

IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement November 2013



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I. Preface

Dear Colleagues
Officers and Individual Members of
IAHR Member Societies and Affiliates

Dear Colleagues

Please share this IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, November 2013 from the desk of the IAHR General Secretary with the members of your respective national or regional IAHR member associations and societies.

Allow me to stress, as I did also in my report to the International Committee in Liverpool earlier this year, how important it is that the individual members and not just the officers are continuously being informed and updated on IAHR related matters.

Though minutes from the IAHR International Committee Meeting in Liverpool, September 4, 2013 will be circulated later, I find it appropriate to share with you already at this point some of the discussions and decisions taken at the meeting, *especially as regards the proposed change of the name of the IAHR* (see ahead, p. 3).

If you have any questions regarding the IAHR, please do not hesitate to contact me (t.jensen@sdu.dk).

Respectfully yours

Tim Jensen, IAHR General Secretary
Copenhagen, November 19, 2013

II. *The Name*

Words and names matter. So do acronyms. This also pertains to the IAHR and to IAHR matters. Consequently, one of the most important items on the agenda, item 10, of the International Committee Meeting, September 4, 2013 in Liverpool, was the IASR proposal (see [IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013](#), pp. 44;48-49) to change the name from the IAHR (International Association for the History of Religions) to IASSR (International Association for the Scientific Study of Religions).

During the meeting, Prof. Wiebe put forward, as an alternative to the proposed *International Association for the Scientific Study of Religion (IASSR)*, another name, namely the *International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religion (IAHSSR)*. The IAHR General Secretary, Prof. Jensen, with reference to the response to the IASR proposal to change the name, informed the members of the International Committee that the Executive, also following further discussions at its recent annual meeting, found it in perfect line with its policies to seek to strengthen the academic and scientific profile in words and deeds of the IAHR. However, the Executive was still not convinced that the proposed change of name would make a real difference in that regard.

During the discussion that followed, other possible new names were discussed, namely *International Association for the Study of Religion(s) (IASR)*, and *International Association for the Academic Study of Religions (IAASR)*.

Following the discussions, the International Committee agreed to the following: The Executive Committee is to take the issue forward to the International Committee Meeting in Erfurt 2015 in order for the International Committee to discuss matters once again AND to put forward a proposal for the General Assembly to discuss and vote on. The International Committee meeting in Erfurt is to be encouraged to try its best to come up with a recommendation for a vote between three names: the current one and one or two alternatives.

Consequently, the IAHR member associations and societies should be encouraged to discuss a change of name with their constituencies in the time up to the meeting in Erfurt 2015, and I therefore *sincerely ask you to take up such discussions whenever possible in order for the delegates to the International Committee Meeting in Erfurt to enter into discussions with a mandate from their respective constituencies.*

III. Recommendation and Conferment of Honorary Life Membership

At the IAHR International Committee Meeting in Liverpool, UK, Wednesday September 4, the IAHR General Secretary, having informed members about the procedure for the recommendation and conferment of IAHR Honorary Life Membership, stated that the Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee, consisting of the Prof. Giulia S. Gasparro (Messina), Prof. Yolótl Gonzales Torres (Mexico City) and Prof. Armin W. Geertz (Aarhus) had submitted a report letter of recommendation (see Appendix) to the end that IAHR Honorary Life Membership be conferred on the following three persons all of whom had, in accordance with the related IAHR rules, “distinguished themselves through life-long service to the history of religions through their scholarship, regular participation in IAHR conferences, service as national or international officers, and/or other outstanding contributions”:

Prof. Jan G. Platvoet, Groningen, The Netherlands

Prof. Jonathan Z. Smith, Chicago, USA

Prof. Akio Tsukimoto, Tokyo, Japan

Prof. Jensen, when presenting each of the names of the new IAHR Honorary Life Members quoted from the relevant paragraph of the letter (see Appendix) from the Advisory Committee chaired by Prof. Geertz.

The International Committee accompanied and endorsed the recommendation of each of the mentioned scholars with applause.

Prof. Jensen congratulated the named new Honorary Life Members and thanked the members of the Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee for their work and service to the IAHR.

IV. Nominating Committee 2015

In accordance with the relevant Rules, see <http://iahr.dk/nominations.php>, the Executive Committee must appoint a Nominating Committee. The IAHR Executive Committee, at its meeting in Cork September 1-2, 2013, decided to name the following senior scholars:

Prof. Emeritus, Dr. Dr. Peter Antes

Prof. Maya Burger

Prof. Gerrie ter Haar

Prof. Sylvia Marcos

Prof. Luther H. Martin

It is a pleasure to inform the IAHR membership that each of the five senior scholars agreed to once again serve the IAHR, and I have extended thanks from the IAHR Executive Committee to each of the named colleagues.

When established, the Nominating Committee members shall appoint one of its members as the Chairperson of the committee. Prof. Emeritus, Dr. Dr. Peter Antes, in an email as of September 30, 2013, informed the IAHR General Secretary that the Nominating Committee had asked him to serve as chair of the committee, and that he had accepted to do so. Allow me to extend thanks to Prof. Antes for his willingness to take upon himself this work.

The Nominating Committee shall then (see the mentioned Rules) submit nominations for the next [2015-2020] Executive Committee by mail to the IAHR International Committee, via the desk of the IAHR General Secretary, not more than twelve months and not less than nine months prior to each quinquennial congress. This means, with reference to the IAHR World Congress 2015 in Erfurt, beginning August 23, that the 2015 Nominating Committee should send nominations to me, Tim Jensen, the IAHR General Secretary no earlier than **August 23, 2014 and no later than October 23, 2014** - for me to forward the nominations to the International Committee in due time, i.e. **no later than November 22, 2014**.

The relevant Rules, as well as the Constitution, also speak of 'Constraints' and 'Alternative Nominations'. I quote:

4. Constraints

- a. "The Executive Committee is composed of a President, two Vice-Presidents, a General Secretary, a Deputy General Secretary, a Treasurer, a Deputy Treasurer, a Publications

Officer, and four further members. The officers in particular, and the members of the Executive Committee in general, shall be chosen in such a way as reasonably to reflect various parts of the world where academic study of religion is pursued in its various disciplines. (...) The members of the Executive Committee shall hold office for one quinquennial term each and be subject to re-election, but not more than two-thirds of the Committee shall be carried on from one term to the next. No one member shall serve in the same office more than two terms and no other member shall serve for more than four terms in total." [Article 4.c of the Constitution].

b. At the International Committee meeting in Paris in 1993, it was recommended that the Nominating Committee strive towards a gender balance among the nominees for the Executive Committee.

c. At the International Committee meeting in Rome (1990) and recalled for the minutes in Paris (1993), it was recommended that nominees for the Executive Committee should be actively in post at a university or a comparable institution at the time of the election.

d. Nominees should be chosen for their organizational abilities as well as their scholarship, and they should be committed to the aims and goals of the IAHR

5. Alternative Nominations

a. "Members of the International Committee may propose alternative nominations not less than three months prior to each quinquennial congress." [Article 4.c of the Constitution].

b. Three months prior to each quinquennial congress means three months before the day prior to the opening of the congress

c. Such nominations shall be made public. Those nominations that are inconsistent with Point 4 above shall not be taken into consideration.

Following the announcement of the nominations by the Nominating Committee, I shall, of course, remind all officers of these Rules.

Thank you once again to the members of the Nominating Committee for their willingness to continue their service to the IAHR.

V. Recommendation of New National and Regional Members

It is a pleasure and privilege to inform you that the IAHR International Committee at its meeting in Liverpool, UK, September 4, 2013, following the recommendations from the IAHR Executive Committee, unanimously decided to recommend to the IAHR General Assembly, meeting in Erfurt 2015, the admission of the following:

- the ***Association belge pour l'étude des religions/ Belgische Associatie voor de Studie van Religies (BABEL)*** as a national member association to the IAHR,
- the ***Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions (ISASR)*** as a national member association to the IAHR,
- the ***Lithuanian Society for the Study of Religions (LSSR)*** as a national member association to the IAHR,
- the ***Asociación de Cientistas Sociales de la Religión del MERCOSUR (ACSRM)*** as a regional member association to the IAHR.

In accordance with the IAHR Constitution, the aforementioned associations, though pending admission by the General Assembly, are thus considered member associations of the IAHR.

I have notified the aforementioned associations about the decisions taken, and I have sent letters of congratulations, expressing my hope for the future well-being of the named associations as well as for the future collaboration on the promotion of the academic study of religion.

VI. IAHR African Trust Fund

Research & Publication Grant Applications for 2014

Purpose

The IAHR African Trust Fund seeks to facilitate and promote the advancement of research and the development of scholarship on religion in the African continent (and nearby islands) by encouraging scholarly and contextual research initiatives and practices, as well as publications.

The IAHR African Trust Fund aims to encourage and acknowledge the generation of scholars whose research is deemed to hold significant future promise to increase knowledge and contribute to the historical, social and comparative study of religion in the African continent (and nearby islands).

Thus, the IAHR African Trust Fund herewith invites young scholars in particular of any ethnic/national origin, working and/or studying in any higher academic or research institution on the African continent (and nearby islands), whose research project needs financial support or whose publication in an African publishing house (scientific journal) requires a subsidy.

Grant Amount

The total grant allocation for **2014** is **US\$4000**. The grant application is divided into two categories and successful applicants will be awarded the respective amounts within the specific category:

Category 1: Research and/or Publication	Category 2: Research and/or Publication
2 X Award of US\$1000	4 X Award of US\$500

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants have to be scholars resident in Africa and associated with any higher academic or research institution within this context. We encourage applications from members to the IAHR member associations, namely the African Association for the Study of Religion (AASR), the Association for the Study of Religion in Southern Africa (ASRSA), and the East African Association for the Study of Religion (EAASR). Members of the Nigerian Association for the Study of Religion (NASR), no longer a member to the IAHR, may apply if they are also individual members to the AASR.

Evaluation Mechanism & Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by the Board of Trustees of the IAHR African Trust Fund, and the board will consult specialists in the relevant fields when needed. Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. The originality, quality, importance and impact of the proposed study as it relates to the historical, social and comparative study of religion in the African continent (and nearby islands).
2. Adherence to the best practices of research methodology and theory employed.
3. The relevance of the study to the African continent (and nearby islands).

Submission Timeframe

Applications are open till **30th January 2014**. Grant-winning applicants will be announced on **20th February 2014**. Note that all grants will be awarded to the successful applicants at the end of **February 2014**.

Conditions of Grants

Applicants who receive the grant should submit a copy of the publication or a research report (of no less than 5 pages) that summarises the project's findings to the IAHR African Trust Fund. The publication or completed research project should acknowledge the support received in the form of an IAHR African Trust Fund Grant. The IAHR African Trust Fund will be allowed to reproduce or report the summary and parts of the report on the IAHR website, annual reports, and any other document or medium for the purpose of

informing its stakeholders on the study findings. In all these publications, the authorship of the research will be clearly attributed to the applicant.

Application Form

Send a brief covering letter addressed to the IAHR African Trust Fund stating that your submission is for consideration for the IAHR African Trust Fund Grant and include the following required materials:

1. Name of Applicant
2. Email, Telephone Number and Mailing Address of the Applicant
3. Name of University, Department, Research Centre or Institute
4. Name(s) of IAHR African Member Association(s)
5. Title of Research/Publication Proposal
6. A research proposal of not more than four single-spaced pages detailing the aims/objectives, specific research questions, methodology and theoretical issues, the rationale and plan of research (time frame), and a detailed, one-page budget should be attached, indicating the amount being applied for and the exact purposes for which it will be used. If application is for only publication purposes, also indicate to what specific journal or book and evidence of what sum is required for such publication.
7. Brief *curriculum vitae* and a statement of qualifications that specifically addresses the research project.
8. Include two letters of reference from senior scholars, one of whom **MUST** be a member, preferably an executive member of the IAHR member associations.

Completed applications forms are to be submitted as an electronic copy file in PDF or MS Word format in an attachment via email to the Secretary of the African Trust Fund Board of Trustees, Dr. Afe Adogame [A.Adogame@ed.ac.uk]. Please include in the electronic copy file the applicant's last name e.g. Eliza.pdf / Eliza.doc. The subject line in the email should read "**IAHR African Trust Fund Application 2014**" – Note, no hard copies will be accepted.

For more information on the IAHR African Trust Fund Applications, please contact the Secretary of the African Trust Fund Board of Trustees at A.Adogame@ed.ac.uk

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VII. IAHR XXI World Congress, Erfurt 2015: Call for Panels

The Erfurt host has announced the following call for panels, a call that you may find also at the IAHR website at <http://www.iahr.dk/docs/CfP.pdf>

The XXI World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR) will take place August 23-29, 2015 in Erfurt, Germany, looking at »Dynamics of Religion: Past and Present«.

Religion is a human, historical, social and cultural phenomenon. As such, religious ideas, practices, discourses, institutions, and social expressions are constantly in processes of change.

The Congress will address the processes of change, the dynamics of religions past, present, and future, on several interconnected levels of analysis and theory, namely that of the individual, community and society, practices and discourses, beliefs, and narrations.

These will be addressed within four areas:

- Religious communities in society: Adaptation and transformation
- Practices and discourses: Innovation and tradition
- The individual: Religiosity, spiritualities and individualization
- Methodology: Representations and interpretations

We invite contributions from all disciplines of religious studies and related fields of research to allow for broad, interdisciplinary discussion of the Congress topic to register their panels for the XXI World Congress of the IAHR.

Each panel lasts two hours. Panel papers should be limited to 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the number of panel participants. Panel conveners are asked to approach possible participants from different nations to reflect the scope and internationality of the IAHR Congress.

To propose a panel, please submit a general proposal of the panel as well as individual proposals of all papers included in the panel. Both panel and papers of a proposed panel will be evaluated by the Academic Program Committee to ensure a high academic standard of the Congress program. We therefore ask panel conveners to submit the proposals of all prospective panel participants of a proposed panel as indicated by the submission form. Proposals of panels and of papers should not exceed 150 words.

The deadline for submission of proposals is Sunday, September 14, 2014. All

proposals must be submitted electronically via the IAHR 2015 website (www.iahr2015.org).

This site will be available for submissions from Sunday, September 1, 2013 through Sunday, September 14, 2014. As part of the submission process, you will be asked to indicate the area in which you would like your proposal considered. Your proposal will then be forwarded to the appropriate member of the Academic Program Committee. You will receive notice concerning the status of your proposal as soon as possible and certainly before March 1, 2015. If your panel or paper has been accepted by the Academic Program Committee, please note that you will have to register as Congress participant before May 15, 2015 to be included in the Congress program.

For any further questions, please contact the organizers at iahr@uni-erfurt.de.

VIII. IAHR Special & Regional Conferences 2014-2015

As communicated already in the [IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013](#), p. 30, the IAHR Executive Committee has awarded the *Dutch Association for the Study of Religion* (NGG) Conference on “Religion and Pluralities of Knowledge”, Groningen 11-15 May 2014, the status of an IAHR Special Conference. The conference is also an EASR Annual Conference. For more information see the [NGG conference website](#).

Following the IAHR Executive Committee Meeting in Cork, September 1-2, 2013, and the IAHR International Committee Meeting in Liverpool, September 4, the IAHR Executive Committee has awarded the African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR) 6th AASR Conference on [Religion, Ecology, and the Environment in Africa and the African Diaspora](#), to take place at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, July 30-August 3, 2014 the status of an IAHR Regional Conference. At the same time the AASR leadership has kindly offered to host the annual IAHR Executive Committee meeting that will thus take place within the context of the aforementioned conference. On behalf of the IAHR Executive Committee, I take the opportunity to extend thanks to the AASR for this offer.

As also mentioned in my above mentioned report on 'Special and Regional Conferences 2015, and the World Congress in Erfurt 2015', I sincerely encourage the members and affiliates to consider that their conference planning and activities do not interfere unnecessarily with the IAHR XXI Quinquennial World Congress in Erfurt, August 23-29, 2015.

Members and affiliates are kindly requested to avoid organizing their Annual or Bi-Annual meetings and conferences too close to the the 2015 IAHR World Congress. They are also kindly encouraged to consider ‘following in the footsteps’ of the European Association for the Study of Religions: the EASR does not hold its Annual Conference in the year of an IAHR World Congress, thus trying to make sure that individual members are not pressed to try to find time and money for two important conferences within the same year.

The IAHR and the local German host, on their side, promise to try their best to accommodate possible wishes for finding time and space for business meetings *et al* that consequently must be arranged within the framework of the IAHR World Congress 2015 in Erfurt.

IX. AAR International Initiatives: Linking up with the IAHR

For years, the American Academy of Religion (AAR) has had a committee devoted to reaching out to non-US scholars and international AAR members around the world. The committee is called **The International Connections Committee (ICC)**.



The IAHR General Secretary has, not as IAHR General Secretary, but in his capacity of an individual AAR international member, been a member to this committee for several years. His membership, though, terminated with the end of 2012.



The committee so far has mainly sponsored special programs at the AAR annual meeting, inviting scholars from different regions to come to the AAR meetings. It has also hosted an International Members Breakfast and thus extended hospitality to AAR members from outside the USA.

Following several years of discussions, discussions including Tim Jensen, in his capacity both as a member to the committee and as the IAHR General Secretary, discussion that the IAHR President, Rosalind I.J. Hackett has also been part of, the AAR has decided to expand the charge of the ICC: the ICC is transforming into a grants jury, responsible for new **AAR Collaborative International Research Grants** competition.

You can read more about the **AAR Collaborative International Research Grants** at <http://www.aarweb.org/programs-services/collaborative-international-research-grants> as well as at the IAHR website but the core of it is this: the initiative is intended to support generative research collaborations between and among scholars located in different geographical regions who wish to pursue focused, joint projects in any area of the study of religion. Applications for awards ranging from \$500 to \$5000 will be reviewed by the AAR's International Connections Committee (ICC).

The new scheme may be seen as a first evidence of an initial but important aspect of the membership of the AAR to the IAHR and of the developing collaboration between the AAR and the IAHR as regards, *inter alia*, the international outreach of the AAR.

In order to secure the collaboration in general and also in regard to this program, the AAR has asked the AAR Executive Director Jack Fitzmier to staff the grants jury, serving also as the AAR liaison to the IAHR; the IAHR General Secretary, likewise, has been asked to serve on the ICC grants jury and thus function also in this regard as the IAHR liaison to the AAR.

The IAHR is pleased with these initial steps towards ensuring a close collaboration in general and in regard to this new program, and the IAHR is happy to be engaged in the support and administering of this new program.

Mention may also be made of a session at the AAR annual in Baltimore, MD, USA, Sunday November 24, 2013, arranged by the AAR/ICC, with the ICC chair, Amy L. Allocco, Elon University, Presiding, and the IAHR General Secretary, Tim Jensen, University of Southern Denmark, and the IAHR President, Rosalind I. J. Hackett, University of Tennessee as panelists.

Appendix: Report and Recommendation on IAHR Honorary Life Membership

Nominations for Honorary Life Memberships of the IAHR (2013)

An Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee consisting of three honorary life members of the IAHR consisting of Prof. Giulia S. Gasparro (Messina), Dr. Yolótl Gonzales Torres (Mexico City) and Prof. Armin W. Geertz (Aarhus) was constituted in accordance with the procedural provisions, and we have the privilege of reporting as follows.

In accordance with the rules, the two IAHR constituent member societies and associations who replied to the General Secretary Prof. Tim Jensen's call for proposals, suggested one name each and the Executive Committee suggested three names. These names were then forwarded to the Advisory Committee, which was asked to choose up to three names. According to the rules, "honorary life memberships can be conferred on senior scholars who have distinguished themselves through life-long service to the history of religions through their scholarship, regular participation in IAHR conferences, service as national or international officers and/or other outstanding contributions." We were conscious of various criteria such as academic achievement and reputation, global balance and gender balance, contribution to the work of the IAHR, but found that it was not possible to take all relevant criteria into account simultaneously and equally. It was necessary to establish a shorter list from within the slightly larger pool of eminently suitable persons and after considerable thought, the committee reached unanimous agreement that the following three persons (alphabetical order) should be put forward to the International Committee for decision:

Prof. Jan G. Platvoet, Groningen, The Netherlands

Prof. Jonathan Z. Smith, Chicago, USA

Prof. Akio Tsukimoto, Tokyo, Japan

Prof. Jan G. Platvoet has contributed significantly to the development, qualification and promotion of the academic study of (the history) of religions through his scholarly research and publications. Furthermore, he has promoted the academic study of religion through many years of teaching in African educational institutions. He has also served through steady and continuous engagement, as officer, leader, and key mover, in the activities of the IAHR and its national and regional member associations. He has particularly distinguished himself by his crucial role in establishing several African associations, in particular, the African Association for the Study of Religion where he also served as officer for a number of years.

Prof. Jonathan Z. Smith has contributed longstanding service to both the IAHR and the North American Association for the Study of Religion (an IAHR regional member). Smith is the author of a number of important works in religious studies, including *Map Is Not Territory*, *Imagining Religion*, *Relating Religion*, *To Take Place*, and *Drudgery Divine*—all of which have had a substantial impact on the discipline. Smith's enormous contributions to the field from the 1960s to the present have unwaveringly insisted upon, and been

exemplary of, methodological rigor and self-consciousness. He has probably done more than any single scholar to promote an analytic or critical approach to the study of religion.

Professor Akio Tsukimoto is a renowned scholar in Oriental studies who served as a dedicated member of the IAHR Executive Committee from 2000 to 2010. He further contributed to the international development of the IAHR as its Vice-President from 2005 to 2010. It is particularly noteworthy that, together with Congress Director Susumu Shimazono, he devoted himself to the preparation of the 2005 Tokyo Congress and ensured the success of the largest world congress in the history of the IAHR.

Armin W. Geertz (for the Advisory Committee)
August 7, 2013