

### **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 rhythm 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*