

The Botched ‘National Prayer’: Challenges in the Performance and Recording of the Botswana National Anthem, 1965-2006

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It is by no means uncommon to see many people failing to remove headgear, lounging around with their hands in the pockets, laughing and talking during [the singing of Botswana National Anthem]

—PK Nwako, 1969

The national anthem is a song, which has come to embody the nation’s patriotic fervor. There is arguably no song that commands such respect and reverence from Batswana. At the national stadium during Zebras games, drunken football fans pause in momentary sobriety to sing it.

—Tshireletso Motlogelwa, 2006

Abstract

After Kgalemang Motsete’s composition overwhelmingly won the competition for Botswana’s national anthem in 1966, he later realised that the official version was so replete with errors which he said made a mockery of Botswana’s musicianship internationally and reflected badly on him as the composer. This paper uses archival records to trace the origin of the national anthem, errors spotted by Motsete and subsequent corrections made, and issues involved in the choral recording of the song. We also look into how a commercial recording company in Johannesburg recorded the anthem without permission from the government of Botswana, and made losses as the government could not permit the sale of an error-riddled song. Challenges experienced in an attempt to have a British military orchestra record the anthem in collaboration with a commercial company in England are also observed. Furthermore, we examine the attitude of the Batswana to the national anthem which government officials condemned as deplorable. Our conclusion is that until about 2006 when the country celebrated its 40th anniversary of Independence, the use of national symbols was restricted under the National Emblems Act and National Emblem Subsidiary legislation. This may have led to a somewhat arm’s length approach to the national anthem by Batswana. It was only after the ‘liberalisation’ of national symbols that Batswana openly and boisterously celebrated national events with national symbols among which was the national anthem.

Introduction

Towards the end of 1965, George Winstanley at the Office of the Prime Minister (Sir Seretse Khama) issued a circular memorandum stating that since the territory would achieve Independence towards the end of 1966, it was appropriate that the country had its own coat of arms, flag and a national anthem (Winstanley 22 November 1965, OP 2 45/4, Botswana National Archive and Records Services (BNARS)). These were national symbols which almost all other independent countries had. In most cases these national symbols depicted a country’s geographical features, culture and history, among others. Winstanley’s memorandum invited interested individuals to submit suggestions for all or any of the three symbols to the Ministry of Home Affairs in Gaborone before 31 December 1965. A price of R20 was available for anyone whose design won. Suggestions for a coat of arms and a flag had to be illustrated by coloured drawings while suggestions for a national anthem had to be in the form of words and music. The advertisement was posted on the government-owned *Daily News* and *The Star* newspaper in South Africa among other regional press.

Numerous entries were made from both inside the country and South Africa. Simon Gillett rec-

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commended June Schneider, a music lecturer at the University of Witwatersrand, to George Winstanley to compose a national anthem (Gillett to Winstanley 3 December 1965, OP 2 45/4, BNARS). In approaching Schneider, Winstanley wrote that ‘We would be most grateful if you would contribute a suggestion –the words do not matter much as we have more “poets” than composers in this country’ (Winstanley to Schneider 16 December 1965, OP 2 45/4, BNARS). He also informed her about Dr Huskinsson of Radio Bantu whom he said had made some good recording of traditional Tswana music. Therefore, Winstanley advised that Schneider could get some suggestions from those recordings.

Winstanley himself designed a new flag while his wife helped design the coat of arms, and the two were adopted by the Botswana government (Winstanley 2000). As for the national anthem, seven entries were received and performed to cabinet. Among the entries was Kgalemang Motsete’s highly appealing composition ‘*Fatshe La Rona*’ (‘Our Country’) whose message was said to be very relevant to Botswana, and the melody irresistible (Dingake 2011:136). Motsete, who was born in Serowe and was a teacher by profession and a politician, had a degree in music from a university in London. He was also president of the Pan-Africanist and fiercely anti-colonial Botswana Peoples Party (BPP) and it is said that the genesis of his composition started during a trip he undertook to Ghana in 1962 alongside other members of the BPP leadership (Motlogelwa 22 September 2006). Therefore, Motsete’s politics may have made his composition unappealing to the government of the rival Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) which had won the country’s first elections in 1965 (Dingake 2011).

At any rate, the entries were regularly played on Radio Botswana to enable the masses to make an informed choice. The songs were also played by Radio Botswana staff to live public audience in halls over a period of seven days from late April to early May 1966. Motsete’s charming song captured the aspirations of Botswana so much that some notable civil servants led by Gobe Matenge launched a spirited campaign for the composition (Motlogwala 2006; Dingake 2011 and Makgala 2014). The civil servants made a standard form with a list of the seven entries for the people to tick their preferred choice. The result was a landslide victory for Motsete’s song as illustrated in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Results of the National Anthem Entries sung from 26 April to 4 May 1966

1	26-4-1966	27-4-1966	28-4-1966	29-4-1966	2-5-1966	3-5-1966	4-5-1966
1	8	10	11	12	12	12	12
2	9	9	9	10	12	13	13
3	4	4	4	5	6	7	7
4	33	40	43	56	62	63	64
5	31	34	38	43	49	53	54
6	253	278	301	372	461	468	468
7	10	18	47	51	53	54	56
Total	348	393	453	549	655	670	674
1	Botswana II						
2	Ipuso Botswana						
3	March of the Batswana						
4	Botswana I						
5	Fatshe La Botswana						
6	Fatshe La Rona						
7	Morena Boloka						

Source: OP 45/3, Botswana National Archive and Records Services (BNRS)

It is not clear whether June Schneider did compose and submit an entry because only Motsete's name appears, and one other composer mentioned is Kingsley Baruti (Dingake 2011:136). Archival records indicate that the songs were composed in Setswana with the exception of 'March of the Batswana' (number 3 in the Table 1) whose composer is not identified by name. By winning the competition and getting the R20 prize, Motsete also withdrew his copyright to the anthem which became property of the Botswana government (Motsete to Ministry of Home Affairs 2 June 1966, OP 45/3, BNARS). The composition was translated into English which interestingly JP Jones, the director of Independence celebrations, wrote that 'The English translation need not fit the music as the Anthem will be sung only in Setswana' (Jones to Senior Permanent Secretary 17 June 1966, OP 45/3, BNARS). Jones also proposed printing the official Setswana and English versions for distribution to all schools and organisations such as Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in Botswana.

A Faulty Start to the Singing of the National Anthem

The singing of the official national anthem got botched from the start perhaps because of the cavalier manner in which the English version was translated. The fact that there were no established institutional brass bands and symphony orchestras in the then impoverished Botswana meant that only bands outside the country could play the national anthem. For instance, Jones indicated that 'With regard to the music, I received yesterday from Mr. Finlay a... sheet containing the music of various tunes one of which is alleged to be the music of the National Anthem. I gave this sheet to Captain Magrane of the Royal Irish Fusiliers who returned to Swaziland yesterday and asked him to have the Bandmaster of the Regimental Band write out the music so that it may be played by bands and also sung'. Jones also wrote, 'I further asked that the Regimental Band should record the Anthem on tape and send the tape to me when I would arrange for the tape to be played to the Prime Minister and Cabinet so that they may approve it' (Jones to Senior Permanent Secretary 17 June 1966, OP 45/3, BNARS).

In August 1966 Motsete, who at the time was a school teacher in Mufulira (Zambia), noticed the gross discord in the English translation of his composition and quickly alerted the Minister of Home Affairs in Gaborone. He wrote that 'Passing through Bulawayo on 16/8/1966 I observed in the "Chronicle" newspaper an English translation of the proposed National Anthem which is rather "unsingable", and as several non-Setswana speaking friends have expressed a wish for an English rendering I am sending you herewith and at the back of the Govt. copy of the National Anthem my suggestion for the English translation which is both "singable" and gives the gist of the message of the Tswana words' (Motsete to Minister of Home Affairs 28 August 1966, OP 45/3, BNARS). To use his words again, he strongly complained that 'Musical solecisms and howlers: These must be avoided. The copy of "Fatshe La Rona" as published and distributed by Government has shocking errors which will make the musicianship of Botswana open to ridicule internationally'. He pleaded that the copy he was sending to government should be rectified by a qualified professional music expert with at least three years' experience following attainment of a music diploma from a special music college.

He was greatly displeased by the error-riddled English translation of his composition and worried that it would be a bad reflection on his professionalism, as well as giving an undesirable image of the country internationally. It is worth citing the well-articulated corrections he made in red ink circles (Figure 1) at length:

Symmetry refers to correspondence or balance among the musical parts, or arrangement of parts (Harmony/concord). Chord refers to any harmonic set of usually three or more notes that is heard if sounding simultaneously. It can also refer to simultaneous sounding of a group of musical notes, usually three or more in number. Staff Notation or musical notation is the writing in which a staff (a set of five lines and four spaces) is used. As for Pedal the first use of pedals on a pipe organ grew out of the need to hold bass drone notes or to hold sustained bass notes. Piano pedals are foot-operated levers at the base of a piano which change the instrument's sound in various ways (we are grateful to Professor OS Phibion for this explanation).

Symmetry destroyed: by the added last chord, which is not in the Tonic Solfa Copy, thus making for irregularity of rhythm not allowed by the Musical Form of the Song. This would put the marchers out of step as this is a march. Hence the final Chord in the Staff Notation copy must be cut out.

Pedal Note: of the bass at 'Emang' –must be the G_1 on the bottom line of the Bass –Starve [Staff]–it is the 'PEDAL' –a deep note to imitate the roll and rumble of coming thunder just before the explosive clap or crack and climax at the words 'Re kopaneleng go direla', then underlined syllables being sung with staccato-like stress, as the jerky or rag-time rhythm adds indicative emphasis –such as 'pedal' in a large organ is kicked with the foot of the left leg, or in a Brass Band by the Bombardon instrument. Therefore it must be expressed by the low S_1 (G_1) which gives volume, by the deep voice of the men calling by a deep roaring note to the women to Stand Up! 'Emang'!, and not the harmony of the top G (S) of the men as mistakenly written. It is the deep roar of heavy men's voices [that] give the alarm to the women, and commanding the latter.

Ugly Leap: The downward jump of the bass in the staff notation copy from the note $B(+)$ to $C(d)$ is bad and strictly prohibited by the rules of harmonic progression. But it is a clerical error as it is not in the Tonic Solfa copy.¹

To make things clearer I have taken the trouble to re-write the song in both notations with the addition of the suggested English translation, for I have not abdicated authorship, and any uncalled for errors by your copyists from ignorance, or presumption or carelessness will be, to the outside musical world, a reflection on me, the composer, for after our independence it will be played all over the civilised world wherever the President or his representatives are on official visits, to say nothing of radio and gramophone records. Therefore its musicianship should be seen and heard as comparable with the best.

Unfortunately, it was too late because the error-laden copy of the anthem had been produced and distributed inside and outside the country for Independence celebrations on 30 September 1966. It was only in February 1967 that government officials attended to the matter. Private secretary to the president, James Molefhe, wrote to President Seretse Khama saying that he was disturbed and concerned by the errors which have, in a short period of time crept into the notation and rendering of the national anthem (Molefhe to Khama 13 February 1967, OP 2 45/4, BNARS). Molefhe, who himself had studied music at Tiger Kloof, was deeply worried that a large number of copies of the anthem had been distributed both inside and outside the country; all the while perpetuating errors which occurred during the initial transcribing of the originals in both tonic sol-fa and staff notations.

He advised the president on the desperate need for corrections to be made to the anthem and new copies distributed to schools and other institutions throughout the country. Molefhe also suggested to the president that a new recording of the anthem be made by Radio Botswana (Molefhe to Khama 13 February 1967, OP 2 45/4, BNARS).

Motsete had informed Molefhe that the BBC in London had offered to record the anthem. The recording of the anthem in England became a drawn out matter with no clear headway being made. In February 1967 B Palmer, advisor to Radio Botswana, sent a dispatch to the Minister of Home Affairs, Amos Dambe, saying that he had no news on whether the recording of the anthem by the BBC had been completed. He said that his only information had been that the recording would take place early in 1967! The reason for this was that arrangements were being made to record the national anthems of several newly independent countries in the one session (Palmer to Minister of Home Affairs 8 February 1967, BNARS, OP /16/13). He also stated that he was writing to the Botswana High Commission in London to ask for a progress report. It should be noted that Motsete's composition was rendered to cabinet by a choral choir as mentioned above.

Figure 1: Corrections made by Kgale Mang Motsete to the National Anthem

FATSHE LA RONA

172d

Con Spirito

Fatshe leno la ro-na Ke m-pho ya Mo-di-mo; Ke bo-swa jwa bo-R-
 Ina le-ntle la tu-mo La chaba ya Bo-tswana Ke ku-Tlwa-no le ka-

1. rae-tsho, a le nne ka ka-gi-so } CHORUS Tso-gang, tso-gang banna, Tso-gang e-mang ba-sa-di emang
 2. gi-sa-no, E bo-pa-gant-swe mmo-go }

Tlwa-ga-ja-lang re ka pana-langodi-re-la le fa-tshe ja ro - nu

panelang go dire-la lefatshe la ro - na.

Source: OP 45/3, BNARS

The Choral Singing of the National Anthem

In April 1968 it was reported to the Office of the President that Kgale College Choir's version of the national anthem, which was approved by James Molefhe himself, would start being used by Radio Botswana as the officially adopted rendering (Egner to Office of the President 11 April 1968, BNARS, OP /16/13). However, it seems government could not avoid the temptation to interfere with the rendering of the anthem. For instance, in February 1969 a presidential directive on the recording of the anthem ordered the Ministry of Home Affairs to arrange further recordings of the choral version of the song bearing in mind the following points:

The singing in the recordings played appeared to be too fast. It would be preferable, if it were slower. If the metronomic speed were indicated, it would also be possible to ensure that the recording

was played at the correct speed.

The composer and the choir should be asked whether more emphasis could not be laid on 'Tsogang' wherever it occurred, because by its nature and meaning this word should not be pronounced or sung softly. Radio Botswana technicians should be asked to advise on the acoustics, in order to produce as perfect a recording as possible (Presidential Directive 12 February 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13).

The government was also anxious to obtain a recording of a choral version of the anthem sung by a truly indigenous choir composed solely of Batswana. One suggested method of achieving this was to have the anthem included as one of the test-pieces for the annual schools music festival (Jones to Director of Education 19 March 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). (By this time Jones was a permanent secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs.) The winning choir would then be recorded singing the anthem. This idea was appreciated and supported by the director of education who, unfortunately, feared that it may be too late for 1969 year's competitions (Director of Education to Ministry of Home Affairs 19 March 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). The matter was referred to Botswana Teachers Union (BTU) which was said to be responsible for school singing competitions. The idea was later abandoned without clear reasons advanced.

The original choral version of the national anthem, as recorded by the choir of expatriates conducted by Marion Pletcher, was to be used as an interim measure, on official occasions. Pletcher was the wife of Charles Pletcher, the American Charge d'Affairs in Gaborone in 1965/1966, and her choir performed the national anthem during the country's Independence celebrations in 1966 (Email communication with Sandy Grant 2 November 2015).

The Kgale College Choir's version mentioned above or other versions were not be used as the official version (Jones to Broadcasting Officer 15 April 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). An order was issued to the effect that in addition to being played on all official occasions the version by Pletcher's choir should be played after the cow bells at the start of each day's transmission on Radio Botswana, and the close of each day's transmission (Molefhe to Acting Chief Engineer 4 June 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). This was to be done with immediate effect.

A communication by Charles Tibone, an official at the Ministry of Home Affairs, stated that the minister had decided they should not call for any more choral recordings of the national anthem (Tibone to Director of Education 29 April 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). Tibone also noted that BTU be advised not to pursue the matter further. Perhaps, the reason was that the government now seemed interested in having the anthem recorded by a military orchestra in England or Zambia as we discuss below.

Unauthorised Recording of the National Anthem by EMI

In November 1967 a surprising communication came from a certain WF Fraser of a commercial recording enterprise Electrical and Musical Industries (EMI) in Johannesburg. Fraser wrote to the Department of Information in Gaborone that a Saint Michael's Anglican Church Choir in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra had recorded the Botswana national anthem in the EMI studios for sale on the company's Columbia trade mark (Fraser to Department of Information 1 November 1967, BNARS, OP /16/13). The EMI letterhead stated that the company was 'the greatest recording organisation in the world'. The main reason for Fraser's communication was to be given the name of the composer of the anthem so that credit could be given to him on the record label. He also enquired whether any royalties on the sale of the record were payable to the composer or any other authority. It is quite appalling that neither the Saint Michael's Choir nor EMI had sought permission from the Botswana authorities to record the anthem.

EB Egner, who was the chief information officer at the Department of Information responded by informing Fraser that the composer of the anthem was Kgalemang Motsete while the copyright belonged to the government of Botswana (Egner to Fraser 14 November 1967, BNARS, OP /16/13). According to

Egner, the question of payment of royalties was still being examined. In the meantime, Egner asked Fraser to send him a tape or disc of the recording by the St Michael's Choir. Egner further indicated that it was necessary for the Botswana authorities to listen to the recording and to give their approval in writing before permission was given. Egner also requested information on the normal rate of royalty payment by EMI, the price at which the disc would be sold, its length and speed, the number the company proposed to make, the titles and lengths of any other tunes which would appear on the same or on the reverse side of the same record.

As noted above, EMI had not sought permission from Botswana authorities prior to recording the anthem –something Egner made clear to the Ministry of Home Affairs. However, in his communication he advised that there was a real need for the anthem to be recorded by an international record label (Egner to Ministry of Home Affairs 16 November 1967, BNARS, OP /16/13). 'Provided this one is of high enough quality, I suggest that they should be allowed to go ahead with its issue, subject to payment of a minimum royalty fee or to the fees being waived altogether if this is thought desirable', wrote Egner. If the quality of EMI recording was high then this would have been a big advantage to the government because it had been noted that the technical recording of the anthem by Radio Botswana was not suitable for broadcasting (Chief Engineer to Chief Information Officer 17 November 1967, BNARS, OP /16/13).

EMI did make a record and tape of their recording available to the government and the opinion and verdict of the musician James Molefhe was that while the St Michael's Choir was good and the sound of their recording technically satisfactory, the rendering of the notes was not true to the original composition. He concluded that the record and the tape recording had the same errors, probably due to singing from a copy in which the notes were wrongly written (Molefhe to Egner 13 December 1967, OP 2 45/4, BNARS). EMI was reported to be scathing about the error which they felt was the fault of the government of Botswana, and protested at the commercial loss involved in destroying a record of which they were said to have made a staggering 150 copies (Chief Information Officer to Office of the President 28 December 1967, BNARS, OP /16/13). This being the case the chief information officer requested a definite ruling on the question of whether or not the government was prepared to allow EMI to sell the copies they already made, provided that no further copies of this version were made for sale.

As noted above the composer, Motsete, had provided the authorities with a corrected version of the anthem. However, it was not until January 1968, more than 12 months since Motsete spotted errors in the national anthem and alerted the authorities, that Government Printer was instructed to make corrected copies of the anthem for distribution throughout the country (Molefhe to Government Printer 31 January 1968, OP 2 45/4, BNARS). According to Molefhe this had to be done urgently in preparation for the forthcoming state visit by the Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda. He became the first foreign president to make a state visit to Botswana both before and after Independence in 1966 (Parsons *et al* 1995:269).

An order was issued for the erroneous copies of the anthem to be destroyed, and replaced with new ones. As far as Molefhe was concerned 'It would be wrong to perpetuate even the slightest error in the National Anthem through erroneous recordings and renderings, if such error is known to exist' (Molefhe to Dambe 31 January 1968, OP 2 45/4, BNARS).

A government decision was to refuse to accept as authentic EMI recording of the national anthem, as well as not authorizing the sale of any records produced. This decision was communicated to an EMI agent in a meeting with Molefhe (Molefhe to PSP 13 February 1968, OP 2 45/4, BNARS). It was pointed out to EMI agent that his company should have first sought permission from the Minister of Home Affairs to make a recording of the anthem in order to avoid violating the copyright. They were also advised to make use of an authentic copy of the anthem from the Ministry of Home Affairs. Archival records show that this is where the issue of the recording of the anthem by EMI in Johannesburg ended.

Attempt for a British Military Orchestra to Record the National Anthem

The government was anxious to have the anthem recorded by a military brass band and it was suggested that the British Army School of Music at Kneller Hall would be happy to record the anthem free of charge, if they were asked to do so (Jones to Botswana High Commission 30 October 1968, BNARS, OP /16/13). Jones wrote to the High Commission in London asking them to enquire from Kneller Hall to see if a recording could be arranged and on what terms. In November 1968 JRM Seboni, first secretary at the High Commission, contacted Colonel Charles Morris, commandant of the Royal Military School of Music, with a correct version of the anthem and enquired whether it could be recorded by a military band. It should be noted that until 1977 Botswana did not have a military service, hence the plea for help to the British military college.

Morris responded by indicating that the anthem could be recorded by a military but first it had to be arranged for military music. The military man also noted that they could arrange the anthem for military music for a nominal charge of ten guineas (Morris to Seboni 13 November 1968, BNARS, OP /16/13). He also informed Seboni that the recording of the anthem would have to be done by a private company such as Decca who under current rules would have to pay full recording rates. Seboni also had a telephone conversation with Morris and described him as extremely co-operative (Seboni to Permanent Secretary, Home Affairs 15 November 1968, BNARS, OP /16/13). He said that once the anthem had been arranged for military music, Morris would be prepared to offer the military school's hall for the recording by a commercial company. 'This would cut down the cost of the operation a great deal. Further, the Commandant is prepared to negotiate the terms of the recording with a reputable Company (such as Decca) on our behalf', appreciated Seboni.

However, things were not as simple and straight forward as Seboni put it. It was difficult for the Botswana government to proceed on the matter until they knew the total cost involved. Seboni was requested to ask Morris to enquire from a private company the terms and costs they were going to charge for recording the military version of the anthem. There were other issues that needed clarification as far as the government was concerned:

Government will wish to have records made for use in Botswana and at Botswana diplomatic missions in other countries. We would also like to place records on sale in Botswana through normal retail outlets in which whatever way this can be most conveniently arranged. A record consisting solely of the military band playing the Anthem which takes only a minute or two may be uneconomic to produce. We should perhaps consider how we can fill up the record with other suitable material. Could the Commandant please obtain the company's views on these points and at what cost and in what quantity would the company make records.

There is also the question of Kneller Hall or the recording company claiming copyright and reproduction rights. It may be necessary for all these various points to be incorporated in a formal contract with the company and I would be grateful if you would inform me of the various views and advice you obtain (Jones to Seboni 27 November 1968, BNARS, OP /16/13).

The response from Morris was that the normal process of making a commercial record was that each member of the band and the conductor must receive the minimum rate as laid down by the Musicians' Union which was £9 per man per session (Morris to Seboni 19 December 1968, BNARS, OP /16/13). He also stated that to complete a record, two sessions were required, for a band of 30 performers the expense for this would be in the region of £540. According to Morris as far as the Botswana national anthem was concerned a session for the band would cost only half of this amount. He also introduced Seboni to Brian

Culverhouse, classical A&R manager at EMI in Middlesex, to give Seboni all the information required for copyright purposes.

In February 1969 a presidential directive resulting from a cabinet meeting instructed the Ministry of Home Affairs to take steps to commission the Royal Military School of Music to record an orchestral version of the anthem, which would be used on official and ceremonial occasions (Presidential Directive 26 February 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13).

Morris did agree to arrange the anthem for military music and for his school band to record it in conjunction with EMI. Therefore, authorities at the Ministry of Home Affairs felt it was necessary for Botswana government, Royal Military School of Music and EMI to enter into a contract concerning the copyright, royalties, and reproduction rights in as far as they affected the three parties (Jones to Attorney General Chambers 11 March 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13).

Surprisingly, the Minister of Home Affairs was also said to have advised that the Zambian government be approached to see if they would agree to make a recording on tape with their police or army bands (Jones to Director of Education, 20 March 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). However, the option of recording of the anthem by the Royal Military School of Music and EMI was still being pursued.

When Culverhouse was contacted by the government, he stated that EMI was interested in producing a recording of the anthem. He added that 'we have in fact made many such recordings over the years' (Culverhouse to Jones 26 June 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). He was also receptive to the suggested involvement of the band from the Royal Military School of Music in the project. His advice was that 'In view of the fact that the Anthem is only some $\frac{3}{4}$ mins., a half session (ie. 2 hrs.) would be required. The M.U. ('Music Union') fee per player, therefore, would be £6. 10s. 0d., not as quoted in your letter, £9 per man being for a whole session ie. 3 hours and this amount of time will definitely not be required for the recording of such a short piece of music. No mention is made of the Band's Director of Music and I would recommend something in the region of 25gns'. Culverhouse also wrote that his company would like to supply tapes and records for sale through normal commercial channels in Botswana and other countries. He also advised that since the anthem was brief, there was no need to have any other music recorded with it. EMI would record the anthem on a single sided 7" 45 rpm record, he said. As for royalty payment, he noted that since the copyright belonged to the government of Botswana, which would have paid outright for production facilities and the services of the band, no royalty will be payable to the company.

According to Culverhouse the cost for recording the anthem were as follows: a) hire of studio (mono recording) and technicians at £42; b) recording producer (Culverhouse himself) at £2; and c) one reel of tape at £5. 4s. 9d. plus additional copies at approximately £3. He wrote that they had no indication as to the number of records which the government required but said that the quotation for 1,000 7" single sided 45 rpm copies was approximately 1s. 6d. This included a two-colour cover with wording provided by the government. As to the payment of the various costs involved, this was to be carried out as follows: a) Royal Military School of Music and director of music fees to be paid to the commandant, Kneller Hall; and b) production of recording and subsequent records to be paid to EMI. However, the brevity of the anthem, the original of which was actually long, would become a controversial issue in the mid-1970s as the country was preparing to celebrate its tenth anniversary of Independence as we discuss below.

The government's response was that 1000 copies were too many to purchase at one time for its own use. They wanted about 200 records initially with the possibility of buying more as time went on and records worn out, and as the need arose (Jones to Culverhouse 15 July 1969, BNARS, OP /16/13). Jones also indicated that similarly with tapes, the government would purchase only about five tapes initially for government use and purchase more from EMI later on if necessary. He said the reason was that in Botswana's climate of extreme heat and cold, records and tapes were likely to deteriorate as there was no air-conditioned storage space. It was also indicated that cabinet would wish to hear the Kneller Hall recording and approve it

before it was put into full production through records and tapes.

Nevertheless, no response came from EMI until an official at the Ministry of Home Affairs, P Makepe, wrote to Culverhouse in January 1972 –almost 4 years later. With a few years having elapsed, Makepe enquired about the present position on recording of the anthem (Makepe to Culverhouse 25 January 1972, BNARS, OP /16/13). A response from EMI, written by Hubert Hughes, creative products manager at the company, revealed that Culverhouse had quit to become an independent producer. Nevertheless, Hughes said he did have a word on telephone with Culverhouse who indicated that he could still be involved in the project as was originally suggested (Hughes to Makepe 4 February 1972, BNARS, OP /16/13). Unfortunately, this is where the matter ended and the archival records do not show whether any progress was made.

Government and Botswana's Attitude Towards the National Anthem

As the custodian of the national anthem the Ministry of Home Affairs complained that it was being played too often on Radio Botswana. An order was issued that the educational broadcasting unit of Radio Botswana discontinue the present practice of playing the anthem during school broadcasting hours (Egner to Educational Broadcasting Officer 28 March 1968, BNARS, OP /16/13). In other words, the educational broadcasting was being accused of overplaying the national anthem. According to Law scholar at the University of Botswana, Professor Bojosi Otlhogile, the one reason many Botswana (until 2007) did not fully utilise the national emblems especially the flag was that the use of the emblems were restricted under National Emblems Act and National Emblem Subsidiary legislation (Email communication with Professor Otlhogile 10 December 2015). National emblems could only be used with permission of the president or he could determine/designate when they could be used. This approach may have led to Botswana not showing a lot of enthusiasm to the national symbols among which was the national anthem. This would become a source for worry for officialdom particularly in the early 1970s as Makgala and Bolaane demonstrate elsewhere in this volume.

As the country was preparing to celebrate its tenth anniversary of Independence in 1976, a public debate emerged as some citizens demanded that the national anthem be sung in full as Kgalemang Motsete had originally composed it. He had died two years earlier in 1974. Robert Ntsima in Molepolole wrote to the *Daily News* complaining that:

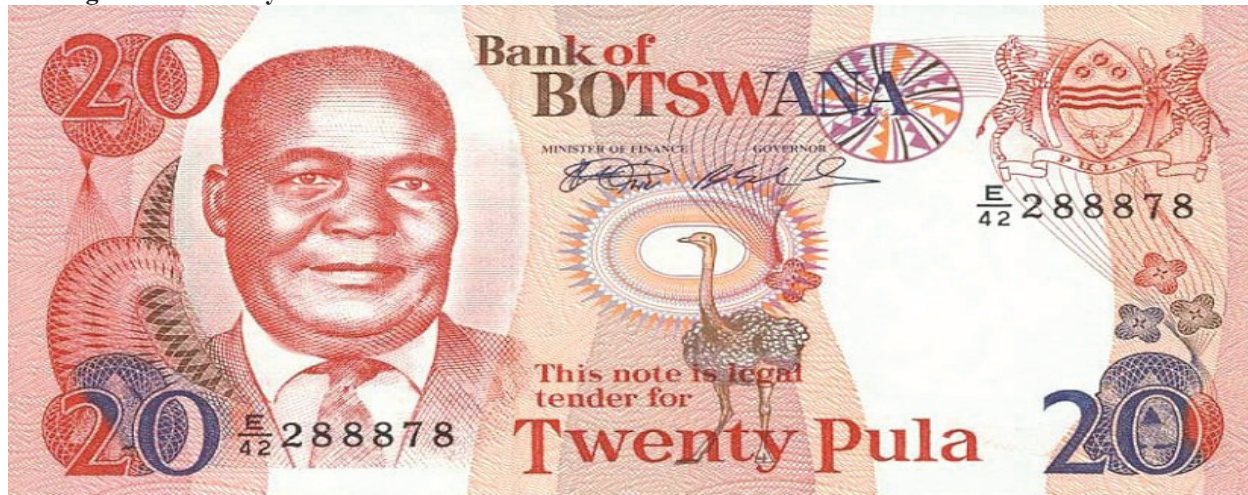
We prayed to God that He should save the King/Queen, 'Long reign over us'. These words came from the British national anthem which is the prayer for the British people. We sang the song during the colonial time and we sang it in full.

But now that the time has come that we should be singing our own national anthem in full we are only making a mockery of it. Those of us who know the length of the Zambian national anthem will agree with me that to sing only the first verse, is a gross neglect for the national prayer.

Of course, the national anthem is a national prayer. This is why people should stand up, take off their hats and even stand to attention when the anthem is sung (Ntsima 7 April 1976).

Starting in 1976 the anthem was sung in full. However, it was not until October 1997 that the government of Quett Masire honoured Motsete, who had died in 1974, by having his portrait on the country's Twenty Pula bank note (Figure 2).

Figure 2: A Twenty Pula bank note with the Portrait of Motsete¹



A 'New' National Anthem and Liberalisation of National Symbols, 2006

The preparations to the country's 40th anniversary of Independence under President Festus Mogae in 2006 seem to have led to the 'liberalisation' of the national symbols among which was the national anthem. According to the musician and journalist Rampholo Molefhe, in a bid to create a legacy for himself, President Mogae had a young music graduate Reggie Kopi 'refurbish' the national anthem (Molefhe 14 August 2006). Molefhe writes that Mogae had been motivated by a perception 'that young Batswana were unfamiliar with the song. Or perhaps that it did not seem to carry the same meaning for them that a national anthem should carry for its citizens'. He further notes that in 'creation' of the national anthem Kopi enlisted Philip Modise, who was a band master at the Francistown detachment of the Botswana Defence Force (BDF) band, to write the necessary orchestration for the anthem and also write the harmony parts for the choir. Molefhe said that the choir travelled to Johannesburg in late July or early August 2006 where they joined an orchestra of the best musicians there –about 33 piece band –to marry the lyrics to the sound of the orchestra. 'It was Kopi and Modise's aim to also make it easy for students and citizens to learn the song. So they recorded the first, second, third and fourth parts of the voice, also referred to as the soprano, alto, tenor and bass on separate tracks so that they could be played and sung separately for ease of learning' (Molefhe 14 August 2006). Perhaps, it is worth citing Molefhe's take on the creation of the rearranged national anthem and the attitude of Batswana:

According to Kopi, he had discovered that most Batswana are only familiar with the soprano voice and only harmonise randomly, following the 'first part' by ear. President Mogae visited the studios of the Department of Information and Broadcasting Services on Friday afternoon, to listen to the first recorded version of *Fatshe La Rona*, and the Kopi and Modise arrangement. Kopi promised to furnish him with copies that he would listen to and then advise on the next step.

Without pre-empting the President, I should be permitted to say, having had the opportunity to listen to Kopi's work perhaps a few more times than he has, that the new work represents a definite improvement on the version that is currently in use in schools and at the government institutions. It is also, aesthetically superior to the versions of Botswana folk songs made by the South Koreans a few years ago.

I should only caution that there is often a tendency among Batswana singers to attempt beautification of Setswana words in order to make the language sound English. I should not suggest

Source: <http://banknoteworld.com/botswana>, accessed 21 March 2016

that this is the case with the Kopi recording, but I would advise that adequate scrutiny should be given to the enunciation of the words, which concern has already been expressed by Kopi anyway.

The national anthem, like the constitution of the country, the coat of arms and the flag tends to have a certain permanence that is not enjoyed by the 'Top of the Pops' songs that change every week on the radio. But from this point of view, Kopi's is an artistically credible piece of work that should receive the highest consideration so that Batswana should be able to sing a lively and pleasant national anthem, come September 30, 2006, and every Independence Day thereafter.

Starting around 2006, among other symbols the national flag could be brandished about by excited enthusiasts at sporting activities such as the national football team (Zebras) matches. It also became common for fans to be clad in costumes and loudly blowing *vuvuzelas* with national colours. The journalist, Tshireletso Motlogelwa, writing during the build-up to the 40th anniversary of Independence celebrations in 2006 noted that 'The national anthem is a song, which has come to embody the nation's patriotic fervor. There is arguably no song that commands such respect and reverence from Batswana' (Motlogelwa 22 September 2006). He continues by saying that 'at the national stadium during Zebras games, drunken football fans pause in momentary sobriety to sing it. Primary school teachers like to drum the lyrics into their students' heads until they can sing it eyes closed'.

Conclusion

This paper has traced the origin of the Botswana national anthem, and the challenges presented following the initial distribution of a recorded wrong version of the anthem. Understandably, the distribution of the wrong version to the international community greatly distressed the composer of the anthem. At the time, Botswana was a desperately poor country with no good government or private music recording studios, hence reliance on foreign facilities in South Africa and England. This may explain why EMI, which had no branch in Botswana, recorded the wrong version of the anthem without permission from the copyright holder. The country's lack of an army and a military band or a police brass band led to efforts to have the anthem recorded by a military orchestra in England and Zambia but it is not clear whether these efforts did bear fruit.

It is argued that for decades the Botswana government did not appreciate Batswana celebrating national events by waving the national flag and colours. Therefore, this may have had adverse effect on the people's attitude to the anthem, and other national symbols. It was not until the turn of the twenty-first century that the government liberalised the national symbols and Batswana enthusiastically embraced these at the country's international competitions.

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