Tokonoma
Also by José Kozer at Shearsman Books

Anima

Tokonoma (bilingual edition)
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wo</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Concentration of Chang Hsu</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of Chu Hsi</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Concentration of Tu Fu</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of Wang Wei</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of Master Kuan Hsiu</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of Master Ning</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of Go Toba</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration (‘In the sky Sagittarius’)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration (‘He leans’)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation (‘The monk Noin’)</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation (‘Cowbell’)</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation (‘For a year now’)</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation (‘With the utmost care’)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation of Kiyowara Fukayabu</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemplation (‘During the worst snowfall’)</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemplation (‘The window. From the bed’)</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘Hsin, of the Shingon sect’)</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘Hui-neng, tegument’)</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘Hui-neng, sixth patriarch’)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘Noin contemplates’)</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘The rollcall of the Masters’)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘The arhat knows’)</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘Ducks/ come’)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘The entrance to the Temple’)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satori (‘Po Chu-I has set down’)</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Satori (‘Elegance of Fujiwara no Teika’) 91
Satori (Ryokan) 93
Satori (‘From/ the peg’) 96
Satori (‘The marigolds that adorned’) 100
Satori (Ma Non Troppo) 103
Satori (‘He imagined’) 108
Satori (‘He walked thinking’) 110
Satori (‘He adjusts his step’) 113
Satori (Overnight/ my pubic hair) 117
Satori (‘Under the hundred year old…’) 118
Satori (‘The/ monk’) 120

V.
Satori (‘The/ worm’) 125
Satori (‘I’m/ going/ to be born’) 126
Portrait of a seventy year old and an adolescent 130
The philosopher Mo Tse teaches: refuting me is like firing eggs at a rock.

You can use up all the eggs but the rock remains unharmed.

The philosopher Wo uses up all the eggs of the world against a rock and conquers it.

First, to make the rock memorable.

Second, because in the future, given its excess yellowness, whoever approaches the rock confuses the moon and horses.

And third, even more importantly: one verdict acts on another verdict, cancels the obsession of its words.
The Concentration of Chang Hsu

Taking off your shirt demands measure.

The act of defecation involves the respiratory system, concerns every detail of the organism.

Positioning yourself in a chair in the early hours of morning must be considered a transcendental moment, all too easily disturbed: it requires character (agility) all at once your concentration shifts from knees to groin, adjusting the body’s posture from waist upward.

Chang Hsu transmits to us other rules (more far more than a thousand have been counted): his words, registered for posterity (Chang Hsu surrounded by the Immortals of Wine laughed and called posterity posteriority) his words divide matter, and the skein of matter, into what makes sense and what does not: Chang
identifies good sense
with working in the fields,
the life of birds, the insects’
(comfortable, relaxed) way
of busying themselves:
modest creatures.
The absence of good sense
remains, obviously, for
those with two hands.

To correct the lack of good sense corresponds to the rules:
these can be reduced to two
or three laws that are one;
or you can study them
and put them into practice
over a long life, one
by one, day by
day, from the precise
proliferation of the thousand
and one rules aimed
at, smoothly, firmly,
sustaining and continuing
to sustain the guiding
thread of attention, a
tributary source
of happiness.

Chang Hsu is not a model of anything, emulated no one,
ever considered he should
be emulated. He got rid of
the calligrapher’s shirt,
revised his thought,
imperturbably took part
in the morning’s ablutions,
and sat on a hemp
mat, alone with
the Immortals of Wine:
house wine, fermented
(from rice) five
years in pewter
barrels: one day he’d
drink distilled wine,
the next clouded.

A lightning flash, he opens his eyes: the same rooster at
the same hour, some rats
stirring restless in the
straw.

Chang Hsu lets go, is empty. First ideogram (head shaven)
a blackish coloured tunic.
Second ideogram (his
head inclined) one
eye only. Second cup
of wine, Chang Hsu
now lighter (laughing,
all by himself, blurted
out to the members of
the Community of
Wine last night that
he didn’t drink myths,
only wine and water)
(water, he pointed out, that
other form of calm). Third
ideogram, the ideogram then
of water. Were these hours,
these days, flowcharts?
Leaning on the window sill
Chang looks at the flowerbed
of invasive chickweed,
notices its flowering,
considers he will have to
come closer to inspect
them thoroughly when
the sun goes down: the
most insignificant wildflower
requires a specific inflorescence, the
chickweed require the cusp
of an ideogram, two cups
(more) of rice wine,
to lighten tomorrow’s
body.
Concentration of Chu Hsi

Master Chu Hsi recommends taking seven words at random (from the dictionary?) (well, ok, yes, from the dictionary) to know the future.

(We are born? Yeah, sure. We die? Yeah, sure. And next what? What do you mean, next what?)

(Master Chu Hsi arms crossed, a fire, a few half cold embers, two sweet potatoes, burning dung, chu (candle) cheers: the cup of wine suddenly strikes the mat (six palms wide) (made from woven rattan).

(Acerola (not casserole, acerole) hayloft carpenter’s plane carabao sandalwood scarcely clog).

(Ah, Chance. Disciple Chu Shu-chen has studied his future for twenty five years, where it says carpenter’s plane a few shavings gather, carabao day by day inspires him to work.)
(Sandalwood smoke drives him mad for a month, lunar or solar he couldn’t say. The pair of clogs, still dirty from blackened earth, at the foot of the deathbed, belonged to Master Chu Hsi).

(Chu Shu-chen imagines he can know his Future in advance, or at least go beyond the hidden meaning of the word clog in less than three lustra. And then? Ah no, what do you mean and then?).

Scarcely transmitting to his seven disciples the idea that a word like the word scarcely can scarcely transmit the notion of Future: at sixty he recommends sitting in the open air holding present in mind the word scarcely as if it were a cliff that not being eternal must in its own due time crumble (ah in its own due time, exclaim the seven disciples in unison).
The Concentration of Tu Fu

Tu Mu told Tu Fu he was disoriented.

Here in the mountains there are no roads, we rely solely on a tree that likes mountains, clearings and forests (thickets) the species reproduces and modifies so that the only existing bird, in all its mutations (which are only the air’s business) should have a place to land, according to a law that has never been obeyed (the golden oriole was made to nest in willows, just as the wagtail should only sing lost in the thick tangle of the walnut tree).

Tu Mu doesn’t stop scratching his head while Tu Fu continues his ruminations.

Huashan, a sacred peak, with much effort the peak is accessible, what’s inaccessible usually is the sacred. Tu Fu explains to Tu Mu (who doesn’t stop scratching his head) that exertion leads
to disorientation.
Disorientation means reasoning,
means being at the temple’s entrance
and seeing cowsheds. Oh cowsheds and corner stores, weavers and grocers, spinning wheels and abacuses; proliferating flutes and bamboo cages with the bird that will bring joy to our mornings (like this, Tu Mu, no one will wake to the truth) unless we understand the meaning of the caged bird’s song, the bird foretelling the unstoppable chain of events, listen to it from dawn to dusk and cover its cage with a black taffeta hood.

Tu Mu understands (Oh, not for the first time) Unity encompasses the totality of numbers (for a moment he stops scratching his head) and names lock us in a cage: that as Tu Fu has aptly explained isn’t a matter of maples or almond trees in flower or finches and calandra larks but of the Tree
and the Bird where,
clearly, Tree is Bird, all
in the same bosom, an
undifferentiated abyss.

Tu Mu trembles all over when Tu Fu lands a slap
three times on his
cheeks (Tu Mu will
have raised his hands
to cover his head).

Tu Fu, after taking a few steps back, returns: places before
Tu Mu’s anxious nostrils
three red hot objects,
pristine objects: the
leaf of a weeping willow;
a feather fallen from a
heron as perhaps
terrified it flew away:
and the ideogram
shih. Tu Fu indicates to
Tu Mu that he should
concentrate all his
attention first on the
left side of the ideogram,
later there’ll be time to
speak of marriage,
ornate boxes with bridal
coins, the civil service
and its ranks, mushrooms
and woods, there will
be time to sit down at
the entrance to the
temple situated
(evidently) on the
right side (shih) of
the ideogram.