



Omohundro Institute  
of Early American  
History and Culture

# Call for Papers

*“The bloody Writing is for ever torn”*

## DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE FIRST GOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS TO ABOLISH THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE

On August 8–12, 2007, the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, in cooperation with UNESCO, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the W. E. B. Du Bois Center for African and African American Studies, the Reed Foundation, Inc., and the Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation, will convene a major international conference in Ghana, West Africa. The aim of the meeting is to examine the national and international contexts of the transatlantic slave trade at the end of the eighteenth century; the circumstances that led to decisions by some of the trade’s original instigators and greatest beneficiaries to outlaw participation in it; and the social, political, economic, and cultural consequences for all the inhabitants—slave and free—of the kingdoms and nations involved, of actions that ultimately abolished one of the pillars of Atlantic commerce.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century the slave trade had become a vital engine of the Atlantic economy. Although voices in opposition to the commerce in human cargo had been raised as early as the sixteenth century, it was not until the 1780s that a constellation of humanitarian, economic, and ideological forces combined with the determined resistance of those in slavery to challenge its legitimacy. Acknowledging the inherent evil of this lucrative “traffick” and no longer able to ignore the struggles against bondage, such as that mounted in Haiti 1793–1804, the governments of several Atlantic world nations initiated policies, between 1787 and 1807, to make participation in the trade illegal. The goals of this conference are twofold: first, to explicate the domestic and international forces in play when the first decisions to end the transatlantic slave trade were made, and second, to examine and illuminate the short- and long-term consequences for Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, Latin America, and North America of these initial attempts to end further transportation of captives from Africa.

The conference’s thematic focus on transatlantic slavery should be understood to include the trade’s global reach. Hence, the topics to be addressed will include how the development and implementation of abolition in the Atlantic World affected the commerce in human beings in other regions, such as trans-Saharan Africa, the Indian Ocean littoral, and the Mediterranean. The consequences of the slave trade’s legacies for racism, colonialism, and other relevant political, economic, and cultural patterns will be examined as well.

The conference will be multi-disciplinary, and the program committee welcomes proposals from scholars in all appropriate fields—history, historical anthropology, archaeology, literature, philosophy, and social sciences. Please submit written proposals of three to five pages outlining the subject, argument, and relevance to the conference themes. Proposals for individual papers and for panels are welcome; submissions may be in English or French. Include curriculum vitae. Send five (5) hard copies or an email attachment to: **Ghana Conference, OIEAHC, P.O. Box 8781, Williamsburg, VA 23187-8781; [ieahc1@wm.edu](mailto:ieahc1@wm.edu)**. The deadline for proposals is June 30, 2006.