

I AM OF MALAWI

It's the greenery of the countryside
 The dramatic stances of its hills and mountains
 It's the tortuous rivers
 It's the endless lake
 With its world-topping fish species
 Bobbling up and down
 The freshest azure waters

It's the easy warm smiles of the people
 Their elaborate greetings
 Where strangers are just family
 we haven't been introduced to
 And parents are a community heritage
 Not only belonging to you
 And the other one
 With a forehead like yours
 It's where children
 Are the responsibility
 Of every adult in the commonwealth

It's the long summers
 The vibrant winters
 The melodious rains
 The gaudy colours
 The pitchy flavours
 The dinner tables
 Where food is itself
 Confident in its own taste
 Without enlisting the cheer-leading of spices

It's the perpetual peace
 The clockwork transitions
 From one regime to another
 It's the hope even in lack
 The love out of nothing
 The diligence even in delayed reward
 The belief so national
 For a country better than the present
 It's the many other intangibles
 You can't tag a GDP number on
 That I am especially proud
 To say I am of Malawi
 The warm heart of Africa.

Chisomo Nyamalikiti Nthiwatiwa Mdalla
 08.03.22

Chisomo Mdalla more prominently known as Nyamalikiti Nthiwatiwa (literal: Giraffee Ostrich) is a Malawian artist of quite a few persuasions: prose, poetry and drawing who took to writing as a self-healing process from the debilitating thoughts of becoming an orphan early in life. He has performed at International Festivals such as Commonwealth Literary Fest, ArtsAlive, British Council's Crossing Borders, Poetry Africa, Africa Slam Competition, Lake of Stars, and Land of Poets- and in countries as diverse as Uganda, South Africa, India, Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Malawi. Anthologized in three volumes in Malawi, he is currently working on a multi-form sophomore publication of his works, exploring the theme of what remains of our memories post trauma with COVID-19 as the diving platform. Accompanied by his tongue-pan drum, he is performing and researching nostalgia in places he lived in as a pass-on child as part of the bigger work alluded above.

