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Over twenty years since the events of 9/11, we have witnessed a steady increase in states adopting policies that directly impact the lives of Muslims living within them. This can be reflected by individual accounts of prejudice at the hands of state actors such as the police, border controls and public services such as education and healthcare. In other cases, it is represented by state “re-education”, internment, and ethnic cleansing. Bakali and Hafez’s volume opens with their respective experiences of Islamophobia: Hafez at the hands of the Austrian state and Bakali witnessing the actions of the state against the Rohingya. Both instances help lay the foundations for a book which explores how, despite the stark differences between examples, the War on Terror has “ushered in a new era of anti-Muslim bias and racism globally” (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 3).

The edited collection comprises twelve nations in the Global North and South which fit into Sayyid’s theatres of Islamophobia (Sayyid 2010: 3). These examples are organised according into four parts: settler societies “founded through European colonialism”, “former imperial states” with “colonial histories ruling over the Muslim ‘Other’”, “formerly colonised states from the Global South”, and lastly “global sites that have had severe manifestations of Islamophobia” (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 12–13). This emphasises that despite differing geopolitical, economic, and historical contexts, there are distinct family resemblances between the ways Islamophobia is enacted around the world in the post-9/11 reality, whether through private actors or the state.

Each part of the book demonstrates the impact of the global War on Terror and the “symbiosis between institutional and interpersonal Islamophobia” (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 10). It also highlights the links between historic colonial racial logics and white supremacist ideologies to the current status quo in a range of examples. Part 1 examines Islamophobia in settler states that were founded through European colonialism, namely Canada, Australia, and the United States. These chapters allow us to observe the ways in which the colonial foundations for racialisation were laid when these states were first “settled”. They also make clear how policy and the media can influence individual acts of Islamophobia by infusing it into the
public psyche (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 51). Part 2 addresses by comparison former colonisers such as the Netherlands, Austria, France, and the UK. This section introduces the framing of Muslims as a threat, and the rise of far-right ideologies and parties in reinforcing that narrative. This is something we can observe in recent times through the peddling of theories around the Great Replacement or Islamist separatism. Part 3 observes the triple frontier of Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay, as well as South Africa. This section focuses on securitisation policies and the manufacturing of the Muslim “other” as a consequence of the War on Terror discourse. This occurs through Think Tanks, popular media and of course through the machinations of states. Finally, Part 4 addresses states that have excluded Muslims as a symbol of an existential threat to their existence. These examples emphasise how Islamophobic pathologies can lead to “mass murder, sexual violence and genocide” (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 12).

Hafez and Bakali’s collection of works would interest readers from a range of disciplines. There is an obvious appeal for those investigating security and counter-terrorism policy from a critical perspective as well as scholars exploring the relationship between colonial racial legacies and current Islamophobic practices. The decolonial approach of enquiry when investigating these case studies also makes this an appealing text for those looking to take a critical Muslim studies approach to the War on Terror and the subsequent project of global Islamophobia. The final part of the book, which addresses possibly the most extreme examples, makes the tangible links between state policies that restrict and manage Muslim lives and their logical conclusions. In these particular cases (the Rohingya and Uyghur genocides, and Hindutva policies in India), we see how “processes, legislation and laws by the state” as well as interpersonal Islamophobia enacted by private actors can lead to an Islamophobia “breaking point” (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 237–238). That is to say, the state violence and ethnic cleansing that we have seen in India, China and Myanmar articulated through “allegories of biological infection”, demonisation of Muslims as “licentious homebreakers” and “solidifying the otherness” of Muslim populations (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 201, 220, 229). However, it is in the reflections on former imperial states that we can observe the relationship between colonial histories and “the forces of hyper-capitalism and neoliberal globalisation” on the denial of Muslim agency (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 126). The effective criminalisation of “political Islam”, of political thought as well as religious practice, has made precarious the status of Muslims in the Global North (Bakali and Hafez 2022: 109). We can observe this with the restrictions in many European countries on Muslims’ daily lives as well as through securitisation policies such as Prevent in the UK. The recent Shawcross Review, revealed in early 2023, emphasised little hope of de-escalation of these actions, with encouragement towards the state to focus yet further on “suspect” Muslim communities.
This book addresses a global problem that many within the corridors of state, academia, and the private sector would endeavour to minimalise or isolate. That Islamophobia operates across the world in a variety of contexts in the Global North or South. There has been an evolution from the management of the Muslim “other” during former colonial rule to the securitisation of Muslims on the pretext of preventing potential terrorism. The positioning of Muslims as a global threat has enabled the expansion of Islamophobia from securitisation, to emboldening individual acts of violence, to state-sanctioned brutality. “The Rise of Global Islamophobia” makes clear how this is occurring at all points of the compass, and the ideologies that continue to facilitate it.

References
