

Winter Semester 2022/2023

SDAC Guest Lecture Series

Decisions as Social Artefacts

André Krischer
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg

Monday
28.11.22
18-20:00 c.t.
Online

*The lecture will be held via Zoom



Prof. Dr. André J. Krischer studied history, philosophy, English literature, and geography at the Universities of Cologne and Bonn. From 2009 until 2022 he was a junior professor and a senior lecturer for British and Commonwealth history at Münster University. He received his habilitation in 2015 in Münster with a book on the differentiation of legal procedural systems in the early modern period using the example of English treason trials between the 16th and 19th centuries. Since 2022 he has worked as a Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Freiburg.

We are used to understanding decisions as more or less rational acts of choice that are omnipresent and unavoidable in our everyday lives. Against this understanding of decision as an anthropological constant, however, a position can be argued that breaks with many supposed self-evident facts: according to this, in the context of social action, decision-making is not the rule but the exception because it is much more time-consuming than non-decision-making. Deciding has something to do with the commitment to one of several alternatives; it leads into the field of contingency, and is burdensome and criticizable, in short: it is a burden and therefore, in need of explanation when, what, how, and by whom a decision was made. Moreover, action is often attributed the quality of decisions only in retrospect; therefore, it appears as a social construct, about which different questions are asked than usually in the 'decision sciences'. Instead of always presupposing that one is dealing with decisions and discussing how rational, just, moral, etc. they are (or can be improved in this respect), one can also ask what is considered to be decision-making at all, what is framed, modeled, communicated, perceived as such. In the talk, Prof. Dr. Krischer will further show that decision-making is not a predominantly mental process but a cumulative social practice involving actors and artefacts.

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to register:

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