Orientalism in The Blind Men's Garden: Critical Analysis

Orientalism is a term used by scholars and historians to identify the culture of East that how it is depicted by West. The West in generally refers to the Europe and united states, on the other hand, the East includes the Middle East, Africa, and Asia like Afghanistan India, and Pakistan. Traditionally, Orientalism points to everything that concerns the East; thus Orientalists are scholars who study the East and culture of it. The First Critic who connect Orientalism to Western prejudices towards the East was Edward Said in his book Orientalism (1978) he sketched down the situation in which the negative image of East created by West for his own benefits. Although his book was praise and criticizes by scholars but was highly influential in and outside postcolonial studies. The attacks of 9/11 inspired many western and Orient scholars to review Orientalism with new interest. Due to this review, theory of Neo-Orientalism was formulated in relation to the cultural responses to the attacks. The 9/11 terrorist attacks have sparked the memory of many people both inside and outside the United States; The artistic and literary creations created in the aftermath of the attacks and subsequent reactions have become the subject of a cultural and critical debate about how to deal with attacks and write. The representation of the so-called Muslim “Other,” people of non-Western descent who are followers of the Islamic faith, is one of the issues deal in this debate. Some writers reproduce the stereotypical image of the “Other” as dangerous, which is typical for an Orientalist view, while others challenge these stereotypes Nadeem Aslam is one those he is a Pakistani-British writer. He underlines the Basic presumption about the “Other,” and how they are linked to neo-Orientalism. In his novel “The Blind Men's Garden” (Aslam, 2013) criticizes not only American critics but also people in other parts of the world and the U.S. foreign policy too, he took critical stand towards the New-Orientalism. the novel set completely outside of the borders of U.S. namely Pakistan and Afghanistan. Almost all the characters in the novel are Muslims enabling the Western reader to experience the consequences of the 9/11 attacks occur miles away from Pakistan and Afghanistan through the eyes of non-Western and culturally of different peoples. All characters have to deal with death and troubles in their lives and traumatized in some way. Aslam tries to make the gap between the East and the West, which is symbolized by the Muslim protagonist who save an American soldier when he is in trouble.

Nadeem Aslam work “The Blind Man’s Garden” shows awareness of the debate regarding the “Other” that followed the attacks of 9/11, causing the readers to think critically about their own (west) attitudes and consider the international perspectives as well, which might encourage a more open-minded view of the “Other” a view that challenges Orientalist discourse. The Blind Man’s Garden explores the aftermath of conflict through the lives of ordinary people who become victims of an ugly war that uproots their happiness. Much of it is about the perils of living with bombings, torture, disappearances, beheadings, and terrorism. (Sethna, 2013)