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### Bosnian Chardaklia House: The Korkut Family House in Travnik

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#### Abstract

Travnik is a town (with about 15,344 inhabitants) located on the Lasva river in the central part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, about 90 km west of Sarajevo. In the area of today's Travnik the prehistoric Illyrian people and then the ancient Romans panned gold here. Preserved material traces and historiographical sources about Travnik have historical continuity. In the Bila and Lasva river valleys, the remains of settlements over 7,000 years old were found (Nebo, Han Bila and Crkvine, Turbe). The settlements belonged to the famous 'Butmir cultural group'. In the Bila valley, a slightly older Neolithic settlement of the 'Kakanj culture group' was discovered, which was destroyed by river erosion, and in Alihodza traces of an Eneolithic settlement of the 'Vucedol culture' were found. In written sources, the parish of Lasva is mentioned for the first time (1244) in the list of bishop's sermons, and then (1380) in the letter of the Bosnian king Stjepan Tvrtko I (1338-1391) to Hrvoj Vukcic Hrvatinic

(1350-1416), in which he appoints him as grand duke and presents mu Bila, Trebeus and Lupnica in Lasva parish. At the end of the 14th century, the parish of Lasva was governed by the Bosnian nobleman Batalo (?-around 1400). There are several versions about the origin of the name Travnik. According to one of them, the city got its name from the spacious pastures and the word 'grass' ('trava'), while according to the other version, the name originated from the medieval pre-Ottoman fortress where the official charged a fee for the use of grass ('travarina').

The Korkut family house in Travnik is located in Donje Osoje Street in the old part of Travnik, on the right bank of the Lasva river. It was built in the middle of the 19th century. The house primarily belongs to an oriental-type city house. The house is treated in this paper (as a Bosnian Chardaklia House) because of the many characteristics of a Bosnian Chardaklia House that it possesses.

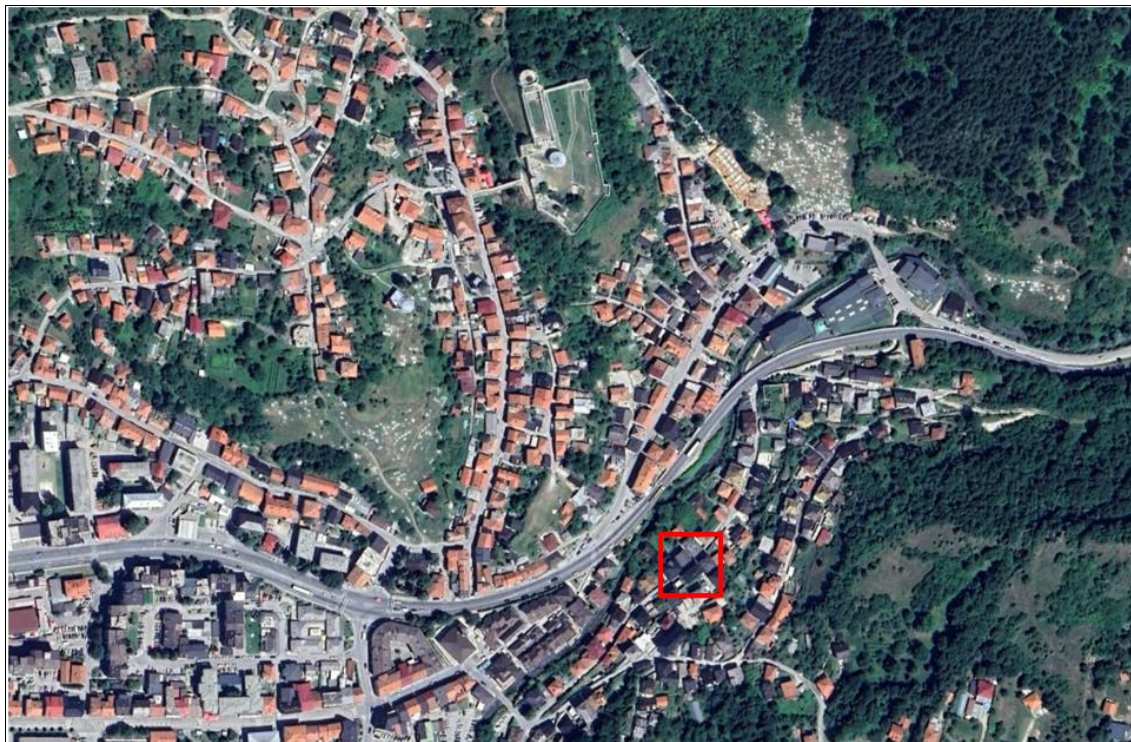
**Keywords:** Travnik, Korkut family, Bosnian Chardaklia House

#### 1. Introduction

Travnik is a town (with about 15,344 inhabitants)<sup>[1]</sup> located on the Lasva river in the central part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, about 90 km west of Sarajevo. In the area of today's Travnik the prehistoric Illyrian people and then the ancient Romans panned gold here. Preserved material traces and historiographical sources about Travnik have historical continuity. In the Bila and Lasva river valleys, the remains of settlements over 7,000 years old were found (Nebo, Han Bila and Crkvine, Turbe). The settlements belonged to the famous 'Butmir cultural group'. A slightly older Neolithic settlement of the 'Kakanj culture group' was discovered in the Bila valley, which was destroyed by river erosion, and traces of an Eneolithic settlement of the 'Vucedol culture' were found in Alihodza<sup>[2]</sup>. In written sources, the parish of Lasva is mentioned for the first time (1244) in the list of bishop's sermons, and then (1380) in the letter of the Bosnian king Stjepan Tvrtko I (1338-1391) to Hrvoj Vukcic Hrvatinic (1350-1416), in which he appoints him as grand duke and presents mu Bila, Trebeus and Lupnica in Lasva parish<sup>[3]</sup>. At the end of the 14th century, the parish of Laša was governed by the Bosnian nobleman Batalo (?-around 1400). There are several versions about the origin of the name Travnik. According to one of them, the city got its name from the spacious pastures and the word 'grass' ('trava'), while according to the other version, the name originated from the medieval pre-Ottoman fortress where the official charged a fee for the use of grass ('travarina'). The town was first mentioned under the name Travnik (1463) in connection with the events related to the fall of the Bosnian Kingdom. This is how Dursun-beg, a companion of Sultan Mehmed II the Conqueror (1432-1481) in his campaign to Bosnia, named this city. After the Ottomans conquered Bosnia, Travnik developed as a trade and craft center, and in the period (1686-1850) it became the seat of the Bosnian vizier. France opened its embassy in Travnik (1806), and Austria-Hungary immediately followed (1807). These years are known in professional literature and literature as 'Consular times'. With the arrival (1878) of the Austro-Hungarian administration in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Travnik developed in everything according to the patterns of Western European culture. The following were built: match factory (1901), tobacco factories (1893), wood processing company "Ugar" in Turbe (1912),

railway (1893), hydropower station (1906), post office, banks, the first fire company in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1879), urban developments are carried out, especially after the great fire (1903), the Great Archbishop's High School in Travnik is founded (1882), the new building of the Elci Ibrahim Pasha madrasa is built (1893), school buildings are erected on Cabrusa, the Fufic endowment near Orthodox churches, the Trade School in Donja Carsija, the monastery and school of the nuns of Milosrdnica, the District Office building, the Officer's Home building, Hotel Vlastic... After the end (1918) of the First World War, Travnik became part

of the newly formed Kingdom of SHS, and since then it has shared a complete history of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Korkut family house in Travnik is located in Donje Osoje Street in the old part of Travnik, on the right bank of the Lasva river (Geographic coordinates: 44°13'36.31"N, 17°40'17.26"E, Elevation: 514 m). It was built in the middle of the 19th century (Fig 1). The house primarily belongs to an oriental-type city house<sup>[4,5,6,7,8,9,10]</sup>. The house is treated in this paper (as a 'Bosnian Chardaklia House') because of the many characteristics of the Bosnian Chardaklia House that it possesses.



**Sources:** Google Earth: Accessed: November 22, 2022

The residential quarter ('mahala') of Donje Osoje is one of the rare preserved (in its originality) city districts in Bosnia and Herzegovina in general and, as such, has exceptional architectural-cultural-historical value (Fig 2).

**Fig 1:** The Korkut family house in Travnik. Location







Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 2:** Houses in the hamlet ('mahala') of Donje Osoje that have been preserved in their authentic appearance to this day

## 2. Spatial-form characteristics of the house

According to the disposition of its horizontal plans, including its development in the vertical plan, the Korkut family house in Travnik, although a city house, belongs more to the two-story type of Bosnian Chardaklia House [3, 4, 5, 6, 7].

Typical of the classic type of Bosnian Chardaklia Houses in central Bosnia, this house in its vertical plan has a basement, ground floor and first floor, access to the first floor via an

external single-legged wooden staircase ('basamaci') with a sofa, and an extremely steep and voluminous roof covered with shingles (Fig 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).

What determines the Korkut family house as an oriental-type city house is, looking at its architectural physiognomy from the outside, the doxat on the ground floor and on the first floor, and the interior decoration of the main chardak with a built-in wall battery-musander (Fig 3).



Source: Author (Drawing 2017)

**Fig 3:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Disposition

As the house is placed on extremely steep terrain, the development of its vertical plan through the basement, ground floor and first floor is expected and perfectly fits into the natural and built environment of the old part of Travnik (Fig 3, 5, 6, 7). The basement of the house is built under only one contour of the ground floor. The walls of the

basement, 70-80 cm thick, were built from roughly processed local stone (Fig 3, 10). As already mentioned, the base of the ground floor has two spatial tracts. From the outside, the ground floor is first accessed through the extended communication ('hayat') in which there is a fountain with a trough, which is followed by a storage room



for wood (Fig 3). From the hayat there is access to the main living room on the ground floor ('halvat'), and from the woodshed to the kitchen ('mutvak'). The kitchen has a door to the side garden directly next to the house (Fig 3, 14).

Both the living room ('halvat') and the kitchen ('mutvak') are located in the second part of the ground floor, above the basement. From the hayat on the ground floor, there is access to a single-legged staircase ('basamaci') that leads to

the first floor, i.e., to the divanhana area. From the divanhana there is access to three chardaks, while from the larger chardak next to Donje Osoje Street you can access a small chardak (Fig 3). In the central part of the base of the floor is an enclosed air space ('dimluk') that connects the kitchen space on the ground floor with the space in the attic (Fig 3).



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 4:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Processing of sub-views of the dock floor. (The column supporting the floor was added later)



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 5:** Korkut family house in Travnik. View of the house from the southwest direction

A key role for the durability of the roof against the effects of weather and insects was played by the smoke, which permanently covered all the wooden elements of the roof. With the cessation of the use of the house in the traditional and originally designed way, the wooden roof lost an essential input for its maintenance (smoke), and began to

deteriorate rapidly. The galvanized sheet that was placed on the shingle slowed down the process of deterioration of the roof, and thus the house (Fig 5, 6).



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 6:** Korkut family house in Travnik. View from the courtyard (from Donje Osoje Street level), southwest facade of the house





Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 7:** Korkut family house in Travnik. View of the house from the west



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 8:** Korkut family house in Travnik. View of the house from the north (from the Sarajevo-Travnik Road)



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 9:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Spatial-constructive and design structure of the house

### Construction and materialization

The walls of the basement of the Korkut family's house in

Travnik (which was developed under one part of the base of the ground floor, following the slope of the terrain) are made of stone (partly limestone and partly tuf) with a thickness of 70-80 cm. Due to its relatively high height, the stone wall is 'stiffened' with wooden beams ('hatule') which act as reinforcement and ensure the stability of the stone wall against shearing forces (due to possible different settlement of the ground), (Fig 10).

The walls of the ground floor and first floor of the house are made of a wooden skeleton ('bondruk') with adobe filling and wooden wattle with compacted earth. These walls are plastered on both sides with mortar made of clay and whitewashed with milk of lime (Fig 11).



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 10:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Construction and materialization of the stone wall in the basement



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 11:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Construction and materialization of floor walls (right)

The basement-ground floor, ground floor-floor and floor-attic ceiling structures are made of wooden beams and wooden floor boards (thickness 5-7 cm), which are finely processed, both as a ceiling surface and as a floor covering (Fig 12).

The roof construction is made of wood, including the roof covering made of wooden planks ('shindra'), to which a galvanized sheet was later added (Fig 16, 17).





Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 12:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Wooden ceiling in the chardak (next to Donje Osoje Street)

### 3. Doors and windows

The doors and windows of the house of the Korkut family in Travnik are made of wood. The design of some doors is archaic (as we find in other čardaklia throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina)<sup>[6,8,9]</sup>, (Fig 13, 14).



**Fig 13:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Entrance door to the house



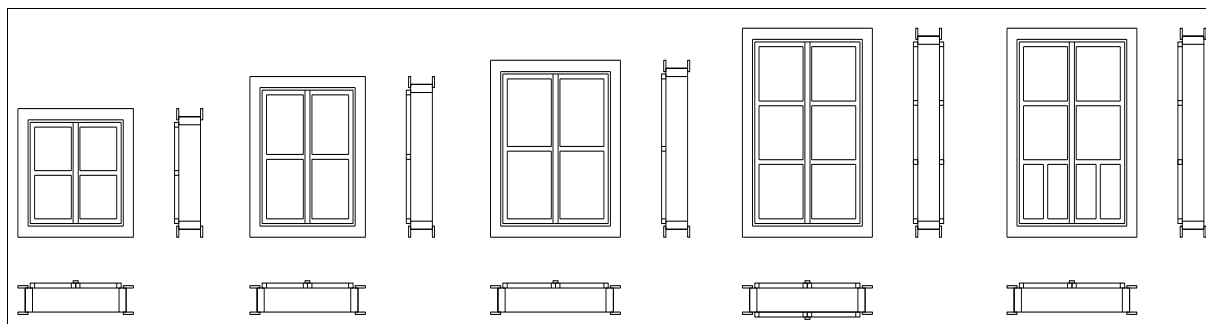
Source: Author (6.25.2016.)



**Fig 14:** Korkut family house in Travnik. The door on the small chardak (next to Donje Osoje Street), (in the left) and the door on the 'mutvak' (exit to the garden), (right)

The windows are, for the most part, double, double-winged, with 2-4 smaller fields in each wing filled with single-layer glass (Fig 5, 6, 7, 15, 16). The width of the wooden window

frame follows the thickness of the wall. Some windows on the ground floor level and on the first floor have protective grilles ('demiri') made of wood or wrought iron (Fig 17).



Source: Author (Drawing, 2017.)

**Fig 15:** Kuća obitelji Korkut u Travniku. Galerija dizajna prozora



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 16:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Gallery of windows on the northwest facade



Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 17:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Window on the divanhana with wooden 'demirs' and on the porch with iron 'demirs'

#### 4. Specific elements of home equipment

In the Korkut family house in Travnik, the equipment of its rooms is reduced to a minimum. Similar to the processing of the surfaces of the space (walls, ceilings and floors) and the furnishing of the space, it follows the culture of living and the worldview of the Korkut family, which are based on Islam<sup>[5]</sup>. Spaces are, conditionally speaking, 'empty', where their function is 'activated' by installing equipment that is located next to the walls and ceilings. The rooms and the living room have special wall niches ('dulaf') which are a

decoration of the room and a place to store various household items and books (Fig 18).

Sleeping equipment (mattresses, pillows and sheets) are 'packed' in the corner of the room and 'activated as needed'. The large porch is equipped with a closet ('musander') built into the wall, which consists of three 'compartments': a linen storage ('dusekluk'), a brick stove for heating the room ('furuna') and a small shower cabin ('banjica'), (Fig 3). Permanent food ('winter') is stored in the basement room, and various household items are stored in the attic.





Source: Author (6.25.2016.)

**Fig 18:** Korkut family house in Travnik. Preserved cupboard in the wall and rafter (Left). View from the veranda along the street through the door towards the divanhana (Right)

## 5. Discussion. Today's condition and purpose of the house

The physical structure of the Korkut family house is in relatively good condition, although the building, as a whole, is devastated. During the war (1992-1995) refugees from various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina stayed in this building, and after that the building was neither renovated. The famous Korkut family from Travnik and Bosnia and Herzegovina donated this building to the Islamic community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and it is expected that it will soon be restored and brought to a suitable purpose.

## 6. Conclusion

According to the disposition of its horizontal plans, including its development in the vertical plan, the Korkut family house in Travnik, although a town house, belongs more to the two-story type of Bosnian Chardaklia House. Typical of the classic type of Bosnian chardaklia Houses in central Bosnia, this house in its vertical plan has a basement, ground floor and first floor, access to the first floor via an external single-legged wooden staircase ('basamaci') with divanhana, and an extremely steep and voluminous roof covered with shingles. What defines the Korkut family house as an oriental-type city house is, looking at its architectural physiognomy from the outside, the doxat on the ground floor and on the first floor, and the interior decoration of the main chardak with a built-in wall battery-musander.

The Korkut family house, still relatively preserved in its physical body, has the potential to be a famous place in Travnik, mostly because of its name (the Korkut family has an important place in the culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and because of its location in the authentically preserved Donje Osoje 'mahala' <sup>[11]</sup>. It can be adapted as a

thematic museum (related to the Korkut family, the history of Travnik as a 'vizier city'...) <sup>1</sup> (Fig 19).



<https://travnik-grad.info/rekonstrukcija-kuce-porodice-korkut-u-donjem-osoju/>, Accessed: 11.26.2022.

**Fig 19:** Reconstruction of the Korkut family house and its adaptation into a museum

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<sup>1</sup> Just as he was finishing this work, the author received information that the works on the reconstruction and adaptation of the Korkut family house in Travnik had begun.

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