Acknowledgments

This volume has its origins in a gathering of Qur’an scholars at the University of Notre Dame in 2012–2013. This academic project, known as “The Qur’an Seminar,” was led by Gabriel Said Reynolds with the purpose of advancing scholarly understanding of the Qur’anic text. As the participants of the seminar were encouraged to address the Qur’an directly, this volume is the result of an endeavor to provide a much-needed tool to approach the text of the Qur’an on its own terms. My first gratitude goes to Gabriel Reynolds, my friend and colleague, at the Department of Theology, for his advice and encouragement, which helped bring this work to completion. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all participants in the Qur’an Seminar, particularly, Mehdi Azaiez, Tommaso Tesei, and Hamza Zafer, whose generous help has shaped the scope of this project. Mr. Talal Itani has been very supportive as he allowed me to use his Qur’an translation for this volume. Shukran kathīran!

Preparing this volume has been a long journey, almost ten years in the making. I couldn’t have done it without support all along the way. I have been fortunate to be surrounded by a supportive community at the University of Notre Dame, both faculty and students. The theology faculty, especially the World Religions and World Church (WRWC) area, provided the amiable congeniality and intellectual space for me to work on this project. I should note my thanks to colleagues in the WRWC area as a token of my appreciation: Emmanuel Katongole, Paul Kollman, CSC, David Lantigua, Bradley Malkovsky, Francesca Murphy, Paulinus Odozor, CSC, R. Trent Pomplun, Gabriel Reynolds, and Todd Whitmore. They are not only great scholars, but also nice individuals. I am also grateful to my ustādh, Rashied Omar from the Kroc Institute, for his continuous support. The students in my “Qur’anic Exegesis” course likewise deserve a special thanks. One of the strongest motivators many of us have for writing books comes from teaching. Teaching Qur’anic exegesis and other Qur’an-related courses has convinced me of the deep need for a Qur’an with cross-references. I must single out Jacob Kildoo for helping me with various tasks as I worked on the Introduction.

I am indebted to my friends and family – without their help and emotional support this project would not have been possible. One unparalleled friend must be thanked for his unique contributions: Sukidi not only continuously encouraged me to finish this book (there were moments of low spirits due to the long process), but also offered insightful comments on my Introduction. Above and beyond the academic endeavor, I would like to express my special thanks to my wife, Nunung Nurhasanah, for her love, quiet encouragement, and patience. I have sometimes been too much preoccupied with this project. I dedicate this work to the beautiful souls of my dad, Achmad Sirry, and my mom, Samsuni. “O tranquil soul. Return to your Lord, pleased and accepted” (Q 89:27–28).

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110782448-001