# Psalm for Black History Month

From everlasting to everlasting  
World without end, You Are!

Wrought in my mother’s womb  
And even before then  
You knew I would be.  
Who I would become―or not…  
Where I would dwell―or not…  
What skin tone I would have  
Especially after the sun had touched me;  
All these, you, Creator God, had known.

The language that I would speak  
Or how many I would speak, hear, and understand  
How I would know to call you  
And know that you are still the One  
How I would pray, praise, or lament  
And hope and trust that you would still hear.

My mother continent is Africa  
Vast lands and lakes and rivers created by you.  
You were there before many a navigator, an explorer, often a stranger  
Created invisible lines, invisible boundaries, unnecessary divisions.  
Before I knew to call you God or Dieu,  
Languages from across many seas,  
I learned to call you in the languages  
Of my kin and others, closer, nearer, and dear to me,  
Present or gone before me  
In the continent of my origin, my birth, my roots.

Nyasaye (Luo)  
Mungu (Kiswahili)  
Mulungu (Ngoni)  
Ngai (Kikuyu)  
Enkai (Maasai)  
Chukwu (Igbo)  
Unkulunkulu (Zulu)  
Lesa (Bemba)  
Mwari (Shona)  
You who sees all, hears all, knows all  
You who are many in One,  
Present everywhere all at once;  
You in whose image I am made,  
You whose nature is  
Love, Unity, Harmony, Sameness,  
It matters not in what land I currently dwell.

To you I pray,

Breathe your nature in me  
Breathe courage and wisdom in me  
Breathe healing over wounds that may still be open  
Breathe over scars that may still be tender  
Breathe to soothe the hurt that may still linger  
Breathe, so that unforgiveness may not inhabit or overwhelm me

Breathe that I may fully live to  
Love and be loved  
Understand and be understood  
Accept and be accepted  
Value and be valued  
Listen―and be listened to

That I may not be singled out  
Because of mere suspicion or stereotype  
That I may not be considered as not belonging  
Because a person, a people, a system  
Just cannot believe or accept that I do

That I may be viewed neither as a token nor an object of pity  
But truly and sincerely be recognized as a worthy and deserving human

In the here and now and beyond now

Amen

*―Akinyi Owegi-Ndhlovu*