Africa in the World

I am Africa in the world.
I cast my shadow long and wide and Black and everywhere;
and green is my flag of the earth
and red is the bloodline from here to there;
It is said that you all share the beat of my blood;
A powerful legacy.

This daughter of the Nile, limpopo, Sudan, Zaire, Zambezi, Senegal
and Zimbabwe
walks the Diaspora;
I talk Africa.
I walk with her rythym and her strength.
I shout Africa when I give you my profile.

Look carefully with Western eyes to see my neck-coils,
my coiled and adorned hair
my face tattooed and coloured with the earth,
the birds, the sky;
my arms clack with bracelets of baobab and cowrie,
my foot - dress is the dust of the Serengeti.

I see with you, here, my icons.

This sweetmeat face-mask fills my eye, Africa,
and I am happy.
This persimmon bittersweet image bites my eye
and Africa, I am found.
Face of this mother-continent
with your full lips speaking Kikuyu, Swahili, Shona,
Ndebele, Tswana, Xhosa, Zulu, Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa
in rich savannah
across these Benin, Yoruba, Serengeti dreams
Serengeti dreams
Serengeti dreams

my neck coils
my breastplate
my talking
talking
talkingstick
my mango, and
my breadfruit;

I did not know what 'heavy' was and is
'til I lifted these sights and sounds and images
of old Africa to my mind.

This estuary of image and shape and colour,
round and round

that we stand on
this bridge that is
this space that is
this time that is here and now
Africa, and all of us.

I am Africa in the world.

— Maxine Tynes