

DATE OF INTERVIEW: 7/10/88

DATE OF TRANSCRIPTION: 7/10/88

DATE OF TRANSLATION:

INTERVIEWERS: Sizwe Nkomo/Me

INTERVIEWEES: Mr Fred Gijima Mzomi

PLACE OF INTERVIEW: His home, Amatata.

ANY FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT INTERVIEWEES: He is 82, and was dipping cattle when we arrived. We went to fetch him & he arrived home in his dipping clothes to talk. At first, he was chary — he at present has a dispute with the church authorities who wish to remove the church (building right next door to his house), and the matter was with his lawyers. After assurances from us that we were not fishing for info. he gave us a long interview. We then visited the graves of Madukane & his wife (overgrown but, according to M's wish, directly opp the altar window of the church). Mr Mzomi then took us to the house, just across a field, inhabited by Rev M Cole. It is now in ruins, walls only standing, & he wishes to renovate it.

The main house in the Msomi homestead is square, timbered. In the lounge were the 'Oligarchy' artefacts: Kist, chimney clock, display cabinet (displaying a tea set, plastic bowls & packet of curri powder) and velvet-covered chairs. In middle, a dining table. A daughter came in & sat on the floor at the beginning of the interview, then reappeared later with tea. One got the impression of a once more economically secure setup; altho' Mr Msomi has land & owns the small butcher nearby, this 'entrepreneurial' activity has not led to comfort. The homestead buildings are all modest, neat, higgledy-piggledy, but really quite austere. Mr Msomi has just recently heard that he has been granted a K pension.

His wife died some years ago; he has 13 children; he is a local induna under Mzoyani. He thinks 'shuleni' has brought great benefits to the people; and jokingly as we left said that now that people could marry whom they liked, did I find him a white bride?

We returned a week later, Friday, 14/10. On this occasion, we reported progress with the copying of the pictures he'd asked us to organise, & to make this suggestion:

that I put tog. all the info I have
on Madikane, that I compile it into
a booklet which they can sell to
raise money for the restoration of the
house / church. Mr Msoni was
deeply impressed & in fact got wet
water eyes. He then did
something most unexpected: he
careered off on a long history
of Mgawe, Bulushe & Madikane —
his heartfelt story, the "real history"
which he had obviously been too
shamed to tell us before! We had
to stop him to get the tape
recorder, but that did not seem
to affect the flow.

Then we sat down to a very
formal tea (grace beforehand) and
Mr Msoni urged us to visit
his imbonjo / advisor, Mr Mzimela,
immediately after, as it wasn't far.
We drove about 4 kms, and found
Mr M leaning on his hoe in
his fields — a little, bent man
with elfish features, someone out
of a fairy tale. Very old, wizened
but kindly face. Mr Msoni
obviously respected him very much,
as he introduced us to our business
by a long preamble. When the
crux of the matter finally came, the

80 man was much impressed: he said that he had told Mr Mason that everything would come right, just the other day when they had been talking about historical matters. So we setup a meeting for the next Thursday.