

In the beginning darkness covered the face of the deep  
save for a dull glow behind the Akkadian veil.

Then Alexander declared the Persian *drachma* the standard  
from the Nile to the Ganges. And the *drachma*

begat the Roman *aureus* and *solidus*  
which moved upon the waters. And *aureus* begat

*nomisima* also called *byzant* five hundred  
years sound face value equal

to weight which *bezant* begat the *dinar* brought back  
with spices the fork and the oud by uncouth crusaders.

And the *dinar* begat the *ducat* of Venice and *florin*  
of Florence which begat the *real* which sailed

the Inquisition and pox upon the Spanish main.  
And in the new world the *real* begat

the *Almighty Dollar* and in the old one  
the *Pound Sterling* which bestrode the shrinking globe

from Waterloo til the birth of the Federal Reserve  
shortly before the Archduke's assassination.

And lo, when there was not in circulation coin  
enough to buy up all the goods producers produced

(and truly there was a perpetual shortage of ready cash)  
more was made to appear as if by miracle

created more or less out of thin air  
or bought borrowed or stolen outright in wars of trade

the shortfall in short made up in interest-bearing debt  
the benefit of which accrued not to the just.