

English translation of selected poems of Sonia Balassanian from
“There Might Have Been an Insane Heart”
Published in New York, 1982

*There might have been
 An insane heart,
By the crude beauty of stones...
It might have uttered an echo that
 At the hour of mass
 Has slapped all the walls
 And all their eyes have cried
 A million eyes...*

*There might have been
 A crazy heart,
At the root of every tree...
There might have been a sky of fire*

* * *

*Half black, half white
Earth,
A handful of earth,
 It is all the same.
Filled with the emptiness,
To the towering jaws of rocks
 The road is nailed.
But the burnt memories' wings
A reckless soul is crucified.
An old roof
Ten children
Half black, half white
 It is all the same...*

* * *

*Penance... penance...
 Penance a thousand times
I have become a pagan of mind
Repenting unto you
 Mirth...
In the murky cradle of the mist
 I rock myself
The sun slowly is melting inside me
Licking my face,
 my body,
 my hands.
Let me stay un-named
 in my cradle
All the sadness in skies,
Are licking my face,
 my body,
 my hands.
All the sadness in skies...
 Penance... penance...*

* * *



*They force me laugh.
I have embraced the corpse of sun
 with my four eyes
 and boney mouth.
To shout?
 To laugh?
 To scream?
I nail the frames to the windows
 They gaze at me wide open...
In the shivering fist of the wind
 There is a commotion.
Commotion...
 Commotion...
 Commotion...
In the room an image
 walks slowly
 with earthen eyes.
The corpse is warm...*

* * *

*But I
Have hung from the sky
 Grotesque corpses of pain
And have buried in the white heart
The orphaned body of lamentation...*

*I have hung around my heart
A tattered evening
And on fingers of my arms
 A flickering song of lips...
On the branches of the sun
 Still swing
Yet un-haggard shrouds...*

* * *

*We are not harassed off the Earth as yet...
Our eyes are not blind insanes...
Our bottomless depth
In the ravines of the mountains has not been disrupted...
We are still humans*

*The world has become
 a sprinkler of gazes*

*Let me speak
 of martyrs,
 the wise,
 and the children
 of memories born in grief...*

*First 3 poems have been translated from Armenian by Arpiar Petrossian.
The remaining 3 have been translated by Edward Balassanian
Assisted by Arné Balassanian and Arpiar Petrossian*

English translation of selected poems of Sonia Balassanian from
“To Present Dreams of Emotion to the Noisy Rain”
Published in New York, 1991

To wring, to tear apart old memories
To leave home consciously,
To walk until dawn,
And with all one's being
 to permeate life's desires...
To present emotions filled with dreams
 to the noisy rain...
To open the first page,
To sow grains of wheat
 and await the blessings of earth.

To be fed with milk,
To become small, to become a child
To mix the smoke of the roof with the blue of the sky,
To watch the herd graze
To open the first page,
To listen the downpour of rain
 on the grains of wheat
 and turn the blessings of earth.

To thicken on the river bank
And huddles in the urn of emotions...

* * *

Swings the fist.
Pierces the air.
Feet sink in earth.
Ties spurring light of eyes
To missiles hanging from the planets,
Sits under the shade of stars,
Soaks his hands in the stardust,
Places his heart on the tip of the spear
And hurls it at the sun.

Hurls it at the sun
and darts towards infinity.

An earthen-lipped child
Learns to chew
 the first slice of the wheat-bread.

* * *

The Earth turns calmly
 around itself.
The Seconds expire.
Time doesn't stop to rest.
 It runs breathlessly...
The Earth turns slowly
My face is burning from fire
My body melts
Time runs breathlessly
Seconds giggle and escape
 like crazy children.
My face is aflame



The night does not come to visit
The night is chaotic and pale...
Time is running fast.

* * *

A beast is being slaughtered in the altar,
Birds have turned on their heads.
I have worn a black tunic.
The sky is born not to die,
We die.
My eye are fixed on the sky,
I am digging a pit
 where I and a beast
 will be buried.
I am wearing black.
On the planets live red insects
 chained together
The sound of the pagoda rushes around me.
I and a beast
 are being slaughtered.

* * *

I smite at the trunk of the tree.
It is quiet. It does not move.
I smite and smite.
It howls with the ferocious roar of a stalwart beast
Deep, coarse,
Deep, coarse.
Growls deeply...

Someone is cutting a tree
Deep, coarse, coarse.
I shout.
Tell me tree,
The post of my house's wall,
The green laughter of my garden,
Will you laugh in me? With me?

I am axing the foundation of the house.
 The foundation of my house.
Tell me, house. Are you my house?

Someone has hit the wall of my house with an ax.
Has cut the tree of my garden.
 Has stolen my fruit.
Tell me tree, the post of my house,
Will you be with me?