

## MAJUBA KA SIBUKULA

2.2.1902, Sunday.

File 71, pp. 66-7.

Also present: Dhlozi, Ndukwana, Ndaba

## 66 Conversation with Majuba of Tongaland.

Dhlozi, Ndukwana, and Ndaba (were present) when, at Silverton Road, I had a conversation for several hours this day with Majuba, one of the royal family of Tongaland. He belongs to the Ingubokamanaba regiment. He says he is *of the age of the Mtuyisazwe* regiment in Zululand; this would make him 43 to 46 years of age.<sup>1</sup> His grandfather Bungane was a son of the great king Makasane, and his father's name is Sibukula.<sup>2</sup> He says he used to nurse Ngwanaza (not Ngwanazi) when a baby and knows him very well.<sup>3</sup> Ngwanaza is at present living in British territory at the ekuPelandaba kraal.<sup>4</sup> His principal kraal, Emfihlweni, was set fire to and burnt by the Portuguese. It is said 36 Europeans attacked Ngwanaza and he fled.<sup>5</sup> He was afraid to fight, for Europeans help one another. Ngwanaza has 58 wives; there may be 60 now. He has children.

Majuba has been five months in Durban. He has been engaged making wire bracelets and *wire rings* for legs (calf). He once worked four years at Port Elizabeth, a place he likes because wages there were £4 and £4 10s a month. This was when the railway in those parts was being constructed. He thinks Port Elizabeth is a more moral place to live in for natives than Durban. Natives there are more civilized. Wages are very low in Durban.

The Tonga kings are buried at Kwa Mwayi (Mwali), which is a small bush or forest a mile and a half or so from Emfihlweni. Mwali, Makasane, Hluma and Noziyingili are buried there.<sup>6</sup> Mwali's kraal originally stood where the bush is now. He was buried there; trees grew up, and the place has become the royal burial ground, no trees or wattles ever being cut there.<sup>7</sup>

Spirits are still being freely drunk in Portuguese territory, over which a man, Mapoloba [I think he says] - Mapobobo - is chief, having been appointed by the Portuguese, but he is not a man who would have dared to eat out of the same *eating-mat* with Majuba; he is not a man of rank. No liquor to speak of is now drunk in British Tongaland. The Tongas (this name, M. says, is an *icilo*, the proper designation being *a ba kasa Mabudu*)<sup>8</sup> have a wish to be under the British Government. The Tongas did not fight, for it was useless, seeing so powerful a state as Zululand came to grief.

I read him over my list of Tonga kings, genealogical tree, and regiments, but he had nothing to add thereto and appeared surprised.

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67 He is on the point of returning home; he wants to leave on Tuesday, but I persuaded him to stay over next Sunday to afford me an opportunity of having another chat with him.

Gedeza, Ngwanaza's *induna*, is still living. One of his wives got the *amandiki* disease or complaint.<sup>9</sup> This disease, known in Swaziland as *amandawu*, has spread over Tongaland - and, Ndaba adds, came as far as the Mpukunyoni district.<sup>10</sup>

Ngwanaza has twice come down to Durban. Last time he came he went to Pietermaritzburg and there saw Samuelson, the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs.<sup>11</sup> Samuelson then asked him if *amandiki* existed in his country and he said, 'Yes,' whereupon S. said this was not to be allowed: the people were to stop the practice altogether. This order seems to have had some effect.

M. says that going back at this time of year he is likely to get an attack of fever, but with a little doctoring will soon get over it. M.'s people have for very many years lived in Tongaland.

9.2.1902, Sunday. Silverton Road.

File 71, pp. 67-8.

Also present: Dhlozi, Ndukwana, Ndaba

Further talk with Majuba. Present: Majuba, Dhlozi, Ndukwana, and Ndaba.

Majuba and Ndaba are going home in a day or two. Majuba tells me that Ngwanaza has very few people with him now. When he went to see Ngini (Sir M. Clarke) at uBombo several years ago, Ngini expressed surprise at no old men being with him.<sup>12</sup> Ngwanaza quarrelled with the Portuguese. They first summoned him but he failed to go. Afterwards they asked him to help them against Ngungunyana.<sup>13</sup> N. called up his forces and sent them forward to Delagoa en route to Ngungunyana. On the way, in spite of warning given by Ngwanaza to the Portuguese, the troops broke into and looted stores, drinking the liquor and taking the guns. When they got to Delagoa a rumour got about to the effect that they were to be taken to Ngungunyana's by ship. This rumour being found true caused so much dissatisfaction and distrust that the men turned homewards. The Portuguese said that as soon as they had dealt with Ngungunyana they would come and deal with Ngwanaza. Bruheim (Madvu) was sent to Pietermaritzburg to tender the people's allegiance.<sup>14</sup> After the Ngungunyana expedition, which had proved successful, the Portuguese sent 37 men to Ngwanaza. Ngwanaza fled. He was afraid of fighting because he thought that if defeated and he took refuge in British territory, the British would hand him over.

68 The Portuguese had previously called on Ngwanaza to pay hut tax. Ngwanaza refused. The *senior men* (*amadoda*) however disagreed with Zambili (Dhlamini) and said they ought to pay taxes, seeing they were far lower than those claimed by the British Government.<sup>15</sup> This difference arose in intensity. When Ngwanaza fled the *senior men* remained, Mapobobo was appointed chief, and the main body of the people very rarely visit their rightful king. Mapobobo is to all intents and purposes now king over the Mabudu people. The Portuguese have raised the taxes. It was the Queen Regent, Zambile, who stood out, saying she had given her allegiance to the British Government (at Pietermaritzburg) and would not fail.

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I told Majuba I did not think the Mabudu people had taken properly into account the MacMahon Award of 1875.<sup>16</sup> I explained as well as I could.

Majuba says the allegiance of the nation was tendered at the conclusion of the Zulu War of 1879. This act tends to show that the Tongas did not know anything about that cruel act, the MacMahon Award.

The kraal Ngwanaza is now living in is called Emfihlweni, for the old kraal name has been preserved at the new site.

I told Majuba not to be downhearted. The Boer War is nearing conclusion, and there is a possibility that England will obtain possession of Delagoa Bay, when the MacMahon Award would vanish and Zambile and her son be restored to their proper country. This may not happen in a year or two, it may take twenty, but what is twenty in the history of a native?

It is not known when the Tongas first came to Tongaland. The people are called neither Abenguni or Amantungwa.<sup>17</sup> One might glean particulars from the old people in the country.

I asked Majuba if he thought he could get two or three old men to come down and stay here with me two or three months and educate me in Tonga affairs. He said he thought this could be done. Ndaba suggested Luhoho, and Majuba said Mapoyi, both about 67 years old. I said I would pay their railway fares to and fro, and *present* them each with something on their return, as well as find food and lodging for them. Majuba perceived I took a keen interest in Tongaland and I warned him to be careful not to excite people. He was not to ask either Zambile or Ngwanaza for the people, but might speak about the matter if he liked.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Bryant, Olden Times, p. 646, gives the umThwisazwe *ibutho* as having been formed c.1869 of youths born c.1849.

<sup>2</sup>Makhasane was chief of the Mabhudu branch of the Tembe Tsonga from early in the nineteenth century until his death in the early 1850s. See Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 293, 299, 304-5; Junod, Life of a South African Tribe, vol. 1, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup>Ngwanaza (Ngwanasi), great-grandson of Makhasane, was chief of the Mabhudu people in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. See Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 203, 307; Junod, Life of a South African Tribe, vol. 1, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup>Rival British and Portuguese interests in the country south of Delagoa Bay resulted in a partition of Ngwanaza's territory. Though the southern portion was declared a British sphere of influence in 1887-8, it was not formally annexed until 1895. Bryant, Olden Times, p. 307, locates kwaPhelindaba kraal between the Phongolo river and Khosi bay.

<sup>5</sup>Ngwanaza and his mother Zambili fled from the Portuguese in the early 1890s.

<sup>6</sup>The names given are of successive chiefs of the Mabhudu people. See the genealogy in Bryant, Olden Times, p. 293.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Stuart Archive, vol. 1, p. 65.

<sup>8</sup>Bryant, Dictionary, p. 75, gives *icilo* (*ichilo*) as 'any ... thing

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disgusting to nature, filthy, obscene, to be ashamed of'.

- <sup>9</sup>Bryant, Dictionary, p. 411, gives *indiki* (pl. *amandiki*) as a 'person (mostly girls) suffering from some neurotic or hysterical disease ... prevalent in the north of Zululand....'
- <sup>10</sup>Presumably the country about the Hluhluwe and lower Mfolozi rivers where a section of the Mpukunyoni people settled.
- <sup>11</sup>S.O. Samuelson was Under-Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, 1893-1909.
- <sup>12</sup>Sir Marshall Clarke was Resident Commissioner and Chief Magistrate in Zululand, 1893-7.
- <sup>13</sup>Ngungunyana kaMzila was ruler of the Gasa kingdom in what is now south-central Mozambique in the early 1890s. He was attacked and deposed by the Portuguese in 1895.
- <sup>14</sup>G. Bruheim was reputedly the first white to settle among the Mabhudu, and was influential in Mabhudu public affairs during the regency of Ngwanaza's mother Zambili.
- <sup>15</sup>Zambili, daughter of the Swazi king Sobhuza (Somhlolo), was mother of Ngwanaza, and regent of the Mabhudu people at the time of the Portuguese attack. See Bryant, Olden Times, p. 307.
- <sup>16</sup>In 1875 the French President, Marshall MacMahon, arbitrated in favour of Portugal and against Britain in a long-standing dispute over rights to the territory to the south of Delagoa bay.
- <sup>17</sup>For discussion of the terms Nguni and Ntungwa see Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 3 ff, 232 ff; Marks, 'The traditions of the Natal "Nguni"', in Thompson, ed., African Societies, ch. 6; Marks and Atmore, 'The problem of the Nguni', in Dalby, ed., Language and History in Africa, pp. 120-32; Stuart Archive, vol. 1, index.