Biopolitics, Race and Resistance in the Novels of Salman Rushdie

Submitted by George William Twigg to the University of Exeter

as a thesis for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in English in November 2015

This thesis is available for Library use on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Signature: ………………………………………………………..

Abstract

The twenty-first century has seen a resurgence of academic interest in biopolitics: the often oppressive political power over human biology, human bodies and their actions that emerges when political technologies concern themselves with and act upon a population as a species rather than as a group of individuals. The publication of new works by theorists including Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Roberto Esposito, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri has furthered academic understanding of biopolitical attempts to ensure an orderly, productive society. Biopolitics bases these attempts upon optimising the majority population's health and well-being while constructing simultaneously a subrace of unruly, unproductive bodies against which the majority requires securitising. However, despite the still-proliferating and increasingly diverse recent theoretical work on the subject, little material has appeared examining how literature represents biopolitics or how theories of biopolitics may inform literary criticism. This thesis argues for Salman Rushdie's novels as an exemplary site of fictional engagement with biopower in their portrayal of the increasingly intense and pervasive biopolitical technologies used in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Rushdie has been considered frequently as a novelist who explores political discourses of race and culture. However, analysis of the ways in which he depicts these discourses animating recent biopolitical practices has proven scarcer in Rushdie Studies. This thesis asserts that Rushdie's novels affirm consistently the desirability of non-racialising polities, but almost always suggest little possibility of constructing such communities. In the process, it will reveal that he represents more numerous and varied forms of racialisation than has been supposed previously. This study considers how Rushdie describes biopolitical racialisation by state and superrace alike, the massacres of subraces that often ensue, how biopower operates and is resisted in space, and the discursive and practical forms this resistance takes. Contrasting Rushdie's early fiction with his less-studied more recent works, this analysis deploys, critiques and augments canonical theories of biopower in order to chart his generally growing disinclination to depict this resistance's potential success.

This study thus works towards a new biopolitical literary criticism which argues that although the theories of Foucault and others illuminate the ways in which literature represents power and resistance in contemporary politics, narrative fiction indicates simultaneously the limitations of these theories and the practices of resistance they advocate.

Contents

Chapter Two – Thanatopolitics

Chapter Three – Biopolitics and Space

Chapter Four – Discourses of Resistance

Chapter Five – Movements of Resistance

Acknowledgements

throughout my life. I would not have been able to do this without you, and I want you to know that I never take that for granted.

Introduction

Salman Rushdie and Biopolitics

In its portrayals of political discourses and practices, Salman Rushdie's fiction was political even before the controversy surrounding *The Satanic Verses*. While there have been probably more words written about Rushdie than any other South Asian author of contemporary fiction, the breadth and complexity of the ways in which his novels represent politics means that his work opens itself up constantly to new readings.[1] Much of the existing criticism analyses Rushdie's political engagement with the culturalist, ethnicist and phenotypical discourses of race that shaped the relationships between former imperial centres and their erstwhile colonies after decolonisation. However, less research has been undertaken to uncover how he describes the ways in which these discourses animate specific political practices, and how in depicting these practices he suggests that the variety of racialisations that govern their operations exceed the culturalist, ethnicist and phenotypical. This mirrors Michel Foucault's political philosophy in indicating that the state may construct race using any criteria it desires.

In the twentieth-century polities in which Rushdie sets most of his fiction, practices of government have tended to take the form of biopolitics. Biopolitics describes the application of biopower; the power that the state wields over the human body when it considers humanity as a species rather than as a collection of individuals. The state deploys technologies including statistical analysis, public health and education to optimise the well-behaved and pliant majority population – which Foucault calls the 'superrace' on account of the state's privileging of their well-being (2004, 61) – in order to engender efficient economic production and the orderly running of society. This optimisation requires the superrace to be protected from the actions, cultures and even genes of the subraces that the state constructs simultaneously on account of their perceived resistance to, or the difficulty of assimilating them within, its categorising, homogenising biopower. As Foucault argues in his theory of governmentality, members of the superrace

must choose either to assist the state perpetually in optimising their lives and bodies, or to themselves be placed into the category of subrace on account of their resistance. He thus formulates a concept of race as based on an infinitely variable conjunction of biological and behavioural signifiers.

Rushdie's fiction does not occupy the terminological matrix of communities, subjectivities, states of exception, discourses and multitudes that characterise the influential, canonical theories of biopolitics that Foucault, Giorgio Agamben, Michael Hardt, Antonio Negri and Roberto Esposito offer. However, by fictionalising different historical examples of biopolitical practice, Rushdie still explores many of the same questions as these thinkers. He constructs a body of work that not only complements their critiques of biopower, which prove consequently useful in aiding analysis of his novels, but suggests the ways in which the nature of contemporary biopolitics exceeds and problematises their theories. He thus indicates the necessity of a literary criticism which does likewise.

Biopolitical Literary Criticism

Rushdie's fiction engages deeply with how biopolitical technologies and the multiple racialisations that animate them became increasingly intense and pervasive during twentieth-century history. It thus constitutes an exemplary site for a new biopolitical literary criticism. This biopolitical literary criticism does not aim to uphold or justify biopolitical governance in the same way that a Marxist or psychoanalytic literary criticism accepts the value and veracity of the Marxisms and psychoanalytical theories that inform them. Rather, this study is biopolitical in that it shows how Rushdie's novels deconstruct and expose biopower's racist and authoritarian excesses, and how they problematise theories of biopower. It contributes towards an affirmative biopolitics in Hardt and Negri's sense; an affirmation of 'the power of life to resist and determine an alternative production of subjectivity' (2011, 57).

The twenty-first century has seen an increased interest in biopolitics within academic disciplines. The publication of new works by Foucault, Hardt and Negri, Agamben and Esposito has inspired productive ways of conceptualising both historical biopolitics and the biopolitical governmental

14

campaigns of the twenty-first century itself, including the War on Terror and the Australian state's incarceration of asylum seekers in offshore camps. However, criticism examining how biopolitics has been depicted in literature remains scarce. Stephen Morton's brief analysis of the ways in which Rushdie presents Indira Gandhi's historical sterilisation programme in biopolitical terms (2008, 48) constitutes a rare example of literary criticism that displays an awareness of recent politics' specifically biopolitical nature, as does his discussion of Max Ophuls in *Shalimar the Clown* in terms of sovereignty and *homo sacer* (139). Christopher Breu's recent monograph, *Insistence of the Material* (2014) considers more substantively how William Burroughs, Thomas Pynchon, J. G. Ballard, Leslie Marmon Silko and Dodie Bellamy represent bio/thanatopolitics.[2] It attempts 'to think about the way in which materiality can form one site of resistance to and divergence from the dominance of biopolitical forms of governance and economic organisation in twentieth- and twenty-first century life' (Breu 2014, x). However, while Breu's book proves innovative in its engagement with biopolitics in fiction, the incipient field of study towards which it contributes has not yet approached the multiplicity and profusion of the work that the academic vogue for philosophical responses to historical and contemporary biopolitics has occasioned outside of literary studies.

This study intends not only to augment the critical field surrounding Rushdie but to work towards an emerging discipline of theoretically aware biopolitical literary criticism. In order to produce a conception of biopolitics appropriate to further study of how other literary works depict its discourses and technologies, this thesis analyses the ways in which Rushdie's novels invite a biopolitical reading, but also suggest that the reality of historical biopolitical practices exceeds that which canonical theories of biopower posit. Considering the increasing imbalance in the twenty-first century between the depth and copiousness of philosophical approaches to historical biopolitics and the scarcer analysis of biopolitics in literature, this approach to scholarship appears more important than ever within the discipline of English Studies.

Rushdie's Trajectory: From Pessoptimism to Pessimism

Studying Rushdie's fiction by using and critiquing the theories of biopolitics and governmentality that Foucault developed and inspired indicates the utility of biopolitical literary criticism. It reveals, more clearly than ever, that Rushdie's novels display a growing disinclination to depict effective resistance to biopower within twentieth-century politics, or the potentiality of a future non-racialising polity. Some critics have used their analyses of Rushdie's later novels to gesture towards the existence of this trajectory (Teverson 2007, 222; Khanna 2009, 410-11). Yet an enduring tendency in Rushdie Studies to focus primarily on his fiction up to *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995), even in some recent monographs (Kimmich 2008; Thiara 2009), has meant that this arc's precise nature remains uncharted. By reading Rushdie's earlier work through the prism of his post-1995 writing this study argues that, with the exception of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999), his fiction becomes increasingly doubtful that pluralist discourses or movements may resist racialising biopolitical oppression effectively within contemporary (bio)politics, and that constructed subraces may escape race-thinking. Andrew Teverson calls Rushdie's novels 'pessoptimistic fictions' (2007, 161); optimistic in that they explore the possibility of new forms of inclusive community and resistance, but pessimistic in their portrayals of (bio)political oppression, racialisation and slaughter. A biopolitical reading which considers how Rushdie represents biopolitical technologies and the discourses that animate them – hence revealing a greater variety of racialisations than previous studies of his work have identified – delineates in detail the growing tendency of his novels towards this latter aspect of pessoptimism.

This study seeks to chart the evolution of the ways in which Rushdie represents how biopower operates and is resisted within twentieth-century governmentality specifically. Parts of his fiction thus fall outside of its remit. Rushdie's debut *Grimus* (1975) takes place in a fantasy world ruled by a petty sovereign, and as such cannot illuminate significantly a study of how he portrays historical biopolitical practices. His latest two adult novels prove similarly inutile. *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008) occupies a sixteenth-century setting in which petty sovereignty characterises political governance

far more than do nascent proto-biopolitical technologies. Rushdie sets much of *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights* (2015) in the twenty-first century, which has been pervaded by a securitising biopolitics, particularly since the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. However, the main conflict in the novel takes place not between biopolitical governments and resistance forces but between two supernatural armies which use humans merely as proxies; one benevolent force, and one violent faction which proves too capricious, indolent, vicious and thinly spread to optimise life biopolitically. Otherwise, if a Rushdie text provides useful material for the purposes of charting how his depiction of twentieth-century biopolitics has evolved, this study has examined it.[3]

Towards a Biopolitical Reading of Rushdie

Approaches to Rushdie

The richness of thematic content in Rushdie's fiction has inspired a growing diversity of studies concerning his work. However, despite the ever-increasing variety of literary criticism on Rushdie, particularly in the new millennium, analyses of how he depicts specific historical political techniques remain relatively scarce in Rushdie Studies, especially with respect to biopolitics.

Timothy Brennan's *Salman Rushdie and the Third World* (1989) constitutes the founding text of Rushdie criticism. The book claims that novels written by literary cosmopolitans such as Rushdie are 'unrepresentative[…]of the writing now being published from the Third World', but have proven popular amongst audiences in First World countries 'because they tell strange stories in familiar ways' (Brennan 1989, 36). Brennan wrote his pioneering study at a time when, as he argued, '[o]nly a handful of critics (often themselves tied to the colonised by background or birth) have seen English fiction about the colonies as growing out of a comprehensive imperial system' (5). His analysis, which contributed significantly to the still emerging discipline of postcolonial literary studies, proved fruitful because all of Rushdie's novels at the time (except *Grimus*) focused on Britain and its former colonies. However, Rushdie's more recent

fictional explorations of twentieth-century governmentality have covered a greater variety of spaces, from America to France to the South Pacific. By using a broad, variegated Foucauldian conception of race to explore Rushdie's evolving portrayals of biopolitics on a global scale, this study argues that oppressive race-thinking proves less resistible for Rushdie's characters than Brennan (147) and others have supposed.

Aijaz Ahmad's chapter on *Shame* in *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (1992) became the most influential critique of Rushdie in the years immediately following Brennan's monograph. Ahmad focuses on the character of Sufiya Zinobia, whose abuse at her family's hands and overwhelming sense of shame transform her into a feral, mindless beast that topples her father's government violently. He questions Rushdie's feminist credentials by arguing that '[t]he novel[...]becomes incapable of communicating to us, in whatever grotesque forms, the *process* whereby a woman's intellectual and emotional abilities may be sapped, or regained' (1992, 145). Ahmad gestures towards the Foucauldian elements of Rushdie's '(post)modernist literary imagination' (128). However, this study builds upon this gesture by contrasting Sufiya's bestial, unthinking rampage, and its failure to alter biopolitical power structures in the long term, with the discourses and praxes of resistance advocated by Foucault and those he influenced, the efficacy of which Rushdie questions indirectly. This new analysis of Sufiya thus augments this thesis' argument that Rushdie's fiction suggests that the reality of contemporary biopolitics exceeds canonical theorisations of biopower.

The broad conception of race that complements Brennan's foundational work on Rushdie and the Third World, and the critique of theories of resistance to biopolitical oppression that augments Ahmad's reading of *Shame*, represent just two of the tools through which this study argues that Rushdie increasingly represents twentieth-century biopower's efficacy in quelling resistance and oppressing populations. Analysing coherently the multiple racialisations, biopolitical techniques, spaces, discourses and movements of resistance that Rushdie describes requires taking these elements in turn, thus diverging from the chronologically based structural conventions of the early monographs that followed Brennan. The

growing critical interest in Rushdie in the 1990s led to the publication of numerous introductory guides to his work; many, including those by James Harrison (1992), Catherine Cundy (1996), D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke (1998) and Damian Grant (1999), simply called *Salman Rushdie*. Because of the structural coordinates of the introductory study as a critical genre, these books follow a similar format with a chapter on each of Rushdie's novels in turn. This study traces a general chronological trajectory, culminating in *Shalimar*, characterised by the growing tendency of Rushdie's fiction to depict twentieth-century biopolitics as effective. However, it does so within chapters which each focus on specific aspects of biopower, from racism to massacres to resistance. This approach enables the thesis to argue that Rushdie represents biopower increasingly as oppressive and difficult to resist while asserting simultaneously that his novels suggest consistently the complexity and multiplicity of race-thinking and the biopolitics it animates.

Studies of Rushdie stand currently at a peak of profusion, diversity and theoretical rigour, towards which this study contributes. In the new millennium approaches to Rushdie's work have diversified in form and content, even in the case of newer introductory guides such as Andrew Teverson's *Salman Rushdie* (2007). Teverson begins with an apposite epigraph from Rushdie's *Imaginary Homelands* (1992) – 'For every text, a context' (1992, 92) – and provides extensive background on political, intellectual and biographical contexts, Indian writing in English, intertextuality and postmodernism. His monograph reflects the growing interest in the intellectual origins of Rushdie's fiction that has inspired books including Martine Dutheil Hennard de la Rochère's *Origin and Originality in Rushdie's Fiction* (1999), Roger Y. Clark's *Stranger Gods: Salman Rushdie's Other Worlds* (2001) and Nicole Weickgennant Thiara's *Salman Rushdie and Indian Historiography: Writing the Nation into Being* (2009).

A concomitant tendency has emerged, within studies of politics in Rushdie's novels, to go beyond a general postcolonial analysis in favour of engaging with the specific historical polities he fictionalises. In *Salman Rushdie: Fictions of Postcolonial Modernity* (2008) Stephen Morton argues that before his book was written 'there ha[d] been no sustained book-length

studies of how Rushdie's writing contributes to an understanding of decolonisation and political violence in South Asia' (2008, 15). Morton emphasises how

> Rushdie's novels are bound up with wider debates about the legacies of colonial modernity in India, Pakistan and Britain, the meaning of secularism in India's political discourses, the emergency period in India, the experience of migration and displacement from India to Pakistan and South Asia to Britain, the rise of communal violence in both India and Pakistan, the conflict over Kashmir, the politicisation of Islam and the contemporary discourses of terrorism and anti-Americanism. (12)

This study extends Morton's concern with specifics of historical political practice in Rushdie's novels into a distinct focus on how they represent biopolitics, a theme that Morton briefly and usefully touches upon (48; 139). Its analysis of Rushdie not only provides a new interpretation of his work but intervenes in the emerging field considering how literature depicts biopolitics. This field has been animated by the growing interest in, and profusion and sophistication of, theories of biopolitics in the twenty-first century.

Studying Biopolitics in the Twenty-First Century

G. W. Harris coined the term 'biopolitics' in 1911. Harris perceived the task of biopolitics as ensuring a manageable population of equal numbers of men and women through techniques including legalising abortion, gassing the mentally ill and exiling 'superfluous women' through a lottery (1911, 197). However, the term has since been used to denote many different concepts marrying biology and politics, especially from the 1960s onwards.

The contemporary study of biopolitics has two main currents. The first denotes a subfield of political science. Lynton Caldwell's influential 1964 essay 'Biopolitics: Science, Ethics, and Public Policy' defined biopolitics as 'political efforts to reconcile biological facts and popular values – notably ethical values – in the formulation of public policies' (1964, 3). Thinkers including Thomas Thorson (1970), Thomas Wiegele (1979) and

Roger Masters (1989) followed Caldwell in exploring how policy could be formulated based on a perceived innate propensity of humans to think, act and vote in certain ways. Biopolitics in this sense thus mostly concerns hypothetical politics rather than historical public policy, and has proven of limited interest to philosophers and literary critics.

Conversely, the second main current of academic inquiry into biopolitics defines it not as a putative politics informed by the body but as a set of historical political technologies that aim at controlling the body. Philosophers of this form of biopolitics – most notably Foucault, Hardt and Negri, Agamben and Esposito – analyse how absolute sovereign power has historically been supplemented increasingly by a capillary politics of the body. They examine the complex array of racialisations by which governments attempt to optimise one part of the population's health and productivity, and the state's attendant surveillance, punishment and even massacring of the remainder; the multiple forms these optimisations and punishments take; and the methods by which this politics potentially can be resisted. Because Rushdie's novels explore frequently how historical biopolitical technologies and policies have operated, this conception proves much more useful than the strand of subjunctive political science detailed above in illuminating the ways in which he represents twentieth-century biopolitics.

The twenty-first century has seen a resurgence of interest in this form of biopolitical study. As Thomas Lemke wrote in 2011, '[t]he notion of biopolitics has recently become a buzzword. A few years ago it was known only to a limited number of experts, but it is used today in many different disciplines and discourses. Beyond the limited domain of specialists, it is also attracting increasing interest among the general public' (2011, 1). Much of this increased interest has arisen because of changes in global geopolitics in the new millennium that have been conceptualised increasingly in biopolitical terms.

In particular, numerous considerations of America's military response to the 9/11 terror attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon as a biopolitical conflict have emerged. Slavoj Žižek drew upon

Giorgio Agamben's recently-translated *Homo Sacer* (1996, trans. 1998) in an early philosophical response to the War on Terror. He argued that 'the "unlawful combatant", who is neither enemy soldier nor common criminal' (Žižek 2002), constitutes *homo sacer*: the figure that Agamben conceives as suspended between humanity and non-humanity through its subjection to biopower and its consequent placing into a state of exception. For Žižek the unlawful combatants that the American government constructed were rendered *homo sacer* by their incarceration in the space of exception at Guantanamo Bay without recourse to the Geneva Convention or the American legal system, an observation also made by Judith Butler in *Precarious Life* (2006, 67-68).

Not only did Agamben's thought influence responses to the War on Terror, but Agamben himself opened his 2003 book *State of Exception* by arguing that

> [t]he immediately biopolitical significance of the state of exception as the original structure in which law encompasses living beings by means of its own suspension emerges clearly in the 'military order' issued by the president of the United States on November 13, 2001, which authorised the 'indefinite detention' and trial by 'military commissions' (not to be confused with the military tribunals provided for by the law of war) of noncitizens suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. (2005, 3)

Agamben accused President Bush of 'producing a legally unnameable and unclassifiable being' (3) and of 'attempting to produce a situation in which the emergency becomes the rule' (22); of producing *homo sacer* and a state of exception.

Later academic responses to the War on Terror began to consider other theoreticians of biopower. Butler criticised Guantanamo not just for its production of *homo sacer* but in Foucauldian terms. She argued that as a form of governmentality 'the protocols governing indefinite detention and the new military tribunals reinstitute forms of sovereign power at both the executive and managerial levels' (Butler 2006, 92). The existence of a 2008 volume called *Foucault in an Age of Terror* supports Rey Chow's assertion

that 'the post 9/11 global scene only seems a fantastical set of demonstrations of Foucault's arguments about the omnipresent and omnipotent reach of technological-cum-ideological surveillance under the guises of our neo-liberal society' (2010, 62). The interrelated biopolitical technologies of racialisation, surveillance and security that Foucault describes have been seen widely to underpin the increasing panopticism of post-9/11 geopolitics.

However, the War on Terror did not constitute an exceptional deployment of biopolitics in the twenty-first century, nor were the technologies and discourses it utilised novel. As François Debrix and Alexander Barder argue, 'the virtual "real possibility" of the exception (Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib) may also seek to draw our attention towards the idea of a supposedly unique, unusual, extreme, or indeed "exceptional" zone *as if* such a site were *not* the norm, or *as if* it were *not* supposed to be real or actualised anywhere else' (2011, 82). The new theories of biopolitics that have appeared in the twenty-first century can enable analysis of other states of exception either in history, in contemporary politics or as depicted in literature. The recent (and ongoing) publication of Foucault's Collège de France lectures of the 1970s and 1980s has added significantly to the sum of knowledge of his thought on discipline, biopolitics, governmentality and discourse, and forced academics to rethink the extent to which his philosophy offers a strategy of resistance to oppressive biopower. Heightened interest in Agamben following the use of *Homo Sacer* and *State of Exception* in responses to the War on Terror has led to the translation of his works both old and new into other languages, as well as numerous monographs on his thought. Hardt and Negri's three books on Empire published since 2000 have proven influential and controversial in their theoretically incorporative critique of biopolitical globalisation. Since 2008 four volumes of Roberto Esposito's work on community and biopower have been translated into English, enabling greater understanding of the exclusionary, immunising character of modern biopolitics. Just as these new publications make possible a richer analysis of historical and contemporary biopolitics than ever, they can illuminate how literature such as Rushdie's depicts biopower's racialising discourses and technologies.

Michel Foucault's Political Philosophy (1): Sovereignty and Discipline

Foucault's foundational analyses of racism, sovereignty and discursive resistance, which have influenced heavily and been critiqued by most late twentieth- and twenty-first-century philosophies of historical biopolitical technologies, inform much of this study's investigation of the ways in which Rushdie depicts twentieth-century biopolitics. Foucault emphasises the multiplicity of power relations that the diffuse, capillary nature of power under biopolitical governments engenders, and the multiplicity of racialisations by which these governments identify bodies to be placed under biopolitical surveillance, punished or eliminated. Consequently, a reading of Rushdie's novels informed by Foucault's thought can delineate comprehensively the profusion of prejudicial discourses, (bio)political policies and violent acts that they describe, and thus trace most accurately his fiction's growing disinclination to suggest that these may be resisted effectively.

Foucault's early political thought assesses the ways in which the state wields sovereignty through political technologies. By sovereignty Foucault means early monarchies' absolute power of seizure, deduction and oppression that formed a direct relationship between sovereign and subject: 'the right to *take* life or *let* live' (1990, 136). Despite this power's lack of constraints by parliaments or electorates, Foucault argues that because the sovereign possessed limited resources through which to exert it, it could only be applied to a population incompletely. Sovereignty in itself 'can found absolute power on the absolute expenditure of power, but[…]cannot calculate power with minimum expenditure and maximum efficiency' (Foucault 2004, 36). For Foucault, '[s]o long as the institutions of sovereignty were the basic political institutions and the exercise of power was conceived of as an exercise of sovereignty, the art of government could not be developed in a specific and autonomous way' (2002a, 213).

Foucault's political philosophy concerns the ways in which this art of government developed in history as sovereign power was diffused and refracted increasingly through new political technologies. For Foucault power is everywhere. Humans, even sovereigns, do not possess power but

wield it to varying degrees: through discourses, which Foucault defines as 'characterised by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories' (1980a, 199); and through the political technologies that these discourses animate. Consequently the sovereign may allow other humans or government institutions to use power by acting in his/her name and hence control the bodies of his/her subjects indirectly. Foucault's early political thought analyses the historical development of what he calls discipline, in which a refracted sovereign power acts upon individual human bodies by locating them in disciplinary spaces including the clinic, the barracks and the prison. Sovereign power does not affect humans directly within these spaces, but the technologies which diffract it nevertheless shape them into docile citizens. For Foucault '[t]his discourse of disciplines is about a rule: not a juridical rule derived from sovereignty, but a discourse about a natural rule, or in other words a norm' (2004, 38). Disciplinary apparatuses make humans obedient and productive not by threatening that the sovereign will take their lives, but through capillary scientific technologies of normalisation such as routinisation, exercise and confined movement.

Rushdie's novels depict political oppression frequently by describing the incarceration of his characters in disciplinary spaces, as with Saleem Sinai's sterilisation in prison in *Midnight's Children*, and the death of resistance fighter Anees Noman in the Indian army's 'secret torture chambers' (2006a, 307) in *Shalimar*. However, because Rushdie represents these disciplinary spaces as part of a wider system of political control over the nation, Foucault's later political philosophy, in which he began to examine the historical spread of these techniques of normalisation and optimisation beyond disciplinary spaces into the general population, further illuminates the ways in which Rushdie's novels portray the mass racialisations and political oppressions of twentieth-century (bio)politics.

Michel Foucault's Political Philosophy (2): Biopolitics

Foucault's theory of biopolitics enables this study to consider how Rushdie represents political technologies' effect on populations because, contrary to

discipline, in biopolitics '[t]here is absolutely no question relating to an individual body[...][biopolitics] is therefore not a matter of taking the individual at the level of individuality but, on the contrary, of using overall mechanisms and acting in such a way as to achieve overall states of equilibration or regularity' (2004, 246). Consequently, a biopolitical reading of the nation-state's power over and relationship with its population as a whole – a dynamic central to Rushdie's portrayal of twentieth-century politics – proves more productive when it augments Foucault's work on discipline with his later philosophy, which examines biopolitical discourses and technologies in detail.

Foucault first used 'biopolitics' in his published writing in 1976 in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, in which he remarks that '[d]uring the classical period[...]there was an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of "biopower"' (1990, 140). Here Foucault argues that in politics '[i]t is no longer a matter of bringing death into play in the field of sovereignty, but of distributing the living in the domain of value and utility' (144) at the level of the species rather than the individual. He later extended his observations on sexuality by exploring other biopolitical efforts to optimise bodies' health and security.

For Foucault, just as sovereignty was incorporated into discipline, both were incorporated into biopolitics. Foucault conceives of biopolitics as a set of political technologies enacted inside and outside disciplinary spaces, which emerged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and became particularly effective from the nineteenth century onwards. These technologies seek to optimise human life at the level of the population as a whole by improving amenities and institutions including housing, medicine, sanitation and education, in order to make society and its economy run more efficiently and productively. However, although biopolitics intends that the majority of the population benefit from the improvements made to their bodies and society, in its efforts to maintain stability and productivity it also sanctions reprisals against humans who prove unwilling to submit to their bodily optimisation, their plugging into economic production or the population's biopolitical ordering: those bodies David Nally calls 'human

26

encumbrances' (2011, 16). As Michael Dillon argues, 'where life is improvable, biopolitics specifies continuous revision and reform. Where life is however obdurately resistant to biopolitical revision, biopolitics specifies correction and punishment' (2008, 168). The state constructs subraces of troublesome human encumbrances, and uses the recapitulated sovereignty inherent in biopower to securitise the superrace of orderly, productive citizens against the actions of these bodies.

The biopolitical state identifies subraces not just in order to prevent resistance to biopolitics but as a precondition for biopower's efficient operation. By persuading the superrace that subraces threaten its survival, the state securitises itself twofold: by discouraging the superrace from perceiving the state as a threat; and thus through further inducing the superrace to participate in its often oppressive optimisation. Members of the superrace come to see any punishment of the subrace – even massacres – as justifiable in order to securitise their own bodies. As Foucault claims, '[i]n the biopower system[...]killing or the imperative to kill is acceptable only if it results not in a victory over political adversaries, but in the elimination of the biological threat to and the improvement of the species of race' (2004, 256). Biopolitics benefits a section of the population, but also incorporates a thanatopolitical potentiality that reinstitutes the old sovereign power to take life and which theoretically can be turned on any bodies that the state perceives as a threat, whether actively rebellious or merely difficult to assimilate within biopower's optimising embrace.

Rushdie's novels describe efficacious state operations of biopolitical oppression, from the sterilisation campaign in *Midnight* to the British government's racist immigration policies in *Verses*, but also depict the limitations of these technologies and thus suggest that humans possess the ability to resist racialisation and violence. Foucault's conception of race and biopolitics can inform usefully an analysis of how Rushdie portrays bio/thanatopolitical practices. Yet its overwhelming focus on the state restricts its utility to a comprehensive investigation into how Rushdie's fiction indicates not just the strength of biopolitical technologies, but the possibility of effective resistance to biopower by discourses and movements extraneous to the state. However, Foucault's later theory of

governmentality, which explores both how humans abet their own biopolitical oppression and that of subraces, and the possibility that they may refuse to do so, illuminates the ways in which Rushdie represents this latter dynamic.

Michel Foucault's Political Philosophy (3): Governmentality

The term 'biopower' was preeminent in Foucault's philosophy for a short period of time, after which he began to conceive of politics since the seventeenth century in terms of 'governmentality'. This shift from biopolitics to governmentality constitutes a terminological reinscription on Foucault's part rather than a historical shift in political practice akin to sovereignty's diffusion through discipline or biopower's recapitulation of both. His concept of governmentality augments his earlier work on biopolitics by focusing more radically on the idea that 'with government it is a question not of imposing law on men but of disposing things: that is, of employing tactics rather than laws' (Foucault 2002a, 211). Just as Foucault's genealogy of biopower was premised on the idea that, historically, the limitations of sovereign power necessitated its diffraction into biopolitical technologies, governmentality recognises that the power that these technologies wield, while applicable to more spaces than petty sovereignty, remains limited. Hence, the government must create tactics to persuade the population to participate in optimising their own bodies: to become what Julian Reid calls 'self-securing subjects' (2013, 116).[4]

Effective governmentality requires the population to assist the securitising work of biopolitical technologies. Yet political oppression does not necessarily prove more stultifying than it would be without the population's participation. Foucault asserts that while human beings may be persuaded to aid state biopower's optimisations, racialisations and oppressions, they may also choose not to. His work on governmentality, particularly his recently published Collège de France lectures, argues for a robust potentiality of resistance to modern biopower through *parrhēsia*: an Ancient Greek discourse characterised by public-spiritedness, fearlessness, sincerity and directness. However, in suggesting the near-impossibility of producing and disseminating widely this ideal discourse, and

by portraying effective discursive resistance based even partially on parrhesiastic qualities as unlikely, Rushdie's novels indicate increasingly the impracticality of Foucault's proposed method of opposition to biopolitical regimes. Foucault's theory of governmentality thus enables this study to analyse Rushdie's growing emphasis on biopolitics' capacity to produce self-securing subjects, and to trace his fiction's lessening tendency to evoke the possibility of inclusive communities, nations and state institutions.

Despite its still-increasing profusion, Foucault's published work on biopower and governmentality offers scarce detail regarding, or outright fails to cover, numerous aspects of biopolitics that Rushdie's fiction critiques: colonial biopolitics; biopolitical oppression of women; biopower's multiple spatialities; and the ways in which discursive resistance to biopower may engender resistance movements. Yet, as Michael Dillon and Andrew Neal argue, 'Foucault's legacy lies not with the text he expended on the problematisation of biopower, but with its astonishing prescience and enormous heuristic potential' (2008, 12). Considering philosophers of biopolitics including Hardt and Negri, Agamben and Esposito, who have critiqued Foucault and considered facets of biopower untouched by his thought, will enable this study to analyse as fully as possible the complex and multiple biopolitical spaces and technologies that Rushdie depicts.

However, just as Rushdie's novels problematise Foucault's state-centric theory of racism by describing the superrace's prejudice towards subraces, and question whether a parrhesiastic or pseudo-parrhesiastic discourse can resist biopower effectively, the ways in which they depict biopolitical discourses and technologies indicate the limitations of these other thinkers' theories and suggested praxes. His fiction suggests that the nature of contemporary biopolitics exceeds Agamben's argument that spaces of biopolitical oppression prove invariably impermeable and inescapable; his theory of the homology of biopolitics and thanatopolitics; Esposito's assertion of their antinomy; and Hardt and Negri's claims for the potentiality of effective resistance through a non-hierarchical, communicative multitude. In his engagement with historical twentieth-century biopolitics, Rushdie thus points the way towards a new biopolitical literary criticism which uses selected, recapitulated and augmented

versions of these theories of biopower to illuminate literary depictions of biopolitics.

Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Bare Life

Rushdie not only depicts frequently the oppressive strength of modern biopolitical technologies including mass sterilisation, high-tech immigration camps and massacres enacted by devastating military hardware, but often emphasises how these technologies create categories and spaces of indeterminacy and uncertainty for their victims. Giorgio Agamben complicates Foucault's distinction between superrace and subrace by emphasising the spatial and racial indistinctions that biopolitics produces. He thus complements Foucault's philosophy in informing a comprehensive reading of the various ways in which Rushdie represents biopower's multiple aspects. However, just as they problematise Foucault's conception of race and resistance, the ways in which Rushdie describes twentieth-century biopolitics suggest that the nature of modern biopolitical discourses and practices exceeds Agamben's thought.

Agamben's most influential book, *Homo Sacer* (1996), argues a distinction between *bios* (life which possesses the right to participate in politics and the community) and *zoē* (so-called natural life lacking this right). Taking a term from Roman law, Agamben defines those who resist biopower's ordering of the community as *homo sacer* or bare life, suspended between *bios* and *zoē*: between superrace and subrace. For Agamben, under regimes of biopower 'the realm of bare life – which is originally situated at the margins of the political order – gradually begins to coincide with the political realm, and exclusion and inclusion, outside and inside, *bios* and *zoē*, right and fact, enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction' (1998, 9). The construction of *homo sacer* creates a 'state of exception' (Agamben 2005, 3) in which bare life's indeterminate status as life enables the state to eliminate it thanatopolitically.

Agamben not only asserts *homo sacer*'s racial indistinction but argues that the sovereign also stands 'outside and inside the juridical order' (1998, 15). By claiming that the sovereign represents a 'zone of indistinction' (47), he diverges from Foucault's model of sovereignty as

absolute, deductive power diffracted through biopolitical technologies. As Johanna Oksala contends, in this formulation 'it is exactly sovereignty that must account for those modern biopolitical mechanisms that fall through the grid of the juridical realm' (2010, 41). Yet Agamben's formulation of what Andreas Kalyvas calls '[t]he bio-sovereign' (2005, 109) does not apply solely to these modern biopolitical mechanisms. For Agamben sovereignty has not become incorporated into biopower as Foucault asserts, but was always biopower: 'the inclusion of bare life in the political realm constitutes the original – if concealed – nucleus of sovereign power[…]biopolitics is at least as old as the sovereign exception' (1998, 6).

Agamben's category of *homo sacer* illuminates the ways in which Rushdie describes the indistinctions that biopower has produced within twentieth-century politics – for example, in *Verses*' depiction of a British immigration centre – and his numerous portrayals of how subraces constructed as less than human subsequently have been massacred. However, Rushdie's novels suggest that biopolitical oppression and the sovereign potentiality of thanatopolitics have become increasingly effective and pervasive throughout history. They therefore indicate the inadequacy of Agamben's argument for a homology between sovereignty and biopower's intense imbrication in contemporary politics, and *homo sacer*'s production in antiquity, to a comprehensive biopolitical reading of Rushdie's work and that of other writers.

In novels including *Midnight*, *Shame* and *Shalimar*, Rushdie represents the efficacy of twentieth-century bio/thanatopolitical technologies. However, his fiction also depicts a more limited, more provisional and therefore more resistible petty sovereignty, as in *Grimus* and *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*' fantastical settings and the sixteenth century of *Enchantress*. It suggests that governments lacking technologies of biopower may racialise and even produce *homo sacer*, but not as efficiently as contemporary biopolitical regimes. Rather than portraying biopower as an originary component of an ancient sovereign exception, his fiction thus indicates that biopower constitutes a technological augmentation of sovereign power, the effect of which has increased throughout history. As Paul Patton argues, '[a]t the level of representation, classical sovereignty

was already biopower. At the level of political technology, it only became biopower in the course of the nineteenth century' (2007, 214). This study utilises Patton's periodisation; for example, in Chapter Two's argument that Rushdie's novels chart sovereignty's increasing re-emergence through thanatopolitics. Hence, it conceives sovereignty using Foucault's historicised genealogy of a deductive power that has been diffused and recapitulated through a growing number of biopolitical technologies both deductive and productive, rather than Agamben's theory of an ancient bio-sovereignty. This conception of an ever more pervasive biopolitics, of which the violent and often lethal sovereign power of the past constitutes a growing component, will enable this study to analyse the ways in which Rushdie depicts the specifically modern nature of a biopower that, his novels emphasise increasingly, became more and more prevalent as the twentieth century progressed.

Hardt and Negri, Roberto Esposito and the Spaces of Biopolitics

Despite Agamben's problematic periodisation of biopolitics, the utility of his concept of *homo sacer* in analysing the ways in which Rushdie portrays spatial and racial indistinction shows that a comprehensive, granular biopolitical literary criticism requires problematising and exceeding Foucault's foundational theory of biopower. Hardt and Negri's Empire trilogy, which departs from Foucault in conceiving biopower and resistance as modalities of production, and Roberto Esposito's deconstruction of recent bio/thanatopolitics' specifically immunitary dimension enable further investigation of the complex, multifarious ways in which Rushdie depicts biopolitics.

Hardt and Negri theorise a contemporary political paradigm of globalised, capitalist, American-led power, which they call Empire. Their thought focuses especially on 'the *productive* dimension of biopower' (Hardt and Negri 2000, 27) within Empire. They argue that Foucault's exploration of the relationship between economic production and biopolitical normalisation was inadequate. For Hardt and Negri exploitative economic production may be resisted by a different kind of production: 'biopolitical production' (2011, 286). This non-hierarchical production is 'immanent to

society and creates social relationships and forms through collaborative forms of labour' (Hardt and Negri 2006, 94-95). Hardt and Negri's overly optimistic ideal of pluralistic resistance functions in this study's final chapter as a benchmark against which to measure the ineffective, hierarchical and racialising oppositional movements that Rushdie describes. The increasing degree to which these movements fail or refuse to constitute this formation contributes towards revealing and delineating clearly a trajectory in which Rushdie's fiction places progressively greater emphasis upon the pervasiveness and efficacy of biopolitical technologies in the twentieth century.

Esposito's work on the specific reasons for the increasingly thanatopolitical nature of modern biopolitics provides a corrective to Agamben's assertion of an ancient bio-sovereignty, and hence helps draw this trajectory yet more sharply. Similarly to Hardt and Negri, Esposito asserts that biopolitics can be understood only through its modern dimension, an observation lacking from Foucault and Agamben. Esposito defines immunisation (*immunitas*) as the process by which states and superraces have become more and more likely to construct subraces as a threat against which the community must be securitised. His concept of the community that eschews immunisation completely – what he calls *communitas*, 'a locus of plurality, difference, and alterity' (Esposito 2013, 55) – also proves useful in order to denote, in a less schematic manner than Hardt and Negri's concept of biopolitical production, the hypothetical non-racialising polity that Rushdie's fiction lionises constantly while indicating increasingly the impossibility of its construction.

Although these theories illuminate the ways in which Rushdie represents twentieth-century biopolitics and resistance, they are often more compelling in considering discourses and technologies themselves than how these discourses and technologies operate and are resisted in space. Agamben's concept of the state of exception can enable analysis of how Rushdie depicts the indistinctions that biopolitical oppression produces, but he perceives '*the space that is opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule*' (1998, 168-69) – the camp – as infinitely reproducible and therefore inescapable. He thus fails to augment his theory of racial

indistinction with one of spatial indistinction. In his work on disciplinary space and the heterotopia Foucault proves similarly reluctant to explore the potential malleability, porousness and relationality of space through which, as Rushdie's novels suggest, resistance to biopolitical oppression may be enacted. The closed and non-relational spaces that Agamben and Foucault describe remained prevalent in twentieth-century history and in Rushdie's representations of this history. However, through stressing the potentially relational nature of space by drawing on thinkers such as Henri Lefebvre, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, this study aims at the 'properly poststructuralist understanding of biopower' that Hardt and Negri advocate (2000, 28). By further delineating the lessening potentiality for effective resistance to contemporary biopower that Rushdie's fiction evokes, this theoretically incorporative analysis of various spaces of biopower and resistance indicates that examining biopower in fiction thoroughly necessitates a biopolitical literary criticism that exceeds and critiques Agamben and Foucault's insufficiently relational conceptions of space.

Resistance to Biopower in Rushdie's Fiction: A Waning Potentiality

Revealing comprehensively Rushdie's trajectory of growing disinclination to describe a potentiality of effective resistance to twentieth-century biopower requires analysing the multiple aspects of biopower and racism that he depicts. To this end, this study's individual chapters utilise, critique and augment canonical theories of biopolitics in order to consider how Rushdie represents: biopolitical racialisation by state and superrace alike; the massacres of subraces that often ensue; how biopower operates and is resisted in space; the discursive forms this resistance takes in his novels; and the oppositional practices these discourses inspire.

Chapter One examines the ways in which Rushdie's novels indicate the permanence and ubiquity within twentieth-century politics of the multiple racialisations and technologies through which biopower operates, in portraying post-independence societies and exploring discrimination towards immigrants within former colonial powers that have become neo-colonial.[5] Using Foucault's conception of race as denoted by limitless

criteria, this chapter argues that Rushdie's fiction suggests consistently the efficacy of the process whereby the state securitises itself against resistance from subraces and superraces alike through constructing the former as a scapegoat for society's ills, thus making the latter less likely to attribute them to the state. However, Rushdie's habitual focus on the role that the superrace's race-thinking plays in complementing the state's racism invites a biopolitical literary criticism that augments Foucault's state-centric theory of race with genealogies of para-state racisms. In Chapter One this biopolitical reading reveals that, although *Ground* evokes a nascent hope that humans may eradicate and transcend race and racism, novels including *Midnight*, *Verses*, *Ground* and *Fury* affirm the permanence of race-thinking within twentieth-century states and populations both colonial and post-colonial, and hence the pervasiveness of effective biopolitical oppression.

Chapter Two extends the previous chapter's analysis of the state's racism by exploring how Rushdie represents thanatopolitics: the massacres of the subrace in which the sovereign power to make life die re-emerges. Rushdie emphasises that these massacres arise when pre-existing racialisations within state biopolitics engender the subrace's securitising extermination in times of political crisis. He thus suggests the inadequacy both of Agamben's argument that biopolitics and thanatopolitics became homologous in the twentieth century, and Esposito's conception of thanatopolitics as the deadly opposite of a biopower which optimises life. His fiction helps to formulate a biopolitical literary criticism which, conversely, conceives thanatopolitics as a potentiality inherent within biopolitics. By using this theory of thanatopolitics to contrast *Shalimar* with *Midnight* and *Shame*, this chapter begins to delineate a trajectory within the events of Rushdie's fiction in which race-thinking proves progressively endemic, the lethal potentiality of thanatopolitics thus manifests more and more frequently, and the massacre's efficacy in quelling resistance within twentieth-century polities increases.

Chapter Three clarifies this trajectory further by arguing that Rushdie's novels indicate increasingly that the ease with which bio/thanatopower shapes space suggests why the discourses and technologies that the previous two chapters scrutinise proved so effective

in twentieth-century (bio)politics. This chapter works towards a new, incorporative biopolitical literary-geographical criticism. It deploys Agamben's notion of the camp and Foucault's concept of the heterotopia in order to conceive static or inescapable spaces of biopolitical oppression in Rushdie's fiction. However, Chapter Three also augments Agamben and Foucault's insufficiently relational theories of space via the thought of contemporary philosophers of relational and variform space (Lefebvre, Deleuze and Guattari), in order to analyse the remarkable complexity and variety of lived spaces in Rushdie's novels. It not only considers how states and superraces produce oppressive spaces in Rushdie, but uses theories of relational space to analyse his gradual disinclination to represent a potentiality of effective opposition to biopolitical oppression by complicating notions of space, place, fixity and borders. The chapter delineates this tendency's precise nature by tracing an arc from the relative autonomy Rushdie depicts in *Midnight*'s spatial margins to the near-total control of Kashmir's space by bio/thanatopolitical forces in *Shalimar*.

Chapter Four develops this study's analysis of the waning potentiality of resistance that Rushdie's novels evoke, by considering how he presents resistance through discourse in twentieth-century (bio)politics. This chapter uses Foucault's work on *parrhēsia* – a public-spirited, fearless, simple, sincere Ancient Greek discourse directed at a more powerful figure, which he appropriates as a possible mode of resistance to modern biopolitics – as an ideal of effective, selfless resistance against which to measure the oppositional discourses that Rushdie describes. With the exception of *Ground*, which depicts *parrhēsia*'s forcefulness, Rushdie suggests less and less that such resistance may threaten contemporary biopower. By charting the generally growing degree to which he indicates that the biopolitical oppressions of governments and superraces, and his characters' personal failings, render *parrhēsia* – and effective, widely disseminated discursive resistance of any kind – impossible, Chapter Four brings his fiction's overall trajectory of growing scepticism regarding the potentiality of resistance into clearer focus. In so doing it argues that even impractical theories of resistance to biopower can inform biopolitical literary criticism usefully.

By examining how Rushdie represents movements of resistance, Chapter Five both draws still more sharply the trajectory of waning oppositional potentiality that his fiction evokes, and further indicates the utility of such theories to biopolitical literary criticism. Whereas Chapter Four utilises Foucault's work on *parrhēsia* in order to compare Rushdie's characters' ineffective discourses of resistance with this ideal, this chapter considers Hardt and Negri and Esposito, who go beyond Foucault in imagining how humans may transform discursive resistance into a movement of non-hierarchical, pluralist resistance to oppressive biopower. A critique of the idealism and impracticality of these theories with regard to their possible actualisation within the twentieth-century polities that Rushdie explores will inform an analysis of why movements of resistance in his novels fail invariably to replace biopower with a political system based on pluralism. Rushdie's fiction at many points asserts the potentiality and even the efficacy of discursive resistance, but suggests more and more that constructing an effective movement of resistance to biopower proves much more difficult, especially if the putative movement is to be non-hierarchical and pluralist. This chapter builds upon Chapter Two's argument that in their engagement with historical twentieth-century massacres *Midnight*, *Shame* and *Shalimar* depict increasingly the actualisation of biopolitics' thanatopolitical potentiality. Its biopolitical reading charts a concomitant cessation of the potentiality and efficacy of pluralist resistance movements in these novels.

Using Rushdie as a case study, this thesis works towards a new method of reading literature in terms of the ways in which it engages, critiques and exposes the authoritarian and racialising excesses of biopolitical technologies. Rushdie's novels represent an exemplary site of such engagement in their descriptions of twentieth-century biopolitics. Showing how his work indirectly problematises canonical theories of biopower and race produces a conception of biopower appropriate to considering its depiction in literature. In turn, utilising and critiquing these theories and the practicality of the praxes they advocate illuminates how Rushdie's fiction represents specific discourses and practices of biopolitical oppression and opposition, and their relative success and failure to

accomplish their objectives. It thus brings into clearer focus than ever the trajectory of waning potentiality regarding resistance that previous critics in Rushdie Studies have identified.

Chapter One – Biopolitics and Race

Introduction: Biopolitics and Race

Rushdie's fiction has often been investigated with regard to its depiction of the psychological and violent effects of racism based on skin colour (phenotype) (see Brennan 1989; Afzal-Khan 1993; Teverson 2007). However, augmenting this analysis by considering additionally how Rushdie represents biopolitical technologies reveals that he engages with race more widely and variously than has been supposed. This chapter argues that because his novels portray these technologies as animated by racialisations which the state constructs based on any criteria it desires, they suggest consistently the inevitability of suffering and discrimination as an effect of multiple racisms. Attempts by his characters to transcend race and escape race-thinking prove invariably incomplete and provisional because of a conjunction of biopolitical state operations and the racism of those members of the population who perceive the racialising biopolitical state as guaranteeing their freedom, security and species.

Governments use discriminately the biopolitical technologies that Rushdie's novels describe, not just because the state possesses limited resources but because biopower must racialise in order to regulate and optimise a population effectively. Biopolitics operates extensively by identifying sections of the population that require extra biopolitical surveillance and proceeding to racialise them. Phenotype may function as a means by which a group can be racialised easily, or as a complementary signifier of otherness making it possible to identify an already racialised group, but the state racialises primarily through discourses of security, economic efficiency and civic order. As Michel Foucault argues, the biopolitical state practices 'the splitting of a single race into a superrace and a subrace' (2004, 61). The government asserts a hierarchy between the superrace of those it deems worthy of protection and the racially-othered subrace(s) from which the superrace of the better-behaved, more valued population must be shielded biologically and politically.

The state produces subraces either because these communities prove difficult to assimilate within its categorising, homogenising biopower or because they resist the state's attempts to optimise life actively, becoming what David Nally calls 'human encumbrances' (2011, 16). As Michael Dillon observes, 'where life is improvable, biopolitics specifies continuous revision and reform. Where life is however obdurately resistant to biopolitical revision, biopolitics specifies correction and punishment' (2008, 168). Rushdie's novels suggest frequently that states construct subraces in this way. *Midnight's Children* refigures the Indira Gandhi government's biopolitical sterilisation programme as an attempt to destroy alternatives to the Prime Minister and her dynasty as symbols of the Indian nation. In *Shalimar the Clown* Rushdie portrays the Indian government's military crackdown against Kashmiri rebels as a racialising operation in which 'every Kashmiri was [considered] a militant' (2006a, 292). Rushdie indicates consistently that the racism of modern biopolitical states exceeds phenotypical form in its securitising efforts.

This chapter further argues that, by engaging with a second securitising function of biopower, Rushdie's fiction depicts the frequently phenotypical racism displayed by civilian members of superraces as an adjunct to a biopolitical state control more likely to be based on other constructions of racial difference. The state identifies rebellious bodies in order to secure itself against their resistance via surveillance, but also so that it may impress upon the rest of the population the alterity of these bodies and thus justify – and make more efficient – their correction, punishment or even their elimination. The state not only persuades the superrace to complement biopolitical technologies by obeying commands to optimise its health, productivity and orderliness, but to legitimise and abet the government's state-securing racialisations. It thus renders resistance by both subrace and superrace even more unlikely. Rushdie explores this dynamic in *The Satanic Verses* when describing a British government which racialises immigrants from its former colonies. His fiction indicates that the conjunction of multiple racisms by the biopolitical state and the superrace it constructs prevents the formation of a pluralist, inclusive *polis* – what Esposito calls *communitas*, the 'locus of plurality, difference, and alterity'

(2013, 55) – and virtually precludes the possibility of resistance to and escape from racialisation.

Foucault's foundational analysis of how biopower and race are reticulated outlines usefully the methods by which regimes of biopower seek to securitise themselves by constructing subraces. His thought informs this chapter's exploration of the ways in which Rushdie depicts the various racisms of twentieth-century biopolitical states and their deleterious effects on the subraces these states constructed. However, Foucault's theory of race lacks detail regarding the complementary role that non-state actors play in oppressing subraces. Arguing most effectively that Rushdie's novels suggest consistently the persistence of – and difficulty of resisting – race-thinking of multiple types within modern states and populations alike requires a theory of race and biopower that goes beyond Foucault. By outlining how twentieth-century civilian groups of all phenotypes internalised the hierarchies that earlier colonial governments and discourses instituted, and through engaging with the specific character of non-state actors' phenotypical, biocultural and ethnicist racisms, this theory reveals a greater pervasiveness of racism in Rushdie's fictional worlds than has been supposed. It works towards a new conception of race and biopower appropriate to a biopolitical literary criticism of state and non-state racisms in the fiction of Rushdie and others, augmenting the valuable insights that Foucault offers, particularly in *Society Must Be Defended*.

Michel Foucault: *Society Must Be Defended*

Foucault described perceptively and influentially the means by which biopolitical governments use racism to justify their ordering of society. His thought proves critical to a thorough investigation of how Rushdie depicts modern biopolitical states and the effect of their technologies on the racialised. Foucault's most detailed exploration of the biopolitics of race comes in his *Society Must Be Defended* lectures, published in 2004, in which he traces a genealogy of race-thinking within the biopolitical state. Foucault argues that 'from the seventeenth or eighteenth century onward, the human body essentially became a productive force' (2004, 31) within technologies and economies of biopower. However, the widespread use of

41

this productive force to institute a biopolitical regime of securitising racism began in the nineteenth century. For Foucault this was the century where racism and the state became symbiotic (254). Foucault claims that before the nineteenth century theories of race primarily animated an emancipatory race war discourse (*discours de la guerre des races*) which, in David Mutimer's words, 'argued that society was split, the state represented but one side of that split and it was an instrument of oppression, therefore it had to be overthrown by the oppressed race' (2007, 167). Whereas race war discourse constructs the nation's population as two warring races, the securitising form of state racism (*racisme*) which developed in the nineteenth century affirms the existence of a national population constituted by an essential racial oneness and beset by multiple alien races, causing 'the splitting of a single race into a superrace and a subrace' (Foucault 2004, 61).

Foucault calls this racism 'the postrevolutionist theme of the struggle for existence' (80) because the superrace, frightened by racially-othered outsiders and racially-othered sections of its own *polis* (human encumbrances who resist biopower or prove difficult to order), no longer prioritises overthrowing the state. Instead, the superrace's fear of the racial Other that the biopolitical state constructs leads it not just to accept the state's racist oppression of the Other but to participate in its own concomitant oppression and optimisation. Perceiving 'the imperative to protect the race' (81), the superrace now views the state as a vital security apparatus rather than an oppressive fetter. Through racism the biopolitical state immunises the superrace from the subrace, and immunises itself simultaneously against mass resistance.

Foucault argues that the state's criteria for acceptance into the superrace are not based necessarily on phenotype or biology. The biopolitical state secures the superrace against bodies constructed discursively as non-normative and hence as a threat to national security, whether in terms of sexuality, nationality, physical health or phenotype. Anybody can be ejected from superrace into subrace, in what Foucault calls 'the internal racism of permanent purification' (62). Foucault's concept of porous and malleable superracial and subracial categories enables a

42

reading of Rushdie's novels which suggests that the pervasiveness of the biopolitical state's racism – and hence the difficulty of resisting its effects – results from this racism being based on a theoretically limitless array of signifiers.

However, considering how Rushdie represents the complex dynamics of racism by states and constructed non-state superraces alike demands a theory of race that goes beyond *Society Must Be Defended*. Foucault focuses overwhelmingly on the relationship between state power and its construction of race. As Mary Beth Mader argues, these lectures do not constitute 'a genealogy, history or typology of race and racisms[…]race is treated only as a part of a genealogy of state power and not as a focus of investigation in itself' (2011, 98). Rushdie's novels indicate that the self-securing subjects living within biopolitical governmentality augment the state's racist ordering with biopolitical race-thinking and discourses of their own. In *Midnight* he fictionalises and excoriates the state racism of the Indira Gandhi government's sterilisation campaign, but also criticises the phenotypical racism of ordinary Indians which he portrays as a legacy of British colonialism. In *Verses* his characters are assailed by racists in the employ of the British state, but also by racist citizens including street traders, hooligans and advertising executives. However, Foucault only gestures towards the superrace's part in racialisation in his writings on '[g]overnment's limit of competence' (2010a, 40), which concentrate on the ways in which superraces optimise their health and productivity under governmentality rather than the ways in which their race-thinking complements that of the state. Understanding fully the severity and pervasiveness of biopolitical oppression in Rushdie's fictional worlds – and in those of other writers – requires complementing Foucault's perceptive genealogy of European state racism with genealogies of para-state racisms, which Rushdie's novels suggest continue to be shaped by the legacy of colonialism.

The Biopolitics of Race Beyond Foucault

Rushdie's novels describe a number of different racisms – phenotypical, ethnicist, culturalist and bioculturalist – within and outside biopolitical state

apparatuses. Although Foucault's theory of race illuminates the ways in which Rushdie represents state biopolitics, a concept of racism that goes beyond Foucault's Eurocentric, state-centric thought proves necessary to analyse how Rushdie's novels depict other racisms, including some forms of government racism that Foucault declines to examine.

Foucault's treatment of race concerns the European state almost exclusively. He notes that '[r]acism first develops with colonisation, or in other words, with colonising genocide' (Foucault 2004, 257), but fails to explore how conquered spaces, foreign subject populations and racial hierarchies and othering(s) are interrelated. As Paul Gilroy argues, '[a] fuller appreciation of specifically colonial input into modern statecraft promises an altogether different sense of where bio-political procedures and anthropological hierarchies might fit into an amended history of modernity' (2004, 48). Considering how colonialism stimulated biopolitical government's development allows an extension of the analysis of state biopower in Rushdie's novels to his fiction's non-European locales, and an examination of how he represents racism among the superraces constructed by colonial and neo-colonial states alike. Rushdie depicts consistently how the contemporary state's race-thinking often augments phenotypical racism with discourses of culture or ethnicity, or eschews phenotypical racism altogether. He thus mirrors Foucault's notion that the state racialises based on any criteria it wishes. However, he also explores the race-thinking of the superrace the state constructs, which *Midnight*, *Verses*, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* and *Fury* portray as more likely to be based on a more straightforward assertion of phenotypical difference influenced by a legacy of colonial racism that he suggests has continued to characterise neo-colonial government. Hence, a genealogy of the different racisms present in the twentieth-century colonial and neo-colonial polities that Rushdie fictionalises complements Foucault's state-centric thought in illuminating how Rushdie represents race.

The Legacy of Colonial State Biopolitics

Rushdie's novels explore colonial racism and its psychological and political effect on humans, from figures such as Ahmed Sinai in *Midnight*, Saladin

44

Chamcha in *Verses* and Darius Cama in *Ground* – Indians who perceive Britishness (and sometimes even whiteness) as preferable to their own race – to the internally colonised non-white people of Britain in the latter two novels. Analysing in detail how Rushdie represents racism requires an awareness (absent from Foucault) of the continuities between the British Empire's racialising colonial biopower, governmental racism in post-independence societies and race-thinking's persistence amongst constructed superraces in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century history upon which Rushdie draws.

As Kenan Malik notes, for early Victorians 'race was a description of social distinctions, not of colour differences' (1996, 91). However, by the end of the nineteenth century the development of a sustained discourse of scientific racism, which held that non-whites were biologically inferior as well as biologically different from whites, had engendered a widespread belief in the homology of phenotype and race. This race-thinking provided a convenient rationale for the conquests of European empires, whose rule over non-white populations began to be perceived more concretely at their imperial centres as the natural order of things. Lawrence Blum argues that the need to justify colonial (bio)power was what necessitated biological racism in the first place: 'It was only when the European powers turned definitively to conquest, subjugations, displacement of native peoples, and slavery that they began to develop rationalisations in which the latter were viewed as inferior and subhuman' (2002, 112).

During the nineteenth century the British Empire became able to order and administer its colonies increasingly efficiently on the basis of these racial distinctions, through biopolitical technologies such as mapping, sanitation and statistical surveys which made easier the construction and surveillance of subraces. For Arjun Appadurai the British imperial state, particularly in India, treated the non-white bodies it governed as 'inherently both collective and exotic, set[ting] the stage for group difference to be the central principle of politics' (1996, 130). Indigenous populations were racialised simultaneously at the level of representation and, through the empire's more expansive use of technologies of biopower, biopoliticised at the level of administration: 'The modern colonial state brings together the

45

exoticising vision of orientalism with the familiarising discourse of statistics. In the process, the body of the colonial subject is made simultaneously strange and docile' (133). These theories and technologies of race fed back from the colonial periphery, animating the biopolitical governance of other races within the central nation-state in the nineteenth century and beyond (see Gilroy 2004, 8).

Rushdie's novels emphasise the lasting effects of these racialising technologies, and the new racisms that have come to inform them discursively, in the post-imperial societies of the formerly colonised and their former colonisers. In *Midnight* previously colonised populations retain the psychological trauma of racialising colonial discourses that stressed their inferiority to whites. India's post-independence economic and political elite in the novel thus prioritises attaining whiteness and Britishness over constructing a new Indian national identity. Similarly, Rushdie suggests in *Verses* and *Ground* that immigrants from former colonies into erstwhile imperial centres are likely to find themselves racialised by both state and civilian actors who even after decolonisation seek to securitise themselves against non-white bodies. However, by exploring racisms based on criteria other than skin colour his fiction indicates that colonialism's spread of efficient technologies of biopower in the nineteenth century – as described by Foucault (2004, 254) – and the rise of phenotypical racism are roughly contemporaneous, but not homologous. The racisms that govern technologies of biopower evolve independently of the technologies themselves, as do racisms amongst the superraces that these techniques construct. Beyond the phenotypical, a form of racism that he indicates has persisted even after its scientific discrediting in the twentieth century, Rushdie examines the devastating impact of culturalist, bioculturalist and ethnicist racisms on subraces inside and outside former imperial centres, and inside and outside biopolitical state apparatuses, be they colonial, post-independence or neo-colonial. Considering how his fiction engages with biopower's securitising technologies and discourses reveals that it depicts more varieties of race-thinking than has been supposed, and therefore evokes a more attenuated potentiality of escape from race-thinking.

The Twentieth Century's Multiple Racisms

Rushdie's novels depict the persistence of multiple types of race-thinking in twentieth-century society despite the discovery that race has no basis in biology, as Victorian colonising biopoliticians supposed. Whereas the nineteenth century saw a growing scientific belief that the white race was superior biologically, a new consensus emerged in the mid- to late twentieth century. In Robert Blank and Samuel Hines' words, 'emphasis began shifting to the micro level within biology' (2001, 52). Biologists began to analyse humans not by phenotype but by genotype. One of the first, Richard Lewontin, argued in his 1972 article 'The Apportionment of Human Diversity' that 'human races are remarkably similar to each other, with the largest part by far of human variation being accounted for by the differences between individuals' (1972, 397). Scientific investigations into epigenetics led to the widespread acceptance within the field of human biology that phenotypical difference arose from environmental factors and that human beings were virtually identical genotypically (see Gill 2015, 481). It has become an almost unanimously held view within the scientific community that, as John McLeod asserts, 'all constructions of racial difference are based upon human invention and not biological fact' (2000, 110).

However, in the mid- and late twentieth-century societies that Rushdie fictionalises, the lack of credible scientific evidence that biological difference causes variations in skin colour did little to end phenotypical racism. As Sara Upstone argues, '[r]acism exists within a system where, as for colonial control of space, sight is essential' (2009, 95). For the state, phenotypical racism remained an effective measure of security because it was surveyed easily, and because most humans even towards the century's end continued to perceive it as a signifier of racial difference (see Masters 1989, 128), thus making constructed superraces more likely to abet the state's securitising operations.

Rushdie's fiction, on the few occasions that it engages directly with contemporary epigenetics, represents the persistence of phenotypical racism in twentieth-century societies in spite of scientific discoveries, rather than indicating the possibility that these theories will find widespread

acceptance outside the scientific community in the future. In *Ground* Ormus Cama, who dreams of transcending race and escaping from race-thinking, uses contemporary epigenetics to justify his claim that this escape is possible: 'He had taken to quoting biologists, geneticists. Human beings are just about identical, he'd say. The race difference, even the gender difference, in the eyes of science it's just the teeniest-tiniest fraction of what we are. Percentagewise, it really doesn't signify' (Rushdie 2000, 413). However, he remains racialised phenotypically by both biopoliticians and civilian subjects. Rushdie, even in the novel in which he suggests most vividly the possibility of opposing racist biopolitical technologies and discourses, offers only an attenuated potentiality of effective resistance.

In Rushdie's novels phenotypical racism persists because constructed superraces continue to consider skin colour a signifier of racial difference. It also endures because biopolitical governments, while ceasing to racialise explicitly on the grounds of phenotype, absorb phenotypical racism into similarly exclusionary discourses of ethnicity or culture that securitise the state by appealing to the superrace's enduring phenotypical racism. Rushdie further suggests, particularly in *Verses*, that this securitisation proves effective because the resistance of these subraces to biopolitical oppression entrenches the superrace's belief in their ungrateful intransigence and thus in their racial inferiority. By depicting how multiple forms of racism animate biopolitical technologies and protect the state from race war discourse by persuading the superrace of a threat from the subrace's otherness, Rushdie's fiction consistently indicates the near-impossibility of escaping race-thinking and racism.

In novels such as *Ground*, in which the British state asserts the otherness of non-white races without invoking phenotype explicitly, Rushdie depicts the ways in which complex and multiform discourses of ethnicity and culture have offered new ways for mid- to late twentieth-century biopolitical states to construct subraces and segment the populations they govern. After the atrocities committed by the Nazis – whose bio/thanatopolitical nature Foucault, Giorgio Agamben and Roberto Esposito examine – it became less acceptable for politicians to assert racial or phenotypical hierarchies overtly, particularly in Europe. Increasingly, racialising post-war

biopoliticians referred not to race but to ethnicity. They disavowed the explicit race-thinking now associated with the Third Reich's genocide while continuing to practice racial othering. In order to justify their continued discursive scission between superrace and subrace, these politicians eschewed the socially constructed conception of ethnicity posited by academics (see Maiello 1995, 99), instead asserting its primordialism. In Gilroy's words, '[t]hese formations [were] treated as if they spring, fully formed, from their own special viscera' (1993, 4).

The post-war racialising state's culturalist discourses have proven similarly likely to emphasise primordial ties, or at the very least the fixity of cultural groups within society. For Gilroy '[t]he logics of nature and culture have converged, and it is above all the power of race that ensures they speak in the same deterministic tongue' (2004, 6). Even those who accept that humans are near-identical biologically may still construct superraces and subraces on the grounds that the different customs, behaviour and history of other nationalities, colours or socio-economic groups make them inassimilable within the nation-state's safe, securitised biopolitical order. These discourses, which cloak racism in apparently more benign shrouds of authenticity and belonging, strengthen the biopolitical government by indirectly condoning the superrace's state-securitising phenotypical racism. Rushdie frequently depicts, as in *Verses* and *Ground*, how the racialising aspect of biopower persisted in twentieth-century politics even as discourses of government abjured overt racial hierarchising in favour of asserting ethnic and cultural alterity.

Rushdie's fiction suggests the difficulty of resisting these multiple racialisations through resistance organised along racial lines, and thus the endurance of the categories of superrace and subrace. Gilroy argues that '[f]or many racialised populations [subraces], "race" and the hard-won, oppositional identities it supports are not to be lightly or prematurely given up' (2000, 12). However, he warns that these often essentialist 'postures of resistance' (13) risk reifying the very racial categories which the biopolitical state uses to justify its punitive actions. In *Verses* efforts to reclaim blackness and the demonic as badges of pride cannot prevent the British state and the white superrace it constructs from viewing these signifiers as

marks of unruliness and racial inferiority. Rushdie's novels indicate frequently that this kind of oppositional (sub)race-thinking only fortifies (super)race-thinking.

Yet attempts by Rushdie's characters to resist racist biopolitical oppression not by asserting racial identity but by eschewing it also fail. Michael Dillon argues that '[i]f you biopoliticise you will racialise' (2008, 188). As in *Midnight*, which portrays the Indian government's sterilisation programme as a targeted attempt to destroy alternatives to Indira Gandhi as the symbol of the nation, Rushdie's novels suggest not only the prevalence of interrelated phenotypical, culturalist and ethnicist racisms in twentieth-century polities but mirror Foucault by showing that a state may use any criteria it desires to construct a subrace from which the superrace must be securitised. However, Rushdie also indirectly problematises Foucault's Eurocentric, state-centric conception of biopolitical racism and government. His fiction explores the enduring influence of colonialism on many of the state's racisms, and the ways in which the often phenotypical racism of superraces enables the state better to securitise itself. A biopolitical reading reveals that Rushdie imagines a greater plethora of racialisations, prejudices and (often violent) identitarian conflicts than critics have supposed, and thus affirms more firmly than ever that his fiction indicates the near-impossibility of constructing a non-racialising *communitas*. It therefore asserts the necessity of an incorporative theory of biopolitics and race, if biopolitical literary criticism is to analyse fictional depictions of biopower as comprehensively as possible.

Through their depictions of multiple racialisations and failed attempts to resist them, Rushdie's novels demonstrate the difficulty of moving beyond the phenotypical 'frontier of the skin' (2000, 413) or beyond the concept of race and its effects in general. Race-thinking pervades biopolitical nation-states in his fiction: from the phenotypical racism and biopolitical state sterilisation programme he represents in *Midnight*; to the rampant racial prejudice of the British state and public in *Verses* and *Ground*; to *Fury*'s descriptions of ethnic conflicts and racial discrimination that countermand *Ground*'s nascent suggestion that the frontier of the skin can be transcended. Rushdie criticises the racism of twentieth-century states and

superraces scathingly, while portraying consistently their vast capacity and ability to discriminate on the basis of gender, wealth, sexuality, race, ethnicity, culture or whatever constructed category they wished.

Biopolitics and Racism in *Midnight's Children*

In *Midnight's Children* (1981) Rushdie offers an encomium to the pluralist, egalitarian ideal of the Indian nation. However, he also criticises the racialisations, enacted on the bases of phenotype, gender, nation and region by India's people and its biopolitical nation-state alike, that he suggests have increasingly prevented this ideal from animating India's daily life and politics since independence in 1947. As the narrative unfolds India progressively becomes a space whose hugely numerous and diverse social groups racialise and are racialised in turn. Consequently, the possibility wanes that India may become an inclusive *communitas* that accepts these groups' differences.

Early in *Midnight* Rushdie explores how colonial biopower influenced the racism of Indian civilians. He depicts a fictional post-independence Indian socio-economic elite that continues to prize whiteness and behaviours associated with their former British rulers. The novel's later chapters focus more on how the central government's increasingly racialising practices after independence diminished the potentiality of *communitas* in India. Rushdie fictionalises the gradual erosion within the nation's politics of the pluralist ideals of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first post-independence Prime Minister.[1] Nehru wrote of 'the mass of the Indian people, in their infinite diversity and yet their amazing unity' (1969, 35). He advocated 'equal opportunities for all and no political, economic, or social barriers in the way of any individual or group' (521). Nehru associated national stability and worth with a pluralist acceptance of diversity, a politics that *Midnight*'s protagonist Saleem Sinai shares.

Rushdie contrasts Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister with that of his daughter Indira Gandhi, particularly during the period of 'Emergency' (2008, 597) between 1975 and 1977 in which democratic norms including elections and *habeas corpus* were suspended. By depicting the biopolitical

sterilisation campaign that her government carried out during this period as a targeted attempt to remove perceived threats to India's security, Rushdie suggests that India's central government in the post-independence era has become marked increasingly by the autocracy, racism and technologies of biopower that characterised British colonial rule. He presents the possibility of an inclusive nation by establishing Saleem and his diverse collective of magical children as symbols of a desirable pluralist India. However, *Midnight* emphasises most of all the prevalence of racially-othering discourses and practices in India. Rushdie stresses the perseverance of colonial-influenced phenotypical racism, and by describing the ways in which Indira Gandhi's government uses discourses and technologies of biopower to racialise, persecute and eventually sterilise the children in the novel, he indicates that the post-independence Indian nation-state has disavowed pluralism and tolerance.

White Equals Might: Phenotypical Racism in *Midnight's Children*

The sterilisation of Saleem Sinai and his fellow magical children towards the end of *Midnight* constitutes the novel's most vivid description of the racialising biopolitics that Rushdie suggests has come increasingly to characterise Indian central government since Nehru's death. However, in its early chapters *Midnight* also depicts the pervasiveness of race-thinking outside state apparatuses in twentieth-century India. Rushdie represents racism among ordinary Indians as the legacy of British colonialism. Similarly to the late nineteenth-century biologists whose work provided a rationale for colonial expansion and biopolitical administration, many of Rushdie's Indian characters in *Midnight* think of themselves not only in terms of race but in terms of phenotypical hierarchies. Members of Saleem's family talk openly of white skin's desirability. After independence his father Ahmed Sinai forms part of a socio-economic elite which seeks to imitate behaviours associated with the British and which not only prizes whiteness but achieves it. Rushdie uses the literary device of imagining a supernatural post-independence India in which gaining wealth turns people white, in order to evoke the difficulty of eradicating colonial race-thinking and racial hierarchies that associate whiteness with success, beauty and power from post-independence Indian society.

The British colonised India through a conjunction of biopolitical technologies and a discursive racism that fed into them. One such technology was the British-run education system which, characteristically of the optimisations of life that biopolitical states enact, was established to aid India's colonial government's smooth running rather than for altruistic reasons. Thomas Babington Macaulay's notorious 'Minute on Education' of 1835 betrays these administrative concerns. Macaulay argued that the British Empire in India needed to establish 'a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect' (1958, 601). In *Midnight* Rushdie explores this racialising biopolitical discourse's lasting effects on twentieth-century India. He indicates that because the white-dominated colonial government sought to create a class of interpreters through behavioural conditioning and racialising discourse, India's post-independence socio-economic elite, despite being no longer answerable to the British Empire, continued to prize the morals, opinions and even the phenotype of their former rulers. By suggesting that the transfer of power from British to Indian hands left colonial racism intact, *Midnight*'s early chapters evoke the difficulty of overcoming these associations psychologically and politically.

In *Midnight* the behavioural continuity between old and new elites means that colonial discourses of Eurocentrism and racialisation persist in India after independence. Rushdie uses allegory to suggest that the conditions for Indian self-rule, set by a British imperial machine characterised by discursive racism, biopolitical technologies and economic neoliberalism, led to a post-independence nation run along similar lines. The sale of William Methwold's estate at the precise moment of India's independence to a group of wealthy Indian families, including Saleem's, on the proviso 'that the entire contents be retained by the new owners' (Rushdie 2008, 126), represents the handover of India in miniature. As Macaulay advised, Methwold selects a class of interpreters to take over, ensuring that they will conduct themselves in much the same way as their predecessors:

'My notion,' Mr Methwold explains, staring at the setting sun, 'is to stage my own transfer of assets. Leave behind everything you see? Select suitable persons – such as yourself, Mr Sinai! – hand everything over absolutely intact: in tiptop working order. Look around you: everything's in fine fettle, don't you agree? Tickety-boo, we used to say. Or, as you say in Hindustani: Sabkuch ticktock hai. Everything's just fine.'

'Nice people are buying the houses,' Ahmed offers Amina his handkerchief, 'nice new neighbours…that Mr Homi Catrack in Versailles Villa, Parsee chap, but a racehorse-owner. Produces films and all. And the Ibrahims in Sans Souci, Nussie Ibrahim is having a baby, too, you can be friends…and the old man Ibrahim, with so-big sisal farms in Africa. Good family.' (128)

In this section of *Midnight* Rushdie evokes the historical transfer of power from British hands and its attendant creation of a post-independence Indian elite that felt bound to respect and imitate the political practices and social mores of the British colonists. As Methwold watches the sun set on the British Empire – here Rushdie plays on the well-worn phrase that argued for the impossibility of this occurrence – he outlines his intention to '[s]elect suitable persons' (128) to take over the house and its contents, meaning the rich and well-connected. By juxtaposing Methwold's plan with Ahmed Sinai's assessment of his putative new neighbours, in which his characterisation of the Ibrahims and Catracks as 'nice' and '[g]ood' (128) appears occasioned entirely by their wealth and business interests, Rushdie criticises the way in which post-independence India became ruled by a wealthy, British-influenced elite.

Rushdie further indicates the influence of Methwold and British colonial discourse when he details the gradual assimilation of the house's occupants into behaviours associated with the British. Rather than shaping their space they become shaped by it, taking on 'imitation Oxford drawls' (131) and growing to enjoy evening cocktails and budgerigars. Through 'the subtle magic of Methwold's Estate' (132) Rushdie suggests allegorically how in order to take their place among the post-independence socio-

economic elite, Indians have often imitated the colonisers' behaviour. However, the traits of Rushdie's middle-class Indian characters which arise from the positive qualities they ascribe to the British colonisers exceed a desire to emulate their behaviour. The post-independence socio-economic elite in *Midnight* also crave whiteness. In the case of businessmen such as Ahmed they achieve it supernaturally through the effort of taking their place at the forefront of India's economy. They thus contribute further towards preserving colonial hierarchies and discourses of race.

Rushdie depicts colonial-influenced phenotypical racism amongst Indians both before and after independence. This racism proves rife within Saleem's wealthy family prior to their becoming part of India's British-imitating post-independence elite. Saleem's cousin Zohra demonstrates a mixture of pity and contempt towards darker pigmentations: 'How awful to be black, cousinji, to wake every morning and see it staring at you, in the mirror to be shown proof of your inferiority! Of course they know; even blackies know white is nicer, don'tyouthinkso?' (89-90) That Saleem's mother Amina later sees a white beggar, and feels 'embarrassment, because he was white, and begging was not for white people' (106), indicates the veracity of Zohra's statement. Saleem's family associate whiteness with wealth, beauty and superiority. Similarly to their racialising colonial administrators, they perceive a natural order of white elites and black subraces. Moreover, *Midnight* uses the supernatural disturbingly to suggest this racial hierarchy's immutability even after independence.

Rushdie represents the fixity of discursive associations of whiteness with political and economic power by describing magical phenotypical transmogrifications. Multiple characters in *Midnight* find their phenotypes altering from dark to white. These transformations countermand Macaulay's argument that a body can be defined as 'Indian in blood and colour' (1958, 601), and the similar claims of nineteenth-century racialising biologists. Rushdie suggests that environment rather than innate biological characteristics produces phenotype, as epigeneticists discovered in the late twentieth century. However, because the phenotypical transformations of India's post-independence socio-economic elite in the novel occur as a

result of their increasing influence and wealth they leave received discourses of white superiority intact.

Saleem's businessman father Ahmed Sinai not only imitates the behaviour of British colonials on Methwold's Estate, but his growing power in post-independence India transforms him supernaturally into a white man. Characteristically of his family members, Ahmed associates whiteness with power, wealth and superiority, arguing that '[a]ll the best people are white under the skin' (Rushdie 2008, 247). He reifies colonial notions of subrace and superrace, a self-loathing that Frantz Fanon argues was common under colonialism: 'For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white' (1986, 12). In *Midnight* this destiny proves not only desirable but achievable in post-independence India, thus constituting a further reification. After 1947 a second wealthy white elite replaces its departed predecessor. Saleem attributes the phenotypical change to the effort of seizing control of the country. He thus augments the novel's description of Methwold's Estate in indicating a continuity between India's post-independence socio-economic elite and their former colonial masters: 'the gargantuan (even heroic) efforts involved in taking over from the British and becoming masters of their own destinies had drained the colour from their cheeks' (Rushdie 2008, 248). Having been convinced by British colonial discourse of the white race's superiority and that of the British tastes and morals that Macaulay lionised, the businessmen of post-independence India leave the nation's racial hierarchy virtually untouched. They do so partly because they emulate the behaviour of the white British colonials and prize whiteness, but also partly because they are forced supernaturally into a white phenotype. Rushdie criticises British colonial racialising but, through his novel's supernatural elements, affirms the extreme difficulty of altering perceptions of whiteness as aesthetically desirable and socio-economically beneficial.

Rushdie suggests in *Midnight* that the continuing discursive and economic strength of whiteness is neither the only impediment to *communitas* in post-independence India nor the most severe. Race-thinking proves prevalent psychologically and discursively amongst the new socio-economic elite in the novel's fictional version of India. However, post-

Nehru, it also comes pervasively to inspire the (bio)politics of the nation's government, which possesses far more ability than ordinary citizens to affect the lives of constructed subraces. Rushdie maps a trajectory in which Nehru's pluralist, inclusive politics gives way to intensely biopolitical government under his daughter Indira Gandhi. Saleem's plural, diverse collective, which attempts to resist state biopower, falls victim to a biopolitical campaign of sterilisation through which the state asserts its power over their bodies and numbers. Rushdie thus indicates the veracity of Foucault's argument that state biopower's strength arises from its ability to construct race using any criteria it desires and to use these racialising discourses to animate powerful biopolitical technologies.

Jawaharlal Nehru's Pluralist Politics

Rushdie's novels and essays alike demonstrate his affinity with the pluralist, inclusive politics of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. In *Imaginary Homelands* (1992) Rushdie argues that 'Nehru represents the [Indian] dream's noblest part, its most idealistic phase. Indira Gandhi, always the pragmatist, often unscrupulously so, becomes a figure of decline' (1992, 48). *Midnight* depicts this perceived decline within India's post-independence politics by contrasting Nehru's attempts at constructing a democratic, egalitarian nation with his daughter's autocracy and biopolitics.

The chapters of *Midnight* that Rushdie sets before India's independence chart the nascent coalescing of multiple identities into Indian nationhood. Rather than representing the often violent thanatopolitical methods by which India retained possession of Kashmir, as he does in *Shalimar*, Rushdie uses the character of Saleem's grandfather Aadam Aziz to emphasise how Kashmiris embraced the Indian nation voluntarily within the inclusive Nehruvian framework. By tracing Aadam's progression from Kashmiri to Kashmiri Indian, Rushdie suggests the Indian nation's theoretical ability to include even those at its geographical margins within its polity. From the beginning of the novel Aadam perceives 'the narrowness, the proximity of the horizon' (Rushdie 2008, 5) in Kashmir and prizes a diverse, hybrid community that incorporates many regions, peoples and races. He rejects the philosophy of Tai the boatman, 'the living antithesis

of[...]belief in the inevitability of change' (11). He prefers to put his faith in the Nehruvian ideal of a modern, inclusive Indian nation. His experiences at the Amritsar Massacre in 1919 produce an allegiance to the multiplicitous Indian nation attempting to resist British rule. Years later he remembers, 'I started off as a Kashmiri and not much of a Muslim. Then I got a bruise on the chest that turned me into an Indian' (47). Through Aadam's affiliation with Nehru's political project – albeit an affiliation characterised by support for the anti-Partition Free Islam Convocation rather than Nehru's Congress – Rushdie depicts how in the years before independence even people from India's most contentiously held region affiliated themselves with Nehru's conception of the nation and thus became Indian.

Rushdie further accentuates the desirability of Nehru's pluralist ideal by having Saleem argue for a connection between himself and the Prime Minister in his idiosyncratic historiographical narrative of post-independence India. Rushdie juxtaposes Saleem's birth with Nehru's 'Tryst with Destiny' speech made at the moment of India's independence:

> So I was brought to my mother; and she never doubted my authenticity for an instant. Ahmed Sinai, toe in splint, sat on her bed as she said: 'Look, janum, the poor fellow, he's got his grandfather's nose.' He watched mystified as she made sure there was only one head; and then she relaxed completely, understanding that even fortune-tellers have only limited gifts.
>
> 'Janum,' my mother said excitedly, 'you must call the papers. Call them at the *Times of India*. What did I tell you? I won.'
>
> '…This is no time for petty or destructive criticism,' Jawaharlal Nehru told the Assembly. 'No time for ill-will. We have to build the noble mansion of free India, where all her children may dwell.' A flag unfurls: it is saffron, white and green. (157-58)

Having underscored Nehru's pluralist exhortations to build a nation 'where all her children may dwell' (158), Rushdie then establishes further parallels between Nehru and his protagonist through a fictional letter that the Prime Minister sends to the newborn Saleem: 'My belated congratulations on the

happy accident of your moment of birth![...]We shall be watching over your life with the closest attention; it will be, in a sense, the mirror of our own' (167). While Nehru is not aware of Saleem's magical powers, Saleem takes the Prime Minister's apparent interest in him as proof of a great destiny. When Saleem discovers the 'exotic multiplicity of [the Midnight's Children's] gifts' (275), which Rushdie associates closely with the flowering of India's independence and which represents a diverse profusion of India and Indians that tallies with the author's preferred hybrid national ideal, he views the children as a mirror of the nation. He attempts to realise his perceived destiny by shaping this multiplicitous collective along inclusive, Nehruvian lines into a political movement to change India for the better.

Hence, when Indira Gandhi has the children sterilised during her biopolitical Emergency, Rushdie suggests that she largely excises symbolically from the public sphere the incorporative, pluralist and nebulous Nehruvian conception of Indianness that *Midnight*'s early chapters lionise. Rushdie represents Nehru's India as a nation – and a nation-state – that strives to include as many different bodies as possible within its *bios*. However, this inclusivity wanes under Nehru's daughter, who seeks instead to eject Indians from this *bios* into subracial categories that her government constructs. She does so through a campaign of sterilisation whose stated aim – to eliminate poverty – masks a securitising, racialising biopolitical operation aimed at destroying the symbols of Nehruvian pluralism that countermand her construction of herself and her family as the embodiment of India.

The State Biopolitics of Sterilisation

Although *Midnight* lauds Nehru's pluralist politics, Rushdie's fictional portrayal of post-independence India also criticises his failings. The nation-state that Nehru established after independence included mechanisms liable to turn biopolitical and racialising in the wrong hands. As Paul Brass observes, 'the power to declare a national emergency that, in effect, may convert the country into a unitary state' (1994, 63) – Indira Gandhi's biopolitical use of which Rushdie depicts in *Midnight* – was written into India's constitution under Nehru's watch. Nehru's distribution of power

within the political system was much less egalitarian than his identity politics. In *The Discovery of India* (1946) he argued that '[t]he idea of planning and a planned society is accepted now in varying degrees by almost everyone' (Nehru 1969, 501). He advocated 'equal opportunities for all' (521), but saw the state as the vehicle for implementing these opportunities. He thus invested large amounts of power within central state mechanisms. In *Midnight* Rushdie criticises Nehru's planned economy by having Saleem Sinai describe the mixed success rate of the government's Soviet-style Five Year Plans (2008, 285). Saleem also hints occasionally at incipient autocratic tendencies within Nehru's government. For example, he details how Congress hires a gang of toughs to 'encourag[e] the electorate to use its vote with wisdom and care' (308) in the 1957 election. Rushdie depicts the Indian nation-state under Nehru as a potent tool for inclusivity, pluralism and socialism, but also as an apparatus whose bias towards centralisation enabled Indira Gandhi's future biopolitical oppression.

However, Rushdie emphasises Nehru's willingness to compromise and his inclusive rhetoric far more than his government's abuse of power. *Midnight*'s later chapters contrast Nehru's pluralist politics favourably with the government of his daughter Indira Gandhi, who Rushdie presents as much more willing to utilise the totalitarian potentiality within India's central state apparatuses. He does so most vividly through the episode in which her government has the Midnight's Children sterilised. Indira Gandhi militates against the diversity and pluralism of the Nehruvian ideal that the children represent symbolically by constructing them as a subrace and using biopolitical technologies to prevent them from reproducing. She complements this process through a supernatural programme that seeks to entrench her own dynasty's power through cloning her family members. By showing how his fictionalised Indira Gandhi uses state apparatuses to destroy magical symbols of pluralism and replace them with magical symbols of autocracy, Rushdie mirrors Foucault in indicating the devastating power of securitising biopolitical technologies based on infinitely variable and malleable racial criteria.

The historical sterilisation campaign upon which Rushdie's novel draws employed the categorising and organising technologies of central planning and statistical methods through which biopolitics aims, as Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue, at 'an absolute and total ordering of[...]social subjectivity and social life as a whole under a unified sovereign power' (2006, 161). The deleterious effects of these technologies were felt overwhelmingly by India's poor. Brass writes that during the sterilisation programme's height – the Emergency of 1975-1977 – government employees in some states were 'given quotas to fulfil to have ordinary members of the public sterilised' (1994, 42). In order to achieve these quotas, officials began to use increasingly coercive methods. Because India's poor were less mobile than the middle classes and less able to bribe officials to avoid being vasectomised, they suffered disproportionately from these biopolitical statistical measures (see Tarlo 2003, 149). The state's sterilisation programme constituted, in Stephen Legg's words, 'an exceptional biopolitical stripping of the urban poor' (2007, 281).

However, Rushdie's novel deviates from this conception of the biopolitical sterilisation programme during the Emergency as a campaign that harmed the poor in a misguided quota-driven attempt to improve their lot. Instead he evokes the historical Indira Gandhi's autocracy by depicting the programme that her fictional equivalent institutes as a deliberate, targeted effort to create new symbols of Indianness by replacing the Midnight's Children's multiplicity and magic with clones of her family through a campaign of state racism that uses similar quotas. Hardt and Negri define state racism as

> discussions of demographic explosions and population crises[...][which] are not really oriented toward either bettering the lives of the poor or maintaining a sustainable total global population in line with the capacities of the planet but are rather concerned primarily with which social groups reproduce and which do not. (2006, 166)

In *Midnight* Indira Gandhi identifies the magical Midnight's Children as a social group which should not reproduce. As Saleem argues, 'the truest,

deepest motive behind the declaration of a State of Emergency was the smashing, the pulverising, the irreversible discombobulation of the children of midnight' (Rushdie 2008, 597). The privileged group whose reproduction must, conversely, be encouraged numbers only the Prime Minister and her family. Through this state racism she attempts to entrench herself as the symbol of the Indian nation, a megalomania which Rushdie indicates through the election slogan, 'India is Indira and Indira is India' (587). She does so by using biopolitical practices to prevent alternative symbols of Nehruvian multiplicity and pluralism from producing further potentially magical offspring, and by using a mysterious supernatural cloning technology to bolster the numbers of her dynasty.

Rushdie describes the government's move against the Midnight's Children not as an act of political oppression aimed at securitising the nation against human encumbrances which threaten its safety and stability, but as an effort to securitise Indira's personal power by erasing Nehruvian political pluralism and replacing it with a personality cult based around her and her dynasty. Often Rushdie's fiction re-imagines historical oppressions by regimes of biopower 'where life', in Michael Dillon's words, proves 'obdurately resistant to biopolitical revision, [and] biopolitics specifies correction and punishment' (2008, 168). Rushdie suggests, as when he depicts the British government's response to the race riots of the early 1980s in *Verses*, that twentieth-century biopolitical governments tended to represent political dissidents as a subracial threat to the population on account of their unruliness and resistance. However, by the time the Midnight's Children are sterilised their political movement has long since disintegrated. Rushdie establishes the children as a symbol of a politics that welcomes free and frank discussion of a wide range of viewpoints through their debates in 'the lok sabha or parliament of [Saleem's] brain' (2008, 314), and through their destruction evokes the possibility of a new, as yet unthought form of pluralist politics. Yet the Midnight Children's Conference fractures without accomplishing anything tangible in resisting state biopower. If Rushdie's Indira Gandhi feared political dissent from the children she would simply have imprisoned them along with her major political opponents. Her targeted sterilisation campaign against them

demonstrates that she aims to remove them from the gene pool. Rushdie portrays the children's sterilisation as an act of state racism, an attempt to prevent 'the very essence of multiplicity' (317) from producing yet more multiplicity. He depicts further state racism through the government's concomitant programme of cloning its Prime Minister's family supernaturally.

In describing the government's raid on the Magicians' Ghetto, Rushdie juxtaposes these two aspects of Indira Gandhi's state racism:

> there were figures descending from vans: a brightly-coloured tent was being hastily erected, and there were camp beds and surgical equipment…and now from the vans there poured a stream of finely-dressed young ladies of high birth and foreign education, and then a second river of equally-well-dressed young men: volunteers, Sanjay Youth volunteers, doing their bit for society…but then I realised no, not volunteers, because all *the* men had the same curly hair and lips-like-women's-labia, and the elegant ladies were all identical, too, their features corresponding precisely to those of Sanjay's Menaka[…]I was shown once again that the ruling dynasty of India had learned how to replicate itself; but then there was no time to think, the numberless labia-lips and lanky-beauties were seizing magicians and old beggars, people were being dragged towards the vans, and now a rumour spread through the colony of magicians: 'They are doing nasbandi – sterilisation is being performed!'[…]the air is thick with yells and missiles and the elegant labia-lips and lanky-beauties are retreating before the harsh fury of the illusionists; and there goes Picture Singh, leading the assault against the tent of vasectomy…Parvati or Laylah, disobeying orders, is at my side now, saying, 'My God, what are they –', and at this moment a new and more formidable assault is unleashed upon the slum: troops are sent in against magicians, women and children. (599-600, original emphasis)

Rushdie uses the 'stream' or 'river' of volunteers, which sweeps the slum dwellers swiftly along and uses the biopolitical tools of 'camp beds and

surgical equipment' (599) to sterilise them, to evoke the government sterilisation programme's efficiency. A 'new and more formidable assault' (600) of soldiers crushes any resistance. Rushdie compares the slum dwellers' helplessness against this biopolitical operation with the disenfranchising symbolic power of the Gandhi dynasty that enacts it. He communicates this superrace's might by hinting at a mysterious government cloning programme. 'The Sanjay Youth Movement [which] was particularly effective in the sterilisation campaign' (588) lives up to its name literally by comprising entirely clones of Indira Gandhi's son Sanjay and his wife Menaka. Saleem writes, 'all *the* men had the same curly hair and lips-like-women's-labia, and the elegant ladies were all identical, too, their features corresponding precisely to those of Sanjay's Menaka[...]I was shown once again that the ruling dynasty of India had learned how to replicate itself' (599). Through the italicised '*the*' Rushdie emphasises the sameness of the men involved in the 'civic-beautification and vasectomy programmes' (603). Menaka's presence affirms the fertility of Indira Gandhi's family as opposed to the sterility of the subraces it constructs. In this section Rushdie contrasts the replication of the same few bodies of an elite with its efforts to prevent a larger, more multiplicitous social group from producing more multiplicity.

Rushdie indicates the devastating strength of the Indian state's biopolitical operations by detailing the destruction and numerous sterilisations that the raid on the Magicians' Ghetto causes. However, the clones' assault against the slum proves a 'diversionary manoeuvre' (603) to mask a targeted operation of state racism not against the poor but against the Midnight's Children. As Saleem argues, 'those who would be gods fear no one so much as other potential deities' (612). In *Midnight* Indira Gandhi's biopolitical Emergency represents an attempt to use biopolitical technologies to extinguish a potent symbol of Nehruvian multiplicity while associating her family with the idea of the Indian nation. This act of state racism constitutes the final point on the trajectory of decline from pluralism to racialising biopower that Rushdie's novel identifies in India's post-independence politics. In suggesting the veracity of Foucault's argument that biopolitical governments wield effective oppressive technologies

animated by an infinitely malleable racism, *Midnight*'s portrayal of India evokes little hope for escape from race-thinking by the end of the novel.

Midnight does not excise completely the potentiality of effective resistance to biopolitical racialisation. By showing that Indira Gandhi loses power, Rushdie disproves the idea that 'Indira is India' (587). Through describing the disintegration of Saleem and the Midnight Children's Conference, and the possible dissemination of Saleem's narrative indictment of the Emergency, the novel gestures towards the possibility of an as yet unthought future form of pluralist politics. However, Rushdie depicts racism as prevalent amongst post-independence India's population, and biopolitics as enduring within its state apparatuses. Characters discriminate on the grounds of phenotype throughout the novel, and Rushdie portrays Nehru's pluralist government as a lull between racialising British colonial biopower and racialising Indian state biopower. Just as Rushdie uses Ahmed Sinai's phenotypical racism to suggest a continuity between colonial and post-independence views of whiteness, *Midnight* reveals a technological continuity between the British Empire's racialising biopower and that of Indira's Congress. It thus indicates the severe difficulty of eradicating biopower and racism in twentieth-century polities.

In *Verses* Rushdie charts a similar continuity between technologies and discourses of colonial and neo-colonial biopower. Biopolitical technologies have been feeding back from the colonies to the metropolitan centre since the nineteenth century (see Gilroy 2004, 8). Rushdie suggests in his fictional exploration of race relations in post-imperial Britain that because of increased immigration the British state has been able to racialise as it did in the days of the British Empire by using these technologies to subjugate a new, internally colonised, non-white population. Moreover, he describes the buttressing of the state's racism by the phenotypical and bioculturalist racism of the white superrace it constructs. Whereas *Midnight* invites a biopolitical reading informed primarily by Foucault's conception of state biopolitics as animated by a theoretically infinite variety of racisms, *Verses* depicts civilian racism more vividly as an adjunct to the smooth operation of the state's biopolitical technologies. Delineating accurately the lesser potentiality of resistance to racism that the novel evokes thus requires

– and hence indicates the utility of – a biopolitical literary criticism that augments Foucault's state-centric political philosophy with genealogies of para-state racisms.

Biopolitics and Racism in *The Satanic Verses*

Midnight depicts an attenuated potentiality of effective resistance to race-thinking on the parts of biopolitical governments and superraces, but *The Satanic Verses* (1988) evokes no such possibility in its portrayal of a post-war Britain ruled by a racialising government which after decolonisation has become, in Timothy Brennan's words, 'a colonising spirit with little to colonise but itself' (1989, xi). Rushdie explores how Britain's post-imperial government and the nation's majority population, shorn of external spaces to colonise, sought to bolster their crumbling sense of national and racial identity by constructing the country's non-white population as subrace. In *Verses* white British citizens, and biopolitical state institutions including immigration centres and the police, punish both non-whites' efforts at assimilation and their assertions of cultural difference. Attempts by the racialised to mimic the white British superrace's behaviours fail because of this superrace's enduring phenotypical racism. Conversely, efforts at reclaiming words such as 'devil' and 'nigger' discursively prove futile because the majority of white British people continue to construct these terms as pejoratives and view their wielders accordingly. Resistance which transmutes oppositional discourse into violence only confirms racist stereotypes of non-whites as savages. Rushdie suggests in *Verses* that the power of neo-colonial biopolitical technologies and discourses, inside and outside state apparatuses, dooms to failure all attempts to escape race-thinking in post-imperial Britain, whether they take assimilationist or oppositional form.

Chamcha as *Chamcha*: Failed Assimilation among the New Racists

Through the failed efforts of his protagonist Saladin Chamcha to become accepted as British, in *Verses* Rushdie affirms that bioculturalist racism among Britain's white population and its biopolitical government alike renders futile the efforts of non-whites to assimilate themselves within

British culture. Saladin, an Indian who adores and admires the British, and hence imitates British customs, a British accent and even British racism, finds himself nevertheless constructed as subrace because of his phenotype. The ideologies of cultural and ethnic hermeticism carry such discursive power in post-imperial Britain that his love for his adopted country cannot save him from detention and torture by its racialising biopolitical government, nor from racial abuse by the white superrace this government constructs.

Verses indicates the inadequacy of Foucault's state-centric, Eurocentric political philosophy to a comprehensive biopolitical reading of literature without its being complemented by genealogies of para-state and colonialism-influenced racisms. In the post-imperial British moment upon which Rushdie's novel draws, white Britons and their government continued to racialise on the basis of phenotype in spite of the findings of contemporary epigeneticists who showed skin colour to be produced by environment rather than genetics. As this chapter has argued, in the latter half of the twentieth century politicians and the superraces they constructed became less likely to practice overt phenotypical or biological racism. Instead they incorporated it within racialising discourses of ethnicity and/or culture. Historians of racism(s) have charted the rise, within post-war Britain, of a bioculturalist so-called New Racism which, as Tariq Modood argues, was 'simultaneously culturalist and biological', with the latter being 'the less explanatory aspect of a complex phenomenon' (1997, 156).

The New Racism's newness comes not from its racialising partially on grounds extraneous to biology (155) but from its incorporative, nationally situated nature, which hearkens back to Britain's supposedly glorious imperial past and blurs the distinction between race and nation. For Gilroy 'its novelty lies in the capacity to link discourses of patriotism, nationalism, xenophobia, Englishness, Britishness, militarism and gender difference into a complex system which gives "race" its contemporary meaning' (2002, 43). In the absence of an external colonial population to racialise and hence against which to define themselves, white British racists assert aggressively the unity and homogeneity of their culture and of the white phenotype, so as to avoid having to examine the emptiness of the categories by which they

construct themselves as superrace (see Hall 1995, 71). Hence, they deny that non-white subraces can be assimilated into this atavistic white British culture.

Conversely, in *Verses* Rushdie suggests the multiplicity, processuality and malleability of Britishness. The novel affirms that British identity arises not from a so-called British race's innate biological characteristics but as a product of discourse, politics and environment. The latter of these proves central to an episode in which Gibreel Farishta, Rushdie's second protagonist, uses magical powers to change the behaviour of London's inhabitants tangibly and thus reveals the mutability of British culture. Believing himself to possess the ability to change the capital's climate, Gibreel hypothesises 'that the moral fuzziness of the English [is] meteorologically induced' (Rushdie 2006c, 354). His litany of 'the benefits of the proposed metamorphosis of London into a tropical city' (354) encompasses 'vivid and expansive patterns of behaviour among the populace' (355). He predicts that British culture will be altered drastically by a change in its physical environment:

> Religious fervour, political ferment, renewal of interest in the intelligentsia. No more British reserve; hot-water bottles to be banished forever, replaced in the foetid nights by the making of slow and odorous love. Emergence of new social values: friends to commence dropping in on one another without making appointments, closure of old folks' homes, emphasis on the extended family. (355)

Emboldened, he looses 'the unimaginably colossal, elemental forces of the transformative process' (355) on the city.

It appears initially that this apparent alteration constitutes one of Gibreel's characteristic hallucinations. Yet Rushdie later reveals that, as with the changes in phenotype amongst India's post-independence business elite in *Midnight*, his protagonist has effected a real transformation (356). Not all of Gibreel's predicted alterations in British behaviour come to pass, but 'political ferment' (355) results from his actions. Rushdie associates the heatwave closely with a growing racial tension and societal

68

instability in the London of his novel: 'The temperature continued to rise[…]the heatwave reached its highest point, and stayed up there so long that the whole city, its edifices, its waterways, its inhabitants, came perilously close to the boil' (420). Although he depicts the racism of the British state, its institutions and its people as the prevailing cause of the Brickhall riots, he suggests that London's Gibreel-induced heatwave contributes towards the violence's intensity. By showing how London's environment shapes its denizens' behaviour and culture, Rushdie criticises characterisations of Britishness as biological and immutable.

However, while Rushdie in *Verses* indicates British culture's malleability, he also acknowledges the great discursive power of the exclusionary discourse of British New Racism. He exposes this bioculturalist post-war racism, which he portrays as endemic within Britain's white population, by depicting its continuing racialisation of even those non-whites who prove keenest to assimilate and who subscribe to the fixed notion of Britishness that the New Racists construct. In detailing the failure of Saladin Chamcha's attempts to be accepted as British by affecting an ideal of Britishness that imitates the New Racism's conservatism and even its race-thinking, Rushdie suggests that, because of the phenotypical racism of much of the white British population, 'from Indianness to Englishness [is] an immeasurable distance' (41).

An Indian-born British citizen obsessed with becoming British, Saladin perceives Britishness as a cultural given but thinks that he can attain it despite being a non-white foreigner. His stage name, Chamcha, translates aptly as 'Mister Toady' (54). Similarly to the residents of Methwold's Estate in *Midnight*, Saladin affects the opinions, morals, tastes and prejudices of his idea of the archetypal Englishman. He attempts to reject completely his past as an Indian, eschewing the possibility of a synthesised, culturally hybrid self. Rather than identifying behaviours and lifestyles which constitute new ways of being British he rejects the idea that Britishness can be altered, even by certain of the nation's own citizens.

Rushdie presents Saladin's ideal of Britishness as fixed, exclusionary, conservative and imperialist: similar to that of the New

Racists. Donning a bowler hat (87) and a 'narrow, haughty demeanour' (135), he affects the bearing of a stiff, respectable middle-class Englishman. He strives towards a 'moral code' of '[a]ssiduity, fastidiousness, moderation, restraint, self-reliance, probity, [and] family life' (257) that for him constitutes the essence of Britishness. In a further attempt to assimilate, Saladin augments this cultural conservatism by joining the majority of white Britons in *Verses* in constructing non-white bodies as subraces. At one point he remarks, 'Damn all Indians' (137). He later reacts with horror when he finds that he is 'entertaining romantic notions about a black woman' (170). Despite his former (and, as Rushdie later stresses, current) status as a colonised body, Saladin even feels a nostalgia for Empire typical of New Racism: 'Empire was no more, but still he knew "all that was good and living within him" to have been "made, shaped and quickened" by his encounter with this islet of sensibility, surrounded by the cool sense of the sea' (398).[2]

Yet Saladin's adoption of an exclusionary neo-imperial discourse of Britishness fails to inure him from the very same discourse's oppressive effects when white Britons subject him to it. Rushdie indicates how white British citizens' racism on the grounds of phenotype, ethnicity and culture endures even in the face of attempts at assimilation from non-white bodies. Saladin fails in his quest to become his ideal of 'a goodandproper Englishman' (43). His attempts to be accepted as British founder not just because his mask slips, his performance falters or his voice reverts to its natural accent (49), but because white British people continue to construct him as subrace. For example, the television producer Hal Valance informs Saladin when firing him from his job as a voice actor, '[y]our profile's wrong, if you follow: with you in the show it's just too damn racial' (265). Among *Verses*' white Britons, Valance is by no means alone in his race-thinking. From businesspeople lamenting competition from 'Pakis' (299) to independent political activists – one woman hands Gibreel 'a racist text demanding the "repatriation" of the country's black citizenry' (326) – Rushdie's novel depicts a Britain teeming with racist citizens.

However, as with the sterilisation campaign that Rushdie describes in *Midnight*, the most deleterious effects of race-thinking in *Verses* occur when it informs the biopolitical state's racialising workings. The abuse

Saladin suffers when incarcerated in an immigration centre under suspicion of being an illegal alien confirms that while he may have an 'Englished soul' (439), the New Racism's discursive power renders attaining an Englished skin or race impossible. The immigration officers' actions possess the ability to construct racial difference – a power Rushdie figures characteristically through the literary device of supernatural physical transformation – and to place non-white immigrants like Saladin into a biopolitical state of exception. In *Verses*' later chapters Rushdie suggests that this power to produce racial difference renders the state's racist operations severely difficult to resist by depicting a resistance movement which, in attempting to oppose the biopolitical state by reclaiming non-normative appearances and behaviours, only entrenches the racism of the superrace that the state constructs.

Racism, Immigration and the Construction of Difference

Rushdie sets *Verses* during a period in which immigration into Britain was controlled very tightly and prejudice against immigrants was widespread. As Susan Smith writes, '[b]y 1976, Britain had tightened its immigration laws to reduce immigration to a trickle' (1993, 61). Moreover, she argues that in the 1980s 'the Thatcher government passed unnecessary and symbolically restrictive legislation which served largely to bolster national pride and undermine the status of "visible minorities"' (62).   In *Verses* Rushdie explores this historical mixture of strict immigration control and state-sanctioned racialisation by depicting how racism manifests within the biopolitical apparatus of the immigration service.   Saladin Chamcha's experiences in the state's immigration detention centre prove false his naïve appraisal of his comfortable standing in British society. The immigration officers within this state of exception not only treat Saladin as a non-British subrace in spite of his British citizenship and his imitating (his ideal of) British custom and behaviour, but transform him supernaturally into a devil through their violence and racialising discourse. Rushdie suggests through this device that the state's ability to persuade the superrace of subraces' monstrosity augments the securitising capacity of its biopolitical institutions to discipline and punish the racialised. By emboldening its constructed superrace to immunise itself against ostensibly savage subraces the state

in *Verses* uses racism to protect itself from the instability that race war discourse amongst a majority population can cause.

When Saladin plunges onto British soil following a plane explosion at 'twenty-nine thousand and two feet' (Rushdie 2006c, 3) he enters an unfamiliar zone of topographical and legal indistinction. Rushdie indicates that non-white immigrants in post-imperial Britain stand at permanent risk of becoming *homo sacer*, the inhabitants of the state of exception which, as Agamben argues, 'is neither external nor internal to the juridical order[…]a threshold, or a zone of indifference, where inside and outside do not exclude each other but rather blur with each other' (2005, 23). As soon as Saladin lands back in Britain following a trip home he perceives that he is not in the country he knows and treasures but an indeterminate 'transit lounge' between India and Britain in which the very landscape appears uncanny:

> He was looking up at the sky, and noticed that it was the wrong colour entirely, blood-orange flecked with green, and the snow was blue as ink. He blinked hard but the colours refused to change, giving rise to the notion that he had fallen out of the sky into some wrongness, some other place, not England or perhaps not-England, some counterfeit zone, rotten borough, altered state. (Rushdie 2006c, 132)

Saladin's sense of indeterminacy intensifies when the biopolitical state's immigration officers arrest him on suspicion of being an illegal immigrant and subject him subsequently to physical and sexual abuse: '"This isn't England," he thought, not for the first or last time. How could it be, after all; where in all that moderate and common-sensical land was there room for such a police van in whose interior such events as these might plausibly transpire?' (158) The police van and the immigration centre it serves house people whom the state deems to be in Britain but not of it, and hence undeserving of the same rights and laws as white citizens. They constitute spaces of exception and indistinction between the immigrants' home nations and the England of belonging and security that, prior to his arrest and abuse, Saladin thought he inhabited. Rushdie suggests that because the biopolitical state practices what Foucault calls 'the internal racism of permanent purification' (2004, 62) Saladin was always at risk, despite his

72

Anglophilia and British citizenship, of being placed into a subrace of *homo sacer* alongside other non-white bodies that the state refuses to accept within the protected superrace. By describing the ease with which a racist and abusive immigration service wrenches Saladin from his safe existence and imprisons him within a state of exception, Rushdie evokes the precariousness of non-white people's rights in post-imperial Britain.

Rushdie indicates that the biopolitical state's powers of discursive racialisation exacerbate this precariousness. The immigration officers arrest Saladin because they do not believe an Indian can be British, and racialise him further during his incarceration. From the moment they first speak to Saladin they deny his imagined Britishness:

> I'm a British, he was saying, with right of abode, too, but when he couldn't produce a passport or any other identifying document they began to weep with mirth, the tears streaming down even the blank faces of the plain-clothes men from the immigration service. (Rushdie 2006c, 140)

Later on they abuse him racially for his name: 'You're a fucking Packy-billy. Sally-who? – What kind of name is that for an Englishman?' (163) His retort that the surnames of the white immigration officers (Stein, Bruno and Novak) suggest that they themselves are not of unbroken Anglo-Saxon ancestry only earns him more physical punishment (163). The officers' attitudes infer their belief that while the descendants of white continental Europeans can be British, non-whites cannot, no matter how entrenched they are within British society. Rushdie's fictional exploration of Britain's post-war immigration policy exposes the ways in which government agents engage in phenotypical racism. He evokes the prevalence of bioculturalist New Racism within Britain's state and superrace alike.

Rushdie further explores the power of state institutions to construct subraces as monstrous when he depicts a racist discourse that supernaturally produces actual biological difference in a way which for Josie Gill 'has clear parallels with the conclusions of epigenetic studies which recognise seemingly racial characteristics as the biological embodiment of cultural and environmental circumstances' (2015, 492). The biopolitical

73

state in *Verses* seeks to immunise the race of white British people against immigrants by asserting a qualitative difference between white and non-white phenotypes, but also reinforces and intensifies its claim that non-whites present a threat to the constructed white superrace through forcing non-whites literally to become another species. Like Ahmed in *Midnight*, Saladin finds himself altered physically by supernatural forces. However, whereas Ahmed acquires a longed-for white phenotype, Saladin's bodily change causes him profound distress and leads to him being perceived as monstrous by much of British society.

Through his device of literalising the claims of bestiality made against non-whites in post-war Britain, Rushdie depicts effectively the harm that racialising discourses cause in two main ways. He renders their effects more vivid through imagining a world in which biopolitical state apparatuses can alter the biology of subraces, and by detailing the limitations that these transmogrifications place on discursive resistance. The racist immigration officers who govern the state of exception within which they place Saladin make him into a demonic, goat-like creature not through any scientific experimentation but simply through their racialising discourse: the same discourse in which the biopolitical state they serve engages. The officers tell their charges, 'You're all the same. Can't expect animals to observe civilised standards' (Rushdie 2006c, 159), and thus transform them physically into animals. As a detainee who has been changed into a tiger-headed being laments, '[t]hey have the power of description, and we succumb to the pictures they construct' (168). In a typically fantastical manner, Rushdie shows how discourse constructs its own reality, just as race-thinking constructs races. In his supernatural idiom, the power to construct the racialised subject becomes not only figurative but literal, which makes it all the more oppressive and all the more difficult to resist.

The detainees' discursive-literal transformation militates against opposition to state biopower and racism by making it difficult for them to oppose their incarceration and bestialisation discursively. Because of their new forms the only linguistic ability many of them possess in response to their captors is 'the snorting of bulls [or] the chattering of monkeys' (166). Saladin finds that 'a tone of authority[…][is] pretty difficult to bring off from

74

that undignified position on his back with his hoofy legs wide apart and a soft tumble of his own excrement all about him' (159). The detainees' mutations into animals preclude resistance further by making them seem less than human to the outside world biologically as well as discursively. Their appearance justifies their ill treatment. When discussing the possibility of killing Saladin in order to conceal their physical and racial abuse of a fairly prominent naturalised British citizen, the immigration officers consider using his newfound monstrosity, which they themselves caused, to excuse their incarcerating him in the first place: 'as for this bugger, you only have to clock the bleeder, looks like the very devil, what were we supposed to think?' (164) Through the supernatural, Rushdie evokes the continuities between racist discourses and racist actions. By depicting the effects of physical and discursive violence on non-white immigrant bodies, he portrays forcefully the ability of Britain's post-imperial state apparatuses to construct them as subracial *homo sacer* whenever it desires.

In *Verses* Rushdie suggests that these techniques of biopolitical othering, and others like them, produce subraces and preclude effectively their resistance to racism outside as well as inside state institutions. Some of London's non-white citizens in the novel attempt to reclaim the devil as an assertive image of resistance to the racist British state and its institutions. However, Rushdie indicates that the New Racism's discursive power proves so strong that the superrace's abiding perception of this non-normative behaviour, and of the non-white bodies that the biopolitical state constructs as a subrace, remains overwhelmingly unfavourable. As with Rushdie's portrayal of Saladin's failed attempts to assimilate, the ways in which he describes oppositional discourses and movements of resistance to racism acknowledge the difficulty of militating against the complex, multiplicitous race-thinking he depicts as endemic in post-imperial Britain.

The Reclamation(?) of the Pejorative

Verses displays Rushdie's characteristic scepticism that resistance to oppressive state (bio)power can work effectively. Just as Saladin Chamcha's attempts to assimilate himself within Britain founder because of

racism amongst the country's state and population alike, attempts to oppose the racism of British society fail in the novel. The residents of the fictional London borough of Brickhall appropriate Saladin (and by extension the devil) as an avatar for their alterity and grievances. Many later participate in a violent uprising against the racist Metropolitan Police. However, the strength of the New Racism's discursive power in *Verses* means that every action taken by London's non-white people in an effort to resist the biopolitical state's racism serves only to entrench the racial othering to which the state and its superrace subject them.

Early on in *Verses* Rushdie's narrator argues that '[t]o turn insults into strengths, whigs, tories, Blacks all chose to wear with pride the names they were given in scorn' (2006c, 93). At times Rushdie's characters transmute both their bodily alterity and their discursively constructed status as subrace into powerful discourses and practices of resistance. Eventually the detainees at the immigration centre flee captivity through the very animal qualities that the officers of the biopolitical state impose upon them. They run 'quickly, silently, to the edge of the Detention Centre compound, where the manticore and other sharp-toothed mutants were waiting by the large holes they had bitten into the fabric of the containing fence' (171). Saladin's escape enables his physiological otherness subsequently to inspire an entire anti-racist movement that seeks to reclaim subracial signifiers and images of monstrosity as badges of honour.

Rushdie evokes the discursive power of images and discourses of subracial alterity to galvanise resistance to racism when the demonic Saladin becomes a totem for Brickhall's subraces:

> the image of the dream-devil started catching on, becoming popular, it should be said, only amongst what Hal Valance had described as the *tinted persuasion*[…]browns-and-blacks found themselves cheering, in their sleep, this what-else-after-all-but-black-man, maybe a little twisted up by fate class race history, all that, but getting off his behind, bad and mad, to kick a little ass. (286)

Mishal Sufyan explains the image's popularity by claiming, '[i]t's an image white society has rejected for so long that we can really take it, you know,

occupy it, inhabit it, reclaim it and make it our own' (287). Many non-white residents of Brickhall share her sympathy (and enthusiasm) for the devil. They begin to wear plastic horns as a gesture of opposition to the racialising British state. This collective defiance animates the campaign that later forms to protest prominent black intellectual Dr Uhuru Simba's arrest on trumped-up charges. Rushdie depicts the group as a broad, plural coalition 'packed[…]with every conceivable sort of person' (413). The anti-racist writings of Simba, who aims politically 'to occupy the old and honourable role of the uppity nigger' (414) towards Britain, are quoted liberally at the protest meeting. They provide a powerful argument for non-white immigrants' value to the British nation:

> we are here to change things. I concede at once that we shall ourselves be changed; African, Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Cypriot, Chinese, we are other than what we would have been if we had not crossed the skies in search of work and dignity and a better life for their children. We have been made again: but I say that we shall also be the ones to remake this society, to shape it from the bottom to the top. (414)

Simba argues that although the migratory journey transforms the immigrant – a theme to which Rushdie returns in *Ground* – immigrants of numerous nations possess, in turn, the ability to shape the nation to which they migrate. *Verses* frequently suggests the possibility of resisting racism through asserting racial difference and its value to the nation.

However, Rushdie also indicates that racism's discursive power in post-war British society causes superraces either to ignore attempts by non-whites to assert the desirability and legitimacy of non-normative behaviours and racial signifiers, or to view these efforts as confirming the subrace's savagery and unwillingness to assimilate. In *Verses* those who resist the racism of the British state and its white British people remain racialised, however much they try to deconstruct and rebel against biopower's racialising logic. The detainees escape one space of exception successfully, but their transformation into animals continues. Even after they flee the immigration centre together, in a nightmare recalling their

escape Saladin Chamcha perceives the nurse Hyacinth Phillips becoming monstrous: 'He saw in the yellow light that her skin was growing darker by the minute, and her teeth more prominent, and her body as long as a child's stick-figure drawing' (254). In this ambiguous passage Rushdie suggests the persistence of racism whether Hyacinth becomes othered literally as an atavistic supernatural punishment for deserting her role within the biopolitical state apparatus, or whether Saladin's nightmare in fact recalls events inaccurately. Saladin racialises Hyacinth whether or not she actually transforms physically. Saladin, too, continues 'slowly transmogrifying' (282), to the horror of many Brickhall residents. Because of his monstrosity the borough's non-white people do not view him universally as an inspiring figure of alterity and resistance. His demonic appearance 'succeed[s] in terrifying the entire temporary population of the bed and breakfast establishment [in which he lives] to the point of incoherence' (291). The effects of the biological transformation that the state's immigration service imposes upon Saladin linger even after his escape. He thus remains liable to be seen as evil. Despite attempts at reclamation, traditional discourses regarding the devil hold sway for many ordinary citizens in the Britain of *Verses*.

Hence, the anti-racist movements aiming to reclaim pejoratives such as 'devil' and 'nigger' fail to resist successfully the racism of the British state and its people in the novel. Rushdie describes discourses and movements of opposition to racism in post-imperial Britain, but by portraying their inefficacy suggests that embracing racial difference and behavioural non-normativity risks leaving racism intact. Their failure becomes especially apparent once the resistance movement turns violent. In *Verses* Britain's police and media use non-whites' violent resistance as proof of their savagery and subracial status as human encumbrances. They thus reinforce the white British population's existing racism. In the novel's final chapters Rushdie continues to portray the existence of complex, multiform racisms within both the biopolitical state and the superrace it constructs. He again invites a biopolitical reading which asserts that the nature of contemporary biopolitics exceeds Foucault's state-centric theorisations.

Polizeiwissenschaft, Media and Racism

In *Verses* Rushdie suggests that racialising national institutions including the Metropolitan Police and the British media possess the ability discursively to influence the opinions of white British people in favour of upholding the racist status quo. He uses a fictionalised version of the 1981 Brixton riots to indicate how violent non-white resistance against racialisation thus only reinforces associations between non-whites, crime and racial otherness amidst a white population terrified of the subraces it has been told threaten its survival.[3] Rushdie depicts a further obstacle to opposing or escaping race-thinking, the pervasiveness and multifariousness of which – amongst state and non-state actors alike – his novels underscore consistently.

As with the immigration service which racialises Saladin so severely that his physiognomy alters, Rushdie shows in *Verses* how, as Foucault claims, police forces function as an arm of the racialising biopolitical state. For Foucault police forces and their techniques of discipline and ordering (*polizeiwissenschaft*) constitute a key instrument of the biopolitical state's operation. They share its concerns with optimising human life's orderliness and productivity:

> What the police are concerned with is men's coexistence in a territory, their relationships to property, what they produce, what is exchanged in the market, and so on. It also considers how they live, the diseases and accidents which can befall them. In a word, what the police see to is a live, active, and productive man. (Foucault 1988, 155-56)

The police are responsible for aiding this productivity through the corrective punishment of those the state perceives as threatening the nation's stability and that of the superrace the state seeks to protect. Many writers have condemned the police as a neo-colonial racialising force in the late twentieth-century British context upon which *Verses* draws. For Gilroy, 'crime came to occupy the place which sexuality, miscegenation and disease had held as the central themes and images in the earlier discourses of "race"' (2002, 109). He argues that the police colonised the non-white inhabitants of Britain through racial profiling, harassment and racially-

aggravated violence: 'The "thin red line" of troops in the colonial front line, standing between us and them, between black and white, [was] translated into the "thin blue line" of police, personifying the law' (110).

In *Verses* Rushdie stresses the presence of racialising neo-colonial *polizeiwissenschaft* within the Metropolitan Police's discourses and practices. However, he also emphasises how *polizeiwissenschaft* buttresses racism amongst Britain's civilian superrace by making its members liable to view resistance of non-whites against racial oppression, violent or otherwise, as confirming their unruly and criminal nature. He again indirectly problematises Foucault's state-centric theory of racism. As with the move from race war discourse to racism that Foucault describes, *Verses* indicates that because Britain's police offer security against threats from subraces, the majority of the white population prove unlikely to criticise their racialising operations. Yet Rushdie goes further by showing how the superrace's desire for order and support for the police leads it actively to complement the state's racist oppression.

In *Verses* Rushdie charts the racist police actions that lead to protests and anti-racism campaigns. He shows subsequently how the police use these acts of resistance to justify more racial oppression to the superrace. The police exploit Brickhall's growing veneration of Saladin Chamcha as proof that non-white subraces are violent and uncivilised: 'Police community relations officers pointed to the "growing devil-cult" among young blacks and Asians" as a "deplorable tendency"' (Rushdie 2006c, 286). Crucially, Rushdie places this pejorative statement directly before Mishal Sufyan's assertion that non-whites can take the image of the devil, 'reclaim it and make it [their] own' (287). He undercuts her optimism immediately. The police's construction of the cult around Saladin as a threat to the nation's order provides them with a scapegoat for an unexplained series of ritual killings: 'The detention of "tints" intensified accordingly, as did the incidence of snap raids on establishments "suspected of harbouring underground occultist cells"' (288). Rushdie indicates the erroneousness of Mishal's idea that images seen traditionally as evil can be reclaimed discursively within a state-led cycle of biopolitical repression, resistance and more racialising repression.

Rushdie stresses that racialisation and resistance take place within a matrix of opposing discourses. In his essay 'The New Empire Within Britain', written one year after the Brixton riots upon which *Verses* draws, he argues that '[w]hite and black perceptions of everyday life have moved so far apart as to be incompatible' (1992, 134). In *Verses* Rushdie evokes this perceptual incompatibility by depicting the conflicting discourses of anti-racist activists and the racist police. Following Dr Uhuru Simba's death in police custody after his dubious arrest on suspicion of committing the ritual murders, police spokesman Inspector Stephen Kinch dismisses compelling suggestions from Simba's lawyer, Hanif Johnson, that the police murdered his client as 'inflammatory' and 'unprofessional' (Rushdie 2006c, 450). Hanif uses comparable terms – 'provocative and incendiary' (451) – to describe the increased police presence in Brickhall to control the protests over Simba's death. Similar discursive oppositions arise during the subsequent racialised violence when the '[s]elf-defence patrols of young Sikh, Bengali and Afro-Caribbean males', formed to protect non-whites unable to rely on the police, are 'described by their political opponents as *vigilante groups*' (451). The state apparatus of *polizeiwissenschaft* views these actions, which Brickhall's non-whites perceive as essential for their own security, as threatening the security of the city and nation. Here Rushdie further suggests the incompatibility of white and black perceptions of everyday life.

However, Rushdie affirms that the discourses disseminated by biopolitical state apparatuses such as the police wield more influence than oppositional anti-racist discourses over the superrace's opinion of non-white subraces in post-imperial Britain. He indicates that the institutionally racist British media bolsters this discursive power. The Metropolitan Police in *Verses* convince the majority white British public successfully that the violent resistance of Brickhall's non-whites in response to Simba's death represents proof of the subrace's savagery, ingratitude and cultural otherness, and thus warrants further racialising actions. In an attempt to quell the anti-racist resistance movement the police charge non-white rioters exclusively. They leave white racists free to continue assaulting non-whites (451). When the violence escalates after the police's attempt to

cover up the identity of the real ritual murderer – 'a bland, pale man' – is discovered, the police declare 'riot conditions' (453) and institute a violent racialising crackdown. The police can justify these practices more effectively because the media's reporting of the riots exculpates the biopolitical state and places the blame for the violence solely on non-whites. *Verses* describes a symbiotic relationship between the media's discursive power and that of the police. In detailing the fictional Inspector Kinch's statement to TV cameras following the riots, Rushdie suggests that the British media's analysis of race riots in the early 1980s racialised by giving an uncritical platform to the state's racist discourse, and led the superrace to accept this discourse similarly uncritically by presenting favourably those who disseminated it.

Frank Reeves argued in 1983 that '[i]n Britain, the interests of racial minorities are seldom expressed through the mass media, and black people are rarely in a position to speak with effect on behalf of the common interest of a social whole which includes themselves' (1983, 42). The media coverage surrounding Rushdie's fictionalised version of the roughly contemporaneous Brixton riots excludes non-white, anti-racist perspectives in this manner. It instead privileges Inspector Stephen Kinch's racialising discourse:

> A camera requires law, order, the thin blue line. Seeking to preserve itself, it remains behind the shielding wall, observing the shadow-lands from afar, and of course from above: that is, it chooses sides.
>
> […]*Inspector Stephen Kinch*. The camera sees him for what he is: a good man in an impossible job. A father, a man who likes his pint. He speaks: cannot-tolerate-no-go-areas better-protection-required-for-policemen see-the-plastic-riot-shields-catching-fire. He refers to organised crime, political agitators, bomb-factories, drugs. 'We understand some of these kids may feel they have grievances but we will not and cannot be the whipping boys of society.' Emboldened by the lights and the patient, silent lenses, he goes further. These kids don't know how lucky they are, he suggests. They should consult their kith and kin. Africa, Asia, the Caribbean: now those are

places with real problems. Those are places where people might have grievances worth respecting. Things aren't so bad here, not by a long chalk; no slaughters here, no torture, no military coups. People should value what they've got before they lose it. Ours always was a peaceful land, he says. Our industrious island race. – Behind him, the camera sees stretchers, ambulances, pain. – It sees strange humanoid shapes being hauled up from the bowels of the Club Hot Wax, and recognises the effigies of the mighty. Inspector Kinch explains. They cook them in an oven down there, they call it fun, I wouldn't call it that myself. – The camera observes the wax models with distaste. – Is there not something *witchy* about them, something cannibalistic, an unwholesome smell? Have *black arts* been practised here? – The camera sees broken windows. It sees something burning in the middle distance: a car, a shop. It cannot understand, or demonstrate, what any of this achieves. These people are burning their own streets. (Rushdie 2006c, 454-55)

Here Rushdie evokes the symbiotic relationship between racist discourses of *polizeiwissenschaft* and their media representation by using the device of a biased camera which stands in for both the British media establishment's prejudice and the racialising tendencies of the audience for which it records and warps events. The camera 'requires law, order [and] the thin blue line' and hence 'chooses sides' (455) in favour of biopolitical securitisation. It adds to the appeal and power of Kinch's discourse by presenting him to the public as 'a good man in an impossible job[…][a] father, a man who likes his pint' (455). Bolstered by this sympathetic portrayal and '[e]mboldened by the lights and the patient, silent lenses', Kinch disseminates a nostalgic, nationalistic discourse of Britain as an 'industrious island race' (455) beset by ungrateful aliens. In turn, the camera gives its assent. When Kinch criticises the anti-racist bacchanals at the Club Hot Wax the camera, rather than effecting a neutral reportage, agrees: '[t]he camera observes the wax models with distaste. – Is there not something *witchy* about them, something cannibalistic, an unwholesome smell? Have *black arts* been practised here?' (455) The camera excludes anti-racist perspectives in favour of absorbing the biopolitical state's

racialising discourse and hence cannot appreciate the causes of the riots. It only perceives – and thus presents – senseless violence that entrenches the public's perception of non-whites as a savage subrace: 'It cannot understand, or demonstrate, what any of this achieves' (455). Through showing how the representational biases of news agencies mediate and justify the racialising actions of the biopolitical state and its police force, Rushdie depicts further obstacles to resisting race-thinking and state racism through either discourse or violence. By the time the racialised Saladin returns to India in *Verses*' final chapter, the potential for change in the novel's fictionalised version of Britain appears scarce.

As with Rushdie's exploration of phenotypical racism and sterilisation in *Midnight*, a biopolitical reading reveals that *Verses* suggests the inevitability of race-thinking within twentieth-century politics and society. *Verses* depicts a British state and majority population pervaded by a complex, multifaceted biocultural New Racism which at every turn neuters discursive and practical efforts by non-whites to resist their racist biopolitical ordering; whether these be assimilationist, oppositional, peaceful or violent. Saladin's phenotype means that his affected persona of a nationalistic, racialising pillar of the establishment cannot save him from imprisonment on suspicion of being an illegal immigrant. He finds that the British state's racialising discourse wields such power that it literally can transform the subraces it creates and places in a state of exception into non-human bodies. The state, its police force, the superrace it protects and the media that relays its racist discourse perceive attempts to construct these bodies counter-hegemonically as symbols of resistance and assertive alterity, and the later frustrated, violent protests against the Metropolitan Police's blatant racism, as proof that non-whites constitute a savage, ungrateful subrace of human encumbrances. Through describing the efficacy of multiple, complex and interrelated racisms in animating a physical and discursive biopolitical violence that successfully quells multifarious attempts at resisting the British state's race-thinking, Rushdie mirrors Foucault in asserting the flexibility of the numerous criteria by which biopolitics constructs subraces. However, *Verses* exceeds Foucault's thought by suggesting that the racisms that the state's discourses and technologies

engender and reinforce amongst the superrace complement the state's actions in rendering race-thinking and biopolitical oppression near-impossible to resist or escape. Rushdie indicates little prospect of overcoming racism in post-imperial Britain.

Ground, Rushdie's next novel to cover post-imperial Britain in detail, depicts similarly insurmountable obstacles to anti-racist resistance in the former colonial power, though also posits a certain potentiality for moving beyond 'the frontier of the skin' (2000, 55) in the more welcoming national space of America. However, his subsequent novel, *Fury*, evokes no such possibility. In *Fury* Rushdie explores the global pervasiveness of race-thinking; in New York, the South Pacific and even in a fictional alien world. As with Saladin's years as a successful *chamcha* in London, any escape from race-thinking for characters in these two novels proves provisional and temporary. Rushdie further indicates the veracity of Foucault's argument that multiple racisms, based on any criteria the state wishes, characterise contemporary biopolitics. He also continues to stress the role of the superrace in bolstering racist biopolitical oppression. *Ground* and *Fury*, like *Midnight* and *Verses*, hence invite – and help to construct – a biopolitical literary criticism that goes beyond Foucault's state-centric conception of biopower and race.

Biopolitics and Racism in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* and *Fury*

In *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999) Rushdie again represents Britain as a nation whose government and people have engaged in racialisation both before and after decolonisation. However, reading *Ground* in conjunction with *Verses* reveals that Rushdie depicts a greater possibility of effective resistance to racism in the later novel by decentring Britain in favour of the more welcoming United States of America as the desired destination for his immigrant characters. America's state and people in *Ground* racialise similarly to their British equivalents, but Rushdie suggests an attenuated potentiality for resistance through remaking the self and hence transcending 'the frontier of the skin' (2000, 55) in the US.

<u>*The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1): Racism in the British Membrane</u>

In *Ground* Rushdie continues to depict Britain's government and white majority population as pervaded by a biocultural racism that proves near-impossible for constructed subraces to resist or escape. As in *Verses*, in describing attempts by his Anglophile Indian characters to assimilate within British culture he indicates that non-white immigrants find themselves invariably racialised phenotypically by figures inside and outside biopolitical state apparatuses. An Indian who venerates all things English, Sir Darius Cama resembles Saladin Chamcha in many ways. His Anglophilia leads him to yoke his fortunes to the British Empire. After the colonial administration departs he lionises Britain's grace in ceding its South Asian territories, while chastising India for its 'backwardness' (Rushdie 2000, 151). Darius idealises what he refers to as 'the mother country' (88). He dreams of

> England as a pure, white Palladian mansion set upon a hill above a silver winding river, with a spreading parterre of brilliant green lawns edged by ancient oaks and elms, and the classic geometry of flower beds orchestrated by unseen master gardeners into a four-seasons symphony of colour. (86)

However, just as Saladin's rose-tinted Anglophilia renders him shocked by his incarceration and racialisation in the immigration centre, when Darius and his son Ormus, who maintains a similar fantasy, travel to Britain they realise the falsity of this ideal of a verdant, welcoming space.

A comparable conjunction of racialising white citizens and biopolitical institutions to that which marks Britain in *Verses* construct Darius and Ormus as subracial once they arrive in *Ground*'s fictionalised version of the country. The immigration officers in *Verses* refuse to accept that Saladin, a prominent actor and member of the Garrick Club, possibly could be a British citizen on account of his phenotype (Rushdie 2006c, 140). Similarly, in Rushdie's later novel Darius' status as a knight of the realm and a pillar of India's old Anglophile elite carries less weight than his skin and nationality in the eyes of the biopolitical state's equivalent agents. He suffers a 'gruelling interrogation by immigration officials who were bewilderingly

unimpressed by his explanations, his credentials or even his knighthood, news of which they treated with extreme scepticism' (Rushdie 2000, 152).

When Ormus emigrates to Britain he too finds himself racialised by the British state and the white superrace it constructs. The 'rapid disenchantment of Ormus Cama with his fantasy of the West' (270) begins almost as soon as he leaves India. His co-workers on the pirate radio ship – a DJ who calls an 'obstinate fucking Paki' (275) and another who believes in apartheid (279) – render him racialised bioculturally from the beginning of his working life in Britain. Not only do Ormus' racist co-workers other him, but the British state's institutions criminalise him as they did his father. Although the state does not single Ormus out because of his race, Rushdie nevertheless depicts the authorities' treatment of him as the act of a violent state which cannot permit spaces or bodies to stand outside its categorising biopolitical knowledges. When a government drug squad boards the ship, looking for any excuse to shut down the outlaw radio station, Ormus suffers sexual humiliation just as surely as Saladin does: 'Naked and innocent before the officers of the law, suffering their jolly rogerings, he shakes with rage and shame' (278). In both *Verses* and *Ground* Rushdie portrays race-thinking's prevalence within Britain's post-imperial government, evokes the harassment that the state proves consequently liable to inflict upon human encumbrances, and problematises Foucault's thought indirectly by emphasising the superrace's role in this oppression.

However, the racist British nation proves much less central to *Ground*'s narrative and to its characters' lives and psyches than in Rushdie's earlier novel. In *Verses* Saladin bases his constructed self on his idealised version of Britain and Britishness. When the racialising biopolitical state incarcerates and abuses him violently within its state of exception it comes as such a shock to him that he reacts by thinking, 'This isn't England' (Rushdie 2006c, 158). Even after his escape he insists upon Britain's 'hospitality[…]in spite of immigration laws, and his own recent experience' (398). By contrast, although Ormus idealises Britain to an extent before emigrating there, he sees the country as a 'membrane' (Rushdie 2000, 255) to pass through on his way to America. When he finds himself subject to racism and police harassment he does not respond with Saladin's disbelief

but by accepting the reality of the racialising, oppressive underside of the country that his father venerated. Saladin views the racialising state of exception as alien to England's true nature, whereas Ormus perceives it as 'an England his father never knew, at whose existence he could not have guessed' (278). Rushdie not only decentres Britain as a longed-for destination space but depicts Ormus' later attempts to escape race-thinking by reinventing himself in America as partially successful. He thus suggests an attenuated potentiality of effective resistance to biopolitical racialisation that exceeds that found in his other novels.

The Ground Beneath Her Feet (2): Transcending the Frontier of the Skin in America

In *Ground* Rushdie portrays the United States as a nation in which non-white immigrants may escape the racialisation that pervades Britain. Ormus Cama's half-American, half-Indian lover Vina Apsara believes that one can become American regardless of phenotype, nationality or culture. She lionises America as an agglomerative, inclusive space which, unlike Britain, incorporates all cultures, all races and all lifestyles into an increasingly rich national tapestry: 'by becoming an American you add to the kinds of American it's possible to be' (Rushdie 2000, 331). Vina does not idealise America as Saladin does Britain. By the time she persuades Ormus to join her there she is already a veteran of many American anti-racist movements. However, she views it as a space where one may take on a new identity and cast off old roots.

Ormus attempts to go even further than Vina in his attempt to escape racialisation in America through remaking the self. *Ground* marks a rare occasion on which Rushdie explores racism by engaging specifically with the findings of twentieth-century epigeneticists and the persistence of race-thinking amongst the general public in spite of these discoveries. He writes that Ormus 'had taken to quoting biologists, geneticists. Human beings are just about identical, he'd say. The race difference, even the gender difference, in the eyes of science it's just the teeniest-tiniest fraction of what we are. Percentagewise, it really doesn't signify' (413). Vina proves 'sceptical, questioning his universalist premises', but Ormus proves

determined 'to transcend the frontier of the skin, not to cross the colour line but to rub it out' (480). He succeeds to an extent by affecting a deracinated public persona and, with Vina, disseminating a syncretic rock music which gains the pair widespread acceptance and celebrity as a canonical part of American popular culture. Rushdie depicts a greater potentiality for effectively resisting and transcending race-thinking in *Ground* than in *Midnight* or *Verses*. Yet he also suggests that Vina and Ormus' eventual acceptance by America and its media culture has more to do with their fame than the nation's disavowal of race-thinking. He thus shows the incompleteness of their escape from racialisation and issues of race.

In *Ground* Rushdie characteristically deconstructs the identitarian essentialisms that animate racism. Moreover, by using Ormus and Vina's reinventions of the self to suggest the possibility of escaping being constructed as a subrace – or as a race at all – he indicates more vividly than in his other novels a potentiality of effective resistance to race-thinking in twentieth-century politics. Rushdie's narrator Rai repeatedly emphasises Ormus and Vina's ability to fashion new anti-essentialist selves and thus put down new roots: 'The rest of us get our personae off the peg, our religion, language, prejudices, demeanour, the works; but Vina and Ormus insisted on what one might call auto-couture' (95). Rai asks the question, 'What if all of it – home, kinship, the whole enchilada – is just the biggest, most truly global, and centuries-oldest piece of brainwashing? Suppose that it's only when you dare to let go that your real life begins?' (176-77) Through letting go by emigrating to America, Ormus and Vina manage to leave behind their old lives and, to an extent, their old racial identities. Indian-American Vina protests on behalf of African-American victims of racism: '[o]wing to her golden voice and, above all, her renown, nobody questions her right to sing out for American blacks' (394). The success and fame of the couple's band VTO leads white and non-white Americans alike to embrace Vina and Ormus as icons of American popular culture in spite of their phenotypes. As Rai observes, '[t]hose were the days when the first crossover stars were making their way through the firmament: O. J., Magic, people whose talent made people colour-blind, race-blind, history-blind' (412-13). Vina and Ormus traverse boundaries of geography and colour successfully. They

find themselves assimilated and welcomed within America's white-majority, white-dominated culture. However, in *Ground*'s depiction of late twentieth-century America Rushdie emphasises the rarity and provisionality of this escape from racialisation. He indicates that, because the American state and the white superrace it constructs continue to produce subraces, most of the country's non-white citizens remain racialised. Even the fortunate Vina and Ormus fail to escape racialisation completely.

In *Ground* Rushdie characterises America by a near-endemic racism. The ways in which he describes how Vina and Ormus negate their racialisation suggest that only their wealth and fame allows them to escape much of the racism that affects other non-white residents of America. Nobody protests when Vina speaks on behalf of African-Americans because of 'her renown' (394). Ormus and Vina make people 'colour-blind' by way of their 'talent' (413). Rushdie indicates that most of America's non-whites lack these protections against being constructed as subracial. Rai relates the circumstances of Vina and Ormus' self-fashioning, but also asserts its rarity. For Rai most humans prove unwilling to defy the discourses of racial or cultural essentialism that powerful political figures and institutions disseminate. They prefer instead to think of themselves and others in racialising terms: 'those who value stability, who fear transience, uncertainty, change, have erected a powerful system of stigmas and taboos against rootlessness[…]we hide our secret identities beneath the false skins of those identities which bear the belongers' seal of approval' (72-73).

The ways in which Rushdie depicts America's endemic racism confirm Rai's analysis. They not only suggest the veracity of Foucault's argument that race-thinking under regimes of biopower proves pervasive, multiform and hence nearly impossible to resist effectively, but augment Foucault's observations by exposing the role of non-state actors in upholding racial hierarchies. In *Ground* figures who even escape race-thinking partially, such as Ormus and Vina, constitute a minority because people who eschew race-thinking are similarly scarce. Rushdie characterises America's politico-economic structures and cultural discourses by multiple state and para-state racisms that accept only a handful of rich, famous non-whites as truly American. He evokes the unjust

economic legacy of America's past colonialism by describing 'Shinnecock Indians trimming the hedges and cleaning the pools and maintaining the tennis courts and moving the grass and in general tending to the high-priced, stolen land' (492) of their ancestors. He criticises the enduring presence of racialising Orientalism within American public discourse by having numerous characters define India as a peaceful, 'spiritual' space (496). Rushdie thus indicates that America's acceptance of certain exceptional non-whites within its cultural fabric does little to prevent a prevalent racialisation which damages the lives of the vast majority of non-whites who lack the fame and wealth to resist their construction as a subrace. This racialisation proves so forceful that even Ormus and Vina's attempts to transcend race-thinking only succeed partially.

As with Saladin's failed attempts at assimilation within a racist Britain in *Verses*, Rushdie suggests in *Ground* that one cannot escape racism entirely or indefinitely by fashioning a new self. Despite her success in the music business and the Civil Rights movement, Vina remains conscious of her race and her attendant precarious position in American society. Unlike Ormus, whose fervour for modern epigenetics leads him to attempt deracination, 'life at the frontier of the skin always made Vina uneasy[…]Vina also dreamed of lynch mobs, of burning crosses. If such horror was happening to anyone, anywhere, it might yet someday happen to her' (413). Vina's past experience of American race-thinking makes her deeply conscious of racism's enduring presence within the nation's society. She maintains that anyone potentially can become American but acknowledges simultaneously, as does Foucault in his writings on 'the internal racism of permanent purification' (2004, 62), that anyone may be placed into a constructed subrace: even a rich, successful rock star at the heart of America's celebrity culture.

Even Ormus, who goes beyond Vina in seeking to escape not just race but the signifier of his own phenotype, finds that 'the frontier of the skin' (Rushdie 2000, 55), in spite of the epigenetic discoveries he lauds, cannot be transcended in a twentieth-century world pervaded globally by multiple racisms. His decision, mindful of 'the link between deracination and success', that 'the taking of a stage name is not a dishonourable act' (291)

91

comes back to haunt him when he attempts a musical tour of India. His own brother persuades the Indian government that Ormus' 'self-hating, deracinated music has long been at the service[…]of the arrogance of the West, where the world's tragedy is repackaged as youth entertainment and given an infectious, foot-tapping beat' (556). Ormus finds himself and his music drawn into a debate on race and neo-colonialism which leads to his being banned from India on the grounds of betraying his homeland through his supposed Westernisation and deracination. His being barred from India does not significantly affect him psychologically. Nevertheless, Rushdie uses the episode to indicate how attempts to void categories of phenotype, race and nation often meet with resentment from those whose interests lie in maintaining these racialising distinctions, whether they be biopolitical governments or individual citizens frightened to attempt such a transgression themselves.

In *Ground* Rushdie depicts an uncharacteristically high number of fissures in racist discourses, and obstacles to their biopolitical shaping of twentieth-century society. Whereas the British state defeats all attempts to resist racialisation in *Verses*, *Ground*, though it describes racism in Britain in similar terms to its predecessor, portrays America as a space that affords its non-white inhabitants a better chance to escape racism and race-thinking. However, Rushdie indicates the rarity and provisionality of this escape. Even Vina and Ormus' success in liberating themselves from racialisation fails significantly to impair race-thinking in America or to shield them entirely from its effects. By asserting race-thinking's pervasiveness and biopolitical governance's efficacy not just in America but globally, *Fury* extinguishes even this limited possibility of transcending race.

Fury: The Persistence of Race-Thinking

The attenuated potentiality of resistance to racism that Rushdie depicts in *Ground* disappears in *Fury* (2001). Just as the majority of his fiction evokes the multiformity and near-impossibility of escaping racism within twentieth-century (bio)politics, *Fury* affirms race-thinking's global pervasiveness at the outset of the twenty-first century. From the novel's engagement with phenotypical racism in American high society, to a science-fiction debate on

the very nature of the human race itself, to the culturalist racism that the racialisations during this debate inspire in the South Pacific, Rushdie indicates that the frontier of the skin remains resolutely intact, as do many other frontiers of race. He suggests once more that states and superraces within contemporary biopolitical polities construct and oppress subraces invariably effectively using a theoretically infinite array of criteria.

In *Fury* Rushdie depicts far fewer prospects for escaping racialisation through remaking the self than in *Ground*. He exposes America's inequalities of income and race in the earlier novel, but through VTO's success and Vina's enthusiasm for the idea of becoming American also portrays the United States as a land of possibility and potential escape from racism. By contrast, in *Fury* Rushdie's protagonist Malik Solanka finds himself adrift in an irredeemable American sea of simulacra, commercial excess and barely-suppressed rage (2002, 3). Rushdie criticises the persistence within this modern-day Babylon of the phenotypical racism that the discoveries of twentieth-century epigeneticists would have ended if not for the determination of racists, inside and outside state institutions, to ignore their findings.

As in *Verses*, Rushdie suggests in *Fury* that phenotypical racism's persistence among the constructed superrace within a racialising culture dooms non-white attempts at assimilation to failure. Jack Rhinehart, a successful black journalist, becomes 'seduced' (58) by a socio-economic elite which will never truly accept someone of his colour as an equal. The white American super-rich coterie of whom Jack writes acerbic profiles view him as 'their house nigger' (57): a pet of sorts, or a court jester. Like Saladin Chamcha in *Verses*, who tries to assimilate by performing his ideal of conservative British respectability, Jack does everything he can to ingratiate himself with the whites he seeks to emulate. He parrots their right-wing political opinions and dances for them like a puppet, performing 'all the obsolete thirty-year-old moves old white people like' (150). He ceases to think of himself as African-American: 'He stopped hyphenating himself and became, simply, an American' (57). Just as Saladin perceives that he does not belong to a race (Rushdie 2006c, 267), Jack 'move[s] in *bien-pensant* circles in which race was "not an issue": that is, almost everyone [is] white'

(Rushdie 2002, 57). He persuades himself that he has escaped the black subrace that American society constructs. By showing that Jack persuades himself incorrectly, Rushdie once again questions the extent to which non-whites can resist racialisation within polities in which the state's racialising biopolitics and the white superrace's phenotypical racism inform and embolden each other.

In describing Jack's failed attempts to insinuate himself further within America's white elite, Rushdie characteristically criticises the conjunction of the state's racism and the racism of the superrace it constructs within biopolitical polities:

> Neighbours had reported an intruder on the property, and [Jack] was it. It took him close to an hour to persuade the cops that he wasn't a burglar but a bona fide purchaser. A week later the golf club blackballed his application for membership[…]Rhinehart, for whom, as he said, 'being black's just not the issue any more', had rediscovered, the hard way, that it still was. (151)

The white, privileged Americans of Jack's new neighbourhood prove so conditioned by discourses associating African-Americans with criminality that their phenotypical racism leads them to perceive any black man in their residential space as a threat to their security. Similarly to the racialising immigration officers in *Verses*, who assume Saladin Chamcha to be an illegal immigrant because of his phenotype, and *Ground*'s immigration officers, who assume the fraudulence of Darius Cama's knighthood on account of the same, the American police in *Fury* refuse to countenance the legitimacy of a black man's presence within the nation and its polite society. Through detailing the vast effort Jack must expend in order to persuade the police of his innocence, Rushdie emphasises how state apparatuses condone the prejudices of civilian racists by taking their claims seriously. His fiction continues to argue that non-white attempts to assimilate within a white-dominated biopolitical *polis* invariably fail because members of the superrace and the government's racialising agents of *polizeiwissenschaft* persist in constructing them as part of a subrace.

94

The racism to which America's white elite subject Jack harms him even more grievously than does Saladin's racialisation in *Verses*. Saladin regains human form eventually, gives up his attempts at assimilation and returns home to a more contented life in India. Conversely, the privileged young white men into whose culture Jack tries to integrate not only racialise but kill him. They sacrifice him 'on the altar of their invincible, egomaniacal pride' (200) in an unsuccessful bid to scapegoat him for murders they committed. As in Rushdie's earlier novels, attempts at voiding phenotype as a signifier of race fail, as do non-white efforts at assimilation into the culture of the constructed white superrace. However, *Fury* also continues to stress that phenotype names just one of the multiform criteria by which states construct subraces. As Foucault argues, this multiformity means that the discursive power of essentialising, fundamentalist race-thinking far exceeds that of ideas which would disavow identitarianism or problematise the concept of race. Through his usual augmenting of state-centric notions of racialisation with an examination of civilian contributions towards multiple racisms, Rushdie asserts that discourses and practices of biopolitical racialisation, so prevalent in the twentieth century, show no signs of abating in the twenty-first.

Rushdie further depicts the power of racialising discourses by describing the reception of Solanka's literary output in Lilliput-Blefuscu, a fictional country based on Fiji, which was riven by racial tensions at the time Rushdie was writing *Fury*.[4] Solanka's story problematises essentialist ideas of race, yet the resistance movement in Lilliput-Blefuscu appropriates the discourses of the characters who seek to reinforce racial hierarchies. In this episode Rushdie indicates racism's globally diffuse nature in the twenty-first century – a racialising political movement in the South Pacific perverts a tale of an alien world by a British writer living in America – and reinforces his novel's assertion of humanity's continuing tendency towards race-thinking.

By having Solanka's fiction engage with the concept of the posthuman, Rushdie exposes biological racism's aporias by suggesting that man-made bodies may problematise and exceed fixed notions of superrace and subrace. However, he simultaneously represents humankind's enduring racism based on other criteria. Solanka's story takes place on

Galileo-1, a fictional alien planet populated by 'human[s]' (163) and cyborgs. It questions received discourses regarding race, life, identity and humanity. In the story the 'amoral cyberneticist' (139) Akasz Kronos constructs a race of sentient cyborg slaves, the Puppet Kings (PKs). The PKs prove so advanced technologically that they learn eventually 'how to modify their own systems without Kronos' help' (165). They become not only more powerful intellectually and physically but more conscious that their maker has created them as a subrace. They develop a sense of 'rights' (166) and establish their own autonomous community in defiance of both their creator and the human ruler of Baburia, the nation-state which hosts them. The PKs come increasingly to think of themselves as humans, and to resemble them. Solanka's fiction constructs a complex web of doppelgangers and doubling which problematises the very notions of authentic identity and biological humanity. He pens a fractal, ever-shifting conflict which describes 'encounters between "real" and "real", "real" and "double", "double" and "double", which blissfully demonstrated the dissolution of the frontiers between the categories' (187). Similarly to Ormus' theories in *Ground*, by asserting the mutability of race and humanity in general these encounters affirm the possibility of transcending the constructed biological frontiers that divide races. However, Rushdie characteristically implies that the presence of oppositional potentiality does not mean its inevitable actualisation. Galileo-1 also houses those who would reinforce the frontiers of race. Solanka's collaborator's summation of the story as a 'fight to the death between the counterfeit and the real' (177) does not go far enough. The tale of the PKs proves a fight between those who subscribe to this racialising dichotomy and those who do not.

In describing a debate between Kronos and the Mogol, Baburia's ruler, Solanka stages a conflict, similar to those in late twentieth-century biology, between the belief that a subrace can attain the same qualities as the supposed superrace, and the perception of an unbridgeable gap. Kronos'

> explanation of his creations' arrival at autonomy was rejected by the Mogol with a snort of disbelief. There followed, in the pages Solanka wrote, a long dispute between the two men on the nature of life itself

96

– life as created by a biological act, and life as brought into being by the imagination and skill of the living. Was life 'natural', or could the 'unnatural' be said to be alive? Was the imagined world necessarily inferior to the organic one? Kronos was still a genius in spite of his downfall and long penurious concealment, and he proudly defended his cyborgs: by every definition of sentient existence, they had grown into fully-fledged life-forms. Like *Homo faber*, they were users of tools; like *Homo sapiens*, they reasoned and engaged in moral debate. They could attend to their ills and reproduce their species, and by shedding him, their maker, they had set themselves free. The Mogol rejected these arguments out of hand. A malfunctioning dishwasher did not become a busboy, he argued. By the same token, a rogue puppet was still a doll, a renegade robot was still a robot. This was not a fit direction for their discussions to take. (188-89)

Despite his former slave race having rebelled against his tyranny, Kronos defends proudly their right to be called human. He argues that, through their physical and intellectual prowess and their disavowal of their maker, 'by every definition of sentient existence, they had grown into fully-fledged life-forms' (189). By contrast, the Mogol continues to assert that race is biological rather than a matter of consciousness, self-fashioning or perception: 'a rogue puppet was still a doll, a renegade robot was still a robot' (189). Similarly to the biopoliticians that Agamben describes, the Mogol refuses to regard the PKs as truly alive and hence constructs them as *homo sacer* by not regarding their killing as murder: 'The term "killed" was forbidden; what was not alive could not be dead' (189). The PKs problematise biological racism through their elevated consciousness, but many humans on Galileo-1 prove unwilling to accept race's constructed nature and the provisionality of racial hierarchies.

By describing the reception of Solanka's work by racists in Lilliput-Blefuscu, Rushdie indicates that the discourses of racialising humans wield more power than those of people who problematise frontiers of phenotype and race. The PKs' fate proves inconclusive. Because from a business standpoint 'it [is] vital to the project's long-term prospects that the tale be

capable of almost infinite prolongation' (190), Solanka's story has no ending. Seemingly decisive victories by one force soon resolve into a proliferation of new conflicts and new doublings. Even '[t]he "recantation of Kronos", his declaration that machines had no souls whereas man was immortal, [which] was greeted by the deeply religious Baburian people as a mighty victory' (189), does not presage a final Baburian triumph or convince the PKs of their subraciality. Hence, no final victor emerges in the war or in any of its sub-conflicts. Solanka's fiction offers no answer as to which conception of race – problematising or fundamentalist – carries the most discursive power on Galileo-1.

However, the way in which Rushdie depicts how Lilliput-Blefuscu receives Solanka's fiction suggests that the dominant discourses of identity amongst state and non-state agents alike on twenty-first century Planet Earth continue to be racialising, essentialist and culturalist. The Fremen, an Indo-Lilliputian resistance group, appropriate Solanka's work selectively in order to justify their racism. The faction don the masks of the PKs, but eschew their racial anti-essentialism. Both inside and outside of government, the members of this bioculturally racialising political movement disavow the arguments that Kronos and his cyborgs make regarding the provisionality and constructed nature of race. Instead they follow the Mogol in regarding themselves as irrevocably different from their perceived enemies and, moreover, as an inherently superior race.

Rushdie establishes numerous parallels between the PKs and the Fremen in order to suggest the persistence of the politics of hierarchical race-thinking in the twenty-first century. The Fremen's appropriation and perversion of the PKs' slogan, '*Let the fittest survive*' (167) proves the most important of these parallels. Although the PKs' use of this phrase implies that they regard themselves as superior to the Baburians, their conception of superrace and subrace arises not from biological essentialism but from their belief that they have transcended their earlier subracial enslavement and become a stronger and more intelligent race. Additionally, the PKs do not demand that their perceived superiority be recognised, but simply that 'the "Peekays" and Baburians must live on their twin islands as equals' (167). The PKs engage in a form of race-thinking, but one that conceives

race as mutable and non-hierarchical. Conversely, the Fremen appropriate 'Let the fittest survive!' (227) to justify racial essentialism and their construction of the Indo-Lilliputians as superrace. By describing how Solanka's story, which presents problematising and fundamentalist accounts of race as equally powerful, becomes a totem for racists Rushdie affirms humanity's tendency towards racialisation when presented with both arguments.

Rushdie characterises Lilliput-Blefuscu's bifurcated politics by a bioculturalist race-thinking he depicts as endemic amongst political and civilian figures on both sides. Even Malik Solanka's lover Neela Mahendra, who states that when you '[s]tir all the races together[…]you get the most beautiful people in the world' (63), believes in an unbridgeable cultural difference between the Indo-Lilliputians and the indigenous Elbees. In an effort to gain more rights for her people, constructed as a foreign subrace by the Elbee-dominated government and as such forbidden to own land despite their being the backbone of the nation's economy (157-58), Neela joins the Fremen and their leader Babur. However, under Babur's direction the Fremen movement takes a sinister racialising turn. Babur does not simply want 'justice' for his people as Neela does (158), but a reversal of subrace and superrace. Growing ranks of Indo-Lilliputian citizens come to share this sentiment. One proclaims to Solanka,

> Indian people of Lilliput-Blefuscu have finally standed up for our right. Our culture is ancient and superior and will henceforth prevail. Let the fittest survive, isn't it. For one hundred years good-for-nothing Elbee cannibals drank grog[…]and made us eat their shit. Now they can eat ours instead. (238)

In contrast to the PKs' discourse, the bioculturalist, essentialising and racially hierarchical Fremen ideology focuses on revenge rather than justice. In human hands the slogan of Solanka's fictional cyborgs becomes an excuse not to abolish racial hierarchies but to recapitulate them by subjugating the supposedly unfit.

Neela's growing disgust at Babur's fascist racialising leads her to sacrifice herself to defeat him. However, the Fremen's fall offers only a

minimal boon to the prospect of a future free of race-thinking. Rushdie suggests in *Fury* that the twenty-first century will not see an end to the multifariousness, pervasiveness and near-impossibility of escaping racism that his novels have explored frequently within twentieth-century (bio)politics. As in *Midnight* two decades earlier, he remains sceptical that attempts to move beyond the frontier of the skin, or frontiers of constructed identity in general, can prove effective. In complementing his fictional exploration of American phenotypical racism by describing the Fremen's twisting of Solanka's narrative attempt to problematise race into a biocultural racist discourse, Rushdie indicates an enduring tendency towards race-thinking, animated by infinitely variable criteria, amongst humans inside and outside political structures in all corners of the globe; from India to Britain, from America to the South Pacific. *Fury* constitutes another Rushdie novel which exceeds Foucault's state-centric conception of racism by exploring and criticising not only the multiple ways in which contemporary biopoliticians racialise, but how civilians bolster the state's power through their own race-thinking. Rushdie again invites a reading which augments Foucault's thought and hence suggests ways by which future biopolitical readings of race in literature might proceed.

Conclusion: Frontiers of Biopolitics and Thanatopolitics

Rushdie's novels present the possibility of resistance to race-thinking, but remain consistently doubtful that it can operate effectively. Multiple interrelated racialisations by states and populations characterise each of his fictionalised locales. In *Midnight* Rushdie depicts a prevalent phenotypical racism in post-independence India to which the nation's biopolitical government adds further subraces through its sterilisation programme. *Verses* and *Ground* indicate that the colonialist race-thinking that influences much of the phenotypical racism in *Midnight* did not end with the advent of modern biology or the end of the British Empire, but lives on in a post-imperial British nation which discriminates against non-whites when these constructed subraces emigrate to the land of their former colonial rulers. America in *Ground* and *Fury* proves only a provisional and temporary refuge

from race-thinking. In the latter, racialisation reappears in metropole and far-flung periphery alike, from Jack Rhinehart's racialisation to the Indo-Lilliputian political movement which reads Solanka's stories and adopts not their problematising of race and human identity but their primary villain's fascist, essentialist racism. In engaging with twentieth- and twenty-first-century history Rushdie's fiction criticises the multiple phenotypical, culturalist, ethnicist, worldwide and persistent racisms that have characterised the biopolitical discourses and actions of states and populations in these periods. By emphasising the symbiotic relationship between state and para-state racisms, it offers an exemplary site through which to develop a biopolitical literary criticism that suggests the limits of Foucault's state-centric analysis of race, both as a theory of real-life politics and as a means of reading the ways in which literature represents biopower.

In *Shalimar the Clown*, Rushdie's most recent novel to deal extensively with biopolitics, he continues to depict race-thinking's persistence in twentieth-century politics and society. Through his fictional elegy for Kashmir he exposes the thanatopolitical component of a biopolitical state racialisation in which, as Foucault argues, 'massacres have become vital' (1990, 137). He shows how mass killings have become viewed increasingly as a necessary component in maintaining biopolitical order, a dynamic he explores more briefly in *Midnight* and *Shame*. The next chapter of this thesis argues that by emphasising the ways in which pre-existing racism causes massacres under certain circumstances Rushdie's novels invite a biopolitical reading, and therefore suggest indirectly a theory of biopolitics, that conceives of thanatopolitics as a conditional potentiality inherent within biopolitics. Just as Chapter One augmented Foucault's theory of state race-thinking in order to explore fully the ways in which Rushdie depicts racism, Chapter Two will critique both Agamben's argument for the homology of biopolitics and thanatopolitics, and Esposito's assertion of their antinomy. Using this conception of thanatopolitics to analyse the degrees to which *Midnight*, *Shame* and *Shalimar* evoke the possibility of resisting or escaping thanatopolitical massacres, this chapter builds upon Chapter One's gestures towards delineating a trajectory of waning oppositional potentiality across Rushdie's successive fictionalised

twentieth-century polities. This trajectory culminates in *Shalimar*, in which massacres prove especially pervasive, racialised, and difficult to resist.

Chapter Two – Thanatopolitics

Introduction: Lingering Sovereignty

Chapter One argued that Rushdie's novels persistently depict racism's deleterious effects on the bodies, psyches and rights of the racialised. In *Midnight's Children*, *Shame* and *Shalimar the Clown* Rushdie further suggests the severity of these effects by describing how the state's race-thinking often engenders mass killing under circumstances of political instability or perceived insecurity. Chapter Two contrasts the relatively resistible thanatopolitical violence he depicts in *Midnight* and *Shame* with the more pervasive and effective racialised production of death in *Shalimar*, in which the state's lethal potentiality emerges most frequently and devastatingly. It begins to trace the trajectory of lessening potentiality for effective resistance that characterises Rushdie's successive fictional representations of twentieth-century polities.

Under classical sovereignty political power functions as absolute and deductive of human rights and human life. Conversely, modern biopower operates productively by diffusing sovereignty through various apparatuses and technologies which act on behalf of the sovereign and aim at creating healthy, vigorous, useful human bodies. However, biopolitics retains the sovereign power to punish to the fullest extent of the law the human encumbrances who threaten, or are perceived to threaten, society's order and security. Biopolitics thus deploys the technologies of mass killing wielded by older regimes of classical sovereignty, but to a new end: preserving the superrace of productive bodies that it creates.

Rushdie's fiction details the lethal actions of para-state forces including racist members of superraces, multinational terrorist groups in *The Satanic Verses* and regional biopolitical governments in *The Moor's Last Sigh* and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*. However, his novels indicate that the central biopolitical state possesses the greatest capacity to produce racialised death on a mass scale, through its numerous armies and administrators. In Rushdie, racialising states perpetrate the most devastating and vividly described episodes of mass killing: the atrocities

committed during Bangladesh's war of independence in *Midnight*; Raza Hyder's violence against tribals around the city of Q. in *Shame*; and the especially overwhelming crackdown of India's army in Kashmir in *Shalimar*. He frequently depicts how the state legitimates human encumbrances' harassment by police, their placing into a state of exception or even their sterilisation by constructing them as subrace. Yet by fictionalising historical massacres he also exposes how the enduring sovereign power inherent in biopolitics impacts upon subraces not merely by denying rights or preventing new subracial life from being created but by destroying the mass of racialised bodies. For Rushdie, death proves always potentially present in contemporary politics. His novels describe how the biopolitical state produces death when it believes that massacring subraces safeguards most effectively its security and that of the superrace it constructs; the circumstances under which biopolitics, through wielding the sovereign right to kill, becomes thanatopolitics. That Rushdie suggests more and more the difficulty of resisting these thanatopolitical acts, and portrays the conditions which produce them as increasingly common, demonstrates his fiction's growing assertion of race-thinking's persistence, the biopolitical state's power and lethal sovereignty's lingering potentiality in the twentieth century.

Thanatopolitics: A Potentiality within Biopolitics

Massacres do not pervade Rushdie's fictional worlds. Rather, his novels show how mass killings by state apparatuses occur under certain circumstances in which pre-existing racist logics of biopower lead to deadly attempts at securitising state and population against subraces. Consequently, constructing a theory of thanatopower appropriate to studying Rushdie requires engaging with Giorgio Agamben and Roberto Esposito's useful work on twentieth-century massacres, while critiquing their assessments of the relationship between biopolitics and thanatopolitics. Whereas Agamben asserts the homology of the two, and Esposito their antinomy, in his emphasis on the conditionality of massacres Rushdie problematises both of these theories indirectly. Chapter Two argues that his fiction invites a biopolitical reading which conceives thanatopolitics as a potentiality inherent within biopolitics. This theory of

104

thanatopolitics allows this chapter to draw clearly a trajectory across Rushdie's novels in which he suggests increasingly that political instability and the state's perceived insecurity prove liable to transmute discursive racism and biopolitical oppression into massacres which prove difficult to resist or escape.

The extent to which biopolitics is already, or can become, thanatopolitics has been debated widely. Michel Foucault is ambivalent on the issue. His earliest published work on biopolitics argues that 'massacres have become vital' (Foucault 1990, 137) for the state to optimise and order its population as a whole. In his most detailed examination of race and racism, *Society Must Be Defended*, he explores the state's use of the categories of superrace and subrace to vindicate these apparently vital massacres: 'racism justifies the death-function in the economy of biopower by appealing to the principle that the death of others makes one biologically stronger insofar as one is a member of a race or a population' (Foucault 2004, 258). Foucault's thought on biopower and race asserts that in times of political instability the biopolitical state's racialisation of its people may lead it to massacre the subrace of human encumbrances it has constructed in the name of national security.

However, elsewhere in Foucault's writing he indicates that he considers some genocidal governmental actions to exceed biopower's limits. He argues that a state's use of the atom bomb 'cannot be power, biopower, or the power to guarantee life, as it has been ever since the nineteenth century' (253). Foucault posits massacres as a vital component of biopolitics, but stresses their qualitative difference from the power to guarantee life that techniques of biopolitical optimisation wield.

Foucault's ambiguity regarding the relationship between biopolitics and thanatopolitics has led later thinkers, such as Agamben and Esposito, to evaluate diversely the extent to which biopolitical practices of life incorporate, or transform into, thanatopolitical practices of death. For Agamben, contemporary biopolitics is always already thanatopolitics. In *Homo Sacer* he claims that '[i]f there is a line in every modern state marking the point at which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and

105

biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics, this line no longer appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones' (Agamben 1998, 122). Agamben allows that biopolitics has not always been thanatopolitics, but argues that the twentieth century saw the pervasive homology of the two.

Esposito also asserts that thanatopolitical actions became more widespread in the twentieth century. However, whereas Agamben argues that the two formerly distinct zones of biopolitics and thanatopolitics have merged in recent history, Esposito does not conceive twentieth-century biopolitics and thanatopolitics as always already coterminous, or even as circumstantially coterminous, but as firmly contiguous opposites. He claims that 'under certain conditions, [the] biopolitical vector is turned into its thanatopolitical opposite, thereby linking the battle for life to a practice of death' (Esposito 2013, 71). These conditions arise when the racialising biopolitical government perceives that eliminating the human encumbrances which refuse to conform to its technologies of ordering will securitise most effectively the state and the superrace it constructs.

Understanding the ways in which Rushdie's fiction increasingly criticises state race-thinking by drawing upon the racist discourses, laws and violences that engendered massacres in the twentieth century requires a biopolitical reading that conceives thanatopolitics as a conditional potentiality inherent within biopolitics. Hence, this chapter departs from both Agamben's theory of twentieth-century biopolitics as intrinsically thanatopolitical, and Esposito's characterisation of thanatopolitics as the power to destroy life against which biopolitics constitutes the power to promote life. Contrary to Agamben, Rushdie's novels suggest that thanatopolitics, as Esposito argues, arises only under certain conditions, in certain spaces and at certain times. However, because Rushdie presents biopolitics as mass killing caused by racialising elements intrinsic to biopower, he also problematises Esposito's claim that biopolitics and thanatopolitics are diametrically opposed. In Rushdie, biopolitics appears as the power to promote life tempered by the will to promote only some. His fiction indicates the existence of a border between biopolitics and its inherent thanatopolitical elements which governments cross when they massacre the subraces they have created. Arguing for a continuum

between biopolitics and thanatopolitics rather than an opposition or a homology, a more nuanced theory of the relationship between the two categories which may illuminate future studies of biopolitics in literature and beyond, reveals most productively the ways in which Rushdie depicts racialised massacres.

Rushdie portrays these border crossings occurring in times of national insecurity. He explores the circumstances under which the central government perceives such a threat from the unruliness of human encumbrances that it massacres them, and uses their status of subrace to justify the act to the superrace. Departing from Agamben's and Esposito's assessments of the categorical relationship between biopolitics and thanatopolitics, this chapter argues that Rushdie's novels indicate that biopolitics does not become thanatopolitics inevitably, nor does it become completely qualitatively different when it does so. However, because Agamben and Esposito theorise how the state uses its construction of subraces to validate their attempted annihilation, their work on techniques and discourses of thanatopower proves useful in reading the ways in which Rushdie represents massacres and the circumstances leading to them.

Agamben theorises perceptively the means by which the state produces a subrace and subsequently cleanses it thanatopolitically in order to protect the superrace. *Homo sacer* – the subrace which he conceives as lacking the protection of the rights and laws afforded to the superrace – emerges frequently within the states of exception that governments in Rushdie's novels produce. Augmenting a focus on state apparatuses with an examination of para-state racisms, Esposito explores how communities attempt to secure themselves from what the state constructs as a threat. He perceives this process, which he calls immunisation, as progressively prevalent and deadly in recent history. His thought exposes the twentieth-century state's unprecedented heights of paranoia, racialisation and exclusionary logic culminating in thanatopolitics, which Rushdie's novels indict. Using Agamben and Esposito's philosophy, while arguing that governments release the thanatopolitical potentiality within biopolitics only conditionally, provides a conceptual framework through which to chart how Rushdie's fiction stresses increasingly that the race-thinking and paranoid

107

securitising of twentieth-century biopolitical states against their outlying, resistant people and regions proved liable to engender massacres.

Giorgio Agamben: *Homo Sacer*

Rushdie frequently suggests that states and superraces construct subraces as not quite human and therefore not deserving of the same juridical protection. Agamben's identification of *homo sacer* – a subrace whose uncertain legal status and rights enable the state to enact and justify their elimination – thus illuminates how Rushdie describes the state's massacres of these racialised bodies in times of political crisis.

Agamben bases his conception of biopolitics on a theory of how states produce indistinction. He introjects an examination of the law and its racialising operations into the study of biopolitics in order to critique the supposed antinomy of superrace and subrace: concerns he perceives as lacking in Foucault. Agamben draws a distinction between the superrace of *bios* (life that has the right to participate in politics and the community) and the subrace of *zoē* (life lacking this right). He posits the existence of a further subrace called bare life, or *homo sacer*, within antiquity and modernity alike. In his book of the same name he argues that the biopolitical state produces this subrace by creating a state of exception which problematises laws and norms, and the borders between them. Within the state of exception, in which certain humans are constructed as *homo sacer*, 'exclusion and inclusion, outside and inside, *bios* and *zoē*, right and fact, enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction' (Agamben 1998, 9). For Agamben, 'the state of exception is neither external nor internal to the juridical order' (2005, 23) of the biopolitical state. As it proves consequently 'impossible to distinguish transgression of the law from execution of the law, such that what violates a rule and what conforms to it coincide without any remainder' (57), the government renders law not quite law, rights not quite rights and life not quite life.

Because life is not quite life within the state of exception, death is not quite death. Agamben argues that 'the killing of *homo sacer* does not constitute homicide' (102) in the eyes of the state, nor in the eyes of the

superrace whom the state persuades that the dead were never fully alive. The state's capacity to construct the discursive, disciplinary and spatial state of exception means that the killing of bare life is permitted and justifiable if it becomes necessary. States may therefore use the state of exception as a means to wage full-blown thanatopolitical campaigns of massacres against the human encumbrances they identify as a danger to the superrace and to the nation's smooth biopolitical running. Agamben perceives these campaigns as increasingly common in twentieth-century history.

Rushdie's fiction also suggests that racialising massacres grew in intensity and frequency in the twentieth century. Examples of massacred *homo sacer* abound in the twentieth-century polities that his novels imagine. Bangladeshis in *Midnight*, tribals in *Shame* and Kashmiris in *Shalimar* all find themselves placed into a state of exception by governments who use their status as bare life to enable and later vindicate their killing on a huge scale. However, Agamben's illuminating exploration of the juridical indistinction that allows *homo sacer* and the state of exception to be produced proves unclear regarding precisely why and how the associated production of death purportedly intensified in recent history. This lack of clarity arises from Agamben's insistence on the homology of biopolitics and thanatopolitics in the twentieth century, which prevents him from considering in detail the conditions under which biopolitics begets thanatopolitics. Understanding how Rushdie describes the actions through which states convert *homo sacer* into dead bodies requires a biopolitical reading which augments Agamben's insights with a theory of the conditions under which thanatopolitics manifests.

Esposito comprehensively explores the paranoid, racialising immunitary practices of the contemporary biopolitical state that, according to him, cause not the merging of biopolitics with thanatopolitics but the former to transform into the latter under certain conditions. Esposito goes too far in arguing that the two categories are diametrically opposed. He imputes a less deadly meaning to the term 'biopolitics' than other critics and thus attributes massacres to the separate and opposite category of thanatopolitics. However, when subracial categories such as *homo sacer* are considered as a means by which the thanatopolitical potentiality of

biopolitics can emerge in a politics of the massacre, Esposito's genealogy of circumstantial immunisation contributes towards a thorough biopolitical reading of the insecurity, paranoia and conditional massacres that characterise the actions of twentieth-century governments in Rushdie's novels.

Roberto Esposito: *Immunitas*

Rushdie's novels *Midnight*, *Shame* and *Shalimar* expose twentieth-century states' attempts to securitise themselves and their populations during political crises by massacring the subraces they produce and using their victims' status as subrace to justify the massacre to the increasingly paranoid and racialising superrace. Esposito's deconstruction of this combined state and para-state racialisation argues for the growing pervasiveness of a circumstantial thanatopolitics in the century Rushdie's fiction represents most frequently. His theory of immunisation defines the conditions for thanatopolitics: the increasing mobility of populations and commodities; the subsequent insecurity that communities perceive; and the state's tendency to respond to this insecurity – and its own – by scapegoating and massacring the subraces it constructs. Identifying the growing prevalence of these conditions, and the immunising massacres they beget, in Rushdie's fictional locales helps reveal a trajectory of lessening potentiality for effective resistance in his own deconstruction of twentieth-century thanatopolitics.

For Esposito, understanding biopolitics requires an examination of twentieth-century history that is all but absent from Foucault's work: 'only when biopolitics is linked conceptually to the immunitary dynamic of the negative protection of life does biopolitics reveal its specifically modern genesis' (2008, 9). He conceives immunisation (*immunitas*) as the process by which the totally inclusive and non-racialising ideal of *communitas* gives way to a 'community of death' (Esposito 2013, 15). This community cannot bear to include all humans or to imagine commonalities with, and responsibilities to, the marginal and different. Instead, it constructs people on society's margins as a risk to the nation in the same way that, as Foucault argues, the biopolitical state racialises human encumbrances who resist

biopower's optimising embrace. The community perceives a common enemy's identification, and often its thanatopolitical destruction, as essential to securitise itself against the disorder and terror of *communitas*: '[t]he community can survive the violence that traverses it only by shifting violence onto an enemy that is able to attract it' (Esposito 2010, 33). The state thus identifies a subrace against which to securitise the community. It racialises this social group as less than human so that it may be massacred if necessary (a similar dynamic to that which Agamben calls the production of *homo sacer*).

Esposito argues that these securitising tendencies became more widespread than ever in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In this period populations, races, currencies and weapons have become increasingly mobile. Communities feel consequently less secure in their being, property and socio-economic status. They are therefore more likely to demand protection from subraces:

> In the moment in which liberty is no longer understood as a mode of being, but rather as a right to have something of one's own – more precisely the full predominance of oneself in relation to others – the subtractive or simply the negative sense is already destined to characterise it ever more dominantly. (Esposito 2008, 72)

For Esposito, '[i]t would seem that, instead of adjusting the level of protection to the actual presence of risk, we [are] adjusting instead the perception of risk to the growing demand for protection. That is, risk is artificially created in order to control it' (2013, 62). This process benefits superrace and state alike. Esposito notes that '[t]he more individuals seek to defend from others what is proper to them, the more they must allow themselves to be appropriated by the collectivity intended to defend their defence' (2011, 26). Hence, similarly to Foucault's theory of an earlier historical transition from race war discourse to racism, he argues that when states enacted thanatopolitics in the twentieth century populations proved much more prone to view massacres as necessary to securitise them.

Yet Esposito asserts that neither biopolitics nor thanatopolitics can truly securitise the superrace, for the state does not offer protection against

the state itself. As Foucault does in conceiving 'the internal racism of permanent purification' (2004, 62), Esposito argues that members of the superrace are always at risk of being placed into a subracial category. The more paranoid the state, the fewer citizens remain *bios*: 'immunisation in high doses means sacrificing every form of qualified life, for reasons of simple survival' (Esposito 2013, 61).

Esposito's deconstruction of immunisation advocates replacing immunitary community with *communitas*, but acknowledges the increasing prevalence of the politics of the massacre – the most extreme form of immunisation – in contemporary (bio)politics. He perceives the twentieth century as characterised by heightened mobility of populations, superraces and governments' attendant growing use of immunitary logic and the state's subsequent and theoretically limitless thanatopolitical production of death under the conditions of a perceived insecurity. Because he departs from Agamben in examining why thanatopolitics manifests in certain times and spaces, Esposito's theory of *immunitas* enables this chapter to augment Agamben's work on the state of exception and thus produce a theory of circumstantial thanatopolitics adequate to exploring its depiction in literature. Rushdie's exploration of the conditions under which the production of *homo sacer* engendered massacres in twentieth-century history suggests the necessity of this theory. In turn, its ability to chart the growing degree to which Rushdie depicts massacres as an effective political technology indicates its utility.

Rushdie's fiction frequently criticises the extreme immunisation that often results from the race-thinking he portrays as permanent in the nations and communities he fictionalises. A biopolitical reading which utilises and critiques Agamben and Esposito reveals that Rushdie suggests that the actualisation of biopolitics' thanatopolitical potentiality under conditions of perceived insecurity came increasingly to characterise twentieth-century government, and that he progressively indicates the difficulty of resisting these immunitary practices. Rushdie describes the racialising thanatopolitics of Pakistan's military during Bangladesh's war of independence in *Midnight* and the violent suppression of regionalist rebels in an allegorical version of the country in *Shame*. However, both of these

novels also expose state thanatopower's limits. Conversely, in representing India's military crackdown against Kashmiri militants in the 1980s and 1990s, *Shalimar* infers the near-impossibility of resisting massacres. Contrasting *Shalimar* with Rushdie's earlier depictions of thanatopolitics traces the trajectory of waning potentiality that his fiction evokes regarding effective resistance to racialising immunisation and the state massacres it engenders.

Thanatopolitics in *Midnight's Children* and *Shame*

Rushdie presents Pakistan's recent history as characterised by thanatopolitics. In *Midnight* he depicts East Pakistan's secession and the lethal, surreally intense but resistible violence of the subsequent civil war in 1971. In *Shame* he uses a fictionalised version of the Pakistani government's military campaign against rebellious tribals in mid-1970s Balochistan to suggest that governments of nations comprised of irreconcilable elements may securitise themselves effectively against threats from outlying regions by producing death, though not indefinitely. Reading both novels through the biopolitical critical methodology detailed above shows that Rushdie emphasises and describes how pervasive pre-existing discourses of racialisation within state institutions (intended to engender security and national unity) lead to thanatopolitical massacres which attempt to prevent further instability under conditions of political crisis or perceived threats to the state from human encumbrances. The governments of the fictionalised Pakistan in *Midnight* and Peccavistan, *Shame*'s version of Pakistan 'at a slight angle to reality' (Rushdie 1996b, 29), seek to immunise themselves and their superrace by constructing *homo sacer* and then massacring it. In these early novels Rushdie indicates that a state's use of thanatopolitics does not guarantee that a nation or a government will remain intact, a notion he largely excises from *Shalimar*. However, the devastating strength of immunitary operations in his fictional versions of Pakistan in *Midnight* and *Shame* suggests the ease with which racialisation becomes lethal in the state's hands, and the human cost of this thanatopolitics.

Thanatopolitics in *Midnight's Children*: Military Interventions and Resistance in East Pakistan

Rushdie focuses most of *Midnight*'s depiction of twentieth-century politics around a fictionalised version of India's nation-state which he presents as racialising and biopolitical. However, whereas India's government in the novel practices a sinister biopolitics, Pakistan's immunising militarised state actualises biopolitics' thanatopolitical potentiality in a bid to maintain territorial integrity and stability. Though unsuccessful, this attempt has deadly consequences. In his treatment of the historical military atrocities through which Pakistan's central state attempted to prevent its East Wing's secession in 1971, Rushdie lays bare the vulnerability of racialising thanatopolitical governments despite their oppressive violence. Yet at the same time he suggests the lethality of thanatopolitical practices and the permanence of the race-thinking that engenders them.

In *Midnight* Rushdie emphasises the state's immunitary, thanatopolitical tendencies in post-independence Pakistan. The military techniques of mass killing that he describes constitute thanatopolitics because a pre-existing profile of bare life animates their meticulously planned efforts to securitise a state and a superrace against secession. Rushdie depicts Pakistan as an artificially created nation of heterogeneous regions and cultures constantly on the verge of fragmenting. Unlike the similarly heterogeneous India, a nation created by British colonists and which Rushdie's protagonist Saleem describes as 'a dream we all agreed to dream[...]a collective fiction in which anything was possible' (2008, 150), Pakistan in *Midnight* lacks an ethos of unity-in-diversity strong enough to combine its constituent regions into a stable territorial formation. The actions of West Pakistan's army in the novel confirm Saleem Sinai's appraisal of 'the fear of schizophrenia, of splitting, that was buried like an umbilical cord in every Pakistani heart' (490). In showing how the army's paranoid racialisation of every East Pakistani as secessionist subversives leads to thanatopolitical massacres when secession occurs, Rushdie's novel indirectly indicates the need for a biopolitical literary criticism that treats thanatopolitics as a potentiality inherent within racialising biopolitics.

Rushdie portrays West Pakistan's military campaign in Bangladesh as a premeditated security operation of thanatopolitical state terror. Historians have stressed that the attack on Bangladesh used technologies of knowledge and centralised planning (techniques characteristic of biopolitics). As Ian Talbot argues, '[w]hat is most chilling[...]is not the level of the violence unleashed on 25 March 1971, but the meticulous planning which accompanied it. Parallels with the Nazi Holocaust immediately spring to mind' (1998, 33). Rushdie emphasises this type of planning by presenting the massacres carried out by West Pakistan's army not as a reaction to Bangladesh's independence but as a calculated tactic to be deployed in case of secession. Its officers base this strategy on a discourse which racialises East Pakistanis as subversive human encumbrances and constructs them as *homo sacer* thanatopolitically permitted to be killed.

Through Saleem's sergeant-major's racialising discourse, Rushdie suggests that West Pakistan-dominated state apparatuses constructed East Pakistanis as *homo sacer* even before their nation's declaration of independence. Sergeant-Major Najmuddin addresses his unit:

> Purpose of units? – To root out undesirable elements. Nature of such elements? – Sneaky, well-disguised, could-be-anyone. Known intentions of same? – To be abhorred: destruction of family life, murder of God, expropriation of landowners, abolition of film-censorship. To what ends? – Annihilation of the State, anarchy, foreign domination. Accentuating causes of concern? – Forthcoming elections; and subsequently, civilian rule. (Political prisoners have been are being freed. All types of hooligans are abroad.) Precise duties of units? – To obey unquestioningly; to seek unflaggingly; to arrest remorselessly. Mode of procedure? – Covert; efficient; quick. Legal basis of such detentions? – Defence of Pakistan Rules, permitting the pick-up of undesirables, who may be held incommunicado for a period of six months. Footnote: a renewable period of six months. Any questions? – No. Good. (Rushdie 2008, 485)

Here Rushdie stresses race-thinking's discursive power within West Pakistan's army. Najmuddin orders his troops to immunise Pakistan against 'undesirable elements' (485) including pro-independence intellectuals and Mukti Bahini guerrillas. He presents these rebel factions as a threat to Pakistan's morality and its very existence by alleging that the separatists desire 'destruction of family life, murder of God, expropriation of landowners [and] abolition of film-censorship' (485). He perceives these ideals as leading inevitably to '[a]nnihilation of the State, anarchy, foreign domination' (485). However, his racialising logic precludes a precise surgical strike against these supposedly subversive groups. The army categorises East Pakistanis as a subrace in their totality in an attempt to securitise Pakistan and the simultaneously constructed superrace of West Pakistanis. The undesirable elements 'could-be-anyone' (485). Najmuddin founds his strategy for combating this subrace on a discourse of *homo sacer* that, under the 'Defence of Pakistan Rules' (485), affords East Pakistanis fewer legal rights than the West Wing's population. It places every East Pakistani into a state of exception which permits the army to imprison them indefinitely for 'a renewable period of six months' (485) or even kill them. In outlining this operation Najmuddin plays the roles of both questioner and answerer. He leaves no room for alternative discourses to enter the planning process, save for a cursory query of 'Any questions?' (485) Because this securitising strategy racialises it leads to massacres when put into practice in *Midnight*'s later chapters, in which Rushdie fictionalises the circumstances of secession under which the thanatopolitical potentiality of West Pakistan's state biopolitics became lethal action.

Rushdie depicts West Pakistan's military campaign in East Pakistan as a racist attempt to kill not just confirmed pro-independence intellectuals and guerrillas but anybody suspected of being one. Because the state's extreme immunitary logic renders every Bangladeshi a suspect, intense thanatopolitical brutality results. Rushdie presents the violence's indiscriminate nature and surreal horror as exceeding rationality:

Midnight, March 25th, 1971: past the University, which was being shelled, the buddha led troops to Sheikh Mujib's lair. Students and lecturers came running out of hostels; they were greeted by bullets,

and Mercurochrome stained the lawns[…]And while we drove through city streets, Shaheed looked out of windows and saw things that weren't-couldn't-have-been-true: soldiers entering women's hostels without knocking; women, dragged into the street, were also entered, and again nobody troubled to knock[…]Ayooba Shaheed Farooq watched in silence through moving windows as our boys, our soldiers-for-Allah, our worth-ten-babus jawans held Pakistan together by turning flamethrowers machine-guns hand grenades on the city slums. (497)

Here Rushdie vivifies the shift that takes place as the thanatopolitical potentiality within biopolitics, which in the sergeant-major's racialising orders operated only discursively, manifests in sweeping massacres which outstrip any violence that Saleem and the boy soldiers he accompanies have imagined. Because the army constructs every Bangladeshi as a possible subversive and therefore as *homo sacer*, it executes students and lecturers and rapes women summarily without establishing their complicity in fomenting resistance. Moreover, Saleem's description of how the army 'held Pakistan together by turning flamethrowers machine-guns hand-grenades on the city slums' (497) demonstrates that the army's discourse of *immunitas* leads its soldiers to internalise and believe in a thanatopolitical correlation between national security and massacres. In *Midnight* Rushdie shows how in contemporary biopolitics the state may use immunitary discourses successfully to convince its constructed superrace of the necessity of sacrificing entire subraces in the name of stability.

And yet this concerted operation of deadly immunisation fails to securitise Pakistan against secession. Considering the ways in which Rushdie engages with the circumstances under which biopower begets massacres in *Midnight* not only reveals that he portrays thanatopolitics as a potentiality inherent within biopolitics rather than asserting the two categories' homology or antinomy, but that he presents this potentiality's actualisation as finite. Rushdie depicts the indiscriminate lethality of racialising thanatopolitics in Bangladesh's capital and the countryside where 'entire villages are[…]burned owing to their collective responsibility for harbouring Mukti Bahini' (499). However, he also indicates the limits of

its power to securitise territories, governments and superraces. Even a campaign of immunitary violence so intense that every East Pakistani becomes *homo sacer* cannot prevent Bangladesh's independence. The meaningful presence of West Pakistan's troops in the East proves inadequate as, consequently, does their power to fight the Mukti Bahini and to commit massacres. They kill Bangladeshis by the thousands, and still the Mukti Bahini 'mov[e] invisibly through the smoking land [and] bullets come buzzing in like bees-from-nowhere' (515). Eventually Indian military support helps end the war decisively in Bangladesh's favour: 'in a mere three weeks Pakistan had lost half her navy, a third of her army, a quarter of her air force, and finally, after the Tiger surrendered, more than half her population' (523). Most of the East Pakistani *homo sacer* constructed by West Pakistan's racialising state survive potentially to become *bios* in the new state of Bangladesh. Rushdie indicates immunitary thanatopolitics' limited power to retain a rebellious region and to eradicate the subrace of human encumbrances it constructs.

Despite the eventual defeat of the instruments of thanatopolitical security that Rushdie depicts, *Midnight* communicates immunitary race-thinking's deleterious consequences and the potentiality of thanatopolitical violence under circumstances of insecurity in twentieth-century politics. The fictional version of Pakistan's state that Rushdie portrays in his next novel, *Shame*, wages a thanatopolitical campaign just as devastating as the 1971 war in *Midnight*. However, because this thanatopolitics meets with less effective resistance, *Shame* only augments the previous novel's suggestion of the ease with which racism engenders death under regimes of biopower.

Thanatopolitics in *Shame*: Raza Hyder's War in the West

Shame (1983) centres on Peccavistan, a fictional nation based on Pakistan. In this novel Rushdie again invites a biopolitical reading that conceives thanatopolitics as a circumstantially actualised potentiality inherent within racialising biopolitics. Peccavistan's state, perceiving the country to be constantly on the verge of spatial fragmentation, racialises the inhabitants of rebellious regions and then practices thanatopolitics on them. In this sense his representation of the nation resembles his portrait of Pakistan in

Midnight. However, Rushdie places greater emphasis on the efficacy of the state's immunitary thanatopolitics and its production of *homo sacer* than in the earlier novel. He does so by devoting less space to the unsuccessful war in the East Wing than the conflict in Balochistan between 1973 and 1977, which he depicts as a successful act of *immunitas*. Popular resistance fails to defeat the thanatopolitical campaign in the west. The president's daughter Sufiya Zinobia merely avenges the slaughter years later through bloody murder. Sufiya's act of resistance does not hold political leaders democratically accountable to the subraces they construct and massacre, and comes far too late to save the Outer Rim's *homo sacer*. In *Midnight* Rushdie evokes the limitations and resistibility of thanatopolitical actions, but in representing the successful quelling of tribal rebellion *Shame* mostly depicts the emergence of biopolitics' thanatopolitical potentiality as devastatingly effective in securitising governments.

Rushdie again fictionalises Pakistan as an artificially created nation of heterogeneous, incompatible parts. Peccavistan fails to construct effectively a distinct national identity upon the palimpsest of the past, as, Rushdie's narrator argues, does the country upon which he bases *Shame*'s fictional polity: 'To build Pakistan it was necessary to cover up Indian history, to deny that Indian centuries lay just beneath the surface of Pakistani Standard Time' (1996b, 87). As in *Midnight*, Rushdie does not so much suggest the unity-in-diversity he attributes to India in the earlier book as a nation '*insufficiently imagined*, a picture full of irreconcilable elements' (87). In both novels Rushdie's fictionalised Pakistani state perceives a constant risk of secession, racialises those it views as working towards it and hence practices thanatopolitics in an attempt to prevent the nation from disintegrating. However, whereas *Midnight* describes effective resistance to thanatopolitics and its discourses and techniques of racialisation, in *Shame* Rushdie indicates more vividly the power of massacres to quell rebellion successfully.

In *Shame*, as in *Midnight*, Rushdie presents thanatopolitics as a potentiality innate to biopolitics by fictionalising the pre-existing governmental and military racialisation that animated West Pakistan's conduct in the 1971 civil war. Future Peccavistani Prime Minister Arjumand

Harappa refers to the East Wing's inhabitants as 'savages, breeding endlessly, jungle-bunnies good for nothing but growing jute and rice, knifing each other, cultivating traitors in their paddies[...]perhaps not foreigners exactly, but aliens without a doubt' (179). Yet although Rushdie once again engages with the historical racism of Pakistan's West Wing-dominated government towards the East in the years leading up to Bangladesh's secession, and covers secession's impact on the remaining Peccavistani state's politics, he pays scant attention to the military conflict itself on this occasion. *Shame*'s version of Pakistan's civil war lacks the graphic brutality of its equivalent in *Midnight*. Rushdie fails to depict the state's thanatopolitical massacres in the East Wing, and hence omits any mention of the rebel movements that rendered them unable to securitise the nation against secession.

When Rushdie depicts the massacres that biopolitical racialising begets under circumstances of perceived insecurity during his fictional analogue for the Pakistani government's campaign against rebellious tribals in mid-1970s Balochistan, he makes little effort to evoke the possibility of effective resistance. The wild, violent spaces in Peccavistan's west prove much more central to *Shame*'s narrative than East Peccavistan and its secession. Consequently, the army's thanatopolitical suppression of the regional uprising around the 'remote border town' (11) of Q. in a successful attempt to keep Peccavistan's remaining provinces together carries more importance than the civil war in Rushdie's exploration of Peccavistan's biopolitics. This conflict's relative prominence in the novel, as opposed to the defeat of the thanatopolitical campaign in the East Wing, means that *Shame* emphasises the efficacy of immunitary thanatopolitics based on race-thinking much more than does *Midnight*.

Rushdie describes the region around Q. as 'a zone of instability' (23) which the central governmental cannot control completely. By virtue of its remoteness and inhospitable nature this 'hideously indeterminate' (30) area constitutes a potential space of resistance to biopower. However, the resident tribals' autonomy and resistance to central government immunisation's devastating violence within this space proves severely limited. Many Rushdie critics have argued that the inability of *Shame*'s

characters to move and resist freely within Peccavistan's frontier space arises from the topography of the space itself. For example, Catherine Cundy laments 'the rigidity of the framework imposed on the text by the internal structure of such motifs as the frontier[...]coalesc[ing] in a way that suffocates the internal movement that was so obvious and defining a feature of *Midnight's Children*' (1996, 49).[1] These readings fail to address the specific reason for the borderland's suffocating quality and the defeat of the tribals' movement for regional autonomy: the thanatopolitical, immunitary aspect of the army officer Raza Hyder's bloody crackdown. The frontier suffocates its inhabitants because Peccavistan's central government, in an attempt to securitise itself and its superrace, racialises the tribals as human encumbrances and subsequently sacrifices them thanatopolitically in the name of a perceived greater good.

As in *Midnight*, Rushdie suggests that the state's prior racism begets and seeks to justify an ostensibly stabilising thanatopolitics which emerges in times of national crisis. As soon as Peccavistan's government discovers gas fields in the region around Q. 'the unpatriotic behaviour of the intemperate tribals bec[o]me[s] a matter for national concern' (Rushdie 1996b, 91). For the government the tribals' deadly violence towards the engineering team sent to survey the area represents more than a mere act of resistance to central government domination. It proves that they are less than human: *homo sacer*. The government racialises the tribals as 'savages' (102) because of their brutality, but also because they attempt to retain natural resources for the outlying region's benefit rather than that of the privileged superrace. They become considered human encumbrances that present a threat to national unity and security. In his portrayal of the tribals' subsequent massacring Rushdie characteristically indicates how biopolitics' thanatopolitical potentiality becomes extant under conditions of perceived political instability. Moreover, he evokes the difficulty of resisting thanatopolitics to a much greater degree than in *Midnight*.

By describing Raza Hyder's immunitary activities when he becomes administrator of the Q. region, Rushdie again exposes the role of the legal indistinction which creates *homo sacer* in engendering the circumstances under which thanatopolitics manifests. Raza, who argues that '[a]t certain

moments civil law must bend before military necessity' (101), ousts the region's chief minister, declares martial law and institutes a state of exception. The space around Q. no longer comprises a spatial indeterminacy allowing for freedom of movement and autonomy for the tribals, but a juridical indeterminacy which militates against this autonomy and renders the tribals *homo sacer* which may be massacred to protect the state, the nation and the superrace. The army visits horrific immunitary violence on the bodies of the rebels, which the shawls of Rani Harappa later depict in great detail: 'the men without genitals, the sundered legs, the intestines in place of faces, the alien legion of the dead' (195).

Rushdie refrains from portraying the crackdown as wholly suppressive of resistance. He counterposes the state's triumphant discourse to the vestigial tribal resistance movements that Raza's indiscriminate brutality radicalises:

> The official version of Hyder's period of power in the west was that it had been an unmitigated success, and his career was continuing along its upward path. Dacoity had been eliminated, the mosques were full, the organs of state had been purged[…]of the corruption disease, and separatism was a dead duck[…]but, as Iskander Harappa was fond of telling Omar Khayyam Shakil when the pair of them were in their cups, 'Fuck me in the mouth, yaar, everybody knows those tribals are running wild out there because Hyder kept hanging innocent people by the balls'. (119)

Yet despite their efforts the tribals fail to retain the natural resources they attempt to defend. They cannot remove or even destabilise significantly the central government, whose production and massacring of *homo sacer* all but quells the uprising. Unlike the attack on Bangladesh in *Midnight*, *Shame*'s most vivid depiction of immunitary thanatopolitics represents it as both violent and effective.

In contrast to *Midnight*, in *Shame* Rushdie emphasises thanatopolitics' efficacy in pacifying rebellious outlying regions. However, he also exposes its limits periodically. Through Sufiya Zinobia's successful campaign of terror against her father Raza Hyder's biopolitical regime,

122

Rushdie suggests that no government can immunise itself and the nation against all threats indefinitely. Yet Raza's deposing comes too late to save the subrace of the borderlands from annihilation, and does not herald a new age of democracy or *communitas*. By indicating that bloody violence from within the ruling elite wields more power to remove governments than do mass resistance movements, *Shame* evokes only an attenuated potentiality for a future free of racialising bio/thanatopolitical oppression.

This chapter has used a conception of thanatopolitics as a circumstantial but limited potentiality intrinsic to biopolitics, in order to contrast Rushdie's depiction of effective resistance to thanatopolitics in *Midnight* with *Shame*, in which massacres prove mostly effective in securing the state against perceived threats. It has thus begun to trace a trajectory of lessening potential for freedom from biopolitical oppression within Rushdie's successive fictionalisations of twentieth-century history. This biopolitical method of reading reveals that this trajectory culminates with *Shalimar*, Rushdie's most recent novel to engage with twentieth-century biopolitics. In *Shalimar* Rushdie mirrors Esposito's thought most acutely by portraying the conditions that beget massacres as increasingly prevalent as the century progressed, and by indicating the impossibility of resisting the state's devastatingly effective immunitary thanatopolitics.

Thanatopolitics in *Shalimar the Clown*

Shalimar the Clown (2005) constitutes Rushdie's bleakest novel in large part because he emphasises more forcefully than ever the prevalence of massacres and their effectiveness in extinguishing resistance movements within recent political history. Rushdie portrays thanatopolitics as endemic globally, from Nazi Germany's concentration camps to the Indian army's immunitary atrocities in Kashmir. These campaigns prove more and more pervasive throughout a twentieth century marked increasingly by conditions of instability and insecurity. The novel thus indirectly suggests the veracity of Esposito's notion of 'the accelerating, generalising character' of biopolitics' 'contagious drift' (2011, 2). A biopolitical reading shows that *Shalimar* evokes only the scantest possibility of effective opposition to thanatopolitics and the racialisations that animate it.

Thanatopolitics of the Nazi Concentration Camp

Although Rushdie depicts thanatopolitical massacres frequently, *Shalimar* represents his first extended fictional engagement with Nazism. He describes the horror of the Nazi concentration camps, but also suggests the limits of their power to produce death. After the Second World War the French Jew Max Ophuls discovers the full extent of the Jews' reduction to *homo sacer*. Victims include his parents, whom the Nazis exterminate in a thanatopolitical attempt to optimise the superrace: 'they ended up as mere bodies, bodies that reacted this way to pain, this way to greater pain, this way to the greatest pain imaginable, bodies whose response to being injected with diseases was of interest, of high scientific interest' (Rushdie 2006a, 157). Yet Max, by fleeing from France to Britain during the war and to America after its conclusion, leaves behind his precarious existence as *homo sacer*. Here Rushdie evokes the possibility of escaping race-thinking and the state of exception. As Stephen Morton argues,

> Ophuls' escape from the threat of death in the Nazi concentration camps, and his rise to political power in the United States mirrors the distinction that the political theorist Giorgio Agamben makes between the figure of bare life (the person who can be tortured and killed outside the jurisdiction of the law), and the figure of sovereign power (the figure who decides on the exception to the law which allows bare life to be tortured and killed). (2008, 139)

For Morton, Max's journey indicates that Rushdie's novel presents a potentiality of resistance to thanatopolitics in which *homo sacer* can become *bios* under certain circumstances. However, as Morton acknowledges elsewhere (143), the vast majority of Rushdie's characters in *Shalimar* who find themselves subject to immunitary thanatopolitics are helpless before its racialising logic, even after the Allies dismantle the Nazi camps. Rushdie portrays Max as the exception to the state of exception.

By depicting Kashmir as another state of exception, Rushdie indicates that the defeat of Nazi thanatopolitics failed to end thanatopolitics worldwide. A space ravaged increasingly by racialised massacres, in which the exception becomes the rule, every Kashmiri becomes *homo sacer* and

resistance proves near-impossible, Kashmir in *Shalimar* appears as one of the infinitely reproducible thanatopolitical camps that Agamben theorises.

Many of the most influential philosophical critiques of thanatopolitics argue for the Nazi concentration camps as an exemplary bio/thanatopolitical space. In *Society Must Be Defended* Foucault, in a rare pronouncement on twentieth-century biopower, refers to Nazism as the most extreme example of lethal biopolitics. He describes it as 'the paroxysmal development of the new power mechanisms that had been established since the eighteenth century' (Foucault 2004, 259). However, Agamben goes further than Foucault in claiming the camp's centrality to thanatopolitics. Agamben describes the camp not only as 'the most absolute biopolitical space ever to have been realised' but as 'the very paradigm of political space at the point at which politics becomes biopolitics and *homo sacer* is virtually confused with the citizen' (1998, 171). Although he discusses the specific camp in *Remnants of Auschwitz* (1998), he states elsewhere that he treats his key concepts 'as paradigms whose role [is] to constitute and make intelligible a broader historical-problematic context' (Agamben 2009, 9). Consequently, he argues that

> if the essence of the camp consists in the materialisation of the state of exception and in the consequent creation of a space for naked life as such, we will then have to admit to be facing a camp virtually every time that such a structure is created, regardless of the nature of the crimes committed in it and regardless of the denomination and specific topography it might have. (Agamben 2000, 41-42)

For Agamben, the paradigmatic, infinitely reproducible camp means that the defeat of the Nazis failed to stop the march of thanatopolitics. The way in which Rushdie presents Kashmir in *Shalimar* mirrors Agamben's point. His brief description of the Nazi camps and their dismantling serves as a prelude to the horrors of Kashmir's recent history that his novel describes. In contrast to *Midnight* and *Shame*, in which Rushdie indicates a potentiality of effective resistance, *Shalimar* suggests the near-impossibility of opposing race-thinking, the lingering presence of the sovereign right to kill and the

increasingly common immunitary massacres that the twentieth century's growing political instability engendered.

Thanatopolitics and Hopelessness in Kashmir

By charting how centralised Indian military control of Kashmir intensified in the twentieth century, Rushdie in *Shalimar* indirectly suggests the value of a biopolitical literary criticism informed not only by Esposito's assertion of thanatopolitics' circumstantiality, but by his argument that the conditions that beget immunising massacres have become progressively prevalent. He depicts a brutal, coercive occupation in which growing instability means that biopower's thanatopolitical component becomes more and more pervasive and thus gradually excises the prospect of effective resistance to massacres. The immunitary military operations that Rushdie describes in the novel constitute a form of lethal state terror that goes beyond any government in his fiction in its paranoid, racialising, efficient production of death. *Midnight* represents a thanatopolitical campaign's limitations and defeat, and *Shame* implies that no thanatopolitical state can immunise itself from successful resistance completely. However, *Shalimar* traces Kashmir's decline from 'paradise on earth' (Rushdie 2006a, 76) to a ruined wasteland lacking any possibility for a future without fear of becoming bare life. In its attempt to securitise the Indian union against both Islamist terror and forces fighting for 'Kashmir for the Kashmiris' (130), India's central government racialises Kashmiris as *homo sacer*. By the end of the novel the government proves so desperate to immunise the increasingly fragile nation that it permits any act of violence against this already constructed subrace, and refuses to save their lives through optimising biopolitical technologies when given the opportunity.

As in *Midnight* and *Shame*, Rushdie describes the pre-existing discursive racialisations that lead to thanatopolitical massacres under circumstances of perceived governmental insecurity. The racialising agent of the Indian state's eventual immunitary campaign in *Shalimar*, Colonel Hammirdev Kachhwaha, parrots the government's official discourse regarding his military camp: 'Elasticnagar was unpopular, the colonel knew that, but unpopularity was illegal. The legal position was that the Indian

126

military presence in Kashmir had the full support of the population, and to say otherwise was to break the law' (96). Here Rushdie evokes the Indian state's power to construct and disseminate discourses regardless of their empirical truth. Kachhwaha remains conscious of Elasticnagar's unpopularity among Kashmiris but, because the truth-claims that the state's discourse carries are not just powerful but legally enforceable, believes – and attempts to create – the reality that the government propagates.

Consequently, Kachhwaha follows the state in considering Kashmir 'an integral part of India' (96) and perceiving Kashmiris as human encumbrances which threaten the Indian union. For him the prospect of Kashmir's independence constitutes a slippery slope towards India's dissolution:

> Kashmir for the Kashmiris, a moronic idea. This tiny landlocked valley with barely five million people to its name wanted to control its own fate. Where did that kind of thinking get you? If Kashmir, why not also Assam for the Assamese, Nagaland for the Nagas? And why not stop there? Why shouldn't towns or villages declare independence, or city streets, or even individual houses? (101-102)

Similarly to Pakistan's army in *Midnight*, Kachhwaha's paranoia about the secession of an outlying region leads him to construct its entire population as subrace. He does not view Kashmiris as a race that ought to be preserved or optimised biopolitically, but as 'a valley of subversives' (98). He aims to obliterate this subrace entirely: 'The population was unsuitable. A new population should be found. The valley should be emptied of all these people and refilled with others, who would be grateful to be here, grateful to be defended' (130). Rushdie renders Kachhwaha's thoughts ominous through his earlier portrayal of the Indian state's ability to construct truth. The colonel not only racialises, but believes that as a soldier his word is law.

In *Shalimar*'s later chapters Rushdie suggests characteristically that prior racialisation within state apparatuses leads to thanatopolitics under circumstances of political instability; circumstances that the novel presents as increasingly common in twentieth-century Kashmir. The massacres in

the novel prove all the more severe and effective because Kachhwaha's zealotry – encouraged by the army's deceptive but legally enforced truth-claims – and his refusal to perceive Kashmiris as potentially optimisable and productive bodies become manifest in the wider military and its strategy. The government's new policy in response to the deteriorating security situation in Kashmir seems to Kachhwaha, now a general, to confirm his prior suspicions: 'every Kashmiri was a militant as had been laid down by the political echelon' (292). *Shalimar* exposes the thanatopolitical potentiality within biopolitics by depicting the Indian military 'crackdown' (307) of the late 1980s and early 1990s as aimed less at immunising the Kashmiri people against Islamist terrorism than immunising India from the already racialised Kashmiris. Rushdie describes a central state so determined to securitise itself against a constructed subrace that it ceases to enact the productive, optimising dimension of biopolitics in the outlying region that this subrace populates. Instead, it produces only *homo sacer* and death. To use Agamben's terms, Rushdie portrays Kashmir as a camp in which the state of exception has become the rule.

In *Shalimar*, biopolitical control by India's non-military state apparatuses and forces proves less than total in Kashmir. However, Rushdie does not show this lack engendering a potentiality of effective resistance, as he does in *Midnight* when he describes Pakistan's failure to subdue the Mukti Bahini in Bangladesh. Under the crackdown, the government uses its resources primarily to securitise the Indian nation against separatists (every single Kashmiri being defined as such) rather than to protect the racialised Kashmiris from violence and disease. Because the Indian state thus ceases to optimise Kashmiri life biopolitically, its limited presence in Kashmir leads only to more death. Rushdie depicts this lethal neglect when he evokes the deaths of thousands of Kashmiri Hindus in the first of *Shalimar*'s two litanies of unanswered questions:

> There were six hundred thousand Indian troops in Kashmir but the pogrom of the pandits was not prevented, why was that. Three and a half lakhs of human beings arrived in Jammu as displaced persons and for many months the government did not provide shelters or relief or even register their names, why was that[…]The tents

provided for the refugees to live in were often uninspected and leaking and the monsoon rains came through, why was that. When the one-room tenements called ORTs were built to replace the tent they too leaked profusely, why was that. There was one bathroom per three hundred persons in many camps why was that and the medical dispensaries lacked basic first-aid materials why was that and thousands of the displaced died because of inadequate food and shelter why was that maybe five thousand deaths because of intense heat and humidity because of snake bites and gastroenteritis and dengue fever and stress diabetes and kidney ailments and tuberculosis and psychoneurosis and there was not a single health survey conducted by the government why was that and the pandits of Kashmir were left to rot in their slum camps, to rot while the army and the insurgency fought over the bloodied and broken valley, to dream of return, to die while dreaming of return, to die after the dream of return died so that they could not even die dreaming of it, why was that why was that why was that why was that why was that. (296-97)

The question 'why was that' (296) proves unanswerable in that Rushdie suggests such negligence to be inexplicable morally. However, he implies a partial answer by juxtaposing the potential of the Indian state's biopower to optimise life with its refusal to use it to such ends. Rushdie states the vast number of Indian troops in Kashmir – 'six hundred thousand' (296) – in order to emphasise the enormous power that India's state could have wielded to promote life, but which it chose to direct towards massacring insurgents. India's government in *Shalimar* leaves displaced Kashmiris 'to rot while the army and the insurgency f[i]ght over the bloodied and broken valley' (297). Rushdie further lays bare this wasted optimising potentiality by detailing the numerous biopolitical technologies that India fails to use, including medicine and statistical accumulation: 'the government did not provide shelters or relief or even register their names'; '[t]he tents provided for the refugees to live in were often uninspected and leaking' (296); 'there was not a single health survey conducted by the government' (297). India's state in *Shalimar* focuses its resources so

overwhelmingly on securitising the Kashmiri territory itself against the subrace that populates the valley, so as to retain the land as an integral part of India, that it refuses to make life live. It wishes only to let, or make, Kashmiri life die. Rushdie indicates paradoxically that the Indian state's limited non-military presence in Kashmir actually makes it more dangerous. It produces death not just by massacres but by negligence.

Rushdie presents Indian state bio/thanatopolitics less in terms of productive and optimising biopower than in terms of thanatopolitical immunisation and security. The 'crackdown' (307) that he fictionalises took place in the late 1980s, a time in which India's central government was beset by separatist violence, particularly in Kashmir, the Punjab, Assam and Nagaland. According to Seema Kazi, 'the eroding legitimacy of the Indian state, together with a lack of democratic accountability, generated a crisis of extraordinary proportions that was sought to be masked by its self-projection as a *unitary* and militarily "powerful" state in the realist tradition' (2010, xxv). The state confronted this crisis by placing greater emphasis on security through lethal force in unstable outlying regions. In *Shalimar* Rushdie represents this historical 'Indian effort[...]to preserve the integrity of the nation' (2006a, 96), even unto massacres, by describing how Kachhwaha's prior racism engenders a campaign of thanatopolitics once the valley's stability deteriorates.

For Kachhwaha and India's army in *Shalimar*, security means retaining Kashmir as a territory of the Indian union. Kashmir's people are far more expendable than its territory. Hence, when resistance movements threaten the state's power in the novel's later chapters, 'the ultimate crime of challenging the territorial integrity of India' (290) becomes punishable by death. India's government institutes a legal state of exception: '[t]he amended code of criminal procedure immunised all public servants, soldiers included, against prosecution for deeds performed in the line of duty. The definition of such deeds was broad and included destruction of private property, torture, rape and murder' (290). Because the law's application to the army becomes ambiguous, the mass production of *homo sacer* ensues. The massacring of Kashmiris thus becomes permissible: '[e]very Muslim in Kashmir should be considered a militant. The bullet was the only solution'

(291). Central government policy now sanctifies and emboldens Kachhwaha's racism. Rushdie again suggests the ease with which pre-existing racism leads to thanatopolitics under circumstances of political instability and legal indistinction that he presents as increasingly prevalent in twentieth-century Kashmir.

Kachhwaha, eager to put his racist ideas into practice, enthusiastically conducts his new mission to convert *homo sacer* into dead bodies without restraint. Rushdie describes this new thanatopolitics most vividly in the scene in which India's army massacres the villagers of Pachigam. In *Shalimar*'s early chapters Rushdie uses this harmonious, pluralist community to suggest the pervasive presence, before the Indian occupation, of *Kashmiriyat*, 'the belief that at the heart of Kashmiri culture there was a common bond that transcended all other differences' (110). Its destruction serves as a death knell for the possibility of a peaceful community free from racism and thanatopolitics in Kashmir. Rushdie represents the massacre through the novel's second litany of unanswered questions:

> Who lit that fire? Who burned that orchard? Who shot those brothers who laughed their whole lives long? Who killed the sarpanch? Who broke his hands? Who broke his arms? Who broke his ancient neck? Who shackled these men? Who made those men disappear? Who shot those boys? Who shot those girls? Who smashed that house? Who smashed *that* house? Who smashed *that* house? Who killed that youth? Who clubbed that grandmother? Who knifed that aunt? Who broke that old man's nose? Who broke that young girl's heart? Who killed that lover? Who shot his fiancée? Who burned the costumes? Who broke the swords? Who burned the library? Who burned the saffron field? Who slaughtered the animals? Who burned the beehives? Who poisoned the paddies? Who killed the children? Who whipped the parents? Who raped that lazy-eyed woman? Who raped that grey-haired lazy-eyed woman as she screamed about snake vengeance? Who raped that woman again? Who raped that woman again? Who raped that woman again? Who raped that dead woman? Who raped that dead woman again? (308)

131

Through a sequence of short, dispassionate sentences, Rushdie describes dozens of violent acts including rape, poisoning, torture and, eventually, the thanatopolitical production of death. The repeated and unanswered question of 'Who?' evokes the chaos that the Indian army creates, and its soldiers' faceless lethality. The narrator's refusal to give details exacerbates the impersonality of the killings while emphasising the excess of the horror: 'There are things that must be looked at indirectly because they would blind you if you looked them in the face, like the fire of the sun' (309). Just as the Indian army's neglect of the pandits defies reason, the massacre's violence exceeds language. Despite his narrator's claim that '[t]he beautiful village of Pachigam still exists' (309) – either in memory, history or literature – in depicting the severity of the violence in Pachigam and its efficacy in destroying the Kashmiri nationalist movement Rushdie suggests that under circumstances of governmental insecurity the conversion of racialised bare life into death is potentially limitless.

As in *Midnight* and *Shame*, Rushdie describes the ease with which racialisation led to massacres in twentieth-century (bio)politics. However, although the earlier novels suggest the precariousness of thanatopolitical regimes and the limitations of their immunising techniques, Rushdie portrays no such potentiality of resistance in *Shalimar*. When Max Ophuls' adopted daughter Kashmira Noman visits the land of her biological parents in the novel's final section, she finds it ruined by 'the twin diseases of poverty and fear' (364) and subject to the opposing thanatopolitical operations of jihadists and the Indian military. By the end of *Shalimar* the dominant political logic in the valley has become immunitary, racialising and thanatopolitical to a much more radical degree than in Rushdie's other novels. Rushdie's fiction, constantly conscious of race-thinking's persistence in state and society, has become more sceptical than ever that the racialised politics of the massacre can be resisted in a world marked increasingly by the very conditions of insecurity that lead biopolitics' thanatopolitical potentiality to emerge.

Conclusion: The Growing Efficacy of Thanatopolitics

Rushdie's fiction frequently depicts how racialisation may beget immunising massacres of *homo sacer* in times of political instability. His novels suggest consequently that analysing biopolitics and thanatopolitics in literature and history requires an understanding of their interrelation that mediates between those that Agamben and Esposito offer; one that argues not that massacres arise from a coincidence or an opposition of biopower and thanatopower but that they are radically conditional and circumstantial. This notion illuminates Rushdie's growing disinclination to affirm that the thanatopolitics that racialisation engenders can be resisted successfully within an increasingly unstable contemporary politics. Contrasting *Midnight* and *Shame* with *Shalimar* reveals a waning potentiality of effective resistance across his successive fictionalisations of twentieth-century history.

In order to explore this trajectory's nature more fully, Chapter Three analyses the ways in which Rushdie represents space. Each Rushdie novel generally depicts fewer spaces of successful resistance to biopower than the last. His descriptions of spaces, and the social and political forces acting upon them, more or less emphasise increasingly the efficacy of techniques of racialisation, biopower and thanatopower.

Chapter Three – Biopolitics and Space

Introduction: Rushdie's Relational Spaces

Rushdie not only describes a plethora of bio/thanatopolitical discourses and technologies, but suggests that humans' relative ability to shape and control the various spaces in which these practices operate greatly affects their efficacy. From the potentiality of resistance to biopolitical racialisation that he evokes through depicting indistinct spatial margins in *Midnight's Children* and migration in *The Satanic Verses*, to the increasing pervasiveness of political oppression and capitalist rapacity that his 1990s novels chart, to violent bio/thanatopolitical forces' complete control of space in *Shalimar the Clown*, Rushdie's fiction proves progressively doubtful that spaces of freedom from oppressive biopower may be constructed.

Chapter Three focuses less on the ways in which Rushdie represents specific biopolitical techniques of ordering, racialisation and killing than the first two chapters. However, it argues that examining his growing emphasis on the ease with which biopolitical states and superraces mould space further explains his fiction's progressive inclination to depict these technologies as effective. Additionally, this analysis prepares the ground for Chapters Four and Five, which consider how Rushdie presents specific oppositional discourses and movements. It asserts that his fiction's increasing tendency to indicate the difficulty of fighting biopower's shaping of space through oppositional spatialities and territorialisations contributes greatly towards its expanding scepticism regarding the possibility of effective resistance.

Conducting an analysis of the remarkable variety of twentieth-century biopolitical spaces that Rushdie describes requires a conception of how biopower acts upon space that critiques the limitations of canonical theories. Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben conceptualise race, biopolitics and thanatopolitics perceptively, but conceive the spaces in which they operate as contiguous and inescapable rather than penetrable

and potentially converging. Drawing upon these thinkers to consider how Rushdie represents the complex, shifting spaces that engender potential resistance to biopolitical technologies proves much less productive than using their theories to explore the ways in which he portrays spaces that these technologies shape and govern. Rushdie's fictional spaces number near-impermeable disciplinary buildings including the immigration centre in *Verses* and Bombay Central jail in *The Moor's Last Sigh*. However, he also imagines nebulous spaces of uncertain dimensions and borders like the Sundarbans and the Rann of Kutch in *Midnight*. Investigating the multiple spatialities that Rushdie describes requires a detailed understanding of space's relationality that exceeds Foucault's and Agamben's thought. This chapter augments their work on biopower and space with recent human geography which problematises spatial fixity and borders. Considering the possibility of radically penetrable and formless spaces, whose bewildering complexity and/or their inhabitants' ability to shape them to their will may render biopolitical technologies ineffective, produces a biopolitical reading which charts how Rushdie increasingly indicates the difficulty of creating these oppositional spatial formations.

Rushdie's novels depict the multiple complex ways in which forces including people, governments, nature and buildings shape spaces and are shaped by them in turn. He portrays lived space in the twentieth century as intricate, especially as flows of globalisation and migration intensified. In the past few decades human geography has evolved a conceptual and analytical framework that has brought this complexity into greater relief. Henri Lefebvre writes that '[n]ot so many years ago, the word "space" had a strictly geometrical meaning: the idea it evoked was simply that of an empty area' (1991, 1). However, this is no longer the case. Human geographers and philosophers have come increasingly to perceive space as constituted by numerous social processes of oppressive and oppositional power. Drawing on many of these recent theories of space, this inquiry into how Rushdie represents biopower's spatiality formulates a broad, variegated concept of 'relational space', which David Harvey describes as 'space regarded[…]as being contained *in* objects in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represents within itself

relationships to other objects' (1973, 13). This chapter's consciousness of relational space enables it to chart Rushdie's generally growing disinclination to represent freedom and resistance through its construction, and hence the waning potentiality of effective opposition to biopower that his fiction evokes. This notion's utility in delineating this trajectory indicates the necessity of a biopolitical literary criticism that marries its critique of Foucault and Agamben's work on racism and thanatopolitics to a theory of how these practices operate within space that goes beyond their insufficiently relational formulations. Through a biopolitical reading of Rushdie, this chapter works towards what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri term a 'properly poststructuralist understanding of biopower' (2000, 28) and how it shaped the twentieth century's complex spaces.

Theories of Biopower and Space

Understanding comprehensively the ways in which Rushdie describes bio/thanatopolitical operations and resistance within space requires an incorporative theoretical approach which considers both closed and relational spaces. Agamben's notion of the camp and Foucault's concept of the heterotopia prove useful in analysing how Rushdie represents spaces of biopolitical oppression and attenuated freedom respectively. However, neither offer a radically plural theory of the nebulous, penetrable spaces through which greater freedom and resistance from oppressive biopower may be enacted. Their thought cannot illuminate the full range of spatial formations that Rushdie's fiction portrays without being complemented by recent human geography regarding relational, pervious space.

Giorgio Agamben's Spatiality: Escaping the Camp

This study has argued that Agamben's work on *homo sacer* and the state of exception can usefully inform an analysis of how Rushdie depicts twentieth-century states practising biopolitical oppression by constructing the camp (the state of exception's spatial manifestation); for example, Saladin's detention and forced mutation in an immigration centre in *Verses* and India's government's mass racialisation of Kashmiris in *Shalimar*. However, whereas Rushdie affirms the conditionality and limitations of the

136

camp's materialisation, Agamben perceives the logic of the camp as so pervasive within contemporary (bio)politics that the spaces of exception it creates prove impermeable and inescapable. The concept's virtuality and paradigmatic nature in Agamben's thought renders his work on space inutile in examining Rushdie's depictions of effective resistance to the state of exception, and tracing their growing scarcity in his fiction.

Agamben's subtle and complex theory of exception problematises received binaries regarding law and life at every turn. He conceives the state of exception as a 'zone of irreducible indistinction' (Agamben 1998, 9). For Agamben, 'the state of exception represents the inclusion and capture of a space that is neither outside nor inside' (2005, 35) the juridical order. This legal indeterminacy means that 'it is impossible to distinguish transgression of the law from execution of the law, such that what violates a rule and what conforms to it coincide without any remainder' (Agamben 1998, 57). Hence, the state may use spaces of exception to construct and massacre *homo sacer* with impunity.

Not only does Agamben claim that indistinctions within the state of exception serve only to enable more effective biopolitical oppression, but he refuses to countenance the idea of indistinctions in its external dimensions that may enable escape from the camp or resistance to its racialising technologies. The most distinct and concrete configuration in Agamben's theory of the state of exception is the state of exception itself. He conceives the camp as a space of indistinction, only to draw a virtual border around the entirety of lived space. This border, as Thomas Lemke argues, appears 'not as a tiered or graded zone but as a line without extension or dimension' (2011, 59). It encompasses the whole world within a zone of dissolution in which the state of exception may gain physical form as a camp anywhere and at any time (see Agamben 2000, 41-42).

Rushdie's descriptions of spaces of indistinction and resistance, including Delhi's slums in *Midnight* and the nomad-populated desert in the early Jahilia sections of *Verses*, imply that the nature of biopolitics and space within twentieth-century governmentality exceeded Agamben's flattening notion of the virtual, inescapable camp. His fiction thus indirectly

indicates the necessity of a biopolitical literary criticism that acknowledges the limits to the state of exception's reach, reproducibility and capacity to restrict its inhabitants' freedom. Moreover, understanding comprehensively Rushdie's growing disinclination to emphasise the potentially infinite freedom that humans may gain through shaping space requires a theory of relational space that goes beyond not just Agamben's stultifying camp, but the juxtaposed and ordered spaces of attenuated resistance that Foucault calls heterotopian.

Michel Foucault: Heterotopias

Foucault's thought affirms a greater potentiality of resistance through the shaping of space than Agamben's. He stresses the difficulty of eroding significantly the discursive and symbolic power of the spatialities that the politically powerful produce, but by asserting the growing juxtaposition of multiple, heterogeneous concepts of socially constructed space within particular places – heterotopias – he proclaims the feasibility of creating spaces of freedom and resistance.

Yet Foucault's notion of this juxtaposition does not go as far as conceiving the voiding of borders between spaces or the attendant intrusion of spaces of resistance into spaces of oppression. As Nigel Thrift argues, 'Foucault tended to think of space in terms of orders, and[…]this tendency made him both alive to space as a medium through which change could be effected and, at the same time, blind to a good part of space's aliveness' (2007, 55). As with Agamben's camp, some of Rushdie's descriptions of spaces demonstrate the heterotopia's utility as a concept. However, his portrayals of nebulous, permeable spaces, especially in his early novels, indicate that the twentieth-century world incorporated spaces whose relationality, complexity and resulting potential for freedom from biopower exceeded the heterotopian. His fiction consequently invites a biopolitical literary criticism that augments Foucault with more radical theories of the open, flexible spaces which also prove subject – and resistant – to biopower.

Foucault often spoke of his 'spatial obsessions' (2007, 177). Yet his insistence that '[g]eography acted as the support, the condition of possibility

138

for the passage between a series of factors [he] tried to relate' (Foucault 1980b, 77) did not translate into a detailed theory of spatiality once his thought moved away from the disciplinary techniques that operate in closed, impermeable spaces, and began to focus on technologies of biopower in wider society. Explicit discussions of space outside disciplinary institutions such as the clinic, the prison and the school are scant in Foucault, with the exception of his much-discussed 'Of Other Spaces' (1967). In this essay Foucault counterposes unreal utopias, and the Middle Ages' discrete, contiguous, hierarchical system of places, with actually-existing modern places, which he calls heterotopias. These locales 'ha[ve] the power of juxtaposing in a single real place different spaces and locations that are incompatible with each other' (Foucault 1997, 354). For Foucault 'there is probably not a single culture in the world that is not made up of heterotopias' (353).

Foucault proves ambivalent as to whether these new spatial formations necessarily engender resistance to oppressive (bio)power. He suggests that heterotopias' opening up of hermetic, sacred and forbidden spaces, which become juxtaposed with other constructions of space, leads increasingly to these forbidden spaces' gradual erosion and their replacing by 'heterotopias of deviance, occupied by individuals whose behaviour deviates from the current average or standard' (353). Yet he also argues that '[h]eterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that isolates them and makes them penetrable at one and the same time' (355). No universal form of heterotopia exists (353). Foucault warns that although heterotopias problematise received notions of spatial hierarchy they also possess 'the function of forming another space, another real space, as perfect, meticulous and well-arranged as ours is disordered, ill-conceived and in a sketchy state' (356). Heterotopias juxtapose incompatible, heterogeneous spaces, but the politically powerful easily may co-opt these spaces and recapitulate them into a new placial formation that, though different from older hierarchical spatialities, is no less oppressive of resistance.

Rushdie's novels often evoke this co-optation. In *Moor* he describes how predatory capitalists shaped Bombay's cityspace after India's

independence by building and then dwelling in inaccessible skyscrapers. He contrasts their perception of the city with that of the *homo sacer* that these capitalists exploit, who live in ground-level slums. Just as Rushdie portrays spaces that can be called camps in Agamben's sense, he frequently depicts spaces that appear heterotopian in that they juxtapose heterogeneous spatialities within a specific place but do not go as far as voiding their boundaries. However, Rushdie also imagines locales of indeterminate borders and dimensions which do not merely juxtapose lived social spaces but merge them to various extents. He thus indirectly indicates the inadequacy of Foucault's thought to a comprehensive investigation of fictional space. Analysing Rushdie's gradual disinclination to evoke a potentiality of effective resistance to biopower through shaping these locales spatially requires a biopolitical reading that augments Agamben and Foucault's spatialities with a theory of post-space.

Post-space names a conception of space as characterised by endless complexity and mutability, and by ever-shifting spatial orders and borders. Complementing the formulations of the camp and the heterotopia with Henri Lefebvre's work on social space and Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concepts of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation enables this chapter to comprehend the full range of spatialities that Rushdie's novels describe. These theories allow this chapter to identify the points at which Rushdie depicts resistance through producing and shaping relational post-space, and hence to chart his rising disinclination to portray this resistance as effective.

Theories of Relational Space

In Marcus Doel's words, the discipline of postmodern or poststructuralist geography asserts that '[g]eography is cracked, fissured, and fractal' (1999, 103). It opposes the notion that space comprises perceptible orders, borders and hierarchies. For Doel, '[s]pace has no points of constancy, only folds that lend consistency' (2000, 127). This type of thinking posits space as a pandemonium of infinite complexity: post-space. Far from viewing this perceived irreducible openness as an undesirable obstacle to attaining the relative solidity and belonging of place, postmodern geographers assert the

140

possibility of resistance and freedom in post-space.[1] As literary critic Sara Upstone argues, '[t]he central premise of post-space is its explicitly metamorphic function, where it is precisely through re-visioning chaos, fluidity and disorder, rather than in spite of it, that statements of resistance or survival are made' (2009, 15). However, the postmodern geographies of Lefebvre and Deleuze and Guattari conceive post-spatial freedom in the metamorphic spaces of modernity not as an inevitability but a potentiality. An awareness of their theories of post-space and the fetters on its emergence thus permits this chapter not only to identify the spaces which Rushdie presents as too complex and nebulous to be called camps or heterotopias, but his fiction's increasing suggestion that even these relational spaces fall invariably under biopolitical control.

<u>Henri Lefebvre: Social Space</u>

Lefebvre's seminal *The Production of Space* (1974) conceives space as socially produced by a complex matrix of human and capital interactions. Just as Foucault warns that the politically powerful may co-opt heterotopias of contiguous spaces and render them oppressive, Lefebvre argues that despite its relationality this multiplicitous and ever-changing social space does not necessarily prove a vehicle for alterity and plurality. Consequently, his thought illuminates Rushdie's growing suggestion that although space's complexity within twentieth-century polities produced a potentiality of resistance, free movement and free perception, this relationality also rendered space recuperable by oppressive forces and governments. Lefebvre's terminological distinction between abstract spaces of oppression and differential spaces of freedom further clarifies Rushdie's engagement with twentieth-century practices of biopolitical coercion and resistance by providing a means by which a biopolitical reading may categorise the vast variety of spaces in which these take place: camps, heterotopias and spaces which exceed these forms.

Abstract space does not problematise received notions of materiality and perception as abstract art does. Rather, it is abstract in the sense that it abstracts, negates and homogenises humans' identities so as to absorb them into an overarching spatial logic of capitalism and political oppression

(see Lefebvre 1991, 49). However, unlike Agamben's camp, Lefebvre argues that abstract space can be escaped: 'despite – or rather because of – its negativity, abstract space carries within itself the seeds of a new kind of space' (52). This differential space, the potentiality of which Lefebvre perceives as always inherent even within the most abstracted spaces, constitutes a space of heterogeneity and freedom which 'put[s] an end to these localisations which shatter the integrity of the individual body, the social body, the corpus of human needs, and the corpus of knowledge' (52). Lefebvre conceives differential space as a multivalent, multi-spatial state of free subjectivity and movement which includes and accepts all human identities equally.

Rushdie depicts biopolitical operations, and opposition to them, in both differential and abstract spaces. His early novels in particular evoke a potentiality of resistance through differential space; for example, when he describes how the moving magicians' slum in *Midnight* evades India's biopolitical state apparatuses, and the possible non-communalist political sphere that Saladin Chamcha resolves to create in the country at the end of *Verses*. However, Rushdie suggests more and more that space's differentiality proves inevitably incomplete, provisional and subject to the abstractions that predatory capitalism, biopolitical regimes and the constructed superraces who support them impose. His fiction describes spaces whose multiformity and nebulousness exceeds the formulations of the camp and the heterotopia, but increasingly indicates the veracity of Lefebvre's argument that despite space's theoretically infinite differential potentiality, abstract spaces in contemporary society far outnumber their differential counterparts.

Rushdie's novels depict these differential and abstract spaces arising from a wide, interrelated array of social, political and sometimes even supernatural processes. Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation, which go beyond even Lefebvre in seeking to explain the complex processual formation of spaces, enable this chapter to analyse how Rushdie's novels delineate the intricate ways in which acts of biopolitical oppression and resistance produce space.[2] They provide a useful adjunct to the notions of the camp, the heterotopia, abstract

142

space and differential space within a biopolitical reading of Rushdie. Through their detailed play of voided and converging oppositions, Deleuze and Guattari argue that social and economic processes of deconstructive deterritorialisation in late capitalist modernity do not mean necessarily that disenfranchised subraces can use the resulting nebulous spaces in order to oppose (bio)political oppression. This notion of deterritorialisation illuminates the passages in which Rushdie describes spatial indistinction and formlessness producing terror and/or confusion rather than effective resistance, as with the soldiers who perceive phantasms in the indeterminate space of the Sundarbans in *Midnight*, and Gibreel's failed attempts to perceive London's ever-shifting spatial form in *Verses*. Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari's theory of reterritorialisation helps this chapter to chart Rushdie's increasing emphasis on the numerous processes through which biopolitical states and superraces reformulate abstract space within contemporary governmentality. The utility of their post-spatial schizo-geography to an analysis of Rushdie's fiction suggests the means by which a biopolitical literary criticism of biopower's operations within, and subsequent effect in shaping, space may proceed.

Deleuze and Guattari: Territorialisations

Deleuze and Guattari's theory of relational, processual space illuminates Rushdie's fiction by providing a critical vocabulary through which to analyse the multiple, complex ways in which he depicts space's production. For Deleuze and Guattari, '[t]erritorialities[…]are shot through with lines of flight testifying to the presence within them of movements of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation. In a certain sense, they are secondary. They would be nothing without these movements that deposit them' (1988, 55). The pair define deterritorialisations as the processes within contemporary (bio)politics and economics that disrupt and destroy existing spaces, and reterritorialisations as the processes that replace these formations with new spaces. As Edward Soja elaborates,

> [d]eterritorialisation involves the breaking down of Fordist worlds of production and related spatial divisions of labour, the long-standing political and discursive hegemony of the modern nation-state and

traditional forms of nationalism and internationalism, and established patterns of real-and-imagined cultural and spatial identity at every scale from the local to the global. Reterritorialisation is the critical response to globalisation and postfordist restructuring, generating new efforts by individuals and collectivities, cities and regions, business firms and industrial sectors, cultures and nations, to reconstitute their territorial behaviour, their fundamental spatiality and lived spaces, as a means of resisting and/or adapting to the contemporary condition (2010, 212).

As with Foucault's notion of the heterotopia and Lefebvre's conception of social space, Deleuze and Guattari claim that neither deterritorialisation nor reterritorialisation prove always oppressive or liberating for constructed subraces. They assert that reterritorialisations often constitute recapitulated versions of previously existing oppressive spaces: 'These neoterritorialities are often artificial, residual, archaic; but they are archaisms having a perfectly current function, our modern way of "imbricating", of sectioning off, of reintroducing code fragments, resuscitating old codes' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984, 257). Deterritorialisations, too, may not actualise post-space's differential possibility. Deleuze and Guattari argue that capitalism, 'the deterritorialisation of the soil through privatisation' (225), militates against differential space by rendering space and society increasingly subject to capital's exploitative logic. Both deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation incorporate a differential potentiality, but may just as easily (or, perhaps, more easily) produce new oppressive spaces segmented 'by walls, enclosures and roads between enclosures' (Deleuze and Guattari 1986, 51). Deleuze and Guattari call this process striation.

This conception of space's production mirrors that which Rushdie's novels evoke. Rushdie does not portray either deterritorialisation or reterritorialisation as inherently oppressive or liberating. In *Midnight* Delhi's slums become subject to a biopolitical clearance programme's violent deterritorialisations, which the constant reterritorialisations of the moving Magicians' Ghetto escape and hence resist. Conversely, in *Moor* the reterritorialisations of predatory capitalists who dot Bombay with

144

skyscrapers heighten socio-economic inequality and produce death. Reading Rushdie in the light of Deleuze and Guattari's schizo-geography reveals his fiction's growing tendency to present the twentieth century's multiple complex territorialisations as a conjunction of deleterious striations both deterritorialising and reterritorialising in form. He emphasises more and more that although the increasingly metamorphic nature of space and society in recent history meant broadly that fewer camps and heterotopias emerged, more spaces of resistance and differentiality did not necessarily ensue within this intricate matrix of social spaces.

Lefebvre's notion of differential space and Deleuze and Guattari's conception of liberatory territorialisations allow this chapter to identify and discuss the partial realisations of resistance through post-space in Rushdie. However, the biopolitical reading towards which these formulations contribute also reveals that Rushdie describes more abstract than differential spaces, and more camps and heterotopias than relational spaces of freedom. His later novels in particular depict space's differential possibilities as co-opted invariably by the striations of biopolitical and economic elites. Using an incorporative theory which augments canonical theories of biopolitics and space with work on relational spaces and the social processes that create them makes clearer Rushdie's almost constantly growing disinclination to depict a potentiality of effective resistance to biopolitical oppression. Moreover, this chapter's analysis of marginal spaces in *Midnight* affirms that any differential territorialisations in his novels prove partial and provisional even in his earliest fictional engagement with twentieth-century biopolitical space.

Margins of Oppression and Resistance in *Midnight's Children*

In *Midnight*'s fictionalised version of India's twentieth-century history Rushdie describes not only the urban centres that proved especially susceptible to governmental biopower's striations, but marginal spaces more remote from biopolitical technologies' effects. These spaces range from the borders between India and Pakistan, to Delhi's unmappable slums, to rural regions whose formlessness he suggests renders them resistant to

145

the embrace of central state apparatuses. As Veena Das and Deborah Poole argue, spatial margins do not merely denote geometric limits, but may become spaces 'in which the creativity of the margins is visible, as alternative forms of economic and political action are instituted' (2004, 19). Rushdie evokes a potentiality of resistance to biopower within peripheral space in *Midnight*. Yet he indicates that spatial margins prove much more likely to enclose abstract spaces than constitute problematising, differential ones.

Rushdie portrays India and Pakistan's Partition as a deep, irreversible schism. He counterposes the near-total solidity and permanence of India's external dimensions to the fluidity of marginal spaces within the nation. However, *Midnight* suggests that the broad efficacy of the biopolitical reterritorialisations that central governments enact upon their territory, and the confusion and horror that remote, nebulous spaces may induce in their inhabitants even in the absence of these reterritorialisations, mean that these comparatively formless margins do not necessarily become differential spaces of effective resistance and freedom. As the novel progresses, its narrator Saleem Sinai's nostalgic lionising of Bombay's relatively differential cityspace becomes superseded increasingly by descriptions of abstract or terrifyingly indeterminate spaces. The moving Magicians' Ghetto in Rushdie's fictionalised version of Delhi constitutes a space which partially escapes state biopower's striating techniques. Yet by detailing its residents' constant, all-encompassing struggle to evade state agents he outlines the obstacles both to establishing a solid sense of place independent of abstract space within the twentieth-century city and using differential space to resist biopolitical oppression actively. The ways in which he describes marginal non-urban locales including the Rann of Kutch and the Sundarbans also indicate this latter difficulty by suggesting that the inconstancy and inhospitability of rural spaces outside central biopolitical control may preclude their transformation into meaningful differential spaces of resistance. *Midnight*'s engagement with India's recent history evokes only an attenuated potentiality for recapitulating deterritorialisations into plural, hybrid spaces of democracy and freedom within the nation's post-independence (bio)politics.

The Impermeable National Border

In *Midnight* Rushdie interrogates comprehensively the meaning of Indianness after India's independence by offering the magical, diverse Midnight's Children as an alternative to Indira Gandhi's conception of the nation as an extension of the state and her family's power. However, because his critique of state biopower centres upon the idea of a better India he declines to problematise to the same degree the country's external dimensions that the Partition of 1947 created. On the few occasions when Rushdie explores Partition's effect on space he represents it as an irreversible schism which created a barely movable, barely penetrable static border. Despite being disputed by both national armies and relatively powerless citizens, India's external borders in *Midnight* remain all but constant as irrevocable dividing lines between nations.

In *Midnight* Rushdie stresses the almost completely stationary position of the borders between India and Pakistan after independence. In describing the 1965 war over Kashmir he emphasises the senselessness and waste of an attritional conflict fought in return for negligible portions of land: 'India had occupied less than 500 square miles of Pakistani soil; Pakistan had conquered just 340 miles of its Kashmiri dream' (Rushdie 2008, 477). Rushdie implies that the solidity and near-immovability of the two countries' external margins means that they not only delineate India as an integral nation with fixed dimensions but produce tangible effects in shaping national social space.

The migration of Saleem Sinai's family to Pakistan has deleterious consequences for his telepathic ability to communicate with his fellow magical Indian children. Through this episode Rushdie suggests that the striated solidity of India's post-Partition external borders, and their ability to divide and shape social space, renders the process of traversing them impossible without the migrant's connection to India being severed. As with its description of India's post-independence elite's forcing into the supposedly desirable white phenotype of their former masters, *Midnight* presents a harmful supernatural force in order to evoke the power of man-made discourses and conceptions of order to shape reality. Just as Rushdie

147

depicts the idea of the Indian nation as 'a collective fiction in which anything was possible' (150) – an artificial creation which nevertheless produces national forms of belonging and tangible spatialities – he portrays the capacity of its external borders to define the limits of these formations. Saleem observes, 'my perceptions were, while they lasted, bounded by the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, the Himalaya mountains, but also by the artificial frontiers which pierced Punjab and Bengal' (271). When he finds himself 'flung across the Partition-created frontier into Pakistan' (393) he can no longer communicate with his fellow magical children. Saleem's power, which Rushdie associates with the birth of post-independence India, vanishes when he migrates outside the borders that Partition delineated. Despite the plurality and hybridity of Rushdie's ideal of India, his attachment to the concept of the nation in *Midnight* leads him to depict its outer borders as striations. He disallows the possibility that the post-independence Indian nation could attain different territorial form, or that it may in future incorporate or be subsumed by external spaces.

In *Midnight* Rushdie's critique of India's post-independence (bio)politics demurs from problematising the nation's existence in its current topographical form. He represents external borders and border regions more as sites for fruitless intra-national contestations than as spaces for the production of subjectivity or identity. These margins carry vast, tangible power to include and exclude people, discourses and spatialities. However, by exploring the ways in which India's biopolitical state has shaped and produced the nation's internal spaces, Rushdie exposes and outlines the limits of its attempts to militate against the spatial differentiality that he suggests offers a potentiality of effective resistance. As Sara Upstone argues, '[t]here is a significant difference between[...]a rejection of the nation and the deconstruction of states themselves[…]The India that Rushdie nostalgically creates, imagines, and maintains is not one in which India is a "nation" if we take that to mean a unified, cohesive and homogeneous space' (2009, 47). A biopolitical reading, informed by the concepts of social space and schizo-geography, of the ways in which Rushdie describes the complex processes of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation within post-independence India's malleable internal politics and spaces reveals that

Midnight depicts a potentiality of resistance through producing differential space. Rushdie uses the device of a constantly reterritorialising Delhi slum to affirm that biopolitical regimes can never render space fully abstract. Yet by describing the slum-dwellers' inability to shape a solid social space on account of their fugitive status, he evokes the severe difficulty of resisting biopolitical oppression through nebulous and shifting spaces. This difficulty arises in both the novel's urban and rural spaces. When Rushdie portrays the psychotropic spaces of the Rann of Kutch and the Sundarbans he indicates that truly deterritorialised amorphous non-urban spaces offer not freedom and contentment but chaos and dread. By revealing the attenuated possibility of effective resistance that *Midnight* evokes in its fictionalisation of twentieth-century India's internal spaces, this chapter begins to trace the waning of this potentiality across Rushdie's subsequent novels.

The Striation of the Slums and the Terrors of Deterritorialised Space

The indeterminate, unmappable spaces of Delhi's slums prove central to *Midnight*'s efforts to expose how India's biopolitical state striated the nation's internal spaces after independence, especially under Indira Gandhi. Yet in deconstructing these striations, Rushdie evokes only a limited potentiality of effective resistance. He uses a fictionalised version of the state's slum clearance programme during the Emergency, which complements his engagement with the sterilisation campaign that formed a parallel part of its biopolitical project, to indicate that although urban slum-dwellers may escape such programmes through acts of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation their ability actively to fight back is negligible. Rushdie suggests that the Prime Minister's famous political slogan – 'GARIBI HATAO, Get Rid of Poverty' (2008, 494) – masked her true purpose: to get rid of the poor themselves. *Midnight*'s fictional Indira Gandhi attempts to bring every single space within Delhi under her (bio)power by eradicating the slums whose squalor and ugliness challenge her authority and her quest to optimise Indian space biopolitically. She almost succeeds. Her government's striations of cityspace prove so effective that a constant, exhausting reterritorialising migration proves the only recourse available to the slum-dwellers. The series of precarious differential spaces that this

movement produces offer only escape from, rather than resistance to, biopolitical oppression.

Historically, as P. K. Das writes in an article on India's slums, '[i]n the late eighties[...][b]oth the government and the middle and upper classes in the city began to accept the slums provided a housing opportunity for millions, which the government cannot otherwise provide' (2003, 225-26). However, in India's Emergency years it was more likely that the state would consider slums a nuisance or even an impediment to the city's biopolitical optimisation and effective governance. As Emma Tarlo notes, between 1975 and 1977 seven hundred thousand slum-dwellers, representing fifteen per cent of Delhi's population, were displaced to 'marginal spaces beyond the borders of the city' (2003, 4).

In *Midnight* Rushdie draws upon these events, which were occurring at the time he was writing the novel. He augments his criticism of Indira Gandhi's sterilisation programme and thus exposes more forcefully her government's abuse of (bio)power during the Emergency. Just as the novel's fictionalised Indira Gandhi determines the necessity of sterilising the Midnight's Children for the good of the species, she views destroying the slums as vital for the good of the city, even if this means sacrificing subracial bare life. Rushdie refracts his description of the government's raid on the Magicians' Ghetto through the government's worldview. He emphasises its utilitarian, optimising biopolitical logic:

> the machines of destruction were in their element, and the little hovels of the shanty-town were slipping sliding crazily beneath the force of the irresistible creatures[…]the city was being beautified, and if there were a few deaths[...]well, what of it, an eyesore was being removed from the face of the ancient capital (Rushdie 2008, 602).

Rushdie indicates that these violent, often thanatopolitical optimising techniques proved broadly effective in rendering Delhi's cityspace abstract during the Emergency, though less than totally pervasive. However, the only escape possible for the novel's racialised slum-dwellers lies in an exhausting spatial practice of perpetual movement that falls short of an effective campaign of active resistance to biopolitical oppression.

150

Rushdie evokes biopolitical control's limitations, and cityspace's differential potentiality, by describing a successful attempt at escaping the state's 'machines of destruction' (602) through repeated reterritorialisation. After their slum's demolition, some magicians escape being rehomed as *homo sacer* in a 'barbed-wire camp' (602) outside the city limits. Rather than conform to Indira's biopolitical vision of a well-ordered Delhi, they construct a new 'moving slum' (602). Rushdie's portrayal of this space affirms movement's value as a practice of resistance within cityspace:

> it is said that the day after the bulldozing of the magicians' ghetto, a new slum was reported in the heart of the city, hard by the New Delhi railway station. Bulldozers were rushed to the scene of the reported hovels; they found nothing. After that the existence of the moving slum of the escaped illusionists became a fact known to all the inhabitants of the city, but the wreckers never found it. It was reported at Mehrauli; but when vasectomists and troops went there, they found the Qutb Minar unbesmirched by the hovels of poverty. Informers said it had appeared in the gardens of the Jantar Mantar, Jai Singh's Mughal observatory; but the machines of destruction, rushing to the scene, found only parrots and sun-dials (602-603).

By describing the slum's reterritorialisations upon multiple Delhi landmarks, Rushdie contrasts the subrace's ability to render cityspace differential through disorder with the static disciplinary prison space outside the city. He shows how the striations and camps produced by biopolitical regimes may partially be effaced through the simple act of movement.

However, Rushdie also suggests that the overwhelming effort required to effect the deterritorialisations that accompany these oppositional reterritorialisations renders impossible a substantially effective programme of resistance to the biopolitical state's attempts to create abstract cityspace. When Saleem locates the remaining magicians he finds that '[s]omewhere in the many moves of the peripatetic slum, they had mislaid their powers of retention, so now they had become incapable of judgement' (621). The 'confusion of hunger, disease, thirst and police harassment' (621) in which they exist means that a perpetual, exhausting series of deterritorialisations,

151

rather than free movement, precipitates their constant reterritorialisations. Forced to concentrate solely on the present, the magicians cannot complement their escape from biopower's embrace by creating or even conceiving a movement of active resistance, because the sheer act of survival and evading agents of government biopower consumes their labour. Rushdie uses the moving slum's reterritorialisations upon Delhi to demonstrate the limits of biopolitical ordering techniques, but by describing the continuing oppression that necessitates its perennial deterritorialisations he indicates the severe difficulty of constructing differential spaces of sustained, effective opposition to biopolitical technologies within twentieth-century Indian cityspace.

Rushdie represents indeterminate, deterritorialised rural locales remote from central government biopower's abstracting technologies as similarly unlikely to produce differential spaces of effective resistance. *Midnight* indicates that secluded locales outside biopolitical control offer a potentiality of freedom. However, in describing the confusion and terror that the nebulous psychotropic spaces of the Rann of Kutch and the Sundarbans induce, the novel suggests that amorphous marginal spaces of indistinction may prove just as oppressive and lethal as the cityspaces that biopolitical regimes striate.

Rushdie depicts the Rann of Kutch as a rare fissure in the generally solid and static Indo-Pakistani border. The nebulously proportioned Rann constitutes 'disputed territory' (465) that neither nation possesses the resources or will to reterritorialise. However, despite its relative lack of striation by (bio)political forces, the 'bog of nightmare' (395) does not offer a sanctuary from fear nor a potential base for resistance. The remoteness and fluidity of space in the Rann inhibits differential space's production rather than enabling it. Though Rushdie attributes some of the Rann's ghostly noises to smugglers, he conjures up for the few humans stationed there 'a crazy war[…]in which each side thought it saw apparitions of devils fighting alongside its foes' (466). The inhabitants' inability to perceive the region's nature leaves them powerless to act or think rationally. Hence, they cannot reterritorialise upon it.

Later in *Midnight* Rushdie presents a rural space which proves even deadlier than the Rann because it is even less striated. As soon as Saleem Sinai and the Pakistani soldiers for whom he acts as guide enter the Sundarbans, Rushdie begins again to emphasise the terrors of deterritorialised space:

> The jungle closed behind them like a tomb, and after hours of increasingly weary but also frenzied rowing through incomprehensibly labyrinthine salt-water channels overtowered by the cathedral-arching trees, Ayooba Shaheed Farooq were hopelessly lost[…]Ayooba Baloch cried without stopping for three entire hours or days or weeks, until the rain began and made his tears unnecessary; and Shaheed Dar heard himself saying, 'Now look what you started, man, with your crying', proving that they were already beginning to succumb to the logic of the jungle, and that was only the start of it, because as the mystery of evening compounded the unreality of the trees, the Sundarbans began to grow in the rain (503).

Here Rushdie describes not a social space that humans shape, but an amorphous, 'incomprehensibly labyrinthine' terrain whose psychotropic properties and ever-shifting topographical dimensions induce a 'logic of the jungle' (503). By rendering humans alternately terrified and soporific, this new jungle-induced subjectivity precludes the Sundarbans' reterritorialising into a meaningful differential space of resistance. As well as evoking only an attenuated potentiality of freedom within cityspaces close to the racialising state's central apparatuses, Rushdie suggests that marginal spaces remote from biopolitical control may, in their indeterminacy and inhospitability, provide similarly infertile ground for effective opposition to biopolitical oppression.

Midnight proves broadly sceptical that successful resistance may be effected through constructing differential space within contemporary governmentality. Yet a biopolitical reading informed by theories of social space and schizo-geography reveals moments at which Rushdie indicates the limits of biopower's capacity to produce camps and abstract spaces.

Comparing *Midnight*'s portrayal of biopolitical space with Rushdie's later novels further delineates his fiction's trajectory of generally increasing bleakness. *Verses* represents his next substantive engagement with the deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations through which constructed subraces attempt to resist biopolitical oppression by creating differential space.[3] Through the themes of movement and migration from the former colonial periphery into the former imperial centre Rushdie continues to suggest an attenuated potentiality of effective resistance tempered with an acknowledgement of its difficulty. Deploying an incorporative conception of space's variability reveals that in describing Britain's post-imperial spaces he evokes abstract cityspace's unknowability for immigrants, their consequent inability to reterritorialise and thus resist their own racialisation, and even the dangers of the migratory journey itself. *Verses*' ending indicates the possibility of a future differential space in India. However, this appears only a small counterweight to the pervasive abstraction of space in the novel's fictionalised version of twentieth-century history.

Movement and Migration in *The Satanic Verses*

In *Verses* Rushdie produces a detailed fictional investigation into the effects that migration and movement have had on both spaces and subjects in the years following decolonisation. He engages with migration through air travel, the immigrant's attempted reterritorialisation of the infernal, amorphous destination city, and the journey home. To a greater degree than in *Midnight*, *Verses* questions the solidity and stability of national borders, and social spaces within the nation. London in the novel proves significantly more indeterminate than India's relatively legible cities in the earlier novel. In describing the deterritorialisations and attendant reterritorialisations that the city's immigrants undertake, *Verses* evokes an attenuated potentiality of differential space and hence of resistance to oppressive discourses of racialisation.

However, Rushdie characteristically indicates the difficulty of combating the rival reterritorialisations produced by racialising regimes of biopower and the superraces they construct. As Chapter One argued, resisting racialisation and oppression proves taxing for *Verses*' migrant

characters. Analysing the ways in which Rushdie depicts space in the novel complements the earlier reading by further illuminating why biopolitical discourses of superrace and subrace remain intact in his fictionalised version of Britain. Rushdie portrays recapitulating Britain and London's complex matrices of deterritorialising and reterritorialising flows into differential space as virtually impossible. Despite their best efforts, Rushdie's migrant characters, who have already suffered harm through the migratory journey itself, lack the codes that would enable them to understand London's hostile cityspace enough to reterritorialise upon it. Consequently, at times London resembles the Rann of Kutch or the Sundarbans in its amorphousness and horror, 'changing shape at will and without warning' (Rushdie 2006c, 327). As in *Midnight*, the journey through deterritorialised spaces of indistinction produces confusion and terror rather than effective resistance.

The novel's final chapter, in which Saladin Chamcha returns to Bombay, commits to aiding the city's transformation into differential space and finally attains a sense of belonging, suggests a greater potentiality of pluralism through the social production of space. Yet even this apparent happy ending leaves biopolitical racialisation intact in the post-imperial Britain that Saladin abandons and gives up on reterritorialising. A biopolitical reading which exceeds Foucault and Agamben's theories by engaging with social space and complex processes of territorialisation reveals that, characteristically, Rushdie produces a novel in which the majority of spaces remain abstract and differential space's construction proves provisional and incomplete.

The Journey Out: Danger and Racialisation in the Act of Migration

Verses opens with Rushdie's protagonists Saladin Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta passing through the metamorphic zone of airspace in which 'the processes of their transmutation' (2006c, 5) commence. From the very beginning of the novel Rushdie stresses the transformative nature of migration and movement. In later sections he portrays not only migration's effect on migrants but the reterritorialisations these migrants may enact

upon the places to which they journey. He evokes this potentiality through Uhuru Simba's defiant courtroom statement:

> we are here to change things. I concede at once that we shall ourselves be changed; African, Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Cypriot, Chinese, we are other than what we would have been if we had not crossed the skies in search of work and dignity and a better life for their children. We have been made again: but I say that we shall also be the ones to remake this society, to shape it from the bottom to the top (414).

However, *Verses* indicates that the shaping of immigrants' bodies and subjectivities by migration far outstrips their capacity to remake the societies to which they journey. Even before he begins to explore the oppressive reterritorialisations and racialisations that preclude this remaking in the former imperial centre, Rushdie uses his description of Saladin's supernatural transmogrification in order to depict the dangers of the migratory journey itself. He suggests that these difficulties exacerbate the migrant's inability to reterritorialise the destination city into differential space when they arrive.

Rushdie evokes the obstacles to attaining a spatial sense of belonging through migration in a passage relating Saladin and Gibreel's journey from India to Britain through transformative airspace:

> How far did they fly? Five and a half thousand as the crow. Or: from Indianness to Englishness, an immeasurable distance. Or, not very far at all, because they rose from one great city, fell to another. The distance between cities is always small; a villager, travelling a hundred miles to town, traverses emptier, darker, more terrifying space (41).

Here Rushdie depicts poverty and racism as fetters on successful migratory reterritorialisation. He suggests that migration proves especially arduous for villagers of limited means. They perceive the interstitial ground-level space through which they travel as 'emptier, darker and more terrifying' (41) than richer city-dwellers' comfortable plane journeys. This renders their

attempts to reterritorialise destination spaces more taxing, and perhaps even discourages movement altogether. As Bishnupriya Ghosh argues, 'given their political and cultural visibility, for elite cosmopolitans migrancy assumes mythological status. But migrancy remains a physically and socially painful experience for other (underprivileged) diaspora cultures and migrant peoples' (2004, 19). However, Rushdie also emphasises the vast distance 'from Indianness to Englishness' (2006c, 41). Despite the time-space compression possible through air travel, he implies that the act of migration itself transforms even wealthy cosmopolitans into othered subraces before they arrive at their destination. Rushdie builds upon this suggestion by describing how Saladin's journey to Britain transforms him supernaturally into a devil. This fantastical literary device shows vividly how the automatic racialisation of non-white migrants by virtue of their having left their homeland makes later attempts to reterritorialise the destination space more likely to fail.

Through Saladin's migration-induced transmogrification, Rushdie interrogates the precariousness of the non-white immigrant's place within Britain's post-imperial *polis*. He characteristically indicates the veracity of Foucault's theory that the state, by degrees, practices 'the internal racism of permanent purification' (2004, 62). Saleem possesses British citizenship, and his flight with Gibreel on the *Bostan* is not his first journey to Britain. Yet his metamorphosis following his fall to earth suggests that his original act of migration rendered him at perpetual risk of eventually becoming subracial in the destination space. Early in the novel Rushdie writes of Saladin's fall, 'changes took place in delirious actors that would have gladdened the heart of old Mr Lamarck: under extreme environmental pressure, characteristics were acquired' (2006c, 5). Josie Gill argues that in this passage

> Rushdie comically invokes Lamarckian evolution as the magical science which explains the immigrants' equally magical transmutation by migration; yet as the novel progresses it becomes apparent that it is the socially and culturally hostile environment of England which dictates the nature of the characteristics which the immigrants go on to acquire (2015, 491-92).

157

However, the episode may be read more productively by considering Saladin's initial transformation not as separate to the characteristics with which the biopolitical state's racialising discourse imbues him, but as part of the same process of othering. *Verses* frequently ventriloquises the viewpoint – though does not leave it uncriticised – that humans who migrate from their roots are 'false' (Rushdie 2006c, 427). As Rushdie's narrator asks of Saladin and Gibreel, 'What did they expect? Falling like that out of the sky: did they imagine there would be no side-effects?' (133) The nascent nubs of Saladin's demonic horns are visible even before his arrest (133). The majority of his metamorphosis arises at the hands of the biopolitical state's agents, yet it begins not as a result of racism on the ground but as an apparent atavistic punishment for the very act of migration. Rushdie suggests not only the migratory journey's physical dangers and its effects on bodies and subjectivities, but that migration itself renders human beings subracial even before they arrive at the destinations they hope to reterritorialise.

After exploring the often deleterious alterations that the migratory journey engenders, Rushdie indicates through Saladin's imprisonment and further mutation within the British immigration camp's state of exception that racialised migrants may experience incarceration and additional racialisation at the hands of biopolitical state apparatuses when they arrive at their destination. Saladin's ordeal takes the form of a discourse that, as Chapter One explored, makes him terrifying to the white British superrace by transforming him fully into a devil. This augmentation of his atavistic transformatory punishment for leaving his roots implies a continuity between the automatic racialisation of all non-white migrants to Britain and the violence to which the state subjects them within biopolitical transit zones. In *Verses* Rushdie depicts borders between nations as more porous and nebulous than in *Midnight*. However, he continues to stress the difficulty and danger of crossing frontiers. He suggests that before migrants can even hope to achieve a sense of place in their destination they must pass through dangerous border spaces of indistinction in the air and on the ground. The capacity of these spaces to racialise and inflict punishment far outweighs their victims' severely limited ability to reterritorialise the

destination space. Moreover, Rushdie's description of Gibreel's experience in traversing London infers that further racialisation upon arrival contributes towards this impediment.

As Chapter One argued, because Saladin's transformation into a devil leads the British state to view the movement he inspires as proof of non-whites' unruly and ungrateful subracial nature, it prevents effective resistance to biopolitical oppression. Gibreel's attendant mutation into an angel gains him some 'new disciple[s]' (194), but has a similar outcome.[4] Although at one point 'vendors of novelties in Brickhall, Wembley and Brixton were selling as many toy haloes[…]as headbands to which had been affixed a pair of rubber horns' (352), most of the non-whites who come across Gibreel either refuse to recognise his divinity (329) or find his appearance perplexing or horrifying (448). His angelic transformation fails to beget even a movement of ineffectual resistance akin to that which Saladin creates accidentally. In contributing towards his schizophrenic view of himself as 'the agent of God's wrath' (457), it also lessens the possibility of his attaining a spatial sense of belonging in London.

However, Rushdie attributes London's infernal, deterritorialised appearance in *Verses* not solely to Gibreel's transformation-exacerbated schizophrenia but also to the inhospitable and alienating 'insanities of the city' (333) which prevent new arrivals from perceiving its nature fully. He complements his engagement with the deleterious racialising effects of migration itself by indicating the difficulty migrants face in traversing and creating their own social spaces once they arrive. Gibreel undertakes the most sustained and vivid attempt to reterritorialise a destination space by any of the novel's characters. Whereas the assimilationist Saladin, who wishes only to become 'a goodandproper Englishman' (43), proves a reluctant totem for resistance, Gibreel embarks upon a campaign to reshape London in his own image. Yet as with the failed efforts to traverse the Rann of Kutch and the Sundarbans in *Midnight*, Rushdie uses Gibreel's failure to change London significantly in order to assert the near-impossibility of reterritorialising a hostile, nebulous space within twentieth-century governmentality.

<u>The Journey Through: Heterotopian Illegibility and Failed Reterritorialisation</u>

By describing Gibreel Farishta's failure to reterritorialise London significantly or even to perceive its shifting spatial form by walking through it, Rushdie suggests how little ability migrants possess to create their own spatialities within the places to which they journey. Human geographers, prone to seeing space as constructed both physically and psychologically, have often considered the city not just as social space but as a space that is particularly socially produced: 'a centre of meaning, par excellence', in Yi-Fu Tuan's words (1977, 173). David Harvey affirms the possibility of resistance via shaping social space. He argues that cityspace is 'predicated on[…]a certain hierarchical ordering of activity which is broadly consistent with the dominant mode of production', but that it also constitutes 'the likely birthplace of a new mode of production' (Harvey 1973, 203). However, Rushdie's representation of London as a socially produced construct incorporates minimal scope for migrants to play their part in this construction. *Verses* emphasises the alienating striations that Britain's racialising post-imperial biopolitical elites enacted upon London. Through Gibreel's confusion and loss of orientation in the face of this apparently illegible, amorphous and violent abstract space Rushdie indicates the circumscribed ability of migrants to traverse and mould freely foreign social spaces of which they possess incomplete knowledge. He thus evokes only a limited potentiality of effective resistance.

At points in *Verses* Rushdie describes successful reterritorialisations by London's immigrants. These include 'the Jamme Masjid which used to be the Machzikel HaDath synagogue which had in its turn replaced the Huguenots' Calvinist church' (Rushdie 2006c, 285), and the tower blocks named formerly after the British colonial army's victories but which now sport the names of anti-colonial leaders (461). However, he subsumes his hints at social space's differential potentiality beneath an overriding portrayal of Britain's capital as a racially segregated city that appears heterotopian in its juxtaposing of incompatible white and non-white spaces without merging them. As his character Otto Cone argues,

> The modern city[…]is the locus classicus of incompatible realities. Lives that have no business mingling with one another sit side by side upon the omnibus[…]And as long as that's all, they pass in the night, jostling on Tube stations, raising their hats in some hotel corridor, it's not so bad. But if they meet! It's uranium and plutonium, each makes the other decompose, boom (314).

The race riots that occur later in the novel bear out Otto's prediction of a violent clash of spatialities. However, his notion that 'each makes the other decompose' (314) equally proves inaccurate. Rushdie imagines London as a space of incompatible realities as Otto does, but one in which the realities and striations created by the biopolitical state and the superrace it constructs cause attempted migrant reterritorialisations to fail. These forces maintain a racialised hierarchy of social spaces within the heterotopia. In response to the subrace's resistance, the biopolitical state in *Verses* reasserts its authority over London via an increased racialising police presence on the streets, raiding the Club Hot Wax (the deviant space in which pillars of the racialising establishment are burned in effigy) and killing Pamela Chamcha, whose dossier threatened to expose the Metropolitan Police's use of black magic. In describing these actions, Rushdie emphasises the racialising post-imperial biopolitical state's extensive ability to suppress cityspace's differential potentiality by striating the spaces it governs and curbing migrants' efforts at reterritorialisation.

By portraying Gibreel's failure to reterritorialise this hierarchical heterotopia significantly as a consequence of his inability to comprehend and thus to traverse London's cityspace, Rushdie strengthens the degree to which his novel portrays migrants' spatial realities as incompatible with those that the biopolitical regime and its superrace construct. He not only suggests the capacity of Britain's post-imperial elite to quell uprisings effectively by having its agents occupy particular spaces in the capital, but that the abstract nature of London as a whole precludes resistance by rendering it illegible to migrants. Gibreel's perception of London's cityspace as nebulous and shifting appears partially as a symptom of his schizophrenia. However, Rushdie also depicts his protagonist's confusion as arising from the difficulty immigrants experience in reterritorialising a

social space which they cannot know as well as the superrace who striate it.

Rushdie portrays London as a space whose complexity makes it so inhospitable to immigrants that even the '[g]eographer's London' (156) of the *A to Z* cannot help Gibreel understand and traverse it freely. In its ungraspable indeterminacy, the city resembles the psychotropic spaces of the Rann of Kutch and the Sundarbans in *Midnight*. London's shifting, deterritorialised form stymies Gibreel's attempts to comprehend it:

> the city in its corruption refused to submit to the dominion of the cartographers, changing shape at will and without warning, making it impossible for Gibreel to approach his quest in the systematic manner he would have preferred. Some days he would turn a corner at the end of a grand colonnade built of human flesh and covered in skin that bled when scratched, and find himself in an uncharted wasteland, at whose distant rim he could see tall familiar buildings, Wren's dome, the high metallic spark-plug of the Telecom Tower, crumbling in the wind like sandcastles (327).

Here Rushdie defamiliarises London landmarks by incorporating them within a surreal, terrifying vision of nebulousness and decay. He shows how Gibreel's schizophrenia prevents him from finding his way through cityspace and thus from reterritorialising upon it.

However, although Gibreel's difficulty in traversing and perceiving London's spatial form arises partially from 'the fatal logic of his insanity' (201), Rushdie also uses his protagonist's mental travails to evoke the struggles of migrants in general to shape destination spaces. One passage, in which '[t]he city sends [Gibreel] messages' (458) as he walks, combines these two themes. London communicates both its treacherous formlessness and its malleability: 'Not all migrants are powerless, the still-standing edifices whisper. They impose their needs on their new earth, bringing their own coherence to the new-found land, imagining it afresh. But look out, the city warns. Incoherence, too, must have its day' (458). Despite his confusion, Gibreel manages at one point to bring his own coherence. Rushdie depicts his protagonist's most effective act of reterritorialisation –

the supernatural tropicalisation of London that Chapter One analysed – as an anti-colonial attempt to banish 'British reserve' and bring about the '[e]mergence of new social values' (355) more in line with his native India. By altering the city's climate, Gibreel actualises the transformative potentiality of migration that proves central to Rushdie's novel.

Yet because this successful supernatural reterritorialisation constitutes not so much an attempt to produce differential space as an alternative act of striation and even destruction, it evokes only a limited possibility of freedom from biopolitical oppression. Rushdie shows how Gibreel's tropicalisation of London partially causes the race riots in Brickhall that engender further biopolitical oppression, rather than creating a space in which other migrants may enact their own reterritorialisations: 'the heatwave reached its highest point, and stayed up there so long that the whole city, its edifices, its waterways, its inhabitants, came perilously close to the boil' (420). Gibreel's small victory in his quest to shape London's social space proves pyrrhic. Moreover, it does nothing to alter his view of the city as characterised primarily by a terrifying formlessness. This enduring perception precludes further effective reterritorialisation.

In *Verses* Rushdie depicts London simultaneously as so striated that biopoliticians easily can suppress migrants' movements of opposition to their racialisation, and as appearing so amorphous to the same migrants that they also struggle to resist through reterritorialising British social space. Out of Rushdie's two main characters, only Saladin Chamcha eventually finds a sense of belonging within space. He migrates back home to India and resolves to aid its transformation into differential space. Yet in describing how Saladin attains this belonging by leaving behind a cityspace still inhospitable to even elite cosmopolitan migrants and confirming his rejection by the British city he wanted desperately to make home, Rushdie tempers the potentiality for a more pluralistic, differential world that his ending imagines.

The Journey Back: Homecoming and a Possible Differential Space

Rushdie bookends *Verses* with an arc of migration and return. The novel valorises migration and movement, but also represents the pull of roots.

163

Rushdie counterposes the performative, discursive 'British' persona that Saladin Chamcha develops in the novel's first chapter to a more embodied Indianness with which his protagonist becomes reconciled in the final chapter when he returns to Bombay and becomes an activist against Hindu communalism. However, Saladin's commitment to constructing differential space in India leaves intact London's inhospitability to immigrants. Rushdie contrasts his ending's gesture towards space's differential potentiality with his earlier, more frequent portrayals of the difficulty of actualising this potentiality.

Chapter One argued that Saladin's attempts to become accepted as British fail because of phenotypical racism's pervasiveness amongst biopolitical elites and superraces in post-imperial Britain. Yet Rushdie also indicates that Saladin becomes racialised by his own biology. Saladin experiences 'accent slippage' (Rushdie 2006c, 63) when he attempts Received Pronunciation. When convalescing in Brickhall after his transformation, his heart begins 'to misbehave, to kick and stumble as if it[…]wanted to metamorphose into some new, diabolic form, to substitute the complex unpredictability of tabla improvisations [from Indian classical music] for its old metronomic beat' (253). On the plane from London back to Bombay, his body and voice revert to what *Verses* describes as their innate original form: 'old emotions were sending tentacles out to grasp him[...]his tongue was twisting again, sending his accent East along with the rest of him' (514). Rushdie implies that however violently humans may reject the spaces in which they are born, the link cannot be truly severed.

Verses suggests that embracing one's roots by committing to transforming these spaces offers a potentiality of effective resistance to biopolitical oppression. Saladin Chamcha returns home for his dying father and his lover Zeeny Vakil, but comes to feel not only the pull of his identity as an Indian but a particular kind of pluralist Indian politics that aims to construct differential space. He completes his reintegration with India by joining a march against the Hindu nationalist Shiv Sena government in Bombay. Rushdie initially leaves the sincerity of Saladin's participation in the march open to question: 'Me, taking part in a CP(M) event. Wonders will never cease; I really must be in love' (538). Yet Saladin commits

genuinely to resisting the communal violence against which he and Zeeny protest: 'Salahuddin[...]could not deny the power of the image' of the 'unbroken chain of men and women linking hands from top to bottom of the city' (541).[5] Rushdie links the final fruition of Saladin's love for Zeeny with his protagonist's acceptance that her previous criticism of his *comprador* self was valid, and his identification with her secularist and pluralist idea of India as a space which must be reshaped along these lines. *Verses* presents Saladin as having rejected his performative 'Englished' (439) self in favour of a pluralistic vision that allows for a deep personal bond with the idea of a differential, hybrid Indian national space. His return home appears not as cowardice but as an attempted act of reterritorialisation.

Verses' final chapter thus evokes a potentiality of effective resistance through making one's home country into differential space. However, Rushdie's description of Saladin's voice and physiognomy as only stable when he returns to India complements the way in which he depicts the act of migration to the former imperial centre as racialising. By suggesting that human bodies can only attain a comfortable sense of place in their homeland, he again indicates the severe difficulty of shaping the destination space. Saladin's return home represents an affirmative engagement with pluralist politics, but also an admission that his capacity to reterritorialise upon Indian space far outstrips his ability to oppose biopolitical discourses and technologies in Britain's alien cityspace. Just as Rushdie portrays Gibreel Farishta's confused wandering as inadequate to actualise London's differential potentiality, he shows that Saladin Chamcha's journey home leaves intact the city's abstract, unknowable and amorphous space.

As with *Midnight*, a biopolitical reading of *Verses* informed by theories of social space as created by complex flows of reterritorialisation and deterritorialisation reveals that Rushdie depicts only a limited production and attenuated potentiality of differential space. However, his novels written in the 1990s portray even more radically striated spaces, especially through their new and bleaker fictionalised versions of India. In the Indias that Rushdie imagines in *Moor* and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, predatory biopolitical capitalism and political religious fundamentalism render cityspace more and more segregated and oppressive, and engender

increased communalist racialisation in rural space. *Ground* suggests that migration to America offers a greater prospect for freedom and the differential. However, this constitutes an anomalous upturn in the generally lessening degree to which Rushdie's successive novels indicate that spaces of resistance to racism and bio/thanatopower can be constructed. Using Foucault's concept of the heterotopia to analyse the diverse yet abstract space of Bombay in *Moor* begins to bring this trajectory into greater focus by exploring the ways in which Rushdie engages with the waning differential potentiality of complex spaces within twentieth-century governmentality.

Vertical and Horizontal Space in *The Moor's Last Sigh* and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*

Whereas *Verses* concludes with a protagonist's return to India and his newfound commitment to shaping its politics and culture into a more pluralist, hybrid form, both *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995) and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* feature narrators who flee the country partially because they perceive no hope of doing so. *Moor* and *Ground* demonstrate an evolution in Rushdie's fictional representation of India in relation to *Midnight* and *Verses*, which both evoke the prospect of the nation's future reconstitution into differential space. In these later novels he portrays India as increasingly subject to two major deleterious striations. He critiques the equally damaging and predatory territorialisations of capitalism, which he describes exploiting bare life and constructing abstract space, and Hindutva, the attempted reterritorialisation of India's politics along communalist and majoritarian lines: what Nivedita Menon and Aditya Nigam call 'the equation of Indianness with Hinduness' (2007, 37). *Ground* depicts a greater possibility of oppositional reterritorialisation through migration than *Verses*, but only in the form of a limited potentiality. Especially when engaging with India's post-independence (bio)politics, Rushdie's 1990s novels represent the striations of predatory capitalism, religious communalism and biopower as near-impossible to resist through constructing differential space.

In *Moor* and *Ground* Rushdie stresses the polyvalent and complex (bio)political and spatial dynamics of India's late twentieth-century

governmentality to a greater degree than in *Midnight* and *Verses*. These spatialities intertwine regional and national political Hindu fundamentalism, national and global capital, and regional and national government. Rushdie's move away from figuring India's post-independence politics principally through the centralised nation-state means that central state biopower becomes less evident in his 1990s novels. Their India-based sections, which he sets primarily in Bombay, produce no vivid descriptions of centre-mandated biopolitical oppression akin to the sterilisation campaign in *Midnight* or the racist British police crackdown in *Verses*. However, he declines to use the increased complexity of politics and space in these novels in order to suggest a greater potentiality of differential space than in his earlier fiction. Rushdie's Bombayite protagonists are spatially distant from central state biopower's excesses, but become subject to the biopolitics of Hindu regionalist communalism and to the abstract spaces of capital. By showing how these forces combine to reterritorialise and striate the interrelated spaces of Bombay, Maharashtra (the region of which Bombay is the capital) and India, he underscores the enduring ability of oppressive territorialisations to militate against effective resistance even within intricate spatial matrices.

Through Abraham Zogoiby's construction of skyscrapers and his attendant biopolitical exploitation of *homo sacer* as labour, *Moor* engages with the vertical reterritorialisation of Bombay's cityspace and its conversion into a segregated heterotopia in the late twentieth century. Considering these striations alongside the way in which the novel describes Hindutva's horizontal permeation of cityspace and non-urban space reveals that Rushdie minimises the possibility of future resistance in *Moor*'s fictionalised version of India by depicting the spaces of Bombay and Maharashtra as abstract in a three-dimensional sense. *Ground* proves an even bleaker imagining of late twentieth-century India. In this novel capital and Hindutva's reterritorialisations, which oppose each other in *Moor*, unite in the form of the 'Great Goat Scam' (Rushdie 2000, 232) in which a communalist politician parlays his crooked business dealings into national prominence at the centre of government. In *Moor* Rushdie deploys Bombay as a metaphor for India. He implies that the striation of the nation's most

plural, vibrant city symbolises the failure to construct differential space in India in general. In *Ground* he goes further by using the Great Goat Scam to exemplify the country's wholesale striation, from central government to the most remote non-urban spaces. Aside from *Ground*'s portrayal of a potential attenuated reterritorialisation through migration, reading Rushdie's 1990s novels through theories of the heterotopia, social space and schizo-geography further reveals his growing disinclination to depict the possibility of freedom and resistance from biopolitical oppression within differential space.

The Moor's Last Sigh (1): The Vertical Territorialisations of Capital

Through his fictionalised version of Bombay in *Moor*, Rushdie criticises the effect of capitalism and communalism's oppressive territorialisations on the previously plural, hybrid city, and by extension the nation. He implies that to striate Bombay, 'the most Indian of Indian cities' (Rushdie 2006b, 350), is to striate India. As Rachel Trousdale argues, Rushdie depicts 'Bombay [as] a metaphor for India in its history as a multi-ethnic, multi-religious society' (2004, 98).[6] In *Moor*'s early chapters Bombay's pluralism and diversity reflect the incorporative hybrid heterogeneity of the ideal pluralist India that Rushdie sets forth in *Midnight*. The city's gradual transformation into a violent abstract space damages this model. As Rushdie's narrator Moraes states, '[t]hose who hated India, those who sought to ruin it, would need to ruin Bombay' (2006b, 351). By emphasising Bombay's symbolic meaning as a site of waning differential potentiality, Rushdie provides an elegiac critique of the deleterious striations enacted upon India in the late twentieth century. *Moor* shows how the reterritorialisations of predatory capitalism and Hindutva have opposed and thus complemented each other in rendering not just Bombay as abstract space but Maharashtra as well and, Rushdie implies, the entire nation.

 This chapter has argued that because Rushdie's fiction describes a variety of often nebulous and interpenetrating spaces it invites a biopolitical reading whose conception of space exceeds that offered by influential philosophers of biopower. However, his later novels prove increasingly wont to depict the non-relational spaces that their theories posit. Using one

such formulation, Stuti Khanna claims that '[u]sing Foucault's idea of the heterotopia, the city in the work of Rushdie can be read as a space that simultaneously mirrors, idealises, and negates the (concept of the) nation' (2009, 410). Like this study, Khanna's essay on cityspace in Rushdie identifies his fiction's increasing reluctance to depict the possibility of future resistance to political oppression. She argues that '[a] clear shift can be traced in Rushdie's later work from a trajectory of return to one of flight, an outcome of his disenchantment with the ugly face of ethnic nationalism that the city has come to embody' (410). For Khanna, Rushdie's lessening inclination to depict cityspace as heterotopian, and thus as pluralist, characterises this trajectory. Yet her emphasis on the heterotopia as a possible space of resistance to nationalist myths fails to consider that the oppressive deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations that Rushdie's later novels depict are characteristic of other kinds of heterotopia, whose complex spatialities prove susceptible to recuperation and recapitulation by rapacious businesspeople and oppressive political forces. Analysing how Rushdie depicts Bombay as a city distinguished increasingly by juxtaposed spaces of poverty and fabulous wealth reveals that *Moor* charts not Bombay's loss of heterotopian qualities but its transformation from a differential heterotopia of deviance (see Foucault 1997, 353) into an oppressive abstract heterotopia.

In *Moor* Rushdie places far more emphasis on Bombay as a centre of commerce (and capitalist corruption) than in *Midnight*. He charts how India's economy has evolved from an epoch of protectionism to a more globalised free market based around the city. In the novel Abraham Zogoiby welcomes this economic liberalisation as an opportunity for greater wealth through predatory and criminal means. He subsequently striates Bombay's cityspace. Although Abraham's business empire also reterritorialises horizontally by intersecting with flows of global capital, Rushdie evokes its effect on lived space most vividly by depicting Abraham's construction of a vertical striation. Through his biopolitical exploitation of poor labourers and his attendant dotting of Bombay's skyline with skyscrapers, Abraham renders the city an increasingly abstract heterotopian space, reterritorialises upon the pluralist ideal of India and even produces death.

By describing Bombay as a 'hovel'n'highrise town' (Rushdie 2006b, 145), Rushdie emphasises its heterotopian qualities. Hovels and highrises are juxtaposed, but remain separate. Abraham's skyscraper allows him to sequester himself from the poor below. Beyond the spatial metaphor through which Rushdie describes Abraham's wealth as a 'city of gold' becoming 'the great metropolis of [his] present fortune' (170), *Moor* also shows how capital creates and shapes space itself through construction projects which Rushdie suggests tend to exacerbate abstract heterotopian segregation. Soja writes of '[c]ities[...]as centres of innovation, places where dense propinquity and interdependent co-presence are important shaping features of daily life' (2010, 26). However, Rushdie indicates that rich capitalists can escape this propinquity through the vertical spatial striations of the buildings they construct. Abraham's skyscraper renders him literally 'above the Law': 'the Over World's cackling overlord in his hanging garden in the sky, rich beyond rich men's richest dreams' (Rushdie 2006b, 317). In contrast to Rushdie's narrator Moraes Zogoiby, who claims hopefully that Bombay 'belong[s] to nobody, and to all' (350-51), *Moor* implies increasingly that the city belongs to the few capitalists who erect skyscrapers not just for profit but so that they may rise above horizontal spatiality. The novel exposes these capitalists' lack of care for the human cost to the inhabitants of the lower regions with which these skyscrapers are juxtaposed. Rushdie suggests that this cost often takes the form of death.

In *Moor* Rushdie figures Bombay's skyscrapers not simply as commodities but as symbolic and productive of economic elites' deadly power. He depicts the city more and more as a space where '[f]or a man prepared to take risks, to give up scruple[...]the only limit to the money that could be made was the boundary of your imagination' (182). Abraham's lack of scruples leads him to build his empire on the backs of 'invisible people' (212): *homo sacer* whose exploited labour enables him to striate vertical space by purchasing Bombay's scarce land, seizing the airspace above through the reterritorialising construction of skyscrapers, and financing the process by subdividing and selling these new edifices. Rushdie indicates the veracity of Foucault's argument that capitalism 'would

not have been possible without the controlled insertion of bodies into the machinery of production and the adjustment of the phenomena of population to economic processes' (1990, 141). Through his predatory biopolitics Abraham steers Bombay towards becoming an abstract heterotopian space which subjects the poor to the logic of capital.

Moraes states that 'Abraham's empire was large, and nine-tenths of it was submerged below the surface of things' (Rushdie 2006b, 341). This comment extends to the *homo sacer* Abraham employs and exploits. Rushdie's portrayal of capitalism in *Moor* suggests a relationship between the biopolitical state's racialising construction of *homo sacer* and this subrace's subsequent appropriation as labour without rights:

> the city authorities decreed that any persons who had settled in Bombay subsequent to the last census were deemed not to exist. Because they had been cancelled, it followed that the city bore no responsibility for their housing or welfare[...]This was where Abraham Zogoiby and all those who had jumped on the great Reclamation bandwagon came in, generously hiring as many phantoms as they could to work on the huge construction sites springing up on every inch of the new land (186-87).

Because the city's government constructs this life as less than human and hence as dispensable, predatory capitalists like Abraham who perceive these figures as equally dispensable are able to take advantage: 'the invisible people[…]continued to be classified as phantoms, to move through the city like wraiths, except that these were the wraiths that kept the city going, building its houses, hauling its goods, cleaning up its droppings, and then simply and terribly dying, each in their turn, unseen' (212). *Homo sacer* construct Abraham's skyscrapers while suffering in the ground-level spaces of Bombay's increasingly abstract heterotopia. They are forced to give what little life they have in order to further the city's segregation and erode its differential potentiality. Abraham views death as necessary in order to optimise the market: a philosophy Warren Montag calls 'necro-economics' (2013, 204). Moreover, in *Moor*'s later chapters Rushdie suggests not only

that the construction of skyscrapers produces death but that they continue to do so once erected.

Rushdie frequently associates skyscrapers with death. In *Verses* they appear 'like tombstones marking the sites where the torn corpse of the old city lay' (Rushdie 2006c, 12). However, in *Moor* late twentieth-century Bombay's skyscrapers do not simply symbolise death by creating the aspect of abstract space in which, as Lefebvre argues, '[v]erticality and great height have ever been the spatial expression of potentially violent power' (1991, 98). They also convert this symbolism's murderous potentiality into death. Rushdie again suggests capital's lethal influence on the city when a fictionalised version of the 1993 Bombay bombings (partially financed by unscrupulous capitalists) causes glass to rain from the exploding skyscraper above: 'the great atrium at the top of Cashondeliveri Tower burst like a firework in the sky and a rain of glass knives began to fall, stabbing the running workers through the neck the back the thigh, spearing their dreams, their loves, their hope' (2006b, 375). Abraham's business empire effects 'the deterritorialisation of the soil through privatisation' of which Deleuze and Guattari write (1984, 250). It simultaneously reterritorialises the city of Bombay through constructing a vertical spatiality of death on the soil which exploits and kills *homo sacer* in order to inure itself from the poorer ground-level spaces of the heterotopia it striates. Rushdie strengthens his novel's scepticism regarding Indian space's differential potentiality by suggesting that the violent political forces of Hindutva, while opposed to Abraham nominally, complement his vertical urban striations through their horizontal reterritorialisation of India's cityspace and rural space alike. Together these forces render India an abstract space in all three dimensions.

The Moor's Last Sigh (2): The Horizontal Territorialisations of Hindutva

Not only does Rushdie suggest in *Moor* that the possibility of differential space in post-independence India and Bombay has been excised by predatory biopolitical capitalism's vertical striations, but he depicts a concomitant threat from horizontal reterritorialisations by right-wing Hindu politicians. Their ideology of Hindutva, as Ashis Nandy, Shikha Trivedy, Shail Mayaram and Achyut Yagnik put it, is characterised by an 'effort to

convert the Hindus into a "proper" modern nation and a conventional ethnic majority and[...]corresponding efforts to turn the other faiths of the subcontinent into proper ethnic minorities and well-behaved nationalities' (1995, vi). Hindutva's communalist discourse produces a reterritorialising movement which, Satish Deshpande argues, 'has attempted[...]to essentialise the nation-space by re-sacralising it thereby stressing its irreducible and exclusive affinity for Hindus alone' (1995, 3220).

This movement appears in *Moor* (and *Ground*) in the fictional form of Mumbai's Axis (MA). Drawing upon the real-life Bombay-based Hindu nationalist party, the Shiv Sena, Rushdie describes a political party which 'unit[es] regional and religious nationalism in [a] potent, explosive new group' (2006b, 231). His novel charts the reterritorialising horizontal spread of the MA's political influence from its beginnings, to its gradual abstraction of Bombay's cityspace, to its striation of Maharashtra's countryside. The power of the party's racialising discourse and policies is augmented by a violent communalism that Rushdie depicts disturbingly as innate throughout Indian space.

Thomas Blom Hansen, amongst other historians, criticises the 'construction of communalism as the irrational force of primitive and atavistic hatred emanating from the "masses" steeped in tradition and superstition, and easy targets for manipulations' (1999, 201). Yet *Moor* posits just this construction. Rushdie indicates that the threat to differential space comes not only from the central state but from India and its *polis* itself. As John Clement Ball argues,

> [u]nlike the brutally top-down nature of social upheaval during the Emergency, the rise of the religious right is a function not just of charismatic leadership but of mass participation. It is both a top-down and a grass-roots movement. To Rushdie it therefore represents a greater national crisis than the Emergency (2003, 161).

Rushdie represents Hindu communalism not as an alien striation imposed upon Indians but as intrinsic to the nation's cityspace and non-urban space alike. He depicts both these types of locale as fertile ground for the MA's manipulations. Moraes speaks of 'those who sought to ruin [India]' (Rushdie

2006b, 351), but Rushdie suggests that India ruins itself in part. He thus excises the potentiality of differential Indian space that *Midnight* and *Verses* evoke.

The appeal of the Shiv Sena, on which Rushdie bases the MA, historically has been strongest in Bombay, the city in which the party was founded. Yet *Moor* depicts an interpenetration of Hindutva and Indian space that goes beyond historical evidence towards the atavistic. By presenting Hindu communalism as inherent in India's countryside, Rushdie portrays Hindutva not just as an urban phenomenon but as a continuum between the urban and the non-urban that he implies may enable fundamentalist political groups like the MA to striate all of India in the future.

In *Moor* Hindu communalist ideals intrinsic to the countryside arise in the politics of the urban MA, whose influence thus spreads easily back to rural areas. Thinkers including Amartya Sen have critiqued the Hindu Right's promotion in the 1980s and 1990s of the god Ram as a symbol of Hindu militarism and unity. Sen argues that '[m]any Hindu schools of thought do not mention Ram at all, and, among the texts that do, many hardly portray him in the spectacular light of divinity in which the present-day Hindutva activists insist on seeing him' (2006, 48). However, in fictionalising Hindutva's growth in India's post-independence politics Rushdie suggests that fervour for Ram in non-urban India predates the rise of urban political formations; that Hindutva actually originated in the countryside. Early in the novel, Camoens da Gama becomes frightened by the crowd of village dwellers at a pre-independence rally staged by Mahatma Gandhi: 'I had seen India's beauty in that crowd[...]but with that God stuff I got scared. In the city we are for secular India but the village is for Ram[...]In the end I am afraid the villagers will march on the cities and people like us will have to lock our doors and there will come a Battering Ram' (Rushdie 2006b, 55-56). Consequently, when Rushdie then describes the ideology of Ram Rajya – as MA leader Raman Fielding puts it, the idea that 'when minority seeks to dictate to majority, then[...]the small[...]must accept to bend and move before the big' (260) – taking hold in Bombay the striations appear not as unnatural top-down

reterritorialisations by politicians but as the actualisation of a communalism innate to India's *polis*.

As *Moor* progresses, Rushdie strengthens his portrayal of India as a space incorporating minimal differential potentiality by showing how the communalism that he depicts as arising atavistically in India's non-urban areas increasingly striates Bombay, and how this reterritorialisation in turn enables the MA's growing band of violent cadres to exacerbate the Maharashtrian countryside's existing communalism. He evokes Bombay's growing reconstitution as abstract communalist space in the years after independence by peppering his novel with descriptions of the MA's reterritorialisations of the city, from their support for the kind of biopolitical slum clearances that *Midnight* depicts (125), to their racialisation of non-Marathi speakers (298-99), to their seizure of cityspace through loud, colourful and aggressive religious festivals (314). The communalist violence that Rushdie portrays as inherent within India's non-urban space comes more and more to characterise politics in the city as well. The MA preys on the knowledge that 'it is not the civil norm for which men yearn, but the outrageous, the outsize, the out-of-bounds – for that by which our wild potency may be unleashed' (305). Its successful breaking of a mill strike in Bombay, aided by the violence of disaffected urbanites like Moraes, leads to electoral gains and thus an even greater striation of cityspace.

In describing how the MA's violent communalist operations spread subsequently into the countryside around Bombay, Rushdie shows that establishing a base of operations in the city affords the party a greater ability to striate non-urban space more severely and hence to increase their ideological influence on India's politics. As Moraes states, '[t]he bandwagon had begun to roll' (308). He participates in multiple violent actions within non-urban space. These include suppressing a revolt of female mill workers, reinforcing the caste system and forcing a young widow on to her husband's funeral pyre (308). The political power into which the MA parlays the existing tendency towards communalism in rural India means that Hindutva loops back into the spaces in which Rushdie implies it originated and striates them still further: '[e]ven in the most remote rural areas, where ideas such as Fielding's had never before taken root, people had begun to

speak of the coming kingdom of Lord Ram' (308-309). By the end of the novel the communalist territorialisation of horizontal space in Maharashtra has become nearly total.

By showing how Abraham's lethal skyscrapers reterritorialise vertical space, and the violent means by which the MA shapes the existing atavistic violence of Hindutva into a further reterritorialisation of horizontal space, Rushdie describes a national space which offers much less differential potentiality than the post-independence Indias of his previous fiction. Abraham Zogoiby and Raman Fielding oppose each other nominally as they engage in 'the heavyweight unification bout to establish, once and for all, which gang (criminal-entrepreneurial or political-criminal) would run the town' (351-52). Yet *Moor* suggests that their striations actually complement each other in ruining Bombay, and therefore in symbolically ruining India. When bombs rip apart the city towards the end of the novel it proves uncertain, and unimportant, which of the two forces is primarily responsible (372). Moreover, Rushdie strengthens his representation of communalism as inherent to Indian space by having Moraes assert the complicity of the nation's *polis* in this act of destruction: 'The explosions were our own evil[…]We have chopped away our own legs, we engineered our own fall' (372-73). Rushdie indicates that India has become striated by its public's innate communalism, violence and greed as much as by that of its politicians and capitalists. *Moor* forbears to suggest the possibility of a future differential India that *Midnight* and *Verses* incorporate.

In *Ground* Rushdie depicts Indian space as even more dystopian and abstract than in *Moor*. The territorialisations of Hindutva and predatory capitalism once again militate against differential space. However, in this novel Rushdie describes not an opposition between the two forces which reterritorialises India in the crossfire of their striations, but their conjunction: '[t]he corruption of money and the corruption of power, united in a super-corruption that no opponent could withstand' (2000, 247). India becomes such an abstract space that *Ground*'s protagonists migrate in order to thrive. These characters' partially successful reterritorialisations of America mean that *Ground* represents a momentary aberration in Rushdie's generally growing disinclination to present the possibility of effective resistance to

176

biopolitical racialisation and striation. Yet this potentiality proves only attenuated. As in *Verses*, Rushdie depicts the migratory journey as treacherous, the destination space as abstract and the migrant's reterritorialising capacity as limited.

The Ground Beneath Her Feet (1): The Great Goat Scam and Hindutva Capitalism

Rushdie sets *Ground* in an alternate reality at a remove both from our world and that of *Moor*. He characterises this reality not only by altering historical details but by doing so in order to depict space's effective striation by movements of religious communalism and predatory capitalism more vividly than in his previous novels. These movements prove particularly powerful in *Ground*'s fictionalised version of post-independence India. Here, both urban and non-urban space's differential potentiality become increasingly minimal. The super-rich's skyscrapers striate Bombay, as in *Moor*. In New Delhi a fictional coalition government of Hindu fundamentalists and Indira Gandhi, *Midnight*'s villain, reterritorialises the nation as a whole into abstract space. Even the countryside's amorphous deterritorialised space becomes striated by agents of Hindutva and capitalist corruption. Unlike in *Moor*, Rushdie depicts these figures as one and the same.

As in *Moor*, the MA attempts to reterritorialise India along communalist lines. However, because the MA of *Ground*'s reality becomes more powerful politically than the version in Rushdie's earlier novel, it striates Indian space more severely. Whereas in *Moor* Rushdie suggests that the MA's territorialisation of Bombay symbolises India's ruination, in *Ground* he describes a communalism that spreads beyond Bombay and Maharashtra to reterritorialise upon the entire nation. The MA ruins India not just symbolically but literally. Rushdie indicates that the MA's greater ability to effect these reterritorialisations in *Ground* arises from its use of corrupt predatory capitalism and its eschewing the antagonism towards big business that *Moor* describes. He does not depict late twentieth-century India as the victim of a crossfire between opposing movements of Hindutva and predatory capitalism. Rather, through MA politician Piloo Doodhwala's 'Great Goat Scam' (Rushdie 2000, 237) he shows how both forces work

177

together to reterritorialise India in urban and non-urban space alike, as well as at the heart of its central biopolitical government. Piloo's illegal business activities in the countryside finance his political activities in Bombay, win him the support of the poor villagers he employs en masse and propel him to power in New Delhi. Rushdie stresses the interrelation of cityspace, non-urban space and central government, and portrays the increasingly abstract nature of all three in his most minimal representation of Indian social space's differential potentiality to date.

By charting Bombay's transformation into a space of 'cynical Mammon worshipper[s]' (207), Rushdie represents the city in a similar way to *Moor*. *Ground* shares the earlier novel's concern with how skyscrapers, 'the giant concrete-and-steel exclamations that destroyed forever the quieter syntax of the old city of Bombay' (154), reterritorialised the city's vertical space increasingly in the twentieth century. However, the novel portrays capital's corruption and reterritorialising capacity most vividly in engaging with its effect on non-urban space. Rushdie suggests that predatory capitalism has come more and more to facilitate Hindutva's communalist striation of India's countryside. Whereas in *Moor* he depicts the MA's influence as confined to Bombay and Maharashtra, here he imagines a fictionalised India in which the party's use of capital enables its spatiality of Hindutva to spread further outwards, reterritorialise even more Indian space and excise the nation's differential potentiality to a greater degree. The MA's ability to effect these reterritorialisations throughout India arises from Piloo Doodhwala's profile. Through his corrupt capitalist exploitation of Madhya Pradesh's amorphous non-urban space, this MA politician-cum-businessman surpasses *Moor*'s Abraham Zogoiby in the 'surrealist boldness' (233) of his corrupt business dealings and goes subsequently beyond Raman Fielding in obtaining political power at the centre of government in Delhi.

In describing rural Madhya Pradesh's nebulousness Rushdie portrays not a potentiality of differential space but a locale even more deleterious to anti-biopower resistance than the inhospitable, unknowable Rann of Kutch and Sundarbans in *Midnight*. Unlike these spaces, the area's indeterminacy makes it recuperable by striating forces. Piloo exploits the

178

countryside's nebulousness and remoteness to aid the corrupt capitalist venture from which his political popularity and his eventual place at the heart of India's central government derive. Rushdie depicts the non-urban space into which the photojournalist Rai Merchant journeys, hoping to uncover details of the scam by which Piloo earns '[t]hree hundred million dollars per annum, free of taxes' by claiming the ownership of 'one hundred million wholly fictitious goats' (233), as alien, amorphous and near-impossible to map. He emphasises the territory's recalcitrance to human comprehension by describing it as deterritorialised *terra incognita*: 'The sheer unchartedness of rural India in its most profound depths never failed to amaze. You turned off the road on to the rural tracks and at once felt as the earth's early navigators must have done; like a Cabot or Magellan of the land' (238). The countryside's unknowable remoteness enables Piloo's deception in two ways. Firstly, it hides the scam from the authorities. Secondly, because the terrain proves as inhospitable to its inhabitants as Rai finds it, rural Madhya Pradesh's impoverished *homines sacri* – 'life in its purest form, life seeking no more than to remain alive' (236) – are all too willing to help Piloo earn his ill-gotten money in return for employment. Whereas in *Midnight* and *Verses* Rushdie indicates the prospect of spatial belonging and resistance within deterritorialised space, here he suggests that imbricated forces of Hindutva and predatory capital possess the ability to permeate India from its remotest areas to its urban centres of political power.

The Great Goat Scam rivals anything Abraham effects in *Moor* in its corruption. However, because Piloo does not exploit *homines sacri* as Abraham does but raises them from such a state, he gains greater political power. Here Rushdie engages with the networks of patronage through which communalist parties have accrued mass followings in post-independence India (see Banerjee 1992, 67). *Ground* emphasises Piloo's support from the impoverished villagers to whom he gives jobs and sustenance and who view him as 'a true man of the masses, a son of the soil' (Rushdie 2000, 245). When Rai exposes the Great Goat Scam this groundswell leads the central government, eager for MA support, to pardon Piloo. MA penetration not just of cityspace or rural space but of India's

179

central government ensues when Piloo becomes a key player in Indira Gandhi's Congress-MA coalition. For Rai this confirms 'the total victory of Pilooist values' (246) within Indian space. Rushdie imagines a reality in which cityspace and non-urban space's reterritorialisation by an unholy alliance of predatory capitalism and Hindutva allows an MA communalist-cum-corrupt-capitalist to operate at the heart of the biopolitical nation-state. *Ground*'s India constitutes a more abstract space than any version of the country in his fiction.

Ground goes further than *Moor* in depicting a successful, extremist, murderous Hindu communalist party as a threat to pluralism in India. It represents the culmination of Rushdie's disenchantment with the idea that India's nation-state, federal system and politicians can produce differential space. Rushdie suggests more than ever that as 'the precise instant of India's arrival at independence' (2008, 3) recedes into the past the country is becoming a space characterised less and less by values of hybridity, diversity and tolerance. However, considering how *Ground*'s later chapters present the uncertainties and dangers of migration reveals that the novel's reluctance to depict a significant differential potentiality within social space extends beyond its portrayal of India.

The Ground Beneath Her Feet (2): Movement and Migration, Again

Rai leaves India due to threats to his life following his exposing of the Great Goat Scam. He joins his friends Vina Apsara and Ormus Cama in becoming a migrant and attempting to put down new roots. Rushdie augments the severely limited potentiality of resistance that *Ground*'s India-set chapters depict by suggesting that migration does not lead necessarily to a stable sense of place or the production of differential space. In representing the dangers of the migratory journey itself (as in *Verses*), describing the destination space of New York as heterotopian and segregated, and depicting the very ground beneath his characters' feet as shifting perpetually, he indicates only a minimal possibility of reterritorialisation through migration within late twentieth-century governmentality.

In *Ground* Rushdie characterises India, through Rai, as a 'place obsessed by place, belonging-to-your-place, knowing-your-place [in which]

180

we are mostly given that territory, and that's that, no arguments, get on with it' (2000, 55). Rai resists this placial stasis. He asserts the possibility of putting down new roots by reterritorialising the destination space to which one migrates. *Ground* asks the question, 'What if all of it – home, kinship, the whole enchilada – is just the biggest, most truly global, and centuries-oldest piece of brainwashing? Suppose that it's only when you dare to let go that your real life begins?' (176-77)

However, the novel also suggests the rarity of such migratory reterritorialisations, both in terms of the paucity of humans willing or able to attempt them and in terms of the difficulty of enacting these reterritorialisations should the will be present. Rai argues that 'in every generation there are a few souls, call them lucky or cursed, who are simply *born not belonging*, who come into the world semi-detached' (72). By stressing that the numbers of the semi-detached are few, Rushdie indicates the scarcity of attempted reterritorialisation through migration. In later chapters he reinforces his narrator's concomitant assertion that the state of placial non-belonging may prove a blessing or a curse for the few who attempt to create new roots. Through Ormus and Vina's struggles in Britain and America (and even to arrive there) Rushdie emphasises the dangers of migration and the obstacles to reterritorialising the destination space.

As in *Verses*, in which Saladin's migration marks him as demonic, in *Ground* Rushdie portrays the mere act of journeying as fraught with a danger and uncertainty that transforms the self. When Ormus flies to Britain he 'feels a certain resistance in the air' and the presence of 'ghostly border guards' (253). Here Rushdie depicts not only airspace's resistance to migration but its transformatory capacity. Ormus senses that 'a mutation is occurring at the level of the cell, of the gene, of the particle', that '[t]he person who arrives won't be the one who left, or not quite' (253). Although Rushdie presents this epigenetic mutation as far less deleterious than Saladin's metamorphosis into a demon, contrasting this passage with Ormus and Vina's later migration to America reveals that space in *Ground* possesses a capacity to shape humans far in excess of humans' ability to shape space. By describing how Ormus and Vina become assimilated within New York's juxtaposed, segregated heterotopian spaces Rushdie

shows that while the migrant may attain a sense of place by planting new roots in the destination space, this can occur without a significant attendant reterritorialisation of the locale in a wider sense.

Ormus and Vina do not fail to reterritorialise New York entirely. Rai writes that '[t]he city seems to organise itself around them, as if they are the principle[…]that makes sense of the rest' (382). Their fame means that their music and their private lives become significant parts of New York's social space. Beyond the city limits their political activism reterritorialises the world successfully in the name of causes including famine relief and environmentalism (478). Vina's death inspires numerous movements of resistance which Rushdie suggests may construct differential space in the future.[7]

Yet their presence in New York leaves its segregated, stratified, heterotopian nature unchanged. Ormus in particular becomes shaped by New York's cityspace rather than trying to reterritorialise upon it. He territorialises vertically in a manner akin to Abraham Zogoiby in *Moor*, and thus assimilates himself within the dominant culture as does Saladin Chamcha in *Verses*. Rushdie depicts New York in *Ground* as a 'mighty pincushion' (354) characterised by man-made vertical striations, similar to Bombay in his 1990s novels. This heterotopia juxtaposes skyscrapers containing business HQs and luxury homes with '[t]he rusting decadence of the city at ground level, its shoulder-barging vulgarity, its third-world feel' (387). Instead of attempting to merge these contiguous spatialities into differential social space Ormus recoils from New York's ground-level spaces. Like Abraham, he prefers to spend his time living in a succession of 'unshod, segregated world[s]' (474) far above the city streets. Meanwhile, Vina discovers not new roots but the realisation that every new place seems 'just as wrong as the place she'd left' (163). Vina and Ormus reterritorialise their destination space to an extent. However, their ability to do so proves limited because of Ormus' distaste for the ground and Vina's perpetual feeling of non-place.

Rushdie not only presents heterotopian social space's recalcitrance to change, but questions additionally the possibility of new roots or

differential space in a world in which the very terrain becomes progressively more unstable and difficult to traverse. As with the Rann of Kutch and the Sundarbans in *Midnight* and London in *Verses*, amorphous and nebulous spaces in *Ground* produce terror and uncertainty rather than freedom from biopolitical oppression. In a characteristically fantastical idiom, Rushdie describes this nebulousness as arising from human actions. He utilises '[g]eology as metaphor' (203), but also as metonym. Rushdie depicts space as man-made not merely in the Lefebvrian sense of social space but in the sense that human actions produce actual changes in the world's topographical form: 'human Faults cause earthquakes too' (327). Striating violence and greed alters geography and thus makes it harder for most humans, especially subraces, to reterritorialise in the face of these striations:

> In the West the earthquakes have stopped and the construction teams have moved in. Banks and insurance companies are building their new palaces over the faults, as if to assert the primacy of their authority, even over the misbehaving earth itself[…]
>
> In the South, however, the devastation continues. It's as if the earth were discriminating against its most disadvantaged children (553).

By showing the Earth fracturing by degrees and producing an attendant continuum of deleterious deterritorialisations and reterritorialisations, Rushdie complements his novel's broad scepticism regarding the potentiality of producing differential space through migration. He portrays a growing terrifying treacherousness in the planet's social space, and its very geometric form.

Ground's fictional version of India becomes more abstract and oppressive than that of *Moor*. However, Rushdie suggests a potentiality of reterritorialisation through migration greater than that in the earlier novel, in which Moraes Zogoiby leaves India for Spain to find the mythical differential space of Palimpstine, only to be confronted with a village of 'lost souls' (2006b, 390). Yet the latter of Rushdie's 1990s novels portrays this potentiality's actualisation as invariably limited, for reasons commensurate with his previous fiction. Nebulous marginal space offers not freedom but

terror (as in *Midnight*), the act of migration presents danger (as in *Verses*) and space proves susceptible to striation by the forces of predatory capitalism and (bio)political communalism (as in *Moor*).

Even this attenuated possibility of differential space and reterritorialisation through migration outstrips that found in *Shalimar*. In his latest novel to deal with twentieth-century (bio)politics Rushdie characteristically concerns himself deeply with space and its construction. However, he differentiates *Shalimar* from his previous fiction by depicting the prospect of differential space, and the resistance to bio/thanatopower that it enables, as superseded completely by the deadly striations of India's army and Pakistan-backed jihadists. Chapter Two of this thesis argued that *Shalimar* constitutes the novel in which Rushdie most emphatically affirms the pervasiveness and effectiveness of race-thinking and the massacres it seeks to justify within twentieth-century governmentality. Identifying the increasing degree to which the novel's representation of space mirrors Agamben's notion of the inescapable, infinitely reproducible biopolitical camp reveals the centrality of the novel's engagement with space to this portrayal. This biopolitical reading thus reinforces the study's argument that *Shalimar* marks the final point on the general trajectory of excised oppositional potentiality within the events of Rushdie's successive novels that explore twentieth-century biopolitics.

Precarious Spaces in *Shalimar the Clown*: Three Kinds of Camp

In *Shalimar*'s fictionalisation of Kashmir's recent history Rushdie describes a formerly differential space's gradual reterritorialisation by thanatopolitical forces. He criticises equally the lethal means by which India's biopolitical state eroded Kashmir's spatial autonomy as the latter half of the twentieth century progressed, and the jihadists who worked towards the region's accession to Pakistan in this period. In Rushdie's novel, the Indian state's construction of military camps and the establishment of terrorist camps by Islamist fighters shape Kashmir gradually into a camp in Agamben's sense: '*the space that is opened when the state of exception begins to become the rule*' (1998, 168-69). Charting the ways in which India and Pakistan shape

the valley into a space of total exception and abjection reveals that Rushdie's most recent fictional engagement with biopower's effect on spatiality incorporates the most minimal potentiality of constructing differential spaces of resistance and freedom that his fiction has evoked to date.

In describing how the Indian army officer Hammirdev Kachhwaha's military camp renders Kashmir an abstract space by degrees, Rushdie portrays it not as a static receptacle for 'all the cumbersome matériel of war' (2006a, 95) but as a spatialising enclave of Indian bio/thanatopower within the valley that expands and reterritorialises more space as the novel progresses. As India's military power over Kashmir grows, so do the dimensions of 'the camp everyone locally called Elasticnagar because of its well-established tendency to stretch' (94). Rushdie criticises the oppressive occupation occasioned by the efforts of India's central biopolitical state during the years after independence to retain the region it viewed as an integral part of the nation. He shows how it denuded the integrity, autonomy and differentiality of Kashmir's space by reterritorialising upon it through establishing multiple military camps: 'There were many Elasticnagars now and they were getting bigger and bigger' (98).

Rushdie suggests in the novel's later chapters that when India's central government actualised the thanatopolitical potentiality of its racialising biopolitics in the late 1980s by decreeing that 'the ultimate crime of challenging the territorial integrity of India' (290) warranted deadly force, these reterritorialisations enabled India's army to conduct its massacres more effectively. In *Shalimar* this renders Kashmir an Agambenian camp in which the state of exception becomes the rule. For Kachhwaha's army, '[t]he political echelon's decision to declare Kashmir a "disturbed area" [is][...]greatly appreciated. In a disturbed area, search warrants were not required, arrest warrants ditto, and shoot-to-kill treatment of suspects was acceptable' (290). Wielding the Indian state's sovereign power, Kachhwaha takes full advantage of this *carte blanche*. He constructs further thanatopolitical spaces of indistinction: 'the secret torture chambers of Badami Bagh, those rooms which had never existed, did not exist and would never exist, and from which nobody had ever heard a scream' (307). For

the Indian soldiers in their military camp, killing is not killing, the spaces of torture do not exist officially and neither do their victims. To use Agamben's terms, Rushdie depicts Kashmir's people as *homo sacer*, the exemplary victims of bio/thanatopower 'exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable' (Agamben 1998, 28). However, Rushdie declines to place the blame for Kashmir's reterritorialisation into an inescapable camp characterised by the mass production of bare life entirely on the Indian biopolitical state. He attributes equal responsibility to the Pakistan-backed jihadists whose terrorist camps also contribute towards the region's gradual conversion into a biopolitical camp by exploiting Kashmir's porous borders in order to reterritorialise upon its space.

Shalimar depicts Kashmir's external borders as nebulous, porous and lacking tangible striating effects. They have more in common with the boundaries of the Rann of Kutch in *Midnight* than the more concrete barrier to Saleem Sinai's telepathy. However, as with Piloo Doodhwala's capitalist exploitation of non-urban space in *Ground*, Rushdie indicates that provisional, shifting marginal locales, rather than fomenting a potentiality of differential, pluralist space, provide fertile terrain for reterritorialisations deleterious to this space. Just as India in *Moor* becomes ruined by the combined effect of the antagonistic forces of Hindutva and predatory biopolitical capitalism, in *Shalimar* the permeable border between Indian- and Pakistani-administered Kashmir constitutes an opportunity for Pakistan-backed forces of spatial striation to oppose and, paradoxically, complement the Indian army's violent reterritorialisations.

Rushdie asserts in *Shalimar* that the creation of the ceasefire line between Indian- and Pakistani-administered Kashmir arose from the inability of both Kashmiris and India's central government to defend Indian-controlled space against the 'army of kabalis from Pakistan[...]cross[ing] the border, looting, raping, burning, killing' (2006a, 85). However, as Robert Wirsing argues, the historical LOC (Line of Control) 'possessed very few of the attributes of a permanent boundary. It was wholly military in its conception; and, drawn on the basis of positions held by the combatants at the time fighting between them ended, it was clearly designed for temporary

use' (1998, 62). Rushdie's fictionalised version of Kashmir's twentieth-century history similarly represents the ceasefire line as both temporary and porous. The ceasefire line in *Shalimar* proves unable to securitise the territory it circumscribes against the reterritorialisations of Pakistan-backed jihadist forces. Kachhwaha grumbles about 'Kashmiris on both sides who treated the line with contempt and walked across the mountains whenever they so chose' (Rushdie 2006a, 97). The LOC fails to prevent the continued migration of '[w]ild mountain men, fanatics, aliens' (130) from the Pakistani-administered side. By describing how these fanatics striate more and more of the valley as the novel progresses, Rushdie portrays 'the crescent shadow of Pakistan' (132) as a more tangible spatial formation than any border delineating territory belonging to Kashmir. Upon its creation Pakistan becomes a major force in the politics of the spatially provisional region it claims, whose borders prove permeable enough to allow the entry of reterritorialising jihadist forces espousing what Rushdie depicts as ideals alien to the naturally differential space of Kashmir.

Just as India's army in *Shalimar* reterritorialises more and more of Kashmir and becomes increasingly thanatopolitical, Pakistan-backed terror cells enact a growing number of striations in line with Islamic fundamentalist ideology. The jihadists of the novel, who become more powerful as it goes on, propagate a discourse that militates against the valley's tolerant ethos of *Kashmiriyat*, 'the belief that at the heart of Kashmiri culture there was a common bond that transcended all other differences' (110). By occupying more and more of Kashmir's terrain they enable their ideology to shape a greater area of social space. When Shalimar Noman returns from abroad the FC-22 jihadist camp appears 'larger, more solidly constructed' (275). Rushdie describes a similar expansion to that of Kachhwaha's military camp. Differential space becomes increasingly constrained in the middle. Through such fictional events as the violent jihadist takeover of the villages of Shirmal and Pachigam and its effect on Kashmiri women, Rushdie criticises the damaging effect on pluralism and tolerance of what he perceives as the historical reterritorialisations of an externally-backed, alien version of Islam whose spatiality eroded *Kashmiriyat* gradually during the late twentieth century. Combined with the Indian military camp's similarly

violent thanatopolitics, the jihadist camps render Rushdie's Kashmir a third kind of camp: that which Agamben theorises. This indistinct space of hopelessness, striation and lethality epitomises Rushdie's most vivid affirmation of the vast capacity that the spatiality of bio/thanatopower possessed to quell resistance within twentieth-century governmentality.

Conclusion: The Cessation of Resistance

This chapter has argued that Rushdie's novels invite a biopolitical reading which asserts that the variety of spaces that biopower produced within twentieth-century governmentality exceeded the notions of spatiality that Foucault and Agamben's canonical theories of biopolitics posit. It augmented these thinkers by using Lefebvre and Deleuze and Guattari's conceptions of relational space to assemble an incorporative theory of spatiality which provided a critical vocabulary appropriate to considering the multiple abstract and differential spaces that Rushdie depicts. By delineating more comprehensively than ever the gradual increase in abstract spaces of oppression throughout Rushdie's fiction, this chapter showed the utility of this kind of biopolitical literary-geographical criticism. From the attenuated potentiality of freedom within differential space in *Midnight* and *Verses*, to the bleak Indian spaces of his 1990s novels, to Kashmir's complete striation in *Shalimar*, Rushdie's novels have become increasingly unlikely to depict the possibility of effective resistance to biopower through the shaping of social space.

However, outlining this trajectory as clearly as possible requires this study to consider the precise nature of the discourses and movements which take place within the spaces that Rushdie describes. Chapters Four and Five argue that his novels indicate increasingly the idealism and impracticality of the modes of resistance that Foucault, Hardt and Negri, Agamben and Esposito advocate. This brings into clearer focus the trend of lessening oppositional potentiality across Rushdie's successive fictionalisations of twentieth-century history by charting the generally growing extent to which attempts at resistance in his novels fail to approach the heights of democracy, inclusiveness, public-spiritedness, fearlessness,

directness and sincerity that these theorists suggest erroneously are possible within contemporary governmentality.

Chapter Four – Discourses of Resistance

Introduction: Resistance in Rushdie

Chapter Three charted two intertwined trends within Rushdie's fiction: the expanding pervasiveness of oppressive abstract spaces in his novels, and his growing disinclination to portray a potentiality of resistance through differential spaces that militate against biopolitical control. By considering how Rushdie describes spaces that biopolitical governments and superraces striate, this chapter provided a literary-geographical backing to Chapters One and Two's arguments that he proves increasingly prone to depict bio/thanatopower's efficacy. Conversely, by delineating the second tendency Chapter Three began a broader inquiry into effective resistance to biopower, and its gradual waning, in Rushdie's fiction.

In order to draw this trajectory more sharply, Chapter Four analyses how Rushdie figures discourses of resistance. Chapter Five considers the ways in which he represents the movements that these discourses inspire. This study so far has illuminated the ways in which his novels suggest that the reality of twentieth-century biopolitical practice exceeds and problematises the canonical conceptions of biopolitical oppression that Michael Foucault, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, Giorgio Agamben and Roberto Esposito have produced. Chapters Four and Five argue that Rushdie indicates even more forcefully the impracticality of the discourses of resistance that these thinkers formulate and advocate. However, these chapters assert that although these putative methods of resistance to biopower prove invariably ineffectual in resisting biopower, they contribute towards deconstructing it when they inform a biopolitical reading of literature that engages with the limits of their potency.

Chapter Four uses (and critiques) Foucault's theory of discourse in order to analyse Rushdie's growing tendency to depict the failure of discursive resistance to oppose biopolitical reterritorialisations effectively within twentieth-century (bio)politics. For Foucault, 'discourse is constituted

by the difference between what one could say correctly at one period (under the rules of grammar and logic) and what is actually said' (1991, 63). Discourses are not measured against any empirical truth but 'are characterised by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of a legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories' (Foucault 1980a, 199). This chapter uses Foucault's concept of simple, sincere, fearless, public-spirited *parrhēsia*, a mode he appropriates from the Ancient Greeks in his late-career thought. It deploys good *parrhēsia* as a yardstick of effective '"reverse" discourse' (Foucault 1990, 101) against which to measure the often unclear, over-complicated, self-serving, narrowly disseminated and/or ineffective discourses that Rushdie's characters produce in their efforts to oppose the politically powerful's racialising truth-claims. In so doing, Chapter Four shows how his fiction generally suggests more and more that reverse discourse proves ineffectual in countering the discursive norms and fields that biopolitical states and their constructed superraces delimit. *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* evokes a potentiality of parrhesiastic resistance by describing how its protagonists' sincere truth-claims foment mass oppositional organisations. However, for the most part Rushdie's characters increasingly fail to resist biopolitical oppression effectively through discourses constituting *parrhēsia* or including parrhesiastic elements; particularly when, as Chapter Five demonstrates, they attempt to transform discursive resistance into powerful political movements.

Foucault argues that '[d]iscursive practices are not purely and simply ways of producing discourse. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behaviour, in forms for transmission and diffusion, and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them' (Foucault 1980a, 200). Consequently, understanding his conception of discourse requires engaging with his work on the diffuse, capillary power relations that form every network in which humans disseminate and resist discursive truth-claims. For Foucault power is everywhere, including the power of resistance. However, this does not mean that reverse discourses prove necessarily more powerful than biopolitical regimes' truth-claims, or even as powerful. As well as providing

191

a background to his notion of how biopower may be resisted discursively, Foucault's theory of pervasive, capillary power enables this chapter to trace in detail the broadly increasing unwillingness of Rushdie's fiction to depict effective discursive resistance within the complex networks of discourse and power by which he characterises twentieth-century politics.

Power and Resistance in Foucault

Rushdie rarely describes reverse discourses unseating governments, dismantling oppressive apparatuses or lessening the power of biopolitical elites, but his novels always indicate to some extent that they may inspire future effective resistance. However, his fiction has proven increasingly reluctant to evoke this potentiality. Because Foucault perceives a power of resistance of variable potency as present in all power relations, his theory of power as processual and capillary enables this chapter to analyse the generally lessening degree to which Rushdie portrays effective reverse discourse as possible within the complex power networks of twentieth-century (bio)politics.

Foucault's conception of power asserts clearly the potentiality of effective resistance. Even the mightiest sovereign does not possess power exclusively or monolithically. Rather, power is processual and relational. It is thus present in all (bio)political relations, including dynamics of resistance. Humans do not resist power, but use their own power to resist that which oppressive biopolitical governments wield.

For Foucault, not only are there 'no relations of power without resistances' (1980b, 142), but resistance constitutes a primary condition for power's existence (see 2002b, 329). However, his thought incorporates a tension between his assertion that resistance, like power, is everywhere and the extent to which oppressive (bio)political practices permit effective resistance. As Dan Beer argues, Foucault 'has certainly never claimed that power and resistance are necessarily equal to one another' (2002, 89). Not only do Rushdie's novels suggest increasingly that discourses and technologies of oppressive (bio)power rendered resistance's power

192

invariably ineffectual within twentieth-century politics, they indicate indirectly the inutility of the specific modalities of resistance that Foucault advocates.

In considering spaces not directly subject to biopower, Foucault's notion of governmentality complements his conception of power by suggesting that resistance cannot be eradicated completely. However, the method of resistance he proposes – *parrhēsia* – constitutes a discursive potentiality which regimes of biopower historically have prevented from becoming extant within governmentality. By analysing the ways in which Rushdie's novels engage with the suppression of this potentiality, this chapter uses them to critique the practicality of Foucault's strategy. Moreover, identifying the generally growing degree to which Rushdie's fiction enables this critique further delineates the trajectory of excised oppositional potentiality within his successive fictionalisations of twentieth-century history.

The Later Foucault: Governmentality and *Parrhēsia*

As Chapter One observed, Foucault argues that the biopolitical state lacks the resources to police every member of the population, or even every member of the subraces it constructs: '[g]overnment's limit of competence [is] bounded by the utility of governmental intervention' (2010a, 40). In order to operate efficiently the state induces its superrace to become what Julian Reid calls 'self-securing subjects' (2013, 116). These bodies optimise their own health and productivity, remain orderly and join the state in racialising subraces within what Foucault calls governmentality. Foucault's theory of governmentality also allows that subjects under biopower may choose not to secure themselves or to accept their racialisation but to resist. It was possible in the past to argue that Foucault did not offer an explicit strategy to oppose oppressive power (see Hartsock 1996, 46). However, the recent (and ongoing) publication of his Collège de France lectures, which include extensive material on how humans may enact discursive resistance within governmentality via *parrhēsia*, invites a reading of Foucault that questions this representation of his political philosophy.

Yet these newly published works have also exposed not just the difficulty of achieving *parrhēsia* and having it heeded by the politically powerful and the wider population (which Foucault himself admits), but the idealism and impracticality of reviving this frank, unfurnished, public-spirited Ancient Greek discourse as a method of resisting biopolitical oppression within contemporary governmentality. Because Rushdie's novels constitute an exemplary site of fictional engagement with twentieth-century governmentality, they can inform a critique that uses literature to interrogate the utility of Foucault's strategy. This reading charts the generally growing extent to which Rushdie suggests indirectly that the complexity of contemporary politics and reality, human beings' personal failings and biopolitical oppression's potency present obstacles to constructing this ideal of effective discursive resistance to biopower.

Understanding why achieving *parrhēsia* has proven so difficult historically, and increasingly challenging for Rushdie's characters, requires engaging with its specific characteristics and its position within the intertwined networks of power and discourse. Foucault's suspicion of the notion of empirical scientific or moral truth leads him to characterise discourse as a 'will to truth' (1981, 55) which operates within a matrix of competing truth-claims made by various parties. He argues that what populations accept as true depends on the ability of political actors to make people believe that their claims are truthful. Consequently, although all truth-claims constitute and are constituted by power (Foucault 2004, 24), not all of them wield an equal amount of power. The (bio)political state's discourse sanctions certain truths within the *polis* and excludes others. The government produces what Foucault calls a 'regime of truth' (1980b, 131). This discourse constitutes and buttresses the state's apparatuses in turn.

Foucault's Collège de France lectures focus on how humans may resist these regimes of truth through *parrhēsia*, an Ancient Greek discourse 'which roughly speaking means frankness, open-heartedness [and] openness of thought' (2005, 169) within the democratic *polis*. As Jeremy Moss argues, 'Foucault made it clear that Greco-Roman ethics, as a whole, could not simply be grafted on to modern problems' (1998, 4). Yet Foucault's late writings suggest that oppressive political (bio)power can be

resisted through a revival of good *parrhēsia* – a direct, fearless, sincere, public-spirited discourse spoken to a more powerful figure – within contemporary governmentality.   In analysing discursive resistance to biopower in Rushdie this chapter uses the concept of good *parrhēsia* as Foucault does, as an ideal of discursive resistance that stands in contrast with the self-interested or populist bad *parrhēsia* that often constitutes a more powerful truth-claim.   However, whereas Foucault asserts optimistically that good *parrhēsia* constitutes a potentiality of effective resistance to the process by which '[d]emocracy is in the process of being overrun by a bad *parrhēsia*' (2010b, 168), Rushdie's fiction indicates more or less consistently increasingly the near-impossibility of disseminating effective good *parrhēsia*, or reverse discourse based on parrhesiastic qualities, within twentieth-century governmentality's complex, violent and oppressive (bio)politics.

In his *Fearless Speech* lectures (published in 2001) Foucault unpacks good *parrhēsia*'s features.   In the so-called Socratic type of *parrhēsia*, 'telling the truth is regarded as a *duty*' (Foucault 2001, 19) to the community in order to improve it.   To work effectively for the public good, *parrhēsia* must be direct and unfurnished discourse.   Simplicity enables *parrhēsia* to delineate clearly how this improvement may be enacted, and communicate the parrhesiast's sincerity: 'in *parrhēsia*, the speaker makes it manifestly clear and obvious that what he says is his *own* opinion.   And he does this by[…]us[ing] the most direct words and forms of expression he can find' (12).   This advocation for a well-run, democratic *polis* must come from amongst the ordinary population.   As Foucault explains, 'the commitment involved in *parrhēsia* is linked to a certain social situation, to a difference of status between the speaker, to the fact that the *parrhesiastes* says something which is dangerous to himself and thus involves a risk' (13). *Parrhēsia* works through power against power's repressive use by using the power of a direct, sincere, public-spirited discourse, spoken without fear to a more powerful – often sovereign – figure, to resist political tyranny and poor governance.

Foucault asserts the potential oppositional potency of this 'particular way of telling the truth' (2010b, 52), but also outlines the difficulty of meeting

good *parrhēsia*'s various conditions. He argues that only humans who take control of their selves, physically and mentally, through *sōphrosynē* – 'restraint in the practice of pleasures' (Foucault 1992, 78) – can control their discourse. In his lectures on the care of the self (*epimeleia heautou*) he notes that to achieve such control through taming the self 'one must have the ability, time, and culture, etcetera, to do so. It is an activity of the elite' (Foucault 2005, 75).   Only a limited number of figures outside of political and economic elites may practice *sōphrosynē* – and hence good *parrhēsia* – successfully (113).

Having good *parrhēsia* heeded by the population that it intends to help proves even more taxing than achieving the *epimeleia heautou* necessary to produce it. Foucault argues that '[b]ecause *parrhēsia* is given even to the worst citizens, the overwhelming influence of bad, immoral, or ignorant speakers may lead the citizenry into tyranny, or may otherwise endanger the city' (2001, 77). A population may be unable to identify who truly has the *polis*' best interests at heart. Foucault warns that the politically powerful may ignore or repress public-spirited good *parrhēsia* and that citizens may choose instead to listen to self-interested or populist bad *parrhēsia* (82).   When the opinions most beneficial to the *polis* are unpopular, good *parrhēsia*'s power as a truth-claim becomes limited.

Though mindful of the obstacles to producing good *parrhēsia*, Foucault argues for its potential strength as a mode of discursive resistance. However, every Rushdie novel with the exception of *Ground* depicts the impossibility of practising good *parrhēsia* characterised by total sincerity, directness, courage and public-spiritedness in form and content within a complex, oppressive twentieth-century governmentality in which bad *parrhēsia* habitually overruns democracy.   Narratives including Saleem Sinai's attempt to tell the story of his role in India's post-independence history in *Midnight's Children* indicate that the intricacy of contemporary politics militates against the knowledge of the self and its place within political reality that produces the *epimeleia heautou* which enables good *parrhēsia*'s discursive directness. In other novels such as *Shame* Rushdie evokes the potential punishment for *parrhēsia* – the risk of which Foucault explores – that often engenders subtle resistance through allegory or art

rather than fearless speech. His fiction suggests almost constantly that racialising biopolitical oppression, bad *parrhēsia*'s discursive power and the unwillingness of the population (particularly the constructed superrace) to accept alternative truth-claims coalesce to prevent parrhesiastic discourses of resistance to biopower from being disseminated widely and hence from inspiring powerful resistance.

Tracing Rushdie's growing disinclination to depict effective resistance to biopolitical oppression through reverse discourse thus requires a new concept of 'pseudo-*parrhēsia*'. Several of the discourses that Rushdie's novels describe can be considered pseudo-parrhesiastic in that they achieve a partial sincerity, simplicity, public-spiritedness and/or courage. Saleem fails to produce a historiographical narrative that constitutes his own opinion entirely in *Midnight*, but his discourse's broad sincerity renders it a powerful truth-claim. In *Shame*, although Rani Harappa's confinement within her house prevents her from disseminating a verbal *parrhēsia* within the political sphere, certain of her artworks condemn biopolitical oppression as directly as she can manage. Considering the varying degrees to which Rushdie depicts obstacles to pseudo-*parrhēsia* within twentieth-century governmentality helps produce a biopolitical reading which critiques Foucault's impractical strategy of resistance, but asserts its usefulness to literary study as a benchmark against which to measure ineffectual, less idealised fictional oppositional discourses. In so doing it delineates more comprehensively the trajectory of waning oppositional potentiality that Rushdie's successive fictional engagements with twentieth-century governmentality evoke. This trajectory begins with *Midnight*.

Rushdie's Pseudo-Parrhesiasts (1): *Midnight's Children* and Saleem Sinai's Narrative Resistance

Despite the disintegration of the narrator Saleem Sinai beneath the feet of India's millions at the end of *Midnight's Children*, the novel suggests that his reverse discourse may prove effective after his death. It nevertheless invites a biopolitical reading that critiques good *parrhēsia*'s impracticality. For Foucault, good *parrhēsia* must be simple and entirely the speaker's own

opinion. Because of its complex, digressive style and the external forces that shape its content, Saleem's narrative cannot form Socratic *parrhēsia* on either of these grounds.

Saleem only resolves very occasionally upon an unfurnished mode of narration, as when during his search for bodily obliteration during the 1965 war he remarks, 'I'm making it sound too noble; no orotund phrases must be used' (Rushdie 2008, 474). He proves neither willing nor able to fashion a historiographical narrative direct enough for its potential audience to understand it easily. In *Midnight* Rushdie presents a narrative of copious descriptive and historical detail (213), digression (310) and linguistic and narratological exuberance whose style exceeds the parrhesiastic mode because Saleem perceives India's post-independence history as too complex, uncertain and resistant to notions of empirical truth to be told simply. Moreover, his interlocutor Padma's demands, the impending death that makes him race against time and an unparrhesiastic fear of reprisals from his nemesis Shiva contribute towards shaping his narrative. This renders it something other than his own personal, sincere, parrhesiastic opinion.

However, Saleem's narrative style appears more a symptom of the state of contemporary *parrhēsia* than a damaging contribution towards this state. His narrative's unparrhesiastic nature does not indict him as an unskilled truth-teller. Rather, it evokes the impossibility of articulating good *parrhēsia* within the relational matrix of discursive truth-claims that characterises contemporary governmentality. Yet although Rushdie details the multiple forces that render Saleem's narrative unparrhesiastic in its complexity, digressive nature and omissions, he suggests that its general pseudo-parrhesiastic sincerity and public-spiritedness in questioning the claims of India's regime of truth renders it a powerful truth-claim against oppressive (bio)power. He indicates at the end of the novel that Saleem's story may change India for the better by inspiring others to produce a similarly sincere reverse discourse that problematises the state's oppressive truth-claims further; a potentiality of pseudo-parrhesiastic resistance that becomes excised from Rushdie's later fictional versions of the twentieth century.

198

The Untruthful Truth-Claims of Narrative

By describing Saleem Sinai's belief in narrative's power to construct truth-claims, in *Midnight* Rushdie questions the notion of empirical truth in a way that mirrors Foucault's theory of truth and discourse. He thus evokes a potentiality of effective discursive resistance. For Foucault, 'the possibility exists for fiction to function in truth, for a fictional discourse to induce effects of truth, and for bringing it about that a true discourse engenders or "manufactures" something that does not as yet exist' (1980b, 193). Saleem asserts the truthfulness of his supernatural narrative intertwining of India's history with his personal life. At the same time he accepts that it may be taken for fiction by those inclined to believe the official state version of Indian history, or scientific, purportedly empirical discourses of knowledge (the very truth-claims that inform biopower):

> To anyone whose personal cast of mind is too inflexible to accept these facts, I have this to say: That's how it was; there can be no retreat from the truth[…]But no literate person in this India of ours can be wholly immune from the type of information I am in the process of unveiling (Rushdie 2008, 273).

In depicting India as a space with the supernatural at the heart of its national imaginary, Rushdie problematises and relativises truth and knowledge. Within this context, he portrays Saleem's fantastical narrative as no more or less truthful than any other telling of India's post-independence history.

Yet by describing the external factors that limit his protagonist's control of his own truth-claim Rushdie indicates the impossibility of achieving, within twentieth-century governmentality, the sincere explication of one's personal opinion that characterises good *parrhēsia*. Saleem's historiographical narrative constitutes a truth, but not solely his truth. His race to finish his narrative before he disintegrates and his omission of certain details for fear of reprisals confirm his inability to construct good *parrhēsia*, regardless of the truth he feels his narrative art carries.

Saleem's body disintegrates as he produces his story. His efforts to 'resist the cracks' (168) twist his narrative into a form not entirely his natural

mode of storytelling. His race against time makes him attempt to resist 'cracked digressions' (168) on occasion, but his style remains largely incorporative and digressive rather than becoming simpler, more linear and therefore more parrhesiastic in form. The primary effect of time constraints on his narrative art actually disallows parrhesiastic content by making him more careless about historical facts and his discourse's consistency: 'I'm racing the cracks, but I remain conscious that errors have already been made, and that, as my decay accelerates (my writing speed is having trouble keeping up), the risk of unreliability grows' (375-76). Saleem's limited time in which to write prevents him from producing the type of discourse that his personal opinion would beget under ideal circumstances. His unparrhesiastic fear of repercussions inhibits him further.

Because Saleem feels threatened by his nemesis Shiva, he 'push[es] him, the other, into the background' of his story until '[h]e can be concealed no longer' (568). In inventing the story of Shiva's death Saleem even gives up on any truth-claim whatsoever. He falls victim to 'the illusion that[…]it is possible to create past events simply by saying they occurred' (619). Foucault emphasises 'the fact that the *parrhesiastes* says something which is dangerous to himself and thus involves a risk' (2001, 13). Yet despite Saleem's powerful, public-spirited critique of the Indian government's biopolitical regime the risk that he is willing to accept proves limited. Rushdie suggests that the vicissitudes of time and fear prevent his protagonist from disseminating the completely personally-held, personally-shaped truth of good *parrhēsia*.

However, Rushdie indicates that Saleem's truth-claim carries a potentiality of effective pseudo-parrhesiastic resistance in its attempts to disseminate a reverse discourse of counterhistory against the biopolitical state's racialising regime of truth, and its capacity to inspire similar discourses in the future. Saleem's narrative's ornate rhetorical style and shaping by external forces preclude it from becoming good Socratic *parrhēsia* in the strictest sense. Yet his profound conviction in his truth-claim aligns with the truth-telling that Foucault describes, in which 'the *parrhesiastes* says what is true because he *knows* that it *is* true; and he *knows* that it is true because it is really true' (14). Good *parrhēsia* arises

from a sincere belief in one's own truth-claim and from a duty to the *polis* (19). Its strength comes from this conviction rather than from reference to the established notions of truth that it resists. Time and fear limit Saleem's personal control of his narrative's style and content, but his discourse incorporates pseudo-parrhesiastic characteristics of broad sincerity and public-spiritedness. Rushdie uses these qualities in order to suggest that reverse discourse's 'shadows of imperfection' (2008, 642) do not matter as long as the resisting truth becomes disseminated effectively and galvanises the *polis* to produce their own parrhesiastic or pseudo-parrhesiastic discourses of resistance to oppressive state (bio)power. Although he hints that the complexity of Saleem's narrative may preclude it from influencing India's *polis* significantly, he indicates the possibility of its changing India for the better.

Narrative Dissemination and The Tastes of Saleem's Audience

As he does in most of his later novels, in *Midnight* Rushdie indirectly indicates the impossibility of producing the most effective form of discursive resistance according to Foucault – the widespread dissemination of one's own opinion expressed simply, directly and fearlessly – within twentieth-century governmentality. This chapter has argued that the external influences which shape Saleem Sinai's narrative mean that it lacks the complete control over its own discourse that characterises good *parrhēsia*. Moreover, by describing the efforts of Saleem's interlocutor Padma to induce him to write more simply and linearly, Rushdie portrays his protagonist's narrative as caught between two modes of narration. Parrhesiastic directness makes it more likely to be understood when disseminated, but militates against the pseudo-parrhesiastic sincerity of the complex style that Saleem believes necessary to represent the truth of India's post-independence history. This bind further renders good *parrhēsia* unachievable.

Yet Rushdie suggests that Saleem's truth-claim will be disseminated rather than suppressed after he dies. This complex reverse discourse may change India for the better by inspiring others to attempt *parrhēsia* or pseudo-*parrhēsia*. Saleem again mirrors Foucault's questioning of the

201

notion of empirical truth when he asserts that 'in autobiography, as in all literature, what actually happened is less important than what the author can manage to persuade his audience to believe' (Rushdie 2008, 376). Rushdie indicates that Saleem's sincere, public-spirited pseudo-parrhesiastic discourse may work against power's oppressive use in the future by persuading his audience to believe it, and thus to believe in reverse discourse's capacity to oppose biopolitical oppression. Though this potentiality is attenuated it appears greater than the prospects for resistance to biopower that most of Rushdie's later novels depict.

The potentiality of effective discursive resistance in *Midnight* proves finite in part because Rushdie suggests that the complex unparrhesiastic form of Saleem's narrative will render it difficult to understand when disseminated within India's *polis*. Saleem's illiterate interlocutor Padma 'get[s] irritated whenever [his] narration becomes self-conscious' (83) and digressive. In Foucauldian terms, she steers Saleem's narrative towards parrhesiastic directness. Saleem bemoans Padma. He 'wish[es], at times, for a more discerning audience, someone who would understand the need for rhythm, pacing, the subtle introduction of minor chords which will later rise, swell, seize the melody' (135). Yet he misses her when she is gone, and feels the need at times for his narrative to 'recapture [her] rapt attention' (445). In these episodes Rushdie shows how the tastes of Saleem's audience – and by implication his potential wider public – force him to compromise his style in order to address them more effectively. However, these moments of concession prove rare. Timothy Brennan argues that 'Padma's lower-class impulses in art merely symbolise the fatal immaturity of her class in the struggle for a meaningful democracy on a legitimately "Indian" terrain' (1989, 105).[1] Yet considering her role as an analogue for a possible wider, mostly illiterate and working-class, audience for Saleem's reverse discourse produces an analysis that takes her failed attempts to shape his narrative into something more linear – and hence more parrhesiastic in form – less lightly. Reading *Midnight* in the light of Foucault's conception of discursive resistance through truth-claims reveals that the importance of whether Saleem's audience believes his story literally is superseded by the issue of whether his narrative inspires resistance in its

audience when disseminated after his death. His habitual refusal to heed Padma's advice to write more simply suggests limitations to this future resistance's potentiality.

Through Saleem and Padma's relationship Rushdie characteristically indicates the impossibility of producing good *parrhēsia* within twentieth-century governmentality. Saleem's narrative is caught in a bind between a self-reflexive, non-linear and digressive mode which he perceives as vital to communicate sincerely the true nature of India's post-independence history, and a more readily comprehensible parrhesiastic style which paradoxically leads him away from the parrhesiastic quality of saying 'what he *knows* to be true' (Foucault 2001, 14). Rushdie also uses Padma's distaste for Saleem's narrative style to evoke the difficulty of inspiring further reverse discourses even through a sincere but complex pseudo-*parrhēsia*.

However, Rushdie indicates the possibility of Saleem's narrative being disseminated and accepted by India's public despite its complexity. Padma complains about Saleem's complex discursive mode. She often loses interest in his narrative (Rushdie 2008, 537). Yet on other occasions Saleem notes that she appears rapt: 'I know now that she is, despite all her protestations, hooked. No doubt about it: my story has her by the throat' (44). *Midnight* depicts her emotional investment frequently, as when she becomes 'almost beside herself with anguish' (496) after hearing of Saleem's part in a coup in Bangladesh. Although Rushdie uses Padma to infer that ordinary working-class Indians may find the digressive, incorporative nature of Saleem's story unpalatable, her engrossment in his narrative at times implies the countervailing possibility. Furthermore, in the novel's ending Rushdie suggests that Saleem's pseudo-parrhesiastic narrative may inspire millions of Indians to produce similar reverse discourses. Through this possible dissemination of discursive resistance, he describes a potentiality of future resistance to state biopower that exceeds that which most of his later fiction evokes.

Rushdie deploys the metaphor of pickling to suggest this potentiality. In affirming the '[s]ymbolic value of the pickling process' within 'the

chutnification of history' (642) which distils his discourse into an essence, Saleem once again mirrors Foucault's relativist conception of truth. He admits that 'shadows of imperfection' (642) characterise the process by which he immortalises his memories and his truth-claim. However, he stresses his reverse discourse's truthfulness and pseudo-parrhesiastic sincerity: 'yes, I should revise and revise, improve and improve; but there is neither the time nor the energy. I am obliged to offer no more than this stubborn sentence: It happened that way because that's how it happened' (644). Not only does this chutnification 'give immortality' (644) to Saleem's discourse, but Rushdie indicates that in doing so it creates a space for other Indians to produce their own reverse discourses against the country's biopolitical regime of truth. Saleem claims that his narrative's sincerity renders it a powerful and potentially influential truth-claim: 'One day, perhaps, the world may taste the pickles of history. They may be too strong for some palates, their smell may be overpowering, tears may rise to eyes; I hope nevertheless that it will be possible to say of them that they possess the authentic taste of truth' (644). By entering his chutneys into the 'mass-production' through which they will be 'unleashed upon the amnesiac nation' (643), he intends their public-spirited counterhistory of post-independence India to expose its iniquities and inspire further discursive resistance. Engaging with this potentiality of future reverse discourse by using Foucault's conception of discursive power as a network of competing, proliferating, mutating and galvanising truth-claims countermands readings of *Midnight* such as Fawzia Afzal-Khan's. She claims that '[t]here seems to be no possibility for optimism in the cruelly ravaged world that is being passed on by Saleem's generation to the next' (Afzal-Khan 1993, 159). Although the novel's final paragraph sees Saleem disintegrate, as Michael Reder argues, 'the conclusion represents, to a great extent, a spiritual union of the individual with the world[…]Rushdie offers us a mystical acceptance of the somewhat harsh realities of today's world, because he believes that we must actively participate in history, not try to escape from it' (1999, 244). The pseudo-parrhesiastic discourse that Saleem leaves behind presents the method by which this participation and resistance can operate. Rather than constituting a closure of the possibility of opposition to state biopower, Rushdie's ambiguous final chapter suggests that Saleem's truth-claim may

change India after his death. He inculcates *Midnight*'s version of the nation's post-independence history with the potentiality of effective resistance.

Despite *Midnight*'s constant suggestion that direct, fearless good *parrhēsia* cannot occur within contemporary politics, Rushdie indicates that Saleem's pseudo-parrhesiastic narrative may change India for the better after the events of the novel by inspiring others to produce similar reverse discourses. However, with the exception of *Ground*, his subsequent novels take a more jaundiced view of the possibility of effective reverse discourse. Analysing the diminishing extent to which Rushdie depicts powerful resistance through pseudo-*parrhēsia* in these novels further delineates the general trajectory of waning oppositional potentiality that his successive fictionalisations of twentieth-century history evoke. In *Shame*, *The Satanic Verses* and *The Moor's Last Sigh*, not only is good *parrhēsia* as hard to come by as Saleem finds it, but Rushdie portrays discursive resistance of any kind as ineffective in countering biopolitical oppression or doing so in the future.

Rushdie's Pseudo-Parrhesiasts (2): Resistance through the Creative Arts

Often the most effective resistance available to Rushdie's protagonists arises not from verbal discourse but through art that engages with the multiplicity and complexity of modern politics and oppression, whether through storytelling (as with Saleem Sinai) or through the visual arts (as with Rani Harappa's shawls in *Shame* and Aurora Zogoiby's painting in *Moor*). Where opportunities for good *parrhēsia* are scarce or completely absent, Rushdie shows that works of art potentially constitute effective opposition to regimes of truth. By producing truth-claims that deconstruct biopolitical oppression or depict a better, more egalitarian world, they may carry pseudo-parrhesiastic qualities of directness, sincerity and/or public-spiritedness.

Midnight evokes the possibility of future resistance through Saleem's pseudo-parrhesiastic narrative artistry. However, in *Shame* and *Moor*

205

Rushdie suggests more forcefully that works of art which incorporate a pseudo-parrhesiastic reverse discourse fail invariably to resist biopolitical oppression because of (bio)politicians' refusal to listen and their adeptness at suppressing production and dissemination of these artworks. He indicates that neither exposing political oppression through art nor using it to depict a new society works effectively towards actually building one. Continuing to critique the utility of Foucault's strategy of discursive resistance by analysing these two novels' reluctance to portray parrhesiastic or even pseudo-parrhesiastic resistance as powerful draws more sharply the trajectory of generally waning oppositional potentiality in Rushdie's fictional engagement with twentieth-century governmentality.

Shame: State Suppression of Direct and Allegorical Artistic Discourses

In *Shame* Rushdie presents Peccavistan, the novel's fairy-tale analogue for Pakistan, as a nation whose misogynist Islamist government disallows the possibility of women's resistance. Through the character of Rani Harappa, wife of Prime Minister Iskander Harappa, he indicates that even women who formed part of Pakistan's socio-economic and political elite could not use reverse discourse to oppose biopolitical oppression within twentieth-century governmentality. Although Rushdie states through his author-analogue narrator that women 'march in from the peripheries of the story to demand the inclusion of their own tragedies, histories and comedies' (1996b, 173), this inclusion functions more in terms of the presence of women's discourses within the text's narrative form than their efficacy in combating biopower within the events of the novel. Rushdie characteristically implies the impossibility of good *parrhēsia* by indicating the necessity of allegorical forms of resistance under biopolitical tyranny. Moreover, the ways in which he describes Rani's failure to expose her husband's crimes through her allegorical art, or even to disseminate it, suggest the difficulty of engendering lasting political change through the direct and/or sincere pseudo-parrhesiastic reverse discourse which constitutes the closest thing to public-spirited good *parrhēsia* that twentieth-century governmentality's complex and often oppressive power relations allowed.

206

Through Rani, Rushdie evokes the strictures that twentieth-century biopolitics placed on women's resistance in countries with a stark divide between public and private (see Cundy 1996, 52). He depicts this divide by describing Rani's spatial location in her home, Mohenjo. Rani initially perceives the house as the 'backyard of the universe' (Rushdie 1996b, 94). Despite her privileged elite status as the wife of a wealthy, powerful politician, her confinement to private space as a condition of this status renders her simultaneously 'in exile' (119). Eventually, making the most of her situation, she makes the house her own fiefdom and becomes the 'true mistress of Mohenjo' (151). Rani's most powerful act of resistance occurs within Mohenjo's walls after the new government places her under house arrest following Iskander's deposing as Prime Minister and execution. The shawls through which she produces her artistic reverse discourse aim not at criticising the new regime but at exposing her late husband's biopolitical – and at times thanatopolitical – iniquities in government. However, in the lengthy passage in which he describes Rani's art Rushdie suggests the waning potentiality for fearless, public-spirited *parrhēsia* within twentieth-century governmentality. He charts Rani's progression from a style that constitutes pseudo-*parrhēsia* both in terms of sincerity and directness, to allegorical forms that retain pseudo-parrhesiastic sincerity but lack this simplicity. Additionally, Rushdie indicates that even pseudo-parrhesiastic resistance proves invariably futile by describing how Rani's own daughter prevents the shawls from being disseminated when she becomes Prime Minister.

Saleem Sinai's narrative in *Midnight* veers wildly between parrhesiastic directness and digressive complexity, but usually settles on the latter mode. By contrast, in *Shame* Rushdie describes a near-constant trajectory of increasingly unparrhesiastic allegory in the sequence of shawls that Rani produces:

> the torture shawl, on which she embroidered the foetid violence of [Iskander's] jails, blindfolded prisoners tied to chairs while jailers hurled buckets of water, now boiling hot (the thread-steam rose), now freezing cold, until the bodies of the victims grew confused and cold water raised hot burns upon their skins: weals of red embroidery rose

scarlike on the shawl; and the white shawl, embroidered white on white, so that it revealed its secrets only to the most meticulous and squinting eyes (193).

Foucault writes that *parrhēsia* denotes a specifically verbal mode characterised by 'the most direct words and forms of expression' (2001, 12). Yet these early shawls' stark artistic representation of violent excess constitutes pseudo-*parrhēsia* in its directness and the sincerity with which it attempts to expose Iskander's oppressive use of disciplinary space. By detailing such vivid artistic devices as Rani's use of 'red embroidery' to denote 'the foetid violence of [Iskander's] jails' (Rushdie 1996b, 193), Rushdie depicts a potentiality of public-spirited, fearless, powerful pseudo-parrhesiastic resistance.

However, the piece that immediately follows 'the torture shawl' (193) proves less unmediated. '[E]mbroidered white on white, so that it revealed its secrets only to the most meticulous and squinting eyes' (193), this shawl in its unparrhesiastic opacity marks a turning point in the artistic sequence. The remainder of Rani's artworks become increasingly allegorical and indirect. In describing shawls including the piece which depicts 'Iskander and the Death of Democracy, his hands around her throat, squeezing Democracy's gullet' (194), Rushdie evokes the fetters that forced artists to create subtler, less parrhesiastic reverse discourses under particularly tyrannical forms of twentieth-century biopolitics. Even Rani's later attempts at directness become stymied by the inadequacies of her art and her materials to represent properly the full horror of biopolitical oppression in Peccavistan. The shawl in which there is '*not enough scarlet thread to show the blood*' (195) brings to mind the restraints upon Saleem's narrative style in *Midnight*. Just as Saleem's interlocutor, his lapses in memory, his truncated timescale and his unparrhesiastic fear of reprisal prevent his narrative from constituting a completely personal, honest truth-claim, Rani lacks enough thread to do full, sincere, direct, pseudo-parrhesiastic justice to the horrors that her husband ordered and abetted. In this passage Rushdie charts in miniature the waning potentiality for parrhesiastic directness in Pakistan/Peccavistan that forces artistic reverse discourses increasingly to take more allegorical forms.

Shame suggests that allegories like these later shawls, despite their lack of simplicity, may carry a pseudo-parrhesiastic sincerity which can resist biopolitical oppression effectively because it passes under the nose of the biopolitical regime undetected. In a somewhat tongue-in-cheek narratorial interpolation Rushdie, or at least a narrator-figure who represents an alternate version of him, asserts allegory's capacity to evade repression:

> If I had been writing a book of this nature [i.e., a realistic novel], it would have done me no good to protest that I was writing universally, not only about Pakistan. The book would have been banned, dumped in the rubbish bin, burned[...]

> Fortunately, however, I am only telling a sort of modern fairy-tale, so that's all right; nobody need get upset, or take anything I say too seriously (70).

Rushdie's narrator possesses the ability to disseminate his allegorical critique of Pakistan's biopoliticians in the form of *Shame* itself because he resides in the freer society of Britain. However, Rani fails to circulate her largely allegorical artistic reverse discourse beyond Mohenjo. Catherine Cundy argues that the passage in which Rushdie describes Rani's sequence of shawls constitutes 'the embodiment of the text's movement towards allegorical forms to represent its arguments' (1996, 60). Yet the potentiality for propagating sincere, pseudo-parrhesiastic allegorical artistic discourses through the text itself proves much greater than within the events it describes. *Shame*'s events lack the possibility of effective discursive resistance that *Midnight* depicts.

By describing how Rani's shawls remain confined within Mohenjo, Rushdie indicates the severe difficulty of enacting not just good *parrhēsia* but even pseudo-parrhesiastic resistance to biopower. Ambreen Hai argues that 'if Rani's work is educational, transformative, and thus threatening enough to be censored, it must surely be politically potent' (1999, 24). However, resistance's disseminative practice carries more power than its potentiality in *Shame*. Artistic reverse discourses resist oppression simply by their production, but altering power structures significantly requires a receptive audience within 'the game of democracy' (Foucault 2010b, 183).

Rani's 'shawls of memory' (Rushdie 1996b, 191) in *Shame* are not disseminated to the wider *polis*. Rushdie undercuts the oppositional potency of the variously direct and allegorical ways in which Rani's shawls vividly depict political oppression even before he relates them. He confirms that Rani's artistic condemnations of Iskander that the reader is about to experience will remain within the private sphere: 'instead of showing off her work to daughter or soldiers, she placed each shawl, on completion, in a black metal trunk full of naphthalene balls and fastened the lock' (190). At the end of Rushdie's long passage concerning the shawls 'all eighteen have been spread out and admired' (196). Yet they have only been viewed by narrator and reader, not by the people of Peccavistan. Rani's one ill-conceived attempt at dissemination fails. She delivers her art to her daughter, the new Prime Minister Arjumand Harappa, who 'refus[es] to hear anything bad about her father' (108). Rushdie writes that 'Rani[…]sends Arjumand, one day, a gift of eighteen exquisite shawls. These shawls ensure that she will never leave the estate again: Arjumand has her own mother placed under guard. People engaged in building new myths have no time for embroidered criticisms' (277). Rushdie suggests that women's ability to influence the public by disseminating the artistic acts of resistance that they produced in private proved negligible within twentieth-century governmentality.

In *Shame* Rushdie continues to depict the unattainability of good *parrhēsia* under twentieth-century regimes of truth, as he does in *Midnight*. However, whereas *Midnight* promises at least the chance of Saleem Sinai's truth-claim being disseminated effectively and inspiring India's multitudes to produce their own pseudo-parrhesiastic reverse discourses against state (bio)power, *Shame* offers no equivalent possibility. Rushdie's third novel marks the first point on the general trajectory of waning potentiality that his post-*Midnight* fiction evokes with regard to resistance to biopolitical oppression. As Chapters One and Three argued, his next novel, *Verses*, suggests that reverse discourses serve invariably to reinforce racist stereotypes of subraces as ungrateful and intransigent. Yet in contrast to *Shame*, it evokes the prospect of future effective resistance through Saladin Chamcha's return to India and commitment to oppose racialising

communalist forces. *Moor* excises this increased potentiality. Unlike *Shame*, here Rushdie indicates that although sincere pseudo-parrhesiastic reverse discourses cannot capture contemporary political oppression's complexity and severity they may be disseminated into the *polis*, but asserts disturbingly that the *polis* may not prove receptive to these discourses and may choose instead to believe bad *parrhēsia* characterised by communalist racism.

The Moor's Last Sigh (1): The (Non-)Dissemination of Moraes Zogoiby's Narrative

Rushdie sets *Moor* in a darker fictionalised version of India than that of *Midnight*. Artistic discourses akin to Saleem Sinai's championing of pluralism and hybridity wield little discursive power in this reality. The way in which Rushdie describes the possible dissemination of his narrator Moraes Zogoiby's story shows that he evokes a far fainter potentiality of discursive resistance to state (bio)power than in the earlier novel. As in *Midnight*, Rushdie indicates the impossibility of direct, parrhesiastic discourse in an era marked by multiple flows of oppressive biopower, yet suggests that complex discourses of resistance may nevertheless achieve good *parrhēsia*'s sincerity, fearlessness and public-spiritedness. Like Saleem, Moraes creates a narrative discourse of resistance whose form and style is digressive, complex and exceeds received notions of historical and empirical truth, but which proves pseudo-parrhesiastic in its sincere attempt to expose capitalism's corrupt underbelly and communalist biopower's deleterious effects. However, in contrast to Saleem's reverse discourse, Rushdie depicts the possibility of Moraes' story being disseminated and fostering political change as severely limited.

Stylistic resemblances abound between the complex first-person narratives that Rushdie creates in *Midnight* and *Moor*. Both Saleem and Moraes produce a discourse that entwines personal experience with Indian history (or Rushdie's fictionalised version). In exposing the ways in which political and economic elites abuse power, they seek to create a better India by way of negative example. Similarly to Saleem, Moraes will only occasionally 'say[…]things baldly' (Rushdie 2006b, 40) and

211

parrhesiastically within an incorporative and largely digressive narrative. As in *Midnight*, Rushdie's narrator does not have all the facts at his disposal (197-98) and intentionally omits some details of which he is aware (308). Yet in the Foucauldian sense of the parrhesiast disseminating 'what he *knows* to be true' (Foucault 2001, 14), Moraes affirms his discourse's pseudo-parrhesiastic sincerity as a truth-claim in spite of its complexity and failure to constitute literal truth. Just as he does with Saleem, through Moraes' frequent interpolations addressing the reader Rushdie communicates his protagonist's eagerness for his truth-claim to be believed despite its fantastical nature:

> *I am going through time faster than I should.* Do you understand me? Somebody somewhere has been holding down the button marked 'FF', or, to be more exact, 'x2'. Reader, listen carefully, take in every word, for what I write now is the simple and literal truth. I, Moraes Zogoiby, known as Moor, am[…]a man living double-quick (2006b, 143).

Rushdie's novels suggest consistently that representing the reality of twentieth-century (bio)politics requires an intricate, unparrhesiastic mode of discursive representation. However, in both *Midnight* and *Moor* he indicates that complex reverse discourses may carry good *parrhēsia*'s sincerity in their pseudo-parrhesiastic attempts to deconstruct and resist biopolitical oppression.

Despite these similarities, the more limited circulation of Moraes' critique of India's post-independence (bio)politics means that it proves much less likely than Saleem's to engender future resistance within the sphere of governmentality after his death. Although Rushdie suggests that Saleem's chutneys of memory and resistance may be unleashed upon an entire 'amnesiac nation' (2008, 643) – perhaps via Braganza Pickles' mass distribution network – only one copy of Moraes' tale exists. Moreover, whereas Saleem's narrative remains intact, Moraes scatters his 'bunches of scribbled sheets' (Rushdie 2006b, 3) across Spain's countryside. These fragments of Moraes' discourse will be shorn of context in the event of their reaching the handful of Spanish villagers that constitutes his possible

212

audience. This social group cannot possibly form as powerful a movement of resistance to state (bio)power as Saleem's potential mass Indian following.[2]

With respect to the ways in which Rushdie depicts pseudo-parrhesiastic resistance in *Moor*, Moraes carries more importance not as a producer of discourse but as a symbol of hybridity in his mother Aurora's paintings. Aurora's artistic reverse discourse opposes communalist racialising within India's post-independence politics more effectively than does Moraes' narrative. However, Rushdie charts how her art becomes less influential as Indian politics becomes characterised increasingly by religious communalism. He suggests that as the twentieth century progressed pseudo-parrhesiastic discourse's capacity to enact change dwindled almost to nothing.

The Moor's Last Sigh (2): Aurora Zogoiby's Art and The Erosion of Its Truth-Claim

In both *Midnight* and *Moor* Rushdie charts an increase in racism and biopolitical oppression in India's recent politics. Saleem Sinai's narrative in *Midnight* implies a potentiality of future resistance and a return to the pluralist values that characterised Jawaharlal Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister in the years immediately after independence. However, in *Moor* the decline in the popularity of Aurora Zogoiby's pseudo-parrhesiastic artistic lionising of pluralism and hybridity indicates that reverse discourse's ability to oppose racism and biopower effectively has vanished.

In these two novels Rushdie evokes the impossibility of achieving good *parrhēsia*. They thus contribute towards shaping a biopolitical literary criticism that questions the practicality of Foucault's preferred strategy of resistance. However, in both texts Rushdie suggests characteristically that complex discourses of resistance can carry good *parrhēsia*'s sincerity and public-spiritedness in their efforts to oppose racism and biopower. The primary hope for a future pluralism that *Moor* depicts does not arise from Moraes' ineffectively disseminated narrative but within his mother Aurora's hybrid, multiplicitous, widely circulated art. Through the hybrid figure of the Moor and her paintings' central metaphor of palimpsest which refigures

India as the innately plural fictional country of 'Palimpstine' (Rushdie 2006b, 226), Aurora militates discursively and pseudo-parrhesiastically against the communalist biopolitics that propagates views of distinct communities and 'invader-history that may have to be erased' (364).

Although the complexity of Aurora's work precludes good *parrhēsia*'s directness and transparency, it constitutes the very sincerity that renders her public-spirited art a powerful pseudo-parrhesiastic truth-claim:

> Once the red fort of Granada arrived in Bombay, things moved swiftly on Aurora's easel. The Alhambra quickly became a not-quite-Alhambra; elements of India's own red forts, the Mughal palace-fortresses in Delhi and Agra, blended   Mughal splendours with the Spanish building's Moorish grace[…]The water's edge, the dividing line between two worlds, became in many of these pictures the main focus of her concern[…]Often she painted the water-line in such a way as to suggest that you were looking at an unfinished painting which had been abandoned, half-covering another. But was it a waterworld being painted over the world of air, or vice versa? Impossible to be sure.
>
> 'Call it Mooristan,' Aurora told me. '[…]Place where worlds collide, flow in and out of one another, and washofy away[…]One universe, one dimension, one country, one dream, bumpo'ing into another, or being under, or on top of it[…]' (226).

In describing this painting Rushdie outlines several of Aurora's intricate compositional techniques and spatialities. Not only does she dissolve borders between nations, as with her 'red fort of Granada arriv[ing] in Bombay', but she problematises both horizontal 'dividing line[s] between[…]worlds' (226) and vertical dividing lines between her palimpsestic painting and a half-covered layer that gestures towards yet another space. Through an idealised concept of Moorish Spain as diverse and tolerant, Aurora advocates a plural, hybrid future for India: 'one country, one dream' (226).

Rushdie depicts this hybrid art achieving effective anti-communalist discursive resistance in the years immediately before and after India's independence. Aurora's early paintings achieve significant political import as a public spectacle commensurate with her fame as 'the great beauty at the heart of the nationalist movement' (116). They become a powerful, nationally disseminated discourse of pluralism which enacts opposition to intolerance that exceeds potentiality. Here Rushdie suggests that a place remains in his fiction for the idea of the plural and the promise of a better future less subject to oppressive biopower.

However, *Moor*'s early chapters also portray India as a nation which has always been subject to violence and communalism. The ascendancy of pluralist ideals such as Aurora's cannot cover up completely the violent misuse of power which Rushdie suggests has always been part of India's history. *Moor* hints at the brutality, communalism and corruption inherent within India's *polis* at the pre-independence stage of the novel through Camoens da Gama's vision of the fundamentalist 'Battering Ram' (56) and Abraham Zogoiby's illegal business practices that set him on his way to being the head of a huge criminal empire. Rushdie depicts communalism as stretching back even further: '[i]n 1524, ten years after Zogoibys arrived from Spain, there had been a Muslim-Jewish war in these parts' (72). He indicates that violence and communalism lie beneath more tolerant layers of the palimpsest that India's history constitutes.

These forces come to the surface in *Moor*'s later chapters and construct a new layer of intolerance atop India's palimpsest. Consequently, the discursive power of Aurora's pseudo-parrhesiastic art, within which the novel symbolically circumscribes the potentiality of a pluralist India, wanes significantly. Aurora finds political influence in the post-Nehru nation elusive and critical success provisional. Her paintings become subject to opposition from the ascendant Hindu nationalist party Mumbai's Axis (MA). MA leader Raman Fielding argues that 'art and beauty must serve [a] national interest' (260) that he conceives as animated by a majoritarian communalism. Some of Aurora's later critics agree. They describe her art as '"deleterious" to[...]the temper of the age' and call her 'an irrelevance' (261).

An affirmative lionising of hybridity not only disappears from India's public discourse in *Moor* but from Aurora's later paintings. Rushdie presents alterations in Aurora's compositional style as broadly autonomous of emotional considerations, but the nature of her artistic depiction of mélange corresponds with events in her personal life at times. Tragedy in the latter engenders pessimism in the former. Hence, neither the Moor nor Palimpstine constitute an immutable symbol of beneficial cultural pluralism. Following Aurora's estrangement from Moraes, the Moor 'lose[s][…]his previous metaphorical role as a unifier of opposites, a standard-bearer of pluralism, ceasing to stand as a symbol – however approximate – of the new nation, and being transformed, instead, into a semi-allegorical figure of decay' (303). Aurora's new artistic discourse recognises pluralism and hybridity's susceptibility to disturbing distortions and fragmentations. The Moor becomes 'a new imagining of the idea of the hybrid – a Baudelairean flower, it would not be too far-fetched to suggest, of evil' (303). Aurora paints him as abstract, discombobulated, 'a kind of human rag-and-bone yard' (302) that she mirrors through a new Palimpstine comprised of formless scraps of detritus. Through these 'last pictures' (303) of Aurora's, Rushdie further suggests the waning of effective pseudo-parrhesiastic discourses of pluralism in the new India of the late twentieth century. This loss of oppositional potentiality occurs even within the discourse of an artist who was once pluralism's most forceful and influential advocate as well as within the *polis* in general. Aurora receives a state funeral (318) and is lauded as a national icon after her death. However, the 'critical appreciation' of her work by Zeeny Vakil, which is given the somewhat Bhabhaesque title of 'Imperso-Nation and Dis/Semi/Nation: Dialogics of Eclecticism and Interrogations of Authenticity in A. Z.' (329), does not promise to make it once more accessible and comprehensible to the masses it used to steer discursively towards pluralistic tolerance.

That Aurora Zogoiby's older paintings reach and influence a mass audience in the Nehru years means that *Moor* evokes a greater potentiality of successful discursive resistance through pseudo-*parrhēsia* than *Shame*, in which Rani Harappa's art remains confined within Mohenjo. Yet the novel's final chapters indicate that the capacity of Aurora's early paintings

216

to inspire resistance against communalism has become denuded almost completely. Rushdie presents the destruction of the Zogoiby Bequest in the 1993 Bombay bombings (328) and the attendant consignment of the vast majority of Aurora's art into the 'the realm of irretrievable antiquity' (373) as a pivotal moment in pluralism's decline within his fictionalised Indian *polis*. With respect to *Midnight*, *Moor* represents a further erosion of pseudo-parrhesiastic discursive resistance's power and potentiality in Rushdie's fiction. Neither novel's ending shows the truth-claims of its protagonist having much of a legible effect. However, in *Midnight* Rushdie suggests that Saleem Sinai's discourse may become influential in the future. Conversely, Aurora's, once widely accepted within a more pluralist public sphere, has been subsumed beneath a palimpsestic layer of predatory capitalism, communalism and more diffuse and effective biopolitical technologies that allows only a negligible possibility of a more pluralist future.

The ways in which Rushdie depicts discourses of resistance in *Ground* stay the trajectory of waning oppositional potentiality that his successive fictionalisations of twentieth-century biopolitics evoke. The power of resistance to biopolitical oppression in the novel proves attenuated. However, unusually for Rushdie, *Ground* describes discourses of resistance that are disseminated widely and somewhat successfully. Despite the characteristic multiplicity and complexity of the novel's setting, Rushdie even evokes the possibility of producing *parrhēsia* that inspires mass movements. Analysing the extent to which the discourses of Rushdie's three protagonists – Rai Merchant's pseudo-*parrhēsia*, Ormus Cama's bad *parrhēsia* and Vina Apsara's good *parrhēsia* – resist or fail to resist biopolitical oppression further indicates the utility of Foucault's concept of sincere, direct, simple and public-spirited good *parrhēsia* as a yardstick against which a biopolitical reading may measure reverse discourse's efficacy in literature. Moreover, examining the mass movements of peace and pluralism that Vina's discourse inspires augments the work that Chapters One and Three accomplished in arguing that *Ground* represents a momentary interruption in Rushdie's growing disinclination to affirm resistance's potentiality and potency in his fiction.

217

Movements Inspired by *Parrhēsia* in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*

Ground imagines yet another alternate reality, different again from *Midnight* and *Moor*. This world includes Rushdie's bleakest fictionalised version of India to date. Although India and the world in general fall gradually into instability and political oppression as the novel progresses, *Ground* marks the re-entry of effective, powerful discourses of resistance into Rushdie's fiction. Like Saleem Sinai, Rani Harappa and Aurora Zogoiby, his three protagonists produce art that aims to change the world and often to expose political elites' iniquities. They find more tangible success. Rushdie begins once more to suggest that '[t]he world is not cyclical, not eternal or immutable, but endlessly transforms itself, and never goes back, and we can assist in that transformation' (2000, 145). Furthermore, he describes successful resistance through specifically parrhesiastic discourses. The oppositional efficacy and public-spirited pseudo-parrhesiastic qualities of Rai Merchant's photography vanish as his political commitment wanes. However, the influential discourses that Vina Apsara and Ormus Cama's music enables them to propagate constitute *parrhēsia* in their sincerity, directness and fearlessness.

Rushdie implies that *parrhēsia* may have both beneficial and deleterious effects on the *polis*. Vina's *parrhēsia* galvanises mass movements against political oppression in life, and even more in death. Conversely, Ormus disseminates widely a discourse that takes *parrhēsia*'s verbal form but constitutes a vehicle for self-expression and nihilism – a bad *parrhēsia* – rather than an attempt at radical political change. *Ground* represents a momentary interruption in the trajectory of growing reluctance to imagine effective resistance that Rushdie's fiction comprises. Yet the potency and potentiality of reverse discourses against (bio)political oppression in the novel proves attenuated.

Pseudo-*Parrhēsia* in Rai Merchant's Photography

Rushdie contrasts the limited effect of Rai Merchant's pseudo-parrhesiastic photography in militating against (bio)political corruption and thanatopolitics

with the influential verbal discourses that Vina Apsara and Ormus Cama produce. He suggests that the sincerity, thorough public-spiritedness and constant political commitment that Rai's art lacks constitute necessary criteria for effective discursive resistance within the wider *polis*. Like Rani Harappa's shawls in *Shame* and Aurora Zogoiby's paintings in *Moor*, Rai's early work possesses pseudo-parrhesiastic qualities despite being a non-verbal artistic mode. Similarly to good verbal *parrhēsia*, his photojournalism incorporates a public-spirited political commitment. It transmutes his aesthetic impulse to 'look at the darkness' (Rushdie 2000, 211) into a frank critique of the politically powerful's moral darkness. Rai argues that '[t]he inhibited photographer should set down his camera' (214). He asserts a fearlessness also akin to that of Foucault's good parrhesiast. This allows his art to expose the misdeeds of corrupt (bio)political elites despite numerous threats (213). Taking his mentor M. Hulot's advice – 'Find your enemy' (223) – Rai identifies the kleptocratic MA politician Piloo Doodhwala as such. Despite his failure to ruin Piloo with (stolen) photographs exposing his corruption, he continues to catalogue bio/thanatopolitical excesses the world over (419). Courageous, risky and aimed at the powerful, Rai's photojournalism produces a reverse discourse of pseudo-*parrhēsia*.

However, Rushdie portrays limits to the public-spiritedness of Rai's photojournalism. Rai admits early on in the novel that he stands '[h]alfway between voyeur and witness' (13). In an ambiguous later passage in which Rai relates his motivations for photojournalism, Rushdie presents the delicate balance between these two facets of his narrator's artistry:

> Something in me wants the dreadful, wants to stare down the human race's worst-case scenarios.

> I need to know that evil exists and how to recognise it if I pass it in the street. I need it not to be abstract; to understand it by feeling its effect on me (342).

Rushdie depicts Rai's art as fuelled partially by his need to document evil's existence and partially by his desire to experience its operations; to 'stare down' (342) evil in the sense of facing it head-on pseudo-parrhesiastically, but also simply to stare.

219

Although Rai produces photojournalism not solely because he wishes to resist regimes of truth but because he is a 'violence junkie' (342), his work still constitutes a powerful reverse discourse. However, by describing Rai's later, more aestheticised photography Rushdie suggests that his narrator's new lack of direct political commitment lessens his art's ability to resist biopower. By giving up photojournalism, Rai abandons his pseudo-parrhesiastic truth-claims. Having moved from aestheticised photography to politically committed art, he makes a return journey. He eschews 'looking at atrocities in search of capital-A Atrocity' in favour of capturing 'the inexhaustible happenstance of life' (446). Rai's former colleagues in photojournalism make a similar retreat from pseudo-*parrhēsia*. They devote themselves not to reverse discourse but to aesthetics, fashion and advertising (443-44). In *Ground*'s later chapters Rushdie describes a general decline of public-spirited pseudo-parrhesiastic photojournalism amongst photographers. He charts a similar abating of this reverse discourse's presence in the public consciousness. Rai's photograph ostensibly (though not actually) capturing the moment of rock megastar Vina's death becomes more famous than any of his shots of political oppression. It 'join[s] that small stock of photographic images[…]which actually *become experiences*, part of the collective memory of the human race' (467). In *Ground* Rushdie increasingly depicts photography as an artistic medium imbricated with a growing mass celebrity culture as opposed to any pseudo-parrhesiastic programme of political resistance. He thus traces a waning potentiality of powerful reverse discourse through visual art.

Rushdie's descriptions of how Rani's shawls become progressively allegorical in *Shame* and how Aurora's paintings lose influence in *Moor*'s fictionalised post-independence Indian *polis* suggest that the possibility of sincere, direct, courageous, potent reverse discourse has become extinct. Rai's progressively apolitical art in *Ground* does not denote a similar excising. Through his other two protagonists – Vina and Ormus – Rushdie suggests that the very celebrities he portrays as the most significant subjects of late twentieth-century photography can enact resistance more effectively than Rai by using their art and fame to disseminate reverse

discourse. He satirises celebrities' political pretensions, but nevertheless depicts the power of their truth-claims to change the world. Rushdie indicates that a discourse of directness, simplicity, sincerity and courage combined with an influential public platform may engender forceful mass movements. He reintroduces effective *parrhēsia* as a possibility in his fictional engagement with twentieth-century governmentality.

Vina's political activism inspires movements against racism, dictatorship and misogyny. However, through Ormus' lyrics, which prove more nihilistic and self-indulgent than politically liberatory, Rushdie questions whether the widely disseminated *parrhēsia* of celebrities necessarily constitutes good *parrhēsia* rather than bad. Unusually for Rushdie's fiction, discursive resistance in *Ground* goes beyond mere potentiality and affects the *polis* tangibly and lastingly. Yet he implies that some *parrhēsia* harms the world rather than helps it.

<u>Bad *Parrhēsia* in Ormus Cama's Lyrics</u>

The way in which Rushdie describes the effect of Ormus Cama and Vina Apsara's music on public discourse in *Ground* suggests the veracity of Foucault's warning that 'the overwhelming influence of bad, immoral, or ignorant speakers may lead the citizenry into tyranny, or may otherwise endanger the city' (2001, 77). He depicts music's powerful discursive potential to change the world by resisting power's oppressive use, but suggests that it may not do so necessarily. Ormus and Vina's fame as the driving forces behind VTO, the world's most successful musical act, allows them a vast public platform from which to disseminate *parrhēsia*. Vina's discourse of political activism aims at liberation from political oppression and succeeds tangibly. However, the truth-claims of Ormus' lyrics, though parrhesiastic in form, give rise in their bad *parrhēsia* to a mass movement of self-indulgent nihilism millions strong. This group welcomes the world's end rather than attempting to change it.

The movement that Ormus' lyrics inspire proves crucial to *Ground*'s representation of discursive resistance and its attenuated ability to resist biopolitical oppression. Rai states that there are 'a small number of bands[…]who steal into your heart and become a part of how you see the

221

world, how you tell and understand the truth' (Rushdie 2000, 157). VTO's songs appear not as trivial entertainment but powerful examples of what Foucault calls 'discourses of truth, that is to say, discourses having the status and function of true discourses' (1980b, 210). In describing the main truth-claim that these songs disseminate Rushdie indicates that a discourse that takes the form of *parrhēsia* may do nothing to resist (bio)political oppression. He complements Foucault's warning that bad *parrhēsia* can take the form of its good counterpart.

Ormus' discourse appears parrhesiastic because of its direct, sincere, courageous characteristics. Firstly, Rushdie depicts his message as a simple one: '*The Quake is coming, the Big One that will swallow us all. Dance to the music, for tomorrow, suckers, we die*' (2000, 393). Rai observes that 'set down on the page without their music, [Ormus' lyrics] seem kind of spavined, even hamstrung' (354). Their banality constitutes a parrhesiastic directness – absent from less influential narratives in Rushdie's fiction including Saleem Sinai's and Moraes Zogoiby's – which renders their truth-claims readily comprehensible.[3]

Secondly, Ormus' truth-claim constitutes *parrhēsia* in its sincerity. As Foucault argues, the good parrhesiast 'makes it manifestly clear and obvious that what he says is his *own* opinion' (2001, 12). Ormus' manager Mull Standish, criticising his early musical efforts, tells him, 'there's too much of you missing from your music. You're phoning it in' (Rushdie 2000, 303). By contrast, VTO's most successful and most influential albums are steeped in Ormus' sincerely felt truth-claims: 'fury is evident in every chord, every bar, every line, fury deep-drawn like black water from a poisoned well' (380). Finally, Ormus' discourse parrhesiastically 'opens [him] up [to] an unspecified risk' (Foucault 2010b, 62). His message's radicalism leads to its widespread acceptance throughout the world, but also to extensive derision. In the US 'the perceived anti-establishment contents of Ormus's lyrics' (Rushdie 2000, 395) win him powerful enemies who almost manage to facilitate his deportation. In India '[t]he government's favourite godmen of the moment[…]announce that the former Indian and lapsed Zoroastrian "seismopropagandist" Ormus Cama must indeed bear a heavy responsibility for the West's quake-inducing "doomsday scenario"' (556).

They lead the government to exile Ormus from his homeland. Because it is direct, sincere and addressed fearlessly to those more powerful than the speaker, Ormus' discourse constitutes *parrhēsia*. Moreover, unusually for a reverse discourse in Rushdie's fiction, it becomes effective *parrhēsia* which influences legions of followers: 'Everyone's a New Quaker now' (555).

Analysing Ormus' discourse in terms of its parrhesiastic qualities produces a biopolitical reading that shows how Rushdie indirectly reinforces Foucault's argument that a bad *parrhēsia* which lacks good *parrhēsia*'s public-spiritedness may nevertheless take its rhetorical form. Foucault asserts that 'in *parrhēsia*, telling the truth is regarded as a *duty*' (2001, 19) in order to improve the community. Despite the directness, sincerity and fearlessness of his protagonist's truth-claim, Rushdie leaves it unclear how far Ormus aims at the *polis*' renewal and how far he welcomes its annihilation. Ormus' discourse epitomises his ambiguous relationship with the cracking earth. It propagates idealism and apocalypticism simultaneously. Ormus asserts that 'all we have to fall back on is harmony, all we have to protect us is the power of music and love' (Rushdie 2000, 438). However, his 'earthquake songs' also constitute 'rants in praise of the approach of chaos' (390). The new way of being that they attempt to inspire within twentieth-century governmentality is characterised by nihilistic defeatism rather than active opposition to biopolitical oppression.

Vina eschews Ormus' apocalyptic bad *parrhēsia* and Rai's later apolitical aestheticism. By describing the mass anti-racist and feminist movements that she inspires in life and death, Rushdie depicts a strength of resistance that exceeds that found in his other fictional twentieth-century polities. Once again using Foucault's conception of good *parrhēsia* as a potentially effective means of resisting biopower delineates the ways in which Vina's discourse fulfils the criteria for this modality. This biopolitical reading complements Chapters One and Three in further revealing that *Ground* constitutes a temporary aberration in Rushdie's generally growing disinclination to evoke the possibility of powerful resistance to biopolitical oppression in his fiction.

223

Good *Parrhēsia* in Vina Apsara's Life and Death

Vina Apsara manages to use her fame not just to disseminate a reverse discourse but to inspire mass movements that aim to make the world a more equitable place. Her discourse carries the sincerity of *parrhēsia* as well as parrhesiastic acceptance of 'an unspecified risk' (Foucault 2010b, 62). Vina speaks frankly regardless of the cost to her musical career: 'while her marvellous voice ensured her a full slate of bookings, her bad mouth lost her many of them' (Rushdie 2000, 225). Like Ormus, Vina rises above this risk and powerful opposition to her truth-claims to inspire mass movements within governmentality. However, she augments her reverse discourse's sincerity, directness and fearlessness with a public-spiritedness that contrasts with and counteracts Ormus' nihilistic bad *parrhēsia*.

Ormus and Vina campaign to the same ends initially. On a level distinct from Ormus' nihilistic lyrics, their parrhesiastic political activism proves effective in opposing racism and inequality. The intellectuals Marco Sangria and Rémy Auxerre criticise the pair for attempting to use their celebrity to further political causes (425), but eventually Vina and Ormus claim 'victory over the Sangria-Auxerre assault' (428) through the potency of their truth-claims. Vina in particular disseminates influential entreaties to world leaders in the name of numerous noble causes: famine relief; Third World debt cancellation; and environmentalism (478). Rai's comment that VTO 'entered that zone of celebrity in which everything except celebrity ceases to signify' (425) appraises the situation inaccurately. Rather than signifying an emptying-out of meaning, the band's power, wealth and public notoriety enable them to campaign and to resist. In contrast to his earlier novels, in *Ground* Rushdie suggests the possibility not only of enacting good *parrhēsia* in an attempt to render the world freer and more equal, but having it listened to by the public.

Ormus' *parrhēsia* moves increasingly towards nihilistic apocalypticism. Yet Vina continues to inspire the attempted construction of a new, pluralist and just *polis* even – and especially – after death. As with Rushdie's suggestion in *Midnight* that Saleem's narrative may galvanise further reverse discourses after he disintegrates, this posthumous capillary

truth-effect arises not from direct *parrhēsia* but from Vina's heedless frankness inspiring others to do the same. By 'unleash[ing] the full power of the symbol she had constructed' (162), her passing produces a fractal web of truth-telling that exceeds the implied potentiality of Saleem's. Rushdie shows how Vina's death opens up the mass dissemination of good *parrhēsia* within the world's population: 'Inspissated women in sexually segregated societies cast off their veils, the soldiers of oppression lay down their guns, the members of racially disadvantaged peoples burst out from their ghettos, their townships, their slums, the rusty iron curtain is torn' (480). In contrast to Ormus' 'New Quakers' (396), these mass movements base themselves not on apocalypticism but actions of sincere, public-spirited, risky but fearless resistance to political oppression. Rushdie indicates that the parrhesiastic impulse that Vina's death looses wields more power to change the world than Ormus' eschatological lyrics.

The oppositional potentiality that Rushdie evokes by describing this parrhesiastic impulse proves finite. Some self-interested figures appropriate Vina's memory discursively in support of causes she would have rejected. Rushdie describes a priest who 'invites the stadium crowds [mourning Vina] to congregate each Sunday in their neighbourhood church, *as Vina would very likely have wished*' (483). Others continue to hate her. A crowd of Islamist women crow that the Vina phenomenon 'reveals the moral bankruptcy and coming annihilation of the decadent and godless Western world' (483). In these passages Rushdie suggests that Vina's passing opens up a 'war of meanings' (485). He implies that it may become impossible to tell good *parrhēsia* like Vina's from bad *parrhēsia* like Ormus' within a free play of competing discursive truth-claims akin to the democratic maelstrom that Foucault posits. However, Rushdie emphasises most of all the capacity of Vina's death to inspire those who rally to resist power's oppressive use by racist, misogynist and kleptocratic political elites just as surely as she resisted in life. For Rai, this 'possibility[…]is Vina's true legacy' (487).

Considering the ways in which Vina's discourses, and those she engenders in death, constitute effective good *parrhēsia* illuminates Rushdie's uncharacteristic affirmation of reverse discourse's ability to resist

225

(bio)political oppression. *Ground* proves primarily apocalyptic, but Vina's truth-claims provide a vivid counterweight to the planet's tectonic and societal cracking in the novel. They transform the potentiality Rushdie's other fiction describes into effective action through qualities of sincerity, simplicity, fearlessness and public-spiritedness. Rushdie uses Rai Merchant to chart a waning possibility of effective resistance through pseudo-parrhesiastic visual art. He also suggests bad *parrhēsia*'s strength by describing how the *polis* receives Ormus' lyrics. He satirises the cult of celebrity's political import and pretensions. However, through Vina he indicates the prospect of the mass dissemination and influence of reverse discourses opposed to tyranny, racism and misogyny within twentieth-century governmentality. Using good *parrhēsia* as a model against which to measure discourses of resistance reveals that *Ground* depicts an increased potentiality and strength of effective resistance to biopower when compared with Rushdie's earlier novels, and especially when compared with *Shalimar*, his most recent novel to engage with twentieth-century biopolitics.

Conclusion: From Discourses to Movements

Rushdie's novels indirectly affirm Foucault's argument that '[w]hen *parrhēsia* is lacking[…]all are doomed to the master's madness' (2010b, 161). *Ground* shows that a sincere, direct, fearless, public-spirited, widely accepted discourse can produce a new governmentality of truth-telling that limits biopower's oppressive effects. Rushdie's fiction suggests that good *parrhēsia* constitutes the most effective form of discursive resistance. However, he mostly indicates the impossibility of this discourse in a modern world characterised by biopolitical oppression and numerous, ever-shifting flows of power and resistance. By deploying Foucault's conception of effective good *parrhēsia*, and a new theory of pseudo-*parrhēsia* that seeks to identify parrhesiastic elements within artistic, allegorical and complex reverse discourses, Chapter Four has complemented this study's investigations into racism, thanatopolitics and space in Rushdie's novels. It has helped to draw more sharply the trajectory of ebbing, then growing, oppositional potentiality in his fictional worlds from *Midnight* to *Ground*. The

utility of this method in making this arc clearer outlines the means by which a future biopolitical literary criticism may analyse comprehensively the relative efficacy of resistance to biopower in other works of fiction.

This chapter has gestured towards an argument that Rushdie's depictions of resistance suggest the relative ease of producing or disseminating *parrhēsia* or pseudo-*parrhēsia* as opposed to converting the potentiality of effective resistance into mass movements which militate against biopower. Chapter Five goes beyond Chapter Four's nascent investigation into resistance movements in Rushdie with respect to *Ground*. It reconsiders the ways in which the novels discussed previously portray attempts at political organisation in opposition to state biopower. The chapter uses Hardt and Negri's concept of the egalitarian, communicative multitude and Esposito's notion of *communitas* as a totally inclusive, non-racialising polity in a similar way to Chapter Four's engagement with good *parrhēsia*. It deploys these formulations as ideals whose impossibility Rushdie's novels indicate increasingly by describing successful movements of resistance as possible only through bloody violence or the power of elites. This biopolitical reading augments the argument presented by this study's previous chapters by further showing how *Shalimar*, in which all pluralist resistance movements are defeated by the end of the novel, constitutes the end point of a trajectory in which Rushdie has proven progressively reluctant to depict effective opposition to biopolitical oppression in his fictionalised twentieth-century polities.

Chapter Five – Movements of Resistance

Introduction: Attenuated Resistance

In *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* Rushdie suggests that *parrhēsia* may inspire mass movements that oppose biopolitical oppression. However, Chapter Four argued that his fiction generally proves increasingly disinclined to evoke a potentiality of powerful discursive resistance within twentieth-century governmentality. Chapter Five builds upon this investigation into *Ground* by considering more extensively Rushdie's still greater, and concomitantly growing, reluctance to portray successful efforts to turn discourse into effective movements, especially when this discourse is animated by pluralist ideals. As this study has shown, Rushdie's successive novels have emphasised biopower's efficacy more and more. This chapter argues that developing tendencies towards racialisation, hierarchy, unproductive violence and impotence in the resistance movements that his fiction portrays augment his depictions of racism, thanatopolitics and space in accounting for this trend. From *Midnight's Children*, in which Saleem Sinai's faction collapses but creates the space for a future pluralist politics, to the rebels in *Shame* who topple a government but leave oppressive biopower intact, to the pervasive communalist violence that completely destroys the inclusive discourse of *Kashmiriyat* in *Shalimar the Clown*, Rushdie increasingly excises the possibility of political pluralism from his fictional engagement with twentieth-century biopolitics.

As an ideal against which to measure insufficiently direct, sincere, fearless and/or public-spirited discourse, *parrhēsia* offers a fruitful method of considering discourses of resistance in Rushdie. However, Foucault only indicates vaguely how movements of resistance to biopower may be constructed. Philosophers who extend Foucault's thought into theories of how political movements may replace biopower with an inclusive non-hierarchical politics prove more useful in charting Rushdie's growing disinclination to depict effective resistance to biopolitical racialisation.

Considering the increasing extent to which his novels imply the limitations of these thinkers' strategies reveals the utility of a biopolitical reading that uses literature's indirect critique of unworkable methods of resistance as a means of deconstructing biopower and its capacity to crush opposition. Just as Rushdie implies *parrhēsia*'s impracticality, in representing twentieth-century governmentality his fiction suggests more and more the near-impossibility of movements of resistance replacing biopower with the optimally pluralist society of *communitas* that Roberto Esposito theorises, let alone Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's more idealistic hybrid multitude of free subjectivity and communication.

Hardt and Negri: The Multitude

By criticising the ways in which power was stratified in twentieth-century politics, Rushdie's novels portray increasingly the difficulty of constructing an effective non-hierarchical, inclusive movement of resistance and of creating an inclusive community through this praxis. The few successful resistance movements that Rushdie depicts are non-pluralist and thus leave biopolitical discourses and technologies intact. These include the conjunction of socio-economically privileged citizens that remove Raza Hyder from power in *Shame*, and numerous Islamist terror groups in *Shalimar*. Hardt and Negri's concept of the multitude – a possible future movement that includes all races within a non-hierarchical matrix of free subjectivity and communication – offers an ideal of resistance which Rushdie progressively suggests proves unworkable within contemporary governmentality.

In *Empire* (2000), *Multitude* (2006) and *Commonwealth* (2011), Hardt and Negri propose a programme of resistance to what they call Empire: the contemporary political paradigm of globalised, deterritorialised, late capitalist, American-led power relations and rule. They write of economics, rights, politics, globalisation and war that biopolitics is 'the fundamental category that demonstrates how all of the others are mutually implicated' (Hardt and Negri 2006, 282). Hardt and Negri draw upon Foucault's theory that 'from the seventeenth or eighteenth century onward, the human body essentially became a productive force' (2004, 31). However, their analysis

of this biopolitical productivity leads them to advocate a different strategy of resistance than *parrhēsia*: one which amalgamates discourses into a mass movement.

For Hardt and Negri, the subjectivities and social relations produced by and between humans potentially constitute an effective movement of opposition to biopower. Whereas Foucault focuses on the resistance of individuals who may influence the *polis* discursively by disseminating good *parrhēsia*, Hardt and Negri theorise the multitude: a hybrid, productive, democratic, communicative movement produced by human society as a whole as it practices a new affirmative biopolitics against Empire. The 'democracy of the multitude' (Hardt and Negri 2011, 21) aims at freedom from hierarchical power relations by negating identity as an organising principle for resistance. Hardt and Negri advocate a movement based on a hybrid multitude of differences within and between bodies. This oppositional formation strives to create 'not[…]a world without racial or gender difference but instead a world in which race and gender[…]do not determine hierarchies of power' (Hardt and Negri 2006, 101). Hardt and Negri do not want humans to be racialised politically, as under regimes of biopower. Rather, they desire the inclusion and acceptance of all identities within the global multitude, as long as decision-making is based on the free and equitable exchange of discursive truth-claims within a non-hierarchical communication matrix, instead of communalism: '[t]he multitude is composed of innumerable internal differences that can never be reduced to a unity' (xiv). The multitude replaces old identitarian conflicts with 'a new milieu of maximum plurality and uncontainable singularisation' (Hardt and Negri 2000, 25) which attacks biopolitical governments on multiple fronts.

However, the ways in which Rushdie portrays movements of resistance suggest increasingly the near-impossibility of replacing biopolitical apparatuses with a multitude within contemporary governmentality. From Saleem's racially divided and eventually defunct Midnight Children's Conference in *Midnight* to *Shalimar*'s violent, often communalist terrorist groups, the resistance movements that Rushdie represents invariably eschew or fail to achieve non-hierarchical, non-identitarian communicative pluralism in their organisational structure.

Furthermore, his novels indicate progressively the difficulty of going beyond Foucauldian discursive resistance by constructing an inclusive, plural community in general: what Esposito calls *communitas*.

Roberto Esposito: Community/*Communitas*

The resistance movements that Rushdie describes not only fail increasingly to constitute a non-hierarchical, non-identitarian multitude but to create a pluralist society, if they aim to do so at all. He depicts the gradual erosion of multiple pluralist political formations within twentieth-century governmentality. These include Nehruvian politics in *Midnight* and *Kashmiriyat* in *Shalimar*. Rushdie's novels chart how biopolitical regimes which pluralist movements of resistance proved unable to resist effectively destroyed these ideals as the century unfolded, often abetted by more violent, communalist resistance groups. Esposito's notion of *communitas* denotes usefully the ideal inclusive polity that the movements of resistance Rushdie portrays fail or do not attempt to create. His fictions lionise *communitas* constantly, but indicate more and more the difficulty of constructing it.

Esposito's conception of resistance to biopower does not place biopolitical productivity between humans at its centre in the radical manner of Hardt and Negri, nor does it propose that humans eschew identity politics completely. As Timothy Campbell argues, Esposito aims simply at 'a thoroughgoing deconstruction of the intersection of biology and politics that originates in immunity' (2006, 3). He attempts no strategy of resistance but advocating an inclusive *polis* free from biopolitical racialisation by negative example. Esposito sets a future optimal *polis* against the current less-than-ideal community under biopower in which human bodies are 'immunised against what they have in common' (2011, 107). In common with the multitude, this hypothetical *polis* – not necessarily a global one – forms 'a locus of plurality, difference, and alterity' (Esposito 2013, 55). Esposito calls this locus *communitas*. In contrast, for Esposito 'we are a community made up of those who do not have community' (15). This community bases itself on *immunitas*. *Immunitas* excludes certain groups or races from full citizenship on the grounds that to include every human within the community

231

risks disorder. Under *immunitas* governments and their superraces disavow their obligations to the community's most vulnerable and marginal members and regions.

Esposito argues that *immunitas* arises from human beings' growing tendency towards the self-securing self-interest of governmentality:

> In the moment in which liberty is no longer understood as a mode of being, but rather as a right to have something of one's own – more precisely the full predominance of oneself in relation to others – the subtractive or simply the negative sense is already destined to characterise it ever more dominantly (2008, 72).

He suggests that recognising the deleterious effects of *immunitas* and the need to resurrect *communitas* may reverse the former's increasing influence in politics. Through negative example, Esposito's work on *immunitas* attempts to beget a more equitable future politics.

Rushdie affirms the desirability of inclusive, hybrid societies through his own negative example. Yet *communitas* fails all but completely to materialise in his fictionalised versions of twentieth-century governmentality. The unworkable modalities of resistance and pluralism that Esposito and Hardt and Negri advocate prove useful to a biopolitical reading of Rushdie. Identifying the lessening extent to which they materialise in his fiction further reveals his increasing disinclination to depict limits to biopower's efficacy. However, even *Midnight*, in which Rushdie describes a potentiality of future *communitas* through the dissemination of Saleem Sinai's discourse and the existence of a new generation of magical children, mostly indicates the difficulty of creating pluralist resistance movements and communities.

Failed *Communitas* in *Midnight's Children*

In *Midnight* Rushdie depicts the multiplicity and diversity of India's *polis*, but also suggests the obstacles to constructing *communitas* or a multitude by representing and including all Indian regions and citizens at the political level. Stephen Morton argues that 'Rushdie's choice of the word multitude

rather than people to describe the national population in *Midnight's Children* is significant[…]because it is opposed to [Thomas] Hobbes' idea of state control' (2008, 45). In *De Cive* (1642) Hobbes distinguishes between people and multitude (*multitudo*):

> The people is somewhat that is one, having one will, and to whom one action may be attributed; none of these can properly be said of a multitude. The people rules in all governments. For even in monarchies the people commands; for the people wills by the will of one man; but the multitude are citizens, that is to say, subjects (1949, 135).

For Hobbes, governments of all sorts by definition govern in the name of their people. Mass political organisation based on heterogeneous ideologies sets 'the multitude against the people' (135) and hence against state control. To Hobbes, this is anathema.

Complementing Morton's analysis of Hobbes by considering how Hardt and Negri theorise the multitude's precise constitution further illuminates the ways in which Rushdie's language evokes both the difficulty and the possibility of forming an oppositional multitude from India's citizens. Hardt and Negri critique Hobbes' concept of the people as 'totalitarian' (2000, 113). They argue that '[a]n originary notion of the people poses an identity that homogenises and purifies the image of the population while blocking the constructive interactions of differences within the multitude' (113): interactions which resist biopower. However, in *Midnight* Rushdie portrays India's population more as plural 'multitudes' (2008, 172) than a singular, powerful multitude. He indicates that these multitudes cannot produce a multitude that forms an effective pluralist movement of resistance to biopower. He implies consequently that they cannot coalesce to produce *communitas.*

The way in which Saleem Sinai describes India's multitudes at the end of *Midnight* suggests that their plurality inevitably overwhelms both the individual and any attempt at a democracy of the multitude in Hardt and Negri's sense:

233

Yes, they will trample me underfoot, the numbers marching one two three, four hundred million five hundred six, reducing me to specks of voiceless dust, just as, all in good time, they will trample my son who is not my son, and his son who will not be his, and his who will not be his, until the thousand and first generation, until a thousand and one midnights have bestowed their terrible gifts and a thousand and one children have died, because it is the privilege and the curse of midnight's children to be both masters and victims of their times, to forsake privacy and be sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and to be unable to live or die in peace (647).

In the novel's final paragraph Rushdie emphasises the multiplicity of India's population and its enormous, increasing size by using an onrushing sequence of increasingly large, barely punctuated numbers: 'one two three, four hundred million five hundred six' (647). This massive, heterogeneous population takes no coherent political form. Instead it appears as an amorphous 'annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes' whose vast numbers will destroy the Midnight's Children even 'until the thousand and first generation' (647). Though substantial, this number of generations pales beside the hundreds of millions 'reducing [them] to specks of voiceless dust' (647). The ending proves broadly consistent with the rest of *Midnight*. Most of Rushdie's novel indicates the difficulty of constructing *communitas* or a multitude from India's plural multitudes.

Yet Rushdie represents Saleem's attempts at forming an inclusive political movement from these multitudes ambivalently. He details Saleem's failures, but suggests the possibility of an effective pluralist politics arising from them in the future. Rushdie depicts Saleem's discourse of *communitas* as overly idealistic through his protagonist's disgust at what *Midnight* portrays as the necessary partition of Bombay State into Maharashtra and Gujarat. He further paints this discourse as utopian by describing the inability of the heterogeneous Midnight Children's Conference (MCC) to function and resist biopower effectively as a non-hierarchical, non-identitarian multitude. This failure results from its members' racism and Saleem's autocratic leadership. Rushdie also indicates that even the divided multitudes of the MCC's hundreds do not represent all Indian

identities or regions and hence do not even potentially constitute an optimally plural *communitas*.

However, Rushdie evokes a potentiality of future resistance that partially mitigates his novel's overriding emphasis on biopower's efficacy and its near-apocalyptic ending in which India's multitudes, having overwhelmed Saleem's attempts to create a movement of resistance, destroy his body itself. As Morton argues, 'in his physical disintegration, Saleem allows for the structural possibility of a plural, heteroglot nation' (2008, 46). Rushdie implies that the destruction of Saleem and the MCC creates the prospect of a new pluralist politics, whose form he leaves undecided. Analysing this augments Chapter Four's identification of the oppositional potentiality that Saleem's pseudo-parrhesiastic narrative promises. The MCC's failure to become a multitude or effectively to resist Indian state biopower indicates the unlikeliness of parlaying reverse discourse into a pluralist resistance movement. Yet by suggesting the impermanence of Indira Gandhi's biopolitical government and the existence of a second generation of magical children Rushdie affirms the possibility of *communitas* as well as its desirability.

Saleem Sinai's Pluralist Ideal and Jawaharlal Nehru's Spatial Compromise

Rushdie indicates that his protagonist Saleem Sinai's belief in a pluralist nation built on *communitas* is overly idealistic. *Midnight's* fictional rendering of the State of Bombay's partition into Maharashtra and Gujarat in 1960 demonstrates how Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's egalitarian, anti-communalist ideal was often compromised in practice through having to deal with subnational forms of identity. Rushdie's treatment of the partition exposes the limitations of an idealised version of Nehruvian pluralism such as Saleem's. It affirms not just the inevitability but the necessity of political decentralisation through regionalism. Rushdie thus exposes the difficulty of governing India as *communitas*.

For Rushdie, Bombay constitutes an exemplary space of diversity and cultural hybridity. In *Midnight* he fills Saleem's descriptions of the city of his childhood with exhilaration at the vividness and diversity of life and sensations to be found there (Rushdie 2008, 412-13). However, Rushdie's

novels also depict Bombay's multiplicity engendering communal rivalries which result in necessary territorial reorganisation. India's external dimensions remained virtually fixed after independence, but the redrawing of internal borders was an ongoing process. Eventually Nehru's government accepted majority languages within regions as a basis for dividing India into states in most cases (see Guha 2007, 180-200). Rushdie represents this process in *Midnight*. Saleem states that in 1956 'India had been divided anew, into fourteen states and six centrally-administered "territories". But the boundaries of these states were not formed by rivers, or mountains, or any natural features of the terrain; they were, instead, walls of words' (Rushdie 2008, 261). Bombay's status at this point in history, though, was undecided. This led to political unrest that Rushdie describes in the novel:

> The State was to be partitioned; then not to be partitioned; then partition reared its head again. And as for the city itself – it was to be the capital of Maharashtra; or of both Maharashtra and Gujarat; or an independent state of its own...while the government tried to work out what on earth to do, the city's inhabitants decided to encourage it to be quick (309-10).

Rushdie sets Saleem's childhood against a backdrop of violent language riots between Marathi and Gujarati speakers. These groups each demand a state of their own and militate consequently against *communitas*. By representing these riots Rushdie questions the prospects for total inclusivity within a *polis*. If even the State of Bombay, at the centre of which stands India's most diverse city, cannot maintain its spatial political form peacefully then what hope exists for *communitas* in the nation as a whole, which includes an even greater plethora of identitarian affinities? The historical Nehru also recognised this difficulty. Eschewing dogmatic pluralism in the face of social unrest in Bombay, he effected the kind of compromise that Paul Brass applauds: '[m]ost of the language conflicts in the Nehru period, some of which became at times bitter and violent, were ultimately resolved through pluralistic solutions' (1994, 157). Almost paradoxically, the state acted pluralistically in this case by accepting the wish for a plural region to be partitioned into less plural entities. In *Midnight*

Rushdie depicts Bombay State's bifurcation as a necessary act. This admission that pluralism in India may best be served by partition mirrors his later essay 'The Assassination of Indira Gandhi' (1984), in which he argues that '[f]or a nation of seven hundred millions to make sense, it must base itself firmly on the concept of multiplicity, of plurality and tolerance, of devolution and decentralisation wherever possible' (Rushdie 1992, 44). However, the more idealistic Saleem accepts Nehru's spatial compromise under sufferance. He continues to perceive India as constituted ideally by a unitary *communitas*.

Saleem believes in a pluralism and multiplicity that somehow can resist the vagaries of compromise politics. He regards the demands for Maharashtra and Gujarat as undesirable dreams based on 'old dead struggles' (Rushdie 2008, 262). Elsewhere in *Midnight* Saleem affirms the beneficial effects of shared dreams which lead to tangible political and spatial formations. He refers to India as 'a dream we all agreed to dream[...]a collective fiction in which anything was possible' (150). However, he also suggests that some dreams have adverse consequences. In the same passage Saleem calls India 'a mass fantasy[…][which] would periodically need the sanctification and renewal which can only be provided by rituals of blood' (150). The Indian state enacts one such ritual later in the novel: the 1965 war which Saleem claims 'happened because [he] dreamed Kashmir into the fantasies of [India and Pakistan's] rulers' (471). Because Saleem recognises the power of collective fictions within politics, he decries those which oppose his vision of *communitas*. He describes the marchers' dreams as fevered, almost primal and therefore insubstantial compared with the more desirable collective fiction of pluralist India:

> the dream of Maharashtra was at the head of some processions, the mirage of Gujarat led the others forward. Heat, gnawing at the mind's divisions between fantasy and reality, made anything seem possible; the half-waking chaos of afternoon siestas fogged men's brains, and the air was filled with the stickiness of aroused desires. What grows best in the heat: fantasy; unreason; lust (231).

237

Saleem reacts unhappily when he realises that the vibrant, diverse city of his childhood cannot sustain a multilingual state: 'we resigned ourselves to the partition of the state of Bombay' (308). Although the way in which Rushdie describes Bombay State's partition in *Midnight* indicates its necessity, Saleem rejects Nehru's compromise. He considers it a betrayal of pluralism and *communitas*.

Later in the novel Rushdie renders Saleem's attitude towards this partition ironic. He shows that his protagonist, who bemoans the division of a plural region for reasons of administrative and societal order, cannot even make the MCC, a community of just five hundred and eighty-one Indians, into an effective multitude. Because of the magical children's tendencies to racialise each other and Saleem's autocratic, immunising leadership, even this small group fails to become *communitas*. Hence, it cannot transform India along similar lines.

The Midnight Children's Conference as Failed Multitude

Saleem Sinai fails to keep his initial promise of consolidating the Midnight's Children into a 'loose federation of equals' (Rushdie 2008, 305) unencumbered by spatial considerations of national and regional boundaries. His autocratic, immunising leadership of the MCC and their inability to shed identitarian, racialising forms of belonging precludes the collective from becoming an equitable multitude of free communication and subjectivity. Through the MCC, Rushdie tempers *Midnight*'s celebration of diversity and multiplicity. By describing the MCC's inability to function as a democratic, egalitarian movement he acknowledges the dependency of the hybrid national ideal upon people of diverse identities existing in harmony successfully. Rushdie asks: if the MCC cannot become a peaceful, non-hierarchical *polis* that acknowledges every member's *parrhēsia*, how can the much larger and more diverse India?

Hardt and Negri's strategy of resistance requires movements to excise identity politics (2006, 101) and eschew hierarchies of power. The MCC manages neither. Racialisations within the collective prevent it consistently from becoming a powerful movement of the multitude. Saleem laments, 'I found children from Maharashtra loathing Gujaratis, and fair-

238

skinned northerners reviling Dravidian "blackies"; there were religious rivalries; and class entered our councils' (Rushdie 2008, 353). His group proves unable to form a peaceful, parrhesiastic and effective parliament. It fails consequently to agree a practice of resistance (353-54). By depicting the racially-divided MCC's inability to coexist, Rushdie illustrates the difficulty of creating a pluralist politics which through the multitude's communicative production agglomerates the *parrhēsia* of all participants into an effective praxis. Saleem's autocratic leadership and act of *immunitas* exacerbate this lack of pluralism within the group, and excise the potentiality of its future efficacy by precipitating its final dissolution.

Rushdie affirms the inevitable stratification of power that presents a further obstacle to constructing a democratic multitude when he details Saleem's self-anointing as MCC leader. Despite professing equality between his collective's diverse members, Saleem finds himself 'not immune to the lure of leadership' on the grounds that his head serves as their meeting place: 'didn't the one who provided the club-house run the club?' (315) He proves initially a benevolent chairman. He acts merely as the host of the group's debates, a paternalistic 'big brother' (316). However, by describing Saleem's later leadership Rushdie indicates how purportedly inclusive bodies can undermine their own efforts at the *communitas* necessary to produce a multitude by operating under an immunitary logic.

Rushdie suggests in *Midnight* that once a figure rises to power within a community they are tempted invariably to take immunitary action to maintain their leadership. Like Rushdie's fictionalised Indira Gandhi, Saleem attempts to immunise himself against a perceived threat to his authority. He expels his nemesis Shiva from the MCC because he hates 'the roughness of his tongue [and] the crudity of his ideas' (314) and fears Shiva learning of his true birthright as the son of Ahmed and Amina Sinai. As Esposito argues, once a movement based ostensibly on pluralism picks and chooses which members it wants to retain it ceases to be truly plural. It is no longer *communitas*, but a community of *immunitas*. Rather than accepting the risk of Shiva's presence in his *polis*, Saleem immunises himself. He therefore declines the 'obligation of reciprocal donation' (Esposito 2008, 50) that Esposito cites as a necessary component of

communitas regardless of the dangers of including certain people. The remaining members accuse Saleem of 'secrecy, prevarication, high-handedness [and] egotism' (Rushdie 2008, 414). The collective collapses. Saleem envisions the MCC as an effective pluralist political movement against oppressive (bio)power, but because of his immunising leadership it becomes neither pluralist nor effective. Moreover, *Midnight*'s narrative form suggests the impossibility of acknowledging and representing the *parrhēsia* of all members within a diverse community, even if immunising leaders such as Saleem (and Indira Gandhi) were so inclined.

By affirming that even a relatively small collective cannot recognise every single member's interests, personalities and *parrhēsia*, Rushdie interrogates the capacity of a larger resistance movement or *polis* to do likewise. Saleem states that his narrative 'could not cope with five hundred and eighty-one fully-rounded personalities[...]they were the very essence of multiplicity' (317). Despite its length and complexity, his story does not present more than a handful of MCC members' truth-claims. Because Saleem's narrative cannot integrate the *parrhēsia* of five hundred and eighty-one children to an equal degree, Rushdie implies that neither can the divided and hierarchical political movement in his brain. He thus evokes the still greater obstacles to representing and acting upon the discourses and wishes of a *polis* numbering hundreds of millions. A group of five-hundred and eighty-one cannot constitute a microcosm of India's vast diversity. Although 'the endless duality of masses-and-classes, capital-and-labour, them-and-us' (354) wracks the MCC, India includes further differences, rivalries and prejudices. Rushdie celebrates multiplicity in *Midnight*. Yet he also questions how a regionally, religiously and culturally diverse nation such as India can function peacefully and equitably without central governmental leadership to mediate between groups and effect compromises, as in the case of Bombay State's partition. If the MCC cannot operate effectively along the multitude's equitable pluralist lines, Rushdie suggests that India as a whole will find it even more difficult to become *communitas*.

A Possible Pluralist Future?

Midnight highlights the obstacles to forming a multitude or a nation built on *communitas*. However, in the novel's final chapters Rushdie indicates the possibility of a future *communitas*. He describes the persistence of political and magical symbols of pluralism. The end of *Midnight* sees the Janata Morcha, a multifarious coalition of parties which 'grew in all kinds of bizarre directions, until it embraced Maoist Communists[...]and extreme right-wing members of the Ananda Marg' (Rushdie 2008, 582), defeat Indira Gandhi's racialising biopolitical government in India's 1977 election. Saleem Sinai does not perceive the front 'to represent a new dawn', but acknowledges that 'others[...]felt otherwise' (616). Its victory promises an Indian nation-state governed along more pluralistic lines (even if history and Rushdie's later writing record that the Janata government soon collapsed).

Rushdie later asserts that the Midnight's Children, his novel's symbols of the pluralist conception of the nation (as distinct from the nation-state), are not defeated completely. Indira Gandhi's sterilisation campaign proves largely effective. However, just as her bulldozers fail to destroy the Magicians' Ghetto, her operatives lack the capacity to eradicate the Midnight's Children. One operative, the Widow's Hand, tells Saleem that 'they would be satisfied with four hundred and twenty, they had verified one hundred and thirty-nine dead' (612). This makes five hundred and fifty-nine captured or dead out of the five hundred and eighty-one that did not die in infancy of '[m]alnutrition, disease and the misfortunes of everyday life' (271). Twenty-two remain at large. Although this does not represent a great proportion of the original group, Rushdie indicates that their numbers are bolstered by a second generation of magical children whose existence further belies the limits of state biopower. He gestures towards the possibility of a new *communitas*.

Saleem undergoes a 'draining-out of hope' (611) when the government sterilises him and the vast majority of his cohorts. The Midnight's Children are 'denied the possibility of reproducing themselves' (613). Moreover, they 'los[e] their magic' (614) as a result of the procedure. Saleem rejoices when he later learns that his nemesis Shiva's pre-

sterilisation philandering has meant that 'in the boudoirs and hovels of the nation, a new generation of children, begotten by midnight's darkest child, was being raised towards the future' (616). This elation appears premature at first. That the powers possessed by the first generation of Midnight's Children were conferred upon them through their birth within the hour of India's independence rather than by genetics suggests that these new children do not necessarily possess the gift (or curse) of magic.

Yet in the novel's final chapter Rushdie reintroduces the possibility of a magic that offers an oppositional potentiality. At the same time he indicates that the prospect of a new pluralist nation remains limited. Saleem describes his stepson Aadam Sinai (himself one of Shiva's offspring) as 'a member of a second generation of magical children who would grow up far tougher than the first, not looking for their fate in prophecy or the stars, but forging it in the implacable furnaces of their wills' (625). The passage in which Aadam speaks for the first time exemplifies Rushdie's ambivalent portrayal of the second generation:

> Abracadabra! But nothing happens, we do not turn into toads, angels do not fly in through the window: the lad is just flexing his muscles. I shall not see his miracles…Amid Mary's celebrations of Aadam's achievement, I go back to Padma, and the factory; my son's enigmatic first incursion into language has left a worrying fragrance in my nostrils. Abracadabra: not an Indian word at all, a cabbalistic formula derived from the name of the supreme god of the Basilidan gnostics, containing the number 365, the number of the days of the year, and of the heavens, and of the spirits emanating from the god Abraxas. 'Who', I am wondering, not for the first time, 'does the boy imagine he *is*?' (641-42)

Aadam's first word not only alludes to magic, but because it is polysyllabic and hence theoretically beyond infants suggests its presence. Saleem perceives the potential for his stepson to perform future 'miracles' (642). However, he worries that this 'enigmatic first incursion into language' (642) indicates the kind of megalomania that caused his autocratic leadership of the MCC and its subsequent collapse. Because 'Abracadabra' is 'not an

242

Indian word', he also implies that Aadam's magic will attempt to shape the Indian nation to a lesser degree than his own (642). Rushdie indicates that though this second generation of magical children may combat (bio)political oppression in India more effectively than the first, their resistance will not necessarily materialise nor work towards *communitas*.

Midnight's final paragraph further epitomises this ambivalence regarding the future: 'it is the privilege and the curse of midnight's children to be both masters and victims of their times, to forsake privacy and be sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and to be unable to live or die in peace' (647). As Saleem disintegrates he predicts a similar fate for the second generation and all subsequent ones. However, as Morton argues, 'in his physical disintegration, Saleem allows for the structural possibility of a plural, heteroglot nation' (2008, 46). Despite Saleem's death, his resistance movement's inability to become an effective multitude and the sterilisation of the majority of the magical children, Rushdie suggests that India's politics may one day accommodate diversity and multiplicity. Through the racialising Indira Gandhi's removal as Prime Minister and the existence of the second generation of children, he indicates both the limits of state (bio)power and the endurance of symbols of pluralism which may become 'masters[…]of their times' (Rushdie 2008, 647) by organising along different, as yet unthought, lines to the failed multitude of Saleem's MCC. Rushdie describes India as an 'annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes' (647), but also presents the seeds of future *communitas*.

In *Midnight* Rushdie affirms the desirability of pluralist, hybrid resistance. Although he explores the limitations of oppositional practices, he suggests that political pluralism may materialise in the future. However, in his next novel, *Shame*, discursive resistance against biopower proves virtually impotent, and resistance forces do not even attempt to form a multitude. Only violent, recursive means prove able to topple the dictator Raza Hyder. His fall does not generate *communitas* but more of the biopolitical same.

Failed *Communitas* in *Shame*

Chapter Four argued that in *Shame* a misogynist, racialising political class in the fictional nation of Peccavistan circumscribes *parrhēsia*'s influence on the *polis* by propagating its own truth-claims effectively while silencing those that oppose its (bio)power, such as Rani Harappa's shawls. Yet Rushdie portrays more powerful agents of resistance than Rani in the novel. As Morton asserts, though Rani's shawls 'articulate the terror of Iskander Harappa's governmental authority[…]it is Raza Hyder's daughter, Sufiya Zinobia, who performs the role of the public secret' (2008, 55). By describing how Sufiya Zinobia ends the biopolitical dictatorship of Raza Hyder (*Shame*'s fictional analogue for the Pakistani leader General Zia ul-Haq), Rushdie suggests that neither a government's discursive truth-claims nor its biopolitical technologies can keep it in power indefinitely.

However, the manner of Raza's deposing and death indicates little possibility that a movement of truly democratic resistance or an inclusive *polis* will come to characterise Peccavistan's politics. Sufiya mounts a campaign of violence in an attempt to avenge her father's mistreatment of her rather than through *parrhēsia* or on behalf of *communitas*. The terror and disorder that she causes lead Raza's generals to mount a successful coup against him. The wealthy Shakil sisters later kill him as vengeance for the death of their guerrilla son. None of these socio-economically privileged figures constitute part of an affirmatively biopolitical multitude. Neither do their actions work towards constructing one. Because these characters leave biopolitical oppression intact, *Shame* fails to augment its emphasis on the provisionality of singular dictatorships with the nascent pluralist potentiality that the end of *Midnight* evokes.

Sufiya Zinobia's Resistance as Personal Vendetta

In *Shame* Rushdie suggests the difficulty of opposing regimes of truth such as Raza Hyder's through discourse or pluralist, egalitarian mass movements. He depicts effective resistance as possible only through the violence of individuals and small groups belonging to the nation's socio-economic elite. *Shame*'s dictator is removed by members of a hermetic political class that continues to hold power thereafter. As punishment for his crimes, he is killed by three wealthy individuals rather than brought to

trial before his former subjects. The construction of equitable *communitas* and the multitude's communicative subjectivity prove absent in Raza's deposing, his death and its aftermath.

The status of the nation's women presents one of the most significant obstacles to *communitas* and the multitude in *Shame*'s fictionalised Pakistan. Aijaz Ahmad has made the most influential critique of the way in which Rushdie represents women in the novel. Ahmad argues that '[n]either the class from which the Pakistani segment of [Rushdie's] experience is derived, nor the ideological ensemble within which he has located his own affiliations, admits, in any fundamental degree, the possibility of heroic action' (1992, 139). He relates this primarily to the plight of *Shame*'s women: 'there is something fatally wrong with a novel in which virtually every woman is to be pitied, most are to be feared, at least some of the time, but none may be understood in relation to those fundamental projects of survival and overcoming which are none other than the production of history itself' (151). Ahmad considers Sufiya Zinobia as a destructive avatar of repressed female sexuality. He writes that 'so wedded is Rushdie's imagination to imageries of wholesale degradation and unrelieved social wreckage' (149) that when Sufiya rebels against Peccavistan's oppressive rulers she does so in the form of a feral, unthinking brutality that *Shame* presents in sexualised terms. Acts including Sufiya's rape and murder of 'four youths[...]transfixed by those appalling eyes' (Rushdie 1996b, 219) fit within what Ahmad deems 'a system of imageries which is sexually overdetermined' (1992, 144). Though successful in its goal of gaining revenge on Raza, this mindless, sexualised cycle of violence fails to alter the country's oppressive matrix of power relations.

Andrew Teverson defends Rushdie against Ahmad's critique. Teverson argues that 'Rushdie at no point suggests that he is representing all women in Pakistan, or indeed trying to make a point about women's existence generally' (2007, 141). He asserts that 'we might question whether or not it is true that Rushdie does present all the women in the novel as disempowered' (142). Sufiya's campaign of resistance suggests that women may rebel powerfully against the biopolitical control over their bodies that Rushdie portrays as endemic in Peccavistan. However, her violent

245

rampage arises primarily from her abuse at her family's hands. It consequently takes the form of a personal vendetta rather than an attempt to empower other women and hence work towards *communitas*. Considering Sufiya's failure to bring about pluralist change shows that the possibility of successful resistance to (bio)political oppression in *Shame* is as negligible as Ahmad claims.

As Hardt and Negri argue, the very bodies that biopower seeks to control fuel the biopolitical production of the multitude (2006, 348). However, many of Rushdie's female characters in *Shame* experience magical bodily transformations that militate against women's freedom and agency. Physiology becomes an agent of Islamist biopolitical oppression. These women are thus unable to participate fully in the community and to create *communitas* through democratic movements of the multitude. The politically powerful husband of Raza's daughter Good News cites religious doctrine to justify eschewing birth control, and uses clairvoyance to 'kn[o]w which nights were best for conception' (Rushdie 1996, 207). The supernaturally large number of children that Good News is forced to bear (thirty-six in total) leads her to perceive 'that there was no hope for women in the world, because[…]men would come and stuff you full of alien unwanted life' (207). Listlessness and eventual suicide result. Through 'the numberless children' (235) of Good News and the transmogrifying shame that Sufiya experiences, Rushdie uses extreme bodily metamorphosis to evoke vividly biopower's horrific effects on women. He uses the supernatural to suggest biopower and misogyny's overwhelmingly stultifying effects on human biology and consciousness. His fictionalised excoriation of Pakistan's Islamist biopolitical state virtually precludes the possibility both of women's mass resistance against the central government's patriarchal discourse, and a pluralist end to biopolitical oppression.

Unlike Good News, Sufiya manages to use her shame-transformed body to fight biopolitical control. The supernatural strength of 'the Beast bursting forth to wreak its havoc on the world' (219) becomes an effective weapon of resistance which leads eventually to Raza's deposing. However, Sufiya's bestial form and feral mind mean that she enacts her opposition

246

through the violent rage of a singular body rather than the 'intelligent productivity' (Hardt and Negri 2000, 344) of the multitude of bodies. Her resistance is animalistic and barely conscious rather than political. Sufiya does not rail against political elites in order to enfranchise oppressed women, effect a change of government or produce *communitas*. She acts out of instinctual personal revenge for 'her parents'[...][g]roans, insults, even the wild blows of exasperation' (Rushdie 1996b, 121). Although she represents the nation's shame symbolically, her personal circumstances as 'the incarnation of her family's shame' (171) primarily engender her transformation. Raza's conception of the Beast as a 'champion' (262) of the oppressed or 'the collective fantasy of a stifled people' (263) proves erroneous. Sufiya's violence targets his regime to a degree, but arises long before his rise to power and continues (following a brief hiatus) after the government falls. It eventually consumes the whole of Peccavistan in 'the fireball of her burning, rolling outwards to the horizon like the sea' (286). Rushdie's apocalyptic ending further indicates that Sufiya's exogenous, uncontrollable fury possesses little ability to alter the nation's oppressive power structures. Because of the supernatural transformation her family's abuse and misogyny induces, she retains only the mental capacity to avenge herself upon specific fellow members of the elite. She cannot conceive replacing this elite with a more equitable political system based on the biopolitical production of the multitude or on *communitas*. Political change in Rushdie's novel does nothing to preclude a biopolitical oppression that continues deleteriously to affect women's bodies and mind. The circumstances of Raza's fall from power offer merely a severely attenuated potentiality of dislodging biopolitical elites in the future.

In *Shame* Rushdie suggests that forces originating from within the regime's stratum of society, such as the wealthy family or the exclusive political elite, prove far more likely than mass movements of the multitude to oust governments. Raza is terrorised by his daughter, removed by his own generals and replaced by another member of the elite. Arjumand Harappa comes to power and beatifies her war-criminal father as 'the Martyr Iskander' (276). '[A]rrests, retribution, trials, hanging, blood, [and] a new cycle of shamelessness and shame' (276-77) characterise her rule. The

dynastic and hermetic cycle of Peccavistani politics reasserts itself. Rather than constituting a liberation for Peccavistan or the construction of *communitas*, Raza's removal functions as a point on a continuum of repression and violence. That Rushdie admits the difficulty of removing a dictator by peaceful means (257) does not mean that biopower cannot be fought. However, through Sufiya's campaign against Raza *Shame* indicates the near-impossibility of doing so in a way that, through the multitude, articulates and implements ideals of pluralism and *communitas* that empower the *polis* and its women. As Raza's death further shows, only the violence of the elite can oppose biopolitical oppression effectively.

The Death of a Dictator and the Stillbirth of *Communitas*

In *Shame* all operations of resistance against Raza Hyder's violent biopolitical government are themselves steeped in violence. The horrific brutality Sufiya Zinobia visits upon innocent people (Rushdie 1996b, 219) does not promise a new, more peaceful and pluralist Peccavistan. Neither does Raza's eventual punishment for his thanatopolitical crimes. Rushdie depicts both Raza's deposing and his death as violent acts carried out by privileged members of Peccavistan's elite. Though enacted by women, these deeds do nothing to empower women in general by constructing *communitas*. After Raza's removal from office the thanatopolitical violence that his troops unleash on the tribals in the west of Peccavistan redounds upon him at the hands of three wealthy sisters. Timothy Brennan calls Raza's death '[u]topian vengeance' (1989, 124) in the sense that Zia, the dictator's real-life equivalent, was still in power. However, a truly utopian vengeance would take the form of justice done in public by the multitude rather than the bloody, private revenge that Rushdie describes.

Raza's death constitutes poetic justice. The three mothers of Babar Shakil, the tribal guerrilla leader 'shot for politics' (Rushdie 1996b, 161) in a sortie led by Raza, avenge their son in a manner as horrific as any act by Raza's thanatopolitical army against the tribals. They repay Babar's blood with blood: 'the eighteen-inch stiletto blades of death drove into Raza's body, cutting him to pieces, their reddened points emerging, among other places, through his eyeballs, adam's-apple, navel, groin and mouth' (282).

Yet, as with Raza's removal from power, his death fails to work towards *communitas* or enfranchising Peccavistan's oppressed women. It arises not from the reparation of the multitude against tyranny but the settling of a personal grudge which removes agency from the population and places it in the hands of members of an elite. Instead of 'an absolute democratic power' (Hardt and Negri 2000, 344) holding Raza to account for his crimes, three rich women take it upon themselves to slay the oppressor brutally in cold-blooded revenge. Despite the presence of multiple successful individual acts of resistance in *Shame*, Rushdie questions the extent to which mass movements of resistance can constitute a non-hierarchical, inclusive multitude or effect lasting pluralist change to the biopolitical order.

Rushdie criticises the authoritarian state, Islamisation and biopolitical oppression in *Shame*. However, by portraying the situation in Pakistan/Peccavistan as a fruitless cycle of violence and revenge he suggests the difficulty of combating these forces in peaceful, collaborative, democratic ways. *Shame*'s elites construct regimes of truth so powerful that neither *parrhēsia* nor *communitas* prove possible. The overthrowing of Rushdie's fictional Zia-analogue indicates that only violence from within the political elite can dislodge a dictator. Women are mostly prevented from acts of resistance by a supernatural conjunction of biopower and physiology. Those that (violently) oppose the government fail to enfranchise other women in so doing. In representing state biopower's overall efficacy and the impotence of democratic, egalitarian political forces, *Shame* depicts little possibility that a multitude can militate effectively against biopolitical oppression. The potentiality of pluralist resistance that *Midnight* evokes has been lost.

The level of this potentiality varies in Rushdie's novels after *Shame*. *The Satanic Verses* suggests that discursive resistance against racism, as exhibited by the Brickhall rioters and the patrons of the Club Hot Wax, will likely prove ineffective. *The Moor's Last Sigh* charts the fall of the hybrid ideal of India as *communitas* and its replacing by the identitarian politics of Mumbai's Axis. The world in *Ground* proceeds towards an apocalyptic societal and topographical disintegration.

Yet all of these novels depict the prospect of an egalitarian politics to a degree. Saladin Chamcha resolves to fight Hindu communalism at the end of *Verses*. Despite their waning influence on public discourse, Aurora Zogoiby's paintings which avoid destruction in *Moor* continue vividly to evoke a more pluralist future India. *Ground* in particular indicates the re-entry of effective *parrhēsia* into Rushdie's fictional polities. Vina Apsara and Ormus Cama's truth-claims inspire new global movements and communities that change the world tangibly, even if these do not quite constitute a multitude or *communitas*. Rushdie portrays a greater potentiality of pluralist resistance in *Ground* than any of his preceding three novels.

However, *Shalimar* excises this possibility. Rushdie imagines not the feasibility of pluralist resistance to Indian state biopower (as in *Midnight*), nor the powerful but non-enfranchising resistance that removes a dictator in *Shame*'s fictionalised Pakistan. Instead he charts the total defeat of pluralism and hybridity in Kashmir's politics by both India and Pakistan. *Shalimar* suggests that Rushdie's fictional rendering of twentieth-century politics has ceased completely to represent both the multitude's capacity to resist oppressive (bio)power effectively, and the nation's potential to become a pluralist, hybrid *communitas*.

Failed *Communitas* in *Shalimar the Clown*

Of Rushdie's novels, *Shalimar* proves most sceptical regarding the possibility of *communitas* and effective movements of pluralist resistance within twentieth-century politics. Its bleakness arises from the sharp contrast between its early chapters, in which Rushdie imagines a Kashmir characterised primarily by peace and religious tolerance, and its conclusion. By the end of the novel, this 'paradise on earth' (Rushdie 2006a, 76) has become hellish at the hands of India and Pakistan's bio/thanatopower. The violence, death and terror that these foreign agents spread have eroded both the power of discourses and movements of pluralism and the potentiality of their future efficacy.

In order to draw this trajectory vividly, Rushdie idealises the forces that resist communalism and external military control in the novel. He presents *Kashmiriyat* (Kashminess), a historical cultural consciousness described in *Shalimar* as 'the belief that at the heart of Kashmiri culture there was a common bond that transcended all other differences' (110), as an immutably pluralist discourse of *communitas*. Rushdie suggests that India and Pakistan's post-Partition machinations carry far more responsibility for extinguishing *communitas* in the valley in the late twentieth century than communalist intolerance among Kashmiris or within Kashmiriness itself. His desperation to identify and depict effective pluralist resistance movements in late twentieth-century Kashmir leads him to portray the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front's resistance as based on this idealised discourse of Kashmiri autonomy and pluralism. He thus omits many of the historical terrorist group's more unsavoury and racialising acts.

Even these idealised forces of pluralist resistance are defeated eventually. By *Shalimar*'s conclusion, Rushdie represents Kashmir's political situation as forlorn. The only remaining resistance movements are violent and identitarian. They do not constitute a multitude nor aim at *communitas*. The most effective opposition to India's thanatopower comes through violent Pakistan-backed Islamist terror based on discourses of religious and racial supremacy rather than tolerance and pluralism. The Kashmiri population, constructed as subrace, is caught in the middle of this discursive and physical violence. In *Shalimar* Rushdie eschews the potentiality of *parrhēsia* and resistance that he reintroduced into his fiction in *Ground*.

Kashmiriyat: Mutable or Immutable?

India and Pakistan have disputed each other's territorial claims to the state of Kashmir ever since Partition in 1947. This conflict forms the core of the geopolitics that Rushdie depicts in *Shalimar*. However, the novel refuses to privilege one claim to sovereignty over the other in representing Kashmir's recent history. For Rushdie, a third claim supersedes India's and Pakistan's. *Shalimar* affirms Kashmir's right to be considered a separate nation-state. It conceives this state as based ideally on *Kashmiriyat*, a

pluralist historical discursive formation which Victoria Schofield describes as 'a unique culture[…]which includes both the Hindus and Muslims' (2000, 184). Rushdie indicates that politics in the valley has become characterised increasingly by a racialising ideology of communalist *immunitas* that his novel suggests is alien to this culture. He not only portrays *Kashmiriyat*'s irreversible destruction but idealises it as a discourse of immutable, inclusive hybridity and tolerance. Hence, the trajectory of waning potentiality for *communitas* that he charts in his fictionalisation of Kashmir's recent history appears all the steeper. *Shalimar* concludes the gradual lessening of the degree to which Rushdie's novels have tended to depict the possibility of effective discursive resistance in twentieth-century politics.

In *Shalimar* Rushdie idealises *Kashmiriyat* as a discourse of *communitas* assailed by foreign forces of racialising *immunitas*. Gyanendra Pandey argues that '[t]he view that harmony and mutual understanding are the norm (until challenged from the outside, especially by powerful states and large organisations) rests on an unduly sanguine and ahistorical construction of human nature and human society' (2001, 63). Yet Rushdie offers this construction in *Shalimar*. He depicts *Kashmiriyat* as a tolerant, pluralist ethos undermined by a conjunction of a thanatopolitical Indian military presence and the fundamentalist Pakistan-financed Islamist terrorism which opposed the Indian army in the late twentieth century. Rushdie indicates that India's and Pakistan's governments harmed *communitas* and militated against *Kashmiriyat* by introducing violence and alien discourses of religious intolerance. In fictionalising the waning of pluralism in post-Partition Kashmir, he emphasises most of all the deleterious effect of these outside forces. He neither devotes significant attention to historical racial and religious divisions in the region in the years before or soon after Partition, nor accepts the mutability of tolerance's presence within the discourse of *Kashmiriyat*. *Shalimar* accepts the limits of Kashmir's supposed natural peacefulness and tolerance when left alone by the two central governments that claim the space, but focuses far more on *Kashmiriyat*'s function as a desirable discourse of *communitas* and consequently of resistance to thanatopolitical tyranny and communalism.

In a *New York Times* article of 1999 Rushdie argues, '"Kashmir for the Kashmiris" is an old slogan, but the only one that expresses how the subjects of this dispute have always felt; how, I believe, the majority of them would still say they feel, if they were free to speak their minds without fear' (1999b). *Shalimar* reflects this sentiment by lionising the beneficial effects of the kind of Kashmiri nationalism that developed in the 1930s based on nationalist leader Sheikh Abdullah's conception of the territory as a neutral, religiously tolerant and, crucially, independent pluralist nation (see Ataöv 2001, 57). Despite its not being recognised as a separate country in international law or by India and Pakistan, for Rushdie Kashmir constitutes a nation by dint of a common culture encapsulated by *Kashmiriyat*. His novel describes this ethno-national social and cultural consciousness as 'the belief that at the heart of Kashmiri culture there was a common bond that transcended all other differences' (Rushdie 2006a, 110). He depicts *Kashmiriyat* as an inclusive discourse of *communitas* that, historically, resisted attempts at government based on the dominance of one race or religious group. *Shalimar* provides a powerful fictional indictment of what Rushdie represents as the alien (thanato)political forces of *immunitas* that acted upon the Kashmiri nation after Partition and eroded *Kashmiriyat*'s discursive power.

Rushdie suggests that if left to its own devices Kashmir would run naturally along the hybrid, inclusive lines of *communitas*. Early on in *Shalimar*, before the advent of Pakistan-backed fundamentalist terror and the Indian army's thanatopolitics, the villagers of Pachigam assert that 'though they were not connected [necessarily] by blood or faith[...]Kashmiris were connected by deeper ties than those' (47). The young Shalimar Noman perceives that '[t]he words *Hindu* and *Muslim* had no place in their story[...]The frontiers between the words, their hard edges, had grown smudged and blurred. This was how things had to be. This was Kashmir' (57). Rushdie's portrayal of pre-Partition religious practices in Kashmir emphasises cultural hybridity. According to Robert Young, the discourse and practice of cultural hybridity 'makes difference into sameness, and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same, the different no longer simply different' (1994, 26). Rushdie writes

that '[t]he pandits of Kashmir, unlike Brahmins anywhere else in India, happily ate meat. Kashmiri Muslims, perhaps envying the pandits their choice of gods, blurred their faith's austere monotheism by worshipping at the shrines of the valley's many local saints' (2006a, 83). In *Shalimar*, *Kashmiriyat* forms part of a hybrid ethos of peace and tolerance that works akin to Homi Bhabha's conception of a hybridity that by accepting difference and voiding identitarian fixity and hierarchy militates effectively against political oppression by 'caus[ing] the dominant discourse to split along the axis of its power to be representative, authoritative' (1994, 112). Discourses of communalism and racism, prevalent in the vast majority of Rushdie's fictional spaces, appear mostly absent in *Shalimar*'s early chapters because *Kashmiriyat*'s discursive power engenders *communitas*. The hybrid religious practices and tolerance that Rushdie suggests are innate to Kashmir and Kashmiriness maintain the valley's status as 'heaven on earth' (2006a, 28).

Although most of Rushdie's portrayal of mid-twentieth-century Kashmir presents it as idyllic and harmonious, *Shalimar*'s early chapters describe a small amount of religious tension and misogyny in the valley even before the spread of fundamentalist Islam by Pakistan-backed militants. However, he declines to suggest a continuity between these episodes of intolerance and the communalist and gendered bigotry that becomes more palpable later in the novel. Rushdie attributes this waning potentiality of political pluralism and tolerance overwhelmingly to the immunising influence of India's thanatopolitics and Pakistan-backed fundamentalist terror. He thus forgoes a critique of *Kashmiriyat* or the idea that Kashmir naturally constitutes a space of hybridity and *communitas*.

As in *Moor*, less pluralist truth-claims acquire increasing discursive power as *Shalimar* progresses. Yet even in the 'Golden Age' (80) of the novel's Kashmir – the mid-twentieth century – communal conflict unrelated to India and Pakistan's political machinations sometimes undermines the commonality of *communitas* that Rushdie attributes to *Kashmiriyat*. No sooner does Abdullah Noman proclaim of his son Shalimar and Boonyi Kaul's match, 'There is no Hindu-Muslim issue[...]To defend their love is to defend what is finest in ourselves' (110), than the debate over the wedding

threatens the village of Pachigam's stability. Rushdie writes that 'Pachigam had divided into two camps, and long years of communal harmony were at risk' (113). The villagers eventually reach a compromise. However, because this incipient communalism occurs before the fundamentalist 'iron mullah' (117) comes to the region, it indicates that hybridity and *communitas* did not always permeate Kashmir completely in this supposed Golden Age. The way in which Rushdie represents women's rights in this period suggests likewise.

Rushdie's depiction of Zoon Misri and Boonyi's treatment following perceived sexual impropriety asserts the presence of misogyny in Kashmir before the years of widespread Pakistan-backed fundamentalist terror. Their punishment shows the villagers' intolerance and even produces *homo sacer* in Boonyi's case. Rushdie writes that when Zoon is raped her family 'comforted her and bathed her and told her she had no reason to be ashamed' (126). However, thereafter '[n]o man ever came to ask for her hand in marriage. That was how things were. Nobody could defend it but nobody could change it either' (129). Rushdie describes an enduring stigma attached to rape survivors in Kashmir which has deleterious psychological consequences. Zoon becomes 'a vague drifting presence, half-human, half-phantom' (190) – a figure of indistinction. Later, the legal indistinction that Agamben suggests produces bare life renders Boonyi as such. After Boonyi breaks her marriage vows in order to leave Pachigam her family has her declared legally dead (223). They turn her into *homo sacer*, the figure 'not[...]simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather *abandoned* by it, that is, exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, become indistinguishable' (Agamben 1998, 28). '[L]iving in the world while also not living in it' (Rushdie 2006a, 235), Boonyi occupies a state of exception. Ill treatment of women becomes more widespread in *Shalimar* after fundamentalist truth-claims are disseminated into the valley, but through Zoon and Boonyi's rendering as less than human Rushdie includes elements of intolerance within his generally idyllic fictionalisation of pre-1980s Kashmir.

Zoon and Boonyi's suffering and the communalist rancour over Shalimar and Boonyi's wedding show that *Shalimar*'s characters often fail

to put ideals of hybridity, *communitas*, tolerance and peace into practice. However, rather than attributing intolerance to limitations in *Kashmiriyat*'s inclusivity, Rushdie represents it as an aberration from Kashmir's natural hybridity. In his attempt to draw a stark contrast between a blessed Golden Age and the war-ravaged Kashmir of the late twentieth century, he idealises *Kashmiriyat* as a form of *communitas* by definition. He fails to consider the potential mutability of the tolerant discourse he depicts as intrinsic to Kashmir and Kashmiris.

Any reading of *Shalimar* that perceives *Kashmiriyat* as immutable in the history upon which Rushdie's novel draws cannot engage fully with the ways in which he fictionalises and idealises pre-1980s Kashmir. Some writers have a fixed conception of the ethos Rushdie eulogises. Jean-Luc Racine considers intolerant discourses such as Islamic fundamentalism to be 'alien to the *Kashmiriyat* tradition' (2004, 216). However, others claim that *Kashmiriyat* is in fact malleable. Mustapha Kamal Pasha asserts that in the uprising of the 1980s and 1990s, which Rushdie examines in *Shalimar*'s later chapters, 'the emergent Islamic current in vast areas of the nationalist movement' carried 'the potential for changing the entire character both of *Kashmiriyat* and Kashmiri nationalism' (1992, 373). *Kashmiriyat* translates as 'Kashmiriness'. The term implies the subjectivity of what it is to be Kashmiri. For Pasha and others *Kashmiriyat* takes many forms. Rather than communal conflict and intolerance constituting a betrayal of *Kashmiriyat*, these formations can become part of Kashmiriness.

Many writers regard the notion of an ineffably tolerant *Kashmiriyat* as a 'homogenising discourse' (Zutshi 2004, 329) that papers over real historical conflicts between the valley's communities. For Ananya Jahanara Kabir, Rushdie's representation of *Kashmiriyat* constitutes this kind of 'placebo' (2009, 144-45). His novel repeatedly presents a fixed conception of Kashmiriness as *communitas*. Abdullah and his wife Firdaus ponder whether or not 'their beloved Kashmiriness' (Rushdie 2006a, 131) is served by union with India yet fail to question the nature of Kashmiriness itself. When Kashmir later becomes scarred by violence Pyarelal Kaul worries that '[m]aybe *Kashmiriyat* was an illusion[...]Maybe tyranny, forced conversions, temple-smashing, iconoclasm, persecution and genocide were the norms

256

and peaceful coexistence was an illusion' (239). He perceives the indestructibility of *Kashmiriyat*'s discursive power as illusive, but not its assumed exemption from elements of intolerance and violence. Rushdie suggests that Kashmir's politics in the twentieth century became characterised increasingly by racialisation. However, although his elegy for Kashmir and *Kashmiriyat* depicts some communalist conflicts in the valley's mid-twentieth-century 'Golden Age' (80), it eschews a critique of Kashmir's supposed innate ethos of tolerant *communitas* under an emphasis on the external (thanato)political powers that oppose it.

Rushdie idealises *Kashmiriyat* by depicting a form of Kashmiriness characterised inherently by *communitas*. His idealism does not extend to implying its discursive power's permanence. *Shalimar* charts the gradual erosion of the hybrid discourse of *Kashmiriyat* towards the end of the twentieth century by the *immunitas* of India's thanatopolitical army and Pakistan-backed fundamentalist terrorists. The most effective movement of resistance to these forces in the novel comes from the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF). Rushdie idealises this Kashmiri nationalist terrorist organisation in a similar manner to *Kashmiriyat*. Just as he overplays tolerance and hybridity as intrinsic facets of Kashmiriness, he overemphasises the presence of these ideals in fictionalising the historical JKLF. Though the JKLF in *Shalimar* does not constitute the democratic multitude that Hardt and Negri imagine, Rushdie suggests that the group aims at *communitas* as well as Kashmir's independence. The political situation in Kashmir becomes so desperate by the novel's later chapters that it presents a terrorist organisation as the valley's least worst chance to retain what Rushdie portrays as its natural way of life, and must omit the group's historical communalist activities in order to suggest even an attenuated potentiality of future pluralism.

Resistance through Terror (1): The JKLF

The political events that Rushdie describes in *Shalimar* gradually erode *communitas* in Kashmir. The most effective movement of resistance to India and Pakistan's thanatopolitics in the novel is a violent terrorist organisation rather than a peaceful, democratic multitude. The historical

JKLF, as Türkkaya Ataöv argues, 'by reducing politics to criminal actions and by accepting violence as the style of struggle[...]disorganise[d] the authentic forces of change' (2001, 106). Rushdie nevertheless depicts its brutal resistance as the most potent counterweight to what he represents as alien forces of intolerance. Moreover, his eagerness to identify effective movements of pluralist opposition in late twentieth-century Kashmir leads him to allot the JKLF a more generous fictional treatment than historical reality would suggest. Morton observes that *Shalimar*'s narrator 'appears to support the secular nationalism of the Kashmiri separatist movement against both the influence of the Indian military and the iron mullahs from Pakistan' (2008, 143). As Morton adds, Rushdie is not 'simply an uncritical defender of the JKLF' (144). However, *Shalimar* goes to great lengths to humanise the JKLF's fighters and to present it as a pluralist movement not just for Kashmiri independence but for *communitas*. Rushdie glosses over its unsavoury part in the spread of communalist violence in the valley in the history upon which his novel draws. As with his treatment of *Kashmiriyat*, he idealises historical resistance to India and Pakistan's violence and intolerance in the name of depicting Kashmir as an innately pluralist and tolerant nation if left unmolested by external (bio)political powers.

Rushdie does not present the JKLF as a democratic multitude or its members as unimpeachable heroes. The group's organisational structure is hierarchical and its fighters' motives often ignoble. Some fight for Kashmir, some for 'women, power and wealth' (Rushdie 2006a, 257). Their methods of obtaining funding actually harm the cause of Kashmir's freedom and independence in many cases. JKLF cell leader Anees Noman's argument that 'free isn't free of charge' (253) affirms the necessity of billeting and the extortion of ordinary Kashmiris for the greater good. Rushdie later states that 'ISI [Pakistani secret service] funding to the JKLF was being reduced and the [Islamist] Hizb was getting the cash instead' (299). He stresses that the historical JKLF was once a regional outpost of Pakistan's thanatopolitical foreign policy.

However, Rushdie places far greater emphasis on his fictional JKLF fighters' humanity and their wish for a Kashmiri independence characterised

by hybrid, tolerant *Kashmiriyat* and consequently by *communitas*. In one passage he writes,

> [a]ll the men in the liberation front were afraid almost all the time[…]They feared betrayal, capture, torture, their own cowardice, the fabled insanity of the new officer in charge of all internal security in the Kashmir sector, General Hammirdev Kachhwaha, failure and death. They feared the killing of their loved ones in reprisal for their few successes, a bridge bombed, an army convoy hit, a notorious security officer laid low. They feared, almost above all things, the winter, when their high-ground encampments became unusable, when the Aru route over the mountains became impassable, when their access to arms and combat supplies dwindled, when there was nothing to do but wait to be arrested, to sit shivering in loveless garrets and dream of the unattainable: women, power and wealth[…]

> […]The Kashmiris of Kashmir were shivering, leaderless and very close to defeat (256-57).

Here Rushdie shows his novel's empathy with the JKLF. The passage humanises them by detailing at length the suffering caused by the various fears that arise from the precariousness not just of their resistance movement's success but of their lives. Rushdie's description of the militants as 'Kashmiris of Kashmir' (257) suggests that they represent a more authentic voice of Kashmir's people than the fundamentalist groups fighting for union with Pakistan. In keeping with his near-constant emphasis on the natural tolerance of Kashmiris and *Kashmiriyat*, *Shalimar* portrays the JKLF as less violent and more secular than these Islamist factions. Unlike the fundamentalists who deploy suicide bombers, Anees places limits on his group's violence – 'we will die as men of culture, not barbarians' (254) – even when he attempts to save the villages of Pachigam and Shirmal from domination by Pakistan-backed Islamists. Rushdie uses the members of his fictionalised JKLF, in their fearful and dilapidated state, their relative mercy and their opposition to religious communalism, as a counterpoint to the remorseless, hardline, alien 'iron commando' (314) fighting for Islamic

259

fundamentalism and union with Pakistan. Although he does not celebrate or condone terrorism, he presents the JKLF as the lesser evil because its violence in the novel operates in the name of Kashmir's freedom from India's military thanatopower and Pakistan-backed communalist terrorism, and in the name of tolerance and *communitas*.

However, *Shalimar*'s sympathy with the JKLF's campaign for Kashmir's independence leads to a simplistic fictionalisation of the massacres and mass displacement of the valley's Hindu pandit population in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which for Yunas Samad represented 'the final nail in the coffin of *Kashmiriyat*' (2011, 167). Rushdie omits the JKLF's historical role in the exodus in favour of attributing the pandits' fate to a conjunction of Pakistan-backed Islamic fundamentalism and the inaction of India's government. As with *Kashmiriyat*, in order to depict Kashmir as a naturally pluralist and tolerant nation he idealises a force opposing external control of the valley by suggesting that it also works towards *communitas*.

In describing the suffering of Kashmir's pandits Rushdie poses a long series of unanswered questions:

> There were six hundred thousand Indian troops in Kashmir but the pogrom of the pandits was not prevented, why was that. Three and a half lakhs of human beings arrived in Jammu as displaced persons and for many months the government did not provide shelters or relief or even register their names, why was that. When the government finally built camps it only allowed for six thousand families to remain in the state, dispersing the others around the country where they would be invisible and impotent, why was that (2006a, 296).

His narrator does not answer these questions definitively. However, he implies heavily that they can be explained either through the Indian state's limited (bio)power to make life live or its lack of political will to do so. In blaming the pogrom of the pandits on India's inability to secure the valley against alien Islamist terrorists, particularly the fictional Lashkar-e-Pak group, Rushdie exculpates the JKLF for its historical role in the massacres. Navnita Chadha Behera argues that historically the 'JKLF was the main

force behind the expulsion of the minority pandit community, with many of its cadre implicated in the brutal killings of Kashmiri pandits' (2006, 150-51). Rushdie subsumes this disquieting aspect of the JKLF. Instead he emphasises their anti-fundamentalist activities. This leaves an aporia in his elegy for *Kashmiriyat*. He cannot answer the question, 'why was that' (Rushdie 2006a, 296) fully. Although Rushdie depicts the JKLF as ineffective, unheroic and not constituting a democratic multitude, the group appears in *Shalimar* as a force dedicated to preserving Kashmir's freedom and pluralist *communitas* from the deleterious actions of India and Pakistan's governments. This presentation aids his novel's argument that tolerance and peace characterise Kashmir's society if outside political powers leave the valley alone, but elides the JKLF's own part in spreading communalist violence and intolerance in Kashmir's recent history.

Rushdie's eagerness to portray Kashmir as an innately pluralist and hybrid nation does not extend to denying the effect of violence and communalism on political pluralism in the valley in recent decades. He idealises *Kashmiriyat* and the JKLF in terms of their religious tolerance rather than their ability to resist the overwhelming discursive and military power of the forces of thanatopolitics and Islamic fundamentalism that he depicts as alien to Kashmir and *Kashmiriyat*. By the end of *Shalimar* Rushdie excises the potentiality of effective resistance and future pluralism more completely than in any of his novels.

Fundamentalism vs. *Kashmiriyat*

In *Shalimar*, especially by the end of the novel, various Pakistan-backed fundamentalist terrorist groups constitute more effective movements of resistance to the Indian army's thanatopolitics than pluralist organisations such as Rushdie's idealised secular JKLF. Not only do these factions not form a democratic multitude, but they eschew the discourses of tolerance and pluralism that the novel (erroneously) suggests inherently characterise Kashmir's 'Golden Age' (80) and the JKLF's ideology. By emphasising the foreignness of the leadership and financing of *Shalimar*'s fictional fundamentalist movements Rushdie depicts them as alien to the nation and

its supposed natural state of *communitas*, particularly when support from Pakistan's immunising government makes them more powerful.

In describing the fictional mullah Bulbul Fakh, the novel's most prominent Islamist, Rushdie emphasises his alienness. He renders him richly symbolic as a creation of political forces external to the valley by using a fantastical literalisation of geopolitical causality: 'The Indian army had poured military hardware of all kinds into the valley, and scrap metal junkyards sprang up everywhere[...]Then one day by the grace of God the junk[...]came to life and took on human form' (115). Here Rushdie evokes the historical role of India's immunising bio/thanatopower in begetting resistance movements characterised increasingly not just by terrorism but by discourses of religious fundamentalism and *immunitas* that his novel suggests are inimical with *Kashmiriyat*. *Shalimar* implies that if Kashmir were to have been left free, extremists like the 'iron mullahs' (115) would never have emerged and *communitas* would have endured.

Bulbul's communalist discourse proves as foreign to Kashmir as the mullah himself. Bulbul condemns those 'who mistake tolerance for virtue and harmony for peace' (116). He elides Kashmiri nationalism with religious communalism. He thus countermands the pluralism and hybridity that *Shalimar* depicts as inherent to Kashmir and *Kashmiriyat*. Rushdie writes that Bulbul 'spoke the language harshly, like a foreigner' (115). By describing 'the powerful hypnotic spell woven by [his] harsh seductive tongue' (125) on the people of Shirmal, *Shalimar* suggests that such a spell is necessary to convert the naturally peaceful Kashmiris into religious communalists. Bombur Yambarzal's discourse of resistance – 'This thickheaded, comical, bloodthirsty moron is what you have all decided to become' (124) – lifts the enchantment eventually. However, Bulbul returns later in the novel. In addition to suggesting the Indian army's responsibility for creating the mullah, Rushdie goes on to portray him as a product of Pakistan's nation-state and its financing of Islamist terrorism. He depicts Bulbul, and by extension his communalist ideals, even more emphatically as an alien presence in Kashmir produced by foreign political powers. He suggests characteristically that the immunising biopower of nation-states eroded *communitas*' discursive power as the twentieth century progressed.

262

In *Shalimar*'s later sections Rushdie fictionalises the process by which the Kashmiri elections of 1987, which Ayesha Jalal describes as 'royally rigged' (1995, 179) in favour of the pro-India National Conference, precipitated a new uprising characterised by fundamentalist terrorism and financed by Pakistan. He writes, '[t]housands of previously law-abiding young men took up arms and joined the militants, disillusioned by the electoral process. Pakistan was generous. There were AK-47s for everyone' (Rushdie 2006a, 276). Bulbul appears among the militants. He is now not merely a preacher of communalist hatred but a fully-fledged terrorist fighting for Islamic fundamentalism and Kashmir's accession to Pakistan. He continues to disseminate the truth-claim that '[w]hen the world is in disarray then God does not send a religion of love' (262), but proves able to do so more effectively than in mid-1960s Shirmal because of increased disillusion at Indian rule within Kashmir. Pakistan's government exploits this disenchantment. The terrorist group that Bulbul commands forms a regional outpost of the 'centre for worldwide Islamist-jihadist activities set up by Pak Inter-Services Intelligence' (264). Symbolically, he wishes to spread 'Pakistani salt' (264) on Kashmir as if to claim the space. Through the growing influence of Bulbul's violent fundamentalism and pro-Pakistan discourse, his terrorist camp comes to occupy more and more Kashmiri territory. His foreign-backed and alien movement of resistance to India's biopower progressively lessens the discursive power of *Kashmiriyat*: of tolerance, *communitas* and Kashmiri independence.

By the end of *Shalimar*, resistance based on violent communalist acts and discourses of *immunitas* has almost completely superseded the JKLF's movement of pluralist *communitas*. Even the possibility that these supposedly alien discourses pervaded late twentieth-century Kashmir less than totally, which Rushdie figures through the performativity and lack of fundamentalist ideology of Shalimar Noman's terrorist resistance, proves attenuated. Despite Shalimar's actions being motivated by personal rather than ideological considerations, because he joins and participates in Bulbul's violent, racialising movement the violence he commits nevertheless harms *communitas* in Kashmir.

Resistance through Terror (2): Shalimar Noman

Ironically, Rushdie uses his novel's most prominent terrorist to suggest that Pakistan-backed fundamentalism did not necessarily motivate anti-India forces in late twentieth-century Kashmir. Personal revenge, rather than Islamist fervour or a desire to harm *communitas*, inspires Shalimar Noman's militancy. Shalimar condemns Pakistan as 'the enemies pretending to rescue us in the name of our own God except they're made of death and greed' (Rushdie 2006a, 248). He values not the Islamist ideology its government and its mullahs propagate but the resources it affords him: 'Over the mountain there are training camps. Over the mountain there are comrades and weapons and money and political backing. Over the mountain I will find the rainbow's end' (260). For Shalimar, joining Pakistan's cause and accepting its aid represents a means to an end. Although he justifies accepting Pakistan's help by saying, 'I want to drive the army bastards out and our enemy's enemy is our friend' (259), he focuses far more on killing the man with whom his wife eloped. Shalimar lacks political commitment. His terrorism is consequently deeply performative. Because of his training as an actor he can affect a simulacrum of 'the total abnegation of the self' (267) and thus convince Bulbul Fakh of his devotion to his immunising movement. As Robert Eaglestone argues, Rushdie offers 'the strangely hopeful idea that this terrorist assassin is motivated by personal not religious motives: motives, that is, that might be satiated fairly easily' (2010, 366). Through his protagonist Rushdie presents the possibility that the reach of Pakistan-backed Islamic fundamentalism in Kashmir is less than total even within terrorist organisations. He thus indicates that discourses and movements of *immunitas* may not necessarily pervade Kashmir's politics in the future.

However, Shalimar's merely performing the role of a fundamentalist terrorist does not negate the effect of the atrocities he commits on Kashmir's peace and *Kashmiriyat*. Just as Rushdie portrays the JKLF as a force for *communitas* despite some of its members being motivated primarily by fame and money, he suggests that Shalimar's actions in the undemocratic non-multitude of Bulbul's faction contribute towards *communitas*' increasing erosion regardless of his motivations. Though Shalimar does not fight for the fundamentalism that Rushdie depicts as un-Kashmiri he does not

combat it either. His personal revenge succeeds because of Kashmir's irreversible militarisation, and contributes towards it. Through its protagonist, *Shalimar* presents only a limited possibility that the *Kashmiriyat* ideal will again come to animate Kashmir's politics in the future.

By the end of *Shalimar* the Kashmiris that Rushdie depicts as naturally tolerant and peaceful are caught irrevocably between India's racialising state thanatopolitics and a fundamentalist resistance movement which also produces death, and which seeks a Kashmir bereft of *communitas* and subject to the power of Islamist truth-claims and Pakistan's central government. Even the potentialities of pluralist resistance that the novel evokes through certain characters and movements are perverted in some way. Rushdie does not go as far as to depict the JKLF, the most powerful political movement working for Kashmir's independence, as a democratic multitude. Yet he idealises the group disturbingly by omitting its historical practices of *immunitas*, just as he romanticises the discourse of *Kashmiriyat* which he portrays as animating its supposedly pluralist ideology. Shalimar's militancy is performative and driven by personal revenge rather than fundamentalism, but he nevertheless harms *communitas* because he participates in violent, racialising terrorism as a means to an end. These oppositional formations, such as they are, are extinguished by *Shalimar*'s conclusion. The way in which Rushdie describes the increasing ability of Pakistan's central government, via its financing of terrorist groups, to disseminate a fundamentalist communalism foreign to Kashmir indicates a complete absence of potentiality for movements or even discourses of effective pluralist resistance within the valley's governmentality. His most recent novel to explore twentieth-century (bio)politics proves his most sceptical regarding the prospect of future *communitas*.

Conclusion: Loss of Potentiality, Loss of Resistance

Reading Rushdie through Esposito and Hardt and Negri's thought reveals that the extent to which he suggests *communitas*, and the multitude that may bring it about, to be lost causes within contemporary governmentality

265

builds almost consistently with each successive novel. From *Midnight* to *Shalimar*, his characters' attempted movements of opposition to communalism, biopower and *immunitas* generally fail more and more completely to bring about an inclusive polity or to constitute non-racialising, non-identitarian 'biopolitical production' (Hardt and Negri 2011, x) organisationally. Resistance which alters the political power structure effectively in these novels, as in *Shame*, does not aim at a new, equitable *polis* and emerges from within often racialising political elites.

Philosophers of biopower formulate potentially powerful praxes of resistance. However, a biopolitical reading that measures the degree to which Rushdie's novels imply the impracticality of these modalities shows that he indicates increasingly that forming an effective pluralist political movement against biopower proves far harder than articulating parrhesiastic or even pseudo-parrhesiastic reverse discourses. The power that truth-claims of nationalism, biopower, racism, religious fundamentalism and misogyny wield precludes the creation of such groups in his fiction. This chapter thus also asserts that literature, including Rushdie's, may not only deconstruct biopolitical oppression by indirectly critiquing theories of practical resistance, but gesture towards the means by which a more realistic programme of opposition may operate.

Conclusion

Rushdie Studies continues to be characterised by a growing engagement with ever more specific aspects of his fiction and its intellectual background. In recent years these have included family (Kimmich 2008), visual culture (Mendes, ed. 2011) and Indian popular cinema (Stadtler 2014). However, the field has not yet produced a substantive analysis of the degree to which Rushdie's individual novels suggest that humans may combat political oppression within contemporary polities. Critics have gestured towards 'a trajectory from the city as a utopian space to a dystopian one' (Khanna 2009, 411) in his work, and cited *Shalimar the Clown*, his most recent fictional engagement with twentieth-century politics, as his bleakest (Teverson 2007, 222). Yet the exact nature of Rushdie's generally lessening inclination to evoke a potentiality of effective resistance in his fictionalisations of recent history has remained elusive.

This study has argued that tracing this trajectory comprehensively requires conceiving politics as biopolitics. Its methodology built upon previous work that engaged with how Rushdie weaves history and politics into his fiction (Harrison 1992; Morton 2008). It used theories of biopolitics to conceptualise and vivify the complex power relations that permeate the polities he imagines, and hence shape governance and resistance within them. These theories' emphasis on how discourses animate diverse technologies of societal ordering, bodily optimisation, political oppression and even mass killing, and the ways in which these practices operate upon and are operated by humans, helped reveal the precise extent to which Rushdie's novels suggest the possibility of resisting (bio)political oppression within these power relations.

The broad, incorporative conception of race formulated by Michel Foucault's foundational, influential writings on biopolitics aided this study in illuminating how Rushdie presents the discourses that biopolitical governments deploy to identify which humans to protect through their technologies, and which to punish. For Foucault, race arises not from biology but from the state's attempts to securitise itself against resistance

and disorder. The state identifies a majority superrace whose health, productivity and safety its biopower seeks to optimise against unruly, supposedly intrinsically Other subraces that ostensibly jeopardise this process. This discourse buttresses the state's power by persuading the superrace to view subraces as the greatest danger to their security and hence to accept their biopolitical ordering. This makes both superraces and subraces less likely to threaten governmental biopower. Criticism of how Rushdie represents, problematises and even reifies race (Brennan 1989, 147; Teverson 2007, 26; 164) has focused primarily on racisms commonly identified as such in literature, history and sociology: phenotypical, culturalist and ethnicist. Foucault's thought enabled an analysis of Rushdie's work that complemented these inquiries by engaging with how these racisms function in his novels as a means of convincing superraces to submit to biopolitical optimisation and ordering. Moreover, Foucault's expansive notion of race offered a method of conceiving the ways in which Rushdie presents the capacity of discourses of order and securitisation themselves to produce additional racisms. Subraces in Rushdie's fiction are often created not through any biological or cultural criteria but because they present a threat to biopower's smooth operation. These include Saleem Sinai's magical collective in *Midnight's Children*, tribal rebels in *Shame* and Kashmiris in *Shalimar*. This study showed that Rushdie represents race more widely and variously than has been supposed. Hence, it argued that he indicates the near-impossibility of transcending race. Considering this greater array of racisms brought into clearer focus the generally growing degree to which his novels suggest the difficulty of resisting the biopolitical technologies that these discourses animate.

This study's engagement with racialising discourses and biopolitical technologies in Rushdie was further informed by thinkers whose work on biopower and race is inspired by (and often critiques) Foucault. Their theories provided useful critical vocabularies and conceptual frameworks which complicated and thus augmented the Foucauldian conception of race and power that underpinned this thesis. Giorgio Agamben's concept of *homo sacer* – human life which the state constructs as less than human – allowed an analysis of the spaces of legal indistinction within which

governments in Rushdie's novels often place these figures, such as the immigration centre in *The Satanic Verses*. It also illuminated the use of this dehumanising discourse to justify massacres in *Midnight*, *Shame* and *Shalimar*. Roberto Esposito's claim that tendencies towards exclusionary securitisation increased in the twentieth century permitted this study to chart Rushdie's increasing inclination to suggest likewise. For example, *The Moor's Last Sigh* and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* both portray India's *polis* as characterised more and more by religious communalism and predatory capitalism. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's critique of Foucault's failure to address the way in which subjectivities and social relations, produced by and between humans, enable an oppositional 'biopolitical production' (2006, 146) provided a means by which to conceptualise attempts by Rushdie's characters to transmute discursive resistance into effective praxis. Rushdie does not mention Foucault, Hardt and Negri, Agamben or Esposito in his work. Nor does he use their terminology to describe biopolitical racialisations and technologies. Yet in exploring similar questions of race, power and oppression by fictionalising examples of historical biopolitical practice, he indicates the veracity of many of their claims. By outlining the relative presence in his novels of the forms of racialisation and persecution these thinkers theorise, this thesis charted Rushdie's growing disinclination to depict a potentiality of effective resistance.

However, Rushdie also implies that the nature of twentieth-century biopolitics exceeded the thought of Foucault, Hardt and Negri, Agamben and Esposito. Considering the ways in which his fiction indirectly problematises their theories enabled this study to move beyond a reading merely shaped passively by canonical theories of biopolitics, towards a dialectical biopolitical literary criticism.

Biopolitical literary criticism holds that not only can theories of biopower inform a reading of fiction, but works of fiction can help formulate a theory of biopower. Literature which engages with specific technologies and discourses of biopower can increase our understanding of their historical and contemporary practice, and gesture consequently towards practical strategies of resistance to political racialisation and oppression.

This study has asserted that Rushdie's novels provide an exemplary site of biopower's operation in fiction. His work indicates the utility of concepts including superrace, subrace, *homo sacer* and biopolitical production. However, in indirectly problematising Foucault, Hardt and Negri, Agamben and Esposito's formulations Rushdie also suggests the need to devise a new conception of biopolitics. Building upon his (unintended) critiques of canonical philosophies of biopower and augmenting them with other critical theories allowed this thesis to engage more precisely with his portrayal of twentieth-century biopolitics. It showed that a notion of biopolitics which conceptualises biopower's discourses and technologies accurately in politics, history and fiction may arise from fiction itself as easily as from the first two fields, and possibly more so.

By describing the ways in which the superrace's racism strengthens the state's racialising biopolitical oppression, Rushdie's novels indicate the need to augment Foucault's state-centric theory of race with other genealogies of para-state racisms. *Midnight*, *Shame* and *Shalimar* emphasise the pre-existing racialisation that begets massacres under circumstances of political instability and perceived insecurity. Rushdie thus suggests the inadequacy of Agamben's assertion that biopolitics and thanatopolitics became homologous in the twentieth century, and Esposito's claim that biopolitics morphs into its thanatopolitical opposite when massacres occur. Analysing comprehensively the ways in which he describes the diverse, often nebulous spaces in which these racialisations and massacres take place and are resisted requires a theory of post-space that goes beyond both Foucault's conception of the heterotopia in which competing spaces come into contact within a certain place without merging, and Agamben's notion of the inescapable, infinitely reproducible camp of exception. Within these fictional spaces Rushdie illustrates the impracticality of Foucault's strategy of resistance based on a sincere, direct, fearless, public-spirited discourse of good *parrhēsia*, and Hardt and Negri's idea of opposing biopower through a non-hierarchical, democratic, communicative movement of the multitude.

Using Rushdie's novels to critique canonical theories of biopower allowed this study to formulate a theory of biopolitics that could engage

more accurately with his depictions of its discourses and technologies. Considering thanatopolitics not as homologous with or diametrically opposed to biopolitics, but as a conditional potentiality inherent within its practices, highlighted how Rushdie increasingly depicts the circumstances of political insecurity and instability which lead to this potentiality's actualisation. Measuring the relative presence of nebulous post-spaces and oppositional territorialisations within fictional worlds characterised primarily by camps and heterotopias aided a consideration of his growing disinclination to portray the production of social spaces free from biopolitical oppression. Though this study questioned the feasibility of *parrhēsia* and the multitude as effective modalities, charting the degree to which discourses and movements of resistance in Rushdie's novels achieve these forms brought his excising of effective opposition to biopower in his novels into still clearer focus. Using Rushdie as a case study has shown how biopolitical readings may use literature to interrogate the limitations of theories of biopower, but can also recuperate and augment these philosophies to produce a conception of biopolitics appropriate to literary study.

Delineating this notion further requires engaging with literature beyond Rushdie, and theories of biopower outside this study's remit. Although this thesis focused on selected concepts from Foucault, Hardt and Negri, Agamben and Esposito, their work is still being translated and published. Future releases will offer ideas that engender fresh perspectives on literary depictions of biopower, but may also prove subject to biopolitical readings that use fiction to identify added aporias in their thought. Through theoretical augmentations, these readings can produce more ways of conceiving biopolitical practice and resistance that exceed these thinkers' canonical theorisations. In turn, these new formulations will come to inform analyses of other works of literature.

Additional considerations of biopower in literature may build upon this thesis by focusing more closely on specific facets of overall biopolitical practice absent or negligible in Rushdie's work. Further inquiries could follow Christopher Breu by 'think[ing] about the way in which materiality can form one site of resistance to and divergence from the dominance of

biopolitical forms of governance and economic organisation in twentieth- and twenty-first century life' (2014, x) across a range of novels. They might also examine how recent fiction has engaged with twenty-first century political trends towards expanding panopticism as a result of the War on Terror and the growing insecurity engendered by increasing global flows of population (Updike 2006; Hamid 2007; Shamsie 2009). Investigating how literature represents medicine as a component of biopolitical practice may intervene tellingly in the increasingly prominent discipline of the medical humanities, which 'focus[es] not on the practical resolution of ethical [and medical] problems but on their cultural and historical contexts, emotional and existential dimensions, and literary and artistic representations' (Cole, Carlin and Carson 2015, 2). Theorists of biopolitics have begun to engage with what Nikolas Rose calls 'the new forms of pastoral power that are taking shape in and around our genetics and our biology' (2001, 22). Biopolitical readings can engage with literary responses to the sinister, racialising potential of the kinds of molecular biology that the mapping of the human genome has engendered, through which biopoliticians and scientists may use new medical knowledge to create racial difference both discursively and biologically (Mitchell 2004; Zeh 2014). As Una Chung argues, '[t]he "bio" of biopolitics comes to name a much larger number of things than those discussed explicitly by Foucault' (2011, 281). Theoretical engagements with any past, current or future aspect of biopolitics are augmented by works of literature just as productively as they inform a reading of the novels, poems or plays in question.

By exploring the numerous ways in which Rushdie's novels illuminate and are illuminated by theories of biopower, this thesis has argued for the necessity of biopolitical literary criticism to literary studies and academic inquiry into biopolitics alike. If fiction suggests that race exceeds what is generally thought of as race, that the political exceeds what is generally thought of as the political and that resistance must consequently exceed all previously thought strategies of resistance, then it indicates the need for a biopolitical theory that exceeds existing biopolitical theories. Through biopolitical literary criticism, literature provides the means by which we may discover it.

Word Count: 87,378

Endnotes

Introduction

[1] *The Year's Work in English Studies*, published annually by Oxford University Press, remarks frequently upon the preponderance of Rushdie criticism in its surveys of writing on South Asian literature: 'As usual, Rushdie is the individual writer most widely written about' (Abodunrin et al. 2004, 1006); 'As in previous years, substantial critical attention was paid to canonical figures in 2006, with Salman Rushdie once again taking centre stage' (Abodunrin et al. 2008, 1195); 'A preoccupation with the diaspora emerges as the strongest theme in this year's list, and once again it is Salman Rushdie who garners the lion's share of the attention' (Abodunrin et al. 2011, 994); 'Among contemporary writers, it was predictably Salman Rushdie[…]who commanded the maximum critical attention' (Carpentier et al. 2014, 1179).

[2] This study deploys the term 'thanatopolitics' rather than Achille Mbembe's 'necropolitics' to describe the massacres that racialising biopolitical states perpetrate, for two reasons. Firstly, 'thanatopolitics' is used more widely. Secondly, Mbembe's notion of necropolitics incorporates not just massacres but 'the creation of *death-worlds*, new and unique forms of social existence in which vast populations are subjected to conditions of life conferring upon them the status of *living dead*' (2003, 40). This thesis uses 'thanatopolitics' to describe violent massacres of subraces, and Agamben's concepts of *homo sacer* and the state of exception to theorise the living dead who are not (yet) massacred but who live under the threat of death. This distinction provides more theoretical clarity than grouping both categories under the umbrella of 'necropolitics'.

[3] Although *Fury* (2001) also concerns the twenty-first century rather than the twentieth, it still engages with racist discourses and technologies of biopower. It thus further indicates Rushdie's late-career scepticism that the racialisations that characterised twentieth-century (bio)politics may be resisted in the future.

[4] Foucault's theory of governmentality delineates in detail the ways in which humans participate in their own biopolitical optimisations, and the discourse of 'frankness, open-heartedness [and] openness of thought' (2005, 169) by which they may resist this optimising. However, his work proves almost bereft of material regarding how, as Rushdie's novels indicate, the race-thinking of the superrace the state constructs complements the government's racialising biopolitical activities. Foucault emphasises usefully that states may produce multiple racialisations based on any criteria they desire, but the diversity and numerousness of the actors that enact these racialisations in Rushdie's fiction exceeds his thought, as Chapter One of this study argues.

[5] This study uses the terms 'neo-colonial' and 'post-independence' in Ella Shohat's sense. For Shohat, the concept of the neo-colonial, 'like the "post-colonial" also suggests continuities and discontinuities, but its emphasis is on the new modes and forms of the old

colonialist practices, not on a "beyond"' (1992, 106). By contrast, '[t]he term "post-independence"[…]invokes an achieved history of resistance, shifting the analytical focus to the emergent nation-state. In this sense, the term "post-independence", precisely because it implies a nation-state telos, provides expanded analytical space for confronting such explosive issues as religion, ethnicity, patriarchy, gender and sexual orientation, none of which are reducible to epiphenomena of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Whereas "post-colonial" suggests a distance from colonialism, "post-independence" celebrates the nation-state; but by attributing power to the nation-state it also makes Third World regimes accountable' (107). In criticising the racialising biopower that post-independence regimes wielded, Rushdie's fiction attempts this accountability.

Chapter One – Biopolitics and Race

[1] Ramachandra Guha writes, 'Nehru articulated an ideology that rested on four main pillars. First, there was democracy, the freedom to choose one's friends and speak one's mind (and in the language of one's choice) – above all, the freedom to choose one's leaders through regional elections based on universal adult franchise. Second, there was secularism, the neutrality of the state in matters of religion and its commitment to maintaining social peace. Third, there was socialism, the attempt to augment productivity while ensuring a more egalitarian distribution of income (and of social opportunity). Fourth, there was non-alignment, the placement of India beyond and above the rivalries of the Great Powers. Among the less compelling, but not necessarily less significant, elements of this worldview were the conscious cultivation of a multiparty system (notably through debate in Parliament), and a respect for the autonomy of the judiciary and the executive' (2007, 433).

[2] Saladin quotes from Nirad Chaudhuri's *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (1951).

[3] Fawzia Afzal-Khan offers a reading of *Verses* that views the Brickhall riots not as a futile attempt at destroying race-thinking but as an intermediate point that by asserting opposition to racism paves the way for further resistance: 'Clearly, hatred and anger, however righteous, can only lead to violence that in the end is self-destructive. Yet Rushdie seems to be resigned to the fact that this is a necessary stage in the Manichean opposition created by colonialism. Such destruction is, in fact, a tactic necessary to purge the world of the subject-object dialectic between coloniser and colonised' (1993, 171).

[4] Lilliput and Blefuscu are two islands in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), satirical portraits of Britain and France respectively. Similarly to its equivalent in *Fury*, Swift's Lilliput suffers from sectarian divisions.

Chapter Two – Thanatopolitics

[1] See also Vassilena Parashkevova, who argues that '[t]he urban triangle of Shame's Q./Quetta, Karachi and Islamabad indicates the contours of Pakistan – East, South, and North – which is seen, in this way, as a national fiction that entraps its citizens' (2012, 57).

Chapter Three – Biopolitics and Space

[1] See Edward Casey for a dissenting view which argues that '[f]rom being lost in space and time (or, more likely, lost *to them* in the era of modernity), we find our way in place' (1993, 29).

[2] See Søren Frank (2011) for an extended Deleuzian reading of Rushdie's fiction.

[3] In *Shame* Rushdie imagines a much narrower variety of spaces than in *Midnight*. He subsumes his exploration of humans' capacity to shape social space under an overriding concern with the disciplinary carceral spaces that the biopolitical state establishes, and the remote 'zone[s] of instability' (Rushdie 1996b, 23) that it striates almost completely.

[4] That Gibreel experiences a transformation as deleterious as Saladin's, despite avoiding incarceration in the biopolitical immigration camp, further supports the argument that the act of migration itself contributes significantly and atavistically to the construction of subraces in *Verses*.

[5] Crucially, Rushdie now refers to him not by his Anglicised name – Saladin, the Europeanised name that the crusaders bestowed upon the defeated sultan – but by the name given to him by his father.

[6] The concept of Bombay as a metaphor for India has proven so prevalent in Indian public discourse that there is even a book which incorporates it into its title (Patel and Thorner, eds. 1995).

[7] See Chapter Four of this study for an extended analysis of the resistance movements that Vina inspires.

Chapter Four – Discourses of Resistance

[1] Roger Clark defends Rushdie against charges of condescension towards Padma: 'One could argue that Rushdie makes fun of Padma and therefore that she cannot constitute a serious audience, let alone a challenge to scepticism. Yet one would have to ask, what character, including Saleem himself, remains unscathed in the novel?' (2001, 77)

[2] Matt Kimmich identifies a greater potentiality of resistance through this dissemination. He argues that '[t]his could be read as his shedding of his past, fragmenting his life, so he can finally dissolve; at the same time, he does open his story up to whoever may find his notes nailed to fences and gateposts, a readership distinct from Vasco Miranda or any other characters in the novel' (Kimmich 2008, 240).

[3] A typically simple and apocalyptic VTO song goes, 'For Jack and Jill will tumble down, the king will lose his hollow crown, the jesters all are leaving town, the queen has lost her shoe; the cat has lost his fiddling stick, so Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, as all the clocks refuse to tick, the end of history is in view' (Rushdie 2000, 389). Even Ormus' more opaque lyrics take the form of easily understood metaphors: '*Ooh Tar Baby yeah you got me stuck on you. Ooh Tar Baby and I can't get loose it's true. Come on Tar Baby won't you hold me tight, we can stick together all through the night. Ooh Tar Baby and maybe I'm in love with you*' (276).

Bibliography

Abodunrin, Femi, Elizabeth Webby, Julieanne Lamond, Richard Lane, Ashok Bery and Nelson Wattie. 2004. New Literatures. *The Year's Work in English Studies* 83: 922-1025.

Abodunrin, Femi, Leigh Dale, Chris Tiffin, Richard Lane, Suzanne Scafe, Rachel Farebrother, Caroline Herbert and Nelson Wattie. 2008. New Literatures. *The Year's Work in English Studies* 87: 1101-1214.

Abodunrin, Femi, Tabea Bergold, Sally Carpentier, Mridula Nath Chakraborty, Leigh Dale, Elizabeth Hicks, Ira Raja, Paul Sharrad, Tony Simoes Da Silva, Jane Stafford, Mark Stein, Chris Tiffin, Ian Whitehouse and Mark Williams. 2011. New Literatures. *The Year's Work in English Studies* 90: 911-1029.

Afzal-Khan, Fawzia. 1993. *Cultural Imperialism and the Indo-English Novel: Genre and Ideology in R. K. Narayan, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, and Salman Rushdie*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Agamben, Giorgio. 1998. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

— 1999. *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*. Trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen. New York: Zone Books.

— 2000. *Means without End: Notes on Politics*. Trans. Vincenzo Binetti and Cesare Casarino. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

— 2005. *State of Exception*. Trans. Kevin Attell. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

— 2009. *The Signature of All Things: On Method*. Trans. Luca d'Isanto and Kevin Attell. New York: Zone Books.

Ahmad, Aijaz. 1992. *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*. London: Verso.

Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions in Globalisation.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ataöv, Türkkaya. 2001. *Kashmir and Neighbours: Tale, Terror, Truce.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Ball, John Clement. 2003. *Satire & the Postcolonial Novel: V. S. Naipaul, Chinua Achebe, Salman Rushdie.* London and New York: Routledge.

Banerjee, Ashish. 1992. 'Comparative Curfew': Changing Dimensions of Communal Politics in India. In Veena Das, ed., *Mirrors of Violence: Communities, Riots, and Survivors in South Asia*, 37-68. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Beer, Dan. 2002. *Michel Foucault: Form and Power.* Oxford: Legenda.

Behera, Navnita Chadha. 2006. *Demystifying Kashmir.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Bhabha, Homi K. 1994. *The Location of Culture.* London and New York: Routledge.

Blank, Robert H. and Samuel M. Hines, Jr. 2001. *Biology and Political Science.* New York: Routledge.

Blum, Lawrence. 2002. *'I'm Not Racist, But…': The Moral Quandary of Race.* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Brass, Paul R. 1994. *The Politics of India since Independence.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brennan, Timothy. 1989. *Salman Rushdie and the Third World: Myths of the Nation.* New York: St. Martin Press.

Breu, Christopher. 2014. *Insistence of the Material: Literature in the Age of Biopolitics.* Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Butler, Judith. 2006. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence.* London and New York: Verso.

Caldwell, Lynton K. 1964. Biopolitics: Science, Ethics, and Public Policy. *Yale Review* 54.1: 1-16.

Campbell, Timothy. 2006. *Bios*, Immunity, Life: The Thought of Roberto Esposito. *Diacritics* 36.2: 2-22.

Carpentier, Sally, Mridula Nath Chakraborty, Margaret Daymond, Philip Holden, Dougal McNeill, Marguerite Nolan, Ira Raja, Giselle Rampaul, Paul Sharrad, Tony Simoes Da Silva, Geraldine Skeete and Ian Whitehouse. 2014. New Literatures. *The Year's Work in English Studies* 93: 1046-1212.

Casey, Edward S. 1993. *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Chaudhuri, Nirad C. 1999. *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*. London: Picador.

Chow, Rey. 2010. Postcolonial Visibilities: Questions Inspired by Deleuze's Method. In Simone Bignall and Paul Patton, eds., *Deleuze and the Postcolonial*, 62-77. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Chung, Una. 2011. 'Seeing' Spectral Agencies: An Analysis of Lin and Lam and Unidentified Vietnam. In Patricia Ticineto Clough and Craig Willse, eds., *Beyond Biopolitics: Essays on the Governance of Life and Death*, 277-305. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.

Clark, Roger Y. 2001. *Stranger Gods: Salman Rushdie's Other Worlds*. Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Cole, Thomas R., Nathan S. Carlin and Ronald A. Carson. 2015. *Medical Humanities: An Introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cundy, Catherine. 1996. *Salman Rushdie*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Das, P. K. 2003. Slums: The Continuing Struggle for Housing. In Sujata Patel and Jim Masselos, eds., *Bombay and Mumbai: The City in Transition*, 207-34. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Das, Veena and Deborah Poole. 2004. State and Its Margins: Comparative Ethnographies. In Veena Das and Deborah Poole, eds., *Anthropology in the Margins of the State*, 3-33. Santa Fe: School of American Research Press.

de la Rochère, Martine Dutheil Hennard. 1999. *Origin and Originality in Rushdie's Fiction*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Debrix, François and Alexander D. Barder. 2011. *Beyond Biopolitics: Theory, Violence, and Horror in World Politics*. London: Routledge.

Deleuze, Gilles and Félix Guattari, 1984. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane. London: The Athlone Press.

— 1986. *Nomadology: The War Machine*. Trans. Brian Massumi. New York: Semiotext[e].

— 1988. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Trans. Brian Massumi. London: The Athlone Press.

Deshpande, Satish. 1995. Communalising the Nation-Space: Notes on Spatial Strategies of Hindutva. *Economic and Political Weekly* 30.50: 3220-27.

Dillon, Michael, 2008. Security, Race and War. In Michael Dillon and Andrew W. Neal, eds., *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, 166-96. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dillon, Michael and Andrew W. Neal. 2008. Introduction. In Michael Dillon and Andrew W. Neal, eds., *Foucault on Politics, Security and War*, 1-18. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Doel, Marcus. 1999. *Poststructuralist Geographies: The Diabolical Art of Spatial Science*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

— 2000. Un-Glunking Geography: Spatial Science after Dr Seuss and Gilles Deleuze. In Mike Crang and Nigel Thrift, eds., *Thinking Space*, 117-35. London: Routledge.

Eaglestone, Robert. 2010. 'The age of reason was over...an age of fury was dawning'. In Elleke Boehmer and Stephen Morton, eds., *Terror and the Postcolonial*, 361-69. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Esposito, Roberto. 2008. *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy*. Trans. Timothy Campbell. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

— 2010. *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*. Trans. Timothy Campbell. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

— 2011. *Immunitas: The Protection and Negation of Life*. Trans. Zakiya Hanafi. Cambridge: Polity.

— 2013. *Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics*. Trans. Rhiannon Noel Welch. New York: Fordham University Press.

Fanon, Frantz. 1986. *Black Skin, White Masks*. Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. London: Pluto Press.

Foucault, Michel. 1980a. History of Systems of Thought. Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon. In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, 199-204. Ithaca: Cornall University Press.

— 1980b. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. Trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham and Kate Soper. Brighton: The Harvester Press.

— 1981. The Order of Discourse. Trans. Ian McLeod. In Robert Young, ed., *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, 51-78. Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

— 1988. The Political Technologies of Individuals. In Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton, eds., *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, 145-62. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press.

— 1990. *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. Trans. Robert Hurley. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

— 1991. Politics and the Study of Discourse. In Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller, ed., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, 53-72. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

— 1992. *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality, Volume 2*. Trans. Robert Hurley. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

— 1997. Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias. In Neil Leach, ed., *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory*, 350-56. London and New York.

— 2001. *Fearless Speech*. Trans. Joseph Pearson. Los Angeles: Semiotext[e].

— 2002a. Governmentality. In James D. Faubion, ed., *Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Volume Three*. Trans. Robert Hurley and Others, 201-22. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

— 2002b. The Subject and Power. In James D. Faubion, ed., *Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, Volume Three*. Trans. Robert Hurley and Others, 326-48. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

— 2004. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-1976*. Trans. David Macey. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

— 2005. *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France 1981-1982*. Trans. Graham Burchell. New York: Picador.

— 2007. Questions on Geography. In Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden, eds., *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*, 173-82. Aldershot: Ashgate.

— 2010a. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France 1978-1979*. Trans. Graham Burchell. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

— 2010b. *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France 1982-1983*. Trans. Graham Burchell. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Frank, Søren. 2011. *Salman Rushdie: A Deleuzian Reading.* Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press.

Ghosh, Bishnupriya. 2004. *When Borne Across: Literary Cosmopolitics in the Contemporary Indian Novel*. New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers University Press.

Gill, Josie. 2015. 'Under extreme environmental pressure, characteristics were acquired': Epigenetics, Race and Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. *Textual Practice* 29.3: 479-98.

Gilroy, Paul. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

— 2000. *Between Camps: Race, Identity and Nationalism at the End of the Colour Line*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

— 2002. *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation*. London: Routledge.

— 2004. *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* London: Routledge.

Goonetilleke, D. C. R. A. 1998. *Salman Rushdie*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Grant, Damian. 1999. *Salman Rushdie*. Plymouth: Northcote House.

Guha, Ramachandra. 2007. *India after Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*. London: Macmillan.

Hai, Ambreen. 1999. 'Marching In from the Peripheries': Rushdie's Feminised Artistry and Ambivalent Feminism. In M. Keith Booker, ed., *Critical Essays on Salman Rushdie*, 16-50. New York: G. K. Hall & Co.

Hall, Catherine. 1995. Histories, Empires and the Post-Colonial Moment. In Iain Chamber and Lidia Curti, eds., *The Post-colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, 65-77. London: Routledge.

Hamid, Mohsin. 2007. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. London: Penguin.

Hansen, Thomas Blom. 1999. *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. 2000. *Empire*. London: Harvard University Press.

— 2006. *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

— 2011. *Commonwealth*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.

Harris, G. W. 1911. Bio-Politics. *The New Age*, Dec. 28.

Harrison, James. 1992. *Salman Rushdie*. New York: Twayne.

Hartsock, Nancy C. M. 1996. Postmodernism and Political Change: Issues for Feminist Theory. In Susan J. Hekman, ed., *Feminist Interpretations of Michel Foucault*, 39-55. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

Harvey, David. 1973. *Social Justice and the City*. London: Edward Arnold.

Hobbes, Thomas. 1949. *De Cive, or The Citizen*. Trans. Sterling P. Lamprecht. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Jalal, Ayesha. 1995. *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kabir, Ananya Jahanara. 2009. *Territory of Desire: Representing the Valley of Kashmir.* Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Kalyvas, Andreas. 2005. The Sovereign Weaver: Beyond the Camp. In Andrew Norris, ed., *Politics, Metaphysics, and Death: Essays on*

Giorgio Agamben's Homo Sacer, 107-34. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Kazi, Seema. 2010. *Between Democracy and Nation: Gender and Militarisation in Kashmir*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Khanna, Stuti. 2009. Postcolonial Politics of the Possible: City and Nation in the Fiction of Salman Rushdie. *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* 45.4: 401-13.

Kimmich, Matt. 2008. *Offspring Fictions: Salman Rushdie's Family Novels*. Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi.

Lefebvre, Henri. 1991. *The Production of Space*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Legg, Stephen. 2007. Beyond the European Province: Foucault and Postcolonialism. In Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden, eds., *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*, 265-89. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Lemke, Thomas. 2011. *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction*. Trans. Eric Frederick Trump. New York: New York University Press.

Lewontin, R. C. 1972. The Apportionment of Human Diversity. *Evolutionary Biology* 6: 381-98.

Macaulay, Thomas Babington. 1958. Minute on Education. In Theodore de Bary, Stephen N. Hay, Royal Weiler and Andrew Yarrow, eds., *Sources of Indian Tradition*, 596-601. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mader, Mary Beth. 2011. Modern Living and Vital Race: Foucault and the Science of Life. *Foucault Studies* 12: 97-112.

Maiello, Amedeo. 1995. Ethnic Conflict in Post-Colonial India. In Iain Chambers and Lidia Curti, eds., *The Post-colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, 99-114. London: Routledge.

Malik, Kenan. 1996. *The Meaning of Race: Race, History and Culture in Western Society*. Basingstoke and London: Macmillan.

Masters, Roger D. 1989. *The Nature of Politics*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Mbembe, Achille. 2003. Necropolitics. Trans. Libby Meintjes. *Public Culture* 15.1: 11-40.

McLeod, John. 2000. *Beginning Postcolonialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Mendes, Ana Cristina, ed. 2011. *Salman Rushdie and Visual Culture: Celebrating Impurity, Disrupting Borders*. London and New York: Routledge.

Menon, Nivedita and Aditya Nigam. 2007. *Power and Contestation: India after 1989*. London: Zed Books.

Mitchell, David. 2004. *Cloud Atlas*. London: Sceptre.

Modood, Tariq. 1997. 'Difference', Cultural Racism and Anti-Racism. In Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood, eds., *Debating Cultural Hybridity: Multi-Cultural Identities and the Politics of Anti-Racism*, 154-72. London and New York: Zed Books.

Montag, Warren. 2013. Necro-Economics: Adam Smith and Death in the Life of the Universal. In Timothy Campbell and Adam Sitze, eds, *Biopolitics: A Reader*, 193-214. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press.

Morton, Stephen. 2008. *Salman Rushdie: Fictions of Postcolonial Modernity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Morton, Stephen and Stephen Bygrave, eds. 2008. *Foucault in an Age of Terror: Essays on Biopolitics and the Defence of Society*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Moss, Jeremy. 1998. Introduction: The Later Foucault. In Jeremy Moss, ed., *The Later Foucault: Politics and Philosophy*, 1-17. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Mutimer, David. 2007. Sovereign Contradictions: Maher Arar and the Indefinite Future. In Elizabeth Dauphinee and Cristina Masters, eds., *The Logics of Biopower and the War on Terror: Living, Dying, Surviving*, 159-79. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nally, David P. 2011. *Human Encumbrances: Political Violence and the Great Irish Famine*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.

Nandy, Ashis, Shikha Trivedy, Shail Mayaram and Achyut Yagnik. 1995. *Creating a Nationality: The Ramjanmabhumi Movement and Fear of the Self.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Nehru, Jawaharlal. 1969. *The Discovery of India*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House.

Oksala, Johanna. 2010. Violence and the Biopolitics of Modernity. *Foucault Studies* 10: 23-43.

Pandey, Gyanendra. 2001. *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Parashkevova, Vassilena. 2012. *Salman Rushdie's Cities: Reconfigurational Politics and the Contemporary Urban Imagination*. New York: Continuum.

Pasha, Mustapha Kamal. 1992. Beyond the Two-Nation Divide: Kashmir and Resurgent Islam. In Raju G. C. Thomas, ed., *Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia*, 369-87. Boulder, San Francisco and Oxford: Westview Press.

Patel, Sujata and Alice Thorner, eds. 1995. *Bombay: Metaphor for Modern India.* Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Patton, Paul. 2007. Agamben and Foucault on Biopower and Biopolitics. In Matthew Calarco and Steven DeCaroli, eds., *Giorgio Agamben: Sovereignty and Life*, 203-18. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Racine, Jean-Luc. 2004. Pakistan and the 'India Syndrome': Between Kashmir and the Nuclear Predicament. In Christophe Jaffrelot, ed., *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?*, 195-227. London and New York: Zed Books.

Reder, Michael. 1999. Rewriting History and Identity: The Reinvention of Myth, Epic, and Allegory in Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*. In M. Keith Booker, ed., *Critical Essays on Salman Rushdie*, 225-49. New York: G. K. Hall & Co.

Reeves, Frank. 1983. *British Racial Discourse: A Study of British Political Discourse about Race and Race-Related Matters*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reid, Julian. 2013. Interrogating the Neoliberal Biopolitics of the Sustainable Development-Resistance Nexus. In Sandro Mezzadra, Julian Reid and Ranabir Samaddar, eds., *The Biopolitics of Development: Reading Michel Foucault in the Postcolonial Present*, 107-22. New Delhi: Springer.

Rose, Nikolas. 2001. The Politics of Life Itself. *Theory, Culture and Society* 18.6: 1-30.

Rushdie, Salman. 1992. *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-91*. London: Granta.

— [1990] 1993. *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. London: Vintage.

— [1975] 1996a. *Grimus*. London: Vintage.

— [1983] 1996b. *Shame.* London: Vintage.

— 1999. Kashmir, the Imperilled Paradise, *The New York Times*, Jun. 3.

— [1999] 2000. *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*. London: Vintage.

— [2001] 2002. *Fury*. London: Vintage.

— [2005] 2006a. *Shalimar the Clown.* London: Vintage.

— [1995] 2006b. *The Moor's Last Sigh*. London: Vintage.

— [1988] 2006c. *The Satanic Verses*. London: Vintage.

— [1981] 2008. *Midnight's Children*. London: Vintage.

— [2008] 2009. *The Enchantress of Florence*. London: Vintage.

— 2015. *Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Samad, Yunas. 2011. *The Pakistan-US Conundrum: Jihadists, the Military and the People: The Struggle for Control*. London: Hurst & Co.

Schofield, Victoria. 2000. *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unfinished War*. London and New York: I. B. Tauris.

Sen, Amartya. 2006. *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Shamsie, Kamila. 2009. *Burnt Shadows*. London: Bloomsbury.

Shohat, Ella. 1992. Notes on the 'Post-Colonial'. *Social Text* 31-32: 99-113.

Smith, Susan J. 1993. Immigration and Nation-Building in Canada and the United Kingdom. In Peter Jackson and Jan Penrose, eds., *Constructions of Race, Place and Nation*, 50-77. London: UCL Press.

Soja, Edward W. 2010. *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Stadtler, Florian. 2014. *Fiction, Film, and Indian Popular Cinema: Salman Rushdie's Novels and the Cinematic Imagination*. New York and London: Routledge.

Swift, Jonathan. 1985. *Gulliver's Travels*. London: Penguin.

Talbot, Ian. 1998. *Pakistan: A Modern History*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Tarlo, Emma. 2003. *Unsettling Memories: Narratives of the Emergency in Delhi*. London: C. Hurst & Co.

Teverson, Andrew. 2007. *Salman Rushdie*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Thiara, Nicole Weickgennant. 2009. *Salman Rushdie and Indian Historiography: Writing the Nation into Being*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Thorson, Thomas. 1970. *Biopolitics*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Thrift, Nigel. 2007. Overcome by Space: Reworking Foucault. In Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden, eds., *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography*, 53-58. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Trousdale, Rachel. 2004. 'City of Mongrel Joy': Bombay and the Shiv Sena in *Midnight's Children* and *The Moor's Last Sigh*. *Journal of Commonwealth Literature* 39.2: 95-110.

Tuan, Yi-Fu. 1977. *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.

Updike, John. 2006. *Terrorist*. London: Hamish Hamilton.

Upstone, Sara. 2009. *Spatial Politics in the Postcolonial Novel*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

Wiegele, Thomas C. 1979. *Biopolitics: Search for a More Human Political Science*. Boulder: Westview.

Wirsing, Robert G. 1998. *India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Dispute: On Regional Conflict and its Resolution*. Basingstoke and London: Macmillan.

Young, Robert J. C. 1994. *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London: Routledge.

Zeh, Juli. 2014. *The Method*. Trans. Sally-Ann Spencer. London: Vintage.

Žižek, Slavoj. 2002. Are We In A War? Do We Have An Enemy?, *The London Review of Books* 24.10, May. 23.

Zutshi, Chitralekha. 2004. *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir*. London: Hurst & Co.