

Call for Papers

Premodern Unfreedoms: Global Approaches to Exploitation, Enslavement, and Trafficking

October 27-28th 2023; Urbana-Champaign, Illinois



Inscribed stone depicting the seizure of a monk by a Norse raider. Image reproduced with permission from Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd.

This interdisciplinary conference aims to interrogate the state of the field for slavery, and broader practices of unfreedom and trafficking, in the global premodern world. This field has flourished in recent years, yet still remains relatively understudied despite offering fertile ground to discuss the history of slavery, servitude, and exploitation. *Premodern Unfreedoms* seeks to grapple not only with the larger historical issues of globalizing the practice of unfreedom in the premodern period, but to also forefront the human stories at its core.

Premodern Unfreedoms will take place over two days (October 27th and 28th, 2023) in the Levis Faculty Center at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. The keynote lecture will be given by **Dr. Don Wyatt (Middlebury College)**. This conference is being planned in conjunction with *The Medieval Globe* under the expectation that select papers from participants will constitute a special issue of the journal. Proposals are invited to present twenty minute papers on any aspect of unfreedom in the premodern world. Papers with an interdisciplinary and/or non-Western focus are particularly encouraged. Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- Boundaries and parameters of unfreedom
- Unfree mobility and movement
- Representations of unfreedom in literature
- Resistance to exploitation, enslavement, and trafficking
- Teaching global premodern unfreedom in the classroom
- Methodologies and approaches for studying unfreedom

Proposals should consist of a title, abstract (max. 500 words) and a short academic biography. All materials should be sent to premodernunfreedoms@gmail.com no later than May 1, 2023. It is expected that this conference will be held in person this fall, subject to the global health situation.

For any further questions, email chloe3@illinois.edu and/or hduncan3@illinois.edu.