

Acknowledgements

It is a pleasure to record the many debts of gratitude involved in bringing a book to completion, even though ‘completion’ is perhaps a relative term as I look ahead to work on a second volume.

Stimulating and gracious colleagues at the Centre for Muslim-Christian Studies, Oxford, have listened to presentations of parts of this work. In particular I wish to thank Ida Glaser, David Coffey, Richard McCallum, Georgina Jardim and Shabbir Akhtar for their encouragement along the path. I am also grateful to the trustees of the Solomon Academic Trust, which runs CMCS, for their support and encouragement. Some of this material has been presented at research seminars at CMCS, as well as at various other venues, and I am grateful for helpful comments from people too numerous to mention. I am also thankful for my involvement in the community of Regent’s Park College, Oxford, where I am a research fellow and where I have always received such a warm welcome. Fellows there have listened to earlier versions of some of these chapters, and I thank in particular Professor Paul Fiddes for his encouragement and interest. Belal Abo al-Abbas and Janan Izadi have both given valuable input, which I truly appreciate. Others have helped me towards the finish line in a variety of supportive ways. These include Richard McArthur, Sr Dorothee Grupp, Angela and Nigel Bamping, Neil and Megan Heath, Margaret Hanson, Gordon Tubbs, Loraine and Alasdhair Hedges, Dave and Helen Jackson, Sylvia Kempshall, Matthew Kempshall and Kirstin Gwyer. My daughter Anna provided wonderful help with bibliography at just the right time. Responsibility for views expressed and any errors is of course my own.

I am grateful to A.J. Droge and to Equinox Press for permission to quote from *The Qur’ān: a New Annotated Translation*.

It has been a pleasure to work with my editors at De Gruyter, Albrecht Doehner and Aaron Sanborn-Overby, who both combine warmth and professionalism in equal measure.

Lastly, it is a delight to thank my family for their love and presence in my life. My father died two months before I submitted the manuscript for review, but my final year with him was a special one. My mother, my wife Helen, and our daughters Anna and Saskia have a place in my life greater than words can express – even for someone who works with words every day.

