

For Phyllis

Phyllis and Koichi have made a deep and everlasting imprint on our lives, both academically and personally. We first met in Paris during a series of Phyllis's conferences on religious images, some twenty years ago. As social and cultural anthropologists we tend to approach religious studies from a different vantage point: while acknowledging the historical and possible textual roots of rituals and interactions we observe, we focus on actual practice and current narratives in today's context. The initial exchange we had with Phyllis was the beginning of a rich and continuous dialogue throughout the years, introducing us to a wide array of questions and works we were not familiar with. We recall particularly the numerous conferences Phyllis convened at Yale and in Canada, which were extraordinary occasions of meeting with scholars working on Indian, Tibetan, Chinese and Japanese traditions, as well as the two semesters we spent at Yale at the invitation of Phyllis, during which we enjoyed the exceptional friendship of Phyllis and Koichi, their fondness and generosity, and their constant intellectual stimulus.

These sojourns at Yale had a tremendous (positive) change on our family life. We were there during the fall semesters of 2007 and 2008, and our young son, Laurent, went to a nursery school where he was immersed in English, so much so that, after returning to France, whenever he was playing he would talk in English. He continued with his bilingual education during his school years at Paris, and has just now started to prepare a B.Sc. at McGill ... an outcome of Phyllis's invitations to Yale!

So, a big big hearty thanks to Phyllis and Koichi for their scientific encouragements and openings, and for their sustaining love and friendship which contributed to shape us into what we are.

Gilles Tarabout, CNRS (emeritus), France

Daniela Berti, CNRS, France

And Laurent !