The Negro Speaks of Rivers

By Langston Hughes

I’ve known rivers:
    I’ve known rivers ancient as the world and older than the flow of human blood in human veins.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.

I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young.
    I built my hut near the Congo and it lulled me to sleep.
    I looked upon the Nile and raised the pyramids above it.
    I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans, and I’ve seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset.

I’ve known rivers:
    Ancient, dusky rivers.

My soul has grown deep like the rivers.