

## SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Gabriela Habánová

### Peasant House in Sucháň no. 7

The peasant house dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century originates from a small village named Sucháň, which is situated in the low highland area in the south of middle Slovakia. It was built according to a younger building tradition using stone and clay mortar. The older tradition of wooden houses in this village expired after fires in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

According to the local tradition this compact building has a simple rectangle ground plan, whereas the residential part and the two rooms – the store room and the stable – were added later.

The house has two storeys on its front side: the main room and the cellar underneath. Different parts of the house have their own entrances to the yard side, the cellar entrance is on the front side of the house. All rooms are gathered under a common roof and beside a loft. The pitched roof is carried by a wooden rafter ridge beam construction and covered with rye straw. The expression of this building is very simple, squared by the archaic type of small simple windows, set deep in the wall. The only international decoration of the exterior is the blue border around the windows on the front side, which contrasts with the smooth white façade.

The main room is the living room. It is used for everyday life as well as for the festivities of the peasant family. This room has also played an important role as the place for social representation.

The main room is heated by a more recent type of brick stove. The room is entered through the entrance hall, which also served as a kitchen and where a brick bread oven and a brick stove are placed under an open chimney. The chimney alludes to the older way of cooking on an open fireplace, though the latter was not preserved. It was probably replaced by a younger type of stove around the turn of the 19th century.

The third space of the house – the store room – was used for storage of cereals, food-stuffs, tools and clothes, but it also served as temporary bed room of the newly weds. The store room was not heated and was lit by only two very small windows. In the stable big farm animals were kept – a horse and a cow. The hay was stored in the house. House no. 7 is a cultural monument. Its original role as a peasant house has been lost. Since the restoration of the monument in 1995 it has served as a local ethnographical museum.