

# Minutes of the General Assembly

General Assembly of the IAHR  
Erfurt, Germany  
Saturday August 29, 2015

[To be adopted at the next General Assembly in 2020]

[Preliminarily adopted by the Executive Committee, January 30, 2016]

## *Welcome by the President of the IAHR*

Prof. Hackett welcomed the participants to the General Assembly and the closing of the IAHR XXI Quinquennial World Congress in Erfurt 2015. She explained that though everybody was more than welcome to attend, voting rights were restricted to paid-up individual members of paid-up IAHR member associations.

## *Welcome by the General Secretary of the IAHR*

Prof. Jensen likewise welcomed the participants to the last of many business meetings taking place in conjunction with the World Congress. Saying a few more words about the rules as regarded the General Assembly, he stressed that the basis of the IAHR is constituted by the individual scholars and members of the IAHR member associations, and that it is these members and this basis that constitute the General Assembly meeting once every five years in conjunction with a quinquennial World Congress. The General Assembly is thus composed of all members of the IAHR member associations present at the congress in question. The General Assembly may, however, take action only on matters referred to it from the International Committee (that met Wednesday, August 26 in Erfurt), but it may also refer any matter to the International or Executive Committee for consideration and report. It is, Prof. Jensen added, the privilege of the General Assembly to make amendments to the Constitution and to adopt new members and affiliates but it does so only on the recommendation of the International Committee. Prof. Jensen, with reference to the detailed listing (*IAHR BULLETIN 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015*, p. 52) of information about the IAHR sent to the officers and members of the IAHR member associations and societies and to the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement, September 2014* with the first call for the General Assembly 2015, ascertained that the meeting had been called in accordance with the relevant Rules of Procedure.

Prof. Hackett then moved on to the first item on the provisional agenda, printed in the *IAHR BULLETIN 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015*, p. 16, displayed also on a PowerPoint presentation in the meeting room.

## 1 Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted by general consent.

## 2 Minutes of General Assembly Toronto 2010

The minutes, printed in the *IAHR BULLETIN 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015*, pp. 37-48, were adopted by general consent.

## 3 Brief Report by the Outgoing General Secretary

The General Secretary initially asked the General Assembly to honor the memory of IAHR Honorary Life Members, Profs. Jean Leclant, Julien Ries, Noriyoshi Tamaru, Jacques Waardenburg and R.J. Zwi Werblowsky who had all passed away during the past five-year term with a minute's silence.

With reference to his detailed written report (*IAHR BULLETIN 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015*, pp. 49–77), as well as to the oral report to the International Committee at its meeting on August 26 in Erfurt, the General Secretary reported as follows:

### 3.1 Meetings and Meeting Locations

The outgoing Executive Committee had, in his opinion, been fairly successful with implementing the principle of rotation, moving the IAHR business meetings around the world, thus enhancing and extending the continuous efforts to make of the IAHR a truly global association and to promote the academic, non-religious study of religions globally, the key aim of the IAHR. He thanked all the hosting member associations and their local partners for facilitating the meetings.

### 3.2 Communications

With reference to his detailed listing of his communications on behalf of the Executive Committee to the IAHR members and affiliates, Prof. Jensen stated that the *IAHR Bulletin*, the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement*, the IAHR website and occasional email letters sent to the officers and members at large from the desk of the General Secretary constitute the main channels of communication from and about the IAHR. Since the IAHR Executive Committee and its General Secretary have no means to contact the IAHR membership directly, Prof. Jensen once again stressed how important to the well-being and proper functioning of the IAHR it is that the officers of the IAHR member associations and affiliate societies find ways to share the information from and about the IAHR with their, and thus the IAHR's, membership at large. How, he asked, should the members around the world keep up an interest in the IAHR and 'identify' themselves as IAHR members if they did not get to read the information from and about the IAHR?

With its information about news from the desk of the General Secretary as well as its information about the 'fundamentals' of the IAHR (Constitution, Rules of Procedure, lists of IAHR membership, past congresses and conferences, proceedings, publications and proceedings, as well as its link to e.g. the IAHR Women Scholars Network), the IAHR website functions as the public face of the IAHR, and Prof. Jensen expressed his hope that the members visit the website from time to time. The General Secretary – in continuous contact over the past 7–8 years with the IAHR webmaster, Jeremy Hughes (Knoxville, USA) – extended his thanks to the webmaster for his almost daily work with the IAHR website, updating information, posting news, etc.

Though the IAHR Facebook Group is not serving as the official vehicle for news from the IAHR Executive, it seems to serve another purpose, namely communication among individual IAHR members and information about IAHR related events and matters. Prof. Jensen thanked the President, Prof. Hackett and the colleagues assisting her, Justin Lane and Sarah Gallant, for the work with the IAHR Facebook Group.

Likewise, he extended thanks to Prof. Hackett and Publications Officer Prof. M. Joy for developing the IAHR Women Scholars Network, and, with reference to the successful meeting of the Women Scholars Network that had taken place some days before in Erfurt, he extended thanks to all the scholars actively participating in and supporting the network, thereby assisting the IAHR in its efforts to practice a responsible strategy and implementation of globalization, as well as to work continually towards gender equality and empowerment of

women scholars, and, by extension, IAHR-related scholarship around the world.

### 3.3 IAHR Congresses and Conferences

With reference to the listing of the 2010 – 2015 IAHR Special and Regional Conferences (as well as the IAHR Co-Sponsored Conference in Macau 2015) and his equally extensive report on the bids for and decision regarding the hosting of the 2015 World Congress, Prof. Jensen extended thanks to all the colleagues who had made these IAHR conferences and the World Congresses in Toronto and Erfurt possible. Warm thanks were extended to the BASR (UK) and the CASR (Czech Republic) and their local partners; the two member associations that had joined the DVRW in preparing and sending detailed and impressive bids for hosting the 2015 World Congress.

Special thanks were extended to the German and local Erfurt hosts of the IAHR XXI World Congress, to Congress directors, Profs. Rüpke and Bochsinger, to Congress Coordinator Dr. Begemann, to the members of the (local) Organizing Committee, and to each member of the Academic Program Committee, including, of course, the two co-chairs, Profs. Bochsinger and Marcos, for their meticulous and hard work, including their constant efforts to help align the academic standard of the IAHR World Congress academic program with the general aims of the IAHR and the IAHR's ongoing efforts constantly to improve, secure and tighten up its academic profile. Prof. Jensen likewise thanked the German hosts for their continuous and at times daily contact and cooperation with the IAHR leadership on matters pertaining to the Congress, and for their cooperation in regard to raising and distributing funds for partial travel grants to participants.

Prof. Jensen also extended thanks to the IAHR Honorary Life Members who accepted to serve as members of the Congress Advisory Committee, and special thanks were extended to Dorothea Ditchfield for generously sponsoring the Gary Lease IAHR Memorial Lecture.

Before finishing his report on IAHR conferences and congresses, Prof. Jensen mentioned that the rules for hosting an IAHR conference had been revised. They now make it an obligation for a host to ensure that the academic program and 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." Furthermore, it had been made explicit that the IAHR General Secretary be kept informed about de-

velopments and provided with conference programs, that publication of the proceedings must be consistent with the IAHR congress publication policy, and that the host of an IAHR regional conference, within two months of the event, shall provide the IAHR General Secretary with a brief report on the conference, a report later to be published either in the *IAHR Bulletin*, the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement* and/or the IAHR website.

Prof. Jensen thanked those colleagues who had already provided such a written report and this led him to remind the members of the rules regarding congress and conference publications and spin-off publications, inter alia the obligation to mention the relation to the IAHR congress or conference in question. With reference to his written report pp. 73–74, he expressed his sincere wish that colleagues who knew about IAHR related publications that had not been registered with the IAHR and on the IAHR website contact the IAHR General Secretary and/or Publications Officer. In line with what was said earlier on the importance attached to the dissemination to members of e.g. the *IAHR Bulletin* and the *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplement*, Prof. Jensen stressed the importance that publications related to the IAHR appeared as such, also publications related to the Erfurt 2015 World Congress. If the IAHR is never mentioned, the IAHR might well be forgotten.

### 3.4 Membership Development

With reference to item 5 on the Agenda (“Adoption of new members and affiliates”), Prof. Jensen limited his oral report to the following: During 2010–2015, the IAHR has continued the process of globalization as regards the adoption of member associations from various parts of the globe, having furthermore strengthened its position as the pre-eminent global forum for the academic study of religions by way of the *affiliation* to the IAHR of international associations dedicated to the study “of particular areas within the academic study of religions”. However, the Executive Committee, in accordance with the 2010 revised rules (IAHR Rules of Procedure, Rule 1.c.), had also declared lapsed the membership of some member associations which over several years had not complied with the IAHR requirements as regards payment of fees. The outgoing Executive Committee has been eager to develop the membership and have more members. But it has also agreed that it wanted the member associations to be alive and to pay the dues.

Thus, the membership of a Cuban, Israeli, Nigerian, Portuguese, and Indonesian association had all eventually been declared lapsed. In view of this policy, the Executive Committee, however had also agreed on a re-admission policy,

and the Nigerian association had applied for re-admission; the incoming Executive Committee was about to apply the principles of the new policy to this application. The General Secretary also mentioned that several colleagues, within and without the IAHR Executive Committee, inter alia Prof. Morny Joy, had tried to stimulate a process towards the establishment of a new and functioning Indonesian association, that the IAHR leadership was in continuous contact with Cuban colleagues who had drafted a new constitution for a new Cuban association that might hopefully (depending also on new Cuban regulations for associations in general) spring to life during or after a conference to be held in Habana, Cuba, July 2016. Last but not least he reported that he had very good reasons to believe that a new Israel society for the study of religions would be a reality in the near future (October), not least thanks to Shai Feraro, a young Israel scholar with whom Prof. Jensen had been in contact for a year or so. The General Secretary added that he could not think of a better way for scholars in Israel to honor the memory of late Zwi Werblowsky.

Before closing his report on IAHR membership developments, Prof. Jensen, with reference to his written report (p. 61) added a few words on the cooperation between the IAHR and the, as of 2010 national US IAHR member association, American Academy of Religion, the AAR:

The IAHR leadership, in close cooperation with the AAR leadership, had tried to make sure that the membership within IAHR of the AAR might develop into a well-functioning mode of cooperation, not least as regards an outreach of the AAR to international scholars located outside the USA and often members of IAHR member associations and affiliates. The AAR has appointed a liaison to the IAHR, and the IAHR has done likewise, asking the General Secretary to stay in close cooperation with the AAR, not least as regards the AAR international research grants scheme meant to further cooperation between US based AAR/IAHR scholars and non US-based IAHR members. Though the cooperation with the AAR leadership had been very good, promising, and rewarding, Prof. Jensen encouraged the incoming IAHR leadership to continue the close cooperation with the AAR, in order to make sure that the AAR did not forget that it is the IAHR that is the *international* (and preeminent) association for the academic scientific study of religion, and in order to make sure that the collaborative research grant requirement, according to which one partner in the grant scheme must be a member of the IAHR, is not neglected when the funding is decided upon.

### 3.5 Finances, CIPSH, and the IAHR African Trust Fund

With reference to the written and oral report by the Treasurer, Prof. Bocking, the General Secretary stated his satisfaction with the fact that the financial situation in 2015, as well as in 2013 and 2010 (cf. *IAHR Bulletin 39, Toronto Congress Edition, August 2010*, 42–45; 55–62), was significantly better than in Tokyo 2005 when he first took office. Though the major reason for the improvement was the agreement made with Brill in 2008 as regards *NVMEN*, a strict scheme concerning the soliciting of annual dues and the rise in the rate of dues as of 2014, had also contributed to the much healthier state of affairs. The fees are no longer just symbolic support, and Prof. Jensen thanked all the member associations for their support also in terms of the payment of fees.

This Erfurt World Congress, Prof. Jensen continued, is a very good example of how important it is for the IAHR in terms of democracy and scholarship to be able to use some of its general funds to assist scholars from all over the world to participate. Prof. Jensen once again stressed that he agreed with former General Secretary Prof. Armin W. Geertz when he said: if we do not have any money, if we cannot assist scholars from weak-currency countries then we will be back in the old euro-centric times.

This Erfurt World Congress, Prof. Jensen continued, the first one since Rome 1990 to be held in Europe, hosts, as far as he had been informed, almost 50/50 of participants from inside and outside Europe, or to be more precise: 54% from Europe and 46% from outside Europe (a first estimate). Due, he added to the fact that the German hosts have managed to raise a substantial amount of money, but also due to the fact the IAHR had been able to add an equally substantial amount of money to help fund scholars from around the world participate in the Congress.

Prof. Jensen expressed his gratitude for the way in which the outgoing IAHR Treasurer had managed the IAHR finances 2010–2015 as well as for his highly important participation and close cooperation with the General Secretary in the 2006–2008 negotiations with Brill when he served (2005–2010) as Publications Officer. Prof. Jensen also extended special thanks to Honorary Life Member, Prof. Akio Tsukimoto for his generous donation to the IAHR. The IAHR rarely receives so generous a gift.

In regard to CIPSH, the *Conseil International de la Philosophie et des Sciences Humaines*, under UNESCO, the General Secretary initially referred to his earlier reports stating that the IAHR membership to the CIPSH, in terms of fees paid and grants received, had paid off. The IAHR did receive grants that de facto assisted scholars from around the world. The IAHR, for example, received some 5.000 USD for the Toronto 2010 World Congress. But the IAHR has also support-

ed the CIPSH by way of an annual fee paid, and that fee has been paid also to support the general work of the CIPSH, inter alia promoting the humanities around the world. Prof. Jensen added that the outgoing President, Prof. Hackett, since 2014 one of two CIPSH Vice-Presidents, would be invited to take the floor under item “Any other business” to inform about an upcoming UNESCO/CIPSH Humanities World Congress planned for 2017.

However, Prof. Jensen continued, since 2010, this situation had changed dramatically, and in 2013 the IAHR Executive Committee decided to not pay any annual fees to CIPSH unless CIPSH was revived. In 2014 efforts to rescue or revive CIPSH resulted in a call for a General Assembly to be held in Paris October 14–15, 2014. It was therefore decided that the IAHR should pay the fee for 2014, but not for 2013 when CIPSH had appeared to be non-functioning. A decision, Prof. Jensen added, about any payment of fee for 2015 and about the IAHR’s future relationship with CIPSH has been referred to the incoming 2015–2020 IAHR Executive Committee.

As regarded the *IAHR African Trust Fund* (originally based on money accumulated in connection with the Durban 2000 World Congress and the work of the organizers, not least Profs. Pratap Kumar and Rosalind I.J. Hackett), Prof. Jensen referred to his written report pp. 65–67 for an overview of applications and grants awarded over the five years 2011–2015, as well as for a full report on discussions and decisions. The *IAHR African Trust Fund* has, Prof. Jensen reported, come to an end. It was the 2011 decision of the outgoing Executive Committee that it be a ‘sinking fund’ ending 2015. All the money set aside for the *IAHR African Trust Fund* had not been spent. On top of the 12.000 USD originally there, it was agreed to add 8.000 USD. But no more than 13.000 USD in total had been spent over the years. It will be up to the incoming Executive Committee to decide if it wants to continue the fund or start a similar one. The outgoing Executive Committee unanimously agreed not to take any decisions that might bind the hands of the incoming Executive Committee for instance by way of prolonging the *IAHR African Trust Fund* beyond 2015.

Prof. Jensen ended his report on the *IAHR African Trust Fund* by extending thanks to all the members of the Board of Trustees and special thanks to the Secretary to the Board of Trustees, Prof. Afe Adogame.

### 3.6 The IASR Proposal to Change the Name of the IAHR

Prof. Jensen, with reference to his written report pp. 68–69, reported: It follows from several *IAHR e-Bulletin Supplements*, and from, *inter alia*, the Minutes from the International Committee Meeting in Liverpool 2013, that there have been ex-

tensive discussions about the proposal to change the name of the IAHR, originally submitted by the IAHR Honorary Life Members, Profs. Luther H. Martin and Donald Wiebe, on behalf of the IASR consultation. Following the meeting and discussion in Liverpool, Profs. Martin and Wiebe submitted a revised proposal for changing the name of the IAHR, this time from the IAHR to *International Association for Historical and Scientific Studies of Religions* (IAHSSR), cf. the *IAHR BULLETIN*, 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015, pp. 103–106.

This proposal had been discussed (under item 8) at the International Committee Meeting Wednesday August 26, 2015, in Erfurt and following the discussion a vote was cast. The proposal was rejected by a majority of votes, namely 40 members voting against the proposal, 15 in favor of the proposal, and 9 abstentions. This, Prof. Jensen added, was the reason why the General Assembly did not have the proposal on its agenda.

Prof. Jensen then thanked Profs. Wiebe and Martin and the other participants in the IASR Consultation for taking the time and making the effort to reflect on and discuss possible ways of improving the IAHR and its work. That kind of dedication to the IAHR could hardly be overestimated.

### 3.7 NVMEN

The editorial board of *NVMEN*, International Review for the History of Religions, the IAHR flagship journal, is constituted by the IAHR Executive Committee, and it is the IAHR Executive Committee that recommends the managing as well as reviews editors of *NVMEN* to Brill Publishers. Current managing editors are Profs. Gregory D. Alles and Olav Hammer and current Reviews Editor is Prof. Ingvild Sælid Gilhus. The General Secretary thanked the editors for their service to *NVMEN* and thus to the IAHR, and he extended special thanks to Prof. Gilhus who is stepping down at the end of 2015.

Next, the General Secretary announced a forthcoming *NVMEN* 60th anniversary publication, edited by Profs. Armin W. Geertz & Tim Jensen on behalf of the IAHR Executive Committee. Though it had been the intention of Brill to have it published and ready for the Erfurt World Congress, Brill had re-scheduled the publication for November 2015.

The publication, entitled *NVMEN, the Academic Study of Religion, and the IAHR – Past, Present and Prospects*, is 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. The content includes, on the one hand, reprints of past key contributions to *NVMEN* as well as to the IAHR, and, on the other hand, new contributions that – in line with the re-

prints selected – look forward at the same time as they look back. The book has 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, and T. Jensen, and new contributions by D. Accorinti, G. Alles, C. Bochinger & J. Rüpke, G. Casadio, S. Fujiwara, R.I.J. Hackett, O. Hammer, M. Joy, M. Pye, and D. Wiebe.

The General Secretary extended thanks to past and present Brill acquisition editors as well as to Brill editor Maarten Frijswick for suggesting the publication and for their support during the editorial process, a process bearing witness to the excellent working relationship between the IAHR and Brill, a relationship going back to the very beginnings of the IAHR and *NVMEN*.

It was a pleasure, Prof. Jensen continued, to be able to announce also the forthcoming *Philosophy and the End of Sacrifice – Disengaging Ritual in Ancient India, Greece and Beyond* (ed. by Peter Jackson and Anna Pya-Sjödin), the first publication in the new Equinox/IAHR book series ‘The Study of Religions in a Global Context’.

The new IAHR book series supports the continued development of historical and comparative studies, as well as encouraging work that is also in other ways innovative within the academic study of religions.

Prof. Jensen thanked former and current IAHR Publication Officers, Profs. Brian Bocking and Morny Joy, Equinox editors Janet Joyce and Valerie Hall, the Managing Editor Prof. Triplett, and the editorial board for their efforts, cooperation and contributions to the new IAHR book series.

Prof. Jensen ended his brief oral report on IAHR publications by directing the attention of members to the fact that Nos. 1–40 of the *IAHR Bulletin* can now be accessed by all IAHR members and the public at large on the IAHR website. Thanks not least, of course, to IAHR Honorary Life Member and former President and Secretary General, Prof. Michael Pye who managed to publish 33 issues of the *IAHR Bulletin* during his two terms as Secretary General.

But thanks must also go, Prof. Jensen added, to another IAHR Honorary Life Member and former General Secretary, Prof. Armin W. Geertz, who had been so kind as to offer to have the 33 1986–1995 issues scanned so that they could enter the digital archive of the IAHR provided by the IAHR website.

The General Secretary, consequently, extended his heartfelt thanks to Profs. Pye and Geertz.

### 3.8 Concluding Remarks

Stepping down as General Secretary, Prof. Jensen asked that he be allowed to look back over the past two terms during which he had served the IAHR as General Secretary.

Looking back Prof. Jensen found it fair to say that the IAHR leadership, i. e., the Executive and International Committee, as well as the General Assembly, during the two terms managed to continue to fulfill its mandate, namely (Constitution § 1), to promote “ [...] the academic study of religions through the international collaboration of all scholars whose research has a bearing on the subject”, and thus also doing its best to make the IAHR what it proudly claims to be (cf. the website policy statement), namely the “preeminent international forum for the critical, analytical, and cross-cultural study of religions, past and present”.

The IAHR leadership had done so by way of:

- assisting the establishment and adoption of new national and regional associations and societies for the academic study of religion(s);
- adopting (in accordance with the Constitution § 3b) affiliates, i. e., international associations for the study of particular areas within the academic study of religion, and thus linking them to and including them in the IAHR;
- framing the thorough amendments to the Constitution ratified during the 2010 Toronto Congress, with, inter alia, introduction of terms that signal that ‘history of religions’, also within the IAHR, is different from what it was in the 1950s;
- making other innovations to the Constitution and By-Laws meant to further geographic representation, gender balance and cultural diversity (e. g. revised Rules for the Nominating Committee);
- clarifying and tightening the academic profile of the IAHR.

As regards developments and improvements specifically pertaining to gender, Prof. Jensen found it worth noticing that

- the Nominating Committee 2015 – 2020 was constituted of three females and two males;
- the IAHR Honorary Life Membership Committee 2010 – 2015 was constituted of two females and one male; and that
- while the IAHR Executive Committee 2005 – 2010 was constituted of seven males and five females (one serving as President), the 2010 – 2015 now outgoing Executive had six females (one serving as President, another as Vice-President) and six males on board.

Moreover, during this period, the IAHR Women Scholars Network was established and developed, and the new Equinox/IAHR book series ‘The Study of Religion in a Global Context’ was introduced, with the aim of being a venue not least for younger scholars worldwide.

In terms of the ‘globalization’ of the IAHR, the outgoing Executive Committee had thus worked hard to continue the efforts towards globalization that can be seen as ongoing from the 1950s and speeded up and strategically developed by Profs. Michael Pye (1985–1995) and Armin W. Geertz (1995–2005).

Furthermore, Prof. Jensen said, ‘putting globalization to work’ takes a strong economy. Thanks to the noticeable improvement of the IAHR finances over the past ten years, the IAHR Executive Committee had actually been able to put ‘globalization’ to work, e. g. by way of giving considerable travel grants to help scholars from around the world participate in the IAHR business meetings, congresses, and conferences.

Last but not least Prof. Jensen wanted to stress that the outgoing Executive Committee, continuing the work of the 2005–2010 Executive, had worked assiduously to guard the academic respectability of the IAHR by clarifying the commitment to academic objectives. As he himself had stated in his statement for candidacy for the position of General Secretary in 2005: “‘global’ in the language of the IAHR, is not the same as ‘ecumenical’.”

Lasting traces of these efforts are found in the 2010 addition to the first article of the IAHR Constitution, but the tightening up of the academic profile can also be seen from the revised rules as to the obligation to see to it that the academic programs of IAHR Special and Regional Conferences are in line with the stated aims of the IAHR.

The outgoing Executive Committee had thus, in the opinion of Prof. Jensen, done its best to expand the IAHR while at the same time trying to secure that the ‘identity’ of the IAHR continued to reflect what was arguably first formulated more explicitly by General Secretary, Zwi Werblowsky in his famous Marburg 1960 statement:

If the IAHR has any *raison d’être* it is by reason of a division of labor which makes the Organization the responsible organ and international meeting ground for those scholars who wish to serve the cause of Religionswissenschaft in its strict sense. (*NVMEN* 7, p. 220)

Prof. Jensen stressed that he wanted to quote these words because he, as is evident e. g. from the coming *NVMEN* 60th anniversary publication, with many others, consider the Marburg 1960 Congress and the late Zwi Werblowsky’s statement a cornerstone in the building of an institutional consensus as to the

perspective and ethos of the IAHR, despite all disagreements and cultural differences.

But, he added, he also quoted these words to signal that it had been a privilege and honor – standing on the shoulders of great(er) scholars and former general secretaries like, to mention but a few of the more recent ones, Zwi Werblowsky, Michael Pye and Armin W. Geertz – to serve the IAHR, trying to further develop the IAHR along the lines staked out by the Werblowsky statement.

Stepping down as General Secretary, Prof. Jensen wanted to thank all his colleagues in the outgoing Executive Committee for their hard work, commitment, and support. A special thank you was extended to the outgoing President, Prof. Hackett with whom Prof. Jensen had had a wonderful working relationship for ten years as well as to the outgoing Treasurer, Prof. Bocking with whom he had had an equally splendid cooperation.

The President, Prof. Hackett opened the floor for questions and comments, to the oral as well as written report. There were no questions nor comments. The President then moved to ask the General Assembly to formally adopt the report. The report was adopted with applause. Prof. Hackett asked the General Assembly to join her in thanking the General Secretary for his meticulous work as manifested in his report, constituting an important record not just of the work of the Executive Committee but also of the work of the IAHR membership at large.

## 4 Brief Report by the Outgoing Treasurer

With reference to his full and written report in the *IAHR BULLETIN Number 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015*, pp. 78–85, the Treasurer, Prof. Brian Bocking displayed the overview rendered below (cf. p. 84 in the detailed written report) of the IAHR accounts.

The *payments from Brill* for each issue of *NVMEN* constitutes the major source of income for the IAHR, with 65,058 USD provided since 2010. The *annual membership dues*, hitherto mainly fulfilling a symbolic function, now, with the raise of the annual dues, however also actually augment the IAHR funds. The major expenditures are *a) Conference support*, *b) Executive Committee expenses*, and *c) Publications and web expenses*.

The IAHR currently maintains two bank accounts: a EUR account and a USD account. The IAHR accounts are traditionally reported in US dollars, so the recent sharp rise of the dollar/fall of the Euro has ‘cost’ IAHR 4,633 USD in the period 2010–2014 and may ‘cost’ a further 5,000 USD in 2015 alone. However, this has no practical effect as long as the IAHR has both USD and EUR bank accounts on which to draw as appropriate.

## IAHR accounts 01/01/2010 - 31/12/2014

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Totals	Average p.a.	5 months to 31/5/2015
	0.80	0.77	0.76	0.73	0.83		2010-14	0.89
Exchange rate (€-\$) at 31 Dec	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$			\$
Opening balance at 1/1 brought fwd	63,529	47,334	67,635	68,217	87,942	63529		94,261
Foreign Exchange gain/loss		1,282	728	2,324	-8,967	-4,633		-5,419
<b>INCOME</b>								
NUMEN	11,350	14,866	8,512	18,049	12,281	65,058	13,012	1,928
Dues	5,159	5,332	4,921	3,787	11,139	30,338	6,068	9,540
CIPSH	11,795	2,079	0	0	0	13,874	2,775	0
Donations	0	121	0	0	2,986	3,107	621	0
IAHR Endowment Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,695
IAHR African Trust Fund	0	4,000	3,535	0	2,119	9,654	1,931	0
Other	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Total income (€)</b>	<b>28,304</b>	<b>26,399</b>	<b>16,968</b>	<b>21,836</b>	<b>28,525</b>	<b>122,032</b>	<b>24,406</b>	<b>20,163</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>								
Conference support	33,395	1,299	3,000	366	2,000	40,060	8,012	18,112
Committee Expenses	5,651	1,229	9,205	3,433	7,570	27,088	5,418	5,107
IAHR African Trust Fund	958	4,000	3,535	0	2,119	10,612	2,122	0
IAHR Endowment Fund	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CIPSH	0	0	789	0	723	1,512	302	0
Publications & Web	3,020	776	0	311	283	4,390	878	0
Bank charges	0	41	260	325	544	1,170	234	166
Other	1,475	35	325	0	0	1,835	367	0
<b>Total expenses (€)</b>	<b>44,499</b>	<b>7,380</b>	<b>17,114</b>	<b>4,435</b>	<b>13,239</b>	<b>86,667</b>	<b>17,333</b>	<b>23,385</b>
Surplus/deficit	-16,195	19,019	-146	17,401	15,286	35,365		-3,222
<b>Closing balance at 31/12 carried fwd</b>	<b>47,334</b>	<b>67,635</b>	<b>68,217</b>	<b>87,942</b>	<b>94,261</b>	<b>94,261</b>		<b>85,620</b> (31 May)
IAHR African Trust Fund	12,000	8,000	4,465	4,465	2,346	2,346		2,345
IAHR Endowment Fund	8,695	8,695	8,695	8,695	8,695	8,695		0
<b>TOTAL ASSETS at 31 Dec</b>	<b>68,029</b>	<b>84,330</b>	<b>81,377</b>	<b>101,103</b>	<b>105,302</b>	<b>105,302</b>		<b>87,965</b>

Prof. Bocking extended thanks to all those treasurers and other officers of IAHR member associations who have over the last five years ensured payment of annual dues in the right amount, at the right time, and to the right IAHR account. Finally, Prof. Bocking thanked the President, General Secretary and all of his colleagues on the 2010 – 2015 Executive Committee for their support, encouragement and patience with regard to his efforts as Treasurer during the period.

The President, Prof. Hackett thanked the Treasurer for his clear report and opened the floor for questions and comments, to the oral as well as written report. There were no questions nor comments. The President then thanked the Treasurer for his excellent and dedicated work for the IAHR and asked that the report be formally adopted. The report was adopted with applause.

## 5 Adoption of New Members and Affiliates

Having referred to the most relevant articles and rules in the IAHR Constitution and Rules of Procedure, Prof. Jensen reported that the IAHR International Committee, at its meetings in Liverpool, September 4, 2013, and in Erfurt, August 26, 2015, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, had unanimously agreed to recommend to the IAHR General Assembly to adopt as members the following *national* associations:

- *Association belge pour l'étude des religions/Belgische Associatie voor de Studie van Religies (BABEL)*, Belgium;
- *Irish Society for the Academic Study of Religions (ISASR)*, Ireland;
- *Lithuanian Society for the Study of Religions (LSSR)*, Lithuania;
- *Philippine Association for the Study of Culture, History and Religion (PASCHR)*, Philippines.

Each of the named applicant associations was adopted as a member association by an overwhelming majority show of hands and applause, and the General Assembly greeted the representatives of the named association present.

The General Secretary proceeded to the application for regional membership, reporting that the IAHR International Committee, at its meetings in Liverpool, September 4, 2013, and in Erfurt, August 26, 2015, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, had unanimously agreed to recommend to the IAHR General Assembly to adopt as a member the *regional* association *Asociacion de Cientistas Sociales de la Religion del Mercosur (ACSRM)*, South America.

The named applicant association was adopted as a regional member association by an overwhelming majority show of hands and applause.

The General Secretary then proceeded to an application for affiliation, reporting that the IAHR International Committee, at its meeting in Erfurt, August 26, 2015, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, unanimously agreed to recommend to the IAHR General Assembly to adopt as an *affiliate* the *Society for Ancient Mediterranean Religions (SAMR)*.

The named applicant association was adopted as an affiliate by an overwhelming majority show of hands and applause, and the representative present was greeted by the General Assembly.

## 6 Recommendation of Changes to the IAHR Constitution and Rules of Procedure

Having referred to and displayed on a slide the relevant articles of the Constitution (§8) and the Rules of Procedure (Rule 22) regarding changes and amendments to the Constitution and the rules of Procedure as well as rules for voting (Rule 15acdeg), the General Secretary, Prof. Jensen and later, the Treasurer, Prof. Bocking, displayed on a slide the proposed changes to the IAHR Constitution as recommended by the IAHR International Committee on the recommendation also of the IAHR Executive Committee. Prof. Jensen also mentioned that in

so far as the changed articles were reproduced in the Rules of Procedure, the Rules of Procedure were also changed.

There were two proposals:

1. a) inserting a sentence in the Constitution about the primary location of the IAHR, and b) move a sentence about the legal registration of the IAHR in The Hague, The Netherlands, from the Constitution to the Rules;
2. Changing “General Secretary” to “Secretary General”, and “Deputy General Secretary” to “Deputy Secretary General”.

Ad 1. The Treasurer first reported on the background for the first proposal:

Banks are subject to increasing restrictions on who may open a bank account, and where.

The IAHR bank accounts have to be transferred to the new Treasurer’s location, Switzerland. A basic requirement for opening a corporate (IAHR-type) bank account in Switzerland is that Switzerland must be the ‘primary location’ of the IAHR.

This condition is met if:

- (a) The IAHR Constitution does not state that the IAHR is located outside Switzerland;
- (b) the Constitution states that ‘the primary location of the IAHR is the official address of the Treasurer’; and
- (c) the Treasurer is resident in Switzerland.

Consequently, the proposal was as follows:

- A new sentence to be added at the end of Article 3 A of the IAHR *Constitution* to read as follows: “The primary location of the IAHR is the official address of the IAHR Treasurer.”
- The clause in Article 1 of the IAHR Constitution which reads “and is legally registered in the Hague, the Netherlands” to be moved from the IAHR Constitution into a new section VI within the IAHR’s Rules of Procedure and the current (final) section VI to be renumbered section VII.

If the proposal be adopted, the relevant paragraphs and articles of the Constitution and Rules of Procedure are to be changed as follows, with the deleted and added sentences marked in cursive script.

### **Constitution**

#### Article 1

The International Association for the History of Religions (abbreviated from its English title to IAHR), was founded in September 1950 on the occasion of the VIth International History

of Religions Congress ~~and is legally registered in the Hague, the Netherlands~~. The IAHR is a nonprofit worldwide organization which 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.

...

#### Article 3

The IAHR is constituted by national and regional member societies and associations for the historical, social and comparative study of religions. These are such bodies as are now members and such as have been, upon application, recommended for membership by the Executive Committee, pending recommendation by the International Committee (see below), and admission by the General Assembly at a future quinquennial Congress. *The primary location of the IAHR is the official address of the IAHR Treasurer.*

#### Rules of Procedure

20.d. The minutes of the Editorial Board of *NUMEN* shall be circulated only to the members of the Editorial Board, to the Managing and Reviews Editors, and to the Publisher.

#### VI. Legal Registration of the IAHR

##### Rule 21. Legal Registration

*The IAHR is legally registered in the Hague, the Netherlands.*

#### VII. Adoption, Amendment and Suspension of the Rules of Procedure

##### Rule 22~~7~~. Adoption

The International Committee shall adopt the Rules of Procedure by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.

Following this presentation of the issue by the Treasurer, the President asked if there were any questions and comments. This was not the case. The General Assembly then adopted the recommended changes by such an overwhelming majority show of hands that the President without a doubt could state that the required two thirds of the General Assembly voted for the adoption of the proposal.

The General Secretary then moved to add a few words in explanation for the second proposal, changing “General Secretary” to “Secretary General”, and, “Deputy General Secretary” to “Deputy Secretary General”, in the Constitution as well as in the Rules of Procedure, saying that it was a wish based upon a seemingly wide spread notion that ‘Secretary General’ signaled more ‘authority’ and status than General Secretary, and that ‘Secretary General’ furthermore had been in use for decennia within the IAHR.

The President asked if there were any questions and comments. This was not the case. The General Assembly then adopted the recommended changes by such an overwhelming majority show of hands that the President without a doubt could state that the required two thirds of the General Assembly voted for the adoption of the proposal.

## 7 Other Recommendations of the International Committee Requiring a Vote by the General Assembly

There were no other recommendations.

## 8 Report on the Conferment of Honorary Life Membership

The General Secretary, with reference to the relevant rules, explained that IAHR 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.”

Having furthermore reported that the IAHR Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee 2010–2015, consisting of three honorary life members of the IAHR, namely, Prof. Giulia S. Gasparro (Messina), Prof. Yolótl Gonzales Torres (Mexico City) and Prof. Armin W. Geertz (Aarhus), had been constituted in accordance with the procedural provisions, and that the chair of the committee, Prof. Geertz had submitted suggestions for new IAHR Honorary Life Members, first in time for the International Committee in Liverpool in 2013 and now again for the International Committee meeting in Erfurt in 2015, the General Secretary reported that the International Committee, meeting in Liverpool (cf. *IAHR BULLETIN 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015*, p. 29) had conferred honorary life memberships on Profs.

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

On its meeting August 26, 2015 in Erfurt, upon the recommendation of the IAHR Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee, the International Committee had conferred honorary life memberships on Profs.

- Giovanni Casadio, Salerno, Italy
- Rosalind I. J. Hackett, Knoxville, USA
- Susumu Shimazono, Tokyo, Japan

The General Assembly applauded the conferment of Honorary Life Membership to each of the named, and Prof. Geertz was invited to take the floor to share with the General Assembly the brief introductions by the Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee to the merits of each of the named new IAHR Honorary Life Members.

Prof. Jensen then thanked Prof. Geertz and the two other members of the committee, Profs. Giulia S. Gasparro and Yolótl Gonzales Torres for serving the IAHR once again as members to the Honorary Life Membership Advisory Committee.

## 9 Report on the Election of the Incoming Executive Committee

With reference to the Constitution § 4: “[...] The International Committee, at its meeting just preceding the General Assembly, shall elect the Executive Committee and shall report this to the General Assembly”, to the current rules regarding the ‘Nomination Procedure for the Executive’, as well as to the relevant sections (pp. 86–89 & 90–102) in the *IAHR BULLETIN 40, Erfurt Congress Edition, August 2015*, the General Secretary reported, with the assistance of a slide, on the result of the elections in the International Committee Meeting, August 26, 2015, Erfurt, of the 2015–2020 IAHR Executive Committee.

### President (one position)

Peter Beyer, Canada (8 votes)

Tim Jensen, Denmark (58)

(spoiled/incomplete ballot papers: 1)

### Vice-Presidents (two positions)

Veikko Anttonen, Finland (38)

Anne Kubai, Sweden (33)

Mar Marcos, Spain (61)

### General Secretary (one position)

Afe Adogame, United Kingdom (35)

Jenny Berglund, Sweden (32)

### Deputy General Secretary

Ann Taves, USA (elected unopposed)

Treasurer

Philippe Bornet, Switzerland (elected unopposed)

Deputy Treasurer

Marion Maddox, Australia (elected unopposed)

Publications Officer

Satoko Fujiwara, Japan (elected unopposed)

Further Members (four positions)

Milda Alisauskiene, Lithuania (43)

Chae Young Kim, South Korea (39)

Amarjiva Lochan, India (48)

Marianna Shakhnovich, Russia (24)

David Thurfjell, Sweden (42)

Katja Triplett, Germany (53)

Frank Usarski, Brazil (18)

The following were thus duly elected to the IAHR Executive Committee 2015–2020:

President: Tim Jensen

Vice-Presidents: Veikko Anttonen, Mar Marcos

General Secretary\*: Afe Adogame

Deputy General Secretary: Ann Taves

Treasurer: Philippe Bornet

Deputy Treasurer: Marion Maddox

Publications Officer: Satoko Fujiwara

Four Further Members: Milda Alisauskiene, Amarjiva Lochan, David Thurfjell, Katja Triplett

\*From 2015 onwards 'Secretary General'.

The President, Prof. Hackett congratulated the elected nominees, and thanked all the nominees not elected for their willingness to serve the IAHR.

Prof. Jensen thanked the two Vice-Presidents, Profs. Gilhus and Tayob, serving as tellers during the elections, Prof. Pye, serving as returning officer, and the Treasurer Prof. Bocking who had prepared and overseen the whole process leading towards the elections in the International Committee. Prof. Jensen finally extended thanks to the members of the Nominating Committee, Profs. Maya Burger,

Gerrie ter Haar, Sylvia Marcos, Peter Antes (chair), and Luther H. Martin for their service to the IAHR.

## 10 Public Transfer of Office to the Incoming Executive Committee

Profs. Hackett, Jensen and Bocking, the three officers from the outgoing Executive Committee who were on the stage, left the stage and thus stepped down from their offices (together with the other members of the outgoing Executive Committee).

(Before the outgoing President was allowed to step down, however, members of the Outgoing as well as Incoming Executive Committee showed their appreciation of her 20 years of service to the IAHR by handing over flowers and praises).

Shortly after, the members of the incoming Executive Committee entered the stage, thus signifying the transfer of office. The General Assembly welcomed and congratulated the incoming Executive Committee members with applause.

## 11 Brief Statement by the Incoming President

Prof. Jensen said it had been a privilege, pleasure and honor to serve the IAHR as General Secretary for the past ten years (and following the passing of Gary Lease also as Acting Treasurer for some years), and that he considered it no less an honor to serve as President for the coming five years. He extended his thanks to the member associations for the honor shown by way of electing him IAHR President.

Admitting that it was (kind of) a relief to hand over the many and time consuming duties of the IAHR General Secretary to the incoming Secretary General, Prof. Jensen expressed his great pleasure to be given the opportunity to contribute in other ways to the continuous work needed to make the IAHR what it boasts to be, namely the “preeminent international forum for the critical, analytical, and cross-cultural study of religions, past and present.”

A work the success of which – though primarily depending on the work and dedication to the academic study of religion and to the IAHR by all members and affiliates – was also depending on the efforts of the Executive Committee to stimulate membership development, cultural diversity, and gender equality, clarifying and tightening, at the same time, the academic profile of the IAHR.

While the task of the Secretary General is to function as the primus motor of the IAHR leadership, the office of the President is different, Prof. Jensen stated. Though to a certain degree an honorary position and the tasks of the presidency not infrequently representative, the President has other important functions: s/he must be well versed in the history and workings of the IAHR, s/he must function as a source of advice and support to the Secretary General, s/he must provide a sense of continuity in the Executive Committee, and s/he must help the IAHR bridge past, present and future.

Prof. Jensen expressed his thanks to the outgoing President for the excellent way in which she had performed accordingly and contributed to what had been a wonderful working relationship between the two. Prof. Jensen likewise thanked all the other members of the outgoing Executive Committee for their cooperation and support. Finally, he congratulated the members of the incoming Executive Committee, expressing his wish for a close, fruitful, and pleasant collaboration to the benefit of the IAHR over the next five years.

## **12 Brief Statement by the Incoming Secretary General**

Prof. Afe Adogame thanked the outgoing General Secretary for his work and asked the IAHR members not to use the work and style of Prof. Jensen as a yardstick for him and his work, and he announced briefer reports and fewer emails from the desk of the Secretary General. Prof. Adogame extended his thanks to the organizing committee of the Erfurt Congress, and to the outgoing Executive Committee members.

Continuity, he went on, was, however, guaranteed with the incoming Executive Committee. As he saw it, though, the Executive Committee is but the servant of the IAHR, not its owner. He encouraged members to actively contribute, and he said that he wanted to commit himself to maintain an open door policy, disseminating all information and asking for feedback from IAHR members, by sending information from and about the Executive Committee.

The IAHR, he said, must open itself to new challenges, not least to young scholars, trying to make them part of the IAHR.

Prof. Adogame finally stated that he looked forward to the next World Congress. A call for bids would be circulated, he said, within the next months.

## 13 Suggestions from the General Assembly to the Incoming Executive Committee

There were no suggestions.

## 14 Any Other Business

Prof. Hackett, in her capacity of newly elected Vice-President to the *CIPSH*, took the floor to announce and promote the World Conference of the Humanities in Liège 2017, aimed at promoting and defending Humanities. She offered herself to be a link to the conference, and encouraged colleagues to keep an eye on future announcements and calls for papers and panels.

Congress directors, Profs. Jörg Rüpke and Christoph Bochinger, then took the floor to extend greetings to the IAHR thanking the IAHR for the trust shown when asking the DVRW and the local Erfurt institutions and colleagues to host the IAHR 2015 World Congress in Erfurt.

They extended thanks to the various German co-sponsoring organizations for their support and for the grants given, and they extended thanks to everybody, student assistants included, for their invaluable contribution to the planning and running of the congress.

The President, Prof. Jensen, then took the floor and likewise expressed his thanks on behalf of the IAHR to everybody involved in the planning and running of the IAHR XXI World Congress, and he extended a special thanks to the student assistants who had done a wonderful job.

Last but not least he handed over presents to Congress directors, Profs. Rüpke and Bochinger, while Prof. Hackett handed over a special gift to Congress Coordinator, Dr. Elisabeth Begemann.

\* \* \*

Prof. Jensen then closed the formal meeting, thanking everybody present, and thereupon declared the 2015 XXI Quinquennial World Congress of the IAHR, the *International Association for the History of Religions*, in Erfurt, Germany, officially closed.

Minutes prepared by then General Secretary, Prof. Tim Jensen, occasionally assisted by notes taken by then Deputy General Secretary, Prof. Mar Marcos.

