Acknowledgments

There are many deserving of thanks: Phil Kennedy for his vision; the LAL editors and editorial board for their hard work, assistance, and advice (and friendship); Chip Rossetti for his skill, diligence, and patience; the NYU Abu Dhabi Institute for its generous support; NYU Press for their sense of adventure; the anonymous outside reviewer; my colleague Paul Cobb for advice on technical terms; my fellow LAL board members Michael Cooperson and Phil Kennedy for help with poetry; RRAALL for help with translation; Shawkat Toorawa, as always; the students in my seminar who read the chapter on “subjective legal reasoning” with me (Raha Rafii, David Zvi Kalman, Ari Gordon, Elias Saba, Kathleen Norland); doctoral candidates Nicholas Harris, Ryan Rittenberg, and Elias Saba for help with proofreading and various useful suggestions; Allison Brown for meticulous copyediting and Stuart Brown for editorial advice and incredible typesetting; and of course all my Arabic teachers, and among them special thanks to that most illustrious translator of Arabic, whom I am lucky to call teacher, colleague, and friend, Professor Roger Allen. I hereby also express my gratitude to those brave souls who preceded me in attempting to translate the *Epistle*: Majid Khadduri, Lakhdar Souami, Philippe Rancillac, and Khalil Semaan, and especially to the late Shaykh Shākir for his superlative edition of the *Risālah*, and to Professor ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, whose edition of the *Umm* is an enormous contribution to the study of Islamic law.

Devin Stewart deserves more than a special word of thanks for serving as my project editor. Not only did he save me from many errors of all kinds, but it would be no exaggeration to say that he made nearly every paragraph of this translation better, especially with his wise counsel and many suggestions for improvement in matters of English style.

My mother read the whole translation for style and naturally wondered why anyone would exchange dried dates for dried dates (“what’s the point?”). Why
indeed! Finally, I must thank my family, which includes Bronwynne, Hélène, and Lucy, and of course Michael, Jonathan, Vanessa, Louise, and Larry.

This book would not have been possible without any of the persons and groups just named, and if I have forgotten anyone, they, too, are hereby thanked. All errors of omission or commission, and any other shortcomings of any kind, are my responsibility alone.