

## Preface

### "That Tremendous Voice"

One of Professor Leonard Ngcongco's former colleagues in the NIR (National Institute of Development Research and Documentation), Letsholo Kgathi, recalls an incident in the early 1980s when they were attending an international conference in Sweden together. All day he and Leonard Ngcongco sat in different parts of a big hall packed with participants, who contributed to a rather dull debate in often stilted English. Then, late in the afternoon, the audience was suddenly aroused and excited by a deep and sonorous male voice which filled the hall with precise and flowing English. Many people were visibly startled, turning round to search out at the speaker. They were even more surprised to see who he was: a short, stout, bespectacled black man, sitting at the far back.

"That tremendous voice," as Bojosi Otlhogile calls it in these pages, has thrilled generations of students in Southern Africa since the 1950s. It is the voice of man who must stand among the top teachers in the pantheon of Southern African pedagogy. Indeed, the very word "Tremendous" is part of his favourite vocabulary and for many years his nickname among students has been just that. Those who know him can all hear him, in our mind's ear, rolling the word out to echo in the lecture hall.

The *festschrift* to Leonard Ngcongco that follows may be seen as advancing scholarly understanding in a number of fields of study, from pre-colonial to post-colonial times, particularly but not exclusively on Botswana and immediately adjacent areas—as evidenced by the essays on the Makua language in Tanzania/ Mozambique and on J.T. Jabavu in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. Maybe we can even incite Leonard Ngcongco to contribute further in such fields in his "retirement".

Since the contents of this issue are predominantly historical, we have retained Humanities-type style bibliographic citation style in many of the articles. But we request all contributors to submit future papers following the style laid out on the inside back-cover of the journal.

**Journal Editor**