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SUNDIALS IN ZEMUN FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT DAY

There are four wall sundials in the territory of the Municipality of Zemun today. They were created in their current form in the last two decades. All four belong to the group of declination sundials, reduced to the simplest form: a shadow pointer (polos) placed in the celestial axis and a semicircular dial composed of metal numbers. The three most recent ones – the "Gardoš" Nursing Home (2018), the Faculty of Geography (2013) and the family house (Skadarska 7, 2001) – are not particularly significant for the history of gnomonics in Serbia. The fourth one is. It is a sundial made in 1858 on the house of Gliša Petrović, built in 1828. The designer of the sundial is unknown. The first known mentions and descriptions of the clock come from written historical sources from the beginning of the 20th century. During World War I, the clock and the building probably remained undamaged. The first known photograph of the house (from the 1930s) shows a shadow pointer with a support and a painted dial consisting of two color-framed arched rows (morning and afternoon) with Arabic numerals. During World War II, the building was significantly damaged in an Allied bombing in April 1944, but the clock survived with minor damage. The dilapidated wall in Dubrovacka Street was demolished in 1950 by the then owner, Pavle Petrović, and a new one was erected – on that occasion the first known restoration of the clock was also carried out. It is not known who designed the new clock, probably someone from the Astronomical Observatory in Belgrade, primarily Prof. Vojislav Mišković (1892-1956), the then director of the Observatory and the author of the first scientific text in Serbian on the construction of sundials. Although the original sundial from 1828 was destroyed during the bombing, the new post-war clock was apparently largely faithful to the original and most likely retained the old, authentic shadow pointer. The entire building was protected as a cultural asset in 1951 under the name "House with a sundial". During the renovation of the facade in the late 1990s, which was carried out by the then municipal administration of Zemun without consultation and participation of the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments, the sundial disappeared forever, as the existing facade was completely removed, and with it all the elements of the clock, including the original pole. The new sundial was constructed in 1999 by Dr. Milutin Tadić, in a new materialization (metal numerals instead of painting on the facade). A faithful copy of the sundial could not be made at that time for three reasons: the Institute did not have (and does not have) any documentation about this sundial, the shadow pointer disappeared without a trace, and the only photographs available showed that none of the post-war dials of the sundial were original. As part of this work, calculations and drawings of the hour scale and poles of the sundial were made, which will be submitted to the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of the City of Belgrade.

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