



## Representatives Remarks



### Ulrike Roesler

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I am taking part in this launch event as the current Chair of the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Oxford. It is a privilege and a pleasure to represent our Faculty on this happy occasion, and I would like to express our gratitude that Oxford is one of the Universities hosting the Yin-Cheng Distinguished Lecture Series. We are thrilled to take part in this major international initiative to promote knowledge about Buddhism and its contribution to contemporary society, and we will do our very best to make the lectures a success.

The University of Oxford has a long-standing tradition in Buddhist Studies, and there is great interest from various sides. In previous decades, under the academic leadership of Professor Richard Gombrich, there tended to be a focus on the Theravada tradition, but over the past fifteen years or so, the interest has shifted more towards the Mahayana and its transmission and practice in Asia. Undergraduate students at Oxford can study some of the major languages of Buddhism such as Sanskrit, Pali, classical Chinese, and classical Tibetan. They are thus able to engage with Buddhist thought directly through the original testimonies in these languages. They also attend lectures and write essays on various aspects of Buddhism. The late Professor Stefano Zacchetti established a Master's programme in Buddhist Studies at Oxford, which has been running successfully for a number of years and is now in the capable hands of my colleague Matthew Orsborn. He is also supervising a group of doctoral students carrying out research on various aspects of Buddhism.

Guest Lectures on Buddhism receive much attention from within the University, as well as from the public. Guest speakers can expect an audience of students and colleagues in Buddhist Studies, Indian Studies, Chinese Studies, Tibetan Studies, Religious Studies, and Philosophy.





Moreover, the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies brings in members of the public. Therefore, we tend to have a large and varied audience with a lively interest in the Buddhist traditions, and in the relevance of Buddhist thought and practice for our society.

I am therefore confident that the Yin-Cheng Distinguished Lecture Series will find an enthusiastic welcome in Oxford, and I can promise that we in the Faculty of Oriental Studies will do our best to support this initiative now and in the future. We look very much forward to collaborating with our distinguished colleagues at Universities around the world in making these lectures a success.

I would like to express my profound thanks to the Tzu Chi Foundation for their initiative and vision in establishing this lecture series, which will honor and promote the intentions of the Venerable Cheng Yen and the Venerable Yin Shun.

I would also like to thank the team at UBC who have been so skillful and kind in bringing us together and organising this event.

I look very much forward to the lectures and wish the lecture series the best of success for many years to come.

