

Departmental Colloquium Series Summer Semester 2022



**The Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology
of the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität
is pleased to welcome**

Dr. Nandagopal R. Menon
(Universität Münster)
Postdoctoral Research Fellow
at the Cluster of Excellence 'Religion und Politik'

Wednesday, February 1st 2023, 4-6 p.m.

"The Point of Death: Religious Conversion and the Self in South India"

What is the significance of death and the dead to the study of religious conversion? This talk engages with this broad question in an ethnographic and comparative approach to the lives and deaths of two Muslim converts in the southwest Indian state of Kerala. Paying attention to the treatment of their dead bodies, which were donated and cremated contrary to their wish for an Islamic funeral, and problematization of their proper names, the principal argument is that death is the point at which selves are made/remade. Death provides the opportunity for the dead, their kin, friends and the state to make claims about religious identities and/or familial relations. I conclude that this clash of stances converted the two dead individuals into religiously indeterminate figures, though their belonging to the kin was successfully established.

The lecture will take place in Room F042.

Everybody is welcome!