



## Representatives Remarks



### Jonathan Gold

Director of the Center for the Study  
of Religion,  
Princeton University

Thank you. I join my colleague Buzzy Teiser in extending our deepest thanks to Tzu Chi and the organizers of the Yin-Cheng Distinguished Lecture Series. We at Princeton University are honored to be a part of this exciting and important collaboration. I'll say just a few words about our plans for the lecture at Princeton.

Many scholars in the west today recognize that their fields of research have been limited and hampered by historic biases, especially those of race, ethnicity, gender and nationality. More than ever before, scholars are looking for ways of understanding that had previously been sidelined or belittled. Consequently, Philosophers who only recently would have ignored anything composed outside Europe or North America are now quite willing to take Buddhist ideas seriously.

A significant obstacle remains, however, which is the difficulty of translating Buddhist thought into a mode that is readily understood by contemporary scholars and students of Philosophy in western universities. Buddhist intellectual traditions' unfamiliar norms, structures and idioms remain a barrier to their ideas being adopted as genuine conversation partners. This is true even when traditional texts have been rendered into English.

The event we are planning for February 2022 with the generous funding from Tzu Chi will address the obstacles to Translating Buddhist Philosophy from Sanskrit for a modern western philosophical audience. Our keynote speaker will be Parimal Patil, of Harvard University. In addition, we plan to invite at least one, perhaps two, teams of translators for a day-long event preceding the lecture. The translators will discuss their recent translations of Buddhist philosophical works with panels of western philosophers, who will be asked to comment on what works well in the translations provided, and what presents barriers to taking the ideas seriously.