

# Glossary of Zulu Words Used in the Narrative

<b>amabutho</b>	Group of regiments; a single regiment is called an <i>ibutho</i> .
<b>assegai</b>	Throwing spear; the traditional Zulu main personal weapon.
<b>boma</b>	Outer perimeter fence of any Zulu dwelling complex, usually made of acacia thornbush branches, built to about five or six feet high.
<b>ezibuto</b>	Regiment of younger teenagers; their purpose was to carry provisions.
<b>ka</b>	‘Son of’, e.g. Shaka ka Senzangakhona means ‘Shaka, son of Senzangakhona’.
<b>konkhulu</b>	The King often moved between his <i>amakhanda</i> [group of regimental barracks]. Each <i>ikhanda</i> [regimental barracks] contained a royal residence for his exclusive use while he was visiting, but the King had his favourite residence, which is where he spent most of his time; this was called his <i>konkhulu</i> or ‘great place’. Today we might call it his capital.

<b>kwa</b>	‘At’. For example, Kwa-Bulawayo means ‘at Bulawayo’.
<b>ibutho</b>	Military regiment from 400 to 1,000 strong. Young people, male and female, were organised into ‘age sets’ after their twentieth birthday. Originating as circumcision sets and then progressing to military and civil task regiments. A group of regiments was called an <i>amabutho</i> .
<b>ikhanda</b>	Regimental barracks. A group of barracks is called an <i>amakhanda</i> . These were of varying sizes, from 350 huts to hold an <i>ibutho</i> [regiment] to a few larger ones that served as the King’s residences. Kwa-bulawayo, Shaka’s primary residence, had a two-mile circumference palisade that housed 1,400 huts, set four deep inside the fence.
<b>iklwa</b>	The traditional Zulu weapon of war was a long spear [ <i>assegai</i> ], which was thrown at their enemies. When Shaka started developing his more efficient armies, he realised that a warrior was almost defenceless once he threw his spear. He modified the <i>assegai</i> by shortening the shaft and increasing the length of the blade to create almost a short sword. He trained his warriors to close with the enemy and thrust this new fighting or thrusting spear into their bodies. This action could be repeated many times, causing carnage through enemy ranks. Shaka called this new fighting spear the <i>iklwa</i> , which, when pronounced correctly, was the sucking sound made when this deadly weapon was withdrawn from a fallen foe’s body.
<b>impi</b>	A group of warriors. It is a loose term that applied to any size group—as few as ten men or as many as multiple regiments.

<b>impondo zenkomo</b>	'Horns of the bull'; the main attack manoeuvre of the Zulu military. Regiments are trained to engage an enemy with a central charge. Once the central charge has engaged and held the enemy, two formations sweep down, one on either side, and envelop the whole enemy force.
<b>induna</b>	Commanding officer of an <i>ibutho</i> [regiment], with two appointed for each regiment. Sometimes the term is used for all the Zulu officer classes.
<b>inkosi</b>	Lord, master.
<b>inkosi yezwe</b>	King.
<b>inyanga</b>	Herbal doctor.
<b>isangoma</b>	A witch doctor or medicine man. These were the King's intelligence service and were all-powerful. The whole nation feared them, except for Shaka, who let it be known that he was immune to their spiritual powers. The plural is <i>izangoma</i> .
<b>isiHlangu</b>	War shield, made from hardened cowhide spread over a light timber frame. Around five feet tall and two feet in width.
<b>iWisa</b>	Fighting stick or club, a carefully crafted shaft with a heavy knob at one end. Sometimes known as a knobkerrie.
<b>izangoma</b>	Witch doctors, the plural of witch doctor [ <i>isangoma</i> ].
<b>izilomo</b>	The direct translation is council of trusted advisers. Also known as the council of the King's favourites.
<b>izinduna</b>	Favourite <i>induna</i> or general of the King, a trusted adviser.
<b>phutu</b>	A porridge made by steaming ground maize until it becomes crumbly.

<b>smelled out</b>	A means whereby kings used the witch doctors to 'smell out' dissension, usually resulting in immediate execution.
<b>Ubulunga</b>	<p>An early African word for white people (even before the time of the Zulus). European ships that historically sailed the trade route between England and India travelled close to East Africa, and many were wrecked along the coast. The native inhabitants' first contact with whites was when the dead bodies of shipwrecked sailors washed up on their shores.</p> <p>The natives' early explanation of the bodies was that these people lived under the sea, which is why they were so pale, and the reason they only found them dead is that, like fish they found dead on the beach, these humans could not live out of water. The direct translation is 'deposited out of the sea' or 'sea scum'. When the Africans later encountered live ones, the name still stuck. Sometimes today, it is spelled as <i>umlunga</i> and has derogatory connotations.</p>
<b>umnumzana</b>	The homestead head man. His hut was situated at the other end of the <i>umuzi</i> [homestead] from the gate. Next to his hut would be the hut of the principal wife, then the huts of the lesser wives in descending order, and finally, at the farthest distance away, nearest to the gate, were the huts of unmarried dependants.
<b>umuzi</b>	The base family dwelling complex or homestead. It would house the headman, his wives (three would not be unusual) and their offspring. The layout was around a central cattle pen surrounded by several huts and an outer fence called a <i>boma</i> .
<b>usuthu</b>	National battle cry demonstrating allegiance to the King.