



Burn This PDF, Vol. III  
Contemporary Shootings  
Syrianus

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The following four long poems were written in the  
macrotonal **>.667** meter.

## Inscrutable Myths

.748 - .762 - .742 - .740 - .698 - .748

.775 - .715 - .764 - .706 - .801 - .692

.740 - .786 - .791 - .723 - .743 - 675

*(Prelude) With a fair amount of ambivalence, knowing as well as anyone that Nikos typically spends the hours of 3PM through 7PM, Monday through Friday, verifying the European origin of his dietary tract, I approached Mr Kazantzakis at 6:59 PM, ambling toward the screened-in patio of his modest row house located spitting distance from Garden City, and began as such:*

01 (.748) Well Mr Kazantzakis, if I'm being honest with you,  
completely honest with you, if I'm holding back next to no honesty whatsoever,  
I should note that, yes, it's indubitably true that of late

I've found myself gluttonously chewing four to seven  
slices of gum in simultaneity,  
for a variety of reasons - in fact, it was just yesterday  
afternoon,  
prior to leaving our apartment to go grab a coffee  
that I indiscriminately shoved an entire pack of gum into  
my mouth  
and exuberantly chewed this large ball of gum,  
wondered if chewing gum was actually good for your  
teeth,  
when the thought occurred to me:  
Is emo the highest form of classical music America is  
historically responsible for?  
When discussing American music, I thought while  
chewing an entire pack of gum,  
a litany of genres, from post-bop jazz, to experimental  
rock, to avant-metal  
to the so-called classically trained composers of  
American descent,

are discussed as 'the truly classical music of America.'  
'But what if emo is the truly classical American music?' I  
thought to myself,  
chewing an entire pack of gum, preparing myself to pay  
full-price for a coffee out somewhere,  
despite the fact I had an entire pot of coffee at my  
apartment, waiting to be imbibed for free.  
The primary conceit of emo music is that its creators are  
young and white and male,  
and that they originate from neighborhoods that are safe  
if not opulent and utterly hate their lives.  
Nothing, it should be noted, is ever proceeding well for  
the emo band,  
as the slightest deviation from the emo band's best case  
scenario is always apocalyptic,  
despite the fact that, sociopolitically at least, they have  
everything going for them.  
The emo participant exists at the apex of the American  
totem pole,

and despite this fact everything remains essentially objectionable to them.

Nothing is going well!

The emo song is, in practice, the antithesis of the virtue signal.

And it occurred to me, as I left my apartment to pay four dollars for a coffee

that would inevitably be co-opted

by an art school professor, with no regard to socially acceptable decibel levels,

pontificating about people as brands to a foreign exchange student,

that this type of wide-eyed narcissism, that this unironic ignorance of sociopolitical totem poles,

this obsession with direct, lived experience at the expense of everything conceptual -

is perhaps the apex of what should comprise American classical music?

And I nodded my head at this notion as we entered the  
Honda  
asking Tina if she'd be willing to play 'One-Eighty by  
Summer' on our way to the coffee shop.

02 (.762) I suppose you could say it was fortuitous,  
if not a direct product of fate itself, that with these  
thoughts in mind,  
while browsing my Shopping List on Amazon dot com,  
while considering the merits of the so-called university  
professor  
after my encounter with this pea-brained art professor  
from Yoleni's,  
I noticed that the Constantine Eleven monograph by my  
old college professor,  
Marios Philippides, was now on sale -  
reduced from the borderline-insulting price of ninety  
dollars for the hardcover,

to the increasingly palatable price of nine dollars for the Kindle edition.  
I'd had no communication with Philippides since my time at Massachusetts,  
which is unsurprising, as I doubt strongly Philippides recalls me in the least,  
as almost the entirety of my late adolescence was marked by my dedication to my dissipation-process,  
which I'd extended into an era some may choose to characterize as a post-youth era,  
so the two of us had no need, no reason to communicate with one another,  
primarily because Philippides had no idea who I was.  
Just because two persons ostensibly share a modicum of so-called 'Greek blood'  
in no way means they should communicate with one another.

For Philippides's part, he has no idea who I am, and for my part,  
my only interaction with Philippides took place in the midst of my dissipation-process,  
of which I was dedicated to -  
yet being that I'd been looking for a monograph on the so-called 'last emperor of the Greeks',  
and being that Philippides was the only author with a recent monograph published  
on the final so-called Constantine of Helen,  
it just so happened that our paths would once again cross,  
this time on the Kindle app of my iPhone.  
Perhaps it was fate, just as it was fate that I'd sit through an ebullient bloviation session  
from a pea-brained art school professor on one day,  
then on the next day find my own old professor's monograph fortuitously on sale,

reduced to a price more appropriate for the proletariat as such.

03 (.742) After confirming the price reduction multiple days in a row

I finally pulled the trigger and bought the book,  
only downloading said book during a solitary circular  
sojourn around Foxwoods,

Ike busy attempting to continue his luck on the slot  
machines -

having won two hundred dollars on one roll prior to our  
high class Chinese dinner,

which he magnanimously comped -

and Tina passed out in the car,

tired and hungover after an ill-advised decision to  
daydrink prior to our venturing to the casino for the night.

At first, in preparation of my reading,

I sat in line at Dunkin Donuts,

surprisingly the only coffee shop open at the expansive  
casino,  
and bought a medium iced coffee for myself with almond  
milk.  
Three men stood in front of me and struck me as abutting  
old men  
until I began to consider they very well could be the same  
age as I,  
clinging, it struck me, to perhaps some fading beacon of  
youth,  
one of them adorned in deluxe Michael Jordan sneakers,  
the other making a long speech to the Dunkin Donuts  
barista  
about how much he likes his Caramel coffee  
yet curiously punctuating the note by repeatedly saying  
he's not that picky.  
In the rainforest casino, sipping my iced coffee,  
with water audibly falling all around me,  
I got my five dollar double poker game out of the way,

realizing slowly that the first two machines didn't work,  
then slowly realizing I completely forgot how to play  
double poker,  
despite being so exuberant at the thought of finally  
finding a double poker machine to play.  
I googled 'How to play double poker' but couldn't seem to  
find a concise explanation,  
an explanation that would allow me to play double poker  
immediately,  
which was the extent of everything I wanted at the time.  
Leaving the double poker machines after immediately  
losing five dollars,  
I decided to spend the last of my cash on an ice cream  
cone,  
then begin reading Philippiades' monograph.  
The ice cream barista informed me there were no cones  
left,  
which was disappointing in the extreme.

Feigning no disappointment, I ordered two scoops of the  
cappuccino gelato  
and was subsequently given a spoon half the size of my  
own pinky finger,  
which isn't a particularly large pinky finger,  
I've never had my pinky finger described as abnormally  
large by anyone,  
to the best of my knowledge,  
to scoop out both scoops of ice cream from the  
surprisingly deep cup.  
I didn't object, instead feeling curiously lucky to pay  
seven dollars for this ice cream cup,  
then walking around to find myself quite enjoying said ice  
cream,  
the end-game of said ice cream of course being that I ate  
the last half scoop essentially with my bare hands,  
walking around by myself, enjoying nothing more than  
eating this ice cream

with both an absurdly tiny spoon and also with my bare hands.

Finally, after washing the cappuccino gelato off my hands in the Foxwoods rest area,

I sat on a park bench and opened up my Kindle app to open up Philippides' monograph on the final so-called emperor of the Greeks.

## Contemporary Shootings

.766 - .724 - .787 - .729

.692 - .714 - .752 - .764

.755 - .723 - .726 - .764

01 (.766) Well, I guess it's been give or take seven years  
since I first experienced the sublime delight of smoking  
the hookah at Pasha on Allens Avenue,  
and nearly three and half since I was introduced to the  
venerated ice hose,  
so I suppose I'm now at the point in my life where an  
equidistant amount of time has elapsed  
since I experienced the regular hose as well as the ice  
hose,  
both hoses that I'd of course recommend,  
although our country's rapid rate of inflation has impacted  
the price of each substantially,  
while the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus

has turned smoking hookah into an increasingly frowned upon practice.

02 (.724) It was an era of lingering socioeconomic commotion when my friend Curtis and I experienced somewhat of a dual rough patch romantically -

Curtis recklessly divorced, after an eight year relationship and nine month marriage, while I remained in less than infrequent communication with a person

I'd inadvisably become involved with in a variety of ways, while at the same time I'd inadvisably entered a subsequent relationship with a person I'd, perhaps unsurprisingly, eventually have a dramatic falling out with.

03 (.787) More often than not it seems our lives are little more than a series of ill-advised relationships,

that whenever we escape from one ill-advised relation  
we find a subsequent ill-advised relation  
waiting for us patiently -  
for my part I'd acquired a custom of chasing the ill-  
advised in an almost mechanical manner,  
as if the ill-advised had some sort of direct line into my  
very being,  
and in retrospect it feels as if circumstance in the case of  
my life has played an outsized role,  
that my approach to my life has been a simple sculpting  
of inescapable circumstances.

04 (.729) I still hold both owners - Jack and Sal - in the  
highest esteem,  
and, in fact it was just this past Christmas that I stopped  
in Pasha with Tina  
and said a jovial hello to Jack,  
indulging in my first ice hookah in what seemed like eons,  
Tina and I sitting at the counter,

having exactly one beer a piece,  
already somewhat inebriated,  
watching a Mavericks game that was curiously void of  
Luka Doncic.

05 (.692) It's never necessarily advisable to admit that an  
exotic dancer quote-unquote  
'fell in love with you',  
yet in my particular case it was an irrefutable burden I  
was forced to bear.  
Although at the time I attempted,  
with some degree of success,  
to deny that my charismatic character was capable of  
making said set of events possible,  
if not inevitable, yet it was appropriately catastrophic for  
my mental well-being,  
as I took full responsibility for both my charisma as well  
as my inability to resemble a father-figure.

06 (.714) These precise circumstances led both myself  
and my friend Curtis  
into the ready-made arms of the Pasha hookah hose  
at least once a week for years on end -  
as there exist times in someone's life where there's no  
choice  
but to disassemble themselves in the most reckless of  
fashions,  
smoking and drinking excessively and engaging in  
ill-advised long-term relationships excessively;  
the quality of the hookah at Pasha was of a height that  
was hard to fathom at the time.

07 (.752) We unravel ourselves, attempting to reach a  
core that's always unapproachable,  
being told by Byzantine monks that our center remains as  
ineffable as God's Essence -  
sending ill-advised messages to love interests that no  
longer have any interest in us.

An innocent exotic dancer falls in love with us,  
and we choose to use the full extent of our critical  
faculties to disassemble this person over and over again.  
Continually drawn to this person,  
we ruthlessly destroy them critically until the situation  
itself becomes intoxicated in the worst of ways.

08 (.764) And after all of this is over we go to Pasha on  
Allens Avenue,  
and we enjoy the highest quality hookahs at least every  
Wednesday,  
unraveling becomes just another hobby of our's,  
and we drink vodka with just a splash of water,  
and the bartender liberally indulges us with a tall glass of  
this vodka,  
and then we drive up the street,  
and we laugh hysterically with Curtis as we mindlessly  
toss currency at a dark stage comprised of nudity,  
then we drive downtown to order a meatless burrito

at a highly regarded Tex Mex establishment.

09 (.755) One common mistake to eschew both at Pasha and other establishments offering so-called hookah is the conflation of 'more' with 'better' with regard to flavors.

Waitstaff will invariably highlight the fact that a patron can order a litany of flavors at no extra cost, implying that receiving *more* flavors for the *same* price is a 'good deal', that ordering a blueberry-peach-mint-creamsicle flavor hookah will be enjoyable when a sensible hookah should be restricted to at most two flavors - I personally recommend blueberry mint.

10 (.723) Sitting at the bar at Pasha smoking a scrumptious hookah with my friend Curtis,

watching an exciting Celtics contest,  
I had the misfortune of assiduously studying my  
surroundings with the intent of recording them,  
so to speak.

In short,

I believed events could be recorded via recollection and  
recreated through creative faculties,  
when it's now clear that nothing was further from the truth

-

at Pasha smoking hookah I believed I could create a  
nonfictional account,  
an autobiographical element,  
when autobiography and history are only the most  
elevated forms of fiction!

11 (.726) Our memories are by far the most specious  
things about us,  
have you ever wondered why our official histories are  
almost immediately checkered,

biased before the first drafts are completed,  
why human beings are believed to have existed for tens  
of thousands of years,  
yet if we even glance a paltry millennium into our past  
we witness nothing but foggy notions and bitterly  
conflicting opinions?  
At times it seems I'm made up of nothing but memories,  
yet all of these memories seem to have minds of their  
own!

12 (.764) Ultimately, while the relative risk of loitering at  
Pasha on Allens Avenue is at this point well-established,  
and while the prices of the median hookah have inflated  
exponentially,  
I'd still be hard-pressed to sit here and recommend a  
better place to smoke hookah in the Greater Boston  
metropolitan region.  
Frankly, I've always considered it a bit of a bourgeois  
cowardice

to avoid places solely because of a low probability  
chance you'll get shot,  
even as we age it can still be beneficial to embrace the ill-  
advised once in a while.

## An Aborted Anime Opera

.783 - .816 - .692 - .847 - .888 - .711  
.707 - .753 - .695 - .844 - .759 - .881  
.691 - .765 - .740 - .834 - .760 - .707  
.804 - .742 - .672 - .709 - .703

(01) Flipping myself ass up at the colonoscopy before it  
was appropo.

There's no longer a notion  
of sanctity in abstract expressionism.

Quantum mechanics and nonlocal relations or something.

John Bell was correct about the physical universe.

Writing "muttering my constant curiosity got in the way of  
my suicide" to myself

in a somewhat ironic tone  
but muttering nothing at all.

The older woman had no interest in geriatric footwear  
yet wouldn't stop speaking to me of my destiny  
after eight o'clock  
at the Wrentham outlets.

Aged thirty six Portuguese dancers  
inform you in minute detail  
of your own acute misery  
then walk away unconcerned.

This is why Christ had his feet rubbed.

(02) Dip down like a quick bath  
into the DMT-like essence  
of what seems poetic.  
Breakfast and coffee spots close so quickly  
yet I find myself yearning for an Americano and omelet  
a little after four.  
The clouds over one forty six south  
consistently look like oil paint.  
Prior to the mental health revolution  
adolescents were forced to internalize trauma  
many of them becoming complete assholes in the  
process.  
I've soured on the beach.  
Skin care I suppose has become a bit of a priority.  
Sand is somewhat of an annoyance.

(03) Two midgets eating delicious looking rice bowls at  
Xaco Taco.

Repeating the phrases

“There is no image.”

“There is no memory.”

There’s no image and there’s no memory.

Sans image and memory we can start to approach the  
fundamental nature of the universe as such.

Triple egg omelet

with the kalamata olives.

A chest crevice stained

in a permanent ink of sorts.

Cuddly beavers eat vegetables from the hands of well  
intentioned human beings.

The small bottles of soju were only eight bucks a piece.

(04) The saki at Somo was possibly  
the worst alcoholic beverage I've ever sipped.  
The can looked like an anime juicebox.  
It appealed to me.  
It struck me Tiny Bar  
had a pretense about it  
that just struck me as completely out of line.  
People from various backgrounds making fast friends  
as I ate breakfast out on the patio at Domenic's.  
Considering going to Chilango's.  
Once again deciding against it.  
The condo complex looked like total shit.  
Real estate as an investment  
has always struck me as less than  
a no brainer.

(05) Blue light eyeglasses with the black wire rims  
I look like a complete douchebag.  
There's a document titled password is password  
with the dollar signs after the A.  
Proust was a renowned fan of male  
prostitutes.  
They think Nietzsche died of syphilis.  
In my mind I'm the last of a long line.  
Made American English into Ancient Greek.  
Consider me the twelfth Constantine.  
Genocides are just a matter of taste.  
"Anatoli" just means East.

(06) Gregory of Nazianzus implicitly understood  
the nature of quantum physics.

Of nonlocal relations.

It's possible the Occident has clung  
to an initial linguistic reversal.

A reversal creating an illusion of perspective.

It's possible the perspectivism discovered by people like  
Nietzsche

was in fact a simple byproduct of this initial reversal  
of the Occident.

This idea of a perspective.

It seems totally illogical to me.

No pun intended.

Ice hookah with the tzatziki

I wasn't quite in my right mind at the time.

Samurai sword in Washington Park  
the car seat saw too much.

Videography is archaic in retrospect.

The science of phonetics

is still ambiguous.

The conversation faded of its own accord.

(07) Siberia is beautiful this time of year.  
All art is not necessarily ipso facto for everyone.  
The flesh of the human being  
wasn't universally appealing  
believe it or not.  
Emotional baggage lost in transit  
after I woke from a strange dream.  
My yiayia informing me  
she's out of sorts with smudged lipstick  
as I clutch a nephew that isn't mine.  
There are many regional differences to take into account.  
We construct linear states in retrospect  
then spit on a street in Izmir.  
The rolled down window was like a picture frame.  
Memory was juvenile delinquents spraying graffiti.  
The Providence cop was satisfied with the answer  
we're just conversing.

(08) The unspecified bug trapped in the spider web  
on the railing of the employer's entrance  
made me consider metaphors or something.  
The cashier at Job Lot of ambiguous ethnicity  
needs to employ social media  
to assist her pursuit of establishing herself  
as a photographer.  
Her favorite food is pizza.  
The colonoscopy was unsuccessfully rescheduled  
on two occasions.  
It struck me that "Russian whore"  
is one of the few misogynist phrases  
still acceptable to say aloud  
in so-called mixed company.  
Sure it was nice enough  
to have the assistance  
of Giovanni Guistiniani but  
not if he insisted  
on retreating the first time

his chest caved in.

(09) I found Marios Philippides' monograph  
on the last Constantine  
to be so pro-Latin  
to be nearly unreadable  
which was unsurprising  
because it seems as though  
there are almost no true Greek intellectuals in the West.  
Only faux-Greek intellectuals  
that shamelessly sell out their own history.  
Who rubber stamp Anglo assertions  
that the Hellenic era ended after  
Socrates fondled Alcibiades.  
I often have an urge to spit on these so-called  
intellectuals.  
These scholastic imbeciles.  
These Levantine Benedict Arnolds.  
These cowards of the spirit.  
While I painstakingly transform American English  
into Koine Greek

I have to deal with people of my own ancestry  
obfuscating in the service of secular popes.  
When there's nothing below a secular pope.  
It's why at times I feel like retiring to a monastery or  
something.  
Sometimes you have to ask yourself  
what's the point.

(10) A bit depressed without palpable cause.  
Slowly noticing a variety of polka dots  
on a pristine two thousand sixteen Honda Civic  
clearly due to the douchebag  
incessantly moving  
his white pickup in the parking lot.  
Inebriated and peeing  
on Enzo's door handle in two thousand and fourteen  
two years prior to the Civic being issued.  
The scallops at Maria Cucina were succulent  
yet ridiculously overpriced.  
Curt alleged the pork was kind of dry.  
Slowly noticing Milagro  
is a halfway decent tequila  
at Vino Veritas.

(11) Black eyebrows plucked  
with a muted sense of glee.  
The center of gravity is ultimately elusive.  
There's a πρόσωπο that becomes an ουσία  
but not quite vice versa.  
We begin with the individual and think this is freedom.  
There is no individual.  
The individual is no organism.  
The organism is the first fallacy.  
I've never been a big fan of sense perception.  
Prose is some form of telepathy.  
This is perilous.  
I've only intermittently believed this is good.  
My beliefs are purely theatrical.  
There's no better opera house than belief.  
She asked me an asinine question and laughed.  
I chuckled nervously.  
It marked the beginning of a horrendous era for each of  
us.

(12) Leaving the apartment for the first time all Friday  
the fresh air was a revelation.

Liberian with the mask on  
at the Greek pizza spot.

Rub and tug with the open sign across the street.

Might get my VCR repaired at Cho's Electronics.

Speedway stuck up by the black dude  
with balloons tucked under his shirt.

He picked my key up for me  
on a random Sunday afternoon.

I always found him a nice guy personally.

Take a right onto Alexander  
and pass the basketball courts  
two thousand eighteen flashbacks.

Taken aback

by my note

but as much of an asshole as you can be  
it's essential to remain a man of your word.

Otherwise there's no redemption arc.

(13) It became gradually apparent  
as I made incidental eye contact  
with a girl with a gargantuan fake ass  
that I'd slowly lost the ability  
to type words coherently  
into my iPhone.

Memory is perhaps as a concept slightly ill-advised.  
I considered while eating  
an entire rotisserie chicken  
at a later date.

Yes it was inadvisable in retrospect  
to give an overarching historical recap  
of the late Ottoman Empire  
to two seventy somethings  
I'd never met.

Senses get muted with age.  
I failed to notice the effervescent backside  
ambling across India Point

until Katreena accused me of looking at it.  
Orifices are ultimately negligible phenomena.  
Jesus didn't give much credence  
to bank accounts  
I considered  
eating an entire rotisserie chicken  
at a later date.  
Chanting the words "turn my bitch up"  
in a soft whisper  
as I strenuously edit the HTML  
of a bootleg Tumblr page  
I feel at peace with the world.  
Ten calendars on females  
with two kids  
I feel at peace with myself.  
Ten mezcals  
enter an eleventh dimension  
I feel at peace with the world.  
With the charlatan nature of mathematics.

My mother ditched me at Nick-A-Nee's  
but truthfully  
I didn't want to  
reveal my new Audrey Horne tattoo anyway.

(14) On Mineral Spring  
getting my eyebrows threaded  
by Cheryl  
a self-identifying Spanish lady  
with a curiously Arabic accent  
attempts to sell off  
a pair of air pods  
to help support her alleged four children  
and I was a little dubious  
to say the least.  
Defecating at the gentlemen's venue.  
Off-brand dude wipes from  
The Christmas Tree Shop.  
Writing essays is reprehensible.  
Having sincere opinions is basically  
worse than climate change in my mind.  
Boycotting semicolons.  
The irony of my New York Knicks fandom  
has slowly fallen by the wayside with age.

(15) Pulling my penis out  
with a child-like sense of jubilation.  
I require more podcasts  
is the only conclusion I've come to of late.  
It's the only logical conclusion.  
There's simply a severe  
lack of podcasts in the current era.  
We've ruthlessly deprived ourselves  
of others' opinions.  
Reading a Robert Ashley libretto  
while stroking my beard  
in a fashion that evinces  
a solemn contemplation.

(16) Honduran medium roast  
in the Mister Coffee.  
Brown basmati with two teaspoons  
from the za'atar bag.  
Only extra virgin olive oil  
from the cold press.  
At this point I think we need to admit  
we've made some mistakes  
in an adult and calculating manner of speaking.  
I'm even-tempered by nature.  
Office space two feet by four feet  
with the stapled carpet  
made from recycled styrofoam  
or something.  
Reading impassioned reddit posts  
about the heterosexuality  
of male masturbation dildos.  
Toss two cubes in the ice hose  
and try to see dead people.

One of the most profound friends  
I've ever had was a floor fan.

(17) Tyranny of the four-four.  
Meaning is negotiable.  
The doppelganger appeared  
only intermittently to me  
on a mild Sunday afternoon.  
Reminded me of a missed call  
I received  
five or so years ago.  
But I discarded the memory  
to the possibility  
of eating a self-salted french fry.  
The dude who stuffed the young corpse  
into his trunk  
lived in an upscale apartment complex  
and didn't resemble  
your typical pervert murderer.  
Eye contact is quantum computing.

(18) Four walls encapsulate  
horrendously repetitive phenomena  
right around decade anniversaries.  
At the Italian-American club  
I engaged in an emo conversation  
regarding geographical tendencies  
for no particular reason.  
Turquoise crystal covers  
the stab wound  
between the collarbones.  
Parts and wholes are necessary.  
Didn't need to inform myself  
it was slightly ill-advised.  
Gazing mindlessly  
at your own history a little aloof.  
Succumbing to nefarious literalism  
with friends.  
To be frank  
I couldn't comprehend

how anyone would come to  
think political opinions  
are anything but art.  
It never occurred to me  
that my passion  
could be misconstrued  
as sincerity.

(19) The deceased raccoon  
looked serene like  
it was sleeping  
on the side of one forty six.  
I saw Curtis texted  
there wasn't a cunt hair of a chance  
the Italian ass was authentic  
and I agreed.  
I thought about the raccoon corpse again.  
About the nonsensical nature of biology.  
About the big bottle of Soju I'd bought  
at the so-called discount liquor store  
which seemed to price items higher than MSRP.  
Thoughts may be physical phenomena  
that haunt us  
no different than poltergeist.  
I can't honestly say I always select my phrasing  
in the most careful of manners.  
Some names you shouldn't say.

(20) Discussing espressos  
blackout drunk with Emilio at Amedeo.  
Half pound of the pulled pork  
but only if it's completely unseasoned.  
Succulent (pause).  
Being the only car on Memorial  
brought on a somewhat nonsensical sense of foreboding.  
I felt an intense foreboding.  
Could it have been the Casamigos Blanco.  
This continual disrespect of the agave.  
An ad claims to unravel the meaning of agape.  
The Big Fat Greek Wedding franchise  
does nothing but perpetuate a generic sense of ethnicity  
that's as inane as it is counterproductive.  
Something especially ironic coming from the so-called  
Greek east.  
The relational essence par excellence.  
Nia Vardalos it should be noted is simply no  
Cappadocian.

This conception of essence is embarrassingly faux-Hellenic.

Back to Manuel at Manzikert.

(21) Half Greek vacuum cleaner in a mid-August malaise.  
Fortune read unsolicited at two pm on a Sunday  
smoking a ten dollar cigar  
drinking a vodka on the rocks.  
Half barbarian eleventh Constantines.  
Eleven Constantines is sufficient.  
Half Nikola Jokic.  
Typing the word “kindly” in emails.  
I was flummoxed at the amount of redskin on the redskin  
peanuts.  
Middle aged podcast host  
repeatedly using the phrase “sphincter clenching.”

(22) Ingest the special star shapes  
there's a club above an arcade.  
There's a seven am showing  
of an uneven Netflix anime.  
Two homosexuals dance  
sans irony  
and there's an album  
that will preferably be disavowed  
at a later date.  
A man my age  
is now dying a slow death.  
Incoherent epidermis.  
I used to hit the bottle hard too.  
Indeed I painted six hours at a time  
with the Sobieski by my side.  
Screwed and chopped Bjork.  
A sense of adolescence existed.  
Markos Vamvakaris  
wrote about the water pipes

and call girls of turn of the century Piraeus.  
Shirt unbuttoned all the way down  
with profound hiccups to drown  
out D'Andrea's dead body.  
But can we confirm the Puerto Rican girl  
behind the bar is aware.  
Does the butt wipe at the bar bathroom  
realize Ryan's died?  
I don't discriminate between organic entities  
and otherwise.  
Another man our age is dying.  
Second cousins we never see drop dead in Florida  
yet dude was always an asshole anyway.  
Ingest the special star shapes  
there's a club above an arcade.  
I used to paint six hours at a time  
with the Sobieski by my side.  
I found it enjoyable for the era.  
Cigar bar with Lams.

I'm well aware  
my charisma is unorthodox in character.

(23) I can no longer consume  
spaghetti alio  
yet I've gradually come to terms  
with this trying state of existence.  
Surgically inserting substances  
into the very essence of one's buttocks  
is a pure roll of the die in my humble opinion.  
Yet a female's sexual history  
is frankly none of our business.  
We tend to view the vagina  
as a tissue or a kleenex  
when it's essentially reflexive in character.  
Like a unique phrase  
or laconic collection of lexicon.  
That's more or less how I view  
the contemporary vagina at least.  
I was a little taken aback at the fact  
the wing spot only offered curly fries.

## Postmodern Novelists

.785 - .822 - .851 - .808 - .833 - .737

.761 - .738 - .718 - .709 - .810 - 741

.781 - .738 - .790 - .756 - .734 - .785

01 (.785) Approaching the automatic entrance of Fresh  
Shore's on Mineral Spring Avenue,  
hoping with all of my heart that their prepared foods were  
in the ballpark  
of what my mom generally discovers at Dave's  
Supermarket,  
I glanced across the street and saw the old building of  
Ken Wok Chinese Cuisine halfway torn down,  
and I took out my phone and made a brief note  
on the indefatigable impermanence that remains so  
pervasive all around us,  
as I do each time a building I felt some sort of  
nonsensical connection with

on Mineral Spring Avenue gets knocked down.

02 (.822) In any case, it was August first of this year that I felt as though

I was rapidly approaching the end of my so-called rope in an over decade-long plus dissipation process, the fact of the matter was my dissipation had extended its prime in a way that was at once mildly impressive, yet simultaneously severely depressing.

Perhaps with that being the case, it was on the night of August first, the second to last night of my thirty-fifth year, that I experienced a dream sequence where I was suspended in air above a desolate plain where a skyscraper-like tall building comprised solely of mirrors sat in the bright sunlight, where a portion of said top corner reflected said sunlight in a violent fashion,

and I found myself lifted to said section where a voice I  
identified with Gregory of Nazianzus  
spoke to me mellifluously of the futility of ephemeral  
things.

03 (.851) But perhaps we should pose a subsequent  
question:

while there are a litany of instances of novelists  
attempting to ape the stylistic idiosyncrasies of Homer's  
Odyssey,

while there's seemingly an endless line of English-  
speakers and Euro-adjacent folks

who've shamelessly aped the Athenian baboons of the  
Antique era without pause! -

are there any that we can think of that have mimicked the  
mannerist quirks of The Divine Eros?

Because it recently struck me in re-reading Symeon's  
central work

that in many ways it reads like an epic poem cum postmodern novel?

04 (.808) After all, it was none other than the notable postmodern novelist John Hawkes who said so sternly, 'I began to write fiction on the assumption that the true enemies of the novel were plot, character, setting, and theme.'  
And in this way the sprawling, politically-metered, spiraled verses of Symeon track the conceptual Hawkian novel to the Nth degree, or perhaps vice versa!  
Should we perhaps even pose the question:  
How acquainted was Hawkes' with the Byzantine monk in the era of said quote?  
We should perhaps note Hawkes was to an extent a disciple of Nabokov, who,

in addition to penning a few novels postmodernly  
prodding into the do's and don't's of seducing underage  
females,  
was raised in a Russian milieu still pre-Soviet,  
so to say an essentially Orthodox milieu.

05 (.833) The modern novel, which in our era is  
essentially the postmodern novel,  
because it seems serious modern novels no longer exist,  
only spurious commercial novels that perhaps ape old  
modern novels (poorly);  
no, today, to the extent the serious novel still exists  
outside of, say,  
thesis advisory boards,  
all serious novels are now essentially postmodern novels,  
and with that being the reality I suppose I'll refer to the  
postmodern novel as just the modern novel,  
as there are no modern novels anymore,  
just postmodern,

so the postmodern,  
for myself and my peers, is ipso facto the modern.  
The modern novel, to Hawkes' credit,  
no longer requires anything of narrative, of character, of  
setting, of theme;  
in fact, even indulging in such antiquated attributes is  
typically a sign of poor taste!  
For myself, when and if, which is hardly ever,  
I begin a novel with a fervent urge to tell me a story I'll  
place the item back down immediately,  
at least somewhat disgusted at its brazen narrative  
inclinations.

06 (.737) Symeon's Eros, on the other hand,  
while indulging in bombastic dialogues,  
while tearing itself apart in a perpetually appropriate  
fashion -  
perhaps the so-called refrain of Symeon's work is this  
very tearing apart,

is essentially a postmodern epic poem,  
which if we consider the many attempts to turn the epic  
poems of Homer into the modern novels of, say,  
Gogol or Joyce,  
then it almost goes without saying that Symeon's epic  
poem is already a postmodern novel in many ways,  
as the addiction to pure prose of the novel,  
the addiction to the non-metrical methods of placing  
words in conceptual order,  
is perhaps another lurid quirk of the novel that would be  
better off set to the side!

07 (.761) Of course the beauty of the Divine Eros,  
of the so-called kontakion form  
(of which both Symeon and Nazianzus are essentially  
book-ends to,  
if not entirely indulgent in)  
is that it mimics the metaphysics of these Byzantines,  
itself of course being a poem and an essay and a story!

The digressive hymns of the Divine Eros must be all  
three in simultaneity,  
verses and stories and essays,  
because if they're just verses or just essays or just stories

-

no, that simply won't work at all!  
To describe a select hymn as a verse,  
or as a story,  
or as an essay,  
instead of all three simultaneously,  
yet not as an amalgam but instead as an individual essay,  
an individual verse,  
an individual story in the same breath,  
to do that would almost be heretical in itself.

08 (.738) Whereas Descartes noted, 'I think therefore I  
am,'  
Athanasius said, 'Has the Father ever existed without His  
Son?'

The most important aspect of the Divine Eros,  
what makes them essentially novelistic in perhaps the  
postmodern sense of the word,  
is that they're at once essays and verses and stories  
individually,  
but they're non-amalgamous!  
The Eros is all of them at the same time,  
but also each one of them individually as well;  
whereas Descartes noted, 'I think therefore I am,'  
the kontakion is only an essay because it's a poem,  
but it's only a poem because it's a story,  
and so on and so on -

09 (.718) Hawkes said, 'I began to write fiction on the  
assumption that the true enemies of the novel were  
plot, character, setting, and theme,'  
while Athanasius said,  
'Has the Father ever existed without His Son?'

Is The Divine Eros of Symeon the New Theologian a  
postmodern epic poem  
and as such also the postmodern novel par excellence?  
Perhaps we should inquire further into this term  
'postmodern,' however,  
namely as to how exactly it's said to differ from the term  
'modern'?

One of the more modern notions of our era,  
in this instance I'm speaking of modern as non-  
postmodern,  
whereas previously (perhaps foolishly)  
I used modern as a synonym for postmodern,  
is this conception of The Big Bang,  
which has achieved jihad-like popularity in our era.  
Perhaps the most modern notion of all, if we're  
attempting to inquire about the modern-postmodern  
divide,  
is this notion, which has achieved a jihad-like belief  
system around it,

of the Big Bang.

10 (.709) Now, personally, I'm not exactly a proponent of this notion,  
primarily because it strikes me as idiotic,  
with all due respect to the scientists who developed it,  
it strikes me as an idea that's attempting to improve upon a previous notion (God),  
but in practice is taking the idiocy of said previous notion, blindly believing in God,  
and making it somehow more idiotic.  
There's an idea that there was nothing,  
then something occurred,  
and now things are occurring in an outward fashion at increasing speeds.  
There's an idea that our sensory faculties,  
which are unable to accurately officiate feelings at a bar after three beers,

are somehow capable of taking clues from billions of years ago

and somehow empirically postulating what occurred billions of years ago, trillions of miles away.

But this idea of the Big Bang is more in line with, say, Descartes, than, say, Athanasius.

It's an idea that's essentially antithetical to the idea that a father only achieves being through his son, that the father and son, while existing independently of one another, only achieve being because of one another, that without one another they, in many ways, cease to exist.

11 (.810) It's only been of late that I've found myself craving the classic cookies and cream flavor,

and it's been ice cream in particular that has struck my  
cravings acutely.

In our era, now I need more or less at least one night of  
indulging in ice cream per week.

Yet at the same time,

alongside this peculiar craving for cookies and cream,  
I've found myself bending to an equally acute urge to try  
something new,

hardly satisfied with this cookies and cream craving,  
despite the fact this cookies and cream craving more or  
less just came over me,

I often find myself saying things like,

'I don't know,

maybe that chocolate chip cookie dough is good?'

or, 'What if I had a milkshake?

I feel like, I don't know, maybe a milkshake would really  
hit the spot right now?'

Of course the only result of such prevarication,

of such mindless deviations is the indulgence in non-cookies and cream items and the inevitable remorse of the initial craving remaining unquenched!

12 (.741) There's an idea that there was nothing, then something occurred, and is still occurring; the postmodern novel, as well as Symeon's Divine Eros, do away with the first portion of this formula, disassociating themselves from this idea that there was nothing and also from the idea that then something occurred, instead restricting themselves to the is still occurring. For both Symeon and the postmodern novel something is still occurring, however, we're not quite as concerned with the idea that there was at one time nothing,

or with this idea that then something occurred.

13 (.781) If we were bold,  
and I'm feeling decently bold at the moment,  
having indulged in a long day,  
all of my days these days seem exceedingly long! -  
but also feeling as though all autobiography is absurdist  
fiction,  
we might say that while the modern novel says  
something adjacent to,  
'I think therefore I am,'  
the postmodern novel states something akin to,  
'He is the Father because he eternally has a Son through  
whom he affirms Himself as Father.'  
But this is perhaps even too speculative for our tastes;  
it's in all likelihood beyond the scope of this inquiry!

14 (.738) Yet of course this could be considered  
controversial,

as the median postmodernist ostensibly loves nothing  
more than flaunting his reckless atheism;  
what the postmodernist adores more than anything is to  
flaunt his atheism;  
if the postmodernist becomes peacock-like about  
anything  
it's without a doubt his fervent disbelief in God.  
Yet is it possible that a Byzantine monk penned the first  
truly monumental postmodern novel?  
It's an interesting query,  
although I have a feeling it would disgust Hawkes if not  
Nabokov,  
but most likely Nabokov as much as Hawkes.  
Nabokov, and I'm basing this on little to nothing,  
strikes me as someone who would be loath to be  
grouped together with Symeon the New Theologian.

15 (.790) In his fiftieth hymn Symeon sensually notes,

'she reached out to me like a breast, for me to suckle  
imperishable milk' -  
we should inquire into  
this note further,  
as perhaps curiously,  
our author even refers to the Father (or the Son)  
in this quote as αὐτή the feminine pronoun,  
hence the quote was rendered in English as She rather  
than He,  
yet another postmodern element to be found in the Eros,  
referring to the Father in the feminine conjunctive in the  
Eleventh Century!  
(Perhaps even the late Tenth!)  
So many of us to this day still blindly refer to the Father  
employing primarily the male conjunctive,  
yet I've never personally subscribed to this conjunctive  
conditioning myself,  
although I usually refrain from engaging in public  
statements regarding conjunctive matters.

16 (.756) Ultimately, both the postmodernists as well as Symeon the New Theologian recognize the for lack of a better phrase quantum character of our material existence; while the postmodernists, in many if not all cases, tend to either form or support various crusades due to this characteristic, Symeon did the opposite, instead rescinding completely and making no explicit political statement on the conjunctive character(s) of his world. (Yet of course there is the speculation that Symeon himself was of a conjunctive deviation, so to speak, unique to his milieu, that of the eunuch, although we don't know this for certain.) The world, its quantum character, was no call to reform to Symeon; no, it was a sign to rescind!

17 (.734) For my part, I certainly can't deny that my personal predilections fall closer to rescinding; not a week goes by that the thought of entering a monastery doesn't become at least momentarily appealing!

The monastery, to me,  
at times, seems like a second home,  
despite the fact, to the best of my knowledge,  
I've never stepped foot into a monastery of any sort.  
Yet where could I possibly belong more than a  
monastery,  
with few to no possessions and nothing pressing to do  
besides monitor my own fleeting thoughts,  
isn't the assessment of one's own waves of fleeting  
thought a full-time job in and of itself?  
How could we possibly have time for anything else,  
if we're attempting to maintain a modicum of honesty with  
ourselves?

18 (.785) Approaching the automatic entrance of Fresh  
Shore's on Mineral Spring Avenue,  
hoping with all of my heart that their prepared foods were  
in the ballpark  
of what my mom generally discovers at Dave's  
Supermarket,  
I glanced across the street and saw the old building of  
Ken Wok Chinese Cuisine halfway torn down,  
and I took out my phone and made a brief note  
on the indefatigable impermanence that remains so  
pervasive all around us,  
as I do each time a building I felt some sort of  
nonsensical connection with  
on Mineral Spring Avenue gets knocked down.