

MINI KA NDHLOVU

6.4.1910

File 58, nbk. 18, pp. 9-12.

9 Mini Kanyile (chief: Josiah Batengi) lives near R.C. Samuelson's; he was brought to see Mr Shepstone.¹

10 I was of *Dingana's inNsewane regiment*. I became uDhlambedhlu of Mpande's.² The section I was with was *the vanguard*. Ndhlela was our regimental *induna*. He was wounded at Maqongqo, wounded in the right thigh - outside. He was hiding in a *bush* when stabbed. He was afterwards put to death by order of Dingana for favouring Mpande.³ I was a *carrier-boy* in this *battle*. I was born at the eGolokodo stream, which enters the Umhlatuze. I *crossed over with the Mdidi ka Ndhlela*.⁴

I know of *the mourning for Nandi*.⁵ Amongst other things, people used to *defecate into holes* so that their faeces could not be seen as, having eaten *amabele*, which were forbidden, they would be killed. Hence all faeces had to be covered up.

I was three or four years old when Tshaka died.⁶

The Kanyile are part of the Cunu people. Originally a beast was killed; the *rib-meat (insonyama)* was cut out, also a *leg*.⁷ Kanyile and Mcunu were called to pick, whereupon Kanyile took *the leg*, as he had a large number of people, whilst Mcunu took the *rib-meat*, having fewer people. In consequence of this, Mcunu became our great chief and Kanyile the lesser one.⁸

11 Kisi ka Mandondo ka Dube ka Mqumbela ka Denga ka Bulu ka Ramatshe are the Kanyile heads. Macingwana ka Jama ka Mcunu are the Cunu chiefs.⁹

Kisi died at the Mngeni near Baynes Drift.¹⁰ Mandondo died at the eGolokodo in Zululand. The Golokodo stream enters the Mhlatuze high up.

Mqanjelwa ka Sonomo ka Madilika ka Langa ka Bulu ka Ramatshe. This Mqanjelwa *took charge of orphans of the Kanyile people*, many having become orphans owing to the Balule *impi*.¹¹ Mpande killed Mqanjelwa, for Mpande *had been brought to power by the abanumzana*. Dingana had not killed men like Mqanjelwa.

I did not *kleza in the Zulu country*.

My father was Ndhlovu ka Dube ka Mqumbela etc. My father, being a man of Senzangakona's time, had *been circumcised*.

In Senzangakona's day, prisoners were made, and taken to the king. They were given food and well treated, and then *ransomed (hlengwa'd)* by their friends with cattle. People were not killed in warfare.

12 My father was a blacksmith. He made assegais - *imigeula, amawaba, izinhlendlama*.¹² The other blacksmith who *worked* with my father was

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Nama ka Ntshiza of the Matonsi people. My father lived at eMangeni.¹³ He died at the time of 'the breaking of the rope'.¹⁴

Bongoza, the one who decoyed the Boers, lived at Mahlaba's on the Mzinyati.¹⁵

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Also present: Mtshebwe, Ngingci

18 Mini continues. [See 10 pages back.] Mtshebwe and Ngingci (present).

A certain woman bore Kanyile and Mcunu. A beast was killed. The joints of meat were laid out, viz. legs and rib-meat. Kanyile, finding that he had a large following, decided to take the leg, having first choice. Upon doing this the old women shouted out, 'Kanyile has lost the chiefship; it has slipped from his grasp. It has now been taken by Mcunu!', for Mcunu got the rib-meat and became the great chief.

The mother of Kanyile also bore Mabuqa. Then Ngulunga of the Majola people, Mtiyana, and Lutango were born, also Mqanjelwa (praise: 'Langa who has no ears'), alias Shiyabantu. Mqanjelwa fathered Gaqangana, Zizwezibili and Mcuti.

19 We Kanyile people originally separated off at the eGolokodo, a stream that enters the Mhlatuze.

Pakade ka Macingwane was of the Wombe regiment.¹⁶

In ancient days people threw assegais at one another and did not fight hand-to-hand as Tshaka's warriors did. There was no stabbing one another. Prisoners were captured, and these, on being ransomed, were taken off to their homes.

Should one of our children cry incessantly, our practice is to cut a hole in its ear and pass through a piece of the *ubendhle* plant. Or a goat might be killed and a *carrying-skin* be made of its hide for the infant. Then strips of skin (*iminqwamba*) would also be cut out for it and tied about its neck.

Mtshebwe says: We Celes also observe the custom of *iminqwamba*.

Mini continues: The *caul* of a beast was twisted so as to be about two inches in diameter and put over both shoulders thus, back and front:



It was worn by chiefs as well as by the principal women. It would be worn for two or three weeks. The *cockroaches* would eat it by degrees. The custom of wearing this exists even today.

The Nhlangwini chief was Fodo ka Nombewu.¹⁷

22.6.1910

File 42, item 38, pp. 1-2.

1 Mini Kanyile (Adam) - from Miss Samuelson.¹⁸ There is *umVelinqangi*, *umKulunkulu*, who created people.¹⁹ That was

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what we were first told.

People used not to be stabbed, but simply captured and spared. Tshaka was the first to use the assegai.

Abstentions (okuzilwayo).

*The curds of the household.*²⁰

Porridge (umdokwe, umnyambazi) into which whey has been poured.

Meat of a beast's head, which is not eaten by youths, i.e. of an old beast.

Amadenselwana - meat mixed with the pancreas. Not eaten by boys, only by men.

Beast's lower lip - only by men.

Dewlap - eaten by men.

The white intestine - eaten by men only.

The spleen - some boys avoid it, others eat.

Adultery was not allowed; now common.

The king sat alone on one side of the hut, *the councillors* all on the other side; no *unmarried man* to enter.

Women may not enter *the cattle enclosure*.

Only *izinceku* entered *the king's hut*.

Shaving done whilst *public affairs* are being discussed. The king was not touched with the hand during this performance. The hair was dropped into a basket.

The *umlindaziko* - (a person does not sit) there; *his testicles will swell*.²¹ Nor will a girl sit there, only little boys. An older person, however, may sit if the hut is full, drinking beer; there is then no objection to sitting there.

No one enters a hut in which a child has been born until *it has been smeared with cowdung*. Then only may men enter. The woman who had the child then makes beer.

A *daughter-in-law*, i.e. who married *the son*, does not enter where *the father of the son* is until she is given *curds*; moreover she goes behind the hut; *she may not walk in the yard*. She does not enter *the cattle enclosure*. She does not on arrival eat meat; she must wait till she has a goat given her to kill, and then she is given *curds*, but these *curds* she does not eat. She takes out spoonfuls and gives to a child, and the rest is taken by old women. On this occasion her own *gourd* is started, and that is the first *curds* she eats, although what was just given by her to children etc. was what she had been given to eat. She is also given a beast whose milk she and her child will forever enjoy. This beast gives her *curds*.

When she sings *the marriage song (isimekezo)*, a child, boy or girl, is given her to carry on the back.²² This child is given and selected by her *mother-in-law*, and this is the child she afterwards gives the *curds* to. This child is one born at the husband's place, i.e. from her husband's hut, and will live in her hut and help her. If a boy, his earnings go to this hut, and if a girl, her *lobola* goes there.

'Intercede for me, he has spoilt me, the young wife,

Intercede for me, he has spoilt me, the wife of his father' (insult). She is with other girls, goes out by the main gate, and unless young men are on the lookout she will run off to her home where they can get her back only on paying a forfeit. Girls will catch a goat, and rip it open anyhow, take out *the stomach contents* and scatter them on the

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ground. If she succeeds in running to her home, a forfeit of a goat is paid for her.

2 Arrive the first day; slaughter a beast the second day; first sexual connection the third day.

She has first sexual connection with her husband after her people have left.

The *isimekezo* is a chant chanted by a group of girls.

Notes

- ¹Josiah Bathengi was chief of the *kholwa* living in the Umgeni and New Hanover divisions. R.C.A. Samuelson, one of the lawyers engaged to defend Dinuzulu kaCetshwayo in his trial for treason in 1908-9, and author of Long, Long Ago, lived in Pietermaritzburg. The Shepstone referred to was presumably Arthur Shepstone, Under-Secretary for Native Affairs in Natal, 1909-10.
- ²The uDlambedlu *ibutho* was formed c.1843 of youths born in the mid-1820s.
- ³Ndlela kaSompisi of the Ntuli people was one of Dingane's principal *izinduna*. He commanded the army that was defeated by Mpande's forces in January 1840 at the amaQongqo hills near present-day Magudu.
- ⁴After the death of Dingane, a number of his adherents took refuge in Natal, where, according to Bryant, Olden Times, p. 679, 'they were contemptuously referred to as the *um'didi kaNdlela* (Ndlela's rectum)'.⁵Nandi, the mother of Shaka, died in August 1827. For an account of the events that followed her death see Fynn, Diary, pp. 132 ff.
- ⁶Shaka was assassinated in September 1828.
- ⁷The meat covering a beast's ribs was highly prized and was the perquisite of the head of the homestead.
- ⁸Cf. the account in Stuart Archive, vol. 2, p. 84.
- ⁹Cf. the Chunu chiefly genealogies in Bryant, Olden Times, p. 263; Stuart Archive, vol. 2, pp. 83-4, 88; Fuze, The Black People, p. 15.
- ¹⁰Baynes Drift is on the Mgeni river some fifteen kilometres north-east of Pietermaritzburg.
- ¹¹The reference is to the expedition sent by Shaka in the latter part of 1828 to attack Soshangane, founder of the Gaza kingdom, near the Balule (Olifants) river in what is now southern Mozambique.
- ¹²Bryant, Dictionary, pp. 177, 635, gives *i-nGeula* (*ingcula*) as 'assegai having a very long shank and small blade...used for small game etc.', and *i-nTlendhla* (*inhlendla*) as 'barbed assegai'. On p. 691 he gives *iwaba* as 'black shield having a white mark at one or both sides'.
- ¹³Another of Stuart's informants, Jantshi kaNongila, identifies Mangeni (emaNgeni) as the *umuzi* of the mother of Shaka's father, Senzangakhona kaJama. See Stuart Archive, vol. 1, pp. 178-9.
- ¹⁴'...ngoku dabuka kwe goda' in the original, a phrase used to refer to Mpande's secession from the Zulu kingdom in 1839.
- ¹⁵Bhongoza kaMefu of the Ngongoma people won fame in the Zulu kingdom for leading a party of Boers into an ambush during the Boer invasion of the Zulu kingdom in December 1838.
- ¹⁶Phakade, son of the Chunu chief Macingwane, lived for a time in the Zulu kingdom after his father's chiefdom had been broken up by Shaka. He later became chief of a section of Chunu living in the colony of

Natal.

- ¹⁷Fodo kaNombewu was chief of a section of the Hlangwini in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. He was deposed by the Natal colonial authorities in 1847.
- ¹⁸Possibly Levine Henrietta Samuelson, who taught in African schools in Natal from 1873 to 1917 (R.C.A. Samuelson, Long, Long Ago, opp. p. 48).
- ¹⁹Mvelingqangi and Nkulunkulu were names for the supreme deity.
- ²⁰On Zulu taboos and abstentions associated with milk see Krige, Social System, p. 383; Raum, Social Function of Avoidances and Taboos, pp. 336-77.
- ²¹Bryant, Dictionary, p. 357, gives *umlindaziko* as 'That part of the Native hearth immediately behind the first pillar opposite the doorway'.
- ²²Doke and Vilakazi, Dictionary, p. 497, give *isimekezo* as 'Song sung by women of the bridal party on demanding the *umeke* beast, and during the ceremony prior to the marriage consummation'.