**Commodities of Empire workshop, Threads of Empire**

**University of Glasgow, 8-9 September 2025**

Preliminary programme

Day 1

Melville Room, Gilbert Scott Building 458

9:30: welcome

10:00-12:00: **Panel 1 – Making and Meaning of Textiles in Latin America**

Paula Fons, ***Labour competition and the decline of the silk industry in New Spain, 1550-1650***

Laura Beltran-Rubio, ***Indigenizing the northern Andean world of textiles***

Annahcelestya Sanchez, ***Weaving Nationality: The Rebozo from 1519-1850***

Tiago Gil, ***The Spinners of Vale do Paraíba and Collective Manufacturing in São Paulo Captaincy (1780-1820)***

Discussant: David Pretel

Moderator: Sabine Wieber

12:00-13:00: lunch

13:00-14:00: **Panel 2 – Materials and Objects**

Ruth Egger, ***From the Tree onto the Body and into the Chamber: Collecting and Reinterpreting Palm Fibre Textiles from West Central Africa in the European Kunstkammer, c. 1550-1750***

Pragya Sharma, ***19th Century Indian Hand-knitted Gloves and Slippers: Tracing Provenance and Style Diffusion***

[Alexandra Macdonald, ***Dyed in the Wool: Understanding Patterns of Knowledge, Labour, and Extraction in the Creation of Christian Williams’ Canvaswork Picture* CANCELLED]**

Discussant: Sally Tuckett

Moderator: Simon Jackson

15:00-17:00: double book launch

Kelvin Hall Lecture Theatre

Sally Tuckett, ***Transatlantic Threads: Scottish Linen and Society, c.1707-1780***. Discussant: Prof Andrew MacKillop (University of Glasgow)

Jelmer Vos, ***Coffee and Colonialism in Angola, 1820-1960***. Discussant: Prof William Clarence-Smith (School of Oriental and African Studies)

Moderator: Jonathan Curry-Machado

19:00: dinner

Ka Pao, 26 Vinicombe Street

Day 2

Melville Room, Gilbert Scott Building 458

9:00: welcome

9:30-11:00: **Panel 3 – Cultures of Consumption**

Juan Carlos Gonzalez Balderas, ***Illicit Chinese Silks Influencing Lima’s 18th-Century Wardrobes***

Emma Pearce,***‘Plaid and other Fancy Ginghams’: Circulations, Sellers, and Consumers of Tartan, Madras and other Checked Textiles in Caribbean Markets***

Stephanie Coo [online], ***Comfort Zone? Clothing, Culture, and Colonialism in Nineteenth-century Philippines***

Discussant: Meha Priyadarshini

Moderator: Jonathan Robins

11:00-11:30: break

11:30-13:00: **Panel 4 – Cloth Production in Africa**

William Clarence-Smith, ***Cloth production in Sub-Saharan Africa: adaptation since c. 1500 CE***

Sarah Van Beurden, ***Congolese Lace: A History of Craft, Gender, and Worldmaking***

Williams Orukpe, ***Cloth weaving domination, de-womanisation and decolonisation in Esanland***

Discussant: Jelmer Vos

Moderator: Helen Cowie

12:30-13:00: **Roundup**

13:00-14:00: lunch

14:30-16:30: excursion (Scottish Business Archive / The Hunterian ‘Curating Discomfort’)

Directions

To reach the Melville Room, go to the Main Building (aka Gilbert Scott), find the cloisters in between the two inner courtyards (also called quadrangles), go through the doors on the southside, and go up the stairs to the Melville Room. The Melville Room is relatively well signposted, although the Main Building is a labyrinth. The university website suggests you enter the Main Building from the south front: <https://frontdoor.spa.gla.ac.uk/map/#/>, but the north front, through the Main Gate, is possible too.

Travel & accommodation

The University of Glasgow is [located](https://maps.app.goo.gl/deXddNcf8wUYn99W7) in the West End.

Arrival from Glasgow airport: airport bus (500) to city centre, £11 single, £17.50 return, 20 min; bus 77 through West End to city centre, £5, 1 hour; taxi, £30.

Arrival from Edinburgh airport: Citylink AIR/900 to Buchanan bus station, 1 hour, £15 single (buy a return if you need one).

Trains from the south arrive at Glasgow Central.

From the city centre, the easiest way to get to the West End is by [subway](https://www.spt.co.uk/travel-with-spt/subway/maps-stations/), which takes about 10 minutes. Station nearest the university is Hillhead.

The West End has many hotels within walking distance from the university. Decent options start at around £80 per night, but there are cheaper options. Staying in the city centre is a good alternative.