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Summary

WOMEN'S CRAFT SCHOOL IN LESKOVAC 1894–1939

Following the example of the Belgrade Women's Society, the spouses of the industrialists, merchants, craftsmen, doctors, and professors in Leskovac founded the Leskovac Women's Association in 1892. They united in order to take care of poor girls, their vocational education and upbringing, and to engage them in charitable and humanitarian activities. The main goal of the Leskovac Association – the founding of the Women's Craft School, was achieved in 1894. Due to the insufficient number of students and financial problems, the school stopped working in 1898 and did not work until 1908. It started working again with the efforts of the members of the Association in 1909, and, except in the period from 1916 to 1918, when the Bulgarians destroyed the school inventory, when there were neither premises nor teachers, it worked continuously until 1960.

The Women's Craft School was especially important for less affluent families, where girls were trained for traditional women's occupations free of charge. In addition to vocational training, they also acquired general educational knowledge. It became an important factor for the general enlightenment of female youth, both economically and culturally.

According to the existing sources, we may conclude that the Women's Craft School in its 45 years of work, from 1894 to 1939, accomplished its main task, and that was to teach girls tailoring, sewing and embroidery, making folk national embroideries and motifs as well as to preserve these crafts through the work of the school.

Keywords: *Belgrade Women's Society, Women's Association, Women's Craft School, Leskovac.*