

## GXUBU KA LUDUZO

27.1.1912

File 40, item 26, pp. 2-3.

Also present: Mjobo

- 2 Gxubu, a dark *kehla* of medium height, speaks. My father Luduzo ka Nongila of the Radebe (Hlubi), was of the Izimpohlo regiment.<sup>1</sup> He belonged to Mzetepi's hut. Mzetepi was one of Tshaka's wives, but had no child. I am sure of this, for my father frequently spoke of it.

My father was of the Izimpohlo regiment. They used to carry white sticks, rather short; they also carried one assegai (each) when they went to *maraud in the territory of another chief*. He wore *izimbedu* or *ingwota*<sup>2</sup> round the neck, arms, etc.

My father lived in Pietermaritzburg. He was sent occasionally to Zululand as a special messenger. I remember his being sent to Mpande. I accompanied him as mat-bearer.

The kings and queens of Zululand used not to swallow *pieces* of meat but would simply chew and drop them out of the mouth onto the floor. After six to ten of these they would discontinue. The *inceku* would then pick them all up, carry them off, and eat them. This same *inceku*, before eating commenced, would wash his hands and then come in and sit a little distance from the king, holding up his open hands, not daring to touch anything, waiting for the order to be given to cut up the meat. When ordered to *cut it up*, he would cut off one lump and throw it on one side, off the *wooden trays* (off which the king ate, one of which held meat and the other nothing). Then (he would) cut off another and throw it off. The third would be put onto an *eating-mat* for the king to eat or rather chew and then spit out. This meat would have been *roasted and cut in strips*. The meat would be eaten in this way in the *isigodhlo*.

- I saw both Cetshwayo and Monase *eat* in this way and then *spit out*. Silwane ka Gabangaye used to eat in this way too. I also
- 3 noticed small *gourds* about them, containing water or probably beer, for the beer was always taken when old - say Saturday's *drained* beer would not be drunk until the Monday after next, i.e. in nine days' time. The *curdled milk* was allowed to wait for two months<sup>3</sup> before being taken. The *whay* was *drunk* as drawn. The *curds* were eaten without being *stirred*.

Ngoza's affair. Somtseu had gone to Nodwengu with Ngoza and pitched his camp some distance off, say three miles off.<sup>4</sup> Cetshwayo

came to put a demand to Somtseu. He asked that the dog Ngoza might be fetched and brought before him there. 'Bring him out here in the open!' Cetshwayo had come to kill both Ngoza and Somtseu. He was accompanied by a huge mass of Zulus, who kept pushing up closely. Sir Theophilus Shepstone said, 'Wait now, son of Mpande. Even if he entered the *isigodhlo*, what harm did he do?' Cetshwayo: 'Why did he enter and speak with the girls of the *isigodhlo*?' Cetshwayo said all he wanted to know was why Ngoza, that dog Ngoza, had entered. 'Let him appear here!' Here he spat. The spit landed in front of Somtseu. Masipula then said, 'Hau! Hau! What are you doing, Dhlamvuza? Do not destroy the nation of Funga!' <sup>5</sup> Cetshwayo remained silent. Then Somtseu said, 'You are hoping to kill me, as Piti was killed. <sup>6</sup> The queen of the white people is full of sorrow. The whites will advance upon you through the pass of the snake' (near Mtetwa country). <sup>7</sup> Somtseu said, 'I thought we would have talked in peace. I shall now leave you.' He left the cattle that had been slaughtered for him, for he went to report to the Queen that Cetshwayo was not friendly toward her, but an enemy.

The skin of a beast was sent after this incident. Somtseu refused to hand over Ngoza, and would not let him appear. When Ngoza made as if he would come forward Sir Theophilus Shepstone shouted, 'Stay Ngoza! Do not do as he wants!' As Cetshwayo shouted for Ngoza, Somtseu said, 'Stay!'

.... <Linguistic note omitted - eds.>

Masipula was a dark man. He had a small headdress and was very tall. He was of the Wombe regiment. When he spoke no-one replied. Cetshwayo was afraid of him. Cetshwayo then left. Sir Theophilus Shepstone left the same day.

I was present at Ngoza's affair, but, being a *mat-bearer*, sat away. My father was close up.

Black bull affair. Fierce animals were the ones used for medicine. The strip of meat was not cut into pieces; it was thrown and pieces were bitten off, not (taken) with the hands. The king stood on a chair, looking on. The object of the medicines was to cause the people to be ferocious in war. <sup>8</sup>

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Formed c.1816; age-group born c.1785-95.

<sup>2</sup>The *ubhedu* (pl. *izimbhedu*) is described as 'a band or flat ring of solid brass worn...round the neck as a decoration of the highest class...' The *ingxotha* is given as a 'heavy, broad brass armlet... worn round the lower arm by old Zulu warriors, bestowed as a royal honour'. See Bryant, *Dictionary*, pp. 27 & 218; and Doke and Vila-kazi, *Dictionary*, pp. 29 & 567.

<sup>3</sup>This seems an exceptionally long time, but the original reads '2 mo.'

<sup>4</sup>Somtseu (Somsewu) was the Zulu name for Theophilus Shepstone, Ngoza was his chief *induna*. The incident described in this passage took place in 1861 at Nodwengu, Mpande's principal *umuzi*, when Shepstone

## GXUBU

came to confer the Natal Government's recognition of Cetshwayo as heir to the Zulu kingship.

<sup>5</sup>Masiphula was chief *induna* of Mpande. Dlamvuzo, literally 'eater of gain', was a name given to Cetshwayo. Phunga was one of the line of early Zulu chiefs.

<sup>6</sup>Piti was the Zulu name for Piet Retief.

<sup>7</sup>'Pass of the snake' is a literal translation of '*isikala se nyoka*'. Shepstone may, on the other hand, have been referring to the royal *umuzi* named Sikhalasenyoka.

<sup>8</sup>For a description of the ritual preparation of the Zulu army for war, see Bryant, Zulu People, pp. 500-4.