



Seminar

**EWAN JONES**

Fellow, SCAS.

Lecturer in Nineteenth Century Literature, University of Cambridge

*Rhythmical Entrainment:  
A Genealogy of Embodied Sympathy  
in the Nineteenth Century*

Tuesday, 22 October, 2019, 2:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall  
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala  
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#### ABOUT EWAN JONES

Ewan Jones is University Lecturer in Nineteenth Century Literature at the Faculty of English, and a Fellow and Director of Studies for Part II at Downing College, University of Cambridge. He completed his PhD at King's College, Cambridge, and was previously a Fulbright Scholar at New York University. He is the author of *Coleridge and the Philosophy of Poetic Form* (Cambridge University Press, 2014; paperback 2017), in addition to numerous articles on literary history, prosody and digital humanities.

Jones is currently at work on three separate projects. The first of these takes the form of a second book that traces the development of the concept of rhythm across the nineteenth century; portions of this work have appeared in *Representations* and *ELH*. He is also a member of the Concept Lab, based at the Centre for Digital Knowledge at CRASSH, which seeks to develop new computational resources so as to uncover and account for the structure and change of concepts. Finally, he is co-ordinating a project to digitise manuscripts relating to Alfred Lord Tennyson.

During his year at SCAS, Jones will be investigating the intersections of poetic technique and science during the nineteenth century, with a particular emphasis upon the contemporary biological and ethno-musicological concept of entrainment. He will also continue to develop a variety of corpus linguistic approaches to large historical datasets.

#### ABSTRACT

Over the past two decades, entrainment has gained increasing significance in otherwise unrelated fields such as ethnomusicology and biology. The concept concerns the tendency for individual oscillators -- be they whole organisms or the organs of which they are composed -- to synchronise their endogenous rhythms to an external phase. I explore how the nineteenth century prefigured entrainment in various ways, without yet having the concept to hand. In the process, I demonstrate the extent to which the developing fields of zoology and anthropology repeatedly drew upon poetry in order to model their notions of rhythmical competence -- with consequences for our own contemporary world.