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## A review of the characters of Mustansar Hussain Tarar's novel “Qila Jangi”

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### Abstract

The novel "Qila Jangi" is a novel written by Mustansar Hussain Tarar. This novel came to the fore after the massacres that took place in response to the invasion of Afghanistan by the allied forces, where Muslims were strangling Muslims. This is what happened with the fort war. The novel "Qila Jangi" is about Afghanistan. The fortress is used as a metaphor in which humans have no status. They are helpless and constrained by a greater power and die like bees and gnats. It is the barbaric side of power and conquest in which human beings have no value. A very tragic incident took place in the fort battle in which several hundred prisoners of war were killed. The crime was that some of the prisoners tried to escape which resulted in a skirmish in which the Americans were also killed and because of this the prisoners were attacked and bombed from the air which resulted in many

prisoners being unjustly killed. were killed This novel is representative of many texts that raise the question of whether war is the solution to problems. Like other writings in this novel, Mustansar Hussain Tarar's style of narration is amazing. Mustansar Hussain Tarar's novel "Qila Jangi" was published in 2008. It tells the story of seven people, who belong to different regions, but all of them come to Afghanistan for jihad inspired by the same discourse.

**Key Words:**

Mustansar Hussain Tarar, "Qila Jangi", Mazar-e-Sharif, 25 November 2001, /11 attacks, US-led coalition, 400 foreign fighters, Taliban's Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, (CIA) officials, Taliban's Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Al-Qaeda, Daghestan.

**Literature Review**

The Battle of Qila Jangi sometimes referred to as the Battle of Mazar-e-Sharif was a bloody six-day war following the uprising of prisoners of war on 25 November 2001. After the 9/11 attacks, the US-led coalition launched a war on Afghanistan to eliminate the Taliban's Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, which the Taliban government accused of harboring Al-Qaeda operatives.

More than 400 foreign fighters surrendered outside Mazar-i-Sharif and were held by Afghan Northern Alliance forces in "Qila Jangi", where they were interrogated by Abdul Rashid Dostum's intelligence officers and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officials. inquired. Facing defeat in northern Afghanistan, these jihadists expressed their willingness to surrender to Rashid Dostum's commander.

"His surrender was negotiated at Qala-e-Jangi on November 21"(1)

During the interrogation, when the prisoners realized that they would not be released alive, they mutinied. After which the entire fort becomes a battlefield. Dead bodies pile up everywhere. Mustanasar Hussain Tarar presented the initial scenes of this rebellion as follows

”بھگدڑ میں انہیں کوئی جائے پناہ نظر نہ آتی۔۔۔ اور انہیں یہیں گمان ہوا کہ وہ مر چکے ہیں اور موت کی تاریکی میں گر رہے ہیں“ (۲)

Suddenly, a terrible battle broke out in the fort. When the war was not controlled by the Northern Alliance fighters, they came to the aid of the United States, as a result of which the American bombers began to fire on Fort Jang. Meanwhile, there was a stampede in the fort, all the fighters started running around to save their lives, but it was impossible to escape from the American bombs, meanwhile, seven Taliban fighters somehow reach the basement in the fort. Mustansar Hussain Tarar's novel Qila Jangi starts from here.

### **Roles of Battlegrounds and Jihadi Discourse**

Mustansar Hussain Tarar's novel Qila Jangi has seven characters and a horse along with them. The horse is a symbolic character, which accompanies all the characters throughout the novel. This novel has the characters of Murtaza Beg, Chi Chi Abu Talib, Allah Bakhsh, Abdul Wahab, Gul Sher Wali and Hashim Mir. All these people come from different regions and different countries to fight the war of right and wrong in Afghanistan. During the Soviet-Afghan War, the US thought of using Islam as a weapon to achieve its interests, for which the US organized a jihadist discourse around the world. The author of Qila Jangi presents this discourse with seven characters. Which we study separately will do Mur Tazi Baig.

In the novel, the author first tells us the story of Murtaza Baig. In Q it is shown how Murtaza Baig became a victim of this discourse. Murtaza Baig is the son of a Pakistani general, Murtaza Baig. In the Afghan-Soviet war, General Ertaza Baig works with the CIA and delivers weapons and ammunition from abroad to Afghan fighters. Along with this, he also delivers US dollars to these fighters. It was a kind of business under the guise of war. In which the biggest dealers of the world participated. Trucks full of ammunition would return loaded with drugs, which would be smuggled through Dubai, Europe and America. Big businessmen, some of whom were from abroad, were involved in this scam. As if Dubai serves as a junction in this war where arms, dealers and drugs are distributed. At this time, the world's top arms sellers, drug dealers and agencies of different countries hold meetings in Dubai. Where the blood of Afghani and Pakistani people was being sold in exchange for dollars, ammunition and drugs

The agencies with the highest revenue in this business were the CIA. These agencies earned billions of dollars which they used to wage proxy wars in different countries to achieve their goals. Tarr writes in this regard.

”افغان سرحد سے واپسی پر یہ کنٹینر مکمل طور پر خالی نہ لوٹتے۔۔  
ان میں سفید سفوف کی کچھ پوٹلیاں ہو تیں، جو ایک مرتبہ پھر جہلم اور  
گجرات کے درمیان ان کے رفقاء کے حوالے کر دی جاتیں۔“ (۳)

Murtaza Beg was living the life of a prince, but because of his father's unruly behavior, he was incited to rebel. In those days, there was so much noise of Jihad everywhere that Jihadist hadiths were found written on the streets, from barber shops to university seminars, Jihad and Afghanistan were mentioned loudly. This discourse was so powerful that not only the educated people of the country but also the poor people of the country were ready for Jihad in Afghanistan. Some people were even preaching this Jihad while sitting up. Murtaza Beg also prepared for Jihad through the preaching of the common people. It happened that one day when Murtaza Beg went to get a haircut from the barber's shop, he asked the barber, "Where have you been for so many days?" were missing. To which the barber says

”میری زندگی نے کروٹ لی ہے۔ میں قبائلی علاقے میں گیا تھا جہاد  
کی ٹریننگ لینے۔“ (۴)

Mur Taza Beg was so influenced by the words of the barber that he spent the whole day thinking about the words of the barber and kept thinking that this poor poor barber was also ready to give his life for the religion of God, so why not him. Just what happened, Amar Tza Beg returned to his house at night and called this barber and told him that I too have to go for Jihad. Arrangements should also be made for my departure.

Because the barber has previously received jihad training, he has contacts with officials of jihadi training camps. He immediately contacts them and arranges Jihad training for Murtaza Baig. Murtaza Baig packs his essentials and leaves for Jihad.

Murtaza Baig trained in Jihad and now outside the training camp, was eager to fight the infidels on the real battlefield. He was completely brainwashed during jihad training, told true Muslim stories about the Taliban and al-Qaeda. He was repeatedly told that these people were fighting the war of Islam against the infidels. When disbelief and Islam are in conflict, it is the duty of every Muslim to fight for Islam and save the religion of God by risking his life

However, the reality was the opposite. It was not an Islam and Kufr war, but a power show of two world powers. The poor and simple people of Pakistan and Afghanistan were becoming the fuel of this war. Murtaza Beg, like the rest of the youth, believed these stories to be true, sweated day and night in training, so that he could quickly complete his training and be freed from the walls of this training camp and join the fight with the infidels. During the training. The brainwashing of these fighters is presented by the author in these words

” اسے یقین دلایا جاتا کہ طالبان اسلام کے بنیادی اصولوں پر عمل پیرا ہو کر ایک سچے اسلامی معاشرے کے لیے کوشاں ہیں اور ان کے جو بھی مخالفین ہیں انہیں نیست و نابود کرنا عین جہاد ہے۔“ (۵)

This is the story of Murtaza Baig who is a member of a rich family. He also falls prey to this jihadist discourse. Because this discourse has equal control over the rich and the poor. By adding the role of Murtaza Baig, the author has tried to show that not only poor Muslims were going on Jihad, but educated youths from well-to-do and rich families were also following this path. This gives us an idea of the power of any jihadi discourse created for Afghanistan by how powerful a discourse it is.

### Abu Talib Chi Chi

Abu Talib was a native of Chi Chi, Chechnya. The Soviet Union, in its heyday, imposed war on the population here, simply out of desire for occupation. In response, the Muslim population of Chechnya was against Russia. In the Afghan Jihad, the sentiments of these Muslims were used and pushed into a war against Russia.

In the past, during the Russian occupation, the population here was expelled and sent to the distant regions of Russia, so that these people could not gather together to revolt. Then he also banned him from returning to his area. These people were stripped of their lands and sent to refugee camps in distant states

”جوزف سٹالن نے چیچنیا کے بیشتر آبادی کو زبردستی ترکوں پر ٹھونس کر دور دراز کی سوویت ریاستوں میں بکھیر دیا اور ان پر پابندی لگادی کہ وہ ان ریاستوں کے باہر کبھی بھی قدم نہیں رکھ سکتے۔“ (۶)

His grandmother had witnessed Soviet persecution which had a profound effect on his personality. Also, she was highly influenced by Imam Shamil and prepared her

grandson, Abu Talib, to fight against Russia. People in Chechnya consider Imam Shamil as their hero. In Dagestan there was a warrior's home who was far bigger and more powerful in his status. His name was Imam. And he was one of the great warriors to emerge from Dagestan in the 1800s. He was born into an Avar family in the village of Jamri in Dagestan in 1797, at a time when Russia was expanding into the Ottoman Empire and Persia. His real name was Ali, he was often sick as a child, and was given the name Shamal "in the hope that a new name" would restore his health. As a young boy, he spent his days studying Islamic knowledge with the town sheikh. And at the age of 20, he had traveled to Syria and mastered many Islamic sciences. Upon his return to Dagestan, he joined the resistance against Russian forces that wanted to invade his country. However, after being wounded in the Battle of Jamri in 1832, he retreated to the mountains to recuperate. After his recovery in 1834, Imam Shamil was appointed as the new Imam and leader of the Dagestani army. Due to his tall stature, strong build and immense Islamic knowledge, he quickly gained the trust of his people. He was also able to strategically reorganize and unify the Muslim ranks throughout the Caucasus. He was highly respected by the townspeople and was always quick to accommodate his warriors. In 1859, due to internal tribal conflicts, his resistance gradually weakened and he was eventually captured by the Russian army. He was captured by Russian forces and held in exile for ten years under strict surveillance in a small town near Moscow. Ten years later, he got permission to perform Hajj for the second time in his life. After his pilgrimage, he visited the city of Medina and subsequently died there in 1871. This is the story of Imam Shamil. One day Abu Talib's grandmother said

”غز وہ اور جہاد کے نعرے ابھی فرسودہ نہیں ہوئے میرے بچے، امام شامل میرے خواب میں آئے تھے اور وہ کہتے تھے کہ کوہستان کی حرمة اور ناموس کو بچانے کے لیے گروزنی پہنچو۔“ (۷)

In the war against Russia in Grozny, Arab, African, Afghan, Pakistani Mujahideen were also fighting. Abu Talib had now come here with these Mujahideen to fight in Afghanistan against the Soviets

**Hashim Mir**

Hashim Mir is a British citizen of Pakistani origin. In Pakistan it belongs to Kashmir. His father goes to Britain illegally to earn money. Then he gets citizenship there. After which he becomes economically strong Hashim Mir's father has no special interest in his children, he only cares about money. For which he can do any legal or illegal work. Hashim Mir moves from Bradford to London to study. Here she meets a Saudi boy. Whose name he says is Al Mansoor. Al-Mansoor is a rebellious Saudi boy who is heavily influenced by Sayyid Qutb and Ayman al-Zawahiri and believes in Jihadi Islam. Hashim Mir had a daily meeting with Al Saud at the Islamic Center. Jahan Al Saud used to read Hashim Mir's translation of Quran and Hadith in English

About which Hashim Mir says

”اس نے مجھے اسلام کے اس تصور سے آگاہ کیا جس کی وسعت ،  
کائناتی سچائی اور فراخ دلی میرے گمان میں بھی نہ تھی۔“ (۸)

The outline of the perfect Muslim and the universal truth that Bashmeer had in his mind, was broken and crumbled here. Because here he saw that Muslims were not fighting against an infidel, but against other Muslims. Hashim Mir was brought up in an environment in Britain where no one forbids questioning, whereas here Hashim Mir was not allowed to question any action. He was seeing a Muslim being killed by another Muslim every day, the treatment of women here like animals made him wonder what Islamists had come between. Although Hashim Mir was now tired of this war and he knew that this war was not a universal war, nor were these people true followers of Islam, but he could not leave here

”اب میں طالبان کے لیے نہیں۔۔۔ تصور کامل کے حصول کے لیے  
نہیں۔۔۔

اپنے بے لوٹ اور جاں نثار ہمرابیوں کی خاطر یہاں ہوں۔“ (۹)

### **Allah Bakhsh**

Allah Bakhsh is a Punjabi youth who joins the Afghan war after being inspired by the jihadi speeches of his mosque's cleric. It is called the family legacy of Allah Bakhsh. These people are the poorest section of our society. In the name of religion, these people are used more, because they have nothing else to live a good life except religious consolations. Allah Bakhsh once went to the mosque to offer Friday prayers, where an Afghani had come who was called Mujahid of Allah. This Afghani told very painful stories that in Afghanistan, infidels and poor Muslims are doing this persecution. He also narrated some hadiths about Jihad,

then invited everyone to Jihad. Allah Bakhsh also responded to his urgent appeal. In addition, Allah Bakhsh tells the other soldiers in the courtyard of the fort that he was sent by a "dwarf" for jihad. This dwarf also said to Allah Bakhsh the same thing that Afghani Mujahid was saying that day. The dwarf said to Allah Bakhsh.

”جب وہ بولا تو اس افغانی بابے کی آواز میں بولا ، جو اس دین چندہ مانگنے آیا تھا۔ اس نے بھی وہی درد ناک قصے سنائے ، کافروں کے ظلم و ستم کی کہانیاں سنائیں، شہادت کا مرتبہ بیان کیا اور کہنے لگا تم جہاد کرو اور اسلام پر قربان ہو جاؤ۔“ (۱۰)

Hussain Tarar has symbolically called the clerics of that era to be dwarfs. Those who were using people in the name of Islam. Allah Bakhsh also came here as a victim of dwarfs.

Leaving everything there, Allah Bakhsh reaches Akora Khattak. The majority here are poor youths like Allah Bakhsh. Who were getting three meals a day, clothes and shoes and above all respect. Here, no one considered them inferior or ridiculed them. Allah Bakhsh describes the conditions of the training camp to his comrades in the basement of the fort as follows

”ادھر ہمار پاس جتنے بھی ذرا سخت طبیعت والے مولوی اور مدرسوں کے طالب علم ہیں ، ان میں بڑی تعداد میرے جیسے کمی کمینوں کی ہے۔۔۔ کیوں کہ ادھر روٹی پانی کا بندوبست ہو جاتا ہے۔“ (۱۱)

During the Afghan Jihad, madrasahs were built in places with the funding of Saudi Arabia, from where the poor and simple village youth were raised in the name of Jihad, they were told the painful stories of the Muslims of Afghanistan, and the atrocities of the Russians were described. Then they were sent to Pathan tribal areas along Afghanistan for training. Where they were taught everything from Kalashnikovs to cannon firing. After the Afghan war ended, when these people returned to their respective societies, they were unable to live as ordinary citizens. Why didn't these people read and see the concept of Islam and Muslim in the Afghan war that was created by the West? Therefore, these fighters began to see .their people excluded from the circle of Islam

Allah Bakhsh's role in this novel is that of a poor Pakistani compared to the role of Murtaza Baig. Murtaza Baig joins this war for his own spiritual peace, but it is contrary to the story of Allah Bakhsh. Allah Bakhsh does not join this jihad by the preaching of an ordinary Pakistani, but he decides to join the jihad after listening to the fiery speech of an Afghan Mujahid. Second, these people were poor. The slogan of Jihad would have given these people an opportunity to end all the



deprivation of their life, who were disappointed with life. Because of which he goes on this jihad.

### **Abdul Hameed Johnny Walker**

Johnnie Walker is an American teenager. Whose jihadi name was given as Abdul Hameed. He is a Jewish youth, a member of modern American society. But everyone calls him American American. The dialogue between Johnnie Walker and his father is described in great detail in the novel "Battle Castle". The novel begins with Johnnie Walker telling his father that he has converted from Christianity to Islam. Later, when he has contact with the jihadis in Afghanistan, during which he wants to go for jihad, there are great conversations between Johnny Walker and his father. Great narratives, Marxism, Che Guevare etc. are the topics of discussion.

How Johnnie Walker comes into contact with the Afghan jihadis in America is not mentioned in the novel. Because at that time there was no internet facility and the jihadi groups fighting in Afghanistan had no other means of public communication. According to a study by the United States Institute of Peace, during the Soviet-Afghan War, jihadist groups used satellite TV to communicate with the public, then through specific madrassas and their activists to reach people for their cause. were:

"Al-Qaeda uses satellite television and ubiquitous user-generated content on the Internet to reinvigorate pan-Muslim identity with a vengeful, defiant underdog narrative in which Islam is under constant and global attack by a monolithic adversary."(12)

America, which itself was the founder of this jihadi discourse, its own citizens also began to fall prey to it. George Washington University compiled a list of foreign jihadis in Afghanistan. In which big surprising figures came out. According to this research, at least 6,500 jihadis from European countries joined the Islamic Jihad in Afghanistan. Most of them belonged to France, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain and the United States. While only about 250 to 300 American citizens from the United States joined the Islamic Jihad in Afghanistan.

"The estimated number of foreign volunteers from Europe ranges from 5,000

to,6000, most of them from France, Belgium, Germany and the United Kingdom, while U.S. officials speak of several hundred. (13)

Johnnie Walker was also among them. Who came here to die and kill for the universal truth, fearing the introspective openness born of corporate culture. The inclusion of an American citizen in the novel completes the jihadist discourse of Mustansar Hussain Tarar's novel. Because according to Foucault's discourse, when any discourse becomes too powerful, it also brings its makers under its influence, as if this discourse also dominates its makers. Such as American citizen Johnny Walker being influenced by the Jihadi discourse and joining the war in Afghanistan is a proof of this.

### **Gul Sher Wali**

Taluk Gul Sher Wali is a rural, poor and simple-minded Pathan from the northern regions of Pakistan. He keeps late. His father works in the stables of the local Nawabs there. Gul Sher Wali belonged to a very poor family, he has six siblings. Gul Sher faced employment problems at an early age, as he was living in an .outpost where the only source of livelihood was working for the Nawabs This is the most affected region during the Afghan Jihad, where Gul Sher belongs to. Here too, the participants of the Afghan war brainwashed the people here through self-interested clerics. Since this area was an area with a tribal background, due to which the people here were quick to fall in with the words of these self-interested clerics. According to Gul Sher Wali, they were taught to be proud of being Pathans, and were said to be the bravest people. It is a fact that during the Afghan war, exaggerated stories of Pathan bravery were popularized, due to which the naive Pathan youth became the main fuel of the war. The author of Gul Sher's oral novel exposes this fact in the following way.

”یہ باہر کا انگریز لوگ جب ہمارے بارے کہانی بناتا ہے تو لکھتا ہے  
کہ پٹھان قوم بہت طاقتور اور مضبوط ہے اور کسی کے سامنے جھکتا  
نہیں۔۔۔۔۔ پٹھان بھی ویسا ہی ہوتا ہے جیسے بنگال کا بھوکا اور غریب۔“  
(۱۴)

Gul Sher and his father used to work for a Nawab. One day the Nawab's servant saw Gul's father riding the Nawab's horse, then went and told the Nawab. Nawab punished Gul Sher's father shamefully and also dismissed him from his job. After a few days, Gul Sher's father dies. After which poverty and destitution increase in their homes.

On the same day, Gul Sher meets a cleric. Who comes here to offer prayers? He also encourages the people of the Maulvi region to wage jihad. In which he describes Jihad as the most fundamental religious duty. Tells people the virtue of Jihad and encourages them to go to Afghanistan and die in the name of Islam. Maulvi Sahib describes Taliban and Islam as two sides of the same coin. During the speech, Maulvi Sahib says in a passionate speech that at this time, any Muslim who does not prepare to fight alongside the Afghan Mujahideen who are fighting against infidelity in Afghanistan is not a Muslim. This is a statement that no Muslim can live without being affected by. According to Gul Sher Wali, his Maulvi says this in the mosque

”وہ مسلمان نہیں جو طالبان کی مدد نہ کرے۔“ (۱۵)

Gul Sher is also poverty stricken like Allah Bakhsh. He is also impressed by the free best food, new clothes, best shoes and respect he gets in the training camp. In this novel, on the one hand, the very rich and ruling class is presented, while on the other hand, the most downtrodden poor class of Pakistan is shown. There is a world of difference between the lifestyles of both, but both become part of this jihadi discourse. As mentioned above, Gul Sher talks about the good food and comfortable shoes and new clothes available at the training camp. The author

:describes this thought of Gul Sher Wali Gul Sher as follows

”میرا یہ جو پاؤں ہے جس میں بوٹے تو پہلے نہیں تھا، جہاد پر آیا تو ملا۔۔۔ بچپن سے ننگے پاؤں پھر تا اور بوجھ ڈھوتا۔“ (۱۶)

Like Gul Sher, young people who were forced by poverty became the fuel of this war. Because two things of this discourse were affecting young people like them more. For one thing, after becoming a mujahid, they were getting a place of honor in the society, which these people could never imagine. Because these people were the most downtrodden section of their society who did not have enough respect at the social level. This is the problem of our society where the poor are considered untouchable. The second thing they were getting through this jihadi discourse was the blessings after martyrdom. Gambling could be the cause of people's lifelong .deprivations

### **Abdul Wahab Al Ghamdi**

In this novel, Abdul Wahab is a character who is more educated than all the jihadis imprisoned in the basement of the fortress. He holds a degree in Anthropology from Cambridge. In the novel, this relationship is shown with the Al Saud of Saudi

Arabia. His father is a luxurious man like other Saudis. Abd al-Wahhab tells about his father's debauchery that

”میرا باپ جس نے میرے ایسے درجنوں بچوں کا بیچ مختلف بیویوں میں ڈالا اور وہ کبھی کبھار ہمارے نام بھول جاتا تھا اور اپنے خادموں سے پوچھتا تھا کہ یہ جو نہیں برس کا ہے اس کا کیا نام رکھا۔“ (۱۷)

Abdul Wahab had a lot of hatred for Americans. The reason, he explains, is that during the Soviet-Afghan War, Americans were sitting everywhere in Saudi Arabia. In the royal families, he was called like a king, he had great influence in our internal and external affairs. The Saudi king is very strict for his people, but if an American or European came there, they would melt like wax for him. This hatred against Americans in the mind of the Arabs can be seen openly after the Soviet war. There are many reasons for this. However, Abd al-Wahhab says of the Americans.

”وطن ہمارا تھا لیکن حکمرانی ان کی تھی، فوجی اڈے ان کے تھے جن کے جن کے اندر سعودی جنرل بھی نہیں جاسکتے تھے“ (۱۸)

But this propaganda would come out with more intensity in Arab countries after 9/11. Earlier, Arabs were also victims of this discourse, which was the victim of the youth of Pakistan, under the influence of which many youths of America and Europe join this jihad. Because the works of radical Arab preachers of Islam were published by institutions in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, then distributed throughout the Islamic world, in the name of the true interpretation of Islam. America used the writings of Sayyed Qutb, Muhammad Abd al-ala Salim Faraj, Abu Bakr Majdi, Abu Musab al-Suri, etc. as a basis for the Jihadi interpretation of Islam. The Jihadi materials developed from his studies were translated and published in various languages of the world. Michel W.S. Michayel (WS) writes in his book Decoding Al-Qaida

“Ideology of Al Qaida Derive from Sayed Qutb and Muhammad Abd Al Salem Faraj, Abu Bakr Naji Writings and conspets, Abu Masab al Suri, Abdul al Aziz al Murqin-” (19)

No one can deny the fact that the US was the mastermind of the Afghan war, the Arabs provided immense money and Pakistan provided the manpower. Due to these three, Russia was defeated, several generations of Afghans were maimed and

destroyed, Kalashnikov culture was promoted in Pakistan. As a result of which the storm of terrorism came that thousands of innocent Pakistanis were killed. Even the Arabs could not be safe from their own fire. Extremism flourished in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Libya, where millions of innocent Arabs were killed on the basis of religion and sect Any discourse, when it is repeated over and over again, emerges as more powerful than before. Then there comes a time when that discourse takes over even its creators. America, Pakistan and Arabs are the best examples of this.

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