

TRIBUTE TO AYANDA KOTA

By: Mazibuko Kanyiso Jara

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(not delivered at the funeral due to circumstances of the day)

What a fire has stopped warming our hearts

What a torch of reason ceased to burn

What a heart stopped to beat

Ubuya kuhlala unathi phi ungumntu nje,

Ungumntu nje, int' ehlal' ihlal' igoduke,

Ungumntu nje int' ehlal' ihlal' ihambele

Ungumntu nje int' ethe yagoduka lakufika ilixa

Ungumntu nje int' ebihambele kweli limagad' ahlabayo

For how long you would be with us still,

Given that you are only human,

A wanderer,

A visitor to this harsh world

Who often returns home,

Who indeed returned home when the time came?

Linzulu inxeba

Lutsho kabuhlungu ulwamvila lwakho kufandini

The wound is deep.

Death, the bite of your sting is sore.

Umhlab' uyagula, ubuhlungu, uyanqwina

Umhlab' unxaniwe, uyalil' ukhamisile

The earth is sick, pained and groaning.

The earth is thirsty, crying agape.

Ilanga liqumbile, ligijima ligqatsile;

Lihlaba ngenxa zonke, livutha njengomlilo;

Lishushu njengentsimbi, litshisa njengelahle;

The sun is grim-faced, speeding past as it blisters.

Burning hot as if a fire

Hot as burning steel, burning as cinderling embers.

Umhlab' uqhekekile, uneentanda, uneemfanta;

Uthuli luyaqhuma, iindlela zingcolile;

The earth is broken open, with cracks and crannies.

Dust bowls flying, roads and pathways sullied!

lintaba kwaneenduli, bona zikhedamile;

Sezikhangele phantsi, ziqondele ezantsi;

Mountains and hills, look they are forlorn.

Looking down, ashamed and sunken

Mathambeka namathafa, mithombo nemifula

Nithe cwaka anithethi, sekuphela niyalila

Hillocks, velds, fountains and streams

You have gone silent, not uttering a word.

All you do is weep.

Zityalo kwanemithi, ziintaka kwanezilo

Niqondele phantsi, nikhangele ezantsi

Plants and trees, birds, and animals

You are drooping and sapped.

Zizonke zidakumbile, zibharhile

Kukunduluka kweqhawe lethu uTower

All are dour, withered,

By the departure of our hero: the Tower

The People's Mayor

The best Mayor that Makhanda will end up not having,

The People's Mayor through his acts – ngezenzo

The early exit of Ayanda Kota from our lives is mourned by all who have been able to grasp his thought and appreciate his influence upon our time.

He was a great heart as he was a great mind. All who knew him know that.

Unique Ayanda you are joining what was a small Black Consciousness movement at the time of the transition when the easiest would have been to support Mandela's ANC organising young people sports as a community builder and liberator Mamelodi Sundowns shining at the centre of your hope – Imithandazo testifies to the call of The Sky is the Limit.

Solving people's issues not as charity but as concrete revolutionary work, speaking to each person and getting to respect and know them individually speaking with strategic clarity, impact and hope on public platforms building people's movements building solidarity across movements writing and expressing ideas – building grounded theory from below advanced socialist consciousness.

Standing for principled, mass-based left renewal instead of vanguardist dogmas which many still falter under to this day, a lifelong commitment to revolutionary change. These attributes call for an Ayanda Kota Legacy Project to collect, document, publish and distribute your works for the benefit of movements today and of future generations in this way, your name, work and legacy can endure through the ages.

Ayanda, Tower wethu ubungathunywanga ngazo izicengo; ubungathengwanga ngayo imibengo. Bekunganzuzo zimakhwezikhwezi, bekungembek' onayo kuthi sonke

Bekungentobeko yakho kumntu ocinezelweyo.

Ayanda, Tower wethu

You were not inspired by pleas and beseechingness you were not bought with promises of fire-roasted meat. It was not for glamorous benefits, it was because of your respect for all of humanity It was because of your humble service to the oppressed in you we also saw a convinced, committed and active feminist.

You refused to accept the idea that women should remain oppressed, you used your influence to advance the struggle to liberate women. Love and revolution brought you together love, and revolution were not inseparable in your lives side by side with you was your comrade and lover.

Wena ububabalwe ngoBabalwa a fascinating woman, one who is feeling passionate proud and independent small and feisty, packing a powerful punch – umde ngeentonga!

Who struggled to reconcile her political activism with her deep wish to have a quiet, peaceful homelife with you Tower.

Babalwa, as a soldier, you have turned your life into a battlefield to free us from amasiko okusibopha.

As a political educator, you have educated us you have taught us that indeed the personal is political the struggles we are fighting in our personal lives are important there is a need to practice what we preach in our personal lives there is a need to balance the political and the personal aspects of our lives; to love and be loved; to appreciate and be appreciated; to respect and be respected.

The time has come for all of us, women and men, to drop our shields. To be human again — to accept ourselves, to cry, laugh, love and enjoy life. Perhaps we will find that being honest and open with those closest to us will make us more useful and stronger in our struggle. Maybe the most powerful struggle is the one that is from inside all of us this is also our tribute to you sister Babalwa.

Thank you for doing it for us, the women and men in this hall and all of us in the struggle and our families. In doing it for yourself you have done it for all of us. with courage, and strength and beauty, so much beauty, you did it.

Asiqedeni lamasik' okusibopha

Tower wethu, in no time constrained by the protocols of our times we will bid farewell to you, hearts heavy with sorrow, eyes full of tears. We who have taken so much of your life from you and you unflinchingly giving it you're all at great risk to your own health in the service of the oppressed and exploited.

You taught us so much more than time allows to share in this platform, you loved this country and njengejoni you died with your boots on. Indeed, it is true that he who digs the well never drinks from it.

Hamba thol' iduna! Your day is done! You led from the frontline! Still we ask – how does the vaulting and affecting pain subside?

Ntambanan' yeNtabezono

Ntsiba zakho ziphapha kuzwelonke

Zivakel' izingqi zakho, Tower

Zayiwel' iNxuba, iGqili, neLigwa

NeNtab'etafile ziyenze kufuphi

Hamba ndlov' enebatha

Nduluka nyath' ematyhoboza
Goduka mgwadli weembadu
Phumla mthandi wesizwe
Lala yolisa elisichubele lophela
.....

Ndiyekeni zizwe
Ndiyekeni ndikhweze umlamb' iNxuba ndigoduke,
Ayandibiz' amathamb' oomakhulu noobaw'omkhulu kuloo Ntaba kaNdoda
Kunga kungaCamagu kube Chosi kube Hele mabandl'aNtsundu,
Kuded' ubumnyama kuthi qwenge! qheke! kukhanye kuthi,
Ndee ngciph', ndatshonela!

...ends...

Ndicaphule kuMzima waseNtabozuko (S.E.K. Mqhayi)

This press statement was released by Mazibuko Kanyiso Jara on 02 March 2024.