

ZULU STICKFIGHTING

by

Liam Keeley

Introduction

Stick-fighting systems appear to be widespread among the Bantu peoples of Southern Africa. In this article I shall confine myself to a discussion of Zulu Stick-fighting. The very word, *Zulu*, has become something of a synonym for martial prowess and spartan discipline, ever since the battle of Isandhlwana in 1879, when six companies of British infantry were wiped out by the Zulus in fierce hand-to-hand fighting.

Most hoplologists are probably vaguely aware that the adoption of new tactical methods and organization by the emergent Zulu state in the early nineteenth century, led to the Zulu becoming the pre-eminent Black African power in Southern Africa. Histories usually mention the adoption of the short stabbing spear, the *iqhlwa*, as a major factor. This weapon, often called the *assegai*, encouraged hand-to-hand combat of a type the surrounding tribes were unprepared for. However, most historical research has tended to ignore stick-fighting, and even the most anthropologically-oriented texts mention stick-fighting only in passing. One exception is Clegg's paper on *fencing* among the Zulu, which I recommend. *fencing*

Research

While residing in South Africa from 1980 to 1984, I attempted to research traditional African fighting arts. Fortunately, early in my search I met Mr. J Clegg, then a lecturer in the Social Anthropology Department at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Mr. Clegg very kindly shared his wealth of knowledge in the field of Zulu culture with me and introduced me to the man who became my teacher of Zulu stick-fighting, Mr. Bafazane Qoma, a migrant from the Mahlabathini area of Kwa Zulu. For approximately two years I was able to take lessons from Mr. Qoma, then in his early thirties. Mr. Clegg was kind enough to give me a couple of introductory lessons in stick-fighting, and later to interpret, explain, and elucidate various concepts and techniques.

After practicing Zulu stick-fighting for over a year I was approached by Mr. Barry Leitch, then working under contract for South African Television. He invited me to participate in making a television documentary on Zulu stick-fighting. Mr. Leitch had been born and brought up on a farm in Zululand, and is a fluent Zulu linguist and fanatical stick-fighter. He, too, generously shared his time and knowledge with me. While engaged in making the documentary I was able to visit "problem" areas of Zululand and Kwa Zulu, and to observe and sometimes spar with a variety of stick-fighters.

Equipment

Before going any further, I shall describe the physical characteristics of the equipment employed in Zulu stick-fighting. This equipment consists of:

1. a striking stick
2. a small cowhide shield or buckler
3. a guard stick

The Striking Stick

The exact dimensions of the equipment vary from individual to individual and from area to area. However, the dimensions I shall give here are fairly standard. A striking stick presently in my possession, and made to a common pattern, measures 94 cm. in length. The width tapers from 5.5 cm. at the widest point of the head, to 2 cm. at the point at the butt end, where the stick is gripped. It broadens slightly at the butt end to form a chisel point just under 2.5 cm. in width. The handle is bound with black electrical tape. While the stick I possess is straight, some fighters, including Mr. Barry Leitch, prefer a slightly curved stick. Mr. Leitch explained to me that the curved stick actually can reach just a little further than one's opponent realizes - thus a blocking movement which is sufficient against a straight stick may prove inadequate against a curved stick.

Buckler

The small shield or buckler is generally made of cowhide, but may be made from the skin of other types of animals, such as the jackal. The cowhide is very stiff when dry, but relatively light. The size and shape varies from district to district. An average buckler would be from 40 cm. to 50 cm. in length and perhaps 30 cm. at its widest point. The area of the grip is sometimes padded. Some stick-fighters now use foam rubber for the padding. This is a "civilian" type shield, carried for self defense or decoration (as when courting), and on certain ceremonial occasions. The great war shield, carried in battle, though similar in construction, shape, and materials, is far larger, covering almost the entire body. The buckler serves only to protect the wrist and hand holding the guard stick.

The Guard Stick

A guard stick is typically about 155 cm. in length and approximately 2 cm. in width. It tapers at both ends, and may be sharpened at one or both ends to provide an extra weapon. This guard stick corresponds to the central stick used to control the great war shield, and it has remained at roughly the size necessary to control the large shield, although the buckler used in stick-fighting is far smaller. The sharpened ends of the guard stick may be used for threatening or stabbing. In the so-called "fair fight," the guard stick, apart from its obvious function of blocking, is used to keep one's opponent at optimum striking distance by not allowing him to rush in to clinch.

Variations

There is a variation of the guard stick in which a blade may be hidden inside one end of the blocking stick, rather like a sword cane. Similarly, some striking sticks are decorated with a bunch of feathers at the butt end; these sometimes serving to conceal a small blade. Finally, I have also seen a detachable axe head which is carried in one's pocket and fixed to a suitable stick should the need arise, thus converting the stick into a war axe.

In cases where a hide buckler is not available, a jacket or any article of clothing may be wrapped around the guard hand and/or stick, so as to protect the blocking hand. In emergencies, any kind or length of stick, pipe, or heavy hose or cable may be used. Some Zulu men make it a rule to carry a spike-tipped, rolled umbrella, paired with a striking stick. The innocent looking umbrella may be used as a guard stick in an emergency, the spike directed at an opponent's vulnerable areas, such as the eyes, throat, and groin.

I should point out that in certain areas carrying a stick, or sticks, is the rule rather than the exception. In fact, in some areas, people are suspicious of those men who do not carry sticks. These men are thought to be arrogant and acting against the norm, and, as a result, some dark night they may be ambushed and beaten up by their neighbors in order to teach them a lesson. The reason for this is that not carrying a stick is considered a form of boasting - either the person concerned is confident because he has a gun, or else, he is confident that he can protect himself through witchcraft. In either case his behavior is considered anti-social and dealt with accordingly.

Finally, there are shorter sticks which are easily concealed and sometimes weighted. These are purely for self protection in emergencies. I was able to inspect a number of these in the Mahlabathini area in 1982. The ones I saw were crudely made, approximately 35-40 cm. in length, with a large metal bolt as counterweight at one end. I suspect the ones I saw were made by the same person or group, and quite possibly from the same work place. At least the bolts came from a common source, perhaps from the same work place. Working in factories enables men to acquire metalworking skills (and equipment), which are then put to good use. There are some skilled metalworkers among the Zulus, and indeed, during the period of Zulu domination there evidently was a clan of blacksmiths. I have seen some beautifully made spears in Zululand, which were of considerably higher quality than those spears offered for sale to tourists. Interestingly enough, none of the spears I saw conformed to the classic *iqlwa* type (the short, broad-bladed stabbing spear or *assegai*). The ones I saw were between 125 cm. and 155 cm. in length, with relatively small blades, though they could be used in the same manner as the *iqlwa*. These spears are generally kept hidden in the roof thatch of the huts.

Usage

Because the guard stick is so long, it provides excellent cover for the body, much as the great war shield must have done.

Consequently, the more obvious attacks are easily blocked, at least by the competent stick-fighter. This in turn, has resulted in a tendency for attacks to become extremely sophisticated in order to penetrate an opponent's guard. From what I have been able to see and experience (and feel!), the better fighters are in no way inferior to the exponents of any other weapon-system. Their body movements, balance, timing, knowledge of target areas, ability to deceive and mislead the opponent, and the use of sophisticated angling and changes of direction when striking, are all excellent. Mr. Clegg informed me that, among the Zulu, there has been a direct carry over of these techniques into knife fighting.

Classic strikes

Classic strikes include: a direct downward blow to the fontanel area of the opponent's head, angled strikes to the temples, a direct downward strike to the opponent's right collar bone (disabling his striking arm), and strikes to the opponent's left elbow (disabling his guard arm). The concept known in western fencing as the "stop hit" is well understood and applied. Indeed, almost any fencing concept has its counterpoint in stick-fighting. However, I have only observed one thrusting movement, in which the stick is held horizontally in front of the body, and then flicked forward in a thrust against the opponent's face. This technique seems to be rare and it may only be a personal idiosyncrasy rather than a standard technique.

The average stick-fighter has a good practical knowledge of anatomy and the effects of the various strikes. Most strikes are delivered to joint areas; e.g., strikes to the top of the foot, the sides of the ankle, and the sides of the knee, which are all used to rob the opponent of mobility. Some of these strikes are extremely deceptive. A strike which appears to be aimed for one's left temple may end up striking the inside of the left knee. The advance leg is usually the objective of such attacks.

Stance/posture

In the case of a right handed fighter the buckler and guard stick are held in the left hand; the left foot is advanced, and the right hand is held high, ready to strike. The body is relaxed. The left arm, holding the guard stick and buckler, is kept in a balanced, relaxed position so as not to tire. The position of the feet is similar to that in a boxer's stance.

Other techniques

Although the primary weapon is the stick, and more particularly the head of the stick, the butt end of the striking stick also may be used for hooking and stabbing; the buckler and buckler arm can be used to trap; and when clinching, anything goes - knee kicks, head butts, and elbow strikes, as well as biting and tripping. The guard stick is often used to threaten or stab, and the opponent's vision may be blocked by the buckler, or by forcing the opponent's buckler towards his own face to blind him.

All this depends on the level of intensity of the fight. The techniques used will vary according to whether the

participant is "playing" with friends, engaged in sporting competition with men from other districts (e.g., *umgangela*), duels of honor, or in combative situations involving self-defense or aggression at various levels of intensity, up to and including mortal combat. But, it should be emphasized that the standard striking stick which I have described here, would not be the weapon of choice in mortal combat.

On the subject of the *umgangela*, I should like to quote Clegg at some length, as this appears to be the only research done so far on this subject:

Zulu martial thinking stresses that fighting with sticks is to be considered as "playing" and indeed stick-fighting is referred to as *ukudlala kwezinsizwa* (lit. 'the playing of men'), or, *ukudlala ngenduku* ('to play with sticks'). Although it is admitted that serious injuries can be inflicted with sticks and that in some instances people are killed, this does not alter the fact that the men were 'playing'. The death is an unfortunate event, but one which does not invalidate the 'play' nature of stick-fighting. 'War' (*impi*) is essentially associated with stabbing (*ukugwaza*, *ukuhlaba*) and any weapons which puncture the body are weapons of war, i.e. spears, battle axes, firearms (i.e. bullets), knives, etc. In Zululand, 'playing' between districts in the form of the *umgangela* was a means by which districts could cope with the tensions unleashed by the fragmentation of traditional power and the tendency towards balkanisation of the territory, generated by the increasing absence of the unifying effect of the age regiment system. In the *umgangela* today, each *isiqinti* contributes fighters to its district's forces. The *umgangela* takes place after weddings, and for the young men involved the wedding is often simply regarded as the channel through which the *umgangela* can find its expression. All through the wedding one notices little groups of armed men from different *isiqinti* arriving, singing *umgangela* songs and shouting war-cries. All the *isiqinti* of a district march independently to the wedding and on arrival link up with each other to form a unified fighting body representing their district. The district 'captain' (*umphathi*) then takes command of the whole group. The captain is elected by a vote from all the *isiqinti*. No individuals within the *isiqinti* or its district may fight each other at the *umgangela* and if there are differences

between such individual they must fight before the *umgangela* of afterwards, but never in the presence of other districts. The districts form a semi-circle of fighters and shout war-cries at each other over a distance of about 30 metres. There is extreme tension and the captains of each group control their men with absolute authority. Those eager to fight will dash out and *giyela* the other district, i.e. perform a war-antic aimed at provoking a man from the other district to also step out, at which point the two will engage in battle. Under no circumstances can any fighter:

1. Hit someone already on the ground.
2. Stab him with the sharpened ends of his blocking stick or with the point of the striking-stick (*inhlabele*).
3. Continue fighting when a captain comes between the two combatants for any reason (usually because they are holding each other's weapons in a clinch.)
4. Continue beating an injured opponent after the latter has shouted out "*maluje!*" or "*khumu!*".

When a man is killed at an *umgangela*, the killer 'has no court case' because they were both 'playing' and it was an unfortunate accident. The *umgangela* appears to have only developed in Zululand and today it is found in the Mahlabathini, Nongoma, Mtubatuba and Mandlakazi regions. The *umgangela* failed to develop in Msinga, a feud ideology evolving instead.

Training Methods

Children in traditional households may undergo severe training at a relatively young age. I was able to witness some of these training methods in the Melmoth area of Zululand, while engaged in making the documentary on Zulu stick-fighting. Before discussing these training methods, I first would like to give a brief picture of a boy's life in a traditional Zulu homestead.

Daily life

Zulu life and culture revolve around cattle. For men, the central symbol is the bull. People are in intimate contact with cattle throughout their daily lives. Small boys first help herd goats and calves, and later, the cattle. The responsibility of

looking after the homestead's cattle, which are its wealth and its emotional focus, leads to the building of a tough and resourceful character. Krige gives this picture of a herdsboy's life:

Boys while out herding amuse themselves in various ways. They organise their own hunts, killing birds, rabbits and sometimes even small buck. Birds are trapped in various ways, the *isiFe*, consisting of a stone resting on a stick, and the *ngcokovana*, a trap like a cage, being the most common bird-traps. They are adepts, too, at killing birds on the wing by flinging knobkerries at them, while small animals are killed with sticks sharpened at one end, or with small assegais. The Zulu boy was, in the old days, given his first assegai, which was roughly made with small blade and haft, at the age of about ten, but in their boyish fights only sticks were used. Boys were early initiated into the science of fencing and this was a very popular pastime. The recognised way of challenging another boy to fight is to tap him on the head with a stick saying words to the effect, "I am your master" (*iNgqotho*), whereupon the other prepares to fight or assents quietly.®

Ideology

The herdsboys have ample time to observe and reflect on the behavior of cattle. As males, they model themselves on bulls. They are keenly aware of the predicament of the bull and the pathos inherent in being a bull. For a bull is always alone; he fights even with his brothers in his male pride; he attempts to cut out and gather a group of females and restrict access to them; he can trust no one. All he can rely on is his physical strength and courage, and as he grows older, he inevitably weakens. All this they see and absorb. Thus the symbol of the bull permeates their lives.

Bulls are sometimes matched against each other by their respective owners, and losses are taken extremely seriously. The owner of the losing bull may feel he has to wipe out the dishonor incurred in his bull's losing, by himself challenging the owner of the winning bull to a stick-fight. Since the average homestead head has only a small herd of cattle and probably just one bull, he often identifies himself closely with the animal.

To some extent, the terminology used for bull fights is interchangeable with that used in describing stick-fighting. A bull who gores primarily with his left horn, and a left-handed stick-fighter, may be referred to by the same term. The bull motif is also present in dance as well as in stick-fighting. Furthermore, the traditional Zulu battle tactics are thought of in terms of a bull's head. The wings of the army are the bull's horn and the center its forehead.

Training

Stick-fighting may begin when the child is still a toddler. Fathers will gravely squat down to face their infant sons, and very gently play at stick-fighting with them, using perhaps thin reeds for blocking sticks and a switch of grass as a striking stick. Thus the child unconsciously absorbs stick-fighting from almost the time it begins to walk. This kind of play is regarded with great approval by the community. I have found playing like this with the children of a homestead to be a great icebreaker.

The form of training I saw for children aged about six years old was as follows. Two boys of roughly the same size, age, and ability were matched together. They were given improvised blocking sticks and a bunch of nettles to use to strike with (older children would use light sticks.) A sort of coach (usually an older brother) stood behind each contestant with a switch, with which he would strike his own contestant should the boy attempt to retreat or show cowardice. Very early on these boys learn that even a single step back will cost them a blow from their 'coach,' and that any display of cowardice will ensure a worse thrashing from their older brother (or father should he hear of it) than they would receive from their age-mate opponent. Thus one sees little boys sobbing in frustration and pain, but never moving back or ceasing their attack until their coach feels that honor has been satisfied. There is plenty of time and opportunity for such matches during the long hot days spent herding out in the veldt.

There appears to be little formal instruction in Zulu stick-fighting, being not so much taught as absorbed. One learns by observing and participating. Those with a special interest may make a point of seeking out older relatives known to have been exceptional fighters in their youth, and learning from them. However, the vast majority of training is man-to-man and consists of actual fighting, although lighter sticks than usual may be used, or blows controlled to some extent. Thus stick-fighters may develop highly idiosyncratic styles of their own, and be continually modifying them by adding new variations or tactics to their repertoire. The lack of trust between Zulu men, even inside the extended family, contributes to this situation. Thus techniques, tactics, and rules vary from area to area. For example, I had learned a very sophisticated style of stick-fighting from Mr. Qoma, of the Mahlabatini area. In the Melmouth area, I found that I was able to catch the average stick-fighter quite easily with my favorite move - a feint to the collar bone to get my opponent's shield across to his right, thus slightly exposing his left elbow, letting the deflected blow go enough and then whipping the stick back up to strike the point of my opponent's exposed left elbow. The better stick-fighters weren't caught by this and the others quickly picked up the technique. On this particular occasion we were using padded sticks so a good time was had by all with a minimum of bruises.

As an outsider, I had to be formally taught all the things which a young Zulu boy unconsciously absorbs. First, my teacher showed me how to hold and handle the equipment and how to stand. Then, I was shown a few basic strikes. The teacher then got me

to attack him using the strikes while he defended, contenting himself with occasionally tapping me. I must say that I was extremely lucky to have such a fine gentleman as an instructor. He never once took advantage of his superior ability to take a so-called 'cheap shot.' Incidentally, we used light sticks, which stung, but were not heavy enough to cause serious injury.

As I grew more competent, my teacher added new strikes, and when I had a decent repertoire, he began to return more blows. At that point, he switched to demonstrating one or two strikes, showing me how they could be blocked, and then he would initiate the attack. He would then concentrate on using the new strikes until he felt my blocks were reasonably competent. I am under the impression that this training method was the result of considerable thought on his part; I do not think he previously had faced the problem of teaching an absolute beginner who was also an outsider. Our sessions were completely informal. We would usually fight for a few minutes, and then take a break in the shade, discussing a move or practicing a particular technique alone before trying it out against an opponent. We usually chose a fairly secluded spot, but sometimes we would be interrupted by passersby, who, depending on their inclination, would offer banter or advice, and even the occasional challenge, which added spice to the lesson.

Giya

I was also taught *giya*. This is a form of challenge made by a physical display of one's fighting spirit and prowess. Typically, an individual will run forward and shout a challenge, and then go through a short demonstration of his fighting ability while his supporters shout encouragement.

I was taught to do the *giya* with and without weapons. While the strikes and other techniques I learned were very sophisticated, the *giya* shown to me was surprisingly short and direct: move forward, move back, repeat, move forward, break time by jumping forward, pull in an imaginary opponent and stab, move forward, strike down, turn and simultaneously strike backhand. Even though *giya* varies from person to person and locale to locale, it does appear that the particular *giya* I learned is recognisable as one from the Mahlabathini area.

Although it is tempting to compare the *giya* with the solo performances of other combative systems, such as the *kata* of karate, it should be noted that the *giya* is not employed as a training method. It is used purely as a physical manifestation of an individual's prowess and fighting spirit when he makes a formal challenge.

The *giya* I learned can be performed with and without weapons, and there was a definite martial flavor to it. This seems to reflect what Krige relates in how warriors would "*giyella*" before going off to war. In this case the *giya* would not lead directly to a fight.

A few regiments would be summoned into the enclosure, there to challenge one another, and the king would say, "I've summoned you to hear how you mean to behave to the enemy."

Thereupon one man would jump up and say, "I shall do so-and-so, I can do better than you," challenging some other warrior, *giya*-ing all the time. The challenged man would then come up defiantly and answer the challenge, though occasionally, someone would refrain from taking up the challenge. Such a man was treated as a coward and made to suffer great indignities.⁴

I was able to observe far more sophisticated *giya*, but only on occasions not leading directly to combat. Some *giya* were very elaborate and artistic. One interesting and seemingly practical technique, which I observed on a number of occasions, was a stamp to the rear with the heel of the foot. One can only speculate, but I am inclined to think this movement represents stamping on the body of a fallen opponent. This would be an efficient way of making sure the opponent is definitely out of action (without dropping one's guard) as the line of battle moves forward. One wonders too, whether the characteristic stamping kick of Zulu dancing symbolizes the same action. It is an extremely powerful movement.

The *giya* performed without weapons tends to take on a dance-like quality. There does seem to be a very definite relationship between dance, *giya*, stick-fighting, and the use of the spear and shield in battle. That there is a weaponless *giya*, however, is not to say that the Zulu have anything like a system of unarmed combat. From what I have seen and heard, the Zulu tend to rely solely on weapons, feel very uncomfortable without them.

Exposure to western systems such as boxing and wrestling, and Oriental systems such as judo and karate, however, may change this in time. Now, it is mostly towns people who are exposed to these systems, and they tend to know little about stick-fighting. Indeed, in the towns the stick is usually the mark of a migrant or countryman.

In time techniques from other fighting arts may filter through and be absorbed into Zulu stick-fighting. Unlike some of the better known Asian combative systems and styles, Zulu stick-fighting is a vital system, maintaining a capacity to evolve in conjunction with the changing lifestyles of the Zulu people.

Dance, Stick-fighting, and Warfare

Zulu dancing is characterized by dynamic, stamping kicks. Watching a line of Zulu men dance, one cannot help being reminded of a military drill team, especially when shields and weapons are being carried. Indeed, certain dances must have performed the same functions as military drill does for European armies. I would like to quote MacNeill on the importance of drill, since he makes some extremely interesting and relevant comments in discussing the military reforms of Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange (1567-1625). MacNeill considers the most important European military reform to have been the adoption and development of systematic drill:

For when a group of men move their arms and leg muscles in unison for prolonged periods of time, a primitive and very powerful social bond wells up among them. This probably results from the fact that movement of the big muscles in unison rouses echoes of the most primitive level of sociality known to humankind. Perhaps even before our prehuman ancestors could talk, they danced around camp fires, rehearsing what they had done in the hunt and what they were going to do next time. Such rhythmic movements created an intense fellow feeling that allowed even poorly armed protohumans to attack and kill big game, outstripping far more formidable rivals through efficient cooperation. By virtue of the dance, supplemented and eventually controlled by voice signals and commands, our ancestors elevated themselves to the pinnacle of the food chain, becoming the most formidable of predators.⁵

But what of the relationship between stick-fighting and actual warfare? Now it seems to me that the non-lethal nature of stick-fighting must have made it an excellent basis for hand-to-hand weapons combat. Fighting skills built up in stick-fighting, such as blocking and parrying, trapping the opponent's arms, blocking his vision, and hooking away the opponent's shield, must have been second nature to the young warrior before he had ever engaged in battle.

The Zulu were famous for their skill in man-to-man combat. A particular technique that they were known for was the use of their own shield to hook away their opponent's. This had the effect of turning the opponent to the side and exposing the area under his left arm. At the same time he would be in an awkward position to counter. The Zulu warrior would then stab into the exposed area. The ability to execute such techniques in the heat of battle most likely derived from the Zulu's long and arduous apprenticeship in stick-fighting.

Zulu stick-fighting is one of the relatively few hand-to-hand combative systems that has survived the onset of the technological age, and is still being practiced in its fullest context, i.e., combat. It is deserving of more in-depth study than the cursory interest shown towards it so far.

This is even truer for the traditional systems of use for the stabbing spear, the *iqiwa*, and the war shield. These systems are fading away, and are no longer practiced in the active sense, i.e., combat. Moreover, little is to be seen of their passive practice, that is, their practice for the sake of maintaining the traditional combative culture of the Zulu, especially in such situations where a traditional combative system is in danger of disappearing. Attempts must be made to at least record the system, if not preserve it.

ZULU STICKFIGHTING NOTES

1. See J. Clegg, "Ukubiyi Isidumbu," in *Working Papers in Southern African Studies*, ed. P. Bonner (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1981), 2:164-198.
2. Ibid., 168-169.
3. E.J. Krige, *The Social System of the Zulu* (London: Longmans Green and Co. Ltd., 1936), 78-79.
4. Ibid., 271-272.
5. W. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 131.

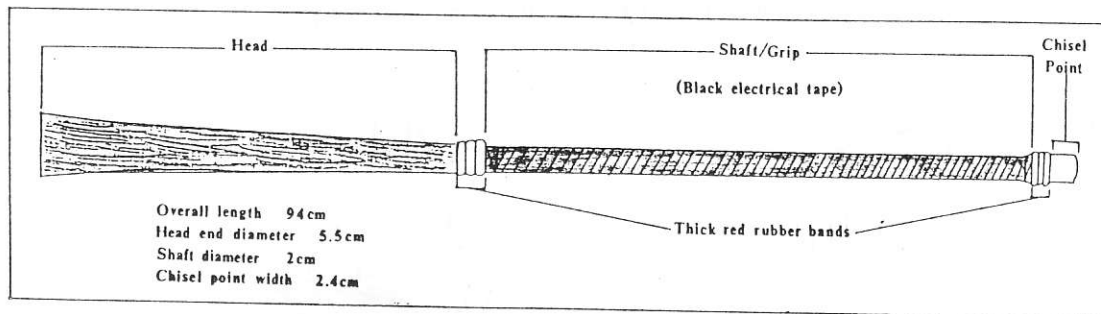
Additional Bibliography

The standard anthropological text is Krige (see above). For the background to the Zulu war of 1879, read Donald Morris' *The Washing of the Spears*, or Michael Barthorp's *The Zulu War: A Pictorial History*. Frank Emery's *The Red Soldiers* is an interesting collection of letters written by British soldiers during the war. What happened to the Zulu nation after the war is dealt with by Jeff Guy's *The Destruction of the Zulu Kingdom*. For a discussion of the feud in modern times see Clegg (above).

- Barthorp, M. *The Zulu War: A Pictorial History*. Poole, England: Blandford Press, 1980.
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- Morris, D. *The Washing of the Spears*. London: Jonathon Cape, 1966.

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AFRICAN WEAPONS AND SYSTEMS



The Zulu *ngenduku*

Macro-analysis: the weapon

category: staff/stick/club
 group: wood
 genus: stick
 type: *ngenduku*
 sub-type: Mahlabathini, South Africa; Bafazane Qoma;
 Ukudlala *Ngenduku*
 class: symmetrical self/regular taper constricting to butt-
 section haft; beveled-edged butt-end at proximal
 section/regular taper expanding to head haft;
 rectilinear straight butt-end at distal section
 order: combat



Zulu Stick-fighting

(Photograph from Aubrey Elliot's *Sons of Zulu*, pp. 90-91)

Macro-analysis: the system

category: armed
 type: stick
 emic term: *Ukudlala Ngenduku* ("to play with sticks") - *ngenduku*
 style/school: Zulu stick fighting tradition; teacher Bafazane
 Qoma; Mahlabathini, South Africa;
 application: agonistic; single self-defense; duel