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## Bosnian chardaklia house: The kantarevic family house in klupe village near velika kladusa

**Ahmet Hadrovic**

Faculty of Architecture, University of Sarajevo, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

\* Corresponding Author: **Ahmet Hadrovic**

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### Abstract

The Kantarevic family house is located in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa (Geographic coordinates: 45°12'07.75"N, 15°52'02.22"E, Elevation: 183 m). The house is situated on flat ground, on the property of the Kantarevic family, 3 km away from the Vrnograc-Velika Kladusa road, in the local community of Podzvizd. The house is 1.65 km from the Bosnia and Herzegovina-Croatia border. Mr. Mehmed (Mehmed) Kantarevic (born in 1932) lives in the house, which was built at the beginning of the 20th century, as a single man. Although it is about a hundred years old and an extremely neglected area, the house of the Kantarević family in the Klupe village onear Velika Kladusa still has a completely preserved physical structure in all its elements. The house is not inhabited, but it is under the constant supervision of its owner. After a detailed inspection of the space and construction of the house, one gets the impression that it just needs to be cleaned, which can be brought to the proctor of a wide range of usability. This house has exceptional architectural-constructive and historical-ambient values, and the professional public and all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not lose sight of this building, so that it does not disappear.

**Keywords:** Bonian Chardaklia House, Klupe village near Velika Kladusa, Kantarevic 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 chardaklia house is the most valuable example of vernacular architecture in Bosnia and Herzegovina, characteristic of all its peoples [1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16]. The Kantarevic family house is located in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa (Geographic coordinates: 45°12'07.75"N, 15°52'02.22"E, Elevation: 183 m), (Figures 1,2). The house is situated on flat ground, on the property of the Kantarevic family, 3 km away from the Vrnograc-Velika Kladusa road, in the local community of Podzvizd. The house is 1.65 km from the Bosnia and Herzegovina-Croatia border. Mr. Mehmed (Mehmeda) Kantarevic (born in 1932)<sup>1</sup> lives in the house that was built at the beginning of the 20th century, as a single man. Although it is about a hundred years old and an extremely neglected area, the Kantarevic family house in the Klupe village near Velika Kladusa still has a completely preserved physical structure in all its elements. The house is not inhabited, but it is under the constant supervision of its owner. After a detailed inspection of the space and construction of the house, one gets the impression that it just needs to be cleaned, which can be brought to the proctor of a wide range of usability. This house has exceptional architectural-constructive and historical-ambient values, and the professional public and all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not lose sight of this building, so that it does not disappear.

<sup>1</sup> The author visited this house on July 25, 2016. years. Mr. Spaho (Resid) Husidic (born in 1958) was the guide and assistant to the author in filming the object. The house was littered with various things, both outside and inside, which made filming difficult for the Author. It seems that the intention of the owner of the house is to deliberately make the object 'untidy' so that with its pristine beauty it does not 'attract' anything that could harm the object.



*Source:* Google Earth: Accessed: June 20, 2023.

**Fig 1:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Location



*Source:* Author (July 25, 2016.)

**Fig 2:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Today's appearance of the house

## 2. Spatial-form characteristics of the house

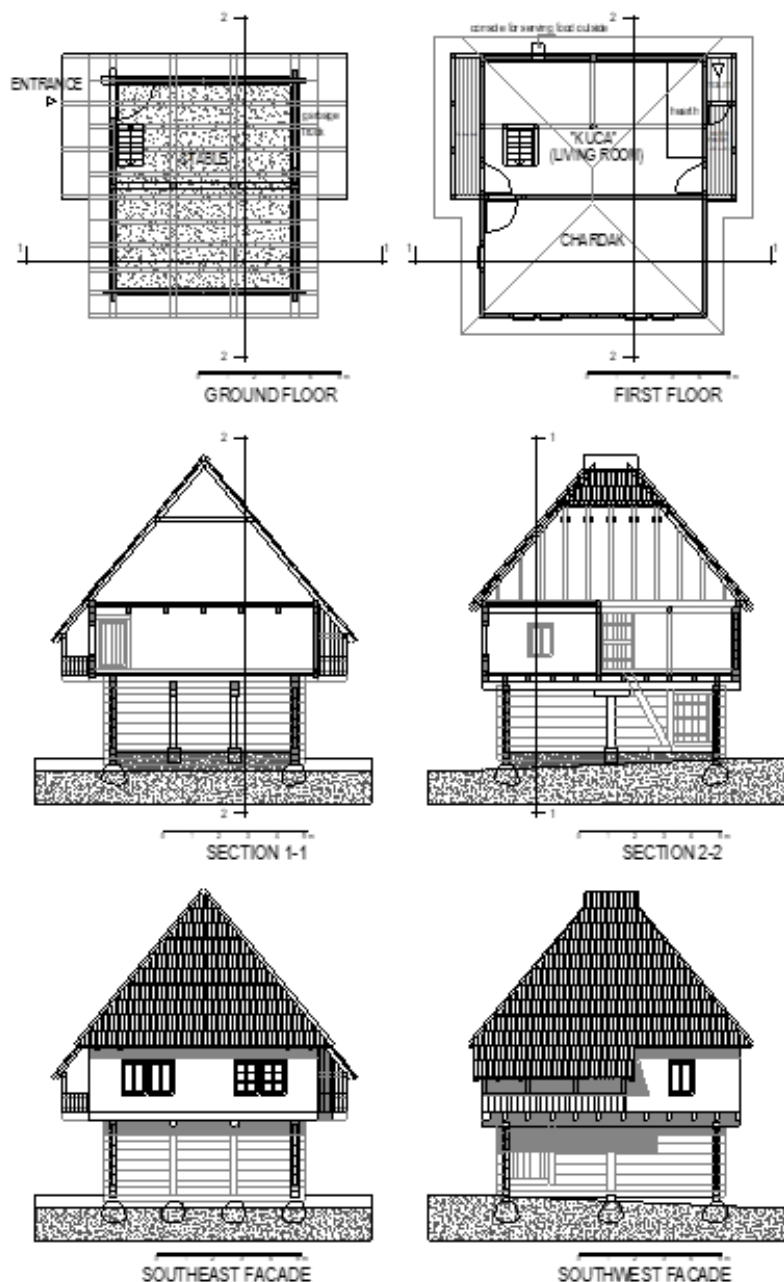
The Kantarevic family house in the Klupe village near Velika Kladusa, according to the disposition of the horizontal plan, belongs to the type of two-tracts bosnian chardaklia house with the specifics of the houses in the Bosnian Krajina. These specifics refer to the arrangement of the ground floor of the

house as a barn and the first floor as a space for housing, the existence of a cantilevered annex on the main body of the house in which the water storage ('waterhouse'/'vodnica') and sanitary facilities are located, and the cantilevered letting of the residential level of the floor into the space, outside the contour of the ground floor, on all sides of the horizontal plan

(Figure 3). This house, however, also has its own specifics: a cantilevered divanhana on the front of the house (which in the horizontal plan of the house stands symmetrically with the usual annex of a Krajina house, in relation to the central plane of symmetry), and one entrance to the house, for the apartment and for the barn (Figures 3,4).

On the ground floor of the house, as already mentioned, there is a barn (Figure 5), and a single-legged wooden staircase leading to the floor where the living quarters are arranged. A single-legged wooden staircase from the ground floor leads to the first floor area, to the first section, where the 'house' area with a fireplace, i.e. the living room area, is arranged (Figure 6). From this space there is access to a relatively large room that occupies the entire tract of the horizontal floor plan, to the area of the sofa bed, on one side, and to the area of the annex with the 'waterhouse'/'vodnica' and sanitary facilities, on the other side of the house. Although of modest basic

dimensions, the divanhana built in this house testifies to people's need to 'have a divanhana in the house', which always symbolizes a higher level of human needs, i.e. a richer housing culture. It should be emphasized that in the tract where the area of the 'house'/'kuća' is arranged, in its inter-floor construction ground floor-first floor, a relatively thick layer of compacted clay with shavings of straw and chaff is made as a floor covering, which ensures fire safety of the wooden elements of the mezzanine structure and the house as a whole. From the space of the 'house'/'kuća', communication with the space of the attic was achieved by means of a permanently installed ladder. In one wall of wooden logs in the area of the 'house'/'kuća', a special opening (similar to a counter) was made, through which food was taken, first to a wooden console on the outside of the wall, and then lowered to the ground outside with a rope. This 'service elevator' solution is unique in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Figures 3,7).



Source: Author (Drawing, 2016)

Figure 3. The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Disposition



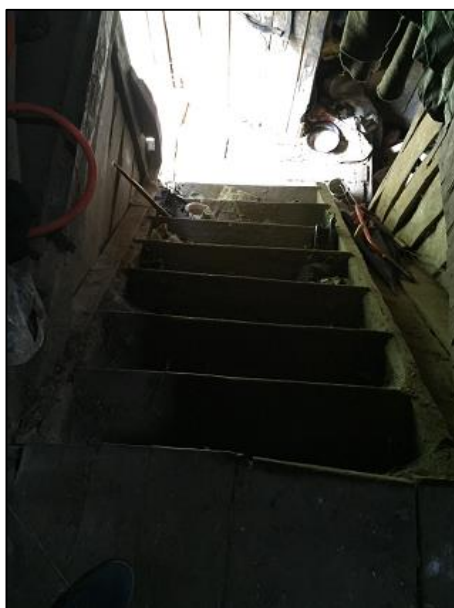
*Source:* Author (July 25, 2016.)

**Fig 4:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Cantilevered divanhana above the entrance to the house



*Source:* Author (July 25, 2016.)

**Fig 5:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Barn on the ground floor of the house



*Source:* Author (July 25, 2016.)

**Fig 6:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. A wooden staircase ('basamaci') leads from the ground floor to the first floor, into the living area of the house



Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

**Fig 7:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. A 'counter' in the wall of the 'house' through which the food was taken outside, onto the shelf, and then tied to the ground with a rope

### 3. Construction and materialization

The foundations of the house were made as a series of stones in discontinuity, on which, in a horizontal position<sup>2</sup>, strong beams-cornerstones made of oak wood were laid (Figure 8). The ground floor is structurally divided into two tracts, where two wooden columns resting on stone foundations carry a strong wooden beam (the demarcation line of the tracts) on which, transversely to its direction, the beams of the ground-floor mezzanine structure are supported (Figure 9). The mezzanine floor-attic construction was made in a similar way (Figures 10, 11). The roof of the house is hipped, with a large slope, relatively voluminous, covered with shingles. Since

the wooden structure of the roof and its wooden covering (shingles) are protected from rotting and insects by permanent fumigation, the absence of fumigation causes the sudden deterioration of the roof, first its covering and then the roof structure, and then the entire building. In this house (similarly to houses in other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina), after the use of the open hearth and the smoking of the roof had stopped, sheet metal (sometimes made of ordinary barrels) was placed over the wooden cover in order to preserve the roof structure, that is, the building as a whole (Figures 2,12).



Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

**Fig 8:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Construction and materialization of the house

<sup>2</sup> Here the author emphasizes the 'horizontal position' for the reason that there are examples of houses where the stones in the foundation and the foundation

beam-ceiling are not in the (expected) horizontal position, but in an oblique position, i.e. in the line of the terrain<sup>[11,15,16]</sup>.



Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

Fig 9: The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Ceiling in the barn, towards the first floor



Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

Fig10: The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. The ceiling in the room, towards the attic



Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

Fig 11: The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Wooden ceiling in the room, shelves, some useful items



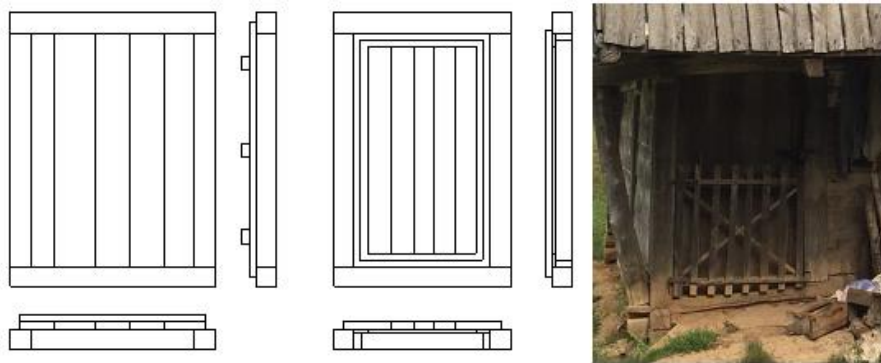
Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

Fig 12: The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. The inner side of the roof shell. The roof structure has been preserved by long-term, permanent fumigation

**4. Doors and windows**

On the Kantarevic family house in the Klupe village near Velika Kladusa, the original opening elements - doors and windows - have been preserved (Figures 13, 14, 15). The entrance door to the house is made of thick boards (thickness 5 cm). In addition to the 'basic' door, there are also small

doors - 'doors' that enable ventilation of the barn when the 'basic' door is open (Figure 13). The doors to the veranda are also made of thick boards, but of a much finer finish. Over time, from the smoke generated on the hearth in the 'house'/'kuća', they acquired a chestnut color (Figure 14).



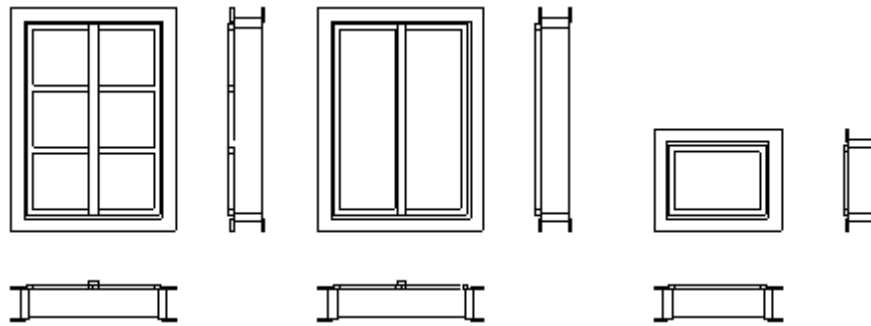
Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

Fig 13: The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. The door at the entrance to the house



Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

Fig 14: The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. Left: The door at the entrance to the room (conservatory). Right: the door to the sofa



Source: Author (July 25, 2016.)

**Fig 15:** The Kantarevic family house in Klupe village near Velika Kladusa. The double windows in the upstairs room emphasize their complex role

## 5. Conclusion

Although it is about a hundred years old and an extremely neglected area, the house of the Kantarević family in the Klupe village near Velika Kladusa still has a completely preserved physical structure in all its elements. The house is not inhabited, but it is under the constant supervision of its owner. After a detailed inspection of the space and construction of the house, one gets the impression that it just needs to be cleaned, which can be brought to the proctor of a

wide range of usability. This house has exceptional architectural-constructive and historical-ambient values, and the professional public and all levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not lose sight of this object <sup>[17]</sup>, so that it does not disappear<sup>3</sup>.

## 6. References

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<sup>3</sup> During a visit to this house (July 25, 2016), the author and his guide, Mr. Spaho Husidic, found the owner of the house, Mr. Mehmed Kantarevic, lying on his back in the shade of a huge tree canopy. Since Mr. Mehmed knew Mr. Spaha, he was pleased by his visit, which helped the Author quickly get into the job of recording the object and talking with Mr. Kantarević about the history of the Kantarevic family and their house. The author, more than anything else, was interested in why an elderly man (Mr. Kantarevic was 84 at the time) was lying outside, under a tree, by the old house of the Kantarevic family (and not in the new house that was built next to the old house), and what he was thinking about. ...

Mr. Kantarevic answered that when he is next to this house, he is not alone, but in the company of all the people who were born in it, where they lived and died, and in the company of all those people who in the time he remembers were in visit this house. It seemed to the author that this answer of Mr. Kantarevic also gave the meaning of writing the book about the Bosnian house čardaklia, which he, at the beginning of the work on the book, could not define so clearly. In addition, the Author recalled looking at the 'essence of the house' that the writer Mehmed-Mesa Selimovic presented (through his literary character Ahmet Sabo) in the novel "Fortress"

(„Tvrdjava“): "The dilapidated family house burned down, it was set on fire by the gypsies when they took shelter for the winter from winter, set on fire inadvertently, carelessly, because it is not theirs. Sometimes I would go to see the blackened walls and dead eyes of a dead building, in which I could not imagine the former inhabitants: it was as if it had always been deserted. I couldn't even imagine myself in that house, once. I wasn't there in my own memories, as if I was someone else. The garden was destroyed, the fruit trees withered, miserable and sad. They asked me to sell, I didn't want to. As if I had hoped that the memories would come back, maybe I will need them... (27) ...That dead past and no present, those black ruins of everything that was, on which I don't intend to build anything, are still somehow connection with something... (37) ...We finished the work, agreed on the sale (of houses, see A.H.), everything in a hurry, as if I was preparing to run away. Because I suddenly felt regret, for no reason, I don't need that adventure, it tied me to my childhood, to the life from which mine originated. I had to preserve the shadows, so that an empty thought would not remain, without a trace and a foothold and sorrow for the lost past. Mine and theirs. Now, I'm starting all over again" (151) <sup>[18]</sup>.



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