



Prof. Dr. John Peterson, Kiel, Germany

*'The history of settlement and migration in India.
A sociolinguistic-typological approach to the linguistic prehistory
of South Asia.'*

Venue: Collegium Novum, Room 104B

Time: 1st April 2022 10 a.m.

In my talk I compare two Indo-Aryan languages, Sadri/Nagpuri and Konkani, with respect to their morphological complexity. Based on assumptions made in sociolinguistic typology (e.g., Trudgill, 2011), which forms part of a larger research program investigating the effects of social factors on language structures, this study attempts to reconstruct various aspects of prehistorical society based on the structures of these two modern languages as typical representatives of eastern and western Indo-Aryan, respectively. The results suggest that 2,000 – 2,500 years ago eastern and western Indo-Aryan languages were spoken in very different sociolinguistic environments, with a high degree of ethnic and linguistic diversity in eastern India and a comparatively low level of diversity in the west. I will also suggest that different areas of grammar, such as nominal and verbal systems, may be affected to different degrees in language contact and that their respective rates of (re)complexification may also differ.