

*Dwight Maxwell*



## What Patrimony Can Do To A Body

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Because of patrimony  
I hung up my western name neatly  
On a hook I found sleeping  
In a corner of my house.  
I undress in the corner,  
Lift up some loose floor boards  
And buried my western attire.

I cooked soup in the corner,  
Boiling all my books from the western cannon.  
I drank the soup, passed it out later,  
In a black-hole corner.

Reclining on my bedroom floor,  
My arms stretched a mile in opposite directions,  
Palms tepid, wide open looking at the roof  
Naked, except for the painful vice around the heels –

I took off my Oxford shoes,  
Stretched the sole out on my window sill,  
Gave it to the birds.  
I looked at my feet torn and callused  
My African toes glued together  
Like a statue's toes. I bent down  
And straightened them out,  
Viciously let in the air.

I opened the door of my western shack,  
Walked out — out of my meticulous shack to gather fuel.  
I got some dried up leaves  
Sprinkled them generously through the ad hoc  
Of my western living room.

I got two bone white stones out of my head, rubbed them  
Till they burnt my skin and catch the leaves.  
My western shack burns like a klan cross  
On the manicured lawn of some unsuspecting Negro.  
While the shack burned, I skipped to my dessert,  
The hyena in me laughing.

