"Sifuna umlando wethu"

(We are Looking for our History):

Oral Literature and the Meanings of the Past

in Post-Apartheid South Africa

Mbongiseni Buthelezi

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ABSTRACT

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In post-apartheid South Africa, working through the distortions of identity and history of the formerly colonized, as well as the traumas suffered by black South Africans as a result of the alienation of land by European settlers is an ongoing project of the state. The state's attempts to formulate an appropriate national myth with founding heroes and significant events that resonate with the majority has resulted in the promotion of certain figures as heroes. Not all black South Africans who are exhorted to identify with these figures consider them heroes. Some trace the beginnings of the fragmentation of their historical identities to the conquest actions of these figures. Shaka kaSenzangakhona, founder of the Zulu kingdom, is one such figure who is being promoted as the heritage of all Zulus by the state, especially at the level of the province of KwaZulu-Natal, for purposes of constructing a heritage for the province and of encouraging tourism. This promotion of Shaka is seen by some as the perpetuation under the post-1994 dispensation of the suppression of their histories and the disallowing of engagement with a longer history than the reorganization of chieftainship from 1927 and the seizure of land belonging to Africans from 1913. Hence has sprung up groups convening around pre-Zulu kinship identities since the early 1990's in which people attempt to find answers to the question "Who am I?" For most people, this question is driven by a sense that their conceptions of the country's past and of their historical selves (i.e. of the experiences of their predecessors that have brought them to where they are in the present) have been either influenced, mis(in)formed or distorted by the national master narratives that crystallized under European colonial rule and apartheid, even as they were simultaneously being resisted. Informed in part the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of the late 1990's and the state's attempts to "redress the imbalances of the past," many feel they need to work through the

meanings of the past in their personal lives in order to inhabit the present with a fuller sense of how they have come to be who they are and so that they can imagine and create different futures for themselves.

In this project I examine the attempt of people who trace their history to the Ndwandwe kingdom that was destroyed by Shaka's Zulu forces in the 1820's who have organized themselves into an association named the uBumbano lwamaZwide (Unity Association of the Zwides) to engage with questions of identity and the meanings of the past. The association comprises a group of activists in different parts of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng provinces who have been meeting since 2003 to attempt to bring together on a large scale people of Ndwandwe, Nxumalo and other historically-associated clans to recall and/or construct a heroic past in post-apartheid South Africa. Implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, the assembly of the Ndwandwe calls into question the definition as Zulu of those Ndwandwe whose forebears were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom in the 1820's.I analyze the use of the idiom of heritage as well as a traditional idiom of kinship that has come to be handed down as a Zulu language for mediating social relations by the uBumbano in ways that challenge the centrality given to Shaka in narrations of the past. I argue that the uBumbano is using these idioms against how they are commonly understood – heritage as a mode of engaging with the past for its feel-good features and kinship as a Zulu idiom in KwaZulu-Natal province. Through an analysis of three closely related oral artistic forms – the *izibongo* (personal praises) of Shaka in his promotion and the *ihubo lesizwe* ('national' hymn), *izithakazelo* (kinship group or clan address names) of the Ndwandwe as well as the personal praises of Zwide, the last Ndwandwe ruler before the fall of the kingdom – I argue that the uBumbano is deploying these forms in subtle ways to overturn the dominance of Shaka in public discourse. Moreover, I contend, the uBumbano is turning on its head the permission to recall their ancestors under the authority of the Zulu ruling elite that Ndwandwe people who

were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom have been permitted for almost two centuries. I demonstrate how the language of being an isizwe ('nation') was permitted and perpetuated a Ndwandwe identity that has held the potential to be asserted more forcefully to overturn its secondary position to an overarching Zulu identity.

In Chapter 1 I examine the unprecedented promotion of Shaka since the 1970's for political purposes by the apartheid collaborationist Inkatha, which ruled the Bantustan of KwaZulu from 1975 until the end of apartheid in 1994 and the province of KwaZulu-Natal until 2004. I argue that Inkatha's promotion of Shaka forced a politics of ethnicity in which the national ruling party, the African National Congress, had to play by Inkatha's rules in order and wrest recourse to Zuluness from Inkatha in order to win elections in the province. Hence the province was locked into the renovation of colonial stereotypes of Shaka and Zulus and their new promotion in the new dispensation as the heritage of the province. Any attempts, therefore, to work through the meanings of the past is forced to engage with what Shaka means, I argue, as the state's own project of working through the past stops in the early 20th century and thus disallows engagement with the longer past. Asking questions about the meanings of the Zulu past is further forced to be subtle and strategic as powerful interests in the society are invested in holding Shaka as the center of the heritage and identity in the 'Zulu Kingdom,' so named for purposes of tourism.

In Chapter 2 I argue that the need to tread with care when recalling the still symbolically powerful Ndwandwe kingdom and identity has fostered the use of two interlocking idioms: heritage as the mode of engaging with the past that the state promotes, and kinship as a way of presenting the uBumbano's project as continuing the veneration of Ndwandwe ancestors as a subset of the overarching Zulu identity that has been allowed under Zulu authority for almost two centuries. I demonstrate how this Ndwandwe recall of their ancestors has held in place potential for the subversion of such Zulu authorization and of the

identity of the Ndwandwe as Zulu because the Ndwandwe ‘nation’ that has been recalled includes those who settled in other polities in other parts of southern Africa, such as the Gaza kingdom in today’s Mozambique. This subversive potential is being released by recalling Zwide more publicly, I argue, and demonstrate how the use of Zwide’s name encodes the subversion of Zulu authority.

In Chapter 3 I examine three versions of the praises of Zwide kaLanga, the primary figure on whom pre-Zulu Ndwandwe memory and identification attach, to probe how a putative father of the ‘nation’ comes to be remembered more than 185 years after his death in what is considered the appropriate manner of remembering an important male ancestor when his praises have been suppressed almost out of memory. My argument is that the Ndwandwe look to the Zulu model for an appropriate manner to commemorate important founding figures. Hence they are attempting to reconstruct Zwide’s praises in order to recall him in the same manner as Shaka is recalled. I show how fragments of Zwide’s praises have survived even as the memory of Zwide and his recall were being suppressed under Zulu authority.

Chapter 4 goes into the detail of how the uBumbano is cashing in on the wide usage of the Ndwandwe hymn and clan address names among the people activists are attempting to mobilize. I demonstrate how these forms are embedded in the quotidian and ritual practices of a wider set of Ndwandwe people than those whose have so far been mobilized and persuaded to attend the association’s heritage celebrations. I argue that the use of these forms in their own lives by a Ndwandwe public primes the reception of the uBumbano’s mobilization efforts by setting up a framework for interpreting the association’s use of the more widely prevalent oral artistic forms. The use of the forms at the association’s events finally decenters Shaka and Zuluness in more public ways.

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Dedication

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Introduction

As South Africa hurtled towards its third national democratic election in 2009, an old anti-apartheid struggle song jostled with poetry and songs from the long oral tradition to bolster public images of politicians. At rallies the leader of the largest political party led supporters in singing '*Umshini wami*' ('My machine [gun]'), a song with a long career in the underground camps of the liberation struggle. The song was imbued with new meanings and sung with relish by those seeking to voice popular dissatisfaction with the perceived failures of the state and of political leadership according to Liz Gunner in "Jacob Zuma, the Social Body and the Unruly Power of Song" (Gunner 28, 30). The same song had in the preceding months been transformed into countless cellular telephone ringtones by entrepreneurs seeing a popular cultural phenomenon out of which to score sales. Sound and video clips of singing crowds were also heard on radio and seen on television. At the same time debate raged under trees, in offices, on numerous blogs, news websites, and on radio and television talk shows about the public uses of a song with an illustrious history of galvanizing fighters for justice by a politician whose post-liberation character was, allegedly, dubious. To add to the maelstrom of reinvented cultural idioms and symbols, some of the politicians were being lauded in *izibongo* (praise poetry) and songs in the *maskanda* genre performed at live concerts. The poetry and music were recorded and disseminated through fast-selling compact discs. The same compact discs were simultaneously being illegally reproduced on isolated computers and the songs and poetry circulated via cellular phones in even the remotest parts of South Africa.

A few weeks earlier, in a remaking of the praise tradition, the internationally acclaimed *isicathamiya* music group Ladysmith Black Mambazo had won a Grammy award for *Ilembe: Our Tribute to King Shaka* (2007), its honoring of Shaka Zulu, the early

nineteenth-century empire builder who melded together the Zulu kingdom. In yet another renewal of praise poetry, Buzetsheni Mdletshe, the *imbongi* (praise poet) of the incumbent Zulu king, had put music to the praises of the entire lineage of Zulu kings from Senzangakhona, Shaka's father, onward and produced a compact disc, *Wena Wendlovu Bayede!* (2008).

The artistic forms and products noted above – *izibongo*, the album in honour of Shaka, the liberation struggle song and *maskanda* – are either praise genres or borrow aspects of the praise tradition towards new ends. Since one of the first written descriptions of Zulu *izibongo* in 1837 by American missionary Rev. George Champion (Brown 75), the praise tradition has continued to be used in ways that are close to the function Champion observed at the royal court of Dingane, Shaka's successor. The form has also been remade time and again in the mouths as well as the singing and dancing bodies of people who have created new forms of expression out of it. Such remakings have ranged from an old oral poem such as Zulu king Shaka's praises being declaimed in a new setting and thus taking on new meanings to the importation of the imperative of praising that is at the core of praise poetry to produce a music album by Ladysmith Black Mambazo. The emergence of new forms over the past century points to the capacity of traditional South African, and African, oral forms for renewal as successive generations of people find uses for, and meaning in, earlier poems, songs, stories, riddles and other forms. As the society has changed so have people's popular expressive forms evolved while maintaining continuity with earlier forms.

At the same time that Zuma was being sung about and Shaka was being hailed in the different recordings mentioned above, two other uses of traditional oral artistic forms were taking place in South African society. On the one hand the customary addressing of ancestors during domestic rituals and ceremonies using *izithakazelo* (kinship group or clan praises/address names), the *izibongo* (personal praises) of lineage ancestors and singing the

ihubo (hymn) of the larger group with the same surname or set of related family names continued in disparate homes. Simultaneously, people were greeting one another by their *izithakazelo* in streets, in offices and on factory floors and dropping these *izithakazelo* into the flow of their speech whenever they wanted to be polite or show good manners to Zulu speakers whose family names they knew. As this dissertation is going to signal, this domestic and public usage of the forms of naming and declaiming is the foundation on which the popularity of *maskanda* music and reception of the celebration of Shaka are built.

On the other hand, various groups of people were deploying the notion of kinship that is contained in and perpetuated by the oral artistic forms, to mobilize and assemble those defined as sharing kinship bonds deriving from polities that pre-existed the rise of the Zulu kingdom under Shaka kaSenzangakhona (Shaka son of Senzangakhona) in the 1810's and 1820's. These kinship groups being mobilized and assembled are mainly attempting to rediscover, revise or reconstruct the histories of their forebears. Groups whose assembly I am aware of include people of the family names Qwabe, Khumalo, Ntuli, Dlamini, Mkhize, Buthelezi, Mbatha and relations such as Dladla and Mbeje, Gwala, and Ndwandwe and the related Nxumalo. In this dissertation I follow the activities of the Ndwandwe and Nxumalo who have formed themselves into an association named the uBumbano lwamaZwide (Unity [Association] of the Zwides) deriving from the address name 'Zwide.' Zwide is the name of the leader of the Ndwandwe kingdom whose reign in today's northern KwaZulu-Natal ended when Ndwandwe forces were defeated on the battlefield by the Zulu circa 1820.

This dissertation examines the deployment of three oral artistic forms – the *ihubo lesizwe* (national hymn), *izithakazelo* and *izibongo* – as used by the Ndwandwe and Nxumalo in the mobilization for assembly as well as actual assemblies of people of these family names. To be sure, these forms are not unique to the Ndwandwe. Each *isibongo* (kinship group or clan) uses the same forms with different content in the case of the *izithakazelo* and *izibongo*,

and with both different content and different tunes in the case of the *amahubo*. My main goal is to understand how these traditional symbolic forms are being put to use in new ways in post-apartheid South Africa to do new kinds of cultural and political work, the space for which has been opened up by the end of apartheid and the transition to democracy. In the working out of what form the post-apartheid state should take, what national past should be constructed or recalled for the historically racially-divided society, and how to deal with the traumas of colonialism and apartheid, certain African figures have been elevated as national heroes (primarily Nelson Mandela) to replace the national heroes of the apartheid state. Other African figures whose images had been distorted for the ideological purposes of representing Africans as savage and the land that was alienated by European settlers as having been empty and available for settlement, have been (and are being) renovated and made the bedrock of the national founding myth today. One such figure is Shaka, the mythical founder of the Zulu state, who has been for almost two hundred years the cornerstone of the colonial and neo-colonial images of savage Zulus on one hand, and the epitome of black pre-colonial political achievement on the other. Shaka's image has been, and continues to be, used by a range of political and social actors.

Throughout South Africa, but especially in the former apartheid homeland of KwaZulu that falls under the province of KwaZulu-Natal today, Shaka was promoted as the representative of an essential Zulu tribal identity by the apartheid state and Inkatha, the collaborationist rulers of the homeland. Shaka has been rehabilitated from this apartheid usage and is being promoted by the state under the African National Congress, the once anti-apartheid organization which now governs the province, as the heritage of KwaZulu-Natal and of all the black African inhabitants of the area who are defined as Zulu. Projects such as Ladysmith Black Mambazo's and Mdletshe's recordings fit into this upholding of Shaka as an ancestor of whom black South Africans, especially 'Zulus,' are being exhorted to be proud.

Yet for people whose ancestors were violently dislodged by the rising Zulu kingdom or forcibly incorporated into the Zulu state, the promotion of Shaka and Zuluness are not a simple matter of pride. Shaka is identified as responsible for a painful episode in the case of the history of the Ndwandwe – the colonization of the Ndwandwe prior to the advent of the later British colonization. Therefore, part of working through colonial and apartheid distortion, suppression and erasure of the identities and histories of the formerly colonized in post-apartheid South Africa involves engaging with Zulu colonialism in one form or another. This engagement among the Ndwandwe is hampered by the position accorded Shaka in the national myth and the policing by powerful interests of any questioning of Shaka's place, the position of the current Zulu royal establishment which derives from Shaka, and of Zulu identity.

I probe how this promotion of Shaka and Zulu identity has created a dynamic where people who are attempting to work through the meanings of colonial and apartheid pasts cannot avoid navigating what Shaka and Zuluness mean to them today if they want to construct versions of their personal and group pasts that attempt to formulate a fuller sense of how they have come to be who they are today. Many groups are reaching for the distant past as a panacea for the ills of at least the past two centuries. These versions of the past being constructed attempt to counter what is seen as the disruption of the transmission of a coherent sense of identity by previous regimes of cultural and political power and knowledge that include the Zulu kingdom itself as well as British colonialism and apartheid. I attempt to understand how the discourse of heritage, as the dominant mode of engaging with the past being upheld by the state, is being turned against itself by the uBumbano lwamaZwide in order to position its project as politically innocuous. Over the years since the formation of the uBumbano in 2006, this positioning has proved necessary because Ndwandwe assembly appears automatically to call Zulu rule and identity into question. When groups of people

begin to assemble who trace the beginnings of the loss of a coherent sense of their identity to becoming Zulu by force of arms in the early nineteenth century, the instability of Zuluness becomes clear.

This study also aims to contribute to the expansion of the field of oral literary studies in which relatively extensive work has been done on the *izibongo*, but the interface between the *izibongo* and the other forms – *izithakazelo* and *ihubo lesizwe* – alongside which it seems to me essential to read the *izibongo*, has barely been considered. It is essential to read these forms together in order to construct a fuller view of the range of artistic forms that enjoy extensive usage as the cultural expression of majority of South Africans. For a long time, these forms have been studied incompletely for various reasons. The reasons have ranged from the colonial stereotypes of Africans as having no cultures worthy of being taken seriously, to the more recent studies conducted by scholars whose inability to speak the languages in which the forms circulate have made them stop short of penetrating analyses of the forms. Therefore, part of the reformulation of the post-apartheid research agenda involves extending the study of the cultures of the majority that were secondary to 'European' cultural and literary forms under British colonialism and apartheid. Ndwandwe assembly offers an opportunity to study how some of these forms are being asserted publicly with a new-found confidence since the end of apartheid.

Ndwandwe Assembly and Recall

On November 13, 2010 the uBumbano lwamaZwide convened the first annual Zwide Heritage Celebration in Mbazwana, northern KwaZulu-Natal. The event was hosted by *inkosi* (chief) Justice Nxumalo, a stalwart of the KwaZulu homeland administration who was hailed as a hero by the former leader of the homeland, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, when Nxumalo died not long after the event. The second event, this time renamed the Zwide Heritage Day, was

held in Msebe in the greater Nongoma area on August 6, 2011. Msebe falls in the former Ndwandwe heartland, which extended from where the town of Nongoma stands today to Magudu approximately thirty-five miles north of Nongoma. The events were convened to bring together people who, it is claimed by the activists who formed the uBumbano lwamaZwide and who mobilize people for these events, are disconnected family members being brought together to network and to learn about their Ndwandwe pasts. After an abortive attempt to generate momentum for the association following its founding in 2006, the events in 2010 and 2011 were positioned as an effort to discover and celebrate their heritage by the Ndwandwe[1]. The turn to the heritage discourse was in response to the loss of initiative that followed the intervention of the Zulu king, Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, when he received erroneous reports that the Ndwandwe were gathering to overthrow him and reconstruct the Ndwandwe kingdom that Shaka had destroyed. It took the involvement of well-known Nxumalo politicians, business owners, academics and chiefs for the events to be positioned as heritage and be able to take place without causing similar political unease to the 2006 assembly.

The Ndwandwe kingdom on which recall of the past centers collapsed in the 1820's. In historian John Wright's recent reconsideration of the historiography and history of the Ndwandwe, "Rediscovering the Ndwandwe Kingdom" (2008), the *abakwaNdwandwe* (people of Ndwandwe) were resident south of Delagoa Bay by the early part of the eighteenth century (Wright 224). By the middle of the eighteenth century they had moved south and settled in the Magudu-Nongoma region in today's northern KwaZulu-Natal. Wright suggests that as a result of its weakness and insecurity the Ndwandwe chiefdom would have been a predatory polity, using excessive force against other chiefdoms to survive as well as needing

[1] The leaders of the uBumbano and several Ndwandwe and Nxumalo people I have interviewed identify people of the family names Ndwandwe and Nxumalo as all Ndwandwe. The Nxumalo were historically the junior house of the Ndwandwe clan. Some identify other groups, such as the Madlobha, Masuku, Mncwango, Jele and Mathetha as also being historically Ndwandwe. However, it appears that these latter groups were subordinated by the Ndwandwe through conquest rather than having a genealogical link.

to maintain tight control over its adherents (225). Groups that appear to have come under the control of the Ndwandwe by the close of the eighteenth century were an offshoot of the Ndwandwe under Zikode, the Msane, the Jele or Ncwangeni and the Nzimela (226).

According to Wright and Carolyn Hamilton in "Traditions and Transformations: The Phongolo-Mzimkhulu Region in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries," central to the process of centralization and expansion of the Ndwandwe kingdom was “the transformation of the functions performed by bodies of young men known as *amabutho* (singular *ibutho*)” (Wright and Hamilton 62). Wright and Hamilton posit that *amabutho* seem originally to have been circumcision schools in which young men underwent rites of passage from boyhood to manhood at the behest of a ruling chief. Such bands were under the ritual authority of the chief and could be put to work for the chief (63). These *amabutho* increasingly came to be used to hunt elephant, raid neighboring polities for cattle and extract tribute, and eventually became a standing army and police force (63). Using available evidence for the Mthethwa polity, Wright and Hamilton also argue that the process of incorporation initially proceeded through the creation of cohesion forged by manipulating the traditions of origin of communities incorporated into the chiefdom to enable them to claim to be kinsfolk of the ruling house (64). However, by the beginning of the nineteenth century, chiefdoms that were incorporated were no longer permitted to claim kinship, resulting in the formation of social strata where groups from chiefdoms that were incorporated in the early period of expansion were distinct in terms of status from those incorporated later (64). A similar model of incorporation obtained in the Ndwandwe chiefdom (64). The Ndwandwe were under the leadership of Zwide kaLanga by the close of the eighteenth century.

Wright and Hamilton further state that by 1810, the rivalry between the Ndwandwe and the Mthethwa had come to overshadow all other conflicts in the region between the Phongolo and the Mzimkhulu Rivers (Wright and Hamilton 66). With the Mthethwa moving

rapidly to consolidate their power and bring more chiefdoms under their control to the south and west of Ndwandwe territory, the Ndwandwe launched their own campaign to counter this move. According to Wright, they attacked two sections of the Khumalo under Donda and Mashobane and subjugated the Ntshali under Mlotha. They also launched attacks on the Dlamini and the Ngwane. At the same time, the Jele section of the Ncwangweni under Zwangendaba was attacked in order to bring it more firmly under the control of the Ndwandwe as it was one of the polities on the periphery that recognized Ndwandwe overlordship but over which the Ndwandwe had tenuous authority (Wright 229).

The Ndwandwe went on to launch an attack against the Mthethwa in 1817, defeating their army, and capturing and putting to death the Mthethwa leader, Dingiswayo (Wright and Hamilton 66-7). This left the Zulu chiefdom as the last major obstacle to Ndwandwe domination of the region. At that stage, the Zulu under Shaka kaSenzangakhona were tributary of the Mthethwa. Shaka had seized power with Mthethwa support and was being encouraged by Dingiswayo to strengthen his chiefdom by bringing neighboring polities under his control in order to check the Ndwandwe advance (Wright 230; Wright and Hamilton 67).

While the evidence is tenuous, the Ndwandwe are said to have launched two (possibly three) attacks on the Zulu c.1819-1820, according to Wright (230). The Zulu seem to have avoided encountering the powerful Ndwandwe army by withdrawing southward from their base in the Makhosini area south of the Mfolozi River, hiding in broken and forested territory in the Nkandla region or beyond the Thukela River. The Ndwandwe eventually retreated. During the reprieve, Shaka appears to have moved quickly to bolster his power and fighting force, forcing and cajoling neighboring chiefdoms to subject themselves to the Zulu rather than the Ndwandwe. He also launched a surprise attack on the powerful Qwabe chiefdom in the coastal regions between the Mhlathuze and the Thukela Rivers. In Wright's view, by the time the Ndwandwe launched their next attack, the alliance under Shaka:

> was strong enough to halt the Ndwandwe in what recorded accounts describe as a fierce battle on the Mhlathuze river. The common – Zuluist – view is that the fight ended in a resounding defeat for the Ndwandwe, and that the various sections of the kingdom then went into flight to escape from Shaka, with the main house under Zwide fleeing northwards across the Phongolo, and sections under Soshangane of the Nxumalo, Zwangendaba of the Ncwangeni-Jele, and Nxaba of the Msane making off in separate groups towards Delagoa Bay. (230)

In line with his reconsideration of the available evidence to outline a history of the Ndwandwe from a "post-Zulu' perspective," Wright then proposes that "the Ndwandwe forces, though badly mauled, were not destroyed and … in his move northward Zwide retained a considerable following" (231). Wright traces the outlines of what happened to the Ndwandwe thereafter: Zwide most likely first moved across the Phongolo River and seized Swazi cattle. He then turned north-west to put distance between himself and both the Zulu kingdom and the unstable Delagoa Bay area. He eventually settled in the upper reaches of the Nkomati River, in the east of the present-day Mpumalanga province, where he waged war against the local Pedi inhabitants and went on to reconstruct his kingdom (232). With Zwide and his adherents' abandonment of the Ndwandwe heartland, Wright asserts that "strategic parts of former Ndwandwe territory were colonised early in Shaka's reign by sections of the Zulu royal house" (232). However, while the evidence cited by Wright suggests that the Ndwandwe relocated, it is commonly accepted that some Ndwandwe remained behind, paid their allegiance to Shaka, and were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom.

Wright surmises that Zwide consolidated his kingdom and remained a significant power in the region, raiding the Pedi, the Dlamini and other polities that had significant holdings of cattle. The kingdom Zwide built was regarded with some fear by Shaka and the latter sought to undermine the kingdom. Zwide died in late 1824 or early 1825, after which there was a leadership dispute between his sons, Sikhunyana and Somaphunga. The outcome of the dispute was that Sikhunyana was able to take over the kingship and Somaphunga, with

a number of adherents, went to give his allegiance to Shaka (232). In mid-1826, Wright continues, Shaka launched an attack on the Ndwandwe under Sikhunyana with the assistance of British traders and their black adherents who had settled at Port Natal (today's Durban), which was within Shaka's sphere of influence, and who possessed firearms. The Ndwandwe suffered a resounding defeat on the battlefield, following which their cattle were rounded up, their homesteads and fields of grain destroyed, and many women and children massacred. Some of the surviving Ndwandwe fighters were incorporated into the Zulu army and large numbers of Ndwandwe submitted and were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom, settling in their former territories, "but now under the rule of senior members of the Zulu royal house" (232-3). The Ndwandwe kingdom effectively disappeared and subsequently was given little attention in history writing. Wright's attempt to reinsert it into the research agenda stems from the murkiness of this important episode in South African past and the importance of understanding the period better in order to counter the mythologies that have developed around Shaka and the Zulu kingdom.

Wright makes a further illuminating revision of the narrative of the flight of the Ndwandwe diaspora after the Ndwandwe repulsion by the Zulu c.1820. The story that has been codified in the past two centuries of Shaka-centric historiography is that the Nxumalo, the Ncwangeni-Jele and the Msane were fleeing from Shaka when they spread throughout southern Africa. Wright posits that the groups used the loosening of Ndwandwe control over them occasioned by the repulsion of the Ndwandwe by Zulu forces to free themselves of Ndwandwe overlordship and move to places where they could set themselves up as independent rulers (231). Indeed Soshangane, Zwangendaba and Nxaba went on to form significant polities of their own in other parts of southern Africa, the former founding the

famed Gaza kingdom in today's Mozambique and the latter two going further afield to set up their own kingdoms.[2]

The uBumbano lwamaZwide is reaching for the pre-Zulu past of the Ndwandwe kingdom prior to the 1819-20 wars that resulted in the demise of the kingdom in today's northern KwaZulu-Natal. It is tapping into the widespread notion that all Ndwandwe are related to persuade those it can reach that people of Ndwandwe descent need to reconnect with this history and with one another. The history as has been reconstructed by professional historians is hardly known to people in the uBumbano. Even the main intellectual in the group, Otty Nxumalo, presented a largely incoherent version of Ndwandwe history at the 2010 event. The sketchy nature of what is known of the history of the Ndwandwe by the activists as well as the larger Ndwandwe public they are attempting to reach is used to fuel the message that the Ndwandwe have lost touch with who they are. The oral artistic forms that are used repeatedly in daily speech and in domestic rituals suggest this void. Ndwandwe people call themselves after putative Ndwandwe ancestors through the *izithakazelo* – Zwide, Mkhatshwa, Nkabanhle, Sidinane and others – without knowing any longer who these people were. The mobilization efforts of the uBumbano thus tap into the widespread use of these forms among people who maintain traditional spiritual beliefs in which the ancestors play an important role in the lives of the living, requiring communion with these ancestors from time to time. These Ndwandwe forms appear to have remained in use over the previous two centuries as subsets of the expressive forms of larger identity groupings, such as the Zulu in the area that is KwaZulu-Natal today and Swazi in both Swaziland and South Africa. The signification of these forms over the past two centuries continued in interaction with new forms which derive from or borrow elements from these traditional forms.

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[2] See Ackson Kanduza. "Mfecane Mutation in Central Africa: A Comparison of the Makololo and the Ngoni in Zambia, 1830s-1898." *Five Hundred Years Rediscovered: Southern African Precedents and Prospects.* Eds. Natalie Swanepoel, Amanda Esterhuysen, and Philip Bonner. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008. 257-272. Print.

Change and Continuity: Oral Artistic Forms and Scholarship in the last 150 years

As Benedict Vilakazi's essay "The Conception and Development of Poetry in Zulu" makes clear, the *izithakazelo* (kinship group or clan praises) and *izibongo* (praise poetry) are two of the earliest known forms in northern Nguni-speaking society from which later ones have been derived (Vilakazi 105-134). Several forms have been created from *izibongo* over the past century and a half and continue to exist alongside *izibongo* today even as ever newer forms mutate from older ones. The wide use of the praises has only recently been given serious recognition in scholarship, the bulk of earlier commentary having created the impression that the genre of *izibongo* was reserved for royalty. This impression was created largely because of the earliest documented commentary that came in the first stages of contact between Europeans and Nguni-speaking communities was based on the accounts of traders and adventure travelers who commented on the most pronounced manifestation of the tradition in sensational ways. This sensationalism was further fuelled by the development of the discipline of anthropology through the 1960's according to Leroy Vail and Landeg White in *Power and the Praise Poem: South African Voices in History* (Vail and White xi). Among others, Liz Gunner has noted in her Ph.D. dissertation, "Ukubonga Nezibongo: Zulu Praising and Praises" (1984), the more rigorous and most influential early contribution to the study of *izibongo* came from James Stuart who collected "oral testimony and *izibongo* from Zulu informants" over a period of more than thirty years from 1888 to 1922 (Gunner 15). To date, Stuart's methodology and the volume of the *izibongo* he collected, accompanied by explanatory notes, remain a touchstone in the study of *izibongo*. Stuart's collection has made his version of the Ndwandwe leader Zwide's *izibongo* available to be drawn on in Ndwandwe recall and reconstruction of the past today, as I show in Chapter Three. Nevertheless, Stuart focused his collection of ethnographic information on the Zulu monarchy. Hence his

collection provides scholars with only small fragments of information regarding other descent groups and almost nothing of their praise poetry.

Further fragments of *izibongo* were provided by A.T Bryant in his problematic text, *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* (1929). Bryant's work further contributed to the focus of early scholarship on royal *izibongo.* It was Vilakazi who eventually attempted to introduce the wider range of Zulu-language oral artistic forms into scholarly discourse in his article referred to above. Yet in spite of Vilakazi's work, influential books such as Trevor Cope's *Izibongo: Zulu Oral Literature* (1968), continued to reinforce the dominance of royal *izibongo* in scholarship. Not until the publication of Ruth Finnegan's *Oral Literature in Africa* (1970) did scholars take seriously the need to widen their focus beyond the oral forms of the elite in African societies. Furthermore, the decolonization of African countries in the 1960's saw an increase in contributions to the field by Africans where previously oral forms had been studied predominantly by European anthropologists and folklorists who often did not speak the languages in which the forms circulated. Since the late 1970's Liz Gunner has contributed to the growing sophistication of the study of Zulu-language oral forms. In the 1980's the University of Natal's Oral Documentation and Research Centre continued the work of collecting these forms. It produced timely research work such as that probing the effects of formalized education on oral forms in *Oral Tradition and Education* (1988). In the 1990's Isabel Hofmeyr took stock of the growth of oral literary studies in "Making Symmetrical Knowledge Possible: Recent Trends in the Field of Southern African Oral Performance Studies" (1999). However, in spite of the recent growth of oral literary studies, we have no evidence of the practice of praising before the 1820's and can therefore only speculate that it was relatively similar to what we know from the late 1820's.

Overlapping in time with the work of recording and preserving testimonies that Stuart was conducting was the development of a new modes of using the old forms of *izibongo* and

new forms drawing from *izibongo*. Two such examples are *maskanda* or *maskandi* (from the Afrikaans *musikant* for musician) music and the hymns and praises of the Church of the Nazarites or the Shembe Church as it is commonly known. In these and later forms what is transferred to new contexts are products – songs and poems – as well as formal aspects, aesthetic principles, and functions of praise genres. Furthermore, Liz Gunner asserts in "Jacob Zuma, the Social Body and the Unruly Power of Song":

> Africa teems with the temporal and spatial journeying of various kinds of song. They travel, they metamorphose, they die, sometimes they are reborn and they give birth. They are the midwives to new ideas and to new social visions. They summon up collective memory with amazing speed. They can provide platforms for debate and for an evolving discourse on a range of topics. Often the electronic media have facilitated rather than hampered such journeyings, sometimes with unpredictable results. (Gunner 36)

Maskanda is one of the best-selling types of music in South Africa today, especially popular in rural areas of eastern South Africa and among migrant workers in urban centres like Johannesburg and Durban who hail from rural areas. *Maskanda* "has always maintained the right of those on the far edges of power to comment on the social and political and to represent the voices of those who might otherwise go unheard" (44). According to David Coplan in "Sounds of the "Third Way": Identity and the African Renaissance in Contemporary South African Popular Traditional Music," the genre "began in the late nineteenth century as a musical expression of self-propelling individuality, as courting songs sung "on feet" (as isiZulu puts it) by young men on amorous walk-about" (Coplan 112). Maskanda was the music of young men, sung as they travelled across the land in search of sweethearts. A young man would sing about the landscapes of his home district, the cattle his family has to pay *ilobolo* (bridewealth) for the women he was courting, and amplify himself as a great lover and/or warrior, calling out some of the *izibongo* he had accumulated since childhood or making up new ones. However, the form grew out of women's music in which

they sang about themselves and their experiences while accompanying themselves on the *umakhweyana* or the *ugubhu* bow and gourd. Once it became a men's form, though, *maskanda* gradually migrated to urban centres like Johannesburg with the absorption of more and more men into the labour market.[3] For a long while during this interregnum it maintained its identity as a travelling form or one of the "cultures of mobility" as David Coplan terms it, a form of "practice not only transported by but formulated "on the road" within the context of multisited, mobile networks of kin, homeboys and girls, and reciprocal friendships" (112).[4]

New *maskanda* songs were made up and sung on the road by men migrating to seek work in the cities and hence *maskanda* forms part of a culture of mobility. Songs expressed disconnection from, and longing for, the landscapes and people back home. These young men accompanied their singing on homemade guitars fashioned out of old oil cans, fishing line and wood. *Izibongo* were, and remain, a centerpiece of male *maskanda* songs, expressing aggressive and virile masculinity. The tin guitars came gradually to be replaced by guitars purchased from shops in the urban centers. The form settled in economically depressed urban sites of migrant settlement, that is, barrack-style men's hostels. It circulated more widely as the cultural expressive form of dispossessed laborers who gathered together on weekends to sing and dance together in these hostels of Johannesburg, Durban and Kimberley, among other places.

According to Coplan, throughout the 1920's homeboys (and a few homegirls) would gather together during their leisure time to perform. Solo guitar, violin or concertina players competed against one another at these gatherings in a manner similar to veld stick fights in which boys engaged while they were herding cattle in the rural areas. Over time the form

[3] On the increasing absorption of men into labor migrancy, see Moodie, T. Dunbar. *Going for Gold: Men, Mines and Migration*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. Print.
[4] The terms "homeboys" and "homegirls" refer to people in urban settings who come from the same rural places.

came to incorporate more than the individual self-accompanying singer. According to Coplan, in the 1930's when early recording companies went into the migrants' hostels in search of products for the African market, *maskanda* was transformed into ensemble music. Later still, with urban *maskanda* concerts becoming established, dancers were added to the ensembles (112). The new elements can be identified as deriving from rural-based traditional dance forms like *ingoma* and *indlamu*. The lead singer-guitarist came to stand in a similar position as the *igoso* who leads the singing and dancing in an *ingoma* or *indlamu* group. Hence was gradually established the *maskanda* aesthetic that remains popular to this day. Until his death in 2004 and, more so afterwards, one of the most popular maskanda musician was Mfaz' omnyama. He praised himself variously in his songs as:

> *UMfaz' omnyama nezingane zakhe,*
> *Qoma ntombi ngafa inhlamba kanyoko.*
> *Wuy' umfan'ozalwa yinyanga kanti nay' uyinyanga,*
> *Ugogo wakhe isangoma, umfowabo umthakathi.*
> *Yil' inxele likaMgquzula leli,*
> *Phezulu kwaNongoma laph' engiqhamuka khona,*
> *Umful' engiwuphuzayo ngiphuz' eVuna,*
> *La emanxiweni obabamkhulu.* (Mfaz' Omnyama, *Ngihlanze Ngedela*, 2001)

I have translated these *izibongo* as:

> Black woman and his children,
> Accept a suitor's proposition, maiden, I'm tired of your mother's insults.
> This is the boy whose father is a healer and this boy is also a healer,
> His grandmother is a diviner and his brother a wizard.
> This is the left-handed one of Mgquzula here,
> Up in Nongoma is where I hail from,
> The river (the waters of which) I drink is the Vuna,
> Here at my forefathers' former homesteads.

Coterminous with the early development of *maskanda* was a new use of praise poetry in Zulu by Isaiah Shembe, founder of the Church of the Nazarites. The Church was founded in 1910 by Shembe at a time when Zulu monarchical authority had finally been broken down by the increasing assertion of colonial power after the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 and rapid

urbanization from the 1860's onwards in southern Africa. According to Duncan Brown in his book *Voicing the Text: South African Oral Poetry and Performance*, the environment created by such a flux opened up space for new Zulu leaders to emerge (Brown 119). Thus Shembe emerged as the leader of a new African Independent Church at a time when, as African nationalism was growing, many black Christians were dissatisfied with the racist arrogance of white missionaries on matters of theology and doctrine such as polygamy and belief in the existence of ancestors (132).[5] Shembe was a modern leader, combining aspects of a traditional chief with those of a Christian prophet in his conduct. His vision for his church yielded a hybridized religious and cultural practice which combined, among other things, the calling out of his praises and the singing of hymns which he composed through his career as prophet similarly to how Janet Hodgsen in *The God of the Xhosa: A Study of the Origins and Development of the Traditional Concepts of the Supreme Being* has described the early nineteenth century Xhosa prophet Ntsikana as having done (Hodgsen 24). Orality and literacy combined in a synthesis of disparate symbols and practices from 'Zulu' culture and Christian worship. Shembe's praises borrow from those of Shaka images of a martial hero which are then combined in an inventive way with symbols that had become significant in the lives of Shembe's followers, the Gospel in this case:

> Spear which is red even at the handle,
> you attacked with it at Mpukunyoni
> because you attacked by means of the Gospel.

The image of a spear that is red even at the handle which attacked adversaries comes from Shaka's *izibongo*, which I discuss in Chapter One. The image has been remade to describe preaching as attacking with the gospel. According to Gunner in *The Man of Heaven and the*

[5] Brown makes this point drawing on the work of several historians, including Bengt Sundkler, Albert Gérard, G. C. Oosthuizen and Norman Etherington, who have investigated the formation of African Independent Churches in South Africa.

Beautiful Ones of God: Isaiah Shembe and the Nazareth Church, even successors of the founder of the church are often referred to by their praise names: Isaiah Shembe's son Johannes Galilee is iLanga (Sun) who was succeeded by Amos, iNyangayezulu (Moon of the Heavens) after whom came Vimbeni, uThingo lweNkosazana (Rainbow of the Princess) (Gunner 3).

The *amahubo* (hymns) of the Shembe church are a similarly syncretic form to the *izibongo*. They combine the tradition of church hymns brought from the mission churches from which early African Independent Church leaders broke away with elements of traditional indigenous modes of religious expression. Moreover, in Brown's assessment, "[t]he hymns of Isaiah Shembe and the Church of the Nazarites treat many of the most pressing issues of twentieth-century 'Zulu' history in particular, and modern South African history in general: ownership and occupation of land; economic dispossession; African nationalism and ethnicity; the ideological and educational role of the missionaries…" (Brown 124). Shembe hymns and praise poetry strongly demonstrate the mobility of features of traditional praise forms.

It has also been shown how in the 1970's poets, galvanised by ideas of Black Consciousness and radicalised by the events that began with the student uprising of June 1976, sought to challenge the ways in which they were represented by the oppressive racist state by returning to traditional African cultural models (Brown 165-211). By reinventing oral poetry through combining it with music in some cases, performance poets were able to negate state censorship: "poems could be memorized, passed on, and performed in a variety of contexts" (183). Poems such as Ingoapele Madingoane's 'black trial' borrow formal elements from *izibongo*, using parallelism and building up to rhetorical climaxes in a similar way to the royal *izibongo*. As Michael Chapman has shown in *Soweto Poetry*, the praise imperative

featured strongly in the work of most “Soweto poets,” as the group of radical poets from this era of intensifying resistance to apartheid has come to be called (Chapman 1982). Praises were sung to heroes from the African past as well as to landscapes as a counter to racist representations.

At the same time as the study of oral forms deepened with Gunner’s work in the 1980’s, further innovation expanded the range of forms that were oriented towards praise. Where *izibongo* traditionally had been about praising and criticizing individuals, a new form came into being that combined the group praise orientation of *izithakazelo* with the declamatory style of *izibongo*. Enterprising poets performed praises alongside plays and political speeches at trade union rallies. This was a new genre of oral poetry in which trade unions were praised for the work they were doing of fighting for the rights of workers, and in which the leadership of the resistance movement was praised for its work, thus being similar to *izithakazelo* in praising a large collective and in the same poem singling out particular leaders. In this poetry the collective being praised was a group of co-participants in the struggle for justice and freedom. Similarly to *izibongo*, the poems gave sometimes veiled, sometimes overt criticism and warning to apartheid authorities about the consequences of oppressing the black majority of the people of South Africa. Whereas the Shembe and other African Independent Churches were oppositional to white authority in subtle ways in their song and poetry, these traditions increasingly came to be used as a mode of shouting opposition to apartheid state policies in the 1980’s.

Alfred Themba Qabula is credited with originating the deployment of performance poetry as part of the cultural aspect of the industrial workers’ struggle for rights in Durban (Brown 215). Drawing on his acquaintance with the poetic license of Xhosa- and Zulu-language *izibongo* to praise and admonish, Qabula first performed “A Poem for FOSATU” as part of the *Dunlop Play* created by workers in the Dunlop tire factory in Durban in 1983. In

the socio-economic environment of the time the relationship the praise poet mediated was no longer between a ruling leader and the ruled populace but a much more oppositional one between exploitative employers forming part of a larger state-sponsored system of exploitation and a group of workers organized into a trade union. The role of the poet had thus been altered from being one of praising the ruler for his achievements as a leader and attempting to correct faults in his conduct through criticism, to praising the union for its achievements in organizing workers into a stronger collective. The poet also warned the leadership of the union to remain vigilant while at the same time criticizing the employers for the poor working and living conditions that workers were forced to endure. However, in this new role Qabula still deployed the formal strategies of *izibongo* that were familiar to his audiences who were largely comprised of people who made use of *izibongo* and *izithakazelo* and some of whom listened to *maskanda* music and/or were members of the Shembe church.

‘Praise poem for FOSATU’ remains emblematic. Once Qabula had made the initial attempt, the enthusiastic response of the thousands of union members in front of whom he performed encouraged the growth of the form. The form was taken up by more poets, becoming a central part of union mass gatherings. Poets performing to large crowds had the benefit of amplification so that they no longer needed to perform like the *izimbongi*, becoming less flamboyant in their movements in order to remain within the range of a microphone and no longer needing to project their voices without the benefit of amplification. Moreover, the poets combined orality, writing and print in innovative ways, writing their poems before performing them and often publishing them in union newsletters and pamphlets. *Black Mamba Rising* (1986), containing the poetry of Qabula, Nise Malange and Mi Sduduzo Hlatshwayo, was one of the products of this period of creative explosion.

Izibongo continue to be a vibrant form: the tradition of Zulu royal poetry has continued unbroken among Zulu royalty from the founding of the Zulu kingdom, and most

likely long before, until today. While ordinary people continue to compose and declaim their own *izibongo*, the tradition has significantly contracted with the hybridization of 'Zulu' culture as it has encountered and sought accommodation with aspects of other cultures. Nevertheless, while fewer people use *izibongo* in their daily lives, the form has gained prominence beyond the confines of 'Zulu' culture through new technologies that have been used by *izibongo* practitioners. Recently, a range of permutations of *izibongo* and other praise genres has proliferated. In 2009 an old anti-apartheid struggle song jostled with poetry and songs from the long oral tradition to bolster public images of politicians as described in the opening passage of this Introduction. Moreover, popular rapper Zuluboy teamed up with *maskanda* musician Bhekumuzi Luthuli and produced hits that combine the two musical forms to speak poignantly about HIV/AIDS, poverty and *maskanda*'s traditional subject – courtship. Musicians and poets may yet create new pathways for the poems, songs and aesthetic assumptions that we know to have been in motion since the nineteenth century.

While *izibongo* have received significant critical attention, the *izithakazelo* and *ihubo lesizwe* have not garnered the same kind of study. Passing mention has often been made to the forms in ethnographies or literary and cultural history introductions to southern African cultures, including N. J. van Warmelo's *Survey of the Bantu Tribes of Southern Africa* (1936), Hilda Kuper's *An African Aristocracy: Rank among the Swazi* (1947), as well as Zulu-language introductions to aspects of language and culture such as Sibusiso Nyembezi and Otty Nxumalo's *Inqolobane yesizwe* (1966) and Christian Msimang's *Kusadliwa Ngoludala* (1975). In *Musho!: Zulu Popular Praises* (1991), Liz Gunner and Mafika Gwala give a useful introduction to the use of the *izithakazelo*. They maintain:

> The *izithakazelo*, clan praises, which are closely related to praise poetry [*izibongo*] both linguistically and in their gestural significance, stress the common origins of those from a particular clan rather than any other kind of hierarchy. Thus everyone who has the clan name Zulu has the right to be greeted by one of the clan names, "*Ndabezitha!*"… In other words everyone shares the history of their clan and when they are praised with the praise names of the clan founder they in a way become that

> person and carry all the resonances of history and the afflatus associated with the name or names. It is a verbal form that is highly regarded in social intercourse and it is one that stresses continuity and origin rather than status. (Gunner and Gwala 32-3)

However, the most extensive study of the use of the *izithakazelo* has been conducted by Carolyn Hamilton in her MA thesis, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu Kingdom" (1985). Hamilton extensively analyzes the manipulation of traditions of origin and the *izithakazelo* in processes of incorporating and subjugating groups that were brought under the control of expanding states in the early nineteenth century. I revisit Hamilton's readings in this dissertation as well as read the Ndwandwe *ihubo* in a manner I have not seen *amahubo* interpreted before. It has taken several years to arrive at something of an understanding of how to interpret the use of these forms by the uBumbano lwamaZwide and in the larger contexts of their use that make them available for the uBumbano's project.

Arriving at the uBumbano via Many Byways

I began my Ph.D. research in January 2008 trying to understand how the *ihubo*, *izithakazelo* and *izibongo* of the Ndwandwe are used transnationally in southern Africa. I was following leads from 2003 when I researched the Ndwandwe and the Buthelezi for my Master's thesis at the then University of Natal in Durban, South Africa. At that time I had been interested in how oral literature can be used to recover the histories of people who were written and spoken out of the historical record in the preceding two centuries. Starting with a reading of Shaka's *izibongo* for how the leaders of the Ndwandwe and the Buthelezi, Zwide and Phungashe respectively, whom Shaka is praised for having defeated, are represented, I then went on to read the versions of the two leaders' *izibongo* I had found in books and collected via interviews for how they "speak back" to Shaka. My project was largely informed by Bill

Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin's introduction to postcolonial theory in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practise in Post-colonial Literatures* (1989).

While gathering preliminary information in 2007 in preparation for a year of fieldwork in 2008, I learnt that the uBumbano lwamaZwide had been formed in 2006 and that its reach extended to Swaziland and Mozambique with attempts being made to reach the Ndwandwe diaspora in Zimbabwe as well. I thus developed a project to trace the use of these Ndwandwe oral artistic forms in South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique. I aimed to establish how the forms had survived almost two centuries of Ndwandwe dispersal to be available for deployment in mobilizing for the reconstruction of Ndwandwe identity in the present.

I began my research in the archive of the Swaziland Oral History Project at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg where the work done by historian Philip Bonner in the 1960's and 1970's and Carolyn Hamilton in the late 1970's and early 1980's is held. The archive also contains the radio broadcasts of the Swaziland local history programme in the 1970's and 1980's. I trawled through the tapes, microfilms and transcripts in the archive looking for material on the Nxumalo and the Ndwandwe in Swaziland. In the end I did not find much of use to my project. From Johannesburg, I moved to Durban to spend time in the James Stuart Archive at the Killie Campbell Africana Library at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I found some interviews that covered the Ndwandwe-Zulu wars and the dispersal of the Ndwandwe through southern Africa. Most of the material on the oral artistic forms focused on Shaka's *izibongo*, with more general discussions in places of the uses of *izibongo*, which I have drawn on in the third chapter of this dissertation. After three months of research, I had not found any earlier recordings or in-depth discussions of Ndwandwe oral artistic forms that I wanted to compare to how the forms were being mobilized in 2008.

Armed with the few representations of the Ndwandwe I had found, I then set out to find people who knew Ndwandwe history and/or the *izibongo* of the figures represented in the Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* – Zwide, Mkhatshwa, Nkabanhle, Sidinane – and could interpret them by setting them in the broader history of the Ndwandwe. I enlisted the help of Andile Ndwandwe, who had worked with me on the Ndwandwe aspect of my Master's research, and moved to his home in the village of Nengeni in Nongoma. Over approximately two and a half months in March, April and May 2008, we sought out people who were said to be knowledgeable on the Ndwandwe past all over the Nongoma-Magudu area. We made repeated visits to Sakhile 'Sikaza' Nxumalo, whom I discuss in chapter 2, interviewed him and went on excursions to sites where he said once stood Zwide's *imizi* (homesteads). We visited Mkhuzeni Nxumalo when we finally managed to catch him on the way back from working the fields near his home after weeks of trying to get him to commit to an interview. I met Andile's siblings, Philani and Ntombi, and learnt that they were involved in organizing meetings of Ndwandwe in Nongoma. We met the Zulu king's *inyosi*[6] (praise poet), Chitheka Ndwandwe, who introduced us to Mafunza Ndwandwe, his brother from a different branch of their family and the extended family's *imbongi* (praise poet). Neither of these two poets form part of the uBumbano, but they spoke in illuminating ways about the use of the oral artistic forms on which I was focusing in domestic family rituals and ceremonies. I draw on the interviews with them extensively in this dissertation, especially in Chapter Four.

I also attended several Ndwandwe weddings and observed what a 'traditional Zulu' wedding I had always heard about, but had never seen, looked like. I observed the use of oral artistic forms at these events and felt the symbolic weight of the address to ancestors among people who believed that their ancestors have a direct impact on their lives. Also, I listened to the radio more than I ever had before. Radio was everywhere around me. In Andile's home I

[6] A royal praise poet is referred to as an *inyosi* rather than the ordinary *imbongi*.

woke up to the sound of roosters crowing and the radio playing in the background. We listened to the radio in the car on our many drives around Nongoma. I also listened to *maskanda*. Having lived in predominantly English-speaking contexts since I was a teenager, all the while I was trying to learn to hear the conversations and oral artistic forms like somebody whose cultural universe is 'Zulu.'

Little by little I learnt that Philani was in contact with other active organizers in Empangeni, Durban, Intshanga, Newcastle and Johannesburg. At first, I was regarded with some suspicion when I started concentrating on finding out about the uBumbano. I kept asking questions until by the beginning of May I was attending meetings of the Nongoma section of the association along with Andile. In April I had already secured interviews with two of the leaders, Sduduzo Nxumalo and Philani Ndwandwe. Mzingeli Ndwandwe, an *inyanga* (healer) who was most vocal about how the Ndwandwe are in a shambolic state because of their defeat by the Zulu and needed to perform rituals to put the spirits of those who died in the Ndwandwe-Zulu wars to rest, would never agree to an interview. To this day he remains suspicious of my project. I later learnt that his discomfort derived from problems that had arisen after the launch of the association in 2006 when the Zulu king was incorrectly informed that the Ndwandwe were rising and convening meetings in order to overthrow him. It seems Mzingeli has never been sure whether I am spying on the uBumbano and cannot be persuaded that I am not.

As I pieced together the different names of people involved in the uBumbano, I started following the leads out from Nongoma. I went to eMpangeni and met Bhekani Ndwandwe, an *imbongi* (praise poet) whom I discuss in Chapter Three. I would also meet Phakamisani Nxumalo who had initiated the meetings of the Ndwandwe in Empangeni later in the year. The effort to map the association took me to Thulamahashe in Mpumalanga province where I met Philani Nxumalo. He informed me that he belonged to the royal family

of the Gaza kingdom and they were the paramount rulers of the Shangana people. Their forebears had settled in South African after the defeat and exile of Ngungunyana, the last leader of an independent Gaza kingdom in Mozambique, by the Portuguese in 1895. He would not tell me anything about their history or the structure of their rule because they had submitted a claim to the state's Commission on Traditional Leadership Claims and Disputes and did not want distortions of their history and identity being put about as had been done by academics previously. He admitted he and some of the royals had gone 'back home' to Nongoma and connected with the Ndwandwe and Nxumalo there. He would not introduce me to the branch of their family in Mozambique or in the Limpopo province either. I stayed two days in Thulamahashe and then left when it was clear I was not going to be able to pursue my research there.

I went to Durban and met the energetic Mvangeli Ndwandwe from Nongoma who works for some firm, and is a leader of the Shembe Church in Umlazi township and a tireless organizer of the Ndwandwe. Further meetings of the uBumbano followed in Nongoma and Newcastle, which I attended from my new base in Ulundi where I was trying to piece together what I had gathered and beginning to test out arguments in research seminars and conferences in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town. In September I attended the *umKhosi womHlanga* (Reed Dance festival) and the Heritage Day celebration where Shaka is commemorated to see what took place at these Zulu-centric events. The rest of the year was spent in Durban until I went on a field trip to a site where the last Zulu-Ndwandwe war is said to have taken place near Wakkerstroom in Mpumalanga province with historian John Wright and archaeologist Ronette Engela. The final trip of 2008 took me to an end-of-year celebration of the Johannesburg chapter of the association.

Over the year, I had developed a growing sense that I was hearing the same assumptions and ways of speaking about being related, the ancestors, and performing rituals

in the daily conversations in Nengeni village, the town of Nongoma, the *maskanda* songs on the radio, the Zulu festivals I had attended, and the meetings of the uBumbano lwamaZwide. The *izithakazelo* seemed to be used in the same or closely related ways in the public and in domestic events, and this public usage of the *izithakazelo* also seemed to relate in some close way to the domestic use of the *ihubo* and *izibongo*.

By the beginning of 2009 I still needed to listen more closely to how the oral artistic forms of the Ndwandwe were being used. The observations I had made in 2008 were pointing to the need for further observation and to probe the links between the forms some more. I was still attempting to understand the survival of these forms, which was appearing more and more fruitless. So I decided to keep following developments within the uBumbano as it seemed to be generating some momentum in its mobilization again. From Cape Town where I was now employed, I occasionally attended meetings of the uBumbano in Nongoma and Durban over the next two years. I interviewed Gijima Ndwandwe on one trip to Johannesburg in May 2009 and Phakamisani Nxumalo in Empangeni in October 2009. The momentum the association was building finally culminated in the 2010 Zwide Heritage Celebration. After the Celebration, it became clear that the dissertation could not be about the survival of the forms. Rather, the most productive line of questioning would be about how the forms were being put to use in the contemporary project of Ndwandwe assembly. As the orientation of the dissertation changed, it also became clear that I could return to the *izibongo* I had recorded in 2003, when Andile and I interviewed Mzomusha Ndwandwe, and reinterpret them with much more sophistication than I had done in 2004 to answer the new questions I was posing. This is how my re-reading of Mzomusha's version of Zwide's *izibongo* in the third chapter of this dissertation, and that I had previously interpreted in my Master's thesis, came about. I also continued in 2011 to follow developments in the uBumbano, eventually attending the Zwide Heritage Day on August 6, an account of which opens Chapte Three.

To try and make sense of all I have observed and the material I have collected in these past four years and in 2003, I have organized this dissertation in the following manner: In Chapter One, “Encountering Shaka: Oral Artistic Forms and Navigating Zuluness in KwaZulu-Natal,” I show how Shaka has come to be central over the last two hundred years in any conception of the past of the north east of South Africa. I trace the production of images of what Wright calls “Shaka the mighty” in academic and popular discourses and how his *izibongo* have been used to enforce this image, especially by the Zulu nationalist organization Inkatha since the 1970’s. I follow this chapter with a view of projects of decentering Shaka in the second chapter, “Countering Shaka: Language, Subversive Potentiality and Poetic License.” The chapter follows these projects of decentering Shaka since the late 1980’s and how they run counter to the state’s promotion of Shaka and the Zulu kingdom through heritage and tourism. I discuss the Mfecane debates of the late 1980’s to mid-1990’s. I also trace the foundation of the uBumbano lwamaZwide and what its project is as well as its mobilization of notions of kinship through a commonly available idiom. I show some of the limitations of the use of this ‘traditional’ idiom of kinship by the uBumbano.

Chapter Three,“‘Praises do not die out’: Remembering Zwide kaLanga as the Father of the isiZwe,” analyzes how Zwide as the putative father of the Ndwandwe ‘nation’ is being recalled in what is deemed to be the appropriate form of memorialization, his *izibongo*. So, I ask, what versions of Zwide’s *izibongo* are still extant and how have they come about if Zwide has been forgotten as bemoaned by most Ndwandwe people I’ve interviewed, both inside and outside the uBumbano? In the final chapter, “Being an isiZwe: Ndwandwe iHubo, iziThakazelo and iziBongo in Domestic and Public Spaces,” I show how the mobilization efforts of the uBumbano draw on the widespread use of *izithakazelo* in public as generic forms of greeting that constantly recall the ‘nation’ and on domestic ritual uses of the

izithakazelo, *izibongo* and *ihubo lesizwe*. I argue that it is also the use of these forms that primes the responses to Zwide's *izibongo* discussed in the previous chapter.

In the Conclusion I signal what my study brings into view about changing identities in South Africa. I argue for the need to pay attention to the languages and categories people deploy in living their lives in order for us to move away from old categories like "Zulu" that obscure more than they illuminate what needs thinking through in post-apartheid South Africa. Paying attention to these languages and forms also shows us how people are dealing with the past in radical symbolic ways that are articulated in metaphorical terms in order to not disturb in obvious ways the social and power structures carried over from the past that are being promoted by the state. I have given all my interviewees pseudonyms in order to protect their identities in the face of warnings to some of the leaders of the uBumbano that by 'attempting to revive the Ndwandwe kingdom' they are putting their lives in danger.

Chapter One
Encountering Shaka: Oral Artistic Forms and Navigating Zuluness in KwaZulu-Natal

UShaka kashayeki kanjengamanzi.
Ilemb' eleq' amany' amalembe ngokukhalipha
UShaka ngiyesaba ukuthi uShaka...

He who beats but is not beaten, unlike water,
Axe that surpasses other axes in sharpness;
Shaka, I fear to say he is Shaka…

Trevor Cope, *Izibongo: Zulu Oral Literature* (1968: 88, 89)

"The Zulu nation is still standing. We are the legacy of King Shaka kaSenzangakhona who birthed this nation through battle, sacrifice and vision."
Mangosuthu Buthelezi; Shaka commemoration, KwaDukuza
September 25, 2010

Friday, November 12, 2010

My flight lands at King Shaka International Airport in Durban. Completed just in time for the 2010 Soccer World Cup, the airport is another one of those slick, efficient modern ones. Passengers tumble out of the airplane and are out and on their way in no time. The throngs of tourists who came for the World Cup are gone now. But, as always, the advertising on the walls bids you, the traveler, "Welcome to the Zulu Kingdom" – foreign tourist, Johannesburg business person, returning native of this province, or whoever you may be. I almost don't notice it this time, the third time I've landed at this airport. I know I am going to encounter this stamp of approval by the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority over and over again for the next few days at establishments endorsed by the Authority – the guest house where I'll be staying, restaurants, curio shops, etc. I notice it only when I want to nowadays.

When I drive out of the airport I am greeted by the face of Zweli Mkhize, the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, welcoming me to the iDube Tradeport. He is premier by virtue of also being the provincial chairperson of the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC). I wonder: is this "iDube" a play on both the name of John Langalibalele Dube, one of the early leaders of the ANC who lived not far from La Mercy where the airport is, and on the zebra,

idube in the Zulu language? The possibility that this is a convergence of the animals and Shaka with ANC history is a tantalizing prospect to contemplate. It points to much I am trying to understand.

On the drive north to Mbazwana where the Ndwandwe event I am in the province to attend is taking place I tune into Gagasi 99.5FM, the Durban-based provincial radio station, to hear what's topical in this province. A young clothes designer is asked how she uses her designs to showcase her Zuluness. She stutters and stumbles over words, not knowing how to fit into the straitjacket that has just been shoved at her. I gasp.

Just before midday I am in my sister's colleague's car in eSikhaleni (renamed from eSikhawini in the reclamation of 'authentic' names distorted under white rule going on in the country since the 1990's). On Ukhozi FM two young poets read their bad poetry in a feature that encourages writers to go back to their roots and write in their Zulu language. According to the man who runs the writers' group that is grooming these poets, the goal is to encourage the larger public to go back to their roots as Zulu people – speak their language, value their heritage and the like. Later, the spokesperson of the commuter wing of Transnet, the national train company, comes on to announce the state of their service this afternoon. As usual, he greets the listeners quoting from Shaka's *izibongo* as "*nina belemb' eleq' amany' amalembe ngokukhalipha*" (you people of the axe that surpasses other axes in sharpness**)**. When he finishes talking about Johannesburg he shifts to KwaZulu-Natal by saying, "*Uma siza kwelikaBhejane phum' esiqiwini kade bekuvalele; elikaMdlokombhan' odl' abakayise, mdlokombane vuk' udla amadoda …*" (when we come to [the land] of 'rhino come out of the game reserve, they have long held you captive'; that of Mdlokombane who eats those of his father, Mdlokombane wake up and eat men...**)**. So, he is talking to Shaka's people and KwaZulu-Natal is Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu's land? He quotes from the Shaka's *izibongo* to

greet all the listeners and turns to speaking about KwaZulu-Natal by identifying the province as territory belonging to Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, the current Zulu king.

At 6pm the Zulu king himself is on Ukhozi FM in an hour-long interview (or, more accurately, a series of monologues into which the interviewer manages to insert a few futile questions and many a royal salute of 'Bayede'). His *imbongi*, Buzetsheni Mdletshe, introduces him in the customary way – with the king's royal salute and his *izibongo*:

> Imbongi: Wena wendlovu!
> Host of the show: Wena wendlovu!
> Imbongi: Bayede
> Host: Bayede

This salute is followed by a few lines of *izibongo*.

In the interview the king talks about issues of health, economics and traditional leadership. He has revived circumcision, which Shaka had stopped, in order to help fight the scourge of AIDS. He wants his people to also take tuberculosis and cancer seriously. On economics: his friends from Abu Dhabi want to invest in agriculture. He has instructed all the chiefs to set aside 100 acres of land to develop commercial farming in their communities. His funding body, the Ingonyama Trust, will put up money for that land to be fenced in. The complete lack of self-irony is striking when he talks about going to London to open the King Shaka restaurant[7] and the existence of the Bayede range of wines and boutique restaurant in Stellenbosch in which he has a stake of a "small percentage". In the same breath he exhorts those he refers to using words that translate as "my people" and "my father's people" to return to subsistence farming to keep hunger at bay. Throughout the interview he implies that KwaZulu-Natal is his kingdom and its inhabitants his subjects. He even names the harbor at Richard's Bay "*ichweba lami*" ("my harbor"). On traditional leadership: he is pleased and

[7] From images of the interior of the restaurant, its decor appears to trade on the age-old stereotypes of ferocious bare-chested Zulu warriors: www.shaka-zulu.com. Accessed January 20, 2012.

grateful that the provincial government passed legislation in 2005 authorizing him to appoint *amakhosi* (chiefs or traditional leaders). There are now over 280 *amakhosi* in KZN.

I listen to this interview sitting in a car outside the *inkantolo* (court) in the Mabaso area just north of Mbazwana. Mabaso is ruled by *inkosi* Nyangayezizwe Justice Nxumalo who is hosting the Ndwandwe event the next day. In a room in the court precinct, *inkosi* Justice is entertaining delegations of Ndwandwe notables from Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Gaza province in Mozambique. The chiefs were in the Nongoma area since Wednesday to *khuleka* (pay their respects) to the Zulu king. They got to Mbazwana this afternoon. Here in this far-flung corner of the province the Ndwandwe are poised to launch their major public recall of their pre-Zulu pasts and assert Zwide as the putative ancestor of all of them. Zwide the putative ancestor? Zwide whose invading forces were defeated by the Zulu, precipitating the end of Zwide's kingdom in the Magudu-Nongoma region! The interplay of all these elements is just too provocative not to make much of.

The next morning I listen to 'uTalagu' on uKhozi FM. Khathide 'Tshath' ugodo' Ngobe and Ngizwe Mchunu intersperse *maskanda* music with calling out their own *izibongo* and, most prominently, Shaka's. Every year they ratchet up by several notches their promotion of Shaka, Zwelithini and Zuluness in the lead up to Shaka commemorations on Heritage Day (24 September).

* * *

When Inkatha raised its marshalling of Shaka and Zuluness to a fevered pitch in the late 1980's and early 1990's in order to compete with ANC-aligned forces and eventually to make itself a key player in the transition to democracy, it set in motion the amplification of Zulu ethnic or 'tribal' identity and of Shaka as the founding father of modern Zuluness like never before. International journalists swallowed whole Inkatha's claims that it was mobilizing the

mighty Zulu nation of Shaka. These journalists interpreted the internecine warfare that engulfed parts of Natal, KwaZulu and the Witwatersrand as the expression of a timeless Zulu warrior spirit.[8] Even in South Africa, Carolyn Hamilton has shown in *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka and the Limits of Historical Invention*, newspaper headlines on billboards screamed about the rise of Shaka's spirit (Hamilton 3). The violence is gone now and so is the marshalling of Zulu identity to pursue politics by violent means. Apartheid is also gone with its drumming up of tribal identities which enabled Inkatha's project of Zulu nationalism, especially when Inkatha led the homeland of KwaZulu from the 1970's. But Shaka is still with us and so is Zuluness. One of the main players in the mobilization of martial Zuluness and mighty Shaka in the past, leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party Mangosuthu Buthelezi, continues to invoke Shaka and Zuluness, but the fall of his political fortunes and the takeover of Zulu symbols by his political rivals in the ANC make his invocations ring empty nowadays. As demonstrated by the anecdote above, Shaka and Zuluness are now being resonantly promoted by the heritage (largely state-driven) and tourism (largely private, but with extensive state involvement) industries as the primary heritage of KwaZulu-Natal in whom all people defined as Zulu are enjoined to take pride and on which tourists will spend money. They are being invoked by entertainers and radio announcers. An extensive set of political and cultural processes has brought the province and the country to this point.

In contrast to the Zuluness promoted by the state and business, many people are now asking themselves what Zuluness means to them. Different modes and processes of dealing with the past in post-apartheid South Africa have opened the path to this questioning of Zulu identity in KwaZulu-Natal and elsewhere. Among other modes and processes has been the Truth and Reconciliation's attempt to work through the trauma of colonialism and apartheid. In the same period, another initiative was the Africanization of the state through the African

[8] See Jabulani Sithole. "Preface: Zuluness in South Africa: From 'Struggle' Debate to Democratic Transformation." *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present.* Eds. Benedict Carton, John Laband, and Jabulani Sithole.University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009. xiv. Print.

Renaissance promoted most conspicuously by Thabo Mbeki when he was deputy president and, later, president of South Africa.[9] The main thrust of this Renaissance has been the promotion of a return to some version of African cultural practice and modes of social organization and government from before the advent of settler rule. This project has seen convulsive attempts at restoring land and chieftainship to people whose forebears were stripped of these under colonial authority, apartheid rule and its homeland surrogates. To overturn negative stereotypes of Africans of the period of colonial contact and oppressive white minority rule, heritage has been promoted as the form of history-making by which to work through the past. As Ciraj Rassool notes in "The Rise of Heritage and the Construction of History in South Africa," heritage has been the arena in which have been generated, centered and reproduced the heroes through whom the myth of the post-apartheid nation is being narrated (Rassool 1). Shaka kaSenzangakhona has been raised to being one of these national heroes as demonstrated by Mbeki's speech and the inclusion of the Shaka commemoration on the heritage month calendar of the national Department of Arts and Culture.[10] In KwaZulu-Natal, he and Zuluness have been endlessly promoted as the heritage of the province and its most important contribution to the pool of national heroes.

As Jabulani Sithole acknowledges in his preface to *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu, Past and Present*, these modes and processes of dealing with the past have opened spaces to attempt to (re)construct a variety of identities and social formations that are imagined to have obtained in the past before they were disrupted by European incursion. The formations being (re)discovered include patterns of settlement as 'communities' and forms of leadership. Yet while the focus of the state's efforts is on remaking the nation's past through heritage, and restoring the dignity of Africans through returning land and reinstalling people as 'traditional' leaders where their forebears were removed under British colonialism or apartheid authority

[9] See Mbeki's 1998 African Renaissance Statement: http://www.dfa.gov.za/docs/speeches/1998/mbek0813.htm. Accessed January 12, 2012.
[10] See www.dac.gov.za, especially the calendar for 2010. Accessed January 12, 2012.

and its surrogates, these efforts have backward cut-off dates that disallow materially benefiting from engagement with longer pasts. Land claims are entertained if they pertain to territory alienated after the passing of the Natives Land Act of 1913, and the Commission on Traditional Leadership Claims and Disputes (colloquially called the Nhlapho Commission) is tasked with mediating claims and disputes arising out of the reorganization of chieftainship after 1927.[11] Yet, people are pushing beyond these limits imposed by the state's grand narrative of the nation's past within which its restoration projects are being pursued.

In KwaZulu-Natal, as in other parts of South Africa, the question many are asking that pushes beyond the state's limitation of what pasts it mediates is, "Who am I?" In some cases in spite of, in others because of the centrality of Zuluness, Shaka and current Zulu royalty, many are trying to navigate their way around the pillars of their received Zulu heritage in order to ask questions about what Zuluness and its perpetuation mean and what they obscure about their personal pasts. To engage with this question, many are turning to collective identities that predate Zuluness. Over the last few years, groups of Mkhize, Ntuli, Gwala, Mbatha, Qwabe, Khumalo, Buthelezi and others have been convening virtually via platforms like Facebook and/or in face-to-face gatherings where they probe who they collectively are and were historically.[12] The uBumbano lwamaZwide is attempting to mobilize and periodically convene people of Ndwandwe descent. Unlike 'communities' that have been put forward as the unit through which to lay claim to the state's developmental resources or to attempt to claim chieftainship and/or land in order to enter the heritage and tourism markets, the group has different starting points and motives. While the motives remain unclear, varying from person to person that one asks, the common starting point is a deep sense of

[11] The Restitution of Land Rights Act No. 22 of 1994 entitles claimants to seek the return of land that was alienated after June 19, 1913. In terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 42 of 2003, the Nhlapho Commission makes determinations on chieftainship as it was constituted on September 1, 1927.

[12] See coverage of the events of some of these groups by Ancestral Stories, an initiative of the Archival Platform that I co-ordinate: http://www.archivalplatform.org/blog/list/category/ancestral_stories/.

historical injury that needs to be remedied today. The association's mobilization of Ndwandwe descendants makes an appeal to the Ndwandwe kingdom that obtained before it was destroyed by the expanding Zulu kingdom under Shaka in the 1820's. After years of self-initiated mobilization of Ndwandwe people by activists passionate about establishing a coherent and fuller sense of their Ndwandwe identities, the uBumbano came into being in 2006.

In 2010 the uBumbano turned to the language of heritage to publicize and define what it is doing following difficulties arising from being perceived as reviving a Ndwandwe kingdom to challenge the Zulu king and his kingdom on the basis of the defeat of the Ndwandwe in the 1820's. The association's leaders called the first annual commemoration of the Ndwandwe past the Zwide Heritage Celebration. They thus named the celebration of their heritage in a similar way to how the annual national Heritage Day as part of which Shaka is commemorated is named. What is more, they put Zwide, the putative father of the Ndwandwe, upfront in their mythology as the figure through whom to mediate Ndwandwe historical selfhood almost 200 years after his ousting from his territory by Shaka's forces. As this dissertation will make clear, Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* still remember this territory as the group's historical home and Zwide as the putative father of the Ndwandwe 'nation.' Hence Zwide is being mobilized as the symbol of Ndwandwe identity in the way that Shaka has come to symbolize Zuluness.

The tactic of calling the annual event a heritage day is a delicate but deft political move. As I discuss in the next chapter, this tactic allows the association to position what it is doing as a response to the state's encouragement of people to (re)discover and take pride in their pasts as precisely what is being promoted by the state, that is, relatively trivial heritage. Positioning the event in this way allows the uBumbano to avoid appearing to be calling into question the legitimacy of Zulu rule over the Ndwandwe who settled under Zulu authority

after the Ndwandwe defeat by pointing to Shaka's conquests as illegitimate through calling up pre-Zulu pasts. After all, today's Zulu monarchy, which is constitutionally entrenched, relies for its popular legitimacy in large measure on Shaka as the founder of the 'Zulu nation.' At the same time, the state's legitimacy in KwaZulu-Natal rests on supporting and protecting the monarchy as the foremost symbol of the Zulu identity that is still accepted by the majority of the citizens of the province. For these reasons, Shaka and his successors, the monarchy as it stands today, and a variety of other symbols of Zuluness continue to be promoted as the heritage of the province today. This promotion is such that anyone attempting to understand her/his identity historically must either directly confront or navigate her/his way around what Zuluness and Shaka mean. Such engagement of Zuluness must be undertaken with care because of the investment of powerful forces in the society in maintaining Zulu identity.

To begin to understand the interplay between the promotion of Shaka and the new ways this promotion is being contested, this chapter asks three questions about the place at which the Shaka phenomenon intersects with the current amplification of Zwide. First, how have Shaka and Zuluness come to be so centrally situated in conceptions of KwaZulu-Natal as the essential heritage and identity of the province such that they unavoidably must be worked through by people trying to understand their pasts? Second, what is the place of oral art, particularly Shaka's now-ubiquitous *izibongo*, in this centering of Shaka, especially since the 1970's? Finally, how do these *izibongo* represent the Ndwandwe?

Making KwaZulu-Natal Zulu since the 1820's

Every moment in South African history since the 1820's has had its own Shakas and Zulus. Images of Shaka and the Zulu have been repeatedly produced for cultural, political and academic use since Shaka's lifetime: from those produced by his *izibongo* and in the conversations of his contemporaries during his life through the amplifications, distortions, renovations and critiques that have followed. In "Reconstituting Shaka Zulu for the Twenty-

First Century," John Wright offers a comprehensive but succinct genealogy of portrayals of Shaka that has made him available as a "historical symbol… with such potency and with a powerful and insistent contemporary presence" according to Hamilton in *Terrific Majesty* (Hamilton 3). Essentially, Wright demonstrates,

> From the 1820s to the 1990s, images of Shaka were a product of what can be characterised as colonial-type conflicts, in which white people in southern Africa and Europe sought to establish political, economic and cultural domination over the indigenous black people, and in which black people sought first to resist and subsequently to throw off white domination… In important senses this era of conflict came to an end in South Africa with the establishment of its first democratically elected government in 1994. The upshot was the startlingly rapid depoliticisation of the process in which images of Shaka were made, and the rendering of the figure of Shaka the Mighty as increasingly an anachronism in the New South Africa. Hollowed-out versions of this figure lived on in appropriations of it made by interests in business and in the heritage industry, but it was clear within a few years that its long-established power as a political metaphor was rapidly on the wane. (Wright 140)

Wright identifies four phases in the period from the 1820's to the 1990's as the different political contexts in which images of Shaka were produced. The first of these phases was before the late 1870's when there was still a number of black societies in southern Africa that were independent of white rule. The second phase, from the late 1870's to the early twentieth century, saw the subjugation of black societies by European imperial and local settler interests. Lasting from the early twentieth century to the 1950's, the third phase was a period of no serious challenge to white settler domination. Finally, the late 1950's onward saw more militant African nationalism and decolonization (140). The discourses of each of these phases have their own dominant Shakas, as Wright goes on to demonstrate.

In the first place, early Cape colonial records contain reports of Shaka, Zwide of the Ndwandwe and Mzilikazi (the Khumalo leader then still identified as Ndwandwe by settler writers) as powerful chiefs responsible for the wars and migrations that were destabilizing the interior of southern Africa. By the late 1820's Shaka had come to be credited with being the main reason for the instability. In the 1840's, the migration in the 1820's and 1830's of other

successful raiders and conquerors – Mzilikazi, Sebetwane of the Kololo, Zwangendaba of the Ngoni and Soshangane of the Gaza – further north into southern Africa, focused attention on Shaka as the motor for the upheavals in the 1820's. Some in Cape and Natal settler societies and in Britain saw him as 'a bloodthirsty despot, a tyrannical Attila' after descriptions by the first adventurers to reach the Zulu kingdom, such as Nathaniel Isaacs. Others were more sympathetic, seeing him as a Napoleon-like figure who was a model of the establishment of order even though he was dictatorial (Wright 141-2).

The images of Shaka among black populations in this phase can be divided into two: on one hand, in the Zulu kingdom he increasingly came to be remembered as a powerful ruler and conqueror as anxiety grew about white expansion. The growth of anxiety followed the incursion of Boers from the Cape in the late 1830's and early 1840's. On the other hand, Wright speculates, it is most likely that in colonial Natal Africans were ambivalent about Shaka, seeing him as the destroyer of the old order when people lived in their own independent chiefdoms.[13] The inhabitants of this region are likely to only have started taking a more positive view of Shaka in the 1870's and 1880's as colonial rule bore down more and more heavily on them (142).

In *Terrific Majesty*, Hamilton offers a useful glimpse into one of the early revisions of Shaka's image not long after his death. Dingane, one of Shaka's assassins and successor, suppressed anyone who expressed regret at the murder of Shaka in 1828 and the usurpation of his position, which forced some of Shaka's supporters to leave the Zulu kingdom. Moreover, Dingane underpinned his onslaught with an ideological campaign:

> His campaign entailed maligning in the popular "media" of the time (songs, praises, etc.) his predecessor as an illegitimate tyrant, and the justification of his role in the death of Shaka.… Dingane called himself "Malumulela" (the Intervener) 'because he had intervened between the people and the madness of Tshaka'…. Dingane appropriated for himself one of Shaka's most powerful and threatening praises, 'The

[13] In Shaka's day, the chiefdoms south of the Thukela River were exploited for tribute but never integrated into the Zulu kingdom (Wright and Hamilton 3-23).

> bird which devours all others,' and killed off one of Shaka's chief propagandists, the royal *imbongi* (praise singer), Mxhamama. (Hamilton 55-56)

However, it was not long before the ideological struggle took another turn. After the civil war that ensued in 1839 when another of Shaka's brothers and assassins, Mpande, led a secessionist move that aligned itself with the Boers in a successful war against Dingane, he shored up his position by revamping the image of Shaka. Hamilton maintains, "Mpande, as was to be expected, proclaimed Shaka's legitimacy in the strongest terms, and basked in his reflected glory. He was praised with the actions of Shaka, even where such actions were not incorporated into Shaka's own praises… In a pattern that continues into the present, the image of the first Zulu king began to rise and wane in response to that of the second" (Hamilton 57).

When we turn to Wright again, we further learn that the Shaka stereotype that had been building up since the 1840's finally solidified in the second phase of Wright's periodization, from the 1880's to the 1920's. The victory of Zulu over British forces at the battle of iSandlwana in the early stages of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 set in circulation a world-wide reputation of the Zulu as warlike, this warlikeness being traced back to Shaka. And as the last black societies in southern Africa were being brought under white control, so were writers of popular histories and fiction such as George Theal and Henry Ridder Haggard entrenching this stereotype of the Zulu and Shaka. Theal's sweeping representation of southern Africa was later taken up in the early twentieth century by various authors, all either colonial officials or missionaries, who were 'experts' on more localized areas. Drawing from black informants and from existing literature, A.T. Bryant's *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* (1929) was a key text in cementing a view of Shaka's depredations (Wright 143).

Wright further states that in rural black communities memories of the period of Shaka's rule were dying out, some of the last being collected by James Stuart between 1897 and 1922 and finding their way into works like Magema Fuze's *Abantu Abamnyama Lapa*

Bavela Ngakona (1922). The dying out of such memories led to a narrowing of views on Shaka, stereotypes of Shaka the Mighty becoming more generally normative. In the third phase, Wright demonstrates, there was a similar narrowing of views among black intellectuals writing in the 1940's and 1950's. At this point nationalist resistance against white domination was on the rise as it became clearer that racial segregation was going to be strictly enforced. Shaka was increasingly recast as an African hero (144).

In the final phase of Wright's schema, the era of decolonization, academic discourses revamped the previous stereotype of Shaka the bloody tyrant and began describing him as 'a great statesman' (Wright 145). It was in this period that Shaka's conquests were viewed as part of the processes of 'state formation' and 'nation building' and the term *mfecane*, which from the 1980's would come to be the focus of intense debate, was adopted in the historiography. Over the next two decades from the late 1970's, the making of images of Shaka in academic and public discourses came under critical scrutiny, eventually yielding works such as *The Mfecane Aftermath: Reconstructive Debates in History* (1995) edited by Hamilton, Hamilton's own *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka and the Limits of Historical Invention* (1998), and Dan Wylie's *Savage Delight: White Myths of Shaka* (2000) and *Myth of Iron: Shaka in History* (2006).

In contrast to the revision of representations of the southern African past and of Shaka conducted in academic discourses, black writers have continued to produce views on Shaka that are informed by the early twentieth century literature of liberal writers like Bryant and Stuart. Wright cites C. L. S. Nyembezi's *Izibongo Zamakhosi*, Inkatha supporter Jordan Ngubane, and anti-apartheid campaigners Mazisi Kunene and Thando Zuma (147). To this list I would add, among others, C. T. Msimang's work since the 1970's and more recent works by R. S. Khumalo and S. T. Zimu.

‘Raising the pitch’: Inkatha and Academic Shakas – 1970’s-1990’s

Regarding the intervention of Inkatha, Wrights states, “The generation of new ideas about Shaka by academics, and the reproduction of stereotypes by African nationalist writers, were almost entirely overshadowed in the 1980’s and early 1990’s by another development: the raising of Shaka to an unprecedented pitch of Mightiness in the ideologies of a new Zulu nationalism” (Wright 148). Wright goes on to outline the emergence of Zulu nationalism: it began in the 1950’s and 1960’s, leading to an alliance of “Zulu chiefs, Zulu petty traders, and Zulu bureaucrats, under the leadership of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi” being in control of what became the bantustan of KwaZulu. For the next two decades, Buthelezi would peddle a brand of increasingly chauvinistic and militant politics in which his central claims were to be the bearer of the mantle of Shaka, to be seeing to its end Shaka’s nation-building project that was cut short when Shaka was assassinated, and to be the legitimate representative of all Zulu people in the fight against apartheid in the place of the outlawed ANC.

In “Nationalism without a Nation: the rise and fall of Zulu nationalism in South Africa’s transition to democracy, 1975-99,” political scientist Laurence Piper persuasively demonstrates that Inkatha’s brand of ethnic nationalism resulted from the party’s political strategies that evolved as a result of competition with the ANC and its allies, and that Inkatha never enjoyed widespread support among Zulu speakers (Piper 73-94). Piper builds on commonly known leftist accounts of Inkatha’s manipulation of Zuluness from the late 1980’s and early 1990’s to account for Inkatha’s activities as “a unique attempt at resistance politics which explains the turn to Zuluness as a second-choice strategy driven by competition and conflict with a rival” (75).[14] He locates Inkatha’s turn to nationalism in the failure of Buthelezi’s attempt to advance “an anti-apartheid politics within the boundaries of government’s tolerance” in the early 1970’s (Piper 78). In Piper’s interpretation, Buthelezi

[14] See Gerhard Mare and Georgina Hamilton. *An Appetite for Power: Buthelezi's Inkatha and South Africa.* Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1987. Print, and Mzala. *Gatsha Buthelezi: Chief with a Double Agenda.* London: Zed Books, 1988. Print.

was attempting to work within the apartheid homeland system to oppose apartheid. The homelands had been conceptualized to territorialize racial segregation. Drawing on the work of Mahmood Mamdani on the 'bifurcation' of the state between direct and indirect rule in colonial and postcolonial Africa, Piper explains bantustans as'self-governing territories' comprising 13 per cent of the total land area of South Africa in which the (black) population was governed by 'traditional' authorities under 'customary law.' The other 87 per cent of the land mass of the country – urban areas and white-owned farmland – was defined as 'white South Africa' where people were governed by democratic institutions and European law, but where only white people were permitted citizenship (77).

From 1959, under National Party leader and Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd, 'homelands' were conceptualized as nation-states with power devolved at three levels: first, a local and, second, a regional level where chiefs ruled, and a third level that had a legislative assembly, government and administration (77). The establishment of the Zululand Territorial Authority in 1970, which was replaced by the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly in 1972, saw Buthelezi push himself to the forefront of political leadership as a conservative nationalist after he had out-competed 'monarchists' who were close to the Zulu king, Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu.[15] Buthelezi's attempts to oppose apartheid from within the system failed because of the unresponsiveness of the other bantustan leaders to his project and the intractability of the state. His attempts at opposing apartheid from within the system having failed, Buthelezi launched Inkatha in 1975 in order to seek popular support for his project, according to Piper. The organization was positioned as a Zulu cultural movement endorsed by the leadership of KwaZulu and open only to Zulu people, drawing its name from the proto-Zulu nationalist organization of the 1920's.[16] At the same time as being this Zulu movement

[15] Zwelithini was installed as Zulu king in 1971.
[16] The 1920's Inkatha was a coalescence of Zulu-speaking intellectuals, politicians and land owners who collaborated with the Zulu royal house to attempt to construct a vehicle for representing the interests of the black petit bourgeoisie in Natal and Zululand. See Shula Marks. *The Ambiguities of Dependence in South*

that was allowable within apartheid ethnic segregationist logic, “Inkatha was also a political project that was critical of apartheid during a highly repressive era when there was little by way of large-scale militant resistance politics inside South Africa” (78). It embraced the ANC’s colors and was formed with the tacit support of ANC leaders in prison and in exile outside South Africa (78). It was thus an organization with a hybrid identity, embracing a third way between acquiescence in apartheid and open militant resistance.

Piper goes on to show how, over the next two decades, Inkatha would constantly shuttle back and forth between two positions: “when Inkatha fared well it emphasized its national ambition, anti-apartheid politics and black credentials but when it fared poorly it defended its provincial orientation, its participation in KwaZulu and its Zulu credentials” (78). It also moved between characterizing the ANC as an ally and the apartheid government as an enemy, and portraying the ANC as a greater threat. 1979 saw a marked break between Inkatha and the ANC at a meeting of the leadership of the two organizations in London. This rupture precipitated the beginnings of a showdown between supporters of the two organizations that grew increasingly violent as the 1980’s wore on. The showdown culminated in the country’s being on a knife-edge just days before the first democratic elections in 1994. Inkatha in 1994, in a fevered ethnic chauvinist pitch, threatened to mobilize the ‘Zulu nation’ to violently resist incorporation into the new South Africa. It only agreed to participate in the process at the eleventh hour and mayhem was narrowly avoided.

Inkatha had been relaunched in 1990 as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). From the same year onward, the confrontational tactics of Inkatha became more virulent, culminating in the near-disaster of 1994. Piper’s view is that between 1990 and 1994 Inkatha’s militant Zulu nationalism manifested itself in three phases. The first phase followed the unbanning of the ANC and other political organizations in 1990 when the ANC and the National Party (NP)

Africa: Class, Nationalism and the State in Twentieth-century Natal. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1986. Print, and Nicholas Cope. "The Zulu Petit Bourgeoisie and Zulu Nationalism in the 1920s: Origins of Inkatha." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 16.3 (September 1990): 431-51. Print.

evolved a consensus that an understanding between the elites of the two parties "would be a necessary and sufficient basis for progress" with negotiations toward a political settlement (82). The IFP saw itself as marginalized. It wanted to be recognized as a necessary partner.

The second phase ran from December 1991 through late 1993. In this period the ANC and the NP were defining the form the post-apartheid state would take. The IFP attempted to assert itself by constantly stalling the negotiations on procedural issues. It protested and boycotted negotiations forums. It augmented its elite's activities by mobilizing a popular 'Zulu' uprising, trying to demonstrate its power with 'rolling mass action.' This mass action involved marches during which 'traditional Zulu' weapons were borne. The marches often spiraled into vicious attacks on township dwellers – often defined as the antithesis of Zulu, that is, ANC and Xhosa – by hostel-dwellers who were predominantly migrant workers from rural areas of KwaZulu and Natal. Piper notes that it was during this time that the ANC in KwaZulu and Natal began to affirm Zuluness through rhetoric and public display (83). I discuss the struggle between the ANC and the IFP over Zulu symbols and symbolism in the following decade below.

The final phase of the IFP's brinkmanship was in the early months of 1994 when the latter mobilized in full force against the elections. The ANC determinedly stood its ground, pushing ahead with arrangements for the elections to take place on April 27, 1994. Violence escalated to the brink of a full-scale ethnically-based civil war. In the end the IFP had to choose between participating in the elections or boycotting them and going the route of a civil war (84). At the last minute, the IFP relented and the civil war was averted. After 1994, Zulu nationalism went into rapid decline. As Wright puts it,

> in the mid-1990s, in what must be one of the most remarkable acts in the history of the country's political theatre, [Shaka] virtually disappeared from the stage. Almost overnight, strident public invocations of the glorious Zulu past and the awesomeness of Shaka largely came to an end. Such public references as Zulu leaders made to him were now in a much more modulated register, and for the first time, if not very

> convincingly, notions of him as the Great Democrat and the Great Reconciler began to be put about. (Wright 150)

With the IFP taking part in the transition to democracy and winning control of the province of KwaZulu-Natal and with Buthelezi having forced his way to the centre of national politics, "Zulu nationalism quite suddenly lost most of its driving force" (150). Piper demonstrates how the decline of the IFP at the polls in the national elections of 1994 and 1999 and in the local government elections of 1996, gave the lie to its claims of being the exclusive representative of Zulu people. In Piper's summation, election results show that even at the zenith of its Zulu nationalist mobilization in 1994, Inkatha was supported by less than 50 per cent of Zulu speakers (Piper 87).[17]

Wright goes on to argue that with the waning of Zulu nationalism, processes of constructing KwaZulu-Natal's pasts were depoliticized and shifted to the genre of history known as 'heritage,' "understood as having to do with the uncritical celebration or commemoration of aspects of the past selected for their 'feel-good' features" (15). In the process of this shift "the making of the region's public history more and more came to be influenced by business interests," narrowing the focus of the making of this history "to produce the sort of marketable history-bites that tourists were prepared to spend money on" (15). Thus came about the springing up of 'Zulu cultural villages' in the 1990's,[18] the branding of KwaZulu-Natal as 'The Zulu Kingdom' and later, in 2004, the final Disneyfying of Shaka with the opening of the uShaka Marine World in Durban's harbor precinct (16). To this progression we can now add the King Senzangakhona Shopping Centre named after Shaka's father in Ulundi that opened in December 2008 and the King Shaka International

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[17] See also Kerri-Ann Hampton, The Decline of Nationalism as a Defining Feature of IFP Policy 1994-1997, MA, University of Natal, 1998, (Pietermaritzburg: Univerity of Natal) and Laurence Piper and Kerri-Ann Hampton. "The decline of 'militant Zulu nationalism': the sea-change in IFP politics after 1994." *Politikon* 85 (1998): 81-102. Print.

[18] On the rise of cultural villages, see Leslie Witz, Ciraj Rassool, and Gary Minkley. "Repackaging the Past for South African Tourism." *Daedalus* 130.1 (2001): 277-96. Print.

Airport. As Wright states, “the most important products of this kind [are] made up of carefully selected elements of ‘Zulu history’ and ‘Zulu traditional culture’ in which the figure of Shaka [is] an important feature” (15). Shaka has been remade as the Great Patron of money-making (17), even with the involvement of the Zulu king with his stake in Bayede wines and his approval of the Shaka Zulu restaurant. An important episode in the use of images of Shaka in the last two decades has been the ANC’s move to control the political uses of these images.

The Struggle over Zulu Cultural Symbols

The present promotion of Shaka as the heritage of the province is itself in part a result of the politics forced by Inkatha’s brinksmanship and trumpeting of Shaka and Zuluness in the transition to democracy. Intersecting with the political uses of Shaka and the Zulu by Inkatha and with the *mfecane* debates was a contest over Zulu cultural symbols between Inkatha and the ANC. There is general agreement that the invocation of Zuluness gradually retreated in public discourse and display in KwaZulu-Natal after 1994 as the IFP and the ANC settled into an uneasy accommodation with each other in the government of national unity.[19] However, it also has been shown that the control of symbols of Zuluness has been at the heart of the contest over political control of KwaZulu-Natal. Ineke van Kessel and Barbara Oomen have argued in “One Chief, One Vote: The Revival of Traditional Authorities in Post-Apartheid South Africa” that “[i]n order to contest Inkatha’s claim to the sole guardianship of Zulu tradition, the ANC in 1992 made a conscious decision to enter the political arena in Natal on Inkatha’s terms.” In order to do so, the ANC “…attempted to ‘out-Zulu’ its rival when paying

[19] See Laurence Piper. "Nationalism without a Nation: the rise and fall of Zulu nationalism in South Africa's transition to democracy, 1975-99." *Nations and Nationalism* 8.1 (2002): 84. Print, and John Wright. "Reconstituting Shaka Zulu for the Twenty-first Century." *Southern African Humanities* 18.2 (2006): 150-1. Print.

respect to Zulu traditions which included of course royalty and chieftaincy" (van Kessel and Oomen 570).

A core part of the increasing gains the ANC has made at the polls between 1994 and 2009 has been its ability to make inroads into the IFP's support base in rural areas. This has involved shaking loose the IFP's grip on the *amakhosi* (traditional leaders) and the Zulu king who are regarded, and regard themselves, as the custodians of Zulu tradition and custom.[20] By 1993 the ANC was cognizant of the need to wrest the control of Zulu cultural symbols from the IFP. Hence, according to Sandra Klopper in "'He is My King, but He is also My Child': Inkatha, the African National Congress and the Struggle for Control Over Zulu Cultural Symbols," the party organized the Sonke Festival on the 165th anniversary of Shaka kaSenzangakhona's death (Klopper 53-66). Moreover, ANC leaders such as Jeff Radebe began emphasizing their Zuluness by appearing at rallies addressed by Nelson Mandela and at fundraisers kitted out in 'Zulu' dress – a variety of furs, feathers and beaded tapestries (54-5).

One of the IFP's responses was to make a subtle shift in its rhetoric: from the end of 1993 Buthelezi and other IFP leaders began referring to the area as Kingdom of KwaZulu instead of just KwaZulu. As the form of the new state was being debated and new legislation being passed in the coming years, Inkatha continuously made a loud clamor about the recognition of the Zulu king and of the *amakhosi*. The recognition of the king was to affirm the IFP's claim of the correlation between the province and the Zulu kingdom. The clamor for the recognition of the *amakhosi* was an attempt to keep local government the preserve of neo-traditional hereditary male leaders in resistance to the introduction of elected councilors of

[20] Inkatha had been relying on the support of *amakhosi* from the mid-1980s: "The turn to Zulu rhetoric was partnered by a greater reliance on traditional leaders… but especially Buthelezi's erstwhile enemy, King Zwelithini" (Piper 84).

any gender.[21] Along with these claims went, among other activities, the continued celebration of Shaka kaSenzangakhona on Shaka Day (24 September) every year, and the hosting of the *uMkhosi woMhlanga* (Reed Dance Festival) in the new democratic dispensation under the political leadership of the IFP. The former had been introduced with Buthelezi's close involvement in 1954 and the latter in 1984 (Klopper 58, 56) in strategic moments of Zulu cultural revival. Before 1994, these events had been sponsored by the government of KwaZulu. While the IFP was in control of the province between 1994 and 2004, the events continued to be sponsored by the state, with IFP leaders being conspicuously at the forefront of the celebrations.

After 1994, one of the ANC's tactics to wrest Zulu symbols away from being monopolized by the IFP has been to recognize 24 September as a national holiday – Heritage Day – thus claiming Shaka kaSenzangakhona for the whole country (64). Celebrations are held in KwaDukuza where Shaka lies buried, but now under the auspices of the ANC-led provincial government since 2004, which sponsors the annual event. The state also funds the annual *uMkhosi woMhlanga*. ANC leaders such as Zweli Mkhize, chairperson of the ANC in KwaZulu-Natal and provincial premier; and ANC member of the provincial executive in charge of the Arts and Culture portfolio, Weziwe Thusi during the period of my research and until the KZN cabinet reshuffle of November 15, 2011,[22] share the platform with the Zulu king and Buthelezi. Buthelezi continues to feature in these events, no longer as the leader of the IFP, but as hereditary chief of the Buthelezi and *induna enkulu* to the Zulu king.[23]

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[21] See Barbara Oomen. *Tradition on the Move: Chiefs, Democracy and Change in Rural South Africa.* Amsterdam: Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa, 2000. Print, and Jo Beall, Sibongiseni Mkhize, and Shahid Vadwa. "Emergent Democracy and 'Resurgent' Tradition: Institutions, Chieftaincy and Transition in KwaZulu-Natal." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 31.4 (2005): 755-71. Print.

[22] On the cabinet reshuffle, see "Mkhize Reshuffles KZN Cabinet," November 15 2011, *News24*, <http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/Politics/Mkhize-reshuffles-KZN-Cabinet-20111115>. Accessed February 13, 2012.

[23] Buthelezi's position of 'traditional prime minister' came under threat in 1994 when King Goodwill Zwelithini repositioned himself, moving away from close identification with Buthelezi and Inkatha. There was high tension when Nelson Mandela wanted to attend that year's Shaka Day celebration. Buthelezi threatened that Mandela's safety could not be guaranteed, forcing Mandela eventually to abandon his plans. The king cancelled the

Another tactic has been to recognition of the *amakhosi*. Whereas ANC intellectuals such as Govan Mbeki in the 1950's and Jabulani 'Mzala' Nxumalo as late as 1988, had seen *ubukhosi* (chieftainship) as a backward institution that would be abolished once democracy had been achieved (van Kessel and Oomen 565), the emergence in 1987 of the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa (CONTRALESA) took the ANC by surprise and forced a change of stance (568). The position of chiefs in relation to the state and to liberation politics had undergone major changes in the preceding century, as traced by Ineke van Kessel and Barbara Oomen in "'One Chief, One Vote': The Revival of Traditional Authorities in Post-apartheid South Africa" (1997). Representing the concerns of the small urban black middle class, the early ANC had maintained a connection with the rural aristocracy. It created an Upper House for traditional leaders who joined the organization. However, the organization was radicalized by the growth of its working class membership during the acceleration of the industrialization process of South Africa in the 1940's and 1950's and by the coming into power of the National Party in 1948 (van Kessel and Oomen 562-3). From the 1950's onward, the apartheid government restructured rural society, making chiefs responsible for the recruitment of labor for the mines, commercial agriculture and industry; implementing land 'betterment' schemes, which involved culling livestock and land demarcation; as well as trying minor cases such as family disputes and disputes over livestock. These chiefs became accountable to the state and not their subjects, leading to despotism and deep unpopularity. Hereditary chiefs were deposed if they were resistant to state policies and new chiefs installed. New chiefdoms were also created in the move to re-tribalize Africans and chiefs imposed on communities that had previously had no institution of chieftainship (van Kessel and Oomen 563)

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celebration, but Buthelezi and Inkatha pressed ahead with the event without the king. The fallout that followed resulted in Buthelezi and his bodyguards storming a television studio in the middle of a live program to dispute the king's spokesperson's version of the fallout. For a discussion of these events, see Hamilton, *Terrific Majesty*, pp. 1-2.

In the 1980's, youths aligned to the United Democratic Front (UDF) revolted against the authority of these chiefs. From about 1950, the ANC had turned the focus of its mobilization to urban areas, no longer perceiving chiefs as potential allies by 1960 (564). By the time the youth revolted against them in the 1980's, for the most part chiefs in the bantustans had become functionaries of the state with little popular legitimacy. In the 1980's, many collaborated with the security forces of the state in trying to suppress the youth revolts, organizing vigilante groups armed by the South African Defense Force that fought bloody battles against members of civic organizations (567-8). CONTRALESA emerged out of this maelstrom as an alliance of progressive chiefs who were resisting the creation of a new bantustan for the Ndebele Ndzundza people in the then northern Transvaal, which falls under the Limpopo province today. The organization quickly aligned itself with liberation movements. The dilemma that followed about what the place of chiefs should be in the anti-apartheid alliance was resolved when the ANC shifted to focusing on a negotiated settlement as a military victory seemed less and less likely. Thus, "[w]ith the promise of delivering the 'block vote', chiefs assumed a new role: no longer relics of a feudal past, but strategic allies in the conquest of state power" (van Kessel and Oomen 571).

It took until 2004 for the state to define and legislate the place of traditional leaders in the democratic dispensation. By 1997 in KwaZulu-Natal traditional leaders still formed local government as the IFP unbendingly insisted that they do (van Kessel and Oomen 576). The ANC attempted to loosen Inkatha's grip on traditional leaders and their rural support by transferring the responsibility of paying the chiefs from the provincial to the national government in 1996. The IFP challenged this move in court and won (577). According to Jo Beall, Sibongiseni Mkhize and Shahid Vadwa in "Emergent Democracy and Resurgent Tradition: Institutions, Chieftaincy and Transition in KwaZulu-Natal," with the rushing through parliament of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (TLGFA)

ahead of the election in 2004, the state finally validated the role of amakhosi in local government. They would be leaders of 'traditional councils' in the rural areas of South Africa where they would work alongside elected representatives (Beall, Mkhize and Vadwa 763). Beall, Mkhize and Vadwa see the effect of this law as "…significantly entrench[ing] the authority of traditional leaders, and means, in effect, that legislation introduced in the 21st century will give perpetual life to a system of 'indirect rule' dating back to the colonial era and ossified under apartheid" (763). Alongside this Act, the Communal Land Rights Act no. 11 of 2004 gives these traditional leaders a central role in allocating land, "serving to enhance the power of traditional leaders to control property rights" (763).[24]

As far as the battle over Zulu symbols and institutions in KwaZulu-Natal goes, these laws finally tipped the balance of political power in favor of the ANC. The TLGFA was passed in the run-up to the election in 2004 in order to win the support of traditional leaders and thus a larger section of the vote for the ANC. The ANC went on to increase its gains over the IFP in the 2004 and 2009 provincial elections, continuing the steady rise of its support at the polls since 1994. In 1994, the IFP had won 50.3 per cent of the vote to the ANC's 32.2 per cent. In 1999 the IFP's support had declined to 40.45 per cent compared to the ANC's 39.78 per cent. By 2004, the ANC had advanced to the position of taking control of the province, winning 46.98 per cent of the vote compared to the IFP's 36.82 per cent. The IFP has gone into rapid decline since 2004, wrecked by internal succession disputes that have seen large numbers of members expelled, Buthelezi continuing to hold on to the presidency and a breakaway party, the National Freedom Party, being formed by former IFP national chairperson, Zanele kaMagwaza-Msibi in January 2011. The internal wrangling has seen a

[24] Sections of the law were declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court on May 10, 2010 because of the law's imposition of traditional councils on communities that had a different system of land tenure prior to colonialism. See Cousins, Ben. 'Key Provisions of the Communal Land Rights Act are Declared Unconstitutional. Where to Now?' <http://anothercountryside.wordpress.com/2009/11/10/key-provisions-of-the-communal-land-rights-act-are-declared-unconstitutional-where-to-now/>. Accessed February 21, 2012.

slide in the support of the party with the result that in the 2009 elections it only won 22.4 per cent of the votes to the ANC's 62.95.[25]

Yet even as the ANC has succeeded in wresting recourse to toned-down Zuluness and Shaka from the IFP, and has, as the leaders of the provincial arm of the state, been at the forefront of redeploying this Zuluness in heritage and tourism as part of the province's economic development policies, Buthelezi remains a canny player in the field. From time to time he grabs media headlines with his confrontations with the provincial leadership on matters Zulu. His statements as *indunankulu* (chief counselor) are always made ambiguous by his simultaneous position as president of the IFP. In 2005 he called an *imbizo* (public meeting) purportedly to speak about issues of concern to the 'Zulu nation.' When the king could not be drawn into attending the event, Buthelezi claimed in his speech at the event that the king had abandoned the 'nation'. A fallout ensued in which ANC leaders Jacob Zuma, then deputy president of South Africa, and Sbu Ndebele, then premier of the province, accused Buthelezi of claiming a monopoly on Zuluness and of blurring the line between the positions of the IFP and those of the 'Zulu nation'. Ndebele reminded Buthelezi that the IFP was in the minority in the province and that the population had voted against the positions Buthelezi was parading as those of Zulu people as a whole when the gathering was attended by between 4000 and 7000 people. Zuma pointed out that he was Zulu but did not attend the gathering, hence Buthelezi could not be speaking for all Zulu people.[26]

Again in June 2009, Buthelezi made headlines when he accused Zuma, who was by then president of the ANC and of South Africa, and the premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Zweli Mkhize, of plotting against him when he was ousted as chairperson of the KwaZulu-Natal

[25] For election results see the www.elections.org.za. Accessed April 1, 2011.
[26] See Sipho Khumalo and Moshoeshoe Monare, "Buthelezi imbizo a farce, says ANC," Independent Online May 25 2005, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/buthelezi-imbizo-a-farce-claims-anc-1.242095>. Accessed February 21, 2011.

House of Traditional Leaders.[27] He had decided not to stand for election when it was clear that his rival, Bhekisisa Bhengu, who was perceived to be in the ANC camp, had more support.[28] Buthelezi's loss of the chair of the KZN Provincial House of Traditional Leaders signaled the end of his control of symbols and institutions associated with Zuluness.

Oral Artistic Forms in Inkatha's Campaign and Beyond

As was suggested by Hamilton in the case of the revamp of Shaka in Dingane's and Mpande's reigns, a key component of the remaking of images of Shaka after his death has been Shaka's *izibongo*. Hamilton notes, "In the early 1970s the Zulu cultural organization, Inkatha, succeeded in getting September 24 proclaimed as "Shaka Day," and proceeded to make the figure of Shaka the centerpiece of an ideological campaign promoting Zulu nationalism" (1), which I have shown above. Shaka's *izibongo* were central to the promotion of Inkatha's brand of Zuluness. In Liz Gunner and Mafika Gwala's interpretation in *Musho!: Zulu Popular Praises*, "[t]he internecine warfare which has raged with varying degrees of intensity since 1983 has seen a struggle, particularly by conservative organisations such as Inkatha, to claim above all the royal *izibongo* precisely because they are so rich in historical associations and thus contain such easy recourse to the powerful symbolic figures of the Zulu kings" (Gunner and Gwala 11-12). Inkatha's version of Zuluness and its deployment of Shaka's *izibongo* to promote this version did not go unchallenged. Gunner and Gwala demonstrate some of the oppositional uses of Shaka's *izibongo* in trade union bodies such as the Federation of South African Trade Union and the Congress of South African Trade Unions movement in the 1980's (Gunner and Gwala 12). However, Inkatha's mobilization had sufficient traction and the organization commanded enough ideological and cultural power for its project to become central in the period of the accelerating struggle against

[27] Houses of Traditional Leaders were established by legislation in 1997 to appease chiefs clamoring for recognition. They exist in 6 of the 9 provinces.
[28] See http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Mkhize-Buthelezi-is-wrong-20090615.

apartheid in the late 1980's. Moreover, Inkatha's promotion of Zuluness and Shaka later necessitated the negotiation of the place of these symbols in democratic South Africa, which has yielded renovation and use of ethnicity for purposes of governance in ways that parallel the use of the same ethnicity under apartheid.

The deployment of Shaka's *izibongo* in this campaign was such that by 1998 Duncan Brown would write in *Voicing the Text*,

> To add to the difficulty of conservative tactics utilised in highly contested modern politics, the Zulu kingship was for many years encouraged by the apartheid state as supporting the retribalising policies of 'Bantu Education,' ironic testimony to which lies in the fact that many Zulu speakers in KwaZulu-Natal can recite the izibongo of Shaka from memory because they were taught them at school as a bulwark against the aspirations of modernising ideals. (Brown 31)

The ideological work the *izibongo* were deployed to do for Inkatha becomes clear in Brown's argument about how the *izibongo* manipulate the past in and for the present:

> Just as personal izibongo locate the events of an individual life within the happenings of the community, royal izibongo place public events in a larger frame of reference. Recording history is not the primary function of the izibongo of the chief, but is a vital part of the form's concern to maintain the chiefdom, establish the lineage of the ruler, and assess his conduct. The poem "Shaka" is especially concerned with history… since it seeks consciously to bolster national pride. In his poems the imbongi creates a sense of history as rhetorical presence without annulling what [Karin] Barber refers to as the "gravitational pull" of the past (1989, 20). History in izibongo is constantly re-evaluated and revised, yet the customary and memorial nature of the form prevents the imbongi from arbitrarily recasting past events or their significance. Barber's comments on Yoruba oriki may apply equally to Zulu izibongo: "They represent the 'past in the present,' the way the knowledge of the past makes itself felt stubbornly and often contradictorily today. They represent a way not just of looking at the past, but of re-experiencing it and reintegrating it into the present" (1989, 14). (Brown 28)

Many of the uBumbano activists have experienced the constant calling up of the past and its reintegration into the present in KwaZulu and Natal and continue to do so in today's KwaZulu-Natal. Most were exposed to the rhetoric of Inkatha in the 1970's, 1980's and 1990's and lived through the times described above. Indeed, even though they will not

discuss it, some of the people I have interviewed were supporters of Inkatha and were closely involved in violence when Inkatha pursued its Zulu nationalist politics. Some were part of the forces that fought against apartheid and against which Inkatha was at war in the late 1980's and early 1990's. Yet others were bystanders, caught in the middle and trying to live their lives as best they could in the midst of the violence. Today some are complicit in this perpetuation of Shaka and Zuluness as senior government officials and as politicians whose parties rely on upholding Zuluness and Shaka in competing with other political parties.

What is clear, nonetheless, is that for the Ndwandwe generally, the point made by Brown in the extract above held when Shaka was being promoted for Zulu nationalist purposes and it still holds today when he is cast as the essential heritage of KwaZulu-Natal. This promotion of Shaka and Zulu history has meant, and continues to mean, re-experiencing the past made present whenever Shaka's *izibongo* were performed. Many absorbed the promotion of a Zulu-centric past when they had to memorize and recite Shaka's *izibongo* in KwaZulu schools under Bantu Education that promoted 'tribal' consciousness. Whereas in contemporary moments the *izibongo* would not have been absorbed as such, in retrospect it appears that, among other things, Ndwandwe children in such school situations were absorbing the celebration of defeat of Zwide, the putative ancestor after whom they are addressed in the Ndwandwe *isithakazelo* (kinship group or clan) as 'Zwide.' They were being made to even mock Zwide in the words crafted by Shaka's *izimbongi* (praise poets) for being put to flight by Shaka, as I demonstrate below.

Sakhile 'Sikaza' Nxumalo is an example of someone who has been exposed to this promotion of Shaka and Zuluness at the expense of Zwide, his assumed ancestor. He is now confronting the meanings of Shaka and Zuluness. For him and other Ndwandwe people, there persists a pervasive sense of historical injury and injustice about the collapse of the Ndwandwe kingdom following the series of armed confrontations with the expanding Zulu I

described in the Introduction. On April 4, 2008, Sikaza, as he is commonly known, said in an interview:

> *Akaze babuye banikwe [abakwaNdwandwe] isiqephu [sezwe ukuthi basiphathe] ngoba kwakusentweni yabo, ngoba uma benganikwa isiqephu njena uzovuka lomlilo. Njoba beze babongw' uShaka kuthiwe "umxoshi womunt' amxoshele futhi nje" kwakusholwo khon' ukuthi uyobaxosha njal' abakwaNdwandwe ngoba uma babuye banikwe [izwe] nje kuyoba khon... uyovuk' umlilo. Nakhu nje namanje sesiyakhuluma ngeMfakuceba ukuthi ayinikwe phela indawo yayo.*(Buthelezi and Ndwandwe, interview, April 4, 2008)
>
> They [the people of kwaNdwandwe[29]] were never again given a piece of land [to rule over] because this was their land. Shaka is praised saying, "the pursuer of a person who chases him ceaselessly" it was meant that he will forever chase the abakwaNdwandwe because if they were ever given [land], there's a fire that would reignite. Even now we are talking about Mfakuceba [the home of the Mazwide Ndwandwe who is descended from Somaphunga, Zwide's son] that it should be given its own territory.

Sikaza quoted a line from Shaka's *izibongo* to make the point that the Ndwandwe have no status in the Zulu kingdom as it stands today. Significantly, he drew on Shaka's *izibongo* to underline his contention that it has been since the dispersal of the Ndwandwe by Shaka that no Ndwandwe person has ever been elevated to a position of any power in the Zulu kingdom. The line from Shaka's *izibongo* that came readily to his tongue to substantiate his claim about the suppression of the Ndwandwe under Zulu power is a fragment of a praise of Shaka for chasing Zwide, rendered in Trevor Cope's *Izibongo: Zulu Oral Literature* as follows:

> *Umxoshi womuntu amxoshele futhi;*
> *Ngimthand' exosh' uZwide ozalwa uLanga,*
> *Emthabatha lapha liphuma khona,*
> *Emsingisa lapha lishona khona;*
> *UZwide wampheq' amahlonjan' omabili.*
>
> Pursuer of a person and he pursues him unceasingly;
> I liked him when he pursued Zwide son of Langa,
> Taking him from where the sun rises
> And sending him to where it sets;
> As for Zwide, he folded his two little shoulders together. (100-4)

[29] I translate Sikaza's '*abakwaNdwandwe*' as 'the people of kwaNdwandwe' to keep in view the locative prefix 'kwa-'. This prefix suggests that the land belongs to a place called kwaNdwandwe, i.e. the place of the putative ancestor called Ndwandwe. I discuss this location of the Ndwandwe at greater length in Chapter 2.

Indeed Shaka's *izibongo* extensively celebrate his success over Zwide. When Zwide's kingdom collapsed, different fragments of the kingdom settled in different places, as I have discussed in the Introduction. The people who stayed in the former Ndwandwe territory and were absorbed into the Zulu kingdom were incorporated under the watchful eye of Shaka's appointees, which I discuss in chapter 2. However, Sikaza's statement about no Ndwandwe ever rising to prominence again is inaccurate. Sikaza seems unaware that Somaphunga kaZwide was elevated to the position of being a Ndwandwe *induna* (administrator) after his return to settle under Shaka. (Somaphunga had fled with Zwide when the Ndwandwe kingdom splintered after its defeat by the Zulu in 1820 and settled with Zwide where he rebuilt his kingdom somewhere near today's town of Baberton in Mpumalanga province, South Africa.)

Moreover, Sikaza did not acknowledge that Mankulumane kaSomaphunga had risen to a senior position in the Zulu kingdom and, after its defeat by the British in 1879, in the royal uSuthu section of the former kingdom. Mankulumane was *induna enkulu* (chief counselor) to Cetshwayo, Dinuzulu and Solomon in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For Sikaza, Shaka is still pursuing Zwide to this day. Ndwandwe memory of a heroic past attaches to Zwide. Zwide's defeat stands out as having chartered the diminution of status of the previously powerful Ndwandwe. One reason for this sense of the past that Sikaza and others bear may be that Shaka's largeness in the present overshadows the achievements of any Ndwandwe under the Zulu. Another potential reason may be that Sikaza is either downplaying these achievements or questioning their legitimacy precisely because they were under the Zulu in order to make a case for recalling the Ndwandwe as he imagines them to have been before the Zulu conquest. This latter suppression of Ndwandwe achievement may

be in order to sustain the claim about the Ndwandwe being an *isizwe* (‘nation’) in disarray today because of Shaka and Zulu power.

Andile Ndwandwe and I had gone to talk to Sikaza at his home in Siqokolweni village about Ndwandwe history and oral artistic forms. Siqokolweni lies about five miles from Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu’s Kheth’omthandayo residence looking up at the palace on top of Nhlophenkulu hill. A few days earlier, Sikaza had taken Andile and I to a plain covered with fallow fields a short walk from his home and his church. He had pointed out where, he says, once stood one of Zwide’s *imizi* (homesteads). Under a particular tree which serves as a traditional court presided over by the local *induna* (‘traditional’ administrator) whose family name is Zulu, he had regaled us with stories of his confrontations with the Zulu king’s local representative, about which more below.

Sikaza is the kind of person the uBumbano lwamaZwide is attempting to recruit to its project through amplifying the recall of Zwide that is already part of daily speech as Ndwandwe *izithakazelo*. Like many of the initiators of the different chapters of the association, about which Sikaza did not know when we visited him, he is motivated by a realization of the relative absence of Ndwandwe narratives from the public recall of the pasts of the formerly Ndwandwe area in which he lives. He is already mobilized, having been told stories by his grandfather who fought at iSandlwana in the Anglo-Zulu war of how Ndwandwe history was purposely suppressed in the Zulu kingdom (interview, April 4, 2008). He expressed anger at living under Zulu authority, courageously voicing a radical version of the views I had heard many others at activists’ meetings either hedging or stating outright and then containing the impact of their statements by casting them as jokes. What Sikaza said is seemingly what many feel but do not have the courage to say.

Some cannot express their grievances and desire to question Shaka and even rid themselves of Zulu identity because they do not know enough about the processes that made

them Zulu, but simply have an inkling from the little they know that they historically acquired this Zulu identity under duress. Others, like Sikaza, have inherited the stories and the pain of Ndwandwe defeat. They carry the pain and humiliation with them everyday. Some embrace their Zuluness and also want to bolster their Ndwandwe identity; others will not speak up too prominently because they do not know where their fellow Ndwandwe stand regarding Zuluness. All know that the Zulu royal house has sufficient power to crush anyone who questions the cementing of its position. Any revival of an alternative identity to Zuluness that does not situate this identity as secondary and quiescent to Zuluness questions the Zulu royal establishment's legitimacy. It is, therefore, a threat. It moves toward fragmenting the present Zulu kingdom, even if such a kingdom is largely a fiction with no empirical existence, and thus making redundant the position of the monarchy; hence the clinging on to Shaka and the mythology around him. The power, both symbolic and actual, of the Zulu royal establishment is such that any attempt to speak a different past to the Zulu-centric brand must proceed through circuitous routes, careful to navigate Zuluness with great subtlety. Such an effort cannot announce itself as challenging Zulu royal authority or the status of the royal establishment because such a move would be inflammatory and is likely to produce hostile reactions as we shall see shortly in the case of groups that submitted claims to the Commission on Traditional Leadership Claims and Disputes.

Sikaza can express his radical opinions because he is already marginal. Jabulani Sithole has noted that eleven out of the 705 applications received by the Nhlapho Commission by the end of June 2007 were from claimants in KwaZulu-Natal. Some of these claimants were using the provisions of the new legislation to claim to never have been subjects of Zulu kings. Among other motivations for these claims, some of the claimants had longstanding disputes with the homeland rulers dating back to the 1970's and 1980's. The official responses were swift and tough: "Goodwill Zwelithini publicly condemned the

submissions, dismissing them as mischievous challenges, not only to the authority of the Zulu king, but to the Zulu nation as a whole" (Sithole xv). In a show of force, he presided over gatherings in the vicinity of the territories of two of the claimants at which he vowed to deal with the alleged 'impostors.' Some of the claimants, including a certain Sakhile Shadrack Ndwandwe who had submitted a claim on behalf of the "amaNguni," were cowed into withdrawing their submissions. Moreover, both the IFP-dominated Provincial House of Traditional Leaders and the KwaZulu-Natal government threw their weight behind the Zulu king (Sithole xvi).

Unlike the *amakhosi* who were openly using the state's processes to raise themselves and getting media coverage in the process, or members of the uBumbano who have access to money, political power or the media, Sikaza can be ignored or silenced.[30] He is not important enough to take seriously and not a threat to the perpetuation of Zulu royal power and privilege. Yet, what Sikaza said is instructive because it put starkly the discontent that fuels the activities of groups like the uBumbano. He went on to say: "*Ababoni kodwa abantu ukuthi singamakhos' impel' uqobo lwawo! Imizi yethu thina, imizi yenkosi yakhiwe izinkantolo. Muphi nje owakwaZulu nje eyoShaka, ngaphandle kweStanger nje esesinedolobha?*" (People don't see that we are real kings! Our homes, the homes of our king are made up of magistrates' courts. Where are those of the Zulu, of Shaka, except in Stanger where there is now a town?) Significantly, Sikaza takes the existence of magistrates' courts on sites where Zwide's *imizi* (homesteads) once stood, a colonial creation from the 1890's onward, to symbolize the historical importance of the Ndwandwe in comparison to the Zulu. For him, the Zulu only have the insignificant town of Stanger (or KwaDukuza as it was renamed in 2006 after Shaka's capital). Courts, according to Sikaza's logic here, are the

[30] Melizwe Dlamini's ongoing fight to be recognized as king on the same level as Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu has received extensive media coverage. Dlamini is a wealthy business owner who has access to a range of media. See, for instance, the website of Dlamini's Nhlangwini (http://www.nhlangwinikingdom.co.za/hismajesty.htm) and coverage of his claim: http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/zwelithini-angered-by-king-claims-1.360803.

primary signifier of historical importance. A longstanding bone of contention between Sikaza and the *induna* is that the tree under which the cases are heard is where Zwide's court used to sit and hence where a person of Ndwandwe descent should be presiding, tying his understanding of stature as deriving from the control of justice to the presence of courts as symbols of justice at the sites of former Ndwandwe capitals.

Earlier in the interview, before the above statement, Sikaza had even gone off on a facetious tangent about present Zulu authority over descendants of the once-powerful Ndwandwe:

> *Awu, kodwa bakithi, la masimba la kudlala ngathi lokhu! Uyazi la manyala la! Kuhamba kuthi kuphethe lelizwe lokhu. Ayi. Ayi. Ayi, yazi ngithathe nami ngithukuthele!... [ahleke] Ake kubanjwe yena okungcono. [Kuthiwe] [l]o Shaka lo ke nimvuse; mina ke ngimthathelele ngedwa.... Ngisho lokhu engiyaye ngithi amacala athethelwa la. Kuyadlala nje; kunamuph' umlando khona?* (Buthelezi and Ndwandwe 2008a)
>
> Awu, but really, this shit is messing with us! You know, this disgusting thing! It goes around saying it is in charge of this land this thing. No, no, no, I just get angry!... [laughs] He should be caught [in the place of those who defeated and displaced the Ndwandwe]. [It should be said,] Bring this Shaka back to life; I want to take him on on my own.... I am talking about this thing where [court] cases are heard. This thing is just playing; what history does it have?

In the above extract Sikaza degrades the local Zulu leader as a non-entity who does not have as long a history in the area as the Ndwandwe. He rhetorically reduces the Zulu polity to the minor chiefdom it was before Shaka started building it into a larger state after 1815. He calls up the memory of Ndwandwe rule in the Nongoma-Magudu area of northern KwaZulu-Natal almost two hundred years ago to question Zulu authority under present democratic governance where the Zulu king is the putative ruler of the province and *amakhosi* ('traditional' leaders or chiefs) fall under him. Sikaza questions the identity of the Nongoma area as the symbolic centre of the Zulu kingdom, which it has been since Mpande's reign in the 1840's. He challenges the incessant celebration of Shaka's conquests that brought many groups which previously had independent polities under Zulu control. He suggests that if it

were possible, he would demand of the Zulu royal elite that it raises Shaka, on whose suspect success its position today rests, so that he could take him on. His reference to court cases is to the matters over which the local 'traditional court' presides, such as minor disputes between neighbors.

Sikaza went further in his invocation of the Ndwandwe past to make claims about how differently society ought (not) to be ordered today. Asked which land he was referring to when he said we were on Ndwandwe territory, his response was: '*ElakwaNdwandwe leli, lonke leli. Izwe lakwaNdwandwe nje. ElakwaZulu liseStanger lapho kukhona khon' uShaka. Izwe lakwaNdwandwe nje kusukela nganeno koThukela*'. (This is the land of kwaNdwandwe all here. This is simply land of kwaNdwandwe. The land of KwaZulu is in Stanger where Shaka is. It's kwaNdwandwe land from the near side of the Thukela River.) For Sikaza then, the land of the Zulu is in and around present-day Stanger, where Shaka eventually died and lies buried, and where an annual celebration in his honor has been carried out since 1954. Sikaza has thus internalized the commemoration of Shaka in Stanger to mean Stanger and its surrounds is historically where the territory of the Zulu chiefdom was before Shaka built it into a major polity. He also erroneously claims that Ndwandwe territory extended north from the Thukela River. Despite this incorrect assignment of land that was occupied by other groups when the Zulu polity was still relatively small and weak, it is clear that Sikaza's gripe is with the Zulu.

The Ndwandwe in Shaka's izibongo

Sikaza is indeed correct in the earlier quote about the pursuit of Zwide by Shaka, at least at the rhetorical level. For almost two hundred years Shaka has been celebrated in his *izibongo* for defeating Zwide. Sikaza has lived through the period of Inkatha's drumming up of Zulu nationalism from the 1970's through its decline in the late 1990's. People like him – who

were in their 20's and 30's at the time – were the Zulus whom Inkatha mobilized and brought in buses to attend its nationalist events like Shaka Day when I was a child in the 1980's. They would hear Shaka lauded through his *izibongo* and the legitimacy of the contemporary Zulu royals and the Inkatha-led KwaZulu government repeatedly reinforced. Some of the people active in uBumbano were on the Inkatha side. Others were opponents of Inkatha's ideology. Yet others did not participate in the struggles as I have noted above.[31] It is not surprising, therefore, that, among other things, the growth of Ndwandwe revivalism coincided with the decline of Inkatha and its Zulu nationalist politics. With these factors about the positioning of different people in relation to Inkatha's project in view, the rise of emphasizing pre-Zulu identities even appears to be part of the process of the rejection of Inkatha's Zulu nationalism by the Zulu-speaking public, as laid out by Piper.

Sikaza and the activists of the uBumbano who were of age in the 1970's-1990's in KwaZulu-Natal thus lived through almost three decades of hearing Shaka being praised. When Shaka's praises were declaimed, they put down their putative Ndwandwe ancestors in, among others, the line that Sikaza quotes above. The *izibongo* lavish elaborate praise on Shaka for defeating the Ndwandwe. He is called:

> *UBholokoqa bazalukanisile,*
> *Zalukaniswe uNoju noNgqengenye,*
> *EyakwaNtombazi neyakwaNandi;*
> *Yayikhiph' eshoba libomvu,*
> *Ikhishwa elimhlophe lakwaNandi…*
>
> The open-handed one, they have matched the regiments,
> They were matched by Noju and Ngqengenye,
> The one belonging to Ntombazi and the other to Nandi,

[31] It is difficult to ask interviewees about their past political affiliation. Except for those who are prominent political office bearers, most are uneasy about disclosing their political loyalties in the fast-shifting quicksand of the KZN political landscape, especially those who were previously Inkatha supporters or are loyalists. They are mostly trying to suppress this fault line, which was most visible when the ANC-led eThekwini Municipality attempted to rename Mangosuthu Highway in Umlazi township south of Durban (named after Mangosuthu Buthelezi during Inkatha's reign under apartheid) in 2008. Two leaders of the uBumbano, Jabulani Nxumalo who was then Speaker of eThekwini and provincial chairperson of the ANC's partner, the South African Communist Party, and Phakamisani Nxumalo, IFP member and speaker of the Mhlathuze Municipality, would attack each other in the media in one moment and sit in the same room in meetings of the uBumbano a few days later.

He brought out the one with the red bush,
Brought out by the white one of Nandi… (Cope, lines 16-19)

The above lines celebrate Shaka's triumph over Zwide. Zwide and Shaka are likened to two bulls being put to fight. The bulls are described as matched and are translated erroneously by Daniel Malcolm as 'regiments'.[32] Noju and Ngqengenye, who are said to have matched the regiments were, respectively, Zwide and Shaka's counselors. Noju defected to Shaka's side and was involved in devising the strategy to defeat the Ndwandwe (Cope 89). The two bulls are identified as belonging to Ntombazi and Nandi, Zwide's and Shaka's mothers respectively, hence they are Zwide and Shaka. In the end the bull belonging to Nandi, that is, Shaka, triumphs. The *izibongo* continue:

UMagongobala!

Ophekwe ngembiz' ende yakwaNtombazi
Waphekwa wagongobala.

He who gets stiff!
He was cooked in the deep pot of Ntombazi,
He was cooked and got stiff. (171-3)

Ntombazi is remembered as having been a major influence on Zwide through her counsel and her use of witchcraft (interview with Philemon, Andile and Nicholas Ndwandwe in Nengeni Nongoma, August 22, 2003). Shaka's *izibongo* confirm this when the subject is said to have been cooked (strengthened) in Ntombazi's (witch's) pot. The praise is an under-handed insult to the Ndwandwe, calling the illustrious Zwide's mother an *umthakathi* (witch). Shaka is praised for being able to withstand anything because of his struggle against Zwide having been preparation by boiling him in the witch's pot until he was stiff. The Ndwandwe generally are then called witches and wizards in a further reference to Ntombazi:

Inkonyan' ekhwele phezu kwendlu kwaNtombazi,

[32] The poems in *Izibongo* were collected by Jabulani Stuart and translated by Daniel Malcolm, who died before he had completed the project. The project was completed by Trevor Cope, hence the book bears his name.

Bathi iyahlola,
Kanti yibo bezaz' ukuhlola…

Calf that climbed on top of a hut at Ntombazi's kraal,
They said it was scouting,
But it was they who prided themselves on scouting… (208-210)

The epithet names Shaka as a calf that climbed on top of a hut at Ntombazi's homestead. When the occupants of the homestead remarked that the calf was foretelling disaster, the praise turns on these occupants of the homestead. It points at them as foretelling disaster. The term '*ukuhlola*' is mistranslated in Cope's English version, asserting that Shaka was scouting. The praise is rather a retrospective take on Shaka's defeat of Zwide. Shaka is represented as an innocent, naïve calf that (perhaps) playfully climbs on top of a hut, but the ones who said it was foretelling disaster had the witches' power to foretell disaster. We can even interpret the praise as blaming the Ndwandwe for the catastrophic collapse of their kingdom. It was they who called it down on their heads by foretelling it.

Shaka is further eulogized for his defeat of Zwide in being praised as the heavens that thundered and struck with lightening, carrying away the shields of Zwide's warriors and leaving them defenseless:

UMaswezisela wakithi kwaBulawayo,
Oswezisel' uZwide ngamagqanqula.
Izulu elimagwagwaba likaMageba,
Elidume phezulu kuNomangci,
Laduma' emva kwomuzi eKuqhobokeni laqanda,
Lazithath' izihlangu zaMaphela naMankayiya,
Amabheqan' ezimpaka asal' ezihlahleni…

Our own bringer of poverty [of] Bulawayo,
Who made Zwide destitute by great strides.
The sky that rumbled, the sky of Mageba,
That thundered above Nomangci mountain,
It thundered behind the kraal at Kuqhobokeni and struck,
It took the shields of the Maphela and the Mankayiya,
And the little melons of the Zimpaka were left on the vines… (178-184)

The praise mocks Ndwandwe warriors: their *amabheqe* (decorative tassels made of animal skins worn hanging on the side of the head), mistranslated as melons above, are reduced to the diminutive form, *amabheqana*. These tassels are said to have snagged and been left hanging off trees as the warriors fled. This humiliation is bolstered by the cataloguing that follows of Zwide's sons and adherents who were killed in the war: Nomahlanjana, Mphepha, Nombengula, Dayingubo, Sonsukwana, Mtimona, Mpondo-phumela-kwezinye, Ndengezi-mashumi, Sikloloba-singamabele, Sihlala-mthini-munye and Nqangube (lines 185-196). I discuss these lines at greater length in Chapter 3.

Shaka is then given a rhetorical pat on the back in the form of 'advice' to leave the Ndwandwe alone, having turned Zwide into a homeless criminal[33] and subdued his son, Sikhunyana, who had tried to launch an attack on the Zulu in 1826 but was comprehensively defeated with the help of white mercenaries from Port Natal:

> *Buya Mgengi phela indaba usuyenzile,*
> *UZwide umphendul' isigcwelegcwele,*
> *Namuhla futhi usuphendul' indodana.*
> *USikhunyana uyintombi ukuganile*
> *Ekufunyanis' uhlez' enkundlen' esibayen' eNkandla,*
> *Engaz' ukuth' amabuth' akho anomgombolozelo.*
>
> Return, Trickster, you have finished this matter,
> As for Zwide, you have made him into a homeless criminal,
> And now today you have done the same to the son,
> Sikhunyana is a girl and he has married you,
> He found you sitting in council in the cattle-fold at Nkandla,
> Not knowing that your soldiers had a cross-questioning. (198-204)

We are left with an overall image of a powerful Shaka (even in his weak moments as a calf) who made light work of defeating the then powerful and expansive Ndwandwe kingdom. It is humiliation relived for those who are daily addressed by their *isithakazelo* as "Zwide kaLanga" and had to hear and/or recite, and who still today have to hear, these *izibongo*

[33] The notion that Zwide died a homeless wanderer which many activists purvey today may derive from this praise of Shaka.

sampled in *maskanda* songs and recited when the Zulu king comes on the radio. The defeat and humiliation of their ancestors is relived by the Ndwandwe. It is with such representations of their venerated ancestor Zwide that my dissertation shows the Ndwande to be engaging in order to make sense of their long pasts in post-apartheid, post-Truth and Reconciliation Commission South Africa where room for working through the past has opened up. The engagement needs to be strategic and tactful because of the power of the interests that are promoting and defending Shaka and Zuluness.

Shaka and Zuluness are firmly established as the symbols through which KwaZulu-Natal is legible, not just in South Africa, but globally. Norman Etherington cites the example of a hip-hop group in the United States with affiliated groups in several European countries and Australia that calls itself the Universal Zulu Nation (Etherington 157). The American navy uses “Zulu time” instead of Greenwich Mean Time to symbolize its independence from Britain (Etherington 157). Shaka is commandeered, Dan Wylie asserts, “to lend a muscular glory to the aura of a pop singer, a Namibian traditional healer, a brand of Zimbabwean knives, and an Africa-American comic book super-stalwart…” (Wylie 1). In South Africa, one is inevitably assumed to be Zulu if one is from KwaZulu-Natal or has a family name of a group that has large representation in the province. It is, therefore, imperative to ask and try to answer what Shaka and Zuluness mean today when anybody attempts to work through the distortions of identity under colonialism and apartheid because, in part, the entrenchment and enforcement of Zuluness were part of the processes of white domination. The state’s working through this past puts limits on the extent to which people can call into question the forms that domination took prior to the advent of Europeans in the region. These limits take the emphasis off the conflicts between various polities in the region that were used by apologists of white colonial occupation to claim that the settlers had found the land vacant and available

for occupation.[34] However, people such as Sikaza and members of the uBumbano lwamaZwide who are attempting to work through the meanings of the past in order to shape their post-apartheid presents and futures, face the challenge of engaging with the legacies of Shaka and Zuluness.

The investment of powerful interests in maintaining Zulu identity and the Zulu monarchy makes asking questions about the identity and the institution at times a hazardous undertaking. In many instances this questioning takes place in subliminal and symbolic ways. The manner in which the uBumbano lwamaZwide is pursuing its project provides an example of one way in which a reach for longer pasts than the state's confinements is being positioned. The uBumbano is making the state's discourse of heritage do work for it that deftly navigates the potential pitfalls of bringing into the public record narratives of the past which challenge official and Zulu-centric versions. The leaders of the uBumbano who are deploying the language of heritage and giving it their own meanings seem to not even realize the implications of their project yet. In attempting to navigate their way around their initiative being perceived as an attempt to rise against the Zulu royal house, the initiators have named their annual commemoration of Ndwandwe heroes a Heritage Day and put Zwide upfront as the figure through whom they are recalling the Ndwandwe past. This work the language of heritage is being made to do subverts the state's promotion of Zulu heritage and calls into question the narration of the past of KwaZulu-Natal through Zuluness and the Zulu kingdom. What is more, before the naming of what it is doing as heritage, the uBumbano had recourse to old or 'traditional' vocabularies of kinship and accompanying oral artistic forms that enjoy wide use and purchase in the society. In this chapter I have argued that it is the promotion of Shaka in post-apartheid South Africa that has given impetus to both individuals like Sikaza Nxumalo and those attempting to mobilize collectives of people such as the uBumbano

[34] See Shula Marks. "South Africa - the myth of the empty land." *History Today* 30.1 (1980): 7-13. Print.

lwamaZwide to speak other pasts into the public record. In the next chapter I examine how these vocabularies of heritage and kinship are being made to work by the uBumbano today in ways that appear to not question the Zulu monarchy's position while being inadvertently a radical engagement with the state's entrenchment of the Zulu monarchy and Zuluness.

Chapter 2
Countering Shaka: Language, Subversive Potentiality and Poetic License

[Izibongo zikaZwide] azikaze zisetshenzi[swe].... yikho kungeke kube lul' umlando wakwaNdwandw' ushesh' uvuke ngoba wath' uma ugqitshwa, wagqibeka... Kithi nje futhi khona kwagqibek' impela ngob' ade kungakhulunywa nje; ungayikhulumi nj' indaba yakwaNdwandwe. Nca, ungayikhulumi. Sekuvela manje ngob' izwe lona likhululekil' impela ngoba manj' usuyakwaz' ukukhuluma ngendaba yakwesiny' isibongo. Abant' ade bekhuluma nje indaba yakwaZulu, ukuthi 'lapha kwaZulu,' 'lapha kwaZulu,' 'lapha kwaZulu.' NoMkhiz' umuzw' ethi, 'lapha kwaZulu' kodw' eb' ekwaMkhize. Manj' uzw' eth' umuntu 'lapha kwaZulu akwenziw' ukuthi.' Hhawu uma usuth' uyabuza, 'Lapha kwaMkhize-ke?' 'Hhayi angikhulumi lokho.'… Abantu bayesab' ukuziveza ukuthi bangobani bakabani. Akukho lula; abantu banayo leyonto yokwesabel' ukuthi kuzobe sekuthiwa bafun' izwe... babonwe ngathi bayabanga…. Futh' ukuthi lab' eyibona abengamakhosana ezibongweni, yibon' abenentamo yofud' impela ukudlula laba abangelutho.

Sduduzo Douglas Nxumalo, interview April 5, 2008

[Zwide's *izibongo*] have never been used.... That is why it will not be easy for Ndwandwe history to be revived quickly because when it was buried [suppressed], it was successfully buried. At our home things successfully got buried because [until recently, our past] has not been talked about; you couldn't talk about the Ndwandwe matter. No, you couldn't talk about it. [Talk of our past] is only emerging now since you are now able to talk about a matter of a different family name. People have been talking about Zulu matters, saying 'here in kwaZulu', 'here in kwaZulu', 'here in kwaZulu.' You would even hear a Mkhize saying, 'here in kwaZulu this should be done.' When you ask, 'Here in kwaMkhize?' 'No, I'm not talking about that.'… People are afraid to reveal who they are, descended from whom. It is not easy; people have that thing of being afraid that it will be said that they want the land… they'll be seen as if they are disputing …. Especially those who are first sons of their family groups, it is they who have tortoise necks [who hide away like tortoises in their shells] more than those who are nothing.

Indlela-ke okucathameka ngayo ilukhuni ngoba uma sikhuluma thina bantu bakwaNdwandwe izwe liyanyakaza, linyakaziswe ukuthi kungacishe yini ukuthi sesivukela ubukhosi bakwaZulu….

Mvangeli Ndwandwe, interview, May 11, 2008

The path on which we are tip-toeing is difficult because when we people of kwaNdwandwe speak, the country shakes, being shaken by whether it is possible that we are now rising up against the Zulu kingdom….

Saturday, November 13, 2010

It is the day of the Ndwandwe celebration. I find out when copies of the program are distributed in the huge marquee where the event is taking place that it is called the Zwide Heritage Celebration. The event is here in Mabaso, well away from the putative historical home of the Ndwandwe in Nongoma to Magudu to which reference is going to be made throughout the day. Here there is a long-established Nxumalo chiefdom. In his speech chief Justice Nxumalo dates the chiefdom back to the late 18th century, claiming that its founder arrived in the area in 1770 and conquered the local chiefdom. Indeed this is a good place for the Ndwandwe to come and remember their ancestors' dispersal, which is the heartbeat of today's event. It is a Ndwandwe home of sorts. The program's subtitle is "185 years on." 185 years after Zwide's death in 1825. It is going to be noted as the day progresses that Zwide's grave is still unknown because he died far away following defeat by the Zulu, and that those who have 'come home' today from other parts of southern Africa would have lived in today's KwaZulu-Natal had the Ndwandwe not been dislodged. To remember that defeat here is to keep well out of the way of Zulu royalty's discomfort with the revival of this Ndwandwe memory.

Today's event has been reported to the Zulu king. He apparently has given his consent for it to take place and wants a report on it afterward. He heard through rumor about the previous such meeting that took place in Nongoma in 2006. The conjecture was that the meeting was an attempt to overthrow the Zulu kingdom and reinstate the Ndwandwe in their former homeland. When the Zulu king was told of this supposed attempt to overthrow him, it led to his coming down hard on certain Ndwandwe leaders who were involved in organizing that meeting. It made them jittery and set their efforts back significantly. Today a much more diffuse Ndwandwe leadership is involved in organizing this event – politicians and business people from all over KwaZulu-Natal, academics and *amakhosi*. The naming of the event is

astute. “Heritage celebration” makes it palatable and innocuous – seemingly nothing is being questioned, nobody challenged. After all, many other groups are holding similar events all over the province from time to time: the Ntuli; the Mbatha, Dladla and Mbeje; the Khumalo and Mabaso; the Dlamini; the Mkhize; the Buthelezi and others.

I am most fascinated by the *amahubo*, *izithakazelo* and *izibongo* that are performed, by who is remembered and in what ways in this celebration. One of the masters of ceremonies instructs the crowd: he is going to call out “Zwide” and they are to respond “Mkhatshwa.” When he says “Mkhatshwa,” they are to say, “Sothondose.” And so these *izithakazelo* (kinship group or clan praises) are repeated over and over the whole afternoon. Zwide’s *izibongo* and those of Justice Nxumalo and Samuel Nxumalo are the three sets declaimed during the course of the day. These are the putative ancestor of the Ndwandwe and the two royal champions of current Ndwandwe revivalism.

Mzila, the last sovereign of the Gaza kingdom in Mozambique whose son, Ngungunyana, was deposed and exiled by the Portuguese, is recalled in the *ihubo* sung on the march from the *inkantolo* to the marquee and back at the beginning and the end of the event: “*Nang’ uMzila sebeyamsola*” (“Here is Mzila being blamed”). So is Zwide remembered in a song that reduces some to tears: “*UZwid’ ufel’ izwe lakhe*” (“Zwide is dying for his land”) sings the lead and the crowd responds “*Amabutho ayeza, ayaz’ amabutho*” (“The [fighting] forces are coming, they are coming the forces”).

* * *

At the height of Inkatha’s trumpeting of Shaka and Zulu identity in 1986, a group of migrant workers deeply involved in Inkatha’s war with ANC-aligned forces started meeting as Ndwandwe in a hostel in Johannesburg. When Nelson Mandela and other apartheid political

prisoners were released in 1990, another effort began in Empangeni to bring together Ndwandwe people before it extended to the home area of its initiator in Nongoma. In Nongoma, a different effort was in progress independently. At the same time, in Durban migrant workers and some locals were making their own efforts to get Ndwandwe people together. They later linked with a well-established Nxumalo group from Intshanga between Durban and Pietermaritzburg. And a chance work meeting between a businessman from Pietermaritzburg and a councilor in Nongoma got them talking about being Nxumalo, one Zulu-speaking and the other speaking XiChangana.

Gijima Ndwandwe and Hlabekisa Madlobha spearheaded efforts that brought together factory workers, miners, taxi owners and others in Johannesburg as early as 1986 (Buthelezi, interview with Gijima Ndwandwe in Thokoza, Johannesburg; September 14, 2009). In Empangeni, Sduduzo Nxumalo, who is credited as the initiator in KwaZulu-Natal, took his cue from the release of Mandela and other political prisoners in 1990 to begin trying to convene Ndwandwe people (Buthelezi, interview with Sduduzo Nxumalo in Msebe, Nongoma; April 5, 2008). His effort eventually extended to his home area of Mandlakazi in Nongoma where he teamed up with William ‘Mavela’ Nxumalo. Mvangeli Ndwandwe was approached by a fellow Shembe minister in Durban, who is a Ndwandwe from Swaziland, about a vision he had had that Shaka and Zwide need to be ritually reconciled. He began trying to formulate an appropriate collective to address the matter (Buthelezi, interview with Mvangeli Ndwandwe in Umlazi, Durban; May 11, 2008). He later linked up with politician Jabulani Nxumalo from Intshanga where there was a long-established Nxumalo social club. Jabulani is leader of the ANC-aligned South African Communist Party in KwaZulu-Natal and has been mayor of the eThekwini Municipality since May 2011. Mavela had the chance meeting with Matshaya Nxumalo who is originally from Giyani in the Limpopo province and whose father was Mangosuthu Buthelezi’s counterpart in the apartheid homeland of

Gazankulu (Buthelezi, interview with Sduduzo Nxumalo, April 5, 2008). Matshaya's family traces its history through the leaders of the Gaza kingdom and considers itself the royal family of the Shangana people. By the time the Zwide Heritage event I describe above took place, all these groups had been networked into an association, the uBumbano lwamaZwide (Unity of the Zwides or Unity Association of the Zwide People).

While the leaders of the uBumbano lwamaZwide have been trying to position their efforts as innocuous heritage that does not challenge Zuluness or the Zulu royal establishment, several aspects of their mobilization and convening of people of the Ndwandwe and associated names call Zuluness and Zulu authority into question in spite of the leaders' intentions. The name of the event, the Zwide Heritage Event (renamed the Zwide Heritage Day in 2011) upholds Zwide as the foremost ancestor of the Ndwandwe. The name of the association also contains Zwide's name. 'Zwide Heritage Day' and 'uBumbano lwamaZwide' bring into view how this Ndwandwe project is making three interrelated moves. First, it is calling into question what pasts are worth remembering and through whom these pasts are worth recalling in the transforming post-apartheid society. By emphasizing Shaka's one-time adversary, Zwide, in naming the event after him, the uBumbano is subtly putting pressure on the promotion of Shaka and his Zulu kingdom in KwaZulu-Natal. Second, as I suggested in Chapter One, calling the event "heritage" positions the effort as responding to the state's call for people to embrace their heritage. At the same time it shifts the emphasis by qualifying 'heritage day' with 'Zwide.' Finally, whereas the name of the event identifies the singular figure of Zwide, the name 'Zwide' does further and different work in the name of the association, the uBumbano lwamaZwide. It draws on 'Zwide' the Ndwandwe *isithakazelo* to advertise the association as being of all the people to whom the *isithakazelo* refers. These three moves are a (perhaps unconscious) navigation of the obstacles to calling up older pasts that the power of the Zulu royal establishment and the state's framing

of its heritage projects disallow. Together the two names mesh the older ‘traditional’ idiom of filiation and affiliation through which relationships are mediated in Zulu-speaking society with the idiom of heritage. It is precisely in bringing together these two idioms, heritage and kinship, that the effort of the uBumbano does radical work that disturbs received notions of the identities and heritage of the people of KwaZulu-Natal.

For Ndwandwe people whose ancestors were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom, the idiom of kinship has passed down to them as a Zulu idiom, that is, the idiom of people defined as ethnically Zulu. In the idiom, the assumption is that all people of the same surname are related or of the same family (*kithi*). Hence Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* (kinship group or clan praises or address names) and *ihubo lesizwe* (‘national’ hymn) have been declaimed and sung under Zulu authority since the incorporation of those fragments of the Ndwandwe that settled under the Zulu in the 1820’s. They have been used as the forms of a sub-set of the Zulu ethnic group, which came to be defined as such by settlers and travelers from the 1820’s onward.[35] The perpetuation of the forms as Zulu in the area that is KwaZulu-Natal today has made them available to question the very Zulu establishment under whose authority the forms have been perpetuated.

In this chapter I ask the three questions in order to understand the manner in which the uBumbano’s project is pressing against the dominating official narrative of the past of the region that is now KwaZulu-Natal. First, what claims do the two idioms of heritage and kinship enable the uBumbano lwamaZwide to make? Second, what is the cultural and historical basis of such claims? Finally, what are some of the limitations of making claims about the past through these idioms?

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[35] John Wright argues that a Zulu identity was only broadly assumed by the African inhabitants of north-eastern South Africa in the 20th century. See John Wright. "Reflections on the Politics of Being 'Zulu'." *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu Past and Present.* Eds. Benedict Carton, John Laband, and Jabulani Sithole. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008. Print.

What's in names?: uBumbano, Zwide, and Heritage Day

In the preceding chapter I suggested that the uBumbano lwamaZwide turned to calling its event the Zwide Heritage Celebration in 2010 after problems resulting from the machinations of Zulu power experienced by the association following its launch in 2006. Mvangeli Ndwandwe said about the difficulties: "*Kodwa into eyabe isithena amandla... ngabe sengizwa sekuvuka ubuxokana, sekubalulwa ukuthi kulowo mhlangano bekukhona uMntwana wakwaPhindangene, kulowo mhlangano sifuna thina ubukhosi bakwaNdwandwe. Hhayi, kwakukhona phela neziqophi mazwi lapha*..." (interview, May 11, 2008). (But what sapped our energy... I later heard lies arising, it being mentioned that at that meeting there was the uMntwana [Prince] of Phindangene [Mangosuthu Buthelezi], at that meeting we wanted a Ndwandwe kingship. No, there were even voice recorders there...). It appears that a Ndwandwe person who has the king's ear misrepresented the event. From off-the-record conversations and discussions in meetings of the uBumbano I have been allowed to attend since 2008, it appears that the person informed the king that the meeting had been about the revival of the Ndwandwe kingdom. At the time there was conflict between the king and Buthelezi over the king's moving closer to the ANC and putting distance between himself and his uncle, Buthelezi's IFP with which he had enjoyed a cosy relationship in the late 1980's and early 1990's as discussed in chapter 1. This made possible the easy linking of Buthelezi to a conspiracy about a Ndwandwe uprising.

The turn to the idiom of heritage then does much work to position the uBumbano's project as not the kind of subversive move it was perceived to be in 2006. It shifts the project from the realm of politics and locates it as mainly (or even only) cultural in such a way that it threatens neither the position of the Zulu royal establishment nor the upholding of Shaka and

Zulu heritage in the province. However, a closer look shows these attempts to contain perceptions being bound to have limited success because, by its very nature, a convening of the Ndwandwe patently counters Shaka-centricism if it recalls the past in the manner that the uBumbano is doing. The idioms used to speak about, and to drive, this effort go some way toward positioning the effort in ways that seem politically innocuous, but the idioms themselves hold potentialities that exceed attempts to use them to contain the implications of the coming together of the Ndwandwe and the ways the Ndwandwe recall the past.

As indicated above, the first of the annual events in 2010 was named the Zwide Heritage Celebration. The naming of the event as a heritage celebration gives it the appearance of being a response to the state's promotion of heritage as the mode through which people are being encouraged to learn about and take pride in their cultures and histories. One of the organizers of the event, Mavela Nxumalo, even deliberately situated the event within the state's developmental discourse which encourages people to use heritage for economic development through tourism. In his vote of thanks to Nomusa Dube, the member of the provincial government executive in charge of the Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs portfolio who had been invited and had attended the event, he expressed hope that the state would sponsor future events because the government always says it helps those who help themselves (November 13, 2010). He said the Ndwandwe were helping themselves by coming together and learning about their pasts. Mavela was deploying the language of government advertisements on radio in which people are encouraged to get up and do something to develop themselves and the state will meet them part-way. He was claiming the heritage initiative was such an attempt to do something that the state should support.

The shift to calling the event the Zwide Heritage Day in 2011 is important. The 2011 event marked what, in my observation, was an arrival at the more appropriate positioning of

the annual gathering of Ndwandwe people which the previous naming as a Heritage Event had been reaching toward. The new name takes further the work the first one had begun. 'Heritage Day' takes the same form as the rubric under which Shaka is commemorated annually by announcing the Ndwandwe event to be the same kind of undertaking as this national occasion on which Shaka is commemorated. However, 'Zwide' qualifies the Ndwandwe event as the same kind of occasion, but different. It is different in that it is a small matter of the Ndwandwe. It is not the national occasion that Heritage Day is.[36] The name announces the event as a minor one that does (or should) not matter to people who do not identify with the name Zwide.

However, putting Zwide upfront in this way is a bold move, which at the same time underplays its boldness by its very subtlety. This move begins to counter the promotion of Shaka. The naming of the event lifts Zwide to a similar level to Shaka, at least among the Ndwandwe. It insists on his recognition on similar terms to the heroes celebrated on the generically-named Heritage Day, primarily Shaka in KwaZulu-Natal. What is more, it goes a step further than what Heritage Day is to Shaka: whereas Shaka is no longer included in the name of the occasion now that it is not called Shaka Day as it used to be in KwaZulu under Inkatha, putting Zwide in the name makes the figure visible in a way that begins rhetorically to counteract the naming of things after Shaka, as is the case with the King Shaka International Airport. This emphasis on Zwide questions who is memorialized on the national and provincial state-driven heritage landscape and who is not.

As a mediation of the politics of Zuluness, the naming of the annual event leans on the notion of heritage "understood as having to do with the uncritical celebration or

[36] Even as the state promotes the importance of Heritage Day, many complain that it has been trivialized by the likes of Jan Braai (real name Jan Scannell) who has popularized the occasion as National Braai [Barbacue] Day ostensibly to further reconciliation between different races with the support of Desmond Tutu, among others. See www.braai.com and the furious responses for and against Mabine Seabe's critique of the trivialization of the day: http://dailymaverick.co.za/opinionista/2011-09-21-heritage-day-goes-up-in-charcoal-smoke.

commemoration of aspects of the past selected for their 'feel-good' features" (Wright 15) that John Wright has identified as discussed in Chapter One, to suggest that Zwide is just heritage, the heritage of the people to whom Zwide matters. In this view, upholding Zwide serves to lessen the impact of reviving and popularizing the history of the Ndwandwe through Zwide, which readily questions the legiticimacy of Shaka and Zuluness. Recalling Zwide is indeed threatening to the Zulu royal house. It has the potential to call into question and open the path toward beginning to reverse Zulu conquest in a similar way to how European conquest was questioned, resisted, fought and is being ideologically reversed since the end of apartheid through, among other things, an emphasis on Zulu heritage. As a result, it is important for leaders of the uBumbano to manage the political effects of recalling Zwide because, as Mvangeli put it, "*Indlela-ke okucathameka ngayo ilukhuni ngoba uma sikhuluma thina bantu bakwaNdwandwe izwe liyanyakaza, linyakaziswe ukuthi kungacishe yini ukuthi sesivukela ubukhosi bakwaZulu.…*" (interview, May 11, 2008) (The path on which we are tip-toeing is difficult because when we people of kwaNdwandwe speak, the country shakes, being shaken by whether it is possible that we are now rising up against the Zulu kingdom…). Sduduzo went even further.

Sduduzo said, "*Kithi nje futhi khona kwagqibek' impela ngob' ade kungakhulunywa nje; ungayikhulumi nj' indaba yakwaNdwandwe.… Sekuvela manje ngob' izwe lona likhululekil' impela ngoba manj' usuyakwaz' ukukhuluma ngendaba yakwesiny' isibongo. Abant' ade bekhuluma nje indaba yakwaZulu, ukuthi 'lapha kwaZulu,'...*" (interview, April 5, 2008). (At our home things successfully got buried because [until recently, our past] has not been talked about; you couldn't talk about the Ndwandwe matter.… [Talk of our past] is only emerging now since you are now able to talk about a matter of a different family name. People have been talking about Zulu matters, saying 'here in kwaZulu', 'here in kwaZulu'…). In the quotation with which I open this chapter, Sduduzo sees Ndwandwe

history as having been suppressed, which will make it difficult to revive this history for some time to come. In his statement Sduduzo makes an illuminating rhetorical move: "*lapha kwaZulu*" (here in kwaZulu) is both used to talk about happenings in a family or kinship group whose family name is Zulu as well as a way of referring to matters of the 'kingdom' or bantustan of KwaZulu. This move suggests a conflation of matters of the Zulu kinship group with those of all those who are assumed to be part of the Zulu 'nation.' Moreover, it is instructive to note the elliptical manner in which these sentiments are articulated, not just by Sduduzo, but by almost all who speak publicly or go on record in interviews: agents are masked in collective nouns and the passive voice in phrases such as "*kithi kwagqibek' impela*" (at our home things really got covered over), "*abantu kade bekhuluma ukuthi 'lapha kwaZulu'*" ("people have been talking about, 'here at the Zulu'") and "*izwe liyanyakaza*" ("the country shakes"). Activists see themselves as facing difficulties in what they are attempting to achieve. They subtly articulate the existence of these difficulties in the elliptical language they employ to speak about their work.

Mvangeli and Sduduzo's statements are accurate because insisting on making Zwide visible in the manner the uBumbano is doing through its naming practices questions the notion of the Zulu *isizwe* or nation that Mangosuthu Buthelezi calls up in the epigraph above and which the ANC-led provincial government promotes. Zwide is the putative ancestor of more than just the Ndwandwe and Nxumalo people who were incorporated into the Zulu kingdom. Nxumalo, Ndwandwe and Mkhatshwa people in Swaziland, Mozambique and parts of South Africa other than KwaZulu-Natal whose ancestry left the Ndwandwe kingdom on the cusp of its collapse also use the same *izithakazelo* (kinship group or clan address names) as the Ndwandwe and Nxumalo in KwaZulu-Natal. They also identify Zwide as their putative ancestor. The naming of Zwide in this way masks the circumstances within the Ndwandwe kingdom under which the different fragments of the kingdom left and allows the group to

constitute itself unproblematically as amaZwide based on a selective use of the past. This is how Matshaya Nxumalo, a businessman from Pietermaritzburg whose family constitutes the remnants of the Gaza kingdom that settled in South Africa after defeat by the Portuguese in Mozambique in 1895, has been drawn in.[37]

The selectiveness of the association's recall of the past is clear in its name: uBumbano lwamaZwide (the Unity of Zwides or the Unity Association of the Zwide People). The name deploys the idiom of kinship to which I referred above. Zwide is again placed centrally in the name of the group. However, it is not Zwide the individual who is in the name. Rather, it is all Ndwandwe people whose unity the association strives to achieve who are named as *amaZwide* or Zwides. This deployment of the *isithakazelo*, which identifies each living and dead Ndwandwe as Zwide, points to the manner in which the association is deploying the second idiom to which it has access: the 'traditional' idiom of kinship of which the oral artistic forms of *izithakazelo*, *izibongo* and *ihubo lesizwe* ('national' hymn) are a central aspect. This traditional idiom permits the Ndwandwe (not just the uBumbano, which is using the idiom for its own ends) to call themselves an *isizwe* ('nation')[38] along with those they are assumed to be genealogically related somewhere in their past. Every other group of people who share a family/clan name can similarly call themselves an *isizwe*. The convening of this Ndwandwe *isizwe* is thus positioned as the coming together of people who have lost touch with who they are and how they are related in order to rediscover and celebrate their heritage.

[37] Matshaya has become one of the more powerful leaders of the association and the main funder of its events. He linked his father, Samuel Nxumalo – the former prime minister of the Gazankulu homeland – and his relatives, the Shangana royal house, to the uBambano and eventually got them to take part in the events of 2010 and 2011 along with a group of adherents.

[38] The concept of nation in the Zulu language is highly unstable. The term '*isizwe*' works on five levels. On one level is the South African Nation which is under formation since the end of apartheid. On the second level, the Zulu ethnic group continues to be called an *isizwe* even as its stability and sustainability come under pressure. Third, a group that shares a family name such as Ndwandwe and related names like Nxumalo, Masuku, Madlobha, Mncwango, and others, is called '*isizwe samaNdwandwe/ sakwaNdwandwe*' (the Ndwandwe 'nation'). A fourth use of the term is in referring to a 'community' under a chief also as an *isizwe*. Finally, in anti-apartheid activities and songs, reference was often made to "isizwe esimnyama/esinsundu," the black nation.

At this point the two idioms to which the uBumbano is making an appeal mesh. The 'nation' that exceeds Zuluness can thus be convened in the pursuit of heritage. I return to the notion of the *isizwe* as it is being deployed by the Ndwandwe at more length below.

The meshing of these two idioms allows the calling up of Zwide in the same manner that each and every individual and family can invoke its ancestors and address the ancestors' praises to them in domestic rituals. It permits the lifting of this recall of Zwide as the putative ancestor of all Ndwandwe to a more public level where the calling up of a symbolically powerful leader like Zwide would otherwise be problematic if not presented as heritage. This convening of Ndwandwe people maintains the appearance of being the coming together of Zwide's putative descendants to recall their ancestors in the way that they have always done under Zulu authority for as long as even the oldest members of the group can remember. These are people who have been naming Zwide in their domestic rituals and have been named after him by their *isithakazelo* throughout their lives. I demonstrate more fully in Chapter Four how this naming and affirmation of Ndwandweness functions in the context of an individual subject's life. How Philani and Ntombi Ndwandwe narrate the beginnings of their segment of the uBumbano in the uSuthu section of Nongoma confirms that it is around a sense of being Ndwandwe that they began mobilizing. Philani said:

> *Sahlangana njengabantu bakwaNdwandwe ngezinkinga esinazo njengabantu bakwaNdwandwe. Sakubuka okwezinkinga zethu ukuthi azisapheleli ezindlini lapho sizalwa khona thina, kodwa manje sekudinga lento siyixoxe sisonke. Sazama-ke ukucoshacoshana ngezindawo ngokwehlukahlukana. Sabathol' abakwaMandlakazi, sabathola koMatheni, sabathola koPhongolo, nabafoweth' abasebenza koGoli nakoThekwini. Sahlangana-ke ukuthi ake sibonisaneni ukuthi yini-ke esingayenza njengesizwe mhlampe; kesihlangane nje, kesikuyeke okwezindlu ... [uNtombi uyajobelela," NjengamaNdwandwe."] njengabantu nje bendoda nje. Kodwa hhayi ngokuthi wen' uphuma kuyiph' indlu, nomuny' uphuma kuyiph' indlu....* (Buthelezi, interview, April 7, 2008)

> We came together as the people of kwaNdwandwe[39] about problems we have as the Ndwandwe people. We examined our problems that they do not end in the houses where we were born, but now [the matter] requires that we all talk about it together. We tried then to find one another in different places. We found those in kwaMandlakazi, we found them in Matheni, we found them in Phongolo, and our brothers who work in Johannesburg and Durban. We came together to discuss what we could do as an *isizwe* perhaps; just coming together, leaving aside the matter of houses… [Ntombi interjects, "As Ndwandwe people."] as the people [descendants] of one man. But not based on which house you come from, and which house the other person comes from.…

To note in the above is that the people started convening as the people of kwaNdwandwe about matters that had come to exceed domestic mediation between them and their ancestors. Instead, these matters affect them all similarly as Ndwandwe people. In Philani's word, these matters affected them "*njengesizwe*" (as a 'nation'). The matters required intercession with the ancestors all the Ndwadwe conducted by a (re)convened 'nation.' It was thus necessary to convene this 'nation.' In my reading, the first attempt to convene this 'nation' could not be realized as fully as the second because it relied solely on the idiom of kinship, making the Zulu king uneasy what he perceived as a threat to his position, albeit based on false information. The turn to the idiom of heritage made it possible for the uBumbano to reconvene publicly after a six-year hiatus.

There is, however, irony in how the 'traditional' idiom of kinship is allowed when the Zulu king leans on the Ndwandwe to convene as an *isizwe* to carry out aspects of 'Zulu' cultural festivals. In this regard, each year the Ndwandwe in Nongoma are required to lead the collection of the *uswela* (a certain fruit that grows in coastal areas) for the *umkhosi woswela* festival through which the king and the 'Zulu nation' are ritually strengthened.[40] Yet,

[39] I translate 'abantu bakwaNdwandwe' as 'the people of kwaNdwandwe' rather than as 'the Ndwandwe people' to keep in view in the translated text the prefix 'kwa-' which is in the locative form, signaling belonging together at a place, kwaNdwandwe [at the Ndwandwe place], that is encoded in the language. I return to this encoding of belonging in my discussion of key terms below.

[40] Some interviewees claim this was a Ndwandwe festival that was appropriated by the Zulu after the defeat of Zwide.

when the Ndwandwe convene on their own, away from Zulu supervision, this convening can be perceived as a threat to the very existence of the 'Zulu nation' as the king's continuing veiled uneasiness suggests.[41] Ironically, the group that convened the Ndwandwe in Nongoma used the occasion of the impending wedding of one of the Zulu king's daughters to generate momentum in Ndwandwe assembly. On the back of hosting the *ukucimela* (farewell conducted by relatives for a woman ahead of her wedding), they started meeting more regularly to talk about Ndwandwe matters. These "Ndwandwe matters" were still undefined at the time.

Several people had begun meeting in 2004. While they were attempting to find a way to bring more Ndwandwe people together, the *ukucimela* came about. Philani said in an interview, "*Sithe sisahlangene-ke ngalokho [kwakwaNdwandwe] sisabonisana, singakayi naphambili ngakho, kwabe sekuvela-ke lomcimbi-ke owawusuba khona-ke [wokucimela kwengane yeSilo]. Iwona-k' owadal' ukuthi-ke asiqine-ke manje-ke; sesihlangana entwe...ntwe... kukhon' intw' okufanele siyenze-ke manje njengabantu bakwaNdwandwe-ke manje*" (Buthelezi, interview in Nongoma; April 7, 2008). (While we were in the process of meeting about [Ndwandwe matters] and discussing them, before we had gone forward, then there was this function [of a ceremonial farewell for the king's daughter who was getting married]. It was that function which made us stronger when we were now meeting about something we had to do as the people of kwaNdwandwe). As the king's relatives (Zwelithini's mother was a Ndwandwe and sister to the father of Philani, Ntombi and Andile, my research partner), the Ndwandwe were called on and required by custom to conduct a large-scale *umncamo*. Seemingly, it has taken the overlaying of the 'traditional' idiom of kinship that can be called up for some purposes with the idiom of heritage for the activities of

[41] In 2011 some of the leaders of the uBumbano were warned to stop pursuing this Ndwandwe convergence as they might lose their lives.

the Ndwandwe not to elicit as strong a response as the one seen after the first gathering of the different groupings to form the uBumbano lwamaZwide.

The space opened by the domain of heritage in post-apartheid South Africa permits the Ndwandwe to think and talk about their history as separate from the imposing Zulu-centric narrative. More importantly, it makes it possible for them to proceed to do something about putting this past in the public domain under the rubric of heritage. At the same time, the idiom of kinship allows the Ndwandwe to make themselves appear to be recalling their heritage within the confines of how, in the Zulu kingdom, those who were incorporated were permitted to recall their ancestors in ways that did not threaten (and has not threatened for almost two hundred years) the appeal to Shaka as a source of the legitimacy of the Zulu royal house. They then are able to use the 'traditional' idiom of kinship under the rubric of heritage as the main idiom of mobilization, which usage appears to place the convening of the Ndwandwe *isizwe* as the rediscovery of their Zuluness. The appearance of Zuluness is given to the effort by the fact that the idiom of kinship is 'traditional.' The traditional in KwaZulu-Natal is defined as Zulu such that adhering to 'traditional' practices like addressing ancestors is called "*ukwenza izinto zesiZulu*" (doing Zulu things) or even getting married in a traditional manner of the region is typically referred to as having "*umshado wesiZulu*" (a Zulu wedding). Old beliefs, modes of filiation and affiliation and their idioms have come down over the past two centuries as Zulu.

Hamilton has reconstructed how the socialization of people who were defeated and incorporated into the Zulu kingdom in Shaka's day began the process I see as having bequeathed on the present the traditional as Zulu in her Master's thesis, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu kingdom" (1985). She states: "…the pre-state societies of south-east Africa were essentially lineage-based" (10). Pre-state societies in southern Africa, in the historians' vocabulary of the time, had existed prior to

approximately 1750 when larger polities or states such as the Ndwandwe formed. Hamilton maintains that geographical areas were most likely dominated by lineage groups. Outsiders moving in would have had to form relationships through the loaning of cattle (*ukusisa*), participation in local circumcision lodges, taking part in collective labour of the community, and other forms of participation. She posits that "a loose idiom of kinship" is likely to have been employed and "manifested in the calling of patrons "father" and others of the community by similar family titles" (15).

Importantly for my discussion here, Hamilton speculates, "...in lineage-based societies... political incorporation of outsiders would have, over time, entailed the creation of claims of common descent with the hosts. In such societies, territorial units would have manifested a tendency towards genealogical homogeneity" (22-3). She maintains that "[t]he polities which experienced minimal changes in the later eighteenth century such as the Qwabe accorded a far greater importance to kinship connections than those polities, like Mthethwa, which underwent more extensive transformations. From this it can be inferred that kinship and genealogical mapping was considerably more significant in the pre-state period" (20). The incorporation of outsiders involved the creation of kinship bonds through manipulating data of origins by, among other things, giving groups that were incorporated the same *izithakazelo* as the ruling lineage. In the later, state period, once the expanding polities had enough military power, defeated groups were required to pay tribute and were never integrated into the nation.

Hamilton intimates that the scenario above obtained in the Ndwandwe kingdom, even though the data available in the James Stuart archive is only sufficient for the Qwabe and the Mthethwa polities. In this view, the uBumbano is making appeal to these meanings and uses of kinship that obtained before the Ndwandwe state's defeat by the Zulu. In Hamilton's schema, however, the Ndwandwe would long have been past creating fictive kinship and onto

subordinating its conquests as tributaries by the time the state collapsed. Indeed, John Wright suggests that the Ndwandwe was a conquest state (Wright 225). Hence, the notion that the Ndwandwe and all the other *izibongo* that 'came out' – the Mabaso, Madlobha, Jele, Mncwango and others – are related may be a fiction that obscures much that needs to be investigated about the Ndwandwe kingdom itself. Only the Nxumalo appear to be genealogically related to the Ndwandwe main house that ruled the Ndwandwe kingdom. Nevertheless, the importance of kinship in how the past is being revised and in present intersubjectivity still holds.

In her discussion of how the Zulu state maintained social cohesion much more successfully than its predecessor polities, Hamilton claims that what distinguished the Zulu kingdom was the more extensive use of the idiom of kinship as ideological cement in the early phase of its expansion. Fictive kinship bonds were created between the rulers of the Zulu chiefdom and the lineages that were incorporated early on, when the chiefdom was not yet strong enough to command military power to subdue rivals without needing to resort to kinship as the ideological cement. Hamilton notes that the Qwabe, who were brought under Zulu control when Shaka was moving quickly to build his power to meet the might of the Ndwandwe and who remained recalcitrant, were subdued in part by creating a genealogical link to the Zulu royal house. This was done by inventing a tradition that the Zulu and Qwabe were related in a past that had purportedly fallen out of memory via an ancestor named Malandela who was the progenitor of both the Zulu and Qwabe lines (Hamilton 181-2). Once the Qwabe had been defeated, mature men from the group "were required to undergo complete resocialization and retraining, the Zulu way, to absorb the military ideology of the Zulu amakhanda [military establishments into which they were drafted], and to participate in rituals stressing the ideological preeminence of the Zulu king" (Hamilton 175) to complete their incorporation. The *amabutho* or age sets into which these men were incorporated served

as labor units for the royal establishment and a fighting force in times of war. Drawing from the Stuart Archive, Hamilton maintains that "the *amabutho*, under Shaka, were crucial mechanisms in the resocialization of adult men from a number of different chiefdoms, into a Zulu-dominated state society, and in the socialization of the youth of the new kingdom" (Hamilton 332). Furthermore,

> ...[t]he process by which the loyalties of veterans and new recruits alike were focused on the Zulu king were complex, and extended over time, for it involved an enormous shift in the conceptualisation of society then current. At the same time, the new Zulu rulers were under great pressure to mobilise a large army in a very short time. To achieve this as rapidly as possible, ideological elements from the previous era were mobilized to underpin the legitimacy of the new order. One obvious source of significant and powerful elements lay in appealing to the hierarchy of Zulu ancestors. This was achieved through the concentration of the newly-enrolled units and the demoted veterans in the ideologically significant area of the Zulu kings' grave-sites. (337-8)

Makhosini district thus came to be imbued with a sense of sacredness as the place of the ancestors of the Zulu, and also of antiquity. It "served as an ideologically powerful environment for the reorientation of new recruits towards the idea of a Zulu nation, united under a Zulu king. The training period amidst the very graves of the Zulu ancestors created the opportunity for non-Zulu recruits to come to identify with the Zulu king and ancestors, at the same time that respect and fear of Zulu 'ancestral' power was inculcated in the men through their participation in the associated rituals" (340).

When it comes to the Ndwandwe, their own *amabutho* would have been resocialized in the same way. The remnants of the Ndwandwe kingdom were incorporated under the Mpangisweni *ikhanda* or military homestead. The area under Zulu leader Maphitha was extended to include the former Ndwandwe territory (219). Maphitha's region served as the Zulu kingdom's outpost against the Swazi to the west, the followings of Soshangane, Nxaba and Mawewe to the north-east, and the Nyawo, Mngomezulu and Thonga just beyond the Lubombo who recognized Zulu overlordship (221-2). Under this new arrangement, "the

ideological foundation of the Zulu kingship lay in the fundamental conception that the spiritual and material welfare of the nation was associated with that of the king. The king was considered to be the necessary intermediary between the nation and the Zulu ancestors, the previous Zulu kings, who could be invoked to intervene in the present when necessary on behalf of the Zulu nation" (222).

My contention is that under this new power, the perpetuation of the politically dangerous memories of a time when the Ndwandwe kingdom was still intact would have been carefully managed or suppressed. Shaka's *izibongo* that celebrated his victory over Zwide would have been emphasized to repeatedly remind the Ndwandwe of their defeat and loss of pre-eminence, especially because they had been so powerful and been the last obstacle to the domination of the area between the Phongolo and Thukela rivers by the Zulu. It is this process that would have led to Mtshapi's contention in an interview with James Stuart in 1921 that, "In the Zulu kingdom, people did not discuss matters of former times to avoid being put to death. For a person who spoke about these things would be killed. It would be said, 'Where did you get this from? You will spoil the land with this talking'" (Wright 217). Yet the resocialization of the Ndwandwe would not have been able to erase their ancestors because of the perpetuation of the ideology of kinship in the Zulu kingdom. For that reason, the Ndwandwe were able to continue recalling their Ndwandwe ancestors in domestic ritual and to use Zwide's name as their collective *isithakazelo*. The incorporation of the Ndwandwe into the Zulu kingdom had no basis for creating the kinds of fictitious kinship bonds that could be created with the Qwabe. While the Ndwandwe in their newly-established status as members of the Zulu nation were socialized to look to the ancestors of the Zulu lineage as the forebears of the nation, in the domestic sphere they would still have turned to their Ndwandwe ancestors to appeal for intervention in times of difficulty or simply to commemorate them.

At the same time as the Ndwandwe would have been able to continue recalling their ancestors in domestic ways, this recall would have been managed so as not to spill over into publicly prominent ways that suggested that the Ndwandwe were attempting to regroup and rise against the Zulu kingdom to try and reverse the defeat of Zwide's forces. The management of the recall of the past would have been done by the Ndwandwe themselves for fear of being put to death in the way that Mtshapi spoke about eighty years later. They would also have been the ideological work of the Zulu-appointed administrators of Maphitha's region, the extension of which was precisely to guard against, among others, dissidents who were formerly under the Ndwandwe – Soshangane, Nxaba and Mawewe. These dissidents would have had a point of convergence around the defeat of the Ndwandwe should they have needed one. This would have been especially important in the period between 1820 and the final defeat of the Ndwandwe kingdom in 1826. The representation of Zwide as laughable and of Shaka as mighty for having defeated Zwide that we saw in Shaka's *izibongo* in Chapter One, would have been particularly important in the military establishment watching over and incorporating the Ndwandwe. As Hamilton notes, "… there were royal *izimbongi* at every military establishment (*ikhanda*). The *izimbongi* were required to recite the praises of the king and his ancestors on all public occasions so as continually to reaffirm the legitimacy of the ruling house" (Hamilton 68).

The continuation of the recall of the Ndwandwe past would have been still allowable if carefully monitored. It would also have gone along with the maintaining of old kinship bonds that had been established in the Ndwandwe kingdom. Over time, the idiom of kinship that enjoyed currency in the region, and was continued in the Zulu kingdom, would have come to appear Zulu as the nineteenth century wore on. This making Zulu of the idiom, I contend, was part of the making of the region Zulu through the interplay of local discourses with those of European settlers, missionaries and others that projected the region as Zulu and

Shaka as symbolically central.[42] As the conquest activitiesof the Zulu in the late 1810's and 1820's receded into the past, as insecurity increased after 1838 with the advent of Boers over the Drakensberg mountains, and as the language spoken in the region, and the customs and oral artistic forms practiced came to be defined as Zulu, the modes of filiation and affiliation increasingly came be defined as Zulu themselves. With time, they came to be passed down simply as Zulu modes such that the custom of addressing ancestors and the idiom of kinship that the uBumbano is deploying today have come down to us as Zulu.

For the Ndwandwe to call up Zwide today is a manner of honoring one's ancestors that is 'traditional' and, therefore, Zulu. What prompted the turn to heritage then is that, as in Shaka's kingdom, the Zulu king is trying to manage this recall because of its politically dangerous nature. The reporting of the events to the Zulu king is in keeping with maintaining their Zulu appearance. However, the maintaining of old kinship bonds in the Zulu kingdom has kept open the possibility that the memory of being Ndwandwe as separate from Zulu would be revived and given more prominence in the way that we are seeing today. The ability of the Ndwandwe to deploy the idiom of kinship, to call up their Ndwandwe ancestors and to use the *ihubo lesizwe*, *izithakazelo* and *izibongo* defined as Ndwandwe has held in place the potential to subvert Zulu-centric versions of the past.

Licensed to Hold Potential for Subversion: Prose, Poetry, Circumstance

When Ntombi Ndwandwe says above they came together to talk about matters that affect them as people of the Ndwandwe "*isizwe*," she is putting to use the 'traditional' idiom of filiation that has come down to her as a Zulu way of speaking. The convening of the Ndwandwe as an *isizwe* under the auspices of the uBumbano is the release of the subversive

[42] For a detailed discussion of the interplay or local and settler discourses in the making of images of Shaka and Zulus, see Carolyn Hamilton. *Terrific Majesty: The Powers of Shaka and the Limits of Historical Invention.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998. Print.

potential of knowledge that was allowed to be perpetuated under Zulu authority. The identities of those who convened in 2010 and 2011 are not limited to those who are assumed to have been 'Zulu' since Shaka's time. The Ndwandwe *isizwe* overspills the compartmentalized 'tribal' identities that were normalized under apartheid. The unconscious part of the uBumbano's positioning of its project uses precisely this normalization of Zuluness as the identity of KwaZulu-Natal to present itself as reaching for Zulu traditionalism that heritage as promoted by the state is meant to be. It astutely hides the wider reach and potential disruption of Zuluness of the Ndwandwe project.

The deployment of the idiom of kinship and Ndwandwe oral artistic forms that each group was permitted to use under Zulu authority has kept intact knowledge of being Ndwandwe as distinct from the overarching Zulu identity. This idiom and its performative forms, especially *izithakazelo* and *ihubo*, have remained available to be put to use in a new context where the definition of the power of Zulu royalty and of the state are still in flux. The flux of the present moment in which the post-apartheid state is still under formation has opened a space for the emphasis of Ndwandwe identity. Kinship ideology has allowed the survival of the faint traces of that Ndwandwe identity that is now being given a new emphasis. The outlines of the identity are being made bolder and the history of the group is being spoken into the public record of the past.

Leroy Vail and Landeg White's theory of poetic license offers a useful way into understanding the permission that the Ndwandwe oral artistic forms have maintained for almost two hundred years. In *Power and the Praise Poem: Southern African Voices in History*, Vail and White posit that oral artistic forms operate similarly where they are used throughout southern Africa to mediate social relationships. They argue that the forms they discuss – including oral poetic forms and songs in Zimbabwe, Malawi, Swaziland, Mozambique and South Africa share a common aesthetic, "a set of assumptions about poetic

performance held throughout Africa… over a period of at least the past 150 years" (Vail and White 41). They have termed this aesthetic "poetic license" (41). Writers including H.I.E. Dhlomo, Pallo Jordan and others previously had insisted that in many southern African cultures the praise poet was the conscience of the society who voiced subjects' opinions of their rulers in poetry. They had seen the poets as licensed to criticize rulers for errant behavior on behalf of the rulers' subjects. In Vail and White's intepretation poetic license means "it is not the *poet* who is licensed by the literary conventions…; it is the *poem*" (56); "[i]t is *not* the performer who is licensed; it is the *performance*…" (57). The emphasis on the poem/performance being the privileged entity rather than the poet lead Vail and White to recognize that poetic license "permits, for instance, the assumptions legitimating the *imbongi* [to criticize the ruler in performance] to be carried not only into the village, the dancing arena, the homestead, the spirit-possession ceremony, but also into the plantation, the township, the mining compound, or the black trade union meeting" (57). Vail and White demonstrate how oral artistic forms ranging from Ndebele and Swazi royal praises to Chopi songs, have been adapted over time to, among other things, serve rulers and articulate subversive messages against those in power because of this poetic license.

To extend Vail and White's theory, poetic license in the case of the Ndwandwe as they existed under Zulu authority meant that in the 'Zulu' idiom of kinship, Ndwandwe oral artistic forms were licensed to recall Ndwandwe pasts before the advent of Zulu power over remnants of the Ndwandwe kingdom. The *izithakazelo* and *ihubo lesizwe* that have come down to us in the present were licensed poetic forms through which to recall and commemorate the ancestors of the Ndwandwe people as subordinates of Zulu power. Generally, the oral artistic forms of defeated groups were licensed to recall the ancestors of those people as secondary to the pre-eminent ancestors of the nation, who were the ancestors of the Zulu lineage. In my view, it was especially the *izithakazelo* – a record of significant

male leaders in the group's past – and *ihubo* – the hymn now sung on domestic ritual occasions in Ndwandwe homes and is assumed by people I have interviewed to have been the something like an anthem of the Ndwandwe nation (Buthelezi, interview with Mafunza and Chitheka Ndwandwe, May 5, 2008) – that have been transmitted to the present. The *izithakazelo* are used in daily speech as polite greeting. They are also used along with the *ihubo* during domestic rituals. I discuss these two forms in Chapter Four. On these ritual occasions, the *izibongo* (personal praises) of ancestors are also addressed to them. Notably, in Ndwandwe families of today, the *izibongo* that are known and declaimed are those of the lineage ancestors of the family that is conducting the rituals. At Ndwandwe events such as weddings where ancestors are addressed which I have observed since 2003, the *izibongo* of the putative ancestors of all Ndwandwe who are named in the *izithakazelo* are not used. They have largely fallen out of memory, including those of Zwide, the ancestor of all Ndwandwe to whom memory of a heroic Ndwandwe past most readily attaches, as I have demostrated.

It appears from this absence from usage of the *izibongo* of putative ancestors of most groups that are each defined as an *isizwe* is the result of the *izibongo* of ruling lineages being part of public culture. The *izibongo* of Zulu kings have been perpetuated in this way. In contrast, the *izibongo* of Zwide, the putative father of all the Ndwandwe, seem gradually to have fallen out of memory. With the Ndwandwe in the Zulu kingdom permitted to remember Zwide only in limited ways, his *izibongo* would no longer have been declaimed as openly as they would have been in his kingdom. Generally, the *izibongo* of leaders of chiefdoms that were incorporated under the Zulu are lost to memory. This suggests that in domestic recalling of ancestors, people addressed their own lineage ancestors. Former leaders were canonized as *izithakazelo*, but their *izibongo* appear to have diminished to the point of being forgotten even among their own descendants. An example is Mazwide Ndwandwe who is the Zulu king's designated Ndwandwe leader in Nongoma. The fortunes of Somaphunga, Zwide's son

through whom Mazwide traces his lineage, were linked to the Zulu. Somaphunga was elevated by Shaka to an *induna* (administrator) after his return from Zwide's new kingdom to seek refuge. It would not have been in the interest of Somaphunga and his adherents to emphasize Zwide. As a result, today Mazwide hardly knows anything about Zwide from whom he takes his name.

Nevertheless, the effect of the license to recall ancestors under Zulu authority is that it has allowed for the passing down of these forms as Zulu similarly to the language of kinship with which the forms are closely associated. The forms of all Ndwandwe – the *izithakazelo* and *ihubo* – and the *izibongo* of lineage ancestors recall these Ndwandwe ancestors as subsection of the Zulu nation. This limited license has ensured the continued use of these forms and their availability today to be mobilized to recall the Ndwandwe *isizwe*. The license of the poetry to recall the ancestors of the Ndwandwe means the forms freighted the potential to be used to raise this recall to a new level under changed political circumstances. This license has kept the forms available to be drawn on and infused with new meanings that exceed those that the forms have held all along under Zulu authority.

Most activists from KwaZulu-Natal confirm learning only recently of the existence of Nxumalo people in other provinces and in Mozambique as well as Ndwandwe, Nxumalo and Mkhatshwa people in Swaziland. Most have only become aware since the advent of democracy that colonial and apartheid ethnic segregation kept them separated from people who are their "*abafowethu nodadewethu*" (our brothers and sisters) in the idiom of kinship that is used in the uBumbano. In these other contexts, the forms continued to be used under different configurations of ethnic and national identity, but they also retained their identity and the identity of the people to whom 'Ndwandwe' pertained, however faint this latter

identity was.[43] The potential of these forms to call up a Ndwandwe group identity that exceeds the ethnic and national identities that exist in southern Africa has thus been in place all along. Looking back over their pasts in the present, the different sets of people that have coalesced into the uBumbano can look back over difficult pasts for them and their forebears now that systems of domination such as apartheid have ended. The various experiences of Zulu imperialism, British colonial rule and apartheid in South Africa, and the defeat of the Gaza kingdom and Portuguese rule in Mozambique can now be worked through and countered. Countering these historical experiences is taking the form of reaching for heroic pasts through which to erase histories of defeat and domination, and the shame that has gone with such experiences. This search for heroic pasts can draw on the oral artistic forms in order for the Ndwandwe to construct a different past for themselves in the present.

The search for heroic pasts can be detected in Mvangeli's explanation of some of the goals he hopes the uBumbano will achieve. Mvangeli makes the startling claim that "*Ngikhule kuthiwa singamaShangane. Cha abantu bakwaSoshangane abasuka kwaNongoma*" (interview, May 11, 2008). (I grew up hearing it being said that we were Shanganes. No, the people of the place of Soshangane are the ones who come from Nongoma). As a result of this confusion about their past as Ndwandwe, he says, their intention is to revive a Ndwandwe heroic past:

> *Kodwa ummongo wenkulumo esinayo nanamhlanje ukuba sithole indlunkulu yakithi noma sakhe indawo nomuzi la singakwazi khona ukugubha nokukhumbula… uZwide kaLanga kaMkhatshwa obakhe kwaNongoma ngob' uNongoma kuthiw' uNongoma nje, uNongoma umthetho wakhona akul' igama lendawo. Igama lomuzi wenkosi uZwide owayephila nonina. Nobuhlakani ubuqhawe bukaZwide babuncikene nonina.… Esibuka ukuthi bekungakuhle nje ngolunye usuku kesikhumbule yena uNtombazi njengeqhawe elagqamisa uZwide. Inkinga kwakuwukuthi sifuna ukuthol' ukuthi ukubusa kukaZwide kwakuhamba kanjani noma ekwehlulekeni kwakhe*

[43] Hamilton recorded Nxumalo *izithakazelo* in Swaziland in 1983 that is identical to those used by the Nxumalo and Ndwandwe in South Africa today. She was tracing some of the descendants of the remnants of polities that had been destroyed by the Zulu and investigating what memories of the past they held as well as their self-identities.

> *lalingasekho yini eliny' ithuba ayengalithola lokuthi nje naye abe nesiqephu phela laph' angabusa khona noma laph' engahlala khona, aziwe-ke njengeqhaw' elikhona esizweni sakithi. Izinkinga, izinto zihlanjululwe, njengabantu abafa ngengozi; inhlalakahle emantombazaneni, imendo icikizela.* (Buthelezi, interview, May 11, 2008)

> But the core of the matter we are talking about today is to find our [royal] house or to build a place and a homestead where we can celebrate and remember… Zwide son of Langa son of Mkhatshwa who had built [his home] at Nongoma as Nongoma is called Nongoma, Nongoma is in reality not the name of a place. It is the name of king Zwide's home who lived with his mother. And Zwide's wisdom and heroism were linked to his mother…. Which makes us see that it would be good that some day we just remember Ntombazi herself as a heroine who made Zwide prominent. The problem was that we want to find out how Zwide's rule was and whether upon his defeat there wasn't any other opportunity for him to have a piece [of land] where he could rule or where he could reside, and be known as a hero who was there in the *isizwe* of our home. Problems, things be cleansed, such as people who died accidentally, the welfare of girls, marriages not going well.

Mvangeli is interested in establishing a place of commemoration where the Ndwandwe past can be marked and celebrated as heroic. The celebration of a heroic past before and outside of the intervention of the Zulu in their history is precisely the aspect that offers a challenge to the official narrative of the province's past and is therefore politically harzardous for the continued upholding of Shaka, Zuluness and Zulu royalty. This commemoration could open the path to the fragmenting of the idea of the 'Zulu nation' as currently constituted in the discourses of the state.

Today we are witnessing in the events of the uBumbano lwamaZwide the release of this potential of the licensed oral artistic forms to subvert ethnic and national formations. The involvement of people from the former Gaza kingdom who identify Zwide as their putative ancestor means the ability of the forms to call up a Ndwandwe 'nation' the notion of which has been held in place by these licensed forms is now being released. It is a wider 'nation' than the 'Zulu nation' that has been assumed for Ndwandwe people in KwaZulu-Natal. The

potential to fracture the 'Zulu nation' under permitting political conditions by convening the 'nation' that exceeds the bounds of the Zuluness is indeed what we are seeing in progress in these gatherings. The conditions that make this possible have been set in place by the end of apartheid and of the homeland of KwaZulu, by the promotion of Shaka and Zuluness in the new political environment, as well as by perhaps the stability that has been achieved in Mozambique since the end of the civil war in 1992. The promotion of Shaka and Zuluness has sparked a reaction to it and to the making present of the history of the defeat of the Ndwandwe. This defeat has been repeated over and over each time Shaka's *izibongo* have been recited, as I showed in Chapter One. Sduduzo Nxumalo made the point about permitting political conditions when he spoke about how he started convening Ndwandwe people:

> *Umqondo [wokuhlanganisa amaNdwandwe] wawusunesikhath' eside uhlupha.... Ngesikhathi seminyeka yawo-90 kwangihluph' ukuthi thina sogcina sihlangana kanjani ngoba nakhu nje ngoba izwe likhululeka. Uma sikhumbula kahle izwe likhululeki... baphumile emajele iziboshwa, nom' ababeboshiwe, nom' ababevalw' umlomo, baphumile ngonyaka ka-1990... Ngesikhathi la bantu begijima la emgwaqeni, mina kimi kwakuvel' ukuthi ukuba nami kuyenzeka ngabe kugijim' abakithi sebekhululekile ukuba sesihlangene, sesiyazana. Bagijima kahle-ke laba bantu ngoba bona banab' abantu bakubo balapha ndawonye. Njoba bebuyile nje, bebuya ko-America, koTanzania, kuphi kuphi nezwe, ezindawen' ezining' e-Afrika yonke, abakith' ababuyile ngoba abaz' ukuthi uma beza la [kwaNongoma] bazofikela kubani. Uma befis' ukuvakasha la bazoza bathi bavakashel' ubani wakwabani, bemazi ngani. Iliphi-ke isu engiyolenz' ukuze laba bantu bakwaz' ukusivakashela ukuze nathi sikwaz' ukubavakashela. Kwase kuvela-k' emqondweni' ukuthi cha, akuhlangane thina lapha; ngizokwazi kanjan' ukwaz' abant' abasekudeni singazani thina khona la kule-South Afric' engakhe kuyo. Mhlambe khona lapha kwaNongoma nje, laph' engingowokuzalwa khona abant' abaning' abakhona angibazi. Sihlangana senz' ukuhlangana. Kushuthi kwalukhuni-ke ngaleso sikhathi sama-90s, kuma-91, '92, '93, '94; kwakunzim' ukuhlanganis' abantu ngob' abantu babesemqondweni wepolitiki, bebulalana bona bodwa ngob' omunye ngal' uyiNkatha, omuny' uyi-ANC, omuny' uyi-PAC, omuny' uyi-AZAPO, omuny' uyilokhuya, njalonjalo. Kwanzima-k' ukubahlanganisa. Kodwa kuthe ngo.. ngo-94, 95, kwase kuba ngcono-ke manje ukuba abantu sebeya ngokuya, sengiyakwaz' ukubahlanganisa, ukuxoxisana nabo.*
> (interview, April 5, 2008)

> The idea [of bringing Ndwandwe people together] had been troubling [me] for some time.… Around the [19]90 it troubled me how we would end up meeting as the country was becoming free. If we remember well the land became free… they came out of prison, the prisoners, or those who had been imprisoned, or who had been

> silenced, they came out of prison in the year 1990… When these people were running in the streets [in celebration], to me it occurred that if it were possible it would be people of my home running because we are finally free, we now know one another. These people are running well because they have the people of their families, they are together. As they have returned from America, from Tanzania, wherever in the world, from different places throughout Africa, those of our home have not returned because they don't know to whom they would be coming if they came back here [to Nongoma]. If they wished to visit they would come here to visit whom of what family name, knowing them how? Hence what plan could I make so that these people could come and visit us and we can visit them? Then it came to my mind that, no, we should meet here; how can I know people far away when we don't know one another here in this South Africa where I have my home? Perhaps right here in Nongoma even, where I was born, many people who are here I don't know. Meeting, getting to make connections. It happened that it was difficult in that time of the '90s – '91, '92, '93, '94; it was difficult to bring people together because people had politics in mind, killing each other because one on that side is Inkatha, another is ANC, another is PAC, another is AZAPO, another is that, etc. So it was difficult to bring them together. But in '94, '95, it got better now with people coming along, I could now bring them together, talk with them."

Sduduzo goes on to say that by 1995 people's focus on politics had subsided. The political violence that had wracked the country in the months leading up to the election, which I discussed in the previous chapter, had died down. Sduduzo was, therefore, able to start arranging meetings. However, there was still residual mutual suspicion among the people he gathered together because many knew one another's political allegiances (interview, April 5, 2008). As I discussed in the preceding chapter, this was the period of political turmoil and unprecedented violence as political ground was shifting. Inkatha was mobilizing Shaka and Zuluness to pursue its brinksmanship. After 1994, the tumult began to recede and people's political identities gradually became less important. The receding of these political identities made possible the recall of the pre-Zulu Ndwandwe *isizwe* as Zuluness itself gradually came to matter less and less. Moreover, the rigid division of people into 'tribes' under colonialism and apartheid began to recede as the 'rainbow nation' was being worked into being. It became possible for Zulu and XiChangana speakers to lose mutual 'tribal' suspicions fostered by the apartheid devide-and-rule strategy and begin to define themselves as kin. The oral artistic

forms that had been licensed as Zulu could now speak more openly about non-Zulu, pre-Zulu pasts. As people sought to work through the past and understand better who they were in the contemporary moments, old kinship bonds and group identities increasingly came to be emphasized. Slowly, from 1998 Sduduzo's efforts began gaining momentum as politics had further retreated to the background in the minds of the people he was targeting.

Deploying Kinship, Pushing the Boundaries of the Licensed

Asked how the uBumbano started, Ntombi Ndwandwe, Sduduzo Nxumalo and Mvangeli Ndwandwe, among others, all emphasized that their motivation was learning about their pasts. Ntombi said:

> *[Ukuhlangana kwethu] [k]usukela... kusukela ekujuleni nje kwe... kwethu thina besibongo sakwaNdwandwe.... Kushuthi sibona ukunyamalala komlando wethu thina bantu bakwaNdwandwe. Kushuthi-ke sase sizam' ukuthi sihlangane ngawo nobaba bethu abadala, ngoba sibancane, nobaba bethu abadala ukuthi eke besitshel' ukuthi bazini bona ngomlando wethu thina bantu bakwaNdwandwe. Kushuthi sazam' ukwenz' imihlangano-ke.*
>
> [Our meeting] comes from our depth as people of the Ndwandwe family name. It is because we see the disapperance of our history as people of kwaNdwandwe…. We therefore tried to come together about [this history] with our old fathers, because we are young, with our old fathers to ask them to tell us what they know about our history as the Ndwandwe people. So we tried to call meetings.

Ntombi perceives Ndwandwe history as having disappeared. She intimates an understanding of people of Ndwandwe people as being a distinct group when she refers to "*umlando wethu thina bantu bakwaNdwandwe*" (our history as people of kwaNdwandwe). She goes on to her clearest use of the idiom of kinship on which the uBumbano's effort relies. The people to whom she and the other initiators of one of the groups in Nongoma turned to their "fathers" to tell them what they know about the Ndwandwe past. Incidentally, the fathers did not know

much either. Sduduzo made similar points about the Ndwandwe past and also deployed the language of kinship in a similar way to Ntombi when he said:

> *Sisemkhankasweni nje-ke wokuxoxa ngomlando wethu njengabantu bakwaNxumalo, njengabantu bakwaNdwandwe. Njoba siqonda-ke ukuthi abakwaNxumalo bayikhohlwa lakwaNdwandwe. Kodw' okusemqok' esikhuluma ngakho nesith' asihlaganele kukho ukwazana ngoba isizwe sakwaNdwandwe kwathi ngokulwa kwenkos' uShaka abaningi bethu bahamba babheka koMozambique, babheka kwesakwaMthole, babhek' abanye bagcina bebheke le koMaphumulo. Bakhona nesibezway' ukuthi bakoCape Town… esifisayo futhi nab' ukudibana nabo, esingakadibani nabo. [Ubala izindawo esebeke baya kuzo.] Kodw' esikhuluma ngakho kakhulu, sibhekelel' ekwaziseni ukuthi singahlangana kanjani, singathuthukisana kanjani empilweni: imfundo, ezempilo, ezenhlalakahle; umnotho wezwe singawuthola kanjani thina njengesizwe sakwaNdwandwe kulelizwe lakithi kwaNdwandwe.* (interview, April 5, 2008)

> We are in a campaign to talk about our history as the people of kwaNxumalo, as the people of kwaNdwandwe. Since we understand that those of kwaNxumalo are the left hand house of kwaNdwandwe. But the important thing we are talking about and that we have thought to meet over is to know one another because the Ndwandwe *isizwe* (nation), when Shaka waged war, many of us left and headed to Mozambique, headed to kwaMthole, headed whichever way, and ended up going to places like Maphumulo. There are also some we hear are in Cape Town… that we still wish to meet with, with whom we have not yet met. [Lists places to which they've travelled as discussed above.] But what we are mainly talking about, we are looking to see how we can meet, how we can help one another develop in life: education, health, welfare; how we can get the wealth of the land as the *isizwe* ('nation') of kwaNdwandwe in this land of our home at the Ndwandwe.

Sduduzo's version of how the abakwaNdwandwe or those of kwaNdwandwe belong together is as an *isizwe* ('nation'). However, he goes a step further than Ntombi in stating that these Ndwandwe people are an *isizwe*, maintaining that what is important and what they are organizing around is *ukwazana* (to get to know one another) because the Ndwandwe *isizwe* (nation) dispersed to Mozambique, kwaMthole and as far as kwaMaphumulo near Durban and Cape Town when Shaka waged war. He then says they are looking for ways to help one another develop in matters of education, health and welfare, as well as how they can get their

hands on the wealth the earth has to offer as the Ndwandwe *isizwe* ('nation') on the land *lakithi* (of our home) as the people of kwaNdwandwe.

Two slightly differing notions of *isizwe* can be discerned in this part of Sduduzo's speech. First, he talks about the *isizwe* of kwaNdwandwe that fragmented when Shaka waged war. This way of referring to the Ndwandwe suggests that they were a nation prior to their war with Shaka's Zulu kingdom. In the same breath Sduduzo refers to the spread of the Ndwandwe to Mozambique, kwaMthole and other places. He then goes to say those mobilizing the Ndwandwe are attempting to find a way to help one another develop as the *isizwe sakwaNdwandwe* ('nation' of kwaNdwandwe or Ndwandwe 'nation') on the *izwe lakithi kwaNdwandwe* , the land that belongs to their home, the place of Ndwandwe.[44] Here the use of the term *isizwe* maintains that even though the nation fragmented, a nation of some sort is still in existence. The *isizwe* exists despite the people who belong to that nation no longer knowing one another or being connected to one another in any coherent way, hence the need to mobilize and organize Ndwandwe descendents to get to know one another again.

When it comes to the terms in which Sduduzo talked about the land, the phrase "*kulelizwe lakithi kwaNdwandwe*" suggests a conception of the Nongoma and its surrounds as still belonging to the dispersed Ndwandwe *isizwe*.[45] Elsewhere in the interview Sduduzo named the land over which Zwide ruled as covering the following area:

> *...elikaZwid' izwe ukusuk' oPhongolo lize liyoma ngeMfolozi. Emsamo nezwe ukusuk' eSikhwebezi lehle lishon' ezansi; ngoba kuze kuyoma ngolwandle ko St. Rucia [St. Lucia] njalo njalo ukubheka le ezansi lalibuswa nguNdwandwe lelozwe. Njoba sonke*

[44] Here the language of development derives from the ubiquitous talk of development in post-apartheid South Africa as the state attempts to help those who were disadvantaged by apartheid lift themselves out of poverty. Sduduzo's idea that a Ndwandwe *isizwe* can use its land to develop itself supports Jean and John Comarroff's thesis in *Ethnicity, Inc*. that ethnicity is the new currency in the era of the commodification of ethnicity. See Comaroff, John L. and Jean. *Ethnicity, Inc.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Print. However, this idea of ethnic entrepreneurship is not yet widespread in the uBumbano lwamaZwide.

[45] For some activists, this idea dovetailed well with the state's attempt at restoring land to those whose ancestors were deprived of their land under the Natives Land Act of 1913, which rendered 87 percent of South Africa reserved for white occupation and the remaining 13 percent black South Africa. In 2007, the uSuthu committee submitted a claim for the restoration of Nongoma and its surrounds to the Ndwandwe.

> *la makhosi la angaphansi kukaNdwandw' uma kungathiwa ubukhosi bakwaNdwandwe buyavuk' uma buvuka. Baninge-ke... yingakho singathi asibukhulumi nje ngoba kungasuswa yiphi inkosi kusale yiphi? ... umncele kwakuwuPhongolo vele. Behlukaniselana noGumede ngale ngezansi ngoba manje sekuthiwa kukwaNgwanase*. (interview, April 05, 2008)
>
> … the land is Zwide's from the Phongolo [river] all the way to the Mfolozi. Upcountry from the iSikhwebezi down south, because it's all the way to the ocean at St. Lucia all the way down that way it was ruled by Ndwandwe. Because all these chiefs are under Ndwandwe if the Ndwandwe kingship were to rise. There are many… that's why it's like we are not talking about it because which [chief] would be removed and which left?... the border was indeed the Phongolo. They were separated [by the river] from Gumede on the other side where it is now called kwaNgwanase.

The phrase "*izwe lakithi kwaNdwandwe*" holds the idea of the land as primarily belonging to a place called kwaNdwandwe. In the days of the Ndwandwe kingdom, the *ikomkhulu* (the place of the high one), that is, Zwide's main *umuzi* (homestead), would have been the place to which the land notionally belonged. This *umuzi* would have been the notional *ikhaya* (home) of all the subjects of the Ndwandwe king.[46]

Conversely, the term "*kwaNdwandwe*" then connotes that every part of the territory that was under the authority of the Ndwandwe king is kwaNdwandwe, the place of Ndwandwe, which is the home of all Ndwandwe in the same way as a homestead is a home.[47] To belong to the land, therefore, one had to belong to the Ndwandwe *isizwe* as the set of people who occupy Ndwandwe land as home. This is a concept of belonging that appears to be residue from a time when inhabitants of the area between the Phongolo and Thukela rivers lived in small chiefdoms based along different permutations of clientship defined in kinship terms that I have discussed above. "*Kithi*" (at our home) locates us (*thina*) in a place, that is, Nongoma in the way the Nongoma is talked about by members of the association today. *Abakithi* are those who belong in this home, hence all the people of the different family names said to be Ndwandwe being referred to as "*abakithi*." Philani Ndwandwe, talking

[46] See C. T. Msimang. *Kusadliwa Ngoludala*. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter and Shooter, 1975. Print. See especially Chapter 15, "Imikhosi yakoMkhulu."
[47] Today this is a common way of speaking about the area north of the Thukela as KwaZulu.

about deciding to hold the first joint meeting in 2006 of the different Ndwandwe groups that had been started independently on one another, in Nongoma, said, "*bathi ikomkhulu labo bebonke likwaNongoma*" (they all said the place of the place of their great one [headquarters] is here in kwaNongoma) and later, "*bathi bonke bangabalaph' ekhaya kwaNongoma*" (they all said they belong here at home in kwaNongoma). In this conception, Nongoma thus remains the putative home of all regardless of how the different *izibongo* (kinship group names) were incorporated into or split from the Ndwandwe ruling house.

Another key idea that the term "*kwaNdwandwe*" holds in place is that Ndwandwe is the founding father and the putative ancestor of all the people who are identified as belonging to kwaNdwandwe. In this case, the prefix 'kwa-' (at the place of) locates the place as that of a person, Ndwandwe. It is this Ndwandwe who is the ancestor of all who belong in the land of Ndwandwe (that is, all the different lineages that were under the political control of the Ndwandwe ruling elite). Ndwandwe's position as accepted ancestor leads Sduduzo to put it that the land is Zwide's as the latter was the last ruler who also is said to have extended the land of kwaNdwandwe through conquest. It is also this Ndwandwe from whom the other *izibongo* (family names) are said by all the people I have cited above to have issued in some unremembered time before Zwide's rule.

As the *isizwe* is dispersed today, the replication of the name *kwaNdwandwe* in reference to each home in which people of the Ndwandwe kinship group name live, names each of those homes the place of Ndwandwe, hence the home of the putative ancestor Ndwandwe, but also notionally the homes of every Ndwandwe person who lives and has ever lived. Each such Ndwandwe is called "*uNdwandwe*." This rhetorical gesture identifies every Ndwandwe thus addressed or referred to as three people in the same enunciation: s/he is the individual person thus named; a Ndwandwe like, and in unity with, any other who has ever been named such; and a descendent of or the same person as Ndwandwe the founder of the

kinship group. Importantly, therefore, in the moment that each person is referred to or hailed as Ndwandwe s/he is being identified as her/himself and with every other Ndwandwe who has ever lived. The act of referring to or hailing a person as Ndwandwe thus constitutes anew and/or maintains the existence of a Ndwandwe *isizwe*. It reinforces the sense of belonging together of people defined as Ndwandwe. This *isizwe* is a unity of the person being referred to or hailed, all other living Ndwandwe and all their ancestors.

In Chapter 4, I return to this identification of an individual with all other Ndwandwe in the oral artistic forms when they are used on ritual occasions and in daily speech, which fosters a ready audience for the uBumbano that, the activists think, just needs to be talked to in the right way to be persuaded to join the association's project. It is this *isizwe* that exists in rhetorical gestures of complex meaning which is being reconstituted today. For the Ndwandwe properly to reconstitute themselves as an *isizwe*, they also then need to call their putative father(s) by their *izibongo* (personal praises) in the manner Shaka and other Zulu kings are praised on Zulu 'national' occasions. However, Zwide's *izibongo* are largely forgotten. In the next chapter I examine how the putative father whom the memory of the Ndwandwe's heroic past upholds is recalled in the proper manner of remembering fathers in the present when his *izibongo* are no longer widely known. The other forms that have kept the notion of the *isizwe* intact – the *ihubo* and *izithakazelo* – are still in wide circulation. To close off this discussion of the idioms the uBumbano is using to position its project, I want to consider one major limitation of the idiom of kinship that has far-reaching implications for the future society, the formation of which projects such as the uBumbano's may inform.

Being an isiZwe, Not Remembering Mothers

One obvious limitation of the uBumbano's project I briefly want to draw out is that the 'traditional' idiom of kinship marginalizes women. In post-apartheid South Africa, gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution as part of overcoming the legacies of pre-colonial and colonial patriarchy which subordinated women to men as perpetual minors. Yet the traditionalism of uBumbano's project, visible in its reliance on the 'traditional' idiom of kinship, repeats the gender norms of patriarchal society that the Constitution attempts to alter. In our discussion on the place of the place of female ancestors in the performance of rituals and ceremonies, Chitheka and Mafunza Ndwandwe concurred that, as Chitheka put it, "*[Umuntu wesifazane izibongo zakhe zibizwa] uma sekwenziwa lo msebenzi wakhe* [*wokumbuyisa*]. *Nawe futhi nom' usukhuluma la, ngoba noma kusuke kuyoganiswa akabongwa yena*." ([A female's izibongo are called out] when the ritual [of returning her] is being conducted. You even, when you speak here, because even when a marriage ceremony is being conducted, she is not praised.] Chitheka and Mafunza's concurrence that the normative manner of addressing ancestors in family ceremonies does not include calling out women's *izibongo* points to a double marginalization of women that this 'traditional' idiom of kinship perpetuates. This marginalization inheres in the notion of being an *isizwe* that the uBumbano is mobilizing. In life women are neither fully part of the *isizwe* of their birth nor that into which they marry. Yet marrying is what is assumed they will do in order for the *isizwe* to perpetuate itself. In death they are not addressed as putative ancestors of the *isizwe*. They do not feature in the *izithakazelo*. As an ancestor, a woman is addressed either during the ritual performed for her three months after death; when her son conducts a ritual to remember her; or when she is asked to intervene during difficult births. She is not part of the public recall of the *isizwe*.

Even the occasion of the Zulu king's daughter's wedding seems to have been been used as an opportunity for the king to renew the ties of kinship and subjection between himself and the Ndwandwe who convened to arranged the ceremonial farewell. Nombuso, the king's daughter, was being sent off from her birth home to become a Chonco in 2005. The marginalization of women derives from 'traditional' social structures that place women in inferior positions relative to men. As Mark Hunter states in "IsiZulu-Speaking Men and Changing Households: From Providers within Marriage to Providers outside Marriage":

> Prior to colonial conquest in the nineteenth century, the life of isiZulu-speakers revolved around the self-sufficient African homestead, or *umuzi*. The centrality of the *umuzi* to production and reproduction is captured by the phrase *ukwakha umuzi*, roughly translated as 'to build a home', a patriarchal project established through marriage. Indeed, matrimony catapulted a man into the respected status of *umnumzana* (household head), a husband who might support several wives in his large *umuzi*. (Hunter 566)

In his position as a homestead head, the man would thus have authority over subordinate and subservient women and children who made up his *umndeni* (family). Thabisile Buthelezi argues in "Lexical Reinforcement and Maintainance of Gender Stereotypes in isiZulu" that even today the subordination of women is encoded in the Zulu language itself and hence women grow up with constant reinforcement of how to be a proper woman in later life (Buthelezi 386-400). Having suggested that most of the terms she analyses have had long usage in the Zulu language, Buthelezi posits that, "[I]n Zulu culture, like in many African societies, the dignity of Black womanhood is measured in terms of a female stereotype of the subordinate woman whose ultimate goal in life is universal wifehood and motherhood, over and above any and all the other roles that she may perform" (Buthelezi 389). She argues that "girls are socialized to believe that it is a privilege for a young woman to be chosen as a wife by a man" and that the continued use of gendered language valorizes women who conform to stereotype of wife and mother (390).

Buthelezi demonstrates that, in particular, terms for various stages through which a woman passes in her life cycle categorize women according to their relationships with men and give a positive value to submissive behavior on the part of women. These terms are *itshitshi* (a young virgin female at puberty stage), *iqhikiza* (a slightly older young woman than *itshitshi* who is a trusted peer leader who already has a lover), *ingoduso* (a woman for whom *ilobolo* gifts are in the process of being paid), *inkehli* (a senior *iqhikiza* who is about to get married), *umlobokazi/umalokazana* (a newly-wed female), and *umfazi* (a married woman) (393-4). Furthermore, Buthelezi continues, once she gets married, a woman is no longer addressed by her name: "She is under the guidance of her mother-in-law. She would become a wife (*umfazi* or *inkosikazi*)[48] as she gains her status in marriage by giving birth to a number of children" (Buthelezi 394). Words that define women who are aging but unmarried (*uzendazamshiya*/*umjendevu*), divorced (*umabuy' emendweni/iphumandlini*) and independent (*iqhalaqhala*), or who have children before marriage (*iqginkehli*), connote failure and deviance. What is more, a woman whose husband dies (*umfelokazi*) "loses her place completely in the second family unless she marries one of her brothers-in-law by a practice called *ukungenwa*" (397).

The language also celebrates manhood at every stage in life that expresses itself in bravery (*ingqwele* and *iqhawe*), having many female lovers (*isoka*), and being a good fighter (*ingqwele*). Even disparaging terms for a man who does not have many female lovers (*isishimane*) or is not married (*impohlo*), or who is unemployed (*umahlalela/uqhwayilahle*) or a coward (*igwala/ivaka*) do not carry negative connotations to the same degree as those for deviant females (396). For instance, a female who has many lovers is seen as promiscuous (*isifebe*/ *unondindwa/unoyile*) (397).

[48] Buthelezi points out that *inkosikazi*, which is commonly used today, originally only referred to the first wife of a man and only assumed the common meaning of wife that it bears today at a later stage.

From the above, it is highly significant that a woman grows up being prepared for marriage. She is disciplined by society through the language of daily speech to one day become a wife and a mother, subservient to a husband who has been schooled in being tough and in control of women and children, as well as to consider having multiple amorous and sexual relationships with women as proper modes of masculine behavior.[49] Buthelezi notes that although the ritual practices that mark the different stages of the development of girls are no longer performed in many communities, "the language that stigmatizes and punishes a girl who does not fulfill the stereotype is still used" (398). The marginalization of women is encoded in the language of daily speech. This language, I posit, extends to the use of oral forms in ceremonies and rituals.

Scholars have shown how male and female 'traditional' oral artistic forms are respectively performed in public and private spaces.[50] The marginalization of women is more glaring when one considers that they are not even mentioned in forms of an *isizwe* such as the Ndwandwe. The strictures on the proper position of a woman as being in marriage under the authority of men mean that when she gets married, she goes from being under the authority of her 'fathers' to primarily being under that of her husband and his male relatives, and that of his mother secondarily. Hence she is transferred from her birth home to her marital home. Upon getting married she stops being called by her name as Buthelezi suggests. She is referred to as Ma-, 'daughter of,' Ndwandwe or Zwide. She is thus partially of her marital

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[49] See Robert Morrell, ed. *Changing Men in Southern Africa.* London and Pietermaritzburg: Zed Books and University of Natal Press, 2001. Print. See also Thembisa Waetjen. *Workers and Warriors: Masculinity and the Struggle for Nation in South Africa.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004. Print.

[50] See Liz Gunner. "Clashes of Interest: Gender, Status and Power in Zulu Praise Poetry." *Power, Marginality and African Oral Literature.* Eds. Graham Furniss and Liz Gunner. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 185-196. Print, Isabel Hofmeyr. *"We Spend our Years as a Tale that is Told": Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chiefdom.* Portsmouth, NH; Johannesburg; London: Heinemann; Witwatersrand University Press; Jabulani Currey, 1993. Print, Nonhlanhla Dlamini. "Gendered Power Relations, Sexuality and Subversion in Swazi Women's Folk Songs Performed During Traditional Marriage Rites and Social Gatherings." *Muziki* 6.2 (2009): 133-44. Print, Nompumelelo Zondi, "Bahlabelelelani: Why Do they Sing?: Gender and Power in Contemporary Women's Songs," PhD, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2008, and Mzuyabonga Gumede, "*Izigiyo* as performed by Zulu women in the KwaQwabe community of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa," PhD, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2009.

home, but not entirely; partially of her birth home, but not quite. She will shuttle between these two places for the remainder of her life. Unlike her husband or her brother, she will not be remembered in the praise forms of the lineage by her descendents for generations to come. The mother-in-law whose authority she will be under will reproduce the social values and norms that have also kept her under the authority of men as well. The mother-in-law herself is 'Ma- so-and-so,' who has never attained the form of full recognition as subject to which men have access.

Moreover, only 'fathers' and where there are no fathers, 'brothers' lead rituals and ceremonies. It is a familial order in which seniority is both according to age and gender in so far as conducting ancestral ceremonies goes. A mother hence becomes her son's junior, for instance, when ceremonies are performed. He may address the ancestors, i.e. the dead male members of the extended family into which his mother is married, but she may not. She may only address herself to other women in case of a difficult birth. She always remains somewhat outside.

When it comes to the mobilization efforts of the uBumbano, the recall and rhetorical reconstitution of the Ndwandwe *isizwe* suggests an attempt to return to a proper social order which the defeat of Zwide's army and dispersal of his *isizwe* has negated for almost the past two centuries. The problems identified by Mvangeli Ndwandwe, Philani and Ntombi Ndwandwe, and Sduduzo Nxumalo in my interviews with them primarily included the failure of marriages of Ndwandwe women. The work of the uBumbano would thus be to restore appropriate social order by conducting the requisite rituals to *geza* (cleanse) Zwide and *ukumbuyisa* (to ritually bring him back home). This work is partly toward restoring this social order that is still encapsulated in the *izithakazelo* in which women are never named. This would be the order that obtained (or is thought to have obtained) in the Ndwandwe kingdom up to Zwide's defeat as it is memorialized in these *izithakazelo* that stop at Zwide's

generation.[51] The Ndwandwe women whose marriages fail or who do not get married at all are deviant in the normative language discussed by Buthelezi. The women who are members of the groups in Nongoma and Durban fit this definition. In the proper social order that putting Zwide to rest would reestablish, they would be successfully married and no longer an undesirable excess to the Ndwandwe *isizwe* as they are in their unmarried state. They, or future Ndwandwe women, would be married off into other *izibongo* (kinship group names) where they would be no longer fully Ndwandwe, but not fully something else. This is the way they are supposed to be according to the norms to which most members of the uBumbano subscribe. Other women from other groups would be a peripheral part of the Ndwandwe *isizwe*.

The leaders of the uBumbano are putting the idiom of heritage to use in set of complex rhetorical moves that downplays the challenge the convening of Ndwandwe poses to the remaking of the post-apartheid nation's mythology of its past. Such convening destabilizes the centering of Shaka and Zulu identity in KwaZulu-Natal as the heritage of the province. Yet when presented as heritage, this Ndwandwe convening is made to appear as if it is a celebration of a sub-identity of Zuluness because of the idiom of kinship that has come down to the present as Zulu in KwaZulu-Natal. The manner in which the group that is convening exceeds this unstable Zuluness is thus made invisible. The name of the group as well as the name of its annual celebration intimate the radical edge of the group's efforts. At the same time, the names de-emphasize this edge by implying their Zuluness, the implication of which is made possible by heritage being understood as traditionalism, which is understood as Zulu in the province. The notion of the Ndwandwe *isizwe* has been allowed to exist under Zulu

[51] Indeed there are many men who have lived and who are not named in these *izithakazelo*. However, they also could have been named. They are not named because they did not gain as much prominence and/or heroic status as those who are named. On the contrary, no woman even stood a chance of being named.

authority for almost two hundred years at the very center of the Zulu kingdom in Nongoma and surrounds. The oral artistic forms of the Ndwandwe have kept available the outlines of a Ndwandwe identity that is distinct from Zuluness. The license of these forms to recall Ndwandwe ancestors has ensured their availability as well as the availability of the notion of the Ndwandwe *isizwe* to be given new meanings today in a changing political environment. These new meanings offer a counter to how Shaka and Zuluness are being emphasized by the state in KwaZulu-Natal. Problematically, women remain marginalized by the 'traditional' idiom and practices of kinship on which the uBumbano's project in part relies.

In this chapter, I have argued that the idioms of heritage and traditionalism the uBumbano is mobilizing ring familiar and, as a result, do not appear threatening to the order that the state and Zulu royalty are attempting to maintain. They have provided a ready formula for the uBumbano's presentation of its project. What is more, the positioning of Shaka provides the Ndwandwe project with a ready model within the idiom of traditionalism of the appropriate modes of recalling and commemorating a figure regarded as the father of the 'nation,' Shaka in the case of the 'Zulu nation' and Zwide in the Ndwandwe case. The uBumbano's project thus relies on Shaka and Zuluness in multiple ways: first, as the official project which it is attempting to counter, second, as a model of how what the status of the Ndwandwe would be in the present had Shaka not triumphed over Zwide; third, as an example of how a triumphant past is recalled through a heroic figure; and, finally, as a model of how such a heroic founder is commemorated appropriately by calling out his praises on significant occasions. In the next chapter I go on to analyze how Zwide is being commemorated as this father of the 'nation' through his *izibongo* and how these largely forgotten *izibongo* have been reconstructed for the purposes of recall and commemoration.

Chapter 3

"Praises do not die out": Remembering Zwide kaLanga as the Father of the isiZwe

> "People die but their praises remain
> Their praises will remain and mourn them where their homes once were
> For the child of a man, the child which he has fathered, will declaim his praises, the father's praises. People are remembered by their praises at their old homes; they do not die out. There is no fear about declaiming the praises of the dead; a man who has died will have his praises declaimed by his sons."
>
> Mtshapi kaNoradu in 1918 (Webb and Wright, Vol. 4 73-4)

Saturday, August 06, 2011; Msebe, Nongoma

Today is the second Zwide Heritage Day. It picks up where last year's one, called the Zwide Heritage Celebration, left off. Whereas last year's event was held in Mbazwana near the border between South Africa and Mozambique, today's is closer to the centre of Zulu power. Msebe is in the Mandlakazi section of Nongoma. Mandlakazi is, of course, the section of the Zulu kingdom where Maphitha was put in charge of incorporating the Ndwandwe into the Zulu kingdom after the defeat of Zwide's forces. How many, if any, people know this piece of the history of the area is unclear. I have never heard it mentioned. What stands out is the historic tension in the Zulu royal house between the Mandlakazi house and the uSuthu, which today is led by Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu. The tension derives from Maphitha's son, Zibhebhu's struggles against the uSuthu section in Cetshwayo and Dinuzulu's reigns in the 1870's and 1880's.[52] Despite the reconciliation ceremonies between the two sections of the

[52] After the termination of the institution of Zulu monarchy by the British at the end of the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879, Zibhebhu was used as a foil for Cetshwayo when the latter was returned to a reduced portion of his former territories in 1882 following a period of exile. Cetshwayo's territories had been divided into 13 chiefdoms after he was exiled, with one of these under Maphitha. This chiefdom was not returned to Cetshwayo nor was the portion between the Mhlathuze and Thukela rivers, which was made a buffer between the Zulu kingdom and colony of Natal. Cetshwayo and Zibhebhu went to war with each other, the latter eventually triumphing. The matter was eventually decisively settled in Cetshwayo's successor, Dinuzulu's reign in 1888 with the help of Boers on the uSuthu side. See John Laband. "The Rise and Fall of the Zulu Kingdom." *Zulu Identities: Being Zulu Past and Present.* Eds. Benedict Carton, John Laband, and Jabulani Sithole. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008. 93-5. Print.

Zulu royal house arranged by the current Zulu king a few years ago, the historic split remains palpable. The holding of the Zwide Heritage event in Mandlakazi abounds in significance. It is perhaps unintended significance; but it is discernible nonetheless and the organizers of the event are well aware of it. The public explanation by the organizers is that the event could not be taken back to last year's venue as the area is still mourning the passing of *inkosi* Justice Nxumalo who hosted the celebration; he died soon after seeing through the successful inauguration of what is foreseen as an annual celebration of Zwide and Ndwandweness. The *inkosi* in Wasbank near Ladysmith felt he was not ready to host the event this year as had been the word that he would all along until a few weeks ago. Who knows what politics may have come into play to make him reluctant? And so we are here.

Like last year, representatives from the Gaza kingdom are here all the way from Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces, and from Mozambique. This year they have gone one better than last year: they have brought their *iSilo* (lion). He is said to be directly descended from Zwide kaLanga. Samuel Nxumalo, the former Prime Minister of the Gazankulu bantustan, is here again in his old age. They have also brought a whole retinue of *amakhosi nezinduna* (chiefs and headmen). We later learn about them all as they get seated according to protocol that is invented as we watch at the start of the event.

Well before the start of the formalities, I arrive with two of the uBumbano activists to whom I am giving a lift. Today they are on the margins, spectators like me for the most part. It is a Nxumalo-led event. The event is being handled by the big politicians and business people from here, eMpangeni, Durban and Pietermaritzburg. After our arrival, the two activists and I loiter in the yard of the school where two marquees stand: a big one for the general public and a smaller one with a stage for dignitaries. The two Ndwandwe greet the many people they spot whom they know from their involvement in mobilizing for these events. "Zwide," "Mkhatshwa," "Sothondose," and "Mnguni" keep ringing out all around

me. After a while people start streaming out of the school yard toward a nearby home. We follow. We learn when we arrive that we are at Mavela Nxumalo's home, the base for the event. At Mavela's the event is opened according to local custom: important Ndwandwe present are taken into the cattle enclosure and shown the cattle that are to be slaughtered for those who are being commemorated today. The ancestors being commemorated, primarily Zwide, are addressed and told that the event is about to commence. The address ends with the speaker shouting, "Zwide!" The crowd repeats, "Zwide!" We then walk back to the school yard and into the larger of the two marquees for the day's speeches and entertainment while the dignitaries file into the smaller marquee.

Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* are prominent throughout the event: "Zwide kaLanga", "Mkhatshwa", "Nkabanhle", "Sidinane", etc. People greet one another as "Zwide." It is assumed that all present are members of the Ndwandwe *isizwe* ('nation') that has been called to gather here today. Nobody's name matters much. It is their Ndwandweness that is at the forefront. Even I get addressed as "Zwide" several times during the day by people I've been meeting at these events since 2008. It becomes a joke that I look like a Ndwandwe and so should just be adopted and change my family name. A call and response of *izithakazelo* opens and closes the event. The *izithakazelo* are called out and the crowd responds each time one of the three people directing proceedings needs to silence it; when a notable rises to come and address the crowd or s/he returns to her/his seat; and when Zwide kaLanga is saluted. The *izithakazelo* also pepper the speeches of almost every person who addresses the crowd. The crowd is all called "amaZwide" or addressed directly as "maZwide" or "boMkhatshwa", "boNkabanhle". The *ihubo lesizwe* is sung immediately after the opening prayer to offer it as 'our' way of *ukukhuleka* (paying obeisance) to 'our' ancestors. But most importantly, Zwide is central to the presence of all those who have gathered here today; the event revolves

around him as name, as symbol, as myth. Khaya Ndwandwe calls out his *izibongo* early on and keeps repeating them throughout the three hours of speeches.

* * *

In the epigraph above, Mtshapi kaNoradu maintained in an interview with James Stuart on April 01, 1918 that a man's praises do not die because his descendents address them to him as a form of remembrance after his death. Elsewhere, Mtshapi elaborates: "Of the ancestors, each one is praised with his own praises. Praises do not die. They survive, and when a man's sons slaughter cattle they declaim his praises, saying, 'Eat, father!', and break into his praises. That is how important they are" (Webb and Wright 89). The addressing of praises to ancestors during domestic rituals today is informed by the same assumptions about maintaining relations between the living and the dead that underlie Mtshapi's statements. Moreover, the similar but more elaborate addressing of praises to dead chiefs and kings – such as those of Shaka kaSenzangakhona during 'national' ceremonies and celebrations – is driven by the assumption that they are fathers of their *izizwe* (nations).[53] The Ndwandwe of the uBumbano lwamaZwide are trying to constitute themselves as an *isizwe* ('nation'). They are looking to commemorate their ancestors, especially Zwide as the founding father, in what they understand to be the appropriate mode of commemorating the father(s) of the 'nation.' Addressing the *izibongo* to the father that is publicly seen in Zulu 'national' commemorations today is considered old and traditional, that is, this is how fathers have always been commemorated; it is the Zulu way as I have demonstrated in the previous chapter how the

[53] Chitheka Ndwandwe suggested in an interview that the Zulu king and his *izimbongi* are addressing the fathers of the *isizwe* (nation) on behalf of this nation when the king speaks and the *izimbongi* declaim the praises of kings from Shaka's predecessor Senzangakhona through the current king on national ceremonies such as the umKhosi wokweShwama (First Fruits Festival) in Mbongiseni Buthelezi and Anthony Ndwandwe. *Interview with Chitheka and Mafunza Ndwandwe.*, April 28, 2008. Christian Msimang makes the same suggestion. See *Kusadliwa Ngoludala*, p. 126.

traditional has come to be considered Zulu. In keeping with the customary way, Zwide's *izibongo* should, therefore, have been called out when he was addressed in the cattle enclosure to begin the event. Yet none of the elders present knew them, it appeared. Khaya Ndwandwe – a man in his thirties who later called out the *izibongo* at several points during the proceedings in the marquee – arrived during the opening in the marquee back in the school yard. He spontaneously started calling out the *izibongo*, which was a welcome surprise to the organizers.

In a situation when the putative children of a father of the *isizwe* ('nation') generally no longer know his *izibongo* (praise names) what happens when they try to remember him in the proper way? What do the father's putative descendents do when the *isizwe* has become scattered over time, when the prevailing political order has long replaced the addressing of this *isizwe*'s fathers by those of the fathers of the new *isizwe*, the Zulu 'nation,' into which fragments of the old *isizwe* were incorporated? After all, for many Ndwandwe Zwide is now merely a name of a supposed ancestor. Because little is known about Zwide, the name lends itself to the mythologizing of the Ndwandwe kingdom as always having been more powerful than the Zulu state which is said to have defeated it by dint of unhonorable defections and deception. Zwide is being made into a symbol of all that is wrong for the Ndwandwe *isizwe* and of how it went wrong. How do those trying to reinsert Zwide as the venerated father of the 'nation' remember him in the appropriate poetic form – *izibongo* – by which fathers are ritually and ceremonially remembered when his *izibongo* are almost entirely forgotten?

In this chapter I conduct a comparative analysis of three sets of Zwide's *izibongo* declaimed by people with ties to the uBumbano lwamaZwide. Two were called out at the two Zwide heritage events described above. The third version was recited by Mzomusha Ndwandwe in an interview Andile Ndwandwe and I conducted with him on August 29, 2003

as part of my Master's project.[54] Mzomusha was an *imbongi*, praise poet, who was active in the mobilization efforts that led to the formation of the uBumbano until his death in 2004. I begin with Khaya Ndwandwe's version from the 2011 Zwide Heritage Day. I go on to Bhekani Ndwandwe's version, which he performed at the first annual Zwide Heritage Celebration held in November 2010. I then turn to Mzomusha's version, which I recorded at his home in Nongoma, not far from where the 2011 Heritage Day took place. An analysis of these three sets of *izibongo* illuminates how vastly differing *izibongo* all lay claim on the same basis of being old and traditional to being those of Zwide. I show how different processes, including print, invention using currently available materials, and potential oral transmission, have made available in the recent past these three different versions of the *izibongo*.

Re-oralizing the Printed Word: From James Stuart's informant(s) to Khaya Ndwandwe

At the 2011 Zwide Heritage Day, Khaya Ndwandwe called out these lines several times:

UNonkhokhel' abantu bahlatshwe,
Umashesh' afika kuMashobana,
Iqili abalihlabe lashon' ilanga.
Ezindleleni ufana nayiphi na?
Ufana nevundlayo.
Emithini ufana namuphi na?
Ufana nomnyamathi?
Ezinyokeni ufana nayiphi na?
Ufana nenyandezulu.

Threatener of people with weapons until they are stabbed,
He who quickly reached Mashobana,
The wily one who was stabbed until the sun went down,
Among the paths which one is he like?
He is like the circuitous one.
Among the trees which one is he like?

[54] The resulting thesis was titled "'*Kof' Abantu, Kosal' Izibongo'?:* Contested Histories of Shaka, Phungashe and Zwide in *Izibongo and Izithakazelo*" (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2004).

He is like the essenwood tree.
Among the snakes which one is he like?
He is like the nyandezulu.

Khaya repeated these lines at various times while directing the proceedings. At one point while waiting for the speaker he had called up to take the stage, he gave a gloss of these lines: Zwide was called “Pursuer of people until they are stabbed” because he attacked one of his own sons. He also attacked and killed Mashobana of the Khumalo, hence his being quick to get to Mashobana. He is likened to a circuitous path because of his craftiness; to the essenwood tree because of his hardiness and versatility in statecraft; and to the mythical snake *inyandezulu* (viper) that causes storms when it flies from one base to another because of his incomprehensible might.

The *izibongo* Khaya recited and interpreted are a shorter version of those James Stuart published in one of his series of five readers for school children on Zulu history and custom in the 1920’s. The *izibongo* appeared in *Ukulumetule* in 1925. They were reprinted in *Izibongo: Zulu Praise Poems* in 1968, which contains a range of *izibongo* that were collected by James Stuart, translated by Daniel Malcolm and polished for print by Trevor Cope. The same *izibongo* were republished by Christian Msimang in *Kusadliwa Ngoludala* in 1975. What Stuart’s publication of the *izibongo* in 1925 tells us is that a version or several versions of Zwide’s *izibongo* was/were still extant at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century when Stuart was interviewing old men about Zulu history. While it is not possible to say in what settings the *izibongo* were being used, how widespread knowledge of them was, or from whom Stuart recorded them, we can see that Stuart’s recording of these *izibongo* has made them available to be reproduced in *Izibongo* forty-three years later and in Msimang’s *Kusadliwa Ngoludala* fifty years after Stuart had first published them. Since Khaya maintains he learnt the *izibongo* from Msimang’s book, the author’s

reproduction of them has made it possible for Khaya to draw on this version 36 years after Msimang's reproduction, 43 years after Cope's publication, 86 years after Stuart's publication of the poem and 186 years after Zwide's death in 1825. Thus, even as the sustained telling of the history of the Ndwandwe kingdom had came to an end by the beginning of the twentieth century (Wright 217), this version of Zwide's *izibongo* has survived until today. It is this version that Khaya has learned and is attempting to popularize in the context of remembering Zwide as his father and the father of the other *abakwaNdwandwe* or *amaNdwandwe* whom the uBumbano had reached and persuaded to gather. Notably, the *izibongo* have survived despite the absence of any coherent knowledge about Zwide and the Ndwandwe.

The *izibongo* do not tell us much about Zwide. As recited by Khaya, the first line suggests that Zwide threatened war and eventually attacked those he threatened. The second line celebrates Zwide's swift attack on Mashobana of the Khumalo. The Khumalo of Mashobana were one of the neighbors of the Ndwandwe whom the Ndwandwe incorporated. Mashobana was the father of Mzilikazi who went on to found the Ndebele empire that eventually settled in what is today south-western Zimbabwe in the 1850's. The rest of the *izibongo* proceed by posing a question and then answering it. The *imbongi* first asks to what type of path Zwide can be likened. He is then likened to a circuitous path. The second question asks to which tree he can be likened. The answer is the essenwood tree, which, in Stuart's gloss in *UKulumetule*, was commonly used to make household utensils such as *amathunga* (milk pails), *izingqoko* (meat platters) and *izicamelo* (headrests) (Stuart 58). The final question is to what snake Zwide can be likened. The answer is the mythical *inyandezulu*. Stuart glosses *inyandezulu* in his footnotes as "Le nyoka i idhlozi elikulu; li inkosi" (This snake is a supreme ancestor; it is a king) (Stuart 58).

Msimang's brief interpretation of the *izibongo* feeds the mythology about Zwide by foregrounding his confrontation with Shaka as follows:

> *Ezibongweni zikaShaka imbongi ilila ize ibe nesilokozane ngempi kaShaka noZwide. Ngabe uZwide lona kwakuyinkosi enjani?Ababaningi abangasilandisa ngalendoda kepha izibongo zisigcinele umlando wayo njengoba* [imbongi] *yayimbona ukukhalipha nokuhlabana kwakhe. Zisuka nje imbongi ihlaba isenzo sakhe sokubulala ngobuqili amakhosi akhelene nawo njengoDingiswayo kaJobe, ewagolela emzini wakhe eLangeni, ngalesi senzo imbongi imbiza ngokuthi uNkokhel' abantu bahlatshwe. Wabe engachithi sikhathi lapho efuna ukuhlasela, ngalokhu washeshe wadlondlobala waba indlondlo noma inyandezulu, iphinde futhi imbongi imfanise nomnyamathi phakathi kwemithi. Umnyamathi umuthi olukhuni kakhulu futhi uyintelezi emangalisayo… Ubuqili bukaZwide ayibuhlanganiseli mlomo imbongi, ikakhulukazi ekubulaleni kwakhe uDingiswayo wakwaMthethwa….* (Msimang 374)

> In Shaka's izibongo the imbongi laments until he sobs about the war between Shaka and Zwide. So what kind of king[55] was this Zwide? There are not many who can tell us about this man, but the *izibongo* have preserved his history for us as [the imbongi] saw his intelligence and triumphs. At the outset the imbongi criticizes his act of killing through deception many neighboring 'chiefs' such as Dingiswayo son of Jobe, luring them to his homestead at eLangeni, for this act the *imbongi* calls him 'Threatener of people with weapons until they are stabbed'. He did not waste time when he wanted to attack, and so he soon became powerful and stood erect like a snake [known as *indlondlo* [viper] or *inyandezulu*], the *imbongi* also likens him to the essenwood among the trees. The essenwood tree is a very tough tree and it is an amazing prophylactic [that renders witchcraft ineffective]… Zwide's deceptiveness is commented on with surprise by the *imbongi*, especially his killing of Dingiswayo of kwaMthethwa....

Khaya was thus able to borrow part of his interpretation from Msimang and use it to remember the father of his *isizwe*, the Ndwandwe. To be sure, Zwide is a father who, for many in the *uBumbano*, has until now not been remembered in the way enunciated by Mtshapi: his children have not been able to address his praises to him when they slaughter cattle and say, "Eat father" in the known past. His *izibongo* have thus not been declaimed appropriately as they should have been in any Ndwandwe *umuzi* during ceremonies and rituals where cattle are slaughtered and ancestors addressed. They have thus largely been

[55] I use 'king' to signal the regard with which Zwide is considered. Later I put 'chiefs' in quotes because the term is an inadequate translation of the word *amakhosi*. However, from the leader of a small polity and one of a state as large as the Zulu, they are all referred to as *amakhosi* in Zulu. Chiefs as we know them today are a colonial creation, much downgraded from the position of autonomous leaders before the advent of European colonialism in southern Africa. As such, to use 'chiefs' to refer to precolonial leaders is anachronistic. Yet 'king' seems to impute too much power and status to these leaders. The palatable term in official discourses is 'traditional leader,' which is equally inapplicable to a context when such leaders were autonomous and not jostling for position with other forms of government as is the case today.

forgotten. However, his *izibongo* have not died. Rather than Mtshapi's mode of preservation by iteration, it is Stuart's act of recording in writing that has rendered the *izibongo* available for Khaya to deploy in his quest – that took him to the Zwide Heritage Day of 2011 – to learn and disseminate information about the Ndwandwe past and to honor his Ndwandwe predecessors.

The discovery of forgotten texts in order to make certain (often dubious) claims in the present or the positing as authentic oral texts derived through untainted verbal transmission of compositions that turn out to be borrowed from an odd colonial written source, is a well-documented phenomenon. Following the publication of a reconstruction in 1970, the flowering of different versions of the Mandinke epic "Sunjata" in West Africa that lay claim to being the original is a case in point.[56] In South Africa, there has been a protracted feedback loop between writing and orality in the narration of the past of Zulu-speaking people. Alfred Bryant's *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* (1929) was used extensively by Reggie Khumalo on his long-running radio program on Ukhozi FM as authentic history of the Zulu-speaking people of South Africa. Moreover, Khumalo went on to publish his own book, *Uphoko* (1995), which repeats much of Bryant's erroneous mythology. The book elides Bryant with Khumalo's own extensive interviewing in KwaZulu-Natal in a way that suggests the oral transmission of the history presented. Even though Khumalo mentions Bryant as one of his sources, he does not indicate what he has drawn from Bryant. Such a use of Bryant ignores or is unware of critiques of Bryant's invention advanced by, among others, John Wright in a series of articles that include "A. T. Bryant and 'The Wars of Shaka'" (1991). Contrary to claims of authenticity, Khaya readily admitted Msimang as his source in a conversation approximately a month after the Zwide Heritage Day.

[56] See Ralph A. Austen, ed. *In Search of Sunjata: The Mande Oral Epic as History, Literature, and Performance.* Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999. Print.

What we see then in Khaya's calling out of these *izibongo* is that in a time when the passing down of the putative father's *izibongo* through repeated ritual and ceremonial usage has stopped, the putative scion has searched written records. He has found a version of *izibongo* that he now renders in performance. At the Heritage Day, he oralized a poem that has come down to him through print. Significantly, he did not acknowledge Msimang's book as his source on the day. I suggest that this failure to acknowledge his source created a tacit understanding in his audience that he was reciting Zwide's old *izibongo* which had been transmitted in the traditional manner that Mtshapi lays out in the epigraph above.[57] The poem has come down whole, albeit short, from almost one hundred years ago. Stuart focused on Shaka and the Zulu kingdom in his enquiries. Zwide entered the picture somewhat incidentally because the story of the rise of Shaka and his kingdom could not be told without some discussion of Zwide. What is clear from the biographical information on Stuart's 'informants' in *The James Stuart Archive of Recorded Oral Evidence Relating to the History of the Zulu and Neighbouring Peoples* (vols. 1-5, eds. Colin De B. Webb and John Wright) is that the bulk of them were from Natal. That is to say in the main they were from groups that had lived far away from the Nongoma-Magudu centre of the Ndwandwe kingdom or had moved south across the Thukela river during upheavals associated with either the reign of Shaka or his successors. This means that whoever Stuart recorded his version of Zwide's *izibongo* from is likely to only have known little about Zwide and the Ndwandwe kingdom. Hence the existence in print of only a few lines of Zwide's *izibongo* from the early twentieth century is no measure of how widely they were known and used. Two other poems have come down to the present through other trajectories.

[57] As I show below and in chapter 4, print is not commonly understood to be a method of preserving and/or transmitting this type of poem among users of oral artistic forms. When someone like Khaya can recite Zwide's izibongo, it is assumed that these have been handed down to him through word-of-mouth transmission. It is ironic that Stuart thought of himself as recording dying Zulu traditions. The strictly Zulu, i.e. of Zulu royalty, traditions of oral arts on which he was focused are far from dead. Instead, it is incidental *izibongo* like Zwide's that are almost entirely forgotten and that he did preserve.

The New is Traditional: Bhekani Ndwandwe and the Audacity of Invention

In contrast to Khaya's *izibongo*, Bhekani Ndwandwe's recitations at the 2010 Zwide Heritage Celebration were more elaborate. Unlike Khaya's unanticipated recital of the few lines of *izibongo* that he knows, Bhekani's *izibongo* were deliberately inserted at the beginning of the event. Bhekani had been invited by the organizers of the event. In line with a longstanding wish of one of the leaders of the uBumbano, Philani Ndwandwe, an *imbongi* was finally present to remember Zwide appropriately by calling out his *izibongo* at a gathering convened by the association. As the group of notables entered the marquee where the Heritage Celebration was being held singing the *ihubo* "*Nang' uMzila sebeyamsola,*" Bhekani took to the podium with microphone in hand and started by calling out two Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* – "Zwide" three times and "Sothondose" – before declaiming Zwide's *izibongo*. He performed for approximately two minutes before ceding the podium to the master of ceremonies. His performance is absent from the video of the event produced by the company contracted to video the event because the white videographers seem not to have realized the significance of the songs and praises. As a result, I obtained the *izibongo* a few months after the event when I was finally able to get Bhekani to commit to an interview. When I asked him to recite Zwide's *izibongo* on March 29, 2011, he recited the following:[58]

UNonkonkela abantu behlatshwe, abanye bengamhlabi. *1*
Inkunzi ebebeyibanga beyiphikisa.
Ubholokoqa kwabempind' amshaye.

[58] I have organized the lines of poetry performed by Bhekani and, below, Mzomusha for readability on the page based on the Zulu language text. The organization of the English translation follows this initial organization, which is based on two principles:
i) some line breaks are based on breath units, hence the indented lines that span more than one line on the page before the *imbongi* paused for breath in his performance; others are based on logic where the *imbongi* stretched the same breath unit over indirectly connected ideas;
ii) the logic of the lines is signalled by capital letters and full stops: lines that are linked by logic to preceding ones begin with lower case letters; where they are not indented it marks the beginning of a new breath unit.

Inkunz' enyukele kweliphezulu, yaduma njalo.
Ingonyam' engengonyama, beyithuka beyicokofula.
Ingonyama ebebeyithuka ngezingazi zamadoda, inyukela kweliphezulu.
Uchibiyampongo ngokaNtombazi, ngokaLanga, ngokaLudonga, ngokaMavuso.
Inyon' ekhale phezu kweliphezulu yandiza yaduma zonk' izinkalo,
Yaphinde yandiza yagwaca yanjengesagwaca,
Yaphinde yandiza yagwaca yanjengenyoni, yanjengoncede, yanjengejuba.
Ugobongo beluphehla bethi alusoke lunuke;
Lunuke kweliphezulu, lwanuka nkalo zonke,
Baphinde baliphehl' igobongo, zaqhamuk' izindaba,
Baphinde baliphehl' igobongo, zaqhamuk' izindaba,
Baphinde baliphehl' igobongo…
Amakhand' amadoda, amakhand' amakhosi
Ebebewanyukela kweliphezulu,
Akhale nkalo zonke, engingeke ngisawabala:
Ngisho elikaMzilikazi kaMashobana, engisho awakwaMthethwa, angish' awakwaMqungeba
Aphelela kuwo lomuzi wakwaNdwandwe kwaDlovunga, umuzi wakwaLindizwe, umuzi wakwaNongoma, oqanjwe nguy' uZwide, umuzi wakwaNongoma oqanjwe nguy' uZwide.
Ngifela phakathi.
Inkunzi yakithi, ingoba makhosi!
Inkunzi yakithi, ingoba makhosi!
Inkunzi yakithi…
Zwide!

He who threatens people with weapons until they are stabbed, others do not stab him.
The bull that they were fighting over, contradicting it.
The open-handed one[59] they struck repeatedly.
The bull that rose up to the highlands, and wandered all the time.
The lion that is not a lion, that they were insulting and smearing.
The lion they insulted about the blood of men, it went up to the highlands.
Chibiyampongo he is of Ntombazi, he is of Langa, he is of Ludonga, he is of Mavuso.
The bird that gave a cry from the high ground and then flew and resounded over all the plains,
And it flew and ducked and was like a quail,
And it flew and ducked and was like a bird, it was like a fantail warbler, it was like a dove.
The medicine calabash that they churned saying it would not smell;
It smelt in the highlands, and it smelt all through the country,
And they churned the calabash again, and matters arose,
And they churned the calabash again, and matters arose,
And they churned the calabash again…
The heads of men, the heads of kings
That they sent to the highlands
They cried across all the plains, and I cannot count them anymore:
I am talking about that of Mzilikazi son of Mashobana, I am talking about those of

[59] The term "*ubholokoqa*" appears in Shaka's *izibongo* and is translated as "the open-handed one" in Trevor Cope. *Izibongo: Zulu Oral Literature.* London: Clarendon Press, 1968. Print.

kwaMthethwa, I am talking about those of kwaMqungeba,
They piled up at this Ndwandwe homestead of kwaDlovunga, the homestead of kwaLindizwe, the homestead of kwaNongoma, named by Zwide himself, the homestead of kwaNongoma, named by Zwide himself.
I now keep quiet.
The bull of our home, the defeater of kings!
The bull of our home, the defeater of kings!
The bull of our home…
Zwide!

The first thing that stands out when Bhekani's *izibongo* are compared to Khaya's/Stuart's version is that Bhekani's only share the opening line with the former: "*UNonkonkel' abantu behlatshwe*" (Threatener of people until they are stabbed) which is translated in *Izibongo: Zulu Praise Poems* as "He who crouches over people that they might be killed" (Cope 128).[60] The line is different in that, in my transcription of Bhekani's recital, Stuart's[61] opening line is now modified in Bhekani's version with the words "*abanye bengamhlabi*" (others do not stab him). In *Izibongo*, the modification is "*yena bangamhlabi*" (but he is not stabbed). The modification sets the subject, Zwide, apart as not having been stabbed like those he threatened. The next two lines build on this image, line 2 naming him a bull that is contradicted and line 3 positing that he is attacked repeatedly. The epithets in these opening four lines develop an image of Zwide as one who triumphed in the face of a great deal of adversity: he pursued people until they were stabbed, but that was because he had been provoked by those who had been contradicting him (the bull) (line 2). Moreover, his actions are justified because he was attacked repeatedly (3). Hence he is the bull that had to retreat to

[60] To be sure, the phrase is formulated slightly differently: Bhekani said "unonkonkel'…" whereas in Stuart's *UKulumetule* it's "unonkokel'…", and "behlatshwe" instead of Stuart's "bahlatshwe". These are merely variations of pronunciation and do not affect meaning. My translation of the same phrase as performed by Khaya above is "Threatener of people with weapons until they are stabbed." I have retranslated the phrase as Daniel Malcolm's rendition did not make sense, deriving the obscure verb "*khokhela*" from C. M. Doke and B. W. Vilakazi. *Zulu-English Dictionary.* Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1948. Print.

the highlands in order to gain a vantage point from which to counter all that 'they' unleashed on him – both verbal and physical attack.

Line 5 continues constructing this image of Zwide: he is a lion that is not a lion and he is insulted and smeared. However, in the next line Zwide becomes an unmitigated lion, one that is insulted about the blood of men. Lines 7 to 16 continue building up the image of a mild Zwide who now gets eulogized as a bird (*inyoni*) and as a calabash (*igobongo*). A key development in these lines is the expansion of the subject's reach. Once the bull has climbed to the highlands (perhaps Nongoma, which sits on a hill) in line 6, Zwide becomes a bird that flies over all the plains. This flight is followed by another image of expansion: the smell generated by the stirring of the healing medicines in the calabash also spreads through the whole country. It is after this expansion that the lion's ferocity, about which Zwide as the lion was said to be insulted in line 7, is then celebrated. Lines 16 to 20 extol Zwide's conquering of leaders of the Khumalo, Mthethwa, and Qungebe, and returning their heads as trophies to his *imizi* (homesteads) of Dlovunga, Lindizwe and Nongoma. By the end of the *izibongo*, the mild bull of the early part of the poem has turned into "*ingobamakhosi*," the bender (that is, defeater) of kings. Stealthily, the subject has spread his influence across an expanse of territory. The *izibongo* suggest that once this influence is secure, Zwide then unleashes his ferocity against his enemies, subduing rival leaders whose heads are taken as trophies. Given that it is commonly accepted among Ndwandwe people to whom I have spoken since 2003 in South Africa and Swaziland that Zwide's *izibongo* are generally no longer known, where then does Bhekani's elaborate version of Zwide's *izibongo* come from? Bhekani claims they came to him in a dream. The claim to have received *izibongo* through dreams is a common one

[61] Neither in Stuart's *UKulumetule* (1924) nor in Trevor Cope's *Izibongo: Zulu Praise Poems* (1968) is there any acknowledgement of the person(s) from whom Stuart collected this version of Zwide's *izibongo*. As a shorthand, therefore, I refer to this version as Stuart's.

among *izimbongi*. It is used to claim legitimacy as an *imbongi* whose vocation is sanctioned by the ancestors. A closer examination points to Bhekani's sources.

Several aspects point us to the sources from which Bhekani may have derived material with which to address Zwide. Two aspects of *izibongo* stand out as key in this regard. The first is a set of obscure terms that appears in these *izibongo* and those of two Zulu kings, Shaka and Zwelithini. "*UBholokoqa*" (the open-handed one) appears in an extended epithet in Shaka's *izibongo* about the confrontation between Shaka and Zwide:

> *UBholokoqa bazalukanisile*
> *Zalukaniswe uNoju noNgqengenye*
> *EyakwaNtombazi neyakwaNandi;*
> *Yayikhiph' eshoba libomvu,*
> *Ikhishwa elimhlophe lakwaNandi.* (Cope 89)
>
> The open-handed one, they have matched the regiments,
> They were matched by Noju and Ngqengenye,
> The one belonging to Ntombazi and the other to Nandi;
> He brought out the one with the red brush,
> Brought out by the white one of Nandi. (Cope 88)

The metaphor seems mistranslated in Cope's *Izibongo: Zulu Oral Poems*. The subject of the first line is left unstated; it is not regiments. The rest of the metaphor refers to that unstated subject. One needs to look more closely at the verb "*bazalukanisile*" to decipher the subject. The verb suggests two bulls (*izinkunzi*) have been put to fight each other. Confirmation that the metaphor is about bulls comes in the fourth line in the form of the noun "*[i]shoba*" (bushy tail [of a bull]). Nevertheless, what is significant is that Bhekani uses this epithet from a metaphor about Shaka's confrontation with, and triumph over, Zwide to say something about Zwide being repeatedly attacked. Moreover, Bhekani uses "*inkunzi*" (bull) in the lines immediately before and after the line in which this term appears. As in Shaka's *izibongo*, he has pulled together this term with the image of a bull. The bull recurs at the end of his *izibongo* where it has turned from being assailed to subduing kings.

Bhekani further uses the term "*ingonyama*" (lion) in lines 5 and 6. In the first instance of the use of this term he names Zwide a lion, but immediately makes a rhetorical retreat from imputing the mightiness of a lion to Zwide, calling him a lion "*engengonyama*" (that is not a lion). As pointed out above, in the praise in the next line dispenses with this hesitation and calls Zwide a lion. Crucially, this again seems to be a subtle borrowing not just narrowly from Shaka's *izibongo,* but more broadly from those of Zulu kings since Shaka. In the context in which Bhekani, who is in his early 20's, has learnt his craft as an *imbongi,* a Zulu king is respectfully referred to as *ingonyama* or *isilo*, both meaning lion. The current Zulu king, Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu, is respectfully referred to by another word for lion, *imbube*. Before becoming a generic name for Zulu kings, this term seems to have first appeared as a praise name in Shaka's *izibongo* as all extant versions of the *izibongo* of leaders before Shaka in today's north-eastern South Africa do not refer to their subjects by this term.[62]

A further borrowing from extant *izibongo* of Zulu kings is evident in the same line in which Zwide is named a lion that is not a lion. The phrase "*beyithuka beyicokufula*" (that they were insulting and smearing) comes from the current Zulu king's *izibongo*:

> *Unesibindi Buthelezi ngokukhuthazel' umntakaNdaba*
> *Bemthuka bemcokofula*
> *Beth' uZwelithini kayikubusa, kuyikuba nkosi*
> *Kanti bamgcoba ngamafuth' empepho yakithi kwaMalandela.* (Mdletshe, *Wena weNdlovu,* track 3)

> You are brave Buthelezi for encouraging the offspring of Ndaba
> When they were insulting and smearing him
> Saying Zwide would never rule, would never be king
> Whereas they were anointing him with the oil of the incense of our home at Malandela's.[63]

In these lines the *imbongi* celebrates Zwelithini's accession to the Zulu throne when some had been insulting and smearing him, saying he would never rule. According to the *imbongi*, those who were insulting him were anointing him with the oils of the *impepho* herb, an

[62] See, for instance, the *izibongo* of Dingiswayo, Ndaba, Jama and Senzangakhona in Cope's *Izibongo*.
[63] My translation differs slightly from Liz Gunner and Mafika Gwala's in *Musho!: Zulu Popular Praises* (55).

important plant that is burned when the ancestors are being addressed. Hence the king's detractors were anointing him with the blessings of the ancestors the more they insulted him. This praise in Zwelithini's *izibongo* is itself a remaking of lines from Shaka's *izibongo* whose ascent is similarly celebrated:

> *UTeku lwabafazi bakwaNomgabhi,*
> *Betekula behlez' emlovini,*
> *Beth' uShaka kakubusa kakuba nkosi,*
> *Kanti unyakana uShaka ezakunethezeka.* (Cope 91)
>
> The joke of the women of Nomgabhi,
> Joking as they sat in a sheltered spot,
> Saying that Shaka would not rule, he would not become chief,
> Whereas it was the year in which Shaka was about to prosper. (Cope 90)

In the above sequence of borrowings and remakings, we see Zwide likened to Zwelithini who is likened to Shaka. In the case of the remaking of Shaka's *izibongo* in Zwelithini's, the convention of sampling from the *izibongo* of a predecessor is used to establish or emphasise the legitimacy of the incumbent. Political legitimacy was kept secure for later leaders by their *izimbongi* through performing on ceremonial occasions both the *izibongo* of older leaders to whom the current leader was heir and those of the current leader derived and modified from their predecessors'.[64] In Bhekani's case, I posit, the likening of Zwide to Zwelithini and, via Zwelithini, to Shaka whose *izibongo* have been remade in Zwelithini's, makes the claim that Zwide has been denigrated as a lion that is not a lion (line 5). However, for Bhekani, Zwide is a lion, that is, a king on a par with Zulu kings to whom the term *ingonyama* has come to exclusively refer in KwaZulu-Natal. The basis for denigrating Zwide is enunciated as the blood of men he spilt (line 6). The poem overturns this negative view of Zwide's collecting of the heads of his opponents by going on to celebrates these heads as a symbol of Zwide's greatness.

[64] See Carolyn Hamilton, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu Kingdom," Master of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, 1985, 67-8.

A final point of similarity between Zwide's and Shaka's *izibongo* is the sense of large territory over which the subject ranged during his life and career. Zwide is "the bird that gave a cry from the highlands and flew and resounded over all the plains" (line 8). In the next two lines this bird then kept flying in the manner of different kinds of birds, nimbly darting from one place to the next. Notably, the three birds to which Zwide is likened are not aggressive. This image of quick movement across an expanse of country is expanded in the extended metaphor that follows immediately after that of the flying bird: the *igobongo* (calabash) that gets churned (lines 11 to15) produces a smell that spreads through the whole country. Zwide is the calabash that is churned. It is this churning, this provocation of Zwide that draws out of him a response that gets talked about throughout the country. Each time the calabash is churned, each time Zwide is provoked, *izindaba* (grave matters/news) arise (lines 13 and 14). In line with the uBumbano's remaking of Zwide as having been at the receiving end of Zulu aggression, Bhekani makes the claim that a peaceful Zwide was prodded and provoked into action. Where these actions took place, that is, which country it is through which the consequences of the provocation of Zwide reverberated, is left vague. Again, this is significant as I show below.

In a similar vein, Shaka's *izibongo* speak of a wide geography over which he conducted his raiding for cattle, as well as his conquest of territory and subjection of peoples. The places and people are named and Shaka is lauded for conquering specific people in specific places. Some of the people he attacked are Zwide himself, Phungashe of the Buthelezi (line 89), Phakathwayo of the Qwabe (lines 21-3), Macingwane of the Chunu (72), and Gambushe and Faku of the Mpondo (128-9). Places include Mthandeni (line 30), Dlebe (47) in Mahlabathini close to a hundred miles away from Mthandeni, Mabedlana (48) also in Mahlabathini, Thukela (66) a hundred miles to the south of Mahlabathini, as well as Nkandla (273) and Ngome (417). If the *izibongo* Bhekani calls Zwide's are so similar to Shaka's in the

way they name the places Zwide traversed and in the metaphors and images they use, how do we account for the scantiness in their detailing of the places that Zwide conquered or settled?

It is my contention that the vagueness about territory in Bhekani's version of Zwide's *izibongo* is a result of little being known about Zwide in the present, the context in which, it seems, Bhekani has composed these *izibongo*. The similarities suggest that Bhekani has found a way of making Zwide seem majestic in the same way as Shaka by borrowing metaphors and images from Shaka's *izibongo*. However, it is equally as possible that the similar lines traveled in the opposite direction: from Zwide's to Shaka's praises as we are going to see in the case of the third version of Zwide's *izibongo* below. As Hamilton maintains, "The Zulu king was reputedly one of the architects of his own image, collecting praises for himself that he liked. According to Mbokodo kaSokhulekile [one of James Stuart's informants], Shaka took for himself the praise 'The one whose fame resounds even as he sits,' after he heard it used in respect to the Mbo chief Sambela" (Hamilton 50).

Nevertheless, in Bhekani's usage the metaphors are much less developed and lack detail about Zwide's activities in life. What Bhekani knows about Zwide are the commonly used fragments I have gathered in interviews since 2003: Zwide was a powerful leader who subdued many others; he was made powerful by his mother, Ntombazi's advice and/or *ubuthakathi* (witchcraft); his territory covered the stretch between Nongoma and Magudu, where he had several homes; he killed Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa and fought a protracted war against Shaka; and he died a wanderer somewhere unknown, resulting in the suppression of the Ndwandwe in the Zulu kingdom into which fragments of Zwide's kindom were incorporated. It is also commonly said that the heads of the leaders Zwide captured would be cut off and used to adorn Ntombazi's house while the bodies were thrown to hyenas she kept

in another house.[65] Some of these fragments are indeed confirmed in Shaka's *izibongo* and were made much of by Bryant's often fantastical history of north-eastern South Africa, which were peddled by Khumalo, as I have suggested above, and many writers after Bryant. These inventions were repeated in school text books until a few years ago. It is these scant details on Zwide that we see fused with metaphors that are familiar to Bhekani and his audiences in their contemporary context.

We can detect this scant historical detail in a few places in Bhekani's *izibongo* for Zwide. Bhekani names Zwide's genealogical connections when he says "*Uchibiyampongo ngokaNtombazi, ngokaLanga, ngokaLudonga, ngokaMavuso*" (Chibiyampongo he is of Ntombazi, he is of Langa, he is of Ludonga, he is of Mavuso) (line 7). Along with Ntombazi, Bhekani names Langa, Ludonga and Mavuso as the people from whom Zwide is descended. The latter three names come from the commonly used *izithakazelo* of the Ndwandwe: *Zwide kaLanga, wena kaLudonga lukaMavuso* (Zwide son of Langa, you [son] of Ludonga of Mavuso). Later in the poem, Bhekani attempts to give specificity to the geography covered by Zwide. After naming some of the groups from which came the heads of men and of kings he states he is not going to enumerate – that of Mzilikazi son of Mashobana, and those of the Mthethwa and the Mqungeba (lines 19-20) – he goes on to say: "*Aphelela kuwo lomuzi wakwaNdwandwe kwaDlovunga, umuzi wakwaLindizwe, umuzi wakwaNongoma, oqanjwe nguy' uZwide, umuzi wakwaNongoma oqanjwe nguy' uZwide*" (They piled up at this Ndwandwe homestead of kwaDlovunga, the homestead of kwaLindizwe, the homestead of kwaNongoma, named by Zwide himself, the homestead of kwaNongoma, named by Zwide himself) (lines 21-3). We see two moves of reassessing Zwide being made in thus naming Mzilikazi and the groups from which the heads came, and in naming where the heads went.

[65] These are the bare details that were repeated across interviews with Mzomusha, Nicholas and Philemon Ndwandwe in 2003; Mkhuzeni, Mqotheni, Chitheka and Mafunza Ndwandwe, among others, in 2008 and on many a public platform such as meetings of the uBumbano and even Khaya's interpretation of the Zwide's *izibongo*.

First, Bhekani further weaves some of the known historical detail into his *izibongo* for Zwide. He erroneously names Mzilikazi, leader of a section of the Khumalo, as having been killed by Zwide when Mzilikazi migrated from territory neighbouring the Ndwandwe and eventually settled near Bulawayo in today's Zimbabwe. Instead, it was Mzilikazi's father, Mashobana, who was attacked by Zwide as Stuart's version of Zwide's *izibongo* states. Bhekani also uses the central narrative of any recollection of the early nineteenth century – that Zwide put Dingiswayo to death and that action brought him into conflict with Shaka who had been under Dingiswayo's tutelage – to claim Mthethwa scalps for Zwide. It is not clear how he comes to include the Qungebe or Ngobese as one of the groups from which heads came. Seemingly he assumes that as neighbors of the Mthethwa they were in alliance with the latter and were thus also defeated in the Mthethwa-Ndwandwe confrontation.

The second move – that of naming Zwide's *imizi* (homesteads) of Dlovunga, Lindizwe and Nongoma – goes to the heart of the uBumbano's move to insert into the record that which has been forgotten or erased. The three places that are reclaimed as having been occupied by Ndwandwe *imizi* are within twenty-five miles of one another in territory that is being rhetorically reclaimed as having been Ndwandwe in these *izibongo* and in discussions and speeches at public events convened by the uBumbano. As discussed in the Introduction, the Nongoma homestead is said to have been where the town by the same name stands today. Today Lindizwe is a village approximately ten miles south of Nongoma and Dlovunga is a village fifteen miles north of Nongoma. By insisting that homesteads were named by Zwide, the *izibongo* reclaim the homesteads from their present-day identification as Zulu names as a result of being in the area that is the centre of the Zulu kingdom. Nongoma became the centre when the Zulu kingdom shifted north in Mpande's reign following armed confrontation with Afrikaner immigrants, as discussed in the Introduction.

Bhekani's imagery, metaphors and his vocal style suggest that he has tapped into the commonly known *izibongo* of royalty. These *izibongo* are commonly known because of their ubiquity. Zwelithini and Shaka's *izibongo* can be heard on radio, particularly in the lead-up to Zulu 'national' festivals such as the uMkhosi woMhlanga (Reed Dance Festival) every September, the uMkhosi weLembe as the commemoration of Shaka every Heritage Day is called, as well as the uMkhosi woSwela (First Fruits Festival) every December. They also appear in the songs of some popular *maskanda* singers such as Mfaz' omnyama.[66] Many Zulu speakers have grown up with these *izibongo*, learning them in school and internalizing them as central to their Zulu identities. They are part of daily speech when 'Zulus' are greeted by radio presenters such as Ukhozi by even a newsreader like Jabulani Sibisi.

In his praising of Zwide, Bhekani thus subtly deploys images commonly associated with Shaka and subsequent Zulu kings, images that speak of might and speed and catalogue successes. He uses the images available to him in combination with the scant historical detail on Zwide and the Ndwandwe kingdom to thicken the figure of Zwide in the way that *izibongo* generally do. Moreover, Shaka's *izibongo* have offered him some of the historical detail that he uses. In composing and performing these *izibongo*, Bhekani takes the battle for the Ndwandwe past into the symbolic realm through poetry in a safe space provided by the recall of Zwide at a Heritage Day celebration. As discussed in Chapter Two, his poetry is licensed to celebrate Zwide as the putative ancestor of all Ndwandwe, the father of the *isizwe* or nation in a discursive field populated by Shaka and Zulu-centric histories that are constantly being reproduced. However, there is a limit placed on this poetic license by the context in which Bhekani and the uBumbano find themselves laboring. Official state and Zulu royalist and nationalist discourses refuse to entertain any questioning of the position

[66] Gunner and Gwala point out that singers like Mahlathini and the Mahotela Queens, Thisha, Mzikayifani Buthelezi and Clive, and Ernest Shelembe included Shaka's *izibongo* on recordings and in performance in the 1970's through the early 1990's when the book was published. See Liz Gunner and Mafika Gwala. *Musho!: Zulu Popular Praises.* East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1991. Print.

accorded Shaka and the Zulu kingdom in reconstructions of the South African past. On public fora such as radio discussion programmes, those who do not subscribe to Shaka- and Zulu-centric versions of the past are usually dismissed as being racist if they are white or speaking their white masters' words if they are black. Bhekani and the uBumbano's new way of (perhaps inadvertently) challenging the dominance of Shaka is a radical move, more radical than even they imagine in the context of the normative assumption of Zuluness for Africans in KZN. The move borrows metaphors, images and historical details from Shaka's *izibongo* and turns them against Shaka- and Zulu-centric productions of the past.[67] This is a subtle struggle for, and over, the past in the realm of poetry.

What the *izibongo* Bhekani recited demonstrate is the striking result of what happens when people seek a past for themselves in the present in a discursive space that is heavily filled with narrative and poetry that place the Zulu kingdom and its leaders in the center. The result is that any attempt to recall their putative ancestors must symbolically engage with these Zulu-centric productions of the past. The radicalism of Bhekani's *izibongo* arises precisely because he is unconscious of his symbolic overturning of the centrality of Zulu-centric versions of the past. He is merely attempting passionately to celebrate his Ndwandweness without being conscious of some of the implications of this move I demonstrate in Chapter Four. What we end up with in these *izibongo* is a new composition which, in contrast to how Shaka's *izibongo* from which Bhekani draws, came about over time when different *izimbongi* selected events and actions about which to compose praises, little is remembered about Zwide, but the bareness of the detail is productive of an audacious new creation. The sparseness of the detail allows us to arrive at a very similar point to our inability to interpret some of the detail in Shaka's *izibongo*: this version of Zwide's *izibongo* seems

[67] My reading of Bhekani's *izibongo* as doing such radical work would most likely be uncomfortable for him since his ambition is to follow in the footsteps of his mentors, N.J. Dlamini and Buzetsheni Mdletshe, and become an official *imbongi* of the Zulu king. Moreover, he has praised a Zulu nationalist of note in Jacob Zuma, the current president of South Africa.

dense with allusion and rich in metaphor and imagery from long ago that we can no longer interpret. On the contrary, these *izibongo* possess no such depth. Further comparison between Shaka's and Zwide's *izibongo* will clarify this point.

Critics from Trevor Cope to Duncan Brown have demonstrated in their interpretation of Shaka's *izibongo* that some of the lines of the poem defy interpretation by those who encounter them long after Shaka's time.[68] Many of his contemporaries within his kingdom would have been able to read the seemingly obscure references in the *izibongo* because knowledge of the events or actions about which *izimbongi* crafted lines of praise would have been common public knowledge at the time or would be publicized when the *izibongo* were declaimed. Hence generations of interpreters of Shaka's *izibongo*, especially Cope, have attempted to shed light on many allusions in the *izibongo* with the result that Cope's text is accompanied by a mass of footnotes carrying what detail James Stuart, Daniel Malcolm and Cope himself were able to collect. On the other hand, Bhekani's composition that he identifies as Zwide's *izibongo* seems to also carry a dense set of allusions to which we no longer have access because of historical distance and the problem of transmission due to the workings of Zulu, British colonial, Union of South Africa, and apartheid power. Unable to interpret the allusions in Bhekani's version of the *izibongo*, we are left to assume that some images and metaphors refer to Zwide's actions and to historical events that are lost to us because the story of Zwide was suppressed, as many leaders of the uBumbano would have us believe, or due to normal memory loss over time as in any other society.

Yet it is clear that these *izibongo* are newly composed. Bhekani has used materials that are available to him today. These materials have historically been transmitted and remade within the power structures of the past two hundred years: Shaka's image has been made and remade, construed and fought over in different ways. The Church of the Nazarites; the trade

[68] See Cope, *Izibongo: Zulu Praise Poetry* and Duncan Brown. *Voicing the Text*.

union poets of the 1980's; *maskanda* musicians; as well as people who have used different *izibongo*, *izithakazelo* and related genres of oral art in domestic and public address, have all variously played their parts in making these images and metaphors available to a young *imbongi* to draw on them today. By borrowing from Shaka's *izibongo*, Bhekani is able to make his version of Zwide's *izibongo* sound old and traditional like Shaka's are assumed to be. After all, Bhekani had been invited because "*wazi izibongo zikaZwide*" (he 'knows' Zwide's *izibongo*), according to Philani. 'Knowing' signals an assumption that Bhekani is versed in reciting Zwide's *izibongo* as they have been since Zwide's lifetime, not that he has composed a version to fit the demands of the present. It assumes that the *izibongo* have reached Bhekani via a chain of transmission such as the one conceptualized by Mtshapi in talking about how a man's *izibongo* are passed down.

Bhekani's composition is in line with Leroy Vail and Landeg White's observation about the invention of tradition in the *izibongo* of Sobhuza II, king of Swaziland from 1921 to 1982: "The most recent praises [of Sobhuza II]… are substantially new praises containing only a trace of older content. As we demonstrated … with Zulu *izibongo*, and to a lesser extent with Sotho *lithoko* (praises), it is possible to trace the development of particular praises through different periods from the 1840s onwards, showing how metaphors familiar to both poet and audience are progressively modified as the past is reinterpreted within the framework of common tradition" (Vail and White 165-6). In the case of Zwide's *izibongo* in this instance, the common tradition is that of 'Zulu' *izibongo* as constructed over almost two hundred years by both the iteration of the *izibongo* of Zulu royalty and the discussion by writers of the tradition of praising in northeastern South Africa as Zulu. In Bhekani's invention, the metaphors familiar to the audience have been transposed almost wholesale from Shaka's *izibongo*, rather than progressively modified. The past is indeed reinterpreted, but it is reinterpreted in one fell swoop rather than progressively. This contrasts with what

Vail and White see in a similar genre of oral poetry from Lesotho, that is, the *lithoko* of Moshoeshoe, the founder of the Sotho kingdom in the early nineteenth century: “Moshoeshoe *is* his praises and the praises *are* history. Reassessments of history must proceed from the “evidence” by reinterpreting the stock of metaphors.…” (Vail and White 64). In Zwide’s *izibongo* we see the importation of a stock of metaphors familiar to the audience. This importation serves to rhetorically elevate Zwide to a similar level to Shaka.

Ultimately, therefore, in the context of the Ndwandwe event at which he performed them, Bhekani’s version of Zwide’s *izibongo* may appear to be in line with Mtshapi’s conception of how men’s *izibongo* survived. Seemingly the event to remember Zwide was an occasion for his putative sons (and daughters) to slaughter cattle and declaim, “Eat father!” Bhekani’s performance thus would read as testament that the praises of Zwide have not died; they have been repeated over time when Zwide has been addressed somewhere. Yet it is clear from how Bhekani claims to have come by these *izibongo* through a dream that they have not passed to him in an unbroken chain from Zwide’s lifetime.

Hence, Mtshapi has been proved wrong by the lessening of the usage of the *izibongo* due to reorganization of society in the twentieth century and their near-total forgetting in the present. This forgetting has prompted Bhekani to compose new *izibongo*. Hence under certain historical circumstances the praises of a man do die, as would likely have been the case with Zwide’s. If not for Stuart’s recording, Zwide’s *izibongo* may entirely have been forgotten over time as Ndwandwe descendents became part of new political and cultural formations such as Zulu, Swazi, Gaza/Shangana, and others.

The *izibongo* have not died, but not because they have continued to be declaimed in the manner of which Mtshapi speaks. They have survived because a colonial official like Stuart, while engaged in collecting Zulu history, considered Zwide important enough to how

the Zulu kingdom in which Stuart was interested had come into being to enter him into the written record. Moreover, some of his informants knew something about Zwide, leaving us with a trace of Zwide's *izibongo*. Hence while it is still considered the appropriate way to remember a father to call out his *izibongo*, it may no longer be possible to call out versions of the *izibongo* that have been transmitted by declamation since Zwide's own time. Rather, to fulfil the requirement of properly remembering and honoring Zwide, it appears that it is now necessary to either rediscover his *izibongo*, as in Khaya Ndwandwe's case, or to innovate by composing new *izibongo* in the manner that Bhekani Ndwandwe has done. However, a third version of Zwide's *izibongo* suggests a different trajectory to those discussed above of how Zwide's *izibongo* came to be available for deployment in the mobilization efforts of the uBumbano.

"UZwide akayanga kwaSoshangane": Mzomusha Ndwandwe and Older Poetic Revision of the Past

When we turn to Mzomusha Ndwandwe's praise of Zwide from 2003, a very different poem emerges:

Uchakide kaMnjololo, umgob' usin' etsheni, umagwaca ngezidinjana, umphephethi wezinduku zabafo.
Unonkokhel' abantu behlatshwe njengezinkomo,
abanye behlatshwe emazibukweni.
Imambana yakithi eGudunkomo eyazibuth' emaGudu amabili,
izibuthe kwelincane yaye yazibutha kwelikhulu.
Unoshosh' ahambe ez' eyefike kwaSoshangane.
Utho olubonwe ngabafazi behlakula babaleka bawashiy' amageja, bathi sibon' utho lukaZwide benoLanga.
UZwide bath' wayekwaSoshangane kanti uZwide akayanga kwaSoshangane,
izinyoni zodwa ezaya kwaSoshangane.
Inhlendla kaNonyanda ephumela kweziny' izinhlendla.
Wadl' uMatiwane wasemaNdebeleni wamqumba phansi koludumayo [uthuli] akwandaba zalutho.
Umgwazi kaqhaqhwa uqhaqhwa zinkonjane.

Waye wadl' uBhungane ezalwa kwaHadebe wamqumba phansi koludumayo kwandaba zalutho.
Udwal' elibushelelezi ngoba lishelelise kabi lishelelis' amadoda agund' izicoco azibeka phansi ngoba lashelelis' uDingiswayo ezalwa kwaMthethwa ezalwa nguJobe wamqumba phansi koludumayo, wamenzel' izinyoni zezulu,
wamnik' iziqabo zezinkomo zezithole wambamba wamjika ngapha wamjika ngapha wamnikel' izithole ezazimabal' amhlophe zameqa zamxovaxova.
UNdwandwe bathi asiyekumbona.
Umgwaz' akaqhaqhwa uqhaqhwa zinkonjane ngoba zona zazingaphakelwa muntu yena wayephakelwa kwabo ngoba wayephakelw' endlini kwabo,
ngoba wayephakelwa ngunina uNtombazi intombi yasemaNdlovini, izinyoni zazingenamphakeli.
Dlana simuke siye kwelakithi kwaSoshangane
siyothola izinyembezi zamadod' amadala agund' izicoco azinikela kwelikaMdolomba kwelakwangwenyakazi.
*Ubantu abaholwa abanjengamahlahla… (*Ayi uzobuy' ungiphinde ngoba sekuthi angikhale. Kube sekuthi kangikhale. [Andile: Ibinda nkosi]*).*
Ubantu abaholwa (kabanjengezinkomo) abanjengamahlahla.
Unonkokhel' abantu behlatshwe emazibukweni bebe njengezinkomo.
Abanye abantu behlaba izinkomo zamadoda, umambana evuke ezihosheni yaphelel'ezihlangwini zabafokazana.
Usixhumo sampunzi esavuk' eminceleni… (Ewu, sengibindiwe bafana ngiyekani. [Andile: Ayiqedw' inkosi.] ngizawuyiqeda... awu zinde).
Bathi wadl' uMatiwane ezalw' emaNdebeleni,
wadl' uMbulazi ezalwa kwaKhumalo,
wadl' uMashobana ezalwa kwaKhumalo,
waye wadl' uDingiswayo ezalwa kwaMthethwa.
Udwala lalibushelelezi lashelelis' amadoda,
amadoda azigundi izicoco azibek' emsamo… (Sengibuyele khona lapho)

The weasel of Mnjololo, bender that dances on a rock, who hides behind little clumps of grass, the blower away of strangers' weapons.
Threatener of people with weapons until they are stabbed like cattle,
and others are stabbed at the fords.
The little mamba of our home at Gudunkomo that collected them [cattle] at the two Gudus,
it collected them at the small one and collected them at the big one.
The one who stalks all the way to the place of Soshangane.
The apparition that was seen by women when they were weeding the fields and they ran away and left the hoes, and said we saw the thing of Zwide and Langa.
Zwide they said he had gone to the place of Soshangane but Zwide did not go to the place of Soshangane, only the birds went to the place of Soshangane.
Barbed spear of Nonyanda that triumphs over other barbed spears.
He ate up Matiwane of the Ndebele and brought him down to [the dust] which buzzes and it did not matter.
The stabber who is not unstitched, he is only unstitched by swallows.
He even ate up Bhungane of the Hadebe by birth and brought him down to that which buzzes and it did not matter.

The rock that is slippery because it made [them] slip badly, it made men slip and they cut off their head-rings,
because it made slip Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa by birth, born of Jobe, and brought him down to that which buzzes, and left him for the birds of the heavens, and gave him to the heifers, and grabbed him and threw him this way and that, and gave him to the heifers with white spots and they jumped over him and trod on him.
Ndwandwe they say let us go and see him.
The stabber who is not unstitched, he is only unstitched by swallows because nobody dishes food for them
but he was fed at home because he was fed at his house,
because he was fed by his mother Ntombazi, maiden of the Ndlovini people, the birds had no feeder.
Eat and let us hasten to the land of our people at the place of Soshangane
to receive the tears of old men who cut off their head-rings and offered them to
[the land] of Mdolomba, the place of the large crocodile.
People are not dragged they are not like branches of trees… (*voice breaks, becomes emotional, says he feels like crying).*
People are not dragged they are not like branches of trees.
The threatener who threatens people with weapons until they are stabbed at the fords, until they become like cattle.
Other people were stabbing the cattle of men, the little mamba that suddenly appeared in the ravines and ended on the shields of insignificant little strangers.
The young buck that suddenly appeared at the boundaries [of fields]… (*voice breaks again*)…
They say he ate up Matiwane of the Ndebele by birth,
and ate up Mbulazi of the Khumalo,
and ate up Mashobana of the Khumalo,
and eventually ate up Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa.
The smooth rock that made men slip,
and the men shaved their head-rings and put them at the backs of houses…
(*realises he is repeating himself, is now distracted*)

What is the same in Mzomusha's and the other two versions of Zwide's *izibongo* discussed above is the line "*Unonkhokhel' abantu bahlatshwe*" (threatener of people with weapons until they are stabbed) (line 2). In Mzomusha's poem, this line is now elaborated into a simile with the word "*njengezinkomo*" (like cattle). The simile is further elaborated in the following line: "*abanye behlatshwe emazibukweni*" (and others are stabbed at the fords) (line 3). Another similarity between Mzomusha and Stuart's versions is the epithet about Zwide's craftiness that led to his triumph over Dingiswayo. Stuart recorded and Khaya repeated the praise as "*Izibuk' elimadwal' abushelelezi/ Lishelel' uMalusi waseNgoleleni, laye lashelel'*

uDingiswayo waseLuyengweni" ("Ford with the slippery flagstones/ Malusi of Ngoleleni slipped there/ And there slipped Dingiswayo of Yengweni") ([Cope 128-9], lines 18-20). As with the line that remains constant across all three versions, this epithet has been significantly elaborated in Mzomusha's version:

> *Udwal' elibushelelezi ngoba lishelelise kabi lishelelis' amadoda agund' izicoco azibeka phansi ngoba lashelelis' uDingiswayo ezalwa kwaMthethwa ezalwa nguJobe wamqumba phansi koludumayo, wamenzel' izinyoni zezulu,*
> *wamnik' iziqabo zezinkomo zezithole wambamba wamjika ngapha wamjika ngapha wamnikel' izithole ezazimabal' amhlophe zameqa zamxovaxova.*

> The rock that is slippery because it made [them] slip badly, it made men slip and they cut off their head-rings, because it made slip Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa by birth, born of Jobe, and brought him down to that which buzzes, and left him for the birds of the heavens,
> and gave him to the heifers, and grabbed him and threw him this way and that, and gave him to the heifers with white spots and they jumped over him and trod on him. (lines 13-14)

Beyond these similarities the *izibongo* bear no resemblance to either of the two versions discussed above when it comes to the metaphors and images used to assess Zwide. Instead, they bear minor similarities to the *izibongo* of four Zulu kings – Shaka, Dingane, Cetshwayo and Dinuzulu – to which I return below. I first want to read the poem closely before drawing out its similarities to the *izibongo* of Zulu royalty.

The *izibongo* open with a burst of praise in five lines. Zwide is praised for his intelligence and deceptiveness, his toughness and his triumphs. His intelligence and deceptiveness are celebrated when he is referred to as *uchakide* (weasel) (line 1) and *imambana* (little mamba) (line 4). In many *izinganekwane* (folktales) a weasel is represented as characterized by constantly getting itself in trouble through mischief. It gets out by outwitting human beings and other animals when they attempt to punish it for its misdeeds. The term *imambana* is often used to refer to a mischievous person who also always tries to get herself/himself out of trouble through trickery. Hence Zwide is being celebrated for his

shrewdness through the use of commonly-known images that represent him as wily. These images combine with the celebration of strength and the ability to achieve the almost unachievable when he is named "*umgob' usin' etsheni*" (bender that dances on a rock) and "*umagwaca ngezidinjana*" (he who hides behind small clumps of grass) (line 1). He is seen as being able to coerce ("bend") almost anyone to do his will, as well as to *sina* (do the 'Zulu' dance) on a rock and to hide his *impi* behind small clumps of grass, when he attacks before surprising the enemy. The raiding of cattle at his behest among the Ndwandwe neighbors is celebrated in his gathering of cattle at the Magudu hills, the big one and the small one. These hills are toward the northern end of what was Ndwandwe territory until the destruction of the Ndwandwe kingdom by the Zulu.

The bulk of the *izibongo* laud Zwide for his triumphs in a similar vein. His might sends women who are weeding fields running in fright, leaving their hoes behind (line 7), and he is a barbed spear that surpasses other spears (9). Zwide's successes are catalogued when the people he conquered are named:

> *Wadl' uMatiwane wasemaNdebeleni wamqumba phansi koludumayo [uthuli] akwandaba zalutho.*
> He ate up Matiwane of the Ndebele and brought him down to that [the dust] which buzzes and it didn't matter. (line 10)

> *Waye wadl' uBhungane ezalwa kwaHadebe wamqumba phansi koludumayo kwandaba zalutho.*
> He even ate up Bhungane of the Hadebe by birth and brought him down to that which buzzes where everything crumbles to insignificance. (line 12)

> *wadl' uMbulazi ezalwa kwaKhumalo,*
> *wadl' uMashobana ezalwa kwaKhumalo,*
> *waye wadl' uDingiswayo ezalwa kwaMthethwa*
> and ate up Mbulazi of the Khumalo,
> and ate up Mashobana of the Khumalo,
> and eventually ate up Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa. (lines 27-29)

Moreover, there is an extended celebration of Zwide's defeat of Dingiswayo, leader of the Mthethwa in the lines I have discussed above:

> *Udwal' elibushelelezi ngoba lishelelise kabi lishelelis' amadoda agund' izicoco*

> *azibeka phansi ngoba lashelelis' uDingiswayo ezalwa kwaMthethwa*
> *ezalwa nguJobe wamqumba phansi koludumayo, wamenzel' izinyoni zezulu,*
> *wamnik' iziqabo zezinkomo zezithole wambamba wamjika ngapha wamjika ngapha*
> *wamnikel' izithole ezazimabal' amhlophe zameqa zamxovaxova.* (13-14)
>
> The rock that is smooth because it made [them] slip badly, it made men slip and they cut off their head-rings, because it made slip Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa by birth, born of Jobe, and brought him down to that which buzzes, and left him for the birds of the heavens,
> and gave him to the heifers, and grabbed him and threw him this way and that, and gave him to the heifers with white spots and they jumped over him and trod on him.

However, quite early in Mzomusha's recital of the poem there is a line that tempers this laudatory thrust. Zwide is called, "*Unoshosh' ahambe ez' eyefike kwaSoshangane*" (The one who stalks all the way to the place of Soshangane) (line 6). This notion of Zwide having travelled to the place of Soshangane is developed later on in the poem when the speaker addresses an assumed listener: "*Dlana simuke siye kwelakithi kwaSoshangane/ siyothola izinyembezi zamadod' amadala agund' izicoco azinikela kwelikaMdolomba welakwangwenyakazi*" (Eat and let us hasten to the land of our people at the place of Soshangane/ to receive the tears of old men who cut off their head-rings and offered them to that [the land] of Mdolomba, the place of the large crocodile) (lines 19-20).

The above words are a lament for Zwide about his defeat and displacement. Here the *imbongi* exhorts the listener to eat in preparation for a lengthy trip to the place of Soshangane, the leader of the Gaza kingdom, to receive the tears of old men who shaved their *izicoco* (head-rings). *Izicoco* (singular *isicoco*) are rings that in the past would be worn sewn into the hair around the top of the head. They were won by *amakhehla*, mature men who had distinguished themselves in battle and in the service of their leader over many years (Msimang 186-7). The line suggests that elderly men cut off their *izicoco* (that is, hair along with the *izicoco*) as a result of the defeat of the Ndwandwe. The *izicoco* were a sign of status, and when something undermined the wisdom and accomplishment of the men who had reached ages to *thunga izicoco* (make and wear *izicoco*), the removal of the *izicoco* would be

an expression of their humiliation, according to Nhlanhla Mathonsi (personal communication, 2004). As discussed by Hamilton, Shaka is reputed to have demoted some of his subjects to more junior ranks of *amabutho* (age sets) by forcing them to cut off their head rings. Earlier in the *izibongo* Zwide is said to have caused similar humiliation to the Mthethwa (line 13).

The speaker and the addressee, coming from where Zwide was defeated, would be greeted with tears by the men upon arrival in Soshangane's territory, which is viewed as another home of the Ndwandwe. These are seemingly men who had fled. Mzomusha himself broke down at this point in his recital and had to pause and compose himself before he could continue. As he said several times during the interview, what had happened to his ancestors pained him. The *izibongo* end up being broken and circling back to the same images toward the end as Mzomusha struggled to find his train of thought again, but these images are filled out using different words so that their meanings are slightly altered. An example is Mzomusha's repetition of the line common to all versions of Zwide's *izibongo*. Whereas it had earlier been "*Unonkokhel' abantu behlatshwe njengezinkomo/ abanye behlatshwe emazibukweni*" (Threatener of people with weapons until they get stabbed like cattle/ and others are stabbed at the fords) (lines 2-3) , the second time it has become "*Unonkokhel' abantu behlatshwe emazibukweni bebe njengezinkomo/ Abanye abantu behlaba izinkomo zamadoda…*" (The threatener who threatens people with weapons until they are stabbed at the fords until they become like cattle/ Other people were stabbing the cattle of men) (23-4).

Understanding the *izibongo* as lamentation illuminates what at first seems an obscure reference. Zwide is called "*umgwaz' akaqhaqhwa uqhaqhwa zinkonjane*" (stabber that is not unstitched, he is only unstitched by the swallows) (line 11). Here, in a confluence of very disparate images, Zwide is seen as unbeatable, "*qhaqhwa*" (unstitched) being a word used in the past to refer to the stabbing of a person with a spear so that his/her internal organs spill out. Zwide is only unstitched by swallows because they migrate to where food is more

abundantly available as seasons change. It is suggested, then, that Zwide migrated, albeit in flight, in mimicry of the swallows, which had to migrate because they had nobody to feed them, whereas he was fed in his mother's house. He was, therefore, outdone by the birds. The image of Zwide being beaten by swallows is an unusual one for *izibongo*. *Izibongo* commonly build up their subject, emphasizing and exaggerating his/her successes as heroic acts against great odds. An acknowledgment of Zwide's limitations here reads as a reassessment of Zwide after the defeat of his forces and his flight. We thus get a revision of the abundant heroism that runs through the bulk of the *izibongo*.

Mzomusha was much older than Bhekani – in his seventies – when I met him in 2003. He had been involved for a few years in the effort to get off the ground the association that came to be named the uBumbano lwamaZwide when it was launched in 2006. He had died by the time the association was formed. About a year we had interviewed Mzomusha, when Andile and I went back to his home to give him a copy of the interview we had conducted with him and copies of the photographs I had taken of him as well conduct a follow-up interview with him, we learnt that he had passed away two weeks before we came. What is notable for my purposes here is that he remembered Zwide through strikingly different *izibongo* to those that have been declaimed at the two Heritage events. What, then, do the differences between his *izibongo* and the other two versions discussed earlier tell us?

Two things are evident in these *izibongo* as compared to Bhekani's version: first, they are constructed from much broader base of knowledge about Zwide's activities and the context of his life. Even though it is not possible to trace every historical occurrence to which the *izibongo* refer, they seem much more conversant with the happenings during Zwide's life as well as his doings. Second, while the images and metaphors deployed bear some similarity to those of several Zulu kings, they seem less obviously borrowed from those more publicly dominant *izibongo*. These similarities raise a different set of questions to Bhekani's *izibongo*

about how Mzomusha had come to know these *izibongo* in a time when the memory of Zwide and the Ndwandwe kingdom was seemingly much eroded. I pose and engage these questions below.

Three examples illustrate the broader historical detail that the *izibongo* demostrate overall. First, the *imbongi* names five leaders whom Zwide defeated in contrast to Bhekani's naming of the generic groups to which the conquests belonged and his erroneous inclusion of Mzilikazi. These are Matiwane of the Ndebele (lines 10 and 26), Bhungane of the Hlubi (line 12), Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa (13 and 29), and Mbulazi (27) and Mashobana (28) of two different branches of the Khumalo. Indeed the confrontation between the Ndwandwe and the Mthethwa has been central in narrations of the story of the rise of Shaka in most histories of southern Africa. Alfred Bryant's *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* (1929) has been key in popularizing the almost mythological narrative of the Ndwandwe-Mthethwa battle. Even Ndwandwe interviewees in 2003 told similar stories to Bryant's. Moreover, some of James Stuart's interviewees could speak in some detail about the battle.

According to Bryant, the confrontation between the Ndwandwe and Mthethwa was due to Zwide's putting Malusi to death. Malusi was Zwide's *umfowabo* (brother or, in English nomenclature, cousin) by virtue of being of the *ikhohlwa* (junior house) in the Ndwandwe succession dating four generations back from Malusi and Zwide's time (Bryant 163). Malusi was married to Dingiswayo's sister, Nomathuli. Their daughter was involved along with Zwide's sister Ntombazana in a plot to capture Dingiswayo (163-4). Malusi fell out with Zwide when the latter accused him of divulging the plot to Dingiswayo. Hence Malusi was put to death. This angered Dingiswayo who demanded from Zwide that Malusi be produced alive. When Zwide expressed his inability to comply, Dingiswayo declared the battle that led to his demise (Bryant 164).

However, according to Mzomusha, Dingiswayo and Zwide had a confrontation over Bhungane's cattle. Bhungane, the *inkosi* of the Hadebe, is represented in Zwide's *izibongo* as one of Zwide's conquests. It seems that there was conflict over the cattle looted by the Ndwandwe from the Hadebe people, with Dingiswayo maintaining that he was entitled to a portion of the loot as the Hadebe were under his overlordship. It is on this pretext that he declared war on Zwide in Mzomusha's account (Buthelezi and Ndwandwe, interview, August 29, 2003). The reason for the conflict advanced by Mzomusha accords with Wright and Hamilton's hypothesis of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century history of the Phongolo-Thukela region discussed in the Introduction. As Wright and Hamilton suggest, the rise in the cattle trade prompted conflict among the expanding states like the Ndwandwe and the Mthethwa. Hence it is plausible that the confrontation between Zwide and Dingiswayo was over cattle.

Once war was declared, Dingiswayo "dispatched word to his vassal, Shaka, to [mobilise his *impi*, and for] both armies to invade Ndwandweland simultaneously" (Bryant 164). The Mthethwa *impi* launched an attack on the Ndwandwe, entering Ndwandwe territory at Mpukunyoni near Hluhluwe according to Reggie Khumalo (Buthelezi, interview, August 6, 2003), and marching undetected all the way to the vicinity of Zwide's seat of power in Nongoma in Bryant's account (Bryant 164). It then halted, waiting to no avail for Shaka's *impi* to join the attack on the Ndwandwe. At that stage, Ntombazi's spell took its toll on Dingiswayo, according to Bryant (Bryant 164) and one of Stuart's interviewees, Makhuza kaMkomoyi. Dingiswayo, with a group of girls who had come along with the *impi* to wait on the king, then "sauntered gaily over the open veld towards kwaMbuzi hill, and walked into the Ndwandwe platoon there awaiting him" (Bryant 164-5). Nicholas Ndwandwe offered a very similar account (Buthelezi, interview, August 22, 2003). Makhuza's version is slightly different. He maintains that Dingiswayo and his *impi* were so overcome by Zwide's *umuthi*

(medicine or spell) that Zwide sent a dispatch of *amabutho* to find Dingiswayo and bring him back to his kwaDlovunga residence, which they accomplished without the slightest resistance from the Mthethwa *impi*.

Nevertheless, according to Bryant and another one of Stuart's sources, Jantshi kaNongila (Webb and Wright 183), after Dingiswayo had proceeded to Zwide's residence, his *impi* became alarmed when time passed and he did not return. An attack on the Ndwandwe *impi* was then launched in which the Mthethwa *impi* was heavily defeated and sent fleeing as far as the Amatigulu River (Bryant 166). Jantshi states that "Zwide had a mind to let Dingiswayo go, but Ntombaze said, 'Kill him, or he will kill you'. Zwide allowed Dingiswayo to live for three days and on the fourth day put him to death" (Webb and Wright 183-4). Ndlovu kaThimuni narrates that Dingiswayo was trampled to death by cattle: "[The Ndwandwe people] caused cattle to trample him. He had stakes driven through his hands and feet, and was placed face upwards on the ground. Then cattle were driven over him while he was still alive; they trampled his chest and stomach" (Webb and Wright 230). This incident appears in Mzomusha's version of Zwide's *izibongo*: "[*uDingiswayo*] *wamenzel' izinyoni zezulu/ wamnik' iziqabo zezinkomo zezithole wambamba wamjika ngapha wamjika ngaphawamnikel' izithole ezazimabal' amhlophe zameqa zamxovaxova*" (lines 13-14) ("[Zwide] left [Dingiswayo] for the birds of the heavens [swallows]/ and gave him to the heifers, and grabbed him and threw him this way and that, and gave him to the heifers with white spots and they jumped over him and trod on him"). Dingiswayo's head joined those arrayed on top of Ntombazi's house according to Bryant, Nicholas and Mzomusha.

The second example of historical knowledge on Zwide being deployed in these *izibongo* is the naming of Zwide's mother, Ntombazi, as "*intombi yaseMandlovini*" (maiden of the Ndlovini people) (line 18). This naming of Ntombazi in the *izibongo* provides the only mention of Ntombazi's origins I have encountered in any record thus far. Even in meetings of

the uBumbano in 2008 and 2009 discussion of this topic led to speculation that Ntombazi was of the Mkhwanazi. Nobody could say with any certainty what her origins were. That these *izibongo* name these origins suggests that they may have been composed when knowledge about Ntombazi, Zwide and the Ndwandwe kingdom had not yet eroded to the extent that it has today or even when Andile and I interviewed Mzomusha and other Ndwandwe people in 2003.

The final instance of historical information that is no longer remembered contained in the *izibongo* is in the manner in which Zwide's engagements with Soshangane are represented. The *imbongi* initially states that Zwide went to the place of Soshangane (line 6). He goes on to dispute this claim, imputing it to other people whom he sees as having made an erroneous claim: "*UZwide bath' wayekwaSoshangane kanti uZwide akayanga kwaSoshangane/ izinyoni zodwa ezaya kwaSoshangane*" (Zwide they said he was at the place of Soshangane but Zwide did not go to the place/ of Soshangane, only the birds went to the place of Soshangane) (line 8). Later, as discussed above, an addressee is exhorted to eat so that s/he and the speaker can hasten to the land that belongs to their home, the place of Soshangane (line 19). The naming of the place of Soshangane and the land over which he presided as home to the speaker and the addressee suggests that these *izibongo* were composed at a time when it was possible for Ndwandwe who resided where the *izibongo* were composed to go and settle in Soshangane's territory, the Gaza kingdom. Moreover, the praise continues to state as discussed above, it is the defeat of the Ndwandwe that reduces the men from the old Ndwandwe territories to tears and sends them fleeing to the Gaza kingdom where the travelers would find them. This explicit and prominent acknowledgement of Soshangane's connection to the Ndwandwe is in sharp contrast to uBumbano lwamaZwide, which has to teach its adherents of the historical connection of Soshangane's branch of the Nxumalo in today's Mozambique with the Ndwandwe of South Africa.

Overall, Mzomusha's version of Zwide's *izibongo* gives a sense of being composed from much denser historical knowledge. It is knowledge that is mostly forgotten among the Ndwandwe whom the uBumbano is attempting to mobilize and recruit today. The *izibongo* carry many allusions to historical occurrences that can no longer be interpreted by leaders of the uBumbano or any member of the Ndwandwe public. They appear in part to articulate a reassessment of Zwide and the Ndwandwe kingdom. This reassessment suggests that they come from late in Zwide's life (that is, the 1820's) after Soshangane had migrated and established himself in the Delagoa Bay area or even later, that is, after Zwide's death in 1826.

When we turn to how these *izibongo* compare to those of Zulu royals, as I have suggested they do, we can trace epithets that are very similar to those of Shaka, Dingane, Cetshwayo, and Dinuzulu. There are two sets of epithets in Zwide's *izibongo* that are similar to those in "Shaka." First, both figures are said to be so fierce they frightened women whom they found at work tilling the soil as they traversed the country on their conquering missions. Zwide is "*Utho olubonwe ngabafazi behlakula babaleka bawashiy' amageja, bathi sibon' utho lukaZwide benoLanga*" (The apparition that was seen by women when they were weeding the fields and they ran away and left the hoes, and said we saw the apparition of Zwide and Langa). The effect of sighting Shaka is even more devastating, ranging from married women to aged men and women, as the praise is more elaborated than Zwide's:

> *Odabule kuNdima noMgovu,*
> *Abafazi abanendeni baphuluza;*
> *Imikhubalo bayishiy' izinqindi,*
> *Imbewu bayishiya semahlangeni,*
> *Izalukazi zasala semanxiweni,*
> *Amaxhegu asala semizileni,*
> *Iziqu zemithi zabheka phezulu.*
>
> He who travelled across Ndima and Mgovu,[69]
> And women who were with child gave birth easily;
> The newly planted crops they left still short,

[69] Ndima and Mgovu were "[m]en of importance whom [Shaka] attacked" according to Cope's footnote (Cope 91).

> The seed they left amongst the maize-stalks,
> The old women were left in the abandoned sites,
> The old men were left along the tracks,
> The roots of the trees looked up to the sky. ([Cope 90-1], lines 49-55)

The second similarity to Shaka's *izibongo* is in the naming of the adversaries whose cattle Zwide seized in several lines that repeat the same grammatical structure again and again: "*wadla usibanibani ezalwa kwasibanibani*" (he ate up so and so who came from/belonged to such and such a group), eating up commonly meaning to seize a person's cattle or other property. Zwide is said to have eaten up several leaders of rival groups, as I have discussed above: Matiwane (line 10 and 26), Mbulazi (27), Mashobana (28) and Dingiswayo (29). The *izibongo* name Zwide's conquests in the latter set of lines – 26 to 29 – using the same words which are repeated over and over again. The only variation is that each repetition presents the name of a new conquest from a different rival group. This repetition builds up an image of a fierce Zwide who subdued with relative ease adversaries who even now are remembered as having been important, such as Mashobana whose name is the most commonly used *isithakazelo* of the Khumalo, as well as Dingiswayo who sheltered and trained Shaka. Shaka's *izibongo* have many such passages. One example of this building up of a sense of fierceness is in the following lines mainly about the war against the Ndwandwe:

> *Wadl' uNomahlanjana ezalwa nguZwid' eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' uMphepha ezalwa nguZwid' eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' uNombengula ezalwa nguZwid' eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' uDayingubo ezalwa nguZwid' eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' uSonsukwana ezalwa nguZwid' eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' inkosikazi okaLubongo,*
> *Wadl' uMtimona ezalwa nguGaq' eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' uMpondo-phumela-kwezinde eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' uNdengezi-mashumi eMapheleni,*
> *Wadl' uSikloloba-singamabele kwabakaZwide,*
> *Wadl' uSihlala-mthini-munye kwabakaZwide,*
> *Wadl' uNqangube ezalwa nguLundiyane*
>
> He devoured Nomahlanjana son of Zwide of the Maphelas,[70]

[70] AmaPhela (the Maphelas) were one of Zwide's regiments according to Cope's footnote (Cope 100).

He ate up Mphepha son of Zwide of the Maphelas,
He destroyed Dayingubo son of Zwide of the Maphelas,
He ate up Sonsukwana son of Zwide of the Maphelas,
He devoured the chief wife, daughter of Lubongo,[71]
He ate up Mtimona son of Gaqa of the Maphelas,
He killed Mpondo-phumela-kwezinde of the Maphelas,
He destroyed Ndengezi-mashumi of the Maphelas,
He ate up Sikloloba-singamabele of Zwide's people,
He devoured Sihlala-mthini-munye of Zwide's people,
He destroyed Nqwangube son of Lundiyane… (Cope 100-101)

The structure of these lines is repeated in several places in Stuart's composite version of Shaka's *izibongo* collated from different performances. However, the translation is misleading as it does not convey the repetition of the verb "wadla" in the original. In *Voicing the Text*, Duncan Brown says of the translation of the repetition in Shaka's *izibongo*, "This form of parallelism [by initial linking] is more widespread than Cope's English translation suggests, for… Cope consciously varies the verb form in his translation, even though Stuart's Zulu text repeats the same verb 'wadla' (he ate/devoured) (Brown 103). What is clear, nevertheless, from the comparison of Shaka and Zwide's *izibongo* is that the device of repetition (or parallelism by initial linking) is the same.

The same kind of building up of the subject's stature by stacking the names of his conquests using anaphora appears in the *izibongo* of Shaka's four successors on the Zulu throne – Dingane kaSenzangakhona, Mpande kaSenzangakhona, Cetshwayo kaMpande and Dinuzulu kaCetshwayo. Dingane's *izibongo*, in which such lines are repeated most extensively, illustrate this point:

Wadl' oNginani kumakhosazana,
Wadl' oNgiyalila kumakhosazana,

[71] "Zwide's chief wife. She was killed in the final cataclysm in 1819, when, after a disastrous defeat, the Ndwandwes suffered invasion and destruction by the Zulus. Zwide himself escaped but died shortly afterwards." (Cope.). In this footnote, Stuart/Malcolm/Cope is working with the old estimation of when the Ndwandwe were defeated by the Zulu and when Zwide died. The timeline has been revised by historians, the most recent estimations given by John Wright in "Rediscovering the Ndwandwe Kingdom." See John Wright. "Rediscovering the Ndwandwe Kingdom." *Five Hundred Years Rediscovered: Southern African Precedents and Prospects.* Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2008. 217-238. Print.

Wadl' uNoyipholo engowaseNdinaneni,
Wadl' uNtanase noNozinyanga kwaMashobana,
Wathi bayobon' inkundla yakithi eMgungundlovu.
Wadl' uNsizwazana, unina kaMzilikazi, kwaMashobana.
Waze wafika ngaphakathi kithi' eMgungundlovu.
Wadl' uMahabulangweb' isashisa kwaMashobana.
Wadl' uNsimbakaz' emsila lugaju kwaMashobana.
Wadl' uMlom' edlel' emeveni njengembuzi kwaMashobana.
Wadl' uMhlan' ebeleth' igudu kwaMashobana.
Wadl' inkom' ikulala kulukhuni khona kwaMashobana.
Wadl' umlomo wenqaba kwaMashobana.
Wadl' uGundane kumitha khona kwaMashobana. (Msimang 418)

He ate up Nginani among the eldest daughters,
He ate up Ngiyalila among the eldest daughters,
He ate up Noyipholo who was of Ndinaneni,
He ate up Ntamase and Nozinyanga at Mashobana's place,
And said they would see the dancing arena of our home at Mgungundlovu.
He ate up Nsizwazana, the mother of Mzilikazi, at Mashobana's place.
And he landed up at our home at Mgungundlovu.
He ate up Mahabulangweb' isashisa at Mashobana's place.[72]
He ate up Nsimbakaz' emsila lugaju at Mashobana's place.
He ate up Mlom' edlel' emeveni njengembuzi at Mashobana's place.
He ate up Mhlan' ebeleth' igudu at Mashobana's place.
He ate up 'cow that trouble sleeping' among again at Mashobana's place.
He ate up 'mouth of the fastnesses' at Mashobana's place.
He ate up Gundane kumitha at Mashobana's place.

In another series comprising nine lines in the same poem, Dingane is praised for his successes over the Boers, the white settlers of Dutch descent who poured over the Drakensberg mountain range into his kingdom in the late 1830's and inflicted a defeat on the Zulu kingdom at the Battle of Blood River/Ncome in 1838. He is again lauded in another eight lines of the same structure for his successes against the Swazi.

How do we interpret these similarities in the *izibongo* of different leaders? One possibility is that the *izibongo* Mzomusha recited are as old as or older than Shaka's. This would suggest that there was a similar set of metaphors and images available to the *izimbongi* who composed these poems in the respective kingdoms in what is KwaZulu-Natal today. Further, it would suggest that the grammatical construction "*Wadl' usibanibani wakobani*"

[72] The names from this line to the end of the quote are praise names I have left untranslated.

(He ate up so and so of such and such a people) was in common use. In that way, an *imbongi* celebrating Shaka's successes in the Zulu kingdom would have had available to him the same devices as Zwide's *izimbongi* had in Zwide's own Ndwandwe kingdom. These devices would have been common stock metaphors, images, vocabulary and grammatical formulations. This possibilitity is supported by the presence of a set of lines about eating up rivals in Shaka's father and Zwide's contemporary, Senzangakhona's *izibongo*:

> *Odl' umfazi, umkaSukuzwayo,*
> *Wamudla' uNohlambase, ingqongqokazane,*
> *Esatheth' izindaba zaseSinyameni.*
> *Wamudl' uMabhebhetha kwaNonkokhela.*
> *Wadl' uMsikazi kaNdimoshe…*
> *Odl' uNomnyani eMzansini* (Msimang 408).
>
> Who ate up the woman, the wife of Sukuzwayo,
> And also ate up Nohlambase, the forward one,
> While busy gossiping about eSinyameni.
> He also ate up Mabhebhetha at Nonkhokhela's.
> He ate Msikazi son of Ndimoshe…
> Who ate up Nomnyani at Mzansini.

When it comes to the similarities between Zwide's *izibongo* and those of later Zulu leaders, this can be attributed to the practice of borrowing or sampling from the *izibongo* of earlier leaders by *izimbongi* composing *izibongo* for later ones discussed in relation to Bhekani's version of the izibongo above. *Izibongo* that share images and metaphors with Zwide's may have come down to later *izimbongi* through Shaka's praises, leading to Mzomusha's version of Zwide's *izibongo* appearing to borrow from those of Zulu royalty.

The second possibility I posit is that the *izibongo* that Mzomusha recited in 2003 may have borrowed from those of Shaka and other Zulu monarchs at a much earlier time than Bhekani's did. An *imbongi* in a position similar to Bhekani may have had the need to recall Zwide in a time when his *izibongo* had already passed out of memory. Like Bhekani, he may have had recourse to available materials in his context that included Shaka's *izibongo*. His

use of those materials may then have yielded a poem that is rich in historical allusion and dense with imagery and metaphors that are derived from those of Zulu royalty to which the *imbongi* was exposed. However, Mzomusha claimed to have learnt his *izibongo* from his fathers who fought at iSandlwana, that is, in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 (Buthelezi and Ndwandwe, interview, August 29, 2003). Fathers in this usage can mean anybody from his father through his father's brothers and men of their age, to his grandfather and his agemates. Given that Mzomusha was born in the 1920's, it is feasible that he had learnt Zwide's original *izibongo* from people who were a generation removed from Zwide and had themselves learnt the *izibongo* from Zwide's contemporaries. This is indeed possible as Mzomusha maintained that his "*obabamkhulu*" (grandfathers) had fled at the collapse of the Ndwandwe kingdom and only returned later to settle in the Mandlakazi area. Zwide's *izibongo* may have been "eaten up" by Shaka in the practice of power that saw a victor not only round up the cattle, and women and children among the defeated groups, but also praises. Regardless of whether these were from Zwide's lifetime or not, the point holds that they reassess Zwide and his kingdom from a later vantage point conscious of the consequences of the kingdom's collapse.

If these *izibongo* had indeed passed down to Mzomusha through iteration by his seniors, this would mean the similarities to those of Zulu royalty are incidental due to common images and metaphors being available to *izimbongi* in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They would suggest that fathers of the Ndwandwe *isizwe*, and Zwide in particular, were remembered in Mtshapi's way through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, they were remembered less and less in the traditional way of the *izibongo* in a context where the 'Zulu nation' had replaced all prior 'nations' and adeherence to it was being emphasized. As such then, Mzomusha came to be one of the last *izimbongi* who knew Zwide's *izibongo* because he took an interest and asked his 'fathers' when his contemporaries no longer cared to remember Zwide and the Ndwandwe kingdom under Zulu

authority. That the uBumbano took so long to get off the ground meant his attempt to rescue the *izibongo* from obscurity by repopularizing them among the Ndwandwe public he was involved in mobilizing ultimately failed. My writing might well provide the place where somebody will come across these *izibongo* and re-oralize them in the manner Khaya has done with Stuart's version. Through my recording, these *izibongo* have thus joined a growing body of oral poetry the recording of which vivifies them when their fate was obscurity and disappearance.[73] When we return to the reception of the versions that have formed part of the first two Heritage celebrations, how have their audiences reacted to them and what conditions have made these responses possible?

Adequate Remembrance of the Father?: Audience responses to Khaya and Bhekani

Having discussed how the three versions of Zwide's *izibongo* I have tackled above have come to be used in the uBumbano lwamaZwide and how they may have come about, I conclude this chapter by briefly examining the efficacy of this insertion of the *izibongo* into the association's events. I limit my examination to my impression of the responses of the audience who heard Khaya and Bhekani give renditions of their versions of the *izibongo*. Mzomusha's audience was composed of only Andile and I when we interviewed him.

Khaya's performance did not resonate with his audience. His recital and interpretation of the *izibongo* were met with blank stares and conversations about unrelated matters. Several factors seem to have produced this response. First, Khaya was unable to deliver the *izibongo* in the *imbongi*'s commonly-known lively style. He is not an *imbongi* after all, but an amateur

[73] For a case of a poet who turned to print in order to preserve his poetry to address future audiences when his craft was frustrated by the political conditions of apartheid, see Ashlee Neser. *Stranger at Home: The Praise Poet in Apartheid South Africa*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2011. Print. This poetry may yet have what Jennifer Wenzel calls "afterlives" in her discussion of how images and ideas associated with the prophecies of nineteenth-century Xhosa prophet Nongqawuse have been used to speak to contemporary situations long after Nongqawuse's time. See Jennifer Wenzel. *Bulletproof: Afterlives of Anticolonial Prophecy in South Africa and Beyond*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009. Print.

historian researching the history of the Ndwandwe kingdom and its leading figures. Second, the *izibongo* Khaya performed are short and did not lend themselves to any elaborate building up of sonic patterns or movement across space that often accompany performances of *izibongo*. Finally, the images of Zwide as a path, a tree and a snake are not part of the common store of images that are familiar to his audience. Combined, these three factors made Khaya's *izibongo* unable to draw out of his audience the kind of excited response that often involves shouting, ululating or even audience members spontaneously running into the performance area and augmenting the performance with gestures, shouts and brief dances.

I want to suggest that Khaya's attempt to inject some life into these *izibongo* that exist as immobile and silent on two printed pages in Stuart's and Msimang's books fell flat because he was taking up images that may have been current in another time, but are unable to speak to the concerns and the aesthetic understandings of his audience. His *izibongo* thus blurred into the general remembering of Zwide as the putative father of all Ndwandwe without being able to evoke pride in being Ndwandwe in a manner that I have observed more efficacious performances of *izibongo* do.

On the contrary, at the 2010 Zwide Heritage Event, Bhekani's composition electrified his audience, drawing shouts, whistles and ululation. Bhekani said in my interview with him that he has performed these *izibongo* to a similar reception for audiences since 2008 at gatherings of Ndwandwe people in Johannesburg, and Durban, and at his own family's rituals and ceremonies in eMpangeni and Nongoma. He was not present at any of the meetings of the uBumbano I attended between 2008 and the Heritage event of November 2010. Nevertheless the performance I observed, in my view, resonated because the *izibongo* speak of Zwide's greatness, the quality attributed to Shaka and Zulu leaders. This is the very quality that Ndwandwe activists are attempting to reimagine back into the past as having been possessed by Zwide while rhetorically constructing it in the present. They speak of this

greatness in metaphors and images familiar to an audience that is hearing Zwide's *izibongo* for the first time. For an audience hearing its ancestor praised as having been great in language only Zulu royalty is predominantly spoken of in public, was uplifting and exciting. With their claim to being old and traditional, Bhekani's *izibongo* were thus able to play their part in bolstering the claim that the Ndwandwe were once mighty in the way that Shaka, and, through Shaka, other Zulu kings have claimed the mantle of might.

The differing responses to the performances by Khaya and Bhekani of what they understand to be Zwide's *izibongo* suggest several points about the conditions that make for a successful performance of *izibongo* of the father of the *isizwe* that are no longer remembered by Ndwandwe publics, but are being mobilized in the pursuit of the project of Ndwandwe remembrance and memorialization. First, an understanding that, indeed, Zwide is an important ancestor is a primer for receptiveness to the performance of his *izibongo*. Second is a common understanding of (or tutoring during the event to accept that) *izibongo*, and the *ihubo* and *izithakazelo* alongside which they are commonly used, are the appropriate forms through which ancestors are memorialized. That is to say, it is through these forms that fathers are remembered in the correct way. Third, an energetic and energizing performance that lives up to or surpasses what members of the audience understand to be a good performance of *izibongo* is necessary. Finally, the *izibongo* need to be composed of epithets that carry images and metaphors which read to the audience as fitting, that is, as belonging to the *izibongo* of someone of Zwide's stature by being appropriately grandiose.

Two main things feed these understandings of the uses and appropriateness of the oral artistic forms of *izibongo*, *izithakazelo* and *ihubo lesizwe*. First is the widespread use of *izithakazelo* as polite forms of greeting among the majority of Zulu speakers, including their propagation on public platforms like radio and musical genres such as *maskanda*; and the

declamation of the *izibongo* of Zulu kings in the lead up to commemorative occasions like Heritage Day, again on radio programs such as "*uTalagu,*"[74] and on the occasions themselves. The second and more important aspect is the use of these oral artistic forms in their own lives by the people who were audiences of Zwide's *izibongo* at the two Zwide Heritage events. For many who attended these events as for most Zulu speakers, it goes without saying that one calls oneself by one's ancestors such that each one of them is commonly addressed as "Zwide". It is also to state the obvious to say that in their lives, the addressing of ancestors, including Zwide, is a norm even as many would identify themselves as Christian. Most follow hybrid cultural practices in which 'traditional' cultural practices mix with Christian belief and usage without contradiction. It is, therefore, a surprising and welcome insertion when they hear Zwide's *izibongo* at these events since they are unable to declaim them in their own domestic ancestral ceremonies.

Speaker after speaker at the events decries the forgetting of the Ndwandwe past, links this forgetting to defeat of the Ndwandwe by the Zulu, and claims that Zwide's history, down to his *izibongo* (as history), is unknown because of this defeat. These speakers often go on to justify the holding of gatherings like the one they are addressing as necessary for the Ndwandwe to learn about who they are (that is, were historically and how they have come to be who they are in the present). These statements often touch a nerve since their audiences – as I have observed sitting in the crowd – are supplied with an explanation for the incompleteness of their lives in assertions that the ancestors are not at peace.

I want to close by suggesting that this use of oral artistic forms in the lives of the people who attended the Heritage events is key to understanding why, in addition to *izibongo*, other oral artistic forms are playing an important role in the remaking of the past in South

[74] "UTalagu" reaches more than two million listeners every Saturday morning. See Thandiwe Jumo, "Popular Radio Duo Back with Traditional Mix," *Independent Online*, <http://www.iol.co.za/tonight/tv-radio/popular-radio-duo-back-with-traditional-mix-1.1068624?ot=inmsa.ArticlePrintPageLayout.ot>. Accessed November 20, 2011.

Africa today. Having shown in this chapter how three putative descendents of Zwide make use of their versions of Zwide's *izibongo* and in the previous chapter how the notion of being an *isizwe* ('nation') functions, I turn in the next chapter to analyzing how for events such as the two Heritage Days discussed in this chapter to take place, the uBumbano's mobilization efforts feed off the use of *izibongo*, *izithakazelo* and *ihubo lesizwe* in the lives of those being mobilized. It is their understanding of themselves as Ndwandwe as distinct from any other kinship groupings (whether accepting or resisting their Zuluness), and the iteration of this Ndwandwe identity through the use of *izithakazelo*, *ihubo* and *izibongo* in public and domestic address, that have primed their mobilization to be at the events. In turn, their being at the events made them available to hear and respond in the ways they did to the two versions of Zwide's *izibongo* I have discussed above. Again, it is their Ndwandweness, and their use of these artistic forms and Zwide's *izibongo* being generally unknown, that primed how the audiences received the performances I have discussed in this chapter. In the next chapter, I broaden my view from the tightly focus on the uBumbano of the first three chapters of this dissertation in order to construct a more detailed view of how the three oral artistic forms with which I am concerned are used in daily speech, in family settings and in the mobilization efforts of the uBumbano.

Chapter 4

Being an isiZwe: Ndwandwe IHubo and iziThakazelo in Domestic and Public Spaces

At the opening of the 2011 Zwide Heritage Day, a singer from Intshanga was called to lead the singing of the ihubo *lesizwe sakwaNdwandwe* (the ihubo of the Ndwandwe isizwe) or *ihubo lakwaNdwandwe* (the ihubo of KwaNdwandwe). Throughout the event, as throughout all of the many meetings of the various chapters of the uBumbano I have attended since 2008, the attendees address one another by the *izithakazelo*, most prominently 'Zwide,' but also almost as frequently, 'Mkhatshwa.' 'Nina baseGudu' or 'nina baseGudunkomo' or 'baNguni baseGudunkomo' (you of Gudu or Gudunkomo or Ngunis of Gudunkomo) is deployed to make profound points about Ndwandwe belonging. The rest of the Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* are often called out in greeting and not used as prominently: 'Nkabanhle' and 'Sdinane.' At these meetings and the large heritage celebrations, each speaker begins by saluting the gathering with an *isithakazelo*: "MaZwide, I am so and so…" or "BoMkhatshwa, this is what I want to suggest…" These *izithakazelo* are very effective in whipping up a collective identity for the Ndwandwe who subscribe to Ndwandweness as separate from other identities, such as Zulu in the case of KwaZulu-Natal, and those who come to these events seeking to find the meaning of this sense of identity they have inherited as residual and secondary to more prominent identity formulations, again such as Zulu.

The efficacy of these forms in the uBumbano's events derives from their usage in two contexts. First, they are used in daily speech as polite forms of greeting in which usage the addressor demonstrates knowing something about the addressee's genealogical connections and belonging. Second, the forms are used in domestic rituals alongside *ihubo* and the *izibongo* of the ancestors of the lineage of those conducting these rituals. In this second usage, these *izithakazelo* signify deeply as they tie together the living and a range of their

ancestors, those of the direct lineage of the family as well as those of all Ndwandwe as argued in Chapter Two. Specifically, the *ihubo* and *izithakazelo* set the Ndwandwe apart from other groups that have different *amahubo* and *izithakazelo* and thus maintain a sense of the Ndwandwe as an *isizwe* apart from other *izizwe* that have their own versions of these forms. Into this category of the forms of the Ndwandwe as a whole would also fit the *izibongo* of the ancestors whose names are canonized as the names in the *izithakazelo*. It appears then that this is why the search for the *izibongo* of Zwide to be addressed on occasions of public recall is such an important thing for many of the leaders of the uBumbano. These *izibongo* provide the means of returning Zwide to his proper place as the 'father' of the *isizwe*.

The public usage of the *izithakazelo* in daily speech also draws on their ritual usage for its meanings and efficacy. It is the people who believe in the importance of their ancestors as influential in their lives to whom being addressed by their *izithakazelo* is most meaningful. The uBumbano is trying to tap into the widespread use of the forms among Ndwandwe people in the society. For the uBumbano, this widespread use seems to mean that people who use these forms are available for persuasion about the need to convene as Ndwandwe because of their belief in ancestors about whom they know little. Using the need to learn about these ancestors, how the Ndwandwe nation collapsed and dispersed, and the need to get to know one another in the present as the descendants of these ancestors, activists appear to assume that letting these 'Zwides' know about their gathering will bring them to the events. My journey to understanding the signification of these *izithakazelo* and *ihubo* and, specifically, how they maintain the sense of a Ndwandwe *isizwe* to which the uBumbano is attempting to give new meanings has taken the form of observations of their use in the events of the uBumbano and at Ndwandwe ceremonial events where they are deployed, listening closely to people's daily conversations, and a series of discussions with two *izimbongi* (praise poets), Chitheka and Mafunza Ndwandwe. One particular event stands out as crucial to my

understanding of the work of the *izithakazelo* and *ihubo* on ritual occasions. An analysis of the various uses of the forms will bring to light how the uBumbano is attempting to tap extant uses and meanings of these forms and shape them in new directions.

My grappling with the finding an appropriate mode of narrating my observations and of situating these singular observations in the larger contexts in which the oral artistic forms need to be accounted for, have led me to taking an experimental turn in how I describe the use of the forms. The first device I employ is an ethnographic description of a pivotal event in my attempt to understand the multiple uses and meanings of the forms – a segment of a wedding ceremony. Later in the chapter, I take this experimental line even further: in an attempt to avoid the kind of generalization that slides into stereotypes about 'Zulu' culture in studies such as Msimang's *Kusadliwa Ngoludala* and Krige's *The Social System of the Zulus*, I have imagined full lives for hypothetical characters derived from the actual woman whose wedding ceremony I describe below and her brother. This device of hyphothetical characters allows me to both place my focus on oral artistic forms for the purpose of describing their development and use in the context of singular lives, and to think through possible ways in which a Ndwandwe person who has lived through the period since the 1970's on which this dissertation focuses may have experienced these forms in her or his life. Such a person would encounter the uBumbano's mobilization through tapping into the meanings of the forms with the understandings s/he has derived from her/his exposure to the forms as the interpretive framework with which to read the uBumbano's messages.

Calling all Ndwandwe Together: iziThakazelo and iHubo in Domestic Ritual Practice

I happened upon a Ndwandwe *umncamo* (ritual farewell to a woman before she gets married) in Mahhashini, Nongoma on Friday, April 4, 2008. Andile Ndwandwe and I had just returned to Andile's home in the village of Nengeni where I was staying while conducting my field

research. We had spent the late morning and early afternoon with Sikaza Nxumalo, whose statements from the same day I quoted in Chapter One. A child from another Ndwandwe homestead nearby came and asked Andile to request that I, the only person with a car in the village that afternoon, drive an old man to a ceremony being conducted *emndenini* (in the extended family) at a different *umuzi* (homestead). Andile had been thinking of going too, but had not yet made up his mind. He was obliged to go because as a Ndwandwe, he was part of the *umndeni* even though not directly related. Not having anything better to do, I went. In the process of loitering in the yard where the event was taking place, which is hardly a mile from Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu's Dlamahlahla residence, I observed the happenings at the event and later that day reflected on them as follows in my field diary.

A Ndwandwe woman is leaving home to go and marry into another *isibongo* (surname group). It is the day before the wedding. The private family part of the *umncamo* send-off ceremony has been conducted behind closed doors in the house. Now the bride is being taken out to the cattle enclosure where the departed ancestors will be informed that she is now leaving the Ndwandwe home and going to become a Zulu by surname. The group that walks the bride out of the house is led by two young men bearing the brand new wooden kist that is the customary possession she takes with her to her new home. Behind them walks the man who is leading this ceremony. He is, he must be, one of her 'fathers' – either her biological father or a Ndwandwe blood relation who is of her father's generation. He is tasked with leading the ceremony because he knows how to speak to the ancestors: he knows Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* (kinship group praises) and the *izibongo* (personal praises) of some of the ancestors he has to address. He also knows protocol. He knows the forebears of which houses he has to address, that is, who are the *obabamkhulu* (forefathers) of the daughter of this house

for which he is leading the ceremony, and he knows the order in which he has to address the forefathers of each house.

The bride follows her 'father' and is surrounded by her other 'fathers' and her 'brothers' as well as her *izimpelesi* (bridesmaids). She is in 'Zulu' or 'traditional'dress: an *isidwaba* cowhide skirt, a piece of leather hanging from her neck covering her breasts and on her head an *inhloko* headdress with tassels hanging down the front to cover her face. The group sings, '*Inj' emnyama*', the *ihubo lesizwe* ('national' hymn) of the Ndwandwe, as it walks out of the house. It is a very solemn moment. All of us who were loitering outside and were not allowed the privilege of being part of the happenings indoors must be quiet and stand still. Those who know the *ihubo* join in the singing and we all follow the procession as it descends along the grassy slope to the cattle enclosure. Once it is inside the enclosure, the group lines up behind the bride on one side of the enclosure facing towards the houses. Those of us who are neither of the family nor accompanying the bride stand outside the enclosure or sit on the grassy slope. We watch, listen, learn. "*Ngenj' emnyama*," the leading soprano voice sings. "*Hhiya hho, hhiya ho, hhiya ho*" is the response as the family and the accompanying young women arrange themselves. The *ihubo* gradually dies down as each person settles into her/his standing position. The 'father' who is leading the ceremony then begins by hailing the ancestors with Ndwandwe *izithakazelo*: "*BoZwide, BoMkhatshwa, nina baseGudunkomo, nina bakakhokhel' abantu bahlatshwe*…" ("You Zwides, you Mkhatshwas, you of Gudunkomo, you of leader of people until they are stabbed…").

Thus begins a lengthy conversation with the ancestors of this Ndwandwe family that is bidding farewell to its daughter. The 'father' walks up and down the length of the cattle enclosure in his approximately twenty-minute talk with the ancestors. He addresses each male ancestor of the bride's house and each generic Ndwandwe male ancestor by his *izibongo* (praises) where he knows them. He tells them that this daughter is now going to *gana* (marry)

into a certain Zulu family of a particular place. He informs the ancestors that he is telling them so that in the future when this particular daughter is no longer at this home, they will know that it is because she was sent off to a new home. He then shows them the beast with which they are telling the ancestors of their daughters' departure. He concludes his talk by asking the ancestors to whom he has spoken to inform their brothers, fathers and grandfathers that he did not get to and those he does not know, about everything he has just told them. Finally, he *thakazela*s (praises) the collective of ancestors to whom he has spoken: "Zwide" and the crowd responds, "Zwide"; "Mkhatshwa, Nkabanhle." The crowd repeats each name after the father in a closing call-and-response sequence.

When the leader stops speaking then the formalities are over. The group behind him dissolves out of the cattle enclosure. Those of us outside the enclosure go back to our loitering. Inside the enclosure the cow is slaughtered, care being taken over the removal of the *inyongo* (gall bladder), as it must be taken indoors where the gall will be poured over the bride in order to conclude the process of telling the Ndwandwe ancestors of their daughter's departure. In the yard, while the cow is being slaughtered, the bride and her *izimpelesi* start the bride's farewell song and dance routine. Once they have danced, the floor is open to anyone who feels like going into the circle to dance. It is a festive occasion. Each time a popular local person goes into the circle to dance there is much ululating and shouting. Those who know her or him well shout out two or three of her or his *izithakazelo* and her or his *izibongo*. Very few have any *izibongo* at all. The singing, dancing and praising go on until *braaied* (barbecued) meat is served by age and gender group. *Umqombothi* sorghum beer, bottled beer, cool drink and juice are served to the guests. Afterwards singing and dancing are picked up again and go on until the singers and dancers tire. They resume sporadically throughout the rest of the evening as small groups get progressively intoxicated and lively.

The first thing of significance about the ceremony in 2008 is that the name of the *umndeni* (family) conducting the *umncamo* is Ndwandwe. Hence the home where the ceremony was conducted was *kwaNdwandwe* (the place of Ndwandwe). It is, therefore, a putative home of any Ndwandwe person as I suggested in Chapter Two. In the language of kinship, it is "*kithi kwaNdwandwe*" for any Ndwandwe person who chooses to identity it as such. It is such a home in the way that Ndukwana understood to be the normative function of an *isibongo* (family or clan name) in an interview conducted by James Stuart in 1900:

> The isibongo identifies all people according to their tribes. It is the name which indicates the origin (ukudabuka) of people. People are all known by their isibongo, and they retain this even though they may be living at a kraal with people of a different isibongo. The word is connected with bonga, meaning to praise, because when one is praised, one is praised by means of it. It indicates one's clan (uhlobo) of origin – So-and-so of such-and-such a people. There was no person but he or she had an isibongo. (Webb and Wright 297)[75]

Today this idea of kinship persists even though various migrations over the last 200 years have disconnected people who may identify themselves as kin and would have lived in lineage-dominated polities prior to the mid-eighteenth century as I have demonstrated in the case of the Ndwandwe. This "*kithi*" of all the Ndwandwe, according to Philani' recounting of where the groups coming together to form the uBumbano in 2006 chose to meet, is Nongoma. However, the *isithakazelo* "Mnguni waseGudunkomo" identifies the home as Magudu north of Nongoma where Zwide had a capital as well. I return to this point below.

To this day, therefore, one's family name continues to be a marker of one's belonging together with all the other people of that family name, even if the detail of how people of that family name historically belonged together is now lost to memory. Groups that were possibly subjugated are thus unproblematically assumed to be part of the Ndwandwe *isizwe*. As I showed in the Introduction, the Ndwandwe confederacy came into being as a conquest state that subordinated several groups of other *izibongo* (kinship group names) despite the absence

[75] It is unclear what the term Stuart translated as "tribe" is and how this relates to the term "uhlobo."

of evidence to provide a fuller view of which groups were subjected and incorporated. In-depth research remains to be conducted on the historical connection between the Ndwandwe, Masuku, Madlobha, Ncwangeni, Mathetha and all the other groups said to be Ndwandwe.

In the ceremony in the anecdote above, the *umndeni* walks out of the house singing the *ihubo lesizwe* (hymn of the *isizwe* or 'national' hymn) of the Ndwandwe, "*Inj' emnyama*" (Black Dog). The lead sometimes sings a variation of this line: "*Ngenj' emnyama*" (About the black dog). In the *inyosi* (praise poet) of the Zulu king, Chitheka Ndwandwe's view, this *ihubo* is a form of paying obeisance:

> *... ngingathi umthandazo. Kushuth' ihubo ngoba lihlatshwa ngoba ku... angithi nje uma usuke uganwa noma uyoganisa noma-ke kukhushulwa lowo munt' oshonile, kusebenza leli hubo. Uthi ukubizwa kwaw' amahubo kuyimthandazo ngoba kush' ukuthi lokho sikuthathaphi? Sikuthatha ngoba ngish' emakhosini kunala mahub' akhona, [Mafunza: Ndwandwe!] okushuthi njalo kusukwe kuyi... kubizwe imikhosi yomhlangan' emakhosini. Okushuthi-ke nalapha phakathi kwabantu ngikholwa ukuthi kuwumthandaz' okokuthi e... nabangasekho bezw' ukuthi kwenziwani manje. Sekuyacelwa ukuba... angithi nje ngaphambi kokuqedwa kwaleli hubo kube sekubikw' ukuthi, "Nay' intombazana," ukuba yintombazan' iyogana. Noma ngabe umfana kube sekubikwa ukuthi, "Nanguk' umfaz' uqhamuk' ekuthini. Useyangena layikhaya..." [Mafunza: Ehhe. Ndwandwe!] "Nina basekuthini." Useyabaqala-ke ngokubazi kwakh' ukuthi nina bosibanibani baseku... usesh' izibongo zabo-ke manje. Useze ezogcina khona-k' ukuthi lo mfazi ngowalaph' ekhaya, ukuthi-ke usengenile namhlanje. Nasentombazaneni futhi iyogana ufike uma isifikile lapha athi, "Nina basekutheni, sengicela ukubika kwabakini." Noma abant' abasakhulumayo bezikhulumel' izindaba zabo, kuthiwa, "Ake nithule, bayabonga manj' abakwaNdwandwe."* (interview; Ngoqongweni, Nongoma; May 5, 2008)

> I would say it is a [form of] paying obeisance. The *ihubo* is sung because... let me say when you are getting married or when you are marrying [a woman] out or when a dead person is being raised, this *ihubo* works. The *amahubo* can indeed be called a form of paying obeisance, and where does that come from? It comes from, because even among the kings there are *amahubo* there, [Mafunza: Ndwandwe!] which means it is... when ceremonial gatherings are called. That means even here among [ordinary] people I believe it is paying obeisance so that those who are no longer here can hear what is being done now. It is being asked that... usually before the [singing of] *ihubo* is finished it will be reported that, "Here is the girl," if a girl is going off to get married. Even if it's a boy, it is reported that, "Here comes [his] wife from such and such a family. She is now entering this home..." [Mafunza: Yes. Ndwandwe!] "You of such and such a family name." Then [the praise poet] starts praising them [the ancestors] as he knows them, you so and so and such and su.. he now calls out their *izibongo*. He finally ends by saying this wife is of this home, she has entered today. Similarly when a girl goes to get married when she gets there he [the poet] will say, "You of such and such [a family name], I am now asking to tell those of your home

> [about the arrival of the wife]. Even if there are still people still talking their own matters, it will be said, "Be quiet now, the people of kwaNdwandwe are now bonga-ing [praising]."

Chitheka sees the *ihubo* as a form of address to higher powers which operates in the same way as a prayer. For comparison he draws on official Zulu events during which the ancestors of the Zulu *isizwe* ('nation')[76] are implored. He maintains that it is the same kind of address that is conducted in disparate family settings. The word *umthandazo* is commonly used to refer to a Christian-type prayer to God. What is not clear is whether there is a meaning of the word that predates the normalization of Christianity in the region or whether Chitheka is interpreting the *ihubo* in terms of Christian practice. After all, he is a member of the Shembe church that combines praying to God with addressing the ancestors.[77]

The *ihubo* is a lament about a black dog, the lead calling out this black dog and the chorus made up of everybody else who knows the *ihubo* responding with the lamentation "*hhiya hho, hhiya hho, hhiya hho*." Of the many people I have asked since 2003, nobody can interpret the hymn today. It is simply replicated and passed down as the Ndwandwe *ihubo*. Asked how the *ihubo* is transmitted, Mafunza said:

> *Lokhu sadabuka nalo... lokhu sadabuka nalo. Ihubo nje leli liqhubeka ngokuthi inzalo yethu, njoba thina siyinzalo yawobaba nje, obaba bafica likhona komkhulu, balifica likhona komkhulu. Nomkhulu balifica likhona kokhokho.... Bafike balilalela-ke. Ngoba ngish' intombazane kufuneka ilazi eyalaph' ekhaya, isibongo sala kwaNdwandwe. Kanti angibal' ukuthi liyaziwa ngabantu bonk' ihubo lakini njoba likulesi sigodi, kodwa nabanye [bakwezinye izindawo], ngoba phela silihlaba noma siyoshadisa, bafike balilalele abantu ukuthi hho, ihubo lasekuthe... lalaba basekutheni, lithi.*
>
> We originated with it since the beginning… we originated with it since the beginning. This *ihubo* passes down in that our progeny, as we are the progeny of our fathers, our

[76] I use 'nation' in quotes here to signal that today the Zulu group is not a nation. As observed in previous chapters, it falls within the South African nation whereas I refer to it as a nation in the nineteenth century when it was still politically autonomous. Similarly, the Ndwandwe were a nation when the Ndwandwe kingdom was still in existence but were no longer one after the fragmentation of the confederacy even as they appear to have continued calling themselves an *isizwe*.

[77] On the Church of the Nazarites or the Shembe Church, see Liz Gunner. *The Man of Heaven and the Beautiful Ones of God: Isaiah Shembe and the Nazareth Church.* Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2004. Print.

> fathers found it in existence, they found it existing among our grandfathers, and our grandfathers found it in existence among our great-grandfathers.… They came and listened to it [learnt it]. Because even a girl of this home needs to know it, of this kinship group name of kwaNdwandwe. But I'm not counting that all the people of a district know the *ihubo* of your home, but others as well [of other areas], because we sing it even when we go and marry someone off, and people listen that the *ihubo* of such and… of the people of such a place goes like this.

Chitheka concurred and went further :

> *... Ngoba lapha nje kwaNdwandwe nom' ungalaz... nom' ungawazi ukuthi lomthimb' owaphi, uthi usuwuzwa ngoba sebesh' ukuthi, nom' umukad' ungazi ukuthi kuzoganis' abantu bakwaNdwandwe, kodwa uzwa sebesho [ngehubo] ukuthi o, ngabakithi labana.*
>
> ... Because here for example in kwaNdwandwe when you don't know i... even if you don't know where this bride's party is from, you'll here it [the party] when it sings, even when you didn't know that those coming to marry off [a woman] are people of kwaNdwandwe, but you here them sing [the *ihubo*] that oh, these are people of my home.

It appears that something fundamental about a black dog as a Ndwandwe symbol that the hymn expresses has been lost to memory. What now remains is a taboo deriving from the hymn's lament. Ndwandwe people "*abasagcina isiZulu*" (who still observe 'Zulu' customs) do not call a dog *inja*, as it is commonly called. They respect it as a symbol of the Ndwandwe. Andile and almost every other Ndwandwe in Nengeni and Mahhashini where I lived in 2008 call it *ingcanga.*[78]

I posit that the *ihubo* and the *izithakazelo* as generic Ndwandwe forms maintain the memory of and rhetorically re-constitute the Ndwandwe *isizwe*, taking further the naming as an *isizwe* of the Ndwandwe I discussed in Chapter Two. The hymn is referred to as the *ihubo lesizwe* (national hymn), carrying forward the notion of Ndwandweness contained by the kinship group name Ndwandwe. The *ihubo* calls up all the *oNdwandwe* (Ndwandwe people) who are now the *abangasekho* or *abaleleyo* (the ancestors) who have ever lived to be present at the event to hear what they are being told and celebrate with the living. It is a hymn that

[78] On the custom of ukuhlonipha which makes some words taboo in a family or among a group of kin, see C. D. Ntuli. "Respect and hlonipha among the Nguni and some observations on the derogatory tags that tarnish women's image." *Southern African Journal of Folklore Studies* 11.1 (2000): 32-40. Print.

many are familiar with from hearing it sung at Ndwandwe, Nxumalo, Madlobha, and other *imizi* (homes) where ritual observances are practiced. Each time a Ndwandwe hears it, it is a reminder that s/he belongs together with all the others who use it. It is an expression of her/his Ndwandweness even though nobody can interpret what it means or pinpoint its provenance anymore.

To add to the points I have drawn out above – first, that each *isibongo* (kinship group name) has its own *ihubo* and, second, that the *ihubo* is passed down through repeated use during events such as weddings – Mafunza makes a third point: that even a person who does not know the family name of the people conducting the ceremony will find out from their *ihubo*. Indeed, especially in rural areas, people are conversant with the *amahubo* of a wide range of groups and can identify the *isibongo* (family name) of the group holding a ritual or ceremony, if they happen upon one, by the *ihubo* sung. They can also identify the group by the *izithakazelo* which follow the *ihubo*, as I discuss in the section that follows.

That each *isibongo* has its own *ihubo lesizwe* reinforces the notion of the *isizwe*. The *isizwe* uses this *ihubo* as its form of paying obeisance to its ancestors, as suggested in the second point above. The ihubo identifies those who sing it as part of the Ndwandwe *isizwe*. It distinguishes the Ndwandwe *isizwe* from others that sing different *amahubo* of their own in such a way that someone who wanders into a ceremony can identify the *isibongo* to which s/he has come as a consequence of the hymn being widely known to be of the Ndwandwe *isizwe*. Even when neighbors of the family conducting the ceremony sing it, they are understood to be merely helping the Ndwandwe. The work of distinguishing the Ndwandwe from other groups and reinforcing Ndwandweness that the ihubo performs is continued by the *izithakazelo*, both in their ritual use and in their daily use.

Ukuthinta abaDala: Izithakazelo in Ritual and Ceremony

In the ceremony we are following here, the addressing of the ancestors begins to specify who is being spoken to when the father names them with the *izithakazelo*: "*Zwide, Mkatshwa, Nkabanhle, nina baseGudunkomo, nina bakaKhokhel' abantu bahlatshwe, nina beSidinane samaphiswa esasingaphiswa thuvi esasiphiswa zindaba, Sothondose*" (Zwide, Mkhatshwa, Nkabanhle, you of Gudunkomo, you of Sidinane who did not feel like relieving himself of shit, but of heavy matters, Sothondose) in Mvangeli's version (interview, Durban, May 11, 2008). In some cases the 'father' leading the ceremony will call out all of these at the beginning. He may only call out a few, shouting them one at a time and waiting for a response from the audience. Throughout his address he will repeat some or all of these *izithakazelo*, perhaps calling an ancestor here and there by an *isithakazelo* before going on to declaim his *izibongo*. He will call the *izithakazelo* out again to end his address, perhaps calling the names out in quick succession, but often prompting a response from those gathered.

When the 'father' addresses the lineage of the family for which he leads the ceremony, he is calling all these ancestors Zwides, Mkhatshwas, Nkabanhles, and other names. He is invoking three sets of people simultaneously in calling out these *izithakazelo*: in the first place, the ancestors of the lineage; second, the individuals whose names the *izithakazelo* are derived from, and finally, every other dead Ndwandwe who is not an ancestor of the lineage conducting the ritual. Each of these people has been called by these *izithakazelo* in his[79] life, at least those who have lived since the *izithakazelo* became the general form of all Ndwandwe. In this ritual address, the form also surreptitiously extends to addressing Ndwandwe who lived longer ago, perhaps before these *izithakazelo* became generally used for all Ndwandwe.

[79] The tacit understanding in such address is that it is *omkhulu* (the 'grandfathers') or the male ancestors who are being called to.

The living people taking part in the ceremony that the *izithakazelo* identify with the Ndwandwe ancestors are themselves addressed as *amaZwide, oMkhatshwa, oNkabanhle* at different points during the ceremony. The father addresses the living Ndwandwe on whose behalf the father is speaking to the ancestors as "*maZwide, boMkhatshwa, boNkabanhle*" (Zwides, Mkhwatshwas, Nkabanhles) whenever there is something he wants to say to them. This is the case throughout the three days of the ceremony. The effect of this address for a living Ndwandwe person hearing the *izithakazelo* is to identify her/him with all the other Ndwandwe who are invoked by the *izithakazelo*.

In the ceremony as a whole, the *izithakazelo* are thus used to invoke the different sets of dead people as well as to address the living who are present at the ceremony. Moreover, the *izithakazelo* also invoke every other living Ndwandwe who is not present at the ceremony but to whom Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* apply. By invoking the totality of Ndwandwe – those who are living and all those who have lived before them – the *izithakazelo* thus rhetorically (re)constitute the Ndwandwe *isizwe* again and again each time they are called out during a ceremony – both the ritual address of the ancestors and speaking to the living.

These *izithakazelo* are a record of significant male leaders in the kinship group's past. Explaining the nature of the *izithakazelo* in *Kusadliwa ngoluDala* (1975), literary scholar C. T. Msimang maintains:

> *Empeleni izithakazelo amagama okhokho bohlobo oluthile, kanye nomlando ophathelene nohlobo lolo. Igama lenzalabantu yohlobo lolo ilona elibizwa kuqala ezithakazelweni, bese kulandela elenkosana yalo nelenkosana yenkosana aphothe intambo, njalo ngokwanda kwezizukulwane zenzalabantu. Leli gama-ke eliqala kuqala liba isibongo sohlobo lolo kuthi alandelayo abe izithakazelo.… Ngakho-ke umuntu ngokwazi ukulandelana kokhokho bakhe, wazi izithakazelo zakubo nomlando wakubo.* (57)
>
> In reality the *izithakazelo* are names of the ancestors of a certain type [of people], and a history that has to do with that type. The name of the progenitor of that particular type is called out first in the *izithakazelo*, followed by the name of his senior son, followed by the senior son's senior son and they weave a continuous rope [chain] as the descendents of the progenitor grow. The name that comes first becomes the *isibongo* [family group name] of that type and the following ones become the

> *izithakazelo*.… Therefore, a person, by knowing the order [of seniority] of one's ancestors, knows the *izithakazelo* of one's home and the history of one's home.

Msimang's teleology does not apply in the case of the Ndwandwe (nor to most other *izithakazelo*). The *izithakazelo* do not always name the progenitor and follow that name with the names of descendants coming down the genealogy. Ndwandwe is the progenitor in the case of the abakwaNdwandwe, but Zwide is the figure whose name is the most prominently used *isithakazelo*. While available genealogies are uncertain and conflicting, they all place Zwide at least five generations from Ndwandwe. Hence the *izithakazelo* do not follow a genealogical line as Msimang suggests they do.

What Msimang identifies applies to the calling out of the ancestors of the lineage once the father has declaimed the opening *izithakazelo* at the end of the singing of the *ihubo*. In the Ndwandwe *izithakazelo*, the memory of a heroic past attaches to Zwide in so far as he is said to have made the Ndwandwe *isizwe* strong and was subsequently catastrophically defeated by Shaka, precipitating the state the Ndwandwe find themselves in today. Little has been retained in memory about most of the other figures named. Chitheka confirmed in an interview that among the Ndwandwe the *izithakazelo* used are names of ancestors, as did almost every other interviewee I have cited in this dissertation. Chitheka put it in the following way:

> *Angithi lapha ezithakazelweni, izithakazelo isikhath' esiningi kuze kube umuntu... kungen' umuntu kuzo, kuthakazelwe ngomuntu kodwa. Ngoba ake ngithi nje la... kukhon' ath' umuntu 'Zwide kaLanga.' Angithi siyathol' ukuth' uZw... uLanga kwakuwumuntu, uZwide futhi kwakuwumuntu. 'Wena kaZwide kaLanga.' Omuny' az' aqhubeke athi, 'Wena kaSomaphunga.' Angith' uSomaphunga njalo useyindodana kaZwide. Kuze kuqhubek' omunye athi, 'Wena kaMgojana.'… Angithi nje njalo manje usakuthakazela. Kushuth' izithakazelo zingena isikhath' esiningi, zisebenza ngomuntu. (interview, Ngoqongweni in Nongoma, May 5, 2008)*

> Well, here in the *izithakazelo*, the *izithakazelo* most of the time come from a person… a person enters into them, a person is used to *thakazela*. For example here… somebody would say, 'Zwide kaLanga.' We find that Zw… Langa was a person, Zwide was also a person. 'You of Zwide [son] of Langa.' Another person would even continue to say, 'You of Somaphunga.' Somaphunga was Zwide's son. Another will

> even continue to say, 'You of Mgojana.'… This person is still *thakazela*-ing you [calling you by your kinship group's address names]. That means the *izithakazelo* come from, they work through a person.

Among the *izithakazelo* to which Chitheka refers here, 'Zwide kaLanga' is commonly used as the *isithakazelo* of all the Ndwandwe in ceremonies and everyday speech. I have not heard '*wena kaSomaphunga'* and '*wena kaMgojana'* used in any setting other than in this example that Chitheka gave in the interview. However, Chitheka and Mafunza went on to clarify that in daily use, it is only people who are most familiar with the individual being addressed through the *izithakazelo* who would venture to use names that are more specific to a lineage such as Somaphunga and Mgojana (interview, May 5, 2008). If a person is addressed as descended from the wrong ancestors, s/he will often object and correct the speaker's error, pointing out that he is from a different lineage (interview, May 5, 2008).

The names of people who came after Zwide – Somaphunga and Mgojana who lived in the Zulu kingdom in this case – do not feature in the general *izithakazelo* of all Ndwandwe. This suggests that the *isizwe* that is recalled is that which existed up to Zwide's defeat.[80] Any and every Ndwandwe family uses the *izithakazelo* of all the Ndwandwe similarly to the *ihubo* where ancestral ritual observances are practiced. These *izithakazelo* are used in the family ceremonies of the Nxumalo, the Madlobha, the Masuku and any other groups that are considered Ndwandwe. Msimang goes on in his discussion to account for the use of similar *izithakazelo* by groups that bear different family names:

> *Umndeni ungabamkhulu kuvela imibango egcina idabule abozalo phakathi, kokunye*

[80] It is not the case that the *izithakazelo* of all groups that were incorporated into the Zulu recall their *izizwe* as they were at the time of defeat. An example is the Buthelezi where Mnyamana and Ngqengelele are named in the accepted generic *izithakazelo*, even though some families do not call these *izithakazelo* in their ceremonies. Nqengelele rose to prominence under Shaka and his son, Mnyamana, went on to become the *induna enkulu* (chief counselor) to Cetshwayo kaMpande. See Mangosuthu Buthelezi. "The Early History of the Buthelezi Clan." *Social System and Tradition in Southern Africa: Essays in Honour of Eileen Krige.* Ed. John Argyle. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1978. 19-35. Print.

> *indlu yasekhohlo igcine ngokujokola impela iqembuke iyozakhela yodwa. Izizukulwane zendlu leyo eqembukile zizozibiza ngesibongo salowo owaqembukayo kube nguyena khulukhulu wazo. Kuyatholokala nokho ezithakazelweni ukuthi empeleni abakwabani laba, badabuka kwabakwabani.* (58)
>
> Once a family gets large disputes arise which eventually split people of the kinship group, sometimes the left-hand house ending up breaking away and moving off to set up independently. The descendents of the house that separated off will call themselves by the *isibongo* (family group name) of that person who moved off, he will become their progenitor. It will, however, be found in the kinship group address names [*izithakazelo*] that, in truth, which kinship group these people are of, they split off from the people of which group.

The above is one way in which the *izithakazelo* spread across different family names. This is roughly the manner in which the Nxumalo split off from the Ndwandwe main house (Sduduzo Nxumalo, interview, April 5, 2008)**.** However, in line with Msimang's project of giving a positive view of 'Zulu' cultural practices in his book and perhaps also due to his sources, his 1975 account seems insufficient as it fails to bring into view the struggles that went along with this type of splitting off.

A much more nuanced account of the spread of the *izithakazelo* is provided by Hamilton's 1985 Master's thesis, "Ideology, Oral Traditions and the Struggle for Power in the Early Zulu Kingdom." In discussing the ideological manipulation of the *izithakazelo* in Shaka's Zulu kingdom, Hamilton brings to light the historical conflict submerged in this form. Hamilton suggests:

> The ostensible function of *izithakazelo* seems to have been preservation of the memory of a clan's wider genealogical connections. People claim genealogical connections and tend to observe marriage prohibitions with groups who share the same *izithakazelo*, even where the circumstances of their connection are not (or no longer) known. It is widely asserted that a group 'must' be related to whosoever their *izithakazelo* (or *tinanatelo*[81]) conjoin with. Unlike clan-names (*izibongo*) *izithakazelo* are not fixed for all time. Numerous *izithakazelo* are not even the names of ancestors. Rather, the characteristic obscurity of meaning of most *izithakazelo* predisposed them to manipulations of meaning, additions and subtractions, and facilitated the creation of fictive kin relationships. *Izithakazelo* had no ritual role which might have served as an imperative for their accurate preservation. These features suggest that *izithakazelo*, possibly even more than traditions of origin, were open to manipulation, both in the reign of Shaka and subsequently. (66-7)

[81] *Tinanatelo* is the term for the form in the Swazi language.

Based on speculation that the Ndwandwe kingdom was the prototype of the Zulu kingdom,[82] a similar kind of conflict possibly took place in the Ndwandwe kingdom. The easy assumption of kinship between the Ndwandwe, the Nxumalo and other groups said to be Ndwandwe, such as the Mncwango, Masuku and Madlobha, derives from this function of the *izithakazelo*. The genealogical connections are no longer known for the most part. The likely subjugation of these groups by the Ndwandwe has fallen out of memory. Only ostensible kinship remains, based on shared *ihubo* and *izithakazelo*. Even in the case of the closely related Nxumalo, accounts of the relationship between the Nxumalo and the Ndwandwe main house are confused. Sduduzo Nxumalo, the initiator of the uBumbano, could only offer a confused history of how the Nxumalo split off from the Ndwandwe:

> *LoMkhatshwa wesithathu nguye le osephuma ngathi usewuNxumalo, ongathithi sebeyaxebuxebuka manje lapha kuNdwandwe, kushuthi ngezizashwana zokuthi kuhlala kuhlal' emndenini kube khon' ukushayisana. Ngoba kahle hle kwagcina sekungathithi kuthand' ukuxebuxebukana ngenxa yezizashwana okungelul' ukuthi ngiziqonde kahle. Kodwa uth' u... bathi abadala kwathi ngesikhathi kubus' inkosi u... uLudonga wayesebon' intombi yena lapha kwaNxumalo... Bathi noma bemkhuza umndeni laph' uthi, "Cha, lent' oyenzayo ayifanel' ukuthi uyenze," kwash' ukuthi bona sebeze bathandana-ke, akuselul' ukubehlukanisa. Kanti kukhona neziny' izizashwana aba... okushuthi lokhu kwase kungumthelela wokushayisana, wokungemukelan' inkosana nekhohlwa.* (interview, April 5, 2008)

> The third Mkhatshwa is the one who separated off and seemed to become Nxumalo, seeming to move away from Ndwandwe, for minor reasons that from time to time in a family there's conflict. In the end it seems to have been a split for reasons I cannot quite understand. But so says… elders say in the rule of inkosi Ludonga, he saw a potential lover here in kwaNxumalo… Even when he was advised against it, the family saying, "No, this thing you are doing is not appropriate to do," they had already fallen in love, it was no longer easy to separate them. But there were other petty reasons… that means this became a cause of conflict, for the son from the main house to not get along with the son from the left-hand house.

Sduduzo goes on to say that a Nxumalo section had been established under Dingiswayo of the Mthethwa for some time by the time of the Ndwandwe-Mthethwa war that took place in the 1810's. Hamilton corroborates this claim with evidence from the James Stuart archive (66).

[82] See Norman Etherington. "Were there Large States in the Coastal Regions of Southeast Africa before the Rise of the Zulu Kingdom?" *History in Africa* 31 (2004): 157-83. Print.

Regardless of how the Nxumalo separated off from the Ndwandwe main house, the key point here is that the Nxumalo use the same *izithakazelo* as the Ndwandwe and have maintained a close kinship bond. This is in contrast to all the other groups who are said to be Ndwandwe: the Madlobha, Masuku, Mncwango (or Ncwangeni), and others. If we apply Hamilton's argument about ideological incorporation through the assumption of *izithakazelo* (and even the same *ihubo*), it appears that these other groups were incorporated into the Ndwandwe confederacy. However, no evidence has yet come to light to demonstrate conclusively the form their incorporation took. Yet the use of the same *ihubo* as the Ndwandwe by some of these groups and the same *izithakazelo* by others of these groups suggests that official forms of the Ndwandwe state may have been assumed by these groups as part of the process of their incorporation. Of significance about the *izithakazelo*, Hamilton further states, is that,

> In contrast to a claim made by the ethnologist Van Warmelo that *izithakazelo* are accurate indicators of historical origins, it should be noted that *izithakazelo* were, rather, a prime site of the manipulation of, and intervention in, the historical record. Address-names appear to have been altered to suggest historical connections between groups who were entirely unrelated. Indeed, Hilda Kuper in her comments on *tinanatelo*, the parallel address-name form amongst the neighbouring Swazi, notes that the name '*tinanatelo*' derives from the verb *kunana*, meaning to borrow, with the intention of returning, a point which emphasises the flexibility and flux of address-names. Where certain *izithakazelo* were common to a number of *izibongo* they were used to suggest that the *izibongo* were related to each other. The acquisition of *izithakazelo* appears therefore to have been one means of cementing alliances between groups, and perhaps ultimately a part of the process of creating a common political identity.… Patterns to the contradictions in the evidence on origins suggests that the claims of the groups to a common descent may have been imposed over other, disparate claims of origin. How did this occur? The assumption of new *izithakazelo* was a recognized social practice. A number of traditions survive which testify to *izithakazelo* being acquired through exchange for goods or services. From this it can be inferred that the 'borrowing' or acquisition of new *izithakazelo* demanded the agreement, or at least the appearance of agreement of both parties concerned. Clearly it would have been of little effect for one party to claim that it was related through its *izithakazelo* to another party, if the latter denied the relationship, and if the former had no authoritative sources with which to bolster their claim to a particular *izithakazelo*. This is borne out in the traditions [of origin] by the emphasis placed on the transactions involved in the exchange, and by the negative evidence of the absence of any accounts of the forcible appropriation of *izithakazelo*. (Hamilton 274-5)

In regard to the Ndwandwe today, an assumption of quiescent Ndwandweness is retained. UBumbano activists make an easy assumption that the groups they call Ndwandwe became and remained Ndwandwe willingly. The evidence assembled by John Wright that the Ndwandwe were a predatory state suggests otherwise.[83]

What is most significant is that these Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* name Ndwandwe notables up to Zwide or, more accurately, they start with Zwide's generation and go backward into the past before Zwide as I have suggested above. This tells us that they were adopted either before Zwide's time or in Zwide's day by the Masuku, Ncwangeni and other groups. It further suggests that when the Ndwandwe kingdom splintered, the *izithakazelo* remained unchanging among certain fragments of the Ndwandwe confederacy. Among people of the Ndwandwe and Nxumalo names, these generic *izithakazelo* have not changed since, while groups that might have been incorporated into the Ndwandwe may have added the names of people who have lived since the Ndwandwe defeat. My assertion gains support from the *izithakazelo* of the Nxumalo recorded by Hamilton in Swaziland, a group whose forebears migrated after the breakup of the Ndwandwe confederacy. These groups took the same *izithakazelo* with them that are still in use in KwaZulu-Natal today. Hamilton recorded the Nxumalo *izithakazelo* as "Nxumalo, Ndwandwe, Mkhatshwa, Zwide kaLanga, kaSidinane samaphisa abangaphiswa thuvi kepha baphiswa izindaba, okaSothondose omhlophe" (Hamilton 58). Hamilton interviewed Bongani Mkhatshwa, an oral history fanatic who has travelled extensively in Swaziland, South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zambia reconstructing the history of the Ndwandwe diaspora.[84] These are the very same *izithakazelo* used by Nxumalo in KwaZulu-Natal. People of the Ndwandwe name only omit Nxumalo as an *isithakazelo* because they are genealogically senior to the Nxumalo.

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[83] See Wright, "Rediscovering the Ndwandwe Kingdom," 225.

[84] My own enquiries into the Ndwandwe diaspora in Swaziland led me to Mkhatshwa in June 2011, almost two decades after Hamilton had interviewed him. By now in his 70's, Mkhatshwa spoke extensively, if not always coherently, about the Ndwandwe in Swaziland and Mozambique in the nineteenth century.

Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* as used in family ceremonies thus maintain and recall the Ndwandwe *isizwe* up to the moment of its collapse, that is, the defeat of the Ndwandwe by the Zulu in approximately 1820 in the way they name notables up to Zwide. In part, this recall explains why the founders of the uBumbano hold on strongly to the idea of the defeat of the Ndwandwe as the moment that chartered Ndwandwe loss of status that persists to this day. This memory lies dormant in the *izithakazelo*. It is repeated each time a Ndwandwe ceremony is conducted and the ancestors hailed with the *izithakazelo*. Zwide is also amplified in the *izithakazelo* as the person who made the *isizwe* what it was. His name is the *isithakazelo* most frequently used. Yet, in narrations of the Ndwandwe past Zwide is often remembered in the same breath as his mother, Ntombazi. Ntombazi is said to have been the pillar of the Zwide's kingdom with her advice to Zwide and through powerful medicines. Yet as a woman she is not recalled in the *izithakazelo*. Women never are included in traditional recitations of praises, as I demonstrated in Chapter Two.

The *izithakazelo* are, therefore, a series of names that canonise some of the most significant male figures of the particular kinship group in line with traditional patrilineal practices. The figures that are canonised can be leaders who founded the group and/or its chiefdom, who fought great wars in the kinship group's collective memory, or who led great treks in search of freedom from oppressing powers. The praises can also describe the topography where the group has resided in its history and/or the geography traversed by the group as it searched for land to settle away from hostile nature and/or human enemies. The Ndwandwe refer to one another as "*Mnguni waseGudunkomo*" and are referred to by others as "*wena waseGudunkomo*." This is a reference to Magudu. In the poetic turn of phrase Magudu is called Gudunkomo, combining Magudu with *inkomo*, cow. None of the people I have interviewed can interpret what this reference to Magudu means. However, many use this as evidence of their belonging in Magudu. Magudu figures as an important ancestral home in

conversations in meetings of the uBumbano. This reference to Magudu lends weight to the manner in which overall the *izithakazelo* build up the *isizwe's* greatness, regardless of its numerical size or the magnitude of its past achievements.

What is more, the *izithakazelo* can also borrow fragments of the personal *izibongo* of the leaders who are canonised in the group address names. The *izibongo* of Zwide kaLanga, who is remembered as the consolidator of the Ndwandwe confederacy that was destroyed by Shaka Zulu's forces in 1826, are incorporated into the generic *izithakazelo*. All the Ndwandwe people are '*nina bakaNonkokhel' abantu bahlatshwe njengezinkomo*' (you [descendents] of 'leader of the people until they are stabbed like cattle'). This is an extract from the personal praises of Zwide that is repeated in all three versions I discussed in the preceding chapter. For those who claim rootlessness and a lack of a coherent sense of historical subjectivity as a general Ndwandwe condition, the *izithakazelo* along with the *ihubo* as performed in family ancestral ceremonies also recall the beginnings of the condition in which the Ndwandwe find themselves today. They rhetorically (re)constitute the Ndwandwe *isizwe*. The *izithakazelo* then carry these deep significations with them in pared down form in their public usage.

Ndwandweness in the World: iziThakazelo and iHubo at Large

When it comes to the use of *izithakazelo* in daily life, Eileen Krige in *The Social System of the Zulu* (1936), Hilda Kuper in *An African Aristocracy* (1947), Christian Msimang in *Kusadliwa Ngoludala* (1975), Liz Gunner and Mafika Gwala in *Musho!: Zulu Popular Praises*, and Carolyn Hamilton in her MA thesis (1985), have provided some explanations of how the form functions. However, the form has barely been studied in any comprehensive way, except by Hamilton. Studies on oral literature have mainly focused on the *izibongo*. Combining all the work of these writers with my experiences and observations of the uses of

these forms on the occasion in the anecdote above, in the context of my own family, among neighbors and pointing to their deployment in other forms such as *maskanda*, I construct a view of the intersection of the *ihubo*, *izithakazelo* and *izibongo* through a thought experiment. To understand how the forms we see at work in the uBumbano lwamaZwide function in the life of a male and a female, I track them through the lives or two closely related hypothetical people, building on the event I observed in the anecdote in the above section. I borrow some aspects from the story of the life of Mfaz' omnyama, a popular maskanda musician from Nongoma who died in 2001.

The oral forms associated with our hypothetical sister by the time she gets married in her life began to accumulate before she was even born. When her mother was pregnant with her approximately thirty years before, perhaps she talked to her unborn child about the world and the family she would be coming into. Sometimes she would call her baby "Zwide," sometimes "Mkhatshwa," and other times "Nkabanhle" or any of the other *izithakazelo* that fitted in with the rhythm of her singing or talking to soothe her child and assure her that she would be alright in the world despite the challenges that awaited her. The mother perhaps composed a song or modified a well known one to give the unborn child her first *isangelo*. *Izangelo* are songs combined with poetry about the mother's experiences of married life with her husband, co-wives and the extended unit in a polygynous and multigenerational family living together in a homestead. The songs and poems sometimes lead to the child's name being derived from the mother's compositions. Perhaps our subject's name was given to her as a record of important events that occurred around her or of the state in which the family or the society was when she was born. It could be the revival of the name of an ancestor whom she is thought to resemble or whose significance in the family is meant to be remembered.

When our friend was born she would have been welcomed into the world in an *imbeleko* ceremony where a goat was slaughtered and her ancestors enjoined to guide and protect her throughout her life. The *izithakazelo* of the Ndwandwe as well as the names and *izibongo* of her forebears would have been called out by her father when he conducted the ceremony. Thus she joined the kinship group, tied to the living and to those who had lived before she was born through the *izithakazelo*. The initial *izangelo* sung to her would gradually have given way to another form of song and praises, *imilolozelo* (lullabies) in which her mother combined playful praise of the child for her physical beauty and hope for the moral and social values she would come to exhibit in later life. Out of these lullabies would have grown the child's early personal *izibongo* to which would be added by siblings, relatives and neighbours as she grew up. As she grew up, she was probably called "Zwide, Mkhatshwa, Nkabanhle, wena wasGudunkomo, Sdinane" along with all the other members of her family each time an (male) elder addressed any meeting of her potentially extensive family.

Up to this point, her father's brother's son, who is our sister's brother in 'Zulu' kinship terminology, who was perhaps born a few days after her, had grown up experiencing oral forms in the same way. At about the age of six, they both started attending school. In the olden days before schools existed, at about this age she would have started participating in household chores while her brother went out to herd the family's goats. The brother's heroic deeds in play and in dispensing his duties would have started assuming public prominence as friends composed *izibongo* for him based on any notable actions on his part or on his physical appearance. Her actions would have been confined to the relative obscurity of the domestic sphere in the *ixhiba* (cooking hut) and the girls' *ilawu* (sleeping hut). An ethos of heroism would henceforth have been instilled in the brother and he would have lived by it for the rest of his life when he was recruited into an *ibutho* (age set) to serve as a fighting unit in war or a

labor unit for the ruler in peace time. He would have accumulated new *izibongo* after he had shown heroism in battle or on hunting trips. These would be declaimed in public each time there was a feast in this *umuzi* (homestead) or that one when he took the circle to do his *ukugiya* solo dance in the manner some did at the *umncamo* send-off ceremony. These izibongo would have gone along with the *izithakazelo* that would be all the praises of his known to those who were not close enough to him but only knew that he was so-and-so, son of so-and-so, of the Ndwandwe *isibongo* (kinship group name). The personal praises would have been his *izigiyo* (dancing praises). She, on the other hand, would have accumulated *izibongo* of her own, but as she is a woman these would be declaimed in women's circles at feasts and not in the cattle enclosure where the men's would be. They would most likely have been about being a good woman who was a good wife and mother. Her *izithakazelo*, that is those of all the Ndwandwe, would also precede the calling out of her *izigiyo*.

But because she and her brother went to school, they have not acquired much *izibongo* except for a few lines each. They have not done the things that used to occupy people through their youth because schooling became the norm. Sure, in their isiZulu classes they were required to learn the *izithakazelo* of prominent *izibongo* (family or kinship group names) such as Zulu and Buthelezi, from which the king and his *induna enkulu* (chief counsellor), Mangosuthu Buthelezi, respectively come. Teachers have along the way insisted that they know the *izithakazelo* of all the family names represented in their classes. And they had to learn the *izibongo* of Shaka, Dinuzulu and other Zulu kings in the curriculum of KwaZulu schools.[85] In and outside school, they were always surrounded by the *izithakazelo*. Their teachers and neighbors greeted each other using the respective *izithakazelo* of the people being greeted. There were many ceremonies over the years at home when the *izithakazelo*, *izibongo* and Ndwandwe *ihubo* were used. They themselves were greeted,

[85] Memorizing *izibongo* of the Zulu royalty used to be the norm when I was in primary school in the late 1980's.

addressed, praised for good deeds with these *izithakazelo*. On radio they have heard time and again announcers, politicians, traditional leaders and sport stars of Ndwandwe, Nxumalo and other related names being addressed as Zwide, Mkhatshwa, Sidinane, Nkabanhle. Even in church members of their congregations address one another using *izithakazelo*. They invite one another to *imisebenzi* (ancestral ceremonies) and weddings where these forms are almost always used.

After school, our friend continued to live at home in Mahhashini, Nongoma. She may have found a job working in a clothing store in the town of Nongoma. Perhaps she drifted to Johannesburg to find better-paying employment. She came back home for a time. She moved to Durban. When she came of marriageable age, her father held an *umemulo* for her. Again her ancestors were addressed and told she was now a grown woman and asked to bless her with a good marriage. In each of the places she lived she met men whose sweet talk to her often included calling her “Zwide”. The pick-up lines that included this signal of knowing who her people are always worked best. The man she is now married to knew her *izithakazelo* well. To this day he probably calls her MaZwide rather than MaNdwandwe. He possibly spent the night before his delegation went to *khonga* (ask for her hand in marriage) tutoring members of the delegation on how to address his prospective in-laws: teaching them the Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* and a few lines of the *izibongo* of the forefathers of her family he had picked up. They called these out at the gate when the three or four men went to Mahhashini the following morning. They dropped in an *isithakazelo* here and another one there as the negotiations over how many cattle the *ilobolo* (gifts given by the groom to the bride’s family) would be. The *izithakazelo* were a great sweetener; they helped make the negotiations quite smooth and the money cattle not too pricey. These were used again along with the *izibongo* of her ancestors at her *umkhehlo*, the ceremony to mark her engagement to be married.

On the other hand, when he finished school maybe the brother went to Johannesburg for a few years. Being the oldest son in his own *indlu* (house or nuclear family), he had to start taking responsibility at home. He had to help his father support the children who come after our brother here. He also had to progressively take the lead in matters of family ritual and ceremony. So he had to start learning from his 'fathers' as much of the genealogies of the various *izindlu* (houses) of his *uzalo* (extended family). He learnt as many of the *izibongo* as possible of his *obaba* ('fathers'), *omkhulu* ('grandfathers') and *okhokho* ('great-grandfathers) of the various houses that make up his family unit. He learnt these in order to use them when the time came for him to lead family ceremonies. But because he was still young and still learning, because he was still unmarried and therefore a mere boy in local terms, whenever he or any other member of the family conducted a major *umsebenzi* (ancestral ceremony), they had to call a 'father' from the extended family to come and address the ancestors. He can call up his ancestors when they do a little *umsebenzi* that only requires a goat or less to be slaughtered. Anything that involves a cow is above him for now. He will take over when his 'fathers' are no more.

In Johannesburg over the years he has been part of a *maskanda* music band while keeping his day job. He is the leader of the band, which has risen to the point of being recorded. In the middle of most songs he sings on stage and on the CD they have released he praises himself with some of the *izibongo* of his lineage he uses in family ceremonies. He starts with himself, tells about being from *ehlalankosi* (Nongoma) where the Zulu king lives, he calls out his *izibongo* that he has composed for himself, borrowing from those of his forebears and from incidents that have happened in his life up to now. He amplifies his successes – he is a great conqueror who succeeded where the *abathakathi* (detractors and/or witches) and *izitha* (enemies) swore he wouldn't. He goes on to his father, his father's father and father's father's father. He calls out the *izithakazelo*, saying he walks with the greats of

the Ndwandwe who have seen him to this place in life. He has slaughtered a cow and thanked his ancestors each time he has achieved something in his career – when he was promoted at work, when he *bika'd* (reported) his *umuzi* (homestead) to his ancestors after the completion of its construction, and when his band released its CD. At each of these celebrations he addresses the ancestors using *izithakazelo* and *izibongo*. The group is perhaps so successful that he is thinking of leaving his job at a gold mine to focus on his music. As a sign of respect, he is called Zwide, Mkhatshwa, Nkabanhle everywhere he goes nowadays: in the male hostels where his 'homeboys' live, and each time he appears for an interview on radio or television. He has even personalized the license plate of his first car 'ZWIDE GP.'[86]

Back at the wedding ceremony where we started and where the brother was part of the 'family' delegation in the cattle enclosure, early the next morning his car will lead a convoy of cars and a bus out of their home to the groom's home to hold the *umgcagco* or *umshado wesiZulu* ('Zulu' or traditional wedding).[87] When they get to the *isigcawu* they will sing the Ndwandwe *ihubo* and their *imbongi* (poet) will then praise the ancestors. This will be part of the elaborate announcement that the daughter of the Ndwandwe of such and such an *umuzi* (homestead) has arrived at her new home. She comes accompanied by all her forebears, the Zwides, who are named and praised in the 'father's' speech. She will be welcomed by a 'father' from the family she is marrying into who also will address the ancestors of his people or *abakubo*, those of his home. There will be much singing and dancing, with a group of singers from *umthimba* and the *ikhetho*, respectively the bride's and the groom's groups, trying to outcompete each other. The festivities will continue with feasting and drinking until about midday the following day when the *umthimba* leaves to return home.

[86] Aspects of the story on the music career of the hypothetical man are based on the life, career and music of Mphatheni 'Mfaz' omnyama' Khumalo, a maskandi musician who died in 2001 and has become even more popular after death than he was while alive.
[87] Traditional is called Zulu by most people in local Zulu-language parlance, as I discussed in Chapter Two. Those who distance themselves from Zulu identification often call a ceremony 'wesintu.'

The *ihubo*, *izithakazelo* and *izibongo* will be heard again and again back home whenever there's a major ritual or ceremony. They will be heard daily when a male stranger or neighbor approaches the home. He will call out the *izithakazelo* from a distance to announce his approach. Every time the brother arrives home from Johannesburg or leaves to go back he will go into the ceremonial hut, burn the *impepho* herb and tell the Zwides of his lineage that he is safely back or he is asking them to guard him as he roams the world. He will also perform the critical ritual for his father when he dies where the forms will be used: the *ihubo* will be sung at the *ihlambo*, the *izithakazelo* called out and the father's *izibongo* addressed to him. A year after his father's death, he will also perform the *ukubuyisa* ritual to finally bring his father's spirit back home so that he may become a good ancestor since he will have been appropriately laid to rest. The *ihubo*, *izithakazelo* and *izibongo* will thus continue to be part of the brother's life until he dies and beyond. The sister will also take part in these rituals and be surrounded by the singing and declaiming of these forms for the rest of her life. But rituals and ceremonies that have to do with her will be conducted following the traditions of her husband's family for the remainder of her life and after.

The *izithakazelo* are commonly used in daily speech in various moments observable in the above anecdote as rhetorical gestures to put one in good standing with the addressee. Ndwandwe people are commonly addressed as 'Zwide' in greeting; in giving praise and thanks, such as at the end of a feast; and the *izithakazelo* are often dropped into the flow of common speech. In each case they are a polite form of address. In relation to the use of the formin the Zulu kingdom Hamilton writes:

> The widespread daily use of the *izithakazelo* made them an ideal vehicle for the transmission of new ideas concerning historical and socio-political relationships. In Zulu society, it was considered very important to know a wide range of *izithakazelo* and to be able to address people with the correct names. The *izithakazelo* enjoyed daily currency. Everyone was familiar with the *izithakazelo* of the clans about him, and in addressing their members habitually used them. (276)

The importance of knowing a wide range of *izithakazelo* still holds in the present. In rural towns and villages such as Nongoma where I conducted some of the research for this dissertation, and to a lesser extent in more culturally mixed towns and cities, the *izithakazelo* are used extensively among Zulu language-speakers. On factory floors in Johannesburg and elsewhere where many migrant workers from KwaZulu-Natal work, and in the corridors of universities, law firms as well as among friends at parties in townships and suburbs, one will hear speech peppered with different *izithakazelo*.

As we saw in how the Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* are a record of some of the significant male figures in the history of the group, it is indeed calling the name of the putative ancestors of the addressee when a person is called by an *isithakazelo*. The name of either the most illustrious ancestor or the founder of the group is used most prominently as the primary *isithakazelo* that is called out if the speaker is going to use only one name, such as when greeting a person in passing and not stopping to engage in a conversation. A comparison will clarify this point. While for the Ndwandwe, the most prominent *isithakazelo* is Zwide, for the Khumalo it is Mntungwa, for the Mbatha it Mthiya; it is Mgabadeli for the Dladla, Gatsheni for the Ndlovu and Shenge for the Buthelezi. In each case, this is the one *isithakazelo* that will be familiar to people who have superficial knowledge of the groups to whom the *isithakazelo* pertains.

In the above cases, except for the Ndwandwe, the *izithakazelo* are the names of forebears of the group who are assumed to either be the founders or some of the earliest members of the group who made major contributions to its existence sometime in the past. These are people who lived in barely-remembered times before the groups were incorporated

into the Zulu kingdom.[88] Hardly anything of substance can be said about who these figures were. In the case of the Ndwandwe, it is Zwide who is foregrounded in the *izithakazelo* as I have signaled above. Although not much can be said about him either, it is remarkable that he is the primary figure through whom the past of the group is recalled. It is his name that is called out on a daily basis when a Ndwandwe or Nxumalo person is greeted.

Greeting a person by her/his *isithakazelo* is, in the first place, acknowledging that s/he is descended from the particular ancestor whose name the *isithakazelo* is. By implication, it is acknowledging the other ancestors whose names would come before or follow the one the addressor calls out if the addressor either knew the rest of the *izithakazelo* and/or had occasion to call them out. The implying of the rest of the ancestors also recognizes them by such implication. It is this type of use to which Msimang refers when he maintains that the *izithakazelo* tickle a man because they recall his his ancestors for him:

> *Izithakazelo ziphinde zibaluleke ngokuthi ziyamkitaza, zimthinte enonini lowo othakazelwayo. Okhokho babebazisa oyise nawoyisemkhulu. Uma-ke wena uzomthopha ngabo, uzomuzwa esethi, "Ngubani lowo owazi ubaba nobabamkhulu usibanibani owathi wathi? Ngenisani lowo muntu bo!" Nempela usezongeniswa okhulekayo emukelwe ngezandla ezimhlophe. Umuntu okhuleka nje engazazi izithakazelo kenameleki, uyasolwa abuzisiswe agwetshwe ukuthi uze ngani njalonjalo. Akasheshe abekelwe ukhamba ngaphambili noma umnumzane esutha kakulula ukuba amhlabise.* (57-8)
>
> The *izithakazelo* are also important because they tickle and make joyful the person being thakazelwa'd. Our ancestors used to hold their ancestors in high esteem. So when you praise[89] a person about them, you'll here him say, "Who is that who knows father and grandfather so and so who did this and that?[90] Hurry up and bring that person in!" Indeed the person calling out will be brought in and welcomed warmly. A person who calls out for attention not knowing the *izithakazelo* is not happily received, he is viewed with suspicion and asked in strong terms what he wants. A pot of beer is not quickly brought out for him nor will the head of the homestead quickly slaughter an animal for him even if he is relatively wealthy.

[88] The past that is retained in memory and constantly made present by being talked about in any detail today is the Zulu period for which there are written records. It is narrated through the experiences of the Zulu royal house for the most part.

[89] Msimang uses the verb *thopha* which means the same as *thakazela*, but with the additional element of using the names and even adding the *izibongo* of the specific ancestors of the addressee.

[90] "Who did this and that" suggests that the response of the addressee includes calling out the *izibongo* of the people the addressor names.

Msimang is referring to an *umuzi* (homestead) as it existed in the Zulu kingdom during a time before the changes wrought by colonialism and industrialization from the second half of the nineteenth century. Such *imizi* are relatively rare today where the practice of receiving a visitor in this manner continues. Visitors who call out in such an elaborate way are also rare, except perhaps in *ukukhonga* (asking permission for a man to marry a woman). Msimang switches to using the present after discussing how "our ancestors" used to hold their ancestors in high regard. In the change of tense, he skips to the present, suggesting that the use of the *izithakazelo* was much the same in 1975 when he published his book as more than a century earlier. This assertion bears some accuracy even today, especially in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal. What is more, even though the language does not give clues as to the sex of the addressor and addressee here and it is only when Msimang refers to the host that we learn he is male, Msimang assumes male interlocutors as the *izithakazelo* are mainly used in this way by male callers. In the same passage Msimang continues:

> *Kunjalo futhi nalapho kukhongwa, uma umnumzane bemhashe kahle abakhongi usheshe abemukele. Ingani bakhombisa ukuhlonipha oyisemkhulu. Kunjalonje nabo bayazichaza ukuthi bathunywe ngubani wakobani, sekuyobonakala khona lapho ukuthi mhlawumbe bathunywe isikhulu noma abantu abanobuntu.*
>
> It is the same also when the request is formally being made for a woman to marry a man; when they have praised the head of the household really well he will quickly accept them. Indeed [by so praising him] they have shown respect for his ancestors. At the same time they are explaining by whom of what lineage they have been sent, and it will come to light there whether perhaps they have been sent by a high-ranking official or people with *ubuntu*.[91]

Here again Msimang is taking for granted the gender norms of the Zulu society he is describing. His reference to the *ukukhonga* is to what would have happened in the lead up to the *umncamo* ceremony in the anecdote at the beginning of this chapter. As suggested earlier, the *ukukhonga* is conducted by a delegation of men from the family of the prospective groom

[91] On *ubuntu*, see Nkonko Kamwangamalu. "Ubuntu in South Africa: A Sociolinguistic Perspective to a Pan-African Concept." *Critical Arts* 13.2 (1999): 18-24. Print.

who ask a similar delegation of men from the prospective bride's family for permission for the marriage on behalf of the groom. The *abakhongi* (the groom's representatives) arrive early on an appointed day. They call out the *isibongo* and *izithakazelo* at the gate as they request acceptance into the *umuzi*. They go on to use the *izithakazelo* in the negotiations.

Above, Msimang maintains that to call the man being addressed by his *izithakazelo* is to show respect for his ancestors. It is a sign of good manners. Following on from Msimang's assertion, I see these more public uses of the *izithakazelo* as indeed a way of maintaining the memory of the putative genealogical connections of the addressee, as Hamilton suggests about the *izithakazelo*. In the case of the kinship group *izithakazelo* of all Ndwandwe that anyone can speak once s/he knows a person's *isibongo*, they keep alive the memory of the erstwhile *isizwe* by naming its leaders up to the moment of its collapse in the public domain for anyone to hear. The *izithopho* that proceed to the direct lineage of the addressee often then trace the addressee's more recent predecessors in the family lineage.

Further, the resonance that Msimang suggests these forms find when addressed to the head of a household derives its power from the ritual uses of the form. Such public address through the *izithakazelo* finds its most ready and receptive audience in people who commune with their ancestors during family ceremonies such as weddings and funerals and/or perform rituals specifically for their ancestors. The use of the form comes most easily to people who are immersed in cultures of ancestor veneration in comparison, for instance, to those whose religious convictions do not accord the ancestors the same depth of recognition. I demonstrate this more fully below. The *izithakazelo* in such more public uses work by alluding to the manner in which they are used in ritual and ceremonial ways. A person who knows the addressee more intimately may go on to use the names of the addresse's 'fathers' as *izithopho*.

On a second level, to call a person by her/his *isithakazelo* is to link her/him to all the other people who are called by the same *isithakazelo*, both the living and all the dead who have lived at different times in the past to whom the *isithakazelo* applies. Again this link is implied. The addressor implicitly acknowledges that the addressee belongs together somehow with all the other people to whom the *isithakazelo* pertains. Thus hailing a person by a Ndwandwe *isithakazelo* implies acknowledgment of a totality of Ndwandwe that the addressee is a part of, that is, the Ndwandwe *isizwe*. It also implies the acknowledgment of the symbolic home of this *isizwe*, Gudunkomo or Magudu as named in the *isithakazelo* "*Mnguni waseGudunkomo*." Going beyond one *isithakazelo* is a demonstration of knowing the person's ancestors more deeply and being conversant more broadly with who this *isizwe* looks to as its ancestors.

I suggested above that this form of public address using the *izithakazelo* draws its efficacy from the use of the *izithakazelo* on ritual occasions. When addressed to such a person in public, these *izithakazelo* subtly invoke how the person addresses his ancestors (if he is a man who conducts such addressing of the ancestors himself) or hears the ancestors being addressed (if she is a woman or he is a man who is not senior enough in his family to address the ancestors or does not have his own *umuzi* (homestead) where he leads rituals). They imply the ways in which the person addresses or participates in the address of the ancestors in the deeply symbolic and meaningful manner of the rituals of her/his family.

A further nuance to this public address I see is that there is a difference between the addressing of the *izithakazelo* to a Ndwandwe person by a fellow Ndwandwe or Nxumalo or anybody else who considers her/himself related to the Ndwandwe, and the addressing of the *izithakazelo* to a Ndwandwe by a person of another *isibongo* (family name). In the former case, it is a gesture of recognition as belonging together. Each recognizes the other as *owakithi* (of my home), both the putative home of all Ndwandwe, Nongoma-Magudu, or the

current homes of each of the speakers in such a conversation. The home of each of the speakers, as I suggested in the second chapter, is *kithi* (my/our home) for each and every Ndwandwe by virtue of all Ndwandwe being supposedly related to one another. In the case of a non-Ndwandwe addressing a Ndwandwe by her/his *izithakazelo*, it is a recognition of difference from the self.

Holding Together a Dispersed 'Nation'

Hence both in their deployment in the private sphere of the family homestead to address the ancestors associated with a group of directly related kin and in their public uses in daily speech as polite forms of address, the *izithakazelo* distinguish the Ndwandwe from other groupings that have different *izibongo* (family names). They identify the living Ndwandwe with their collective ancestors. They also constitute the living as a belonging together. Furthermore, they assert the living and the ancestors as belonging together and co-extensive with one another. In this way, the *izithakazelo* and the *ihubo* hold together the Ndwandwe *isizwe*. They are the rhetorical glue that perpetuates the notion of the existence of such a 'nation' that has been in effect since an unremembered time before the defeat of the Ndwandwe under Zwide by the Zulu.

What is more, the *ihubo* and the *izithakazelo* repeat this assertion of a notional Ndwandwe 'nation' each time they are articulated. These oral artistic forms perpetuate the sense of the Ndwandwe (and every other group of kin identified by their family/clan name) as being distinct from every other group as well as from both the Zulu kinship group and the overarching Zulu identity. As I have shown, the Ndwandwe 'nation' extends beyond the limits of Zuluness to include people who are outside the Zulu Kingdom as constituted in heritage and tourism discourses and in the form of government post-apartheid KwaZulu-

Natal is still in the process of working out. The existence in rhetorical form of this notional 'nation' makes it available for mobilizing and convening in the way the uBumbano is doing.

The language of kinship through which relationships are mediated functions through the *ihubo* and *izithakazelo* as a constitutive element of this ideology of kinship in the manner I have shown. The people of the 'nation' are related because they share these forms. They are a 'nation' because they have these forms to distinguish them from other 'nations.' Co-extensive with the language of being an *isizwe* I discussed in Chapter Two, the oral artistic forms work at a deep symbolic level to give substance to the notion of being such a 'nation.' In the present, from Andile Ndwandwe's comment in a discussion we held with Chitheka and Mafunza Ndwandwe on May 5, 2008, this substance is an emotive sense of being anchored in the world by one's ancestors and being part of a collective to which one belongs in an essential way, one that was not forced by conquest. Talking about his response to listening to the leader of a ritual address the ancestors, Andile said, "*Kushuthi phela lesikhathi silalele thina sesithule, kukhona laph' okuhamba kuhambe kuthinte khona ngokuthi zihamba zihambe izibongo phela zibe nezicanyan' ezithile... Khon' okuhamba kuhambe kuthintek' egazini nawe usuzw' ukuthi uyabona usungena emdlandleni walo obongayo. Ithinta mina manje yonke lent' eshiwoyo*" (Buthelezi and Ndwandwe, interview with Chitheka and Mafunza Ndwandwe, May 05, 2008). (When we are listening being quiet, there is something that this [praising] touches because the *izibongo* have some odd details... There is somewhere [the praising] touches in your blood and you feel yourself getting into the spirit of the person praising. Everything being said now is about me).

Andile sees the praising of one's ancestors as moving because it touches on something essential about oneself. Although Andile refers to the moments when the leader of the ceremony calls out the *izibongo* of the ancestors, the larger context of the conversation was the use of oral artistic forms in family ceremonies and rituals. At the time I had not yet

recognized the critical role played by the *izithakazelo* and my line of questioning focused on the *ihubo* and *izibongo*. In retrospect, what Andile said about the *izibongo* is equally as applicable to the *izithakazelo* that would have preceded the *izibongo*. Chitheka added to Andile's point: "*Angithi nje Shenge, okunye njoba nje isuk' imbong' isibasho, omuny' uthi uyambhek' umthol' ukuth' izinyembezi seziyehla. [Andile: Uyabona khon' int' eyenzakalayo.] Omunye hleze ukhumbula loya munt' ambonga njengamanje. Omunye kufika lolo sizi ukuthi, "Hheyi, wabasho lomuntu. Uyabazi." Uyabo? [Andile: Uyathinteka.] Manjena uyathinteka... lent' i-shock' igazi*" (You see, Shenge,[92] sometimes when the *imbongi* calls [the ancestors] out [by their *izibongo*] when you look at some people, you'll see the tears coming down. [Andile: You see, something is happening.] Someone perhaps remembers the *imbongi* is praising in the moment. Another perhaps is deeply moved thinking, "Hey, this person is really speaking [the ancestors]. He really knows them." You see? [Andile: S/he gets moved.] S/he gets moved now... this thing shocks the blood.).

Listening to the leader communing with the ancestors can thus be a deeply moving experience, according to both Andile and Chitheka. This was clear to me at the farewell ceremony that I described above from the moment the group that walked to the cattle enclosure came out of the house singing the *ihubo* until the moment the 'father' closed his address with the *izithakazelo*. At the Zwide Heritage Celebration of 2010, some people were reduced to tears when a man from the Intshanga sang an *ihubo* about Zwide dying for his land. He sang, "*UZwid' ufel' izwe lakhe*" (Zwide is dying for his land) and those who knew the hymn, seemingly only the people who had traveled from Intshanga, responded, "*Amabutho ayeza, ayez' amabutho* (The troops are coming; they are coming, the troops). The response of some of the people at the Heritage Celebration suggests that the forms can be moving when they touch on something about which their listeners feel deeply.

[92] Here Chitheka was addressing me with my Buthelezi *isithakazelo*.

A problem and new possibilities arise when it comes to giving an empirical explanation of Ndwandwe 'nationhood' beyond the sense of this 'nationhood' that is cultivated by language and the oral artistic forms. Explaining the *isizwe* requires giving some explanation of the actual nation that existed prior to the defeat of the kingdom dissipated to give concrete detail on how it came about that the Ndwandwe are this rhetorically-constituted 'nation' today. The question of why members of the 'nation' no longer know one another draws impassioned responses such as the one we saw from Sikaza Nxumalo in Chapter One. It is this question that was at the center of Sduduzo Nxumalo's initiation of the uBumbano lwamaZwide in 1990. It is also this question that drives the search for a heroic past for Mvangeli Nxumalo. Similarly, as we saw in the second chapter, Ntombi and Philani Ndwandwe's efforts are fueled by the view that Ndwandwe history has disappeared, the Ndwandwe past forgotten. Almost all of these activists and others I have interviewed, especially Mzingeli Ndwandwe from the Mandlakazi section of Nongoma, point to Zwide's defeat by Shaka as the root cause of their current status.

It becomes essential to (re)convene the Ndwandwe 'nation' more fully in the way the heritage events are beginning to do for the activists in order to construct a fuller and more coherent sense of who they are as Ndwandwe. To construct this fuller sense of the *isizwe* involves learning about how the Ndwandwe were defeated and what happened to the different fragments of the *isizwe* after the collapse of the Ndwandwe kingdom. It also involves eventually trying to construct a view of what the Ndwandwe kingdom was like in its successful days and holding on to this heroic past of the kingdom as the era to which to look for pride in Ndwandwe achievement. Most importantly, (re)constructing a proud past also involves finding 'national' heroes in the past and promoting them. Zwide kaLanga is such a hero who is being championed and on whom the 'national' memory attaches. To elevate him to the appropriate level as father of the 'nation' it is then important to remember him

appropriately through his *izibongo*. Yet because his *izibongo* have fallen out of memory over the period of the 'nation's' dispersal, it becomes necessary for his putative descendants to seek to (re)construct his *izibongo* in the way that we have seen in the previous chapter.

The *ihubo* and *izithakazelo*, as forms licensed by being a constitutive part of the idiom of kinship, are available to be used to mobilize the Ndwandwe to (re)convene as an *isizwe*. They prime the reception of the mobilization messages of the uBumbano by cultivating this sense of being an *isizwe* over and over. They make it possible to persuade people of Ndwandwe descent that the rhetorically-constituted *isizwe* should convene in practice to re(dis)cover its heritage. In the first instance, the uBumbano's appeal utilizes the *izithakazelo* in the manner they are used in general public address by Ndwandwe people in the uBumbano's calls to gatherings. In the second place, what is familiar to most of those who attend the gatherings as the domestic uses of the *ihubo* and *izithakazelo* is elevated to a public level outside a specific lineage setting to address the ancestors of the *isizwe* on behalf of these ancestors' convened putative descendants. These two forms combine with the *izibongo* that are called out – those of Zwide kaLanga and those of present Ndwandwe royalty in the case of the 2010 and 2011 heritage events – to address the collectivity of the Ndwandwe *isizwe* in the same manner as we see done with Shaka kaSenzangakhona, current king Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu and all the Zulu kings before Shaka and between Shaka and Zwelithini in the 'Zulu kingdom.'

I suggested in Chapter Two that it appears that in polities that existed prior to the rise of Shaka's state and in the state itself, the commemoration through public praising of leaders was limited to the lineage of the ruling house, leading to the forgetting of the *izibongo* of ancestors of groups that were incorporated into Shaka's polity. The enforced forgetting would have been especially the case in groups such as the Ndwandwe whose memories of the past presented a political challenge to the Zulu kingdom. Even in the present, the convening of the

Ndwandwe and the commemoration of Zwide through declaiming his praises similarly to how Zulu royalty is praised, set the Zulu royal elite on edge. The recalling of Zwide in this public way through his *izibongo* further positions him on the same plane as Shaka.

Recovering the 'Nation': the uBumbano's Uses of Oral Artistic Forms

The uBumbano lwamaZwide's calls to Ndwandwe descendants to attend meetings and heritage celebrations mainly circulate by word of mouth. On several occasions while walking in the town of Nongoma with Andile when we were conducting field research in 2008, Andile would stop to talk to another Ndwandwe. He would alert the person to a meeting of Ndwandwe by saying, "*Uzwile yini ukuthi amaZwide azobe ehlangene endaweni ethile ngelanga elithize*?" (Have you heard that the Zwides are going to be gathering in such and such a place on such and such a day?[93]) Philani would ask the same question or deliver the message in the form of a statement on the phone to people in Nongoma, Newcastle, Johannesburg and many other places as one of the organizers of such meetings or celebrations. The question would come after greetings using one or several Ndwandwe *izithakazelo* and meandering conversations about unrelated matters. I imagine the kinds of address I heard are replicated in similar fashion in other people's conversations. Moreover, the 2006 meeting at which the uBumbano was formed was announced on radio in an advertisement paid for by the Johannesburg grouping of the Ndwandwe. It called the *amaZwide* together.

In the context of conveying messages about meetings of the uBumbano, Andile and Philani again deployed the *izithakazelo* in the manner of the use of the form in ordinary daily speech. In calling other Ndwandwe people by the *izithakazelo*, Andile or Philani and the addressee acknowledge each other as sharing the same ancestors by whose names they call

[93] Andile is not an activist in the uBumbano; he has been mobilized by his brother Philani and sister Ntombi.

each other. They also recognize each other as belonging together in the putative historical home territory of the Ndwandwe, the Nongoma-Magudu area. Having generated camaraderie, when Andile or Philani then speaks of the *amaZwide* being called together, he builds on the foundation already laid by the addressing of the *izithakazelo* to his interlocutor. While building on this foundation is effective, it is usually not entirely necessary in such moments. The people to whom he addresses himself are usually people who already know him and whom he knows as Ndwandwe. He is often building on an established rapport and the assumption of being kin by virtue of being Ndwandwe that is already in place. Even at times when I observed Philani or Andile meeting a new Ndwandwe person in the company of one he already was familiar with, the recognition of being kin was immediate.

As argued above, this public use of the *izithakazelo* taps into their deeply symbolic use in family rituals to address the ancestors of the lineage and the putative ancestors of all Ndwandwe. The recognition derives from the subliminal understanding carried by each Ndwandwe person of their kinship as Ndwandwe coming down from an unremembered past. To signal that the Ndwandwe are assembling is to present an opportunity to learn about the *isizwe*. Gatherings present an opportunity to (re)connect with one's kin on a larger scale than family gatherings make possible and to learn about how this assumed kinship came into being, was sustained and dissipated into the fuzzy, undefined assumption that it is today. The reception of the invitation to attend the convening of the Ndwandwe is thus primed by the *izithakazelo* as used in daily speech and as this daily usages draws from the ritual usage of the form.

At the heritage events in 2010 and in 2011, the *izithakazelo* were used in both manners I have described above. As people arrived, they went up to those they knew and greeted them mainly as 'Zwide,' or 'Mkhatshwa' or 'Mnguni, wena waseGudu.' These *izithakazelo* peppered the conversations between the people attending either event. At each

event, the *izithakelo* were also ritually addressed to the ancestors of the 'nation' at the point at which the formalities began. As in a family ritual, the ancestors were told what the event was about – that their descendants had gathered to remember them in the way that children remember their departed 'fathers' from time to time. I described this address taking place in Mavela Nxumalo's cattle enclosure/garden at the 2011 Zwide Heritage Day in Chapter Two. At the 2010 Zwide Heritage Celebration, this address was carried out by chief Justice Nxumalo behind one of the buildings in his court precinct the day before the main event. In each case, the ancestors were shown the cattle that were to be slaughtered for the feast. The address concluded with the hailing of the ancestors by the *izithakazelo*.

The addressing of the ancestors in this manner established the ritual context of each event under which the rest of the singing of the *amahubo* and the calling out of the *izithakelo* and *izibongo* went on to take place. Each event then went on to a series of speeches about the purpose of the gathering, Zwide kaLanga and what the Ndwandwe kingdom is thought to have been like in its heyday, the Ndwandwe-Zulu war and the destruction of the Ndwandwe kingdom, and reconstructions of the history of the Ndwandwe in South Africa and outside of South Africa, especially the rise and fall of the Gaza kingdom in Mozambique. Throughout each event, the usual lament about the collapse of the Ndwandwe kingdom was repeated by several speakers. Over and over again, the Ndwandwe were said to no longer know who they are because they became disconnected with the collapse of Zwide's kingdom. Attendees were exhorted to encourage more people to attend these events in the future in order for the Ndwandwe *isizwe* to reconnect more extensively and fully. The urgency of such a task of reconnecting the disconnected *isizwe* was impressed upon the listeners. It was never made clear what the benefits of such convening are meant to be beyond the seemingly self-evident good of learning more about one's Ndwandwe past and meeting similarly interested people.

Each speaker opened with a greeting using one or more *izithakazelo* in a call-and-response sequence and closed in the same way. The *amahubo* and Zwide's *izibongo* we observed in the preceding chapters fell into this flow of address. The deployment of the *izithakazelo*, *amahubo* and *izibongo* in the contexts of these heritage celebrations was the beginning of the release of the subversive potential that I have argued the oral artistic forms have held under Zulu authority. Together the forms were articulating publicly the revival of the Ndwandwe past and the coming together of a group of Ndwandwe people defined as long-lost kin. The forms celebrated and recalled Zwide as the putative father of all Ndwandwe. In these events, Shaka and the Zulu kingdom were finally off centre. Paradoxically, Shaka and Zuluness simultaneously remained the implicit 'other' with which the Ndwandwe were in conversation or locked in battle. As currently articulated, and as a working through of the past, the uBumbano's project needs Shaka and Zuluness as its conditions of possibility. They only featured in the retort that the Ndwandwe 'nation' is atomized as a result of Shaka's war with the Ndwandwe. The Ndwandwe *isizwe* had finally physically (re)convened, realizing the possibility of such (re)convening that the oral artistic forms have kept alive for almost two hundred years. Zwide, in particular, had been recentered.

The events also opened the path to the furthering of the goal of *ukubuyisa* (ritually returning) Zwide home to his former territory. Some speakers made reference to the impoverished state in which many Ndwandwe live (implicitly compared to the conspicuous opulence of Zwelithini)[94] and the diminished status of the Ndwandwe. From the assent of some I overheard sitting in audiences in meetings and in the heritage celebrations of the association, this representation of the plight of the Ndwandwe resonated with their lives. The

[94] The amount of money spent by the state on the Zulu monarchy was the subject of much debate in 2008-2010. The department responsible for the royal household was overspending its substantial budget every year, leading to attempts to make the royal house self-sustaining. There were even some rumblings in places where I did research about why the South African Police Service even has a special royal protection unit.

message I had heard repeated in meetings in Nongoma, Durban, Newcastle and Johannesburg in 2008 and 2009 that a ritual reconciliation needs to be effected between Shaka and Zwide, and that Zwide (or Zwide's spirit) must return to his former territory, the putative home of the Ndwandwe, was finally driven home.

Conclusion

One hundred and ninety one years after the ousting of Zwide by Shaka's forces, his putative descendants returned to remember him at the site of his old home, that is, in his former territories. They returned under the auspices of the uBumbano lwamaZwide to slaughter cattle, to declaim his praises in remembrance of him, and to constitute the 'nation' that was dispersed with Zwide's defeat. This 2011 gathering shifted from the periphery to the former Ndwandwe heartland between Nongoma and Magudu where Zwide had his most widely remembered capitals. The location for the gathering was closer to Nongoma, the symbolic centre of Zulu power in the present, than the previous year's event. What are we to make of this Ndwandwe assembly and the momentum it seems to be gaining? What futures can be projected for the uBumbano lwamaZwide and its project?

It remains to be seen whether the uBumbano's project is going to develop into a form of ethnic nationalism along the lines seen with Inkatha under apartheid, or into something of what Jean and John Comaroff have named "Ethnicity, Inc.", or something else. There are lucid articulations as well as murmurs of different kinds of aspirations for the uBumbano lwamaZwide and reasons for attending its gatherings: from irredentist separatism to puzzled spectatorship. Regarding ethnic nationalism, recent discussions of postcolonial nationalism have yielded the view that after anticolonial nationalism has succeeded in bringing down colonialism and installing the leaders of anticolonial movements in the place of colonial rulers, nationalism often falters, becoming incapable of holding together the forces that it had coalesced in the struggle against colonial rule. In some cases, when segments of the anticolonial formations which had been mobilized around regional/ethnic identities reach a point of feeling that their interests are not or no longer being protected or advanced, they mobilize those same identities/forces to oppose their old comrades, leading to the rise of ethnic nationalism.

In other cases, new identity formations are conjured along old contours or drawing on old memories of kinship and affiliation, certain colonial inheritances and/or other factors.[95] The result is often revivalism of the kind we are beginning to see with the various groupings that are reaching for the past and attempting to construct different presents and futures in post-apartheid South Africa. These revivalist groups may well be fleeting formations fulfilling a need to make sense of the past as the country settles into its post-apartheid governance as well as cultural and social forms, and its people gain temporal distance from apartheid. At the same time, the lives of many remain mired in legacies of colonialism and apartheid. In the case of the Ndwandwe, there are several factors to consider going forward. In the first place, are more people going to be drawn into attending these celebrations? In 2010, the host of the event, Justice Nxumalo, decried the state's creation of dependency in the population by arranging transport to every state event for which an audience is sought. He suggested that the Ndwandwe event was poorly attended as a result of an expectation that has been instilled in the general population that organizers of an event will also make means of transportation available. At the 2011 event, the spokesperson of the group from the Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces spoke of bringing busloads of people in 2012. Whether this will happen and which other people may be drawn in remains to be seen.

Second, will the irredentist strain gain any traction in the association? Those who claim that Ndwandwe lands between Nongoma and Magudu should be reclaimed and some who intimate that they seek the installation of a Ndwandwe *inkosi* (chief or king) were making these assertions in hushed voices in 2008 and 2009 when I sat in on meetings of different chapters of the association. My requests to attend some of the planning meetings of the heritage celebrations made to the person who had previously facilitated my access to

[95] See Joshua B. Forrest. "Nationalism in Postcolonial States." *After Independence: Making and Protecting the Nation in Postcolonial and Postcommunist States.* Ed. Lowell W. Barrington. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006. 33-44. Print.

meetings in Nongoma, were largely ignored. It is difficult to tell whether this was an attempt to restrict my access to the planning committee's discussions or whether it was a result of my contact's own lack of power and influence in the company of prominent politicians and business people that made him unresponsive to my requests. Hence I cannot tell what direction the leaders want to take. The irredentist murmurs continue in private conversations between people whom I have heard on several trips to Nongoma. It is not yet clear whether these murmurs will be harnessed in any way or whether they'll be suppressed or ignored.

Third, the treatment meted out by the Zulu king and the provincial leadership in KwaZulu-Natal to those who openly submitted claims to the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims in the form of threats has begun to be directed at some individuals in the uBumbano. Following Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu's reaction to the formation of the association in 2006, the association seems to be under surveillance. In the lead-up to the 2011 Zwide Heritage Day, the pitch of the reactions to the association had risen to threats being articulated to prominent leaders of the uBumbano that members of the group were courting death by seeking the revival of a Ndwandwe chiefdom. It is not yet clear whether this was willful misrepresentation of what was then known to not be an attempt at reviving a chiefdom or whether Ndwandwe coalescence to recall the past is read as an attempt to rise against Zulu royalty because when the Ndwandwe convene the land shakes, as I quoted Mvangeli Ndwandwe saying in Chapter Two. Heritage discourse became even more important in 2011 in order to underline that the agenda of the uBumbano was being misread and was not intended as an uprising against the Zulu royal house. The hostile reaction the gathering of the uBumbano has attracted has necessitated my use of pseudonyms in order to protect the identities of the people to whom I have talked over the years of my research. The outcome of this negotiation between surveillance and threats on one hand, and attempting to take the sting out of Ndwandwe assembly by presenting it as heritage on the other hand is yet

to emerge. Will the project ultimately turn to just heritage, devoid of irredentism or the potential for reviving the Ndwandwe 'nation'? If it turns to mere heritage, will those who wish to establish a Ndwandwe memorial site and place of pilgrimage under the authority of the Zulu king pursue this goal? Will the Zulu king and the state allow such a site to coexist with the promotion of Shaka?

What is more is that there is a new political dynamic emerging in the province. In the last local government election in April 2011, the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) lost most of the last few municipalities it still governed to a coalition of the National Freedom Party (NFP), a party that was established in January 2011 by former IFP leader Zanele kaMagwaza-Msibi, and the African National Congress (ANC). KaMagwaza-Msibi left the IFP in acrimonious circumstances when the old guard of the IFP leadership, including Mangosuthu Buthelezi, continued to resist change in the party and to cling on to its leadership positions. Buthelezi has been president of Inkatha since its formation in 1975. KaMagwaza-Msibi was removed by the IFP in 2010 as mayor of the Zululand District Municipality that includes the former IFP and Zulu strongholds of Nongoma and Ulundi and that extended through the former Ndwandwe heartland of Nongoma-Magudu. She was sent to be a member of the provincial legislature based in Pietermaritzburg. The move appeared to be an attempt to remove her from the base of her support in order to curb her popularity and calls for the old leadership to hand over power to her and a younger cohort. She bounced back with a party that handed the IFP a shock defeat in the election of 2011. The death knell of the IFP may signal the final wresting from the IFP of Zulu nationalism and the symbols of Zuluness, which it had mobilized for over thirty years. The ANC has gone some way in wresting these symbols from the IFP since the 1990's as demonstrated in Chapter One. The NFP now controls Nongoma and kaMagwaza-Msibi was returned to the mayorship of the Zululand Municipality. Yet kaMagwaza-Msibi upholds the position of the Zulu king and the royal establishment in her

public speeches. The position of her party will also depend on how it mobilizes Zuluness and relates to Zwelithini as the production and manipulation of Zuluness will remain an important political tool for the foreseeable future.

As for political realignment on the ground, there is a tense standoff as I write between members of the IFP and the NFP who were involved in running battles in Umlazi township outside Durban on the weekend of February 25 and 26, 2012. Two people died in the violence and thirty houses were torched (Makhaye, www.thenewage.co.za). The cause of the violence is still unknown, however, the violence is reminiscent of the battles that took place between the IFP and the ANC in the same part of Umlazi – T section – in the transition to democracy touched on in Chapter Two of this dissertation. The political tension of the early to mid-1990's proved to be a setback for Sduduzo Nxumalo's attempt to assemble the Ndwandwe as he stated in the extract I quoted from my interview with him in Chapter Two. What the implications of the new political realignments and violence will be for the project of the uBumbano will only become clear as time progresses. Will the NFP become strong enough to compete directly with the ANC instead of being aligned to the latter and governing together in coalition in different municipalities in the province? The implication of such development may be that the NFP will compete with the ANC for the control of Zulu cultural symbols in the way that the latter competed for these symbols and eventually won against the IFP, as discussed in Chapter Two. Different activists of the uBumbano may fall on different sides of the several political divides and these political loyalties may affect unity among the activists and hence influence what becomes of mobilization and assembly.

Finally, why are the Nxumalo who trace their history through Soshangane and the Gaza kingdom getting progressively more involved in the annual heritage celebrations in northern KwaZulu-Natal? The delegation that attended the event in 2010 comprised people from Thulamahashe in Mpumalanga, Giyani and Malamulele in Limpopo province, and from

Gaza province in Mozambique. Given that their claim to the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims was dismissed and that this Nxumalo royalty is now suing the state to gain recognition, is the presence of this elite at these events part of its political maneuvering? Matshaya Nxumalo, the son of the former leader of the Gazankulu Bantustan, appears to have been the main funder of the first two heritage celebrations. Why?

Because we are not yet able to tell what will become of the coalescence of Ndwandwe, what is of more immediate interest to follow is how the people who have coalesced into the uBumbano lwamaZwide are creating new meanings of their personal and their group pasts in order to occupy the present differently to the trajectories bequeathed by the past and to imagine new trajectories for their lives going into the future. It will indeed be of interest to watch how this working through, and working out of the meanings of, the past feeds into the broader national project with the same objectives of making sense of and reformulating the past for purposes of the post-apartheid present and future. Of concern in this national project is the manner in which the state has been unable to discard old ethnic categories even though they have greatly been de-emphasized in post-apartheid South Africa. There is a paradox in the simultaneous promotion of cultural and ethnic plurality through the myth of the Rainbow Nation and the promotion of apartheid-era ethnic identities for some regions of the country such as KwaZulu-Natal (the Zulu Kingdom) based on shaky primordialism.

Currently under intense debate in the country is the extension of the powers vested in customary or ‘traditional’ leaders by the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003. Initially introduced to Parliament in 2008 and then retracted when it faced stiff opposition from civic organizations, the Bill has been reintroduced at the beginning of 2012 in much the same form. It aims to give clearer definition to the role of these traditional courts. According to its introduction, its goals are:

> To affirm the recognition of the traditional justice system and its values, based on restorative justice and reconciliation; to provide for the structure and functioning of traditional courts in line with constitutional imperatives and values; to enhance customary law and the customs of communities observing a system of customary law; and to provide for matters connected therewith. (www.justice.gov.za)

The Bill is again being met with very vocal opposition that sees it as a throwback to British colonial and apartheid bifurcations of rural and urban areas, putting rural dwellers under a different system of law to urban dwellers. Estimates are that between seventeen and twenty-one million out of the approximately fifty million people who live in the country will be subject to these traditional courts.[96] In this legal system, chiefs and their councils will hold judicial, legislative and executive power all at once.

According to Christi van der Westhuizen in an article in *The Star* newspaper on March 2, 2012, the law is "rehashing aspects of apartheid and British colonial law stretching all the way back to the 19th century" (Van der Westhuizen, www.iol.co.za). She goes on to explain:

> In terms of the bill, traditional leaders will be appointed presiding officers of traditional courts with the powers to decide on civil and criminal matters involving members of traditional communities, or even people just passing through. These are the same traditional leaders who, in terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003, administer government functions, including welfare, economic development, land, management of natural resources and registration of births, deaths and marriages. According to [the University of Cape Town's] Law, Race and Gender Research Unit, the bill gives traditional leaders the power to make customary law. The chief-cum-judicial officer can pass various sentences, including fines, forced labour, or depriving someone of "customary benefits", which could mean losing access to land. (Van der Westhuizen, www.iol.co.za)

This law will perpetuate the marginalization of women, in particular rural women. Another development along the same lines was the election held on February 19, 2012 throughout KwaZulu-Natal to vote into position 'traditional councils.' According to the Traditional

[96] Heidi Swart in an article in the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper on February 17, 2012 put the figure at 22 million (http://mg.co.za/article/2012-02-17-traditional-courts-bill-out-of-step). In an article in *The Star* on March 2, 2012, Christi van der Westhuizen maintains that 17 million people will be affected by the legislation (http://www.iol.co.za/the-star/traditional-courts-bill-throwback-to-past-1.1247083).

Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003, 40% of the chiefs' councils are to be elected and the remaining 60% is appointed by the chief. The rural-urban split is being maitained in the post-apartheid present, continuing the legacy of in what Mahmood Mamdani has defined in *Citizen and Subject*: *Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* as the bifurcated state (Mamdani 16-23).

This empowering of 'traditional' leaders ultimately continues the promotion of the Zulu royal establishment and of Shaka kaSenzangakhona through whom the Zulu king, Zwelithini kaSenzangakhona, claims legitimacy. Zwelithini is the 'traditional' authority under whom all chiefs in KwaZulu-Natal fall. Continuing from his recognition as the only paramount ruler in the province by the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims, the cementing of his position solidifies the state's narrative of the KwaZulu-Natal past. I have argued that in the state's narrative, which is in part being promoted through the discourse of heritage and heritage practices, the state's attempt at undoing colonial and apartheid definition and manipulation of local modes of leadership disallows the calling up of all but one narrative of the precolonial past – the Zulu-centric version of the history of the area. Official heritage discourse has been used to produce and reinforce this Zulu-centric version, especially since the 1970's in the Bantustan of KwaZulu under Inkatha.

The extension of the prestige of the Zulu royal establishment and its adherents by legislating new powers for it could potentially impact upon gatherings like the Zwide Heritage Day. If the recently tabled legislation does become law in the end in any form resembling what critics are currently decrying as a throwback to British indirect rule, the Zulu king and those chiefs governing rural KwaZulu-Natal at his behest stand to be granted sufficient legislative, executive and judicial power to make rules that may in the end disallow gatherings such as the uBumbano's Zwide Heritage Day celebrations, which have taken place in rural areas that fall under chiefs. Executive power may be exercised to arbitrarily deem

undesirable the calling up of the past in ways that call into question the narrative being supported and used to their own ends by the ANC leaders of the province. The judicial power of these chiefs would allow them to arbitrarily punish anybody who transgressed orders or attempted to conduct the kind of mobilization I have described in the preceding chapters. There is a long road ahead for the tabled legislation. Judging from previous cases, a lengthy fight about the legislation is in the offing that will likely go all the way to the Constitutional Court when the compatibility of the law with the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic gets questioned. Hence it will likely be years before the effects and implications of the current developments are sufficiently clear for a proper analysis.

In view of these current developments, what it is ultimately possible to say at this point can only be tentative and provisional. The post-apartheid nation-state is still in the making. Part of the process involves friction and contests about the past and identity. Modes of working through the traumas of the past, and of re-interpreting the past for purposes of inhabiting the present and fashioning the future, are also still in the making. Official procedures, while being done on behalf of the population, sometimes run counter to, and are counteracted by, how pockets of people pursue much the same goals the state is pursuing. The promotion of alternative identities that I have discussed in this dissertation is one such case: official mythologizing of the nation-state has tightly defined boundaries in the form of clear dates beyond which the state will not go in reviewing chieftainship (1927) or restoring land that was alienated (1913). This mythologizing also has its allowable categories of identity. What quickly becomes clear is that the dates and the allowable identities are largely a rehash or renovation of the very categories and definitions formulated and used under British colonial rule and apartheid. A ‘tribal’ identity such as Zulu, and a form of ‘traditional’ governance like chieftainship, as we know them today are largely the product of the second half of the nineteenth century and later. Yet it is these very categories and forms that are

actively being promoted today while pockets of people such as the uBumbano and many others struggle to fit into these categories or wrestle with the forms of governance. Such people bear their own multiple and often fragmented understandings of the past that do not always sit comfortably with official versions. Their personal and group heritages sometimes run counter to the official ones.

People like these then may yet call the inherited identity categories and their vocabularies more openly into question. The uBumbano and the many other similar groupings grappling with how to engage with the past may yet push themselves into being taken seriously and hence help formulate new categories of identity as well as give impetus to the creation of different forms of governance as they give new meanings to pre-Zulu, precolonial identities. The future continuation of the association's celebrations is uncertain. The funders and organizers may well drift off and be taken up by other interests. The working through of the past may yet take other forms and take place in forums other than groupings based on imagined kinship. The solidarity that this coalescence seems to promise for people who feel left behind by the state may not have a future. Nor does the grievance against the Zulu royal establishment and Shaka seem strong enough to sustain for a long time and build a durable movement around.

Yet what is sure to continue for the foreseeable future, even if the project of the uBumbano does not, is the addressing of Ndwandwe people by other Ndwandwe on the streets of Nongoma, Johannesburg, Durban and other places as 'Zwide,' 'Mkhatshwa,' 'Nkabanhle,' 'wena kaNonkokhel' abantu bahlatshwe,' and 'Mnguni waseGudunkomo.' The calling of Ndwandwe by people of other surnames by some of these *izithakazelo* will continue too as will the addressing of these *izithakazelo* to the ancestors of the Ndwandwe in domestic rituals and ceremonies. In these domestic rituals and ceremonies, the *izithakazelo* will continue to be declaimed along with the singing of the *ihubo lesizwe* and the calling out

of the *izibongo* of the departed fathers of that particular family conducting the rituals and ceremonies.

In these domestic and public uses, the forms will continue to perpetuate and reinforce a Ndwandwe identity that is separate from and different to Zuluness and to any other identity described by a family name that is not Ndwandwe. This Ndwandweness is particularly unstable because of sketchy knowledge about the Ndwandwe past and so the oral forms will continue to index what has been forgotten and erased in the form of the names carried in *izithakazelo* and repeated when living and departed 'Zwides' are hailed and addressed. The forms will continue to reinforce Gunner and Gwala's point that they offer a sense of continuity with the past as well as swift communication with that past (Gunner and Gwala 14). For the foreseeable future, they will continue their mobility and ability to pick up and drop meanings and references, and to be the catalyst for new social visions in different ways (Gunner 36). For my part, I shall continue to follow what happens when these forms continue to be made to do work in the ways I have charted in the preceding pages. My project will also expand to trace the Ndwandwe diaspora in Swaziland, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. I aim to attempt to understand what exists of the forms I have discussed in this dissertation in places where people migrating from northern KwaZulu-Natal settled in new polities and formulated new cultures in the nineteenth century. The project will also take a comparative look at another case of a group that is making similar claims to the uBumbano, possibly the Dlamini under Melizwe whose claim is much larger and starker than the Ndwandwe as Melizwe and his adherents mobilize history and oral artistic forms to claim to be historically separate from the Zulu and to be royalty on the same level as Zwelithini kaBhekuzulu.

In this dissertation I have sought to describe how oral artistic forms, both 'traditional' forms and their contemporary reinventions, are at the centre of the working out of identity politics

in a transforming post-colonial society. In the first chapter of the dissertation I examined how the figure of Shaka has been mobilized for different political projects both during and after apartheid. Drawing on the work of historians, cultural scholars and political scientists I have charted the ways in which, since the 1970's, Zulu identity and Shaka have been promoted in unprecedented ways. I have shown how the dominance of a particular form of 'Zuluness' has shaped perceptions of the past, the political landscape, as well as the kinds of identity movements my thesis explores. In the first chapter of the dissertation I also write of the ways in which these productions of 'Zuluness' have affected the formation of other identities in South Africa. In particular I focus on the case of the Ndwandwe and show how Shaka's praises were central to the project of promoting Zulu nationalism.

In the second chapter I turned to the emergence of a Ndwandwe social movement that has nationalist elements and in certain ways presents a challenge to Zulu dominance. I discussed how the oral artistic forms hold the memory of the distant past and reanimate that past in the present. My work begins to illuminate how in the post-apartheid present there are intense contests around the narration of the past and the kinds of identities that can be publicly asserted. The idioms with which Shaka and Zuluness have been promoted – those of heritage and kinship – have also provided this nascent Ndwandwe movement with the language to articulate alternative forms of identity and different perceptions of the past to the official versions that are being standardized. Reading different kinds of material collected over years of close observation of the ways in which people speak about their personal and group identities and their histories, my work has analysed the discursive struggle between dominant modes of history telling and those forms of articulation of the past and present that have been overshadowed.

Within the discourses of heritage and kinship that provided the grounds for Zulu nationalism, the figure of the founding father of the nation occupies a central place. In

Chapter Two I show the centrality of Zwide in Ndwandwe conceptions of their past and demonstrate how the idioms of tradition and heritage are made operational in similar ways by the uBumbano in promoting Zwide to how they work in relation to Shaka in the case of the 'Zulu nation.' In the third chapter I argue that the Ndwandwe are reaching for appropriate modes of commemoration of Zwide, 'the father of the Ndwandwe nation', through the reclamation of his praise poems. In that chapter I carefully read various iterations of Zwide's praises in order to trace how these oral artistic forms have survived over two centuries of Ndwandwe suppression. I show how while the history of Zwide is forgotten by the twentieth century, the extant versions of his praises recorded in written form, as well as possibly, in one case, transmitted orally, make possible the re-animation of that history in the present.

My work differs from much other scholarship in the field of southern African literary studies in that I have sought to situate the oral artistic forms I have considered here in the broad context of everyday use as well as mobilization for specific projects. At the same time, I have focused closely on the three forms I believe ought to be analyzed together in the ways I have done in this dissertation in order to develop a fuller picture of how oral artistic forms are in ongoing use in South Africa and elsewhere. I take forward the expansion of scholars' view of oral artistic forms following on from Benedict Vilakazi's insistence that the *izibongo* were not only the forms of the elite in Zulu-speaking society, Liz Gunner's charting of the wider use of the *izibongo* in her Ph.D. dissertation, the book she co-edited with Mafika Gwala – *Musho!: Zulu Popular Praises* and various essays, as well as the study of the links of the journeying of the *izibongo* into forms such as *maskanda* music in the work of David Coplan and others.

In her important PhD dissertation and later publications Gunner focuses her attention on *izibongo* and considers the construction of individual subjectivity through these forms. Her approach, however, makes only passing reference to the related oral artistic forms,

consideration of which is critical if the *izibongo* are to be more fully understood. Carolyn Hamilton, in her MA thesis, considers the political uses of the *izibongo* and *izithakazelo* in the late eighteen and, especially, the early nineteenth centuries in state ideologies in the area that is northern KwaZulu-Natal province today. Duncan Brown takes an approach that combines " a sociology and a poetics" to a range of broadly oral genres – from Shaka's *izibongo* to the rap songs of Prophets of da City – to understand how orality functions across different South African cultures and why it should be seriously considered. In a lively book that spans several southern African countries and cultures, Leroy Vail and Landeg White trace the way in which an aesthetic they call 'poetic licence', which I have discussed in Chapter Two, functions similarly in these cultures to make possible the articulation of subversive and critical views. Finally, in a recent book, Ashlee Neser focuses on the career of a single praise poet to try and understand how living and working under apartheid truncated his career as a traditional *imbongi* and forced him to seek to address future audiences through print. These are all important approaches which have informed my study.

At the same time I have sought to understand how these intertwined oral artistic forms of *ihubo lesizwe*, *izibongo* and *izithakazelo* function together in the present in ways that are both traditional and new, which has not been done previously. The workings of surnames in how people address one another and their ancestors and the uses of the *ihubo lesizwe* in ritual have hardly been touched beyond descriptions such as C. T. Msimang's. Attempting to analyze the use of these forms in the ongoing moments of the reformulation of their meanings as identities are being worked out and reworked has necessitated asking questions about politics, history and memory, the material conditions of life in post-apartheid South Africa, ritual and ceremony, music, radio, chieftainship, the state, legislation, ancestors, the archive and many other matters. My approach has necessitated working at the intersection of the

disciplines of history, anthropology and literary study with all the struggles it entails in regard to modes of framing, description, analysis and argumentation.

Chapter Four brings to the fore my wrestling with the intersection of different modes of writing. In the chapter, I grapple with how the forms I have analyzed are embedded in daily speech and in the personal ways in which people communicate with their ancestors. I have struggled with finding an adequate mode of description through which to illuminate how the forms are lodged in practices of living spanning a person's life as well as exceeding such a life without falling into stereotyping. I have used ethnographic description and a semi-fictional description to attempt to capture how the forms function together. I then analyze my observations of the use of these forms by people I have listened to who bear many similarities to the hyphothetical figures through whom I trace the forms. By the end of the chapter, I show how the mobilization of the forms by the uBumbano reaches into understandings that people hold of these forms from using them in mediating their own lives, which I had signalled throughout the preceding three chapters.

In order to conduct the work of analyzing the ways in which the forms inform and form part of living cultural practices, my project has insisted on ongoing engagement with people who use the forms and listening closely, and in the original language, to the ways in which the people I have observed speak the *izibongo*, *izithakazelo*, *ihubo* and 'nationhood.' In this way, I advance the work Gunner did for her Ph.D. in which she conducted extensive field research. I bring to my analysis of the forms the kind of linguistic ability and cultural embeddedness which few scholars of the forms have possessed. Indeed current scholars like Brown and Neser work on translated versions of the *izibongo* on which they write. Neser's recently-published book, for instance – *Stranger at Home: The Praise Poet in Apartheid South Africa* (2011) – does not even provide the Xhosa language versions of the praises she discusses. Instead, she explains away her inability to read the language by insisting that her

linguistic inadequacy offers her the opportunity to ask different questions (29). Such an explanation appears no longer adequate in post-aparheid South Africa (and postcolonial Africa more broadly) coming on the back of apartheid promotion of Afrikaans and English to the detriment of African languages. It continues the same linguistic and cultural violence of apartheid which made it acceptable for scholars to not take seriously the need to learn African languages as a precondition for studying texts that circulate in the languages.

I have attempted to heed Olabiyi Yai's call for the practice of professional criticism to take serious account of what participants have to say about oral artistic forms. In 1989 Yai was dissatisfied with the state of the field of oral art criticism. He stated in "Issues in Oral Poetry: Criticism, Teaching and Translation":

> No communication seems to exist between the production/consumption of oral poetry and its criticism. More precisely communication is unidimensional. When the creator of oral poetry and his academic critic are contemporaries the terms of the critical exchange are unilaterally set by the critic. The poet is thus degraded from his status of creator to that of an informant. He can only make such contributions as required by the initiatives of the critic… [The process] fail[s] to solicit the claims and interests of the participant. (59)

In order to solicit the claims and interests of participants, as students of oral art our practice perhaps ought to shift towards sustained field research which involves much more discussion of the art with its producers and their audiences. In conducting field research we would maintain ongoing dialogue with people who use these forms in their daily lives. By conducting such field research during which we talk to people, we would need to borrow something of the methodology of Anthropology in ways to which Vail and White, Gunner, Isabel Hofmeyr have pointed, a crucial move in making literary scholarship responsive to the forms of artistic practice of the majority in southern Africa. Moreover, we must take seriously the kind of *rapprochement* between Comparative Literature and Area Studies (and other disciplines, in this case Anthropology) advocated by Gayatri Spivak in *Death of a Discipline* (Spivak). Spivak says,

> The new step that I am proposing... would work to make the traditional linguistic sophistication of Comparative Literature supplement Area Studies (and history, anthropology, political theory, and sociology) by approaching the language of the other not only as a "field" language… I am inviting the kind of language training that would disclose the irreducible hybridity of all languages. (9)

The move I have attempted differs slightly from Spivak's in the above quotation. Rather, to expand and deepen the study of oral literature, those of us steeped in the care for language and idiom that Spivak identifies as the hallmark of Comparative Literature (5) ought to borrow the tools of the art of field research so finely honed in Anthropology. For far too long, on one hand many scholars of oral literature in southern Africa have had poor command of the languages in which the literature circulates. The result of such linguistic ineptitude has been surveys of the field and studies that look at influences of oral forms on written literature, with much surface-level thinking about this oral literature that is said to have influenced writing. Much of this kind of work fits the mould of what Spivak identifies as the tourist gaze of (global northern) Anthropology: "Engagement with the idiom of the global other(s) in the Southern Hemisphere, uninstitutionalized in the Euro-US university structure except via the objectifying, discontinuous, transcoding tourist gaze of anthropology and oral history, is our lesson on displacing the discipline" (10). Such work of displacing literary study is overdue. Yet, the work of Gunner, Hofmeyr, David Coplan, and Vail and White has not yet led to further studies that break new ground in terms of bringing into view the multifarious ways in which oral literary forms mean and are used in southern African societies.

On the hand, until recently the study of oral literature by native speakers of the languages of southern Africa, mainly in departments of African languages, has been limited either to morphological analyses or to adulatory comments on great leaders. Such studies and collections have been poor on analysis and criticism. Instead, most authors have been attempting to counter colonial stereotypes about Africans and their literary production by suspending or deferring critical assessment. It is now time we combined the ability to

understand the languages of performance and organic criticism with ways of listening closely and analyzing with care.

My insistence on making visible, and conducting my analyses on, the Zulu language versions of the texts and the vocabularies in which people speak identity is a way of pushing toward more in-depth study of oral artistic forms. It is also a way of insisting on taking seriously these oral artistic forms and expanding their study because they are widely used, but inadequately studied as a result of the legacies of colonial and apartheid definitions of what counts as cultural production worthy of critical attention. I am in part responding to Deborah Seddon's 2008 bemoaning of the marginality of what she terms "South African orature" in the country's canon (Seddon 133). Seddon says in "Written Out, Writing in: Orature in the South African Literary Canon,"

> …despite an increasing recognition of oral poetry through a number of endeavors such as the Poetry Africa Festival, the Lentswe Poetry Project on [South African Broadcasting Corporation channel] 2, the Timbila Poetry Project and others, South African orature remains marginal in the country's literary canon. It is largely absent from the curriculum in the literature departments of its universities. (133)

Seddon's complaint about the marginalization of oral literature is similar to Brown's in 1998 and Hofmeyr's 1996 one.[97] While the critical work undertaken by scholars in the last thirty years has helped bring acceptance of oral literature as literature and not just the terrain of ethnography, and has brought the acceptance of its presence on curricula alongside 'high literature', the expansion of the study of oral artistic forms has not followed. The growing move to redefine their identities by many groups of South Africans who are reconfiguring precolonial identities, makes this a timely moment to re-propose oral literature for more extensive and deeper study. Space to conduct in-depth studies has opened up in post-apartheid society in much the same way that room for Ndwandwe assembly, recall and

[97] See Brown. *Voicing the Text*, "Introduction" and Isabel Hofmeyr. "Not the Magic Talisman: Rethinking Oral Literature in South Africa." *World Literature Today* 70.1 (Winter 1996): 88. Print.

assertion has become available. The Ndwandwe case has offered me the opportunity to make use of the space for study and to try out a slightly unusual way of describing and analyzing the use of oral artistic forms in much the same way that the Ndwandwe and many other groups are using the space available to them and experimenting with describing their initiatives.

The Ndwandwe case also shows the need to move away from some of the broad ethnic/cultural identity categories, “Zulu” in this case, which have served to obscure much that we need to understand about how people make sense of their lives. While the consequences, implications and future directions of Ndwandwe assembly are not yet clear, the term “Zulu” now needs to be used with some caution as it does not adequately describe the categories in which many people live their lives or understand their subjectivity. Studies of “Zulu oral poetry” or “the social system of the Zulu” have been useful, however, we now need to go beyond these categories, the centrality of which is a legacy of their promotion under apartheid, and listen to and study more carefully how post-apartheid identities are being mediated in ways that challenge past forms of identity.

As a case study, the Ndwandwe project makes visible several issues that may be generalizable to societies emerging into postcoloniality and even those that have been independent of colonial rule for a significant amount of time. First, the pre-colonial past is an arena that can be turned to in moments of social stress or when the society or the state is undergoing reformulation/reorganization. Second, identities that have roots in the precolonial past can be revived and reimagined using cultural materials that have been shaped and reshaped over time under different colonial conditions. The case of the current Tuareg uprising in Mali where the rebels are claiming an independent state of Azawad is a case in point.Third, in Africa imperialism and colonialism cannot be neatly harnessed to race, the colonizers being white European settlers and the colonized being black Africans. Imperialism

and colonialism were in progress before European settlement. To recognize this fact of imperialism and colonialism is not to support white colonial myths about land being unoccupied and available for settlement that continue to be perpetuated even today in some societies.[98] The analysis of imperialism and colonialism appears to need further refinement to account for the period prior to European settlement in many societies.

The fourth issue that the Ndwandwe case raises is how a state's attempts to shape perceptions of the past can create space for a cacophony of voices to make a range of different contending claims on the same basis as the state's own project. On one level, the Ndwandwe and the many other groups similar to the Ndwandwe that have arisen in the last two decades are attempting to do the same kind of work as the state – to work through the past in order to inhabit the present differently and to open the path to different futures than what the past has made available. Yet the frame of the state's project and the strategies deployed to pursue this project can incite and active resistance and attempts to do the same kind of work of working through the past on similar, but different terms. The interests of different groups that exist in a society or that coalesce when people feel that their interests are being subordinated to others can require pursuing the project defined under the same broad rubric by the state by other means. These means can create contending claims to resources such as land and funding. Memory becomes an important resource in such claims. The Ndwandwe are making claims about Ndwandweness against Zuluness and against the state's project of reimagining the past. The Ndwandwe claim is based on received memory and deploys fragments of various oral artistic forms as I have shown. At the same time, the Zulu royal elite is cementing its position with the support of the state while other groups, such as the Nhlangwini, are making their own claims to not be Zulu and so are the many other groups I have signalled throughout this dissertation. Yet, groups that are said to be Ndwandwe – that

[98] In South Africa, such a claim was made by a leader of a minority right wing Afrikaner opposition party, the Freedom Front Plus, in Parliament as recently as a few weeks ago.

is, groups that were colonized by the Ndwandwe – can conceivably make their own sovereignty claims against the Ndwandwe in an infinite regress to smaller and smaller identities that are said to have existed in some vaguely-remembered past.

The above point makes visible the final issue I want to draw out about the Ndwandwe case. I have argued that the Ndwandwe are doing radical work by deploying the three oral artistic forms in an interplay with the language of daily speech which gives both the forms and this daily language new meanings. The potential for infinite regress I have pointed to above shows this Ndwandwe project to have a strongly conservative element within the radicalism I have observed. Such projects are radical in the way they destabilize the easy assumptions of identity that reinvent colonial identity formulations in the postcolonial period. However, they play off the conservatisms they oppose and are thus conservative in the same ways. The uBumbano's project plays off conservative monarchical Zuluness – deploying the idiom of tradition that has come down to the present as a Zulu cultural idiom, restoring conservative Zulu-ist gender hierarchies, and attempting to remember the father of the nation in the ways Zulu founding figures are remembered. In playing off this Zuluness, it destabilizes Zulu identity that the royal elite and the state are attempting to cement. The radical move is steeped in conservatism that is ultimately an attempt to replace one conservatism with another. Many such postcolonial revivalist movements may ultimately conform to this formulation.

This dissertation ultimately suggests one way of reading the interplay of the present and the past, oral literature and heritage, history, the developmental state and business interests in the context of changing social organization and modes of governance. The insights arrived at and pointed to will be confirmed, modified or challenged by other test cases.

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