

APRIL LECTURE & AGM

Wednesday, April 20th, 2016

University of Calgary

****ES 162****, 7:30pm

Border Warriors: Castrum Cumidava in the Context of the Roman Occupation of Dacia

Dr. Álvaro Ibarra, Department of Art and Architectural History, College of Charleston

Abstract: The emperor Trajan completed his conquest of Dacia (present-day Transylvania) in 106 CE. However, the Dacians were neither pacified nor ever fully romanized. The latest research conducted by the lecturer (via Braşov Archaeological Projects) suggests the presence of an ongoing native insurgency, one fought more intensely on the eastern frontier of Dacia through the end of the Roman occupation, 271 CE. Through remote-sensing methods, ArcGIS, and landscape analysis, project contributors discovered a significant change in Roman military operations in eastern Dacia, an approach we are confident in effectively calling a counter-insurgency. The Roman counter-insurgency is evidenced in a shift from forts designed to support open-field battles to those positioned at key choke points and manned by smaller, mixed, mobile units suited for guerrilla warfare. To compliment this overarching view of Roman strategy, BAP researchers also examined the material remains and data sets from the excavation of one specific frontier fort: Castrum Cumidava. In completing the narrative of the border experience in eastern Dacia, a more intimate picture of everyday life emerged from the common artifacts and personal effects utilized by the Roman auxiliary soldier stationed in a foreign and hostile environment. In this lecture, the speaker will relate how the everyday experiences of the inhabitants of a site like Castrum Cumidava are key to understanding the complex and violent interactions between Romans and Dacians, from the personal motivations of a career soldier to the political motivations of emperors.



Photo by Pete Truch

Biography: Álvaro Ibarra is a native Texan. He received three degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, including a Ph.D. in Art History. Dr. Ibarra has twelve seasons of archaeological field experience in Rome, Pompeii, Tuscany, Provence, and Romania. His research concerns Roman provincial art and architecture and the cultural effects of Roman military interventions in the provincial landscape. Professor Ibarra is currently Assistant Professor in the Department of Art History at the College of Charleston. He is also the director of Brasov Archaeological Project, an ongoing study of the Roman occupation of Dacia, present-day Transylvania. His multi-national, multi-disciplinary team consists of archaeologists, classicists, geologists, art historians, and U.S. Army veterans.



Photo by Pete Truch