This book discusses the historical development of the legal methodology for the interpretation of the Shari'ah, and analyzes proposed reforms by modern Muslim scholars. This study has two goals: (1) to summarize usul al-fiqh’s rise and development from its rudimentary form to its advanced and mature phase by articulating the contributions of eminent jurists on key intellectual debates, and (2) to present a schema of reforms, new hermeneutics, and epistemology proposed by modernists to bring about foundational changes in Islamic legal methodology so that they can bypass the authority of the legal language. The critical distinction between the timeless Shari'ah and mutable jurisprudence allows for a mechanism that can review and revise juridical opinions in the light of new information.

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