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In the beginning there was a timber construction... Wooden amphitheatre of Viminacium (Upper Moesia)

This paper is devoted to the wooden amphitheatre discovered during recent archaeological excavations of Viminacium. The amphitheatre is situated *c.* 60 m from the north-western corner of the legionary fortress. It was possible to suggest at least three construction phases, one timber and two stone-timber phases.

The oldest wooden amphitheatre was connected to the legionary fortress and it was built by soldiers. The excavated parts of structure include traces of timber seating framework and traces of posts that supported the sides of the entrances. This amphitheatre dates back to the first quarter of the second century AD and according to the small finds, especially coins, we can assume that it was built soon after Trajan's Dacian wars. Later, during the second and the third century AD it was replaced by a structure made of stone and wood.

Wooden amphitheatres are known from literary sources, while their pictorial evidences from the Roman period are extremely rare. The best known representation of wooden amphitheatre partly built of stone is depicted on Trajan's column. In this paper we will compare discovered parts of the construction with similar structures excavated on the other sites, and also with the amphitheatre displayed on Trajan's column, in order to reconstruct the appearance of Viminacium wooden amphitheatre.