February 1957. Merz and McCallend enterprise became a regular consultant on development of electricity in Botswana starting in 1963. The expansion of electricity supply and setting up of the state-owned enterprise Botswana Power Corporation (BPC) in 1970 increased imperatives of training Botswana nationals who would manage and guide further developments in the energy sector. It was also imperative that supply of electricity increased to promote and facilitate economic and social development of the country (Ibrahim 1993).

A long tradition exists in Southern Africa and African studies on use of reports by specialists submitted to governments on developmental and contentious issues. The best known must undoubtedly be Lord Hailey's *African Survey* (1938) which was commissioned by the British government. In 1953 Hailey also published a separate study on the native administration of the British High Commission Territories (namely Bechuanaland Protectorate, Basutoland, and Swaziland) meant to guide policy. There is a long history on governments using intellectual capital by asking experts to advise on certain situations or emerging policies. Ballantyne (2008) observes that studies of 'knowledge' recently became a new 'analytical problematic' in historical research of the British Empire. In a wide-ranging historiographical review, Ballantyne discussed scholarly interest in production and dissemination of knowledge as a 'complex cultural project' in European imperialism during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He acknowledges that Africanists revealed patterns and structures of domination in their studies of colonial policies on themes such as medicine and ecology.

There has also been interest in understanding the impact of decolonisation by examining development ideas and continuities in economic strategies of colonial and post-colonial states. There is a diverse body of literature by economists and political scientists examining independent Botswana as a 'developmental state' (Taylor 2003; Tsie 1996; Edge 1998). The literature emphasises minimal government participation in the economy, promotion of public and private partnerships and government's facilitation of economic undertaking by the private sector (Jefferies 1993). This was in stark contrast to trends in a majority of newly independent African states during the 1960s and 1970s. The creation of public enterprises was also limited. In effect, the BPC was probably the first public enterprise in the country. The first public utility was created in October 1962 to manage power and water services of Francistown. Lessons learned from the Francistown initiative helped in founding the Gaborone Water and Electricity Company, and this eventually became transformed into the state-owned BPC in 1970 following the country's independence in 1966.

Independent Botswana adopted pragmatic economic policies. According to Holm and Darnolf (2000), part of the explanation for this was the attitude of the founding head of state, Sir Seretse Khama, whom they say supported a civil service run by rules and staffed with skilled personnel. The experts in the civil service, especially in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, formulated plans for national economic development and allocation of resources. Holm and Darnolf (2000:38-39) argue further that President Seretse Khama was successful 'in establishing a personnel system isolated from the demands of political patronage and upholding highly professional standards of performance'. Periodic review of the energy needs of Botswana and for the country's development make consultancy reports a useful barometer of social and economic change in Botswana between the 1960s and 1980s. Robinson and Parsons (2006) have provided an extended historical analysis of Botswana as a developmental state. They analyse the view that Botswana's economic growth and stable political system since attainment of independence in 1966 was exceptional in post-colonial Africa. This is a view held by few other scholars. Robinson and Parsons focus on how leaders in Botswana from the time of initial contact with expanding capitalism as a

social and economic system responded to international relations or trade, new knowledge and elites who had mastered or were associated with the new information. They argue that Batswana *dikgosi* (chiefs) were open to international trade during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. This economic openness was embedded in Tswana values and culture and remained an important element in Botswana's post-colonial economic management. This continuity was not based on static continuity but a continuous adaptation with creativity reflected in changing engagements with diverse external elements. In contrast, many African economies since attainment of independence lacked economic openness and were not successful in the national (domestic) constituency to build political power based on rewarding politically correct groups.

It is this attitude towards and internalisation of knowledge in Botswana which influences finding historical value in many consultancy reports on the history of generating electricity and diversifying sources of energy in Botswana. These reports contain technical information which requires interdisciplinary collaboration in implementing recommendations. That as a background that shaped the central focus of this discussion in showing the richness of the historical writings of Professor Morton because of combing history, archaeology, and anthropology to understand development and functions of institutional practices. There is a lot of useful information in the consultancy reports reflecting attitudes and views of several key players in the historical development of electricity in Botswana. There are also many assessments of change in the energy sector. The reports were also a periodic review of some changes in the economy of Botswana showing why expansion was justified. The reports contain several projections or forecasts. Thus, these consultancy reports contain valuable data revealing processes of change. It is common in history that new themes which are studied often reveal new sources. For example, in European and American universities, the study of African history from the late 1940s or 1950s introduced new themes, sources and methods in the study of world history. I read these consultancies in ways which helped me understand the owners of the companies which were hired. I was also interested to study certain continuities from the late colonial state into the early post-colonial era. These continuities and variations constitute the core of Morton's studies of history in Botswana rather than history of Botswana only.

Conclusion

Contemporary development interventions in diverse social, economic sectors draw origin and implementation strategies from historical foundations, experiences, and advisory documents which specialists have researched, studied, and produced. This discussion has drawn attention to two bodies of knowledge that would be valuable in studying social history in Botswana. First, the scholarship of Fred Morton demonstrates research methods and holistic concern for contemporary orientations of society in Botswana. An attempt to understand and develop most of the Botswana population is central in the scholarship of Fred Morton. As such, it is advised in this discussion that his works are essential in social research in Botswana. The use of intellectual capital or knowledge economy demonstrates official government policies to provide essential services to the population between 1957 and 2016. By 2016 Botswana had attained 50 years as an independent state.

Taking the development of providing electricity as an example, the discussion has shown that the government has attempted to provide electricity as an important social facility. I see historical research in general as usable in contemporary policies on developments aimed at increasing supply of electricity and energy in general in Botswana and elsewhere in Southern Africa. In a distinctive sense, historians are development scholars. Growing recognition of the knowledge economy revives the high status of historical research and history as an area of academic or scholarly study. Successful appreciation of history advances the place of learning and teaching history in any country or community. The focus on human effort and experiences, makes historical research and historians, such as demonstrated here in Fred Morton, essential players in construction of past and continuing changes. When ignored, such a body of knowledge with

multiple significances can only point to a decline in academic standards and quality of schooling, research, and education.

I have projected these views on a historiographical screen made from works of a leading historian and researcher. Considering his perceptive use of archaeology, anthropology, empathy and eclectic or mixed learning and teaching methods, the works of Professor Fred Morton make him a highly accomplished historian and a scholar of an extraordinary standing. These attributes could be displayed in pursuing social research to reconstruct the story of how Botswana expanded the supply of electricity to the population. Energy, with electricity as the key element in the complex sector, is a service aimed at increasing productivity and standard of human resources in Botswana. Developments on increasing access to energy should not use the urban-rural binary, but a framework of advancing social services and empowering productivity.

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