

DATE : 20.3.70

INFORMANT : MANDANDA MTHETHWA (INTERVIEW 2)

REGIMENT:

AREA : SIGODZI

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QUESTION A

When Somhlolo arrived at this place from Shiselweni which clans did he find around this area- and what did he do to them?

I do not quite remember, but I think that as the clans are still present today he did this ; He drove away the Sotho, only to Hululu, Mshadza; those who remained were the Maseko who were found here. The Maseko used to cremate their dead on the banks of the Mazimuseyana river. They used to carry the corpse to a place and cremate it in a big fire. After that the ~~ashes~~ ashes were put into water and washed away. As the corpse burnt they kept on saying, "There burns Maseko, there burns Tshubonye wahdlovu..." The second clan he found here were the Mnisi people; the third were the Magagula.

QUESTION B

How did the Mnisi rule?

I am not sure. What I know was their famous magic. For instance you would not dare walk behind their hut (i.e. the hut of magic) because you would suffer from strangetroubles. You could keep on pumping air out of your arms. Again I know of their magic which enables them to get into water with a burning cinder and come out with it still burning. As they used to do this at the Mantsholo king's pool. Of course they were inhabiting the foothills of Mdzimba mountains. Also the Gama were inhabiting this area, and the Nkambule were those who were found ahead.

QUESTION C

There are many Gama in the southern Transvaal. Did these leave the ones who are here?

I am not sure of that, for during my boyhood the Gama were around the banks of the Komati River.

QUESTION D

How were the Dlangeni Gama assigned to the task of guarding the place of the kings' burial at Dlangeni?

I don't know.

QUESTION E

Did the king trust them to guard the sacred place?

I cannot tell you, for all I know is that they guard the kings burial place of Dlangeni.

QUESTION F

Could you tell us some more of what you remember of Mswati's reign. As you know Mswati expanded his land which stretched as far as Bhalule River.

Yes, he had his land as far as the Vereenegeng River to the west, which joins the Mgwemja River, then the latter joins the Bhalule River. To the east it was as far as the Lutsatsawe.

QUESTION G

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QUESTION G

How did he manage to conquer the former clans who inhabited all that stretch of land? Surely they must have resisted.

He fought with his famous regiments; Nyatsi, Tilheme, Mjiva, Gibingwe.

QUESTION H

When Mswati established the village of Mbhuleni whom did he put there to look after the village?

To begin with I know of only women. The one queen who was there was LaMagadlela, but later Mgwenja was there. LaMagadlela was the wife of Somhlolo - in fact the villages of Mbhuleni and Mjindini, Ncakini, Mekemeke were Somhlolo's villages or homesteads

QUESTION I

After the death of LaMagadlela who was given to look after the village of Mbhuleni?

I'm not quite sure here. The prince was Mgwenya, the father of Mkolishi. At Mjindidni I remember Mhlola of Matsobeni the prince. At Mekemeke village stayed the queen, the mother of Monile, LaMagonogo who was once at Ndingeni, then moved to Mekemeke, because Monile her son was to look after the Mekemeke village - Mswati's village.

QUESTION J

After the death of Mswati who succeeded him and how?

It was Mbandzeni. Yes the first was Ludvongo, who died young, even before he reigned. Then Mbandzeni of Gundwini village was installed. The mother of Mbandzeni was the late LaNkambule Madvolomafisha. Immediately after Mbandzeni was installed bad remarks were heard, so much so that his kingship was indangera and they wanted to install someone else. They actually did it because there arose a conflict between him and the Queen mother, LaMgangeni, who fled with her army to Gobhobo, where she esconced with her army whilst Mbandzeni's army followed her. An incident here led to her capture. By night the army slept with her in that cave at Gobhobo, but before dawn the army had deserted her in the face of the enemy i.e. Mbandeni's impi. So the impi took the opportunity to capture her and went to kill her. The regiments who captured her were Ndlavele, Nohegu. She herself had NjeluMafazane, which also belonged to Ndlabeke; she also had Giva of Ndlavele regiment.

Let's come to LaMgangeni Khumalo - the one who was killed by Mbandzeni's regiment at Gobhobo. It looks as if she had come from Zululand. But she was not quite from Zululand - she came ~~for~~ from the ~~Mgwasixax~~ Mgcoyiza Khumalos who were at Zikhotheni, where they looked after the kings sacred mountain there. Together with Ngqwanjane, Mgcoyiza guarded the sacred place. But during the Zulu raids Ngqwanjane fled and deceived ~~the~~ the Ndwandwe of Zikhotheni, telling them that he would come back soon. But he did not. So the Ndwandwe had the honour of guarding the sacred place. It is said, before the Zulu raid i.e. after Ngqwanjane had fled - around the sacred place was seen a huge she elephant roaming there. Then a few days later the Zulu raid pounced upon them, but the Ndwandwe escaped the raid by hiding in the same sacred hill. Then later at his new residence Ngqwanjane was spotted by the king of the day, and he wanted to know why he was there, and whom did he leave at the sacred place, and how could he entrust his work to someone else. How much confidence did he have in the man: What if he exhumed the body of the kings. Ngqwanjane was greatly reprimanded and forced to return to the

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Zikhotheni sacred place for burying kings. So Ngqwanjane had to influence Mgcoyiza, who had also left the place, to return and build both ~~to~~ their homes there - which they did. So up to this day Ngqwanjane's offsprings guard the sacred place. Later Mgcoyiza migrated to eKwendzeni near Hlathikhulu, where his offspring live till this day.

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