APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Question 1

What is the role of the elderly people in the family when there is a traditional Zulu wedding?

Response

The elderly people act as priests of the particular family.

They report to the ancestors that their daughter is leaving the family and the clan.

They invoke the ancestors to bless the marriage with children.

On the bridegroom’s side, the bride is introduced to the living and the dead of the new family acquired through marriage.
Question 2

What is the role of the elderly people in the family when there is a funeral that is conducted according to Zulu culture?

Response

The elderly people again assume the role of priests in that they report the coming of the deceased on behalf of the living members of the family.

They plead that the deceased should be accepted by the community of the living dead (ancestors).

They cut the hair of the members of the family, adults and children, to signify that a part of their bodies has been removed. New life must start without him or her.
Question 3

What is the role of socialization of children in relation to the Zulu traditional religion?

Response

This process of socialization begins at an early age.

The children have to be told why certain actions are performed and certain words are pronounced or said.

They have to know the social norms and values of the culture or religion as they grow up.
Question 4

Why are African traditions not given the international status in Africa?

Response

African Religion has been undermined in the past. It was simply regarded as unreal or practised by uninformed or ignorant people.

It is only in recent years that the importance of this religion has been realized. It is regarded as one of the religions with a unique status and as one of the world religions.
**Question 5**

How do you describe the concept “ubuntu”?

**Response**

Ubuntu (humanness) is an important value in African Religion.

It is a willingness to be of service to others and be the promoter of peace and harmony in the community.
**Question 6**

What role do you think Mvelinqangi/God plays in your life?

**Response**

Different responses were viewed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minister of Religion:</td>
<td>God, the Supreme Power is everything in his life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Elders:</td>
<td>See ancestors as mediators. One said Jesus is the Chief Mediator and Ancestor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sangoma:</td>
<td>No direct bearing on her life. Deals mainly with the ancestors whom she regards as Mediators between her and Mvelinqangi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialists in Zulu culture and Literature:</td>
<td>One was not quite clear where he belongs or should belong, Christianity or African Traditional Religion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Another had no problem. Practises both comfortably. His words “I see no clash between Christianity and the religion of our ancestors”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 7

How do different believers or religious people describe God?

Response

The responses were as follows:

“God is my life”

“God/Mvelinqangi is my super ancestor”

“God is the source of my whole being”
Question 8

What are the roles of witchdoctors/izinyanga in a society?

Response

They heal or restore life.

They counteract the evil skills of witches and wizards. Can use herbs to catch witches.
Question 9

Describe the different types of witchdoctors and their functions.

Response

Herbalist: Uses leaves, barks and roots of some trees to restore life or protect people from evil.

Diviner: To interact with ancestral spirits and communicate their will to the living.

To smell out evil practices.

To predict the future.

To diagnose illnesses and prescribe a cure.

Medium: Communicate with the spirit world (ancestors)

Told why the situation is what it is and suggest action to be taken to heal the situation e.g. offer sacrifice.

Seer: Has natural powers to predict things e.g. drought, epidemic.

Has foresight, sometimes seeing things in dreams or visions.
Question 10

Why is marriage emphasized in African culture?

Response

Marriage assures the continuity of life. One must have people to remember him or her after death.

The name continues not only within the family, but also within the clan.

The person lives on as the grandchildren are named after him/her.

One of the academics interviewed expressed the concern that women are not given a front position in Zulu culture.

(A common concern. See APPENDIX II)

Marriage, in African culture, is an “institution, which ensures the prolongation, nurturing and preservation of life”.

It does that through procreation or reproduction.

Zulu philosophy maintains that a maiden is married to the family. If the husband dies, marriage is not dissolved but levirate marriage perpetuates this situation.

Likewise a brother must marry a woman on behalf of his Kinsman who died and beget children for him.
Question 11

Why are the children, particularly boys, important in Zulu (African) marriage?

Response

Some reasons have been given under question 10 above.

The boys are particularly important in that at no stage do they change the surname and belong to another surname or clan.

The boys are the ones who offer the sacrifices after the death of the father. They become the leaders in a family environment especially the first born son. They preserve and perpetuate life in the patrilineal order thus preserving the particular clan.

Generally children are a gift from the ancestors and their sign of approval of the marriage. So if a woman is barren an appeal is made to the spirits for a remedy.

When a woman experiences problems with delivery, ancestors are invoked in a ritual known as ukushaya indlu.

When a child is born he/she is entrusted to the ancestors in a ritual known as imbeleko.
Question 12

What role do the ancestors play in Zulu culture? Do women also become ancestors? Does a woman ancestor have the same status as the male ancestor?

Response

We use the ancestral spirits as mediators or messengers who convey our prayers to Mvelinqangi as it happens in many other religions.

The Zulu system is of hierarchy requires that a junior must use intermediaries in communicating with his seniors. So the ancestors, the heroes of the clan, who lived good and exemplary lives and are now in the spirit world, play a mediatory role.

Women also become ancestors. Women ancestors are known to be more caring, protective and benevolent.

They have a lower status as a result of the patrilineal social system of the Zulus.
Question 13

What rituals are regarded as important in a traditional African marriage or wedding and in death?

Response

Rituals At Marriage

Marriage is reported. The ritual is called **Umncamo**. A cow is slaughtered for the maid by her father or guardian on the eve of the wedding to inform her ancestors that she is leaving her maiden home to become somebody’s wife.

**Umqholiso**

This is a ritual in which a cow is slaughtered by the groom’s family to welcome the daughter-in-law to her in-law family during the wedding.

A number of goats are also slaughtered for rituals such as **indlakudla** (the ritual of giving food to the new member of the family).

Rituals At Death

Before Death

Farewell Speech:

To the family: **Ngicela ningenzele ukulila.**
This is a request for provision for the journey to the ancestors. A cow is slaughtered and he is given the liver thereof.

To the ancestors: **Ngicela ningilande sengikhathele.**
This is an appeal that the ancestors fetch him.
He goes on to say, “death has overpowered me”.
“Oh! I am leaving you now, going away to be with my great grandfathers”.
Burial with possessions: Assegai, eating vessels, seeds etc.

Cleansing ceremony: After the burial. To remove the dark cloud that may result in misfortunes.

Bringing back ceremony
(ukubuyisa): Ritually brought back in order to be mysteriously present and protect the living members of the family.

Imbuzi yamakhubalo: This is a goat slaughtered after the burial.

Imbuzi/Inkomo yokukhumula: This is a ritual to mark the end of mourning by the family members.

Ukukhipha Inhlambo: This is a cleansing ceremony after which the deceased’s estate may devolve on his heirs.

Ukubuyisa: This is a ceremony done when the deceased is returned as a spirit to guard the living.
Question 14

What myths are viewed as the cause of death in Zulu religion?

Response

The most well known myth is Intulo no Nwabu where we are told that the Creator sent a Chameleon to tell the people that they shall not die. They will live forever. Along the way it was attracted to the berries and delayed its journey.

The Creator then sent the lizard with the message that people shall die. It hurried and delivered the message and people accepted it.

When the chameleon eventually arrived with the good news the people rejected its message and stoned it (chameleon).
**Question 15**

How does the spirit of the dead person connected to the relevant spirit or shades?

**Response**

Not easy to describe.

One is suddenly in a sleeping or fainting state (trance).

The spirit or shade communicates the message at this stage.

The Sangoma who was interviewed also stated that sometimes she dreams at night during which a message from the ancestors is communicated.

Another way of linking with the shades is through throwing the ritual bones. A Sangoma has the insight to interpret the bones and come out with a message from the ancestors.

NB. The ritual bones are sprinkled with the bile of a sacrificial beast annually.
Question 16

What is the status of women in Zulu culture/religion?

Response

The Culture Of A People

The culture of a people infringes on their religion. This is evident in world religions like Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

Women seem to take a back stand or pushed to take a back stand. In fact Jewish and Islamic women do not have the same status as men due to their cultural background. The same applies to the Zulus. Women do not take a leading role in public. Women however play an important role as evident in naming female children.

(See APPENDIX II)
**Question 17**

Describe the status of African Religion in comparison with world religions e.g. Christianity and Islam?

**Response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Christianity</th>
<th>Islam</th>
<th>African religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Power (God)</td>
<td>Supreme Power (Allah)</td>
<td>Supreme Power (Allah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creator (Universe)</td>
<td>Creator (Universe)</td>
<td>Mvelinqangi/Molimo etc. Creator (Universe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief in life after death</td>
<td>Life after death</td>
<td>Life after death</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It's quite obvious from the above information that African Religion can be classified as a world religion. The above commonalities with (Judaism) Islam and Christianity prove that African Religion qualifies for a world status.