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A monument on Columna Traiani and the archaeological investigations: *Amphitheatrum castrense* from Drobeta

In the scene C¹ from the *Columna Traiani*, right after the inauguration ceremony of the bridge in the presence of the emperor Traian, it is depicted the arrival of Barbarian messengers. The event takes place in Drobeta, as shown in the previous scene. In the background, behind the Barbarian delegation, there are presented many monuments: a camp with a stone wall, a temple with columns, in the interpretation of the historian Radu Vulpe, and a wooden amphitheatre, in the interpretation of the same author.

In the winter of the year 2010, the modifications made in the Porțile de Fier Museum's yard from Drobeta Turnu-Severin (Mehedinți district) have led to the discovery of a stone monument of great proportions, located at approximately 200 metres West of the Roman camp and at approximately 150 metres East of the Roman thermae. A surface of approximately 45 x 35 metres has been dug. On the entire surface, a wall appeared, in the shape of a semicircle, with a radius of approximately 15 metres and a breadth of 0,60 - 0,70 metres, made of river-stone and mortar; it remains so up to a height of 0,50- 2,00 metres. The monument was identified as a Roman amphitheatre. On the Southern side, towards the Danube, in the East, towards the Roman camp, and in the North there were identified the entrances of the amphitheatre.

The archaeological diggings developed between the 15th of July and the 15th of August and between the 15th of September and the 1st of October 2012, made in the West half which remained untouched, had the purpose of discovering the direction of the amphitheatre's wall, establishing its dimensions and the area's stratigraphy. Six sections have been drawn, with the width of 2 metres and the length between 14 and 22 metres, which intersected the amphitheatre's wall. The research stopped at the depth of 2-2,5 metres and traces of Roman, feudal and modern inhabitation were identified. On the basis of these traces, it has been established that the amphitheatre had a slight ellipsoidal shape, with a diameter of 35 x 37 metres. Moreover, the placement of the West gate has also been identified.

The archaeological diggings from 2012 confirm Radu Vulpe's hypothesis, which identified the circular monument from the C scene as being an *amphitheatrum castrense*.

¹ According to R. Vulpe, *Columna lui Traian*, Bucharest, 2002.