

Bosnian Chardaklia House: The Gradasevic Family House in Gradacac

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Abstract— The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac is located on a gentle slope of northwestern exposure, with views of the Gradacac town, at the foot of the fortress with the Husein-captain Gradasevic tower (Geographic coordinates: 44°52'36.72"N, 18°25'19.76"E, Elevation: 139 m). This house was built by Osman-captain Gradasevic (1786), father of Husein-captain (1802 – 1834). The last extension and adaptation of this house was done in 1868, when some rooms lost their authenticity due to partitioning and the insertion of sanitary equipment. Until 1944, the house was surrounded by a wall, inside which there was an intimate family yard - the 'women's courtyard'. Outside the wall there was a dormitory for men, a stable ('ahar') and a stable. The house is still owned by people from the Gradasevic family. Given the time the house was built and the fact that it has been in continuous use for more than three centuries, there have been occasional reconstructions and adaptations. Aware of its historical and architectural-ambient value, its users from all generations have maintained the authenticity of the architectural and construction corpus of houses, while its interior decoration, very carefully, followed the times, that is, new needs and ways of living.

Keywords— Bosnian Chardaklia House, Gradacac, Gradasevic family

I. INTRODUCTION

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a multi-ethnic and multicultural country where the three most numerous nations (Bosniaks, Serbs and Croats) and a large number of national minorities live. Thanks to its geographical position, it had a turbulent history in which the pressures of East and West, North and South collided. The bosnian chardaklia house is the most valuable example of vernacular architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, characteristic of all its peoples [1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15].

The house of the Gradasevic family in Gradacac is located on a gentle slope of northwestern exposure, with views of the town of Gradacac, at the foot of the fortress with the tower of Hussain-Captain Gradasevic (Geographic coordinates: 44°52'36.72"N, 18°25'19.76"E, Elevation: 139 m), (Figures 1,2,3). This house was built by Osman-captain Gradasevic (1786), father of Husein-captain (1802 – 1834). The last extension and adaptation of this house was done in 1868, when some rooms lost their authenticity due to partitions and the insertion of sanitary equipment [16]. Until 1944, the house was surrounded by a wall, inside which there was an intimate family yard - the 'women's courtyard' [17]. Outside the wall there was a dormitory for men, a stable and a stable. The house is still owned by people from the Gradasevic family.



Figure 1. The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac. Location Source: Google Earth: Accessed: June 19, 2023.



Figure 2. The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac. Today's appearance of the house

Source: Author (July 20, 2016)



Figure 3. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Orchard right next to the house

Source: Author (July 20, 2016)

II. SPATIAL-FORM CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOUSE

According to its horizontal plan, the Gradascevic family house in Gradacac could be equally classified into two types, the three-section type and the central solution type of the bosnian chardaklia house [4,5]. The external dimensions of the ground floor of the house are 15 x 13 m. In the vertical plan, the house is developed through the ground floor and the first floor (Figure 4). The three tracts of the house are particularly pronounced in the layout of the ground floor, where the central tract is arranged with a hall, that is, the main entrance to the house with a staircase to the first floor, and one room of the apartment, which is developed in the second tract of the horizontal plan. The room of the 'house'/'kuca' is not in the central tract of the horizontal plan (as is the case in most bosnian chardaklia houses) but in one of the tracts, in its corner (Figure 4).

A toilet ('zahod') was arranged next to the 'house'/'kuca', and later an annex was added as a storage room. There used to be an open space from the 'house'/'kuca' towards the attic. In one of the reconstructions, the area of the 'house'/'kuca' received a mezzanine construction towards the first floor, and the role of the former chimney was taken over by a newly built chimney.

One residential unit is organized on the ground floor of the house, which occupies the space of one side tract of horizontal plan, almost half of the central tract and part of the third tract where the sanitary block of the residential unit is arranged (Figure 4). This residential unit has an entrance porch on the south-eastern side of the house, from which you can access the living room (kitchen). To the left and to the right of this space, within one end tract of the horizontal ground floor plan, there is one room each. From the room on the eastern corner of the base of the ground floor, you can go to the room on the northeast side of the house, and from this room to the sanitary block.

The first floor is cantilevered by about 60 cm into the free space on all four sides of the ground floor contour. Due to the floor designed in this way, the house of the Gradascevic family can be included in the type of central solution of the bosnian chardaklia house.

The voluminous, whitewashed and cantilevered floor over the contour of the ground floor also has a symbolic meaning, which is associated with 'the white Hussain-captain tower' (Figure 5). However, even in the horizontal floor plan, three tracts can be clearly seen that follow the tracts from the ground floor. Moreover, the horizontal floor plan of this house

fully follows the functional concept of the three-story Bosnian čardaklija house, since in the central tract there is a divanhana with a staircase where you stay, but it also plays the role of a communication surface, and in the side tracts rooms ('chardaks'), (Figure 4).

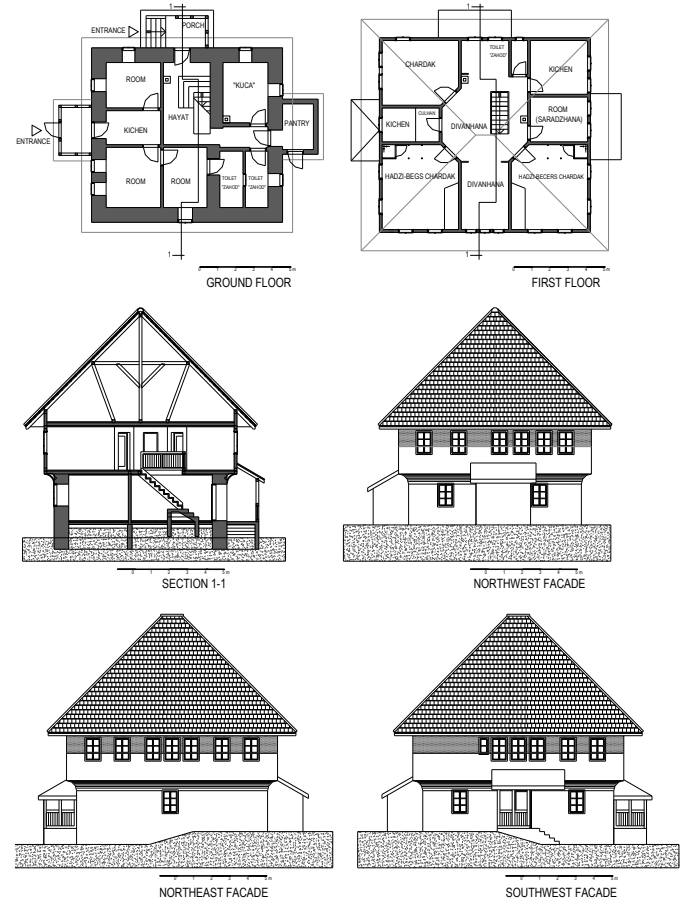


Figure 4. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Disposition
Source: Author (Drawing, 2016)

In the southeastern tract of the horizontal floor plan, two garden sheds are arranged at the corners, while in the middle of the tract there is a kitchen and a space for burning furun (culhan), which is located as part of the musandera, in a large garden shed (Hadzi-beg's chardak). In the north-western section of the horizontal floor plan, three rooms, a chardaks, one of which is large, with a 'musander' (Hadzi Becir-beg's chardak), are arranged (Figure 4). The roof of the house is hipped, with a relatively small slope (about 45°), covered with 'pepper' tiles.

III. CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALIZATION

The walls of the ground floor are made of stone, 90 cm thick, plastered on both sides and whitewashed. The walls of the first floor are made of bricks. Considering the dimensions of the house on the first floor, the roof is extremely voluminous, but harmonious in the overall architectural physiognomy of the house (Figures 2,4). The construction of the roof is an engineering demanding 'triple chair' - one upright and two inclined chairs (Figure 4).



Figure 5. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. The impressive, huge volume of the floor, which is cantilevered into the space over the contour of the ground floor, is reminiscent of the 'white tower of Hussein-kapetan'. Source: Author (July 20, 2016)

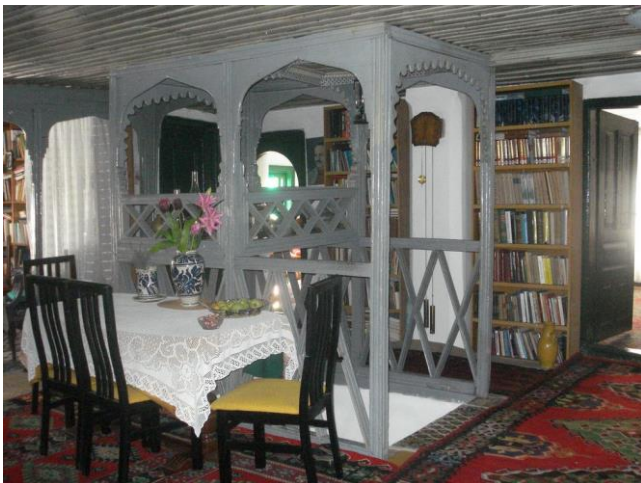


Figure 6. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Staircase exit from the ground floor to the lower divanhana Source: <https://bastina.ba/gradascevic-kuca-u-gradacac/>, Accessed: 15.04.2016.



Figure 7. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Arrangement of the divanhana Source: <https://www.bosanskehistorije.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=710>, Accessed: 15.04.2016.

The inter-floor constructions, ground floor – first floor and first floor - attic, are made of wooden beams on which, on the upper side, wooden floors are laid, and on the lower side, a wooden ceiling ('shishe'). In some rooms the 'shishe' is simple, and in the rooms in the corners of the floor ('begovski coskovi') the shishe is made more richly - with decorative slats at the joint of the boards and an emphasized central part of the ceiling in a rich woodcarving design (Figures 6,7,8).



Figure 8. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Ceiling in the beg's chardak Source: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/kula-zmaja-od-bosne/26905875.html>, Accessed: 15.04.2016.

IV. DOORS AND WINDOWS

As the house has had several adaptations since its construction (1786) until today, some elements of the opening have been changed over time, while others have remained in their original state. The interior doors on the porches have the original design, but they too have lost much of their authenticity due to painting (Figure 9).



Figure 9. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Doors on the chardaks Source: <https://www.bosanskehistorije.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=710>, Accessed: 15.04.2016.

The windows have a rectangular profile, single, double-hung, with three panes in each wing (Figures 10,11).



Figure 10. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Windows in the ground floor residential unit

Source: Author (July 20, 2016)



Figure 11. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Doubling and tripling windows (both on the ground floor and on the first floor), with a visible effort for aesthetics, gives the space richer natural lighting and airiness

Source: Author (July 20, 2016)

V. SPECIFIC ELEMENTS OF SPACE EQUIPMENT

The house of the Gradašević family in Gradačac has many preserved original elements of interior decoration (Figures 12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20). Divanhana with stairs (lower divanhana, oriented to the southwest, i.e. to the orchard) is a space for rest, leisure, work, and spacious communication. The house of the Zaimović family in Gornji Zovik near Brcko has a similar arrangement of the floor, with a 'lower' and an 'upper' sofa bed [6]. Bosnian carpets as a floor covering contribute to the feeling of warmth in this space. The rooms have 'three-part batteries' ('musandera') in which there are three compartments - for storing bed linen, a stove for heating and bathrooms ('hamamdzik'), wardrobes and rafters. The house has a library of books with family seals.

The upper divanhana (north-eastern part of the divanhana) is arranged like a courtyard of an oriental-type townhouse (Figure 13). A minderluk with pillows, a brazier for serving coffee, a row of three windows, a Bosnian carpet and serjada on the floor give this space a high level of aesthetic comfort. Portraits of members of the Gradascevic family do not belong to the original Islamic tradition, but are a custom in Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Figure 12. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Lower divanhana

Source: <http://www.bosanskehistorije.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=710>, Accessed: 15.04.2016.



Figure 13. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Upper divanhana

Source: <http://www.bosanskehistorije.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=710>, Accessed: April 15, 2016



Figure 14. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Left: view from the divanhana area into the 'big chardak' (Hadzi Becir-beg's chardak). Right: arrangement the divanhana

Source: <http://www.bosanskehistorije.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=710>, Accessed: April 15, 2016



Figure 15. The Gradascevic family house in Gradacac. Built-in 'three-part battery' ('musandera')

Source: <https://bastina.ba/gradascevic-kuca-u-gradacac/>, Accessed: June 19, 2023.

The chardak is arranged in the same way as these rooms are arranged in an oriental style city house: a 'musandera' along the inner wall, opposite a row of windows, a 'minderluk'

with pillows, a 'mangal', carpets on the floor... Portraits on the wall do not belong to the Islamic tradition, but they fit into the context of this house (which is a house of professional soldiers).



Figure 16. The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac. Sofa for sitting ('minderluk') in the chardak

Source: <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/kula-zmaja-od-bosne/26905875.html>, Accessed: June 19, 2023.



Figure 17. The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac. Chest for keeping valuables ('sehara')

Source: <https://bastina.ba/gradasevica-kuca-u-gradaccu/>, Accessed: June 19, 2023.



Figure 18. The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac. Gallery of original interior arrangement equipment

Source: <https://bastina.ba/porodicna-kuca-gradasevica/>, Accessed: June 19, 2023.



Figure 19. The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac. The exhibition of weapons on the wall of the chardak is a reminder of the tradition of the Gradasevic family, as captains and noble-heroes (beys).

Source: <http://www.bosanskehistorije.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=710>, Accessed: April 15, 2016



Figure 20. The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac. The composition with portraits of the Gradasevic brothers (sons of Osman-bey Gradasevic) fits into the architectural and interior design of the house.

Source: <http://www.bosanskehistorije.com/forum/viewtopic.php?t=710>, Accessed: April 15, 2016

VI. CONCLUSION

The Gradasevic family house in Gradacac is one of the oldest residential buildings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general, which has been used continuously since its construction until today. This house is not yet included in the list of national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The condition of the physical body of the house, its complex (location in the Gradacac town, a huge and rich orchard, for example) and a family that has all ages of generations are the best answer to the question: how to protect and preserve the architectural and cultural heritage? This house (complete with an overview of the state of all buildings that are 'under state protection') provides the answer. Architectural cultural-historical heritage best preserves life, that is, its primordial and meaningful use. Given the time the house was built and the fact that it has been in continuous use for more than three centuries, there have been occasional reconstructions and adaptations. Aware of its historical and architectural-ambient value, its users from all generations have maintained the authenticity of the architectural and construction corpus of houses, while its interior decoration, very carefully, followed the times, that is, new needs and ways of living.

The Commission for the Preservation of National Monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina, by its Decision no. 02-35-83/04 of November 2, 2004 declared the Building Complex - Old Town in Gradačac a national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina^[18].

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