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The Politics of Placing Princes in Historical and Contemporary Swaziland

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This research report is an exercise which seeks to understand centre-regional disputes, which are now nearly two centuries old, between the Swazi royal house, and the subordinate chiefdoms of the Magagula, Tfwala, Mabuza, all located in central Swaziland, and the Fakudze of Macetjeni in the Lubombo region. It seeks to investigate what has become an increasingly critical and controversial issue in Swazi society and Swazi politics: the relationship between princes and chiefs. It will also highlight the central importance of history, or at least historical assertion, in the assumption of political power in earlier and contemporary Swaziland.

These issues have attracted some attention from scholars but not nearly as much as they deserve. Centre-regional relations between kings and subordinate chiefs are on the whole neglected in Swazi historiography. This thesis seeks to correct this anomaly by exploring local, regional, and national dynamics which strained the relationship between centre and region, and to show how the former has grappled with the problem of recalcitrant chiefs in a bid to retain its power position through suppression of the latter who have constantly sought to reclaim lost autonomy.

The present history of Swaziland is one that glorifies the Dlamini dynasty and projects a one-sided picture of historical events in Swaziland. For instance, it is contended that Swaziland is a homogenous, democratic and peaceful country. This thesis seeks to show that such a claim is part of a hegemonic ideology which was fashioned by Sobhuza 11 (1921-1982) and his loyal elites in order to assert Dlamini authority over recalcitrant chiefs. This masks the realities of the relationship between centre and region in the

struggle for power. There is therefore a need to correct this misconception by examining the role which has been played by subordinate chiefdoms in shaping the history of Swaziland.

The major shortfall with existing literature on Swaziland is that it has been written from the perspective of the ruling Dlamini clan and thus ignores the power struggles that have characterised Swazi politics from the time of the establishment of the Swazi state. This study seeks to show that the Swazi state has been created out of a mixture of different ethnic groups, which were colonized by the Dlamini during and after the *mfecane* era. It contends that there has always been a threat of the Swazi nation splitting along such ethnic lines and that the Dlamini rulers have constantly struggled to retain their position through placing princes and arranging marriages through sending out princesses to subordinate non-Dlamini chiefs so that their nephews would seize the chieftaincy upon the demise of the incumbent. This was in line with nguni culture as a princess automatically became chief wife of the incumbent non-Dlamini chief and thus mothered the heir to take over after the demise of the incumbent chief. This had the net effect of bringing the nephew closer to the Dlamini royal house ensuring that the heir took orders from the king. The specific issue that this study investigates therefore is the politics of placing in historical and contemporary Swaziland. Placing in this context has two dimensions or purposes: the removal of princes from the royal family through the tradition of *Kuphakela* (dishing out) to exercise their chiefly powers in distant areas so that they do not disturb the newly appointed king. This also served the purpose of ensuring that the non-Dlamini chiefdoms were brought under surveillance as both the princes and princesses provided the king with important information regarding the activities of the outlying chiefdoms. This study then, seeks to understand the regional and

national dynamics, which have led into tensions between centre and region. It focuses on forces like British colonialism, labour migration, missionary activity, and the South African industrial revolution so as to see how they have impacted upon chiefdoms on central Swaziland. Addressing these issues enables the study to be placed within a broader regional context, as the same forces affected other countries in southern Africa. This however, does not imply that there were no differences in terms of the character and severity of disruptions caused by colonial forces amongst African countries. For instance, Hugh Macmillan and Brian Marwick argue that colonialism in Swaziland had contradictory effects on the Dlamini and chiefly power.[1] On the one hand colonialism, through its use of the Paramount chief and the chiefs, reinforced their powers, yet on the other hand, through land alienation and by stripping away their judicial powers, it simultaneously weakened them. In short therefore, attention will be focused on how colonialism transformed Swazi society and how a number of different sections of the Swazi kingdom in the process of colonization struggled to retain their autonomy.

This thesis will attempt to give substance to the argument first propounded by Hugh Macmillan that Sobhuza II actively reconstructed tradition with a view to consolidating royal power and warding off western democratic practices, which he argued were not in accordance with Swazi way of life.[2] This also entailed the usage of patronising language like, 'Swazis are loyal, love peace and their king, and that the king will deny any Swazi who is unruly before God.[3]

The recent upheavals in the Macetjeni and KaMkhweli chieftaincies will be used as evidence for the existence of a bitter power struggle between centre and regions. These two subordinate chiefdoms have openly rebelled against the Swazi traditional authorities who have imposed a senior prince, Maguga Dlamini, as new chief of the two areas. This has been a highly embarrassing encounter for the authorities, who have been forced to

resort to the naked use of force and to erect two camps comprised of the police and the army in the areas to deal with the recalcitrant chiefs. The authorities have also been criticized by certain sections of the Swazi society for corruption and nepotism.

The two-hundred-year timespan of this study is necessary and defensible as the oral traditions, which are the principal source of this study, are dense only at the beginning and end of this period and each constantly refers to the other. The Magagula of Moyeni, Tfwala in Maliyaduma, and the Mabuza in Mafutseni have been selected as principal case studies. Each one is different, as the Magagula were a pre-existing Sotho chiefdom subordinated by the Dlamini during the early years of the nineteeth century, while the Tfwala accompanied the Dlamini into Swaziland, and the Mabuza are an offshoot of the royal house. Each however, has suffered from placing, and a rich tradition exists documenting the subsequent struggles. This dissertation also uses the histories of these areas to reflect on the current strained relationships between Mswati III and the KaMkhweli and Macetjeni chiefdoms. Further, these areas have been selected because there has been no research conducted on this topic in these areas.

It is hoped that this study will also contribute in understanding how new forces have come to the fore demanding that the country be democratized as it is the only one one remaining under absolute monarchy in Southern Africa. This has forced Swazi traditional authority to institute consultative (‘Vusela’) exercises with the view of soliciting views from the general public on how this can best be done. This is a constructive move by the king which follows on the footsteps of his father who emphasized the idea that a king is a king by the people. By so saying, Sobhuza II was trying to state the importance of building a united Swazi kingdom. The net effect of this exercise will supposedly give a

chance to chiefdoms that are currently not happy with the treatment that they receive from the system to air their views so as to come up with a constitution that is representative of all sections of Swazi society.

Literature review

Current information on the relationship between the centre and region in Swazi history is scanty. This is because existing historical texts have been written mainly from the perspective of the ruling Dlamini clan. Hilda Kuper[4] for instance, offers a good anthropological history of Swaziland. This has produced the largest body of information on the functioning of the Swazi politics but contains no systematic exposition of the evolution of centre regional relations and still less of their interaction with pressures from outside.[5] Kuper's perspective has been criticized by the developing school of Swazi historiography for unduly emphasizing unity, continuity, and tradition in Swazi society. Vail and White contend that as far back as the 1930s Hilda Kuper had been infused with an extreme sense of respect for the royal house, which she accepted as extending back thirty generations.[6] Kuper, it would appear, mistook the respect Sobhuza II commanded within the royal kraal, where she did most of her research, as representative of the attitude throughout the country. In addition, a selected team of traditional scholars who were loyal to Sobhuza were appointed to work hand in hand with Kuper, which gave Sobhuza the opportunity to manipulate her into glorifying his reign. Finally, she admits that Sobhuza requested her not to publish certain information which was sensitive.[7]

JSM Matsebula's *History of Swaziland*[8] also does not pretend to offer detachment, which is scarcely surprising as Matsebula served as Sobhuza's secretary from 1967. It lacks any analytical depth. Bonner describes Matsebula's historical account as more of a survey

than a detailed analysis.[9] Sobhuza is also said to have realized the need to exercise personal control over academic research. Thus, before Matsebula's book could be published it was given to Sobhuza to scrutinize and make comments. The accounts of both Kuper and Matsebula project Swazi society as united, peaceful and democratic.

To suggest that Swazi history has been free from internal ethnic prejudices, is however fundamentally misleading since it ignores internal tensions which have always existed from the time the Swazi state came into being.[10] Scholars like Richard Levin and Hugh Macmillan insist that the historical image of unity, continuity and tradition in fact constituted a powerful ideological tool, which forms part of a larger conservative nationalist ideology largely attributed to Sobhuza II.[11] Rose likewise maintains that "to prevent unfavourable interpretations by critics, Swazi rulers effectively used harmony ideologies in public rhetoric to disguise the disruptiveness of land disputes for individuals and groups and to promote an image of unity."[12]

One of the issues most neglected in the literature is the placing of princes and the tensions that this caused. Huw Jones in his *Bibliographical Register of Swaziland*[13] is an exception who provides important information on the placing and building of royal villages and diplomatic marriages by Sobhuza 1, Mswati, Mbandzeni, and Bhunu all over the conquered areas. However, like the other scholars, he fails to give a detailed account of the reactions and resistance of the non-Dlamini chiefdoms upon which the princes were imposed for purposes of surveillance, and of the policy of silencing princes by removing them from next to the capital to exercise their powers in distant areas. More especially, nothing is said about the chiefs who were reduced to the level of *Indvuna* for the princes.

Philip Bonner[14] provides the fullest account of nineteenth century Swaziland. He acknowledges that there are different chiefdoms in Swaziland and argues that these need serious attention. He contends that each of the groups that were absorbed into the Swazi kingdom carried with it the historical memory of its incorporation and of the changes of status that these subsequently underwent.[15] While he explores some of these issues, he himself acknowledges that limitations of time and the magnitude of the task precluded in-depth-study across time and space. This observation applies to central Swazi chiefdoms which are the object of this study. Bonner is the only scholar who examines the relationship of the Magagula to the Swazi monarchy but does not fully engage with the politics of placing. The same is even truer of other central Swazi chiefdoms.

Jonathan Crush, in his book *The Struggle for Swazi Labour* does refer to tensions between the Dlamini ruling clan and regional chiefs during the South African industrial revolution but does not go into any detail apart from mentioning some of the causes. For instance, he maintains that the demands made by Labotsibeni for taxing the Swazi for the purposes of purchasing land taken away from the Swazi during the reign of Mbandzeni by concession hunters strained the relationship between the centre and region as the latter accused the former of misuse of the fund.[16] In general therefore it can be concluded that there have been only limited attempts by these scholars of early Swazi history to expose the views or feelings of the conquered groups.

The aim of the study therefore is to explore relationships and tensions between the central Dlamini and the regional chiefs. This dissertation will argue that though the Dlamini managed to attain a certain degree of integration of the conquered groups through the system of placing, marriage and the regimental system, tensions have always existed and

this has forced the Dlamini clan to suppress and keep a vigilant eye on recalcitrant non-Dlamini chiefs.

Methodology and oral sources

The research focuses on central Swaziland. I have found a narrow regional focus useful because it facilitates in-depth research. Relying on both archival and oral material, it will be possible to use a solid and broad base of evidence for the construction of the histories of the abovenamed clans. I have combined oral information with archival sources located in the Swaziland National Archives where possible, and also used secondary material. Focusing on a narrow area also allowed me to have a more nuanced and detailed sense of socio-political developments, which would not be the case in a broader study.

This study has adopted an approach grounded in social history, especially in its use of oral evidence. This will enable this study to unveil the views and histories of the people involved in the research and in that way bring to light the hidden past of this section of the Swazi society. According to Tosh, 'Oral history allows the voice of ordinary people to be heard alongside the careful marshalling of social facts in the written record".[17] Working in a limited area has allowed me to interview in a more representative way, and thus increase the quality of gathered information.

This however, does not mean that oral evidence is unproblematic as it has the potential of being fallible, biased, and selective. J. Vansina argues that "Selectivity implies discarding certain information one has about the past and from that pool of information keeping only what is still significant in the present."[18] Further, it is also impossible to exhaust the entire memory of a single informant. This means that the researcher, though acting as a

guide, should also be careful not to impose himself too much on the informant as this may make the informant less free. This also has serious implications in the sense that, if such is allowed to happen, the voice of the informant is lost and we can only hear that of the researcher or social historian. La Hausse warns against this insensitivity and emphasizes the value of oral interviews. He writes; "Oral history gives the ordinary people the opportunity to make representations of their own lives and it retrieves the frequently hidden history of the largely illiterate underclasses in the society."[19]

Delius shares the same sentiments in his book, *A lion Amongst the Cattle*.[20] What this means is that there should be a mutual understanding between the researcher and his informant as oral interviews are often a battle between what the interviewer wants to know and what the interviewee wants to tell. This is evident from the interviews already conducted by this research report between the Magagula and the Ndwandwe, where each party tended to take defensive positions with regards to the current turmoil involving the two chiefdoms. For instance, the Ndwandwe, take a defensive stand and use the past to justify their present claim to chiefship in the Madlangempisi and Nkambeni areas. This means that the researcher has to be very careful, as some informants may be shy to criticize their chief. They may also hold back crucial information or present a fabricated story. This may lead an unwary researcher astray and to make wrong conclusions. This problem can only be countered by conducting a wide range of interviews, taking into account the informants' status, age, gender and political allegiances. Informants may also try to tell the researcher what they think is fit for him/her to hear. In view of the above then, it is naive to suppose that oral testimony represents a pure distillation of past experiences.

Another major limitation in oral history is language, especially if the researcher is not conversant with the culture and language of the people he/she intends to interview. In such a case, the process of transcribing may yield inaccuracies of the recorded interviews. Bozzoli has shown in *Women of Phokeng*, the importance of having an interviewer who is conversant with the informants' culture and language. Bozzoli argues that if the researcher and the informant share common ground much emerges from the interview as the researcher is then in a position to understand the maxims, figures of speech and idioms commonly used by elderly resource persons.[21] This is where I enjoy an advantage of being a Swazi, fluent in both English and Siswati. I also enjoy the advantage of writing from the inside, being born in central Swaziland.

La Hausse also contends that another common mistake researchers commit is that when conducting oral interviews they never indicate when a sensitive issue is being discussed with an informant. Such conditions should be made known for purposes of making proper and informed assessments of the interviews.[22]

Hofmeyr has offered a broad study into the critical use of oral information. She analyses the structure of memory and its relation to social process, narrative forms, and conventions issues of representation, and the role of the unconscious in oral history.[23] The researcher needs to understand these issues to be in a position to use oral information carefully and critically.

In conducting the interviews, I used a tape recorder, which allowed me to revisit recorded information whenever the need arose. It has also been advantageous in the sense that one can capture the tone of voice, hesitation, which at times offers clues for purposes of

analysis and making informed conclusions. It is also true that the spoken word can very easily be mutilated when it is taken down in writing and transferred to the printed page. Some distortion is bound to take place, whatever the intentions of the writer. The tape recorder will therefore guard against this shortfall and create a living document.

Chapter 2

The Constitution, Dissolution, and Reconstitution of Central Control over the Subordinate Chiefdoms (1815-1982)

(a) Sobhuza I and Mswati II build the Swazi Nation (1815-1865)

This section of this research report seeks to explain the role played by Sobhuza I and Mswati II in building the Swazi nation. It explores the integration of the *Emakhandzambili* and *Emafikamuva* into the Swazi nation during the time of Sobhuza I and Mswati II. It also examines how the Dlamini royal clan, through the system of placing and marriage, used princes and princesses to keep conquered and recalcitrant chiefdoms under surveillance. The gist of the argument here is that the Swazi kingdom came into being after the conquest of various Nguni, Sotho and Tsonga groups, following which Sobhuza I and Mswati II sought to assert Dlamini authority through the use of tradition and custom, and to hold together the Swazi state in the face of forces that threatened to split it. This chapter relies heavily on the accounts in Bonner's *Kings Commoners and Concessionaires* and Matsebula's *History of Swaziland*. These scholars have provided a detailed account of the nineteenth-century history of Swaziland. It is important to first understand how the Swazi state came into being as this will be helpful in grasping the power struggles involving the Magagula, Tfwala, Mabuza, and the Fakudze with the ruling Dlamini clan.

Sobhuza 1 started the process of building the Swazi nation which was later consolidated by his son, Mswati II in the 1860s. By nation I mean the number of ethnic groups paying their allegiance to a central authority. The early Swazi state was situated in the Shiselweni area of modern Swaziland. Sobhuza I could not stay in the Shiselweni area for

long because of harassment by Zwide, the leader of the Ndwandwe. Zwide, was at that point in the process of forging a new Ndwandwe state, an exercise prompted in the first instance by competition for scarce ecological resources and by drought. It was Zwide who first attacked Sobhuza I, forcing him to wander to the north where upon he led a life of a rootless refugee.[1] From Shiselweni he moved to Ephungalegazi next to Hlatikhulu, to Buseleni south of the Mkhondo River, then to Ncabaneni an area of the Maseko, then to Ezulwini Valley where he later built his capitals, and finally to the Dlomodlomo mountains where he sought protection from a Sotho chief by the name of Magoboyi some way further north-west. During his flight to the north, Sobhuza noticed the cave sanctuaries used by the Maseko of Encabaneni and the Magagula around the Mdzimba Mountain. After the collapse of the Ndwandwe state due to its defeat by Shaka in 1819, Sobhuza returned firstly to Shiselweni and then moved into central Swaziland where he began the process of attacking smaller scattered weaker clans and incorporating these into the Swazi kingdom.[2] In these early years, the Swazi people came to be grouped into three main categories. First were the *Bemdzabuko* who are known as the "pure" Swazi. These included amongst others the Thwala, Fakudze, Mhlanga, Hlophe, Matsebula and Mkhabela. These came with the Dlamini from the south. Second were the *Emakhandzambili* (those found ahead), who are mainly of Sotho and Tsonga stock. These included the Gama, Magagula, Maziya, Maseko and Mnisi. Last were the *Emafikamuva* (those who came late or as lieges) who include the Nhlengethwa, Mathunjwa, Mtsetfwa, Dladla, Mngometfulu, Mabaso, Tsela, and Masuku. These were mainly refugees seeking political protection.[3] Such a layered organization of the Swazi was problematic as it held the potential of splitting the nation along such seams. It was in this climate of insecurity that the new Swazi state was born.

Beside the protection the area in central Swaziland gave to Sobhuza, it was also blessed with an abundance of water and fertile alluvial soils. Nguni, Tsonga and Sotho occupied the area around central Swaziland. Most powerful were the Sotho, and in particular the Magagula. Over a lengthy period (4-5 generations) these had split into a number of independent branches, spreading from the Mdzimba Mountain as far the Sabie in the north. At this stage Sobhuza was relatively weak. As a result he employed precautionary measures in dealing with the more powerful chiefdoms he encountered, especially the Maseko of Mgazi waCece and the Magagula of Mnjoli. Thus Sobhuza I chose to marry his daughter *Lambombotsi* to Mgazi with the hope that she would give birth to Mgazi's heir, as it was customary that as a royal girl, she would automatically become Mgazi's chief wife. This heir would then be Sobhuza's nephew and someone whom it would be easy to manipulate. However things did not go as Sobhuza I had planned. Mgazi instead made a Ndzimandze girl his chief wife instead of Lambombotsi, an act which angered both Lambombotsi and Sobhuza and which finally culminated in Sobhuza inviting the Maseko for a hunting party where, upon a given signal, the Maseko warriors were decimated. Mgazi himself tried to escape but was caught and killed by the Swazi. Even though the power of the Maseko had been broken, Sobhuza allowed them considerable autonomy.[4] The Magagula of Mnjoli suffered immediate conquest, and are dealt with more fully in chapter four.

Placing for Surveillance or Silencing brothers?

Sobhuza, Mswati, and Mbandzeni are monarchs associated with the system of placing and diplomatic marriages. Sobhuza began the process of building the Swazi nation through the conquest and incorporation of smaller clans of Nguni, Sotho and Tsonga

origin. For purposes of ensuring loyalty Sobhuza and Mswati needed to place newly conquered groups under regular surveillance. This was crucial particularly during the time of Sobhuza who was troubled by a number of groups running away from Shaka and passing through his kingdom. Bonner believes that this never allowed Sobhuza peace of mind as there was a possibility of the fleeing groups teaming up against him with disgruntled factions within his own domain.[5] These early Swazi kings therefore placed their brothers in charge over newly conquered non-Dlamini chiefdoms. Royal villages were also built at strategic places around the country for the same purpose. This was known as *liphakelo* (dishing out) meaning that the wives of the king would be allocated an area and automatically the heir became the new chief of the area. Marriage was also used by the Swazi kings to cement diplomatic relations with leaders who proved to be a threat to the Swazi state. For example, Sobhuza gave his daughters to Mgazi, Zwide, and Shaka in an attempt to establish cordial relations with these leaders, which would be to the benefit of the Swazi nation.[6]

Apart from placing the kings' brothers as overseers of newly conquered areas this practice seems to have also helped in silencing the king's brothers who also contend for the throne. This was done to please them and to shift their attention from competing with the nominated heir to the throne. This occurred especially when a minor was nominated yet was surrounded by senior brothers who were qualified and ready to reign. For example, when Mswati II was appointed king, Booth contends that his selection was a circumnstance that begged for trouble, considering the handful of elder brothers who viewed their own legitimacy in a different light.[7] The first to challenge Mswati's selection was prince Fokoti who colluded with non-Dlamini chiefs in the south of the country and launched his revolt. Mswati managed to quash this revolt as it was, according

to Bonner "a half-baked affair''as no support came from the royal capitals at Ezulwini, and that on the eve of the battle many southerners slipped away. Consequently when the two rival armies lined up against each other, Fokoti found hiself decisively outnumbered, and his forces were decimated on the slopes of the Mahamba hill.[8] The next prince to rebel against the king was Malambule in 1845 centred around Lavumisa in the southwest. This was very serious for the young king as Malambule managed to solicit the support of outsiders namely, Wesleyan missionary Rev. James Allison, and king Mpande of the Zulu. Mswati again managed to overrun Malambule's forces and had him executed. The third to rebel against Mswati was Somcuba who was entrusted with the care of special cattle belonging to the king known as *Ludlambedlu,* used during the *incwala* ceremony. When ordered to surrender the cattle to the king, he refused. This left Mswati with no alternative but to attack Somcuba whom he managed to defeat in 1855, thus ending the last serious threat to his reign.

The above help to explain why Swazi kings saw it imperative to adopt defense mechanisms of placing princes and establishing royal villages in the countryside.

Jones has compiled a list of the Dlamini princes, kings' wives, and princesses who were given areas through the system of *phakela.*[9] William Dlamini, a grandson of Njebovu who was a brother to Mswati II, asserts that after the defeat of Sotho groups, for example, the Magagula, Mnisi, Mncina, and Gama, princes were used to control them to prevent them from regrouping and attacking the Dlamini. He further asserts that Mswati II, for purposes of monitoring the Magagula placed Maloyi at Ekutsimleni and Madzanga Ndwandwe at Bulandzeni, the latter being one of Zwides' sons.[10]

Bonner provides a detaild analysis of the events that unfolded during the reign of Mswati, more especially the period when the Swazi lived under constant attack from the Zulu. He contends that these were years of unrelieved disaster for Mswati as a large number of Swazis fled to neighbouring states when he was under constant menace from the Zulu, Portuguese, and the Shangane allowing the secession of some of the *Emakhandzambili* who exploited the opportunity to reclaim their lost autonomy.[11] The political scenario prevalent at the time necessited that Mswati be very tactical as there was the probability of some chiefdoms allying themselves with enemies abroad. After the Zulu army had left, Mswati took the opportunity to deal with his recalcitrant *Emakhandzambili* and tightening his grip over them by attacking and accelerating the process of placing princes and establishing royal palaces throghout the kingdom. Bonner argues that out of nineteen chiefdoms of the *Emakhandzambili,* fourteen were attacked by Mswati. These included the Mnisi, Tsabedze, Gamedze, Mngometfulo, Sifundza, Masilela, Dladla, Ngwenya and Mavimbela.[12] He affirms that royal wives and their attendant princelings were given charge over chiefdoms in the provinces. He also mentions the fact that royal functionaries like Mhlaba Motsa, Mtshengu Mdluli and Sandlane Zwane were placed in control of previously autonomous chiefdoms.[13]

This period also saw Mswati reviving the regimental system which ensured the assimilation of captured young men into the mainstream of the Swazi army and the non tolerance of rituals of rival groups. This included the stopping of rain-making rituals by some of the conquered groups which sought to ensure that Mswati was the only king allowed to perfom these rituals. This was a very important political tool. The Swazi army was also kept very busy subduing chiefdoms that showed signs of affluence.[14]

According to William Dlamini, Prince Nyamayenja was charged with looking after the Mncina and Mnisi at Nkomazi up to Bulembu, an area now called Maphalaleni. William adds that these princes were also placed in these areas to remove them from the royal palace as these might threaten Mswati II by fighting for the kingship as well. Malunge was likewise given the area of Nyakeni which was previously under the control of the Tfwala and the Magagula clans.[15] More placing seem to have been done during the reigns of Sobhuza I and more especially Mswati II than was done later. There is, for example, no record of placing in the brief reign of Bhunu. This is probably because he was troubled by the relationship between the British and the Boers who had conflicting interests over his country. Details of such placings are to be found in later chapters of this research report.

(a) Mbandzeni and Concessions

This section seeks to show how the work done by Sobhuza 1, and more especially Mswati II in consolidating the Swazi monarchy, began to unravel in subsequent reigns (1865-1921) producing tension between centre and region as more chiefs gained greater autonomy. Attention will be focused on how colonial rule, land alienation, labour migration to South Africa, the introduction of taxes, and long regencies, affected chiefly rule in Swaziland. Brian Marwick and Hugh Macmillan contend that there was unquestionably a weakening in 'tribal' control in Swaziland due to European influence, as chiefs were stripped of most of their judicial functions, and the regimental system declined in the face of the competing demands of taxation and labour migration. Massive land alienation created further problems of jurisdiction for chiefs, most of whom were left

in the reserves separated from their followers on white farms.[16] This chapter discusses all of these issues.

The next major king of Swaziland was Mbandzeni. Mbandzeni was installed as king in June 1875. He took over from Ludvonga who died from a mysterious illness in 1872. When Mbandzeni took office, as in the case of Mswati II, there were senior brothers who were also contesting the throne. These included Mbilini, Gija, Lukhwabitsi, Logcogco, Magudvulela, Mnyafula, Mpatfwa, Malamba, Msundvuka, Mphangwa, Mabhedla, Vuphe, Mvelaphansi, Ngengemane, Caka, Makhweleni, Shishibala, Mfokati, Myanga, Matikweni and Mkhetfwa.[17] The choice of Mbandzeni as king followed the royal council's request to Sisile Khumalo (also known as LaMgangeni), mother of the late king Ludvonga to choose one of the king's sons in the place of the late Ludvonga. Sisile chose Mbandzeni, an orphan whose mother had died whilst young. It is important to note how Mbandzeni was selected as this had a bearing on how he governed the country. Bonner says that Mbandzeni began his reign from a position of exceptional weakness; hence he was chosen as king less for his exceptional qualities than his exceptional lack of them.[18] Immediately Mbandzeni took office, the nation began to experience a spate of social and political problems as new king estranged himself from his councillors by being uncooperative with regards to the granting of concessions that saw the country losing more than two-thirds of the land to white concessionaires. Chief among these acts was his marrying of Somdlalose, the daughter of Langalibalele, chief of the Hlubi, who had been betrothed to Ludvonga. The councillors, including the Queen Mother, disapproved of this affair because a son born of that union would automatically became king, in that way dethroning Mbandzeni. The argument was that Mbandzeni would produce children for Ludvonga who was the rightful king after Mswati. Mbandzeni disregarded the advice of

Sisile,(Queen Mother) and his councillors and persisted in the relationship with Somdlalose.

A son was born of this union in 1879 and news spread across the country that there was now a new king, Mdzabuko. Swazis said "*singete sabuswa ngumsinsi wekumbelwa,"* meaning that they could not be ruled by a transplanted king.[19] Sisile, the *Indlovukazi,* also bathed the baby in the sacred enclosure only used by kings. According to custom, Mbandzeni was now expected to give way to the newborn king. It is alleged that Mbandzeni, with the help of Mdzabuko's nurse, poisoned the child to stop the rumour that Mdzabuko was now the successor of the father Ludvonga. Bonner writes: "A young *indvuna* named Magungubeyane was sent to Mdzabuko's nurse with poisoned milk, and within hours the young child was dead"[20]

The death of Mdzabuko sparked off trouble in the royal house. Sisile ran away with *royal* insignia *(ematinta*) and her regiments to settle beyond Mbabane. The king Mbandzeni ordered his regiments to pursue her and kill her so as to bring back the *Ematinta.* However, Sisile's regiments managed to escape to the Transvaal where they were later decimated by Mbandzeni's soldiers.[21] After Mbandzeni's assumption of power, a period of decentralization of royal authority followed, as regiments were partially demobilized and some chiefs seized this opportunity to reclaim some of their lost powers.

The strong and disciplined army left by Mswati II started to lose its power. Lack of discipline in the army was one of the causes of the decline of military morale. A series of defeats of the army under Ludvonga and Mbandzeni ensured this would never recover.

Also during Mbandzeni reign, no major raiding expeditions were undertaken. Here again Bonner claims political power devolved onto the localities and on the regional chiefs.[22]

Whilst Mswati had always kept his armies around him in readiness to be launched against any unsuspecting foe, those of Ludvonga and Mbandzeni were mustered less frequently for campaign. Though Mbandzeni had the following regiments; *iNdlavela*, *iNyatsi*, *uGiba* and *imiGadlela*, they were not kept active. It is alleged that the younger regiments were restless at their enforced abstinence from war and at the denial of the share of the military and political spoils. Bonner concurs with this state of affairs and contends that "Regiments were mobilized less often, and control over labour power and reproduction devolved back in some measure on local leaders and homestead heads. Bonner further argues that the fate of the *iNyathi* regiment's wives underlined this trend." For example, he contends that whereas Mswati had directed that no bridewealth cattle be paid for the women they married, Ludvonga and Mbanzeni succumbed to pressure to rescind the decree.[23]

Mbandzeni also acceded to power at a time when more and more Europeans were entering the country in search of grazing, hunting, woodcutting, and mining concessions. Following this initial crisis, Mbandzeni, from 1881 sought to re-assert his authority in two ways. Firstly, he accelerated the practice of granting concessions. In so doing Levin, believes Mbandzeni was attempting to 'loosen' his councillors who were not pleased with the manner in which the king was running the country.[24] Secondly, he took advantage of some of the confusion surrounding these grants to place his brothers in selected parts of the kingdom. I will deal with the second initiative first. Mbandzeni, like his predecessors used to send his brothers to be chiefs in the areas previously under the control of the

Emakhandzambili. The main aim was to try and bring under closer control resistant non-Dlamini chiefs. Crush contends for example, that a number of Dlamini princes were sent to the south as this area was occupied by a number of powerful non-Dlamini clan chiefs who resisted central control. He writes, "In order to curb the territorial control of the powerful southern chiefs, a number of loyal Dlamini chiefs were placed in the area and on land expropriated for the purpose."[25] Amoung those subordinated in this fashion were the Simelane, Mdluli, Nsibandze, and the Mamba chiefdoms. This was also done to silence those of Mbandzeni's brothers who had contended for power by sending them out to exercise their powers in distant areas away from the royal palace. A precise identification is difficult because, Huw Jones, the only scholar who offers such information, simply provides a list of the princes who were placed in different parts of the kingdom without indicating when these placings took place and what was the response of the deposed chiefs and their followers who both had to accept and give way to the imposed princes. It can only be assumed that the princes were placed by the former king's heir following the death of his father, as according to Swazi tradition, it is the one who takes over the reins of kingship who is authorised to *phakela* the wives of his predecessor.[26] This is a subject for further research. One can however safely speculate that most of the princes Mbandzeni placed were the sons of Mswati II, considering their ages and that they had been fathered by Mswati II. Amongst the princes placed by Mbandzeni then were Msudvuka who was *phakelad* to the Mvembili area in the Mlumati valley in northen Swaziland, Mhubhe, who was sent to Ngculwini, an area about 13 kilometres east of modern Manzini, Mnyafula, who was sent to Lukhetseni in the Lubombo next to the Matse and the Maziya of Maphungwane, Mphatfwa, who was sent to Ludlawini in northen Swaziland, 18 kilometres east of modern Piggs Peak, Myanga, who was sent to Mgungundlovu on the eastern slopes of the Nkomati valley,

Ndabefihlwayo, who was sent to Lushini, an area along the Mantambe River south of its confluence with the Ngwavuma River in southern Swaziland, and Nkopolo, who was sent to Maqudvulwini area in western Swaziland.[27]

The point that needs to be emphasised here then is that the Dlamini during the reign of Mbandzeni had a hard time trying to bring under control a number of non-Dlamini chiefdoms more especially because factionalism within the royal house had reached an alarming level. This division had been caused by the manner in which king Mbandzeni granted the concessions to which some of his councilors were opposed. For instance, Bonner argues that some senior councilors like Sandlane Zwane stood aloof from the scramble, aghast at the political and economic havoc being wrought. He further contends that a traditionalist reaction began to cohere around the person of Nkopolo, the most senior Swazi prince.[28] It is said that Mbandzeni decided to deal with his opponents in the most brutal way as he ordered that they be killed on 10th October 1888. Furthermore, Bonner argues that one, Tikhuba, who was by then the traditional Prime Minister, also used this opportunity to get rid of all those elements within the king's council that opposed him as he amassed a lot of wealth through the granting of concessions. These included, amongst others, Kwababa, Bulana and Juako

It should also be emphasised that a number of non Dlamini chiefdoms had a falling-out with Mbandzeni, especially from 1888. This state of affairs may have been caused by the fact that the king was sick and the regional chiefs took advantage of the situation. For example, Crush shows that, beginning from 1888, a number of non-Dlamini chiefs were not on good terms with Mbandzeni. He describes one incident involving Mbandzeni and chief Silele of the Sibandze in the south. Chief Silele was forced to flee from Swaziland

as a result of his complicity in a *coup* against the throne. Although he was allowed to return by Mbandzeni, a portion of his chiefdom was expropriated to make way for a new Dlamini chief, an action which alienated his loyalty further.[29]

The relationship between Mbandzeni and regional chiefs was worsened by Mbandzeni's practice of using the concessions as a way of getting even with chiefs who resisted his control. He ceded a great deal of land to the concessionaires. Europeans gave Mbandzeni cash, blankets, dogs, horses, liquor and other luxury products of European origin in exchange for huge tracts of land.[30] The discovery of gold in 1873 in the northwest of Swaziland caused the number of concession seekers to rise to unprecedented levels. This later created serious problems for Mbandzeni, as these concessionaires refused to recognize his authority. Instead they became a law unto themselves, scoundrels who forcibly grabbed Swazi land and cattle and annexed their concessions for the SAR, as in the case of the Little Free State. Some scholars like JSM Matsebula defend Mbandzeni's granting of concessions to Europeans, claiming that under Swazi tradition the king holds the land in trust for the Swazi nation and therefore has no authority to sell the land. Matsebula argues that Mbandzeni intended that the concessions would only give permission to a person to reside and use a piece of land for a limited time without absolute ownership. Grotpeter concurs, contending that when granting concessions, Mbandzeni assumed that the land could be taken back when the Swazis needed it.[31] The implication of this is that Mbandzeni did not realise the legal significance of the concessions, which were to confer permanent freehold right. Hilda Kuper supports the same view, noting that Swazis complained of "the papers that killed us."[32] She also observes that the Swazi were defeated not through warfare, but through concessions, written documents which they could not read and which embodied alien concepts.[33] KJB

Keregero shares the same sentiments and argues that the issue of concessions appears to have been contentious from the beginning, as the interpretations and interests of concessionaires and the Swazis were diametrically opposed. The concessions were viewed by the Swazi as temporary user rights.[34] Whatever the case, Mbandzeni was caught between a rock and a hard place and is said to have remarked "I have whitemen all around me, by force they have taken the countries of my neighbours. If I don't give them rights here, they will take them. Therefore I give when they pay. Why should we not eat before we die?"[35]

Mbandzeni's manner of granting concessions became a source of conflict within his council. In one instance, a grazing concession was granted to Joachim Ferreira and Ignatius Maritz of a massive 36 000 acres. By 1885-1889, 400 concessions had been granted.[36] The granting of such excessive concessions alienated Mbandzeni from his chiefs. Crush records how the granting of a concession to a white settler in 1887 estranged Mbandzeni from chief Maja of the Mamba chiefdom in the south. Mbandzeni did this deliberately as he was trying to break the power of chief Maja whom he perceived as a menace to royal authority.[37] Another chief who had problems with Mbandzeni was Sitambe Ntjangase who lived in the Transvaal. He is said to have refused to acknowledge the overlordship of the king. These were not the only chiefs who had problems with the rule of Mbandzeni. The south generally had chiefs who were very powerful and who seized any opportunity to assert their autonomy when Dlamini authority was weak. Even the Nsibandze and Mdluli, who had been co-opted by the aristocracy as caretakers of royal graves and as clans from which the chief wives of the monarch could be drawn, had a falling-out with Mbandzeni in the latter part of his reign.[38]

In addition to Mbandzeni, some councillors and princes seized this opportunity to enrich themselves by granting concessions as well. Hugh Gillis, for instance, contends that there is evidence which makes it clear that the king did not act alone, as members of the Dlamini family, prominent chiefs, and headmen accepted bribes to act a agents for concessionaires. Those who, out of reverence for the past, stood apart or voiced their disapproval, fell into disfavour.[39] For instance, Sandlane Zwane, Nkopolo, Kwababa, Juako, and Bhulana were executed for opposing a group of corrupt councillors who viewed concessions as an opportunity for self-aggrandizement.[40] There is thus every indication of confusion and a lack of coordination in as far as the granting of concessions was concerned which saw the whole country being signed away to concession seekers. Matsebula again seeks to defend Mbandzeni by claiming that he granted overlapping concessions to the Europeans with the aim of setting enemies at loggerheads. However, he fails to note the role of some of Mbandzeni's councillors and powerful princes, which could also explain why there was an overlap of the concessions.

As the resources of the country were parcelled out in concessions, factions developed within Mbandzeni's council. This gradually eroded his authority as well as that of the central organs of the state. Kuper says, "The general presence of the Europeans gradually disturbed the alliance between Swazi authorities and their subjects. Service was deflected from the king and chiefs to European employers; criminals fled from judgements in Swazi courts to white homes for protection; Mbandzeni's failure to restrain European law breakers undermined his authority; and the conspicuous wealth of the Europeans overshadowed his prestige."[41] When Mbandzeni realized that his control was visibly slipping in the outlying areas, as a result of the activities of the concessionaires, he sought

British protection. This triggered off a complicated series of negotiations between Mbandzeni and both the British and the Boer governments. Mbandzeni realised that seeking protection from either of these governments would have a corrosive effect on his power. Mbandzeni was also aware that getting the services of a resident commissioner from the British would have cost implications as he would have to devise ways of raising revenue to pay for such services. Mbandzeni therefore opted for a resident advisor of his choice to be in charge of the activities of the white people in his country. He hoped that this resident advisor would remain under his control and be answerable to him. However, things did not work out as Mbandzeni had planned as the advisers appointed, Theophilus Shepstone (Junior), and, later, Allister Miller, proved to be more criminals than advisors. Both amassed a lot of wealth for their own use at the expence of the Swazi king from the sale and granting of concessions. This finally forced Mbandzeni to seek British protection. At first, the British were not interested because there was nothing materially to be gained from Swaziland. Only after the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 did the British take full responsibility over Swaziland.

Mbandzeni died with a broken heart on 6th October 1889 at the age of 32, and sorrowfully lamented "Swazi kingship ends with me." His son Bhunu who was installed in 1894 succeeded him. The problems related to land alienation continued unabated. There was also pressure from the Boers of the SAR who were interested in gaining control of the country because of its possible strategic access to the sea. Bhunu ruled at a time when Swaziland became an area of contention between the Boers and the British. At first, through the convention of 1894, Swaziland was given by the British to the Boers of the Transvaal to administer, much against the wishes of the Swazi people. Though the convention guaranteed the independence of the Swazi, Bhunu never enjoyed the liberty to

rule his kingdom. Hence he had to rule under the terms of the 1894 Convention. The Boers Government first introduced taxation without the involvement of the Swazi people. Reports were rife that Boer farmers were illtreating his people. This is said to have greatly frustrated the king as he could not exercise his kingly powers over his people without the interference of the Boers. For instance, he was given the new status of being a paramount chief. Bhunu vehemently protested against this new arrangement arguing that "without killing of"and eating up" he would be unable to rule.[42] This explains why the young king resorted to hunting and heavy drinking most of the time which made him become very unpopular to his subjects as he made unreasonable demands for cattle and other property. Jones argues that the king did however, try to assert his authority and that of the Dlamini on some of the more independent chiefs. For instance, he records an instance where Bhunu started to call chiefs and the regiments to Zombodze in September 1895 and says that by October some 8000 men were assembled.[43]

Bhunu did little to address the problems faced by the Swazi state more especially the issue of land expropriation following the granting of concessions. He also ruled for a very short period. Up to a point, the external threats helped to unite the Swazi kingdom. However, Vail and White say that Bhunu's cruelty to chiefs alienated many of these.[44] The same point is echoed by Crush, who contends that Bhunu had problems with chiefs, more especially in the south. For instance, he cites Maja of the Mamba clan as having been a thorn in Bhunu's flesh to the point where the latter mobilized the army (*Umbhengo*) which was, however, disbanded before fighting.[45] Bhunu's relationship with the Boers came to a head after he had ordered the assassination of the traditional Prime Minister, Mbhabha Sibandze and several others on 9th April 1898 at Zombodze on allegation that they plotted to assassinate him. Bhunu was charged for the murder of Nsibandze and was summoned to appear before court. He appeared in court in the

company of about 600 men. The situation got so tense between the Swazi and the Boers as the latter interpreted Bhunu as preparing for war. Bhunu, finally fled on horseback to Ngwavuma on the 7th July 1898, and sought the intervention of the British. He was brought back to the country after much negotiation between the British and the Boers to stand trial. Bhunu was found guilty and fined 500 British Pounds. He was also suspended as king until October 1898 when he was reinstated. This stands to show that Bhunu did not have enough time to rule over his people as he himself was governed by laws which did not approve of war as an instrument of foreign policy.

Bhunu became ill in November 1898 and again suspected that certain individuals were behind it. He ordered the killing of many of them including Mkonkoni Kunene. This marked the end of Bhunu, as he collapsed and died during the *incwala* ceremony. One, Gama, is quoted as having said that Bhunu, because of his temper, was disliked by the people, frightened his councillors and that this deprived him of good men to advise him properly.[46]

(b) British Rule in the early 20th century.

Immediately the British took control of Swaziland they were forced to attend to the land problem. This led to the promulgation of the Land Proclamation Act of 1907 which confirmed the concessions granted by Mbandzeni as valid. Levin maintains that the new colonial administration addressed the land question in typical colonial fashion, by responding first and foremost to the demands of settler capital. Settlers required that legal property rights be conferred on their land as a pre-condition for capitalist production.[47] Booth believes that the British intentionally alienated land for purposes of mobilizing Swazi labour for the South African mines.[48] In 1936 two-thirds of Swaziland was still

owned by whites who numbered 2,740, less than two percent of the total population. Scattered in between the farms were some 25 “Native Areas” available for over 150 000 Swazi.[49] Land alienation had serious implications for chiefly rule and led to the rise of tensions between chiefs and commoners on the one hand, and chiefs and the ruling Dlamini clan on the other. Land expropriation immediately damaged chiefly rule and central Dlamini authority because the legitimacy of both institutions was heavily dependent on land distribution. Keregero puts it succintly when he writes that in Swazi society, land is the most sacred thing that people know.[50]

As the land was parcelled out into farms, chiefs' followers found themselves obliged to serve the economic interests of the landlord more than those of their chiefs. There was also the possibility of being evicted if farm residents refused to obey the demands of the white farmer. H. Macmillan has observed that landlords in the parts of the Transvaal occupied by Swazis were strongly opposed to chiefly rule.[51] This inhibited the chiefs’ capacity to accumulate wealth through the extraction of free labour (*ummemo)* from their followers. Because of the chiefs’ failure to allocate land to their followers (which was their chief source of power), their followers were less keen to heed their summonses. This was the case because traditional leaders, after allocating land to a follower, had the right to demand free labour from that person. This problem was later compounded when the British took over the administration of Swaziland, and both chiefs and the royal authorities were stripped of their judicial powers and revenues. Previously, chiefs had amassed a lot of wealth for themselves from fines exacted from their followers.[52]

The major factor undercutting central Dlamini authority during this period was the incorporation of the Swazi economy into that of South Africa. This acccelerated between

1890 and 1920 when the capitalist economy of southern Africa rapidly expanded. Having been denied access to land, their major base for production, the Swazi were forced to resort to wage labour. It should be noted that at first the Swazi resisted this trend, in common with other African states during this time. It was only after 1890 that the numbers of Swazi migrating to South Africa began to increase. The second factor which forced Swazi males to resort to wage labour was the introduction of taxes, first by the Boers and later by the British, for purposes of collecting revenue with which to run the administration. Finally, Swazi males also left for South Africa because they were responding to royal summonses by the Queen regent, Labotsibeni, who had established a fund in 1910 to repurchase land given away by Mbandzeni through concessions.[53] A total of R 73,734 was collected and was used to buy back 76,853 acres of land.[54]

The existence of alternative methods of acquiring homestead subsistence needs from labour migration and the possibilities of squatting on white farms or crown land outside the chief's control meant that Swazi homesteads were no longer exclusively dependent on Swazi chiefs for access to a material base. Marwick observes that a Swazi youth, instead of going to join his *libutfo,* had first to think of how his tax liabilities were going to be met.[55] Jonathan Crush notes that "a faster rate of homestead formation, smaller homestead size, and the development of a new division of domestic labour all accompanied the emergence of mass migrancy and reduced the ability of chiefs to extract labour from commoner homesteads".[56] Crush, Kuper and Genge argue that the numbers of men resident in the villages of chiefs and the royal palaces rapidly declined. For example, in 1904 Labotsibeni had only 400 soldiers at her palace.[57] Chiefs had the tendence of ignoring Labotsibeni's orders for them to attend her meetings at her headquarters at Zombodze from 1915 and onwards. Genge further states that Labotsibeni

complained of her diminished powers over her subjects and of her inability to punish them due to the colonal state's encroachment upon her court's jurisdiction. The regimental system was thus removed from centre stage of Swazi society during the first twenty years of British rule despite the efforts of Swazi royalty to preserve and adapt it to a new environment. This handicapped the aristocracy, as it was heavily dependent on regimental labour for tilling the soil, weeding, chasing off birds, hunting, harvesting, and threshing for the royal family. Chris Lowe concurs with the above scholars and suggests that labour migration not only led to the destruction of the regimental system but also contributed to the dispersal of power to chiefs in their regional settings.[58]

The changes brought about by labour migration led to tension between the royal family and the local chiefs as both struggled to control Swazi labour. The royal family demanded that a portion of the migrants pay go towards the purchasing of land from the concessionaires while the chiefs also expected to get cash in lieu for tribute labour from their followers. Vail and White show how Labotsibeni set up the national fund to buy back land alienated from the Swazi. They also point out that as an essential part of this strategy she sought to control the flow of migrant labourers from Swaziland by linking migrancy to the old Swazi regimental system and providing labour to selected white labour recruiters.[59] Crush contends that the Queen Regent could clearly not afford to dispense altogether with more traditional forms of labour appropriation, and her plan was to dispatch the *emabutfo* for mine labour during periods when cultural demands were slackest. The Queen Regent also feared that extended periods spent on the Rand by Swazi imigrants would not only deprive the aristocracy of labour in the sphere of agricultural production, but would generate new forms of consciousness hostile to traditional authority.[60] Total subservience on the part of the chiefs to traditional authority

meant a considerable and persistent loss of local male labour. For that reason chiefs began to resist labour demands from the aristocracy. These demands weighed heavily on the migrants who bitterly complained of the heavy burdens placed upon them by their authorities who expected them to pay government tax, land owners' tax, chiefs' tax and Labotsibeni's land tax.[61]

When the fund established by the regent Labotsibeni started in 1910, local chiefs fully supported the idea, but later they changed their minds as they accused the *Indlovukazi* of embezzling the funds. They also protested that the land repurchase scheme was only meant to benefit members of the royal family (specifically to buy back land for royalty in central Swaziland, believed to be the heart of the nation from the time of Sobhuza I. Booth records that as levy followed levy the mood of acquiescence changed to suspicion and on occasion to outright opposition as it came to be widely believed that a great deal of the money collected stuck to the palms of the collectors and that much of the remainder was used by the royal house for things other than the announced purposes.[62] Crush cites one Swazi chief Nomadakulu (sic) as having expressed the frustration of the Swazi rulers at such reactions when he declared that "the people have defeated us." [63] The most recalcitrant chiefs were those from the south of the country, more especially chief Maja I of the Mamba. It is worth explaining why the south was a problem to Labotsibeni. It is said that at the time of the 1911 census over 40% of the male adult population lived in the Hlathikhulu district, and between 1907 and 1916 50% of the legal migrant labour force came from this district. In 1915 58 % of the Swazi mine workforce were Hlathikhulu men.[64] This therefore illustrates how crucial control of the south was to the Dlamini authorities. The regions began to pay attention to their own needs; thus unity began to crumble.

(c) BoChief Bemapasi (Pass Chiefs)

In 1903, following the imposition of colonial rule, the British began to compile a list of chiefs. The British wished to use these Swazi chiefs for purposes of tax collection and general control of the Swazi. This pracice was eventually elaborated into the policy of Indirect Rule, first systematically propounded by Lord Lugard. Onwubiko defines indirect rule as "a system of local administration in which the essential features were the preservation of traditional political institutions and their adaptation under the tutelage and direction of the British administration, to the requirements of the modern units of local government."[65] In effect this simply meant a system of administration under which the traditional rulers were allowed to rule their people under the supervision of British officials. This system was implemented in all British colonies like Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Rhodesia, and the Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland dependencies. It worked well where pre-colonial political structures were centralised or where traditional rulers commanded great respect as was the case in Swaziland. This is not to suggest that Dlamini traditional authorities did not have problems with outlying chiefdoms as it has been stated earlier on that hegemonic idealogy has always been used by Swazi royalty to project images of a peaceful and a harmonised Swazi state. This is to say that the 1950 Native Administration Proclamation helped Sobhuza II in declaring him the sole authority with exclusive powers of appointing and deposing chiefs. District commissioners served as link between chiefs and the colonial administration. In short, this Act made chiefs and the Swazi king become colonial functionaries for easy control and administration of the country. It became imperative that chiefs, more especially Sobhuza II had his powers enhanced by the Colonial Government. In the course of compiling lists of chiefs in 1903, the main objective of which was to facilitate tax

collection and the general control of the Swazi, the British appointed any one who could be of use to them and designated these as chiefs. This led to much confusion, as people who were never regarded as chiefs became chiefs through the process of tax collection.[66] These were sarcastically described as tax identity chiefs (Bochief *bemapasi or Bemtselo*) as chiefs were now only recognized by having the tax book.[67] Among others, farm *indunas* were made chiefs through this method. People who also looked after the king's cattle *(tinhlonhla*) were regarded as chiefs even though these did not have a large following.[68] The same applied to those individuals who looked after royal graves. Ngubuyana Nkosi became a chief in this way, though he had no followers. Huw Jones notes that Josiah Vilakati was recognised as chief of Mahamba Mission Station in 1932, though he had only twenty-one followers and the size of the area he controlled was restricted to the mission station.[69] This thus lends certain credence to the argument raised by the Magagula against Madzanga II of Bulandzeni where they contend that it was during this confusion that Madzanga became chief.[70] In fact, Velebaleni Nkambule and LoMalombo Dlamini claim that before colonialism there were no chiefs in Swaziland but *tindvuna*, a position greater than that of a chief in the British sense. The Mabuza of Mafutseni in a similar (and mistaken) vein argued that, the term was adopted from the way it was used in hotels where there were chief cooks.[71]

In essence then, from Mbandzeni down the line of Swazi kings, including the long regency of Labotsibeni, the royal family struggled to assert its authority over local chiefs. A struggle for land and labour took place which saw the chiefs and the ruling clan at loggerheads. It is against this background that Sobhuza II came to power and struggled to reverse the trend by re-asserting Dlamini hegemony, an exercise which produced new

kinds of tensions between him and some non-Dlamini chiefdoms that had reclaimed their autonomy when the ruling royal family was weak.

(d) Sobhuza 11's reign 1921- 1982.

When Sobhuza II came to power in 1921, he found the country beset by a number of problems, chief among which was the land issue and the weakened authority of the royal family over the outlying chiefdoms. Booth believes that Swazi chiefs used the circumstance of royal disarray following the disastrous reigns of Mbandzeni and Bhunu to distance themselves from the monarchy both politically and in terms of royalty obligations, especially labour.[72] This state of affairs remained unchanged for the duration of Labotsibeni's political career. This situation was further compounded by the fact that during Labotsibeni's long regency the *Incwala* ceremony was in abeyance. In short, Sobhuza II faced three broad, interrelated challenges to his legitimacy and effectiveness as *Ingwenyama*. The first was the need to prevent at all costs the proposed transfer of Swaziland to the Union of South Africa, which would have been disastrous to both the monarchy and its people. The second was the imperative to continue the domestic effort begun by Labotsibeni to bring rebellious chiefs to heel and to restore the popular reputation (and hence the legitimacy) of the monarchy. The third was the requirement to wrest back from the colonial administration those levers of royal authority previously relinguished to it during the regimes of Labotsibeni, Bhunu, and *iNgwenyama* Mbandzeni Dlamini.[73]

The *Incwala* Ceremony

This ceremony originated amongst the Ndwandwe and was later copied by the Swazi kings. *Indlovukazi* LaZidze helped develop this ceremony in Swaziland and that it was again through her efforts that there was a profound change in the course of 19th century Swazi history. LaZidze did this in support of her son Mswati II who had acceded to the throne in 1839. Politically, the *Incwala* is of great importance as it helps to enhance the power of the Dlamini ruling clan. The ceremony centred around the king as he was the chief perfomer. He was also regarded as the symbol of unity. The king was believed to invoke supernatural powers, to protect the state, bless it with rain and ensure a bountiful harvest. To re-inforce the belief that the king was the only being who had the power to invoke supernatural powers, some rain fell at the end of the ritual. Sikhondze contends that "to the most naive of the Swazi nation, this was an indication that the king was close to God."[74]. Marwick describes the *Incwala* as "a pageant in which the early life of the Swazi is re-enacted in dramatised form."[75] Levin characterises it as a ceremony which aims at strengthening kingship, and cementing the nation. He explains that it is not the specific economic, ritual or political powers of the king that are celebrated, but the sum total of kingship.[76] The *Incwala* also gave Swazi kings the opportunity to control agricultural production in that no one was allowed to eat any of the new season's products until this ceremony had been performed. It was believed that the king had powers to ensure a bountiful harvest through the control of rain and fertility of the soil. The king was also believed to be an intercessor. He had the power to communicate with the ancestors who in turn carried the prayers of the nation to God (*Mvelinchanti*) through the medium of ancestors. Before being dispersed, the *emabutfo* were also expected to weed the king's fields. No other person was allowed to perform his own *Incwala* ceremony as it was regarded a treasonable offence punishable by death. For instance,

Somcuba did this and was attacked and killed by Mswati II in the 1850s. The people were expected to behave themselves properly during the ceremony as there were a number of taboos. For instance, no person during the king's seclusion (*kutila)* may scratch his person in the royal kraal or go to sleep as this was believed to have a direct effect on the king. Any one found doing these was fined.[77] After the ceremony, the old had been left behind, the king had demonstrated his strength anew and the people were again united and prepared for the New Year. Through this ceremony then, the king was able to monitor recalcitrant chiefs and subjects, as failure to attend was punishable by a heavy fine. LoMalombo Dlamini contended that the king was very observant when it came to noting chiefs and warriors who did not attend the *Incwala* ceremony. These he called one by one after the ceremony to show cause why they had not attended.[78]

In short, the people of Swaziland did not regard their king as an ordinary citizen hence they believed that he also possessed supernatural powers. For instance, during the reign of Sobhuza II there were myths circulated to the effect that he could turn into any form of animal whenever sensing danger. It was also claimed that when Sobhuza was still young his mother 'cooked' him. He would move from one boiling pot to the other without being seen. These myths helped Sobhuza in his effort to buttress his authority on the Swazi people. In short the *Incwala* ceremony is a powerful mechanism to engender and renew a unified sense of Swazi nationalism.

Sobhuza's accession to power saw the revival of the *Incwala* ceremony, which had been in abeyance for almost three decades. This helped Sobhuza II in re-asserting Dlamini hegemony though with a certain degree of difficulty. Sobhuza also went to the extent of inviting Christians to participate in the *Incwala* ceremony, an attempt to emphasize its

unifying value. Kuper, however claims that Sobhuza encountered resistance in re-establishing this national event. She further argues that for the first decade of Sobhuza's reign the attendance of regiments at the *Incwala* ceremony was poor.[79] Jonathan Crush shares the same sentiments that numbers of subjects attending the *incwala* ceremony had seriously declined in the 1920s because instead of supporting the royal family, chiefs tended to put first their needs of expropriating tribute labour from their followers.[80] This underlines the point that the people had enjoyed a long period of freedom during the extended regency of Labotsibeni.

Attendence at the *Incwala* only started to improve after 1936.[81] This could be attributable to the fact that Sobhuza had taken a conscious effort in reviving the regimental practice last seen during the time of king Bhunu. Allan Booth argues that after 1926 Sobhuza refashioned himself into an arch-traditionalist and that traditionalism, whether authentic or manufactured, became both the essence and the basis of his political legitimacy.[82] Sobhuza also managed to use his close relationship with the colonial office to his advantage. For instance, between 1928 and 1935 Sobhuza worked closely with Ainsworth Dickson the then resident commissioner who found ways to restore to Sobhuza much of the domestic authority previously undermined by his predecessors.[83] Sobhuza in turn, used some of that power to assist Dickson in local governance- and in that process to discipline rebellious chiefs. Sobhuza also developed a keen interest in re-uniting the Swazis living in the Transvaal. Macmillan argues that "when Sobhuza had his first *Incwala* in 1921 it was reported that many Swazi from outside attended."[84] The Swazi chiefs living in the Transvaal also informed Sobhuza of any important events, ocassionaly sent him tribute, received emissaries from him, and had him ratify the appointment of their local chiefs.

Sobhuza further sought to tighten his grip on the outlying chiefddoms by demanding their attendance together with their subjects, to the *Incwala* ceremony. Macmillan contends that "although the old system, involving not only military training, but tribute labour, was clearly moribund, Sobhuza and his council had began in the early 1930s to exact fines from young men who married without permission.''[85] Sobhuza also continued reviving the regimental system outside the schools and also used the recruitment of Swazi soldiers to fight in the Second World War in support of the British for the same objective. For instance, Sobhuza dispatched the African Pioneer Corps to the war in the Mediterranean theatre in a ceremony reminiscent of past kings' dispatching of the *emabutfo* on campaigns and also received these warriors back in 1946 in a similar ceremonial fashion.

Apart from reviving the *Incwala* ceremony, Sobhuza also found it imperative to attend to the issue of land ownership, a problem which had baffled Queen Regent Labotsibeni for her entire reign. Following the Land Proclamation Act of 1907, a third of the land was set aside for the use by the Swazi while the remaining two-thirds belonged to the whites who had been granted concessions by Mbandzeni. In 1922 Sobhuza addressed a petition to the British Privy Council. Sobhuza also led a delegation to London where he hoped to put the Swazi land case to the British Crown. The argument Sobhuza presented was that the British did not have the right to transform the concessions to freehold titles. His argument was also based on the assumption that Swazi rulers did not have the right to alienate land to non-Swazi and that in any case Swazi rulers had assumed that concessionaires were settling as 'Swazis', with the implication that any rights they acquired were subject to modification at some later stage.[86] However, in all these attempts Sobhuza was not successful. It was only after 1944 that the British acknowledged a land crisis because of

overgrazing, overstocking, soil erosion, child malnutrition, and general diseases in the reserves arising from extreme congestion. In a bid to redress these concerns, the British decided to increase land under Swazi occupation to 50%.[87]

Macmillan believes that Sobhuza's failure to have the land partition reversed through the deputation to London in 1923 and through the case against Allister Miller, which the Privy Coucil rejected in 1926, prompted him to taka a fresh interest in ethnic mobilization.[74] Sobhuza used the Miller as a test case to try and win back the land taken away from the Swazi during the time of Mbandzeni by arguing that the British Government had no legal right to partition Swaziland. In 1908 the high commissioner had expropriated the concession, which then became British Crown land. In 1917 a portion of this had been granted to Miller's company as a freehold title 'farm'. All this was done under the order-in-council of 25 June 1903, which effectually estinguished all Swazi authority. In 1922-23 Miller began to evict the Swazis from the land they had occupied for centuries. Among those evicted was Chief Maloyi Kunene, the son of Mbabane and his followers. This case was heard before the Special Court in May 1924 and was dismissed with costs. Sobhuza then appealled the court verdict but again lost as it was rejected by the Privy Council in 1926.

After losing this case, Sobhuza then focused his attention on ethnic mobilization. He was especially concerned about the effects of labour migrancy on Swazi society which contributed to the decline in royal and chiefly authority. It was for this reason that Sobhuza cleverly followed Swazi migrants to their work places in South Africa, in an effort to combat the influences to which they were exposed there. Sobhuza even built six houses in an area he purchased in Sophiatown the only area in South Africa where Blacks

were allowed freehold land rights during the apartheid era.[89] He later named this to be the home of the Swazi working in South African mines. *Indunas* were chosen to be the 'eyes' of the royal family in ensuring that the migrants remained loyal to the king. Swazi workers were discouraged from joining strikes in the mines in an effort to preventing Swazi migrants from adopting a generally militant attitude. Sobhuza also had a personal representative in the Native Recruitment Corporation, a branch of the labour recruitment company for the mines in South Africa which replaced the collapsed Witwatersrand Native Labour Association.[90]

Sobhuza was also concerned about the widening divisions between educated and uneducated, and between Christians and pagans in the country as a result of missionary activities in the country. Joyce LaNdwandwe records an instance where Sobhuza was overheard singing a traditional song while at Lovedale in 1916 and was scolded severely for chanting 'heathen songs.' This remark deeply hurt and offended the king and started him questioning the missionaries' real intentions. Sobhuza felt that missionaries were not sensitive to other peoples' feelings. He even questioned if their intentions were pure in spreading the Christian gospel.[91] In an effort to combat this an early initiative of Sobhuza II was to revive the regimental system (*emabutfo)* by introducing it into Swazi national schools. These were schools built by the Swazi traditional authorities for exclusive use by Swazi students. This was done once it was realised as early as 1908 that the missionaries used their schools to influence Swazi students to shun traditional activities. Booth contends that Labotsibeni, understanding his emphatic need for Western education in the new colonial era and yet leary of mission influence, established an elementary school under her watchful eye at Zombodze for Sobhuza and other princes.[92] This again saw the establishment of the Swazi National High School in Matsapha in 1931, an institution

specifically free from all mission influence. LaNdwandwe shares the same sentiments and cites, one, Father Mveng of Cameroon, who once said that the early stages of missionary activities in the continent were not very positive because the church was, at the beginning not living up to the message of Christ. Rather than dealing with the African personality and encourage a dialogue between such personality and the church of Christ; many of these early missionaries wanted to destroy the African personality before embarking upon the teachings of the Christian messages and this led to depersonalization. This phenomenon was a result of the mode of teaching developed by the missionaries.[93] This was thus intended among other things, to counter the activities of missionary schools that were viewed by the Swazi ruling authorities as contributing to the youth's alienation from their cultural traditions. Leibrandt claims that missionaries inculcated contempt for tradition, king and country among Swazi youth and engendered the amorality of today.[94] The same view is echoed by Kasanene who argues that the missionaries described Swazis as "rude savages to be tamed and civilised."[95] It was because of the above state of affairs the Sobhuza, in 1933 resolved to take charge of the education of the Swazi youth. Sobhuza wrote a memorandum on "nature of edcuation'' in which he criticized the education then being provided by the missions. His grounds were that:

(a) It causes the scholar to despise Swazi institutions and his indigenous culture;

(b) It causes him to become ill-fitted to his environment;

(c) It releases him from the wholesome restraints which the Swazi indigenous method of education inculcated, and does not set up any effective substitutes for them.[96]

In the curriculum offered in Swazi national schools, Sobhuza demanded that the following be included, Swazi history, customs, lore and law, as well as ceremonial topics. Following this was also an order from the king to compile the history of Swaziland. He

entrusted this responsibility with J.J.Nquku in 1939. Nquku then produced the *Amaqhawe AkaNgwane* (heroes of Swaziland).[97]

Mpassou claims that Sobhuza also decided to counter the activities of the missionaries in part, by supporting the Zionist League of Churches. "He saw in the League as a powerful instrument for uniting the Zionist churches and having them solidly behind the throne." He goes further to explain that the majority of Zionist churches in Swaziland allow the blending of christian and traditional values like polygamy and the use of traditional herbs, and fully support the monarchical system.[98] Sobhuza further built a national church which was non-denominational. This followed the incident involving one, Solomon Madevu who had been excommunicated by the Wesleyans because he took a second wife and openly advocated polygyny. Swazi National schools were therefore meant to counter and serve as vehicles for ensuring Swazi traditions and values were inculcated among Swazi students.

Sobhuza also used culture and tradition for the purpose of re-asserting central authority. It is along these lines that Levin argues that conservatives propagated the hegemonic ideology that the Swazi was a unified, peaceful and democratic state. For Sobhuza, culture had an almost spiritual dimension. He argued that this bestowed identity, self-esteem and a sense of individuals' worth in a world which was too easy for blacks to succumb to the tidal wave of White American and European culture. He believed that Swazis were to guard against being imitative of whites since this could only breed a sense of inferiority. He advised Swazis to take that which was good from the whites and to discard that which they considered bad from their own culture.

Sobhuza also revived the chastity rite *(umcwasho*) for girls in 1935, as there was not much space for girls in the *iButho* (regiments). This was a two-year pledge in celibacy by adolescent girls with a reciprocal pledge in relation to them by all men. Sobhuza argued that *umcwasho* made Swazi maidens to experience a sense of pride and self-worth.[98] It offered both maidens and young men the opportunity to maintain standards of honesty and intergrity in their moral behaviours. It also instilled in them a sense of pride leading maidens to master self confidence and self respect as they declare the chastity vow in their families, community and the nation. This was very important to the royal family as the queen mother was made in charge of this rite. One of the princesses was nominated leader of the maidens and were all answerable to the queen mother and the king.

Finally in his endeavor to promote Swazi culture Sobhuza also established a newspaper that was written in Siswati, know as the "*Izwi LamaSwazi*". This also saw the production of Swazi literature in 1952 and the discarding of European names in favour of local ones. Sobhuza had the ability to appeal to the people's pride, which won him great respect from certain quarters of the Swazi society.

Sobhuza also faced serious challenges during the 1960s from the Swazi workforce who embarked on a wild strike demanding better pay. The strike started at the Havelock mine but soon spread to other parts of the country. Sobhuza, who had a strong alliance with foreign capital reprimanded the strikers for behaving in an un-Swazi manner and demanded that they stop their industrial action. He argued that no Swazi would talk to him through a strike action and advised the strikers to follow laid down procedures by appealing to him if they had grievances. Unfortunately the strikers disobeyed Sobhuza's order and continued with their industrial action, forcing the British colonial office to rope

in the Gordon Highlanders from Kenya to suppress the strike. The 1960s was also a period when most African countries demanded their independence from their colonial masters. African nationalism had gained momentum more especially in South Africa and Mozambique. Though Sobhuza was a card carrying member of the African National Congress, he however tried his best to stifle the freedom of association in the country as he argued that this was a foreign concept not suitable for Swaziland. For instance, he opposed the independence constitution that was drafted by Britain in 1964 which allowed political parties to contest power. His argument was that this was both un-Swazi and divisive. Allan Booth contends that after 1967, Sobhuza managed to come with a new independence constitution which was a mixture of both Swazi and foreign ideas and reflective of Swazi tradition. He further argues that it was this document that helped determine the largely non-democratic character of post-independence political and economic development of the kingdom.[99] Sobhuza maintained this postion until he, in 1973 banned all parties in the country through the 1973 Decree which saw him assuming all executive, legislative, and judicial powers.

In 1978, Sobhuza introduced the *Tinkhundla* system of government which placed the parliamentary electoral process directly under his control. For instance, he appointed the Prime minister and cabinet ministers. In short this meant that Sobhuza continued to rule the country using the 1973 Decree which itself took the position of a constitution. By controlling the parliamentary process this gave Sobhuza the opportunity to participate in the legislative process. For instance, he granted himself powers to assent to every piece of legislation passed by parliament, and could therefore block or refer back to parliament what he did not like. This was in line with what Sobhuza wanted, for when he repealed the independence constitution he justified himself saying; "…that I and my people

heartily desire at long last, after a long constitutional struggle, to achieve full freedom and independence under a constitution created by ourselves for ourselves in complete liberty without outside pressures; as a nation we desire to march forward progressively under our own constitution guaranteeing peace, order and good government and the happiness and welfare of all our people." This in short meant that what Sobhuza wanted became the constitution of the country. He strategically placed himself incharge of all activities done by the Swazi nation, and that the western form of government only existed as his administrative arm and thus did not exercise real power. In practical terms this meant that the king would have the final say on any policy issue, and could effect such policy through legislation by decree. This ensured that Sobhuza presided over both the traditional and western form of governments, as both structures were answerable to him. It can further be argued that when the first post-independence exercise in constitutional reform was undertaken by a Constitutional Review commission those members were appointed by the him, and those terms of reference were also determined by him.

Sobhuza sends out his sisters to non-Dlamini chiefdoms

Sobhuza also started the practice of sending out his sisters to non-Dlamini chiefs. By so doing, Sobhuza managed to link the Dlamini dynasty to influential families within the emerging Swazi kingdom. According to Chief Mafohla Sukati, chief of Mpembekati and a member of the Ludzidzini inner council, Sobhuza used marriage as a method of gaining closer control of some non-Dlamini chiefdoms by giving out his daughters and sisters to non-Dlamini chiefs. For instance, Sobhuza's sisters, Sengcabaphi was given to the Nkambeni chief Dinane, in the 1920s following the deathof her sister Ntongontongo in 1918, who was married to Dinane. Mzamose was taken to Vusumuzi Bhembe of Ezikhotheni, and Mnengwase was taken to Mbetsambalo in the Motjane area. Likewise

his daughter Ntombane was given to Manceba in the Dlangeni area, Tfobi was given to Ndabefihlwayo, Ntfombindze was taken to Mathutha, chief of Ekuvinjelweni, Sitsini was taken to KaShiba Ezibondeni, Shiyose was taken to Lovutha Magongo of Elangeni, and Betfusile was taken to chief of KaNgcamphalala in the Lubombo. According to Swazi custom the princess bears the heir to the chiefship and chiefs had no way of refusing a princess sent to them by the king.[100] This ensured the loyalty of the entire chiefdoms, as a son born by the princess automatically became the heir to the chiefly throne. Kuper notes that out of about twenty five chiefs she interviewed in 1934, she found that more than half were directly or indirectly related to the king.[101]

The net effect of this was that the notoriously recalcitrant chiefs of the south who were brought under close control by Sobhuza "were much less free and independent than in the old days".[102] This was made possible by the fact that the 1950 Native Act gave chiefs more powers over their subjects than they had enjoyed in pre-colonial days. The British strengthened the position of chiefs through the policy of 'indirect rule'. Sobhuza II for his part used the support he received from the colonial office in dealing with recalcitrant chiefs. For instance, he was now given the powers to appoint and to dismiss chiefs. He also refused that chiefs be salaried, as he believed that they would shift their allegiance to the colonial officers. Booth notes that in 1957 the colonial administration criminalized acts of disobedience on the part of chiefs to Sobhuza's decrees, which led to the conviction of chiefs in colonial courts.[102]

However, this should not be misunderstood to mean that to argue then that Swazis were peace loving is misleading as there was tension between Sobhuza and some local chiefs. In fact the political structure which Sobhuza attempted to mould lacked a firm foundation

because it owed everything to his highly personalised style of rule. This became more evident after his demise as it was difficult for the Dlamini authorities to find a suitable replacement. It was only after Sobhuza's death that Swazi people realised that he had been a dictator.[103]

Sobhuza sends out his brothers to outlying non-Dlamini chiefdoms

When it came to placing his brothers and sons, Sobhuza, according to Ben Dlaminin, did little. Ben Dlamini argues that members of the royal family criticized Sobhuza for not observing this tradition of placing princes.[104] According to Swazi custom, the kings' brothers are not allowed to stay at the same palace as the king after their teen years as they might disturb the king by conspiring against him. They should therefore be sent away to exercise their powers in areas at some distance from the royal palace. One major exeption to this pattern was Prince Makhosikhosi who was in 1922 sent to Prince Sijula Dlamini whom Sobhuza had instructed to apportion Makhosikhosi part of the area Sijula controlled. It is said that Makhosikhosi had quarrelled with a number of his brothers at the royal village and was difficult to control. He was thus made chief of Embelebeleni.[105] Alan Booth pushes the argument further, asserting that Makhosikhosi was the true heir to Mahlokohla's throne and not Sobhuza II. For instance, he records that "Domestically bitter opposition to Sobhuza's legitimacy centred in one of his half-brothers, Mnt Makhosikhosi Dlamini whose mother (LaMavimbela) had been regarded at the time of Bhunu's death as holding the inside track of the office of *Indlovukazi*."[106] This may well provide a better explanation of why he was among the tiny number of princes to be placed. Giving him an area to rule was a way of consoling and silencing him. *LoMalombo* Dlamini, who is a prince himself, only recalls four of Sobhuza's sons who were sent out as chiefs. Most of these were sent to areas which were previously farms

owned by whites as freehold title land, and had been without chiefs for a very long time. The local commoners who remained on those farms readily accepted the candidate. This was especially the case with *Emahambate*, which were former farms owned by white settlers and bought back by the government after independence. It is probable that Sobhuza decided to reserve these areas for purposes of placing his father's wives, sons, and brothers and is no wonder that most of the areas even today still do not have chiefs but only *tindvuna.* For instance, Davies and his colleagues contend that "while Sobhuza was alive, his position was inviolate and the factional struggles remained to some extent hidden within the complex rituals of royalism."[107] According to LoMalombo and Mfanasibili; Zinjoli was sent to Zandondo, Mvelaphansi was sent to Mabovini, Matatazela was given Nhlambeni, Mshengu was sent to Mahlangatja, Makhosikhosi was sent to Mbelebeleni and Maguga was sent to Macetjeni, reflecting that he was regarded as Sobhuza's brother and not his son.[108] The issue of sending Maguga to Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli chiefdoms has become a subject of a heated debate involving the people of Macetjeni and the traditional authorities, and is the first of its kind to explode into an open revolt in the history of the kingdom. More of this will be explained at a later stage. According to Dr Ben Dlamini, Sobhuza did not depose chiefs in favour of his sons and brothers because he had great respect for the non- Dlamini chiefs.[109] He is of the opinion that such placings could well have met with resistance from the chiefs and their followers which Sobhuza was anxious to avoid. This did not mean that chiefs were not deposed in the past but was only on very rare occasions that would be done as for instance, under charge of murder and wicth craft. Even then, the character of the chief was an important factor. If he was harsh or corrupt, the people would welcome a change and he would be deposed, but if he was good the reverse would be the case. Another reason for Sobhuza not placing a lot of his brothers was that under colonial rule boundaries had been drawn

and expeditions for purposes of raiding neighbouring groups had stopped. In this way there was no new land annexed to that of Swaziland, as had been the case with Sobhuza I and Mswati II to which the king's brothers could be sent to rule.

With a view to creating alternative opportunities for his brothers and sons, Sobhuza formed the Tibiyo and Tisuka TakaNgwane, in 1968 and 1975 respectively, a business venture for the royal family held 'in trust' for the Swazi nation in which many of his relatives were employed. Levin claims that through the Tibiyo, Sobhuza created a comprador bourgeoisie and that the institution constituted the material basis for the transformation of the entire social structure of Swaziland.[110] Sobhuza II also sent some of his brothers and sons to certain companies to act as liason officers or his 'eyes' (*liso leNkhosi*) in the late 1960s. They were expected to update him on the activities of both the company management and the workmen. This was the case more especially with the companies in the Lubombo sugar belt which operated with the Tibiyo TakaNgwane as a joint venture on a fifty- percent basis. The companies paid the princes. Sobhuza also sent his sons and brothers to overseas missions as ambassadors and also appointed them into powerful positions in companies to serve as board members as a way of silencing them.

This chapter has attempted to show how Sobhuza, after his accession to power devised strategies to meet the challenges which had been caused by the disastrous reigns of Mbandzeni Bhunu, and the long regency of Queen Labotsibeni which saw Dlamini central control devolving to the regions. The argument has centred on how Sobhuza II mananged to weld together the Swazi state through the manipulation of culture and tradition, through the revival of the regimental system, putting in place measures to counter the corrosive influence of missionary education, and suppression of dissenting

voices during the period towards independence and immediately after. By 1960s Sobhuza had become a charismatic leader who worked within the colonial ambit through shrewd, diplomacy, and perseverence to both protect and enhance the powers of the royal family and thus saw him surviving the traumas of colonialism.

Chapter 3

The Liqoqo (Privy Council) era and the Appointment of Mswati III

King Mswati III was born on 19th April 1968, at a time when Sobhuza II was advanced in years. Sobhuza had married Ntombi Tfwala who was a maid for *inkhosikati* LaMasuku who stayed at the Hlane royal palace. Ntombi Tfwala was the daughter of Mfelani Tfwala. Ngangenyoni Tfwala, who was a senior councillor and chairperson of the Swazi National Council, is reported as having asked the king why he took the girl, and the king responded by saying "he had had a dream in which the ancestors directed him to take a girl from that clan to build his house."[1] The same sentiments were expressed by Mankayane Tfwala, an elder of the Tfwala clan at Maliyaduma house, and prince Mfanasibili, who claim that the king had fallen sick and was instructed in a dream to scout for a Tfwala girl. The king is reported to have called the elders of the Tfwala clan and informed them of his dream.[2] He then mandated the Tfwala elders to look for the girl and bring her to him. The Tfwala elders took long to deliver the girl until the king, on his own efforts and with the assistance of Inkhosikati LaMasuku obtained Ntombi who stayed very close to him as she was LaMasuku's maid.[3] In fact it is argued that Inkhosikati LaMasuku was keen not to let this opportunity pass her as she believed that her son Phika would be the next king. One senior member of a chiefdom within the Manzini region alleged that Phika was bragging that he was going to be next king.[4] She colluded in assisting the king get the Tfwala girl because she believed that Ntombi would bear on her behalf the heir as her son Prince Phika was now over age. Whatever the case regarding this matter, it is clear that one has only managed to scratch the surface as there seems to be more to it than meets the eye.

Following the death of Sobhuza II, a power vacuum was created as the heir apparent, Makhosetive (later named Mswati III) was still a minor. The period of the *Liqoqo* is still remembered by many as a time marked by corruption, nepotism, and suppression. The death of Sobhuza II led to a fierce and open conflict between two factions of the royal household as princes attempted to gain executive power through either the *Liqoqo* or the cabinet. It is argued that the king was aware of the existence of these two factions but had managed to keep them under check as he skillfully played one group against the other.[5] Sobhuza is also reported to have been aware that his death would usher in a period of confusion in the country and thus made frantic efforts to try and avert this anticipated state of affairs. It is for this reason that before Sobhuza died he had relinquished all powers to Dzeliwe, one of his senior wives. The reason for choosing Dzeliwe was that she was childless and that this would save her from joining the race for the throne on behalf of her son. Sobhuza is also reported to have mandated the then justice minister, Polycarp Dlamini, to identify fifteen individuals who would form the *Liqoqo* which would assist the Queen Regent in the day to day activities of the state. However, the then justice minister is said to have delayed until the king passed away.[6] There is suspicion that a section of the royalty was behind the behaviour of the justice minister, and that this section was aware that the king would soon die. In fact it has been recently claimed that Sobhuza's death was the result of a certain *muti* man who was brought from Malawi to come and peform a certain ritual on the king.[7] This suggests that the late king did not sanction the names that finally appeared in the list of fifteen which formed the *Liqoqo.* Taking the argument further, Alan Booth's analysis of the Liqoqo composition contends that the inclusion of Dr George Msibi, an outsider, of allegedly considerable venality, raises doubts about the Liqoqo's authenticity.[8] This fifteen-member committee comprised nine princes, three senior chiefs and three commoners.[9] The net effect of this was to

begin the political disruption that marked the period from 1982 to 1986, when Mswati III was finally installed as king.

As earlier mentioned, the period following the death of king Sobhuza II was marked by the emergence of two factions. One faction was led by Prince Mfanasibili and George Msibi, the other, by Prince Gabheni and the Queen Regent Dzeliwe. Davies contends that Mfanasibili was operating under the belief that he was an acknowledged leader of the lineage from which the heir to the throne had been drawn. He thus regarded himself as the guardian of the monarchy.[10] The first move in the power struggle came from the faction led by Mfanasibili, who aimed to usurp the powers of the *Liqoqo* in a bid to pave his way to the throne. This faction initiated the move to limit the powers of the Prime Minister Mabandla Dlamini and the Queen regent Dzeliwe. When asked why he had embarked on the move to curtail the powers of the two, Prince Mfanasibili alleged that Dzeliwe together with her confidantes, had colluded to oust the king-designate, and in his stead wanted to install Prince Gabheni as king, and that the latter had already been given the crown name Ngwane III.[11] This cannot be proven, as there is scant corroborative evidence against which to check such claims. This is also very difficult to prove as Mfanasibili was at the centre of the political confusion that marked the *Liqoqo* era. What further complicates matters is that the individuals who were involved in the factions take defensive positions with regards to the activities of the *Liqoqo*. However, it must be noted that Prince Mfanasibili has on several occasions threatened to expose those he believd to have been behind the confusion during the time of the *Liqoqo,* and challenged his opponents to come out to dispute his claims. No one from among his opponents has had the courage to face him publicly. We may thus never know what happened behind closed doors as Mfanasibili claimed that he had been secretely offered the opportunity by the

king, Mswati III, to reveal everything before the then Army Commissioner Brigadier Fonono Dvuba, which was taped and supposedly taken to the king. He has also been appointed by the king to Swaziland Breweries as a Board member which lends credence to his claim that he has since relayed to the king his side of the story. He insists that whatever he did was in the interests of the Swazi nation. For instance, he claims to have warned the Queen Regent of an impending *coup* but she refused to heed his warning. He also claims that a letter had been written to the South African government by the other faction requesting the help of the South African army in staging a *coup* in the country to topple Ntombi Tfwala and the king-designate.[12]

Mfanasibili claims to have been the one responsible for sending the prince to school in England, and contends that this should serve to dispel any allegations levelled against him that he wanted to harm the heir to the throne, as insinuated by his critics. The king-designate was swiftly flown to Sherborne High School amidst speculation that the nation would never see their king. These speculations were fuelled by one episode when it was discovered that a powerful traditional healer from the Lubombo region had been secretly flown to England to doctor the young king without the knowledge of the nation's elders.[13] This is one episode that is down-played by Swazi traditional authorities, as no one wants to come out and discuss it openly. Chief Mafohla Sukati alluded to the fact that it was the Sibandze clan which had been initially entrusted with the responsibility of doctoring the heir to the throne but the Nsibandzes refused to board a plane to England as they argued that there was no kraal in England where the doctoring process could take place.[14]

Whatever Prince Mfanasibili alleges in defence of his actions, it is clear that the curtailment of the powers of the Queen Regent had more to do with the coming October 1983 national elections. Davies argues that as the national parliamentary elections drew near in 1983, the issue of Dzeliwe's authority became critical, as Dzeliwe still retained significant discretionary powers under the monarchical system, which gave her the right to nominate candidates, first to the Electoral College, and then to the list from which members of parliament were to be chosen. In short, the power of nomination became an important issue in the factional struggle.[15] The Mfanasibili-led faction pressed the Queen Regent to transfer these powers to the 'Authorised Person', Prince Sozisa Dlamini, who later became leader of the *Liqoqo,* which in turn had its position elevated to that of a Supreme Council of State. This committee was to have unlimited powers, much against traditional practice, in which the committee only played an advisory role. Dzeliwe refused to transfer her powers to the Authorised Person and was then dismissed in 1983 by the Mfanasibili-led faction, which had by now mananged to bring into its camp the Authorized Person. JSM Matsebula contends that the appointment of Sozisa raised eyebrows, as it was not in keeping with Swazi tradition. Sozisa was an uncle to the late king and grand uncle to the heir.[16] Matsebula also claims that before Dzeliwe was ousted from office she had tried to dismiss the *Liqoqo en bloc* but was obstructed by the Mfanasibili faction, which told her that she did not have the powers to do so. She was also reminded that she had no authority to take unilateral decisions without the *Liqoqo*. The Mfanasibili-led faction also refused to be frustrated by Dzeliwe as they told her that she had only come to the Dlamini as a wife, implying that she should instead be taking orders from her in-laws.

Immediately after Dzeliwe had been deposed, her position was taken over by the unlettered and malleable Ntombi Tfwala who was the mother of the king-designate. Ntombi agreed to transfer her powers to the Authorised Person, Prince Sozisa.

Prince Mabandla Dlamini, the then Prime Minister was also seen as a stumbling block by the Mfanasibili-led faction, and did everything possible to discredit him in the eyes of the traditional authorities and the nation. For instance, he was accused of frustrating the border negotiations between the Swazi government and the South African minority regime.[17] This was regarded by the Mfanasibili faction as treasonable and reason enough to dismiss him from office. Another reason which made Mabandla fall out of favour with the Mfanasibili-led faction was that he had instituted a commission to look into the corruption taking place in the *Tibiyo* organization and had recommended that the *Tibiyo* be put directly under the government of Swazilland. Mabandla argued that Swazis were now capable of running their own affairs. This did not go down well with the Mfanasibili faction as it was directly involved in the operations of the organisation, from which thousands of Emalangeni were reported to have disappeared. This remains a very sensitive matter as Tibiyo falls directly under the office of the king, and all its activities are not for public consumption.Tibiyo TakaNgwane is run as an independent company and is not accountable to the government of Swaziland. Some sources argue that in one instance Sishayi Nxumalo, who was then heading the organization, went to inform the king Sobhuza II that Mabandla was investigating the organization and had recommended that it be incorporated back to the mainstream economy of the country. (*Bafuna kukuphenya tinta Wena Waphakathi)* This is said to have angered the king and Mabandla soon became unpopular within royal circles.

As the conflict between the two factions deepened, the group led by Mabandla seemed to be losing the battle. For instance, the Mfanasibili faction claimed that Mabandla and his group was planning a *coup*. In the midst of that, a live leopard was found within Prime Minister Mabandla's living residence.[18] It still remains a mystery as to how the wild animal got there, but it was clear that the opposing forces had a hand in it.

The climax of this period of disorder was marked by the dismissal of Mabandla on 20th March 1983, who was then replaced by Prince Bhekimpi, a traditionalist conservative from Enkhaba Royal Residence, and a grandson of Prince Malunge of Nyakeni.[19] As things became dangerous for Mabandla, he fled to South Africa where he sought political asylum. Prince Gabheni was also dismissed from the *Liqoqo* and stripped of the Home Affairs ministerial post. It is not clear why Gabheni was dismissed. It is however probable that he had opposed the moves made by the Mfanasibili faction, and in that way was seen as a stumbling block. It should also be remembered that Mfanasibili claimed that Gabheni had colluded with Dzeliwe to oust the king-designate. However, there is scant evidence to support this claim. Davies argues that Gabheni had tried to oppose the moves made by Mfanasibili and his acolytes by first summoning all chiefs to the Lobamba cattle byre. Bhekimpi countered this move by warning the Swazi chiefs against attending this meeting, arguing that the elders of the nation had not sanctioned it.[20] Gabheni is also reported to have tried to mobilise university students to march to Lobamba to present a petition to have the dismissal of both Mabandla and Dzeliwe revoked. It was during this period that the People's Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) was formed. prince Gabheni had a hand in its formation. Its sole purpose was to counter the activities of the Mfanasibili-led faction. In a bid to counter prince Gabheni, prince Bhekimpi decided to unban the teacher organisation which had been banned in 1982, on

condition that the teachers agree to change the name of the association from 'union' to 'association'.[21]

After Dzeliwe had been dismissed, she took up the matter with the High Court, requesting it to intervene. However, the court officials were told by Bhekimpi that the court had no mandate to entertain the matter, as the issue was purely traditional. After this episode, Dzeliwe was, on the 4th September 1983, removed from Ludzidzini royal palace and taken to Zombodze below the Mdzimba Mountain, where she was kept under house arrest until her demise. It is worth mentioning the fact that the removal from office of Dzeliwe and the forceful taking away of the royal insignia (*ematinta*) from her were both un-Swazi as the three year mourning period had not ellapsed. A section of the elders of the Swazi nation argued that Dzeliwe should have been allowed to groom both the heir to the throne and her mother for the task that awaited them. She should have been allowed to exercise her powers until the three-year mourning period for the late Sobhuza II was over, whereupon she would have voluntarily handed over power to Ntombi.[22] They also argued that Ntombi should have not been given the royal insignia as she was still in mourning. This argument is echoed by Davis, who contends that Ntombi Tfwala tried to resist taking the royal insignia but was forced to wear it as it was customary that it should move from person to person.[23] (It is never put down). It only moves from person to person.) It is still difficult therefore to understand why the Mfanasibili faction flouted traditional procedure in the manner it did.

Another important event that took place during the *Liqoqo* period was the arrival of a roving ambassador to Swaziland, only known as Fernandez, who came from Nigeria and was a close friend to Prince Mfanasibili. JSM Matsebula contends that this man was a

foreigner, and was the ambassador of another country in which he was a foreigner too.[24] This incident raised eyebrows and was the cause of much murmuring among the Swazi. The official explanation that the country got was that this man was rich and had influence internationally. The protest this matter received from the Swazi populace forced his associates to relieve him of his duties in 1985.

In short then, the *Liqoqo* era became characterized by corruption, intimidation of its opponents and general repression of any dissenting voice. Swaziland was transformed into a police state as police and army road blocks were manned all over the country.[25] This prompted growing in dissatisfaction among the Swazi populace as they took to the streets demanding that both Dzeliwe and Mabandla be re-instated. For example, students from the university of Swaziland held demonstrations in Mbabane, the capital city. They also demanded the abolition of the *liqoqo.* During this period students approached certain chiefs and princes, including Gabheni, urging them to lead these demonstrations. Bhekimpi warned the Swazi community to desist from meddling in politics (*Bunhhinhhihhi*), as the elders of the nation knew what they were doing. Princes who opposed Ntombi Tfwala's confirmation were threatened with treason charges and accused of having pretentions to the throne. Finally, chiefs were whipped into line as they attempted to meet and counter the acts of the L*iqoqo* and were bluntly told by Sozisa (at that time wearing a pistol strapped around his waist) that every chief would have to be aware that there would be consequences.[26]

It is however interesting to note that Prince Mfanasibili still vehemently denies that he ever attempted to usurp the throne. He argues that it is his enemies who are bent on destroying him that have portrayed him as a bad person. He contends that he has suffered

a great deal at the hands of his opponents. He related one incident where his home at Lusushwana was overrun by soldiers and police officers who had been told that he had been to Mozambique to organise mercenaries to overthrow the state. He said that his house had its ceiling ripped off to find guns he was suspected of hidding in the house.I was personally shown around the house and saw the hole in the ceiling. He further argued that his opponents lied to the nation when, following his incarceration for seven years, they spread rumours around the country that he had tried to escape from prison in a coffin in which he played dead. He alleged that some prisoners had been coached to make false allegations against him and make the whole fabricated story seem real. He also denied ever dismissing Mabandla as Prime Minister of the country. He based his argument on the claim that at the time the premier was dismissed he was already incarcerated. A closer look at the dates proves the Prince wrong. He further argues that the people who are the real enemies of the state are the ones who are still surrounding the king, Mswati III, today and gladly mentions these by name. These individuals still occupy top positions in the government and security forces. He contends that these elements made sure that he was kept away from the king, so that they are able to cover their activities during the Liqoqo era. Mfanasibili concluded by saying that had it not been for him and princess Mnengwase (Sobhuza II's only surviving sister), Mswati III would not have been installed as king of the country.[27] It should however be pointed out that the credibility of such a statement remains elusive, as the heir was installed when Prince Mfanasibili was incarcerated.

Mswati III's ascent to the throne

The traditional process towards the coronation of the king, Makhosetive (king of nations), was started immediately after the demise of Sobhuza II. The king-designate was in and

out of the country many times. For instance, he had been flown back to the country for the first time on 10th September 1983 to be presented to the nation.[28] This, according to some elders of the nation, was done much against the dictates of Swazi culture and tradition. They claim that the presentation of the king to the Swazi nation should have been done at the age of sixteen. However, Matsebula, a well-placed source within traditional circles, contends that there was nothing sinister about this as it was customary that if the circumstances dictated, this could be done and was still within the confines of Swazi tradition. He also argues "this was seen as a positive move to ensure that the kingdom settles down as quickly as possible and recovers from the on going power struggles which had plagued the kingdom since the death of king Sobhuza II three years ago."[29] The presentation of Makhosetive was done at a time when a number of the members in the Mfanasibili camp had been detained for three weeks and later released and assumed their positions in the *Liqoqo*. These included, amongst others, Dzeliwe's lawyer Douglas Lukhele, Arthur Khoza, who had been the late king's interpreter, Prince Sulumlomo, and Prince Thunduluka.[30] Anyone who challenged the traditional authorities behind the presentation of Makhosetive to the nation, more especially princes, was threatened with treason charges, as their actions were seen as tantamount to contesting the throne.

The king-to-be was again shown to the nation on 29th August and 19th November 1984. It was during this visit that the king was shown his *Lusasa* (a place where the king would stay until all the rituals had been peformed on him in preparation for his eventual takeover of the reins of kingship). In August 1985 the king was again flown in for extensive ritualisation, during which time the *Butimba* (royal hunt only sanctioned by the king, which had been in abeyance) was also conducted. In October 1985, Prince Mfanasibili and George Msibi were dismissed from the *Liqoqo,* along with Majaji

Simelane, the then Commissioner of police. They were also arrested and charged with defeating the ends of justice.[31] They were sentenced to seven and five years imprisonment respectively.

Indvuna Samuel Dvuba summoned all chiefs and princes to announce the coronation date, planned for 25th April 1986. When Makhosetive was installed, the following dignitaries were in attendance; Moshoeshoe of Lesotho, King Zwelithini of Zululand, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, P.W. Botha of South Africa, Samora Machel of Mozambique, Quett Masire of Botswana, and Prince Michael representing Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom.[32] This ceremony first took place at Ludzidzini in the traditional way. It was at this time that Samuel Dvuba announced that the new king's name would be Mswati III. On the following day the celebrations were held at the Somhlolo National Stadium, where the king delivered his first speech, promising to follow in his father's footsteps. On 27 May 1986, after his coronation, the king dismissed the *Liqoqo* which had been created after the death of Sobhuza II.

In conclusion this chapter sought to show that the intense factional rivalry among the royal establishment and especially among Mswati III's elder brothers, presented him with a difficult legacy. This problem of managing the princes has been the primary reason for a new wave of 'placings' which in turn has prompted further political destabilisation in Swaziland, as will be discussed in chapter 6.

Chapter 4

The Magagula

This chapter looks at the integration of the Magagula, a Sotho group by origin, into the Swazi nation during the time of Sobhuza I and his son, Mswati II. It explores the way the Dlamini ruling clan used Madzanga Ndwandwe, a member of a highly respected clan within the royal family circles, and prince Maloyi Dlamini to keep the Magagula under surveillance through the system of placing and arranged marriages. It then examines the evolution of Magagula-Dlamini relations through the reigns of Sobhuza II, Mswati III, and the *Liqoqo* era in between.

It has been mentioned in chapter two that it was during his flight that Sobhuza I came to notice the cave sanctuaries owned by the Maseko at Ncabaneni and by the Magagula of Mnjoli at the Mdzimba Mountain. Sobhuza had realised that if he was to be safe from Shakas' attacks he needed to gain control of these areas, which offered good protection. The first group with which he decided to deal with were the Magagula of Mnjoli. Thomas Magagula and Lomalombo Dlamini maintain that it was relatively easy for the Swazi to defeat the Magagula because they had split into several independent groups before the arrival of the Swazi. Sobhuza started first by sending messengers to Mnjoli for the purpose of establishing some kind of an alliance with him. Sobhuza's messengers were thoroughly beaten by Mnjoli's men. According to Lomalombo Dlamini Mnjoli used a sharpened stick (sibhaju) to poke out the eye of one of Sobhuza's messengers and told the victim that he was not doing that to him (victim) but was doing it to the one who had sent him (meaning Sobhuza).[1] It was after this that Sobhuza decided to attack Mnjoli. One of his followers (Makhubu) came up with an idea of smuggling

Swazi soldiers in under cattle hides as the Magagula brought their cattle in from pasture at dusk. These then attacked the Magagula men from inside and slew Mnjoli.[2] The reason why this plan was adopted was because Mnjoli's headquarters were well defended and at this time Sobhuza did not have the force to attack Mnjoli head-on. In the Dlamini account this plan succeeded as they managed to kill Mnjoli and also obtained his rain-making charms. However, the Magagula claim that Sobhuza did not gain possession of these charms and attribute their suppression to Mswati II and other Swazi kings who followed. Their argument is that the Swazi still feared the Magagula as they believed that they still possessed the war-and rain-making charms.[3]

According to the Magagula informants, Mnjoli's people were scattered. The majority of them went to Moyeni, chief of the Magagula of the Madlangempisi area, who offered them a place to stay where Malamlela II is currently chief. Thomas Magagula says that Moyeni had an obligation to accommodate these within his area because he was their father (as he came from the senior house of the Magagula).[4]

The reasons why Sobhuza attacked Mnjoli are clear; he wanted the war-and rain-making charms and also wanted to bring the Magagula under his control. The exact reasons as to why Moyeni was attacked are not clear, as there are various accounts that have been recorded by different interest groups. Moyeni, it seems, refused to acknowledge Sobhuza's control, considering himself a king in his own right. Bonner argues that after the defeat of Mnjoli, Moyeni was determined to hold out against Sobhuza, forcing Sobhuza reluctantly to fight Moyeni.[5] Together with the Ndwandwe and five Portuguese mercenaries[6] who brought with them twenty guns, Moyeni was besieged at his mountain stronghold Mkhutsali. Moyeni is believed to have been a magician. Whenever he was attacked, he moved to the top of the mountain together with his followers and cattle. The mountain would be covered by thick fog

even in broad daylight. According to Gogo Magongo of Endondakusuka, the mountain would be elongated which made it appear higher. When the attacking army tried to climb up, the stones would become loose and they would fall down.[7] This argument is repeated by Magangeni Dlamini, a senior prince in an article entitled "The Humiliation of Moyeni by Somhlolo". He writes that the climb of the sacred hill was magical and unending. Darkness fell even before they reached the summit where the chiefs' cavern was. The Swazi army slept at the bottom of the hill for days. Whenever Moyeni wanted to go down to get water from the nearby stream he would walk over the Swazi warriors whom he sent to sleep before returning to the mountain in safety. The Swazi warriors would feel that someone was walking over them but would not be able to get up. When he was back on top of the mountain, the army would awaken, look around for his foot-marks, and realize that Moyeni had been down to the stream[8].

As more reinforcements were called and Moyeni ran short of food supplies, he was forced to flee to the Madolo territory near modern Maputo where he sought refuge. The Magagula say that he ran away with his son Mlingo who looked like him (Moyeni). He told Mlingo not to follow in his footsteps, as this would weaken him, allowing the Swazi army to catch up with him. As they ran away, Moyeni used dense fog to shield them from the Swazi army in pursuit. Mlingo made a mistake by not obeying Moyeni's orders and the Swazi army caught up with him and killed him. They took his head to Sobhuza. Upon arrival they sang and danced, showing that they had killed Moyeni. To their surprise, however, they found that Moyeni had returned from the Madolo and had gone straight to Sobhuza I to surrender and to enquire why Sobhuza's army had killed his son. Sobhuza then showed Moyeni to the warriors, who were disappointed. The Magagula say that from this meeting of the two kings they agreed to live peacefully side by side. Moyeni had surrendered to Sobhuza but not in the sense that he would cease to be king of the Magagula.

Lomalombo Dlamini takes a different view and argues that Moyeni's surrender to Somhlolo was an indication of admitting defeat.[9] Thomas Magagula claims that Sobhuza I requested Moyeni to show him how the Magagula made rain as theirs was more powerful. For instance, the rain of the Magagula did not thunder like that of the Dlamini which, after making a great deal of noise, produce little rain. That of the Magagula by contrast rains for days, causing rivers to get flooded.[10] At this meeting the two kings informally divided the land between themselves. Sobhuza took the central part and Moyeni the northeast.

The Magagula thus argue that the Swazi never defeated Moyeni and challenge anyone with proof of date, venue and war to come forward and dispute their claim. However, the question that we then need to ask ourselves is why did the Magagula allow themselves to be incorporated so fully into the Swazi state. For example, during the *Incwala* ceremony, *Umhlanga* reed dance and sacred shrub *(Lusekwane*) ceremony they send regiments to the Dlamini royal kraal, even though they annually celebrate their own ceremony, known as *Sibhimbi*, which could be loosely translated to mean their own *incwala.*[11] Furthermore during the two World Wars they agree that they were part of the two regiments, *Emasotja* and *Sikhonyane* known as Company 1991 which was sent by Sobhuza to fight alongside British forces and numbered about 3836 men.[12] Amongst those sent were Sibhilivane Magagula, Lwaneseboya, Njingeni and Mncele.[13] The Magagula as a Sotho group also had their own language, style of dress, and their own traditions and customs. But today they have lost almost all of these. At the same time, one should point out that a number of cultural activities were copied by the Swazi from the Sotho, for instance, their hairstyles (*ticholo*), *libandla/pitso,* and many others. This means that there was a process of reciprocal influence.

It is therefore evident that the Magagula have to a large extent been integrated into the Swazi society. They now regard themselves as Swazis. Some scholars are of the view that today there

is nothing that distinguishes the Magagula from the Swazi.[14] This does not mean that they have retained nothing in the form of traditions or customs peculiar to themselves. This is still practised at family level. It is common in Swaziland, as Matsebula, Denoon, and Omer-Cooper[15] observe, that conquered groups were allowed to retain their traditions, but only if they affirmed loyalty to the Dlamini ruling clan. Even today in Swaziland each clan has activities that are peculiar to itself, be it Maseko, Hlophe, Mnisi, Gama or whatever. The Nkambule for instance, are buried only at sunset, as they are known as *Emalandzelalanga* (followers of the sun). The next section will therefore try to explore more precisely the relationship of the Magagula to the central Dlamini authorities.

The Magagula, Maloyi and the Ndwandwe

As was noted earlier, Maloyi was given the area of Ekutsimleni by Mswati II. Maloyi was the son of Sobhuza 1. The area had been *phakelaed* to his mother Lamawandla. William Dlamini claims that ever since Maloyi was posted to this area there have been land disputes involving him (Maloyi) and the Magagula, more especially those under Malamulela II (Mnjolis' grand-son).[16] According to LoMalombo Dlamini, a senior prince of Ekutsimuleni, the area up to the black Mbuluzi was allocated to Maloyi, and the Magagula were told that their territory lay on the other side of the Mbuluzi river down to Tshaneni and Mhlume.[17] Maria Mvubu says that during the time of the Magagula leaders Mthonga, and Sijula, the latter being a prince and chief of Ekutsimuleni in the early years of the twentieth century, there was no land dispute. It was only after the death of these two leaders that trouble started.[18]

The Magagula did not lose land and status just to Maloyi. Early in the reign of Mswati II, they lost their chiefly status and portion of their territory to Madzanga Ndwandwe. Both Maloyi and

Madzanga II were a thorn in the flesh of the Magagula as they continued to encroach on land belonging to the Magagula. In fact, the Magagula were left sandwiched between the chiefdoms of Ekutsimuleni and Buhlebuyeza or Nkambeni, with Maloyi on the southwestern flank and Madzanga on the Northwest and Northeast. The Ndwandwe are a very important clan in the history of the royal family. The mothers of Swazi kings Sobhuza 1, Mswati 11 and Sobhuza 11 came from this clan. The Ndwandwe, also known as the Mkhatjwa, play an important role during the *incwala* ceremony. They are responsible for doctoring the king with seawater. It is important to be aware of this background information as it sheds light on the land disputes involving the Magagula of king Moyeni and the Ndwandwe of Madzanga II

According to Mdvuba Magagula, Madzanga was Moyeni's protege, a refugee who was found by Moyeni and taken care of by the Magagula before being taken to *Indlovukazi* Lazidze who was his aunt. Following Zwides' defeat by Shaka in 1819, Zwide's army was forced to flee in different directions. Madzanga 1 fled towards Swaziland looking for his aunt Lazidze, who was Sobhuzas' wife and Zwide's daughter. The Magagula assert that Madzanga was found by a Masilela man (Moyenis' *indvuna*) and was taken to Moyeni. He was well looked after by Moyeni and given sour milk. After some time, Moyeni realized that Madzanga talked like Lazidze, and *Indlovukazi* Lazidze was alerted to his presence. The Ndwandwe, for example, use the letter 'y' for 'l' and if they want to say " *lomuntfu loya* they say '*yomuntu yoya'* (that person). Following the indlovukazi order, Madzanga was taken to her, at the age of 26. Both Lazidze and Sobhuza were happy to see him. Sobhuza was interested in protecting him for purposes of reviving Zwides' kingdom as his Bulandza (in-laws). Madzanga was allocated an area by the king at Etjedze (Shiselweni), eTigeni around Zombodze11 and Esinceni in the Manzini region.[19] However, Madzanga declined these areas, requesting that he be sent back to Moyeni whom he now regarded as his father. Both the Magagula and the Ndwandwe are agreed on this point. It was then accepted that Moyeni should continue looking after him. Moyeni on his own accord

gave him an area on the other side of the Nkomazi River now known as Bulandzeni to erect his own homestead. Moyeni then assigned a number of his followers to stay with Madzanga. Moyeni also gave Madzanga cattle for lobola and for sour milk.[20]

The Magagula deny ever giving Madzanga an area to rule as a chief but only a piece of land upon which to put up his home.[21] The Magagula, however seem to contradict themselves on this point as they also argue that Madzanga was given Bulandzeni, a wide area north of the Nkomazi River. This implies that they now accept the version that Madzanga is chief of Bulandzeni. The Magagula have also cited this argument from Matsebula and Denoon, who are also of the view that Madzanga was given an area to rule by Sobhuza north of the Nkomazi river.[22] This is therefore meant to dispute any claim by the Ndwandwe over the Madlangempisi as also under their their control. This will be elaborated later in the chapter.

The second version of this story is narrated by the Ndwandwe and the Dlamini of royal blood. These claim that king Sobhuza gave Madzanga the area of Bulandzeni. He was keen to re-establish Zwides' kingdom, presumably after Moyeni had returned from the Madolo and rendered his allegiance to Sobhuza. If the latter version is correct, it implies that Somhlolo placed Madzanga at Ebulandzeni for purposes of surveillance. It is perhaps worth pointing out here that Madzanga has two royal kraals, one in Nkambeni an area owned by the Magagula, and another at Bulandzeni.[23] This has also become the centre of controversy between the Magagula and Madzanga, as the Magagula say that Madzanga was only given the area at Bulandzeni north of the Nkomati river.

During the reign of Mswati II the Ndwandwe were elevated to a position of chiefship over the Magagula of Moyeni, who were relegated to a junior position. This has never been accepted by the Magagula of Moyeni who have paid Sobhuza II a number of visits with the aim of having

this reversed. Even today the same issue is being pursued with the present king Mswati III. There are different versions as to how the Magagula relegation came about. The Magagula deny that they were ever relegated to a junior position and dismiss any version of it as fabricated. This view has also been shared by a senior Prince of Luve, Lomalombo Dlamini, who dismisses this as a story invented by the Ndwandwe to legitimize their baseless claim.[24] The Ndwandwe argue that king Mswati II had summoned his people to his Hhohho palace to bring Marula beer. The Magagula did not pay heed to this call, an act which angered Mswati, who ordered that the Magagula be attacked and destroyed. This was typical of Mswati who time and again summoned the chiefs because he wanted to see those loyal and faithful to him and also to ensure that the loyalty of his chiefs was maintained at a level that did not show obvious signs of recalcitrance.[25]

Another version advanced by Magangeni Dlamini was that the *Indlovukazi* Lazidze sent six men to take marula beer to Mswati's Hhohho royal residence. She instructed these men to go to Moyeni who would help them transport the beer across the flooded Nkomazi River. The Magagula of Moyeni knew how to cross the Nkomazi River when it was in flood.[26] Some of the Magagula interviewed agreed with this story and argued that they refused to transport the beer across the flooded river for fear of their lives. Thomas Magagula adds that they had no obligation to transport the beer because they were kings of their own accord, and paying heed to such a call would have compromised their position. LoMalombo disagrees with this interpretation and argues that the Magagula had indeed refused. Madzanga, upon arrival at the king's palace used this as an opportunity to undermine the Magagula telling Mswati that the Magagula were no longer respecting him.[27]

There is yet another version advanced by the Dlamini royal family and the Ndwandwe. These assert that after Madzanga had been to see his aunt Lazidze, he requested food. Lazidze sent the food some time later but this never got to Madzanga as it was intercepted by the Magagula of Moyeni who decided to eat it. Mahlubane Ndwandwe remarks that "Moyeni took the food and gave it to his own people"[28] Madzanga was later to learn that his aunt had sent the food, and reported to Lazidze that it had not reached him. The king (Mswati) was angered by Moyeni's act and decided to attack the Magagula because they had shown that they had no respect for the Dlamini royalty. An army was sent to decimate the Magagula, but Madzanga who regarded Moyeni as his father protected him and pleaded with Mswati not to kill Moyeni. His plea was successful. Mswati then called Moyeni and Madzanga to his royal palace. It was at this meeting that Mswati announced that from then on the Ndwandwe would be chiefs over the Magagula and that the Magagula were relegated to a junior position of being *tindvuna* (surbodinates) for the Ndwandwe.[29]

A final version that may also contain a germ of truth, and is certainly consistent with other acts of Mswati, is that Mswati at one time was travelling to his Hhohho royal residence and happened to see Moyeni's homestead, which awed him by its size. He is said to have asked for the owner of the homestead and was told that it belonged to Moyeni. Mswati then ordered that Moyeni be attacked.[30] This probably explains Mswati's true position. He demoted Moyeni because he felt threatened by Moyeni's prosperity and power. Booth says that Madzanga was able to entice Mswati into calling off his assault on Moyeni by suggesting that the king instead grant him control over the Magagula chiefdom and place Moyeni under his authority, a humiliation at once as politically effective as, and as far less costly than, a military defeat.[31] As mentioned earlier, the Magagula deny this as a fabricated story coined by the Ndwandwe to legitimize their illegal claim of chieftainship.

The Magagula further claim that their relegation to a junior position occured during the time when the British introduced taxes. The Magagula contend that their chief Madlangempisi had been arrested and sentenced by the British to three years imprisonment for witchcraft. It is allegd that a number of Madlangempisi's children died whilst young. He decided to hire a traditional doctor who was to perform a witch-hunt in order to identify the culprit who, it was believed, was amongst his twenty wives. The muti man gave Madlangempisi's wives a traditional concoction to drink known as *imphondvo*. It was believed that the culprit would immediately collapse and die. However, this exercise went horribly awry as most of the women died, an act, which was viewed by the British as witchcraft. They brought charges against Madlangempisi.[32] It should however be noted that no trial records exist to substatiate this claim in the Swazi National Archives. The Ndwandwe, because they were educated, used the opportunity of Madlangempisi's absence to declare themselves as chiefs of the area and requested that they be given a tax identity book. (The tax identity book was given to chiefs for purposes of collecting taxes from their own people and handing over the money to British officials. LoMalombo Dlamini, a senior prince, and Velebaleni Nkambule, the latter being a senior member of Mafutseni inner-council (*Bandlancane*), confirm that there was confusion with regards to the appointment of chiefs during the Colonial period. They argue that people who had never been chiefs were appointed chiefs by the British for purposes of tax collection. LoMalombo goes on to say that there are only seven chiefs in Swaziland and that the rest are not chiefs. He argued that amongst the seven chiefs he knew were (a) the Mahlalela of Ngudumane, (b) Mamba, (c) Simelane, (d) Matsenjwa, and (e) Nyawo.[33]

Magagula-Swazi relations during the reign of Mbandzeni and Bhunu

The Magagula attribute the loss of most of their land to Mbandzeni and the concessionaires. Thomas Magagula for instance, argues that Mbandzeni never consulted them when granting land to the concessionaires. Specifically he claims, "the Balekane farm was given to a certain whiteman named Mnandi, which was later left in the custody of Rev. Forster who was his son-in law. In addition to the Balekane farm, we also lost farms portion numbers 286, 287, 63, 356 388 and 509. We have since written a letter to the Swaziland Government demanding that these be brought back to us.''[34] The Magagula further allege that when Swaziland received its independence, most of these farms were taken over by the Tibiyo Organisation. The Swazi king on behalf of the Swazi nation owns this organisation.[35] The Magagula say that time has now come that this land be returned to the original inhabitants as it has been held in their trust by the king. The Simunye, Tshaneni and Mhlume Companies, who grow sugar cane on a commercial scale, now cultivate most of the farms the Magagula claim as theirs.

Marriage was one of the powerful tools used by the Dlamini to bring under their full control non- Dlamini chiefs, more especially those who proved to be recalcitrant. Dlamini princesses were given out to non- Dlamini chiefs, and by Nguni custom these princesses automaticallybecame the chief wife of the incumbent chief and gave birth to the heir. Thomas Magagula thus says that the Dlamini carefully used marriage to destroy the chiefdoms of the *Emakhandzambili*. Hence, if *Emakhandzambili* married a Dlamini lady it "was tantamount to conquering themselves as well as their own land and also meant selling their land to the nephews or the princes."[36] The Magagula say that the first Swazi king to send his daughter to the Magagula was Bhunu, who sent princess Dzeliwe to marry Madlangempisi, Ndlondlo's heir.

The Magagula allege that Bhunu did this because he was aware of the fact that the Dlamini had not conquered the Magagula. The Magagula affirm that they had always resisted Dlamini encroachment and that their relationship with the Dlamini had always been sour. The Magagula also say that by giving his daughter to Madlangempisi, Bhunu was trying to mend the relationship between the Magagula and the Dlamini, which had remained bad since Sobhuza's conquest and killing of Mnjoli at KaLancabane Mountain. The arrival of princess Dzeliwe at the Magagula royal kraal was to break the conventional way of marriage, which the Magagula had always relied upon to bear an heir to the throne. The Magagula had always enjoyed the freedom to choose the heir to the throne following the demise of the incumbent. Now that princess Dzeliwe had come, this abruptly came to an end as Dzeliwe, by virtue of being a princess, was now to give birth to the heir. Dzeliwe gave birth to Simangaliso in 1900, who succeeded his father Madlangempisi in 1938 at Nyakatfo, an area still under the control of the Magagula. This area came to be later known as Echibini or Sidvwashini, situated north of Madlangempisi and beyond the Nkomati River.

Trouble started after the death of Madlangempisi as the Dlamini claimed ownership of the area in Sidvwashini.The Dlamini based their claim on the grounds that Dzeliwe was chief of the area. Jones says that Dzeliwe was allocated (*phakelaed)* at Sidvwashini on the Nkomati River. He however, goes on to note that this was an unusual procedure.[37] This confusion has two roots. On the one hand it is attributed to the British colonial officers who went about registering people as chiefs for purposes of collecting tax. These had registered princess Dzeliwe as chief of the area. The Magagula argue that because of the error made by the British in appointing and registering Dzeliwe as chief of the area, the Dlamini then used that to claim ownership of the area. This dispute became more pronounced during the reign of Sobhuza II. The Magagula royal

house have refused to give in to the claim made by the Dlamini, as they argue that it is unSwazi to say that Dzeliwe was chief of the area.

The second root of the dispute is that Swazi traditional authorities claimed that the area belonged to Sobhuza II and had been *phakelaed* to princess Dzeliwe. Thomas Magagula argues that this dispute emanates from a request by Sobhuza II to the Magagula to allow him to erect his residence in the area under question because he needed a place to rest whenever he was going to his Hhohho royal residence. Thomas further argues that the Magagula royal house refused and instead Madlangempisi decided to build princess Dzeliwe a home on the land that had been asked for by Sobhuza, as a means to counter Sobhuza's machinations. Chief Mdvuba added another dimension to the dispute by insisting that Madlangempisi decided to move Dzeliwe from the main royal kraal to Sidwvashini because she was not on good terms with the other wives of Madlangempisi.[38] The Magagula argue then that that home rightfully belonged to Madlangempisi and "here were Madlangempisi's cattle, goats and chickens."[39] As far as the Magagula are concerned Dzeliwe was a wife to Madlangempisi, who was also *lobolaed* according to Swazi law and custom. They insist that the marriage between Madlangempisi and the princess was not supposed to be an instrument of conquering the territory of the Magagula. Customarily, the area should have been taken over by Madlangempisi's son, and not Sobhuza II. The Magagula contend that it is traditionally unacceptable for the Dlamini to convert Madlangempisi's homestead to a Dlamini royal residence arguing that the incumbent chief is nephew to king Sobhuza II.

The Magagula of Madlangempisi and Sobhuza II.

The Magagula in the Madlangempisi area claim that they paid Sobhuza II a number of visits during his reign with a view to having their chief Mdvuba II re-installed to his position. The Magagula contend, somewhat implausibly, that Sobhuza II had no problem with their request because he was aware of the fact that the land currently known as Swaziland belonged to the Magagula. This is a highly contested position as Bonner contends that from the time of king Mswati II the autonomous status of the Magagula had been whittled away when Mswati II shifted his headquarters to Hhohho in an effort to avoid Zulu attacks. [40] However, Mankwempe Magagula (in Bonner), a member of the inner-council of Madlangempisi chiefdom, added that though the land belonged to the Magagula, they too were not the original inhabiants of the area as they came from Tshenilembule (sic) in the Transvaal. Mankwempe further argued that starting from chief Ndlondlo, Madlangempisi, Simangaliso, and Mdvuba II were all presented to Sobhuza II for confirmation as chiefs. This is however problematic, more especially the case of Ndlondlo who reigned earlier than the time of Sobhuza II. Chief Mdvuba II and his *Libandla* argued that they at one stage paid Sobhuza II a visit at the Masundvwini royal village for purposes of *kwetfula* (pay tribute) to the king. They assert that in the presence of a number of senior princes, amongst whom were Gabheni, Mfanasibili, and Mahhomu, Sobhuza said that the Magagula should be respected as they were the rightful owners of the land.[41] Sobhuza is also supposed to have said the Magagula and the Ndwandwe should regroup according to their identies as clans and observe their own customs. He even encouraged the Magagula to rebuild Mnjoli's former royal palace at Lancabane next to the Mdzimba Mountains where Mnjoli had settled before being attacked by Somhlolo in the early nineteenth century.

The Dlamini traditional authorities however hold a completely opposite view, asserting that Sobhuza II stated clearly that he was not going to change anything with regards to Mswati's

demotion of the Magagula.[42] It may be that Sobbhuza's procrastination and prevarication hold the answer to this puzzle. It is quite possible, as the Magagula claim, that he kept promising them that he was going to look into their problem but in reality did nothing until death overtook him in 1982. The position of Sobhuza II with regards to the dispute involving the Magagula and the Ndwandwe is that he tended to side with the latter. The Ndwandwe are mothers' to Sobhuza because Sobhuza's mother was also a Ndwandwe.

The Magagula during the *Liqoqo* era.

The problems faced by the Magagula in their attempt to have their matter resolved seem to have continued without a solution in sight. Though the Magagula claim that the current chief Mdvuba II was installed in September 1983 as chief of Madlangempisi area, the Dlamini Royal House seem to hold a different view. The Magagula contend that Mdvuba was taken to the king, Sobhuza II before his demise for confirmation and was thereafter allowed to celebrate the *Sibhimbi* (Installation ceremony*)*. The Magagula contend that the ceremony was an indication that the traditional authorities had approved their chief. It is however difficult to ascertain the validity of the Magagula claim as there was no one from the royal family who came to grace the occasion as a representative of the king, and neither did they have any document to prove same. Under normal circumnstances, custom dictates that when a chief celebrates *Sibhimbi*, the royal family sends a representative, inviting also neighbouring chiefs who shall serve as witnesses that the *sibhimbi* did take place.[43] Furthermore, the Magagula also seem to have manoeuvred during the *Liqoqo* era to have their case resolved by the traditional authorities. However, it should also be borne in mind that the *Liqoqo* era was one characterised by corruption and nepotism, and that generally, a lot of things went awry during this time in Swazi politics. Kululu Tsela, a senior member working for the Nkhanini Traditional Court, alluded to the fact that during the time of the *Liqoqo* a number of things went wrong, chief among which was the

erasure of Sobhuza's taped speeches where he had passed his judgements on chieftancy disputes like that of the Magagula and the Ndwandwe.[44]

The Magagula claim to have a letter written by Swazi authorities confirming Mdvuba as the chief of Madlangempisi. It should however be pointed out that the acquisition of the appointment letter by the Magagula during the period of the *Liqoqo* raises questions of its authenticity. For instance, Prince LoMalombo alleged that it was Prince Mfanasibili who had revived chief Mdvuba's tax book, in violation of what Sobhuza II had ruled on the matter. The Magagula claim that the letter had been signed by the then queen regent Dzeliwe in 1983, who acted in her capacity as the head of state after the demise of King Sobhuza II. It should therefore be emphasised that it was only after Sobhuza's death that the Magagula managed to obtain an instrument nullifying Mswati II's order.[45] Immediately the Magagula had aquired the letter authorising Mdvuba to be chief of Madlangempisi, Prince Sozisa is said to have responded by forcefully taking the letter from the Magagula and destroying it. Mankwempe Magagula confirmed that their success was short-lived as Prince Sozisa, the Authorised Person who headed the *Liqoqo* after the demise of Sobhuza, took Mdvuba's tax identity book from him and destroyed it.[46] Mdvuba was first removed from office on 2nd August 1985, and was re-instated again in December 1985, and removed again in 1986. All the letters had the Swaziland Government stamp, as indication that indeed a lot happened during this period. The Magagula have been pushed from pillar to post trying to get their matter resolved by the Swazi traditional authorities but to no avail. The Magagula believe that taking the matter to Swazi traditional courts, to district officers and to the police has not helped, as all these are biased. One example: Elmon Methula, a member of Mdvuba's inner council, claimed that Mshamdane Sibandze, the then Hhohho Regional Administrator sided with the Ndwandwe as himself was mothered by a princess. When Mdvuba sent his *indvuna* to be registered, Mshamdane refused.[47]

The Magagula and Mswati 111

The matter between the Magagula of Madlangempisi has dragged for quite some time now without any solution coming from the Swazi traditional authorities. Even king Mswati III has failed to resolve the conflict. The Magagula have since taken the matter to court, seeking an order evicting and restraining the chief of the Ndwandwe, Madzanga II, together with his followers from the Magagula area under Mdvuba II. In the High Court papers the main complaint is that chief Madzanga continues "to leave his area of jurisdiction (Bulandzeni) and claim power and authority over my chiefdoms."[48] Mdvuba sought to challenge Madzanga because he believed that the area, Madlangempisi is under his authority and that Madzanga had no power and authority over his chiefdom.

In 1991 Chief Madzanga ploughed Mdvuba's maize fields at Emzaceni (an area under Mdvuba and very close to the Magagula royal residence).When the maize was already cobbing in 1992, the Magagula mobilized some of their followers and destroyed the maize. Madzanga reported the matter to the police and more than 100 of the Magagula were arrested, including their chief Mdvuba.[49] This became a very sensitive issue and was covered by the local media. The Magagula allege the Ndwandwe were able to get support from the police as the Station Commander at the time was a certain Frances Ndwandwe. The matter was brought to the magistrate where the Magagula won the case and were discharged as it was proven in court that the field belonged to Mdvuba.[50] The matter was again taken to the Ludzidzini traditional authorities, where the two parties were told to go home as the king would send his men to see the said field. The delegation from the king arrived in 1994 led by Maloyilande and Nhloko Zwane. The matter was debated at the Madlangempisi *inkhundla* where both the Magagula and the Ndwandwe were in full attendance. The verdict of the Nhloko-Zwane led delegation was that Mdvuba was the rightful owner of the field.[51] In 1996, Mswati III sent another delegation of Hhohho chiefs, which included, amongst others, chiefs Majahane, Solani, and Maduma who

also went to see the fields. This time the matter was brought before the traditional court. Their verdict once again, according to the Magagula, was that the field belonged to Mdvuba as it was nearer to him.

In 1997, Mswati called all Hhohho chiefs at the kaLozitha palace and told them that the purpose of the meeting was to advise the two chiefs (Mdvuba and Madzanga) to go back to their areas and live in peace. In 1998, the regional officer of Piggs Peak, by the name of Nhlanhla Dlamini, looked into the issue of Mdvuba's tax identity book and has since corrected the anomalies barring Mdvuba from collecting taxes from his area of jurisdiction.[52]

In his defence papers filed in the High Court of Appeal, Madzanga alludes to the fact that his father, Madzanga 1 was indeed a rootless refugee when he fled from the Shakan wars of disruption, but then emphasizes the fact that the Magagula cannot claim to be chiefs as they were demoted by Mswati II, a position which has not been altered up to today.

The Magagula have cited L. Rose, who has argued that in Swaziland there are three types of chiefs. She writes; " Over the course of history, three types of chiefs acquired control over land: *Indvuna*, the governor of a royal village; *umtfwanenkhosi*, the prince who is allotted an area; and *sikhulu,* the clan chief."[53] The argument advanced by the Magagula is that Madzanga does not fit in any of these categories. According to Swazi law and custom, then Madzanga is not a chief.

On the other hand Madzanga has submitted that the matter be dismissed with costs, as Mdvuba is not a chief. Madzanga argues that the area claimed by Mdvuba is under his control. He further argues that the matter has been brought to the wrong forum as it is a purely traditional matter which should be taken to the traditional authorities at Ludzidzini. Madzanga further

alleges that what was done by Mswati II has been re-iterated by Sobhuza II and Mswati III in *libandla*. Madzanga thus argues that the whole area is under his control and includes the following areas;

Bulandzeni-------*indvuna* Khehla Mayaba.

Ndwvabangeni----*indvuna* Jahamafisha Sifundza

Bhekinkonzo-----*indvuna* Sibangani Magagula

Mavula----------*indvuna* Ndlavela Magagula

Nkambeni---------*Indvuna* Lomahuda Mdluli

Madlangempisi --*indvuna* Gabha Magagula

Ngojeni----------*indvuna* Mkhosi Gumedze

Nsontamathumbu- *Indvuna* Malindane Ndwandwe.

As earlier stated the matter was taken to the Court of Appeal and set down for June 2001. The matter could not be closed because it required a full bench of judges (5).

The Court of Appeal passed down the judgement as follows, which is unabridged;

[1] Mdvuba is chief of Mandlangempisi in the Hhohho region.

[2] Mdvuba is chief but contestible and that there is a chieftancy dispute between Mdvuba and Madzanga.

[3] Madzanga is chief of Bulandzeni and cannot be contested.

[4] Respodents 1,2,3,4-this includes the farmer's associations which have been allowed to operate in the area claimed by Madzanga. Their place of bussiness is at Bulandzeni and not Madlangempisi, in the Hhohho region.

[5] Madlangempisi includes the areas used by the farmers' associations which are under Mdvuba. For instance, Mavula, Enkambeni, Sihhoye, Manzana, Mahlabathini and Mdvuba has his indunas there.

[6] The court says therefore; Mdvuba says the three associations mentioned above should move to Bulandzeni and should not bother Mdvuba again, beyond Inkomati River.

[7] According to Madzanga's submission, Mdvuba is not a chief but an *induna* for Madzanga.

The Magagula conceded that at first they had had problems with the judgement because they believed that they had lost the case to Madzanga. But upon close scrutiny of the contents, they have discovered that technically they had won it. This is however a highly questionable position, as it is clear that the Magagula have lost the case. Thomas Vabula Magagula, for instance, argues that part one of the ruling does say that Madvuba is chief of Madlangempisi and that there is a chieftancy dispute between Madzanga and Mdvuba. Part three says that Madzanga is chief of Bulandzeni and not Madlangempisi. This according to Thomas, Mdvuba accepts because he knows that Madzanga is chief of Bulandzeni and this is what he sought to show through the court. This implies that Madzanga should then move together with the farmer's associations to Bulandzeni and leave Madlangempisi, which is an area under the jurisdiction of Mdvuba. In short, then, what Thomas said is that the first six points in the judgement show unquestionably that Mdvuba is chief of Madlangempisi.

However, the seventh point is not in favour of Mdvuba and is the one which made Mdvuba lose the case. This last point contests Mdvuba's status as chief based on Madzanga's submission that Mdvuba is his *induna.* The Magagula felt that it was their lawyer, Advocate Ernest Thwala, who let them down because when he made his submission, he did not attach the three crucial documents in Mdvuba's possession which were signed by Queen Regent Dzeliwe in 1983 and other top government officers, acknowledging that Mdvuba was confirmed chief of Madlangempisi.

The first document was the letter written by the Queen Regent on 1, July, 1983, which in part reads: *To whom it may concern* "You are given authority to grant Mdvuba a new tax-payers book for Madlangempisi area." The Magagula felt that had these crucial documents been submitted, Mdvuba would have won the case.[54]

The other memorundum was written on 6 December 1985. This talked about the Removal Amendment of the memorundum which stopped Mdvuba from operating as chief of Madlangempisi. The Regional Secretary of Manzini, E.J. Mavuso, who is now the Judicial Commissioner, wrote this document. It sought to correct an instrument which had in the past barred Mdvuba from operating as chief of Madlangempisi. In part it reads: "Following the matter before the induna of Lusaseni in council today on the 6 December 1985; This letter serves to confirm the instruction that Mdvuba be given authority to operate as chief of Madlangempisi as he had done prior. Any correspondence following that of the Queen Regent Dzeliwe is therefore null and void as from 6 December 1985"[55]

The third document was a memorundum dated December 18,1985. It was written by the Hhohho regional Secretary, Macobolwane Mamba, and was copied to Secretary of Tinkhundla, Revenue offices, Regional Secretaries, Principal Secretary, all regional offices (Police and the Defence force), Commissioner of Police, Clerk to Swazi National Council, Station Commander-Piggs Peak, and the Accountant General in Mbabane.
The title of the memo was: *Instalment of Mdvuba as chief of Madlangempisi area*, and it confirmed that Mdvuba, had been rightfully made chief of Madlangempisi.[56]

The Magagula have tried to also link Mdvuba's Court of Appeal case ruling to that of a certain political activist by the name of Professor Dlamini (**Professor versus Rex**) who had been

charged for illegal possession of a firearm. He applied for bail and was granted it by the Court of Appeal. These two cases had a common element, in that both had a bearing on the Swazi Administration Order of 1998 which granted chiefs unlimited powers in dealing with their recalcitrant subjects. This order caused a stir in Swazi politics as people in Swaziland argued that the Order had been systematically engineered by the traditional authorities as an instrument in preparation for the imposition of Prince Maguga in the Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli chiefdoms. The Swazi Law Society for a long time had been complaining about the Order, which they viewed as impinging on their right to represent their clients when they applied for bail. The argument raised by lawyers was that a person remained not guilty until proven otherwise in a competent court of law, thus nobody should be denied the right to bail application. Judges also were not happy with this piece of legislation as they arged that it curtailed the powers of the courts to dertemine bail applications. Their argument centred around the idea that the Order was in contravention of the 1973 Decree which granted the courts unlimited powers in dealing with judicial matters. By granting Professor Dlamini bail, it meant that the 1998 Order had been rendered unconstitutional and obsolete. Realizing this anomaly, the government acted swiftly. Certain sections of the Swazi society, including the Prime Minister, Barnabas Dlamini, argued that the decision of the court to render the 1998 Order unconstitutional had a hidden political agenda aimed at toppling the government.[57]

In response to the Court of Appeal ruling on the 1998 Order, the then Prime Minister, Barnabas Dlamini, issued Order Number 2, following his argument that the country now had no constitution. In the Order Number 2 it was stated that all laws based on Orders were still in force/legal. This included the Non-Bailable Order, which was being resuscitated. This also included other clauses, which were very unpopular with the general public. The matter culminated in the king publicly declaring that he had signed this Order hastily (as he was on a

trip to New York) and was not aware of its evil intentions.[58] This order had to be reviewed, an exercise which culminated in the proclamation of Decree Number 3 of 2001.

Decree Number 3 took the status of a constitution because Swaziland at the time did not have a constitution as it was still being reviewed. This decree therefore stood as a constitution. It read: "All Orders in Council and Acts of Parliament that would otherwise be invalid on the sole ground that they are inconsistant with the king's proclamation to the nation of 12 April 1973 are hereby validated to that extent unless repealed or amended by this decree or any other law." This meant that anything labelled Order in-Council, together with laws of Parliament which were not in agreement with the 1973 Decree, were now validated unless repealed or amended by another decree or law. It was also said that article 2, which concerned section 104 of the repealed constitution of 1968, the Non-bailable Offences Order number 14 of 1993 as amended, had also been validated. Thomas Magagula was quick to point out that the validation of the Non-Bailable Offences Order also affected Mdvuba's issue. In short this meant that it favoured Mdvuba in the sense that it was linked to Professor Dlamini's case. Thomas justified his position by arguing that the decree clearly stated that:

"All laws, Acts, made by ministers or any public officer discharging duties entrusted upon him by minister or ministry or public officer which functioned before this decree was in force, what the public officer, or minister did was in force and shall not be contested in any court of law."[59] This therefore means that all the papers pertaining to Mdvuba's instalment as chief of Madlangempisi were in full force. They were signed by Gogo Dzeliwe who had all the powers conferred on her as queen regent, public officers, which in this case, Regional Secretaries, were also in full force. It means that what they wrote was in full force as they wrote these documents as public officers, and therefore no one should challenge what these officers did.

There is no guarantee that the matter will ever favour the Magagula as the present state of confusion that characterised the 1980s was far from over. The courts are not independent of government. Judges are instructed to pass verdicts that will not be against the authorities of the land.[60] Further more, the Magagula still face the task of taking Mdvuba to the king so that he approves/ blesses him as chief, which means granting him a certificate of operation as chief. It is not known whether the Magagula will be successful in convincing the king to grant Mdvuba his chiefly status. But tradition has it that the king does not appoint a chief but confirms him after family members have all agreed that the heir apparent is a legitimate one.

It is also worth noting that the ruling Dlamini clan will not easily give in to the demands made by the Magagula, as they would not sever their royal ties with the Ndwandwe who play such a very important role during the *Incwala* ceremony. The Ndwandwe are responsible for collecting seawater from Mozambique, which is used for doctoring the king (*Bemanti/Water party*). In effect, the Ndwandwe act as spies for the Dlamini as they are placed in that area to monitor the activities of the troublesome Magagula.

The Magagula issue has acquired an additional salience over the past two decades. The youthful king Mswati III has now embarked on a programme of placing senior princes in the provinces both to silence them and to monitor these areas. This seems to be occurring on a larger scale than at any time since the accession of Mswati II over 130 years ago. The most notable case is the one discussed below.

Chapter 5

The Tfwala of Maliyaduma.

The Tfwala, like the Dlamini and others, are referred to as the *Bemdzabuko* as they are believed to be descendants of the Nguni speaking peoples who moved southwards from east-central Africa across the Limpopo River and settled in Tsongaland before the 15th century. Matsebula asserts that the Tfwala have been connected with the Dlamini royalty since time immemorial.[1] In the late eighteenth century, under the leadership of Dlamini, they first moved into the southern part of modern day Swaziland. The Swazi never got to settle in one place for a long time as they were forced to wander from one place to the next, first by the Ndwandwe of Zwide and later by the Zulu of Shaka. The Swazi as a nation survived through the shifting of alliances during the period of the Mfecane.[2]

The Tfwala (which means to carry something on the head) were closely connected to the Dlamini royal clan. Their original name is Motsa. To this day the Tfwala and the Motsa consider themselves very close relatives and as such are not allowed to marry one another. The Tfwala got their family name because they carried the king's luggage (*umfunti*) as the Swazi moved from Tsongaland to present day Swaziland.

Masende Tfwala said that Motsa always carried spears wherever he went, even to drinking places. These spears were wrapped up in a grass mat and Motsa was always ready to arm his people whenever they were under sudden attack.[3] For instance, the idea of him carrying spears all the time became useful on one occasion when the Swazi were under attack. It is alleged that the main army was away on a military mission under the instruction of Somhlolo when the enemy army attacked. Motsa is said to have fought very bravely, killing a lot of the attackers. Motsa is said to have saved the Swazi and that is how he got to be noticed by the Dlamini ruling

clan and was thus made to carry the king's luggage (*ludzibi*).[4] The Tfwala did not just simply carry ordinary property of the king. Noah and Thomas Tfwala contend that the *Umfunti* contained secret herbs that were used by the Tfwala to doctor the Swazi army so that the warriors would be brave and victorious.[5] For instance, Mvovo Tfwala asserts that the king's luggage also included a small gourd that 'talked', called *sigubhu sebalozi,* which directed the whole Swazi nation, showing them where it was safe to settle. If an area was not safe for settlement, the gourd would warn the Swazi against settling in that area. It was the gourd which guided the Swazi to settle in the region around the Phongola (south of modern day Swaziland), where they stayed for some time before they were again forced to move further north by Zwide and Shaka.[6]

The Swazi finally settled around Lobamba in present-day Swaziland in the 1820s. Mvovo strongly believed that it was the 'talking gourd' which told the Swazi to stay in this area. Hence the Swazi were prepared to fight to the last man in order to win the area from the Sotho and Nguni groups (*Emakhandzambili*) that were found living in what is today known as Swaziland. These groups occupied the best hiding caves around Ncabaneni and the Mdzimba Mountains, which was ideal for the retreating Swazi army which was still weak compared to the Zulu and the Ndwandwe who were a constant menace to them.

The history of the Tfwala clan in Swaziland goes back to the early nineteenth century. They are the grandchildren of two men named Mangwalane and Tikhuba. Malangwane was the eldest and stayed at LaMlalati in the Shiselweni region next to Nhlangano. Tikhuba spent most of his time with the king through the system of *butseka*, whereby Swazi males stay with the king in *Tinhlendlo* or *emalawu* (houses built around the royal palace to act as a buffer zone in case the king is under attack). Tikhuba therefore spent most of the time with the king at old Lobamba, and Sobhuza I made him his *lincusa*.[7] Each time he went to attend the *Incwala* ceremony or

heed a royal demand for tribute labour, Tikhuba would mockingly tell his elder brother Malangwane that he was attending the *incwala*, and that Malangwane, because he liked to remain behind, should look after the wives. This is said to have happened on several occasions, until Malangwane became annoyed and decided to drive away Tikhuba, together with his wives, from LaMlalati, the home in which they had always stayed together.[8]

Tikhuba then reported to King Sobhuza I that his elder brother had chased him away from home. The king is said to have sympathized with him and gave him Mfomf'omangcanga Zikalala to accompany him to the LaMgabhi chiefdom to look for a place where he could settle. The people of LaMgabhi refused to give Tikhuba land because they knew him from Lobamba, having themselves declarfed their loyalty to the king (*butsekaed)*, and were aware that Tikhuba was very rude and rough, and he would be a problem to control. The two men then went back to report to the king. Whilst they were giving their report, Malunge arrived. He had been assigned by King Sobhuza I to go and apportion the whole area from Manzini to Lomahasha. The king then requested Malunge to allocate land to Tikhuba. Malunge agreed saying that Tikhuba should go and settle on his land so that he could drive away the wild animals that had infested the area. Malunge instructed Ndondo Dvuba, who accompanied him when he was apportioning the land, to accompany Tikhuba so that he could show him where to settle. Malunge is said to have also instructed Ndondo not to take Tikhuba across the Mbuluzi River. This of course may possible imply that Tikhuba was given the privilege of choosing the best land that would suit his taste so long as it was within the set boundaries. It was on this base that Maboya Tfwala, who belongs to the Tfwala of Magoloza royal house *(umphakatsi*) believes that Tikhuba was made chief of the area.[9]

According to Mankayane Tfwala, Tikhuba first built his home around Mpembekati, five kilometres north east of Manzini. After some time he moved to Mbazweni, Vuketjeni, and finally to where the Nyakeni primary school stands today. The main reason for moving his homestead was that he needed a higher place where he could spot an enemy army from afar and have enough time to raise an alarm. Mankayane Tfwala contends that Tikhuba was put in charge of the area that belonged to Prince Malunge. He claimed that when Malunge had someone looking for land he would refer him to Tikhuba. This meant that people *khonta'd* (paid allegiance) to Malunge as the rightful owner of the land.[10]

In short the Tfwala, from their different standpoints, all agree that they were the first to come and settle in the area now called Nyakeni and Maliyaduma. They were followed by a number of other clan groups, to whom Tikhuba allocated land. The first group to come after Tikhuba was the Simelane, whom he placed around Mahubheni. The Tsabedze, Zubuko, Shabangu, and Ndondo, whom he placed at Miyane, followed these. After Ndondo came, the Ginindza, who first settled at Mpembekati and were later moved to Kukhanyeni by Jokovu, who succeded Malunge. After the Ginindza came the Mtsetfwa, who were placed around Magogeni.

The last to come during the time of Tikhuba was a man named Vilane whom Malunge decided to make Tikhuba's *indvuna*. The reason for appointing Vilane was that Tikhuba would send him to Malunge whenever the need arose, or if Tikhuba was not feeling well, as he (Malunge) lived around the royal palace at Lobamba. The Tfwala of Magoloza base their argument on the fact that Tikhuba had been made chief of Nyakeni and Maliyaduma. They have even criticized Mankayane of sabotaging them, as will be explained below.

Tikhuba's last homestead was built next to where the Maliyaduma primary school stands. It is from there that the Tfwala began to spread out. Their main house was Buseleni. The Tfwala of Magoloza moved to Mbova and later to Maliyaduma, behind the Ka Timothy shop where they are today, seven kilometers east of Manzini on the way to Bhekinkosi. Another house moved to Endabeni. Some moved to Nsangwini in the Hhohho region and again split, with some going to Hlane, next to the Hlane Royal Palace. It is from the latter that the present queen mother, Ntombi Tfwala comes from.[11]

The Tfwala begin to lose favour with the royal family

According to LoMalombo and Mfanasibili, who are both senior princes, the history of Swaziland bears testimony to the fact that the Tfwala had been a very important name within the ruling Dlamini clan as they had carried the king's property and doctored the Swazi army.[12] This is contrary to the assertions of some scholars such as Booth and Kuper, who see the Tfwala as a clan name of low pedigree which had never been mother to a Swazi king.[13] Both princes concur in believing that the Tfwala had been mother to Swazi kings and that is why in their praise name they are described as 'those who bore Swazi kings' (*Ematalankhosi*). Other sources argue that Swazi kings have in the past married a number of Tfwala women. Thus, Mbhekwa Tfwala contends it is not the first time that a Tfwala woman was mothered a Swazi king. Though this seemed to have escaped his memory, he argued that a Tfwala woman mother to one of Ndvungunye's predecessors.[14] This however does not appear in the pedigree of the royal family. Mkhumbi Tfwala asserts that Ndvungunye had six Tfwala women whilst Somhlolo had four, which stands to show that the close relationship between the Tfwala and the Dlamini ruling clan is an old one.[15]

Following the subordination of the Sotho and Nguni groups, the Tfwala under their ancestor Tikhuba settled at Lugedzeni, from where they moved to Maliyaduma not far from the place of their first abode. The Tfwala argue that it is from this period that they lost favour with the royal family. This is despite the fact that the Tfwala are closely related to the Motsa who still hold a very important position with regards to certain cultural functions that they are expected to fulfil. For instance, the Dlamini ruling clan still gets from the Motsa *tinsila* or blood brothers for the king whose main function is meant to protect the king from any harm like witch craft. These two clan groups are responsible for also producing the *Tesula msiti* (which means that these protect the king from bad luck or harm) For instance, when the king is doctored for the throne, his blood is put into those of the *tesula msiti* and vice versa. This is done because of the belief that when the king is in danger, the danger would first affect the Motsa and the Matsebula, and that by the time it reached the king it would be weak, in that way protecting the king from any danger.) Grotpeter concurs and states that "the theory behind the ritual is that danger originally intended for the king will first enter the *tinsila*, thus reducing the chance of harm to the king"[16]

The Tfwala attribute their loss of favour with the royal family to the relationship the Swazi kings have always had with Tfwala women. The Tfwala allege that one of the Swazi kings so much loved one of his Tfwala wives that at one point he forgot to attend the important *Incwala* ceremony. This is said to have angered senior princes, who accused the Tfwala of having a strong 'red root' (*umnyamatsi*), which overpowered the king. They therefore took the decision to have them outsted from the royal village and to stop the kings from ever marrying a woman coming from the Tfwala people. Mbhojane Tfwala however believes that the main reason why the Tfwala lost favour with the Dlamini was that one of the Tfwala wives of the king used a family root which was very powerful and a lot of the children of the king died. This greatly

affected the other king's wives, and the king together with his senior brothers was forced to take the stand that the royal family should never again marry a Tfwala woman.[17]

Though this may be true, the Tfwala believe that they began to gradually lose favour with the royal family once the Swazi nation became more permanently settled after the subordination of the Sotho-Nguni groups. This meant that the special task of the Tfwala to carry the king's property and to doctor the Swazi army ceased to be of any significance. In this way they lost favour. This itself is not wholly convincing because king Mswati II is known to have been one of the greatest fighting kings in southern Africa during the 1850 and 1860s, as he sought to expand and consolidate his state by attacking his neighbours. If what the Tfwala say is anything to go by, the royal family should still have needed their services. It may also be that a powerful traditional doctor with another name replaced the Tfwala. For instance, LaNkonyane, the only surviving grandmother to the Mafutseni chief Ngalonkhulu, argued that the Mabuza of Mafutseni were doctoring the Swazi army and the royal family during the time of Mswati II through their ancestor named Lubhokwane. The Mabuza perform this duty up to today.[18]

It is however true that the many wars fought by the Swazi nation began to diminish from the time of Mswati's successors. Most of these military attempts ended in disaster for the Swazi nation.The last war fought by the Swazi army was that fought in 1879, when they supported the British in destroying the Pedi paramountcy.[19]

How the Tfwala settled around Maliyaduma

The area from Siyeni to Maliyaduma has been and still is dominated by the Tfwala, which bears testimony that they arrived very early in the area. It should however noted that the Tfwala are divided into two factions in regard to their relationship with the Dlamini of Prince Malunge II.

Firstly, there is the Buseleni faction which is led by Mankayane Tfwala. This faction is closely attached to the Nyakeni royal village under Malunge II as it nurses hopes of being made chiefs of the Tfwala clan through the support of the Prince. Mankayane also plays an important role in the Nyakeni royal village as time and again he is instructed to perform specific duties and is regarded as a resource person of the area (*Likhehla*). The other faction is led by the Tfwala of Magoloza and enjoys the support of Thomas Tfwala in their claim of chiefship of the Maliyaduma area. Thomas Tfwala is the eldest remaining amongst the Tfwala, and claims to know the whole history of the Tfwala clan. This faction resists any encroachment on their chiefdom by the Nyakeni *Umphakatsi* because they strongly believe that their forefather, Tikhuba, was a chief of the area and that they are the legitimate house of the chiefship.Whilst the Mankayane-led faction believes that the area originally belonged to Prince Malunge, who was Mswati's brother, the other faction argues that the area originally belonged to the Tfwala and that Malunge only came to settle in the area as a prince not as a chief. This faction goes so far as to argue that Nyakeni, the name given to the area under Malunge's jurisdiction, was a name for Malunge's homestead, (and not the chiefdom) as was the case with all other princely homesteads in the country. Margaret Tfwala also argued that the prince could not have been a chief of the area as the position of a prince is senior to that of a chief.[20]

The two factions differ markedly on the terms under which Prince Malunge came to settle in the area. The ruling Dlamini clan have exploited this division to their advantage to the detriment of the Tfwala. The Dlamini traditional authorities at the Lozitha palace tend to favour the pliant Mankayane-led faction, which could be viewed as a policy of prolonging the division of the Tfwala. Further, according to Swazi tradition, if there is a succession dispute in a chiefdom that has dragged for a long time, the traditional authorities resolve the matter by placing a prince in

the area, which will see both contesting parties lose. This subject will be explored in detail at a later stage.

As mentioned above, there are two versions on how the Tfwala acquired the Maliyaduma area. The Magoloza faction argue that the Tfwala were the first to occupy the area and that it is on the basis of such claim that they believe themselves to be legitimate chiefs of the area. This section also buttress that their claim by also arguing that LaZidze, Mswati II's mother, appointed them to look after her sorghum field around the area of Magoloza. They claim that LaZidze commanded them to plough it, look after the crop, and take the harvest to her. This they have done up to the year 2000. It is on these grounds that the Tfwala of Magoloza assert their claim. They also argue that Tikhuba had an *indvuna*, which further lends credence to their claim. Thomas Tfwala for instance, claims that Malunge was never chief of the area. He only became 'chief' following the introduction of taxes by the British in 1903. This, he argues, was used by the Dlamini ruling clan to marginalize the Tfwala as chiefs of Maliyaduma. Thomas also claims that the Dlamini have skilfully used the princely position of Malunge to subordinate the Tfwala. According to Swazi tradition, when a prince comes to an area he is introduced as a prince. The people in that area celebrate his arrival by offering their labour to build his home and kraal. The people also plough and harvest his fields, and the prince then becomes (liaison officer) between them and the king.[21]

Ever since Prince Malunge I came to their area, the Tfwala of Magoloza argue that not only were their powers curtailed but the size of their land or chiefdom had also shrunk. Maboya Tfwala, who is the brother to the current Tfwala chief Meshack, asserts that the Tfwala area was very big during the time of Tikhuba, and included Nyakeni, which has now been claimed by the Dlamini as belonging to Malunge. Maboya argued that the Tfwala area originally extended to

areas like the Mpembekati in the north, Mbuluzana River and Lutfotja in the east, via Miyane and Mpisi farm in the southwest. Salukazi marked the western boundary, which was shared with the area called Mafutseni under the Mabuza.

Maboya also maintains this information on the boundary of the area under the Tfwala was given to the Boundary Commission which was sent to all chiefdoms in 1987 by king Mswati III, a year after he had acceded to office. This commission, he claims, was led by Prince Madevu and included Bernard Fakudze, Velabo Mtsetfwa, and Gawulela Zwane. It is perhaps worth mentioning the fact that this commission has not yet had its findings published for fear of reprisals as the country suffers from a scourge of chieftaincy disputes.[22]

The Tfwala of Magoloza are very bitter about being regarded as ordinary subjects of Nyakeni. In fact the Tfwala maintain that though they began experiencing problems from the time Malunge came to the area, Malunge knew that the whole area belonged to the Tfwala. For instance, Gogo Mkhatjwa, who is the patron of the young Tfwala chief, argues that "Malunge had no problem with the Tfwala of Magoloza who have always had their own *umphakatsi,* for he knew that Nyakeni belonged to them."[23] The Tfwala also claim that Malunge would even refer people looking for land to them (*Kukhonta***),** which is an indication that he recognized the Tfwala *umphakatsi.* LoMalombo, a senior prince, supports this by saying that at one point Mswati II had dreamt seeing the subordinated Magagula clan regrouping and attacking the Dlamini. Mswati decided to attack them. Malunge is said to have come to the rescue of the Magagula and requested the king not to destroy them. Mswati then ordered Malunge to allocate new land to the Magagula next to him (Maliyaduma) so that he could keep a watchful eye over them. Malunge replied by saying that he did not have land to give to the Magagula because the land he occupied belonged to the Tfwala.[24]

The Tfwala of Magoloza therefore, claim that the problem between them and the royal village of Nyakeni only started after the demise of the 'old ones' who knew the status of the Tfwala and that of Malunge I with regards to who exactly owned the area of Maliyaduma and Nyakeni. The Tfwala attribute their woes to new arrivals (subjects) to whom they allocated land and who have since shifted their allegiance to Prince Malunge II. Reasons that might have forced new arrivals to shift their allegiance could be attributed to the fact that when subjects want to acquire passports, birth certificates, and government scholarships, the Tfwala are of little use as they are not recognized, and one blocked by central Dlamini traditional authorities from offering such services. When the same subjects approach Prince Malunge II these personal documents are easy to secure. This has had detrimental effects on the authority of the Tfwala, to such an extent that a number of subjects who had been under their control no longer respect them and have become a law unto themselves. For instance, one homestead allocated land by the Tfwala next to the field of the king has even started ploughing the king's field under their care for its own private use. This homestead, according to Lomatsengela Tfwala, is very wealthy and a staunch supporter of Malunge II, the current chief of Nyakeni. He has even blocked development projects initiated by the Magoloza house. Lomatsengela further argued that there was once a move by the Tfwala to have a bus operating in the area and to electrify it. But both efforts were frustrated by the same man who has become instrumental in ensuring that the Tfwala *umphakatsi* is rendered useless. He forces people to go to Nyakeni, telling them that there is only one chief in the area, and that that chief is Malunge II.[25]

Gogo Mkhatjwa, as the caretaker of the Magoloza heir, says that she has been infuriated by the recalcitrant subjects who have now turned against them to support Malunge, yet they still have their homes within the area controlled by the Tfwala. She further argues that she has on several

occasions approached the *inkhosikati* LaShabangu of Nyakeni with a view of finding out what is happening, but has not found her home and had been repeatedly told that the *inkhosikati* was away.[26]

The other section, which is led by Mankayane Tfwala, believes that Malunge, was from the very beginning appointed chief of Nyakeni and Maliyaduma by Mswati II. According to Mankayane, Mswati II issued an instruction to Malunge to apportion the land east of Swaziland to a number of clans, including the Tfwala.[27] Whilst these acknowledge the claim that the Tfwala were the first to come to the area, they maintain that this did not mean that they were made chiefs of the allocated areas. This faction argues therefore that the whole Lubombo region was under the jurisdiction of Malunge from Manzini to Lomahasha.

According to Mankayane, Malunge came, as promised, to Nyakeni to join Tikhuba because the latter had driven away the wild animals from Nyakeni and it was now safe for the prince to come to the area. Malunge built his first homestead around Ludzengelweni so that he could be close to his brothers who had been placed at Sigombeni and also to be close to Ludzidzini royal palace.[28] It is not known why at this particular time the prince decided to come and settle in the area, for he had been a very powerful and influential prince present in all described important national issues. He had also acted as regent after the death of Mswati II in 1865.[29] It can however be safely said that the prince only came to settle in the area after he had appointed Vilane as *indvuna* oparating under Tikhuba.

Malunge is said to have later moved his home to where the high school named after him stands today, about seventeen kilometers northeast of Manzini. After Malunge died in 1874, Jokovu, who had been born in 1850, took over as chief of Nyakeni. There is not much said about

Jokovu's rule in national politics apart from his degree of isolation. He is described by Jones as very militant and conservative and as having resisted encroachment by whites. He is also said to have voiced his concern over the Swazi being unable to pass death sentences on wrong-doers as the British had banned the practice. Jones writes "Our way of ruling ourselves is to kill each other and what shall be the rule if we are not allowed to kill? "[30] Jokovu is also reported to have accompanied Bhunu on his flight to Ngwavuma after the murder of Mbhabha Sibandze who had been *indvunalenkhulu yesive*.[31]

The Tfwala have no record of a serious encounter with Prince Jokovu. Jokovu died in 1908 and was succeeded by his son Zikodze. Zikodze was born in 1900 and was installed as chief in 1924. He ruled only for a very short period as he died in 1927. Richard Patricks records that after Zikodze's death, Mahhololo acted for Mtsakatsi between the years 1927 and 1953. Mtsakatsi, born in 1920, was legitimately installed as chief of Nyakeni in 1953. He too ruled for a short period as he died in 1956. Mtsakatsi was then followed by Malunge II, who was born in 1962 and installed in 1990, and who is the current chief.[32] In short, Mankayane and Mvovo contend that all the people from Manzini to Lomahasha paid tribute to Malunge I and assembled at his place for ceremonial functions. *(Kuhlehla)* [33]

Relationship between the Tfwala and Nyakeni royal village

The relationship between the Tfwala and Nyakeni royal village has deteriorated over the years. Tensions have been mounting, as the Tfwala persistently refuse to acknowledge Prince Malunge as chief of the Nyakeni. The Tfwala have always rejected overtures by the Nyakeni royal village to have them pay their allegiance to the Prince, claiming that by succumbing they would be reduced to the level of ordinary citizens by the area's authorities. Mankayane argued that at one

point a chief's runner was sent to summon the Tfwala of Magoloza and that they refused, saying that it was unSwazi for a chief to summon another chief.[34]

What needs to be pointed out here is that the Nyakeni royal village has the advantage of being recognized as the rightful owners of the land by the Dlamini ruling clan and the Swazi government. For instance, when people want to obtain passports, death, marriage, and birth certificates, and scholarships, they are forced to go to Nyakeni. This is what is largely contributing to the downfall of the Tfwala as they fail to provide this essential service because government institutions do not recognize them. This very advantage has been used by the state to frustrate recalcitrant chiefdoms like that of the Magagula of Moyeni in the Madlangempisi area and Fakudze of Macetjeni.

According to Mvovo and Mkhumbi, who are both closely attached to the Nyakeni *umphakatsi*, the Tfwala claim of chiefship by the grandchildren of Magoloza is baseless. They assert that Ngangenyoni Tfwala, who was Sobhuza II's close confidant, misled the children of Magoloza into believing that they were chiefs. Hilda Kuper refers to Ngangenyoni as chief of Maliyaduma.[35]

The Mankayane led faction also dismisses the idea that the Tfwala of Magoloza were given a field by LaZidze to look after as a 'new invention'. They contend that even if that was the case, that did not mean that they were being made chiefs of the area. They also argue that anyone made to look after a king's field is only given the responsibility of warding off birds from devouring the sorghum. Mvovo and Mkhumbi Tfwala attributed claims made by the Tfwala to the fact that the Nyakeni *umphakatsi* had been for a very long period without a chief following the demise of Zikodze, as the heir was still a minor. Both argue that following the extended

period of regency, a number of 'self- constituted chiefdoms' had mushroomed in the area, such as the Mdluli of Bhekinkhosi, Ginindza of Kukhanyeni, and Mbekelweni under Mandanda Mtsetfwa. They further argue that the Ginindza and Mdluli were only appointed to look after Gwamile Mdluli's fields. Gwamile was one of king Bhunu's wives.[36]

The Tfwala of Siyeni, an area on the eastern side of Manzini town, support the claim by the Tfwala of Magoloza, who are under the chiefship of Thomas Madlembe Tfwala. The Tfwala of Siyeni are now very powerful, as the national electoral officer is drawn from their ranks. Thomas Tfwala, who is now the eldest remaining of the Tfwala clan, argues that the Tfwala of Magoloza deserve to be appointed chiefs rather than those of Buseleni under Mankayane. Mankayane dismisses Thomas Tfwala as being power-hungry. Mankayane also refuted claims that Thomas is chief of Siyeni. He contends that Thomas was only appointed by the Zwane of Ntathu, who were his in-laws through Sigidzi's daughter, to act as chief because at the time the Zwane did not have an heir who was ready to take over. This is also supported by Tigudze Dlamini, a senior prince, who noted that the Zwane have since taken the tax book, which Thomas claims, away from him.[37] Following the demise of Ngangenyoni, Thomas is the one who is now left with the responsibility of leading the Tfwala of Magoloza to the king to have their claims addressed.

The Tfwala take the matter to the traditional authorities for arbitration.

Following their suppression by the Nyakeni *umphakatsi,* the Tfwala of Magoloza resolved to take the matter to the king for arbitration as they are convinced that they are the chiefs of the area. The decision, according to LoMatsengela Tfwala, was prompted by the fact that when the Tfwala allocate land to someone, the Nyakeni *Libandla* quickly evicts him and also blocks developmental projects initiated by the Tfwala.[38]

The Tfwala claim that on several occasions they have been to the king and have been turned back, as the *indvuna*, Mpica Mtsetfwa, kept avoiding them. The Tfwala believe that the *Indvuna* (governor) did not want their matter to reach the king because he was a son of Mandanda, and an interested party in the matter. Mandanda claimed to be chief of the Maliyaduma area following his appointment as *indvuna lenkhulu yesive* (traditional Prime Minister). He claimed that the Tfwala could not be above him and thus took the decision to suppress them. The Tfwala also believe that if Mpica had taken their matter to the king, he would have let down the Mtsetfwa, as that would imply that they had no area, hence the whole area belonged to the Tfwala. The Tfwala argue that Mandanda was an *indvuna lenkhulu yesive*, which made him a custodian of all areas in Swaziland that do not have chiefs commonly referred to as areas without chiefs (*emahambate).* The Tfwala believe that Mandanda used his position of being close to the king to claim to be chief of the area originally under their control. Mandanda, according to Margareth Tfwala, came from Sigombeni, an area north of Manzini, and only asked for a place to build a home for his mother from the Tfwala[39].

The Tfwala first took up their matter with King Sobhuza II to whom they paid a number of visits. The king is said to have noticed that the Tfwala were not united, and therefore ordered them to go back and discuss amongst themselves who actually deserved to be appointed chief. According to Swazi tradition, the king does not want to take sides. He only confirms or approves an appointed heir, who has been nominated by the family. "The king does not appoint chiefs but confirms and blesses someone already identified at *umphakatsi* level as the rightful heir and successor to the chieftaincy position by virtue of his birth"[40] Maboya Tfwala further argues that Sobhuza II instructed the Tfwala to go and count themselves so that he could give the tax book, and gave them a man named Mpumalanga as their emissary. He contends that they

had great difficulty in carrying out the king's order as most of their subjects had now shifted their allegiance to the Nyakeni royal village and were afraid of being charged by the Prince of having stolen his subjects.[41] It should be pointed out that King Sobhuza was a very shrewd leader and could have deliberately asked the Tfwala to go and count their subjects knowing very well that this was not going to be achievable as most of the Tfwala subjects had defected.

Meshack Tfwala further argued that after completion of the royal instruction they went to see King Sobhuza II. Unfortunately for them Prince Sifuba, who was by then in charge of allocating land per royal command, was sick and could not attend the meeting. The king then decided to postpone the matter. The Tfwala lamented this state of affairs, as shortly afterwards the that the king died, which prevented the matter from being resolved.[42]

Even though the king had died, Maboya Tfwala argued that they did not remain idle as they took up the matter once Dzeliwe had been made the queen regent in 1982. According to the Tfwala these were difficult times, as the *Liqoqo* acted as the Supreme Council of state, which brought about a lot of confusion during the interregnum.[43]

Meshack Tfwala accused their emissary, Mpica of 'melting away' whenever they were supposed to see the Queen Regent. For instance, on one occasion, Mpumalanga, who was appointed as their new emissary, was nowhere to be seen when they were in a meeting with the Queen Regent Dzeliwe. The Tfwala also argued that on this day they had lined up or queued with the Lukhele people of Ngololweni, who had come to present Dambuza to be presented for confirmation by the regent. The Lukhele were successful because they had their emissary with them. The Tfwala delegation had to go back because their emissary was absent. Surprisingly, when they dispersed, Mpumalanga resurfaced. The Tfwala argue that this was a well-calculated

move by their emissary as he knew that they could not go back to meet the Queen Regent after she had dismissed everyone.[44]

The Tfwala also claim that they have taken up the matter with the present king Mswati III. When they were summoned, the Tfwala of Magoloza allege that it was Mankayane who blocked them from being made chiefs of the area. Mankayane belongs to the Tfwala of Buseleni. This, according to him, is the senior house, which should rightfully appoint. Mankayane argues that if the Tfwala are to be made chiefs, it is the house of Buseleni which deserves the position, and bases his claims on the family history of the Tfwala clan. According to him Tikhuba had five wives. The first one was a Simelane who had sons. LaGinindza, who had no children followed her. Three co-wives were sent by the Ginindza to raise children for her, but none of them bore children. Tikhuba had a Nhlabatsi friend who gave him a wife to marry (an arranged marriage) (*Kwendziswa*). It was this Nhlabatsi woman who helped revive LaGinindza's home and to retain her senior position amongst Tikhuba's wives. This Tikhuba did by sending for one of his sons named Ngolokodvo from the house of Magoloza to come and raise children on his behalf as he was by now very old.

The Tfwala of Magoloza are said to have refused to release Ngolokodvo. Tikhuba then sent his *indvuna*, Vilane, to the king to report the matter. The king then sent a messenger to the Tfwala of Magoloza and forcefully took Ngolokodvo to Tikhuba. The Nhlabatsi marriage party had been at Tikhuba's home for more than a month because of the delay. According to Mankayane Tfwala, Tikhuba instructed Ngolokodvo to produce children from the Nhlabatsi woman, and said that these children would be his (Tikhuba's). Tikhuba promised to give him a beast if he did that as a way of thanking him (*Inkhomo yelidvolo*).

Such unions are common in Swaziland where a son is asked to sleep with his 'mother' in order to produce children for the father. For instance, Sobhuza II did a similar thing to LaMngometulu who was the mother of Maguga. According to Swazi tradition, Maguga was not his child but that of his father Bhunu, which in short means that Maguga was Sobhuza's brother.[45]

From the marriage, it was Ngolokodvo, according to Mankayane, who was the one to give birth to the Tfwala heir and successors. He advances this argument so as to show that the Tfwala of Magoloza do not deserve the chiefship. Mankayane continues to claim that Ngolokodvo had a son who was named by Tikhuba as Sigidzi, meaning that he had been relieved (*Kwatsi gidzi*). Tikhuba then took Sigidzi and hid him amongst the Nhlabatsi who were under the control of the Mamba people in the Shiselweni region. Sigidzi had four wives. There were three Simelanes, and the fourth one was a Mtsetfwa. LaMtsetfwa's home was built at Ngolotjeni whilst the Simelanes remained at Buseleni, which was still regarded as the main house. One of Sigidzi's sons was Sobaba, who had four wives. Sobaba's heir was Mavela who had two wives. It was from these wives that Mankayane was born. Mankayane is presently, by tradition, the senior in all the Tfwala houses.

The Tfwala of Magoloza and Siyeni dismiss the argument presented by Mankayane. They argue that instead the Magoloza house is the one that is senior. Maboya Tfwala said that there were three sons of Tikhuba who were important in as far as seniority was concerned. These were Mhayise, Mnyamane and Sigidzi. Mnyamane was appointed as the heir and gave birth to Mavela who then gave birth to Mabonya who fathered the current incumbent. Ngolokodvo was then the youngest of the three and it would be wrong to claim that he is senior.

Mankayane has been vilified by the Tfwala of Magoloza and has even been threatened with death. The Tfwala of Magoloza accused him of being a stumbling block to their attainment of the chiefly position.

The above shows that there is a protracted struggle between the Tfwala of Magoloza and Nyakeni. The Tfwala refused to heed summons made by Nyakeni royal village. For instance, they refused to offer their tribute labour to Malunge as they maintain that they are also a chiefdom. During the *Incwala*, and maidens' reed dance national ceremonies, they prefered to register under Mandanda Mtsetfwa who was made in charge of all *Emahambate* (places without chiefs).

LoMalombo Dlamini, who is one of the senior princes and acting chief of Kutsimuleni (Maloyi area), argued that it was King Sobhuza II who should have solved the Tfwala issue as he was better placed to deal with it than the present king Mswati III. Sobhuza II had the advantage of being neutral in the matter, as the present king would be accused of granting chiefly status to the Tfwala because they are mothers to him. LoMalombo further believes that the Tfwala should have used Ngangenyoni as their emissary because he was a close confidante of Sobhuza II. Ngangenyoni was always with the king and should have introduced the matter to the king on behalf of the Tfwala. The Tfwala according to LoMalombo, would long since have been granted chiefly status. But because they were divided, King Sobhuza is said to have told them to go back, recolve their differences, and put forward one candidate to take over as chief of the Tfwala people.[46]

One further dimension of the dispute is that there are those who believe that the Tfwala are opportunists and are only taking up the matter with traditional authorities simply because they

want to take advantage of the position of the Tfwala queen mother. Others are strongly against the move of demanding chiefly status, as they believe that this will spoil the relationship between the queen mother and the Dlamini authorities. These have also advised that the matter should be handled with great care, as carelessness might bring disaster for the entire Tfwala clan. These argue that rather than forcing matters the Tfwala should open negotiations with the traditional authorities who will, if they see it fit, make the Tfwala chiefs of the area. The rationale for this would be based on what has been done to many other clans that have contributed in many different forms to the development of the Swazi nation.

The Tfwala have expressed disappointment with the manner in which royal authorities have handled their case. Thomas Tfwala for instance, went to the extent of arguing that the Tfwala, being a non-Dlamini clan, would never win their case against the Dlamini of Nyakeni. He argues, "If you come from a non-Dlamini clan you will never win your case against a Dlamini because the latter easily team up, even if your case is a legitimate one."[47]

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the relationship between the Tfwala clan and the ruling Dlamini royal clan. It has argued that, though both the Tfwala and the Dlamini belong to the same group known as the pure Swazi (*Bemdzabu*), the relationship between these two groups has been strained as a result of the placing of Prince Malunge I and his successors. The placing of Prince Malunge in the region was undertaken as a means of monitoring the recalcitrant non-Dlamini chiefdoms in the eastern part of the country extending from Manzini to Lomahasha. It has also been argued that, as one of the most powerful princes, Malunge had to be removed from the royal palace so that he could exercise his chiefly powers far away from the royal residence. This served to ensure that the prince could not disturb the incumbent by contensting the throne. The

presence of the prince has helped to monitor the activities of the Tfwala and ensured that the Tfwala remain divided. This state of affairs helps to serve the ruling Dlamini clan well in the sense that the even if the Tfwala claim is a legitimate one, the policies of the Dlamini will prevail.

Chapter 6

The Mabuza of Mafutseni

This chapter seeks to understand the tension that resulted when some of the senior princes within the royal family wanted to carve off part of the land that belonged to the Mabuza of Mafutseni and allocate it to the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni. The Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni belong to the house of Fokoti, who had serious problems with Mswati II when he was installed as king following the demise of Sobhuza I. Fokoti, according to Hugh Jones, was the first-born son of Sobhuza I. He was *phakela'd* the area of Dlovunga, which stretched from the vicinity of modern Nhlangano southwards for several kilometres into what is now Piet Retief district in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa.[1] The Mabuza have for a long time found it very difficult to deal with the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni because the latter enjoyed the support of some senior princes. This problem as shall be discussed was compounded by the fact that for 55 years the Mabuza were without a chief as the heir was still minor. This state of affairs has produced serious tensions between the Mabuza and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni, and has been taken to the king, Mswati III, for arbitration.

The Mabuza belong to the section in Swazi society referred to as the *Bemdzabuko*, having originated with the Dlamini in Ka-Tembe and then travelled to what is now southern Swaziland. It is generally assumed that the Dlamini were forced out of Ka-Tembe because of a protracted struggle that ensued between them and the Tembe chiefdom, over the control of trade in the region.[2] The Dlamini travelled along the Lubombo Mountains until they settled in the south of present day Swaziland.

The Mabuza were originally known as Nkhosi Mabuza, implying that they were as the same status as the Dlamini when they started off from Ka-Tembe under king Ngwane III. According

to Lomalombo Dlamini, who is a senior prince and lives at Kutsimuleni as acting chief, the Mabuza were part of four clans which had their names changed in order to enable the Dlamini to take wives from them.[3] This followed the entrenched belief amongst the Nguni that they should not marry within the same family name. These were the Mamba, Ndlela, Sihlongonyane and Mabuza.

When the Dlamini settled in present-day Swaziland, the Mabuza are believed to have first settled around Emthombe in the Shiselweni region during the reign of Sobuza I and then later moved to Emgomfelweni in the Mahlangatja area in the south. It is from there that they spread to the other parts of the country where they are found today. For instance, they are found in Mafutseni in central Swaziland, south-east of Manzini, and Jubukweni, north of Mbabane. In both areas the Mabuza are recognised as chiefs. The Mabuza of Jubukweni became chiefs following their assignment of looking after the king's cattle (*inhlonhla*).[4]

The Mabuza of Mafutseni have been selected as part of this study and more attention will be focused on them than on the Mabuza of other areas. The Mabuza of Mafutseni, according to Jones, occupied this area which, lies east of modern Manzini on the edge of the lowveld, in the last quarter of the ninenteeth century.[5]

There are three versions on how the Mabuza of Mafutseni came to be chiefs of the area. Though these versions differ, they concur in one aspect, that is, that the Mabuza chiefdom was founded during the reign of Mswati II, prior to which the area was under the control of the Tsabedze of Malindza known as Enkondweni. However, from Richard Patricks' oral sources, the first people to occupy the area were the Mziyako.[6] There is very little oral information collected about the existence of the Mziyako in the area, and also a paucity of documented information on their history. Complicating matters further is that Patricks does not name sources who could be

further probed on the matter for corroboration. LaNkonyane, a senior wife to Madlinkhomo and now one of the very few living oral sources on the history of the area, contends that Nkondweni was a name given to Lubhokwane's homestead when he first built his home next to Ka-Mgowingi[7] (Mrs Rouse shop area). Lubhokwane is believed to be the progenitor of the Mabuza clan.

The first version proposed by Jones is that the Mabuza became chiefs following their special assignment of looking after the king's cattle, *inhlonhla*. Jones claims that the Mabuza acquired their chiefly status after 1903, following the introduction of taxation by the British, whereupon, for easy facilitation of tax collection, all individuals tasked with tax collection were collectively referred to as chiefs. This category of chiefs is now denigrated in Swaziland as *Bo chief bemapasi* (tax identity chiefs) The Mabuza reject Huw Jones' assertion, as they claim that by the time the British introduced taxes in Swaziland, the Mabuza had long been recognised as chiefs of the Mafutseni area.[48] What needs to be pointed out here that Jones make two contradictory statements with regards to the establishment of the Mabuza chiefdom, since he also states that the Mabuza were placed in the area by Mswati II around the Mahlabane area. It should also be pointed out that there is currently a protracted chieftaincy struggle involving the Mabuza of Mahlabane and those of Mafutseni, as the latter accuse the former of usurping the position of chiefship. This matter will be shelved for now as the focus will be on the Mabuza and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni.

LaNkonyane argued that at one point they were tasked with the responsibility of looking after the king's cattle, but also indicates that this was only for a short period. The Swazi king had asked to graze his cattle in the area after he had noticed that it had good grazing grounds. She asserts that the cattle were looked after by one of the sons of the Mabuza named Magwegwe.

When he was in his thirties, Magwegwe requested that he be excused from the royal assignment because he was now old and wanted to start his own family. Madlinkhomo, then chief of the area, reported to the king that there was no one to look after the king's cattle, and they were removed from Mafutseni. Magwegwe was given a heifer as a sign of appreciation by the Swazi king.[8]

The second version, advanced by Lomalombo Dlamini, a senior prince, is that king Mswati II established the chiefdom of Mafutseni in the years after 1839. This was after the Mabuza had shown their heroism and loyalty to the king, who decided to honour them by allocating them a piece of land in the Mafutseni area. It is generally known that the Mabuza were involved in doctoring the army each time it was commissioned by the Swazi kings. LoMalombo Dlamini further stated that the Mabuza were also renowned for working on animal fat, which was then taken to the king's wives who used it to prepare their loin skins for the *Incwala* festival. It was for this reason that the area came to be known as Mafutseni, a name coined by Indlovukazi LaMgangeni (the mother of Ludvonga). LoMalombo contends that the animal fat referred to here could have been something else, like powerful herbs *(tihlati)* for use by Swazi kings.[9]

Lomalombo contends that in the past it was very easy for people to be allocated land because the population was still very small and there were vast acres of unoccupied territory. In the same vein, Gogo Mkhumane, who is senior wife to Maloyi II, argued that the Ekutsimuleni area was allocated to LaMawandla, Maloyi I's mother, because she had given LaZidze clean water. Gogo Mkhumane claimed that the Swazi people were always on the run during the time of Sobhuza I. As the whole group ran away, the women were expected to cook at the end of the day's journey. She argued that when the wives of the king saw a spring of water they would run for it as the first to get there would get clean water. Unfortunately, LaZidze, who was the king's

senior wife, was overweight and was always outrun by the more slender wives. LaMawandla would then take the calabash belonging to LaZidze, run with the others, and manage to get clean water before the other wives could dirty the spring. This, according to Gogo Mkhumane, happened on several occasions, and LaZidze promised to reward LaMawandla when Swazi society became more established.[10] Ndzabidlayena Khumalo maintains that there were three ways by which people were allocated land. They were *phakela'd* if related to the royal family, allocated land for heroism if they had contributed significantly in any way to the development of the Swazi nation, and finally, if they were clan chiefs in their land.[11]

The third version, which is advanced by Velebaleni Nkambule and Lomsholo Mabuza, is similar to the second. Velebaleni Nkambule, a member of the Mafutseni chief's inner Council, claims that King Mswati II became very sick, suffering from a strange disease. It is reported the king dreamt seeing a certain man, Nkhosi Mabuza, who worked on animal fat. This man kept on giving him a root to chew that eased his sickness. This happened several times, until the king decided to send warriors to look for this man. He was found at Mgomfelweni and taken to the king. Upon arrival, the king narrated to him what had happened to him in a dream. This man, who was by then known as Tfundzela, gave the root to the king, and after this the king was rid of the sickness. Mswati decided to give this Mabuza man a new name, Lubhokwane, and from then stopped using his original name, Tfundzela.[12]

In appreciation of the good deed, Mswati II then decided to allocate land to the Mabuza man, thus establishing the Mabuza chiefdom. The Mabuza have since then been close to the royal family because they possess powerful herbs which are used by Swazi kings. This function the Mabuza perform up to today. Hilda Kuper and Clifford Maseko both cite the Mabuza as being responsible for the purification ceremony of every Swazi king if, for example, he happens to

lose a wife or gets close to a corpse. The Mabuza also provide herbs for a nominated heir to take over the throne of kingship when he enters the puberty stage, and when the Swazi army was sent out on a military mission.[13]

The area of Mafutseni as mentioned above originally belonged to the Tsabedze of Malindza. Mswati II is said to have ordered the Tsabedze to move further east so as to make way for the Mabuza, and the dividing line between the Mabuza and the Tsabedze was fixed at Siphondvo, a small mountain next to Ngogola along the Manzini-Siteki road. Bonner provides detailed information on the relationship between the Tsabedze and Mswati II. He contends that the Tsabedze were one of the *Emakhandzambili* who were attacked by Mswati as he wanted to bring an end to their autonomy.[14]

According to Mtjopi Dludlu, the king's messenger of Mafutseni royal kraal, the Mabuza chiefdom at that point had its beacon in the east of Siphondvo and running along the Lihhake River, which demacated Mafutseni and the chiefdom of Malindza, going down to where the river Lugulu meets the Mzimpofu River. In the south, the boundary line ran along the Mdumezulu Mountain where it separate the Mabuza from Prince Jahamnyama Dlamini's chiefdom. It also extended further west, including the area now claimed by the Nkambule of Khamatfo, up to the home of Nkosazana (supposedly a white woman's homestead) around Lugaganeni, a few kilometres east of Manzini. In the north the dividing line was the Mbuluzana River.[15] This meant that the three farms subsequently owned by whites, Alexander, Howe and Macnabs, were part of the Mafutseni chiefdom before the arrival of the white concessionaires. The Mafutseni *umphakatsi* was forced to move out from its location following the British Land Proclamation of 1907, whereupon the Swazi who had their areas bought by the whites were given a grace period of five years (1914) to either submit to the authority of the farm owner or

vacate. This, according to LaNkonyane, was met with stiff opposition from the residents who in one of their meetings, resolved to advise Mbandzeni to give back all the dogs the whites had given him in exchange for land.

When Lubhokwane was chief, he had a small number of followers, most of whom shared the same surname with him. According to Velebaleni Nkambule, a senior member of the chiefs' inner council, there were a number of homesteads which were clustered around the home of Lubhokwane. The Mabuza homesteads included those of Giba, Mgudvwa, who later left for Hhohho, Ndodayideli Vilane, and Mkongo. Additional homesteads located around Siphondvo Mountain, which marked the boundary line between the Mabuza and the Tsabedze, were those of Magangalatane, Lonjengu, Ncangeni, Felaphakathi and Lugidzi Mabuza.[16]

When Lubhokwane died, his son Ngalonkhulu I succeeded him. Ngalonkhulu reigned before the white concessionaires flooded the country. Patricks records that Ngalonkhulu was a war captive from the Sotho. He claims that he was captured by Mbungu Mabuza of Jubukweni and was given the Mabuza surname.[17] What Velebaleni emphasised is that during the reign of Ngalonkhulu, the area was already known as Mafutseni. This serves to rebut claims by the Dlamini will be explained below.

Madlinkhomo succeeded Ngalonkhulu. According to Huw Jones, Madlinkhomo ruled the Mabuza chiefdom during the last quarter of the ninenteeth century and had about 139 followers.[18] Kuper shares the same opinion and asserts that Madlinkhomo continued to be attached to the royal family as a very important ritual specialist used on national occasions such as the *Sibhimbi*, which celebrated the attainment of puberty by Ngwenyama Sobhuza II in 1919.[19] Madlinkhomo married Cwangubane, a princess fathered by Prince Sijula, who was

chief of Kutsimuleni area under Prince Maloyi. According to LoMsholo Mabuza, Cwangubane did not bear a child and a subordinate co-wife was brought to bear children on her behalf. It was the co-wife who gave birth to Ngcatfo. Ngcatfo succeeded his father after 1935.[20] According to Swazi tradition, Cwangubane's status as princess guaranteed that she was going to give birth to the heir to succeed Madlinkhomo. In most cases the act of arranging marriage for princesses was done by the Dlamini traditional authorities in order to gain a firm grip on chiefdoms since the heir would be their nephew. This became crucial when western influence, missionary activity, and the mining revolution in neighbouring South Africa, threatened to tear the Swazi kingdom apart. More of the youth was forced to go and work in the South African mines thus denying the royal family of tribute labour. Missionaries operating in the country discouraged Swazi youth from attending to activities of the royal family. In other words, the centre was losing its grip on the periphery as chiefdoms sought to reclaim their lost independence following their subordination in the 1820s. However, the story of Cwangubane seems to be shrouded in a good deal of mystery, as senior members of the Mabuza clan do not want to mention this name. LaNkonyane for instance, argued that Cwangubane was just Madlinkhomo's girlfriend and that the two were never officially married.[21]

The relationship between the Mabuza and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni Sours

The Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni came from Dlovunga in the Shiselweni region. According to LoMalombo and Mamilela Maphosa, the latter being an *indvuna* of the Mafutseni *umphakatsi*, the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni belong to the house of Sobhuza I and are direct descendents of Prince Fokoti, which is now a house very distant from the present ruling Dlamini clan. The Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni came to Mafutseni through their forefather Manzezulu who was thrown out of Dlovunga due to a family misunderstanding relating to the practice of witch craft. It is rumoured that Manzezulu had been labelled as a witch by the people of Dlovunga and was

therefore ejected from the area.[22] It should also be recalled that Fokoti had rebelled against king Mswati II at the beginning of his reign. More of this information is contained in the accounts of Jones, Matsebula, Kuper, and Bonner. This could probably explain why Manzezulu, a grand child of the royal family had fallen out of favour with the royal family. Madlinkhomo then decided to take him and allocated him an area in which to build his homestead next to the Siphondvo area. Manzezulu had only two sons, named Magodzi and Mampefu.[23]

Manzezulu owned a large flock of sheep whose number were soon depleted because of the depredations of the many jackals and lions in the area. The whole area around Siphondvo was by then a thick forest with no homesteads. Manzezulu then decided to go back to Madlinkhomo to request that he be found an alternative spot on which to build his home as the one at Siphondvo was infested with wild animals. Madlinkhomo then decided to place Manzezulu at Mashekesheni a place now commonly known as Macelaluthswayi, next to where the Mafutseni Nazarene Primary School stands today.

Again Manzezulu complained that there were a lot of ants in the area. He was then moved to the area where the present Moyeni High School stands. Makhayinda Gwebu further stated that Madlinkhomo then decided to name this homestead Lundzindzaneni because its owner kept on moving from one area to the other (home of a wanderer). Velebaleni contends that in the area where Manzezulu finally settled there were a number of Tfwala homesteads, including those of Mhlonishwa, Lofanele, Majahabovu and Ndukuyakhe (all being Tfwalas). Other neighbours to the Lundzindzane homestead were Macwatsa Lukhele, Mvimbi Lukhele and Tfoliwe Shongwe. All these homesteads had encircled the Lundzindzane homestead and there was therefore no way that these could have been allocated land as chiefs of the area as is now alleged by the grandchildren of Manzezulu.[24]

After the death of Manzezulu, his sons Magodzi and Mampefu remained in the area as ordinary citizens of Mafutseni, and remained loyal to Madlinkhomo. After the death of Mampefu and Magodzi, Mgwaze was brought in from Dlovunga to take over the responsibility of raising Magodzi and Mampefu's children through the levirate custom.[25] He was soon given the job of milking the cow, which had been allocated to the Nkambule of Khamatho by king Mbandzeni. The royal family had requested that the cattle be kept away from the royal palace because they had been offered to the ancestors at a point when Mbandzeni had been found to be possessed by ancestral spirits.[26] According to Swazi culture and tradition, a king could not be allowed to be a diviner or to be possessed by ancestral spirits. Kuper writes; "political leaders and other aristocrats are positively discouraged from becoming either medicine men or diviners, for this would interfere with their administrative duties and does not fit into their ascribed status." [27]

It is reported by Velebaleni Nkambule that at first Mgwaze did not cause any problem for the Mabuza. However, as time went by Mgwaze experienced problems crossing the Mzimpofu River, which was always in flood during the summer season and prevented him from milking Khamatho's cattle. He then went to Madlinkhomo and requested that he be granted a piece of land across the river so that he would not need to cross the river when he wanted to milk the cows. Unsuspectingly, Madlinkhomo granted him the piece of land.[28]

How the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni got hold of the tax book

The Mabuza blame the British who, through the introduction of taxes, made people who had been ordinary citizens into chiefs. The British did this to facilitate the collection of taxes and were not aware of the confusion this caused for Swazi society. LaNkonyane and Velebaleni concurred that trouble started when Khamatho became sick. Khamatho had originally gone to

Mafutseni following the king's request to take his cattle there because there was good grazing land. When Khamatho got sick he was taken to Lomahasha, a place renowned for having strong traditional doctors. He stayed there for a long time undergoing treatment until he was overcome by his sickness.[29]

When the British introduced taxes in 1903, they wanted someone to be in charge of the *inhlonhla*. They refused to accept that the rightful person who had the authority over the *inhlonhla* was away because of sickness. They then decided to register Mgwaze as the one responsible for the king's cattle, and the people around the area, thus giving him the tax book, which is today the source of the trouble between the Mabuza and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni. Huw Jones asserts that it was Magodzi who was given the tax book by the British and his name appeared on the list of chiefs compiled by the British Administration of 1903. Jones further contends that Magodzi was in charge of an area called lundzindzaneni, east of Mafutseni, in central Swaziland.[30]

After the demise of Khamatho, Mgwaze assumed full responsibility of the king's cattle because Khamatho's children were still young. This therefore explains how the Dlamini got hold of the tax book upon which they claim chiefship of the Lundzindzaneni area.[31] The truth is that the tax book does not belong to them but to the Nkambule of Khamatho. This tax book was for the *inhlonhla* not and did not mean that through it the one responsible for the *inhlonhla* would automatically become chief. According to Lomalombo the tax book was taken to Khamatfo from Mbekelweni, where the king's cattle had been first kept before being moved to Mafutseni. He further argued that if the tax book was now the source of trouble between the Mabuza on the one hand and the Nkambule and Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni on the other, it should be taken back to Mbekelweni.[32] Mbekelweni was the King's Royal Palace. The cattle had been moved from Mbekelweni to Mafutseni because the king, Mbandzeni, had previously seen good grazing

grass around the area and is said to have asked to move his cattle to Mafutseni. (*Kuyodlisa Luhlata*) There is another dimension which has been added to this story. The Mabuza argue that if the tax book was for the King's cattle, it means that the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni owe the present king, Mswati III a lot of cattle as the original owner of the *inhlonhla*

The tax book has caused a double problem for the Mabuza of Mafutseni as the Nkambule of Khamatho have also been made chiefs. LoMalombo argued that the Nkambule did not deserve to be chiefs and blamed the *indvuna* of Ludzidzini, Mpica Mtsetfwa who misled the young king Mswati III into ratifying the chiefly status of the Nkambule. The argument raised by LoMalombo is subject to contestation as it is common that people who had been given the responsibility to look after the king's cattle were granted the status of chiefship, more especially during the colonial period. For instance, the Mabuza and Dvuba of Jubukweni and Mpolonjeni areas respectively were granted chiefly status based on the fact that they were looking after king's cattle.[33]

The Mabuza claim that they had not had any trouble with the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni until the death of Mhlekwa in the 1980s after he had taken over from Mgwaze. According to LaNkonyane, "Mhlekwa presented no problem because he knew that Lundzindzaneni belonged to the Mabuza. Thus, when the Mabuza summoned their subjects, Mhlekwa would heed the call without objection." This claim by LaNkonyane may be doubted as it would appear that Mhlekwa did enjoy minimal powers of being accorded the status of 'chief,' though whether through an agreement with the Mabuza to be their 'eye'(representative) in that area or because the Prince had usurped his princely status is not clear. For instance, he allocated land to people, which act should have been challenged by the Mabuza from the outset.

LoMalombo contends that the Mabuza have themselves to blame for the chieftaincy dispute because he believes that the Mabuza were did not call to order the Dlamini of Lundindzaneni when they started usurping their powers by allocating land to new arrivals. For instance, Mhlekwa was allowed to *khontisa* (allocate land) and at times the Mabuza would even attend some traditional functions organised by Mhlekwa, and provide tribute labour.[34]

In another development, Mhlekwa is also reported to have quarrelled with the Magagula of Ka-Budla and Prince Jahamnyama Dlamini of Mdumezulu over boundaries. The latter is said to have complained to the Mabuza about Mhlekwa who, according to their view was not chief, hence the Dlamini of Mdumezulu knew Mafutseni as their neighbour in terms of boundaries and not Lundzindzaneni.[35]

In one instance Mhlekwa is also reported to have had a boundary dispute with Phica Magagula who was made chief by Sobhuza II under very questionable circumstances. Phica is believed to have been Sobhuza's close friend, and that had accompanied him when he went to school in Lovedale (South Africa). Both Mhlekwa and Phica sought the intervention of the Elangeni traditional authorities for arbitration in the late seventies. However, they were both told that they were not chiefs, and their request was not entertained. Mhlekwa is even said to have lost an eye during this quarrel.[36]

In short then, what needs to be pointed out is that though Mhlekwa did not trouble the Mabuza, he was asserting himself and tension must have been simmering over the years. Further, though the people around Lundzindzaneni had their tax identities, stating that they were subjects of Mhlekwa, the Mabuza did not take this as a serious challenge because the king had not at any stage confirmed Mhlekwa, or celebrated his installation ceremony known as *Sibhimbhi.*

LaNkonyane argues that before Mhlekwa died, she sent two delegations led by Mgundane Vilakati to Mhlekwa to ask him if he had told his children that he was not chief of the area and that Lundzindzaneni belonged to Mafutseni.[37] This on its own is an indication that Mhlekwa did enjoy minimal powers and was an admission of the existence of tension between the late prince and the Mabuza. Nevertheless, the Mabuza maintain that trouble started when one of Mhlekwa's sons, Matututu, who is well connected to the royal family, claimed to be chief of the Lundzindzaneni area, which has less than fifty homesteads. This has led to a bitter chieftaincy dispute between the Mabuza and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni, the latter remaining adamant that they deserved to be recognised as chiefs by the Mabuza.

The Mabuza also emphasise that for 55 years Mafutseni had been without a chief, and that is why a number of 'chiefdoms' mushroomed in the area. In other words, during the long period of regency, the Mabuza chiefdom became very weak and could not closely monitor what was happening in the area. Everyone did as he pleased during the period of regency. Even those who were made to act as chiefs were very weak, and there was in-fighting within the Mabuza houses with regards to the right candidate to assume the position of chief of the area.

The long period of regency and confusion

Following the death of Ngcatfo, the last chief in the line of succession prior the installation of the present chief on 15th October1994, a period of regency lasted for 55 years. When Ngcatfo died in 1947, there was no immediate replacement. Mjahane, Ngcatfo's brother, was only allowed to act for a short period. It would seem Mjahane did not enjoy full support of the Mabuza as it was felt that he did not deserve the title of chief even after the death of Ngcatfo. LoMsholo Mabuza, who is a senior member of the Mabuza clan, stated, "Mjahane could not be

made chief because Ngcatfo had a son who could now legitimately claim that position." After the death of Ngcatfo, there was confusion and it looked as if the Mafutseni chiefdom was in limbo. All of Ngcatfo's wives ran away and went back to their fathers' places. LaNkonyane argued that they ran away because both Ngcatfo and Mfanawendlela died in the same year within a period of five months. This made them confused, as they did not understand what was happening.[38]

Ngcatfo did not have a son from his wives. He had two girls by the name of Khongwase and Lomakhisi. He was forced to marry another Vilakati woman, who then gave birth to Mfanawendlela. He was the one considered for the post of chief. However, though Mfanawendlela had been nominated for the post he had not been taken to the king to be blessed so that he could rightfully assume the powers of chiefship. He also could not celebrate *Sibhimbi* because, when he was taken to the king, the party was turned back as it were told that there was a national census. Mfanawendlela was murdered before he could be installed as chief.

It is alleged that Mfanawendlela had an illicit affair with somebody's wife, a Mabuza woman. This woman is also said to have had an affair with another Nyawo man. Trouble started between Mfanawendlela and the Nyawo man because the woman seemed to have made herself more available to Mfanawendlela as he came from a chiefly family. Mfanawendlela and Nyawo are said to have quarrelled over the woman. The Nyawo man then conspired with his friends to have Mfanawewendlela killed. One of them is said to have gone to the nearby filling station then owned by Mr Percy Howe (*Masengula*), to purchase gasoline which was used to douse Mfanawendlela's hut whilst he was asleep. It is alleged that the petrol station owner met the boys on their way home carrying the fuel container. He is said to have asked them where they

were taking the petrol to, and as such was the one who helped the police in identifying the culprits who killed Mfanawendlela.[39]

Both Lomalombo and Velebaleni concurred that an explosion was heard before the house was set alight, suggesting that he could have been shot before the hut was set on fire.[40] Lomsholo Mabuza claims that Mfanawendlela left a son he had got by an Mngometfulu woman. Mfanawendlela had confided only to LaNkonyane that he had impregnated an Mngometfulu girl.[41] This means that only LaNkonyane knew of the existence of the small boy amongst the Mabuza. LaNkonyane also took the Mngometfulu girl after Mfanawendlela had been murdered and hid her amongst the Mamba people in the south. Following the death of Mfanawendlela, Velebaleni says, a succession dispute ensued. From that time, a number of regents have been nominated by the Mabuza to act as chiefs of the area. The Mabuza were divided amongst themselves, as some of the houses claimed to have seniority and that they deserved to take over the chieftaincy. First to act was Sibhebhu Shongwe, followed by Hlobile Mabuza, Magwegwe, Lomtjekula, Mangisi Mabuza and others. During this long period of regency the chiefdom became very weak. Even those nominated did not enjoy support from the people of the area. Ordinary subjects of the area became less intrested in paying homage to the Mabuza royal kraal.[42]

In addition, even during national ceremonies like the *Incwala,* very few warriors attended. Despite this state of affairs, LaNkonyane commanded respect from the people, though she was undermined by a faction of the Mabuza who argued that she came to the area only as a wife and had no mandate to interfere in the family affairs of the Mabuza.

LoMalombo alleges that, after some time, upon seeing that Mafutseni had been without a chief for a long time, Sobhuza II decided to send a delegation to them to find out if there was no one rightfully deserving to take over the chiefship after Ngcatfo. Sobhuza may have done this because of pressure from the colonial office which constantly complained to the Paramount Chief about areas that did not have chiefs as this was making it very difficult for the colonial office to collect taxes.[43]

The Mabuza are said to have responded to Sobhuza's request by saying that there was no one to take over the chiefship as Ngcatfo had fathered only the two girls, Lomkhize and Khongwase. This position was taken by a section of the Mabuza who wanted to conceal information with regards to the person who had the right to take over the reins of chiefship. This delegation was later sent to LaNkonyane to find out if it was true that there was no one who deserved to take over the chiefship. Sobhhuza II had also hinted that he had heard that there were children fathered by Mjahane, Ngcatfo's brother, and advised that one of his sons should be allowed to take over the chiefship. LaNkonyane is said to have revealed that there was a Mabuza son, legitimate next to the chiefship, who should take over. It was then that Sipho, the current chief, was identified and groomed for the position until his installation in October 1994. Gabheni, Jahamnyama and Nkominophondo Khumalo represented the royal family during this function.[44]

The chieftaincy dispute between the Mabuza and Dlamini is taken to the king for arbitration.

The Mabuza claim that the matter between them and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni has been a thorny one. This was more so because the Lundzindzaneni prince seemed to be enjoying a lot of support from certain quarters of the royal family. Before the Mabuza could take up the matter with the king, Mswati III, the matter was first reported to the regional administrator, Prince

Gabheni Dlamini, a son of the late king Sobhuza II. He is said to have been unco-operative and told them that the Mabuza should install a chief before they could bring any matter to him for arbitration. In the meantime the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni enjoyed the liberty of putting more homesteads in the area 'under their jurisdiction'. The Dlamini did not just continue to place more homesteads in the area under Mafutseni, they continued to claim more of the area under Mafutseni as rightfully belonging to them.[45]

Alan Booth, who has done extensive research on the lives of the Swazi princes and princesses argues that Prince Gabheni was almost nominated king after the demise of Sobhuza II.[49] The implication here then is that he was bitter and would do anything to weaken the position of the present king. He also appeared to be more on the side of the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni.

Some subjects who paid their allegiance to the Mabuza chief were harassed and intimidated by the Dlamini, who even adopted coercive tactics to have these subjects transfer their allegiance to them. For instance, a Tfwala homestead had its fields taken away. When they enquired about their fields, they were told by Ndlandla, the Dlamini chief's *indvuna,* that they should come to the Lundzindzaneni chief's kraal for an answer and that only then would their trouble be over.[50]

Another subject to fall victim to Dlamini was Thandi Nkambule. The piece of land allocated to her by the Mabuza chief was likewise taken away. Thandi Nkambule, together with her building material, was loaded onto a truck by the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni and dumped several miles away from her area.[51] Such acts of violenceforced the Mabuza to renew their efforts to take the matter to King Mswati III. It needs to be emphasised that the Mabuza were not united, as some influential members of the inner council are said to have played a double game. There were some who pretended to be supporting the Mabuza whilst going on the backs

and providing the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni with information on what the Mabuza were planning to do. One senior member of the Mabuza inner council Mthithi Mabuza, claimed to have been promised a number of cattle by the Prince of Lundzindzaneni if he changed his position and supported him in his effort to be installed as chief in the area.[52]

The Mabuza had on several occasions tried to have the matter between them and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni resolved by the traditional authorities, but always received unfavourable treatment. For instance, the matter was reported to the traditional court in Manzini (Ndabazabantu). However, the presiding officer, Ntfonjeni Dlamini, who also happened to be a very influential prince, tended to side with the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni. It is also alleged that some powerful members of the Swazi Nation Council sought the downfall of the Mabuza, hence they sided with those of Lundzindzaneni. These authorities even went to the extent of blocking the Mabuza from seeing the king for a very long time when they tried to report the matter. Each time they tried to see the king, they were told that their matter was still being looked into, that the matter would be reported to the king. The Mabuza waited for too long without being allowed to see the king.[53]

It was only after the king appointed a new *Indvuna*, at Ludzidzini, Dibanisa Mavuso, that the matter began to be given attention. Each time the matter had been taken to the king's council, the Mabuza were told to stop allocating land to people until the king had passed his verdict on the matter. Whilst the chief of the Mabuza respected this order, the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni continued to push in more homesteads, so that the area under their control looked like a 'location'. Rumours circulated that the prince had been advised by certain princes to place more homesteads, as the existing number was too small for him to be made chief of the area.

This was done so that his request, when put to the king, would have weight, judging from the number of homes under his control.

The Mabuza also argue that these homesteads were placed where they kept the *Incwala* muti, which is taken to the king during the *Incwala* ceremony. The Mabuza have used this issue as a trump card against the Dlamini in order to win the support of the king. The matter took some time before it could be resolved. On several occasions, the Swazi National Council summoned both the Mabuza of Mafutseni and the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni to Ludzidzini and Lozitha royal palaces. They were told that if the king was not in the country matters involving chieftaincy disputes were to be discussed at Lozitha, but if the king was present, such matters were to be discussed at Ludzidzini royal palace.

The Mabuza were fortunate in the sense that during the *Incwala* ceremony they are expected to take *muti* to the king and that this responsibility cannot be delegated. Through this, the Mabuza were in a position to relate to the king what had happened in their dispute with the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni. Some members of the Swazi National Council are said to have not taken kindly to being by-passed in this way.

In September 2000 the king gave his verdict on the matter to a delegation nominated by him to deliver it to the concerned parties. An announcement was made over the national radio that those from the Lundzindzaneni area should converge at the Mafutseni *umphakatsi*. The verdict was read to all who were present, including both the Mabuza chief and the Dlamini 'chief'. They were told that in Mafutseni there was only one chief and that the whole area claimed by the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni was under the jurisdiction of the Mabuza. There were shouts of joy from the Mabuza subjects, as they believed that the king had wisely ended the chieftaincy

dispute and had brought to an end the long standing sour relationship between the Mabuza and the Dlamini on the one hand, and the tension between the Mabuza and the royal family on the other.

However, the Dlamini refused to believe that the delegation was from the king. They also argued that the king's delegation had emphasised that they should co-exist peacefully with the Mabuza. This they interpreted to mean that they were allowed to retain their chiefly status and that they would continue to exercise their chiefly powers in their area. Indeed they continued to add more homesteads in 'their' area. When the Mabuza chief sent his mesenger, Mtjopi Dldlu, to have them pay allegiance to him, the messenger was badly assaulted by the Lundzindzaneni people. This was taken seriously by the Mabuza as they argued that beating the chief's messenger was as good as beating the chief himself. The Mabuza finally resolved to go back to the king once more, with a view of getting him to authenticate the verdict.

This time the Mabuza decided to invite their neighbouring chiefdoms. They invited Mdumezulu, Kutsimuleni, Malindza, Nyakeni and Mhubhe to stand as their witnesses.[54] The king is said to have expressed his appreciation of the act of bringing along neighbouring chiefdoms so as to ensure that there would be more witnesses in the matter then and in the future. After lengthy deliberations, the king gave out a signed document to the Mabuza which was also copied to the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni.

Upon receipt of the document from the king, the Dlamini of Lundzindzaneni decided to seek audience with the king to make an appeal, taking with them a clique of powerful chiefs and princes. They are said to have taken with them seven herd of cattle. It is rumoured that the king accepted the cattle but refused to entertain their matter. This is probably because, according to Swazi tradition, the king is described as 'a mouth that tells no lies', implying that once he has

given a verdict what he has said can not be reversed, even if it is wrong. (*Awuyihlantisi inkhosi*)[55]

According to Ndzabidlayena Khumalo, a renowned conservative, a king is a king in council.[56] This means that a king never takes decisions alone. He always works with his committee members who advise him on traditional issues. This is done so as to ensure that the king does not err. The committees thoroughly investigate every matter brought to the king for arbitration. It is only after a committee has satisfied itself with investigations that they take their opinion to the king, which is then communicated by the king to the concerned party as final.

Conclusion

Though the dispute involving the Dlamini and the Mabuza has been resolved by the king, this does not mean that there has been no animosity between the royal family and the Mabuza. It is true that the tension between the Mabuza and the royal family had not been a pronounced one. The Mabuza had been bitter about the treatment that they had received from the traditional authorities as they allege that it has been marred by corruption and nepotism. Ndzabidlayena Khumalo confirms that people's issues taken to the king's committees have not received the attention they deserve, as members of these committees have always demanded bribes from the complainants before their matter could be addressed, this is code-named 'watering the garden'.

The king's verdict of denying the Lundzindzaneni princely status sets a bad precedent as it means that there will be continued resistance from non-Dlamini chiefdoms in acknowledging princes sent out to exercise their powers away from the palace. This places the king in a critical position as he is expected by tradition to continue the culture of sending out princes to the

regions to be made chiefs over non-Dlamini chiefdoms. This also helps the king in getting rid of troublesome princes from the royal palace.

Chapter 7

The Fakudze

This chapter will discuss how a senior Prince, Maguga, who was a senior member of the Swazi National Council, was forcefully imposed on the Fakudze of Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli chiefdoms. Both are located in the Lubombo region on the road to Bigbend. This followed the promulgation of the Swazi Administration Order of 1998. Some people believe that this law was specially engineered to allow the imposition of Prince Maguga in both Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli chiefdoms. The imposition of Prince Maguga has produced such an outcry from the whole country that this is now being referred to as 'a national crisis'. People have defiantly taken to the streets in support of the evicted chiefs and their followers. The Prime Minister has since banned the teachers' organization, The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions, and other concerned parties from holding meetings. The country's authorities have revived the Sixty Days Detention Order in an attempt to contain the situation. What is currently happening in the country has been described by some as showing that " Swaziland has no law and that the courts no longer guarantee the freedom of citizens, the country is more of a jungle than a modern state".[1] For one to better understand the issue involving the prince and the people of both Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli, one has to first look at the origin of the Fakudze.

The Origin of the Fakudze

The Fakudze are of Sotho stock, and were found by Sobhuza I around the Magudu region in northern Kwazulu-Natal when he temporarily stayed there before he was forced to move to the north by Zwide of the Ndwandwe. The Fakudze claim that they were found by the Swazi king living in three areas namely, Mkhwakhweni, Mangwazane and Ntonga, all areas around Mkhuze in South Africa.[2]

The Fakudze advance two versions on how they came to be part of the Swazi under king Sobhuza I. The first version alleges that the Fakudze accidentally came across the Swazi in the Magudu under the leadership of *Mntolomfene*. Mkhankuyane Fakudze asserts that one of their hunting party, which was pursuing a specific wild animal known as *Imfelakudze* (wild game that took long to collapse), encountered the Swazi, and that it is after this animal that they came to be known as the Fakudze. The Fakudze hunting party decided not to go back and chose to join the Swazi as subjects of king Sobhuza I through the system of *kubutseka* (pay allegiance)[3]

The second version alleges that Sobhuza found the Fakudze around the Magudu area when he came from Ka-Tembe. Michael Fakudze asserts that one night, while camping, Sobhuza noticed fires glowing nearby, and that this unsettled him because he was not sure of what threat this might pose to him and his people. The following day the Swazi king sent some of his regiments to go and investigate. He was told that those were Sotho groups. The king suggested that the Sotho groups should be made to join the Swazi, and that he (Sobhuza) would choose his *indvuna* amongst them. The reason for choosing his *indvuna* from the Sotho groups was that the Sotho had lived in the area for a longer time than the Swazi, and as such had better knowledge of the environment. It was, for instance, of paramount importance for the Sotho groups to help the Swazi king locate good caves to hide in around the area. Michael Fakudze also claimed that the Sotho groups had powerful war *muti* known as *Imfakudze* or *Imfakayiboni,* which made them 'invisible' to their enemy and that it was from this *muti* that the Swazi came to refer to the Sotho as the 'Fakudze'. "Our original name was in Sotho, but was changed by the Swazi to Fakudze"[4]. Richard Patricks further lists the pedigree of the Fakudze leaders as: "Mntolomfene was followed by Mlambo, who was in turn followed by Qoma, Mjudi, Dzambile, Ngobe, Sophela, and Mlobokazane"[5]

Sobhuza then instructed his forces to go and capture the Sotho. He had warned his regiments not to kill them but to bring them alive. First to be captured through a three pronged encirclement were those who lived around Mkhwakhweni. This was followed by those in the Mangwazane area. The last group, which stayed around Ntonga, was very difficult to capture because each time the Swazi regiments tried to seize them they retreated to their strategic mountain stronghold known as Ntonga Mountain which had good caves to hide in. It was then decided that they be enticed from their sanctuary by giving them a lot of meat, so that Swazi intentions not to harm them were explicitly made known. Finally, this group surrounded. It was also here that one of the Sotho leaders, who hid like a baboon amongst the rocks, came to be described by the Swazi as *Mntolomfene*, which means the one who hides like a baboon. Even today the Fakudze in their praise-name are referred to as *Mntolo*.

Immediately the Fakudze had been recruited into the Swazi, the chosen *indvuna* was commissioned by Sobhuza I to move around the area showing the Swazi regiments the caves for hiding in. The Fakudze claim that from that time up to the present they have occupied the position of *tindvuna* in most royal villages, like Lobamba Lomdzala, Nkhanini, and Elangeni, all in central Swaziland. The Fakudze further contend that the coming together of the Sotho groups and the Swazi proved to be very useful, as it enabled Sobhuza I to augment his small fighting forces and subsequently to ward off the Zulu army on several occasions. Two episodes are recounted when the Swazi were able to drive back the Zulu. This was during the 1836 and 1838 battles of Lubuya, also described by other historians like Bonner, Omer-Cooper, Hamilton, Matsebula, and Jones. Bonner provides a detailed account of the troubled times the Swazi had with the Zulu under Shaka during the latter half of the 1820s. He describes the visit Sobhuza paid to Shaka and how Shaka, after welcoming the Swazi, later decided to send his army to decimate them. He argues that it is perhaps during this period that Shaka decided to kill

Sobhuza's two daughters Mphandzese and Lonkhulumo. Despite a tactical defeat, Sobhuza had again demonstrated his ability to withstand a massive Zulu attack through the use of inaccessible hideouts from which the Swazi could not be dislodged.[6] There were heavy casualties on both sides. The Zulu were however able to drive back with them more than 15000 head of cattle.[7]

Jones also describes this war of the Swazi led by Mngayi Fakudze against the Zulu who had been commisioned by Dingane. "…the Zulu *imphi* attacked in three divisions with the objective of eliminating the Swazi menace. Tactically, each division was to move separately and then quickly converge to cut the Swazi from their caves, forcing them to fight in the open."[8]. Michael Fakudze claims that one of the Zulu regiment was completely wiped out by the flooded Phongolo River, and the remaining two refused to cross the river as their commander demanded, telling them that those who had been swept down stream would resurface on the other side.[9]

When the Swazi king left Shiselweni to settle around Nokwane, next to the Usuthu River, he left together with the Fakudze who still retained their position of *tindvuna*, even during the time of Mswati II.

Settlement at Macetjeni

The Fakudze of Macetjeni trace their geaneology to Mntolomfene, whom they regard as the progenitor of all the Fakudze people whilst in the Magudu area well before the coming of the Swazi. The Fakudze claim that at the time of their capture *Mntolomfene* was their leader, and that he was the one who always carried the war *muti*, which made the Fakudze 'invisible' to their enemy. This is where most of the Fakudze were concentrated. After Mlobokazane, the new leader of the Fakudze was either Hlahla or Mjingi. It is possible that these two names refer

to the same person, as Hlahla is hardly mentioned in the Fakudze pedigree. Mjingi, according to the Fakudze was the leader whom the king, Mswati II sent to settle at Macetjeni, a place originally known as Bulunga, to monitor and raise an alarm in case he saw the Zulu army advancing. Jones and Hamilton also echo this information.[10] It is not clear whether the two names refer to the same person. It is worth mentioning that there is again a slight difference in the information regarding the name Macetjeni. Mkhankuyane Fakudze contends that the place came to be known as Macetjeni in recognition of the bravery of one of the Fakudze regiments during raids and campaigns commisioned by the Swazi king, Mswati II. This Fakudze warrior became famous amongst the regiments and was thus accorded great respect, more than that accorded Mswati II. A brother to the Fakudze warrior is said to have become jealous and reported to the king that the Fakudze warrior was a threat to him as he was boastful. Mswati is said to have ordered that he be killed, and sent word to the regiments. Realizing that he too would not be spared if the king decided to kill his brother, the jealous Fakudze man decided to alert his brother about the secret murder plan, and both fled to Bulunga. When the regiments wanted to carry out the royal order they discovered that their target had fled. When the king sent for the jealous Fakudze man, he was nowhere to be found. It was later found that they had both left for Bulunga to seek protection from the king of the Tsabedze known as Sihlase, who was also very powerful. It was therefore after the two Fakudze's act of cunning that the king named the place Macetjeni. (a place of tricksters/cunning)

The other version alleges that the place was named after one of the Fakudze leaders who lived around Lavumisa. His name was Macetjeni. The King sent him to Bulunga to keep a watchful eye on the Zulu. Bonner agrees with this assertion that Mswati sent Macetjeni Fakudze to Bulunga.[11] Whatever the case may be, the Fakudze claim that it was Mjingi who first came to Macetjeni, during the reign of Mswati II. When the Swazi king sent him there, he ordered the

Tsabedze to move further east to give room to Mjingi. The leader of the Tsabedze is said to have refused, nor was he willing to pay allegiance to the Swazi king. The King decided to attack him. He was defeated and was forced to flee to Natal where he sought protection from the Zulu.[12] Bonner concurs with the above and asserts that Mswati II proceeded to attack the Tsabedze and other *Emakhandzambili* to whittle away their autonomy.[13]

Mphosi followed Mjingi and was included in the list of chiefs compiled by the British Administration in 1903. Richard Patricks records that Mphosi was installed as chief of Macetjeni in 1903 by the British.[14] It has been mentioned earlier that there was confusion when the British registered a number of people as chiefs for the purpose of tax collection. Whether this was another case is not clear as some contend that the area was *Lihambate* (a place without a chief). Mphosi, according to Jones died in 1935. At that point he had about 130 followers homestead appears in Schoch's map of 1914.[15]

Maguga and Macetjeni

The dispute between the Fakudze and the Swazi royal house began when King Sobhuza II sent Prince Maguga's mother, LaMngometulu, to Macetjeni during the reign of Mandlabovu somewhere in the 1960s. Maguga and his mother were senior and slightly anomalous Swazi royals, which helps account for the nature and extent of the dispute that subsequently arose. Maguga was the biological son of Sobhuza II, but was designated the legal offspring of Sobhuza's father Bhunu. This somewhat complicated status had its roots at a time when Bhunu met the Mngometulu chief, Mbikiza, after Bhunu had fled to Natal in an attempt to escape from the Boers who wanted to arrest him following the murder of traditional prime minister (*indvunalenkhuluyesive),* Mbhabha Sibandze. Mbikiza gave a wife to Bhunu whom Bhunu accepted as his *Inkhosikati*. Bhunu, however, died before he could marry her. When Sobhuz II

was installed as king, he recalled that chief Mbikiza had given a maiden to Bhunu. He therefore sent for an Mngomezulu maiden to be brought to him to fulfil the promise made to his father. Mbikiza complied and sent a girl, named Nceneleni, who later became Maguga's mother. According to Swazi tradition therefore, any child born of such a union did not belong to Sobhuza 11, but to Bhunu. The children of LaMngomezulu were therefore brothers and sisters to Sobhuza II.[16] It is for this reason that a number of people wrongly assumed that Maguga would be the next king when he became of age. This could not be because Maguga was son of Bhunu and not Sobhuza II. Sobhuza II was aware of this, as he shrewdly understood Swazi law and custom. When rumours circulated that Maguga would be the next king, Sobhuza is said to have called him and told him that he could not be king as he was his brother and not his son.[17] He is also reported to have told Maguga that he was now old (*sewugugile*) and that he should marry. That is how Maguga got his name. This may well have been a way of discouraging him from the idea that he would be the next king. Traditionally, a king-designate should have no wife before he is crowned. Sobhuza then took Maguga and his mother to both the chiefs of Macetjeni and KaMkhweli and asked these chiefs to live with Maguga and make him their emissary. It should however be pointed out that by virtue of the fact that Maguga was almost nominated king, he occupies a very special position within the royal family. He is regarded as the senior prince, and there are certain rituals that are only performed by him, especially during the *incwala* ceremony.[18] Hugh Jones narrates a similar incident regarding the appointment of the heir to Sobhuza I when he was advanced in years. Seeing that he was about to die each of his wives pestered him to appoint her son. Sobhuza is said to have fallen for LaVumisa Ndwandwe's son, Malambule but later retracted and as recompense gave him 300 to 500 head of cattle.[19]

The Fakudze accepted LaMngometulu without any problem and even paid *lobolo* as the king had ordered. Michael Fakudze claims that when the *Inkhosikati* was brought to Macetjeni, the Fakudze paid seventy head of cattle, whilst those from Ka-Mkhweli paid thirty.[20] They also contend that free labour was offered to build LaMngometfulu's home, plough and harvest the fields, and mend the kraal. Though the Fakudze play down the issue, it is clear that tension between Maguga and the people of Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli started after 1935 (this being the time whem Mandlabovu took after his father) during the time of Mandlabovu, the father of Mliba the current chief of Macetjeni. Mzululeki Shongwe, a staunch supporter, and a member of the inner council of the deposed Chief Mliba Fakudze, argues that Mandlabovu called his people to assemble in his homestead when Maguga's mother was first brought to them. A man by the name of Ngangenyoni Tfwala, who claimed to have been sent by King Sobhuza II to bring his son, Maguga to Mandlabovu, was introduced to them. He told the Fakudze that Sobhuza II had done that so that Mandlabovu could 'teach Maguga the law'.[21] According to Prince LoMalombo, the *Inkhosikati* was not *phakela'd* and Sobhuza did not make Maguga chief of these areas.[22] Prince Cetjwayo, a son to Sobhuza II, lambasted Maguga for the evictions (to be discussed in detail below), arguing that a prince is superior to a chief in Swazi culture, and that a prince lowered his dignity and painted royalty in a bad way among subjects when they became involved in chieftaincy disputes.[23] Chief Mtfuso has made the same point, that Sobhuza had only introduced Maguga to him as his emissary in 1982, not as a chief of the area. Another source, who spoke on condition of anonymity added that Sobhuza II made Maguga an emissary for all the chiefs of the Lubombo region.

The Swazi National Council secretary, Sam Mkhombe, has however presented a different version of events. He claims that Sobhuza had made Maguga chief of the said areas and asserts that there is nothing strange in what the king did because from time immemorial chiefs in

Swaziland had been chosen by the *Ingwenyama*.[24] Mandlabovu is said to have resisted, and, instead of allowing Maguga to stay at Macetjeni, chose to put him on the boundary line between his chiefdom and that of Mdumezulu, which was under Prince Mhawu Dlamini. It is not clear whether Maguga chose to do this because he intended to inherit the Mdumezulu, principality, or whether was deliberately put there by Mandlabovu because there was a boundary dispute involving Mandlabovu and Prince Mhawu. Mzululeki, Absalom Tfwala, and Michael Fakudze all agreed that King Sobhuza II expressed his concern over Maguga putting his home in the Mdumezulu area, and insisted that he should move his home from Mdumezulu to Macetjeni. Maguga was finally moved from Mdumezulu to where his home stands today, next to Gilgal High School on the main road between Manzini and Big Bend, less than a kilometre from the home of Mliba Fakudze, the deposed chief of the Fakudze.

The Fakudze claim that they lived peacefully with LaMngometfulu and Maguga. They assert that trouble started after the death of Mandlabovu in 1972. Following this, the Fakudze clan met to choose Mandlabovu's replacement. Mfanudleni was selected, and the matter was reported to Maguga whom they knew as their emissary to the king. When Maguga was asked to lead the Fakudze delegation to the king so that the heir to the chiefship could be blessed, Maguga refused. It has also been reported that Maguga's mother chastised him for not taking the Fakudze to the king.[25] The Fakudze finally decided to go to the king on their own without their *Lincusa* on 17 November 1977. However, they were kept waiting for more than a month to meet the king as they did not have an emissary (*Kuhwaya umvalo*). Absalom Tfwala claims that each time they went there they were told by the Swazi National Council, of which Maguga was a senior member, that the king was tired. The Fakudze claim that Sobhuza was annoyed when he heard that the Fakudze had been waiting to see him for such a long time. He sent for Maguga and asked why he had neglected the Fakudze. Maguga's response was that he had hoped that

Lusendvo Fakudze, the then *indvuna* of Ludzidzini, would take them in. The king then asked him if Maguga had the power to delegate because he had chosen him to be the intermediary for the Fakudze. He is said to have upbraded Magug,a saying, " I will place hot charcoal on your shoulders and you will be a nuisance all over the country."[26] Sobhuza then ordered that Mfanudleni be brought to him, and he immediately recognized that he was indeed the son of Mandlabovu because he knew his father, with whom he was in good terms. It is customary that the one who is the emissary should take the heir incumbent by the hand and present him to the king. It is claimed that when Maguga tried to do that he fell down. He tried again and he fell. This could have been a subtle way of showing his displeasure of being denied the opportunity of being chief of the area.

Mfanudleni then decided to stand on his own and approached the king. The king then gave Mfanudleni his new name, Mliba (*Ngumliba loya embili*). The king is said to have instructed Maguga to take Mliba to his mother, who now live at Masundvwini royal palace, so that she could counsel the young chief. Maguga was also instructed to take two head of cattle, one was to be given to his mother and the other was to be taken by Maguga to the people of Macetjeni. He was also told to take the gallblader and put it on Mliba, a sign of the king's blessing. However, Maguga never did this. Iinstead he took the two cattle from the king and 'ate them'.[27]

After dancing the *Sibhimbi* (installation ceremony), Mliba was supposed to be taken back to the king so that he could be given his certificate of registration. Again it was Maguga's responsibility to take the young chief to the king. Maguga never undertook this as he kept avoiding the Fakudze, telling them that the elders were still looking into the matter, until the king Sobhuza II died in August 1982.[28] Under normal circumstances, when *Sibhimbi* is held, there should be representatives from the royal family, and neighbouring chiefs are also invited

to witness the event. The Fakudze downplay this issue. The Fakudze assert that trouble started again after the demise of King Sobhuza II. Mzululeki contends that Prince Jahamnyama was escorted by two police vehicles with the police officers fully armed, called all the Fakudze and told them that Maguga was now their new chief. Mzululeki adds that they were all shocked, more especially because Prince Jahamnyama said that he would entertain neither comments nor questions. After some time another man, Mphica Mtsetfwa, called the Macetjeni people to assemble at Maguga's place. He too echoed the message delivered by Prince Jahamnyama and stressed that "even though they were refusing to listen the traditional authorities were prepared to deal with them."[29] This has not been accepted by both the Fakudze and other Swazis. The majority of the Swazi are also questioning the timing of the matter and ask why Maguga remained silent for the previous two decades only to emerge at this point and claim chiefship of the two areas. Many people have been left puzzled as to why Maguga did not take up his chiefly position immediately he was sent to the area if it is true that his mother was *phakela'd* both the Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli areas. The Fakudze have also raised the question of why government structures official like the District Commissioner and the revenue official did not reflect that Maguga was indeed chief of the said areas for the past two decades. This can be readily confirmed, as whenever an individual goes to pay his/her trading licence, or graded tax, the name of his/her chief should appear on the tax receipt. Even in the register of chiefs in Swaziland, the name of Maguga has been recently inserted over those of Mliba and Mtfuso by hand.[30]

The Fakudze contend that if they are now being deposed and Prince Maguga is now their new chief, then proper channels need to be followed. Mzululeki Shongwe argued that they will not accept the imposition of Maguga as their new chief until the right channels have been followed.[31] They assert that what had been done was carried out behind their backs. The

Fakudze of Macetjeni do not deny that they paid dowry for Maguga's mother, which the traditional authorities have used as proof that Maguga was indeed appointed chief. Richard Patricks contends that Mandlabovu and his *indvuna* were demoted to junior positions immediately Prince Maguga was brought to Macetjeni, but fails to explain why the prince did not take up his new position, neither does he provide sources.[32] Another question that has been raised by the Fakudze is why the prince accompanied Mliba to King Sobhuza II when he knew that he was chief of Macetjeni. Connected to this question is why King Sobhuza II accepted and blessed Mliba if he knew that he had *phakela'd* Maguga's mother the Macetjeni area. Absalom Tfwala contends that he was the one who was entrusted with the responsibility to to see to it that Mliba was taken to the king and danced his *sibhimbi.* He further claims that when Mliba was taken to the king, he was in the company of nine witnesses some of whom are still alive.[33] According to Swazil law and custom, the king had the right to *phakela* Maguga's mother because Maguga, though fathered by Sobhuza was not his son but his brother. Tradition says that if a king's wife is sent to any part of the country, her first-born male child automatically becomes chief of that area. Further, the Fakudze claim that LaMngometulu, Maguga's mother refused to stay in the area and decided to go and live in Masundvwini, one of Sobhuza's royal palaces in Matsapha, and even refused to be buried in the area.[34] They also claim that she would occasionaly visit Macetjeni, where the Fakudze would kill ten head of cattle for her and celebrate her visit.

The Fakudze argued that they were aware that Swazi kings from time immemorial had exercised their powers of appointing and deposing chiefs but contend that the right channels need to be followed. They contend that in Swazi law and custom a clan chief, under normal circumstances, is chosen by family members and then taken to the king for blessing. In other words, a clan chief is born, not appointed. He retains his position untill he dies, after which his

son takes over. This explains why the people of both Macetjeni and Ka-Khweli have remained so recalcitrant, vehemently opposing the installation of the prince in their areas. What also needs to be emphasised here is that it was very rare for a king to depose a clan chief and replace him with a prince unless the former was recalcitrant and resisting Dlamini hegemony. When such was done, both the deposed chief and his followers were made aware beforehand. The traditional elders would call the deposed chief and everything would be explained to him.

It is on these grounds that Prince Mfanasibili has strongly criticised those who support Maguga's claim. He argues that if the king made Maguga chief of both Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli chiefdoms, then proper channels were not followed.[35] Mfanasibili maintains that according to Swazi culture, when a prince is taken to a chiefdom to be made chief, a number of producers must be followed, the first of which is that the incumbent is called to the royal palace together with his council. He is then told that he is no longer chief but an *indvuna* of the prince. He is forced to carry the baggage of the prince back to the chiefdom. At their arrival all the subjects would have assembled. The deposed chief arrives at his former chiefdom carrying the princes's baggage so that all the people could see him and know that he is no longer their chief but has been replaced by the prince. Mfanasibili contends that this very important step was never followed in Maguga's case and he cannot claim to be the legitimate chief of Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli.[36]

When asked why it took them so long to acquire Mliba's certificate that legitimazed his position as chief of Macetjeni, Micheal Fakudze argued that it was because Maguga was refusing to take them back to the king so that Mliba could get his certificate. Michael further claims that Sobhuza had signed Mliba's certificate before he died in 1982. He gave this certificate to a certain B.B. Tfwala to hand it over to the Fakudze. B.B. Tfwala died without having passed the

certificate to its rightful owner, Mliba. B.B. Tfwala left the certificate with his wife, who finally gave it to Mliba after paying a certain fee. It is alleged that Mliba was alerted by Malamulela Magagula, now chief of Ka-Dvokolwako, that he had seen Mliba's certificate with B.B. Tfwala's wife because he had also gone there to fetch his. It should however be noted that in the period after the demise of King Sobhuza II, there was political instability, in the country under the *Liqoqo*, as this period was marred by corruption and nepotism. The Dlamini traditional authorities claim that Mliba's certificate was forged.[37] The Fakudze have vehemently denied this allegation arguing that there was no way Mliba could get to forge the king's signature and stamp. The same sentiments were echoed by Mzululeki Shongwe, who wanted to know why the police wanted to confiscate Mliba's certificate if it was a forgery and why they came to him having removed their identification numbers. Mzululeki argues that the police wanted it because they wanted "to destroy the devastating evidence Mliba had over Maguga's claim that he also possessed a certificate purported to have been signed by Sobhuza II."[38]

The matter involving Maguga and the people of Macetjeni has now been further complicated by Mswati III's marriage to an Mbikiza woman. This makes it difficult for him to deal with this matter without bias. The Swazi National Council also has a problem because Maguga is a prince and also a member of the Council. Sobandla, the Home Affairs Minister, cannot deal with the issue because he is a brother to Maguga.

Mswati III and the Fakudze

When Mswati III assumed power he endorsed Maguga's claim and placed him as new chief of Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli. These areas, as we have seen, had for a very long period of time been under the control of Mliba Fakudze and Mtfuso Dlamini. The people of these areas vehemently rejected Maguga as their new chief and defiantly continued to pay allegiance to the

deposed chiefs. Following the imposition of Maguga, the people have divided into two factions, with a few heeding the royal decision on the grounds that in Swazi tradition the king is ‘a mouth that tells no lies’ (*Umlomo longacali manga*). This means that no one should challenge what the king has said and that the order should be carried out as planned. The majority of the people of both areas have however refused to recognize Prince Maguga as their new chief. They also refuse to attend his meetings. When the deposed chief call a meeting the people heed the call and attend in large numbers, and they have vowed to support their leaders no matter what came their way. The armed forces have also been placed in these areas to protect the prince, whose home is under 24-hour surveillance, and also to bar the deposed chiefs from holding 'illegal' meetings.[39] The researcher can also attest to the presence of the armed forces as he had been to the area on numerous occasions.

It has been said that when the matter involving Maguga and the people of Macetjeni was first reported to king Mswati III, he promised to gather together all chiefs and princes to debate the issue. However, the king is said to have somersaulted when he called the Fakudze to Nkoyoyo royal palace in the year 2000 to tell them that Maguga was now the new chief of Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli. The Fakudze argue that the king was under great pressure from Maguga and his brothers. The king is said to have even alluded to the fact that he was being bothered by Maguga every day, demanding that he be given what belonged to him, that is, to be made chief of Macetjeni and KaMkhweli. It is for this reason that the Fakudze believe tradition has been flouted to make Maguga happy and that they have been victims of circumstances. *The Mail and Guardian* newspaper concluded a caption on the issue of KaMkhweli and Macetjeni by saying “Many say that it is squabbles within the royal family and Mswati’s attempt to appease his brothers that may see the fall of the monarchy.[40]

In the June edition of the *Nation Magazine 2001*, the king was interviewed regarding the Macetjeni and KaMkhweli issue said, "Some bogus chiefs amass a large following and thereafter claim to be legitimate chiefs but when asked to produce the necessary documents to support their claim they fail"[41]

It has been very difficult to get the truth from the two factions involved in the chieftaincy wrangle as the two factions are very economical with the truth and take defensive positions.

Immediately Maguga was made chief of the area, he appointed his own *libandla,* headed by his *indvuna*, Almon Mhlanga. The people of Macetjeni decided to cut down all electric poles supplying electricity to the *indvunas*' homestead and Maguga's home was gutted by fire.[42] These acts of sabotage have taken place in spite of the presence of the armed forces. Matters worsened when the Minister for Home Affairs Sobandla Dlamini, who is de facto brother to Maguga, issued an eviction order on the Fakudze chief to be carried out on 5 September 2000. It was said that the king had consented to the eviction order. Following this order, the deposed chiefs organised a prayer meeting with their followers on 3 November 2000 to pray about ' the dark cloud which was hovering over them. This prayer meeting was however not allowed to proceed as the chiefs' areas were closely policed by the armed forces and heavy roadblocks mounted close to the deposed chiefs' homes.[43]

The eviction order was purportedly signed by the king on the 12 July 2000 in terms of the Swazi Administration Order of 1998. It will be remembered that the powers-that-be waited for parliament to be dissolved in preparation for the 1998 elections and swiftly enacted this Order which gave new vast powers to chiefs.[44] It has been mentioned above that certain elements within Swazi society were of the conviction that this order was meant to impose Prince Maguga on the people of Macetjeni and KaMkhweli so that he could deal with who ever challenged his

authority. The order gave him powers to evict recalcitrant elements. The eviction order was carried out during the night. A convoy of trucks and pickup vans worked through the night, transporting the 200 evicted families for a hundred kilometres to different destinations around the country, where they were dumped. This figure is debatable as some officials from the government contend that only seven families were evicted. However, it should be noted that in Africa there are extended families and that there is a difference between a family and a homestead. The mere fact that these evictions were carried out during the night made it a good deal less than transparent.[45]

It is said that some of those to be evicted ran away before the eviction order was carried out. These included the chiefs who had been deposed who fled the country to seek political asylum in neighbouring South Africa.[46]

Political parties, human rights organizations, the Swaziland Association of Teachers and members of the general public all condemned the evictions. the Swaziland National Association of Teachers, concerned about the welfare of the seventy students who were victims of the eviction order, donated an amount of E10 000 Emalangeni to the Swaziland Red Cross Society to feed and transport them to their examination centres, as the order was carried out during the time when standard fives, form threes and form fives were sitting for their end of year examinations.[47] There have also been demonstrations to protest against the evictions. The paramilitary police, who also used live ammunition and clubbed most of the demonstrators.[48] University students also marched to the king's palace to deliver a petition demanding that the evictions be reversed but to no avail. Both deposed chiefs tried in vain to seek audience with the king for purposes of *"Kwembula ingubo*". They filed an urgent court application that the evictions be stopped while they sought audience with the king. The court granted this. However, the evictions were carried out despite the court ruling, which serves to show the state of

lawlessness in the country. It should be noted here that seeking audience with the king would not have helped as the king himself had consented to the eviction order. The banned political formations in the country (Peoples Democratic Movement and the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress) seized this as an opportunity to show the world that Swaziland was a feudal state where the rights of the people are not respected, and sought to mobilize the international community.[49]

The situation at Macetjeni continued to worsen. For instance, a bomb went off where the security forces camped at Macetjeni, wounding two police officers.[50] It was also reported that a group of angry women went to Prince Maguga's homestead to present him with a "special gift" which turned out to be their nude buttocks. Had the women found him home, they said "they would have shown the prince their nude backs and front".[51] This act by the women has sparked off a heated debate within Swazi society, with some condemning the women and others supporting them arguing that what the women did was cultural. This was analogous to what the Swazi did to Brian Marwick, a resident commissioner during the colonial days. Marwick is said to have been so surprised that he advised his country to hand over absolute power to the Swazis in 1968.[57] The act of the women of exposing their buttocks is considered a bad omen, and is a defiant act, very serious under Swazi culture. This was an act of defiance not only to Maguga but also to the hand that had appointed him. The women argued that they used this as their last resort to show their frustration concerning the imposed prince. The police arrested the elderly women who exposed their behinds but other women sympathizers threatened to join the fray and present more of such spectacle to the authorities, particularly the king. This was indeed a case of the law versus culture.

When the Swazi House of Parliament tried to discuss the issue of Macetjeni it was told in no uncertain terms by traditional authorities that the issue of the evictions was outside its jurisdiction.[53] As the condition of the people who were evicted, worsened, their plight won more sympathisers. For instance, it was subsequently reported that one of those evicted, by the name of Lindiwe Fakudze, gave birth to a baby whilst alone in the forest for four days, as she had run away during the eviction. The Swaziland Red Cross Society reported that the conditions under which the evicted victims lived were miserable, regardless of the public statement made by the government to the effect that it would do everything in its power to ensure that evicted families were taken care of.[54]

Some of those who left the country to seek political assylum in South Africa later died. It is not clear whether they died of natural causes or because of stress as a result of homesickness. Those who have died include the likes of Dumsile Tfwala, her husband Makhuphula Tfwala, and their daughter, Magudva Sihlongonyane and Mduduzi Dlamini, son to deposed chief Mtfuso. Matters were compounded by the refusal of the Swazi authorities to allow their bodies to be burried at their ancestral gravesites. The Court of Appeal ruled that government should return the exiles to their ancestral lands, but the government overturned the rule of law as it refused to abide by the court ruling.This led to a showdown between the police and the affected families on a number of occasions. The corpse of Dumsile Tfwala was impounded by the police from the custody of family members and taken back to the morgue, where it spent more than a month. The same was done to the corpse of Makhuphula and Mduduzi Dlamini. Makhuphula's body was taken at a police roadblock just two kilometres from Makhuphula's home. The family had incurred expenses in preparation for the funeral. The family made an urgent court application to restrain the police from interfering with Mkhuphula's funeral. Even after the court order had been granted, the police continued to obstruct the funeral.[55]

The public, which had been watching the procedings, became vocal when the police took the same action with the corpse of Mduduzi Dlamini. Mduduzi's hearse was not allowed to enter his home where he had been living before the evictions. One of Mtfuso's wives, who tried to draw water from the home, was severely assaulted by the non-compromising police officers.[55] The family then decided to leave the corpse unattended. It lay in the open for the whole night and the following day. The family was forced to live under a tree and brave the rain that fell during the night.

There was an outcry from the public who called for sanity from the traditional authorities and the police. The authorities were also criticised by their own pseudo political party, Sibahle Sinje, which was formed by the traditional authorities in the early 1990s to counter the activities of political formations in the country.

Sibahle Sinje lambasted the government saying "the government had taken leave of its senses and used eighteenth century solutions to solve a problem of the 21st century, something which resulted to the loss of hard earned resources and time on events that did not need to take place in the first place." Sibahle Sinje has also claimed that these acts by the government had the net effect of creating heroes out of government enemies who were otherwise nonentities prior to these events.[56]

Jim Gama, a very influential conservative radio personality, and also *indvuna* of Ludzidzini royal palace, condemned the confiscation of coffins and leaving them unattended as unSwazi, because according to Swazi culture and custom "a dead persons' body deserved to be accorded respect and not be used as a subject of quarrel or dispute." He also maintained that anyone had

the right to be buried in the land of his birth next to his ancestors who *khonta'd*.[57] The affected families were also not allowed to hold a cleansing ceremony, a ceremony which takes place after thirty days, of which certain items *(tibi)* are burnt. According to Swazi culture, this again cannot be done in another person's home, implying that the evicted people should be allowed to return to their homes to hold such a ceremony.

The major issue that has angered Swazi society has been the police's arrogance and their continued violation of court orders with impunity. The habit of the police violating court orders began in December 2001 when the High Court ruled that all the evictees should be allowed to go back to their homes pending their appeal to the king. One of the victims of evictions, who is also a brother to Chief Mliba, Madeli Fakudze, made successful court applications on three separate occasions to have the eviction order set aside. The police violated these court orders. After the first court order had been issued in his favour, Madeli Fakudze went back to his home. Sisana Mamba lamented the treatment they received from the police. She said that after the court order had been issued, the people of Macetjeni and Ka-Mkhweli jubilantly received the news. They went to clear Chief Mliba's homestead in preparation for his coming, but the police dispersed them with tear gas, live and rubber bullets hurting about sixty of them, with some still having the bullets in their bodies.[58] Sisana further argued that it was the first time that elderly people got a taste of tear gas and they still have not recovered from the shocking experience.

The above stands to show that the state of the justice sysytem in the country had reached deplorable levels as the police continued to subvert court orders as they pleased. The people began to call for the arrest of the police officers or the one who gave them the orders to violate court orders. Progressive formations in Swaziland also voiced their disappointment in the system of government, arguing that the judiciary was not independent and that the law in

Swaziland had 'eyes'. One of the judges, Justice Matsebula warned the nation's authorities, predicting anarchy in the country if the police continued to ignore court orders.[59] People called for the intervention of the king and have condemned him for being silent when the contry was 'on fire'. The king recommended that a commission be set up to look into the malfunction of the justice system in the country when he opened parliament in February 2002.

The people of Macetjeni, who remained loyal to the deposed chief Mliba, called for the boycott of *the Incwala, umhlanga,* and *lusekwane* ceremonies. "We have served the king with utmost loyalty for years but he has failed us by taking sides" said an angry Zodwa Dlamini, one of the evicted relatives of the deposed chief.[60]

Conclusion

This chapter sought to show that the relationship between the Swazi royal house and the people of Macetjeni has soured and that the latter have openly revolted against traditional authority following the imposition of Maguga as their new chief. This state of affairs has worsened forcing traditional auathorities to resort to the use of naked force. A police and army camp has been established in the area to monitor the activities of the people of Macetjeni and to ensure the safety of Maguga. The people of Macetjeni argue that Maguga was never made chief of the area and have vowed never to heed his call to meetings sanctioned by him other than their chief Mliba Fakudze. This stands to show that powers exercised by Swazi royal authorities in the past have now come under scrutiny as deposing a chief is now regarded as an act of war. It is for the same reason that the people are now calling for the removal of the mornachy. To speak therefore of the Swazi State being united and homogenous is both hegemic and misleading as the country suffers a scourge of chieftancy disputes that have resulted in tensions between the centre and the regions.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

This research report has sought to show how Sobhuza I and Mswati II consolidated the Swazi state through conquering smaller scattered Nguni, Sotho and Tsonga groups during the 19th century. It has sought to understand centre- regional disputes that have married Swazi affairs for the past two centuries disputes between the Swazi royal house and the subordinate chiefdoms of the Magagula, Thwala, Mabuza, all located in central Swaziland, and the Fakudze of Macetjeni in the Lubombo region. It has documented a number of convergences in all of

these, which hint at the limits to the manipulation of oral tradition. It has also demonstrated the centrality of historical traditions to current political claims. Finally, it has illustrated unambiguously the tensions which have existed between the Dlamini and non- Dlamini chiefdoms dating back nearly two hundred years which are sedimented within these traditions.

These tensions, as has been shown in the foregoing chapters, have recently assumed a more pronounced character, forcing the Dlamini central authorities to resort to the use of naked force. This state of affairs has been necessited by the fact that central authority is struggling to retain its stranglehold on the non Dlamini chiefdoms by placing princes and princesses for purposes of surveillance. The non-Dlamini chiefdoms have struggled to regain their lost autonomy at any opportunity. Such opportunities have been availed to the non Dlamini chiefdoms by the forces which affected the whole Southern African region. These forces have in one way or the other had contradictory effects on the various groups present in Swaziland. These forces include the Mfecane, colonialism, missionary activites, education, the South African industrial revolution and its concomitant labour migration. These forces saw the Dlamini royal house struggling to retain its hold on the non-Dlamini chiefdoms through the re-invention and manipulation of tradition. Princes and princesses have also been placed around the country for purposes of monitoring the subordinate chiefdoms.

The study has looked at how Sobhuza I started building the Swazi nation from a weak position and that he allowed a very loose confederation of ethnic groups under his care. It was King Mswati II who consolidated the Swazi state. He is described as the greatest fighting Swazi king. He worked tirelessly trying to whittle away the autonomy of the non-Dlamini chiefdoms by attacking all those who refused to submit to his authority. He also accelerated the process of placing princes and building royal villages throughout the country for purposes of surveillance.

The study has also shown that very little was done by Mbandzeni, Ludvonga, and Bhunu in placing princes and princesses around the country. It was King Sobhuza II who re-ignited this tradition when asended the throne in 1921. When Sobhuza assumed his majority, he found that a lot of damage had been caused by the forces of change affecting the whole region of Southern Africa. He worked hard to re-impose Dlamini hegemony on the non Dlamini chiefdoms. His struggle to regain lost Swazi land earned him a lot of respect and admiration from the Swazi people. Sobhuza II chose to work within the confines of colonialism and used the opportunity colonialism availed him to deal with recalcitrant non-Dlamini chiefdoms, as witnessed by the promulgation of the 1920s-1950s Swaziland Native Acts by the British. Sobhuza revived the age-regimental system, and placed some of his brothers around the country. He also gave out his sisters and daughters to the non-Dlamini chiefdoms, who acted as spies for him. Sending out Dlamini women ensured that they would give birth to nephews who would then be pliable to his demands.

Dlamini Sobhuza also chose to cooperate with foreign capital to start businesses that earned money for him and the royal family through the Tibiyo Organisation. This gave him the opportunity to send most of the royal family members to get employment in the companies he set up together with his foreign partners. This proved helpful in handling princes who could be problematic to him, especially because he reigned at a time when neighbouring states were having political problems. South Africa was under the unpopular rule of a white minority regime. Mozambique was riched by civil war. It was for this reason that most investors chose to come and invest in the country. This made things better for King Sobhuza II as he was in a position to amass a lot of wealth for himself and the royal house. Sobhuza also reigned at a time when coup d'etats were common in most African countries, and he used theis as a reason for dismissing calls for democracy in the country. Like other African rulers of the time,

development and unity were used as trump cards. In the process he denyied his people their freedoms to the extant that he became an autocrat. He argued that democracy was both a foreign concept, unsuitable for Africa, and divisive. Used the nation of traditional culture as a means of uniting the Swazi people and thus sustaining the hegemony of the royal family.

The study has also looked at the time of the *Liqoqo* which was characterized by much corruption and nepotism. Non-Dlamini chiefdoms tried to use this opportunity to reclaim their lost autonomies. Division within the royal house itself became very pronounced. This period came to an end when Mswati III took over the reings as king in April 1986. He took office at a time when the royal house was facing a number of challenges. His father Sobhuza had more than two hundred children. In thus of traditional practice, he was expected to send most of his brothers to the periphery as chiefs by deposing the non-Dlamini substantive chiefs. The latter have resisited any enchroachment on their principalities. This has a number of problems for the king who has since resolved to use force in trying to make the non- Dlamini submit. the issue of the Fakudze of Macetjeni has been used as an example to show the magnitude of the problem that the king is faced with. More than two hundred families were evicted from Macetjeni. These were mainly from the families who refused to accept senior prince Maguga as their new chief as per royal command. The whole country openly condemned the evictions. Political parties, labour unions and students from tertiary institutions took to the streets, demanding that those evicted be taken back to their areas. The king, by imposing his brothers as chiefs, was trying to get rid of them from the royal house as they were a constant problem to him. This was interpreted by the people to mean that the king was trying to please his brothers at their expense and they resorted to open defiance. This has demonstrated the limitations of the traditional approach to solving chieftaincy disputes involving princes and clan chiefs. The legitimacy of placing princes as chiefs in the outlying areas rests upon pre-colonial traditions which were

transmitted orally from one generation to the next. This means that those in power believe that customary institutions should be protected, regardless of the views of the people, and of the times. It is a fact that some African practices are out of place with current democratic demands and international law. The placing of princes and princesses has become a great challenge to those in power. Swazi kings have in the past been able to place their brothers and deposing non-Dlamini chiefs with ease as they met minimal resistance or none at all. The people living in the past were fewer in number, unlettered, and very obedient. Furthermore, it was by then possible to attach adjacent lands by attacking neighbouring groups and placing princes there. Nowadays political boundaries are fixed, thus posing the challenge of sending out princes to be chiefs in the periphery. The democratisation of both Mozambique and South Africa has also contributed to the challenges facing the Swazi Royal House. More people are now calling for democracy in Swaziland, and strikes and demonstrations are more common now than in the past.

This state of affairs is attributable to a number of factors that have acted against the Dlamini enjoying their powers as they did in the past. For instance, the times have changed. People in the past accepted the demotion of their chiefs for a prince, but nowadays the reverse is true. This has come as a result of western influence, like education, missionary activities and western democratic ideologies that have served to undermine the position of the Dlamini ruling clan over the years.

The institution of chiefship has also been undergoing some changes. That is to say though it was believed that princes were senior to chiefs, the opposite seems to be the case as chiefs now amass a lot of wealth from allocating land to their subjects in the form of money or cattle. For instance, a chief now gets an income of about E 3000,00 from allocating land to an individual, which makes princes also, want to be made chiefs. It is also rumoured that the government is

considering placing chiefs on the pay role, which would mean that they are now civil servants and thus pensionable.

Levin argues that industrial strife in Swaziland can best be explained in terms of the lack of any structures for expression of political dissent. He further contends that the traditional system is structured such that the king is at the helm of society, and any attack on elements of the structure has a direct impact on the monarchy, and might be interpreted as a sign of disrespect for royalty.

The argument has shown that the Swazi traditional system must adapt, yet it is also true that the system offers no alternative system of governance. Certain sections of Swazi society are of the view that culture has been perverted in the country to satisfy the needs of those in power, and that resources are used to press people into submission. The king lacks advisors with necessary vision and wisdom. The sysyem has failed to contain the forces of change or to grapple with the challenges of today, and shows signs of snapping as non- Dlamini clans have shown total disregard for the imposition of princes in their principalities.

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