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## **Introduction: London in a Time of Terror?**

**Angharad Closs Stephens and Nick Vaughan-Williams**

On 2 July 2005 Pink Floyd reunited to perform together on stage for the first time in twenty-four years. They played at the 'Live 8' concert in Hyde Park, London, which was organized by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure to raise awareness of the Make Poverty History campaign. This campaign, a coalition of more than 400 charities, unions and faith groups, formed to put pressure on world leaders' commitment to halve global poverty by 2015. It was organized in anticipation of the G8 summit of world leaders (the leaders of the world's eight richest countries) who met at the Gleneagles Hotel, near Edinburgh in Scotland, from the 6 -- 8 July. Top of the agenda were issues of trade, debt and aid and global climate change. The summit coincided with the meeting of the International Olympic Committee in Singapore on the 6 July 2005, at which it was announced that London would host the 2012 Olympic Games, beating rival bids from Paris, Moscow, New York and Madrid. Tony Blair, then Prime Minister of the UK, and president of the G8 for that year, left the summit briefly to congratulate the city of London on its successful bid. As Blair exclaimed: 'Many reckon [London] is the greatest capital city in the world and the Olympics will keep it that way' (*BBC News Online* 6 July 2005). The next day, 7 July, four suicide bombers targeted the London transport network killing themselves and 52 other people and injuring over 700. In the midst of such high profile and widespread discussions of global politics, justice and inequality, London experienced the worst single instance of loss of life in its recent history.

What is distinctive about the London bombings on 7 July 2005, in contrast to the events in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on 11 September 2001, is that despite the initial shock, many people claimed to be able to instantly recognize what kind of an event this was: the terrorist attack on London that the UK government had said that would almost inevitably happen.<sup>1</sup> As the Report into the bombings conducted by the London Assembly puts it: 'London had been warned repeatedly that an attack was inevitable: it was a question of when, not if' (*Report of the 7 July Review Committee* 2006:6). In contrast to US President George W. Bush, who, famously, was nowhere to be seen in the immediate aftermath of the atrocities on 11 September 2001, Tony Blair interrupted the meeting of the G8 at Gleneagles at

midday (3 hours following the first bombings) and proclaimed that there had been ‘a series of terrorist attacks in London’ (*BBC News Online* 7 July 2005). Against the backdrop of confusion on the streets and in the tube carriageways in London, as phone servers collapsed with people attempting to get in touch with loved ones, as people and bodies were being transported to and between different hospitals, and as emergency phone-lines were still being set up, Tony Blair attempted to provide clarity and meaning in confused times.

This book attempts to make the familiar events of the London bombings unfamiliar once more.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to proclamations by governmental leaders and politicians that frame ‘7/7’ as self-evident and understood, we want to question the assumption that it is easy to know exactly what is going on in global politics. Rather than assume that there is general agreement over what a terrorist event looks like, what it means, and what policing, surveillance and security measures it necessitates, the collection of essays presented in this volume treat these issues as problems that require close readings and detailed engagements. The aim is to explore some of the key dynamics of the current War on Terror by focusing on the theme of what we propose to call the ‘politics of response’. While many of the essays contained in this volume engage directly with the case of the bombings in London on the 7 July 2005, they also raise broader questions about the politics of identity, security, community, power, authority and sovereignty. Our rationale for focusing on this particular case is twofold: first, the London bombings, together with the so-called ‘failed attacks’ two weeks later and the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes, have all gone largely unexamined in the academic literature in Politics, Political Geography and International Relations to date;<sup>3</sup> second, we believe that the London case offers a provocative site for analyzing the diverse logics and idioms deployed as part of the global War on Terror. We do not seek to ask what *exactly* happened on 7 July 2005, but rather to examine in some depth how the bombings have been framed in a broader context and how such framings have served to legitimize and/or obscure certain policies and political activity. The theme of the ‘politics of response’ enables a double reading of how responses to terrorism, by politicians, authorities and the media, legitimize certain forms of sovereign politics, and how terrorism can also be understood as a response to global inequalities and colonial and imperial legacies. In this way the concept of response offers a particular angle which might be helpful in thinking about an array of

practices that have come to be associated with global terrorism. Furthermore, as we hope will become clear throughout, the concept of response raises difficult political, methodological and ethical questions about our own abilities and *response*-abilities as academics trying to figure out ways of engaging critically and emotionally with the effects of terrorism.

The rest of this Introduction is divided into three sections. The first considers what it means to think about an act of terrorism such as the London bombings as an ‘event’ in global politics. We seek to raise questions about how events come to be defined as such and what is at stake, politically, in the construction of particular narratives that join lots of different events together as if they were part of a causal sequence (e. g. 9/11, 11/3, 7/7). It is suggested that this critical interrogation - or ‘problematization’ - of the concept of the event is a useful starting point when thinking about how the complexities of 7 July might be unpacked. The second section then pushes this analysis of the ‘event’ a little further by exploring the relationship between terrorism, politics and time. Here we express a concern about the way in which events constructed simply as ‘9/11’ or ‘7/7’ end up legitimizing certain decisions, practices and rulings that come to dominate - or dictate even - the political possibilities of the present and future. We suggest that a focus on the relationship between terror, time and the political offers a useful avenue of thought for a critical analysis of contemporary geo-politics. Finally, in the third section, we build further on these issues by turning to the politics of response, and sketching out how this overarching theme acts as a unifying problematic throughout each of the chapters.

### **‘7/7’: London 7 July 2005**

In the absence of an official public inquiry into the bombings of 7 July 2005, the London Assembly review represents one of the only opportunities that survivors and eyewitnesses have had to put their experiences on record.<sup>4</sup> One of the survivors gives the following account:

We just started leaving Tavistock Square when there was a very strange noise. It wasn’t like a bang; it was like a muffled whooshing sound almost, but then the bus was very packed, and I was on the one in front. Being sort of ensconced, I didn’t hear - I saw, but I didn’t really hear it very loudly. There

was a mass exodus off of our bus, as things were still coming to the ground and bits were flying everywhere. The only thing I do remember is the carnage and everything as it hit the floor. I remember looking at the bus, and I remember initially thinking, ‘What is a sightseeing bus doing there?’ because that is actually what it looked like. From the front, that is what it looked like; it didn’t look like a London bus. Now I know why, but it didn’t look that way to me. It looked like one of those that has the roof off. It wasn’t until I actually saw the blood, and the smells, that I thought something is really wrong here and not right. It sounds almost ridiculous to say it, but it was just such a surreal thing; I still have trouble explaining it. I can see things in my head, but I just can’t find the words to describe it (Report of the 7 July Review Committee 2006: 36).

The personal stories of those caught up in the traumatic incidences of 7 July 2005 reveal the difficulty of explaining and depicting the ‘event’ of the London bombings. Many of the survivors speak of colours and lights, and describe the world changing ‘from bright orange to nothing’ (Report of the 7 July Review Committee 2006: 31) or that ‘Everything turned a horrible, urine-coloured yellow’ (Report of the 7 July Review Committee 2006:15). It is possible to read about what people smelt, felt and touched and of the smoke, the shock, and the incomprehension. Yet, despite the sense in which this was clearly a major event, survivors’ stories demonstrate that we still do not fully know what it is that we are describing when we refer to ‘the London bombings’ or, even more crudely, ‘7/7’.

In his response to the attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon on 11 September 2001, Jacques Derrida highlights the process through which ‘brute facts’ come to be recognized as ‘major events’ in global politics (Derrida 2003: 89). He argues that the seemingly endless and unreflective use of the slogan ‘9/11’ ultimately suggests that ‘we do not know what we are talking about’: the signifier, repeated time and time again, becomes a substitute for that which we cannot describe (Derrida 2003: 89). Derrida’s response usefully informs an analysis of what is at stake in the repeated reference to what happened in London on 7 July 2005 as ‘7/7’. The use of this slogan to describe and package what went on that day quickly established a sense of familiarity with the radically unfamiliar: the effects of suicide bombings in the capital

of the UK. One of the implications of this act of naming was to render multiple occurrences - the explosion of different devices at different sites across London, and the deaths and injuries of lots of people at staggered intervals over many hours (and in subsequent days) - as a single 'event'.<sup>5</sup> This way of referring to and thinking about these various happenings allows us to capture them as a coherent entity that can then form the basis for explanation within broader narratives. This is, to some extent, a necessary device. But it is also one that functions to obscure the more detailed intricacies and, perhaps more importantly, the competing understandings of what happened. Another function of the slogan '7/7' is that it ties what happened on 7 July 2005 into a number of other 'events': '9/11'; '11/3'; 'Bali'; 'Istanbul'; '21/7'. In this way, '7/7' has been emplaced within and contributes to the (re)production of a seemingly continuous sequence that has come to appear self-evident, straightforward and uncomplicated. Yet in stringing these dates and place names together, we conjure a particular view of global politics, and often forget the broader geographies and histories involved in different events at various sites.

Following Derrida, we might want to remember that moments in global politics, and the different meanings that such moments acquire, are not somehow pre-given, settled and stable but rather performatively produced, sorted and categorized. After all, it takes force to establish, uphold and maintain a continuous sequence such as this: one that organizes complex events from across a diverse geographical landscape into a singular continuum. In this example, '9/11' acts as an origin or point of departure, which, designated and media-theatricalized as a major rupture, comes to mark a series of supposed beginnings and endings: a marker that divides all that has gone before from a new world with a new politics and new necessities (Walker 1995; Derrida 2003). Consequently, in the case of an analysis of '7/7' (or indeed any of the other 'events' comprising the series) this framing obscures the way in which we might be witnessing a combination of *both* new forms of sovereign politics *and* the continuation of political techniques, discourses and laws that have a much older history. Moreover, such a framing, in its insistence upon a linearity that starts at point *x* and moves inexorably to point *y*, brings multiple and complex tragedies together in such a way that obscures the range of variegated responses occasioned by grief, anger and loss. On this basis, instead of accepting an uncritical usage of the slogan '7/7' - thereby legitimizing a whole range of sovereign practices that follow in its name - this

book insists upon a disruption of such a way of thinking. Crucially, as the next section will outline and explore in greater detail, we suggest that critical resources for mobilising a disruption of this sort can be found through an investigation of the relationship between time and politics. This focus offers a different framing for the way we think about global terrorism and its implications.

### **Terror, Time and the Political**

What was somehow unique about the London bombings was that they were quickly described as events that we knew would take place. But what does it mean to describe the London bombings as an event that was always expected to happen? How does this influence our understanding of what happened on 7 July 2007? What range of responses does this legitimize and/or obscure? Some routes into addressing these questions are offered by John Tulloch, Professor of Media and Communication Studies at Brunel University, who was injured by the blasts at Edgware Road. In a personal and close reading of how the London bombings were framed in the media and news reports across Britain, North America and Australia, Tulloch recalls lying in hospital shortly after the bombings and studying former Prime Minister Tony Blair's response:

One photograph I saw on 9 July from the previous day's newspaper made me very angry. It was a shot of Prime Minister Tony Blair taken at Gleneagles just after he had been told about the terrorist attacks. He is standing alone, head bowed, and body stiff as though in genuine shock – or perhaps wired, like his US presidential friend, directly to God. My immediate thought was that it was a performance, a photo opportunity to gain empathy by a politician who, because of his illegal, media-spun military entry into Iraq, was deeply unpopular. For me, lying there that day, it was a posture well-practised, an attitude thought about and rehearsed long before (Tulloch 2006: 48).

At one level, we expect politicians to rehearse their lines, postures and emotions in anticipation of the need to respond to major events. However, echoing an earlier point about the way in which events on 7 July were seen as both shocking and yet somehow familiar and pre-empted, Tulloch raises a deeper and more political issue about the

timing of this response, and ease with which Blair seemed to have decided what had happened and why.

Similar questions about the politics of time and timing have been raised in many critical responses to the events of 11 September 2001 and their aftermath. For example, much of this literature has concentrated on the way in which the positing of a key moment, '9/11', as exceptional, and as a fundamental rupture between a world that went before and a new world that must now follow, must be interrogated. The trick of positing such a radical break is of course typical to modern politics: it is encountered in declarations of a shift from a state of nature to a state of society to legitimize a form of sovereign politics that we must now accept. Talk of a radical break should not therefore be taken at face value but analyzed for the assumptions, arguments and claims it enables. The idea of a radical break should also be interrogated for the way in which it enables a story of progress. Many people have noted the way in which the War on Terror has been framed as a war between 'us' progressive civilized people and 'them' the backward barbarians. Derek Gregory has shown the way in which these 'imaginative geographies' are produced by 'fold[ing] distance into difference', presenting a reformulation of a familiar story of development. (Gregory 2004: 17). They rely on a particular temporal narrative: one that orders differences along a hierarchical scale ranging from the pre-modern to the modern, the underdeveloped to the developed, or from the uncivilized to the civilized (Massey 2005). This is a framing that relies on a particular and culturally specific way of seeing the world: one that can only acknowledge differences in so far as they measure up to the criteria *it* sets for what counts as a proper subjectivity or political community.

The task of resisting the particular forms and demands of sovereign politics might therefore begin by taking time to think critically about how different understandings of time both enable and constrain ways of responding to global terrorism. Judith Butler and, separately, Jenny Edkins have both engaged with questions of time and politics by pointing to the swiftness with which we were quickly invited to agree on what had happened on 11 September 2001 and on how we should respond (Butler 2004; Edkins 2003). They both refer to George W. Bush's announcement on 21 September 2001 that 'the time for mourning is over and that the time for action has



begun' (Butler 2004: 29; Edkins 2003: 19). Butler and Edkins show us how these multiple events were rapidly written into a single 'event' and then co-opted into a familiar narrative of us and them, good guys and bad, war and revenge. Butler and Edkins suggest that the rhetorical rush to declarations of supremacy and self-certainty in this immediate aftermath played an important role in legitimising ensuing US military adventurism in Afghanistan and later Iraq. However, they also argue that this direction was not necessarily pre-given or determined at that time: by reflecting on what had happened, resisting the urge to respond to violence with further violence and instead embracing an awareness of vulnerability or trauma time, Butler and Edkins emphasize that different kinds of responses could have been identified, discussed and pursued. For Butler, this might have included accepting a new understanding of the United States' position in international politics and in considering a common vulnerability, dependency and relationality (Butler 2004).

While Butler and Edkins concentrate on resisting George W. Bush's rapid and simple affirmations, Brian Massumi has argued that we should pay close attention to how Bush talks about the past, the present, and the future (Massumi 2005). For example, Massumi seizes on Bush's seemingly paradoxical statement at the time of the decision to go to war in Iraq in 2003: 'I have made judgements in the past. I have made judgements in the future' (Massumi 2005: 5--7). Instead of casting this aside as merely another unfortunate 'Bushism', Massumi argues that it is characteristic of a significant temporal logic at the heart of the Bush administration: one that privileges a 'lightening strike' approach to decision-making (Massumi 2005: 4--5). According to Massumi, the 'lightening strike' approach assumes the form of a foregone conclusion because it puts the present to one side in order to be seen to act without delay (Massumi 2005: 5). Any equivocation is considered to be a sign of weakness and so this is an approach that literally seeks to 'waste no time' and act on the future before it is yet here. This, Massumi claims, can be understood in terms of a new politics of pre-emption in the context of the War on Terror whereby conventional legal and political mechanisms are by-passed as part of a shift from the present tense to the future perfect tense: from the 'will be' to the 'always will have been already' (Massumi 2005: 6).

The common task implied by Butler, Edkins and Massumi is not only for analysts of global politics to be sensitive to questions of time and the political but also to work within and/or seek ways of developing alternative temporal registers to those of Bush, Blair and other politicians. In particular, Butler and Edkins stress that, in the face of disastrous circumstances such as those on 11 September 2001, we need not or indeed perhaps should not rush to respond by attempting to prematurely capture or make sense of these events. This point is reiterated by David Campbell, who, in his response to the events of 11 September 2001, echoes Butler and Edkins by arguing that the task of ordering things into a sequence is not only difficult but ‘something we cannot and perhaps should not easily or quickly resolve’ (Campbell 2002).

Inevitably, as the earlier discussion inspired by Derrida demonstrates, the activity of ‘making sense’ of complex and traumatic events often distorts what happens in overly simplified, crude and unhelpful ways. If these critical insights about the relationship between time and the political are applied against the backdrop of the bombings in London on 7 July 2005 then a number of salient issues arise that disrupt conventional and totalizing responses. First, such an approach encourages a critical questioning of the ways in which an initial confusion surrounding ‘events’ quickly becomes coded, settled and commodified. Various governmental reports into the London bombings, such as the *Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London on 7 July 2005* offer a very coherent, straightforward and unambiguous account of what happened on 7 July 2005 but in doing so, close down multiple and contested accounts. Second, we might want to pay closer attention to the way in which events such as the London bombings quickly converge into a ‘fictitious unity’ that serves to affirm a united and homogenous political community (Butler 1999). Third, the focus on the relationship between terror, time and the political opens up provocative questions about the role of academics in responding to events such as the London bombings. As the next subsection will discuss, these and other key questions are addressed by the chapters collectively through an engagement with the over-arching theme of the politics of response.

### **The Politics of Response**

This book emphasizes the difficulty of understanding exactly what took place in the multiple events that have been crudely packaged as ‘7/7’. In concentrating on the

theme of ‘response’ we want to question the ease with which ‘terrorist events’ such as the London bombings are all too often easily packaged and comprehended without due recognition of the way in which our framings affect the way we see, analyze and prescribe. The main problem with an approach to global terrorism that fails to recognize the implications of its own framings is that it tends to avoid broader discussions of the way in which such events might themselves be understood as responses to complex histories of power relations and global inequalities. Our focus on the theme of response also raises the question of how we might respond, as academics, to devastating and emotionally fraught moments in global politics such as the London bombings. Marie Fatayi-Williams, who lost her son Anthony in the bombings on 7 July, raises precisely this question in her challenging and provocative Foreword to this volume. Therefore, whilst the theme of response highlights a number of problems about the relationship between terrorism, time and the political, it also raises the possibility of *rethinking* the relationship between these categories and disrupting or at least de-familiarizing some of the more familiar accounts of the War on Terror. The discourse of the War on Terror places great emphasis on key dates and events and the constant positing of those dates, times and places serves to legitimize certain understandings of the present and excluding others. In beginning to think about how we might engage critically with the War on Terror we have to think about other ways of discussing and approaching these ‘events’ critically.

In the inaugural issue of the journal *Theory & Event*, Wendy Brown suggests that all political writings could in some way be described as responding to events, be it Locke or Hobbes on the English Revolution, or Marx, de Tocqueville or Burke on the French Revolution (Brown 1997). However, Brown goes on to distinguish between two different approaches available to academics when thinking about how to respond to ‘events’. The first is to provide a close reading of the unfolding of an event, such as, we might suggest, Hannah Arendt did in her close study of the trial of the Nazi and SS member Adolf Eichmann. The second approach is one that seeks to inquire into *the conditions of possibility* of particular events. While both approaches have a valuable role to play, Brown argues that the latter might require a de-familiarizing of the event itself in order to open up a ‘flourishing’ of responses:

[T]here is a world of difference between reading events and theorizing the conditions and possibilities of political life in a particular time. Indeed, understanding what the conditions of certain events means for political possibilities may entail precisely de-centring the event, *working around it*, treating it as contingency or symptom (Brown 1997, emphasis added).

In this vein, the collection of papers presented here represents an effort to ‘work around’ the London bombings: to analyze how they were explained in ways that establish particular practices and forms of sovereign politics that exceed the timings and locations of the events themselves. To ask different questions about ‘what happened’ in London in July 2005 it is necessary to decentre the narrative that makes these events seem self-evident and which also makes those *responses* to them (such as the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes in the feverish man-hunt for the suspected bombers of the ‘failed’ attacks on 21 July 2005) appear as if they were the only ones available.

This de-centring is enabled by a focus on response because it takes seriously the idea that much of what we refer to as global politics can only be understood as responses and responses to those responses. Indeed, there is a sense in which all we ever encounter are responses and that any analysis of politics is always already a politics of response. Once this alternative perspective is adopted then the causal linear sequence ‘event’ → ‘response’, one which, as we have already seen, conventional discourses of the War on Terror rely upon, is rendered highly problematic. According to this sequence, ‘event’ is set-up as being temporally prior to ‘response’ and therefore privileged in a given discourse: for example in the claim that the shooting of Menezes was a justified response to the event of the ‘failed’ attacks on 21 July. In this way ‘event’ is seen as a ground, source or origin and ‘response’ is considered to be a less important secondary by-product. However, if the ‘event’ itself is reconfigured as a response (for example the ‘failed attacks’ as a response to British foreign policy) then the simplicity and coherence of the narrative breaks down or becomes de-centred. The effect of this is to re-politicize the way that the causal linear sequence was framed to begin with: not as an obvious or somehow natural version of the way things are but as a particular rhetorical construction. We suggest that the de-centring of the event via an analysis of the politics of response offers useful critical purchase on an array of

contemporary phenomena framed in the context of the on-going War on Terror. Whilst the London bombings offer a particular site for exploration in this volume it is hoped that our adoption of the ‘politics of response’ as an angle will be useful for deepening on-going discussions about global politics more generally.

To close, we return to the question of the *response*-abilities of academics, and to Sheldon Wolin’s comments on this question in the same inaugural issue of *Theory & Event* (1997). In it, Wolin argues that political theory operates according to a ‘political time’ that is different to the temporalities, rhythms and pace governing economy and culture. While the latter is driven and determined by the desire for change and newness, the former works according to an alternative pace, the time of deliberation. ‘Political time’ is that which is ‘conditioned by the presence of differences and the attempt to negotiate them’. Wolin points to the ‘instability’ of political time, and that this is precisely what makes it difficult for political theorists to respond to events such as 1989 – and we might add, the London bombings, or the events of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001. He argues that while traditional conceptions of the political might have assumed a common time, a common authority, and common identity, the ‘instability’ of contemporary politics suggests that there is no common idea of political life. In the same way that people live according to different rhythms and tempos, people also have different ideas of the political, and this makes the task of analysis more difficult. Wolin’s point represents more than an acknowledgement of plurality – it’s not that some people are against terrorism while others are sympathetic to terrorism, as some would have it. Rather, different people have different ideas of what politics involves, and these might not be reducible to any shared basis. We need to find a way of disrupting the familiar temporal logics within which terrorist events are framed, and the binary choices that are presented as the only ways of responding, to find a language that can recognise this complexity, and uncover some of the alternative ways in which people have woven relations, communities and solidarities in response to terrorist events. We present this collection of chapters as attempts to capture the spirit of such an approach.

### **The Book**

The book is divided into three interconnected parts designed to explore the core thematic of terrorism and the politics of response: ‘Cartographies of Response’; ‘War

on Terror/War on Response’; and ‘Possibilities of Response?’ The first part maps some of the different governmental, political and analytical responses to the bombings in London on the 7 July 2005 and the various ‘imagined communities’ that were constructed in their immediate aftermath.

Chapter One, written by Jenny Edkins, engages with the personal experiences of those friends and relatives that were searching for missing loved ones in the aftermath of the bombings and their encounters with different governmental authorities. Edkins critically interrogates some of the procedures that were put in place as part of the established protocols of disaster planning, and the ways in which these involved the objectification and instrumentalization of persons. Offering an analysis of biopolitical forms of global governance, Edkins draws on Giorgio Agamben’s work to reveal the way in which the missing persons were produced as ‘bare life’, devoid of agency and humanity. In her discussion, Edkins addresses some of Marie Fatayi-Williams’ concerns raised in the Foreword, by offering a response to her protests at the way in which many of the relatives of the missing were handled in the aftermath of the bombings.

Angharad Closs Stephens’ chapter also offers a close reading of some of the governmental responses to the bombings, by concentrating on a series of poster campaigns that were disseminated by the London Assembly. Closs Stephens looks at the ways in which different ideas of community circulated in the aftermath of the events of 7 July and in particular how national ideas of belonging interweaved and contrasted with more urban multicultural narratives. Although the national and the multicultural messages offered by the British government on the one hand and the London Assembly on the other seem to offer different accounts of community, Closs Stephens argues that both worked to strikingly similar effect, by insisting on the importance of commonality and unity. She explores the politics and risks of this insistence on unity and asks how we might imagine alternative forms of community.

This section closes with Vivienne Jabri’s chapter, which also engages with the theme of political community and with the contradictions of liberalism. Jabri explores how practices of security centre on the government of social relations. More specifically, she traces the shift from discourses of multiculturalism to discourses of social

cohesion in the British political context, and analyses how cultural differences came to be securitized in the governmental responses to the bombings in London on 7 July 2005. Jabri points to a paradox in the UK government's commitment to the elimination of racism and xenophobia on the one hand, and yet, on the other hand, the targeting of the Muslim subject constructed as the potentially 'radicalised' Other that is implicit in emerging security practices. The generalisation of singular acts so that particular transgressions of law come to be culturally defined as common to the community as a whole ends up (re)producing the very forms of subjectivities deemed to be dangerous. Against the backdrop of London in the aftermath of the bombings, Jabri expands the analysis to explore what it means to live in the global city with its fusion of fixities and mobilities, combining the local and global, and posits this 'cosmopolis' as potentially, an alternative form of political space and political community.

The second part of the book, 'War on Terror/War on Response', moves away from a close reading of the particular cartographies of response in the aftermath of the bombings to offer broader reflections on the politics of response in the context of the War on Terror.

Dan Bulley's chapter opens with a study of how the four suicide bombers were constructed as 'outsiders' or 'others' despite the fact that these attacks were carried out by Britons. All of the bombers were raised in Britain and schooled in Britain and yet the government worked hard to make these largely typical young British men seem untypical, exceptional and 'foreign'. Bulley explores the process by which attempts were made to escape the threat of domestic chaos and insecurity through the exteriorisation of the threat of terror in the aftermath of the bombings. Moreover, he locates this analysis in a broader critique of British foreign policy as it relates to the discourse of the 'failing state'. Ultimately, Bulley claims that the bombings disturb simplistic categories of inside/outside, self/other and domestic/foreign, and points to the way that the UK reveals itself as a 'failing state' according to its own designation of that term.

Chapter six, written by Nick Vaughan-Williams, critiques the dominant framing of the shooting of Jean Charles de Menezes as a 'mistake' and seeks to re-frame this as a

symptom of broader systemic features of Western politics. Vaughan-Williams argues that the discourse of the mistake stymies critical questioning about what happened and colludes in the reproduction of a particular framework of understanding within which sovereign power has retrospectively valorized Menezes' death. By contrast, he argues, the shooting can be read as one of multiple responses of the British state to the London bombings and seeks to locate it within the broader context of the global War on Terror. Rather than a simple mistake it is suggested that the shooting was symptomatic of innovations in the ways sovereign power attempts to secure the spatial and temporal borders of sovereign political community.

In her chapter, Patricia Molloy considers the relationship between time, terror and the political through an analysis of the 'Toronto Arrests' of 2 June 2006 and various responses to these counter-terrorist initiatives in both policy-making and academic contexts. Molloy begins with a close reading of the ways in which, despite the absence of an act of terrorism in the Canadian context, the speaking and writing of the arrests simulated a terrorist event and mobilized fear and uncertainty among the population at a vulnerable time for the minority government. She explores the work that the myth of Canadian benevolence and tolerance to 'our multicultural others' does in reaffirming nationalist tropes dependent upon notions of spatial and temporal distinctions between inside and outside. In this way Molloy emphasises that, whilst there may be differences in the way these dynamics play out locally, responses to acts of terrorism globally can be said to follow and (re)produce certain common logics.

Louise Amoore's chapter brings the second part of the book to a close with a plea not to forget the 'War on Terror', in the face of the UK government's decision to limit the use of this phrase. Amoore argues that an ethical response to events such as the London bombings must engage in remembering, reiterating and revealing the violence carried out and legitimized in the name of that War. Her insistence is that many of these violent practices are ultimately authorized by the routinization of norms and the identification of deviant practices that establish what is considered to be 'the norm' in the first place. What is necessary, in her view, is an ethical engagement with the politics of response by seeking to recover the forgotten aspects of our lives that allow for violent practices based upon a technologized and depoliticized algorithmic calculation of unknown futures. Amoore suggests that practices of artistic intervention



offer a potentially valuable resource for rethinking political responsibility in the face of technical depoliticization.

Finally, part three, 'Possibilities of Response', critically addresses the central animating concept of response as it relates to the study of terrorism, and draws on questions of politics, philosophy and ethics.

This part begins with James Brassett's chapter, which interrogates the relationship between cosmopolitanism and terrorism through the lens of the concept of response. Brassett argues that the disruption of the G8 Summit and the Make Poverty History campaign by the London bombings set up a dichotomy between cosmopolitanism on the one hand and terrorism on the other. He argues that this constituted a totalizing ethical discourse of possibility that foreclosed other responses beyond cosmopolitanism. The chapter finishes with a discussion of the need for an alternative ontology of the global beyond this discourse in order to recover a more critical moment in cosmopolitan thought.

Chris Rumford's chapter examines discourses of fear and risk in the aftermath of the events of 7 July 2005 in London. Rumford notes the highly emotional content of many responses to terrorist events by governmental leaders such as those displayed by Bush and Blair. He contrasts what he describes as emotional and rational responses to terrorist events but argues at the same time that these should not be understood as mutually exclusive. Rather, a focus on the politics of emotion can help offer us a critical analysis of the way in which meaning is produced in meaningless times. In the final part of this chapter Rumford turns to contemporary novels to engage his themes and to offer ideas on avenues for further research in this field.

Chapter 11, written by Madeleine Fagan, offers a critical interrogation of the concept of response that animates this volume throughout. Fagan highlights some of the major difficulties of this concept and the implications of these for any attempt to understand what the politics of response might mean. She argues, drawing primarily on the work of Emmanuel Levinas, that any politics of response is also always already an ethics of response, and that response is inseparable from ideas of responsibility. Following on from this key insight, the chapter explores how the way we conceptualize otherness

impacts on the possibilities of a politics, and an ethics, of response. It does so via an analysis of forms of identity captured in the general context of the war on terror and also the 'One London Campaign' instigated in the aftermath of the 7 July bombings in London.

The final chapter of the book is written by Costas Douzinas. This chapter offers a bold examination of the Live 8 event and the London suicide bombings as representing two dominant types of metaphysics which both correspond to forms of 'post-politics'. He argues that the moralistic humanism displayed at the Live 8 concert abandons a search for the good and sees its purpose as combating evil. The London bombings were driven by a different pursuit, of a politics in the service of the good but with this truth being only available to certain members. These two types of post-political politics, moralistic humanism on the one hand and terror on the other, share a basic metaphysical structure. Douzinas explores the general characteristics of this metaphysical structure, through a study of different conceptions of the self, otherness and community. He engages the endless struggle over meaning that forms such an important part of political life, using the work of Jean-Luc Nancy in particular. He concludes by attempting to rework the relationship between sovereignty, sacrifice and politics and proposes an alternative imaginary for forming political communities.

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<sup>1</sup> The idea that a terrorist attack of some sort was bound to take place in a city like London was quite widespread. This is revealed in *The Guardian*'s editorial on 8 July 2005 for example, which claims: 'This was, we have repeatedly been warned by police and security chiefs, an event which was likely to happen one day.' ('In the face of danger') While other debates deal with questions about the preparedness of the UK in general, and with the question of why Britain's threat level was lowered in advance of the events (this is addressed in The Intelligence and Security Committee's 'Report into the London Terrorist Attacks on 7 July 2005'), we are more interested in the general framing of the events of 7 July 2005 as events that were always going to happen, and in questions about the politics of pre-emption and prevention raised by this assumption.

<sup>2</sup> This approach borrows from David Campbell's citation of Michel Foucault's maxim: 'Practicing criticism is a matter of making facile gestures difficult.' Foreword to *Writing Security. United States foreign policy and the politics of identity*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992

<sup>3</sup> There are important exceptions however, including John Tulloch's, *One Day in July*; Paul Gilroy, 'Multiculture in Times of War: an inaugural lecture given at the London School of Economics', *Critical Quarterly*, 48(4), Dec 2006: 27—45; MacCabe, Ali, Carlin, Gilroy, Hext, Kureishi, Rushdie, Serret, Young, 'Multiculturalism after 7/7: a CQ seminar', *Critical Quarterly*, 48(2), August 2006: 1--44

<sup>4</sup> 'Home Office Rules Out Inquiry into the 7 July Bombs' *The Guardian*, September 8 2007. Available online at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2007/sep/08/politics.july7>; (Accessed 6 March 2008).

<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed argument on the way in which this temporal indication masks an analysis of the spatial framings of the 'War on Terror' see Stuart Elden, 'Terror and Territory', *Antipode: A Journal of Radical Geography*, 39(5), November 2007: 821--45; Derek Gregory (2004), *The Colonial Present*, Malden MA; Carlton, Victoria; Oxford: Blackwell, 2004,