San Antonio Review •

Hagia Sophia

Aida Bode

Published on: Nov 14, 2021

License: [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC-BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

Photo by [Raimond Klavins](#) on [Unsplash](#)

You don't sing anymore
your bells don't ring on Sundays
and your icons don't chant
when the dawn returns from its

walk in the dark

Byzantium is but the shadow of a whisper
that holds your hollow ghost like the dead hold

their bones

your eyes are dry, for life has escaped
through cracks that were supposed

to show pilgrims parts of a heaven

that hoped to be yours

But suns set and moons rose,

so many of them that when people stopped counting

they thought it was an eternity

but you knew better,

the crescent holds no numbers,

no notes, no chimes

Yet, it peeled your name off of the surface of time

- letter by letter

I saw them drip

one by one

like grains of sand through the tight throat of an hourglass

and stood wondering, if you'll recognize it

when I sigh it to you

Instead, you shrink inside halos

Mary is childless

Christ is without a cross

Who will be saved now?

I dreamt my great grandfather

in front of your gates - weeping

his tears wet my eyes

his hands held my heart in his throat

and I heard the soil sob with souls

that wander through six hundred years

of unsang troparions

then, I thought of the time

when God so loved the world that he gave

his only son

Saint John couldn't imagine

what God would do if he had to give

his only daughter

Aida Bode is a Pushcart-nominated Albanian poet and writer, whose works have been published online and in print. Visit her [website](#) for her extensive publications.