

transcript							
15pp type							
re: CH I think you need to look at the original siswati, the translations is in good english but sometimes loses the subtleties of what is actually been said in siswati eg. [p5]							

Title: "when one lives with important people, they talk, and a young boy learns from them if he is wise."

Date: 18 March 1970

Interviewed at: Esikhotheniⁱ

Narrators: Simahla Msaneⁱⁱ

Interviewers:

Transcriber and translator: Mag Dlaminiⁱⁱⁱ

[p] Umntfwanenkhozi Ndlela^{iv} came from Zombodze^v. The king gave him land^a. The king was Ngwane. He came here at a time when there was no residence. He started building it. It was an empty land^b without people. That was the end.

You have not told us who that was?

This is how it went. Majula^{vi} fathered Madlazi^{vii}, his heir^c. Madlazi was the father of Phatwako^{viii}. Phatwako was the father of Ndlavela^{ix}. Ndlavela was the father of the present Mfomubi^x. That is the end.

[p2] How were they treated? When did they come here after they were sent home by the King?

No, there was nothing bad. They were still living in the same place here.

You say they came from Zombodze. But before they came here, did they belong to the king's kraal [sic]?

According to Swazi custom I said he was an *mntfwanenkosi*; that is, this Ndlela.

Tell us how and when the Swazis came here, because we are told that they came through eShiselweni^{xi}?

^aOriginal has: *imsikela lapha*, cut here.

^bOriginal has: *indawo*.

^cOriginal has: *inkosana*.

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Since I am very young, how can you expect me to know? I am told that one who came first to occupy this place was King Ngwane. This I am told: that it was Ngwane.

Where did he settle?

As you that this is Ngwaneland. [re: look at siswati - beacuse]

[p3] *Unknown question asked*

He lived at Zombodze, at eShiselweni, Lobamba^{xii} and Hhohho^{xiii}. These were the royal kraals [re: no locative indicator, only yenkosi] I know.

These old kraals of Hhohho, eShiselweni, Lobamba, Zombodze, where are they?

The kraal called Hhohho is there by that tree which appears.

Hhohho?

Yes, that tree which appears.

The green tree?

The green tree, that is the old place called Hhohho. Lobamba is over there where you see that tall grass. That tall grass where there is a small hill over there. This one, this one, a little further which has some trees is then place, called Lobamba where Sobhuza I was made King. [p4] [The old Lobamba was built here. it was again removed and rebuilt at koNtjingila^{xiv} above.](#)

Did Somhlolo leave this place and go to Ntjingila?

He left koNtjingila and went to Mkondo river^{xv}, eBuseleni^{xvi}. He left eBuseleni and went to Kemp's store^{xvii}.

Where we say old Lobamba is?

Yes, that was Sobhuza's old kraal^a [sic].

What is the name of the mountain that we see in front of us?

The name is eSikhaleni se Gundwana^{xviii}, and the big one, the white one eNdunjeni ye Gundwane^{xix}. This is Luhlongwane^{xx}, yes, it is Luhlongwane. When the *lusekwane*^b appeared at [p5] [Maqhatha^{xxi} near Ngovuma^{xxii} on the other side, the King when it appeared **. The king used to stand on top of these mountains to look at the boys carrying the *lusekwane*. \[re: do not see boys in siswati\] The boys used to come through the mountain passes.](#)

Incwala was celebrated here?

Yes, *incwala* was celebrated here.

Was that in Somhlolo's time?

^aOriginal has: kaSobhuzake omdala.

^b*lusekwane/tinsekwane* shrub-like species of the acacia (used at *incwala* ceremony to decorate sacred enclosure) (Rycroft, *Dict.*, p.87).

Yes it was in Somhlolo's time. Then he left to go to *koNtjingila*.

Where was it situated - at koNtjingila?

It was situated on the Mqongo mountain^{xxiii} as you look at Masoka^{xxiv}.

Did he build the same Lobamba?

Yes, it was still Lobamba. He built a kraal which was removed shortly and it went [p6] out. The fight was on with the Zulus^{xxv} and the Sothos^{xxvi}. He pushed the Sothos and the Zulus pushed him. He then settled on the Mkondo river. He left Mkondo and built a kraal which was shortly removed and went to Mr Kemp's store where you are^a. At the present old Lobamba.

Where at Mkhondvo was Lobamba situated?

This was Lobamba being built every time where the King was, because *incwala* was still *incwala* to be celebrated^{xxvii}.

Incwala was still celebrated at Lobamba?

Yes.

Where exactly was it situated at Mkhondo?

I do not know the exact spot. I hear that [p7] he built at Mkhondo. He left there and went to old Lobamba. He further went on to Hoho^{xxviii}.

Was Hhohho still this Hhohho here?

Yes, he rebuilt this same Hoho.

We have been told of Hhohho and Lobamba...

eShiselweni is on the other side of that mountain. Where it was burnt down by the Zulus, where there is a store.

At the store where all the Chiefs meet?

Yes, a little to this side of the chief's meeting place. This side. You see, when you are just passing the store, then you are close to the spot.

I once got to the spot and found the main hut still standing?

O, that is the chief's meeting place^b.

[p8] *Was that the chief's place?*

This is the chief's meeting place.

Is it where there are swamps?

^aie. the questioner.

^bie. not the exact spot but the chief's meeting place.

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No, that is very far: the place is this side^a. It is at the store. The old Zombodze is on the other side of those trees.

On the other side?

On the other side of those trees. On top of the mountain, but on the other side is all Zombodze. Royal residences are four.

Let me try to remember them: (1) This Hhohho, where there is a tree (2) Lobamba there (3) Shiselweni on the other side (4) Zombodze over there. Are these King's kraals?

Yes, they are Royal kraals.[re: siswati: Yebo yinkhosi- yes they are the kings]

[p9] *Where in these kraals did Somhlolo's father live?*

He lived at eShiselweni: remeber that the father of Somhlolo was Ndungunya.... He lived at eShiselweni.

Did he die at eShiselweni?

I do not know the exact place where Ngwane died. The *incwala* was celebrated at Zombodze. [re: note jump in logic]

So Ngwane lived at Zombodze?

Yes, he celebrated *incwala* there.

Was Ngwane father of Ndvungunye?

Yes, Ndungunye celebrated *incwala* at eShiselweni.

Who celebrated incwala at Hhohho?

No, at Hhohho there was no *incwala* that was celebrated because we only had two kings. These are here at eZikhotheni^{bxxiv}. [p10] *The two kings were Ngwane and Ndungunye. That was all here at Mbilaneni^{xxx}. Sobuza then died at Hhohho and was buried at eHlangeni^{xxxi}. Oh no, I mixed up. He died at Hhohho and decayed at eHlangeni. Then he was carried to Mashobeni^{xxxii}. Mswati also because Sobhuza was the father of Mswati. Mswati also died over there, and was carried to be buried here at eMashobeni. Mbandzeni died and was carried, and was stopped by the Boer soldiers. Then he was buried in the mountains of Mkondo.*

Did he not reach eMashobeni?

No, he did not reach Mashobeni. He was stopped by the Boer soldiers and the English. Apparentlyl he could not go through, this Mbandzeni. He was buried in one of the forests where there are caves.

[p11] *Is this known to all Swazis?*

Yes, it is very well known.

^aie. of the swamps: the swamps are near the chiefs' meeting place

^bie. they are buried at eZikhotheni.

We would like to know the spot, so that the place is preserved and does not get lost.

In this area even the rock of Ngwane^{xxxiii} where he played as a boy, it is well known. It is beyond, in the Union^{xxxiv}, it is over there where he played - on a hill with lots of boulders on it. He used to climb and play using rocks for cattle. This place is on the other side of Godlwako^{xxxv}. It is called the rock of Ngwane.

What did he play there?

He played with rocks that were meant to be cattle^b. He was a boy.

[\[p12\] What were these amagwadla?](#)

Amagwadla were stones meant to represent cattle. he herded these stones that were called *amagwadla*. This was Ngwane.

We are told that on the top of this mountains of Ngwane there is a bath that collected water?

Yes, there was water because this rock resembles a bath. Water collects there and he used to bathe in it. He also played there.

Who was the father of Ngwane?

Oh, I do not know his father. What I do know is that he was the first to occupy this part of the country.

Because we hear Dlamini^{xxxvi}, Dwabasilutfuli^{xxxvii}?

The are there, they are there these Dvwabasilutfuli, they are at Nyawo^{xxxviii}. [\[p13\] I know very well Dwabasilutfuli and Dlamini. they are at Nyawo. On the Lubombo^{xxxix}, as you hear the saying, "Nine nagedza Lubombo ngekehlehletela, Nine nagedze Lubombo ngekehlehletela."](#)^d This refers to [that place along the Lubombo.](#)

Were those Dlamini and Dvwabasilutfuli?

Yes.

Where were they buried?

Over there at the Lubombo at Nyawo.

Is this Nyawo place in Swaziland or on the other side of the border?

It is on the other side. These are the places at the border that we want.^{x1}

What are the other things and places that were left on the other side of the border?

We have burial places which are on the other side.

^aie. in the Republic.

^bStones that were used by young boys to represent cattle.

^c*amagwadla*:

^dYou who ran along the Lubombo. A saying used from one Dlamnini to another, even today.

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[p14] *Those remained?*

Those were royal graves that remained.

Do we have other burial places that were left in the Republic?

Oh yes, you pass through Nyawo country which is called Mhlabuyalingana^{xia} below the mountain as you see the Phongolo^{xii} where it meets the Usutu^{xiii}. There it is still called Ngwane of Mahlabatshi^{bxiv}. Even today we still say he is Ngwane of Mahlabatshi. All this refers to those sandy places.

What was the extend of their kingdom in the east - as far as Potuguese East Africa^{xv}?

There is a place where my knowledge ends, [p15] according to what I collect from the royal people and old men with head rings. You know what happens when one lives with important people. They talk, and a young boy learns from them if he is wise.

^ameans a flat country.

^bKing Ngwane is referred to as this - the word means flat, sandy soil: ie. Ngwane came from an area of this.

i. Esikhotheni:

ii. Simahla Msane:

iii. Mag Dlamini:

iv. iv. Ndlela: the son of Hlubi from whom the Ndlela people take their name. The informant John Gama lists Ndlela as a son of Hlubi and a brother of Dlamini who lost the chieftainship because of the automatic disqualification of having two younger brothers (*J.S.A.*, vol. 1, p.133)

v. Zombodze (variant Zambodze): has been the name of a number of Swazi royal residences at different times in history:

i) Zombode was the name of a very early royal residence in southern Swaziland of Ngwane — the exact location of which is still a matter of debate amongst historians.

ii) Zombodze was also the name of the capital of the late nineteenth-century Swazi king, Bhunu, located approximately 15km due east of present-day Lobamba.

In present-day Swaziland there are two sites of this name: iii) one lies east of present-day Lobamba in central Swaziland in the foothills of the Mdzimba mountains; iv) the other is located in southern Swaziland, about 10 km south-west of present-day Mhlosheni, and was traditionally governed by an Nsibandze *indvuna*.

vi. Majula Ndlela:

vii. Mandlazi Ndlela (Mandlazika):

viii. Phatwako Ndlela:

ix. Ndlavela Ndlela:

x. Mfomubi:

xi. Shiselweni: area in southern Swaziland extending south as far as the Phongolo river and eastward to the Lubombo mountains. Occupied by the early Swazi kings, Ngwane and Ndvungunye, and by Somhlolo in the earliest phase of his reign. Somhlolo had an early residence here, near Mhlosheni, [re: what is reference??], but according to Matsebula this was the name of a residence of Ndvungunye (*History* (new edition), p.7). Shiselweni is also the name of a present-day administrative district in Swaziland.

xii. Lobamba: there are a number of places known as Lobamba

- i) according to Grotper, Lobamba was the name of Ngwane II[re: check 'II' or 'III']'s first village' in south-eastern Swaziland (*Dictionary*, p.75);
- ii) according to Matsebula, Lobamba was the residence of LaMndzebele (the mother of Ndvungunye, wife of Ngwane III), where the *incwala* was performed during the latter's reign (*History* (old edition), pp.6-7);
- iii) according to Msila Shiba, Ndvungunye had a residence called Lobamba, located north-east of Mhlosheni, in southern Swaziland, just near a mountain called (Li)Hlobane (SWOHP, Hamilton series, 23-08-1983);
- iv) likewise, Somhlolo called his headquarters Lobamba, when he built it in about 1820 near the Mdzimba mountains. It is now sometimes referred to as Old Lobamba. According to Mandlenkosi Nxumalo, Lobamba was a residence of Somhlolo's (SWOHP, Bonner series, 23-04-1970). According to Maboya Fakudze, "old Lobamba" was built by Somhlolo at Nokwane [re: where is this??] (SWOHP, Bonner series, 23,31-05-1970);
- v) Lobamba is also the name of the residence of the Queen Mother during the reign of Sobhuza II, situated roughly midway between Mbabane and Manzini.
- According to Mbali Hlope, Lobamba was a *lilawu*, which "left" Zombodze, and "to go where Sobhuza was to be born, there at Sikhaleni *seGundwane*" (SWOHP, Hamilton series, 12-07-1983). [re: which Sobhuza??]

xiii.Hhohho: there are, and have been in the past, a number of places with this name: i) According to Matsebula, Hhohho in the southern parts of Swaziland, was the *lilawu* of Ngwane (*History* (new edition), p.11); ii) It was also the name of Somhlolo's administrative capital in southern Swaziland, near present day Mhlosheni; iii) Hhohho was also the name of Mswati's capital on the north bank of the Lomati river in northern Swaziland; iv) It is from this settlement of Mswati's, that the modern northern administrative district (Hhohho) derives its name (Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p.XIII); v) It is the name given to the area just north-east of Mhlosheni, presently inhabited by the Shiba people.

xiv.Ntjingila:
-Ntshingila (variant Ntjingila): the name refers to the Simelane chiefdom just south of present-day Hlathikhulu. Ntshingila was a Simelane chief who died c. 1919. He was the son of Bhozongo.

xv.Mkondo river (variant Mkhondvo - assegai): river and area around it, about 25km south of Manzini. The Mkhondo river flows into the Lusutfu river.

xvi.Buseleni: area about 15 km north of present-day Hlathikhulu, located in an arc of the Mkhondvo river.

xvii.Kemp's store: a trading store store that was/is situated at Mahlanya.

xviii.Sikhaleni se Gundwane: at the mouse's pass, ie. it is narrow.

-Gundwane (variant Gundwana): place in south west central Swaziland near the *luSutfu* river. [CH we need more here; RE isn't this the mouse-porch/passage ?](A1)

-Gundwana pass:(A2)

-According to Mbali Hlope, Lobamba was a *lilawu*, which "left" Zombodze, and "to go where Sobhuza was to be born, there at Sikhaleni *seGundwane*" (SWOHP, Hamilton series, 12-07-1983).

-Sikhaleni: probably short form for Sikhaleniseligundwana.(B7)

-Sikhaleniseligundwana: place located about 5km east of Mhlosheni in southern Swaziland.(B7)

xix.Ndunjeni ye Gudwane: at the mouse's hole.

xx.Luhlongwane:

xxi.Maqhatha: at this point in the interview, Simahla Msane suggests that Maqhatha is a place in southern Swaziland.

xxii.Ngovuma:

-iNgovuma:(B7)

-Ngovuma:(a82)

-*ngwa*Vuma river: rises north of present-day Nhlngano in the western part of southern Swaziland, and flows due east across much of southern Swaziland. It breaches the Lubombo mountains near Big Bend and enters Natal where it joins the Phongolo. It flows eastwards to the Indian Ocean, lending its name to much of the area between the Lubombo and the sea. The *ngwa*Vuma drains much of southern Swaziland. (B42)(A2)(F2)(f1)

-Ngwavuma: district in the far north-east of *kwa*Zulu, South Africa, just east of the Lubombo mountains.(C1)

xxiii.Mqongo mountain: at this point in the interview Simahla Msane suggests that Mqongo is a mountain in southern Swaziland.

xxiv.

"When you look towards the kraal named Masoka you can see this mountain."

xxv.Zulu: the major pressure on this area in the early years of Somhlolo's reign was from the Ndwandwe kingdom centered on Magudu. There appears to be a tendency for Swazi narrators to designate all powerful southern neighbours as 'Zulu'.

xxvi.Sothos (variants *be*Sutfu, Basotho, Basutu): generic term for the early inhabitants of Swaziland who did not originally speak *siSwati*.

xxvii.ie. Lobamba is the only place where *incwala* could be celebrated, so Lobamba had to be rebuilt every time.

xxviii.Hoho: there are, and have been in the past, a number of places with this name:

i) According to Matsebula, Hhohho in the southern parts of Swaziland, was the *lilawu* of Ngwane (*History* (new edition), p.11);

ii) It was also the name of Somhlolo's administrative capital in southern Swaziland, near present day Mhlosheni;

iii) Hhohho was also the name of Mswati's capital on the north bank of the Lomati river in northern Swaziland;

iv) It is from this settlement of Mswati's, that the modern northern administrative district (Hhohho) derives its name (Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p.XIII);

v) It is the name given to the area just north-east of Mhlosheni, presently inhabited by the Shiba people.

xxix.Zikhotheni: area just south-east of present-day Mhlosheni in the centre of southern Swaziland occupied by the Nxumalo chiefdom. LoMawa, the mother of Sobhuza II, came from this area. A section of the Ndwandwe people, the Nxumalo, presently have a chiefdom in this area.

xxx.Mbilaneni: there are two hills of this name, both of which are site of royal graves

i) about 8km south-east of modern Nhlngano in southern Swaziland (also known as the Nzama royal graves), and

ii) located 3km east of Mhlosheni in southern Swaziland (also known as the Mlokothwa royal graves).

xxxi.Hlangeni:

-Hlalani: about 12km south west of the present-day town of Hlathikhulu.(B9)

xxxii.Mashobeni:

-Maphumzane may refer to Maphumzane Ndluli, chief of the Mashobeni area around the Nzama royal graves in the far south of Swaziland) (A2,B7).

-Makhahleleka: a son of Fokoti and therefore possibly, a grandson of Somhlolo. He was the chief of the area between Mashobeni and Mahamba in southwestern Swaziland. [this man is also mentioned in interviews A1 and A2, check what they say] (A8)(A1)(A2)(B9)

-Maphumzane: present-day Mdluli chief of the Mashobeni area near the Nzame royal graves in the far south of Swaziland. (A2)

-Mashobane:(F10)

-Mashobeni: [place](A2)

-Mbilaveni: In an interview on the 17 August 1983, Simbimba Ndelela notes that Ndelela died at Ticokweni [\[p72\]](#), and was buried at [Mbilaveni](#). [Mashobeni \[p76\]](#).(A22)

-Mshengu: according to Velamuva Malinga, Mshengu Mdluli was the name of a chief sent by Mswati II to Mashobeni, to barricade Swaziland against Zulu attacks. Mshengu was also placed in charge of the Mabuza people, who were sent to Mashobeni for the same reasons (SWOHP, Bonner series, Velamuva Malinga, 29-05-1970). According to Simbimba Ndelela, Mshengu was a son of Ndela, and a grandson of Hlubi (SWOHP, Hamilton series, 27-07-1983). A recent historical figure with this name, is the brother and body-guard of Sobhuza II.(A8)(B9)(A22)

-Shoba: probably Mashobeni - the area around the Mbilaneni royal graves under the Mdluli chief. Mashobeni is also the name of an Mdluli area north west of Nhlangane.(D2)

xxxiii.rock of Ngwane (*etjeni laNgwane*, also known as *litshe lejuba*): lies about 35km outside the present day town of Pongolo, along the road to Piet Retief and just outside the Swaziland border. The rock of Ngwane is recognised as being of special sign to the Swazi kingship, and is a common feature in the oral traditions concerned with this period. Although located in South Africa it is cared for by a custodian appointed by the Swazi king.

xxxiv.Union: before the Republic of South Africa was declared in 1961 the territory was governed as a Union.

xxxv.Godlwako: a craggy mountain about 5km south of the Swazi border, approximately 29km outside of the present-day town of Pongola, along the road to Piet Retief; said to contain caves in which the Swazi king took refuge.

xxxvi.Dlamini: a putative ancestor of the Swazi royal house. In the Matsebula royal genealogy Dlamini and Hlubi are given as brothers. Although Hlubi was the eldest, Dlamini became the king (*A History of Swaziland* (new edition), chart opposite p.18). Matsebula lists Hlubi and Dlamini as the sons of Ludvonga, and gives Dlamini as the name of the rightful heir, as the one who gained the kingship. In yet another version of the royal genealogy (create cross reference testimony of Simbimba Ndelela) it is claimed that there were three brothers: Mamba, Hlubi and Dlamini. Hlubi, the rightful heir, was deprived of the kingship when his right-hand was deliberately burnt, and the royal line of Ngwane thus descended through Dlamini, the followers of Hlubi becoming the Ndelela people.

xxxvii.Dwabasilutfuli (Dwabasiluthuli): a very early name on the Ngwane kinglist (*J.S.A.*,

vol. 1, pp.134, 152, 362, 364, 365; Matsebula, *History*, p.5; Bryant, *Olden Times*, chart opposite p.314). According to Simbimba Ndlela, 'Dwabasiluthuli' was another name of Dlamini (SWOHP, Royal collection, no date). According to John Game, Luthuli and Saidwaba were different people, named as one as the result of succession through a co-wife (*J.S.A.*, vol. 1, p.134 & p.365).(A1)

xxxviii.Nyawo: the Nyawo chiefdom lies astride the Lubombo mountains between the Phongolo and Ngwavuma rivers, extending into both Swaziland and South Africa.

xxxix.Lubombo (locative *eLubonjeni*): mountain range forming the eastern border of Swaziland, and along which the early Ngwane people were supposed to have traversed before entering present-day Swaziland.

xl.[re: endnote here on Ngavuma border dispute]

xli.Mhlabuyalingana: flat country

xlii.Phongolo (*luPhongolo* river): this river rises in the Drakensberg mountains south and west of the present-day South African town of Piet Retief, and runs eastwards almost parallel to the southern border of Swaziland. It flows through the Lubombo mountains to join the *luSutfu* river in forming the Maputo river that enters the Indian Ocean in the Bay of Maputo.

xliii.Usuthu (*luSutfu* river): river that transverses central Swaziland, and joins the Phongolo river in forming the Maputo river that enters the Indian Ocean in the Bay of Maputo.

xliv.Mahlabatshi (variant Mahlabathini, Mhlabatsini): literally sandy place. Often used in oral traditions to refer to sandy places east of the Lubombo; a place south of the Ngome forest in Zululand.

xlv.Portuguese East Africa: Mosambique.