Humanities Research Centre Seminar 2011

Tuesday 30 August 2011 4.00 pm - 5.30 pm

Crazy about Calico: Fashioning Textiles in Early Modern Eurasia

Professor Giorgio Riello, Global History and Culture at the University of Warwick, UK
HRC Visiting Fellow

Convenors: Ken Taylor & Alastair MacLachlan

Printed textiles are integral to how Western fashion is conceived today; however printing on cloth was something unknown in Europe until three centuries ago. “Fashioning” – the process of creating design and giving meaning to cloth – was done through weaving, rather than printing. This paper investigates how an Indian technique came to be incorporated into Europe’s aesthetic vocabulary and how this changed the way in which fashion operated not just in Europe but also in North and Latin America, and Africa.

Giorgio Riello is Professor of Global History and Culture at the University of Warwick, United Kingdom. He completed his PhD in History at University College London and is recipient of the 2011 Leverhulme Prize, the Stanford Humanities Center fellowship, and the 2009 Newcomen Business History Prize. He published and edited several books, including The Fashion History Reader (Routledge 2010), The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1250-1850 (Oxford 2009), and Global Design History (Routledge 2011). His current research focuses on changes in consumer demand and their impact on the spheres of production and material culture, specifically in relation to textiles and clothing.