

## THE END OF THE BELGRADE MERIDIAN CIRCLE

I. PAKVOR and V. PROTITCH-BENISHEK

*Astronomical Observatory, Volgina 7, 11160 Belgrade-74, Yugoslavia*

*E-mail ipakvor@aob.bg.ac.yu*

*E-mail vprotic@aob.bg.ac.yu*

With deep regret we have to inform the astronomical community of the vanishing of the Belgrade Meridian Circle (BMC). It was completely destroyed by fire on May 10th, 1999.

BMC was one of the three fundamental instruments (Transit Instrument and Vertical Circle are the other two) all with the same aperture and the focal distance (190/2578 mm) that existed at Belgrade Observatory. Since 1970 the observations carried out with this instrument were used in compiling numerous catalogues as this Observatory's contribution to the International Reference Frame (Sadžakov and Dačić, 1989, 1990, Sadžakov *et al.*, 1981, 1982, 1991, 1992, 1996, Sadžakov and Šaletić, 1972, Sadžakov and Damljanović, 1997). For instance, these observations were used in the construction of the Fifth Fundamental Catalogue (FK5) (Sadžakov and Dačić, 1992).

During the last decade we intended to modernize BMC with new electronic equipment (CCD technique) but due to financial problems the undertaking progressed very slowly (Protich-Benishek *et al.*, 1997, Pinigin *et al.*, 1998).

Now all the plans have gone up in flames !

### References

- Pinigin G., Pakvor I. and Shulga, A.: 1998, Modernization of the Belgrade meridian circle, *Serb. Astron. J.*, **158**, 12.
- Protich-Benishek, V., Pakvor, I. and Damljanović, G.: 1997, Progress report on the Belgrade astrometrical instruments and the possibilities of re-integration in modern ground-based observations, *Journées 1997, Systemes de reference spatio-temporels, Prague*, 219.
- Sadžakov, S. and Dačić, M.: 1989, A catalogue of right ascension and declination of FK4 stars. *Astron. Astrophys. Suppl. Ser.* **77**, 411.
- Sadžakov, S. and Dačić, M.: 1990, Belgrade catalogue of double stars, *Publ. Astron. Obs. Belgrade*, **38**, 1.
- Sadžakov, S. and Dačić, M.: 1992, The orientation of the FK5 coordinate system from the Belgrade meridian observations of the Sun and planets, *Bull. Acad. Serbe. Sci. Arts*, **18**, 33.
- Sadžakov, S., Dačić, M. and Cvetković, Z.: 1991, A catalogue of the positions of 290 stars situated in the vicinity of radio sources, *Astron. Journal*, **101**(2), 713.
- Sadžakov, S., Dačić, M. and Cvetković, Z.: 1992, Catalogue of positions of 233 Ondrejov PZT stars observed at Belgrade Observatory, *Bull. Astron. Belgrade*, **146**, 1.
- Sadžakov, S., Dačić, M. and Cvetković, Z.: 1996, A position catalogue of 146 HSL and 78 radio stars observed with the Belgrade meridian circle, *Bull. Astron. Belgrade*, **153**, 1.

- Sadžakov, S., Dačić, M., Šaletić, D. and Ševarlić, B.: 1982, Observations of the Sun and inner planets with the large meridian circle in Belgrade, *Sun and Planetary System, Riedel Publ.*, 445.
- Sadžakov, S. and Damljanović, G.: 1997, The characteristics of the Belgrade meridian circle and its contribution to the fundamental astrometry, *Bull. Astron Belgrade* **155**, 89.
- Sadžakov, S. and Šaletić, D.: 1972, Catalogue of declinations of the latitude programme stars (KSZ), *Publ. Astron. Obs. Belgrade* **17**, 1.
- Sadžakov, S., Šaletić, D. and Dačić, M.: 1981, Catalogue of NPZT programme stars, *Publ. Astron. Obs. Belgrade* **30**, 1.