

**Quantification in the Humanities:
A Guided Introduction to Bridging a Disciplinary Gap**
The University of Hamburg and Online, 25–26 June 2025

Convened under the aegis of the Emmy Noether Junior Research Group ‘Social Contexts of Rebellion in the Early Islamic Period’. Generously funded by the Academy of Sciences in Hamburg.

In 1970, it seemed that the humanities would be revolutionised by computers: just as in the natural and social sciences, teams would work with huge data sets to test falsifiable hypotheses. Yet, only a decade later, the ‘cultural turn’ was testing scholars’ confidence in these new, quantitative methods, and the boundaries between fields such as History, Sociology and Economics were redrawn and again reinforced. Today, in the context of fast-growing AI and with team-based funding models playing an important role in the academy, the time has come to revisit the question of quantification. This event will provide a guided introduction to bridging the disciplinary gap.

Schedule:

Wednesday 25 June 2025, 17:00–18:30 CEST

Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, Hauptgebäude Flügelbau Ost, Room 222 and via Zoom

Hybrid lecture by Prof. Myles Lavan, “Quantification in the History of Slavery: Why We Need a Demography of Manumission”.

Thursday 26 June 2025, 10:00–16:00 CEST

Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, Hauptgebäude Flügelbau West, Room 209 and via Zoom

Hybrid workshop led by Prof. Myles Lavan and Dr Alasdair Grant based on pre-circulated readings and participant-oriented discussion. Participants are encouraged to circulate their own material and questions for collaborative workshopping.

Organisers:

Myles Lavan is Professor in Ancient History at the University of St Andrews. He is currently writing a new study of manumission in the Roman world and the Americas. His publications include *Slaves to Rome: Paradigms of Empire in Roman Culture* (Cambridge, 2013) and ‘The Spread of Roman Citizenship, 14–212 CE: Quantification in the Face of High Uncertainty’, *Past & Present* 230 (2016). He is also co-editor (with D. Jew and B. Danon) of *The Uncertain Past: Probability in Ancient History* (Cambridge, 2022).

Alasdair Grant is a postdoc at the universities of Hamburg and Mainz and a Young Academy Fellow of the Academy of Sciences in Hamburg. He is currently working on a study of rebels and rebellions in early medieval Armenia under Muslim rule. His publications include *Greek Captives and Mediterranean Slavery, 1260–1460* (Edinburgh, 2024). He is co-editor (with H.-L. Hagemann) of *Between Rebels and Rulers in the Early Islamicate World: Power, Contention and Identity* (Edinburgh, 2025).

Registration:

Register by Monday 23 June 2025 by emailing alasdair.grant@uni-hamburg.de. Attendance is free and refreshments will be provided at Thursday’s workshop. Places are limited, however, so advanced registration is necessary. The lecture and workshop can be booked separately. The language of the event will be English.