



Numata Zentrum
für Buddhismuskunde

How to read Xuanzang's 'Record' *Some thoughts on the general description of India*

A lecture by **Prof. Dr. Max Deeg**, Cardiff University/Max-Weber-Kolleg, Universität Erfurt
The lecture will be held on **Wednesday 1 June 2016, 16:15 – 18:45 h** at Hamburg University, Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, East Wing (ESA O), Room 209. The lecture will be held in English. The entrance is free.



Bild: Max Deeg

One of the most often quoted sources on Indian Buddhism but also more generally on medieval India is the “Record of the Western Regions of the Great Tang” (Datang Xiyu ji) written by the famous Chinese monk, scholar and traveller Xuanzang (600 or 602-664). The text has been used (and misused) since its “discovery” and first translation into a Western language (French) by Stanislas Julien to make statements about historical India and Indian Buddhism, or to corroborate facts gained from other textual sources or material culture (archaeology). The talk will discuss and demonstrate some of the hermeneutical and methodological aspects through examples taken from the second chapter of the text, the general description of India. I will argue that, instead of reading the “Record” as a description of India, a meaningful interpretation has to recur to the Chinese context for which and in which the text has been written.

Max Deeg is professor in Buddhist Studies at the Department of Religious of Theological Studies, Cardiff University, and at present Fellow of the Max-Weber-Kolleg, Universität Erfurt. He studied German Studies, Indology, Japanese Studies and Religious Studies at the University of Würzburg where he received his academic degrees (M.A., PhD, Habilitation). His main research interest is the history of Buddhism, particularly the spread of Buddhism from India to China and the interactions between the wider Indian and Chinese cultural regions. His publications include *Das Lotos Sutra* (2007), and *Das Gaoseng-Faxian-zhuan als religionsgeschichtliche Quelle. Der älteste Bericht eines chinesischen buddhistischen Pilgermönchs über seine Reise nach Indien mit Übersetzung des Textes* (2005). He is currently working on a new English translation and commentary of Xuanzang's “Record of the Western Regions” (Datang Xiyu ji).

Further Informationen:

www.buddhismuskunde.uni-hamburg.de