

Royal Collection: Tape I
English Typescript: Simbimba Ndlela, notebook 4
Ndlela History

Typescribed by: Nokuthula Vilakati for FHYA

Date: 5 December 2023

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- Where the typescriber edits/amends the original text, the edited/amended text appears in grey.
- The audio-tape counter numbers from the original text appear in square brackets, justified Left, and pertain to the text below them.
- The page numbers of the original text appear in square brackets, justified Right, and pertain to the text below them.
- The footnotes which appear on the left-facing page of the original text have been added at the bottom of each typed page. The numbering of the original notes has been retained.
- Where the typescriber is unsure of a word, the word is placed within square brackets and a question mark. [word?]
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- Endnotes appear in grey, within square brackets on the last page of the document. They comprise the typescriber's notes regarding their editorial interventions.

[INTERVIEWED AT:

[DATE:

[1] Interviewers:

[SN] [KEY INFORMANT: Simbimba Ndlela

[Other Informant: [2]

[Other informant: [3]

Also present:

Heard from: Gedlembane Ndlela

[109]

[SM] He collected Balondolozzi, who are of his age

[2] With the old Tichele¹⁹³

[SM] With the old Tichele now, they
ran away. They were captured until

¹⁹³ Tichele: Age group, libutfo (for Libutfo, see glossary), according to Matsebula (Izakhiwo appendix B) a libutfo of Somhlolo's.

[278] Balondolozzi: the libutfo of the age of the late King Sobhuza II; but, according to Matsebula (Izakhiwo, appendix B) also a libutfo of Somhlolo's.

they ended there. Back at home he had
left his brother. Wait, it seems I am
forgetting his name yet it is
not hidden

[5] Where did the impi end

[SM] There

[5] Was he going with impi?

[SM] He was in the midst of the impi

He had left

[5] Ask Maboya¹⁹⁴, maybe

he will remember him

[110]

[5] He had left behind these, the one who
begets Mswati¹⁹⁵ and others, these are
children of the king. The one who
married Mtelengane¹⁹⁶ Fakudze's¹⁹⁷
child. The father of the king's child

[3] Who is the father of Sozoboso¹⁹⁸?

[SM] What?

[3] Who is Sozoboso's father?

[2] He is of Mchobosheli¹⁹⁹

[5] Whom did he leave at home
because I heard you mentioning him?

[SM] He left Ngwekazi²⁰⁰ here at home
Now, he found the men who were left
behind having taken this Ngwekazi

¹⁹⁴ Maboya: Maboya Fakudze, a renowned authority of Swazi history who was, for a long time, Regent of the Nkhanini royal village near Lobamba.

¹⁹⁵ Mswati: Name of a Swazi king

¹⁹⁶ Mtelengane: Name of a person

¹⁹⁷ Fakudze: Sibongo, clan name, According to Kuper (p. 233) and Matsebula (p. 9) the Fakudze are known as bemdzabuko

¹⁹⁸ Sozoboso: A person's name

¹⁹⁹ Mchobosheli: A person's name

²⁰⁰ Ngwekazi: A person's name; possibly a brother (Kuper, Survey 54+ Logwaja Mamba (p. 33) say son) of Somhlolo who engaged in a succession dispute with Somhlolo (see Bonner, pp28, 45)

into the Nhlambelo on the
day of starting the small incwala²⁰¹

[111]

the man that were here had
took him into the Nhlambelweni
yet Ndvu

[3] That day?

[SM] On that day Ndvu came in (back)
going on the front of the libutfo
and the libutfo was following
behind. He found him in the Nhlambelweni.
Now Ngwekazi died for that.
Yet Ngwekazi did say
that awu! Bandla²⁰² what do you say,
they said it never happened. Maybe it
came and just passed an eye. He came
and then killed him.

[5] Where about did he kill him? Was he

[112]

by his Mabutfo when they
arrived or what?

[SM] At the time when the eMabutfo arrived
He said they should take him to
kill him at Gundwane²⁰³ pass,
at Lukhalweni²⁰⁴

[5] Where he was killed?

²⁰¹ incwala: see glossary

[279] inhlambelo- washing enclosure under the cattle byre of the king's main establishment, opposite the entrance where traditional events occur, such as the keeping of special sea water with which the king washes, or where the bull killed by boys during and after the lusekwane is first driven.

²⁰² Bandla: see libandla

²⁰³ Gundwane: name of a person

²⁰⁴ Lukhalweni: possibly also a place name but it seems name likely to be figurative remark meaning a high up place (lukhalweni) suitable for an ambush, from which escape would be difficult (esikhaleni segundwane lit: the passage of a rat)

[SM] Yes

[3] Wo! His children went there because
he was killed on this side

[SM] Now, what happened afterwards
is that he came over this side
while fighting the Sotho²⁰⁵ people
This continued until he came
to Mdzimba. Somhlolo's attacks
(expectations) ends by the

[113]

the Nkomazi²⁰⁶ (river). The one who took over
(continued) from over the
other side of the river is Somhlolo's child, Mswati

[3] As for him, he ended by the
Nkomazi

[SM] He then found the Maseko²⁰⁷ people here
From there to all over the Mdzimba

[5] Where was Somhlolo's mother at the time?

[SM] His mother was dead

[5] She was the daughter of who?

[SM] She was the daughter of Sibandze

[2] Simelane

[SM] Simelane her name is
Sinjalo

[5] Did not she have an inhlanti²⁰⁸

[114]

this daughter of Sibandze?

[SM] Awu: I do not remember the
inhlanti whether there was,

²⁰⁵ Sotho

²⁰⁶ Nkomazi/Komati: Name of a river that cuts through the north of the country. It runs from west to east.

²⁰⁷ Maseko: Clan name: The Maseko known as emakhandzambili, were defeated and scattered by Somhlolo.

²⁰⁸ inhlanti

they did not talk about it because
I also heard the story from
the elders

[3] We are just asking, like Hlubi, that
is, was there not an inhlanti? Because
you have help with Sinjalo. As for us
we know Lojiba²⁰⁹
and Sinjalo. We,
ourselves. Whose mothers are these?

[1&5] Of Somhlolo.

[3] But you have widened our
knowledge in our mind with
many things

[115]

let us not disturb you, continue, Nkhosi

[5] Continue, we have understood

[SM] When Somhlolo put the impi there,
was he going to erect a residence this side?

[3] Somhlolo

[SM] He took that very one at Lobamba
and put it here at Nokwane?

[SM] Yes

[3] As we have tried to search
for tindzala²¹⁰ here, we found
tindzengelo²¹¹ here, on the bottom of the
Lubombo, he put it, there (residence)

[SM] Yes

[116]

[3] Did he gidza incwala there?

²⁰⁹ Lojiba: A person's name

²¹⁰ Tindzala: It could refer to the spot where a residence was once built, irrespective of whether the ruins are still there or not.

²¹¹ Tindzengelo: Broken pieces from clay pots.

[SM] He (did) gidza incwala,
[3] For how long (For how many years)?
[SM] Until he grew up in age. They say
he lived to such an age that he could
not walk and was carried by a hide
And concerning food, he was then eating
meat that was ground and Somhlolo drank it.

[3] He drank it?

[SM] Yes. He also drank milk only.
It was then that death
came (took him). This first Somhlolo
to come here, he asked for a
wife from Zidze²¹². She found that
this one, the child of
his brother has given birth,

[117]

of Vumisa²¹³, the one who comes
after Zidze

[5] There, in Zululand?

[SM] In Zululand, in Mkhatjwa's place

[3] He sent men?

[5] Those were Mamba and others?

[SM] Now, it happened that
Zidze gave them an intfombi which
is born of Vumisa and the (Zidze)
had by then young children.

[3] He was given by Zidze?

[SM] Yes. He was given by Zidze

[3] Was Zidze a king there?

[SM] He was a king.

²¹² Zidze: (variant: Zwide) A child of the Ndwandwe people in the early nineteenth century.

²¹³ Vumisa: A name of a person. According to informants from the LaVumisa area in southern Swaziland, LaVumisa was a wife of Somhlolo's who bore Thekwane (Interview with Thekwane Dlamini)

[118]

[3] There in Zululand?

[SM] There in Zululand

[5] Where are these?

[SM] His indvuna²¹⁴ was Senzangakhona²¹⁵
the father of Shaka²¹⁶

[3] Is that his indvuna

[SM] Yes, it is his indvuna

[3] This Zidze?

[SM] Yes

[5] Continue

[SM] Now, it then happened that
she came to be an
inkhosikati²¹⁷, the child of Vumisa
Now, time marched on
by the time when Tsekwane²¹⁸
and others were grown up,

[119]

(Tsekwane) is of the one who was brought
first, her child is Tsekwana'

[2] He is the son of Ndabazezizwe

[SM] He is the son of Ndabazezizwe

[3] He is the son of Ndabazezizwe

[SM] Yes. Now, Zidze sent emabele²¹⁹
to the one who was brought
and he said we are discredited

²¹⁴ Indvuna: see glossary

²¹⁵ Senzangakhona: Father of Shaka

²¹⁶ Shaka: Zulu king, c1816-1828

²¹⁷ Inkhosikati: see glossary

²¹⁸ Tsekwane: Name of a person; Tsekwane was the name of a son of Somhlolo and is the name of the present day chief of the LaVumisa area

[283] Ndabazezwe: according to Matsebula (chart opposite p.4) Ndabazezwe was the son of Tsekwane I, and a grandson of Somhlolo whose son was Tsekwane II.

²¹⁹ emabele: sorghum, breasts

in the place of Ngwane

[2] We have not cooked (sent food)

[SM] There is not any food we are sending to
the child. It appeared that it is
a discredit. It was then that Somhlolo
saw Thandiwe bringing (something)
yet this Thandiwe is the one

[120]

Born of Zidze

[3] Ye __ _ s

[SM] (agreeing) yes

[3] She was called Tsandzile?

[SM] Yes. He then caught her

[3] She was caught by Somhlolo?

[SM] She was caught by this Somhlolo. He
said you will then tell babe that
I have then done this (like this)

[5] He caught her for himself?

[SM] Yes. Wo! For sure the indvuna
did report that

[5] Back at home?

[SM] Yes: Now, she stayed and
stayed as Somhlolo

[121]

dies here, Thandiwe's child
was starting

[3] Was she an intfombi?

[SM] He was starting to be a lijaha²²⁰. He
was the same age as

[5] So, he was a male?

[SM] He was a male, the child

²²⁰ lijaha: post-adolescent young man

[5] Wo! He caught a male (child)
[SM] No he caught a female (child)
[5] W__o
[SM] Then, she gave birth. As he is now
installed
[3] I see
[SM] He was Mswati
[3] The child was Mswati?

[122]

[SM] Yes
[3] The one who is born of Somhlolo
[SM] Then, this Tsekwane,
no, he is down
[3] He is down
[SM] That one was installed because
he is born of the eldest from back
home. Now, it happened that they
caused friction between these (two)
[3] They are children
[SM] Mswati, yet, because Somcuba²²¹
and others had said
we have our own king which
was in the first place born
She is the mother
in law.

[123]

Wile it was/is young. It was born
of ____ A boy cannot be
put to be over us. Where this one became
recalcitrant and went to stay there

²²¹ Somcuba: A person's name. Somcuba challenged the rule of Mswati, and allied with the Ohrigstad Boers in the late 1840's

at/in Condvo, Mswati

[3] Mswati then ran away?

[SM] Yes. He then came back home

ngempi²²² ready to kill.

It was then that Somcuba and others

went to this side, with

Mabhedla²²³

[3] With Mabhedla

[SM] Then Tsekwane and Malambule²²⁴

went out (away). They also went

out (away) together

[124]

They went out with Malambule.

[5] Where did they go babe?

[SM] They came out and went down

to the Lubombo?

[5] Down to the Lubombo?

[SM] Yes. They saw dust being blown up

behind them when they were up

on the Lubombo. They said, there is

an impi. Awu: they tried to think

that it is caused by cattle, no, it is not:

It is caused by an impi. Then they

went down here, from Nkonjane²²⁵ people's area

[5] From the area of the people of Nkonjane?

²²² Ngempi: by impi (see glossary for impi). This word refers to the state of an individual who is ready to fight

²²³ Mabhedla: Person's name. Son of Mswati who rebelled against the accession of Mbandzeni and fled among the Pedi for sanctuary

²²⁴ Malambule: Name of a person. According to Bonner, p.47, Malambule was a son of LaVumisa and Somhlolo, who had been nominated as the heir by an ailing Somhlolo, but when this was later retracted and Malambule was appointed a senior regent during the minority of Mswati. Malambule was accused of plotting to kill Mswati, and a major power struggle ensued

²²⁵ Nkonjane: people of Nkonjane

[SM] Yes. They then went down and crossed²²⁶
then they went on with no rest

[125]

until they slept on this side of Lushobeni²²⁷

[1] Where are they going to?

[SM] They are running away. They went on
with no rest. When they awoke up there,
they went on until they
slept at Makhahleleka's²²⁸ (residence)

[2] At Nyama's²²⁹ place, at Nyawo's place

[SM] At Makhahleleka's place, the child of the king

[SM] Makhahlaleleka's is of Somhlolo's (child)

[2] Makhahleleleka's is of Fukuta's²³⁰ (child)

[SM] Who is Fukuta?

[2] He is of Somhlolo, also a brother of Mswati

[SM] Makhahleleleka is of Somhlolo

[126]

When they arrived there, there
at Mahamba²³¹, they came
in the evening. The child of the
King gave them cows to kill for
their food and they straight away killed
the cows and said Awu: our brother,
we cannot leave slaughtering them
because here is Mswati after us, the impi

[5] It is coming

²²⁶ Cross: It is not clear as to what phenomena did they cross. This could be a river or a mountain.

²²⁷ Lushobeni: place; possibly Mashobeni, the name of the area around the royal graves at Mbilaneni in the far south of Swaziland

²²⁸ Makhahleleka: person's name, grandson of Somhlolo and son of Fokoti; chief of an area between Mashobeni and Mahamba.

²²⁹ Nyama: It appears that the informant wanted to say Nyawo instead of Nyama, although the chiefdom of Makhahleleka was located to the immediate north-west of Chief Nzama's establishment in southern Swaziland.
[128] Nyawo: either the Nyawo chiefdom on the Lubombo or the place of a particular Nyawo person elsewhere

²³⁰ Fukuta: A person's name; probably Fokoti, see n.229 above

²³¹ Mahamba: A place on the south-western border of Swaziland; lit: the place of the runaways

- [SM] It is coming, so, they slaughtered them and
in the midst of the night they left
- [5] Left them in the dust
- [SM] Left them in the dust
- [5] Where did they go?
- [SM] Yet also the impi has slept

[127]

Very near. It slept here in Mweni²³²
here here in Mgabhi²³³ place. Now
it (impi) arrived at Makhahleleka's
place at dawn immediately just
before dawn. They found the fire
places like so, they were gone.
They went until they crossed the
Luphongolo. When they were over the other side,
below the dvumbe²³⁴ and slept in the forest

- [5] Where did they go with this Makhahleleka?
- [SM] Where could Makhahleleka go to
- [5] because they say he also came
from there.
- [SM] No, Makhahleleka is not coming
because they killed Makhahleleka
when they were coming back accusing

[128]

him that he helped them escape and
even gives them food

- [3] WO_ _, the impi

²³² Mweni: A place just east of Madulwini, between Hlathikhulu and Nhlngano

²³³ Mgabhi: It is not clear whether it is a name of a person or a place: KaLaMgabhi is just west of present-day Bhunya; Mgabhi is also the name of a son of the early Swaz king

²³⁴ dvumbe: It is not clear as to what is the name of, whether it is a mountain, and or a river. Probably Dumbe mountain near present-day Paulpetersburg

[105] Luphongolo rises in the Drakensberg and flows eastwards closely parallel to the Swazi-South African border

[SM] He then died. When they were on the other side of the Luphongolo, because the impi came as far as the Luphongolo and it returned back having reached the Luphongolo and seeing them over there. It said, your father is with you. Awu it then returned back. It then killed the Makhahleleka when it was coming back

[5] Do they come to report?

[SM] They then came (back) to Mswati to report that they have killed Makhahleleka

[129]

[1] He died for

[SM] He died for nothing

[1] By the way, the person (man) was helping them through holding them by giving them food

[3] Now, what about those who went this direction, (that is) Somcuba?

[SM] Those who went this way, it (impi) it killed, they killed Somcuba

[3] They were found, also in there?

[SM] For sure

[5] Was he killed when they came to there?

[SM] They say when Somcuba arrived there, there was tjwala²³⁵ being drunk whilst the Mabele were threshed

[130]

It happened that there was a (man) person who appeared to have

²³⁵ tjwala: The term is used to refer to any alcoholic drink whether is is Swazi brew, beer or liquor.

tfwasa²³⁶-ed a little bit. He said I will not sleep here at home, I am going. He said this whilst the tjwala was being drunk. As I tried to sleep, blood rose to here (dreaming). Even after I woke up and slept, it again, blood rose to here. I will not sleep here at home. I am going (leaving) today. He was telling them.

[3] A true tale.

[SM] Yes. They said forget, you say you are an inyanga²³⁷ yet you do not even know how to phengula²³⁸. he packed his luggage and left. By dawn it

[131]

(impi) had surrounded the residence

[3] They were killed?

[SM] This. This. That one, this Magadla After Magadla's escape, he continued to the Sotho people

[3] Did he not stay in another place?

[SM] Yes, he does not stay. That is how I know it.

[3] The impi came back, then what?

[SM] The impi came, it came back

[3] It came alone, is there no child of the king which it comes back with?

[SM] It comes back with Somcuba's children

[5] Of Somcuba that is what we want

[SM] It is Shakata²³⁹ and others

²³⁶ (ku) tfwasa: to undergo the training process for being an inyanga

²³⁷ inyanga; Herbalist, ritual specialist, diviner

²³⁸ phengula: divine (by throwing bones)

²³⁹ Shakata: A person's name

- [5] It is Shakata and others
- [SM] Now, awu
- [5] What did Mswati say. King so and so, did he say they should come back with them?
- [SM] Yes
- [5] What happened when they came?
- [SM] When they came, they again stayed at endlunkhulu²⁴⁰ until they grew up in there, these children of the king, As they were then given Bhanganoma²⁴¹
- [5] Did they go with cows which were to be milked to get milk for the children
- [SM] In fact Bhanganoma refers to cows
- [2] Does this Bhanganoma refer to cows

- [SM] Yes (agreeing)
- [3] Do you get it, you of my family?
- [5] Continue babe as to what then happened, here in Somhlolo's (time)?
- [SM] We are now in Mswati
- [3] Where it says he was carried by a hide and he was eating (drinking) milk. We did not hear, that is, which child was taken (to be king) of which wife?
- [SM] That of Zidze's daughter was taken
- [3] of Zidze's daughter
- [SM] Yes

²⁴⁰ (e)ndlunkhulu: See glossary

²⁴¹ Bhanganoma: area north of Hlathikhulu

[3] Then she gave birth to Mswati

[SM] That is it (agreeing)

[3] We understand Nkhosi. Then you

[134]

continued with Mswati and the impi

[SM] Mswati went on (continued). As he

grew up while all these,

Somcuba, Tsekwane and

others already grown up.

[3] They were grown up people

[SM] They were grown up people

[5] Who sent out impi at first,

sending it there, before the king was

grown up, who is he?

[SM] Who sent it to where?

[3] There, at Hhulu²⁴²

[SM] At Hhulu?

[3] Yes, the first one, where were

the children of the king settled

there.

[135]

[SM] In fact at Hhulu it (impi) was

sent out by Mswati as he was

following Tehla²⁴³ who was not

found when they killed Somcuba

[3] Mabhedla had not died

[SM] Mabhedla was there in the Sotho people

[3] Did he find him?

[SM] He did not find him. Mabhedla ran away

[2] Mabhedla ran away and they could not find him

²⁴² Hhulu: Across the Mgwanya river, in the (north-eastern Transvaal, see Bonner, interview translated by John - Nkambule informant)

²⁴³ Tehla: A name of a person

[SM] They do not find him?

[3] Did not they find him?

[SM] Mabhedla. Awu I do not know that

[3] His children?

[SM] They stayed amongst the
Sotho people.

ⁱ [A mistake in the original transcript with the numbering of the footnotes. This footnote should be number 200 not 100]