

NTSIKANA:

**THE STORY OF AN
AFRICAN CONVERT**

“IBALI LIKA NTSIKANA”

By JOHN KNOX BOKWE.

NTSIKANA:

THE STORY OF AN AFRICAN CONVERT

WITH AN APPENDIX

“IBALI LIKA NTSIKANA”

IN THE NATIVE LANGUAGE.



By JOHN KNOX BOKWE.

Author of “Amaculo Ase Lovedale,” “Indoda Yamadoda,” &c.

SECOND EDITION.

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PREFACE.

THE following sketch is gathered from all the materials of information, written or oral, known to exist. So far as I am aware, in 1878-79 when the writer prepared it for the Lovedale *Christian Express*, Ntsikana's Story had not until then been put together in a connected English form. A good deal of my information was gathered from the mouths of old men and women, who either knew Ntsikana personally, or were intimately acquainted with his family. My own grandparents were more or less regular attendants of Ntsikana's religious services. The four melodies with words that were sung by Ntsikana as now preserved in this book, were learned from the same tradition.

Other sources from which this story was compiled may here also be acknowledged. In 1878 a few articles on Ntsikana appeared in the *Isigidimi Samaxosa*. They gave what I believed to be an accurate account of the life of that remarkable man. I therefore took the liberty of making free use of them.

It may, perhaps, add to the interest in the compiling of the volume to mention a personal incident which led to the discovery of another valuable source of information. On the 24th August 1878, I had occasion to go to attend the funeral at Burnshill of the Rev. Donald MacLeod, the missionary of the station. While waiting for the procession to start I chanced to pick up page 44 of an 1845 issue of the *Ikwezi*, lying near the door of the old church. Strange to say it promised a "Continuation of the History of Ntsikana!" I took possession of the scrap of paper, and on returning to Lovedale compared it with the *Isigidimi* articles of 1875. I found the two accounts, to the extent of the preserved paragraphs in *Ikwezi*, to agree almost word for word. I have now been fortunate in procuring from Dr. Bryce Ross' library at Pirie Mission pages 1 to 56 of the *Ikwezi* in four issues, *Printed at the Chumie Mission Press*, containing this very early sketch of Ntsikana,—February 1845—written evidently by one of the Missionaries in the Xosa language as written and spelt in those days. As "IMBALISO KANTSIKANA" then printed is worth preserving, I hope I

may be pardoned for including it. (See Appendix IV., page 45.) The *Ikwezi* was the first Kafir-English periodical ever published in the South African mission-field. It appeared in 1844-45, and the first editorial announcement states that all the missionaries "helped the writing of it," but I believe the Rev. James Laing, first missionary at Burnshill, was its most active editor.

When committing this story to writing, I sought out the few of Ntsikana's contemporaries and friends that were yet alive. All of them that could be found were consulted. One of these was *John Muir Vimbe*, who turned out a most active missionary agent, evangelizing from Kafraria till he reached Zululand, dying in a good old age in East Griqualand. His article in the *Isigidimi Samaxosa*, May 1888, "Imbali Yokufika kwe Lizwi kwa Xosa" (see Appendix IV., page 50.) supplies dates to the events of Ntsikana history, also individual names of family connections with Ntsikana that give vivid reality to the story, as well as confirming the *Ikwezi* articles of 1845. So with the evidence thus produced the reader will, I hope, feel that the account now given in this volume, is fairly trustworthy. May I, however, add that since the appearance of Ntsikana's Story in 1878, so far as I am aware no material contradiction of the statement of facts has been brought forward such as might necessitate any modification in the present recast of it? The references or criticisms that the Story has elicited have rather been confirmatory.

In 1904, Ntsikana's story in condensed form was issued in a booklet entitled "Ntsikana: The Story of an African Hymn," with pictorial illustrations of Native life. This booklet was printed under the auspices of the Sunday School Union, London, with the kindly help of the late Mr. Charles Waters, Honorary Secretary to the International Bible Reading Association. What appeared in that booklet and the original, fuller articles for the *Lovedale Christian Express* (1878-79) are now combined to produce the present volume, which also contains, among other things not previously published, the words and melodies of the four hymns that Ntsikana is reported to have both composed and used for religious praise after his conversion to Christianity,

In the Appendix will be found four papers in English which are of some interest in connection with the subject of this book. Two of them are productions of Ntsikana's lifelong companions, *Matshaya*, whose mission name became "Charles Henry," and *Noyi*, whose name became "Robert Balfour." Both of them after Ntsikana's death and burial, went, like John the Baptist's disciples, and joined the missionaries who had now arrived in the country.

These two men became useful helpers as school teachers and evangelists. Their services to the mission cause frequently received honourable mention in the Missionary Reports of those days. The Rev. James Laing communicates in the *Missionary Record* of 1842, "The life of Charles Henry, Native Teacher at Burnshill" in which Ntsikana's connection with him is prominent (see Appendix I. page 32). The second paper is—"Kafirs and their country, by Robert Balfour" whose native name was *Noyi* (see Appendix II. page 36). A third paper from the pen of the late Hon. Charles Brownlee, C.M.G., M.L.A., first Secretary for Native Affairs in the Cape Government, than whom there was no greater authority on Native history and problems of Native tribes. Only extracts bearing chiefly on the Xosa clans are quoted in this book from a paper published in 1872 as read at the Jubilee of the Glasgow Missionary Society, on the "Condition of the Native Tribes during the century preceding the introduction of the Gospel among them." (See Appendix III. page 40). These papers might interest present or future readers of this book, which endeavours to relate the beginnings of Christianity in Southern Africa.

It has been thought advisable to add the closing Appendix IV. a XOSA VERSION of Ntsikana's Story from various acknowledged sources. for the benefit of those readers who cannot readily follow it in English. It is expedient that the two versions comprise one volume meantime, and it is hoped that such arrangement will not be unacceptable.

JOHN KNOX BOKWE.

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Ugie, East Griqualand.
April 1914.*

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

In this second edition, value is enhanced by the insertion of other illustrations which were not published in the first, being pictures of persons whose names are mentioned in the story, as well as in our issuing NTSIKANA in a more permanent book form than that of a paper covered pamphlet.

J. K. B.

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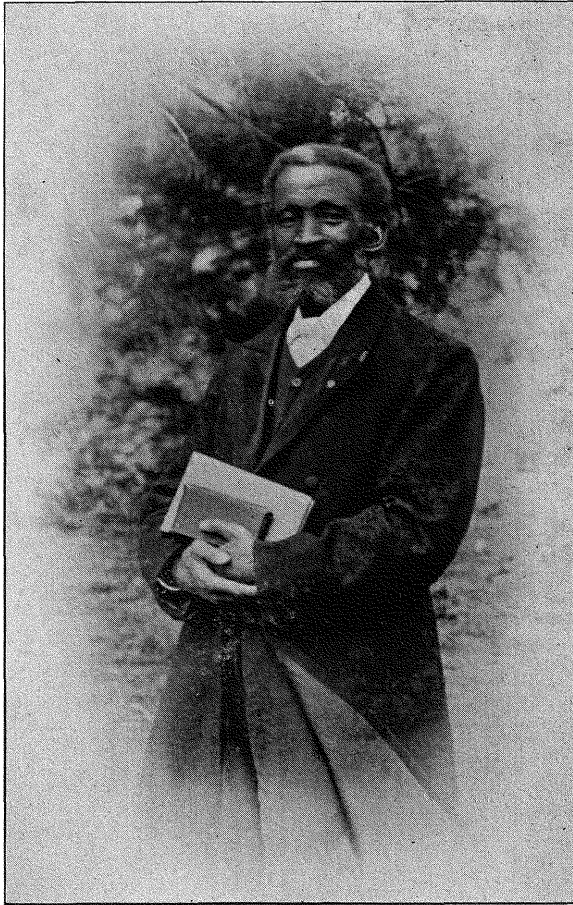
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John Knox Bokwe.