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Neo-Orientalist Gambits in South Asian Global Game in Aslam's *The Blind Man's Garden*

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Abstract *This study focuses on the great global game of chess of Neo-imperialist played in South Asia. It explores that to fetch global capitalist designs, global forces have devised a global Neo-Orientalist game of chess in three perspectives, i.e. economic, cultural and political, for three-level players, i.e. great players, little players and domestic players. The economic ventures urge the need to divide the South Asian Muslims into good and bad categories through neo-orientalist cultural and political gambits, as is revealed from Nadeem Aslam's 'The Blind Man's Garden' (2013) that critiques the hegemony of Neo-imperialist global forces working purely for their global designs in the region. It exposes economic, political, cultural and strategic motives behind two basic goals: the establishment of neo-imperialism through the elimination of borders for neo-liberalist gains by homogenizing world culture; and the eradication of global terrorism for which war has already been launched there.*

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Introduction

Nadeem Aslam's *"The Blind Man's Garden" (2013)* chalks out the political designs working behind the war against terrorism in South Asia. The avarice for economic ventures tempts globalizers to devise a great political game mostly based on neo-orientalist gambits in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Taking South Asia a chessboard, a political game of dividing Muslims into good and bad (white and black pieces) is being played by them. By taking advantage of this binary between "good" and "bad' Muslims (Mamdani, 2005) or between the pious and the wayward (Aslam, 2013), the great player (USA) seeks to establish its geostrategic goals of how to control the Muslim 'other' in the name of the war on terror. Neo-Orientalist discourse is at its peak to render this region borderless for great player's economic game being played through little (Pakistan, India) and local players (ISI, St. Joseph's missionary school etc.).

By dealing with the attacks differently, the novel also shows the counterproductive activity of *Ardent Spirit's* (school) administration which sends their students to fight jihad against global invaders. Besides criticizing the fanatic religiosity of South Asian Muslims and emphasizing the inevitability of adapting secular foreign policy to run their affairs smoothly, it also exposes the apparently enlightened but inwardly evil designs of global forces hidden behind the war on terror and the missionary projects such as St. Joseph's.

Review of Literature

Neo-Orientalist narratives are not based on any new perception of Islam but typically a rebirth of traditional orientalism intended to validate American imperialism and its hostile acts towards Muslim countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. Not like the past Orientalists, however, the Neo-Orientalists took Islamic movements as the main end and regarded Islam as a global danger to western civilization. The scholarly field of what used to be called orientalism is renamed as 'Area Studies' or

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'Regional Studies'; these political expressions reinstate the word 'Orientalism' in erudite circles that is largely polluted with a negative imperialist subtext due to Orientalists themselves (Squires, 2006). American supposition authenticates Dag Tuastad's squabble (2003) that the ideological assumptions of Neo-Orientalism are consistent with new barbaric tenets; the presence of deep-rooted violence in local culture renders political structures and economic situations quite irrelevant (p. 595), and hence the whole culture is the 'house of terrorism'.

After 9/11, the 'battle of ideas' was opened on several borders in America. Addressing a joint session of Congress on 20 September 2001, President Bush framed the foes as ones who "hate our freedoms–our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other" (cited in Naqvi, 2012). He reiterates that Muslims are traitors of their own faith (p. 97). The American new empire's official narrative and discourse were now hinged around the past imperialist strategy of 'Divide and Rule'; i.e. a division of Islamic society into good and bad Muslims. Maryam Khalid (2011) argues that after the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. hostility towards the East was increased, and it envisaged itself as the leader of the "civilized world", by taking upon itself the responsibility to liberate the Middle East of its oppressors (p. 20). Chuck, on his release from the American detention center, says that Americans have been committing the crime of meddling into different worldly nations in the name of national security howsoever at a far distance did they locate from the U.S. (Naqvi, 2012, p. 136).

Rahman shows (2014) how, after the incident of 9/11, the US-led global forces, particularly western nations, appeared on the South Asian stage to play the game of making Afghan-Orients civilized and cultured. They were the same who once were maneuvered as "white pieces of chess" by the white (chess)man in their Cold War gambit against the USSR. Then they were given the role of 'Jihadists' on the South Asian chessboard, and the Americans (white chessman) strategy was to ploy them since they were "enemy's enemy", but now they had become 'black pieces' (p. 537); hence not acceptable (Mustafa, Saleem & Shafiq, 2020). Naqvi, 2012, too, described how the Taliban's veteran 'Mujahidins' was enthusiastically received by American officials in the White House. But soon after the Neo-imperialists' Cold War gambit ended at USSR's defeat or what might be called one of the four global players to use Raemdonck's phrase (Watson, Coarrubias, Lansford, & Van Raemdonck, 2013), Taliban were not only segregated but also declared terrorists by their patron-in-chief; these Taliban were, albeit, the progenies of those Mujahidins' who were once welcomed in Washington (Naqvi, 2012). In the recent era, the American (neo)-empire has been playing the chess of 'whole and parts' respectively towards different nations to win their economic motives there (Hamid, 2008). The "partisan and sports-event like coverage" given by the lopsided media to the war between the well-resourced "American bombers and the ill-equipped and ill-fed Afghan tribesmen below (Hamid, 2008).

Nadeem Aslam (2013) also traces the clues of the great game started by past imperialists since the days when an agent working under the fictitious name of Khan Ali (later on became famous as Connolly) was arrested by Amir of Bukhara in 1842. The same game of civilizing the Afghanis is continued yet by Americans. Unlike John Updik's *'Terrorist' (2007)* and Don DeLillo's *'Falling Man' (2007)*, Aslam's work, however, bridges the gap between East and West (Wijingaarden, 2015) as revealed from Muslim protagonist, Mikal's acts of reconciliation with an American soldier despite his being tortured by Americans. Amidst the impending fear of slaughter by them, he not only thinks American soldier "[n]ot like that" but also declares optimistically that in case if the American soldier licks his blood, then "that makes me better than him" (Aslam, 2013, p. 370). The novel does not simply portray Muslims as religious fanatics and dangerous terrorists that conservative media showed to American viewers after 9/11, though Aslam presents such characters, too.

Theoretical Frameworks

Historians and critics use the term Orientalism and Neo-Orientalism to distinguish the West from East, particularly in cultural and political contexts. In his 1978 work *'Orientalism'*, Edward Said has drawn a situation of how the West created a negative image of the East purely for rendering its superiority and other gains (Wijingaarden, 2015) besides exploiting the Orientalist discourse for subjugating and looting them economically.

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In the current era, the Neo-imperialist global nations are playing the same game in three dimensions in the South and Central Asian region to render their cultural superiority, to establish their political writ and to gain their geostrategic and economic interests (Raemdonck, 2013). Since 1970s turmoil, while passing through the stations of post-Soviet withdrawal, Taliban regime and the 9/11 incident respectively, the Afghani train engine received worst dents of ruination by global (USSR, USA), little (India, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia etc.) and local players (ethnic, militant groups, agencies, NGOs etc.). The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had not only led to disturbances but also affected Pakistan that had to bear the brunt as an immediate neighbor. After Soviet withdrawal, Afghanistan was already going through a serious crisis of the forces fighting to control the country (Hussain, 2008).

The post-9/11 geopolitical situation once again brought Afghanistan to the forefront of world politics. The Taliban approval of Bin Laden's stay in Afghanistan was enough to provoke the global community to attack and remove their regime. Ashraf Ghani's administration signed the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) with the U.S. and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with NATO in 2014 (Kousary, 2015). The US-led NATO alliance and ISAF soldiers engaged in the war on terror in Afghanistan (great game) disrupted the security of the entire region. Besides the internal turmoil of warlords and extremist groups (domestic games), *the world military order* (to use Giddens' phrase, 1990) weakened the nation-state of Afghanistan by challenging its writ. The clash of interests between neighboring countries like Iran, India and Pakistan (little players in Raemdonckian concept, 2013) in respect of Afghanistan has proved to be disastrous for the country as well as for the region. The U.S. failure in combating the Taliban in Afghanistan was also due to the Indo-Pak rivalry. The incompatible interests of the two countries hampered the social and political growth and created an undue facet for Taliban mutiny. "Rivalries with India have formed Pakistan's view of the Taliban as a *strategic depth,* and Islamabad's paranoia about India's growing influence in Afghanistan has been used to justify its support for Taliban as a counterweight" (Kousary, 2015, p. 31). The filthy global game (little game) of political and ethnic cleansing is also in vogue. Hence 'great powers, regional powers and diverse factions are playing their game of chess on the chessboard of Afghanistan' (Watson, Covarrubias, Lansford, & Van Raemdonck, 2013).

Analysis

Great Game – A Continuity in Using Past Chessboard

Mao Tse Tung says, "… war is politics and war itself is a political action; since ancient times there has never been a war that did not have a political character" (2019). The incident of 9/11 was itself a great political game based on fury and past grievances and caused ruthless response by America since "[t]he more ruthless we are, the more visible our fury" (Aslam, 2013, p. 270). The incident was politicized and internalized by America to turn turtles in its own interests. The American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq changed the game, and 9/11 was figured out as a sign of initiation of a clash of civilizations. The injured nation was tasked at taking armed revenge from the culprits whereas the targeted affectees in Afghanistan were suffering and the Muslim world, in general, was angry at the invasion; counterproductive activities were started besides resistance being offered to the West in Afghanistan and its adjacent country, Pakistan (Aslam. 2013). The aggression led to a tide of anti-Americanism and a surge of support for fanatical Islamism across the Muslim world (Jenkins, 2011) due to an unwise American response to 9/11.

What was going on in the South Asian region is but a 'Great Game' (Aslam, 2013) of war politics being played by the past imperialists arrived this time in the form of a team–comprising many players (nations and multinational institutions) which supported the U.S.' exceptionalism' by ensuring that the USA was going to live in a more secure world by having dressed itself up in a tripartite uniform–economic, political and cultural–in the name of extinguishing those who have extinguished local as well as global (glocal) peace, stability, and liberty (Patman, 2006).

Assuming the worldwide role by sidestepping the U.N. authority, the U.S. initiated a global war on terror. The *Twin Towers'* incident had already strengthened the distinguishing 'American internationalism' of the Bush administration (Patman, 2006). The clues of this great game are found back in the 19th century

when a 'white man' was captured by Amir of Bukhara's soldiers (during his alleged spying of Asian region for imperialists under the fake name of 'Khan Ali' and became known as Connolly) and was executed in 1842 after facing torture in detention. 'Connolly' was the first person who had coined the term "Great Game" (Aslam, 2013, p. 278). Later on, the newly built clinics and wards were named *Connolly* at his sister's request.

Global Game of Chess through Pieces (Good & Bad Muslims)

America (the great player) had been fighting its Cold War proxies through its own entitled 'Mujahidin' (local players) who were welcomed in Washington by the Reagan administration as the *'moral equivalents* of America's. 'Founding Fathers' (Mamdani, 2005). After Soviet defeat and the fight for power among several Mujahid groups, the Taliban was launched as white pieces with American support on the Afghan chessboard. But no sooner did they implement their conservative version of Islam than they became unacceptable for their Western employers (Naqvi, 2012) though the Reagan administration had willingly sponsored terrorist movements against the militant nationalist government in Afghanistan (Mamdani, 2005). Now there was a need for humanitarian interventions in the name of a new civilizing mission, for *'saving strangers'* (Wheeler, 2003) since the Taliban government was taking unfavorable actions against its citizens. Armed forces, therefore, were to intervene not only for liberating the Afghan citizens but also to crush the terrorist nomenclature of Talibanization spread across Afghanistan and Pakistan so that aid workers, engaged in the proposed and already running developmental projects, might be shielded.

It was here that American *Great Global Game* reached its peak in Afghanistan, i.e. Taliban's strict practices and al-Qaeda's actions were propagated as the real face of Islam, as religion and culture were stimulated to intervene and defeat neo-oriental might (Aslam, 2013, pp. 24-25). Whereas, it was political Islam which, Mamdani, 2005 squabbles, was materialized as the outcome of the adverse confrontation with Western power, and the Muslim movements embraced terrorism recently following America's fight of proxy war after they were defeated in Vietnam. On the other, Muslims were categorized into good and bad as part of a great game.

There were Muslims of various countries being trained in Jihadist camps to Talibanize them who talked chiefly about crusades and jihad. While working under the leadership of Al-Qaeda chief Bin Laden (Aslam, 2013, p. 56), they were engaged in a fight with American soldiers with full religious zest by raising slogans such as 'God is Great' (p. 61). The jihadist culture projected by the West in the Cold War scenario as a part of the game strategy was now striking back, not only at the local level but also at international level. Besides receiving millions of dollars from the U.S. and Saudi Arabia (little player), Afghanis were also assisted in terms of sending thousands of people from Pakistan, Arab countries, South Africa etc. to fight side by side with them against the communist aggression and these imported mercenaries, too, realized that they were not drawn there to help Afghans liberate their occupied land but to wage a 'jihad' (Malik, Noshab, & Abdullah, 2001; 2014) for helping their wretched Muslim brothers and sisters. The other side of the Muslims was now being backed by the U.S. and allied forces as per game strategy; one time's white pieces had now been replaced with the black ones on the same chessboard (cited in Rahman, 2014) purely for great player's crooked designs. Noises from the mouths of humans and the mouths of guns (Aslam, 2013, p. 65) could be heard … with both sides shouting Allah's name (p. 65); this shows the split between them that was taken and maneuvered as a split between good Muslims (westernized, liberal, secular) and bad Muslims (fanatical, conservative, pre-modern): The terms were coined in post-9/11 scenario parallel to the Western assumption of playing the gambit of good Arabs and bad Arabs (cited in Said, 2003, p. 206). In his 2012 article, Malreddy Pavan Kumar identifies (Western gambits of) 'Parallel Orientalism' that distinguishes 'good' and 'bad' Muslims, and 'Counter-Orientalism', i.e. anti-Orientalist movement (pp. 235-236). While good Muslims enable Americans to set up their neo-imperialist hegemony, those fighting against American global-political designs are labeled as bad Muslims, even terrorists. But covertly, it was a political game of chess played by the U.S. to grind its own axe (a blame game started to win world sympathies about internalizing the 9/11 trauma for achieving multidimensional global

goals). In their noticeable distinction, the once allies could become the villains and vice-versa; thus, past black pieces of the chess were now white, and they were asked to dispose of the corpses of Taliban (once white pieces of Afghan chessboard) as soon as possible since this being an age of satellite, the neutral media could release a film of the coldblooded massacre of Taliban in the battle (Aslam, 2013, p. 97).

Americans had also sent in Muslim guerrilla warriors who made alliances in local population to craft their campaign more effectively (p. 25). As per great game strategy, Americans had spread across the country–from big cities to small towns and villages–in local getup and attract locals through "emboldening, bribing and arming" (p. 47) to combat Taliban. They planted devices and besieged the targeted place for combing operations after having equipped with cameras, computers, guns and heavy black canvas bags, whereas the Taliban landlords, in their local game, facilitated them in operation after receiving dollars (p. 55).

Local Games Run Parallel to Global Game/ Glocal Games

The so-called *good Muslims* backed by America became indulged in some immoral activities like pederasty; the game of "Nail" (p. 120) as the bird pardoner's teen-aged boy said, "They do things […] that make you kill yourself" (p. 120). Even they did not provide them food for many days, and the child had to eat a leftover hoopoe that a cat brought there (p. 130). This local game by Afghan warlord was being played under the very nose of globalizers, the claimants of culture, liberty and enlightenment (121-22). These warlords had become ransom-seekers; another local game played under great player's supervision or, better to say it, a 'glocal game', and so they deteriorated the concept of jihad by mixing up their undesirable wishes (p. 120) within it. Having several forms, jihad at its central point is the name of a struggle done against one's own self to save one's very being from involvement in immoral, undesirable and God-forbidden acts and live according to Allah's will. So saving oneself from activities such as drinking wine, eating pork, gambling, robbery, stealing and equally hijacking for ransom-seeking is Jihad (Malik, Noshab, & Abdullah, 2001; 2014).

When Rohan halted the jeep carrying American soldiers and asked them to help liberate the children confined by American allied warlord for abusive purposes, they refused, saying, "[n]ot our problem" (p. 131). Moreover, if the Taliban were cruel, the brutality of their past allied warlords was not negligible, too. What remained then the moral justification of the American invasion of Afghanistan if they were not there to save the suffering humanity? Western media never exhausts in depicting a lopsided view of Muslims on the grounds that they are brutal, sexiest and demonic. Americans had invaded Afghanistan in the name of stopping Talibans' inhumanly treatment of women and children, but their flat refusal is enough proof of their covert designs; at least they had not come on a 'civilizing mission' as it was repeatedly experienced throughout history. It exposes the limits of a global vision that is confined just to crush Muslim power through orientalizing them. As Shahid Alam (2006) puts it: What forms this repackaged orientalism new are its ends, its exponents, and the enemy it has embattled for pulling down….Whatever the term, it holds all Islamicate movements, no matter what their positions on political uses of violence.

Displaying the parallel orientalist stance of globalizers, Aslam (2013) counters it; good and bad people live everywhere but calling westernized Muslims good is just a political game-stunt. *The Blind Man's Garden* obscures the existing stereotypes by anti-orientalist (counter-orientalism in Kumar, 2012) depiction of a variety of well–rounded Muslim characters. Extreme and repressive Muslim characters, such as Major Kyra, are contrasted with sympathetic characters, such as Naheed and Mikal. In his review of the novel, Peter Faber notes that "Aslam's characters–whatever their background or motives, and even as they advance 'into the crosshairs of history'–are never emblematical of anything but themselves" (2013).

Little Game by Pakistan

Taliban furnished their headquarters with a sense of *'piety'*; they walked to the mosque for morning prayers in the severe cold and started battle-exercises with raising cries of 'God is great. In different exercises, they did practices of "firing bullets into telephone directories of Pakistani cities soaked in water, poof that the Taliban were supported and funded by the Pakistani government and military" (Aslam, 2013, p. 61). A game of good/bad Taliban was blamed for being

played allegedly by the Pakistani government and military establishment as Afghan President Ashraf Ghani says that Pakistan never clarifies the category of Taliban; good or bad to be targeted since it always differentiates between the two types of Taliban. In fact, Pakistan battles with its insurgents who target its security. As for the Haqqani network, they are let loose and that Pakistan has failed so far to take confidence-building measure between the two countries (Ghani, 2016). Moreover, Pakistan Army assisted Americans in a chase-up game of arresting al-Qaeda heroes (Aslam, 2013, pp. 234-35) in hope for what the Pakistani military called 'strategic depth' (National Commission in Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, United States Govt. Printing Office, Kean, & Hamilton, 2004, 2004, p. xx). Since Jihadists had to be sought out of their 'safe heavens' (Bush, 2001), so Americans killed or arrested al-Qaeda militants in a compound in cooperation with the Pakistan army; the operation concluded the injuries and casualties of many passerby civilians, including children and women (Aslam, 2013). The interesting aspect of this newly initiated game of chess was that these were the same militants who had already been used by the great player (USA) as white pieces (local player) during Cold War against the rival player (Russians). But now, they were the blacks, and their opposition groups were being used deceptively to serve the purpose of knocking out the past co-partners (Rahman, 2014). Little game is also played with Pakistani communists, as Aslam pointed out in the missing persona of Mikal's father (2013).

Besides, the disputed issue of Kashmir has been discussed in terms of Pakistan's little game played by sending Mujahideen there. Pakistan was blamed for being running training camps where ISI officers prepared the pupils of religious seminaries such as Ardent Spirit for Jihad in Kashmir (Aslam, 2013).

Little and Local Games of ISI and Major Kyra

A little game was played by a Pakistani intelligence agency, ISI. Ahmad the Moth, a former student of Rohan, not only forced out his teacher from Ardent Spirit but also denied his ownership of it. Soon after Ahmad took over the place (p. 25), the school administration developed links with ISI (p. 31). ISI, however, changed its past policy and that it did 'as a matter of *strategic depth*' (Rahman, 2014). Consequently, Ahmad's brother, Major Kyra, who had been working for ISI, resigned from Pak-army in reaction. As per the changed policy of ISI, it had to lift not only its assisting hand from sponsoring those religious schools which were providing corporal and moral support to the Taliban regime but also to make an alliance with the U.S. that had staged Afghan war as an initiative excuse to invade Muslim lands one after the other (Aslam, 2013, p. 30).

ISI's role in flopping the siege was, however, crucial; a local game was played by an ISI officer to convince Kyra in a threatening mood that in case if he did not tell about the location of the facilitator, i.e. school guard and the names of terrorists who had besieged the Christian school, he would be injected a syringe of mercury in the skull and if cooperated, he would not be damaged anyway on account of his services for the army (Aslam, 2013, pp. 296-97).

The ISI officer, however, shared their little game they were going to play with global players, i.e. they had planned to let down the American army comprising homosexuals and women (p. 297). After General Musharraf was asked by President Bush to side either with or against America, the Pakistani government and ISI felt much trouble in reviewing their policy about the Taliban. Finally, it had to cooperate with the U.S. reluctantly for saving its *'strategic partnership'* developed during the Cold War era, but the changed policy about Taliban severely damaged its interests in Afghanistan since "[a]fter all, the Taliban is Pakistan's only–however reluctant and unhappy–ally among Afghanistan's political actors" (Felbab-Brown, 2018). A game of hitting below the belt was to be played necessarily by Pakistan to keep its hand in both sides' affairs. Afghanistan is the mess of proxy games, and besides Indian influence, the use of Indian card by the U.S. in Afghanistan would certainly bother Pakistan to carry on its proxy in Afghanistan. Moreover, India might have played a game of assisting Baluchi separatists (2018).

Findings

Mamdani, 2005 points out that the concept of good/bad Muslims talks about political instead of cultural and religious identities. The supposition that 'good' Muslims are willing to diverge from 'bad' Muslims is equally a groundless political analysis of the current age. The split is visible in Pakistani Muslims, too. Major Kyra is a *bad*

Muslim (in Western connotation) just for having Islamic fundamentalist approach; an advance that does not harmonize with norms of civil society and Western vision of civilization, political order and society" (Bernard, Riddile, Wilson, & Popper, 2004). He is a hateful, violent, extremist character who assumes the charge of Ardent Spirit after his brother Ahmad's killing in Afghan Jihad (Aslam, 2013, p. 31). His alleged links with radical Islamists substantiate the (neo-)Orientalist view of the Center about extremists, i.e. many Muslims are Islamic fundamentalists who are 'irreconcilable' with modern Western democratic values and culture (Bernard, 2004). Major Kyra dislikes the U.S. for invading Afghanistan and believes that 9/11 is "a conspiracy" that was "staged to invent an excuse to begin invading Muslim lands one by one" (Aslam, 2013, p. 30).

Major Kyra played the game of projecting the Islamic identity of the Ardent Spirits by converting it into a Jihadist camp besides replacing the liberal inscriptions of the school's archway with the sayings of '*Quran-o Sunna*' (2013; also cited in Mustafa et al. I, 2021). Moreover, the game of misusing school pupils for dealing with Americans was schematized by Kyra besides typifying the pioneering moderate teachers of Ardent Spirit, Rohan and Sofia as "traitors to Islam" by accusing them of disseminating 'un-Islamic' education of music, biology and English literature etc. (Aslam, 2013, p. 173) instead of making them proficient in Islamic education and Arabic literature and language; this attitude vouchsafes John Updike's thesis of 'Terrorist' (2007) and Don DeLillo's concept in 'Falling Man' (2007) that being narrow-minded, the Muslims are against modern education.

This tactic of snatching away Rohan's house after his school reveals the entire mentality of a modern Jihadist, i.e. to appease ones' temporal, sensual and carnal appetites rather than to struggle unvoluptuously in Allah's way and to purely win 'His Will'. Instead, he wanted to see Jeo be caught up in some war-ridden area in memory of his brother, Ahmad (p. 32), and this happened later. The intransigent chauvinism of Major Kyra apparently seems to be taken in reaction to increasing western interventions into Pakistan and Afghan state affairs for sabotaging their sovereignty, but inwardly the religion was misused by him for fulfilling his own crooked designs; for playing his own 'unfair' game.

The students of Majo Kyra's occupied Ardent Spirit planned a terrorist attack on the 'Christian St. Joseph School' in Heer to vengeance upon America for its foreign policy of interfering and challenging state-sovereignty in Afghanistan and Pakistan; nude aggression of what can be called Globalization/ Americanization on political and cultural fronts in Aaron's words (2008). In Jihadists' perception, the United States is assumed to be a 'far enemy' (Aaron, 2008, p. 164) just because of its imperialist activities around the globe. Thousands of Japanese, for instance, were thrown into camps on the assumption of their beings security threat. Now the similar act of persecution is being faced by Muslims for nothing, but the achievement of security through harassment of human beings is quite unfair (Naqvi, 2012, p. 136).

The deprived and denied communities, no doubt, react and involve in counterproductive activities of terrorism and radicalism but attaching terrorism with religion (of Islam) is but an unjust narrative; before 9/11, Tamil Hindus were allegedly involved in more than two-third suicidal attacks, but nobody had ever attached the perpetration with Hindu religion; in fact, religion has nothing to do with terrorism, said PM Imran Khan at U.N. conference on hate speech (2019).

The aim of Major Kyra's group in attacking and besieging St. Joseph's, as per (domestic) game strategy, was to remove American hegemonic influence and disturb the *'strategic framework based on vital interests'* (Aaron, 2008, p. 128) as well as a military presence in Afghanistan besides taking vengeance for their 'global crime' (Aslam, 2013) of invading Islamic lands. Although fanaticism and violence are not unique to Islam (Aaron, 2008), yet to achieve their goal, they (since being marginalized) were ready to employ extreme violence for a good bargaining position; thus, Kyra proposed that they should procure "a camcorder–to film the beheadings" (Aslam, 2013, p. 214) for stretching fear but America was too huge a country to listen to what Pakistan communicated (pp. 290-291), and they were a mere group.

Conclusion

The Blind Man's Garden (2013) has been able to effectively oppose the prevailing game of Orientalist stereotyping. The novel advocates

that these assumptions are lame excuses because the "Other" is suffering from all perspectives, though the presence of fundamentalists among the Muslims cannot be denied. But they might possibly be counterproductive to U.S. action in Afghanistan. For instance, the people of the village of Allah-Vasi in Waziristan who deal in pricey tarpaulin business are well-healed with Kalashnikov, bulletproof vest and dollars, but as their "honour, faith and manhood is still intact" (p. 374) so they would not allow anybody to bring "Americans" (p. 374) there. Nor would they tolerate the presence of a detained American soldier whose country had invaded the neighboring Muslim country of Afghanistan. To sum up, Aslam (2013) has appropriately exposed the economic, political and geostrategic motives of globalizers' game in South Asia while hitting below the belt. But equally, he chalks out the sensual and materialistic objectives of jihadists hidden behind their so-called struggle to oust Americans from the Muslim land of Afghanistan.

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