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## TOURISM VALORISATION OF SITE "LAZAR'S TOWN" IN KRUŠEVAC

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**Abstract:** Kruševac is the town with rich tradition, long history, former Medieval Serbian capital, and today, it is the town which importance is fading. Tourism is observed as an adequate means of town revitalization, due to the fact that Kruševac possesses numerous cultural attractions. It has all the predispositions to become touristic destination based on culture. Tourism evaluation of cultural heritage is of great importance for planning the substantial development of cultural tourism. The aim of this work lies in conducting tourism valorization of the site "Lazar's town", with purpose of examining its multiplicative, but mostly cultural-historical value, and by all means showing the potential that site could have in the process of the development of tourism in Kruševac.

**Key words:** tourism evaluation, heritage, Lazarus town, Kruševac

### Introduction

Kruševac is the town of rich tradition, with long history, former Medieval Serbian capital. The development perspectives of Kruševac and municipality as a whole were and still are unspeakably tied to rich cultural and historical tradition of people who lived and still live in this part of Serbia. Beside favorable geographic position, Kruševac is the town of exceptionally attractive tourism potentials, with great possibilities of developing diversified branches of tourism. The complex "Lazar's town" is of immense importance as far as tourist offer of this town is concerned. This complex is consisted of several significant cultural monuments. Some of them such as the archaeological site, Medieval church "Lazarica", The City museum and contemporary monument of king Lazarus are very important for history and culture of Serbian people. This site is also the space where some cultural events occasionally take place.

Evaluation of touristic destination is a process of evaluation, type of verification and ratification that specific destination with its values deserves the attention of tourists. If the destination gets a positive appraisals during the tourism

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evaluation, her chances to become tourist destination with greater number of tourists are increasing. Objective of tourism evaluation of some destination are all objects, aspects and spaces created by nature or human activity, located on the space upon which the tourism evaluation is conducted and which obtain certain attractiveness for visitors (Hadžić, 2005; Romelić, 2006; Besermenji, 2008; Bjeljic, Ćurčić, 2008). In practice, two methods of touristic evaluation are used. The most popular method is the quantitative-qualitative method. It allows the great freedom in research and evaluation, and is based on six indicators (Ćurčić, 1999). Other, more complex method is Hilary Du Cros evaluation model of cultural assets. Since, it is complex and based on a great number of indicators that examine the value of cultural asset; it is regarded as more appropriate and reliable. After completing the tourism valorization sub-indicators indicate if the objects are proper for tourism development on destination, but only with adequate promotion.

Regions (municipalities) in Republic Serbia have the natural, cultural and historical potentials that can define certain types of tourist offer. This potentials are not used completely as they are partly defined by differences in actual conditions (nature, cultural and historical heritage), and partly by created conditions (availability, infrastructural equipment, service sector, diversity of sport-recreation programs, tourism organizations, etc) (Bjeljac, Brankov, Popović, 2009). In favor of tourism affirmation of some destination, it is necessary to assess the tourism evaluation on its key attractions (Stanojlović, Ivkov-Džigurski, Dragin, 2010), and as the site “Lazar's town” is doubtlessly the main attraction of Kruševac, evaluation of the complex will be implemented. Evaluation of the complex will be conducted on the basis of quantitative-qualitative method, as well as the Hilary Du Cros model of evaluation. The results of the valorization will be put in the position of comparement, so the positive experiences from one method, as well as from other method, would be mutually transferred and applied, if they do not significantly differ.

#### **Tourism valorization of the site “Lazar's town” in Kruševac**

The tourism valorization of site Lazar's town, as cultural-historical monument is the adequate method for the evaluation of tourist attractiveness of the site, but also an important starting point of tourism development plans of municipality of Kruševac. To avoid any kind of subjectivity to happen, in this particular research the specific questionnaire is applied. It was conducted on a sample of 20 experts from different areas relevant to this study, namely, 5 tourism managers, 3 geographers, 3 historians, 3 art historians, 3 urban planners, 1 architect and 2 tourist guides. Also, within this sample, the experts from different regions were

questioned, namely, certain number of experts were from Kruševac (7), Niš (3), Kragujevac (2), Belgrade (5) and Novi Sad (3). During the process of choosing the representative sample, especial attention was made to be assured that all experts possess the awareness and knowledge about this heritage site. Also, all the respondents visited the site "Lazar's town" in Kruševac at least once in last 10 years. Based on their answers and grades on indicators, the average marks of each indicator of tourism valorization of a complex is made, so the realistic value of tourist attractiveness of the site is gained.

### **Hilary Du Cros method of tourism valorization**

Hilary Du Cros (Du Cros, 2000) introduces the process of touristic evaluation of destination, cultural-touristic sub-indicators and the degree of their graduation (Hadžić, 2005). Touristic sector is represented by two sub-indicators: market attractiveness of cultural assets and the factors important for designing of tourism product. Sub-indicators are graded by marks 0 to 5, but certain indicators have different ranks of marks. The grades are later summed up and market attractiveness of cultural assets is evaluated. After that the sum is ranked as: low attractiveness, medium attractiveness, high attractiveness for tourism development. The sector of cultural asset management also contains two sub-indicators: cultural importance and robustness. Sub indicators of this sector are graded by different grades, and the conclusion on sub-indicators of cultural importance/robustness for the sector of cultural asset management is evaluated as sensitivity/low cultural value, medium value, and high value. Based on the conducted analysis, „market attractiveness/robustness matrix” consisting of 9 cells is set up and marked with  $M(i,j)$ , ( $i,j=1,2,3$ ). For every cultural asset it is determined to which cell it belongs, depending on the grade that it previously was assigned in the process of evaluation (Hadžić, 2005; Besermenji, Pivac, 2008). The cells are defined as:

- $M(1, 1)$  - high value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and low market attractiveness,
- $M(1, 2)$  - high value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and medium market attractiveness,
- $M(1, 3)$  - high value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and high market attractiveness,
- $M(2, 1)$  - medium value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and low market attractiveness,
- $M(2, 2)$  - medium value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and medium market attractiveness,
- $M(2, 3)$  - medium value of indicators of cultural

- importance/robustness and high market attractiveness,
- M (3,1) - low value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and low market attractiveness,
- M (3, 2) - low value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and medium market attractiveness,
- M (3,3) - low value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and high market attractiveness.

#### *Market attractiveness of the site*

##### *Ambience*

Complex “Lazar's town” is situated on a hill in the center of Kruševac. These are the remains of medieval town that was built by duke Lazar in 1371 as his capital and fortress. Within it, there is the park with archaeological sites: the main tower, palace remains and city walls, as well as the preserved Medieval church “Lazarica” (Srejšović, 1996). The complex also includes The National museum and the contemporary monument of duke Lazar. The park is nicely arranged. The ambience could be improved, so for now, its grade is 3 (weak 0-1, adequate 2-3, good 4, great 5).

##### *The site renowned beside local area*

The complex “Lazar's town” in Kruševac is the significant cultural-historical site, well renowned, not only in the local area, but also on national level. This site is renowned in the national scope; however, some of the assets are less renowned, such as the sculpture of Lazar and the museum. By this criterion, the site gets grade 3 (not 0, in certain amount 1-3, very well-known 4-5).

##### *The important national symbol*

The site and cultural monuments within it are the symbols of Kruševac, but also the symbols of Medieval Serbia. The grade of its significance as a national symbol is 3, because of the existence of less important assets within it, as well as the strengths of the Belgrade as a capital (not 0, has a potential 1-3, yes 4-5).

##### *Evocative place*

The archaeological park “Lazar's town” presents the remains of Medieval town, built by duke Lazar in 1371, as his capital and fortress (Đidić, 2008) There are numerous historical facts about this site, as well as many legends and epic poems. The stories are usually considered as very interesting for the visitors. By this sub-indicator, the complex is graded 3 (not 0, has a potential 1-3, yes 4-5).

*The site different from other nearby cultural assets*

The complex is different from nearby cultural assets, but not excessively. Although it possesses the unique elements, it is only one of the several preserved medieval fortresses in Serbia. Based on the evaluation of distinctiveness, the site is graded 3 (not 0-1, adequate 2-3, good 4, very good 5).

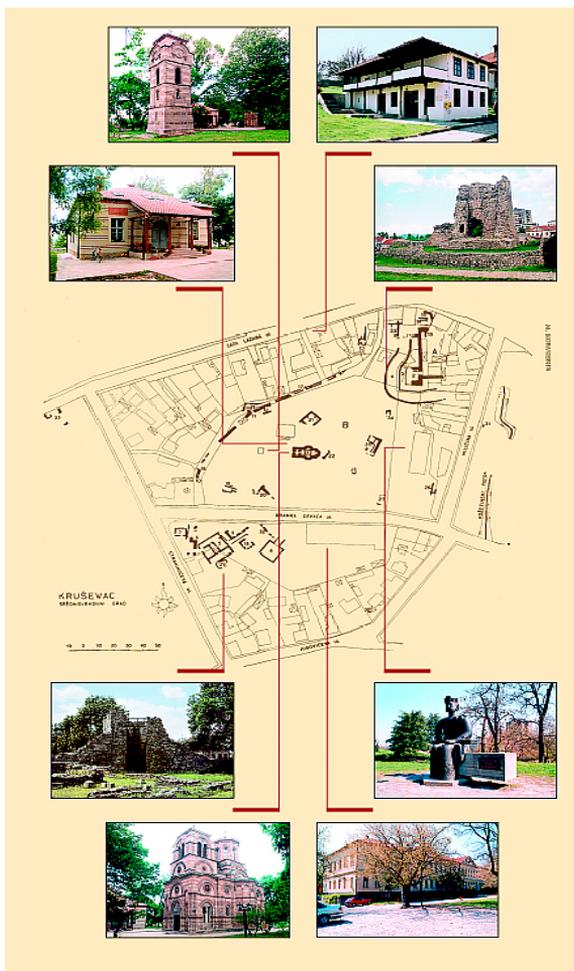


Figure 1. Site "Lazar's town" in Kruševac

*The site's attractiveness for special purposes*

The complex "Lazar's town" is situated on a hill, located in a spacious park ambient. It is suitable for occasional adaptation for special purposes. Within this site, several important events are organized, such as Vidovdan festival, concerts,

exhibitions and performances. The site is assigned grade 4 (not at all 0, has a potential 1-3, very good 4-5).

*Complementary to other tourism products at the destination*

The complex “Lazar’s town” has a great degree of complementariness with other tourism products at the destination, and within the region (cultural tourism, educational tourism, event tourism, religious tourism), so it is graded 4 (not at all 0, has a potential 1-3, very good 4-5).

*Associated with culture*

The site as a whole and all the monuments within the complex are clearly associated with culture. They are the center of numerous cultural activities, for Kruševac, where this site is located, is the cultural center of region. Based on this sub-indicator the site is assigned grade 4. (not at all 0, has a potential 1-3, completely 4-5)

*Tourist activity within the region*

Tourist activity within the region gets stronger and more organized day by day. The tourism organization of Kruševac has the greatest part in it. Anyway, there are no limits in degree of usage and management of this site. It is necessary for the tourism and cultural employees, which would work on promotion of this important historical and cultural site, to be well connected. Grade is 3 (barely none 0, in certain amount 1-3, strong 4-5).

*Factors important for design of tourism product*

*The accessibility of cultural asset*

The accessibility to the site “Lazar’s town” is good, due to its location in the center of Kruševac. The access to all of the cultural assets within the complex is allowed, and all of the assets are open for visitors. The grade for accessibility is 3 (not allowed 0, limited 1-2, allowed access to all assets 3-4).

*Transportation from population center to cultural asset*

The geographical position of Kruševac is auspicious, because it is placed in the central part of Serbia. The traffic position of Municipality of Kruševac is characterized by good connectivity with nearby and distant towns and villages as well as regional units. The transportation to the site is very good, concerning the accessibility from emitive centers to the site, but also the accessibility within Kruševac itself. Access to this location is possible by car, bus and train. The grade is 2 (long distance/difficult access 0, enabled access 1-2, easy access 3).

*The proximity of other cultural assets*

Nearby the complex “Lazar’s town”, within Kruševac, there are several other important cultural assets, which are separate attractions. Objects that deserve to be mentioned are The City hall of Municipality, the most impressive building in Kruševac in neoclassicism built in 1904, the monument Heroes of Kosovo battle, placed at the central square in 1889, but also The Art Gallery and The House of Simić, originating from 19<sup>th</sup> century, and finally The memorial complex “Slobodište” (Freedom) built in 1965 on the place of former occupational camp (Srejović, 1996). Within wider area of Rasina region, there are more important and tourist attractive objects. This sub-indicator deserves the high mark 3 (long distance/difficult access 0, enabled access 1-2, easy access 3).

Table 1. The evaluation of the complex Lazar’s town by H. Du Cross model

Indicators of tourism sector	Value of site <i>Lazar’s town</i>
Ambience	3
The site renowned beside local area	3
Important national symbol	3
Evocative place	4
Different from other nearby cultural assets	3
Attractive for special purposes	4
Complementary to other tourism products at destination	3
Tourism attractiveness in the region	3
Associated with culture	4
Accessibility of cultural asset	3
Transportation from population center to asset	2
The proximity of other cultural assets	3
Service availability	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>

*The service availability*

The service on the site is provided, concerning the information, especially promotional materials. The promotion materials and souvenirs are available in

the National museum and Tourist organization desks. Restaurants and markets on the site are still non existent, but there are some plans for modifying and activating a part of the National museum into a restaurant. The parking space within the complex exists, but is inadequately designed and has small capacity. The grade is 2 (weak 0, adequate 1 - 2, good 3 - 4, and great 5).

After the evaluation of these indicators, the conclusions on attractiveness of cultural asset for tourism sector can be made. As the sum of the points of the sub-indicators of tourism sector at the site “Lazar’s town” is 40, the degree of the market attractiveness of the site is evaluated as medium value. (the scale of attractiveness: low attractiveness 0-20, medium attractiveness 21-40, high attractiveness 41-60)

#### *Sector of cultural asset management*

##### *Historical importance*

The year 1371 is considered the official year of establishment of Kruševac, it is the time of building of the medieval fortress, the capital city of king (duke) Lazar Hrebeljanović. Since then, Kruševac became cultural and trading center of Serbia. The battle of Kosovo which occurred in 1389, June 28<sup>th</sup> (Saint Vid’s Day) was sublimated by various legends. It affected the future generations through the process creation of national identity (Berić, 2002). Kruševac as the former duke Lazar's capital and significant cultural center of Serbia, gets the high grade 2 (low 0, medium 1, high 2).

##### *Aesthetic value*

Aesthetic value of the site as a whole is high, but the values of its parts differ. The medieval fortress “Lazar’s town” was built in typical Serbian-Byzantium style, just like most of the Medieval fortresses in the region. The fortress itself had more basic functional and strategic value then the aesthetic value. On the other hand, church “Lazarica” has the immense artistic value, so it is regarded as the cultural asset of exceptional importance (Ristić, 2001). Other assets within the complex, Sculpture of Lazar, and the National museum of Kruševac has some minor aesthetic value. The grade is 2 (low 0, medium 1, high 2).

##### *Educational value*

Numerous historical events occurred in the site’s territory. Church “Lazarica” is one of the important representatives of Moravian school of art. The national museum of Kruševac was established in 1951 as a vernacular institution with a complex structure. It is visited by a number of tourists, mostly young students during study tours and excursions. The grade is 2 (low 0, medium 1, high 2).

*Social value*

Social importance of the site is based on the fact that it represents the place of local community gathering. It is the gathering place of tourists as well. Here, numerous cultural events and sacral rituals take place, so its contribution to the communication and comprehension among people is large. Therefore, grade is 2 (low 0, medium 1, high 2).

*Scientific value*

The examination of archaeological remains of this complex is still unfinished, thus it attracts a number of archaeologists, historians and other scientists. The grade indicating the scientific value of the site is 2 (low 0, medium 1, high 2).

*Rareness of the cultural asset at the destination*

The complex "Lazar's town" differs from nearby cultural assets, but not excessively. It is one of the several preserved medieval fortresses and old towns that are common in Serbia and are mainly built in Serbian-Byzantine style. Even though "Lazarica" has unique elements of the Moravian art, it is not a rarity, since in Serbia there is a number of churches and monasteries built in this style. The grade is 1 (usual cultural assets of same type 0, unusual cultural assets of same type 1, rare cultural assets of same type 2, unique cultural asset 3).

*Representativeness of the site*

This complex is by all means the representative site, attractive for tourist visitation since it consists of cultural assets such as: the well preserved church "Lazarica", the remains of the tower, palace, other buildings and city walls as well as the museum with archaeological findings from different periods of time, and a unique sculpture of duke Lazar. Therefore, grade 3 is given (weak 1, good 2-3, great 4).

*The sensitivity of the cultural asset*

The complex "Lazar's town" has the capacity to accept great number of visitors without the risk of damaging the objects, provided that the tourists are educated and aware of the proper norms of behavior during the visit to the cultural asset. However, it is of crucial importance to limit the accessibility of some zones, and prevent the damage on cultural assets. Since the site is still not fully preserved, even though it could accept tourists without being damaged, the sub-indicator of sensitivity is assigned grade 2 (very sensitive 0-1, sensitive 2-3, insensitive 4).

*Reparation status*

This site belongs to the area of integrative conservations, i.e. areas within which

numerous methods of preservation are performed by Departments of Protection of Cultural Monuments based on The Law of Cultural Assets. The restorations were made on all objects within the complex, except the sculpture of duke Lazar. Most of the “Lazar's town” is restored during the period of 1960 to 1969 by the National Museum of Kruševac and the Institute of Cultural Monument Protection of Republic Serbia. So the grade is 3 (weak 0, partly repaired 1, good 2-3, great 4).

#### *Existence of the management plan of the cultural asset*

There is no definite plan of management. Management within this complex is in the hands of the National museum and municipal government. However, it is expected for the complex to be given the new urban regulative plan, which will provide the conditions for the possible revitalization and inclusion of additional contents. Currently, the grade is 2 (not existing 0, in preparation 1-4, exists 5).

#### *Regular monitoring and maintenance*

Regular monitoring and maintenance of the cultural assets are present, but insufficiently. It is necessary to give them additional attention. Monitoring and maintenance of all cultural assets within the complex “Lazar’s town” is done by the National museum of Kruševac. At the moment, it is given grade 2 (weak 0, in certain amount 1-2, good 3-4, great 5).

#### *Possibility of tourists negatively affecting the physical state of the site*

The assumption is that a great number of visitors can have the negative influence, so it is given grade 3 (great possibility 1, medium 2-4, small possibility 5).

#### *Possibilities of modification*

It is assumed that major modification of cultural assets could have the negative influence on the complex. Modifications, as a part of product development, that would not have the negative influence on physical state of cultural asset, are possible and desirable. The grade is 2 (great possibility 1, medium 2-4, and small possibility 5).

#### *Potentials for investments and consultations of the key stakeholders*

Consultations with stakeholders about investments are certainly desirable, but, unfortunately, they are present in minimal dimensions. Main investments in this site are provided by the Municipality government of Kruševac, the National museum and the Tourism organization of Kruševac as well as other sources

within the municipality. At the moment, it gets grade 2 (weak 0, adequate 1-2, good 3-4, and great 5).

Table 2. Evaluation of complex Lazar's town in Kruševac, H. Du Cros model

Indicators of sector of management	Value of site Lazar's town
Aesthetic value	2
Historical value	2
Educational value	2
Social value	2
Scientific value	2
Rareness of the cultural asset at the destination	1
Representativeness of the site	3
The sensitivity of the cultural asset	2
Reparation status	3
Existence of the management plan	2
Regular monitoring and maintenance	2
Possibility of tourists negatively affecting physical state of site	2
Possibilities of modification	2
Potentials for investments and consultations of stakeholders	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>

After evaluation of individual indicators of sector of cultural asset management, the total grade of management sector is in total 29 which is the medium value (the scale: low value 0-20, medium value 21-40, high value 41-60). Based on the analysis and the matrix of "market attractiveness/robustness" given above, it is concluded that the complex "Lazar's town" in Krusevac pertains to the category M (2,2), medium value of indicators of cultural importance/robustness and medium market attractiveness.

### **Quantitative-qualitative method of tourism valorization**

Quantitative-qualitative method is actually the comparative method that uses the qualitative or quantitative terms to implicate the touristic value. The predisposition for applying of tourism valorization is that certain cultural-historical monument posse's touristic properties (rareness, significance, aesthetic values), that with this properties satisfy the tourist needs (Tomka, 1998). With this method the evaluation of certain features of cultural asset is set, and during the evaluation process six indicators are analyzed: geographical position, artistic value, touristic value of ambience, touristic attractiveness and recognition, construction and equipment of the site, and accordance with the surrounding touristic resources. Grade scale in this method is the same for every indicator, with grades from 1 to 5 (grade 1 – insufficient quality, not for tourism activation; grade 2 – sufficient quality, local tourist significance; grade 3 – good quality, regional significance; grade 4 – very good quality, national significance; grade 5 – excellent quality, international tourism significance). After the evaluation of indicators, the average grade is calculated for cultural asset, and based on that grade its value is determined (Tomka, 1998).

#### *Geographical position*

The geographical position of Kruševac is auspicious, because it is placed in the central part of Serbia, at the crossroads of different touristic roadways and nearby of strong dispersive centers. The traffic position of Municipality of Kruševac is characterized by good connectivity to other major cities of Serbia. However, the railway transport is bad, and the none existence of the airport is also considered to be a weakness in accessibility of Kruševac. In accordance to this, indicator is graded with 3.2.

#### *Artistic value*

The complex of Lazar's town is constituted of two separate cultural assets of great national importance: the fortification complex and the medieval church Lazarica, as unique monuments of Morava art school. The complex is in fact, the remain of a medieval fortress and capital court of duke Lazar Hreveljanović, and certain parts of this complex symbolize the typical Serbian medieval architecture. The average grade is 4.8.

#### *Tourist value of the ambience*

This indicator is of rather high value. The tower is within small nature park space on the hill in town center. Park space is adequately managed, but additional improvements are possible, so the grade is 3.8.

*Touristic attractiveness and recognition*

Complex Lazar's town is a very attractive site, in accordance to its historical and national importance, as a symbol of a medieval capital of Serbia. The position and preservation level of this heritage asset make it attractive for tourist visitation. Nevertheless, as a consequence of insufficient affirmation of fortresses and this type of heritage in Serbia, its overall recognition is graded with 3.6.

*Construction and equipment of the space*

Interior of the fortification is partly constructed and equipped. Pathways and recreational park zones are arranged, the access to most attractive elements of the fortress is enabled, and lightings are put. However, better communal infrastructure and tourist signalization, parking space and shops are lacking, so the grade 2.8.

*In accordance to the surrounding touristic resources*

Complex Lazar's town in Krusevac is the most attractive heritage site in the town and in the region, and due to its characteristics it is totally in accordance with other heritage monuments in the region and in Serbia as whole. The average grade is 4.2.

Table 3. Evaluation of complex Lazar's town by quantitative-qualitative method

Indicators	Value of site <i>Lazar's town</i>
Geographical position	3.2
Artistic value	4.8
Touristic value of the ambience	3.8
Touristic attractiveness and recognition	3.6
Construction and equipment of the space	2.8
In accordance to the surrounding tourist resources	4.2
<b>Average grade</b>	<b>3.7</b>

Based on conducted quantitative-qualitative method of tourism valorisation, the conclusions can be drawn about the value of the site Lazar's town in Kruševac. Furthermore, the total grade of overall tourism value of the complex Lazar's town in Kruševac is 3.7, which rank it in the complexes **of the national importance**, as well as of **very good quality**. Based on this, this site has also the high tourism value.

### Conclusions

Through examination and comparison of several indicators from both conducted methods of tourism valorization, it shows that in many aspects, the given results match each other. According to that, they can be considered as relevant for the evaluation of the appropriateness of tourism development. As a tourism valorization is conducted by using the representative sample of experts from different area, by questionnaire analysis shown the significant differences in opinions and evaluation of this cultural-historical monument. So to speak, the experts from Kruševac, Niš and Kragujevac gave the higher grades to certain elements of the site than the experts from Belgrade and Novi Sad did. Such a case can be regarded as a certain dose of subjectivity, but also as a higher degree of knowledge of the site itself. By implementation of questionnaire, wherein the different aspects concerning the adequate knowledge about the site from the pointview of respondents, the more realistic grading of the value of the site „Lazar's town“ was obtained. According to conducted analysis of both methods of tourism valorization, it shows that tourism value of the complex „Lazar's town“ is very good, or, that the complex is of the national importance (grade 3.7 based on the quantitative-qualitative method), whereas, the complex belongs to the category M (2,2) – medium value of indicators of cultural significance/robustness and medium market attractiveness (based on the matrix of the model by Du Cros, 2000).

Even though it is positioned on the borderline of medium and high value, this cultural asset is among the most attractive monuments of cultural heritage of Serbia. This is the consequence of the fact that a number of cultural monuments of this type is in bad shape, are not touristically built and affirmed. Therefore, the conclusion is that this site is appropriate for tourism development, as an most attractive marker of tourist offer of Kruševac. The examination and comparison of certain indicators of tourism valorisation at large scale the results are the same. Therefore, they are considered to be relevant for the evaluation of the appropriateness of the site for tourism development. The value of the tourism potential of the heritage complex is not final and immutable. It is possible to significantly improve the value of the complex by using the adequate tourism development tools, interpretation and marketing. Rich and famous past and numerous heritage monuments are only few facilities that are attractive for tourists. Cultural-historical complex “Lazar’s town” has the exceptional value for Kruševac and wider region, With its attractiveness and better organization, it can obtain significant visits of national and foreign tourists in the future.

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