

The resurgence of Islam, geopolitical crises involving Muslim nations, violence associated with Islam and the immigration of millions of Muslims to Western countries have generated a strong interest in understanding Islamic law. The challenges of these new realities have impressed upon Muslims the need to rethink classical jurisprudence and a powerful contemporary *ijtihad* – the process of making a legal decision by independent interpretation of the legal sources – has unleashed a tremendous intellectual energy that is transforming legal systems across the Muslim world. This book explores the limits and controversies of this development in the context of the diverse needs of Muslim cultures and communities living in Muslim and non-Muslim nations and continents including Europe and North America.

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