



Smajic Family House in the Gorani Village Near Konjic

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Abstract

The Smajic family house in Gorani near Konjic is located on a flat terrain, on a slope with a southeast exposure (geographic coordinates: 43°44'53.02"N, 17°48'08.54"E; altitude: 511 m). The house was built in the mid-19th century. (The author visited this house on August 4, 2016. Mr. Asim (Atifa) Smajic (1947), whose ancestors built this house, helped him in recording the house. Information about the culture of living in the village of Gorani near Konjic was provided to the author by: Smajic (Ahmeta) Zikrija (1933), Hrnjica (Ismeta) Bego (1941), Smajic (Atifa) Asim (1947), Hrnjica (Taiba) Sacir (1961), Smajic (nee Alibegovic) Ajisa (1963), Hrnjica (nee Pirija) Razija (1972).

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1. Introduction

Gorani is a populated place in the municipality of Konjic, located at the foot of the hills Hum and Ilina (altitude 667.50 m, on the way to the slopes of Celinska planina), which is about 28 km from Konjic in the northwest direction. The village of Gorani is located in an area that has been inhabited since prehistoric times. The area is characterized by a combination of natural and cultural values - four necropolises with stećci in the localities of Veliće/Glavičina/Zaselje, Šarčevina, Trnovnik and Klokotje/Roganj-brdo, a Muslim cemetery and the site of a mosque from the 16th century (Hadzi Sahman's mosque). Several features of this area - especially the cave, popularly known as the Cold Cave, the remains of a Roman settlement with an area of about one hectare and the medieval buildings at the Pavlovina site (still not sufficiently researched and documented to determine their value and significance with certainty). The settlement of Gorani developed on one branch of the traffic road, which led from Buturović polje upstream through the valley of the river Neretvica and connected Herzegovina with the mining area of Kresevo and Fojnica. Esad Pasalić^[1] pointed out the existence of traces of Roman communications on the mentioned route, but also the need for further research and confirmation in that direction, and Pavao Andjelic, studying this settlement and its surroundings, found fragments of Roman roof tiles and a large amount of stone on an area of about 1 hectare of land (the hamlet of Kovacevici and Cokoje and the locality of Gromilje). In addition to rough-hewn stone, he also recorded parts of finely carved travertine. Based on the amount of archaeological material and the size of the area where it was found, Pavao Andjelic is of the opinion that it is the ruins of a larger building, primarily an agricultural estate (villa rustica). Fragments of prehistoric pottery were also found west of the Talijanci village at the foot of the Hum hill (slope on the northwest side of the village of Gorani). West of the village of Gorani is the hill of Ilina, mostly covered with low vegetation, and on the top there is a terraced area called Crkvina. In the area, which is covered with vegetation and grassland on the eastern and northern slopes of the hill, a large amount of prehistoric pottery has been found, while the plateau is archaeologically sterile. Erosion has washed away the entire cultural layer so that the stone skeleton of the hill (conglomerate) peeks out from under a thin layer of humus. According to recorded tradition, on the top of the hill there was a church dedicated to St. Elijah, after which the entire hill got its name, as indicated by the names Ilina and Crkvica, as well as the prominent position of the hill. Pavao Andjelic is of the opinion that there was a wooden church in that area, which was built there in honor of Saint Elijah, for protection from storms (the Holy Prophet Elijah is revered by the Slavs as the Thunderer and is a Christianized variant of the polytheistic deities of heaven and thunder

(Zeus, Perun), churches dedicated to him are often located on the tops of hills^[2]. These areas were definitively conquered in mid-1465 with the invasion of the Bosnian sandžak-beg Isabeg Ishaković into the Herzegovinian lands^[2]. Based on the preserved toponymy, traces of medieval nobility have been identified in the settlement. On the royal judge's chair from the village of Bukovica^[2] there is a coat of arms that belonged to a distinguished noble family, as well as an inscription that directly mentions a certain Ivan Pavlovic. Tradition and toponymy still preserve the memory of the noble family of the same name, which had its seat in Gorani. Fra Leon Petrovic states that in addition to the large necropolis in Gorani there are also the graves of the dukes Pavlović, Gosta^[2] and 'Krstjana', and that in Seonica there is also the famous 'table of Pavlovic Ivan', who died there in November 1450^[3]. In the folk tradition recorded by Pavao Andjelic, it is reported that "on the site of the present-day mosque in Gorani there was a church dedicated to the Holy Spirit", while Sefik Beslagic states that about 400 m south of the Velije site is the Pavlovina site, where the remains of 'duvarina' (walls) and a cave that was worked on the inside and is attributed to the Greeks have been documented, and that the court of Ivaniš Pavlović was also located somewhere in that area, as well as the assumption that there could also have been a house of Bosnian Christians somewhere there^[4]. Near the mosque today there is a medieval necropolis with stećak tombstones, characterized by two stećak tombstones with carved 'grandfather's sticks'. Although the present-day Muslim place of worship does not have elements reminiscent of medieval religious buildings, Pavao Andelić is of the opinion that the proximity of the necropolis makes the tradition of the existence of a church in the settlement more likely, at least as far as the location is concerned^[5]. With the arrival of the Ottomans, the Neretva kadiluk was established in the area of today's Konjic, within which the Gorani settlement was located. The Neretva kadiluk was first mentioned in sources in 1469, when the kadij was a certain Mevlana Muslihuddin. This kadiluk is mentioned for the second time in 1477, then in 1485 together with the "timar of the lord of the Neretva kadij", as well as in 1489 and until the end of the 16th century. The seat of the kadiluk was Konjic. After the Venetian liberation of parts of the Bay of Kotor, Muslim families from Risan, Bijela, and Herceg-Novi emigrated either through persecution or independently. The Muslim families who arrived in the Konjica region, who could be from Herceg-Novi, are Alici in Homolje, Basici in Lipovci and in Konjic itself, Celebici in Seonica, Hasani, (of which only the village of the same name remains), Sabanovici in Tuhobic and Konjic, Topalovici in Gorani and Otelezani, Novalici in Vrdolje, and Turks from Novi and Sutorina, who moved to Podhum^[6]. According to the census (2013), there were 180 inhabitants living in Gorani^[7], which is significantly less than in 1991 (336)^[8], 1981 (580)^[9], and

1971 (502)^[10].

The natural and historical area in the Gorani village was declared a national monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina^[11]. The national monument consists of several units. Necropolises with stećaks in the localities of Velije/Glavicina/Zaselje (15 stećaks – 1 slab, 2 chests and 12 gables), Sarcevina (158 stećaks in the form of chests), Trnovnik (14 stećaks in the form of chests), Klokotje (13 stećaks in the form of chests). A spacious active Muslim cemetery with several hundred niches, of which more than a hundred and fifty can be called old, is attached to the Stećak necropolis. Only one of them bears the year 1280 (1863/64), and all the others are without any inscription on them. The form of individual niches and their appearance, even though they are without inscriptions, and the fact that the cemetery logically continues on the stećak necropolis, indicate that the cemetery at this place began to develop long before the only dated niche, perhaps in the 17th or even the 16th century. The site and remains of the Old Mosque (Hadzi Sahman's Mosque), which was built by a certain Hadzi Sahman and for its support he endowed all his estates in Gorani and Dubok, where he was born. The mosque was built in 1565 and is considered the oldest mosque in the Konjic municipality. In 1979, it was demolished due to dilapidation, and in 1983, a new one was built on its foundations with a tall minaret that has two towers. With the aim of protecting the area, a protective zone is established that includes the unexplored Hladna Pecina, the potential archaeological sites of Hum (Prizid) with a prehistoric castle and tumulus and the remains of a Roman settlement of about 1 hectare, Pavlovina with a medieval manor, Ilina, Barevisce with two stećaks, the site of Crkvina and the area within the basin of the Neretvica river from Hum hill to its mouth.

The author of this paper visited the Gorane village on August 4, 2016 and got to know its people and cultural and historical heritage in detail. It is interesting that all current residents of Goran have their houses or apartments in the Konjic town, and that they visit the houses and estates in the Gorani village in the summer period of the year where they grow vegetables, primarily onions. The inhabitants of Goran are extremely hospitable: they welcome guests with coffee and offer lunch. The human profile of the inhabitants of the Gorani village can be read from the architecture of their residential complexes, where the construction of the 'reception house' is particularly interesting. It is a construction intended for the reception of guests, and it was built through the ground floor and first floor. On the ground floor there is a fireplace for preparing food, while on the first floor there is an area for guests. The ground floor is accessed from the courtyard, and the first floor is accessed by a staircase oriented to the street. Below is a photo gallery of some of the houses in the Gorani village near Konjic (Figures 1, 2, 3).



House layout



Left: basement. (The preserved mezzanine structure towards the ground floor can be seen).



Right: chardak with 'kahve-odzak'. The preserved mezzanine structure towards the attic

Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 1: House 01: The Graho family house is one of the oldest houses in the Gorani village. The house is developed vertically through a basement, ground floor and first floor. On the ground floor there were two rooms: the 'house' with a fireplace and a room. On the first floor there was a vestibule with a chimney and a room.



House layout



Left: staircase to the upper floor with divanhan. Right: porch ('divanhana') with staircase to the upper floor



Left: divanhana. Right: all the rooms of the old house are used as storage space for onions (the Gorani village is known for its onion production. Growing onions is the main and only occupation of several Hrnjica and Graho families)



The fireplace is still used in the summer kitchen of the Hrnjica family

Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 2: House 02. The Hrnjica family house



The current owner, Mr. Bego (Ismet) Hrnjica, proudly shows off the 'reception pavilion'. (The author was given the great honor of being a guest of Mr. Bego Hrnjica during a visit to the Gorani village. The author understood here that for the Hrnjica family, receiving and hosting a stranger was a 'special gift' and a sign that his family was 'in good shape and on the right path')



On the ground floor of the 'reception pavilion' there is an open fireplace that is always ready for use



Guests accessed the upper floor of the 'reception pavilion' from the outside, from the street, and service came from inside



At each protected spot, next to the 'reception pavilion', material (dry branches) is prepared for lighting a fire in the hearth. Although a physically small structure, the 'reception pavilion', viewed from both the inside and outside, appears monumental.

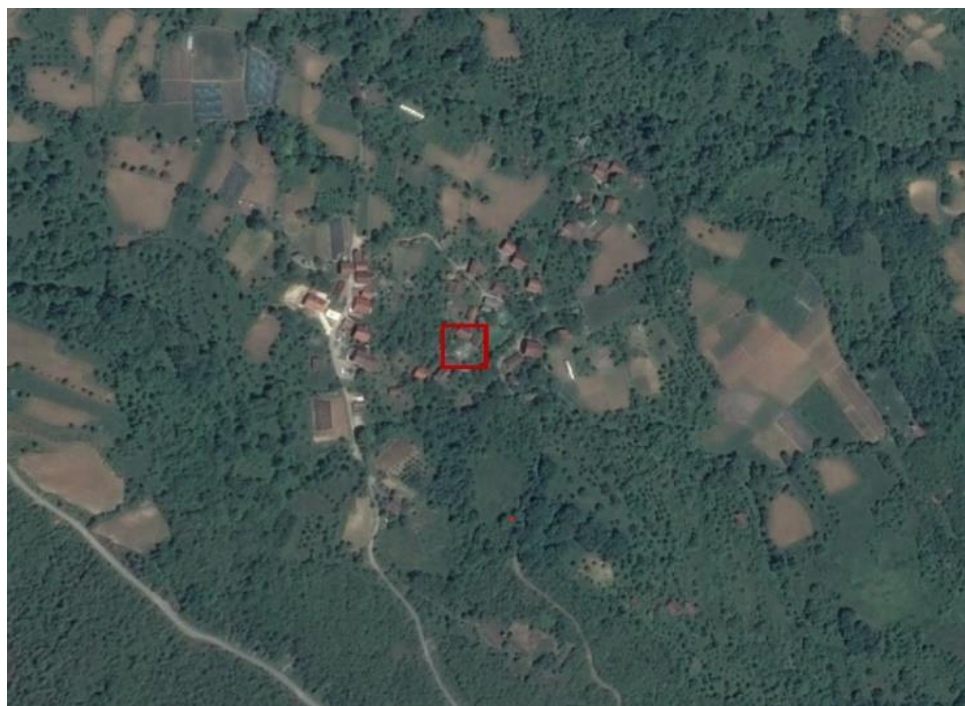
Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Figure 3. House 03. Summer kitchen and 'reception pavilion' of the Hrnjica family (Current owner Bego (Ismet) Hrnjica, 1941)

2. The Smajic family house in the Gorani village near Konjic

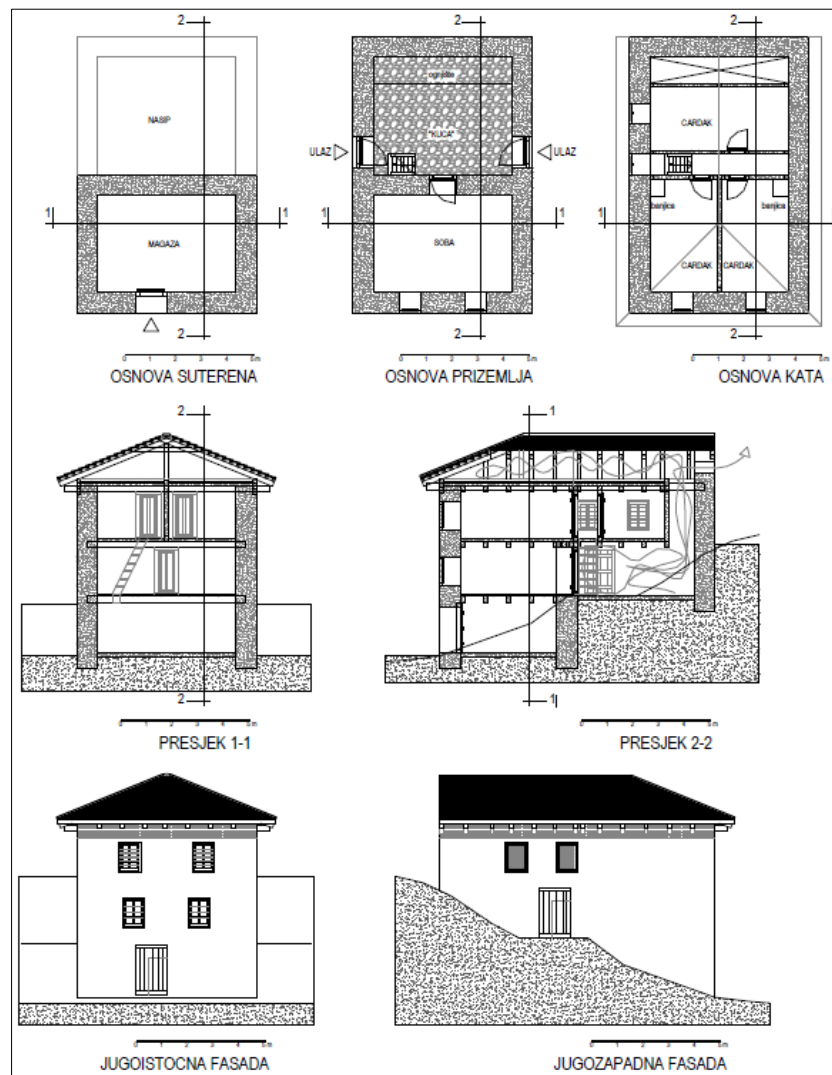
The Smajic family house in Goran near Konjic is located on level ground, on a slope with southeast exposure (Figures 4-10). The house was built in the middle of the 19th century. (The author visited this house on August 4, 2016. Mr. Asim (Atif) Smajic (1947), whose ancestors built this house, helped

him in recording the house. Information about the culture of living in the village Gorani near Konjic was provided to the author by: Smajic (Ahmet) Zikrija (1933), Hrnjica (Ismet) Bego (1941), Smajic (Atif) Asim (1947), Hrnjica (Taib) Sacir (1961), Smajic (nee Alibegovic) Ajisa (1963), Hrnjica (nee Pirija) Razija (1972)).



Source: Google Earth. Accessed: December 27, 2025.

Fig 4: The Smajic family house in Gorani near Konjic. Location



Source: Author (2016)

Fig 5: The Smajic family house in Gorani near Konjic. Layout



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 6: Left: view of the Gorani village from the access road from the direction of Buturovic field. Right: one of the public fountains along the access road to the Gorani village



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 7: Left: Public fountain in the Gorani village. (Hair fountain to Hasan and Mevla Kovacic). Right: Public fountain near the house of the Smajic family in the Gorani village



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 8: Left: view of the Smajic family house from the northeast. Right: view of the Smajic family house from the west



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 9: View of the house of the Smajic family from the north. (You can see the second entrance to the area of the 'house'. In the foreground of the picture is an old dogwood and the area of the courtyard which is overgrown with weeds)



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 10: Grain storage (barn) next to the Smajic family house

According to the layout of the horizontal plans, the house of the Smajic family in Gorani near Konjic belongs to the type of two-section Bosnian chardaklija house, which is developed vertically through a basement, ground floor and first floor (Figure 5). Given its location, the house has the specifics of a Herzegovinian house in which stone is the main building material (Figure 8). The basement of the house (storeroom) is arranged only below part of the ground floor contour. This is the space of a large household pantry in which food of a permanent nature was stored (fruit jam, cheese, butter). The walls of the basement, as well as the

walls of the ground floor and first floor, are made of crushed stone, 70-80 cm thick. In the first section of the ground floor base, which is developed on the ground, the living room, the 'house', is arranged. The space was accessed from two, mutually opposite, sides, from two courtyards (Figures 11,12,13). In the 'house' there is a fireplace (which is still there today in its original design), with an open space towards the attic. From the area of the 'house', one accesses one room and goes to the floor level via a narrow one-legged staircase (steps) (Figure 13).



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 11: View from the front door to the fireplace in the 'house'



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 12: View from the front door to the wooden staircase (stairs) that connect the space of the 'house' and the first floor. (The front door to the 'house' can be seen on the opposite side of the house)



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 13: View from the 'house' towards the front door and the staircase to the upper floor. Under the staircase, material for 'lighting the hearth' has been prepared

The staircase from the ground floor leads to a narrow hallway at first floor level. This hallway leads to three chardaks, two above the ground floor room, and one above the 'house' area.

Next to this čardak, there is a chimney space running the entire width of the 'house', which connects the hearth with the open space of the attic (Figures 14-17). The roof is hipped,

with a stone gable wall at the height of the 'house' wall next to the ground. The roof has a slight slope as it is covered with stone slabs on densely placed beams (Figures 18,19,20,21). All the inter-storey structures are made of wooden beams

with hewn wooden floors (Figures 14,18). In one chardak there is a preserved (although devastated) bathhouse (Figure 30).



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 14: View from the 'house' towards the space through the open room door

All the original elements of the opening have been preserved in their original design. Both the external and internal surfaces of the stone walls are plastered and whitewashed. The floor covering in the area of the 'house' is made of stone

slabs, while the floor in the rooms and conservatories is made of wooden floors covered with handmade rugs (rugs, woolen tarpaulins and woven cloth curtains).



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 15: View into the floor space from the access staircase



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 16: Left: View from the first floor of the staircase and entrance to the 'house'. Right: Hallway on the first floor



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 17: One of the chardaks, above the ground floor room



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 18: Stone is the main building material in house construction



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 19: Interfloor structure 'house'-porch



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 20: Interfloor structure ground floor-first floor, in a room, above the basement. The beams and floors are hewn. Over time, the wood has acquired the color of honey, and is impregnated with smoke that was let into the room from the space of the 'house'



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 21: Surface treatment in the čardak area, above the room: wooden ceiling, a niche in a thick stone wall that is plastered and whitewashed, wooden floor...

All elements of the openings, doors and windows, are made of wood and are well preserved to this day, partly thanks to the permanent 'smoke' from the open hearth (Figures 22-29).



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 22: Basement (warehouse) door



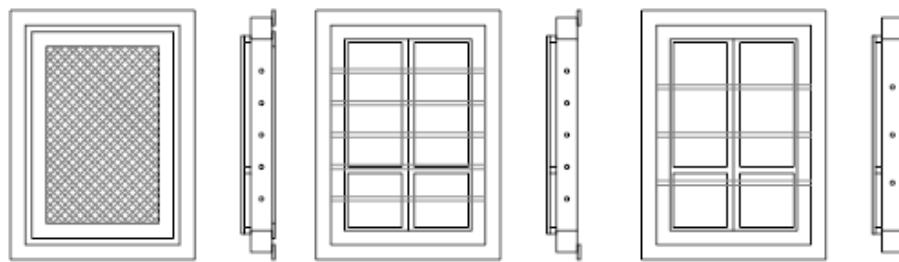
Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 23: Door to the ground floor room, with access from the 'house' area. (Dry branches by the door are prepared for 'lighting the hearth' on the hearth)



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 24: Left: View of the room door, from the room towards the 'house'. Right: Door to the chardak



Source: Author (2016)

Fig 25: Windows



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 26: The original windows have been preserved



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 27: Left: windows with mullions on the first floor. Right: window on the veranda, above the room on the ground floor



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 28: Fireplace in the 'house' - original design



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 29: Wooden bars above the hearth on which kettles for cooking food are hung



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 30: Shower cabin ('bathroom'/'banjica') in one of the attics, above the room on the ground floor

3. Perspectives (Conclusion)

By the term 'perspectives' (in the framework of the theory of Architecturally Defined Space, ADS) we mean „that dynamic relationship that connects the present - future, the existing - possible, the achieved – desired“^[12]. All elements of the physical structure of the Smajic family house in Gorani near Konjic are still well preserved today, bearing in mind that the house was built more than 150 years ago. All of its current owners, as well as those people who are not owners but were born in it or lived part of their lives in it, view this house as their cradle, as a common denominator of the extended Smajic family, as a symbol of the continuity of the family's existence (Figure 31). The house is not currently inhabited,

but people visit it and still use its hearth to prepare particularly important meals, on the occasion of family or village (and even religious) celebrations. (Working on the recording of this house, the Author experienced the extraordinary hospitality of the family of Mr. Asim (Atif) Smajic, which completed the 'objective picture' of the house of the Smajic family in the Gorani village near Konjic). The house of the Smajic family in Gorani near Konjic is not the only house in the village of Gorani that has great architectural-historical and ambient values. There are several such houses, and they are of different ages and levels of preservation.



Source: Author (4. August 2016.)

Fig 31: A fountain next to an unused house, a witness to a once intense life

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