

Introduction

Professor L.D. Ngcongco officially retired in August 1995 after many years of continuous service to the University of Botswana. Having joined the staff of the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in 1967, he is certainly one of the longest-serving faculty members to retire from this university. The University of Botswana, compared to others in Western and Eastern Africa, is a relatively young institution and therefore not many of its serving academics have had the honour or privilege of serving to retirement age.

Prof. Ngcongco has seen the institution grow from humble beginnings to its present position as a centre of learning in the SADC region. He has been an active player in this process of growth. He was the first staff member to start the teaching of History on the small Gaborone campus in 1971 and has been head of department on and off for close to twenty years, and at different times Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, Director of the National Institute for Research, and acting Deputy Vice Chancellor, as well as a member of various boards and committees which have shaped the development of the university.

For these reasons it was considered that a *festschrift* to mark his retirement would be a fitting tribute to him for his service to the university. The following articles are offered in that spirit. The papers which follow cover some of the areas of Leonard Ngcongco's scholarly interests.

Darkwah's paper discusses Ngcongco's contribution to the development and study of history in Botswana. This is followed by an interview in which Ngcongco reminisces about the development of the University of Botswana and the part he played in it. As befits a publication devoted to a historian, the chapters that follow are organized chronologically by topic.

The role of linguistics in historical reconstruction is the subject of the contribution by Herman Batibo and others; the languages used as examples in that paper are Makua and Sotho. Neil Parsons looks at foreign traders and travellers in Tswana lands before about 1820. Bruce Bennett analyses the discourse between the missionary John Mackenzie and Kgosi Sekgoma Kgari of the Bangwato. Henryk Zins revisits the issue of the international background to the creation of the Bechuanaland Protectorate in 1885. Christopher Saunders' paper discusses Ngcongco's study on John Tengo Jabavu and the newspaper which he edited, *Imvo Zabantsundu*. Themba Mgadla surveys the part played by wives of the missionaries and other women in the development of education in Botswana to 1937. Bojosi Othlogile discusses the handling of criminal cases by the colonial courts and what may be learnt from them about the development of colonial policy in Botswana. Isaac Mazonde looks at the conflict of interest and of policy between Government and NGO's in respect of the Basarwa at Xade.

These papers are offered as an expression of appreciation of the part played by Leonard Ngcongco in the development of the historical studies in Botswana. It is our hope that his retirement years will be happy and fruitful.

Kofi Darkwah