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: Giraffe 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.