

From the Editor

Dr. Richard C. Martin has a long list of accomplishments as a scholar and teacher at Emory University, where he chaired the Department of Religion from 1996-1999, and where he has been affiliated with the Center for the Study for Law and Religion. He came to Emory from earlier homes, Arizona State University and Iowa State University, where he also led departments. He recently served as the president of the American Research Center in Egypt (2007-2009), and as editor-in-chief of the *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World* (Macmillan 2004). Richard's many publications include *Islamic Studies: A History of Religions Approach* (Prentice-Hall, 1996); *Defenders of Reason in Islam: Mu'tazilism from Medieval School to Modern Symbol* (with Mark Woodward, Oneworld, 1997); *Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam* (with Abbas Barzegar, Stanford University Press, 2009); and *Rethinking Islamic Studies: From Orientalism to Cosmopolitanism* (with Carl Ernst, University of South Carolina Press, 2010). Richard has been central to the development of contemporary Islamic studies in the United States, with research that crosses the boundaries between history, religious studies, and anthropology. And aside from all the rest, he is a genuinely warm and gracious man.

In Summer 2012, Richard Martin will continue adding to this long list of contributions to scholarship when he becomes the new editor of the *Review of Middle East Studies*. In July, we will begin packing up shop at UNC Charlotte and transfer the editorial office to Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, VA, where their first issue will be 46(2) for Winter 2012.

Although I will edit one more issue after this, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who have worked over the last five years to make the *MESA Bulletin* and *RoMES* a success. Most members of MESA may not know just how lucky they are to have Amy Newhall directing the organization. Amy has been unfailingly supportive and helpful from her post at the Secretariat, as have Mark Lowder, Sara Palmer, and Shirley Nellson. My partner in crime, Nadia Hlibka, designed the journal and has performed the meticulous job of transforming text documents into finished pages for

each issue since 2007, ensuring that its appearance is consistent, readable, and beautiful (Nadia is also an accomplished professional artist).

Thanks and praise are due to the Associate Editors who have shaped the content and direction of the journal since I've come on board: Betty Anderson, Shiva Balaghi, Michael Beard, Joyce Dalsheim, Michael Frischkopf, Erika Gilson, Nadia Hlibka, Erik Ohlander, Megan Reid, Abdelkader Sinno, Alison Snyder, Sultan Tepe, Sherifa Zuhur, Asma Afsaruddin, Susan Schaefer-Davis, Magnus Bernhardsson, Azzedine Layachi, Naomi Weinberger, and Najwa al-Qattan. I'm also happy to introduce, with this issue, our newest Associate Editor, Paul Sedra of Simon Fraser University. This group of colleagues provides the continuity and expertise it takes to produce a journal over the long run, as editors come and go.

At UNC Charlotte, I would like to thank Dean Nancy Gutierrez and Associate Dean Bill Hill of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, Janet Levy, Chair of the Department of Anthropology, and Dodie Hart, the department's office manager. In the editorial office, Jessica Jones and Phyllis Griffin have been outstanding Assistant Editors, managing the traffic of books and manuscripts and otherwise taking care of the everyday operation of the journal.

And finally, I owe a debt of gratitude to all the authors, book reviewers, and anonymous peer reviewers who have contributed their intellectual labor to the *Review of Middle East Studies*, helping to create and maintain this one small corner of the public sphere. Along with my illustrious editorial predecessors, and my equally illustrious successor, I thank you all. ✧

Gregory Starrett
Editor