

NEW AGE

The questions which have always been here

Jump at us like impatient lovers
Of nights which cannot be numbed
Not even by spirits departed from
bottle or land

When fogs of despair jump up thick
in our heads
When struggle becomes the next bottle
Or the warmth between a willing
woman's thighs
Sucking into her our hasty greed
Remember O comrade commander of
the ready smile
This is pain and decay of purpose

Remember in baton boot and bullet
ritual
The bloodhounds of Monster Vorster
wrote
SOWETO over the belly of my land
With the indelible blood of infants
So the young are no longer young
Not that they demand a hasty death

The past is also turbulent
Ask any traveller with memory
To tame it today is our mission
With liberty hammered to steel in
our eye

Remember O Poet
When some of your colleagues meet
They do not talk the glories of the

past
Or turn their tongues blackwards
In platitudes or idealistic
delirium
About change through chance or beauty
Or the perversion you call love
Which be nothing nothing
But the Western pairing of parasites

The young whose eyes carry neither
youth nor cowardice
The workers whose song of peace
Now digs graves for the goldfanged
fascist monsters
With artistic precision and purpose
Now know the past is turbulent
We must tame it now
Ask any eye fuelled with liberty

Tell those with ears to hear
tell them
Tell them my people are a garden
Rising out of the rancid rituals
of rape and ruin
Tell them tell them in the dry season
Leaves with dry and fall to fertilize
the land
Whose new flowers black green
and gold
Are a worker's song of fidelity
To the land that mothered you

Keorapetse Kgositsile