



KHYENTSE
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Khyentse Lecture Series

Az ELTE BTK Buddhizmus-kutatás Központja szeretettel meghívja

Prof. Dr. Michael Zimmermann (Hamburg University)

angol nyelvű előadására, amelynek címe:

***Meditative insights without ethical conduct?
On the relationship between meditation and
ethics in early Buddhist scriptures***

Az előadás ideje: 2022. november 15. (kedd) 17:00 óra

Az előadás helye: ELTE BTK, Távol-keleti Intézet, F épület I. em. 1/1-es terem
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Abstract

This lecture will deal with the relationship between correct ethical behaviour on the one hand and meditative exercises on the other as presented by early Buddhist thinkers. It is based on the results of a project funded by the German-Israeli Foundation for Scientific Research and Development, run by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Hamburg University. In this project, Buddhist texts of different genres were studied in order to find some concrete reasons from within the texts for the dominant idea that keeping closely to the ethical code would also lead to meditative realizations.

In the presentation, it will be shown that the traditional Buddhist Path leading to liberation requires the observance of moral rules which serve as a basis for meditative attainments. A crucial reason for why keeping moral requirements is held important is the avoidance of *vipratīṣāra* (“regret,” “remorse”) which could manifest when morally bad things have been performed, and thus become an obstacle for a peacefully focused mind.

In case of the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, a seminal work of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the arrangement of ethics and meditation seems to lead into a different direction. The traditional relation between morality and meditation becomes partly reversed. Morality is not anymore just a useful prerequisite to attain higher meditative states but quite the opposite: meditation leads to and also encourages ethical behaviour.

In this lecture I will reflect about the diverse interplays of meditation and ethics as they are laid out in Buddhist scriptures and link them to broader developments of intellectual and religious thought in early Indian Buddhism.



Michael Zimmermann is a professor of Indian Buddhism at the Asien-Afrika-Institut and co-director of the Numata Center for Buddhist Studies at Hamburg University. His research focuses on all aspects of Mahayana Buddhism in India, in particular its textual-historical dimensions, based on the study of primary sources in the Buddhist canonical languages of India, Tibet, and China. One of his research topics has been the idea of buddha-nature, a concept that attained vital importance in East Asian Buddhism. He is also interested in questions of Buddhist ethics such as the relation of Buddhism to political ideas and violence, and how ethics and meditation interact. The analysis of contemporary developments in the Buddhist

traditions of East and West serves him to illustrate how ancient questions are reconsidered among scholars, religious specialists, and followers of modern Buddhism. He is the co-editor of the [Hamburg Buddhist Studies Series](#) with freely downloadable books on diverse topics dealing with the cultural and religious history of Buddhism.