APPLIED FIELD GEOPHYSICS RESEARCH WORKSHOP
- GROUND PENETRATING RADAR APPLICATIONS -

Summer 2021
Southern Transylvania, Hunedoara County, Romania

SYLLABUS
ArchaeoTek / BioArch Canada

This year, the Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR) training is offered in two distinct formats:

- **Applied Field Geophysics Workshop - Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) Applications (5 days):**
  
  Session 1: (moved)
  Session 2: (moved)
  Session 3: July 11 – July 17, 2021
  Session 4: July 18 – July 24, 2021
  Session 5: August 1 – August 6, 2021

- **Geophysical Exploration (GPR) and Roman Archaeological Excavation (4 weeks):**
  
  Session 1: (moved)
  Session 2: July 4 – July 31, 2021
  Session 3: August 1 – August 28, 2021

Program Director:  **Dr. Andre Gonciar** (archaeology@archaeotek.org)

Web Site:  
[https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/applied-field-geophysics-gpr](https://www.archaeotek-archaeology.org/applied-field-geophysics-gpr)

Application Form:  

Program Fees and Costs:

- GPR Applications Workshop (standalone): $1195 per 5-day session
- GPR Exploration and Roman Archaeological Excavation: $2495 per 4-week session (which includes the 5-day GPR Workshop) – Additional costs due to the COVID-19 situation, applicable only for the GPR Exploration and Roman Archaeological Excavation:
  - mandatory chartered bus pick up at the Bucharest airport: $100 one-way (return optional)
  - weekend day-trips are mandatory in 2021, for an additional cost of $300 (total for all 4 trips)
I. Introduction:

Our Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR) Field Applications Workshop is an intensive 5-day training program in GPR survey, data acquisition, and analysis. Taking place in an extraordinary environment in Southern Transylvania (Romania), this program is designed to offer our participants a very practical, useful and concrete set of professional and research skills that would provide an edge in today’s field/urban survey and exploration job market. Our participants will acquire in a very short time the necessary practical and analytical skills to conduct independent GPR field research.

Geophysical methods are an extremely versatile set of techniques used extensively in both research and practical applications from archaeology, to urbanism, forensics, geology, and engineering. Field experience with these techniques is an exceptionally useful and lucrative skill to acquire, but training in these methods is limited to expensive manufacturer professional development and/or academic courses. These educational opportunities otherwise available tend to sacrifice either the theoretical and technical foundations, or the practical use and interpretation of the methods. In contrast, this workshop provides a full set of technical, theoretical, and practical skills for Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) surveying. As such, it offers thorough training for field work, processing, and interpretation of intensively modified human landscapes in an accessible and professional way. Hands-on experience is an essential complement to previous or planned geophysics training for work in earth sciences, geology, geography, urban planning, architecture, surveying, civil engineering, environmental engineering, environmental studies, landscaping, forensics, anthropology, archaeology, cultural resource management (CRM), Classics, and/or history.

This workshop will address the basic principles of electromagnetic wave propagation and electromagnetic properties as they apply to GPR and geophysical exploration. We will focus on the practical applications of GPR in a variety of disciplines in order to achieve the most useful results for a specific environment with distinct stratigraphic and geological properties. The workshop will be progressively staged so that participants gain experience and skills required to formulate appropriate research questions and carry out real life data collection and analysis to answer those questions.

Through a combination of lectures, GPR deployment, data collection, and analysis, this workshop provides all the necessary training for our graduating participants to be able to conduct on their own proficient GPR surveys, fully understand the limitations on both GPR systems and terrain, optimize (and maximize) data collection, analyze and interpret the data, and generate a high quality results. The culmination of the workshop will be a presentation of the results to develop participant’s skills to communicate geophysical results. Working in teams of two or three, participants will maximize both quantity and quality of acquired field and analytical geophysical exploration skills. Our participants will get intensive comparative training on the two most used systems in near-surface investigations, respectively 250 MHz and 500 MHz transducers in rough terrain and cart configurations.
II. Course Aims and Outcomes:

Aims

Upon completion of this workshop, participants will have the skill set and knowledge required to plan, conduct, analyze, and interpret successful GPR surveys in any terrestrial setting. This process will present a variety of anthropogenic and natural challenges, from working in diverse field conditions, to dealing with sites containing a combination of known and unknown modern and historical features. The whole experience is intended to be intensive and collaborative, with a focus on experiential learning and application of processing, collection, and interpretation methods to real sites under real life research conditions. Participants will work directly with our instructors in small groups of 2-3 per system to gain fluency and proficiency with the equipment, software, and logistics of a GPR project. At the end of each session, the data will be presented as a full professional report, both in writing and as an oral podium presentation.

System and Analytical Training

Our participants will learn to operated two different GPR Noggin (manufactured by SenSoft – Sensors and Software) systems, equipped with different transducers, respectively at 500MHz and 250MHz peak frequency, in two field configurations, cart and rough terrain. Each field team consists in 2-3 participants on each system, conducting at least 2 full days of data collecting. Each group will be trained in setting up their own survey grids to optimize data collection and integration, assembling each field system, and collecting the same grid data with each of our two GPRs.

Concurrently, our participants will be trained in using SenSoft’s analytical software application package, EKKO Suite, to become proficient in analyzing GPR data, maximizing the results. All the data collected will be analyzed by each GPR crew, comparing, integrating and extrapolating the data/results obtained from both 500MHz and 250MHz antennas. At the end of the 5-day Workshop, each group will be required to produce a professional report and present their results in a podium presentation setting.

The comparative approach between the two GPR systems (500MHz and 250MHz) and field configurations (cart and rough terrain), combined with the intensive hands-on, data oriented, results driven focus of the workshop, as well as the low ratio participant:instructor is guaranteed to provide field GPR training of the highest quality, both in terms of data generation and analysis, and professional deployment and research.

Applications and Case Studies

The workshop is conducted in the heart of Transylvania, in the Mureș river valley (Hunedoara County, Romania). This region combines intensive and continuous historical human habitation and landscape transformation with relatively static modern occupation, offering complex but highly accessible study sites. This offers a unique setting in which common environmental challenges to a GPR survey, such as interference from cell phone towers, communication and power lines, road traffic, and modern constructions occur at recognizable and manageable levels. As a result, this location is ideal for both GPR exploration and intensive skill acquisition.

In terms of practical applications, the two GPR antennas and configurations we deploy during this workshop are the systems of choice in archaeology, forensics and shallow subsurface urban mapping (SUM), for
locating buried structures, graves, utilities, root systems, etc., as well as variations in pedology and geology down to about 4-6m (or 13-19ft) depth. During the 2021 field season, we will investigate 2-3 archaeological sites in Southern Transylvania (Romania), situated in or near urban settings. These sites provide an unparalleled access to a diverse set of features and conditions. We address urban and proto-urban settlement construction, complex anthropogenic stratigraphic relationships, variation in soil structure and conditions, wide range of materials and their use/reuse, unmapped ancient and modern utilities, potential graves, modern and ancient civil works projects (including the remains of roads, aqueducts, and wells), changes in hydrogeological environment caused by modern human intervention (such as the construction and operation of a nearby thermal power plant on the site of Micia), and any additional and as-yet undiscovered features.

Our feature targets are as follows:

- **The Uroi Castle.** Situated in the village of Uroi (Hunedoara County, Romania), it was a medium size medieval military fortress, aimed at controlling one of the many crossings over the Mures River, most likely along the ancient Roman road. The massive andesite walls offer different challenges to GPR exploration and interpretation, both because of the topography generated by the destruction of the castle as well as the resulting stratigraphy. It is an ideal environment to deploy and compare the two system configurations for shallow exploration and the different frequency transducers.

- **Roman Castrum and Municipium of Micia.** Situated in the village of Vetel (Hunedoara County, Romania), it is one of the largest and most intricate archaeological urban sites in Transylvania, featuring three centuries of intensive and extensive Roman occupation. Beginning in 102AD as complex fortified military camps, it later expanded into a large village and then a full city, complete with amphitheater, baths, temples, manufacturing, shops, plazas, large and small habitation structures, and two cemeteries with funerary monuments. The Roman site was then taken over by migratory people with variable architectural skill who modified the site according to their needs and perception for over four centuries. During communist times, a thermal power plant and a couple of roads were built on the site, destroying about 20% of it, introducing a modern twist to our GPR research area in the form of unmapped buried utilities and buried support/temporary structures.

- **Sarmizegetusa Ulpia Traiana, Roman Capital of the Dacian Provinces.** This extraordinary archaeological site is 80% “overrun” by the modern small city of Sarmizegetusa (Hunedoara County, Romania). The site was continuously inhabited since 102AD. In order to build the provincial capital, the Romans drained the entire plateau where the city now sits. After the Romans officially left Dacia in 271AD, the public works that ensured the drainage were not tended any longer and the water began to rise. Throughout the Medieval period, opportunistic channels were dug throughout the ancient site to redirect the water flow away from the inhabited sections of the city. Starting in the early Modern period, the Roman city was quarried for the high quality marble and limestone in order to produce lime, a process that lasted until the first half of the 20th century. The combination of all these elements, in addition of all the utilities of the modern town, offers an extraordinary opportunity for GPR skill development and research. We will be surveying the modern roads, public parks and other accessible areas in an attempt to map the ancient town of Sarmizegetusa Ulpia Traiana (survey to start in 2021 or 2022 - TBC).

The already published results of some of our work are listed below (see VIII. Optional Readings and Helpful References).
**Specific Learning Outcomes**

We aim to provide contextualized information about the technical and practical aspects of GPR surveying, fully applicable to GPR work in all disciplines. After a comprehensive introduction to the equipment and survey procedures, we will conduct intensive surveys to map both the modern and historical features at one or two sites, Uroi, Micia and/or Sarmizegetusa, using both GPR systems (250MHz and 500MHz) in both field configurations (rough terrain and cart). The results of this survey will be formally presented in a professional setting at the end of each session. In addition to providing hands-on experience and associated skills required by employers (field assessment, technical and geophysical surveying, oral and written presentation of the data, etc.), we will have supplemental discussions and readings on more advanced GPR topics and specific applications (for example, qualitative and quantitative identification of subsurface features). At its core, the workshop is designed to provide an engaging environment for the acquisition of the fully transferrable skills and knowledge at the core of all GPR applications and projects.

Students who want to expand their skill set to field archaeology can register to our Geophysical Exploration and Archaeological Excavation. It is a 4 week program resulting from the combination of our Applied Field Geophysics Workshop and Roman Villa and Settlement Excavation and Survey (and save $495 on the combined cost of the two programs).

This course will equip participants with the skills and experience needed to:

**Conduct successful GPR projects from conceptualization through completion**
- Select the appropriate geophysical method for particular objectives and conditions
- Understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of each system and configuration, resulting in the capacity to choose the optimal system for the task at hand
- Define and prioritize feasible data collection objectives according to urgency, required results, data quality and quantity, and accessibility
- Identify survey costs (data storage and processing, collection time, labor, seasonal factors, and equipment) related to specific goals and objectives
- Execute efficient and successful field surveys
- Meaningfully process and interpret data for particular project objectives
- Create clear visuals that convey results
- Communicate results clearly and completely to technical and non-technical audiences

**Properly understand and identify constraints of GPR surveys in actual environments**
- Identify the conditions under which a GPR approach is applicable
- Use technical foundations of the GPR method to understand the different kinds of information that can be gained from GPR survey and how this information might change with field conditions
- Recognize how external constraints such as weather impact the feasibility of particular objectives and/or implementation of specific geophysical methods
Proficiency operating GPR field equipment
- Identify and understand nature and use of field equipment required for conducting surveys
- Properly assemble and disassemble the equipment, in both field configurations
- Full training and troubleshooting with Noggin 500 and Noggin 250 (Sensors and Software) GPR Units in Smart Tow/Rough Terrain and Smart Cart Configurations

Understand and execute useful GPR surveys in the field
- Optimize field coverage, grid location, and collection type according to survey goals
- Understand data quality and quantity in relation to data collection method, equipment settings, calibrated parameters, and field contexts
- Identify optimal data collection method for each context
- Evaluate locations and sites to address specific research questions
- Properly locate and prepare different types of survey sites (grid, line survey, GPS, etc.)
- Identify and collect external auxiliary non-GPR data essential for post processing and interpretation of GPR data

Perform meaningful GPR post-processing and interpretations
- Process data into scans (radargrams) and slices using the EKKO Project suite and Sliceview (Sensors and Software), transferrable to most GPR processing software suites
- Interpret a wide range of anthropogenic and natural features in GPR data, including walls, floors, roads, destruction levels, funerary features, utilities, and geological changes
- Distinguish between meaningful reflections, spurious signals, and artifacts of the data
- Apply depth slicing, velocity analysis, grid stitching, and GPS positioning data to create interpretive maps of subsurface features from multiple grids
- 3D visualization of research context and results

III. Format and Procedures:

This workshop is structured as an intensive five-day GPR training course conducted in an archaeological/historical environment with well-defined modern interferences and activity. For processing data and compiling results, it is necessary for participants to bring a Windows laptop. The software can only be installed on this operating system (Windows 7 or newer, or a Windows emulator like Bootcamp for MacOS) and can only be used in the lab according to software licensing. Even if you do not have Windows, a laptop will likely be necessary to complete and review readings and work on the final presentation. Please contact the directors if you have computing concerns.

Participants registered for one of the sessions of the standalone 5-day GPR Applications Workshop are required to arrange travel to Sibiu or Simeria (Romania), where they will be picked up at the appointed time. It is highly recommended, on arrival, to minimize the time spent on Romanian public transport. To do so, it is recommended to land in Sibiu and we will pick you up at the airport directly. Participants registered to the
Geophysics (GPR) Exploration and Roman Excavation will be picked up by our chartered bus at the Bucharest airport, at the appointed time.

Participants will be guests of Romanian families in Rapoltu Mare (Hunedoara County, Romania) for the duration of the workshop. Full room and board will be provided for each workshop session. Meals will consist of traditional Romanian cuisine and can be prepared to accommodate vegetarian diets. The small size of our field teams, 2-3 per GPR system, is designed to provide extensive personalized instruction and the ability to tailor the workshop to the interests of participants. Local transportation to field sites will be provided as needed.

The workshop is meant to be an intensive program, maximizing the integration of theory, method and experiential knowledge/skill. As such, each day will contain 7-9h of workshop related activities. The tentative daily schedule – for more details, see Course Schedule below – is as follows (subject to change):

- 6:30AM: Breakfast
- 7-7:30AM: Beginning of morning lectures, laboratory work and/or field surveying
- 12:30PM: Lunch
- 1:30PM: Beginning of afternoon lectures, laboratory work and/or field surveying
- 4:30PM (or later, as needed): End on work day
- 7PM: Dinner

Note that the basic introductory training program offered by Sensors and Software (SenSoft), one of the leading North American companies in GPR manufacturing and research, respectively the ONE Day GPR Short Course, costs $400. The GSSI introductory TWO Day Short Course, the other North American leading GPR company, costs US$800. Their classes usually run with 10 participants (or more), room and board not included.

IV. Participation Assumptions

This workshop focuses on extensive skill acquisition rather than academic progression. However, in registering for the course, it is assumed that participants will be engaged, interested, and active in the workshop. All workshop activities are mandatory. A substantial degree of personal responsibility and initiative is expected and required from all participants to complete readings, prepare for discussions, and acquire the skills offered in the workshop. All acquired skills and enjoyment of this workshop are directly proportional to the effort and attention participants invest. It is assumed that participants will fully engage in all aspects of the workshop.

Once accepted to the program, a set of articles and a list of introductory videos will be provided to participants. It is absolutely essential that participants are fully versed in this prerequisite information prior to their arrival to the workshop.

GPR surveying is physical labor. You must be able to repeatedly carry 30lbs a distance of 50m (160ft), on uneven ground, for about 1.5-2.5h per day. Field work will range from 1-2h (first day) to 4-5h daily (following days). Please contact the directors with any concerns.

Participants are encouraged to share their particular interests with the instructors, who will do their best to personalize the workshop and maximize the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills.

All participants are expected to behave respectfully at all times towards the staff, other participants and local people. All participants are required to abide by the rules and regulations of the workshop as well as Romanian laws. Disrespectful and/or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
V. Course Schedule (Subject to change)

Readings will be provided to participants before their arrival in Romania. **Readings should be completed as prerequisites and reviewed before the day they are listed.** Several videos on data processing using the EKKO software suite will be provided for participants to view as prerequisites to the program. Additional reference materials containing specific technical details will also be provided for the interested participant and future reference. Each workshop session will conclude with a presentation and report of the session’s findings in a professional-like environment.

The program includes, for each session, approximately:

- 14h lectures and seminars
- 6h laboratory instruction
- 15-20h field surveying
- 10-15h data processing and analysis

**NOTE:** The present syllabus could be modified in response to local and field conditions in order to achieve the GPR workshop’s goals, as well as to provide a safe research, work, and training environment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPICS (AM)</th>
<th>TOPICS (PM)</th>
<th>READING(S)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DAY 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>DAY 1</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1-Lecture:</strong> Short intro to GPR (1h)</td>
<td><strong>2-Lecture:</strong> EM wave propagation and GPR Principles (1.5h)</td>
<td>[prereq] SenSoft webinars on EKKO</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Field:</strong> Equipment assemble and disassembly (1h)</td>
<td><strong>3-Lecture:</strong> GPR surveying basics: history, and reports (1.5h)</td>
<td>[1] Annan 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Field:</strong> Locate and Mark (2h)</td>
<td><strong>Lab:</strong> Interpretations for locate and mark and sample scenarios (1.5h)</td>
<td>[2] Conyers 2016a</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>DAY 2</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Field:</strong> Site Gridded Survey I (3-4h)</td>
<td><strong>5-Lecture:</strong> More advanced GPR principles: gain, attenuation, and more (1h)</td>
<td>[3] Conyers 2016b</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4-Lecture:</strong> Another look at GPR interpretation (1h)</td>
<td><strong>Lab:</strong> Processing GPR data for interpretation: using EKKO software (2h)</td>
<td>[4] Takahashi 2012</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>DAY 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Field:</strong> Site Survey II (4-5h)</td>
<td><strong>Lab:</strong> Processing with maps, slices, and surfaces (2h) - Introduction to field data processing (original site data analysis)</td>
<td>[5] Verdonck et al. 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6-Lecture and discussion:</strong> Comparing remote sensing approaches (1h)</td>
<td><strong>7-Lecture:</strong> Review of acquired methods and techniques (1h)</td>
<td>[6] Damiata et al. 2017</td>
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<td><strong>DAY 4</strong></td>
<td><strong>DAY 4</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Field:</strong> Site survey III (4-5h)</td>
<td><strong>Lab:</strong> Original data processing (as needed)</td>
<td>[7] Pincus et al. 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> Attribute analysis, velocity, and gain (1h)</td>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> Attribute analysis, velocity, and gain (1h)</td>
<td>[8] Zhao et al 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DAY 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>DAY 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Field:</strong> Site survey IV (4-5h)</td>
<td><strong>Lab:</strong> Original data processing (as needed)</td>
<td>[9] SenSoft concrete</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> Modeling and Inversion, Quantitative Analyses (1h)</td>
<td><strong>Discussion:</strong> Modeling and Inversion, Quantitative Analyses (1h)</td>
<td>[10] dos Santos 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8-Summary and Discussion</strong> (1h)</td>
<td><strong>Presentation of Results</strong> (1h)</td>
<td>[11] Olhoeft 2000</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SenSoft webinar: Qualitative to Quantitative</td>
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</table>
VI. Prerequisite SenSoft Webinars - Proceed in the order below, after reading [1] and [2], and using glossary from [2] for reference (see Required Readings for [1] and [2])

Getting the most from your GPR Utility Data: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9MRFcpVqi4
EKKO Project Utilities: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Znxslp5tpY
GPR Software: EKKO_Project v5: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXc47f2GyA
SliceView GPR: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sv3sQHp6NeQ
Qualitative to Quantitative Analysis: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5IPpKGEK4R8

VII. Required Readings (Provided)

VIII. Optional Readings and Helpful References

Our Previous Work


General References


Forensic Applications


**Geological and Environmetal Applications**


**Archaeological Applications**


J.T. Smith, Roman Villas: A Study in Social Structure, Ch. 16 "A Model of Development" Routledge, 1997


Engineering Applications

A. Benedetto and L. Pajewski, Civil Engineering Applications of Ground Penetrating Radar. 2015.

GPR challenges and techniques


Software manuals, guides, and references