HIDDEN WORDS OF THE PROPHET: 
Texts appearing in traditional versions 
of the songs of Ntsikana

ABSTRACT

Ntsikana, the prophet, or St Ntsikana, as he was known to his followers, was the first Xhosa Christian and missionary to his own people. It is possible that Ntsikana composed a number of songs for worshipping with his disciples. It is also possible that he composed only one song which was sung in different ways. It is extremely difficult to trace the text lines of the songs and the history of the song texts, since his music survived by oral tradition until 57 years after his death in 1821, when John Bokwe made the first attempts to transcribe it. The author, an African musicologist, presents further texts by the prophet which he has studied and recorded in his study of Xhosa music.

Intsimbi kaNtsikana – Ntsikana’s “Bell”

Sele, sele, ahom, ahom, ahom! ... (etc).
(Chorus) Ahom, ahom, ahom, ahom, ahom!

Ingoma engqukuva – Ntsikana’s “Round Hymn”

Ele le le homna, hom, homna ....
Latsho eGqorha' hom, homna ... (etc).

Ingoma enkulu kaNtsikana – Ntsikana’s “Great Hymn”

1. Ulo Tixo omkulu ngosezulwini
2. Ungu wena-wena Kaka lenyaniso
3. Ungu wena-wena Nqaba yenyaniso
4. Ungu wena-wena Hlati lenyaniso
5. Ungu wena-wena uhlel' enyangwaneni

* Professor Dave Dargie teaches in the Department of Musicology at the University of Fort Hare.

Latsho eGqorha: “It was proclaimed at Gqorha.”
6. Ulo dal' ubom wadala pezulu  
7. Lo Mdal' owadala wadala izulu  
8. Lo Menzi wenkwenkwezi noZilimela  
9. Yabinza inkwenkwezi isixelela  
10. Lo Menzi wemfaman' uzenza ngabom?  
11. Lateta ixilongo lisibizile  
12. Ulonqin' izingela imipefumlo  
13. Ulohlenganis' imihlamb' eyalanayo  
14. Ulomkokeli wasikokela tina  
15. Ulengub' inkul' esiymbata tina  
16. Ozandla Zako zinamanxeba Wena  
17. Onyawo Zako zinamanxeba Wena  
18. Ugazi Lako limrolo yinina?  
19. Ugazi Lako lipalalele tina  
20. Lemali enkulu-na siyibizile?  
21. Lomzi Wako-na-na siwubizile?  

Brief translation: 1. He is the Great God in heaven. 2. You ... are the shield of truth, 3. ... the fortress of truth, 4. ... the forest of truth. 5. You dwell in the highest.  
6. He created life, he created above. 7. That Creator who created the heaven. 8. The maker of the stars and the Pleiades. 9. A star shone out, it told us. 10. The maker of the blind, does he not make them for a purpose?  
11. The trumpet sounded, it called us. 12. The hunter who hunts for souls. 13. He brings together the flocks which reject each other. 14. He is the leader who has led us. 15. He is the Great Blanket which we put on.  
16. Your hands are wounded. 17. Your feet are wounded. 18. Your blood, why is it streaming? 19. Your blood was shed for us. 20. Are we worth such a great price? 21. Are we worthy of your home?  

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2 This sentence can probably be more accurately translated as: "Are we worthy of this homestead of Khonwana?" (= Soga)
BACKGROUND

John Knox Bokwe (1914) gave us what are now usually regarded as the standard texts of Ntsikana's "Four hymns". Bokwe's texts of the "Bell" and the "Round Hymn" are given in part above, plus his text of the "Great Hymn", with translations by this author. Other texts attributed to the hymns were written down in earlier times, texts very likely genuine, but which are not used as parts of the hymns today. Certain of these additional texts have been documented and studied by Janet Hodgson, together with Bokwe's texts (Hodgson 1980; 1985). Seeing these documents are readily available, these texts will not be reproduced here, except when explicitly discussed.

The purpose of this article is to present and have a look at certain further texts which the writer has come across, occurring in versions of Ntsikana's songs which he has recorded and/or studied in the course of his work in the field of Xhosa music. These versions include a performance as a "wedding song" recorded by Hugh Tracey in the Peddie district (Ciskei: Xhosa/Nqika) in 1957, four performances as traditional songs recorded by the author in the Glen Grey District (Transkei: Xhosa/Thembu) in 1981, 1983 and 1985, and a further version as a traditional song recorded by the author in the Tyhume area (Hogsback) in 1995-97. Music transcriptions and texts of the Bokwe "Four Hymns of Ntsikana", the Tracey "Wedding Song" recording, and the four Glen Grey District performances are to be found in the book *Xhosa Music* (Dargie 1988:194-206). The Tyhume version is published here for the first time.

Ntsikana the Prophet, St Ntsikana to his followers, was the first Xhosa Christian and missionary to his own people. He died in 1821, six years before the death of Beethoven. His music survived by oral tradition until Bokwe made the first attempts to transcribe it, using solfa notation, 57 years after the prophet's death. The process of oral tradition is still going on now – there are undoubtedly other versions of Ntsikana's songs waiting to be "discovered" by researchers. The fact that much is known about the origins and history of the music makes this a study of tremendous interest to the African musicologist.

NTSIKANA'S TEXTS: BOKWE AND ORAL TRADITION

- Bokwe (1914) bases one song (the "Round Hymn") largely on the text *Elelele homna*, and another song, "Ntsikana's Bell" similarly on the text *Ahom*. Yet another song, "uDalibom", as performed by Bokwe's son
S.T. Bokwe (Rec. TR 26, side A; cf. Dagie 1988 p.199), is also punctuated by the same Ahom chorus as the "Bell". Bokwe gives as the fourth song Ntsikana's "Great Hymn". This song has 21 lines of text, and does not make use of the words elele homna, ahom or similar texts. (Elele, perhaps better written helele, is an exclamation; hom, ahom, ahomna, homna are praise words usually addressed to the chief or the king, and used by Ntsikana to address God.) Each of Bokwe's "Four hymns" uses only one melody at a time, in a way similar to European church hymns.

On the other hand, all the traditional versions are in call-and-response form: the leader or leaders sing text(s) using one melody, and the follower(s) respond with their own text(s) and melody, the two melodies (and sets of texts) overlapping in the traditional way. The traditional versions all use ahom homna texts, in either leader or follower parts or both, and also texts attributed by Bokwe to the "Great Hymn", in leader and/or follower parts. This seems to indicate that Bokwe separated leader and follower parts of an original song into different songs. There are also cogent musicological reasons for suspecting that all "Four Hymns" might be versions of one original song, performed in different ways (cf Dagie 1982).

There is no doubt at all that all six traditional performances discussed here are versions of the same song, a combination of verses of the "Great Hymn" and the "Round Hymn"/Ahom chorus, in call-and-response form. These six performances may be identified as the "Wedding song" version (Tracey recording, Peddie, 1957), the Sikhwankqeni version (Glen Grey District 1981), the Mackay's Nek version (Glen Grey District 1981), the Ngqoko uhadi version (Glen Grey District 1983), the Ngqoko amaGqobhoka version (Glen Grey District 1985) and the Tyhume version (1995-7). (In fact, both the Mackay's Nek and the Ngqoko 1983 versions were performed with the uhadi musical bow.)

Sikhwankqeni, Mackay's Nek and Ngqoko are villages in the Glen Grey District, to the east of Queenstown. AmaGqobhoka, the pierced people, was a name given to early Xhosa Christians. These days in Ngqoko it refers to people who regard themselves as Christians without necessarily having allegiance to any particular denomination. The Ngqoko amaGqobhoka have their own rites and ceremonies, often combining Christian and traditional elements: thus their version of Ntsikana's song is performed for the women's umngqungqo dance, used at girls' initiation and on certain other occasions including umtshatho weddings. The fact that Hugh Tracey recorded Ntsikana's song at a wedding in the Peddie
district seems to indicate that those people were also amaGqobhoka in the Ngqoko sense.

It is possible that Ntsikana composed a number of songs for worshipping with his disciples. It is also possible that he composed only one song, which was sung in different ways. Traditional Xhosa songs may be sung in different ways at different times even by the same people, with new texts being added, old texts perhaps being neglected or even forgotten. If a new text is added then either the adopted melody must fit or be changed to fit the new pattern of speech tones; or a new melody must be constructed which fits the new text. This new melody may either replace a previous melody, or overlap polyphonically with earlier melodies. There will always be some basic line or lines of the song, around which the other text/melody lines will be woven. In the traditional versions of Ntsikana's song, this basic line features the ahom/ahomna text, though sometimes alternating with other texts.

If a traditional Xhosa song has many texts, then the texts may be ordered in three main methods of performance:

a) The song leader may keep repeating the same basic line, over and over, while the answering singer(s) respond by singing different lines, moving from one line to another, often in aleatory fashion;

b) A number of different song lines may be sung simultaneously by leading and answering singers, both leader and followers using a variety of text lines: if there are eight singers, then eight different text/melody lines may be presented together, with the lines overlapping (i.e. beginning at different points of the rhythm cycle);

c) It can be the song leader who goes from one text line to the next, while the followers sing a basic line as a chorus.

The traditional performances discussed here show all three of these formats. If Ntsikana's song is performed in the third way, that is, with the followers using a chorus response, it will be the chorus which features the ahom text. Apologies if this description seems to be rather complicated! The reason of course, is that Xhosa songs can be extremely complex.

What makes matters even more complex is that improvisation is an important element in Xhosa singing. Singers singing the same text at the same time will improvise harmony. And very often in traditional singing singers will improvise new lines which fit the pattern of the song, new texts fitted into the rhythm and harmony patterns but with a new melody suited to the speech tones of the new text. Many songs are treated with
great respect in this regard: singers are less likely to improvise new texts for songs regarded as important, and perhaps ancient. But textual improvisation may sometimes occur even in the most important songs.

All this means that it is not at all easy to unravel the text lines of traditional songs, and it may be extremely difficult to trace the history of song texts.

There is, however, the great advantage in studying the texts in traditional versions of Ntsikana's songs: that the composer is known to us, and efforts were made to transcribe his texts soon after his death. This is unique to this author's experience in Xhosa traditional songs.

**TEXT CRITERIA**

At this distance in time, it is undoubtedly not possible to establish whether newly-discovered texts inserted into Ntsikana's song in fact have roots going back to him. Nevertheless one can at least look for indications of authenticity. And studying these texts may tell us something about the history of the song itself.

There are several criteria which may link texts to Ntsikana: a) the theology or thinking behind the text; b) the literary style of the text: use of words, poetic structure etc.; c) facts known about the performers, the local transmission of the song, etc.; d) actual information contained in the text itself, historical references etc.

**TEXTS OF TRADITIONAL VERSIONS OF NTSIKANA'S SONG**

Here then are the texts of the traditional versions of Ntsikana's song, with performance details and some analysis.

**The "Wedding Song" version.**

(Recorded by Hugh Tracey, Peddie District, 1957; published on Tracey African Music series disc TR 26, side B, no. 1; texts deciphered from the recording with the expert help of Dr Cecil Manona of the I.S.E.R., Rhodes University.)

Method of performance: closest to the style described in b) above: leader and followers sing many texts in overlapping polyphonic format; leader and followers are mostly women: a man sings line 16. Men provide a kind
of gruff vocal percussion: "Hi! Hi!", as men may do when dancing. This probably indicates that the song was performed in typical traditional style with women standing around in a circle singing for the men to dance in the middle. The song rhythm is a three-beat pattern, as with the church versions of the "Great Hymn", but more lively than was usual in church.

**Leader:**

1. Ingwena wena, he wena wena.
2. Ulomgwebi wagweba, wagweba ngabom.
3. Siyambona umgwebi, wagweba ngabom.
4. Latheth' ixilongo, lisibizela.
5. Umenzi wenkwenkwezi noZilimela.
6. UloThixo omkhulu ngosezulwini.
7. Wena homna homna, homna homna.
8. Uyanqina ke uncana ... (homna ...)
9. Uzenza ngabom ... (Hom... ndizawuhamba...)

**Followers:**

10. He wena wena, iikhaka lenyaniso.
11. He wena wena, unguThix' omkhulu.
13. Wena wena, homna ....
15. Latheth' ixilongo, he! ixilongo/lathetha....
16. He ha ... kukhenkceza ixilongo.

In the performance, the leader begins with line 1, then works through the other lines up to line 9. The followers use lines 10 to 16 aleatorically, plus plenty of homna/wena etc.

Lines 4, 5, 6, 10, 11 and 15 are the same as certain lines of Bokwe's version with insignificant small changes. Lines 1, 7, 12, 13, 14 and 16 either bring the ahom/homna texts clearly into the "Great Hymn", or make small changes to lines of Bokwe. (Line 15 says "The trumpet has spoken"; line 16 says "the trumpet makes a strident sound".)

The lines of particular interest here, not found in Bokwe nor in other text transcriptions, are lines 2, 3, 8 & 9. These may be translated as follows:

2. He is the judge who judged; he judged with purpose.
3. We see the judge, he judged with purpose.
8. *May mean*: The little one is hunting, or
The little one bears witness (homna...)
9. He acts with purpose – hom! I am going....

Line 2 and its equivalent, line 3, seem to fit in with the theology of Ntsikana. Line 2 especially seems to fit in perfectly with the poetic pattern of the hymn texts. That God acts with purpose – ngabom – is stated by line 10 of Bokwe's text. Line 2 is not at all out of place in the "Great Hymn". Line 8 is of particular interest. As early as 1828 J. Philip (1828:187-188) published a line of Ntsikana's hymn which in modern orthography reads: "Imvan' encinane sibizile" – The little Lamb has called us. Ntsikana's disciple, Makapela Noyi Balfour, quoted in Bokwe (1914:59), gives this version of the line: "Imvan' encinane nguMesiyase" – The little Lamb is the Messiah (cf Hodgson 1980: 15-16). No version of the "little Lamb" text seems to have passed into church use, nor has any entered the hymn books. Therefore the title uncinana – the little one – applied to Christ in line 8, seems to imply that this version of the song traces back to the earliest days. However one translates uyanqhina – as hunting or as bearing witness – the idea seems to fit in theologically with Ntsikana: Christ the hunter or Christ bearing witness. Bokwe's line 12 uses the same root – nqhina – to say that God is hunting for souls.

Line 9, on the other hand, shows a typical way in which traditional singers may use interjections within a text. Bokwe uses uzenza ngabom – he acts with purpose – to describe God's action in creating even the blind (Bokwe line 10). Here the lead singer uses – remembers? – only half the text, and so fills out the line with ndizawuhamba – I will go. This text is frequently inserted into traditional songs in similar circumstances, and has no relevance for the first text phrase.

It is possible then that in this "Wedding Song" we have a preservation or at least a memory of two lines of Ntsikana's song not preserved elsewhere.

The Ngqoko amaGqobhoka version

(Recorded by D. Dargie at Isiganga, Ngqoko, on 17/11/1986; performed by amaGqobhoka people, a group of c. 20 women and 7 men.)

Performance method: type c) above. The leader sings various song lines, and the followers build a chorus with harmony and some overlapping, on the texts hom, ahom, homna, wena: all found in Bokwe's versions together with some interjections: he Bawo (He! our Father), ndithi ahom (I
say *ahom*), etc. The rhythm is a three-beat pattern, similar to that of the "Wedding Song". The women stood in a circle and men came into the circle to dance. Men sometimes sang, uttered cries, etc.

In this version the lead singer used five basic texts with variations:

1. *He wena wena, iNkosi nguwena Bawo.*
2. *Hom homna, hom homna bethu.*
3. *Homna kodwa, kodwa, mna ndinguNtsikana.*
5. *Hom! Ndikumhlaba kaNtsikane* (x 2).

*Translation:*
1. *He! it is you – the Lord is you, our Father.*
2. *Hom homna ... friends!*
3. *Homna, but, but as for me, I am Ntsikana.*
4. *Hom! This is the song of Ntsikana ....*
5. *Hom! I am in the land of Ntsikana.*

In this version there is clearly a more tenuous transmission line down from Ntsikana than in the "Wedding Song" version. The title *Bawo – our Father* – has found its way, with *uYehovah*, as names of God even into purely traditional songs in Ngqoko village, undoubtedly due to missionary influence. The leader's texts must clearly be regarded as improvisatory and recent. They make a good contrast with texts such as lines 2 and 3 of the "Wedding Song" version, perhaps even indicating the authenticity of those texts.

**The Sikhwankqeni version**

(Recorded by D.Dargie at Sikhwankqeni village near old Lumko mission, 20/9/1981. Performed by (about) 6 elderly women.)

The performers were not Christians and did not know of Ntsikana, and did not know they were singing a Christian song. They called the song *"Zidlanza zinamanxaba"* – "The hands are wounded". *Zidlanza* is local usage for *izandle* (which is also used locally). I asked if they knew Ntsikana's song. *They didn't.* I sang "Homna hom", and at once they recognised and began this song.

Performance method and texts: performance style a) above; the leader kept repeating *Homna homna*, etc, with some variations in melody.
The first follower began with *hom hom*, then used the text *Zidlanza zina­manxeba* (“The hands are wounded”) with some interjections: *hom, homna, ndiyahamba* (I am going). Another follower sang *Izandla zina­manxeba* (also meaning “The hands are wounded”). The other followers built overlapping polyphony using parallel harmony, on the text *hom hom*...

The rhythm showed that this version had perhaps no church influence at all. It used a pattern of 3+3+2=8 beats, a typical Xhosa additive rhythm.

After they had been singing for some time one follower added in an improvised line: "Ndigodi' indongomane" – "I have hidden the peanut". This demonstrates what can occur in the oral transmission of songs, especially when the real nature of the song is not known to the performers. It was a pity that this line could not be considered an authentic part of the song as the melody invented for it was very beautiful!

**The Mackay’s Nek uhadi version**

(Recorded by D.Dargie at Mackay's Nek mission near Lady Frere 15/06/1981. The performers were Mrs Nosinothi Dumiso, lead singer and playing *uhadi*, and Mrs Nomawuntini Qadushe, following singer.)

Both were Christians, Mrs Dumiso Anglican, and Mrs Qadushe Catholic. They said they had not learned the song from the church but from the old people: that is, that it had come down to them by oral tradition.

The *uhadi* is a large (100 to 120cm) musical bow with attached calabash resonator. The player strikes the string with a reed, opening and closing the resonator against the breast in order to follow the melody. The *uhadi* is the oldest Xhosa melody instrument, dating back hundreds of years, and is played by men and women. It is quite possible that Ntsikana played the *uhadi*.

**Performance method:** The *uhadi* acts as the song leader. A solo performer will play leader lines with the bow and sing the answering (following) lines. In the Mackay’s Nek and the Ngqoko versions, where the *uhadi* was used, the bow player sang leader’s lines of the song together with the bow. The song structure used here is that of b) above, with leader and follower each using a variety of text lines. The follower began each time after the leader, but the two ended each line together. As in the Sikhwankqeni version the rhythm was the additive pattern 3+3+2=8 beats.
Leader:
1. Ahomna homna, likhaka lenyaniso.
2. Ahom ahom hom, zidlanza zinamanxeba.
3. Ahom ahom hom, lemfazwe kaMlanjeni.
4. Ahom ahom hom, hom hom hom hom! (etc.)

Follower:
5. Ho! lemfazwe kaMlanjeni.
6. Ho! lemfazwe kaMfuleni.
10. We we huyoo! lentsimbi kaNtsikana.

(Plus: lines built on homna hom, interjections, exclamations (ndiyawuhamba = I am going, hamba mntanam = go child), altered combinations of texts (e.g. intsimbi lenyaniso) and so on.

We see in this performance that both leader and follower use the ahom/homna texts. Lines 1 (=8) and 2 (=7) are transcribed in Bokwe's version of the "Great Hymn". But lines 5 (=3), 6, 9 and 10 are of particular interest.

To start with line 10: The singer says "This is the Bell of Ntsikana." Thus the "Bell" song is here identified with the "Great Hymn", or perhaps we should say with the combination of "Round" and "Great" hymns.

Line 9 says: "Hemna hem - this child is the little one." I heard this text wrongly at first, thinking Mrs Qadushe had said Lemvan' encinana, the text published by Philip in 1828. Mrs Qadushe explained to me that she did in fact know of that text, but that she had changed it because she was fond of Christmas. As with the "Wedding Song" version, the reference to the Little One seems to authenticate the tradition behind this version.

Line 5 is of great historical significance. It says: "We we huyoo! This War of Mlanjeni!" During the War of Mlanjeni (1850-1853) there was a terrible battle at Imvani only some 25 kilometres as the vulture flies from Mackay's Nek. Over 200 Thembu and other Xhosa were killed by a combined force of Boers and British. The song still laments that war, although the two singers did not know of it. They thought the reference was to some local people called Mlanjeni, and therefore at times Mrs Qadushe used the hlonipha (honour) name for that family; Mfuleni (line 6), which means the same as mlanjeni (by the riverside). So the song still laments...
that war which took place 150 years before the recording was made, even beyond the knowledge of the singers. The commemoration of Mlanjeni's war in Ntsikana's song may indicate that the song was brought to the Mackay's Nek area during that time. It also seems to indicate that, already then, the song had the status of a national song – call it a freedom prayer song – for the Xhosa.

**The Ngqoko uhadi version**

(Recorded by D.Dargie at Lumko Institute, then at old Lumko mission, 2 km from Ngqoko village, December 1983. The performers were Mrs Nowizine Mandumbu, uhadi player and lead singer, and three companions.)

Performance method: style described in c) above: Mrs Mandumbu as leader sang various text lines; the followers responded with a constant chorus. The rhythm here was an extremely subtle Xhosã disguised pattern, equalising 8 beats into what appeared to be 5 beats; against which the performers danced a straight 4-beat pattern!

*Followers' chorus:*

"Homna homna, likhaka lenyaniso"
"Homna homna, (he) is the shield of truth."  *Leader's texts:*

1. Ma homna homna .... *(homna texts...)*
2. Wena wena Ntsikana .... *(You, you, Ntsikana!)*
3. Izandla zinamanxebe *(The hands are wounded)*
4. Wena Thixo omkhulu *(You, O great God)*
5. Izandla zinamachaphaz'egazi *(The hands have spots of blood)*.

These texts do not appear to be of particular significance. The "spots of blood" may just be a local improvisation on line 3. However, the existence of a second uhadi version of the song was musicologically most interesting, and gave further weight to the importance of the song as a traditional song. The performers knew about Ntsikana. Mrs Mandumbu said she had learned the song from her mother.
(Mrs Nowizine Mandumbu of Ngqoko, performer of Ntsikana's song with the uhadi musical bow.)

The Tyhume version

(Recorded by D. Dargie on various occasions during 1995 to 1997 including in Hogsback and at Fort Hare; performed by (mostly) the same
singers, the group "iHogsback Club" (leader Mrs Noquestion Mafika) and others of the area.)

The group includes people from Hogsback and from the Tyhume valley. At least some and maybe all are Christians. Mrs Mafika's husband is the local minister of an indigenous Church.

Performance method: as c) above; the song performed in two sections each with the leader singing first and the followers answering with a chorus. The rhythm was a three beat pattern as in the "Wedding Song" and AmaGqobhoka versions.

Section 1:
Leader:
1. SinoThixo omkhulu ngosezulwini.
2. Sinonyana kaThixo osezulwini.
3. Sinomlambo ozimbhaxa osezulwini.

Followers' chorus:
Ahom homna etc.

Section 2:
Leader:
4. Uyolingena .. (x 2)

Followers' chorus:
Ngolisebenzela .. (x 2)

Translation:
1. We have the great God in heaven Chorus: Ahom!
2. We have the Son of God in heaven ... Ahom!
3. We have a forked river in heaven ... Ahom!
4. You will enter heaven ...

Chorus:
By working for it ...

Line 1 goes back to Bokwe and Ntsikana. Line 2 fills out the pattern, and is almost certainly a recent insertion into the hymn. But line 3 seems most interesting.
A forked or divided river may be so through having tributaries which come together, or through breaking into a delta at its estuary. One of my students at Fort Hare, Mr Mahlubeni Stebe, saw the meaning of line 3 as follows: the tributaries are all the different peoples on earth, coming together into the one river of God in heaven. Rev. C.C.M.D. Hoyana, for many years convener and leading figure in the Eastern Cape’s St Ntsikana Memorial Society, explained it from the other point of view: the river is the grace of God coming down from heaven, and then spreading out to all peoples “like my hand spreading out into my fingers”. Either explanation seems to fit Ntsikana’s theology. And the idea seems original enough to trace right back to the prophet.

I have recorded line 4 and its chorus used as a Zionist Christian hymn in the Ngqoko area, without direct reference to Ntsikana but using basically the same music as in the Tyhume Ntsikana version. In about 1986 I met a woman living in Grahamstown who played the uhadi. I asked her about Ntsikana, and at once she quoted (but did not sing) the text: "Uyolingena ngolisebenzela." So people do seem to attribute it to Ntsikana. However, theology professor and dean Deon Thom, at Fort Hare, thought the theology must post-date Ntsikana.

CONCLUSION

The texts of traditional Xhosa songs are sometimes like windows looking back into the past. Just how far back we can see through the "hidden texts" in traditional versions of Ntsikana’s songs, who can say. And who knows, maybe there are still more such texts waiting to be "discovered".

LIST OF REFERENCES


Four traditional versions of Ntsikana's song (4.1., 4.3., 4.4 and 4.5.) are on tape no. 98, "Ntsikana Music Collection 1984", published by Lumko Institute, Germiston (rec. D.Dargie 1981-1983); version 4.2. is on Lumko tape no. 110, "Xhosa Songs for certain occasions", rec. D. Dargie, 1986. (Copies of these, and the Tyhume version (4.6.)can be obtained from D. Dargie.)