

*28th Annual Visiting Scholar Conference  
Center for Archaeological Investigations, Southern Illinois University Carbondale*

March 30–31, 2012

**The Archaeology of Slavery:  
Toward a Comparative  
Global Framework**



**CALL FOR PAPERS**

This is the first and final call for papers for the 2012 CAI Visiting Scholar Conference at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Abstract submission is open to all who are interested, and early career scholars are encouraged to apply.

The goals of the 2012 Visiting Scholar Conference are (1) to develop an interregional and cross-temporal framework of the archaeological interpretation of slavery and (2) to promote a diachronic approach to the topic, extending from before the moment of capture to beyond emancipation.

This conference offers an opportunity for archaeologists studying slavery to begin building the broader interpretive toolbox necessary to confront the growing diversity of their field. The interregional and cross-temporal dialogue the conference promotes will help archaeologists develop strategies to confront basic methodological challenges, such as recognizing material signatures of slavery. Dialogue will also facilitate productive cross-fertilization between prehistoric and historical archaeologists interested in similar interpretive issues—for example, slave identity or slave owners’ strategies of coercion. A diachronic approach to the study of slavery offers additional interpretive benefits. Most importantly, studies that focus on slaving or emancipation force archaeologists to analyze the instability of social boundaries and identities rather than to inadvertently naturalize slave status through inattention to the process of enslavement.

Prospective conference participants are encouraged to engage one or more of the following four themes:

- A. *The challenges of a comparative interpretation approach*, including
- the diversity of social forms classified as “slavery”;
  - the difficulty of recognizing slavery in prehistoric settings through purely material means;
  - the frequent discrepancies between archaeological, oral historical, and documentary data about slavery;

- the risk of comparisons becoming overly general and insensitive to the cultural circumstances in which slavery occurred.
- B. *The benefits of a comparative interpretive approach.* We are especially interested in case studies that connect their interpretive approaches to slavery scholarship with other time periods and/or geographic locales. Potentially productive topics to consider include
- identity creation in captivity;
  - slave owners' strategies of coercion;
  - landscape versus site approaches to analysis;
  - the role of race and ethnicity in slave systems.
- C. *Slaving and enslavement.* We are interested in exploring the transition to enslavement, including what strategies individuals and groups used to mitigate their vulnerability to slaving and how the social identity 'slave' was imposed on formerly free people.
- D. *Emancipation.* The conference will explore how slavery continued to shape the lives of formerly enslaved people and their descendants. Our focus will encompass both ex-slaves in post-emancipation contexts and self-emancipated Maroons or fugitive slaves living within still-operative slave systems.

The conference will take place on March 30-31, 2012, in Carbondale, Illinois. Conference attendance is open to all who are interested and registration details will be available at [www.cai.siu.edu/vsprogram.html](http://www.cai.siu.edu/vsprogram.html) in the near future.

Participants will also be asked to submit detailed summaries of their papers prior to the conference, to allow discussion facilitators time to prepare their responses. Further details concerning these summaries will be forthcoming upon acceptance of abstracts.

Abstract submissions are due on **December 5, 2011**, and should be submitted via e-mail to the 2012 CAI Visiting Scholar, Dr. Lydia Wilson Marshall, at [llw3r@virginia.edu](mailto:llw3r@virginia.edu). PDF files are preferred, but Microsoft Word files are also acceptable. Abstracts are limited to 250 words (excluding titles, authors, or funding information). Please do not include illustrations. Submissions that do not follow these criteria will not be reviewed. See the **Abstract Guidelines** at [www.cai.siu.edu/vspages/marshall/vsconf](http://www.cai.siu.edu/vspages/marshall/vsconf) for further information on preparing your submission.

Abstracts will be reviewed, and applicants will be informed of the decision in mid-January. All papers presented at this conference are eligible for inclusion in the peer-reviewed conference volume, which will be published by the Center for Archaeological Investigations as part of their Occasional Papers series <[www.cai.siu.edu/publications.html](http://www.cai.siu.edu/publications.html)>.

We look forward to your submissions, and hope that you will take the opportunity to join us in Carbondale for this exciting event.