

Festina Lente

I come to bury, not praise you, in your house
—A.D. Hope

not of their outward shapes & acts, that are still
down the centuries, like some baggage train—
(beware of ruins!) & always about to restore
the lost mobility of a limb, or a thought—turned
sour all these years, choked with nettles &
“obscene”—who was that, fuelling the unburied
past, despairing that it might outlast the effort?

“in this we are each dowered” & so, & so—no
peat or dung left to burn here—the flies more
numerous than the hands that will feed them—
do not fear: a cold bed has stories enough &
time to tell them in—there’s no applause at the
end, no short straws, no grease paint that will
ever be removed—& the lights will barely go out