

MAXIBANA KA ZENI

31.12.1913. Dore's store.

File 63, item 2a, pp. 29-40.

- 29 Maxibana ka Zeni ka Mbizela ka Nonkande of the emaNseleni people. Chief: Mfinyeli ka Nguzalele (Mridi) of the Xulu people.¹ (This tribe originated from Xabatshe - don't know which, but said to be near the Pate, where Bongoza decoyed the Boers.)²

The battle of Ndongakusuka.³

Numbers of people started to konza to the princes. As people came to konza, each prince built his own kraal round which his people were concentrated. After this, Mpande slaughtered a beast: it was a black one with a white patch on its flank.⁴ He then said, 'Let the shield made from the side with the wound in it be Mbuyazi's, and the one made from the opposite side⁵ be Cetshwayo's.' No quarrel took place on this account.

- The time for an umjadu dancing competition then drew nearer. It was said that Cetshwayo would hold the dance with Haiyana ka Mapita.⁶ This dance came on; they danced. Then, while the dancing was going on, Mbuyazi exclaimed, 'The one has stabbed the other!' meaning by this that Cetshwayo had been defeated by Haiyana in the dancing. After this came to an end and we had forgotten about it, we heard it said that a mock hunt had been arranged, and that the armed force at Mbuyazi's was increasing in size. We then heard that Mpande said, 'Makasane is happy, he who sometimes saw the eagles of his place fighting.'⁷ This was the very cause of the war. We then heard that the princes were quarrelling. A hunting party was summoned to hold a hunt in the bush country at Ntabankulu and at Nde:ru hill, i.e. between the White and Black Umfolozis. When the hunting party got into the bush country, its sections crossed each other's paths. Mbuyazi's section got out of sight. This section of M.'s turned back and went home. Upon this, C.'s section turned round and went home, i.e. to Gqikazi, built then at Kwa Denge, i.e. close to the Nongoma magistracy. Mbuyazi's impi went home to Macanca, a hill opposite Nhlazatshe⁸ and to the north of it. Others of his impi were ezim-Fabeni.

A pause now came. Presently we heard, 'Mbuyazi has gone. He has taken all the lowland country; all of it now adheres to him,' (i.e. all the flat country of the Biyela, Majiya, Mtetwa, Mpukunyoni, as far as the Tukela). All this land, it was said, was his. At this juncture it was heard that the cattle from Mangweni⁹ had been taken off. They were taken by Manqina ka Nkontshela, who brought them to Mbuyazi. Upon this Cetshwayo's forces took to arms and went out

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after Mbuyazi. Mbuyazi gathered his followers into a body and went off with them away down-country to the Matigulu. C.'s army then followed him. I was there, having been buta'd as a mere boy. I was buta'd when still very young. The reason for this was my own personal wish. I am of the uDhloko regiment.¹⁰ I, as a cadet, was called iNyati,¹¹ which kleza'd at Mahlabatini, at Nodwengu.¹²

Our shields were red in colour. We had oxtails strung round our necks. On the head we wore a circle of black and white ostrich feathers.



There were a number of these white feathers back and front. Round the loins we wore girdles (imitsha) of long-haired white goat skin behind, and of twisted genet skin in front, or we wore girdles of black sheepskin. We did not wear buttock-covers (amabetshu). Amabetshu were not put on for dancing, only for everyday wear. This applied to all the regiments.

We Dhloko carried three or four assegais, but at the *unkosi ceremonies* only sticks were carried. As regards headdress, each man had a grass frame put on his head. It did not fit like a hat, but rested on the head and was tied with string under the neck. The string passed behind the ears and under the chin.



The oxtails were each cut into two or three strips, and each of these strips was cut down and twisted, then tied to a necklace. [See above.] We wore circlets of short oxtails immediately below each knee, and another set of oxtails round the upper part of each arm, i.e. round the biceps, and also round the wrists.

The assegais were the *iklwa* and the *isijula*: these were the kinds carried.

Our big *induna* under Mpande was Ndumundumu ka Nonkokela of the Ndabezita people. Cetshwayo's great *induna* was Mgamule ka Nzobo (the man I know), now dead.¹³ Mbuyazi's big *induna* is unknown to me.

We followed Mbuyazi for three days, starting from Gqikazi. Our object was to fight with him, as Cetshwayo's cattle had been taken. We came to the Matigulu opposite Ndulinde hill.¹⁴ The whole force went up the Ndulinde. We heard, 'Mbuyazi has crossed over; he is now on the other side of the river'. We next heard that he had returned and was at Ndondakusuka (the name of a big hill).¹⁵ C. then sent off his army and it appeared near Ndondakusuka.

The Ndabakawombe, Dhlabedhlu (i.e. Mpande's), Sangqu, Tulwana, and Ndhlonhlo were selected to start the fight. We Dhloko belonged

to the other portion of the Usutu¹⁶ that had not been selected; (it also) included the Mandhlakazi.

35 C.'s force was driven back by Mbuyazi's regiments. After this the Mandhlakazi went into the attack. No sooner did they do so than they drove back the iziGqoza.¹⁷ Upon this the rest of the Usutu *tshaya'd ingomane* (i.e. to strike the shield slightly uplifted with the shaft of the assegai). M.'s impi was then broken up and driven into the water at Dhlokweni. Many were then killed off. This hurling of M.'s impi into the river took place about 9 or 10 a.m.

After this C.'s impi returned and 'ate up' the cattle from the whole of Mbuyazi's country.

The river was full. Some fugitives swam; others were swept away by the water.

Cetshwayo himself was in this battle. I saw him. His shield was dark brown, almost black, with a small white patch.



36 C. had on, I think, a buttock-cover of blue monkey skin. I don't know what kind of front cover he wore. The Tulwana carried black shields with white patches on the loins. Later on, years later, this regiment carried white shields. The older men had all put on the headring. The young regiments carried black-coloured shields, but such shields had white patches. C. had on a bunch of eagle feathers. He had not put on the headring at that time.

Mbuyazi too had not put on the headring. Both were of the Tulwana regiment. Mbuyazi was very tall, as tall as Mgamule ka Nzobo. I do not know what dress Mbuyazi wore. He was called 'the elephant with a tuft of hair on its back' because he had a tuft of hair low down on his back (where indicated). This was used as his name and not as an insult. All we people spoke of him to one another as 'the elephant with a tuft of hair on its back'. He may have got the name because 37 of his father intending to designate him as his successor, thereby ousting C. This may be the reason for using the name 'the elephant'. I believe Mpande gave Mbuyazi this name. The common form of the name was Mbuyazi and not Mbulazi. I do not *tefula* and yet use the former form of the word.

We Dhloko also stabbed the iziGqoza. Mbuyazi's followers were the iziGqoza, and Cetshwayo's were the uSutu. I cannot think of the meaning of the name iziGqoza.

John Dunn was in the battle.¹⁸ He fought with his iziNqobo people, i.e. the name of his people. [See p. 47.]¹⁹ Mantshonga and Ngqelemana (Europeans) are also supposed to have taken part.²⁰

The stories are that Mbulazi was killed by the warriors, or that he was swept away in the Tukela. Others say he crossed over. There is still an impression that he is living.

38 C. took part in chasing the iziGqoza. He went up Ndondakusuka hill. 'The one who remains silent and provokes quarrels with no one! O ya o!'

This refers to Cetshwayo. This was the ceremonial song sung by C.'s troops. No more of it than this.

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Cetshwayo returned after the battle to his ekuBazeni kraal, *built at Denge*, near Gqikazi. Denge is quite close to Nongoma court house.

The Usutu were called '*the Usutu with the long horns*'. We believed that the name was derived from *cattle captured in the war in Sikwata's country*.²¹ The *battle-cry* of C.'s regiments was '*Usutu!*' Mbuyazi's said, '*Laba! Laba! Laba! Laba! Laba!*'

Women and children were killed at Dhlokweni. Others were killed at other places.

I know of no quarrel about girls between Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi.

Zibebu²² sat on the left side of the hut going in. The men usually sit on the right side. Zibebu used, however, to sit on both sides.

39 I was on Zibebu's side at Tshanini, but was not present at Msebe as I was lying ill.²³

The Usutu faction proper at Ndondakusuka was *simply an assemblage from all the regiments*.²⁴ The Mandhlakazi fought on the Usutu side. Haiyana ka Mapita and Hlomuza ka Mapita were in charge of the Mandhlakazi. There were no Mandhlakazi who fought on Mbuyazi's side.

No bucks were killed by the *mock hunting party*. This kind of '*hunt*' is one where it is known that hostilities are intended. The Usutu, instead of carrying small shields used in *bona fide* hunting, carried large ones, but not as large as those *carried at the umkosi ceremony*. These were called *imbumbuluzo* because they were *smaller*. Mbuyazi's people too carried *imbumbuluzo*.

40 It had been proclaimed that there was to be a *mock hunt* before C. and M. went out. I know of no other *such hunt*, and this was so called from the larger size of the shields making it evident that both sides expected to come into action. I know nothing of this kind in Tshaka's or Dingana's time.

Mgamule ka Nzobo, C.'s head *induna*, was assisted by Dambuza ka Mafuku of the emaNkwanyaneni, Magedama ka Sobadhli ka Dhlokukula of the Ntombela, and many others.

Ndondakusuka hill is slightly above Dhlokweni drift.

Notes

¹According to Bryant, *Olden Times*, p. 229, Mfinyeli kaNguzalele of the Xulu people lived in the early nineteenth century.

²On the origins of the Xulu, cf. Bryant, *Olden Times*, p. 228. The uPhathe stream flows from the south into the White Mfolozi east of the present-day road between Melmoth and Mahlabathini. Bhongoza kaMefu of the Ngongoma people won fame in the Zulu kingdom for leading a party of Trekkers into an ambush after the Zulu defeat at the Ncome (Blood) river in 1838.

³Fought in December 1856 near the mouth of the Thukela between the forces of Cetshwayo and Mbuyazi, sons of Mpande who were contending for the future succession to the Zulu kingship.

⁴The original has *iwaba*.

⁵The word used in the original is *indhlelo*, which Bryant, *Dictionary*, p. 101, gives as 'that side of a slaughtered beast, or its hide, opposite to the wounded side - this latter ... is the most prized and goes to the chief, or favourite wife'.

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- ⁶Maphitha kaSojijisa, head of a collateral line of the Zulu royal house, lived in the north-east of the kingdom. His following was known as the Mandlakazi.
- ⁷We have been unable positively to identify the 'Makasane' here referred to, although from the context it would appear that Mpande was using the name to refer to himself. The best known personage of that name was Makhasana kaMwayi, chief of the Mabhudu Tsonga, who died c.1854. See Bryant, Olden Times, pp. 293, 303-5.
- ⁸A prominent hill north of the White Mfolozi thirty kilometres west of present-day Mahlabathini.
- ⁹One of Cetshwayo's *imizi*.
- ¹⁰Formed c.1858 of youths born c.1838.
- ¹¹The 'cadets' of the uDloko *ibutho* were called iziNyathi. See Stuart Archive, vol. 1, p. 33.
- ¹²One of Mpande's principal *imizi*.
- ¹³Nzobo (Dambuza) kaSobadli of the Ntombela people was one of Dingane's principal *izinduna*.
- ¹⁴Ndulinde hill lies twenty kilometres west of present-day Gingindlovu.
- ¹⁵On the north bank of the Thukela near its mouth.
- ¹⁶The name for Cetshwayo's supporters.
- ¹⁷The name for Mbuyazi's supporters.
- ¹⁸A white hunter and trader from Natal who, with his African following, fought on the side of Mbuyazi.
- ¹⁹The reference is to the evidence of Mangoya, which appears in the present volume.
- ²⁰Mantshonga was the Zulu name for Captain J. Walmsley, Natal border agent on the lower Thukela. We have been unable to identify Ngqelemana.
- ²¹Sekwati (Sikwata) was chief of the Pedi living in what is now the eastern Transvaal from the late 1820s until his death c.1861. On the 'uSuthu' cattle, cf. Bryant, Zulu People, p. 329.
- ²²Son of Maphitha, and his successor as leader of the Mandlakazi.
- ²³Zibhebhu's Mandlakazi defeated Cetshwayo's uSuthu at Msebe in March 1883. Cetshwayo's successor Dinuzulu, supported by a party of whites, defeated Zibhebhu at Tshaneni in June 1884.
- ²⁴The original has *inhlanganisela nje yamabut' onke*.