

The Phenomenon of Patriotism in Botswana

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'The demise of white minority regimes in the Southern African region, and particularly apartheid in South Africa, ended patriotic fervour against foreign aggression in Botswana and led to domestic issues of tribal recognition at constitutional level becoming issues of serious national concern. This essay examines the notion of patriotism in Botswana by providing a historical insight into the phenomena of ethnicity, tribalism, nationalism and individualism. The latter being promoted by a capitalist economy. These themes are of great importance in contemporary Botswana. As in many post-colonial African countries, writing on tribal relations in Botswana was not encouraged by the government. The reasoning was that this had potential of rekindling otherwise 'healed' old tribal animosities and undermining national unity. So serious was this thinking that the government did not allow researchers access to some records on tribal relations in the National Archives. Furthermore, in the past, tribal issues and demands by some ethnic groups for recognition at the same level as their Tswana-speaking counterparts were usually ignored. The campaign for equal recognition or 'politics of recognition' has been carried on through courts of law in some instances'

-A visitor is a visitor for two days only, the third day you give him/her a hoe (Swahili proverb).

-'If we are deceived into concentrating on our differences and not our common interests, then enmity and rivalry will trespass where hope and cooperation should prevail' (Howard F. Jeter).

-'A prudent man should always enter those paths taken by great men and imitate those who have been most excellent, so that when one's own skill does not match theirs, at least it will have the smell of it' (N Machiavelli).
