

Fantasies of more efficient language  
more perfect union on imperial terms  
    in fashion since the Rosetta Stone translations  
    raised interest in the birth of civilization

Grimmerian aspirations for the mother tongue  
the spirit of the letter of the law recoverable  
    from word sentence tale, meanings borne  
    in the sounds nature teaches her natural children

Newtonian dreams of redeeming at least in part  
our fall into arbitrary written signs  
    from the original tongue Adam employed  
    when giving things their ordinary names

The hope since the birth of modern science  
for a *characteristica universalis*  
    in which everything that could be said  
    at all would be said clearly

a language tooled by reason to get across  
what needs to be said free of the null goose  
    chase results of irrationality  
    meaningless statements and propositions produce

its relation to other languages  
purely logical, the notation  
    perspicuous, looking like what it means,  
    conveying even the illogical

Conceiving a form incorporated among  
history oratory chronicle  
    antiquities mythology religion  
    legend saga legal accounts song

a psychic construct sensitive to time  
yet durable, coherent through the ages  
    patterns in perceived phenomena  
    true signatures of nature witness

to persistence of mental production

relatively free from interference

by the monitor itself suggesting  
a common source in answer to their prayers

Deducing from current similarities  
however devoid of empirical proof  
a primeval unity implied  
in etymological *culs-de-sac*

the old in-and-out satyricon,  
loss between sleeping and waking lip and cup  
breath and breath corruption of syllables  
redemption by return to original inspiration

metaphysical polyvalent nostalgia  
for essence prior to language, primordial states  
words should be good for evoking, keeping in mind  
what is not to be spoken should go without saying

Objects of vision the language of nature's author,  
their bodies thickening the alphabet soup  
turning attention away from meaning to sound  
making the hearing of a word more difficult

the language of lesser works, authored by mortals,  
far from being a beatific light  
between truth and intellect  
a Beatrice conceived in purgatory

is a shadow inscribed between us and the glare,  
a providential obscurity not unlike  
Apollinaire's *ombre* saving us  
from blinding ourselves seeing into it

Art starting from the visible  
helping us understand with our senses  
Poems from intelligible accidents  
letting us feel with the intellect

the hieroglyphic and alphabetic in tandem  
picture-writing for quick image-ideas  
phonetic glyphs for discursive intercourse  
universals less concrete than supposed

though it's said they're not in fact abstract  
but so effective that some particulars  
are unthinkable without them,  
some unifications impossible