

## IN MEMORIAM

### Richard C. Martin (1938–2019)

Richard C. Martin contributed signally to the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) as an organization, to other institutions dealing with the Middle East and Islam, and more generally to Middle East studies through his research, teaching, and service. In regard to service to MESA, Rich Martin was a member of the Annual Meeting Program Committee in 1993 and chair of the Albert Hourani Book Award committee in 2004. However, his greatest service contribution to MESA was his prodigious work as Editor of the *Review of Middle East Studies* (RoMES) from 2012 to 2017, a period of time when RoMES was headquartered at Virginia Tech. I had the privilege of working closely with Rich during this period. He was devoted to the post of editor even as he had to overcome many obstacles. Rich's wisdom, tact, and good judgment as an editor were constantly on display. He splendidly achieved his goals of increasing the quality, timeliness, and inclusiveness of RoMES as a scholarly journal.

It was unprecedented to have RoMES headquartered at a university where the editor was not a faculty member. After his retirement from Emory University, Rich Martin moved to rural North Carolina. This meant that when he became the editor of RoMES he had to drive a considerable distance from his home in North Carolina to Blacksburg, Virginia, so as to perform his editorial duties. He tactfully secured office space, the assistance of a graduate student, and mailing privileges at Virginia Tech. He also twice presided over the necessary moving of the RoMES office to new locations on campus.

When Rich first became the RoMES editor he had to deal with a backlog of well over 100 books for review as well as a flood of new books intended for review. Rich secured the service of many new associate editors in a variety of scholarly fields, thereby broadening the intellectual purview of RoMES and adding the participation of scholars whose areas of expertise had not formerly been included. He encouraged the submission of essays to

address broad issues and timely discussions of current events and trends in the Middle East.

One of the most onerous tasks Rich Martin undertook was the transition from a printed format for *RoMES* to an online-only format. This complex and lengthy process involved close coordination with the MESA central staff and Cambridge University Press.

When he was finishing his term as *RoMES* editor Rich was of great assistance to his successor, Heather Ferguson. Rich and Heather gracefully presided over the smooth handing of the position to a new editor in a new location.

In addition to his accomplishments as editor of *RoMES*, Rich Martin provided many other services to Middle Eastern studies. He served as chair of the Department of Religion at Emory University and chair of the Department of Religious Studies at Arizona State University. He was President of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) and a member of its executive committee. Rich also served on the editorial board of two important scholarly publications: *Journal of Islamic Studies* and *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*.

Rich Martin was a dedicated teacher and a widely-published scholar. In addition to several edited or co-edited works and numerous articles, he was the author of an influential textbook on Islam and how to study and teach courses about it. This work shaped numerous younger scholars in their approaches to Islamic Studies and was thereby of service to them and a whole generation of their students.

Rich's service to the general public involved, among other undertakings, the editor-in-chief position for two editions of the *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* (2003 and 2016, published by Macmillan Reference). As a contributing editor for the second edition of this work I observed at close hand Rich's extraordinary commitment to scholarly inquiry, to meticulous and fair-minded adjudication of contentious issues, and his deep and sympathetic understanding of modern Islam. ✂

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William Ochsenwald  
Virginia Tech