

Botswana: An Oasis of Hope in the Solitude of the Kalaharii

Botswana: Un oasis de esperanza en la soledad del Kalahari

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Resumen

La República de Botsuana, con su tangible prosperidad en el alcance del bienestar para su población tras la superación de desafíos adversos, constituye una singularidad en comparación con los trayectos que han seguido otros países del Sur Global y, por lo tanto, provee un caso interesante para analizar los diversos factores que posiblemente contribuyan de forma positiva hacia cursos deseables de desarrollo. En ese aspecto, en el presente trabajo se evalúan estos factores, su efecto en los aspectos políticos, etnoculturales, económicos y legales del Estado, y la influencia percibida que tienen sobre el resultado deseado. Se proveen también recomendaciones sucintas con base en las fuentes revisadas.

Palabras clave:

Sur Global, desarrollo, Kgotla, territorio, extractivo, modernización, democracia, inclusivo, Kagisano, Botho.

Abstract

The Republic of Botswana, with its tangible prosperity in the achievement of wellbeing for its population after surmounting adverse challenges, constitutes a singularity in comparison to the pathways followed by other Global South countries, and therefore provides an interesting case for the analysis of the diverse factors that may positively contribute towards desired development paths. In that regard, this academic work exposes an assessment of these factors, their effect on the political, ethnocultural, economic, and legal aspects of the state, as well as the perceived influence they have on the desired outcome. Succinct recommendations are also provided based on the sources reviewed.

Keywords:

Global South, Development, Kgotla, Land, Extractive, Modernization, Democracy, Inclusive, Kagisano, Botho.

Introduction

The Republic of Botswana, an official state of the world since its independence from the British Empire on September 30, 1966, is a pronounced anomaly in the Sub-Saharan African region. The recently formed state led initially by Seretse Khama¹ and now guided by Mokgweetsi Masisi² is a chimera of prosperity, characterized by an unyielding democracy, functioning institutions, infrequent corruption, absence of political infighting, protection of citizen rights, general stability, and economic growth. This reality, contrastingly divergent from the evolution of innumerable less thriving developing countries, poses the suggestive necessity of determining the causes for this success phenomenon, with the overarching objective of discovering general pathways for sustainable development and citizen welfare. Based on the relevant antecedents of this country here explained, the purpose of this article is to provide an exhaustive assessment of the institutional, personalistic, and casual factors that have affected the political, ethno-cultural, economic, and legal features of the country and have directed them into this desirable trajectory throughout the historical period comprised from independence into the present day. The uncovered thesis here reveals the assertion that an optimal and efficient institutional arrangement, complemented with effective individual leadership and characterized by the usage of conventional, pragmatic, and syncretically³ defined modernistic policy, precludes welfare accomplishment for a country. This assertion will be developed on the following sections, composed of brief chapters regarding pivotal moments in Botswana's history, and concluding remarks on further recommendations.

1 First president of the Republic of Botswana, from independence until his death on July 13, 1980.

2 Fifth and current president of Botswana since April 1, 2018.

3 This academic work does not endorse the complete assimilation of foreign values and is open to syncretic interpretations if that is beneficial for the culture studied.

An unpretentious beginning (1965-1970)

The scenario Seretse Khama witnessed was not precisely a picturesque one. The new country was a landlocked territory the size of Kenya or France but sparsely populated by 300,000 inhabitants, and composed in an 84% of arid Kalahari sand with a small 4% of farmable land (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 9). The country had minimal assets, with only two secondary schools, and unfavorable agricultural features that forced the nation into investing 10% of its gross domestic product (GDP) in food imports (Ibid., 17). During the period that could be aptly described as the ‘eve’ of independence, British commentators, scholars, and analysts alike did not hesitate to point out the ‘ills’ of the land by crudely describing them as “the railway corridor to Rhodesia” (Bunbury 1966, 536), with an emphasis in the reality that its limited economic endeavors, related intrinsically to the cattle and mining industries, were in the grasp of *apartheid*⁴ South Africa and that, under that same argument, even comparable emerging countries such as Swaziland⁵ and Lesotho were better positioned for success (Ibid., 536-537). The French observers concurred with most of the British remarks and described the situation among the emerging countries as a *quasi-intégration* but emphasized that Botswana should benefit from remaining in the same customs union with South Africa, as their cooperation suggests monetary stability, direct access to capital markets, functioning institutions, and technical assistance (Giniewski 1966, 383-384). For these scholars, a common market in which Botswana itself, Lesotho, and Swaziland⁶

4 Specifically, the denomination of the racially segregated South African regime from 1948 to 1991. Rhodesia was also an apartheid regime throughout its duration from 1965 to 1979.

5 Former name of Eswatini and employed during the Protectorate (1902-1968) and post-independence eras (1968-2018). Swaziland was known for possessing vast mineral resources in comparison with pastoral Botswana (Doxey, G., and Doxey, M. 1966, 35).

6 Formerly known as the BLS or High Commission Territories, and persistently assumed to be even-

specialized their production would be beneficial (Ibid., 387). There was quite an insistence on the apparent unfeasibility of Botswana as an independent economic unit from both former colonizers.

It is particularly suggestive contemplating those preordained assertions taking into account the previous actions, or perhaps inaction, that the British had enacted on the land and that had distinctively positioned it into the situation previously described. The Bechuanaland⁷ Protectorate, established in 1885, had the sole reason for existence in the British Empire as serving “as a road to the interior,” with evident disinterest in settling the land and with a colonial expenditure mindset composed almost entirely by “administrative costs” (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 13). Inactivity was not absolute, however, as the administrators imposed a hut tax in 1899 and a “native tax” in 1919, which generated the desired outcome of forcing the natives into the labor market and created the pre-independence situation of having a significant assortment of *Batswana*⁸ men migrating and working in the Witwatersrand mines of South Africa, and therefore, driving the dependence so often denounced (Ibid., 14).



tually absorbed by South Africa (Robson 1967, 469).

7 Colonial name used during the British administration (1885-1966). It is not interchangeable with the modern usage of Botswana and refers only to the pre-independent state of the country.

8 Plural demonym for the people that inhabit Botswana. The singular demonym is Motswana.

Due to Botswana's alarming economic dependence, voices external to the agonizing relation between colony and colonizer advocated for a thorough separation from the South African regime as a requisite for true emancipation (Ortiz 1968, 294); and, in contrast to the British defeatism, nations from both the Global North and South supported the admission of the country into the Commonwealth of Nations and the United Nations (UN) forums as a Member State (Pakistan Institute of International Affairs 1966, 386).

Nonetheless, and as discussed by present-day students of institutionalism, Khama had an interesting and potentially favorable context in the practices of the Tswana people⁹. The Tswana had a history of political union under shared adversities, with various cases such as the Battle of Dimawe, in which the natives halted a Boer incursion into their territory in 1852, or the successful lobby in 1895 between the Tswana chiefs and Queen Victoria, which rescued the land from the assured colonial exploitation of Cecil Rhodes and the expanding British South Africa Company (BASC) (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 11-13). Additionally, the Tswana were cohesive as a group and had sophisticated political structures such as the *kgotla*, which was a congregation of adult men that discussed topics of public interest, and that was special as it provided a resource for openly and freely criticizing authority, in contrast to the more extractive¹⁰ organizations of the ethnically similar Lesotho (Ibid., 9). The creation of the Bechuanaland

9 Overarching term for the union of tribes that settled the land. The eight major tribes were the Bakgatla, Bakwena, Bamalete, Bamangwato/Bangwato, Bangwaketse, Barolong, Batawana, and Batlokwa (Proctor 1968, 59).

10 The term "extractive" will be used under political and economic definitions. The economic definition is straightforward, but when referring to political entities, the concept utilized is the one proposed by Acemoglu and Robinson (2013) on institutions designed to extract resources from the citizens into the political elite.

Democratic Party, currently the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), was also successful in joining the rural and urban sectors of the country, particularly with Khama's ability in integrating the traditional chiefdoms, and in achieving a "swift and relatively painless end to colonial rule" by winning the 1965 general election (Spence 1967, 546). Regardless of the daunting setbacks, Khama had a united citizenry, a culture with pro-democratic institutions, an effective party, tangible powers in the legislative and executive branches, and no potential dangers of foreign intervention besides the economic meddling of South Africa. The time was appropriate to assess the developmental value of orthodox and 'realistic' economic policy.

An Economic Upheaval (1970-1980)

The first years of the post-independence era were marked by stark changes in the economic and political land configuration. A severe drought ravaged the fields for six consecutive years, a secondary industry was developed (Best 1970, 605), and the government conducted its Accelerated Rural Development Programme, an efficient initiative on land redistribution (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 15). The meaningful decision of this period, however, was the gradual reassignment of the competencies of the traditional chiefs into a burgeoning centralized state. This realignment was a process directed on behalf of Khama, who, regardless of being the former heir to the dominant *Bangwato* tribe, was deeply convinced that the welfare of the nation relied on strengthening a state apparatus unobstructed by traditional rulers. Consequently, he deliberately deviated the political involvement of the chiefs into the advisory institution of the House of Chiefs, a government organ detached from the National Assembly and ineffectual in the creation of laws. The house

had symbolic value as a site of relevance for the traditional tribal regimes, but any attempts to unify it with the National Assembly into a bicameral legislative were persistently opposed by Khama and his ministers (Proctor 1968, 65). Contemporary scholars acclaimed the strategy as a success in the application of a gradual and nonviolent process of state modernization (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001); and in overriding the potentially divisive, and in some circumstances aggressive, character of tribal identities, a situation put into perspective by the adverse example provided by the evolution of the also tribal Somalia (Samatar 1997, 704). In 1969, the government renegotiated the customs union with South Africa, increasing Botswana's share in the revenues. In addition, public investment in infrastructure increased, and mining companies were invited to explore the lands. Concerning other aspects of the governmental landscape, Khama himself was publicly supportive, as was expected from small economies of the Global South, of becoming a member of the United Nations and of the Organization of African Unity, the precursor of the modern African Union. Khama was also publicly critical of the colonial administration, or lack thereof, of Britain, and the industrial and commercial pressure exerted by Rhodesia and South Africa, nations known for being led by their *apartheid* minorities (Khama 1970, 125).

Regardless of these achievements, Botswana would not be considered today a "success story" if it had not taken complete advantage of a critical historical junction. Until that moment, it was an interesting democratic experiment in an era of drastic and polarized development strategies, but without achieving industrial independence from South Africa, its prospects of solving the economic tensions of its citizens may have been limited. The necessary disruption appeared when De Beers found commercially valuable diamonds in

Orapa, Letlhakane, and Jwaneng, which prompted the subsequent renegotiation of the mining agreement in 1975 between the multinational company and the government. The new settlement gave the government a 50% share of diamond profits (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 17). With this situation, the cattle economy of the land was permanently reformed, and income soared dramatically, as the annual GDP growth from 1971 to 1973 reached the shocking percentages of 25.8%, 26.4%, and 21.3%, respectively (World Bank n.d. a) when the government was in fiscal surplus.

The responses from the political actors were even more crucial. Under extractive institutions, it is straightforward to assert that the political infighting for profit would, at best, evolve into instability in a resource curse situation (Acemoglu and Robinson 2013), with Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo as examples of the violent extremes of that circumstance. Botswana, however, was able to converge the welfare of the land with the interests of the elite, by allocating significant investment into health and education, the introduction of the Pula as currency in 1976, linked to the South African Rand, and the formation of the Bank of Botswana and the Botswana Development Corporation to subsidize large-scale industrialization. Furthermore, the fact that the diamond reserves were also present mainly in *Bangwato* territory makes Khama's decisions even more surprising (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 19).

National development would become a major worry for analysts and practitioners of the field. Inside the system of the University College of Botswana (UCB), precursor to the current University of Botswana, the National Institute of Development and Cultural Research (NIR) was set in 1975 to contribute complementary

investigation for the suitability of government-prepared policies responding to development issues on the rural arena (CODESRIA 1979, 84). The institute was in favor of solving the appalling absence of capital in the country while denouncing rising inequality with the surge of a wealthy farming class (Cliffe and Moorsom 1979, 35). On the financial scheme, progress was made by the government in formally regulating the emerging banking sector and introducing an exchange control system while minimally disrupting ordinary business life (Collings 1978, 101-111). Separation from the Rand Monetary Union, today known as the Common Monetary Area (CMA), was essential for buffering external influences on the domestic economy (Ibid., 120).

Botswana's achievements were starting to become recognized by international observers, with the decisions of the political leadership considered as "wise" and progress attained as "gigantic" (Yates 1972, 683-690). The Khama era eventually reached its closure with the leader's death in 1980. The BDP was then led peacefully by Quett Masire¹¹ and continued to have a comfortable command in the state institutions against its traditional opposition of the social democratic Botswana National Front (BNF) and the socialist Botswana People's Party (BPP).

Quett Masire Takes the Baton (1980-1998)

Quett Masire's administration commenced with the emergence of the profound nuances of the Tribal Grazing Land Policy as a medium for further modernizing the country with the creation of a planned socio-economic transformation. For the government, the traditional system of land administration created unfavorable incentives for the productive use of the territory, a position susceptible to criticism

11 Second president of Botswana, from July 18, 1980 until March 31, 1998.

in that it dissolved the tribal status quo accepted when the independence happened (Hitchcock 1980, 2-4). Tribality and modernity would continue their enduring cultural clash throughout the decade, with their skirmish being qualified as a struggle of the *Gemeinschaft* of the informal interaction and mutual assistance of the ancestral culture against the *Gesellschaft*¹² of rationality and impersonality of the new bureaucracy (Jones 1983, 138). Regardless of these tensions, the tranquility that characterized this period may assert the benefits of gradualism and conciliation when assessing the transition from antique to contemporary institutions. Furthermore, scholars of the time stated that the Tribal Land Act of 1968 and subsequent interventions averted the usual African 'pitfall' of over-centralization, as it was recognized as a fruitful undertaking against parochial and subsistence modes of land usage (Frimpong 1986, 51-74).

Masire's government was naturally not exempt from challenges, as the Bank of Botswana, at the end of the 1970, reported that the domestic surpluses were not completely directed to expanding employment and raising living standards (Makgetla 1982, 69). There was an increasing dependence on foreign exchange in the form of loans and grants, disarticulation between the industrial clusters, and a private sector not necessarily interested in investing in productivity (Ibid., 83-86). This situation required an improved and comprehensive plan conducted by the financial area, especially considering the demonstrated bidirectional causality between financial development and per capita income (Akinboade 1998, 343). The Central Bank also called for the more equitable relocation of productive wealth (Holm and Morgan 1985, 480).

12 Terms employed by the author on concepts beyond their basal German definitions. "Gemeinschaft" refers to the informal and ancestral 'community,' while "Gesellschaft" alludes to the impersonal and rational 'society' or 'company.'

On other matters, observers questioned the prioritization of the economy into the “commercially-oriented cattle ownership” sector (Yeager 1989, 397), and the political opposition used the alleged inability of the administration to handle foreign interests in the land as a constant rhetoric (Lavrencic 1986, 51). In the international arena, Botswana partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Food Programme (WFP), with the latter being crucial in averting famine during a severe drought at the start of the 1980’s (Ibid., 52). In that interval, the *apartheid* regime in South Africa was hostile and even conducted a raid on June 14, 1985 against suspected African National Congress (ANC) guerrillas in Tswana territory (Ibid., 51). On regional matters, the strong support to the formation and hosting of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980 was viewed as a further step into reducing Botswana’s dependence on its troublesome neighbor and the Rand Monetary Union (Sekgoma 1990, 157).

The political landscape was an amalgamation of different and fascinating phenomena. Masire stated his desire to position Botswana as the “Switzerland of Southern Africa” and to lead a prosperous land alien to foreign struggles (Lavrencic 1986, 51). The motive of the political elite, as was observed, relied on the accomplishment of the *kagisano*¹³, a set of values deeply associated with the *kgotla* and consequently focused on protecting the political freedoms of the citizenry (Fawcus 1987, 157-158). Critics were not absent, nonetheless, as the BDP was labeled as a paternalistic association that viewed itself as obliged to ‘educate’ the public and the opposition in “democratic

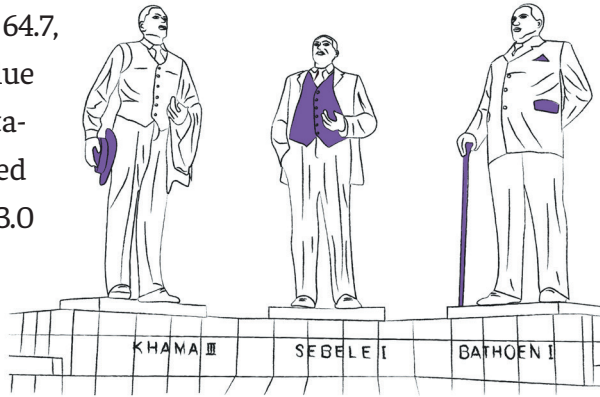
13 Term attributed to mean peace, harmony, social justice, and a sense of community (Fawcus 1987, 157).

manners” and whose overwhelming victories were based on clientelist policies (Holm 1987, 24).

Concerning education, society made giant steps. Schools were becoming widespread by the government’s initiative and teacher training programs, while the benefits of schooling were consolidated in the households by the provision of free meals and healthcare to the new students (Chernichovsky 1985, 319). Moreover, a 1978 decision that abolished schooling fees for primary education was made to disconnect school attendance from household wealth (Ibid., 331). Setbacks were present, however, such as the prohibitive costs of transportation for pupils of isolated villages as well as the irresolution of the persistent disparity between women and men (Ibid., 320). Equally important was the creation of the University of Botswana in 1982 after the termination of the transnational partnership between its predecessor, the UCB, and the institutions of the former South African High Commission Territories. It is important to mention that this incipient university has been under constant expansion since its emergence (Simmons 1991, 135). General praise was given regarding the burgeoning success of the country on the guarantee of universal education and healthcare, especially in comparison with other African nations where more radical policies were pursued (Lavrencic 1986, 53).

Rising inequality, a topic discussed since the final years of Khama, was a reemerging matter and a visible stain in an otherwise praised development model. Growth, desirable under a pattern that fused a market economy with competitive policies, was deemed incomplete because the potential pressures that class divergence posed against the stability of the political economy were ignored (Good 1992, 95). According to the World Bank, the Gini index of the country was 60.8 in 1993, achieved

a zenith in 2002 with 64.7, and its most recent value stood at 53.3 in 2015, notably high when compared to the 2014 value of 63.0 for first place South Africa (World Bank n.d. b). Criticism was also increasingly attested to the



“dispossession” of the San/Basarwa people, a cattle rancher community historically neglected, notable for its rural poverty, and impeded concerning political representation and permeability¹⁴ (Good 1993). A scholar of the era even denounced a tradition of “soft authoritarianism” by the BDP. However, this despotism receded with the competitive October 1994¹⁵ general election and the succeeding student riots for openness and equality (Good 1996, 53). That landmark election was perceived as beneficial in increasing responsiveness and accountability in the BDP regime (Danevad 1995, 381).

Regarding the novel nuances of society, women were developing an increasingly confident position in the political and economic arenas of their nation, especially after the establishment of the Women’s Affairs Unit in the Ministry of Home Affairs and the ensuing creation of the *Emang Basadi* movement, *Setswana*¹⁶ for “stand up, women” in

14 In this particular usage of the word, the capacity of providing significant contributions and influence into a polity.

15 Especially tight general election, in which the popular vote was 54.5% for the BDP and 37.3% for the BNF (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 43).

16 The native language of the Tswana people.

1981 (Molokomme 1991, 848). This movement was devoted to furthering a program of increasing visibility and awareness for women's issues, enhancing women's participation in national development, designing action-oriented strategies toward greater social equality, and improving the situation of women regarding the law (Ibid., 849-851). Further cooperation between women and the San/Basarwa was also advanced, motivated by the common affliction of subordination suffered by both groups (Mogwe 1994).

A Crisis Ensues (1998-2022)

The HIV/AIDS epidemic that devastated Sub-Saharan Africa was especially felt in the nation, with grave repercussions against its prospects of progress and the emergence of a gargantuan public health challenge for the Mogae¹⁷ regime. Scholars mentioned that the country had one of the highest HIV rates of prevalence and that the effects were noted more acutely in pregnant women and orphaned children (Farrow 1999, 146). The dire situation was placed into perspective when the UN Population Division estimated a decrease in life expectancy from 59 years in 1990 to a projected 45 years in 2010 (Ibid., 147), and by 2008 an estimated 24% of the adult population were HIV positive (Zembowicz 2008, 8). The government responded with diverse initiatives, such as the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) in 1985, a National Policy in 1993, the drastic increase in government expenditure for the containment of the disease (Motlaleng 2006, 138), and the Vision 2016 initiative for stopping the spread of HIV infections by the named year. Eventually, Ian Khama¹⁸ and his administration inherited the Mogae program on AIDS and concentrated efforts on prevention, widespread

17 (Festus Mogae) Third president of Botswana, from April 1, 1998 to April 1, 2008.

18 Fourth president of Botswana, from April 1, 2008 to April 1, 2018. Son of Seretse Khama.

testing, and close cooperation with the private sector, with the coordination of the latter proving effective as a resource for providing funding and assistance to the cause and displaying a beneficial partnership in lowering HIV incidence (Zembowicz 2008, 8), an oxymoron to the more reticent approach towards this sector by the scholars opposed to the modernization overview. Furthermore, the circumstance could also be a substantiation of optimal historical government management of private-public partnerships, in particular with the case of Debswana.¹⁹ On behalf of Vision 2016, relevant progress has been made into 2022, with the declaration of UN AIDS that Botswana was the first high-burden country to eliminate mother-to-child transmission (2021).

In addition to this crisis, other processes ensued. Observers reiterated their criticism on economic matters such as the prolonged absence of social redistribution, mounting inequality, the obstacles of diversification, and the non-terminated dependence on South Africa (Pillai 2006, 2304). More moderate stances advocated instead for a redefinition of the Debswana partnership toward structural clarity and transparency (Sharife 2016, 81). From one perspective, Botswana should be regarded as an evident “development State” regardless of the reversals of its economy and based on its vision, coordinative investment plans, robust institution building, and domestic conflict management (Taylor 2012, 466). From the other perspective, contemporary inquiry should delve into the essentials for alleviating poverty, creating a sustainable economy, and adopting completely inclusive institutions, necessary conditions for averting prospective stagnation (Hillbom 2012, 477).

¹⁹ Initially the De Beers Botswana Mining Company, an entity established in 1968 and the focus of the public-private partnership between the government and De Beers (Sharife 2016, 77).

In politics, praise was not only reserved for the governmental strategy and praxis but also given to the civil society and its interactions of mutual criticism with the State, a situation perceived as a sign of a healthy democracy and with an emphasis made on the role of the civilians and their communities into solving the problems of inequality identified in the economy (Maundeni 2004, 635). In regard to corruption, the establishment of the Directorate on Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC) in 1994 has meant an achievement in prosecuting malpractice and prompted an encouraging future despite its initial technical setbacks, a favorable scene for the least corrupt country in Africa, according to the international community (Sebudubudu 2003, 137). Botswana has also taken considerable steps in complying with international dispositions on Anti-Money Laundering with the passing of the Financial Intelligence Act of 2009 and the creation of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) within the DCEC (Mogomotsi 2019, 21).

On a final postmodern note, the presence of an evolving conceptual framework in *Setswana* may contribute to the admission and acceptance of new standpoints. Local scholars argued that *botho*, a *Setswana* term encompassing individuality and the realization of a person's complete potential, could become benignant in the provision of rights for the LGBT community (Tabengwa and Nicol 2013, 356).

Conclusion

The colonial history of Botswana followed an expected pathway regarding the forced dependence of its population on the extractive institutions devised by the metropole. The British administration prompted the employment of the Tswana people by means of the mining enterprises of South Africa, and the colonizers believed that the new country would continue depending on and eventually be

absorbed by the dominant *apartheid* State. However, there were some pivotal differences. First, Botswana did not suffer from a coercive foreign regime, and second, its native peoples had a shared history of union and proto-democratic participation. These antecedents proved essential for the creation of a functional and peaceful democratic system and the survival of their country as an independent State.

The presidency of Seretse Khama was crucial, as his decisions consolidated the young institutional framework. His plan to gradually deviate power from the traditional chiefs to the National Assembly was a successful process of state modernization. In addition, his effective renegotiation of the South African customs union provided valuable income to his administration, a situation crucial for funding necessary health and education programs. However, his most important decision was the renegotiation in 1975 of the public-private agreement with De Beers and the spending of the subsequent diamond revenues into beneficial social programs. The creation of formal education and banking sectors ensued, and the BDP remained a popular party.

Quett Masire followed Khama's gradual state modernization plan and expanded upon his predecessor's foreign policy objectives. Observers praised his tribal land policy's avoidance of over-centralization, while his collaboration with the United Nations System prevented severe food insecurity. He administered the expansion of the financial and education sectors, and the establishment of the SADCC dissolved dependence on the hostile regime of South Africa. These successes in foreign policy support the benefits of multilateralism for emerging States. Nevertheless, the country's pathway deserves critique and discussion. The economy was based mainly on diamond

extraction, relied on foreign capital, and generated significant income inequality. In addition, the political liberties included in the *kagisa-no* policy were absent for marginalized women and the San/Basarwa people. Finally, some observers were concerned by the BDP's trajectory of competitive authoritarianism. Further studies should examine if the BDP's victories were due to their merit, the opposition's shortcomings, the over-arching institutional structure, or a combination of all those factors.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic was devastating for the wellbeing of the Tswana. The state effectively managed its public-private partnerships, but the recovery of pre-epidemic health values needed two decades. While Botswana made advances in the prosecution of corruption and the expansion of civilian rights, it also faced constant inequality and an undiversified economy that posed risks of future stagnation. Consequently, a civil society developed to combat the ailments of wealth disparity. The prospective questions of this juncture are twofold: if this new civil society may spontaneously impulse more permeable democratic institutions, and if the economy is prepared to generate post-diamond growth.

Final recommendations include the comparison of Botswana's case with the trajectory of other economies of the global south. This case proves the power of institutions, individual leadership, and conventional policy in generating welfare in a country. Other political entities in an initial stage of development could replicate these findings. Nevertheless, Botswana's development remains incomplete, and that incompleteness poses questions for the path ahead.

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