

SBS Collection: Tape 10, A229
English Typescript: Bongani Mkhathshwa, notebook 5
Ndwandwa [Zwide History]

Typescribed by: Nokuthula Vilakati for FHYA

Date: 26 May 2023

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- Where the typescriber edits/amends the original text, the edited/amended text appears in grey.
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INTERVIEWED AT: SBS, Mbabane
DATE: N/D
[1] INFORMANT: Bongani Mnguni (BM)
[2] INTERVIEWER: Dumisa Dlamini (DD)

those of Ngwane, because those of Ngwane were
on the upper area; those of Ngwane are you,
this Somhlolo in fact. Enhhe we arrived
and found those of Ngwanaza. We arrived at
the place, down there, called eSibayeni
eSikhulu, I don't know whether they say iSibaya
eSikhulu, something like that. That is a dam there.
[D.D] I see, there are dams, down there,
yonder

[B.M] enhhe --- we then arrived there
at your place. When we arrived, we learnt
a lot of tricks from you there, to begin
learning certain things we did not know.
That is why I say God doesn't give a person
everything. When we arrived there, Shaka kept
quiet, he called his ibutho and said "Hey! let

there be great happiness, because we have defeated
the greatest enemy." He took us as a great
enemy, which had never ---

When we arrived there, Shaka kept quiet
and called his ibutho and said "Hey! Let there be great
happiness, because we have defeated the greatest
enemy." He took us as a great enemy,
which had never appeared to him before
in his life.

[D.D] Yes

[B.M] He said be thankful, but he said: "Are you
happy? They said "yes, we are happy." He
said "can you be happy?" --- and you hear a
person saying he [Shaka] later went to fetch
us; he fetched us back, were we his relatives?
We don't meet with [people] of Mageba, us This

history says he then said to them, What? You
say you enjoying life?" Because even the surname Zulu,

[D.D] Yes

[B.M] It was coined by him. They don't have a
surname before [Shaka], we don't find their surname,
even their history before [him], we don't get.

[D.D] Yes

[B.M] yes they just making it up, because once a person is in power, he makes up things. I, too, can make up for myself. Enhhe, he said: what are you saying? Are you saying you are enjoying life? How can you enjoy life, because whenever I am asleep, I see Soshangane's children are coming back and take the Zulu [country]? Verily, verily, fellow Soshangane. Without having gone to fetch Soshangane, without having

killed Soshangane, you must come with him here. We will really kill Soshangane; he will come and take

[D.D] e_ [um] let us get clear each other here. Will you please enlighten me, because we said when we started talking that we are searching

[B.M] enhhe

[D.D] When I come across history from my grand father; they told him that there is Shaka, despatching [an army] to Soshangane's country.

[B.M] Don't please!

[D.D] When he was later to be killed by Dingane

[B.M] Don't please! I was still explaining to you, Mlangeni, it is me who is explaining.

Now he says: "What are you saying? You are enjoying life? Your enjoying life is nothing. Follow Soshangane because he

will take the Zulu [impi] . Verily, verily indeed.

He sent all libuho which was present, everyone.

[D.D] even bantfabenkosi⁹⁵ indeed?

[B.M] Yes, so that they could go and fetch only

⁹⁵ bantfabenkosi singular umntfanenkosi: see glossary.

Soshangane. “Because, verily, whenever I am asleep, I see his children coming back to take Zululand.” He then despatched the libutho and it went. Yet ever having arrived, this history says, although sikhonyane⁹⁶ was present, but we were afraid of you the Thonga

[D.D] You, on arrival, skirted the Thonga [people]

[B.M] Oh yes! We skirted the Thonga [people] ye Dlamini. Hhawu, there is no sifanakalo⁹⁷. No no, because we learnt a lot from you, animals⁹⁸. Because even the tree of umdlebe⁹⁹ we learnt about it from you [people]

Wo, the Thonga [people] then told us. They said: “It is easy, it is easy: take the tree of umdlebe, like this, like this, it lumba’s. Then the Thonga, [well]. I won’t tell you that

[D.D] let us pass

[B.M] it belongs to the great house.

[D.D] let us pass

[B.M] It is not mine. Now ke they [the Thonga] then gave us and we took it; we were given by you, though. E [um] it lumba’d, saying “Wo, it is nothing [the Zulu attack] and poured isichitho¹⁰⁰ behind.

[D.D] Wo!

⁹⁶ sikhonyane: literally means “locusts.”

⁹⁷ sifanakalo: slang or the language used in the South African gold mines, where different ethnic groups are forced to use one common language by their single common interest working. This language is a compromise language made up of bits of Zulu.

⁹⁸ animals: in this context this word seems to be a slang word, expressing the idea that the people referred to are “big” or important. It is one of those words which don’t mean something special.

⁹⁹ umdlebe: species of poisonous tree of the Euphorbia family, *synadenium arborescens*, from the bark of which a powerful umbulelo charm is made. Natives believe that the smell of the flowers causes death.

¹⁰⁰ isichitho: a mixture of herbs and other secret ingredients known or to cause a home or people in a country, office, etc to desire to abandon whatever is being done, and to become unpatriotic, thus leading to the destruction of the home, office, country etc.

[B.M] [B.M. is laughing]

[D.D] Continue

[B.M] by the time the libutho leaves [Zululand]

pursuing us, they then rose against him [at home] and his libutho got finished; we finished, by the umdlebe tree. That is why and where Dingane is praised thus: “the cow said it was still nkona¹⁰¹, whereas they were to die of umdlebe at Soshangane’s [place]” Don’t you ask them ye-Dlamini

[D.D] there

[B.M] ___ you keep on being silent, you don’t ask

[D.D] there they had come there, when they were on the way to attack Soshangane there, where Soshangane had---, Soshangane had asked for asylum?

[B.M] No. Soshangane never asked for asylum.

[D.D] On arrival what did he do?

[B.M] Soshangane was just passing; so that he could ---

[D.D] When he arrived, he was just passing?

[B.M] Yes, we never asked for asylum from anybody.

[D.D] He never hlasela’d there, too?

[B.M] No, we never hlasela’d, we were just passing

We, on arrival, built a homestead; there, these are, down there.

[D.D] they are now down [there] ---

[B.M] yes, you see those of Ndwandwe there who seem as if ---, these ones, of Bhukwane.

I don’t know who begot Bhukwane, but those remained from us.

[D.D] They were quite present, when you are to

¹⁰¹ nkona:

go towards eLwandle, there they had built [home]

[B.M] yes

[D.D] there, they are the Nguni there?

[B.M] yes, yes, it is said that its kaNqaba, the name of the homestead. On arrival, he built

this umuti¹⁰²; it was his lidlangala.¹⁰³ We then passed on. Anyway we got a lot of tricks from your place. We really got some tricks from your place

[D.D] In short, you admit that there, there was no fighting?

[B.M] No! no! no! no! [no fighting]

[D.D] let us come back.

[B.M] We don't remember, we don't remember---

[D.D] Here the Mkhathjwa [people], who have--- the Nguni who are now here.

[B.M] Please stop Dlamini please stop Mlangeni don't cut a thing in the middle

[D.D] I am listening, Mnguni

[B.M] We descend now, we descend now.

When we descend, Mawewe, about who you have been talking [resulting in my

saying] I am of Mawewe of Soshangane myself

[D.D] yes.

[B.M] Myself I am of Mawewe of SoShangane.

This Mawewe of SoShangane was born in Zululand.

[D.D] e- (yes)

¹⁰² umuti variant umuzi: see glossary.

¹⁰³ lidlangala: a temporary structure intended to be a residential place, while (in some cases) a more permanent structure is being constructed.

[B.M] enhhe. He was born there, they came with him here; he was begot by SoShangane, it's SoShangane's child.

[D.D] e-(yes)

[B.M] enhhe. He descended, descended, descended when we arrived there, do you see this police-man- called Madolo.

[D.D] Madvolo ---- ?

[B.M] Madvolo, Madvolo, Madvolo; the police-man which is here, in your country.

[D.D] Here in KaNgwane, I see Madvolo.

[B.M] yes, the senior police

[D.D] I see him

[B.M] yes, top man. Yes Madolo, is majestic by the way.

[D.D] Does Madvolo belong to the royalty?

[B.M] Yes he is majestic [this] Madolo. You can't ask him, Madolo is, indeed, majestic

[D.D] I am listening.

[B.M] enhhe. When we arrived to Madolo [people] the Madolo came and paid tribute to us. Those who are many that side; they paid tribute to us, we never hlasela, any person.

[D.D] e [um]

[B.M] -----They themselves saw that it was legitimate for us to govern them it was legitimate that we governed them

[D.D] they are/were kings, too?

[B.M] yes, awu, they just kept quiet and said "no, we will be governed by you, governed by you, governed by you."

[D.D] e- (yes)

[B.M] We then continued; still hlaseling. We were
by now catching locusts, we were catching
locusts, ourselves, ye-Dlamini; we were catching locusts

[D.D] I know locusts

[B.M] e [yes], you see, locusts, you just sweep
into a sack. We were doing that, ourselves,
sweeping [the locusts] into a sack, sweeping
[it] into a sack. Having built umuzi there
at Magudu, at second Magudu; do you know
have you ever got there?

[D.D] yes

[B.M] there at our place, those of Gasa say Magudu

[D.D] I am now lost there

[B.M] Wo ---

[D.D] I am lost

[B.M] You go as if you are going to Ntshayi-
Ntshayi's place?

[D.D] hha ---, I am lost

[B.M] There is eMagudu II, there.

[D.D] Yes, I am lost, really.

[B.M] We there built [an umuti] here at Magudu.
That is when, cousin, you arrived, you nephew
you came to talk about money, to
Thandiye, Thandiye who was begot by
Zwide.

[D.D] Where was/is there, was it there yonder

[B.M] Down there, listen to me, there.

[D.D] Does it mean that the thing we are talking
about happened this side?

[B.M] We had, by then, moved there, Dlamini.

[D.D] Oh!

[B.M] Be a Ngwane [person] please.

[D.D] Oh, continue.

[B.M] that [a Ngwane] which, once shown a path, knows

[D.D] I am listening

[B.M] Now, on arriving there, we built an umuzi

which we named Magudu. There is nje

the second Magudu today, even

if you can go there

[D.D] yes

[B.M] Then this one arrived; they sent men, sent

by this one, Thandiye. "Awu, what do you

want now, you now want the ligula, [you]

boys of our place

[D.D] e_e_e_e_e (showing interest in what is said)

[B.M] let us thoroughly explain it, Dlamini, this

thing does not trouble, we are telling each other

[D.D] e [um] we now ----

[B.M] are we fighting, by the way?

[D.D] We now want ingula.

[B.M] You are asking for ligula; you buy it with cattle

we give you this ligula, we are, in fact

giving it to the nephew. This one, Mswati

says uncle to Mawewe; it's not his cousin,

people mix [it] up.

[D.D] e -- (yes)

[B.M] It's his uncle.

[D.D] By what reason?

[B.M] By the reason that Thandile was begot