Abdul Hamid

Before the Jewish murders I was that Great Beast
You Christians seem always to need. Armenia,
Land no one ever heard of, I made a Crusade
No one took up. As long as I was Caliph, Rhodes
And Crete were not a threat to Suez or Toulon;
The Hijaz and that other Holy Land were safe,
Which hardly can be said for Ataturk. Grant me
That I thought up the bank accounts in Switzerland
Accessible by number only, which is how
Alone of many I contrived to die in bed,
If after years of a palatial house arrest.

Gallipoli, the holocaust of "Greater Greece,"
Freeing the eunuchs, opening the harem walls,
The works of German architects in Ankara,
I'd have enjoyed, their evocations of a siege--
Vienna--or some parody of Herod's Temple.
Sick Man I may have been; remember that I lingered.