
THE STORY OF BELJE

SUMMARY

The exhibition *The Story of Belje* devoted special attention to Belje's technical heritage, showcasing the rich development of industry and mechanization through artifacts, documents, and machines that bear witness to the transformation of the Belje estate into a modern agro-industrial combine. The thematic sections cover key stages of industrialization, from the introduction of steam engines and tractors to the establishment of a closed production cycle. An analysis of Belje's industrial development was prepared, encompassing all major phases of its origin, growth, and transformation.

The machine workshop in Kneževo, founded in 1866, was the central technical and industrial hub of the Belje estate, responsible for the maintenance and production of machinery as well as the development of industrial infrastructure. Alongside, the food industry and the narrow-gauge railway gave a strong impetus to industrialization by enabling the expansion of processing plants and the efficient transport of raw materials and products.

After 1945, Belje transformed into a powerful agro-industrial combine with integrated facilities for the production of food, machinery, and equipment, becoming one of the leading industrial systems in Yugoslavia. The modernization of existing capacities and the construction of new ones – such as the dairy, sugar factory, meat industry, animal feed production, wine-making, and mechanical engineering – enabled a significant increase in efficiency, exports, and employment.

Keywords: Belje, exhibition, industry, 18th-20th century