

Jan Carstensen,
Katarina Frost (Ed.)

Creating Museums Museen erschaffen

50 Years Association of European Open-Air Museums
50 Jahre Verband Europäischer Freilichtmuseen

WAXMANN



Association of
European Open-Air Museums

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T. Guggenbühl
W. Walter
herzlichen Dank für
freundlichen Willkomm
F.H. Sommerstein + Fra
Ester...
an h...
El. H...
G...
K...
großes Kuch...
n...

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Waxmann 2016
Münster • New York

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>

Print-ISBN 978-3-8309-3420-2
E-Book-ISBN 978-3-8309-8420-7

© Waxmann Verlag GmbH, 2016
www.waxmann.com
info@waxmann.com

Cover design: Inna Ponomareva, Jena
Cover image: © Signatures of the founders in the visitors' book of Jozef Weyns
27 April 1966 (Collection Weyns, Ter Speelbergen, Beerzel, Belgium)
Typesetting: Stoddart Satz- und Layoutservice, Münster
Print: Těšínská tiskárna, a.s., Český Těšín, Czech Republic

Printed on age-resistant paper,
acid-free as per ISO 9706

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Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Hinz, President of ICOM
International Council of Museums, Paris
Note of Congratulation

I would like to offer my hearty congratulations to the Association of European Open-Air Museums (*AEOM*) on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. As President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the world's largest international cultural association with its 35,000 members in 140 countries, I have great pleasure in saying thank you to the open-air museums of our continent for the valuable work they have carried out over the decades. As an affiliated organization, your association is closely linked to ICOM and is thus part of the global association, which is a matter of great pride for us.

I think it is very important that the ICOM family gets to know more about the work of the open-air museums. This was the reason for the invitation I extended in June 2015 to the then President, Jan Carstensen, to address the Advisory Committee of the ICOM in Paris. This Committee is the parliament as it were of the International Council, in which work together the National Committees and the international specialist committees, the regional alliances as well as the affiliated organizations.

In Paris, ICOM's representatives got to know the work of the open-air museums, the themes and challenges they faced, but also the ongoing dialogue they engage in with open-air museums on other continents beyond Europe.

In 2016, ICOM will celebrate its 70th anniversary and remind the world that after the ravages of the Second World War it was the museum experts who were among the first cultural workers that wanted to contribute to the creation of the international post-war order. When the museum representatives of 14 states met in November 1946 at the Louvre Museum in Paris, in order to found an international association, they let themselves be guided by humanist values, which were later reflected in ICOM's "Code of Ethics for Museums". It is these values that still today determine the fundamental principles of the protection of the cultural heritage within and outside museums.

The 50th anniversary celebrations of the *Association of European Open-Air Museums* in Bokrijk (Belgium), the Association's place of foundation, is an equally important date from which to look back at what has been achieved. But *AEOM* will also want to look forward to the future, at the challenges that museums are facing in our time and at ways in which our institutions at the start of the 21st century can involve museum visitors in the dialogue about culture and history.

It is a great pleasure to express to this exceptionally active *AEOM*, to Katarina Frost, its President, and to all its members my very best wishes for the future.

Jan Carstensen, Katarina Frost

Editors' preface

Open-air museums have been filling visitors with enthusiasm for 125 years – an unprecedented success story that began in Scandinavia. With the foundation of the first open-air museum in Skansen near Stockholm in 1891, the idea of presenting rural history and everyday culture in a museum in the open-air was born. During the 20th century this idea spread southwards and affected the whole of Europe. This type of museum is among the most attractive forms of presentation for culture and nature.

As President and as Past-President of the *Association of European Open-Air Museums (AEOM)* we jointly assumed the task of producing this anniversary publication on behalf of approximately 100 museum professionals from large and national open-air museums. In 1966 a network was established and so we are celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2016. What kind of network are we talking about and how can the development of the *AEOM* be described in terms of what it is today?

Ever since the beginning, museum colleagues in the *AEOM* have regularly been in contact with each other not only at the international conferences taking place every two years, but also in between. The latest invitation was issued by our Norwegian colleagues in 2015, and the focus of the speeches and discussions was on the issue “present and future of open-air museums”. In between the conferences, members meet to attend workshops in order to discuss various special subjects.

Subjects and methods of presentation changed in the course of the 20th century. During that period, societies have developed greatly – for instance due to mass production and globalization – and this cannot be ignored by open-air museums which have witnessed these radical changes. This undoubtedly has an influence on the collection, presentation and cultural education policies of each open-air museum. Common fundamental values – stipulated by the affiliation of the *AEOM* to ICOM, the International Council of Museums in Paris – form the basis of large museums undertaking societal functions.

But what motivated the founding generation to enter into intense dialogue with each other while being devoted to the goal of establishing open-air museums in their own countries? It is worth looking at the history of the *AEOM* because by doing so the development of open-air museums is clarified. The *AEOM* reflects the discussions and development of this type of museum in Europe. “How can we make a good museum?”: this question, which was asked by our founding member Max Gschwend, reveals what it was all about right

from the start. The enthusiasm for professionalization and standardization as well as quality management was the essential motive to meet at an international level and to exchange information in a collegiate manner. By making the founding declaration in a small group in 1966, the initial impulse for lasting institutional communication was set. At first, only a few German-speaking open-air museums in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany formed the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft europäischer Freilichtmuseen* (Working Team of European Open-Air Museums). Then from 1972 it became the *Association of European Open-Air Museums*, accepted by and affiliated to ICOM, and open-air museums in Europe benefited from the development of the *AEOM* as a professional, methodical and content-related point of view.

The *AEOM* has gathered an even larger circle of museum directors and professionals in the meantime, so that a great variety of competences are represented. We asked some of the protagonists to present their connection to the *AEOM* and their own version and perspectives on events.

Firstly, we asked for contributions for a Book of Memories, but it soon became clear that we could offer more than that. Under the title “Creating Museums – 50 Years Association of European Open-Air Museums” we can recount the history which – on the basis of thoroughly researched documentation – has its main focus on the early years. Having this in mind, we contacted Adriaan de Jong, who, as former museum professional at the Netherlands Open-Air Museum in Arnhem, Professor at the University of Amsterdam and Honorary Member of the *AEOM*, is predestined for such a task. This contribution differs from the others in its perspective: the other authors describe very personal views, but Adriaan de Jong produced a grand survey which he calls “Passion for Museums and for Europe”.

The development of the European open-air museums is divided into three phases: the Scandinavian, the German and the Anglo-Saxon period. The first phase is called the “Scandinavian period”, illustrating the time between 1890 and the 1950s. Initial intentions to establish open-air museums already existed at the end of the 19th century; frequently, World Expos are considered to have been the stimuli. Scandinavia was the pioneer: between 1890 and 1910, the first national open-air museums opened in Stockholm, Oslo, Copenhagen and Helsinki.

In the 1950s the so-called “German period” starts with the foundation of open-air museums in Northern Germany first and Southern Germany later on in the 1970s. This period between the 1950s and the 1980s had already been called the “second founding period” of open-air museums by Adelhart Zippelius. During this time, the *AEOM* was established as a means for the museum professionals involved to become more professional and to exchange ideas on an international level. The European idea was – after death, destruction and devastation during the Second World War – decisive. This phase is

especially associated with the name of Zippelius. His Handbook of European Open-Air Museums characterized and still documents the situation in this "German period".¹ The interview with Max Gschwend conducted by Katrin Rieder also gives a vivid picture of this early phase.

Around the time of 1990 – that is before and after the fall of the Iron Curtain – there were intensive contacts between Eastern and Western Europe which shaped the *AEOM* in a special way. Our Honorary Member Stefan Baumeier shares his personal experiences with us on this issue. He passed away in April 2016.

The picture has changed since the 1980s. In the so-called "Anglo-Saxon period" the stories of the residents of the houses play a more important role. Moreover, the greater involvement with the public, the public's participation in activities as well as the stimulation of "an experience" by storytellers or role-players have become a key focus. These conflicts between the various representatives of the open-air museums (science versus experience) decreased in the course of the 1990s. This tendency is reflected in the so-called "Arnhem declaration on 'privatization' of open-air museums" which resulted from a meeting in Arnhem/Netherlands. Jan Vaessen (President 1997–2001) provides a report on this workshop with his own contribution in this book. Finally, it was possible to find a common basis with the "ICOM Code of Professional Ethics", so that similarities between open-air museums now predominate.

In the past decade, open-air museums have reacted to changes to society in many different ways, and today's generation also gets a chance to state their views – Miklós Cseri from Hungary (President 2003–2007), Thomas Bloch Ravn from Denmark (President 2007–2011) and Jan Carstensen from Germany (President 2011–2015) as well as the current President Katarina Frost from Sweden.

Henrik Zipsane from Sweden (Vice-President since 2015) concludes the book by describing the importance of Europe and the European Union for open-air museums. It has become evident that the future as well as the roots of the *AEOM* are tightly linked to the European idea.

What is the destination of the *AEOM* in the future? A résumé puts even greater emphasis on two current aspects of the work in open-air museums: participation on the one hand, and contemporary issues on the other. Here, every museum needs to adopt a clear position. These arguments have been discussed during *AEOM* congresses, and also at the Congress of Museum Professionals in Poland at which the then President Jan Carstensen gave a lecture.

1 Adelhart Zippelius: Handbuch der europäischen Freilichtmuseen. Köln, Bonn 1974. (Führer und Schriften des Rheinischen Freilichtmuseums und Landesmuseums für Volkskunde in Kommern, Nr. 7) Esp p. 9-39.

Furthermore, the professional collaboration between the two editors (Carstensen & Frost) has also brought the work with live collections into focus. The first “International Symposium on Garden Heritage at Open-Air Museums” took place at the Open-Air Museum Detmold in 2013 and brought together specialists for gardens and rare domestic animals from all over Europe for the first time. The subsequent meeting took place at the Franco-nian Open-Air Museum in Bad Windsheim in April 2016, and it is hoped that garden diversity and the survival of rare breeds will continue to be at the top of the list of important issues for open-air museums. The *AEOM* and its members are an enormously lively forum and a platform for the exchange of ideas.

We thank the President of ICOM, Professor Dr. Hans-Martin Hinz, for his kind words. It needs to be acknowledged that the publication of this book has only been possible thanks to the support of numerous members of the *AEOM* and the research work that has been done. This book is about more than just memories: it is yet a story about the beginnings of the *Association* that is tightly connected to our present. For that, the editors would like to thank all authors. Sincere thanks also to the colleagues at the Open-Air Museum Bokrijk who invited the members as guests to Belgium in 2016, to the *locus nascendi* of the *AEOM*.

Katarina Frost
Västerås, Sweden
President

Jan Carstensen
Detmold, Germany
Past-President

Adriaan de Jong

A Passion for Museums and for Europe

The early years of the *Association of European Open-Air Museums* (1966–1972)

1 Introduction¹

Anyone who frequently attends the conferences of the *Association of European Open-Air Museums* (AEOM) will eventually begin to wonder how this organization of enthusiastic directors and staff members of open-air museums came about and why certain matters are the way they are. Why did museums, which are in fact rooted in a particular country or a particular region, seek contacts on a European level? What did they have in common with each other, so that a need arose for experiences to be shared beyond national borders?

With this we could also pose the question as to why that need did not arise any earlier than in 1966. Or had the open-air museums already arranged regular contact with each other by way of other channels? Another interesting matter: why was the organization intended exclusively for European open-air museums, while open-air museums had also been founded in such countries as the United States? And, during the Cold War years, were open-air museums behind the Iron Curtain considered part of that Europe? What exactly does the term 'Affiliated Association of the ICOM' (International Council of Museums) mean when it appears in publications of the *Association*, and why is the *Association* not 'simply' an ICOM committee as that exists for historical, technological or ethnographic museums?

There are ample reasons to carry out, on the basis of original source material, new research on the early days of the *Association*. To that end this article adopts, as its point of departure, two directors of open-air museums within the Dutch-speaking region who played significant roles in the establishment of the *Association*: Jozef Weyns, the first host, and August Bernet Kempers, the first chairman. Weyns (1913–1974) was the first academic director of the Flemish Open-Air Museum Bokrijk, where the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft europäi-*

1 I thank Beth O'Brien for the translation of this article from Dutch into English. I also thank Robert Lenaerts, son-in-law of Jozef Weyns and author of a book about the letters of Jozef Weyns, *Hartelijkst van huis tot huis. Brieven van Jozef Weyns (1913–1974)*, who gave me a start with my research in the archives of Jozef Weyns at the Letterenhuys in Antwerp. I am grateful to Hilde Schoefs, academic director of the Flemish Open-Air Museum Bokrijk, and Joyce Paesen, staff member of that museum, for their additional information and preliminary work in the archives of the Domein Bokrijk.

scher Freilichtmuseen (Working Team of European Open-Air Museums), the forerunner of the *Association*, was founded in 1966. Bernet Kempers (1906–1992) was the director of the Netherlands Open-Air Museum in Arnhem, chairman of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* and, from 1972 to 1976, chairman of the *Association* as well.

Further on in this book, individual chapters are dedicated to two other prominent figures from the early days: Adelhart Zippelius, director of Rhineland's Open-Air Museum in Kommern, and Max Gschwendt, director of the Swiss Open-Air Museum at Ballenberg. This does not mean to say, however, that the list of founding fathers is thereby complete. Throughout the course of this article, mention will be made of additional colleagues who have been crucial to the development of the *Association*. The list used by Weyns in organizing the first meeting at Bokrijk (see Ill. 2) could serve as a convenient aid in order not to lose one's way in this multitude of names.

Bernet Kempers and Weyns, in particular, have left behind extensive archives that provide insight on their international activities. These archives consist of material in Dutch but also contain a great deal of correspondence in German, English and French. They constitute the basis of this article. Among the items preserved at the Letterenhuis (House of Literature) in Antwerp (which manages Weyns's personal records) are, for instance, the personal notebooks kept by Weyns at conferences that he attended. Furthermore there are the official files of Bokrijk, which are housed at the Provinciaal Archief Limburg (Archives of the Province of Limburg) in Hasselt, Belgium. The detailed travel reports that Bernet Kempers wrote for the Dutch Ministry of Culture, under which the Nederlands Openluchtmuseum operated, are kept at the Gelders Archief (Archives of the Province of Gelderland) in Arnhem, the Netherlands. This material offers – particularly as a whole – a fascinating and varied view of the international contacts and networks.

2 Weyns and Bernet Kempers: a brief comparison

Weyns and Bernet Kempers had more in common than their native Dutch language and the directorship of an open-air museum. Both initially opted for studies related to non-Western cultures. Weyns studied art history from 1932 to 1935 and obtained his PhD with a dissertation titled 'De plastiek van het Neder-Kongo-Stijlgebied' (Sculpture of the Lower-Congo Regional Style). For several years he was then employed at the Museum of Belgian Congo in Tervuren and at the Royal Museums for Art and History in Brussels. In 1953 he was asked to be the curator of the recently founded museum Bokrijk.²

2 Robert Lenaerts, *Hartelijkst van huis tot huis. Brieven van Jozef Weyns (1913–1974)* (Beerzel, Belgium, 2013), pp. 61–63; Patrick De Rynck, Sam Van Cleven

Bernet Kempers studied Indo-Iranian literature from 1926 to 1933, specializing in Indian archaeology and cultural history. He obtained his PhD with the dissertation *The Bronzes of Nalanda and Hindu-Javanese Art*. In 1940, in Batavia (capital of the then Dutch East Indies, now Jakarta), he was appointed professor of the ancient history and archaeology of Southeast Asia and the cultural history of British India, a position which he continued to fill, after World War II and after Indonesia's independence, until 1956. On his return to the Netherlands, his appointment as director of the Netherlands Open-Air Museum in 1958 was regarded as a bold venture, since he had little familiarity with European ethnology.³

Weyns and Bernet Kempers were both what we would now refer to as 'networkers.' Even before his appointment at Bokrijk, Weyns was maintaining international contacts with various organizations and museums of folklore. Bernet Kempers also attached considerable importance to the strengthening of international contacts. It is striking to see just how quickly he, as an outsider, made himself familiar with this field of folklore studies and open-air museums. Four years after being hired in Arnhem, he was writing an extensive chapter, for the fiftieth-anniversary publication on the history of the Netherlands Open-Air Museum, in which he made an international comparison of open-air museums.⁴ This chapter dealt with their histories, their components such as the site, buildings, interior and surroundings, and finally with their representation of folklore as it had developed in the various European open-air museums. Considerable attention was given to the problems and choices involved in the moving and presentation of the buildings. Unfortunately, this interesting chapter has never been translated into English or

and Sofie Wouters, *Achter de traditie. Op zoek naar een levend verleden: leven en werk van Jozef Weyns* (Antwerp 2008), pp. 21–27; E. Mannaerts, 'Vijfentwintig jaar openluchtmuseum', in *Volkskunde* 1978), nr. 2/3 (April-Sept.) pp. 109–118, spec. p. 110; Hilde Schoefs, 'The founding fathers of Bokrijk – Plural rather than singular', in Nikola Krstović (ed.), *Founding Fathers. International Yearbook 2014 Open-Air Museum Old Village Sirogojno* (Serbia) pp. 215–226, spec. p. 221; 'Kroniek en memorieboek van huize ter Speelbergen', LH, archives Weyns, Inv. Nr 1385.

- 3 A. Soekmono, 'In Memoriam A.J. Bernet Kempers 7 Oktober 1906–2 Mei 1992 Persoonlijke Herinneringen en Indrukken', in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 150 (1994) nr. 2 (KITLV Leiden), pp. 269–290; Ton Dekker, 'August Johan Bernet Kempers (1906–1992)', in: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde, neue Serie Band XLVII, Gesamtserie Band 96 Heft 2* (1993), pp. 187–189; Ad de Jong, 'Bij het overlijden van oud directeur prof. dr. A.J. Bernet Kempers', in *Priori*, personeelsblad van het Nederlands Openluchtmuseum nr. 9 (14 Oct. 1992); P.J. Meertens, 'Bij het afscheid van August Johan Bernet Kempers als directeur van het Nederlands Openluchtmuseum', in: P.J. Meertens and Hermanna W.M. Plettenburg (ed.), *Vriendenboek voor A.J. Bernet Kempers. Aangeboden door de Vereniging Vrienden van het Nederlands Openluchtmuseum ter gelegenheid van zijn afscheid van het museum* (Arnhem 1971), pp. 1–3, spec. p. 2.
- 4 A.J. Bernet Kempers, *Vijftig jaar Nederlands Openluchtmuseum* (Arnhem, The Netherlands, 1962), p. 126–156.

German. The chapter hints at the imminent role of Bernet Kempers in the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*.

In a certain sense Bernet Kempers assumed Weyns's role in the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*. Due to his failing health, Weyns was forced, not long after the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft* was set up, to take things easier and to transfer his secretaryship to Bernet Kempers. Reluctantly, as a colleague from the very start, he even had to miss a number of meetings. His last conference was that held in 1970. Four years later he died at the age of sixty-one.

There were also major differences between Weyns and Bernet Kempers. Weyns was tied to his native region with all his heart and, from the very start, involved in activities related to local history. Due to his pro-Flemish commitment, he had a great affinity with the national and educational ideas of Hazelius. He also shared his enthusiasm for a living museum which would attract a wide audience by way of tangible as well as intangible aspects of folk culture.⁵ Open-air museums were regarded by him as ideal museums for national folk culture, as 'idyllic gardens of native folk life'. Weyns was a practical man who had a passion for traditional architecture and folk art. He had a sense of nostalgia about the loss of folk customs and wanted to preserve whatever was left of it for the benefit of future generations. In short: he had a real 'eleventh hour' feeling about this.⁶

Bernet Kempers was driven by a great sense of duty, both in his scholarly work and in his association with others. He spent his youth in various places throughout the Netherlands and then lived in Indonesia for a long period, first in the colonial society and later, after the years of internment by the Japanese, in the new Republic of Indonesia, where he was engaged in scholarly work and the development of an Indonesian archaeological service.⁷ Later, too, in Arnhem he placed emphasis on the scholarly aspect of the museum, was devoted to systematic research and publications and, for many years, was on the editorial staff of the international scholarly periodical *Ethnologia Europaea*. A true scholar, he took a reserved stance, unlike Weyns, toward anything that verged on 'staging'. His sole concern was the 'serious study' of folk customs based on a documentation of that which still exists: 'Holding on to them by organizing them into a spectacle is practically the same as depriving them of their actual character, no matter how nice its outward appearance

5 De Rynck, Van Cleven, Wouters, *Achter de traditie*, pp. 71–79; Schoefs, 'The founding fathers of Bokrijk', pp. 221–222.

6 M. Laenen, 'Openluchtmusea, verleden, heden, toekomst', in: *Volkskunde* 79 (1978), nr. 2/3 (April-Sept.) pp. 129–156, spec. p. 137; idem, 'Gesellschaftliche Bedeutung von Freilichtmuseen jetzt', in: Claus Arens, Iván Balassa and Adelhart Zippelius (ed.), *Report of the Conference Hungary 1982* (Szentendre, Hungary, 1984) pp. 137–145, spec. p. 138; Pascal Gielen, *De Onbereikbare Binnenkant van het Verleden. Over de encensering van het culturele erfgoed* (Leuven, Belgium, 2007) p. 54.

7 Soekmono, 'In Memoriam A.J. Bernet Kempers', pp. 269–290.

might be.⁸ In view of his scholarly disposition, it came as no surprise when Bernet Kempers was appointed special professor of folklore studies at the Universiteit van Amsterdam in 1969. As with his chairmanship of the *Association*, he would continue to hold this position even after his retirement from the Netherlands Open-Air Museum in 1971, until 1976. The last conference of the *Association* in which he participated was that held in Switzerland in 1988.

3 The start of the ‘second founding period’ during the years 1953–1966

The founding of the open-air museum Skansen in Stockholm in 1891 prompted the further establishment of successive open-air museums throughout Northern Europe. Open-air museums based on the Scandinavian model, like the Netherlands Open-Air Museum in Arnhem, were set up on a modest scale in several other countries in Western, Central and Eastern Europe. I would like to refer to his initial phase, which extended up to World War II, as the ‘Scandinavian’ period. The prime objective at that time was to preserve a vanishing folk culture, which was considered the root of a national or regional identity. Romantic sentiments and pedagogical activities that promoted the awareness of a national identity played a more important role than scholarly research.

The second phase in the history of European open-air museums begins during the 1950s. The opening of the Flemish Open-Air Museum in Bokrijk, in 1953, heralded an era of successive new open-air museums, those of the second generation. These differed from open-air museums founded around 1900 by way of their new approach: that of the ‘village type’, as opposed to the ‘park type’. The ‘park type’ involved individual buildings that were relocated to a park-like environment. There they were arranged according to the region of origin and type of structure. The ‘village type’ open-air museums aimed, by contrast, to collect buildings which would jointly make up a characteristic historical village or landscape ensemble. This type developed on a small scale during the interbellum period in Cloppenburg (Germany) and in Odense (Denmark), but it did not truly flourish until after World War II. It isn’t surprising to see that, soon after his appointment at Bokrijk, Weyns was corresponding with the director of the museum in Cloppenburg, Heinrich Ottenjann, with whom he also exchanged publications. In 1955 Ottenjann

8 Volksgebruiken in deze tijd. Overzicht van de inleiding door Prof. Dr. A.J. Bernet Kempers, Volkskundedag 1 Sept. 1960, Documentation department of Netherlands Open-Air Museum; Bernet Kempers, ‘Terugblik op veertien jaar Nederlands Openluchtmuseum’, in *Bijdragen en Mededelingen van het Rijksmuseum voor Volkskunde ‘Het Nederlands Openluchtmuseum’* 34 (1971) 2, pp. 33–54, spec. p. 44.

gave Weyns a tour of the museum in Cloppenburg, which inspired him greatly. The concept of what he called the ‘museumsDORF’ (museumVILLAGE) was taken from Heinrich Ottenjann.⁹ Due to the focus on ensembles of buildings, these new open-air museums had a more regional than national character, although Bokrijk did develop into a Flemish national open-air museum.

Until the mid 1950s few developments had come about in Germany, as far as open-air museums were concerned. Around 1900 the Scandinavian open-air museums were indeed enjoying a considerable reputation in Germany. The German journalist Heinrich Pudor and the architect H.E. von Berlepsch-Valendàs, for instance, were writing extensive articles on them in German periodicals at the start of the twentieth century. Socialist leader Karl Liebknecht was so enthusiastic about Skansen’s suitability for a broad audience that he urged the Prussian parliament to establish such a museum for German workers.¹⁰ The founding of a national open-air museum like that in the Netherlands, however, would not be realized. The open-air museum that opened in Cloppenburg in 1936 was regional in character.

As of the mid 1950s Germany began – in a big way – to make up for lost time: the Open-Air Museum ‘am Kiekeberg’ in Hamburg-Harburg was founded in 1953, Rhineland’s Open-Air Museum in Kommern in 1958, and the Westphalian Open-Air Museum for Peasant Culture in Detmold, the Westphalian Open-Air Museum for Technical Heritage in Hagen and the Schleswig-Holstein Open-Air Museum in Kiel were all founded in 1960. Somewhat later, in the beginning of the 1970s, came the open-air museums in southern Germany. Adelhart Zippelius, director of Rhineland’s Open-Air Museum, does speak about a second founding period for this reason. The impulse to set up new open-air museums arose, in his view, from the new historical outlooks of historians from the French *Annales* group, which gained great influence after World War II, also outside France. For these historians socio-economic and socio-cultural structures were more crucial to the view of history

9 Letter from Weyns to Heinrich Ottenjann, 24 May 1954, LH, archives Weyns, Acces Nr 364; letter from Weyns to Bernard Sudendorf, president Heimatverein Cloppenburg, in response to invitation for party held in celebration of 75th birthday of Heinrich Ottenjann, 20 Feb. 1961, LH, archives Weyns, Inv. Nr 948.

10 Adriaan de Jong, *Die Dirigenten der Erinnerung. Musealisierung und Nationalisierung der Volkskultur in den Niederlanden 1815–1940 (The Conductors of Memory: ‘Museumisation’ and ‘Nationalisation’ of Folk Culture in the Netherlands)* (Münster 2007) pp. 278–282; H. Pudor, ‘Nordische Freiluft-Museen’, in *Deutsche Stimmen. Halbmonatschrift für vaterländische Politik und Volkswirtschaft* III, 17 (beginning Dec. 1901) pp. 589–592; H.E. von Berlepsch-Valendàs, ‘Nordische Freiluftmuseen’, in: *Kunstgewerbeblatt Neue Folge* 16, nr. 6 (March 1905) pp. 101–120, 16, nr. 7 (April 1905) pp. 121–137 and nr. 8 (May 1905) pp. 141–145; idem, ‘Skandinavische Museen, Eine Reisestudie’, in *Zeitschrift des Bayerischen Kunstgewerbe Vereins ‘Kunst und Handwerk’* (1905) 7 and 8 (special edition); Karl Liebknecht, ‘Kunst und Wissenschaft für das Volk. Reden im preußischen Abgeordnetenhaus zum Kultusetat 28. April 1910’, in: Karl Liebknecht, *Gesammelte Reden und Schriften Band III Februar bis Dezember 1910* (Berlin 1960) pp. 237–264.

than major events and famous individuals. This caused the accent to shift from political history to patterns of day-to-day life.¹¹

Throughout the course of the 1960s a new spirit began to prevail in folklore studies at German universities. Romantic approaches and feelings of identity were, partly due to the Nazi era, no longer considered acceptable.¹² There was growing criticism of the way in which folklore studies were carried out, and a younger generation wished to put an end to prewar myths such as the continuity of the folk culture, the rural population as the bearer of 'authentic' folk culture and the notion that folk culture was supposedly the culture of close-knit communities free of social contrasts.¹³ Many directors of German open-air museums from the second founding period therefore adhered to thorough research of the facts and a strict scholarly presentation, thus steering clear of any ideologically tinted interpretations, feelings of identity or rousing displays of sentimentality.

Throughout all of this the German open-air museums were being observed critically by the universities. In Detmold a congress of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde (German Society for European Ethnology) was held, for instance, in 1969. Prominent directors of open-air museums attended this renowned conference, to which 'critical students' were invited as guests. Many came from the 'increasingly sociologically oriented Tübingen' (the University of Tübingen in southern Germany) as Bernet Kempers wrote. They were critical of the way in which folklore studies were being carried out and of the choice of subject matter at this conference. Interruptions took place, resolutions were proposed and lectures were disrupted by way of 'rehearsed' intrusions. According to Bernet Kempers they attempted to impose a fairly one-sided view on the others, and in conclusion he referred to this as a 'remarkably sad phenomenon.'¹⁴ Before very long the open-air museums would also experience the consequences of this rupture at the very foundations of folklore studies, the discipline that determined the direction of subject matter for most open-air museums.

The large number of new open-air museums, particularly in the German-speaking region, gave rise to a growing need for an exchange of ideas on methods to be used. Throughout the course of the 1950s, many directors of new open-air museums sought contact with each other and with the first generation of open-air museums. We already saw how Weyns was in touch with Cloppenburg. The founders of new open-air museums in Germany

11 Adelhart Zippelius, 'Zur notwendigen Selbstkritik der Freilichtmuseen', in *Volkskunde* 79 (1978), nr. 2/3 (April-Sept.) pp. 109–118, spec. pp. 110, 121–122.

12 Sten Rentzhog, *Open Air Museums. The history and future of a visionary idea* (Jamtli, Sweden, 2007), pp. 181, 183.

13 Adriaan de Jong, *Die Dirigenten*, pp. 610–612.

14 Bernet Kempers, Short report on business travel to Detmold 22–27 Sept. 1969, GldA, archives NOM, Acces Nr 3061, Inv. Nr 389.

were fond of an orientation toward Cloppenburg and later toward Bokrijk as well. Like Weyns, Bernet Kempers also proved to have a desire for contacts with colleagues abroad. Within a year after being appointed to his position, he travelled to Scandinavia and met people such as Gösta Berg, the director of Skansen who played a prominent role among Scandinavian open-air museums. Kempers referred to him as ‘an enormous authority’. In 1961 he made his second visit to Bokrijk and came to the conclusion that what Weyns had achieved in only several years and with few staff members was admirable. Several months later he travelled to Kommern for the opening of Rhineland’s Open-Air Museum, where he encountered Zippelius and Weyns again. ‘Because both Weyns and Zippelius aim to provide a well-founded rebuilding and presentation, based on thorough previous documentation in the field, I regard the two as valuable fellow colleagues in a neighboring country.’¹⁵

Another important pioneer from the second founding period, Max Gschwend, who was involved in the founding of the Swiss open-air museum Ballenberg, made a trip to Bokrijk, Arnhem and Cloppenburg in 1963 as part of the preparation for a Swiss Open-Air Museum.¹⁶ For open-air museum people, the Cloppenburg-Arnhem-Bokrijk-Kommern trip became, in addition to the Scandinavian ‘Grand Tour’, a kind of ‘Second Grand Tour’.

What was referred to by Zippelius as the second founding period could also be called ‘the German period’. The German postwar context, in which most of the open-air museums developed, established the norm with its strict scholarly approach and its focus on the highest possible degree of material authenticity. During this period German was the ‘lingua franca’ in the world of open-air museums. Museum directors from the Netherlands, Belgium, Scandinavia, Central and Eastern Europe generally had a sufficient command of this language to participate in discussions. For German colleagues this internationalization with German as the spoken language was a welcome opportunity to part with the past after World War II and to acquire a valued position in Europe.

4 Open-air museums among three networks, 1950–1966

Broader options for fast travel and increasing financial possibilities due to the extended period of economic growth made it possible, more than before, to attend meetings held at distant places. And there was a desire for this: emerg-

15 Bernet Kempers, Notes relating to Scandinavia trip 16 June–12 July 1959; idem, Report on business travel to the 24th Flemish philological congress in Leuven. Undated [5–8 April 1961]; idem, Report on business travel to Kommern 19–21 July 1961, all three: GldA, archives NOM, Acces Nr 3061, Inv. Nr 389.

16 Letter from Gschwendt to Weyns, 27 July 1963, PAL, archives Domein Bokrijk, correspondentie 1, correspondentie 1963-2.

ing among colleagues in the field was a new eagerness to meet with each other after contacts had been broken during World War II. There were new ideals with regard to international collaboration, which came about with the formation of the European Community or under the auspices of the United Nations and UNESCO. Furthermore an increasing professionalization was taking place in the museum world, and this demanded more investigative trips and exchanges. All of this contributed to the need to resume and to intensify the prewar conference activities: a kind of restoration and development of scholarly and cultural ties.

There were three types of conferences at which open-air museum directors from the 1950s and early 60s were meeting each other, before open-air museums had any organization of their own: the ethnological, the museum and the architectural history conferences. These three different types of conferences contain, as it were, the ingredients that make up the content of open-air museums: ethnology – museology – architecture. Let us first take a look at the world of conferences that were of importance to the open-air museums during the 1950s and 60s.

a) The ethnological conferences

The oldest organization was the Commission Internationale des Arts et Traditions Populaires (CIAP), which existed since 1928 and, before World War II, had come under the auspices of what was then known as the League of Nations.¹⁷ After World War II the anthropologists and ethnologists (Western and non-Western) soon resumed their international contacts. In 1951 Weyns went to Stockholm for the International Congress of European and Western Ethnology. During this conference, as is evident from his memorandum book, he came in touch with the world of open-air museums for the first time. He visited Skansen, became acquainted with its director Gösta Berg, travelled to the folklorically very interesting Dalarna, where Hazelius arrived at his first ideas about founding a museum, jotted down the address of Heinrich Ottenjann (Cloppenburg), heard of the existence of the Arbeitskreis für deutsche Hausforschung (Working group for research on German vernacular architecture, referred to further on as the *Hausforschung* group) and, on his way home, visited the Danish Open-Air Museum in Lyngby.¹⁸ It must have been a milestone for Weyns when, roughly ten years later, more than a hundred participants from the Conférence Européenne de Folklore in Brussels also visited his open-air museum in Bokrijk.¹⁹

17 Bjarne Rogan, 'Folk Art and Politics in Inter-War Europe: An Early Debate on Applied Ethnology', in *Folk Life* 2007, pp. 7–23.

18 Weyns's notebook 'Stockholm 1951', LH, archives Weyns, Inv. Nr 1601.

19 'La Conférence Européenne de Folklore consacrée aux métiers et au Carnaval', in *La Province*, 8 Sept. 1962; 'Deelnemers aan Europese Volkskundeconferentie kongresseerden te Bokrijk', in *Het belang van Limburg*, 12 Sept. 1962.

Bernet Kempers, too, quickly proved to be a veritable ‘conference tiger’, who seemed unwilling to miss out on a single one. During the summer of 1960 he attended the Congrès International des Sciences Anthropologiques et Ethnologiques in the Musée de l’Homme in Paris. Among those attending were Kai Uldall (Lyngby) and Gösta Berg (Skansen); in the museology section, the subject of open-air museums came up for discussion. In 1963 Bernet Kempers went to the conference of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde in Münstereifel. According to Bernet Kempers there were a good many acquaintances and friends among the 200 who attended this.²⁰

A year later, in 1964, he attended the conference of the Niederdeutscher Verband für Volks- und Altertumskunde (Association for folklore and antiquarian studies in Lower Germany) in Kiel. The open-air museum directors who were present spoke extensively about the problem of architecture historians who viewed everything solely from a structural standpoint and objected to the removal of buildings. The men from the open-air museums were, according to Bernet Kempers, in complete agreement with each other: ‘Though it was encouraging to notice that Schepers [Detmold, AdJ], Kamphausen [Kiel, AdJ] and the author of this had very similar ideas about various fundamental issues that had occupied us over the past years.’²¹

b) The museum conferences

Among the museum organizations the International Council of Museums (ICOM), which is part of UNESCO, played a major role. The importance of open-air museums did not go unnoticed by ICOM. At ICOM’s General Assembly in Geneva, in 1965, it was decided that an ad-hoc commission would be formed in order to discuss fundamental matters concerning open-air museums, such as the significance of open-air museums with regard to the preservation of endangered monuments in traditional rural culture. Many Scandinavian open-air museums, in particular, were represented in this commission.

The twenty-four delegates tackled the definition of the concept ‘open-air museum’. The definition referred to ‘a collection of buildings open to the public, composed as a rule of elements of popular and preindustrial architecture.’ And further on: ‘These various items are displayed with their appropriate furniture and equipment.’ The commission pointed out the scholarly and educational content of open-air museums, which made them of public impor-

20 Bernet Kempers, Report on business travel to Paris 29 July–7 Aug. 1960. Participation in the Congrès International des Sciences Anthropologiques et Ethnologiques. VIe Session. Paris (Musée de l’Homme); idem, Report on business travel to the congress of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Volkskunde in Münstereifel 16–20 April 1963, both GldA, archives NOM, Acces Nr 3061, Inv. Nr 389.

21 Bernet Kempers, Report on business travel to Denmark and northern Germany 27 May–10 June 1964, GldA, archives NOM, Acces Nr 3061, Inv. Nr 389.

tance. This was a recognition of the work carried out by open-air museums when 'in situ' preservation was not possible. Referring to the stimulating effect and high attendance figures of Skansen, the commission recommended the establishment of open-air museums, with the support of UNESCO, in countries where this had not yet taken place. The commission's work took concrete shape in the ICOM Declaration on open-air museums (1957). The Declaration mainly expresses a concern about neglect in the preservation of rural architecture, as opposed to major monuments. It is striking that, at that time, open-air museums were predominantly associated with the Scandinavian countries.²²

Afterwards, different views were held as to the importance of the Declaration. A positive aspect was that the Declaration became a stimulus for the governments of various countries to assist in financing the creation of new open-air museums. The director of the open-air museum in Sanok, in the southeastern part of Poland, Jerzy Czajkowski, who like Zippelius had also been carrying out a study of open-air museums, believed that the ICOM Declaration had established, for the first time, the scholarly principles and chief tasks of the open-air museums. This, in his view, signified a new stage in the development of open-air museums. He moreover pointed out the Declaration's great influence in 'socialist countries', particularly as this provided a workable pretext for authorities to show the importance of open-air museums. In countries such as Poland and Czechoslovakia, the ICOM Declaration helped to speed up the process of founding new open-air museums.²³ Another virtue of the Declaration was that it stipulated the importance of rural architecture and emphasized the complementary relationship between open-air museums and historical preservation societies. If people had later acted more in accordance with the contents of the Declaration, Zippelius later observed, there would have been fewer conflicts in the field of historical preservation.²⁴

In 2007 Sten Rentzhog also expressed criticism, however, in his book *Open Air Museums*. To regard open-air museums solely as collections of buildings from the pre-industrial era, was in his view too strict an interpre-

22 Adelhart Zippelius, *Handbuch der europäischen Freilichtmuseen* (Cologne 1974), pp. 30–31; Adelhart Zippelius (ed.), *Tagungsberichte 1966–1972 Association of European Open-Air Museums* (Cologne 1973), p. 35; Marc Laenen—quotes the official English version of the definition of open-air museum in 'Openluchtmusea, verleden, heden, toekomst', in *Volkskunde* 79 (1978) nr. 2/3 (April-Sept.), pp. 132–133.

23 Jerzy Czajkowski, 'An outline of Skansen museology in Europe', in Jerzy Czajkowski (ed.), *Open-Air Museums in Poland* (Sanok, Poland, 1981), pp. 12–31, spec. pp. 26–27; Claus Ahrens, 'The general course of the conference', in Ahrens, Balassa, Zippelius (ed.), *Report of the Conference Hungary 1982*, pp. 9–31, spec. p. 23; Jerzy Czajkowski, 'Skansen Museology in Socialistic Countries in the Years 1945–1982', *ibidem* pp. 113–122, spec. p. 120; Rentzhog, *Open Air Museums*, pp. 196, 199.

24 Adelhart Zippelius, '25 Years of ICOM-declaration about open air museums', in: Ahrens, Balassa, Zippelius (ed.), *Report of the Conference Hungary 1982*, pp. 81–90, spec. p. 88.