

## G I B A   K A   S O B U Z A

25.11.1898

File, 74, pp. 84-5.

Also present: Mnkonkoni

- 84 Per Giba ka Sobuza (king) and Mnkonkoni, two men sent by the Queen Mother at my request for trustworthy information regarding the past history of the Swazis. (See below, for list of Swazi kings given by them and also for list of regiments. Giba is of the Tigo-godolo regiment, Mnkonkoni of the Inyati, the one about 69, the other 72 years of age. They say:

The Swazi people originally came from the Ubombo range of mountains some way north of the Usutu river and in the neighbourhood of the chief Jozana's present location. It is not known now what caused the Swazis, who refuse to admit that they are Tongas, to leave the Ubombo, but leave they did, and proceeded across the Usutu to country now occupied by Silele, the Swazi chief, not far from Mahamba<sup>1</sup> and close to what is now Ntshingila's location.

Here they lived until attacked by Zwide, the Zulu chieftain, in Tshaka's reign.<sup>2</sup> The Swazis were defeated by Zwide and put to flight. They fled into what is now the Transvaal, to the Basutos. Ncaba, Zwangendaba and Mpakeni fled at the same time.<sup>3</sup> Sobuza's kraals were burnt by Zwide and the place is now known by the name Etshiselweni. There is a Zombode kraal at Etshiselweni, the present *induna* being the man Silele above referred to. The Swazis fled as far as the Basutos, to Esidhlomodhlomo hill, because Zwide's *impi* followed them. After pursuit was abandoned, the Swazis came back and attacked Mhlangala, then living with his people about the Mdimba range of mountains.<sup>4</sup> Mhlangala, who was defeated, fled. The regiment which *ousted* him was the Mbulalazwe. Mhlangala's kraal was where the South African Republic's Justice of the Peace office is now, and was called Ncabane's and was where Mhlangala's *inkosikazi* lived.

It is reported that a whirlwind came, destroyed the kraal and uplifted trees growing in the neighbourhood. This incident, however, occurred before Sobuza was attacked by Zwide as stated.

Even to this day there are some of Mhlangala's people living in Swaziland. Madubana is the name of one such headman. There was another section of people living near the Usutu river and Mankayi-yana hills<sup>5</sup> called *the people of Maseko ka Luhleko*. These were not dispersed until a later date.

King Tshaka asked Sobuza for one of his daughters in marriage. Sobuza acquiesced and gave him his first-born daughter named Mpa-

ndeze. It appears that this girl became enceinte, whereupon Tshaka, without in any way consulting Sobuza, caused her to be put to death. The Swazis were much surprised at this arbitrary action and regarded it as an insult. This happened before Etshiselweni had been left. 85 The first Zulu *impi* that attacked the Swazis was that of Zwide as already referred to. No Swazi princesses or others were given in marriage to any of the subsequent Zulu kings, although marriages took place between Swazis and the (Zulu) *indunas* Masipula, Mnyamana, and Seketwayo.

As regards Tongaland, Noziyingili<sup>6</sup> despatched a messenger named Nsingingenge to ask Mswazi for two of the Swazi princesses. Nomakala and her sister Zambili (Swazi: Dzambile; Zulu: Dambile) were given in marriage. The former died without issue. *Lobola* of over 100 head was paid for the two. Zambili is a daughter of Sobuza.

Messages were on various occasions sent by the Swazis to the Zulu kings. Mnkonkoni was on one occasion sent by the king to tender allegiance, or *konza*.

The first missionary to come to the country was a European known as Muneli.<sup>7</sup> He built a house at Mahamba. After a time he left and was succeeded by one Daniel Msimanga, a native, who reoccupied the European's site.

The Hoho district was first occupied by Swazis in Mswazi's reign. The owners, Siwundhlwana, Mlaleli, and Wamhabela, left for some unknown reason and proceeded to Gasaland (kwa Gasa).<sup>8</sup> Mswazi, finding the land deserted, built upon and claimed it as his own.

The first white person to visit Swaziland was a Boer named Ngalongkulu. He was accompanied by Potolozzi,<sup>9</sup> said to be President Kruger's father. President Kruger also came to the country in the early days to hunt elephants as well as purchase Tonga children with horses and oxen from Swazis who had raided the children from the Tongas. Other Boers too made similar purchases.

When Mpande defeated and put to flight the Swazi (princes) Malambule, Dubelo and Nyamayenja, they fled to Emkolo in the South African Republic,<sup>10</sup> where Boers demanded of them Tonga children.<sup>11</sup> A hundred were then paid over. None of these, it seems, were Swazi children.

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File 74, p. 104.

Also present: Mnkonkoni

104 The first kind of *lobola* which these men can call to mind as prevailing in Swaziland was that of cattle. They have never heard of *lobolaing* with beads or *brass rings*, although they admit that beads and *brass rings* formed and do still form what is called respectively the *isembato* and *umgano*,<sup>12</sup> or the latter word might cover the former. On this point they agree with Mabola;<sup>13</sup> indeed on nearly all they agree with him.

At first it seems there were few cattle in Swaziland due to the attack made by Zwide on Sobuza at Etshiselweni, and, after this attack, certain sections of the Swazi king's subjects refused to obtain cattle and so *lobola* in cattle, because they were afraid of further raiding on the part of the Zulus. The chiefs Nomahasha and

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Jozana,<sup>14</sup> who *lobola'd* with *hoes* and *goats*, were among these. The Swazis ordinarily speak of these chiefs as Tongas, for they will not admit that they are so themselves.

Mnkonkoni, who is about 72, says his own mother was *lobola'd* with two head of cattle. At a later time the *lobola* rose to five, and if a sixth beast were paid it was considered the man was entitled to another girl, which he received, she being described as *the one placed among the cattle*. The *isembato* was made of white beads and when worn on the body would be called *umgano*. The king's daughters, if married to people beyond the border, say in Zululand or Tongaland, were paid for at the rate of about 100 head of cattle apiece. That number or more was paid for Zambile and her elder sister Nomakala.

The two men agree in the opinion that to *lobola* has in it the meaning of purchase, for although after death the woman's *spirit* may and does *go to* her father's home, yet, on the other hand, whenever the woman, in her lifetime, pays a visit to her father's and her own original home, she is then regarded merely in the light of an *isihlobo*, as a relation, not as one of the family. Moreover, when she dies, she is buried at her husband's kraal and is put into the grave in accordance with custom prevailing, not at her original home, but at that of her husband and her husband's people.

[Note. These are strong arguments. Still, I cannot allow the sense of purchase in *lobola* because, although a woman may live only in accordance with the custom of her husband, yet that custom is not a habit; it has the sanction of antiquity and is itself binding on the husband. The woman surrenders one law to live under another with at least equal sanctions, for it must be remembered customs may differ in every family in a certain degree - 26.11.1898.]

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File 74, p. 128.

Also present: Mnkonkoni

128 The following is a list of Swazi kings given by Giba ka Sobuza (the king) and Mnkonkoni, the well-known Special Messenger, men who, when I asked the Queen Mother to send me someone to give me information on this point, were sent by her this day. She considers them trustworthy.<sup>15</sup>

Kings	<i>Izinduna</i>	Kraals
1 Ngwane (Bunu)		Emampondweni Zombode
(Queen Mother:) Kunabtibeni	Mbabe, Mgudhlula	
2 Mbandeni (Dhlamini)	Tikuba - at Embekelweni	Embekelweni Zombode
(Queen Mother:) Madolomafisha <sup>16</sup>	Sandhlana - at Didini Makambana Mgogo	Didini
3 Ludonga - died a minor	Matebula Mgenge	

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Kings	<i>Izinduna</i>	Kraals
4 Mswazi <sup>a</sup>	Sandhlana Jojo - at Ekufinyeni	
(Queen Mother:), Lazide - daughter of Zwide		
5 Sobuza (Somhlolo)	Mngayi Mkiza Magongo <sup>b</sup> - at Elangeni	
6 Ndungunya (Zikode)	Dinile ka Nkambule	
7 Ngwane	Mlobokazana	
8 Dhlamini		
9 Hlubi		
10 Ludonga		
11 Mavuso		
Samugedi		
Lange - son of Bululwana		
Sidwabasolutuli		
Sikulamaloyi		
Sihuba		
Mboholo		
Ngongoni <sup>c</sup>		
Dhlodhlotela		

<sup>a</sup>In a proclamation by M.W. Pretorius, State President of the South African Republic, dated 29th April 1868 and appearing in a Blue Book headed 'Cape of Good Hope and Natal, Correspondence relating to the alleged kidnapping and enslaving of young Africans by the people of the Transvaal Republic', London, printed by George Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1869, price 8d, Mswazi is referred to as 'late', and two agreements with him and Boers are referred to as dated 25th July 1846 and 21st July 1855. From this, Mswazi must have been reigning in 1846 and dead by 1868. Erskine told me that when in 1867 he came to survey, Mswazi was reigning, but he did not seem to be quite sure. In the same Blue Book as above, p. 29, a statement by 'Illunganiso, messenger from the Amaswazi tribe to the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal', 20th July 1868, occurs, complaining of McCorkindale's action. Evidently Lazide, or Ludonga's mother, sends the message, which was received by T. Shepstone.

<sup>b</sup>Magongo was Tikuba's father.

<sup>c</sup>Ngongoni, Dhlodhlotela added by Tikuba, 26.11.1898. Gama says Ngongoni was not a *king*. Gama does not know Dhlodhlotela.

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File 74, p. 138.

Also present: Mnkankoni, Zulu

- 138 (List of Swazi regiments given by Giba and Mnkankoni)  
 Latshawe - *enrolled* by Sobuza  
 Mbulalazwe - *drove out the people of Mhlangala*  
 Emahlakabezi - *of Nobamba*  
 Imgumanca or Imgungundhlovu

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Sigujana or Amahohloka (Amapinyane)  
Luhawuhawu or Giba  
Abalondolozzi - *age-group of Ndubela*  
Punga - *enrolled by Sobuza*  
Zicele (Zicele'cele) - *age-group of Mswazi* - or Sitshi<sup>17</sup>  
Inyati (at Hoho) or Indhlovu (at Didini) - (approximate  
age in 1897:) 69 or 70. (Age contemporaries of Zulu,  
Izingulube.  
Tigogodolo - Giba ka Sobuza's regiment  
Mahubulu (put up at Didini) or Mbayimbayi (put up at  
Hoho) - (age contemporaries of Zulu, Ndhlonhlo  
Giba - *of Mswazi*, (age contemporaries of Zulu, Dhloko  
Imgadhlela - *of Mswazi, age-group of Dududu*  
Abalondolozzi or Umlondolozzi - *enrolled by Mswazi, age-*  
*group of Mbandeni*  
Ndhlavela - *enrolled by Ludonga*  
Giba or Nocegu  
Imgadhlela  
Izingulube (Ingulube)  
Halaza  
Isaka

[Note, 17.12.1898. I find John Gama does not know the regiments at all well. He says Mahubulu is only a *section* of a regiment, and that the Tigodolo should *follow after* the Zicele. He never paid much attention to the regiments. Mpikeli and others used to tell him names of them but he has forgotten.]

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>In the south-west of present-day Swaziland.

<sup>2</sup>Presumably Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe, and not 'a Zulu chief-tain' as described by Giba. According to most accounts, the attack took place before Shaka's rise to power; see for example Bryant, *Olden Times*, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup>Substantially different accounts of the movements of these leaders and of Swazi-Zulu relations are given in other sources. See for example *Olden Times*, passim, and Omer-Cooper, *Zulu Aftermath*, chs. 3-5.

<sup>4</sup>Near present-day Mbabane.

<sup>5</sup>In the west of present-day Swaziland south of the Usuthu river.

<sup>6</sup>Noziyingili (Nozililo) was chief of the Mapuju branch of the Tsonga in the second half of the nineteenth century. See Bryant, *Olden Times*, pp. 306-7; and Junod, *Life of a S.A. Tribe*, vol. 1, p. 24.

<sup>7</sup>Rev. James Allison.

<sup>8</sup>The kingdom of Soshangana.

<sup>9</sup>The Zulu name for Andries Pretorius. Ngalonkulu (literally, 'big arm') was also a name applied to Pretorius.

<sup>10</sup>It is difficult to unravel the personal histories of Malambule, Dubelo, and Nyamayenja. According to Bryant, *Olden Times*, pp. 326-7, Malambule, who had been regent during the minority of his younger half-brother Mswati, quarrelled with the latter after

- his assumption of the kingship in 1840, and was driven into Zululand. Dubelo (Sidubela) and Nyamayenja were also half-brothers of the king, and Matsebula writes that Dubelo was one of those who escaped with Malambule. Neither Bryant nor Matsebula mentions their fleeing from Mpande into the South African Republic, though Matsebula states that another of Malambule's brothers, Somcuba, sought refuge with the Pedi in the eastern Transvaal. (History of Swaziland, genealogical table opp. p. 4, and pp. 16-17.)
- <sup>11</sup> Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 329-30, gives an account of the Boers' demanding Tsonga children from the Swazi king after the Swazi had sent their cattle into the Transvaal for protection from a Zulu attack, c.1854. Giba and Bryant may be giving variant accounts of the same episode.
- <sup>12</sup> *Isembatho* literally means 'a covering for the body'. The *umgano*, according to Doke and Vilakazi, Dictionary, p. 231, and Bryant, Dictionary, p. 171, is the name for one of the beasts which accompanies a girl on her wedding. They make no reference to beads or brass rings.
- <sup>13</sup> Another of Stuart's informants.
- <sup>14</sup> Chiefs living on the Ubombo hills north of the Usuthu river.
- <sup>15</sup> Giba's list as recorded in the original contains numerous additions and changes, apparently based on information given by John Gama. The information supplied by Giba was recorded in ink, the amendments in pencil. We give Giba's original list. The additions and interlinear insertions in the original make it difficult in some cases to determine the associations intended between the names in the three columns. We have imposed our own order on Stuart's footnotes and comments. The composite list is given in Appendix 2.
- <sup>16</sup> Nandi (Nandzi) was the mother of Mbandzeni. Her sister Madolomafisha, who had been one of her co-wives, served as Queen Mother during the latter part of Mbandzeni's reign. See Matsebula, History of Swaziland, pp. 29-31.
- <sup>17</sup> At this point in the original the following interlinear insertion occurs: 'enrolled by Mswazi'. It is not clear whether this relates to the name 'Sitshi' or to the name 'Indhlovu' which is next on the list.