AL-AASAR Journal
Quarterly *Research Journal*
www. al-aasar.com
Vol. 2, No. 4 (2025)
Online ISSN: 3006-693X
Print ISSN: 3006-6921

WESTERN CRITIQUES OF ISLAM IN WAFA SULTAN'S A GOD WHO HATES: AN ISLAMIC SCHOLARLY RESPONSE

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Abstract

Western critiques of Islam have occupied a significant place in contemporary academic and intellectual discourse, particularly after the emergence of modern secularism and the global political developments of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Among the contemporary critics of Islam, Wafa Sultan has attracted considerable scholarly attention through her controversial work A God Who Hates. In this book, she presents a comprehensive critique of Islamic theology, prophethood, revelation, jihad, Muslim women, and the historical development of Islamic civilization. Her arguments are primarily constructed upon personal experiences, selected historical events, and particular interpretations of Islamic sources, leading to conclusions that portray Islam as a religion incompatible with modern values of freedom, human rights, and rational inquiry.

The present study critically examines Wafa Sultan's intellectual framework and evaluates her major arguments from an Islamic scholarly perspective. Employing an analytical and qualitative research methodology, the study investigates the theological, historical, and methodological foundations of her criticism through a systematic examination of the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, classical Islamic scholarship, and contemporary academic literature. Particular attention is given to her understanding of the concept of God, divine revelation, prophethood, jihad, and the social status of Muslim women.

The study argues that many of Sultan's conclusions are based upon selective historical examples and subjective personal experiences rather than a comprehensive engagement with the primary sources of Islam. It further demonstrates that her methodology frequently generalizes the actions of particular individuals or extremist groups to the entire Islamic tradition, thereby overlooking the normative teachings of the Qur'an and the Sunnah. The research also highlights that several of her interpretations reflect broader trends within contemporary Western secular and orientalist critiques of religion rather than the established principles of Islamic theology.

Furthermore, this study emphasizes the necessity of distinguishing between historical abuses committed in the name of religion and the authentic teachings of Islam preserved in its primary sources. It maintains that objective academic inquiry requires contextual analysis, methodological consistency, and reliance upon authoritative textual evidence instead of isolated narratives or autobiographical experiences.

The study concludes that while A God Who Hates represents an important contribution to contemporary debates concerning religion and modernity, its generalizations regarding Islamic beliefs and practices require careful scholarly reassessment. A balanced understanding of Islam can only be achieved through comprehensive engagement with the Qur'an, the authentic Prophetic tradition, and the rich legacy of classical and contemporary Muslim scholarship. Consequently, the present research offers an Islamic scholarly response that seeks to promote objective academic dialogue based upon authentic evidence, methodological rigor, and intellectual fairness.

Keywords: Wafa Sultan, *A God Who Hates*, Western Critique of Islam, Islamic Theology, Orientalism, Jihad, Muslim Women, Islamic Scholarly Response.

Introduction

The relationship between Islam and the modern Western intellectual tradition has remained one of the most widely debated subjects in contemporary religious and academic discourse. Since the eighteenth century, particularly after the rise of Orientalism, secularism, and modern liberal thought, Islam has increasingly been examined through Western philosophical, political, and historical frameworks. While many Western scholars have adopted objective and balanced approaches toward Islamic civilization, others have presented interpretations that portray Islam as incompatible with reason, freedom, human rights, democracy, and modernity. Such critiques have become more prominent after the events of September 11, 2001, when discussions concerning Islam, terrorism, religious extremism, and Muslim societies gained unprecedented international attention. Within this intellectual environment, several Muslim-born writers who later distanced themselves from Islam emerged as influential voices in Western public discourse. Among them, Wafa Sultan occupies a distinctive position because of the intensity of her criticism against Islamic beliefs and institutions, particularly through her book A God Who Hates.

Wafa Sultan, a Syrian-born psychiatrist residing in the United States, presents herself as a critic of traditional religious authority and an advocate of secular humanism. Her writings primarily reflect personal experiences, autobiographical narratives, and observations regarding religious extremism in certain Muslim societies. In A God Who Hates, she argues that violence, intolerance, gender inequality, and intellectual stagnation within Muslim societies are rooted in Islamic theology itself rather than in historical, political, or social circumstances. Consequently, she challenges several fundamental Islamic doctrines, including belief in God, Divine Revelation, Prophethood, Jihad, Islamic law, and the status of Muslim women. These arguments have generated considerable discussion among academics, religious scholars, journalists, and policymakers, making her work an important subject for scholarly investigation.

Although A God Who Hates has received significant attention in Western intellectual circles, much of the existing discussion has focused either on its political implications or on its autobiographical dimensions. Comparatively fewer academic studies have examined its theological arguments through a systematic Islamic scholarly methodology. In many instances, Wafa Sultan's conclusions appear to rely upon selected historical incidents, personal experiences, and generalized observations rather than upon a comprehensive study of the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, classical Islamic scholarship, and the historical development of Islamic civilization. Consequently, an objective academic evaluation requires that her arguments be analyzed within their broader theological, historical, and methodological contexts.

Islam presents itself as the final Divine guidance for humanity. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes justice, mercy, wisdom, human dignity, and intellectual reflection as essential principles governing individual and collective life.

آیت: اِنَّ اللّٰهَ یَأۡمُرُ بِالۡعَدۡلِ وَالۡاِحۡسَانِ"،"
ترجمہ: بے شک اللہ انصاف اور احسان کا حکم دیتا ہے"،"حوالہ: النحل16:90".

Likewise, the Qur'an declares the sanctity of human life by stating,

" مَنۡ قَتَلَ نَفۡسًا بِغَيۡرِ نَفۡسٍ اَوۡ فَسَادٍ فِي الۡاَرۡضِ فَكَاَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيۡعًا"
ترجمہ: جس نے ایک بے گناہ جان کو قتل کیا گویا اس نے پوری انسانیت کو قتل کیا"،"حوالہ: المائدۃ5:32".

These and many other Qur'anic teachings demonstrate that the normative principles of Islam cannot be understood merely through isolated historical incidents or the actions of individuals claiming religious legitimacy.

Similarly, the Prophetic Sunnah emphasizes moderation, justice, compassion, and respect for human dignity. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "حدیث: خیرکم خیرکم لأھلہ"،"مفہوم: تم میں بہترین وہ ہے جو اپنے اہل وعیال کے لیے بہترین ہو"،"حوالہ: Jami' al-Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 3895". Such primary Islamic sources provide the theological foundation upon which Muslim scholarship has historically interpreted questions relating to social justice, women's rights, religious coexistence, and legitimate self-defense. Therefore, any comprehensive evaluation of Islam must distinguish between the authentic teachings preserved in these primary sources and the practices of individuals or groups acting contrary to those teachings.

From a methodological perspective, scholarly criticism of any religion demands consistency, contextual interpretation, and reliance upon authentic textual evidence. Classical Muslim scholars such as Imam al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-Shatibi, Shah Waliullah al-Dihlawi, and numerous contemporary researchers have emphasized that religious doctrines must be interpreted through the totality of revealed texts rather than isolated passages or exceptional historical events. Likewise, contemporary academic methodology requires careful differentiation between theological doctrine, historical practice, political authority, and individual conduct. Failure to observe these distinctions often results in overgeneralization and methodological bias.

The present research, therefore, seeks to examine Wafa Sultan's critique of Islam within a systematic academic framework. Rather than approaching the subject polemically, the study analyzes her principal arguments concerning God, Revelation, Prophethood, Jihad, and Muslim women by comparing them with the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, classical Islamic scholarship, and relevant contemporary academic studies. Through analytical and qualitative research methods, the study aims to determine whether her conclusions accurately represent normative Islamic teachings or whether they primarily reflect subjective interpretation and selective historical reading.

This research also contributes to contemporary discussions on religion, secularism, and inter-civilizational dialogue by emphasizing the importance of intellectual fairness, methodological rigor, and evidence-based scholarship. It argues that genuine academic inquiry neither accepts religious claims uncritically nor rejects them through preconceived ideological assumptions. Instead, it evaluates competing perspectives through authentic sources, contextual analysis, and objective reasoning. In doing so, the study aspires to provide an Islamic scholarly response to one of the most

influential contemporary critiques of Islam while contributing to a more balanced and academically grounded understanding of the issues under discussion.

Significance of the Study

The present study occupies a significant position within the contemporary academic discourse on Islam and Western intellectual criticism. During the last few decades, debates concerning Islam have increasingly been influenced by political conflicts, media representations, secular philosophies, and ideological narratives rather than by comprehensive engagement with authentic Islamic sources. Consequently, many contemporary writings have attempted to interpret Islamic theology, history, and civilization through selective historical experiences or subjective observations. Wafa Sultan's A God Who Hates represents one of the most influential examples of this intellectual trend. Therefore, a systematic scholarly evaluation of her arguments is both academically relevant and intellectually necessary.

One of the primary significances of this research lies in its attempt to distinguish between normative Islamic teachings and the actions of individuals or groups who may claim to represent Islam while acting contrary to its authentic principles. Throughout history, every religious tradition has experienced instances where political interests, social conflicts, or individual misconduct have been associated with religion. However, objective academic methodology requires that such historical realities should not be confused with the original teachings preserved in authoritative religious texts. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes justice, moderation, wisdom, and respect for human dignity. "آیت: اِنَّ اللّٰہَ یَاۡمُرُ بِالۡعَدۡلِ وَالۡاِحۡسَانِ","ترجمہ: بے شک اللہ انصاف اور احسان کا حکم دیتا ہے","حوالہ: النحل 16:90". Accordingly, the present study seeks to evaluate Wafa Sultan's conclusions in the light of these foundational Islamic principles rather than isolated historical incidents.

The significance of this study is further strengthened by its methodological approach. Instead of adopting an emotional or polemical response, the research employs analytical, qualitative, and comparative methods to examine the principal themes discussed in A God Who Hates. Particular attention is given to the concepts of God, Divine Revelation, Prophethood, Jihad, human rights, and the status of Muslim women. Each argument is examined through the primary sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah, alongside the interpretations of classical Muslim scholars and contemporary academic research. Such a methodology contributes to greater academic credibility and enables readers to distinguish between theological doctrine and subjective interpretation.

Another important contribution of this research is its relevance to contemporary discussions concerning interfaith dialogue and intercultural understanding. In an age characterized by globalization, migration, and digital communication, religious traditions increasingly interact within multicultural societies. Misrepresentation of religious beliefs may intensify misunderstanding, prejudice, and social polarization. Consequently, scholarly studies that critically examine controversial claims through authentic evidence contribute not only to Islamic studies but also to broader discussions concerning religious coexistence, intellectual tolerance, and academic

integrity.

The study also addresses an important gap within contemporary scholarship. Although numerous publications have discussed Wafa Sultan from political, sociological, and media perspectives, relatively limited research has critically analyzed her theological arguments according to established Islamic scholarly methodology. Many discussions either celebrate her criticism as an expression of intellectual freedom or reject it without systematic academic engagement. The present research attempts to bridge this gap by providing a balanced scholarly evaluation based upon textual evidence, historical context, and methodological consistency.

Furthermore, this research possesses educational significance for students and researchers working in the fields of Islamic studies, comparative religion, theology, history, religious philosophy, and contemporary intellectual thought. It demonstrates how controversial religious literature should be evaluated through critical analysis rather than ideological assumptions. The study encourages researchers to rely upon primary sources, contextual interpretation, and recognized scholarly principles while examining religious doctrines and historical developments.

The research is equally important for correcting widespread misconceptions concerning several fundamental Islamic concepts. Wafa Sultan associates issues such as violence, extremism, intolerance, and discrimination directly with Islamic theology. The present study investigates whether such conclusions accurately represent the Qur'anic worldview and Prophetic teachings or whether they result from selective historical interpretation. In doing so, it contributes toward a more comprehensive understanding of Islamic intellectual tradition and its ethical foundations.

The Holy Qur'an consistently encourages knowledge, reflection, justice, and rational inquiry. "آیت: قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ","ترجمہ: کہہ دیجیے, اگر تم سچے ہو تو اپنی دلیل پیش کرو","حوالہ: البقرۃ 2:111". Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasized the pursuit of knowledge as a fundamental religious obligation. "حدیث: طلب العلم فریضۃ علی کل مسلم","مفہوم: علم حاصل کرنا ہر مسلمان پر فرض ہے","حوالہ": Sunan Ibn Majah, Hadith No. 224". These foundational principles establish that Islam welcomes reasoned inquiry based upon authentic evidence rather than conjecture or prejudice. Accordingly, this study adopts the same scholarly spirit by examining competing claims through evidence-based academic investigation.

Finally, the significance of the present research extends beyond the evaluation of a single author's work. It represents a broader contribution to contemporary debates concerning religion, secularism, modernity, and the relationship between Islamic civilization and Western intellectual traditions. By combining classical Islamic scholarship with contemporary academic methodology, the study seeks to promote objective scholarship, intellectual fairness, and constructive dialogue. It ultimately argues that meaningful academic engagement requires comprehensive examination of authentic sources, contextual interpretation, and methodological rigor instead of selective citation or ideological generalization. Such an approach strengthens both the academic credibility of Islamic studies and the wider pursuit of knowledge founded upon justice, evidence, and scholarly integrity.

1.1 Historical Development of Western Critiques of Islam

Western critiques of Islam have developed through a long historical, intellectual, and political process. Since the emergence of Islam in the seventh century CE, Western attitudes towards Islam have been influenced by religious rivalry, military conflicts, colonial expansion, and modern secular thought. Consequently, many Western writings have interpreted Islam through theological, political, or ideological lenses rather than through its primary sources, namely the Qur'an and the Sunnah (Said, 1978; Lewis, 1993).

During the medieval period, European knowledge of Islam remained extremely limited. Much of the available literature concerning Islam was produced within the context of the Crusades and reflected religious hostility rather than academic objectivity. As a result, Islam was frequently portrayed as a rival civilization instead of being examined through authentic Arabic sources (Daniel, 1993). Edward Said argues that Orientalism gradually evolved into an intellectual framework through which the East, including Islam, was represented according to Western political and cultural assumptions rather than its own intellectual traditions (Said, 1978).

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries witnessed the institutionalization of Oriental Studies in European universities. Orientalist scholars translated numerous Arabic manuscripts and produced extensive studies on Islamic history, law, philosophy, and civilization. Although several Orientalists made valuable academic contributions, many of their interpretations were influenced by colonial interests and Eurocentric assumptions (Esposito, 1998; Said, 1978). Bernard Lewis observes that historical relations between Islam and the West have consistently been shaped by political competition and civilizational interaction, factors that significantly affected Western academic discourse concerning Islam (Lewis, 1993).

The contemporary period introduced another important phase in Western criticism of Islam. Following the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Islam became one of the principal subjects of political, media, and academic debate. Extremist organizations claiming Islamic legitimacy were frequently presented in Western discourse as representatives of Islam, despite the clear distinction between authentic Islamic teachings and the unlawful actions of particular individuals or groups (Esposito, 2002; Armstrong, 2006).

However, the Qur'an categorically prohibits aggression against innocent people and establishes justice as one of the fundamental principles of Islamic law. Allah Almighty declares: "Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight you, but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors" (Qur'an 2:190). Likewise, the Qur'an emphasizes the sanctity of human life by stating that whoever kills an innocent person is as though he has killed all humanity (Qur'an 5:32). Classical exegetes, including Ibn Kathir and Al-Qurtubi, explain that these verses establish comprehensive ethical principles governing warfare, human dignity, and the protection of innocent life (Ibn Kathir, 2000; Al-Qurtubi, 2006).

Among the contemporary critics of Islam, Wafa Sultan occupies a distinctive position because her criticism combines autobiographical narrative with theological and

cultural arguments. In A God Who Hates, she argues that religious violence, authoritarianism, gender discrimination, and intellectual stagnation are deeply rooted within Islamic teachings themselves rather than resulting from historical, political, or socio-economic circumstances (Sultan, 2009). Owing to these claims, her work has received considerable attention in Western media and academic circles and has become an important source for contemporary discussions concerning Islam and the West.

From the perspective of Islamic scholarship, however, any critical evaluation of Islam must be based primarily upon the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, and the established principles of Islamic jurisprudence and theology. Muslim scholars have consistently maintained that isolated historical incidents, political misuse of religion, or the misconduct of particular Muslims cannot be regarded as representative of Islam itself. Al-Shatibi argues that the higher objectives of Islamic law are the preservation of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property, while Al-Ghazali emphasizes that justice, mercy, wisdom, and public welfare constitute the essential objectives of the Shari'ah (Al-Shatibi, 1997; Al-Ghazali, 1993). Consequently, a balanced academic assessment of Wafa Sultan's arguments requires systematic analysis based upon authentic Islamic sources rather than subjective personal experiences alone.

1.2 Orientalism and the Intellectual Construction of Islam

The academic study of Islam in the West became increasingly institutionalized during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries through the emergence of Orientalism. Initially, Oriental Studies focused on the translation of Arabic manuscripts, Islamic history, Qur'anic studies, and the Arabic language. However, with the expansion of European colonialism, Orientalism gradually developed beyond a purely linguistic or historical discipline and became closely associated with political authority, colonial administration, and cultural representation (Said, 1978; Irwin, 2006).

Edward Said defines Orientalism as a system of knowledge through which the West constructed the image of the East according to its own political and intellectual interests rather than allowing Eastern societies to represent themselves (Said, 1978). According to Said, Islam was frequently portrayed as irrational, violent, static, and incompatible with modern civilization. These representations gradually influenced academic writings, media discourse, and public opinion throughout Europe and North America (Said, 1978).

Several contemporary scholars acknowledge that Orientalism cannot be evaluated as an entirely homogeneous movement. While some Orientalists demonstrated remarkable linguistic expertise and produced valuable editions of classical Islamic texts, others interpreted Islam through preconceived philosophical assumptions rooted in secularism and colonial ideology (Esposito, 1998; Irwin, 2006). Consequently, Orientalist literature contains both significant scholarly contributions and methodological limitations.

John L. Esposito argues that many Western analyses of Islam have historically suffered from the tendency to generalize isolated political events as representative of Islamic doctrine. Such generalizations often ignore the diversity of Muslim societies, the

complexity of Islamic jurisprudence, and the distinction between religious teachings and political practices (Esposito, 1998). Karen Armstrong similarly maintains that reducing Islam to violence or extremism represents a serious distortion of Islamic history because every major religious tradition has experienced periods of political conflict and misuse by its followers (Armstrong, 2000).

The Qur'an repeatedly encourages intellectual reflection, rational inquiry, and the pursuit of knowledge. Allah Almighty states: "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for people of understanding" (Qur'an 3:190). Likewise, the Qur'an asks, "Do they not reflect upon the Qur'an?" (Qur'an 4:82). These verses demonstrate that critical thinking and intellectual engagement constitute essential dimensions of the Islamic worldview rather than being incompatible with reason or scholarship (Nasr, 2015).

Classical Muslim scholars consistently integrated reason with revelation instead of presenting them as contradictory sources of knowledge. Imam Al-Ghazali argued that authentic reason and authentic revelation ultimately lead to the same truth because both originate from Allah Almighty (Al-Ghazali, 1997). Ibn Rushd likewise maintained that philosophical reasoning and revealed knowledge are complementary rather than mutually exclusive when interpreted according to sound methodology (Ibn Rushd, 2001).

Within this broader intellectual context, Wafa Sultan's critique reflects several themes commonly found in modern secular discussions concerning Islam. In A God Who Hates, she associates religious authority with fear, authoritarianism, intellectual stagnation, and violence, arguing that these characteristics are inherent within Islamic theology itself (Sultan, 2009). However, from an Islamic academic perspective, such conclusions require careful examination because they frequently derive from selective historical examples and personal experiences rather than comprehensive engagement with the Qur'an, the Sunnah, classical tafsir, and the broader tradition of Islamic intellectual history (Esposito, 1998; Ramadan, 2009).

Consequently, an objective scholarly evaluation demands methodological balance. Academic criticism should distinguish between normative Islamic teachings, historical political developments, cultural practices, and the actions of particular individuals or groups. Failure to maintain these distinctions risks attributing historical misconduct to Islam itself, thereby producing conclusions that lack historical and theological precision (Brown, 2017; Esposito, 1998).

2.1 Wafa Sultan's Critique of the Concept of God

One of the central arguments presented by Wafa Sultan in A God Who Hates concerns the Islamic concept of God. Throughout the book, she attempts to portray God not as an objective metaphysical reality but as a psychological construct created by human fear, insecurity, and emotional dependence. According to her, religious belief emerged from humanity's existential anxieties rather than from Divine revelation. She argues that human beings first imagined God according to their psychological needs and subsequently submitted themselves to this imagined authority, thereby confusing the relationship between the Creator and the created (Sultan, 2009, pp. 84–90).

This argument reflects the influence of modern secular humanism, psychological reductionism, and atheistic philosophy, which explain religion exclusively through social, psychological, or evolutionary processes while denying the possibility of Divine revelation (Freud, 1927; Feuerbach, 1841). Such interpretations are also evident in the writings of Ludwig Feuerbach, who described God as the projection of human ideals, and Sigmund Freud, who regarded religion as an illusion originating from psychological needs (Feuerbach, 1841; Freud, 1927). Wafa Sultan's discussion closely resembles these intellectual traditions, although she applies them specifically to Islam and Islamic theology.

From the Islamic perspective, however, belief in God is neither the product of fear nor a human invention. Rather, it is founded upon revelation, rational reflection, and the innate human disposition known as fitrah. The Qur'an repeatedly invites humanity to observe the universe as evidence of Divine existence. Allah Almighty states: "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of the night and the day, are signs for people of understanding" (Qur'an 3:190). Likewise, the Qur'an asks, "Were they created by nothing, or were they themselves the creators?" (Qur'an 52:35). These verses demonstrate that Islamic theology presents belief in God as a conclusion supported by revelation and rational contemplation rather than emotional fear alone (Nasr, 2015).

The Qur'an further explains that belief in God is rooted in human nature itself. Allah says: "So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. This is the natural disposition of Allah upon which He has created mankind" (Qur'an 30:30). Classical Muslim scholars interpret this verse as evidence that recognition of the Creator is embedded within human nature before social or cultural influences intervene (Ibn Kathir, 2000; Al-Tabari, 2001).

The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ also emphasized this innate disposition by stating, "Every child is born upon the fitrah, then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian" (Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 1385; Muslim, Hadith No. 2658). This Prophetic tradition establishes that belief in God is considered an inherent characteristic of human nature rather than an artificial psychological construction.

Muslim theologians have historically argued that human reason independently points toward the existence of a Necessary Being. Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali maintained that the order, harmony, and purpose observable throughout the universe constitute rational evidence for the existence of Allah, while revelation provides certainty regarding His attributes and relationship with humanity (Al-Ghazali, 1993). Similarly, Ibn Taymiyyah argued that the human intellect and the natural disposition (fitrah) operate together in recognizing the existence of the Creator, making atheism an exception rather than the original human condition (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1995).

Furthermore, contemporary Muslim scholars argue that reducing religion solely to psychological experience ignores philosophical, metaphysical, historical, and empirical dimensions of religious belief. Seyyed Hossein Nasr observes that modern secular approaches often dismiss transcendence because they restrict knowledge to materialistic assumptions, whereas Islamic epistemology recognizes revelation,

reason, and sensory experience as complementary sources of knowledge (Nasr, 2015). Likewise, John L. Esposito notes that Islamic belief in God cannot be understood merely through political or psychological analysis because it is inseparable from the Qur'anic worldview and the broader intellectual tradition of Islam (Esposito, 1998).

Therefore, Wafa Sultan's interpretation represents one particular secular reading of religion rather than an objective analysis of Islamic theology. Her conclusions primarily emerge from personal experiences and philosophical assumptions instead of a comprehensive engagement with the Qur'an, the Sunnah, classical Islamic theology, and the long-established intellectual tradition of Muslim scholarship. Consequently, from an Islamic scholarly perspective, her argument does not adequately represent the Qur'anic concept of Allah or the epistemological foundations upon which Islamic belief is established (Al-Attas, 1995; Nasr, 2015).

2.2 Wafa Sultan's Critique of Jihad and the Islamic Response

One of the most significant themes discussed in A God Who Hates is Wafa Sultan's interpretation of jihad. Referring to her personal experiences in Syria and later to incidents of religious violence, she argues that the concept of jihad has historically encouraged extremism and terrorism. She particularly associates the attacks of September 11, 2001, and other acts of political violence with Islamic teachings, maintaining that such actions originate from the religious understanding of jihad itself rather than from political or historical circumstances (Sultan, 2009).

This interpretation has become increasingly common within sections of contemporary Western discourse, particularly after the events of 9/11. Numerous political commentators and media outlets began employing the terms "jihad" and "terrorism" interchangeably, thereby creating the impression that Islamic doctrine itself promotes indiscriminate violence (Esposito, 2002; Armstrong, 2006). However, many contemporary scholars of religion have criticized this approach for oversimplifying a complex theological concept and for failing to distinguish between Islamic legal teachings and the actions of extremist organizations (Esposito, 2002; Brown, 2017).

From the perspective of Islamic jurisprudence, the Arabic word jihad literally means "to strive" or "to exert one's utmost effort." Classical Muslim jurists explain that jihad encompasses every legitimate struggle undertaken for the pleasure of Allah, including spiritual self-discipline, intellectual effort, peaceful propagation of truth, charitable service, and, where legally justified, armed defense against aggression (Ibn Qudamah, 1997; Al-Mawardi, 1996). Consequently, armed conflict represents only one limited dimension of jihad and is governed by strict ethical and legal regulations.

The Qur'an repeatedly prohibits aggression and establishes justice as the fundamental principle governing armed conflict. Allah Almighty declares: "Fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress. Indeed, Allah does not love the transgressors" (Qur'an 2:190). Similarly, the Qur'an commands: "If they incline toward peace, then incline toward it also" (Qur'an 8:61). These verses indicate that warfare in Islam is fundamentally defensive and regulated by moral limitations rather than unrestricted violence (Ibn Kathir, 2000).

The sanctity of human life occupies a central position within Islamic ethics. The Qur'an

states: "Whoever kills a soul unless for a legal punishment or for spreading corruption in the land, it is as though he has killed all mankind, and whoever saves one life, it is as though he has saved all mankind" (Qur'an 5:32). Muslim exegetes consistently interpret this verse as establishing the universal value of human life irrespective of religious identity (Al-Qurtubi, 2006; Ibn Kathir, 2000).

The Prophetic Sunnah further clarifies the ethical limits of warfare. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ explicitly prohibited the killing of women, children, monks, elderly people, and other non-combatants during military campaigns (Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 3015; Muslim, Hadith No. 1744). In another narration, he forbade the mutilation of bodies, destruction of crops, unnecessary killing of animals, and damage to places of worship (Abu Dawud, Hadith No. 2669). These narrations demonstrate that Islamic law developed detailed humanitarian principles governing armed conflict many centuries before the emergence of modern international humanitarian law.

Classical jurists likewise emphasized that jihad is never permissible without legitimate authority, lawful objectives, and strict adherence to ethical regulations. Al-Mawardi explains that military jihad must remain subject to public authority and legal accountability rather than individual initiative (Al-Mawardi, 1996). Ibn Taymiyyah similarly maintained that warfare becomes unlawful whenever it involves injustice, aggression, or the violation of innocent lives (Ibn Taymiyyah, 1995).

Modern Muslim scholars have also rejected attempts to equate jihad with terrorism. Yusuf al-Qaradawi argues that terrorism deliberately targets innocent civilians for political purposes, whereas jihad, according to Islamic law, seeks justice while preserving the sanctity of non-combatant life (Al-Qaradawi, 2010). John L. Esposito likewise notes that extremist groups selectively quote religious texts while ignoring the broader ethical framework established by the Qur'an and Sunnah (Esposito, 2002). Karen Armstrong similarly concludes that no major world religion, including Islam, can fairly be judged solely through the actions of violent extremists who misuse religious language for political objectives (Armstrong, 2006).

Therefore, Wafa Sultan's conclusion that jihad is synonymous with terrorism cannot be sustained when examined through the primary sources of Islam and the classical tradition of Islamic jurisprudence. Her argument largely reflects the actions of particular extremist groups rather than the normative teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. From an Islamic scholarly perspective, terrorism represents a violation of jihad rather than its authentic expression. Consequently, identifying jihad with terrorism constitutes both a theological misunderstanding and a methodological error because it overlooks the legal, ethical, and spiritual dimensions that define jihad within Islamic thought (Brown, 2017; Esposito, 2002).

3.1 The Qur'anic Response to Wafa Sultan's Critique of Islam

The principal weakness of Wafa Sultan's critique lies in her methodological approach. Throughout A God Who Hates, she primarily relies upon autobiographical experiences, selected historical incidents, and personal observations to formulate conclusions regarding Islam as a religion. While personal experience undoubtedly contributes to intellectual inquiry, it cannot independently serve as a sufficient basis

for evaluating an entire religious tradition that derives its authority from revealed scripture and an extensive scholarly heritage (Sultan, 2009; Esposito, 1998).

From the perspective of Islamic scholarship, any evaluation of Islam must begin with its primary sources, namely the Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah. The Qur'an explicitly describes itself as the ultimate criterion between truth and falsehood: "Blessed is He who sent down the Criterion upon His Servant that he may be a warner to all the worlds" (Qur'an 25:1). Likewise, Allah declares, "Indeed, this Qur'an guides to that which is most upright" (Qur'an 17:9). These verses establish that Islamic beliefs, ethics, and legal principles must be understood through Divine revelation rather than through isolated historical experiences or subjective interpretations (Ibn Kathir, 2000; Al-Tabari, 2001).

One recurring theme in Wafa Sultan's work is the portrayal of God as a source of fear rather than mercy. However, the Qur'an consistently presents Allah as the Most Merciful and the Most Compassionate. Every chapter of the Qur'an, except one, begins with the declaration, "In the name of Allah, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful." Furthermore, Allah states, "My mercy encompasses all things" (Qur'an 7:156), and, "Say: O My servants who have transgressed against themselves, do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins" (Qur'an 39:53). Classical exegetes explain that Divine justice and Divine mercy are complementary attributes, not contradictory realities, and that the Qur'anic conception of God cannot be reduced to fear alone (Al-Qurtubi, 2006; Ibn Kathir, 2000).

Similarly, Wafa Sultan associates Islam with coercion and intolerance. The Qur'an, however, establishes the principle of religious freedom by declaring, "There is no compulsion in religion" (Qur'an 2:256). This verse has been regarded by Muslim jurists as one of the foundational principles governing relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. Ibn Ashur explains that genuine faith loses its meaning if imposed through coercion because belief must arise through conviction rather than force (Ibn Ashur, 1984).

Justice likewise occupies a central position within the Qur'anic worldview. Allah commands: "Indeed, Allah commands justice, excellence, and generosity toward relatives, and He forbids immorality, wrongdoing, and oppression" (Qur'an 16:90). Elsewhere, believers are instructed: "Do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness" (Qur'an 5:8). These verses demonstrate that justice in Islam extends beyond communal or religious boundaries and remains applicable even toward opponents (Al-Tabari, 2001).

Another methodological concern relates to Wafa Sultan's tendency to generalize the misconduct of certain Muslims as representative of Islam itself. Islamic scholarship has consistently distinguished between Divine teachings and human behavior. Al-Shatibi argues that the objectives of Islamic law are the preservation of religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property, and that any action violating these objectives represents a deviation from the purposes of the Shari'ah rather than its authentic implementation (Al-Shatibi, 1997). Consequently, acts of extremism committed by individuals cannot logically invalidate the normative teachings of Islam.

Furthermore, contemporary scholarship emphasizes the necessity of contextual interpretation when examining Qur'anic verses related to warfare, justice, or social regulation. John L. Esposito argues that selective citation of isolated Qur'anic passages without historical and textual context has contributed significantly to misconceptions concerning Islam in modern public discourse (Esposito, 1998). Likewise, Jonathan A. C. Brown maintains that both extremist groups and some critics of Islam frequently employ selective textual readings while overlooking the broader interpretive tradition developed by Muslim scholars over fourteen centuries (Brown, 2017).

Therefore, from an Islamic scholarly perspective, a balanced evaluation of A God Who Hates requires distinguishing between subjective experience and normative doctrine, between historical misuse and authentic revelation, and between individual misconduct and the universal principles established by the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Only through such a methodology can Islam be assessed according to its own epistemological foundations rather than through external ideological assumptions.

3.2 The Prophetic Model as a Response to Wafa Sultan's Critique

A comprehensive evaluation of Wafa Sultan's criticism cannot be completed without examining the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, because many of her conclusions regarding Islam are directly connected to her interpretation of the Prophet's personality, his family life, the institution of jihad, and the social position of women (Sultan, 2009). From an Islamic scholarly perspective, however, the Sunnah constitutes the practical explanation of the Qur'an and therefore provides the primary framework through which Islamic teachings should be understood (Al-Shafi'i, 2003).

The Qur'an explicitly presents the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the highest moral example for humanity. Allah Almighty states, "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example for whoever hopes in Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah frequently" (Qur'an 33:21). Likewise, Allah describes him by saying, "Indeed, you are surely upon an exalted standard of character" (Qur'an 68:4). These verses establish that the Prophetic model is fundamentally characterized by mercy, justice, wisdom, patience, and moral excellence rather than coercion or oppression (Ibn Kathir, 2000; Al-Tabari, 2001).

One of Wafa Sultan's recurring arguments is that the Prophetic model allegedly contributed to the oppression of women in Muslim societies (Sultan, 2009). However, historical evidence demonstrates that the Prophet ﷺ introduced unprecedented reforms concerning women's legal and social status in seventh-century Arabia. Before Islam, women were generally denied inheritance, independent property ownership, and legal personality. The Qur'an recognized women as independent legal persons by granting them inheritance rights, financial ownership, contractual capacity, and protection against forced marriage (Qur'an 4:7; Qur'an 4:19). These reforms represented a significant transformation within the social context of Arabia (Esposito, 2005).

The Prophet ﷺ consistently emphasized respect, dignity, and kindness toward women. He declared, "The best among you are those who are best to their wives, and

I am the best among you to my wives" (Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 3895). In another narration, he instructed believers to treat women with kindness and compassion (Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 3331; Muslim, Hadith No. 1468). Classical commentators regard these narrations as foundational ethical principles governing marital relationships and family life (Ibn Hajar, 2000).

Likewise, the Prophet ﷺ established strict ethical regulations concerning warfare that fundamentally differ from acts of terrorism. During military expeditions, he prohibited the killing of women, children, elderly persons, monks, and all non-combatants. He also prohibited mutilation, betrayal, unnecessary destruction of property, and the cutting of fruit-bearing trees (Muslim, Hadith No. 1731; Abu Dawud, Hadith No. 2614). Modern scholars of international humanitarian law frequently recognize these Prophetic directives as among the earliest articulated ethical regulations governing armed conflict (Khadduri, 2006).

The Prophet ﷺ further demonstrated extraordinary religious tolerance through numerous historical examples. The Constitution of Madinah established legal rights and mutual obligations for Muslims, Jews, and other communities living within the same political society. Likewise, the Prophet ﷺ received Christian delegations from Najran with dignity and allowed them to practice their religious worship peacefully during their visit to Madinah (Hamidullah, 1981). These historical events indicate that coexistence, dialogue, and mutual respect formed essential components of the Prophetic model.

Another significant aspect frequently overlooked in contemporary criticism concerns the Prophet's emphasis on intellectual development. The first Qur'anic revelation began with the command, "Read in the name of your Lord who created" (Qur'an 96:1). Numerous Prophetic traditions encourage the pursuit of knowledge, critical reflection, and education. Classical Muslim civilization consequently developed universities, libraries, hospitals, and scientific institutions that significantly contributed to global intellectual history (Makdisi, 1981; Nasr, 2006).

Contemporary Muslim scholars therefore argue that extremist interpretations cannot legitimately claim to represent the Prophetic Sunnah because they contradict its fundamental ethical principles. Jonathan A. C. Brown maintains that authentic Islamic legal methodology consistently distinguishes between normative Prophetic teachings and politically motivated distortions committed by later individuals or movements (Brown, 2017). Similarly, John L. Esposito concludes that evaluating Islam exclusively through extremist violence ignores the broader historical reality of Islamic civilization and the moral teachings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (Esposito, 2005).

Accordingly, Wafa Sultan's critique does not adequately engage with the comprehensive historical and textual evidence concerning the life of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Rather than examining the Sunnah as interpreted through the established tradition of Islamic scholarship, her analysis relies primarily upon selected historical incidents and personal observations. From an Islamic academic perspective, such a methodology cannot provide a complete or balanced understanding of the

Prophetic model, which remains firmly grounded in mercy, justice, human dignity, and moral accountability.

3.3 Scholarly Evaluation and Contemporary Significance

The preceding discussion demonstrates that A God Who Hates represents a contemporary critique of Islam that combines autobiography, social criticism, and philosophical skepticism. Although Wafa Sultan raises questions concerning religious authority, jihad, the status of women, and the concept of God, her methodology primarily depends upon personal experience and selective historical interpretation rather than a comprehensive engagement with the primary sources of Islam. Consequently, many of her conclusions reflect subjective evaluation instead of systematic theological or historical analysis (Sultan, 2009).

From the perspective of Islamic scholarship, academic criticism must distinguish between normative religious teachings and the historical behavior of individuals or societies. Muslim theologians have consistently maintained that Islam should be understood through the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, and the established principles of Islamic jurisprudence rather than through isolated political events or the actions of particular groups (Al-Shatibi, 1997; Al-Ghazali, 1993). Failure to maintain this distinction often results in methodological generalization, whereby historical abuses are incorrectly attributed to Islamic doctrine itself.

One of the principal methodological limitations of Wafa Sultan's work is the absence of sustained engagement with the classical Islamic intellectual tradition. Major exegetical works such as those of Al-Tabari, Ibn Kathir, Al-Qurtubi, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi, and Ibn Ashur are largely absent from her discussion, despite their central importance in understanding Qur'anic theology and Islamic legal thought (Al-Tabari, 2001; Ibn Kathir, 2000; Al-Qurtubi, 2006; Ibn Ashur, 1984). Likewise, the rich tradition of Islamic theology developed by scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, Al-Shatibi, and Shah Wali Allah is not substantively considered when evaluating Islamic beliefs concerning God, revelation, morality, or human society.

Contemporary academic scholarship likewise emphasizes the necessity of contextual analysis. John L. Esposito argues that neither Islam nor any other world religion can be adequately understood through selective quotations detached from their historical and textual contexts (Esposito, 1998). Jonathan A. C. Brown similarly observes that both extremist movements and certain critics of Islam frequently ignore the interpretive methodologies developed by Muslim scholars over many centuries, resulting in conclusions that oversimplify complex theological issues (Brown, 2017).

Another significant observation concerns the distinction between religion and civilization. Islamic civilization has historically contributed to philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, architecture, literature, and legal theory. The intellectual achievements of scholars such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, Al-Biruni, Ibn Rushd, and Ibn Khaldun illustrate that Islamic civilization encouraged rational inquiry alongside religious commitment (Nasr, 2006). Therefore, reducing Islam to violence or intolerance overlooks the broader historical reality of Muslim intellectual and scientific contributions.

Similarly, Wafa Sultan frequently interprets particular cultural practices as intrinsic components of Islamic teaching. Contemporary Muslim scholars argue that this approach overlooks the distinction between religion and culture. Many social practices observed in Muslim societies originate from local customs, political structures, or historical circumstances rather than from the Qur'an or the Sunnah. Consequently, criticism directed toward cultural practices should not automatically be regarded as criticism of Islamic doctrine itself (Ramadan, 2009).

From an academic perspective, constructive criticism of religion remains both legitimate and necessary. Islamic civilization itself produced extensive traditions of intellectual debate, legal disagreement, philosophical inquiry, and theological discussion. The Qur'an repeatedly invites humanity to reflect, reason, and examine evidence before reaching conclusions (Qur'an 3:190-191; Qur'an 39:18). Accordingly, scholarly dialogue should remain grounded in intellectual honesty, methodological consistency, and mutual respect rather than ideological polarization.

In conclusion, A God Who Hates should be understood as one individual's interpretation of Islam shaped by particular historical experiences and philosophical assumptions rather than as a comprehensive representation of Islamic theology. A balanced academic assessment requires consultation of the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, classical tafsir, Islamic jurisprudence, and contemporary scholarly research. When examined through these sources, many of the book's central claims appear to rest upon selective evidence, methodological generalization, and insufficient engagement with the broader Islamic intellectual tradition. Therefore, while the work contributes to contemporary discussions concerning religion and modernity, its conclusions cannot be regarded as definitive representations of Islamic belief according to the standards of mainstream Islamic scholarship.

Conclusion

The present study critically examined the Western critiques of Islam presented in Wafa Sultan's A God Who Hates from the perspective of Islamic scholarship. The analysis demonstrated that the book primarily reflects the author's personal experiences, philosophical assumptions, and contemporary secular worldview rather than a comprehensive academic engagement with the primary sources of Islam. While the work raises significant questions concerning the concept of God, revelation, jihad, women, and Islamic civilization, its arguments frequently rely upon selective interpretation and historical generalization instead of systematic textual analysis grounded in the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the classical Islamic intellectual tradition (Sultan, 2009; Esposito, 1998).

The study further established that Islamic teachings cannot be evaluated solely through the actions of certain individuals, political movements, or historical events. Rather, Islam derives its normative principles from Divine revelation as preserved in the Qur'an and authentically explained through the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Throughout Islamic history, Muslim scholars have consistently interpreted these primary sources through rigorous methodologies of tafsir, hadith, jurisprudence, and theology, thereby providing a comprehensive intellectual framework for

understanding Islamic beliefs and practices (Al-Shatibi, 1997; Ibn Kathir, 2000).

The analysis also revealed that many allegations advanced by Wafa Sultan concerning jihad, women's rights, and the Islamic concept of God become substantially weakened when examined in the light of authentic Islamic sources. The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes justice, mercy, human dignity, freedom of belief, and the sanctity of human life, while the Prophetic Sunnah establishes detailed ethical principles governing social relations, family life, warfare, and coexistence with people of other faiths (Qur'an 2:256; 5:32; 16:90; Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 3015; Muslim, Hadith No. 1744). Consequently, attributing the misconduct of particular individuals or extremist groups to Islam itself represents a methodological oversimplification that does not accurately reflect mainstream Islamic doctrine.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of distinguishing between Islam as a revealed religion and the diverse historical experiences of Muslim societies. Cultural practices, political failures, and individual misconduct should not automatically be interpreted as religious teachings. Likewise, objective academic inquiry requires engagement with the entire spectrum of Islamic intellectual heritage rather than selective quotations or isolated historical incidents. Contemporary scholarship increasingly recognizes that balanced research must incorporate historical context, linguistic analysis, and the established principles of Islamic interpretation before drawing conclusions concerning Islamic theology or civilization (Brown, 2017; Nasr, 2006).

In conclusion, A God Who Hates may be regarded as an important contribution to contemporary debates concerning Islam and the modern West; however, it does not provide a comprehensive or methodologically balanced representation of Islamic belief. A more accurate understanding of Islam requires direct engagement with the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, the classical exegetical tradition, and the accumulated scholarship of Muslim intellectual history. Such an approach not only promotes academic integrity but also contributes to constructive dialogue, mutual understanding, and objective scholarship in the study of Islam and contemporary religious discourse.

Results / Findings

1. The study concludes that Wafa Sultan's *A God Who Hates* represents a contemporary Western critique of Islam that is primarily shaped by autobiographical experiences, secular philosophical assumptions, and selective historical interpretation rather than by a comprehensive study of the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the classical Islamic intellectual tradition (Sultan, 2009; Esposito, 1998).
2. The research finds that Wafa Sultan's discussion of the concept of God is largely influenced by modern secular and materialist philosophy, which interprets religion as a psychological and social construct. In contrast, Islamic theology establishes belief in Allah through Divine revelation, rational reflection, and the innate human disposition (*fitrah*), as affirmed by the Qur'an and the Sunnah (Qur'an 30:30; Qur'an 52:35; Al-Ghazali, 1993; Ibn Taymiyyah,

1995).

3. The study demonstrates that identifying Islamic jihad with terrorism constitutes a methodological and theological error. The Qur'an and the Sunnah define jihad as a comprehensive struggle for righteousness that is governed by strict legal and ethical principles, whereas terrorism involves unlawful violence against innocent people and is categorically prohibited in Islamic law (Qur'an 2:190; Qur'an 5:32; Al-Bukhari, Hadith No. 3015; Muslim, Hadith No. 1744).
4. The research establishes that Wafa Sultan's observations concerning Muslim women are based primarily upon selected historical and cultural practices rather than the normative teachings of Islam. The Qur'an and the Prophetic Sunnah recognize women as independent legal personalities possessing rights relating to inheritance, property ownership, marriage, education, dignity, and social participation (Qur'an 4:7; Qur'an 4:19; Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith No. 3895).
5. The study concludes that the author's methodology does not adequately engage with the classical sources of Islamic scholarship, including the major works of tafsir, hadith, jurisprudence, and theology. Consequently, many of her conclusions overlook the interpretive principles developed by Muslim scholars over more than fourteen centuries (Al-Tabari, 2001; Ibn Kathir, 2000; Al-Qurtubi, 2006; Al-Shatibi, 1997).
6. The research finds that many criticisms directed toward Islam in *A God Who Hates* arise from a failure to distinguish between Islamic teachings and the actions of certain individuals, political regimes, or extremist organizations. Islamic scholarship consistently differentiates between Divine revelation and human misconduct, thereby rejecting the attribution of individual errors to Islam itself (Brown, 2017; Esposito, 2005).
7. The study further concludes that an objective academic evaluation of Islam requires contextual interpretation of Qur'anic verses, Prophetic traditions, and historical events. Selective quotation without historical, linguistic, and juristic context produces incomplete conclusions that do not accurately represent mainstream Islamic doctrine (Nasr, 2006; Ramadan, 2009).
8. Finally, the research concludes that although *A God Who Hates* contributes to contemporary debates concerning religion, secularism, and the modern West, it cannot be regarded as a comprehensive scholarly representation of Islam. A balanced understanding of Islam requires direct engagement with the Qur'an, the authentic Sunnah, classical Islamic scholarship, and contemporary academic research using established methodological standards (Esposito, 1998; Brown, 2017; Nasr, 2006).

Recommendations

1. Future academic studies on Wafa Sultan's writings should adopt a comparative methodology that critically examines her arguments alongside the Qur'an, authentic Sunnah, and classical Islamic scholarship rather than relying solely on autobiographical narratives.

2. Researchers should distinguish between Islamic teachings and the political, cultural, or social practices of particular Muslim societies to ensure methodological accuracy and scholarly objectivity.
3. Universities and research institutions should encourage interdisciplinary studies integrating Islamic theology, history, comparative religion, sociology, and contemporary Western scholarship for a more balanced understanding of Islam.
4. Muslim scholars should produce well-documented academic responses to contemporary critiques of Islam using internationally accepted research methodologies and peer-reviewed publications.
5. Greater emphasis should be placed on studying the historical context of Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions before drawing conclusions regarding Islamic doctrines related to jihad, women, and religious freedom.
6. Academic dialogue between Muslim and non-Muslim scholars should be encouraged to promote mutual understanding, reduce misconceptions, and strengthen objective scholarship on Islam.
7. Future researchers should incorporate recent peer-reviewed journal articles alongside classical Islamic sources to enhance the academic quality and international acceptance of their research.
8. Educational institutions should promote critical thinking, textual analysis, and methodological rigor in the study of Islam so that religious discussions remain evidence-based, balanced, and academically credible.

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