

Dedication

In Memoriam: Peter Anton von Arnim

Sonnet to My Collaborator, Peter Anton von Arnim, and to My Mentor, Katharina Mommsen, by Martin Bidney

Introduction

***WEST-EAST DIVAN* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, translated by Martin Bidney**

**Moganni Nameh: Book of the Singer**

1. Twenty years I let pass by,...
2. Hegira
3. Blessing Pledges
4. Freethought
5. Talismans
6. Four Gifts of Grace
7. Confession
8. Elementsa
9. Create and Enliven
10. Phenomenon
11. Lovable
12. Rift
13. Past in Present
14. Song and Image
15. Audacity
16. Rough and Ready
17. The Living All
18. Blessed Longing
19. Height will reeds of cane fulfil,...

**Hafis Nameh: Book of Háfiz**

20. Spirit's like the bridegroom who...
21. Sobriquet
22. Accusation
23. Fetwa
24. The German Offers Thanks
25. Fetwa
26. Unbounded
27. Emulation
28. Measured rhythms charm us, after all;...
29. Open Secret
30. Hint

31. To Háfiz

**Ushk Nameh: Book of Love**

- 32. Tell me true...
- 33. Models
- 34. One More Couple
- 35. Primer
- 36. Yes, it was the glancing eye...
- 37. Warned
- 38. Immersed
- 39. Dubious
- 40. Dearest! Bound in printed band,...
- 41. Cold Comfort
- 42. Contented
- 43. Greeting
- 44. Submission
- 45. Unavoidable
- 46. Secret
- 47. Deep Secret

**Tekfir Nameh: Book of Observations**

- 48. Hear the advice that the lyre will sound!...
- 49. Five Things
- 50. Five Others
- 51. Lovable the maiden gaze that winks;...
- 52. In *Pend Námeḥ* there's a thought...
- 53. If near the smithy you happen to be,...
- 54. A stranger's greeting hold in high regard!
- 55. They have shamed you with your failings,...
- 56. Markets, charming us: "Come buy!"...
- 57. Faithful to honesty—...
- 58. Worry not what entry gate...
- 59. Where did I come from? I could never say;...
- 60. One thing after another, or...
- 61. Deal with women indulgently!...
- 62. Life is a joke that's fallen flat....
- 63. Our life is but a game of "Geese."...
- 64. "You claim the years have taken much away:..."
- 65. Find an expert—there's the test...
- 66. The generous are cheated,...
- 67. He that can command will praise...
- 68. To Shah Shuja and Those Like Him
- 69. Highest Favor
- 70. Firdusi speaks: "O world! how shameless and wicked are you!..."

71. Jalaloddin Rumi speaks: You'd linger in the world—it, dreamlike, flees...  
72. Zuleika speaks: In mirrors, beautiful am I....

### **Renj Nameh: Book of Anger**

73. "Where did you get it from?..."  
74. Not a rhymer can we find...  
75. If a person is cheerful, emits a glow,...  
76. True predominance, you'll feel,...  
77. Keep adhering to the good,...  
78. Things on names are never based....  
79. "Méjnun means—I cannot claim...."  
80. Have I ever counseled you...  
81. Wanderer's Peace of Mind  
82. Who would from the world demand...  
83. Self-praising? A mistake, we feel;...  
84. Think you then, from mouth to ear...  
85. Whether it's German, English, or...  
86. Formerly when the Qur'an was cited...  
87. The Prophet speaks  
88. Timur speaks

### **Hikmet Nameh: Book of Proverbs**

89. With talismans will I this book bestrew....  
90. From today and from tonight...  
91. People born in evil days...  
92. Why something is light...  
93. The sea is flowing ever,...  
94. Something, I fear, each hour is wrong....  
95. Your fate is proving you, wise plan at root....  
96. It's day—let man bestir himself, not shirk....  
97. Why rail at the world? It's made, it's there....  
98. When the heavy-laden wail:....  
99. "Clumsy, unwise—so high to set..."  
100. How splendid the heritage, never scant!...  
101. For love of good, good deeds to do—...  
102. Anvari claimed—a clever man, outstanding,...  
103. But why lament your foes?...  
104. No folly is harder to tolerate!...  
105. Were god a neighbor such as you...  
106. Admit it! Greatest and the best...  
107. Everyone wants to put on shows,...  
108. Pardon, Lord, our sin....  
109. If envy wants to rend its prey,...  
110. To keep your self-respect,...

111. The priestly orders dare berate,...
112. To praise and name a hero great...
113. Purely do good for love of good....
114. If you'd evade the most rapacious thief,...
115. How does it happen? Everywhere...
116. Don't let yourself be led astray
117. "Why does truth seem gone for good—..."
118. Should your mind to the question go...
119. When a spider once I killed,...
120. "The night is dark, with God is light."...
121. Colorful company!...
122. A stingy man you're calling me—...
123. Want me to show you all the land?...
124. Silent, you're free of care:...
125. Master, two servants—well...
126. You people, in perplexity...
127. Why am I thanking Allah? He...
128. I find it foolish, and quite odd,...
129. New in the world, a house he'll build....
130. Within my home I'll let the guest...
131. My home—I hope You like it, Lord—...
132. You're always safe, I'd say—...
133. "How startling, what a marvel-feat,..."
134. Splendidly the Orient...
135. "Why have you the *right* hand made..."
136. If one to Mecca were to ride...
137. Mud trampled long...
138. Don't, worthy souls, your fate bewail:...
139. "In writing thank-yous you're behind..."
140. You must work for good repute
141. The flood of passion storms in vain...
142. Confidant
143. It happens, but it none behooves:...
144. I'll tell you what I cannot stand:...

#### **Tímur Nameh: Book of Tímur**

145. Winter and Tímur
146. To Zuleika

#### **Suleika Nameh: Book of Zuleika**

147. I was thinking, in the night,...
148. Invitation
149. That a Joseph Zuleika delighted...
150. Now "Zuleika" is your name,...

151. Hátem: Thieves occasion doesn't make...
152. Zuleika: I, delighted in your love,...
153. The lover won't go wide astray...
154. Ah, can it be—caressing you, and full...
155. Suleika: Gold the ring my finger left...
156. Hátem: I'll decipher it, and clearly:...
157. Be acquainted with men's gazes:...
158. Ginkgo Biloba
159. Zuleika: You've so many lyrics made,...
160. Zuleika: The rising sun, a splendor shining!...
161. Come, darling, come! my cap needs winding well!...
162. There's little that I long for, now;...
163. Would I ever hesitate...
164. The prettily written,...
165. Love for love and hour for hour,...
166. Zuleika: People, vassal, conqueror—...
167. Hátem: Colored cut-glass lantern lights...
168. Hátem: Braids of hair, contain me, caught...
169. Allow your sweet, your ruby lips...
170. When from your love you're riven, rent...
171. Though it may feel itself complete—...
172. The senses are too multiple, I find!...
173. Though far away, you're yet so near!...
174. How to remain serene,...
175. When you're on my mind...
176. Book of Zuleika
177. What ample branching clusters...
178. Zuleika: Where the merry fountains stand...
179. Zuleika: Barely do I have you back,...
180. They say that Báhrangur invented rhyme;...
181. First and last, your lips and heart,...
182. Zuleika: What's the meaning of the stirring?...
183. A Sight on High
184. Echo
185. Zuleika: Oh how, West Wind, those rain-wet wings...
186. Reunited
187. Full-Moon Night
188. Code
189. Reflection
190. Zuleika: Innermost contentment: how,...
191. World-mirror leave to Alexander
192. The world entire is fine to look upon;...
193. You in a thousand forms yourself may hide,...

**Saki Nameh: Book of the Cupbearer**

194. Yes—I went to the tavern, too, and sat—...
195. Alone, just me...
196. Mulei, the thief, the skillful cheat,...
197. Is the Qur'an from eternity?...
198. Drunk is what all of us *ought* to be!...
199. All right—no more investigation!...
200. "So long as you're sober..."
201. Zuleika: Why in the world are you so—unkind?...
202. Well, if the body's a dismal jail,...
203. To the Waiter
204. To the Cupbearer
205. Cupbearer speaks...
206. Folks have, regarding drunkenness,...
207. You little rascal!...
208. Crack of dawn—already, we...
209. Those who chide me like to say...
210. What a condition! Sir, so late...
211. That vile trollop,...
212. Cupbearer: You have eaten well, I feel;...
213. Cupbearer: In the market, praises ring:...
214. Cupboy, come! Another cup!...
215. Think, sir, during drunken larks...
216. Summer Night
217. Deep the wisdom you have lent:...

### **Mathal Nameh: Book of Parables**

218. From sky to wilding sea the droplet sank...
219. Bulbul's night-notes through the shower...
220. Believing in Miracles
221. The pearl that away from the mussel ran,...
222. I look with a pleasurable surprise:...
223. An emperor had two chancellors,...
224. Said to the kettle the newer pot,...
225. All the people, big and small,...
226. From heav'n descending, Jesus brought...
227. It Is Good

### **Parsi Nameh: Book of the Parsi**

228. Legacy of Ancient Persian Faith
229. When a man the earth will treasure...

### **Chuld Nameh: Book of Paradise**

230. Foretaste

- 231. Authorized Men
- 232. Thus I filled you in on little things—...
- 233. Chosen Women
- 234. Admittance
- 235. Resonance
- 236. Your love, your kiss—delight me so!...
- 237. Again your counting finger I'm...
- 238. Favored Animals
- 239. Higher and Highest
- 240. Seven Sleepers
- 241. Good Night

### **Unpublished by Goethe**

- 242. Who knows himself and others well...
- 243. Háfiz, next to you to be—...
- 244. They've been attempting now for fifty years...
- 245. Can't I use what likeness I...
- 246. Sweetest child, a pearly row,...
- 247. Let me weep! embraced by night,...
- 248. Why won't he send...
- 249. No longer on silken leaf...

### **“NOTES AND ESSAYS FOR A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE *WEST-EAST DIVAN*” by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, translated by Martin Bidney and Anton von Arnim**

- 1. Introduction
- 2. Hebrews
- 3. Arabs
- 4. Transition
- 5. Ancient Persians
- 6. Governance
- 7. History
- 8. Muhammad
- 9. Caliphs
- 10. Preliminary Observation
- 11. Mahmud of Ghazna
- 12. Poet-Kings
- 13. Traditions
- 14. Firdusi
- 15. Anvari
- 16. Nizami
- 17. Jalaloddin Rumi
- 18. Saadi
- 19. Hafiz

20. Jami
21. Overview
22. General Observations
23. Broadest Observations
24. Newer and Newest
25. Doubts
26. Despotism
27. Objection
28. Addendum
29. Countereffect
30. Interpolation
31. Basic Elements of Oriental Poetry
32. Transition from Tropes to Similes
33. Admonition
34. Comparison
35. Taking Care
36. Poetical Genres
37. Natural Forms of Poetry
38. Addendum
39. Bibliomancy
40. Exchanging Flowers and Symbols
41. Code
42. A Future *Divan*
43. Studies in the Old Testament
44. Israel in the Desert
45. Further Assistance
46. Pilgrimages and Crusades
47. Marco Polo
48. John of Mandeville
49. Pietro della Valle
50. Apology
51. Olearius
52. Tavernier and Chardin
53. Later and Latest Travelers
54. Teachers: Forebears and Contemporaries
55. Von Diez
56. Von Hammer
57. Translations
58. Final Conclusion!
59. Revision
60. Silvestre de Sacy

**COMMENTARY POEMS FOR GOETHE'S *WEST-EAST DIVAN* by Martin Bidney**

Prologue to Commentary Poems



## **Moganni Nameh: Book of the Singer**

1. Plain and simple phrasing, yet...
2. Heavy learning-work I've done,...
3. Comment
4. Sura six, line ninety-eight;...
5.  
Reading a Facsimile of Goethe's Ornamented Handwriting  
Goethe Meets Muhammad: Comment on the Breath-Poem  
Breathing: Tennyson, Buddha, Goethe  
Breaths at Daybreak  
Metered Breathing  
To Goethe and Schiller: The Beauty of Breath  
Breathing Tree
6. In turban, sword, and tent and song...
7. The fire and the love and the poetry...
8. Four More Elements
9.  
Such words initiated all...  
More on Wine: Goethe's translation of Bakchylides, rendered with reply  
More on Adam as Clod and Clump: *Dam-Adam-Adom-Adamah*
10. "White is your hair, it's true,..."
11.  
Persian poppies crimson, clear,...
- More on the Turkish Tulip Plate
12. Venus and Mars were great...
13.  
I adore the story-trochee  
More on the Sun Ray: Goethe's Version of the Homeric Hymn "On the Birth of Apollo,"  
Rendered with Reply
14. See the stream becoming spheric:...
15. Sphering water in your palm?...  
Audacity Encapsulated
16.  
"Be Ready, Rough, Audacious, If You'd Poet Be"  
High-Spirited  
Rude and Courageous: Good-Humored Ovidian Dactyls for Goethe  
Away with Modesty!—"Translator-Greater"
17. I had never heard a song...
18.  
Mysticism and Goethe  
Thoughts on Goethe's Birthday  
Morpho Butterfly as Goethean Fire-Moth
19. Brother Wolf, no littler quill...

### **Háfis Nameh: Book of Háfiz**

20. Word and spirit here are wed...
21. Goethe's Image of Belief
22. Mejnun and Laila
23. To Our Mentor, Ebusu'ud
24.  
Free Alike of Theriac and Venom, or Two Rhymes, Two Companions  
Goethe's "Ihr könnt mir immer ungescheut" Rendered, with Reply
25. Art will ride a lightning steed,...
26. His name with morning-red will rhyme:...
- 27-28. Night and day and land and sea apart,...
29.  
Goethe  
More About Piety: Goethe Translation and Reply  
Still More on Piety: Goethe and Angelus Silesius
30. Transfiguration
31. More on Goethe's Háfiz

### **Ushk Nameh: Book of Love**

32. Talisman,...
33. Cleo and Antony:...
34. Wamik and Asra
- 35-36. Let me learn the style—...
37. See the slim Romantic maiden...
38. Hair
39. First, the helmet-wearer fencing;...
40. Art—alive, while we are dying;...
41. Every year my dream...
42. Every time we had a quarrel...
43. Holy Writ and Daily Life
44. Submission
45. Keeping Down Grief
46. With Aid from Blake
47. Brief Explanations

### **Tefkir Nameh: Book of Observations**

48. I think I detect an aesthetic, too:...
49. Five simple rules of true nobility...
50. High-fevered heat—what cure?...
51. Though master-veneration is to me...
52. There's a twofold teaching here...
53.  
A just ideal, and you summed up well...

Performing Bach's B Minor Mass: *Gelegenheit*, or Seize the Moment  
"There's Nothing Further You Need to Learn"

54. Three Goethe Themes: Blessing Pledge, Talisman, Friendly Greeting

55. Choose your master, choose your battle,...

56. Earthquake, wind, and fire preceded....

57. Bodily mindfulness:...

58. Counsel to the rulers who...

59. A Thought from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

60. Not to be false! Polonius:...

61. Don't worry if the rib is broken:...

62. Epitaphic Aphorisms

63. To liken life to games may be...

64. Love and Idea

65.

Expert

Imagination plays, envisioning von Diez,...

66. "Cromek loves artists as he loves his Meat...."

67. A sermon for the ruler and the ruled;...

68. Flattered is Goethe's duke: upon his banner...

69. The Persian lyric word-recurrence well may sound...

70.

My noble example is Goethe the bold....

Beggar Bliss, or Omnia Mea Mecum Porto

More Beggar Bliss: A Goethe Lyric Translated, with Reply

71-72. A thought from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

### **Renj Nameh: Book of Anger**

73. Hymn to the Day

74.

See the swiftness of the writing:...

Proctophantasticators, regal fleas,...

75. Prescription for Poets

76. In the year two thousand eight...

77. When you reach a certain age...

78. I mailed it to my publisher,...

79. Banished, on the desert sand...

80. Moon-controlled the ocean glows,...

81. How I loved the blues' release:...

82. World-time, mind-time coincide...

83. The sweetly layered ironies...

84. "What I Believe"—a series on...

85.

Five thousand years of poetry...

Putting Our Selfhood in the Sun

86. Newer faiths? But name not these...

87. Goethe's Version of Qur'an 22:15  
88. Goethe and Timur

### **Hikmet Nameh: Book of Proverbs**

89.  
While wanting not for tonic oracle,...  
Bibliomantic Plantings  
Reading the Turkish Poet Nazim Hekmet
90. Captive, the body wants to move;...  
91. Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon*  
92. Elder Brother Wolf
93.  
Final Act, Part Two  
Goethe and the Qur'an on Water
94. We are amazed at Nothingness...  
95. In part, acute. I'll take the test of fate....  
96. Goethe Rewrites John 9:4  
97. The casual amble is fun, is free;...  
98. Sad how often, wearied, blind,...  
99. Such is the loveliness of youth:...
100.  
Time Is My Wealth—and My Field to Plant  
Goethe's "Pindar" Rendered, with Reply
101. How lasting is the love instilled...  
102. Wisdom of Anvari: Qur'an 42:43  
103. Denial here: a pioneer...  
104. *Enthusiasm*: being filled with God....  
105. Walt Whitman used to wonder how...  
106. Fine satire by the smiling sage...  
107. Of "expert" and "experience"...  
108. Pipsqueaks are piping up, the poet groans:...  
109. The Gospel of St. John we heard before....  
110. "He has observed the Golden Rule..."  
111. What's cacodox to catechism...  
112. A man's approach to suffering...  
113. Do good—our children will not know...  
114. William Blake: "An answer to the parson"
115.  
The young who claim their elders' word...  
More on Boring Talk: Goethe's "Gesellschaft" *Quatrain* Rendered, with Reply
116. Tiring is dull, unwelcome chatter...  
117. Tricky to learn the truth in time!...  
118. Better a meal of herbs where love...  
119. "A dog starved at his Master's Gate..."  
120. We've sight in sun and in the dark...

121.  
 With Help from Saadi  
 Nepheliad symposiasts,...
122. “No maker he; we call him scholar.”...
123. Your poetry as roof had served;...
124. The bad ’twere wise to hide...
125. “Two cools...will spoil the soup.”...
126. Some people love the “tried and true,”...
127. We’re told by Freud we never die...
128. The image root of every word...
129. Your writings cannot be complete;...
130. Criticize, fine!—up to a point—...
131. I hear an archangelic sigh...
132.  
 An Allah-shaped similitude...
- More on Song: Goethe’s Anacreontic “To the Cicada” Rendered, with Reply
133. Luqmân
134. Russian Hispanist
135. “Right,” we’re told, means “Orient.”...
136. A donkey will the driven spirit be...
137. A metaphor we here may win...
138.  
 Untamed, the spite in rhymes like these,...
- Thoughts on a Goethean Quatrain-Proverb
139. Forgetting the formalities—...
140. On Goethe’s Persian Proverb
141. The passion-pearls upon the sand...
142. A brilliant little drama here:...
143. Of Truth, and Error, and their tricks...
144. A Backward Glance at “The Prophet Speaks”

### **Tímur Nameh: Book of Tímur**

145.  
 Tímur, Winter, and Nasreddin Hodja  
 I’m warning those who go to war:...
146. Tímur and Zuleika

### **Suleika Nameh: Book of Zuleika**

147. Turkish poem, fifteen hundreds,...
148. Amiable invitation!—...
149. Well, the bard’s a bit dizzy, romancing—...
150. Lonely children play the game....
151. When giving seems like thievery
152. Surely love is not, once known,...

153. Goethe would have us understand...  
154.  
The rose appears to me impossible...  
The Rose and the Nightingale?—Lilac and Choir  
Emerson on Háfiz and the Translator on “Hátem”  
155. Ring is rounded like the Being...  
156. It’s a clever little lyric...  
157. Quia Amore Languo  
158.  
In the banyan plant of Dacca...  
More on the Banyan  
159. The poet would a prophet be...  
160. The sun and moon and yin and yang...  
161. Winding a turban’s not a simple thing;...  
162.  
Who is the Muse? She nightly flies...  
Compressed within a measured span...  
163. William Blake’s “Riches” Revisited  
164. Throwing of balls, and the tossing of pearls—...  
165. Joseph shows, in the Qur’an,...  
166.  
Goethe on Lucifer and the Elohim  
Zuleika and Zusya  
167. It is fun to be a lover...  
168. Not *Quite* Lost in Translation  
169-170. The impulsivities of mood...  
171. Youth is renewing a loving man...  
172. The meters I’m attempting here tonight...  
173. He is so very like a child...  
174. I’m full of years, and company...  
175. Hadn’t dreamed that he,...  
176. He’s having trouble wrapping up the tale:...  
177. Goethe Rewrites Qur’an 19:23-26  
178. Neoteny  
179. It is well, if two compose,...  
180. Rhyme will metaphorphize the brighter bliss...  
181. “Man was made for Joy & Woe...”  
182. ’Tis a tonic for the tone...  
183. Theory of Clouds  
184. Beat unpredictable, the iamb-threaded sway...  
185. Zuleika West and East  
186.  
Don’t you feel when reading these...  
Rainbow: Shelley and Goethe  
Rainbow: Beethoven and Goethe  
Light awoke! The Dark, made shy...

187. Mirror  
188. Deciphering  
189. Uncannily as a dream...  
190. Were my life to lead again...  
191.  
In summary: acclaimed in awe,...  
More from Goethe on Alexander  
192. Spectacles and Hearing Aids  
193.  
Mevlana saw Shemseddin everywhere...  
“A Thousand Forms”

### **Saki Nameh: Book of the Cupbearer**

194. So casual, as fits the tavern talk...  
195. More casual than this it never gets....  
196. Háfiz on Solitary Drinking  
197. Is the Qur’an From Eternity?  
198. “Envirez-vous!” urged Baudelaire—...  
199. Wine Counsel  
200. The interchange of love and wine,...  
201. Admire the wondrous way that he...  
202. And that returns me to the theme...  
203. Eighteen-eleven—a vintage rare....  
204-205. Who’s the guardian of the heart...  
206. Challenge Accepted, Brother Wolf!  
207-208.  
Háfiz penned a longer story...  
Concretion—center of poetic teaching....  
209-210. Commentary you will find...  
211. Faith and hope and charity...  
212. Singing swan at point of death...  
213. Saadi in his *Gulistan*...  
214. Prophetic fire will never die....  
215. How I feel it! Ever since...  
216.  
In this Eden of the blest,...  
When We Two the All Admire: Goethe’s “Pythagoras” Rendered with Reply  
217.  
Grecian, too, the closing lines:...  
Faustian Epilogue to Goethe’s Concluding Cupbearer-Poem

### **Mathal Nameh: Book of Parables**

218. Pearl: a reward for piety....  
219. Nightingales, like human beings,...

220. The poet aims at a double goal:...

221. This pearl was once a water-drop...

222. Lesson of the Peacock Feather

223. The parable is followed by...

224. Aesop went Eastern, seems to me:...

225. The frailty of the spider's dream...

226.  
Noah and Moses, Jesus, Paul,...

Thoughts of a Local Taxi-Driver

227.  
"Within my arms you softly rest—..."

I'm hesitant, as I begin...

Goethe and Milton

Reading My Renderings of Goethe's Poems: A Fantasy  
Paradise

Letter on "Paradise": The Emerald Hermetic Table

It is Good, or The Blessings of Bach

### **Parsi Nameh: Book of the Parsi**

228.  
Neo-Zoroastrian Fire Veneration

I praise the higher and the driving might...

Goethe's German Translation of "Veni Creator Spiritus"

Another Look at Venerated Fire

Further Adoration of the Flaming light

229. I'm a Zoroaster-man,...

### **Chuld Nameh: Book of Paradise**

230. The Garden-argument so well pursued...

231-232. What could be more fun if you're a man?...

233. Goethe and Women

234. Peter, with a scripture scroll...

235. So witty are the tricks we're taught...

236. Supplement to the Houri-Theme

237. More on the Goethean Eternal Feminine: Tara

238. Two More Favored Animals

239.  
Higher  
Highest  
Hâtem in Heaven

240.  
It's a dream of patient waiting...

More on Sleep: Goethe's Version of Alexis' Riddle-Ode with Reply

Goethe's Lullaby



241.

So will Goethe guided be...

Unpublished by Goethe

242. Schumann Echo: Elegy in Bedouin Style

Epilogue

Bibliography and Abbreviations for the Introduction and *Notes and Essays* Including  
Sources Mentioned by Goethe