

THE CREATION OF OPEN-AIR MUSEUMS IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AND THE CHOICE OF THEIR LOCATIONS

The idea of planning open-air museums first saw the light in 1973. The proposal to establish them was the outcome of research on the laws determining the development of socialist culture, an understanding of which is the primary objective of cultural research in the GDR; they were considered to provide a means of preserving a portion of our humanist heritage and in particular of preserving the progressive and creative works of the labouring classes. The task of planning them belongs to the special branch of ethnographical research concerned with the discovery and interpretation of the laws governing the culture and way of life of the labouring classes successively under feudalism, capitalism and the new conditions offered by socialism. One of the prerequisites of a correct understanding of ethnographical phenomena is an understanding of social, economic and political development which

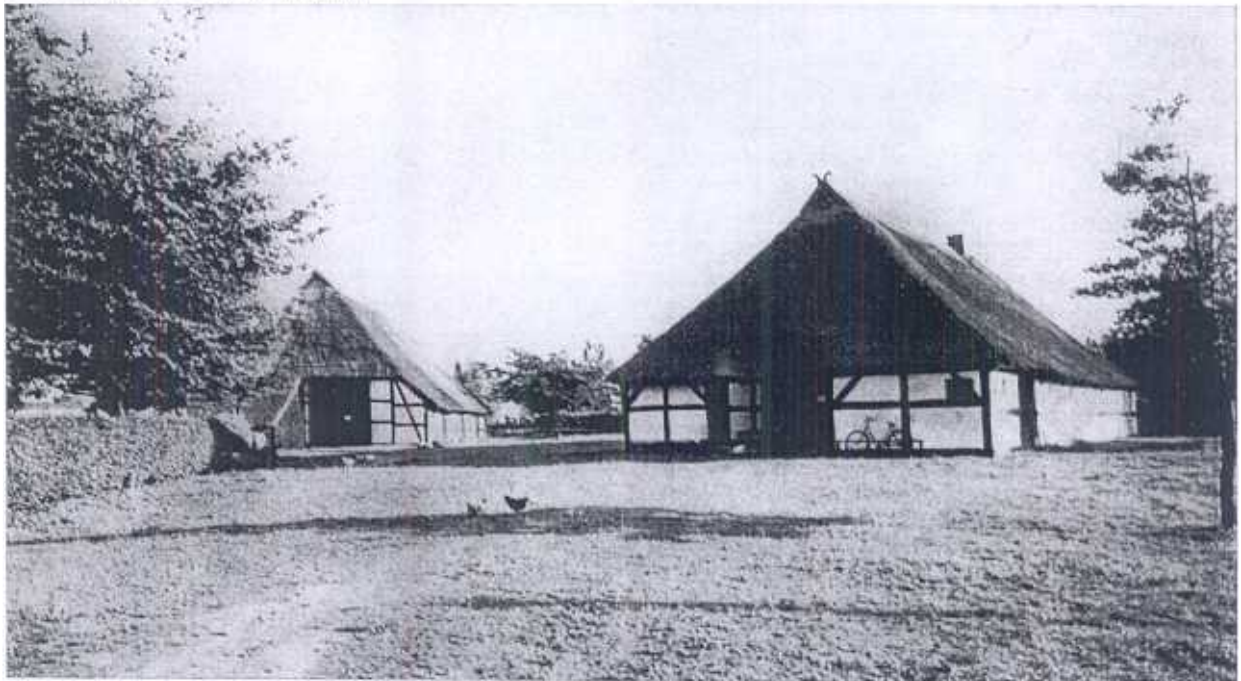
makes due allowance for the role of the class struggle and for its significance as a cause of these changed conditions.

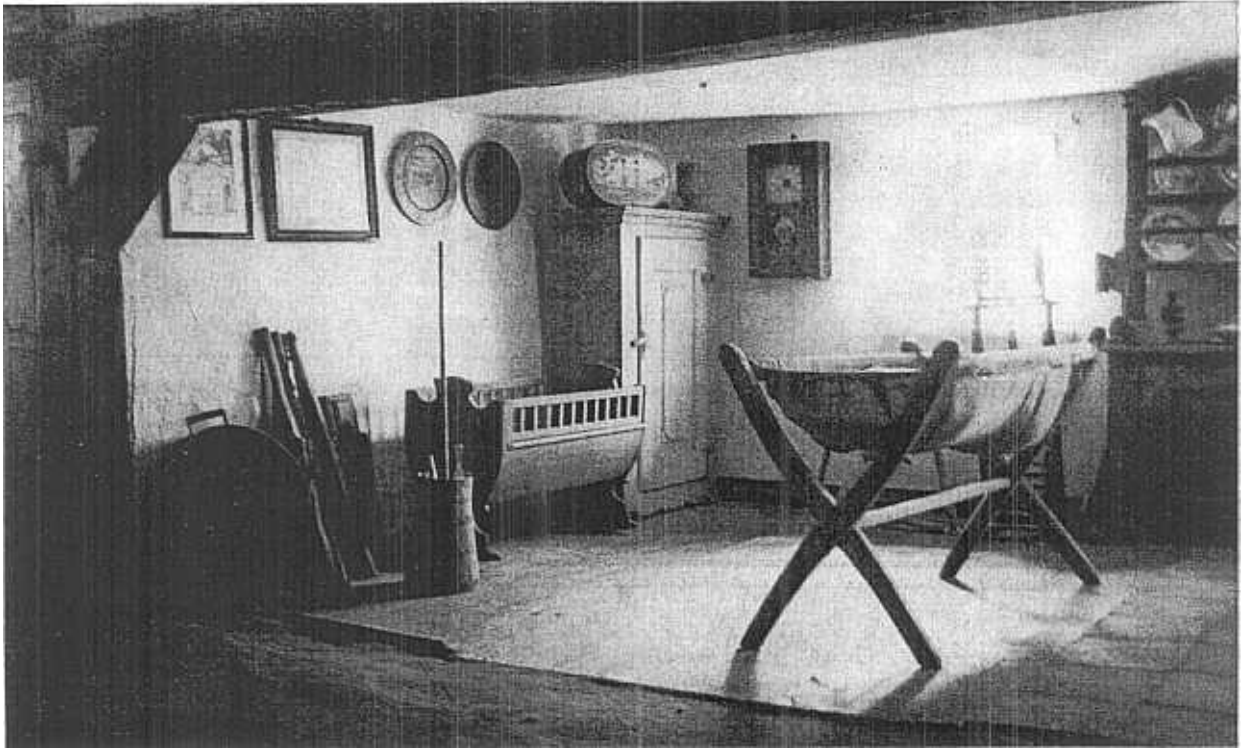
Museums, and particularly open-air museums, are an important popular means of illustrating development in this specific branch of culture. The programme for open-air museums in the GDR is an integral part of a large-scale plan for museums in the country. In the light of the multiple differences in regional conditions it was decided to decentralize and to create 18 different institutions. The locations for these have been chosen on the basis of landscape and surroundings, with a view to their providing interesting cultural focus-points for holiday resorts, especially in the frontier regions of the GDR.

It is estimated that each of these museum projects will require about 15 years to implement.

In the last two decades life in the country has chan-

1. Klockenhagen. Open air museum.





ber

Open- cases the house after rest



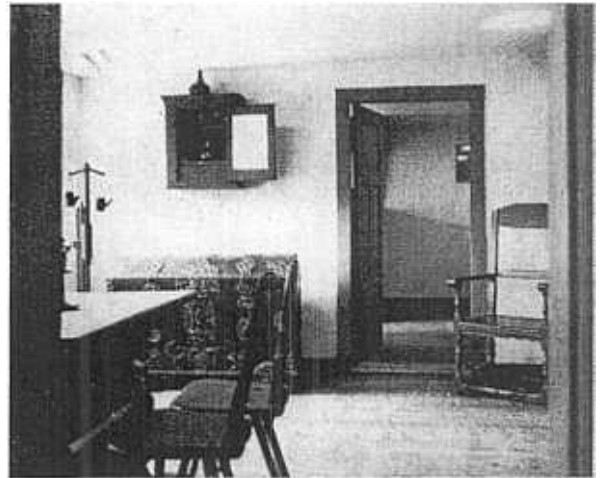
ged more than in the whole of the previous century. Farm buildings are today neither economical to run nor comfortable.

Before exhibits can be chosen for an open-air museum in the light of the appropriate scientific and educational criteria, a number of preliminary steps must be taken, i. e.:

1. Rapid decisions as to which items are to be moved.
2. Signing of agreements with their owners regarding the preservation of such buildings.
3. Allocation of the necessary funds.
4. Creation, in each district, of a group comprising a minimum of five workers skilled in traditional building methods.
5. Compiling of a complete list of equipment and furniture required to fit out each building in its original state.
6. An enormous increase in the scale of international exchanges of experience in connection with open-air exhibits.

The following is a list of the projected open-air museum, from north to south:

1. *Kloekenhagen*; County: Ribnitz-Damgarten: district Rostock. Open-air museum of rural architecture. 15 buildings, illustrating the creativeness of hard-working peasants and craftsmen in the Hallenhaus area of what used to be Mecklenburg-Pomerania. 4 in situ.
2. *Muess*. County: Schwerin-Stadt, district Schwerin. Village museum of about 15 buildings, mainly preserved in situ, and showing the development of a farming village in the past.
3. *Alt-Schwerin*; County: Waren/Müritz, district Neubrandenburg. Agricultural museum located on a former big Mecklenburg farming estate.
4. *Diesdorf*. County: Salzwedel, district Magdeburg. Open-air museum illustrating various stages in the development of the cultural background and ways of living of Altmark farmers by means of twenty buildings arranged in six chronological groups together covering the period from 1600 to 1850.
5. *Eggenstadt*. County: Wanzleben, district Magdeburg. Open-air museum at a holiday resort, illustrating the cultural background and habits of the working people of the Magdebourg Border, with the aid of 8 carefully preserved ancient buildings. Further buildings from the neighbouring villages, among them the "Sugar-Beet Castle", are to be added.
6. *Stolpe or a site near it*; County: Kyritz: district Potsdam. Open-air museum with about 15 Brandenburg farm buildings from the "Flurhaus" area dating from 1700 to the present day.



4. Schwerin-Miess. Farm — sitting-room with furniture from middle 19th century.

7. *Moglin*. County: Bad Freienwalde, district Frankfurt-on-the-Oder. A former big Brandenburg farming estate of 15 buildings, all in situ: surrounding the memorial to Albrecht Thaer (1752—1828).
8. *Lehde*. County: Calau, district Cottbus. Open-air museum showing homes of Serbian small peasants (the only national minority in the GDR). The village, which is part of the Spreewald recreation area, contains 15 buildings in all.
9. *Oybin*. County: Zittau, district Dresden. Home of the farmers, craftsmen and piece-work textile workers of Upper Lusatia in the area of "Umgebendehaus", preserved in situ.
10. *Seiffen*; County: Marienberg: district Karl-Marx Stadt. Open-air museum illustrating such typical trades as mining: toy-making, etc. (annex to the toy museum). 15 buildings planned, of which 3 in situ.
11. *Kriebethal*. County: Hainichen, district Karl-Marx Stadt. Open-air museum comprising 20 Saxony farm buildings, in chronological order but with several specimens for each period of construction.
12. *Windischleuba*. County: Altenburg: district Leipzig. Open-air museum of 15 farm buildings illustrating the specific social and economic development of the Altenburg farmers.
13. *Landwust*. County: Klingenthal, district Karl-Marx-Stadt. Open-air museum illustrating living conditions and village crafts and trades in Vogtland. Planned to comprise 15 buildings, of which 3 exist in situ.
14. *Mitschareuth*. County: Greiz, district Gera. A listed village forming an open-air museum illustrat-

ing the rural culture of East Thuringia.

15. *Hohenfelden*; County: Weimarland, district Erfurt. Open-air museum comprising about 10 buildings of the Thuringian lowlands.

16. *Vessra*. County: Hildburghausen, district Suhl. Open-air museum containing 10 buildings illustrating rural conditions in South Thuringia and cottage industries and trades in the Thuringerwald.

17. *Wintzingrode*. County: Worbis, district Erfurt. A very well-preserved village of great antiquity and historical value.

18. *Schiele or Rieder*. County: Quedlingburg, district Halle. Open-air museum of the eastern Harz Mountains and the lower spurs of the range. 10 buildings, some of them preserved in situ.

Together with museums of the conventional type and surviving villages, these open-air museums serve to provide adequate illustration of the development of agriculture on small farms and on large estates, both of which are represented.

Serafim POLENZ, German Democratic Republic

RESUME

Les musées de plein air contribuent à résoudre les problèmes des villages anciens en République Démocratique Allemande. L'étude pour leur implantation se fait dans le cadre du plan général des musées et selon les conditions propres aux différentes régions. La création de dix-huit musées de plein air est envisagée:

1. *Klockenhagen* — pour présenter les résultats du travail des paysans et des artisans du Mecklembourg et de la Poméranie.

2. *Muess* — histoire du village mecklembourgeois.

3. *Alt-Schwerin* — musée d'histoire de l'agriculture.

4. *Diesdorf* — évolution de la culture des villages de l'Altmark.

5. *Eggenstedt* — mœurs et culture des classes ouvrières.

6. *Stolpe* — évolution de la vie des fermiers du Brandebourg de 1700 à nos jours.

7. *Möglin* — quinze bâtiments autour d'une place consacrée à la mémoire d'Albrecht Thaer.

8. *Lehde* — quinze bâtiments illustrant l'évolution des mœurs et de la culture de l'unique établissement de

paysans serbes en R. D. A.

9. *Oybin* — évolution de la vie des fermiers, des artisans et des ouvriers de l'industrie textile.

10. *Seiffen* — la vie et l'économie du Brzgebirge central.

11. *Kriebethal* — la vie des habitants de la Saxe.

12. *Windischleuba* — la vie et le développement économique de l'Altenbourg.

13. *Landwüst* — quinze bâtiments illustrant la vie des paysans du Vogtland de 1800 à nos jours.

14. *Nitschareuth* — la vie rurale en Thuringe.

15. *Hohefelden* — la vie ouvrière en Basse — Thuringe.

16. *Vessra* — l'artisanat du Wald, en Thuringe.

17. *Wintzingrode* — site historique.

18. *Schielo* — la vie des habitants du Harz, dix bâtiments restaurés in situ.

1. *Klockenhagen*. Musée de plein-air.

2. *Idem*. Une chambre de la ferme.

3. *Schwerin-Muess*. Musée de plein-air. La ferme après restauration.

4. *Idem*. La salle de séjour de la ferme avec des meubles de la moitié du 19^e s.