



It is with great pleasure that I extend my best wishes to my friend Koichi Shinohara on the occasion of his 80th birthday. His colleagues and friends are here today to extend their friendship to him. I first met Koichi and Phyllis in person in November 2000 at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, at the international conference "On the cusp of an era: Art in the Pre-Kushan World." Since then, I have enjoyed the warmth of their friendship. A major breakthrough in my life was the year I spent at Yale University from September 1, 2009 to June 1, 2010 as a visiting professor. I am very grateful to Phyllis and Koichi who in many ways helped me to understand the enigmatic issues of Buddhism and Hinduism in India. They stimulated my curiosity about many hidden aspects of Indian art. During that academic year, I enjoyed their hospitality. I felt this humanity deeply when I became very ill towards the end of my stay at Yale. I had to undergo a painful operation and stayed in the hospital for ten days. Phyllis and Koichi never left me. That warmth has been with me all my life. Then, I met Phyllis and Koichi several times at Yale and Berkeley.



The most memorable experience was our visits to Sri Lanka and Java with Bob and Elizabeth Sharf. Their knowledge of Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism and their critical approach to visual art based on Sanskrit, Pali, and Chinese texts were inspiring. It is a blessing to be able to benefit from their immense knowledge and generosity.



Osmund (Bopearachchi)