

Time Travel, Isivivane uShaka, Mthwalume, Umzumbe, 1828

Goal

To recognise, promote and record a local heritage site

To make people understand where the word of the area, Mthwalume, comes from

Promote tourism

Facts

Isivivane sikaShaka is a heap of stones that traces the journey of the last expedition by King Shaka Zulu in May 1828.

In 1827, September, King Shaka sent spies to study the status of King Faku's army in the Pondoland, now Eastern Cape, with the aim of attacking. In 1827, October, queen Nandi, the mother of King Shaka passed away and the Zulu nation had to undergo a year mourning. In this mourning period Shaka ordered that no crops should be planted during the following year and no milk was to be used. Also a cleansing ritual had to be undertaken, either through a hunting expedition or attacking an enemy and wash the spear by spilling the blood of an enemy. The latter was the choice; King Faku had to be attacked. King Shaka sent his impi (army) to Pondoland as ihlambo (cleansing ritual) in the beginning of May 1828.

On the way to Pondoland King Shaka's army camped at several places. One night they stayed in an area called Qoloqolo (meaning the back ache, as it is extremely difficult to climb the hill). King Shaka named the river in the valley, Mthwalume River and the area Mthwalume. The army consisted of maybe as many as 50 000 soldiers in several regiments. All these soldiers, under the lead of King Shaka and his general Manyundela, camped overnight at the hills of Mathwalume.

As a memory and as a sign that they have passed the place, the army laid a heap of stones, an isivivane, one stone for each soldier. To this day such isivivane is respected by local people and they often throw a stone when passing.

The army moved further. General Manyundela was responsible for the column that attacked the Thembu group of the Pondos and virtually destroyed them, while Mdlaka kaNcidi attacked King Faku. By the end of July King Faku was defeated. Girls and cattle from Pondos were captured. The army went back in scattered groups.

King Shaka consulted with Henry Francis Fynn if King Faku wanted to accept any peace talks. It is said that Fynn advised Shaka that King Faku were willing to accept any peace process. King Shaka and some of his soldiers went to meet Faku. Several chiefs from King Faku's neighborhood, with messengers from him, returned to meet the Zulu soldiers to thank King Shaka for the peace process. The cattle seized and the girls captured were returned.

This expedition was the last King Shaka made before he was assassinated in September 24, 1828.

Scenario, King Shaka and his impi (army) camping in Mthwalume, May 1828

King Shaka and his huge army are heading towards Pondoland to attack King Faku. This attack has to be done as a cleansing ceremony after King Shaka's mother's death last year. The army is growing bigger and bigger; the soldiers are marching and marching. Today they are coming to the region called Vundlasi. It is hilly and steep and there is a streaming river at the bottom of the valley. The soldiers will camp and stay overnight on the hillsides.

The rumor of the huge marching army has been heard for weeks. People from the neighboring villages are curious and are gathering at the place where the soldiers are expected to camp. Everybody is waiting for the arrival of the warriors led by the indunas, King Shaka and his general Manyundla. But first of all the intelligence has to check the site of the camp.

There will be lots of discussions today among the people who have gathered. Some are concerned; they have heard so many cruel stories of King Shaka. Others are happy that at last we are uniting like a proud group of people. Dignity and self-confidence are restored.

Everyone knows that King Shaka expects good performances, poems, songs and dances to encourage the soldiers. Today is an important day in the region, a day that will make history. Will King Shaka even create a place for remembrance, an isivivane? Maybe even rename the place and the region?

Roles

The learners and most of the participants are villagers from the surroundings
 Soldiers, praise singers, poets, sangomas, healers, indunas, intelligence
 General Manyundela, King Shaka

Key Questions

- War or peace? We have had war for so many years. Is this the best solution to solve disagreements? When is the time to make peace with our enemies? Can we live together although we are different?
- How do we build up dignity, self-esteem in our group? Together with others?

Activities

- Cook food and make Zulu beer
- Singing and dancing, poems
- Beads and jewelry
- Medicine, traditional healers and sangomas
- Training of soldiers
- Throwing stones in the isivivane

Time Plan

07.00	Set up the site
09.00	Welcome Repeat story, dress up, rules
09.45	Initiation, arrival of soldiers, create isivivane
10.20	Activities
11.30	Meal
12.30	King Shaka's speech Naming of the area, performances/poems
13.15	Ending of Time Travel, hymn Closing speech
13.30	End

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Umzumbe Time Travel Committee

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