

Some Whiteheadian Reflections on the Resurrection: My Spring, Summer, and Autumn Greetings in Tanka and Responses of My American and European Friends in Memory of Nobuko Nobuhara

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Introduction:

My new Japanese book 『復活の省察 [上巻] ——妻と歌う：生くるとは深き淵より共に甦ること喜びてこそ』 *Reflections on the Resurrection, Vol. I, Singing with My Wife: To live is to be resurrected from the deep abyss joyfully together* (Niigata: Kokodo Shoten, 2014) has appeared on October 14, 2014. Prior to the publication of this book, in “My Spring Greetings in Tanka,” dated March 21, 2014, in memory of my wife Nobuko, I exchanged ideas about the theme of the “reflections on the resurrection” with some of my American and European friends and colleagues who are all Whiteheadian thinkers, including my mentor, Professor Dr. John B. Cobb, Jr., who is the Founder and Co-Director at The Center for Process Studies, and who teaches at Claremont School of Theology and at Claremont Graduate University.

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A word here may be in order in reference to the Whiteheadian background of my way of writing in the present article: poetic, narrative, and metaphysical.

To begin with, all of the above-mentioned friends and colleagues are dedicated to what is usually called process studies that began with the thought of Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947) since he taught at Harvard. One of his foremost successors was Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000) who taught at Chicago. It was at Chicago that my mentor, Cobb (1925~) studied with Hartshorne.

Although, in my case, I have written many essays and books on process thought in comparison with the Nishida School of Buddhist Philosophy in English⁽¹⁾ and Japanese,⁽²⁾ this article is unique in that it maintains a holistically Whiteheadian perspective: namely, it involves some poetic, narrative, and metaphysical reflections on many issues, including the resurrection which is the theme for me at present. As is well known, Whitehead as a process metaphysician esteems “a setting in order of a ferment already stirring in the mind” which he calls the stage of “romance.” Whitehead wrote:

Education must essentially be a setting in order of a ferment already stirring in the mind: you cannot educate mind in *vacuo*. In our conception of education we tend to confine it to the second stage of the cycle, namely, to the stage of precision. But we cannot so limit our task without misconceiving the whole problem. We are concerned alike with the ferment, with the acquirement of precision, and with the subsequent fruition.⁽³⁾

Limiting one's thought to a narrative or literal way of writing alone would tend to be rather shallow because in this mindset one is somehow obliged to be losing "a ferment already stirring in the mind" (romance), on the one hand, while, on the other, forgetting about how to think comprehensively in general perspective (metaphysics). In this article I begin by immersing in producing tanka poems in contact with what Whitehead calls one's "perishing *and* being immortal" (passing and smiling, in the case of Nobuko Nobuhara), and then I think deeply narratively by writing my greetings to friends and colleagues. Third, my poetic immersion in tanka and my greetings to friends and colleagues in dialogue will lead to a new metaphysical realization in tandem with Whitehead's thought.

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"My Summer Greetings on The Reality of Objectively Immortal Life," dated June 7, 2014, referred to some of the basic contents of the above-mentioned book, including a metaphysical reading of John 21.

"My Autumn Greetings in Tanka (I): On *amor mundi* and Process Philosophy," dated September 23, 2014, involved a further clarification of the theme that I tried to foster while preparing my public lecture on "*amor mundi* and Process Philosophy: Reflections on Whitehead's Adventure or Resurrection Metaphysics" to be delivered at the 36th Annual Convention of Japan Society for Process Studies, at Momoyama Gakuin University or St. Andrew's University in Osaka, October 11, 2014.

Further, "My Autumn Greetings in Tanka (II): On I Cor. 15: 58" is a meditation about the "death of death." I am profoundly grateful to Dr. Cobb and other Western friends and colleagues for their thoughtful responses and deep sympathies.

Appendix : "Nobuko Nobuhara's English Proverbs: God blessed the good

day” is attached.

I My Spring Greetings in Tanka in Memory of Nobuko Nobuhara: March 21, 2014

Dear Dr. Cobb, Friends, and Colleagues,

I am very sad but at the same time full of joy and gratitude to tell you that my wife Nobuko passed away on Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at 14: 25 at Niigata Prefectural Shibata Hospital due to suffocation resulting from her inability to swallow food.

In the morning of the day Nobuko said to me, “Toki, I am at the summit of happiness, joy, and gratitude to you.” I asked, “Why so?” She replied, “Because you do everything necessary for me.” Since Nobuko fell down from the ladder while preparing a fence against snow in the front yard of our residence on November 30, 2010 I took care of her diligently with all my attention and capabilities. She made a miraculous recovery from that fall, as you my might know, and is attested to in our Japanese book 『あなたにいちばん近い御方は誰ですか——妻と学ぶ「ラザロとイエスの物語」』 *Who Is The Nearest One to You?: Learning with My Wife How to Read The Lazarus' and Jesus' Story* (Tokyo: The Board of Publications/UCC, Japan, 2011).

Let me quote some of my tanka poems I created on March 11, 2014:

今一番

幸せやとぞ

笑みて言ふ

我妻逝けり

昼餉最中に

Ima ichiban

Shiawase ya to zo

Ernite iu

Waga tsuma yukeri

Hiruge sanaka ni

I am superbly

Happy and joyful now

So saying with smile

My wife passed away lo!

In the midst of lunch time

されど今
 笑みつ横たふ
 信子様
 天国其処に
 在るや誠ぞ
 Saredo ima
 Emitsu yokotau
 Nobuko-sama
 Tengoku soko ni
 Aru ya makoto zo
 However right now
 Lying smiling a deep smile
 Dear Nobuko-sama
 It's very sincerely true
 That the Kingdom of God is

After having the wake at our residence presided over by my nearest friend Rev. Keiyou Torigai from Kobe, which was attended by Nobuko's sister from Osaka, my colleagues from Keiwa who live in the vicinity, and some of our intimate neighbors, at midnight when alone I opened the cover of the coffin to find that Nobuko's face is smiling MORE than it had been earlier. I was really and joyfully amazed. Her mouth was rounded as if reciting a prayer. I was convinced that Nobuko was pleased about the evening ceremony for her and that she was aware of her ultimate destination, Abba, The Father.

I had in my hand a sheet of paper which Nobuko wrote in the morning of November 30, 2010 before her accident, the following: "With our aging we acknowledge that some day we will come to the end of our life. With this realization in mind I am in search of increasing memories of meeting with others in a way which Buddhism refers to as 'the only chance in one's life' (Jpn., *ichigo ichie*) in order that I might bring the increased memories with me after experiencing the burning of my coffin before our Heavenly Father." This was Nobuko's lifetime belief. She didn't want to live long for the sake of a long life. Rather, she wanted to bring with her her "life memories with other persons" into the presence of The Heavenly Father.

Nobuko and I, therefore, were able to cherish life memories of love, care,

and mutual assistance over the past three years and four months since the accident as well as from the time of our marriage on May 28, 1969. —These years included our stay at both Claremont and Keiwa.

Surrounded by more faculty members of Keiwa College, including President Dr. Muneharu Kitagaki, my elder brother Tatsushi Nobuhara and his family, and others, at the final moment of the funeral on March 13, I was amazed even more at seeing that the smile on her face had broadened even further. I was also especially amazed when I noticed that her right eye was slightly opened since the pupil of the eye was declared as already dilated when Nobuko was carried over to the ambulance on the morning of December 1, 2010. However, on February 2, 2011 she was able to recover the sight in her right eye miraculously at Shibata Hospital. I shouted then, “Nobuko, you see totally!”

我妻よ

偉大なり汝（なれ）

驚愕の

壁破りつつ

御神示しぬ

Waga tsuma yo

Idai nari nare

Kyogaku no

Kabe yaburitsutsu

Mikami shimeshinu

O you my wife

You are really great

While breaking

The wall of astonishment

You just testified to God

真とは

我ら遂にぞ

死にしまま

生くる世界を

啓きしぞげに

Makoto towa

Warera tsuini zo
 Shinishi mama
 Ikuru sekai wo
 Hirakishi zo geni
 The truth lies here:
 We finally come to
 Death while yet
 At the same time alive
 This life world is revealed

この真理
 ホ氏ぞ滅して
 不滅とぞ
 書きし理（ことわり）
 人生の極
 Kono shinri
 Ho-shi zo messhite
 Fumetsu to zo
 Kakishi kotowari
 Jinsei no kyoku
 It's this truth
 That Whitehead wrote well:
 When we perish
 We are yet immortal
 The pinnacle of life
 (See PR=Process and Reality=, 351, 82)

Friends, I thank you very much for your precious friendship, care, and love
 to Nobuko and me.

かくて我
 妻ともどもに
 新しき
 信を生くるや
 永遠接触
 Kakute ware

Tsuma tomodomo ni
 Atarashiki
 Shin wo ikuru ya
 Eien sesshoku
 Thus I
 Together with Nobuko
 Am living right now
 A new and profound faith
 In contact with Eternity

And, finally, one more tanka greetings for Nobuko:

さながらや
 摩訶迦葉のぞ
 拈華微笑
 浮かべて妻は
 御国入りたり
 Sanagara ya
 Makakasho no zo
 Nenge misho
 Ukabete tsuma wa
 Mikuni iritari
 Just in resemblance
 To Maha-ka-syapa's
 Enlightened smile
 Nobuko entered lo!
 The Kingdom of God finally

With best regards,
 Cordially,
 Toki

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II Responses and Gratitudes: Regarding My Spring Greetings in Tanka

1. From Professor Dr. Jeseoph Bracken (Xavier University): March 21, 2014

Dear Toki: Thanks for notifying me about your wife's passing to the Lord. You loved her deeply. I will offer Mass for her intention and yours this evening. Joe B.

2. My Gratitude: March 21, 2014

Dear Joe, Thanks a lot for your kind and encouraging words for her and me in the presence of our Lord. We gratefully accept your Mass. Toki

3. From Professor Dr. André Cloots (Katholieke Universiteit te Leuven):
March 21, 2014

Dear Toki, This is very sad news. Especially since we were full of hope that she would recover fully. I admire your positive and even enlightened way of coping with it. I wish you all the strength of the Lord. Cordially, André Cloots

4. My Gratitude: March 21, 2014

Dear André, Thanks a lot for your kind and encouraging words for her and me in the presence of our Lord. I really appreciate your friendly admiration. Toki

5. From Professor Dr. Bob Mesle (Graceland University): March 21, 2014

Dear Toki, I join with all your friends to express our deep sorrow at Nobuko's passing. Clearly you brought great joy into each other's life. Even in her dying, she reminds you of her love for you, and the happiness you shared together. We will carry you both in our hearts with love. Peace, Bob

6. My Gratitude: March 21, 2014

Dear Bob, Thank you very much for your kind and encouraging words sharing Nobuko's passing to the Lord joyfully. Nobuko changed her face in smile three times in her final times, thus manifesting the loving reality of our Lord. For that reason I thank for her dying in life and for her living in dying

with the Lord. Cordially, Toki

7. From Professor Dr. John B. Cobb, Jr. (Claremont School of Theology):
March 21, 2014

Dear Toki, thank you for letting us know of your loss. I had not taken in about the seriousness of her recent condition. I'm sure that indeed you cared for her well and that she died happy. How important that is! John

8. My Gratitude: March 22, 2014

Dear John, Thank you very much for your kind and encouraging words for Nobuko and me. She had been amazingly healthy through past three years and four months although she was declared to have only 6 % life expectancy at the time of surgery on December 1, 2010. However, this problem of swallowing is one, as you might know, which is potentially very crucial for patients with brain surgery. So I think Nobuko had been assisted every day by the Lord to live miraculously with me up until the day of March 11, 2014 when she passed into the Kingdom of God so suddenly within the hands of the Lord of Blessing. Nobuko herself has written clearly about this miraculous fact in the first article of her English Proverbs: "God blessed the GOOD DAY of self-reflection and self-dedication."

The GOOD DAY means the God-given Time. That is the Time during which we accumulate life memories of living together with others to bring finally with us into the realm of Abba Father even beyond the process of burning of the coffin, according to Nobuko's conviction (as manifested in her passage written on the morning of November 30, 2010 just before she fell down from the ladder).

The GOOD DAY covers the whole process during which "we perish *and* are immortal" (PR,⁽⁴⁾ 351, 82). Nobuko's life is a beautiful testimony to the DAY in smile growing even after death: first, smile at the stage of physical origination; second, smile with joy and gratitude anticipating passing into the Kingdom of God, and third, smile because of God-given recovery of her right eye which once experienced the dilated condition of its pupil (December 1, 2010). Actually, Nobuko miraculously recovered her right eye once on February 2, 2011 at Niigata Prefectural Shibata Hospital. For the second time, she was in the process of recovering the opening of her right eye even while

PASSING into the Kingdom of God. I believe that this miraculous opening of her right eye slightly is an element of what Whitehead refers to as the process of “AND are immortal.” Her smile after death or while dying is a symbol of/ or a testimony to this “AND.” Gratefully, Toki

9. From Professor Dr. Roland Faber (Claremont School of Theology):

March 22, 2014

Dear Toki, My deepest condolences for the loss of your precious wife. I don't know what to say, except send you a prayer from my tradition from my heart:

O Lord, O Thou Whose mercy hath encompassed all, Whose forgiveness is transcendent, Whose bounty is sublime, Whose pardon and generosity are all-embracing, and the lights of Whose forgiveness are diffused throughout the world! O Lord of Glory! I entreat Thee, fervently and tearfully, to cast upon Thy handmaiden who hath ascended unto Thee the glances of the eye of Thy mercy. Robe her in the mantle of Thy grace, bright with the ornaments of the celestial Paradise, and, sheltering her beneath the tree of Thy oneness, illumine her face with the lights of Thy mercy and compassion. Bestow upon her Thy forgiveness. Cause her to dwell in a blissful abode, heal her grief with the balm of Thy reunion, and, in accordance with Thy will, grant her admission to Thy holy Paradise. Let the angels of Thy loving-kindness descend successively upon her, and shelter her beneath Thy blessed Tree. Thou art, verily, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous, the All-Bountiful. ('Abdu' 1-Baha)

Sincerely,

Roland

10. My Gratitude: March 22, 2014

Dear Roland, Thank you so much for your kind and encouraging words especially because they are expressive of what happens at the entrance of the Kingdom of God which Whitehead designates as “AND” in the famous line “We perish *and* are immortal” (PR, 351, 82).

11. From Professor Dr. Jay McDaniel (Hendrix College): March 22, 2014

Dear Toki, I am thinking about you and Nobuko, trusting that she is blessed in the Lord's light and that your heart will be freed from loneliness by

that faith, in time. Peace to you and her. Jay

12. My Gratitude: March 22, 2014

Dear Jay, Thank you very much for your kind and encouraging words for Nobuko and me especially because you mention that trusting that she is blessed in the Lord's LIGHT will free my heart from loneliness. I believe that by saying so you might be referring to what happens after "We perish and" in the famous line "We perish and ARE IMMORTAL" (PR, 351, 82). We are immortal while blessed in the Lord's LIGHT, right? Gratefully, Toki

13. From Professor Dr. John Quiring (programs director, Center for Process Studies): March 22, 2014

Dear Toki, I have just read your email / and am sending prayers and tears / to you and for the life of Nobuko. / Her remarks to you are so moving and true. / Your tanka are very beautiful / in their directness and spirituality. / I appreciate the funeral details and photographs. / How difficult these last years must have been for Nobuko and you. / Best wishes as you go on with such wonderful memories. Love, John Q

14. My Gratitude: March 22, 2014

Dear John Q, Thank you very much for your kind and encouraging words especially because you kindly speak of our difficult experiences over these last years. / Actually, we both Nobuko and I have been just like two comedians. We laughed joyfully together every day, which is testified by our book *Who Is the Nearest One to You?: Learning Together with My Wife How to Read The Lazarus' and Jesus' Story*. I gratefully accept your prayers and your tears and your remarks about Nobuko's remarks to me. Thanks a lot for your comments on my tanka which are actually my hidden weapon by which I lived through all these last years and months and days and minutes and seconds joyfully and gratefully with Nobuko. What a blessing! Gratefully, Toki

15. From Professor Dr. Gene Reeves (academic advisor, Rissho Kosei Kai):
March 22, 2014

Dear Toki, I never met your Nobuko, but think she must have been a remarkable wife. Please accept my sympathy at her passing.

I will return to Tokyo in a couple of days, but right now I am in Chicago, looking out over Lake Michigan. It's a beautiful day, and the Lake is beautiful in its peace and calm. But this Lake and Chicago's people have just come through perhaps the worst winter on record. I feel that you might be a little like this Lake: you have come through a difficult winter in your life, but now you can be calm in the embrace of Nobuko's lasting love. But, as you know well from living in Niigata, that calm Lake is getting ready to burst forth with Spring. Soon there will be buds on the trees and ducks in the water. I hope you too will enjoy a great Spring. Sincerely, Gene

16. My Gratitude: March 23, 2014

Dear Gene, Yes, I can be calm in the embrace of Nobuko's lasting love which changes Lake of winter into a great Spring. Very much so!

And the truth of the matter is this, that I am Nobuko as she is resurrected to do what she might be doing, including three books on and with her: 1. *Reflections on the Resurrection: From My Earlier Writings to "Rehabilitation Step by Step"* ; 2. *Toward a Nembutsu Christianity: From a Recollection of the Original Landscape to "Blessing Now"* ; and 3. *Songs of Blessing: Nobuko Nobuhara's English Proverbs*. Gratefully,
Toki

17. From Professor Dr. Herman Greene (president, Center for Ecozoic Societies)

Toki, I have only now read of the passing of Nobuko. I am so glad you sent her picture, she is beautiful. I am so glad you sent her proverbs, they are beautiful too.⁽⁵⁾

I think you and Nobuko shared a great secret which is not a secret at all. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Glory be for Nobuko and for the love each of you shared with each other. This is eternal. Love, Herman

18. My Gratitude: March 23, 2014

Herman, What a splendid passage of blessing you presents us, Nobuko and me!
Thank you so much. / In the evening of December 5, 2010 at Sophia University you prayed for Nobuko and me. Thank you so much. / Now, you see this is the reward we've got from the Loving God (see Matt. 6: 6).

Especially the fact that Nobuko's face changed at the night of March 12, 2014 into a praying one in smile and further the fact that her right eye (whose pupil was declared as already dilated while being carried over into the ambulance on the morning of December 1, 2010 and which, however, was blessed by clearly recovering on February 2, 2011) was slightly opening into the vision of the Kingdom of God with a joyful expectation in mind, testifies to the loving reality of Abba Father before whom Nobuko wanted so eagerly to bring with her her memories of contacts and friendship with so many intimate persons, to begin with, with me regarding whom she said, "You are my first friend," even beyond the burning of her coffin.

In living through these last years with Nobuko since May 28, 1969 when we got married, and especially since November 30, 2010 when she fell down from the ladder in the front yard of our residence to say, "Toki, what happened? Your knees are full of blood, aren't they?" to which I immediately responded while carrying her, "Nobuko, this is your blood!" I observed the loving existence of our God. Gratefully, Toki

19. From Professor Dr. Herman Greene: March 24, 2014

Very beautiful, Toki. Herman

20. My Gratitude: March 24, 2014

Thanks, Herman. Toki

III My Summer Greetings in Tanka in Reference to the "Objectively Immortal": June 10, 2014

Dear Dr. Cobb, Friends, and Colleagues,

華やぎや

こと終りての

理（ことわり）ぞ

ホ氏これを言ふ

客体不死性

Hanayagi ya

Koto owarite no

Kotowari zo

Ho-shi kore o iu

Kyakutai fushisei
 Glorified, indeed,
 Is that which is accomplished
 Wonderfully so
 Whitehead testifies to it
 As objectively immortal

我らがぞ
 個体永生
 有るかとぞ
 心配せるも
 客体的に
 Warera ga zo
 Kotai eisei
 Aru ka to zo
 Shimpai serumo
 Kyakutaiteki ni
 We are so anxious
 About how to find individual
 Immortality
 But the truth of the matter
 Is given objectively

恩寵の
 メタフィジックスや
 宇宙満つ
 今妻実にも
 包まれたるよ
 Onchou no
 Metaphysics ya
 Uchuu mitsu
 Ima tsuma geni mo
 Tsutsumaretaru yo
 Grace is fully given
 Metaphysically

In the universe lo!
 My wife is embraced, indeed,
 By that here-now totally

I am presently concerned with the reality of immortal life, such as my wife Nobuko's. On February 13, 2014 at Hokuetsu Hospital Dr. Sofue, a superb brain specialist, asked her, "What would you like to do?" Immediately Nobuko responded by saying, "I want to produce a book and Toki, would you help me?" Nobuko passed away on March 11, 2014 while undergoing five phases of smiling within the coffin: the phase of physical passiveness, the phase of recollecting smile, the phase of discovering the risen Lord with astonishing smile, the phase of reciting the Name of the Lord in smile, and the phase of passing into the Kingdom of Heavenly Father Everlasting with her right eye slightly opened joyfully. I took pictures of her smiling face the night of March 12 by opening the cover of the coffin and continuously on March 13 during the funeral.

By doing so I have finished a book which I have been writing over the past 48 years since 1966 when I wrote a sermon entitled "Re-missio Peccatorum" on the text of John 21. My basic idea then was this : that the remission of sinners, including Peter, was actually the re-sending of them with the Lord who asked Peter, saying, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these [sc. Peter's boats and nets, things related to his old profession; in a word, all individual things in the universe]?" Peter responded by saying, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you" (v. 15). The book is entitled *Reflections on the Resurrection: Singing with My Wife—To live is to be resurrected from the deep abyss joyfully together*. Part one contains four meditations; part two: memories, though cited briefly in book one but developed fully in book two, of two hospitals: Niigata Prefectural Rheumatic Center (February 4 through June 13, 2011) and Toyoura Hospital (June 13 through October 5, 2011). Part three consists of singing with my wife Nobuko's English proverbs: 30 articles and Tokiyuki's collection of tanka poems "Life Shining in Smiles"—(i) memorial; (ii) contemplative tanka. Part four: concluding remarks.

One of the basic things I have found is that John 12: 4 ("Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.") is the way in which John's narrative theology appears. Today, we should

transmute John's narrative theology into a metaphysical theology in which the beach is that which mediates between and combines this world and the other world, heaven, which is the position of the risen Lord. Secondly, I also have found that if Peter loves the Lord "more than these" he loves Him as the all-embracing Love or the universe in its oneness .

John's narrative theology has to be transformed into a metaphysical theology which I perceive to be the meaning of Whitehead's thought inherent in the dictum "We perish *and* are immortal." (PR, 351, 82) This is related to my personal discovery that Nobuko smiled within the coffin on March 11 through 13, 2014 because the risen Lord was with her metaphysically not only narratively.

In terms of Logos theology we have two basic cases of understanding: one is my teacher Katsumi Takizawa's notion of the *Proto-factum* Immanuel which supports all things in the world; textually, Takizawa is based upon the expression "In the beginning was the Word." [John 1: 1, first line] However, this understanding covers the Logos as he undergirds worldly affairs fundamentally, but not the Logos as he is toward the Father. The latter case of the Logos's mode of existence inheres in the expression "and the Word was with God [*pros ton theon*, connoting 'toward God']" (John 1: 1, second line).

The problem of the resurrection of the Lord and of us cannot be fully understood, as far as I can see, if we do not adopt the second vision of the Logos metaphysically. But in what manner? I propose that beneath the ground of the *Proto-factum* Immanuel the Lord or the Logos faces and is "with" (*pros*, or *gegenüber* in German) the Heavenly Father in such a way that the immanent intra-Trinitarian Way or Place or Perichoresis provides the road through which the Lord or the Son prays to the Father. We too might go up to the Father through the Way of the Son with our life memories in mind as our final offerings to Him.

My wife Nobuko had a firm conviction that we should bring with us our life memories to the Father as our final offerings. This requirement was far more important to her than any other aim in life. For her her idea was something like a fundamental presupposition in logic; it is in the process of being fulfilled by the resurrection of her by the risen Lord. This I believe is why she smiled in the coffin so marvelously.

Now, I have done all necessary things to get our book published; the

publisher, Kokodo in Niigata who published three of my Ryokan books recently, came to our residence to finish editing with me. Since I am doing this business for Nobuko I have a mysterious but real feeling that I am Nobuko as she is objectively immortal. I have recently re-read Karl Barth's *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum* and re-confirmed that he shared Anselm's conviction of God's objective immortality in that God gave himself to him to know and he was able to know God. Barth writes:

On this foundation, comparable to no philosophical presuppositions and inconceivable for all systematic theology, he has come to know and has proved the Existence of God. For that reason his last word must be gratitude. Not satisfaction over a work that he has completed and that resounds to his own praise as its master, but gratitude for a work that has been done and of which he is in no sense the master. God gave himself as the object of his knowledge and God illumined him that he might know him as object. Apart from this event there is no proof of the existence, that is of the reality of God. But in the power of this event there is the proof which is worthy of gratitude. It is truth that has spoken and not man in search of faith. Man might not want faith. Man might remain always a fool. As we heard, it is of grace if he does not. But even he did, *sit e esse nolim credere* [even if I did not want to believe thine Existence], truth has spoken—in a way that cannot be ignored, refuted or forgotten and in such a way that man is forbidden and to that extent is unable not to recognize it. Just because it is the science of faith about faith, theology possesses light but is not the light of the theologian's faith.⁽⁶⁾

Further, I am reminded of Whitehead's text in conjunction with the truthfulness of Nobuko's life theology:

In this Supreme Adventure, the Reality which the Adventure transmutes into its Unity of Appearance, requires the real occasions of the advancing world each claiming its due share of attention. (AI,⁽⁷⁾ 295)

Nobuko too thought that her life memories have to be brought before the Heavenly Father. Furthermore, early in the morning of May 20, 2014 I heard

the voice from above saying, “I have resurrected Nobuko by myself.” There was no sound but I perceived the message without doubt.

This time I have learned that the resurrection is a metaphysical reality within which my wife, Nobuko, is embraced even as she passed into the Kingdom of Heaven. It is beyond and above a narrative story. And yet narrative theology, such as is embodied magnificently in the narrative theology of John 21, is the necessary basis for a metaphysical elucidation of the resurrection which Whitehead calls “the Adventure” in the above-quoted passage.

On May 28 I laid Nobuko’s ashes in the Nobuharas’ grave in Miki City in Hyogo Prefecture with my relatives and her relatives joining joyfully. She has had the inscription “Nobuko Nobuhara IXIA! [Jesus Xristos Immanuel Amen!—my Christian nembutsu] The grave is located in a Shingon Buddhist temple named Kongoji, but it is free from religious and sectarian bounds.

IV Responses and Gratitudes: Regarding My Summer Greetings in Tanka

1. From Professor Dr. Gene Reeves (academic advisor, Rissho Kosei Kai):
June 9, 2014

Dear Toki, Thank you for including me in your mailing.

I can’t explain it, but somehow it seems appropriate to me that Nobuko’s remains are resting in a Shingon temple cemetery, and, I presume, soon enough yours will lie there too. There is, I think, more than a bit of esoteric Buddhism in your Christianity.

Last week we finished this year’s International Lotus Sutra Seminar with a visit to Kawasaki Daishi, as you probably know, a major Shingon temple. Cheers, Gene

2. My Gratitude: June 9, 2014

Dear Gene, Thank you so much for your kind and encouraging words of understanding which are so precious for Nobuko and me.

In this Buddhist country our hope is to make Christian faith indigenous and incarnate—and this quietly and naturally.

More than a bit of esoteric Buddhism in my Christianity? Naturally so, I think.

This time I am very glad to have my insight into the Resurrection of the Lord and of Nobuko growing bit by bit.

You are making progress in your Buddhist studies which I admire. Gratefully, Toki

3. From Professor Dr. John B. Cobb, Jr. (Claremont School of Theology):
June 10, 2014

Dear Toki, Thank you for sharing this moving and amazing reflection. Your discovery that the facial expression of the body of the deceased can reflect the changing experiences of the resurrected person is wonderful. John

4. My Gratitude: June 10, 2014

Dear John, Thank you very much for your kind and encouraging words of understanding concerning Nobuko's smile which came to appear, even increasingly, in the presence of the risen Lord within the coffin. Gratefully, Toki

V My Autumn Greetings in Tanka (I): On *amor mundi* and Process Philosophy: September 23, 2014

Dear Dr. Cobb, Friends, and Colleagues,

人如何に

悲惨なるとも

裏からぞ

神共にます

見れば微笑ぞ

Hito ikani

Hisan naru tomo

Ura kara zo

Kami tomo ni masu

Mireba bishou zo

However miserable

Humans might be in their lives

If seen from the back

That God is really with them

Smile comes out in their faces

I am presently about to finish writing a lecture on “*amor mundi* and Process Philosophy: Reflections on Whitehead’s or Resurrection Metaphysics” to be delivered at the 36th Annual Convention of Japan Society for Process Studies, at Momoyama Gakuin University or St. Andrew’s University in Osaka, October 11, 2014. Beginning with a tanka: hito ikani / hisan naru tomo / urakara zo / Kami tomo ni masu / mireba bishou zo (However miserable / humans might be in their lives / if seen from the back / that God is really with them / smile comes out in their faces), I will pursue the theme “how one can be geared toward love for the world despite miseries in one’s life.” This theme is a continuation of my grasp of the matter of the Resurrection as inherent in life which I articulated in the following tanka appearing in the subtitle of the book, *Reflections on the Resurrection*, namely, *To live is to be resurrected from the deep abyss joyfully together*. In pursuit of the theme I have four specific ideas: 1. From the back; 2. God is really with us; 3. Seeing; and 4. Smile coming out, are four conditions for love for the world.

Then, in four sections I will deal first with Hannah Arendt’s *The Human Condition* in which she describes a life-long critical dialogue with Martin Heidegger in reference to what lies at the back of human existence which Heidegger designates as the “*in-der-Welt-sein*.” Second, Katsumi Takizawa’s idea of an inseparable, non-identical, and irreversible relationship between God and humans will be critically re-considered: what he calls the *Proto-factum* Immanuel is at the center of my concern. Third, following the third stage will be a discussion of Whitehead’s metaphysics of Adventure or the Resurrection in dialogue with Hans Jonas’s *Das Prinzip Leben*: here the idea of “seeing from the back” is pursued deeper than in the previous stage. And, fourth, I will challenge to explore the question as to how the narrative theology of John 21 could be re-interpreted into a metaphysical theology in terms of the “Resurrection”-motif: if I am really successful in this exploration I will find a metaphysical rationale for Nobuko’s smile.

What is pivotal in these fourfold metaphysical exploration of the Adventure or the Resurrection is the denial of the Unmoved Mover which is hidden in Heidegger’s philosophy of Sein’s Geschichte and also in Takizawa’s Pure The-anthropology as the source of change lying outside the universe or the world. In the case of later Heidegger, Being—Language relationship is not mediated by any intermediate actualities and is overshadowed by the act of

interpretation of the philosopher, namely, Heidegger himself. Arendt critiques this idea as the moment leading to Heidegger's companionship with the Nazis due to his uncritical judgment about world affairs. In Takizawa's case, he thinks that his new idea of "Pure The-anthropology," is free from our usual schizophrenic concern about theology as loftier than anthropology and vice versa. Since it is the "Pure" The-anthropology, Takizawa thinks it important to recognize the God—Expression relation as the basic human *Bestimmung*, which does not allow particular-historical elements to come in and decide. Also, Takizawa thinks that the deep depth or the *Proto-factum* Immanuel of human existence is the sacred limitation beyond which no one can go down deeper. In this sense, the deep depth has a resemblance with the Aristotelian Unmoved Mover: it is unsurpassable as the firm basis for everything in the world while giving rise to the change of all things.

For Whitehead, however, the change or transmutation of "the Reality by the Adventure into its Unity of Appearance" is pivotal in requiring the real occasions of the advancing world each claiming its due share of attention (AI, 295). We can acknowledge here Augustine's reference to the descending Agape as combined with the ascending Platonic Eros or Charitas in Augustine's case. If our human life memories can ascend with the salvific help of the Risen Lord in order to be offered into the bosom of the Heavenly Father, our resurrection can take place. Whitehead's final metaphysical realization is free to accept this vision in terms of his idea of the "reciprocal relation" by virtue of which what is done in the world is transformed into the reality in heaven and the reality in heaven passes back into the world (PR, 351).

In terms of the Logos Theology appearing in the beginning of John's Gospel, the "reciprocal relation" is approachable by reason of the combination of the "Logos who was in the beginning" (John 1: 1, first line) and the "Logos who was with God [*pros ton theon*]" (John 1: 1, second line): the latter Logos is metaphysically deeper than and is inclusive of the former Logos. Incidentally, Takizawa refers to the idea of the "Logos in the beginning," but not to the "Logos with God," in terms of the *Proto-factum* Immanuel. Presumably, it is for this reason that Takizawa adheres to the idea of the "deep depth" which negates our deeper approach. However, the truth of the matter is that at the deeper ground of the "deep depth" the "Logos with God" is awaiting us to descend even after we have perished. Further, the "Logos with God" ascends

paradoxically with those who have passed away by reason of the paradoxical principle: that is to say, as you go down deeper and deeper you ascend higher and higher.

We know that the “reciprocal relation” is designated by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin as the “Center of the Universe” which is actually “Christ” (see *The Future of Man*, New York: Harper & Row, 1964, p. 324; esp. The two articles of my Credo: The Universe is centered —Evolutively {Above and Ahead; Christ is its Centre {The Christian Phenomenon: Noogenesis = Christogenesis (= Paul).) John 21: 4 describes the “reciprocal relation” between the perishable world and the immortal heaven in the following narrative manner: “Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.” We must re-interpret and transform the narrative theology of John 21 into the language of a metaphysical theology such as Whitehead’s vision of reality in which “We perish *and* are immortal” (PR, 351, 82).

The vision of the Adventure or the Resurrection Metaphysics has some relevance to the idea of a university. John Henry Newman’s idea of a university is overshadowed by religious sovereignty, which is radically different from Jacques Derrida’s idea of the “university without condition.” How can we discern the compatibility between the two? Probably we have to ask Whitehead’s aims of education to come in to coordinate and say that religious sovereignty is supportable at the level of “romance” whereas in the case of Derrida’s idea of the “university’s profession without condition” the rhythm of “generalization” might be proper. Then, what about the precision-process? In this regard, we have to re-learn appropriately from the interreligious dialogue, especially Buddhist-Christian dialogue, which has been flourishing during the latter half of the 20th and the 21st centuries. Cordially, Toki

VI Response and Gratitude

1. From Professor Dr. John B. Cobb, Jr. (Claremont School of Theology):
September 25, 2014

Dear Toki, I am moved and enlightened by the depth of your theological reflection. John

2. Gratitude: September 25, 2014

Dear John, Thank you so much for your kind and encouraging words,

which are so precious to me. Cordially, Toki

VII My Autumn Greetings in Tanka (II): On I Cor. 15: 58: November 9, 2014

Dear Dr. Cobb, Friends, and Colleagues,

Please allow me to extend to you my Autumn Greetings in Tanka joyfully:

驚きぬ

死の死そも是

何あらん

主に在りてはぞ

永久に無駄なし

Odorokinu

Shi no shi somo kore

Nani aran

Shu ni arite wa zo

Towa ni muda nashi

A big surprise!

To know death is to know it

As the death of death

Which means that in Lord your labor

Is not in vain for ever

I Cor. 15: 58: “*ho kopos humoon ouk estin kenos en kurioo.*”

It is important to note that in the original Greek text there is no definite article, ‘the’ [in quotes], placed before Lord like in the case of NRSV; “In the Lord your labor is not in vain.” Why so? Because “*en Kurioo*” is equal to the expression “in Risen Christ.”

I am moved to find that in the early church “in Lord” is used in the same sense as “in Christ” while, however, appearing in the context of Easter. Cf. “*Kurios Iesous Xristos*” in Phil. 2: 11.

But here in I Cor. 15: 58, Paul refers to the case of an objective immortality of Risen Christ, Lord, in the midst of the Christian community, I might say. How profound!

I have discovered this truth due to my attention to the case of my wife

Nobuko's book co-authored by me: *Reflections on the Resurrection: Singing with My Wife. To live is to be resurrected from the deep abyss joyfully together* (Niigata: Kokodo Shoten, 2014). It's selling now. God be with you! Cordially, Toki

VIII From Professor Dr. John B. Cobb, Jr. (Claremont School of Theology): November 9, 2014

1. Thanks. When I co-authored a book on *Romans* with David Lull, I discovered how strongly Paul emphasized what philosophically we call then "internal relatedness" of the believer and Christ. Your poem expresses that beautifully. John

IX Gratitude: November 9, 2014

Dear John, And the "internal relatedness" surpasses death, thus adventurously leading to the unity of the universe which Whitehead calls "its Unity of Appearance" (AI, 295), I might say. Thanks a lot for your kind and encouraging words. Cordially, Toki

Concluding Remarks:

I have learned over these last severe but, nonetheless, enjoyable and joyful years with Nobuko that tanka is the way in which my immersion in them will create a new mind in me to think deeper, taste life anew, and be convinced that this life is just the gateway toward life everlasting. In my case, this tanka learning goes hand in hand with my deep love and appreciation for my wife Nobuko who showed a superb smile increasing with our Risen Lord while passing into the Kingdom of Heavenly Father.

I am convinced that without this learning there would be no proper way of dealing with this world's acute ethical issues, such as "The Right to Kill," "The Right to Die," "The Right to Live," and "The Right to Love" on which my mentor Dr. Cobb delivers a profound meditation and a clear-cut articulation in his marvelous book, *Matters of Life and Death*.⁽⁸⁾ My deepest thanks go to him and to my intimate friends, who wrote this time thoughtful sympathies for Nobuko and me, including Joseph Bracken, Andre Cloots, Roland Faber, Herman Greene, Jay McDaniel, Bob Mesle, John Quiring, and Gene Reeves.

(November 24, 2014: for *Bulletin of Keiwa College*, No. 24, February 28, 2015)

NOTES:

I am indebted to Professor Allan Blonde for his critical comments and useful suggestions while I have been going through a revision to produce the present article.

- (1) For instance, “Principles for Interpreting Christ/Buddha: Katsumi Takizawa and John B. Cobb, Jr.,” *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, Vol. 3, 1983, 63-97; “Reflections on God Who Is ‘With’ All Creation: Phases of Mysticism in D. T. Suzuki’s Zen Thought and Whitehead’s Metaphysics,” *Process Studies*, 34/2, Fall-Winter 2005, 240-263; “A Whiteheadian Reinterpretation of Nishida’s Philosophy of Pure Experience: With the Concept of Symbolic Reference as Guide,” in: Franz Riffert, ed., *Perception Reconsidered: The Process Point of View* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2007), 75-98; and “God and Nature in Metamorphosis: From Martin Luther through Cobb, Takizawa, and Nishida to Whitehead,” *Bulletin of Keiwa College*, No. 22, February 28, 2013, 43-63.
- (2) 『仏教的キリスト教の真理——信心決定の新時代に向けて』 *The Truth of Buddhist Christianity* (Kyoto: Kohro Sha, 1987); 『ホワイトヘッドと西田哲学の〈あいだ〉——仏教的キリスト教の構想』 *Between Whitehead Nishida-tetsugaku: The Idea of a Buddhist-Christian Philosophy* (Kyoto: Hozokan, 2001); and 『対話論神学の地平——私の巡礼のなかから』 *The Horizon of Dialogical Theology: From My Pilgrimages* (Yokohama: Shumpu Sha, 2006).
- (3) Alfred North Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 18.
- (4) Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality, Corrected Edition*, Ed., David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: The Free Press, 1978).
- (5) See Appendix: “Nobuko Nobuhara’s English Proverbs: God blessed the good day.”
- (6) Karl Barth, *Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum. Anselm’s Proof of the Existence of God in the Context of his Theological Scheme* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1960), pp. 170-171.
- (7) Alfred North Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: The Free Press, 1967).
- (8) John B. Cobb, Jr., *Matters of Life and Death* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991). I have published a Japanese translation of the book with the help of Nobuko as: 『生きる権利死ぬ権利』 *Ikiru Kenri Shinu Kenri* (Tokyo: The Board of Publications, UCC, Japan, 2000).

Appendix: Nobuko Nobuhara’s English Proverbs: God Blessed the Good Day (March 9 through September 10, 2011)

I . Blessing:

1. God blessed the good day of self-reflection and self-dedication. (March 9, 2011)
2. I am not a philosopher; but I know the philosophical world. (March 29, 2011)
3. This paradox is at the core of Christianity. (April 6, 2011)
4. Let me say a new word. To say a new world is to put chaos in order. (April 9, 2011)
5. My mind is always at peace, O God, thanks to your great encouragement, help, and thoughtfulness. (April 11, 2011)

6. Nobody can touch me because I am blessed. (April 13, 2011)
7. I am living in the secular world. And yet I am blessed by the sacred world. Is this strange? No, not at all. It is quite normal in Japan because Japanese society is very much influenced by the Buddhist wisdom: samsara is nirvana. (April 19, 2011)
8. (Your seven English proverbs are a great work.) I thank you very much for your evaluation. (Spiritually, you are a beautiful lady.) Sure. (May 1, 2011)

II. The Kingdom of God:

9. Hurry up in seeking the kingdom of God and you will be fed and saved. (May 5, 2011)
10. Let's have a ceasefire; and thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior. (May 6, 2011)
11. What I have been experiencing is a great process of recovery that has been moving forward little by little day by day. (May 10, 2011)
12. Blessed are those who are shining while serving people sincerely on the corner of a table. (May 15, 2011)
13. O God, I simply grasped back your hand to my great heart-warming joyfulness. (May 19, 2011)

III. Prayer:

14. Where is my weapon for life to be found? Only in praying to my God, indeed! (May 24, 2011)
15. Purifying my heart by praying is very much like cleansing water. (May 24, 2011)
16. Your escape form prayer is your escape from liberation. (May 24, 2011)
17. O God, help me. Allow me to become healthy again, please. (May 29, 2011)
18. You are invited to serve each other, but not to be served. (May 31, 2011)

IV. Salvation:

19. I want to be saved; but I don't want to be saved alone. (June 4, 2011)
20. I would like to see the world growing beautifully, (June 4, 2011)
21. Let us say aloud with a fanfare new English proverbs every new year joyfully and together. (June 4, 2011)
22. People can sometimes be saved with only one dollar or just one telephone call. (June 4, 2011)
23. You have to put into practice what the Bible says. (June 16, 2011)

V. Life and Integrity:

24. The happiest moment in our married life is in the vesper of each day when we pray together tremendously relaxed into peace and consolation. (June 22, 2011)
 25. Do not leave me alone in such a way that I forget about the aloneness with Christ. (June 26, 2011)
 26. I too need to save my own face by writing thank you letters to God and so many kind friends. (Our new book is a big thank you letter, isn't it?) Certainly. (July 7, 2011)
 27. Let us pray, O God, for a young fellow-patient who often screams in agony after a deep sigh with his aged mother standing beside him. (July 16, 2011)
 28. If you do not say how your suffering is painful, nobody can tell how it is so. If you do not say how your suffering is eased, nobody can tell how it is so. (July 28, 2011)
 29. My words of inspiration are far better than my words of criticism. (September 10, 2011)
 30. My words of criticism are in need of self-reflection after they are spoken. (September 10, 2011)
- Began March 9, 2011 and accomplished September 10, 2011.