



Bosnian chardaklia house: The smajlovic family house in cehaje near srebrenik

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Abstract

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. Cehaje is a village in the immediate vicinity of the Srebrenik town (Geographic coordinates: 44°43'01.31"N, 18°29'36.86"E, Elevation: 216 m). The Smajlovic family house was built in the middle of the 19th century on a west-facing slope, about 1 km northeast of the center of Srebrenik. From the time of construction to the present day, the house has undergone several constructions and adaptations, but its original values have been preserved. The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik, according to the disposition of its horizontal plans, belongs to the three-section Bosnian chardaklia house, with the specifics of the house in the northern and northeastern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In the vertical plan, the house is developed through the basement, ground floor and first floor. This house has many similarities with the Osmic family house in Mala Brijesnica near Gracanica and with the Mara Popovic house in Gracanica.

Keywords: Bosnian Chardaklia House, Cehaje near Srebrenik, Smajlovic family

1. 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 čardaklija house is the most valuable example of vernacular architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, characteristic of all its peoples ^[1, 2, 3, 4, 5].

Cehaje is a village in the immediate vicinity of the town of Srebrenik (Geographic coordinates: 44°43'01.31"N, 18°29'36.86"E, Elevation: 216 m). The Smajlovic family house was built in the middle of the 19th century on a west-facing slope, about 1 km northeast of the center of Srebrenik (Figures 1, 2). From the time of construction to the present day, the house has undergone several constructions and adaptations, but its original values have been preserved.



Source: Google Earth: Accessed: June 16, 2023.

Fig 1: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Location



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 2: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Today's appearance of the house

2. Spatial-form characteristics of the house

The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik, according to the disposition of its horizontal plans, belongs to the three-section Bosnian chardaklia house, with specific

features of houses in the northern and northeastern parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina [6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14] (Figure 3). In the vertical plan, the house is developed through the basement, ground floor and first floor (Figure 3). This house has many similarities with the Osmic family house in Mala Brijesnica near Gracanica and with the Mara Popovic house in Gracanica [5, 6].

The ground floor of the house is accessed in part of its central tract, which was originally arranged as a 'house' ('kuca'), with an open space above the hearth, up to the attic. From the outside space, you first access a narrow vestibule with a staircase to the first floor, and then the living room area ('kuca').

Today, the central section of the ground floor is the living room area, from which access to the 'big room' developed in one of the two end sections of the ground floor (Figure 4) and to two rooms developed in the other end section of the ground floor.

The central tract at the base of the ground floor corresponds to the divanhana space on the first floor (Figures 5, 6). Similar to the house of the Bugilović family in Gornja Tuzla [7], this house also has an 'upper' and a 'lower' divanhana (Figures 3, 5). From the divanhana area, you can access the 'big chardak', two chardaks and the 'small chardak' (Figures 3, 6, 7).



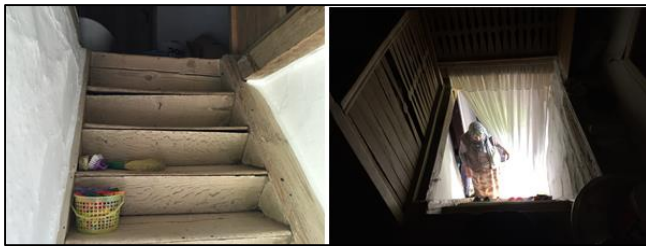
Source: Author (Drawing, 2016)

Fig 3: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Disposition



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 4: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. The 'big room' on the ground floor



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 5: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Staircase ('basamaci') ground floor-first floor



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 6: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Left: divanhana area. Right: the area of the 'small chardak'



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 7: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. The area of the 'big chardak'

3. Construction and materialization

The walls of the basement are partially made of crushed stone (thickness 80 cm), and for the most part in a wooden skeleton with a brick filling (Figure 8). A similar approach to the materialization of the basement walls is visible on the Osmic family house in Mala Brijesnica near Gracanica^[5]. The walls of the floor are made of wooden skeleton ('bondruk') with adobe filling (Figure 8).

Looking at the Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik, one gets the impression that it is a house of rich people, which, as a physical structure, is an expression of the high mastery of its builders. Thanks to its spatial development through three floors, and especially the cantilever overhangs of the floor outside the contour of the ground floor, the obvious intention of its builders was that the house, to its observers from the side, appears like a 'tower' ('kula')^[10] (Figure 8).



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 8: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Construction and materialization of the house

The inter-floor construction on all levels is made of hewn wooden beams with massive wooden floors. The ceilings of the rooms on the ground floor and on the first floor are made of wood ('shishe'), with a visible effort to have aesthetic qualities. Since the intermediate floor construction between the ground floor and the first floor is made of linear structural elements (wooden beams), the cantilevered floor beyond the contour of the ground floor was a serious engineering-master's request (Figures 8, 9).

On the wooden floors are spread woolen carpets (somewhere original 'Bosnian', and somewhere industrially produced, which is more recent), (Figures 10, 11).



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 9: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Cantilever overhang of the first floor beyond the contour of the ground floor



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 10: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Left: wooden ceiling in the 'great room'. Right: Wooden ceiling in the 'big chardak'

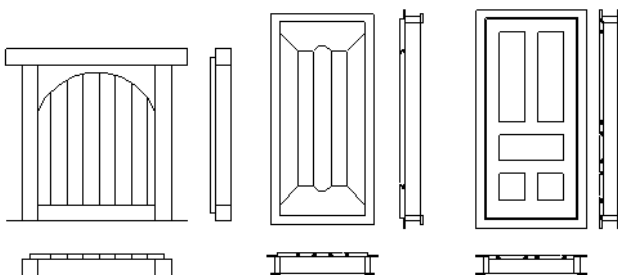


Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 11: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Left: wooden ceiling ('shishe') in the 'small chardak'. Right: treatment of surfaces in the divanhana area

4. Doors and windows

Opening elements, both doors and windows, have a wide range of designs, where some are preserved in their original solutions and some are more recent (Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17).



Source: Author (Drawing, 2016.)

Fig 12: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Different door designs

The entrance door to the basement area ('storehouse'/'magaza') is of an archaic design, made of rough-hewn wooden planks and with an arched lintel made of wood that suggests the importance of the room and a preference for aesthetic qualities (Figure 13).



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 13: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Entrance door to the basement area ('storehouse'/'magaza')

Some interior doors have been preserved in their original design. The door leaf is made of ash wood, it is finely processed and without any paint coating (Figure 14). Some interior doors are of more recent design (from the 1950s) and are painted brown (Figure 15, left).



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 14: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. Door on the 'small chardak'



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 15: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik.

Left: (new) door at the entrance to the 'big room' from the area of the former 'kuca'. Right: Door on the 'big chardak'

The windows are double-hung with three panes in one wing. The wooden elements are painted brown and, apparently, regularly maintained (Figures 16, 17).



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 16: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. The surface of the sidewalk around the house is made of cobblestones



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 17: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik.

Left: windows on the ground floor. Right: window on the chardak

5. Conclusion

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 čardaklija house is the most valuable example of vernacular architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, characteristic of all its peoples.

The physical structure of the house of the Smajlović family in Cehaje near Srebrenik is, for the most part, preserved, with the fact that many of its elements have been changed in relation to the original state (Figure 18). The central tract of the ground floor, the 'kuca', lost its original appearance (floor made of rammed earth, open hearth), but still remained the area of the 'living room'. Traces of former windows are visible on the outer walls of the house, which were once bricked up [15, 16].

The similarity of this house with houses of this type in the area around Gracanica should be emphasized, where the disposition of the horizontal plans was designed in such a way as to allow the vertical division of the house into two independent residential units [5,6]. The architectural-historical and ambient values of this house are great, which is why it should be included in the list of national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Source: Author (June 4, 2016.)

Fig 18: The Smajlovic family house in Cehaje near Srebrenik. The house offers wide and distant views

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