

Forensic Anthropology and Human Rights: Uncovering Somaliland's Troubled Past February 2013



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SOMALILAND, HORN OF AFRICA



Somaliland was a part of the former Republic of Somalia. For 21 years until his fall, the regime of Mohammed Siad Barre carried out massacres against the people of Somaliland. About 60,000 civilians were killed, thousands were victims of enforced disappearance, and 500,000 individuals were displaced before the declaration of independence, in 1991.

Since its independence, Somaliland has managed to secure the political stability, economic and social development needed to investigate the atrocities committed in the past (through a War Crimes Investigation Commission made up of 6 members). The forensic field school in Hargeisa will help to determine the universe of missing people through a systematic approach of collecting and combining of ante mortem data and research of mass and clandestine graves.

COURSE OBJECTIVE

In this 4-weeks long field school, the participants will attend virtual and in situ workshops on the culture, society, religion and post-conflict issues of Somaliland. The field school will assist in training the staff of the War Crimes Investigation Commission of Somaliland in forensic investigation of human rights violations.

At the completion of the course, the participants will have an understanding of the application of forensic sciences to the investigation of Human Rights violations, as well as the process involved in the examination, recovery and analysis of mass graves and their contents. As a norm students will spend two weeks working in the exhumation process and two weeks in the laboratory.

CONTENT AND SCHEDULE

Prior to arrival to Hargeisa participants will receive a reading package on the culture and politics and recent history of Somaliland, as well as the legacy of human rights violations in the country. In addition during the first day students will receive an introductory lecture on the various aspects to be considered in a forensic intervention of this nature.

The first group shall be deployed to the exhumation site while the second group will start the examination of remains already exhumed at the morgue.



In the field participants will be guided through the exhumation process from mass graves selected by the War Crimes Investigation Commission of Somaliland, including (but not limited) to surveying, mapping, collection of surface evidence and exhumation procedures.

In the morgue participants will be exposed to the examination of remains and associated artefacts recovered during the exhumation process as well as prepare chain of custody forms, clean recovered remains and associated artefacts and storage. They will be guided through the process of aging, sexing, calculate stature, biological affinity and trauma.



CONTENT AND SCHEDULE

In addition they will examine clothing and related artefacts and prepare individual reports.



APPLICATION PROCESS, COSTS, DATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

Application Process

The Application process for the fields school consists of;

Filling in the Somaliland Field School application form, submitting it to the field school email address (see below)

Participating in an interview with the Field School Faciliators (via Skype). These should take place in early November 2012.

Once the interview process is complete a deposit is required to secure participation in the field

Costs - Field School

The estimated cost for field school participants is US\$ 4,950 for the month (US\$165.00 per day).

A non-refundable deposit of US\$500.00 is necessary to reserve the participant's space will be required shortly after the application process is complete (by November 15, 2012).

A second payment of US\$ 2,425 will be required by December 7th and a final payment of US\$ 2,425 should be completed by January 5th 2013. Vacancies are limited.

APPLICATION PROCESS, COSTS, DATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

Costs Include



Accommodation: Participants will stay at Adams's inn hotel, a peaceful environment, with all basic services for the participants' comfort.

Meals: All three (3) meals are included for the entire month.

Costs - Air Travel

The above costs do not include airfare or travel insurance. The official carrier will be Ethiopian Airlines to guarantee direct flights to/from Somaliland. All international flights arrangements will be handled directly by EPAF International in order to secure bulk pricing from the airline.

Dates and Security

Field School Dates:

The field school will run from February 5 to March 3, 2013

EPAF Security Brief for Proposed Mission to Hargeisa, Somaliland on February 2013:



Security is of course our primary concern and will be awarded the utmost priority in the planning and execution of the mission. Every possible effort will be made to ensure the safety of the team and have every contingency in place. In turn students will strictly adhere to mandatory regulations for EPAF staff whilst in the country.

Despite travel advisories from national governments cautioning against all travel to Somalia, the distinction must be made between the generic name of the region and Somaliland. The proposed mission will be exclusively located in the city of Hargeisa where the security situation has been stable for some years.

APPLICATION PROCESS, COSTS, DATES AND OTHER INFORMATION

Health and Well Being

EPAF Medical Brief - Hargeisa:

All aspects of the provision of medical cover for expatriates working in Somaliland are handled by Exmed Global Medical Services of Hereford, United Kingdom.

Exmed UK are contracted by the United Nations (UN) to provide Emergency Care, Medevac as far as Nairobi and primary care to all registered NGOs. Exmed will have a doctor and two paramedics on call 24/7 and based in one of the secure UN compounds in Hargeisa. In addition there is also a UN doctor and ambulance based at a clinic in the World Health Organization (WHO) compound.

Everyone deploying to Hargeisa with the EPAF program should have medical insurance and must have the following inoculations:

Yellow Fever
Hepatitis A & B
Rabies
Tetanus

Hargeisa is not classified as a Malaria risk area. Prophylactics are not required but mosquito nets are always useful.



Happy
Healthy
Forensic
Field School
Participants

October 2012

Read some
of their
stories on
page 8

FACILITATORS

Jose Pablo Baraybar

Has over 20 years of experience as a forensic anthropologist. He has consulted and/or trained on the use of forensics in cases of Human Rights violations in Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, Haiti, Ethiopia, the Congo, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Iraq, and the Philippines. He is the Executive Director of the Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF). He served as forensic anthropologist for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 1996 and as Chief Forensic Anthropologist/ Archaeologist for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) from 1996-2002. He has expert witness status in the International Criminal Tribunal and was one of a handful of scientists to present forensic evidence in the case of Srebrenica (Bosnia) which is the first case of Genocide to be prosecuted using forensic evidence after the Tribunals of Nuremberg and Tokyo. In 2002 he created the Office of Missing Persons and Forensics (OMPF) in Kosovo and served as its head until 2007. During his tenure as head of OMPF was awarded with the UN21 Awards. Mr. Baraybar was awarded the 2011 Judith Lee Stronach Human Rights prize by the Center for Justice and Accountability in San Francisco.

Chris Cobb-Smith

served for twenty years in the British Army, retiring in 1994. Recruited by the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, he gained further operational experience as an UNSCOM weapons inspector in Iraq and as a monitor for the OSCE's Kosovo Verification Mission. Increasing awareness that journalists were ill prepared for hostile environments led to him founding Chiron Resources to provide specialist media support. In addition, Mr. Cobb-Smith is retained as a military/weapons expert by news agencies and NGOs to conduct investigations, not only into the deaths of journalists (most notably Abed Takoush in 2000 and James Miller in 2003), but also of alleged human rights abuses and potential war crimes.

Scott Emmons

is a respected teacher and an expert in different fields related to the use of spatial data. He uses his expertise to support people in gathering, managing and sharing information through technology and local knowledge. Prior to working in mapping and data management, Scott worked in construction, oil and gas work and project management. He has led the development of software and techniques to better promote the interests of community projects and spends much of his time working with Aboriginal groups throughout British Columbia. Mr. Emmons runs the GIS Lab at UNBC, which operates as an open door educational facility.

Forensic Anthropology and Human Rights: Uncovering Somaliland's Troubled Past October 5

The first phase of the Somaliland collaborative project with the EPAF, the Somaliland Government and Centre for Justice and Accountability was in progress from September 24 to October 21, 2012. Participants of this first phase conducted exhumations, forensic investigations, as well as participated in the collection of ante mortem data. This historic effort has seen international support from students from Canada and Venezuela. Individuals among this ground breaking initial phase shared some of their experiences:



Melissa Simmill - This experience has been so far the most wonderful, terrifying and exciting thing I have ever done. To be able to change someone's fate by retrieving them from a pit of horror and return them to their family and loved ones for a future with a proper burial full of respect and love is the most honourable thing I have ever had the opportunity to partake in.

Donald Ireland - I am doing well in Hargeisa, Somaliland, the trip so far has been an amazing experience. I find myself to be very lucky and honoured to be able to participate on a project like this, especially in a place like Somaliland. Not many people travel to this region, let alone this part of Africa.

Wendy Slavica - It was a rewarding day here in Hargeisa for the team: Two burials were uncovered shortly after lunch within the excavation. Present to witness this were many family member of the missing and murdered persons, community members and the War Crimes Commission. Being able to work side by side with the War Crimes Commission trainees has made me feel less like an outsider and more as a collaborator in a much bigger picture.

Contacts and Information:



The Center for Justice and Accountability (CJA) is an international human rights organization dedicated to deterring torture and other severe human rights abuses around the world and advancing the rights of survivors to seek truth, justice and redress. CJA uses litigation to hold perpetrators individually accountable for human rights abuses, develop human rights law and advance the rule of law in countries transitioning from periods of abuse.

For more information: cja.org
The Center for Justice and Accountability
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The Peruvian Forensic Anthropology Team (EPAF) is a non-profit organization that promotes the right to truth, justice, and guarantees of non-repetition in cases of forced disappearance and extrajudicial execution. EPAF seeks to contribute to the consolidation of peace and democracy where grave human rights violations have taken place by working alongside the families of the disappeared to find their loved ones, gain access to justice, and improve the conditions affecting their political and economic development.

To achieve these goals, EPAF works in four principal areas: Forensic Investigation, Historical Memory, Forensic Training, Human Development.

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Contact and Information for the Forensic Anthropology and Human Rights Field School In Somaliland:

If you have any questions regarding this field school in February 2013, please send us an email at:

fieldschool@epafperu.org

We look forward to hearing from you.