

IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014



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I. Introductory Summary

Dear Colleagues,
IAHR Members and Affiliates,
Officers of IAHR Member Associations and Affiliate Societies

The IAHR World Congresses constitute the primary public event sponsored by the IAHR, the International Association of the History of Religions. The IAHR World Congresses bring together scholars interested in the academic and scientific study of religions to share the results of their research and to engage in discussion and debate of the major issues and concerns in the field. Panels, individual papers and poster presentations provide ample opportunity for this kind of engagement of various new developments in the study of religion in diverse venues around the world.

The IAHR XXI Quinquennial World Congress taking place in Erfurt, Germany, August 23-29, 2015, with the overall theme: "Dynamics of Religion: Past and Present", is coming up. Not even a year from now.

In a recent email (as of August 25) to the officers of the IAHR member associations and affiliate societies, with the 'IAHR Honorary Life Membership: Call for Suggestions' and 'Minutes of the IAHR International Committee Meeting, Liverpool, UK, September 4, 2013' attached, I announced that this *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014* was on its way with, inter alia, important updates on the upcoming World Congress in Erfurt.

Now the announced *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014* is on your desks, and its most important update, inserted in Section II, pp. 5-6, as regards the upcoming XXI IAHR World Congress in Erfurt, Germany, August 23-29, 2015, is **the extension of the deadline for panel proposals** (previously September 14) to merge, thus, with the deadline for paper and poster proposals also on **December 15, 2014**. To be stressed, though, is that there will be no more extensions, and proposals submitted after the extended deadline will not be accepted.

Furthermore, **registration** for the 2015 Erfurt World Congress opened on 1st of September. You will find all the information you need regarding registration, fees, accommodation, call for papers, financial assistance etc. at the Congress website at <http://www.iahr2015.org>

In addition to this, the World Congress Organizing Committee has agreed upon a few

changes to the regulations in regard to proposal and acceptance of panels, papers, and chairs. Please see Section II below also in this regard.

This, then, was my main reason for asking the officers of the IAHR member associations and affiliate societies to 'hold the horses' and wait and send this *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014* to their and thus the IAHR members rather than the August 25 email with attachments.

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However, this *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014*, apart from the above mentioned documents and news, holds other highly important information, important to all IAHR members and affiliates, to the officers of IAHR member associations and affiliates, and to members of the IAHR International Committee meeting next time in Erfurt August 26, 2015.

In Section VI you will find the first call for the two most important IAHR business meetings to take place in Erfurt, namely the International Committee Meeting on August 26, 2015, and the IAHR General Assembly on August 29, 2015.

What is more: this *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014* entails a formal proposal and argument ("A Rationale for a Change of Name for the International Association for the History of Religions") for a change of name for our association. A proposal and argument submitted on behalf of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion (IASR) by the IAHR Honorary Life Members, Profs. Donald Wiebe and Luther H. Martin.

The proposal and argument (in its entirety, with its original title, "A Rationale for a Change of Name for the International Association for the History of Religions", and the font in which it was submitted August 28, 2014) is inserted below as Section IV. The proposal from Profs. Wiebe and Martin on behalf of the IASR is that the current *International Association for the History of Religions* (IAHR) be changed to the *International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religion* (IAHSSR).

As can be seen from the related Section III ('Retaining or Changing the Name of the IAHR?') from the desk of the IAHR General Secretary, the IAHR Executive Committee, on behalf of the IAHR International Committee, urges you to encourage and help foster discussion on the issue and proposal among your members by any means

appropriate. Consequently, please make sure that the proposal is made known to your members and colleagues, and please make sure that each member association's two representatives on the International Committee can thus be fully briefed and prepared to decide what should be brought forward and recommended to the General Assembly, which will be held on Saturday August 29, on the final day of the IAHR World Congress 2015.

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Last but not least: while the XXI Quinquennial IAHR World Congress, Erfurt, Germany, August 23-29 is thus almost around the corner, with time being up for registration and for panel and paper proposals, and while the IAHR members, the World Congress host, and the IAHR Executive Committee are thus busily preparing themselves for this great event, the IAHR Executive Committee is obliged to start looking beyond Erfurt 2015 and towards the IAHR World Congress 2020. This is why you will find an invitation for letters of interest for hosting the XXII IAHR World Congress 2020 in the final Section VIII.

So, please concentrate on and do not miss the upcoming IAHR XXI World Congress 2015 in Erfurt, Germany. However, please also take a minute to read the invitation for letters of interest for hosting the 2020 IAHR World Congress.

Respectfully yours

Tim Jensen, IAHR General Secretary, Copenhagen September 6, 2014

II. IAHR World Congress Erfurt 2015: Extended Deadline Panel Proposals: December 15, 2014

The IAHR 2015 Congress Organizers have extended the deadline for **panel proposals** to merge with the deadline for paper and poster proposals on **December 15, 2014**. **This deadline is the final deadline for proposals** and will not be extended beyond the given date. Proposals sent after December 15, 2014 can no longer be considered by the Academic Program Committee and will therefore not be included in the program.

You will receive notice concerning the status of your proposal as soon as possible and certainly before March 1, 2015. If your panel, paper or poster 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.

Registration opened on 1st of September. You will find all the information you need regarding registration, fees, accommodation, call for papers, financial assistance etc. at the Congress website at <http://www.iahr2015.org>

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Please also notice the following equally important information about the set of slightly revised rules and regulations:

A network of scholars, a group of scholars, one scholar, a member association and the like may propose and organize up to three panels on a given topic. If there is demand for more than three panels, the proposer must approach the Academic Program Committee via the organizers to argue for further panels. The panels must be given different subtitles to indicate nuances and variations of the overall theme.

One scholar may chair up to two panels and present up to two papers at two different panels. A third presentation may be granted in special cases. Please contact the Academic Program Committee via the organizers in these cases. A scholar chairing two panels may act as co-chair to other panels. However, we urge proposers to encourage colleagues and especially younger scholars to act as chairs and co-chairs at the Congress.

You may be eligible for a **travel grant**. Please read the Travel Grant Guidelines provided for you on the IAHR Congress website (<http://www.iahr2015.org>) before applying for

financial assistance to the XXI IAHR World Congress. Application for Travel Grants is possible until **December 15, 2014**. You will be informed about the status of your application before March 1, 2015.

Tim Jensen, IAHR General Secretary, Copenhagen, September 6, 2014

III. Retaining or Changing the Name of the IAHR?

Following a proposal from the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion (IASR) consultation, a consultation constituted by IAHR Honorary Life Members, Profs. Luther H. Martin, Michael Pye, Donald Wiebe, and Armin W. Geertz, and two members of the Association at large, Panayotis Pachis and Christoph Bochsinger (as for the original proposal, please see "A Rationale for a Change of Name for the International Association for the History of Religions", Section IV, pp. 11-12, and and, with more references, the 'Minutes of the IAHR International Committee Meeting, Liverpool, UK, September 4, 2013', Section V, pp. 31-33), the Executive Committee was asked by the International Committee meeting in Liverpool in 2013 to bring forward the proposal for a change of the IAHR's (English) name to the International Committee Meeting in Erfurt 2015, in order for the IAHR International Committee to make a recommendation to the General Assembly, whose decision will in turn be binding on the Association.

In accordance with this concluding decision (see Section V, p. 34) by the International Committee and because a change of name is a very significant matter, the Executive Committee now earnestly requests and encourages the national and regional member associations to discuss the matter well in advance of the International Committee Meeting in Erfurt (Wednesday, August 26, 2015), so that each member association's two representatives on the International Committee are fully briefed and prepared to decide what should be brought forward to the General Assembly, which will be held on Saturday August 29, on the final day of the IAHR World Congress 2015.

Also in accordance with the mentioned decision and conclusion to the debate at the meeting in Liverpool 2013, the IAHR Executive Committee has given the IASR consultation, represented by Prof. Wiebe, the opportunity to rethink the name and add further comments in support of a change of name, be it a change to the one proposed originally, or the one, namely "International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religion (IAHSSR)", proposed by Prof. Wiebe on behalf of the IASR during the International Committee Meeting in Liverpool 2013.

As can be seen from the following section, Section IV, in this *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014*, the renewed proposal and rationale, signed by the IAHR Honorary Life Members, Profs. Donald Wiebe and Luther M. Martin, argues for a change of name, from the *International Association for the History of Religions* (IAHR) to the *International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religion* (IAHSSR).

Other possible *new* names, apart from the one now proposed, mentioned and briefly discussed during the discussion of the IASR proposal at the International Committee Meeting in Liverpool (see 'Minutes of the IAHR International Committee Meeting, Liverpool, UK, September 4, 2013', Section V, pp. 31-33), were the one originally proposed by the IASR Consultation, namely the *International Association for the Scientific Study of Religions* (IASSR), the *International Association for the Study of Religions* (IASR), and the *International Association for the Academic Study of Religions* (IAASR).

Retaining the current name, the *International Association for the History of Religions* (IAHR), was, as evidenced by the same 'Minutes of the IAHR International Committee Meeting, Liverpool, UK, September 4, 2013', also a favorite option of some members of the IAHR International Committee.

However, as for other *new* names rather than the one now proposed by the IASR, namely the *International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religion* (IAHSSR), no specific or formal proposals have come forward, neither during the meeting in Liverpool nor afterwards.

Consequently, the proposal to be discussed in Erfurt 2015 at the International Committee Meeting August 26, 2015, is the proposal, inserted as Section IV of this *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014*, from the IASR consultation.

If a member of the IAHR International Committee, i.e. a representative of a constituent IAHR member society or association, is in favor of a change of name but not in favor of the one proposed by the IASR consultation, then this member must bring to the floor a specific and formal proposal to that effect. Also, there is of course a possibility of proposing an amendment to the proposal from the IASR consultation. As for the IAHR rules in this regard, see the IAHR By-Laws, Rules 17, 18, and 19 (<http://www.iahr.dk/procedures.php>).

For the time being, though, please read the IASR consultation proposal and rationale in the following Section IV, including its most helpful outline of previous discussions about the name within the history of the IAHR, and please help foster discussion on the issue among your members by any means appropriate.

Tim Jensen, IAHR General Secretary, Copenhagen, September 6, 2014

IV. A RATIONALE FOR A CHANGE OF NAME FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

[As stated above: the below text, as well as the title above, is the original proposal and argument for a change of name written and signed by Profs. Donald Wiebe and Luther H. Martin and submitted to me, Tim Jensen, the IAHR General Secretary on August 28, 2014]

A History of the Discussion

Issues with the name of the “International Association for the History of Religions” have been with the IAHR from the beginning. The original name for the Association at the founding meeting in 1950 was the “International Association for the Study of the History of Religions (IASHR). In 1955 this was changed to the Association’s current name – The International Association for the History of Religions (IAHR).

A further change of name was contemplated in 1960 suggesting the name “International Association for the Science of Religion” (IASR). This discussion was generated by the participation of a number of scholars at the Marburg International Congress of the IAHR whose academic work was largely theological and metaphysical. The proposed new name was rejected, however, because it was thought that it might permit “the entry of philosophy into the field.”

The same issue was raised again at the 1965 International Congress of the IAHR held in Claremont, California. The plenary addresses by C. J. Bleeker and Wilfred Cantwell Smith amounted to a public clash of commitments as to what was to be considered an appropriate approach to the study of religions within the IAHR. This conflict in methodologies revealed a profound dissatisfaction with the IAHR on several levels, but especially with respect to the name of the Association. The Americans maintained that the emphasis on history was a flat refusal to incorporate the social-scientific approaches they considered important. A sub-committee was set up by the Executive of the IAHR to look into these matters; the sub-committee decided that a change of name was not necessary.

The question regarding the name of the Association was raised again by a member of the Executive Committee in 1986 (IAHR Bulletin, 3; September, 1986), but the issue was not taken up seriously until the meeting of the Executive Committee in Burlington Vermont in 1991 which referred the issue of a motion for a change of name to the International Committee in Paris in 1993. Professors Peter Antes and Donald Wiebe were asked to prepare a statement on the problem in preparation for the 1993 discussion. This is the first time in the several decades that this divisive issue which had negatively impacted the IAHR was aired publicly. As the Antes/Wiebe statement put it: “Little of the discussion and debate of this topic has ever appeared in print, but that is not a true indication of the importance of the issue, both at the meetings of national member associations and at the various meetings of congresses of the International Association.” (An account of this

subterranean dispute from 1960 to the present is provided by Wiebe in “Memory, Text, and Interpretation: A Critical Appreciation of IAHR International Congresses – 1975-2010” in Tim Jensen (ed.), *Looking Back and Looking Forward: Past, Present, and Prospects of Numen and the IAHR*, Brill; forthcoming.)

The International Committee discussed the question of a change of name for the Association at its 1993 meeting in Paris. After lengthy debate and compromise, a recommendation was made to change the name of the Association to the International Association for the Study of Religion (IASR). The motion for the change of name was presented to the General Assembly at the 1995 International Congress of the IAHR in Mexico City but was defeated.

This synopsis of the history of the discussion of the name of the Association shows that there has never been a clear consensus about “International Association for the History of Religions” (IAHR) which has caused serious friction and contention for more than fifty years.

Summary of the Antes-Wiebe Statement

1. Practical Reasons for the Change of Name:
 - a. Many member associations do not use the “History of Religions” locution; nor is that locution found to name very many university departments committed to the study of religions;
 - b. The name does not reflect the breadth of scholarship found in departments;
 - c. The name is too restrictive to account for the types of scholarship and research in societies and associations committed to the study of religions;
 - d. A change of name might assist in the raising of funds to support this kind of research.

2. Theoretical Reasons for the Change of Name:
 - a. The name was inappropriate at its adoption because the group of scholars it defined was committed only to the historical and phenomenological study of religions;
 - b. A strict interpretation of the name was too restrictive in that it excluded the social sciences; Used as a technical term, the name suggested that the enterprise was an autonomous intellectual exercise unrelated to the broad field of scientific and scholarly study of religion;
 - c. That the name suggested openness to religio-theological research;
 - d. That the name had Eurocentric overtones and related only to philological and historical research.

3. Practical Reasons for Retention of the Name:
 - a. A change of name could lead to a loss of identity of the Association;
 - b. A loss of that recognisability could negatively affect fund raising for the Association;
 - c. A change of name could make relating to member associations more difficult;

4. Theoretical Reasons for Retention of the Name:
 - a. “Religious Studies” in the name would fail to represent accurately the character of the scholarship of the Association’s members – that is, the Association is not a general rubric for a field of studies but rather a specific discipline;
 - b. A change of name that is too inclusivist could “water down” the scientific character of the Association and a decline of academic standards.

Renewing the Proposal for a Change of Name of the Association

Introduction:

In July of 2012 the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion (IASR) invited several Honorary Life Members of the IAHR (Luther H. Martin, Michael Pye, Donald Wiebe, and Armin Geertz), and two members of the Association at large (Panayotis Pachis and Christoph Boehinger) to “A Discussion on the Future of The International Association for the History of Religions.” Five major topics (among others) were discussed:

- i) The purpose of the IAHR
- ii) “Political Objectives” of the IAHR
- iii) The structure and operation of the IAHR
- iv) The financial viability of the IAHR
- v) The Quinquennial Congresses of the IAHR

A report of our deliberations was sent for consideration to the Executive Committee of the IAHR.

The first two questions considered under the rubric “The purpose of the IAHR” were:

- i) *Does the IAHR need to make clearer to its national and regional associations and affiliates that the IAHR is not a forum for confessional or political concerns?* and
- ii) *Would a change of name of the Association to more clearly reflect our scientific objectives make a difference in this regard?*

After lengthy discussion and debate of possible objections to a change in the Association's name of the kind referred to in the Antes-Wiebe statement, this group included the following friendly advice to the Executive Committee of the IAHR in the report on its deliberations:

“That the Executive Committee of the IAHR recommend to the International Committee a change from “The International Association for the History of Religions,” IAHR, to “The International Association for the Scientific Study of Religions (IASSR), to be taken to the General Assembly of the IAHR at its 2015 quinquennial world congress....”

The Executive Committee discussed this suggestion and brought the matter before the International Committee at its meeting in Liverpool in 2013.

The IASR proposal presented to the International Committee in Liverpool in 2013 was that the current name of the Association be replaced with: **the International Association for the Scientific Study of Religions (IASSR)**. The reasons for the name proposed was to signal to “the academy” that the Association involved not only philological and historical research but also natural and social scientific approaches in the study of religions. Inclusion of the adjective “scientific” was motivated by the concern over the possibility that the Association might be seen as willing to include religious, theological, and metaphysical agendas. There was no interest in changing the name to the Association for “the study of religions” because of its indiscriminate inclusivism, or for “the academic study of religions” because religio-theological and metaphysical studies of religion are included in many college and university departments.

The IASR Consultation Revised Recommendation

The change of name proposed by and discussed in Liverpool persuaded the members of the IASR consultation present at the meeting that changing the name to International Association for the Scientific Study of Religion could endanger the traditional historical focus of the IAHR. Whereas some members of the Association might consider history to be a scientific enterprise many others regard history as one of the humanities in contrast to science. Consequently, we now propose for consideration the following change of name for the Association: **the International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religions (IAHSSR)**. This name pays respect to our tradition of philological and historical studies of religions, points clearly to our stated scientific agenda in our Statutes, and excludes – without causing offense – religious, theological, metaphysical, mystical, and other such agendas from our annual and quinquennial meetings. The proposed name for the Association not only retains an important element of the IAHR brand, it enhances the brand by acknowledging in the Association's name the other scientific approaches to the study of religions it supports.

This proposal is made with the recognition that a change of the name of the Association simply for the sake of change is unwarranted. We believe that the change of name being proposed will improve upon the present name in that it will better represent the aims, goals, and intentions of the Association first established by the group of scholars responsible for the first international congress in Paris in 1900. It will improve upon the current name in reducing the methodological ambiguity implicit in the phrase “History of Religions” while still retaining the traditional name and focus of the IAHR (i.e., history). And, given the concerns over what many have considered the Eurocentric character of the IAHR, the name being proposed will better represent forty-nine societies, associations, and affiliates of the IAHR (of which only eight use the designation “History of Religions”).

There can be no doubt that too inclusivist a name for the Association like the “International Association for the Study of Religion” (IASR) could well be seen as an invitation to philosophers, theologians, and others of similar bent to join the Association. A name like the “International Association for the Academic Study of Religion” (IAASR) would fare no better since there are theologians and philosophers who study religion and do so in the academy – that is, in colleges and universities around the world.

The current name of the Association has served it well for much of its history and in part still points to essential aspects of the Association’s goals. However, the Association’s current name does not fully reflect the scientific developments in the study of religions over the past few decades, nor “recognize” its members who are responsible for the expansion of the scientific objectives of the Association or those engaged in both the social and natural sciences which complement the work of the philologists and historians. Therefore we ask for your support for the motion to change the name of the Association to **the International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religions (IAHSSR)**.

Donald Wiebe, Trinity College in the University of Toronto
Luther H. Martin, University of Vermont

V. Minutes of the IAHR International Committee Meeting, Liverpool, UK, September 4, 2013

[To be adopted at the next International Committee Meeting in Erfurt, Germany, August 26, 2015]

[Preliminarily adopted by the Executive Committee in Cape Town, South Africa, July 29, 2014]

The President, Prof. Rosalind I. J. Hackett presiding.

Prof. Hackett welcomed the delegates of the International Committee and asked the General Secretary, Prof. Tim Jensen, to ascertain that the meeting had been announced and called in accordance with the IAHR By-Laws. With reference to the General Secretary's report in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, p. 3, Prof. Jensen confirmed that the meeting had been announced several times and in accordance with the IAHR By-Laws Rule 3d. The final call, with the preliminary agenda (*IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, p. 2-3), was emailed to the main officers of the IAHR members and affiliates on August 1, 2013. At the same time, the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013* was made public on the IAHR website.

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was unanimously adopted.

2. Membership

Prof. Jensen referred to the Constitution Article 4b, according to which the International Committee of the IAHR is composed of:

- Two representatives each of the constituent national and regional societies;
- (ii) The Executive Committee [...];
- (iii) Up to four individual members co-opted by the International Committee on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

With reference to Rule 5d Prof. Jensen noticed that "[m]embers of the Executive Committee of the IAHR may not serve as representatives for their constituent societies at the International Committee meetings." Prof. Jensen also stressed that no representative can represent more than one association.

2.1. Ascertainment of Membership

The following members of the Executive Committee of the IAHR were present: President, Rosalind I.J. Hackett; Vice-president, Ingvild S. Gilhus; Vice-president, Abdulkader Tayob; General Secretary, Tim Jensen; Deputy General Secretary, Mar Marcos; Treasurer, Brian Bocking; Membership Secretary, Abraham H. Khan; Publications Officer, Morny Joy; Member Without Portfolio, Satoko Fujiwara; Apologies from: Internet Officer, Silas Guerriero; Deputy Treasurer, Marianna Shakhnovich and Member without Portfolio, Amarjiva Lochan

The following representatives of the IAHR national and regional member societies and associations were present: Africa (AASR): Afe Adogame & Elias Bongmba; Australia (AASR): Douglas Pratt; Austria (ÖGRW): none; *Belgium (BABEL): Jos Verheyden & Daniel Praet; Brazil (ABHR/BAHR): none; Canada (CSSR/ SCÉR) [one vote only]: none; Canada (Québec) (SQÉR) [one vote only]: none; Czech Republic (CASR): David Zbírál; Denmark (DASR): Annika Hvithamar & Olav Hammer; China (CARS): none; Eastern Africa (EAASR): none; Europe (EASR): David Václavík; Finland: Teemu Pauha; France: Charles Guittard; Germany (DVRW): Katja Triplett & Juerg Ruepke; Greece (GSSCR): none; Hungary: Abraham Kovács & Bulcsu Hoppál; India (IASR): none; Indonesia: none; *Ireland (ISASR): James Kapalo & Yafa Shanneik; Italy: Giovanni Casadio & Marco Pasi; Japan: Izumi Niwa; Latin America (ALER): none; Latvia (LRPB): Janis Priede; *Lithuania (LSSR): Milda Ališauskienė; *Mercosur (ACSRM): none; Mexico: none; Netherlands (NGG): Kim Knibbe; New Zealand (NZASR): none; Northern America (NAASR): Gregory Alles; Norway (NRF): none; Poland: none; Romania (RAHR): none; Russia: none; Slovakia (SSŠN/SASR): none; South Korea (KAHR): none; Southern Africa (ASRSA): none; South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR): none; Spain (SECR): none; Sweden (SSRF): Susanne Olsson & Jenny Berglund; Switzerland (SGR/SSSR): None; Turkey (TAHR): none; Ukraine (UARR): none; United Kingdom (BASR): Bettina Schmidt & Graham Harvey; United States (AAR): Amy Allocco & Thomas A. Tweed.

(*Applicant Associations and Societies, membership recommended by the IAHR Executive Committee, pending recommendation by the IAHR International Committee and admission by the IAHR General Assembly (cf. Article 3A))

With reference to Article 6 and Rule 10, according to which "A meeting of the International Committee requires a minimum attendance of ten members from a minimum of seven national associations", Prof. Hackett concluded that the International Committee had a quorum.

2.2. Ascertainment of Affiliation

With reference to the By-Laws Rule 5c according to which "each affiliated association may appoint no more than one (non-voting) representative to attend each International Committee meeting", it was ascertained that the following affiliated associations and societies were present:

European Society for the Study of Western Esotericism (ESSWE): none; International Association for the Cognitive Science of Religion (IACSR): Luther H. Martin; International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association (ISORECEA): none; International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture (ISSRNC): none.

2.3 Co-option as Recommended by the Executive Committee

With reference to the By-Laws Rule 5.f. provision that "[o]n the recommendation of the Executive Committee, up to four individuals may be co-opted as voting members by the International Committee at the beginning of the session", the General Secretary reported that presently there were no individual members.

With reference to 'Rule 6. Observers and Consultants' provision that "[on the recommendation of the Executive Committee, the International Committee may allow observers and/or consultants to participate in its sessions. They shall not have the right to vote.", the IAHR Executive Committee recommended that Prof. Donald Wiebe, IAHR Honorary Life Member and signatory to the IASR Recommendations to be discussed in items 9, 10, and 11, be allowed to participate as an observer with speaking rights.

Prof Wiebe was co-opted.

3. Minutes of the International Committee Meeting, Toronto 2010

The Minutes (*IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, pp. 5-22), preliminarily adopted by the Executive Committee on January 31, 2013 and first published in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, August 2011*, pp. 6-26 and thus circulated to the members of the IAHR International Committee in accordance with the relevant rule(s), were unanimously adopted by the International Committee.

4. Report by the General Secretary

With reference to his full and detailed written report, published in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, pp. 23-40, Prof. Jensen invited the members of the International Committee to ask questions and offer their comments to any matters arising from the report. At the same time he expressed his

wish to restrict the oral report to a minimum in order to provide more time for discussion, be it about matters arising from the report or about other items later in the agenda in need of a more nuanced discussion.

Prof. Jensen consequently focused on the following:

1) With reference to the written report, section 1.2. (pp. 23-24) Prof. Jensen explained the continuous efforts (cf. also *IAHR Bulletin 39, Toronto Congress Edition, August 2010*, pp. 38-39) of the Executive Committee to implement the IAHR principle of rotation, i.e. to move the Executive as well as International Committee meetings around the world. Consequently, and in view also of the General Secretary's efforts to stimulate membership development and cooperation with existing member associations in Latin America, the Executive Committee had investigated the possibility of locating the International Committee meeting in, respectively, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico City, and finally, Quito, Ecuador. The decision eventually to locate the International Committee Meeting 2013 in Liverpool, and thus (once again) in conjunction with an EASR Annual Conference, was taken after careful consideration of the costs and risks involved in choosing Quito. Furthermore, the need for a quorum ("attendance of ten members from a minimum of seven national associations", Constitution § 6) also played a role. Prof. Jensen extended thanks to colleagues in Mexico, not least, to IAHR Honorary Life Member, Prof. Yolotl Gonzales and to colleagues in Cuba and in the NAASR for participating in the deliberations, as well as to anthropologist Prof. Enrique Aguilar Montalvo for his willingness to offer to host an IAHR Co-Sponsored Conference in Quito. Thanks were also extended to the Executive Committee members, especially Silas Guerriero, Mar Marcos and Abraham Khan for assisting the General Secretary in various very helpful ways. Last but not least, Prof. Jensen expressed his gratitude that the BASR and the EASR had been ready to host the 2013 IAHR International Committee Meeting 2013, stressing that he and the Executive Committee was well aware of the extra planning and efforts it takes to accommodate such a meeting. He added that he would have more to say as regards the plans for the location of the annual meeting of the Executive Committee in 2014 under item 6.

2) With reference to the written report, section 1.3 (pp.24-25), on his fairly extensive electronic communication with IAHR members and affiliates via newsletters, email letters of information, the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement*, and the IAHR website, Prof. Jensen expressed his concern that the information from and about the IAHR did not always reach the individual members of the IAHR, i.e. all the individual members of all the IAHR national and regional member associations and societies as well as all

the individual members of the IAHR affiliates. Neither he, nor the IAHR Treasurer nor the IAHR Membership Secretary is in possession of any list of names and emails of the individual members of the IAHR member associations and affiliates. There is no way he, or anybody else, can address all these IAHR members directly. There is but one way for the IAHR to send all the information to the IAHR members and that is via the officers of the IAHR member associations and affiliates, relying on them to communicate the information promptly to their individual members. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to the proper functioning of the IAHR that the officers of member associations and affiliates remember to send to the General Secretary up-to-date information including email addresses on the key officers (normally those listed on the IAHR website, i.e. the President, Secretary, and Treasurer). Even more important, though, is that these officers, when receiving news and information from the IAHR, do promptly circulate the information, be it by newsletters, email letters of information, or simply forwarding the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement* to their members. In most member associations and affiliates such circulation can be effectuated simply by way of forwarding it to the email addresses of the individual members, and - if the association in question has a website or Facebook site - by uploading it on the respective websites etc. Prof. Jensen thus appealed to all the officers of the IAHR member associations and affiliates and to all the delegates to the International Committee Meeting to help in improving this communication with all their individual members. It is vital to the well being of the IAHR, i.e. to all the IAHR member associations and affiliates, that the individual members are well informed about the IAHR and the many IAHR-related scholarly initiatives, activities, developments, and discussions.

3) In regard to IAHR congresses and special or regional conferences, Prof. Jensen, referring to the written report section 2 (pp. 26-31) once again expressed his thanks to the Toronto organizers, not least to the Congress Director, Prof. Wiebe and his staff, including IAHR Membership Secretary, Prof. Khan, for hosting and organizing the IAHR XX World Congress, for the speedy and perfect publication of the Congress Proceedings, and for their generous assistance when a limited number of print copies were mailed to countries and libraries of member associations around the world. The [*IAHR World Congress Proceedings, Toronto 2010. Religion: A Human Phenomenon*](#) can be found and downloaded for free at the IAHR website.

4) Looking forward to the next IAHR World Congress, to be held in Erfurt, and hosted by the German Association for the Study of Religions/Deutsche Vereinigung für Religionswissenschaft (DVRW), in cooperation with the Department for the Study of

Religions (Religionswissenschaft), the Max-Weber-Centre (MWK, Institute for Advanced Study), and the Research School "Religion" (RSR) of the University of Erfurt Germany, Prof. Jensen extended his heartfelt thanks to those member associations that had submitted bids for hosting the 2015 IAHR XXI World Congress. He added that the Executive Committee was very well aware of the amount of work that had gone into each of these bids, and all of the bids had been very impressive.

5) With reference to the written report (p. 28), Prof Jensen said that he, as a member of the (local) organizing committee and the Deputy General Secretary, Prof. Mar Marcos, as academic program co-chair, had had several promising meetings with the hosts and that he himself had paid Erfurt a visit in June 2013. The Erfurt 2015 World Congress had long had its own website. A first circular about the Congress and its theme ***Dynamics of Religion: Past and Present*** had been communicated to the officers and members of IAHR members and affiliates in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, March 2013*, and, apart from the calls for panels and papers to be sent to the officers (and thus hopefully also all the members) of the IAHR member associations and affiliates, a link at the IAHR website takes visitors directly to the Congress website.

6) As regards the 2010-2013 IAHR Special and Regional Conferences, held respectively by: the *Norwegian Association for the History of Religions (NRF)* & the Departments for the Study of Religions at NTNU in Trondheim and the University of Tromsø (Trondheim, Norway, March 1-2, 2012), the *Swedish Association for Research in Comparative Religion (SSRF)*, the *European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR)* & The Study of Religions at Södertörn University (Södertörn, Sweden, August 23- 26, 2012), the *African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR)* (in collaboration with PANAFSTRAG) (Njoro, Kenya, July 18- 23, 2012), and the *South and Southeast Asian Association for the Study of Culture and Religion (SSEASR)* & the Pontifical and Royal University of Santo Tomas (Manila, Philippines, May 16-19, 2013), Prof. Jensen thanked all colleagues whose engagement and hard work had made these conferences possible and successful.

7) In addition, Prof. Jensen directed the attention of the members of the IAHR to the revised set of Rules and Procedures for [IAHR Special](#) and [IAHR Regional Conferences](#), the full text of which can be found at the IAHR website and in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, March 2013* (pp. 36-38). The revised Rules make explicit the obligation of the hosting association to ensure that the academic program and the individual papers contribute to the general aims of the IAHR as spelled out in the IAHR Constitution, "Article 1: [...]The IAHR [...] has as its objective the promotion of the

academic study of religions through the international collaboration of all scholars whose research has a bearing on the subject. The IAHR is not a forum for confessional, apologetical, or other similar concerns.” A new requirement, as regards the obligations of the host of an IAHR special or regional conference, is the obligation, within two months of the event, to provide the IAHR General Secretary with a brief (max. 1000 words) report on the conference suitable to be reproduced in an *IAHR Bulletin* or an *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement*. This provision is intended to make this kind of IAHR-sponsored scholarly activity more visible and to make it possible for the IAHR membership at large to get information about key aspects of the academic program in question. If the conference leads to a publication, the rules have not been changed: the publication must be consistent with the IAHR congress publication policy.

8) Looking forward, Prof. Jensen asked the members and affiliates to ensure that their conference planning and activities do not interfere unnecessarily with the IAHR XXI Quinquennial World Congress in Erfurt, August 23-29, 2015, adding that the IAHR and the local German host will try their best to accommodate possible wishes for finding time and space for business meetings of members and affiliates that may need to be arranged within the framework of the IAHR World Congress.

9) While briefly highlighting the most important membership developments, apart from the applications for membership dealt with under item 7, positive (recently adopted new members and affiliates as well as the reentry of the *Australian Association for the Study of Religions* (AASR) and the reorganization of the Russian association into *Association of Russian Centers for Study of Religions*) as well as negative (lapsed membership), Prof. Jensen noted that the IAHR Executive Committee, in spite of the declarations of lapsed membership, naturally kept an eye open to possible ways of re-establishing vital and functioning associations in countries like Israel, Cuba, Nigeria and Portugal but that it was all important to make sure that there was a local basis before offering further assistance.

10) He therefore also drew the attention of the International Committee to the introduction of a re-admission policy for lapsed associations (pp. 32-33) agreed upon by the Executive Committee.

11) Finally, Prof. Jensen, with regard to important membership developments, drew attention to the continuous activities since 2010 of the IAHR President and General Secretary as regards the cooperation with the *American Academy of Religion* (AAR)

trying to do exactly what the IASR Consultation on The Future of the International Association for the History of Religions had recommended, namely to work together with the AAR in helping them to develop the vision for their “Global Connections” project”. With reference to his report pp. 33-34, especially the mentioned “new scheme for their [the AAR] international outreach” and the key issue about how to secure “a permanent link between the AAR and its International Committee and activities and the IAHR”, Prof. Jensen could add that the AAR, represented in the IAHR International Committee meeting in Liverpool by Profs. Amy Allocco (chair of the AAR International Connections Committee) and Tom Tweed (AAR President Elect) had decided to suggest that the link be established through appointing liaisons from, respectively, the AAR and the IAHR to serve on the AAR International Connections Committee and thus participate in the new collaborative research grant program. Prof. Jensen said that he considered this suggestion an important step forward and he invited the AAR representatives to inform the International Committee about the new collaborative research grant program. Profs. Allocco and Tweed took the opportunity, handed out some written information, made reference to the information on the AAR website, and expressed their gratitude that the cooperation with the IAHR had thus been strengthened in regard to a specific international program for collaborative research, a program hopefully to the benefit of AAR scholars as well as scholars who are members of other IAHR member associations and societies.

12) As stated in the [“Procedures Concerning *NVMEN: International Review for the History of Religions*”](#), the IAHR Executive Committee considers *NVMEN* the flagship journal of the IAHR, with “a proud tradition of quality and international coverage, and the editorial board is very keen on improving it in tune with current developments in the subject and in the IAHR organization”. The Executive Committee, which had most recently discussed *NVMEN* during its meeting in Södertörn in August 2012 and also with regard to the questions related to *NVMEN* in the ‘Recommendations of the IASR Consultation on The Future of the International Association for the History of Religions’ (p. 50), agreed, as stated in our response (p.57) to that recommendation that “*NVMEN* strikes a fairly good balance between a more classical historical-philological IAHR profile and a more innovative IAHR profile”, and we “want to strike that balance, not least because we think this is the hallmark of the IAHR and the way for the IAHR journal to have its own special identity”. Though the IAHR Executive constitutes the *NVMEN* Editorial Board, discusses *NVMEN* during the *NVMEN* Editorial Board meetings and is, through the IAHR General Secretary and the Publications Officer, frequently in contact with the

Managing Editors and the Brill Acquisitions Editor, there can be no doubt that without the daily and very hard work of the Managing Editors as well as of the Reviews Editor, there would be no *NVMEN*. Prof. Jensen therefore extended warm thanks to the current Managing Editors, Profs. Gregory D. Alles and Olav Hammer, as well as to the Reviews Editor, Prof. Ingvild Sælid Gilhus. He also extended thanks to Brill for their goodwill and excellent cooperation. Prof. Jensen added that this excellent cooperation also showed in the ongoing work for a planned special publication celebrating the fact that *NVMEN*, Volume LX, 2013 marked the 60th Anniversary of *NVMEN*. The special *NVMEN* publication will be based on the past and present close connection between *NVMEN* and the IAHR, and thus on the history and development of the study of religions reflected in both of them. According to the plans for the contents of the special publication, the book will have reprints of contributions by C. J. Bleeker, R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, A. Schimmel, U. Bianchi, E. J. Sharpe, M. Pye, A.W. Geertz & R.T. McCutcheon, T. Jensen, and new contributions by R.I.J. Hackett, D. Wiebe, J. Platvoet & A. Adogame, C. Bochinger, J. Riepke & H. Seiwert, G. Casadio, M. Joy & S. Marcos, S. Fujiwara, and G. Alles & O. Hammer.

13) As of 2008 the *Numen Book Series* (as well as *Science of Religion: Abstracts and Index of Recent*) was no longer an IAHR-related book series. Since 2008, the General Secretary, Prof. Jensen and the Publications Officer, first Prof. Bocking and then (since 2010) Prof. Joy have tried, on behalf of the Executive Committee, to pave the way a new IAHR book series. Thanks not least to the two named Publications Officers and to Janet Joyce of Equinox, the General Secretary in July 2013 was able to finalize and sign an agreement with Equinox regarding this new IAHR book series with the working title *The Study of Religions in a Global Context*. The first Editorial Board had been appointed. The members are:

- Morny Joy, University of Calgary, Canada, Managing Series Editor
- Katja Triplett, University of Göttingen, Germany, Managing Editor
- Maya Burger, University of Lausanne, Switzerland
- Denzil Chetty, University of South Africa, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Jakob De Roover, University of Ghent, Belgium
- Florence Pasche Guignard, University of Toronto, Canada
- Peter Jackson, University of Stockholm, Sweden
- Jay Johnston, University of Sydney, Australia
- Sylvia Marcos, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
- Steven Sutcliffe, Edinburgh University, Scotland
- Terhi Utriainen, University of Helsinki, Finland

Prof. Jensen expressed his hope that the new IAHR/Equinox book series will assist the IAHR in furthering its aim, namely to promote the scientific, academic study of religions, and he encouraged scholars, not least junior scholars, from around the world and from the total range of the IAHR constituency to use this new venue for the publication of their work. Finally he thanked Profs. Bocking and Joy as well as Equinox for their work and cooperation and he welcomed the Managing Editor Katja Triplett as well as the other editorial board members and thanked them for their willingness to serve the IAHR.

14) As regards other IAHR related publications, Prof. Jensen first extended thanks and congratulations to the Italian association (SISR), *inter alia* represented by Prof. Giovanni Casadio, and to the local host, not least IAHR Honorary Life Member Prof. Giulia Sfameni Gasparro and her staff, for the impressive two [volume publication from the Messina 2009, SISR, EASR and IAHR Special Conference](#). The keynote lectures from the same Messina 2009 SISR, EASR and IAHR Special Conference (including the article by the General Secretary, Prof. Jensen on *The EASR Within the (World Scenario of) the IAHR*), have already been published in a separate volume in 2010, namely in *Historia Religionum. An International Journal*, 2, 2010, Pisa-Roma, Fabrizio Serra Editore.

15) As for the IAHR African Trust Fund, its history, the current composition of the Board of Trustees and information in general, Prof. Jensen invited the International Committee to visit the revamped [IAHR website](#) where the [IAHR African Trust Fund](#) has its own icon and page. Prof. Jensen also asked that the International Committee took a look at the names of recipients of the 2011 and 2012 grants allocated, adding that there had been no applicants for the 2013 grants, and to make sure that the call for applications for 2014 was announced as early as September 2013. Prof. Jensen thanked the members of the Board of Trustees and extended special thanks to the Secretary to the Board, Prof. Afe Adogame.

16) Following up on his reference to the revamped IAHR website, Prof. Jensen expressed his satisfaction with the new website, expressing the opinion that the new design was more in line with the academic profile of the IAHR than the former and that the links available served to improve its functionality. He hoped the members thought so too, and he invited the members to use the website and to feel free to send to him critical remarks and suggestions for further improvements. He thanked the website manager, Jeremy Hughes, Knoxville, TN, USA for his work and excellent

cooperation and he also extended thanks to the President, Prof. Hackett for her input during the process as well as for her management of the IAHR Facebook site. The President, Prof. Hackett, opened the floor for questions and comments, to the oral as well as written report. There were no questions or comments. Prof. Hackett then thanked Prof. Jensen for his report and proposed that it be formally adopted. The report was adopted with applause.

5. Report by the Treasurer

With reference to the written report p. 41 in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, the Treasurer, Prof. Brian Bocking, restricted his oral report to the following:

The IAHR accounts have improved steadily and significantly since 2005. The improvement continues, and the most recent balance as of July 7, 2013 is US\$79,992 as compared to the 2010 balance of US\$69,042. The average annual balance since 2010 has been US\$76,822.

Though the IAHR accounts thus remain safely in credit, the Treasurer stressed what has been stressed also in previous reports: the financial stability of IAHR continues to depend on members of the IAHR Executive making substantial contributions from their personal or institutional resources towards travel and attendance at IAHR meetings.

The IAHR has two main sources of income: *NVMEN* payments from Brill Publishers of about US\$13,000 per annum and annual dues from constituent member associations and affiliates totalling up to US\$5000 per annum. CIPSH is no longer providing any financial subsidy. Hence, IAHR's 'guaranteed' annual income is about \$15-18,000 annually.

Prof. Bocking added that dues are generally paid, if not always in time then following a reminder or two. Prof. Bocking thanked the treasurers and other officers of the IAHR member associations and affiliates for their cooperation.

The President, Prof. Hackett, opened the floor for questions and comments, to the oral as well as written report.

Prof. Luther Martin asked about the size of the IAHR Endowment Fund. The Treasurer answered that the IAHR Endowment Fund did not exist as a separate entity with its own account but the amount of money in the general accounts still earmarked 'endowment fund' was \$8,695. He added that he would have more to say about this under item 6.

Prof. Marco Pasi asked about the annual fee paid to the CIPSH. Prof. Bocking replied that it was €600 but that the IAHR had not been asked to pay since 2012.

Prof. Abraham Kovacs recommended that the Treasurer and the Executive Committee looked into the possibilities of gathering funds from other sources (private). The Treasurer responded that the IAHR Executive Committee time and again had discussed this possibility as well as the difficulties linked to it. He would, however, have something more to say about one possibility under item 6. Prof. Hackett thanked Prof. Bocking for his report and proposed that it be formally adopted. The report was adopted with applause.

6. Additional matters of Report by the Executive Committee

The General Secretary reported that the IAHR Executive Committee during its most recent meeting in Cork, Ireland, September 1-2, 2013, had decided upon taking the following steps:

- *IAHR World Congress 2020, letters of interest*: The procedure, started out of necessity after Tokyo 2005, of issuing a call for bids for hosting the IAHR Quinquennial World Congress, would be continued. However, the Executive Committee wanted to initiate matters and hopefully make the process less burdensome for applicants by way of first issuing an invitation for less demanding letters of interest rather than for a full-fledged and time-consuming bid or application. Such letters of interest would be invited a year before the Erfurt 2015 World Congress. It would then be up to the incoming 2015 Executive Committee to move forward.
- *2015 IAHR Nominating Committee (for the incoming Executive Committee)*: The current Executive Committee had decided on a list of names of senior IAHR members to be tasked with constituting the IAHR 2015 Nominating Committee. According to the relevant IAHR rules, "The Nominating Committee is composed of five senior colleagues who no longer seek office. The members of the committee are chosen in view of their close knowledge of the IAHR and their wider knowledge of international scholarship. The members of the committee are also chosen in terms of gender and regional representation." The names would be announced, Prof. Jensen added, as soon as the proposed members had accepted the invitation to serve the IAHR in this function.
- *Lapsed Membership*: Following many years of missing dues and several efforts to find ways to revitalize the Indonesian Association for the Study and Research of Religion, the Executive Committee had decided to declare the membership of the

named association lapsed. Hopefully, this might inspire and also ease the way for Indonesian scholars to take steps towards the establishment of a new association. The IAHR Executive Committee in various ways has been and still will be in contact with Indonesian scholars in order to offer its support if so wished.

- *CIPSH*: Referring to his report (4.2. pp. 35-36) and Appendix II on the sad developments within the *CIPSH* and the UNESCO, Prof. Jensen reported that the IAHR Executive Committee had decided to continue membership of the *CIPSH*. The general aims of the *CIPSH* were still worthy of support, and the fact that the *CIPSH* had not been able to offer any grants for the last few years was balanced by the fact that the IAHR had not been asked to pay the annual fee after 2012. The situation, including possible efforts to revitalize the *CIPSH*, was to be followed closely by the IAHR, especially by the IAHR President, General Secretary, and Treasurer.

- *IAHR leaflet*: The Executive Committee had decided to produce a *leaflet* on the IAHR for the 2015 World Congress. The leaflet was intended to be informative and promotional.

- *IAHR Endowment Fund*: The Treasurer reported that the Executive Committee had discussed once again the IAHR Endowment Fund. There had been no donations and so the amount of money had not increased for years. Considering this as well as the difficulties linked to concerted fundraising, the Executive Committee had decided that the sum of money currently earmarked 'IAHR Endowment Fund' should be used for one of its original purposes, namely the support of IAHR scholars in need of financial support. It would therefore be added to the grant given to the 2015 IAHR World Congress in Erfurt to support travel expenses of attendants, in particular members of the IAHR International Committee.

Prof. Luther Martin proposed that in this case the money available be used to support junior scholars and scholars from weak currency countries. The Treasurer and the General Secretary responded that efforts would be made to ensure that this would be the case and that the IAHR grant given to the Erfurt 2015 World Congress on top of the money from the 'IAHR Endowment Fund' would also be used for that purpose; all of this, however, had to be done in close cooperation with the Erfurt 2015 hosts.

- *Annual Dues to be Raised*: The Treasurer furthermore reported that annual dues are to be raised. Based upon the fact that it was at least 30 years since the dues were first set at US\$1 per member, an amount today equivalent to approx. \$5, and

following intensive discussions about the pros and cons, the Executive Committee had agreed to raise the fee for constituent member associations from \$1 per individual member to US\$3 (approx. €uro2.25) per year per individual member, to retain a minimum payment of US\$100 (€75) for associations with no more than 33 individual members, and to raise the fee for associations with 500 and more individual member to \$2,000 (€1,500). The dues paid by the IAHR affiliates (\$100) remain the same, and IAHR regional member associations continue to be exempted from paying fees. The fee level shall moreover be reviewed every five years from now on, with the expectation that fee levels will at least keep pace with inflation.

Prof. Bettina Schmidt remarked that this was a big change and a significant amount of money if compared with the current fee of US\$1 per member.

Prof. Marco Pasi remarked that the rise might cause a problem in regard to the fact that a member association to a regional association like the EASR has to pay fees for their membership both to the EASR and to the IAHR.

Prof. Marco Pasi and Katja Triplett also raised the issue of differentiated membership fees (students/scholars), and Prof. Triplett added the information that the German association now operates with an average fee of €40 that might then be respectively raised or reduced, depending on the academic status and situation of the member in question.

The Treasurer, in response, observed that the rise had been very long delayed while fees levied by member associations had in most cases risen over the years. He noted that the minimum fee payable by small associations had not been increased and remained at US\$100.

- *Fundraising*: The Treasurer, Prof. Bocking, finally reported that the Executive Committee had discussed the possibilities of raising money by way of members making a bequest to the IAHR. For several reasons, however, it had been decided not to ask for a bequest but for donations in general. A circular, also to be posted on the website, rather than a personal letter, will be drafted.

Prof. Gregory Alles asked if funds raised in that way would then be put into a special account? Prof. Bocking responded that it will be put into the general accounts.

There were no more matters of additional report.

7. Recommendation of New Members and Affiliates

The General Secretary had received applications for membership from the following national associations:

- *Association belge pour l'étude des religions/ Belgische Associatie voor de - Studie van Religies* (BABEL)
- *Irish Association for the Academic Study of Religions* (IAASR)
- *Lithuanian Society for the Study of Religions* (LSSR),

as well as from the following regional association:

- *Asociation de Cientistas Sociales de la Religion del Mercosur* (ACSRM)

The General Secretary informed the International Committee that the Executive Committee, at meetings in 2011, 2012, and 2013, unanimously agreed to recommend the adoption of the named associations and societies.

Prof. Jensen invited representatives from the applicant associations and societies to rise and say a few words if they so liked, and at the same time he suggested that the International Committee dealt with the applications in the order listed above.

Association belge pour l'étude des religions/ Belgische Associatie voor de Studie van Religies (BABEL).

Profs. Jos Verheyden & Daniel Praet, representatives of BABEL, explained the origins of the new association and the General Secretary, in response to a question, added a few more words on the history leading up to the establishment of BABEL. Profs. Verheyden and Praet stressed that the new association, also following some remarks from the IAHR leadership regarding the draft constitution, had done its best to make it an open and democratic association welcoming everybody. At the moment, the number of members is 90, 50% being French speaking, the other 50% Flemish speaking.

The international Committee unanimously voted for the recommendation to the IAHR General Assembly of the membership of BABEL.

The President congratulated the representatives of BABEL.

Irish Association for the Academic Study of Religions (IAASR).

Profs. James Kapalo & Yafa Shanneik, representatives of the IAASR, did not want to add anything to the application filed.

The international Committee unanimously voted for the recommendation to the IAHR General Assembly of the membership of IAASR.

The President congratulated the representatives of IAASR.

Lithuanian Society for the Study of Religions (LSSR).

Prof. Milda Ališauskienė, representative of the LSSR, said a few words about the association and its history. The membership numbers 27 at the moment.

The international Committee unanimously voted for the recommendation to the IAHR General Assembly of the membership of LSSR.

The President congratulated the representative of LSSR.

Asociación de los Cientistas Sociales de la Religión (ACSRM).

The General Secretary summarized the history of the IAHR talks with the ACSRМ and its officers since the first contact to the ACSRМ taken by the IAHR General Secretary in 2008 following the recommendations of Prof. Michael Pye. Prof. Jensen added that the ACSRМ should not be seen as a competitor to the ALER, and that the General Secretary and the Executive Committee were continuing efforts to strengthen the relations with the ALER.

The international Committee unanimously voted for the recommendation to the IAHR General Assembly of the membership of ACSRМ.

The President congratulated the ACSRМ.

8. Recommendation of Honorary Life Members

The General Secretary described the procedure for the conferment of honorary life membership 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."

The procedure, according to the IAHR By-Laws, is as follows:

The International Committee, at its meeting during a quinquennial congress, appoints by recommendation of the Executive Committee an Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee consisting of three honorary life members. The Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee is appointed for a term of five years.

The General Secretary of the IAHR shall, one year before each meeting in the International Committee, request the IAHR constituent member societies and associations to suggest one or two

names and the Executive Committee to suggest up to three names. These names will be forwarded to the Advisory Committee which will choose up to three names.

Their recommendation shall be accompanied by brief statements of the achievements of the recommended persons. Their recommendation will be presented to the International Committee by the General Secretary of the IAHR.

The conferment of Honorary Life Membership by the International Committee shall be reported to the General Assembly.

The 2010-2015 Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee, consisting of Profs. Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, Yolótl Gonzales Torres, and Armin W. Geertz, in a letter dated August 7, 2013, had submitted its recommendations. The General Secretary read the letter (see 'Appendix to 2013 Intl. Comm. Meeting Minutes') and presented in alphabetical order the names of the three persons (as well as the accompanying argument) put forward to the International Committee for decision:

- Jan G. Platvoet, The Netherlands
- Jonathan Z. Smith, USA
- Akio Tsukimoto, Japan

The International Committee conferred honorary life membership on each of the three nominees by way of acclamation.

The President congratulated the new IAHR Honorary Life Members, and so did the General Secretary, who also extended thanks to the Advisory Committee members for their service to the IAHR.

9. The IASR Consultation Recommendations, and the Response from the IAHR Executive Committee

The General Secretary pointed out that the discussion under this item was not meant to include the proposal and discussion about the change of the name. That proposal and that discussion was to take place under item 10.

With reference to the IASR proposals and the IAHR Executive Committee responses (first printed in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, March 2013*, and then reprinted in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, pp. 42 - 50 & 51-65), Prof. Jensen reported that the IAHR Executive Committee had nothing to add to its written responses, and he therefore invited Prof. Donald Wiebe, Director of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Religion (IASR), and chair of the 'IASR Consultation on The Future of the International Association for the History of

Religions', briefly to narrate the *raison d'être* for the consultation and to refer to the responses from the IAHR Executive Committee to the proposals submitted.

Having said a few words about the reason for calling the consultation, *inter alia* the wish to use a small sum of money accumulated during the IAHR Toronto 2010 World Congress that for various reasons could not just be granted to the IAHR, for a purpose related to the well-being and continuous improvement of the IAHR, Prof. Wiebe expressed his great satisfaction with the very thorough responses by the IAHR Executive Committee to the proposals made by the IASR consultation. In terms of the contents of the responses, Prof. Wiebe likewise was absolutely satisfied. The steps already taken or about to be implemented by the IAHR Executive Committee were all, Prof. Wiebe thought, sound and promising.

Consequently, there was agreement not to spend more time on these aspects of the IASR recommendations and the IAHR Executive Committee responses, but to move on to the maybe more 'thorny' issue about the proposal for a change of the name of the IAHR.

Prof. Jensen once again thanked Prof. Wiebe and the other colleagues constituting the IASR consultation for their devotion to the well-being and continuous improvement of the IAHR.

10. The IASR Consultation Proposal to Change the Name of the IAHR

The General Secretary, Prof. Jensen, referred the International Committee to the IASR proposal (most recently printed in the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, pp. 44 & 48-49):

The proposal for the change of name stated that such a name change was desirable in order more clearly to "reflect our scientific objectives", and it furthermore read: [...] The current name has an illustrious and understandable history and has served the Association well for most of its history, but given developments in the multiplicity of scientific approaches adopted in the study of religions today, that name no longer represents the Association's objectives or its membership internationally. [...] On day one of our discussions, two candidates for an alternative to the current name emerged: i) "The International Association for the Study of Religions" and ii) "The International Association for the Scientific Study of Religion."

The discussion on a name change for the IAHR continued on the second day. In reviewing the first day's discussion, especially the matter of making clear the IAHR's concern with the non-confessional study of religion, there was "full support for recommending:

That the Executive Committee of the IAHR recommend to the International Committee a change of name from "The International Association for the History of Religions," IAHR to "The International Association for the Scientific Study of Religions," IASSR, to be taken to the General Assembly of the IAHR at its 2015 quinquennial world congress for approval.

Prof. Jensen also summarized the IAHR Executive Committee's preliminary response (*ibid.* pp. 54-55) as follows:

The Executive Committee is in total agreement as to the importance of communicating the scientific objectives of the IAHR in every possible way, in words and acts.

[...]Though we can see a point in adjusting the name as well as other developments mentioned in the report and recommendations, we also hesitate: The Executive Committee is not convinced that a change of name can 'do the trick'. Also, the Executive Committee, well aware of the connotations linked to 'history of religions' in the US context, thinks that the IAHR has by now become a 'brand' that signals exactly this: the IAHR is the preeminent international forum for the academic, scientific study of religion(s)! [...]

Apart from the above-mentioned additions to the policy statement and Constitution, we have also taken care in other sections of the text of the Constitution to make sure that the wording signals that the IAHR is an umbrella association for the academic, scientific study of religion that comprises a broader spectrum of approaches, *inter alia* historical, social and comparative studies of religion. Furthermore, the recent active and fairly successful initiative to have a broad range of *associated* [*'affiliated'*] societies and associations devoted to special approaches and themes, also serves to help the IAHR evolve in accordance with the developments in the field of the academic, scientific study of religions.

Mention, moreover, must also be made of the fact that the tightened-up profile of the IAHR for several years has also been communicated to members and others by way of an explicit statement in each issue of NVMEN.

Consequently: The Executive Committee is hesitant, for various reasons, in regard to this proposal and recommendation. [...]

However, the IAHR Executive Committee will discuss the proposal again at its 2013 annual meeting and it will be put on the agenda for the International Committee Meeting in Liverpool 2013. If the International Committee wants to have a change of the name up for discussion and decision in 2015, then the Executive Committee will act accordingly.

Prof. Jensen continued by reporting that the Executive Committee at its recent meeting (Cork, Ireland, September 1-2, 2013) had discussed the matter even more thoroughly and that its response was still the same. Nevertheless, the Executive had discussed a variety of possible new names, including the one proposed by the IASR consultation, namely "The International Association for the Scientific Study of Religion (IASSR)". Other possible new names discussed were: "International Association for the Study of Religions (IASR)", and "International Association for the Academic Study of Religions (IAASR)". During the discussions in the Executive Committee, mention had once again been made of the 'IAHR' nowadays constituting a good 'brand', and that a reading of the 'history' in this name to mean the Chicago/Eliade 'history of religions' was an 'American speciality', while in Europe 'history of religions', even if in many countries substituted with the broader 'study of religion(s)', was still not too far from what was signalled by 'Religionswissenschaft', i.e. from what the IASR proposers actually indicated that they wanted the proposed new name to refer to.

During the discussions, mention was also made of notions that 'science' was an ambiguous term, sometimes signalling something more narrow than what was likely to be intended by the proposers. 'Historical', it was also mentioned, actually stressed the importance of the historical dimensions, and thus might be more appealing also to the many scholars of religion who practise a historical-philological approach.

The discussion at the Executive Committee meeting, Prof. Jensen said, was concluded with a decision to suggest to the International Committee that it should discuss four options: 1) leaving the name as it is: IAHR; 2) change it to 'International Association for the Study of Religion(s), IASR; 3) change it to 'International Association for the Academic Study of Religions (IAASR); or 4) change it to 'International Association for the Scientific Study of Religions' (IASSR). The Executive Committee, however, also decided that it ought to report to the International Committee that it was not in favor of option 4, i.e. the proposal from the IASR consultation.

Having thus reported the conclusions from the renewed discussions in the Executive Committee, Prof. Jensen invited Prof. Wiebe to take the floor. Prof. Wiebe once again thanked the Executive Committee for its way of handling the proposal even though he was not in agreement with the arguments and the conclusions. He repeated the arguments put forward by the IASR consultation but also added that he wanted to put forward yet another possible name for consideration, namely "International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religion (IAHSSR)".

The President, Prof. Hackett opened the floor for comments, questions and discussion. Prof. Giovanni Cassadio commented on the sense of 'scientific': if you say 'historical' *and* 'scientific', this may indicate that 'Historical' is not 'Scientific'. Prof. Wiebe responded, saying that there *was* a need of finding a more descriptive name to keep our intellectual movement moving ahead. Most of the national associations have changed their names to the study of religion(s) to indicate the contemporary broader range of approaches, yet, in Prof. Wiebe's opinion, there also was a deep need of stressing the scientific side of the study of religion(s). Prof. Marco Pasi proposed a change to IASR, i.e. the International Association for the Study of Religions. In his opinion, 'study' was neither too broad nor too vague, but rather 'comprehensive', and everybody might be comfortable with that name. When new associations were being created, most of them, Prof. Pasi added, adopted exactly that name. Prof. Pasi, apart from that, also said that he was against the combination of 'Historical' and 'Scientific', for the reason already mentioned by Prof. Casadio. Prof. Brian Bocking thought that it was to be remembered that while the IAHR had become a brand, and a rather strong one, the acronym 'IASR' far from being an exclusive and strong brand would be just one more 'IASR' among many. Why change, he said, a stronger brand for a weaker one? Prof. Pasi responded

that he did not think that thinking about the brand was important. Prof. Ingvild S. Gilhus found it difficult to find the right name. She herself preferred 'the study of religions', but she also found it important to keep the historical dimension of the study of religions alive and visible.

Prof. Juerg Rüpke found the discussion important as well as difficult because it implied a conceptualization of 'who we are', and he thought further discussion was needed. A few other delegates voiced their preference for the name 'IASR'.

The General Secretary proposed that the discussion be continued within the member associations and that the matter be put on the agenda of the International Committee meeting in Erfurt 2015. Following a question from Prof. Wiebe, he also suggested that the International Committee, following a discussion on whether to change the name, should bring its conclusions or recommendations before the General Assembly, for the General Assembly in Erfurt 2015 then to make the final decision for a change or not, and - if for a change - for the new name.

Following a few more comments and suggestions, *inter alia* from Prof. Gregory Alles who asked that sufficient time be allotted in 2015 for such a discussion, and from Prof. Douglas Pratt that the national and regional member associations be asked to discuss the matter before Erfurt 2015 and thus to be prepared to decide upon what should be brought forward to the General Assembly from the International Committee, the General Secretary's proposal was accepted by a show of hands. The members of the IAHR constituent associations, therefore, are to be encouraged to discuss the matter which will then be discussed again at the International Committee meeting in Erfurt in order for the International Committee to put forward to the General Assembly a specific proposal for discussion and decision. The IASR consultation group represented by Prof. Wiebe will also be given the opportunity to rethink the name and add further comments in favour of a change of name, be it a change to the one proposed originally ("International Association for the Scientific Study of Religions (IASSR)", or the one ("International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religion (IAHSSR)" proposed during the International Committee Meeting in Liverpool 2013.

11. Special Report on Reflections on Proposals by the AASR and the IASR Consultation as regards Communication and Executive Government

The General Secretary, with reference initially to the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, pp. 15-16; 45; 47; 61, introduced the matter at hand, outlining key moments and aspects of the most recent and relevant history:

In Durban 2000, it was decided to restructure the IAHR Executive Committee. As can be seen from the remarks of the then General Secretary, Prof. Armin W. Geertz, (*IAHR*

Bulletin Supplement July 2004, p. 5) about the descriptions of the duties and functions of the now 10 (rather than six) designated officers and two members without portfolio, the main reasons for the new offices were two: to involve the individual members of the Executive Committee more in the day-to-day work of the IAHR and to help relieve the General Secretary from matters that could be taken care of by other officers.

The last mentioned reason primarily referred to the new offices of, respectively, Internet Officer, Publications Officer, and Membership Secretary. The 2005 Tokyo elections and the term 2005-2010 marked the first term with an Executive Committee thus composed.

In 2010 in Toronto, the IAHR Executive Committee, the first one elected in accordance with the new composition and the revised related Article 4c in the Constitution, proposed yet another (constitutional) change in regard to the offices and functions of the Executive Committee. The change was to be applied with the nominations and elections for the term 2015-2020 and the EC's proposal and arguments (see e.g. the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, pp. 17-18) to a large degree relied on the General Secretary's five years of daily work, including coordination and collaborations between the new offices and delegation of duties, especially those of the above-mentioned three new officers. The proposal implied that there would be no Internet Officer and no Membership Secretary as of 2015.

When the proposal and rationale for this was in place, almost ready to be sent to the members in advance of the business meetings during the Toronto 2010 IAHR World Congress, the Executive Committee received (May 10, 2010) a detailed proposal for a more thorough restructuring of the IAHR Executive Committee. The proposal had the title 'Restructuring the IAHR Executive', and it was meant for "discussion and decision" by the International Committee at its meeting in Toronto. The proposal entailed a major change/amendment to the IAHR Constitution, Article 4c. It called for four functional units (Presidency, Secretariat, Treasury, and Communication). The proposal was signed by Profs. Gerrie ter Haar and Jan G. Platvoet, and it was submitted by Prof. Afe Adogame on behalf of the African Association for the Study of Religions (AASR).

The Executive Committee, in the proposal sent to members and uploaded on the IAHR website (June 18) in a special 'business meeting folder', included its preliminary response to the AASR proposal. The response was preliminary because the proposal was so thorough that the Executive Committee deemed it necessary to discuss it equally thoroughly during a meeting before giving a more adequate response. This more thorough discussion took place during the out-going Executive Committee Meeting in Toronto August 2010, and afterwards the AASR proposal was put before the International Committee in Toronto August 18, 2010.

Continuing his outline of the history of the matter, Prof. Jensen moved to the Minutes from that meeting, remarking that they (*IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, Liverpool Edition, August 2013*, pp. 14-16) show that the International Committee discussed the AASR proposal quite thoroughly. Though several kinds of criticism and scepticism were voiced, and though nobody apart from the proposers voiced a wish to change the IAHR Constitution Article 4c in accordance with the proposal, almost all speakers voiced the opinion that the proposal touched upon important matters and that it ought to serve as an inspiration to the incoming Executive Committee. Accordingly, it was decided (*Ibid.* p. 16) that "the Executive Committee be asked to report on its related discussions at the next International Committee Meeting".

The proposal by the Executive Committee for a change of Article 4c in relation to the offices of the Executive Committee was - with a small change from 'four members without portfolio' to 'four further members' - then adopted by the International Committee and later by the General Assembly.

Though the AASR proposal thus, as remarked by Prof. Platvoet (*Ibid.* p. 18) "could not be implemented until 2020", it has, as indicated, been the subject of discussions and a source of inspiration, and the IAHR Executive Committee 2010-2015 has discussed several related aspects on a number of occasions, most recently, Prof. Jensen continued, at its meeting in Cork, September 1-2, 2013. At the same time, he said, it could also be claimed that the proposal by the Executive Committee submitted and adopted in Toronto 2010, including another related proposal to add two more members to the Nominating Committee, witnessed that critical reflections on the functions, composition and effectivity of the Executive Committee and its relation to the continuing process of globalization of the IAHR had been ongoing ever since the current President and General Secretary first took office in 2005 as members of the then restructured Executive Committee. As regards the aim and effort of the AARS proposal, which is similar to one of the main aims of the 2000 Durban restructuring, namely to involve the individual members of the Executive Committee more in the day-to-day work of the IAHR, Prof. Jensen repeated what he said also in Toronto in 2010: the rule in 2005-2010 as well as 2010-2015 had been that each and everybody in the Executive Committee was participating and 'put to work'. The Executive Committee had worked as an integrated whole, as regards the short-term as well as long-term policy of the IAHR, during and in between meetings. True, the daily work of the IAHR Executive Committee to a very high degree depended on the work of one officer, namely the General Secretary, and the Executive Committee therefore also agreed that for the General Secretary to have a kind of secretary would be a great advantage, not just to the General Secretary but to the IAHR. Since that was not realistic, the Executive Committee had discussed whether it could allot the General Secretary and the Treasurer a certain amount of money to buy

assistance from time to time. However, more permanent provisions incurring staffing costs could mean a major revision of the budget available, although it might be argued that such costs could be kept down if the administrative help in question was recruited in a low-income country.

Furthermore: the Executive Committee agreed that the daily business of the IAHR was running fairly smoothly, with a close cooperation between the President and the General Secretary, between the General Secretary and the Treasurer, and between these three officers altogether, the three thus constituting a kind of daily 'leadership' of the IAHR Executive. Admittedly, quite a lot of the workload fell to the office of the General Secretary, with the General Secretary therefore functioning as the '*primus motor*'.

Nevertheless, it was equally clear to the current Executive Committee that the 'Achilles heel' was the whole complex of 'communication': the challenges linked to being able (rather at the moment *not* being able) to communicate IAHR news and information swiftly and directly not only to the members of the IAHR, i.e. the member associations and affiliates, but more particularly to the individual members of those member associations and affiliates, were considerable. The Facebook site established and run by the President, Prof. Hackett, the Women Scholars Network, established and run by the President and the Publications Officer, Prof. Joy, the redesigned website, the assistance of the webmaster in regard to the technicalities linked to the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement*, all of this constituted an evident improvement as regards communication. The same did, of course, apply to the flagship journal *NVMEN*, the new IAHR book series, and the easy access via the IAHR website to e.g. electronic versions of proceedings from IAHR congresses and conferences as well as to past issues of the *IAHR Bulletin*, *IAHR Bulletin Supplement*, and the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement*.

Yet, the initial communication with the constituency, the individual members of the member associations and affiliates, Prof. Jensen said, also referring to his report on this issue, most definitely was not quite satisfactory. Too much depended on officers of the member associations and affiliates: they were the ones who had to make sure that email communication from the General Secretary (or some other member of the Executive Committee) reached their individual members. Too often this was still not the case.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Prof. Jensen thus expressed his hope that the 2015-2020 incoming Executive Committee could continue the efforts of the current Executive to find the best way to implement and utilize the newest electronic possibilities, and, at the same time, to find ways to relieve the General Secretary of some of the duties that the 2000 revised composition of the Executive Committee did not quite manage to redistribute.

Prof. Jensen, however, finally expressed the opinion of the Executive Committee that it would be wrong if this current Executive Committee, in 2013-2014, decided upon more specific devices and means to best meet the challenges facing the 2015 incoming Executive Committee, nominated and elected as it was, in accordance with the current 2010 revised Article 4c of the IAHR Constitution.

The President thanked the General Secretary for his report on this matter.

12. IAHR XXI World Congress, Erfurt 2015

Prof. Jensen invited Prof. Juerg Rüpke, Erfurt, one of two 2015 IAHR World Congress directors, to take the floor and inform the members of the International Committee about the planning and the progress of the congress.

Prof. Rüpke briefly mentioned the most important steps taken: the formation of the local organizing committee, of the congress secretariat, with Frau Elisabeth Begemann as head, of the academic program committee, and of the congress website. The first call for panel proposals had been issued and in Spring 2014; the call for individual papers would be issued. By the end of December 2014 participants will know if their papers have been accepted, in due time for any applications for visa. Prof. Rüpke added a few words about the congress location, Erfurt, and he mentioned that Frankfurt is the most convenient airport for arrivals and departures.

The General Secretary Prof. Jensen added that he, the President, and the Deputy General Secretary, Prof. Mar Marcos (as co-chair of the Academic Program Committee) had been in continuous contact with the congress directors and secretariat, and, referring also to his report, he mentioned his site visit to Erfurt in June 2013. He had been very happy with the location and the plans for the various academic and social activities and events and he looked forward to the XXI IAHR Erfurt World Congress with the greatest expectations. He once again thanked the local organizers for their hard work and service to the IAHR.

The President also thanked Prof. Rüpke and the Erfurt hosts, and she strongly recommended that the International Committee members circulate all information about the upcoming IAHR World Congress to the members of their respective associations.

13. Any other business.

- Profs. Afe Adogame and Elias Bongmba, representatives of the AASR, the African Association for the Study of Religions, announced the AASR biannual conference, July 30 to August 2, 2014, in Cape Town, South Africa.
- The President, Prof. Hackett, suggested that the members visit the IAHR Facebook site.

Prof. Hackett then closed the meeting, extending thanks to the International Committee members for attending the meeting, and to the Executive Committee members for the work done in the previous year. Prof. Hackett extended special thanks to the Treasurer and the General Secretary.

(Minutes prepared by the General Secretary, Tim Jensen, with the assistance also of notes taken by the Deputy General Secretary, Prof. Mar Marcos, during the meeting)

VI. IAHR Business Meetings, Erfurt, August 23-29, 2015: First Call

According to the IAHR By-Laws (Rule 3.d.), "[t]he General Secretary shall notify the officers of the constituent societies/and or members of the Executive Committee concerning the date, place and provisional agenda of each session at the latest one month in advance."

Though I will later send you several further calls and notifications with exact dates, time, locations and provisional agenda(s) for the Erfurt 2015 meetings of the International Committee and the General Assembly, I sincerely ask the officers of the member societies and associations to take heed of the dates already now and also to consider in due time the appointment of your two delegates to the IAHR International Committee already now.

The meetings of the IAHR International Committee and General Assembly are scheduled for the following dates:

- The IAHR International Committee meets Wednesday August 26, 2015
- The IAHR General Assembly meets Saturday August 29 , 2015

According to the IAHR By-Laws, Rule 5.c., "[t]he executive committees of each constituent society appoint no more than two representatives to each International Committee meeting. These are normally, but not necessarily, the president and secretary of the constituent society."

The General Assembly, "composed of all members of constituent societies of the association" present at the congress in question, "may take action only on matters referred to it from the International Committee, and it may refer any matter to the International or Executive Committee for consideration and support." (Constitution, Article 4a).

I cannot but encourage all officers of constituent member societies and associations to do whatever in their power to ensure the participation in the International Committee meeting also in Erfurt 2015 of delegates from their society.

It is vital to the well being of the IAHR that as many of its members as possible participate in the discussions and decisions of the International Committee and the General Assembly.

This is, of course, also the reason why the IAHR has decided to give preference once again to officers or members who have been delegated by their national or regional association to be one of two representatives to the International Committee when IAHR funds are to be granted to applicants (cf. the Travel Grant Guidelines provided for you on the IAHR Congress website (<http://www.iahr2015.org/iahr-registration/1698.html>)).

Please remember that voting rights are dependent upon annual payment of dues, that "each constituent society shall provide the General Secretary with a list of fully paid members who shall then be recognized as members of the General Assembly", and that the General Secretary of the IAHR shall also be notified about the names of the designated representatives (By-Laws, Rules 5b and 5e).

Tim Jensen, IAHR General Secretary, Copenhagen, September 6, 2014.

VII. IAHR Honorary Life Membership: Call for Suggestions

According to the relevant IAHR rules (http://www.iahr.dk/honorary_nominations.php), "recommendations for honorary life membership should be presented to the International Committee at its meetings during quinquennial congresses and in between two consecutive congresses."

"[H]onorary 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."

According to the same rules, the IAHR constituent member societies and associations can suggest one or two names and the Executive Committee up to three names. These names will then be forwarded to the IAHR Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee, which will choose up to three names.

The General Secretary will then present their recommendation to the International Committee at its next meeting.

The date for the next meeting is August 26, 2015, i.e. during the XXI IAHR World Congress 2015, August 23-29, in Erfurt, Germany.

IAHR constituent member associations and societies wanting to suggest one or two names for honorary life membership to the IAHR are kindly asked to do so by way of an email message to the IAHR General Secretary sent no later than December 31, 2014.

All suggestions must be accompanied by a brief CV of the person in question as well as an equally brief argument in favor of the suggestion.

The 2010-2015 IAHR Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee is constituted by Profs. Giulia Sfameni Gasparro, Yolótl Gonzales Torres, and Armin W. Geertz.

On behalf of the IAHR Executive Committee, I extend thanks to the each of these colleagues and IAHR Honorary Life Members for their continuing service to the IAHR.

Tim Jensen, Copenhagen, August 25, 2014

VIII. Invitation for Letters of Interest for Hosting the IAHR XXII World Congress 2020

The IAHR Executive Committee at its meeting in Cork, Ireland, September 1-2, 2013, decided that the General Secretary should issue a call to all member societies and associations regarding 'letters of interest' for hosting the IAHR XXII Quinquennial World Congress in 2020.

The procedure, started out of a necessity after Tokyo 2005, of issuing a call for bids for hosting an IAHR Quinquennial World Congress would be continued.

However, the Executive Committee wants to initiate and hopefully make the process less burdensome for applicants by way of first issuing an invitation for less demanding letters of interest rather than for a full fledged and time demanding bid or application.

Letters of interest, invited a year before the 2015 IAHR World Congress, and received in advance of the IAHR XXI World Congress in Erfurt, will then be handed over to the incoming 2015-2020 Executive Committee for it to then move forward.

Consequently, I herewith ask the officers of the IAHR member societies and associations to consider whether you and your association and members might be interested in hosting the IAHR World Congress 2020.

In case you decide to ponder the matter and maybe even send a letter of interest, I recommend that you take a look at the guidelines for running an IAHR World Congress. You can find the guidelines at the IAHR website under the heading "A Basic Framework for Running an IAHR World Congress" (<http://www.iahr.dk/congress.html>).

Letters of interest should be sent by e-mail to the General Secretary of the IAHR, Tim Jensen, The Study of Religions, University of Southern Denmark, Campusvej 55, DK-5230, Odense M, Denmark.

Deadline for Letters of Interest: May 1st, 2015

Tim Jensen, IAHR General Secretary, Copenhagen, September 6, 2014.

Appendix to the 2013 International Committee Meeting Minutes: Nominations for Honorary Life Memberships of the IAHR (2013)

[Inserted below is the original report and recommendation submitted in a letter dated August 7, 2013 to me, Tim Jensen, the IAHR General Secretary, by Prof. Armin W. Geertz on behalf of the Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee]

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